

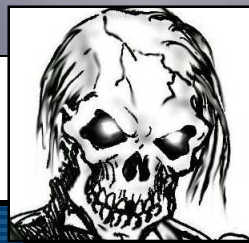
DIGITAL HERO

#15

Nov 2003



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Issue #15 (November 2003)



When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

Let's take a look at monsters... for various genres! Hero's got two books coming out over the next month or so, and they both focus on monsters in some respects.

MONSTERS, MINIONS, AND MARAUDERS

In the first case, it's obvious from the title: *Monsters, Minions, And Marauders*, our second supplement for *Fantasy Hero*. "MMM" contains over 100 monsters and opponents for use with any *Fantasy Hero* game. Unlike *The HERO System Bestiary*, MMM focuses largely on humanoid monsters such as orcs, trolls, giants, ogres, cat-folk, nymphs, and the like – but it has a few more "bestial" monsters that I've uncovered since I wrote the HSB.

Most of the monsters in MMM are easily recognized standards of Fantasy gaming, but you'll also find some more unusual creatures – monsters that feed on dreams or mental energy, horrors from the Qliphothic dimensions, and the like. Additionally, many of the monsters come from non-European cultures, such as the cipacltl (Aztec), delgeth (Navajo), erqigdlit (Inuit), and shedu (Assyro-Babylonian).

To give you some examples of how to customize "generic" monster writeups for your own game, we've got text and sidebars throughout the book with descriptions of specific, individualized monsters of the type on the same page. For example, along with the *Dark Elf* monster sheet, there's information about Hraynul Shadowstep, a dark elven ranger who patrols the caverns near his home city. It tells you how to customize the Dark Elf sheet to create Hraynul, and describes the gear and enchanted items he carries, his personality and combat tactics, and other useful information. These NPCs are all from Hero's *Turakian Age* setting, but you can easily adapt them to your own games.

In addition to the monsters which form the bulk of this book, MMM has several Appendices of useful material. The first contains templates for humans and humanoid monsters (such as orcs, goblins, and trolls); examples include Barbarian, Chieftain, and Shaman. Like the templates in *The HERO System Bestiary*, you can apply them to any appropriate monster to make him more powerful or interesting.

The second appendix contains some "generic" human adversaries – city guards, soldiers, pirates, and so forth. You can use these as stock enemies and NPCs for your heroes to encounter, or customize them with templates and other changes to make "named" adversaries out

of them. The final appendix is an alphabetical summary chart of all the monsters in this book, plus other useful reference tables.

ALIEN WARS

The monsters in our second November book are the Xenovores, the evil aliens trying to conquer (and eat) Humanity during the twenty-fourth century conflict depicted in *Alien Wars*, our third supplement for *Star Hero*. "AW" is a Military Science Fiction setting, with an emphasis on battles, military technology, and similar subjects.

Chapter One, *A Century Of Conflict: A History Of The Alien Wars*, details the history of the 2300s as they occurred in the Hero Universe. After setting the stage for the war by reviewing the major events of the 2200s, it describes the initial invasion, Humanity's response, and the subsequent Xenovore offensives and Human counter-offensives. But the history leaves plenty of room for you to fit your own characters, adventures, and battles into the tapestry of the war.

Chapter Two, *Species Of Terran Space*, describes several alien species living within the Human sphere of influence whom players might choose for their characters. Since Military Science Fiction usually focuses exclusively (or nearly so) on Humans, there aren't many species described here... but that's enough to spice up the PC mix, and of course you can always adapt species from the *Terran Empire* setting book if appropriate.

Chapter Three, *United Earth And Beyond*, describes the worlds and governments of Human space. While Humanity in this time period only holds sway over space within about 5,000 light-years of Sol, that still leaves plenty of planets and unknown territory for the characters to explore... or fight battles in.

Chapter Four, *Life In A Time Of War: Human Society*, tells you what life is like in the twenty-fourth century. It covers such topics as travel, trade, communications, and crime, with information on how the Xenovore Wars affect things.

Chapter Five, *Sword And Shield: The United Earth Military*, reviews the UE Army and Navy during the century, beginning with their initial unpreparedness and incompetence and progressing through the years as they learn how to fight the enemy, develop new ships and technologies, and eventually strike back. It discusses military organization, tactics, subdivisions, and other relevant subjects.

artwork by Eric Lofgren

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Chapter Six, *Pilot, Adept, Soldier, Spy: Character Creation*, has approximately 30 Package Deals appropriate to the setting and period, ranging from civilians (pirates, traders, technicians) to all sorts of Army and Navy personnel. It also includes notes on special applications for Skills, Perks, and other game elements.

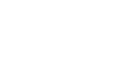
Chapter Seven, *The United Earth Armory*, describes the Human technology of the period, ranging from the relatively primitive tech of the early 2300s (slugthrowers, spin-induced artificial gravity) to the more advanced laser weapons, Thibault gravity plating, and other devices invented to help Humanity fight the Xenovores.

Chapter Eight, *The Threat From Beyond: The Xenovores*, describes Humanity's enemy from the *player characters' perspective*. It provides you with the information the PCs would know, organized by time period to reflect the fact that Humans learn more about Xenovores as the war progresses. The GM should tell his players which sections of this chapter they're allowed to read.

Chapters Nine through Eleven are the GM's section of the book, written for his eyes only. Chapter Nine is *The GM's Vault*, which contains a few tidbits of secret information about the universe of the Xenovore Wars that were deliberately omitted from earlier, player-oriented, chapters. Chapter Ten, *The Xenovores*, presents the full information about the alien invaders for the GM. It discusses their history and society in broad detail. Chapter Eleven, *Stories Of Battle: Alien Wars Campaigns*, provides the GM with some advice about running a *Star Hero* campaign in the *Alien Wars* setting. It includes suggested campaign types (with plot seeds for each) and a general discussion of how to run Military Science Fiction games. My initial plans to write a large appendix on Military SF in the *HERO System* in general had to be abandoned due to lack of space, but hopefully there'll be enough interest in the subject that we can devote a whole book to it at some point.

– Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer





HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

Broken-Down DEX

Variant Rules for Dexterity

Dexterity, according to the rulebook, “represents a character’s agility and reaction time [and] accuracy[.]” As such, it’s extremely important for just about every character and character conception, so most PCs and NPCs spend at least a few points on it despite the fact that it’s the most expensive Primary Characteristic – 3 Character Points per point. In fact, it’s so useful that many characters buy high DEXs even when that doesn’t fit their conception particularly well.

Since DEX provides so many benefits – CV, Skill Rolls, initiative, SPD, and the like – one way to customize characters a little more, and hopefully to prevent them from buying a high DEX just for the sake of the game-related benefits they obtain, is to divide DEX into *three* Primary Characteristics instead of one. These “new” Characteristics are:

- ✂ Accuracy
- ✂ Agility
- ✂ Reaction

Each of these “DEX Characteristics” costs 1 Character Point per point (but see *Game Balance Considerations* for more discussion).

Accuracy (ACC) represents a character’s eye-hand coordination and general ability to attack accurately. It’s used to calculate a character’s Combat Value – CV equals the character’s ACC divided by 3.

Agility (AGI) represents a character’s general nimbleness, adroitness, and dexterousness. It’s the basis for the character’s “DEX Roll” (ACC and REA do not normally have a Characteristic Roll) and for most DEX-Based Skills (aptly named “Agility Skills”).

Reaction (REA) represents a character’s reaction time and related attributes. It’s the basis for a character’s initiative (when his Phase occurs in a Segment, and whether he goes before or after someone else).

SPEED

Using these DEX Characteristics means changing some of the rules for things related to DEX, such as SPD. You have several options for SPD. In all cases, the special rounding rules for SPD apply – you always round down.

First, you can calculate SPD as $(1 + ((ACC + AGI + REA)/30))$. In other words, add ACC, AGI, and REA together, divide by 30, and add 1 to the result. Since the total cost of ACC, AGI, and REA is in theory at least close to the cost of DEX, this should derive a SPD roughly the same as what you’d get using the standard DEX rules.

Second, since INT is supposed to represent (at least in part) a character’s ability to react to unusual or dangerous circumstances, you could work it into the mix. Now SPD becomes $(1 + ((ACC + AGI + REA + INT)/40))$.

Third, since REA is supposed to represent reaction time and initiative in combat, you can use it alone to calculate SPD: $(1 + (REA/10))$. However, because REA is much cheaper than DEX, this tends to create “SPD inflation,” so the GM needs to pay close attention to characters’ SPDs, and perhaps even change the calculation (to, for example, REA/20 or REA/30) to maintain game balance.

SKILLS

Here’s how the DEX-Based Skills break down in the new system:

Skill	Characteristic
Acrobatics	Agility
Breakfall	Agility
Climbing	Agility
Combat Driving	Agility
Combat Piloting	Agility
Contortionist	Agility
Fast Draw	Reaction
Lockpicking	Agility
Riding	Agility
Sleight Of Hand	Agility
Stealth	Agility
Teamwork	Reaction

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GAME BALANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Keeping the costs of the DEX Characteristics at 1 Character Point per point each in theory results in characters spending as much on these three Characteristics as they tend to spend on DEX. But theory doesn't always work in practice, so this may cause problems. First of all, if you want to prevent "DEX abuse," this may not do the trick; characters can end up with the same "DEX" as they would otherwise have by buying all of the DEX Characteristics to the same level. ACC 20, AGI 20, and REA 20 costs 30 Character Points in total, just like DEX 20.

Second, you may find players "min-maxing" their characters by buying one or two of the DEX Characteristics to high levels. For example, with ACC costing only 1 Character Point per point, a base CV 10 only costs 20 Character Points. This could unbalance some campaigns (though since all characters have the same ability to buy high CVs, it's just as likely simply to increase CVs across the board, leading to no significant balance changes in many games).

Correcting or compensating for these problems is usually just a matter of changing the costs of the DEX Characteristics. For example, if you change them all to 2 Character Points per point, min-maxing becomes less attractive, and "DEX abuse" across the board becomes twice as expensive. Alternately, you could weight them depending on what you think is most important or useful in your campaign. For example, maybe ACC is 2 Character Points per point, AGI is 1 Character Point per point, and REA is 3 Character Points per point (thus allowing SPD to be $1 + \text{REA}/10$ and provide the same results as DEX). If you like to alter character standards based on archetype, you could vary the cost that way as well – perhaps speedsters and rogues pay only 1 Character Point per point for all of the DEX Characteristics, bricks and warriors pay 3 Character Points per point for all of them, and all other characters pay 2 Character Points per point each.



WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

I would like to personally thank *Digital Hero* reader Daniel Dickson for pointing me in the direction of Pharaoh Hatshepsut, yet another of history's great neglected heroines. Once again, gentle readers, I ask you to have patience with me as we untie the royal barge of imagination from the solid dock of accuracy so that we might better navigate the Nile of roleplaying, stopping off in the fabled lands of What If and Wouldn't It Be Cool. As usual, I have taken quite a few literary and factual liberties with this fascinating historical character who, at one point, may very well have been the single most powerful person in the Western World. Enjoy.



You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

"Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards" - Kierkegaard

The small fleet of seven ships rowed quietly through the still night, a bright and watchful moon staring down upon their labors like the face like a chubby, cheerful midwife. With the winds still and silent, each ship surged forward under the power of thirty skilled rowers, powerful yet thin fellows whose arms moved back and forth with that casual grace which can only be produced by those who are thoroughly confident in their work. They needed no drum nor taskmaster; each ship's captain had only to glance periodically down the length of his narrow, arrow-like vessel to make certain that everyone was performing their duties. Perhaps the gaunt, silent figures had been practicing their art for so long that it was no longer a task at all, but a meditation. A prayer.

Up front on the lead boat, a bald, well-muscled man in an ornate kilt leaned casually against the ship's narrow mast. He gazed impartially about in every possible direction: down at the nearby shoreline, out to the seemingly infinite sea, upwards at the even more unlimited sky where only the gods dwelt. Beside him an indescribably lovely woman sat stiffly upon an equally startling throne made of sandalwood, ivory, and gold. She always seemed to stare straight ahead. The two were like a pair of uneven bookends, a study in contrasts: the man bulky, hairless, and almost naked save for his decorative cloth sari. The woman, on the other hand, was slim, impeccably coifed, and dressed in the most ornate clothing imaginable for an Egyptian noble: the shendyt kilt, the nemes headdress with its uraeus, and a khat headcloth. She even had an insanely long false beard strapped to her dainty chin. It was made of camel hair woven with gold and silver thread.

The woman glowed a bit, which seemed to make her ship's crew a bit nervous but didn't appear to bother her companion in the slightest. One could gather from his calm expression that very few things made him nervous – or even frightened. Every so often, he would lean over to his stern counterpart,

point to the sky, and whisper something briefly into her dainty ear.

"That constellation, my Pharaoh, is known as The Cat," he murmured quietly, "while we call that one The Scorpion. They hunt one another across the night eternally, each seeking to best the other for the pleasure of the gods. There are many, many patterns in the sky, placed there by your father Amun-Ra when the world was shaped to help guide men in their daily tasks. This is why the oracle of your father sleeps through his days; so that he might spend his nights pouring over ancient scrolls atop his ziggurat, watching the ocean of stars spin above...."

"The oracle of my father Amun-Ra, blessed be his name, sleeps during the day because he spends his nights drinking the fermented juice of tamarin fruits and chasing naked teenaged slave girls up and down his ziggurat," she retorted, "he only sobers up when the lookouts that he has rather wisely posted along hilltops nearby spot the royal entourage winding its way into the valley my grandfather gave him. How the old drunken fraud figured out that drought was coming, I'll never know, but he's made the most out of it ever since. The only reason he sent us on this 'sacred expedition' is that my regular visits – just to get our holy and sacred money's worth, you understand – has been getting in the way of the constant frolics which constitute his oracular duties."

The large man chuckled deeply.

"Then why go?"

"Because," she responded, a somehow charming sneer winding its way across her lovely, somewhat phosphorescent cheek, "eight years of ruling the Kingdom of Upper and Lower Egypt has left even me, the daughter of a god, bored, tired, and cynical. They say that Punt isn't boring or stressful or even especially dangerous, so I'm all for a vacation in Punt. Yea Punt! Plus, from the time he was old enough to take himself to the royal latrine, my idiot nephew Thutmose has been freakishly eager to rule the nation... so I've let him. Three winter months isn't enough time for him to invade Palestine, pull off an insurrection, or impregnate every

serving girl in the palace, so I figure it's safe enough. Maybe a taste of responsibility will sour his appetite for conquest."

"Perhaps, my goddess, but it's a gamble. What if a taste of conquest merely whets his appetite for responsibility?"

"I'm not sure that actually makes sense, Senmut, but it at least sounds profound so I'll respond in kind: then, at some point in the distant future, Egypt gets a better ruler than it would have otherwise. What about you, royal courtier, what's your reason for taking a break from your eternal building and going on sabbatical? Aren't there sphinxes to erect out in a deserted valley somewhere or the other?"

Senmut stiffened, frowning slightly.

"It is my duty to serve my Queen Hatshepsut, goddess and Pharaoh, wherever she may go, even if I have to row the royal barge myself...."

Hatshepsut snorted.

"It wouldn't exactly be the first time you rowed the royal barge, my noble architect, now would it?"

To a man the ship's crew all stared studiously off into the night in an incredible imitation of a sudden, contagious outbreak of mass deaf-mutenedness, hoping that they wouldn't be put to the sword for overhearing anything that they couldn't help but overhear. Senmut smiled gaily.

"Well, it's a rugged job only suitable for an equally rugged man, my Queen, but even the noblest of ships have to be taken out to sea every now and again. Plus, who better to help you retrieve the treasures of Punt than myself – noted scholar, soldier, architect, and conversationalist. There are prodigious amounts of pygmies, giraffes, and unicorns to be tracked down and imported...."

"And cinnamon wood, myrrh, pure ivory, and khesyt," she interrupted.

"Not to mention apes, panther skins, cosmetics, ebony, and green gold," he finished

They smiled at one another. Then, seemingly on some sort of cue, grew quiet again, resuming their pre-conversational brooding. The evening's waves lapped soothingly against the ships' sides as the moon began to rise, huge and yellow, above an eastern sky filled with seemingly endless ocean.

Queen Hatshepsut was one of the very few women pharaohs to rule ancient Egypt. Though there had been female rulers of that venerable and mysterious land before her, Hatshepsut was a uniquely independent, intelligent, irreverent, and effective leader who combined a shrewd understanding of the intricacies of royal power with a widely successful cult of personality. During her reign, Hatshepsut accomplished what no woman before her ever had: she successfully ruled the most powerful, advanced civilization in the world for an unheard of period of almost twenty years.

Before she was born, Hatshepsut's mother Ahmose was visited by the great god Amun-Ra, Lord of the Hidden Sun, who appeared to her in the form of her husband Thutmose I. When the god drew near her, however, his unearthly scent betrayed his divine nature, so that when he took her to bed the Queen knew that she had not slept with her mortal husband. When he finally revealed himself to her as one of the most powerful of ancient Egypt's deities, both Ahmose and her husband felt blessed. The product of this divine union was Hatshepsut, the infamous transvestite woman-pharaoh of the ancient world.

The twenty-year rule of Hatshepsut was one of the most prosperous and peaceful in Egyptian history. A great deal of energy was put into rebuilding temples and other public buildings destroyed during previous conflicts with early Semitic peoples (known as Hyksos or "desert princes"). Trade with other nations was improved or expanded, allowing for a significant increase in the average Egyptian's standard of living. Although well liked by her people, Hatshepsut wasn't without her enemies. Many of the more traditional members of the priesthood resented her ascension to power, her obvious divine constitution, and (perhaps most of all) her irreverent, almost irreligious nature. As her reign went on, these powerful priests made common cause with her disgruntled nephew, Thutmose the Third, who feared that her demigod abilities, which seemingly included physical immortality, would prevent him from ever ascending to the throne of Egypt. Together they conspired to get rid of Hatshepsut, eventually casting a powerful spell with the help of a renegade Canaanite wizard which threw her from her own time into the 21st Century.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Hatshepsut's full name is composed of four parts. The first, her "standard" name, is "she who is rich, powerful through her 'ka's, her doubles." The second, read as *nebti* refers to the pharaoh's dominion over both East and West. The third is her "Horus" name, reading "The divine one in her risings." Finally, her name continues with two cartouches, the first reading *Kamara*, the "true double of Ra." The second cartouche has no holy meaning but instead reads her name given at birth, "Hatshepsut."

Thus her full name, as inscribed on her official "great seal," was: *The Horus, mighty by his Kas, the lord of East and West abounding in years, the good goddess, the pious lady, the golden falcon, divine in her rings, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Kamara, the daughter of Ra, Khnumit Amon, Hatshepsut.*"

Maat-ka-Ra Hatshepsut ("She")

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
25	CON	30	14-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
20	COM	5	13-	
				Total: 21 PD (13 rPD)
				Total: 36 ED (18 rED)
				Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
8	PD	6		
18	ED	13		
6	SPD	27		
9	REC	4		
50	END	0		
28	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 166

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
1	<i>Celestial Nature:</i> Life Support, Longevity: 200 Years	0
20	<i>Daughter of Amun-Ra (solar powers):</i> Elemental Control, 40-point Powers	—
13	1) <i>Divine Aura (creates a soft light):</i> Change Environment 8" radius, Reduced Endurance 0 END (+½), Persistent (+½); Always On (-½)	0
21	2) <i>Hathor's Shield:</i> Force Field (13 PD/18 ED/10 Flash Defense: Sight Group)	4
20	3) <i>Pharonic Resplendence:</i> Flash 2d6 (Sight Group), Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Reduced Endurance 0 END (+½), Damage Shield (+½), Offensive (+¼), Continuous (+1)	0

Perks

- 15 *Royal Wealth:* Money (Filthy Rich)
- 12 *Transvestite Pharaoh of Ancient Egypt:* Reputation (Large Group; 14-) +4/+4d6
- 33 *Ancient Egyptian State:* Contact (Access to Major Institutions, Very Useful Skills or Resources, Slavishly Loyal to Character, Organization) 14-
- 15 *Fringe Benefit:* Head of State, Member of the Aristocracy/Higher Nobility

Skills

- 3 Bureaucratics 14-
- 3 Conversation 14-
- 3 High Society 14-
- 3 KS: Ancient Egypt 13-
- 3 KS: The Ancient World 13-
- 2 Literate
- 3 Oratory 14-
- 5 Persuasion 15-
- 3 PS: Politician (INT-based) 13-
- 3 Seduction 14-
- 3 Tactics 13-

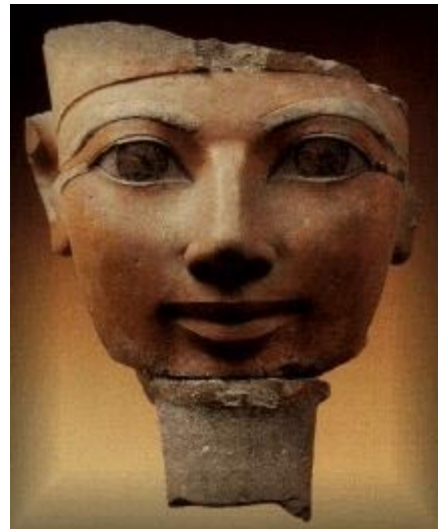
Total Powers & Skills Cost: 184

Total Cost: 350

200+ Disadvantages

- 10 *Distinctive Features:* Dressed as a Male Pharaoh but Obviously a Woman (Easily Concealed, Major Reaction)
- 15 *Hunted:* Thutmose III 14- (Less Pow, Watching, NCI, PC has a Public ID)
- 15 *Hunted:* Conservative Priests of Ancient Egypt 8- (Less Pow, Harshly Punish, NCI, PC has a Public ID)
- 15 *Psychological Limitation:* Ambitious (Common, Strong)
- 15 *Psychological Limitation:* "Control Freak" (Common, Strong)
- 15 *Psychological Limitation:* Irreverent and Irreligious (Common, Strong)
- 5 *Rivalry:* Professional (Thutmose III and Hatshepsut both wish to be Pharaoh, Rival is Less Powerful, Seek to Harm or Kill Rival, Rival Aware of Rivalry)
- 20 *Reputation:* Irreverent and Irreligious 14- (Extreme)
- 20 *Social Limitation:* Woman Pharaoh (Very Frequently, Major)
- 20 *Social Limitation:* Public Identity (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 350





Background/History: Maat-ka-Ra Hatshepsut, better known in 21st Century America as “She,” was born in the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes during the 18th Dynasty in 1524 BCE. The product of a bit of deific adultery between the Royal Queen-Sister Ahmose and the powerful god Amun-Ra, Lord of the Hidden Sun, Hatshepsut was raised by her loving step-father Thutmose the First to take an active role in the running of the newly reestablished Egyptian State, which had only risen from the ashes of Hyksos conquest due to the efforts of her grandfather Ahmose.

Though Hatshepsut had two brothers, Ouazmosou and Amenmosou, both died at a young age, leaving her half-brother Thutmose the Second in direct line for the throne. When Thutmose I died in 1509, the succeeding Pharaoh (Thutmose II) followed traditional customs and married the oldest daughter of his father, who in this happy case was Hatshepsut. Together the two ruled in what was technically a co-regency, although Thutmose II seems to have been in poor health, afflicted with a crippling skin disease, and therefore content to leave the reigns of power firmly in the hands of his bright, ambitious wife. This wasn’t a radical or unthinkable situation in ancient Egypt; Hatshepsut was preceded by a number of influential queens, Tetisheri, Ahhotep II, and Ahmose-Nefertary, who during the 17th Dynasty succeeded one another in the successful running of the government. This gave the Egyptian establishment an understanding that women rulers could provide stability and order.

Furthermore, the perception and position of women in Egypt at the time was markedly different from that of other ancient Mediterranean cultures. Egyptian women were allowed to own property, hold official positions, inherit from their parents or deceased husbands, and, in the case of a dispute, were entitled to take their case to court to defend their legal rights.

So, when Thutmose II died in 1504 leaving the infant Pharaoh Thutmose the Third (a love child by his somewhat more leprosy-tolerant mistress Isis) as a successor, his step-mother/aunt Hatshepsut was made regent until he came of age. Only Hatshepsut didn’t want to be regent; she wanted to be Pharaoh! A favorite daughter of a popular monarch, as well as a charismatic, beloved ruler in her own right, she sat down with her friend, confidant, lover, professional architect, and member of the court with 15 other titles Senmut to plan out a PR campaign amongst the Egyptian people. First, Hatshepsut gathered together a meeting of the most important leaders of Egypt’s various religious cults, where she certified her divine bloodline through a series of demonstrations: glowing softly, blinding them with bursts of light, and (as a direct result) having sword blows glance off of her holy person. With the priesthood convinced, or at least terrified into submission, she donned the clothing of a male Pharaoh down to the smallest detail before taking her show on the road to the common Egyptian people. For six months she rowed up and down the Nile river from Tanis to Edfu, giving out food, cash, and prizes while putting on a stupendous (if blinding) lightshow. When her tour was concluded, Hatshepsut declared herself Pharaoh as well as sole ruler of the Kingdom of Upper and Lower Egypt. Everyone was either too stunned or frightened to argue.

