

# FALSE DAWN

Genocide is not merely a brutal tool of the concentration camps liberated by the Allied advance. A more insidious form has stalked the territories subjugated by Hitler for a decade. Nazi intellectuals and party officials have picked through the spoils, seeking Aryan glory and personal profit alike. Family heirlooms, dealers' inventory, religious implements, library stock and museum collections were all targets. Now that the war is winding down in Europe, someone needs to try and sort things out.

But not every owner was harmed – some aesthetes made good money dealing with the Nazis, even at the expense of their countrymen – and not every *objet d'art* is harmless. And since Stalin appears just as rapacious as Hitler, not every German will remain an enemy.

## Setting

False Dawn is a *Trail of Cthulhu* setting which takes place at the end of World War Two and the beginning of the postwar cleanup. Most of continental Western Europe is open to this setting. France and the Low Countries were the primary foreign victims of German looting (although Jewish communities across Axis-held regions suffered indiscriminately). Neutral nations like Spain and Switzerland were involved in the preservation and trade of artworks as well. Activity is possible in Poland and Hungary – countries which were looted twice – since it takes several years for the Iron Curtain to descend. Even fascist allies Italy and Austria endured the depredations of their more powerful neighbor (Austria, divided like Germany until the 1950s, is an excellent spot for similar intrigues in the capital and along the zone borders).

Of course, a good deal of the areas investigators will frequent have been bombed to the point of destruction. Installations of the enemy, like crumbling fortifications and haunted camps, may yet hold secrets. The bulk of looted artifacts can be found in identified or hidden repositories, but much has been moved to centralized collection points under Allied guard. The liberators have set up their own network of control; bases and DP camps will also be visited frequently. In urban locales, churches and museums are looking for items taken from them at the start of the war. Their claims need scrutiny, especially if an object's provenance indicates a dark history and other claimants who may step forward for themselves.

## Style

Dealing with this grim subject counsels taking a purist approach to the material therein. One logical conclusion made in this setting could be that – as evidenced by the hot war which is ending and the cold one beginning – humanity and its culture might not be worth saving.

As a pulp alternative, fans of *Delta Green* may enjoy a campaign involving the remnants of Nazi resistance in the waning days of the war. This could mean disrupting the scorched-Earth plans of Operation Werwolf, or denying the Soviets Mythos material collected by the Ahnenerbe or Sonderkommando-H. Keepers wishing to maintain the amoral nature of the conflict might consider applying the motives behind Operation Paperclip to Mythos resources rather than former Nazis.

## Mythos

Like other noir settings, False Dawn reiterates the notion that desperate people are dangerous enough regardless of the situation. Introducing the Mythos makes things worse, even when few people grasp its true significance. It is likely that anyone seeking Mythos knowledge is not doing so for its own sake; rather, it is a tool to improve their position in post-war Europe. Revenge, security, and the desire to keep one's background secret are all likely motives for seekers of Mythos artifacts.

## Investigators

Investigators are involved with the end of European operations of World War Two. Their mundane jobs involve locating looted cultural resources and identifying their owners, or checking refugees, POWs and citizens for denazification or potential communist ties. A campaign that starts early enough in 1945 may involve combat operations; a similarly dangerous option might involve identifying and shutting down "ratlines" by which war criminals fled Europe. As the Nazi threat ends and the Soviet one looms, the goal can shift from removing dangerous objects from German hands to denying Mythos objects and persons of interest to Soviet hands.

## Continuing NPCs

As a majority of the people the investigators are likely to meet are from the Continent, a listing of languages follows each entry. After each description come the languages they speak: native tongues first, then in order of fluency.

**Michael Bridges (b. 1907)** served on the S-19 during the Raid on Innsmouth before becoming a professor of Roman architecture at Miskatonic University. As a Monuments Man, he has seen evidence that more than one Ahnenerbe expedition sought items of Mythos significance. Even if one-tenth of one percent of those objects taken from their owners fits the bill, that leaves several hundred artifacts scattered across Europe for the unwitting to find. What the knowledgeable could do with them has brought the nightmares back. English, Spanish.

**Rebekah Esterhaszy (b. 1910)** advocates for claimants of heirless property looted from the Jewish population of occupied Europe. Although she is a DP, her charisma leads

other refugees to share the location of hidden objects with her for eventual retrieval. Hungarian, Yiddish, German.

