



MODERN

A FUNNY THING

HAPPENED AT CAROUSEL #5



By Stan!

A Short Adventure for Four 7th-Level Heroes

Not every adventure pits the heroes against malign forces bent on world domination. In fact, sometimes the most interesting situations occur completely by accident.

The series of misunderstandings that precipitates this adventure can without a doubt be solved quickly, quietly, and without any danger to life and limb. But considering how most heroes behave in the face of an unusual situation, such an outcome seems extremely unlikely.

A Funny Thing Happened At Carousel #5 is a real adventure, with real threats and real rewards. However, it's anything but serious, and you as GM should plan to run it with tongue firmly in cheek. Those who do not like to mix a wisp of comedy with their adventures may want to look away before it's too late.

The author denies that the following tale has anything to do with Peter Bogdanovich's brilliant 1972 screwball comedy, *What's Up, Doc?* Rather, he lays the blame solely at the feet of Rosemary Localsi, the babysitter who let him stay up and watch the Friday Night Movie instead of making him go to bed at 9:00, as his parents had instructed.

PREPARATION

You, the Game Master (GM), need a copy of the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* to run this adventure. To get started, print out the adventure (including the map) and read it through. Familiarize yourself in particular with the various GM characters and their individual motives and abilities. Then make sure you are familiar with the rules for combat, movement, and cover from Chapter 5 of the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game*.

Opponents' statistics are provided in abbreviated form in the areas where they are first discussed. Any text in shaded boxes should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players.

BACKGROUND (A TALE OF SIX BAGS)

The plot of *A Funny Thing Happened at Carousel #5* centers around six identical travel bags. Each belongs to a different person, all of whom coincidentally appear at the same airport at the same time. Most of these people have no interest in dealing with the heroes or with each other, but fate and a unique style of luggage conspire to bring them together.

The Bags

Each of the six major GM characters in this adventure has a medium-size leather overnight bag with a shoulder strap and a pair of handles. Each bag weighs 1 pound when empty, has a capacity of 50 pounds, and is identical to bags that may be bought at any luggage store (Purchase DC 5). The leather is dyed a pale mustard hue, and large patches of pink paisley cloth decorate the sides.

This particular style was not terribly popular with luggage customers for reasons that should be obvious. However, each of the GM characters chose it specifically for its garish design, in hopes that it would stand out from all the other bags on a luggage carousel and not be mistakenly claimed by some other traveler.

The Owners

The motivations, possessions, and temperaments of the six major GM characters are described below, along with the contents of their travel bags. Feel free to modify this information as needed to make it more appropriate for your campaign.

Professor Henry Bogdanovich

Henry Bogdanovich is the reason the heroes are at the airport. They are under orders to meet the professor and escort him and his luggage safely to his final destination.

Professor Bogdanovich is a research scientist from a small, two-year college somewhere in the Midwest. He has developed a theory that ordinary objects absorb the sounds made near them and, under the right conditions, can be made to play back those sounds with amazing clarity. In other words, every chair, table, and wall in the world can function as a recording device. Bogdanovich has been trying for years to prove his theory, and he has recently enjoyed some limited success in laboratory experiments. But he needs additional funding to develop a portable playback device suitable for use in the field.

Scientists within Department-7 believe that Professor Bogdanovich's theories may prove invaluable to the organization's work. Thus, they have arranged to fly him into town so that he can explain his theories and provide a demonstration for the funding committee.

A slight, unassuming, bespectacled man in his early thirties, Bogdanovich is very much the stereotypical absent-minded professor. He often gets so wrapped up in what he is doing that he forgets about everything else—even other people in the same room with him. Worse still, when he is

absorbed in his work, he sometimes makes what he refers to as “suboptimal decisions.”

His most recent such decision was to check the travel bag that contained all his notes and prototype materials instead of taking it on the plane as a carry-on bag.

Henry Bogdanovich (Smart Hero 10): CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 10d6; hp 38; Mas 10; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL science; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; AP 5; Rep +7; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Occupation: Academic (class skills: Knowledge [earth and life sciences], Knowledge [physical sciences], Knowledge [technology]).

Skills: Computer Use +20, Craft (electronic) +20, Craft (mechanical) +30, Craft (writing) +10, Decipher Script +9, Demolitions +8, Disable Device +20, Forgery +7, Knowledge (behavioral sciences) +20, Knowledge (current events) +20, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +31, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (physical sciences) +31, Knowledge (technology) +31, Perform (act) +4, Profession +12, Read/Write German, Read/Write Latin, Read/Write Russian, Repair +20, Research +20, Search +20.

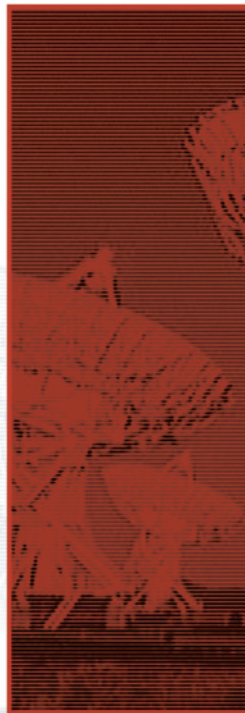
Feats: Builder (Craft [electronic], Craft [mechanical]), Cautious, Creative (Craft [writing], Perform [act]), Educated (Knowledge [behavioral sciences], Knowledge [earth and life sciences]), Educated (Knowledge [current events], Knowledge [history]), Educated (Knowledge [physical sciences], Knowledge [technology]), Gearhead, Meticulous, Renown, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Studious.

Talents: Linguist, savant (Knowledge [behavioral sciences], Knowledge [earth and life sciences], Knowledge [physical sciences], Knowledge [technology]).

Bogdanovich's Bag

The professor's bag is filled with smaller bags, boxes, and containers, all of which are crushproof and waterproof. Some hold such mundane items as changes of clothing or toiletries; others contain notebooks filled with handwritten diagrams and research observations. The largest box houses a complex, delicate mechanism that looks like a cross between a phonograph, a vacuum-tube radio, and an erector set. This object is the only existing prototype of Professor Bogdanovich's playback device.

Bogdanovich overpacked his bag, so it weighs a bit more than 50 pounds. Each time it is lifted, the strap stretches and creaks, and there is a 10% chance that it will break. If this occurs, the bag falls and spills its contents onto the ground unless the character lifting it makes a successful Reflex save (DC 20) to catch it. (None of the items inside are harmed by such a fall, but that fact may not be immediately obvious to either the heroes or the professor.) Once the bag is repacked, it must be carried by the handles, which immobilizes one arm of the person carrying it. Furthermore, the character holding the bag must make a successful Strength check (DC 12) each minute or be forced to put it down. That character cannot lift the bag again for 1 minute thereafter.



Dr. Hugh Fredericks

Hugh Fredericks is Professor Bogdanovich's closest rival. Dr. Fredericks has been publicly trumpeting a theory of his own—that Henry Bogdanovich is a loon who doesn't know what he's talking about!

In point of fact, Dr. Fredericks has been secretly working on exactly the same theory as Professor Bogdanovich has, but without as much success. Fredericks is desperate to discredit his rival and, if at all possible, to steal his notes and materials and pass them off as his own research.

