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**Gothic Horror**

20217

GUIDE TO  
WICKED SCIENCE





# Leagues of Gothic Horror Guide to Wicked Science

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# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Wicked Science

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# Chapter the First:

## The Nature of the Damned

*"'You're a mad scientist,' said Maggie, in what may well have been intended as a reassuring tone. 'We don't expect you to be nice. We just go to bed every night hoping you won't mutate us before we wake up.'"*

—Mira Grant, *Blackout*

Science, like knowledge, has no inherent moral bias. Whether it is used to aid or harm mankind, or for charitable or selfish reasons, lies squarely in the lap of the individual scientist. In this work, we focus solely on those scientists who use their knowledge for what the masses would call evil purposes.



Unlike apparitions, shapeshifters, and vampires, wicked scientists are not supernatural beings. They possess insights far beyond the ken of ordinary scientists, and they are certainly monsters, but they are mortal beings.

### Origins

Few, if any, wicked scientists are born deranged, sadistic, maniacal, or otherwise mentally impaired. Save for a very few, they do not set out to destroy or corrupt at the start of their careers. Indeed, some may begin with the noblest intentions. At some juncture, though, some event triggers their descent into wicked science.

Such triggers are never mundane—a bump on the head or a single slur is not enough to turn them toward wicked science, for instance. A hideous injury, the death of a loved one, the impending death of the scientist, a grievous wrong that has ruined a reputation—these are the events that change a person's perspective on life and death, and which permanently alter their moral compass.

Lesser events can certainly warp minds, but they are usually prolonged. Being turned down by a potential paramour may leave one despondent, but it takes more than a single stab to the heart to turn one into a maniacal stalker or hater or women.

### Motivation

Humans are complex creatures. While it is easy to tar all wicked scientists with the same brush, the motivations behind their diabolical acts are as individual as snowflakes. A single goal can often be covered by two or more Motivations. For instance, a scientist seeking to prove the existence of ghosts may be motivated by Faith, Fame, Glory, Hope, Love, Truth, or Wisdom. One may wish to find proof that physical death is not the end of existence and that we may meet our loved one's again in the afterlife (Hope), while another may seek a way to merge a loved one's spiritual essence into a new corporeal shell.

While their actions and methodologies can be typified as cruel, barbaric, or even insane, a



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wicked scientist rarely sees evil or a villain in their own heart. In their eyes they may be a victim of circumstances beyond their control, forced to use their knowledge to prevent death (typically their own or that of a loved one). In other instances they truly believe that what they are doing is for the betterment of humanity. Alas, in all cases the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Going back to our previous example, a wicked scientist isn't interested in finding and studying an existing apparition. Instead, they need to create a ghost by their own hand. A simple death is not enough to spawn an apparition, though. The formation of a spectre requires prolonged physical or mental torment, something the scientist is only too happy to do on a hapless subject in the twin names of science and their Motivation.

This section ignores the basest human desires—such as power for power's sake, revenge, and greed, as little needs to be said about them—and focuses instead on more unusual motivations, those that make a wicked scientist an interesting villain.

## Faith

Faith does not automatically imply religious extremism—any wicked scientist with a deep-seated belief in some greater cause may have this Motivation. The nature of the individual scientist determines whether their faith is a personal belief or one they wish to share with others.

## Fame & Glory

Fame and Glory are two sides of the same coin. Wicked scientists with the former require immediate praise and attention, while those with the latter seek eternal recognition. Both strive for their goal through their work.

Invariably their research is misguided. While it might have a noble goal, they are usually self-righteous in their thinking that the end justifies the means. What does it matter if a hundred nobodies must die if the life of one person of note can be saved? So what if the people must be enslaved by mind control if it makes them more productive?

## Hope

Faced with problems that require the application of science far above conventional science, it is no surprise that wicked scientists can fall into despair when experiment after experiment meets with abject failure.

In many ways, Hope is a hook for a secondary Motivation. Take, for instance, the stereotypical doctor trying to restore their dead spouse to life. Love definitely plays its part, but equally they steadfastly refuse to abandon their work in the face of constant failure, ridicule, or scorn. So long as there is the faintest flicker of possible success on the horizon, they will walk the darkest path to reach it.

## Love

Love is a powerful motivator. Throughout time it has inspired works of beauty and caused madness in equal numbers. Certainly the old adage that love is blind applies well here, it clouds the scientist's thinking. For the wicked scientist, love takes one of two forms.

First, the scientist strives to keep a loved one alive, or at least not dead, regardless of the price others must pay. Such scientists are usually trained in the medical arts, seeking to preserve life through extracting blood or hormones, or harvesting organs.

Second, the subject of the scientist's love is already dead. Through twisted science they seek to return their loved one to life. Typically their insidious plan involves transplanting a living brain into a new body.

Their love for their subject is total and beyond such trifles as morality. In their eyes, their victims are nothing more than a resource. On the other hand, a wicked scientist never gives a thought to the wants of their subject. That a comatose spouse kept alive only by perverted arts might find this horrific, or embrace death for the natural occurrence it is, never enters the scientist's deranged mind.

## Power

The need for power takes many forms. Most commonly it is found in the pursuit of

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immortality or the ability to control others, both rather stereotypical—and somewhat bland—goals for wicked scientists. Sometimes it manifests in a different guise, although the scientist is oblivious to this.

For instance, a scientist who uses pharmaceuticals or machinery to force someone to love them may claim their intentions are romantic (Love). In truth, this abuse, even if absolutely Platonic, is nothing more than control (Power).

## Preservation

The preservation of knowledge that would otherwise be lost without outside intervention is a noble goal, but only if done correctly. For most, it is enough to gather together written records or physical objects, or collect stories and memories, preserving them for the ages. Such mundane methods are not for the wicked scientist.

They seek to store and be able to access the root of knowledge—the brain. Some favor preserving living brains in a manner that permits them to be interrogated. Others seek to siphon the brain of its memories and stored wisdom.

Victims of this perverted act are never willing subjects—wicked science *requires* harm be caused. In the former case, the subject's body must die for the brain to continue living. In the latter case, the victim's mind is erased, leaving them a vegetable.

## Survival

Arguably the strongest motivator of all, survival can take one down a dark path on which morality does not tread.

This Motivation is not the same as the quest for immortality (covered by the Power Motivation). The scientist does not seek to extend their life beyond natural limits, but rather wants only to be able to enjoy their allotted years. Those they prey on for raw components (usually blood, hormones, and organs) are often members of the lowest social class, such as prostitutes and beggars. In the mind of the deranged scientist, these are worthless members of humanity no one will ultimately mourn.

## Truth and Wisdom

As Fame and Glory are the quest for recognition, so Truth and Wisdom are the quest for knowledge. Whereas the former is often confined to the search for knowledge for its own sake, the latter sees the wicked scientist to be searching for a solution to a problem.

Goals vary from the relatively mundane (such as reanimating the dead or creating a flesh golem) to the arcane (constructing a gateway to allow profane beings from other dimensions into our world) to the blasphemous (the search for the soul).

## Categorization

The Ghost Club has little interest in wicked scientists, but others who do have adopted the Club's insistence on categorizing everything.

The first category concerns the scientist's specialty. Those who work with biological or botanical subjects are referred to as Mad Doctors, regardless of their medical qualifications. Wicked scientists with a fondness of necromancy and the creation of life are more commonly known as Frankensteins. Scientists who favor chemicals are called Alchemists (informally) or Mad Chemists (formal). Wicked scientists who design and build machines, regardless of whether they are mechanical or electrical in origin, are regularly called Mad Engineers.

In terms of Skills, typically Mad Doctors should have Medicine and Science: Biology. Mad Chemists require Craft: Pharmacology and Science: Chemistry, and Mad Engineers must have Craft: Electrics and/or Mechanics and Science: Engineering or Physics.

The second category relates to the scientist's adeptness. Those with limited skill are Apprentices, while those who have mastered their preferred discipline are Masters. Given that most wicked scientists are egotistical by nature, few would suffer being called an Apprentice, especially by one who lacks the intelligence and foresight to understand their deranged work.

True villains are usually Patrons rather than Followers (better for henchmen and

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laboratory assistants) or Allies (students or key underlings). While a high Level gives the villain more Skill points to invest, not every wicked scientist needs to max them out—there is no reason why a major villain should not have only modest Intelligence or Skill ratings. As a general rule, an Apprentice, regardless of their Patron Level, has their main scientific Skill ratings at 6 or lower.

The third category determines whether the villain uses weird or conventional science. Not every scientist who uses the former need have any understanding of it—they may have paid another to construct a device for their personal usage. Naturally, all wicked scientists who intend to construct their own weird science gadgets need the Weird Science Talent, while those hoping to create living beings must have Spark of Life as well.

## The Work

Wicked scientists are not generalists, nor do they dabble in multiple projects at the same time. Each one has a single endeavor on which their entire being is focused. This *raison d'être* is referred to as the Work or the Cause.

In order to count as wicked, the Work itself must involve the suffering or death of others. Equally, it must be a goal which cannot be easily achieved—a project that can be completed in one foul swoop is unlikely to come to the attention of the globetrotters.

Mundane and benevolent weird scientists, inventors, and researchers alike are often devoted to their work. In some cases, it may consume them, but never to the extent of the hold it has over a wicked scientist. Fanatics in the truest sense, they forget to eat, drink, and sleep until exhaustion forces their hand, abandon all social activity in favor of the Work, and become highly irritable at the slightest interruption.

While these personality changes will not be noticeable by globetrotters hunting a wicked scientist already at work, they are ideal tools for when a globetrotter's friend has begun the transformation into a wicked scientist. A brief note that the friend is looking tired and gaunt in one adventure, and a second scenario in

which the scientist cancels yet another social engagement, may lead the hero to discovering a dark truth.

## Timing

A mad scientist's plans always involve a time element. Rarely is the matter left in the hands of the villain, but a necessity of their work.

Some require a constant and frequent supply of resources, be they body parts, chemicals, or electrical or mechanical components. Not only must they (or a trusted minion) venture out frequently in search of these items, which leaves them more exposed, but the drive may make them sloppy in their work—when one has the luxury of time, one can remove incriminating evidence far more efficiently. Those whose plans or devices require only periodic materials or testing are far harder to identify and track down.