**Sergeant Albert Finazzo (b. 1913)** is in charge of the 9pm-5am guard shift at the immense repository in the Bavarian salt mine of Ault-Aussee. Rumor has it he makes quite a bit of money through “midnight requisitions” and black market deals. He’s also probably greased the right palms, so that threatening exposure will fail. Still, it is nice to know that a man in his position has a price. English, Italian.

**Major Barrett Haines (b. 1894)** commands the Seventh Army’s Collection Point in Munich (other U.S.-run collection points are at Marburg and Offenbach). He is a West-Pointer who does things by the book. English.

**Nola Lancotte (b. 1902)** worked with the Occupation to ensure that the bulk of her museum’s collection remained in one place. She also informed the Resistance when major works were scheduled to head East into Nazi hands. It is likely she can find out who received those items that slipped through the partisans’ hands - especially if the investigators have information about her own missing inventory. French, English.

**Collings Manchester (b. 1907)** graduated from the SOE directly to CROWCASS\*, which is collecting data about former Nazis for use in clearing Germans for rehabilitation. Do not ask him for information about Karl Poehler; he dislikes admitting he might have hit a brick wall. English, German.

\* SHAEF’s Central Registry of War Criminals and Security Suspects.

**Karl Poehler (unknown)** surrendered to the officer in charge at a nearby bivouac in early 1945, offering to help hunt down Communist sympathizers in the region. Someone in SHAEF\* took his advice quickly, and he is setting up his own intelligence networks to ingratiate himself with the new powers in charge. German, English, Russian.

\* Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force moved from France to Frankfurt in April, 1945.

**Aleksandar Radecic (b.1887)** is a Croatian priest who spent the worst years of the war securing the Vatican archives. The pope dispatched him to the Eastern Front to retrieve Catholic artifacts in the wake of the Soviet advance. He works just as hard helping Germans with church connections flee via secret ratlines to Spain and South America. It makes little difference to him whether their crimes affected Jews or Communists. Ukrainian, Latin, Polish, Italian, Serbo-Croatian.

**Pierre Taillon (b. 1921)** never tires of sharing tales of his exploits in the Resistance, since no one else is around to tell – or dispute – them. He insists that the bulk of his family’s art collection, obtained with the profits of a famous vineyard, was appropriated by representatives of Hermann Goering without compensation. Or without *adequate* compensation, at the very least. Oddly, he has yet to bring this up with the CRA\*. French, Italian, English, German.

\* France’s Commission de Récupération Artistique.

**Alois Weber (b. 1889)** knows his days are numbered. As a member of the ERR\*, he personally plundered dozens of synagogues and occult libraries in the West. Now reduced from moving from village to village at night, his only bargaining chip is a book titled *Cultes des Goules*, which he neglected to list in the contents of a Masonic Lodge's shelves in Liège. German, French.

\* the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, which plundered the possessions of Jews in France and the Low Countries for Hitler. Much of the material appropriated from these regions was stored in Paris' Jeu de Paume and later Neuschwanstein Castle.

**Igor Vissarionovich Zhelayev (b. 1916)** is the head of the Soviet Trophy Commission located in Berlin. He has recently moved from Königsberg, where the Nazis stored the bulk of material looted from the Eastern Front. He has become obsessed with delivering the components of the Amber Room to Stalin; all he has to do is find them. Russian, German.

## Rules Variations

The primary thrust of this section is to present more options for investigators who are likely to be public servants. The remaining mechanics involve the particular nature of a game in which characters have some sort of occupational duty to investigate the Mythos. As such, they can be used for many campaigns with this framework.

## New Occupations

A number of Occupations will not typically be found in the False Dawn setting. These include Hobos, Police Detectives and Private Investigators (but see below for the latter two). In lieu of these limitations, there are additional Backgrounds for players to choose, as well as some variations of Military subspecialties. Owing to the setting, however, a disproportionate number of them are primarily for men. A single role – Auxilliary – is exclusive to women, while it is not unexpected to encounter females (in decreasing order of likelihood) serving as Resistance Fighters, Spies, Curators, Interpreters, and Attorneys. Obviously, Displaced Persons can be either gender.

