

# DARING COMICS

THE SUPER-POWERED ROLE PLAYING GAME



# Daring Comics Role-Playing Game

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**Accuracy Stunts**

Any Object is a Bullet  
 Lead Rain  
 Quick Draw  
 Ricochet Expert  
 Superior Marksman  
 Trick Shot

**Arcanum Stunts**

Fortune Telling  
 Hypnotic Voice  
 Sixth Sense  
 Powerful Sixth Sense

**Artificing Stunts**

A Kind of Magic  
 Master Artificer  
 Warded Workshop

**Athletics Stunts**

Dazing Counter  
 Fluid Technique  
 Uncanny Agility  
 Superhuman Agility

**Contacts Stunts**

Big Man  
 Talk the Talk  
 Big Name  
 Big Reputation  
 In the Know  
 Tapping the Network  
 Word on the Street

**Controlling Skill Stunts**

Power stunt Expert  
 Power stunt Mastery

**Deceive Stunts**

Actor  
 Impersonator  
 Master of Disguise

**Empathy Stunts**

Counselor  
 Emotional Trigger  
 Empathic Read  
 Lie Detector

**Fight Stunts**

Into the Fray  
 Everywhere at Once  
 One-Man Army

**Investigate Stunts**

Attention to Detail  
 Eavesdropper  
 Focused Senses

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# CHAPTER 1: THE BASICS

## WELCOME TO DARING COMICS!

Heroes battle villains through the streets and skies. Debris from stray energy beams and super-tough bodies covers city blocks. From megalomaniacs who dream of ruling the world, to dictators who wish to shape the future course of humanity, only the heroes stand in their way.

With the Daring Comics Role-Playing Game, you bring your own comic book stories to life. Inside these pages, you'll find complete rules for constructing your own, ongoing comic book series, creating your heroes, and how to resolve all types of actions.

Daring Comics also gives you the rules for creating your own stunts and powers. To help you get started easily, however, we've also provided dozens of example stunts, and over 100 powers, special effects, and limits.

## A ROLEPLAYING GAME

If you've never played a roleplaying game before, here's the basic idea for Daring Comics: you and a bunch of friends get together to tell an interactive story about a group of super-heroes you make up. You get to say what challenges and obstacles those heroes face, how they respond, what they say and do, and what happens to them.

It's not all just conversation, though— sometimes you'll use dice and the rules in this book to bring uncertainty into the story and make things more exciting.

Daring Comics doesn't come with a default setting, it's meant to take place in a setting that your group creates. As a matter of fact, in the Series Creation chapter, we'll walk you through the step-by-step process of how your entire group will cooperate to not only create parts of the setting, but how to make specific choices that will determine your series scope, power level, and even tone.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Getting into a game of Daring Comics is very simple. You need:

- A **character sheet**, one per player, and some extra paper for note-taking. We'll talk about what's on the character sheet below. (GMs, any important characters you play might have a character sheet also.)
- Fate dice, at least four, preferably four per person. Fate dice are a special kind of six-sided dice that are marked on two sides with a plus symbol (+), two with a minus symbol (-), and two sides are blank (■).
- Fate dice, at least four, preferably four per person. Fate dice are a special kind of six-sided dice that are marked on two sides with a plus symbol (+), two with a minus symbol (-), and two sides are blank (■).
- If you don't want to use fate dice, you don't have to—any set of regular six-sided dice will work. If you're using regular dice, you read 5 or 6 as +, 1 or 2 as -, and 3 or 4 as ■.
- **Tokens** to represent fate points. Poker chips, glass beads, or anything similar will work. You'll want to have at least thirty or more of these on hand, just to make sure you have enough for any given game. You can use pencil marks on your character sheet in lieu of tokens, but physical tokens add a little more fun.
- **Index cards**. These are optional, but we find they're very handy for recording aspects during play.

## PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTER

In any game of Daring Comics, you're either a player or a gamemaster.

If you're a player, your primary job is to take responsibility for portraying one of the protagonists of the game, which we call a playe r-character (and sometimes a character, hero, or PC). You

make decisions for your character and describe to everyone else what your character says and does. You'll also take care of the mechanical side of your character— rolling dice when it's appropriate, choosing what abilities to use in a certain situation, and keeping track of fate points.

If you're a gamemaster, your primary job is to take responsibility for the world the PCs inhabit. You make decisions and roll dice for every character in the game world who isn't portrayed by a player— we call those non-player-characters (or "NPCs"). You describe the environments and places the PCs go to during the game, and you create the scenarios and situations they interact with. You also act as a final arbiter of the rules, determining the outcome of the PCs' decisions and how that impacts the unfolding story.

Daring Comics RPG is a collaborative endeavor, with everyone sharing ideas and looking for opportunities to make the events as entertaining as possible.

## THE CHARACTER SHEET

Players, your character sheet contains everything you need to know about your PC: aspects, skills, stunts, powers, and any other resources that character has to use in the game. Grab a blank character sheet, and we'll go over all the components.

### ASPECTS

Aspects are phrases that describe some significant detail about a character. They are the reasons why your character matters, why we're interested in seeing your character in the game. Aspects can cover a wide range of elements, such as personality or descriptive traits, beliefs, relationships, issues and problems, or anything else that helps us invest in the character as a person, rather than just a collection of stats.

Aspects come into play in conjunction with fate points. When an aspect benefits you, you can spend fate points to invoke that aspect for a bonus. When your aspects complicate your character's life, you gain fate points back, this is called accepting a compel.

*Wraith has **Once a criminal, Now a Hero** on his character sheet, which likely gives him some knowledge into the criminal underworld. It can also bring in some complications to a scene when someone recognizes him from his time in the underworld.*



Aspects can describe things that are beneficial or detrimental. In fact, the best aspects are both.

And aspects don't just belong to characters; the environment your characters are in can have aspects attached to it as well.

*Barrage and Midnight Avenger have tracked a known arms dealer to a warehouse in the Beauman Straights district. As they enter the warehouse, the GM lets them know that the interior has **Deep, Dark Shadows** and **Lots of Abandoned Machinery** as aspects on the environment.*

### SKILLS

Skills are what you use during the game to do complicated or interesting actions with the dice. Each character has a number of skills that represent his or her basic capabilities, including things like perceptiveness, physical prowess, professional training, education, and other measures of ability.

At the beginning of the game, the player-characters have skills rated in steps from Average (+1) to Fantastic (+6). Higher is better, meaning that the character is more capable or succeeds more often when using that skill.

If for some reason you need to make a roll using a skill your character doesn't have, you roll it at Mediocre (+0).

*Midnight Avenger has the Stealth skill at Great (+4), which makes him suited to sneaking up on an opponent, or past a guard. He does not have the Vehicles skill, however, so when the game calls upon him to drive a car or pilot an aircraft, he'll have to roll that at Mediocre (+0).*

## STUNTS

Stunts are special tricks that your character knows that allow you to get an extra benefit out of a skill or alter some other game rule to work in your favor. Stunts are like special moves in a video game, letting you do something unique or distinctive compared to other characters. Two characters can have the same rating in a skill, but their stunts might give them vastly different benefits.

*Wraith has a stunt called **Into the Fray**. The character is at his best when facing a group of opponents, and whenever his opponents have a bonus for teamwork against him in a conflict, he does an extra Shift of damage when attacking them.*

## STRESS

Stress is one of the two options you have to avoid losing a conflict, it represents temporary fatigue, getting winded, superficial injuries, and so on. You have a number of stress levels you can burn off to help keep you in a fight. They reset at the end of a conflict, once you've had a moment to rest and catch your breath.

## CONSEQUENCES

Consequences are the other option you have to stay in a conflict, but they have a more lasting impact. Every time you take a consequence, it puts a new aspect on your sheet describing your injuries. Unlike stress, you have to take time to recover from a consequence, and it's stuck on your character sheet in the meantime, which leaves your character vulnerable to complications or others wishing to take advantage of your new weakness.

## REFRESH

Refresh is the number of fate points you get at the start of every game session to spend for your character. Your total resets to this number unless you had more fate points at the end of the last session.

# TAKING ACTION

Players, some of the things you'll do in a Daring Comics game require you to roll dice to see if your character succeeds or not. You will always roll the dice when you're opposing another character with your efforts, or when there's a significant obstacle in the way of your effort. Otherwise, just say what your character does and assume it happens.

## COMMON ACTION TYPES

*Below are the most common reasons why you'll roll the dice in the Daring Comics RPG.*

**Overcome** to overcome an obstacle

**Create an Advantage** to create or unlock an advantage for your character, in the form of an aspect you can use

**Attack** to attack someone in a conflict

**Defend** to defend yourself in a conflict

## ROLLING THE DICE

When you need to roll dice in Daring Comics RPG, pick up four fate dice and roll them. When you read the dice, read every **+** as +1, every **0** as 0, and every **-** as -1. Add them all together. You'll get a result from -4 to +4, most often between -2 and +2.

Result	% Chance
+4	1.23
+3	4.94
+2	12.35
+1	19.75
+0	23.46
-1	19.75
-2	12.35
-3	4.94
-4	1.23

Here are some sample dice totals:

$$\ominus\oplus\oplus\oplus = +1$$

$$\oplus\ominus\ominus\ominus = +0$$

$$\oplus\oplus\oplus\ominus = +2$$

$$\ominus\ominus\ominus\ominus = -1$$

The result on the dice isn't your final total, however. If your character has a skill that's appropriate to the action, you get to add your character's rating in that skill to whatever you rolled.

## THE LADDER

Daring Comics uses a ladder of adjectives and numbers to rate the dice results, a character's skills, and opposition to an action.

Terrible	(-2)
Poor	(-1)
Mediocre	(+0)
Average	(+1)
Fair	(+2)
Good	(+3)
Great	(+4)
Superb	(+5)
Fantastic	(+6)
Epic	(+7)
Legendary	(+8)
Monstrous	(+9)
Colossal	(+10)
Unearthly	(+11)
Inconceivable	(+12)

It doesn't really matter which side of the ladder you use. Some people remember the words better, some people remember the numbers better, and some people like using both. So you could say, "I got a Great," or "I got a +4," and it means the same thing.

## INTERPRETING RESULTS

When you roll the dice, you're trying to get a high enough roll to match or beat your opposition. That opposition is going to come in one of two forms: **active**

**opposition**, from someone rolling dice against you, or **passive opposition**, from an obstacle that just has a set rating on the ladder for you to overcome. (GMs, you can also just decide your NPCs give passive opposition when you don't want to roll dice for them.)

Generally speaking, if you beat your opposition on the ladder, you succeed at your action. A tie creates some effect, but not to the extent your character was intending. If you win by a lot, something extra happens (like doing more harm to your opponent in a fight).

If you don't beat the opposition, either you don't succeed at your action, you succeed at a cost, or something else happens to complicate the outcome. Some game actions have special results when you fail at the roll.

When you beat a roll or a set obstacle, the difference between your opposition and your result is what we call **Shifts**. When you roll equal to the opposition, you have zero shifts. Roll one over your opposition, and you have one shift. Two over means two shifts, and so on. Later on, we'll talk about different instances where getting shifts on a roll benefits you.

*Wraith is interrogating a captured underworld thug, and wants to know not only when a certain arms shipment is coming it, but on which dock.*

*Mike decides this will be an **active opposition** Overcome action between the thug's Mediocre (+0) Will, and Wraith's Fair (+2) Provoke.*

*Both Mike and Xander pick up the dice and roll. Mike rolls  $\oplus\ominus\ominus\oplus$  for a Mediocre (+0) result, since he had no skill bonus to add to the dice.*

*Xander rolls  $\oplus\oplus\ominus\ominus$  and adds the +1 result from the dice to his Fair (+2) Provoke skill, for a grand total of a Good (+3) result.*

*Xander gets 3-Shifts over Mike, granting him a success with style (which we'll discuss in Chapter 11: Actions and Outcomes).*

## FATE POINTS

You use tokens to represent how many fate points you have at any given time during play. Fate points are one of your most important resources in Daring Comics— they're a measure of how much influence you have to make the story go in your character's favor.



You can spend fate points to invoke an aspect, to declare a story detail, or to activate certain powerful stunts.

You earn fate points by accepting a compel on one of your aspects.

## INVOKING AN ASPECT

Whenever you're making a skill roll, and you're in a situation where an aspect might be able to help you, you can spend a fate point to invoke it in order to change the dice result. This allows you to either reroll the dice or add +2 to your roll, whichever is more helpful. (Typically, +2 is a good choice if you rolled -2 or higher, but sometimes you want to risk a reroll to get that +4.) You do this after you've rolled the dice, if you aren't happy with your total.

You also have to explain or justify how the aspect is helpful in order to get the bonus—sometimes it'll be self-evident, and sometimes it might require some creative narrating.

You can spend more than one fate point on a single roll, gaining another reroll or an additional +2, as long as each point you spend invokes a different aspect.

*It's nighttime, and Midnight Avenger is trying to sneak past a couple of guards blocking his way from getting into a high security facility, where he needs to get evidence from a corporate mainframe. The guards are giving him passive opposition of Good (+3) and his Stealth skill is also Great (+4).*

*Dylan rolls and gets a **⊕■■■■**, which gives him a Fair (+2) result, which means he's going to be discovered— not a good thing.*

*Dylan invokes his **The Shadows are My Domain** aspect for an additional +2. He explains that since he is basically a breed of vampire and is used to hunting at night, he's adept at using the shadows to his advantage,. Mike agrees, so Dylan hands over a fate point. He decides to add a +2 to his roll, raising it to Great (+4). That gives him a 1-Shift success to remain undetected by the guards as he makes his way across the corporate grounds.*

## DECLARING A STORY DETAIL

Sometimes, you want to add a detail that works to your character's advantage in a scene. For example, you might use this to narrate a convenient coincidence, like retroactively having the right supplies for a certain job ("Of course I brought that

along!"), showing up at a dramatically appropriate moment, or suggesting that you and the NPC you just met have mutual clients in common.

To do this, you'll spend a fate point. You should try to justify your story details by relating them to your aspects. GMs, you have the right to veto any suggestions that seem out of scope or ask the player to revise them, especially if the rest of the group isn't buying into it.

*Barrage and Trinity have made it into the corporation's main server room, where they hope to find the evidence they need on the company's involvement in the illegal manufacturing and selling of weapons based on extraterrestrial technology that is supposed to be banned by the government.*

*They get into the room and Mike informs them that the servers are several generations more advanced than anything they've ever seen before, and the interface looks to be something beyond normal Earth designs.*

*Keirdwyn looks at her sheet for Barrage, and reminds the group that she has **Hi-Tech Billionaire Hero**. She wants to know if Barrage can take a few minutes to study the interface and intuitively know how it operates.*

*Mike thinks about it for a few seconds, and agrees.*

## COMPELS

Sometimes (in fact, probably often), you'll find yourself in a situation where an aspect complicates your character's life and creates unexpected drama. When that happens, the GM will suggest a potential complication that might arise. This is called a compel.

Sometimes, a compel means your character automatically fails at some goal, or your character's choices are restricted, or simply that unintended consequences cloud whatever your character does. You might negotiate back and forth on the details a little, to arrive at what would be most appropriate and dramatic in the moment.

Once you've agreed to accept the complication, you get a fate point for your troubles. If you want, you can pay a fate point to prevent the complication from happening, but we don't recommend you do that very often. You'll probably need that fate point later, and getting compelled brings drama (and hence, fun) into your game's story.

Players, you're going to call for a compel when you want there to be a complication in a decision you've just made, if it's related to one of your aspects. GMs, you're going to call for a compel when you make the world respond to the characters in a complicated or dramatic way.

Anyone at the table is free to suggest when a compel might be appropriate for any character (including their own). GMs, you have the final word on whether or not a compel is valid. And speak up if you see that a compel happened naturally as a result of play, but no fate points were awarded.

*Dylan has **Avenging Vampiric Detective** on his sheet as the hero group is trying to get the cooperation of Detective Paul Blake. They need information on certain gang activities near the docks that his Special Crimes Unit possesses, but the detective isn't too keen on a bunch of costumes trying to do get in the way of real police doing their jobs.*

*During the scene, Mike looks at the player's aspects and notices the one for Midnight*

*Avenger. He suggests that the detective isn't as forthcoming as the group had hoped. Since Midnight Avenger hasn't been able to feed on blood lately, the detective's reluctance makes him pretty angry. He's had a rage slowly boiling inside of him from the hunger. Midnight Avenger is going to bare his fangs and assume his full vampiric visage as he attempts to attack the detective for needlessly holding out on them. Although the group will hold the hero back, the detective is now, more than ever, not about to help the team.*

*Dylan accepts the new story twist, and Mike hands him a fate point. The group will have to probably find another way to get the information they need.*

## **START PLAYING!**

These are the basic things you need to know to play Daring Comics RPG. The following chapters go into greater detail on everything we've covered above, and will show you how to get your game off the ground.



# CHAPTER 2: ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS

Aspects and fate points are the main driving force behind any game using the fate system, and they're vitally important to your super-heroes. Through aspects and fate points, your heroes will pull off more daring action and wield more narrative power than simply rolling a few dice.

Before we go any further, let's take a detailed look at aspects, fate points, and how they work together.

## DEFINING ASPECTS

Aspects are phrases that describes something unique or noteworthy about whatever they're attached to. They're the primary way you spend and gain fate points, and they influence the story by providing an opportunity for a character to get a bonus, complicating a character's life, or adding to another character's roll or passive opposition.

## DEFINING FATE POINTS

GMs and players, you both have a pool of points called fate points that you can use to influence the game. You represent these with tokens, as already mentioned in **Chapter 1: The Basics**. Players, you start with a number of fate points equal to your character's refresh every story arc. You'll also reset to your refresh rate if you ended an issue with fewer fate points than your rate. GMs, you get a budget of fate points to spend in every scene.

When your aspects come into play, you will usually spend or gain a fate point.

## TYPES OF ASPECTS

Daring Comics has a few different kinds of aspects: series aspects, character aspects, power set aspects, situation aspects, consequences, and boosts. They primarily differ from one another in terms of what they're attached to and how long they last.

### ***SERIES ASPECTS***

Series aspects are permanent fixtures of the series, hence the name. While they might change over time, they're never going to go away. You'll define the initial

series aspects during series creation. They describe beginning problems or threats that exist in the world, and are going to be the basis for at least your first story arc.

Everyone can invoke, compel, or create an advantage on a series aspect at any time; they're always there and available for anyone's use.

### ***CHARACTER ASPECTS***

Character aspects are attached to an individual character. They describe a near-infinite number of things that set each of them apart, such as:

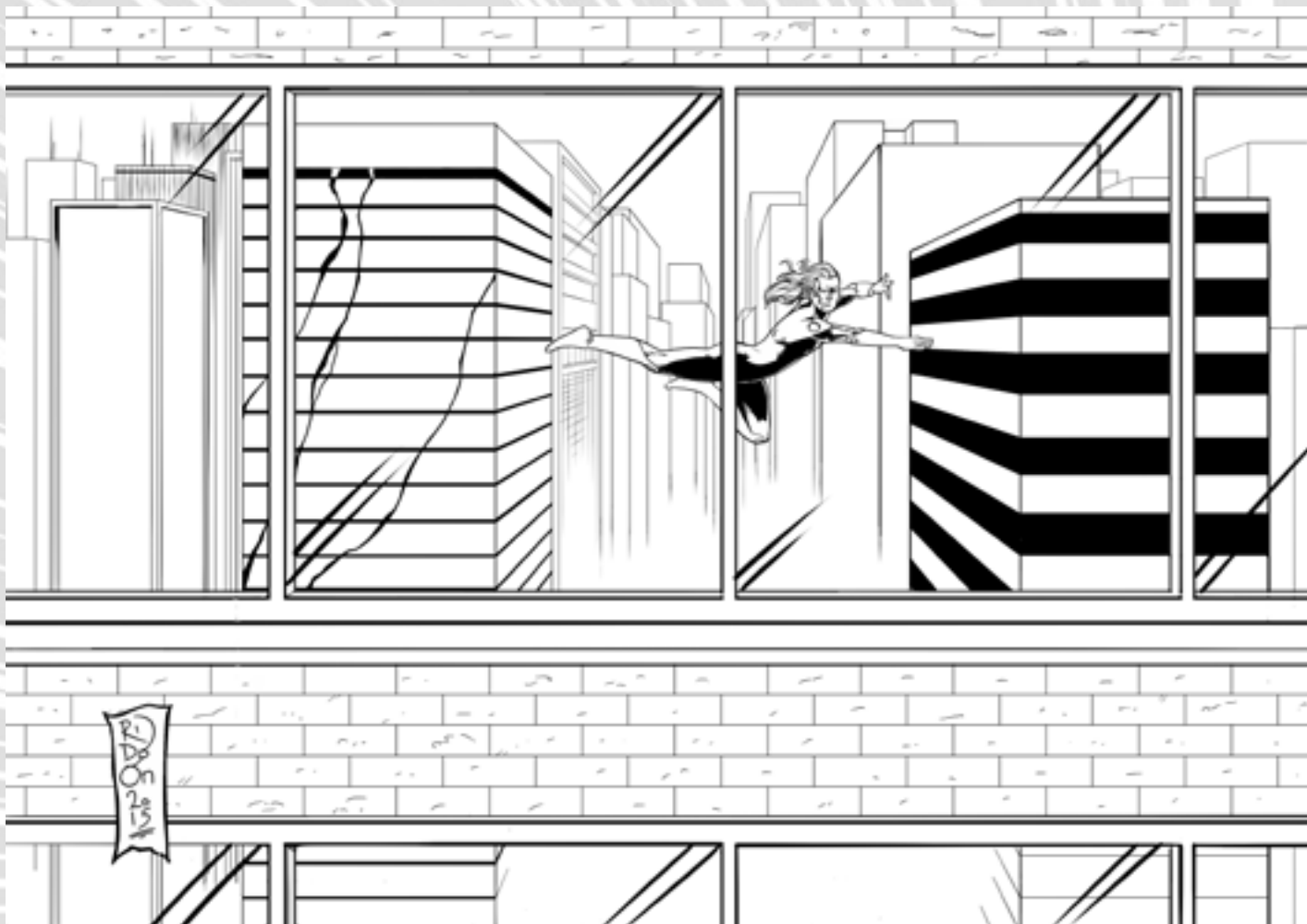
- A concept phrase that tells what your character is all about, such as: Patriotic Super-Soldier, Billionaire Playboy Inventor, or Uncanny Crime-fighting Archer.
- The character's motivation for what he does, such as: With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility, If Good Does Not Act, Evil Wins, or There is No Justice, Only Punishment
- Something from the past, such as a life-changing event: Inaction Harms Others, or Living With the Ghosts of my Parents.
- A core value, such as: The law is Immutable, Killing is Never an Option, or The Legal System is a Revolving Door.

You can invoke or call for a compel on any of your character aspects whenever they're relevant. GMs, you can always propose compels to any character aspect. Players, you can suggest compels for other characters, but the GM is always going to get the final say on whether or not it's a valid suggestion.

### ***POWER SET ASPECT***

Each of your powers are arranged under a thematic power set. Your character might have one power set, two power sets, or in some cases even three or more power sets. However many power sets you have, each one has its own aspect that can be invoked and compelled as normal. Power sets also have another function, but we'll cover that in the Powers chapter.

The power set aspect should say something about the origins or theme of the powers contained within



it, such as: Master of Fire Control, Arcane Spells and Mastery, Intensive Training and Study, Alien Physiology.

## ***SITUATION ASPECTS***

A situation aspect is temporary, intended to last only for a single scene or until it no longer makes sense (but no longer than an Issue, at most). Situation aspects can be attached to the environment the scene takes place in, which affects everybody in the scene; but you can also attach them to specific characters by targeting them when you create an advantage.

Situation aspects describe significant features of the circumstances the characters are dealing with in a scene. Some example are:

- Physical features of the environment: Dense Underbrush, Obscuring Snowdrifts, Low Gravity Planet.
- Positioning or placement: Sniper's Perch, In the Trees, Backyard.

- Immediate obstacles: Burning Building, Hi-Tech Lock, Yawning Chasm.
- Contextual details that are likely to come into play: Disgruntled Police Officer, Security Cameras, Loud Machinery.
- Sudden changes in a character's status: Disarmed, Dazed, Cornered.

Who can use a situation aspect depends a lot on narrative context. Sometimes it'll be very clear, and sometimes you'll need to justify how using the aspect makes sense based on what's happening in the scene. The GM is the final arbiter on what aspect uses are valid.

Sometimes situation aspects become obstacles that characters need to overcome. Other times they give you justification to provide active opposition against someone.

## ***CONSEQUENCES***

A consequence is more permanent than a situation aspect, but not quite as permanent as a character aspect. They're a special kind of aspect you take in

order to avoid getting taken out in a conflict. They describe lasting injuries or problems that you take away from a conflict: Dislocated Shoulder, Bloody Nose, and so forth.

Consequences stick around for a variable length of time, from a few scenes to an entire story arc, depending on how severe they are and what series tone you chose. Because of their negative phrasing, you're likely to get compelled a lot when you have them, and anyone who can justifiably benefit from the consequence can invoke it or create an advantage on it.

## **BOOSTS**

Boosts are a super-transient kind of aspect. You get a boost when you're trying to create an advantage but don't succeed well enough, or as an added benefit to succeeding especially well at an action. You get to invoke them for free, but as soon as you do, the aspect goes away.

If you want, you can also allow another character to invoke your boost, if it's relevant and could help them out.

## **WHAT ASPECTS DO**

In Daring Comics, aspects do two major things: they tell you what's important about the game, and they help you decide when to use the mechanics.

### **IMPORTANCE**

Each collection of aspects indicates what you need to focus on during the game. Think of them as guiding you toward a dramatic narrative impact.

GMs, when you create stories in Daring Comics, you're going to use those aspects, and the connections between aspects, to generate the problems your heroes are going to solve. Players, your aspects are the reason why your heroes stand out from every other character who might have similar skills.

The series aspects do something similar, but on a larger scale. They help show why the heroes are involved in the larger story, what threatens the lives of innocents or is prepared to endanger an entire galactic sector.

Situation aspects make the moment-to-moment interactions of play interesting by adding color and depth to what might otherwise be a boring scene. A fight in a city street is generic by nature. It could be any city street, anywhere. But when you add the aspect

**Gathering Crowd of Spectators** to the scene, and it's brought into play, it becomes a different ballgame entirely as now the heroes have to worry about the innocent people too stupid to flee a super-brawl.

## **DECIDING WHEN TO USE MECHANICS**

Because aspects tell us what's important, they also tell us when it's most appropriate to use the mechanics to deal with a situation, rather than just letting the group decide what happens by only describing what the characters do.

GMs, this comes up for you most often when you're trying to figure out whether to require a player to roll dice. If a player says is simply flying over an island, then there's no real reason to require an overcome action to grab it. But if the situation aspects tell you that the island is **Protected by Defensive Batteries** and the villain has a **Massive Weather Dominator Device**, then you suddenly have an element of pressure and risk that makes it worth going to the dice.

Players, this comes up for you most often when invoking your aspects and considering compels. Your aspects highlight what makes your character an individual, and you want to play that up. So when the opportunity comes up to make your character more awesome by invoking, or when you see an opportunity to influence the story by suggesting a compel for your character, do it! The game will be much richer for it.

## **MAKING A GOOD ASPECT**

Since aspects are so important to the game, it's important to make the best possible aspects.

How do you know what is a good aspect? Simple: the best aspects are double-edged. They say more than one thing. They also keep the phrasing simple.

### **DOUBLE-EDGED**

Good aspects offer a clear benefit to a character while also providing opportunities to complicate their lives.

An aspect with a double-edge is going to come up in play more often than a mostly positive or negative one. You can use them more frequently, and you'll be able to accept more compels and gain more fate points.

Try this as a litmus test: list two ways you might invoke the aspect, and two ways someone else could invoke it or you could get a compel from it. If the examples

come easily to mind, great! If not, add more context to make that aspect work or put that idea to the side and come up with a new aspect.

Let's look at an aspect like **Covert Expert**. The benefits of having this aspect are pretty obvious: any time you're breaking into someplace, using deceit and lies to get information, or maybe wearing a disguise, you could justify invoking it. But it doesn't seem like there's a lot of room for that aspect to work against you. So, let's think of a way we can spice that up a bit.

What if we change that aspect to **Lone Wolf Black Operative**? That still carries the connotations that would allow you to take advantage of it while working undercover and on covert operations, but it adds a downside, you're likely used to working on your own and untrusting of people. This might mean that you could accept compels to trip-up potential allies, or someone might invoke your aspect when you're required to work with other people in certain situations.

GMs, this is just as true of your game and situation aspects. Any feature of a scene you call out should be something that either the PCs or their foes could use in a dramatic fashion. Your game aspects do present problems, but they also should present ways for the PCs to take advantage of the status quo.

## **SAY MORE THAN ONE THING**

Earlier, we noted several things that a character aspect might describe: personality traits, backgrounds, relationships, problems, possessions, and so forth. The best aspects overlap across a few of those categories, because that means you have more ways to bring them into play.

Let's look at a simple aspect that a new hero might have: **I Must Prove Myself**. You can invoke this whenever you're trying to do something to gain the approval of others or demonstrate your competence. Someone might compel it to bait you into getting into a fight you want to avoid, or to accept a hardship for the sake of approval. So we know it has a double edge, so far so good.

That'll work for a bit, but eventually this aspect will run out of steam. It says just one thing about the character. Either you're trying to prove yourself, or this aspect isn't going to come up.

Now tie that aspect in with a relationship to an organization: **I Must Prove Myself to the Sentinels of Society**. Your options open up a great deal. Not only do you get all the content from before, but you've introduced a super-hero team that can govern your actions as a new hero, give you assignments or threaten to take you out of the field, and demand that you abide by a certain moral code (such as no killing). You can also invoke the aspect when dealing with the super-team or with anyone else who might be affected by the team's reputation. Suddenly, that aspect has a lot more going on around it.

GMs, for your situation aspects, you don't have to worry about this as much, because they're only intended to stick around for a scene. It's much more important for game and character aspects to suggest multiple contexts for use.

## **CLEAR PHRASING**

Because aspects are phrases, they come with all the ambiguities of language. If no one knows what your aspect means, it won't get used enough. **Just a Simple Detective** isn't quite as inspiring as **Avenging Vampiric Detective**. However, don't do this at the expense of clarity. Avoid metaphors and implications, when you can get away with just saying what you mean. That way, other people don't have to stop and ask you during play if a certain aspect would apply, or get bogged down in discussions about what it means.

Let's look at **Memories and Nightmares**. There's something evocative about the phrase, but as an aspect, I don't really know what it's supposed to do. How does it help you? What are the memories of? What are the nightmares about? Without some concrete idea of what the aspect's referring to, invoking and compelling it is pretty much impossible.

Suppose we talk about this some, and you specify that you were going for this idea that your character was scarred from years spent in the setting's recent war against an evil alien race (the Necroleans) hell-bent on destroying all life in the universe. You watched entire planets fall, saw twisted lifeforms you never imagined possible, and pretty much had all your normal view of the world (even accounting for super-powers) turned inside-out.

A possibly better aspect for all that might be **Scars from the Necrolean War**. Less

*ambiguous, and it directly references all the stuff you're talking about, and gives me ideas about people from your past I may be able to bring back into your life.*

If you're wondering if your aspect is unclear, ask the people at the table what they think it means.

## IF YOU GET STUCK

Now you know what makes for a good aspect, but that doesn't narrow down your potential choices any—you still have a nearly infinite set of topics and ideas to choose from.

If you're still stuck about what to choose, here are some tips to make things a little easier on you.

### **SOMETIMES, IT'S BETTER NOT TO CHOOSE**

If you can't think of an aspect that really grabs you, then you're better off leaving that space blank or just keeping whatever ideas you had scribbled in the margins. Sometimes it's much easier to wait for your character to get into play before you figure out how you want to word a particular aspect.

So when in doubt, leave it blank. Maybe you have a general idea of the aspect but don't know how to phrase it, or maybe you just have no idea. Don't worry about it. There's always room during the game to figure it out as you go.

The same thing is true if you have more than one idea that seems interesting, but they don't work together and you don't know which one to pick. Write them all down in the margins and see which one seems to really sing in play. Then fill the space with the one that gets the most mileage.

### **VARY IT UP**

You don't want all your aspects to describe the same kind of thing. Five relationships means that you can't use your aspects unless one of them is in play, but five personality traits means that you have no connection to the game world. If you're stuck on what to pick for an aspect, looking at what kinds of things your other aspects describe may help you figure out which way to go for the current phase.

## LET YOUR FRIENDS DECIDE

We've talked before about the fact that the game works best if everyone is invested in what everyone else is doing— collaboration is at the heart of the game, and we'll probably say it a lot more times before the end of this book.

You always have the option, especially with aspects, of simply asking the GM and other players to come up with something on your behalf. Pitch them the events of the phase, and ask them the same questions they're going to be asking of you. What matters to them? What are they excited about? Do they have suggestions about how to make the events of the phase more dramatic or intense? What aspect do they think would be most interesting or appropriate?

You have the final decision as to what your character's aspects are, so don't look at it as giving up control. Look at it as asking your ever-important fan club and audience what they want to see, and using their suggestions to jumpstart your own train of thought. If everyone has a bit of input on everyone else's characters, the game will benefit from that sense of mutual investment.

## INVOKING ASPECTS

The primary way you're going to use aspects is to invoke them. If you're in a situation where an aspect is beneficial to your character somehow, you can invoke it.

In order to invoke an aspect, explain why the aspect is relevant, spend a fate point, and you can choose one of these benefits:

- Take a +2 on your current skill roll after you've rolled the dice.
- Reroll all your dice.
- Pass a +2 benefit to another character's roll, if it's reasonable that the aspect you're invoking would be able to help.
- Add +2 to any source of passive opposition, if it's reasonable that the aspect you're invoking could contribute to making things more difficult. You can also use this to create passive opposition at Fair (+2) if there wasn't going to be any.

## THE REROLL VS. THE +2

Rerolling the dice is a little riskier than just getting the +2 bonus, but has the potential for greater benefit. We recommend you reserve this option for when you've rolled a -3 or a -4 on the dice, to maximize the chance that you'll get a beneficial result from rerolling. The odds are better that way.

It doesn't matter when you invoke the aspect, but usually it's best to wait until after you've rolled the dice to see if you're going to need the benefit. You can invoke multiple aspects on a single roll, but you cannot invoke the same aspect multiple times on a single roll. So if your reroll doesn't help you enough, you'll have to pick another aspect (and spend another fate point) for a second reroll or that +2.

The group has to buy into the relevance of a particular aspect when you invoke it; GMs, you're the final arbiter on this one. The use of an aspect should make sense, or you should be able to creatively narrate your way into ensuring it makes sense.

Precisely how you do this is up to you. Sometimes, it makes so much sense to use a particular aspect that you can just hold up the fate point and name it. Or you might need to embellish your character's action a little more so that everyone understands where you're coming from. (That's why we recommend making sure that you're on the same page with the group as to what each of your aspects means—it makes it easier to justify bringing it into play.)

## FREE INVOCATIONS

You don't always have to pay a fate point to invoke an aspect—sometimes it's free.

When you succeed at creating an advantage, you "stick" a free invocation onto an aspect. If you succeed with style, you get two invocations. Some of the other actions also give you free boosts.

You also get to stick a free invocation on any consequences you inflict in a conflict.

Free invocations work like normal ones except in two ways: no fate points are exchanged, and you can stack them with a normal invocation for a better bonus. So you can use a free invocation and pay a fate point on the same aspect to get a +4 bonus instead of a +2, two rerolls instead of one, or you can add +4 to another character's roll or increase passive

opposition by +4. Or you could split the benefits, getting a reroll and a +2 bonus. You can also stack multiple free invocations together.

After you've used your free invocation, if the aspect in question is still around, you can keep invoking it by spending fate points.

*Wrath succeeds on an attack, and causes his opponent to take the **Mild Concussion** consequence. On the next exchange, he attacks him again, and he can invoke that for free because he put it there, giving him a +2 or a reroll.*

If you want, you can pass your free invocation to another character. That allows you to get some teamwork going between you and a buddy. This is really useful in a conflict if you want to set someone up for a big blow. Everyone creates an advantage and passes their free invocations onto one person, then that person stacks all of them up at once for a huge bonus.

## COMPELLING ASPECTS

The other way you use aspects in the game is called a compel. If you're in a situation where having or being around a certain aspect means your character's life is more dramatic or complicated, someone can compel the aspect. That aspect can be on your character, the scene, location, game, or anywhere else that's currently in play. We'll start with character aspects, and then talk about situation aspects in a bit.

In order to compel an aspect, explain why the aspect is relevant, and then make an offer as to what the complication is. You can negotiate the terms of the complication a bit, until you reach a reasonable consensus. Whoever is getting compelled then has two options:

- Accept the complication and receive a fate point
- Pay a fate point to prevent the complication from happening

The complication from a compel occurs regardless of anyone's efforts—once you've made a deal and taken the fate point, you can't use your skills or anything else to mitigate the situation. You have to deal with the new story developments that arise from the complication.

If you prevent the complication from happening, then you and the group describe how you avoid it. Sometimes it just means that you agree that the event never happened



in the first place, and sometimes it means narrating your character doing something proactive. Whatever you need to do in order to make it make sense works fine, as long as the group is okay with it.

GMs, you're the final arbiter here, as always— not just on how the result of a compel plays out, but on whether or not a compel is valid in the first place. Use the same judgment you apply to an invocation— it should make instinctive sense, or require only a small amount of explanation, that a complication might arise from the aspect.

Finally, and this is very important: if a player wants to compel another character, it costs a fate point to propose the complication. The GM can always compel for free, and any player can propose a compel on his or her own character for free.

## TYPES OF COMPELS

There are two major categories for what a compel looks like in the game: events and decisions. These are tools to help you figure out what a compel should look like and help break any mental blocks.

### EVENTS

An event-based compel happens to the character in spite of herself, when the world around her responds to a certain aspect in a certain way and creates a complicating circumstance. It looks like this:

You have \_\_\_ aspect and are in \_\_\_ situation, so it makes sense that, unfortunately, \_\_\_ would happen to you. Damn your luck.

Here are two:

*Barrage has **Heir to State Industries**, one of the world's leading conglomerates in technological research and development. She's covertly attending a press conference, expecting an attack on the Mayor. Someone in the crowd recognizes her anyway, from an article about her father's company that appeared last month. The person makes a huge fuss, and all eyes turn to her.*

***Wrath was Once a Criminal, Now a Hero.** While tailing someone important to finding out where a crime boss is hiding out, an unmarked police car drives by, turns around, and flashes its lights. Two detectives step out— the very same two who Wrath once had violent, personal run-ins with in the past. They slam him against the wall, and the person he was following disappears.*

As you'll see with decision-based compels, the real mileage is in the complication itself. Without that, you don't really have anything worth focusing on—the fact that the PCs continually have complicated and dramatic things happen to them is, well, exactly what makes them PCs in the first place.

GMs, event-based compels are your opportunity to party. You're expected to control the world around the PCs, so having that world react to them in an unexpected way is pretty much part and parcel of your job description.

Players, event-based compels are great for you. You get rewarded simply by being there—how much more awesome can you get? You might have a difficult time justifying an event-based compel yourself, as it requires you to assert control over an element of the game that you typically aren't in charge of. Feel free to propose an event-based compel, but remember that the GM has the final say on controlling the game world and may veto you if she's got something else in mind.

### DECISIONS

A decision is a kind of compel that is internal to the character. It happens because of a decision he makes, hence the name. It looks like this:

You have \_\_\_ aspect in \_\_\_ situation, so it makes sense that you'd decide to \_\_\_\_. This goes wrong when \_\_\_ happens.

Here are two:

*Barrage has **With Money Comes Power**, so she decides to propose a possible donation to the Police Department in exchange for some information concerning an ongoing investigation. This goes wrong when the Detective considers it a bribe attempt, and puts her and her hero team in his own investigative crosshairs.*

*Midnight Avenger has **Crime Feeds on Innocence, I Feed on Crime**, and decides to use his vampiric powers to feed on a criminal who had murdered a young child in a drive-by. This goes wrong when two women in the neighborhood witness the attack from their third story windows, and the police are given a description.*

So the real dramatic impact from these kinds of compels is not what decision the character makes, but rather how things go wrong. Before something

goes wrong, the first sentence could be a prelude to making a skill roll or simply a matter of roleplaying. The complication that the decision creates is really what makes it a compel.

## GM COMPEL WARNING

If you offer a decision-based compel, and no one can agree on what the decision part should be, it shouldn't cost a fate point to counter—just drop it. Countering a decision-based compel should only mean that the “what goes wrong” part doesn't happen.

GMs, remember that a player is ultimately responsible for everything that the character says and does. You can offer decision-based compels, but if the player doesn't feel like the decision is one that the character would make, don't force the issue by charging a fate point. Instead, negotiate the terms of the compel until you find a decision the player is comfortable making, and a complication that chains from that decision instead. If you can't agree on something, drop it.

The decision part should be very self-evident, and something a player might have been thinking about doing anyway. The same goes for players trying to compel NPCs or each other's PCs, make sure you have a strong mutual understanding of what that NPC or other character might do before proposing the compel.

Players, if you need fate points, this is a really good way of getting them. If you propose a decision-based compel for your character to the GM, then what you're basically asking is for something you're about to do to go wrong somehow. You don't even have to have a complication in mind—simply signaling the GM should be enough to start a conversation. GMs, as long as the compel isn't weak (as in, as long as there's a good, juicy complication), you should go with this. If the compel is weak, poll the rest of the group for ideas until something more substantial sticks.

## RETROACTIVE COMPELS

Sometimes, you'll notice during the game that you've fulfilled the criteria for a compel without a fate point getting awarded. You've played your aspects to the hilt and gotten yourself into all kinds of trouble, or you've narrated crazy and dramatic stuff happening to a character related to their aspects just out of reflex.

Anyone who realizes this in play can mention it, and the fate point can be awarded retroactively, treating it like a compel after the fact. GMs, you're the final arbiter. It should be pretty obvious when something like this occurs, though. Just look at the guidelines for event and decision compels above, and see if you can summarize what happened in the game according to those guidelines. If you can, award a fate point.

## COMPELLING WITH SITUATION ASPECTS

Just like with every other kind of aspect use, you can use situation aspects (and by extension, game aspects) for compels. Because situation aspects are usually external to characters, you're almost always looking at event-based compels rather than decision-based ones. The character or characters affected get a fate point for the compel.

Here are two examples:

*Because the apartment complex is **On Fire**, and the player characters must rescue people from within, it makes sense that, unfortunately, the thug they're chasing can get away in the confusion.*

*The corporate structure the team is breaking into to find connections to a black market super-soldier program has redundant security, and **Redundant Security for the Redundant Security**. So, it makes sense that their intrusion will be noticed at some point.*

## USING ASPECTS FOR ROLEPLAYING

Finally, aspects have a passive use that you can draw on in almost every instance of play. They can be used as a guide to roleplaying your character. Aspects give a big picture of what your character's about, and they can reveal interesting implications if you read between the lines. If you're wondering what your character might do in a certain situation, look at your aspects. What do they say about your character's personality, goals, and desires? Are there any clues in what your aspects say that might suggest a course of action? Once you find that suggestion, go for it.

Playing to your aspects also has another benefit: you're feeding the GM ideas for compels. You're already bringing your aspects into the game, so all she has to do is offer you complications and you're good to go.

GMs use the NPC aspects the same way.

GMs can also use character aspects as a way of figuring out how the world reacts to the characters. Does someone have the aspect **No One is Stronger?** That's a reputation that might precede that character, one that villains might know about and react to.

Also, it might even suggest something about that character's physical size and build (though with super-powers, not always). You know that most people are going to give that character a wide berth in a crowded space, might be naturally intimidated, or might be overly aggressive or brusque as overcompensation for being intimidated.

But no one's going to ignore that character. Inserting these kinds of aspect-related details into your narration can help your game seem more vivid and consistent, even when you're not shuffling fate points around.

*Barrage, in her civilian disguise of Amanda State, daughter of Darren State and heir to her father's corporate empire, she is on a national talk show discussing her life as one of the wealthiest heirs on in the country.*

*During the interview, the host mentions her mother's death in a mugging, an event that happened when Amanda was 14 years old and serves as one of her main reasons for secretly becoming a super-hero.*



*Although the topic starts innocently enough, the host soon shows that he has an axe to grind, and accuses Amanda of learning nothing from what happened to her mother, and living a sheltered life not truly aware of what it's like out there for everyday people.*

*Amanda can't exactly go on record that she is actually*

*Barrage, but dredging up her mother's death has struck a chord. Keirdwyn looks at her sheet and sees the aspect: **I will Always Miss My Mother.***

*Playing on that, she tears up as she recalls that night eight years ago, and goes off on the host not only about using her mother as a weapon against her, but also discussing all the community fundraising and outreach events she has done as Amanda State. Right there on national television.*

## INVOKING FOR EFFECT

When you invoke for effect, you're spending a fate point— or a free invocation— to create a specifically defined mechanical effect, something other than what a typical aspect is capable of. Although this is primarily used with Power Set effects in Daring Comics, it can also be used for pretty much any character aspect if the your group agrees.

When you create an aspect, look at it and decide whether or not it needs a special effect attached to it. Maybe your hero can control the Earth, and can invoke the Power Set aspect to avoid falling down or being moved against his will, or maybe your psychic detective can invoke Mental Eavesdropper to read someone's surface thoughts.

Mechanically, an aspect effect should be worth the fate point you're spending— the equivalent to two shifts' worth of potency, just like any other effect of invoking an aspect. Aspect effects should do something, like in the examples above, rather than provide a static bonus. A regular aspect invocation already provides a bonus, so you don't need a special effect that does that, too. An aspect effect is a bit like having an extra rules-exception stunt that you always have to pay for, both in terms of what the effect can accomplish and the amount of complexity it adds to your character.

In terms of cost, it's okay for PCs to have one or even two of these effects, and they should never replace purchasing a power. They should be on par with a normal aspect invocation in terms of potency, and should be more situational so they're less likely to be used often. If an effect is more than that, the GM is within his rights to either suggest you purchase the proper power, or at least spend a Hero Point on additional effects.

## REMOVING OR CHANGING AN ASPECT

Game and character aspects change through advancement. See the Milestones section in Chapter 15: Advancing the Series for that.

If you want to get rid of a situation aspect, you can do it in one of two ways: roll an overcome action specifically for the purpose of getting rid of the aspect, or roll some other kind of action that would make the aspect make no sense if you succeed. (For example, if you're **Grappled**, you could try to sprint away. If you succeed, it wouldn't make sense for you to be **Grappled** anymore, so you'd also get rid of that aspect.)

If a character can interfere with your action, they get to roll active opposition against you as per normal. Otherwise, GMs, it's your job to set passive opposition or just allow the player to get rid of the aspect without a roll, if there's nothing risky or interesting in the way.

Finally, if at any point it simply makes no sense for a situation aspect to be in play, get rid of it.

## CREATING AND DISCOVERING NEW ASPECTS IN PLAY

In addition to your character aspects, series aspects, and the situation aspects that the GM presents, you have the ability to create, discover, or gain access to other aspects as you play.

For the most part, you'll use the Create an Advantage action to make new aspects. When you describe the action that gives you an advantage, the context should tell you if it requires a new aspect or if it derives from an existing one. If you're bringing a new circumstance into play, like throwing sand in someone's eyes, then you're indicating that you need a new situation aspect.

With some skills, it's going to make more sense to stick an advantage to an aspect that's already on some other character's sheet. In this case, the PC or NPC you're targeting would provide active opposition to keep you from being able to use that aspect.

If you're not looking for a free invocation, and you just think it'd make sense if there were a particular situation aspect in play, you don't need to roll the dice or anything to make new aspects; just suggest them, and if the group thinks they're interesting, write them down.

### GM: EXTREMELY POWERFUL NINJA GM TRICK

So, if you don't have any aspects made up for a scene or an NPC, just ask the players what kinds of aspects they're looking for when they roll to create an advantage. If they tie or succeed, just write down something similar to what they were looking for and say they were right. If they fail, write it down anyway, or write another aspect down that's not advantageous to them, so as to contrast with their expectations.

## SECRET OR HIDDEN ASPECTS

Some skills also let you use the create an advantage action to reveal aspects that are hidden, either on NPCs or environments. In this case, the GM simply tells you what the aspect is if you get a tie or better on the roll. You can use this to “fish” for aspects if you’re not precisely sure what to look for, doing well on the roll is sufficient justification for being able to find something advantage-worthy.

Generally speaking, we assume that most of the aspects in play are public knowledge for the players. The PCs’ character sheets are sitting on the table, and probably the main and supporting NPCs are as well. That doesn’t always mean the characters know about those aspects, but that’s one of the reasons why the create an advantage action exists, to help you justify how a character learns about other characters.

Also, remember that aspects can help deepen the story only if you get to use them—aspects that are never discovered might as well never have existed in the first place. So most of the time, the players should always know what aspects are available for their use, and if there’s a question as to whether or not the character knows, use the dice to help you decide.

Finally, GMs, we know that sometimes you’re going to want to keep an NPC’s aspects secret, or not reveal certain situation aspects right away, because you’re trying to build tension in the story. If the PCs are investigating a series of murders, you don’t exactly want the culprit to have Sociopathic Serial Murderer sitting on an index card for the PCs to see at the beginning of the adventure.

In those cases, we recommend you don’t make an aspect directly out of whatever fact you’re trying to keep secret. Instead, make the aspect a detail that makes sense in context after the secret is revealed.

*Michael is making an NPC who’s secretly a super-villain living in New York City, the main bad guy in the story arc he’s planning. He’s also a known philanthropist, so he doesn’t want to give things away too easily.*

*Instead of making a Secretly a Criminal Mastermind aspect, he decides to make a few personal details instead: **Super-Hero Groupie** (he takes an uncanny interest in super-heroes and their exploits), **Smarter Than He Looks**, and **Wheels Within Wheels**. If the heroes discover a couple of these, or see them on the table, they might start to*

*suspect the NPC, but it’s not going to ruin the mystery of the story arc right away.*

## INVOKING OR COMPELLING ANOTHER CHARACTER’S ASPECT

You can invoke or compel any aspect (that you know about) attached to another player-character or NPC. To do so, simply spend a fate point and declare the invocation or compel.

To invoke another character’s or NPC’s aspect, the fate point you would pay goes to that player, or the gamemaster. Place it somewhere on the table (you’ve just spent it), but they do not get it until the end of the scene. For gamemasters, it goes into their default pool at the beginning of the next scene.

Compelling another’s aspect works the same way, except when they spend a fate point to resist the compel, it goes to the player who initiated the compel.

## THE FATE POINT ECONOMY

For the most part, the use of aspects revolves around fate points. You indicate your supply of fate points by using tokens, such as poker chips, glass beads, or other markers.

Ideally, you want a consistent ebb and flow of fate points going on throughout your sessions. Players spend them in order to be awesome in a crucial moment, and they get them back when their lives get dramatic and complicated. So if your fate points are flowing the way they’re supposed to, you’ll end up with these cycles of triumphs and setbacks that make for a fun and interesting story.

Here’s how that works.

### REFRESH

Each player gets a number of fate points to start each issue off with. That total is called the refresh rate. The refresh is determined by your Series Tone.

You might end an issue of play with more fate points than your actual refresh. If that happens, you don’t lose the additional points when you start the next issue, but you don’t gain any either.

At the start of a new story arc, you reset your fate points to your refresh rate no matter what.

## SPENDING FATE POINTS

You spend fate points in any of the following ways:

- **Invoke an Aspect:** Invoking an aspect costs you one fate point, unless the invocation is free.
- **Power a Stunt or Power:** Some stunts or powers are very potent, and as such, cost a fate point in order to activate.
- **Refuse a Compel:** Once a compel is proposed, you can pay a fate point to avoid the complication associated with it.
- **Declare a Story Detail:** To add something to the narrative based on one of your aspects, spend a fate point.

## EARNING FATE POINTS

You earn fate points in any of the following ways:

- **Accept a Compel:** You get a fate point when you agree to the complication associated with a compel. As we said above, this may sometimes happen retroactively if the circumstances warrant.
- **Have Your Aspects Invoked Against You:** If someone pays a fate point to invoke an aspect attached to your character, you gain their fate point at the end of the scene. This includes advantages created on your character, as well as consequences.
- **Concede in a Conflict:** You receive one fate point for conceding in a conflict, as well as an additional fate point for each consequence that you've received in that conflict. (This isn't the same as being taken out in a conflict, by the way, but we'll get into that later.)

## THE GM AND FATE POINTS

GMs, you also get to use fate points, but the rules are a little bit different than the rules for players.

When you award players fate points for compels or concession, they come out of an unlimited pool you have for doing so—you don't have to worry about running out of fate points to award, and you always get to compel for free.

The NPCs under your control are not so lucky. They have a limited pool of fate points you get to use on their behalf. Whenever a scene starts, you get one fate point for every PC in that scene. You can

use these points on behalf of any NPC you want, but you can get more in that scene if they take a compel, like PCs do.

You reset to your default total, one per PC, at the beginning of every scene.

There are two exceptions:

You accepted a compel that effectively ended the last scene or starts the next one. If that happens, take an extra fate point in the next scene.

You conceded a conflict to the PCs in the previous scene. If that happens, take the fate points you'd normally get for the concession into the next scene and add them to the default total.

If the immediate next scene doesn't present a significant interaction with NPCs, you can save these extra points until the next scene that does.

*Michael is running a climactic conflict, where the PCs are battling a nemesis they've been trying to subdue for several scenarios now. Here are the characters in the scene:*

*Livewire, an electrical generating supervillain, a main NPC*

*Brickhouse, a super strong and invulnerable enforcer, a supporting NPC*

*Five nameless NPC thugs*

*Four PCs: Barrage, Wraith, Trinity, and Midnight Avenger*

*His total fate point pool for this scene is 4 fate points— one each for Midnight Avenger, Barrage, Trinity, and Wraith. If Wraith had been elsewhere (say, sneaking in a different way for a later ambush), Michael would've gotten three fate points, one each for Barrage, Midnight Avenger, and Trinity.*

*Late in the conflict, Livewire is forced to concede so he can get away with his skin intact. He has taken two consequences in the conflict, meaning that he gets three fate points for conceding. Those three fate points carry over to the next scene.*

# CHAPTER 3: SERIES CREATION

The first step in beginning a Daring Comics series is to determine what type of stories you want to tell. To do that, the players and the gamemaster should gather around the table for the first session of the game— series and character creation.

## CREATING THE SERIES

Unlike a lot of other roleplaying games where the players only create their characters and the gamemaster creates the campaign on his own, in Daring Comics everyone has input into the nature of the series' main themes and setting.

Don't worry, you are still responsible for creating your individual player character, and the gamemaster is still going to create the nuts and bolts of the series and the individual issues. What this first session does is, though, is make sure everyone is on the same page, that everyone has some input into the stories that are about to unfold, and that player characters typically have minor connections to the setting prior to the first issue.

Let's take a look at the process step by step.

## SERIES LEVEL

The first thing to determine is the Series Level, which will determine beginning Hero Points, the general types of stories that can be expected, and the overall strength of the opposition.

Daring Comics is divided into five different Series Levels, and each level offers a range of Hero Points. You'll use the Hero Points to purchase your Stunts and Powers. If you run out of points and need a few more things to round out your character, then you must spend your Refresh on it. Which means that your base Refresh will be lower, giving you less fate points to start out with.

Your Beginning Refresh can never drop below 1. If it would, you can't purchase additional Stunts or Powers, and will have to wait to improve your character through Milestones.

## *GRITTY REALISM*

This type of campaign focuses on people with more-than-human abilities existing in a normal, everyday world. Whether they go public with their abilities or keep them secret is dependent upon the flavor of the series. More than likely, however, the normal good, evil, and gray areas will be explored through the stories; and the government is likely to have a secret agency whose sole purpose is the apprehension and control (or study) of the Metahuman population.

**Base Hero Points: 5**

## *URBAN PROTECTORS*

In this type of campaign, the characters defend the streets against gangs, insane villains, crime lords, and other low-level villains. Although the characters may develop to become slightly more than the peak human potential, their crime-fighting careers are an exercise in development and training.

**Base Hero Points: 10**

## *SUPER-HEROIC*

Characters in this genre are capable of amazing feats and can take on most small military forces. Although not necessarily amongst the most powerful on the planet, they run a wide range of abilities and specialties.

**Base Hero Points: 15**

## *EARTH'S MIGHTIEST*

Characters in this genre are some of the greatest on the planet. Villains enter the range of world-dominating megalomaniacs, and some minor extraterrestrial or inter-dimensional threats are not uncommon.

**Base Hero Points: 20**

## *OFF THE CHARTS*

These types of characters can move mountains, shake the Earth if they cut loose with their powers, and take on most threats and have a good chance of surviving. They might be an alien on Earth with

near unlimited power, or someone who imbues the power of a god with a magic word. Villains often times rule their own planets or dimensions.

Base Hero Points: 25

## SERIES TONE

While the Series Level tells you how many resources you have for powers and stunts, and sets the benchmark for how powerful your heroes will be, the Series Tone sets the stage for the types of stories you intend to tell.

Series Tone comes in three flavors, representing the most common tones in super-hero comic books. Each tone establishes your beginning Refresh, base mental and physical stress boxes, and how long it takes to fully remove a Consequence after taking a recovery action.

### *NEAR REALISTIC*

This tone of series focuses more on heroes existing in some version of the real world. Heroes might be low in number, or generally remain hidden from the public at large. Although powers can run the gamut, when it comes to physical or mental confrontation, heroes and their adversaries alike can walk away with some lasting wounds.

**Beginning Refresh:** 3

**Physical and Mental Stress:** 2 boxes

**Mild Consequence:** After one scene

**Moderate Consequence:** After one issue

**Severe Consequence:** After one story arc

### *DARK + GRIM*

While the series maintains the feel of a comic book, it's much darker than the normal super-hero style. Heroes might not be heroes at all, but questionable anti-heroes who operate outside the law and could find themselves hunted by law enforcement as much as the criminals. Physical and mental combat is painful. Teams often times find themselves facing an internal rift due to a conflict of ideologies and personalities.

**Beginning Refresh:** 3

**Physical and Mental Stress:** 3 boxes

**Mild Consequence:** After one scene

**Moderate Consequence:** After one issue

**Severe Consequence:** After two issues

## *FOUR COLOR*

This type of series is the more traditional style of comic book storytelling. Heroes are generally loved by the public. Falling out of favor does occur, but rarely has the ultra-serious effects of the more grim tones. Flashy powers and hero vs. villain confrontations are frequent, as are team dynamics in and out of costume. Although personalities and ideologies on a team might cause tension and even splinter some members away, the team as a whole still continues to fight for truth and justice.

**Beginning Refresh:** 5

**Physical and Mental Stress:** 4 boxes

**Mild Consequence:** After one scene

**Moderate Consequence:** After half an issue

**Severe Consequence:** After one issue

## EXPERIENCE LEVEL

The next thing to determine for your series is how experienced each of the player-characters will be. Will they all be new or young heroes, or are they more just the *average Joe* stuck in a world where everyone around them can toss around energy beams and cars like they're nothing?

The general experience level of your character determines your beginning skill points. Don't worry about how to spend them right now, we'll cover that in the Skills chapter. For now, just make a note of how many skill points you get.

The Experience Level also determines if the characters get additional Hero Points, representing past Milestones they've achieved.

### *NORMAL GUY IN A SUPER WORLD*

Although the people you work with can lift cars, shoot energy beams from their eyes, fly, or move in the blink of an eye, you're just not on their level. Although you might have a couple of special devices, your training in a lot of areas is bare minimum. You're either just starting out, or just never put the time in yet to actually hone your skills to their full potential.



You have a lot of room to grow. But don't worry, that growth will come quick the more you work with your teammates to save the world.

**Skill Points:** 25

**Additional Hero Points:** 0

## ***NEW/YOUNG HEROES***

You're powered, you're fired up, you're ready to go out and kick butt and take names. It's time to put the evil-doers behind bars! Except you have a lot to learn, and are probably being reminded of that often enough by the older or more experienced heroes.

Maybe you have great potential and a wide array of powers, but little actual skill in using them. Or maybe you're all about your powers, and are being constantly reminded that protecting lives requires more than just brute force.

You'll grow. You'll learn. But until then, you're going to have to face and accept your mistakes.

**Skill Points:** 30

**Additional Hero Points:** 2

## ***KNOW THE ROPES***

You've fought crime for a little while now, taken down some criminals, and started building a reputation for yourself. You've also likely made some dangerous enemies, but maybe a powerful ally or two. You've started growing, training harder, and getting better by actual experience.

**Skill Points:** 35

**Additional Hero Points:** 5

## ***BEEN AROUND THE BLOCK***

You've been at this for a couple of years, and have amassed a lot of experience, most likely through a combination of training, doing, and trial and error. Often the younger and less experienced heroes turn to you for advice, or have learned to steer clear of you because you are too blasted scary or psychotic.

Regardless, the people know they can count on you to protect them. You've done it countless times before.

**Skill Points:** 40

**Additional Hero Points:** 10



## ***HIGHLY EXPERIENCED***

You're a paragon to not only the people you've vowed to protect, but to a lot of other heroes. Whether masterminds looking to build a doomsday weapon, megalomaniacs seeking to enslave mankind, or even extraterrestrial and inter-dimensional threats—you've seen it all. You've drawn the line, manned the

barricades, and shown the world that you will never give-up and never surrender.

You're a very experienced hero and have been at this for several years, maybe even a decade or longer.

**Skill Points:** 45

**Additional Hero Points:** 15

## SERIES FRAMEWORK

Now that you've determined you're the basic foundations for you type of series, it's time to start figuring out what type of stories you want to tell. We call this the Series Framework.

By creating a framework for the series as a group, the players are able to have some input into the types of stories they want to help tell. Of course, the players aren't designing the whole thing. It's the GM's job to flesh it out, expand it, create all the abilities that the villains, supporting cast, and other NPCs will have, and actually design the stories. But through the framework, the GM is going to have a solid basis to expand from, and everyone gets a hand in creating the series.

So let's take you through the process step by step. It would be a good idea to have a copy of the Series Framework sheet for each player and the GM. If you weren't able to print them out, that's okay. It's perfectly fine to use notebook paper, just as long as you record each step in the framework for the GM to have on hand when creating the actual stories.

### THE SERIES SCOPE

The first thing to determine is the scope of the series. Part of this will already have been indicated by the Series Level the group agreed upon. An Urban Protector series is likely to focus on a particular city, while a Super-Heroic level might take the heroes to various cities. Obviously, an Earth's Mightiest series could take them around the globe, whereas Off the Charts could likely put the entire universe or multiverse in danger.

*Dylan, Anna, Keirdwyn, and Xander are the players in a game Michael is running. They've already decided to play an Urban Protector series level, and to have a Know the Ropes experience level. So the group has already determined the type of game they want to play: street level heroes who have been at it a little while, but aren't yet truly seasoned at*

*what they do.*

*They don't really want it Dark & Grim. They want to play heroes with flaws, but they don't want the personal flaws and problems dominating the series. So, they agree to go with the traditional Four Color tone for the series.*

*For the series scope, they decide it will take place in a single city. They discuss it a bit and decide it'll be called Sentinel City. Although there are powerful teams and heroes in the city, they usually handle threats on a broader scale than the group will.*

*They decide the city has a wide range of neighborhood types, from the wealthy, to the scientific and corporate, to the poor and rundown. They let Michael know that they want the series to primarily focus on the poor and rundown sections, where crime is a serious problem, where gangs hold power, and where maybe even the larger organized crime families truly call the shots. They also imagine those neighborhoods as having plenty of abandoned buildings and shadows to use in their war on crime.*

*Everyone at the table makes notes for the scope, and moves into the next step.*

### SERIES PROBLEMS AND ASPECTS

Next, you'll create two major problems the heroes will face during the first volume, meaning the first to 4 to 12 Issues or so. This doesn't mean the series will *only* face these two problems, just that these are the two that you want to be a part of the storyline.

**The Broad Problem:** The first problem should represent the broader, lingering problem that will indicate one of the main points of the volume. It's the problem that will set the stage for the types of situations the characters will be drawn into, but rests in the background. It slowly builds, until the characters finally have to confront it in order to achieve a major story impact.

*For this series, it's decided that there is an underworld power vacuum thanks to the arrest (or supposed death) of a city's crime kingpin. That idea likely points to stories that'll involve the street gangs and crime cartels. It might also mean that the heroes are going to work with, or maybe even come into conflict*

*with, local law enforcement. Throughout the stories, this problem will serve as the overall background problem (the power struggle), and will continue to build immediacy. Perhaps it starts out as rumors and a few gang tussles, or that a powerful super-villain has moved in to consolidate his power base and assume the role of kingpin. Perhaps the heroes hear suspicion that certain police officers are on the take, and are helping one faction or another by arresting and raiding the rivals.*

*However it builds, this problem will come to a head in order for the heroes to achieve their Major Milestone. That doesn't mean they will win, either. Yes, they might stop the super-villain from becoming the kingpin, but that still leaves a potential vacuum that could get worse. With (likely) several of the old gangs gone, it's a ripe opportunity for new cartels to move in. Maybe, too, the heroes don't realize the full scope of what they're up against, the super-villain they thought they needed to stop was just a red herring put in place by the real mastermind behind it all, and while the heroes were taking the bait, he moved in and assumed control over the city.*

For the first problem, the group creates an aspect called: **Upheaval in the Underworld**. They decide that, at least for now, that aspect serves the purpose: it sounds like it can be both invoked and compelled easily enough, and they even come up with a few mock situations where both could apply. It might be invoked during a meeting with a gang leader on a Rapport check, using it to potentially cause him a temporary break in confidence. The GM could compel it, causing gang violence to rock a neighborhood at a time the heroes were supposed to be there but were instead chasing a red herring. Looks like the residents are going to give the heroes a bit of friction on any immediate, future cooperation.

It might be invoked during a combat action, indicating the hero using the up in the air situation between all the gangs, and any hesitation or second guessing that might cause the lower members, to his advantage. And the GM could again compel it, say, the heroes managed to capture a gang leader that all signs pointed to being the frontrunner for the title of Kingpin. In this case, the prisoner was actually a patsy, staged to take the fall so that the true, unseen power behind the curtain would remain free.

So yeah, the group decides that aspect will do. It is even one they imagine can be adjusted after a

major milestone into a different form, representing new facets to the growing power struggle, such as if someone were to gain the top spot and have to face adversity from various gangs who weren't too happy with his newfound power.

They write the aspect down on the series worksheet.

**The Immediate Problem:** The second problem the group will create is the immediate situation that spurs them into the story.

This problem will usually springboard off the first, broader problem. What the group determines as the overall problem of the storyline will help dictate some ideas for the immediate problems that get them involved in the plotline.