With the unpleasantness of a public relations campaign concluded, Hatshepsut got down to the business of ruling with a vengeance. Trade relations with the neighboring countries of Nubia, Kush, Libya, and Phoenicia were reopened or expanded. Temples destroyed or damaged by the Hyksos were rebuilt, while ambitious new construction projects were undertaken left and right: a massive three-tiered temple to Amun-Ra was constructed by the banks of the Nile, new sphinxes carved in Thebes, enormous red granite obelisks from Central Africa were raised at Abydos, and new (if small) pyramids were assembled at Giza to name but a few. In the eighth year of her reign as Pharaoh, Hatshepsut undertook a fantastic journey to the near-mythical land of Punt (modern day Somalia). To the ancient Egyptians, the land of Punt, with its distinctive beehive-shaped houses raised on stilts above water, its native pygmies, and its bizarre animals was the most exotic and mysterious of

HE SAID, “SHE” SAID

When I was six
my father Thutmose
the First
lifted me up to sit
beside him
on his throne of
Amen.
He said, Flower of
Egypt,
you will be a ruler.

He took me with him
on his royal barge
down the Nile to
Memphis, to
Sakkara,
to Giza, to see my
kingdom.

He said to the farmers
and nobles
crowding the water
steps
This is my goddess
daughter
Hatshepsut
who will be crowned
with the crown
of Upper and Lower
Egypt
when she becomes a
woman.

I knew that Amen-Re,
Lord of Thebes,
King of Karnak, took
my father’s form
and came down to my
mother, Ahmose,
as she slept in the
beauty of her
palace.
She woke at the
fragrance of the
god
and rejoiced at the
sight of his
beauty,
and he went into her
and his love
came into her body.
And my mother
said

How wonderful to see
you face to face,
your dew is in all my
limbs.

And Amen, Lord of
the Two Lands,
said to her,

Khnumit-Amon-
Hatshepsut is the
name of the
daughter

I have planted in your
body. She shall
be king
in this whole land.

My soul is hers,
my crown is hers.

— Ruth Whitman,
from *Hatshepsut*,
Speak to Me

places to visit – or to receive visitors from, for more than once the Royalty of Punt came to the court of the Pharaoh in Egypt. They considered it a sort of bizarre private garden for the gods, an emporium of goods for powerful deities such as Amun-Ra, which gradually acquired an air of fantasy, like that of El Dorado or Atlantis. When Hatshepsut's trade fleet returned with its ships' holds laden with spices, precious metals, bizarre animals, curious slaves, and exotic woods, the Egyptian public went wild. Once again, she had achieved a smashing public relations success with her people.

For fifteen years Egypt enjoyed a period of prosperity, peace, wealth, and strength which would, in later generations, come to be thought of as one of the golden ages of that nation's history. Yet, like any great age in any country, it was not destined to last, for success inevitably breeds enemies. Thutmose III, whose seething anger at having been pushed aside in favor of his aunt had made him something of a national joke, had secretly been meeting with a variety of very powerful, very reactionary priests who resented Hatshepsut's reign for a wide variety of reasons. Together they made contact with a renegade Canaanite wizard named Benebaal. Using powers given to him by the evil god Melech, Lord of Murder, Benebaal surprised Hatshepsut while she was praying at her temple and banished her to the future through a swirling time vortex. With the powerful Pharaoh Queen gone, Thutmose III massacred her priests, her lover Senmut, and their young daughter Neferure. He then set about a decade-long campaign of removing every memory of Hatshepsut that he could find: her name was erased from hieroglyphics, her image defaced, replaced, or renamed on sculptures, and her obelisks tumbled down. Her fabulous three-tiered temple to Amun-Ra was abandoned, left to be buried by the sands of the desert.

Hurled through time and space, Hatshepsut was flung out of the vortex directly onto the streets of Dearborn, Michigan, very close to Millennium City. After some initial misunderstandings and misadventures, she has been taken in by the local arab community in the Dix neighborhood in the eastern portion of the town. Having learned how to speak English, Hatshepsut has renamed herself "She" in preparation for her new career as a superhero... or villain... or movie star. She hasn't really decided yet.

Personality/Motivation: Hatshepsut is extremely ambitious, exquisitely attractive, highly intelligent, and frankly more than a little irascible. A modern person would probably consider her a "control freak," but in reality Pharaoh Hatshepsut spent a great deal of time

feeling worn down by her duties as the sovereign ruler of the most powerful and advanced nation on Earth; her rigidity and snippiness are merely byproducts of her exhaustion. She has a wicked, sharp, and "snarky" sense of humor, which she is extremely fond of turning on those fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to be close to her, especially her councilor/lover Senmut and her irritable nephew Thutmose. The former found this deeply amusing, while the later wasn't amused at all – which is presumably why he has spent most of his adult life plotting against her.

Hatshepsut's divine nature and powers have made her more than a little arrogant... even for an absolute monarch! This has blinded her to the fact that "lesser" people (like her nephew) can really be very dangerous to her, given enough time, energy, and motivation. It is also why she is currently inhabiting the 21st Century. Nevertheless, it will take several more hard, painful lessons before she will accept that she isn't completely invulnerable – lessons that the metahumans of the modern era will almost certainly be quick to administer.

You would think that Hatshepsut would be eager to return to her own time; but with both Senmut and Neferure dead, she has little desire to return home to the intrigues of 18th Dynasty. Modern America seems to be filled with wealth, opportunity, and (best of all) enormous numbers of people looking to be led, especially by an incredibly attractive demigod: why, just look at how well that young fellow from Palestine is doing for himself after two thousand years!



DIGITAL HERO #15

Hatshepsut, who is now going by the simpler name “She,” is uncertain of what path to take. Should she try to restart her cult of personality? Should she become one of what these modern people call “superheroes,” or would villainy be more to her liking? Should she continue dressing like a man? Maybe she should become what they call a “movie star” so that she can do all of these things at once....

Quote: “You! Yes, you over there, smart guy! Stop gawking at me and get over here so that you can make yourself useful: there isn’t any break time when the Pharaoh is in town. Now pick up that suitcase and follow me.”

Powers/Tactics: Hatshepsut is as beautiful and powerful as many of the legendary gods which populated her ancient land. During her reign as pharaoh she learned how to be a skilled diplomat, a compelling orator, an accomplished bureaucrat, and a decent (if untested) tactician. Her nearly inhuman beauty, when combined with her actually inhuman presence, made her almost impossibly persuasive, especially with men. One of the single most wealthy monarchs of her time, she commanded the largest, best equipped military force that existed during the Bronze Age, which was, in turn, backed up the largest, best organized bureaucracy in the world. In short, she was the greatest non-military leader of the greatest superpower of her age.

Hatshepsut is the daughter of Amun-Ra, Lord of the Hidden Sun, gifted not only with the inhuman DEX, CON, and PRE of a god but also with a variety of light-based powers as well. These include an innate glowing field of pleasant soft light which emanates 8” around her on all sides, a reasonably powerful force field which also has flash defense built into it, and a damage field which can constantly emit 2d6 flash attacks. She generally uses this in conjunction with a zero-Phase 5d6 PRE attack to frighten and confuse opponents. Hatshepsut, while not immortal, is incredibly long-lived. She will look like a teenager for the next 100 years.

If Hatshepsut is used in the modern era, she will gain the use of a very powerful light beam (see below) as well as the ability to fly. She will naturally use both of these to her best advantage in a combat situation, staying well away from opponents so that she can blast them or blind them at a safe distance.

Campaign Use: If some incredibly inventive GM were to adopt Scott Bennie’s fabulous book *Testament* (Green Ronin Publishing) for use with the *HERO System* (hint, hint, people), Hatshepsut instantly becomes a wonderful NPC. Or perhaps the PCs have been hurled back through time to the Middle Kingdom to help her destroy some sort of evil foreign deity which threatens her land. Maybe you are running a *Fantasy Hero* campaign which takes place in an ancient, mysterious desert kingdom run by an all-powerful legendary queen who dresses like a man... which beats having the kingdom ruled by an all powerful king that dresses like a woman. That’s been *done to death*, girlfriend!

Most likely, however, She will be used as a minor villain, hero, movie star, or religious leader (she is hoping to combine three of the above) in the Champions Universe. To bring her up to date, replace her *Hunted: Thutmose III* with a *Hunted: Anubis* (he wants to make her his bride, or steal some magic item, or whatever; he’s crackers) and her *Hunted: Evil Priests* with a *Hunted: Amoral Archaeologists* (they have *questions*, dammit!). Then remove her *Contact* and *Head of State* perks, as they are no longer valid. Add *Light Beam of Amun-Ra: EB 12d6, Beam (-1/4), No Knockback (-1/4)* and *Flight 12*” before raising her STUN to 32 points.

Appearance: Maat-ka-Ra Hatshepsut or “She” is a short, insanely attractive woman with shoulder length brown hair, a petite yet aquiline nose, and large almond eyes. When in costume, she wears the royal attire of an 18th Dynasty Egyptian Pharaoh: the *shendyt* kilt, the *nemes* headdress with its *uraeus*, and a *khat* headcloth. She has an insanely long false beard of woven camel hair and golden thread strapped to her dainty chin. To be honest, she looks a little bit like Cher. Only younger.

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Dreadwood, Missouri

by Jason Walters

Dreadwood, Missouri is a one-shot *Western Hero* adventure for between five and seven players which uses pregenerated characters based on real historical figures. These are rough and dangerous men, hunted fugitives who, in their desperation to escape a group of relentless pursuers, must brave a ruined town filled with restless, malevolent undead creatures bent upon wreaking a terrible vengeance upon the PCs. Their only ally in this reckless undertaking is a mysterious Indian medicine man who, incidentally, may be an incarnation of the ancient Roman god Janus.

The adventure is essentially a morality play intended to teach the players that sometimes the only way to defeat a great evil is with, well, yet more evil. The Medicine Man, who intercepts the PCs at a dismal crossroads in a cursed natural maze, makes it clear that he has few delusions about the nature of his chosen champions. They are hard, callous veterans of Bloody Missouri; a fratricidal guerilla conflict which was going strong years before the American Civil War even formally broke out. After half a decade of visiting murder and destruction upon the homesteads of Union sympathizers along the Kansas border, they find themselves isolated and surrounded in the smoldering ruins of their Confederate dream. Chased ceaselessly across Missouri into the brambles and bayous of a then notoriously dangerous Cedar County, they are desperately in need of food, ammunition, liquor, and fresh horses. They must acquire all four of these precious commodities if they hope to make it out of a final deathtrap of swamp, pinewood, and bramble, and into the seemingly endless open planes of the Nebraska Territory, where they can begin a new life free of the taint of their misdeeds.

The players have to guide their characters through a series of encounters with the unnatural beings who inhabit Dreadwood, ranging from the necromantic to the demonic. These entities, victims of a previous Confederate attack, are eager for revenge not only against the living but most especially against the *Southern* living – a category into which the player characters most emphatically fall. Players should be properly motivated to “get into” their historical characters, if in only a stereotypical sort of way. For example, suggest that they speak with outrageous and outdated “Foghorn Leghorn” accents, make pseudo-Clint Eastwood comments, act ridiculously gun-happy and/or drunk, and so forth. They should be encouraged to actualize their “inner redneck” during the course of the adventure. A few pertinent “yee-haws” should be strongly encouraged, especially during battle scenes.

The GM should take several period-specific technical matters into account when running this game. The bullet was a relatively new and expensive technology during the Civil War (the revolver had only been invented a few scant decades before). The characters all have fairly primitive “cap-and-ball” weapons which were loaded by hand using a time-consuming four-step process that *cannot* be replicated during combat. Each of them only has a few rounds left when the adventure begins, and that’s all they get until they discover more in town. You should also note that a majority of the characters have only loaded five of the six cylinders in their revolvers. This was commonly done for safety reasons; as the old “cap-and-ball” black powder weapons were quite volatile, it was considered best to leave the hammer on an empty chamber. The only character who is crazy enough to break this basic safety rule is Jesse James – known to his friends as “Dang” after an amusing incident in which he shot off the end of one of his fingers. Roll a 1d6 anytime Jesse’s player opens his mouth. If one of his guns is holstered and you rolled a one, he has shot himself by accident.

The Guerrilla seldom become merciless all of a sudden. Pastoral in many cases by profession, and reared among the bashful and timid surroundings of agricultural life, he knew nothing of the tiger that was in him until death had been dashed against his eyes in numberless and brutal ways, and until the blood of his own kith and kin had been sprinkled plentifully upon things that his hands touched, and things that entered into his daily existence. And that fury of ideas also came to him slowly, which is more implacable than the fury of men, for men have heart, and opinion has none. It took him likewise some time to learn that the Jayhawker's system of saving the Union was a system of brutal force, which bewailed not even that which it crushed; that it belied its doctrine by its tyranny; stained its arrogated right by its violence, and dishonored its vaunted struggles by its executions. But blood is as contagious as air.

Thus, almost from the first, a large majority of Quantrell's original command had over them the shadow of some terrible crime. This one recalled a father murdered, this one a brother waylaid and shot, this one a house pillaged and burnt, this one a relative assassinated, this one a grievous insult while at peace at home, this one a robbery of all his earthly possessions, this one the force which compelled him to witness the brutal treatment of a mother or sister, this one was driven away from his own life a thief in the night, this one was threatened with death for opinion's sake, this one was proscribed at the instance of some designing neighbor, this one was arrested wantonly and forced to do the degrading work of a menial; while all had more or less of wrath laid up against the day when they were to meet face to face and hand to hand those whom they had good cause to regard as the living embodiment of unnumbered wrongs. Honorable soldiers in the Confederate army – amenable to every generous impulse and exact in the performance of every manly duty – deserted even the ranks which they had adorned and became desperate Guerrillas because the home they had left had been given to the flames, or a gray-haired father shot upon his own hearthstone. They wanted to avoid the uncertainty of regular battle and know by actual results how many died as a propitiation or a sacrifice. Every other passion became subsidiary to that of revenge....

— John Edwards

Dreadwood, Missouri

The Broken Dreams of Brutal Men

Throughout the War Between The States you've all been members of Quantrell's Raiders, busily staging incursions into Kansas from Missouri and Arkansas. Your leader, Captain William Quantrell, has been unfairly labeled an outlaw by the Federals for his guerilla attacks on pro-Union forces, but you know that he's really just a patriotic, free-spirited hero of the Confederacy doing his best for his country. Though you've all been involved in numerous vicious skirmishes with the Jayhawkers, a brutal pro-Union militia group, you always tried to maintain at least a semblance of decency in the way you treated civilians and captured soldiers by adhering to the principals of accepting enemy surrender. Two things changed your attitudes pretty drastically in 1862, however. First, the Commander of the Department of Missouri, Major General Henry W. Halleck ordered that "unconventional" fighters such as yourselves would be treated as robbers and murderers if captured, not normal prisoners of war. You were to go to the gallows straight away with no hope of fair trial nor any of the recourse which an honorable opponent is normally afforded. After that, Captain Quantrell gave an order to give 'no quarter' to enemy forces be they in uniform or not. You've not taken a prisoner since.

Secondly, in that said same infamous year the Federals kidnapped several dozen of your sisters, wives, and daughters and transported them away from their homesteads to a women's prison in Kansas City. Before you could organize a rescue, that supposed penitentiary (which was really just a deathtrap) collapsed mysteriously one day, maiming and killing a number of your female relations. In retaliation, in you set your sights on Lawrence, Kansas – a hotbed of decadent Yankee sympathizers as well as the home of Senator James H. Lane, that nefarious poltroon of the lowest sort and an enemy to Confederates everywhere. Lane managed to escape that day, racing through a cornfield in his nightshirt like the Yankee coward he is... but his fellow townspeople were not so fortunate. Actually, the whole thing is a little unclear to you now as you'd all been drinking heavily, riding all day in the hot sun, and feeling so powerfully angry that it's hard to say exactly what happened, but when it was over, the town lay in flames and 183 men and boys lay dead in streets of that same village, some dragged from their homes to be murdered in front of their families. The North's newspapers have labeled this a "massacre," while history's fickle hand has inscribed it as the most pointless killing of this

MY THREE SUNS

"There are three kinds of suns in Kansas... sunflowers, sunshine, and sons of bitches."

— *The Outlaw*
Josey Wales

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Shouldn’t we bury ‘em Josey?”

“To Hell with them fellas. Buzzards gotta eat, same as worms.”

— *The Outlaw*
Josey Wales

entire pointless war... as if the murder of your grey-haired Pappy, lying in a grave behind his own cabin with a Yankee bullet in his chest, had some point to it.

The Lawrence Massacre, as they call it, led to swift retribution. Cruel-eyed Union troops fresh from the slums of the North forced the residents of four Missouri border counties onto the open prairie while Jayhawkers looted, burned, and ravaged their way through everyone and everything that got left behind. Quantrell’s Raiders naturally took part in the Southern retaliation for this atrocity, but when Union forces drove the Confederates back, your leader fled to Texas in fear of his life. Your valiant band had to break up into several smaller units, including one headed by his most capable lieutenant “Bloody Bill” Anderson, a man known for his amusing habit of wearing a necklace of Yankee scalps into battle.

That would be your unit, soldier.

The Bramblewood

You are a band of gaunt, grim, silent, and desperate men worn from hard riding, much starving, scant sleep, and continual fighting. Your ammunition has been exhausted along with your provisions, liquor, and much of the value of your mounts. The country in every direction is swarming with Federal troops. They are by the streams and crossings, at the ferries and bridges, in the towns and on the main roads, on scouting expeditions and harrying marches. They are killing everywhere, watching everywhere, waiting everywhere. And why not? Time is on their side; if your tiny band of holdouts cannot get free of the rolling hills and tangled brambles of southwestern Missouri out onto the open prairie of Nebraska they soon will have you... and there won’t be any trial for the men who followed William Quantrell.

With these thoughts perched upon your souls like so many black crows poised upon a weathered fence, you enter bloody Cedar County, that Valley of the Shadow of Death for any Southern man where snipers wait behind every tree and informers sit upon every horse, ready to race off on a moment’s notice into the loving embrace of your enemy. Cedar County, a land almost entirely given over by its very nature to dark bog, bramble, dank rot, and brooding ruinous decay. For days you have hungrily made your way down tracks made by animals or paths long abandoned by hunters, the slow drizzle of a Missouri autumn your most constant and intimate companion. Just when things seem to be at their most miserable, you exit the dark woods due west of the decimated town of Kader (you know it’s decimated on account of you decimated it) to find yourself in a maze of bramblewood, ivy, and scrubtree which fills your vision out to the horizon.

The next several days are spent traveling through this labyrinthine ruin of nature, seeing neither man nor beast. Then one humid morning as you come around the corner of a narrow, bramble flanked deer-trail you are confronted with a choice. Your route splits in two – one path continuing in the southwesterly direction you have been traveling while the other heads off in an uncertain northern direction. But before you can make up your minds one way or t’other, a bizarre figure on horseback rides seemingly straight out of the roadside brambles. He’s obviously some sort of ancient, wizened Indian perched atop a dappled pony, his brow adorned with the tanned hide of a buffalo and his withered flesh dyed a darkest purple-black. In addition, there are various bizarre symbols painted upon his surprisingly well-proportioned chest and arms. He clutches an odd-looking tomahawk in one hand and a bag made of deerskin in the other.

For The GM: Dramatically pause so that the PCs can announce their various reactions. When they are finished, have Jim Whitsett make his KS: Religion role. Should he make it he will quickly realize that the symbols painted on the Indian’s body aren’t native symbols at all; they’re actually ancient Greek or Roman. Next have Bloody Bill should make his PS: Indian Fighter roll. If he makes it, he will know that this is a Medicine Man of some sort. If he makes his role by 2 he will know that this, specifically, is a Missouriia Nation Medicine Man. Their only problem is that there are no more Missouriia – they were wiped out by the Otoe Nation over a generation ago.

The Medicine Man will never give his name nor explain anything about his appearance nor directly answer any questions about his motivations. He is an invulnerable plot device, not meant to be fought or attacked by the PCs. If they insist on behaving violently or disrespectfully he will simply sigh, politely ignoring them (see below).

“You are the Grey Warriors who have fought against the Bluecoats across fields of blood and smoke,” the ancient man announces. “Now you flee for your lives as the falcon flees the eagle’s talons. Hey-hey-hey! You face a hard choice, Grey Warriors, as you travel to your fates down a river of blood; but that is nothing new for any of you.” He turns and slowly points down each path in turn.

DIGITAL HERO #15

“If the Grey Warriors take that route,” he points southwest,” it will lead them to certain death. But if they take that route,” he points north, “it will take them to a death less certain. Let the father of the sky hear my cries! Hey-hey-ho!”

For The GM: At this point it is very likely that the players will have some questions for the Medicine Man. Feel free to ham it up as much as you like because, much like the great “Crying Indian” Iron Eyes Cody (a.k.a. Oscar DeCorti), Medicine Man isn’t really an American Indian... he’s just pretending to be one (like DeCorti he’s actually Italian.) Feel free to do a tiny “rain-dance” around the table anytime he says something like “Hey-hey-ho,” and answer the PCs’ questions in the most cryptic manner possible. Here are some sample answers:

- 1) “In the spring it rains and flowers burst forth from the ground. Yet sometimes the earth gives birth to a black liquid which poisons every flower which it touches. Both are children of the land – who can say what each season shall bring?”
- 2) “Some things are not seen because they do not wish to be seen. Some things are not seen because nobody wants to see them. And some things are not seen because they are not there.”
- 3) “A little rain never hurt anybody – but if it comes down long enough a little rain can become a flood, washing everything in its path away.”

After a while the players will probably get aggravated with your enigmatic indirectness and start to become cranky. You should then encourage them to take the path to the north – otherwise you will probably end up wiping them out when they hit the thirty-man squad of Jayhawkers that are waiting in ambush for them about half a mile down the road to the southwest.

He lifts his army slowly upwards, shaking the tomahawk and deerskin bag as he does so.

“If you take the road north,” the aging Indian points vaguely, “you will find a town in which you might acquire ammunition for your weapons, liquor for your spirits, food for your bellies, and – most importantly – fresh mounts. If you go the other way,” he gestures vaguely southeast, “the Blue Coats might be kind enough to made a cross to mark your gravesite. Sky Father, hear me! Hey-hey-hey!”

For The GM: Pick a character. The medicine man tosses the two objects to him in a non-threatening manner. The tomahawk is, as stated earlier, a strangely constructed axe made of some sort of dark wood combined with a large, sharp crystal. The deerskin medicine bag contains two dozen small clay balls with a luminescent red onyx impressed into each one. They are about the size of a .44 lead ball. These items all have special properties. The tomahawk is a 1d6 NND HKA against any undead or unnatural creature (everything in Dreadwood qualifies). The clay balls, when used as ammunition in any revolver or rifle, do the same amount of damage (1d6 NND RKA).

“You have chosen as best you could, Grey Warriors, but that does not mean that the way you have chosen is best. When a man goes to war does he bring his fishing net? When a man goes to fish does he bring his bow? Take my sacred tomahawk and medicine bag that they might serve you well in your trials to come.”

With these words the venerable Indian rotates his pony around and, with a slight kicking motion, begins to move it towards the brambles from which he originally emerged. But as he leaves he turns his eerily painted body in the saddle, faces you, and raises one hand into the air.

For The GM: Medicine Man will not answer any specific questions about the town to the north – only that it is there. If the characters at last decide to take that route, he will turn his pony to briefly step in front of them.

“Sometimes I wonder why good so seldom triumphs over evil. It seems natural that it would; yet it so rarely does. Perhaps this is because one man’s fortune in another man’s failure, and the Sky Father has a hard time figuring out which is which. Or maybe good will win more battles when it learns to fight dirty. Either way, it shouldn’t matter much to any of you Grey Warriors.”

The old Indian then turns his pony about and vanishes into the brambles along the side of the path.

For The GM: Attempts to follow him will prove futile; he has simply vanished off the face of this Earth. Have your players make a PER roll. If they succeed, they notice that there is a face clearly painted onto the back of his buffalo skin headdress in a substance the color of fresh blood. The face is very much like his, save that it is grinning like a skull.

The northern road, as you could well imagine, is not a pleasant road. Every step down it finds your horses' hoofs ever deeper in the muddy earth as the "clop-clop" of their unshod feet grows ever more weary. Most of you instantly begin to regret following the old man's advice; it looks as though nobody has used this trail in years. It stands to reason that it couldn't possibly lead to a town. Yet, after a half an hour of slow, plodding riding the brambles clear out in front of you and you find yourself confronted with a small town.

Or what used to be a small town.

Dreadwood, Missouri

No more than a dozen decaying, partially burnt buildings line up along a mud street. None of them have back yards as they end right where the seemingly impenetrable forest of brambles and scrub begins. It seems impossible that anyone would voluntarily build this way; it's more likely the town's inhabitants forced a begrudging opening from the ever-hungry maws of the Bramblewood. A pair of battered wooden signs hang high overhead, suspended between a pair of roughly hewn tree trunks. Ravens swirl evilly in the purple-hewed, gloomy sky far above, occasionally alighting on building or bramble. One caws at you mockingly from the sign above.

For The GM: If the players chose to look up and read the signs (you can never be certain), the larger of the two reads "Dreadwood, Missouri" while a smaller one below conjectures "Population 50." It seems, however, that the "50" has been crossed out and replaced with a "20," which has in turn been crossed out and replaced with an eight. This in turn gives way to a three, then a zero, and finally a negative ten.

The town, which probably wasn't much to begin with, appears to have been looted and burned at some point in the last year. Its unpainted pineboard buildings sag in their foundations, looking for all the world like a bunch of battered old men sitting wearily around a card table which, like themselves, has seen better days. For the most part, the remaining buildings are the usual assortment of structures one would expect to find in just about any tiny southern hamlet: a battered looking tavern with its second story burned completely off, a general store with all of its windows smashed, and a primitive stable which looks to not have been much in the first place. But the most remarkable building in Dreadwood is its church; an enormous, unadorned black structure which seems to have been built right in the middle of the road on the far end of town, effectively blocking the only other exit from this depressing little burg.

