

OPERATION: BLACKBIRD

...the mission name conceived by the nations of the world to combat the evil machinations of the villainous international organization known as B.E.D.L.A.M.

The world's top secret agents have been gathered together to stop B.E.D.L.A.M.'s latest plot to extort the world for its own nefarious ends. They intend to use their newest secret weapon, which they have dubbed the Ultra-Lazer Cannon, to destroy a world landmark every week until their vile demands are met!

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WILL THE WORLD'S BEST SECRET AGENTS BE ABLE TO PUT ASIDE THEIR NATURAL DISTRUST AND DISLIKE OF ONE ANOTHER TO STOP THEM?

WILL THEY DESTROY THE ULTRA-LAZER CANNON?

OR WILL THE EVIL CUNNING OF B.E.D.L.A.M. BE MORE THAN THEY CAN HANDLE?

*** TOP SECRET AGENT DOSSIER ***

Name: Martin

Country of Origin: United States of America

Agent Summary: Martin is a very capable agent, but is afflicted with amnesia. He doesn't remember his real identity, and struggles to recall anything of his past life.

Traits

Military Background

- Tactics, Marksmanship, Defend, Combat-tested, [Sniper], [Medic]

Vehicle Operation

- Chasing, Evading, Boats, Stunt Driving, [Petal-to-the-Metal], [Piloting]

Athlete

- Run, Climb, Jump, Tough, [Balance], [Throw]

Keen

- Insightful, Aware, Liars, Traps, [Danger], [Sense Motive]

Gadget: Once per session, Martin may produce a gadget from somewhere on his person, provided by his agency, which will help in his given situation. This Gadget allows a reroll on any failure applicable to the gadget.

Cipher of Amnesia

- You don't remember anything about your life or identity. Hit your cipher when something triggers a memory of who you are. **BUYOFF:** You remember your complete identity.

Cipher of The Mission

- Taking out that damn laser is your only objective. Hit your cipher when you take action to complete the mission. **BUYOFF:** Give up the mission.

Cipher of the Daredevil

- You thrive in dangerous situations. Hit your cipher when you do something cool that is risky or reckless. **BUYOFF:** Be very, very careful.

Injured Dead Tired Angry Lost Hunted Trapped

*** Rules Summary ***

Rolling the Dice

When you try to overcome an obstacle, you roll dice. Start with one die. Add a die if you have a **trait** that can help you. If that trait has any **tags** that apply, add another die for each tag. Finally, add any number of dice from your personal **pool** of dice (your pool starts with 7 dice).

Roll all the dice you've gathered. Each die that shows **4 or higher** is a hit. You need hits equal to the difficulty **level** (usually 3) to pass the obstacle.

Levels: 2-easy 3-difficult 4-challenging 5-extreme

If you **pass**, discard all the dice you rolled (including any pool dice you used). Don't worry, you can get your pool dice back.

If you **don't pass**, you don't yet achieve your goal. But, you get to keep the pool dice you rolled and **add another die to your pool**. The GM will escalate the situation in some way and you might be able to try again.

Conditions

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a **condition** on your character: **Injured, Dead, Tired, Angry, Lost, Hunted, or Trapped**. When you take a condition, mark its box and say how it comes about. [Note: The "dead" condition just means "presumed dead" unless you say otherwise.]

Helping

If your character is in a position to help another character, you can give them a die from your pool. Say what your character does to help. If the roll fails, you get your pool die back. If it succeeds, your die is lost.

Ciphers

When you hit a Cipher, you can do one of two things:

- Take an **experience point** (XP)
- Add a die to your pool (up to a max of 10)

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- Add a new **Trait** (based on something you learned during play or on some past experience that has come to light)
- Add a **tag** to an existing trait
- Add a new **Cipher** (you can never have the same cipher twice)
- Retrieve another **Gadget** (but only if you've already used your first one)

You can hold on to advances if you want, and spend them at any time, even in the middle of a battle!

Each cipher also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you have the *option* of removing the Cipher and earning two advances.