Hugh is a boastful, arrogant, flamboyant man who revels in demonstrating his intellect—usually by making someone else appear foolish or ignorant. He has long, wildly unkempt red hair, a nose like a hawk's beak, tiny eyes, and a face constantly contorted into a scowl or sneer. Fredericks carries himself with the self-importance of a movie star or a maestro, and he never misses an opportunity to explain to those around him just how brilliant and important he really is.

By bribing students, janitorial staff, and secretaries at Professor Bogdanovich's school, Dr. Fredericks managed to learn the exact description and contents of his rival's bag. He has prepared an exact duplicate, except that all the containers inside it are filled with cotton candy (symbolic of the “fluff” he has publicly claimed Bogdanovich's theories to be).

Hugh's plan is to take advantage of Bogdanovich's absent-mindedness to switch the bags and make off with everything the professor has worked so hard to achieve. If necessary, he intends to use his skills at bluff and bluster to throw the professor (and the heroes) off balance. But Fredericks is a coward at heart, so he readily backs down if anyone threatens him with physical violence.

Hugh Fredericks (Charismatic Hero 4/Personality 6): CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 4d6 plus 6d6; hp 38; Mas 10; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL fame; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +3; AP 5; Rep +9; Str 10, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 7, Cha 20.

Occupation: Academic (class skills: Knowledge [earth and life sciences], Knowledge [physical sciences], Knowledge [technology]).

Skills: Bluff +20, Craft (electronics) +13, Craft (mechanical) +11, Craft (writing) +16, Diplomacy +20, Disguise +7, Gather Information +7, Hide +1, Knowledge (business) +7, Knowledge (current events) +10, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +10, Knowledge (physical sciences) +12, Knowledge (technology) +12, Move Silently +1, Perform (act) +18, Profession +11, Sleight of Hand +2.

Feats: Deceptive, Educated (Knowledge [physical sciences], Knowledge [technology]), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Renown, Run, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy, Trustworthy.

Talents: Dazzle, fast talk, royalty, unlimited access, winning smile.

Fredericks's Bag

Like the professor's bag, this one is filled with crushproof and waterproof containers. Because all of them hold cotton candy, however, this bag is significantly lighter than

Bogdanovich's. The professor is unlikely to notice this fact even if he lifts the wrong bag, but any hero can who has seen both bags lifted can discern the weight difference with a successful Spot check (DC 15). A hero who has held one of the bags gets a +5 circumstance bonus on this check, and a hero who has held both bags gets a +10 circumstance bonus.

Eunice van Hoskins

Eunice van Hoskins is a well-known socialite. Any hero who succeeds on a Knowledge (current events) check (DC 10) recognizes her as a local philanthropist (founder of and largest contributor to the van Hoskins Fund) whose name and face have been regularly splashed across the society pages of local and national newspapers for years. If the check result beats DC 20, the hero also realizes that Eunice has been absent from the media for quite a while. If the check result beats DC 25, the hero has heard rumors that the U.S. Customs Service intends to launch an investigation of Ms. van Hoskins and her travels.

The truth of the matter is that Eunice completely squandered her family fortune years ago. When she was on the verge of destitution, one of her jet-set friends put her in contact with a less-than-reputable jeweler in Amsterdam. The two quickly struck a deal, and Eunice has been smuggling rare gemstones into the country ever since. Once she gets them past Customs, she fences them, uses the van Hoskins Foundation to launder the funds, and then splits the proceeds with her European partners.

Ms. van Hoskins is completely unaware that the federal authorities are onto her. As far as she is concerned, this trip is just like any other. The gems she is smuggling should keep her solvent for the next six or eight months, at which time she will take another European vacation.

Since Eunice succeeded in getting her shipment of gems through U.S. Customs on the first leg of her journey, she believes her potential troubles on this trip are over. All she has to do now is pick them up and take them home. Her chauffeur/bodyguard, an ex-Navy SEAL named Simon, is at the airport to meet the plane and carry her luggage.

Eunice van Hoskins (Charismatic Ordinary 5): CR 4; Medium-size human; HD 5d6+5; hp 22; Mas 13; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3+1 electricity, stun gun) or +1 ranged touch (blindness [Fort DC 15, 1d4 rounds], pepper spray); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3+1 electricity, stun gun) or +1 ranged touch (blindness [Fort DC 15, 1d4 rounds], pepper spray); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL society; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +6; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Occupation: Celebrity (class skill: Bluff).

Skills: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +5, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (civics) +10, Knowledge (current events) +10, Knowledge (popular culture) +10, Perform (act) +11, Read/Write French, Read/Write German, Read/Write Japanese, Read/Write Spanish, Sleight of Hand +3, Speak French, Speak German, Speak Japanese, Speak Spanish.

Feats: Deceptive, Renown, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trustworthy.

Possessions: Pepper spray, stun gun (both restored to her by Simon when he meets her in baggage claim).

Simon the Chauffeur (Strong Hero 3/Soldier 5/Tough Hero 2): CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 3d8 plus 5d10 plus 2d10; hp 71; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 18, touch 18, flat-footed 17; BAB +7; Grap +10; Atk +10 melee (1d4+4/19–20, knife) or +10 melee (1d6+5 nonlethal, sap) or +10 ranged (2d6+2/19–20, Colt Python); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+4/19–20, knife) or +10/+5 melee (1d6+5 nonlethal, sap) or +10/+5 ranged (2d6+2/19–20, Colt Python); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL employer; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +2; AP 2; Rep +1; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Drive, Move Silently).

Skills: Climb +11, Demolitions +4, Drive +15, Intimidate +12, Jump +9, Knowledge (tactics) +12, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Spot +3, Swim +16.

Feats: Athletic, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Martial Arts, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Talents: Improved critical (Colt Python), improved melee smash, melee smash, remain conscious, tactical aid, weapon focus (Colt Python), weapon specialization (Colt Python).

Possessions: Knife, sap, Colt Python in a concealed carry holster.

Van Hoskins's Bag

Unice's bag is filled with the less expensive components of her wardrobe, plus toiletries, perfume, and jewelry. The jewelry case contains moderately expensive, tastelessly gaudy broaches, rings, and necklaces, but the real prize is hidden in a secret compartment at the bottom of the case. Finding the compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 20), and opening it requires a successful Disable Device check (DC 10). Inside is a velvet pouch filled with cut and polished emeralds. Their exact value cannot be determined without the proper equipment and sufficient time to examine them closely, but anyone with 5 or more ranks in Appraise can estimate their value at several million dollars. A more accurate appraisal takes 4 hours and requires both a jeweler's lens and a successful Appraise check (DC 15). Success places their value at \$5 million.

Peter Buck

Peter Buck is a smalltime gangster with a bigtime problem—gambling. While visiting Las Vegas, he made the mistake of betting more money than he could afford to lose in a poker game with Lenny Petrone, son of mob boss Antonio “Three Fingers” Petrone. Peter suspects that the kid was cheating, but he can't prove anything. The Petrones claimed that cards just weren't with Peter that night and gave him three days to pay the debt. Peter did the only thing he could think of to save his hide—he pulled a major robbery to cover his losses.

The heist went perfectly, and Peter got away clean. But the next day, he learned that the upscale antique store he had robbed was actually owned by the Petrones. What's more, the place was a front for a counterfeiting operation, so the cash he'd stolen was useless—not only would the mobster know it was fake, but he'd also recognize it as his own work.

