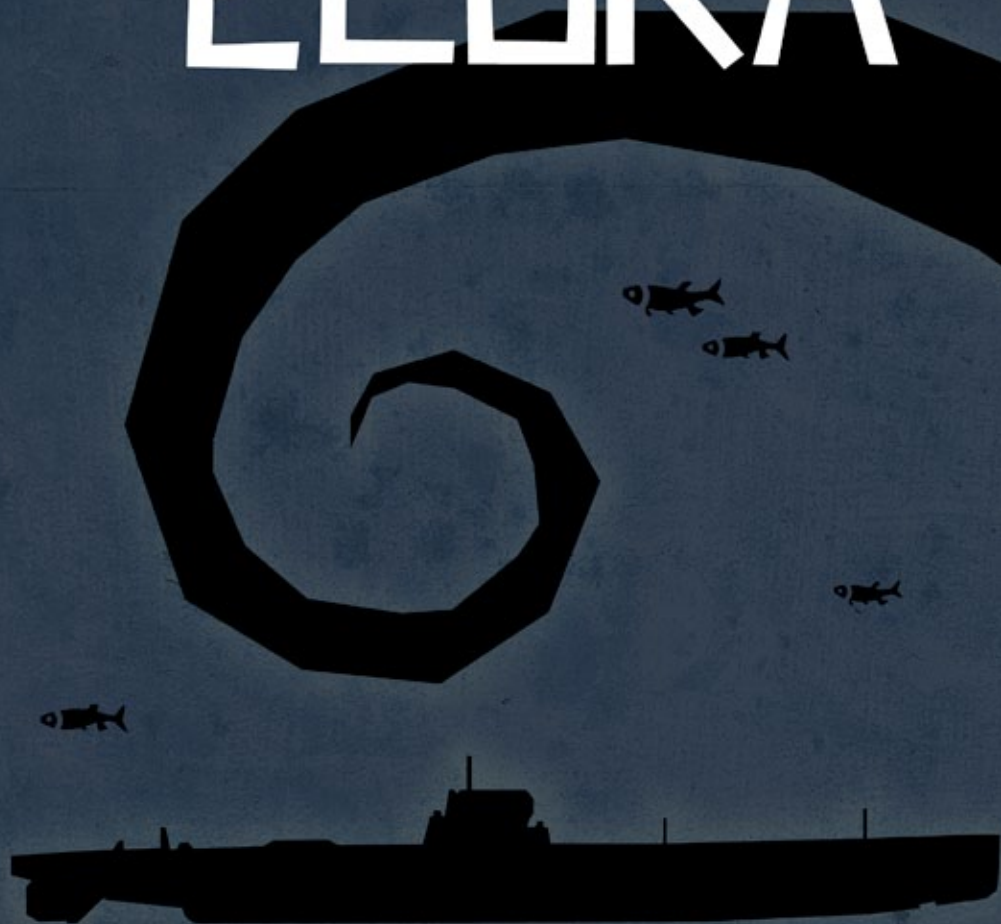


# OBJECTIVE ZEBRA



A FIASCO PLAYSET BY  
JEROME LARRE

# JRO1 OBJECTIVE ZEBRA

## CREDITS

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Objective Zebra was Playset of the Month, January 2011.

## BOILERPLATE

This playset is an accessory for the Fiasco role-playing game by Bully Pulpit Games.

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For more information about Fiasco or to download other playsets and materials, visit [www.bullypulpitgames.com](http://www.bullypulpitgames.com).

If you'd like to create your own playset or other Fiasco-related content, we'd like to help. Write us at [info@bullypulpitgames.com](mailto:info@bullypulpitgames.com).



“When you play, play *hard*.” - Theodore Roosevelt

# THE SCORE

## SILENT AND DEEP, BUT NOT RUNNING

All is quiet aboard the U.S. Navy submarine SS-495, the USS Saddleback. She's on reduced battery power, nestled in the soft mud of the North Sea somewhere off the coast of Lower Saxony.

It is the middle of World War II. You were specially selected for this mission. They made it sound like a great honor, to ferry a handful of civilians somewhere, in the greatest secrecy, so they could do something that would help win the war. It was called "Objective Zebra". It hasn't worked out so well.

You surfaced and took them, heavily guarded, to an island that wasn't on the Saddleback's charts. They did whatever it is they were supposed to do and came back in a tearing hurry, followed by German spotter aircraft, and E-Boats, and finally a depth-charge tossing Vorpostenboot from the mouth of the Elbe that nearly sunk you. Saddleback went deep and got quiet fast, diving for her life.