*The group already determined they want a story focusing on an underworld power vacuum, with rival gangs and organized crime families all vying for the top spot.*

*Expanding on that, they decide that what gets their heroes really involved in the story is a series of public battles between gangs—some super-powered, some with quite an arsenal of weapons—that has taken a few innocent lives in the crossfire. The police are finding themselves ill-equipped to handle the escalating war, especially since there are factions within the Department on the take.*

*It's time for them to get involved, and start getting to the bottom of what's going on, and who's calling what shots.*

For this problem, the group creates an aspect called **Gang Violence is Out of Control**. They decide there should be some opportunities to both invoke and compel the aspect, and jot it down on the series worksheet.

## THE SETTING

The final step is creating a little bit about the actual setting where the main stories will take place. Like the other parts of getting the series created, this step is also cooperative between the players and GM. This is where the players get to create some locations and people to populate the stories, and also anchor their own characters to parts of the setting.

Although this step gives the players a say in some of those locations and people, this step doesn't have the players creating everything about the setting.



## **PHASE ONE: THE BROAD VIEW**

The first phase is what we call the *broad view*, the meaning of which will vary depending on the scope of your series. This might be looking at various planets around the galaxy, countries around the world, cities across the country, or neighborhoods within a city.

Whichever the case for your series, each of your players (assuming a group of about four players) will create one or two general locations. Players should write down the name of the broad location, and a couple of notes about it. You don't have to get too specific. Just give the GM something to go on, since it'll be the GM that truly fleshes it out when the stories are created.

*In Mike's group, they decided to play a street vigilante series that takes place in Sentinel City. During this phase, Anna, Dylan, Xander, and Keirdwyn will each create one or two neighborhoods.*

*Xander creates a neighborhood he calls Liberty Heights, and determines that it is a rundown, low-income area with a lot of abandoned buildings and street crime.*

*Anna creates a neighborhood called Ravenswood. She knows she wants to play a character with ties to the mystic, so she decides this particular area of the city is strong in mystic energy. The people there are superstitious, and in the middle of the night it*

That's ultimately still the province of the GM, who still has to create the stories, adversaries, other allies, and all the nut and bolts for each story arc. This step just allows the players a little input and creativity. It basically allows them to say that a certain location or NPC is in some way, even if minor, important to the overall setting and should play some kind of role. Even if it's just their favorite watering hole.

Creating the setting comprises three phases, as detailed below.

*isn't uncommon for things to be lurking in the shadows or just under a sewer grate.*

*Keirdwyn wants to play someone with a high Resource skill and a lot of money. After all, someone has to be able to afford to outfit this team. She creates a neighborhood called Cedar Valley. She makes note that it's a secondary downtown area, and home to a lot of large corporate HQs. Matter of fact, she asks the GM if it would be okay to call it the financial hub of the city. Michael thinks about it, and agrees.*

*Dylan keeps thinking that other heroes are going to exist in the city, not just the player-group, and that any place with super-heroes would probably have a fairly healthy scientific R&D industry. He creates a neighborhood called Hydesville, and notes that it's home to the main universities, as well as more powerful super-hero teams known for their scientific knowledge and experiments.*

In a game with a higher series level, such as Earth's Mightiest, this phase could easily have been dedicated to creating foreign nations, other cities of importance across the U.S., or even hidden nations of unique residents.

## ***PHASE TWO: THE FOCUSED VIEW***

After the general locations are noted, the next phase zooms in on those locations a bit more. In this phase, the players will now create a few specific locations within those broader areas, basically making note of places they want the GM to filter into the game at some point, perhaps even on a repeating level.

Each player should create two or three locations within their broader area from Phase One.

*Continuing with Michael's group, Anna, Keirdwyn, Dylan, and Xander will now each create a few specific places within the neighborhoods they noted in Phase One.*

*Xander thinks about it, and since his neighborhood is a rundown, crime-ridden place, decides that he'll stay with that theme. He creates the Iron Horse Tavern, and makes note that it's a biker bar where drug deals are made, and other gangs think twice about hitting due to the sheer amount of fire power inside of it. He then decides to*

*take a slighting different path, and creates the Barludi Foundation for Abused Women and Children. He makes a note that the Foundation has centers throughout the city, and that it is owned by one of the major crime families as a legitimate, philanthropic, non-profit business.*

*Anna thinks about her mystic neighborhood, and creates Beltane Park— a sprawling area almost on the scale of New York's Central Park, where strange things lurk in the shadows, people fear to tread at night, and with a high concentration of mystic energy to those who can sense such things. She also decides that the local Native Americans have a decent presence in this neighborhood, and creates an old Burial Ground on the outskirts of Ravenswood. The Burial Grounds are extremely important to the neighborhood, and are protected by something very powerful and vengeful.*

*Keirdwyn has three ideas for her secondary downtown. The first is for a black-market Genetic Research company that she notes is secretly controlled by an organized crime family, and has been around in the shadows for quite some time. Basically, they mutate and alter supers and normal people, trying to create tailor-made super-soldiers to sell to various world governments. She then decides to create an 18-21 year old Nightclub called Sidekicks, where young heroes hang out both in and out of costume, and mingle with the teenagers of the city. Finally, thinking about Anna's neighborhood and the mystic themes that the game will include, she creates Investigation offices called Germaine Investigations, Inc., and notes that they study and battle the paranormal.*

*Dylan has two ideas for his neighborhood. The first is a place called the Daring Building, which he notes is both home and business to a family of super-heroes known for adventures into strange kingdoms and alternate dimensions. He also creates Quantum Mechanics, and notes that it was originally founded decades ago by a super-hero, and is dedicated to the manipulation of time, ways to shrink/miniaturize things, and other cutting edge science that has plenty of ways to go wrong.*

Again, in a higher series level game, this phase might have included specific regions on a planet, villages or towns in a foreign nation, or general neighborhoods in a different city.

## **PHASE THREE: THE PEOPLE**

The final phase of creating the setting's basics involves each player creating two or three NPCs to populate the locations they previously jotted down. These should be just general people, and shouldn't be significant allies, members of the character's family, or specific members of a Rogues Gallery. Those types of NPCs will be created during the character creation steps in the next chapter, and have specific rewards attached to them. Instead, the NPCs for this phase are just people who still might help or hinder the heroes depending upon the scene and story direction at the time, but are generally there to bring the locations to life.

Such NPCs should generally possess the abilities of a Nameless NPC or a Supporting NPC (which are explained to the GM in Chapter 13: Running the Game), depending upon what works best for each one.

*Xander notes that a man named Ben Carter owns the Iron Horse Tavern. Ben is going to be a member of the a local biker gang known as Sons of Nebecar, which is a powerful extradimensional demon. He notes that the gang is heavy into drug distribution and gun running, and also has several blackart sorcerers in their ranks. This might also connect them in some way to the Ravenswood neighborhood, or even Germaine Investigations. He also creates Michelle Barludi, a mother of two small children and wife to one of the top organized crime personas in the city. He decides she's the one who really runs the Barludi Foundation, and that maybe her efforts have recently garnered the attention of a low-level super whose children are in hiding from him.*

*Anna decides that a strange creature calling itself Spring-Heeled Jack haunts Beltane Park, and has done so for the past several decades. He bears a strong resemblance to the old British legend, and is often not seen for years, before suddenly appearing again to terrorize the park at night. She then decides that the Burial Grounds are guarded by a powerful spirit known as the Manitou. Generally, the spirit is dormant, unless something threatens the Burial Grounds or areas of Ravenswood close to it.*

*Keirdwyn looks at her locations and what the other players are creating, and immediately decides the Germaine Investigations contains a half-demon daughter of Nebecar. Not only*

*that, but she's dedicated to stopping her father from his efforts to invade and conquer Earth, and maybe even has the Sons of Nebecar on her personal radar. She also decides that sidekicks is run by a retired hero who was famous 30 years ago, but never quite made it beyond sidekick status. He's a good fellow, who started the nightclub as a way of getting current young heroes some exposure.*

*Dylan decides that one of the top scientists at Quantum Mechanics is Dr. Timothy Henderson. He's an expert in cybernetic development, and someone Dylan's character has helped out a few times in the past when one super-villain or another tried to kidnap him or steal his work. Dylan also decides that the front lobby guard he's friends with at the Daring Building was secretly once a street vigilante himself known as the Silver Eagle, who disappeared from the public (and vigilante work) over 20 years ago when he got too old to keep putting his body through it night after night. The guard, old Henry Weathers, is someone Dylan imagines his character regularly talks to and gets advice from.*

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

By now, you should know the type of series you're going to play, as well as the general power and experience levels of the player-characters. The GM should have a decent setting basis to expand on, thanks to the group creating some general locations, specific locales, and a few people to populate them.

Ideally, the setting basics will also provide some ties between each other, having already determined a few broad strokes about the player-characters, and provide more than a couple of story seeds for the series.

With that done, now it's time to head into the next chapter, where you'll get the concepts, backstory, and aspects created for the main stars of the series: the player-characters.

# CHAPTER 4: CHARACTER CREATION

Welcome back True Believers! Now that you've gone through the process of choosing the type of series you want to play, and created something about the general setting your heroes will populate, now it's time to ramp it up and get to the nuts and bolts of determining who your heroes actually are. If you thought series creation was fun, you haven't seen nothin' yet. And if you didn't find it fun . . . then you're probably doing it wrong.

## CREATING THOSE FAMOUS CHARACTERS

*It is entirely possible to recreate your favorite characters from Marvel, DC Comics, and other of your favorite comic book titles out there. One thing to consider, though, is exactly how experienced those characters are. Some of them have been around for a while, and might have accumulated a few Milestones.*

*Then, to get them recreated under the Daring Comics point system, ask yourself the following:*

- *How big of a supporting cast do they have (as this grants extra skill points)?*
- *How many Rogues in their gallery truly know their secrets and/or weaknesses (as this grants extra hero points)?*
- *How many points of beginning Refresh might they have spent?*

*Not only considering their Milestone history, but also those three questions, is absolutely vital to recreating your favorite comic book characters.*

Okay, so what happens now?

In this chapter, you're going to create the fundamentals of who your character is, why he or she became a hero, what moments in their past set define them, and who some of their closest friends and enemies are.

There are six steps to creating your hero. Let's take a look at each of the steps.

## STEP ONE: CHARACTER NAME

If you haven't done it by now, this is when you'll choose your characters costumed and civilian identities.

## STEP TWO: CHARACTER ASPECTS

Your character aspects are one of the primary nuts and bolts of game play in Daring Comics. During your stories, these Aspects will be your primary method of spending fate points on aspect invocations to gain a +2 to a roll or be able to reroll the dice. Your character aspects are also where a majority of your aspect compels will come from, granting you a fate point in exchange for something about your character adding a complication to a given scene.

As already discussed, your character aspects, like any aspect, should be phrased as a double-edged sword. It should be able to help you in certain situations, or be used against you. But they should also be fun, and be descriptive of some part of your character, whether their basic concept, a flaw in their character or dark part of their life, something about their powers or extreme training that makes them more than human, or even portions of their history or personality.

In Daring Comics, your character will have five character aspects. Two of them must be mandatory, while the other three are open for your group to mix and match however best fits your setting.

## REQUIRED CHARACTER ASPECTS

The required character aspects are the two aspects that every character must possess. They represent two core values about your character, and are absolutely vital to the super-heroic theme of any Daring Comics story.

### CONCEPT

Your Concept aspect is a phrase that sums up what your character is about — who he is and what he does. It's an aspect, one of the first and most important ones for your character.

Think of this aspect like your job, your role in life, or your calling— it's what you're good at, but it's also a duty you have to deal with, and it's constantly filled with problems of its own. That is to say, it comes with some good and some bad. There are a few different directions you can take this:

- You could take the idea of “like your job” literally: Vigilante Detective, Super-Soldier, Billionaire Playboy, or Crime-fighting Archer.
- You could throw on an adjective or other descriptor to further define the idea: Dark Vigilante Detective, Patriotic Super-Soldier, Billionaire Playboy Inventor, or Uncanny Crime-fighting Archer.
- You could mash two jobs or roles together that most people would find odd: Billionaire Playboy Dark Avenger, Amazonian Warrior Diplomat, Secret Agent Super-Hero.
- You could play off of an important relationship to your family or an organization you're deeply involved with (especially if the family or organization are well-connected or well-known): Outcast Agent of the Government, Former Hitman for Gerabaldi, Franchise Hero for VanCorp.

These aren't the only ways to play with your concept, but they'll get you started. But don't stress out over it. The worst thing you can do is make it into too big of a deal. You'll come up with four other aspects after this one, so you don't have to get it all nailed right now.

*Keirdwyn wants to play the billionaire heir to State Industries, one of the world's leading developers of advanced computer and robotics technology. She imagines her hero being in her 20's, and with some high-tech weapons in her fight on crime. For her concept, she writes down **Hi-Tech Billionaire Hero***

*Meanwhile, Xander wants to play the result of a black book, illegal genetic engineering program. He was once a petty criminal, but after all the experimentations and his entire world being turned inside out, he became a hero. For his concept, he goes with **Secret Black-Ops Superhuman Experiment**.*

## MOTIVATION

Your **Motivation** aspect is about why you do what you do. What drives you to be a super-hero and put yourself in constant danger to protect innocent lives? At your core, what pushes you to fight the never-ending battle against crime and injustice?

Here are a few examples:

- No Innocent Will Suffer.
- With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility
- If Good Does Nothing, Evil Wins
- There is No Justice, Only Punishment

Those are just a few examples, but should serve good enough to get you thinking about your core reason for doing what you do.

*Keirdwyn, keeping with the rich-kid turned hero idea, decides that her money and access to highly advanced technology is what caused her to become a hero. Her father, always the philanthropist, raised her to always help those less fortunate, and never take the blessings she has for granted. For her motivation, she writes down: **Defend Those Unable to Defend Themselves**.*

*Xander decides that the agency that experimented upon him is actually owned and operated by a power underworld crime organization. He feels that this is likely what turned his criminal into a hero, and that the character has vowed revenge against not only the crime organization, but against anyone who would prey on the innocent. He decides that **Extract Revenge Against The Criminal Underworld** is a good motivation.*

## CONTINGENT CHARACTER ASPECTS

After you create your Required Character Aspects, you have three other Contingent Character Aspects that should be created. These are called “contingent” because you are now able to choose three of them from the options below, or your group can create an entirely new category that fits into your setting.

### LIFE CHANGING EVENT

**Life Changing Event** covers what it was that propelled you to become a super-hero in the first place. What event so profoundly affected your character that it spurred him along the path to risk his life against all threats to protect the innocent? This isn't the same as your Motivation, though there might be some overlap. Your Motivation is the core of why you are a hero, the Life Changing Event is the specific event or circumstances that pushed you into your chosen path.



## CORE VALUE

**Core Value** is the one thing you will hold on to no matter what. It is the soul of your character. It might be that you will never take a life, no matter what; or that you hold the value of loyalty above all else.

## INNER STRENGTH

**Inner Strength** is the thing that allows you to push through the most trying times, it allows you to pick yourself up off the floor even when you're broken or bloody. It's what stops you from ever giving up, even when the chips are entirely stacked against you. It could be a memory of someone, a desire to always

adhere to a certain code, or maybe even a faith in some greater power.

## INNER DEMONS

Your **Inner Demons** aspect is something that nips at your heels throughout most days or nights. Although it can work to try to bring you down, it can, in the right circumstances, also provide you with a sense of strength to keep going. It might be a tragic event that still haunts you — maybe even one you blame yourself for, it might be memories of a time when you were in great pain and betrayed something you still believe in, or it could be a traumatic childhood memory.

## FLAW

**Flaw** is the complication that defines your life, whether it's an inability to get close to others, having to juggle family and a secret life as a super-hero, a dark side to your personality that causes you no end of complications, or some other type of problem that will plague you at inopportune moments throughout the series.

## DARK SECRET

A **Dark Secret** is something from your past that, if discovered, could hurt your relationship with friends or family, or even damage (if not destroy) your super-heroic career. It might be a previous life as a criminal, the murdered of someone you could have easily brought into custody, or even an affiliation with a power organization that isn't out for the benefit of mankind.

## RELATIONSHIPS

If you have any special **Relationships**, create an aspect for them. These do not have to be the same people as your Supporting Cast, though they could be. Most invocations of the aspect will involve those relationships somehow providing assistance, or even giving you the inner strength to complete a



task. Likewise, compels against this aspect will likely mean the relationship has caused a complication in some way, and one that could set you and your super-team back at least a little bit.

## PERSONAL BELIEF

The **Personal Belief** aspect represents something that you believe in so strongly, it not only complicates your life at times, but can also be used to guide you through troubling situations. It might be a steadfast belief in the legal system, a strong belief in the foundations of America, or even the fact that you're still, deep down, a devout Catholic.

## STEP THREE: SUPPORTING CAST AND ROGUES GALLERY

This is where you will create a few members of your supporting cast and rogues gallery, which will directly affect the rest of your character creation.

Each supporting cast member you create (think Aunt May, Alfred, Lois Lane, Pepper Potts, and so forth from Marvel and DC Comics) gives you +1 skill point for Step Four.

You'll create one or two aspects for each member of your supporting cast. Either you can work with the GM to assign any relevant skills, or the GM can add them as needed during play. The point is, your supporting cast, as in any typical super-hero comic, are there to not only ground you, but to provide some story complications. As far as Mechanics go, each character you create during this step is treated like a Supporting NPC (see: Chapter 13: Running the Game).

For your Rogues Gallery you will create two or three aspects per rogue (the GM will secretly create the rest). These guys are your enemies, and are going to be Named NPCs capable of challenging you at every turn. Your GM will give them their skills, stunts, and powers however he needs in order to provide such a challenge. Each member of your beginning Rogues Gallery provides you with 1 free Hero Point. After all, these villains are out to get you, personally.

Wait a minute! That's a nice bonus. Well, yeah, it is, but there's a reason. For one, the rogue is going to be a direct challenge to your character in ability. For two, since he is **your rogue**, he automatically knows one of your aspects, and once per issue when he is in some way opposing you, he gets to use that aspect against you at no fate point cost. So, either that rogue

is going to hit you where it hurts, or cost you a fate point to resist it, at no cost to himself. And if you spend a fate point to resist such a compel, the rogue directly gets it to use against you.

Keep in mind that although you, the player, created a few aspects for your rogue, **your character does not know those aspects until they are actually discovered in play**. The point is to only give you players a hand in creating the rogues gallery for your characters. Of course, if your character creation phases suggested you encountered a particular main villain previously and an obvious aspect might have been discovered, then the player and GM should work out if the character knows anything about the NPC's aspects. If so, we suggest the character not know more than one of the NPC's aspects.

Anyway, it is recommended you create no more than three supporting cast members, and two rogues.

## STEP FOUR: SKILLS

Once you've created your backstory and chosen your five aspects, and after you've determined some supporting cast members and a beginning Rogues Gallery, you'll then spend those skill points you received based on your Experience Level from the skill list in the next chapter. We won't cover that step too much in this chapter, since the chapter on **Skills** goes into all the details.

## STEP FIVE: SPEND HERO POINTS

As soon as you have your skills chosen, you get to then move on to spending the Hero Points you received based on the Series Level. With the Hero Points, you'll purchase any Stunts for your skills, as well as your powers or gadgets.

Like with Step Three, this chapter won't go into detail on this step, since both the **Stunts** and the **Powers** chapters explain how to spend the points on those portions of your character.

If you run out of Hero Points and still need more powers or stunts for your character, you must spend it from your Refresh. A single Hero Point costs one Refresh. Your Refresh may never go below "1."

## STEP SIX: FINISHING UP

Finally, you'll determine how many physical and mental stress boxes your hero gets, how many

Consequence slots of each type, and get any gear you might be due.

## STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

**Determine how much of a beating your character can take.**

When Daring Comics characters find themselves in harm's way, they have two ways to stand their ground and stay on their feet: **stress** and **consequences**.

The Conflicts section of Chapter 12: Comic Book Action chapter fully explains what these mean and how they're used. In brief, stress represents the ephemeral toll of participating in a conflict, whereas consequences are the lingering effects, and sometimes quite traumatic ones, of taking harm.

Every PC has two different stress tracks. The **physical stress track** deals with physical harm, and the **mental stress track** mitigates mental harm. The more boxes in a stress track, the more resilient the character is in that regard. By default, a character the number of stress boxes given by the Series Tone.

Every PC also has three consequence slots. One is mild, one is moderate, and the last one is severe. Unlike stress, these aren't classified as either physical or mental— any of them can apply to any type of harm. As mentioned above, consequences are the injuries and traumas you can't just shake off after the dust settles.

Certain skills and some stunts can add to these defaults. See the respective chapters for more on that. For the sake of quick reference, these are the skills in Daring Comics that alter stress and consequences:

**Physique** helps with physical stress, and **Will** helps with mental stress. Either skill grants one more stress box of the respective type (physical or mental) if rated at Average (+1) or Fair (+2), or two more stress boxes if rated at Good (+3) or higher. At Superb (+5) or higher, they also grant an additional mild consequence slot. Unlike the standard three, this consequence slot is specifically restricted to either physical harm (Physique) or mental harm (Will).

The number of Stress boxes and consequence slots that a character has is also increased through the Hardiness super-power.

## OTHER TYPES OF STRESS

*You can add stress tracks if the characters in your game suffer unique kinds of harm, such as wealth stress in a series where the heroes are all also rich or corporate owners, or even a Spiritual track if you want to track mystic stress differently than psychic and mental stress.*

## YOU'RE ALL SET!

At the end of this process, you should have a character with:

- A name
- Five aspects, along with some backstory
- A completed Skill Column
- Your beginning Hero Points worth of Stunts and Powers
- A mental and physical stress track
- A refresh rate of at least 1 fate point

## QUICK CHARACTER CREATION

If you want to skip making a detailed character and just want to play, you can leave most of the character blank and fill in as you play. For details on how to do this, see the Pick-Up Game variant in the Appendix: Turning the Dials, and also pay attention to the Pick-Up Style for Beginning a Series boxed text.

# CHAPTER 5: COMPLICATIONS

A complication is a negative effect on your character that isn't easily handled by an aspect. By their very nature, an aspect, even one that goes along with a character flaw or a dark secret from the past, should be a double-edged sword. It should both be able to be invoked to assist the character in certain situations, and it should be able to be compelled to complicate the character's life.

Complications, on the other hand, are those things that exist only to hinder you. They cannot be invoked to your benefit. In that way, they aren't the same as aspects.

There are two types of complications: character and power. Well, actually, there are other types as well, such as Super-Team Complications and Devices; but they're handled in the **Super-Team** and **Devices and Gear** chapters, respectively. For now, we're only going to discuss the two types that affect your character on a personal level.

## COMPLICATIONS VS ASPECTS

In some of the example ideas below, you will no doubt see that there could be some overlap on whether something should be a complication or an aspect. And indeed, in some cases the decision could go either way. Take things like Disability or Temper, for example. Both can just as easily be one of your character aspects instead.

The key to remember is that if it is something you want to both help and hinder your character, then make it an aspect. But if it's something you only want to hinder your character with absolutely no narrative or mechanical benefit, then make it a complication.

Aspects must work both ways. Complications only work against you.

## CHARACTER COMPLICATIONS

A character complication is tied into your character as a whole, and is not dependent on any super-power or power set. It defines a hindrance to your character that can only be brought into play to cause them some type of harm or setback.



Below are a few examples of character complications. It's by no means meant to be an exhaustive list, and you should feel free to create any complications needed for your series.

**Addiction:** You're addicted to some type of substance, most typically alcohol or some type of drug. This complication could come into play when your use of the substance (i.e. you're drunk or high) can be a reason to complicate a scene, or the inability to get the substance causes you some sort of setback.

**Disability:** Are you deaf? Blind? In a wheelchair? Missing a limb? Whatever the nature of your disability, it can come into play at seriously inopportune times to hinder you. Otherwise, the disability is there, but doesn't directly cause you any problems.

**Fame/Reputation:** Your character is either very well known in a positive light, or has a dark reputation attached to him. When he comes into play, it might complicate a scene by having you slowed down by fans or the media, or even have law enforcement misinterpret your intentions.

**Identity:** This type of complication assumes your character has either a secret identity, or a completely different alter ego he must change into. Such a complication comes into play in a scene where not being able to change identities causes either some type of harm to your character, or causes a setback in the goals he's trying to achieve. For example, being in your secret civilian identity at a public function as armed thugs are stealing a dangerous or expensive object would count as the complication coming into play. The criminal element you are facing is getting a step ahead because you're bound by maintaining your secret in the scene.

Likewise, being captured and beaten by the enemy and somehow being unable to transform into your super-powered alter ego, thereby suffering some type of (albeit minor) harm, would count as the complication coming into play.

**Phobia:** You're deathly afraid of some type of animal, insect, situation, or object. The most obvious outcome of this complication coming into play would be having your character freeze-up, or even flee in fear.

**Secret:** What secrets from your past might come back to haunt you in the present day? What have you done that could dismantle everything you're fighting for? When this complication comes into play, it doesn't necessarily mean that the secret is that revealed, but rather that the secret is threatening to

come to light unless you take measures (usually also secretive) to stop it.

**Temper:** While some heroes are known to have a Berserker Rage that gives them an upper hand in fights (and should be represented by an aspect), when tempers comes into play it really messes up a scene for you. It might be that you just blew all chances to get needed information or assistance, or even a mechanical function such as +2 to Create an Advantage action by people attempting to use your rage against you.

**Vulnerability:** You're vulnerable to some type of element or substance. Typically, this will result in an attack against your character by the substance or an increase to damage when attacked by a weapon utilizing the element or substance. Here are a few ideas on how to handle it:

- Exposure to the element (typically being in the same zone) causes 2-Stress per minute.
- Being attacked with a weapon composed of the element causes 2-Shifts of additional damage.
- Being in the same zone as the element causes an attack against Physique or Will each round, with the element having an attacking skill of Fair (+2).

**Weakness:** This type of complication means that you have a specific need for something, and without it you become weaker in some way. It could be the need to submerge yourself in water every so often, a need to drink blood, or even a need to absorb solar energy. Without it, actions become more and more difficult.

As a general rule of thumb, when this complication is brought into play, the character should take a consequence every hour or so until the weakness is resolved. Once the character does whatever he needs to do to resolve the situation, the consequence is automatically healed.

## POWER COMPLICATIONS

Although the powers chapter deals with limits to powers, the very nature of limits means that they are always on and always hinder the power in some way. A power complication, by comparison, only comes into play when you or the GM calls for it.

**Device or Gear:** Yes, this is optional. Not every series will want to deal with devices or gear being able to run out of ammunition or deplete a power source. If it

fits your series, perhaps because of a military or spy theme, then use this complication. When it comes into play, the device or piece of gear (such as a normal gun) is shut down via whatever method makes sense. It might be the device's power cell ran out of juice, or that the gun ran out of bullets. Whatever the cause, it is operational again once the current scene is over.

**Ineffective Against Something:** One or more of your powers are ineffective against something that, while you might not commonly encounter it, has been known to show up against you at inopportune times. It might be a certain type of substance, a color, or even an emotional state.

**Power Loss:** Being near a certain object, substance, or element causes your powers to diminish. As a rule of thumb, consider something like 1 Power Level every minute. Those powers without more than one level are immediately shutdown at the end of that first minute.

You might even consider a reduction in the Controlling skill instead, lowering it one step on the ladder until it reaches a minimum of Terrible (-2).

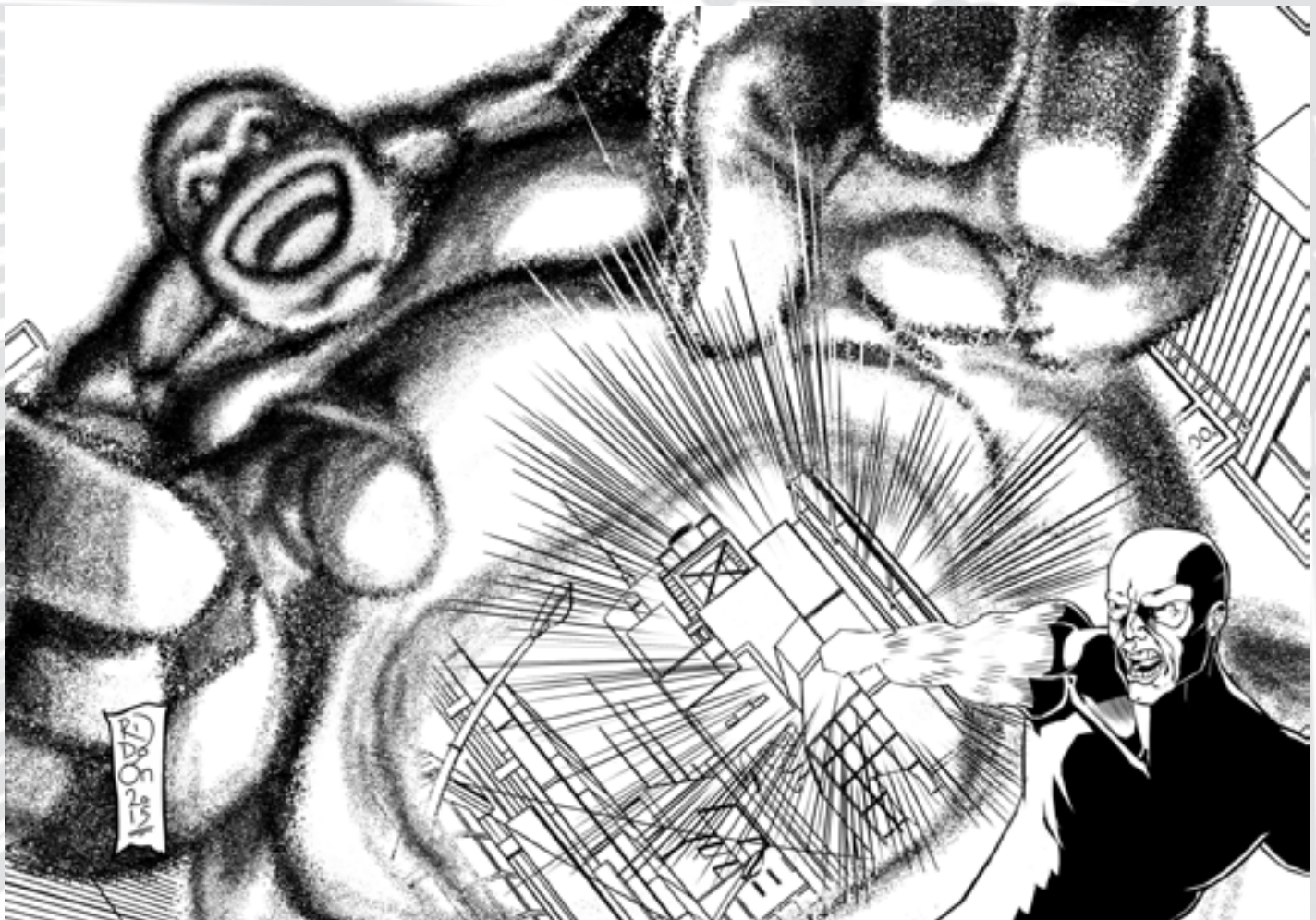
Being removed from the vicinity of whatever is causing the loss of your powers can have them return

immediately or gradually. Talk it over with the GM or other players when taking this complication

**Recharge:** Some or all of your powers need to be recharged sporadically. When this comes into play, your powers might suffer increased opposition up to a maximum increase, and are then effectively shut down until you resolve the need.

## BRINGING A COMPLICATION INTO PLAY

So what happens when a complication is brought into play? Well, whenever a complication is **first brought into play in a scene**, the player immediately earns a fate point. Pay attention to the bolded text, because for those complications that may hinder a character repeatedly or continuously throughout a scene, the player still only earns a single fate point. But yes, if the complication is going to last more than one scene, than the player earns another fate point for each additional scene.



## **REJECTING A COMPLICATION**

Unlike compelling an aspect, a player cannot reject a complication coming into play simply by spending a fate point each time. As a matter of fact, a player **cannot** buy off a complication being brought into play.

Likewise, GMs, don't abuse a character's complications— especially those that have normal gear (with bullets and such). The idea is that a complication comes into the story only occasionally, and when it does, it has a dramatic reason for doing so. If you're going to constantly use the complication against the player, then give them back a Hero Point or two as if it was a power limit (whether or not the complication affects their powers). Limits refund points because they are always in play. Complications grant fate points because they are meant to **occasionally** add drama to the series.

## **EXAMPLE COMPLICATIONS**

Below are a few examples to show you how some complications might be built in Daring Comics. You should recognize them right off the bat, since we used popular instances from comic books and filed off the serial numbers.

### **VULNERABILITY (ELEMENT-X SICKNESS)**

When in the same zone as Element-X, make an attack with a skill of Fair (+2) against passive opposition equal to the character's Physique.

### **VULNERABILITY (ELEMENT-X WEAPON)**

Weapon causes +2-hits of damage and ignores all levels of Invulnerability.

### **POWER LOSS (ELEMENT-X)**

All powers are reduced by 2 levels when in the same zone as Element-X. Those with less than 2 levels are shutdown.

### **RECHARGE (SOLAR ABSORPTION)**

If you go too long without absorbing solar energy, you become weakened. All rolls involving the use of a power suffer a +2 to active or passive opposition, and increase by +1 every hour to a maximum of +4.

If you've not recharged within one hour after reaching the +4 maximum, your powers are shut down until you spend at least an hour absorbing solar energy.

### **DEVICE (OUT OF AMMO)**

At an inopportune time, [power or weapon name] is out of ammo, effectively shutting it down for the rest of the scene.

### **WEAKNESS (DEHYDRATION)**

Suffer a Consequence every hour, beginning with a Mild Consequence, until you spend at least an hour fully submerged in water. Once you rehydrate yourself, all related consequences are removed.

## **FINAL ADVICE: BUILDING YOUR COMPLICATION**

As you can see from this chapter, building your complication is more of a narrative feature than a hard and fast rule. The core rule of thumb to keep in mind is to make sure the complication warrants a fate point, that it accomplishes what you want to say concerning that part of your character, and that it cannot be used to your character's benefit. Be careful not to make it too restrictive to your character, unless of course that is the fun effect you're going for.

Remember, too, that complications are completely optional. You do not have to take any for your character if it doesn't fit your concept. They're only there to handle some of the things we see in comics that don't work quite as well as aspects or power limits.

# CHAPTER 6: SUPER TEAMS

Extraordinary beings in comic books often form unique groups with other super-powered individuals, all working together for a common cause or goal. Super teams are as much a staple of the genre as flashy powers and strange attire.

In Daring Comics, super teams are more than just a cool name and a central base of operations. The super team you create will have its own aspects and stunts.

Of course, just because you form a team of like-minded and goal oriented individuals doesn't mean you have to employ the super team mechanics. It's completely optional, and totally up to you whether or not it fits the tone of your series.

## SUPER-TEAM RESOURCES

A super-team's financial power is equal to the highest Resource skill rating of the player-characters. You may also create your own Team Stunts, representing private investors and backers contributing to your super-heroic exploits, to offer additional benefits or roll bonuses in certain situations to team Resource skill rolls.

## STEP ONE: SUPER TEAM NAME

Although we probably don't have to state it, we're going to anyway: the first thing you should do is determine what to call your little band of crime-fighters. Come up with something cool, because it's going to be the name you'll be best known by.

## STEP TWO: SUPER TEAM ASPECTS

Your super team is going to have two aspects. Like with all aspects in Daring Comics, they should be able to assist you in certain situations, as well as hinder you in some narrative ways. Unlike character aspects, which are always with you, the super team aspects act more like a hybrid of a character and situation aspect. Although they are always there for roleplaying purposes, they are only in play mechanically when

the GM places them in a scene, or you bring them into a scene through a Create an Advantage action.

## CHARTER

Your **Charter** aspect represents the core reason for your team charter. The aspect should basically say something about why the team formed in the first place— i.e. the purpose for its existence.

*The group decides to officially form a super team known as the Sentinels of Society. For their charter, they decide upon: **United Nations Global Response Team.***

*The aspect can be used both to assist them in trouble situations, as well as to hinder them. For example, when something bad has happened, people have been injured or killed, and the Sentinels of Society were somehow involved in the scene, they could be restricted by, or even called in for testimony before, the U.N. Security Council. The Aspect could also be compelled depending upon story plots, such as one of the Security Council members having an axe to grind against the team.*

## FRICTION

No group of superhumans is going to get together and there not be problems. There are simply too many personalities, methods of operation, and personal philosophies in the mix. This aspect should represent some friction within the team. It could be a conflict of personalities, discipline versus showmanship, or even financial troubles.

If you get stuck, look to each member's character aspects, and see if any jump out as possible conflict with those of other characters.

*The Sentinels of Society is made up of a group of heroes with differing opinions on how far the fight against villainy should go. A few members believe strongly in the criminal justice system and that their enemies should be apprehended and brought to justice. Meanwhile, one or two others feel that there are certain situations where killing is not only justified, it's necessary.*



*The group decides to create the aspect: **Tension on What Lines Should be Crossed.** The aspect can be invoked when those differing points of view might be brought to bear to either throw off an enemy, or combine different philosophies into a stronger whole. Likewise, compels are a relatively simple affair, and would easily come into a scene when those differing philosophies hinder the group's performance.*

## STEP THREE: ROGUES GALLERY

In this stage, you can (if you want) create **up to three members** of a team-wide Rogues Gallery, each of which will be a Named NPC capable of taking on at least half the team, if not all of it. Create one or two aspects for each rogue, but only the GM can create the two Required Aspects.

On the worksheet, outline or detail the team's encounter with the rogue, how many times they've fought, and any specific history or special dynamics the villain might have with the team (for example, the villain was once a close friend of a team member before things went wrong).

Create a couple of details about the rogue. This can be the costume, known powers or weaknesses, and even a couple of skills that the team might know they possess. Again, the GM is going to fill-in the blanks and create the rest of the rogue.

For each rogue, you gain an additional Team Stunt.

## STEP FOUR: TEAM STUNTS

The final step is purchasing your team stunts. You choose one team stunt for each player-character in your group, plus another for each team rogue you've created. So, a team with four player-characters can choose four team stunts, while a team with four player-characters and two rogues can purchase six stunts. It really doesn't matter how the stunts are chosen, as long as the group is in agreement.

Just like with character stunts, we provide some ready-made examples. You're encouraged to use the normal Stunt Creation rules to make your own, unique stunts (for how to create your own stunts, see Chapter 8: Stunts).

## **HEROES ASSEMBLE**

The team has trained intensively on how to work together and assist one another in the field. Once per scene, each team member receives an additional +1 bonus when invoking a situation aspect created by another teammate. This is a flat +1 bonus and is only used once per member, even if the aspect in question is invoked twice by the same character due to having two free invocations attached to it (or twice by using a free invocation and then invoking again for a fate point).

## **UNITED WE STAND**

(Requires Heroes Assemble)

The **Heroes Assemble** Stunt can now be used twice per scene by each team member.

## **BROTHERHOOD**

(Requires United We Stand)

The team is so cohesive that they instinctively aid one another in the field. At the beginning of each session, the team has a pool of fate points equal to half the number of player character members (round up). The pool resets each session, and cannot be increased.

## **ICONIC**

The heroes have battled crime and saved the world on many occasions. As a result, the respect they gain from the public, media, and authorities gives them +2 to Rapport rolls when using the Create an Advantage action at social functions, such as a press conference, charity gathering, and so forth.

## **MEDIA LIAISON**

The team has someone whose sole purpose is to handle the team's media coverage and public image. Whenever the team must attempt to remove a Collateral Damage Consequence that involves the public, such as a battle that destroyed part of the city, they receive +2 to the roll.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST**

(Requires Media Liaison)

The team's media relations management is so experienced that Mild Collateral Damage Consequences are automatically removed at the end of the scene.

## **RESERVE MEMBER**

Each time this stunt is taken, the team has a reserve member on its roster. The member is considered a **Supporting Character** (see: Running the Game) and can be created by either the players or the GM.

Once per issue, any team member can spend a fate point to call a reserve member to the scene. The reserve member sticks around as long as it makes narrative sense.

## **SIGNATURE FAST BALL**

The team has practiced the Fast Ball maneuver (See: Combat & Tactics) to the point that it is almost second nature. The throwing character receives +2 to the Accuracy roll.

## **TEAM BASE**

The same as the Personal Headquarters stunt, your team has a base of operations. Each time this stunt is taken, the team gains 10 Headquarter points.

## **VENGEANCE**

The team understands what it means to be a unit. As a result, once per scene when a team member is

Taken Out or Concedes a conflict, the remaining team members in the scene each gain a Boost to represent their intensified determination to win the fight.

## **ULTIMATE VENGEANCE**

(Requires Vengeance)

The determination of the team when a member falls is uncanny. Once per scene when a member is Taken Out or Concedes a conflict, the remaining members in the scene may immediately clear 2-Stress or a Mild Consequence slot.

## **STEP FIVE: COMPLICATIONS**

This step is entirely optional. It allows you to choose a complication or two for the team. Whenever the complication is brought into a scene, each team member it affects immediately gains a fate point.

Below are a few sample complications, but you should really create your own for the team.

## **CORPORATE INVESTOR**

The team has the backing of a corporate entity. The corporation can call upon the team to perform tasks



or missions at their request. Failure for the team to follow orders should result in the Corporate Investor using whatever resources it needs to make sure the team knows that they have little choice in the matter the next time they're called upon.

### ***DARK SECRET***

The team has committed some act, either as a group or due to one of its members, that if publicly known would potentially end their careers. The nature of the secret must be determined when this complication is chosen.

Bringing the complication into the scene should usually involve discovering that someone knows the nature of the secret— quite possibly because they're blackmailing the team with the knowledge.

### ***MEDIA ANIMOSITY***

The team has made an enemy either in the media, or with strong media contacts and influences. Typically, the media organization in question will attempt to sway public opinion against the heroes. Exactly what form this takes will depend on the nature of your game. It might result in the Opposition to clear Collateral Damage Consequences increasing by +1, a negative impact on Rapport with the media, and so forth.

### ***UNWANTED ATTENTION***

The team has gained an unwanted fan, a pain-in-the-rear reporter, or some other NPC that is always following them around, showing up at the most inopportune moments and risking injury, and generally causing the team no end of problems.

## **IMPROVING YOUR SUPER TEAM**

Improving a super team over time, however, is no easy task. There's a lot of coordination, time, and dedication involved.

Whenever you get an additional Hero Point due to a Major Milestone (see: Advancing the Series), instead of spending it on your character, you can spend it on advancing the team by purchasing a new stunt. Basically, it represents that you are putting aside your individual needs in exchange for focusing on making the entire team better.

## **TURNING THE DIALS**

Your super team doesn't have to end here. In **Appendix: Turning the Dials**, we provide more options for your team; such as how to create a team with more members than just your own player-group, including super team skills, stress tracks, and consequences representing your expanded roster.

Then we tell you how to use those skills, stress boxes, and consequence slots to run the team as its own character, off on a different adventure in the background, while your player-characters are the stars of their series.

In other words, how to create a super-team of dozens of heroes like some of the mega-teams from popular comic books, and how to represent their exploits during your game without taking the focus away from your own stories. Including how those side adventures affect your player-group during the series.

# CHAPTER 7: SKILLS

A skill describes a broad family of competency at something (such as Athletics, Fight, or Deceive), which your character might have gained through innate talent, training, or years of trial and error. Skills are the basis for everything your character actually does in the game that involves challenge and chance

Skills are rated on the adjective ladder. The higher the rating, the better your character is at the skill. Taken together, your list of skills gives you a picture of that character's potential for action at a glance— what you're best at, what you're okay at, and what you're not so good at.

Skills are defined in two ways: What game actions that you can do with them, and the context in which you can use them. There are only a handful of basic game actions, but the number of potential contexts is infinite.

## SKILL BENCHMARKS

Sometimes, a descriptive word and number on a ratings ladder isn't enough to get a feel for how good your character is at a particular skill. The following benchmarks further breakdown the ladder, giving you a clearer picture of what a particular skill rating means.

**Mediocre (+0):** Untrained

**Average (+1):** Minimal training

**Fair (+2):** Formal training

**Good (+3):** Advanced training

**Great (+4):** An expert in the field

**Superb (+5):** One of the foremost experts in a large nation

**Fantastic (+6):** One of the foremost experts in the world

**Epic (+7):** Your prowess is recognized as the world's authority on the skill

**Legendary (+8):** Beyond what is normally expected on earth

**Monstrous (+9):** You are one of the best within several star systems

**Colossal (+10):** You are one of the best within the galaxy

**Unearthly (+11):** Your prowess is known across the universe

**Inconceivable (+12):** Your skill is recognized on a multiversal scale

## PURCHASING SKILLS

The Series Creation chapter provided you with a number of beginning skill points based upon the experience level you chose for your character (modified by any supporting cast members you created).

Your skills form a column, and cannot go above Fantastic (+6) rating. Each skill rating beginning at Fair (+2) must have at least the same number of skills as the rating below it (not counting Mediocre (+0)).

*For example, at 40 skill points your column could look like this:*

*Fantastic (+6): o*

*Superb (+5): oo*

*Great (+4) : oo*

*Good (+3): oo*

*Fair (+2): ooo*

*Average (+1): oooo*

*Or*

*Superb (+5): oo*

*Great (+4) : oo*

*Good (+3): ooo*

*Fair (+2): oooo*

*Average (+1): ooooo*

*But could not be built as follows because there would be more skills at Good (+3) than at Fair (+2)*

Good (+3): oooo

Fair (+2): ooo

Average (+1): ooooo

## SAMPLE SKILL COLUMNS

For quick and easy skill column construction, feel free to choose one of the options below based on the number of skill points you received, and simply fill in the appropriate number of skills for each rating.

There 24 skills available in Daring Comics, and as the example skill columns show, it's near impossible for a single hero to begin with a skill at the Skill Cap, and still have all of the skills available at a rating of Average (+1) or above. Even those who have their peak skill below the skill cap will still possess a few skills at Mediocre (+0) rating. This is done on purpose, so even characters with overlap in skills between them will still have skills only they possess, or ratings greater than their teammates. In any comic book, every hero should eventually have their moment to shine.

### 45 SKILLS POINTS

- Fantastic (+6): 2 skills
- Superb (+5): 2 skills
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 2 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 3 skills

Total: 14 skills

- Fantastic (+6): 1 skill
- Superb (+5): 2 skills
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 4 skills

Total: 16 skills

- Superb (+5): 2 skills
- Great (+4): 3 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 6 skills

Total: 18 skills

- Superb (+5): 1 skill
- Great (+4): 3 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 6 skills
- Average (+1): 7 skills

Total: 20 skills

### 40 SKILLS POINTS

- Fantastic (+6): 1 skill
- Superb (+5): 2 skills
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 2 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 4 skills

Total: 14 skills

- Superb (+5): 2 skills
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 5 skills

Total: 16 skills

- Superb (+5): 1 skill
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 4 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 7 skills

Total: 18 skills

- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 4 skills
- Fair (+2): 6 skills
- Average (+1): 8 skills

Total: 20 skills

### 35 SKILLS POINTS

- Superb (+5): 2 skills
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 2 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 5 skills

Total: 14 skills

- Superb (+5): 1 skill
- Great (+4): 2 skills

- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 6 skills

Total: 16 skills

- Great (+4): 3 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 9 skills

Total: 18 skills

- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 12 skills

Total: 20 skills

## ***30 SKILLS POINTS***

- Superb (+5): 1 skill
- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 2 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 5 skills

Total: 13 skills

- Great (+4): 2 skills
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 7 skills

Total: 15 skills

- Great (+4): 1 skill
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 9 skills

Total: 17 skills

- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 4 skills
- Average (+1): 13 skills

Total: 20 skills

## ***25 SKILLS POINTS***

- Superb (+5): 1 skill
- Great (+4): 1 skill
- Good (+3): 2 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 4 skills

Total: 11 skills

- Great (+4): 1 skill
- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 6 skills

Total: 13 skills

- Good (+3): 3 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 10 skills

Total: 16 skills

- Good (+3): 2 skills
- Fair (+2): 3 skills
- Average (+1): 13 skills

Total: 18 skills

## **THE BASIC GAME ACTIONS**

We cover these in more detail in Chapter 11: Actions and Outcomes, but here's a quick reference so that skills make sense to you right now.

**Overcome:** True to its name, you tackle some kind of challenge, engaging task, or hindrance related to your skill.

**Create an Advantage:** Whether you're discovering something that already exists about an opponent or creating a situation that helps you succeed, creating advantages allows you to discover and create aspects, and lets you get free invocations of them.

**Attack:** You try to harm someone in a conflict. That harm may be physical, mental, emotional, or social in nature.

**Defend:** You try to keep someone from harming you, getting past you, or creating an advantage to use against you.

There are also some special effects that some skills perform, such the Physique and Will skills giving you additional stress boxes.

Even though there are only four actions that all skills adhere to, the skill in question lends context to the action. For example, both Thief and Rapport allow you to Create an Advantage, but only under very different contexts. Thief allows you to do it when you're casing a place you're about to break into, and Rapport when you are trying to affect someone's reaction to you. The different skills let you differentiate the heroes' abilities from one another a bit, allowing each person to have a unique contribution to the game.

# ACCURACY

Accuracy is the skill for making ranged attacks, whether with a weapon or power, or throwing things and hitting your mark.

**Overcome:** Unless, for some reason, you need to demonstrate your Accuracy ability in a non-conflict situation, you probably won't be using this skill for normal obstacles much.

**Create an Advantage:** In physical conflicts, Accuracy can be used to perform a wide variety of moves, like trick shots, keeping someone under heavy fire, and even disarming them from a distance— pretty much anything you've seen in comic books. You could also make the argument for creating aspects based on your knowledge of ranged weapons (like placing a **Prone to Jams** aspect on an opponent's gun).

**Attack:** This skill makes physical attacks, and you can make them at a distance as listed under the specific category of gun or type of power.

**Defend:** Accuracy is unique in that it doesn't really have a defense component to it— you'd use Athletics for that. You could use it to lay down some covering fire, which might act as a defense for your allies or provide opposition to someone else's movement. That could just as easily be represented by using Create and Advantage, such as **Covering Fire** or **Hail of Bullets**.

# ARCANUM

Arcanum is the skill if your character is in tune with the mysteries of the mystic world. From knowing of extradimensional entities, to knowing about the dark things that exist just to the side of man's sight, to understanding ancient rituals involving blood and sinew, it's the general knowledge skill for things beyond the mundane.

**Overcome:** You can use Arcanum to overcome any obstacle that requires applying your character's mystical knowledge to achieve a goal. For example, you might roll Arcanum to decipher some ancient language in an old tome, under the presumption that your character might have researched it at some point. Basically, you can use Arcanum as a go-to skill for arcane knowledge any time you need to know if your character can answer a difficult question, where some tension exists in not knowing the answer.

You'll also use Arcanum against the opposition in rolls to create rituals.

**Create an Advantage:** Arcanum provides a lot of very flexible opportunities to create advantages, provided you can research the subject in question. More often than not, you'll be using Arcanum to get a story detail, some obscure bit of information that you uncover or know already, but if that information gives you an edge in a future scene, it might take the form of an aspect. Likewise, you can use the skill to create advantages based on any arcane subject matter your character might have studied, which gives you a fun way to add details to the setting. Plus, you'll likely be using Arcanum to create aspects to assist you in ritual casting.

**Attack:** Arcanum isn't used in conflict.

**Defend:** You won't use it to Defend.

# ARTIFICING

Artificing is used to create and destroy mystical artifacts, whether for good or ill, presuming you have the time and tools you need. It does for arcane artifacts what the Technology skill does for mundane and super-science devices.

**Overcome:** Crafts allows you to build, break, or fix mystic artifacts, presuming you have the time and tools you need. Often, actions with Artificing happen as one component of a more complex situation, making it a popular skill for challenges.

**Create an Advantage:** You can use Artificing to create aspects representing features of a mystic object, such as an amulet or ancient artifact, pointing out useful features or strengths you can use to your advantage (**Nexus of Great Power**) or vulnerability for you to exploit (**It Hungers for Souls**, or **Crack in the Crystal**).

**Attack:** You generally won't use Artificing to attack, as any artifact you create will usually use one of the normal attack skills.

**Defend:** Like with an attack action, you generally won't use Artificing to Defend.

# ATHLETICS

The Athletics skill represents your character's general level of physical fitness, whether through training, natural gifts, mutation, or accident. It's how good you

are at moving your body.

**Overcome:** Athletics allows you to overcome any obstacle that requires physical movement—jumping, running, climbing, swimming, etc. If it resembles something you'd do in the decathlon, you roll Athletics. You use overcome actions with Athletics to move between zones in a conflict if there's a situation aspect or other obstacle in your way. You also roll Athletics to chase or race in any contests or challenges that rely on these types of activities.

**Create an Advantage:** When you're creating an advantage with Athletics, you're jumping to high ground, running faster than the opponent can keep up with, or performing dazzling acrobatic maneuvers in order to confound your foes.

**Attack:** Athletics is not meant as an attack skill.

**Defend:** Athletics is what you would normally use to Defend against ranged attacks. You can also use it to defend against characters trying to move past you, if you're in a position to physically interfere with whoever's making the attempt.

## CONTACTS

Contacts is the skill of knowing and making connections with people, whether on the street, in law enforcement and government agencies, or in the board room.

**Overcome:** You use Contacts to overcome any obstacle related to finding someone you need to find. Whether that's old-fashioned "man on the street" type of work, polling your information network, or searching archives and computer databases, you're able to hunt down people or somehow get access to them.

**Create an Advantage:** Contacts allows you to know who the perfect person to talk to is for anything you



might need, or to decide that you know the perfect person already. It's likely that you'll create story details with this skill, represented by aspects. ("Hey, guys, my contacts tell me that **John Irons is the Best Mechanic For A Thousand Miles**— we should talk to him.")

You can also create an advantage that represents what the word on the street is about a particular individual, object, or location, based on what your contacts tell you. These aspects almost always deal with reputation more than fact, such as **A Man Without Fear** or **Kingpin of Crime**. Whether that person lives up to their reputation is anybody's guess, though that



doesn't invalidate the aspect—people often have misleading reputations that complicate their lives.

Contacts could also be used to create aspects that represent using your information network to plant or acquire information.

**Attack:** Contacts isn't used for attacks; it's hard to harm someone simply by knowing people.

**Defend:** Contacts can be used to defend against people creating social advantages against you, provided your information network can be brought to bear in the situation. You might also use it to keep someone from using Deceive or Contacts to go "off the grid", or to interfere with Investigate attempts to find you.

## CONTROLLING SKILL (MAGIC/MENTAL/POWER)

A special set of skills used only in the control of certain super-powers, which skill you choose depends on the source of your powers. Arcane powers use the **Magic** skill, while psychic powers use **Mental**. If your powers are more traditional in nature (such as from a mutation, accident of birth, or is contained within a piece of technology), you'll use **Power**.

The skill doesn't have to be taken individually for each super-power it applies to (though it can be, if you really want to differentiate your capabilities with different powers). Simply add the appropriate skill to your Skill Column, and it applies to all relevant powers.

**Overcome:** Whether or not the skill can be used to overcome obstacles will depend on the nature of the power involved. Very few powers, however, cannot be used this way, so you'll likely find a lot of use for the skill.

**Create an Advantage:** Some powers offers a bonus to creating advantages in a scene. Typically, though, this skill is useful for setting up situation aspects as long as you can narrate how the specific super-power applies.

**Attack:** Usually, these skills are not used for attack, but it's really determined by the power's description.

**Defend:** Again, whether or not the skill applies to Defend actions will depend on the power's description.

## DECEIVE

Deceive is the skill about lying to and misdirecting people, whether verbally or through disguises.

**Overcome:** Use Deceive to bluff your way past someone, or to get someone to believe a lie, or to get something out of someone because they believe in one of your lies. For nameless NPCs, this is just an overcome roll, but for PCs or named NPCs, it requires a contest, and the target opposes with Empathy. Winning this contest could justify placing a situation aspect on your target, if buying into your lie could help you in a future scene.

You can also use Deceive to do small tricks of sleight-of-hand and misdirection.

**Create an Advantage:** Use Deceive to create momentary distractions, cover stories, or false impressions. You could feint in a swordfight, putting an opponent **Off-Balance** and setting you up for an attack. You could do the whole, "What's that over there!" trick to give you a **Head Start** when you run away. You could establish a **Tough Street Guy** cover story for when you attempt to infiltrate a criminal hangout (for instance, as part of an investigation). You could trick someone into revealing one of their aspects or other information.

**Attack:** Deceive is an indirect skill that creates a lot of opportunities you can capitalize on, but it doesn't do direct harm to an individual.

**Defend:** You can use Deceive to throw off Investigation attempts with false information and to defend against efforts made to discern your true motives with the Empathy skill.

## EMPATHY

Empathy involves knowing and being able to spot changes in a person's mood or bearing. It's basically the emotional Notice skill.

**Overcome:** You don't really use Empathy to overcome obstacles directly—normally, you find out some information with it, and then use another skill to act. In some cases, though, you might use Empathy like you would Notice, to see if you catch a change in someone's attitude or intent.

**Create an Advantage:** You can use Empathy to read a person's emotional state and get a general sense

of who they are, presuming you have some kind of interpersonal contact with them. Most often, you'll use this to assess the aspects on another character's sheet, but sometimes you'll also be able to create new aspects, especially on NPCs. If the target has some reason to be aware that you're trying to read them, they can defend with Deceive or Rapport.

You can also use Empathy to discover what circumstances will allow you to make mental attacks on someone, figuring out their breaking points.

**Attack:** Empathy can't really be used in this capacity.

**Defend:** This is the skill to go to in order to defend against Deceive actions, allowing you to pierce through lies and see through to someone's true intent. You can also use it to defend against those creating social advantages against you in general.

**Special:** Empathy is the main skill you use to help others recover from consequences that are mental in nature.

## FIGHT

The Fight skill covers all forms of unarmed close-quarters combat (in other words, within the same zone).

**Overcome:** Since you don't really use Fight outside of a conflict, it's not often used to overcome obstacles. You might use it to display your fighting prowess in a demonstration, or to participate in some kind of regulated bout or sport fighting, which would allow you to use this skill in a contest.

**Create an Advantage:** You'll probably use Fight for most of the advantages you create in a physical conflict. Any number of special moves can be covered with advantages: a targeted strike to stun, a "dirty move," disarming, and so on. You could even use Fight to assess another fighter's style, spotting weaknesses in his or her form that you can exploit.

**Attack:** This is self-explanatory. You make physical attacks with Fight. Remember, this is for close-in work, so you have to be relatively close to your opponent.

**Defend:** You use Fight to defend against any other attack or create an advantage attempt made with Fight, as well as pretty much any action where violently interposing yourself could prevent it from happening. If you have a means of doing so, you can use this skill to defend against Accuracy attacks, such as blocking

a blast with your invulnerable hands.

## INVESTIGATE

Investigate is the skill you use to find things out. It's a counterpart to Notice— whereas Notice revolves around situational alertness and surface observation, Investigate revolves around concentrated effort and in-depth scrutiny.

**Overcome:** Investigate obstacles are all about information that's hard to uncover for some reason. Analyzing a crime scene for clues, searching a cluttered room for the item you need, even poring over a musty old tome to try and find the passage that makes everything make sense.

Racing against the clock to collect evidence before the cops show up or disaster occurs is a classic way to use Investigate in a challenge.

**Create an Advantage:** Investigate is probably one of the most versatile skills you can use to create an advantage. As long as you're willing to take the time, you can find out just about anything about anyone, discover nearly any detail about a place or object, or otherwise make up aspects about nearly anything in the game world that your character could reasonably unearth.

If that sounds broad, consider the following as just a few of the possibilities for using Investigate: eavesdropping on a conversation, looking for clues at a crime scene, examining records, verifying the truth of a piece of information, conducting surveillance, and researching a cover story.

**Attack:** Investigate isn't used to make attacks.

**Defend:** Same here.

## KNOWLEDGE

A broad skill that represents your character's academic knowledge. A Mediocre (+0) rating in Knowledge means the character has a general high school education, or may be just beginning his college career.

**Overcome:** Knowledge is used to overcome any obstacle that requires academic knowledge of a particular topic, such as knowing what area of a city is controlled by a particular street gang, what technicalities might see a criminal walk free from the justice system, or any other topic where your

character's research and general reading on the matter would come in handy.

**Create an Advantage:** Knowledge is useful for creating advantages to get a story detail or to establish that you have a slight edge in something because of your expertise on the subject. By creating advantages based on the character's studies, it gives you a cool way to add new details to a scene or story.

**Attack:** Knowledge is not used to attack.

**Defend:** Knowledge doesn't really do anything for Defend.

## LEADERSHIP

Your character is a born leader on the battlefield, able to command of others and devise strategies based on the strengths of your allies, and the weaknesses of your enemies. While Empathy might help you understand people better, and Rapport allows you to get them to like and trust you (both good additional skills to take), Leadership is about leading them into dangerous situations and understanding what is needed to bring them back out alive.

**Overcome:** Mostly, Leadership is used to overcome difficulties in combat, such as figuring out an opponent's weakness, knowing how best to direct your teammates, and what battlefield tactics to expect from those you've faced before, or at least studied. Most uses of the skill will involve advice from the GM in the form of knowledge your character would possess concerning the present battlefield and opponents.

**Create an Advantage:** Whether it is bolstering the team with a well-placed battle-cry, directing them on how best to work together, providing direct support to a fellow hero where it's needed most, or recognizing situations on the field that could be used to your advantage, Leadership provides a wide range of options for creating aspects, allowing you to spotlight your character's tactical genius.

**Attack:** Leadership is not use to directly attack an opponent.

**Defend:** Leadership doesn't assist directly with Defend actions.

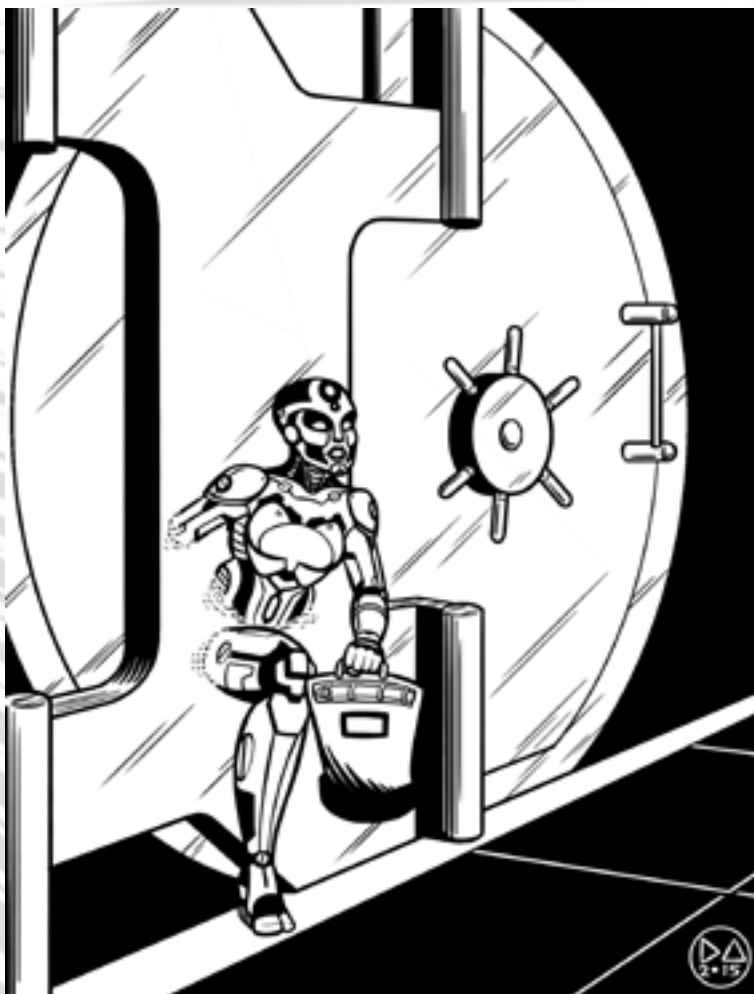
## NOTICE

The Notice skill involves just that— noticing things. It's a counterpart to Investigate, representing a character's overall perception, ability to pick out details at a glance, and other powers of observation. Usually, when you use Notice, it's very quick compared to Investigate, so the kinds of details you get from it are more superficial, but you also don't have to expend as much effort to find them.

Notice is also rolled to determine initiative in conflicts.

**Overcome:** You don't really use Notice to overcome obstacles too often but when you do it's used in a reactive way: noticing something in a scene, hearing a faint sound, spotting the concealed gun in that guy's waistband.

Note that this isn't license for GMs to call for Notice rolls left and right to see how generally observant the players' characters are; that's boring. Instead, call for Notice rolls when succeeding would result in something interesting happening and failing would result in something just as interesting.



**Create an Advantage:** You use Notice to create aspects based on direct observation—looking over a room for details that stand out, finding an escape route in a debris-filled building, noticing someone sticking out in a crowd, etc. When you're watching people, Notice can tell you what's going on with them externally; for internal changes, see Empathy. You might also use Notice to declare that your character spots something you can use to your advantage in a situation, such as a convenient **Escape Route** when you're trying to get out of a building, or a **Subtle Weakness** in the enemy's defense. For example, if you're in a back alley brawl you could make a Notice roll to say that you spot a puddle on the ground, right next to your opponent's feet that could cause him to slip.

**Attack:** Notice isn't really used for attacks.

**Defend:** You can use Notice to defend against any uses of Stealth to get the drop on you or ambush you, or to discover that you're being observed.

## PHYSIQUE

The Physique skill is a counterpart to Athletics, representing the character's natural physical aptitudes, such as raw strength and endurance.

**Overcome:** You can use Physique to overcome any obstacles that require the application of brute force—most often to overcome a situation aspect on a zone—or any other physical impedance, like prison bars or locked gates. Of course, Physique is the classic skill for arm-wrestling matches and other contests of applied strength, as well as marathons or other endurance-based challenges.

**Create an Advantage:** Physique has a lot of potential for advantages in physical conflict, usually related to grappling and holding someone in place, making them **Pinned** or **Locked Down**. You might also use it as a way of discovering physical impairments possessed by the target.

**Attack:** Physique is not used to harm people directly—see the Fight skill for that.

**Defend:** Though you don't generally use Physique to defend against attacks, you can use it to provide active opposition to someone else's movement, provided you're in a small enough space that you can effectively use your body to block access. You might also interpose something heavy and brace it to stop someone from getting through.

**Special:** The Physique skill gives you additional physical stress or consequence slots. Average (+1) or Fair (+2) gives you 1 extra stress box. Good (+3) or Great (+4) gives you 2 extra stress boxes. Superb (+5) and above give you an additional mild consequence slot along with the additional stress boxes. This slot can only be used for physical harm.

**Lifting:** To lift a weight, make a Physique roll in an Overcome action against the indicated opposition.

### LIFTING OPPOSITION

Mediocre (+0)	50 lbs
Average (+1)	100 lbs
Fair (+2)	200 lbs
Good (+3)	300 lbs
Great (+4)	400 lbs
Superb (+5)	500 lbs
Fantastic (+6)	600 lbs
Epic (+7)	800 lbs
Monstrous (+8)	1000 lbs
Colossal (+10)	1400 lbs
Unearthly (+11)	1600 lbs
Inconceivable (+12)	2000 lbs

## PROVOKE

Provoke is the skill about getting someone's dander up and eliciting negative emotional response from them, such as: fear, anger, shame, annoyance, and so forth.