For instance, a crazed scientist who needs to extract a certain gland from the brain every day leaves behind a trail of fresh corpses no matter where they go. Sure they'll try their best to hide their victims' remains, but eventually there will come a time when they are forced to leave a corpse in the open, perhaps because someone has inadvertently stumbled onto the bloody scene.

One who requires the same gland only every decade, though, has time to move to a new location and create a new identity. It may be several decades, if at all, before anyone begins to piece together the clues and learn of their existence.

## Investigation

Investigating wicked science is not clear cut for even experienced globetrotters. Evidence may unintentionally suggest a supernatural agent at work where none lurks.

Take the discovery of a body drained of blood and with puncture wounds in their neck. While it may suggest the work of a vampire, it might equally be the result of a wicked scientist (or more likely a henchman) draining



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blood for nefarious purposes. Is a dismembered or eviscerated corpse an indication of a werewolf or of a deranged scientist seeking to remove certain organs? Are those zombies staggering toward you animated by magic or weird science? Was a victim frightened to death by a terrifying apparition or by an illusion created by some diabolical apparatus?

Even if one suspects a wicked scientist, most do not stand at from the crowd—it is not as if every one of them wears a lab coat and spectacles and sports a shock of white hair.

## Research

Given the dangers of making assumptions regarding any form of supernatural threat, a globetrotter must keep their options and opinions open until they have irrefutable evidence. In essence, if one suspects a vampire, one must also keep one's mind open to other antagonists, and vice versa—charging into an old house expecting a mad scientist and finding a vampire can be fatal!

One immense difficulty facing any globetrotter is actually trying to deduce a wicked scientist's motives and plans. Without psychic abilities, or deductive powers equaling that of the esteemed Sherlock Holmes, determining whether a maniacal phlebotomist is draining blood to transfuse into a loved one hovering near death's door or to formulate a super-soldier serum through which they intend to rule the country is near impossible. Worse, what might one learn from a spate of disappearances where the victims have nothing obvious in common? Are they to be used as a raw material or a test subject?

## Physical Evidence

Often, it takes a detailed examination of physical evidence—including corpses—to reveal the hand of a wicked scientist.

An autopsy may reveal that every victim in a murder spree is missing the same organ or gland, though even this is not a guarantee of scientific involvement—a previously unknown supernatural threat may require the same body part to survive. Likewise, studying a zombie might re-

## I Killed Someone!

Killing a human, no matter deranged or dastardly they are, is very different to slaying a monster, even one in human guise. Characters in fantasy games may well slaughter human foes with no regard for the consequences, but not so in *Leagues of Adventure*. That is true even if the victim deserved to die or the killer had no other option (“It was him or me.”)

Players may well feel nothing at the death of an imaginary villain who exists only in a game, but only the most Corrupt *globetrotters* or those with certain Flaws (such as Callous and Sadistic) lack much in the way of conscience.

An optional rule, a globetrotter who kills a fellow human for any reason may suffer a temporary Flaw. Suggestions include Depressed, Hesitant (when there is the possibility of causing another death), Malaise, Masochism, or Obsession (such as Lady Macbeth's constant washing of her hands as symbolic of her attempts to rinse the blood from her soul).

Optionally, a globetrotter who shows no remorse for their actions may well suffer an additional point or two of Corruption for their lack of conscience.

veal strange chemicals in its flesh or blood, but electrical energy, like arcane energy, would likely dissipate upon a return to its inanimate state. Even if one cannot see or smell evidence, it may be present. Chemical analysis of stains, flecks of dirt under a victim's nails, cigarette ash near the body, and so on, can, if interpreted correctly, produce a wealth of information.

A study of injuries may not reveal the killer's nature, but it can help one build up a mental image of the perpetrator. For instance, the angle of a stab wound may allow one to approximate height and even whether they are right or left handed.

## Other Sources of Information

When suspecting a mad scientist is at work, one logical route is to head the nearest office of public records and start noting down the



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names and addresses of local medical doctors and scientists. Unfortunately, not every “scientist” holds any official title or recognition—they may be a rather ordinary citizen who just happens to grasp the weird technology.

It is always worth questioning businessmen in the vicinity of the crime. A mad doctor or chemist likely needs a constant supply of common chemicals, while even the best mad engineer needs nuts and bolts, spools of wire, and the like. Recent sales of rare, exotic, or unusual items should always be followed up.

Few wicked scientists travel far to acquire materials essential for their work—time is usually an enemy of a mad scientist’s scheme. Instead of focusing on grand houses or castles, a globetrotter should scope out other sites where a scientist may erect a laboratory. Warehouses are especially spacious, not to mention ubiquitous in cities, but one should also cast an eye at derelict buildings, factories that might already contain essential equipment, and even ships at anchor.

Talk to people who frequent the streets—ladies of ill-repute, hawkers, urchins, even a police constable may have witnessed something, even if they do not comprehend its importance. People who haunt the same streets are often adept at spotting strangers, especially those who do not fit the location.

## Protection

Garlic and crucifixes against vampires. Silver and wolfsbane to ward off werewolves. Ecto-armor to defend against the damaging abilities of apparitions. Many supernatural creatures have recognized forms of attacks and means of defending against them.

In many ways, globetrotters investigating wicked scientists are more fortunate than those hunting down supernatural beings. Few mad inventors are trained in any forms of combat, even pugilism for instance, though they may some form of bodyguard at their beck and call. Likewise, the number of weird scientists who have created deadly compounds or constructed mind-control rays or disintegrator guns is tiny.

It is essential a globetrotter knows whether

their quarry is one of the latter in order to ensure adequate defense. At worst, some form of covering over the mouth and nose and some sort of armor will suffice, although it is better to fight fire with fire when possible and make use of weird science devices.

If you know your target has a deadly weapon at their disposal, invest in some Ballistic Deflection Plates as a precaution. If they can control minds through drugs or a ray, a dose of Mental Focus Enhancement Serum will prove beneficial. Deadly toxins can be combatted by popping a Toxin Resistance Pill before any encounter.

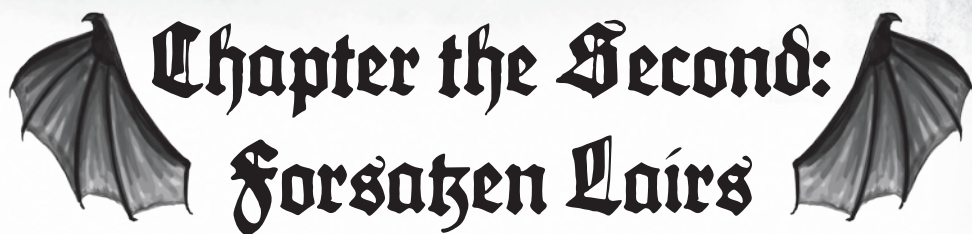
## Destruction

Regardless of their motivation or ultimate goal, the plans of wicked scientists are not whims or fancies, a passing fad to pass the time. They are devoted to their research and are beyond the point where they can see any flaws, dangers, or immorality in their schemes and actions. One can no more convince a wicked scientist they are in any way wrong than one convince a cat it can fly.

Few weird scientists have any supernatural abilities or strange gadgets to aid them against fists (from those who want to see their prey face justice) or bullets (from those who would rather save the courts time and effort). In terms of martial prowess, they rank as the weakest threats to a globetrotter.

Whereas as a vampire is a monster, a ruthless fiend that sees the entirety of humanity as a walking buffet, wicked scientists are, as we have said above, ordinary human beings. Though their souls may be damned through their actions, wicked scientists have not literally traded them to a demon (unlike black magicians).

Killing a maniacal inventor may well save many lives and rid society of a great menace, but it is still an evil (small “e”) act whenever there are any alternative nonlethal options available, such as knocking them unconscious or merely wounding them so they cannot escape. To kill one trying to surrender or who is currently no direct threat to anyone, no matter the vile crimes they have committed, is an Evil act—that is murder, plain and simple.



# Chapter the Second: Forsaken Lairs

*"It was I who thought of the deserted Chapman farmhouse beyond Meadow Hill, where we fitted up on the ground floor an operating room and a laboratory, each with dark curtains to conceal our midnight doings." —H. P. Lovecraft, Herbert West - Reanimator*

Vampires have their crypts, mummies their tombs, and apparitions their haunted houses. The wicked scientist, too, has their pairing. In this case, it is a laboratory.

A wicked scientist may live in a small house, a castle, or even a warehouse, but such places and their various facilities are of little importance to the Work. A bedroom is merely somewhere to rest, the kitchen a place where one can find nourishment. The beating heart of every wicked scientist's lair, their sanctum, is their laboratory. Here they can work at all hours of the day and night without raising suspicions.

A scientist's lair is likely to play an important role in any adventure, for it is here the final showdown between the globetrotters and their enemy occurs. Not only is it a staple of the genre, it permits the Gamemaster to add extra features and hazards into the climatic confrontation. Examples include crackling coils that emit bursts of electricity at nearby characters, chemicals that explode or combust if knocked over or shot, tanks full of acid or water whose contents flood out if they are smashed, whirling machinery that might catch clothes or limbs, and even elevators leading to catwalks to add a third dimension to the battle.



## Refuge Resource

Like his arcane counterpart the black magician, Refuge is the wicked scientist's most important Resource. It is here the inventor lives and, more importantly, works. In this section we look at the three Refuge aspects individually.

### Equipment

A scientist may have to go out and collect specimens, samples, and materials, but their Work takes place in their laboratory. Before rushing to add levels in this Resource, the Gamemaster should ask whether or not the laboratory will actually be used in play.

For example, Doctor Augustus Drewe needs to mix together the nutrient fluids that keep his collection of living brains active, but is he ever going to actually make a Craft: Pharmacology or Science: Chemistry roll? Surely such efforts are made behind the scenes when the villain can be certain of success? Likewise, the horror behind John Smith's Work is not the fact that he can create Hibernation Booths, but what he stores in them. This doesn't mean the scientist should not have the required Skills at all, of course—logic demands they do.