Refresh

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*** TOP SECRET AGENT DOSSIER ***

Name: Liam Brooke **Country of Origin:** United Kingdom

Agent Summary: Liam is a suave and sophisticated agent of MI6. He is a lady's man through and through but is loyal to his country first and foremost.

Traits

Suave and Debonair

- *Charisma, Presence, Handsome, Etiquette, [Well-dressed], [Persuasive]*

British Gentleman

- *Command, Educated, Wealth, Good Form, [Nobility], [Grace]*

License to Kill

- *Fisticuffs, Dodge, Fast, Marksmanship, [Concentration], [Vigilant]*

Her Majesty's Secret Service

- *Connections, Bureaucracy, Tactics, Rank, [Intimidate], [Sense Motive]*

Gadget: Once per session, Liam may produce a gadget from somewhere on his person, provided by his agency, which will help in his given situation. This Gadget allows a reroll on any failure applicable to the gadget.

Cipher of Womanizing

- *Women are your weakness. You can't help it, they're so beautiful! Hit your cipher when you flirt, seduce, or otherwise pay a little extra attention to a woman. BUYOFF: You give up women.*

Cipher of the True Gentleman

- *Chivalry is not dead. You are the ultimate Gentleman! Hit your cipher when you behave in a chivalric or gentlemanly fashion. BUYOFF: Become a complete and total cad. No more manners for you.*

Cipher of the Gambler

- *You love to bet on things. Hit your key if you enter into a wager of any sort. BUYOFF: Disavow gambling for good.*

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*** TOP SECRET AGENT DOSSIER ***

Name: Natalia Chekov

Country of Origin: USSR

Agent Summary: Natalia is a beautiful Russian spy who uses her feminine wiles to her best advantage. Mother Russia is very important to her. She has had many run-ins with the other agents at various times and doesn't trust them.

Traits

Amour

- Seduction, Beautiful, Deceit, Persuasive, [Passionate], [Dance]

Bold

- Brave, Unpredictable, Reckless, Underdog, [Fire], [Escape]

Russian Ingenuity

- Computers, Repair, Electronics, Disable, [Concentration], [Jury-rig]

Sharpshooter

- Marksmanship, Accuracy, Sniper, Quick, [Deadly], [Sure-handed]

Gadget: Once per session, Natalia may produce a gadget from somewhere on her person, provided by her agency, which will help in her given situation. This Gadget allows a reroll on any failure applicable to the gadget.

Cipher of the Motherland

- You love Mother Russia and miss it terribly. Hit your cipher when you defend your home country, or when something brings back bittersweet memories of your home. **BUYOFF:** You disavow Russia forever.

Cipher of the Femme Fatale

- Seduction is your weapon and you drip sensuality. Hit your cipher when your feminine wiles gets you something or puts someone in danger. **BUYOFF:** Become as chaste and pure as a nun.

Cipher of Distrust

- You are mistrustful of others. Hit your key if you make a decision or take an action against the word of others. **BUYOFF:** You find trust in your heart.

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*** TOP SECRET AGENT DOSSIER ***

Name: Heinrich Brecht

Country of Origin: East Germany

Agent Summary: Heinrich is a cold and calculating East German agent of the Secret Police. He is secretly in love with Natalia Chekov and that is the only thing that will crack his frozen exterior.

Traits

Secret Police

- *Dirty Fighting, Bluff, Guns, Interrogate, [Misdirection], [Minions]*

Creepy

- *Intimidate, Glare, Ugly, Sneak, [Unnerve], [Hide]*

Investigator

- *Perceptive, Search, Sense Motive, Deduction, [Contacts], [Bribe]*

Calculating

- *Logic, Plans, Intelligent, Cold-blooded, [Insight], [Under-handed]*

Gadget: Once per session, Heinrich may produce a gadget from somewhere on his person, provided by his agency, which will help in his given situation. This Gadget allows a reroll on any failure applicable to the gadget.