1) Notelek's Tavern: This roomy, two story structure appears to have been constructed of roughly cut pine boards held together with a fair amount of pitch, plug, and prayer. A sign which must have once adorned its now missing upper level lies facedown in the mud on the street below (**GM:** *If the players flip it over it reads "Notelek's Tavern" on the other side*). Its one remaining swinging door hangs limply on a single hinge. Inside, you can hear the sound of a piano's ivories being tickled. Its musician is banging out a melancholy, off-key version of Yankee Doodle Dandy.

The inside of the tavern is gloomy, foul smelling, and damp. A long crude bar covered in cobwebs and broken bottles dominates the far side of the structure, while behind it the remains of an enormous shattered mirror still cling tenaciously to the wall. A half dozen card tables lay scattered across the floor in various states of disrepair. The corpse of a man, flesh obviously long rotten from its frame, lays face down on one table with a hand of poker still clenched in his bony fist (**GM:** *A PS: Bushwhacker roll by any of the characters will tell them that its a marked deck; the stiff had been cheating. Bushwhackers know this kind of stuff*). Two other bodies, similarly heavily decayed but attired in tavern-keeper's clothing, lay sprawled across the bar and piano respectively. The piano, obviously a "player" piano, is slowly but finally spewing its music roll out of a ragged hole in its side and onto the floor. As you come in it slowly winds down and stops.

For The Game Master: There are several items of potential interest to the players left in this structure. Behind the bar are 3 full bottles of Old Revelator whisky which, although stoppered with knucklebones and lead, are still reeeeeaaaal potent. Anyone taking a pull should make a constitution check; failure means that the character suffers a 1d6 CON Drain which lasts for a full minute. However each swig will also restore one point of BODY permanently (there are five shots in each bottle.) There is also a fully loaded and functional black powder shotgun behind the bar which is nearly identical to Henry Hockensmith's. Their liquor worries are over.

Once the characters disturb any of these objects, however, the following happens....

Suddenly you hear a high, feminine voice clear her throat from above. As you all look up, you see a luminescent figure descend down the stairs from where the building's second story would have been. A tall, rather attractive, and undeniably translucent woman with long blond hair glares down at you, her hands gripping the air where a railing undoubtedly used to lie. She has the dress and mannerisms of what you imagine to be an expensive prostitute (**GM:** *George Maddox can make an KS: Ladies of Ill Repute roll to determine this if you like*).



“Rebel scum!” she hisses at you through clenched teeth. She has a distinct, and to your tiny minds sexy, German accent. Actually, she looks and sounds just like Madeline Kahn’s character Lili Von Schtupp from Mel Brooks’ *Blazing Saddles* (**GM:** *Make your R’s sound like W’s.*) “This used to be a nice, respectable town before you traitors came through and wrecked it! You rebel scum make me feel ashamed to have been alive. Oh, you should really never have killed me – because now I’m going to return the favor! Get them boys! Get them out of my bar!”

At this point the three skeletons rise up, gripping long sharp slivers of glass from the floor as they rise....

For The GM: The dead hooker (you don’t get to say THAT every day, do you? Actually, if you do and you’re not an LA cop, don’t tell me) is a ghost as spelled out on page 120 of the *HERO System Bestiary*. Her “boys” are skeletons as detailed on page 123 of the same book. The slivers of glass when combined with the Skeleton’s strength are a 2d6 KA. The skeletons will fight until destroyed, but the ghost will disappear and flee before being terminated.

Ghostly Hooker

10 STR	18 DEX	10 CON	10 BODY
10 INT	18 EGO	20 PRE	15 COM
5 PD	5 ED	3 SPD	
4 REC	20 END	20 STUN	

Abilities: Drain STUN 2d6, Affects Physical World, Reduced Endurance (0 END); Telekinesis (10 STR), Affects Physical World, Reduced Endurance (0 END); Invisibility to Sight, Hearing, and Smell/Taste Groups, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END), Persistent, Inherent; Desolidification (affected by Medicine Man’s objects), Reduced Endurance (0 END), Persistent, Inherent, Always On; +20 PRE, Only for Fear-Based Presence Attacks; Life Support: Total; No Hit Locations; Flight 8”, Reduced Endurance (0 END); Spatial Awareness; Detect Rebel Scum 11-, Range, Sense

75+ Disadvantages: Physical Limitation: Human Size; Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, Cannot Leap (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing); Psychological Limitation: Destroy Rebel Scum (Very Common, Strong)

Skeleton

15	STR	12	DEX	10	CON	10	BODY
5	INT	0	EGO	13	PRE	6	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD		
5	REC	0	END	-	STUN		

Abilities: Reduced Endurance (0 END) for STR; Does Not Bleed; No Hit Locations; Takes No Stun; +2 PD, Only Protects Against Slashing or Piercing Attacks; +2 PD, Only Protects Against Piercing Attacks; Damage Resistance (6 PD/2 ED); Life Support: Total; Reduced END (0 END) on Running; Reduced END (0 END) on Leaping; Reduced END (0 END) on Swimming; Infrared Perception (Sight Group); +4 PER with all Senses, Only to Perceive Images Created By Means Other Than Necromancy

75+ Disadvantages: Physical Limitation: Affected By Necromancy (Infrequent, Greatly Impairing); Physical Limitation: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing); Physical Limitation: Can Only Leap 1" (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing); Vulnerability: 2x BODY from Blunt Weapons (Very Common)

Skeleton



2) Eibmoz's General Store: This large, single-story structure appears to have been converted into a general store from an old barn of some considerable size. Its battered tin roof has seen better days, though, as it seems to have been patched up with boards and tar where it's rusted through. There's a large sign over its front door which reads "Eibmoz's General Store." (**GM:** *assuming the players chose to go in...*) Inside, the store seems to be comprised of a single giant room crisscrossed with four rows of shelves which are approximately four feet tall. All of them are easily visible from a single long wooden counter which runs along the back wall (obviously to prevent theft of any sort). There are four townspeople currently shopping in the store: two men in farmer's clothing with large, floppy straw hats, a woman in her tattered Sunday's best with a bonnet on, and what might be her child standing next to her. They are scattered amongst the shelves, examining the store's dry goods closely and obviously shopping. A storekeeper stands behind the counter, contemplating its surface as he very, very slowly wipes it clean with a washrag.

As the players enter the storekeeper slowly looks up from his work; his face is a rotted, maggot-infested ruin. "Brains!" he cries out through pattered lips, his voice little more than a sickening wreck. His customers all look up, but their faces are also little more than disgusting mockeries of their former humanity. "Brains!" they all echo as they begin to slowly move towards the characters....

For The GM: These townspeople are all zombies, similar to the ones listed on page 127 of the *HERO System Bestiary*. Once they have been defeated (IF they are defeated) the players can search the store. They will find that, although most of the groceries which once lined the shelves are rotten, damaged, or otherwise destroyed, there is still enough boxes of "hardtack" biscuits, beans, and cornmeal to outfit the group for another week. In addition, the general store contains enough .44 caliber balls, percussion caps, and black powder as the characters can possibly carry. Their food and ammunition worries are over.

DIGITAL HERO #15

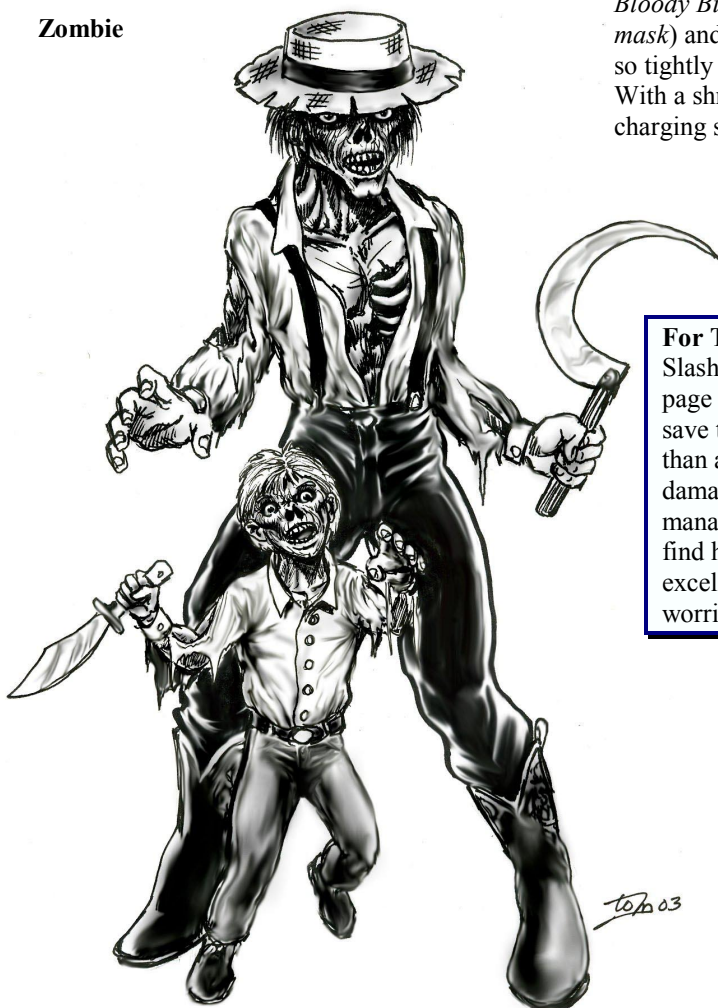
Zombie

20 STR 10 DEX 10 CON 10 BODY
5 INT 0 EGO 13 PRE 6 COM
4 PD 2 ED 2 SPD
6 REC 0 END

Abilities: Reduced Endurance (0 END) for STR; Does Not Bleed; No Hit Locations; Takes No Stun; +2 PD, Only Against Slashing or Piercing Attacks; +2 PD, Only Against Piercing Attacks; Damage Resistance (8 PD/ 2 ED); Life Support: Total; Running -4"; Reduced Endurance (0 END) on Running; Reduced Endurance (0 END) on Leaping; Reduced Endurance (0 END) on Swimming; Infrared Perception (Sight Group); +2 PER with all Senses; Only To Perceive Images Created By Means Other Than Necromancy; Climbing 11-; Stealth 11-; WF: Common Melee Weapons

75+ Disadvantages: Physical Limitation: Affected By Necromancy (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing); Physical Limitation: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) Physical Limitation: Can Only Leap 1" (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)

Zombie



3) The Stables: This medium-sized structure is basically a large lean-to built out of small pine logs which have been stripped of their bark before being driven into the ground at an angle. Its walls are constructed out of shaped stones crudely mortared together with a mixture of mud and ox blood (gross, but not unusual). Through an opening in the front of the building you can hear the sounds of horses from within, as well as the sound of a man singing happily to himself.

"Goobar peas, goobar peas, how I love those goobar peas! Goodness how delicious, eating goobar peas...."

(GM: *Assuming the players go in...*) There are a dozen good, strong horses in various stalls within this building, all obviously well fed and properly taken care of. On the far end of the construction from you a large figure in dirty coveralls is moving hay into one of the stalls using a pitchfork, singing to himself all the while. When you come several feet into the building, however, the figure suddenly spins about to face you for the first time. He is wearing some sort of bizarre white wooden mask ventilated with tiny holes over his face (GM: *A successful KS: Indian Fighter roll will tell Bloody Bill that this is NOT any sort of Indian mask*) and is gripping the pitchfork in his hand so tightly that his knuckles are turning white. With a shriek he screams "Goobar Peas!" before charging straight for you....

For The GM: "Goobar Peas" is a Slasher similar to the one detailed on page 210 of the *HERO System Bestiary* save that he wields a pitchfork rather than a knife (treat it the same for damage purposes). If the players manage to put an end to him, they will find his stable well stocked with excellent, well-fed mounts. Their riding worries are over....

Goober Peas (Slasher)

15 STR 15 DEX 20 CON 20 BODY
 15 INT 15 EGO 20 PRE 10 COM
 8 PD 8 ED 3 SPD
 10 REC 40 END 40 STUN

Abilities: HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR); +10 REC, Requires CON Roll 13-; Healing 2d6 (Regeneration; 2 BODY per Turn), Resurrection (others can stop by burning body), Reduced Endurance (0 END), Persistent, Self Only, Extra Time; Combat Luck; +3 with Hand-To-Hand Combat; Climbing 12-, Contortionist 12-; Stealth 13-

75+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Unquenchable Urge To Kill Southerners (Very Common, Strong)

Goober Peas (Slasher)



4) The Black Church: This long plain black structure seems to have been built right in the middle of the road, effectively blocking the only western exit from Dreadwood. Although obviously a church, it has no steeple, bell, nor any remaining windows – they all seem to have been knocked out before being boarded up. There’s glass everywhere.

The church’s two front doors swing back and forth on their warped hinges, making periodic yet always shocking slamming noises. From within you can hear the familiar sounds of a sermon being given, although you cannot make out any distinct words. You’re going to have to go in to do that.

(GM: Assuming the players go in...) Pews lay broken and scattered throughout this elongated rectangle of a building, creating an open path through a seeming ocean of wooden debris wide enough to ride a horse through. Obviously a portion of the inner roof collapsed into the structure at some point in the past. On the far side of the room a man in the garb of a protestant minister is giving a sermon. He is waving his Bible in the air wildly, beating it against his pulpit, and gesticulating to some unseen crowd of churchgoers. As you center you catch the very tail end of his sermon.

“And when JE-S-EUS stepped out of that boat he was immediately met by a man, a DEMON-IAC, fresh out of the tombs of Gerasenes an’ filled with an unclean spirit of SATAN! He lived amongst the tombs, for none of his kinfolk could restrain him with chains any longer. For though he had been oft restrained with shackles and chains, WITH SHACKLES AND CHAINS, he done wrenched those chains apart and broken those shackles into pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him, no one had the strength to....”

The minister seems to notice you all for the first time. He looks up at you warily for a moment, then grins a magnificent grin entirely comprised of long, sharp teeth. For the first time you notice that there are two tiny black horns growing straight out of his forehead into the wide brim of his parson’s hat. The letters “L-O-V-E” are tattooed on his left fingers while the letters “H-A-T-E” are tattooed on his right.

“You need some churchin’ you rebel scum,” he howls, “an’ I aim to give you some churchin’ – Dreadwood style churchin’ that is!”

For The GM: The Minister is a Lesser Demon very similar to the one detailed on page 54 of the *HERO System Bestiary*. He will enter combat by unleashing a series of “demonic blasts” before charging down amongst the player characters and attempting to rend them with his claws. While he fights he will spout out various Bible quotations in mangled rural American English (chose your personal favorites). The only character with anything capable of cowing The Minister is Jim Whitsett, who is not only a religious man but possesses a well thumbed (if ragged) copy of the King James version of the Bible. The Minister is kind of allergic to holy objects (his “bible” is actually a copy of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*), so if Whitsett “presents” his Bible in conjunction with a Presence Attack and a good ol’ “hellfire” quotation of his own, he gets to make a 5d6 PRE roll against The Minister, who must match or best Whitsett’s roll with a 5d6 roll of his own. If the Minister fails, he has to skip his next Phase, presumably giving the players a chance to fill him full of .44 clay bullets.

Some of The Minister’s sample bible quotations might include:

“My eye will not spare ya, I shall have no pity – I shall punish you for your rebel ways while yer abominations number amongst ya! Then you shall know that I am the Lord! Ezekiel 7:04, you lily-livered killers!”

“Withhold not correction from the child for if thou beatest him with thy rod he shall not die... Proverbs 23:13, you rebel scum! Church learnin’!”

“I came not with peace but with a sword. For I am come to set every man at against his father, and every daughter against her mother... Matthew 10:34, you heathens!”

“Y’all are of your father the Devil, and y’all want to do the desires of your father... yer not the chillens of God! John 8:44, sinners!”

When, and more importantly if, he is defeated, the players at long last have a clear path out of Dreadwood. They can ride their new horses straight through the church and into the next section.

The Minister (Lesser Demon)

25 STR	20 DEX	23 CON	20 BODY
20 INT	20 EGO	25 PRE	8 COM
15 PD	15 ED	4 SPD	
12 REC	46 END	45 STUN	

Abilities: Energy Blast 10d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END); HKA 1½d6, Continuous, Damage Shield, Penetrating, Reduced Endurance (½ END), No STR Bonus; HKA 1½d6 (2½d6 with STR), Armor Piercing; Damage Resistance (8 PD/8 ED); Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Mental Defense (9 Points Total); Power Defense (5 Points); Life Support: Total; Running +3” (9” Total); Infrared Perception (Sight Group); +1 Overall; Concealment 13-; Stealth 13-; WF: Common Melee Weapons

75+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Horns and Sharp Teeth (Concealable With Effort; Causes Fear); Enraged: If Confronted With Rebel Scum (Uncommon, go 11-, recover 11-); Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Very Common, Strong); Psychological Limitation: Utterly Evil (Very Common, Total); Susceptibility: to Bibles, see blue text (Common)



Nebraska Territory

After trials and tribulations of a Herculean disposition which surely would have impressed Sampson or any other Biblical hero of old, you have fought your way free of the frightful and terrible town of Dreadwood, Missouri. Your packs are filled with food, ammunition, and medicinal spirits while your tired behinds rest squarely upon fresh, spirited mounts. Exhausted yet exhilarated with heavy hearts but lightened burdens you make your way due west towards the Nebraska territory and freedom.

The Bramblewood, which just yesterday haunted your dreams with dark and forbidding visions, seems today to be somehow less evil in its disposition. Here and there a late blooming flower sprouts out amongst the thorny branches, while blue birds and robins flutter overhead calling back and forth to one another in the carefree manner of children at play. Spurring your mounts forward, laughing amongst yourselves, you exit the terrible labyrinth off occult and sorrow out onto the endless plains of blue, purposeful blue.

For The Game Master: If you still have more time on your hands and want to give your players a little more hell before they finally get free, have two squads of Jayhawkers laying in wait for them as they exit the Bramblewood.

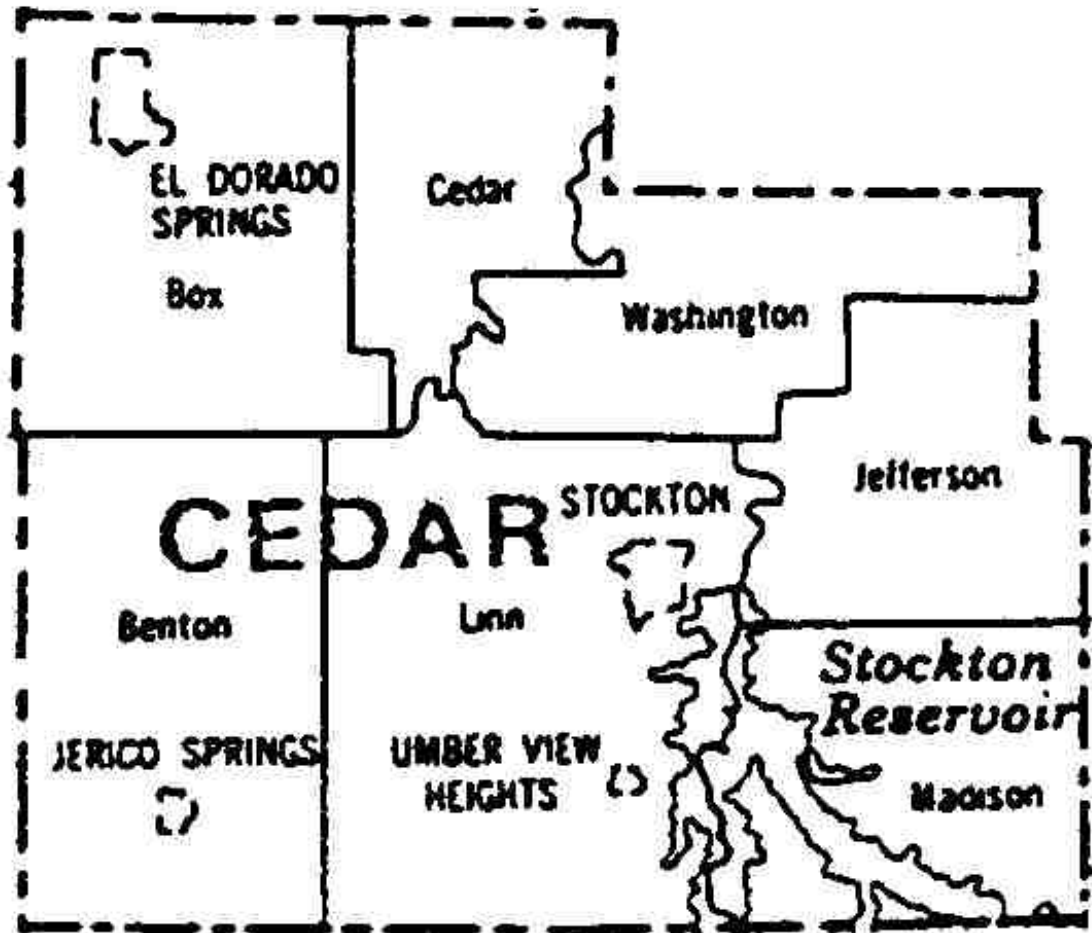
These rough semi-soldiers will be riding hard from both the north and south on light warhorses (see page 169 of the *HERO System Bestiary*) in squads of six to intercept the players from 24" away as they come out into the open. The Jayhawkers will fight until one third of their number has fallen, then retreat back the way they came... like the lily-livered poltroons they are!

Jayhawker

13 STR	12 DEX	12 CON
10 BODY	10 INT	10 EGO
10 PRE	10 COM	
3 PD	2 ED	3 SPD
5 REC	24 END	23 STUN

Abilities: WF: Small Arms, Riding 12-, +1 with carbine, Tracking 11-

Equipment: Cattleman's Carbine (2d6-1, six shot, +1 OCV, +1 Stun, +2 Range) Light War Horse



Appendixes

Appendix Three: Speed Chart and Bibliography

Speed Chart

This handy speed chart will help you keep track of combat in *Dreadwood, Missouri* without having to use the standard *HERO System* speed chart. The number on the left represents a segment, while the characters who can take an action on that segment are listed in order to the right with DEX scores already factored in. This chart should help to speed up the process of playing this scenario, allowing you and your friends to complete the entire thing in three to four hours (at the most).

- 1) Nobody
- 2) Nobody
- 3) The Minister, James
- 4) Ghost Prostitute, Goober Peas, Anderson Younger, Maddox, Hockensmith, Whitsett
- 5) Nobody
- 6) The Minister, James, Skeletons Zombies
- 7) Nobody
- 8) Ghost Prostitute, Goober Peas, Anderson, Younger, Maddox, Hockensmith Whitsett
- 9) The Minister, James
- 10) Nobody
- 11) Nobody
- 12) The Minister, Ghost Prostitute, Goober Peas, James, Anderson, Younger, Maddox, Hockensmith, Whitsett, Skeletons Zombies

Bibliography

- Noted Guerrillas or the Warfare of the Border, 1861-1865* by John Edwards
- Western Lawmen & Outlaws* by Jay Robert Nash
- The Story of Cole Younger by Himself; Being an Autobiography of the Missouri Guerrilla Captain & Outlaw, His Capture & Prison Life* by Cole Younger
- Jesse James and the Civil War in Missouri* by Robert Dyer

Filmography

- The Stranger Wore A Gun* (1953) with Randolph Scott
- Quantrell's Raiders* (1958) with Steven Cochran
- Ride With The Devil* (1999) with Toby Maguire

Appendix Two: Character Sheets

The following character sheets are to be given as handouts to the players. Each one lists the characters statistics, skills, and equipment, along with a brief historical quote relating to the character. It should be noted that all of the characters have *KS: Bushwhacker*, a general skill covering the art of guerilla fighting. This includes ambushing, concealment, small-scale tactics, improvised weaponry, and general rural terrain knowledge as well as a working knowledge of the history of the Missouri Border War. A roll with this skill should be made whenever the player feels that his character may know a reasonable item of information on those subjects that he himself does not.

"Bloody Bill" Anderson

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
14	PRE	4	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6 PD				3 Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
4 ED				1 Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3 SPD				6 Phases: 4, 8, 12
6 REC				0
26 END				0
26 STUN				1



Total Characteristics Cost: 43

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Powers **END**
2 Running +1" (7" Total) 1

Skills

- 8 +1 with All Combat
- 2 KS: Torture 11-
- 2 KS: Indian Fighting 11-
- 3 PS: Bushwhacker 12-
- 3 Riding 12-
- 5 Stealth 13-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 32

Total Cost: 75

50+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Jayhawkers 11- (Less Pow, NCI)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Sociopath (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75

Equipment

- Four .44 Confederate Navy Revolvers (2d6-1 RKA, five shots loaded, -1 OCV, +1 STUN)
- Bowie Knife (1d6 HKA)
- Hatchet (1d6 HKA)
- Light Warhorse with Saddlebags
- Tattered Grey Clothing and Boots

Description

"The most desperate man I ever met... (He) never took prisoners but always shot captives out-of-hand... he was a walking and riding arsenal, usually with four Navy Colt pistols in his waistband, four rifles on his horse, a saber, a hatchet, and a bag of pistols wrapped around the horn of his saddle."

