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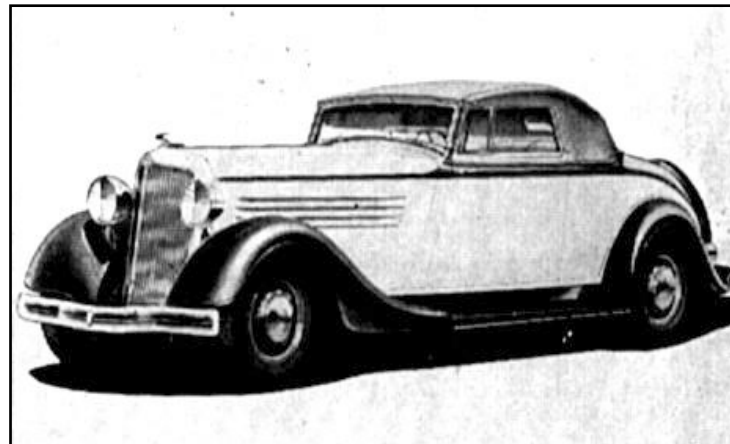
Trusted Sidekick

By Walt Ciechanowski



Introduction

So there I was, standing outside with the car in my chauffeur uniform while the Scarlet Avenger was inside the warehouse across the street, doubtless teaching the cretins inside a lesson or two about kidnapping the mayor's daughter. I'd asked to join her, but she insisted that I remain with the car running just in case things went badly. I've served the Scarlet Avenger long enough to know that was a distinct possibility.



My ears perked up as another sedan pulled up near the warehouse. Two ruffians emerged and I feared that might complicate things a bit for the Scarlet Avenger. I put out my pipe and crossed the street, doing my best to appear confused.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," I asked in the Queen's English, "could you direct me to the Parkview Hotel on Broad Street? I seem to have gotten rather lost!"

The ruffian closest to me wasn't amused. He made a fist. "Scram, limey. We ain't got time for foreigners who can't read directions!"

"My apologies." I bowed politely and then followed it with a right cross to his jaw. As he crumbled, his friend put his hand inside his jacket, reaching for his pistol. I jumped over his companion and punched him square in the nose. His gun fell out of his limp hand right before he did.

I smiled in satisfaction. Whoever said Queensbury rules couldn't have practical applications? My celebration was interrupted by the sound of shattered glass as a third ruffian violently exited a third story window. I guess the Scarlet Avenger was having a little fun as well.

This issue of *Modern Dispatch* features an exclusive pulp-genre Advanced Class -- The Trusted Sidekick.

The Pulp Genre is full of Trusted Sidekicks, men and women who aid the central hero in completing his adventures. Trusted Sidekicks are the butlers, chauffeurs, pilots, and wards of the main hero. They often have abilities helpful to the central hero in his adventures. Kato, the Green Hornet's driver-Trusted Sidekick, was an incredible martial artist. Magersfontein Lugg, British detective Albert Campion's manservant, was a street tough former burglar. Lothar, Mandrake the Magician's best friend, is considered the strongest man in the world. Many of these sidekicks were foreign-born, adding an exotic element to the Trusted Sidekick.

This Advanced Class treats the Trusted Sidekick as an unassuming employee of another PC (such as the Man of Mystery, Mesmerist, or Paragon, all available from Adamant Entertainment) who is also a capable fighter and assistant.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Trusted Sidekick, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Bluff (6 ranks), Diplomacy (6 ranks)

Feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency

Class Information

Hit Die: The Trusted Sidekick gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Trusted Sidekick gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Trusted Sidekick's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int Modifier

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Def	Reputation
1	1	0	2	1	Dedication, Martial Prowess, Unassuming	1	0
2	2	0	3	2	Patch Up, Transporter	2	0
3	3	1	3	2	Keeping Current, Retrace Steps	2	0
4	3	1	4	2	Martial Prowess, Clean Sweep	3	0
5	4	1	4	3	Transporter, Toughness	4	1
6	5	2	5	3	Fearless, Harm's Way	4	1
7	6	2	5	4	Martial Prowess, Nick of Time	5	1
8	6	2	6	4	Transporter, Toughness	6	1
9	7	3	6	4	Defensive Strike	6	2
10	8	3	7	5	Martial Prowess, Ultimate Sacrifice	7	2

Class Features

Dedication: The Trusted Sidekick must select one appropriate character (usually a player character (PC), although at the Game Master's (GM's) discretion, a non-player character (NPC) may be chosen. This becomes the Trusted Sidekick's "Designated Hero." Many of the Trusted Sidekick's abilities are tied to the Designated Hero.

