

**THE  
TROUBLESHOOTERS**

# **THE U-BOAT MYSTERY**



**BY KRISTER SUNDELIN**



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# STARTING THE ADVENTURE

*The U-boat Mystery* starts in Paris in January 1965. You can have it take place in another location as long as these conditions are met:

- The fictional newspaper *La République* has its office or an affiliated office here.
- Nena Wallhaus (and her late husband) lives in a house in town.
- Pierre Martin lives in an apartment in town.
- There is a library in town.

If your campaign is running in another city, just add these locations to your town at suitable addresses, or swap them for establishments that already exist in your campaign.

## RUNNING THE STARTUP

To start the adventure, pick two characters that have at least one of the **Plot Hooks Media Darling, Arch-Enemy: The Octopus, Do-Gooder** or **Looking for a Case**. Give those two characters one handout each that matches their **Plot Hooks**.

## MEDIA DARLING

A friendly journalist, Pierre Martin, mentions that he's off to New York and then Sitomeyang to cover a German marine expedition during an interview with the character. As the interview wraps up, the journalist is suddenly kidnapped by two buffoons who drag him into a van and speed off. His bag contains the book *The One That Got Away: Hitler's Lost U-boat*. A scrap piece of paper used as a bookmark has the words "Wallhaus file?" on it. The bookmark is in the chapter "The Tale of the Survivor".



## LOOKING FOR A CASE

The character gets an anonymous tip about a former Nazi setting up a marine expedition to Indochina. An art catalogue from the *Metropolitan Museum of Art* in New York, with the painting *Brünnhilde Rides to Valhalla* circled, and an octopus and the note "P. Martin, La République" scribbled next to it, is left in the character's mailbox.



## DO-GOODER

Across the street from the character's home, there is a fire in the middle of the night. While helping the tenants evacuate, the character overhears someone claiming to have heard shots and seen a car speed off from the site before the fire broke out. One person is missing, a young widow living on the second floor.



## ARCH-ENEMY: THE OCTOPUS

A very nervous contact, Mrs Wallhaus, calls the character about something big. As they make contact late at night, she is shot in the back by unknown assailants, who then drive off at high speed. She gives the character a map, before falling unconscious. Mrs Wallhaus is taken to a hospital, and the police take testimony from the character.



### Rescuing Martin too early

Play the fight fair, but remember that Melisandre wants to get away with Martin. He is too dangerous to be let free, she reasons.

There's a certain chance that the characters actually rescue Martin. It is unfortunate but the adventure is not unsalvageable.

The reason is that Martin does not want to lose his scoop. Instead, he tells the Sûreté what they want to hear, that some leftist terrorists wanted to demand ransom from *La République* in return for money and publishing a left-wing propaganda piece about the "brave communist freedom fighters". To his surprise, the Sûreté places him in protective custody, so he can't leave the country. He asks the characters to help him with his scoop and finish the story for him, offering to let them share in the credit.

That way, you can motivate the players to go on and finish the adventure even if they rescue Martin too early.

### WHERE DID HE GO?

After a few days, or if the characters storm the warehouse, Martin is brought to a small airfield, put aboard a private jet and flown to Sitomeyang along with Erwin Jäger and some of the expedition members.

If the players think of whether Martin has been flown out of the country – perhaps to Sitomeyang because of all the clues – they can check with the aviation authority and find out that there is one flight plan filed for Sitomeyang that stands out: a Dassault Falcon owned by *Calamari*, a shipping coordination agency from Venezuela. All other flights are regular commercial flights, but the Dassault Falcon is a private jet. To get the list of flight plans from the aviation authorities, have the players make a **Red Tape task check**.

**Handouts:** If the characters get the flight plan list, give *The flight plan list* handout on [page 63](#) to the players.

## CLUES

The first chapter is very much about legwork to understand what is happening. You want to involve the players in the mystery and give them some background to it, and you also want to send them to either New York or Sitomeyang.

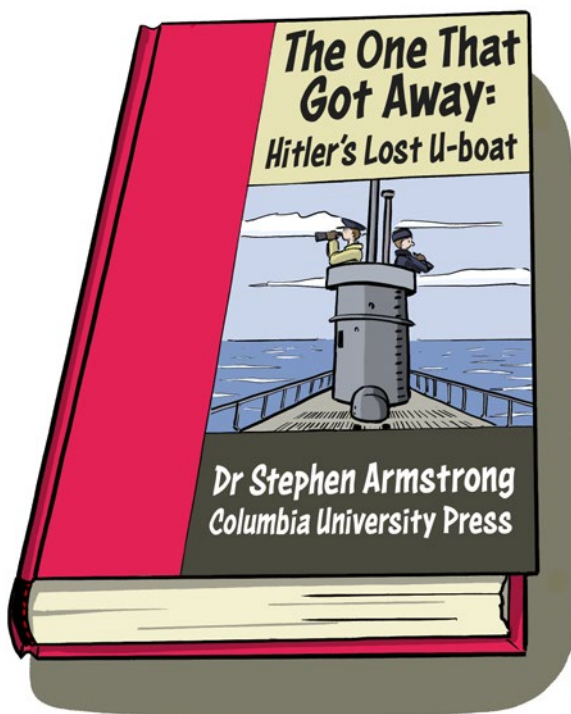
If you need to push the characters along, use the Octopus to motivate them, or use Robert Legros of *La République* to get them moving in the right direction.

### THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY: HITLER'S LOST U-BOAT

Written in English by American historian Stephen Armstrong, the book tells the story of *U-890*, a Type IX-C U-boat on a secret mission to Japan at the end of the war. It sailed from Hamburg on the eve of April 16th, 1945, and never reported in.

The author connects the U-boat's mission with an earlier mission to Zürich, where stolen riches and art were deposited in numbered bank boxes. The value of the riches is just short of ridiculous, even when accounting for inflation. Which boxes, or for that matter which bank, remains unknown even today. The Zürich banks have no records and deny their existence, according to the author.

The author then traces the U-boat to a strait outside Sitomeyang, where it was attacked by the US and Australian navy, and eventually sunk in deep (100 meter)





# THE BIG APPLE

This part of the adventure is not mandatory, but there are leads to New York that the characters may pursue. Following up on those leads provides an opportunity to delve deeper into the available information. It prepares the characters for what they are to expect in Sitomeyang and gives them some additional information about the Brünnhilde painting, and introduces them to a little “reverse psychology motivation” from the mob.

## WHY THE CHARACTERS ARE IN NEW YORK

The most likely reasons that the characters make the trip to New York are:

- To follow up leads on the U-boat from Stephen Armstrong’s book. Clues include the actual book (**Media Darling** startup handout), Nena Wallhaus’ map (**Arch-Enemy: The Octopus** startup handout), and Martin’s contact list (from his apartment).
- To get information about the painting *Brünnhilde Rides to Valhalla*. The exhibition catalogue (**Looking for a Case** startup handout) is the main clue.

## NEW YORK CITY

### New York City in a nutshell

**Foundation:** 1624 CE

**Population:** 7,850,000

**Area:** 783.84 km<sup>2</sup>

**Elevation:** 10 m

**Climate:** Humid subtropical

**Notable landmarks:** Statue of Liberty, Central Park, Broadway, Headquarters of the United Nations, Empire State Building, Brooklyn Bridge, Coney Island

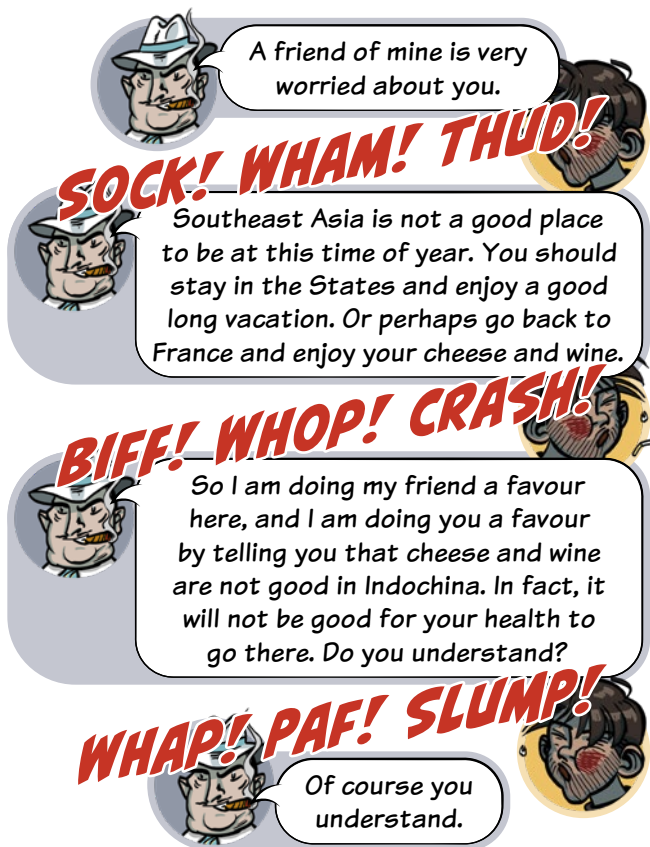
For many years, New York City has been the gateway to the United States. New York City’s skyline is the first glimpse of the United States that passengers on the great Atlantic liners get to see. Even though the jet age is coming, liners are still more common due to the high cost associated with flying.

## THUG LIFE

As the Octopus learns that the characters are still following their trail by way of New York, they ask some of their “friends” in the area to “persuade” them to go back. So the characters get beaten up by the mob at their hotel and then taken to the airport and put on the next flight to France. At least, that is the plan.

### THE PERSUADERS

When the characters return to their hotel, Vito Calzone is waiting in one of the rooms. With him are two massive thugs, aiming guns at the characters. Before they have the chance to respond, more thugs with more guns force the characters into the room, where the “persuasion” begins.