— Western Lawmen & Outlaws by Jay Robert Nash

DIGITAL HERO #15

George Maddox

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes	
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH	
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5	
13	CON	6	12-		
10	BODY	0	11-		
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-	
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6	
12	COM	1	11-		
5 PD				2	Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4 ED				1	Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3 SPD				6	Phases: 4, 8, 12
6 REC				0	
32 END				3	
26 STUN				2	

Total Characteristics Cost: 44

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Powers **END**
2 Running +1" (7" Total) 1

Skills

- 4 +2 with Revolvers
- 5 Fast Draw 13-
- 2 KS: Ladies of Ill Repute 11-
- 3 PS: Bushwhacker 12-
- 3 Riding 12-
- 1 Shadowing 8-
- 5 Stealth 13-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 3 WF: Blades, Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 31

Total Cost: 75

50+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Jayhawkers 11- (Less Pow, NCI)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Fatalist (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75

Equipment

Two .44 Confederate Navy Revolvers
(2d6-1 RKA, five shots loaded, -1
OCV, +1 STUN)
Bowie Knife (1d6 HKA)
Pearl Handled Shaving Kit
Light Warhorse with Saddlebags
Tattered Grey Clothing and Boots



Description

"All tenacity and endurance. Tried in the fire of fifty desperate combats, he was a fatalist to the extent of believing that the fates took good care of him. He did not speculate, he did not build air castles at night for the mists of the morning to dissipate; if he was an hungered and could not get to eat, he drew his revolver belt a hole or two tighter and forgot that he had an appetite. As he rode he sang, or was glad or gay. Air and exercise put iron into his blood as wine puts fire into the brain."

— *Noted Guerrillas or the Warfare of the Border, 1861-1865 by John Edwards*

Henry Hockensmith

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
12	CON	4	11-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
24	END	0		
25	STUN	0		



Total Characteristics Cost: 41

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
2	Running +1" (7" Total)	1
10	Tough Fellow: Physical Damage Reduction, 25%	0
7	Bare Knuckle Fighter: HA +2d6 (5d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½)	1

Skills

- 5 +1 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 2 AK: Rural Arkansas 11-
- 3 PS: Bushwhacker 12-
- 3 Riding 12-
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 34

Total Cost: 75

50+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Jayhawkers 11- (Less Pow, NCI)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Violent (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75

Equipment

- LeMats Pistol (2d6-1 RKA, eight shots loaded, -1 OCV, +1 STUN with miniature shotgun underbarrel 3d6 RKA, one shot, +3 OCV, +1 STUN, -3 Range)
- Double Barreled Shotgun (2½d6 RKA, two shots, +1 OCV, +1 STUN, +2 Range)
- Light Warhorse with Saddlebags
- Tattered Grey Clothing and Boots

Description

"Solid as a young oak, built like a grizzly bear for depth of chest and might of muscle, cool as a grenadier, schooled by Quantrell, drilled by George Todd, and graduated from a school that knew no peril that would not flee if faced and no bloody ground that would not give up its ogres if penetrated."

— *"Noted Guerrillas or the Warfare of the Border, 1861-1865"* by John Edwards

DIGITAL HERO #15

Cole Younger

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
12	PRE	2	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	1		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
26	STUN	2		

Total Characteristics Cost: 38

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Powers **END**
2 Running +1" (7" Total) 1

Skills

- 5 +1 with Ranged Combat
- 2 AK: Rural Missouri 11-
- 3 Demolitions 12-
- 5 Fast Draw 13-
- 4 KS: Literature 13-
- 3 PS: Bushwhacker 12-
- 3 Riding 12-
- 5 Stealth 13-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 37

Total Cost: 75

50+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Jayhawkers 11- (Less Pow, NCI)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75

Equipment

- Two .44 Confederate Navy Revolvers (2d6-1 RKA, five shots loaded, -1 OCV, +1 STUN)
- Sawed-Off Double Barreled Shotgun (2d6 RKA, two shots, +2 OCV, +1 STUN, -2 Range)
- Light Warhorse with Saddlebags
- Tattered Grey Clothing and Boots



Description

"Conflicts and troubles centered on our home that planted a bitterness in my young heart which cried out for revenge, and this feeling was only accentuated by the cruelties of war which followed. I refer in particular to the shameful and cowardly murder of my father for money which he was known to have in his possession, and the cruel treatment of my mother at the hands of the Missouri Militia."

— *The Story of Cole Younger by Himself: Being an Autobiography of the Missouri Guerrilla Captain and Outlaw, His Capture and Prison Life, by Cole Younger*

Jesse James

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
11	STR	1	11-	Lift 115 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
				Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
				Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
				Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	PD	4		
4	ED	1		
4	SPD	16		
6	REC	2		
26	END	0		
26	STUN	3		

Total Characteristics Cost: 49

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Powers **END**
2 Running +1" (7" Total) 1

Talents

3 Ambidexterity (Reduce Off Hand Penalty to -2)

Skills

6 +3 with Colt Navy Pistols
5 Fast Draw 13-
2 KS: Train Robbing 11-
3 PS: Bushwhacker 12-
3 Riding 12-
2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 26**Total Cost: 75****50+ Disadvantages**

15 Hunted: Jayhawkers 11- (Less Pow, NCI)
10 Psychological Limitation: Reckless (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75**Equipment**

Two .44 Confederate Navy Revolvers
(2d6-1RKA, six shots loaded, -1 OCV, +1 STUN)
Light Warhorse with Saddlebags
Tattered Grey Clothing and Boots

**Description**

"He seemed to be afraid of nothing. In one skirmish with the enemy... [James] was seen riding pell-mell into the Union ranks, the reins of his horse held by his teeth, firing two pistols. He shot down six Northern soldiers and was credited with killing three of them."

— *Western Lawmen & Outlaws*, by Jay Robert Nash

DIGITAL HERO #15

Jim Whitsett

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes	
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH	
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5	
13	CON	6	12-		
10	BODY	0	11-		
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-	
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4	
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6	
12	COM	1	11-		
5 PD				2	Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4 ED				1	Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3 SPD				6	Phases: 4, 8, 12
6 REC				0	
26 END				0	
26 STUN				2	

Total Characteristics Cost: 45

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Powers **END**
2 Running +1" (7" Total) 1

Talents

10 Danger Sense 12- (Intuitional)
3 Lightsleep

Skills

2 KS: Ancient History 11-
2 KS: Religion 11-
3 PS: Bushwhacker 12-
3 Riding 12-
3 Tracking 12-
2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 30

Total Cost: 75

50+ Disadvantages

15 Hunted: Jayhawkers 11- (Less Pow, NCI)
10 Psychological Limitation: Religious
(Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75

Equipment

New Texas Army Pistol (2d6-1RKA, five shots loaded, -1 OCV, +1 STUN)
Enfield Black Powder Rifle (2d6+1RKA, one shot, +1 OCV, +1 STUN, +2 Range)
Light Warhorse with Saddlebags
Tattered Grey Clothing and Boots
King James Bible



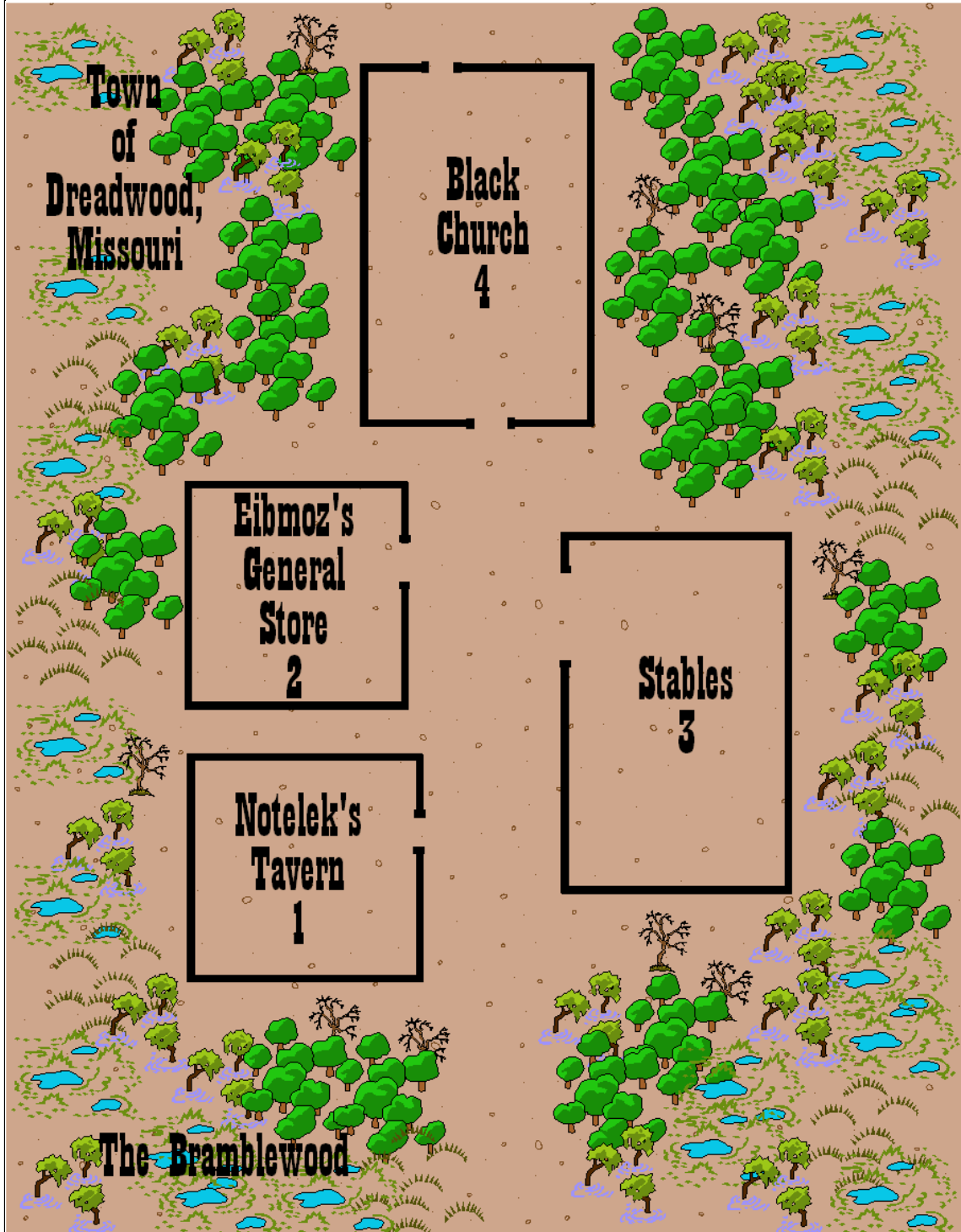
Description

"All nerve, and dash, and rugged appearance"

— *"Noted Guerrillas or the Warfare of the Border, 1861-1865" by John Edwards*

Appendix Three: Map of Dreadwood, Missouri

Though it contains a dozen-odd ruined shells, there are only four actual buildings which remain standing in the tiny town of Dreadwood. In each case the dreaded Bramblewood grows directly to the back of the structure, leaving only a single entrance as well as a single exit. The overall effect is claustrophobic.



Battleforge

by W. Jason Allen

Background/History: Jake Sullivan’s hands glowed red with power as he focused his will into the long sword he had recently taken hot from the forge. The glow spread from his hands to the blade, suffusing the sword from pommel to point, then slowly fading to nothing. Grinning, Jake hefted the blade, and it burst into flame. Satisfied, he placed it carefully on a rack, next to other items he had recently empowered. Soon he would be ready to seek his vengeance.

As he cleaned the forge-soot from his face, Jake recalled how he grew up in a small town deep in the Midwest, hating every moment. The only joy he found was in blacksmithing, working for a local historical museum. His parents disapproved of his learning such a “useless” skill; they wanted him to be an engineer, or something useful and profitable. Jake just enjoyed making things with his own two hands. Working the forge made him feel complete somehow.

One day, as Jake tended the forge by himself, a large, well-built man with a thick black beard entered the shop. He remembered it as though it were yesterday: “You, lad. Who runs this establishment?”

Jake frowned. The man’s speech marked him as a foreigner, probably a Scot, though he couldn’t quite place the accent. He didn’t like the way the man called him “lad.” Jake was nineteen, a man grown! “My manager does, sir. But he’s old at a meeting right now. Something I can do for you?” Jake just wanted him to leave.

“Can ye forge shoes?”

“Shoes?” Jake blinked in confusion.

“Horseshoes, lad. M’ horse threw a shoe and I couldna find the thing. I need ye ta make me a new one, if’n yer master’s nae here ta do it.”

“Well, yeah, I can make horseshoes. You just caught me by surprise, that’s all. Most people who need them mail order their horseshoes. It’s cheaper.”

The man chuckled. “Well, I’m not most people, lad. Come check m’ horse, then get to makin’ that shoe. I have things ta be about, and standing here is’na gettin’ ’em done.”

Jake got to work making the horseshoe. He ended up making a whole set, as the shoes that hadn’t been thrown needed to be replaced. They were severely worn, as if they hadn’t been made to withstand being ridden on pavement. Before he realized it, the set was done and on the horse’s hooves.

“Lad, ye have the knack of forging. What’s yer name?”

“Jake, sir. Jake Sullivan.”

The man smiled. “And yer polite, even when ye’d rather a stranger like me be off and away. Dinna be offended, lad. Yer thoughts were plain

on yer face. Here, take ye this.” He handed Jake a small leather pouch that jingled when he took it.

“What is it?”

“Payment fer a job well done. Dinna open it now; ye’ll know when. And get used ta making things for others, young Jake. Yer good at it, and it’s a terrible skill ta waste.” The bearded man was gone before Jake thought to ask his name.

That night, Jake couldn’t sleep. Restless, he finally got out of bed and went outside. He sat on a stump in the backyard, staring out into the night, when he realized the leather pouch was there on the stump next to him. Jake didn’t remember bringing it out with him, yet there it was. Jake picked it up and opened it without thinking, pulling out the gold coins within.

“Good evening, young Jake.”

Jake yelped in fright, the coins flying everywhere. It was the bearded man, sitting on his horse, suddenly there with no sound of approach.

“Who – who are you?”

“I have been known by many names, Jake. Ye may call me Wayland.”

“What do you want from me?”

Wayland smiled. “I want nothing from ye, lad. Rather, I wish to give ye something. The forging of the horseshoes was but a test. While ye worked, I observed. Ye have a rare talent for making things. Ye put yourself into whatever it is yer makin’, and that’s rare in this day. The smiths of old could make things of power by doing as ye did. Alas, that talent is all but lost now.” He eyed Jake carefully, as though measuring him somehow.

“Will ye learn from me, lad? I can teach ye to imbue magic inta everythin’ ye make. Only a handful in this age have the talent fer it, and yours is the strongest I’ve yet seen. What do ye say lad? Will ye become a true smith?”

“I’d like that. All my parents can talk about is how I should go to college and learn some real skills I can make money with. I don’t care much about making money, really. I just enjoy making things. But I can’t just disappear. What will happen to them if I leave?”

“Well, they’ll miss ye, lad, as all parents do when their sons leave home. They want what’s best for ye, and in this day, that means being wealthy. Once I’ve taught ye, yer talents will be much sought after. Wealth will likely be yours whether ye want it or no.”

Jake grinned, realizing the potential of showing his parents that his own dreams could be of value, despite what they thought. “All right, Wayland. I’ll go with you.

BATTLEFORGE PLOT SEEDS

The largest museum in town is featuring a new exhibit – rare gems from around the world. Security will be extra tight, but Battleforge is confident he and a few friends can get the goods. Will the PCs arrive in time to stop him?

A PC pauses his patrol when someone yells for help from a nearby alleyway. Three street thugs threaten a terrified citizen! When he moves to aid the hapless victim, one of the thugs points a dagger at him – and the dagger shoots a bolt of lightning, knocking the hero through a wall. Where did they get such a dangerous weapon? Has Battleforge lowered his prices? Or is a more dire plot about to unfold?

Battleforge returns home one night to find his items of power missing. He’s been robbed! Respecting the PCs despite their clashes in the past, he goes to them for help in reclaiming his property. Will they help him, or seize the chance to bring Battleforge to justice? Who raided his forge, and what all did they get?

“That’s a good lad. Go and collect yer things. Leave yer parents a note, if ye wish, but dinna mention my name or what it is ye’ll be learning. They wouldna understand. Now hurry, lad; time is short.”

Jake spent years in the Land of Legends, learning the art of Artificing. He stayed away from the natives of the Land of Legends as much as he could, fearing them for their strange appearances and practices. Several natives asked Jake to forge items for them, but he refused, saying he was only an apprentice and not ready to accept commissions. But he promised to remember them, and would accept commissions when his learning was done.

Shortly after his 30th birthday, Jake completed his apprenticeship. Wayland returned Jake to his home, where the smith gave him one last instruction.

“Lad, always remember – what I have taught ye is yours. Use it as ye will. There are those in the world who would seek to use ye as a tool for their own ends. Dinna let them. Yer power canna be forced from ye, only bought or given as ye choose or coerced as ye allow. Ye are yer own master now. Dinna allow another to usurp yer free will.”

Wayland’s last lesson echoed in Jake’s mind as he looked over his handiwork. When Dark Seraph heard of Jake’s skill, the villain quickly moved to capture Jake’s skill for his own ends. Jake refused, even when he was forced to watch his parents suffer torture and death at Dark Seraph’s hands. Scoffing at Jake’s tears, the villain released him, promising that Jake would come to serve him freely. Jake promised a silent vengeance.

Jake went into hiding and set up a forge for himself. There he made his armor and weapons, and empowered them from his imagination. He took the name Battleforge and began a personal crusade to destroy Dark Seraph and any others who would usurp his free will.

Personality/Motivation: Battleforge remains very bitter over the deaths of his parents. He left home to develop his skill at smithing and prove to his parents that it was worth learning. Instead, his parents were tortured to death for the skill he learned. Battleforge fully intends to kill Dark Seraph, by any means necessary. This drive for vengeance hardened Battleforge to the point that he became willing to commit crimes in order to gain the strength and resources needed to destroy Dark Seraph.

Battleforge knows that destroying Dark Seraph won’t be easy or swift. In the meantime, he makes items of power for any who will pay his price. Both heroes and villains have improved their arsenals with items he has forged. He also accepts custom orders, and has worked as a

mercenary, making contacts and earning favors. Nearly anyone might find reason to employ Battleforge, but his services don’t come cheap. He sometimes raids warehouses or laboratories for raw materials, especially if he hears of inherently magical materials such as Dwarven silver-steel, adamantine, and orichalcum.

The price Battleforge charges depends largely on the person making the purchase. He will sell to anyone, hero or villain, as long as they have cash. The only people he won’t knowingly sell to are Dark Seraph and anyone associated with DEMON. DEMON once raided his forge for the secrets of making items of power, believing his secret to be arcane in nature rather than inherent skill. Battleforge, upon discovering his ruined workshop, quickly and messily took his revenge, causing immense property damage and making a name for himself as a dangerous villain.

Quote: “Don’t tell me what to do. And if you think you can force me, think again.”

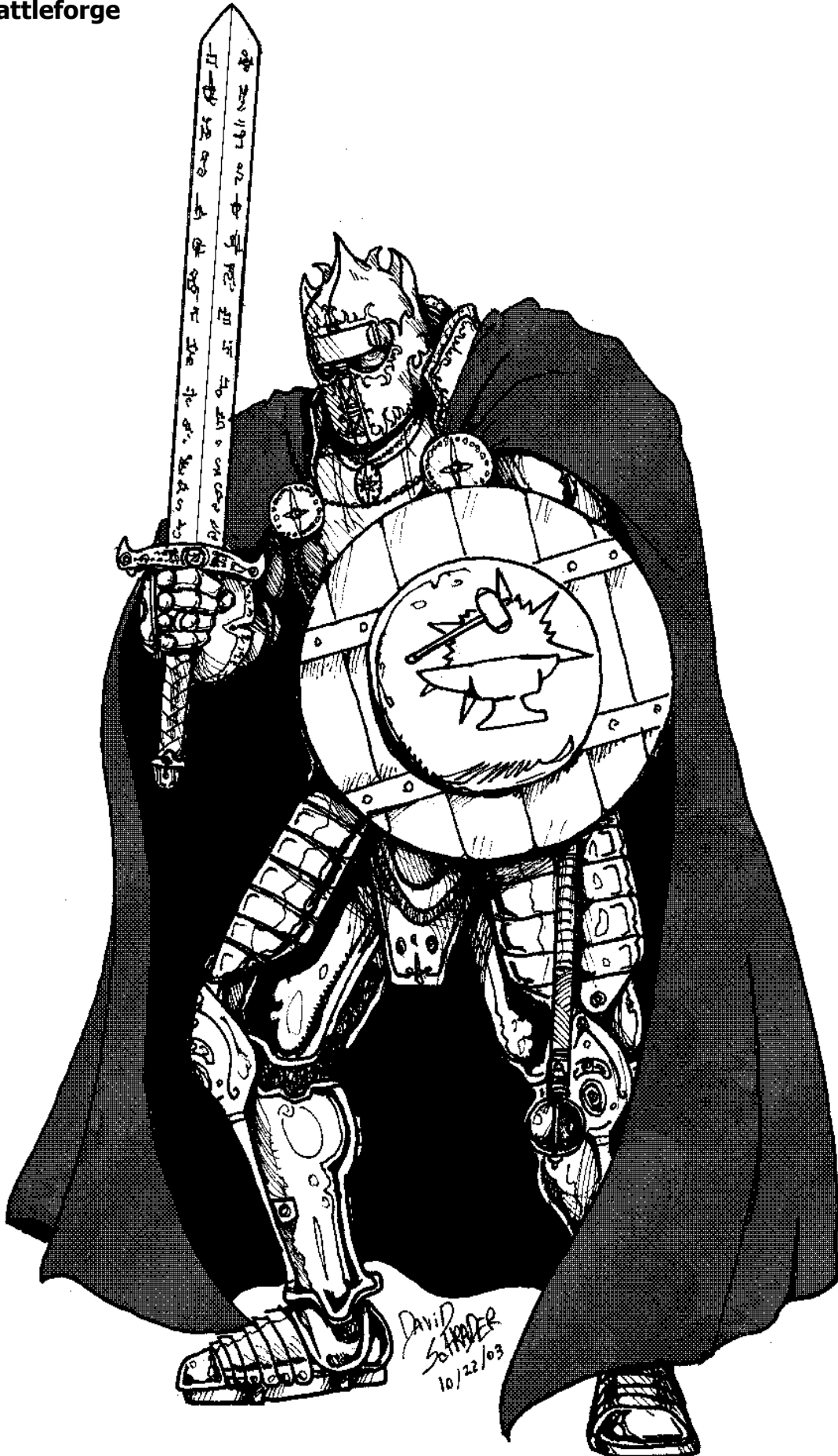
Powers/Tactics: Battleforge’s primary ability is making magic items, or items of power, as he calls them. It isn’t easy, though. He must physically create or forge whatever he wishes to enchant. Then the enchantment process takes at least an hour of concentration. Once he performs an enchanting, it takes a week before he has the energy to enchant something else.

It is suggested the GMs use the *Enchant Item* power as follows: when Battleforge enchants an item, he rolls the 15 dice and adds the total. In addition to determining if the enchanting was successful (by rolling double the target object’s body or more), the roll indicates the maximum Real Points that can be spent on building the item. The maximum Active Point value is recommended to be 90, the maximum possible roll on 15d6. GMs may wish to waive that if a specific plot calls for a more powerful item.

Any points not used are lost, and he can create any sort of powers in the item he desires. He prefers Multipowers (like his Flaming Sword and Wand of Day and Night), items with multiple powers outside of a Power Framework (like his Plate Armor of Glory) and single power items (like his Helm of Defense and Ring of Phasing). Though not reflected in a Limitation, GMs should disallow Battleforge from making Variable Power Pool items, unless required for a specific plot.