With only one day left until his marker came due, Peter left Vegas and came here, hoping to exchange enough of the

funny money to cover his debts. But he has to do so without drawing attention to himself, or some wise guy might tip off the Petrones that someone is spreading around their stolen goods.

To make matters worse, Peter thinks he's being followed. A thin, middle-aged man in a pinstripe suit arrived at the airport on the same shuttle as Peter and has had a seat exactly two rows behind him on every leg of the trip. Peter figures that this fellow is either on the Petrones' payroll or an FBI agent. Either way, Buck wants to lose him quickly. He would feel better if he had his knife in hand, but that's in his checked bag.

In fact, the man in the pinstripe suit is Larabee Hosquith (see below). He's been so wrapped up in his own problems that he hasn't even noticed that Peter has been on all of his flights.

Note: If the campaign is set in Las Vegas (or on a continent other than North America), the GM should modify Peter Buck's background to fit the situation. The poker game (and, more importantly, the Petrone family) can be placed in another city famous for gambling, such as Atlantic City, Monte Carlo, Hong Kong, or Sun City.

Peter Buck (Fast Ordinary 5/Dedicated Ordinary 2): CR 6; Medium-size human; HD 5d8 plus 2d6; hp 29; Mas 10; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 18, touch 18, flat-footed 15; BAB +4; Grap +5; Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/19–20, knife) or +5 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+1/19–20, knife) or +5 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL underworld; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +2; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (class skills: Gamble, Sleight of Hand).

Skills: Drive +10, Gamble +12, Escape Artist +10, Hide +10, Knowledge (current events) +8, Knowledge (streetwise) +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Sleight of Hand +11, Spot +9.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Weapon Finesse (knife).

Possessions: Knife (currently packed in his checked bag).

Buck's Bag

This bag holds a small, black-leather satchel wrapped in wadded-up hotel towels. The satchel is waterproof, locked with an expensive electronic mechanism, and filled to capacity with neatly wrapped stacks of counterfeit twenty-dollar bills. The bag also contains a knife.

Without the correct nine-digit code, opening the lock requires either a successful Disable Device check (DC 15) or a successful Knowledge (technology) check (DC 25). The satchel may also be sliced open with an appropriate cutting implement, but doing so causes the contents to spill out and permanently ruins the case.

Larabee Hosquith

Larabee Hosquith is an agent of the US Securities and Exchange Commission. He is also a highly paid industrial spy. To most people, such an arrangement might seem like a severe conflict of interest (not to mention a conflict of morality), but Larabee has always been able to keep it straight in his head. The government pays him to investigate



corrupt corporations that have manipulated the stock market to their own advantage. He then sells the information he gains in the course of those investigations to other companies that were affected by the illegal activities.

To Larabee's mind, he is merely leveling the playing field and making a little profit along the way. Of course, he knows his superiors would feel differently, but he has thus far had little cause to worry about them finding out. Not only is he one of the best investigators they have, but he is also very circumspect in his activities.

Recently, though, he ran into a real moral quandary. He was called upon to investigate a company to which he'd sold material in the past, and his name and picture were all over their files. The illegal activities of the company in question had defrauded thousands of innocent citizens of millions of dollars in retirement funds and private investments. But in order to shut the company down, he would have to implicate himself.

Unsure what to do, Larabee took all the relevant files and boarded a flight bound for Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, the bag containing the documents was misrouted in transit and wound up in Albuquerque, NM. By the time he flew there, it had been inadvertently sent on to Omaha, NE. A long series of mishaps later, he and the bag have finally arrived in the same place at the same time. But although retrieving the bag will put the information safely back into his hands, he still isn't sure what he's going to do with it.

Larabee's gun is in one of his checked bags (not the one that resembles the professor's).

Larabee Hosquith (Dedicated Hero 4/Investigator 6):

CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 4d6 plus 6d6; hp 38; Mas 10; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 17, touch 17, flat-footed 16; BAB +7; Grap +6; Atk +8 ranged (2d6, Beretta 92f); Full Atk +8/+3 ranged (2d6, Beretta 92f); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL SEC; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +10; AP 5; Rep +4; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Occupation: Investigative (class skills: Computer Use, Gather Information).

Skills: Bluff +5, Computer Use +12, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +3, Forgery +17, Gather Information +17, Investigate +20, Knowledge (business) +9, Knowledge (current events) +9, Listen +12, Profession +5, Research +17, Search +4, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12.

Feats: Alertness, Attentive, Iron Will, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Studious, Trustworthy.

Talents: Aware, low-level contact, mid-level contact, non-lethal force, profile, skill emphasis (Investigate).

Possessions: Steel handcuffs, SEC ID badge, Beretta 92f in a concealed carry holster (packed in checked luggage), license for weapon, permit to carry a concealed weapon.

Hosquith's Bag

This bag is stuffed full of manila folders containing business records, memos, receipts, dossiers, and even a few CD-ROMs from a company called Lubash Securities. A hero who makes a successful Knowledge (current events) check (DC 20) recalls that Lubash Securities is a stock and futures trading company based in Bayonne, NJ. If the check result beats DC 30, the hero also knows that Lubash Securities is currently under

investigation by the SEC. (At your discretion, any hero who is intimately involved with the stock market or other aspects of securities trading may receive up to a +10 insight bonus on this check.)

Anyone who looks through the contents of the bag may attempt a Spot check (DC 25) to notice that several files contain pictures of Larabee Hosquith. Further perusal of those files indicates that Lubash Securities struck several off-the-books deals with him.

Judy Bannister

Judy Bannister is a young woman who likes to take chances. She's twenty-one years old, comes from a well-to-do family, and has led a life that could only be described as privileged. But Judy has always eschewed the finer things her family has offered her. Although she is a voracious reader and has a keen intellect, she was kicked out of all the top-level boarding schools, junior colleges, and women's universities she attended because of either failing grades or various offenses ranging from underage drinking to wanton destruction of property.

A true bohemian, Judy chooses to live life on her own terms. Her forceful, charismatic personality has occasionally landed her a job as a personal assistant to some high-powered executive, but her mischievous nature has ensured that none of these positions ever lasted very long. Between jobs, she survives by convincing people to support her. Her serial benefactors invariably lend her money (which she never returns), allow her to stay in their homes (which she invariably wrecks in one way or another), and provide her with every resource imaginable (which she eventually squanders).

Judy is a fast-talking, conniving, manipulative, charismatic young woman who never seems to be at a loss for something clever to say. She incessantly makes up new names for herself and those around her, and she never gives her correct name or tells the same story twice about herself, her life history, or her motivations. Those who converse with her for a lengthy period often think she's clinically insane, but in truth she just likes playing with people's minds.

Judy has come to the airport from the home of her most recent benefactor, where she left a fresh-baked apple pie and a goodbye note in exchange for the travel bag and its contents. She chose this piece of luggage because she thought it looked "ritzy," and she plans to surreptitiously switch it with an identical one at the airport, hopefully walking off with more valuable contents in the process. Beyond this stunt, she has no plans, although a trip to Paris or Milan would certainly be fun at this time of year.

Judy Bannister (Fast Hero 4/Charismatic Hero 4/Infiltrator 2):

CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 4d8 plus 4d6 plus 2d8; hp 48; Mas 10; Init +5; Speed 30 ft.; Defense 19, touch 19, flat-footed 19; BAB +6; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +4; AP 5; Rep +5; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 18.

