

# A DVENTURERS CLUB

THE HERO GAMES,  
IRON CROWN QUARTERLY

SPRING 1987

ISSUE #9

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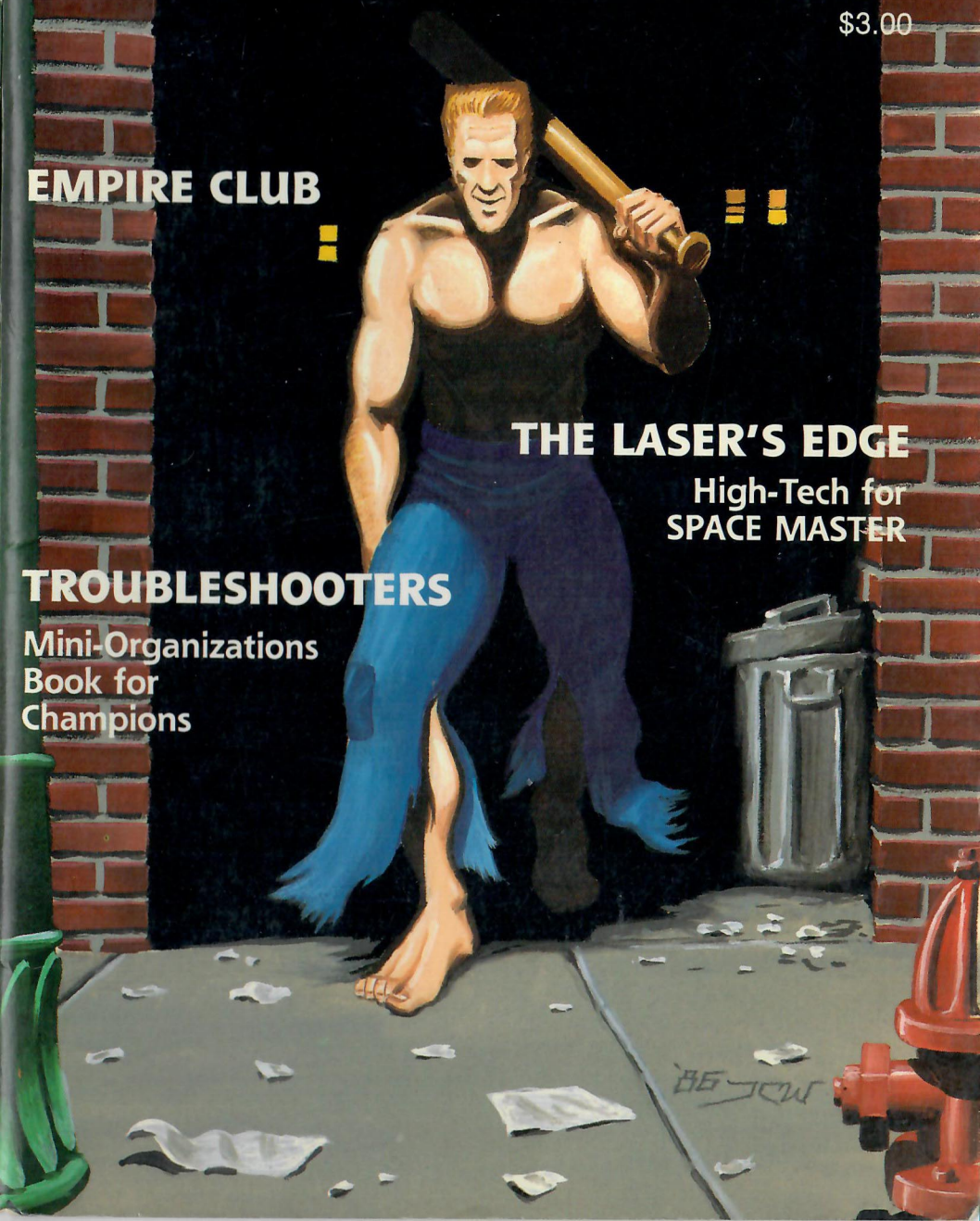
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# ADVENTURERS CLUB

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# NUFF SAID

BY AARON ALLSTON

The title of this column, for once, is right on the money: There's not a whole lot to say this issue.

This is our third issue of the AC since our unfortunate hiatus; it's our second since we went to 72 pages, and there's no sign that the page count will change any time soon; it's our first experiment with a new type of feature article, as I'll mention in a moment. Hero Games products are still rolling from the Hero Games editors and writers, through the ICE production line, and into dealers' stores.

So, we actually have a little breathing room. Things are pretty calm, so we'll just sit back and begin to rake in your comments and suggestions. (Which means you have to send some in. Don't forget, now.)

## IN THIS ISSUE

Our experiment for this issue is Rodford Smith's "Troubleshooters," an Organizations Book — in miniature. "Troubleshooters" is a healthy and helpful agency for any **Champions** campaign; tell us what you think of it in particular and the mini-Organizations Book format in general.

Also on hand is Part Two of Greg Porter's "Sound the Alarm!"

piece, wrapping up the topic of real-life security systems in **DI**. Greg skips to the sillier side of the street with "On Powergaming," just a little further in the issue.

Scott Bennie's long-delayed "Handling Hunteds and DNPCs" piece, bounced from issue to issue since <sup>6</sup>, finally sees the light of day. Sorry, Scott...

"Gadgets & Treasures" has several gizmos and vehicles this time, and "Crooks and Crusaders" brings you *three* useful NPCs: One each for **Champions**, **Danger International**, and **Justice, Inc.**

There are a couple of things you *won't* find this issue. Lenore is one — and that sad story is to be found in the letters column. "Superhype" and "The Hero System" — the latter containing George MacDonald's long-awaited **Champions/DC Heroes** conversion advice — have both been delayed by mundane problems and postal delays, but we'll see their return in AC '10.

## IN UPCOMING ISSUES

Finally, in the next few issues of the AC we'll find all this fun:

"The Wilderness Experience," Greg Porter on weather — and its less delightful effects on your **DI** and **JJ** characters...

"**Champions Minus**," by Marc R. Blumberg, Keith Hannigan, and Mike Malony, with unofficial rules to improve (?) your campaign...

The **Champions/DC Heroes** conversion, from master Hero System engineer George MacDonald...

"**Exotic Weapons for Justice, Inc.**," Greg Porter's look at the real-life gadgets of the "20s and "30s...

"The Care and Feeding of Deathtraps," Duane Tremaine's examination of that most comic-bookish plot device...

"Agents of Darkness," Kevin R. Criscione's bag of nasties for **Champions** campaigns...

And whatever else a 50 STR Telekinesis (Text Only, +3) can cram into our pages.



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## THE TRAVELING SHOW

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On this page we'll cover cons we've been to and talk about ones we'll be attending (including official I.C.E. and Hero tournaments). If we're at a con near you, come on down and say hi, we'd love to meet you. I'll squeeze in a few other topics if space allows. So here goes...

GENCON was a good show for us, good tournaments and lots of good folks. Robert Bell ran "Capitol Patrol," a Champions Tournament. The grand prize winner was John Hufnagel (Igneous). The other winners were Hugh McGowan (Shadow Wolf), Alan Litomer (Balefire), Richard Sheaver (Revenant), Jeff Boyce (Voyager), Philip Kelly and Max Bowman. Kevin Barret ran an action-packed Space Master Tournament where the grand prize winner was Sue Wojahn. The first elimination round winner was Pete Holstein. We had a lot of fun hosting a Tolkien Trivia quiz for

prizes. Those winners were Craig Tsuchiya, Dennis Viau, John Lawson, Charles Schmidt, Charles Polta, William O'Conner, Lori Marek, Craig Marek, Lisa Typo, and Jason Gralewicz. The grand prize winner was Sue Wojahn (no, it wasn't rigged!). We thank everyone for participating and hope you enjoy your prizes.

Speaking of participating, there's a great team of Hero fans who participate at the cons helping to run the booth, organize and run tours, answer questions, run errands, etc. These invaluable folks have gone unsung long enough. Fondly referred to as the HAC crew (Hero Auxilliary Corps), these enthusiasts help things run smoothly and in general make cons fun to be a part of. Here are some of the valiant HAC folks, Eric Aldrich, Robert Bell, Marc Blumberg, Madeline Butkevicius, Jim Dorethy, Dean Eogell, Mitch Gitelman,

Bruce Glassco, and Keith Hanigan. Thanks for everything! If anyone out there would like to help out at conventions, drop us a line. We'll be putting together an I.C.E. auxiliary corps (good folks familiar with the I.C.E. product line). Hours are long, fare is meager, intensity level is high, fun level is tremendous! If interested, contact Chris Christensen c/o I.C.E.

And while I'm soliciting... we need articles and scenarios to keep these pages full! If you'd like to write an article, send us a proposal and we'll let you know if we can use

it. All Hero article proposals should be sent to:

Aaron Allston  
Hero Submissions  
P.O. Box 7111  
Austin, TX 78713

All I.C.E article proposals should be sent to:

Rick Britton  
I.C.E. Submissions  
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Charlottesville, VA 22902

We'll be checking our mail!

Ossie Nibs



# LETTERS



*Special Announcement: Lenore is no longer handling Letters for the AC. She's not a MERP player, and with the new format we need to be able to answer Hero System and MERP letters with a single editorial voice. All of which means she's out there, somewhere, and probably cranky at being dismissed... be warned...*

First off, let me say I'm really pleased with the new format for *Adventurers Club*. It's good to see AC back on the stands. We missed you while you were regrouping!

I'll make some response to some of the ideas sent up as trial balloons in the last issue. First, Aaron Allston suggested that you might try devoting each issue to a particular game. I don't have a really strong feeling either way, though I think that certainly you can't try to cover all the games in the Hero System in a single issue. In fact, now that I think of it, "specializing" each issue would allow you to provide a fairly elaborate coverage of a particular game — under the system of previous issues, you've been pretty much forced to concentrate most of the coverage on **Champions**, with only bits and pieces on the other games. On the other hand, I suspect that most of the readers are mainly **Champions** players — certainly I am. Thus, I'd rather see AC stay mainly

**Champions**-oriented, keeping the present format. Maybe the best method would be to split each issue roughly half between **Champions** and half another game — varying the "spotlighted" game from issue to issue.

Another idea, where variations on the mini-adventures in each issue were suggested, also appeals to me. First, though, I will say that I like the mini-adventures — they are just right for a one-session run. However, it might be interesting to include some organizations and/or plot outlines for more elaborate adventures, though the latter might take too much space. Certainly one could argue that the existing comic publishers provide plenty of plot ideas for long convoluted scenarios, and the real problem for me as referee is to come up with interesting "one-night stands." Anyway, experimentation is a good idea, so try it once and see how the readers respond.

Jeff Sutton  
Seattle, WA

*Thanks for the comments. The way I see it, ideally, an issue devoted to a particular game would have at least one column for each of the Hero System games, then split the rest of the issue pretty much evenly between **Champions** and the game being spotlighted. But it may be a while before we can be that exact.*

*In the meantime, we're trying to run more articles that are useful for several types of campaigns, such as the two-part "Sound the Alarm!" piece, which is equally valid for **DI**, **Jl**, and **Champions**.*

— AA

I have just received AC #7 and I was quite happy to see it. I have really missed getting the mag and glad to have it back.

I enjoyed all of the articles in #7. "Presence of Mind" should be required reading for Hero system GMs. I think that Presence and Comeliness are both overlooked in character creation. Mr. Hall did a fine job thinking out his article.

"The Empire Club" was also quite good. I have used pictures cut out from fashion and glamour magazines for pictures of PC and NPC characters. . .

In future issues, I would like to see less adventures and more **DI**, **Jl**, and **Fantasy Hero** character writeups and spell listings. I find these much more useful than a written adventure.

Finally, please go bi-monthly. Waiting three months between issues is killing me.

Wayne Walls  
Oak Ridge, TN

*We wouldn't mind going bi-monthly. We just have to make sure that the cash flow, copy flow, and publishing procedures we're setting up can handle it. Since we just jumped from 48 to 72 pages, it'll be a while before we can get that copy flow up again to handle additional frequency.*

— AA

I actually prefer the digest-size over that of a magazine-size [issue]. Make an increase of page number, not page size. . .

I realize that the adventures you publish have to be on the short side to fit into the mag, but it really upsets me when all the villains are referred to by name and another publication that they may be found in. Those of us who don't care for the ready-made villains of **Enemies I, II, and III** are in trouble. Since modules or adventures are usually made around the villains within them, at least give us an idea of the bad guys' powers, if not a complete character sheet.

I am biased for **Champions**, and against the rest of the games. I would much rather have more **Champions** articles, scenarios, adventures, etc. than boring **Justice, Inc.**, **Danger International**, and **Fantasy Hero**.

Jon Purvis  
Denton, TX

*That's a reasonable point about the villains in the adventures. Ideally, I'd prefer to either include the stats for all the villains (as we did in #5, #7, and #8) or make recommendations for the villains for three categories of GMs: Those who are starting off campaigns and have only **Champions** and no stock of villains of their own; those who have one or more of the **Enemies** books; and those who have plenty of their own villains and just need to know what sort of role these villains take. We'll see how that goes.*

— AA



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# SOUND THE ALARM

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(PART TWO)  
BY GREG PORTER

*Last issue, Greg introduced us to the broader world of **Danger International** security systems and wrote about alarms in general, tools necessary to bypass them, and perimeter defense. This issue, he concludes with Building Defense, Item Defense, and Sample Alarm Systems.*

## BUILDING DEFENSE

Many places will have no perimeter defense, or will have rudimentary systems that are easily defeated. Buildings, however, are usually more secure.

### Magnetic Switches

*Description:* Magnetic switches are comprised of two parts. One is a magnet; the other is a magnetically activated switch. The magnet is attached to something that will move when entry is attempted (like a door). The other is attached nearby on a stationary part (like a door frame) so that when the first item is moved, the magnet pulls away from the switch and it opens.

The average person has seen low-security magnetic switches. They are usually white plastic, and mounted on the doors of small businesses. The wires will come out of the part attached to the door frame, and continue onto window foil or other sensors. They may also be mounted on the end of the door with the hinges, so they are not visible from either side when the door is closed.

Higher security models are available, but they all work on the same principle.

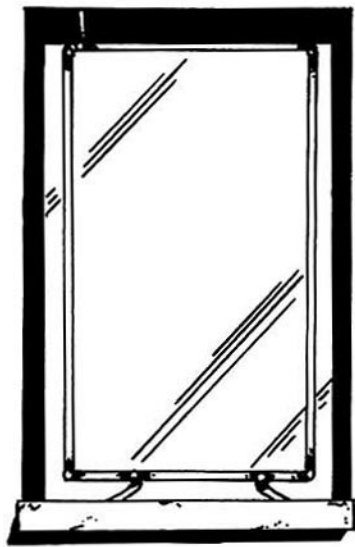
*Neutralization:* Magnetic switches are usually detectable with a simple item like a compass or stud finder. Low security versions can be neutralized from the outside with a strong magnet and a Security Systems roll at a -1. If the location is accessible during the day, it may be neutralized by spraying a conductive spray on the exposed terminals or wedging a piece of aluminum foil across them, shorting the output so it appears closed to the system even if it is not. This may require a distraction to divert attention away from the area for several seconds. The act itself requires a base Security Systems roll to be successful.

High security magnetic switches have secondary magnets that act on the switch. Application of an external magnetic field will set off the alarm, and all contacts are usually not visible. Due to the nature of their placement, attempting to bypass these with external magnets is a -6 to Security Systems rolls. The best way to bypass them is to short the output by drilling or cutting a hole to where terminals can be accessed. This will require at least a minute, and is a Security Systems roll with a -1.

### Window Foil

*Description:* These are the silvery lines commonly seen on

windows of protected businesses. If the window is broken, the foil usually breaks. As it is part of the alarm circuit, the alarm is then tripped. A more sophisticated version of this is to have many tiny wires embedded in the glass. When the glass is broken, the wires break also, setting off the alarm.



**Neutralization:** Normal window foil can usually be defeated with a glass cutter. A hole is cut that avoids the window foil; the glass is punched out; and entry is gained through the hole, or (if the hole is too small) access to the terminals is gained, allowing them to be shorted out. The first is a Security Systems roll with a -1, the second with a -2.

If the glass has the embedded wires, forget it. You aren't getting in that way without setting off the alarm. This is the sign of a very sophisticated setup, and nothing you can do from the outside is likely to get you in undetected.

## Window Sensors

**Description:** These are switches that are tuned to the frequency of breaking glass. These quarter-sized sensors are usually mounted near the corner of a pane, and each one will protect up to two hexes of glass. They will activate on a 17 or less when the glass they are mounted on is broken. A relatively low-security sensor, their use is generally restricted to small businesses.

