

DARING TALES OF ADVENTURE

ROCKET NAZIS ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS



NOTTY STONE



2009 CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

ROCKET NAZIS ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

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ROCKET NAZIS ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

INTRODUCTION

It is 1934, Adolf Hitler is now Chancellor of Germany, but is yet to become Fuhrer: that horror lies in the future. For now he is content to launch twisted schemes to destroy his enemies: the British, the Russians, the Americans, but above all, the French. The Treaty of Versailles forbids Hitler from openly building up his armed forces, and so he is doing it in secret. His current plan for the glorious Third Reich begins with a devastating first strike against the strongest opponent in Europe—France. In order to do this Hitler is investing in research into the most advanced and creative weapons known to man. To this end, he has authorized Major Werner von Stosser to get, by force if necessary, the most brilliant and unusual minds from around the world to work on those weapons.

Von Stosser is the commander of the elite troop of Nazi Rocketeers, and he has spent the last few months gathering scientists from around the world, to work on a variety of mind-boggling projects. Progress has been swift and he is ready for his first strike. Von Stosser's current plan is comparatively simple; he has prepared a double of France's famous Orient Express train, and has fitted it out with rockets more powerful and deadly than any known. The target of the attack is the centre of Paris, with the intention of decapitating the entire French government in one swift strike.

Von Stosser has just one problem—the rocket fuel just isn't powerful enough. However, one of his prisoners has a solution—the secret formula for advanced rocket fuel which is the brainchild of an American, Doctor Nathaniel Davenport. Sadly, for the prisoner, no matter how pressing he was questioned he didn't know the details of Davenport's work, so von Stosser has to get Davenport alive. Von Stosser is handicapped in that he has no idea what Davenport looks like; all he knows is Davenport is American and male. Von Stosser is aware this makes his task a lot harder so he will, initially, be unwilling to risk accidental damage to Davenport.

Nazi Agents have tracked Davenport down—by luck he is in Europe, and about to travel through the Austrian Alps, within range of where von Stosser and his Nazi Rocketeers can capture him easily and make a quick getaway.

However, von Stosser's actions have not gone unnoticed. Bertie Robeson, an investigator, has noticed the kidnappings, and through his contacts has come to believe Davenport is next. Stuck in New York he needs to get to Europe quickly and so he contacts some old friends—Brent Hardcastle, and Lady Amelia Valentine. Explaining the plot to his friends, Nazi agents appear and assassinate him. His dying wish to find Davenport sends the heroes to Vienna, where they battle the Nazis Rocketeers on the genuine Orient Express and rescue captured Scientists from a brooding castle filled with death traps, before racing von Stosser and his fake Orient Express to the French border, battling throughout the speeding train to prevent a devastating attack on France.

THE CHARACTERS

This pulp adventure is a prequel to the *Daring Tales of Adventure* series from Triple Ace Games, and is based on the history of the four pre-generated characters available for free from www.tripleacegames.com. As this is an early adventure, they use the basic character sheets (20 XP). However, if you wish to use your own characters, it should be suitable for any Novice level PCs.

GM's will also need 10 marker stones, and the *Daring Tales of Adventure* pulp setting rules from the TAG website.

ACT ONE: NEW YORK

As this adventure tells the story of how the characters met, the players do not begin together. Whilst Brent, Jimmy and Amelia meet quickly, Doc is not really involved

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until the next Act. Instead of sitting out, Doc's player can choose to take control of the Nazi agents during this Act; if he makes the chase entertaining and cinematic for everyone involved, give him a benny he can keep to use as Doc later on in the adventure.

SCENE 1: WHEN BRENT MET AMELIA

INTRODUCTION FOR DOC (CAN BE USED NOW, OR LATER, AS APPROPRIATE)

Yet again the short sightedness of American funding boards has thwarted your efforts to turn your latest developments into technology that can aid mankind. Your newest breakthrough is a new method of fuel processing that makes the fuel ultra concentrated, so less is needed. The fact that it is also ultra-combustible and just mildly unstable is a small issue that could easily be overcome if only someone with a bit of vision would lend a hand on the money side of things. Not to be deterred by the lack of interest in the US, and the occasional small explosion, you have decamped to the great cities of Europe to see if you can find more enlightened minds there. So far your lectures have not been successful, but you've only reached Vienna. There's still plenty more places to try along the route of the Orient Express, and as you settle down for the next stage of your journey you have no idea of the adventure heading your way!

INTRODUCTION FOR LADY AMELIA

A few months ago, you went out for a few dates with a fellow Englishman in New York, an ex-army officer called Bertie Robeson, now working as a private detective. He called you this morning to say he desperately needed to talk to you, but it was too dangerous to talk over the phone. Your curiosity aroused, you agree to meet him at the entrance to the Central Park Zoo. You arrive promptly at three, pulling up against the curb outside the Zoo. Hanging around by the gate you notice a young man, somewhat unkempt in a rugged kind of way, with a small boy who seems to be wanting to go in.

A moment later, Bertie arrives, looking terrible. He hasn't shaved, and his clothes look slept in. He looks around himself wildly. "Were you followed? Did you tell anyone you were coming?" Before you can answer, Bertie pulls you out of the car. "Come with me, I'll explain everything." He pulls you out of the car and over to the rugged young man.

INTRODUCTION FOR BRENT & JIMMY

Early this morning you received a surprise phone call from a friend you hadn't heard from since you left your mercenary days behind you. Bertie Robeson, ex-British Army officer, sounded scared, saying nothing more than he desperately needed to speak with you, but refuses to talk over the phone. Surprised, you agree to meet him on Fifth Avenue to talk. Herding Jimmy onto the express train from Boston you get to the entrance to Central Park Zoo just before three.

As you wait, an elegant and very attractive young woman driving an expensive roadster pulls up to the curb. She scans the crowd, her eyes settling on you both briefly before looking away. A moment later, Bertie appears out of small crowd inside the zoo, and goes over to her. He looks terrible, as if he hasn't slept in a week. As soon as he sees you, he heads towards you, bringing the woman with him.

Bertie makes introductions quickly, talking up Amelia's title and Brent's bravery. He's a little surprised to see Jimmy—a kid in tow was not part of his plan—but quickly recovers.

"Good. Now we're all chums, we need to get a move on. It won't be long before they..."

With a throaty roar a large sedan pulls across the street and up onto the sidewalk, blocking in Amelia's roadster. Two men in dark suits, overcoats and black hats jump out and pull pistols from their coats, ready to open fire. "Zer he is," shouts one, "Kill him!"

Bertie scoops Amelia up and dumps her unceremoniously back into her car. "Drive! Brent, kid, get in! We have to lose them. I'll explain on the way!"

SCENE 2: CENTRAL PARK CHASE

Deal for initiative, and let the chase begin. The roadster is pulled alongside the curb at the corner of 5th Avenue and 65th Street, right outside the entrance to the Central Park Zoo, facing north with the villains blocking him in. Traffic on 5th Avenue is heavy, but not jammed. It takes the villains a little while to get in to their car, so the heroes get a two Range Increment head start. The range increment for this chase is 5.

Bertie shouts almost immediately he gets into the car: "Off the road! Into the Park!" and its hoped the PCs take this advice. If they don't then there is a lot of traffic in Manhattan for them to drive through. And the park makes for a more interesting chase.

! German Agents (3): See page 17.

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VILLAIN'S SEDAN

Acc/Top Speed: 10/20; **Toughness:** 12(3); **Crew:** 1+5

AMELIA'S ROADSTER

Acc/Top Speed: 15/30; **Toughness:** 10(3); **Crew:** 1+2

As well as any random obstacles that may cause interesting events whilst screaming through the park, they have a choice between staying on the marked and paved walkways and thoroughfares, or off-roading it through the greenery. If they go off road, the ground is solid and they won't get bogged down in mud, but it is bumpy, generating a -2 to all Driving rolls. Whilst off-road the bumpy terrain also makes it difficult for passengers to take actions, as the vehicles count as Unstable Platforms (-2 to all rolls). It is assumed the chase ranges all over the park—after all, the cheerful destruction of public landscapes without worrying about the verisimilitude of their relative locations is something of a cinematic pulp staple.

The villains do not rely on poor driving to undo their victim. They attempt to shoot anyone in the roadster any time they are within four Range Increments.

CENTRAL PARK OBSTACLES

Deuce (-4) Ravine: Bursting out of the trees, the terrain comes to an abrupt stop. The lead vehicle needs to break hard, or plunge down the side of the Ravine into the loch. The following vehicle also needs to break hard. A raise lets the pursuers ram the lead vehicle into the ravine without danger to themselves. If a vehicle fails the roll, it ends up in the little river, which counts as a collision with a hard obstacle. Add an extra 1d6 damage on top of the speed-based damage to represent the fall.

Three (-2) Horse & Cart: A carriage drawn by a white horse appears suddenly from a track way. The horse is surprised and rears up. If the driver fails to avoid the carriage, it overturns and ends up on top of the car, counting as a collision with a hard obstacle.

Four (-2) Carousel: As the heroes approach the carousel, a line of 1st graders on a trip to the park is crossing the way just a little way ahead of the speeding car. Failure to get out of the way causes the vehicle to crash into a nearby patch of trees, which counts as a hard collision.

