

The Shadow Seven

Introduction

The Shadow Seven are a criminal gang of emotionally damaged halfling misfits. Their leader is the charismatic yet enigmatic Tobold Thaine, known to the authorities as The Shadow Mouse. The gang's stated objective is to distribute wealth from the undeserving rich to the downtrodden poor but this is nothing more than hollow rhetoric, a balm to ease their guilty consciences. All the moneys they pilfer go on wine, women (halfling), flunkies, and luxuries. Shadow Mouse is charitable to a fault, especially when drinking, and his careless generosity keeps the gang living from hand to mouth.

Shadow Mouse claims to be an exiled prince from the steppe kingdom of Borodavia. His knowledge of Borodavian history and customs is encyclopedic and he insists any who join the Shadow Seven must learn the national dance, a bizarre Cossack style sit-dance. His charisma and conviction in this story takes most people in but, as explained further below, it is all a lie. Borodavia does not exist and Shadow Mouse is just a forgotten runaway from an unloving home. Even the name Tobold Thaine is made up; his real name is Cecil Buckbottom.

Tactics

The gang engages in a number of nefarious activities, playing on the good reaction most races have towards loveable little halflings. In general, Peeps and Brains do not get involved in actual criminal activity. Instead they research and stakeout potential victims. The latter are generally merchants, revelers, and the occasional warehouse, bank, or wealthy home.

Shadow Mouse often uses his acrobatics, dancing, carousing or general charisma as a distraction while Fingers, Randy, and The Boy pick pockets.

Another tactic is for Randy to disguise himself and blag his way into a society party. He then lets Shadow Mouse and Fingers in to ransack the uppers stories.

Occasionally, Shadow Mouse masterminds a heist. When these take place, he is sure to mark the scene with his signet ring. By this method, he heightens the gang's reputation and mythology.

If trouble brews, The Blade steps in with his "invincible" fencing skills to defend the others. Of all of the gang, only he will put up any prolonged fight as the others prefer to run. To date, the gang has never killed anyone, although The Blade has injured a few unwise assailants.

Enmities

The gang has a particular grievance against "hanging" Judge Siltree, a halfling judge. It was he that sentenced former gang member "Dando" Odo Birch, an accomplished pickpocket, womaniser, and soak. Dando was hanged before Shadow Mouse could engineer a rescue so the gang are now plotting revenge. The payback will take the form of humiliation or theft: they will not actually harm Judge Siltree.

The Gang

Tobold Thaine - *The Shadow Mouse*

A long time ago, a young halfling prince journeyed from the east, friendless and destitute. His father, King Thainar of the cold steppe of Borodavia, had been driven mad by the wiles and sorcery of his jealous brother, Duke Tirana. Now, Tirana sat on the throne, seeking to slay all who might threaten his position, forcing the hapless young prince into exile in the west. That prince was Tobold Thaine, "Shadow Mouse", and he vowed to spend his life righting wrongs so that nobody else would need to suffer as he had.



Tobold Thaine

That, at least, is the story by which Shadow Mouse lives. Born Cecil Buckbottom, to the very well thought of Ramsbottom clan of Thrupping, Shadow Mouse is an inveterate liar and thief. As a child, the only attention he received from his absent, socialite parents was when he got into trouble. By his teens, he had fallen foul of the law. Thrown out by his mother and shunned by his community, he travelled far from home, comforting himself by inventing a new past and funding an extravagant lifestyle through stealing. In time, he met other halfling misfits and, slowly, the Shadow Seven grew up around him.

He carries a signet ring with him at all times, although he is careful not to wear it in public. The ring bears a stylised mouse motif and, when loaded with ink, can be used to stamp paper, walls, or the foreheads of his hapless victims.

Frederick "The Blade" Oakley

After his parents died, Frederick was brought up by his harsh, competitive uncle, Major Bodrum Oakley. Frederick's subsequent childhood was devoid of affection and he retreated into his studies of the martial arts in an unconscious attempt to impress the major. But nothing Frederick did was good enough for his uncle; Frederick left home with an awkward personality, little self-confidence, no friends, and nowhere to go. It was in this state that Shadow Mouse found him and brought him into the gang.