To use Provoke, you need some kind of justification. That could come entirely from situation, or because you have an aspect that's appropriate, or because you've created an advantage with another skill (like Rapport or Deceive), or because you've assessed your target's aspects (see Empathy).

This skill requires that your target can feel emotions—androids and mechanical minions typically can't be provoked.

**Overcome:** You can Provoke someone into doing what you want in a fit of emotional pique. You might

intimidate them for information, piss them off so badly that they act out, or scare them into running away. This will often happen when you're going up against nameless NPCs or it isn't worthwhile to play out the particulars. Against PCs or important NPCs, you'll need to win a contest. They oppose with Will.

**Create an Advantage:** You can create advantages representing momentary emotional states, like *Enraged*, *Shocked*, or *Hesitant*. Your target opposes with Will.

**Attack:** You can make mental attacks with Provoke, to do emotional harm to an opponent. Your relationship with the target and the circumstances you're in figure a great deal into whether or not you can use this action.

**Defend:** Being good at provoking others doesn't make you better at avoiding it yourself. You need Will for that.

## RAPPORT

The Rapport skill is all about making positive connections to people and eliciting positive emotion. It's the skill of being liked and trusted.

**Overcome:** Use Rapport to charm or inspire people to do what you want, or to establish a good connection with them. Charm your way past the thugs, convince someone to take you into their confidence, or become the man of the hour at the local bar. For nameless NPCs, this is just an overcome action, but you may have to enter a contest to sufficiently ingratiate yourself to a named NPC or PC.

**Create an Advantage:** Use Rapport to establish a positive mood on a target or in a scene or to get someone to confide in you out of a genuine sense of trust. You could pep talk someone into having *Elevated Confidence*, or stir a crowd into a *Joyful Fervor*, or simply make someone *Talkative* or *Helpful*.

**Attack:** Rapport doesn't cause harm, so you don't use it for attacks.

**Defend:** Rapport defends against any skill used to damage your reputation, sour a mood you've created, or make you look bad in front of other people. It does not, however, defend against mental attacks. That requires Will.

## RESOURCES

Resources describes your character's general level of material wealth and ability to apply it. This is not just your cash on hand, but also the net worth of all your assets and credit lines. It represents your purchasing power, lifestyle, and ability to make money do the talking for you.

**Overcome:** You can use Resources to get yourself out of or past any situation where throwing money at the problem will help, such as committing bribery or acquiring rare and expensive things. Challenges or contests might involve auctions or bidding wars.

**Create an Advantage:** You might use Resources to grease the wheels and make people more likely to help you achieve your goals, whether that represents an actual bribe, or putting out a reward on an enemy's head to make their life difficult. You can also use Resources to declare that you have something you need on hand, or can quickly acquire it, which could give you an aspect representing the object.

**Attack:** Resources isn't used for attacks.

**Defend:** Resources isn't used to defend.

## AVAILABLE FUNDS

Currency isn't typically measured in comic books, a character is usually strapped for cash, is independently wealthy, or are somewhere in between. In the Daring Comics, your wealth is tied directly into your Resource skill rating. Instead of tracking actual monetary worth, which isn't fun for most people and isn't really a factor in most comic books, purchasing something is a simple Overcome action. The guidelines for what can be purchased at what opposition are shown below. These are just guidelines (it would be impossible to account for everything), but should give a GM enough of a gauge when assigning opposition.

## PURCHASE OPPOSITION

Opposition	Types of Purchases
Mediocre (+0)	Everyday Items
Average (+1)	Most street level firearms, high-end electronics
Fair (+2)	High-end Firearms, Top of the line consumer electronics
Good (+3)	Average vehicle, SOTA electronics
Great (+4)	Top-end vehicle, Average house
Superb (+5)	Small Mansion
Fantastic (+6)	Large Mansion
Epic (+7)	Military vehicles such as a tank.
Monstrous (+8)	Fighter jet, private luxury jet
Colossal (+10)	A Skyscraper
Unearthly (+11)	A private space craft
Inconceivable (+12)	You can buy real estate off world.

## STEALTH

The Stealth skill allows you to avoid detection, both when hiding in place and trying to move about unseen. It pairs well with the Thief skill.

**Overcome:** You can use Stealth to get past any situation that primarily depends on you not being seen. Sneaking past sentries and security, hiding from a pursuer, avoiding leaving evidence as you pass through a place, and any other such uses all fall under the purview of Stealth.

**Create an Advantage:** You'll mainly use Stealth to create aspects on yourself, setting yourself in an ideal

position for an attack or ambush in a conflict. That way, you can be Well-Hidden when the patrol passes you in the secret villain lair and take advantage of that, or Hard to Pin Down if you're fighting in the dark.

**Attack:** Stealth isn't used to make attacks.

**Defend:** You can use this to foil Notice attempts to pinpoint you or seek you out, as well as to try to throw off the scent of an Investigate attempt from someone trying to track you.

## TECHNOLOGY

Characters with this skill understand the mechanics of how things operate, from primitive catapults, to modern vehicles, and even powered-armor or alien technology. Like with the Knowledge skill, the Technology skill represents a broad knowledge, while Stunts allow you to narrow your character's true areas of expertise.

**Overcome:** Technology is used to overcome obstacles that relate to repairing anything from a car, to a computer, to alien and super-science technology. You'll also use it for hacking through computer systems, as well as bypassing electronic security devices. When you discover a piece of mysterious technology, you'll also use the skill to figure out how it works, and whether or not it is about to go BOOM! Technology is also used for inventing any non-magical device.

**Create an Advantage:** Primarily, Technology is used to create situational advantages that will assist you in overcoming obstacles, such as having advanced tools on hand, getting a brain-storm, or having some other type of technological knowledge asset that gives you an edge.

**Attack:** You probably won't use Technology to attack in a conflict, unless the conflict is directly about using some sort of machinery. GMs and players, talk over the likelihood of this happening in your game if you have someone who is really interested in taking this skill. Usually, weapons you invent are likely to be used with other skills to attack— a guy who makes an ice gun still needs Accuracy to have a chance of hitting his target.

**Defend:** As with attacking, Technology doesn't defend, unless you're somehow using it as the skill to control a piece of machinery that you can use to block an attack.

# THIEF

The Thief skill covers your character's aptitude for stealing things and getting into places that are off-limits.

Thief shares one benefit with Technology, which is knowledge of electronic security systems. So, if your character is skilled and breaking-and-entering, but isn't necessarily knowledgeable in a broader range of technology, the Thief skill will serve your purposes just fine.

**Overcome:** As stated above, Thief allows you to overcome any obstacle related to theft or infiltration. Bypassing electronic locks and motion sensors, pickpocketing and filching, covering your tracks, and other such activities all fall under the purview of this skill.

**Create an Advantage:** You can case a location with Thief, to determine how hard it will be to break into and what kind of security you're dealing with, as well as discover any vulnerabilities you might exploit. You can also examine the work of other burglars to determine how a particular heist was done, and create or discover aspects related to whatever evidence they may have left behind.

**Attack:** Thief isn't used for attacks.

**Defend:** Same here. It's not really a conflict skill, so there's not a lot of opportunity to use it to defend.

# TREATMENT

This skill covers the treatment and diagnosis of physical injuries, and is used to treat patients such as with first-aid, quick suturing, or even emergency surgery.

**Overcome:** Treatment will mostly be used when healing another's physical injuries, and as such will have to overcome the Opposition to do so. It can also be used to notice when someone else (such as an opponent) is injured and trying to hide, which means that Treatment would be used instead of the Notice skill and would be opposed by the other's Deceive skill.

**Create an Advantage:** The Treatment skill offers an interesting range of options when creating advantages on a patient, from hitting them up with **Pain Reducing Drugs** to giving them a **Boost of Adrenaline**.

**Attack:** Treatment is not used to attack.

**Defend:** Treatment does not apply to a Defend action.

# VEHICLES

The Vehicles skill is all about operating vehicles and things that go fast— everything from cars and motorcycles, to boats, to aircraft and space vessels.

**Overcome:** Vehicles is the equivalent of Athletics when you're in a vehicle—you use it to successfully accomplish movement in the face of difficult circumstances, like rough terrain, small amounts of clearance, or stunt driving. Obviously, Vehicles is also ripe for contests, especially chases and races.

**Create an Advantage:** You can use Vehicles to determine the best way to get somewhere in a vehicle, and a good enough roll might allow you to learn features of the route that get expressed as aspects, or declare that you know a Convenient Shortcut or something similar.

You can also just read the Athletics description, and then make it about a vehicle. Advantages created using Vehicles often revolve around getting good positioning, doing a fancy maneuver, or putting your opponent in a bad spot.

**Attack:** Vehicles isn't usually used as an attack skill (though stunts can certainly alter this). If you want to ram a vehicle, you can attack with Vehicles, but you take the same shifts of harm you inflict.

**Defend:** Avoiding damage to a vehicle in a physical conflict is one of the most common uses of Vehicles. You can also use it to defend against advantages being created against you or overcome actions of someone trying to move past you in a vehicle.

# WEAPONS

Shields, swords, maces, batons, fighting sticks— these are just more tools of your trade when you're trained in the Weapons skill.

**Overcome:** Just as with Fight, you don't really use Weapons outside of a conflict, it's not often used to overcome obstacles.

**Create an Advantage:** Again, same as with Fight, and we'll just repeat it here: You'll probably use Weapons for most of the advantages you create in a physical conflict. Any number of special moves can be covered with advantages: a targeted strike to stun,

a “dirty move,” disarming, and so on.

**Attack:** Naturally, this is a skill for melee fighting, which means you’ll have to be close to your opponent.

**Defend:** Blocks, parries, and deflections— Weapons is a key skill for defense.

## WILL

The Will skill represents your character’s general level of mental fortitude, the same way Physique represents your physical fortitude.

**Overcome:** You can use Will to pit yourself against obstacles that require mental effort. Puzzles and riddles can fall under this category, as well as any mentally absorbing task, like deciphering a code. Use Will when it’s only a matter of time before you overcome the mental challenge, and Knowledge if it takes something more than brute mental force to get past it. Many of the obstacles that you go up against with Will might be made part of challenges, to reflect the effort involved.

Contests of Will might reflect particularly challenging games, like chess, or competing in a hard set of exams.

Will also serves as your defense against psychic and mystical attacks

**Create an Advantage:** You can use Will to place aspects on yourself, representing a state of deep concentration or focus.

**Attack:** Will isn’t really used for attacks.

**Defend:** Will is the main skill you use to defend against mental attacks from Provoke, representing your control over your reactions. It is also used in Defend actions against psychic and mental attacks.

**Special:** The Will skill gives you additional mental stress boxes or consequence slots. Average (+1) or Fair (+2) gives you 1 extra stress box. Good (+3) or Great (+4) gives you 2 extra stress boxes. Superb (+5) and above give you an additional mild consequence slot along with the additional stress boxes. This slot can only be used for mental harm.





# CHAPTER 8: STUNTS

A stunt is a special trait your character has that changes the way a skill works for you. Stunts indicate some special, privileged way a character uses a skill that is unique to whoever has that stunt, which is a pretty common trope in a lot of settings— special or elite training, exceptional talents, the mark of destiny, genetic alteration, innate coolness, and a myriad of other reasons all explain why some people get more out of their skills than others do.

Unlike skills, which are about the sort of things anyone can do in your campaign, stunts are about individual characters. Although all the characters on a team might have the same skill, their stunts will differentiate them from each other.

## STUNT CREATION EXAMPLES

*All of the stunts shown as examples under the stunt Creation rules are listed as part of the sample stunts as well. Some sample stunts have also been drawn from other Fate system products thanks to various System Reference Documents and the Open Gaming License. In such instances, they were stunts we also felt were already seen in super-hero comic books, and didn't feel that reinventing them purely for the sake of doing so would have been in the spirit of the SRD and OGL. Gamers who already owned such other products were already familiar with those specific stunt designs.*

## BASIC STUNT CREATION

Daring Comics allows players to take stunts during character creation, or leave open the option to take stunts during play. There are a number of example stunts listed in this chapter. These are not a hard and fast list; rather, they're there to show you how to create your own (though you can certainly lift directly from the book if you'd like to).

Creating your own stunts is not hard, and in fact we encourage you to do. Not only is it an investment in the development of your hero, but stunts can also say a lot about the style of comic book series you're creating.

There are three basic things a stunt can do, as detailed below.

### ADD A NEW ACTION TO A SKILL

The most basic option for a stunt is to allow a skill to do something that it normally can't do. It adds a new action onto the base skill in certain situations, for those with this stunt. This new action can be one that's available to another skill (allowing one skill to swap for another under certain circumstances), or one that's not available to any skill.

**Attention to Detail:** You can use Investigate instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive attempts. What others discover through gut reactions and intuition, you learn through careful observation of minute expression.

**Quick Draw:** You can use Accuracy instead of Notice to determine turn order in any physical conflict where shooting quickly would be useful.

**Strike from the Shadows:** You can use Stealth to make physical attacks, provided your target isn't already aware of your presence.

**Unnatural Aura:** You can use Provoke to enter the kinds of contests that you'd normally need Physique for, whenever your ability to psych your opponent out with the force of your presence alone would be a factor.

### CREATE A RULES EXCEPTION

Finally, a stunt can allow a skill to make a single exception, in a narrow circumstance, for any other game rule that doesn't precisely fit into the category of an action. The Comic Book Action chapter is full of different little rules about the circumstances under which a skill can be used and what happens when you use them. Stunts can break those, allowing your character to stretch the boundaries of the possible.

The only limit to this is that a stunt can't change any of the basic rules for aspects in terms of invoking, compelling, and the fate point economy. Those always remain the same.

**Eavesdropper:** On a successful Investigate roll to create an advantage by eavesdropping on a

conversation, you can discover or create one additional aspect (though this doesn't give you an extra free invocation).

**Iron Will:** You can choose to ignore a mild consequence for the duration of the scene. It can't be compelled against you or invoked by your enemies. At the end of the scene it comes back worse, though; increase the consequence to moderate. If Moderate is already taken, it becomes Severe. If for some reason you can't increase the consequence, you are Taken Out.

**Take the Blow:** You can use Physique to defend against Fight attacks made with fists or blunt instruments, though you always take 1 shift of stress on a tie.

## ***ADD A BONUS TO AN ACTION UNDER SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES***

Another use for a stunt is to give a skill an automatic bonus under a particular, very narrow circumstance, effectively letting a character specialize in something. The circumstance should be narrower than what the normal action allows, and only apply to one particular action or pair of actions.

The usual bonus is +2 to the skill total. However, if you want, you can also express the bonus as two shifts of additional effect after the roll succeeds, if that makes more sense. Remember, higher shifts on a roll allow your action to be more effective in certain ways.

You can also use this to establish any effect worth two shifts as an additional benefit of succeeding at the skill roll. This might be Fair (+2) passive opposition, the equivalent of a 2-point hit, a mild consequence, or an advantage that takes Fair (+2) opposition to remove.

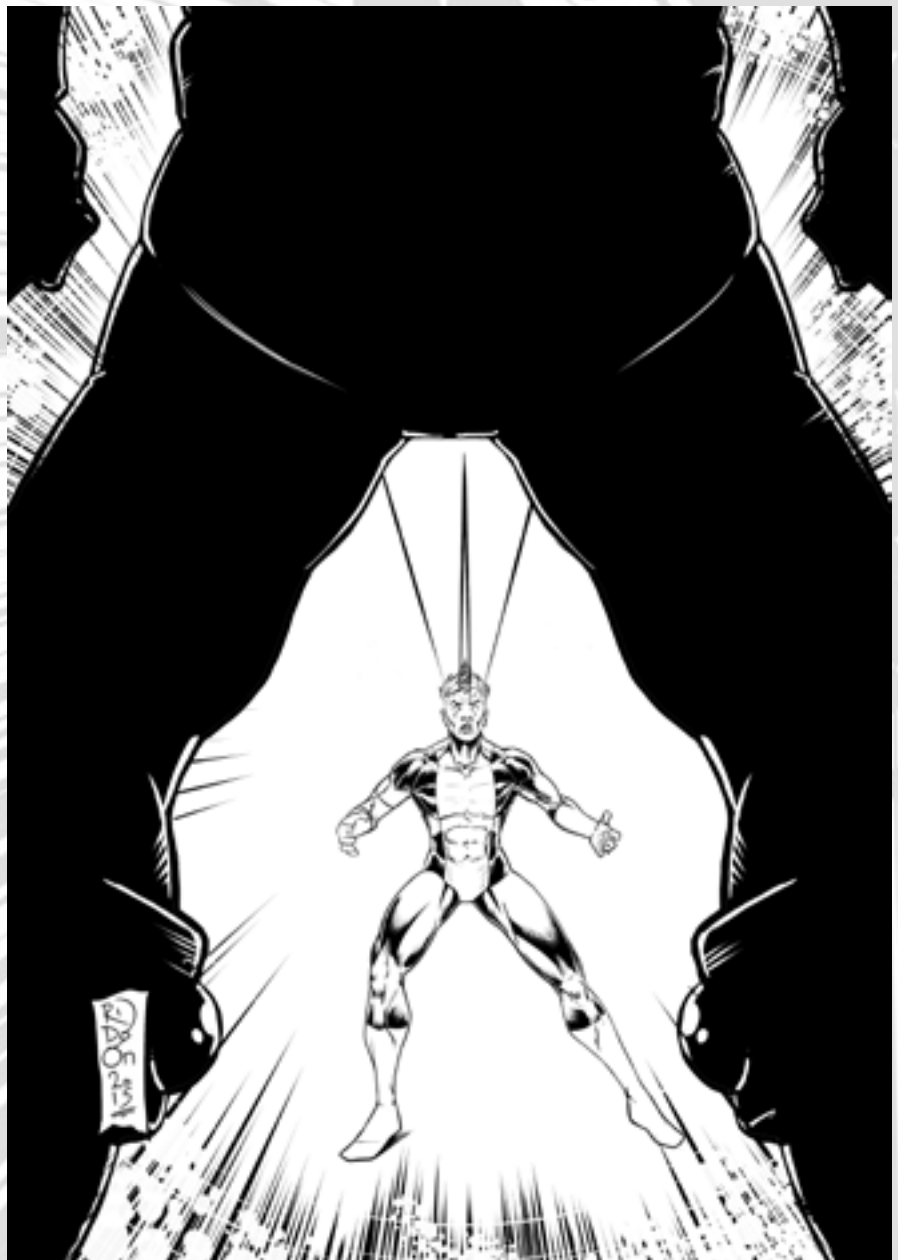
**Killing Stroke:** Once per scene, when you force an opponent to take a consequence, you can spend a fate point to increase the consequence's severity (so mild becomes moderate, moderate becomes severe). If your opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, he must either take a severe consequence and a

second consequence or be taken out.

**Lead Rain:** You really like emptying magazines. Any time you're using a fully automatic weapon and you succeed at an Accuracy attack, you automatically create a Fair (+2) opposition against movement in that zone until your next turn, because of all the lead in the air. (Normally, you'd need to take a separate action to set up this kind of interference, but with the stunt, it's free.)

**Man of Industry:** Gain a +2 bonus to any attempt to overcome obstacles with Rapport when you're at corporate function, such as a trade show, board meeting, or business related negotiation.

**Master of Shadows:** Gain a +2 bonus to create an advantage using Stealth, whenever the situation specific has to do with using darkness and shadows.



# ADVANCED STUNT CREATION

In addition to the three basic forms a stunt can take, you can also expand that a little further with some advanced stunt creation techniques, as shown below. Be warned, though, that they can make creating stunts a little trickier, and can easily throw a stunt slightly out of balance. Of course, it's difficult to create a stunt that will break your story, and you can always adjust it during play if it proves to be a bit too powerful.

## TRIGGERED EFFECTS

A triggered effect stunt is a stunt that— well— triggers under a specific narrative condition, requires a skill roll, and has a specific effect as a result. These types of stunts are very useful when you want to see the characters do certain types of things in the game, as the stunts directly reward such actions.

Now, you'll notice that the following stunt examples do not say what happens when the roll fails. It's deliberate. These triggered effects tend to be powerful, so their drawbacks should be equally so. A tie should be similar to a success, but at some sort of minor cost. On a failure, feel free to apply appropriate repercussions.

**Lead By Example:** When you first take a Moderate or Severe Consequence while in battle alongside your teammates and continue to fight, roll Leadership against Fair (+2) opposition. On a success, your teammates gain +1 to their next single Defend or Attack action, as they're inspired by your "never say die" determination. On a success with style, they get a +1 to their next single Attack and Defend action, and you still place a Boost as normal.

**Intimidating Presence:** When you make it clear how dangerous you are, roll Provoke against your target's Will. If you succeed, that target will not attack you or willingly come near you unless you take action against him first. If you succeed with style, neither will anyone with a lower Will than your target.

## FATE POINT-POWERED STUNTS

Another way to restrict how often a stunt comes into play is to have it cost a fate point to use. This is a good option if the desired stunt effect is very powerful, or there doesn't seem to be a good way for you to change the wording of the stunt to make it come up less often in play.

Our best advice for determining what really powerful means is that it either goes beyond the specified limits we gave above (so, if it adds a new action to a skill and a bonus), or significantly affects conflicts. Specifically, almost any stunt that allows you to do extra stress in a conflict should cost a fate point to use (keep in mind that powers do not share this rule, as explained in Building Powers section in Chapter 9: Powers).

**Ninja Vanish:** Once per scene, you can vanish while in plain sight by spending a fate point, using a smoke pellet or other mysterious technique. This places the Vanished boost on you. While you're vanished, no one can attack or create an advantage on you until after they've succeeded at an overcome roll with Notice to determine where you went (basically meaning they have to give up an exchange to try). This boost goes away as soon as you invoke it, or someone makes that overcome roll.

**Situational Reflexes:** You may spend a fate point to go first in an exchange, regardless of your initiative. If multiple people with this stunt exercise this ability, they go in turn of their normal initiative, before those who don't have the stunt get a chance to act. If the exchange has already started, and you have not yet acted, you may instead spend a fate point to act next, out of the usual turn order.

## STUNT FAMILIES

If you want to get detailed about a particular kind of training or talent, you can create a stunt family for it. This is a group of stunts that are related to and chain off of each other somehow.

Creating a stunt family is easy. You make one stunt that serves as a prerequisite for all the others in the family, qualifying you to take further stunts up the chain. Then, you need to create a handful of stunts that are all related somehow to the prerequisite, either stacking the effects or branching out into another set of effects.

Stacking effects is perhaps the simplest way of handling a related stunt, and is just making the original stunt more effective in the same situation:

If the stunt added an action, narrow it further and give the new action a bonus. Follow the same rules for adding a bonus— the circumstances in which it applies should be narrower than that of the base action.

If the stunt gave a bonus to an action, give an additional +2 bonus to the same action or add an additional two-shift effect to that action.

If the stunt made a rules exception, make it even more of an exception. This might be difficult depending on what the original exception is. Don't worry, though, you have other options.

Keep in mind that the upgraded stunt effectively replaces the original. You can look at it as a single super-stunt that costs two points for the price of being more powerful than other stunts.

Here are some stunts examples that stack:

**Into the Fray:** You're at your best when facing a group of opponents. Whenever you are outnumbered in a fight (meaning your opponents have a bonus for teamwork against you), you do an extra Shift of damage.

**Everywhere at Once (Requires Into the Fray):** You know how to use a group of opponents against each other. Whenever facing two or more opponents at once, you gain a +2 to Fight.

**One-Man Army (Requires Everywhere at Once):** You are a one-man army; the odds don't matter to you. Whenever you are attacked, opponents simply do not get a bonus to their attacks due to an advantage of numbers.

## ***BRANCHING EFFECTS***

When you branch, you create a new stunt that relates to the original in terms of theme or subject matter, but provides a wholly new effect. If you look at stacking effects as expanding a stunt or skill vertically, you can look at branching effects as expanding them horizontally.

If your original stunt added an action to a skill, a branching stunt might add a different action to that skill, or it might provide a bonus to a different action the skill already has, or create a rules exception. The mechanical effect isn't connected to the prerequisite stunt at all, but provides a complementary bit of versatility.

This allows you to provide a few different paths that follow from a single stunt. You can use this to highlight different elements of a certain skill and help characters who are highly ranked in the same skill differentiate from each other by following different stunt families.

As an example of how this works, let's take a look at the Contacts skill, and one way we could create some branching stunts which represent using one's reputation to an advantage.

**Big Man:** When selecting this stunt, the player picks a specific field (Criminal, Business, Politics, Espionage and Occult are the most common); this stunt is often written with that field incorporated, e.g., Big Man in Politics. The character is not merely well connected in that community, he is actually a person of great importance within that area; for maximum benefit, this should be paired with an aspect that indicates similar things.

In addition to the narrative benefits of such a position, the character may use his Contacts skill in lieu of the Resources skill for anything which might fall under the auspices of members in that field. This stunt may be taken multiple times, each time for a different field.

**Talk the Talk (Requires Big Man):** Whenever dealing with members of your chosen field, you put out all the right signals, say all the right things. In such circumstances, you may roll your Rapport at +2, or, alternatively, use your Contacts instead of Rapport, in order to get a favorable reaction.

**Big Name (Requires Big Man):** You're so well known that an awareness of your name has crossed over into other areas as well. The first time you deal with someone who's heard of you (spending a fate point can assure that they have), and you're using your name, you get a +2 bonus to a Rapport or Provoke roll.

**Big Reputation (Requires Big Name):** Your reputation has reached great proportions, and people are willing to believe all sorts of things about you.

For a fate point, you may use your Contacts skill instead of Rapport, Provoke, Deceive, Leadership, or Will, provided those you are dealing with are aware of your reputation (a second fate point will nearly always assure that they do).

This stunt combines with the bonus from Big Name, getting the character a +2 to Contacts when using it instead of Rapport or Provoke.

## ***BROAD STUNTS***

If you're looking for more variety in your stunts than a +2 or its equivalent, consider the idea of a broad stunt that offers a +1 to two or three things. These could be three different actions within the same skill, or could branch across multiple related skills. If you're going to allow broad stunts like this, watch out for the overlaps in stunt combinations: you don't want two broad stunts giving the net effect of three +2's for the price of only two stunts.

## COMBINED STUNTS

If you want to offer particularly potent stunts, consider bundling the benefit of multiple stunts together to produce a single big effect. For example, you could create a stunt that provides a monstrous 4-shift effect—that's a combination of two stunts, and as such would cost two Hero Points.

## STUNTS AS SPECIAL EFFECTS

Sometimes it will make sense to include stunts as part of a Power Set, such as **Uncanny Agility** or **Superhuman Agility** as a part of a Super-Speed set, or a Physique stunt as part of an Invulnerability set.

That's perfectly acceptable. What you are saying is that the stunt is tied directly into the power, so if the power is somehow nullified, you also lose access to the stunt's effect. Since Special Effects are designed the same as stunts, it doesn't break or unbalance anything to treat any normal stunt as a power Special Effect.

### STUNTS AND POWER SPECIAL EFFECT OVERLAP

*In some cases, a stunt shares the exact same effect with a power special effect under a different name. This is because some effects work great when combined with a power, but also work just as well if taken as a stunt— a part of a character representing some sort of training.*

*Watch for those type of stunts vs special effects, because the benefits do not stack.*

## SAMPLE STUNTS

Okay, so now that you've seen all the various methods to creating your own stunts, the rest of this chapter lists plenty of sample stunts that we've included for you. The sample stunts can be purchased and added directly to your character sheet if you find some that fit your character's concept.

## ACCURACY STUNTS

### ANY OBJECT IS A BULLET

Once per conflict your hero can declare any small object to be a ranged weapon when thrown by him. Thrown attacks with the object have Weapon: 2 rating.

### LEAD RAIN

You really like emptying magazines. Any time you're using a fully automatic weapon and you succeed at an Accuracy attack, you automatically create a Fair (+2) opposition against movement in that zone until your next turn because of all the lead in the air. (Normally, you'd need to take a separate action to set up this kind of interference, but with the stunt, it's free.)

### QUICK DRAW

You can use Accuracy instead of Notice to determine turn order in any physical conflict where shooting quickly would be useful.

### RICOCHET EXPERT

You're an expert when bouncing your attack off surfaces to strike your target. You can perform a ricochet twice per conflict, and you can bounce it off of two surfaces before your opponents start accruing bonuses per additional surface (see: Combat Tactics for ricochet rules).

### SUPERIOR MARKSMAN

You're extremely adept at taking aim on someone. When you succeed with style when placing an aspect to represent taking aim, you get an additional free invocation.

### TRICK SHOT

When using your ranged weapon to create a Situation Aspect representing taking a fancy shot, such as shooting the chain holding a chandelier, or shooting a gun out of a thugs hand for a **Disarmed** aspect, you get +2 to the roll.

## ARCANUM STUNTS

### FORTUNE TELLING

Fortune-telling is a form of the Create an Advantage action. The character may, once per Issue, make a

prediction, and make a roll against a difficulty set by the GM. If the roll is successful, it's a true fortune, and there is now an aspect that represents it. If the target of the fortune was a person, they receive the temporary aspect for the duration of the Story Arc. If it was a general prediction, it is considered to be a scene aspect on every scene for the duration of the Story Arc.

## ***HYPNOTIC VOICE***

When interacting with others socially, you are able to weave the patterns and methods of mesmerism into your words, potentially putting someone you're talking to into a partial trance without them realizing it. Provided you have had several minutes of calm conversation with another character as a preamble, you may start using your Arcanum skill instead of Rapport or Deceit. You may not make such a substitution if the conversation becomes strongly charged with emotion or if other distractions break the air of calm. This stunt works even when dealing with an unwilling subject (in part because it simply allows you to substitute Arcanum for the perfectly normal functions of Rapport and Deceit).

## ***SIXTH SENSE***

You may use Arcanum instead of Notice when it involves things that are mystical or sorcerous in nature.

## ***POWERFUL SIXTH SENSE***

(Requires Sixth Sense)

When using Arcanum in a Create an Advantage action to discover an aspect, you gain +2 to the roll.

## **ARTIFICING STUNTS**

### ***A KIND OF MAGIC***

When you succeed with style while creating an artifact, you also get a free invocation of a single aspect possessed by the artifact.

### ***MASTER ARTIFICER***

When creating an artifact, you ignore the first two points of opposition increase for the artifact being a higher quality than your workshop. Beginning at +3 points of higher artifact quality, your opposition is still increased by +3, but you suffer no opposition increase for the first two points.

## ***WARDED WORKSHOP***

When you succeed at a major cost when creating an artifact, your artifact suffers a Flaw aspect (as though you succeeded at a minor cost) instead of a Complication.

## **ATHLETICS STUNTS**

### ***DAZING COUNTER***

When you succeed with style on a defend action against an opponent's Fight roll, you automatically counter with some sort of nerve punch or stunning blow. You get to attach the *Dazed* situation aspect to your opponent with a free invoke, instead of just a boost.

### ***FLUID TECHNIQUE***

You know how to use your speed and agility in close-quarters conflict, allowing you to use Athletics instead of Fight to attack and defend in melee.

### ***UNCANNY AGILITY***

Your agility is such that you can quickly dodge bullets, arrows, and other ranged attacks, and you gain +2 bonus to Athletics rolls when using a Defend actions to dodge.

### ***SUPERHUMAN AGILITY***

(Requires Uncanny Agility)

Your agility is such that you can move with inhuman speed, and now grants +4 bonus to Defend actions involving dodging.

## **CONTACTS STUNTS**

### ***BIG MAN***

When selecting this stunt, the player picks a specific field (Criminal, Business, Politics, Espionage and Occult are the most common); this stunt is often written with that field incorporated, e.g., Big Man in Politics. The character is not merely well connected in that community, he is actually a person of great importance within that area; for maximum benefit, this should be paired with an aspect that indicates similar things.

In addition to the narrative benefits of such a position, the character may use his Contacts skill in lieu of the Resources skill for anything which might fall under

the auspices of members in that field. This stunt may be taken multiple times, each time for a different field.

## **TALK THE TALK**

**(Requires Big Man)**

Whenever dealing with members of your chosen field, you put out all the right signals, say all the right things. In such circumstances, you may roll your Rapport at +2, or, alternatively, use your Contacts instead of Rapport, in order to get a favorable reaction.

## **BIG NAME**

**(Requires Big Man)**

You're so well known that an awareness of your name has crossed over into other areas as well. The first time you deal with someone who's heard of you (spending a fate point can assure that they have), and you're using your name, you get a +2 bonus to a Rapport or Provoke roll.

## **BIG REPUTATION**

**(Requires Big Name)**

Your reputation has reached great proportions, and people are willing to believe all sorts of things about you.

For a fate point, you may use your Contacts skill instead of Rapport, Provoke, Deceive, Leadership, or Will, provided those you are dealing with are aware of your reputation (a second fate point will nearly always assure that they do).

This stunt combines with the bonus from Big Name, getting the character a +2 to Contacts when using it instead of Rapport or Provoke.

## **IN THE KNOW**

You've an extensive network that can get you rumors and vital information quickly. By spending a fate point when encountering someone, you're saying that you already know something important about them. Whenever you use Contacts to create a Situation Aspect against them, you gain +2 bonus to the roll.

People are always changing, however, and your information won't be valid forever. The +2 bonus is not permanent. It lasts only for that issue, and you must spend a fate point to have the bonus against them again in a later issue.

## **TAPPING THE NETWORK**

Whenever a conflict is taking place where you've built an extensive network of contacts, you can use Contacts instead of Notice to determine initiative, representing that you received a tip-off about the upcoming problem, and perhaps even some useful data on your opponents.

## **WORD ON THE STREET**

When investigating a crime, news story, or some other plot element, your contacts on the street provide you with some information. Once per issue, make a Contact roll against Fair (+2) Opposition. On a success, you can create one Situation Aspect to represent the clue your contacts gave you. On a Success with Style, you gain an extra free invocation.

This basically allows you to create an element of the story, and the GM has final say on the nature of the aspect. Since you get to create it, that means the GM should work with you if the aspect is too broad, or takes the story into a direction best not covered.

## **CONTROLLING SKILL STUNTS**

### **POWER STUNT EXPERT**

You've trained to use your powers in new and unique ways, and gain a +2 bonus when performing Power Stunts.

### **POWER STUNT MASTERY**

**(Requires Power stunt Expert)**

You're a master and expanding the scope of your powers, and now get a +4 bonus to creating Power Stunts.

## **DECEIVE STUNTS**

### **ACTOR**

Being a competent actor just means knowing how to lie with an entirely new set of skills. You can use Deceive instead of Rapport when trying to charm your way through a situation.

### **IMPERSONATOR**

Deceive can be used to convince people you are someone you aren't, but usually only in a general sense. You can seem to be a cop, an author, et

cetera, but you can't seem to be a specific person without a lot of work (and an elevated difficulty). With this stunt, you can easily imitate the mannerisms and voice of anyone you've had a chance to study, removing another potential cause to have a disguise examined, or perhaps convincing someone who can't see you that you're someone else even though you're undisguised.

Studying someone doesn't require a skill roll, but it does take a half an hour of time. If you wish to do it faster, state how much time you want to take. The number of steps on the Time Increment chart between a half an hour and your new, short time is the opposition you must overcome with a Deceive roll.

## ***MASTER OF DISGUISE***

Your disguises are near perfect. you get a +2 bonus whenever you roll Deceive to prevent someone from seeing through your disguise.

# **EMPATHY STUNTS**

## ***COUNSELOR***

You have some professional training in counseling others, helping them get through their psychosis and other mental issues.

When rolling to reduce Mental Consequences in other people, you gain a +2 to your Empathy roll.

## ***EMOTIONAL TRIGGER***

You know how best to hit someone's emotional triggers. You can use Empathy in place of Provoke when attempting to intimidate or anger someone.

## ***EMPATHIC READ***

When you have a few minutes of observation or interaction with someone, make a roll against Fair (+2) Opposition. On a success, you treat getting a tie as a success when using Empathy to place a Situation Aspect on them. On a success with style, you get an additional free invocation of the Aspect.

## ***LIE DETECTOR***

You gain +2 to all Empathy rolls made to discern or discover lies, whether they're directed at you or someone else.

# **FIGHT STUNTS**

## ***INTO THE FRAY***

You're at your best when facing a group of opponents. Whenever you are outnumbered in a fight (meaning your opponents have a bonus for teamwork against you), you do an extra Shift of damage.

## ***EVERYWHERE AT ONCE***

**(Requires Into the Fray)**

You know how to use a group of opponents against each other. Whenever facing two or more opponents at once, you gain a +2 to Fight.

## ***ONE-MAN ARMY***

**(Requires Everywhere at Once)**

You are a one-man army; the odds don't matter to you. Whenever you are attacked, opponents simply do not get a bonus to their attacks due to an advantage of numbers.

# **INVESTIGATE STUNTS**

## ***ATTENTION TO DETAIL***

You can use Investigate instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive attempts. What others discover through gut reactions and intuition, you learn through careful observation of micro-expressions.

## ***EAVESDROPPER***

On a successful Investigate roll to create an advantage by eavesdropping on a conversation, you can discover or create one additional aspect (though this doesn't give you an extra free invocation).

## ***FOCUSED SENSES***

The character is skilled at concentrating on one of his senses to the exclusion of all others. The sense must be specified at the time this stunt is taken. With a few moments of concentration, the character may enter a focused state. So long as he remains in that state, for as long as the character uses nothing but Investigation, all Investigation actions the character takes that use the specified sense gain a +2 bonus. While in this state, if the character needs to make a non-Investigation roll, the opposition receives a +2 bonus.



This stunt may be taken multiple times, each time for a single sense. If the character has specified multiple senses, his focus may cover all of them at once.

## KNOWLEDGE STUNTS

### ***SPECIALIST***

Choose a field of specialization, such as criminology, quantum physics, or even a fictional super-science such as Temporal Physics or Transdimensional Chemistry. You get a +2 to all Knowledge rolls relating to that field of specialization. This stunt can be taken multiple times, each time applying to a different area of expertise.

### ***DIZZYING INTELLECT***

**(Requires Specialist)**

Your knowledge is so advanced, there's usually no one around who can tell if you're making things up. Whenever your field of specialization skill comes to bear, you may use Knowledge instead of Deceit. If you've taken *Specialist* multiple times, this stunt applies to all covered areas.

### ***KNOW IT ALL***

**(Requires Specialist)**

Your specialized knowledge gives you flashes of insight into all manner of things.

When you use Knowledge to create Situation Aspects related to your area of expertise, you gain an additional free invocation.

### ***MAD SCIENTIST***

**(Requires Specialist)**

Well, you might not be evil, but your knowledge of science allows you to create devices and inventions related to your field of specialization (with the normal +2 from Specialist). When doing so, you use your Knowledge skill instead of Technology.

## LEADERSHIP STUNTS

### ***CENTER OF THE WEB***

Whether or not you lead it, you are like the spider at the center of a web regarding any organization of which

you are a part. Information within the organization flows your way naturally.

Make a Leadership roll against opposition set by the GM. On a success, you gain some specific insight (also determined by the GM) into an important matter, such as an arms deal going down, illegal drug shipment, or movement by one of the various evil organization that populate the campaign. This allows you to react to it and get agents on the scene.

On a success with style, you can automatically create a situation aspect related to the information, and gain a number of free invocation as though you actually succeeded with style on a Create an Advantage action.

### ***LEAD BY EXAMPLE***

When you first take a Mild or Moderate Consequence while in battle alongside your teammates and continue to fight, roll Leadership against Fair (+2) opposition. On a success, your teammates gain +1 to their next single Defend or Attack action, as they're inspired by your "never say die" determination. On a success with style, they get a +1 to their next single Attack and Defend action, and you still place a Boost as normal.

### ***ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDING***

You have access to the resources of the organization of which you're a member. Use the greater of your Leadership or Resources skill when using organization funds to obtain equipment.

### ***BLACK BOOK FUNDING***

**(Requires Organizational Funding)**

Your access to the organization's funds is top level clearance. Your Leadership or Resources skill is treated as +2 steps higher on the ladder when using organization funds to obtain equipment.

### ***TACTICIAN***

Your ability to analyze the enemy and create tactics to confront them is astounding. As long as you have at least one minute to study your opponent, you gain +2 whenever creating situation aspects against them.

### ***MASTER TACTICIAN***

**(Requires Tactician)**

Your tactical ability means you can think on your feet and react to the ever changing situations of the battlefield. You only have to be in a conflict for

one exchange before you gain the +2 to Create an Advantage actions against your enemy.

## NOTICE STUNTS

### *BODY LANGUAGE READER*

You can use Notice in place of Empathy to learn the aspects of a target through observation.

### *SITUATIONAL REFLEXES*

You may spend a fate point to go first in an exchange, regardless of your initiative. If multiple people with this stunt exercise this ability, they go in turn of their normal initiative, before those who don't have the stunt get a chance to act. If the exchange has already started, and you have not yet acted, you may instead spend a fate point to act next, out of the usual turn order.

### *THOUGHT EQUALS ACTION*

The character's senses are so keyed into minute changes that he is able to respond more quickly to new details. The character's Notice skill is +2 for purposes of determining initiative. This stunt breaks ties whenever facing opponents with the same initiative.

## PHYSIQUE STUNTS

### *EXTRAORDINARY DETERMINATION*

The character may spend fate points to keep standing. Any time the character would be taken out by (or otherwise suffer a consequence from) a physical hit he may spend a fate point to remain standing or otherwise defer a consequence or concession for one more exchange, or until he's hit again, whatever comes first. Once the extra time he's bought is up, all effects he has deferred come to bear at once. He may



keep spending fate points in this fashion until he runs out, each time the time limit expires.

This means that with a whole handful of fate points he might go on for three exchanges with no consequences or collapse impeding him, and then suddenly keel over, revealing **Multiple Bruises and a Broken Rib** and a few surplus consequences, which would suggest an immediate taken out result to be determined by his attacker, even if that attacker has been defeated in the intervening time!

## **FACE THE PAIN**

The character is able to lessen the effects of physical injury thanks to his incredible stamina. Once per scene, the character may spend a fate point and remove a check mark from his 1-Stress or 2-Stress box.

## **NOW YOU'VE MADE ME MAD**

(Requires: Face the Pain)

Once per scene, the character may turn a wound he has taken into pure motivation. After the character takes physical stress, spend a fate point and the character gets to add the value of the Stress to an action in the next exchange.

## **TAKE THE BLOW**

You can use Physique to defend against Fight and Weapons skill attacks.

## **TOUGH AS NAILS**

Once per scene, at the cost of a fate point, you can reduce the severity of a moderate consequence that's physical in nature to a mild consequence (if your mild consequence slot is free), or erase a mild consequence altogether.

# **PROVOKE STUNTS**

## **ARMOR OF FEAR**

You can use Provoke to defend against Fight attacks, but only until the first time you're dealt stress in a conflict. You can make your opponents hesitate to attack, but when someone shows them that you're only human your advantage disappears.

## **DOESN'T SHUT-UP**

The character is constantly talking in combat, cracking jokes and insulting his adversaries. When using Provoke to create Situation Aspects on a target to represent your loud mouth finally getting on their nerves and causing them to make mistakes, you get a +2 bonus to the roll.

## **KNOW THE MENTAL TRICKS**

This character is just someone you don't want to cross, and that's clear even to other intimidating folks. Normally, Provoke attempts are resisted by Will; with this stunt, the character can use his Provoke skill to resist Provoke attempts.

## **INTIMIDATING PRESENCE**

When you make it clear how dangerous you are, roll Provoke against your target's Will. If you succeed, that target will not attack you or willingly come near you unless you take action against him first. If you succeed with style, neither will anyone with a lower Will than your target.

## **BROW BEAT!**

You can use Provoke in place of Empathy to learn a target's aspects, by bullying them until they reveal one to you. The target defends against this with Will. (If the GM thinks the aspect is particularly vulnerable to your hostile approach, you get a +2 bonus.)

## **PROVOKE VIOLENCE**

When you create an advantage on an opponent using Provoke, you can use your free invocation to become the target of that character's next relevant action, drawing their attention away from another target.

## **STRANGE CHARM**

Your ability to get a rise out of people has somehow caused you to be liked by people— something that is just plain strange to those who know you. You can use Provoke in place of Rapport.

## **UNAPPROACHABLE**

It's difficult to try to manipulate someone when you're constantly reminded of how scary they are. A character with this stunt may use his Provoke in lieu of their Will to defend against Rapport, Deceive, and Empathy.

## **UNNATURAL AURA**

You can use Provoke to enter the kinds of contests that you'd normally need Physique for, whenever your ability to psych your opponent out with the force of your presence alone would be a factor.

# **RAPPORT STUNTS**

## **BEST FOOT FORWARD**

Twice per session, you may upgrade a boost you receive with Rapport into a full situation aspect with a free invocation.

## **DEMAGOGUE**

You gain a +2 to Rapport when you're delivering an inspiring speech in front of a crowd. (If there are named NPCs or PCs in the scene, you may target them all simultaneously with one roll rather than dividing up your shifts.)

## **MAN OF INDUSTRY**

Gain a +2 bonus to any attempt to overcome obstacles with Rapport when you're at corporate function, such as a trade show, board meeting, or business related negotiation.

## **POPULAR**

If you're in an area where you're popular and well-liked, you can use Rapport in place of Contacts. You may be able to establish your popularity by spending a fate point to declare a story detail, or because of prior justification.

## **SEDUCER**

You're adept at catching the eye of the opposite sex, and keeping it once you've got it. Any seduction attempts you make with Rapport receive a +2 technique bonus provided the target is someone who could be receptive to it (this is not always a simple case of gender and preference).

## **SMOOTH OVER**

You're adept at stepping into a bad situation and dialing it down to something more reasonable. So long as you are not the direct reason someone is upset, your attempts to calm them down using your Rapport receive a +2 bonus.

## **RESOURCES STUNTS**

### **GREASE THE WHEELS**

Rather than go looking for something, one can always just offer a reward. The character may spread some money around and use Resources in lieu of Contacts to attempt to find somebody or something. He doesn't literally need to offer a reward, but it is necessary that he make an obvious display of wealth in some venue or another, preferably waving crisp money in the face of people in the know (or people who know people in the know). The downside of this approach is that it tends to be highly public, at least

within some circles, and anyone interested will know what the character is looking for.

## **LONG TERM INVESTMENT**

You've had your money for a while now, and you've had a chance to make several strategic investments which you can cash in on when pressed for money. Once per session, you may sell one of these investments to get a +2 to any one Resources roll, as if you had spent a fate point to invoke an aspect.

## **MONEY IS NO OBJECT**

(Requires Long Term Investment)

Once per session, when called on to roll Resources, you may spend a fate point and simply act as if you had rolled +4 on the dice. You may do this after the fact on a roll, and further may combine this with the effect from Long Term Investment to easily achieve a result of your Resources +6, which is usually good enough to purchase almost anything.

## **MONEY TALKS**

You can use Resources instead of Rapport in any situation where ostentatious displays of material wealth might aid your cause.

## **SAVVY INVESTOR**

You get an additional free invoke when you create advantages with Resources, provided that they describe a monetary return on an investment you made in a previous session. (In other words, you can't retroactively declare that you did it, but if it happened in the course of play, you get higher returns.)

## **STEALTH STUNTS**

### **FACE IN THE CROWD**

You gain +2 to any Stealth roll to blend into a crowd. What a "crowd" means will depend on the environment—a subway station requires more people to be crowded than a small bar.

## **MASTER OF SHADOWS**

Gain a +2 bonus to create an advantage using Stealth whenever the situation specific has to do with using darkness and shadows.

## **MOVE AS ONE**

Your talent with stealth may be extended to others who are with you close by, provided that you travel as a group. As long as the whole group stays with you and follows your hushed orders, you may make a single Stealth roll for the whole group, using your skill alone. If someone breaks from the group, they immediately lose this benefit, and may risk revealing the rest of you if they don't manage to pull off a little Stealth of their own. You cannot apply the benefits of other stunts to this roll, though you may bring in your own aspects (and possibly tag the aspects of those you are concealing) in order to improve the result.

The maximum number of additional people in the group is equal to your Stealth rating.

## **NINJA VANISH**

Once per scene, you can vanish while in plain sight by spending a fate point, using a smoke pellet or other mysterious technique. This places the **Vanished** boost on you. While you're vanished, no one can attack or create an advantage on you until after they've succeeded at an overcome roll with Notice to determine where you went (basically meaning they have to give up an exchange to try). This goes away as soon as you invoke it, or someone makes that overcome roll.

## **SLIPPERY TARGET**

Provided you're in darkness or shadow, you can use Stealth to defend against Accuracy attacks from enemies that are at least one zone away.

## **STRIKE FROM THE SHADOWS**

You can use Stealth to make physical attacks, provided your target isn't already aware of your presence.

## **TECHNOLOGY STUNTS**

### **MASTER INVENTOR**

You can create almost anything, even when you don't have all the best tools or resources on hand. The quality of your device being above the quality of your work area does not increase your Opposition unless the device's quality is at least +3 steps higher. You still suffer the +3 to the Opposition at that point, but you basically never suffer the +1 or +2 Opposition increase.

## **POWER TECH**

When using device based powers, you can roll your Technology skill in place of the Power skill.

## **THIEF STUNTS**

### **NO LOCKS ARE SAFE**

You understand locks of all types as part of your chosen career path. When attempting to pick a lock, hack a security system, or disarm intruder countermeasures, you gain +2 to the roll.

### **PROFESSIONAL THIEF**

You understand the need to prepare for a heist and case the place out, noting security measures, guard rotations, location of valuables, and so forth. As long as you've spent at least a day casing a place, then when you decide to hit it for the theft, you gain +2 to creating situation aspects related to the heist.

### **MASTER THIEF**

**(Requires Professional Thief)**

In addition to the +2 bonus to placing heist related situation aspects, you also place an additional aspect if you succeed with style.

### **SECURITY EXPERT**

You've run into enough traps that you've developed an instinct for avoiding them. You may roll Thief instead of Notice or Investigate in order to uncover or otherwise avoid stumbling onto a trap.

## **TREATMENT STUNTS**

### **DOCTOR**

When treating a patient's physical consequence, you gain a +2 bonus to your Treatment roll providing you are within a medical facility (such as an infirmary) equal in quality to the consequence being treated.

### **FIELD MEDIC**

Once per conflict, you can treat someone's Stress in the middle of a battle, given a little bit of time (typically a few rounds). Make a roll against the total value of the Stress boxes you wish to heal. If successful, those boxes clear. On a success with style, you place a boost on your patient representing their renewed vigor.

*Example: A fellow hero has their 1-Stress, 2-Stress, and 4-Stress boxes filled in. You decide to heal the 2-Stress and 4-Stress boxes. The Treatment roll is made against Fantastic (+6) Opposition.*

## VEHICLES STUNTS

### **HARD TO SHAKE**

You get +2 to Vehicles whenever you're pursuing another vehicle in a chase scene.

### **PEDAL TO THE METAL**

You can coax more speed out of your vehicle than seems possible. Whenever you're engaged in any contest where speed is the primary factor (such as a chase or race of some kind) and you tie with your Vehicles roll, it's considered a success.

## WEAPONS STUNTS

### **RIPOSTE**

Whenever you are physically attacked by an opponent at melee distance, and you successfully defend yourself using Weapons, you immediately inflict 1-Stress on your opponent (in addition to any normal benefits, such as a Boost, from the Defend action).

### **TURNABOUT**

**(Requires Riposte)**

You have a singular ability to turn an opponent's action into an advantage for yourself.

Whenever you succeed with style on a Defend action using Weapons, you immediately deal the Shifts from your roll as damage to your opponent (in addition to any normal benefits, such as a boost, from the Defend action).

### **WEAPON BLUR**

Your weapon is a blur of movement, confusing your opponent. You may use Weapons instead of Deceive when performing a feint.

## WILL STUNTS

### **INDOMITABLE**

You gain +2 to defend against Provoke attacks specifically related to intimidation and fear.

### **IRON WILL**

You can choose to ignore a mild or moderate consequence for the duration of the scene. It can't be compelled against you or invoked by your enemies. At the end of the scene it comes back worse, though; if it was a mild consequence it becomes a moderate consequence, and if it was already moderate, it becomes severe.

### **STRENGTH FROM DETERMINATION**

Use Will instead of Physique on any overcome rolls representing feats of strength.

## SPECIAL STUNTS

The following stunts are either agnostic of any particular skill, or can be assigned to several types of skills. In the case of the latter, the stunt must be taken separately for each skill it applies to.

### **ARSENAL**

You begin the game with a small arsenal to wage your war on crime. You begin play with Kevlar armor and four types of guns or melee weapons. Unlike weapons or armor purchased as part of a power set (see: **Devices and Gear**), each of these has a gear based Complication that the GM can compel. When compelled, the weapon or armor is lost until the beginning of the next issue. Note that this is not the same as placing a **Disarmed** aspect on someone, which is covered in the Comic Book Action chapter.

### **BACKUP WEAPON**

Whenever someone's about to hit you with a **Disarmed** situation aspect or something similar, spend a fate point to declare you have a backup weapon. Instead of a situation aspect, your opponent gets a boost, representing the momentary distraction you suffer for having to switch.

## **CRIMEFIGHTING VEHICLE**

You have a specially designed ground or air vehicle to assist in fighting for justice. Choose one type of vehicle and add 5-points worth of Device Special Effects to it. Each time this stunt is taken, you can choose another vehicle, or add an additional 5-points to an existing vehicle.

## **DEFENSIVE FIGHTER**

You're adept at fighting defensively. Once per conflict you gain +2 to a Defend action as though you assumed a Full Defense, but can still make an attack.

## **DEFENSIVE PENETRATION**

You're trained in getting through an opponent's defenses. Once per conflict whenever someone uses a Full Defense against you, they do not receive the +2 bonus.

## **KILLING STROKE**

Once per issue, when you force an opponent to take a consequence, you can spend a fate point to increase the consequence's severity (so mild becomes moderate, moderate becomes severe). If your opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, he must either take a severe consequence and a second consequence or be taken out.

## **PERSONAL HEADQUARTERS**

You have a headquarters or lair of some sort. Each time this stunt is taken, you receive 5 Headquarter Points with which to build your base of operations.

## **WORK AREA**

Instead of a full headquarters, you only have a work area for inventing or research, and the type must be defined when this stunt is taken: Infirmary, Laboratory, Library, Workshop (Mystic or Technology). Each time this stunt is taken, your designated work area gains +1 quality rating, beginning at Average (+1).

The quality of your work area cannot be higher than your Resources skill, unless you make one of your character aspects represent the organization, person, or some type of benefactor that built it for you.

# **ASPECT STUNTS**

Aspect stunts are a special type of stunt that are tied to one of your character aspects. You may only have one aspect stunt.

Aspect stunts follow the normal stunt creation rules, except that they offer the equivalent of a 3-Shift benefit. Aspect stunts should also be limited use (such as once per conflict, scene, or issue), and should always cost a fate point to use. Below are a few examples of how to use Aspect stunts in your series.

Because **I am the Strongest One On Earth**, once per conflict I can spend a fate point in combat against any opponent who has hurt me or challenged my strength. My next successful hit against them does an extra 3-shifts of damage.

If the stunt seems a bit more powerful, consider adding additional restrictions to it, such as the one in the below example on what happens when an extra suit of Power-Armor Concedes a conflict.

Because **I am a Billionaire Technological Genius**, once per issue I can spend a fate point to switch out my current Power-Armor power set for a new version, but the total cost of the power set cannot change. The new version lasts until the end of the current issue, or until Taken Out. Conceding in a conflict with the secondary armor means it is Taken Out and cannot be used again.

Because **This is My City**, I have hidden safe houses scattered throughout it. Once per issue, I can spend a fate point to have a nearby safe house to duck into worth 5 Headquarter Points. The safe house lasts until the end of the issue.

# CHAPTER 9: POWERS

Powers are what separate the heroes from the everyday people. Some can move at super-human speeds or soar through the skies. Others can pass through solid objects as if they were vapor. Some have claws that pop from their hands, or energy beams that fire from their eyes.

Before getting into the meat of the powers we've already built for you, let's take a look at how powers function and how to purchase those included in the book.

## UNDERSTANDING POWERS

All powers in Daring Comics follow a basic format. The power is either activated by the Controlling skill (Magic, Mental, or Power), or uses a skill such as Fight, Accuracy, or Athletics.

Each power entry also lists its effects in play, and sometimes offers special effects or limits specifically designed for that power that can be purchased to further customize it.

## POWER LEVELS

Some powers come in variable power levels, representing the vertical potency we see in comic books. Powers such as Melee Attack, Blast, and Invulnerability can have different power levels when purchased, whereas powers like Air Control, Mind Control, and Chameleon only have a single power level and rely more strongly upon the controlling skill roll for success.

## SKILLS AND POWERS

There are a wide range of powers, and how they operate alongside the skills will vary. Some powers require one of the controlling skills to function at all. The character need not have the skill in the skill column; it just defaults to Mediocre (+0) as normal. Spending points in the power is enough to possess it, though such a character obviously has no solid training in it yet.

Other powers will enhance or use a normal skill you're likely to already have in the column. Blast uses the Accuracy skill to function, while Melee Attack uses Fight. Chameleon not only uses the Deceive skill, but provides a bonus to it as well.

Each power entry lists the relevant skill at the top, beneath the name, and further explains any special uses within the power's description.

## POWER ROLLS AND SHIFTS

Unlike rolls for normal skill rolls and actions in Daring Comics (see Chapter 11: Actions and Outcomes), the specific number of Shifts rolled when using a power sometimes play an important part in how that power functions. Pay attention to the power's description to determine whether or not the number of Shifts achieved on a roll have a specific mechanical function beyond the basic tie, success, or success with style outcomes.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS AND LIMITS

While each power has a base effect (or few effects) that it can do, special effects are enhancements you can purchase to expand the scope of your power. At its most basic, a Blast power simply does its Weapon Rating in damage. But apply the Demolishing or Concussive special effects, and you've just changed the scope and capabilities of your attack.

Special effects do not always have to be used. You can choose whether or not they are currently active each time you use the power.

Special effects add to the cost of the power. If the power has variable levels, the special effect is added to the total cost of the power, not the per-level cost.

Likewise, limits restrict your power in some ways. Perhaps it can't be used against a common element, or each use causes damage to the character. Limits reduce the cost of a power. Like with special effects, it reduces the total cost of the power, not the cost per-level. A power's cost can never drop below 1-point.

## THE POWER SET

Each power you purchase is going to be placed into a power set, which represents a grouping of powers that function under a single theme or source.

Let's look at an example. A character that can turn into flame might have a power set called: **Human Flame**. Within that power set, he'd likely have: Flame Aura, Flame Control, Flame Blast, Flight, plus any appropriate special effects and limits.



Any powers that were not part of his Human Flame ability would be placed into a different power set.

Stunts can also be placed into power sets if they represent something specific about a power in the set, or the set as a whole. For example, a street vigilante highly trained in Martial Arts might have a series of stunts related to fighting under a single power set called: **Extreme Martial Training**. Likewise, if he was also a master detective, he might have a series of stunts related to finding clues, analyzing evidence, and drawing deductions under a power set called: **Master Detective**.

In another example, a speedster might add the Accuracy stunt: **Any Object is a Bullet**, to his super-speed power set to represent being able to throw any small object at a high velocity.

Whether or not normal stunts are applied to a power set is really a matter of the narrative you're going for, and in many cases will come down to a character concept choice of placing the stunts directly under normal skills, or making them effects of a power set. If the stunts speak about the core of the character, especially if they are also represented by the character's Concept aspect, then placing them into a power set should be a definite consideration. Especially since each power set also gets an aspect of its own.

## THE POWER SET ASPECT

Each power set on your character sheet should have an aspect that represents something about it. It can be a descriptive phrase such as **Hot as the Core of the Sun**, or one that says something about your character's use of the powers, such as: **No Stone Unturned** for a power set comprised of stunts to aid in criminal investigations.

The power set aspect serves a couple of purposes in play.

1) Once per scene, the power set aspect can be invoked at no cost to allow a reroll for any action using a power in that set. You cannot take the +2 option for this free invocation, only a reroll of the dice.

2) The power set aspect can be invoked normally by spending a fate point on any action where it would make sense, even if the action isn't actually using the power set.

You could invoke the aspect for a direct use of the power, such as invoking it when attacking with the power set's blast power, thereby gaining the +2 bonus

or reroll to the action just as you would for any aspect on your sheet.

Likewise, if you had Claws, you could spend a fate point and invoke the power set aspect on an Athletics based Defend action against a projectile attack. Not only would you gain the normal +2 to the roll (or a reroll), but you would also be saying that your claws are a direct part of your Defend action. What that means is you get to narrate how you're using the claws and your athletic ability to cut the projectiles out of the air.

3) The power set aspect can be compelled the same as any other aspect, which is another avenue to earning fate points.

## POWER ORIGINS

*Some powers affect an entire power source, such as technological, magic, mutant, and so forth. Although in some cases, such as a spell caster or a power-armored hero, the source of the character's powers are obvious, in other cases a little explanation might be necessary. Ideally, a power set's source should be worked into the Power Set aspect. If that doesn't work out, however, that's fine. Simply make a note somewhere on the character sheet next to the power set as to what type of power source fuels it.*

## POWER STUNTS

Power stunts are a staple of comic books. A hero or villain pushes their ability to use the power in a new and unique way. In game terms, power stunts are basically using a different power or special effect as an off-shoot of a power you already possess, when using that effect makes narrative sense. Naturally, the GM has final approval on any uses of power stunts.

To perform a power stunt, declare what the effect is that you are going for, what power you are using, and what different power or special effect best represents that effect. If the GM approves it, you then **must spend a fate point** to even make the attempt. Next, you roll the appropriate skill in an Overcome action against a Fair (+2) opposition. If the power stunt uses more than one power or special effect to achieve its goal, the opposition is increased +1 for each additional power or special effect. For each Shift generated on the roll, you get to use the power stunt for one round.



#### Example #1:

*Foxtrot is taking on a room full of Typhon soldiers and wants to use his energy blast to create an area wide daze. Although he could go for just the Area Effect special effect and use the Create an Advantage action to make the Dazed situation aspect like normal, he really wants to set these guys up to go down. He decides to apply both the Advantageous (Daze) and Area Effect special effects as the power stunt.*

The GM approves it, so Foxtrot spends a fate point and rolls against Good (+3) opposition (the opposition received a +1 since the player is trying to generate two effects with the stunt: Advantageous (Daze) and Area Effect). He generates 2-Shifts, so he gains the power stunt for two rounds before he would have to spend a fate point to attempt it again.

#### Example #2:

*Cryoborg wants to fire his Ice Blast at the floor beneath the feet of some criminals to make it slippery. The player and GM determine that would constitute a use of the Friction Control power.*

*Cryoborg spends a fate point and rolls against Fair (+2) Opposition. He gets 1-Shift, so only gets to use Friction Control for one round before he'll have to attempt the power stunt all over again.*

The power stunt *can* succeed at a cost, which means something will go wrong and you only get one use (or one round) of the power stunt.

Aspects can be invoked as normal to assist with the roll.

Performing a power stunt counts as a free action, so the player can both get the stunt and use it in the same round. Any rolls the new power requires to use, however, counts as a normal action. So, if a character received an Energy Blast as a power stunt, the roll to perform the power stunt was free, but the roll to actually use the Energy Blast is his normal action.

Sometimes, a power doesn't use a controlling skill, or the effect isn't directly related to a specific power. In that case, the player and GM only need to work out the details, but the mechanics work exactly the same.

#### Example #1:

*Mach-1 has Super-Speed, and wants to use his power to vibrate his molecules enough to pass through a solid wall. The GM decides*

that would be similar to the Intangible power, so allows it. Super-Speed doesn't use a controlling skill, however— it typically applies to Athletics. The GM figures that vibrating his molecules is still the ability to control his body's movements, so decides that Athletics will also apply to the power stunt.

The player spends a fate point and rolls Athletics against Fair (+2) opposition. Unfortunately, he only ties with the opposition and is out of fate points to invoke any aspects. He asks the GM if he can succeed at a minor cost, which the GM approves. He tells the player that Mach-1 takes a little extra time to pass through the wall, so he'll lose his next action.

Example #2:

Phalanx has Flight 4 and wants to create a whirlwind to blow some villains around, basically preventing them from attacking anyone this round. The GM decides that it makes sense and is something that's been done in comics. He rules that it'll be a form of grapple, and that not only will the Shifts on the roll determine how long he can do it before he has to spend a second fate point to try the Stunt again, but that his Shifts will also serve as the passive opposition for any of the criminals to get beyond the boundaries of his vortex. He also decides that, like with Mach-1 and Super-Speed, it'll use the Athletics skill.

The player spends the fate point and rolls Athletics against Fair (+2) opposition and gets 3-Shifts. Not only can he use the whirlwind effect for three rounds, but any attempts to escape it faces Good (+3) passive opposition

If the power stunt would involve gaining access to a power with multiple power levels, the power stunt has an effective Power Level 1. Shifts generated on the roll can be divided between increasing the power level and the base number of rounds it can be used. When doing so, however, at least 1-Shift must be put into the single round of time.

Foxtrot is about to be hit by a nasty energy blast. He narrates how he's quickly recalibrating the energy flow from his Energy Blast to have his gauntlets create a low-yield forcefield to (hopefully) stop the attack.

The GM agrees, and the player goes for the attempt. He gets 3-Shifts on the roll. Since

Forcefield automatically starts with a Power Level 1, and he only expects to use it for one round, he decides to put 2-Shifts into the power level, raising it to Forcefield 3. The final 1-Shift he had to keep aside for the one round of use.

Finally, if applicable, extra Shifts generated on the roll can be used as a bonus to using the actual power, or as a bonus to the opposition for anyone resisting it, instead of allowing for extra rounds of usage. This is entirely up to the player, as long as 1-Shift is kept put aside for the one round of use.

When creating the whirlwind and getting 3-Shifts on the roll, Phalanx could have decided to use it for only one round, and use the remaining 2-Shifts to increase the opposition to get out of the vortex from Good (+3) to Superb (+5).

## **STACKING DAMAGE AND DAMAGE MITIGATION**

When using powers, regardless of source, which offer their own Weapon Rating or Armor Rating, the ratings do not stack. Take the highest rating and use that.

Example #1

Adamantia has Super-Strength 4, and picks up a sword with Weapon Rating 2 and the Potent improvement. Since her Super-Strength also gives her Weapon Rating 4, she uses that instead of the sword's Weapon Rating. She can, however, still use the Potent improvement that the sword offers.

Example #2

Phalanx has Invulnerability 6 and is disguised as one of Typhon's soldiers, which means he is wearing armor with an Armor 3 rating. Although Phalanx gets any Deceive benefits from the disguise, he'll use Invulnerability 6 to mitigate any damage. That armor does nothing for him in that regard.

The GM might rule that the armor is damaged if the absorbed Hits are more than its own Armor 3 rating, but that is more of a narrative judgement call as opposed to creating hardwired rules for such things that may not benefit the style of every group. Such damage might even lower the bonus granted to any future Deceive rolls, or the GM might place a suitable situation aspect on Phalanx representing the damaged armor

that can be invoked, compelled, and might be removed with a successful Technology skill roll to repair it.

## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DAMAGE

Most attacks will track damage along the target's normal stress track. Mental and mystical assaults, such as Mental Blast, a Psychic Blade (Melee Attack), Eldritch Bolt or Blade, and so forth, normally track along the Mental Stress track. There's nothing that says your Mental Blast can't cause actual, physical damage to the target's body, though. It's just a matter of flavor, and taking your power to affect one stress track or the other is not an increase in cost. Just make a note which track it affects when you take the power.

## PURCHASING POWERS

To purchase a power, look at the cost next to the name of the power. It will either be a flat cost, such as **(2)**, meaning it costs two points to have the power; or it will have a variable cost, such **(1-6)**, meaning that it costs 1-point per power level, and has a limit of six power levels for a total of 6-points.

Next, decide what, if any, special effects that you want for the power. The cost of each special effect is added to the total cost of the power, not per power level, if the power has variable levels.

Then decide what, if any, Limits the power would have. Each Limit reduces the total cost of the power by 1-point, to a minimum cost of 1-point.

*Dylan decides he wants the Invulnerability power at level 4, giving him a cost of 4-points. From there, he decides to add on the Highly Impervious special effect for 2-points, giving the power a 6-point cost. Finally, he decides that although the character is pretty tough, each time he is hit by something that can actually damage him (meaning Weapon Rating 5 or higher), he loses one level of Invulnerability until he can rest and recover it. He applies that as Limit for a -1 cost reduction.*

*Since losing Invulnerability levels also means he's losing access to the Highly Impervious special effect, Dylan and the GM decide to apply an additional -1 cost to the power.*

*His final cost for the power is 4-points.*

## POWERS LIST

In the pages ahead, you'll find a robust list of powers we've already made for you—over 100 powers, and nearly as many special effects and limits to customize your powers with. Simply purchase the powers and any special effects or limits, spend your points, and start playing.

At the end of the powers section, we also provide you with guidelines on how to create your own unique powers, special effects, and limitations.

Each power is broken down into the following format:

- Name (Cost, either flat or per power level)
- Relevant Skills
- Description of core effects
- Unique Special Effects
- Unique Limits

### UNDER THE HOOD: POWER ACTIVATION AND OVERCOME ACTIONS

*Many power descriptions call for an Overcome action to activate the effect, also noted as a skill roll, a roll against passive opposition, and so forth so we didn't bore you by repeating the same phrase over and over again between powers. The opposition for such rolls, unless it had to be assigned by design, is left open to the GM. Typically, it should be a Mediocre (+0) opposition, but it's also important that the GM be able to assign an opposition that factors in all of the relevant situations in a scene, even before any aspects might be invoked to further increase the difficulty.*

*As with any Overcome action, unless specifically stated otherwise, the rolls can succeed at a minor or major cost, and a success with style also grants a Boost in addition to whatever other benefits the power might grant.*

## **ABSORPTION (2,4,6)**

**Skills:** None

The character can absorb either energy or physical (kinetic) damage from attacks, which is chosen when this power is taken.

For each level in Absorption, 2-hits worth of damage are negated from incoming attacks of the chosen type. Additionally, for each 2-Hits absorbed (round up), the character gains a +1 to Attack and Overcome actions on his next turn when using the absorbed energy in some way. Energy that is not used dissipates after the character's next turn.

Absorption can be purchased up to Power Level 3, for 6-hits of negation and +3 to Attack and Overcome actions.

### **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Absorption Healing (2):** You can use the Hits of absorbed energy to immediately heal an equal number of stress boxes or an equal severity consequence. If you have both Stress and Consequence, you must heal the Stress first.

**Accumulate Energy (2):** Instead of having to use the absorbed energy or losing it, the character can accumulate and store it for a number of extra turns equal to his Power Level. Each turn the energy is accumulated adds an additional +1 to his Attack and Overcome actions. So, a character with Absorption 3, for example, could store the energy for three additional turns, and unleash it at a whopping +6 to his Attack or Overcome action.

**Energy Sponge (1):** The character can make an Overcome action to absorb ambient energy of his chosen type from the environment (if it exists). Treat this as a normal Overcome action, so it can succeed at a cost. If successful, the character absorbs his power's normal absorption rating. On a success with style, he creates a Boost as normal.

**Power Boost (3):** The character can use the absorbed energy to increase the Power Levels of another power, even one he does not normally possess (in essence, using the absorbed energy to *activate* the power). The exact power that can be boosted must be chosen when this special effect is taken, and multiple applications of this special effect apply to different powers.

Instead of gaining a bonus to Attack and Overcome actions, the character can use the energy to gain

a number of Power Levels in the power, up to the number of Hits he absorbed.

So, a character with Absorption 3 that absorbs 6-Hits worth of damage, can forego the +3 bonus he would have received to instead get 6-points to boost a power with. Naturally, a power gained in this way cannot have more Power Levels than it would normally be able to possess. Special Effects can be applied to the power by splitting the bonus between Power Levels and Special Effect's cost.

If an existing power is increased through Power Boost, the power still cannot exceed the normal Power Level cap for the power. Likewise, the bonus from Absorption can be used to apply Special Effects to an already existing power.

(Yes, this special effect also means that the energy can be directed into the Blast power, thereby gaining a Weapon Rating instead of a bonus to the attack roll.)

The transferred power lasts for a number of rounds equal to Absorption's Power Level, or until the power is emitted from the character, such as with a blast.

*Vanguardian uses his energy shield to absorb an incoming energy attack. He absorbs 5-Hits, and gets a +3 to his Attack and Overcome actions.*

*Since he has Power Boost (Energy Blast) he decides to pump the 5-points into a blast. He makes it Weapon 3 rating, and places two points into the Area Effect and Set-Up special effects.*

### **LIMITS**

**Living Bomb (-1):** The same as Self Damaging, except the exploding energy damages the character and everyone within the same zone.

**Requires Block (-1):** The ability to absorb the attack requires you to successfully Defend against the attack. This might be because your power is contained with a shield, sword, or some other type of object that must be positioned between you and the attacker.

Roll Defend as normal. If you fail, you take the full damage and absorb none of it. If you succeed, you absorb the Weapon Rating of the attack (or the Absorption limit, whichever is lower). You get the normal Boost against your opponent for a success with style.

*Vanguardian must absorb an incoming energy blast using his shield. The attacker rolls a total of Fair (+2) on the attack roll, and Vanguardian*

rolls a Superb (+5), for a success with style. He has Absorption 6, and the attacker had Energy Blast 3. Vanguardian absorbs the Weapon 3 rating of the attack, plus gets to place a Boost on his opponent.

If Vanguardian had failed the Defend action, he would have taken the full damage.

**Self-Damaging (-1):** Instead of simply dissipating, the energy explodes within the character if not used, causing Stress equal to the amount of energy absorbed. Because the damage comes from inside the character, Invulnerability does not negate the damage.

**Specific Energy (-1):** You can only absorb a specific type of energy, such as fire, ice, radiation, and so forth, chosen when this limit is taken.

## BOOSTING POWERS

If the hero can boost more than one power through multiple applications of the Power Boost special effect, then in a single round he can only either place the absorbed bonus into a single power or split it between the powers he wishes to temporarily increase.

## ADAPTATION (2)

**Skills:** None

The hero is able to adapt to hostile environments. Some examples include allowing him to grow gills in water, change his lungs to breathe a poisonous atmosphere, or even gain immunity to fire and heat if in a volcanic environment.

After one minute in the environment, the hero gains a temporary aspect representing the appropriate situational immunities.

After the hero leaves the environment, the changes revert to normal (he loses the aspect) within a few minutes.

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Rapid Adaptation (1):** Your body adapts faster to hostile environments. Each time this applied to the power, your time to adapt is reduced -1 step on the Time Increment table.

## ADOPTIVE MUSCLE MEMORY (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You're able to mimic the movement— such as fighting ability, acrobatics, and so forth— of people you've observed.

To use the power, you must first observe the target in action (such as in combat) for at least a full minute. Then, make an Overcome action. The hero gains one temporary aspect for each Shift generated on the roll, and gets one free invocation (in total, not per aspect). To gain additional free invocations, Shifts can be used to gain additional invocations instead of new aspects.

If you are watching a group of people, your attention is not as focused and your opposition to mimic them increases by +1 per each additional person.

The aspects last until the end of the scene

*Night Sentinel is watching a battle between Sure-Shot and the villain Carrionette that is going badly for the hero. He spends a minute watching Sure-Shot jump and flip, and use nearby small objects as highly accurate projectiles.*

*After the minute, Night Sentinel rolls against the GM determined opposition and gains 4-Shifts. He decides to create two temporary aspects called **Olympic Level Gymnast** and **Any Object is a Weapon**, representing what he's seen Sure-Shot do. He gets one free invocation for free, so applies the remaining 2-Shifts to two additional free invocations, for three in total.*

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Advanced Muscle Memory (1):** You can view and mimic your target faster. Each time this applied to the power, your required time to view the target is reduced -1 step on the Time Increment table.

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## ADRENALINE SURGE (1)

**Skills:** Will

The hero gains a boost to a particular skill, chosen when this power is taken, once a specific trigger is activated, such as being angered, frightened, stressful, and so forth.

To activate the trigger, the hero must take a Create an Advantage action using Will. Success or better means an aspect is placed on the hero representing the trigger (with normal free invocations). To eliminate the trigger (such as calming the hero down if **Angered** was the trigger), those attempting to do so must make an appropriate roll against opposition equal to the Shifts the hero achieved when activating the trigger.

The aspect, meanwhile, can be invoked and compelled normally.

Once the trigger is activated, the hero gains a cumulative +1 to the chosen skill each subsequent round, up to a maximum +4 increase.

Once the triggering condition is eliminated, the character immediately takes Stress equal to the total increase he received, and the skill loses -1 per round until it returns to normal.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Additional Skill (1):** For each extra point of cost, the character has an additional skill increased by the activation of the trigger.

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## AFFLICTION (7)

Skills: Magic, Mental, or Power

Your character can infect others with disease or poison. To infect the target, make a skill roll opposed by the target's Physique (or Will for a unique type of mystic or psychic disease). Each Shift generated counts as the attack skill for your disease. If you tie, your disease has Mediocre (+0) skill.

Once infected, the target gains a temporary aspect related to the type of illness. As long as the aspect remains, they're attacked by the disease on the following exchange. Since this is an internal attack, Invulnerability does not negate damage from the disease, but Immunity and Regeneration do work normally. Damage from the disease causes Consequences, not Stress.

Each day after the initial attack, the disease attacks the target again, and will continue to do so until it is defeated. If the victim is Taken Out or concedes, he is dead.

If the disease fails the attack roll, the character takes no damage that day. Once the disease fails two attacks **in a row**, the character's immune system has beaten it and he is no longer infected.

The disease can be cured through the application of the Treatment skill or the Healing power by rolling against opposition equal to the Attack skill rating of disease to remove the aspect. Consequences gained from the disease must be healed separately.

## AIR CONTROL (2)

Skills: Magic, Mental, or Power

Your character can control air and winds. You gain +2 to the roll when creating situation aspects using your power.

You can create zone barriers made of air by making an Overcome action. This represents intense winds that prevent others from passing through. To get through, they must make an Overcome action (typically Physique with any Super-Strength related bonuses) against opposition equal to the number of Shifts you generated.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Ultimate Control (1):** If you create a situation aspect against a specific target then, for each free invoke you choose to sacrifice, you may instead cause the target 1-Stress as you use your winds to pound into them with near physical force, or even move the air out of their lungs to asphyxiate them. Invulnerability or Immunity (such as suffocation) negates the damage as normal. The Special Effect can only be used once per scene.

## SUMMONING AND SUCCEEDING AT A COST

*If the summoning based powers (**Animal Control, Animate, Duplication, Summon, and Summon Swarm**) succeeded at a cost, it means the hero gained 1-Shift on the roll, and should suffer some sort of setback from the strain. For example, succeeding at a minor cost might cause 2-Stress, while succeeding at a major cost might cause a Mild Consequence.*

## ANIMAL CONTROL (4)

Skills: Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can control nearby animals (usually no more than one zone away) by making an Overcome action. Taking control of animals further away causes a +1 to the opposition per additional zone.

If successful, the Shifts gained on the roll are used to control one or more ranks of animal allies, with a single member of each rank costing an equal number of Shifts. For example, if the hero gained 4-Shifts on the roll, he could choose to summon four Rank 1 animals, two Rank 2 animals, one Rank 3 and one Rank 1 animal, or any other combination.

The animals cannot act until the round after they are summoned. All animals operate as Nameless NPCs.

**Rank 1:** The animals are Average quality. They have one or two Aspects, one or two Average (+1) skills, and no stress boxes— a one shift hit is enough to take them out.

**Rank 2:** The animals are Fair quality. Give them one or two Aspects, one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and one stress box each— a two shift hit is enough to take one of them out.

**Rank 3:** The animals are Good quality, with one or two Aspects, one Good (+3), one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and two stress boxes each— a three shift hit is enough to take one of them out.

The animals automatically have any powers they would normally possess as a species (so, a bird would have Flight and maybe Claws for a talon attack). They are controlled by the player, act on the character's initiative beginning the round after control is gained, and the control lasts until Taken Out or the end of the scene. Controlling them longer than a single scene without making an additional skill roll requires spending one fate point per additional scene.

## SPECIAL EFFECT

**Ready to Rumble (1):** The animals act as soon as they are summoned.

**Swarm: (2):** The hero can choose to summon a swarm of small animals or insects, such as Wasps, Rats, and so forth. Multiply the number of Shifts gained on the roll by five to determine the number of animals in the swarm. So, gaining 3-Shifts on the roll summons a swarm of 15 creatures. Divide the swarm into groups of 5 (if possible) for the purpose of actions, and treat them as a mob. The summoned swarm is Rank 1 and cannot be increased.

## ANIMAL MIMICRY (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can mimic the abilities of one animal at a time, up to one zone away, by making an Overcome action.

Add +1 to the opposition for each additional zone between the animal and the character.

You gain one temporary aspect for each Shift generated on the roll, and get one free invocation (in total, not per aspect). To gain additional free invocations, Shifts can be used to acquire additional free invocations instead of gaining additional aspects.

The aspects last until the end of the scene, and should represent something from the particular animal, such as *fly like a bird*, *strike with sharp talons*, *eyes of an aerial hunter*, *strength of an elephant*, or *speed of a horse*.

The aspects are assumed to carry the appropriate narrative context along with them, such as using *fly like a bird* to fly through the air, or *eyes of an aerial hunter* to pick out small details at a distance.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Menagerie (1):** The character can mimic the traits of more than one animal at a time, but each additional animal imposes a cumulative +1 to the opposition.

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## ANIMATE (5)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can cause normally inanimate objects to spring to life and do your bidding, whether drawn images, furniture, plants, or some other inanimate form. The exact type of animation must be chosen when the power is purchased.

To animate the creatures, make an Overcome action. If successful, the Shifts gained on the roll are used to create one or more ranks of animated allies, with a single member of each rank costing an equal number of Shifts. For example, if the hero gained 5-Shifts on the roll, he could choose to summon five Rank 1 animations, two Rank 2 and one Rank 1 animations, one Rank 3 and one Rank 2 animation, or any other combination.

The animated objects cannot act until the round after they are summoned. All minions operate as Nameless NPCs.

**Rank 1:** The animations are Average quality. They have one or two Aspects, one or two Average (+1) skills, and no stress boxes— a one shift hit is enough to take them out.



**Rank 2:** Your animated objects are Fair quality. Give them one or two or Aspects, one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and one stress box each— a two shift hit is enough to take one of them out.

**Rank 3:** The animations are Good quality minions. They have one or two Aspects, one Good (+3), one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and two stress boxes each— a three shift hit is enough to take one of them out.

All animations of the same type of object must possess the same Aspects and skills between them, and all of them act on the controlling character's initiative.

The animated objects remain until destroyed or the end of the scene, whichever happens first. To extend their use beyond a single scene, the character must spend one fate point per extra scene.

**Animated objects and super-powers:** Animated objects typically possess any powers that a normal, living counterpart would possess (if there is a counterpart). For example, an animated drawing of a bird would possess Flight 1 and maybe Melee Attack (talons) 1.

Things get a little trickier when animating machines or heavy objects. If the animated object would have damage resistance, give it Invulnerability based on its Material Strength. This is not a hard rule, but is simply a guideline for narrative context.

Material Strength	Invulnerability Power level
Wood, Aluminum	1
Brick	2
Concrete	2
Stone	2
Reinforced Concrete	3
Iron	3
Steel	4
Reinforced Steel	4
Super-Alloys	5
Diamond	6

**Special, Animate Dead:** Animating the dead uses the same rules as per any other type of animation with the following addition: when animating the corpses of dead super-beings, the minions possess the powers they had in life. Whether or not they are able to use any mental powers (such as Telepathy, Mind Control, and so forth) depends on the context of the campaign and whether or not such living dead retain enough brain function.

To animate a corpse as a Named NPC, with the full Aspects, Skills, and Powers it possessed in life, the character must make an Overcome action against a Great (+4) opposition. Doing so requires great concentration and power, and only one such corpse can be under the character's control at a time.

Although the character still controls the corpse, it acts on its own initiative and begins with zero fate points.

Animating such beings is not to be taken lightly. If the GM feels the animated dead would seek freedom, the GM can spend a fate point to allow the corpse a chance to break free. Treat this as a Contest, with the two locked in a test of the corpse's Will versus the controlling power. If the animated corpse wins, the Named NPC is no longer under the character's control. This means that depending on the context of the Series, the corpse might actually become a full Undead, exist on its own beyond the single scene, and require a separate storyline to find a way to destroy it.

### SPECIAL EFFECT

**Ready to Rumble (1):** The animated objects act as soon as they are summoned.

### ARMORY SUMMONING (4)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can summon unique weapons or armor out of thin air by making a skill roll. Each Shift generated on the roll is used to decide the Weapon or Armor Rating and pay for any special effects for the power. Applying Limits to the weapon or armor refunds points, as normal.

*Barrage has the ability to summon various types of guns out of thin air. She makes a roll and gets 4-Shifts, creating a rifle. She decides to give it the Dangerous special effect, which normally costs two points. That gives her rifle a Weapon Rating 2, but once per scene she can spend a fate point to cause the target to take a Moderate Consequence instead of stress.*



*Later, she rolls to summon some armor. This time she spends a fate point to invoke an appropriate aspect, and gets 5-Shifts. She decides to summon a suit with Armor 3 rating, and uses the remaining 2-Shifts to apply both the Durable and Low Impervious special effects.*

The weapon or armor remains until you dismiss it or you are Taken Out. You can allow other characters to use it, but you cannot summon a new piece until you dismiss the current one.

To summon more than one type of weapon or armor at a time, you must purchase the power multiple times or divide your Shifts.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Dual Weapons (1):** You can summon a pair of single-handed weapons, such as two knives, two short swords, or two pistols. Dual wielding grants you +1 to the Attack action or Create an Advantage action when having two weapons would apply to the situation aspect.

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## **ASTRAL PROJECTION (1)**

**Skills:** None

The hero can separate his astral form from his body, leaving behind an unconscious shell. The astral form can pass through hostile physical environments and barriers as if they did not exist, and cannot be harmed by physical entities (except with powers

derived from a mental or mystical power source), but also cannot affect the physical world. The hero can, however, be attacked and harmed normally by other astral and spiritual entities. Damage taken when in astral form carries over to the physical body, but always affects the mental stress track.

Astral heroes can make themselves visible and communicate to a corporeal hero at will. Otherwise, corporeal heroes trying to sense an astral form must make an Overcome action, providing they have a sensory power that would allow them to do so.

When the astral form is separated from the body, the body can still be attacked and harmed. The astral form will know immediately if the body suffers

damage. Reentering the body is automatic whenever the character wishes to do so. If something is blocking the hero from reaching his body, he cannot reenter his corporeal form without taking the appropriate action (usually an Overcome action) to get past the obstacle. If the body is destroyed or killed, the hero will remain trapped as a free spirit.

## **AURA (3)**

**Skills:** None

The hero is surrounded by some sort of field or aura that damages those who come into contact with it.

Whenever the hero successfully defends against a melee attack (typically hand-to-hand), the attacker takes 2-hits of damage. Additionally, if your Defend action succeeded with style, you can spend a fate point to place an aspect on the target instead of a Boost. The aspect must represent your aura. Some examples are: **Burning Skin** for a fire aura, **Shocked** for an electrical aura, **Cold Sap** for an ice aura, or even **Distracting Cuts** from protruding spines. You get one free invocation of the aspect. Removing the aspect requires your opponent to succeed at an Overcome action against a Fair (+2) opposition.

Due to the aura surrounding your body, you also receive a +2 to Attack actions when using Fight.

## **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Intense Aura (1):** Against ranged attacks, your aura provides a +2 bonus to Defend actions, if the attack is something your aura would provide protection against— such as an ice aura against bullets or other physical projectiles, or an energy aura against energy based attacks.

## **BLAST (1-6)**

**Skills:** Accuracy

You can fire some sort of distance attack, whether plasma beams, concussive force, ice shards, fireballs, or even spikes. Each power level grants you Weapon: 1 rating, up to a maximum of Weapon: 6, and has a range of power level +1 zones away from the character.

Applying special effects to the power customizes it to fit the type of blast your character can fire. Below are examples of how to create various types of Blast with one or two special effects. Use them as examples for building your own, or apply them to your character for

a ready-to-play power. Simply purchase your levels of Blast, and then add the cost below to the final total.

**Concussive (2):** For each Weapon rating you reduce from your damage, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one. You also gain a +2 bonus when using your blast to Create an Advantage, such as **Stunned**, or **Weakened Structure**.

**Corrosive (2):** When destroying objects, your power does double the amount of Material Strength reduction.

In combat, if the attack succeeds with style, the character can lower the damage and place an Aspect instead of the normal Boost to represent the sticky nature of the corrosive substance.

**Darkness (2):** You can attack everyone within the same zone without having to split your result. When you succeed with style on an attack, you do not have to reduce your damage to place a Boost on the target.

**Earth (1):** When you succeed with style, you do not have to reduce your damage to place a Boost on the target.

**Electrical (2):** When attacking electrical opponents, such as robots, you gain a +4 to the attack roll.

**EMP (1):** The weapon automatically shuts down electronic devices, such as smartphones, cars, computers, electrical grids, and NPC robots.

**Energy (1):** For each Weapon rating you reduce your damage by, you extend the range of your blast by an additional zone.

**Fire (3):** Once per scene, when your attack causes the target to take a Consequence from your power, you may spend a fate point. Doing so causes the fire to continue to attack the target each consecutive round with a skill rating equal to the Shifts you generated on the attack roll. The target uses Physique or Athletics to Defend. To stop the consecutive attacks, the target must succeed at a Defend action.

**Ice (1):** If you succeed with style on the attack, you can lower your damage (both the weapon rating and damage gained from Shifts) and use your ice to automatically encase your target in ice.

To break free of the ice, the opponent must roll against passive opposition equal to the amount of damage you transferred to the encasement.

**Light (2):** You gain a +2 bonus when using Light Blast to place a situation aspect. When you succeed with style on an attack, you do not have to reduce your damage to place a boost on the target.

**Physical Projectile (1):** Once per Issue, when you force an opponent to take a consequence (except through the use of the Potent, Deadly, or Lethal special effects), you can spend a fate point to increase the consequence's severity (so mild becomes moderate, moderate becomes severe). If your opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, he must either take a severe consequence and a second consequence or be taken out.

**Radiation (2):** Once per scene, you can spend a fate point on a successful attack action and cause your opponent to take both stress and a consequence of equal value. If the target was already going to take a consequence, he takes two consequences instead.

**Sonic (2):** When you succeed with style on an attack and lower your damage to place a boost, you instead gain a situation aspect with a free invocation, representing a **Stunned** or **Lost Equilibrium** type of situation.

Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Mild Consequence instead of stress.

**Vibration (1):** Your vibration attacks can shatter both people and objects. When destroying objects, your power does double the amount of Material Strength reduction.

**Water (1):** When you succeed with style on an attack and lower your damage to place a boost, you instead place an aspect, such as **Drowning** or **Water In Your Lungs**.

## **BOOST (2)**

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

A hero with Boost can temporarily increase the skill level of another person, willing or unwilling.

To boost a skill, the character must succeed at an Overcome action with opposition equal to the current skill rank. Success increases the skill by +2 levels, and a success with style increases the skill by +4 (along with placing the normal Boost).

The boosted skill lasts for number of rounds equal to twice the boosted level— so 4 or 8 rounds. After the boosted skill drops back to normal, the character is considered fatigued from the experience. Place an aspect on the character to represent the strain the boost caused. The aspect lasts for one scene, and can be removed during the scene with an Overcome action against Fair (+2) opposition.

A character can only be under one effect of Boost at a time.

## **LIMITS**

**Overload (-1):** The hero's ability to boost another person has the nasty habit of overloading and burning out the ability. Whenever the hero boosts a skill, the target must make an immediate Will roll against an Opposition equal to the amount of the boost. If the roll fails, the target takes a mild consequence related to his body being overloaded by the power.

**Single Skill (-1):** The hero can only Boost a single type of skill, chosen when the power is taken.

## **BURROWING (2)**

**Skills:** None

The character moves by burrowing under the ground, allowing him to ignore ground based situation aspects (such as zone border obstacles). Noticing a burrowing character is an Overcome action, typically against passive opposition equal to the burrower's Athletics or Stealth.

If the burrowing character remains unnoticed, they can erupt from the ground and gain a +2 bonus to an immediate Create an Advantage action for placing an aspect, such as **Taken by Surprise** or **Knocked off Balance**.

## **CHAMELEON (2)**

**Skills:** None

The hero can alter his appearance and voice to resemble any other living being. The new appearance should be of the same relative size and weight as the hero with this power. Although the hero's clothing, gear, and equipment change to resemble the target's items, these items do not become functional. In other words, the hero appears to be wearing a gun when impersonating a police officer, but the gun cannot be drawn or fired.

Shifting into another character does not require a roll, but does constitute your action for the exchange. Place a temporary aspect on yourself to represent the new appearance. When in the other form, you do not gain any powers the original person might possess. To be able to do that, you must also have Power Mimicry in your power set (maybe even with the ranged mimic special effect).

To notice that the hero is not actually the simulated person, the viewer must make an opposed roll against the character's Deceive skill, and the Deceive skill receives +2 bonus.

### SPECIAL EFFECT

**Near Perfect Form(1):** The hero's Deceive skill receives an additional +2 bonus when rolling to avoid being discovered as a shape-shifter.

### COLD CONTROL (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to control the very forces of cold, allowing him to effectively decrease the temperature within an entire zone. You gain a +2 when creating situation aspects with your power.

You can create ice constructs to encase your opponents. Doing so requires you to roll your power against the target's Athletics. If successful, place a temporary aspect on the target to represent being encased. Each Shift you generated on the encasement roll becomes the passive opposition (Material Strength) that must be overcome to break the construct

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Intense Cold (1):** When creating situation aspects with Ice Control against a specific target, the hero can also reduce his number of free invokes to cause those affected to take 1-Stress for each free invoke sacrificed. Invulnerability does not negate this damage, but immunity to cold acts normally.

**Sub-arctic (Requires Intense Cold) (1):** Once per scene the hero can also spend a fate point to cause a target to take a cold related Mild Consequence instead of Stress.

### DARKNESS CONTROL (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You are able to control the very darkness, allowing you to extinguish light, and gain a +2 when creating darkness related situation aspects.

You are immune to darkness, and darkness related situation aspects cannot be invoked for any roll made against you.

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Hungering Darkness (1):** As long as you have free

invocations of any power created aspect available, you can use your darkness to instill fear in others. Make a power roll opposed by the target's Will. If successful, the target is overcome with fear, and all rolls while within the darkness suffer a +2 to the passive or active opposition, which includes Attack and Defend rolls.

To break free of the fear while under the cover of your darkness, the target must make an opposed roll against your controlling skill. Otherwise, it requires a Will roll as an Overcome action once free of the darkness.

### DEATH SPEAK (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can see and communicate with the spirits by touching the person's corpse. To use the power, the hero makes an Overcome action with an opposition equal to the amount of time the person has been dead. The power lasts until the character stops touching the corpse.

Difficulty	Time
-2	One Round (6 seconds)
-1	A few minutes
+0	An Hour
+1	A few hours
+2	A day
+3	A few days
+4	A week
+5	A few weeks
+6	A month
+7	Half a year
+8	A year
+9	Several Years
+10	A decade
+11	Several decades
+12	A century or more

## SPECIAL EFFECT

**Haunted (+0):** You don't need a corpse to use the power; the spirits of the dead tend to seek you out and you can attempt to contact them at any time or place.

## DEFLECTION (2)

**Skills:** Fight or Weapons

The hero is able to deflect incoming attacks, either due to metallic skin, a weapon or shield, or whatever creative means you can come up with.

Whenever you succeed with style on a Defend action against a ranged attack (such as Blast), you reflect the attack back at your attacker causing half the amount of damage (round up). If you lower your damage as normal and choose not to take a Boost for succeeding with style, you instead cause the attack to hit any other target in the same zone as you.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Full Deflection (1):** By spending a fate point, you deflect the entire damage value back at the attacker, or at another target by not taking a Boost for succeeding with style (as long as you still lower your damage by one).

**Mental Deflect (0):** Instead of physical and energy attacks, the hero can only deflect mental and psychic based attacks.

## DENSITY (2,4,6)

**Skills:** None

The hero is able to increase his mass. Each Power Level increases the character's Physique by +2, and lowers his Athletics by -2, up to a +6 bonus to Physique and a Feeble (-2) minimum rating for Athletics.

If the increase in Physique would grant the character additional Stress boxes or Mild Consequence slot as per the normal Physique skill, the character receives all such benefits while his density is increased.

The character also receives an aspect to represent being *heavier and slower*, with one free invocation per power level used.

## DIMENSIONAL POCKET (1)

**Skills:** None

The hero possesses his own, private dimensional pocket that is contained within a cloak, backpack, or

some other seemingly mundane item. The dimensional pocket contains its own physical laws and physical space as defined when the power is taken.

The hero can freely travel into his own dimensional pocket, and can allow access to anyone he chooses.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Lord of the Domain:** The character receives a +2 bonus when creating situation aspects within the pocket dimension.

## DIMENSIONAL TRAVEL (1)

**Skills:** None

You can travel between dimensions, visiting any dimension you have been to before without effort.

Traveling to a new dimension requires an Overcome action, with the passive opposition determined by the GM based upon how difficult access a new dimension might be in the Series. Although you can still succeed at a cost on a failed or tied roll (and the exact details should be worked out with the GM), accepting a failure means that future attempts to access the same dimension cause the opposition to raise by +1 each time.

## DRAIN (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The opposite of the Boost power, Drain allows you to lower the skill ratings of a target. Make an opposed roll against the skill to be drained. On a success, the skill is lowered by -2 steps on the ladder, and is lowered by -4 steps on a success with style (along with placing a boost on the target). The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the amount drained (so 2 or 4 rounds), at which time it returns to normal.

During that time, the target can attempt an Overcome action with opposition equal to the amount of drain to cancel the effect.

A character can only be under one Drain effect at a time.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Transference (2):** The hero is able to gain the drained skill at a level equal to the target's lost rating. If the hero already has the skill that is being drained, then he maintains his own skill level or assumes the target's, whichever is higher. The hero loses the transferred skills when the target recovers from the drain.

## LIMITS

**Single Skill (-1):** The hero can only drain a single type of skill, chosen when the Limit is taken.

## DREAM CONTROL (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can enter the dreams of others, exerting your influence over them.

To enter another's dream, make an opposed roll of your controlling skill against Will. Once inside the dream, you can attempt to enter the dreamer's mind and read their thoughts as though you had the **Mind Probe** power.

If you want your intrusion to affect the dreamer once they awake, you must place a situation aspect on them representing the **restless sleep** they received. They can attempt to remove the aspect by rolling against Fair (+2) opposition. If you succeed with style and spend a fate point when placing the aspect, then the aspect can only be removed by getting a full night of uninterrupted sleep.

## DUPLICATION (5)

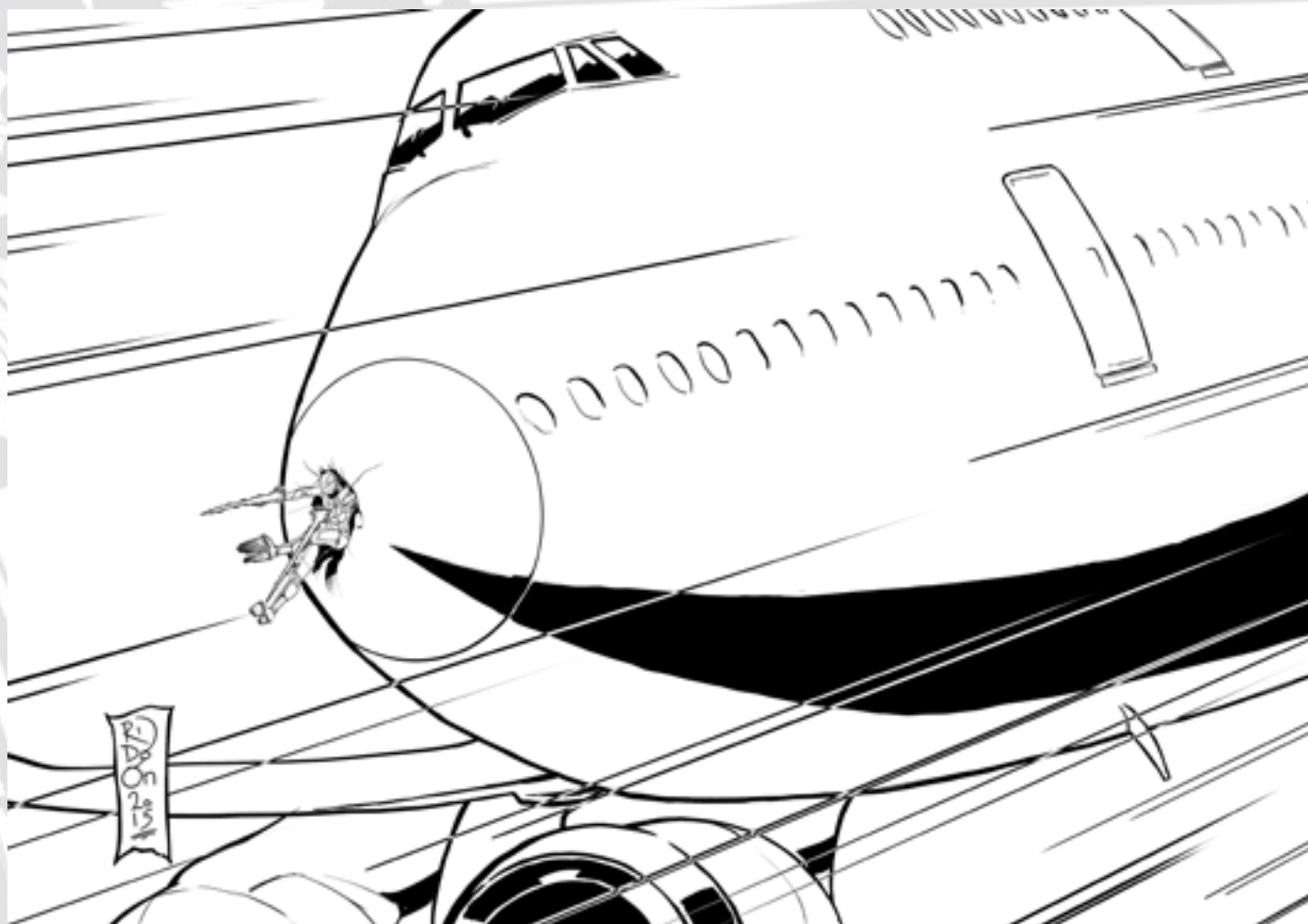
**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You are never truly alone, and have the ability to make more of— you!

The Duplication power allows you to make a number of exact copies of yourself. To call forth your duplicates, make a skill roll. If successful, the Shifts gained on the roll are used to summon one or more ranks of duplicates, with a single member of each rank costing an equal number of Shifts. For example, if the hero gained 3-Shifts on the roll, he could choose to summon three Rank 1 duplicates, one Rank 2 and one Rank 1 duplicates, or one Rank 3 duplicate.

The duplicates have all of your aspects, skills, and powers (except the Duplication power). The rank level only determines the quality of your duplicates for damage taking purposes. Duplicates have no Consequence slots. Duplicates act on your initiative.

**Rank 1:** They are considered Average quality and have no stress boxes. A single shift will take them out.



**Rank 2:** They are Fair quality and have one stress box each.

**Rank 3:** Your duplicates are Good quality and have 2 stress boxes each.

Duplicates last until Taken Out, or until the end of the scene. To control them longer than a scene without an additional roll, you must spend a fate point at the beginning of the scene.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Damage Soaking (3):** Once per issue, the hero can “absorb” a duplicate to automatically heal Consequences. It takes a number of duplicates equal to the Consequence’s severity, so a Mild Consequence would require absorbing two duplicates.

**Ready to Rumble (1):** The duplicates act as soon as they are created.

**Sacrificial Lamb (2):** The hero can spend a fate point to transfer any damage suffered by himself to one or more of his duplicates. Any damage that cannot be applied to a duplicate is taken by the hero.

**Horde (2):** Once per issue, the hero can choose to summon a horde of duplicates to assist him when needed. Multiply the number of Shifts gained on roll by five to determine the number of duplicates created. So, gaining 2-Shifts on the roll creates 10 duplicates. Divided the duplicates into groups of 5 for purposes of actions, and treat them as a mob. The duplicates are Rank 1 and cannot be increased.

## LIMITS

**Shared Damage (-1):** Any damage suffered by the hero or one of the duplicates is suffered by all duplicates and the hero.

**Psychic Feedback (-1):** Whenever a duplicate is damaged, the hero must make a Will roll against Opposition equal to the number of Hits the damage caused, or fall unconscious for the remainder of the conflict.

## DUPLICATE DUPLICATION

*We’ll put this Special Effect as a side idea, only because we’ve seen it in comic books. Allowing this option can greatly affect the balance of a game, however, and requires additional paperwork for the player if used. So, include it as a playable option with care.*

**Duplicate Duplication (5):** Your duplicates possess the Duplicate power the same as you do, and can continue to make copies of themselves ad infinitum. Keep a separate record of which duplicates have also created their own duplicates. If you, the player, have maintained your sanity by the end of the scene, you’ve accomplished an incredible feat.

## EARTH CONTROL (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can control and manipulate the very Earth under your feet, whether because you are a mutant, a form of elemental being, or through arcane means.

You can use your power to create barriers of earth by making an Overcome action. The Opposition for anyone to get through the barrier is the Shifts you generated, +2.

You can also encase others in earth by making an attack roll using your power. Instead of damage, each Shift generated is the Opposition for them to break free.

## ELECTRICAL CONTROL (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can control the ebb and flow of electrical currents within the zone, and gain +2 to creating electrical based situation aspects.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Overcharge (1):** You can sacrifice free invocations of your situation aspects to cause Stress against a target on a one-for-one basis, which Invulnerability does not mitigate. Against electrical targets, such as robots and Power Armor, you cause 2-Stress per invocation sacrificed.



## EMOTION CONTROL (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can alter the emotional state of others. To use Emotion Control, the hero must place a situation aspect on the character, such as *In love with me*, *Overcome with fear*, or *You would do anything for me*, which is defended against with Will. The emotion controlling hero receives a +2 bonus to the roll when placing the aspect.

As long as the situation aspect remains on the target, the hero can compel it for minor details (such as preventing someone an attack from someone he's made fall in love with him), without having to pay a fate point.

To remove the situation aspect, the target must roll Will against a passive opposition equal to the number of Shifts the power received on the roll when placing the aspect.

## EMPOWER (4)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to imbue others with a vast array of powers.

To use Empower, the hero **must spend a fate point**, and then make an opposed roll against the target's Physique. If successful, the hero is able to imbue a number of powers and special effects upon the target up to his own Controlling skill rank in hero point cost, plus an additional hero point for each Shift gained on the roll. On a success with style, he also gains a Boost.

The imbued powers remain until the empowering character chooses to take them back. The character can never have more than his Controlling skill rank in Hero Points spent at any one time.

The hero can do this every round, but once he imbues power levels, he cannot use them again until they are returned, which can be done automatically by canceling a use of the power on a target.

## ESP (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

A hero with ESP can remotely sense other locations as though he was physically present by rolling against opposition based on the distance away from the character. The hero can use any of their senses at the remote location, but is completely unaware of the surroundings of his physical body.

Difficulty	Distance
-2	Nearby, but blocked by line of sight
-1	A city block or two away
+0	Several city blocks away
+1	A mile away
+3	Across a large city
+4	Roughly 50 miles away
+5	Roughly 100 miles away
+6	Several hundred miles away
+7	Half way across the nation
+8	A distance equal to the US coast to coast
+9	Into a neighboring country
+10	Across the Atlantic or Pacific
+11	To the other side of the Earth
+12	Beyond the boundaries of Earth

## EXTRA LIMBS (2)

**Skills:** None

This power only needs to be purchased once, and the exact number and nature of the limbs are left to the description. For example, the power is the same cost whether it represents a prehensile tail, two additional arms, or a mane of living hair.

When the power is taken, the player and GM should decide what one or two types of actions the limb(s) provide a +2 bonus toward. For example, a mane of living hair might offer a +2 bonus to grapples and Defend actions against physical attacks, while a prehensile tail might offer a +2 to Athletic rolls for balance and climbing.

## EXTRAORDINARY INTELLECT (1) FLIGHT (1-4)

**Skills:** None

Your Intellect is so vast that in most settings you are known as a **Level (or Class) X Intellect**, such as Level 10, Class 12, and so forth.

Your vast intellect grants you incredible knowledge of nearly all known subjects, even fighting arts and defensive forms. Though you may not be able to perform them yourself, you know the foundations of how and why they work. Once per scene, you can declare a story detail related to some type of academic knowledge without spending a fate point.

## FIRE CONTROL (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to control fire and heat. He gains a +2 bonus to rolls involving using his power to create fire based situation aspects.

He can increase or decrease existing flame by making an Overcome action against opposition determined by the GM (typically ranging from Mediocre (+0) for a very small fire, to Fantastic (+6) or more for a raging inferno), with the number of Shifts (minimum of 1 if the hero is allowed to succeed at a cost) adding to or taking away from the fire's intensity.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Living Flame (3):** The hero can bring an otherwise passive opposition fire to life with the same type of Overcome action as mentioned above, granting it an attack skill equal to the number of Shifts gained on the roll. The fire is considered to have 2-stress boxes and 1 Mild Consequence slot, but the hero can divide Shifts from the roll between attack skill and adding additional Stress boxes.

### FLIGHT AND SUPER-SPEED

*If the hero has both Flight and Super-Speed, consider only requiring the greater rank of the two powers to be purchased in full, and apply the desired equal or lower speed of second movement mode as a 1-Point Special Effect.*

*Power specific Special Effects are still purchased at the listed cost.*

**Skills:** None

Your character soars through the air, ignoring all ground based obstacles and situation aspects. Outside of combat and chases, your movement is based solely upon the narrative context. During combat, you can use the following benefits based on the power level of Flight.

**Power level 1:** Your flight is the equivalent of fast gliding, giving you a Speed Rating: 2 when involved in a chase. In combat, you may move up to four zones per turn for free.

**Power level 2:** Your flight allows you to match the speed of fast moving sports cars and other ground based vehicles, giving you Speed Rating 3 in chases. You can move up to six zones per turn for free in combat.

**Power level 3:** Your flight is at speeds equivalent to most helicopters and small planes, granting you Speed Rating 4 in chases. You can move to any zone of your choosing for free in a turn.

**Power level 4:** You move at super-sonic speeds and can even reach escape velocity, giving you Speed Rating 5 in chases. You can move into any zone of your choosing for free in a turn, and by spending a fate point can arrive at any scene of your choosing because you had enough time to get there.

### FLIGHT AND SUPER-SPEED IN COMBAT

*Flight and Super-Speed can provide a reason to use the Create an Advantage action to place a scene aspect to help you with Defend or Attack actions. A good example is a **Blur of Motion** aspect representing your intense speed, which then receives the free invocations for placing it (as well as being able to be invoked with a fate point) for bonuses to your action. Combine that with invoking the Power Set aspect, and you'll be the streak of color like you see in some comic book panels.*

## FORCE CONTROL (3)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You are able to generate and shape an energy source such as concussive force or hard light.

You add +2 to grapple attempts when using some sort of force energy to entangle your target, and can grapple any target in the same zone as you. Your controlling skill counts as your strength.

You can make an Overcome action to create force barriers and constructs. The opposition for someone to break them is +2 greater than the number of Shifts you generated.

You can use your controlling skill as though it was Super-Strength, allowing you to knock back an opponent with Force Control, or lift objects up to a zone away.

## ***FORCEFIELD (1-6)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You surround yourself with some sort of field, whether derived from technology or an innate ability, which makes you harder to hit.

When the character activates the field, she rolls the controlling skill with a +1 bonus per power level (up to a maximum of +6). The result is the opposition that attackers must roll against for their attack action. If the attack is a success or success with style, the Forcefield failed to stop the attack and the hero takes damage as normal.

When a forcefield fails to stop an attack, it deactivates and it is considered out of commission until the end of the conflict. To reactivate it during the conflict, the hero can attempt an Overcome action equal to the level of forcefield. Reactivating the field can only be done once per conflict, so if the field is shutdown a second time it is out for the remainder of the conflict. If the Overcome action is successful, the hero rolls a new opposition total that attackers must exceed, as normal.

The forcefield can be maintained from round to round, meaning that the hero uses her original roll on subsequent rounds as well without having to toss the dice again. Doing so, however, means that she can take no other actions that round (not even a Full Defense). The hero can still invoke Aspects (including on subsequent rounds) too add to the total, as normal. To take another action, the hero will have to drop his forcefield that round. This does not count as though the field was shut down from an attack, and the hero does not have to make an Overcome action to be able to reactivate it.

## **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Battering Ram (1):** The hero can shape their forcefield into a battering ram. Doing so provides +2 to knock back attempts, and the knock back distance is treated as though they had Super-Strength.

**Expanded Field (1):** The hero's field can cover an area beyond just them— up to an entire zone maximum. The forcefield's bonus applies to everyone under it when taking Defend actions.

**Ranged Field (0):** Instead of being focused on the hero, their forcefield can be fired to anywhere in the zone. It forms at the point of impact, and covers an area enough for no more than a couple of people.

## ***FRICITION CONTROL (2)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You control the amount of friction between objects, causing them to become extremely slippery or very sticky in relation to each other. Create a situation aspect representing the type of effect you are creating: slippery or sticky. As long as you have free invocations remaining on the situation aspect, you get the following effects.

**Slippery Surface:** Before anyone touching the surface can take an action that requires balance, they must make an opposed Athletics roll against your controlling power (this does not count as an action for you). Unless they succeed, they can take no other actions that round as they either fall, struggle to remain upright, or some other narrative effect that applies.

**Sticky Surface:** Anyone touching the affected surface that attempts to move must first make a Physique roll against your controlling skill (this does not count as an action for you). If they fail (and choose not to succeed at a cost), then they can take no other action that round as they struggle to get free.

## ***GRAVITY CONTROL (2)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can control and manipulate one of the fundamental forces of the universe, allowing you to reduce or increase the pull of gravity over an area or individual.

You can lower gravity by creating a situation aspect to represent the gravitational change. As long as the aspect exists, you can use your controlling skill as Super-Strength for lifting objects. To lift another

person, make an opposed roll against their Physique or Athletics (whichever is greater).

When increasing gravity against an opponent, make an opposed roll against Physique. Each Shift generated on the roll causes all physical actions by the target to suffer a +1 to the opposition (this includes most physical Attack and Defend actions).

To affect multiple targets without the Area Effect special effect, you must split your result.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Intense Gravity (1):** When increasing gravity, you can sacrifice the increase in opposition on a one for one basis to instead cause Stress to the target. Invulnerability negates the damage as normal.

## GROWTH (2,4,6,8,10,12)

**Skills:** None

You can grow to immense size as shown on the table below. Each level of growth increases your movement by 1 zone per Power Level.

When you increase your size, you gain an equal number of levels in **Super-Strength**, which does not stack with the normal Super-Strength power if you have it. If you do, always use the highest rating. Every 2 levels of Growth also provide you with 1 Power Level of **Density**.

You also gain an appropriate situation aspect placed upon you, such as **Large**, **Super-Sized**, or **Gigantic**, with one free invocation.

Whether growth is a permanent feature of the character, or is something that can be turned on and off as a free action, is determined when the power is taken.

Power Level		Height Bonus
1	20"	Super-Strength 1
2	40'	Super-Strength 2, Density 1
3	60'	Super-Strength 3
4	75'	Super-Strength 4, Density 2
5	90'	Super-Strength 5
6	100'+	Super-Strength6, Density 3

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Enhanced Lifting (1):** You add your Physique to lifting rolls involving Super-Strength.

## HARDINESS (1-6)

**Skills:** None

You are difficult to put down, possessing a greater than normal damage threshold before you have to concede a battle or are Taken Out— though you'll definitely feel the effects afterward.

For each Power Level, you gain the following benefit:

Power Level	Benefit
1	Additional Stress Box
2	Additional Mild consequence Slot
3	Additional Stress Box
4	Additional Moderate Consequence Slot
5	Additional Stress Box
6	Additional Severe Consequence Slot

Choose whether the additional Stress Boxes are physical or mental when the power is purchased. Likewise, the additional consequence slots must have a (p) or an (m) notation next to them on the character sheet, designating whether they are for physical or mental consequences.

## HEALING (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

As a full action, you can heal the Stress and Consequences of others. To do so, make an Overcome action with opposition equal to total amount of Stress to be healed. On a success, you clear all checked boxes on the target.

To heal Consequences, you must target one Consequence at a time. The opposition to heal it is the severity +1, so a Mild Consequence provides Good (+3) opposition, while a Moderate provides Superb (+5) opposition.

If you succeed with style on a Healing roll, you place a Boost on the character being healed, such as **I Feel Great!** or **Energy Surge**.

Appropriate effects of succeeding at a cost might be taking the person's injury or Stress onto yourself at a slightly reduced amount, or even assuming the full measure of their injuries onto your person.

## **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Regrowth (1):** The character is able to regrow lost limbs.

**Restoration (1):** You can counter the effects of powers that have hindered your patient (typically through a situation aspect placed on the character), such as from Confusion, Daze, Mind Control, Paralyze, and Transform. To do so, you must make a roll against Fair (+2) Opposition.

**Resurrection (1):** You can bring others back from the dead! Make a roll against Great (+4) Opposition. If successful, you can resurrect the target as long as the number of rounds they were dead do not exceed the power's skill rating. For each Shift gained on the roll, the number of rounds the target can be dead prior to the resurrection attempt is increased by +1. The target revives with all Consequence slots filled in, and can then be further healed.

## **HYPER-ACTION (1)**

**Skills:** None

Whether as a result of being a speedster or some other origin, you're able to complete tasks in far less time than other people. Whenever you are conducting researching, assembling items, or performing some other task where your own mental or physical abilities are the deciding time-factor, you reduce the time on the Time Increment chart by four steps.

## **HYPER-MOVEMENT (1)**

**Skills:** None

The character is able to move in strange or unique ways, whether it is walking on air, climbing walls like an insect, or passing through narrow openings as though made of sand or gas.

Each time Hyper-Movement is purchased, it represents a different type of movement ability.

**Air Walking:** You can walk on air as though it was solid ground, even climbing "air staircases" to increase your elevation. This allows you to ignore most ground based situation aspects and zone obstacles (provided you have enough open air above you to go up), and allows you to safely fall from any height.

**FTL Speed:** You can travel at faster-than-light speeds while in outer space. The exact speed-factor is not important, and should be treated as a narrative need. If two ships (or characters) need to determine who reaches a destination first, both sides make an opposed roll using only a flat Mediocre (+0) skill rating. Aspects may be invoked as normal. The winner gets there first. If the winner succeeded with style, he not only gets there first but gets a slight advantage in being able to place a Boost.

**Particulate:** You move through extremely small openings, such as the cracks under a door or key holes, as though you were made of sand, water, gas, or some other likely substance. It takes three rounds to move your entire body through the opening. If you are in a rush, you can attempt an Athletics roll as an Overcome action. On a success, you only take a full round to get through. On a success with style, you pass through the opening as part of regular movement.

**Swimming:** You can move through water as easily as air, swimming at speeds fast enough to catch even the fastest boats.

**Wall-Crawling:** This power allows you to move along vertical and inverted surfaces as though moving across level ground, allowing you to ignore ground based Situation Aspects. The GM may require an appropriate Athletics action to move over slick or slippery surfaces.

**Water Walking:** You can walk across water as though it was solid ground. Once per conflict you may spend a fate point to ignore all damage from a single attack that is ground level based, as you turn off the power and drops below the water's surface. Even if you reactivates the power and returns to the water's surface, you can only pull that trick once per conflict.

## **HYPER-SENSE (1)**

**Skills:** None

The hero has one or more enhanced or unique senses, granting her the ability to detect things, see things, and perhaps track things that normal people cannot.

Each time this power is purchased, it applied to a new form of Hyper-Sense.

**Analytical Sense:** The hero possesses a sense that can analyze the material an object or person is composed of, such as being able to sense each chemical that composes a steel girder.

**Awareness:** The hero is able to detect something, as determined when Hyper-Sense (Awareness) is purchased. The hero can attempt the detection by making a Notice roll against Mediocre (+0) opposition.

**Danger Sense:** The hero is able to sense impending danger. Situation aspects placed that represent an opponent ambushing, taking aim, or using stealth to attack the character do not receive free invocations. Additionally, opponents cannot use Stealth to attack the character, regardless of Stunts.

**Darkvision:** The hero can see in darkness as though it was normal light. Darkness related aspects and Boosts cannot be invoked for bonuses against the character.

**Directional Hearing:** When making Notice rolls to pin-point the exact location of a sound, the hero gains a +4 bonus.

**Full Vision:** The hero is able to see in 360 degrees simultaneously. Situation aspects representing sneaking up on the character or attacking from behind do not receive any free invocations. Additionally, groups do not receive a Teamwork bonus against the character.

**Hyper-Hearing:** The hero can hear sounds inaudible to the normal ear. When detecting heroes that can hide from normal senses (such as stealth, camouflage, invisible, and so forth) heroes with this power receive a +4 to their Notice roll.

**Hyper-Olfactory:** The hero is able to detect a target by scent. When placing a situation aspect to assist in detecting someone using Stealth, Invisibility, or some other sight impairing power, or tracking someone that the hero can normally get a scent from, he places a situation aspect with a free invocation instead of a Boost on a tie, and receives an additional free invocation for a for a success or success with style.

**Hyper-Touch:** The hero is able to sense tremors and acute details (such as fine grains of sand in an object, conversations through glass, sensing tremors along a surface, and so forth) through touch. Although a roll is not usually required, if the GM rules there is opposition, then the hero makes any necessary Notice check with a +4 bonus.

**Microscopic Vision:** The hero can see miniscule objects. The opposition to view objects of a certain size is shown on the chart below.

Opposition	Size
Mediocre (+0)	Dust
Average (+1)	Microscopic Insects
Fair (+2)	Cellular
Good (+3)	Molecular
Great (+4)	Atomic

**Sonar:** The hero can effectively see (without color) through the emission of high frequency sound pulses. The hero gains a +4 to Notice rolls to detect opponents using Stealth, Invisibility, Camouflage, and other powers that would otherwise hide their presence. Darkness, intense light, and other vision impairing situation aspects cannot be invoked on rolls that oppose the hero.

High frequency sounds on the same frequency as sonar can disrupt it. Make a Notice check (with no bonus from this power) against opposition determined by the GM. This is considered a normal Overcome action. If the hero fails instead of succeeding at a cost, then Sonar offers no benefit until the person, situation aspect, or device causing the high frequency interruption is removed.

**Telescopic Vision:** The hero can see fine details further away than normal people. The exact number of zones a character can see should be determined on a case by case basis. If using the Create an Advantage action to assist in being able to see far away, the hero places a situation aspect with a free invocation instead of a Boost on a tie, and receives an additional free invocation for a success or success with style.

**Thermal Vision:** The hero can automatically see into the infrared spectrum and detect the thermal patterns emitted by all things. To see thermal patterns through objects (such as the heat patterns of people on the other side of a wall), the hero makes a Notice check with opposition equal to half (round up) of the object's Material Strength. Additionally, unless characters using Stealth, Invisibility, or other concealing abilities also have a means of masking their heat patterns, the hero can see them normally.

**True Sight:** The hero is able to see through illusions and other mentally-created visual effects. The hero gains a +4 bonus to Notice check against such opposition.

**X-Ray Vision:** The hero can automatically see through objects of any Material Strength as though the barrier was not there. If the hero places a situation aspect representing his ability to see through objects, the situation aspects involving things like Cover or Concealed cannot be invoked on rolls against the hero as long as he has free invocations of his own situation aspect available.

## ***ILLUSION (3)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can create illusionary objects and people that seem completely real to those viewing them. The illusions can fill any area that makes narrative sense, from the amount of space occupied by a single person up to a single zone.

To create an illusion, make a roll to create a situation aspect. On a tie, you create an aspect instead of a Boost, with one free invocation. On a success or success with style, you gain an additional free invocation. For each free invocation you sacrifice, you can expand the illusion by an additional zone.

The illusions are not real, physical constructs, so anyone stepping onto an illusionary floor that falls through it, steps through an illusionary wall, and so forth, automatically realizes the illusion is not real.

Otherwise, whenever someone has a reason to believe the illusion is not real, they must make a Will roll against passive opposition equal to your skill rating. You may invoke the illusion's situation aspect to increase the opposition by +2.

As long as someone believes your illusions are real, you can attack them with it using your skill for the attack roll. Because the damage is illusionary, it causes Mental Stress (even if the damage appears physical). Such damage heals normally, even after the illusion is discovered. While the body might not have actually been damaged, the mind still suffered injury.

## ***IMMOVEABLE (2)***

**Skills:** None

When it comes to being knocked around or shoved out of the way, you are able to stand your ground, sometimes even against the world's most powerful opponents.

You can use Physique instead of Athletics and Fight for Defend actions against attacks.

When rolling to provide active opposition to Overcome actions, such as blocking movement

between zones, you gain a +2 bonus to the roll. Depending upon the situation, this may or may not also involve any bonus from the Super-Strength power if you possess it, and stacks with Full Defense (i.e. bracing yourself against heavy attacks).

You do not suffer from knock back— ever— without there being very good narrative reason, such as your opponent sending the ground you are standing on with you.

## ***IMMUNITY (1,3,5)***

**Skills:** None

The hero possesses immunity to a particular environmental effect, power, type of damage, and so forth. Choose from the list below when this power is purchased is taken. Each type of Immunity is purchased separately.

### ***SITUATIONAL IMMUNITY (1)***

Each level grants the character immunity to one type of environment based situation aspect. Such situation aspects cannot be invoked on actions against the character. The immunity does not prevent the character from taking damage from associated attacks (such as Fire Blast, Ice Blast, or a radiation based Affliction power), but stops them from being harmed by effects like those generated by the Cold Control special effect since such damage options are based upon placing situation aspects.

Some examples of situational immunities that have appeared in comic books are listed below, but your group is encouraged to create more as needed.

- Cold
- Drowning
- Emotion (or type of emotion, such as fear)
- Heat
- Hunger
- Lack of Sleep
- Poison
- Pressure (such as from the deep ocean)
- Radiation
- Stun (such as the ***stunned*** situation aspect)
- Suffocation
- Thirst
- Vacuum

## TYPE IMMUNITY (3)

The hero is immune to the effects of a specific power type, such as Ice, Fire, Radiation, Plasma and so forth. This means that the hero cannot be damaged by attacks from that specific power, and is also immune to any environmental aspects (such as **heat**, if immune to Fire Blast) associated with the power type.

Only one type of power immunity can be purchased, unless the GM approves additional purchases.

## SOURCE IMMUNITY (5)

This immunity level is included because— well— it exists within comic books, but could prove an issue in some campaigns. Before source immunity is available to the heroes, talk it over with the GM and rest of the group. After all, allowing the player-characters to have **Source Immunity: Magical** in a campaign based on the mystic community and supernatural threats might not be a good idea. If the source immunity makes the heroes completely immune to the common type of major threats in a campaign, it's highly recommended that the particular source immunity option be excluded.

A special and uncommon type of immunity, the hero is immune to all effects (including damage) from a specific source of power. Examples of power sources include divine, magical, mental, mutant, and so forth. Choosing a broad source that makes the character completely immune to everyday effects, such as physical or technological, is not allowed. While such powers might exist, they are purely within the realm of NPCs who represent a major enemy in the story, and typically a Major Milestone when defeated.

A character may never have more than one type of source immunity.

## INTANGIBLE (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You have the ability to become insubstantial and pass through any object, allowing you to ignore ground based situation aspects or zone obstacles. There is no roll to use the power, unless certain special effects are used.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Phase Attack (2):** You can also solidify portions of yourself (such as an arm) inside of people and objects, using your phasing ability to damage them. To perform

the attack, you must first place a situation aspect on the target for the set-up as a free action. The target can defend against this as normal, which represents them getting out of the way. Since your character is still intangible, the Defend action should typically use Athletics, though any skill or power can be used if the narrative is justified. Once the aspect is placed, your character can then make an Overcome action against the target's physique, causing 3-hits of damage on a success. Since the attack is literally through the character, Invulnerability doesn't negate it.

Against objects, the attack is automatic.

## Bio-electrical Discharge (Requires Phase Attack)

**(1):** When you attack electrical targets (including Power Armor) using the Phase attack, you cause 6-hits worth of damage.

**Phase Others (1):** You can extend your phasing to anyone in contact with you, and even to those in contact with that person! To do so, make a roll against Opposition equal to the number of people who are going to phase (excluding yourself). If the people are unwilling, the roll instead becomes Active Opposition against their Will.

## INTERFACE (1)

**Skills:** Will or Technology

You can access computers from a distance. The exact distance is left to the narrative, since nearly any range could be explained thanks to satellites. When accessing or hacking into computer systems, make an Overcome action against a difficulty set by the GM. This power allows you to also use Will in place of Technology (if you so choose) for hacking into computer systems.

## INVISIBILITY (2,4,6)

**Skills:** None

You can make yourself difficult or nearly impossible to see, whether by bending light around you, a mystic spell, or some other origin.

Each level in this power gives you a +2 bonus to Stealth rolls, up to a +6 maximum. Additionally, you are able to use Stealth for attacks (including the bonus from this power) as long as your exact location has not been discovered. If you succeed with style on the attack, you can maintain invisibility and use Stealth (and the associated bonus) again on the next attack instead of placing a Boost— basically representing that you've attacked and moved well enough that



they still can't pin-point you. Otherwise, once you attack, you've been discovered and lose all Stealth benefits granted by this power for the remainder of the conflict (unless the narrative dictates that it would make sense for you to regain the stealth benefits).

Anyone can attempt to discover your location even without you attacking (if they have a reason to know you are present) by making an Overcome action against passive opposition equal to your Stealth bonus from the power. The action cannot succeed at a cost.

## **INVULNERABILITY (1-6)**

**Skills:** None

The hero is resistant to damage, gaining Armor Rating 1 per power level, to a maximum of Invulnerability 6.

### **SPECIAL EFFECT**

**Absorption (1):** Your Invulnerability also has the ability to absorb and channel either physical (kinetic) or energy damage as per the Absorption power. For each 2-Hits of the energy type you absorb (round up), you gain +1 to Attack and Overcome actions, but the energy must be used by your next turn or it dissipates.

To possess expanded absorption abilities, purchase Absorption special effects at the normal cost.

**Unstoppable (2):** Once the hero gets moving, he adds his Invulnerability level as a bonus to resist other characters attempting to stop his momentum. The hero can automatically break objects with a Material Strength up to twice his Invulnerability level simply by purposefully ramming into them.

## **ABSORPTION AND INVULNERABILITY**

*Absorption offers a limited form of invulnerability— an armor rating against either physical or energy damage (but not both) that can then be channeled into a bonus for Attack and Overcome actions. However, what if you want your hero to have both full invulnerability, plus the ability to absorb and channel energy from damage?*

*Since layers of armor rating do not stack, purchase the Invulnerability power with the Absorption special effect. Yes, that makes being able to absorb energy more expensive, since a 4-Shift absorb under Absorption is 2-points, and a 4-Shift under Invulnerability is 5-points with the special effect, but you are also getting the ability to mitigate pretty much all incoming attacks, plus your invulnerability still mitigates damage if your absorption fails..*

## **LEAPING (1-4)**

**Skills:** None

You can leap distances greater than even the best human athlete. Unlike some other modes of super-movement, Leaping does not provide you with specific bonuses to rolls, though you may still ignore ground based situation aspects as long as you have the overhead clearance to leap over them. As a matter of fact, because a leap of your magnitude causes you to hang in the air a bit, the GM might even be able to invoke your power set aspect against you.

Outside of combat, how quickly you get from one location to another is based on the narrative context. In combat, however, leaping provides the following movement.

**Power level 1:** Providing there are no zone barriers to stop you, you can move four zones per turn for free.

**Power level 2:** You can move six zones per turn for free, providing there are no zone barriers in your way.

**Power level 3:** You can leap up to eight zones for free. Doing so requires significant overhead clearing, which means you automatically ignore ground based situation aspects.

**Power level 4:** You can leap to any nearby zone and ignore all ground based situation aspects while doing so.

## LIFE SUPPORT (1)

**Skills:** None

The hero has incredible body chemistry (or may even be a robot or android) does not need to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep. He is unaffected by attacks and situation aspects which require the target to inhale air (such as poisonous gas, smoke inhalation, and so forth).

## LIGHT CONTROL (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can generate and control the intensity of light, whether sheer whiteness, fireworks, or some other sort of illumination, gaining a +2 bonus when creating light based situation aspects.

## LIVING SEANCE (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is a walking conduit for the spirits of the dead, able to summon them to his location.

Make a roll as an Overcome action. Each Shift gained on the roll represents a single spirit. The spirits are intangible and cannot be harmed except through appropriate psychic or mystic abilities (such as Psychic or Eldritch Blast). Although they cannot physically harm other characters, their presence and rapid movements are a good way to cause distractions, allowing multiple spirits to act as a team and apply the teamwork bonus to Create an Advantage actions.

For example, if the hero gained 3-Shifts on the roll and summoned three spirits, they could work together to gain +2 bonus to Create an Advantage actions, perhaps placing a **Distracting** situation aspect on an opponent and handing off the free invocations to the summoning hero or one of his allies.

Spirits act on the round after they are summoned, on the summoning hero's initiative. Unless Taken Out, they last until the end of the scene, and can be extended to a longer duration by paying one fate point per additional scene.

Each Spirit has one stress box.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Phase Attack (2):** The spirits have the **Phase Attack** special effect from the Intangible power.

**Poltergeist (2):** The spirits have the Telekinesis power with Mediocre (+0) skill rating. They can use the skill to attack by throwing objects at the opponent. When using Telekinesis to create situation aspects, they gain +2 to the roll in addition to any teamwork bonus.