**Neutralization:** The best way to get around these is to have the owner remove them. A testing kit is available that will set one of these off without breaking the glass. If the alarm is set off repeatedly over a period of several days with this, the owner will probably get fed up with it and either remove the sensor or turn off the alarm system, either of which is to your benefit. If this cannot be done, the best way to get to the sensor is to drill a small hole in the glass and short out the leads. This is a Security Systems roll with a -2 modifier. After this is done, the glass may be cut out with a glass cutter and entry gained through the hole made.

## Switch Mats

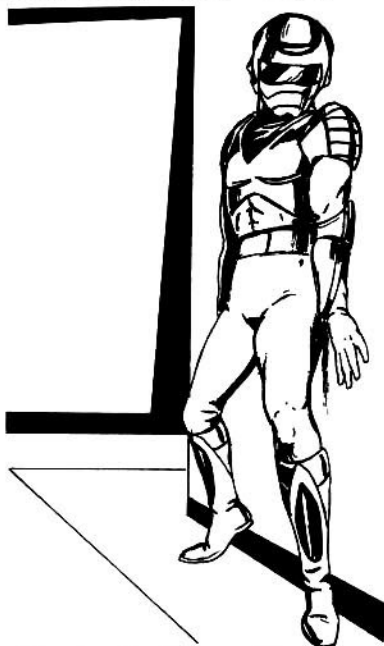
**Description:** These are trip switches like you see on a lot of automatic doors. You step on it, the door opens. In a security mode, you step on it, the alarm goes off. These are most commonly used inside doors or windows where entry might be expected. Pressure of more than a few kilos will set one off, though they can be tailored to go off on larger weights, ignoring such things as guard dogs. Switch mats may be concealed beneath

carpet or other mats, and are a PER roll with a -3 to spot, or a base Security Systems roll.

**Neutralization:** The best way to avoid one of these is to go around it. They are not a high-security item, so they may be bypassed by shorting them out. This is a base Security Systems roll, requiring a wire cutter and piece of wire.

### Strain Monitors

**Description:** These are tiny sensors placed in the flooring of an area, designed to detect the tiny flexing produced by a weight on the floor above. Invisible to normal inspection, they are also hard to get around. The GM should give a rating to an area, based on the density of the sensors, with an 17 or less roll to activate being about normal.



**Neutralization:** These are usually very small, and beneath the normal flooring, so there is little that can be done to detect or

affect them. If a character stays near the maximum number of supports, like walls, the effect of their weight will be reduced, lowering the base chance by 3. Characters may also use the walls for movement, provided they have climbing equipment; this will negate them. If the opportunity arises, characters may try to neutralize them from below. This is reasonably hard, as any flexing of the sensor will set it off, and they are difficult to short out because they have a built-in resistance that must be matched. Without a multimeter and a set of variable resistors, this will be a Security Systems roll with a -6. With it, it is only a -4.

### Vibration Sensors

**Description:** These are like the motion detectors found on fences, but usually mounted inside walls to detect forcible entry through them.

**Neutralization:** The sensors usually do not have tamper switches, so if they can be located, a Security Systems roll with a -2 will isolate it so that it doesn't go off. This usually requires a drill, perhaps with a hole cutting bit, and some foam padding or similar substance.

### Ultrasonic Doppler Alarms

**Description:** These detectors fill an area with ultrasonic sound waves. Any object that moves in this area will alter the frequency of the sound picked up at the detector (usually in the same housing), setting off an alarm. They usually cover a diamond-shaped area six hexes long and four wide, and have a rating for detecting objects. A normal alarm

would detect an object moving 1 hex per phase on a 17 or less. Very slow-moving objects stand a better chance of getting through, the roll receiving a -1 for each two extra seconds spent per hex. A good tactic for use of these alarms is to make sure a door to the room is in the area, so that unsuspecting intruders set the alarm off before they realize it is there. Alarms of this type may also be based on microwaves rather than ultrasound.

*Neutralization:* These respond to frequency changes rather than intensity changes, so it is usually possible to overload the input with a strong signal on the frequency the detector expects. This may mask the different frequency caused by moving objects. A device of this type will subtract 6 from the sensitivity of the detector, along with however much a Security Systems roll is made by. Characters with Stealth may use it to reduce the sensitivity of the sensor, giving it a -1 per point their roll is made by, but any movement of more than one hex per phase automatically sets it off. If the receiver can be reached, it can usually be covered up with something like tape or paper, blocking out signals that would set it off. This requires a Security Systems roll with a -1.

### **Beam Breakers**

*Description:* Similar to outdoor models, these have the advantage that they can be mounted flush with walls, making direct tampering nearly impossible. The smaller area to cover also allows a tighter grid of beams, making it more difficult (if not impossible) to squirm through.

*Neutralization:* As for outdoor models (see last issue).

### **Passive IR**

*Description:* These are also motion detectors, but designed to work off of temperature changes, and are more difficult to neutralize. The temperature is unimportant, just the magnitude of the change. These are easily disguised as things like air vents, so a PER roll with a -4, or a Security Systems roll with a -1 is required to recognize them. They can cover various types of areas, as illustrated below. The chance for detecting moving objects is identical to that for Ultrasonic Doppler Alarms.

*Neutralization:* It is not possible to jam one of these, so the alarm must be deactivated directly. The IR signature of a person *might* be masked by an insulating suit that started at room temperature; this would give a -6 to the detection chance. As a medium security sensor, simple shorting out of the sensor may not work. The sensors will have tamper switches, which are a -3 to bypass if unfamiliar with the equipment, and a -1 to Security Systems rolls if the characters know what to expect.

## **ITEM DEFENSE**

These are last-ditch alarms, designed to protect a certain item or specific area from intrusion.

### **Electronic Combination Locks**

*Description:* These are generally a numeric keypad set into a hardened steel wall or doorframe. A multi-digit combination must be entered within a set time, or the lock will not open. The higher

the security, the more detailed such a setup will be. An improper combination may set off an alarm. Certain facilities have such locks linked into a computer, which prints out when the door was opened, and whose combination was used to open it. Such a printout may be in the main security area, so that authorized entry at unusual times will still draw suspicion. Card locks requiring a coded card (like a banking machine) in addition to the combination are possible, as are fingerprint and voiceprint locks.

*Neutralization:* This is up to the GM. If the characters have the information and/or special equipment to bypass such measures, they should succeed. If they don't have the information or equipment, they won't, at least not without explosives.

### **Capacitance Alarm**

*Description:* This is usually hooked up to an ungrounded metal object of some sort, like a doorknob or small safe. When any conductor (people are conductors) moves near the object, the circuit is disturbed and the alarm triggered.

*Neutralization:* The best way to get by this type of sensor is to deactivate the circuitry powering it. If the character is not familiar with it, he will have a -3 to his Security systems roll, and if he is familiar, only a -1. Another way to get around this problem is to use non-conducting tongs to do whatever work is needed in the area of effect.

### **Pressure Switches**

*Description:* This is a switch placed directly underneath an object, activating an alarm when the

object which rests on it is removed. Higher security models use pressure transducers that measure any change of pressure, whether increased or decreased.

*Neutralization:* The simple pressure switch is easily neutralized by using something like a tongue depressor to hold the switch down while the object is removed. This is a base Security Systems roll. Pressure transducers are better left alone, and the alarm deactivated at another point in the system.

### **Other High Tech Sensors**

Items can be sealed in a resonant cavity that has sound waves of a certain frequency oscillating inside. When the cavity is opened, the sound waves no longer resonate, and an alarm is tripped.

Very sensitive switches can be used in an enclosed area to measure barometric pressure. If a door is opened into the area, the pressure will change slightly, and the alarm is tripped.

A fiberoptic strand can be looped through whatever is being protected. If broken, the optical connection is broken, and the alarm is tripped. The same can be done with wire.

It is left to your imagination to find or make up other systems for your characters to curse through.

## **SAMPLE ALARM SYSTEMS**

A few alarm systems are given below to give you an idea of what to expect in certain situations. They are modeled on actual installations, and are of low to medium security.

### **Normal Residence**

Low security magnetic swit-

ches on all doors and windows. There is a thirty-second delay on the alarm so that the owner can deactivate it from the control console, which is probably in the hall closet. It is deactivated with a key lock that requires a base Lock-picking roll to unlock. If an alarm is sounded, a loud bell inside the control console will begin to ring, not stopping, until the alarm is deactivated. It has a backup battery system that will run the system for ten hours without outside power. For purposes of destruction, this battery will have 2 Def and 3 BODY.

#### **Small Business**

Low security magnetic switches on all doors, window foil or window sensors on all windows, one ultrasonic doppler alarm covering front door and main aisle. It is deactivated with an outside key lock near the front door, or by a key lock on the control console, which is in the main office. This lock requires a Lock-picking roll with a -3 to unlock. If an alarm is sounded, a loud bell mounted high on an outside wall will begin to ring, not stopping until the alarm is deactivated. Optionally, an automatic phone dialer may call the police and deliver a pre-recorded message to investigate a possible burglary at this address. This also has a battery backup system identical to that of the residence.

#### **Small Corporation**

Fence with motion sensors around entire area. One television camera mounted near gate to view incoming vehicles and personnel, with floodlight for night use. Television camera inside main entrance, with remotely controlled lock (from security station)

to let in authorized nighttime visitors. Low security magnetic switches on all entrances, window foil or window sensors on all windows. The main control panel will show which door or window the alarm was sounded at. Any secure area will have an electronic combination lock requiring a six-digit combination and a coded card for entry. Wrong numbers will be ignored and no alarm sounded. If an alarm is sounded it will go first to the security station, where the night guard will decide whether to reset the alarm (unlikely unless an obvious accident caused the alarm, like wind rattling a door enough to set off its sensor) or notify the police and investigate. The controls for the alarm are in the security station, which is locked at all times. The security station may have a radio for local communication, and the alarm will have backup power for six hours. It will have 3 Def and 6 BODY.

You can extrapolate from here to design your own installations, using whatever combinations of sensors you see fit to get the security you want.

One thing the characters should remember is the human factor. Only devices are covered here. Machines might not make mistakes, but the people running them do. Also, a more marginal setup may have human or animal backup, like patrolling guards or watchdogs. The more complex a setup, the more likely the characters can take advantage of the human element to get what they want. Pure technical expertise may not be the key needed... so be prepared for anything.



# HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME



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# HANDLING YOUR HUNTEDS AND DNPCs

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BY SCOTT BENNIE

*"Help! Help!" cried the GM as the dice rolled a "7."*

*"Oh no! Not the Grenadiers!" the players moaned.*

*The GM surveyed the battle in horror. What had begun as a simple bank robbery had deteriorated into World War III between UNTIL, VIPER, GENOCIDE, S.A.T., three supervillain groups, and five superhero teams as Hunted, Hunteds of Hunteds, and Hunteds of Hunteds of Hunteds leapt into the fray.*

*"Can I roll to disbelieve?" the Mad Monk asked.*

\* \* \*

The above scene represents what can happen if a GM treats his NPCs and Hunteds without finesse. Too many Hunteds showing up in a scenario can destroy its credibility; a similar also problem occurs when too many DNPCs show up.

The credibility of a scenario is very important to player enjoyment. If a player thinks what he is doing is worthwhile, he'll have more fun than if he thinks it is stupid. There are several steps which can be taken to reduce the risk of these Disadvantages getting out of control and smashing your adventure's credibility to pieces.

## LIMIT HUNTEDS AND DNPCs

This is known as Taking Care of the Problem At Its Source. When players create their characters, they'll come up with Hunteds and DNPCs. If it seems that the Hunteds will appear too often to suit you, or have too great a chance to disrupt the scenario, ask the player why they are after him so fanatically, or why the DNPC stumbles into the scenario so frequently.

If the player can't justify his disadvantages to you, tell him to tone them down and/or find others to take their place. If the player refuses, you can always choose to give him what he wants. Perhaps his next character will be less foolhardy.

Here are a couple of general rules of thumb on the matter:

A 14- Hunted is probably too frequent — unless your campaign is deeply involved with this one villain (for instance, an UNTIL campaign with VIPER as the 14-villain). An 11- Hunted is all right — so long as it's a good villain and the other players aren't annoyed by his frequent appearances.

A 14- DNPC is fine if the character has an interesting personality and interacts with the player-characters on several levels — the “generic girlfriend” is usually not such a character, but sidekicks and team associates can be. On the same subject, the more frequently a DNPC appears, the more you ought to think about the character being a Talented Normal.

## PLAN FOR THE UNEXPECTED

You shouldn't begin play and then start rolling for Hunteds. Hunteds are unexpected to the characters — but shouldn't be to the GM.

Instead, roll when you're starting to devise your scenario. If the Hunted comes up, ask yourself where you can fit in the Hunted to best advantage.

*Example: The heroes have vowed to keep a mystic gem out of the evil hands of Pentastar, and are keeping vigil in the museum, waiting for the arch-fiend to strike. Where can the characters' Hunters best fit into this situation?*

Perhaps one or more of the Hunters will make a play for the gem too, either before or after the principal antagonist shows up. Or the sneaky Pentastar might employ them as allies, giving them an opportunity to frustrate their “favorite” superhero. Or the Hunter might not directly confront the heroes at all, and try to ambush Pentastar after he purloins the gem, only bothering with the good guys if they manage to catch up with their quarry.

Hunteds should enhance a scenario, not hinder it. If the Hunteds are inappropriate to the scenario, don't use them. But don't avoid using them *too* often, or the players will feel that they've gotten their points for nothing.

Roll for Hunteds when the players are having too easy a time, just to keep them on their toes. And if the good guys are overmatched and hard-pressed, give them a break and roll for the villains' Hunteds as cavalry.

There are several easy ways to introduce a DNPC into a game situation. One is the Crowd Scene: The heroes get into a battle, and the villain says, “Surrender or I will kill these innocents.” That's when the hero, with a conveniently successful Sight Perception Roll, sees in the middle of the crowd his beloved Melinda. Done once in a while, this is a dramatic way of bringing a DNPC into a scenario.



But this doesn't always work, especially for well-traveled superheroes. If you're adventur-

ing one week in India and Iceland the next, what is SuperStealth's brother doing in both places? The player should find DNPCs who have a logical reason for showing up in a superhero scenario. SuperStealth's sibling could be an UNTIL agent, a pilot for the superteam's civilian aircraft, an international courier or spy or diplomat. All these choices allow for him to be anywhere in the world at any given time — much better than if he's a mechanic at a local racetrack, for instance.

### **REMEMBER: SOME VILLAINS ARE MORE VISIBLE THAN OTHERS**

Villains don't have to engage in battle to fulfill their Hunted obligations. They might sit on a flagpost leering at the heroes while the fight rages, and congratulate them with a foreshadowing riddle before disappearing. This is especially true of villains for whom there is currently no probable cause for arrest.

Most villains are stupid enough to duke it out with heroes, but occasionally you'll find a clever one. Why risk a 12d6 Stellar Photonic Blast when you can find some other idiot to do it for you? There are quite a few examples of this

in the comics, where the heroes easily defeat one menace, only to have some other menace in the background taking notes. This is another easy means for involving a Hunter without his physical presence in the combat — but it's a good idea to eventually let the hero know (from discovery of a dropped clue, for instance) that his Hunter has been about.

DNPCs don't have to be sacrificial lambs either. They don't exist, despite some reports, merely to get into trouble. If a dependent character exists merely to flash her 30 COM and scream "Help!" at the first sign of trouble, even the most charitable of characters will eventually be tempted to say "Be my guest" to the troublemaking villain. But if the DNPC is interesting in his or her own right, he or she can get involved in the scenario in many more ways than merely as a victim.

Just as a GM is constantly thinking of new scenarios to challenge the players, he should always be thinking of new ways of deal with Hunteds and DNPCs. A **Champions** scenario is a combination of many things; Hunteds and DNPCs are but two of the elements which need to work well in order for the adventure to succeed. But when all the elements come together, it's magic.

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# **Space Master**

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# ON POWERGAMING

BY GREG PORTER

Are you a power gamer?

"What is a power gamer?" you might ask. You may have another name for it, but around my area it means someone who squeezes every last ounce of efficiency out of a character, device, or rule. There is nothing wrong with that, but a lot of people totally abandon any character idea and just go for the bag o' powers concept.

We're talking about someone who makes sure all his powers have Disadvantages that give a point value of something like 77.5. Then they can round off the fraction, and when they buy Reduced Endurance, the END cost goes from 15 to 7 to 3 to 1.

Or the ones who try to get Missing One Hand as a Disadvantage, but try to get it per finger so they can get more points out of it.