Occupation: Creative (class skills: Bluff, Disguise, Forgery).

Skills: Bluff +17, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +17, Escape Artist +10, Forgery +12, Gather Information +11, Handle Animal +7, Hide +16, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (behavioral sciences) +11,

Knowledge (current events) +14, Knowledge (streetwise) +14, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +11, Move Silently +15, Sleight of Hand +10.

Feats: Deceptive, Dodge, Educated [Knowledge [current events], Knowledge [streetwise]], Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Nimble, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Spring Attack, Stealthy.

Talents: Charm, evasion, favor, improvised implements, sweep, uncanny dodge 1.

Bannister's Bag

This bag contains a random assortment of household items that Judy took from her latest benefactor—a podiatrist who invited her home after a cocktail party and inadvertently wound up hosting her for more than a week. The contents include mismatched items of men's clothing, an African hand-carved ashtray, several stainless steel spoons, a ladle, a 3"x5" framed picture of an elderly woman (Judy has no idea who this is), and anything else the GM deems interesting and amusing.

Attached to the shoulder strap is a luggage tag that proclaims this bag to be the property of Achmed al Hasaar, MD. Should the heroes decide to contact Dr. al Hasaar, he confirms that Miss Bannister has his permission to be in possession of the bag and its contents, and under no circumstances are they to return it—or her—to his home.

SYNOPSIS

The heroes go to the airport to meet Professor Bogdanovich. Also at the airport, hoping to switch carrying cases with the professor, is Dr. Fredericks. Eunice van Hoskins, Peter Buck, and Larabee Hosquith arrive on the same flight as the professor does.

As bags start arriving on the luggage carousel, it becomes clear that several other people have bags identical to the professor's. Since each has a strong personal reason to claim his or her bag immediately, tensions flare as matters become more and more confused.

While the confrontations rage, Judy Bannister runs into the area carrying a bag identical to the others. She immediately attempts to trade hers with anyone else's while the owner's attention is distracted.

The action can be resolved completely in the airport. All the heroes have to do to complete their mission is to get the professor and his bag out safely. If they fail to get the correct bag, the adventure may continue beyond the airport. The heroes must try to track down the other GM characters and retrieve the professor's bag, while their quarry (some of whom have undoubtedly left the airport with another person's belongings) try to exchange luggage before anyone else can discover their personal secrets. This process is likely to involve lots of hijinx, sneaking around, and even more cases of mistaken identity.

Should the adventure progress to this point, the characters and all the GM characters on hand are brought before Judge Bannister—Judy's father—for whatever offenses have been committed, which may range from disturbing the peace to theft or assault, depending upon what measures they have taken to retrieve the professor's bag. The outcome of this

encounter should come as a surprise to the heroes (and the players).

Character Hooks

As GM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. You can use the following adventure hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to make them appropriate for the characters' interests.

- The heroes are members of Department-7. Escorting the professor and his luggage to a predetermined downtown destination is their current assignment.
- One of the heroes is a friend of the professor's. Bogdanovich has contacted that hero and requested a ride from the airport, citing an important scientific breakthrough as the reason for his visit and claiming that he is in danger from industrial spies.

Running This Adventure

While running this adventure, you should behave as though the scenario is a tense tale of corporate and scientific espionage. This technique preserves the element of surprise for the players when they discover that it is actually a farce predicated on mistakes and mishaps.

A Different Sort Of Scenario

If you'd like to try a very different sort of adventure, you may want to consider giving each of the players one of the GM characters to run. Each character has a completely different set of motivations and expectations, as described above in the background section.

Using the scenario in this way is not a good idea for a campaign, but it could make for an interesting one-night event. The advantage is that the players can roleplay their characters without concern for their continued viability in the weeks ahead.

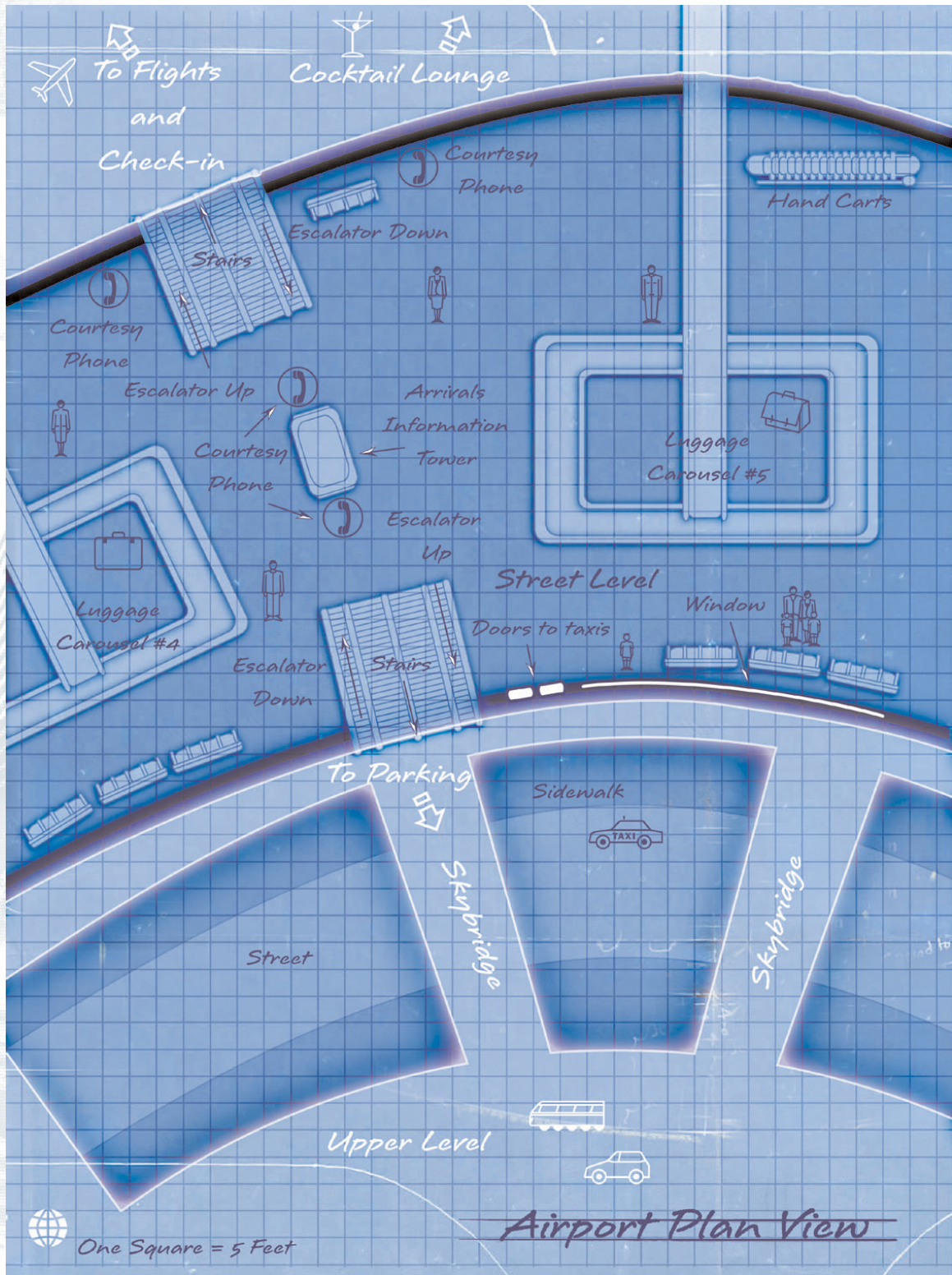
If you choose to run the adventure this way, you can either give the players the full statistics noted here for all the GM characters in the adventure, or hand each of the players one character background and let him or her generate a character to match those requirements. (In this case, all the characters should simply be generated as 10th-level heroes.) Then you can develop a set of personal victory conditions for each character based on his or her specific goals.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

