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RCLS 445-01

Prof. E. Messina

Assignment – Tabletop Game

RPG Adventure “The Missing Surgeon”

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## Leisure Education Tabletop Game - Outcomes

Tabletop role-playing gaming can potentially provide many benefits through engaging in this socially cooperative activity. In this implementation, we will be using a role-playing game (RPG) to provide to the participants leisure education covering sections 3.1 and 4.4 of the 2009 Leisure Education Content Model (LECM) by Stumbo & Peterson (21).

The adventure will specifically cover the following sections of the LECM:

1. As per section 3.0, Leisure Activity Skills, the players will learn, through using their player characters in the role-playing game adventure scenario, that private lessons are available from private instructors for various performance activities such as singing, dancing, playing instruments, and acting. This aligns with section 3.1 of the LECM for *Traditional Leisure Activity Skills*. After the adventure, the participants should be able to provide at least one hypothetical example of how skills can be learned through the hiring of a private instructor

related to the performing arts.

2. As per the 4.0 Leisure Resources section, participants will role-play attempting to find community resources, in this case a civic theater in a specific area of Chicago. This matches section 4.4 of the LECM, Community Resources. After the adventure, the participants should be able to provide an example of how to find the various theaters in a given region, and how to isolate finding a specific community theater based on specific desired goals (type of theater).

In addition to the above requirements, the participants will also be gaining many other benefits due to the nature of the format used to teach the above 2 areas of the LECM, namely that tabletop role-playing games are a socially cooperative problem-solving recreational activity, so many other potential beneficial outcomes are possible.

For populations needing to practice and improve social skills, cooperative play, reading, writing, creative visualization, verbal understanding and expression, and coordinated group simple-to-complex problem solving, tabletop role-playing gaming can be an ideal modality.

## **The Activity – Role-Playing Game Mystery set in 1940s Chicago**

The participants will take part in a cooperative shared narrative tabletop game known as a role-playing game. The setting is in 1940s Chicago, using Hawke's Simple RPG system. Each player will use a character will assume various roles to cooperatively solve a mystery, either creating a character from scratch, or using one of the provided character sheets. The adventure can be completed with about 2 to 8 hours of game play, depending on how much detail and time the Game Facilitator (GF) wishes to invest. This can take place in one or two longer sessions, or several one hour sessions. ***For this class assignment, the Recreation Therapy Specialist will act take on the role of GF.***

## ***Resource Requirements***

Only 2 participants are necessary to play the game, with one participant assuming the role of Game Facilitator (GF), and the other as a player. Though completely playable and enjoyable with only 2 participants, the full richness of a tabletop role-playing game experience is best achieved in a social setting with between 3 to 8 participants per table, with one of the participants acting as the GF, and the rest as players.

The only resources necessary for this tabletop activity are:

- \* A Game Facilitator (GF) familiar (at least read through) with the Simple RPG rules. For this assignment, the RTS will act as GF.
- \* A location quiet enough for casual conversation volume (irrelevant if all participants are sign-language capable and deaf).
- \* A comfortable place to sit that accommodates all participants, typically around a table.
- \* 1 six sided die (1d6) (preferably one per person, but can share one die if no others available).
- \* Sufficient lighting for reading and writing.
- \* Paper for character sheet and note-taking.
- \* Pencil (preferably one per participant).
- \* Hawke's Simple RPG Players Guidebook.
- \* Hawke's Simple RPG Game Facilitators Guidebook.

Some optional equipment that some people like to use to enhance the experience (but not at all required), include:

- \* Maps

\* “Battle mat(s)” with either grid or hexes

\* Miniature figurines

## **The Game Adventure – Famous Heart Surgeon is Missing!**

The local doctor has gone missing! The famous heart surgeon, Dr. David Stevens has been reported missing by his wife Martha. The Stevens have two children Danny (Age 10) and Kathrine (Age 8). Bewildered and distraught, the family needs your help in order to find their husband and father.

Dr. Stevens has allegedly been missing for 48 hours and was last seen by his wife at his location of practice, Westwood Memorial Hospital; Westwood, Chicago.

Since the police won't act until he has been missing for at least 72 hours, they won't even file a missing persons report, but Mrs. Stevens wants help *now*. Therefore, police at this time are no use to this frantic family that has no idea what to assume at this point.

Martha's greatest fear is that David was having an affair and has run away to an unknown destination with some harlot. David had always been known as a workaholic and that the people he works with are the ones that claim to know him better than his own family.

Mrs. Stevens has come to your private detective office asking you to find out what has happened to her husband. The rest of you regularly help the private detective to solve capers. Mrs. Stevens has provided you with the address to his office to begin your investigation...

## ***Westwood Memorial Hospital***

As the sleuths arrive at the hospital, they begin to collect some additional clues about the possible whereabouts of Dr. Stevens.

