

Reap the Whirlwind

An Adventure - Entertainment
For Castle Falkenstein
By
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Sowing the seeds of the wind

“With a whim I can rain lightning down upon their heads, up-root buildings, destroy entire harvests and sink whole fleets! I command the very power of the heavens. I am a God! And like all gods I will have my homage or they will be crushed beneath my heel!”

A slighted madman holds Britain to ransom from his secret liar. Only a small band of Heroes stand ready to oppose him but can any mortal or Faerie triumph against a man who has yoked the power of the elements to his will?

A Note from the Author

“Reap the Whirlwind” is a fairly generic adventure in the “slighted-scientist-holds-the-world-to-ransom-to-prove-his-genius” style. It is set in England in the year 1871 but the date and location can be altered to fit the Host’s campaign. If Mr. Mycroft Holmes is used but at a latter date the Host is advised to increase his Connections to Great or perhaps even Exceptional.

The Adventure requires one of the Heroes to be skilled in Tinkering such as a Steam Engineer, Inventor or Babbage Technician and it will be an advantage if the Heroes have a reputation for being people who can be trusted in a crisis.

Dramatise Personae in Order of Appearance

Mr. Mycroft Holmes (A Civil Servant)

A brilliant mind housed in a lethargic body Mr. Holmes is a young civil servant working in the Home Office. He has no love of the Steam Lords and, while he would never do anything as tiring as join The Second Compact, is sympathetic to their aims.

Athletics: Pr, Connections: Gd, Education: Exc, Fisticuffs: Pr, Perception: Ext
Notable Equipment: none

Detective Inspector Coleman (A Traitor)

Few would suspect that Coleman, a respected member of Her Majesties Police Force, is a traitor in the employ of Dr. Tempest. Coleman was unaware of Mr. Holmes investigation of the scientists’ disappearance, only getting involved after the Ocean Zephyr incident.

Once he has met the Heroes he will endeavour to stay close to them and keep Dr. Tempest informed of their activities.

Athletics: Gd, Charisma: Gd, Comeliness: Gd, Courage: Gd, Fisticuffs: Gd, Marksmanship: Grt, Perception: Gd, Physique: Gd, Stealth: Gd
Notable Equipment: Revolver, Notebook and pen, handcuffs

Dr. Tempest’s Soldiers (Hired Goons)

Cut-throats and ruffians hired by Dr. Tempest for protection and to act as foot soldiers. Despite their colourful uniforms they are little more than common-or-garden rampsmen.

Fisticuffs: Gd, Physique: Gd

Notable Equipment: Revolver, Sword, Black and silver uniform (Chapter 6 only) rifle or carbine

Master Douglas Prism-Maker (A Dwarven Craftsman)

Prism-Maker is one of the finest makers of precision glass instrumentality in New Europa. To this end Dr. Tempest hired him to create the Tempest Prisms which make his Weather Manipulating Apparatus function.

Craftsmanship: Grt (Ext when dealing with glass), Love of Metal: Gd, Physique: Grt, Tinkering: Grt (Exc when dealing with glass)

Notable Equipment: None

Dr. Tempest (aka Dr. William Blaker) (A Mad Scientist)

Rejection of his research into weather control has turned the egotistical Dr. Blaker into the megalomania called Dr. Tempest. He plans to hold Great Britain to ransom as proof of his superior intellect. Dr. Tempest is a small man and at his core a coward. He is easily provoked into either bragging or fits of rage.

Education: Grt, Helmsmanship: Gd, Invention: Exc, Marksmanship (with his “Weather Manipulation Apparatus”): Grt, Natural Sciences: Exc, Perception: Grt, Tinkering: Exc

Notable Equipment: Black and silver uniform with medals, sashes, etc., sword

Captain Maximillian Krayse (A Mercenary)

Cpt. Krayse is a ruthless gun-for-hire who has sold his skills across New Europa. His only loyalty is to himself and money and he is more than willing to abandon his employer if it looks like the source of the latter has dried up. He is disfigured by a vicious scare that twists the left side of his face.

Athletics: Gd, Comeliness: Pr, Courage: Grt, Education: Gd, Fisticuffs Grt, Fencing: Grt, Helmsmanship: Grt, Leadership: Grt, Marksmanship: Gd, Physique: Gd

Notable Equipment: Revolver, Sword, Black and silver uniform

And a cast of sundry characters too numerous to name.

God Save the Queen!

Chapter One

What has gone before.

Dr. William Blaker was a scientist of great potential but little recognition. His tremendous ego, which demanded that all had to acknowledge his towering intellect, alienated the scientific community until he was considered little more than a charlatan. Of course, Blaker was convinced that they were envious of his abilities. When one of his experiments was destroyed by bad weather Dr. Blaker became obsessed with controlling the very elements. After making what he saw as a breakthrough in his research he turned to The Ministry of Science and Innovation for funding. Not only did they refuse to endorse him but also openly questioned the soundness of his judgement.