Anyone buying something from Battleforge must either pay Character Points for the item (in addition to whatever monetary price Battleforge charges), or be able to fit it in a Power Framework of some kind. Battleforge can use any item he has made without paying points for it, unless he begins using it on a regular basis. In that case, he must pay points for it, as he did for his current equipment. GMs who wish for Battleforge to keep

Battleforge



Battleforge

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25+20	STR	15+10*#	14-/18-	Lift 800kg/12½ tn; 5d6/9d6 [2/4]
15+5	DEX	15+7*#	12-/13-	OCV: 5/7/
20+10	CON	20+10*#	13-/15-	DCV: 5/7
15	BODY	10	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll: 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
20+5	PRE	10+3*	13-/14-	PRE Attack:
14	COM	2	12-	4d6/5d6
10	PD	5		Total: 30 (20rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 28 (20rED)
3+2	SPD	5+13*		Phases: 4, 8, 12/ 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	REC	2		
40	END	0		
40	STUN	2		* OIF (Armor; -½) # No Figured (-½)

Total Characteristics Cost: 143

Movement: Running: 10"/20"
Teleport: 15"/30"

Cost Powers END

- 35 *Enchant Item:* Major Transform
15d6 (item into enchanted item, heals back by Dispel vs. magic or anti-magic field), Improved Result Group (any enchantment, see text; +½); Limited Target (items Battleforge has personally made; -½), 1 Charge (-2), Charge Takes 1 Week to Recover (-½), Costs Endurance (-½), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Concentration (0 DCV, must Concentrate throughout; -1), No Range (-½), Roll Result is Maximum Real Points Available to be Spent on Item with Maximum of 90 Active Points (-¼), Points Not Used Are Lost (-¼) [1],34
- 30 *Flaming Sword:* Multipower, 60-point reserve; all OAF (-1)
- 3u 1) *Flaming Blade:* HKA 2d6 (3d6+1 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OAF (-1) 3
- 3u 2) *Flame Blast:* EB 12d6; OAF (-1), 12 Boostable Charges (-0) [12bc]
- 25 *Wand of Day and Night:* Multipower, 50-point reserve; all OAF (-1)
- 2u 1) *Day-Burst:* Sight Group Flash 10d6; OAF (-1), 8 Boostable Charges (-¼) [8bc]
- 1u 2) *Day-Light:* Sight Group Images, Increased Size (16" radius; +1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Only to Create Light (-1) 0

- 2u 3) *Night-Shroud:* Darkness to Sight Group 4" radius, Personal Immunity (+¼); OAF (-1), 8 Charges lasting 1 Turn each (removed by light-based powers; -½) [8cc]
- 24 *Ethereal Crossbow:* RKA 3d6, Affects Desolidified (+½); OAF (-1), 8 Charges (-½), No Knockback (-¼) [8]
- 9 *Shocking Gauntlets:* HA +4d6 (affects ED, not PD); Hand-to-Hand Attack (-½), OIF (-½), 8 Boostable Charges (-¼) [8bc]
- 30 *Plate Armor of Glory:* Armor (12 PD/12 ED), Hardened (+¼); OIF (-½) 0
- 31 *Helm of Defense:* Force Field (8 PD/8 ED/5 Sight Group Flash Defense/5 Mental Defense/5 Power Defense), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½) 0
- 10 *Shield of Deflecting:* +4 with DCV; OAF (-1) 0
- 30 *Amulet of Phasing:* Teleportation 15", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½) 0
- 15 *Ring of Hiding:* Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); IAF (-½), Only When Not Attacking (-½) 0
- 8 *Fast Runner:* +4" Running (10" total) 2
- 15 *Magic Sense:* Detect Magic 12-, Discriminatory, Range 0

Skills

- 32 +4 with Combat
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Mechanics 12-
- 3 SS: Gemology 12-
- 3 SS: Metallurgy 12-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 5 Weaponsmith (Muscle-Powered HTH, Muscle-Powered Ranged) 13-
- 6 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Flails, Staffs
- 3 Jack of All Trades
- 3 1) PS: Jeweler 13-
- 3 2) PS: Leatherworker 13-
- 3 3) PS: Metalworker 13-
- 3 4) PS: Smith 13-
- 3 5) PS: Woodworker 13-
- 3 Scholar
- 1 1) KS: Arcane and Occult Lore 11-
- 1 2) KS: Fantasy 11-
- 1 3) KS: The Mystic World 11-
- 2 4) KS: Weapons and Armor 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 357

Total Cost: 500

DIGITAL HERO #15

200+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only With Unusual Senses)
- 15 Enraged: takes BODY damage (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 11-
- 15 Hunted: Dark Seraph 8- (Mo Pow, Enslave)
- 20 Hunted: DEMON 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Enslave)
- 5 Hunted: Trismegistus Council 11- (As Pow, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Hates Being Manipulated or Coerced (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Hates Dark Seraph and DEMON (Common, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Mercenary, Will Do Almost Anything For Money (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 15 Susceptibility: to anti-magic fields, 3d6 damage per Minute (Uncommon)
- 150 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 500

extra items of power on hand should give him a suitable Variable Power Pool.

Battleforge fights in a fairly straightforward manner. He won't resort to stealth tactics unless he knows he's outmatched or planning an ambush. Ranged combat, however, is his favorite way to start a fight, most often using his Flame Blast or Ethereal Crossbow. If he needs a tactical advantage, he'll create a couple of Night-Shrouds or go invisible. For melee combat, he leads in with his Flaming Blade, and sometimes throws a punch with the Shocking Gauntlet. The sudden switch sometimes draws a Surprise bonus. The Amulet of Phasing is used for strategic maneuvering, the Ring of Hiding for a stealthy retreat.

Campaign Use: Battleforge can be the origin for characters who purchase or otherwise obtain magic items from him. One such character is Shadowspy, a mutant speedster and thief who bought several shadow-based items to complement her mutation.

Battleforge's continuing quest for vengeance against Dark Seraph and (to a lesser degree) DEMON can easily bring him into conflict with the PCs. He stages a raid on most any valuable metal he hears about, especially if it has magical properties. Often he'll hire some villains to help him, if the take is big enough or he expects opposition. On the rare occasion when he wants to get away from the forge and relax, he makes his way to a favorite bar in the city, plays some pool and talks sports with the other patrons.

Any PC with a sense of vengeance might find a bit of sympathy for Battleforge. He came to villainy through tragedy, after all. Had circumstances been different, Battleforge might have become a hero. Who knows? Perhaps he still may.

Heroes who severely cross Battleforge may find themselves regretting it, however. He remembers those who thwart him, and enjoys giving them a sound thrashing later. Those who

insult or actually wound him though, earn his undying enmity. Battleforge creates some deviously unpleasant things in the name vengeance....

Battleforge lives outside of Campaign City, on a small plot of land near a mountain where he set up his second forge after DEMON destroyed his first one. He created a portal to the Land of Legends recently, and charges a moderate fee for its use. He has thought about making portals to other realms, but has not yet done so.

To make Battleforge more powerful, add more items to his arsenal and improve the power of his current items. You might give him a VPP for plot-based items he makes. To trim him down, decrease the power of his items, and have his *Enchant Item* power take a month to recharge.

Appearance: Jake Sullivan is a large, well-built man in his early thirties, over six feet tall, bald with a thick, red beard and green eyes. He normally wears a well-worn leather apron while working at the forge. When out relaxing, he typically wears jeans and a t-shirt.

Battleforge wears plate armor of a late medieval style with a great helm and full, midnight blue cloak. His sword bears runes like any known on Earth, which glow through the flames it creates. The shield appears to be of simple white oak with steel bands, and like the breastplate of his armor, bears his insignia in red – a smith's hammer poised over an anvil with rays of light surrounding them. The armor is surprisingly quiet when Battleforge moves.

The Wand of Day and Night appears to be about 2 feet long, made of blue metal with a large round crystal at the tip. His crossbow and gauntlets appear to be normal, except for runes etched in gold upon them. The Amulet of Phasing depicts a starburst pattern on a gold medallion, while the Ring of Hiding is a simple silver band with runes carved around the surface.



PUTTING THE SLIME IN SLIMER

Ectoplasm is a semi-solid substance said to extrude from the pores and other bodily orifices of a spiritual medium. This material can assume life-like forms, including arms, faces, and entire figures. When extruded, it is warm to the touch, but may have a rubbery or doughy feel. Ectoplasm apparently reacts strongly to bright light, and can only be produced by a medium in a dark or dimly lit room. The production of ectoplasm was a large part of many séances of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Photographic evidence of ectoplasm gives one the impression it is a fairly disgusting substance to encounter, especially when one sees from where ectoplasm was commonly produced. Naturally, skeptics have tried to expose the production of ectoplasm as visual trickery, and small samples of the material, when analyzed, have proved to be ground-up paper or altered animal organs.

Ghost Stories by Michael Surbrook

*“From ghoulies and ghosties,
and long-legged beasties,
and things that go bump in the night;
good Lord deliver us.”*

— Scottish prayer

The belief in ghosts, defined as the spirit (or soul) of someone who has died and is still wandering the earth, is an almost universal concept among all the cultures of the world. According to many belief systems, the soul is released from the body after death and eventually travels to some form of underworld or afterlife. Depending on the culture, there may be a period of time between death and the actual trip to the afterlife in which the soul may remain near its original body. For some tribes of American Indians this was a period of four days; the Chinese, 10 days; for the Japanese this time period can be as long as 42 days; and the Egyptians believed that one portion of the soul, the *ba*, never left the body. If the soul becomes lost, isn't given the proper funeral rites, or never leaves to begin its trip, then it may become a ghost.

According to more modern belief systems, ghosts seem to occur when someone dies suddenly, especially from violence, or if a person dies before some important task can be completed. Other ghosts are said to be the psychic impressions of a person, usually attached to something the person particularly liked (such as a favorite chair or room).

The modern image for the “classic” ghost is a white, sheet-draped figure, usually moaning and howling and accompanied by clanking chains. In reality, most alleged hauntings involve strange sounds and odors, spots of cold, and moving objects. Actual figures are usually hazy, and if clear enough to be identified, are dressed in clothing typical of the time period in which the ghost originally lived. Homer described the ghosts of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as shades, which assumed solid form after being given animal's blood to drink. In Japan ghosts are said to have no feet, while Chinese ghosts are said to lack their chin.

Skeptics have pointed out that many ghosts and other alleged hauntings have natural explanations. Many ghosts are witnessed by those in their beds, and in this case the person seeing the ghost is probably still asleep, although they think they are awake. Other ghosts are hallucinations brought on by stress, fear or exhaustion. Still more ghosts may be explained as tricks of the light, clouds of mist or fog, or the manifestation of an electrically charged atmosphere (many ghosts are associated with thunderstorms).

Ghost

Ecology: Being dead, ghosts do not eat, drink, or sleep (at least as humans understand it). They exist simply because of some strong tie to the mortal world. This can be a desire for revenge, a desire to protect their descendants, unfinished business, or an improper burial. Places of extreme violence are commonly inhabited by ghosts. This category includes: battlefields, prisons, hospitals, and torture chambers.

Personality/Motivation: Most ghosts seem to have little free will and simply pantomime a series of actions repetitively every night (or on specific nights). Others may have strong desires relating to their existence as a ghost. For example, the ghost of a murder victim may wish to have its body uncovered and properly buried, the ghost of a miser may stand guard over its buried treasure, while the ghost of a faithful dog may eternally await the return of its master, and so on. Some ghosts seem to have a certain degree of intelligence. These ghosts may take action against those who disturb their rest and residence. Others may become protective of those who live near them. In general, it is impossible to create a blanket set of desires for a ghost, as their personalities are so variable.

Powers/Tactics: Ghosts don't engage in open combat, instead they tend to harass and menace anyone to whom they have taken a disliking. This harassment often takes the form of strange noises, cold spots around the house (or other buildings), and the movement of objects. Some ghosts may actively throw objects about, often doing so when a specific person is in the room with them. This poltergeist activity can reach extreme proportions in some cases, and can include the hurling of heavy objects, breaking fragile ones, emptying drawers, moving furniture, and opening and closing doors.

Other ghostly powers include the ability to extrude an eerie aura. This will disturb cats, dogs and other animals, activate most forms of Danger Sense and generally "spook" those who are easily startled, nervous or sensitive to the spirit world. Ghosts are also known to produce writing and other symbols on walls, the floor, and blank slates. This "automatic writing" varies greatly in legibility and content, but is usually the only way a ghost can communicate with the living.

As the typical ghost is insubstantial, most conventional attacks will not harm it. If it can be harmed by an attack of some sort, it seems likely the average ghost would flee the local area as quickly as possible.

Campaign Use: The write-up presented here is for a fairly generic ghost. It can be used as a template to represent almost any of the ghosts described in this section, especially if you add in any of the optional powers. Note, this template has no skills; it is up to you to determine what (if any) skills a specific ghost had.

As written, the Generic Ghost is well-suited for heroic-level games. It could be used with ease in a *Justice Inc.*, *Fantasy Hero*, *Horror Hero*, or *Western Hero* campaign. When dealing with *Champions* campaigns, you should feel free to discard this template. Ghosts in comics books usually are much more vocal, active, and intelligent than the traditional ghost. Comic book ghosts usually have more (and stranger) powers as well.

Appearance: When manifesting a visual presence, a ghost is usually a filmy translucent figure. It may (or may not) have any sort of definitive shape, and often lacks facial features. Humanoid ghosts are dressed in a manner fitting the time period in which they lived, while shapeless ghosts often resemble blobs of light or shadows. It should be noted some ghosts take the form of animals (such as dogs or cats) or vehicles (phantom ships and carriages are common).



Ghost

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
0	STR	-10	9-	Lift 25 kg; 0d6 HTH [0]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
10	CON	0	11-	
8	BODY	-4	11-	
5	INT	-5	10-	PER Roll: 10-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
6	COM	-2	10-	
2	PD	2		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
2	REC	0		
20	END	0		
15	STUN	2		

Total Characteristics Cost: 32 (+10 w/ NCM)

Movement: Running: 0"/0"
Flight: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
43	<i>Poltergeist Effect:</i> TK (10 STR), Affects Physical World (+2), BOECV (+1), Invisible To Sight Group (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Affects Whole Object (-1/4), No Range (-1/2)	0
60	<i>Insubstantial Form:</i> Desolidification (affected by magic), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Inherent (+1/4); Always On (-1/2)	0
15	<i>Insubstantial Form:</i> Does Not Bleed	0
50	<i>Undead Vitality:</i> Life Support: Total (including Longevity: Immortality)	0
8	<i>Single-Minded:</i> Mental Defense (12 points)	0
10	<i>Insubstantial Form:</i> No Hit Locations	0
24	<i>Floating About:</i> Flight 6", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2)	0
-12	<i>Only "Flies":</i> Running -6"	
-2	<i>Only "Flies":</i> Swimming -2"	
38	<i>Create Cold Spots:</i> Change Environment 1" radius, -3 Temperature Levels, Affects Physical World (+2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)	0
70	<i>Fearful Presence:</i> Change Environment 4" radius, -5 PRE Roll for resisting effects of the ghost's presence, Affects Physical World (+2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Range (-1/2)	0
94	<i>Mysterious Noises And Smells:</i> Hearing and Smell/Taste Group Images, -5 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (2" radius; +1/4), Affects Physical World (+2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)	0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 398

Total Cost: 430

75+ Disadvantages

- 0 Physical Limitation: Human Size
- 5 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, cannot leap (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 20 Physical Limitation: Tied To The Site Of Its Death Or A Specific Location (Frequently, Fully Impairing)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Single-Minded And Locked Into Habits (Very Common, Strong)
- 310 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 430

OPTIONS

Cost	Optional Ghost Powers	
5	<i>Self-Awareness:</i> INT +5	0
2	<i>Human Appearance:</i> COM +4	0
86	<i>Full Poltergeist Effect:</i> TK (20 STR), Area Of Effect (3" Radius), Affects Physical World (+2), BOECV (+1), Invisible To Sight Group (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Affects Whole Object (-1/4), No Range (-1/2)	0
45	<i>Fading:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2)	0
30	<i>Automatic Writing:</i> Cosmetic Transform 3d6 (blank wall to wall with writing); Affects Physical World (+2), Invisible To Sight Group (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Extra Time (Full Phase; -1/2), No Range (-1/2)	0

Poltergeist

Description: The term “poltergeist” comes from the German words *poltern* (“to knock”) and *geist* (“spirit”). Thus a poltergeist is a “knocking spirit.” Poltergeist cases are a very common form of haunting and usually involve thrown objects, moving furniture, slamming doors and windows, loud and unusual noises, strange smells, and physical assaults. Modern poltergeist cases report such things as phones that dial themselves and spinning light bulbs. In general, the actions of a specific poltergeist can be traced to the presence of a certain person. When that person is present, the poltergeist is active, if the person leaves, the poltergeist is quiet. Statistics show this person to commonly be a female under the age of 20.

In an attempt to explain poltergeist activity, some researchers have offered the theory that the actions are the result of the subconscious use of psychokinesis (*i.e.* telekinesis). As many (but not all) of the people on whom the poltergeist activity is centered are young, it is believed to be a side effect of puberty and stress. One theory states that poltergeist activity is the result of suppressed anger and hostility. Other theories point to spirits of the dead, or the idea that the person under stress projects part of their psyche into an independent being.

Poltergeist

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
0	STR	-10	9-	Lift 25kg; 0d6 HTH [0]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
20	CON	20	13-	
8	BODY	-4	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-
23	EGO	26	14-	ECV: 7
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	4		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	0		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	2		
40	END	0		
20	STUN	2		

Total Characteristics Cost: 75 (+6 w/ NCM)

Movement: Running: 0”/0”
Flight: 6”/12”

Cost	Powers	END
86	<i>Full Poltergeist Effect:</i> TK (20 STR), Area Of Effect (3” Radius), Affects Physical World (+2), BOECV (+1), Invisible To Sight Group (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Affects Whole Object (-¼), No Range (-½)	0
71	<i>Poltergeist Effect:</i> TK (10 STR), Fine Manipulation, Affects Physical World (+2), BOECV (+1), Invisible To Sight Group (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Affects Whole Object (-¼), No Range (-½)	0
60	<i>Insubstantial Form:</i> Desolidification (affected by magic), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Inherent (+¼); Always On (-½)	0
15	<i>Insubstantial Form:</i> Does Not Bleed	0
50	<i>Undead Vitality:</i> Life Support: Total (including Longevity: Immortality)	0
8	<i>Single-Minded:</i> Mental Defense (12 points)	0
10	<i>Insubstantial Form:</i> No Hit Locations	0
24	<i>Floating About:</i> Flight 6”, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½)	0
-12	<i>Only “Flies”:</i> Running -6”	
-2	<i>Only “Flies”:</i> Swimming -2”	
45	<i>Fading:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0
94	<i>Mysterious Noises And Smells:</i> Hearing and Smell/Taste Group Images, -5 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (2” radius; +¼), Affects Physical World (+2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 449

Total Cost: 524

75+ Disadvantages

0	Physical Limitation: Human Size
5	Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, cannot leap (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
20	Physical Limitation: Tied To The Emotional State Of A Specific Person (Frequently, Fully Impairing)
15	Psychological Limitation: Subject To Sudden Mood Swings (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Violent And/Or “Playful” (Common, Strong)
394	Experience

Total Disadvantage Points: 524

Old Hag

The Old Hag is a ghostly creature that comes during the night to “ride” its victims, pressing on the victim’s chest and slowly suffocating him. Interestingly enough, the Old Hag is unique of all the entries in this article in that it is the one thing most likely to have been actually experienced by a reader. The phenomenon of the Old Hag is quite real, although it does not necessarily have a supernatural explanation. The Old Hag effect is caused by a form of sleep paralysis, and may be experienced by as many as one in every six people. In his book *The Terror That Comes in the Night*, David J Hufford describes the Old Hag as follows: “[the] state in which this experience occurs is probably best described as a sleep paralysis with a particular kind of hypnagogic hallucination....” Of course, knowing what the Old Hag effect is still doesn’t make it any less frightening when it occurs.

The Old Hag effect is common to cultures all over the world and the experience of being ridden is invariably described the same way. The Norse blamed these attacks on a creature they called “mara,” which is where we get the term “nightmare” from. To the English, an old hag was the culprit, giving rise to the terms of “hag-ridden” and “haggard.” The Japanese blamed the ghosts of children, who sat on a sleeper’s chest and stole their breath away. The Norse believed in a walking corpse they called the dragur, which could transform itself into a cat. In this form it would sit on a sleeper’s chest, slowly gaining weight until its victim suffocated.

A loose relation to the Old Hag was a demonic creature known as an Incubus. The Incubus was a male demon that came in the night to seduce a woman and enjoy sexual congress with her. The female form of the Incubus was called a Succubus, which seduced men. Some believed the Incubus and Succubus to be one and the same, switching sex depending on their intended victim. Some medieval scholars went even further, stating that the Incubus, being a demon, was incapable of impregnating a woman, and had to gather the needed semen by first seducing a man. In any case, the attack of either an Incubus or a Succubus would leave the victim exhausted, much like the victim of the Old Hag.

Ecology: The Old Hag can be found almost anywhere, in locations all over the world. At night they will leave their lairs (usually located in deserted parts of the countryside) and seek out their prey. They attack those who are sleeping, pressing down on the chest of their target, causing severe pains, general tightness, and troubled breathing. This form of attack is known as “hagging” or “riding.” It is said that pointing one’s shoes away from the bed, hanging a horseshoe over the bed, or keeping lit candles around the bed will keep the Old Hag away.

Old hags are also known by the following names: hag, *mahr*, *mara*, *mare*, nightmare, *zashiki-warashi*.

Personality/Motivation: Old Hags are malicious and evil spirits that come out at night to haunt men. They delight in riding a man to near death and exhaustion and are even known to attack the local livestock in the same manner.

Powers/Tactics: The Old Hag attacks its victims while they are sleeping. It enters into their bedroom and then fixes them with a fear so intense they are rendered unable to move. At this point the Old Hag will ride its victim, suffocating its target and leaving them feeling weary and drained. If uninterrupted, the hag can and will ride its victim to death. However, the hag only attacks one victim a night, and if the victim is able to break paralysis (or is moved by a friend or loved one) the hag’s control is broken and she will be forced to flee (for the moment...).

Campaign Use: Old Hag is best suited for fantasy or horror settings, although it could easily be used in pulp or superhero settings. With a little bit of modification it could even be used in a science fiction setting, especially if one decided to treat it as a form of psionic vampire.

Appearance: An Old Hag normally appears as an old woman, although its face is horrifying to behold. Its approach is heralded by the sound of footsteps followed by a great weight pressing on the victim’s chest.

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Old Hag

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	16	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
23	EGO	26	14-	ECV: 8
35	PRE	25	16-	PRE Attack: 7d6
2	COM	-4	9-	
10	PD	5		Total: 10 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
9	REC	0		
36	END	0		
32	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 106 (+26 w/ NCM)

Movement:

Running:	6"/12"
Flight:	12"/24"
Leaping:	5"/10"
Swimming:	0"/0"

Cost Powers **END**

- 16 *Paralyzing Fear*: Mind Control 12d6, Telepathic (+1/4); One Charge (-2), No Range (-1/2), Set Effect ("Stay with me"; -1), Mind Control Effects are Automatically Dispelled if the Victim Moves or is Moved (-1/4) [1]
- 183 *Suffocation*: EB 2d6, NND (Defense is No Need to Breathe, or Self-Contained Breathing; +1), Affects Physical World (+2), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); No Range (-1/2), Only Affects Victims Under Mind Control (-1/2) **plus Riding**: Transfer 1d6 (Target's BODY to Character's BODY), Delayed Return Rate (5 Character Points per Season [3 months]; +3), Affects Physical World (+2), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Linked (to EB; -1/4) **plus Riding**: Transfer 1d6 (Target's END to Character's END), Delayed Return Rate (5 Character Points per Hour; +1), Affects Physical World (+2), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Linked (to EB; -1/4) 0
- 47 *Undead Vitality*: Life Support: Total (except for Diminished Eating, including Longevity: Immortality) 0
- 36 *Floating About*: Flight 12", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) 0
- 2 *Doesn't Swim*: Swimming -2" (Total 0") 0



- 100 *Insubstantial Form*: Desolidification (affected by magic), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Inherent (+1/4) 0
- 5 *Can See In The Dark*: Night Vision

Skills

- 4 +2 OECV with Mind Control
- 3 Concealment 12-
- 7 Shadowing 14-
- 7 Stealth 14-
- 3 Tracking 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 409

Total Cost: 515

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Physical Limitation: Dispelled (forced to flee) if Mind Control is Broken (Infrequent, Fully)
- 0 Physical Limitation: Human Size
- 15 Physical Limitation: Restricted by Certain Talismans (Infrequent, Fully)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Malicious; Enjoys Tormenting Humans (Very Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: nighttime horror 8- (Extreme)
- 380 Experience

Total Disadvantage Points: 515



Baron Roberto by W. Ross Watson

Background/History: Little is known of Baron Roberto's past. The son of an obscure Spanish nobleman, Roberto mysteriously took over his father's estate a little over thirty years ago. In that time he's been married and has a daughter, but there is no sign of his spouse. UNTIL files propose that she sought, and was granted, a divorce, but PRIMUS believes that Roberto killed her in a fit of rage. Whatever the truth, Roberto's next step was to ally himself with the most powerful supervillains the world has ever known. (Exactly who makes up the elite group is up to the GM.)

The origin of the Baron's powers is similarly a mystery. UNTIL analysts believe he may be a mutant, who honed his abilities over the decades to razor-sharpness. PRIMUS has reports that Roberto's powers were "created" in him by another supervillain, identity unknown, who tampered with the Baron's DNA.

UNTIL has a file on Roberto's daughter, known as The Magician, who is a minor supervillain in her own right. Roberto's lackey Ivan the Terrible likewise is noted in most agencies' (such as PRIMUS and UNTIL) records.

Roberto's Spanish estate was seized by authorities shortly after his debut as a supervillain, but his noble title has never been revoked.

(Baron Roberto's background is purposefully left vague in order for GMs to have free reign in order to incorporate a character as powerful as the Baron into their campaigns.)

Personality/Motivation: Baron Roberto is a man who exists to make things interesting. He believes in changing the world, for the betterment of himself. He also believes in being proactive as opposed to reactive. He rarely hatches a plan or plot of his own. He is more often encountered enforcing the edicts of other elite supervillains and acting as an able assistant to a world-class villain like Doctor Destroyer.

Roberto loves his daughter, The Magician, but rarely shows his affections beyond regular correspondence. He respects power and courage. An honorable hero will gain Roberto's attention, for there is enough of the Spanish nobleman left inside to make Roberto return the favor.

One thing he does not tolerate is being manipulated or tricked. He feels that he has earned his position as a preeminent supervillain, and being toyed with or betrayed ensures that he will become an implacable enemy. Roberto may even end up assisting the superheroes if he feels misused by the elite supervillain group!

The elite superhero he's hunting is intended to be left open for a suitable Player Character. Normally, that Player Character would be responsible for Baron Roberto's missing eye, thus explaining the animosity between them.

Quote: "You'll never escape!"

"Your plans have all come to naught."

"Only I will chart the destiny of the world!"

"You heroes have accomplished nothing.

You are a reactive force, responding to whatever the emergency at the time is. You have no vision to change the world."

"I, Baron Roberto, remain the most powerful... challenge me if you dare!"

Powers/Tactics: It should be apparent that Baron Roberto is extremely powerful. In fact, he is intended for play in a very high power campaign. (See the *HERO System 5th Edition*, page 15.) He was created to fill the place of a world-class supervillain's right hand man... Baron Roberto would fit right in at the side of Doctor Destroyer, for example. When an elite supervillain or elite superhero is mentioned, it is intended to represent a hero or villain with enough Character Points to be considered among the world's best.