Cipher of Hidden Longing

- *You are in love with Natalia Chekov, but you try to hide it. Hit your cipher when you make a decision based on this secret affection or when you somehow show it indirectly. BUYOFF: Give up your desire or make it public.*

Cipher of the Broker

- *You like to bargain and trade favors. Hit your cipher when you make a new contact, bargain, or exchange favors. BUYOFF: Cut yourself off from your contacts or give up haggling for good.*

Cipher of Self-Loathing

- *You are completely aware that others view you as a slimy, sinister, ugly bastard. Because that's what you are! Hit your key when you misunderstand a comment or action as an insult to you. BUYOFF: You find trust in your heart.*

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*** TOP SECRET AGENT DOSSIER ***

Name: Sanjiro Akimoto

Country of Origin: Japan

Agent Summary: Sanjiro is a cunning and sly agent from Japan, who specializes in the hidden arts of the Ninja. He is uncomfortable around so many Westerners.

Traits

Ninja Arts

- Sneak, Quiet, Ambush, Disappear, [Climb], [Katana]

Karate

- Punch, Kick, Block, Tumble, [Discipline], [Black-belt]

Tricky

- Crafty, Bluff, Escape, Distractions, [Sleight-of-Hand], [Acrobatics]

Samurai Guts

- Brave, Rescue, Reckless, Outnumbered, [Honor], [Control]

Gadget: Once per session, Sanjiro may produce a gadget from somewhere on his person, provided by his agency, which will help in his given situation. This Gadget allows a reroll on any failure applicable to the gadget.

Cipher of the Ninja Code

- Honor means everything to you. Hit your cipher whenever you take an action to avoid being disgraced or dishonored. **BUYOFF:** Become as humble as a Buddhist monk.

Cipher of the Foreigner

- You don't understand the ways of the West, and you don't care to. Hit your cipher when you misunderstand or confuse things that your companions say or do. **BUYOFF:** Gain a new appreciation for Western culture.

Cipher of Self-Mastery

- Your body and mind are your temples. Hit your key when you limit or restrain yourself from indulging, or when you take time out to hone your tip-top shape. **BUYOFF:** You only live once! Have fun and celebrate!

Injured
 Dead
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*** Rules Summary ***

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*** TOP SECRET AGENT DOSSIER ***

Name: George LaSange

Country of Origin: Unknown. Probable - France or Belgium

Agent Summary: George is a mysterious rogue agent. He is ex-INTERPOL. No one knows exactly why George has showed up for this mission, or who he is working for. Except George himself.

Traits

Ex-INTERPOL

- Marksman, Interrogate, Contacts, Perceptive, [Chase], [Bureaucracy]

Smuggler

- Deception, Sneak, Hide, Camouflage, [Escape], [Bluff]

Burglar

- Security Systems, Escape, Dextrous, Pick Locks, [Climb], [Sleight of Hand]

Survivor

- Tough, Run, Endure, Scrounge, [Medic], [Control]

Gadget: Once per session, George may produce a gadget from somewhere on his person, pilfered from INTERPOL, which will help in his given situation. This Gadget allows a reroll on any failure applicable to the gadget.

Cipher of Mystery

- No one knows exactly why you're here or who you're working for. Hit your cipher whenever you avoid direct questions about yourself or act in a generally mysterious manner. **BUYOFF:** Reveal your true motives.

Cipher of Vengeance

- Mr. Pilcifer of B.E.L.A.M. killed your wife and son. He must pay! Hit your cipher when you strike a blow against the evil mastermind, or better yet, kill him! **BUYOFF:** Forgive Pilcifer for what he did.

Cipher of the Rogue Agent

- Since your wife and son died, you don't care about morals or right and wrong. Ends justify the means! Hit your cipher when you disregard common morality to further your goals. **BUYOFF:** You realize the errors of your ways and get back on the straight and narrow.

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*** OPERATION BLACKBIRD:GM SECTION ***

Mission Summary: The evil global organization B.E.D.L.A.M., headed by the insane mastermind known only as Mr. Pilcifer, is aiming for nothing short of world domination. They've constructed a super powerful Ultra-Lazer Cannon (YES, that's LAZER with a Z) and are threatening to destroy a world landmark every week until their demands are met. Their needs are thus: complete control of all the world's navies. Their base is a secret installation built on an isolated island in the Mediterranean. Intense research and surveillance has discovered the location of this island, known as Blackbird Isle. The best agents in the world have been selected to infiltrate the island and destroy the Ultra-Lazer Cannon.