Crushed and humiliated Blaker withdrew from the world and threw himself into his research. First by selling off his family estate and then by turning his technical skills to crime, Blaker financed his research. Years later, having completed his masterpiece, Blaker stepped forth into the world again. Gone was the failed scientist whom the world had mocked, in his place stood a man of power, a man who would be feared by all; Dr. Tempest!

First Dr. Tempest had the five members of the Ministry's Review Panel who had mocked his invention kidnapped so they could see his greatness at first hand and then he sent a communiqué to The Government demanding that they pay him handsomely not to destroy England. When the authorities ignored his demands Dr. Tempest set his sights on a very public display of his power.

Dr. Tempest's Weather Manipulating Apparatus:

Dr. Tempest's masterpiece is a machine of *titanic* proportions, which completely fills one tower of Scar Castle and catacombs beneath. While most of it is a maze of *crackling transformers* and *rubberised cables*, the central chamber is filled with electrical *arcs*, rotating *lenses* and shiny *mirrors* clustered around the massive *Tempest Lens*. *Whirring Babage Engines* operate the evil weapon.

The device can control weather patterns many *hundreds of miles* away and effect an area the size of a *city* causing up to *Horrible* damage.

The Storm Crow:

Dr. Tempest's preferred method of transport (when he must go anywhere) is an airship of his own design called The Storm Crow. This vessel is a hydrogen-based *dirigible* constructed of *metalized fabric* stretched over *thin metal ribs* with large "fish-eye" *observation bubbles*. Banks of *sulphuric acid/lead batteries* power large *wooden propellers* that can drive the craft for *up to a week*. It is controlled by a large brass *ship's wheel* on the bridge. The *large* craft carries up to *ten passengers and crewed*. It is armed with a smaller version of *Dr. Tempest's Weather Manipulating Apparatus* that can inflict *Fearsome* damage.

Chapter Two

The Last Voyage of the Ocean Zephyr

In which our Heroes come to the rescue of many innocent lives put in danger by an unexpected and unseasonable blizzard.

The Heroes are in Dover awaiting the arrival of the Inman Line's newest and best Vane Clipper "The Ocean Zephyr". Why they are there is up to the Host and Players. Perhaps they have shares in the company, are awaiting the arrival of friends (or one of the Player's Dramatic Personas) or are simply one of the hundreds who have come to see the arrival of "*the most luxurious vessel on the eight seas*" with telescopes and field glasses.

It is a clear and bright day in late April and the vane clipper holds many of New Europa's social elite, coming for the start of the English Season.

As The Ocean Zephyr makes its final approach to the harbour a blast of arctic wind strikes the area; causing gasps of shocked surprise from the crowd and many hats to be lost. Within seconds the clear sky is covered in heavy grey cloud, the sea begins to foam and boil and stinging snow is being carried by the howling winds. Taken of guard by this sudden blizzard the vane clipper fails to make the turn into the harbour, crashes into the harbour wall and begins to sink.

Whether they have friends on-board the stricken vessel or not the Heroes, as Men and Women of Action, will no doubt be amongst the first to go to the rescue. They will have to brave raging waters, panicking masses and falling rigging, while all the while being subjected to arctic conditions. An ambitious Host may wish to play-out the rescue in full. Otherwise simply play out the first few rounds and then use the following procedure to complete the scene. Have each Hero which of their traits they make most use of during the rescue and why. For example a Dashing Hussar might use *Leadership* to organise rescue parties, a Faerie could employ his *Etherealness* to fly people to safety and an Adventuress could use her *Courage* to persevere (When All Seems Lost). Have each Player make a Good difficulty check using that attribute (the Host is encouraged to use cards in opposition to simulate the adverse weather conditions) with the following outcomes:

Critical Failure:

The Hero quickly finds himself out-of-his-depth and has to be rescued himself! (The Hero might, at the Host's discretion, take a serious injury.)

Failure:

The Heroes presence did little to save the day, she always found herself in the wrong place at the wrong time to be much help. (The Hero might, at the Host's discretion, take a minor injury).

Partial Success:

The Hero acquitted himself admirably though there were others who did greater deeds.

Full Success:

The Hero was always in the thick of things and there are dozens of men, women and children who owe their lives to her quick wits and courage.

Spectacular Success:

The Hero performed Herculean feats of bravery, cheating the grim reaper again and again over the course of the rescue. The Heroes actions and name will be in of tomorrow's papers and forever linked with the day's events.

The blizzard will depart as suddenly as it arrives just as the rescue comes to an end.