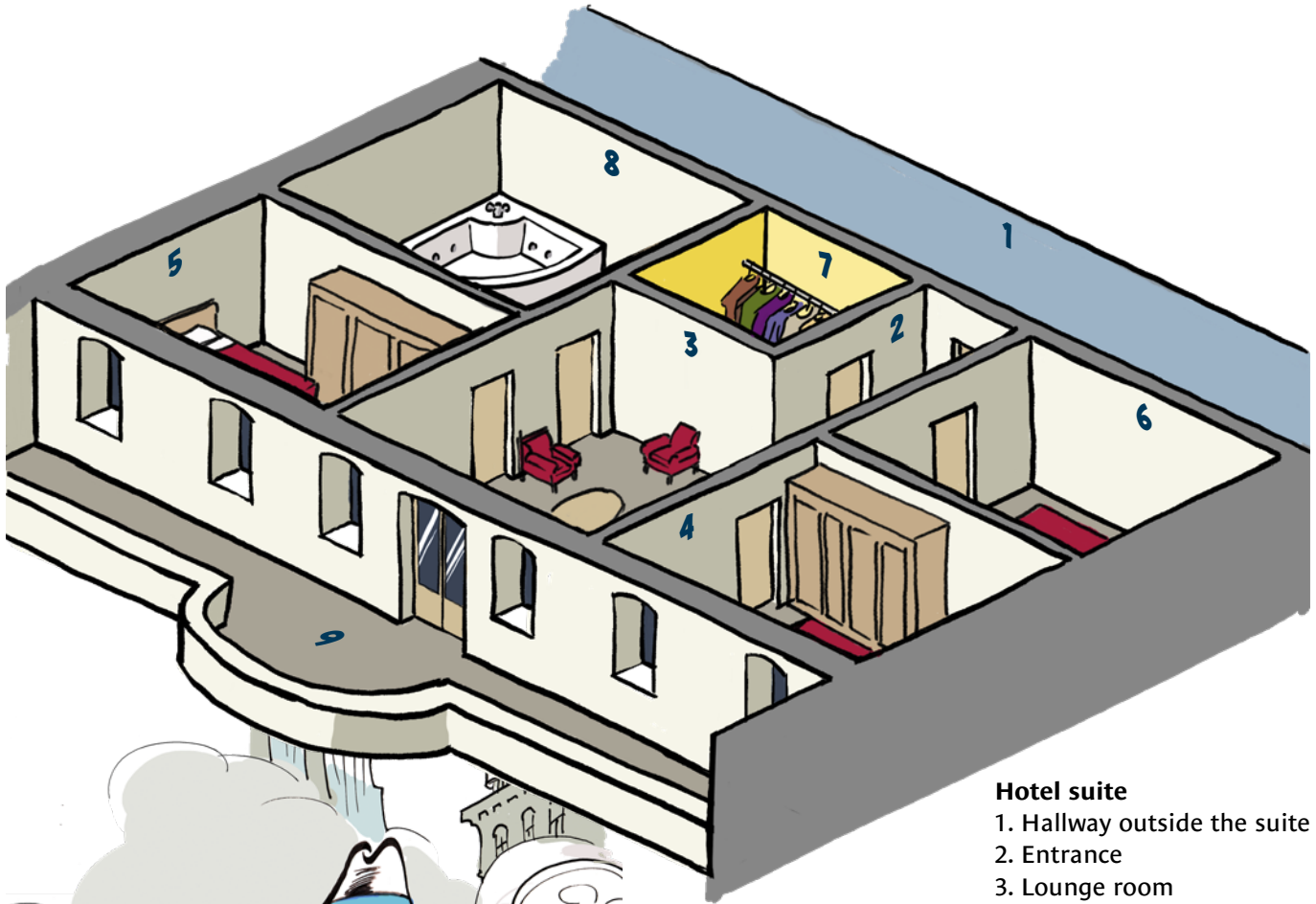
None of the characters are **Wounded** at the end of the “persuasion”, just roughed up a bit. There will be bruises, bleeding lips and black eyes, but nothing so severe that it counts as being **Wounded**. At most, the roughed-up characters are **Stunned**.

### WHEN CAPTURED

This scene is not an “if captured”, but a “when captured” moment. The purpose of the scene is to deliver the warning, and to initiate an action sequence as the characters escape. The escape may require some improvisation on your part, as it is hard to plan when the players will act.

- **When being roughed up:** The characters may try to fight the thugs, or escape the room. Ways out could be through the guarded door, or out the window and onto a balcony.
- **When being moved out of the hotel:** The mobsters have some control over the characters as they are being roughed up in their room, but when they are transported to the car to be taken to the airport, chances of getting away increase a lot. Options include beating up mobsters in the elevator and getting off on another floor, dashing for the fire escape, head-butting mobsters on the sidewalk, and so on.
- **At the airport:** This is the weakest link in the mobsters’ plan. Although they have bribed key security guards, there’s plenty of opportunity to get off the plane, run away from the mobsters in the terminal, alert customs officials and so on.
- **On the plane:** If the plane takes off with the characters on board, they’re just stuck on the plane and may as well enjoy the in-flight entertainment and the food. Really reckless characters may try to hijack the plane. This will get them in really big trouble, so actively try to discourage them from doing it.
- **In France:** It may happen that the mobsters succeed. In the end, it just means that the characters land at Orly a day later, without any harassing mobsters. They also have an interesting tale to add to the story in *La République*.