A Funny Thing Happened at Carousel #5 is a site-based adventure consisting of up to three placed encounters. Only the first of these—the one at the airport—is absolutely necessary, since the heroes can fulfill their mission here. The other two encounter areas—the downtown hotel where the professor is staying and the courtroom of Judge Bannister—provide a way to continue the action if the heroes do not succeed in removing the professor and the correct bag from the airport.

The adventure begins when the heroes receive instructions to pick up the professor at the airport. The following





read-aloud material assumes that the characters are working for Department-7. If this is not the case, modify the information appropriately.

“Sit down,” says your supervisor as you walk into the briefing room. “Today’s assignment is pretty simple. You’re to pick up a . . . Professor Henry Bogdanovich at the airport and bring him and his luggage to his hotel. He’s a scientist with some theory that he’s supposed to present to the brass today.” She puts her notes aside and looks at each of you in turn. “I want this presentation to go off without a hitch. This fellow’s discoveries, if they’re valid, could usher in a whole new way of gathering information.

“Now I don’t know Bogdanovich personally, but my information says two things. One, he’s a certified genius. Two, he’s a complete flake. You’ll not only have to watch him carefully to make sure he doesn’t get into trouble or wander off, you’ll also need to keep an eye out for industrial spies who might try to steal his notes and prototypes.

“Now, is all that clear? You can pick up a dossier on your way out that has his flight information and picture. You won’t be able to meet him at the gate; you’ll have to locate him at baggage claim. We don’t want to call attention to his arrival. Just make sure he and his luggage get where they’re going safely.”

If the heroes press for more information, their supervisor gives them a document that essentially paraphrases the information given in the Background about the professor’s theory and research to date.

When the heroes are ready to leave, they can reach the airport without incident. Go to encounter 1 when they begin searching for the professor.

1. CAROUSEL #5

The main action in this adventure takes place at a large airport near where the campaign is set. The exact location is not important, although if the heroes are based in Las Vegas, Peter Buck’s background will require slight modifications, as noted above. The map provided can work for any airport, but if the players are personally familiar with the airport in question, you may want to adapt it for that specific layout.

Four of the GM characters described above (Professor Bogdanovich, Eunice van Hoskins, Peter Buck, and Larabee Hosquith) have arrived on the same flight, and their luggage is due to be distributed at carousel #5. Hugh Fredericks has arrived at the airport by car and is now standing near carousel #4, watching for Dr. Bogdanovich. Judy Bannister has just arrived by taxi. She ran out of the cab without paying her fare, and the driver is now in hot pursuit. She has not yet entered baggage claim.

Exactly where the heroes begin this encounter is more or less up to them. They can be standing in front of the escalators holding a sign that reads “Dr. H. Bogdanovich,” or spread out through the crowd to keep an eye on the whole situation, or in any other configuration they like. Let them prepare as much or as little as they wish, but you may want to allow for the possibility of a traffic snarl that delays their arrival at the airport.

1a. Paging Professor B.

When passengers from Professor Bogdanovich’s flight start arriving at baggage claim via the escalator, each hero can attempt a Spot check to try to find the scientist. All these checks fail, because he is still back at the gate. Since he had not flown in some time, he expected that his ride would meet him there. However, the heroes may notice some other interesting things while they are searching for him, as given on the table below.

SPOT CHECK RESULT	SITUATION NOTICED
15–19	A husky man in a chauffeur’s uniform is meeting a gaudily dressed older woman. Either they like to play dress-up, or she’s got a ton of money.
20–24	There’s a redheaded man with an ugly yellow-and-pink travel bag standing by carousel #4. He’s watching the arriving passengers as though he’s looking for someone in particular.
25–29	One of the arriving passengers seems exceedingly nervous. He keeps looking over his shoulder at a guy who is clearly either an undercover cop or a Fed. But the undercover guy doesn’t seem at all interested in the nervous one.
30+	There’s some kind of commotion on the drive outside the terminal. A cab driver just leapt out of his taxi and is now running for the entrance to the baggage area. He looks pretty upset.

GM Characters: The gaudily dressed woman is Eunice van Hoskins, and her chauffeur is Simon. The redheaded man is Hugh Fredericks, who is looking for Professor Bogdanovich. The nervous man is Peter Buck, and the supposed Fed is Larabee Hosquith. The cab driver is chasing Judy Bannister, who has just run off without paying him.

Development: Allow the heroes to search baggage claim in vain for Professor Bogdanovich until they become restless. Then read or paraphrase the following aloud.

From ancient-looking speakers mounted on columns and in corners around the terminal, a crackling, barely comprehensible message blares out.

“Will the party here to meet Doctor Henry. . . .”

A hesitant, slightly nasal voice interrupts. “Umm . . . actually, it’s ‘professor,’ not ‘doctor.’”

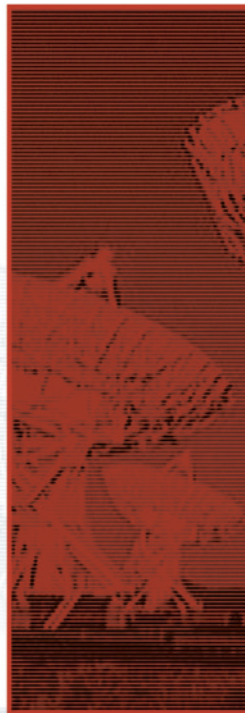
“Whatever,” says the first voice, sounding gruff and impatient.

“They work for Department-7,” says the nasal voice. “But that might be secret.”

“Not no more, it ain’t,” says the first voice. “Look, whoever’s here to meet Professor Bog- . . . Bogda . . . how the heck do you say this? Bohg-da-NO-vich?”

“Bog-DAN-ovich,” replies the nasal voice. “All together . . . really quickly . . . Bogdanovich.”

“Right,” says the first voice crisply. “Anyone here who actually wants Professor B. should pick up a white courtesy phone before we strangle him.”



Several white courtesy phones are conveniently placed around the area. Any hero who picks one up and asks for Professor Bogdanovich is immediately patched through to the desk where he is standing. The much-harassed airline employee manning the desk immediately turns the phone over to Bogdanovich.

The hero must then convince the professor that he or she has legitimately been sent to pick him up. This process can be as easy or difficult as you want to make it. Once the hero convinces him that he or she is legitimate and tells him where his escort is waiting, he begins making his way to the luggage carousels.

1b. The Disembarkation Mambo

By the time the professor arrives, bags, suitcases, duffels, and boxes have begun to tumble down onto the conveyor and lazily circle the carousel, but no bag resembling his has yet emerged. Passengers crowd around, waiting for their luggage to roll by.