His follower, Ivan the Terrible, is a normal superheroic level supervillain, and GMs are encouraged write up Ivan however they wish. Ivan should be a messenger boy for Roberto and nuisance to the Player Character group.

Baron Roberto's powers are based on a mastery of the kinetic energies infusing the universe. He can let loose with hideously powerful energy blasts that can destroy nearly anything. He's fully capable of walking into a superhero base and laying it to waste with a wave of his hand. Any hero should feel worried if he is the target of Roberto's kinetic blasts. His kinetic powers also enable him to move at frightening speeds: Roberto can keep up with a speeding car easily, or leap to the top of tall towers, or swim with torpedo-like velocity deep under the ocean.

Strangely, Roberto's stylish suit never seems to be rumpled, not even in the midst of catastrophic superhero combat or gigantic explosions.

Baron Roberto can, with great effort, assume different shapes in order to hide and observe his enemies. He does this only if absolutely necessary, for it requires him to focus his iron will into unflinching concentration, taking control of his own molecules' kinetic force and reshaping it to change forms.

DIGITAL HERO #15

The scientists of the elite supervillain group that he belongs to constructed Roberto's monocle for him. (The GM should come up with a suitable group for his campaign.) The monocle can transmit and receive television signals, allowing Roberto to communicate with his elite group and Ivan whenever he wishes. The monocle can also extrude a small radar dish to see in many different frequencies.

Roberto's most unusual ability is his near-immunity to death itself. Time and again he has been defeated, his enemies assuming he's dead, only to reappear hale and hearty! This ability can be explained by the Baron's total control over his own molecular energy. His body heals all wounds by restructuring the kinetic energies of his atoms, rearranging the molecular chains to re-knit any damage. Much like other great villains (such as Batman's nemesis, the Joker), Roberto's body can rarely be found after his apparent "death."

The Magician, Roberto's daughter, shares a mind link with him. Whenever they communicate, The Magician's shadow morphs into the silhouette of Roberto, and her voice changes to sound like her father's. On Roberto's end of the mind link, there are no apparent changes, however. (The Magician's Mind Link is bought with the Visible Limitation, -¼.)

While Baron Roberto lacks any Susceptibilities or Vulnerabilities, the nature of his powers makes him affected more than other villains by entangles and grabs. Any heroes who live long enough to attempt these kinds of attacks may find them more successful than they might otherwise think.

In battle, Roberto will choose the elite hero he's hunting as a primary target. If that hero is not around, the Baron mixes hand-to-hand combat with ranged blasts, preferring to make every attack a display of power. (The Baron attempts Presence Attacks every other Phase or so, using the "violent action" and "display of powers" benefits constantly.) He prefers to start by putting half his levels into offense and the other half into defense, but is a smart and cunning foe... his levels will switch around depending on who he's fighting. If enraged, he tends to put all his levels into either offense or damage and blast away at range.

Roberto enjoys combat, but even more he likes destruction. Bases or Vehicles are preferred targets for his kinetic blasts. He enjoys using Area Effect blasts to disrupt the battlefield and make the heroes' jobs harder as innocents are put into danger.

Campaign Use: Baron Roberto only Hunts those he deems worthy of his attention... but those who *are* worthy receive his *complete* attention. He prefers to Hunt only elite-level superheroes, formidable foes who can match him and provide a challenge. When he is a Hunter, Baron Roberto focuses his attention on the Hunted when he encounters him, often to the exclusion of whatever mission he is on at the time. However, he rarely seeks Hunteds during his spare time... he has better things to do, such as conquering the world.

To make Baron Roberto more powerful (yikes... you want a *more* powerful villain?) raise the active points in his attack Multipower to 350, add some more Combat Skill Levels, raise his SPD to 8, and add another 10 points of resistant defense to his PD and ED. To scale down Baron Roberto (whew!) lower his attack Multipower's active points to 150, reduce his Combat Skill Levels by 3, and his SPD to 5.

Baron Roberto's primary use in a campaign is to exist as the right-hand man for the campaigns supreme supervillain. While Roberto is capable of creating a world-dominating plot by himself, he prefers not to... it's so much easier to let someone else handle that.

He is the one who will get things moving in a very high-powered campaign, issuing challenges or threats on behalf of his employer, or as a direct assault on the heroes' base in revenge for a defeat.

In a campaign with lots of intrigue and an epic-level story, Roberto may come to assist the heroes as he is manipulated behind the scenes by the schemes of other elite supervillains.

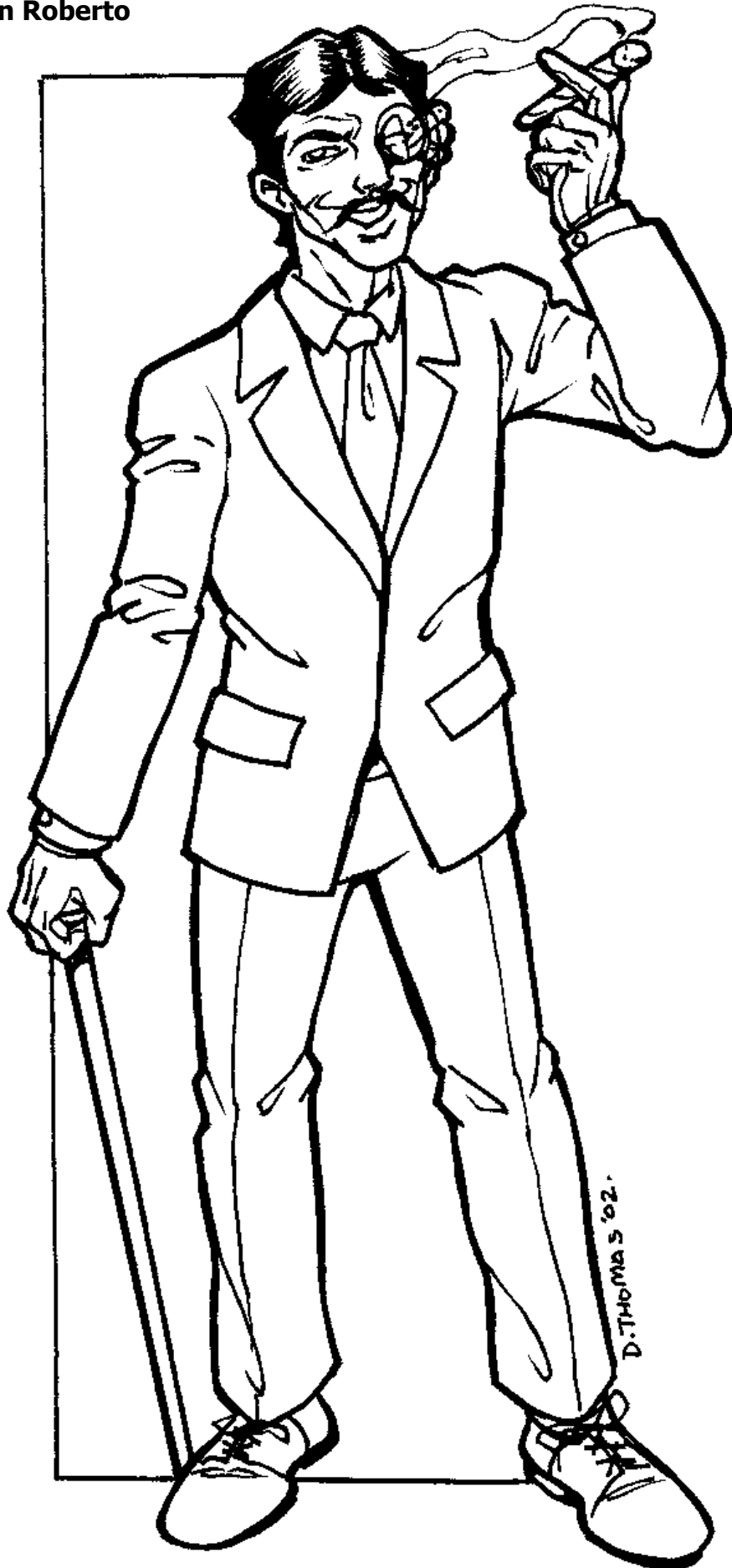
Finally, the link between Roberto and his daughter The Magician could be exploited by a GM. (The character of The Magician is left to the GM to create for his own campaign.)

Any heroes who tangle with The Magician should be prepared for a visit from Roberto. It may not even involve combat... the Baron is likely to offer a meeting for lunch at a posh restaurant if his daughter was not treated badly.

(Baron Roberto was inspired by the character of Lord Alberto from the anime series Giant Robo.)

Appearance: Baron Roberto is a tall, slender man in good shape in his late 40s. Despite hints of grey in his goatee, his hair is otherwise raven black. He has a pencil thin mustache and eyebrows. He is always wearing a very stylish black three-piece suit, with a white undershirt and black tie. A cigar is nearly always clamped between his teeth or held in one hand, and a cybernetic monocle has replaced his right eye. He is very handsome and suave, possessing faintly Spanish features and a light tan to his skin.

Baron Roberto



DIGITAL HERO #15

Baron Roberto

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
27	DEX	51	14-	OCV: 9/DCV: 9
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll: 14-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
18	COM	4	13-	
10	PD	6		Total: 35 PD (25 rPD)
10	ED	6		Total: 45 ED (35 rED)
7	SPD	22		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
15	REC	14		
40	END	0		
60	STUN	20		

Total Characteristics Cost: 223

Movement: Running: 26"/52"
Leaping: 26"/52"
Swimming: 22"/44"

Cost	Powers	END
270	<i>Hyperkinetic Force Manipulation:</i> Multipower, 90-point Reserve, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Variable Advantage (up to +1 Advantages, can only select from a group of four: No Range Penalty, Penetrating, Area Of Effect Radius, Autofire, +1 3/4); Gestures (-1/4)	0
27u	1) <i>Hyperkinetic Blast:</i> EB 18d6; Gestures (-1/4)	0
27u	2) <i>Hyperkinetic Bolt:</i> RKA 6d6; Gestures (-1/4)	0
12u	3) <i>Forceful Fists:</i> HA +12d6 (16d6 with STR); Gestures (-1/4), HA Lim (-1/2)	0
90	<i>Hard to Kill I:</i> Armor (25 PD/35 ED)	0
40	<i>Hard to Kill II:</i> Desolidification (Not versus Electricity), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); Only To Protect Against Attacks That Would Take Him Below 0 BODY (-1)	0
25	<i>Ridiculously Hard to Kill:</i> Healing, 3d6 (Regeneration; 3 BODY per Hour), Resurrection (prevented by finding the body and immersing it in acid), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (3 BODY per Hour, -1), Self Only (-1/2), Resurrection Only (-1/2)	0
120	<i>He's Dead, But Where's the Body?:</i> Invisibility to Hearing, Mental, Radio, Sight, Smell/Taste Groups, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Trigger (when Roberto is at -1 BODY or less, +1/4); Bright Fringe (-1/4), Chameleon (-1/2)	0

40	<i>Hyper Movement:</i> Multipower, 40-point Reserve	
4u	1) <i>Hyper-Running:</i> Running +20" (26" Total)	4
4u	2) <i>Hyper-Leaping:</i> Leaping + 22" (26" Total), Accurate, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2)	0
2u	3) <i>Hyper-Swimming:</i> Swimming +20" (22" Total)	2
8	<i>Cybernetic Monocle:</i> High Range Radio Perception; OIF Durable (-1/2)	0
15	<i>Cybernetic Monocle:</i> Radar, Increased Arc of Perception (360°); OIF Durable (-1/2)	0
3	<i>Cybernetic Monocle:</i> Infrared Perception; OIF Durable (-1/2)	0
3	<i>Cybernetic Monocle:</i> Ultraviolet Perception; OIF Durable (-1/2)	0
15	<i>Immaculate Suit:</i> Cosmetic Transform 2d6 (one set of clothing into a clean, perfectly dry and stylish three-piece suit), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); Limited Target (clothes, -1/2)	1
40	<i>Metamorphic Disguise:</i> Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, Radio, and Touch Groups, any shape), Cellular, Costs END Only to Change Shape (+1/4); Concentration (0 DCV Throughout, -3/4)	6
5	<i>Family Bond:</i> Mind Link with The Magician, Psychic Bond; Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1)	0

Martial Arts: Wing Chun Kung Fu

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 30 STR
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
4 Escape	+0	+0	35 STR vs. Grabs
3 Grab	-1	-1	2 Limbs, 30 STR to Hold
3 Legsweep	+2	-1	5d6 Strike, Target Falls
4 Punch	+0	+2	6d6 Strike

Perks

70	Ivan the Terrible: Follower (350 points)
5	Fringe Benefit: Member of the Aristocracy
5	Fringe Benefit: Member of the Inner Circle of Elite Supervillains
3	Money: Well Off (\$300,000 per year)
8	Reputation: Mastermind-level Incredibly Dangerous Supervillain (The Entire World) +4/4d6

Talents

- 3 Absolute Range Sense
- 15 Combat Sense 13-
- 15 Danger Sense (Self Only, Out of Combat, Intuitional) 13-
- 3 Simulate Death

Skills

- 40 +4 Overall Levels
- 40 +5 with All Combat
- 3 Acrobatics 14-
- 3 Analyze Combat Technique 13-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 3 Deduction 13-
- 10 Full Defense Maneuver
- 3 Gambling 13-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 3 Interrogation 13-
- 3 KS: The Criminal World 13-
- 3 KS: Elite Superhero Organization 13-
- 3 KS: Elite Supervillain Organization 13-
- 3 KS: Kung Fu 13-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 5 Rapid Attack (Hand-to-Hand)
- 5 Rapid Attack (Ranged)
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 3 Systems Operation 13-
- 3 Tactics 13-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 3 Linguist
 - 1 1) Language: English (Fluent, Spanish is native)
 - 1 2) Language: French (Fluent)
 - 1 3) Language: German (Fluent)
 - 1 4) Language: Japanese (Fluent)

200+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Dapper, Debonair One-Eyed Man in a Stylish Suit (Concealable)
- 10 DNPC: The Magician (Roberto's Talented Daughter) 14- (Slightly Less Powerful, Useful Skills)
- 20 Enraged: Enraged in Combat versus the Hero He's Hunting (Uncommon), 14-, 11-
- 20 Enraged: Enraged in Combat with Elite Superheroes (Very Common) 8-, 11-
- 30 Hunted: Superhero Group 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 20 Hunted: Elite Superhero Group 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 10 Hunted: Elite Supervillain Group 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Hunted: Police 11- (Less Pow, NCI, Imprison)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Addicted to Smoking Cigars (Frequently, Slightly)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Hunting Elite Superhero (Uncommon, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Despises Being Manipulated (Uncommon, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Protective of The Magician (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Ambitious (Common, Strong)
- 20 Reputation: Murderous, Master-Class Supervillain 14- (Extreme)
- 10 Rivalry: Professional (with fellow members of Elite Supervillain Group for approval of leader, Rivals outnumber Roberto, Rivals aware of Rivalry)
- 15 Social Limitation: Subject to Orders (Frequently, Major)
- 649 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 1289



Total Powers & Skills Cost: 1066

Total Cost: 1289

Secret Origins

by Michael Satran

Remember the good old days? When good was good and evil was evil, and the secret, yet just forces of the government warred against evil villains too terrible to reveal to the public? That's the way things were in many of the comics of the 1950s and 1960s. Regrettably, the concept of super-prisons hadn't been developed, so many of these terrible criminals were secretly placed in suspended animation, never, in theory, to threaten the world again. This is the story of one of those groups. Behold Doctor Brutallo and the Alliance of Evil! A team of supervillains so horrifying that the government struck their existence from the minds of men, and hid them deep beneath the earth in temporally suspended slumber....

A few words about the era that these villains come from should be mentioned at this point. Many superhero adventures during this time period involved either fighting the communists, or superheroes as secret agents, or some combination thereof. These themes are reflected in the villains below. Because of the fact that the villains are also from the 1950s, there will be some things that the villains consider morally reprehensible and just won't do.

For example, a husband and wife superhero duo with public identities steal a kiss in public. Doctor Brutallo, witnessing this, is shocked, and shows up to offer them membership in The Alliance Of Evil. Real Heroes don't do that sort of thing; therefore, they must be villains. An all-out battle ensues instead, as Doctor Brutallo discovers that the future doesn't share the strict moral code of the '40s and '50s.

As another example, Doctor Brutallo witnesses a hero or villain use language that in the '50s would have been considered foul and unacceptable. He immediately offers them membership in The Alliance Of Evil, assuming that no hero would willingly contribute to the moral depravity of youth, not realizing, of course, that youth is a lot more jaded than it used to be.

Above all, these villains are different than what most of your players have probably seen before. While in some ways they are a standard supervillain team, in others, they are more like a dysfunctional family similar to *Leave It To Beaver* or other 1950s television shows. Watching the villains cope with the changes to the world during the fifty-year gap should be as much fun for your players as it is for the GM running the adventure. There's really not a lot more to be said here, except for Excelsior! Enjoy the ride, True Believers.

SCENARIOS FOR THE ALLIANCE OF EVIL

Mighty Comics: Doctor Brutallo stumbles upon an issue of Mighty Comics, only to discover that he is featured in it, and he hasn't committed the crime within. Only a fool would dare to misrepresent The Alliance Of Evil! Doctor Brutallo begins to seek revenge on Mighty Comics, attacking comic stores, comic book conventions, and kidnapping the editor, demanding redress for the crimes that he has not committed. If the PCs discover the connection between the government and Mighty Comics, they may put two and two together, and discover the secrets of the Super Six, and what the government actually did.

Digging Up The Dead: In this scenario, only Doctor Brutallo has been awakened, and it's a race against time to stop him before he can reassemble the Alliance of Evil. Suggested order for maximum playability is The Terrible Titanoid, Kanga The Dominator, Atomicus, and The Armageddon Mind. If the group is very powerful, add Brutalloids to taste.

Villain Tutor: Doctor Brutallo decides that younger villains don't know how to really be villains anymore, and sets up classes for them somewhere. Heroes must decide whether to stop him, or hold out hope that he might actually teach them something that might keep them alive a little longer. Alternatively, villains might reject his tutelage, causing some really nasty battles that the heroes might have to stop.

Total Domination: Kanga The Dominator begins taking over criminal organizations in order to rule the world through crime. His mental powers combined with the ruthlessness of Organized Crime make a deadly combination, as well as giving Doctor Brutallo access to a much greater range of illegal equipment.

The Return of Captain Unity: Doctor Brutallo decides that there are no more worthy opponents to face anymore, and decides to resurrect Captain Unity, his greatest enemy, to prove how mighty he is, since the new Captain Unity will serve only Doctor Brutallo. In order to accomplish this, he will need to build a new Dimension Z machine, which will require several extremely expensive parts (though the parts will be slightly smaller than he is used to), and the dead body of Captain Unity.

The Alliance Of Evil



Doctor Brutallo The Most Brilliant Mind on Earth!

Background: Doctor Brutallo was born Nicolai Borodenko, in 1907, to a family loyal to the Tsar, in the outlying reaches of Moscow. As he grew up, he was treated well, and his family discovered that he had something of a brilliant mind, sending him to the best schools available in Moscow for young nobles. But at the age of ten, all that came to an end, and he was spirited out of the country by a faithful servant, watching his parents burn in a proletarian riot as the communists came to power. He would never forgive them....

He fled first to Europe, then to America, just ahead of the communist agents who wanted his blood. Conservative elements in the United States agreed to protect him in exchange for his working on secret government projects regarding mysterious dimensional energies, which he gladly accepted out of fear for his life. By 1935, he was well ensconced as the theoretical director of the top secret Dimensional Project Z. He became best friends with the military attaché, a Carlton Hughes, who he began to confide in as a close friend, the first American he had ever truly felt comfortable around.

Throughout the war, he worked on Dimensional Project Z, always hoping that when the time came, the United States would roll over the Germans and crush the communist threat that he knew to be on the horizon. Several attempts to kidnap him by Nazi superbeings were thwarted by superheroes, and he began to theorize a way that it might be possible to infuse a target with the energy of Dimensional Project Z, granting them superpowers and abilities. Carlton was still there, though he was much older, and slowly, the government began to cut funding to the Dimension Z project, as the war had ended.

Doctor Borodenko pressed on as funding slowed to a crawl, his friend Carlton carrying him onward as his health began to fail from the dangerous radiation experiments he was conducting, unable to afford the funding for shielding against the lethal radiation. Slowly, members of the project began to turn against him, suspecting him of being a communist and maintaining Soviet Sympathies, even though that was the furthest thing from his highly rational mind, though slowly, Carlton had begun to suspect that his friend had suffered from the radiation, and was slowly going mad. In December of 1945, shortly after the war was over, Nicolai Borodenko, in a laboratory bereft of assistants, decided to activate the Dimension Z Device, and prove to the world that his research for fifteen long years had not been in vain. Carlton tried to stop him, in a struggle that carried the two men far beyond camaraderie, but

the Dimension Z Project activated with a terrible, ratcheting shudder.

The explosion transformed Carlton into a paragon of Justice, physically perfect, handsome, and powerful, capable of projecting eyeballs of the strange Dimension Z energy. Doctor Borodenko apparently disappeared in the explosion, hurled through the wall in a fit of quantum light. Outside, he discovered that something wonderful had happened to him. He understood all there was about Dimension Z, and more concepts filled his mind at an astounding rate. He mastered fields at which he was a novice in seconds, putting together concepts he never could have before. Then he howled in agony as he stared into a car mirror, at the apish, devolved face that stared back at him from the light of the window. Seeing Carlton's perfection in the light of the window, he grew filled with rage. The Dimension Z energy had evolved his mind, and devolved his body. How could he, the brilliant Doctor Nicolai Borodenko, be transformed into this horrible apelike creature, while his weak-minded assistant had received the true powers of Dimension Z? He had become a monster! Fleeing into the night while Carlton repaired the burning laboratory, he vowed revenge on the small-minded and the puny who had forced him into this. If he had become a brute, then he would become the noblest brute ever. With his brilliant mind, he would rule the world! And thus, Doctor Brutallo was born.

The battles between Doctor Brutallo and Captain Unity, as Carlton now called himself, quickly escalated into open warfare, which the government strove hard to keep quiet in light of the developing situation with the Soviet Union. As Doctor Brutallo acquired allies, built robots, and stole the wealth of ancient civilizations, hiding it for his own evil purposes, Captain Unity recruited superbeings of his own in the secret war against the forces of Evil. Several times, Doctor Brutallo nearly triumphed in taking over the world, once in a very public way. To cover up the fact that Doctor Brutallo was real, the United States Government created Mighty Comics in 1949, and called the whole thing a publicity stunt. Mighty Comics was very successful, featuring "The Secret Adventures of Captain Unity and the Super Six." The false adventures were almost more bizarre than Brutallo's real plans, though some of the villains that the Super Six faced were either real, or parodies of the enemies of other superteams.

In 1951, the Super Six cornered Doctor Brutallo and the Alliance of Evil, as Brutallo now called his allies and minions, deep inside an abandoned Salt Mine in Southern Virginia, and Doctor Brutallo was defeated, just before he could activate his sinister Seismotron. The villains were too dangerous to keep in a standard

PLOT SEEDS

Russia Redux:

Russian Agents contact Brutallo, now that the menace of communism is over, and ask him to work for his old country. Brutallo accepts, but is he sincere, or is it really a sinister step in his latest plan to take over the world?

Doctor Brutallo Falls in Love: (with one of the PCs, of course.) Brutallo's affections are sincere, although he faces two major obstacles in pursuing the object of his desire. One, he's still evil, and he will attempt to prove his love for the PC by doing things like stealing national monuments and delivering them to her, capturing her enemies and reprogramming their minds, and vowing to conquer the world in her name (always bad for a stalwart hero's reputation). Two, Brutallo is hideously ugly, and this obstacle is probably far more difficult than the first.

Doctor Brutallo Dies!: In the course of a combat with the PCs, or even with NPCs, Brutallo is killed. At his funeral, a cryptic note is received that indicates that Brutallo might still be alive. Has the most brilliant mind on Earth faked his death, or is a sinister imposter out there, somewhere...?

prison, but Captain Unity, unable to put his old friend in jail, hoped that the future would find a way to deal with the villains properly. Placing them in specially designed suspended animation capsules of Doctor Brutallos's own design, Doctor Brutallos and the Alliance of Evil were buried deep beneath the earth, never to be seen again. Or so they thought....

The Present... A group of construction workers breaking ground for a new housing project drilled slowly downward, testing for surface stability, broke into the cavern housing Doctor Brutallos's suspended animation capsule, pushed slowly towards the surface of the earth by a massive explosion caused by a super-battle in the mountains some years before. The capsule opened, to the shock and surprise of the workers, to reveal Doctor Brutallos, clad in a yellow jumpsuit. When he told them of his plans to recover his might, and rule the world, they laughed at the ape-man, as he stomped down the road. How much of a threat could he really be...?

Quote: "You may think my apish countenance foolish, but know that you face the most brilliant mind on earth, in this or any century! Face Doctor Brutallos, dolt! And know that your powers are no match for his ultimate genius!"

"Know that you are doomed, at the hands of the (fill in the appropriate thing here, followed by a dramatic pause) ...of Doctor Brutallos!"

Author's Note: This led to several comments on the part of the players of the playtest scenario such as "We have disabled The Jeep ...of Doctor Brutallos," and "Observe ...The Line Drawing of Doctor Brutallos," not to mention the ominous "The Flowers ...of Doctor Brutallos" which deserves special mention here.