Chapter Three

Mr. Holmes of Her Majesty's Government

In which our Heroes learn of a threat to The Empire.

Much later then they planned the Heroes will arrive back at Waterloo Station, exhausted and possibly injured from their efforts. The station is packed with relatives of The Ocean Zephyr's crew and passengers as well as representatives of The Press and the curious through the platform of a glance at the train's passengers. No sooner have the Heroes disembarked (perhaps to a tremendous round of applause if they performed well in chapter 2) when Detective Inspector Coleman and two uniformed officers force their way through the crowd. Addressing himself primarily to the Hero know for his or her technical skills, Coleman will inform them that they are required at Scotland Yard.

A short cab journey latter (assuming they agree) the Heroes find themselves in a small but pleasant office with Coleman and a young and very over weight man who introduces himself as Mr. Mycroft Holmes, a minor civil-servant.

Holmes will impart the following information to the Heroes:

- ✂✂ It has come to his department's attention that several noted scientists have disappeared over the last few weeks.
- ✂✂ All five had severed on The Ministry of Science and Innovation's funding panel and suspicion fell on inventors and the like who were turned down for financial aid.
- ✂✂ One man in particular looked very suspicious; a Dr. William Blaker, considered by many to be a crackpot or charlatan. Blaker was denied funding for his "Weather Manipulating Apparatus". His current were about is unknown.
- ✂✂ Today he discovered that a week ago Scotland Yard had received a letter signed "Dr. Tempest" threatening to unleash destructive storms across England if the sum of One Million Pounds was not wired to a Zurich bank account every year. The authorities had dismissed the demands as nonsense, until today...

Mr. Holmes will show the Hero most known for her scientific and/or technical skill Dr. Blaker's initial design for the Weather Manipulating Apparatus (which he had submitted to the Financing Panel) and ask "could such a device really control the weather and create such a sudden and powerful blizzard as was seen in Dover?!" On a Partial Success or better on an *Exceptional* Invention, Natural Sciences or Tinkering check the Hero will determine two things; firstly that with a lot of refinement the device depicted could indeed control the weather. Secondly that the most vital component, a complicated chamber of mirrors and prisms, could only be constructed to the exacting specifications shown by six craftsman in all the world; two in America, three on the Continent and one here in England.

Excited by this news Mr. Holmes will (once he has the names of the six) arrange for telegrams to be sent to the craftsman in American and on the Continent. He will also ask the Heroes to pay a personal call on the one in England, a dwarf called Master Douglas Prism-Maker, and to enquire if he has received a commission for such a contraption. He asks the Heroes to contact him at the Diogenes Club as soon as they learn anything. Inspector Coleman will volunteer to come with them.

Chapter Four

What occurred at the workshop of Master Prism-Maker

In which our Heroes cross swords with the forces of Dr. Tempest and the villain's lair is discovered.

Master Prism-Maker lives in the industrial city of Manchester. When the Heroes reach the station to begin their journey Insp. Coleman will head off to commission a "Special" to take them to their destination. At the same time he will send a telegram to Dr. Tempest warning him that the Heroes and the authorities are on his trail.

Under the control of the Steam Lords much of the city is made of smoke spewing factories which produce the materials, such a steel and cotton, which drive The Empire and the squalid estates where the factory workers live. The dwarf's home, a combined house and workshop, is in one of the more genteel, almost pleasant, neighbourhoods. Dr. Tempest's agents have arrived first and are currently inside. The four of them have tied up the dwarf and are searching the house for anything that could give away Dr. Tempest's lair. Cpt. Krayse and The Storm Crow are nearby, hidden in the thick clouds of smoke which cover Manchester, waiting to collect the agents. Upon arrival the Heroes discover a sign hanging from the front door declaring that the workshop is shut. If the Heroes announce their presence by knocking, etc. the four thugs inside will stop searching and wait in silence for the Heroes to go away, one holding a pistol to Prism-Maker's head to ensure his co-operation. Coleman will suggest going to the nearest police station to obtain a warrant to enter the premises (a delaying tactic). He will be dead set against forcing an entry or otherwise sneaking in. However fate is on the Heroes side as, moving closer to a window to hear what is going on, one of the thugs knocks over a box of tools which clatter to the ground with a noise which can easily be heard by the Heroes.

If the Heroes do not announce their presence when they first arrive but slip quietly into the house they will almost catch the four villains off-guard but Coleman will bang his toe and curse in and attempt to warn them.

When a fight ensues between the Heroes and Dr. Tempest's Soldiers (as it almost certainly will) one of the villain's first actions will be to fire a flare out of a window. This is a signal for an emergency pick-up by The Storm Crow. However as the craft gets closer Krayse will assess the situation throw his field-glasses and abandoning his men, attempt to flatten the workshop with bolts of lightning from The Storm Crow's Weather Control Apparatus. He will employ the Infernal Device again to ensure his escape by creating a thick fog. Insp. Coleman will do nothing to give himself away though he will do his best to make sure that none of Dr. Tempest's soldiers survive.