Saddleback's collapse depth was 200 meters. When you came to rest on the bottom, amid the screaming protest of over-stressed metal, the gage read 226. There is a meter of water in the pump room and the forward torpedo compartment is largely flooded. The horrible groaning of the tortured pressure hull has mixed with another sound - something stranger, more unearthly - from outside the Saddleback. Whatever it is, it is like nothing even the saltiest old timers has ever heard before. And it is getting closer. What the hell did those civilians do?

You're trapped in a stranded submarine and you have to get the hell out of here...before it comes in !

## MOVIE NIGHT

Das Boot, U-571, Below, K-19: the Widowmaker

# RELATIONSHIPS...

## 1 CHAIN OF COMMAND

- Friendly enemies
- Officer and the crewman who seduced his love
- Inspiring leader of men and his simpering toady
- Fought side by side in the *last* war
- Lazy fool and tough old veteran
- Hard-case and the one who demoted him

## 2 CREW

- Ignorant farm boys
- Gung-ho lunatics
- Up for the same promotion
- “You were both specially selected based on *unique* talents”
- Odd-men-out on a tight-knit boat
- Lovers

## 3 RE: OBJECTIVE ZEBRA

- Secret agent and Navy intelligence operative
- Occultist and Navy cameraman
- “Doctor” and Navy handler
- Secret agent and double agent
- Cultists
- Physicist and Navy liaison

## 4 OLD BONDS

- ◻ Shipboard enemies, shore leave friends
- ◻ Rivals in love
- ◻ We killed a man and he haunts us
- ◻ We saved a life and lived to regret it
- ◻ Through “coincidence” always paired
- ◻ One shot the other, over something silly

## 5 CRIMINAL PAST

- ◻ Bad boys, roughnecks, and roustabouts
- ◻ His criminal past would get him booted from the navy; only I know
- ◻ Bully and weak sister
- ◻ Leaders of rival shipboard gangs
- ◻ Murderer and the guy he thought he killed
- ◻ Victims of the boat’s master grifter

## 6 FAMILY

- ◻ Brothers
- ◻ Competitive cousins
- ◻ Father and son, despite regulations
- ◻ Blood brothers
- ◻ Brothers-in-law
- ◻ Mutual orphans who volunteered together

...**ABOARD USS SADDLEBACK**

# NEEDS...

## 1 TO GET THE TRUTH ABOUT

- ... what happened to the Captain's quarters that night
- ◻ ... the scratching on the hull
- ◻ ... Objective Zebra's real objective
- ◻ ... the sudden illness sweeping the crew
- ◻ ... the thing that happened on the island
- ◻ ... what's in the fucking box

## 2 TO GET RESPECT FROM

- ... the Captain of USS Saddleback
- ◻ ... the crew
- ◻ ... your dark master
- ◻ ... your overbearing father, may he rest in peace
- ◻ ... yourself
- ◻ ... your secret ex-lover aboard the Saddleback

## 3 TO HIDE THAT

- ... you didn't exactly follow orders regarding Objective Zebra
- ◻ ... there is a German agent aboard
- ◻ ... you just killed a fellow sailor
- ◻ ... drunk men sometimes don't do all the safety checks
- ◻ ... you are responsible for this mess - all of it
- ◻ ... you know far more about the mission than anyone guesses

## 4 TO FINALLY TAKE CARE OF

- ☐ ... those lousy Kraut bastards waiting for us up there
- ☐◦ ... your stupid brother, the family golden boy
- ☐◦◦ ... yourself for a change
- ☐◦◦◦ ... Lieutenant Joshua Sheppard
- ☐◦◦◦ ... George, who else?
- ☐◦◦◦◦ ... your own terror and loneliness

## 5 TO GET AWAY

- ☐ ... to Cuxhaven, Lower Saxony, your ancestral home
- ☐◦ ... to your family farm, to marry your pregnant girlfriend
- ☐◦◦ ... from this steam pipe you're unfortunately handcuffed to
- ☐◦◦◦ ... from this stinking air and these stinking people
- ☐◦◦◦◦ ... from whatever is out there lurking in the depths
- ☐◦◦◦◦◦ ... with the ritual

## 6 TO TELL

- ☐ ... the Captain what he did to your dad, right before you kill him
- ☐◦ ... the Navy what happened with Objective Zebra
- ☐◦◦ ... everybody about the ghosts, and what they want
- ☐◦◦◦ ... the Chosen One he must prepare
- ☐◦◦◦◦ ... your superior officer to fuck off
- ☐◦◦◦◦◦ ... the scientist what you added to his bag back on the island

**...ABOARD USS SADDLEBACK**

# LOCATIONS...

## 1 THE MISSION - FLASHBACK

- The chart table of USS Saddleback, an unusual chart on display
- The deck of a Cannon-class Destroyer Escort USS Eldridge
- Hunted, depth-charged, leaking, sinking
- ◐ On the surface, an island on the horizon, dinghies on deck
- ◐ Hell itself, or a reasonable facsimile
- ◐ The sunken wreck of a German E-Boat