### **Coworkers**

As the PCs speak with other coworkers, they will find that fellow coworkers will allude to the fact that he had been running various errands after his shifts each night, rather than returning straight home.

### **Receptionist**

Furthermore, when interviewing the office receptionist, she will mention that the only unusual activity that involved Dr. Stevens was someone by the name of Miss Macy, who had been calling to confirm scheduled appointments, but that no one knew what these appointments were for.

### **Nurse Veronica Diezel**

When interviewing Dr. Stevens primary nurse/assistant in the Operating Room (OR), she reveals that Dr. Stevens was privately taking singing lessons at an unknown theater somewhere in the Westwood, Chicago area, fulfilling a lifelong dream of becoming accomplished at singing.

### ***Finding Miss Macy***

The PCs will need to either ask around town, get a list from a phone book, or contact the operator, for addresses of the different theaters in the West, Chicago area. Westwood has a total of 8 possible theater locations; 3 major commercial theaters, 2 civic theaters, and a college, a high school,

and a middle/elementary school.

The PCs will need to figure out which theater the Doctor has been going to for his singing lessons. As the clues all accumulate, the PCs will find they point to a local civic theater known as the “Westwood One Civic Theater”.

### ***Westwood One Civic Theater***

The PCs will find the only person at the theater with any useful information is the janitor Raymond Burr. He noticed the doctor as a new, but frequent visitor as being to the theater. Raymond Burr is a tall skinny gangly man; he is balding on top with a ring/horseshoe of hair around the sides. He states that he had not seen the two for a couple of days, which was odd because he had been seeing them on a daily basis in recent weeks. Raymond doesn't know much about the doctor, but shares with the sleuths that Miss Macy was providing private lessons to various people wanting to learn singing, dancing, and acting, to make some money on the side. Raymond also reveals that she normally works nights at a local night club, called Sliders, but Raymond doesn't know the address.

### ***Sliders Nightclub***

After leaving the theater the PCs will likely go to this night club to try to find Miss Macy. Club, no one has seen her for the last couple of days. Eventually the PCs will either ask to speak with her boss, or if they do not think of this, the boss will approach the PCs.

### **The Boss – Mr Stinger**

The PCs are approached by, or directed to, a very put together (well-dressed), tall, medium-dark complected man in his 50s, with his dark hair always greased straight back. This Italian-American in a

suit goes by the name of Seth Stinger, though everyone that works for him just calls him “The Boss. Any of the PCs with a law enforcement, news, or private detective background, will know that Mr. Stinger is a well-known mob member.

As the PCs question Mr. Stinger, he nervously fidgets with his cane and his fedora, and acts cagey and evasive when trying to get information about Miss Macy or Dr. Stevens. He claims he hasn't seen her in 2 days and that she is in a lot of trouble for missing work. He tells them, if they find her, to let her know she better come back crawling or she's fired. He claims not to know anything about the doctor.

## **Waiter in the Shadows**

After exhausting their questions of the Boss, as the PCs are heading towards the club exit, a waiter attempts to get their attention from the shadows of a curtained hallway, “Psst! Hey buddy!”. The waiter takes one of the PCs aside, and is able to provide some much needed additional information. He does so very nervously, afraid that if “The Boss finds out, getting' fired will be the least of my worries when wearin' cement shoes”.

The waiter doesn't give his name (his name tag is missing), and hides his identity in the shadows, speaking only in a hushed whisper over the background noise and music of the nightclub. They can only tell he is a waiter by the faint silhouette of his uniform. He is able to provide some more information about the missing instructor, and some information regarding the doctor too, despite the Boss's claims that he was never at the club.

Two days ago, the waiter had seen a person fitting the description of the doctor, Miss Macy, and the boss arguing, then they went into back room. That was last he saw both of them, however, the waiter rapidly continues on by stating that the Boss, Mr. Stinger, usually has no need going down to the



warehouse, but that he recently has been going down there for several “meetings” in just the last few days. Some other higher-up “muckity mucks” have been seen coming in and then going out with the boss, apparently heading down to the docks

He did not have the dock building's address, but it should be easy to find since it matched the company name. This information should lead the PCs to the right warehouse on the docks.

### ***The Sliders Warehouse on the Docks***

It is night time. The fog has rolled in from the lake. Upon first glance, if the PCs do not look carefully, the docks and warehouse appear to dark and empty.

However, if they wait patiently, or search quietly for a few minute, they will see a few faint cracks of light coming from the edge of a door in a smaller ramshackle wooden building attached to the side of the warehouse. The PCs do not see anyone outside.

If the PCs are careful and quietly sneak up to the building, they can peer through the small crack of the door, and faintly hear conversation, sounds like two male voice speaking in hushed tones indistinctly.