I see you peering over the magazine at your friends, nodding to yourself. Yep, you know one. I kicked the habit a while back, but I still remember that brought the event home.

Someone opened a no-holds-barred, no-point-limit **Champions** campaign, which thankfully never got off the ground. The point totals were ridiculous, as were the conceptions. Any twit (even me) can pour points into a character design until it works. (Uhh... I want my character to be the most powerful being in the

universe... yeah.) To make a three-dimensional character based on a reasonable conception is another matter.

For those still looking for the ultimate character, let me end your search. In **Champions**, you can have a beginning maximum character value of 873 points; if you add **Champions II**, you can increase that to a healthy 1087.

Now, your character is going to be a hopelessly psychotic cripple who takes damage from being alive, and is hunted by every intelligent being in the universe; but with this kind of point total, who cares?

Here are some of the characters (and I use the term loosely) you can build with these points:

## PlanetMan

This is your average guy, but with the power to shrink planets down to pocket size and keep them there indefinitely (END Battery). If you annoy him, he pulls one out and throws it at you, turning the Shrinking off while one of his six NPCs teleports him to another dimension. Trivia question of the day: How far do you have to dive to get away from a planet-sized object (Earth), how much extra damage does it do, and what strength would you need to deflect it? (Answers:



About 3,000,000 hexes, +86d6, and 395.)

### Azathoth

He just sits at the center of the universe and gibbers. His powers only work at the center of the universe (+2), except for teleport, which only works outside the center of the universe (+1/4). He has a multipower with every power, most based on EGO combat value and having unlimited range. He just uses his 1,000,000,000,000x telescopic N-ray vision to see what he wants, and then he hits it.

### Landlord

With a thousand points, you can buy a lair with a diameter of  $10^{135}$  light years, which is quite large enough to cover our universe and a nearly infinite number of others. He owns *everything*. Or, he can make his holdings a bit smaller. Then he still owns everything, and everyone is fanatically loyal to him.

### NovaMan

A man with an explosive temper. If bothered while in his private intensive care ward, he explodes, doing about 700d6. This will level skyscrapers out to about a kilometer. Of course, he is protected by his linked force field, but he needs new NPCs every time.

Now, the whole point of this travesty is not to show what you can do (even if it is amusing), but what you shouldn't do. **Champions** and other superhero games are based on comic books with plots, intricacies, personality clashes, and other things that make it seem almost real. It isn't a bunch of mobile howitzers wandering around pulverizing each other for no reason. You can have just as much fun with a low-powered character as with All-Being, mutant alien son of the gods. You just have to give it a try.

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## Rolemaster Combat Screen

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## ADVENTURERS CLUB ORGANIZATIONS BOOK FOR CHAMPIONS

# TROUBLE SHOOTERS

BY RODFORD E. SMITH

*Editor's Note: This is the first in what we hope will be a long line of mini-Organizations Books for Adventurers Club. People not intending to game-master a **Champions** campaign should read no further. . .*

### HISTORY

Fifteen years ago, William Simonson, a retired businessmen, became bored with his retirement. He founded Troubleshooters, an information clearing-house, largely inspired by difficulties he'd encountered in his previous career.

If you needed some information — such as the name of a good tax lawyer or where to get a map of Benson, Arizona — Troubleshooters were the people to ask. They might not have the answer, but they would know who did.

Troubleshooters' main office was manned by a team of experts — generally other retired people — but most work was farmed out to freelance consultants. The office staff kept extensive files on where information might be found and who might be able to help. Fees were charged on an hourly basis for small jobs, were sometimes negotiated as a percentage of money changing hands during large jobs.

The agency was small but highly respected. Simonson rejected many opportunities and offers to enlarge his efforts, content to keep the company intimate and easily managed.

Three years ago, Simonson suffered a stroke. He rallied well from its debilitating effects but decided that enough was enough, and sold the agency to Frederic Fagin, an international commodities dealer known as the "Fox of Finance." Simonson moved to Hawaii and retired for real. He never knew that Fagin was also known as the Fox, a mutant teleporter, a criminal mastermind.

Fagin put Michelle Carver in charge of Troubleshooters. Michelle was a talented young woman whose smooth charm and good looks belied a strong ruthless streak and disregard for the law.

Michelle quickly took charge. Her first goal was expansion and modernization. At first, she retained all the original employees and added a

few of her own. Soon she computerized the office's database, adding a staff of computer operators. It wasn't too long before Troubleshooters was offering new services and soliciting new clients — but only a few of the employees were aware of the fact, because these new services were not exactly proper.

On the street, this new, criminal branch of Troubleshooters was called The Arrangers; there was no hint of its ties with Troubleshooters.

Though the Arrangers did not commit robberies or fraud, they supplied information for those planning such acts. Arrangers personnel would provide false IDs, building floor plans, and security plans; they would launder robbery proceeds; they would act as the go-between in negotiations between criminal parties. All in all, it was a very profitable business.

The company's first supervillain client was a small-time malefactor out on bail. He hired the Arrangers to recover his focus from the police property room. After the contract was fulfilled, Michelle was quick to see the potential of this new area and began advertising new services for supervillains: Recovery of foci, high-powered lawyers specializing in supervillain defense, scaring off or paying off of witnesses, destruction of evidence against the villain, espionage of prosecutors' case against the villain, etc. To be an Arrangers client, the villain had to leave a sizeable deposit; any fees charged over the amount of the deposit could be paid or worked off later. In some instances, this arrangement was so satisfactory that the super criminal was added to the payroll.

Realizing that she was on to something, Ms. Carver created a separate supervillain branch under her direct supervision. If a criminal group needs a specific power to achieve a result, the Arrangers will now supply the appropriate individual. The Arrangers, using the Troubleshooters' computer facilities and information retrieval methods, will provide supervillains with information on their targets (including player-character heroes, if such info is available); will dispose of stolen goods (especially those beyond the abilities of the normal fence); and will provide the specialized medical help often needed by supervillains.

The Arrangers have a thriving businesses, and the company prides itself on integrity in all its affairs. This is the company's watchword, and great pains are taken to ensure the anonymity of all parties involved. Secret identities are held sacrosanct; the true appearances and names of those involved in the deals (including Arrangers personnel) are not revealed unless all parties agree.

Some people in the field of law enforcement are aware that these services are being supplied, but none of them realizes just how well organized the effort is.

As a result of their care and special services, the reputation of the company has grown vastly in the years since it was bought by Fagin. It is said in the underworld that if you need a fair appraisal of your goods or services, these are the people to see. If you need a message delivered or an object kept safe, the Arrangers will do it.



# THE CHARACTERS

Troubleshooters is headed by Michelle Carver. She answers only to the owner, Frederic Fagin.

Her assistant managers are Irving W. Atterson and Beverly Osbourne. Atterson knows of the company's extra-legal activities and participates in them. Osbourne does not know about the special operations but suspects that something unusual is going on.

Her personal secretary is Emily Sutterlin. Emily is a competent but rather unimaginative person whom Michelle has set up to take the fall as the mastermind of the Arrangers if that side of the business should ever be exposed.

## Michelle Carver

Val	Cha	Pts
10	STR	
12	DEX	6
13	CON	6
10	BODY	
18	INT	8
14	EGO	8
18	PRE	8
16	COM	3
5	PD	3
3	ED	
3	SPD	8
5	REC	
26	END	
22	STN	



### Pts Skills and Powers

5	Detective Work, 13-	0
11	Disguise, 16-	0
9	Bureaucratics, 15-	0
5	Professional Skill: Business Management 14-	0
5	Professional Skill: Model 14-	0
10	Martial Arts (or Karate from DI)	0

Disadvantages: 50 +

Pts.

Greedy 20

Secret ID (Member of Arrangers) 15

Hunted, Police Organized Crime Unit (hunting the Arrangers), 8- 10

(CHA Cost) 50 + 45 (Power Cost) = (Total Cost) 95 = Disadvantage Total



Michelle's chief operative in the company's criminal operations is George Thomas, who is publicly known as the super criminal Detonex. He is the main field agent, in charge of dealing with both super and normal criminal talent. He bosses a number of small-time hoods and the supervillains who work directly for the company.

Michelle is an aggressive businesswoman who cares very little for the rules and regulations of society. She is interested almost solely in gaining money and influence. She is loyal to Frederic Fagin and will not implicate him if she is arrested, and knows that Fagin will support her in any reasonable enterprise and will help her if she gets into trouble.

Michelle met Fagin while she was a model. Impressed by her sharp mind and strong personality, Fagin hired her to act as a special agent after she left the modelling field. Since then she has been in his employ, proving herself to be quite competent, especially because of the Disguise (makeup) ability acquired during her modelling experience.

Michelle is 5'10" tall, weighs 130 pounds, and is 31 years old.

Another full-time super-powered employee is Juliana Taylor, who, as the super Jet, acts as the Arrangers' special messenger.

The rest of the staff consists of four section heads, thirteen secretaries and a receptionist. Those left from the original version of the company are nearing or past normal retirement age; Michelle can soon replace them with her own people.

George Thomas was an excellent athlete in high school, earning a number of awards and a college scholarship. He was also a mutant, however, and during his senior year in college a mutant-detection device built by Genocide tagged him as a potential mutant super.

Genocide, through a legitimate-looking front, approached George and offered him a substantial sum to allow himself to be tested for superhuman abilities. He agreed. Genocide soon determined that George was indeed a mutant; they imprisoned him and began a series of tests to determine the extent of his abilities and how they might be neutralized.

They found that, in addition to his mutation-based physical prowess, George showed signs of a potent energy-release power which he had not yet manifested. They subjected him to various stimuli to try to trigger this power. But when they finally succeeded, the resulting release of energy ruptured a gas main; the combination of explosion and fire destroyed the lab and the personnel in it. George, blown clear of the facility by the blast, woke up in the hospital with passersby who had also been injured by the blast; he pretended to have just been passing by when the explosion occurred.

The Genocide files on George had been destroyed in the blast, but the other offices knew that a powerful mutant had been studied prior to the office's destruction, so Genocide began a systematic search of the region. Often, they encountered the area's superheroes and were thwarted in their efforts. George, realizing he was being hunted, decided to do more damage to the agency which had tormented him. He designed an armored suit and shield to protect him in battle, continued and stepped up his martial arts training, and adopted the costumed iden-

tity of Detonex. He began fighting Genocide wherever he found them, and was often hailed as a hero during this period.

He also began to enjoy the excitement of combat. He decided to capitalize on his abilities, using them to commit crimes, sometimes for the sheer fun of it. Despite this, he has maintained the grudging admiration of many heroes and normals, mainly because of his gallant attitudes and actions.

Detonex is a likeable rogue, with a strong (if piratical) sense of honor. He is not a killer; he does not strike from behind; he will aid a seriously injured foe. He will join with almost anyone to fight Genocide.

### Detonex


Val	Cha	Pts
20	STR	10
20	DEX	30
24	CON	28
20	BODY	20
10	INT	
10	EGO	
10	PRE	
10	COM	
4	PD	
5	ED	
6	SPD	30
9	REC	
48	END	
42	STN	



Pts	Skills and Powers	END
20	Martial Arts	0
15	+3 with Martial Arts	0
10	Missile Deflection, 13-	0
27	Armor: 15 & 15 (OIF padded suit)	0
12	Armor: 11 & 10 (OAF shield, Dependent on 0 successful Missile Deflection roll + 1)	0
58	Energy Blast, 20d6; Area Effect Radius, Usable Once per Day (+2), Costs Endurance (+1/2)	40
Disadvantages: 100 +		Pts.
	Hunted, Genocide, 14-	40
	Hunted, UNTIL, 11-	30
	Hates Genocide (very common, total)	25
	Code vs. Killing	15
	Unluck	10
	Secret ID	15
	Villain Bonus	25
(CHA Cost) 118 + 142 (Powers Cost) = (Total Cost) 260 = Disadvantages Total		

Detonex is 5'10" tall, weighs 165 points, and is 27 years old.

### Jet

Val	Cha	Pts		
10	STR			
20	DEX	30		
18	CON	16		
10	BODY			
13	INT	3		
13	EGO	6		
15	PRE	5		
16	COM	3		
4	PD	2		
4	ED			
12	SPD	90		
8	REC	4		
36	END			
24	STN			
<b>Pts</b>	<b>Skills and Powers</b>			<b>END</b>
25	Elemental Control: Mutant Psionic Powers			
25	Flight 20", 1/2 END			2
25	Force Field, 20 Physical/20 Energy, 1/2 END			2
10	Life Support			0
50	+ 5 skill levels overall			
<b>Disadvantages: 100 +</b>				<b>Pts.</b>
Hunted, Genocide, 11-				35
Hunted, Police, 11-				25
Claustrophobic (common, total commitment)				20
Likes the Good Life / Greedy (very common)				15
Secret ID				15
2x STUN, Sonic attacks				20
2x BODY, Sonic attacks				20
Villain Bonus				44
<b>(CHA Cost) 159 + 135 (Power Cost) = (Total Cost) 294 = Disadvantages Total</b>				

Juliana Edwina Taylor is a superhuman mutant with great flight, speed, and dexterity abilities. She is used as a messenger by the Arrangers and is responsible for some "miraculous" deliveries of small packages which had to get somewhere fast.

Juliana was reared in a small midwestern town. Although her family was not poor, she regretted not having some of the expensive things and habits her friends had. Once her powers began manifesting themselves, she decided to find some way to profit from them. She began committing a series of thefts — grabbing small, high-value items and then flying away before anyone could get a good look at her.

Deciding to move on to bigger and better things, Juliana designed a costume to conceal her identity and chose the public name of Jet. She took secret delight in the fact that no one ever connected her initials with her costumed identity.

As her crimes increased in profitability, she began using Troubleshooters to arrange the sale of the stolen items. Eventually, she was contracted for a job by the company. This work was safer and easier, though a bit lower paying, than what she had been doing, and Juliana began accepting more work from them, and was eventually put on the payroll.

Juliana is 5'5" tall, weighs 120 lbs. and is 22 years old.

## CAMPAIGN USE AND TACTICS

### **Troubleshooter Offices**

The offices of Troubleshooters are very busy. Phones ring almost constantly, with people calling from all over the country. With the company's database and reputation still expanding, only the computer system installed at Michelle's behest has kept the employees from being swamped.

Clients rarely visit but messengers are in and out constantly. The company's business is information and it flows through the offices like water through a hydroelectric dam.

Calls and letters are routed by the receptionist to the secretary for the department to which the question or request pertains. The secretary writes a brief description of the problem and forwards this to a section head, who in turn assigns it to a worker or freelance contractor, who is in charge of solving the problem. Urgent calls are sent directly to the section manager; many are solved on the phone in a matter of minutes, at a premium fee. Few questions take more than a couple of days to answer, though if arrangements must be made to fulfill the request through a third party, this may take longer.

### **Arrangers Methods**

The Arrangers branch works in a similar manner. A criminal party approaches an Arrangers field agent with an action or information request. By surreptitious and well-concealed means, the field agent forwards the question to Irving Atterson or (if it's of prime importance) to Michelle Carver. Irving or Michelle will assign the project to an Arrangers contractor; if it's a question that can be answered through legal means, without tipping off enemy parties or the authorities, it will be assigned routinely through the Troubleshooters staff or freelancers. When the answer is in, it goes back along the same route to the client.

### **Sample Job**

A typical job involves an armored car robbery. A group of criminals wishes to knock over an armored car. It contacts the Arrangers and buys information on the route, schedule and equipment of the car.

The Arrangers field agent routes the request through the agency's circuitous and concealed communications system, where it reaches Irving Atterson. He contracts a computer wizard of extraordinary abilities to break into the armored car company's computerized files on that particular route. The information is passed back to the criminal gang, which may pay the stiff fee up front or pay an even stiffer proportion of the armored car's take; the criminals opt for the latter choice.

The gang reviews the information and plans the heist. They find that they need some superpowered muscle to assist in the heist. They put in another request to the Arrangers. Irving Atterson contacts Bulldozer (**Enemies II**), who is only too happy to perform the job. The Arrangers will get an agent's commission from Bulldozer's share of the take.

The robbery goes off smoothly. The spoils are divided between the Arrangers, Bulldozer, and the original gang; Bulldozer pays his commission to the Arrangers; and everyone goes his own way happy (except the armored car crew and their employers).

### **Long-Term Campaign Use**

The main use of the Troubleshooters/Arrangers is to make life easier for criminals in a campaign; this, conversely, makes things more difficult for the heroes and law enforcement officials.

In the early episodes of the Troubleshooters' participation in a campaign, the heroes will notice that criminals are getting better legal help when in prison; their foci are retrieved from the authorities, even when the criminal is not capable of performing the deed; their loot is laundered quickly and professionally. It may be months before the heroes really notice that something is going on.

