

BOOK I

The FIRST BRIEFING



Archie loved his faithful armchair; unfortunately the war will separate them for many years.

MYSTERIES, ACTION *and a* LITTLE BIT of HUMOUR

OPERATION: FALLEN REICH is a role-playing game of supernatural mysteries set in the shadows of World War II. It pitches photogenic British heroes against the unnatural might of Nazi Germany. Most role players know something about this era and what to expect of it. The setting gives plenty of opportunities to revel in battlefield environments, but most of the adventures take place behind the front, in scenes around the world. Scenarios might be set in gloomy English mansions, the Front Lines of France or the jungles of the Amazon.

The game is designed for fast and fun *role* playing, not slow *rule* playing. Character acting is rewarded as much as unravelling the mysteries and hunting down unknown enemies. The role playing is also supported by a system that gives the characters strong and distinctive personalities. The stage is set for lots of excitement and lots of laughs, as the characters usually are ill-suited for their missions.

WHAT WAS

OPERATION: FALLEN REICH?

OPERATION: FALLEN REICH was a top secret project initiated by Winston Churchill, Brendan Bracken, Duncan Sandys and Admiral Roger Keyes in early 1938. They had by that time recognised that war with the Third Reich was unavoidable and that they needed to find ways to destabilise the Nazi regime. Discreet but forceful action was to be taken against Nazi interests in both Germany, Britain and abroad. The secretive missions of Operation Fallen Reich were conducted by a number of small cells, each having knowledge only of what was required for its specific tasks. Only the four founders were aware of the full-scale operation. In 1942, the only official mention of the project was made in an article

in *The Times* following the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich. A British businessman claimed to belong to the project and said he took part in the planning, as he used to live in Prague. He later disappeared on his way to the office, never to be heard of again.

Doctor of History Archibald Andrews let the biscuit melt on his tongue before washing it down with a pleasant mouthful of Darjeeling. He was a short, stocky fellow, always impeccably dressed in his favourite tweed suit, which actually made him look twenty years older than his 38. He was hardly a striking figure, with thick glasses, untamed red hair and a bushy moustache; but he had an aura of self confidence and always wore a pleasant smile. This, and his peculiar sense of humour, always made him the centre of attention of the fellows in the Senior Common Room at Oxford.

He delicately put the fine china teacup down on the small table next to his armchair and sighed with satisfaction. He particularly enjoyed a late-night cup of tea before going back to work.

It was well past eight o'clock, but the room was half-full. The faculty had all been listening to a lecture. "German philosophy and the use of inter-state violence in an historic/geo-economic perspective," was offered by an exiled, long-haired German socialist from Cambridge. The whole lot had been rubbish, according to the professors, who were now settling down for their nightly banter. Most would head home before too long, or, as in Andrews' case, back to their pet projects.

"Andrews, old chap," said one of his colleagues from the Archaeological department. "What do you think? Will the Huns really start a war?"

Andrews thoughtfully leaned back in his armchair before formulating his answer.

"Well, this Hitler character is more than a little bit unpredictable--like a dreadful combination of Caligula, Napoleon Bonaparte and an hysterical monger at Portobello Market. As we used to say in the Army, 'if you want to see a megalomaniac, give a corporal the command of a company.' This Bohemian corporal has got a whole nation under his spell."

Doctor Jones, a guest from the University of Boston asked gravely, "Will you return to the Army, if things get more serious?"

With a deep laugh Andrews answered, "I hardly think so. I was in the Cavalry, and it only took me a few months of service to reach the conclusion that drinking tea while standing in the dirt was not for me. Drinking tea was the most pleasant part, compared to that awful business of riding. If I want exercise, I prefer a good game of cricket to charging over a potato field on some semi-domesticated breed of equus caballus."

An uneasy laughter broke out in the room: loud and exaggerated, perhaps revealing the collective worry for the future.

Andrews always knew how to make a good departure. "While you linger on about minor setbacks like a second world war, I will absorb myself in really important matters: the Sumerian version of cartoons manifested on five shards of clay. Good evening gentlemen."