As usual, the players receive **9 Story Points** each for being captured.



### Hotel suite

1. Hallway outside the suite
2. Entrance
3. Lounge room
4. Master bedroom
5. Second bedroom
6. Spare bedroom
7. Closet
8. Bathroom with jacuzzi
9. Terrace



## WHAT NEXT?

By now, the characters should realise it is time to travel to Sitomeyang.

Preferably, the characters should have discovered the following by this point:

- The almost complete history of the painting.
- The identity of the survivor, Johann Fressner.
- The name of Budi Darwaman, art collector in Sitomeyang.

Have the players plan what they need for the expedition and pick necessary gear kits for the plan. Be part of the conversation and suggest problems that they may encounter on their expedition.

Then the players make task checks for appropriate Skills to get the kits. Failed checks mean that some kind of inconvenience pops up. Don't say that the player characters can't get it, but give them another problem instead – the “yes, but” principle:

- The boat is unavailable at the moment, and the characters can't go for five days.
- The skipper is drunk and character has to drive the boat.
- The air compressor is incompatible with the SCUBA tanks and they have to find or build an adapter using **Engineering**.
- They get an air compressor, but it will fail after **1d6** dives and they have to repair it using **Engineering**.
- They get the food, but it spoils in the hot humid weather, so the characters must barter with the locals or use **Survival** to fish.
- They get one too few sets of SCUBA gear, so they can't do as many dives per day.

## THE TECHNICALITIES OF DIVING

The wreck of the U-boat rests at a depth of about 30 metres, on a coral reef. The submarine is about 10 meters tall, and the possible entry locations may be as deep as 27 meters. The pressure at that depth is significant.



Because of the depth, the dive is rather technical. The oxygen mix and pressure must be set carefully. Someone with the Diver Ability can do the necessary air mixture settings.

On a single air bottle, the characters will have a maximum bottom time of 20 minutes and a total dive time of 35 minutes. It is possible to use two air bottles to get another 30 minutes of bottom time, but each diver must have the Divemaster Ability to handle the equipment safely. It will take a full 10 minutes with decompression stops to safely get to the surface.

There is also the matter of nitrogen saturation. A diver must stay at the surface for 14 hours to desaturate nitrogen from the blood. It is possible to get back down earlier, but then the bottom time is severely affected. Assume that each diver can only safely make one dive per day. For safety reasons, there must be at least two divers on each dive. Having more than one dive team can allow the characters to use the time at sea more effectively.

It is pretty dark down at the sub. Although the water is clear, only about 12% of sunlight reaches down to 27 metres, and most colours are gone. The paint scheme of the U-boat, the overgrowth of corals and the fishing implements stuck to it makes it rather hard to find in the blue-violet dusk.

Talking while diving is impossible, and the characters must instead communicate through signs and gestures. Grease pencils could be used to write messages.