Eventually, the heroes will realize that an organized cartel is behind this and will begin investigating it. It won't take too much investigation to learn that an agency called the Arrangers is making life easier for street criminals — but the street criminals won't all know that the Arrangers are also aiding supervillains. So the heroes must find a supervillain who has been so aided and pry the information from him — by investigation or intimidation.

At that point, the heroes will know that a group called the Arrangers exists, and (possibly) how to put word out to get in touch with a field agent. It's very likely that the criminal who was forced to talk about the Arrangers will tip off the Arrangers that the supers are investigating; so, the Arrangers will know the heroes are after them.

Inevitably, the heroes will find a field agent and get from him more information about the Arrangers. All he'll know is where to look for people trying to get in contact with him, and what number to call to pass on action and information requests. He's paid in cash mailed to his home address and does not know the names or faces of his employers.

The phone number leads to a small house with a satellite dish. But

the dish is not just for home reception — it sends as well as receives, routing calls up to a communications satellite, which bounces them around for awhile before returning them via another satellite to another earth station. When the sending dish is captured, tampered with, etc. it will broadcast a closing signal which alerts the Arrangers that it is no longer a valid unit; and, again, the Arrangers will know they're being investigated.

It's very hard for the heroes to pursue the investigation from the bottom to the top of the organization: The Arrangers are good. The scenario "Breakout" will give the characters a clue to march them up the investigative ladder once the Arrangers have been part of the campaign for quite a while.

The Arrangers can't remain, unchanged, as part of a campaign forever. It will be far too frustrating to the characters to fight this shadow empire they can never find, defeat, or shut down. So, eventually, you'll have to let them track down and stop the Arrangers. (In all likelihood, they'll track the Arrangers back to the Troubleshooters and through the trail of evidence left to damn Emily Sutterlin. Sutterlin will be arrested and the Arrangers shut down. Soon enough, the Arrangers will be back in operation, and the heroes may be trying to clear Ms. Sutterlin as they try to convict Michelle Carver.) They'll ultimately beat the Arrangers . . . but Frederic Fagin is still out there, to spring Michelle Carver and eventually to start the Arrangers up again, somewhere else, under another name, perhaps with new wrinkles and methods for their next encounter with the heroes.

## SCENARIO: BREAKOUT

This scenario is one way the Arrangers can be brought to the attention of the player-characters. Before playing this adventure, you should already have thrown in some hints that the agency exists, as described earlier: Better and more organized legal representation for the villains, criminals' foci unexpectedly retrieved for them by means not within their range of abilities, etc.

### Premise

Several months before this scenario begins, a major supervillain made a deposit with the Arrangers — he gave them a down payment on his rescue. Recently, he was captured. (If you can use a supervillain recently nabbed by the characters, so much the better.) It's now time for the Arrangers to rescue him.

A criminal mastermind has been hired to handle the planning and supervise the actual operation. His first step is to gain information on the prison. Then the breakout must be planned; a group must be assembled and trained for the assault; and the break-in and rescue must take place.

## Episode One: Involving the Characters

Mickey Brandt, a computer operator at Stronghold (or other detention facility for supers where the criminal is being held), works overtime one night, printing out the restricted files on the prison floorplans, security and containment equipment.

If you have some reason for a player-character to be present, the character will observe Brandt furtively stuffing printouts into his attache case and then making his way nervously out of the facility. If the characters don't try to apprehend him, at the final security before he reaches the street, an alert security guard will notice his unusual



nervousness and insist on a routine search of his belongings — whereupon Brandt will bolt. If the characters capture him, skip on down to the text on his confession. If they prefer to let him “escape” and then to follow him surreptitiously, they can follow him to the cafe and the events described below. But back at the prison, an Arrangers spotter with a telephoto lens trained on the employee exit observed him bolting and will radio in to the Arrangers that this mission is to be scrubbed.

If you have no reason for a PC to be present, the characters will learn of Brandt's theft a little later. The warden of the super correctional institution gives them an emergency phone call saying that Brandt has escaped with the plans and chaos could ensue if the plans reach the hands of criminal elements: The prison might become a sieve until all security measures were changed. Will the heroes help in the search for this man?

Brandt is 6' and 165 lbs., age 33 with black hair and blue eyes. When last seen, he was wearing a dark blue suit and an overcoat and carrying his attache case, a handtooled leather case with the initials “MB” tooled onto the side quite large. A cab picked him up at the prison and deposited him at one of the city's largest parks (your choice depending on the campaign setting).

This gives you the opportunity for the characters to do a systematic search of the area, replete with Perception rolls, red herrings, confusing ever-changing masses of people, small-time crimes, and so forth. Eventually they'll spot Brandt, though, sitting at a sidewalk cafe, nervously ordering coffee after coffee and frequently consulting his watch.

If they don't move on him, he'll continue sitting there, minutes turning into hours, as he drinks more coffee and becomes more agitated and nervous. (His contact isn't showing, having been apprised of trou-

ble by the presence of hunting supers in this area.) Brandt will ultimately go home to face the music.

The police are waiting for him there. If the characters don't move on him, Brandt will turn himself in to them. He knows his civilian life is shattered and will waive the right to remain silent and confess immediately. (If the heroes capture him first, naturally, he'll confess to them.)

He admits that he was hired to provide the plans to the defenses and layout of Stronghold. He was to receive payment on delivery of the goods, at the cafe. He doesn't know who he was working for — they contacted him by phone, like the other times. (Other times?) He's done other work for them, nothing this big... usually providing them schedules of prisoner transfers to and from other correctional facilities. (If the characters double-check this information, they'll find those instances do correspond to prisoner breakouts — or, rather, rescues — by organized parties of supervillains who don't ordinarily work together.)

### **Episode Two: Hiring**

The characters now know that Brandt was stealing information on a prison for an employer who evidently breaks people out of prison. They also know that the employer uses bands of villains who are not normally associated with one another.

Let the characters discuss the situation. Perhaps they'll comprehend the situation and realize that the enemy's next step is to recruit the supervillain talent for the breakout. (They have no idea who is to be rescued.) If they don't figure out what's going on, the properly-paranoid warden of Stronghold will, and will ask the characters for help in forestalling this rescue.

It's possible that the characters will try to put out feelers into the criminal underworld and find out if someone is actually recruiting supervillains for some major operation.

Well, someone is. Grapevine has it that some patron is looking for an impressive amount of muscle. Two types of criminals are being sought: Those with great offensive power and those with technological expertise, especially in security systems.

The heroes will want to do one of two things: Track down the person arranging the hiring and confront him, or have someone infiltrate the group of recruits.

If they try the former tack, whichever underworld character the heroes use to find out about the recruitment will be able to give them a phone number to call — the number of the "recruiting officer." They can call and make a physical appointment to demonstrate their powers; when they show up at the seedy rented warehouse of the man they spoke to, they'll have captured, with very little difficulty, an Arranger.

In times of recruitment, when exposure is possible, the Arrangers work on a "deadman switch" arrangement: The Arranger on the site keeps a switch depressed with his foot. Should his foot slip, he can restore pressure within a second or two and be all right; otherwise, an alarm sounds at his superior's location, and all phone numbers known by that



Arranger are abandoned. So if the characters capture this Arranger, their investigation will terminate again.

The Arranger won't talk to them, only to his attorney. If the characters read his mind or intimidate him to the point that he fears for his life, he will confess that he is an Arranger, a member of a criminal "talent brokerage." All he knows is his superior's number — which is a satellite-dish arrangement like the one mentioned earlier, and already abandoned.

If, on the other hand, the characters try to infiltrate the recruits, let them try. Any number can dress up in a new costume and display their powers for this man. The Arranger will be impressed with one, and only one, of the player-characters and hires that character (the other characters are redundant; they've already hired villains with those characters' powers).

If, on yet another hand, the characters don't investigate this situation, ignore Episodes Two and Three. Skip straight on to Episode Four; the characters will receive an emergency call from Stronghold as the rescue is underway. They'll arrive after the main villain has escaped, but will be able to contain the other prisoners to keep them from escaping.

### **Episode Three: Training**

If a character did infiltrate the rescue team, he will be whisked off to a nearby ranch, farm, or other secluded place, and will be introduced to the other villains involved in this job; use plenty of villains the character has met before. The mastermind is some mastermind villain known to the characters — not a world-conquerer, but a bank-heist genius.

The character is trained in his role in the rescue: If he's a brick, he'll be shown which walls to crush, doors to remove, etc.; if he's a security systems expert, he'll be shown the sequence of alarms he must circumvent; if he's a stealth expert, he'll be shown which guards he must knock out. All characters will be shown crude plans of the prison facility in the possession of the Arrangers.

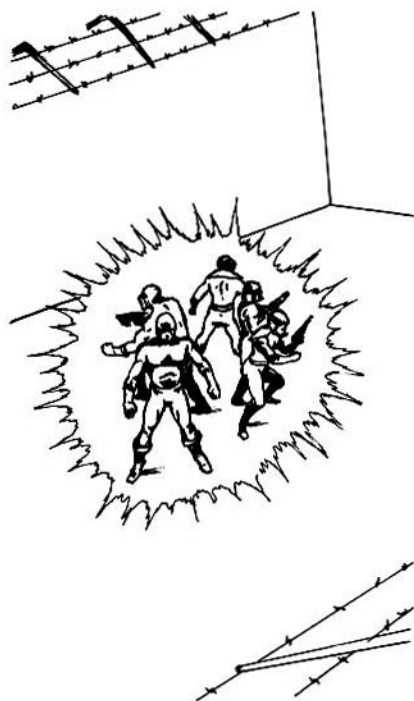
The trainers are Arrangers, of course, and know nothing more that will help the heroes track down their employers than the earlier Arrangers did.

If you can contrive it so that the character remains forcibly incomunicado, please do. Perhaps the training site is underground or otherwise cut off and he can get no message off. The first time he has a chance to radio his comrades is when the rescue operation has just begun; they must zoom in to the prison and stop the rescue in progress.

Otherwise, or if you prefer, he may communicate with his allies, who will swoop down on the training facility to nab all these criminals. That's fine, too: The end result is a big, blustery battle between the heroes and villains all over the training site.

### **Episode Four: The Rescue**

Assuming the heroes didn't stop the plan in Episode Three, the attack on the prison complex will take place during the morning exercise period. Non-super or focus-based villains are milling around the yard,



watched by guards. Dangerous prisoners, such as the rescue's target are not allowed out of their cells.

The rescue team will fly in or be teleported in to the exercise yard. Some villains will head toward the security monitor room, others for the offices, others for the holding area where their target is located. The bricks will stay in the exercise area, freeing other villains and encouraging them to cause a commotion, then go on guard duty, looking for any superheroes — who might be in the prison or who will soon show up. With luck the mission will be in and out in a minutes, before the supers can show.

Of course, this whole episode is just the buildup to a marvellous slugfest in the prison, and the combat itself. The heroes have the rescue team and the imprisoned super-baddie to combat, plus many prisoners running amok; it's going to be a big, messy, glorious combat. Of course, whether or not the breakout succeeds will depend on how the combat goes.

Should the characters not become involved (for example, they just sit back so they can see where the rescued villain is taken) or should they be defeated, the breakout will be successful. The rescued villain will be swept off to the city, where he and his rescuers will amicably part company and go about their separate concerns. None is returning to some central base; if the characters were counting on this, they're utterly foiled. If the press learns the characters failed to prevent the breakout, the characters will be lambasted by the press and urged to capture those involved in the crime.

Even if the heroes triumph and defeat all the villains during the breakout, they will not be able to trace the job directly back to the Troubleshooters. However, they will know of their existence and will have met several of their security measures — such as the satellite relays and deadman switches — and may be able to bypass them on the next encounter.

# NOTES

There are other operations which can be used to get the players involved with the Arrangers and Troubleshooters. The players may notice that a number of criminals are suddenly becoming more successful and will investigate, or will be asked to look into matters by the police. One or more characters may discover a determined effort underway to uncover his Secret ID or weakness. An old nemesis may suddenly defeat a hero because he has a new weapon or trap which he could not have designed on his own.

If for any reason the characters encounter and investigate the actual Troubleshooters agency, they may wish to speak to its founder, Mr. Simonson. He now lives in Hawaii, in Honolulu, in retirement. Due to his stroke, he needs a walker to get around but his mind is still sharp. He is quite wealthy and spends most of his time with his hobbies, ham radio and shortwave listening. He doesn't know about the Troubleshooters' double identity. . . but should the heroes persuade him to help, his analytical mind (Detective on 15- and a host of knowledge skills on 12-) could be invaluable to them.

If there are already too many criminal organizations in your campaign, you can always use Troubleshooters as a strictly honest business. Such an agency could provide interesting employment for a player-character.

You can use Troubleshooters in a **Danger International** campaign as well. Eliminate all the supers from the equation and it stays a useful international crime cartel. Perhaps Mr. Simonson, suspicious because of strange things said by his friends still in the Troubleshooters' employ, persuades the player-characters to investigate. . .

Those of you with the **Enemies** book will have recognized Frederic Fagin as the supervillain known as the Fox. It is not necessary to have the Fox make an appearance, or even Fagin. Michelle does not know that Fagin is the Fox, though he is not reluctant to tell her should he need to. If it is for some reason impossible for him to be the owner of Troubleshooters, you can use some other mastermind villain or Michelle Carver herself.

Existing characters who might be employed by Troubleshooters include (from **Champions**) Shrinker, (from **Enemies**) Lightning, Thunder, Ladybug, (from **Enemies II**) Bulldozer, (from **Enemies III**) Sparkler, Big John and Bullet. These are all professional-minded characters; the company does not hire incompetents or homicidal maniacs.



# MAP KEY

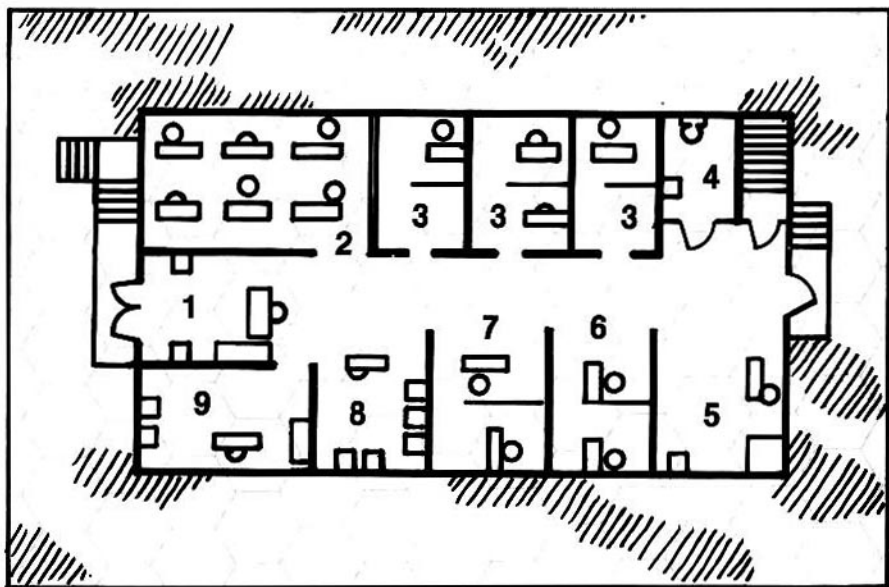
Troubleshooters occupies the entire upper floor of a small office building in a downtown area. The quarters are a bit cramped but there are no plans to move any time soon. The lower level is unoccupied except for a martial arts studio (not associated with Troubleshooters) in the largest room. The interior stairway at the back leads to the lower floor; there is parking to the rear.

Rooms 2-4 and 9 are actual walled rooms; 5-8 are just areas partitioned off a larger room. Each desk shown bears a computer terminal and a telephone.

The building is not difficult to break into. The front doors are the typical double glass type, the rear of solid wood, as is the door closing off the internal stairs. The doors have a sophisticated alarm system (-2 to a Security Systems roll to bypass). All windows have magnetic switches installed as security systems.


The building is well-lit, front and rear, and is only a few blocks from a police station.

- (1) Receptionist's desk and waiting room.
- (2) Secretaries' office.
- (3) Section Managers' offices. Each manager has a personal secretary.
- (4) Rest Room.
- (5) Computer Room. This is a large minicomputer, connected to all



the terminals in the building. There is a desk here for a computer operator but no one currently holds that position. Instead, computer problems are contracted out to the same company from which Troubleshooters bought the equipment.