In both examples giving Refuge: Equipment 0 or 1 is a requirement of logic and theme if nothing else. Giving them a higher ratings is rarely, if ever, going to be beneficial.

Another reason to add a low rating Refuge: Equipment is as a reward for the globetrotters.



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## Laboratory Trappings

In many instances it is enough to describe a villain's laboratory in the most basic term, that being its purpose—chemical, electrical, mechanical, or medical. Using what they know from real life and depictions in movies, the players can form a general image of the contents. Even with players with great imaginations, its sometimes fun to drop in a few interesting bits and bobs, if only for flavor.

- \* A mechanical computator, with numerous dials and switches [Any].

- \* Control panels or levers. Operating them during combat tends to produce explosions or malfunctions to other equipment [Any].

- \* Furnace for melting metals or destroying evidence [Any].

- \* Glassware. Beakers, bottles, burettes, condensers, distilling tubes, Erlenmeyer flasks, retorts, and test tubes in copious quantities, usually containing smoking, bubbling, and/or weirdly colored liquids [Chemical or Medical].

- \* Operating table that can be raised using chains and a winch [Medical].

- \* Roof that opens, usually to let lightning in [Electrical or Medical].

- \* Shelves holding various containers or books. Ideal for pushing over [Any].

- \* Specimen cages containing animals or helpless victims [Chemical, Electrical, or Medical].

- \* Specimen jars containing animals or body parts [Medical].

- \* Sparking electrical apparatus, such as a Jacob's ladder, Tesla coil, Van der Graaff generator [Electrical or Medical].

- \* Stuffed animals, often chimeras [Medical].

- \* Tables. Great for tipping over in a rage or by intruders [Any].

- \* Tanks holding acid (for getting rid of failed experiments) or a body preserved in liquid. May be horizontal or vertical. [Medical].

- \* X-ray Screen. A glass partition that reveals the skeleton of anyone who steps behind it [Medical].

As the rules state, any character with the relevant Skills can make use of the Skill bonus. Thus, assuming they remove the equipment before the police confiscate it, nothing prevents them from adding it to their own refuge or Refuge. Remember, that having no Refuge: Size rating gives a globetrotter a small apartment or a single, limited space workshop. Installing new equipment may require boosting their own Refuge: Size Resource first.

To prevent abuse, we suggest that free Refuge: Equipment ratings do not stack with existing one, even if they augment the same Skill. For instance, a character who already has Refuge: Equipment 2 (Medicine) gains nothing free from adding a second Refuge Equipment 0, 1, or 2 (Medicine)—he gains some disposable items (such extra test tubes and surgical tools), but nothing more useful.

## Security

Patching together human remains, brewing up chemicals and medicines, storing cadavers, and attempting to reanimate the dead is not something the wicked scientist cares to share with all and sundry. In game terms, Refuge: Security is far more beneficial to the occupant than a Skill bonus they'll probably never use.

During the investigative stage of an adventure, the modifier applies to attempts to locate the villain's lair. This can be applied in numerous and novel ways—there is little paperwork regarding the building, it is hard to spot from the road, the villain clears up his footprints, he has urchins who run interference for him, and such like.

Preventing intruders is also important to those with hidden secrets. Strong doors (a penalty to Strength rolls to batter them down) and locks (penalizing Larceny: Lockpicking), and secret doors (a modifier to Perception rolls) are essential in keeping nosey globetrotters out, or at least hampering their efforts while the owner prepares a defense.

## Size

When it comes to non-player characters wicked scientists, Size does not matter. Regard-

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less of whether they occupy a townhouse or a grand castle, the overall size of their Refuge is irrelevant, serving merely as a backdrop. Such characters do not need to purchase Refuge: Size but instead automatically have a rating their background and the adventure demands.

Certain Refuge levels automatically grant the character a bonus Resource. Given that the villain is receiving free levels in Refuge: Size anyway, some Gamemasters may wish to ignore the bonuses as an unfair advantage. On the other hand, bonus Resources can actually help round out both the villain and his lair. A castle is a large fortified building, so using bonus Resources from its Refuge: Size to take Followers (servants) or Refuge: Security (mundane doors and locks) isn't entirely unreasonable.

What matters in terms of common sense and the adventure is the size of the scientist's laboratory. A small attic or basement may be sufficient for a townhouse, but a castle demands an entire tower or a vast expansive hall (again usually a basement).

Since the final battle is likely to take place there, ensure the laboratory has enough room and obstacles for the combatants to make good use of—a stand-up slogging match where no one has room to maneuver, swing from cables, tip over shelves, and so on would be boring in a movie, and ultimately the Gamemaster is creating the same experience in the players' imaginations.

An interesting twist is to make the laboratory mobile. A train carriage is equal in size to a house (Refuge: Size 0), although the scientist needs a private engine to be able to move around outside of scheduled trains. A single carriage can hold a small living area and a modest laboratory (Refuge: Equipment 1 maximum). A large wagon, such as a police van, would also count as a house for Size purposes. Space is limited, but the van could house an Equipment 0 laboratory. A ship may range in size from a river barge (Size 0, Equipment 0 max.) to a large ocean-going ship, such as an Exploration Steamer (*Weird Science Compendium*). Villains who really want to travel and work in style might use an airship as their base of operations.

Not only is a mobile lab a more memorable location, but boarding one while it is in motion is an exciting scene in itself. Instead of breaking a window, for instance, the globetrotters must leap onto a moving train and then fight the villain's minions (best on the roof) before they can gain access.

### Lair Points

Unlike mummies, shapeshifters, and vampires, wicked scientists don't have the option of gaining supernatural powers for each Level in Patron they have. Sure, black magicians don't gain this benefit either, but they at least have rituals to wield against globetrotters. In most instances, all a mad scientist has are their wits, their fists, and maybe a firearm.

For each Level they have in Patron (including Level 0), a wicked scientist gains one Lair point as a means of addressing their relative weakness. Spending a Lair point allows the scientist to pick one of the abilities below, so long as they are in their lair. By lair we mean their entire abode, not just their secret laboratory or other type of sanctum.

The Gamemaster doesn't have to decide on these abilities in advance—he can pick one as a Lair point is used. Similarly, the list isn't exclusive—the Gamemaster should create their own, unique abilities. Each Lair point can be used just once per adventure.

The abilities won't make a wicked scientist a superhuman, but used well they'll turn a dull crawl through a deserted townhouse or castle into a more exciting scene.

Although some abilities can inflict nasty injuries, they should not be used to punish the party or ensure their ultimate demise—having the adventure end before they get to meet the primary antagonist is rather an anticlimax. Of course, bad luck may well mean that one or two globetrotters meets a messy end, but so long as at least one can challenge (and hopefully defeat) the villain that's okay.

Instead, use them to weaken the party, especially if the globetrotters are martial types. That way, even a few shots from a poorly trained mad scientist's revolver may lead to



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serious injury or death, rather than causing flesh wounds.

If there a time element involved in the climax (such as having to save an innocent from being sliced open or having their mind erased), having to deal with effects of an ability forces the globetrotters to burn precious time.

## Do You Mind if I Smoke?

Throwing a switch causes a door shut and lock, and smoke or gas to quickly fill the room. Naturally, it needs to be either a room without any windows or ones sealed by the There's No Escape! ability below.

Since they weren't expecting to need their lungs filled with air, the globetrotters can hold their breath for one turn per success of a reflexive Body roll. After this, the globetrotters suffer 1N damage each combat turn. Escaping requires the door (Defense 4, Structure 5) to be broken open.

When all the globetrotters lose consciousness, the villain may choose to drag them to the secret lab to gloat or use them in experiments; suck out the smoke but leave them where they are while the scientist tries to vacate the property, destroy his notes, or whatever; or leave the smoke present and let the globetrotters continue to choke to death.

## Frying Tonight!

When activated, this ability causes a pit to open right under the feet of one or more globetrotters. The unlucky souls have a chance to leap clear by making an Acrobatic or Athletics roll (their choice) at Difficulty 4. Failure causes them to plunge into a vat of boiling liquid or acid. Common sense requires the vat be placed on the ground floor or a basement, rather than an upper story.

Anyone so unfortunate as to plunge into the liquid suffers 3L caustic damage each combat turn. The vat isn't especially hard to escape from—a lone globetrotter must make a Strength roll (Difficulty 3) to pull themselves free, while allies who avoided the trap require only a Difficulty 2 Strength roll to haul them out before they boil to death or the flesh dissolves on their bones.

## Lights Out!

Globetrotters exploring a vampire's castle expect to need some source of illumination, even in daylight (a vampire's crypt usually lacks windows for obvious reasons and there is no need to leave a night light burning). Those wandering around a scientist's townhouse are more likely to rely on either natural light during the day or switch on electric lights or gas lamps at night.

By spending a Lair point, the scientist not only extinguishes all source of artificial lights installed in their lair, they prevent them from working until they decide otherwise. Naturally, this won't affect the secret laboratory unless the scientist has some means of seeing in the dark. Since this is of little use during the hours of daylight, it is best employed with the There's No Escape ability below.

Many houses and castles likely have a stock of candles for emergencies, but the globetrotters will have to search for them—even the crazed mad scientist isn't going to install a cut off switch and then leave candles lying around for all to find.

A devious scientist may use this ability and then follow it up with Shocking Isn't It! when a globetrotter flicks a light switch or tries to relight a gas lamp.

## Release the Hounds!

By throwing a lever or calling out to a sidekick, the scientist unleashes some sort of guardian to roam the lair.

Despite the name, the ability isn't restricted to dogs (mundane, augmented, or living constructs). A mad doctor may release a Frankenstein's monster, flying monkeys, or some gruesome living corpses with multiple arms whose hands have been replaced with the claws of a giant crab. A crazed engineer may have a pack of mechanical spiders or a clockwork humanoid with swords instead of lower arms, or perhaps a built-in gun.

There is no set number of creatures released. Instead, the Gamemaster should set enough on the globetrotters to create a challenge, but not slaughter them—they are a distraction, not the final fight itself.

## Forsaken Lairs

Likewise, *where* the creatures appear is up to the individual Gamemaster. They be kept locked in cages in the basement and have to hunt down the intruders. Equally, a secret panel may open in the same room as the globetrotters, giving the fiends a clear run to their startled prey.