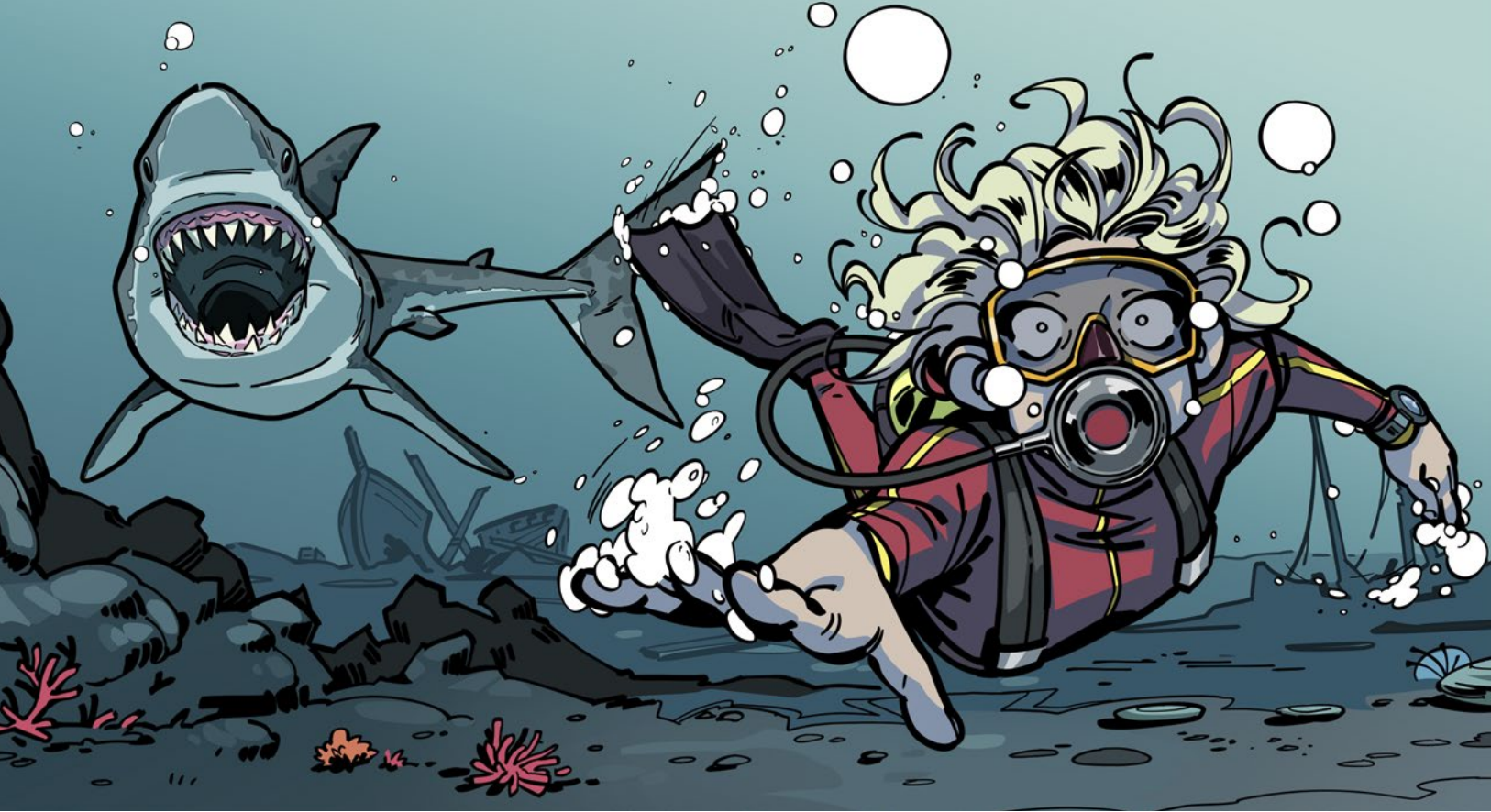
## BOATSMAN AND BOAT

It would be smart to hire a local boatsman who knows the waters. They can probably get both boat and boatsman in one go, if they hire a skipper with his own fishing boat. One such boatsman is Sasanka Vijaya, a friendly fisherman with his own boat, Widyama. Widyama is a sturdy boat with a cabin under the foredeck and three bunk beds, a small galley in the open wheelhouse, and an aft deck which also allows for access to the small diesel engine under the deck.

## DIVEMASTER

If the characters are not experienced divers, they should also consider hiring a divemaster. There aren't that many that will help them because of the local superstition surrounding the haunted reef.

One exception is Terri Powers. Unlike most divers in Sitomeyang, Terri is not that superstitious about the haunted reef. She is Australian and an experienced diver and spear fisher. She makes a living as a dive guide and diving teacher for tourists. She often guides tourists to wrecks in the waters around Selangit, but a new wreck is not something she gets to explore often.



# UNDER THE SEA

In this chapter, the characters try to locate the U-boat and salvage its treasure before the Octopus expedition does.

## ON THE HIGH SEAS

The cruise to the reef is rather uneventful. It takes about three hours to get to the Vikraminay strait from Selangit or to get back. They can also set up a base camp at any of the nearby islands. There are plenty of fishing villages along its coast, where it is possible to stay and buy supplies. Johann Fressner lives in one of them, by the way.

Since the characters can make a limited number of dives per day, and probably can't accomplish all the goals in one day, they will either have to set up base camp on one of the islands near the reef which will require additional gear, or risk discovery by going there once every day (but at least they will sleep in a comfortable bed).

## DIVING

It will take several dives to accomplish the mission and find the painting. If everything goes perfectly, there's at least five different steps involved, and maybe as many as 12. Because bottom time is limited, there's only so much that the characters can do in one dive.

### DIVER EMERGENCIES

There are a lot of things that could go wrong on a dive, triggering emergencies that need to be dealt with.

- **Wounded:** A **Wounded** character should abort the dive and surface, especially if there is blood in the water.
- **Out Cold:** A character who is **Out Cold** must abort now and will need help getting to the surface. One other character must assist them during the ascent. Give the assisting character the choice of a rapid ascent, making both divers unavailable for 48 hours,

starts, it will be noticed, and from engine start, it will take two rounds before the rotor has spun up enough to generate lift. This also means going through a bare-bones checklist for an emergency start, which is not recommended since any aircraft and helicopters in particular are fickle beasts. There is no rules disadvantages as a result of a quick start, but do remind the players how bad it is. Stealing a helicopter is dramatic and will probably lead to all kinds of awkward questions by the authorities, but if they can show that Pierre Martin was kidnapped by the crew of MS *Adonia*, they may get away with it.