If the PCs are quiet and careful, they could slightly crack the door open about an inch, and peer inside. At first it is difficult to make out much detail, but as they slowly widen the crack of the door to the electrical room, the naked eye can barely see by the light from a single bulb at the desk. Slight movement and shadows are seen from inside. The peering PC will see that there are two big heavy husky thugs, and a desk with a lamp (the source of the dim light). The will also see a lot of electrical and other equipment, this shack houses the main fuse box for the whole dock and warehouse.

If the PCs are noisy on the docks, the mobsters will come out, bearing guns in hand, to inquire

as to what the PCs are doing on private property, and “urge” them to leave. If the PCs only make noise just outside of the door, they will go quiet, and start heading towards their guns.

If detect PCs at door. They won't grab their guns right away, but start inching towards guns. “Hey there, can we help you, what are you doing here?” they ask. They've been told to not let anyone in the warehouse. They've heard screams sometimes when the boss comes down, but they doesn't know “nuthin”.

The thug by the desk, has his Tommy gun that he has placed on the desk while the other grips his hand around the shotgun at his side cradling his riffle is his arm at the ready.

### **NPC Thug - Thomas “Tommy-gun” DeVito**

Is a tough guy, has a scar through his right eyebrow, and has one weakness; though he has no mercy, and is very strong, he has trick right knee (it has been broken 3 times). Height: 6'4”, 350 lbs.

Weapons: Tommy Gun .45 caliber machine gun, .45 caliber handgun semi-auto, brass knuckles, bullet proof vest (Damage Reduction 1).

Body = 9, Agility = 3, Intellect = 2, Willpower = 6, HR = 15.

### **NPC Thug – Tony “Shotgun” Capone**

Height 6'2”, 270 lbs.

Weapons: 12 guage Pump Shotgun (6 shells), 357 revolver, 2 throwing knives.

Body = 8, Ability = 4, Intellect = 3, Willpower = 3, HR = 11.

## **The Warehouse**

The building is 3 stories tall from the dock level, approximately 100' wide by 300' long. It is a combination of rusted corrugated sheet metal, wood, and steel, siding. With some windows on the top floor, and a fire escape. There one very large cargo-sized door, with a smaller normal door to the left of the main cargo door. Both are locked, but can be picked by anyone with a lock pick set, they will need to meet or beat the Success Target of 7, ST:7.

The lower two floors are filled with all kinds of (legitimate) crates necessary for running a large night club (dishes, linen, curtains, food, wine, etc.). However the third floor, has a small office (also locked, ST:7). Inside this 25' by 25' windowless room, the PCs will find two people lying on the floor about 10 feet apart, their hands and feet tied up with rope, gagged, unconscious, bloody, and bruised, not moving.

A careful inspection will reveal they are still alive.

## **What Happened?**

Miss Macy's boss found out that she was giving lessons to the Doctor, and The Boss was angry because it was taking time away from her performances, and her time with the boss. The Boss was also jealous because he thought there might be an affair going on between the doctor and Miss Macy. It is the Game Facilitator's (GF) discretion whether or not there was an affair going on or not.

In addition to the Boss's jealousy, his ulterior motive for capturing them was his fear that someone might found out what he has been up to (skimming profit).

Despite the doctor's consistent insistence of his innocence, the Boss knocked them both out and had them hauled down to the warehouse to be interrogated. As of now the boss hasn't killed them yet, because he wants to find out what they both know, and if shared with anyone else. Miss Macy had

witnessed the boss, at work; skimming profits.

One day, a few days ago, he was called away, and accidentally left two ledgers open on his desk, she curiously glanced at them, and then intrigued, copied down some info. From her limited accounting skills, she had her suspicions, but wanted to get a second opinion, so she covertly went to the doctor asking him what he thought what it meant.

They realized the Boss was skimming profits from the Mob and was getting ready to open up a business in Atlantic City. If the club owner found out his manager (the Boss) was skimming, he would likely very very soon “swimmin' with the fishes”.

The other people meeting with Mr. Stinger are in cahoots with the scam, including a ranking police officer. This means a lot of people have not only their fortunes, but also their lives at stake if their complicity were to be revealed.

The PCs have many options available to address the kidnapping and other issues. The Doctor and Miss Macy are very grateful to be rescued by the PCs, and will quickly (though weakly needing help to walk from their beatings), leave the warehouse with the PCs.

The PCs could be rewarded with money, fame, newspaper announcements, and the gratitude of many, though this could be complicated by the involvement of a police officer and others. Or to the keep adventure going for future sessions, the PCs may be asked to find out which police officer was involved, who the other corrupt officials were, or may have to deal with the owner of the Nightclub (Mr. Stinger's boss) wanted to show his “gratitude” for revealing the whole situation to the public...

Many additional adventures can be created built from this beginning story, now that the players have met just a few of the many personalities in the city. The GF can easily create many more adventures targeting other desired outcomes.