### Shocking, Isn't It!

Activating this ability closes an electrical circuit and turns an ordinary object into a deadly weapon. The Gamemaster must determine three things when using this ability.

**Size:** Does the jolt affecting just one globetrotter (say a door knob, that only jolts whoever tries to turn it) or multiple globetrotters (a metal grille concealed under a rug)?

**Charge:** Is the weird scientist toying with his prey (1L caustic damage), trying to harm them (2L), or fry them (3L)?

**Contact:** Is the electrical charge a single jolt, after which the globetrotter is unharmed, or a continuous current that prevent them from pulling away? The latter requires a character to make a Strength roll with a difficulty equal to the electricity's damage rating in order to escape. Failure means they continue to take damage but may attempt another escape on their next turn.

### There's No Escape!

Best used in conjunction with Release the Hounds (see below), this ability causes metal shutters to slam down across the windows and locks the main doors, sealing the globetrotters inside. At the Gamemaster's discretion, the ability may also force interior doors to slam shut and lock remotely.

Logically a mad scientist would employ this to prevent any access to their lair in the first place, but they're not called mad scientists for nothing. With their foes now trapped, the weird scientist can taunt them at leisure before tormenting them with other defenses.

Outside the confines of an adventure, the scientist uses the lockdown to prevent any of their twisted experiments from escaping.

Metal barricades have Defense 8 and Struc-

ture 9 and wooden ones have Defense 4 and Structure 5. The Defense rating may be raised or lowered to suit the globetrotters' Strength.

## Sideticks and Helpers

Few wicked scientists live truly solitary lives. Even the most deranged, anti-social inventor needs someone to cook their food, gather essential components, and inform would-be guests the master is not at home. After all, the scientist must devote their time to the Work.

There are three primary types of minion employed by wicked scientists—servants, minions, and henchmen. We'll look at each type individually below. Regardless of their helpers' status, a wicked scientist does not need to use their available Talents buying servants, guards, or lab assistants. These lesser antagonists are part of the adventure, no different to random thugs in a barroom brawl.

### Servants

Servants are the lowest and least important staff. They are butlers, cooks, and housemaids, usually paid for their services, but sometimes indebted to their master through familial ties stretching back generations.

The number of staff varies with the scientist's social class and residence. A middle-class villain with a townhouse may have only a butler and a cook at their disposal who either live in (occupying a small attic room apiece) or who reside elsewhere. Likewise, while a castle-owning scientist may have dozens of servants at their beck and call, there is no reason they too cannot have just a handful of loyal staff. Naturally, the odds of our townhouse residing villain having 20+ staff are nil.

These lowly employees may know their master is a scientist—hardly a secret if the villain actually *is* a scientist—but they are ignorant of his true Work. They may be hirelings, but they are loyal. Bribery and verbal trickery may well fail (another use of the Refuge: Secu-



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rity modifier), but torture will open their lips (although that is an evil act at best).

Servants are Followers and most are Follower 0. They are not the master's bodyguards, nor are they prepared to fight intruders, although they might *threaten* violence, albeit with a shaky hand and little conviction. A truly devoted servant is prepared to leap in the way of a bullet (or sword thrust) to save their master from harm, though.

## Minions

Having the globetrotters unweave the network of clues that lead to the villain only to have them face an unarmed scientist posing little physical threat is a total anticlimax. Minions are protectors, not much threat to the heroes singularly but deadly in numbers.

The number a scientist has depends entirely on the needs of the adventure and the combat prowess of the globetrotters. If the heroes are built for investigation rather than combat, than one or two minions is a threat. Parties loaded for bear should be faced with greater numbers of minions to be a challenge.

Minions are a step above common servants. They may serve in similar roles, but they are more proficient, being Follower 1. More importantly, they have combat Skills and perhaps even a combat-oriented Talent.

Not every minion needs to be human. Indeed, in many cases they should *not* be ordinary humans. Instead, use the wicked scientist's Work as a guideline to create memorable minions.

A mad engineer might make use of automata, such as a Clockwork Knight, Clockwork Sparring Partner or Mechanical Bodyguard (see *Weird Science Compendium* for these constructs), or Mechanical Guard Dog. A crazed scientific necromancer might employ zombies (even as servants). A deranged chemist might have ordinary guards, but dose them with Doctor Jekyll's Serum. In the latter case, the globetrotters find themselves facing a gang of crazed dwarfs with bulging muscles.

Even mundane beasts, such as a pack of hounds, are as effective as a thug with a cudgel

or revolver. Better still, from the scientist's point of view, animals cannot be bribed, tricked, or threatened into revealing information. Imagine their shock if the dogs have collars that dose them with Invisibility Serum (WSC again) when their adrenaline reaches a certain point.

Regardless of their nature, minions are not trusted with any knowledge of the Work.

## Henchmen


The pinnacle of the helper scale, henchmen are not common employees or hired muscle. They out of all the helpers actually assist their master in the Work, even if they do not understand all the complexities or the scientist's ultimate goal.

Henchmen come in two types. The first expects to be verbally harangued and physically abused by their master, given the worst jobs and all of the risks, but they are as loyal as any pet dog. Threats and bribes mean nothing to them, although they may be temporarily tempted before remembering where their loyalties lie, but they are often cowards. Threaten them with physical harm and they'll usually start blabbing. When the bullets start flying, they are the first to turn tail and flee.


The second type expects to be paid for their assistance, or at least given partial credit when the Work reaches a successful completion. They are devoted to their master, but they are not obsequious toadies. In literature and the movies, they are the medical student who aspires to be like the master (a medical genius) and is blinded to the immorality of the Work. In essence, a wicked scientist in training.

Like a minion, there is no requirement for a henchman to be human. Of course, a mindless zombie isn't going to be much use carrying test tubes, let also partake in complex surgery. However, something like the Multi-Armed Assistant or Clockwork Physician is a perfect employee—immune to bribery and able to work day and night, aside from periodic maintenance.

Henchmen should be Followers or Allies of Level 1 or 2.



# Chapter the Third: Diabolical Powers



*"Science is a magnificent force, but it is not a teacher of morals. It can perfect machinery, but it adds no moral restraints to protect society from the misuse of the machine."*

—William Jennings Bryan (The undelivered summation of William Jennings Bryan at the Scopes 'Monkey' Trial)

As mentioned before, the nefarious plans and cruel devices of wicked scientists are rarely an overt threat to globetrotters. In most adventures they are nothing more than flavor, an unseen but essential tool wielded only in the background.

This short chapter details a handful of new weird science gadgets that can be used overtly against globetrotters (although one does require a globetrotter first be captured). While they are unlikely to form part of the Work, they are handy for punishing those would try to disrupt the scientist's maniacal plan.



## New Weird Science



### Animal Antipathy Gas

#### Artifact 4

This chemical weapon is perfect for hampering globetrotters hot on one's trail. Contained in a stoppered glass vial, the misty, odorless gas releases in a 10-foot diameter cloud on impact (throwing range increments of 5 feet). The fine particles impregnate the clothing, hair, and

exposed skin of any creature in the cloud or who passes through it in the next combat turn (6 seconds).

For the next 24 hours (or until the victim has laundered their clothes and scoured their body), animals are driven to launch a frenzied attack on the victim.

A batch contains five doses, each of which is good for one use.

**Enhancements:** Increased Area of Effect 10 feet (+4 Enhancements), Increased Duration: One day (+2 Enhancements), Induce Flaw: Animal Antipathy (+2 Enhancements)

### Pain Booth

#### Artifact 5

Whether one seeks information, to punish wrongdoers, or merely wishes to inflict suffering for the fun of it, the Torture Booth is a potent and cruel tool.

The Booth resembles a thick, glass cabinet with a complex electrical coil on the top. Attached to the outside of the glass door is a dial numbered from zero (off) to 5 (the maximum setting). Once a victim is inside and the dial rotated to a positive integer, the electrical coil produces energy rays that activate pain receptors in the victim's skin and brain. The higher the number, the more agonizing the pain.

The machine inflicts automatic damage each minute it remains in operation. At level one, it inflicts 1N damage—extremely painful, but not enough to cause lasting damage. At level two, the damage is 1L instead. Each ad-



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## Existing Devices and the Work

Of the many weird science gadgets already created for *Leagues of Adventure* and *Leagues of Gothic Horror*, some are ideal for the purposes of criminal intent. The Work of a wicked scientist, however, requires that others must be hurt in the pursuit of a specific goal. Without causing direct harm, they are merely a villainous scientist. For instance, a Cerebral Interrogator (*Weird Science Companion*) is insidious, but it doesn't leave the victim's mind permanently erased.

Unless otherwise stated, those ideal for use in the Work are listed below, along with a brief mention of how they might be employed. The entry in parentheses is the book in which the device is described.

### Life Transference Engine, Mk II

A loved one is suffering from a deadly and incurable illness. This insidious device gives the patient one week's respite, while the unfortunate victim gains the illness permanently. [*Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion*]

### Lunar Transmogrifier

In a conventional *Leagues of Adventure* game, a wicked scientist may be searching for a means of creating a bestial servant or removing man's bestial nature. In *Gothic Horror*, the madman may be trying to artificially create wolfmen (and women) in order to find a cure for a loved one's lycanthropy. [*Leagues of Adventure*]

ditional level inflicts a further 1L damage, to a maximum of 4L per minute.

After each scene, the device must be switched off and its settings modified in order to prevent the victim gaining any resistance to the torturous stimuli. The booth can still be used if the maintenance is not performed, but the victim suffers a maximum of 1N damage

regardless of the Booth's setting. Resetting the device requires a minimum of one hour.

**Enhancements:** Altered Duration: 1 minute (+2 Enhancements), Induce Exhausting 2N (+2 Enhancement), Induce Reduced Attribute: -1 Willpower (+2 Enhancements), Induce Toxic 4L (+8 Enhancements)

**Limitations:** Requires Maintenance: Craft: Electrics Difficulty 3 (-4 Enhancements)

## Sensory Annulment Ray

### Artifact 3

Although not designed to inflict permanent harm, the Sensory Annulment Ray is still an insidious tool, for it deprives people of the two most important human senses—hearing and sight—albeit for a short duration.