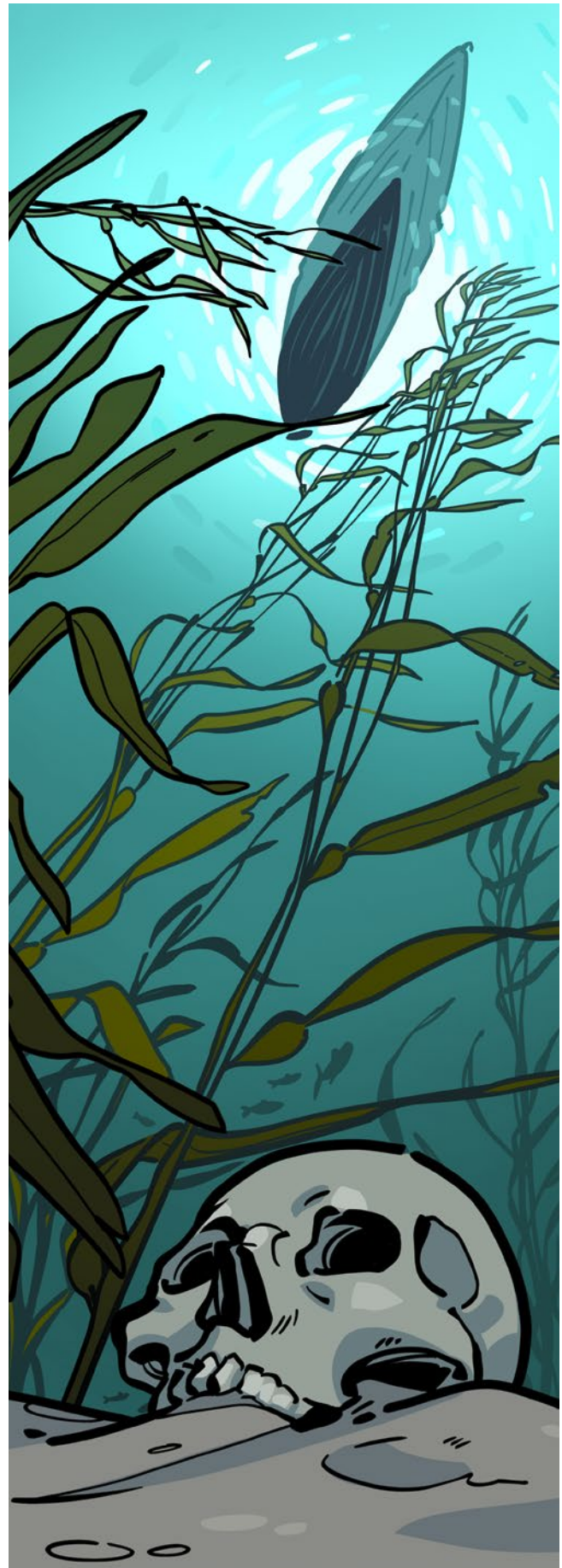
If the characters do not escape, or if they try to escape but are captured again, they will be dealt with by setting them adrift in a lifeboat somewhere in the Indian Ocean. Eventually, they are rescued by a patrol boat from the Sitomeyese navy. In this scenario, Dr Jäger most likely gets away with the painting.

#### The haunted haunted sea

If you need a rescue and are not afraid of going over the top, the Flying Dutchman appears as a ghostly vision. It doesn't do anything, but it distracts the Director characters and gives the player characters a moment of opportunity to escape. Then it disappears, leaving one more mystery to explore in the future.

## WHAT NEXT?

The adventure is effectively over. All that is left to do is to wrap up the story in the Conclusion chapter as an epilogue, and then hand out rewards and free experience ticks.



# HANDOUTS

## STARTUP HANDOUTS

### Media Darling

*This is a startup handout. Use it to help the director kick things off and drag your friends into the adventure.*

Something horrible happened yesterday: a friendly journalist, Pierre Martin from *La République*, was interviewing you before setting off for New York and then Sitomeyang to cover a German marine expedition.

As the interview ended and you exited the restaurant where the interview took place, a van suddenly screeched to a halt in front of you. Two buffoons grabbed Pierre and pulled him into the van before speeding off, leaving you to stare after them in bewilderment.

Monsieur Martin's bag was left on the pavement, which you discovered after the kidnapping. It contains his tape recorder with the interview with you, a book called *The One That Got Away: Hitler's Lost U-boat*, and a scrap piece of paper used as a bookmark that has the words "Wallhaus file?" on it. The bookmark is in the chapter "The Tale of the Survivor".

The police have interviewed you, but they are slow and disinterested as usual, and more prone to accuse you than find Monsieur Martin.

It is now the day after. What do you do?



### Looking for a Case

*This is a startup handout. Use it to help the director kick things off and drag your friends into the adventure.*

Some days ago, you got an anonymous tip on the phone about a former Nazi setting up a mysterious marine expedition to Indochina. When you asked for something more substantive, the voice on the other end of the phone promised to oblige.

Next morning, you found an art catalogue from the *Metropolitan Museum of Art* in New York in the mailbox. As you flipped through it, you found an entry for a painting in the exhibition, *Brünnhilde Rides to Valhalla*, circled in red, with a small octopus scribble next to it and the note "P. Martin, La République".

It is now the day after. What do you do?



## THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

*The One That Got Away: Hitler's Lost U-boat* is a history book by American historian Stephen Armstrong.