- (6) Irv Atterson's office.
- (7) Beverly Osbourne's office.
- (8) File Room. This is full to overflowing with filing cabinets and shelves. Emily Sutterlin's desk is at the front of this room.
- (9) Michelle Carver's office. The company's safe is located here. The safe is a large antique, but is deceptive in that it has a modern lock and its own separate alarm. To pick the lock requires sound enhancement equipment and a separate Security Systems roll for each number of the five-digit combination. The character must make his Security Systems roll each time to get the number right, and he can open the safe; but unless he makes it by 2 each time, the security system detects the extra fumbling taking place and triggers a recorded message which is phoned to the police. The safe contains only Troubleshooters files, no Arrangers material. Also in this office are private Troubleshooters records, which are stored in locked, fireproof filing cabinets.



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# CROOKS AND CRUSADERS

"Crooks and Crusaders" is a regular column featuring character designs. Heroes, villains, talented normals and monsters of all varieties from **Champions, Justice, Inc., Fantasy Hero, and Danger International** will be printed. Readers are encouraged to contribute, but please don't send in every PC and NPC from your campaigns to give us a lot to choose from; send only the most interesting and successful characters you have so far encountered.

## BERSERK FOR DANGER INTERNATIONAL (AND SUPER-AGENTS) BY KIRK OLSEN

Val	Cha	Pts
35	STR	40
17	DEX	21
25	CON	40
25	BODY	40
8	INT	-2
14	EGO	8
23	PRE	26
8	COM	-1
8	PD	1
8	ED	3
4	SPD	23
12	REC	
50	END	
60	STN	8

Pts Skills and Powers END  
\*30 Regeneration (3 BODY/  
Recovery) 0

- \* 9 Knockback Resistance .3" 0
- \*20 Armor: 6 PD, 6 ED 0
- \*48 Damage Reduction, PD & ED, resistant, STUN only 0
- 8 +1 in Combat
- 10 +2 with Melee Weapons
- 2 Familiar: Melee Weapons (esp. axes & knives)
- 9 Stealth 15- 10 Luck 2d6

\* = Power from Champions

Disadvantages: 75+ Pts.

- Becomes murderously berserk whenever anyone pays attention to him (very common, total commitment) 13
- Loves to stalk, terrify, and murder (v. common, total, x1/2) 7
- No functions of reason (physical limitation, all the time, great) 11
- "Dies" after taking 20 BODY (phys. lim., all the time, great, x1/2) 6
- Regeneration doesn't help head wounds (frequent, great, x1/4) 2
- Hunted 14- by the player-characters 11
- Hunted 14- by the police (x1/2) 5
- Distinctive Looks: Crazy eyes, odd body language (not concealable, causes fear in viewers) 10
- Villain Bonus 229

(CHA Cost) 207 + 146 (Power & Skill Cost) = 353 = Disadvantage Total

### Origin:

Greg Burrows was until recently an ordinary college student. But normal campus hijinks led to the end of his life — in a manner of speaking.

While he and some rowdy companions were engaged in heaving snowballs at the women's dormitory, a campus policeman stumbled across the scene. The students bolted, and the campus cop chose Greg to follow.

When caught by the officer, Greg panicked and did the stupidest thing possible: He struggled with the officer. The resulting fight ended in a scramble for the officer's revolver... and its accidental discharge put a bullet into Greg's brain.

In the hospital, the prognosis wasn't good: He was failing and probably going to die. Greg's attending physician, however, was a medical experimenter who took his Hippocratic oath seriously — even, perhaps, too seriously. His latest experimental formula, the cutting edge in regeneration-research technology, was the only thing that had a remote chance of saving Burrows' life. Though it was patently illegal for use on human subjects, he injected Greg with the substance.

It saved his life. Burrows' vital signs stabilized. The remarkable formula chemically altered Greg's body, giving him the ability to heal major injuries practically instantaneously, making him obscenely strong, fast, and resistant to damage.

But it didn't repair the brain damage he'd sustained. He wasn't even remotely the Greg Burrows his friends remembered. The combination of brain damage and

chemical changes made him into worse than an animal, a creature which killed humans, delighting in the terror it caused them. Greg rewarded his physician late that night by rising from what had nearly been his death-bed and throwing his doctor down a stairwell. And then he embarked on his new life of terror.



### Campaign Notes:

Greg, dubbed Berserk by the press, is a movie monster; when using him, you'll want to run a monster-movie **DI** episode. Greg escapes from the hospital. (Perhaps the player-characters are present for that.) The murders begin — patternless and horrifying. The player-characters have to follow his erratic trail, confront him, defeat him. Or perhaps they'll be trapped with him in a large building, the sewers, an estate...



In combat, Berserk will use any weapon at hand — a club, a branch, a butcher knife, an axe, etc. However, he will not carry one more than about 100' (16") from where he finds it unless he's pursuing someone.

If attacked by capable adversaries, Berserk will immediately try to kill those who attack him. However, when he runs across some lesser opponent, he will follow that person to the ends of the earth, springing out at him from shadows, running after him, stalking him, until the victim cannot be terrified any further... whereupon Berserk kills him and goes to find another toy.

### **Skills and Powers:**

Four of Berserk's powers come from **Champions**; we'll discuss how to use them so you DI-only players will have no confusion about him.

His Regeneration means that whenever he takes a Recovery, he recovers 3 BODY in addition to STUN and Endurance — the wounds close up as if by magic. He only recovers BODY up to the amount he has lost, naturally.

His Knockback Resistance assumes you're using some sort of Knockback rules — from **Champions** or **Super-Agents**. If you are, then any attack on him doing knockback does 3" less knockback than is rolled. In other words, an attack doing up to 2" knockback doesn't budge him. One that does 3" knockback will knock him down. One that does 4" knockback will only knock him back 1".

His Armor is, in game terms, just like any other body armor. It protects him from damage. But

when you're running Berserk, the characters don't see him stopping blades and bullets — they go into and through him as if he were a normal man. But, *up to 6 BODY, they don't do him any harm.*

His Damage Reduction means that he takes 1/2 of the STUN caused by any attack. In other words, roll the attack, subtract his defenses, and then cut the remaining STUN by 1/2 before applying it to him. He's incredibly hard to stun and knock out.

His other skills are straightforward **DI** abilities.

### **Equipment:**

As noted, Berserk doesn't carry any equipment routinely, but can use any pertinent melee weapon. He prefers the cutting variety.

### **Weaknesses:**

Berserk's major weakness is that he's not a thinking creature. He can't plan. He can be tricked, lured, and fooled. That's a lot easier than hurting him.

His Regeneration does not work on injuries he sustains to his head — once the characters figure this out, they may find it considerably easier to put him down.

Finally, he "dies" whenever he has taken 20 BODY total. He falls down. His heart and vital functions stop. He is dead. He stays dead until he has Regenerated as much as he is going to. Then his eyes pop open, he gets up, he grabs the nearest weapon, and he goes after the nearest victim — another movie-monster characteristic.

### **Appearance:**

Berserk does little to change

his appearance. He wears any clothes he can find or steal — and, yes, he still changes clothes, some surviving impulse from his human days. Whenever his current garb becomes too knife-ridden and torn, he finds some more.

He never emits a sound, and his facial expression, whether he's at peace or killing someone, never changes. It's always an empty, emotionless smile. Other than this creepy expression and his usually gruesome clothes, he appears quite normal.

## RIHALLA

### FOR CHAMPIONS

#### BY MATTHEW LEWIS

Val	Cha	Pts
6	STR	-4
21	DEX	33
18	CON	16
8	BODY	-4
15	INT	5
10	EGO	
26	PRE	26
30	COM	10
6	PD	5
6	ED	2
6	SPD	29
12	REC	14
50	END	7
30	STN	10

Pts	Powers	END
100	Multipower (Teleport) Base, + 1/4 Disadvantage: Power does not work if Rihalla is adhered to or trying to teleport any mass over 800 kg (+ 1/4)	125
9 u	Teleport, 20", 800 kg, extra-dimensional, 1/4 END (active power: 113 points)	3

9 u	Teleport, 15", on others, at range, invisible power effects, 800 kg, END (active power: 112 points)	22
10 u	Teleport, 20", 800 kg, 16384x distance after preparing 1 phase (655 km/419 mi distance) (active power: 125 points)	24
30	Memorized Locations: 15 memorized and three floating	
15	Skill Levels, + 3 with teleport powers	
20	Sense, locate, analyze Density (costs END), -1/10"	4
14	Telekinesis STR 25, dependant on Teleport (+ 1/4), only for altering velocity and orientation of teleported targets (+ 1/2)	5
11	Flight, 10", dependant on Teleport (+ 1/4), only for altering velocity and orientation when teleporting (+ 1/2)	2
46	Telepathy, 4d6, area effect, 0 END, always on, communication/translation only (+ 1/2)	0
10	Extra Limb: Mobile Hair	
10	Regeneration, 2 pips, protracted (one Regeneration per hour, + 1)	
6	Professional Skill: Companion,	15-

Disadvantages:	100 +
Dyslexic Illiterate	5
Clumsy in HtH combat (-2 to rolls) (uncommon, greatly)	10
Fear of capture and confinement (very common, irrational)	20

<b>Fear and hatred of sharp objects (especially tools and utensils) (very common, irrational)</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Conditioned to obey normals (very common, x1/2)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Resents conditioning, takes orders literally (very common, x1/2)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2x Effect, Mind Control</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2x Effect, Telepathy</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Hunted, anti-mutant agency, 8-20</b>	
<b>Hunted, supervillain team, 8-25</b>	
<b>Berserks 8- if attacked or threatened with sharp objects, recover 14-</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Unusual Looks 11- (sex appeal, vulnerability)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Monitored by authorities 11-</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Subject to orders from authorities 10 Experience Spent</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>(CHA Cost) 149 + 290 (Power &amp; Skill Cost) = 439 = Disadvantage Total</b>	

### Origin:

Rihalla is an android — an artificially created organism. She was created nine years ago by a race of bioengineers known as the Moulders, a cthonian cockroach-like race which inhabits an Earth-type planet orbiting Sigma Draconis. The Moulders were trying to create a slave race of teleporters based on the humanoid biological design, but the experiment was a failure: Rihalla exhibited none of the powers theoretically engineered into her. The Moulders routinely retained her, then sold her as a slave/companion on a humanoid world.

After surviving an indefinite period of physical and mental cruelty (Rihalla estimates it to be three years Terran), she discovered her teleportation abilities

were at last emerging. She used them to slay her owner, then to stow away on a starship headed elsewhere. She was later discovered by the captain, who ejected her in an escape pod. The starship was within the Sol system, and the pod landed in Arizona, where it was immediately seized by the US Air Force.

She spent a month acclimatizing herself to Earth's higher gravitational field and being brief, debriefed, and tested by U.S. military authorities. She was ultimately transferred to the Department of State, which foresaw using her personality and abilities to good effect — her looks and personality for public relations purposes and her abilities for important hostage crises.



### Campaign Notes:

In a campaign, Rihalla serves three purposes.

First, she's extraordinarily helpful in hostage and rescue situations. She can bring heroes

right to the scene of the action, and can teleport victims away from kidnappers. As a side-effect, she is also the official superhero employee of whichever government agency you wish — Department of State, Department of Defense, National Security Agency, CIA, FBI, etc.

Second, her telepathic translation abilities can be helpful in any adventure involving alien visitors with no knowledge of terrestrial tongues. She does some difficult translation work with the United Nations as well.

Third, she is a character with her own history and problems; once the player-characters have come to know her, they may learn of her personal difficulties and try to help her deal with them.

Personally, Rihalla is a fun ally. She is lively and quick-witted, often lapses into an entertaining dizzy blonde routine to amuse her friends and frustrate her employers.

But she is also a nearly textbook case of the "Survivor Syndrome," a psychological condition common among people who have survived long periods of mental or physical cruelty, imprisonment, etc. Like most such survivors, she is unwilling to talk about her past and generally lives in and for the present. She is also prone to phobic reactions (including her fear of sharp implements), mood swings, fits of depression and anxiety, nightmares, and so on.

However, it should take several episodes with Rihalla before the cracks in her personality start to show. Most of the time she appears to be the attractive, witty superpowered ally most supers think she is.

### **Skills and Powers:**

Rihalla is a world-class teleporter. She can teleport into alternate realities, or at distances of more than 400 miles, or even teleport other people from one place to another at range.

She can also change orientation and velocity when teleporting — either for her or those she is teleporting at a distance. (These are the TK and Flight powers from her sheet.) She could, for instance, be falling at 5" speed, teleport somewhere, and be standing on the ground with no appreciable impact.

When Rihalla teleports she is surrounded by a multicolored fringe; then she twists, distorts and disappears. She arrives as a glowing point which distorts and expands. Objects or opponents become surrounded by the fringe and behave the same way. Her method of teleportation is to rotate herself and/or other objects into and out of another dimension.

The nature of her teleport does not let her separate objects that are attached together. The 'glue' need not be very strong: Chocolate syrup would do. The bond must be adhesive: She can teleport out of someone's grasp, for instance.

Rihalla has an extra sense that lets her analyze an object's distance, density and direction.

Her telepathy allows her to 'talk' to just about anything capable of communication.

Her regeneration allows her to recover from serious injuries within a day or so, though you may wish to have the replacement of limbs or organs take much longer. While she recovers BODY

much faster than normal, she can still bleed to death.

The last of her bioengineered abilities is that of her hair, which (through use of a specific telekinetic ability) moves at Rihalla's mental command.

#### **Weaknesses:**

Most of Rihalla's problems come from her bioengineering and especially from her early environment and conditioning.

First, she was engineered for a .5 G gravitational pull. While she has adapted somewhat to Earth's greater gravity, she is still physically weak and will avoid climbing or strenuous activity.

Because of her conditioning, she tends to obey the requests and orders of any non-costumed, normal-looking person (EGO roll at -3 to disobey). But because she resents her conditioning, she will try to find the silliest or most inconvenient interpretation of the order, and she will do almost anything to conceal her conditioning.

Her fear of sharp things and capture comes from her experiences as a purchased toy. She won't touch a knife or fork and refuses to eat in any restaurant where she cannot use fingers or chopsticks.

She fares poorly in hand-to-hand combat because she senses and shrinks from her opponent's desire to hit her, his pain if she hits him, etc.

Finally, her great beauty and air of vulnerability combine to bring out the worst in people. In everyday situations, she can expect propositions and attempts at religious conversion. In combat, she is a favorite target for supervillains needing someone to

menace. And her physical conditioning — mannerisms and body language — from her former life tend to alienate other women; they see her as an attention-hound who is constantly flirting, and don't realize that her habits are the unconscious results of training.

**Appearance:** Rihalla appears to be a human female of about 19 years of age. She is 5'2" and about 105 pounds. Her eyes are a lapis lazuli blue and her hair a platinum blonde; as mentioned, her hair moves at Rihalla's mental direction. Her costume is bright yellow, the belt a dark green.

## **DR. DARKO FON-JAGER**

**FOR JUSTICE, INC.  
BY DAVID ROGERS**

---

Val	Cha	Pts
10	STR	
11	DEX	3
8	CON	-4
8	BODY	-4
30	INT	20
21	EGO	22
15	PRE	5
14	COM	2
2	PD	
2	ED	
3	SPD	9
4	REC	
16	END	
17	STN	

Pts	Skills
15	Skill Levels, +3 with Medical Skills
31	Hypnosis on 23-
7	First Aid on 18-
3	Scientist

- 1 **Science: Pharmacology** on 14-
- 1 **Science: Medicine** on 14-
- 1 **Science: Psychology** on 14-
- 3 **Motorcycling** on 11-
- 3 **English (Serbian is native language)**
- 3 **German**

<b>Disadvantages: 75+</b>	<b>Pts.</b>
<b>Age: 65</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Distinctive Looks: Age, Dress (monacle, beard, medical apparatus, spiky white beard, motorcycle goggles), concealable</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Monitored, Police, 11-</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>DNPC (Daughter Sarah), normal, 11-</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Near-Sighted (Frequent, slight)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Dislike and Distrust of Authorities</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Careless Worker (x1/2)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Likes to Experiment (x1/4)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Experience Spent</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(CHA Cost) 53 + 68 (Skills Cost)</b>	
<b>= (Total Cost) 121 =</b>	
<b>Disadvantages Total</b>	

### Origin:

Some years ago, Dr. Fon-Jager, then a physician in Zagreb, Austria-Hungary, was called in to assist the regular physician of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria. Three hours later, Ferdinand was shot by a Serbian patriot, precipitating the world into the Great War. Naturally, as a Serb in close contact with the Archduke, Dr. Fon-Jager was suspected of complicity, and so was forced to flee to neutral America.

There, he met and married the daughter of an upstate New York farmer, and began his researches into chemical therapy. He became quite successful as years passed.

The word about his work, which involved diagnostic and surgical techniques using advanced chemicals and hypnosis as anaesthetics, began to spread.