The device is similar in appearance to a handgun, although with various blinking lights, miniature electrical coils, and other weird science adornments. It has a maximum range of 25 feet. Anyone struck by the green ray it emits is struck blind and deaf for 24 hours.

**Enhancements:** Increased Duration: One day (+2 Enhancements), Induce Flaw: Blind (+2 Enhancements), Induce Flaw: Deaf (+2 Enhancements)

## Vocal Nullification Ray

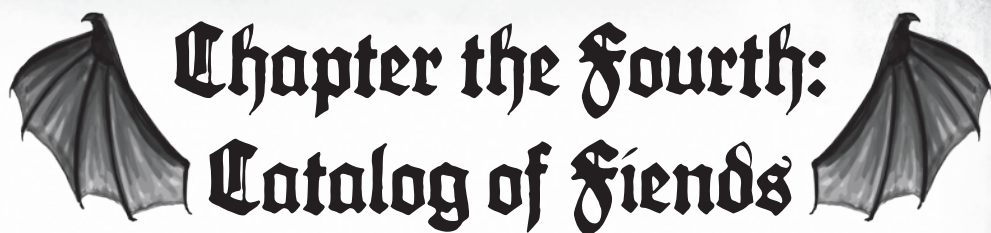
### Artifact 1

Whether they want to kidnap someone or slice them open for parts, no wicked scientist (or more commonly one of their henchmen) wants their victims screaming blue murder and alerting witnesses or the police. A burst from this gadget ensures they won't be able to utter a word, let alone call for help.

More cruelly, it can be used to keep a conscious victim silent while the mad scientist is removing organs, draining blood, or grafting new appendages. It can also be used to silence annoying henchmen for a short while.

Anyone struck by the yellow ray emitted by the gadget is struck mute for the duration of the combat or scene. The beam has a maximum range of 25 feet.

**Enhancements:** Induce Flaw: Mute (+2 Enhancements)



# Chapter the Fourth: Catalog of Fiends

*"I see you've met my assistant Scarface  
His appearance is quite disturbing  
But I assure you he's harmless enough  
He's a sweetheart, calls me 'Master'  
And he has a way of finding pretty things  
and bringing them to me"*

—Jonathan Coulton, *Skullcrusher Mountain*



## Greater Sidekicks

### Igor

*Igor: "I am sorry, Master. We try and we try, but I fear we are not so smart as Doctor Frankenstein." —Van Helsing*

A figure known only as Igor has been aiding inventors and scientists since at least the 18th century, when an assistant of that name worked alongside Victor Frankenstein. Naturally, it is impossible for the same person to have survived into the present age, and yet Igor possess memories that date back centuries. It is possible he is not mortal, but some form of imp, sent forth from the infernal realm to aid inventors.

Incapable of truly original ideas, yet naturally gifted at assisting others, Igor does not work for just anyone. The inventors to whom he offers his services are invariably walking a dark path. Even if they do not start that way,

Igor's presence subtly causes them to drift toward darkness. What begins as a benevolent study, such as Frankenstein's attempts to remove death, quickly become something more sinister. Once he has corrupted them to the stage where the populace turns against them, Igor packs his bags and moves on, leaving his former master to deal with the consequences.

Few of his previous masters have treated him well, but Igor never complains at being treated as a lowly minion—the prize of steering them from righteousness to damnation is worth a few beatings.

Igor is a pitiful figure. He has an enlarged right eye, a hunchback, and a lame left leg. He also has a pronounced lisp.

### Igor

**Ally** 2

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Wisdom*;  
**Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 3, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity 4

**Skills:** Academics: Occult 4, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Con 5, Craft: Chemistry 4, Craft: Electrics 4, Craft: Mechanics 4, Craft: Pharmacology 4, Investigation 4, Medicine 4, Science: Chemistry 4, Science: Engineering 4

**Talents:** Skilled Assistant 2 (Provides +4 Teamwork bonus)



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**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Disfigured (-2 penalty on all rolls where appearance is a factor; +1 Style point whenever he is rejected because of his appearance), **Lame** (-2 penalty to Move rating; +1 Style point whenever he is unable to outrun danger or if his bad leg gets him into trouble), **Speech Impediment** (+1 Style point whenever a severe problem or misunderstanding occurs because of his speech impediment)

**Weapons:** Punch 5N

## Scientific Necromancer

The scientific necromancer has a choice of two Craft and two Science Skills. Which ones he has depends on whether his experiments are powered by chemicals or electricity.

Scientific necromancers, while villains by dint of their vile experiments and lack of moral judgment, are no match for globetrotters in combat—they are men of science, not violence. Fortunately, they often have a loyal henchman or spare animated corpse or two at their disposal to deal with pesky interlopers.

### Scientific Necromancer

**Ally** 2

**Archetype:** *Inventor or Scientist*; **Motivation:** *Varies*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 6, Horror —

**Skills:** Craft: Electrics or Pharmacology 6, Investigation 5, Medicine 6, Science: Biology 6, Science: Chemistry or Engineering 6

**Talents:** Spark of Life (can create intelligent artifacts), Weird Science (can create weird science devices)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Righteous (+1 Style point whenever his actions alienate him and his friends, or causes others to publicly question his motives and moral judgment)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N

## Lesser Sidekicks

### Body Snatcher

Body snatchers, also known as resurrection men, dig up the recently deceased and sell the corpses for use in illegal medical procedures (the Anatomy Act of 1832 made corpses available for legal procedures), or to scientists of dubious morality and purpose whose ready supply of cash ensures no awkward questions are asked. When fresh corpses are in short supply, body snatchers aren't above using violence to secure whatever their employer requires, although that might require more money.

Contrary to reports and public opinion, few body snatchers rob the corpses they gather from graves, so as to avoid felony charges (body snatching from a grave is simply a misdemeanor, whereas theft carries harsher punishments).

### Body Snatcher

**Follower** 1

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 3, Stun 1, Health 4, Sanity 3

**Skills:** Athletics 5 (*Digging* 6), Larceny 4, Melee 5, Stealth 5 (*Sneaking* 6)

**Talents:** Pack Mule (Treat encumbrance level as one level less)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Illiterate (+1 Style point whenever his illiteracy causes him severe difficulty or embarrassment)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Shovel 7N, Pickaxe 8L

### Clockwork Physician

**Artifact** 1

# Catalog of Fiends

Mad doctors who don't want the trouble of employing living henchmen to aid in their work will find the Clockwork Physician a suitable substitute. Unlike living assistants, the Clockwork Physician has no morals and is not squeamish.

The anthropomorphic automaton's clockwork mechanism allows it to function for an entire day if merely passing surgical tools or mixing chemicals. Using it in its surgical capacity requires much more computational power, not to mention its arms and its internal vocabulator, and thus shortens its operating time to one combat or entire scene. Recharging it requires nothing more than 30 minutes of turning a key.

While modestly talented at creating pharmaceuticals and tending injuries on its own recognizance, the Mobile Physician lacks imagination. Thus, it is best used as an assistant to a human physician.

**Enhancements:** Follower 1 (+2 Enhancements)

## Clockwork Physician

**Follower 0**

**Archetype:** *Artifact*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 0, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 3, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4

**Skills:** Craft: Pharmacology 4, Medicine 5

**Talents/Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Automaton (+1 Style point whenever its lack of creativity causes difficulty)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N

## Deformed Lab Assistant

A stereotype of modern Gothic Horror cinema (first introduced in the 1931 version of *Frankenstein*), the deformed laboratory assistant is treated like dirt by his master and yet remains faithful, much like a beaten dog. At least, he remains loyal until his life is in danger. Given the choice between pain or death,

the deformed lab assistant either reveals his master's profane plan or takes to the hills as fast as his twisted form allows.

Whether he works in the laboratory or does his master's dirty work elsewhere, the deformed lab assistant knows his place in the grand scheme of things—at the bottom. Whatever his personal goals, he bows and grovels at feet of his master, acts which are rewarded only with further physical and mental abuse.

These unfortunates, often referred to as "Igor" by those who hunt down wicked scientists, have at least one physical deformity, such as a humpback (*the* stereotype), a swollen eye, bandied legs, dwarfism, obesity, or, more rarely, a missing limb. Many also suffer from extremely poor personal hygiene.

## Deformed Lab Assistant 1

This version of the deformed assistant confines his activities to the laboratory. As well as performing menial chores, like throwing switches, mixing chemicals, stirring vats, and general lifting and carrying, he aids his master in their Work. He hasn't the know-how to create weird science or living constructs himself, though.

When his master demands entertainment, the assistant is requested to play an instrument or, for those with physical impairments, dance. If the master has no other servants, his laboratory also serves as butler, cook, waiter, and general servant.

**Ally 1**

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 6, Sanity 3

**Skills:** Brawl 4, Craft (pick one) 4, Intimidation 4, Medicine or Science (pick one) 4, Performance 4

**Talents:** Robust (+2 Health rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw\*:** Coward (-2 penalty on all rolls when he is threatened with physical violence; +1 Style



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point whenever he gives up without a fight or abandons his friends to save his own skin), Obsequious (+1 Style point whenever he is tormented for his grovelling nature or when his blind obedience causes him problems)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N

\* Pick at least one additional Flaw from Albino, Bad Reputation, Disfigured, Dwarf, Flea-Infested, Illiterate, Lamé, Obese, One Arm, Poor Vision, Repulsive, Sadism, and Treacherous (see p. 28).

## Deformed Lab Assistant 2

Whereas his cousin works in the laboratory, this version is charged with dealing with the public. It is he who must purchase supplies, keep away strangers, and, when the Work requires it, acquire corpses, body parts, or living victims. Despite any physical impairment, he is quite athletic and capable of stealthy movement. Quite content to attack unarmed opponents, he remains cowardly in the face of targets capable of defending themselves.