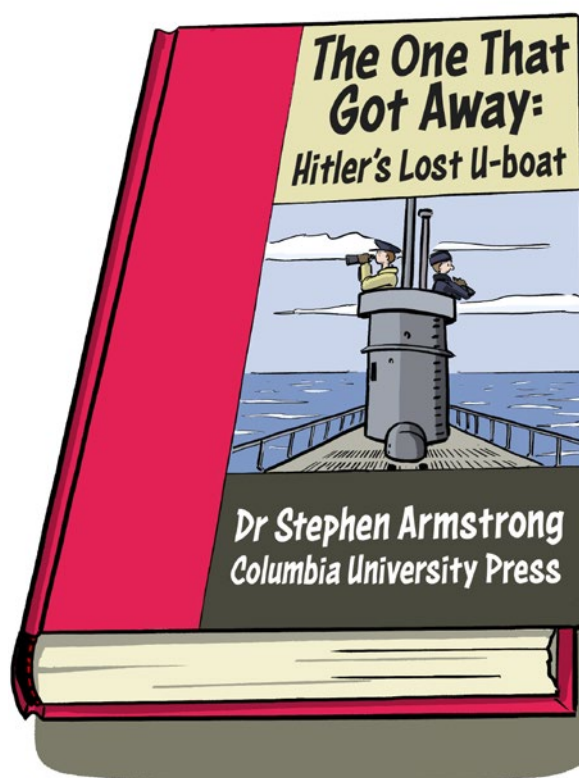
The book tells the story of *U-890*, a Type IX-C U-boat on a secret mission to Japan at the end of the war. It sailed from Hamburg on the eve of April 16th, 1945, and never arrived at its destination.

The author connects the U-boat's mission with an earlier mission to Zürich, where stolen riches and art were deposited in numbered bank boxes. The value of the riches is just short of ridiculous, even when accounting for inflation. Which boxes, or for that matter which bank, remains unknown even today. The Zürich banks have no records and deny their existence, according to the author.

The author then traces the U-boat to a strait outside Sitomeyang, where it was attacked by the US and Australian navy, and eventually sunk in deep water outside the strait.

One chapter, "The tale of the Survivor", tells the story from the perspective of the crew of the U-boat. A note at the beginning says that the story is based on second hand information from someone who met an alleged survivor, but the identity of the survivor in question is unknown. The story is one of suspicion and defeatism, and suggests that the crew considered mutiny and the surrender of their vessel.

There is also a crew manifest and several maps in the appendices of the book.



## THE FLIGHT PLAN LIST

### FLIGHT PLAN

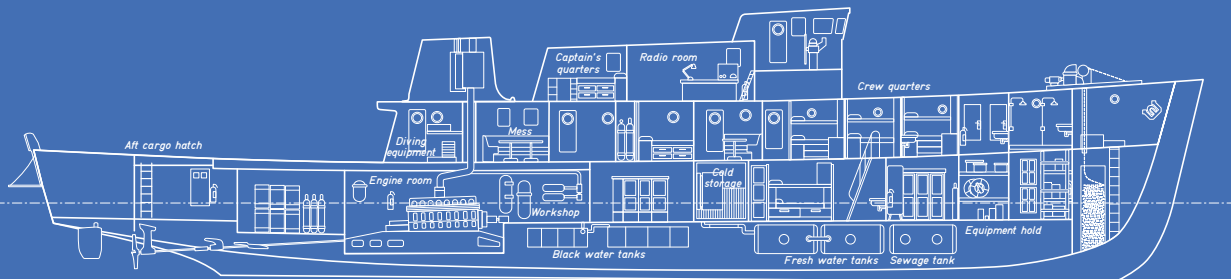
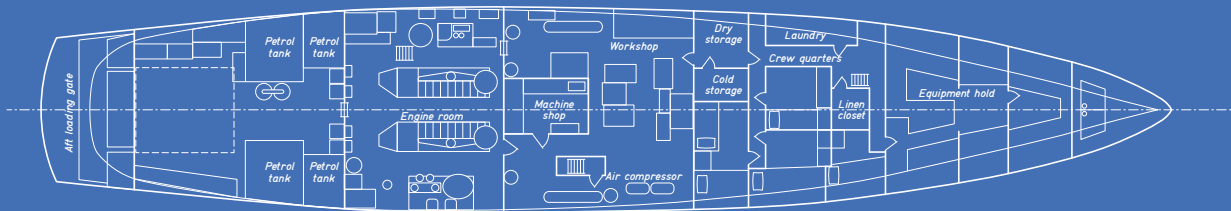
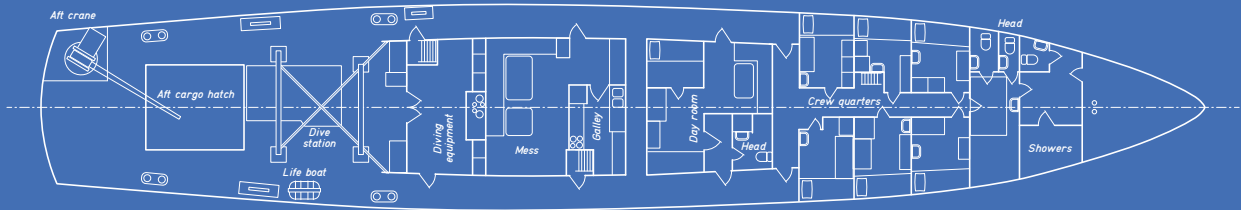
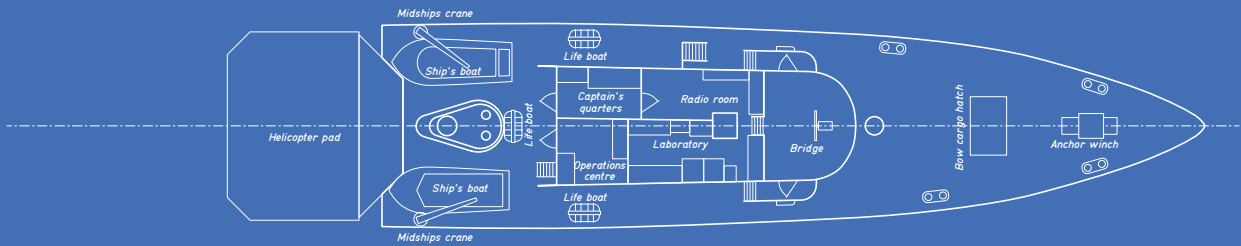
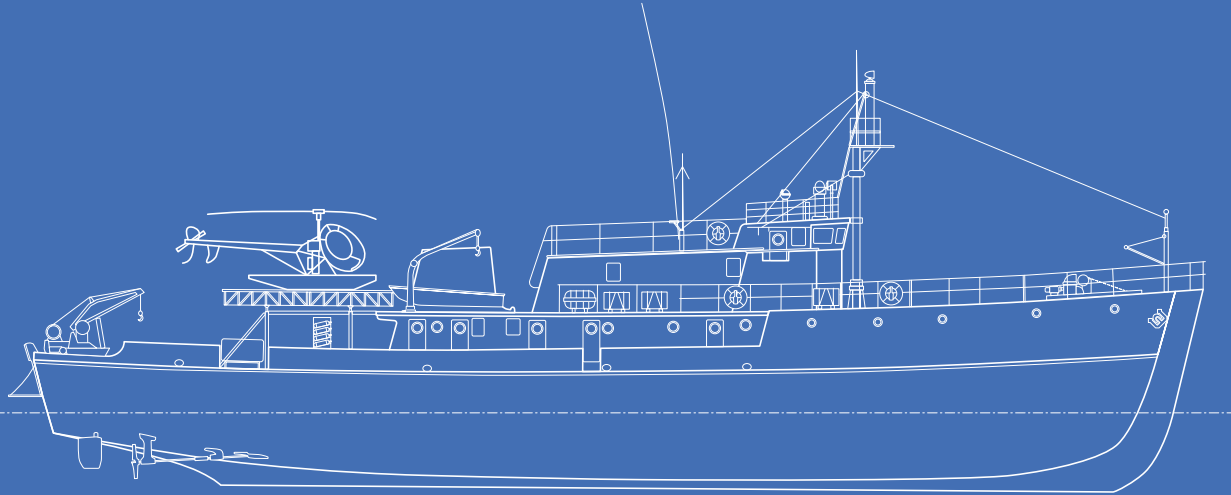
Registration date: 05/01/1965