The Blade is a self-proclaimed expert in the art of the French Smallsword fencing style (Martial Arts, p 158). He is obsessed with it, delusional as to its invincibility as a fighting style, and dangerously overconfident as a result. Fortunately, his outlandish, foppish clothes make him appear somewhat comic, causing most adversaries to underestimate his abilities. Despite (or perhaps because of) his delusions, he is in fact a reasonably formidable foe.

He is devoted to Shadow Mouse, and considers himself to be the leader's right hand halfling. He certainly considers himself superior to the other gang members, remaining somewhat aloof from them. In turn, with the exception of Shadow Mouse, the other gang members quietly consider him a figure of fun.



“Randy” Randolph Buckberry

Randolph’s mother left the family home for another halfling when Randolph was young. She subsequently scorned all contact with her former family. On one occasion Randolph saw her in the street and ran crying to hug her. She swore and shouted at him to go away and this painful rejection lodged itself in a dark, secret corner of the young halfling’s mind.

As he grew, he developed an insatiable appetite for deflowering halfling girls, his charm turning to scorn once he’d had his way. It wasn’t long before his village was full of halfling babies with very angry grandfathers. The by now aptly nicknamed Randy took to the road, charming, seducing, and conning the wives of wealthy halfling merchants. A consummate actor, socialite, and thief, it wasn’t long before he found a kindred spirit in The Shadow Mouse and joined the gang.

There is a love-hate relationship between Randy and Fingers (see below). Randy considers Fingers compulsive, unreliable and unprofessional. Fingers considers Randy to stuffy and considered. On each job, they bicker constantly. Nonetheless, each would lay down their life for the other.

Bartholomew “Brains” Ash

Bartholomew is boring. He has always been boring. He comes from a big family, counting entrepreneurs, entertainers, and leaders amongst his eight brothers and sisters. But, despite the best efforts of his parents to increase his sense of social awareness, Brains just couldn’t understand why nobody else shared his fascination with numbers, gears, pistons, and gadgets. As he grew, he found himself increasingly ostracised, lonely, and embittered. Even his parents began to avoid him, unable to bear Brains’ monologues about his latest ponderings.

As he went through puberty, he became increasingly shy and awkward. Now, this in itself is not unusual for a young, sensitive halfling. Unfortunately, Brains got rather fixated on a young, beautiful halfling lass who lived across the street from him. She, of course, found his geeky attentions most undesirable and rudely shunned him. Undeterred, he began watching her, growing more and more obsessive, until he was caught peeping in through her window as she undressed. He did not wait to face the resulting scandal but fled his village, never to return.

He ended up living rough and on the drink in a distant town, surviving by renting out his skills as a lock picker, forger, and jeweller. In time, he would have slipped into full alcoholism and an early grave but fortune, of sorts, smiled on. Shadow Mouse took pity on young Brains, recognising both a kindred, hurt soul, and a considerable talent for numbers, gadgets, traps, and locks.

Brains is devoted to Shadow Mouse and will lay down his life for him without a second thought. Brains is also in awe of Randy, aping his dress sense and mannerisms in an attempt to escape his own geekiness.

Buck “Fingers” Bolger

When Buck was eight years old, his father left on a business trip and never returned. Shortly after he disappeared, the bailiffs began to arrive at the family home, calling in the huge debts secretly accumulated over many years by Buck senior. Buck’s mother Delma knew nothing about the money owed but this did not stop her and her son being thrown out onto the street.

Confused and betrayed Delma sank swiftly into squalid alcoholism and Buck soon began stealing to fund her drink.

With Delma’s affection increasingly dependent on the money Buck brought home, the young halfling soon found he only felt good when he stole. In time, he became a full-blown kleptomaniac, unable to resist stealing even from his friends. By dint of good luck and considerable skill, he was never caught.