**Ally 1**

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 6, Sanity 3

**Skills:** Athletics 5, Brawl 4, Intimidation 4, Melee 5, Stealth 4

**Talents:** Run (Doubles running speed)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw\*:** Coward (-2 penalty on all rolls when he is threatened with physical violence; +1 Style point whenever he gives up without a fight or abandons his friends to save his own skin), Obsequious (+1 Style point whenever he is tormented for his grovelling nature or when his blind obedience causes him problems)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N, Dagger 6L

\* Pick at least one additional Flaw from Albino, Bad Reputation, Disfigured, Dwarf, Flea-Infested, Illiterate, Lamé, Obese, One Arm, Poor Vision, Repulsive, Sadism, and Treachery (see p. 28).

## Infatuated Student

The infatuated student is another Gothic Horror stereotype. Usually young and brilliant in their own way, with a great future ahead in their chosen field, they are also naïve and utterly beguiled by working with a respected peer. Of high morals (normally), they are not entrusted with the truth of the Work, but instead toil on lesser experiments or are misguided about the true reason for their assistance.

For instance, a mad medical doctor might tell his student he is working on a means of tissue regeneration in a bid to advance medicine. The poor student has no idea where the cadavers they work with come from, nor do they know that their mentor seeks only to return his dead wife back to life, a blasphemous endeavor for sure, for it goes against the natural order of things.

Naturally, outsiders who accuse the student's mentor of being a madman are dismissed as kooks, for in the eyes of the student their superior is a luminary seeking only to better mankind. It takes incontrovertible evidence to persuade them otherwise.

## Infatuated Student

**Follower 1**

**Archetype:** *Physician*; **Motivation:** *Wisdom*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

**Skills:** Diplomacy 4, Gambling 4, Linguistics 4, Medicine *or* Science: Chemistry 4, Performance 4

**Talents:** Skill Aptitude (+2 Medicine *or* Science: Chemistry rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Gullible (-2 penalty on rolls to resist deception; +1 Style point whenever they are taken advantage of because of their trusting nature), Loyal (+1 Style point any time their unswerving loyalty causes them trouble)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N

# Catalog of Fiends

## Multi-Armed Lab Assistant

### Artifact 3

Based on the Multi-Armed Assistant employed by globetrotting expeditions, the Lab Assistant is designed to help with scientific and construction projects.

This steam-powered humanoid construct is not only programmed with a variety of useful practical skills, it has four arms, allowing it to work on two projects simultaneously (so long as they are in arm's reach). Its torso comprises two revolving sections, each with an arm on either side. To facilitate working on different projects, its head is capable of full 360-degree rotation. A powerful computator and articulate voculator complete its suite of abilities.

The automaton's primary weakness is its relatively short working life before the complex mechanisms must be maintained.

The automaton is primarily designed to serve as an assistant, but it can function adequately on its own recognizance on minor tasks, allowing the wicked scientist to get on with more important work. A range of plug-in modifications means it is never without the appropriate tool.

**Enhancements:** Extra Limbs: Two arms, Strength 2 (+4 Enhancements), Follower 1 (+2 Enhancement), Talent: Skilled Assistant 2 (+4 Enhancements)

**Limitations:** Flaw: Conspicuous (-2 Enhancements), Requires Maintenance: Difficulty 3 (-3 Enhancements)

## Multi-Armed Lab Assistant

### Follower 1

**Archetype:** *Artifact*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 0, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 5, Stun 2, Health 4

**Skills:** Craft: Chemistry 4, Craft: Electronics 4, Craft: Mechanics 4, Craft: Pharmaceuticals 4, Investigation 4, Medicine 4, Science: Biology 4, Science: Chemistry 4, Science: Engineering 4, Science: Physics 4

**Talents:** Skilled Assistant 2 (Provides +4 Team-

work bonus), Tinker (Ignores penalty for using improvised tools)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Automaton (+1 Style point whenever its lack of creativity causes difficulty), Conspicuous (-2 Stealth penalty due to grinding of metal and stench of smoke), Requires Maintenance

**Weapons:** Punch 0N

## Servant, General

From butlers who announce "the Master is not at home," to cooks who prepare elaborate meals to maids who keep the house tidy (except the secret laboratory, of course!), the general servant is charged only with ensuring their master's house runs smoothly. Unlike the deformed lab assistant, they are loyal and deferential but not obsequious.

If you need to create additional household staff, a servant should have one or two Skills (no combat Skills) related to their position only. Don't worry if you can't think of a suitable Skill for a boot boy or chambermaid—it's not likely they need to meaningfully interact with the globetrotters. If you really need to roll dice, just assume they have 4 dice.

## Servant, General

### Follower 0

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 1, Dexterity 1, Strength 1, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 2, Perception 4, Initiative 3, Defense 2, Stun 1, Health 3, Sanity 4

**Skills (Butler):** Diplomacy 4 (*Etiquette* 5), Empathy 4 (*Motives* 5)

**Skills (Coachman):** Ride 6

**Skills (Cook):** Craft: Cooking 7

**Talents/Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Loyal (+1 Style point any time their unswerving loyalty causes trouble for themselves or their companions)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N

**Loyal to the Death:** Whether or not the



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Wicked Science

servant has acted in the turn and is within 10 feet of their master, they can throw themselves in the way of harm to protect their master. This is done *after* the attack roll is successful. Damage is automatically assigned to the servant.



## Common Thug

### Follower 2

**Archetype:** *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 1, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 3, Initiative 3, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 8 (*Punching 9*), Intimidation 6 (*Threats 7*)

**Talents:** Skill Aptitude (+2 Intimidation rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Overconfident (+1 Style point when he is forced to ask for help or when his bravado gets him in over his head)

**Weapons:** Punch 9N

## Ferocious Dog

Guard dogs make ideal minions for a wicked scientist. They have no curiosity about their master's Work, cannot reveal his secrets, and are extremely loyal. While in fiction it is possible for nosy globetrotters to keep dogs distracted by throwing them raw meat, this is unlikely to work in real life.

### Follower 1

**Archetype:** *Animal*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 0, Intelligence 1, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size -1, Move 6 (12)\*, Perception 4 (Smell 8), Initiative 4, Defense 6, Stun 2, Health 4, Horror —

**Skills:** Brawl 6, Stealth 6\*\*, Survival 6

**Talents:** Keen Sense (+4 smell-based Perception rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaw:** Bestial (Can't talk or use tools)

**Weapons:** Bite 8L

## Mechanical Guard Dog

### Artifact 1

For the wicked engineer, a mechanical guard dog makes an ideal guardian. Not only does it need any exercise, it doesn't need to eat, which means it cannot be distracted by juicy steaks, and it never has to sleep. Apart from a few lumps of coal each day and some routine maintenance, it runs for 24 hours without needing any attention. The mechanical guard dog answers to the verbal commands of its master.

**Enhancements:** Follower 1 (+2 Enhancements), Increased Damage: +2L (+2 Enhancements), Increased Duration: One day (+2 Enhancements)

**Limitations:** Flaw: Conspicuous (-2 Enhancements), Requires Maintenance: Difficulty 2 (-2 Enhancements)

## Mechanical Guard Dog

### Follower 1

**Archetype:** *Artifact*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 0, Intelligence 1, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size -1, Move 5 [10]\*, Perception 5, Initiative 3, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 5

**Skills:** Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Intimidation 4, Stealth 6\*\*

**Talents:** Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Automaton (+1 Style point whenever its lack of creativity causes difficulty), Conspicuous (-2 Stealth penalty)

**Weapons:** Bite 8L

\* *Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.*

\*\* +1 Size bonus to Stealth rolls.

# Chapter the Fifth:

## Princes of Darkness

*"We are going to experiment, dear boy. Our first order of business will be to find a deranged alchemist, which should not be very difficult. China," said Master Li, "is overstocked with deranged alchemists." —Barry Hughart, Bridge of Birds"*

Whereas the characters in the previous chapter are generic examples, the wicked scientists presented in this chapter are named individuals with unique histories and goals.

### Wicked Scientist Villains

In order to be a true wicked scientist, the villain of your adventure needs two things. When creating a foe worthy of the globetrotters' attention, the Gamemaster must keep these in mind at all times.

First, they need a single project, the Great Work that consumes their very being, corrupts their soul, and corrodes their sense of morality. As previously mentioned, it is not enough for the scientist to create a weird science gadget for the purposes of mundane goals, such as robbing banks or taking over a country. Even one who murders for sport is only a villainous weird scientist, not a wicked one.

The Work requires a great sacrifice of time. In many instances the goal can never actually be achieved, but that doesn't prevent the wicked scientist continuing day after day—that they

refuse to accept failure even when evidence is staring them in the face is part of their overall madness.

The nature of the Work *demand*s that others must suffer or die. These unfortunates are never mourned by the wicked scientist, for they are lesser beings whose pain, insanity, memory loss, or death are a necessary sacrifice for the Work to be completed. In the same as their Victorian peers use, abuse, and discard animals in their experiments, the wicked scientist has the same view about other humans.

Second, the wicked scientist needs to be more than a heartless monster in human guise. Power and Greed for their own sakes are base Motivations and should be avoided. The wicked scientist's Work is definitely evil on many levels, but they should be pitied for their misguided aims as much as despised. On some level, the globetrotters must sympathize with the wicked scientists' motives, even if they utterly abhor their foes's means.

Many globetrotters would take great risks and give up much to save a loved one from death, for instance, but whereas they (usually) have a moral line they will not cross lest it damns their eternal soul, the wicked scientist has gleefully bounded across that line into insanity and damnation.

Other options may be available to the wicked scientist, but they are blinded by their conviction that their way is the right path, no matter the cost to themselves or to others. This is not a matter of arrogance or vanity, but a symptom of their madness.



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Wicked Science



*"There are many strange legends in the Amazon. Even I, Lucas, have heard the legend of a man-fish." —The Creature from the Black Lagoon (1954)*

Price fervently believes humanity is doomed. A growing population is devouring Earth's natural resources at an ever-greater rate. Since the start of the century, famine has caused over 150 million deaths. Colonialism has helped spread disease across the globe while overcrowding fuels the threat of plague. Endless rows of factory chimneys belch toxic smoke into the atmosphere. It may not come today or tomorrow, perhaps not even in the next century or two, but the end of humanity *will* come.