Five (-2) Ice Cream Stand: A bicycle-drawn ice cream stand is doing a roaring trade on the corner of two pathways. Customers surround the stand and the vehicles are forced to swerve hard or hit the stand. Failure leads to a collision with a soft obstacle.

Six (-2) Garbage Cans: A line of garbage cans stand by a park bench. The driver or passengers can choose to try and side swipe them and throw them into the line of the pursuing vehicle. This requires a Driving roll at -2. With success, the tailing vehicle suffers a -2 penalty to its next roll. If the Nazi's have got ahead of the heroes, they definitely try this in order to stop the vehicle.

Seven (-1) Cloud of Pigeons: Roaring past the

Chess & Checkers House, (in 1934 it was a lovely rustic wooden summerhouse, rather than the brick building of today) disturbs a cloud of hungry pigeons, which fly into people's faces and windshields, obscuring vision. Failure on the roll causes the vehicle to automatically drop back one Range Increment. Don't forget to add direct hits with bird guano for comedy purposes.

Eight (-1) Trees: Turning off a footway to avoid pedestrians sends the cars into thickets of trees. Failure means any heroes currently leaning out of the car to fire on pursuers get hit in the head by low hanging branches for 2d6 damage as if from an Extra.

Nine (0) Sheep: Flocks of sheep were kept grazing in Central Park through most of its early years. However, fearing starving New Yorkers during the Depression would poach them, they were rounded up in 1934. At this moment a flock of sheep is being herded together for removal, blocking all progress in the immediate area. Whilst this doesn't cause any difficulties driving, it forces the heroes to reverse and find a detour, loosing valuable ground—they suffer an automatic loss of one Range Increment.

Ten (0/-2) Bridge Repair: A bridge under repair is surrounded by scaffolding, and a hopper of scaffold pipes stands next to the bridge. If the driver is prepare to take a -2 penalty to his roll to get close enough to the works, one of the passengers can open the hopper and bring a pile of pipes down on the pursuit. If the tailing car fails its next Driving roll, it suffers a collision with a hard obstacle.

Jack (0) Hooverville Whilst the homeless have been moved on, this remnant of their shanty town still stands. It won't take much to avoid the tents themselves, but it's a good opportunity to discourage pursuit by letting fly some of the cloth used to make shelters. Any of the passengers in the roadster can attempt an Agility roll to grab a loose piece of tarpaulin and sling it at the pursuing Nazis. Treat this as a passenger Distract stunt. The villains' sedan, as a closed vehicle, means they cannot use this Trick against heroes.

Queen (-/-2) Elephants! Central Park Zoo has taken its elephants for a walk through the park. A half a dozen pachyderms, each wearing a brightly colored coat saying "Central Park Zoo" are being led sedately through the park. Surrounding them, watching the elephants' antics, is a small crowd.

The drivers have the option of avoiding the elephants or weaving through them. Giving them a wide berth automatically cost the vehicle a Range Increment.

Driving closer keeps the vehicle's speed up, but requires the modified Driving roll. Failure on this roll means the car has gotten a bit too close to a particularly irritable elephant, which lashes out with its trunk, hard enough to shatter the front windshield of the car, making Driving harder to do (-1 to all future rolls until someone in the front spends an action to kick out the remaining windshield).

King (-2/0) Ice Rink Their course through the park is leading directly to the ice rink. Do the heroes take the

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shorter route across the ice or take a lengthy detour? The Nazis always head across the ice.

Heading across the ice requires a Driving roll at -2. With success, the car gains an additional Range Increment this round due to the short cut. Anyone who *fails* the Driving roll ends up Out Of Control, spinning without traction. Alternatively, the heroes can go around the rink. This incurs no penalty, but the vehicle automatically moves one less Range Increment than normal due to the greater distance involved.

Throughout the chase, whenever is appropriate, such as a round with no obstacles and no other exciting events, Bertie fills them in on what is going on.

"It's the Nazi's Brent. They're up to something, something big. I think they're building some sort of weapon. I got asked to investigate a kidnapping back in Blighty. A professor of aeronautic engineering who was working on something special for Supermarine. I did a little digging, and it's more than just the one. Seven disappearances since April!"

"They're all fringe types, mainstream calls them crackpots, but clearly Hitler doesn't think so. I got hold of what I think is a list. Eight names in all, in all fields, Aviation, Ballistics, Robotics, Engineering. The last is a Yank, a Nathaniel Davenport. Just like the rest of them he's brilliant, but completely bonkers by all accounts."

"I came over here to warn him, but when I got here, I found he'd actually gone to Europe. I was poking round for more info when those goons behind us arrived, I guess looking for Davenport as well. I need to get to Vienna quickly Brent, so I thought of you. Will you help?"

"And Amelia, I need an even bigger favor from you. They won't be looking for a man and woman travelling together. You'd be saving my life. Plus, you know my German's no good. If I'm to have any hope of getting to Davenport before the Germans do, I'll need a translator. I know it's a lot to ask, but this Davenport! If half his theories have any substance to them I dread to think what the Nazis could create if they got their paws on him!"

If the Nazi Agents catch up to the heroes they do their best to ram them and turn the convertible over. If the heroes pull ahead more than ten increments, then a second group of Nazis suddenly appear from nowhere ahead, and get off one final lucky shot that spells the end for Bertie.

If during the chase the heroes take out the Nazis, their final shot has managed to strike Bertie a mortal blow. If the Nazi's destroy the characters' car, it has turned over; the heroes are badly shaken but otherwise unharmed, except for Bertie, who is now dying.

SCENE 3: DYING BREATH

The heroes pull themselves from the convertible and turn to find Bertie. He's very badly hurt; it is obvious he's not got long left.

"Amelia, Brent, I'm sorry, I'm done for. You must finish the job. For me, for the world. Please! Find Davenport before they do." He fumbles in his jacket and pulls out a notebook. He presses it into Amelia's hand. "Promise me you'll do it."

Bertie won't say any more until they promise to finish his mission. Once they do, Bertie, groans his thanks, and passes away.

Looking inside the notebook they find the evidence Bertie has gathered about the plot: names of missing scientists, their specialties and the dates they were taken. At the back is a list headed Davenport Lecture Tour. It lists European cities and dates. One is underlined; it says "Vienna" and the date is for the fifteenth, just two days from now.

The missing scientists are Professor Lebensraum, Swiss, Aeronautics; Dr Juan-Marcos Reverte, Spanish, Flight systems; Dr Pierre Bonniere, French, Ballistics; Professor Hralf Sigurdsson, Norwegian, Rocketry; Dr James Phillips, British, Aeronautic and Marine engineering; Dr Victor Halley, Canadian, Explosives; Professor Lao Chi Zhang, Chinese, Explosives.

ACT TWO: THE ORIENT EXPRESS

Between Amelia's money and Brent's flying contacts, the heroes have no trouble getting themselves and their weapons across the Atlantic and into Austria. (This is pulp fiction after all, these things happen easily.) In the time it takes to cross the Atlantic, the party can recover all wounds taken in the park. Doc will meet up with the other players in the first Scene of the Act, once they get on the Orient Express and start looking for him.

The Orient Express (the Paris to Istanbul train) is a name that is a byword for luxury. This is a train journey taken by nobles, diplomats, and the very wealthy, using sleeping cars to travel from one end of Europe to the other. As such they demand, and receive, the best possible treatment, from the five star accommodations to the silver-service of the staff. The restaurant cars are known for the quality of their cuisine, providing meals matching that of the finest restaurants in Paris.

This act takes place whilst the Orient Express is traversing the Austrian Alps.

SCENE 1: ATTACK OF THE ROCKET NAZIS

Getting to Vienna is easy—a long plane flight hopping across the Atlantic, a string of bribes at the Austrian Airport, and then a taxi across the city

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to the train station. Enquiries at the ticket office reveal that Doc Davenport is already onboard. Quickly buying tickets, you race to the platform for the east bound train, leaping aboard the last carriage just as the whistle blows, and the Orient Express begins steaming out towards the Alps, and its next stop in Budapest.

Your tickets indicate you have berths in the last passenger cabin, car 14. Brent and Jimmy are sharing cabin 14a and Lady Amelia has taken 14b. The dining car is car 3. From your immediate surroundings it's obvious that the train is the last word in luxury. Even the baggage seems to ride first class. It shouldn't take too long to find Professor Davenport.

Brent, Jimmy, and Amelia board the train with moments to spare, and are right at the back of the train. The heroes can either choose to settle down for the night in the sleeping car, or begin their search for Davenport immediately. If they decide to settle down, or grab some refreshments in the dining car, the romantic nature of the train might appeal to Jimmy's matchmaking tendencies towards Brent and Amelia. Should they choose to search for Davenport they have no luck in the first few cars, as Doc is on his own in cabin 7c, closer to the Dining Car, making sure his inventions are properly stowed for the journey to Budapest.

Either way, by this point it is night and the train is now well outside of Vienna moving at top speed into the Alps. If they make a Notice roll (+2), the heroes have a chance to spot the following.