**Ready to Rumble (1):** The spirits can act as soon as they are summoned.

## LIMITS

**Draining (-1):** Summoning spirits is extremely tiring to the hero. At the end of each scene in which the hero had summoned spirits under his command, he takes 1-Stress per spirit. The stress does not clear until the end of a full scene in which no spirits were under his command.

## LUCK (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero and those around him are favored by fortune and able to get a lucky break at just the right time, or might get hindered at just the wrong time.

**Good Luck:** The hero makes an Overcome action. If successful, the hero may use one of the benefits below. On a success with style, the hero may use two of the effects.

The effects last until the end of the next exchange, at which time the hero will have to use Luck again to reset the benefits.

- The hero places two Boosts on a zone or character. The Boosts can be divided between the zone and a specific character, or two different characters, or two different Boosts on the scene— however the hero chooses.
- The hero gains two temporary fate points and may share them with other characters (including Nameless NPCs).
- The hero may spend fate points to negate those spent by another character, on a one-for-one basis, but cannot spend more than two fate points on this effect.

Whether or not the roll can succeed at a cost is up to the GM. If it can, then a minor cost should be something along the lines of a single Boost placed that can only be used against the hero or an ally. For a major cost, see Bad Luck below.

**Bad Luck:** This primarily happens when the character fails the power roll or succeeds at a major cost. In

this case, the player (or GM) must choose one of the following problems. If the roll was failed by 3 or more, the character suffers two problems.

- The character gets two Boosts placed upon them (or even one or two of their allies instead, GM's choice), with a single free invocation going to the opposition.
- The character (or an ally) suffers a Mild Consequence tied into the unlucky break. If the character does not have a Mild Consequence slot open, then it becomes a situation aspect that grants two free invocations to the opposing forces. The Mild Consequence or aspect automatically goes away at the end of the next exchange.
- One of the character's aspects, or a Mild Consequence or situation aspect placed by Luck, is compelled against the character or ally, and no fate point is received for the Compel.

## ***MAGNETIC CONTROL (2)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can manipulate and control ferrous metals, allowing you to move any such objects within the same zone as though you had Super-Strength equal to your controlling skill rank.

You can use your controlling skill to cause metallic objects to grapple any target within the same zone. Treat the Material Strength of the object as the passive Opposition to break free on subsequent rounds.

If you are simply using magnetic forces to grapple them, then your controlling skill acts as your strength on subsequent rounds.

Against multiple targets, you must split your results as normal.

When creating barriers with metallic objects, the opposition to break the construct or barrier is automatically equal to the material strength of the metal being used, such as steel being Legendary (+8) material strength.

### ***SPECIAL EFFECT***

**Blood Flow Manipulation (1):** If you succeed at an opposed roll against a target's Physique, you can cause them to fall asleep by manipulating the flow of oxygen to the brain. The target is asleep for the current exchange, plus one round per Shift you achieved on the roll. Awakening before then requires a Physique

roll against passive opposition equal to the number of Shifts you generated.

## ***MATTER CONTROL (3)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to control and manipulate the very fabric of the physical universe, effectively changing the form of matter or creating matter where none exists.

To change one material type into another, make as an Overcome action. Use the difference between the two Material Strengths as the opposition. For example, to make a bank vault door disappear (changing the vault door to thin air), the opposition would be Monstrous (+9). On the other hand, changing the Monstrous (+9) bank vault door into a more easily breakable Good (+3) brick, requires Fantastic (+6) opposition.

The change lasts for one exchange on a success (or a success at a cost), or few minutes on a success with style. If the hero spends a fate point, the change lasts the entire scene.

Matter Control does not allow you to create weapons or armor with an actual Rating.

### ***SPECIAL EFFECTS***

**Encasement (1):** You can use created objects to encase any target within the same zone, rolling your controlling skill in a grapple attempt. The Material Strength of the object is the passive Opposition for them to break free.

## ***MELEE ATTACK (1-6)***

**Skills:** Fight or Weapons

Your hero has some sort of powerful, up close and personal attack, whether claws, flaming hands, ice encased fists, concussive force punches, or even a weapon that's beyond the scope of the mundane. Each power level grants the character Weapon: 1 rating (up to Weapon: 6).

Applying special effects to the Melee power customizes it to fit the type of attack he uses. Below are some ready-made, low cost examples of how to create some types of Melee Attacks with one or two special effects. Use them as examples for building your own, or apply them to your character for a ready-to-play power. Simply purchase your levels of Melee Attack, and then add the cost below to the final total.

Damage from Melee Attack does not stack with the damage from Super-Strength. Instead, you use

the greater of the two (though you still purchase a secondary effect from the Melee Attack power).

**Claws/Weapon (1):** Once per scene, you can spend a fate point on a successful Attack action and cause your opponent to take both Stress and a Consequence of equal value. If the target was already going to take a Consequence, he takes two Consequences instead.

**Concussive (1):** For each Weapon rating you reduce your damage by, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one.

**Corrosive (2):** When destroying objects, your power does double the amount of Material Strength reduction.

In combat, if the attack succeeds with style, the character can lower the damage and place an Aspect instead of the normal Boost to represent the sticky nature of the corrosive substance.

**Electrical (2):** When you succeed with style on an attack, you do not have to reduce your damage to place a Boost on the target. You may also use your power's skill, instead of Thief or Technology, when attempting to short out or bypass electronic locks.

**Energy (2):** When you succeed with style on an attack, you may spend a fate point to ignore a target's Imperviousness, as well as bypass 2 levels of Invulnerability. If the target is not Impervious, you ignore 3 levels of Invulnerability.

**Fire (1):** When touching any object or person, you gain a +2 bonus to creating Aspects representing some type of fire or burning effect.

**Ice (1):** Once per Issue, when you force an opponent to take a consequence, you can spend a fate point to increase the consequence's severity (so mild becomes moderate, moderate becomes severe). If your opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, he must either take a severe consequence and a second consequence or be taken out.

## **MEMORY AUGMENTATION (2)**

**Skills:** Magic or Mental

The character is able to transform the memories of the target, either erasing some completely or altering the way the character remembers facts and events.

Make an opposed roll of your Magic or Mental skill against the target's Will. If successful, place a temporary aspect on them to represent the changed memory.

To remove the aspect and regain the lost memories, the target must succeed at a Will roll against opposition equal to the skill rating of the power user.

## **PERMANENT MEMORY ALTERATION**

*Some extremely powerful NPCs might have a permanent version of the Memory Augmentation power. When using it against the player-characters or Named NPCs, attempting to recover the true memories requires a fate point to make the roll.*

## **MENTAL BLAST (1-6)**

The power functions the same as the Blast power, except it causes Mental Stress to the target.

## **MENTAL INVULNERABILITY (1-6)**

This power works the same as Invulnerability, except it only negates mental based damage.

## **MIND CONTROL (3)**

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can enter and control the minds of others, effectively controlling their actions and overriding their willpower.

To Mind Control Nameless and Supporting NPCs, roll your skill against passive opposition equal to their Will. If successful, you place a temporary aspect on the target that can be compelled to force them to follow your orders. Compelling the aspect does not cost a fate point.

To take over a Named NPC's or another player-character's mind requires confronting them on the psychic plane. Treat this as a Contest using your controlling skill against their Will. If you win, you place a temporary aspect on the target that can be compelled for free to force them to follow your orders.

Breaking free of the mind control requires removing the aspect. Make an Overcome action against passive opposition equal to controller's controlling skill.

## **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Master of Puppets (1):** The controller can force his thrall to spend fate points and invoke aspects, but the actual fate points are spent by the controller, not the thrall.

**Subtle (1):** Once free, the target is unaware of the Mind Control and suffers a memory loss (a blackout) for the time he was under the influence of the power. If there is a question as to whether or not he was under someone's influence, anyone with an appropriate skill or power (such as Mind probe) can make a roll against opposition equal to the Mind Controller's controlling skill rating to discover the truth.

## ***MIND PROBE (1)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to delve into another person's mind and read their thoughts and memories.

To do so, make an opposed roll versus the person's Will. If the hero rolls a success, he can read memories easily recalled by the target. On a success with style, the hero can read distant or deeply buried memories.

## ***MIND SWITCH (5)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You are able to switch your mind with another living being that you can touch.

For a willing target or a mindless victim (such as a blank clone) the mind switch is automatic.

Otherwise, you're going to roll for it.

Against Nameless and Supporting NPCs, roll your skill against passive opposition equal to their Will. If successful, you and the target switch bodies, and both bodies receive a temporary aspect representing the change.

Against Named NPCs and player-characters, the two of you must oppose each other on the psychic plane in a Contest of the your Mental skill versus the victim's Will. On a victory, you switch bodies and both people receive a temporary aspect related to the fact.

During the Shift, each personality retains its own skills and mental powers, which are now possessed by the other body.

If either body dies during the switch, the two must make an immediate opposed Will roll. The one who gained the most Shifts enters (or remains inside of) the surviving body and the other personality is considered deceased — though whether it can remain as a ghost and plague the other (or even struggle to get it's body back) is up to the GM and could provide a series of adventures.

You can revert back to your new body at any time by making a Will roll against passive opposition. The victim must succeed at an opposed Will roll against you, but you can invoke the victim's temporary aspect as normal to assist in your own roll.

## ***MOLECULAR CHAMELEON (4)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to restructure his molecules into any material he can touch, in effect gaining abilities based on the substance.

Make an Overcome action. The hero gains one temporary aspect related to the substance for each Shift generated on the roll, and gets one free invocation (in total, not per aspect).

The hero should also choose one effect that can be invoked for each aspect (see: Invoking for Effect in the Aspects and Fate Points chapter). For example, a hero who mimicked steel might choose an effect such as being able to ignore 3-Shifts of damage due to the reinforced skin. He might assume a concrete substance and choose an effect similar to the Immovable power. If assuming a rubber material, his effect might give him +3 to grapple rolls. Since the power was purchased with Hero Points, the GM should allow some leeway on the effect types that can be applied, but should still make sure the player isn't going overboard. Generally speaking, up to a 3-Shift effect is plenty.

If the hero can only mimic one specific substance by touching it (such as only steel), purchasing individual powers like **Invulnerability**, **Immoveable**, and **Melee Attack**, with the power set limit of **must touch a steel object to activate**, would be the better option. Molecular Chameleon is designed for those characters who can shift from substance to substance quickly.

## ***SPECIAL EFFECTS***

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## ***PARALYZE (3)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to render a target immobile through touch.

To paralyze the target, the hero must first touch the individual. Then, they make an opposed roll against their Physique or Will, depending upon the nature



of the power. If successful, the victim receives a temporary aspect related to the paralysis, and cannot move or take action while it is attached.

If the target tries to get free early, she must remove the aspect by rolling the appropriate skill roll against opposition equal to the number of Shifts gained on the original activation roll.

Special Effects such as a Gaseous can be applied to the power to mimic the effects of a paralyzing gas, or Triggered to represent a paralyzing drug that has a delayed activation.

table for each Shift.

## ***POWER MIMICRY (5)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can mimic the powers of another character by touching them. First, there is no roll if you're touching a willing character or one that doesn't know you are about to touch them. Otherwise, you must first make an opposed roll using whatever skills are appropriate to force contact.

Once you touch the target, make an Overcome action with passive opposition equal to Fair (+2). If

## ***PLANT CONTROL (2)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can control existing plants within a zone, manipulating them to do your bidding.

You can use your plants to encase anyone within the same zone (providing the plants have vines or some other means of grappling a target), using your controlling skill with a +2 bonus. The Shifts generated act as the opposition for them to break free.

If you spend a fate point and succeed in an Overcome action, you can cause the plants to grow in area to cover one additional zone per Shift gained on the roll. If you fail or tie and choose to succeed at a cost, the plants only fill one additional zone.

## ***POSTCOGNITION (1)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can touch an object and see into the past, viewing events that took place within the immediate vicinity. The exact details of what the hero views are determined by the GM.

The hero must make a Mediocre (+0) action. They can see a few minutes into the past on a tie, and an additional step on the Time Increment

successful, you mimic their powers until the end of the scene. If the target has a power you already have, you mimic the power at the higher of the two rankings if the power has a variable level.

Only NPCs can maintain a mimicked power indefinitely, and such characters should prove to be major opposition. If the GM has such an NPC keep a player-character's power template, he must give the player a fate point at the end of the scene the powers were mimicked— the scene where they are first mimicked, not future scenes where the powers are used again.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Multi-Mimic (1):** You can hold the mimicked the powers of more than one target at once, but each extra character you mimic increases the opposition by an additional +2. Power Levels do not stack if you mimic the same power more than once between different targets— you only receive the higher power level.

**Power Potency Mimic (1):** In addition to the target's powers, you also mimic their controlling skill. If you both have the same controlling skill, you mimic it at the higher of the two ranks.

**Leach (2):** Instead of simply mimicking the powers, you actually steal them from the target. To steal another's powers, you must roll against passive opposition equal to the number of powers being stolen, +2. Due to the nature of this power, the target can only defend by invoking aspects to increase the opposition.

If successful, you place a temporary **Power Loss** aspect on the target, which lasts until the end of the scene. The target can attempt to regain their powers early by removing the aspect. Doing so requires spending a fate point and making an appropriate roll against the number of Shifts you gained on the original roll. Which skill is used for the roll is determined by the narrative. It might be a controlling skill, Will, or even Physique.

This Special Effect can also be applied to the Skill Mimic and Stunt Mimic abilities listed below. Each instance must be purchased separately.

**Ranged Mimic/Theft (1):** You do not have to touch the target, and can mimic or steal powers of a character anywhere within the same zone. The opposition increases by +1. Add an additional +1 to the opposition for each additional zone between you and the target.

**Skill Mimic (4):** In addition to the target's powers (or even in place of it), you can mimic all of the skills of a target. For skills both of you have, you maintain the higher of the two ranks.

**Stunt Mimic (4):** You can mimic all of the Stunts possessed by the target.

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF MIMIC

*Instead of being able to mimic an opponent's powers, characters can be created to mimic only the skills, or the stunts, or the skills and stunts, of an opponent. Building such a power is simply a matter of taking what is currently listed as a Special Effect under Power Mimicry as a core power. In other words, Skill Mimicry would cost 4-Points, while Skill & Stunt Mimicry would cost 8-points.*

## POWER NULLIFY (1,3,5)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to nullify a single power, a type of power, or the source of a power, chosen when this power is taken.

To nullify a power, make a Create an Advantage roll with +2 bonus against the opponent.

Success means you place a temporary aspect on the target representing how their powers are shut down, such as **EMP Strike**, **Mystic Vortex**, or **Nullification Collar**. The powers are shut down until the aspect is removed. Removing the aspect requires a roll against Opposition equal to the number of Shifts gained on the original roll. Which skill is rolled will be determined by the narrative. It might be Physique (breaking the collar), or a controlling skill, or Will (psychic suppression), and so forth.

## SINGLE POWER NULLIFICATION (1)

The hero is able to nullify a single power at a time, and cannot nullify another power unless the current nullification is ended.

## TYPE NULLIFICATION (3)

The hero can nullify all powers of a specific type, such as Ice, Fire, Light, Darkness and so forth

## SOURCE NULLIFICATION (5)

An extremely powerful form of nullification, the hero can cancel powers of a specific source, such as mental, mystic, or mutant.

A character may never have more than one type of source nullification.

### LONG TERM NULLIFICATION

*The ability to turn off powers for entire scenes or longer are plot devices for the GM, and are meant to be obstacles the heroes must somehow overcome as part of the story.*

*If the GM allows it, player-characters can attempt to create source nullification "fields" as part of a protective measure (such as an anti-magic field), but must spend a fate point and roll against Great (+4) opposition. The field last for an entire scene, unless a narrative reason is agreed upon for it to last longer.*



## PRECOGNITION (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can view events that have yet to transpired, though whether those events are set in stone or can be altered are never known at the time (though he may have his own philosophy on the matter). To get a glimpse of the future, roll against passive opposition. The exact details of what is seen is determined by the GM, and might be confusing glimpses or detailed images, depending upon the needs of the story.

The hero can create a single situation aspect related to the portents with a +2 bonus to the roll. How long the aspect remains depends on the narrative context. It could be one scene, one issue, or the length of the story arc.

## PSYCHIC BLADES (1-6)

The power functions the same as the **Melee Attack** power, except it causes Mental Stress to the target.

## PSYCHIC FORCEFIELD (1-6)

See the **Forcefield** power, except it functions against psychic and mental assaults instead of physical and energy.

## RADIATION CONTROL (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can generate and control radiation, giving you the power to cause others to become sick and weak around you.

You gain +2 bonus to the roll when creating situation aspects related to radiation.



## **REGENERATION (4)**

**Skills:** None

You possess the ability to heal at an accelerated rate, literally recovering from injury in a fraction of the time.

When not in combat, you heal up to 2-Stress per minute. For Consequences, take the severity as the number of minutes; so a Mild Consequence takes 2 minutes, a Moderate Consequence takes 4 minutes, and so forth. Stress is always healed first, and then each Consequence is recovered in order of lowest to highest severity.

Healing an Extreme Consequence takes an entire issue of rest (your character is basically out of action), requires you to spend a fate point, and to succeed at a roll against Fantastic (+6) opposition.

During combat, you can take an action to do nothing except attempt to heal. Doing so requires a Physique roll against opposition equal to the amount being healed, so Fair (+2) for Stress or Mild Consequence recovery, Great (+4) for Moderate Consequence recovery, and so on. You must still recover Stress, then Consequences in order of lowest severity, but can combine efforts into a greater opposition, such as healing 2-Stress and a Mild Consequence in one round for a Great (+4) opposition (or even 4-Stress for the same opposition). You can succeed at a cost.

If you want to heal **and** do something else (such as attack) in the same round, you must spend a fate point to use Regeneration.

### **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Enhanced Regeneration (1):** The hero regenerates in half the normal time.

**Immortality (1):** The hero heals even if dead. The hero's body must be relatively intact in order for the hero to come back to life.

**Reconstruction (1):** The hero can regenerate even if disintegrated or blown to pieces, returning to life after 1 month has passed. The time for reconstruction can be decreased by a -1 step on the Time Increment table for each additional +1 cost.

**Regrowth (1):** You can regrow lost limbs within a matter of hours, which can be decreased by a -1 step on the Time Increment table for each additional +1 cost.

## **SELF-DESTRUCT (2,4,6)**

**Skills:** None

You can literally explode yourself, causing 2-hits of damage per Power Level (up to 6-Hits maximum) across one zone per power level. Unfortunately, you cannot filter targets, so you cannot apply the multi-target special effect to this power. Anyone within the zone can make an Athletics roll to somehow avoid the explosion.

You automatically reform within an hour, but can do so sooner by making a roll against passive opposition equal to each step on the Time Increment table you wish to reduce the time by. So, reforming one round later is a five step reduction on the chart for a Superb (+5) opposition.

If you want to reform in a location other than where you detonated (no more than a few zones or city blocks away), add +1 to the opposition.

### **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Massive Explosion (1):** Your self-destruction explodes across two zones per power level.

## **SENSORY SHIELD (1)**

**Skills:** None

You have a power suit or some other method (even inborn) of protecting your various senses against overload.

When you defend against your opponent attempting to place situation aspects on you that target your senses, such as by using intense sounds (sonic attack), flashes of light (light control), and other effects that can cause you to become **dazed**, **off-balance**, **staggered**, **stunned**, and so forth due to sensory overload, you gain +2 to the Defend action.

## **SERIAL REINCARNATION (2)**

**Skills:** None

Whenever the hero dies, he reincarnates as a new person after a few hours. The hero maintains his memories and Skill Column, but can create new Aspects (except his Concept Aspect), and purchase new powers and stunts using the same number of Hero Points he was originally created with (meaning he has lost any increases he received through Milestones in his previous form).

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Rapid Reincarnation (1):** Each time this special effect is applied, the time to reincarnate is reduced by 1 step on the Time Increment table.

## SHAPESHIFT (5)

**Skills:** Magic or Power

You can shapeshift into any animal or inanimate object. For the ability to shapeshift into other people, add **Chameleon** to your power set.

To shapeshift, make an Overcome action. Each Shift generated on the roll provides you with a power level with which to build your new form. You maintain your own Skill Column.

The points are spent on a one-for-one basis to gain power levels in appropriate powers (so, no, you don't have to flip through the book during play to calculate costs as though buying the powers normally).

When shapeshifting into inanimate forms, anyone trying to recognize that you're not actually the object must make an opposed roll against your Deceive skill, and you get a +2 bonus to the roll.

You can maintain the form until the end of the scene or until Taken Out.

While in a shapeshifted form, you lose access to your normal powers, except the **Shapeshift** ability.

*A hero with Shapeshift transforms into a panther and gets 4 Shifts on the roll. The character has 4 points with which to build the abilities. He might gain Claws 2, Super-Speed 1, and Invisibility 2 (Limit: darkness only).*

*At a later time, he shapeshifts into a rhino and gains 5-Shifts. He spends the Shifts on: super-speed 1, Melee Attack (horn) 2, and Density 2.*

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## SHRINKING (2)

**Skills:** None

The hero may decrease his size at will, allowing him to get into areas impossible for a normal sized person to navigate. Shrinking takes an entire round and it takes another entire round to return to normal size. A hero may choose to shrink to a size less than that

allowed by his power level. Whether or not the hero retains his normal density while reduced in size is up to them, but they retain their normal Physique.

At Power Level 5 and above, normal sized people cannot target the hero unless the individual possesses some way of seeing them, such as microscopic vision. They also cannot interact with normal sized people (such as a direct attack). Additionally, at Power Level 6 the hero can enter an alternate dimension such as a "microverse," if such a place exists within the campaign.

The hero also gains an appropriate character aspect placed upon them, such as **as size of a bug**, with one free invocation.

Whether or not the power is permanent or can be turned on and off as a free action is determined when Shrinking is purchased.

Power Level	Height
1	6"
2	4"
3	2"
4	Small Insect
5	Dust Particle
6	Microscopic

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Blindside (2):** The hero can revert to normal size and attack as a single action, gaining a bonus to the attack roll equal to the Power Level that was active.

## SICKEN (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to make those he touches nauseated or ill.

To do this, take a Create an Advantage action to first place a situation aspect on the target representing what type of illness you are hitting them with. They can defend against this normally, usually with Physique.

If the aspect is placed, you get the normal number of free invocations.

You can either use the aspect for the normal invocations, or sacrifice your free invocations on a one-for-one basis to cause Stress to the target.

## ***SLEEP (1)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to cause another living target to enter a deep sleep. Doing so requires an opposed power roll against the target's Physique for a physical attack (such as a gas), or Will for a mental attack or mystical attack. If successful and the target is a Nameless or Supporting NPC, they fall asleep and remain that way for the rest of the scene. Against a Named NPC or player-character, the target falls asleep for a number of rounds equal to the Shifts generated by the roll.

## ***SORCERY (3)***

**Skills:** Magic

The hero can channel and direct the raw arcane energies of the cosmos, making him a member of the mystic community whether he wants to be one or not.

He can use the Magic skill instead of Arcanum for rolls involving knowing details (common or long forgotten) of mystic elements, such as spells, demons, dimensions, legends, and beings of power.

The Magic skill can be used to Attack or Defend in place of another skill where appropriate, such as using Magic instead of Accuracy to fire a mystic themed Blast power.

The sorcerer also gains +2 to Create an Advantage rolls using his magic skill.

## ***SOUND WAVE CONTROL (1)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can control sound waves across an entire zone. When you create situation aspects based on increasing or decreasing sound, you can sacrifice free invocations on a one-for-one basis to increase sound waves against a target and cause immediate Stress.

Against characters with Hyper-Senses (Hyper-Hearing), each free invocation sacrificed causes 2-Stress.

## ***SPATIAL CONTROL (1)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You possess the ability to twist and bend the very fabric of space, altering distances between two points with ease.

By making a controlling skill roll against as an Overcome action, you can decrease or increase the distance between two points for each Shift achieved on the roll. For example, if you gained 2 Shifts on the roll, you could warp space so that you now occupy an area that was two zones away. Likewise, you could extend the distance so that now the area was an extra two zones away, thereby forcing a movement roll (or multiple rounds) to get there.

By applying the Area Effect and Multi-Target special effects to the power, you can achieve some wild effects.

## ***SPINNING (1)***

**Skills:** None

You can spin like a top, making yourself harder to hit. When taking a Defend action while spinning, you gain a +1 to Fight and Athletics.

Additionally, the hero can purchase enhancements from the selection below, representing special abilities he's gained through his spinning ability.

- **Projectile Attack (1):** The hero can make an attack up to one zone away by launching a projectile at a target. The projectile does Weapon: 2 damage.
- **Area Attack (2):** The hero can release held objects, attacking everyone within the same zone with a Weapon: 2 damage.
- **Burrowing (2):** The hero gains the Burrowing power.
- **Full Vision (1):** While spinning, you can easily see in all directions. The hero gains the Full Vision ability from Hyper-Senses.
- **Any Surface (2):** While spinning, you can move across walls and water as though on solid ground, gaining both the Wall-Crawling and Water Walking modes of Hyper-Movement.

## ***STRETCHING (3)***

**Skills:** None

The hero is able to stretch his limbs up to four zones zone away, allowing him to make attacks and manipulate objects at a distance.

The hero also gains a +1 to Defend actions due to his malleable body, basically allowing him to absorb most attacks, and a +1 to grapple attempts.

The hero can also seep through any non-airtight opening as a full round action.

## ***SUMMON (5)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can summon minions to your side, whether they are human thugs, demons, or some other form. The exact type of animation must be chosen when the power is purchased.

To summon your minions, make a skill roll. If successful, the Shifts gained on the roll are used to summon one or more ranks of minions, with a single member of each rank costing an equal number of Shifts. For example, if the hero gained 5-Shifts on the roll, he could choose to summon five Rank 1 minions, two Rank 2 and one Rank 1 minions, one Rank 3 and one Rank 2 minions, or any other combination.

The minions cannot act until the round after they are summoned. All minions operate as Nameless NPCs, and last until the end of the scene unless Taken Out. Keeping them around longer without making an additional skill roll requires spending one fate point per additional scene.

**Rank 1:** The minions are Average quality. They have one or two Aspects, one or two Average (+1) skills, and no stress boxes— a one shift hit is enough to take them out.

**Rank 2:** Your minions are Fair quality. Give them one or two Aspects, one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and one stress box each— a two shift hit is enough to take one of them out.

**Rank 3:** The minions are Good quality minions. They have one or two Aspects, one Good (+3), one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and two stress boxes each— a three shift hit is enough to take one of them out.

## ***SPECIAL EFFECTS***

**Ready to Rumble (1):** The minions act as soon as they are summoned.

**Super-Powered (1):** Your minions are powered. You gain a number of Power Levels equal to the half the opposition (rounded up) you rolled against to summon them. Divide the Power Levels between powers as desired. Because these are minions, you do not have to calculate costs for the powers, you simply spend Power Levels on a one-for-one basis, but all minions must have the same powers.

## ***SUMMON SWARM (4)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can summon a large swarm of nearby small creatures, such as insects, bats, or birds.

Make an Overcome action. The Shifts gained on the roll are used to determine the rank of the swarm, as well as any Special Effects that might be attached to its attack. The swarm should be no more than one zone away. To summon a swarm from further, the Opposition increases by +1 per additional zone.

For example, if the hero achieved 4-Shifts on the roll, he might choose to summon a Rank 2 swarm, and apply both the Area Effect and Potent Special Effects to the swarm's attacks.

The swarm cannot act until the round after it is summoned. It operates as a Nameless NPC, and lasts until the end of the scene unless Taken Out. Controlling the swarm longer than a single scene without making an additional skill roll requires spending one fate point per additional scene.

**Rank 1:** The swarm is Average quality. It has one or two Aspects, one or two Average (+1) skills, and no stress boxes— a one shift hit is enough to take it out.

**Rank 2:** Your swarm is Fair quality. Give it one or two Aspects, one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and one stress box each— a two shift hit is enough to take it out.

**Rank 3:** The swarm is Good quality. It has one or two Aspects, one Good (+3), one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1) skills, and two stress boxes each— a three shift hit is enough to take one of it out.

## ***SPECIAL EFFECTS***

**Ready to Rumble (1):** The swarm acts as soon as it is summoned.

## ***SUPER-SPEED (1-4)***

**Skills:** None

You can move at greater than human speeds, giving you a faster reaction time than most others and making you harder to hit when you're in motion. Outside of combat and chases, your movement is based solely upon the narrative context. During combat, you can gain the following benefits based on the power level of Super-Speed.

**Power level 1:** You move at a speed equivalent to running horse. Providing there are no zone barriers to stop you, you can move four zones per turn for free. You have Speed Rating 2 in chases.

**Power level 2:** You can run a couple of hundred miles per hour, roughly the equivalent of a top-end sports car. At this power level, you can run up walls and across water, and can move into any zone for free. You can move six zones per turn for free, providing there are no zone barriers in your way, and have Speed Rating 3 in chases.

**Power level 3:** Although not super-sonic, your speed can match that of small planes and any helicopter. In chases, you have Speed Rating 4.

**Power level 4:** You are amongst the fastest beings on Earth and can move at super-sonic (or greater) speeds. You can avoid ground-based zone barriers and move into any zone for free. By spending a fate point, you can arrive at any scene you want to, because you always have enough time to get there. You have Speed Rating 5 in chases.

### **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Hyper-Reflexes (1/2):** Your super-speed gives you hyper-fast reaction, granting you a +2 bonus to initiative each round. If purchased twice, you gain +4 bonus.

**React in a Flash (1):** You may spend a fate point to go first in an exchange, regardless of your initiative. If multiple people with this special effect (or a similar stunt) exercise this ability, they go in turn of their normal initiative, before those who don't have the stunt get a chance to act. If the exchange has already started, and you have not yet acted, you may instead spend a fate point to act next, effectively acting out of the usual turn order.

## ***SUPER-STRENGTH (1-6)***

**Skills:** None

You are stronger than mere mortals, able to achieve feats of strength and hit with a force others usually only imagine.

Each level in Super-Strength provides you with Weapon: 1 for melee attacks, and a +1 to Physique rolls that involve a raw application of strength, such as breaking things or making or breaking grapples, but not to lifting things.

The general lifting ability of super-strength is shown on the Super-Strength Lifting Benchmark table below. To lift a weight, make a roll using Mediocre (+0) skill rating plus your Super-Strength bonus in an Overcome action against the indicated opposition. When lifting weight limits found on the normal Lifting Benchmark table, no roll is necessary.

<b>Super-Strength</b>	<b>Lifting Benchmark</b>
Mediocre (+0)	Lifting a car is no problem
Average (+1)	Semi trucks are weapons in your grasp
Fair (+2)	You could lift a fully loaded jet fighter
Good (+3)	Modern tanks are not a weight problem for you
Great (+4)	You can heft a small building
Superb (+5)	You can move large buildings
Fantastic (+6)	With your strength, Battleships can be carried
Epic (+7)	You are strong enough to rais an aircraft carrier
Legendary (+8)	At this levelm your strength can lift a sky scraper
Monstrous (+9)	You could lift the Great Pyramid of Giza
Colossal (+10)	You can move mountains
Unearthly (+11)	You could lift an island
inconveivable (+12)	Your strength is a plot device, congrats!

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Enhanced Lifting (1):** You add your Physique to lifting rolls involving Super-Strength.

**Ground Slam (2):** The hero can strike the ground and hit everyone in the zone. Doing so means using a Create an Advantage action with +2 bonus to place an **Off-Balanced**, **Staggered**, or similar situation aspect on them. They can Defend against the attempt.

## SWINGING (2)

**Skills:** None

The hero has a swing line that allows him to avoid ground based obstacles and situation aspects. The swing line also provides a +2 bonus to grapples, which you can make with your Accuracy skill, and grants you Speed Rating 2 for chases. Providing there are no zone barriers in your way, you can move four zones per turn for free.

If you use your Swing line to grapple an opponent, they must succeed against opposition equal to the number of Shifts you gained on your grapple roll to break free.

## TELEKINESIS (1)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero is able to move and manipulate objects that he can see, without physically touching them, from up to a zone away. Use your controlling skill as your Strength for determining how much you can lift.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Omega Telekinesis (1):** When lifting objects with your mind, you can lift weight from the Super-Strength Lifting Benchmark table.

## TELEPATHY (1)

**Skills:** Magic or Mental

The hero can facilitate mental communication with another greater than animal intellect at a distance determined by the controlling skill. When attempting to contact more than one person at a time (such as coordinating a team), the hero can automatically contact a number of people equal to his skill rating, to a minimum of one, as a free action. For each additional person he wishes to simultaneously contact or coordinate, he must make a roll against passive opposition equal to the number of additional people. So, a telepath with Mental at Good (+3) can

automatically contact up to three people at once as a free action. To coordinate a team of seven people (an additional four individuals), however, he must succeed at an Overcome action with Great (+4) opposition.

Once the link is established, it is maintained freely until the telepath ends it, or someone involved is rendered unconscious.

Skill Rating	Telepathic Range
Mediocre (+0)	Several hundred feet
Average (+1)	A few miles
Fair (+2)	Several hundred miles
Good (+3)	Several thousand miles
Great (+4)	Anywhere on the planet
Superb (+5)	Easily from the Earth to the moon
Fantastic (+6)	Anywhere within the same star system
Epic (+7) or greater	Anywhere in the universe

## SPECIAL EFFECT

**Omega Telepath (1):** The character uses the Overcome action to link more people than his rating in the controlling skill as a free action.

## TELEPORTATION (1-6)

**Skills:** Magic or Power

The hero can travel a distance from one point to another instantaneously without traversing through the intervening space.

The hero can automatically teleport a distance equal to the Power Level as shown on the Teleportation Range table. At the GM's option, a character can teleport a greater distance, but doing so requires an Overcome action against Fair (+2) opposition for a single Power Level range increase, and an additional +2 to the opposition for each additional level of range increase.

If the hero wishes to teleport an unwilling subject, the hero must first make a grapple against the target. On the next round, if the grapple is maintained, the target can be teleported.

Power Level	Teleportation Range
Power level 1	A few miles
Power level 2	Several hundred milss
Power level 3	Several thousand miles
Power level 4	Anywhere on the planet
Power level 5	Easily from the Earth to the moon
Power level 6	Anywhere within the same star system

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Gateway (1):** The hero opens a portal that allows others to teleport through it.

### LIMITS

**Must See Destination (-1):** The hero must see the location to which they are Teleporting. If the hero cannot see the destination, he must make a roll against Fair (+2) Opposition (increased as appropriate if attempting to also teleport a greater than normal distance). Failure indicates the hero has collided with an object and takes Stress equal to the Material Strength.

### TIME CONTROL (2)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You have rudimentary control over the flow of time, allowing you to manipulate the time stream for minor effects.

When you succeed with style on a Defend action, you may take +2 on your next action in addition to creating a Boost on the attacker. You also do not have to reduce your damage to place a Boost on the target when succeeding with style on an attack.

### SPECIAL EFFECT

**Time Freeze (3):** Once per scene, when you succeed with style while creating an aspect representing the slowing of time, instead of gaining free invokes, you can spend a fate point to cause everyone you choose within the zone to time-freeze. They can take no actions, and are considered to be in a form of suspended animation. The time-freeze lasts for a number of rounds equal to your controlling skill rating +1.

### TIME TRAVEL (1-6)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The hero can travel to any point in time within a range determined by the Power Level. At the GM's option, a character can travel through a greater length of time, but doing so requires an Overcome action against Fair (+2) opposition for a single Power Level increase, and an additional +2 to the opposition for each additional level of range increase.

If the hero wishes to time travel an unwilling subject, the hero must first make a grapple against the target. On the next round, if the grapple is maintained, the target can be time shifted. The time change lasts for one scene, at which time the target's anchor to his own time returns him to the exact point he was taken from. By spending a fate point and rolling against opposition equal to the time traveler's Power Level, the target can attempt to return to his home time period within the same scene.

Power Level	Time Range
Power level 1	A few minutes
Power level 2	Several hours
Power level 3	Several months
Power level 4	Several years
Power level 5	Several Decades
Power level 6	The timestream is your playground

### LIMITS

**Limited Travel (-1):** The hero can travel into the past or future, but not both. As a result, he can't return to his home time period.

### THE LAWS OF TIME TRAVEL

*The exact laws of moving throughout the time stream are left to the GM to decide, and may or may not be completely understood by time travelling characters. For example, can the time stream be altered by travelling into the past, or do time travelers enter an alternate time stream where their actions create new branches that will never affect their home phase?*

## **TWO-DIMENSIONAL (2)**

**Skills:** None

You have the ability to turn your body in a flat, two-dimensional form.

You can automatically bypass any zone obstacle that a single sheet of paper could slide through, and gain +1 to Defend actions against attacks unless the opponent is facing you directly from the front or back.

If someone is viewing you at an angle or from the side, you gain +2 to Stealth.

## **VAMPIRISM (2)**

**Skills:** Mental or Power

The hero has the ability to take the life force or psychic energy of others, and use it to heal himself.

You must first successfully grapple your opponent. Once the target is grappled, make a roll as an Attack action versus their Physique or Will as a Defend action, depending upon whether you are a blood or psychic vampire. Deal damage as normal for an Attack action.

Additionally, for each Stress and Consequence you cause, you heal an equal amount of Stress, then Consequences (Stress must be healed first). Consequences you cause the target heal damage you've sustained for an amount equal to their severity— so a Mild Consequence heals 2-Stress, a Moderate heals 4-Stress, and so forth.

## **CREATING UNDEAD**

*Usually within the realm of NPCs, if the character is a member of the Undead (such as an actual vampire), then anyone Taken Out by the vampiric attack rises within three days as one of the Undead, usually under the domination of the one who created them.*

*If the GM wishes to allow such an option to a player-character, increase the cost of Vampirism by 4-points. Anyone transformed into an Undead rises as an Average quality Nameless NPC under their mental domination. If it is another player-character or Named NPC, the victim remains a full character, and may or may not remain under the thrall of their master depending upon the needs of the story.*

## **WATER CONTROL (4)**

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can control the flow of water, causing it to move at your command.

Anyone caught within the zone must make an opposed against your Controlling skill each round. If they fail or tie, they can take no other actions that round as they struggle not to drown. If they choose to succeed at a cost, then they can act as though they only succeeded, but suffer 2-Stress. Invulnerability doesn't negate this damage, but a resistance to drowning does.

If they succeed, they take no Stress, but all actions suffer a +1 to the opposition. If they succeed with style, they act normally that round.

Water Control already has Area Effect included in the cost.

## **WEATHER CONTROL (5)**

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can command the very forces of nature, allowing you to create storms or diminish existing storms.

The hero can command the winds as though he possessed the Air Control power, and can bring about arctic storm conditions as though he possessed the Cold Control power. Additionally, he can lightning strike a target up to one zone away as an Attack



action using the controlling skill, causing an extra 2-hits of damage.

Although the character can automatically cancel any condition he has created, diminishing a storm he did not create requires an Overcome action against opposition based on the intensity of the weather. Generally speaking, the opposition should range from Average (+1) for a normal thunderstorm, to Fantastic (+6) for an F5 tornado or Category 5 hurricane.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

Below is a list of special effects that can be applied to a wide range of powers, along with the cost for applying each to a power. The cost for a special effect is always flat, regardless of how many Power Levels the power might possess. It only adds to the total cost of the power.

### **ADVANTAGEOUS (1)**

You gain +2 to rolls to create situation aspects against specific targets. The exact nature of the aspects that can be created must be chosen when this special effect is applied to the power, such as **Confusion**, **Dazed**, **Stunned**, and so forth.

Each time this special effect is taken, it can apply to a different type of situation aspect.

### **AREA EFFECT (1)**

You can attack everyone within the same zone without having to split your result. Each additional time this special effect is applied to the power, it increases the area effect by an additional zone.

### **CHARGE OBJECT (1)**

The hero can touch an object, charging it with his blast power. Whatever comes into contact with the object after it is charged triggers the power's release. This effectively allows him to create a Blast attack with a time delay on when it goes off. Avoiding the blast once the charge is triggered requires an Overcome action.

Charging and throwing a small object functions the same as the normal Blast power for damage, but can only hit targets in the same zone as the attacker, and uses the Accuracy skill.

### **CONCUSSIVE (1)**

For each Weapon rating you reduce your damage, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one zone.

### **COUNTERING/NULLIFY RESISTANCE (1)**

The power is particularly resistant to being countered or nullified and increases the Opposition to do so by +2.

### **DANGEROUS (2)**

Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Moderate Consequence instead of stress.

### **DEADLY (1)**

Once per issue, you can spend a fate point on a successful attack action and cause your opponent to take both Stress and a Consequence of equal value. If the target was already going to take a Consequence, he takes two Consequences instead. This cannot be combined with the Potent, Deadly, or Lethal special effects.

### **DEMOLISHING (1)**

When destroying objects, your power does double the amount of Material Strength reduction.

### **DURABLE (1)**

You can spend a fate point once per scene to absorb a Mild Consequence. If the Consequence was caused due to an attack that used the Potent, Deadly, or Lethal special effects, the fate point goes to the attacker.

### **ENCASING (1)**

If you succeed with style on the attack, you can lower your damage (including damage gained from Shifts) and use your ice to automatically encase your target. To break free, they must roll against passive opposition equal to the amount of damage you transferred to the encasement.

If you purchase this Special Effect twice, you instead have **Hardened Encasement**. The passive opposition to break free of your encasement is increased by an additional +2.

## ***ENTANGLING (1)***

You gain a +2 bonus when using the weapon to grapple an opponent. To break free, the target must succeed at an Overcome action with opposition equal the Shifts you achieved on the grapple roll. Breaking free cannot succeed at a cost.

## ***EXTENDED RANGE (1)***

For each Weapon Rating that you reduce your damage, you extend the range of your attack by an additional zone.

## ***FOLLOW-UP (1)***

When you succeed with style on an attack, you do not have to reduce your damage to place a Boost on the target.

## ***GASEOUS (1)***

Your damaging attack power is no longer instant, but takes on a life of its own as it slowly fills the zone. It takes three rounds to fill an entire zone. Any area it covers is attacked each round by a skill rating equal to the Weapon Rating of the power. If the power did not have a Weapon Rating (such as the Emotion Control power), then the gas attacks with Mediocre (+0) skill.

The gas cloud has 2-Stress boxes, and can only be attacked by methods that make sense, such as using Air Control to dissipate the gas.

## ***GHOSTLY (1)***

The power is able to normally affect astral and intangible targets.

## ***HARD HITTING (1)***

Once per Issue, when you force an opponent to take a consequence (except through the use of the Potent, Deadly, or Lethal special effects), you can spend a fate point to increase the consequence's severity (so mild becomes moderate, moderate becomes severe). If your opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, he must either take a severe consequence *and* a second consequence or be Taken Out.

## ***HOMING (2)***

Whenever a Blast power with this enhancement misses its target, it continues to make a new attack each consecutive round, up to a maximum number of rounds equal to the Power Level of Blast. Basically, the power continues to attack on its own, and

subsequent attempts to hit the target do not count toward the character's normal actions.

The extra attacks are at an Average (+1) skill rating, and can be increased to Fantastic (+6) by taking this special effect multiple times. If a Defend action succeeds with style against the attack, the power is considered to have been defeated (such as missiles striking a different target), and the homing attack ends.

## ***IMPERVIOUS (1/2)***

This special effect is optional and requires GM and group consensus before being added to a campaign. It applies to the **Invulnerability** power.

Although Daring Comics allows any character to risk injury if the opponent can generate enough Shifts on an attack, sometimes in comic books certain characters are just completely immune to a type of damage up to a certain threshold.

A character with the Impervious special effect is immune to all damage of a particular type. It could be applied to energy damage, physical damage (such as blades, bullets, and low-yield explosives), mental damage, or even damage from arcane spells (such as a mystic themed blast). In order for a character to have this Special Effect, his Invulnerability level **must be at least equal** to the Weapon Rating he is immune to.

At the **Low Impervious** level, the character is immune to damage from attacks rated at Weapon 3 or lower, and must have at least Invulnerability 3. At **Highly Impervious**, he is immune to damage from Weapon 4 or lower conventional attacks, and must have at least Invulnerability 4. The character cannot be harmed by the attack, regardless of how many Shifts are gained on the attack roll.

Sometimes, an attack will fall between the cracks and will have to be judged on a case-by-case basis. A Concussive Force blast could be argued to be a physical attack against a character Impervious to Weapon Rating in energy attacks, but as shown in comics it might sometimes affect the character as though it were an energy based attack.

Regardless of whether or not a character is Impervious, they can still suffer knockback from an attack as normal, even if they can't be damaged by it.

## ***INDIRECT (1)***

The attack power originates from a source other than where the hero is physically located. The power

ignores obstacles and cover when hitting the target (in other words, targets can't invoke aspects such as **Cover** against this power), but does not ignore Forcefields.

### **LETHAL (3)**

Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Severe Consequence instead of stress.

### **MEGA-ATTACK (1/2)**

Typically, this special effect is found in power-armor themed powers, but can be applied to just about any type of character with the right explanation.

Once per issue, you can double the Weapon Rating of an attack power. The increase lasts for one attack only. There are two levels to this special effect.

**Basic:** The power immediately shuts down after the attack. Additionally, you take Stress, and then Consequences if you don't have enough Stress boxes, equal to *the number of levels the power was enhanced*. The Consequences must be repaired or recovered as normal.

For example, let's say you had Energy Beam 4, and used the special effect to do a single attack at Energy Beam 8. After the attack, Energy Beam is shutdown. Additionally, since Energy Beam was enhanced by 4 levels, you take 4-Stress. If you can't cover the Stress, you take any overflow as Consequences.

Energy Beam is automatically recovered at the end of the scene. To recover it during the scene requires spending a round on an Overcome action against an opposition equal to the power's level. In the above example, that would be a Great (+4) Opposition. Of course, you *could* decide to recover only a portion of it, say Energy Beam 2, against a Fair (+2) Opposition.

The recovery action, though, can only be attempted **once during the scene**.

To recover during a scene, roll whichever skill would make narrative sense (such as a Controlling skill, Physique Technology, or Will).

**Advanced:** The power still shuts down after the attack, but this version allows you to first apply those levels to reduce your other powers, before you have to consider Stress or Consequences. These changes last until the end of the scene in which the special effect was used, then your power levels return to normal.

If you don't have enough overall power levels to absorb the required reduction, then all your powers are completely shut down and you take any overflow as either Stress or Consequences.

If a power does not have Power Levels (such as Shrinking, Teleportation, and so forth), the power can take 1 point of reduction and is shut down.

Just as in the basic version, you *can* attempt to recover the lowered powers during the scene. Doing so requires an Overcome action with opposition equal to the total number of reduced levels to be recovered. So, if Energy Beam 4 had been shut down, plus you had spread the reduction to lower Super-Strength by 2 and Flight by 2, the Overcome action would be at a Legendary (+8) Opposition.

Of course, you could attempt to recover less power. For example, Energy Beam 2 and Flight 2 for only a Great (+4) Opposition.

However you decide to handle it, the recovery action can only be attempted once during the scene. Otherwise, all reduced power levels are automatically recovered at the end of the scene.

*Americannon has Energy Blast 4, Flight 3, Forcefield 3, and Hyper-sense 3 (Dark Vision, Full Vision, Hyper-Hearing). He doubles Energy Blast for 1 action, making it a Weapon Rating 8.*

*Afterward, he can either take 4-Stress, or reduce some of his other powers by a total of 4 levels. He reduces Hyper-Sense by 3, and Flight by 1.*

### **MULTI-TARGETING (2)**

When you make an area attack, you do not split your results between targets, and can filter out targets you do not want to be affected. (Note that the cost of this Special Effect already includes Area Attack.)

### **PENETRATING (2)**

When you succeed with style on an attack, you may spend a fate point to ignore a target's imperviousness, as well as bypass 2 levels of Invulnerability. If the target is not Impervious, you ignore 3 levels of Invulnerability.

### **PERSISTENT (3)**

Once per scene, when your attack causes the target to take a Consequence from your power, you may spend

a fate point. Doing so causes the original attack to continue to attack the target each consecutive round with a skill rating equal to the Shifts you generated on the attack roll. To stop the consecutive attacks, the target must succeed at a Defend action.

### ***POTENT (1)***

Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Mild Consequence instead of stress.

### ***POWER STRESS (1)***

Typically, this special effect is found in power-armor themed powers, but can be applied to just about any type of character with the right explanation.

You may spend a fate point once per scene to lower your powers instead of taking Stress (including if your Stress boxes are full and it would have been a Consequence). The total stress can be applied to one power or multiple powers. For example, if your hero took a 5-stress hit, he could instead spend the fate point and, for his single use of the effect this scene, lower one power by 2 levels, a second power by 2 levels, and a third power by 1 level.

Like Stress, the power levels recover at the end of the scene.

### ***REINFORCED (3)***

You can spend a fate point once per scene to absorb a Severe Consequence. If the Consequence was caused due to an attack that used the Potent, Deadly, or Lethal special effects, the fate point goes to that character.

### ***REROUTE POWER (1)***

Typically, this special effect is found in power-armor themed powers, but can be applied to just about any type of character with the right explanation.

Once per scene, you can spend a fate point to reroute power. For example, lowering one power by 2 to increase another power by 2, or two powers by +1 level each.

You can revert the power levels back to normal at any time during the scene, but cannot reroute power again until the next scene. In other words, if you spent the fate point to reroute 4 levels of Force Field into 2 levels of Energy Beam and 2 levels of Energy Absorption, you can automatically revert any portion of those levels back into Force Field if you really need to, even across multiple rounds. Just remember

that you cannot reroute any powers again for the remainder of the scene, so be sure you want to revert levels back before you do so.

There is a limit, however. You still can't go above a power's normal power level limit (such as Power Level 4 for Flight, or Power Level 6 for Blast).

### ***SET-UP (1)***

When you succeed with style on an attack and lower your damage to place a boost, you instead gain a situation aspect with a free invocation.

### ***TOUGH (2)***

You can spend a fate point once per scene to absorb a Moderate Consequence. If the Consequence was caused due to an attack that used the Potent, Deadly, or Lethal special effects, the fate point goes to that character.

### ***TRANS-DIMENSIONAL (1)***

The power can affect targets in other dimensions as if the wielder were actually in that dimension. The power affects one other dimension (chosen by the player) each time this special effect is taken.

### ***UNNOTICEABLE (1)***

The power, whether it is a physical blast or some other sort of obvious attack, is completely invisible to the naked eye, making it almost impossible to tell where it came from simply by sight.

### ***USEABLE ON OTHERS (1)***

When applied to a power that normally only affects the person who has it (such as Invulnerability), it can now affect others through touch. To do so, make a roll against Fair (+2) Opposition.

### ***VOLLEY (1)***

When added to an attack power, the power fires a rapid volley of shots at the target. Using a volley adds +1 to the attack roll.

## **LIMITS**

The following list covers some of the more common forms of Limits that powers can take, along with the overall power set cost reduction for applying them to the power. The cost reduction is a flat rate subtracted

from the power's total cost. No power can be reduced below a 1-point cost.

### ***ALWAYS ON (-1)***

The power is always on and cannot be turned off, though it can be negated. If the power is negated, it automatically reactivates when the source of the nullification is removed.

### ***CANNOT USE POWER STUNTS (-1)***

The power cannot be modified using Power Stunts.

### ***DAMAGING (-1)***

Each round the hero uses the power, he takes 2-Stress. Invulnerability does not reduce the damage.

### ***DISTRACTING (-1)***

Using the power takes concentration and causes the hero to not be able to properly defend himself. Attacks against the hero gain a +2 bonus.

### ***FATIGUING (-1)***

Each use of the power causes the hero 2-Stress. The hero can resist the fatigue by spending a fate point, but Invulnerability does not mitigate the Stress.

### ***GRAPPLING ATTACK (-1)***

The power requires the hero to grapple the target successfully before he can attack him with the power. After a successful grapple, the hero may attempt to damage his target on subsequent rounds by making an opposed roll versus the target.

### ***LONGER ACTIVATION (-1)***

The power takes longer to activate and the hero can only use it every other round, instead of every round.

### ***REDUCED RANGE (-1)***

Each time this limit is taken, a ranged power has its range reduced by two zones.

### ***RESTRICTED (-1)***

The power is restricted in some way. Perhaps it's not effective against a certain substance, usable only on objects or only on living beings, the hero must chant or perform gestures, or so forth.

### ***SENSE RELIANT (-1)***

The power requires that the target be able to sense you in some manner, such as be able to see you, hear you, touch you, and so forth. The type of sense is determined when this Limit is taken.

### ***UNSTABLE (-3)***

The power is unstable and doesn't always work when the hero desires. Whenever the hero wants to use this power, roll the dice. If the dice roll zero to +4, the power works normally. On a roll of -1 to -3, the power fails to activate. On a roll of -4, the power burns out and can't be used for the rest of the scene.

### ***WILD POWER (-3)***

The power's functionality and magnitude are outside of the hero's control. Such powers are under the GMs control as to when they activate and in what way. (**Note:** This is a Limit instead of a Complication due to the fact that its constant use at the GM's discretion is too broad to net a fate point each time it comes into play.)

## ***BUILDING YOUR OWN POWERS***

In Daring Comics, we give you plenty of powers to choose from and modify through special effects and limits, but powers in comic books are extremely far ranging. It would be impossible to cover every conceivable possibility.

Although you have plenty of ready-made powers to choose from, we're also going to give you the guidelines for creating your own powers. Just as with stunts, creating powers uses a couple of guidelines. Unlike stunts, it's a little less of a semi-exact science. The powers we see in comic books are extremely wide and varied, and some of them just don't cleanly fit into an exact build system. When you hit those powers, the guidelines will help in determining a cost and achieving some balance at the table.

When a power just won't fit as cleanly into a mechanical build system as we would like, such as when it uses an effect or two that are a bit more broad or unique, that's okay. It's actually hard to break any Fate system game, and Daring Comics is the same. For such powers, either break it down further into a basic effect for taking the power, and then put the rest into some special effects that can be purchased, or modify the cost as feels best. A perfect example of such powers are **Immunity** and **Power Nullify**. Both

the upper two tiers of the power offer effects that are extremely hard to gauge. Do your best to determine how many 2-Shift benefits the overall effect is worth, and apply a 1-cost per 2-Shift.

Unlike with normal stunts, many effects of a power will have a broader use instead of being tied only to certain circumstances.

The main rule to the entire process is to build powers and associated special effects that are fun to play and emulate what you've seen in comic books. As long as the cost falls somewhere within the guidelines, you'll be all right. Although building them can be fun, don't get too bogged down with the minutiae. You can always adjust the power later. Just build the power and have fun!

## ***DETERMINING EFFECT COSTS***

For the most part, you'll notice that most of the pre-built powers combined multiple 1-Point Effects in order to offer a broad range of power effects. This is the same principle as building stunts, and is really the core basis of creating powers as well. Many of the example powers stack multiple 1-Point effects.

In some cases, however, powers offer a very broad base effect that doesn't fall neatly into the 2-Shifts of effect, or 1-Point of broad effect. For those situations, we've given guidelines on how to determine cost via the 2-Point through 5-Point effects examples below.

It is rather hard to break a power in Daring Comics by being off by a point of cost, so there's no need to sweat every minor detail. Simply create the power's effects, and use the guidelines below to determine a rough cost. The goal is to have fun and create the super-hero you want to play in an ongoing series.

Keep in mind that although we give only up to a 5-Point effect, the final cost for your power can actually cost more if it combines multiple broad effects, such as the **Affliction** power.

### ***1-POINT EFFECTS***

Every single power in Daring Comics automatically costs at least 1-point and offers a base effect. The base effect should be similar to what a stunt offers: a +2 to a roll, or a 2-Shift effect.

If the power offers a broad bonus to an Attack or Defend action, such as a Weapon Rating or Armor Rating, then the cost is 1-point for a 1-Shift base effect. **Blast**, **Invulnerability**, and **Melee Attack** are examples of that kind of power. Likewise, if it offers

a more restricted Weapon or Armor rating, then using the 2-Shift guideline is better. The **Absorption** power is such an example.

After you determine the base effect for the mandatory 1-point cost, you can apply additional effects for an additional 1-point cost using the guidelines below.

### ***A +2 EFFECT TO THE POWER (BEST FOR CREATE AN ADVANTAGE), OR A +1 ATTACK, DEFEND, OR DAMAGE MITIGATION EFFECT***

You can add a secondary effect to the power that grants an additional +2 bonus to a certain type of action (like being able to Create an Advantage with the power where appropriate), or that grants a broad +1 bonus to any attack or Defend action.

### ***ADD AN ACTION TO THE POWER OR ASSOCIATED SKILL***

This grants the power another type of action (though you're still only allowed one particular action per round), such as creating solid barriers with the power; or it creates a rule exemption as part of the action: examples include a power allowing you to grapple opponents at a distance, causing limited damage without having to make an attack roll, and so forth.

For simple effects that don't directly harm another character, or where certain powers would allow the character to automatically bypass your effect, requiring a roll against Mediocre (+0) Opposition is usually good enough. If the effect harms another character or is more difficult to bypass, the Opposition to use the effect should be at least Fair (+2).

### ***USE ONE SKILL IN PLACE OF ANOTHER***

This type of effect is identical to one of the stunt creation effects— it allows you to use one skill in place of another for particular types of rolls. One example of this is the Electrical option under Melee Attack, which allows you to use your power's skill, instead of Thief or Technology, when attempting to short out or bypass electronic locks

### ***2-POINT EFFECT***

A 2-Point effect is a little broader, but still limited. Generally speaking, this type of effect somehow alters a character in a limited way, such as increasing or decreasing a skill or power, adding temporary aspects to yourself with extra free invocations, and so forth.

## **3-POINT EFFECT**

The three point effect powers are what are generally categorized as the mid-level broad powers. They allow you to at least partially restrict the actions of another character (such as the Paralysis power), allow the power to continue attacking on its own, or might even allow you to bypass Stress and go directly to causing consequences.

## **4-POINT + 5-POINT EFFECTS**

Now we get into the truly broad effects. These point level powers greatly expand a character's capabilities in an exchange or scene. Examples include being able to assume all new powers or power sets, gaining extra actions due to having duplicates or minions appear at your side, and even being able to completely take over the actions (or even body) of another character.

The difference between a 4-Point and a 5-Point power is that the 4-Point power has a built in limitation that can cause the power to not work. Examples of such powers are Animal Control and Empower.

## **INHERENT LIMITATIONS**

Sometimes, a power will have inherent limitations that just make sense with what we've seen in comic books. For example, the Absorption power requires that you use the absorbed energy by your next turn or you lose it. Adaptation takes a minute or more to automatically activate. Adrenaline Boost requires an emotional trigger first be met, and requires a roll to activate the trigger. Animal Control and Animal Mimicry both require animals to first be present nearby.

When creating built-in limitations, look at how much the limitation affects the power's usage. If it limits the power enough where it can cause it to not function for a time in play, subtract -1 point from the power's cost for each limitation. Keep in mind, though, that a power's cost can never drop below 1-point, so such limitations are best when built into more expensive, versatile powers.

Sometimes, you will have to use your best judgement. For example, a power with a 3-Point effect that lets the power continue to attack on its own each round that is limited to one attack per day instead (such as the Affliction power), might warrant a -2 point cost reduction.

## **DETERMINING THE OPPOSITION'S ROLL TO BREAK THE POWER**

Some powers will last more than a single exchange and require the target to make a roll to escape the effects. There are several ways to handle the roll's difficulty, and which one is used is really dependent upon the narrative nature you chose for the power.

**Passive Opposition Equal to Shifts:** With this method, the opposition for the target is equal to the number of Shifts the user gained on the original roll. This method is a good choice when how well the user did on activating the power has a direct impact on the target being able to break free from the effects.

**Opposed Roll:** The target must make an opposed roll against the user to break free from the power. This method is idea when the user must keep putting effort into the power (even though the opposed roll doesn't count as an action for the user), and a bad roll could end the effects, or force the user to spend fate points and invoke aspects.

**Passive Opposition Equal to User's Skill Rating:** This method can be used when the general *potency* of the user's ability with the power is what the target must fight against to break the effects, but the user isn't actually involved in keeping the power going.

## UNDER THE HOOD: DETERMINING OPPOSITION TYPE

You'll notice that choosing one type of opposition style over another doesn't affect the power's point cost. This is because as we learned in testing the concept, it became a bit impossible to find a central weight to determine cost.

On the one hand, you could make it an opposed roll, which now factors in whether a side has fate points to spend on the roll and how the dice work out.

When considering using the Shifts generated verses the Skill rating, that too wasn't consistent. We saw low skilled characters get a high number of shifts, and highly skilled characters do the opposite. Then it came down to: should the power work simply on the character's inherent skill with the power, or should how well they did when using the power be the opposition? We've seen it go either way in comic books.

At the end of the day, none of the three options provided a consistent enough benefit or drawback to allow for a solid point build cost to the power. But not affecting the power's cost also means that if a pre-built power doesn't work the way you envision it, you can switch out one difficulty option for another without affecting the power's listed cost.

For those who would prefer one option cost more than another, make one opposition style your base default at a 0-point cost, make another a 1-point cost, and the final a 2-point cost. How you set-up those costs should be determined by how the powers play out in your game.

## WRITE IT UP

And from there, it's just a matter of describing the power and how each of the effects work. If you want to have scaling effects for your powers, then allow it to be purchased in multiple levels. Typically, multiple level powers should range from Power Level 3 to Power Level 6. There's no hard and fast rule on how high to go, as it'll honestly depend on what effects the power possesses, and in many cases how great a

bonus to particular actions you might want the power to give to a skill use.

*Let's take a look at the build for the Affliction power, which to be honest was easy to design, and a complete pain in the patootie to do a cost for.*

*Your character can infect others with disease or poison. To infect the target, make a skill roll opposed by the target's Physique (or Will for a unique type of mystic or psychic disease). Each Shift generated counts as the attack skill for your disease. If you tie, your disease has Mediocre (+0) skill.*

*We'll call this a 2-Point effect, since the Shifts have a somewhat broad effect.*

*Once infected, the target gains a temporary aspect related to the type of illness. As long as the aspect remains, they're attacked by the disease on the following exchange. Since this is an internal attack, Invulnerability does not negate damage from the disease, but Immunity and Regeneration do work normally. Damage from the disease causes Consequences, not Stress.*

*Each day after the initial attack, the disease attacks the target again, and will continue to do so until it is defeated. If the victim is Taken Out or concedes, he is dead.*

*We'll call this a 6-Point effect, because it basically combines two 3-Points effects. The disease attacks on its own, and it bypasses Stress. But, since the disease only attacks once per day instead of each exchange, we'll also call that a 3-Point inherent limit. After all, an entire day gives him plenty of time to get cured. So, the total effect is 3-Points*

*If the disease fails the attack roll, the character takes no damage that day. Once the disease fails two attacks in a row, the character's immune system has beaten it and he is no longer infected.*

*We'll call this a 1-Point effect since it requires two failed attacks instead of one.*

*Curing the disease through the application of the Treatment skill or the Healing power is rolled against opposition equal to the Attack skill rating of disease to remove the aspect. Consequences gained from the disease must be healed separately.*



We'll consider this another 1-Point effect.

So the total cost for the Affliction power is 7-Points.

## BUILDING YOUR OWN SPECIAL EFFECTS

Okay, so you can create your own stunts, you can create your own powers, so how do you create your own special effects?

Special Effects are nothing more than stunts for your powers, and use similar guidelines.

### ADD A NEW EFFECT TO A POWER

The most basic option for a stunt is to allow a power have another effect to it that is not a basic form of the power, but something that can be added on as fits a character concept.

**Immortality (Regeneration):** The hero heals even if dead. The hero's body must be relatively intact in order for the hero to come back to life.

**Subtle (Mind Control):** Once free, the target is unaware of the Mind Control and suffers a memory loss (a blackout) for the time he was under the influence of the power.

### INCREASE THE PRIMARY EFFECT IN SOME WAY

A special effect can also increase the primary effect in some way, either by making it slightly more potent or by taking away one of its inherent limitations.

**Omega Telekinesis (Telekinesis):** When lifting objects with your mind, you can lift weight from the Super-Strength Lifting Benchmark table.

**Rapid Shapeshift (Shapeshift):** Your skill with the power is so advanced that you can shapeshift as a free action in any given round.

### CREATE A SECONDARY EFFECT AT THE COST OF THE PRIMARY EFFECT

Sometimes, a special effect might grant the power a secondary effect or boost to an effect, but at some type of cost to the primary effect.

**Concussive:** For each Weapon rating you reduce your damage, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one.

**Extended Range:** For each Weapon Rating that you reduce your damage, you extend the range of your blast by an additional zone.

### CREATE A RULES EXCEPTION

The special effect can allow a power to make a single exception for any other game rule that doesn't precisely fit into the category of an action.

**Demolishing:** When destroying objects, your power does double the amount of Material Strength reduction.

**Indirect:** The attack power originates from a source other than where the hero is physically located. The power ignores obstacles and cover when hitting the target (in other words, targets can't invoke aspects such as Cover against this power), but does not ignore Forcefields.

**Penetrating:** When you succeed with style on an attack, you may spend a fate point to ignore a target's imperviousness, as well as bypass 2 levels of Invulnerability. If the target is not Impervious, you ignore 3 levels of Invulnerability.

### ADD A BONUS TO AN ACTION UNDER SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES

The special effect can add a +2 bonus to using the power's skill in certain situations, or a +1 when using a power under very broad circumstances.

You can also use this to establish any effect worth two shifts as an additional benefit of succeeding at the skill roll. This might be Fair (+2) passive opposition, the equivalent of a 2-point hit, a mild consequence, or an advantage that takes Fair (+2) opposition to remove.

**Entangling:** You gain a +2 bonus when using a specific power to grapple or encase an opponent.

**Volley:** When added to an attack power, the power fires a rapid volley of shots at the target. Using a volley adds +1 to the attack roll.

### TRIGGERED SPECIAL EFFECTS

Some special effects require the hero to achieve a certain degree of success when using the power in order for the bonus to activate. Typically, it

means the associated skill roll must achieve a success with style.

**Follow-Up:** When you succeed with style on an attack, you do not have to reduce your damage to place a Boost on the target.

**Set-Up:** When you succeed with style on an attack and lower your damage to place a boost, you instead gain a situation aspect with a free invocation.

## **LIMITED USE SPECIAL EFFECTS**

For some powerful special effects, instead of increasing the cost to buy them, consider applying a limited use to them. They might be usable once per conflict, scene, or issue, requires a fate point, requires a specific trigger to activate, or even all three.

**Persistent:** Once per scene, when your attack causes the target to take a Consequence from your power, you may spend a fate point. Doing so causes the energy type to continue to attack the target each consecutive round with a skill rating equal to the power level (this does not count as your action), with the target using Physique to Defend. To stop the consecutive attacks, the target must roll against opposition equal to your power level.

**Potent:** Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Moderate Consequence instead of stress.

## **SPECIAL EFFECT FAMILIES**

Like with Stunts, sometimes it makes sense for special effects to create tier effects, where the special effect has a basic version, and then a more powerful version that either costs more and can be taken alone (such as with Mega-Attack), or requires you to first purchase the basic form.