The Displaced Person and Interpreter occupations are for non-British European investigators. Such characters may have any background other than Hobo, subject to the limitations described in their entries. If acceptable with the group, players may create characters with sensitive backgrounds (a good example is *Kripo* detective/reluctant Nazi Bernie Guenther); any Keeper worth the title should make concealing a notorious history an important part of the campaign.

### Attorney

As a lawyer, you are used to dealing with terrible family secrets and tomes of arcane lore. In this campaign setting, practicing American judges and attorneys participated in the Nuremberg Tribunals at the end of 1945. Most of the European ones were officers, for

which the JAG Military subspecialty can be used. German civilian lawyers served as defense counsel in war crimes cases and the nascent denazification program.

**Occupational Abilities:** Assess Honesty, Bargain, Bureaucracy or Cop Talk, Forensics or Interrogation, History, Law, Library Use.

**Credit Rating:** 4-6 (2-3 for German attorneys).

**Special:** Your command of the Law allows you to direct the wheels of justice down paths you favor. It might be possible, for example, to get a prisoner released on your recognizance, or to issue an arrest warrant on the strength of your reputation. Likewise, you can prevent a case from moving forward, question the confinement of a mental patient, or examine evidence and records that are being held in confidence for an upcoming proceeding.

## Auxiliary

You are a female serving in a support capacity for one of the armed forces. This template is suitable for members of the American WAC and British AST, as well as medical personnel.

**Occupational Abilities:** Conceal, Military Science, Oral History, Reassurance.

*General:* add Bargain, Bureaucracy, Preparedness.

*Driver:* add Driving, Mechanical Repair, Outdoorsman.

*Nurse:* add Biology, First Aid, Medicine.

**Credit Rating:** 1-5.

**Special:** General Auxiliaries and Drivers may use the Military special ability from the *Trail of Cthulhu* rules, while Nurses can use either the Military or Nurse special ability.

## Curator

Your museum was the envy of Europe before the fascists arrived. The masterpieces they did not appropriate have been squirreled away for years; soon you will have to see if they survived, and if the others have turned up in a repository or collection point.

**Occupational Abilities:** Art History, Bargain, Flattery, Forgery, History, Photography, Streetwise.

**Credit Rating:** 1-4.

**Special:** You can rely on the reputation of your museum for influence in certain circles. Because of this, you can seek favors from or otherwise interact with NPCs who have higher Credit Ratings if they would logically be impressed by your employer. This does not provide additional pool points to spend, however.

## Displaced Person

You are a refugee from a war-torn area of Europe. The memory of your previous life is probably painful but likely one of your only possessions. Design your investigator using a different occupation, but set the Credit Rating to 0. You cannot use your abilities to call on Contacts, as these acquaintances are now scattered in your wake.

**Occupational Abilities:** add Bargain, Languages, Streetwise.

**Credit Rating:** 0.

**Special:** You can blend in with the sea of other DPs, maintaining anonymity. In mechanical terms, you have a dedicated pool of 5 points which can be used to avoid the notice of hostile or authority figures when you are with others in your predicament, or if

you are in an area where your presence is not unexpected. These points can be used for applicable abilities – such as Filch, Sense Trouble, or Stealth – even if you do not have ratings in them normally.

## Interpreter

Your fluency in English makes you valuable as a translator for British and American forces. This may be the result of education or upbringing. Design your investigator using a different occupation, but set your Credit Rating at the minimum.

**Occupational Abilities:** Add Assess Honesty, Oral History. Although not an occupational ability, you must invest at least one skill point in Languages and designate a modern European tongue in which you are fluent.

**Credit Rating:** 1-3.

**Special:** Your fluency with language allows a heightened level of interaction with speakers of other tongues. You can make Interpersonal spends using points from your Language pool. This includes abilities you do not have, although the cost for such spends is increased by one.

## Military

Here are expanded specialties within the Military Occupation (see p. 15) that are found in liberated Europe. All specialties besides Corpsman/Medic include Military Science as an occupational skill.

*Army/Marines:* add Conceal, Stealth.

*Commando:* add Explosives, Stealth.

*Corpsman/Medic:* add First Aid, Medicine, Reassurance.

*Engineers/Heavy Weapons:* add Architecture, Explosives.

*Intelligence:* add Espionage, Oral History.

*JAG:* add Law, Library Use.

*Military Police:* add Cop Talk, Streetwise.

*Motor Pool:* add Driving, Mechanical Repair.