Moving through the cabins you see what looks like a dozen small meteors falling through the sky over the beautiful Austrian Alps. Watching for a moment you realize these shooting stars have changed course. They are now heading directly for the Orient Express! You peer into the night, trying to see more of this unusual phenomenon. A moment or two of observation reveals that these aren't meteors, they're people. People in rocket packs, wearing Nazi uniforms with large automatic rifles!

A moment after this realization, the Rocket Nazi's open fire! Deal action cards. Any hero who notices the Nazis has two rounds to prepare before they arrive, while those who failed receive only one round. The shots the Rocket Nazis are firing are not aimed at anything in particular and are purely intended to keep the heads of the passengers and crew down.

The Rocket Nazis begin by splitting their forces. Some focus on the driver and his fireman, bringing the Orient Express under their control. The driver is ordered to continue, for now. Another group enters the other carriages, and begin herding passengers and staff into the Restaurant Car. The last group, numbering one per player, burst into the train car(s) the heroes are currently

in, and attempt to herd them into the diner. The invading Nazis are free with their fists, and are generally intimidating, but only use deadly force to defend themselves if attacked first.

Fighting the Rocket Nazis can be done with firearms, melee weapons, or in hand-to-hand. If using bullets, then a stray shot may hit a rocket pack, with disastrous consequences for the wearer! Use the Innocent Bystanders rule, with rocket packs counting as valid unlucky targets. Any exploding rocket pack does 3d6 damage as if from a Wild Card in a Small Burst Template. It may also set the train on fire (it's mostly made of wood) and the furnishings are highly flammable.

This combat is an excellent occasion for Doc to meet up with the rest of the heroes, as they fight towards the Dining Car.

TERRAIN

The Orient Express is a long train of 15 cars, plus the engine and coal wagon. Immediately behind the coal wagon is the baggage car, then the kitchen car before the dining car. After that there are eleven more cabins, all sleeper cars with 8 berths per car. The guards van, and secondary baggage storage forms the last car.

For game purposes, assume the carriages of the Orient Express are all 3" wide by 12" long, both inside and out; train walls are not that thick. The interior of the sleeper cars feature a narrow (1") corridor running the length of the train on the left, with few props to aid combat. The rest of the carriage is taken up with the four cabins, each approximately 3" long and 2" wide. Bunks fold up against the walls on both sides during the day, and a small folding table rests against the rear of each cabin. The inside of the cabins can furnish any manor of prop you might find in a hotel room, though any movement inside the cabin counts as Difficult Ground due to the cramped conditions.

The dining car has no corridor, and has tables set from dinner, with cutlery, crockery and more than a few bottles of wines and spirits.

Should the fight move to the roof of the fast moving train, the hero or villain finds it slick with snow with scarce hand holds (for a total of -4 for Climbing attempts) and also counts as an Unstable Platform.

Trying to separate the carriages requires a Strength roll. However, it's not going to slow down any Nazis. With their rocket packs, jumping between separated carriages is easy for them.

! **Nazi Rocketeers (1 per hero):** See page 17.

SCENE 2: WOULD DR DAVENPORT PLEASE STAND

The heroes are either herded into the restaurant car, or having overcome the first wave of Rocket Nazis, can sneak up to it. A quick glance reveals simply attacking will lead to the deaths of many innocent bystanders.

Many of the passengers and crew have been

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crammed into the dining car, squashed into every available space. Half a dozen Nazi soldiers cover them with sub-machineguns. One of these soldiers is immense, a true man-mountain. A stern looking Nazi officer strides to the middle of the car, and draws his sidearm, a vicious looking pistol.

“Herren und Damen,” he begins in German, but then switches to English. “I am Major Werner von Stosser of the German Army. I apologize for this rather unusual interruption to your journey. I have one request, and then you may go on your way with no further disruption. I am looking for an American, Herr Doktor Davenport?”

No-one answers. The German officer waits a second, turns sharply to his right, nods towards an elderly woman, and then shoots her without warning. There is a short moment of screaming as many of the passengers panic. The screaming is cut off by another shot from the Major’s pistol fired into the roof. “Enough! You will show yourself to me, Herr Doktor. Otherwise I will shoot one passenger every minute until you reveal yourself. And just to be sure I do not shoot you by accident, I shall start with ze women!”

If Doc hasn’t made contact with the rest of the heroes before now, he can meet up with them at this point—they are either grouped together at the back of the restaurant car with the other prisoners, or are hiding outside the restaurant car and he can join them there.

Von Stosser is not going to be satisfied with anything less than Doc’s surrender, but he doesn’t know what Davenport looks like. If Brent (or any other male character) wants to pretend he is Dr Davenport, he needs to make a Persuasion roll opposed by von Stosser’s Notice. Children or female characters are seen through instantly.

From now on, as every minute of **real time** passes (not game time, you want the players to feel the pressure!), shoot another hostage. Start with the women. The shots are not be instantly fatal, but they produce plenty of blood and screams—von Stosser doesn’t particularly care, as once he is done he plans to blow the restaurant car to bits. Von Stosser isn’t particularly interested in leaving live witnesses.

If the heroes let von Stosser shoot any more hostages, they lose bennies for their non-heroic behavior (don’t forget to warn them first). If that doesn’t get them moving, and Amelia is in the restaurant car, have von Stosser turn his gun on her, with a stark warning of...

‘60 seconds, Herr Doctor, or this pretty fraulein dies. Achtundfünfzig Seibenundfünfzig..’

Once one of the heroes (Doc or someone else) has surrendered (for which give them a benny, as per the surrender rules), von Stosser has him strapped to Corporal Gunter Eisenberg, a huge Rocketeer who has come

equipped with a carrying rig and handcuffs for an unwilling prisoner, whilst the rest of the Nazi Rocketeers cover the other passengers with their sub-machineguns to make sure none suddenly get heroic ideas. Incidentally once Davenport is identified and in custody, the Rocket Nazis have orders to shoot to kill.

The train slows down, stopping on a long narrow bridge spanning a deep gorge in the Alps. The bridge is narrow, a single track, and whilst the bridge itself is supported with steel girders, the floor of the bridge is made from wood.

The first Nazis, including the prisoner, jump from the train and rocket into the night. Just before von Stosser himself leaves, a soldier comes up and says something in German. Stosser then orders his men off the train. Sharp eyed characters note the Rocket Nazi’s pile off the train with exceeding haste once they hear that order. Any hero who speaks German understands what they heard as “The bomb is set for 60 seconds”. Should no hero speak German, enough passengers and crew understand the language to panic.

Sixty seconds equates to a mere 10 combat rounds!

With everyone crowded into the restaurant car, there is instant chaos as passengers push and shove each other to get off the train. Worse, if the Rocket Nazis are threatened at this stage they have no hesitation in throwing a grenade into the restaurant car.

If a grenade is thrown in, many of the passengers and crew are injured, but fortunately for the players they smother most of the blast. Roll damage as normal, but treat the passengers as providing +6 Armor to the heroes.

Even if a grenade is not used, the heroes must make an Agility roll at -2 or be knocked to the floor and trampled, suffering take 2d4 damage from an Extra.

SCENE 3: DECISIONS, DECISIONS

However, the bridge is long, and it’s unlikely anyone will make it to the safety of solid ground before the bomb goes off. So now the heroes have a choice—deal with the bomb or chase von Stosser. Good heroes, of course, can do both.

THE BOMB

The bomb is fixed securely to the underside of the restaurant car, over the very middle of the bridge. It’s made of a single large can containing several pounds of plastic explosive and a clockwork timer on the top. There is enough explosive here to destroy the restaurant car and the bridge!

The good news is the Rocket Nazis did not have enough time to fix an advanced anti-handling device to the bomb.

Defusing the Bomb: If the party begins a search for the bomb, they must complete the following steps in order. Failed rolls may be repeated next round, at the cost of wasting valuable time. Should the 8th round end be-

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fore the bomb is made safe, it explodes. Anyone helping defuse the bomb suffers 3d6 damage from a Wild Card.

When the heroes begin searching, they have just 8 rounds left before detonation. It takes them two rounds to work through the crowd and reach the outside.

Step 1) The heroes must search for the bomb. This requires a Cooperative Notice roll at -4. Until this roll is made, the party cannot locate the device.

Step 2) Having found the explosive device, the heroes must study it to ensure there are no booby-traps. The sudden impulse to rip the thing free or start cutting wires could be the last act the heroes ever take! Checking the device requires a Smarts roll at -2 or an unmodified Repair roll. On a failure, the party may either proceed with the next step, suffering an additional -2 penalty due to added caution, or reattempt this step.

Step 3) Convinced the bomb is safe to handle, the characters may now try to determine how it works. Once they know this, they can try to dismantle it. This requires a Smarts roll at -2 or an unmodified Repair roll.

Step 4) There are two ways to neutralize the bomb. For those technically inclined, they can snip wires. This requires a Repair roll at -2 (thanks to the awkward operating conditions). Those less able can make a Strength roll at -2 to pull it free and toss it over the side of the bridge, where it explodes harmlessly.

Clearing the Cars: If one of more heroes decide to try and evacuate the train and its passengers to safety while their comrades are searching for the bomb, place ten tokens on the tabletop. These represent the passengers. Again, the heroes have only eight rounds in which to act.