ORY Paris-Orly, FRANCE -- RSG Selangit, KINGDOM OF SITOMEYANG  
IFR: instrument flight

Aircraft: F-1095, Dassault Falcon 20  
Owner: Calamari C.A., Venezuela  
Pilot-in-command: Thibault MARTEL

Departure		Arrival	
ORY Paris-Orly	10/01/1965 05:12	AWU Al-Ansur	10/01/1965 09:29
AWU Al-Ansur	10/01/1965 14:31	DEL Delhi	10/01/1965 18:40
DEL Delhi	11/01/1965 08:29	HKT Phuket	11/01/1965 12:05
HKT Phuket	11/01/1965 15:38	RSG Selangit	11/01/1965 19:09

# MS ADONIA DECK PLANS



Replaces	RV Adonia, Hamburg	Revisions
Replaced by		
Date	1989 Ship type BYMS Mk 1 Motor Minesweeper	
Norderwerft GmbH	Overview plan	

# THE U-BOAT MYSTERY

**A KIDNAPPING. A MAP.  
A LOST U-BOAT.**

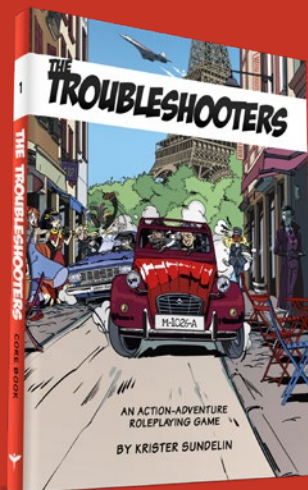
There is something fishy going on in Paris, where the kidnapping of journalist Pierre Martin seems to be connected to a marine expedition to the island kingdom Sitomeyang on the other side of the globe. Clues point to the mysterious organisation The Octopus, whose tentacles are everywhere.

Only a band of intrepid troubleshooters can find out how all of this is connected, and solve *The U-boat Mystery*.

The *U-Boat Mystery* is an adventure for 3–5 players.



You need a copy of  
*The Troubleshooters*  
to play this adventure.



**The Troubleshooters  
Core Book**  
MUH052315



ADVENTURE



GENRE

ACTION



LEVEL

BASIC



#PLAYERS

3-5+



AGE

12+



MUH052318

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**MODIPHIUS**  
ENTERTAINMENT