*NCO:* add Reassurance, Riding.

*Propaganda/Political Officer:* add History, Interrogation.

*Signals:* add Cryptography, Electrical Repair.

*Staff Officer:* add Bureaucracy, Flattery.

## Monuments Man

You work for Allied command as an agent for the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program. It falls to you to preserve important works of art, and possibly returned looted property to their proper owners.

**Occupational Abilities:** Art History, Assess Honesty, Bureaucracy, Evidence Collection, Forgery, Intimidation, Reassurance.

**Credit Rating:** 3-5

**Special:** When you use the Bureaucracy skill and the auspices of a multinational agency, your requests tend to be taken seriously. If you decide that a site should be protected from potential damage – either because it is dilapidated, or owing to the shoggoth in the catacombs – you'll find someone with the authority to make it so. The same applies to entering monuments or repositories that have been sealed off, if you deem it prudent to

visit them. You can throw your weight around in collection points and repositories, DP camps, and even repple depples.

### Partisan/Resistance Fighter

Your acts of struggle and sabotage diverted the resources of the occupation otherwise bound for the front. In the face of considerable danger, you stayed loyal – and noted those who collaborated.

**Occupational Abilities:** Conceal, Explosives, Forgery, Outdoorsman, Scuffling, Sense Trouble, Stealth, Streetwise, Weapons.

**Credit Rating:** 0-4.

**Special:** Now that your side has won, you can use the accolades of less patriotic countrymen to your advantage. You can interact with fellow citizens who have higher Credit Ratings as if your rating was the same. This does not provide additional pool points to spend, however. Fellow partisans are also loyal to you and can be relied upon for favors.

### Spy

You provide intelligence to the military or government, or prevent others from doing so.

**Occupational Abilities:** Cryptography, Espionage, Forgery, Photography.

*Field Agent:* add Conceal, Filch, Sense Trouble, Stealth. Members of the OSS, NKVD, and other foreign intelligence agencies use this template.

**Credit Rating:** 2-4 (as high as 5 for British and American agents).

**Special:** Field Agents develop a cover identity to protect them from discovery. In mechanical terms, you have a dedicated pool of 3 points which can be used to prevent detection. These points can be used for applicable abilities – such as Disguise or an Academic ability germane to your cover – even if you do not have ratings in them normally.

*Secret Police:* add Cop Talk, Interrogation, Law or Scuffling, Shadowing. This specialty is suitable for any counterintelligence bureau; agents with less concern for legal niceties choose Scuffling over Law.

**Credit Rating:** 1-4.

**Special:** Secret Policemen can avail themselves of the Police Detective special ability.

*Spymaster:* add Bureaucracy, Languages, Oral History, Preparedness. A subspecialty for operatives who manage spy networks in hostile countries. Capturing a high-level runner is the dream of all spycatchers.

**Credit Rating:** 3-5 (as high as 6 for British and American agents).

**Special:** For every point of Languages, you have served in a particular country, and developed reliable contacts in that nation's government or military. You do not need to identify the countries at character generation, although an increase in your Languages rating during play does not grant an additional country of service.

# New Skills

Presented below are three skills apropos for the Project Covenant setting. Of these, the Forgery skill is available to Criminal investigators as an occupational ability.

## Espionage (General)

You have learned the secrets of clandestine tradecraft. You can:

- ☒ *operate specialized equipment such as bugs and microdot readers*
- ☒ *use communications gear to send and intercept radio messages*
- ☒ *create and run spy networks in hostile territory – or identify and disrupt them on friendly ground*
- ☒ *identify intelligence agencies from around the globe, as well as their employees who operate without cover*

## Forgery (Technical)

With enough time and suitable samples, you can fake anything from signatures to entire artifacts. Your efforts can defeat simple visual analyses only; others with this skill will be able to spot tampering or even identify a particular forger's work if he is prolific enough. This ability does not convey any ability to compose written works. You can:

- ☒ *create false documents and artifacts, or modify existing ones*
- ☒ *simulate the effects of aging on materials to mask their true provenance*
- ☒ *identify forged items and deduce how they were created*

## Military Science (Academic)

You are familiar with the history, traditions and implements of warfare. This is likely the result of service in the armed forces, but could also be the product of a specialized education or an upbringing in a military family. You can:

- ☒ *spot and evaluate evidence of the use of firearms, artillery, and naval guns*
- ☒ *recall the details of particular battles, including personalities and strategems*
- ☒ *employ and direct military tactics to the benefit of a unit*
- ☒ *identify military uniforms and equipment from around the world*
- ☒ *exhibit the esprit de corps of military life, in order to blend in with or impress enlisted men and officers*
- ☒ *call on comrades or military contacts for favors and advice*

# Technology

All of the firearms in the Trail of Cthulhu rulebook can be found in the False Dawn setting. Listed below are a few more weapons commonly used by the belligerents in WW2. Although costs are listed, it is more likely that military investigators were afforded their use during service. The Browning machinegun was a common vehicle-mounted weapon.

Light Firearms (+0 damage)			
.32 MAB Model B pistol	9	\$25	French issue
.22 High Standard HDM pistol	7	\$60	OSS issue; suppressor
.32 Wellrod pistol	8	\$75	OSS/SOE/ Resistance; suppressor
Heavy Firearms (+1 damage)			
9mm Beretta M1934 pistol	7	\$35	Italian issue, Nazi adopted/trophy
.45 FP Liberator pistol	1	\$5	Resistance
.38 MAB Model D pistol	7	\$30	French issue
7.35mm Carcano M91/41 rifle	6	\$45	Italian issue
7.5mm MAS-36 rifle	5	\$30	French issue
.45 M-3A1 "Grease Gun" SMG	30	\$40	US issue; autofire
7.62mm PPSh-41 SMG	35; 71*	\$30	USSR issue/trophy; autofire
9mm Sten Mk II SMG	32	\$20	UK/Commonwealth issue; autofire
Very Heavy Firearms (+2 damage)			
.30 Browning MMG	250*	\$250	fired from tripod; autofire

\* the larger clip of the PPSh and the Browning's ammo belt provide an additional 3 and 5 points to a firer's Firearms pool, respectively. A second person manning the latter weapon can Cooperate with the main shooter per the ToC rules.

Finally, investigators can expect to use these military conveyances in postwar Western Europe.

Willys MB/Ford GPW 4x4 jeep	\$2,000	300 m	65 mph	OR; 2 crew; MG optional
White Motor Company M2 half track car	\$9,000	200 m	40 mph	OR; 2 crew + 7 pass; MG
White Motor Company M3 half track	\$10,000	175 m	45 mph	OR; 3 crew + 10 pass; 3 MG
M-4 Sherman tank	\$40,000	120 m	30 mph	OR; 5 crew; 75 mm gun & 3 MG

## Adventure Seeds

The typical setup for False Dawn scenario will involve the hunt for Mythos-related valuables, most often while others are searching as well. In the alternative, the new owner of an artifact discovers its powers and uses them to his advantage – as well as against anyone seeking to divest him of his tool. Here are some other ideas to spice up a campaign.

**The Suicide Hunters:** Karl Poehler's guidance has resulted in a number of intelligence coups against suspected Soviet agents. The most recent haul includes dossiers on the investigators, assembled by an unknown source for an unknown reason. The heroes have to clear their names as suspicion mounts. If they are being targeted because of an artifact

they liberated, they will need to retrace their steps – and hope no one is following their new trail.

**Impeachable Motives:** one murder of an imprisoned ex-Nazi might be attributable to the stressful environment, but the second is likely not a coincidence. Few of the camp's administrators can muster sympathy for these men, many of whom are suspected war criminals anyway. If the investigators uncover the connection between victims, it will lead to a larger conspiracy. Perhaps they were members of a secret Ahnenerbe or ERR detail: are they being silenced to protect a dark secret, or killed because they won't reveal it? Maybe someone is exacting revenge on the members of a cult, or offering sacrifices in furtherance of one.

**Salted Away:** Albert Finazzo approaches the investigators with a deal: find a set of icons missing from the Ault-Aussee repository. While he admits things sometimes go missing despite the best precautions, he's got enough dirt on the other guards to know that their innocence is sincere. That leaves someone more skilful than Houdini as a likely suspect – and once the heroes discover the sinister reputation of the lost treasures, someone dangerous as well.

## Pitch

"It's Indiana Jones starring in *The Third Man!*" For additional inspiration, *The Rape of Europa* (in book or documentary format) is a thorough examination of the Nazi's looting activities and the postwar response.