Each round, the heroes must make a Cooperative Intimidation or Persuasion roll at -2. The rolls can be mixed—one hero can bark orders while another acts more politely and ushers people along. A successful roll removes one token, and a raise two tokens—those passengers have reached safety. If the party is split, divide the action between the two groups. The tension of one scene should help fuel the tension in the other.

If the heroes fail to remove the last token by the time the bomb explodes, they suffer 3d6 damage from a Wild Card. Many of the remaining passengers are wounded, but none mortally.

The engine and forward baggage car, and the last passenger car and the guards van are firmly on the tracks. Two more passenger cars dangle precariously over the edge of the bridge. All other carriages have plunged to the bottom of the gorge.

PURSUING VON STOSSER

The goal is now to rescue Dr Davenport, or the hero who impersonated him. If the heroes diffused the bomb or threw it in the gorge, they can easily retrieve rocket packs from the fallen Rocket Nazi's who attacked them in their sleeping car and pursue. Skip ahead to Scene 4.

This section assumes the heroes do **not** give chase at any point.

Should the heroes decide not to immediately pursue the Nazis, the last they see of von Stosser and his prisoner are the trails of the jet packs turning north. Talking to some of the passengers suggests that of all the notable places for the Rocket Nazis to head to the most likely would be the old Schloss Sturmburg—an ancient crumbling castle in the mountains—built to defend against the Turks.

Remember, the Orient Express has lots of important figures on it, people who are “in the know.” They are grateful to the party for their assistance and share what knowledge they have. One of them, an elderly and retired Foreign Office diplomat, recalls there was a secret entrance to the castle, starting at the linden tree by the river beneath the main gates (should the heroes or the other passengers look astounded at him he goes: “What? I’m English and work for the Foreign Office. We’re *supposed* to know everything.”)

Additionally, Lady Amelia may also be aware of the castle from her time at Swiss finishing schools, the ski-ing up there was rather charming. Have her make a Smarts roll. However, she hasn’t heard of the secret entrance unless she scores a raise.

SCENE 4: CHASE THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS

The chase is on! Each Range Increment equates to 10”. Piloting is required to use a rocket pack. For the purposes of any collision, the rocket packs have Top Speed 30.

If the party immediately ran to get rocket packs from fallen Nazis, ignoring the bomb, the Germans are three Range Increments ahead. Waiting until after the bomb means the Nazis are six Range Increments away—they are in no rush, figuring everyone on the train will soon be killed in the explosion.

Nazi Rocket Packs are secured with several straps, that all feed into a central release buttons. If the heroes get into melee distance of the Nazis at any point using one of these packs, then the Nazi's won't hesitate to go for the release button, at which point a hero better hang on tightly! Equally a sharp eyed character could do the same to a flying Nazi!

The Rocket Nazis do everything they can to stop any pursuers catching the Major or Corporal Eisenberg and the prisoner. Each one is a true German patriot, as well as a professional commando. They are highly trained so they are not afraid to take risks, and even sacrifice themselves, for their mission.

Divide the Nazi Extras into groups equal in number to the heroes for the purposes of action cards. This prevents the goons from all suffering the same obstacle simultaneously.

If they lose the chase, then the heroes see the Nazi's heading towards the shadow of an ominous castle in the distance. If they rescue the prisoner, von Stosser still gets away using the Recurring Villain rule. It quickly becomes apparent to Doc when he checks his gear his journal, containing his most sensitive research, has been

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taken—von Stosser has it, and it must be reclaimed or destroyed before the Nazis can decipher it!

Liven up the chase and any subsequent aerial combat with the following events and obstacles. Events marked “*” only affect the heroes and senior Nazis. For the Extras, give a flat –2 penalty due to adverse conditions.

Deuce (—) Fuel Cut-Out*: The fuel to the jetpacks falters for a moment. The wearer must make a Smarts roll (–2) or a Repair roll each round. Until he succeeds, he loses one Range Increment automatically. Alternately, the GM can have one Nazi Extra drop from the sky with a long scream if a goon squad draws this card.

3-4 (–2) Buzzing the Trees: A copse of alpine trees looms suddenly through the cloud, forcing the pilot to take emergency action. A failed Piloting roll causes the victim to be Shaken as he flies through the top of the trees.

5-6 (–2) Ravine*: The Nazis zip between two sheer rock faces, making for a narrow squeeze. Failure damages the rockets, sending the wearer spiraling to the ground. He automatically drops back one Range Increment as he tries to stabilize his flight.

Alternately, the GM can have one Nazi Extra slam into the cliff and explode messily if a goon squad draws this card.

7-8 (0) Strap Breakage*: The straps holding the hero to their rocket pack gives out suddenly. The hero must make an Agility roll at –2 to regain the strap whilst maintaining pursuit, otherwise they lose a Range Increment every round until they reconnect the strap.

Alternately, the GM can have one Nazi slip free of his straps and fall nosily to his doom if a goon squad draws this card

9-10 (–2) Sudden Updraft: A sudden gust of wind threatens to flip the flyer out of control. A failed roll causes the character to be Shaken.

Jack-King (0) Cloudy: The character flies into low cloud. A failed Piloting roll means the flyer becomes disoriented—he loses a Range Increment.

Ace (–2) Loose Rocks!* The noise of the pursuit loosens the snow cap of a nearby peak, tipping it down upon the flyers as they skim through a narrow valley. A successful Piloting roll keeps a character in the chase. If unsuccessful, the character falls aside and is forced to land. On snake eyes, the jetpack is damaged and they crash.

!! **Major von Stosser:** See page 17.

!! **Cpl Gunter Eisenberg:** See page 17.

!! **Nazi Rocketeers (2 per hero):** See page 17.

ACT THREE: SCHLOSS STURMBURG

Castle Sturmburg is an ancient brooding pile the Nazi Rocketeer Brigade has been quietly converting into a forward base and research facility. It's populated by several Nazi scientists, each one every bit as ruthless in their research as von Stosser. In the last few months they have been joined by more reluctant guests—scientists from

around the world who are experts in rocketry, ballistics, and artillery who have been brought here and forced to work on the first of a line of super weapons which Hitler will use as the opening salvo when the Chancellor decides it is time to conquer the world.

There's quite a lot of sneaking around in this act which can be broken up any time it gets boring with the sudden arrival of Nazi soldiers on a guard patrol. The guards, up to the point the heroes attempt to break into von Stosser's office, are stereotypical pulp German Army soldiers—dim, slow, noisy, and unobservant. But there are lots of them. The Nazi Rocketeer Brigade on the other hand is elite. Their guards are cunning, clever, and a match for anything. Including the Heroes.

There are lots of opportunities to be taken prisoner, which leads to Scene 3 (Prison Break)

SCENE 1: APPROACHING THE CASTLE

Outlined against the full moon is the ominous façade of Castle Sturmburg, looming over the pass as it has done for over six hundred years, a silent sentinel against invaders from the east. It does not seem to have fared well in that time. In places the crenellations are crumbling, and one tower is cracked open its roof sheared off long ago.

Iceicles as long as a man hang from the battlements, and every few minutes you see a two man patrol move across them, moving in an endless circle around the walls. Perching on the battlements like a misshapen bird is some sort of aircraft, half hidden under what looks like camouflage netting.

The approach to the castle has been cleared of trees to the south. To the north, the castle hangs out over the ravine, leaning out over the icy river hundreds of feet below. From within, harsh yellow lights can be seen through arrow slits, and the sounds of construction; banging, scraping, hammering, sawing are escaping into the still night air.

There are several ways into the castle—climb the outer wall, use Persuasion or Stealth to get them through the front door, be captured and taken to the dungeon, or if they stayed to help the innocent passengers on the train, they know to try for the secret entrance.

CLIMBING THE WALL

The outer wall of the Sturmburg is a crumbling stone affair, though the plentiful hand holds are slick with ice, making for a very difficult climb (–2). The rocket packs are now low on fuel; one person can make it to the top if they pool the fuel. The others have to climb.

The top of the wall is patrolled by sentries, who pass

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along the top at regular intervals. They are not particularly observant and the cover of darkness helps conceal the heroes until they get closer to the top. The players need to make a successful Climbing roll. On a failure the hero must try again, having got stuck part way up.

Unbeknownst to the heroes, a Nazi patrol passes along the battlements in five rounds. If any heroes are on the battlements and in sight at this time, the guards open fire. Hopefully, the party has scaled the wall and entered the castle by this time.

The terrain at the top of the wall is the classic castle battlement. The parapet is approximately 2 yards across, with no rail. In the icy conditions a combatant could quite easily slip or be pushed down to the ground some 80 feet below!

From the top of the wall, the heroes can see for quite a way, including soldiers on the far side of the castle brushing snow from what looks like train tracks. The train tracks curve away south and east, back towards Vienna. Also on the top of the wall, facing out towards the ravine, is what looks like some sort of plane, covered with a large tarpaulin. It looks like instead of regular engines, it is powered by large rocket packs.

❗ **Nazi Soldier (1 per hero):** See page 17.