For special effects that require the ascending tiers all be purchased, usually the higher tiers will just increase whatever bonus the lower tiers offered.

The special effects under Intangible are one such stacking family.

# **BUILDING LIMITS**

Limits are simply things that limit a power's ability to function or limit how broad a power can be, and always provide a 1-point cost reduction to the overall power's total cost. No power can be reduced below a 1-point cost.

Keep in mind, this is per effect that is limited. So, if a power comes with three core features, and the character can only use one of them, the total cost for the limits is -2, because it takes away two features.

*Force Control allow the following core effects:*

*Add +2 to grapple attempts when using some sort of force energy to entangle your target, and can grapple any target in the same zone as you. Your controlling skill counts as your strength.*

*When creating constructs and barriers, the opposition for someone to break them is +1 greater than the number of Shifts you generated.*

*Use your controlling skill as though it was Super-Strength, allowing you to knock back an opponent with Force Control, or lift heavy objects up to a zone away.*

*If the player decided that his Force Control was more restricted and could only create barriers, then he would be taking away the grapple and pseudo-telekinesis effects. That would lower of the power set by 2 points.*

If the limit is particularly potent and its effects takes the power out of the player's control, such as the **Unstable** and **Wild Power** limits, they are worth three points.

# CHAPTER 10: DEVICES AND GEAR

Super-science is as much a staple of comic books as colorful costumes and extraordinary powers. From a villain's freeze gun or fear inducing gas, to dimensional portals that allow travel and exploration into foreign realms, to highly advanced power-armor, the inventions and technologies of comic books have been a sense of wonder since the debut of the super-hero genre.

But science and technology don't hold a monopoly on the extraordinary in comic books. Dark rituals bring forth demonic servants, and mystic artifacts—both good and evil—are the tools of the trade for the supreme sorcerers.

This chapter gives you the means of creating your own super-science inventions or arcane rituals and artifacts. It also provides you with guidelines for exactly how much your Resource skill can afford, and provides basic Material Strength for busting through objects. Finally, for those of you who have the **Personal Headquarters** or **Team Base** stunts, this is the chapter where you get to spend those points to build your secret base of operations, be it a remodeled cave, volcanic fortress, orbital satellite, mansion, flying aircraft carrier, or even a city-sized trans-dimensional organic vessel.

## GEAR, DEVICES, AND STRESS

Now is a good place to talk about the possibility of damaging someone's device or gear. All devices and gear can take 2-Stress before being destroyed, unless increased through special effects.

When attacking an item, make an attack roll against the character holding it, but they get +2 to Defend. If you hit, Stress is dealt to the item instead of the character. If the item is not being held (such as an automated turret or a computer array), it defends with Mediocre (+0) skill— if it makes sense for the stationary device to roll Defend at all.

## GEAR VS. DEVICES

We're tossing around the *gear* and *devices* terms, but what do they mean? In the context of playing the game, **gear** refers to your everyday types of weapons

and armors. That means your average handguns, semiautomatic and automatic rifles, grenades, flamethrowers, and things of that nature. A **device**, by comparison, is something not found in your everyday world. That includes things like artificially intelligent robots, freeze-ray weapons, fear gas, electricity firing pistols, and so forth.

## EVERYDAY STUFF & ARMAMENTS: THE CRUNCH OPTION

Now, before we talk about all those wonderful toys, let's take a look at everyday gear, which is different than the devices you're looking to build. We call this method *The Crunch Option* because you'll see a less crunchy way to handle normal gear and weapons in **Appendix: Turning the Dials**.

Smartphones, GPS, cars, motorcycles, even the mundane automatic weapons and Kevlar of some more lethal street vigilantes, exist in comic books the same as in the real world. When creating your hero, getting an inventory of weapons and armor is handled by taking the arsenal stunt, or maybe by creating your own stunt under the Contact or Resources skill.

Of course, stunts aren't the only way to get items. During play, you can make a Resource roll to get your hands on it. The item doesn't automatically come back to you like it would if obtained by purchasing a stunt, but you can always try to buy more as long as it makes narrative sense that you have the resources available to do so.

The *Available Funds* section under the Resource skill gives a guideline on opposition to making purchases. Typically, a Mediocre (+0) Resource rating gives a character at least some chance of affording most street level weaponry.

## GEAR COMPLICATION

Although you don't necessarily have to list it on your sheet, all gear, regardless of the type, automatically possesses a Complication that allows it to somehow be shut down for the remainder of the scene. Whether it is a Kevlar vest, a laptop, a set of lock picks, or a firearm, the GM can give you a fate point to shut

it down. Note that this is not the same as placing a **Disarmed** aspect on someone, which is covered in **Chapter 12: Comic Book Action**.

## EVERYDAY ITEMS

Below is a small listing of some everyday items, what special effects they bring with them, and their associated costs. It would be impossible to list every possible item that could be owned, so feel free to expand the list as needed for your series.

Item	Special Effects
Binoculars	Telescopic Vision
Comm-Link	Signal based Telepathy
Flashlight	Ignores 1 point of darkness based situation aspect opposition
Laptop	Internet access
Lockpicks	+2 to rolls to overcome locks
Medkit	+1 to medical treatment rolls
Night Vision Goggles	Darkvision
Smartphone	Internet access, GPS

## WEAPONS

Mundane weapons range from a pocket knife, to firearms and explosives, to vehicle mounted and anti-vehicle weaponry. Each weapon is assigned a Weapon Rating to represent its damaging capabilities, as shown below.

Since this game is designed to emulate comic books, where super-powers and super-science are typically the focus of combat scenes, you'll discover that most weapons fall into the same Weapon Rating category. A few will have some effects listed, but for the most part damage is kept abstract between most weapons available on the streets.

**Weapon 1:** Pocket weapons, knives, and saps.

**Weapon 2:** Swords, bats, and most pistols.

**Weapon 3:** High-caliber pistols, automatic rifles, and shotguns.

**Weapon 4:** Personal level anti-armor weapons (such as LAW Rockets) landmines, grenades, and vehicle level guns.

**Weapon 5:** Tank canon, aircraft missiles, and most starfighter weapons.

**Weapon 6:** space cruiser weaponry, or most weapons capable of levelling a city block.

**Extreme Weaponry:** For those interested in the use of truly devastating weapons as a threat the heroes must defeat, use Weapon 8 for a low yield nuclear warhead, and Weapon 10+ for the mountain-buster nuclear missiles.

## COMMON WEAPON SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Area Effect (1):** You can attack everyone within the same zone without having to split your result. Each additional time this special effect is applied, it increases the area effect by an additional zone.

**Armor Penetrating (1-2):** The weapon ignores Armor 1 when calculating damage. If taken twice, it ignores up to Armor 2 (this includes the Invulnerability power).

**Aspect (1):** Successfully damaging the target also creates a Situation Aspect on them.

**Concealed Weapon (1):** The weapon is either very small, or collapses to be smaller than its normal size. When hiding the weapon, you gain +2 to Deceit.

**Continuous (3):** A normal special effect applied to flamethrowers, this represents the target being more than set **On Fire** by means of an aspect. When you succeed with style on an attack action, you can lower your damage by one to place an aspect instead of a boost. As long as the aspect remains on the target, they continue to be attacked by the flames each subsequent round, with Mediocre (+0) attack skill. Removing the aspect to stop the attacks requires putting out the flames. The opposition to remove the aspect is equal to the number of Shifts you gained on the attack roll.

**Dangerous (2):** Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Moderate Consequence instead of stress.

**Delay (1):** Usually applied to explosives. Instead of detonating on impact, the explosion occurs after a set time. Each time this special effect is applied, the explosion occurs one step later on the Time Increment

Melee Weapons	Rating	Range	Special Effects
Baton	1	0	N/A
Knife	1	0	N/A
Rapier	1	0	N/A
Short Sword	2	0	N/A
Long Sword	2	0	N/A

table, beginning at one round. So, if applied once, the explosive detonates the next round. If applied twice, it detonates a half minute later, and so forth.

**Demolishing (1):** When destroying objects, the weapon does double the amount of Material Strength reduction.

**EMP (1):** The weapon automatically shuts down electronic devices, such as smartphones, cars, computers, electrical grids, and NPC robots. Against player-character and Named NPC robots, it gain a +4 bonus to the Attack roll.

The exact range of the EMP depends on the device. A simple bomb might be an entire zone, while a nuclear warhead would be many miles in diameter.

**Entangling (1):** You gain a +2 bonus when using the weapon to grapple an opponent. To break free, the target must succeed at an Overcome action with opposition equal the Shifts you achieved on the grapple roll. Breaking free cannot succeed at a cost.

**Expert Wiring (1):** Typical of explosives, your Technology rolls to disarm the weapon suffers a +2 to the opposition.

**Full or Semi Auto (1):** The weapon is capable of firing a lot of bullets in a very short time. Whenever you use the weapon to create a situation aspect, such as **Cover Fire** or **Hail of Lead**, you get +2 to the roll.

**Hardiness (1-6):** The weapon is slightly harder to break. This special effect works the same as the power, and can be applied up to six times.

**Independent Attack (1):** The weapon is capable of attacking on its own, such as an automated turret. The skill is Mediocre (+0) for a single application of this Special Effect, and increases by +1 for each additional application, up to a maximum of Fair (+2).

**Lethal (3):** Once per scene you may spend a fate point

to force your opponent to take a Severe Consequence instead of stress.

**Long Range (1):** The weapon is able to hit things more than two zones away, giving you a +2 zone range each time it is added to a weapon.

**Non-Lethal (0):** The weapon fires non-lethal rounds. When an opponent is Taken Out, the defeat never results in death from this weapon (though whether or not they die from other means is a different story). Adding this special effect does not affect the weapon's cost.

**Potent (1):** Once per scene you may spend a fate point to force your opponent to take a Mild Consequence instead of stress.

**Remote (1):** Usually a special effect for explosive devices, you can detonate the bomb from a distance. When applied once, the range is roughly a half-mile. When applied twice, you can remote detonate from up to a mile away.

**Targeting (1):** Whether through special stabilizers, a target scope, or some other method, the weapon provides a +1 bonus to your Accuracy roll when you take the time to aim.

## ARMOR

From your basic leather jacket to law enforcement and military-grade Kevlar, armor ranges in scope from Armor 1 to Armor 6, though personal armor usually tends to stay within the Armor 1 and Armor 2 ranges, with Armor 3 being the best experimental army used by the military.

**Armor 1:** Leather, layered clothing

**Armor 2:** Bullet Proof Vest (i.e. Kevlar)

**Armor 3:** Equivalent to an armored vehicle or bulletproof glass

Ranged Weapons	Rating	Range	Special Effects
Grenade	4	Thrown or 2	Area Effect, Dangerous
Flashbang	3	Thrown or 2	Area Effect, Aspect: <b>Blinded and Deafened</b>
Smoke Grenade	3	Thrown or 2	Area Effect, Successful hit places Aspect: <b>chocking</b> and <b>Blinded</b>
Net Gun	4	1	Entangling
Flamethrower	3	1	Continuous, Potent
Crossbow	2	2	N/A
9mm Pistol	2	2	N/A
.50 Caliber Pistol	3	2	N/A
Shotgun	3	1	N/A
Submachine Gun	3	2	+2 to create cover fire
Sniper Rifle	4	4	+1 to Aiming, Long Range (3)
Assault Rifle	3	2	+2 to create cover fire
Rocket Launcher	4	8	Area Effect, Dangerous, Demolishing, Long Range (3)
Vehicle Mounted Gun	4	3	Armor Penetrating, Dangerous, Long Range (1)
Tank Cannon	5	A lot	Area Effect, Armor Penetrating(2), Demolishing, Potent, Long Range (A lot)
Aircraft Missile	5	A lot	Area Effect, Armor Penetrating (2), Demolishing, Lethal, Long Range (a lot)

**Armor 4:** Equivalent to a heavily armored vehicle (such as an armored truck or tank)

**Armor 5:** Extremely invulnerable

**Armor 6:** Capital Starship level of invulnerability

## **COMMON ARMOR SPECIAL EFFECTS**

**Camouflage (1):** The suit is able to blend into a specific environment, such as jungle, urban, desert, arctic, and so forth. It grants a +2 bonus to Stealth rolls when in the appropriate environment.

**Durable (1):** You can spend a fate point once per scene to absorb a Mild Consequence.

**Environmental (1):** The armor grants +2 to Physique for resisting hostile environments

**Tough (2):** You can spend a fate point once per scene to absorb a Moderate Consequence.

**Reinforced (3):** You can spend a fate point once per scene to absorb a Severe Consequence.

Armor	Rating	Special Effects
Leather	1	N/A
Kevlar	2	N/A
Reinforced Kevlar	3	Camouflage, Durable
Experimental Kevlar	3	Tough
Platemail	2	Durable



## VEHICLES

### COMMON VEHICLE SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Armed (1 per Weapon Rating):** The vehicle is armed with one weapon each time this special effect is applied.

**Armored (1-6):** The vehicle has Armor 1 rating for a single application, with an additional rating per extra application. Armor cannot go above Armor 6.

**Auto-Pilot (1):** Typically applied to vehicles, it can now fly or drive itself with Mediocre (+0) skill. This special effect can be applied two more times, up to a maximum Fair (+2) skill rating.

**Hardiness (1-6):** The vehicle is tougher and stronger than a typical civilian car. This special effect works the same as the power, and can be applied up to six times.

Vehicle	Speed Rating	Special Effects
Motorcycle	3	N/A
Basic Car	3	N/A
Sports Car	3	N/A
Luxury Car	3	N/A
Limousine	3	N/A
Armored Truck	3	Armor 2, Hardened (2)
Semi-Truck	3	Hardened
Military Truck	2	Armor 4, Hardened (2)
Military Helicopter	4	Armed (Weapon: 4 guns, Weapon: 5 missiles, Area Effect), Hardened (2)
Fighter Jet	5	Armed, (Weapon: 4 guns, Weapon: 5 missiles, Area Effect), Auto-pilot, Hardened (2)

# WHAT IS A DEVICE?

Whether you want that weather manipulating weapon for your super-villain, or that gravity controlling gun for your hero, devices are the super-science of comic books. They're weapons, armor, computers, robotic servants, and even deathtraps— all designed using the Daring Comics powers system and the special effects found in this section.

## NPCs, GEAR, AND DEVICES

*For all your GMs out there— no, you don't have to build your NPC's devices or purchase their gear. They are the opposition to the heroes, and get whatever they need to provide sufficient threat and drama. Need them to have an army of robots? Give it to them. Need that mass mind control device that targets citizens through their smartphones? The mastermind has it.*

*Even in comic books, the villains usually have far greater devices and weapons than the heroes. That's the whole story equals obstacle need of fiction.*

# DEVICES AND CHARACTER CREATION

Later in this section you'll learn the rules for creating devices after the campaign has started. Those devices, however, are temporary items, capable of being used for an entire issue before they become inoperative, are lost, or are removed from play through whatever narrative detail makes sense.

For those of you who want to have one or more devices as a permanent part of your character, you'll make them at character creation. There's no invention roll to do so, you simply spend your Hero Points for the device's costs as you would for any other power set in the game. The difference is that the device is a core part of your character, always with him and always recovered at least by the end of the scene if disarmed or shutdown.

For the most part, any device uses the same rules. Choose the powers and any special effects or limits, select any specific special effects from this section

that make sense and pay the total cost in Hero Points. The powers then work the same as they would if part of any other character power set, and should possess a Power Set Aspect the same as any other power set.

Things get a little different (and sometimes dangerous) when you're creating devices in play, as part of the drama.

# BUILDING A DEVICE DURING PLAY

With the Artificing and Technology skills, you can make your own specialized devices— chemical formulas, weapons, and armors, capable of extraordinary feats thanks to super-science or sorcery. In essence, such devices are created as temporary power sets (including a Power Set Aspect), just as you would create a normal power set for your character, with a few extra features.

## DESIGN THE DEVICE

To create a new device during the series, first determine what powers it possess (and determine how the powers are arranged into Power Sets with their own Power Set Aspects). The difficulty to create the device is equal to half the total cost of all the device's powers (round up). Any limits refund points as normal, and any Complications will affect the amount of time it takes to create. The difficulty cannot go below Average (+1).

You must also have a suitable laboratory or workshop of a quality rating at least equal to the difficulty. If the quality rating is lower, that means the device is going to be a bit more difficult to construct. You just don't have the necessary resources or tools on hand to do it easily. The difficulty is increased by +1 for every step on the ladder that the quality rating is lower than the device you want to create.

*Dragonfly wants to create a device that will allow him to shrink his entire team down to the size of a small insect all at once. He decides it will have **Shrinking 4** with an Area Effect. It doesn't have any limits, but has a Complication that might overload itself and shutdown, thereby risking leaving everyone at miniature stature.*

*The base cost for the device is 3 Hero Points, two for Shrinking and one for area effect. That means his opposition is half of that, rounded up, or Fair (+2).*



*The workshop is Great (+4) quality, so he doesn't suffer an increase to the opposition.*

There's no Resource roll necessary to create the device. It's assumed that since you have the work area, you also have tools and components on hand. It might also be that you've gathered the needed components through a series of heists (if you're a villain), or that you have the necessary contacts, maybe through the underworld or an organization, to have gotten a hold of what you need.

The time to create is determined by the GM. Yeah, we could have given you a concrete time of X-hours per opposition rating, but to be honest the time it takes inventors in comic books is really dependent upon the needs of the story, and we felt allowing that in Daring Comics was the right way to go. Once the GM determines the base time, however, each Complication reduces that time by -1 step on the Time Increment table. Sometimes, creating a device that can go horribly wrong means you can make it faster.

If you succeed, great! You've created the device. If you succeed with style, you get to add an aspect to the device for free.

Like a normal Overcome action, you *can* succeed at a cost.

If you tie and have to take a minor cost, you must create a **Flaw** aspect— something that shows a weak point or imperfection in the design.

If you fail and decide to succeed at a major cost, the GM creates a Complication. You don't get to know what it is, and you'll find out what it's brought into play.

*Dragonfly rolls his Great (+4) Technology skill against a Fair (+2) passive opposition. Unfortunately, he's out of fate points and really just wants to get the device built, so he doesn't spend an action to first create an aspect that might assist him.*

*He rolls -2 on the dice, for a Fair (+2) result. Yep. It figures.*

*That ties with the opposition, which means for an Overcome action he either failed, or can succeed at a minor cost. He decides to succeed at a minor cost.*

*The GM nods and smiles.*

*Now the player has to create a **Flaw** aspect. He decides on: **The Wiring Was Rushed.***

*The GM accepts that as a decent flaw. Not only does the device run the risk of overloading and becoming inoperative (the Complication), but it might also short out when it comes time to return everyone to normal and instead make them one additional size smaller (a compel on the Flaw aspect). And then it might also overload.*

*Meanwhile, the GM has decided it would take him a few days to create the device, so thanks to his original Complication, that time is reduced to a single day.*

The device lasts for one issue **of use**. Keep in mind, it's one issue of use. That means you can carry the device for a few issues *before* using it, but the moment you use it even once, it lasts until that issue is over. When the issue concludes, it is assumed to be lost, deconstructed, or whatever reasoning makes sense to remove it from play.

You can only have one device in active use at a time.

### Device Controlling Skill

For powers which require a Controlling skill, the device has the skill at Mediocre (+0) unless purchased at a greater level through device special effects.

## JURY RIGGING

When time is of the essence and you absolutely must construct that device *Now!*, you can attempt a jury-rig. You're basically rushing the job and risking failure in exchange for getting that emergency device built and in the field as quickly as possible.

You build the device using the same rules as building a device, but it takes only one minute per final opposition. Your opposition, after it is halved, is increased by +1 due to the rushed job. Complications reduce the time by -1 minute each, to a minimum of 1 minute building time.

If you succeed, you get the device built. If you succeed with style, you get to add a boost to it. Since you are rushing the work, you cannot succeed at a cost if you fail the roll.

Jury-Rigged devices last for a single scene of use, though they can last longer if you spend a fate point for each additional scene.

*Dragonfly's teammates have been captured by The Anarchitect, and he needs to get in*

there to save them. They've battled the supervillain many times in the past, and he knows each of their abilities. He'll be on the lookout for Dragonfly's shrinking powers.

He needs a device to make him invisible and allow him to pass through solid objects, and he needs it now! He rushes to his workshop to cobble something together on the spot.

Intangible is a 1-point power, and he doesn't want to risk the device not working, so he gives it basic Invisibility 1. He can bend the light around himself, but anyone looking closely enough is probably going to notice something. The two powers combined have a cost of 2 points. His opposition would have only been Average (+1), but because it is a jury-rig, that increases to Fair (+2).

He isn't going to apply any limits or Complications. The workshop has Great (+4) quality, so his opposition is not increased further. His skill rating is Great (+4) and the opposition is Fair (+2).

He rolls the dice and gets a -2, again! That makes his result Fair (+2), which ties with the opposition.

He doesn't want to take a minor cost and create a Flaw aspect, so he spends a fate point and invokes his I'm a Whiz With Engineering aspect for a +2 bonus, making his result Great (+4). He succeeded, and the device is created two minutes later.

## BUYING A DEVICE DURING PLAY

Sometimes, a villain— or even a hero— needs to get his hands on a particular device and doesn't have the means of making it himself. Doing so requires two things: finding someone who has the device to sell, and then being able to afford it.

The opposition for finding someone with the device to sell is equal to the opposition of the device (the total cost of powers, halved and rounded up). However, you roll your Contacts skill instead of your Artificing or Technology skill. On a success, it takes roughly one day per opposition level. On a success with style, lower the time by two steps on the Time Increment table to a few hours per quality level.

*Kill-Joy hears rumors about a new weapon that's been developed by a fellow super-*

*villain. It's basically the Blast power with a unique special effect that can send the target into an alternate dimension instead of doing damage. It has Blast 2 with a special effect worth 2 points, for a total cost of 4 points, or a Fair (+2) opposition.*

*Kill-Joy rolls his Good (+3) Contacts skill against Fair (+2) passive opposition. He rolls zero on the dice, for a Good (+3) total. That's enough to get him a success, but he has plans for the thing, and doesn't want to risk someone else getting to the inventor first.*

*He invokes his **Fear is My Greatest Weapon** aspect, narrating that his reputation and the fact that even criminals are afraid of him gets people answering his questions. He adds +2 to the roll, for a new total of Superb (+5)— a success with style.*

*The GM decides that each point of opposition is now worth 3 hours instead of 1 day, and 6 hours later Kill-Joy finds the inventor.*

Once you find a seller, you must succeed at a Resources roll with opposition equal to the device's opposition rating +1. If you succeed and get the device, it lasts for a single issue.

*Kill-Joy has amassed a decent amount of money through his crimes, and rolls his Great (+4) Resources skill against Good (+3) opposition. He gets 1 on the dice, for a Superb (+5) total, a success. He purchases the weapon from the inventor, and gets to use it against his enemies for an entire issue.*

*Had he failed, the GM might have allowed a success at a major cost, and Kill-Joy would have likely faced some sort of Complication later on. For example, since he was unable to purchase the weapon, perhaps he injured (or killed) the inventor to get it, and the guy's associates will be seeking revenge.*

## **BUT, I'M PERSONAL FRIENDS WITH AN INVENTOR!**

*Okay, let's face it: usually the super-hero community is a close-knit bunch. Oh sure, they have their occasional throw downs when things get too dramatic, but they're also not bashful about hitting up the neighboring super-genius when the going gets tough.*

*When you need to borrow a device from an inventor friend, make a Contacts roll with opposition equal to the normal opposition to create the device. If you succeed, your friend has what you need; and you can borrow it for a single scene of use. On a success with style, you get to borrow it for an entire issue.*

*This does not mean your friendly neighborhood inventor is your private rent-a-device store. The GM has every right to simply declare an item unavailable, especially if you're constantly pestering the poor fellow.*

## **COMMON DEVICE SPECIAL EFFECTS**

Generally speaking, devices are constructed using the powers system for abilities. However, the following special effects are examples of what we've seen in comic books, and represent things not normally covered by the powers system. If a device special effect would make sense, however, it can be applied to any type of power set. Each special effect (or rank of special effect) costs 1 Hero Point.

### **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Your device is an artificial intelligence capable of acting on its own. Each application gives the device a specific quality rating and skill column.

- **Basic Intelligence:** Two Average (+1) skills and two Fair (+2) skills
- **Improved Intelligence:** Two Average (+1) skills, two Fair (+2) skills, and two Good (+3) Skills
- **Advanced Intelligence:** Two Average (+1) skills, two Fair (+2) skills, two Good (+3) Skills, and two Great (+4) skills.

### **ASPECT**

Your device has an additional aspect attached to it.

### **AUTO-PILOT**

Typically applied to vehicles, it can now fly or drive itself with Mediocre (+0) skill. This special effect can be applied two more times, up to a maximum Fair (+2) skill rating.

### **CONCEALABLE**

The device is either very small, or collapses to be smaller than its normal size. When hiding the weapon, you gain +2 to Deceit.

### **DATABASE**

The device is either a walking library or has remote access to one. Each time this is applied, the device has the two of the following skills at Average (+1) rating: Arcanum, Artificing, Knowledge, or Technology. You can take this multiple times, and either apply it to two additional skills, or increase the skill bonus by +1, up to a maximum of Fantastic (+6).

You can also apply a +2 bonus to a single skill instead of taking a pair of skills, up to a maximum Fantastic (+6).

### **EXPERT WIRING**

Typical of explosives, your Technology rolls to disarm the weapon suffer a +2 to the opposition.

### **INDEPENDENT ATTACK**

The weapon is capable of attacking on its own, such as an automated turret. The skill is Mediocre (+0) for a single application of this special effect, and increases by +1 for each additional application, up to a maximum of Fantastic (+6).

### **POWER ABILITY**

Each time this special effect is taken, your device's Power skill improves +1 step on the ladder from Mediocre (+0) to a maximum of Fantastic (+6).

### **RESTRICTED**

The device is restricted from just anyone using it, whether it is through a DNA scan, a mystic enchantment for worthiness, or some other high security means that typically cannot be overcome.



## UNBREAKABLE

Your device has an extra aspect indicating that it is near impossible to break (very few things in comic books are *truly* unbreakable). Whenever something would break your device, you can spend a fate point to create the story detail “My \_\_\_\_\_ is unbreakable,” to prevent the device from being broken. (Note: For those of you who want to mimic a specific Claw power from comic books, you can also apply this special effect to normal power sets where it would make sense.)

## DEVICE LIMITS

Your device can have limits built into it the same as any power set. When determining final difficulty to build the device, subtract the cost of any Limits.

## SAMPLE DEVICES

Let’s take a look at some sample devices. You can plug-and-play these items during play or character creation, use them as inspiration to create your own, or use them as a basis from which to further modify your unique invention.

### REMOTE

Usually a special effect for explosive devices, you can detonate the bomb from a distance. When applied once, the range is roughly a half-mile. When applied twice, you can remote detonate from up to a mile away.

### TARGETING

Whether through special stabilizers, a target scope, or some other method, the weapon provides a +1 bonus to your Accuracy roll when you take the time to aim.

## ARMOR

### STREET VIGILANTE BODY ARMOR

**Effect:** Reinforced yet highly flexible body armor

**Powers:** Invulnerability 2, Hardiness 2

**Special Effects:** None

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Fair (+2)

## ***ELECTRICAL ARMOR***

**Effect:** Body armor that can surround itself with electricity

**Powers:** Electricity Aura, Invulnerability 3

**Special Effects:** None

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Liquid based attacks do Weapon 2 damage

**Difficulty:** Good (+3)

## ***FIRE GENERATING ARMOR***

**Effect:** Body armor with a built in Flame Blast

**Powers:** Flame Blast 3, Invulnerability 3

**Special Effects:** Deadly

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Liquid based attacks do Weapon 2 damage

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

# **ROBOTS**

## ***FAMILY ASSISTANT***

**Effect:** Robot designed for home maintenance

**Powers:** Flight 1, Super-Strength 1

**Special Effects:** Basic Artificial Intelligence, Database

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Good (+2)

## ***CAPE-KILLER ROBOT***

**Effect:** A 20' tall robot designed to hunt down super-beings

**Powers:** Density 1, Growth 1, Invulnerability 4, Energy Blast 3, Flight 3

**Special Effects:** Basic Artificial Intelligence, Aspect (1)

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Must recharge every 12 hours

**Difficulty:** Epic (+7)

## ***POWER DUPLICATING ANDROID***

**Effect:** An android capable of duplicating the powers of super-being it faces

**Aspects:** I Can Adapt to You

**Powers:** Invulnerability 4, Power Mimicry

**Special Effects:** Advanced Artificial Intelligence, Aspect (1), Multi-mimic, Ranged mimic

**Limits:** Cannot mimic technology based powers

**Complications:** Limited thinking ability, Sonic attacks do +2 damage

**Difficulty:** Superb (+5)

# **VEHICLES**

## ***VIGILANTE'S CAR***

**Effect:** Armored car for prowling the streets

**Powers:** Invulnerability 3, Super-Speed 2

**Special Effects:** Auto-pilot, Database

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Must refuel every 6 hours

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

## ***DISAPPEARING JET***

**Effect:** Jet that can turn invisible

**Powers:** Flight 4, Invisibility 3, Invulnerability 3

**Special Effects:** Auto-Pilot

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Fantastic (+6)

## ***TEAM AIRCRAFT***

**Effect:** Aircraft designed to carry a super-team

**Powers:** Flight 4, Blast 4

**Special Effects:** Auto-Pilot, Database, Hardiness 2

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Requires two people to pilot

**Difficulty:** Fantastic (+6)

## WEAPONS

### *FEAR GAS*

**Effect:** Causes hallucinations and intense fear

**Aspects:** Face Your Worse Fears

**Powers:** Emotion Control, Illusion

**Special Effects:** Aspect (1), Gaseous, Power skill Great (+4)

**Limits:** Both powers limited to Fear based emotions and illusions only (-2), only victim can see the illusion.

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

### *MIND CONTROL RAY*

**Effect:** A beam designed to enthrall the target

**Powers:** Mind Control

**Special Effects:** Area Effect, Power skill Great (+4)

**Limits:** Must first hit the target with an Accuracy attack

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

### *ICE GUN*

**Effect:** Ray gun capable of freezing people and entire areas

**Powers:** Ice Blast 3, Cold Control

**Special Effects:** Confining, Power skill (Fair +2)

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Overload: Shutdown for the scene

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

## ARCANE ARTIFACTS

Arcane artifacts are created using the same rules as for creating devices. The only difference

is that you use the Artificing skill instead of Knowledge or Technology.

## SAMPLE ARTIFACTS

### *RING OF ELDRITCH SHIELDING*

**Effect:** A mystic ring from ancient Babylon capable of creating an eldritch forcefield

**Powers:** Forcefield 4

**Special Effects:** None

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Fair (+2)

### *ORB OF ALL-SEEING*

**Effect:** An orb worn on a chain around the neck, which allows the user to astral travel to distant places and see things far away.

**Powers:** Astral Projection, ESP

**Special Effects:** Magic Great (+4)

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** Causes the user 2-Stress at random times

**Difficulty:** Good (+3)

### *CLOAK OF DEMONIC HIDE*

**Effect:** A cloak of demonic skin capable of resisting most firearms, and of granting the wearer flight.

**Powers:** Flight 2, Invulnerability 3

**Special Effects:** None

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Good (+3)

## ARCANE RITUALS

Creating arcane rituals uses the same mechanics as creating devices and artifacts, with a couple of minor differences. You decide which powers the ritual will duplicate and halve the cost (round up) to determine your opposition. However, because

rituals are typically cast to effect remote targets, you add +1 to the opposition after you halve it. You then roll your Arcanum skill.

Like with devices, the actual time to cast the ritual is determined by the GM, and represents not only the actual casting, but also drawing the circle, invoking the correct powers, reading from the necessary ancient texts, and so forth.

The main difference, however, is that if you fail to cast the ritual by one or two Shifts, you take Stress equal to the number of Shifts you failed the roll by. If you failed by three or more Shifts, you take the Stress and the GM is going to create a very bad effect on you or the game world in the form of a new aspect. For example, maybe that demon you were summoning is not only loose and beyond your ability to control, but it's now a Named NPC. In that case, the GM might create an aspect such as: **Primal Demon on the Loose!**

The ritual's effect lasts a length of time that makes sense. For example, a ritual meant to curse your enemy with the Affliction power might last until it is overcome, the same as with the normal power. Meanwhile, a summoned demon might last until the end of the issue, until another sorcerer somehow counters the spell with a ritual of his own, or maybe even longer if the demon must be Taken Out to get it off the earthly plane.

In the case of minion powers, such as Animal Control, Animate, Duplication, and Summon, determine the opposition for the number and quality of minions the ritual is creating, and add that to the opposition for invoking the power itself when casting the ritual. So, if you used the Summon power (5-point cost) to create a Good (+3) quality demonic minion, that means your cost is Legendary (+8), halved to a Great (+4) opposition. With the +1 modifier for being a ritual, it has a final Superb (+5) opposition.

That's right, summoning that demon lord from the Hell dimension is a dangerous proposition.

Unlike the normal use of powers, casting spells during a ritual does not require the use of a Controlling skill to fuel powers that require it. Instead, you use your Arcanum skill during the actual casting.

## SAMPLE RITUALS

### *TENTACLES OF THE DARKENED MIND*

**Effect:** A ritual capable of causing the average citizen to commit extreme acts of violence

**Powers:** Emotion Control, Mind Control

**Special Effects:** Area Effect

**Limits:** Emotion Control limited to anger only, Mind Control limited to acts of violence

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

### *BREATH OF THE ROTTING LORD*

**Effect:** Creates an Affliction of rotting flesh on the target

**Powers:** Affliction

**Special Effects:** Area Effect

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Great (+4)

### *SERVANT OF THE RENDING MASTER*

**Effect:** Summons a powerful demon

**Powers:** Summon (Good quality demon)

**Special Effects:** None

**Limits:** None

**Complications:** None

**Difficulty:** Superb (+5)

## HEADQUARTERS

By taking the Headquarters stunt, you received a number of points to use for building your secret lair, whether a personal lair or a team base of operations. The sections below give you the means to spend those points, choosing the headquarters quality, facilities, and defenses.

## HEADQUARTERS ASPECT

Your headquarters starts with one aspect for free, which should represent the size and scope of your base. Some suitable aspects would be: **Outfitted Cave**, **Skyscraper Upper Levels**, **Stately Mansion**, **Hidden Apartment Rooms**, or even **Nondescript Brownstone**.

## HEADQUARTERS QUALITY

Next, purchase the Quality of your base. The base's quality determines the Quality of any automated defenses you might have, as well as the Quality Rating of any laboratories, workshops, and libraries the base contains.

Your base begins at Mediocre (+0) quality, and every point you spend increases the quality +1 step on the ladder to a maximum Fantastic (+6) quality. Yes, the quality can be raised above Fantastic (+6), but only when the skill cap for the series is increased. **Chapter 15: Advancing the Series** explains when a series skill cap is increased.

## HEADQUARTERS FEATURES

Finally, with any points you have remaining after purchasing the Quality Rating, you can purchase any of the following features for your headquarters. Each feature (or level of a feature) costs 1 Headquarters Point.

**Artificial Intelligence:** Your headquarters is an artificial intelligence capable of acting on its own. Each level gives the device a specific quality rating and skill column.

- **Basic Intelligence:** Two Average (+1) skills and two Fair (+2) skills
- **Improved Intelligence:** Two Average (+1) skills, two Fair (+2) skills, and two Good (+3) Skills
- **Advanced Intelligence:** Two Average (+1) skills, two Fair (+2) skills, two Good (+3) Skills, and two Great (+4) skills.

**Aspect:** Each time this feature is taken, your base gains an additional aspect.

**Command Center:** A central room to monitor happenings around the city or planet, each time this feature is purchased your base receives a rating in a new skill called **Communications**, which begins at Average (+1) for the first application of this feature, and can go to Fantastic (+6).

Communications cannot attack or Defend (unless posing as active opposition to an Overcome action, such as a hacking attempt against the base), and is used for being able to hack into and monitor a wide-array of bands, ranging from local law enforcement to encrypted government channels. The GM sets the opposition for monitoring attempts.

**Database:** Your base has an extensive database covering one or more areas of knowledge. Each time this is applied, the device has two of the following skills at Average (+1) rating: Arcanum, Artificing, Knowledge, or Technology. You can take this multiple times, and either apply it to two additional skills, or increase the skill bonus by +1, up to a maximum of Fantastic (+6).

You can also apply a +2 bonus to a single skill instead of taking a pair of skills, up to a maximum Fantastic (+6).

**Defense Systems:** Your base is equipped with one or more defense systems. The systems have a skill rating and damage rating equal to the quality of the base.

**Dock/Garage/Hangar:** The base contains a place to repair vehicles, equal to the headquarters quality rating.

**Dimensional Pocket:** Your base occupies a dimensional pocket, making it much large (or smaller) on the inside than it appears from the outside.

**Dimensional Portal:** The headquarters contains a portal to a particular dimension, chosen when this feature is purchased. Additional dimensions require this feature to be taken more than once.

**Dimensional Travel:** Your headquarters is not stationary, and travels through the dimensions as easily as flying through the air.

**Infirmary:** The base is equipped with a place to treat injuries. Whenever rolling to Overcome physical consequences, apply half the base quality (round up) as a bonus to the roll.

**Laboratory:** Your headquarters has a laboratory so you can use Knowledge to create devices (see: the Mad Scientist stunt under Knowledge).

**Library:** The headquarters contains a library, either print or digital, which allows you to conduct research and grants a +2 bonus to relevant rolls.

**Living Quarters:** The base has enough sleeping quarters for each core member of the team. If purchased twice, it can house up to 6 additional guests.



**Movement:** The headquarters is capable of either ground movement or flight under its own power. Each time this feature is taken, the HQ gains one power level in either Super-Speed or Flight.

**Personnel:** Your base has some sort of living or robot attendants that deal with general maintenance, security, or possibly help in the laboratory or workshop. Each time this feature is purchased, you either gain three Average (+1) quality nameless NPCs, two Fair (+2) nameless NPCs, or one Good (+3) quality nameless NPC.

**Power Supply:** The headquarters has an independent power supply that keeps things operating and online in the case of an area-wide blackout.

**Secure Access:** Access to the base is highly restricted and limited, requiring the use of a hard to get item, such as a team identification card, DNA recognition, or some other method designed when you purchase this feature. Attempting to bypass the security requires an action against Good (+4) opposition.

**Security Cells:** The base is equipped with four Legendary (+8) Material Strength holding cells. Additional applications of this feature increase the number of holding cells by four, or increases the Material Strength by +1.

**Self-Repairing:** Whether through advanced nanites, dimensional energies, or because it is a living entity, the headquarters heals from damage as though it had the **Regeneration** power.

**Teleportals:** The base contains teleportation technology, capable of teleporting people anywhere on the planet. If purchased twice, it can teleport roughly the distance from earth to the moon. If purchased three times, it can teleport across the universe.

**Temporal Anomaly:** The headquarters exists outside of the normal space-time continuum. Time either flows faster or slower within the base than on Earth (decide when the feature is purchased). Each time this feature is taken, the time needed to complete tasks within the base is either reduced two steps on the Time Increment table (for a faster time flow), or increased by two steps on the table.

**Training Room:** The base is equipped with a combat simulator, typically of some sort of advanced high technology, or even holographic environment. When using the training room to practice taking on particular situations or villains as it pertains to the current session, every participating member receives a +2 bonus to Create an Advantage actions during the next

scene (and only the next scene) in which they confront the villain or situation. Basically, it means your team is preparing for a conflict they know is about to happen, this doesn't allow you to prepare for just any type of situation and get the bonus. The GM has final say on whether or not your team is actually practicing for a dramatic encounter, or simply attempting to abuse the bonus to Create an Advantage actions. If the latter, you don't get the bonus.

**Unique Ability:** Your base has some sort of ability not otherwise covered in the features list. Typically, this will be a power with a cost in Headquarters Points equal to the total cost of the power. It could also be a special feature created by you and the GM, such as a flying aircraft carrier having a few fighter jets as Nameless NPCs.

**Workshop:** Your base has a workshop for creating devices with the Technology skill.

## ***SPECIAL STORAGE: STORY FACTOR DEVICES***

Sometimes in comic books, a hero's secret base will also have a device that plays a part in the story, but does so in a very limited scope and then disappears from future use. **Once per mini-arc**, your hero can have a story device, such as Warsuit or Submersible, by spending a fate point. The item lasts for one issue of use, at which time it is considered to be destroyed or back in storage.

## **SAMPLE HEADQUARTERS**

Below are five different types of headquarters, each one representing a specific type of base seen in comic books at one time or another.

### ***VIGILANTE BASE***

**Aspects:** Hidden Urban Bunker

**Quality:** Fair (+2)

**Features:** Command Center, Secured Access, Workshop

Cost: 5

# MYSTIC BROWNSTONE

**Aspects:** Sanctum of Power

**Quality:** Great (+4)

**Features:** Defense System (mystic themed), Dimensional Pocket, Library, Living Quarters, Personnel (one Good Quality), Workshop

Cost: 10

## MANSION

**Aspects:** High-end team headquarters

**Quality:** Superb (+5)

**Features:** Command Center, Defense Systems, Dock/Hangar/Garage, Infirmary, Laboratory, Library, Living Quarters, Personnel (one Good Quality), Power Supply, Workshop

Cost: 15

## ORBITAL STATION

**Aspects:** Monitoring the Earth from Above

**Quality:** Fantastic (+6)

**Features:** Command Center, Dock/Hangar/Garage, Infirmary, Laboratory, Library, Living Quarters, (2), Power Supply, Secure Access, Security Cells, Teleportals (2), Training Room, Workshop

Cost: 20

## TRANS-DIMENSIONAL SHIP

**Aspects:** Living Alien Vessel

**Quality:** Fantastic (+6)

**Features:** Artificial Intelligence, Command Center, Dimensional pocket, Dimensional Travel, Flight 3, Infirmary, Laboratory, Library, Living Quarters, (4), Personnel (six Average (+1) quality staff), Power Supply, Secure Access, Security Cells, Teleportals (3), Training Room, Workshop

Cost: 30

# OBJECT MATERIAL STRENGTH

When it comes down to how hard or tough a particular object is, such as bank vault or a

concrete bunker, Daring Comics uses a Material Strength ladder as shown below. The Material Strength acts as the passive opposition to rolls to break through the object.

Material Strength	Example
Mediocre (+0)	Paper
Average (+1)	Glass
Fair (+2)	Wood, Aluminum
Good (+3)	Brick
Great (+4)	Concrete
Superb (+5)	Stone
Fantastic (+6)	Reinforced Concrete
Epic (+7)	Iron
Legendary (+8)	Steel
Monstrous (+9)	Reinforced Steel
Colossal (+10)	Super-Alloys
Unearthly (+11)	Diamond
inconveivable (+12)	Magical or Unique Metal

To break through objects, roll based on the type of action you're using. If you are physically trying to break the object, make a Physique roll (including any Super-Strength bonuses). If you are attempting to blast through the object, then roll Accuracy. The passive opposition is equal to the material strength of the object. The material strength is reduced by 1 for each Shift you get on the roll. Once the material strength is reduced to zero, the object is either destroyed or has a hole large enough to pass through.

Unlike a normal Overcome action, the character cannot succeed at a cost or on a tie, at least 1-Shift must be generated. If it makes sense with the action, then Weapon Rating adds to the Shifts.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are a few comic book staples that should really be covered in a chapter dedicated to gear and super-science inventions. They require slightly modified rules to maintain their feel and effectiveness in play,



have any super-powers, nor does he rely on super-science devices. Instead, he relies upon his military special forces training—and a lot of guns, knives, and grenades.

And he's gone toe-to-toe with some powerful enemies.

It's important in the Daring Comics Roleplaying Game that such characters not be inferior to those wielding a few super-powers or carrying around more super-science oriented tech. Comics have shown that gear heavy vigilante is as much of a threat as any other comparable hero or villain, and sometimes even more so.

## ***CREATING THE GEAR***

The gear used by such a character is a part of who and what they are, what they do, and how they do it. Sometimes, a simple handgun in their hands is seemingly more powerful than the one used by the thug they were just staring down—and have since left for dead. Even super-powered foes often times bite off more than they can chew against the character.

and to mimic what's seen in comic books as closely as game rules will allow.

They are: the Gear Heavy Street Vigilante, Power-Armor, Trick Arrows, and the world-famous Utility Belt.

## **THE GEAR HEAVY STREET VIGILANTE**

For the most part in comic books, your average gear heavy character is going to be the street vigilante. Of course, that isn't always the case, but as we all know, one of the most popular vigilantes (whether he's a *hero* or not is open to your interpretation), doesn't

When creating your gear heavy street vigilante for his one-man war on the criminal underworld, create the gear as a single Power Set.

Give the power set a name (usually something like Arsenal, or Heavy Arsenal) and a power set aspect. Then, build your weapons.

Because your power set must not only have a Complication, but can also be disarmed, you get a reduction to the cost of your gear: each weapon or armor has its cost reduced by 50%, rounded-up.

Vengeance is a vigilante known for her guns and knives. When creating the character, the player names the power set **Heavy Arsenal** and gives it the **There's No Criminal my Weapons Don't Like** aspect.

Next, she starts building her weapons.

First she decides to give Vengeance a hard-hitting pistol. She takes Blast 3 (physical projectile). Normally this would cost her for 4 hero points, but thanks to the cost reduction, it only costs her 2 hero points.

Next she makes an automatic rifle. She again takes Blast 3 (physical projectile), and this time adds in Area Effect and full-auto special effects. Normally 5 hero points, she instead pays 3 hero points

For a third weapon, she creates a specialized knife. She gives it Melee Attack 2 (weapon), and the Follow-Up special effect. The knife costs her 2 hero points instead of 3 hero points.

Next, she creates a grenade with Blast 4 (physical projectile), and the Area Effect special effect. She also gives it a limit: Reduced Range. That's 5 hero points, reduced to 3 hero points.

Finally, she creates a Flash Bang grenade. She gives it Blast 3 (sonic), along with Area Effect and reduced Range, for 3 hero points instead of five.

Finally, she decides to wear an experimental Kevlar costume, and purchases Invulnerability 3. Its cost is reduced to 2 hero points.

Vengeance paid 15 hero points for her power set.

## GEAR COMPLICATIONS

Each weapon in your Gear Power Set is understood to have a Complication that the GM can compel to somehow shut it down. Unlike a normal power, the weapon or armor is shut down until it makes narrative sense that you've somehow accounted for it, such as getting extra ammo clips, taking time to repair the jam, or even returning to your armory for a new copy of the weapon.

The minimum time before you can get the weapon back is one scene, but if all else fails, it is always recovered by the end of the issue.

## DISARMING THE GEAR

Despite being a power set, each weapon in the set is assumed to be a physical weapon and is susceptible to **Disarmed** the same as any other weapon.

### ANOTHER GEAR HEAVY OPTION

Don't forget that if the cost of making your gear heavy vigilante gets to be too high, you can also forego making everything as part of your power set and also use the **Arsenal** stunt to supplement your hero. It means that any gear that's shut down or lost takes longer to recover, but it's a good way to round out the character until you get more Milestones under your belt.

## TRICK ARROWS

Playing a character whose powers derive purely from a quiver of trick arrows is another special consideration.

### CONSTRUCTING THE QUIVER

First, create the power set just as you would any other type of power set. Give it an aspect, and purchase your powers. The difference is that when it comes to the Blast power, you do not have to purchase each type of Blast as a separate power. Simply purchase the power once if all of your arrows will have the same Weapon Rating, and then purchase all the special effects that apply.

*Snap-Fire is a trick arrow gal. As part of her arsenal, she decides she'll have a series of arrows based on the Blast power. She also decides that all of her arrows will have the same Weapon Rating 3.*

*She purchases Blast 3 for 3 Hero Points. To represent the various effects the quiver can produce, she then purchases the following Special Effects (the cost is in parenthesis): concussive (2), corrosive (2), electrical (2), entangling (1), physical projectile (1), and sonic (2).*

*Snap-Fire's total cost for the Trick Arrow power set is 13 Hero Points.*

Likewise, if some of your arrows will have a different Blast power Weapon Rating, or even a non-blast related power, you must purchase those powers separately.

*Snap-Fire has a habit of being attacked by a villain who's basically a living flame. She has an arrow in her quiver that is capable of nullifying all Fire type powers at once. The arrow is covered by purchasing the Power Nullify (Type Nullification: Fire).*

*Snap-Fire purchases the Ranged Nullify special effect for an extra 1 point, but she and the GM determine that she'll still need to make an Accuracy roll since she's firing a physical arrow. They decide to treat that roll as a limit (since normally a Ranged Nullify doesn't require an Accuracy roll), and lower the cost by a point, effectively making the special effect a zero cost.*

*Snap-Fire spends 2 Hero Points and purchases the power.*

## USING DEVICE SPECIAL EFFECTS

As explained earlier in this chapter, sometimes a special effect usually reserved for a device can be applied to a normal power set if it would make sense. In the case of some Trick Arrow power sets, it most definitely would.

For example, if one or more arrows use a power that requires its own controlling skill (such as the Power skill), it rolls at Mediocre (+0) unless you purchase it at a higher rating through device special effects.

Likewise, perhaps the archer's bow is special designed to read the exact palm and finger prints of the person using it. This would be represented by the **Restricted** device special effect.

## REQUIRED COMPLICATION

Finally, a Trick Arrow power set, by its very nature, must have at least one Complication that can be compelled to represent the power set somehow being shut down. The most common way is a Complication representing a limited number of arrows or the bow string mysteriously snapping.

## DISARMING THE ARCHER

An archer can be **Disarmed** in combat, though whether or not another person could use their bow

would all depend on whether or not the power set had the **Restricted** special effect or not.

## TRICK ARCHER VERSUS GEAR HEAVY VIGILANTE

*The astute person will quickly notice that the trick archer gets one heck of a cost discount versus the street heavy vigilante. That's absolutely true, and it's by design.*

*When a gear heavy vigilante has a weapon shut down through a Complication or they get **Disarmed**, they typically have one or more weapons still readily available. Losing the weapon might slow them down for a moment, but they're usually back in the fight fairly quickly.*

*By comparison, then a trick archer has their power shut down through a Complication, or get **Disarmed**, well . . . to be a bit frank, they're probably a lot more screwed. Shutting down or disarming a trick archer typically takes away their entire power set since it happened to either the bow or the quiver. They can't use any of their powers until the power set is someone recovered.*

*Now, if that doesn't sit well with your group, don't sweat it. Just build the Trick Arrow type of character the same way you would a gear heavy vigilante, with each arrow being shut down as an individual weapon.*

## UTILITY BELT

Particularly in a street level series, a utility belt can be a real boon in certain situations. In comic books, it allows the hero to carry along a wide-array of small items which can provide a decisive advantage when confronting certain types of obstacles. The hero has an advanced lock-picking set to get past the security door, or a small torch capable of cutting a hole in the glass so he can reach in and disarm the window alarm. Sometimes, the hero has the smoke pellets he needs to confound his enemies and make a quick escape.

A utility belt costs 1 Hero Point to purchase, and you need not define the contents. Once per issue, when a situation arises where your utility belt would be able to help you, you can declare possessing an item that would allow you to automatically get

past the obstacle, perhaps by having just the right tools to get past a lock, or releasing gas pellets to incapacitate the guards.

Once the item is used, it is gone from the scene.

If you need another item from your belt (or the same item again), you must spend a fate point and use the Create an Advantage action to create a **gear aspect** representing the item. Your utility belt grants you a +2 to bonus to creating the aspect, and your skill for doing so is Mediocre (+0), which cannot be increased through special effects. This means your subsequent uses of the utility belt in the same issue will get you an aspect to invoke for a bonus to the relevant skill roll, but no longer nets you an automatic overcome success.

The gear aspect must make sense, and must be something your character can believably have in his belt. It also must be some sort of normal item, and not a super-science device. So, a small cutting torch, some handcuffs, smoke pellets, a miniature camera, aqua-breather, an entangling boomerang— those types of items can be expected. The GM has final veto power on any particular gear aspect.

Once created, the aspect lasts until its free invocations have been used, at which time the item is considered to have served its purpose. While in play, however, the gear aspect can be compelled like any other aspect.

Utility belt doesn't receive any Stress Boxes. However, it can be targeted with things like a **Disarm** aspect from the Create an Advantage action, which is already factored into the 1-point cost.

For utility belts with more advanced and unique items, build it as a full power set, instead. Use the **Trick Arrow** section for guidelines on how to also build a utility belt.

## POWER-ARMOR

Power-armor works just like any other power set as far as having the powers that make it go. You purchase the powers with any special effects and Limitations, add them to your character sheet, give the power set an aspect, and game-on!

Power-Armor is considered a power set, not a device (it's talked about here because most people are going to look for Power-Armor stuff in the device sections). This is an important distinction to note, because unlike item and devices, **Power-Armor does not get 2-Stress boxes for free**. But that's okay, because it can't be targeted directly like a device, despite the

narrative visual a power suit might give.

That means that unless you purchase some levels in the Hardiness power, any damage sustained even while you're in the suit goes directly against the Stress and Consequences of your character. So, heed our advice that is probably a good idea to purchase some levels in Hardiness. It's also probably a good idea to consider a few levels in Invulnerability as well.

## POWER-ARMOR HARDINESS

If you decide to take our advice, here are some special considerations when looking at Hardiness as part of a Power-Armor set, as opposed to the power being directly possessed by the character.

Unlike a character with Hardiness built into them, where they directly get the extra Stress boxes and consequence slots as part of their regular character, power-armor assumes its extra Stress and consequence tracks separately from the main character. In other words, your hero has his own Stress boxes and consequence slots, and the boxes and slots awarded by Hardiness are tracked entirely under the power-armor set.

When the hero is in the armor and takes physical damage, the damage should first come off the Stress and consequence slots provided by the armor. Additionally, Power-Armor consequences do not heal as normal, but require the Resources (i.e. a lab or workshop at the appropriate level) and Technology skill level to repair them. So, unless your hero is a technological genius and slightly rich, his reliance on an outside organization or entity would be shown in a character aspect. If the armor is Taken Out, the character can still be active, but all of the suit's powers are inaccessible.

*A suit of power-armor has Hardiness 4, granting it two Stress boxes, one Mild Consequence slot, and one Moderate Consequence slot. The hero takes a 2-stress hit and fills in his Armor's 2-Stress box. The next attack is for 4-hits, and he fills in the armor's Moderate Consequence slot. He now only has a Mild Consequence slot left. If he takes more than 3-Hits, he's gone beyond the suit's damage absorption capabilities. At that point, he'd either have to shut down the armor (it's Taken Out), or start taking the damage to his personal Stress and Consequences to keep the suit in operation.*

Of course, the hero can choose to avoid the armor taking the damage at any time and apply it directly to

his own tracks. Yeah, it would keep him in the fight a little longer, but he's going to be hurting later. This mimics the instances where the character inside the armor was nearly killed during the battle, but the suit was still operational.

In the end, the boon for the armored hero is that if his armor had a consequence, he could simply remove the suit and no longer be affected by the consequence unless he put it back on before repairing it.

The downside to that is the fact that by removing the suit, he's also losing access to *all* powers contained within that power set.

There's another trade-off as well. Even though the Power-Armor gives him an overall total of 4 Stress Boxes (the two normal Stress boxes for the character plus two from the Hardiness power for the Power-Armor), he doesn't have the same benefit as a character with the power and 4 *character* stress boxes. That type of hero can take a 4-hit attack and use one Stress box to absorb it. Meanwhile, the four Stress boxes total that a power-armored hero has thanks to the **Hardiness 4** example are split: his normal two Stress boxes, and the armor's two Stress boxes from the power, and the two types do not add together— meaning he has a 1-Stress and 2-Stress box on his character, and a 1-Stress and 2-Stress box on the armor. In other words, he is unable to absorb a single 4-Hit attack with Stress. But, as was stated, when he takes consequences on the Power-Armor, he has the advantage of not being hindered by them simply by removing the armor.

The power-armor rules can also be applied to things like unique body armor.

For example, you could simply use Resources or Contacts to get Armor 3 for your street vigilante, or you could invest in a power set that includes: **Invulnerability 3** and **Hardiness 3** (body armor), which would give you 2 Stress boxes plus 1 Mild Consequence slot for the armor, plus negate 3 points of damage and also allow any additional Special Effects to be purchased.

Likewise, you could simply give the armor **Hardiness 3**. It isn't invulnerable to damage and, by the power's narrative, each time it absorbs damage it gets damaged itself.

## ***POWER ARMOR AND HEALING DAMAGE***

Unless the power armor can regenerate, consequences taken by the armor do not heal normally; they must be repaired. Doing so requires a facility with a quality rating at least equal to the severity of the consequence. The opposition is also equal to the consequence's severity, and increases by +1 for each rating the facility quality rating is below the opposition. It takes one hour per opposition rating to repair the armor. In other words, repairing a Severe Consequence would take 6 hours.

## ***POWER ARMOR AND SUPER-TOUGH CHARACTERS***

We already know that Invulnerability levels do not stack— the character uses the highest rating. But what happens when your character with Hardiness is put into power armor with its own Stress track and consequence slots?

Characters wearing armor with Hardiness, even those who have the power on their own, still benefit from the extra Stress boxes and consequence slots from the armor.

And you thought those guys wearing armor in the comics were just cool window dressing.

## ***POWER-ARMOR COMPLICATIONS***

Taking one or more power-armor themed Complications is completely optional.

# CHAPTER 11: ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

## IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

You roll the dice when there's some kind of interesting opposition keeping you from achieving your goals. If there's no interesting opposition, you just accomplish whatever you say you're trying to do.

Whenever you take action, there's a good chance that something or someone is going to be in your way. It wouldn't be an interesting story if the bad guy just rolled over and handed you victory on a plate— clearly, he's got some crazy security measures to keep you out of his place. Or the mastermind's island is already blowing up around you. Or the anti-supers protesters are filling the streets around your headquarters. Or someone's been bribing the informants to keep quiet.

That's when it's time to take out the dice.

- Choose the character's skill that is appropriate to the action.
- Roll four Fate dice.
- Add together the symbols showing on the dice. A + is +1, a - is -1, and a 0 is 0.
- Add your skill rating to the dice roll. The total is your result on the ladder.
- If you invoke an aspect, add +2 to your result or reroll the dice.

*Midnight Avenger needs to sneak past some security guards to get into the home of a crime boss in the Terenza crime family. Mike says it'll be an Overcome action against Average (+1) passive opposition, since the guards*

*are just Nameless NPCs and not worth a conflict for something like this.*

*Dylan rolls his Stealth skill, which is rated at Great (+4). He gets a -2 on the dice, for a total of 2, which corresponds to Fair (+2) on the ladder*

## OPPOSITION

As we said in Chapter 1: The Basics, whenever you roll the dice, you're comparing your roll to your





opposition. Opposition is either active, meaning it's another person rolling dice against you, or passive, meaning that it's just a set rating on the ladder which represents the influence of the environment or situation you're in. GMs, it's your job to decide what the most reasonable source of opposition is.

*Mike decides to roll active opposition against Dylan on behalf of the guards. She decides the most appropriate opposing skill is Notice—they're trying to watch for people sneaking onto the property, after all.*

*The guards are Nameless NPCs, so he gives them Average (+1) in Notice. He rolls and gets +2 on the dice, for a total of Good (+3). The roll for the guards beat Dylan by +1.*

## **FOR THE GM: ACTIVE OR PASSIVE?**

*If a PC or a named NPC can reasonably interfere with whatever the action is, then you should give them the opportunity to roll active opposition. This does not count as an action for the opposing character; it's just a basic property of resolving actions. In other words, a player doesn't have to do anything special to earn the right to actively oppose an action, as long as the character is present and can interfere. If there's any doubt, having an appropriate situation aspect helps justify why a character gets to actively oppose someone else.*

*If there is no character in the way, then look at your situation aspects in this scene to see if any of them justify some sort of obstacle, or consider the circumstances (like rough terrain, a complex lock, time running out, a situational complication, et cetera.). If something sounds interesting, choose passive opposition and set a rating on the ladder.*

*Sometimes you're going to run into edge cases, where something inanimate seems like it should provide active opposition (like an automated gun) or an NPC can't provide proactive resistance (like if they're unaware of what the PC is doing). Follow your gut and use the type of opposition that fits the circumstances or makes the scene more interesting.*

# THE FOUR OUTCOMES

When you roll the dice, either you're going to fail, tie, succeed, or succeed with style.

Every roll you make in a Daring Comics game results in one of four outcomes, generally speaking. The specifics may change a little depending on what kind of action you're taking, but all the game actions fit this general pattern.

## **FAIL**

If you roll lower than your opposition, you fail.

This means one of several things: you don't get what you want, you get what you want at a serious cost, or you suffer some negative mechanical consequence. Sometimes, it means more than one of those. It's the GM's job to determine an appropriate cost.

## **TIE**

If you roll the same as your opposition, you tie.

This means you get what you want, but at a minor cost, or you get a lesser version of what you wanted.

## **SUCCEED**

If you roll higher than your opposition by 1 or 2 shifts, you succeed.

This means you get what you want at no cost.

## **SUCCEED WITH STYLE**

If you roll higher than your opposition by 3 or more shifts, you succeed with style.

This means that you get what you want, but you also get an added benefit on top of that.

## FOR THE GM: HOW HARD SHOULD SKILL ROLLS BE?

*For active opposition, you don't really need to worry about how hard the roll is—just use the NPC's skill level and roll the dice like the players do, letting the chips fall where they may. We have guidelines about NPC skill levels in *Running the Game*.*

*For passive opposition, you have to decide what rank on the ladder the player has to beat. It's more an art than a science, but we have some guidelines to help you.*

*Anything that's two or more steps higher than the PC's skill level (Fair (+2) skill and Great (+4) opposition, for example) means that the player will probably fail or need to invoke aspects to succeed.*

*Anything that's two or more steps lower than the PC's skill level (Fair (+2) skill and Mediocre (+0) opposition, for example) means that the player will probably not need to invoke aspects and have a good chance of succeeding with style.*

*Between that range, there's a roughly equal chance that they'll tie or succeed, and a roughly equal chance that they will or won't need to invoke aspects to do so.*

*Therefore, low difficulties are best when you want to give the PCs a chance to show off and be awesome, difficulties near their skill levels are best when you want to provide tension but not overwhelm them, and high difficulties are best when you want to emphasize how dire or unusual the circumstances are and make them pull out all the stops.*

*Finally, a couple of quick axioms:*

*Average is called Average for a reason. If nothing about the opposition sticks out, then the difficulty doesn't need more than a +1.*

*If you can think of at least one reason why the opposition sticks out, but otherwise just can't decide what the difficulty should be, pick Fair (+2). It's in the middle of a PC's range of skills, so it provides a decent challenge for every skill level except Great (+4), and you want to give PCs a chance to show off their peak skill anyway.*



## FOR THE GM: SERIOUS COST VS. MINOR COST

*When you're thinking about costs, think both about the story in play and the game mechanics to help you figure out what would be most appropriate.*

*A serious cost should make the current situation worse somehow, either by creating a new problem or exacerbating an existing one. Bring in another source of opposition in this scene or the next one (such as a new opposing NPC or an obstacle to overcome), or ask the player to take a consequence at their lowest free level, or give someone who opposes the PC an advantage with a free invocation.*

*A minor cost should add a story detail that's problematic or bad for the PC, but doesn't necessarily endanger progress. You could also ask the PC to take stress or give someone who opposes the PCs a boost.*

*It's okay if the minor cost is mainly a narrative detail, showing how the PC just barely scratched by. We give more advice about dealing with costs on in Chapter 13: Running the Game.*

## THE FOUR ACTIONS

When you make a skill roll, you're taking one of four actions: overcome, create an advantage, attack, or defend.

There are four types of actions you can take in a game of Daring Comics. When you make a skill roll, you have to decide which of these you're going to try. The skill descriptions tell you which actions are appropriate for that skill and under which circumstances. Usually, the action you need to take will be pretty obvious from the skill description, your intent, and the situation in play, but sometimes you might have to talk it over with the group to find out which is the most appropriate.

The four actions are: overcome, create advantage, attack, and defend.

## OVERCOME

Use the overcome action to achieve assorted goals appropriate to your skill.

Every skill has a certain niche of miscellaneous endeavors that fall under its purview, certain situations where it's an ideal choice. A character with Thief tries to jimmy a window, a character with Empathy tries to calm the crowd, and a character with Technology tries to fix a broken thruster on his Power-Armor.

When your character's in one of these situations and there's something between her and her goals, you use the overcome action to deal with it. Look at it as the "catch-all" action for every skill. If it doesn't fall into any other category, it's probably an overcome action.

The opposition you have to beat might be active or passive, depending on the situation.

- When you fail an overcome action, you have two options. You can simply fail, which means you don't attain your goal or get what you were after, or you can succeed at a serious cost.
- When you tie an overcome action, you attain your goal or get what you were after, but at a minor cost.
- When you succeed at an overcome action, you attain your goal without any cost.
- When you succeed with style at an overcome action, you get a boost in addition to attaining your goal.

*Midnight Avenger is in the home office of a powerful crime boss in the Terenza crime family. After some searching, he discovers a hidden safe and wants to get inside.*

*Mike declares the action will be an Overcome against a Great (+3) opposition. Dylan rolls the dice and gets a total of +3. Looking at his sheet, he adds in Midnight Avenger's Fair (+2) in Thief, for a total of Superb (+5).*

## JUDGING ON THE FLY

You may occasionally run into situations where it seems appropriate to provide a different benefit or penalty for a given action result than the one listed. It's okay to go back to the basic description of the four outcomes and sub in something that makes sense.

For example, on the overcome action it says you get a boost in addition to success when you succeed with style. But if that overcome roll is going to end the scene, or you can't think of a good boost, You may choose to offer a story detail as an extra benefit instead.

## CREATE AN ADVANTAGE

Use the create an advantage action to make a situation aspect that gives you a benefit, or to claim a benefit from any aspect you have access to.

The create an advantage action covers a broad range of endeavors, unified around the theme of using your skills to take advantage (hence the name) of the environment or situation you're in.

Sometimes, that means you're doing something to actively change your circumstances (like firing a light-based power at opponent's eyes or setting something on fire), but it could also mean that you're discovering new information that helps you (like learning how to use a piece of alien technology through trial-and-error), or taking advantage of something you've previously observed (like your opponent's predisposition to a bad temper).

When you roll to create an advantage, you must specify whether you're creating a new situation aspect or taking advantage of an aspect that's already in place. If the former, are you attaching that situation aspect to a character or to the environment?

Opposition might be active or passive, depending on the circumstances. If your target is another character, their roll always counts as a defend action.

If you're using create an advantage to make a new aspect...

- When you fail, you either don't create the aspect, or you create it but someone else gets the free invoke—whatever you end up doing works to someone else's advantage instead. That could be your opponent in a conflict, or

any character who could tangibly benefit to your detriment. You may have to reword the aspect to show that the other character benefits instead—work it out with the recipient in whichever way makes the most sense.