## 2 GROTON NAVAL BASE - FLASHBACK

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt's motorcade
- The Five Fathom Club, a Groton dive bar
- A heavily guarded concrete bunker labeled ZEBRA PRIME
- ◐ Research pressure chamber #1
- ◐ In an alley, with an Admiral
- ◐ Temporary duty barracks, heavy with dread

## 3 THE ISLAND - FLASHBACK

- Ruins of an ancient temple
- Underground, with guns blazing
- German facility
- ◐ Strange pinnacle
- ◐ Driftwood shelter awash in blood
- ◐ Above a mass grave



## 4 WHERE WE DO THINGS

- ◻ The surreal, silent engine room
- ◻◦ Crammed inside a blood-stained torpedo tube
- ◻◦ Partially-flooded pump room
- ◻◦◦ Officers' mess, now living up to its name
- ◻◦◦ Radio operator's station, from which creepy noises emanate
- ◻◦◦◦ The should-be-empty-now conning tower

## 5 WHERE WE KEEP THINGS

- ◻ Torpedo room, with a primed "fish" rolling on the deck
- ◻◦ Under a filthy rack
- ◻◦ Fresh water tank, where this *thing* should not be floating
- ◻◦◦ Ship's pantry, curiously empty
- ◻◦◦ Improvised sick bay in officer's country
- ◻◦◦◦ Inside the leaking oil sump

## 6 WHERE WE CURRENTLY AVOID

- ◻ The now burnt-out Captain's quarters
- ◻◦ Outside, in crushing deep water
- ◻◦ In the black water tank
- ◻◦◦ In the #3 forward torpedo tube, forcibly jammed shut
- ◻◦◦ Ancient-looking steamer trunk with all the padlocks
- ◻◦◦◦ Battery room crawlspace

...**ABOARD USS SADDLEBACK**

# OBJECTS...

## 1 WEAPONS

- ◻ Colt M1911 pistol
- ◻ M3A1 “grease gun”
- ◻ Big old galley knife
- ◻ Signal flare
- ◻ Marlin spike
- ◻ Aluminum pan of battery acid

## 2 TOOLS

- ◻ Over-used and damaged electrical saw
- ◻ A weirdly clean hammer
- ◻ Gigantic pipefitter’s wrench
- ◻ “Momsen lung” submarine escape system
- ◻ Depth gage
- ◻ Unusual surgical instruments

## 3 MISSING AND UNACCOUNTED FOR

- ◻ Cockwheel for torpedo tube #3
- ◻ Radio’s microphone
- ◻ Captain’s uniform
- ◻ Pills, lots of pills
- ◻ Half the boat’s food supply
- ◻ Keys to the weapon locker

## 4 STRANGE COMFORT

- Unreliable compass with shattered glass
- ◻ Oil-stained and generally dog-eared bible
- ◻ Signed Art Tatum record with a personal note
- ◻ Straight razor, flecks of dried blood on the blade
- ◻ Diary written in a dead language
- ◻ Carefully concealed bottle of whiskey

## 5 MEMORIES

- Photo of a woman and two kids, “München, 1932” handwritten
- ◻ Photograph of a ghost aboard a submarine, marked SECRET
- ◻ Oil painting of the Saddlebacks’ previous officers
- ◻ Erotic magazine, annotated in code
- ◻ Set of instructions for demon summoning
- ◻ Navy Cross in a velvet-lined box

## 6 DISTURBING

- Strange idol, bathed in deep sea muck
- ◻ List of 13 names, including the recently killed, some crossed off
- ◻ Broken hatch door with marks of fists in the metal
- ◻ Sealed orders
- ◻ The Shroud of Turin
- ◻ Diary of the cook, explaining that he poisoned everybody on board

...**ABOARD USS SADDLEBACK**

# A SUBMARINE INSTA-SETUP

## RELATIONSHIPS UNDERWATER

For three players...

- \* Chain of Command: Hard-case and the one who demoted him
- \* Criminal past: Murderer and the guy he thought he killed
- \* Re: Objective Zebra: Occultist and Navy cameraman

For four players, add...

- \* Crew: Lovers

For five players, add...

- \* Old Bonds: We killed a man and he haunts us

## NEEDS UNDERWATER

For three players...

- \* To tell everybody about the ghosts, and what they want
- \* For four or five players, add...
- \* To get the truth about Objective Zebra's real objective

## LOCATIONS UNDERWATER

For three or four players...

- \* Where We Currently Avoid: Battery room crawlspace

For five players, add...

- \* The Island: Ruins of an ancient temple

## OBJECTS UNDERWATER

For three, four or five players...

- \* Memories: photograph of a ghost aboard a submarine, marked  
SECRET