The agents are parachuted down onto a lonely stretch of the coast of Libya, where the small Blackbird Isle sits just about a mile offshore. They have required equipment, such as pistols, tools, gadgets, etc, as well as two small black life-boats they can use to reach the island (each boat fits 3 agents).

*** THE ISLAND and ITS ENVIRONS ***

The Island Itself -

As the agents approach the island, they will notice that it is surrounded on all sides by high, impassible cliffs. The rocks at the base of the island are slippery and jagged and not given to climbing. There are two areas that are exceptions to this: If the agents go to the left side of the island, they will see a small sandy stretch of beach with a pier that leads up to The Villa. If the players go to the right side, they will find an inverted sandy area that reveals a low cave entrance to the interior of the island (and the underground base).

The Villa -

A beautiful yacht is docked at the small pier leading to The Villa. Several guards are stationed on the yacht and the pier. There is a meandering set of stone stairs that lead up to the Villa proper. The front of the building is adorned with large plate-glass windows with a view inside.

Inside the Villa -

The villa is a very comfortable place where Pilcifer lives. It's fully mid-century modern, with split level spaces, large plate-glass window walls and '60's style furniture. There's also a pool just outside in the rear, where a beautiful woman, B.E.D.L.A.M. agent Dolly Argent, rests in a bikini.

Upstairs there is a large living room area, with comfortable chairs and couches and a cozy fireplace. Just outside, off the living room is the aforementioned sumptuous swimming pool. There are several bedrooms as well. Downstairs is Pilcifer's immense Billiards Room, which contains a secret door to the underground Lazer base.

The billiard room contains any number of traps and tricks that Pilcifer can use, including a trap door that opens to an underground pool of sea water filled with sharks.

Inside the Lazer Base -

There are three main areas to the underground base: The submarine bay, the catwalk with its command center and labs, and the Ultra-Lazer Dome (see map).

- **Submarine Bay**

The Submarine bay contains a submarine (naturally) that is docked with a small steel bridge to the landing. There are supply crates scattered around, as well as a lot of personnel of the base. There is a turbo-lift cargo elevator as well. Stairways on either side of the landing lead up to the catwalk.

- **Catwalk Area**

The catwalk looks out over the landing and the submarine bay. Off the catwalk can be found a few labs, a warehouse, barracks, and the Command Center. The Command Center has a lot of personnel also.

- **Ultra-Lazer Dome**

This large open space contains the Ultra-Lazer cannon as well as engines and generators that help run the facility.

Base Personnel -

- **Guards:** wear red jumpsuits and hard-hats, and carry grease-gun style machine guns.
- **Technicians:** wear yellow jumpsuits and hard-hats and have tool-belts.
- **Laborers:** wear blue jumpsuits and hard-hats and do all the heavy lifting and cleaning up.
- **Scientists and lab assistants:** wear white lab-coats and hard-hats.

***** MAIN NPCs and DIFFICULTIES *****

Mr. Pilcifer

Mr. Pilcifer is in his 50s. He is slim and trim, and can always be found in a white suit with a black tie. He wears his white hair slicked back. He smokes a cigarette always in a long holder. He always carries with him a small but dangerous laser gun. He is very clever and prides himself on his cool demeanor, but he can be prone to fits of anger at times. Encounters with him will most likely happen in the Billiards room of the Villa (where Pilcifer has many tricks with which to trap the agents or escape). The Billiards room is a very large room with a beautiful billiard table, upholstered with red velvet. It has a secret panel that leads to the rest of the base.

Encountering Pilcifer is always a hard obstacle. Difficulty 5. He should be part of the climax encounter. If the agents enter the island through the Villa and first encounter him in the Billiards room, he will distract them with a trap and escape, to be encountered later in the Command Center.

Bowler

This well-known B.E.D.L.A.M. agent and security man for Pilcifer is a mountain of a man. He is Greek in nationality, although his loyalty is with B.E.D.L.A.M. He wears a white button-down shirt with open collar and rolled up sleeves. His brown slacks are held up with suspenders. He doesn't talk much and responds to threats with extreme violence. He can be encountered in the Lazer dome.