From Master Prism-Maker (or his documentation if he has somehow been killed in the fight) the Heroes will be able to determine that over the last two years he has created a pair of mirror and prism chambers, which match Dr. Blaker's blue-print, for "The Scar Castle Restoration Company".

Chapter Five

A Call to Arms

In which a council of war is called and brave deeds are required.

Assuming that the Heroes inform Mr. Holmes of their discovery (either by returning to London or, more likely, by telegram) he will inform them that Dr. Tempest has been busy. In a special edition The Times have printed a letter from Tempest claiming responsibility for the destruction of The Ocean Zephyr and threatening to destroy London if the government does not meet his demands in twenty-four hours. Mr. Holmes will ask the Heroes to stay where they are while he makes "a few arrangements".

After an hour or so a military Helio-Copter will land near the Heroes and the officer on board will tell them that he has orders to convey them. Insp. Coleman (and Mr. Holmes if the Heroes came all the way back to London) to Glasgow.

Upon arrival at the docks the Heroes will see the titanic form of "The Thunderchild", a Royal Navy "Dreadnought" class warship, one of the most powerful war machines in the world. Escorted on board the Heroes will find Mr. Holmes (if he didn't come with them) debating with the ship's commanding officer Admiral Yates. The Admiral has orders to land a large force of marines on the island to arrest everyone they find or, if necessary, level the island with the Thunderchild's main guns. Mr. Holmes is dead set against the idea pointing out that five respected scientists may be being held on the island not to mention what disasters Dr. Tempest might unleash if his hand was forced. Instead he will suggest that a small force be landed on the island by steam launch to rescue the scientists and, if possible, sabotage the Weather Manipulation Apparatus. Assuming the Heroes don't volunteer at once, Mr. Holmes will ask them if they think they are up to the task.

If they agree the Heroes will be shown a map of the Isle of Scar. It is an unexciting place, less than a mile across, mostly flat and fern covered. The only structure of note is the castle built on raised ground in the centre, this is where Mr. Holmes believes Dr. Tempest's base is.

Chapter Six

The Man who threw Lightning Bolts

In which our Heroes enter the lair of Dr. Tempest in order to free his captives and end his mad schemes.

The Heroes will be landed on the island at night in a special steam launch, which is smokeless and almost silent. They will have been supplied with gunpowder charges and any conventional weapons they feel they may need.

Assuming that the Heroes do nothing foolish they will be able to reach the castle without incident, however once there they will find its walls patrolled by Dr. Tempest's Soldiers.

Dr. Tempest is not using the entire castle; much of it is a ruin. His forces are deployed in two of the corner towers and the courtyard as follows:

- ✂✂ The lower storeys of one tower serves as barracks for his soldiers (there are roughly thirty of them) while the upper storeys have Cpt. Maximillian and Dr. Tempest's chambers. If necessary Dr. Tempest can cross the castle parapets straight to the control chamber for his Weather Manipulating Apparatus.
- ✂✂ The Storm Crow waits in the central courtyard. It is primed and can be launched at a moment's notice. There is a set of stairs going down into the ground leading to a small dungeon where the missing scientists are being held. Both the stairs and the entrance to the airship are always guarded
- ✂✂ A second tower (connected by the castle wall to the first) has had its floors removed to form a stone funnel, in which is housed the above ground portion of the Weather Manipulation Apparatus. The controls for the Infernal Device are on a platform at the top (but still inside) of the tower. This area is constantly guarded.

This chapter can be as simple or as complicated as The Host wishes:

If The Host wants a more dramatic and longer finale, Coleman has been able to warn Dr. Tempest and his forces are lying in wait for the Heroes. Dr. Tempest and his cronies will endeavour (with help from Coleman) to capture the Heroes alive so they can witness the Weather Manipulation Apparatus in all its glory as Dr. Tempest unleashes the fury of the elements upon London.

For a quicker ending Coleman will have been unable to warn Dr. Tempest. He will wait until the Heroes are either attempting to free the captives or set the charges (whichever they do first) and then draw a gun on one of the Heroes, in an attempt to take a hostage, and raise the alarm.

In either option Cpt. Maximillian will attempt to escape in The Storm Crow when things turn against him. For dramatic effect Dr. Tempest should make his final stand in the control chamber of the Weather Manipulation Apparatus and fall to his death into the device's electrically charged interior.

The crisis over the Heroes and the scientists will be picked up by the Royal Navy and transported back to London where they will receive the hearty thanks of Her Majesty's Government.

The End

God Save the Queen!