- When you tie, you get a boost instead of the situation aspect you were going for. This might mean you have to rename the aspect a bit to reflect its temporary nature (Rough Terrain becomes Rocks on the Path).
- When you succeed, you create a situation aspect with a free invocation.
- When you succeed with style, you get a situation aspect with two free invocations instead of one.

*Trinity is chasing a thug for the Terenza family down some alleyways in New York. Along the way, she decides to use her spell to control metallic objects (Magnetic Control) to Create an Advantage by throwing all of the empty cans, small trash cans, and other objects into the air to distract the thug.*

*Trinity rolls her Magic, which is Superb (+5) and gets a +1, for a total of Fantastic (+6).*

*Mike rolls to defend for the thug, and gets a total of Good (+3).*

*Trinity succeeded with style, and places a Distracted aspect on the thug, which she can invoke twice for free.*

If you're using create an advantage on an existing aspect...

- When you fail, you give a free invoke on that aspect to someone else instead. That could be your opponent in a conflict, or any character who could tangibly benefit to your detriment.
- When you tie or succeed, you place a free invocation on the aspect.
- When you succeed with style, you place two free invocations on the aspect.

*Midnight Avenger is questioning a supposed associate of the Terenza crime family about anything he might know concerning hi-tech arms making their way into New York. Mike describes the scene, and makes mention of the man wearing a crucifix around his neck.*

*Dylan grabs onto that detail, thinking that if the man is wearing a crucifix, he's likely religious and maybe even a little superstitious. He decides to bare his fangs at the guy, since they are along and secluded. He isn't exactly sure what aspect he's going for, but he's betting the guy isn't going to be thrilled learning that vampires are real.*

*For this, he uses his Good (+3) in Provoke and rolls a +1 on the dice, for a Great (+4) total.*

*Mike rolls to defend, and gets a Fair (+2) total.*

*Mike reveals that the fella is very superstitious, and makes the aspect **The Devil Walks Amongst Us** known to everyone.*

*Dylan has one free invocation of the aspect that he can use, or pass of to someone else.*

## **ATTACK**

Use the attack action to harm someone in a conflict or take them out of a scene.

The attack action is the most straightforward of the four actions—when you want to hurt someone in a conflict, it's an attack. An attack isn't always physical in nature; some skills allow you to hurt someone mentally as well.

Most of the time, your target will actively oppose your attack. Passive opposition on an attack means you've caught your target unaware or otherwise unable to make a full effort to resist you, or the NPC isn't important enough to bother with dice.

In addition, passive or not, the opposition always counts as a defend action so you can look at these two actions as being inexorably intertwined.

- When you fail at an attack, you don't cause any harm to your target. (It also means that your target succeeded on the defend action, which could get you saddled with other effects.)
- When you tie an attack, you don't cause any harm, but you gain a boost.
- When you succeed on an attack, you inflict a hit on your target equal to the number of shifts you got. That forces the target to try and "buy off" the value of your hit by taking stress or consequences; if that's not possible, your target gets taken out of the conflict.
- When you succeed with style on an attack, it

works like a normal success, but you also have the option to reduce the value of your hit by one to gain a boost as well.

*Wraith barrels into his opponent, and starts pummeling him with fists. He rolls his Fight of Great (+4) and gets +2 on the dice, for a Fantastic (+6) total.*

*Mike rolls for the high level lieutenant in the crime family, Wraith's opponent, and gets a total of Great (+4).*

*Xander wants to do better, and the Terenza family has been discovered to be abducting runaways to use as experiments within their black-ops G.O.D. organization. Xander spends a fate point and invokes Wraith's aspect of: **I Will Not Let What Happened To Me Happen To Others**, for an additional +2.*

*His total is now Legendary (+8), a whopping +4 points over his opponent. Xander decides to reduce his damage and place a Boost. He lowers his damage by -1, doing 3-Stress to the villain. He describes his flurry of blows to the guy's head, and places a **Dazed** boost on him.*

## **DEFEND**

Use the defend action to avoid an attack or prevent someone from creating an advantage against you.

Whenever someone attacks you in a conflict or tries to create an advantage on you, you always get a chance to defend. As with attacks, this isn't always about avoiding physical sources of danger. Some of the skills allow you to defend against attempts to harm your mind or damage your resolve.

Because you roll to defend as a reaction, your opposition is almost always active. If you're rolling a defend action against passive opposition, it's because the environment is hostile to you somehow (like a blazing fire), or the attacking NPC isn't important enough for the GM to bother with dice.

- When you fail at a defense, you suffer the consequences of whatever you were trying to prevent. You might take a hit or have an advantage created on you.
- When you tie a defense, you grant your opponent a boost.
- When you succeed at a defense, you

successfully avoid the attack or the attempt to gain an advantage on you.

- When you succeed with style at a defense, it works like a normal success, but you also gain a boost as you turn the tables momentarily.

*Trinity is being confronted by a visage of Xanarath, the extradimensional demon who grants her the mystical abilities she harnesses. Xanarath is not too happy that Trinity has been using his powers for the forces of good. Although he can't physically harm her while she is on the Earth plane and he's in his home dimension, he nonetheless decides to intimidate her, informing her how her actions will have repercussions, not only for her teammates, but also her loved ones.*

*Mike rolls Provoke for Xanarath, which is rated at Superb (+5). He gets +1 on the dice, for a Fantastic (+6) total.*

*Anna rolls Trinity's Will, rated at Good (+3). She gets +3 on the dice, for total of Fantastic (+6).*

*Since Anna tied on her Defend action, Mike gets to place a boost on her, representing that Xanarath is starting to get to her. He calls it: **Flustered and Worried**, writes it on an index card, and slides it over to Anna.*

## CAN I DEFEND AGAINST OVERCOME ACTIONS?

*Technically, no. The defend action is there to stop you from taking stress, consequences, or situation aspects—basically, to protect you against all the bad stuff we represent with mechanics.*

*But, you can roll active opposition if you're in the way of any action, as per the guidelines. So if someone's doing an overcome action that might fail because you're in the way, you should speak up and say, "Hey, I'm in the way!" and roll to oppose it. You don't get any extra benefits like the defend action gives you, but you also don't have to worry about the aforementioned bad stuff if you lose.*

## NO STACKED EFFECTS!

*You'll notice that the defend action has outcomes that mirror some of the outcomes in attack and create an advantage. For example, it says that when you tie a defense, you grant your opponent a Boost. Under attack, it says that when you tie, you receive a Boost.*

*That doesn't mean the attacker gets two boosts—it's the same result, just from two different points of view. We just wrote it that way so that the results were consistent when you looked up the rule, regardless of what action you took.*

# CHAPTER 12: COMIC BOOK ACTION

Whether attempting to infiltrate a villain's lair, trading blows with evil on the public streets, engaging someone in a mental conflict, or trying to calm panicked citizens, just as Daring Comics resolves around the four action types of Overcome, Create an Advantage, Attack, and Defend, the context of where those action types will take place are divided into Conflict, Challenge, and Contest.

In this chapter, we'll explore each of those three types in detail, and explain which is the best method depending on the type of scene taking place.

## ZOOMING IN ON THE ACTION

Most of the time, a single skill roll should be enough to decide how a particular situation in play resolves. You're not obligated to describe actions in a particular timeframe or level of detail when you use a skill. Therefore, you could use a single Athletics roll to find out whether you can safely climb the outside of a skyscraper, or use that same single skill roll to find out whether you can safely avoid a crumbling building that's about to crush you.

Sometimes, however, you'll be in a situation where you're doing something really dramatic and interesting, like pivotal set pieces in a movie or a book. When that happens, it's a good idea to zoom in on the action and deal with it using multiple skill rolls, because the wide range of dice results will make things really dynamic and surprising. Most fight scenes fall into this category, but you can zoom in on anything that you consider sufficiently important—car chases, court trials, high-stakes poker games, and so on.

We have three ways for you to zoom in on the action in Daring Comics:

- Conflicts, when two or more characters are trying to directly harm each other
- Challenges, when one or more characters try to achieve something dynamic or complicated
- Contests, when two or more characters are competing for a goal

## CONFLICTS

In a conflict, characters are actively trying to harm one another. It could be a fist fight, a battle of ranger super-powers, or even using city debris against each other. It could also be a tough interrogation, a psychic assault, or a shouting match with a loved one. As long as the characters involved have both the intent and the ability to harm one another, then you're in a conflict scene.

Conflicts are either physical or mental in nature, based on the kind of harm you're at risk of suffering. In physical conflicts, you suffer bruises, scrapes, cuts, and other injuries. In mental conflicts, you suffer loss of confidence and self-esteem, loss of composure, and other psychological trauma.

Setting up a conflict is a little more involved than setting up contests or challenges. Here are the steps:

- Set the scene, describing the environment the conflict takes place in, creating situation aspects and zones, and establishing who's participating and what side they're on.
- Determine the turn order.
- Start the first exchange:
  - On your turn, take an action and then resolve it.
  - On other people's turns, Defend or respond to their actions as necessary.
  - At the end of everyone's turn, start again with a new exchange.

You know the conflict is over when everyone on one of the sides has conceded or been Taken Out.

## SETTING THE SCENE

GMs and players, you should talk briefly before you start a conflict about the circumstances of the scene. This mainly involves coming up with quick answers to variations of the four W-questions, such as:

- Who's in the conflict?
- Where are they positioned relative to one another?
- When is the conflict taking place? Is that important?
- What's the environment like?
- Things to hide behind: vehicles, obstructions, or large furniture.
- Things you can knock over, wreck, or use as improvised weapons: bookshelves, crates, et cetera.
- Things that are flammable

You don't need an exhaustive amount of detail here, like precise measures of distance or anything like that. Just resolve enough to make it clear for everyone what's going on.

GMs, you're going to take this information and create situation aspects to help further define the arena of conflict.

*Wraith, Trinity, Barrage, and Midnight Avenger are breaking into a dockside warehouse in order to find a shipment of the hi-tech weapons that have been turning the streets of New York into a warzone. Unfortunately, someone tipped the Terenza crime family off. Now Brickhouse, one of the super-powered lieutenants, is at the warehouse waiting for them to show up, and he brought along four associates.*

*The participants in the conflict are pretty obvious—the PCs, plus Brickhouse and four nameless thugs, all NPCs under Mike's control. The warehouse is the environment, and the group takes a moment to talk about it—boxes and crates everywhere, large and open, there's probably a second floor, and Mike mentions the loading door is open because they're waiting for a ship to come in.*

## SITUATION ASPECTS

GMs, when you're setting the scene, keep an eye out for fun-sounding features of the environment to make into situation aspects, especially if you think someone might be able to take advantage of them in an interesting way in a conflict. Don't overload it. Find three to five evocative things about your conflict location and make them into aspects.

Good options for situation aspects include:

- Anything regarding the general mood, weather, or lighting: dark or badly lit, storming, creepy, crumbling, blindingly bright, et cetera.
- Anything that might affect or restrict movement: filthy, mud everywhere, slippery, rough, and so forth.

## SITUATION ASPECTS AND ZONES IN MENTAL CONFLICTS

*In a mental conflict, it might not always make sense to use situation aspects and zones to describe a physical space. It'd make sense in an interrogation, for example, where the physical features of the space create fear, but not in a really violent argument with a loved one. Also, when people are trying to hurt each other emotionally, usually they're using their target's own weaknesses against them—in other words, their own aspects.*

*So, you may not even need situation aspects or zones for a lot of mental conflicts. Don't feel obligated to include them.*

*Considering our warehouse again, Mike thinks about what might make good situation aspects.*

*He decides that there are enough reinforced metal crates in here to make free movement a potential problem, so she picks **Heavy Crates** and **Crowded** as aspects. The loading door is open, which means that there's a large dock with water in it, so she also picks **Open to the Water** as a situation aspect, figuring that someone might try to knock someone in.*

As the scene unfolds, players might suggest features of the environment that are perfect as aspects. If the GM described the scene as being poorly lit, a player should be able to invoke the Shadows to help on a Stealth roll even if she hadn't previously established it as an aspect. If the feature would require some intervention on the part of the characters in the scene to become aspect-worthy, then that's the purview of the create an advantage action. Usually the apartment complex doesn't catch **On Fire!** without someone actually committing a bit of arson.



## ZONES

GMs, if your conflict takes place over a large area, you may want to break it down into zones for easier reference.

A zone is an abstract representation of physical space. The best definition of a zone is that it's close enough that you can interact directly with someone (in other words, walk up to and punch them in the face).

Generally speaking, a conflict should rarely involve more than a handful of zones. Two to four is probably sufficient, save for really big conflicts. This isn't a miniatures board game— zones should give a tactile sense of the environment, but at the point where you need something more than a cocktail napkin to lay it out, you're getting too complicated.

- If you can describe the area as bigger than a house, you can probably divide it into two or more zones— think of a warehouse or a shopping center parking lot.
- If it's separated by stairs, a ladder, a fence, or a wall, it could be divided zones, like two floors of a house.
- “Above X” and “below X” can be different zones, especially if moving between them takes some doing—think of the airspace around something large, like a blimp.

*When you're setting up your zones, note any situation aspects that could make moving between those zones problematic. They'll be important later, when people want to move from zone to zone. If that means you need more situation aspects, add them now.*

*Mike decides the warehouse needs to be multiple zones. The main floor is big enough, in his mind, for two zones, and the Heavy Crates he mentioned earlier make it hard to freely move between them.*

*He knows there's also a second floor ringing the inner walls, so he makes that an additional zone. He adds Shadowy Upper Level to the scene.*

*If, for some reason, someone decides to run outside, he figures that can be a fourth zone, but he doesn't think he needs any aspects for it.*

*He sketches the rough map on an index card for everyone to see.*



## **TIGHT ZONES**

While zones divide up big areas like parking lots and stadiums—showing how difficult it is to run across a football field quickly—they can also be used to divide up small areas in interesting ways. For example, a fight on an invading space vessel might take place in tight quarters that require allies to cross several zones in order to offer support to a friend in trouble. By forcing players to choose between spending actions on moving or offering help from afar, zones can make ordinary conflicts dramatic.

## **DANGEROUS ZONE ASPECTS**

Zones can also create drama by restricting movement and providing threats the characters have to overcome. For example, a zone on a battlefield might have the aspect Taking Heavy Fire, requiring characters to make an Athletics roll to avoid taking damage as they run through the firefight. Some zones might also disappear after a specified number of turns. Collapsing bridges, plummeting space ships, and closing impregnable doors, all push characters to move quickly as the battlefield shifts around them and give the players a chance to force NPCs into those zones to contend with the threats as well.

## **MENTAL OR SOCIAL ZONES**

Not all conflicts happen in the physical world; superheroes are often drawn into mental conflicts that can be mapped out in interesting ways. For example, a psychic may find her way through a patient's dreamscape blocked by situation aspects that must be overcome through a series of Investigation and Empathy rolls.

For those of you who want mental conflicts involving a telepath or psychic to be more than just a few simple die rolls, move the conflict onto a mental plane that for all intents and purposes appears as a physical reality. Draw out your zone map accordingly, and note any zone barriers and situation aspects. Then treat the conflict the same as you would a physical battle.

Try to keep in mind, however, that while the mental conflict is going on, your non-psychic players are going to be sitting around and waiting. So, use this option only occasionally, and only for truly dramatic mental battles, or make sure to split your spotlight between the psychic and physical realms.

## **ESTABLISHING SIDES**

It's important to know everyone's goal in a conflict before you start. People fight for a reason, and if they're willing to do harm, it's usually an urgent reason.

The normal assumption is that the player characters are on one side, fighting against NPCs who are in opposition. It doesn't always have to be that way, however—PCs can fight each other and be allied with NPCs against each other.

Make sure everyone agrees on the general goals of each side, who's on which side, and where everyone is situated in the scene (like who's occupying which zone) when the conflict begins.

It might also help, GMs, to decide how those groups are going to "divvy up" to face one another—is one character going to get mobbed by the bad guy's henchmen, or is the opposition going to spread itself around equally among the PCs? You might change your mind once the action starts, but if you have a basic idea, it gives you a good starting point to work from.

*In our continuing warehouse fight example, the sides are obvious: Brickhouse and the Terenza thugs want to do in the PCs, and the PCs want to keep that from happening.*

*The conflict starts with everyone on the main warehouse floor. Mike decides that Brickhouse and one of the thugs are going to go after Trinity. Each of the remaining thugs will attempt to slow down one of the other heroes.*

## **TURN ORDER**

Your turn order in a conflict is based on your skills. In a physical conflict, compare your Notice skill to the other participants. In a mental conflict, compare your Empathy skill. Whoever has the highest gets to go first, and then everyone else in descending order.

If there's a tie, compare a secondary or tertiary skill. For physical conflicts, that's Athletics, then Physique. For mental conflicts, Rapport, then Will. If there's still a tie after all that, just roll the four fate dice with the highest total acting first, or let the player's decide, or whatever works best for your table.

GMs, for a simple option, pick your most advantageous NPC to determine your place in the turn order, and let all your NPCs go at that time.

Wraith has a Notice of Good (+3), higher than everyone else, so he goes first.

Midnight Avenger and Barrage both have Notice at Fair (+2), making it a tie. Since this is a physical conflict, they both go to Athletics next. As luck would have it, they both also have Athletics at Good (+3), resulting in another tie. Going to Physique, they find yet a third tie. They both have it at Average (+1). Finally, Midnight Avenger just tells Barrage to go first, and he'll follow-up afterward..

Trinity has a Notice of Average (+1), so she goes fourth.

Brickhouse and his thugs all lack the Notice skill. Brickhouse has Physique at Superb (+5), and his thugs don't have it, so he goes fifth and they go last.

## **THE EXCHANGE**

Exchanges in a conflict are a little more complicated than in contests. In an exchange, every character gets a turn to take an action. GMs, you get to go once for every NPC you control in the conflict.

Most of the time, you're going to be attacking another character or creating an advantage on your turn, because that's the point of a conflict—take your opponent out, or set things up to make it easier to take your opponent out.

However, if you have a secondary objective in the conflict scene, you might need to roll an overcome action instead. You'll encounter this most often if you want to move between zones but there's a situation aspect in place making that problematic.

Regardless, you only get to make one skill roll on your turn in an exchange— unless you're defending against someone else's action, which you can do as many times as you want. You can even make defend actions on behalf of others, so long as you fulfill two conditions: it has to be reasonable for you to interpose yourself between the attack and its target, and you have to suffer the effects of any failed rolls.

### **HANDLING A LOT OF NPCs**

*GMs, if you have a lot of nameless NPCs in your scene, feel free to have them use passive opposition to keep your dice rolling down. Also, consider using mobs instead of individual NPCs to keep things simple.*

## **FULL DEFENSE**

If you want, you can forgo your action for the exchange to concentrate on defense. You don't get to do anything proactive, but you do get to roll all defend actions for the exchange at a +2 bonus.

## **WEAPON AND ARMOR RATINGS**

Daring Comics uses Weapon and Armor ratings.

A Weapon value adds to the shift value of a successful hit. So, if you have Weapon: 2, it means that any hit is worth 2 more shifts than it would normally be. This counts for ties, so when you're using a weapon, you inflict stress on a tie instead of getting a boost. That makes weapons very dangerous.

An Armor value reduces the shifts of a successful hit. So, Armor:2 makes any hit worth 2 less than usual. If you hit, but the target's Armor reduces the shift value to 0 or below, you get a boost to use on your target but don't do any harm.

## **RESOLVING ATTACKS**

A successful attack lands a hit equivalent to its shift value on a target. So if you get three shifts on an attack, you land a 3-shift hit (plus any Weapon Rating you might have). The damage is reduced on a 1:1 basis by any Armor rating the target possesses.

If you get hit by an attack and take one or more Hits after accounting for Armor rating, then one of two things happens: either you absorb the hit and stay in the fight, or you're taken out.

Fortunately, you have two options for absorbing hits to stay in the fight— you can take stress and/or consequences. You can also concede a conflict before you're taken out, in order to preserve some control over what happens to your character.

### **TAKING A HIT**

*If, for whatever reason, you want to forego your defense and take a hit (like, say, to interpose yourself in the path of an arrow that's about to skewer your friend), you can.*

*Because you're not defending, the attacker's rolling against Mediocre (+0) opposition, which means you're probably going to take a bad hit.*

## STRESS

One of your options to mitigate the effect of a hit is to take stress.

The best way to understand stress is that it represents all the various reasons why you just barely avoid taking the full force of an attack. Maybe you twist away from the blow just right, or it looks bad but is really just a flesh wound, or you exhaust yourself diving out of the way at the last second.

Mentally, stress could mean that you just barely manage to ignore an insult, or clamp down on an instinctive emotional reaction, or something like that.

Stress boxes also represent a loss of momentum—you only have so many last-second saves in you before you've got to face the music.

On your character sheet, you have a number of stress boxes, each with a different shift value. By default, all characters get a 1-point and a 2-point box. You may get additional, higher-value stress boxes depending on some of your skills (usually Physique and Will).

When you take stress, check off a stress box with a value equal to the shift value of the hit. If that box is already checked, check off a higher value box. If there is no higher available box, and you can't take any consequences, you're taken out of the conflict.

You can only check off one stress box per hit.

Remember that you have two sets of stress boxes! One of these is for physical stress, the other for mental; you'll start with a 1-shift and a 2-shift box in each of these. If you take stress from a physical source, you check off a physical stress box. If it's a mental hit, check off a mental stress box.

After a conflict, when you get a minute to breathe, any stress boxes you checked off become available for your use again.

*Brickhouse, with his Super-Strength 1 (granting him a Weapon: 1 rating to damage), pummels Midnight Avenger. He gets two Shifts on his attack roll, for a total of 3-Hits of damage (2-Hits for the 2-Shifts, plus an addition 1-Hit for his Super-Strength).*

*Midnight Avenger has all four stress boxes available, so he checks off the 3-point stress box to absorb the hit. That means he only has his 1-point, 2-point, and 4-point boxes available.*

*The next exchange, Brickhouse hits him for another 3-Hits worth of damage. Since Midnight Avenger already used his 3-point stress box, he now has to use his 4-point box to absorb the damage. He only has his 1-point and 2-point boxes remaining, so another hit like that and he's going to be forced to take a consequence.*

## CONSEQUENCES

The second option you have for mitigating a hit is taking a consequence. A consequence is more severe than stress. It represents some form of lasting injury or setback that you accrue from the conflict, something that's going to be a problem for your character after the conflict is over.

Consequences come in three levels of severity: mild, moderate, and severe. Each one has a different shift value: two, four, and six, respectively. On your character sheet, you have a number of available consequence slots, in this section:

When you use a consequence slot, you reduce the shift value of the attack by the shift value of the consequence. You can use more than one consequence at a time if they're available. Any of the hit's remaining shifts must be handled by a stress box to avoid being taken out.

However, there's a penalty. The consequence written in the slot is an aspect that represents the lasting effect incurred from the attack. The opponent who forced you to take a consequence gets a free invocation, and the aspect remains on your character sheet until you've recovered the consequence slot. While it's on your sheet, the consequence is treated like any other aspect, except because the slant on it is so negative, it's far more likely to be used to your character's detriment.

Unlike stress, a consequence slot may take a long time to recover after the conflict is over. Also unlike stress, you only have one set of consequences; there aren't specific slots for physical versus mental consequences. This means that, if you have to take a mild consequence to reduce a mental hit and your mild consequence slot is already filled with a physical consequence, you're out of luck! You're going to have to use a moderate or severe consequence to absorb that hit (assuming you have one left). The exception to this is the extra consequence slot you would get from a Superb (+5) Physique or Will is reserved for physical or mental harm, respectively.

Going back to *Midnight Avenger* and *Brickhouse*, the super-villain continues to beat down the vampiric super-hero, landing a solid, super-strength kick to the hero's midsection, causing a walloping 4-hits of damage. Since *Midnight Avenger* only has his 1-point and 2-point stress boxes remaining, he has to take a consequence.

Taking 4-hits of damage means he has to take a Moderate Consequence, which represents up to 4-points of damage. Dylan and Mike agree to call the consequence *Fractured Ribs*, and Dylan writes it down in the consequence slot.

## **NAMING A CONSEQUENCE**

Here are some guidelines for choosing what to name a consequence:

Mild consequences don't require immediate medical attention. They hurt, and they may present an inconvenience, but they aren't going to force you into a lot of bed rest. On the mental side, mild consequences express things like small social gaffes or changes in your surface emotions. Examples: Black Eye, Bruised Hand, Winded, Flustered, Cranky, Temporarily Blinded.

Moderate consequences represent fairly serious impairments that require dedicated effort toward recovery (including medical attention). On the mental side, they express things like damage to your reputation or emotional problems that you can't just shrug off with an apology and a good night's sleep. Examples: Deep Cut, First Degree Burn, Exhausted, Drunk, Terrified.

Severe consequences go straight to the emergency room (or whatever the equivalent is in your game)—they're extremely nasty and prevent you from doing a lot of things, and will lay you out for a while. On the mental side, they express things like serious trauma or relationship-changing harm. Examples: Second-Degree Burn, Compound Fracture, Guts Hanging Out, Crippling Shame, Trauma-Induced Phobia.

## **WHAT SKILL DO I USE FOR RECOVERY?**

In *Daring Comics*, physical recovery happens through the Treatment skill. For mental recovery, use the Empathy skill.

Powers such as Healing and Regeneration can also

be used, as described under the power's description.

## **RECOVERING FROM A CONSEQUENCE**

In order to regain the use of a consequence slot, you have to recover from the consequence. That requires two things: succeeding at an action that allows you to justify recovery, and then waiting an appropriate amount of game time for that recovery to take place.

The action in question is an overcome action; the obstacle is the consequence that you took. If it's a physical injury, then the action is some kind of medical treatment or first aid. For mental consequences, the action may involve therapy, counseling, or simply a night out with friends.

The difficulty for this obstacle is based on the shift value of the consequence. Mild is Fair (+2), moderate is Great (+4), and severe is Fantastic (+6). If you are trying to perform the recovery action on yourself, increase the difficulty by two steps on the ladder.

Keep in mind that the circumstances have to be appropriately free of distraction and tension for you to make this roll in the first place. You're not going to clean and bandage a nasty cut while ogres are tromping through the caves looking for you. GMs, you've got the final judgment call.

If you succeed at the recovery action, or someone else succeeds on a recovery action for you, you get to rename the consequence aspect to show that it's in recovery. So, for example, Broken Leg could become Stuck in a Cast, Scandalized could become Damage Control, and so on. This doesn't free up the consequence slot, but it serves as an indicator that you're recovering, and it changes the ways the aspect's going to be used while it remains.

Whether you change the consequence's name or not—and sometimes it might not make sense to do so—mark it with a star so that everyone remembers that recovery has started.

Then, you just have to wait the time.

The amount of time it takes is based upon the Series Tone.

*Midnight Avenger* took a Moderate Consequence in his fight with *Brickhouse*. Back at the base, *Trinity* treats him at the infirmary, and makes a Treatment roll against Great (+4) opposition. She succeeds.



*This allows Midnight Avenger to rename the consequence to something like **Taped Ribs** and start the recovery process. Since the series tone was set to Four Color, he'll recover from the injury after half an issue. Afterward, he'll erase the consequence and be able to use the slot again in a later conflict.*

## **EXTREME CONSEQUENCES**

In addition to the normal set of mild, moderate, and severe consequences, every PC also gets one last-ditch option to stay in a fight—the extreme consequence. Between major milestones, you can only use this option once.

An extreme consequence will absorb up to 8-shifts of a hit, but at a very serious cost—you must replace one of your aspects (except the high concept, that's off limits) with the extreme consequence. That's right, an extreme consequence is so serious that taking it literally changes who you are.

Unlike other consequences, you can't make a recovery action to diminish an extreme consequence—you're stuck with it until your next major milestone. After that, you can rename the extreme consequence to reflect that you're no longer vulnerable to the worst of it, as long as you don't just switch it out for whatever your old aspect was. Taking an extreme consequence is a permanent character change; treat it as such.

## **CONCEDING THE CONFLICT**

When all else fails, you can also just give in. Maybe you're worried that you can't absorb another hit, or maybe you decide that continuing to fight is just not worth the punishment. Whatever the reason, you can interrupt any action at any time before the roll is made to declare that you concede the conflict. This is super-important—once dice hit the table, whatever happens is

written in stone, and you're either taking more stress, suffering more consequences, or getting Taken Out.

Concession gives the other person what they wanted from you, or in the case of more than two combatants, removes you as a concern for the opposing side. You're out of the conflict, period.

But it's not all bad. First of all, you get a fate point for choosing to concede. On top of that, if you've sustained any consequences in this conflict, you get an additional fate point for each consequence. These fate points may be used once this conflict is over.

Second of all, you get to avoid the worst parts of your fate. Yes, you lost, and the narration has to reflect that. But you can't use this privilege to undermine the opponent's victory, either—what you say happens has to pass muster with the group.

That can make the difference between, say, being mistakenly left for dead and ending up in the enemy's clutches, in shackles, without any of your stuff—the sort of thing that can happen if you're taken out instead. That's not nothing.

*Brickhouse turns out to be too much for Midnight Avenger to Handle, having hit with several devastating attacks in the course of the fight.*

*Before Mike's next turn, Dylan says, "I concede. I don't want to risk any more consequences."*

*Midnight Avenger taken a moderate consequence. He gets a fate point for conceding, as well as one more fate point for the single consequence he took, giving him two total.*

*Mike says, "So, what are you trying to avoid here?"*

*Dylan says, "Well, I don't want to get killed or captured, for starters."*

*Mike says, "Fair enough. So, we'll say that Brickhouse knocks you out cold and doesn't bother to finish you off, because he still has your teammates to deal with. He may even think you're dead. But, he'll quickly search your person and take the two vials of blood you have for later feeding."*

*Dylan is okay with that. He doesn't get captured or killed, and by taking his blood supply, it adds some teeth to him being defeated.*

## **GETTING TAKEN OUT**

If you don't have any stress or consequences left to buy off all the shifts of a hit, that means you're taken out.

Taken Out is bad. It means not only that you can't fight anymore, but that the person who took you out gets to decide what your loss looks like and what happens to you after the conflict. Obviously, they can't narrate anything that's out of scope for the conflict (like having you die from shame), but that still gives someone else a lot of power over your character that you can't really do anything about.

## **CHARACTER DEATH**

So, if you think about it, there's not a whole lot keeping someone from saying, after taking you out, that your character dies. Typically, the average villain might not have any morale issues with simply killing you, so it certainly seems reasonable that one possible outcome of defeat is your character getting killed.

In practice, though, this assumption might be pretty controversial depending on what kind of group you're in. Some people think that character death should always be on the table, if the rules allow it, and if that's how the dice fall, then so be it.

Others are more circumspect, and consider it very damaging to their fun if they lose a character upon whom they've invested hours and hours of gameplay, just because someone spent a lot of fate points or their die rolls were particularly unlucky.

We recommend the latter approach, mainly for the following reason: most of the time, sudden character death is a pretty boring outcome when compared to putting the character through hell. On top of that, all the story threads that character was connected to just kind of stall with no resolution, and you have to expend a bunch of effort and time figuring out how to get a new character into play mid-stride.

That doesn't mean there's no room for character death in the game, however. We just recommend that you save that possibility for conflicts that are extremely pivotal, dramatic, and meaningful for that character—in other words, conflicts in which that character would knowingly and willingly risk dying in order to win. Players and GMs, if you've got the feeling that you're in that kind of conflict, talk it out when you're setting the scene and see how people feel.

At the very least, even if you're in a hardcore group that invites the potential for character death on any taken out result, make sure that you telegraph the opponent's lethal intent. GMs, this is especially important for you, so the players will know which NPCs really mean business, and can concede to keep their characters alive if need be.

## **MOVEMENT**

In a conflict, it's important to track where everyone is relative to one another, which is why we divide the environment where the conflict's taking place into zones. Where you have zones, you have people trying to move around in them in order to get at one another or at a certain objective.

Normally, it's no big deal to move from one zone to another. If there's nothing preventing you from doing so, you can move one zone in addition to your action for the exchange.

If you want to move more than one zone (up to anywhere else on the map), if a situation aspect suggests that it might be difficult to move freely, or if another character is in your way, then you must make an overcome action using Athletics to move. This counts as your action for the exchange.

GMs, just as with other Overcome rolls, you'll set the difficulty. You might use the number of zones the character is moving or the situation aspects in the way as justification for how high you set passive opposition. If another character is impeding the path, roll active opposition and feel free to invoke obstructing situation aspects in aid of their defense.

If you fail that roll, whatever was impeding you keeps you from moving. If you tie, you get to move, but your opponent takes a temporary advantage of some kind. If you succeed, you move without consequence. If you succeed with style, you can claim a Boost in addition to your movement.

*In our continuing warehouse conflict, Barrage wants to go after one of the thugs, who has started shooting from the second floor. That requires her to cross one zone to get to the access ladder for the second floor, and then climb it, making her opponent two zones away.*

*She's currently mixing it up with a thug herself, whose Accuracy is at Fair (+2).*

*Keirdwyn tells Mike her intent, and Amanda says, "Okay, the thug you're fighting is going to try and keep you from getting away, so he's going to provide active opposition."*

*Barrage's Athletics is Good (+3). She rolls and gets +1, for a Great result. The thug rolls his opposition, and rolls -2, for a result of Mediocre (+0). That gives Barrage three shifts, and a success with style.*

*Keirdwyn and Amanda describe Barrage faking out the thug with some quick bursts from her hi-tech gun, vaulting over a crate, and taking the ladder two rungs at a time to get up top. She takes a boost, which she calls **Momentum**.*

*The thug up top swallows hard, swinging his handgun toward the hero.*

## **ADVANTAGES IN A CONFLICT**

Remember that aspects you create as advantages follow all the rules for situation aspects. That means the GM can use them to justify overcome actions, they last until they're made irrelevant or the scene is over, and in some cases they represent as much a threat to you as an opponent.

When you create an advantage in a conflict, think about how long you want that aspect to stick around and whom you want to have access to it. It's difficult for anyone besides you and your friends to justify using an advantage you stick to a character, but it's also easier to justify getting rid of it. Usually one overcome action could undo it. It's harder to justify getting rid of an aspect on the environment (seriously, who is going to move that flaming semi you just threw in the middle of the narrow street?), but anyone in the scene could potentially find a reason to take advantage of it.

## **OTHER ACTIONS IN A CONFLICT**

As stated above, you may find yourself in a situation where you want to do something else while your friends are fighting. You might be disarming a death trap, searching for a piece of information, or checking for hidden assailants.

In order to do this, GMs, set the player up with a modified form of challenge. One of the tasks is likely going to be to defend yourself. In any exchange where someone attacks you or tries to create an advantage on you, you must Defend successfully in order to be able to take one of the other actions in the challenge. So long as no one has successfully attacked you or stuck an advantage on you, you can use your action to roll for one of the challenge goals.

## **FREE ACTIONS**

Sometimes it just makes sense that your character is doing something else in conjunction with or as a step toward their action in an exchange. You quick-draw a weapon before you use it, you shout a warning before you kick in a door, or you quickly size up a room before you attack. These little bits of action are colorful description more than anything else, meant to add atmosphere to the scene.

GMs, don't fall into the trap of trying to police every little detail of a player's description. Remember, if there's no significant or interesting opposition, you shouldn't require a roll—just let the players accomplish what they say they do. Reloading a gun or fishing for something in your backpack is part



of performing the action. You shouldn't require any mechanics to deal with that.

## **ENDING A CONFLICT**

Under most circumstances, when all of the members of one side have either conceded the conflict or have been taken out, the conflict is over.

GMs, once you know a conflict has definitively ended, you can pass out all the fate points earned from concession. Players, take the fate points for when your aspects were invoked against you, make a note of whatever consequences you suffered in the fight, and erase any checks in your stress boxes.

## **TRANSITIONING TO A CONTEST OR CHALLENGE**

You may find yourself in a conflict scene where the participants are no longer interested in or willing to harm one another, because of some change in the circumstances. If that happens, and there's still more to resolve, you can transition straight into a contest or challenge as you need. In that case, hold off on awarding the end-of-conflict fate points and whatnot until you've also resolved the contest or challenge.

## **TEAMWORK**

Characters can help each other out on actions. There are two versions of helping in Daring Comics—combining skills, for when you are all putting the same kind of effort into an action (like using Physique together to push over a crumbling wall), and stacking advantages, for when the group is setting a single person up to do well (like causing multiple distractions so one person can use Stealth to get into a fortress).

When you combine skills, figure out who has the highest skill level among the participants. Each other participant who has at least an Average (+1) in the same skill adds a +1 to the highest person's skill level, and then only the lead character rolls. So if you have three helpers and you're the highest, you roll your skill level with a +3 bonus.

If you fail a roll to combine skills, all of the participants share in the potential costs—whatever complication affects one character affects all of them, or everyone has to take consequences. Alternatively, you can impose a cost that affects all the characters the same.

*Following an explosion in the middle of Times Square, the heroes are trying desperately to*

*move a large piece of rubble to rescue the child trapped in a small hole underneath. Mike declares it a Physique effort.*

*Wraith has Good (+3) Physique and is the highest on the team. Midnight Avenger, Barrage, and Trinity each have it at Average (+1), so they each contribute. Wraith now rolls Physique, with a +3 to the roll.*

When you stack advantages, each person takes a create an advantage action as usual, and gives whatever free invocations they get to a single character. Remember that multiple free invocations from the same aspect can stack.

*Later in the story, the team must once again face Brickhouse. Knowing how damned strong and invulnerable the villain is, and that Midnight Avenger has a personal grudge against him, the team decides to work together to let their vampiric ally get his vengeance.*

*Barrage knows that her ice gun won't freeze and hold the villain for long, but that isn't her intent. She just wants to keep him busy. She lays down some cover fire, successfully using the Create an Advantage action to place a **Distracted** aspect on with one free invocation.*

*Next, Wraith uses his invisibility power to phase in and out of existence as he pummels Brickhouse, always moving behind him. He isn't trying to hurt the guy, just distract him even more. He succeeds with style on his Create an Advantage action, for two free invocations. Xander decides his action mirrored what Barrage was going for, so just adds the additional two free invocations to the already existing **Distracted** aspect.*

*Meanwhile, Trinity casts her Light Control spell, getting a +2 to Create an Advantage action when creating light based aspects (as per the power's description), and also succeeds with style against Brickhouse. She creates a **Blinded** aspect on him with two free invocations.*

*All three heroes turn over the five free invocations to Midnight Avenger, which he uses for a whopping +10 to his attack against the pain-in-the-ass villain.*

*Brickhouse should never have taken Midnight Avenger's blood supply.*

# COLLATERAL DAMAGE

In comic books, super-heroes and their villainous counterparts are always tearing up the scenery whenever they go toe-to-toe. Whether it's energy beams, super-science, or super-strength and invulnerability, the surrounding environment rarely stays intact for long. While a lot of such collateral damage can be represented by simply situation aspects and even some detonating situation aspects, there's another mechanic that Daring Comics uses to not only represent the wear-and-tear on the scene, but also allow the heroes to stand a little longer, and fight a little harder.

It's called the Collateral Damage Consequence.

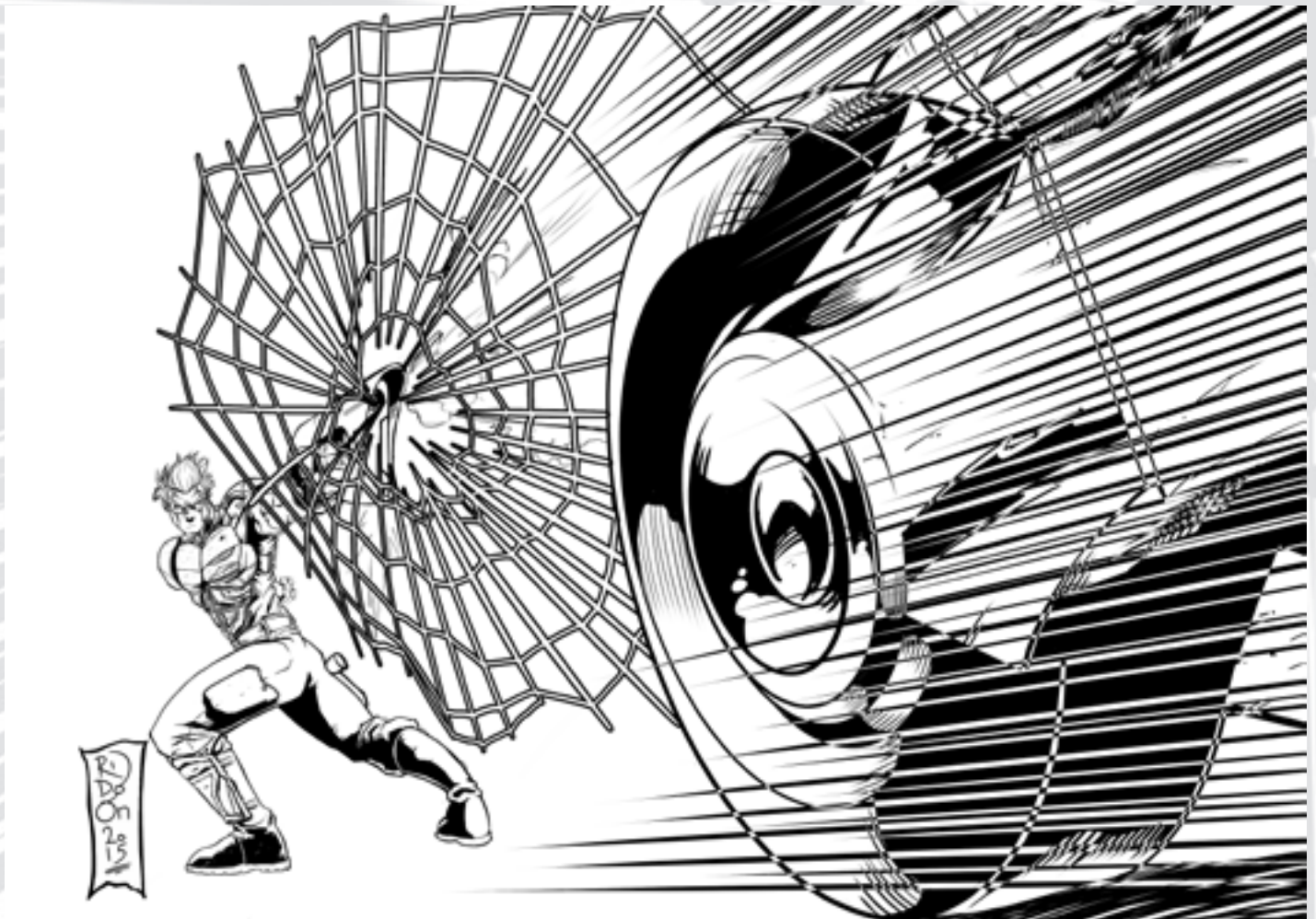
## COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

Each story arc begins with the player-characters having a pool of three communal consequences, one for each of the three normal consequence slots of Mild, Moderate, and Severe (Collateral Damage Consequences do not have an Extreme

Consequence slot). Keep in mind, it's one of each type of consequence slot in total, not one per player.

Whenever a player-character would have taken a consequence, they can instead decide to use one of the communal slots at an equal or greater value, and instead place the consequence on the environment as Collateral Damage. Once a slot is used by a player, it is no longer available for the rest of the story arc— unless it is cleared by the end of the Issue or personally assumed by the character (see: Clearing Collateral Consequences below).

*Midnight Avenger is facing an alien parasite infected Phalanx (one of the world's most powerful super-heroes), and is hit with a super-strength punch that sends him reeling for a massive Moderate Consequence. Instead of taking the hit, Dylan decides to use the open Moderate Collateral Damage Consequence slot. Since they're fighting on a city street, he describes how he instead dodges the blow and Phalanx instead takes out a telephone pole, causing multiple live wires to hit the street and placing nearby citizens in jeopardy.*



*The group decides to call it Downed Live Wires and writes it in the appropriate Collateral Consequence.*

*The group now has the Mild and Severe Collateral Consequence slots remaining.*

## **CLEARING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES**

Using Collateral Consequences are not to be taken lightly. Each of these Consequences must be cleared by the end of the Issue by an Overcome action (using whatever skill is appropriate) with an opposition +2 over the normal for a Consequence. In other words: a Mild is a Great (+4), a Moderate is a Fantastic (+6), and a Severe is a Legendary (+8) opposition. Until cleared, Collateral Consequences can be Compelled and Invoked against your heroes, though you can offer a fate point to resist the Compel as normal.

To make matters more precarious for your heroes who use the environment to avoid taking the hit, only one Overcome action can be made to clear a specific Collateral Consequence. That isn't one per player, but one per group. So, your team is definitely going to have to use Teamwork if the environment gets too beat up.

If you clear them, great! Well done.

If you fail to clear them by the end of the Issue, however, one of two things happen. Either any player can offer to take the Consequence onto themselves at the same severity (renamed if required to represent how they are taking the blame, and so forth), or the Consequences remains in the collateral slot and that slot cannot be used again for the rest of the story arc (what happens to it after that is explained to the GM in **Chapter 15: Advancing the Series**).

If you take the Collateral Consequence as a personal consequence, it can then be cleared as normal. However, until it does, remember that you've now lost an otherwise open consequence slot due to the trust damage, public outrage, guilt, and so forth that your battle caused.

*Throughout the fight with Phalanx, the heroes use both a Moderate and Severe Collateral Consequence slot. Now that the fight is over and they have a moment, they decide it's time to start cleaning up in one fashion or another.*

*The Moderate slot is **Downed Live Wires**, and since it is a 4-point Consequence has an opposition of Fantastic (+6) to clear. Mike*

*tells them that it'll require Athletic rolls, since basically they're be getting the wires up off the street without getting electrocuted or electrocuting anyone else (you would think the bystanders would back off, but nothing is ever that common sense easy). The group decides to use the Teamwork rules, and after all the bonuses are calculated and the "lead hero" makes the roll, they get an Epic (+7) result.*

*Mike clears the Consequence, and the Moderate Collateral Damage Consequence is once again available for use in a subsequent scene.*

*Next, they decide to tackle the Severe Collateral Damage Consequence, which was **Heavily Damaged Skyscrapers**. Since repairing the skyscraper is beyond the heroes' ability, Mike decides that a Rapport roll will be necessary to handle the evacuation out of the highly populated, downtown business area, danger zone.*

*Once again, the group uses the Teamwork rules as best they can, but in the end fail to clear the Consequence. None of the players want to assume the Severe Consequence under their own slots (which might have been renamed to something such as: Damaged Reputation), so the consequence remains in the Severe Collateral Damage Consequence until the end of the story arc.*

## **COMBAT TACTICS**

Rarely do super-beings in comic books simply stand toe-to-toe and duke it out. They are using scenery, charging into a foe, grappling each other, and distracting their opponent as a set-up for other members of the team to hit 'em hard.

Combat tactics allow you to mimic the maneuvers used in your favorite comic book battles, and are an important part of any combat scene.

### **AIMING**

To aim, take an action to place an aspect on the target, such as **In My Sights** or **I Have You Now**, which constitutes your action for the round. On the next round, you can invoke the aspect as normal (including any free invocations) to gain a bonus to your attack roll.

## ALL-OUT

With this tactic, you are throwing caution to the wind and putting everything you have into an offensive. When making an All-Out attack, you gain a +2 to your attack roll. Due to your focus on attacking instead of maintaining decent defenses, however, you also get boost placed on you such as **Wide Open** or **Left Myself Vulnerable**, which a single opponent (not necessarily the one you attacked) gets to use against you for free.

## CHARGE

So, you want to use your body as a battering ram against some poor person? That's called a Charge attack.

To make a Charge attack you must first place an aspect upon your target representing the set-up. On the following round, you get the normal free invocations for setting up the advantage, but must also move at least 10 feet to get your speed going. You make an Attack action using your Physique, which your opponent can defend against normally. If you have the Invulnerability power, you get half its Power Level (round up) as a weapon rating. In other words, Invulnerability 4 means that if you hit the other person with a charge, you get a Weapon: 2 damage bonus.

Otherwise, you do damage as normal for an attack roll. There is an added option with a charge attack, though. You can reduce your damage by any number of Shifts achieved on the roll and knock back your opponent an equal number of feet. If you have Super-Strength, you knock them back an equal number of *zones*.

Keep in mind, you cannot reduce the Weapon Rating you get for being invulnerable— that's damage you're doing on a hit through sheer toughness.

If you miss the Charge attack, you immediately get a boost placed on you such as **off-balance** or **In a Bad Position** that an opponent gets to use against you for free. If you tie with the Defend roll, you still suffer a boost with a free invocation as above, plus your opponent gets to place a second boost on you as normal.

## COMBAT TRICKS

Some maneuvers in comic books are actually combat tricks using a particular power or attack type—the grim vigilante who uses specially created boomerangs to disarm a foe or knock him off his feet, or the world-renowned archer who pins his opponent to a wall by his clothes with several well-placed arrows.

A combat trick can cover a wide range of possibilities in a comic book campaign, and never cause actual damage. The most common uses are detailed below.

## COVER FIRE

Using the cover fire maneuver means spraying an area with (usually) bullets to cause the enemy to keep their heads down. It's a great maneuver to cover an escape or an action by an ally.

First, take an action to place a situation aspect on the area, such as **Hail of Bullets** or **More Lead Than You Can Handle**. In addition to the normal free invocations, the Shifts you achieved on the roll act as the passive opposition for your opponent. They have to beat the opposition to be able to move across the zone. You can use the aspect's invocations (free or with a fate point), to increase the passive opposition by +2 per invocation. Likewise, the invocations can also be used on Defend actions (such as against ranged attacks against you or an ally), representing the enemy being unable to take aim due to having to also worry about the cover fire.

The Cover Fire lasts for the current exchange.

## DISARM

To disarm an opponent, use the Create an Advantage action to place a situation aspect on them, such as **Disarmed** or **Weaponless**. Since you are placing the aspect directly on your opponent, they get to Defend against it normally.

If you succeed, you place the aspect with the usual number of free invocations. Additionally, your opponent cannot use the weapon (which means they are likely to lose access to their Weapons skill, too), until they succeed at an Overcome action to remove the aspect, which recovers the weapon. If you choose not to oppose the action, then it's against Mediocre (+0) passive opposition. Otherwise, they must roll against your skill as active opposition.

## DISTRACTION

A distraction is simply a matter of using the normal rules to Create an Advantage and place an aspect on the opponent. They can Defend against the attempt as normal, but the idea is for you to gain one or more free invocations and pass them to an ally, representing the enemy being focused on *you* and vulnerable to a big hit from your teammate.

## INTERPOSE

You use your action for the round to place yourself between an attack and its target.

As long as you can cross the necessary distance as a normal movement, once per round you can place yourself in a position to use your own Defend action against an attack and take any damage that might occur.

If you've already acted in the round, interposing yourself requires that you spend a fate point.

## RANGED KNOCKDOWN + CLOSE QUARTER TRIPS

With this maneuver, you can use a thrown weapon to trip an opponent within the same zone, or use your Athletics, Fight, or Physique to knock your enemy to the ground, up close and personal.

First, you must place an aspect on your opponent such as **Knocked Down** or **On Your Back**, with the usual number of free invocations, which your opponent can Defend against. If you're successful, your opponent is knocked to the ground. They lose all movement until they get back to their feet. They *can* attempt a ranged attack (such as firing energy bolts or a gun), but their targets can invoke the aspect placed upon them to assist in defense.

To remove the aspect is a Mediocre (+0) passive opposition, but you can attempt to stop them by taking your action to provide active opposition.

## RANGED PIN

Using throwing knives, steel boomerangs, or arrows, you want to pin your opponent to a surface, such as to the floor or against a wall, without actually damaging them.

Perform a Create an Advantage action to place an aspect upon them, such as **Stuck to the Wall** or **Pinned to the Floor**, which they can Defend against normally. If successful, you place the aspect with the normal number of free invocations. You can also compel the aspect as normal, thereby using your compel to prevent them from attacking (unless the attack would make sense and be hard to stop, such as eye beams).

To break free of the pin and remove the aspect, your opponent must make an Overcome action against passive opposition equal to the number of Shifts you achieved on the roll. You can choose to use

invocations of the aspect (free or with a fate point) to add +2 to the passive opposition.

## RICOCHET

Cover in Daring Comics is handled through the invocation of situation aspects. A character might invoke **Large Crates** or something like **Armored Truck** to get a +2 or more (if more than one aspect is invoked) to defensive rolls. The ricochet combat trick lets you bounce your attack, whether a shield or an energy beam, off of nearby objects to attack the target in such a way that the cover gives them no benefit.

A ricochet can be performed **once per conflict**. Make an Accuracy roll at against the target's Defend roll. They do not get the benefit for invoking cover, but for each surface after the first that you are bouncing your attack off of, their Defend roll gets a +1 bonus. If you succeed, you do damage as normal, plus an additional Hit for each surface you bounced the attack off of.

## FAST BALL

A special maneuver between two characters, the *fast ball* is a comic book staple where a super-strong character throws a buddy at an opponent (preferably with the buddy's consent).

To perform a *fast ball*, both characters must act on the lowest initiative turn between the two, and the throwing character must be strong enough to get the other character across the distance to the target. The throwing character makes an Accuracy roll against Mediocre (+0) opposition to hit the target. On a success, the thrown character gets a +2 to whatever follow-up attack he plans to perform. On a success with style, the attacking character also gets a boost.

The thrown character then makes his attack as normal.

If the throw fails or ties, the players can agree to succeed at a cost, which should usually translate into 2-Stress or a Mild Consequence (depending on whether it was a minor or major cost), as the thrown character somehow landed wrong from a nearly botched throw.

## GRAPPLES AND ENTANGLES

Whether it is in hand-to-hand combat or with a weapon such as a net or trick grappling line, this is where you attempt to lock down your opponent and stop them from taking any action.

The skills rolled will be determined by the type of grapple. For hand-to-hand, it will likely be opposing Fight rolls, or Fight versus Athletics. For a ranged grapple, it'll likely be Accuracy versus Athletics. Aspects can be invoked.

Despite the skills being used, this is not an Attack action, but is a Create an Advantage action. You are going to place an aspect on the target such as **Netted**, **Tied Up**, or **Pinned Down**. If successful, you get the normal number of free invocations, plus your opponent is considered immobile and within your grasp (or tied up by your net).

How he removes the aspect and breaks free depends on the type of grapple.

For a hand-to-hand, wrestling type of grapple, the grapple must be maintained each round, which means the two combatants automatically make opposed rolls against each other. If the grappler decides to not roll for the grapple on subsequent rounds, it's broken and the placed aspect goes away.

Beginning on the round after the grapple is first made (i.e. the first round where you have to maintain it), if you win the roll, you can use the Shifts to cause damage to your target. The trade-off is that if your opponent is still active the next round, the number of Shifts of damage you caused to him also act as a bonus to his roll to get free that round. This represents the fact that you weren't trying as hard to simply immobilize them, and although you caused some damage (or tried to, as Invulnerability applies), your overall grip weakened a little.

For a range entanglement, the victim must succeed at an Overcome action with passive opposition equal to the number of Shifts the grapple gained on the initial roll. Like with a wrestling grapple, this cannot succeed at a cost. Additionally, invocations of the placed aspect can be used to increase the opposition by +2 per invocation.

## **LIFTING**

To lift an object, check the associated weight on the benchmark lifting chart for normal strength or super-strength. The weight of the object serves as the passive opposition to lift it.

Characters with super-strength can automatically lift any weight on the normal benchmark chart.

## **KNOCKBACK AND THROWING**

In comic books, super-powered combatants are always knocking each other into buildings, through

streets, and generally causing a lot of collateral damage whenever they fight. Although Daring Comics handles a special type of collateral damage later in the book (allowing you to off-set damage by causing environmental complications), more common collateral damage should be handled as part of the narrative. How far does your hero knock the villain back with that incredible punch, and does he go through the building or hit the wall and crumble to a stop? For the most part, that should be handled as part of the narrative of a super-powered fight. The GM can even use such instances as springboards to a new scene where the heroes have to save innocent civilians trapped in the rubble or stop a ruptured gas main from exploding.

Sometimes, though your hero might specifically go for a knockback, or attempt to throw an object or person with purpose. For those instances, use the following rules.

**Knockback:** When you decided to purposefully knock an opponent back, you forego doing damage in exchange for getting your opponent out of your face. There are two measurements you use for knockback, one for normal strength and one for super-strength.

For normal strength, each Shift of damage you would have done instead translates into feet of knockback. So, if you achieved 3-Shifts on your attack roll, you instead knock your opponent back three feet.

For super-strength, the formula is the same, except you send your opponent flying back a number of zones equal to your Shift.

If your attack normally has a Weapon Rating associated with it, you automatically do the Weapon Rating in damage and cannot reduce it for additional knockback without the appropriate special effect.

**Throwing:** Throwing is similar to knockback, but requires a roll of its own. Look at the benchmark lifting chart that applies to your strength level (normal or super-strength). The weight of the object determines the difficulty to lift it and throw it. Assuming you made the roll to lift the object, you can then throw the object one zone for every Shift gained on the lifting roll for normal strength, and one zone for each Shift achieved on the roll for super-strength.

Character super-strength throwing a weight from the normal benchmark chart is more of a narrative flavor as to how far they can throw it. It's not uncommon for immensely strong characters in comic books to be able to throw lighter objects dozens of miles, or even into orbit.

**Being knocked into objects:** When you knockback or throw a person into another object, compare their Physique to the Material Strength of the object. If the character's Physique is higher, they burst through and continue moving. If the Material Strength is higher, they suffer an immediate Create an Advantage by the object. Because this is directly against the character, they can Defend normally.

The skill rating of the action is the difference between the character's Physique and the Material Strength, and the Defend roll is made with Physique.

If the character has Invulnerability, add the power levels of Invulnerability to Physique when determining if the character breaks through the object. Invulnerability also provides a bonus to the Defend roll against the Create an Advantage action from a sudden stop as normal. The bonus is equal to half the Invulnerability, rounded up.

If the Create an Advantage action succeeded, an aspect or boost is placed on the character such as **Winded**, **Dazed**, or **Staggered**. Any free invokes are not used by the object, but are used by the character's opponent(s). The character can remove the aspect by rolling Physique against opposition equal to the number of Shifts the action received.

## **SCENERY AS WEAPONS**

Super-beings are always using the scenery as an impromptu weapon in comic books. Whenever a character tries to use the scenery (a tree, streetlight, car, dumpster, and so forth) as a weapon, as long as the character can lift the object, they can use it to strike their opponent.

Using scenery is not a be-all of a conflict. In comic books, the landscape is typically used to provide a conceit for how a super-strong character can attack multiple foes at once (such as with a street light) or how a melee-based character can make an attack at a range (throwing an armored truck at someone).

Normally, such objects are considered situation aspects. You could be fighting on a **City Street** or be standing next to a **Gas Tanker**. Invoking such aspects provides the narrative for using the street light to sweep your opponents, or two throw the gas tanker across the zone to attack someone.

You can also spend a fate point to immediately add such an aspect as a story element, but you don't get any free invocations of it.

Using an object for a sweep maneuver gets you the normal +2 bonus if you actually invoke it (but you don't have to), and uses the normal rules for attacking multiple foes. You make the attack roll and split your result against your opponents, which they defend against normally. If you attempt to cause knockback with such an improvised melee weapon, you knock your target back an additional zone.

When throwing a heavy object at your opponent, make an Attack roll as normal. Take the general weight category of the object from the Super-Strength benchmark table, and divide it in half (round up). That is the Weapon Rating of the object. The object's Weapon Rating does not stack with any you get from Super-Strength or other powers, but you do get to use the greater Weapon Rating of the two.

As already stated, the idea is that using the scenery primarily provides a narrative element for attacking several targets at once or using your super-strength at range. It also provides the GM a chance to place more situation aspects in place (see: Detonating Situation Aspects) as a result of your move. Scenery isn't meant to be the end-all of super-powered combats, and rarely serve as such in comic books. Otherwise, the average super-hero setting would be an apocalyptic wasteland in a short time, as every super-strength adversary suddenly used all available cars and buildings as weapons.

## **SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

Just as combat tactics spice up any battle between super-opponents, situations often arise in which further complicate matters for the characters. An opponent might be hiding behind cover, using the cover of darkness to try to get away, or causing something highly flammable to explode and endanger innocent lives.

The special situation rules explain how to use the more common types of complications in your own super-powered conflicts.

### **BLIND/DEAF**

Being rendered blind is different than being placed in absolute darkness with something like the Darkness Control power. While the power provides a situation aspects that can be invoked for a bonus or reroll, typically characters can also act and react normally. That is especially true if they have something like thermal vision or Darkvision.

When you render a character blind, however, and place a **Blinded** aspect on them (which they can Defend against normally), you are literally shutting down their vision. Not only can you invoke or compel the aspect against them, but they are also incapable of any actions that require sight until they remove the aspect. Removing the aspect requires a roll against passive opposition equal to the number of Shifts you received when placing the aspect. Being blinded renders all vision useless, including super-powers such as thermal vision or Darkvision.

Characters temporarily made deaf suffer the same basic effect, except it completely shuts down their hearing and prevents any hearing related actions, including non-telepathic communication with teammates.

## **BREAKING THINGS**

To break an object, either through a melee attack or with a ranged attack, roll against opposition equal to the material strength of the object. The material strength is reduced by 1 per Weapon Rating and Shift. Once the material strength is reduced below zero, the object is either destroyed or has a hole large enough to pass through, which ever makes sense for the object.

Unlike a normal Overcome action, the character cannot *succeed at a cost* if the Physique roll fails, and only reduces the Material Strength by the Weapon Rating on a tie.

## **COLD AND HEAT**

Once temperatures reach below -40 degrees Fahrenheit or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, characters run the risk of suffering ill-effects from the heat or cold.

Every hour a character is exposed to extreme cold or heat without adequate protective measures (such as insulated clothing or plenty of water), he is suffers an attack from a skill rating of Fair (+2) against his Physique, and any damage suffered cause Consequences, not Stress. Invulnerability is reduced by half (round up) for purposes of negating the damage.

## **COVER**

Taking advantage of cover simply means invoking an appropriate situation aspect such as **Large Crates** or **Corner of a Wall** and for +2 (or a reroll) to the Defend action.

## **CRUSHING DAMAGE**

Crushing damage means you are buried under a heavy load, or perhaps even at the bottom of the ocean, and are suffering an attack every round from the sheer weight.

Before you get buried, a situation aspect must be placed on your character. Typically, this will be something along the lines of **Crushing Depths** or **Toppled Wall**. You can Defend against the aspect normally. If you succeed, you've managed to avoid being buried.

If you fail, then the fun begins (though likely not for you). The GM will assign an Attack skill rating based on the general weight pressing down on you, ranging from Mediocre (+0) for several hundred pounds to a small car, to Fantastic (+6) for several dozen tons. Bear in mind that the Attack skill used will also depend on whether or not the character is invulnerable, super-strong, and so forth. For example, against a normal street vigilante with costume-armor, a Fantastic (+6) weight might represent the equivalent of a ton or two of rubble, whereas for an invulnerable super-strong character, that same attack skill might represent several hundred tons pressing down on top of him.

To break free, the buried character must succeed at a Physique roll against passive opposition equal to the Attack skill rating. This roll can succeed at a cost as with an Overcome action. Since this is meant to be abstract, blasting through the rubble (or whatever it is) works under the same Overcome action. Whatever is burying the character isn't treated the same as trying to burst through a standing wall or other obstacle.

For oceanic pressures, treat the Overcome action as the same: physique versus the attack skill rating as passive opposition. The difference is in the narrative—the character is attempting to swim against the pressure to the surface instead of pushing the rubble aside enough to crawl out.

Likewise, each round whatever is burying the character makes an attack roll, defended by Physique.

## **DARKNESS**

Darkness typically does not attack, but is instead treated as a situation aspect which can be invoked for a +2 to an action, particularly Attack or Defend actions, representing your character taking advantage of the conditions.



## **DETONATING SITUATION ASPECTS**

Some situation aspects imply destructibility or finite use, such as **Gas Tanker** or **Ruptured Gas Main**. They can have an effect on the narrative but not necessarily a mechanical effect.

When a player detonates a situation aspect, he declares his intent to do so and explains how he's using that aspect such that no one will be able to use it again. If he can do this to everyone's satisfaction, he gets to invoke the aspect once for free.

Once he's done invoking the aspect, it goes away and the situation changes for the worse —or at least the more dangerous. Detonating an aspect creates a new situation aspect, which represents how the old aspect was destroyed, and how it wrecked things. That last bit is the key— it has to wreck things, to complicate things. It's not fair to detonate that **Gas Tanker** and replace it with something boring like **Hole in the Street**. Replace it with something big and flashy and destructive, like **The Nearby Buildings are on Fire!** or **Buildings Collapsing Toward Civilians!**. The new situation aspect must always make things more tenuous for everyone, and should always be an imminent threat.

## **DISEASE AND POISON**

When creating a disease or poison, assign it a strength, generally from Mediocre (+0) to Fantastic (+6). The rating serves as the Attack skill, which is usually opposed by the victim's Physique.

To infect someone, roll the Attack rating against the target's Physique. If successful, the target is

infected with the disease or poison and starts taking damage. Although damage typically causes Stress, particularly lethal diseases and poisons bypass Stress and cause direct Consequences.

A disease might attack a victim once a day, whereas a poison might attack every hour or sooner. The time between each attack on the victim's body is determined by the GM, but for specifically character-crafted diseases and poisons, options found in the **Gadgets and Inventions** chapter allow you to customize your biological weapons.



## ***DROWNING/SUFFOCATION***

A character can hold their breath for a number of minutes equal to their Physique +1. After that time, unless the character can draw breath and get oxygen back into the bloodstream, they suffer an attack against their Physique beginning at Mediocre (+0) attack skill and increasing one step on the ladder each round. Invulnerability does not negate the damage.

## ***EXPLOSIONS***

An explosion typically covers an entire zone or more, and attacks everyone within the zone. It's basically considered an Area Effect attack, and does not split its attack result between targets. Each and every target defends against the full attack roll.

## ***FALLING***

It's common in role-playing games to have hard rules for taking damage from falling. Let's face it, though, in comic books the heroes or villains going SPLAT! is hardly a staple of the story. Well, unless a character *falling to their death* is meant as part of the story, in which case it is either a significant scene, or the actual landing happens off-camera and whether or not the character is really dead, or will dramatically return at a later time, is always the question. Otherwise, the heroes tend to snag that grappling line onto something at the last minute and take some Stress or a Minor Consequence, or a flying ally swoops in to catch them at the last second.

Generally speaking, falling heroes should be given a solid chance of avoiding the sudden stop of a hard, life ending landing— whether through the trusty Swingline or a flying teammate. Sure, make it dramatic, but always remember that Daring Comics is here to emulate comic books, not simulate reality. So, our apologies to all those comic book forum posters who like to bring the laws of science into comic book debates— the two do not mix in this game.