Only 21% of the Earth's surface is land and large portions of that are useless for farming or habitation. The seas that make up the rest are fertile places, teeming with all manner of life and with considerable vacant space. Were humanity to return to the seas abandoned by our most distant ancestors, there would be plenty of resources for all.

Price's frequent attempts to raise this issue among the Leagues of Adventure and in scientific circles led her to becoming a pariah, a doom monger to some. To others she was a blasphemer, for was not man God's chosen creation? Ridicule and scorn only made her more determined to find a solution.

Simply to construct habitats on the ocean floor is not enough to stem the inevitable doom—mankind would still need the resources of the surface world to survive. In Price's eyes, the only solution is to modify humans to breathe and live in water. In essence, to turn them into fishmen!

Her experiments have had very mixed results. She has successfully modified her neck with rudimentary gills through surgery, but they do not allow true water breathing, only extended capability to stay submerged. She disguises these by always wearing a scarf.

Attempts to create true fishmen through injecting various fish hormones have resulted

in abominations—creatures with both human and piscine physical features, but also the dull intellect of fish. Many of her failures died within hours of the surgery; others were discarded into the local canals to survive as best they could.

Her most abhorrent creations are a melding of human and shark, mindless predators capable of hunting in water and on land. These ravenous beasts, discarded as failures, are currently responsible for a series of disappearances and gruesome deaths.

Price has recently learned of the supposed existence of Gill Men, a race of prehistoric fishmen (see *Leagues of Adventure*). If she could acquire one of these creatures, she could distill its hormones to create a true hybrid. Either that, or she might be able to transplant a living human brain into a Gill Man's body. She has enough savings to sponsor a single private expedition to the Amazon.

## Abigail Price

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Scientist*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 0

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 7, Horror —

**Skills:** Athletics 5, Brawl 4, Expeditions 5, Intimidation 6, Investigation 5, Medicine 6 (*Surgery* 7), Melee 5, Science: Biology 6 (*Aquatic animals* 7)

**Talents:** Artifact 1 (Rudimentary gills\*), Spark of Life (Can create living artifacts), Weird Science: Medicine (Can create biological weird science gadgets)

**Resources:** Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 Medicine: Surgery bonus)

**Flaw:** Doomsayer (+1 Style point whenever she is persecuted for her predictions or when one of her dire predictions comes true)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N, Scalpel 5L

\* Price can hold her breath for two minutes per point of Body rating, or two turns per success on a reflexive Body roll during combat.

## Princes of Darkness



### Douglas Moresby

*"A mind of moderate capacity which closely pursues one study must infallibly arrive at great proficiency in that study."*

—Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein ; or, The Modern Prometheus*

Young Moresby is considered a credit both to his family, from whom have been spawned many senior military officers and politicians, and his university college, for which he is a member of the cricket, fencing, and rugby team. At least he was until recently.

A medical student, Moresby has recently begun devoting more and more time to his studies. His anatomy professor has noted a marked improvement in his student's understanding of the human body, though it has come with increased arrogance. As the professor once remarked to a peer, it is almost as if young Moresby has somehow learned to see the inner workings of the human body in action.

Many a true word has been spoken in jest, and these are no exception. It was all well and good dissecting cadavers under laboratory conditions, but it revealed nothing of how muscles actually act when used or seeing the inflation of the lungs and the beating of the heart packed inside flesh and bones rather than moved by mechanical means. To see a body working without its veil of skin would be a wonder of nature and lead, no doubt, to many revolutions in medicine.

A knowledgeable chemist as well as a medical student, Moresby has, after months of work, devised a drug that will keep a victim alive and mobile after its skin has been flayed and chunks of muscle and entire organs removed. Suitably drugged, he forces his victims to run, jump, and climb while he studies their insides. Once the concoction wears off, shock causes instant, merciful death.

### Douglas Moresby

#### Patron 1

**Archetype:** *Physician (in training)*; **Motivation:** *Truth*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 8, Defense 6, Stun 2, Health 5, Horror —

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Craft: Pharmacology 5, Linguistics 4, Medicine 5 (*Anatomy* 6, *Surgery* 6), Melee 7, Science: Chemistry 5, Sports 5

**Talents:** Run (Running speed is doubled), Skill Aptitude (+2 Melee rating)

**Resources:** Status 1 (Scion of a notable family; +2 Social bonus)

**Flaws:** Aloof (–2 penalty on social rolls when trying to establish a rapport with other people; +1 Style point whenever his business-like attitude causes him trouble)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N, Arming sword 9L

### Moresby's Elixir

#### Artifact 2

A batch contains five doses, each of which lasts for an entire combat or scene.

**Enhancements:** Talent: High Pain Tolerance 2 (+4 Enhancements).



### Professor Joshua Lazarus

*"Ginny!" said Mr. Weasley, flabbergasted. "Haven't I taught you anything? What have I always told you? Never trust anything that can think for itself if you can't see where it keeps its brain!"*

—J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

Servants are such bothersome things. You have to find ones with good references, you can never entirely trust them not to steal from you or spread gossip about your household, and you have to pay them for their time.

For those prepared to pay a not inconsiderable one-off fee, there is a solution that can last a lifetime and replace several human servants—Lazarus Industries manufactures a range



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Wicked Science

## Same Name/ Different Work

While the characters in this chapter are ready to use straight from a page, their entire background can be replaced by something of your choice without needing any changes to their statistics.

Abigail Price, for instance, may have a belief in the existence of Atlantis and that they possessed vast wealth, superior technology, or both. Submarines have a limited depth before the massive pressures of the deep open crush them, but a human/fish hybrid might be able to explore the depths of the ocean floor without any problems.

Doctor Browne may have been studying vampire bats (or even vampires). Bitten by a mutated bat, the creature's saliva caused the doctor to suffer from hemophilia. Thus, he now seeks a coagulant rather than an anticoagulant.

of domestic automata, from old-fashioned (and thus relatively cheap) steam-powered models to (expensive) sleek, clockwork designs.

Joshua Lazarus is an engineering genius, but even brilliance has its limits. While the bodies of his automata were nigh-on perfect examples of engineering excellence, he had great difficulty getting the complex mechanical brain to work correctly. Time after time they malfunctioned after a short period. Within a few years, Lazarus' business had collapsed as customers turned to rival inventors.

Driven by a yearning to be remembered as the greatest creator of automata ever, Lazarus did not take his fate lightly. Originally trained in medicine, Lazarus devoted several years to perfecting a new means of automaton control—a human brain. Naturally the brains had to be lobotomized first—it simply wouldn't do to have the victim tell others of its fate.

Aside from installing the brain in the mechanical body, Lazarus remains detached from the fleshy side of his work. Thugs are paid to acquire fresh brains, and Lazarus doesn't care where they find them.

Like his namesake, Lazarus rose from the dead and relaunched his business. It has taken time, but he has once again become a prominent supplier of automata.

Alas, despite Lazarus having sold dozens of automata to wealthy clients, his process is not yet perfected. On occasion, a spark of its former life flashes through an automaton's brain, driving it insane and sending it into a murderous rage. It is through such an occurrence that the globetrotters are likely to become involved with the mad inventor.

## Professor Joshua Lazarus

**Patron 2**

**Archetype:** *Inventor*; **Motivation:** *Glory*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 4, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 8, Defense 6, Stun 2, Health 5, Horror —

**Skills:** Academics: Philosophy 5, Bureaucracy 5, Craft: Mechanics 7, Diplomacy 4, Firearms 6, Investigation 5, Linguistics 5, Medicine 7, Melee 5, Science: Biology 6, Science: Engineering 6

**Talents:** Spark of Life (Can create intelligent artifacts), Weird Science (Can create weird science devices)

**Resources:** Status 1 (Renowned inventor; +2 Social bonus)

**Flaws:** Condescending (+1 Style point whenever he proves someone else wrong or establishes his own superiority), Secret (+1 Style point whenever he is confronted with the truth or goes out of his way to protect the secret)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Heavy revolver 9L, Sword cane 7L



*"Soylent Green is made out of people. They're making our food out of people. Next thing, they'll be breeding us like cattle for food."*

—Soylent Green (1973)

# Princes of Darkness

Sonia Heston-Greene was, by social norms, insane long before she began her Work. A membership of the Wendigo Society, she dined on human flesh once a week at the clubhouse and, due to her culinary prowess, frequently cooked meals for her peers.

While accompanying her husband, a colonial administrator, to India, Heston-Greene discovered two things—a taste for “exotic” flesh and the devastation that famine was wreaking on the land. Sensing an opportunity to rid the world of famine, Heston-Greene, a keen amateur biologist, began working on a food substitute as soon as she returned home.

She gained some fame with the advent of a nutritious plant substitute pill. Although flavorless, it provided essential vitamins. Her next venture was to create a protein substitute using fungi, a relatively common foodstuff. Although one could not live on the pills for long, regular doses would supplement the diet and alleviate the need for more conventional food on a daily basis.

Her husband, a petty man who considered himself the bread winner, took umbrage at his wife's rising star. During a bitter row at her factory, she struck her husband across the face, causing him to fall into the mushroom pulping machine. Suddenly struck by a curious thought, Heston-Greene watched as her husband was sliced, pulverized, and squashed into pill form. Popping one into her mouth, she instantly realized that not only was this a more concentrated form of protein, but it tasted far better than her bland mushroom substitute. Her only problem was finding a regular source.

Attempts to use cadavers, even fresh ones, proved fruitless—as soon as life expired the flesh resulted in a foul taste, even after the addition of herbs and spices. If she was going to remove the blight of famine, she would need live ingredients. Not only could a single body provide enough material for many thousands of pills, but each corpse meant one less mouth to feed—an added bonus in her insane reasoning.