When Buck turned fifteen, his mother died. He set out in search of his father, a quest he still half-heartedly continues to this day. One day he picked the pocket of Tobold Thaine, only to find he had stolen back his own purse. The two got talking and Tobold managed to persuade Buck to join the gang. He soon became known as Fingers.

Fingers is a bit of a liability. He simply can’t resist taking things, even when Shadow Mouse’s carefully laid plans dictate Fingers shouldn’t. On more than one occasion, this has caused “complications” that almost got the gang caught. Nevertheless, Shadow Mouse remains committed to keeping Fingers in the gang.

As mentioned above, Fingers and Randy bicker constantly.

“Peeps” Perry Hedgebottom

Perry enjoyed a relatively happy childhood. His labourer parents were poor but free with affection. Unfortunately, when Perry was seventeen, his parents were layed-off by the landowner for whom they worked. The landowner insisted the family leave their tied property, sending some men to ensure they went. Perry assaulted one of the men and this action landed him up in prison.

From there it was downhill. By the time he was released, he had picked up all number of useful skills and contacts, along with an angry sense of injustice. His knack for observation earned him the nickname Peeps and put him in demand for casing properties. In a matter of weeks, he had more money than his parents earned in a lifetime. Stealing didn’t sit that easily on his conscience and he thought often of stopping and setting out to find his parents. However, when he came into contact with The Shadow Seven, Tobold’s philosophy of stealing from the rich to give to the poor gave him the justification he needed to continue with his life of crime.

Unlike the others, Peeps is not slavishly loyal to Tobold. Furthermore, he is beginning to have doubts about the whole Borodavia thing...

Aldous “The Boy” Blackberry

Aldous is an orphan who never knew his parents. He grew up on the streets, always just one step ahead of the law, living on his wits.

The Boy is the newest member of the gang and also the youngest. He is in awe of Tobold and completely taken in by the Shadow Seven mythology. He has not yet mastered the sit-dance that is the prerequisite of joining the gang. Tobold and the others treat him with affection and kindness, a new experience for him after his hard upbringing.



Name: Tobold Thaine - "Shadow Mouse" Reaction +/-: +3 Point Total: 100
 Appearance: 4'2", 90lbs, thick, black mouse-tache, dark brown eyes, appealing and friendly manner, dressed in exotically patterned clothes (think halfling Cossack)
8 **ST** HP: 7 **Basic Damage**
12 **DX** 1d-3
10 **IQ** 1d-3
11 **HT** 1d-2
 Will 10 Per 12
 Basic Speed: 5.75 Move: 4
 Encumbrance: 0
 Dodge: 9 Parry: 9 Block: 0
 Shield DB 0 Size Modifier -1

Head					
Torso					
Arms					
Hands					
Legs					
Feet					

DR 0 2 0 0 0 0

Skills: Acrobatics 13, Carousing 13, Climbing 13, Filch 13, First Aid 10, Mimicry (Speech) 11, Pickpocket 12, Gambling 11, History (Cossacks) 10, Holdout 11, Lockpicking 12, Dancing (Cossack sit dance) 14, Smallsword 12, Knife 14, Sling 12, Thrown Weapon (Knife) 13+2, Leadership 10, Stealth 12+2
 Weapon Statistics: Very fine smallsword: \$1600, 1d imp, Reach 1, Parry 0F, Wt 1.5 Fine large knife: Magical "loyal sword" returns at 12, Penetrating Weapon (Arm Div 2): 1d-3cut C/1-1 parry, 1d-2 imp C, -1 parry, wt 1, Thrown: 1d-2 imp, Acc 0, Range 6/12, RoF 1, Shots T(1) Sling: 1d-2 Pi, Acc 0, Range 48/80, RoF 1, Shots 1(2), Fine lockpicks, leather armour (groin, torso), Amulet of healing (8PP, 1HP healed per PP, regains 1PP per hour), further valuables (\$1250), cash \$100