Connecting with Professor B.

Once Professor Bogdanovich enters the baggage claim area, anyone who has been watching for him can make a Spot check (DC 15) to notice him. This check may be repeated once per round as long as a character is actively seeking him.

GM Character: The professor has already forgotten anything the characters told him about how to find them—indeed, he has forgotten that he has anyone waiting for him at all. His attention is focused on the baggage carousel from the moment he sees it.

Development: Should a hero approach Bogdanovich, he looks startled, but responds normally to anyone greeting him by name. Once the heroes identify themselves, he remembers who they are and why they are there. He says he'll be ready to go as soon as he collects his bag.

If the heroes ask any of the following questions, Bogdanovich responds as indicated below.

- What does your bag look like?
“It’s a yellow and pink thing. You can’t miss it.”
- Why did you check a bag containing such important material instead of carrying it on with you?
“Because it was heavy. Besides, I was afraid I’d leave it on the plane or lying around the airport lounge. I thought it would be better to let the airline take care of it. After all, they handle luggage every day—they’d never lose it.”
- Are you sure the devices inside can survive rough handling?
“I’m sure I’ll be able to get them working in time for the demonstration.”

Bogdanovich answers any other questions the heroes have as best he can, though he is still focused on retrieving his bag.

Bag Frenzy

Once the heroes have had a chance to speak with the professor a bit, establish the position of each hero and GM character and determine how much of the luggage on the

carousel each one can see. Have each hero roll for initiative, and do so for each GM character, then establish an initiative order for actions. Characters must begin acting in initiative order as soon as the first of the identical bags emerges. Whether the heroes realize it or not, they’re technically “in combat” to try to identify and take control of the bag as soon as anyone sees it (see encounter 1c, below). The carousel is automatically last in initiative order, so it moves after everyone has acted for the round.

There are currently fifty bags on the carousel. Each round, 1d4–1 new bags roll onto the conveyor and 1d4+4 bags are removed from it. On each round that at least one new bag appears, there is a 25% chance that the grouping contains one of the identical bags. If one appears and it is not the only piece of luggage that emerged that round, there is a 20% chance that two identical bags have entered the carousel at the same time. Continue to roll for the presence of the identical pieces of luggage until all four of them (those belonging to the four GM characters on the plane) have emerged. Each time one of these bags appears, roll randomly on 1d4 to determine whose it is (rerolling if two bags come up with the same owner), and make sure you keep track of that information.

As soon as one of the identical bags moves into view on the carousel, each character who is looking for that kind of bag may make a Spot check (DC 10) to notice it (except Larabee Hosquith, who automatically notices every bag). Anyone who sees the bag may take an action on his or her turn—all others remain flat-footed until they succeed at a Spot check. Each character must make a separate Spot check for each identical bag in his or her field of view.

1c. Did You Check the Tag?

As GM, you must identify the owner of each bag when it appears and keep track of it throughout the adventure, so that you know where each person’s bag actually is. But you must do so without giving the heroes any more information than they have legitimately gained. Some heroes may be aware of only certain bags, while others are aware of different ones. Some may remain completely oblivious to all the bags unless actually presented with one. The heroes should be more than a bit confused, but you should not be.

GM Characters: At present, five of the six GM characters are on the scene: Professor Bogdanovich, Eunice van Hoskins, Peter Buck, Larabee Hosquith, and Hugh Fredericks.

Development: Each GM character reacts differently to the appearance of one of the identical bags, as given below. If Professor Bogdanovich ends up with the wrong bag, go to encounter 2, below, when the characters realize the error.

Professor Bogdanovich

The professor is willing to follow any instructions the characters issue. In the absence of orders to the contrary, however, he attempts to pick up each bag that resembles his own and check the luggage tag. If the tag bears his name, he puts the bag at his feet and waits for instructions. Otherwise, he puts it back onto the carousel. Oddly, he continues to check tags in this manner even after he has identified one bag as his own. He’s just so obsessive that he feels a compulsion to check every bag.

Dr. Fredericks

Hugh Fredericks waits until he sees Professor Bogdanovich alone with a bag of the correct description—even if the professor has not yet claimed that bag as his own. Fredericks makes his way over to the professor and feigns a warm greeting, as though the two were old friends. This behavior momentarily rattles the professor because the two have always been rivals—though Fredericks always took criticism more personally than Bogdanovich did.

Hugh tries to time his approach so that as few of the heroes as possible are watching. Ideally, he waits until the heroes are wrangling with some of the other GM characters over identical bags. When he decides the moment is right, he sets his bag down beside the professor's, offers him some flowery compliments, and engages in scientific chitchat. While Bogdanovich is distracted, Fredericks attempts to use his Sleight of Hand skill (opposed by a single Spot check made by one of the heroes at the scene, or by the professor's if no heroes are present) to pick up the other bag. If successful, Hugh immediately exits the terminal, gets into a taxi, and orders the driver to take him to a downtown hotel. Should the heroes track Hugh to his hotel later, see encounter 2 and Further Adventures, below.

If Hugh is caught trying to leave with Bogdanovich's bag, he feigns indignation at any suggestion that he might be trying to steal the professor's research, then storms off in a huff. Once he is out of sight, he uses his Hide and Move Silently skills to try to get close enough for a second attempt.

The real sticking point in Hugh's plan is that since he makes his move as quickly as possible, the bag the professor is standing beside may not be his own.

Eunice van Hoskins

Eunice stands back while Simon gathers up her eight pieces of luggage. The bag that contains the gems is the odd one; the other seven pieces are a matched set. Eunice points out each piece as it goes by, even though Simon knows perfectly well what her luggage looks like.

If she sees someone else pick up one of the identical bags before she has claimed one, she orders Simon to go and retrieve it immediately. She refuses to believe that any such bag could belong to someone else until she inspects the luggage tag herself.

Once she notices that there are several such bags in the vicinity, she orders Simon to collect them all so that she may personally inspect them and then distribute them to their rightful owners.

Simon follows Eunice's orders to the letter. He is more than willing to start or continue a fistfight to get what she wants. Such an event, however, does draw the attention of Airport Security (see encounter 1e, below).

Peter Buck

Peter Buck is convinced that Larabee Hosquith is following him. He is far too nervous about this possibility to notice that there are several identical bags in the area. All he wants to do is make his escape. Thus, he grabs the first bag he sees that resembles his own and tries to flee.

If he sees Larabee reaching for a bag identical to his own, Peter comes completely unglued. He rushes over to Hosquith and attempts to bull rush him out of the way. If he is successful, he grabs the bag and runs away as quickly as possible. Once outside the terminal, he gets into a taxi and tells the driver to take him to a downtown hotel. Buck does not stop to determine whether the bag he has snatched is actually his own until he is safely checked into his hotel room.

Larabee Hosquith

Larabee Hosquith retrieves his other checked bag immediately upon reaching the carousel. He takes it into the men's room, removes his gun, and puts it into the concealed carry holster he wears before returning to the luggage carousel to look for the bag full of documents.

Larabee is the only character who automatically notices each of the identical bags as they come onto the conveyor. He also notices the bag that Hugh Fredericks is carrying and immediately becomes suspicious of him.