STEALTH/PERSUADE

Immediately out front of the castle there are no guards, though in the shelter of the porch is a single sentry. The heroes can attempt to distract the sentry with a well thrown stone, pretend to be Nazi agents, or use any other ploy they like. If they try bluffing their way in the sentry won't just let them in, but he takes them to his superior, turning his back on the heroes at least long enough to be knocked out.

Once inside the castle there are plenty of alcoves and doorways to duck into to avoid the guards patrolling the halls, and any other staff moving around. Should they be spotted, any staff quickly try and raise the alarm, to which groups of guards quickly respond.

CAPTURE

The surest way into the castle is to surrender, or otherwise engineer their capture. Nazi soldiers swiftly oblige if the alarm is raised, and the heroes are taken to the dungeons.

THE SECRET PASSAGE

The tunnel before you is narrow, just big enough for the adults to get their shoulders through, but tall enough to stand in. And it's clear it's been a dumping ground for all kinds of stuff for years. It's littered with what looks like rusting robot parts, and bits of old rockets and other machinery. Crickets chirp in amongst the rubbish, and the tunnel itself is lined with cobwebs. Things can

be heard rustling in the leaf mold. Unusually, the tunnel slopes slightly downward.

Once the party is inside, a giant stone ball drops from behind them and begins rolling down the slope toward them! This scene uses a variant of the Chase rules.

Place 11 markers on the tabletop to represent the tunnel. To reach safety, the party must move beyond the final marker. The heroes must make Agility roll each round. The stone ball (Agility d10) draws a card at the start of the **third** round. Should the ball end up on the same Range Increment as a hero at the **end** of a round, the unlucky victim takes 3d6 damage from a Wild Card.

The light on markers one and two is Dim (-1), and Dark (-2) from markers three to five. Beyond this is Pitch Darkness (-4). These modifiers apply to all Trait rolls.

To make matters worse, and much more exciting, when the heroes reach certain range markers, as indicated below, ancient traps spring into life.

3) Pit: A hidden pit lies concealed beneath thin wooden panels. The pit isn't designed to kill—it's designed to slow down the party so the ball can crush them. The first hero to step foot on this marker must make an Agility roll at -2 or fall knee deep into the pit. His movement for the round ends automatically, no matter his original Agility roll.

The ball is large enough to roll over the pit.

5) Pendulums: A series of scything blades swing down the ceiling, creating a barrier of slicing death. The hero must end his movement for the round. Next round, he must use Smarts (not Agility) to move forward, judging the blades' timing. A failure causes 2d6 damage. Until the roll succeeds, the hero must remain on the marker, driven back by the killer blades.

The ball is heavy enough to smash through the blades unimpaired.

7) Nest: Thick cobwebs cover this marker. A hero crashing through finds himself covered in insects. For most, this is just an annoyance. Brett, however, must make a Spirit roll. Failure means he cannot proceed past this marker. The roll may be repeated each round. Once he succeeds, he may make his Agility roll as normal.

9) Ancient Crossbow Barrage: Crossbows mounted in the wall release their deadly missiles when a pressure plate is triggered. Well, that was the designer's plan. However, time has not been kind to the ancient weapons. As the crossbows twang, they all break. The wood has all but turned to dust and all that is achieved is a cloud of choking blinding dust is dumped onto the heroes. The first hero onto this marker must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken.

11) Portcullis: When this marker is first stepped on, a spiked portcullis crashes down! Whoever triggers it must make an Agility roll to leap through to safety. Failure means they are trapped on the wrong side of the gate.

The portcullis prevents movement beyond this marker until it is lifted. In order to do this, a character must be on the 11th marker and make a Strength roll at -2 as an action. Should the ball catch up with the characters now,

it smashes them onto the spikes for an extra 1d6 damage. The portcullis is sturdy enough to stop the ball's movement.

Once the players slip past the portcullis they are into a long forgotten storage area in the dungeons. Heading up some dusty stairs, the heroes make it into the main corridors where signs indicate they are quite near the prison.

INSIDE THE CASTLE

Whether they have successfully got in and are sneaking around, or have been captured, their path through the castle takes them past a courtyard that has been glassed over.

Beneath you, you can see a huge workshop, where a hundred German workers are busy assembling the weapons of war. Most of them seem to be unfeasibly large warheads. Others are constructing the bodies of slim rockets, and sleek looking aerial bombs. In the centre of the courtyard a huge assembly has been put together, and barrels of air craft fuel are being brought up to it. As they watch, the fuel is poured into the shuddering machine. A viscous black liquid emerges from the other end, giving off a fetid, noxious smell. The liquid is filling a barrel marked "Superfuel." Another ten barrels stand empty and waiting.

Doc quickly recognizes it for his fuel refining process, though on a scale twice as big as his prototype plans indicate.

As the heroes pass the courtyard, the smell is so overpowering they must make Vigor checks or becomes extremely nauseous, leaving them at -1 to all trait rolls whilst in the area. A critical failure leaves them puking and retching so badly they cannot move for a moment—if they haven't been taken prisoner, another pair of guards has a chance to discover them.

SCENE 2: WE HAVE WAYS OF MAKING YOU TALK

If the Rocket Nazis got away with their prisoner, or the heroes are captured attempting to enter the castle, von Stosser wants "words" with Doc Davenport. Words of a painful nature.

Doc, or whoever is pretending to be Doc, is swiftly taken to an interrogation room, a small, cold, stone chamber lit by a single bare bulb. A drain is set into the centre of the floor, and the smell of rotting meat floats from it. There Doc is strapped into a heavy chair.

Von Stosser pulls up a stool, and watches quietly whilst his minions set up the instruments of torture. A German scientist with a chin so weak it seems to have given up completely, puts a black rubber apron on over his white coat, and lays out a series of instruments on a metal tray, including a sharpened set of forceps, several scalpels, and one that looks suspiciously like a sharpened

melon-baller. In the background a soldier is heating a brazier with a set of small bellows.

Von Stosser turns to Doc. "You will find that whilst I admire science for all the benefits it brings, I have a soft spot for the traditional. Alas, I do not have the time to indulge it, fortunately for you. Instead, you should know that I have access to the finest truth serums mankind has devised. However, I am not a monster. I am still prepared to offer you a chance to join us. So it is your choice. Answer my questions honestly without persuasion. Or have your free will stripped away like the skin from an orange. Do you understand? Good, then make your choice."

If Doc refuses to make a choice, von Stosser says "So be it." He snaps his fingers, and the interrogator draws an evil-looking green fluid from a vial into a syringe. He does so slowly to give Doc one last chance to change his mind, before injecting the contents into Doc's arm.

Von Stosser has a short series of questions he then proceeds to ask:

- * Who were those people fighting my men on the Orient Express?
- * Is there anything missing from the blueprints for the fuel process
- * Where is your rocket pack? (von Stosser wants it studied to see if improvements to his can be made)
- * Would you be willing to work with us freely?

Doc now needs to make a Vigor roll. If he succeeds then every time von Stosser asks a question he makes a standard Spirit roll to resist giving a truthful answer. If he fails, then his Spirit roll is at -2. Should he fail Spirit rolls to resist questioning, he has to give an honest answer.

If Doc gives an answer von Stosser doesn't like, such as "No", or "I don't know" he gives the prisoner a sound slap, with a warning, "Try again, Herr Doktor Davenport. Do not make me move on to those traditional methods I was talking about."

This can lead to the situation where Doc tells the truth, but von Stosser isn't satisfied. However, rather than be realistic and draw things out, von Stosser loses his temper quickly and end the session, sending Doc to a prison cell to think about the fate that awaits him should he not co-operate and choose to work for the Nazis.

If another player is impersonating Doc, and reveals this during the questioning, von Stosser is furious, and after a purely vindictive punch to the gut, stops any further questioning and has the impersonator thrown into a cell.

Alternatively, the hero could be bluffing if he offers to co-operate and attempts to make a break for it. If he does, deal initiative cards and run the combat, though von Stosser has to survive for the finale, so use the recurring villain rule to make sure he gets away. As well as von Stosser, there is just one regular Nazi soldier in the small room. The torturer is a scientist, not a soldier, and tries to avoid combat.

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! Major von Stosser: See page 17.

! Nazi Soldier (1): See page 17.

! Interrogator (1): See page 18.

SCENE 3: PRISON BREAK

Going through a rounded archway leads to a stairway spiraling down. The stairway is narrow, with slightly slippery, worn flagstones and barely wide enough for two people at a time at most, and comes out into an small atrium directly in front of the prison door.

The prison itself is guarded by four soldiers, but the guards are normal German soldiers who are not expecting any trouble, rather than the elite Nazi Rocket troops. They are also pretty dim and any reasonable story may convince them to open up the cells. As a result they should be easily defeated, though they make every attempt to sound the alarm as they fight.

The prison area itself is 8" by 6". There are two cell doors in the left wall. In the centre of the prison the guards are sitting round a table drinking coffee and playing cards. They have their weapons near to hand, and there are spare shot guns in a rack in an alcove on the left hand side of the prison, where the third cell would be. Cell doors a metal with a small grille, so the prisoners inside can offer no assistance.

! Nazi soldiers (4): See page 17.

Once the soldiers are defeated it is easy to free the prisoners.

