

Beat—Gangsters

The 1920s saw the rise of organized crime, as big cities like New York became the epicenter of rum-running and bootlegging. Prohibition led to crime becoming big business, with gangsters raking in millions of dollars of profit each year.

Tell Lucky to keep an eye on that looker that's been hanging around the club lately. I know he thinks it's just someone drawn in by his gangster MYSTIQUE, but...

I've noticed a lot of quiet phone calls being made. Could be someone's working an angle or carrying a GRUDGE.

Time to do something a little SOPHISTICATED. Get the kid to bring over her fancy wiretapping gear. Maybe we'll catch the dregs planning another raid...

OWEN "OWNEY" MADDEN

VIOLENT: Nicknamed "Owney the Killer" by press; Suspected in five murders before age 18.

EXPLOITATIVE: Founded segregated Cotton Club in Harlem; makes "Madden's #1 Beer."

BOSS: Ran the Hell's Kitchen Irish mob; Just out of prison, sees potential in Prohibition.



ON THE TAKE: Gangsters relied on bribes to manipulate just about anyone.

MANY ARRESTS: Those convicted of serious crimes are "sent up river" to Sing Sing prison.

FEW CONVICTIONS: Only a handful of judges were available to try prohibition cases; it'd take decades to clear the backlog.

OPEN CONFLICT: Rival gangsters face assassinations or massacre; especially those "stool pigeons" who work with police.

GUNS BLAZING: The iconic weapon of the gangster, the Tommy Gun, is known as "the gun that made the twenties roar".

ALLIANCES: Partnerships are formed between gangs of disparate backgrounds; profit is the primary motivator.

BOOTLEGGERS

SMUGGLER: Rum is smuggled into the city by ship or car, from Canada or the Bahamas.

RESTRICTED: The Coast Guard has a blockade in place and patrol cars watch the roads.

MOONSHINE: Prohibition seems impossible when every household is making bathtub gin or running a home distillery.

MILLIONAIRES: Before Prohibition, even the busiest gangster made thousands; after, they brought in millions.

SIDE-HUSTLE: Flush with cash, the wealthiest seek new rackets: politics, gambling and club-ownership.

COMMONPLACE: Bootleg booze is sold in clubs, speakeasies, even pharmacies where whiskey prescriptions are filled.