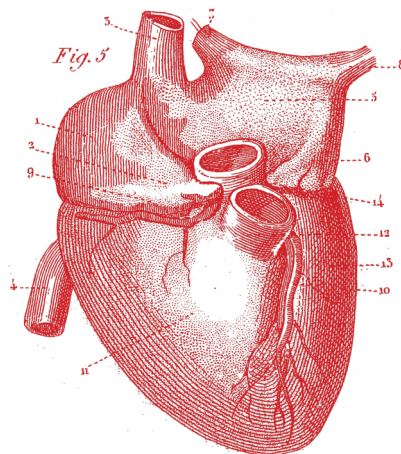
New laughs erupted as Andrews left and headed for his office.

Immediately after leaving the room, his mind switched focus to the small pieces of clay that his friend, Professor Herbert Gordon, had retrieved from an Egyptian tomb near Isis. Getting them home had proved something of an achievement. A German businessman had tried to buy them for an obscene amount of money. Then an attempt to steal them was made, just before Herbert got on a plane for Malta and managed to get back safely to old Oxford. Why someone would go through all the trouble to get their hands on such insignificant shards of clay was something of a mystery.

Andrews was deep in his own thoughts when he finally reached Herbert's room. Without bothering to knock, he went straight in and started to speak (a habit for which he was quite infamous).

"Did not Thomas Miaglo believe that Sumerian...". Andrews stopped short. Herbert Gordon was lying flat on his extremely untidy worktable. His shirt was ripped open, and his intestines were falling out of his body. Blood was everywhere, smearing and drenching notes, papers and books. The sight was hideous. Stupid as it may seem, Andrews rushed forward to check his friend's pulse. As he reached for the wrist, a piece of paper fell to the floor from the dead professor's hand. Capital letters formed two very unpleasant names: one ancient Sumerian and one contemporary German.

L I L I T H
H I T L E R



Many religions claim that the true spirit of a man can be found in his heart.
Most surgeons disagree.

A GAME *with* PERSONALITY

BEFORE WE DIVE into the very rules of the game, let's take a look at what it's really about, what makes it unique and different from other games. Role playing takes many different forms depending on the developers, but to an even larger extent, depending on the players and the Game Master.

Most role-playing games focus on problem-solving, and the personalities of the characters come second. In this game, playing the characters comes first and solving the problem comes along the way. This gives a much more colourful and interesting game play, where the road to success is not set, and anything can happen.

PERSONALITY TRAITS, THE SOUL OF THE GAME

While rules are important to make the game exciting, fair and reasonably realistic, the most fun comes in the actual role playing. Stepping into another person's mind and trying to figure out how he or she will act is a real challenge and highly entertaining. So let's take a look at how to use the Personality Traits.

A good story, just like a good role-playing session, is filled with unexpected, thrilling and amusing events. Reading a book or watching a horror film would be a bit boring if all the characters always did the right thing at the right moment. The same goes for role playing. If an impulsive character in the story suddenly does something highly unexpected, the level of role playing increases, as does the entertainment factor.

THREE TRAITS FOR CHARACTERS

The character's personality is shaped by three Personality traits, which are more or less randomly drawn during the character generation. Each trait has



The two types of cards that will help you create your character.

only a short description and it is up to the player to make his own interpretation. A character can't have two of the same trait.

The player arranges the three traits in order of their importance for the character. The first is the most apparent and predominant feature, the quality that other players will notice first when getting to know the character. The second and third traits are more complementary and used to give more depth to the character.

It's always up to the players to decide how much they want and are able to use the three traits. If the mix of personalities feels odd, a suggestion is to start playing one trait full out and then slowly add the others.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS

Most characters are not flawless and will have a few mental and physical problems. These can range from a bad hair day to being addicted or having mental disorders. Any skill effects are noted at the generation or following the Game Master's advice. After that, the problem is used to give some extra flavour to the character. One of the most common problems is a fear, which if not specified, can be determined by the character himself. Here are the 19 most common fears of mankind. Players chose one or roll the dice for a random result:

Special problem

1. The Game Master chooses something tricky or the player rolls twice again.
2. Darkness
3. Blood
4. Water
5. Closed spaces
6. Large open spaces
7. Heights
8. Crowds
9. Dogs
10. Public transportation
11. Germs
12. Public speaking
13. Hospitals
14. Bridges
15. Storms
16. Natural disasters
17. Rats
18. Snakes and reptiles
19. Bugs and spiders
20. Something very uncommon like sharks or circus artists.

WAY OUT



It's always good to have an exit strategy.