Name: Frederick "The Blade" Oakley Reaction +/-: +1 Point Total: 75
 Appearance: A slight halfling, 4'5", 70lbs, aged 22, hazel eyes, sandy hair dyed black, flamboyantly dressed and debonaire. Fiercely loyal to Tobold Thaine.
9 **ST** HP: 6 **Basic Damage**
13 **DX** 1d-2
10 **IQ** 1d-2
10 **HT** 1d-1
 Will 10 Per 10
 Basic Speed: 5.75 Move: 4
 Encumbrance: 0
 Dodge: 8 Parry: 10 Block: 0
 Shield DB 0 Size Modifier -1

Head					
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Skills: Dance 13 (Cossack sit dance), Carousing 10, Savori-Faire (fencing salle) 10, Acrobatics 15, Games (Sport fencing) 12, Smallsword Art 14, Smallsword 14: Techniques: Bind Weapon 14, Close combat 12, Disarming 16, Feint 18, Retain Weapon 18, Targeted Attack (Vitals) 13
 Weapon Statistics: Very fine small sword (\$8000), 1d imp, Reach 1, Parry 0F, Wt 1.5
 Wears fine, showy clothes, with a large hat adorned with a feather. He carries a silver pipe (\$200), a silver hip flask of brandy (\$200), and a fine leather case with silver trim for his tobacco (\$100). He carries \$75 in cash along with \$400 in rings.

Name: Bartholomew "Brains" Ash Reaction +/-: 0 Point Total: 50
 Appearance: 4'0", 65lbs, slight even for a halfling, sandy brown, curly hair, green eyes, modest clothes, timid manner.
6 **ST** HP: 6 **Basic Damage**
10 **DX** 1d-4
13 **IQ** 1d-3
10 **HT** 1d-3
 Will 9 Per 13
 Basic Speed: 5 Move: 4
 Encumbrance: 0
 Dodge: 8 Parry: 0 Block: 0
 Shield DB 0 Size Modifier -1

Head					
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DR 0 0 0 0 0 0

Skills: Traps 14, Speed Reading 13, Research 15, Lockpicking 14, Jeweler 14, Heraldry 14, Forgery 14, Dancing (Cossack sit dance) 9, Accounting 14, Hobby Skill (Origami) 12
 Weapon Statistics: Ash never carries weapons and will not fight unless it is to defend Tobold.

Name: "Randy" Randolph Buckberry Reaction +/-: 0 Point Total: 50
 Appearance: 4'3", 90lbs, boyishly handsome and sweet talking, curly blond hair, hazel eyes.
8 **ST** HP: 8 **Basic Damage**
11 **DX** 1d-3
10 **IQ** 1d-3
11 **HT** 1d-2
 Will 10 Per 10
 Basic Speed: 5.5 Move: 4
 Encumbrance: 0
 Dodge: 8 Parry: 0 Block: 0
 Shield DB 0 Size Modifier -1

Head					
Torso					
Arms					
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DR 0 0 0 0 0 0

Skills: Knife 11, Thrown Weapon (knife) 11+2, Sling 11+2, Pickpocket 11, Dance 11, Carousing 13, Filch 11, Acting 12, Disguise 11, Fast Talk 11, Scrounging 10, Stealth 11+2
 Weapon Statistics: Large knife: 1d-4 cut, Range C/1, -1 parry, 12-3 imp Range C
 Thrown 1d-3 imp, Acc 0, Range 6/12, wt 1, RoF 1 Shots(1)
 He wears a gold wedding ring on his left hand (\$250), silver hip flask (\$230), silver topped cane (\$120), fine clothes, \$100 in cash.