Unfortunately, Dr. Fon-Jager was always sloppy at his preparations and documentation, and it cost him dearly. Preparing for a routine appendectomy on a wealthy industrialist, Fon-Jager miscalculated the patient's anaesthetic dosage. The patient died during the operation. Fon-Jager was eventually stripped of his license to perform medicine and was sent to prison for a term of 13 years. While he was in prison, his wife died and his young daughter grew to adulthood.

Since his release a few years ago, Fon-Jager has returned to the big city (whichever city is the campaign's base) and taken up residence in a slum area — Harlem, Suicide Slum, Hell's Kitchen, whichever is most appropriate to your campaign. He is reunited with his daughter Sarah, who works as a waitress and supports them both. Fon-Jager supplements their income by performing backroom medicine, and continues his researches into chemical and hypnotic medical treatments.

### Campaign Notes:

In a **Justice, Inc.** campaign, Dr. Fon-Jager is a "slug-yanker" — the backroom doctor who works fast, asks no questions about his patients' injuries, charges low rates, makes house calls, and certainly does not report gunshot wounds to the police — and all of these attributes endear him to **Justice, Inc.** player-characters and mobsters alike.

Fon-Jager can enter a campaign in a variety of ways. For instance: Any character who is similarly a doctor or psychologist developing chemical or hypnotic medical treatments could be an old colleague of his. Any adventuresome character who takes a gunshot wound and cannot, for some reason, let the police know of it may know of Fon-Jager; similarly, such an injured character could be stumbled across by Sarah Fon-Jager, who would take him home for her father to treat. An adventurer tracking down an injured criminal might eventually find himself on Fon-Jager's doorstep, as the Serbian doctor is the person most likely to have treated the criminal's injury.

When using Fon-Jager in a campaign, keep in mind his personal eccentricities. He speaks with a thick Serbian accent and can become nearly incoherent when excited or angry. He has an abiding dislike for authority and its representatives. Though it's not reflected in his personal disadvantages, he is the classic excitable codger: Aged, feeble of appearance, nearsighted, somewhat bad-tempered, easily irritated, absorbed in his work, careless about his appearance, often careless in his treatments.

This carelessness with his work, added to his desire to experiment with new combinations of drugs and hypnotism, can have entertaining results in an adventure. While his patients feel no pain when he's yanking slugs out, it's also true that they may feel no pain for *days*. His treatments might leave his patients walking around in a daze (-5 or -8 INT) for

hours or longer. His patient may become addicted to something. (He's had this problem with morphine. But he's heard of a new, less addictive morphine derivative called heroin, and is eager to try it out on his patients.)

#### **Skills:**

Fon-Jager's skills are mostly self-evident. They consist of the skills needed for his work, his languages, and one more eccentricity, Motorcycling: He does not drive cars, preferring to make his house calls on a beaten-up motorcycle. He has no combat skills or weapons familiarities.



#### **Equipment:**

The only equipment Fon-Jager routinely carries is a small black medical bag. He owns and drives a large, loud Harley-Davidson 45 motorcycle (with sidecar) on his errands and house calls.

**Dress:**

Fon-Jager wears dated, rumpled, and scruffy European-styled suits, a somewhat underpowered monocle, and motorcyclists' goggles, which usually hang about his neck because he forgets to take them off. His hair is white and usually wind-swept or uncombed; he wears a mustache and spiky white goatee.

The one personal possession he carries which means anything to him is a pocket watch. The watch is old, of German manufacture and meticulously cared for; its case is gold. It is the only thing he has left from happier days in Zagreb, and it is conse-

quently of great value to him.

**Sarah Fon-Jager:**

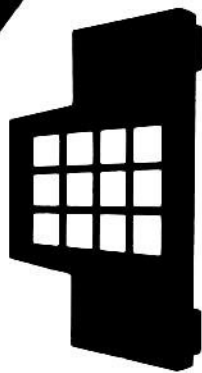
The doctor's daughter is beautiful, blond, and unfailingly cheerful. She often assists him in his backroom surgery. She works as a waitress at a local diner, the Yellow Derby, supporting her father as well as herself. She has a habit of walking home alone after the Derby closes.

She is a Normal with the following additions: (Characteristics) DEX 12, INT 13, PRE 13, COM 18; (Skills) Medicine on 8-, First Aid on 12-, Professional Skill: Waitress on 13-.





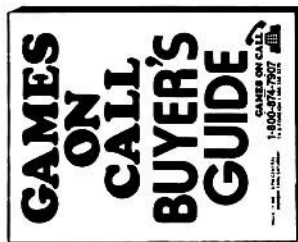
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# GADGETS & TREASURES

"Gadgets and Treasures" is the column for gadgetry in the Hero System. We present gadgets and vehicles for **Champions, Justice, Inc.**, and **Danger International**, and magical treasures for **Fantasy Hero**.

If you have a gadget, vehicle, or treasure that you think is particularly useful, write it up and send it in. If you want to make a gadget for use with several Hero System games, you should include multiple sets of stats if the stats differ from game to game.

## THE AUTOHYPNOTIC GUN

FOR CHAMPIONS AND  
SUPER-AGENTS  
BY AARON ALLSTON

This weapon, invented and developed by a scientific criminal cartel, is a handy tool for silent capture of enemies or for penetrating enemy bases.

It projects a beam of light in the infrared range. The beam acts on the victim's optic nerves in such a fashion that it places him instantaneously into an autohypnotic state — awake, but unaware

of what's going on around him until snapped out of it.

In game terms, this is an NND Energy Blast. (Note to **DI** players: NND means No Normal Defense, meaning that the character's defenses do not protect him against the damage from the attack — no armor, PD or ED count against it. On the other hand, the attack does only STUN damage.) The NND is of no avail against any sort of Flash Defense device or method: The victim's eyes must be open and unshielded, and the weapon must be within his field of vision when fired (even if he does not notice it).

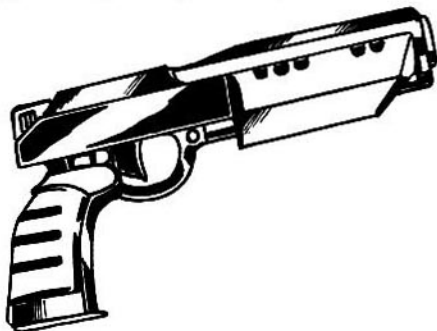
The autohypnotic beam has a severe disadvantage on it: (A) When the victim snaps out of his "trance," he does so instantly, regaining all lost STUN pips instantly, not having to go through several recoveries to be at full STUN value; (B) The beam has absolutely no effect on a victim if it does not Stun him or knock him out (if he is not Stunned or knocked out by the damage rolled, he takes no damage at all — in fact, he feels nothing); and (C) Any loud noise or other stimulus sufficient to awaken a sleeping man will snap a victim instantaneously out of his trance. The victim will not be aware that

any time has passed, though with a successful Intelligence roll can realize that he felt like nodding off a moment before. All these disadvantages are referred to as the "Instant Awaken" disadvantage below.

A Stunned character is conscious — he is merely frozen for a few seconds. An attacker can shoot a character multiple times: Stunning him the first time, knocking him out the second, making sure he's very unconscious with the third, for instance; so long as each damage rolled is sufficient to Stun or knock out the victim, you can keep adding on the NND damage done by the gun.

The gun comes in two sizes. Type I is the size of a large handgun and is suitable for taking out agents. Type II is the size of and shaped like a large, bulky minicam but is usually effective against superheroes and supervillains.

**Autohypnotic Gun Type I:** Energy Blast 8d6, NND, Normally Invisible, 16 Charges, OAF (+1), Instant Awaken disadvantage (+1): 33 points. (For **Super-Agents**, add -10 STR and three levels of Miniaturization: 46 points, SIZ 6, STR Min 6. Ammo cost is 1 point per 3 charges, 5 points per clip of 16.)



**Autohypnotic Gun Type II:** Energy Blast 12d6, NND, Normally Invisible, 16 charges, OAF (+1), Instant Awaken disadvantage (+1): 50 points. (For **Super-Agents**, add -13 STR and two levels of Miniaturization: 64 points, SIZ 21, STR Min 11. Ammo cost is 1 point per 2 charges, or 7 points per clip of 16.)



## SHOOTING DAGGER

FOR DANGER  
INTERNATIONAL  
BY GREG PORTER

This device is a knife whose handle conceals a very powerful spring or small propellant charge. The weapon may be used as a standard dagger, or the blade can be fired at an opponent, for 1d6K damage. This temporarily ruins its effectiveness as a dagger, but the handle telescopes outward when fired, so it may still be used as a small billy club. It is rumored that Russian Spetsnaz units (Green Beret equivalents) are equipped with these knives, and copies of foreign manufacture have appeared on the American market. Needless to say, having a

knife shot at you is usually a surprise and the GM may choose to apply a surprise bonus to the firer's OCV the first time it is used.

**Shooting Dagger:** Hand-to-Hand Killing Attack, 1d6, at range, 0 END, -1/2" range modifier, OAF (+ 1), range advantage is one use only. Cost: 12 points. SIZ 4, STR Min 6. (In **Super-Agents**, device also has "Purpose Concealed" advantage on the ranged advantage, same cost and other stats.)

## POWER-STAF K/A-1 IMPACT WEAPON

FOR DANGER  
INTERNATIONAL  
BY GREG PORTER

In appearance, this device looks like a strange police baton. Conveniently enough, that is exactly what it is. But it also has a compressed air cylinder that can extend the baton into adjacent hexes, and does so with enough force that it adds damage of its own to any force the wielder puts behind it. This extra reach can be quite a surprise the first time a character encounters it, and a surprise bonus to the attacker's OCV is quite appropriate. The device can extend to full length and back in less than a tenth of a second. Models with backpack-mounted air cylinders are also available, and these can be considered to have 250 charges.

**Power-Staf K/A-1 Impact Weapon:** +15 STR (adds to Punch only, + 1/2), 0 END, and 1" Stret-

ching (linked to STR bonus + 1/4, used for Punch only + 1/2), 0 END, 32 charges, OAF: 18 points. SIZ 6, STR Min 10.

## THE CONTINUUM CRAFT

FOR CHAMPIONS  
BY AARON ALLSTON

The following vehicle is a futuristic small transport which features a device enabling it to move from dimension to dimension through the multiverse. Built by a mad scientist, it could fall into the hands of **Champions** superheroes or even **Danger International** adventurers and provide them odd adventures throughout the multiverse.

The Continuum Craft is far too expensive for most characters to have. The GM may wish it to be in the hands of NPCs, or to let the player-characters have it for free — it's really just a plot device to get characters into a universe-hopping campaign.

The vehicle looks like a very large car with wings and landing gear instead of normal wheels. It may fly normally at up to 500'/segment. It's rather ungainly, and so its ACC, DCC and TURN are not in line with jet aircraft. On the ground, it can do about 140 mph (35'/segment).

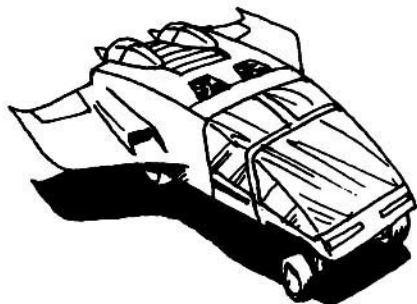
The passenger compartment can carry five passengers: Two in front, three in back. Additionally, in back of the rear passenger seat is a hatch to a cargo storage area. Through refinement of his space-and-time warping technology, the mad scientist has given his brain-child more interior space than it can possibly have from outside

perceptions. The ship has three hexes of interior space which do not add to outside space. The area constitutes a luxurious den — including sunken whirlpool and comfortable chairs.

Even more remarkably, the Continuum Craft is capable of teleporting incredible distances and even across dimensions. Its great in-atmosphere teleport is represented by Desolidification (20 BODY) and FTL Flight; it's the only way you can represent instantaneous teleports of such great distances within the atmosphere.

The craft is armed with a laser cannon and is capable of withstanding vacuum and underwater conditions.

CHAR	VALUE	PTS
MAX	35"	17 (Ground)
MAX	500"	47 (Flight, not Air Breathing)
ACC	4	20
DCC	5	10
TURN	10	20
STR	30	30
DEF	7x6	10 (7 points on 6 sides)
BODY	10	10
ISIZ	4(+3)	6 (As described, interior spaces which don't increase SIZ)



DMG +6d6  
 SIZE 8  
 DCVM -8  
 Mass 6 tons  
 KNB -16  
 Carry 1600 kg  
 Pass 5

CHAR Cost: 170

#### PTS EQUIPMENT

- 25 Desolidification, 20 BODY, only usable when using FTL Flight within atmosphere, 2x END Battery, recover 1/1 segment, OIF
- 5 FTL with Flight MAX, OIF
- 57 Teleport, 20" or 10" and attack, interdimensional, to 30 memorized and 2 floating locations
- 32 Public Address System: Also Sonic EB, 8d6, 0 END, OIF, only in atmosphere. 20 Radar, -1/160", OIF
- 10 Active Sonar, OIF
- 26 Laser Cannon: 4d6 RKA, AP, 8x END Battery, forward only, preparation time 1 phase, OIF
- 75 Artificial Intelligence Device (sentient computer, "Sally"): INT 30, EGO 15, 10 skills, 10 databases, miniaturization to 1 hex
- 5 Radio
- 20 Orbital
- 10 Radio Control
- 5 Watertight
- 15 Luck (Sally's)

305 Equipment Cost

Characteristics Cost 170 +  
 Equipment Cost 305 = 475  
 points.

# New York Day

July 1, 1936

## SOMETHING UNUSUAL FOUND IN LOS ANGELES

by John Stark, Ace Reporter

Something Unusual happened to me the other day. I was hot on the trail of that criminal mastermind, the Scarlet Claw, when I ran across an unusual hobby shop, when I walked into a shop called *Something Unusual*. Boy, was it! They carried games, metal figures, radio-control kits, plastic models, paints, tools, and lots more. I could hardly believe my eyes, so I decided to look further.

Going to one rack, I found RPG's... a ton of them, from Fantasy to Science Fiction to 30's Pulp to Superheroes. Impressive. I decided to give the miniatures a once over. I found so many figures from so many companies that it took a twice over. Okay! But what about wargames? I turned to find a bookcase full of them. Every era from 4000 B.C. to the far future, from companies like Avalon Hill, WRG,

SPI/TSR, Empire Games and more. As I was giving the goods the eye, the Shopkeeper came over and asked if I liked magazines. I said yes. He proceeded to list over 15 different rags, ones like *Adventurer's Club*, *Wargaming*, *The Dragon*, *Fine Scale Modeler*, and *Living History*. Plus a selection of books and reference materials.

I asked the Shopkeeper why he had such a broad selection of things. He replied "Here we not only understand the needs of the few, but the needs of the many. Because we game, too. We have a gaming table and are the headquarters of the Western Heroes of America (WHAM)." He was a long winded guy, but helpful and friendly, as was everyone there. Unfortunately, I was having such a good time, the trail of the Scarlet Claw got cold.

### Ships Continue to Dissappear in South Pacific



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# THE EMPIRE CLUB

BY LYLE WILSON



*Editor's Note: This issue, I didn't have much to say on JI gaming; but Lyle wrote in with a very helpful batch of package deals for 1930s adventurers — so the column is his this issue. Have fun, Lyle. — AA*

What follows are additions to the package deals already published in **Justice, Inc.**, plus new package deals for Police Detective, Explorer, Graduate in Psychic Studies, Playboy/Socialite, and Private Detective.

## ADDITIONS TO JI PACKAGE DEALS

One thing JI did not address is the existence of The Machine. The Machine consists of those people who hold the real political power in the city. The Machine may have criminal ties, but if it does it is invariably separate from The Mob.

In campaigns which take place in any large city, the players' package deals should reflect their characters' understanding of the way The Machine works.

These optional revisions to the existing package deals take the Machine into account.

## Reporter Package Deal Additions

SKILLS	PTS.
Area Knowledge 8-	1
knowledge of The Machine 8-	1

Not only does a reporter know the city in which he works, he is familiar with the surrounding area and he also knows why the city works as it does.

## Policeman Package Deal Additions

SKILLS	PTS.
Knowledge of The Machine, 8-	1
+ 1 with nightstick (club)	3
DISADVANTAGES	PTS.
Monitored: The Machine, 8- (x1/2)	(2)

The nightstick was the policeman's hand weapon of choice, and the policeman is more skilled with it than most people are with a club... hence the skill level.



### **G-Man Package Deal Additions**

SKILLS	PTS.
Familiarity with Bureaucracies, 8-	1

The G-Man, working within a bureaucratic system, had to become familiar with how bureaucracies function in order to accomplish his job.