Encountering Bowler is also a hard obstacle, difficulty 5. He approaches things with a violent nature and is unnaturally strong.

Agent Dolly Argent

Dolly is a beautiful agent of B.E.D.L.A.M. and also currently lover of Mr. Pilcifer. She is very curvaceous and very seductive, and very dangerous. She can be encountered in her bikini, poolside, at the villa.

When encountering Dolly, she will use her feminine wiles to seduce or trick the agents, or to delay them long enough to set off an alarm to alert the base. Difficulty 4

Dr. Boris Cranius

Dr Cranius is a Russian scientist and main technician of the Ultra-Lazer Cannon. He has a huge ego. He is always dressed in a white lab coat. He has black hair and a goatee and glasses. He can be encountered in the Command Center. He is not himself much of a threat, but at the first sign that he himself might be harmed, he will set off the general alarm. He will also not hesitate to set off the lazer, and also perhaps set off the self-destruct. He is a coward, but quick to act.

Encountering Cranius is only moderately hard. Difficulty 3, or 4 if he calls guards (which is likely). Getting him before he can set off the lazer would be difficulty 4 since he is quick.

Guards

Individual guards encountered: Difficulty 3
2-3 guards encountered: Difficulty 4
Over 3 guards encountered: Difficulty 5
Other Personnel difficult as GM desires

***** OBSTACLES AND DIFFICULTIES *****

Approaching the Island -

There is a watchtower that looks over the approach to the island from shore. It is equipped with spotlights and guards will shoot at anyone they see approaching.

OBSTACLES - Sneaking past the watchtower on the open water: Difficulty 3. Taking out the watchtower: Difficulty 4.

ESCALATION - discovered by the watchtower; boat shot; boats separated; agent knocked into water.

Entering the Island -

The entrance through the Villa is guarded (as previously mentioned), and the Submarine bay has guards and other base personnel working in the area.

OBSTACLES - Sneak past guards or personnel: Difficulty 4. Fighting guards: see Guards entry above.

ESCALATION - Captured by guards; imprisoned; brought before Pilcifer

Destroying the Ultra-Lazer Cannon

The Ultra-Lazer Cannon is a complicated piece of machinery and it's surrounded by technicians and guards.

OBSTACLES - Figuring out how to destroy the cannon: Difficulty 5, fighting off guards and other personnel: Difficulty 4.

Destroying or otherwise putting the cannon out of commission will set off the self-destruct for the base, which is a way to escalate tension and force action for the players. A voice will come over the intercom of the base announcing that self-destruct has been set. Remind the players every few minutes. Because it's fun and a trope of the genre, it would not be impossible that other events cause the self-destruct (perhaps Pilcifer sets it off in order to escape, or Cranius sets it off accidentally when he tries to shoot the cannon).

***** Tips, Tricks and Advice for the GM *****

Listen & Ask Questions, Don't Plan

When you're the GM, don't try to plan what will happen. Instead, ask questions—lots and lots and make them pointed toward the things you're interested in. Be alert for situations that might trigger a key that a player doesn't notice right away, especially if it causes problems.

Also ask questions like:

- *"Does anything break when you do this crazy maneuver?"*
- *"The fire probably spreads out of control doesn't it?"*
- *"That sounds like a bold plan. What's the first step?"*
- *"Do the two of you end up somewhere quiet together? Does something happen between you?"*

The GM's jobs: listen and reincorporate, play the NPCs with gusto, create interesting obstacles, and impose conditions as events warrant (especially when rolls fail).

Conditions

A condition constrains what the player should say about their character. It's a cue to tell the GM and players to pay attention to that thing and use it as material for the developing fiction. Gaming is just us saying stuff to each other, right? So you're like, "What do I say now?" and you look down and go, "Oh, I'm angry. I'll go be angry at someone then. For the GM, the conditions can create opportunities or give permissions. "You're Injured, right? Bowler notices that and concentrates his violence on you!" Sometimes a condition will become an Obstacle in its own right, calling for a roll to deal with it.

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