MANAGING MULTIPLE CHARACTERS

Another distinguishing feature of this game is that each player creates two or three characters and chooses one of them to use before each scenario. Note, however, that a player never plays more than one character at a time. There are several reasons why players have several characters in OPERATION: FALLEN REICH:

- We recommend a rather high mortality rate among the characters. The Game Master should not try to kill characters, but if a character dies once in a while due to bad rolls or poor decisions, the players tend to stay sharp. When a character dies (or gets seriously wounded), another of that player's characters will show up and he can still participate. A wounded character may take several weeks to return to the mission, given the level and quality of medical care during the Second World War.
- Characters with eccentric personalities could get tiresome to play repeatedly. The character creation system tends to give rather colourful personalities, and that gives the game a lot of edge. However, while playing a Lazy Ass, Loud Mouth, and Transvestite Big Game Hunter is fun the first few sessions, it could be nice to take a break in the next scenario.
- The character creation system itself is fun to play and use, so it leads to a lot of character generation.

Two fellow staff members, the anthropologist Captain Burt Browning and librarian Claire Crawford, enter the room where Doctor Andrews sits and mourns his old friend. They were heading out on their first date when they noticed the open door. Browning is an adventurous student of the world's most dangerous primitive tribes. He is a keen boxer and a strong, handsome man. Tough as he is he can't help but gasps at the horrible scene before him.

"Oh, in the name of Christ..." he says and makes a disgusted face.

"More likely, in the name of the devil," mutters Andrews and is pushed aside by Crawford, who examines the body. Her sharp eyes gleam with apprehensive interest. She is a petit and rather sweet young woman, but behind her harmless image lie an unstoppable curiosity and the

will to pursue her will at any ones expense.

Browning marches over to the open window in the back of the room, shocked by the fact that such a crime could be committed on British soil.

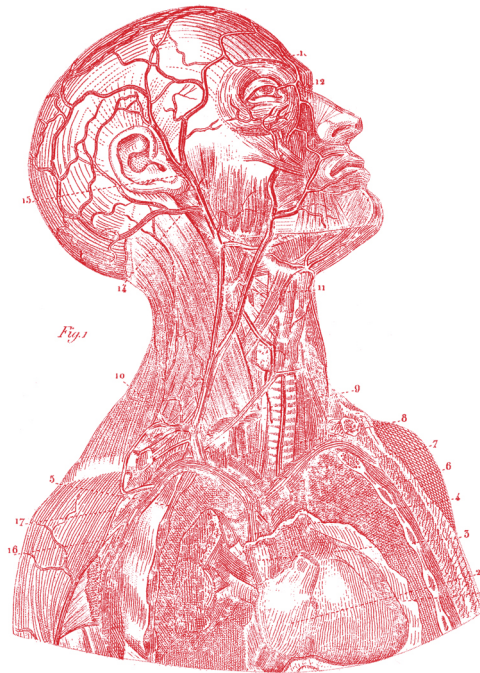
"I haven't seen anything like this since I saw the shrunk Tsantsa heads of the Jivaro tribe. How could this happen here in Britain? In England? At Oxford? I could use some fresh air." He leans out into the chilly September darkness and starts to tell the long, complicated story of how he avoided getting his own head shrunk.

Archie Andrews' three Traits are in order: Joker, Absent-Minded and Lazy Ass. Most people know him as the endearing teachers' lounge comedian. He has a high value in the Charm skill and Aura. (Skills will be explained later.) A Joker with low Charm would probably be considered mean rather than funny. Joachim, the guy who plays Andrews, is a fun and outgoing person in real life, so it's easy for him to play a Joker. A more reserved player might list Joker last, giving the character a sarcastic touch rather than playing

a fully fledged entertainer. The Absentminded trait is not given that much weight by Joachim, but when Andrews discovers something interesting, like an ancient script, he becomes preoccupied to the exclusion of everything else. The same goes for his Lazy Ass trait. It's mostly manifested by him avoidance of any type of exercise or heavy work. If this were his primary trait, he would have been a complete slacker.

Browning is a Story Teller, who has chosen an exotic lifestyle as an Anthropologist. His travels have given him many good stories and a strong conviction that British civilisation is the best, hence his Trait Rule Britannia. He is also a bit impulsive, or as he says himself; dashing.

The very nosy Miss Crawford, with Curious, Pushy and Warrior traits, has a background as an extremely annoying journalist. She is suspended right now, after digging too deep into a delicate matter.



To deal with evil you need a strong mind and an effective body.