### **NEW JI PACKAGE DEALS**

#### **Police Detective Package Deal**

Just as the job of the policeman is to enforce the law, it is the job of the police detective to solve crimes. He is skilled at gathering information and is more experienced than the average policeman. However, because of his job, the police detective is watched closely by the criminal, law enforcement, and political forces which operate in the city.

A character must have the Policeman package deal before taking the Police Detective Package Deal.

The police detective has skills which enable him to talk to people, to operate within the legal code, and to better use the police skills he already possesses.

SKILLS	PTS.
Conversation	3
One additional skill from the Policeman Package Deal list; or, one level (+ 1) with the two skills already chosen as part of the Policeman package	3
One level (+ 1) with Nightstick, Punch, or Service Revolver	3
Knowledge: Criminal Law, 8-	1
Knowledge: Crime area of specialization	1



Knowledge of the Machine increased to 11-	1
<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<b>PTS.</b>
Monitored, Police Department, to 14-	(2)
Monitored, the Machine, to 11- (x1/2)	(1)
Monitored, the Mob, 8- (x1/4)	(1)
<b>TOTAL COST:</b>	<b>8</b>

### Explorer Package Deal

The explorer package deal is suitable for explorers, and for archaeologists, big game hunters, missionaries, or any other persons who regularly operate outside civilized areas.

The explorer is familiar with the area which he has explored, including the country or colony in which the exploration took place. The language of the area is known to some extent, and the explorer may also know some of the culture of the inhabitants.

The explorer will also develop survival skills for wilderness and/or bureaucratic areas. In order to explore an area, the explorer must have the cooperation of the area's government. This government may not reside in or near the exploration area but may be a foreign country (in instances of colonialism). The explorer also requires financial backing. These two problems are reflected by the Monitored disadvantages.

<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>PTS.</b>
Area Knowledge, 11-, explored area	2
Area Knowledge, 8-, country or colony	1

Language, basic conver- sation, explored area	1
Familiarity, survival, 8-	1
Familiarity, favorite weapon	1
Choose Two Skills from List: Brawling, Bribery, Bureaucratics, Culture Knowledge (11-) and + 1 to Area Knowledge of explored area (12-), Scientist, Streetwise, Tracking	6

<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<b>PTS.</b>
Monitored: Sponsoring organization, 11-	(6)
Monitored: Government of explored area, 8- (x1/2)	(2)
Package Bonus	(1)
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>3</b>

### Graduate in Psychic Studies Package Deal

Graduates in Psychic Studies are explorers too, in their own way and their field is the supernatural. In the time period covered by **Justice, Inc.**, the supernatural, the occult, and psychic studies were all synonymous.

Graduates invariably have a latent psychic power — this is what prompts them to study the occult. The graduate has had extensive training in research skills and has a broad but shallow knowledge of the occult in addition to the primary area in which the graduate's field work was done. Studying the supernatural, however, calls attention to one's self, and this is reflected by the Monitored disadvantage.

SKILLS	PTS.	(choice), Bribery, Bureaucratics, Conver- sation, Gambling, Persuasion, Seduction	6
Latent Psychic Power	1		
Scholar	3		
Knowledge: Occult History, 12-	2		
Choose Two: Bureaucratics, Knowledge: Psychic Phenomena (13-), Knowledge: Supernatural Creatures (13-), Knowledge: Magic (13-), Perception + 1, Resistance (+ 3)	6		
<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<b>PTS.</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<b>PTS.</b>
Monitored: The Super- natural, 8-	(5)	Distinctive Looks (press exposure)	(1)
Psychological Limitation: Heedlessly curious about paranormal phenomena	(3)	Monitored: The Press, 8-	(5)
Package Bonus	(1)	Package Bonus: Character must have minimum of PRE 13, COM 12	(1)
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>TOTAL COST:</b>	<b>4</b>

### Playboy/Socialite Package Deal

This character is one of the idle rich, always looking for some new thrill — thrills which are found by members of the Empire Club.

The playboy/socialite is familiar with socializing in upper circles and understands the impact of appearance on relationships. He or she has knowledge of the city in which he or she lives and has some skill in dealing with people. There is, however, a price for being rich — this is reflected by the playboy/socialite being recognizable and watched by the press.

SKILLS	PTS.
Culture	3
City Knowledge, 11- (campaign city)	2
Choose Two: Area Knowledge (12-)	

### Private Detective Package Deal

The private detective is less restricted in his operations than a policeman, but he does not have the manpower resources to call upon that the policeman has.

The private detective knows the city in which he works and the surrounding area. He is also familiar with the city machinery. He is familiar with handguns and carries a license to carry a concealed pistol. A private detective knows some of the "tricks of the trade" and will usually have contacts on the police force.

A detective has various skills which help him deal with various sorts of people. On the other hand, a private detective is usually known, has made some enemies, and is watched by the law enforcement and political machinery of the city.

SKILLS	PTS.
City Knowledge, 12- Area Knowledge, 8-	3
Knowledge: The Machine, 8-	1
Knowledge: The police, 8-	1
Familiarity, pistols	2

Private Detective License	1
Carry Concealed Weapon permit	2
Professional Skill: Private Detective, 11-	2
Familiarity: Deduction, 8-	1
Choose Two: Brawling, Bribery, Bureaucratics, Conversation, Criminology, Lockpicking, Persuasion, Shadowing, Streetwise	6
<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<b>PTS.</b>
Distinctive Looks: PI	(1)
Hunted: Someone you sent up, 8-	(4)
Monitored, Police and Machine, 11-	(8)
Package Bonus	(1)
<b>TOTAL COST:</b>	<b>6</b>



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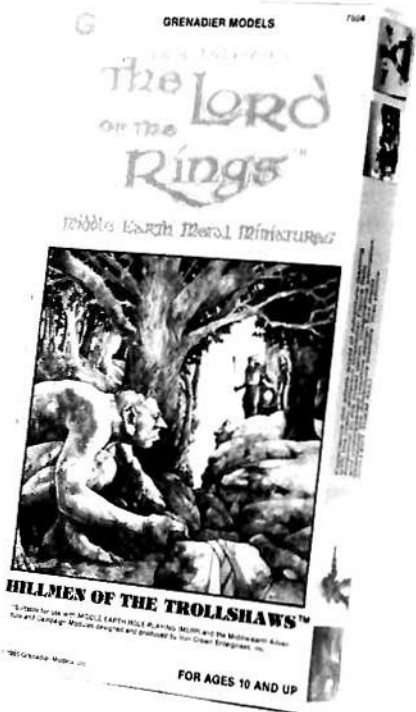
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# COVERT ACTION

BY L. DOUGLAS GARRETT

## SECRET MEANINGS OF THE AGENCY PACKAGE DEAL

Package Deals — What a wonderful idea! For only a handful of points, the average character can have all these great skills and only have to accept a few inconsequential disadvantages.

*Horse feathers.* Nobody rides for “free” in this game system. This is not to say that Package Deals are not a good deal... au contraire; but they are not a “freebie” either. The disadvantages in a Package Deal have a specific meaning, and it is important that you, the GM, understand them.

### TAKING THE PACKAGE BUT NOT THE AGENCY

Think about it this way for a moment: When that Package Deal was designed, it was intended to simulate the one place, or one of the only places, where a character could learn that specific set of skills and operate under those specific Follower rules. Thus, it is incorrect to assume that a character could be built with the Package Deal — but not belong to the agency for which it was built. That's the simple truth.

Take a look at the CIA Counter-Espionage Package Deal from the

original **Espionage** (slightly modified to be in accord with **Danger International**):

SKILLS	PTS.
Familiarity, firearms	2
+1 with favorite firearm	3
Foreign Language (complete, w/accnt)	3
College Degree (KS of choice on 11-)	2
KS: CIA, 12-	3
KS: World Politics, 11-	2
KS: KGB, 11-	2
Familiarity, Bureaucratics, 8-	1
Skill from list	3
Skill, +1 to roll, from list	5

DISADVANTAGES	PTS.
Characteristic minimums: STR 10, DEX 11, INT 13, EGO 10, PRE 13, COM 8	
- 2 Watched, CIA, 14-	-10
Some latitude, dangerous, minor	-4
Package Bonus	-3

TOTAL PACKAGE COST 7

Skill List: Conversion, Disguise, Linguist, Perception +1, Persuasion, Resistance, Shadowing,

## Tracking, +1 to favorite firearm.

Now, if this Package Deal says it is for CIA Agents in Counterespionage, then the only characters who should have that Package Deal are active CIA Agents engaged in or previously assigned to Counterespionage. (Below, I'll talk about "retiring" from an organization and keeping the Packages.)

Perhaps, with a little jury-rigging, you, the GM, could turn the CIA Counter-E package into an FBI Counter-E package by changing the foreign language to Bureaucratics Skill; the KS: World Politics to KS: Law Enforcement Procedures; CIA Knowledge to FBI Knowledge; the KS: KGB to KS: Organized Crime; the Familiarity with Bureaucratics to KS: Politics (8-); the Watched to FBI, 14-.

But *you* should be the one to improvise like this; players should not write up or modify Package Deals. Some Package Deals are more generic than others, so allow some leeway with the less restrictive Package Deals. But remember this: If the character took the Package Deal, he is or was what the Package Deal describes at some point in his history.

## **THE OTHER SHOE DROPS**

And remember: A Package Deal is a Disadvantage.

Yes, the character gets a group of skills relating to a particular training that he received at some time. The character may also be part of an organization (if the Package includes any sort of "Follower" bonus) and this is a big advantage, as the character

will now be able to use the Brownie Point system to gain aid and assistance from the organization.

However, the key to the whole thing is the "Follower" disadvantage. The character is Subject to Orders. This means that he has to do what the agency says or suffer the consequences.

And unless you want to give the characters points for free, you should, once every few episodes, remind them that they are agents. Have the agency issue the occasional aggravating, insulting or downright stupid order. This shouldn't be merely an order sending them into danger — the players like that. It should be an administrative decision based on the agents' reports, a decision which is sure, in the players' minds, to lead to bad results.

The characters can disobey this order — and take the consequences — but they can't change the agency's mind. That's part of being an agent in this game.

Of course, there are several flavors of "Follower," each defining a more dictatorial organization. The "Minor Consequences" level is relatively easy-going. When the character gets out of line or disobeys orders, the agency will penalize him in salary or material goods — or even fire him, forcing the player to "retire" (as described later in this column).

The "Major Consequences" level indicates a strong set of rules, standards, and chain of command. The agency will occasionally cause real grief to a member who fails to do things in the approved manner.

Punishments, in addition to firing and criminal prosecution, include dreary assignments (protecting Antarctic outposts, for instance) and even cruel personal punishment — such as allowing harm to befall the character's DNPC or turning the character's loved one against him. Another approach reflects some results of, for instance, the British Official Secrets Act: They lock you away forever if you talk about what you did, give you a secret trial where you are judged by your superiors, then they throw you in a cell with no key and no appeal. If the character doesn't escape and enter a new line of business, he's retired.

The "Death" level, of course, is the standard for evil agencies. Most player-characters won't belong to agencies at this level of tyranny. If they do, and are not wholly conscienceless, they'll eventually disobey an order and have either to flee or be killed.



## LESSER DISADVANTAGES OF PACKAGE DEALS

There are two other disadvantages associated with Package Deals: Characteristic Minimums and Package Bonuses.

The idea of Package Bonuses is pretty well covered in DI... but some GMs have a problem with Statistic Minimums.

The point value of such Stat Mins is pretty straightforward — however, what happens when one takes more than one package with overlapping Stat Mins? For instance, a character takes two Packages, which require:

PACKAGE #1	PACKAGE #2
STR 13, CON 12, PRE 11	DEX 11, INT 13, COM 14

Value: 2 points      Value: 2 points

Don't just add the Characteristic Minimum point-values of the two package bonuses. Instead, put the two Characteristic Minimum requirements together into one, single requirement:

CHA	Requirement	Point Cost
STR	13	3
DEX	11	3
CON	12	4
INT	13	3
PRE	11	1
COM	14	2

The point cost for all those Characteristics is 16. As the DI Package Bonus rules describe, take this, divide by 5: The result is 3. Therefore, this combined Characteristic Minimums package should bring the character 3 points — not 4.

## RETIRED AGENTS

What if a character used to be a member of an organization, but is now an independent?

This is permissible, but is expensive. The character then buys all the skills required by the Package Deal. He does not have to buy the minimum characteristics required by the package. He does not get the Package Bonus, and he takes only the following Disadvantages:

---

Follower: Major	
Consequences	2 pts.
Watched, 8-	1 pt.

---

The Follower disadvantage reflects the fact that the character must still observe state secrets or be subject to prosecution. It also reflects the situation where the country, in a time of national emergency, calls the player-character out of retirement for an incredibly important (and dangerous) mission — a common spy-movie event.

The Watched disadvantage is taken only at a 1-point level, regardless of the agency's actual size: The only ones really Watching the characters are agents routinely assigned to keep tabs of ex-agents, and the only thing they concern themselves with is the character keeping agency secrets secret.

A character would not have to buy those disadvantages if his former organization was wholly destroyed — for example, Hitler's S.S.

If a player wants to create a character who has retired, he may — but a beginning character may not be retired from *two* agencies unless he takes the Age: 40 disadvantage,

and cannot be retired from three unless he takes the Age: 60 disadvantage.

A character who retires (or is fired) during the course of the campaign must buy off his agency disadvantages (except for the two shown above, which he keeps).

That's all for package deals for the time being. All you need to do for effective package use is: Keep control of all the packages yourself, and occasionally remind the characters that someone else signs their paychecks. It'll help the agency campaign keep its agency flavor.



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# THE HERO SYSTEM™



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## BETWEEN THE LINES

BY W.D. ROBINSON

(1) I have a player who wants to build a shield that will return with a boomerang effect when thrown. How do I work that?

Chris Crawford  
Iowa City, IA

*Either (a) have an Ultra Multipower with Defenses and a Ranged attack, (b) simply throw the shield for STR damage and buy Telekinesis to bring it back, or (c) use one skill level to have the focus bounce off the opponent and come back.*

(2) At night, a person's Perception Roll is -1 per 1" if he has normal vision. Does the character's attack become -1 per 1" at night if the character has normal vision?

Brian Specht  
Rochester, NY

No.

(3) Could the Superleap falling damage reduction dice be used as an attack? For example, Re-

bound has STR 40 and 8x Superleap which allows him to subtract 32d6 falling damage. Rebound and Slayer are fighting it out and Rebound is knocked onto his back. Slayer punches on him and Rebound plants both feet on Slayer and kicks him with the full power of his Superleap. Does Rebound do 32d6 or 12d6 for a kick?

Todd Hawkins  
Black Diamond, WA

*Nope, ol' Rebound only gets 12d6 for a kick.*

(4) What do you do about characters with between 200 and 350 points of Disadvantages? It's hard to use Disadvantages against a character when there are so many.

Greg Linden  
Palo Alto, CA

*Kill them. Retire them. Force them to collapse upon themselves from the point density. In other words, use the Disadvantages against the characters, regardless of how hard it is, until they're as impossible to play as they should be. Do you have a campaign? I should think you could base it on a couple of these*

characters — you know, “Do-Gooders Hunted by the Universe, 14-.” It could make life exciting — for about five minutes.

(5) Can a character teleport part of a villain's body?

Tim Craft  
Chatsworth, CA

*No. Uh-uh. Absolutely not! How un-heroic. If you must do this, try building it as a killing attack with disgusting special effects — for instance, as per the “Pathfinder” character in **Organizations Book III**.*

(6) When does a character become unStunned?

Sheldon Price  
Newton, MA

*On his next action phase.*

(7) Would Mental Illusions work on a blind character?

Michael George  
Amherst, NY

*Sure — blind characters have minds, don't they? But they would only perceive the illusions with the senses they possessed.*

(8) If a character buys Faster Than Light travel, must he also purchase Life Support to exist in space?

Frank Kocourek  
Chicago, IL

*Either that or be really fast between planets.*

(9) Is there anything wrong with a character having wings and buying Flight without the “OAF—Wings” limitation?

*No, not at all. The character's wings are simply not susceptible to fouling or interference — they are not easily disabled.*

(10) Can I memorize a hex inside a vehicle and teleport there no matter where the vehicle goes as long as I'm in range?

Paul Madory  
Poughkeepsie, NY

*Sure. For your character's sake, I hope the relative velocities are similar, or he's going to be absorbing a whole lot of energy in the transfer — in other words, whenever he does this, he sustains a “Vehicle Collision” attack based on the difference in velocities and the vehicle's mass, as per **Champions II**.*

(11) END cost for multipower abilities is based on the slot cost, not the active points in the slot, right?