The heroes are surrounded by grateful scientists, all speaking at once in a half dozen languages. The other captured scientists introduce themselves and their areas of specialization, which covers ballistics, explosives, flight and robotics, just as Bertie described. They reveal they have been working on experimental missiles, flight systems and tanks. What has been missing up to now is a way of making the fuel use more effective so they actually have decent range—and now the Nazi's have Doc's notes, they can do it—the weapons are now viable! They have to get those notes back, and get the captured scientists to safety.

It is most likely the notes are being kept in von Stosser's office, in one of the castle towers. That, Professor Juan-Marcos Reverte says, is where all the plans and documents are kept.

During the discussions Professor Reverte, mentions he's been working on an assortment of flying machines, one of which includes a new light and fast experimental airplane. It's almost complete—the prototype was due to be flown to the Luftwaffe for testing in a few days.

"Except it's never going to get there!" he explains with glee. "I've sabotaged the ignition. Unless they clip the right wire in the ignition, which they won't, because they don't know about it, then, well, it will be too late." He gives a laugh. "If you need a fast escape, take it. You just have to make the right decision."

However, when questioned over which wire to cut he looks a little guilty.

"I can't remember. I got the idea from all those movies Hollywood makes. It works just like the movies."

If the heroes came in through the tunnel, the scientists can be led back there to make their own way out. Now they are aware of the Rocket Nazis they are quite capable of making their own way home. If this happens various national governments think a great deal more highly of our Heroes, and intelligence agencies across the world mark them as useful people to know in a crisis, however else the situation may turn out.

If they haven't discovered the secret tunnel, the scientists suggest staying in the prison area, until the heroes can clear an escape route as a big gaggle of old men wandering around is going to look very suspicious, and make a lot of noise.

SCENE 4: VON STOSSER'S OFFICE

Von Stosser's office is in the area of Schloss Sturmburg guarded by the Rocket Nazis themselves. As a matter of course the Nazi Rocketeer Brigade are very alert and extremely cunning; They use a double patrol system. The first guard patrols use heavy boots with metal heel and toe traps to make the maximum amount of noise are then followed at a distance by a more discreet patrol that moves as silently as possible—a careless spy may think the guards have gone by, only to be unpleasantly surprised by the rear-guard.

Sneaking through the corridors and dodging patrols leads them to von Stosser's office, a spare and practical room featuring a portrait of the Chancellor over the fire place, and a large map of Europe pinned to the opposite wall. Marked on the map are several train routes—the current routes of the Orient Express. Where the route passes into Germany, lines are drawn from the route towards several European cities; Paris, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Lisbon, and Gibraltar. All of them are potential Nazi targets. Beyond that there is a little obvious lying about. Von Stosser has a desk which is kept sparklingly clean and clear.

Doc's notes, along with all the vital plans and breakthroughs from the captured Scientists are in von Stosser's safe. It takes either a Lockpicking roll or a Repair roll to open it. The heroes know any loud noises (like blowing a hole in a safe) will quickly draw attention however.

Once they get the safe open they find several folders. One contains Doc's notes, and includes a transcript of one of his lectures as well as a telegram from Berlin authorizing his capture. In other folders are plans for huge rockets, experimental planes, robots, and other inventions, all of which could be used for waging war. Additionally, if they don't know of the secret passage, blueprints of the castle in the safe indicate it as a drainage tunnel to the outside. An annotation on the plans in German reads "Must get this blocked off."

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What is not obvious from their search of the room is that behind the picture of the Chancellor is a secret observation point, and as they open the safe, one of the more subtle Rocketeer guardsmen is entering. Having spotted the heroes moving around earlier he has come to check on the office as an obvious goal for spies. Whilst they read the plans he presses the secret button to silently pour invisible, odorless anesthetic gas (another advance of stolen science, originally intended for the dental industry) into the room.

Have the heroes make Vigor rolls at -2. Success means the victim is Fatigued. On a raise, the hero suffers no ill effects. With a failure he is Exhausted, and on a critical failure, Incapacitated. With the heroes suitably softened up, the Rocketeers move in for the capture.

Trapped in von Stosser's office, a 3" square room, with the heavy desk and chair filling most of it, free movement is difficult. The Rocket Nazis arrive wearing gas masks, and are more than willing to beat every adventurer unconscious. Blocking the only exit – there are no windows, only arrow slits glazed over—the heroes should quickly realize certain death is the only option if they try to fight. If they surrender, give each of them a benny as per the surrender rules.

If they choose to make a fight of it, show no mercy.

!! **Rocket Nazis (2 per player):** See page 17.

The Nazis should win this fight, all the noise guarantees reinforcements keep coming until the heroes surrender or they are beaten down. Once subdued, the party are bound, and led down into the castle bowels to meet their fate.

Von Stosser walks to the top of a ladder so he can look down on the heroes. He has a monologue prepared and may have been practicing it in front of the mirror. Heroes who fail to look properly awed are looked on with disfavor.

"I thought your disruption of our plans for the good doctor's work would provide me with a challenge. Instead you have become tiresome, so I must dispose of you. You'll forgive the dramatic nature, but I can't risk your bodies being found. Der Chancellor's plans are at a critical stage, and dead Americans might lead to some unpleasant consequences at a time when I cannot afford the distraction."

"Though I should like to thank you, Herr Doctor, your insight is quite revolutionary. Without it, we would not be able to strike at those garlic chewing hypocrites in Paris from so far away. Thanks to you and your colleagues we now have a missile battery of a scale unprecedented in the history of warfare. And it is mobile. So not only can we strike at them from great distance, by the time they send whatever paltry resistance they can offer after us, we will be long gone. After all, what Frog would question one of France's greatest triumphs in the world of locomotion?"

"I'm afraid the hoppers get quite warm first, so it isn't as swift as you might like. Auf wiedersehn, Amerikaners, Fraulein."

With that, von Stosser sets the conveyor belts in motion, and departs the stepladder, whistling *Deutschland Uber Alles*. The guards fall in behind him and the heroes are left to their grisly fate.

Place six markers on the table to present the hopper's route. Use a token to represent the hopper in which the heroes await a fiery death. At the end of each round, the hopper moves on marker toward the opposite end of the track. Should the hopper move beyond the final marker, anyone inside is incinerated unless they succeed in an Agility roll at -2—no damage roll is required.

When the hopper moves onto the fourth marker, everyone still inside must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue from the increasing heat. On the 5th marker, the roll is made at -1, and on the 6th marker at -2.

To escape, the heroes must first free their bonds. This requires a Strength or Agility roll at -2. Two heroes may Cooperate on this task, but no more—there just isn't the room. Once their bonds are loosened, the characters can try to climb the smooth sides of the hopper. This requires an Agility or Strength roll at -4 (hero's choice), but can be done Cooperatively. Remember, a bound hero who wants to try and escape *and* help a colleague climb out incurs a multi action penalty.

Jumping down from the hopper's rim requires no die roll.

ACT FOUR: RETURN TO THE ORIENT EXPRESS

In the final act, Our Heroes must escape the Inescapable Death Trap, pilot an experimental airplane across the mountains in time to catch up with the Orient Express, and then battle von Stosser and his Rocket Nazi minions through the train to prevent a shot which would be heard around the world. Don't forget to restore a wound to any player who has taken one—they're going to need them!

SCENE 1: THE INESCAPABLE DEATH TRAP

Like all good villains, von Stosser has a death trap ready for use. The semi-conscious heroes are tied-up and wrestled down into the depths of the castle, through the assembly room to another large room.

The room is steaming hot, lit by a malevolent orange light glowing from the mouth of an incinerator at the far end. On a conveyor belt leading up to it are a series of large hoppers. As the heroes watch, the hoppers screech forward, and the foremost one tips into the smelter's mouth with a clang. The orange light blazes for a moment, and a belch of smoke blows out from it. The conveyor belt is shut down and the Rocket Nazis dump them into one of the hoppers without ceremony.

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SCENE 2: SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED

Once our heroes have escaped the deathtrap, they now need to escape Schloss Sturmburg. It quickly becomes apparent from the quietness that von Stosser and the Rocket Nazis have gone, and more than likely have a good lead on the party. There are no guards inside the incinerator chamber and none immediately outside. If they haven't already helped the kidnapped scientists out of the castle, now is a good time.

However, they also need to follow the Rocket Nazis quickly. The most obvious way is the experimental airplane they saw on their way in, the one Professor Reverte suggested they use, up on the castle walls.

Getting to the experimental airplane isn't difficult—a quick sneak through the castle past the second-rate German army guards gets them to the walls. However, trying the engine leads to a stuttering sound before it coughs and dies. A quick look at the workings of the plane (using Repair or Weird Science) reveals the ignition has rather obviously been wired incorrectly—Professor Reverte has indeed sabotaged his own work so the Nazis can't use it.

There are two wires to choose from, red or blue. One leads to certain success (cutting the red), and the other to certain doom (cutting the blue). They just have to figure out which is which, and all they have to go on is Professor Reverte's clue, referencing all those movies. If Jimmy wants to make a Common Knowledge roll, he may recall all the Saturday morning serials usually involve cutting the darker wire on screen (after all, in black and white, who can tell?), which he thinks is red.