Name: Andous "The Boy" Blackberry		Reaction +/-: +1	Point Total: 25
Appearance: Age 18, 4'10", 85lbs, black hair, average looks, modest clothes, constantly fidgeting.			
8	ST	HP: 6	
11	DX	Basic Damage	
10	IQ	Thrust: 1d-3	
11	HT	Swing: 1d-2	
		FP: 11	
Will	10	Per	10
Basic Speed:	5.5	Move:	4
Encumbrance:	0		
Dodge:	8	Parry:	8
Block:	0		
Shield DB	0	Size Modifier	-1
DR	0	0	0
	Head	Arms	Hands
			Legs
			Feet
Skills: Knife 11, Thrown knife 11+2, Pickpocket 11, Urban Survival 10, Streetwise 10, Stealth 11+2			
Weapon Statistics: Large Knife: 1d-4 cut, Reach C/1, -1 Parry, 1d-3 imp, Reach C, -1 Parry, Wt 1			
Thrown knife: 1d-3 imp, Acc 0, Range 6/12, RoF 1, Shots 1(1)			
The Boy wears a cloak with a number of false pockets for concealing loot. He carries \$25 worth of cash and a copper ring of his father's, to which he has great emotional attachment.			

Name: Buck "Fingers" Bolger		Reaction +/-: +1	Point Total: 50
Appearance: Medium build halfling, 4'0", 80lbs, 20 years old, blond, blue eye that dart everywhere while he chats amiably.			
8	ST	HP: 8	
12	DX	Basic Damage	
10	IQ	Thrust: 1d-3	
11	HT	Swing: 1d-2	
		FP: 11	
Will	10	Per	10
Basic Speed:	5.75	Move:	4
Encumbrance:	0		
Dodge:	8	Parry:	9
Block:	0		
Shield DB	0	Size Modifier	-1
DR	0	0	0
	Head	Arms	Hands
			Legs
			Feet
Skills: Dance 10 (Cossack sit dance), Pickpocket 14, Flich 14, Stealth 12/14, Carousing 11, Knife 12, Thrown Weapon (knife) 12/14, Sleight of Hand 10			
Weapon Statistics: Large knife: 1d-4 cut, Range C/1, -1 parry, 12-3 imp Range C			
Thrown 1d-3 imp, Acc 0, Range 6/12, wt 1, RoF 1 Shots(1)			
Wears average, loose clothing with a number of concealed pockets. He carries a small pocket knife (to aid pickpocketing) and \$50 in cash.			

Credits

Written by Michael Amos. For more free GURPS material, see the web page at www.michaelamos.net/GURPS. For more information about Michael Amos and his novels, see www.michaelamos.net. If you found this document useful, please drop him an email to let him know - you'll find his email address on his web page.

Tobald Thaine the Shadow Mouse was originally an AD&D character created by my childhood friend Guy Robinson during the 1980s. I have taken Guy's original vision of a Cossack-obsessed, sit-dancing halfling thief and adapted it to the GURPS system, taking a few liberties on the way. The illustration on page one was drawn by Guy circa 1983.

The Coassack dancers at the bottom of pages one and two are copied from the StreetSwing.com Dance History Archives: <http://www.streetswing.com/histmain/z3cosck1.htm>

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Name: ""Peeps" Peery Hedgebottom		Reaction +/-: +1	Point Total: 50
Appearance: Medium build halfling, 4'1", 85lbs, 22 years old. Softly spoken and very observant, he is always jotting things down in his notebook.			
8	ST	HP: 6	
11	DX	Basic Damage	
10	IQ	Thrust: 1d-3	
11	HT	Swing: 1d-2	
		FP: 11	
Will	10	Per	14
Basic Speed:	5.5	Move:	4
Encumbrance:	0		
Dodge:	8	Parry:	0
Block:	0		
Shield DB	0	Size Modifier	-1
DR	0	0	0
	Head	Arms	Hands
			Legs
			Feet
Skills: Dance 10 (Cossack sit dance), Pickpocket 12, Flich 12, Disguise 10, Lip Reading 14, Observation 14, Search 14, Shadowing 10, Sleight of Hand 11, Stealth 11/13, Urban Survival 14			
Weapon Statistics: None: Peeps carries no weapons.			
Quirks: he constantly writes notes in a series of notebooks. He is also a meticulous diarist.			
Disadvantages, Quirks: Reputation +1 (halfling), Silence 2, Addiction, mild (tobacco), Code of honour (hospitality), Gluttony (9).			