Chris Sande  
Alexandria, VA

*Nope. END cost for any END-burning power is figured from the active points.*

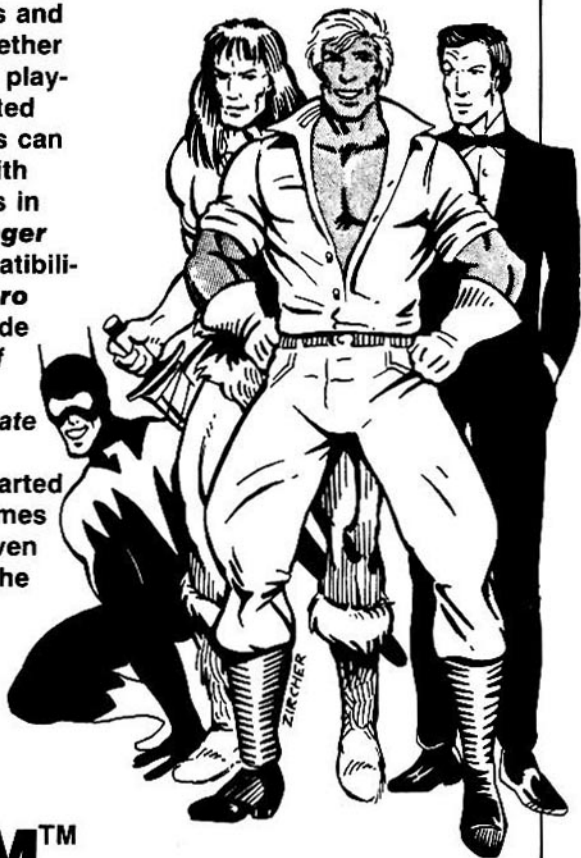
(12) What is a “Villain Bonus”? How does it work? Can characters get a “Hero Bonus”?

*In terms of villains, the bonus is a way to fudge — that is, a way to balance NPCs. Realistically, you can't build a world-conquering mega-villain only on starting points and Disadvantages — he'd be a wreck. As for player-characters, they do get a “Hero Bonus” — they acquire it gradually, and it's better known by the name “Experience.”*

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## THE HERO SYSTEM™

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# THE WOLFHOUNDS OF THE NOLDOR

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New canine NPC's for your MERP adventures. ©1987 Tolkien Enterprises.

by Jorge Quinonez

The wolf-hounds (Q. Haudraug) were originally bred in Valinor by Orome, Vala of the Hunt and Forests, to hunt the monsters of Melkor. After the Noldor made the great journey to Aman, a few of the Elves, (e.g. Celegorm) became friends of Orome, and accompanied him on his hunts to his woods in southern Valinor. Out of friendship, Orome gave his Noldo hunting companions hounds from the group he used on his hunts. When the Noldor left Aman to pursue Morgoth to Middle-earth, some of their Hyedraug followed them into exile. During the Wars of Beleriand, these wolf-hounds were mainly used to protect the Elves against the wolves of Morgoth.

After the banishment of the Noldor was lifted at the end of the First Age, when most of the exiles were allowed to return to the West, the remaining Noldor in Middle-earth continued to breed the wolf-hounds from the original stock they had brought from Valinor. To their surprise, the offspring of the Valinorian-born hounds neither had the in-born resistances to wizardry, illnesses and the elements, nor the stamina and endurance of their sires. The Valinorian-born Hyedraug

(Noble Hyedraug) were immortal, as their Elven masters. Their offspring (Lesser Hyedraug) became mortal, inheriting the mortal nature of the Kelvar of Middle-earth.

From the time they came to Endor, the Valinorian-born Noble Hyedraug were doomed as a race: as long as they remained in Middle-earth their descendants would be mortal. The few that remain live in Forlindon (North Lindon, the stretch of land north of the gulf of Lhun and west of the Blue Mountains), a Noldo realm, with their Elf-lord masters.

Since they were bred by a Vala to hunt and fight the monsters of Morgoth, Noble Hyedraug are extremely powerful adversaries (as reflected by their high level, hits, and OB). They're nearly immune to damage and magic (as reflected by their Power Level, which is over twice their normal level; and their high AT and DB). They stand 5 feet at the shoulder (and large enough to carry an Elf!) and weigh several hundred pounds. They are infallible trackers (+150 Track), and when need be, they will follow their quarry to the ends of the Arda.

Noble Hyedraug are good beings



and loyal to their masters as long as they remain righteous and incorrupt. If their masters perform an "evil" act, they will abandon them and adopt a new master. Orome gave them the gift of speech (a maximum of three words a day or so).

Note: Noble Hyedraug, like the Great Eagles, should be employed with caution. If mishandled, a single Noble Haudraug can upset the balance of an adventure. They can, however, be a useful tool for relaying brief but crucial messages to the PC's.

After the First Age, the Elves began to use a more common breed, the Lesser Hyedraug. These were bred from the immortal Noble Hyedraug. They are smaller, growing to 3 feet at the shoulder and weighing 150 pounds full grown. Found only west of the River Lhun, they are mainly used by Elven hunters, but on occasion one might find one with a Dunadan Ranger.

Lesser Hyedraug are not as intelligent as their Noble kin, but are

still excellent hunting, or adventuring companions. Superb trackers (+100 Track), they can very easily defeat a wolf in combat. They can even be trained and used if obtained while still young. Lesser Hyedraug are sold by a few Elves in Lindon, but they tend to be prohibitively expensive except when purchased by Elves or the Dunedain. Adventuring with them is about twice as expensive as maintaining a horse (because of their taste for meat); but considering the help they can provide, the costs are well worth the trouble.

## HUAN

Huan is the legendary hound of the First Age. A Noble Haudraug of the highest order, he is well known for his crucial role in the Quest of the Silmaril. The Vala Orome gave him to Celegorm, son of Feanor, and Huan went with his master to Middle-earth. He later abandoned his master after Celegorm tried to



kill Beren. Huan's love for Luthien led him into many adventures. He killed Draugluin, a were wolf lord, and defeated Sauron (who fought him in wolf form). Later, Huan slew Carcharoth, the Wolf of Morgoth, although the Hound of Valinor perished in the battle.

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#### HAUDRAUG STATISTICS

Type	Lvl	#/ Encoun	Size	Speed	Hits	AT	DB	(Primary/ Secondary) Attack
Noble	25(60)	1	H	VF	300	PL/12	110	160HBI/130HC1
Notes: Valinorian breed. Use Large Creature Criticals.								
Lesser	12	1-8	L	VF	180	SL/10	75	110LBI/90LC1
Notes: Middle-earth breed.								

SYSTEM NOTE: Level designations: The number in parenthesis is the Power Level, used mainly for the purpose of Resistance Rolls and as a gauge of internal strength, rather than as a working level for calculations of skills, combat bonuses, etc.

#### NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Primary OB	2ndary OB	Mov M	Notes
Huan	43(90)	433	PL/20	133	233HBI	192HC1	45	Noble Draughuan.

# ROBOT WARRIORS

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# THE LASER'S EDGE

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## Pulse Laser

The latest in high-energy handheld weaponry, the pulse-laser operates on the same basic principle as regular laser weapons, but combines this with an incredibly rapid firing 'burst'. Although the result appears as a single strike, each shot is actually several dozen hyperpulses, greatly enhancing range and penetration. The Pulse-laser operates on a standard pistol power pack, is used as a pistol, but strikes as a Mk. III laser with additional bonuses to hit (see chart below). It is not *not* treated as a 'burst' weapon.

Because of the newness of the technology, the Pulse laser is relatively expensive, and all repair maneuvers are at -30.

## Tactical Scanner

A much simpler version of the standard Multiscanner, the tactical scanner is the preferred tool by many military services. Multi-

scanner skill is still used, but all rolls are at +50 due to the simplicity of the unit. Success indicates an accurate scan within the unit's range. The Tactical Scanner has drawbacks, however: standard range is only 30 meters (360° scan) and the scanner only detects in two modes: motion and infrared. While capable of detecting in a vertical range 10 meters up and down, most users set the scanner for a more limited vertical field. It does not distinguish lifeforms, power sources, or perform any sort of analysis. It is strictly a tactical information tool; size of all objects is approximate. The Scanner is able to penetrate most normal physical objects (walls, bulkheads) and force fields, though the GM may wish to include a difficulty subtraction when trying to read through a number of obstacles. The Scanner uses two standard energy cells.

An unmodified 01-02 (as usual) indicates instrument failure—roll



1D10 for charge depletion or malfunction: 1-7 energy charge depleted; 8-9 equipment malfunction; 10 equipment fumbled and dropped. In appearance the scanner is a

small unit, about 5 x 10 x 15 cm, with one large face devoted to the luminous blue gridded display. The scanner normally sells for 250 monits.

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#### PULSE LASER

Type	Rate	Failure	Range/Modifer		MR	LR
			PB	SR		
1-H Energy	2/rnd	7	1/+ 25	50/+ 15	100/+ 0	200/-50
Table Used		AT Mod	Cost	Special		
Laser Mk III		(none)	350	* (see Tech Law page 54)		

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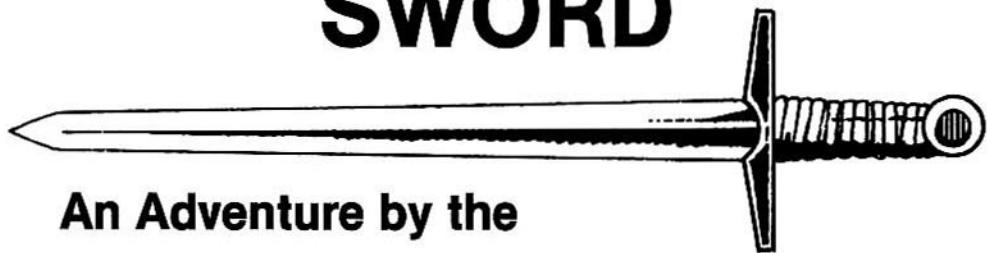
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# THE STOLEN SWORD



## An Adventure by the Annuduin River for MERP

By Jessica M. Ney

---

**Setting:** The banks of the Annuduin River in T.A. 1640. A trade route between the Naugrim of the Ered Luin and the Great Houses of Arthedain follows the strong, swift current.

**Requirements:** A bold, aggressive band of adventurers eager for a fight and the chance to travel in the wilderlands.

**Aids:** A strong sword arm and knowledge of the lands and lore of the northwestern frontier of Arthedain.

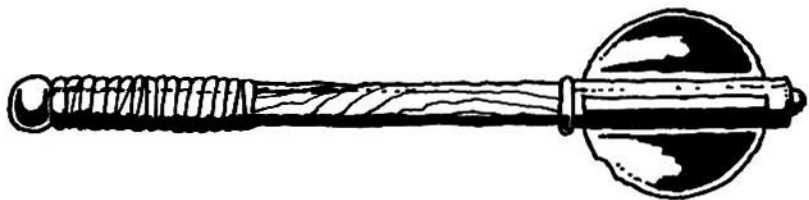
**Reward:** 100 - 200 silver pieces plus any loot not immediately identifiable as the property of either the Dwarf-lord Fain Longspear or the Knight Merle Noirins.

### THE TALE

Merle Noirins, a Royal Knight pledged to King Argeleb II, commissioned a mithril broadsword from the Dwarf-lord Fain Longspear thirteen months ago. He

desired the blade to possess great sharpness and to be of special strength against traitors to the King. Merle fears an uprising incited by the power-hungry House of Eketta, and wishes to be well prepared to defend the royal throne to which he remains ever faithful.

Fain Longspear researched for three months and three days the magical runes necessary to endow the blade with such powers. Another six months of labor in the forge were required to transfer ingots of mithril alloy into the completed weapon. After testing the blade on granite for strength and on silk for sharpness, he gave it a secret name in the Khuzdul and a less private one, Galadgrist, in Sindarin. He sheathed it in a red leather scabbard and entrusted it to Caravanmaster Haldor for the journey to Thoronbar, the fortress home of the Royal Knight. Neither caravan nor blade ever arrived.



Merle desires the recovery and safe delivery of Galadgrist, as well as the extermination of the band of outlaws whom he suspects must be responsible for its theft. This is not the first trading caravan to disappear between the borders of declining Arthedain and the rugged mountain slopes below the Naugrim caverns.

### THE ENEMY

Brus Redbeard was exiled at age sixteen from his native village when he killed Daine Fierson, son of the local mayor. The event occurred during a bout of fist-cuffs that turned suddenly ugly when a knife appeared in Daine's hands. This circumstance and Brus' youth kept the hangman's noose at bay, but he was forever banished from the lands of Arthedain. His sweetheart, Margotta Brunsdotter, sister to his late opponent, went with him when he left. They jumped over his sword to seal their commitment to one another, since no priest would perform a marriage ceremony. After journeying for many days and many leagues, the couple founded a homestead in the northwestern wilds.

Brus and Margotta prospered, but no children blessed their union. Eventually they took in a dark-haired waif named Jule Julson. The eight year old boy boasted of illustrious parentage, but no trace

of his heroic father was ever found. Nor was Jule able to recall the events that left him abandoned in the frontier lands. The couple raised him as their own son. Ironically, Margotta gave birth to an infant girl, Brigida, three years later.

Recently, however, hard times have come to Wildbriar Farm. A forest fire consumed the barn and the house. Raiders poured through as the flames died, removing the few articles of value that had survived the blaze. Brus Redbeard has become a desperate man, fighting to support his wife and child with the help of half-grown Jule. The two of them pillaged the remains of a ransacked caravan (also hit by the raiders), and found the blade Galadgrist hidden among the food stores, their primary target.

### THE TASK

Merle Noirins and Fain Longspear intend to sponsor a party of tough adventurers to recover the sword Galadgrist and to eradicate the menace to the Annuduin trade route. For Galadgrist they offer 100 silver pieces; for each dead bandit, 15 silver pieces, to a maximum of 200 silver pieces total.

Since the outlaws who broke the caravan are a roving band of wanderers unlikely to terrorize the same locality more than once, the successful performance of the tasks will involve persuading Brus

Redbeard to part with Galadgrist through force, charm of manner, a trade involving a blade of equal quality, or (perhaps) a sum of silver; and inducing him to abandon outlawry. Killing or maiming him removes him permanently from the ranks of the unlawful, but other options include showing a viable alternative to support his family or, perhaps, providing the manpower necessary to rebuild his homestead and replant his fields.

The adventurers' first encounter with Brus and Jule is likely to be a violent one, and force may be the only solution. Should they subdue the desperate pair without slaughtering them, or should they first meet the gentle Margotta while skulking unnoticed through the countryside, persuasive argument has a good chance of success. Brus is not by nature cruel or bloodthirsty, while Margotta possesses an abundance of kind common sense.



Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	RM	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee	Missile	MM
			AT					OB	OB	
Brus Redbeard	8	114	RL (10)	55	Y10	A/L	140bs	95lb	5	
Notes: Warrior. +10 leather breastplate, +5 longbow, +30 broadsword (Galadgrist) that is +50 vs. traitors to the king of Arthedain and amputates the applicable limb of its wielder's opponent on E criticals.										
Jule Julson	6	65	RL (10)	50	Y5	A/L	90bs	75lb	20	
Notes: Scout. +5 leather breastplate, +5 longbow, +5 broadsword, X2 ring. 24 PP (2 x 6 x 2), knows Essence Perceptions to level 5. 19 years old. Jule regards Brus as his true father, and aids him without hesitation in the struggle to support a family in the wilds.										
Margotta										
Brunsdotter	4	45	NO (1)	30	N	—	45lk	50sl	25	
Notes: Animist. +15 long knife, +20 sling, X3 earring. 24 PP (2 x 4 x 3), knows Calm Spirits, Direct Channeling, Animal Mastery, Bone/Muscle Ways, Blood Ways, and Purification to level 4. Margotta will usually try friendly diplomacy first when greeting strangers, but will fight if attacked.										
Brigida	1	30	NO (1)	20	N	L	45lk	60sl	30	
Notes: Scout. +15 long knife, +20 sling. Even an eight year old girl, if she grows up in the wilderlands, knows something of self defense. Brigida's usual strategy starts with fleeing and hiding, followed by the use of her sling from concealment.										

NOTE: bs = broadsword; lb = longbow; lk = long knife; sl = sling.

NOTE: Lvl = level; Hits = hit points; AT = MERP armor type (NO = no armor, RL = rigid leather); RM AT = Rolemaster armor type; DB = defensive bonus; Sh = shield (Y10 = yes, +10); Gr = greaves (A = arm greaves, L = leg greaves); Melee OB = melee offensive bonus; Missile OB = missile offensive; MM = movement and maneuver bonus.



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