They need to make a choice quickly as the Nazis have heard the engine's first attempt to fire into life and are coming to investigate with attack dogs. The dogs are noisy, so alert characters have plenty of warning and can take steps to secure their position such as barricading the doors to the ramparts, otherwise just as they finish cutting their choice of wire, the dogs and their handlers appear on the battlements. They can either fight it out, or take off now, and hope for the best! If they take off now, move to Scene 3.

If they do decide to fight it out, they can use both the plane and various piles of sandbags for Cover (as can the villains) As with if they climbed the castle walls, the parapets is narrow for fighting, and a combatant can easily fall off or be left hanging over a nasty drop.

! **Nazi Dog Handlers (2):** Treat as Nazi Soldier (page 17).

! **Dobermans (2):** See page 18.

SCENE 3: FOLLOW THAT TRAIN!

Now is Brent's moment to shine as he gets to show off his piloting skills to Amelia. Have Brent, or whoever is at the controls make a piloting roll. Read or paraphrase the following:

The launch mechanism squeaks as the breaks are

released, and the plane trundles forward under only a small amount of power, just enough to throw it clear of the castle wall. It drops with all the aerodynamic grace of a baby elephant. Then there's a terrifying moment as gravity takes over and your stomachs seem to drop with it as the experimental airplane plunges towards the icy river below.

The initial takeoff is scary – plunging down the ravine, but if they cut the right wire, at the last moment before hitting the water, the plane pulls up sharply. If they didn't cut the right wire, they just plunge, giving the heroes just two rounds to rewire the ignition or attempt to glide-land without killing themselves.

EXPERIMENTAL AIRPLANE

Acc/Top Speed: 50/200, **Toughness:** 11 (2), **Crew:** 1+3
Weapons

2 x 13mm MG (Range: 30/60/120, Damage: 2d10, ROF 3, AP 2)

With the experimental airplane under control, the flight over the Alps, lit by the rising sun, is smooth. A half hour of fast flying and the heroes spot von Stosser's train. It's steaming away a lot faster than any train has a right to go. Von Stosser has had the engine adapted to burn Doc's concentrated fuel rather than coal. After that, it doesn't take long to catch up with the fake Orient Express, now crossing South Germany, with the French border not so far away.

At this point Rocket Nazis boil out of the fake Orient Express, and head towards the airplane, intent on shooting it down. Brett must dodge and weave, whilst the others man the guns, holding the Nazi's off long enough for them to get to the train.

Run this scene using the Chase rules. Each Range Increment equates to 20". The train begins five Range Increments ahead of the plane, and the flying Nazis just three Range Increments. Passengers can either use the MGs or fire out the windows.

Rocket Nazis attempt to down the plane by shooting the rudder and the wings, rather than using suicidal attempts to ram it. As Extras, they cannot Ace damage, so the threat from the guns is minimal. However, should a Nazi be shot while on the same marker as the plane there is a chance he will smash into the plane and his rocket pack, now filled with Doc's superfuel, will explode. Turn a card from the initiative deck. If it comes up Clubs the rocket pack explodes doing 2d10 to the plane.

But von Stosser isn't relying on his swarm of Rocketeers to prevent the heroes from thwarting his plans. Should they get to close, he has another surprise ready to go—the roof of the end carriage rolls back and from it emerges a large anti-aircraft gun. The gun can swivel through a full 360 degrees to track them. The gun is manned by Nazi Rocketeers, but takes a round to reload.

! **Rocket Nazis (2 per hero):** See page 17.

Anti Aircraft gun (Range: 40/80/160, Damage: 3d6, AP 4, ROF 1/2)

NOW WHAT?

Once the plane reaches the same marker as the train, the heroes can attempt to get aboard.

Landing the plane on the roof requires a Piloting roll at -4. Failure means the pilot aborts before a collision. A critical failure results in the plane “landing” inside the plane, for 2d6 damage to each hero.

Jumping is slightly easier, at least for those not flying the plane. All the heroes need do is make an Agility roll to land on the back of the train. The pilot needs to make a Repair roll to jury rig a system to hold the control stick level, and then make an Agility roll in the same round to throw himself to of the plane and onto the Orient Express. Anyone with a rocket pack has to make a Piloting roll at +1 to gently lower down from the aircraft. If the PC's jump, they end up at the rear of the train.

If the heroes contemplate attempting to derail the train or otherwise getting it to stop it by landing or crashing in front of it, then it should be obvious to Doc's knowledge of science the plane is quite flimsy, and the Orient Express is moving at over 100 miles per hour! It is very likely the plane will be smashed to smithereens, and do little to affect the Orient Express.

Should they try anyway, then Doc's prediction comes true. The plane is smashed into little pieces, and any adventurer inside takes 4d10 damage from a Wild Card before he is thrown clear. The train continues to speed towards the French border.

Hopefully, the heroes have got off the plane before trying to stop the train.

SCENE 4: ALL ABOARD

The wind of the speeding trains whips at your hair, and drags at your clothes, threatening to send you spinning over the side to be crushed to death by the wheels below. Taking firm grip on your weapons, you start to crawl towards some sort of safety, for on the train roof there is no cover from the Rocket Nazis who are swarming in for the kill.

But as you watch, the roof of the centre carriage splits open, and from within you see an enormous canon rise up from the innards of the train car. Once it reaches the top of the car, the barrel raises slowly to an elevation of 45 degrees, and swivels with a grinding screech to point the muzzle of the massive missile-launcher towards the distant French capital.

Von Stosser is just moments from launching a missile fuelled by Doc's superfuel and packed with high explo-

sive at Paris. The heroes need to fight their way down to the centre of the train to try and stop it. Fighting through the carriages provides a lot of nameless Extras to knock-out as they approach the centre of the train. This train is much shorter than the genuine Orient Express, with only ten carriages.

Like the original, it is 3" wide and 12" long. The first and last carriages from the engine contain anti-aircraft emplacements that take up nearly the entire car, leaving only a little room to fight around. The second and third contain bunks for the Nazis. The fifth carriage contains the super missile launcher. The rest of the carriages hold ordnance and other supplies in neat racks around the edge of the car, and on shelves bolted to the floor in the centre. All manner of tools and equipment can be found lying around. Moving through any car counts as difficult terrain, due to the cramped conditions.

Going over the roof is easier than before, as its free of slippery snow, but the train is still moving extremely fast, so it still counts as an Unstable Platform (-2 to all rolls). On a bend (which happens whenever the fight needs an Extra something to liven it up) the whole thing tilts up slightly. Any hero who doesn't make his Agility roll ends up hanging by his fingernails again. Moving down from the roof to separate the carriages takes 2" of movement if the heroes want to try and separate the carriages.

! **Rocket Nazis (as many as required):** See page 17. The encounters should be tense and fun, not life threatening to the heroes.

Having defeated the hordes of Extras, they finally reach missile control, where von Stosser is running the operation. Inside the car, the majority of space is taken up with the missile base, which occupies a space 2" by 8" in the centre of the carriage. Against the right wall are the launch controls, a large bank of switches, dials and flashing lights, manned by two technicians who are protected by two more soldiers. A clockwork timer in the centre of the instrument panel indicates there is just 30 seconds left before the most deadly missile the world has seen is sent at Paris at beyond the speed of sound.

Von Stosser and his body guard (Corporal Eisenberg, if he lived through the initial assault on the Orient Express, another Nazi Rocketeer using the same stats if not) have their pistols drawn, and have taken cover behind the missile's base (Medium Cover). Von Stosser has a rocket pack on, and plans to escapes through the roof just as soon as he has made sure the missile has launched.

Von Stosser only needs to protect the launch. To do so he is more than prepared to sacrifice everyone else to do so. He'll use the other soldiers to distract Brent and Doc, hoping to grab Jimmy or Amelia to use as a hostage. He doesn't have to delay the heroes long after all.

"You are too late!" von Stosser calls out as you enter. "In a few moments this cannon will fire a rocket at Paris. Inside that rocket is more fire-power than inside any dozen other warheads in

DARING TALES OF ADVENTURE 2009 CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

history. And you will not be able to stop it. Not with rocket pack, nor plane. Paris is doomed."

With that, deal initiative cards. The Major shoots at the first available target, and definitely isn't squeamish about shooting women or children. The other soldiers also open fire. In all cases, they just have to stop the heroes getting close to the control panel for five rounds, so will grapple, shoot to kill, whatever it takes.

If the players succeed in defeating von Stosser before the timer reaches zero (just five rounds!), cancelling the launch is easy—a large red cancel button sits in the centre of the control panel.

However should the timer reach zero, the missile launches in a deafening roar of heat and smoke. Heroes get a chance to throw themselves to the side of the train car with a successful Agility roll to avoid taking 4d6 damage from the rocket engine. At this point, if possible, von Stosser fires up his rocket pack and tries and makes good his escape. However, as these are the closing scenes, unless you really want him to fight another day, the Recurring Villain rule does not apply.

Once the missile is launched however, whether von Stosser is dead or not, there is nothing they can do to stop it—von Stosser has won and the heroes have failed to prevent the Nazis starting the Second World War five years early.

❗ **Major von Stosser:** See page 17.

❗ **Cpl Gunter Eisenberg:** See page 17.