Powers/Tactics: Doctor Brutallos was the most brilliant mind of his time, but even in the modern era, his brilliance shines in devious and terrible ways. Doctor Brutallos's gadgets cannot be affected by electromagnetic pulses, since all of his devices still work on vacuum tubes composed of the mysterious element he created himself, Brutonium. He carries a Brutonium battery back on his belt to power his mysterious devices. His goal is to rule the entire world, and nothing less will satisfy him. His tactics are typical of an evil genius, though he will follow the code of villainy to the letter. Even in suspended animation, his brilliant mind functioned, building and designing weapons of subtle power as well as brute force. If a character has a weakness, Doctor Brutallos will exploit it with a device located somewhere in his awesome arsenal. He deliberately builds devices to exploit the strengths of his teammates, the Titanoid, Atomicus, Kanga the Dominator, and the

Armageddon Mind. Once Doctor Brutallos discovers that no one uses Vacuum Tubes anymore, he will find this vastly amusing and continue to use them, as everyone will continue to be afraid of electromagnetic pulses...but him.

Appearance: Doctor Brutallos appears to be a Cro-Magnon apish man, hairy and stunted, with long arms and bow legs, wearing a yellow jumpsuit covered with devices, as well as a belt to hold up the pants of the jumpsuit. On his head is an old style helmet with a large side pod for a radio, and his eyes are concealed behind an ominous visor. His voice is gravelly and rough, and were it not for his intelligence, it would seem to be little more than a piggish grunt.

Campaign Use: In lower powered campaigns, give Doctor Brutallos's gadget pool a half-Phase to change, or even a full Phase, unless he is in a laboratory. Reduce the amount of sciences on his sheet so that he cannot be as effective with the gadget pool. Remove one of his gadget levels as well.

Remember that Doctor Brutallos needs to operate a portion of his defenses out of his gadget pool in a standard campaign, or he will become a super smear.

In high-powered campaigns, increase Doctor Brutallos's gadget pool to 75, 90, or even 120 Active Points. Increase his body armor to 20 PD, 20 ED to give him defense outside of his gadget pool. Whatever devices are most commonly used should be removed from the pool as well, and bought on his standard power listing. Replace the leaping boots with a 25" flight belt, and add 2 Combat Skill Levels.

DIGITAL HERO #15

Doctor Brutallo

The Most Brilliant Mind on Earth!

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	1½ tons, 6d6 HTH [3]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
23	CON	26	14-	
15	BODY	10	11-	
30	INT	20	15-	PER Roll: 15-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
4	COM	-3	10-	
10	PD	4		Total: 15 PD (5 rPD) *
10	ED	5		Total: 15 ED (5 rED) *
5	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
12	REC	2		
46	END	0		
50	STUN	8		

Total Characteristics Cost: 178

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 20"/40"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
100	<i>Gadget Pool:</i> VPP, 60-point Reserve, 0 Phase to Change (+1); OIF (-½)	var.
13	<i>Power Cells:</i> END Reserve (100 END, 10 REC); OIF (-½)	0
13	<i>Jump Boots:</i> Leaping +14" (20" Total), Accurate; OIF (-½)	4/2
10	<i>Reflective Jumpsuit:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED); OIF (-½)	0
8	<i>Helmet Radio:</i> High Range Radio Perception, OIF (-½)	0
19	<i>Helmet Visor:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense, 10 Points; OIF (-½) plus Infrared Perception; OIF (-½) plus Nightvision; OIF (-½) plus Ultraviolet Vision; OIF (-½)	0
13	<i>Helmet Radar:</i> Radar, 360°, OIF (-½)	0
4	<i>Extreme Longevity:</i> LS: Increased Aging (800 Years)	

Talents

- 5 Eidetic Memory
- 3 Lightning Calculator
- 6 Speed Reading; 100x Rapid

Perks

- 50 *Headquarters Deep in the Mountains of Peru:* Base (250 Points)
- 60 *Brutaloids:* 16 Followers (100 Base + 100 Disadvantages)
- 10 *Treasure of the City of Gold:* Wealth: Multimillionaire

Skills

- 10 +1 Overall Level
- 10 +2 OCV with Gadgets

- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 3 Computer Programming 15-
- 3 Concealment 15-
- 3 Cryptography 15-
- 3 Deduction 15-
- 3 Demolitions 15-
- 3 Disguise 13-
- 3 Electronics 15-
- 15 Gadgeteering 20-
- 3 Inventor 15-
- 3 Lockpicking 14-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 3 PS: Scientist 15-
- 10 Weaponsmith (All) 15-
- 3 Linguist
 - 3 1) English (Idiomatic, Russian is Native)
 - 3 2) Arabic (Idiomatic)
 - 3 3) Cantonese (Idiomatic)
 - 3 4) French (Idiomatic)
 - 3 5) German (Idiomatic)
 - 3 6) Hindustani (Idiomatic)
 - 3 7) Polish (Idiomatic)
- 3 Scientist
 - 2 1) SS: Anthropology 15-
 - 2 2) SS: Archaeology 15-
 - 2 3) SS: Biochemistry 15-
 - 2 4) SS: Biology 15-
 - 2 5) SS: Biophysics 15-
 - 2 6) SS: Botany 15-
 - 2 7) SS: Chemistry 15-
 - 2 8) SS: Dimensional Physics 15-
 - 2 9) SS: Exobiology 15-
 - 2 10) SS: Genetics 15-
 - 2 11) SS: Inorganic Chemistry 15-
 - 2 12) SS: Mathematics 15-
 - 2 13) SS: Medicine 15-
 - 2 14) SS: Metallurgy 15-
 - 2 15) SS: Nuclear Physics 15-
 - 2 16) SS: Physics 15-
 - 2 17) SS: Organic Chemistry 15-
 - 2 18) SS: Pharmacology 15-
 - 2 19) SS: Robotics 15-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 480

Total Cost: 658

200+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Apelike Humanoid (Concealable, Major Reaction)
- 10 Enraged: when Plans Thwarted (Uncommon), go 8-, recover 11-
- 20 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Megalomania (Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code of Villainy, Always Captures Hero, Puts in Deathtrap, Tells him his plan, etc... (Common, Total)

- 10 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Vulnerability: 2x STUN and BODY from Dimensional Energy Attacks (Uncommon)
- 323 Experience Points

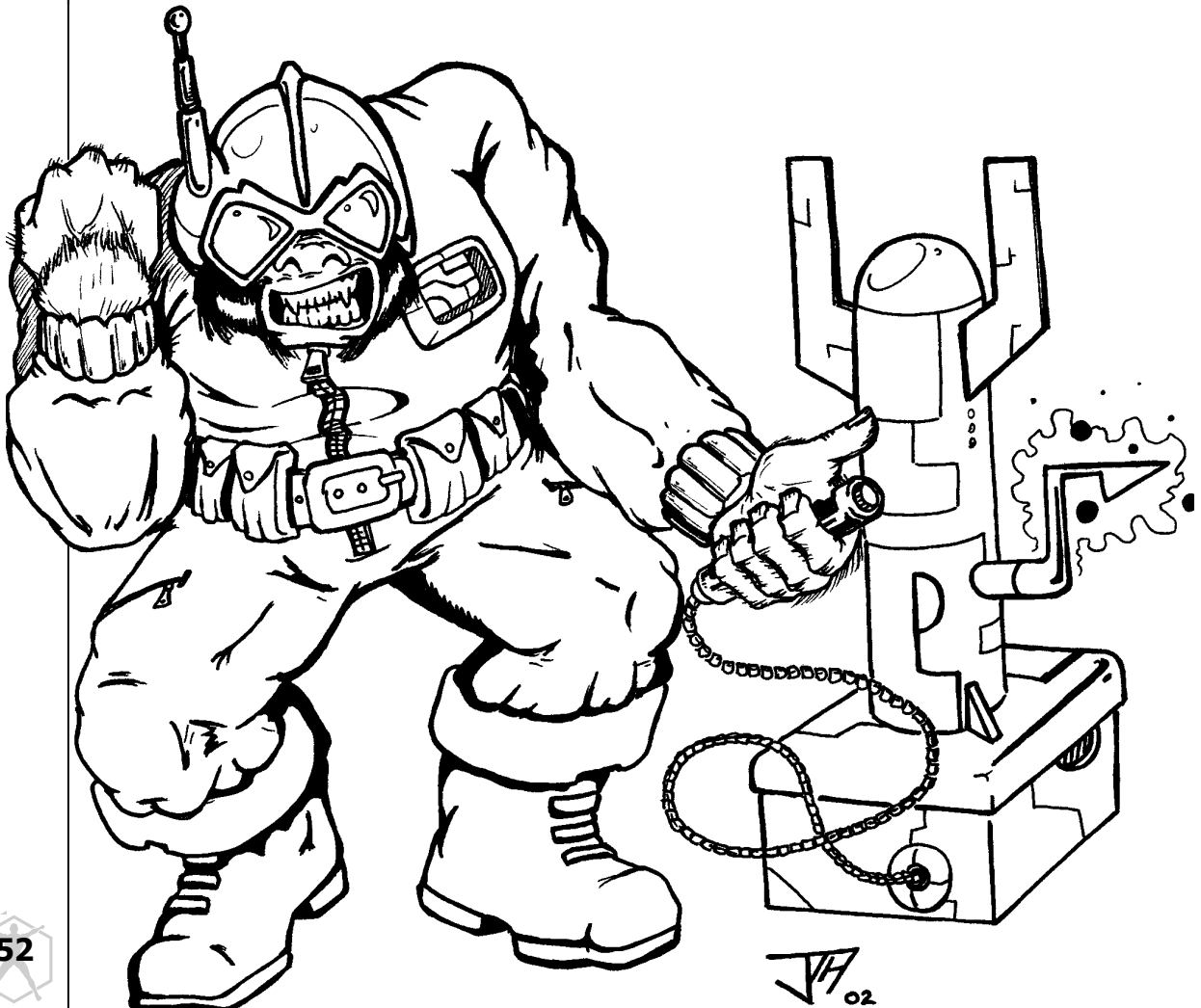
Total Disadvantage Points: 658

**DEVICES FROM THE GADGET POOL
...OF DOCTOR BRUTALLO!**

- 30 *Hypno-Ray*: Mind Control 12d6; OAF (Device makes a "Mwoom-Mwoom-Mwoom" Noise, -1) 6
- 16 *Force Field Belt*: Force Field (10 PD/10 ED), Reduced Endurance (1/2 END, +1/4); OIF (-1/2) 1
- 25 *Neural Disruptor Grenades*: Drain DEX 2d6, Ranged (+1/2), Resetting Trigger (+1/2), Returns 5 points per Minute (+1/4), Personal Immunity (+1/4); 16 Charges (He will only ever use 15, due to the way the rules on Gadget Pools work, -0), OAF (-1) 0

- 30 *Plasma Amplifier Pistol*: EB 12d6; OAF (-1) 6
- 30 *Neural Disruption Ray-Gun*: Drain DEX 4d6, Ranged (+1/2), OAF (-1) 6
- 30 *Gyrojet Pistol*: RKA 4d6; OAF (-1), 8 Charges (Only uses 7, -1) 0
- 24 *Psychic Field Rifle*: Drain EGO 3d6, Area Of Effect (6" Cone, +1), OAF (-1), No Range (-1/2) 6
- 30 *Dimension Z Field*: Entangle 8 DEF, 4d6 BODY; OAF (-1) 6
- 15 *The Dreaded Seismotron of Doctor Brutallo*: RKA 1d6, Area Of Effect Hex (+1/2), Uncontrolled (+1/2), Continuous (+1), Penetrating (+1/2), Sticky (+1/2); Doesn't Work against Living Beings or Their Equipment (-1), OAF (-1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Hour (-0), Immobile (A city-destroying device, which slowly expands outward from the central hex. More hexes touch each other on each of Doctor Brutallo's Phases, slowly crumbling buildings and leveling everything in sight, -1).

**Doctor Brutallo
The Most Brilliant Mind on Earth!**



The Brutaloids

Background: In his quest to battle Captain Unity and the forces of Justice, Doctor Brutallo created the inexorable Brutaloids. Loyal soldiers in the secret war, they battle endlessly in the name of Doctor Brutallo.

Quote: None, Brutaloids don't speak.

Powers/Tactics: The Brutaloids have one tactic. Leap into battle and smash. They are not very intelligent, but do make good shock troops, which is what Doctor Brutallo uses them for.

Appearance: The Brutaloids look like dull, grey, faceless humanoids, with three fingers on a hand and absolutely no distinguishing body parts. The closest description of their appearance would be Jack Kirbyesque, faceless tofu-men.

Campaign Use: In a lower-powered campaign, remove the Brutaloids' Combat Skill Levels, reduce their Mental Defense to 10 points, and subtract their Power Defense entirely. Lower their Strength to a 35, and their defenses to 12.

In a higher-powered campaign, add two more Levels with Punch, Grab, and Haymaker, increase their Mental Defense to 25 points, and Power Defense to 15 points. Raise their Strength to 60, and their PD and ED to 22.



The Brutaloids

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
45	STR	35	18-	Lift 12½ tons, 9d6 HTH
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
23	CON	26	14-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll: 11-
5	EGO	-10	10-	ECV: 2
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
				Total: 15 PD (10 rPD)
15	PD	6		Total: 15 ED (10 rED)
15	ED	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
4	SPD	12		
14	REC	0		
46	END	0		
45	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 100

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 15"/30"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Android "Skin":</i> Damage Resistance, 10 PD, 10 ED	0
16	<i>Android Mind:</i> Mental Defense, 16 points	0
10	<i>Android Body:</i> Power Defense, 10 points	0
27	<i>Android Body:</i> Life Support: Does Not Age, Self-Contained Breathing, Safe Environments: Cold, Heat, Radiation, Vacuum, High Pressure	0
11	<i>Android Legs:</i> Leaping +6" (15" Total), Accurate	1
20	<i>Android Radar:</i> 360° Radar	0
Skills		
6	+2 with Punch, Grab, and Haymaker	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 100

Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Feature: Faceless Robotoid (Concealable, Major Reaction)
- 20 Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal to Doctor Brutallo (Common, Total)
- 30 Vulnerability: 1½ x STUN and BODY from Electricity (Common)

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

PLOT SEEDS

Discovery: A group of construction workers uncovers Doctor Brutallo's secret Brutaloid Factory! Can the PCs get inside and disable it before Doctor Brutallo arrives to make more?

Genesis: A group of Brutaloids develop independent thinking and tactics, and split from Doctor Brutallo, waging war on him for imprisoning their fellow Brutaloids. This causes lots of property damage, and since all Brutaloids basically look alike, chaos ensues.

PLOT SEEDS

Rampage: The Titanoid goes on a rampage, and the heroes have to stop it, but something goes horribly wrong, and it breaks open a genetics facility. Can the heroes stop the Titanoid before it spreads a deadly virus?

Into the Titanic Realm: The Titanoid is found unconscious in the desert, and emitting strange waves of Dimension Z radiation. When the characters approach the Titanoid, they are transported to a place where they are all giants, and everyone around them is very tiny. How will the players cope when *they* are treated as they treated the Titanoid in his previous plot seed? How will they get home?

The Terrible Titanoid

Background: Soon after Doctor Brutallo's first evil plan was foiled by Captain Unity, he realized that the reason for his defeat had been Captain Unity's superior physical strength. Regrettably, he was not the physical superior of Captain Unity, and so he was forced to resort to other means of dealing with the flying sentinel.

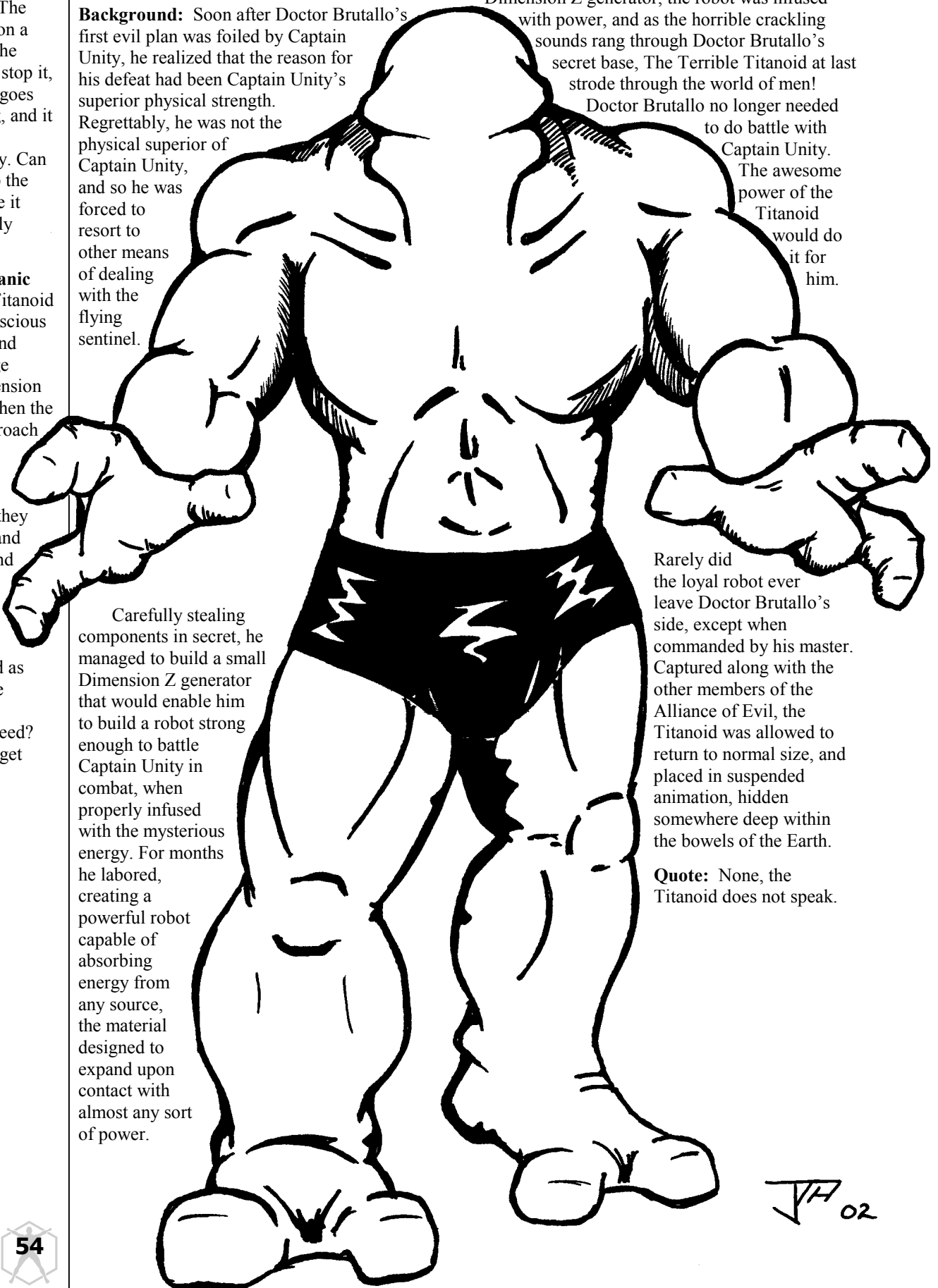
Carefully stealing components in secret, he managed to build a small Dimension Z generator that would enable him to build a robot strong enough to battle Captain Unity in combat, when properly infused with the mysterious energy. For months he labored, creating a powerful robot capable of absorbing energy from any source, the material designed to expand upon contact with almost any sort of power.

At last, activating the switch on the small Dimension Z generator, the robot was infused with power, and as the horrible crackling sounds rang through Doctor Brutallo's secret base, The Terrible Titanoid at last strode through the world of men!

Doctor Brutallo no longer needed to do battle with Captain Unity. The awesome power of the Titanoid would do it for him.

Rarely did the loyal robot ever leave Doctor Brutallo's side, except when commanded by his master. Captured along with the other members of the Alliance of Evil, the Titanoid was allowed to return to normal size, and placed in suspended animation, hidden somewhere deep within the bowels of the Earth.

Quote: None, the Titanoid does not speak.



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The Terrible Titanoid

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6½ tons, 8d6 HTH
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
35	CON	50	16-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
25	PRE	0	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
30	PD	22		Total: 30 PD (18 rPD)
30	ED	23		Total: 30 ED (18 rED)
5	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
18	REC	6		
70	END	0		
65	STUN	12		

Total Characteristics Cost: 202

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 20"/40"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
13	<i>Titan:</i> Growth, 1 Level, Inherent (+¼), Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Trigger (resets when hit, +½)	0
48	<i>Amplification:</i> Physical and Energy Absorption 6d6 to Growth, Increased Maximum (40 Points), Fade at 5 Points per 5 Minutes (+½)	0
18	<i>Android "Skin":</i> Damage Resistance (18 PD/18 ED)	0
15	<i>Android Mind:</i> Mental Defense 17 points	0
10	<i>Android Body:</i> Power Defense, 10 points	0
50	<i>Android Body:</i> Total Life Support	0
17	<i>Android Legs:</i> Leaping +12" (20" Total), Accurate	2
30	<i>Shielded Radar:</i> 360° Radar plus Radio Group Flash Defense, 10 points	0
Skills		
6	+2 with Punch, Grab, and Haymaker	
3	<i>Rubbery Body:</i> Breakfall 13-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 210

Total Cost: 412

200+ Disadvantages

- 20 Physical Limitation: Blind, Sees by Radar (Common, Frequently)
- 20 Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal to Doctor Brutalloy (Common, Total)
- 30 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN and BODY from Electricity (Common)
- 102 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 412

Powers/Tactics: The Titanoid takes a front line position in front of its teammates, along with the Armageddon Mind. It knows only one purpose, fighting for the glory of Doctor Brutalloy. Its strategy is simple. Smash anything Doctor Brutalloy designates as an enemy. A fully amplified Titanoid is a gruesome opponent, when backed up by the other members of the Alliance of Evil, it is even worse. The Titanoid is programmed to interpose itself between attackers and other members of the Alliance. This gets easier as it gets bigger.

Appearance: The Terrible Titanoid is a large, grayish green robot similar to the Brutalloys in overall appearance. It wears a set of skintight olive swim trunks, but underneath them, it is anatomically incorrect. The Titanoid is faceless, and has no lips, nose, mouth, or eyes, seeing and targeting by radar. It has two wide, fat, stubby fingers on each hand, and an opposable thumb.

Campaign Use: To weaken the Titanoid for lower-powered campaigns, lower its STR to 30, take its ED down to 20, and remove the Absorption Growth. Slow its SPD to 4.

For higher-powered campaigns, increase the Titanoid's STR to a whopping 60, increase its PD and ED to 40 each, and raise its SPD to 6. Increase the Absorption Growth to 10d6, with the same return rate.

In all cases, be sure to keep careful track of the Titanoid's Growth. It drastically affects the character's DCV and STR. At maximum output (which Doctor Brutalloy will sometimes pre-pummel the Titanoid for), The Titanoid, in a Standard Campaign, has a STR of 85, additional reach of 4", +9 BODY, +9 STUN, and 9" of Knockback Resistance. This makes for a fairly fearsome opponent.

PLOT SEEDS

Life's A Zoo:

Kanga hides out in the local city zoo, and mind controls the staff into committing robberies for him. Hiding out with the local Kangaroos, he believes his disguise to be impenetrable.

Hostile Takeover:

Kanga the Dominator slowly manipulates Doctor Brutallo into doing his will, using subtle mental movements and diversionary tactics. Suddenly, Kanga is in control of the Alliance of Evil, and Doctor Brutallo must figure out a way to wrest control back from him.

Ru Invasion: The Ru invade Earth, and Kanga comes to the PCs for help. The invasion must be repelled, or Kanga will be executed for his crimes against the Ru. He will not tell them this part, of course....

Kanga the Dominator

Original Concept by James Silverstein

Background: Kanga the Dominator was born Kaangaa, in the City of Valperon, on the world of Ru. A poor and shiftless Ru, he was easily turned to a life of crime by several of his equally poor associates in the slums of Valperon. He never knew his pouch-rearer, and may not even have had one, a sign of shame among the Ru.

Kaangaa grew up cold and heartless, stealing from his fellow Ru, and rising in the Ru underworld, his ability to cause illusions indicating that perhaps, he was the result of a tryst between a Ru noble and a common pouch for coin. The idea that his parents had thrown him into the street, to be raised by cutpurses inspired in him a dark rage, and he began to plot against the crown of Valperon.

Over the years, Kaangaa's plots bore fruit, and eventually, he managed to assassinate the Dominator of Valperon, through his manipulations of two Ru princesses and an outworlder named Jorath. This was too much for the royalty of Valperon, and after many brutal battles in the slums of Valperon, Kaangaa was captured, and sentenced to imprisonment in the Zone beyond life. With horror, Kaangaa was cast into the nebulous void, to float forever in the horrid space, screaming and wailing that one day, he would return to Valperon, and have his revenge on those who had opposed him.

Kaangaa floated in the void for what seemed like an eternity, until suddenly, a golden sphere of light seemed to float before him, widening into an enormous portal. Barely sane, Kaangaa drifted towards the light, and slammed on to the cold concrete floor.

"Goodness," purred a deep gravelly voice. "What have we here?"

Kaangaa struggled to move, but the dimensional travel had made him weak, too weak to resist as Doctor Brutallo's Hypno-ray bored into his mind, making him reveal all of his deepest secrets to the strange, hunched monkey creature. As Kaangaa and Doctor Brutallo spoke, Kaangaa felt a strange kinship with the outcast creature, and vowed to rule this world as he had once planned to rule Ru. Of course, eventually, he would replace Doctor Brutallo as the ruler of this world, and then return to conquer Ru, as his scheming mind plotted the possibilities of ultimate power. The foolish ape creature could not even pronounce his name properly, clearly a sign of inferiority.