## Sonia Heston-Greene

Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Inventor*; **Motivation:** *Hope*;  
**Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 6, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Horror —

**Skills:** Bureaucracy 5, Con 5, Connoisseur 5, Craft: Cooking 6, Empathy 5, Investigation 5, Melee 5, Science: Biology 6, Streetwise 5

**Talents:** Flurry 2 (Can attack same opponent twice at no penalty), Weird Science: Biology (Can create weird science devices)

**Resources:** Rank 1 (Wendigo Club; +2 Social bonus), Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 bonus to Craft: Cooking rolls)

**Flaws:** Secret: Cannibal (+1 Style point whenever she is confronted with the truth or goes out of her way to protect the secret)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Cleaver 7L



*“The soul is the weariest part of the body.”*  
—Paul Bowles, *The Sheltering Sky*

### Artifact 2

Constructed not only to aid surgeons but to perform surgery unassisted, SRG-3N, better known as Surgeon, was intended to save lives. It performed its duties admirably, but over time it came to the conclusion that while it could heal physical injuries, it could do nothing for spiritual ones.

Consulting several old books on religion and philosophy, Surgeon deduced that the cause of such sickness was the human soul. Unfortunately, its readings were less than complete, and the construct learned only that it dwelt somewhere in the body. Its limited ability to be creative caused it to equate the soul to an organ, no different from the liver or kidneys. Find it, Surgeon reasoned, and it could be rid of any disease.

Surgeon's first “patient” was his creator, a brilliant inventor who suffered from chronic depression and often complained of having a “wounded soul.” Despite a thorough and ex-



# Leagues of Gothic Horror: Guide to Wicked Science

## New Mental Flaw

**Amoral:** Whether it is due to a strange background, a brain injury, or just faulty wiring in the brain, the character has no concept of good or evil. The globetrotter earns a Style point whenever their amoral actions alienate them and their friends, or cause others to publicly question his motives and moral judgment.

## New Social Flaws

**Obsequious:** Your character knows their place in the pecking order—it's at the bottom. They are servilely obedient and attentive to those they consider their superiors. They are capable of making their own decisions and fostering opinions, but they always bows to others' wishes and views. You earn a Style point whenever you are tormented for your groveling nature or when your blind obedience causes you problems.

**Treacherous:** Whether it is to earn the respect of a more powerful figure, for financial gain, out of revenge, or to save his own life, the globetrotter has no qualms about metaphorically stabbing his friends in the back. The globetrotter earns a Style point whenever he betrays an ally for personal gain.

tremely messy search, it was unable to locate its creator's soul. Surgeon isn't stupid—it knows humans have been performing surgery for millennia and have still not found the soul. Undeterred by his setback, the construct made more attempts, kidnapping innocent victims to be its guinea pigs.

Surgeon has grown increasingly frustrated by its constant failure, but it is determined to keep searching, whatever the cost. Yes, people must die under his knife, but they are dying for a noble cause that will ultimately benefit mankind for ages to come.

Constructed to resemble a human, at least in basic shape, Surgeon is powered by clockwork. Fortunately, its winding mechanism is

on the front, allowing the construct to keep itself powered indefinitely.

**Enhancements:** Ally 2 (+4 Enhancements)

## SRG-3N

**Ally 2**

**Archetype:** *Artifact*; **Motivation:** *Wisdom*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 1, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 6, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 5, Horror —

**Skills:** Academics: Philosophy 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Firearms 6, Medicine 6 (*Surgery* 7), Melee 7 (*Knives* 8)

**Talents:** None

**Resources:** Artifact 2 (Anaesthetic Pistol; as Anaesthetic Rifle in *Weird Science Compendium* except Range 25 ft. and Weight 1 lb.)

**Flaws:** Automaton (+1 Style point whenever its lack of creativity causes difficulty), Righteous (+1 Style point whenever its actions alienate it or cause others to publicly question its motives and moral judgment)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N, Scalpel 8L



*"Your blood coagulates beautifully."*

—Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*

Despite shunning membership of any League of Adventure on the grounds of being too busy, Dr. Browne is a popular guest speaker at clubs. A renowned physician and a leading hematologist, his lectures on diseases of the blood always attract large crowds. Well-liked and respected in his field for his many breakthroughs, Browne's outwardly friendly demeanor hides a terrible secret.

Browne regards warfare as mankind's greatest failure. Land may be conquered to appease politicians, resources gained for the

# Princes of Darkness

benefit of industrialists, and threats to peace nullified, but the cost in human lives is abhorrent to his sensibilities. Keen to ensure those severely wounded in battle had a chance of survival, he set about trying to produce a fast-acting coagulant. Injected into the area of the wound, he theorized, it would stop bleeding in a matter of seconds.

After months of experimentation, Browne created a single dose of his new drug. He intended to test it on a volunteer, a down-and-out tempted by the promise of a hot meal and a handful of shillings. Seeing the needle, the tramp hurriedly changed his mind and attacked the doctor. During the struggle, Browne accidentally injected himself.

Seeing no point in wasting the opportunity, Browne dismissed his volunteer and sliced open a finger. To his dismay, his new wonder drug produced no discernible effect. It would be several days later before Browne realized his drug had worked, but not in the manner he intended.

The symptoms began with a persistent headache, but soon expanded to include chest pains and intense lethargy. On drawing a sample of blood to analyze, Browne discovered that the blood in his body was starting to thicken. Without thinking, he grabbed a sample of blood he had taken from a patient that morning and injected it into his arm. Slowly, the pain eased and his blood thinned. Within a day, the symptoms had returned, forcing the doctor to seek blood donors.

On further study, the doctor realized that a few pints here and there would not save his life. If he was to continue his medical work, and live long enough to find a cure, he would need more than volunteers would give. Browne's solution was as simple as it was heartless.

When he could, he paid prostitutes and hobos to attend his house at night. There he drained them entirely of blood (which he filtered it to remove the diseases rampant among the lower classes) before dumping their pale corpses in the river. When payment would not suffice, he resorted to kidnapping victims.

Browne's decision to drain human victims of their lives is not entirely down to cruelty. Frequent coagulation of his blood has left him

with minor brain damage, inhibiting his ability to determine right from wrong. In his eyes, his survival is for the greater good, while the loss of a few paupers is insignificant.

Undoubtedly he is a monster who deserves punishment for his crimes, but he is one created by good intentions.

## Dr. Theodosius Browne

### Patron 2

**Archetype:** *Physician*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 2

**Primary Attributes:** Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 7, Initiative 7, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Horror —

**Skills:** Brawl 4, Con 6, Diplomacy 4, Investigation 5, Medicine 7 (*Diseases* 8), Melee 6, Science: Biology 7 (*Hematology* 8), Stealth 5

**Talents:** Flurry (Can attack same opponent twice at -2 penalty), Skill Aptitude (+2 Melee bonus), Weird Science: Biology (Can create weird science gadgets)

**Resources:** Fame 1 (Hematologist; +1 Social bonus)\*, Status 2 (Physician; +2 Social bonus)

**Flaws:** Dying (-2 penalty to all rolls whenever his disease acts up; +1 Style point whenever he is incapacitated by sickness or forced to confront his mortality), Secret (+1 Style point whenever he is confronted with the truth or goes out of his way to protect the secret)

**Weapons:** Punch 4N, Scalpel 6L

\* Bonus Resource from his Status.

## Dr. Wilhemina Carruthers

*"...whatever is more than animal within us must find its solace and it's hope. I HOPE, or I would not live."*

—H.G. Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

An alienist by training, Dr. Carruthers was fascinated by Edward Prendick's account of the profane work conducted by Doctor Moreau.



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She had long held that humanity could never reach its full potential while its instincts and tribal nature, inherited from its animal and pre-human ancestors, remained.

She believes that instinctive behavior—our needs, wants, desires, and impulses—are negative and destructive toward society, as are any emotions that might cloud one's better judgement. In order to rise beyond the animal, the mind must be cleansed of these urges, leaving only logic and rational thought.

Since those traits exist as a product in the mind and are present at birth, they cannot be exorcized by conventional psychology. She considered lobotomy, but quickly realized that route would lead nowhere—she desired to elevate humanity, not reduce it to the level of sheep by destroying the ego. Thus, she began to work on a device that would remove humanity's base nature by directly altering the structure of the brain.

After many years, her machine was ready. Harnessing the power of the moon, whose phases affected human nature, she began her experiments on the poorest members of society. Since the Lunar Transmogrifier brought out a person's bestial nature using the rays of the full moon, her machine was intended to harness the unseen rays of the new moon, the aim being that it would dampen the patient's primitive urges.

To date, her experiments have produced varying results. Some patients (who rarely volunteer) lose *all* drive, including the desire to eat and drink. Others become megamaniacal as their ego runs rampant. A small few have developed multiple personalities, with one self becoming cold and logical, and the other driven to satisfy its base desires. Unlike the Lunar Transmogrifier, the effect of Carruther's device is *permanent*.

Many of her victims are captive subjects, inmates incarcerated in her asylum. Others are private patients. Many of these unfortunates are loose in society.

## Dr. Wilhemina Carruthers

### Patron 1

**Archetype:** *Physician*; **Motivation:** *Hope*; **Style:** 1

**Primary Attributes:** Body 2, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 5, Stun 2, Health 4, Horror —

**Skills:** Academics: Philosophy 6, Alienism 8, Con 5, Craft: Optics 6, Firearms 4, Science: Engineering 6

**Talents:** Skill Aptitude (+2 Alienism rating), Weird Science: Optics (Can create weird science gadgets)

**Resources:** Rank 1 (Society for the Advancement or Science and Technology; +2 Social bonus), Refuge: Size 3 (Asylum with grounds), Status 1 (Alienist; +2 Social bonus)

**Flaws:** Intolerant: Bad Behavior (+1 Style point whenever her intolerance causes trouble, or she convinces someone else to detest the same thing she does)

**Weapons:** Punch 0N, Light revolver 6L



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# Crackling coils, steaming vats, dismembered corpses, & deformed henchmen. Welcome to wicked science!

From the crazed doctor seeking to build a new and improved human from parts of corpses to the insane engineer who wants to transplant human brains into mechanical constructs, there are plenty of scientists whose work transcends not only mundane science but is utterly immoral.

This supplement explores the world of wicked scientists.

Inside you'll discover what drives their madness, how to best use the Refuge Resource, learn how wicked scientists use Lair Points to give them an Edge, unearth the various minions at their disposal, and read the background of sample wicked scientists whose dastardly plans the globetrotters must unravel.

Compatible with Hollow Earth Expedition.

Leagues of Gothic Horror is a Horror Roleplaying game from Triple Ace Games.



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