❗ **Nazi Rocketeers (2):** See page 17.

❗ **Missile Technicians (2):** Use the stats for the interrogator seen earlier (page 18); these people are scientists not combatants

SCENE 5: END OF THE LINE

Missile launched or not, Major von Stosser dead, captured or escaped, there is still one major problem. The Orient Express is out of control, and heading for the French Border city of Strasbourg at ludicrous speed.

You quickly realize that the fake Orient Express is heading down out of the mountains, and gathering speed as it does so. Looking out of the carriage you can see in the distance the spire of the medieval cathedral of Strasbourg. It is now early morning, so the city is likely to be filled with visitors and workers, as well as its own citizens. The Orient Express is dashing towards it, faster and faster with ever gathering pace as the silver rails lead it directly to the heart of the ancient city. You quickly realize that the train isn't trying to stop either. By the time it reaches the city, it will likely jump the tracks at the first opportunity, killing hundreds of innocent bystanders unless you do something

The biggest danger is from the engine, with its load of highly flammable superfuel. If the engine jumps the tracks, that's going to explode whatever happens. If

the carriages are attached, in the resultant fire all the ordnance is going to explode as well, to rain fiery death down on the people of Strasbourg.

In exactly six rounds, the train sweeps around a bend at a speed guaranteed to cause it to jump the rails! In order to prevent terrible destruction, the heroes need to complete four steps (in turn) before the end of the sixth round. Failures can be attempted again next round.

Step 1) The heroes must reach the engine. This requires an Agility roll at -2.

Step 2) Now at the engine, the heroes realize the engineer and fireman have gone! A Notice roll as a free action reveals the brakes have been destroyed and the train is moving too fast for the looming bend in the track.

Step 3) The heroes need a new plan. A successful Common Knowledge roll indicates the best thing to do is dump the fuel, and try and put out the firebox (where the coal/superfuel is burnt). One way to achieve this is by climbing down to the sandbox kept on the front of steam trains to grit the rails, and bringing back the sand to put out the fire. This requires an Agility roll at -2 to reach the grit and bring it back.

Alternatively, the heroes can decouple the engine (a Strength roll by one hero) and use the anti-aircraft guns on the train, or even the missile launcher if von Stosser didn't set it off, to destroy the engine before it reaches the city. They have a small window of opportunity as the engine crosses the open plain before reaching Strasbourg city walls. First though, they must make another Agility roll at -2 to run through the train and reach the gun.

Step 4) If using grit, the heroes need to shovel in as much as possible. This requires a Strength roll at -2. With success, the fire is dampened and the train begins to lose speed quickly. In the last few seconds it loses enough speed to stay on the rails until, with perfect cinematic precision, it comes to rest in the Strasbourg Terminal with a light kiss to the buffers and no more.

If firing the gun or missile, the heroes need a steady aim. Using the AA gun requires a Shooting roll, with a -2 penalty unless the heroes have Steady Hands. Firing the missile requires a Smarts roll.

Using the anti-aircraft guns is much more dangerous, as there is much less time between hitting the engine and the engine exploding to get clear. The Engine has Toughness 15, and needs to take one hit before it explodes. Remember, the gun takes a round to reload each time!

If they use the missile they can escape the train easily by rocket pack before it lands, exploding in an enormous ball of fire, quickly followed by even more explosions. Anyone still flying is knocked to the ground by the force of the wave. Anyone on the ground is knocked off their feet, lifted a few feet into the air and blown backwards in best pulp style, but is otherwise unharmed.

Once the final hit lands all the heroes still on the train need to make an Agility roll at -2 to jump clear. Anyone who fails is in the blast radius. Assuming they are at the furthest end from the engine they only take 4d8 damage as if from a Wild Card. Anyone who survives truly deserves the name 'Hero'!

ROCKET NAZIS ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

AFTERMATH

Watching the ruins of the fake Orient Express burn, the heroes catch their breath and wait for the authorities, safe inside the French border.

If the heroes are completely successful, i.e. the Missile is not launched at Paris, von Stosser is captured, and the train halted before it can blow up Strasbourg, French authorities give them a hero's welcome. The American and British ambassadors in Paris thank them profusely, and arrange to get them all back to the United States in luxury after seeing any wounds cared for. Naturally, they are sworn to secrecy over what they have seen and done, after all, no-one wants a panic, and their actions have set the Nazis back a good three years.

If von Stosser escapes, he heads back to Berlin. Dismissed as a failure by Hitler, he narrowly avoids the firing squad, and begins to plot his revenge.

If the heroes manage to capture von Stosser but fail to stop the launch or the train crash, the French are less enthusiastic, though still grateful for the chance to interrogate von Stosser. Paris is devastated, throwing the European powers into disarray. Hitler moves to invade Austria, France, and large portions of Western Europe are quickly drawn into a state of war. The heroes can only head back to America, ready for their next adventure, perhaps to challenge the Nazi war machine at another point.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

GERMAN AGENTS IN NEW YORK

These junior servants within the ranks of Nazi Intelligence have one mission: Kill Bertie Robeson, and protect the secret of the Fuhrer's plans. Whilst believers in the German cause, they are not fanatical, and try and escape if they are in danger of being captured.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d6, Guts d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: -2 **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Mean

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Pistols (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1, AP 1)

ROCKET NAZIS

Skilled pilots, the cream of the Nazi special forces, the Rocketeers are capable soldiers with high morale and discipline, utterly loyal to the Major and the Chancellor

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Piloting d8, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Helmet (+3), rocket pack; leather flight suits (+1 armor), rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8, AP2), or SMG (range 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, ROF 3, AP 1), 1 grenade (Range: 5/12/20, Damage: 3d6-2, Medium Burst Template)

CORPORAL GUNTER EISENBERG

A big damn Rocketeer, Gunter is a sold man-mountain, dedicated and without fear. He is personally loyal to Major von Stosser and will carry out his orders even to death.

Corporal Eisenberg is a Henchman.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Piloting d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Edges: Brawny

Gear: Helmet (+3), rocket pack; leather flight suits (+1 armor), SMG (range 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, ROF 3, AP 1), 1 grenade (Range: 5/12/20, Damage: 3d6-2, Medium Burst Template)



MAJOR WERNER VON STOSSER

A dedicated officer from a noble family, von Stosser fully supports Hitler's attempt to bring back pride to the German people. A talented pilot and a cunning tactician, von Stosser will do whatever Hitler wants to increase the glory of the German people.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Piloting d10, Shooting d10, Survival d6, Taunt d6, Tracking d6,

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Hindrances: Arrogant

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Improved Nerves of Steel, Level Headed, Natural Leader

Gear: Helmet (+3), rocket pack, leather flight suit (+1), Luger pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, AP 1)

NAZI SOLDIERS

These are regular recruits to the newly resurgent German Army, dedicated but without the training of the elite rocket corp. They follow orders without hesitation, but aren't the sharpest bayonets in the box, and can quite easily be fooled or avoided.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Loyal

Gear: Helmet (+3), SMG (Range 12/24/48/, Damage: 2d6, ROF 3, AP1) or rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage: 2d8,

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AP2), 1 grenade (Range: 5/12/20, Damage: 3d6-2, Medium Burst Template)

INTERROGATOR

Typical of Nazi technicians and scientists, this man has far more pragmatism than moral fiber and will cheerfully do whatever it takes in pursuit of knowledge. Except getting into combat.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Healing d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Biology) d10, Knowledge (Chemistry) d10, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

DOBERMANS

These beautifully bred pedigree attack dogs are well trained, fearless and loyal to their handlers

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d10.

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Special Abilities:

* **Bite:** Str+d4

* **Fleet Footed:** Dogs roll a d10 instead of a d6 when running

* **Go For The Throat:** Dogs instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location

* **Size -1:** Dogs are relatively small

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The Orient Express has been inspiring stories since it first rolled out of Paris in 1882. Hitler did genuinely hate the Orient Express and wish to see it destroyed, but never succeeded, though the service was suspended during the Second World War.

The Paris to Istanbul via Vienna service has run pretty much continuously since then, though on an ever shortening route, which was eventually cut down to just Strasbourg to Vienna in 2007. However, on December 12 2009, just a few days before this adventure is published, the Orient Express Service will be withdrawn completely, bringing the story of one of the greatest trains (and plot devices) in history to a close.

The Venice Simplon Orient Express still runs replicas of the 1920s trains on one of the alternative routes used in the 30s, but the original designation and route is now a thing of the past.

NAZI ROCKETEERS & THE ORIENT EXPRESS? LOOKS LIKE ONE HELL OF A PARTY!

Von Stosser is the commander of the elite troop of Nazi Rocketeers, and he has spent the last few months gathering scientists from around the world, to work on a variety of mind-boggling projects.

Progress has been swift and he is ready for his first strike.



Von Stosser's current plan is comparatively simple; he has prepared a double of France's famous Orient Express train, and has fitted it out with rockets more powerful and deadly than any known. The target of the attack is the centre of Paris, with the intention of decapitating the entire French government in one swift strike.

Triple Ace Games invite you to a seasonal Daring Tales of Adventure in which you need to foil the nazi rocketeers in *Rocket Nazis on the Orient Express*.



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