Hosquith believes that the identical bags are part of some complex sting operation that his colleagues at the SEC have set up to catch him. He figures that his best chance to escape clean is to act professional. Thus, he makes his way over to any character who claims one of the identical bags, flashes his badge, and asks politely to see the contents. If the bag is not his, he thanks the character politely and moves on to the next. If the bag the character holds does happen to be Larabee's, he says so firmly and demands to be allowed to take possession of it. If he succeeds in getting his own bag, Hosquith leaves the building, gets into a taxi, and heads for a downtown hotel.

If anyone tries to leave the terminal with one of the bags before Hosquith has found his own, or refuses to let him examine a bag, or doesn't hand over a bag after Hosquith has identified it as his, he draws his gun and orders that person to surrender the bag. The gun, of course, draws the attention of Airport Security (see encounter 1e, below).

Id. And Then the Trouble Began

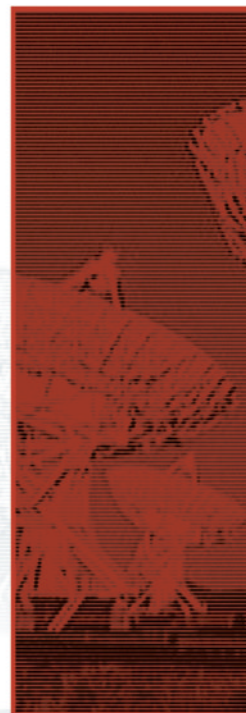
About 2 minutes after the first of the identical bags hits the conveyor, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

A young woman with shoulder-length brown hair, dressed in faded jeans, a belly shirt, and generic sneakers, breaks into the crowd surrounding carousel #5. She is carrying a bag identical to the one Professor Bogdanovich is looking for.

"Help!" she shouts, looking over her shoulder frantically. "Help! My boyfriend is going to hit me again!"

About twenty paces behind the young woman runs an overweight, greasy-haired man whose face is set in a murderous scowl. He is shaking his fist in her general direction.

GM Characters: Judy Bannister has just arrived on the scene, closely followed by Mac the Hack, the taxi driver. Anyone who saw Mac run away from his cab in encounter 1a, above, immediately recognizes this man as the taxi driver. Any hero who does not recognize him may attempt a Sense



Motive check (DC 20) or a Knowledge (behavioral sciences) check (DC 25). Success convinces the character that this man is not the woman's boyfriend, and that although he is very angry, violence is not his main objective.

If a hero approaches him calmly, the greasy man explains that he is a taxi driver and points to his cab (which is now being ticketed by the airport police) outside the terminal window. He insists that Judy stiffed him for a \$75 fare from the city. (Actually, the fare was only \$25, but he believes he's owed more now because of all this inconvenience.) The taxi driver may be as easy or difficult to scare off as you wish, but he does not leave happily unless someone—he doesn't care who—pays him \$30 or more. If the situation gets too out of hand, two Airport Security officers (see encounter 1e, below) arrive to break up the altercation. They pointedly suggest that the driver get back to his taxi before it is towed away, and he grudgingly obeys.

Mac the Hack (Tough Ordinary 4): CR 3; Medium-size human; HD 4d10; hp 30; Mas 15; Init +5; Speed 30 ft.; Defense 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Occupation: Blue Collar (class skills: Drive, Intimidate, Repair).

Skills: Drive +11, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (streetwise) +8, Listen +1, Navigate +4, Repair +8, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert.

Development: While Mac is creating a distraction, Judy tries to use her Sleight of Hand skill to switch her bag with someone else's. (If Eunice van Hoskins is nearby, she preferentially tries for her bag, since Eunice looks rich).

If people get too upset at Judy, she attempts to befriend a male hero with her charm ability. If successful, she tries to get that hero to protect her. Depending on the situation, she may stick close to her selected hero for safety (wheeling her way into the group, if possible), or she may try to pick his pocket, switch bags, and disappear into the crowd.

Judy Bannister is the key to bringing all the groups together again, if need be. See encounter 2, below.

1e. Raising A Ruckus

The authorities generally frown on any kind of loud disturbance at an airport, and they tend to be especially sensitive about violent altercations—particularly those that involve firearms.

GM Characters: If extended shouting matches or raucous disagreements over ownership of luggage occurs, 1d6 members of the Airport Security force arrive within 1 round. They begin by politely suggesting that everyone calm down. If that tactic fails, they begin using nightsticks, stun guns, and handcuffs to take people into custody. Should they have to use force, another 3d6 security personnel appear 1 round later to back them up.

Airport Security Guard (Tough Ordinary 4): CR 3; Medium-size human; HD 4d10; hp 34; Mas 15; Init +1; Speed 30 ft.; Defense 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, nightstick) or +5 melee (1d3+2 electricity,

stun gun); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, nightstick) or +5 melee (1d3+2 electricity, stun gun); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (class skills: Diplomacy, Listen).

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (current events) +2, Listen +9, Spot +10.

Feats: Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Nightstick (treat as a club), stun gun, pair of steel handcuffs.

Development: The heroes may attempt to get out of trouble with Airport Security by claiming a connection with Department-7, or any other organization they work for. This tactic may work at first, but if the trouble becomes so serious that the guards start arresting people, they arrest the heroes as well. They figure that it's better to end the disturbance first and apologize later.

Anyone arrested by Airport Security winds up having to explain his or her actions in court (see encounter 3, below).

2. LOST LUGGAGE

In all probability, one or more of the identical bags will be removed from the airport before the heroes have a chance to examine it. As long as Professor Bogdanovich has the correct bag with all his equipment, there is no reason why they need to pay any attention to the other GM characters and their various plots and problems. On the other hand, being heroes, they may decide to investigate every shady situation they come across.

If the professor's bag has been removed from the airport by someone else, however, the heroes must chase down each of the other characters until they find the missing satchel. Their assignment, after all, was to bring the Bogdanovich and his equipment safely to their final destination.

If desired, you may create suitable locales for each of the other GM characters to go to ground. But if time is of the essence, then just engineer a serendipitous turn of events that brings all the important characters to the same downtown hotel at which Department-7 is putting up the professor.

If All Else Fails

If putting all the GM characters in the same hotel strains your credulity, you can always use Judy Bannister as your tool of reunification. You can use any of the following scenarios to bring all the necessary parties together again, depending on which bag she actually stole.

- **Eunice van Hoskins:** Judy left the airport with the bag belonging to Eunice van Hoskins. The socialite refuses to allow a little strumpet like Judy to ruin her, so she sends Simon out to find the girl, retrieve the jewels, and make sure that no one ever hears from the thief again. Judy, in her blind flight from the murderous chauffeur, runs into one or more of the heroes, either in the hotel or elsewhere in town.
- **Larabee Hosquith:** The night of the airport incident, Judy's face is all over the evening news. The broadcasts

claim that she is a spy and a terrorist from a foreign nation, and that a large reward has been offered for her capture. (This propaganda is all based on tips from Larabee Hosquith.) The heroes should quickly figure out that whatever Judy is, she's not a spy. Suddenly they hear someone nearby yell, "That's her! That's the spy! Get her!"

- **Peter Buck:** The heroes see Judy checking into the hotel's Presidential Suite and paying for it in cash. But the cash she uses is actually Peter Buck's stolen counterfeit currency, and it doesn't take him (or the police) long to track her down.