The ape creatures and Brutallo's enemies feared him greatly, choosing to name him The Dominator, which brought him great amusement, though the strange little ape man's brilliance, while disturbing, seemed to find it fitting with the Ru's mental abilities.

Kanga, or so the humans called him, traveled with the Alliance of Evil, longing for the day when he would return to the world of Ru, and conquer it for his own. However, Doctor Brutallo's enemies, the Super Six, tracked them down and placed them in suspended animation, their dreams of conquest frozen in icy sleep.

Quote: "Bah, you pitiful humans dare to match wills against Kanga the Dominator? Feel the awesome power of my mind, and know that yours is puny in comparison!"

Powers/Tactics: Kanga the Dominator fights mostly with his mental powers, though he has studied the primitive Ru of Earth and discovered their aptitude for a unique sport which humans favor. He has become an excellent boxer, though he prefers to rely on his psychic abilities to crush opponents from a distance, and enters hand-to-hand combat only as a last resort. The future Dominator of Ru does not sully his hands with physical fighting unless absolutely necessary. Kanga enjoys using suggestions to crush his foes, humiliating them with his subtlety.

Appearance: Kanga the Dominator is a six foot two kangaroo with a pouch. It is, however, a male kangaroo with a pouch, which should clue in PCs with animal handling that something is not quite right. He is occasionally carrying several of Doctor Brutallo's gadgets in his pouch, which should prove a rude surprise for heroes who dare to reach inside.

Campaign Use: In lower-powered Campaigns, reduce Kanga's Mind Control to 10d6 or even 8d6, reduce his EGO to 23 and his SPD to 4. Drop his DEX to 18 and remove his Martial Arts. Lower his defenses to 15 PD and 15 ED, and eliminate his Danger Sense.

In higher-powered games, increase Kanga's DEX and SPD to 26 and 6, his EGO to 30, and his Mental Powers to a whopping 20d6. Add levels and damage classes with his martial arts abilities, and increase his defenses by 10 PD and 10 ED. Add 5 to his Damage Resistance as well, and add Mind Scan 15d6 at 0 END outside his Multipower.

Kanga the Dominator



Kanga the Dominator

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg, 4d6 HTH [2]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
23	CON	26	14-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
23	INT	13	14-	PER Roll: 14-
26	EGO	32	14-	ECV: 9
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
20	PD	16		Total: 20 PD (10 rPD)
20	ED	15		Total: 20 ED (10 rED)
5	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	REC	2		
46	END	0		
40	STUN	6		

Total Characteristics Cost: 185

Movement: Running: 11"/22"
Leaping: 10"/20"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
70	<i>Mental Powers:</i> Multipower, 70-point Reserve	
7u	<i>Seizing the Mind:</i> Mind Control 12d6 (Human, Alien)	6
7u	<i>Burning the Mind:</i> Ego Attack 6d6 (Human, Alien)	6
7u	<i>Deceiving the Mind:</i> Mental Illusion 12d6 (Human, Alien)	6
27	<i>Combat Precognition:</i> Danger Sense 14- (Personal, Out of Combat, Any Danger); Flashed as a Mental Sense (-0)	0
10	<i>Mental Protection:</i> Mental Defense (15 total)	0
10	<i>Tough Hide:</i> Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED)	0
10	<i>Bouncy Legs:</i> Running +5" (11" Total)	2
11	<i>Bouncy Legs:</i> Leaping +6" (10" Total), Accurate	2

Martial Arts: Boxing

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
3 Grab	-1	-1	2 Limbs, 40 STR
5 Hook	-2	+1	10d6 Strike
5 Jab	+1	+3	6d6 Strike
4 Punch	0	+2	8d6 Strike
8	+2 Damage Classes (added in)		

Talents

20 Universal Translator 14-

Skills

3 Animal Handler (Kangaroos) 12-
3 Breakfall 14-
3 Combat Driving 14-
3 Combat Piloting (TF: Spaceships Free) 14-
3 Computer Programming 14-
3 Electronics 14-
3 Mechanics 14-
3 Navigation 14-
3 Oratory 14-
3 Persuasion 14-
3 Power (EGO-Based) 14-
3 Security Systems 14-
3 Tactics 14-
3 Teamwork 14-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 270

Total Cost: 455

200+ Disadvantages

20 Distinctive Features: Kangaroo Humanoid (Not Concealable, Major Reaction)
20 Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
20 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
10 Physical Limitation: No Opposable Thumbs (Common, Frequently)
10 Psychological Limitation: Driven to Conquer the World (Common, Moderate)
15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Moderate)
10 Rivalry: For Leadership with Doctor Brutallo
20 Vulnerability: 2x STUN and BODY from Magic (Uncommon)
115 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 455

Atomicus, The Radioactive Man

Background: Leonard Carlsen was a smalltime thug in 1947 – the kind of smalltime thug who made cheap talk but could never get anything done. He had run out on his family; he couldn't trust his friends; and he had stolen three thousand dollars of Big Frankie's money. He was leaving town to set up a new life somewhere in New Mexico, where Big Frankie and his thugs couldn't find him.

Regrettably, Leonard also was not particularly adept at covering his tracks, and Big Frankie's thugs trailed him into New Mexico, always a step behind him. He finally noticed them driving into a small gas station, and hurried into the desert, the gunshots cracking behind him, gas slowly leaking from the hole in the tank as he drove into the sand dunes, heedless of the signs warning of atomic testing.

Leonard chose that moment to look behind him, as the bullets flew, and one caught the gas tank again just as he vaulted over the edge of a tall cliff, the car sailing downward, erupting in a fireball in midair, the bright white light in the distance signaling that some sort of radiation test was being conducted. Big Frankie's thugs headed back the way they had come, intending to report that Leonard Carlsen was dead.

But Leonard did not die....

Leonard's body hurtled through the air, dull and limp as the radiation suffused his dying body, filling it with power as his senses slowly returned to consciousness, his eyes filled with stark terror as he commanded his falling body to stop. It did. Leonard could fly, and he was surrounded by a reddish-hot field of blinding energy. He flew down towards the retreating car, laughing maniacally as he approached the somewhat quiet men inside.

The men turned to look, the driver placing his foot on the accelerator as the laughing, glowing man closed in on them, wishing they could drive faster than he could fly.

They had not driven far before Leonard caught up with them....

Leonard committed crimes throughout the southwest for a while, robbing a bank here and stealing a car there. He barely made enough money to survive, and his money was running out when Doctor Brutallos found him, asking him to front an operation to steal the legendary treasure of the City of Gold from its rightful holders. It was better than the life he had, so he joined Doctor Brutallos's Alliance of Evil, becoming Atomicus, the Radioactive Man.

Leonard never did see any of the money, though he knows that Doctor Brutallos holds it in a secret location, to mint the currency he will need to keep the world running. Leonard figured as long as he stuck with Doctor Brutallos, he has a bright future in the New World Order.

Such was not to be, however. Leonard and his compatriots were cornered by the Super Six deep in South Virginia, as Doctor Brutallos was about to activate his Seismotron, and crumble the country beneath a wave of earthquakes. Leonard was placed in suspended animation with his comrades, hopefully never to be freed from captivity, buried deep in the New Mexico atomic testing area that first created him...

Quote: "Shut yer yap! Yer lookin' at Atomicus. Dat's Right, Atomicus! The Radioactive Man! Now yer gonna Fry!"

Powers/Tactics: Atomicus is a rather powerful man without much education. He is a good team player because Doctor Brutallos has trained him to respond tactically to situations. His radiation field can be shut off if it suddenly presents a danger to his own team. Left to his own devices, he simply blasts away at the weakest opponents he can, trying to cause as much harm with his radiation powers as possible.

Appearance: Atomicus is the most colorful of the Alliance of Evil. He wears a bright red costume with a greenish visor, spiked gauntlets and spiked shoulder epaulets. He has a bright red belt with a shiny "A" etched across it, and the helmet shows most of his jaw and mouth. He sports a bright red cape that trails behind him, down to his knees. There is a large biohazard symbol on the chest of the red costume, and the gauntlets and shoulder epaulets, as well as his boots, are a sickly medium olive color.

Note: This costume is very similar to the costume on the cover of the first *Champions* Rulebook from 1981. This is intentional.

PLOT SEEDS

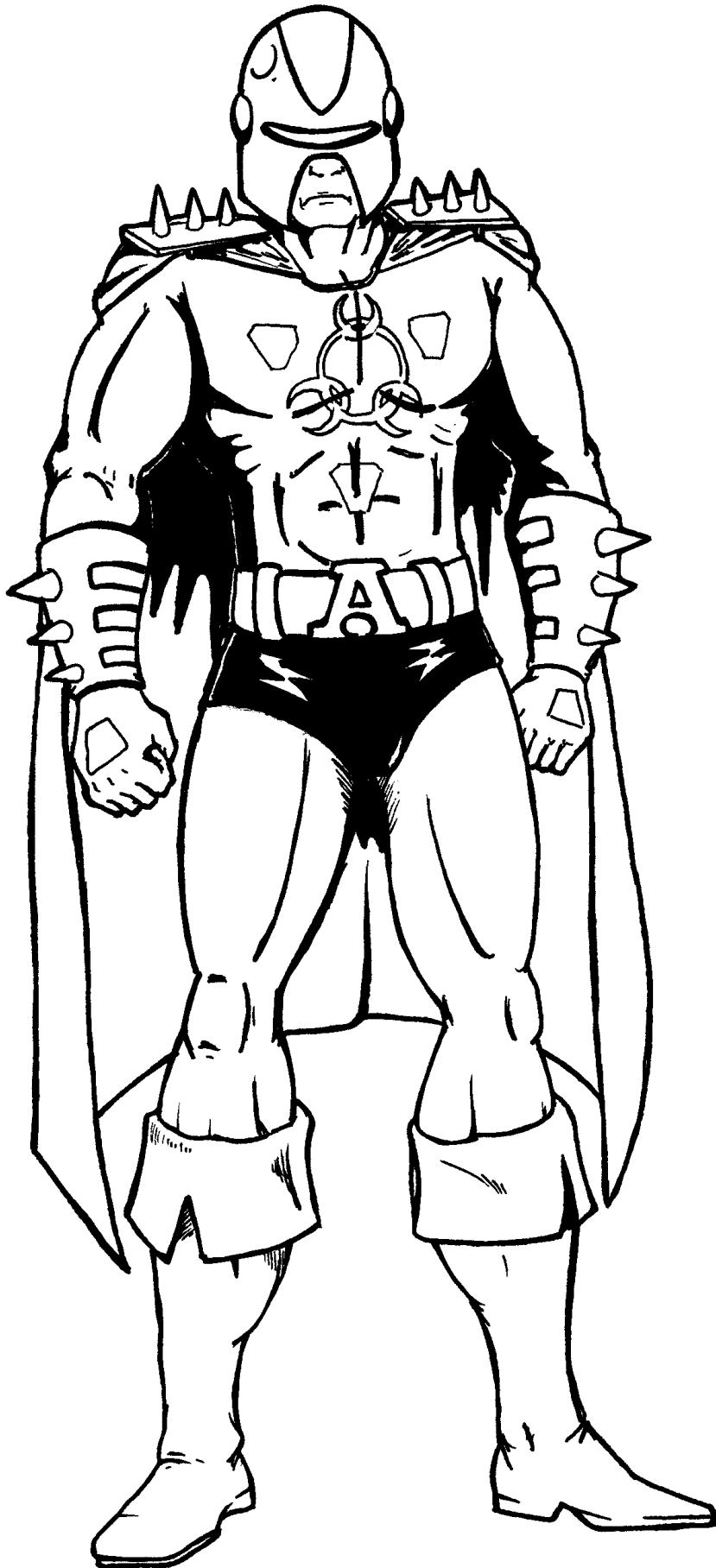
Mutation

Madness: Another villainous scientist kidnaps Atomicus in order to mutate his minions into something else by bathing them in the radiation field of the Dastardly Villain! Doctor Brutallos tells the heroes, in the hope that they will track down Atomicus and save him from an awful fate.

Revenge of the Radioactive Man:

Atomicus has discovered that Big Frankie has descendants living in the heroes' campaign city, who still have mafia ties. Atomicus attacks these people, trying to erase them for trying to kill him over fifty years ago. The Mafia retaliates, and the Alliance of Evil retaliates against the Mafia. All out battles ensue!

Atomicus, The Radioactive Man



JFH 02

DIGITAL HERO #15

Atomicus, The Radioactive Man

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg, 4d6 HTH [2]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
33	CON	46	16-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	

5	PD	1		Total: 20 PD (15 rPD)
19	ED	12		Total: 34 ED (15 rED)
5	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
14	REC	6		
66	END	0		
45	STUN	3		

Total Characteristics Cost: 165

Movement:	Running:	6"/12"
	Flying:	18"/288"
	Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost Powers END

22	<i>Radioactive Energy:</i> Elemental Control (44-point Powers)	
23	1) <i>Force Field:</i> Force Field (15 PD/15 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
42	2) <i>Flight:</i> Flight 18", 16x Noncombat Multiplier, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	2
53	3) <i>Radioactive Wasting:</i> Drain REC and STUN 2d6, Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½), Inherent (+¼)	0
75	<i>Radiation:</i> Multipower, 75-point Reserve	
7u	1) <i>Beam:</i> EB 12d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
7u	2) <i>Blast:</i> RKA 4d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
7u	3) <i>Bang:</i> Flash vs Sight and Hearing Groups 10d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
7u	4) <i>Bomb:</i> Drain STUN 3d6, Ranged (+½), Explosion (-1 DC per 2", +¾), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
10	<i>Radioactive Shielding:</i> Power Defense, 10 points	0
10	<i>Radioactive Shielding:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense, 10 points	0

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
3	+1 with Multipower
6	+2 versus Range Penalties
3	Animal Handler 13-
3	Interrogation 14-
3	Power (EGO-Based) 12-
3	Stealth 14-
3	Streetwise 13-
3	Teamwork 14-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 298

Total Cost: 463

200+ Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Radioactive (Easily Concealable, Major Reaction)
25	Enraged: when Wounded/Takes BODY (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 11-, Berserk
20	Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
20	Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
15	Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Hatred of US Government (Common, Strong)
30	Vulnerability: 1½x STUN and BODY From Lead Attacks (Common)
128	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 463

PLOT SEEDS

Rallying Point:

The Armageddon Mind takes over a printing press, in an attempt to replace the main character of every novel with Doctor Brutallo. (The Armageddon Mind is not a great planner.) If The Armageddon Mind isn't stopped, this leads to novels like *The Secret Affair of Doctor Brutallo* and self-help books like *Cooking Malaysian With Doctor Brutallo*.

False Mind:

Doctor Brutallo sends The Armageddon Mind on a rampage, but when the characters get there and fight it, The Armageddon Mind is a pale imitation of its usual self. Where is the real Armageddon Mind, and what is Doctor Brutallo up to?

The Armageddon Mind

Original Concept Geoff Depew

Background: Jacob Cosmovich was a speechwriter, a pamphleteer trying to save the world from Communism in the late 1940s. His writing was not terribly inspirational, and in the postwar atmosphere, the Russians were still friends to the United States. Looking for people who shared his views of facing down the Communist threat, he found very few takers, and he fell upon hard times.

Using the last of his savings, he put an ad in the newspaper, as his last few pamphlets failed to sell, collecting dust on bookstore shelves, advertising for a speechwriter. Unfortunately for Jacob, it was Doctor Brutallo who answered his ad. Doctor Brutallo did not need a speechwriter. However, Doctor Brutallo needed a brain. In Jacob, he had found the right sort of brain he needed.

Jacob didn't make a sound as his body slumped to the floor, and Brutallo carried him from the building where they met. He didn't make a sound on the operating table, as his life slipped away from him, his girlfriend, his car, his tiny life. It all seemed so insignificant now. When Jacob awoke, he felt strange, different. He tried to look around, but it felt like he was looking out of a television camera at Doctor Brutallo, a man who was supposed to only exist in comic books.

Jacob listened to Doctor Brutallo, for in his new body, at the side of Doctor Brutallo, he would fight communism as no one ever had. Jacob turned to look at himself in the mirror, and he was impressed. Whereas, before he had been a weak, scrawny individual, now his brain was encased in a massive robot body, a titanic metal saucer with retractable legs and ten tentacle arms. Whereas before, he had to struggle to get a girlfriend, now he could simply take any woman he wanted. Jacob decided to test his new abilities, and together, with the rest of the Alliance of Evil, they stormed a drive-in theatre and made everyone flee in panic. Jacob was christened The Armageddon Mind, the newest member of the Alliance of Evil.

Jacob worships Doctor Brutallo, for Doctor Brutallo had taken him away from an unhappy life and made him one of the most powerful supervillains on Earth. Clearly, Doctor Brutallo's brilliant mind had made Jacob a better person. Clearly, Doctor Brutallo was best suited for ruling the Earth, precisely as he had explained. Clearly, the brain transplant had driven poor Jacob mad, for he was Jacob Cosmovich no longer. He was simply The Armageddon Mind.

The Armageddon Mind was placed in a suspension chamber somewhere underneath Wyoming, where, the Super Six prayed, no one would ever discover its whereabouts.

Quote: "You who stare at my horrifying appearance, know that it is the will of Doctor Brutallo, the greatest genius ever to walk the Earth, and future ruler of the world! Now, my beauty, you shall reside forever at the side of The Armageddon Mind!"

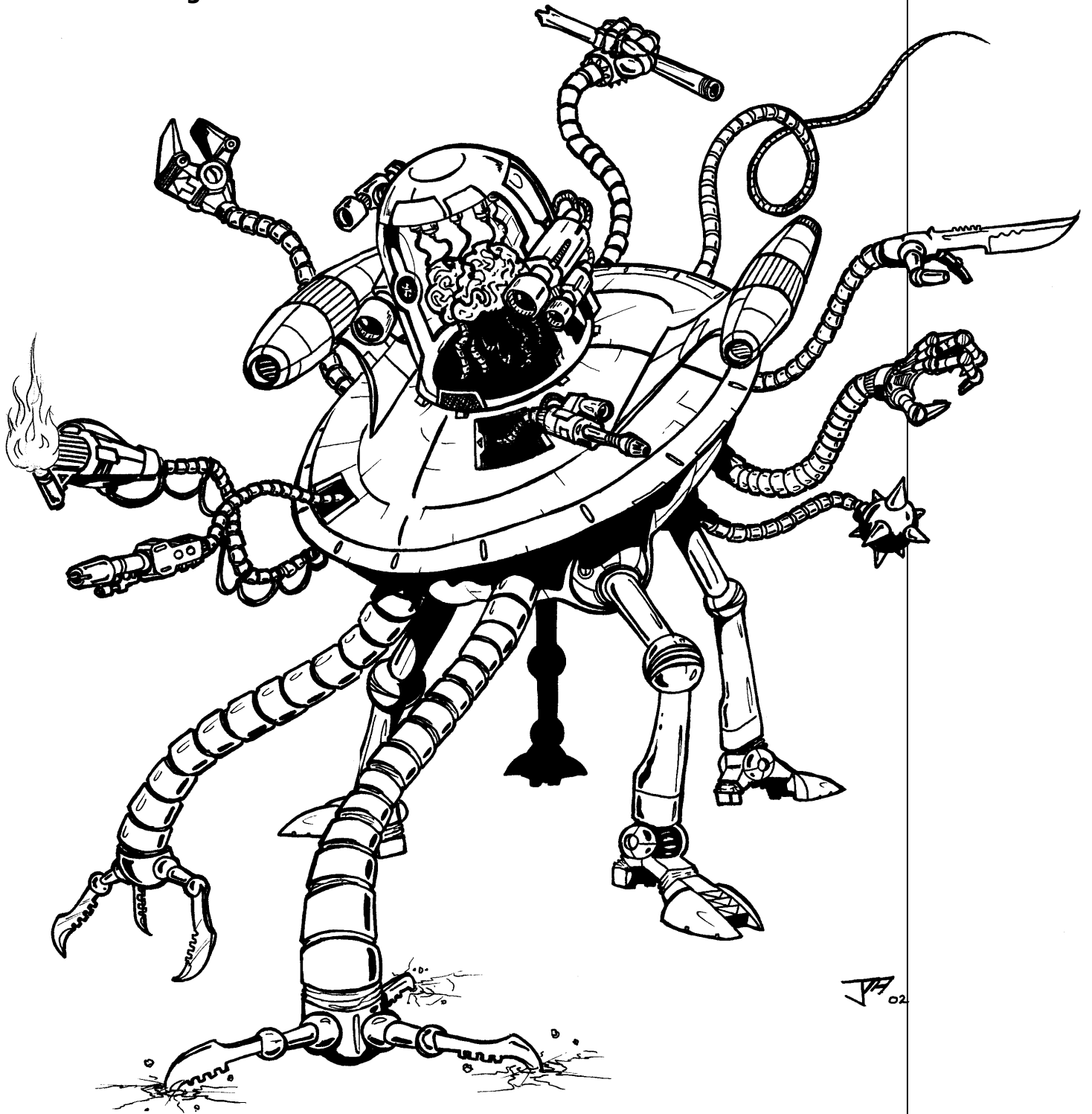
Powers/Tactics: The Armageddon Mind is a slow, ponderous engine of destruction. It lumbers forward, and tries to destroy anything Doctor Brutallo orders it to, except women, which it tries to capture and collect. Doctor Brutallo has tried to cure it of this habit, however, everything he has tried has failed. The Armageddon Mind is easily the most powerful member of the Alliance of Evil in a fight, though it often spends lots of time expounding on why Doctor Brutallo should rule the world. This irritates Atomicus greatly. Note that the Armageddon Mind does not have any idea what to do with the women it collects. Sometimes, in the middle of combat, the Armageddon Mind will pause to place one of its *Why Doctor Brutallo Should Rule The World* pamphlets on the body of a defeated foe.

Appearance: The Armageddon Mind is a nine-foot tall saucer shaped robot with four extendable legs, rocket pods, and a central brain surrounded by cameras, floating in a liquid preservation gel. Sliding doors on the rotating saucer reveal various weapon ports and long mechanical tentacles, ending in various claw and hand shapes. It is a highly disturbing creation. If knocked out, the creature slumps to the ground, unmoving. Attempts to dismantle the Armageddon Mind in the past have proved fruitless, as they would clearly kill the brain inside.

Campaign Use: In lower-powered campaigns, remove The Armageddon Mind's Damage Reduction, add 5 points of raw PD and ED, and reduce the Multipower to 60 Active Points. Remove one Combat Skill Level, and remove the Hardening from its defenses.

In higher-powered games, increase the Armageddon Mind's Damage Reduction to $\frac{3}{4}$ Resistant to Physical and Energy, and add 10 points of Physical and Resistant Energy Defense. Doubly Harden its PD and ED, and increase the Multipower to 120 Active Points. Increase the SPD of the Armageddon Mind to 6, and its DEX to 20. Add 4 more levels with OCV for its main weapons systems.

The Armageddon Mind



The Armageddon Mind

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
80	STR	70	25-	1600 tons, 16d6 HTH [8]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6(4)
30	CON	40	15-	
15	BODY	4	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
4	COM	-3	10-	
20	PD	4		Total: 20 PD (20 rPD)
20	ED	12		Total: 20 ED (20 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
22	REC	0		
60	END	0		
60	STUN	5		

Total Characteristics Cost: 172

Movement: Running: 20"/40"
 Flying: 20"/640"
 Leaping: 12"/24"
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
75	<i>Weapons Systems:</i> Multipower (75-point Reserve)	
7u	1) <i>Armageddon Missiles:</i> RKA 5d6, 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
7u	2) <i>Protonic Ray:</i> EB 12d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
5u	3) <i>Mindwave Ray:</i> EGO Attack 3d6, Explosion (-1 DC per 3", +1), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼); Based On DEX (-½)	3
7u	4) <i>Sonic Ray:</i> EB 6d6, NND (Defense is Hard Ear Coverings or Hearing Flash Defense, +1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
5u	5) <i>Synth-Gel of Doctor Brutallo:</i> Entangle, 8 DEF, 4d6 BODY; 8 Charges (-½)	[8]
60	<i>Robotic Body:</i> 50% Damage Reduction, Physical and Energy, Resistant	0
25	<i>Robotic Body:</i> Damage Resistance, 20 PD, 20 ED, Hardened (+¼)	0
10	<i>Robotic Body:</i> Hardened PD and ED	0
10	<i>Robotic Body:</i> Mental Defense, 13 points	0
10	<i>Robotic Weight:</i> Knockback Resistance -5"	0
60	<i>Rocket Pods:</i> Flight 20", 32x Noncombat Multiplier	4
28	<i>Robot Legs:</i> Running +14" (20" Total)	4
5	<i>Robot Limbs:</i> Extra Limbs (Up to 14, 10 Arms, 4 Legs)	0

Skills

- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 3 KS: Why Doctor Brutallo Must Rule the World 11-
- 3 Power 11-
- 3 PS: Composer 11-
- 3 PS: Musician 11-
- 3 PS: Pamphleteer 11-
- 3 Teamwork 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 330

Total Cost: 502

200+ Disadvantages

- 25 Distinctive Feature: Brain in a Robot Body (Not Concealable, Causes Horror)
- 20 Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)
- 20 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI)

Physical Limitation: Large (16x Mass, -2 DCV, -4" Leap)

- 15 Psychological Limitation: Covets Women and Collects Them (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal to Doctor Brutallo (Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence in Doctor Brutallo (Common, Strong)
- 30 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN and BODY from Electricity (Common)
- 211 Experience Points