Martial Prowess: The Trusted Sidekick is competent in the martial arts (whether fencing, fisticuffs, or judo). He gains one feat from the list below, and a new feat at 4th, 7th, and 10th level. He selects from the following feats (prerequisites must be met):

Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Agile Riposte, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Reflexes, Combat Throw, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Throw, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Knockout Punch, Improved Trip, Knockout Punch, Mobility, Sidestep*, Streetfighting, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus.

*Sidestep is described in **Thrilling Tales: Advanced Class: Boxer** by Adamant Entertainment.

Unassuming: The Trusted Sidekick allows his friend to take the spotlight. As a result, others tend to underestimate the sidekick. He gets the feat of the same name for free.

Patch Up: The Trusted Sidekick is used to patching up the Designated Hero without compromising his identity by going to a hospital. At 2nd level, the Trusted Sidekick receives a +4 to Treat Injury checks (which only applies when treating the Designated Hero) and the Surgery feat.



Transporter: The Trusted Sidekick is often relied upon to get the Designated Hero in and out of danger. At 2nd level, the Trusted Sidekick receives a +2 to Drive and Pilot checks (this may stack with the Vehicle Expert feat). He may also choose a feat from the following list, and gains an additional feat at 5th and 8th level:

Aircraft Operation, Drive-By Attack, Force Stop, Surface Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Dodge

Keeping Current: While the Designated Hero keeps an eye on criminal masterminds, the Trusted Sidekick remains grounded in the intricacies of the real world. At 3rd level, the Trusted Sidekick receives a +2 to Knowledge (current events) and Knowledge (popular culture) checks.

Retrace Steps: At third level, the Trusted Sidekick has the ability to understand how the Designated Hero thinks and follow in his footsteps. This ability can become very important if the Designated Hero is captured or otherwise detained. By using a Gather Information check at DC 25 (he may take 10 or 20), the Trusted Sidekick can collect all clues uncovered by the Designated Hero and determine the last spot where the Designated Hero went under his own power, as well as any unresolved leads.

This class feature does not give the Trusted Sidekick the ability to follow the Designated Hero's captors and locate where the Designated Hero is being kept. Once the Trusted Sidekick has determined where the Designated Hero stopped his investigations, he must rely on other skills, abilities, and allies to follow his trail. Also, it is up to the GM to determine how long it takes a Trusted Sidekick to retrace steps.

Clean Sweep: Starting at 4th level, the Trusted Sidekick may clear an area of evidence that would implicate him or the Designated Hero. If someone uses Investigate to search for evidence, they receive a DC modifier equal to the Trusted Sidekick's class level.

Toughness: The Trusted Sidekick receives the Toughness feat at 5th level and again at 8th level.

Fearless: At 6th level, the Trusted Sidekick gains a +4 morale bonus on Will saves to resist fear effects and on level checks to oppose Intimidate checks.

Harm's Way: Starting at 6th level, once per round, the Trusted Sidekick can subject him or herself to the attack in the Designated Hero's stead. If the attack hits the Trusted Sidekick, he or her takes damage normally. If it misses, it also misses the Designated Hero.

The Trusted Sidekick must declare his or her

intention to place him or herself in harm's way before the attack roll is made.

Nick of Time: At 7th level, the Trusted Sidekick has the uncanny ability to arrive when the Designated Hero needs him most. By spending an action point, the Trusted Sidekick can arrive while there is still time to rescue the Designated Hero. With each additional action point, the Trusted Sidekick may bring along another Hero or Ordinary to help.

The GM must determine the exact details and placement of the Trusted Sidekick. If it was impossible to reach the location without dealing with security, this class feature assumes the Trusted Sidekick overcame it. The Trusted Sidekick will also make intuitive leaps of logic to learn the location of the Designated Hero.

Defensive Strike: At 9th level, if an opponent makes a melee attack against the Trusted Sidekick or the Designated Hero and misses while the Trusted Sidekick is using the total defense option, the Trusted Sidekick can attack that opponent on his or her next turn (as an attack action) with a +4 bonus on his or her attack roll. The Trusted Sidekick gains no bonus against an opponent who doesn't attack the Trusted Sidekick or the Designated Hero or against an opponent who makes a successful attack.

Ultimate Sacrifice: When all hope is lost, the Trusted Sidekick can sacrifice his own life for the Designated Hero. By spending an action point, the Trusted Sidekick may substitute himself into a situation where the Designated Hero's life is in danger. If both are in danger, the Trusted Sidekick can ensure that only he receives the damage (by pushing the Designated Hero out of the way, cutting him free over the acid pit and throwing him to safety, etc.).

It is likely that the Trusted Sidekick will only get to use this power once. At the GM's discretion, he may reward the Trusted Sidekick's player by allowing him to bring in a replacement character at the same level.

New Feat

Unassuming

For some reason, people tend to underestimate you. Reasons could include a thick accent, foreign appearance, profession, shyness, or extreme politeness. As a result, people tend not to question your assertions or motives.

Benefit: You get a +2 to Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

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