2a. A Downtown Hotel

Professor Bogdanovich is staying at a five-star hotel near the Department-7 offices. Even if the heroes and Professor Bogdanovich escaped with the correct bag, however, they may not have seen the last of the other characters. If you plan to continue the adventure beyond the confines of the airport, the heroes' superior assigns them to protect the professor during his stay.

The action at the airport was very fast-paced and obvious—everyone was trying to grab the same bags at the same time in a single crowded room. But at the hotel, the action becomes much more subtle, and the adventure becomes more of a comedic thriller than a slapstick romp.

GM Characters: All six GM characters may be present at this hotel.

Development: Any GM character who has wound up with the wrong bag wants to set the matter right, and the only way to do so is to track down all the people who participated in the altercation at the airport and check their bags—surreptitiously, if possible. Thus, the professor (or any other character with one of the identical bags) might return to find his room ransacked—possibly more than once. The same could happen to the heroes' own offices, if anyone from the airport connected them with the professor and his bag.

Exactly how far to take this portion of the farce is your decision. Eventually, the other GM characters should be convinced that the professor, at least, does not have their property.

2b. Thinning the Herd

The heroes should have no trouble dealing with the various individuals from the airport. In fact, the more GM characters they manage to have arrested or otherwise eliminated, the easier it should be for them to make sense of ongoing events. But you can insert additional encounters to muddy the situation further, if desired.

GM Characters: If you want to make things more challenging for the heroes, have one of the GM characters call in backup of one sort or another. For example, Peter Buck could easily get a bunch of local thugs to help him, or Larabee Hosquith could convince local authorities to beat someone up by promising to let them in on an important bust, or Eunice van Hoskins could hire as many assistants as she feels as needed.

Eventually, though, either the heroes should solve all the various crimes and injustices, or they themselves should be captured for disturbing the peace or some other crime. In the latter case, go to encounter 3, below.

3. TELL IT TO THE JUDGE

If the heroes cause too much commotion in the course of this adventure, the police may attempt to take them into custody. This outcome may result in various longer-term campaign effects, such as loss of status in their organization, unwanted media notoriety, or other annoyances, as appropriate. As far as the plotline of this adventure is concerned, however, this development is just an opportunity to introduce another twist to the tale.

No matter what you plan for the heroes as a result of their arrest—even if it is basically nothing—they must go before a municipal judge for arraignment. Unfortunately for the heroes, the district attorney has lumped their case together with those of all the other characters arrested over the course of the adventure. In other words, the heroes are herded into the courtroom along with any GM characters who have already been arrested.

GM Characters: All the GM characters not already eliminated are here. Presiding over the court is the Honorable John Bannister, a man who is long on wisdom but short on patience. He has a splitting headache and is flabbergasted to see such a huge group of defendants brought before him at once. When he asks what is going on, *everyone* starts talking at once.

Development: When Judge Bannister requests that one person represent the group, Hugh Fredericks, Larabee Hosquith, and Eunice van Hoskins all volunteer, and hopefully at least one of the heroes does so as well. Each volunteering character must make a Charisma check, and you can allow or disallow the use of special abilities, talents, and feats to modify this check as you see fit. Judge Bannister chooses whoever gets the highest check result as the initial spokesperson.

A GM character who ends up as spokesperson describes the situation from his or her own completely biased point of view, prompting other characters (including, perhaps, the heroes) to interrupt occasionally with corrections. Judge Bannister puts up with this situation for a little while, but he eventually calls for silence, slamming his gavel down repeatedly. He threatens to have anyone who speaks out of turn drawn and quartered, keelhauled, or subjected to any number of other colorful punishments. In fact, the most he could really do is hold the offender in contempt of court and impose a fine requiring a Wealth check (Purchase DC 15) to settle. He imposes this punishment on the next character who interrupts and chooses a new spokesperson, based on a new round of Charisma checks.

The only character who does *not* speak up in court is Judy Bannister. Anyone who notices her silence may attempt a Sense Motive check (DC 10) to determine that she is actually hiding at the back of the group, pulling her collar up and turning her face away from the judge whenever possible.

Once the entire tale has been told, Judge Bannister begins asking individual characters specific questions about their involvement. Eventually he gets around to Judy, who is still hiding at the back of the group. At first she just waves him off, but when he insists that she say something, she turns around, pulls down her collar, smiles weakly, and says, "Hi, Daddy."



Judge Banister holds his head in his hands and mumbles, “I might have known.” Unless actual evidence to the contrary has been presented, the judge decides that the entire incident is Judy’s fault and releases everyone else. If the heroes can present hard evidence implicating any of the GM characters in actual crimes, the judge remands those individuals to police custody and sets the bail high enough to prevent them from gaining easy release until they can be tried in a court of law.

In either case, he tells Judy that she can choose between a jail sentence and enrollment at another boarding school, since he’s finally found one willing to accept her. She hangs her head and chooses the boarding school, intending to make her escape from it as soon as possible.

REWARDS

Standard experience point rewards apply for defeating, overcoming, or outwitting all the opponents in this adventure. If the heroes manage to have Larabee Hosquith, Eunice van Hoskins, or Peter Buck arrested for their crimes, appropriate Wealth bonus awards also apply.

Since this adventure is relatively light on combat, you might also want to hand out experience point bonuses for quick thinking or good roleplaying. Be sure, however, that such rewards are for good gamesmanship, not good die rolls.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

A Funny Thing Happened At Carousel #5 is largely a self-contained adventure. Although Professor Bogdanovich and his experiment were the hooks that brought the heroes into the tale, they have little to do with the outcome.

The Professor’s Experiments

If you like the Bogdanovich character, you can devise further adventures in which Department-7 assigns the heroes to test the professor’s device. Such an adventure series could culminate in the heroes acquiring a unique piece of equipment as well as a scientific resource and ally in Henry Bogdanovich. Although his work thus far has been focused on only one area of research, the professor’s skills and abilities make him well suited for many different realms of scientific inquiry.

Dueling Scientists

If Professor Bogdanovich becomes a permanent part of the campaign, then Dr. Hugh Fredericks should as well. He and Bogdanovich have been rivals for years, and he is bound to resent the heroes for derailing his plot to humiliate the professor.

Hugh can pop up from time to time in the campaign, always trying to steal or undermine Bogdanovich’s work. Eventually, he may join (or even found) an organization that directly opposes the heroes and Department-7.

Little Ms. Trouble

Judy Bannister can also provide fodder for continuing adventures, particularly if she and one of the heroes actually hit it

off during the course of this tale. She might decide to relentlessly pursue the hero and convince him that she’s the perfect woman for him, or she might just poke her nose into the group’s business at inopportune moments. Even if Judy has no interest in the heroes at all, her knack for getting into trouble makes her a perfect catalyst for other disasters that might require the heroes’ intervention.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stan! has been publishing fiction, cartoons, and games professionally since 1982. He has served as a graphic designer and line editor for West End Games, an editor and designer for TSR, Inc., and an author, senior designer, and creative director for Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Stan! is currently involved in freelance writing, game design, and illustration, and he is the creative vice president for The Game Mechanics, Inc. <www.thegamemechanics.com>. His recent projects include *URBAN ARCANA*, for Wizards of the Coast, and the *Modern Player’s Companion, Volume 2*, for The Game Mechanics.

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