However, if you *really* want to deal with numbers for falling, use the following guidelines. Assign the fall an attack skill ranging from Average (+1) for falling from a tall building, to Fantastic (+6) for falling from a very high flying aircraft. The fall makes an attack at the time of landing against the character's Physique, and Invulnerability negates damage as normal. If you really want to make falling dangerous, also give the fall a Weapon Rating equal to the skill rating, allowing it to deal damage in excess of any Shifts achieved on the attack roll.

## ***FIRE***

Typically, fire is treated as a situation aspect, such as ***Burning Room*** or the ever popular ***On Fire***. Characters can invoke the aspect and typically use it for bonuses to attack or defense rolls as a means of complicating things for their opponents.

Fire can also be a living, raging thing that can not only attack the heroes, but also use it's skill for Create an Advantage actions such as ***Thick Smoke*** or ***Weakening Floor***.

A fire's attack skill should be rated from Mediocre (+0) for simple bonfires all the way to Fantastic (+6) for a raging inferno.

If you want the fire to take damage, give it two Stress boxes and then treat its skill rating as though it were Physique, granting it additional Stress and a Mild Consequence slot as appropriate.

## ***GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS***

Although we gave fire its own entry, basically any environmental hazard could be handled the same way, whether it is a corrosive atmosphere, poisonous gas pumped through the ventilation system, or cryogenic freezing temperatures. Assign it a skill rating from Mediocre (+0) to Fantastic (+6), which it can use to both attack the heroes and create situation aspects.

Same as with fire, if you want the hazard to be able to take damage, give it two Stress boxes and then treat its skill rating as though it were Physique, granting it additional Stress and a Mild Consequence slot as appropriate.

## ***GRAVITY***

When dealing with scenes taking place in different gravity than Earth's, use the following guidelines when it comes time to drive the point home in the narrative.

For low gravity environments, create a situation aspect representing the lower gravity. The aspect stays in place as long as the characters remain in the scene, and the normal free invocations for creating an aspect apply.

For high gravity, assign the gravity a rating. Generally, look at it as being 1/2 again earth's gravity equal's one step on the ladder. So, an environment that is 1.5x Earth's gravity has a rating of Average (+1), a place with twice Earth's gravity has a rating of Fair (+2), possessing 2.5x Earth's gravity is Good (+3) rating, and so forth.

Whenever character attempt a physical action, including Attack and Defend, passive opposition or any opposed rolls against them suffers a bonus equal to the gravity rating.

## **STARVATION, THIRST, AND LACK OF SLEEP**

Like with falling, it isn't a common thing in super-hero comics for the characters to be debilitated by hunger, thirst, or lack of sleep. On the occasions where it can come into play and affect the character, give them a Minor Consequence representing whatever problem it causes. Like with any Consequence, the character can invoke it to their benefit if they can find a creative reason to do so, but generally speaking it is going to be invoked or compelled against them.

The Consequence stays until they do something to eliminate the condition— in other words: eat, drink enough fluid, or get some rest.

Whether or not the Regeneration power heals the Consequence is really up to your group. In some instances, the power might be able to keep the character going longer, but more than likely even it is going to fail to help as the character's body finally goes into shutdown mode.

## **UNDERWATER MOVEMENT**

Unless a character possess an ability that lets him swim naturally (such as the Aquatic power), a character cannot move more than one zone for free when swimming.

## **CHALLENGES**

A single overcome action is sufficient to deal with a straightforward goal or obstacle—the hero needs to pick this lock, disarm this bomb, sift out a vital piece of information, and so on. It's also useful when the details of how something gets done aren't important or worth spending an intense amount of time on, when what you need to know is whether the character can get something done without any setbacks or costs.

Sometimes, however, things get complicated. It's not enough to pick the lock, because you also have to hold off the hordes of attacking zombies and set up the magical ward that's going to keep pursuers off your back. It's not enough to disarm the bomb, because you also have to land the crashing blimp and keep the unconscious scientist you're rescuing from getting hurt in said landing.

A challenge is a series of overcome actions that you use to resolve an especially complicated or dynamic situation. Each overcome action uses a different skill to deal with one task or part of the situation, and you take the individual results as a whole to figure out how the situation resolves.

GMs, when you're trying to figure out if it's appropriate to call for a challenge, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is each separate task something that can generate tension and drama independently of the other tasks? If all the tasks are really part of the same overall goal, like “detaching the detonator,” “stopping the timer”, and “disposing of the explosive material” when you're disarming a bomb, then that should be one overcome action, where you use those details to explain what happened if the roll goes wrong.
- Does the situation require different skills to deal with? Holding off the zombies (Fight) while pushing down a barricade (Physique) and fixing your broken wagon (Crafts) so that you can get away would be a good instance for a challenge.

To set up a challenge, simply identify the individual tasks or goals that make up the situation, and treat each one as a separate overcome roll. (Sometimes, only a certain sequence for the rolls will make sense to you; that's okay too.) Depending on the situation, one character may be required to make several rolls, or multiple characters may be able to participate.

*Several days after the Necroleans invaded earth with their necrotic biotechnology and turned a majority of the population into zombie like shock troops, Barrage is working with what remains of the military to direct a counter-attack against one of the aliens' nearby, newly constructed, supply depots. Meanwhile, she discovers an alien bomb planted near the survivor outpost, and has to disarm it while keeping the citizens calm.*

*Mike decides that several skills are going to come into play. First will be Leadership, to effectively direct the remaining, ragtag military forces. Next will be Technology to successfully disarm the bomb. And finally will be Rapport, which Keirdwyn will use to see if Barrage can keep the survivors from going into a rout.*

To conduct a challenge, call for each overcome action in whichever order seems most interesting, but don't

decide anything about how the situation turns out until after you've collected all the results—you want to have the freedom to sequence the events of each roll in the order that makes the most sense and is the most entertaining. Players, if you get a boost on one of your rolls, feel free to use it on another roll in the challenge, provided you can justify it.

GMs, after the rolls have been made, you'll consider the successes, failures, and costs of each action as you interpret how the scene proceeds. It could be that the results lead you into another challenge, a contest, or even a conflict.

*Mike sets the opposition for the Overcome actions at Good (+3). He figures the remaining military is no longer all that coordinated, and aren't possessing the best morale, since pretty much the entire planet, including their brothers-in-arms, have been turned into zombies.*

*Keirdwyn picks up the dice, and rolls against her Fair (+2) Leadership first. She gets a phenomenal +1 on the dice, for a Good (+3) total. She ties with the opposition, so succeeds but at a minor cost. She and Mike discuss it briefly, and decide that Necrolean reinforcements will be arriving within five minutes.*

*Next, she rolls her Superb (+5) Technology to disarm the alien bomb. This time she rolls +3 on the dice, for Legendary (+8) result. That's a success with style, so she not only disarms the bomb, but gets a boost. She calls the boost **Better Understanding of Necrolean Tech.***

*Finally, she rolls her Fair (+2) Rapport, rolls -1 on the dice, and gets an Average (+1) result. That's a failure, but Mike lets her succeed at a minor cost. She stops the citizens of panicking, but unfortunately, the reverse of what she wanted happens. Inspired, they race off with makeshift weapons to help the military unit and the newly constructed supply depot. That means that the citizens will be on location when the Necrolean forces arrive, putting a massive amount of lives in danger.*

*But that's for the next scene to handle.*

If you have any boosts that went unused in the challenge, feel free to keep them for the rest of this scene or whatever scene you're transitioning to, if the events of the challenge connect directly to the next scene.

## **ADVANTAGES IN A CHALLENGE**

You can try to create an advantage during a challenge, for yourself or to help someone else out. Creating an advantage doesn't count towards completing one of the challenge goals, but failing the roll could create a cost or problem that negatively impacts one of the other goals. Be careful using this tactic; advantages can help complete tasks more effectively and create momentum, but trying to create them is not without risk.

## **ATTACKS IN A CHALLENGE**

Because you're always up against passive opposition in a challenge, you'll never use the attack action. If you're in a situation where it seems reasonable to roll an attack, you should start setting up for a conflict.

## **CONTESTS**

Whenever two or more characters have mutually exclusive goals, but they aren't trying to harm each other directly, they're in a contest. Arm wrestling matches, races or other sports competitions, and public debates are all good examples of contests.

GMs, answer the following questions when you're setting up a contest:

- What are the "sides"? Is every character in the contest in it for herself, or are there groups of people opposing other groups? If you have multiple characters on a side, they roll together using the Teamwork rules.
- What environment does the contest take place in? Are there any significant or notable features of that environment you want to define as situation aspects?
- How are the participants opposing each other? Are they rolling against each other directly (like in a straight sprint race or a poker match), or are they trying to overcome something in the environment (like an obstacle course or a panel of judges)?
- What skills are appropriate for this contest? Does everyone have to roll the same one, or do several apply?

*Barrage is attempting to disarm another Necrolean bioweapon, this one capable of unleashing a lethal nerve toxin over an entire area that is deadly to humans. The weapon was launched from space, crashed into the center of the survivor encampment, and is embedded in the street.*

*The bioweapon is controlled by a nearby Necromind— the Necrolean cast of psychics with power over the form of nanotechnology the alien race uses. The Necromind is on a hovering sled type vehicle that is surrounded by a forcefield the heroine has been unable to penetrate. Time is running out, so she decides to instead focus on shutting down the weapon before it's fully activated.*

*Mike decides that Barrage will use her Technology skill, while the Necromind uses its Mental skill to facilitate the telepathic powering-up and activation of the weapon.*

Now you can get started.

A contest proceeds in a series of exchanges. In an exchange, every participant gets to make one skill roll to determine how well they do in that leg of the contest. This is basically an overcome action.

Players, when you make a contest roll, compare your result to everyone else's.

- If you got the highest result, you win the exchange. If you're rolling directly against the other participants, then that means you got the highest rank on the ladder out of everyone. If you're all rolling against something in the environment, it means you got the most shifts out of everyone.

Winning the exchange means you score a victory (which you can just represent with a tally mark or check mark on scratch paper) and describe how you take the lead.

- If you succeed with style and no one else does, then you get to mark two victories.
- If there's a tie for the highest result, no one gets a victory, and an unexpected twist occurs. This could mean several things depending on the situation: the terrain or environment shifts somehow, the parameters of the contest change, or an unanticipated variable shows up and affects all the participants. GMs, you should create a new situation aspect reflecting this change.
- The first participant to achieve three victories wins the contest.

*Barrage has Technology at Superb (+5) and this particular Necromind has Mental at Great (+4).*

*In the first exchange, Barrage rolls well and gets a total of Epic (+7). The Necromind only gets a Fantastic (+6) total, so Barrage wins. Keirdwyn marks down one tally. She describes*

*The next exchange, Barrage doesn't do as well. She rolls -3 on the dice for a Fair (+2 total). The Necromind rolls a zero, for a Superb (+5) total. He gets a success with style, and Mike marks two tallies for the victory. He narrates how a low vibration comes from the weapon, that increases in intensity as the things begins powering-up.*

*The next exchange, Barrage gets a zero for a Superb (+5) total, and the Necromind ties. Neither wins, but Mike narrates how a small unit of Necrolean sky-sleds have arrived, and the soldiers within the encampment are engaging them in battle. He places an aspect on the scene called Distracting Battle.*

*The fourth exchange sees the Necromind roll a +2 for a total of Fantastic (+6). Barrage also rolls a +2, for an Epic (+7) total. She doesn't want just a single tally, and wants to end this confrontation now. Keirdwyn spends a fate point to invoke the new scene aspect Distracting Battle, explaining how the Necromind's are tapped into the Necrolean soldiers as well, as the ensuing battle is causing it to lose overall focus.*

*Mike agrees, and Keirdwyn adds +2 to her roll, giving her a Monstrous (+9) result, and a success with style. Keirdwyn marks two more tallies for her victory, granting her three total, and ending the conflict.*

*Mike goes on to narrate how she disarms the weapon, and the small Necrolean force is sent into retreat.*

## CREATING ADVANTAGES IN A CONTEST

During any exchange, you can try to create an advantage before you make your contest roll. If you're targeting another participant, they get to defend normally. If someone can interfere with your attempt, they provide active opposition as normal.

Doing this carries an additional risk—failing to create an advantage means you forfeit your contest roll,

which means there's no way you can make progress in the current exchange. If you at least tie, you get to make your contest roll normally.

If you're providing a bonus via the Teamwork rules, failing to create an advantage means the lead character doesn't benefit from your help this exchange.

*The survivor encampment is littered with broken vehicles, dumpsters, and metal debris of all types.*

*Keirdwyn wants Barrage to use the Magnetic Control power of her gauntlets to toss a storm of small, metallic objects at the Necromind's sky-sled to cause a distraction.*

*She rolls her Technology of Superb (+5) to activate her power (since she has a stunt that allows her to use her Technology skill in place of the Power skill when using her device based powers). The Necromind, since its defense is all about remaining focused, will use its Great (+4) Will to defend.*

*Keirdwyn rolls a +2 for an Epic (+7) result. The Necromind rolls a -1 for a Good (+3) result. Keirdwyn succeeds in placing a Distracted aspect on the alien invader, and can invoke it twice for free.*

*Since she at least got a tie (and she actually did a lot better than that), she also gets to make her normal contest roll.*

## **ATTACKS IN A CONTEST**

If someone tries to attack in a contest, then they're doing direct harm, and it ceases to be a contest. You should immediately stop what you're doing and start setting up for a conflict instead.

## **CHASES**

Although not always part of a comic book story, chases nonetheless have their place in super-hero comic books. Whether it's two speedsters, a vigilante chasing a villain across rooftops, or a swinging hero trying to stop a get-away vehicle, chases can play a dramatic roll in any Daring Comics Issue.

There are two ways to handle chases: the standard method, which treats them as a Contest, and the in-depth method, which uses a Chase Stress track.

## **SPEED RATING**

Before we get into the two methods of dealing with chases, let's talk about Speed Rating. Daring Comics divides different levels of speed into their own rating, which helps emulate the different levels of the Flight or Super-Speed powers, as well as the difference between a character on foot and a character in a speeding car.

Whenever a chase is taking place between different Speed Ratings, count the number of steps between them. That is the bonus added to any relevant rolls made by the greater of the Speed Ratings.

*A vigilante on foot is attempting to race across the rooftops to pursue a speeding car through the city streets. The vigilante has a Speed Rating 1, while the car has a Speed Rating 3.*

*Whenever the driver of the car makes a roll during the chase, he receives +2 bonus.*

**Speed Rating 1:** Foot

**Speed Rating 2:** Bike/Horse

**Speed Rating 3:** Car/Motorcycle

**Speed Rating 4:** Helicopter, Small Plane

**Speed Rating 5:** Jet, Escape Velocity

## **STANDARD CHASES**

This method is the quickest and easiest way of handling a chase, and still maintains a dramatic element. Treat the chase as a Contest, with the side to first gain three victories having either caught the person they were chasing, or lost their pursuer.

## **IN-DEPTH CASES**

This method takes a little longer to play, and also maintains a lot of dramatic tension.

To start, set up a stress track for the chase. This is your timer for the scene. The fleeing party is trying to empty the stress track, while the pursuers are trying to fill it. The length of the stress track determines how long the scene lasts, and where you start on the track sets the difficulty of the escape.

You first need to decide how long you want your chase scene to go on. If you are looking for an average-length scene, a stress track of 10 should be the baseline. If you want to go less than 10, you should probably make the chase a regular contest.

If you want the chase to be longer or more involved, add more stress. A 14-stress chase scene is a major event in the session, and an 18 or 20 stress scene could be the main focus of a whole session of play.

Setting how many stress boxes are already checked off determines how close the pursuers are to catching the fleeing group. Usually you are going to want the stress to start right in the middle. You can make it harder for the fleeing party to escape by setting the stress closer to the top of the range, like 7 stress on a 10-stress track. By the same token, you can make the escape easier by setting the starting stress at a lower level. It's probably best to avoid this, unless the player characters are the pursuing party. If the chase is less complicated, just use a challenge or contest instead of the chase stress track.

Once you've got your stress track set, determine who gets to go first. This can be a judgment call, or it can be based on which individual character on each side has the highest relevant skill. Each side will take turns, so who starts has a slight advantage, but that's about it.

In turn, each side makes skill rolls to attempt to increase or diminish the stress track. This is an Overcome action, and it can be opposed by either a passive defense or, more likely, by an active opposition from the other side in the chase. These actions can be all sorts of things, and it's most exciting if they are varied and inventive. Vehicle rolls for vehicular chases should describe how the character is dodging through barriers or oncoming traffic, for example, and Athletics for foot chases would be about how the characters climb up on to the rooftops and parkour across dangerous hazards. A variety of other skills can come into play for different sorts of actions. You can use Deceive to fake out your opponent, Fight to knock someone down, Notice to spot hazards and avoid them while allowing your opponent to get entangled, Physique to knock obstacles into your opponent's way. If a player comes up with a good action for just about any skill, you should allow it.

- When making your roll, the outcome determines what happens to the chase stress track.
- If you fail, your opponent has the choice to either create a boost that works against you, or to move the stress track one check in their direction.
- If you tie, you may choose to move the stress track one check in your direction, but if you do so, your opponent gains a +1 on their next roll.

- If you succeed, you move the stress track one check in your direction.
- If you succeed with style, you get to move the stress track two checks in your direction, or one check and you gain a boost that you can use against your opponent on your next roll.

Each side takes turns making moves and rolling against their skills, and make sure you apply any Speed factor bonus if the relative speeds can apply to a given roll. Keep the tension up with good descriptions, going into detail about each move and its results. When one side or the other has either eliminated or filled the stress track, the chase is over. There's either been a capture (or the chase now becomes a Conflict as the two sides fight for it), or an escape.

# CHAPTER 13: RUNNING DARING COMICS

## WHAT YOU DO

If you're the gamemaster, then your job is a little different from everyone else's. This chapter is going to give you a bunch of tools to make that job easier during play.

We already talked a little bit about the GM's job in Chapter One: The Basics, but let's take a more detailed look at your unique responsibilities.

### START AND END SCENES

One of your primary responsibilities during the game is to decide definitively when a scene begins and ends. This might not seem like that big a deal, but it is, because it means that you're the person primarily responsible for the pacing of each game session. If you start scenes too early, it takes a long time to get to the main action. If you don't end them soon enough, then they drag on and it takes you a long time to get anything done.

The players will sometimes help you with this, if they're keen on getting to the next bit of action, but sometimes they'll naturally be inclined to spend too much time bantering in character or focusing on minutiae. When that happens, it's your job to step in

like a good movie editor and say, "I think we've pretty much milked this scene for all it's worth. What do we want to do next?"

### EMULATION, NOT SIMULATION

*Daring Comics is designed to emulate the comic book genre, not simulate reality. Although some comic book titles, or new-direction storylines in already established titles, have attempted to scientifically explain some of the feats our favorite super-heroes perform (and indeed, there has even been a book or two on the topic), don't get too hampered by a sense of realism. This is super-heroes: grand adventures by larger than human beings. Focus on the characters, the drama, and the action.*

*That's not to say that you can't run games where realism is a key ingredient like in some select comic books. It's your game, and should be handled however you see fit. Just remember that by design, Daring Comics doesn't worry about that type of realism, so you might have to make rules adjustments.*





## PLAY THE WORLD AND THE NPCs

As the gamemaster, it's your job to decide how everyone and everything else in the world responds to what the heroes do, as well as what their environment is like. If a player botches a roll, you're the one who gets to decide the consequences. When an NPC attempts to capture a hero's friend, you're the one who gets to decide how they go about it. When the heroes stroll up to a suspicious group on the streets, you get to decide what kind of day the group is having, what kind of personalities they have, and whether they are friendly, suspicious, nervous, or even aggressive. You even determine the weather when the PCs are out on patrol.

Fortunately, you don't have to do this in a vacuum. You have a lot of tools to help you decide what would be appropriate. The process we outline in series creation should provide you with a lot of context about the game you're running, whether that's in the form of aspects like current and impending issues, specific locations that you might visit, or NPCs with strong agendas that you can use.



The heroes' aspects also help you decide how to make the world respond to them. As stated in the Chapter Two: Aspects and Fate Points, the best aspects have a double edge to them. You have a lot of power to exploit that double edge by using event-based compels. That way, you kill two birds with one stone— you add detail and surprise to your game world, but you also keep the heroes at the center of the story you're telling.

This facet of your job also means that when you have NPCs in a scene, you speak for and make decisions for them like the players do for their heroes. You decide when they're taking an action that requires dice, and you follow the same rules the players do for determining how that turns out. Your NPCs are going to be a little different than the heroes, however, depending on how important they are to the story.

### LET THE PLAYERS HELP YOU

*You don't have to shoulder the whole burden of making up world details yourself. Remember, the more collaborative you get, the more emotional investment the players are going to have in the result, because they shared in its creation.*

*If a character has an aspect that connects them to someone or something in the world, make that player your resident "expert" on whatever the aspect refers to. So if someone has **Worked for the Terenza Family**, poll that player for information whenever the Terenza family comes up in conversation. Some players will defer back to you, and that's fine, but it's important that you keep making the offer so as to foster a collaborative atmosphere.*

*Also, one of the main uses of the create an advantage action is precisely to give players a way to add details to the world through their characters. Use that to your advantage when you draw a blank or simply want to delegate more control. One good way to do this during play is to answer the player's question with a question, if they ask for information.*

### JUDGE THE USE OF THE RULES

It's also your job to make most of the moment-to-moment decisions about what's legit and what's not regarding the rules. Most often, you're going to decide when something in the game deserves a roll,

what type of action that is (overcome, attack, etc.) and how difficult that roll is. In conflicts, this can get a little more complicated, like determining if a situation aspect should force someone to make an overcome action, or deciding whether or not a player can justify a particular advantage they're trying to create.

You also judge the appropriateness of any invocations or compels that come up during play, like we talked about in the Chapter Two: Aspects and Fate Points, and make sure that everyone at the table is clear on what's going on. With invocations, this is pretty easy—as long as the player can explain why the aspect is relevant, you're good to go. With compels, it can get a little more complicated, because you need to articulate precisely what complication the player is agreeing to.

We provide some more tips on judging the use of rules below.

### **YOU'RE THE CHAIRMAN, NOT GOD**

*Approach your position as arbiter of the rules by thinking of yourself as "first among equals" in a committee, rather than as an absolute authority. If there's a disagreement on the use of the rules, try encouraging a brief discussion and let everyone talk freely, rather than making a unilateral decision. A lot of times, you'll find that the group is self-policing. If someone tries to throw out a compel that's a real stretch, it's just as likely that another player will bring it up before you do.*

*Your job is really to have the "last word" on any rules-related subject, rather than to dictate from your chair. Keep that in mind.*

### **CREATE STORY ARCS (AND NEARLY EVERYTHING ELSE)**

Finally, you're responsible for making all of the stuff that the PCs encounter and react to in the game. That not only includes NPCs with skills and aspects, but it also includes the aspects on scenes, environments, and objects, as well as the dilemmas and challenges that make up a story of Daring Comics. You provide the prompts that give your group a reason to play this game to begin with— what problems they face, what issues they have to resolve, whom they're opposing, and what they'll have to go through in order to win the day.

## **WHAT TO DO DURING SERIES CREATION**

As outlined in Series Creation, inventing or deciding on a setting is often a collaborative effort between you and your players. In that sense, the best thing you can do as GM during the game-creation process is to be open to new ideas and be generous with your own, just like everyone else. Play off of and expand upon the suggestions that the others offer up. Your players will be more invested in the game if they feel like they've had a hand in building it.

## **WHAT TO DO DURING PLAY**

Now that you've gone through the process of series creation with the players, let's take a detailed look at how to approach your various jobs during a session of play.

### **THE GOLDEN RULE**

Before we go into specifics, here's our general Golden Rule of Daring Comics: Decide what you're trying to accomplish first, then consult the rules to help you do it.

This might seem like common sense, but we call it out because the order is important. In other words, don't look at the rules as a straitjacket or a hard limit on an action. Instead, use them as a variety of potential tools to model whatever you're trying to do. Your intent, whatever it is, always takes precedence over the mechanics.

Most of the time, the very definition of an action makes this easy. Any time your intent is to harm someone, you know that's an attack. Any time you're trying to avoid harm, you know that's a defense.

But sometimes, you're going to get into situations where it's not immediately clear what type of action is the most appropriate. As a GM, don't respond to these situations by forbidding the action. Instead, try to nail down a specific intent, in order to point more clearly to one (or more) of the basic game actions.

## SILVER RULE

*The corollary to the Golden Rule is as follows: Never let the rules get in the way of what makes narrative sense. If you or the players narrate something in the game and it makes sense to apply a certain rule outside of the normal circumstances where you would do so, go ahead and do it.*

*The most common example of this has to do with consequences. The rules say that by default, a consequence is something a player chooses to take after getting hit by an attack in a conflict.*

*But say you're in a scene where a player decides that, as part of trying to intimidate his way past someone, his hero is going to punch through a brick wall with a bare fist.*

*Everyone likes the idea and thinks it's cool, so no one's interested in what happens if the hero fails the roll. However, everyone agrees that it also makes sense that the hero would injure his hand in the process (which is part of what makes it intimidating).*

*It's totally fine to assign a mild consequence of **Brick Mortar in My Hand** in that case, because it fits with the narration, even though there's no conflict and nothing technically attacked the hero.*

*As with the Golden Rule, make sure everyone's on the same page before you do stuff like this.*

## WHEN TO ROLL DICE

Roll the dice when succeeding or failing at the action could each contribute something interesting to the game.

This is pretty easy to figure out in regards to success, most of the time. The PCs overcome a significant obstacle, win a conflict, or succeed at a goal, which creates fodder for the next thing. With failure, however, it's a little more difficult, because it's easy to look at failure in strictly negative terms. You fail, you lose, you don't get what you want. If there's nothing to build on after that failure, play can grind to a halt in a hurry.

The worst, worst thing you can do is have a failed roll that means nothing happens—no new knowledge, no new

course of action to take, and no change in the situation. That is totally boring, and it discourages players from investing in failure— something you absolutely want them to do, given how important compels and the concession mechanic are. Do not do this.

If you can't imagine an interesting outcome from both results, then don't call for that roll. If failure is the uninteresting option, just give the PCs what they want and call for a roll later, when you can think of an interesting failure. If success is the boring option, then see if you can turn your idea for failure into a compel instead, using that moment as an opportunity to funnel fate points to the players.

## SITUATION ASPECTS ARE YOUR FRIEND

*When you're trying to figure out if there's a good reason to ask the PCs to make an overcome roll, look at the aspects on your scene. If the existence of the aspect suggests some trouble or problem for the PC, call for an overcome roll. If not, and you can't think of an interesting consequence for failure, don't bother.*

*For example, if a character is trying to sprint quickly across a room, and you have a situation aspect like **Cluttered Floors**, it makes sense to ask for a roll before they can move. If there is no such aspect, just let them make the move and get on to something more interesting.*

## MAKING FAILURE AWESOME

If the PCs fail a roll in the game and you're not sure how to make that interesting, try one of the following ideas.

### BLAME THE CIRCUMSTANCES

The PCs are super-heroes. They aren't supposed to look like fools on a regular or even semi-regular basis. Sometimes, all it takes is the right description to make failure into something dynamic. Instead of narrating that the PC just messed things up, blame the failure on something that the PC couldn't have prevented. There's a secondary mechanism on that lock that initially looked simple (Thief), or the contact broke his promise to show up on time (Contacts), or a sudden seismic shift throws off your run (Athletics).

That way, the PCs still look awesome, even though they don't get what they want. More importantly, shifting the blame to the circumstances gives you an opportunity to suggest a new course of action, which allows the failure to create forward momentum in your story. The contact didn't make his appointment? Where is he? Who was following him to the rendezvous? The ancient tome of the Cult of Nebecar is withered? Maybe someone can restore it. That way, you don't spend time dwelling on the failure and can move on to something new.

## SUCCEED AT A COST

You can also offer to give the PCs what they want, but at a price— in this case, the failed roll means they weren't able to achieve their goals without consequence.

A minor cost should complicate the PC's life. Like the above suggestion, this focuses on using failure as a means to change up the situation a bit, rather than just negating whatever the PC wanted. Some suggestions:

- Foreshadow some imminent peril. "You hack into the corporate records for VanCorp, but the back door tracing program immediately logs your location."
- Introduce a new wrinkle. "The informant tells you that the guy who typically knows where to find the villain's hideout is the same guy you put in prison four months ago. The same guy who managed to escape from his cell and disappear last week."
- Present the player with a tough choice. "You hold the collapsing ceiling long enough for two of the others to get through safely, but not the rest. Who's it going to be?"
- Place an aspect on the PC or the scene. "Somehow you manage to land on your feet, but with a **Twisted Ankle** as a souvenir."
- Give an NPC a Boost. "Jonathan Barludi, you know, the millionaire businessman and also the secretive head of his own crime family, surprises you a bit by agreeing to your offer, but he does so with a wry smile that makes you uneasy. Clearly, Barludi **Has A Plan**."
- Check one of the PC's stress boxes. Careful with this one— it's only a real cost if the PC's likely to take more hits in the same scene. If you don't think that's going to happen, go with another choice.

A serious cost does more than complicate the PC's life or promise something worse to come— it takes a serious and possibly irrevocable toll, right now.

One way you can do this is by taking a minor cost to the next level. Instead of suspecting that a guard heard them open the vault, a few guards burst in the room, weapons drawn. Instead of being merely cut off from their allies by a collapsing ceiling, one or more of those allies ends up buried in the debris. Instead of merely having to face an awkward situation with Berthold, he's still angry and out for their blood.

Other options could include:

- Reinforce the opposition. You might clear one of an NPC's stress boxes, improve one of their skills by one step for the scene, or give them a new aspect with a free invocation.
- Bring in new opposition or a new obstacle, such as additional enemies or a situation aspect that worsens the situation.
- Delay success. The task at hand will take much longer than expected.
- Give the PC a consequence that follows logically from the circumstances— mild if they have one available, moderate if they don't.

If you're stuck for just how serious a serious cost should be, you may want to use the margin of failure as a gauge. For instance, if the player failed their Stealth roll by 1 or 2, the PCs outnumber the guards. Not a tough fight, but a fight nonetheless. If they failed it by 3 to 5, it's an even match, one that's likely to use up resources like fate points or consequences. But if they failed by 6 or more, they're outnumbered and in real danger.

## LET THE PLAYER DO THE WORK

You can also kick the question back to the players, and let them decide what the context of their own failure is. This is a great move to foster a collaborative spirit, and some players will be surprisingly eager to hose their own characters in order to further the story, especially if it means they can keep control of their own portrayal.

It's also a great thing to do if you just plain can't think of anything.

"Okay, so, you failed that Technology roll by 2 to break into the G.O.D. Lab building. So you're working the extremely advanced security lock, and something goes wrong. What is it?"

“You missed that Notice roll. What don’t you notice as you’re sneaking up to the genetic research laboratory doors”

It’s better if the question is specific, like those examples. Just saying: “Okay, tell me how you fail!” can easily stall things by putting a player on the spot unnecessarily. You want to let the player do the work, not make them.

## **SETTING DIFFICULTIES**

When you’re setting passive opposition for an action, keep in mind the difficulty “break points” that we mentioned in Actions and Outcomes— anything that’s two or more steps above the PC’s skill is probably going to cost them fate points, and anything that’s two or more below the PC’s skill will be a breeze.

Rather than “modeling the world” or going for “realism,” try setting difficulties according to dramatic necessity (remember, Daring Comics is about comic book adventure emulation), things should generally be more challenging when the stakes are high and less challenging when they aren’t.

Functionally, this is the same as setting a consistent difficulty and assessing a circumstantial penalty to the roll to reflect rushing the task or some other unfavorable condition. But psychologically, the difference between a high difficulty and a lower difficulty with a penalty is vast and shouldn’t be underestimated. A player facing a higher difficulty will often feel like they’re being properly challenged, while that same player facing a large penalty, likely chosen at the GM’s discretion, will often feel discouraged by it.

Setting a difficulty low is mainly about showcasing a being a super-hero, letting them shine in a particular moment and reminding us why this character is in the spotlight. You can also set lower difficulties during periods when you know the PCs are low on fate points, giving them the chance to take compels in order to get more. You should also set lower difficulties on anything that’s in the way of the PC’s getting to the main action of a scene—you don’t want them to get stalled at the evil overlord’s drawbridge if the point of the scene is confronting the evil overlord!

Finally, some actions should take lower difficulties by default, especially if no one’s contesting or resisting them. Unopposed efforts to create advantages in a conflict should never be harder than Average (+1) or Fair (+2), and neither should attempts to put an aspect on an object or location. Remember that opposition doesn’t have to always take the form of an NPC

getting in the way—if the evil mastermind has hidden the evidence in his lair and away from prying eyes, you might consider that a form of opposition, even though the mastermind might not be physically present.

If the PCs are overflowing in fate points, or it’s a crucial moment in the story when someone’s life is on the line, or the fate of many is at stake, or they’re finally going against foes that they’ve been building up to for a scenario or two, feel free to raise difficulties across the board. You should also raise difficulties to indicate when a particular opponent is extremely prepared for the PCs, or to reflect situations that aren’t ideal— if the PC’s are not prepared, or don’t have the right tools for the job, or are in a time crunch, et cetera.

Setting the difficulty right at the PC’s skill level is, as you might imagine, sort of a middle ground between these two extremes. Do this when you want some tension without turning things up to 11, or when the odds are slightly in the PC’s favor but you want a tangible element of risk.

## **JUSTIFY YOUR CHOICES**

Your only other constraint in setting difficulties goes back to the Silver Rule above— you need to make sure that your choices make sense in the context of the narrative you’re creating. If the only reason for setting a difficulty at Superb (+5) is because it’s two higher than the PC’s skill level and you want to bleed his fate points off, you strain credibility.

In that sense, you can look at setting difficulties as being a lot like invoking aspects—there needs to be a good reason that backs up your choice in the story. It’s totally okay if that justification is something you’re about to make up, rather than something you know beforehand. Situation aspects are a great tool for this— if the players already know that the warehouse they’re in is *Pitch Black* and *Littered with Old Debris*, it’s easy to justify why it’s so hard to notice the thugs hiding within. No one will bat an eye at you looking at the relevant situation aspects and giving a +2 to the opposition for each one, because it mirrors the invoke bonus they get.

Either way, don’t skip the justification part— either let the players know what it is immediately when you tell them the difficulty, or shrug mysteriously and then let them find out soon thereafter (as in, the time it takes to think it up).

You might also try using “out of place” difficulties to indicate the presence of unanswered questions during the game— for some odd reason, the apparent

rundown building you're trying to break into to seek evidence has an Epic (+7) lock on the door. What could be so important in there that you don't know about?

## DEALING WITH EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS

Sometimes, a PC is going to roll far in excess of the difficulty, getting a lot of shifts on the roll. Some of the basic actions already have a built-in effect for rolling really well, like hitting harder on a good attack roll.

For others, it's not so clear. What's happens when you get a lot of shifts on a Notice roll or an Investigate roll? You want to make sure those results have some kind of meaning and reflect how competent the PC's are.

Here are a few choice options.

- **Go crazy with the narration:** It might seem superfluous, but it's important to celebrate a great roll with a suitable narration of over the top success. This is a great time to take the suggestions above for Making Failure Awesome and applying them here. Let the success affect something else, in addition to what the PC was going for, and bring the player into the process of selling it by prompting them to make up cool details. "So you got five shifts on that Contacts roll— tell me, where does Nicky No Nose usually go when he's keeping low from the police, and what do you say when you find him there?"
  - **Add an aspect:** You can express additional effects of a good roll by placing an aspect on the PC or on the scene, essentially letting them create an advantage for free. "So your Contacts roll to contact your friends in the police department succeeded with four shifts. They're going to arrive in the immediate area for backup, but are going to let you call the shots."
  - **Reducing time:** If it's important to get something done fast, then you can use extra shifts to decrease the time that it takes to do an action.
- **Exchange:** The amount of time it takes all participants in a conflict to take a turn, which includes doing an action and responding to any action taken against them. This usually doesn't take longer than a few minutes.
  - **Scene:** The amount of time it takes to resolve a conflict, deal with a single prominent situation, or accomplish a goal. Scenes vary in length, from a minute or two if it's just a quick description and some dialogue, to a half hour or more in the case of a major set-piece battle against a main NPC.
  - **Issue:** The sum total of all the scenes you run through in a single sitting. An issue ends when you and your friends pack it up for the night and go home. For most people, each issue is about 2 to 4 hours. A minor milestone usually occurs after an issue.
  - **Story arc:** One or more issues, but usually no more than four. Most of the time, the issues that make up a story arc will definitively resolve some kind of problem or dilemma presented by the GM, or wrap up a storyline. A significant milestone usually occurs at the end of a story arc.
  - **Volume:** Several story-arcs, usually between two and four. A story arc typically culminates in an event that brings great change to the game world, building up from the resolution of the problems. You can look at volume like most graphic novel collections in any of your favorite comic book titles. You're not always guaranteed to have a recognizable arc like a published volume (the nature of role-playing games being different than the clean, precise structure of writing a comic book storyline). It's possible to bounce from situation to situation without having a defined plot structure. Major milestones usually happen at the end of a Volume.
  - **Series:** The sum of all the time you've sat at a table playing this particular game of Daring Comics— every issue and volume. Technically, there's no upper limit to how long a series can be. Some groups go for years; others get to the end of a volume and then stop. We presume that a typical group will go for a few volumes before having a grand finale and moving on to another game. You might set up your game as a kind of *mega-event series* where there's one massive conflict that everything else is a smaller part of, or it might simply consist of the smaller individual stories that you tell in your scenarios.

## DEALING WITH TIME

We recognize two kinds of time in Daring Comics: game time and story time.

### GAME TIME

Game time is how we organize play in terms of the real players sitting at the table. Each unit of game time corresponds to a certain amount of real time. They are:

## STORY TIME

Story time is what we call the time as the characters perceive it, from the perspective of being in the story: the amount of time it takes for them to accomplish any of the stuff you and the players say that they do during play. Most of the time, you'll do this as an afterthought, mentioning it in passing ("Okay, so it takes you an hour to fly to the country of Pax Wyvernica") or mentioning it as part of a skill roll ("Cool, so after 20 minutes of sweeping the room, you find the following...").

Under most circumstances, story time has no actual relation to real time. For example, a combat exchange might take a few minutes to play out in real time, but it only covers what happens in the first few seconds of a conflict. Likewise, you can cover long swaths of time simply by saying that it happens ("The contact takes five hours to get back to you. Are you doing anything while you wait, or can we just skip to the meeting?"). When used this way, it's really just a convenience, a narrative device in order to add verisimilitude and some consistency to your story.

Sometimes, though, you can use story time in creative ways to create tension and surprise during the game.

## DEADLINE PRESSURE

Nothing creates tension like a good deadline. In television and film, this is called the *ticking time bomb* method (though it doesn't always indicate a literal bomb). The heroes only have a certain number of minutes to disable the death trap, or a certain amount of time to get across the city before something blows up, or a certain amount of time to deliver the ransom before loved ones get aced by the bad guys, and so on.

Some of the game's default actions are made to take advantage of deadline pressure, such as challenges or contests. They each limit the number of rolls that a player can make before something happens, for better or for worse.

You don't have to limit yourself to using just those two, though. If you set a hard deadline for something bad in one of your Issues, you can start keeping track of the amount of time everything takes, and use it as a way to keep the pressure on. Remember, nearly everything takes time. Even a basic attempt to create an advantage using Empathy requires you to sit with the target for a little while, and if every action the PCs are taking is chipping away at a clock, it may be time they don't have.

Of course, it'd be no fun if there was nothing they could do to improve a deadline situation, and it'd be no fun if the crawl toward the deadline was predictable.

## USING STORY TIME IN SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Therefore, when you're using story time to create deadline pressure, feel free to incorporate unpredictable jumps in time when the PCs do really well or really badly on a roll.

Taking extra time is a great way to make failure awesome as per the guidelines above, especially using the "Success at a Cost" option. Give the players exactly what they want, but at the cost of taking more time than they were trying to spend, thus risking that their efforts will come too late. Or it could be the thing that pushes a deadline over the edge— maybe things aren't completely hopeless, but now there are extra problems to deal with.

Likewise, reward extreme success by reducing the amount of time it takes to do something while the PCs are under deadline. That laboratory research (Knowledge) that was going to take a day gets wrapped up in a few hours. While looking for a certain underworld weapons dealer (Contacts) to get a line on the network so you can eventually shut it down, you manage to find him that same day rather than in a week.

If time is a factor, you should also be able to use invocations and compels to manipulate time, to make things easier or more complicated respectively.

## HOW MUCH TIME IS A SHIFT WORTH?

Just like with any other roll, the number of shifts you get (or the amount you fail by) should serve as a barometer for just how severe the time jump is. So, how do you decide just how much to award or penalize?

It really depends on how much time you decide the initial action is going to take. We usually express time in two parts: a specific or abstract measure of quantity, then a unit of time, such as "a few days," "twenty seconds," "three weeks," and so on.

We recommend you measure in the abstract and express all the game actions as half, one, a few, or several of a given unit of time. So if you imagine something taking six hours, think of it as "several hours." If you imagine something taking twenty minutes, you can either call that "several minutes" or round up to "half an hour", whichever feels closest.

This gives you a starting point for moving up and down. Each shift is worth one jump from wherever your starting point is. So if your starting point is “several hours,” and it benefits the PCs to speed things up, then it works like this: one shift jumps the time down to “a few hours,” two shifts down to “one hour,” and three shifts down to “a half hour.”

Going past either end of the spectrum moves you down to several increments of the next unit of time or up to half the next unit of time, depending on which direction you’re going. So four shifts on the aforementioned roll might jump you from “several hours” to “several minutes.” Failing by one, conversely, might jump you from “several hours” to “half a day.”

This allows you to quickly deal with time jumps no matter where you’re starting from, whether the actions you have in mind are going to take moments or generations

## **STORY TIME AND THE SCOPE OF AN ACTION**

It’s easy to think of most actions that a PC takes being limited to anything that the character can directly affect, and working on a “person-to-person” scope. And most of the time, that’s going to be precisely the case— after all, *Daring Comics* is about individual super-heroes facing dramatic adversity.

However, consider for a moment what might do with all the time in the world to accomplish a particular action. Imagine a month-long Rapport roll for a negotiation with an Atlantean diplomatic to avoid a war between the underwater kingdom and the surface world, where the PC gets to talk with every delegate in detail, rather than just focusing on a single conference. Imagine a weeks-long investigation, charting out every detail of a target’s personal routine.

By allowing each roll to represent a long period of time, you can “zoom out” to handle events that reach far beyond the individual player character making the roll, and affect the setting in a big way. That month-long Rapport roll might result in charting a new political course between the two nations. That Investigate roll might be the start of bringing in one of the most notorious criminals in the setting, one that’s been hounding the PCs for a whole campaign.

This is a great way to make long breaks in story time more interactive, rather than bogging the game down with long narration or trying to retroactively come up with what happened during that time. If the PCs have long-term goals they want to accomplish, see if you

can find a way to turn that into a contest, challenge, or conflict that covers the whole break, or just have them make a single skill roll to see if something unexpected happens. If they happen to fail the roll, whatever you invent as a consequence will make good material for the game going forward.

Remember that if you do this with a conflict or a contest, that you scale each exchange appropriately. If a conflict is taking place over the course of a year, then each exchange might be a month or two, and everyone should describe their actions and the results of their actions in that context.

## ***ZOOM IN, ZOOM OUT***

There’s no rule that says you’re required to keep your rolls consistent in terms of story time. One trick you can do is use the result of one roll to segue into another roll that takes place over a much smaller period in time, or vice versa. This is a great way to open a new scene, contest, or conflict, or just introduce a change of pace.

## ***TIME INCREMENTS***

Sometimes, especially with particular powers, time becomes more of a factor and specific Shifts on a roll to use a power might state that the amount of time it takes to perform a task moves up or down in *Time Increments*. For those situations, the time increments are listed below.

As GM, you’re also free to use the time increments as a baseline for any story time that you might need to keep track of, especially to help you out if you need to ad hoc something and want to apply some extra Shifts the player earned to it.



## Time Increments

Instant
An Exchange
Half a minute
A Minute
A Few Minutes
15 Minutes
Half an hour
An Hour
A few hours
An Afternoon
A day
A few days
A week
A few weeks
A month
A few months
A season
Half a year
A year
A few years
A Decade
A lifetime or more

## JUDGING THE USE OF SKILLS AND STUNTS

By now, you pretty much have all the advice you need to deal with skill and stunt use—the individual descriptions in Skills and Stunts, the action descriptions and examples in Challenges, Contests, and Conflicts, and the advice immediately above about setting difficulties and how to handle success and failure.

The only other major problem you'll have to worry about is when you run into an “edge case” with a skill.

A player wants to use it for an action that seems like a bit of a stretch, or a situation comes up in your game where it makes sense to use a skill for something that's not normally a part of its description.

When you run into this, talk it over with the group and see what everyone thinks. It's going to end up one of three ways:

It's too much of a stretch. Consider creating a new skill.

It's not a stretch, and anyone can use the skill that way from now on under the same conditions.

It wouldn't be a stretch if the character had a stunt that allowed it.

If you decide that a certain use of a skill needs a stunt, allow the player in question the chance to spend a fate point to temporarily “borrow” that stunt for the current roll if he or she wants. Then, if they want to keep the bonus, they have to spend a point of refresh to buy it (presuming they have any available), or wait for a major milestone to pick it up.

## ASPECTS AND DETAILS: DISCOVERY VS. CREATION

From the player's point of view, there's almost no way to know what you've made up beforehand and what you're inventing in the moment, especially if you're the kind of GM who doesn't display or consult any notes at the table. Thus, when a player tries to discover something you haven't made up yet, you can treat it as if they were making a new aspect or story detail. If they succeed, they find what they're looking for. If they fail, you can use what they were looking for as inspiration to help you come up with the real information.

If you're really comfortable with improvising, this means that you can come to the table with very little prepared beforehand, and let the players' reactions and questions build everything for you. You may need to ask some prompting questions first, to narrow down the scope of what information the player's looking for, but after that, the sky's the limit.

## AFFECTING MULTIPLE TARGETS

Invariably, if you play Daring Comics long enough, someone's going to try to affect multiple people at once in a conflict without the Area Effect ability. Explosions are a staple of physical conflict, but are by no means the only example— consider tear gas or some kind of high-tech stunner. You can extend this to mental conflict also. For example, you might use



Things get more complicated when you want to filter specific targets, rather than just affect a whole zone or scene. When that happens, divide your resulting total up against every target, who all get to defend as per normal. Anyone who fails to defend either takes stress or gains an aspect, depending on what you were trying to do. (Note: If you create an advantage to put an aspect on multiple targets, you do get a free invocation for each one.)

Attacking a whole zone or everyone in a scene is something you're going to have to judge by circumstance, like any other stretch use of a skill. Depending on the circumstances of your setting, this might be a totally normal thing to do (for example, because everyone uses grenades and explosives), it might be impossible, or it might require a stunt. As long as you can justify it, you don't need to apply any special rules: you roll for the attack, and everyone in the zone defends as normal. Depending on the circumstances, you may even have to defend against your own roll, if you're in the same zone as the attack!

Remember, though, the 1-Point Area Attack special effect in both the *Powers* and the *Devices and Gear* chapters takes all the guesswork and ad hoc ruling off the table.

Provoke to establish dominance in a room with your presence, or Rapport to make an inspirational speech that affects everyone listening.

The easiest way to do this is to create an advantage on the scene, rather than on a specific target. A **Gas-Filled Room** has the potential to affect everyone in it, and it's not too much of a stretch to suggest that the **Inspirational Mood** in a room could be contagious. In this context, the aspect presents an excuse to call for a skill roll (using the overcome action) from anyone in the scene who attempts to get past it. Generally speaking, it won't cause damage, but it will make things more difficult for those affected.

## COMPELS AND MULTIPLE TARGETS

*Just a quick note: players who want to compel their way out of a conflict don't get a free lunch on affecting multiple targets, whether it's one aspect or several that justify the compel. A player must spend one fate point for each target they wish to compel. One fate point compels an individual, period.*

## **DEALING WITH ASPECTS**

As with skills and stunts, the entire Aspects and Fate Points chapter is designed to help you judge the use of aspects in the game. As the GM, you have a very important job in managing the flow of fate points to and from the players, giving them opportunities to spend freely in order to succeed and look awesome, and bringing in potential complications to help keep them stocked up on points.

## **INVOCATIONS**

Because of that, we recommend that you don't apply extremely exacting standards when the PC wants to invoke an aspect. You want them to spend in order to keep the flow going, and if you're too stringent on your requirements, it's going to discourage them from that free spending.

On the other hand, feel free to ask for more clarification if you don't get what a player is implying, in terms of how the aspect relates to what's happening in play. Sometimes, what seems obvious to one person isn't to another, and you shouldn't let the desire to toss fate points lead to overlooking the narration. If a player is having a hard time justifying the invocation, ask them to elaborate on their action more or unpack their thoughts.

You might also have the problem of players who get lost in the open-ended nature of aspects— they don't invoke because they aren't sure if it's too much of a stretch to apply an aspect in a certain way. The more work you do beforehand making sure that everyone's clear on what an aspect means, the less you'll run into this. To get the player talking about invoking aspects, always ask them whether or not they're satisfied with a skill roll result ("So, that's a Great. You want to leave it at that? Or do you want to be even more awesome?"). Make it clear that invoking an aspect is almost always an option on any roll, in order to try and get them talking about the possibilities. Eventually, once you get a consistent dialogue going, things should smooth out.

## **COMPELS**

During the game, you should look for opportunities to compel the PCs' aspects at the following times:

- Whenever simply succeeding at a skill roll would be bland
- Whenever any player has one or no fate points

- Whenever someone tries to do something, and you immediately think of some aspect-related way it could go wrong

Remember that there are essentially two types of compels in the game: decision-based, where something complicated occurs as a result of something a character does; and event-based, where something complicated occurs simply as a result of the character being in the wrong situation at the wrong time.

Of the two, you're going to get the most mileage out of event-based compels—it's already your job to decide how the world responds to the PCs, so you have a lot of leeway to bring unfortunate coincidence into their lives. Most of the time, players are just going to accept you doing this without any problems or minimal negotiation.

Decision-based compels are a little trickier. Try to refrain from suggesting decisions to the players, and focus on responding to their decisions with potential complications. It's important that the players retain their sense of autonomy over what their PCs say and do, so you don't want to dictate that to them. If the players are roleplaying their characters according to their aspects, it shouldn't be hard to connect the complications you propose to one of them.

During play, you'll also need to make clear when a particular compel is "set", meaning that there's no backing out without paying a fate point. When players propose their own compels, this won't come up, because they're fishing for the point to begin with. When you propose them, you need to give the players room to negotiate with you over what the complication is, before you make a final decision. Be transparent about this— let them know when the negotiation phase has ended.

## **WEAK COMPELS**

In order for the compel mechanic to be effective, you have to take care that you're proposing complications of sufficient dramatic weight. Stay away from superficial consequences that don't really affect the character except to provide color for the scene. If you can't think of an immediate, tangible way that the complication changes what's going on in the game, you probably need to turn up the heat. If someone doesn't go "oh crap" or give a similar visceral reaction, you probably need to turn up the heat. It's not good enough for someone to be angry at the PC— they get angry and they're willing to do something about it in front of everyone. It's not good enough for a business

partner to cut them off— he cuts them off and tells the rest of his associates to blacklist them.

Also, keep in mind that some players may tend to offer weak compels when they're fishing for fate points, because they don't really want to hose their character that badly. Feel free to push for something harder if their initial proposal doesn't actually make the situation that much more dramatic.

## ENCOURAGING THE PLAYERS TO COMPEL

With five aspects per PC, it's prohibitively difficult for you to take the sole responsibility for compels at the table, because that's a lot of stuff to remember and keep track of. You need the players to be invested in looking for moments to compel their own characters.

Open-ended prompting can go a long way to create this habit in your players. If you see an opportunity for a potential compel, instead of proposing it directly, ask a leading question instead. "So, you're at the political charity function, and the head of the Terenza crime family is present (he's also a successful business owner and philanthropist). You have *Worked for the Terenza Crime Family* as a character aspect. Do you think this evening is going to go smoothly for your character?" Let the player do the work of coming up with the complication and then pass the fate point along.

Also remind the players that they can compel your NPCs, if they happen to know one of that NPC's aspects. Do the same open-ended prompting when you're about to have an NPC make a decision, and ask the players to fill in the blanks.

Your main goal should be to enlist the players as partners in bringing the drama, rather than being the sole provider.

## CREATING THE OPPOSITION

One of your most important jobs as a GM is creating the NPCs who will oppose the PCs and try to keep them from their goals during your scenarios. The real story comes from what the PCs do when worthy adversaries stand between them and their objectives— how far they're willing to go, what price they're willing to pay, and how they change as a result of the experience.

As a GM, you want to shoot for a balancing act with the opposing NPCs— you want the players to experience tension and uncertainty, but you don't

want their defeat to be a foregone conclusion. You want them to work for it, but you don't want them to lose hope.

## TAKE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED TO SURVIVE

First of all, keep in mind that you're never obligated to give any NPC a full sheet like the ones the PCs have. Most of the time, you're not going to need to know that much information, because the NPCs aren't going to be the center of attention like the PCs are. It's better to focus on writing down exactly what you need for that NPC's encounter with the PCs, and then fill in the blanks on the fly (just like PCs can) if that NPC ends up becoming more important in the campaign.

## THE NPC TYPES

NPCs come in three different flavors: nameless NPCs, supporting NPCs, and main NPCs.

## NAMELESS NPCS

The majority of the NPCs in your campaign world are nameless—people who are so insignificant to the story that the PCs' interactions with them don't even require them to learn a name. The random shopkeeper they pass on the street, the archivist at the library, the third patron from the left at the bar, the guards at the gate. Their role in the story is temporary and fleeting—the PCs will probably encounter them once and never see them again. In fact, most of the time, you'll create them simply out of reflex when you describe an environment. "The downtown center is busy. Thousands of people move in a congestion along the sidewalk, and hundreds of cars face even greater congestion on the street. Overhead, a low flying news helicopter records the daily bustle."

On their own, nameless NPCs usually aren't meant to provide much of a challenge to the PCs. You use them like you use a low-difficulty skill roll, mainly as an opportunity to showcase the PCs' competence. In conflicts, they serve as a distraction or a delay, forcing the PCs to work a little harder to get what they want. Action-adventure stories often feature master villains with an army of minions. These are the minions.

For a nameless NPC, all you really need is two or three skills based on their role in the scene. Your average security guard might have Fight and Accuracy, while your average informant might only have Contacts. They never get more than one or two aspects,

because they just aren't important enough. They only have one or two stress boxes, if any, to absorb both physical and mental hits. In other words, they're no match for a typical PC.

Nameless NPCs come in three varieties: Average, Fair, and Good.

## AVERAGE

- **Competence:** Rank-and-file order-takers, local conscripts, and the like. When in doubt, a nameless NPC is Average.
- **Purpose:** Mostly there to make the PCs look more awesome.
- **Aspects:** One or two.
- **Skills:** One or two Average (+1).
- **Stress:** No stress boxes—a one shift hit is enough to take them out.

## FAIR

- **Competence:** Trained professionals, like soldiers and elite guards, or others whose role in the scene speaks to their experience, such as a sharp-tongued courtier or talented thief.
- **Purpose:** Drain a few of the players' resources (one or two fate points, stress boxes, possibly a mild consequence).
- **Aspects:** One or two.
- **Skills:** One Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1).
- **Stress:** One stress box—a two shift hit is enough to take them out.

## GOOD

- **Competence:** Tough opposition, especially in numbers.
- **Purpose:** Drain the players' resources—as Fair, but more so. Provide a decent stumbling block (in numbers) on the way to a more significant encounter.
- **Aspects:** One or two.
- **Skills:** One Good (+3), one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1).
- **Stress:** Two stress boxes—a three shift hit is enough to take them out.

## MOBS

Whenever possible, identical nameless NPCs like to form groups, or mobs. Not only does this better ensure their survival, it reduces the workload on the GM. For all intents and purposes, you can treat a mob as a single unit— instead of rolling dice individually for each of three thugs, just roll once for the whole mob.

See the Teamwork section in the previous chapter to see how mobs can concentrate their efforts to be more effective.

## HITS AND OVERFLOW

When a mob takes a hit, Shifts in excess of what's needed to take out one NPC are applied to the next NPCs in the mob, one at a time. In this way, it's entirely possible for a PC to take out a mob of four or five nameless NPCs (or more!) in a single exchange.

When a mob takes enough stress to reduce it to a single NPC, try to have that orphaned NPC join up with another mob in the scene, if it makes sense. (If it doesn't, just have them flee. Nameless NPCs are good at that.)

*Midnight Avenger and Wraith face-off against a half-dozen thugs from the Terenza crime family in the middle of an alley way in Liberty Heights.*

*These thugs are nameless NPCs with Notice and Fight skills of Average (+1).*

*Normally Midnight Avenger's Fair (+2) Notice would allow him to act first, but Mike reasons that the thugs' ability to surround the PCs gives them the drop. In a big group of six, their Average (+1) Notice is increased by +5 to a Fantastic (+6).*

*As they make their assault, Mike splits them into two mobs of three: one for Midnight Avenger and one for Wraith. Both attack with Good (+3) ratings (Average Fight skill with +2 for the helpers), but neither mob hits.*

*Midnight Avenger goes next. He extends his fingernails into claws (the Melee Attack power) and gets a Fantastic (+6) result with Fight Mike's first thug mob defends with a Good (+3), so Midnight Avenger deals three shifts to the mob— enough to take All three of them out.*



## ***NPC FIRST, NAME LATER***

Nameless NPCs don't have to remain nameless. If the players decide to get to know that barkeep or town crier or security chief or whatever, go ahead and make a real person out of them—but that doesn't mean that you need to make them any more mechanically complex. If you want to, of course, go ahead and promote them to a supporting NPC. But otherwise, simply giving that courtier a name and a motivation doesn't mean he can't go down in one punch.

## ***SUPPORTING NPCs***

Supporting NPCs have proper names and are a little more detailed than nameless NPCs, playing a supporting role in your Issues (hence the name). They often display some kind of strong distinguishing trait that sets them apart from the crowd, because of their relationship to a PC or NPC, a particular competence or unique ability, or simply the fact that they tend to appear in the game a great deal. Many comic books feature a "lieutenant" character

who is the right-hand man of the mastermind; that's a supporting NPC in game terms. The faces that you assign to the locations you make during game creation are supporting NPCs, as are any characters who are named in one of the PCs' aspects.

Supporting NPCs are a great source of interpersonal drama, because they're usually the people that the PCs have a relationship with, such as friends, sidekicks, family, contacts, and noteworthy opponents. While they may never be central to resolving the main dilemma of a scenario, they're a significant part of the journey, either because they provide aid, present a problem, or figure into a subplot.

Supporting NPCs are made much like nameless NPCs, except they get to have a few more of the standard character elements. These include a Concept, a

## ***NAMELESS NPCs AS OBSTACLES***

An even easier way to handle nameless NPCs is simply to treat them as obstacles: Give a difficulty for the PC to overcome whatever threat the NPC presents, and just do it in one roll. You don't even have to write anything down, just set a difficulty according to the guidelines in this chapter and Actions and Outcomes, and assume that the PC gets past on a successful roll.

If the situation is more complicated than that, make it a challenge instead. This trick is useful when you want a group of nameless NPCs more as a feature of the scene than as individuals.

Motivation, one or more additional aspects, one stunt, and the standard two stress tracks with two boxes each. They should have a handful of skills (say four or five). If they have a skill that entitles them to bonus stress boxes, award those as well. They have one mild consequence and, if you want them to be especially tough, one moderate consequence.

- **Skill Levels:** A supporting NPC's top skill can exceed your best PC's by one or two levels, but only if their role in the game is to provide serious opposition—supporting NPCs who are allied with the PCs should be their rough peers in skill level. (Another action-adventure trope is to make the “lieutenant” character better than the main villain at combat, contrasting brawn to the villain's brain.)
- **Concessions:** Supporting NPCs should not fight to the bitter end, given the option. Instead, have them concede conflicts often, especially early in a story, and especially if the concession is something like “They get away.” Conceding like this serves a few purposes. For one, it foreshadows a future, more significant encounter with the NPC. Because conceding comes with a reward of one or more fate points, it also makes them more of a threat the next time they show up. What's more, it's virtually guaranteed to pay off for the players in a satisfying way the next time the NPC makes an appearance. “So, Landon, we meet again! But this time it shall not go so easily for you.”

Finally, it implicitly demonstrates to the players that, when things are desperate, conceding a conflict is a viable course of action. A PC concession here and there can raise the stakes and introduce new complications organically, both of which make for a more dramatic, engaging story.

## MAIN NPCs

Main NPCs are the closest you're ever going to get to playing a PC yourself. They have full character sheets just like a PC does, with five aspects, a full distribution of skills, and a selection of stunts. They are the most significant characters in your PCs' lives, because they represent pivotal forces of opposition or allies of crucial importance. Because they have a full spread of aspects, they also offer the most nuanced options for interaction, and they have the most options to invoke and be compelled. Your primary “bad guys” in a scenario or arc should always be main NPCs, as should any NPCs who are the most vital pieces of your stories.

Because they have all the same things on their sheet as PCs do, main NPCs will require a lot more of your time and attention than other characters. How you create one really depends on how much time you have—if you want, you can go through the whole character creation process and work out their whole backstory through phases, leaving only those slots for “guest starring” open.

## UPGRADING NPCs

*Of course, if you want, you can also upgrade one of your current supporting NPCs to a main using this method. This is great for when a supporting NPC has suddenly or gradually become—usually because of the players—a major fixture in the story, despite your original plans for them.*

You could also do things more on the fly if you need to, creating a partial sheet of the aspects you know for sure, those skills you definitely need them to have, and any stunts you want. Then fill in the rest as you go. This is almost like making a supporting NPC, except you can add to the sheet during play.

Main NPCs will fight to the bitter end if need be, making the PCs work for every step.

Regarding skill levels, your main NPCs will come in one of two flavors— exact peers of the PCs who grow with them as the campaign progresses, or superiors to the PCs who remain static while the PCs grow to sufficient strength to oppose them. If it's the former, just give them the exact same skill distribution the PCs currently have. If it's the latter, give them enough skills to go at least two higher than whatever the current skill cap is for the game.

So, if the PCs are currently capped at Great (+4), your NPC mastermind should be able to afford a couple of Fantastic (+6) skills.

Likewise, a particularly significant NPC might have more than five aspects to highlight their importance to the story.

## PLAYING THE OPPOSITION

Here are some tips for using the opposition characters you create in play.

## ***RIGHT-SIZING***

Remember, you want a balancing act between obliterating the PCs and letting them walk all over your opposition (unless it's a minion horde, in which case that's pretty much what they're there for). It's important to keep in mind not just the skill levels of the NPCs in your scenes, but their number and importance.

Right-sizing the opposition is more of an art than a science, but here are some strategies to help.

- Don't outnumber the PCs unless your NPCs have comparatively lower skills.
- If they're going to team up against one big opponent, make sure that opponent has a peak skill two levels higher than whatever the best PC can bring in that conflict.
- Limit yourself to one main NPC per scene, unless it's a big climactic conflict at the end of a story arc. Remember, supporting NPCs can have skills as high as you want.
- Most of the opposition the PCs encounter in a session should be nameless NPCs, with one or two supporting NPCs and main NPCs along the way.
- Nameless and supporting NPCs means shorter conflicts because they give up or lose sooner; main NPCs mean longer conflicts.

## ***CREATING ADVANTAGES FOR NPCs***

It's easy to fall into the default mode of using the opposition as a direct means to get in the PCs' way, drawing them into a series of conflict scenes until someone is defeated.

However, keep in mind that the NPCs can create advantages just like the PCs can. Feel free to use opposition characters to create scenes that aren't necessarily about stopping the PCs from achieving a goal, but scouting out information about them and stacking up free invocations. Let your bad guys and the PCs have tea together and then bring out the Empathy rolls. Or instead of having that fight scene take place in the dark alley, let your NPCs show up, gauge the PCs' abilities, and then flee.

Likewise, keep in mind that your NPCs have a home turf advantage in conflicts if the PCs go to them in order to resolve something. So, when you're setting up situation aspects, you can pre-load the NPC with

some free invocations if it's reasonable that they've had time to place those aspects. Use this trick in good faith, though—two or three such aspects is probably pushing the limit.

## ***CHANGE VENUES OF CONFLICT***

Your opposition will be way more interesting if they try to get at the PCs in multiple venues of conflict, rather than just going for the most direct route. Remember that there are a lot of ways to get at someone, and that mental conflict is just as valid as physical conflict as a means of doing so. If the opposition has a vastly different skill set than one or more of your PCs, leverage their strengths and choose a conflict strategy that gives them the best advantage.

## ***THE FATE FRACTAL***

The Fate Fractal is not new to the Fate system, but it is arguably one of its greatest strengths. The idea behind it is that anything—absolutely anything—can be made into a character. Now that doesn't mean that you have to give it full aspects, a complete skill column, and spend points on stunts and super-powers. What it means is that you can stat anything in the game to provide dramatic opposition to the players instead of just giving them a passive opposition to overcome.

Daring Comics already hinted at this in the rules. For example, in the Special Situations section of the Comic Book Action chapter, we talked about fire being given a skill rating between Mediocre (+0) and Fantastic (+6), and then maybe giving it a couple of Stress boxes and treating its singular skill like Physique to see if it received additional boxes.

But you don't have to stop there. As a matter of fact, you could grant a raging inferno even more!

### ***RANGING INFERNO***

**Aspects:** *Intense Heat, Extremely Thick Smoke, Weakening Structure*

**Skills:** Physique (+4), Provoke (+5), Fight (+6)

**Stunts:** Face the Pain (The fire can consume more fuel from the burning structure when it starts to get weakened. Once per scene, the GM may spend a fate point and remove a check mark from its 1-Stress or 2-Stress box).



**Powers:** Fire Blast 3

**Physical Stress:** 4 Boxes

**Mental Stress:** Zero boxes

**Consequence Slots:** 1 Mild, 1 Moderate, 1 Severe

So now that we've built the raging inferno as a character to oppose the heroes, let's examine what we gave it.

We gave it three aspects to represent the nature of the intense fire as well as the weakening building structure. We have it a high Fight skill since the fire is huge and everywhere within the structure, and anyone racing inside of it is up for a real struggle. We then gave it the Physique skill to represent how hard it will be to extinguish. Just for the sake of using the Create an Advantage action to really push the players by creating situation aspects representing innocent people in danger, we gave it a decent Provoke skill.

For stunts, we gave it one of the example stunts under Physique to represent an ability to get damaged, but at least get a surge once during the scene.

The Blast power represents any explosions that might happen as things combust. Since we didn't give it the Accuracy skill, and caused it to default to Mediocre (+0), we're saying the explosions are unlikely to be very accurate.

We originally gave it 1-Point and 2-Point stress boxes, and thanks to its Physique skill it also gets a 3-Point and 4-Point box. That's already saying the fire will not go down quickly. It's an inferno, though. It's large, and powerful, and we're also giving it all three consequence slots.

## UNISTAR INDUSTRIES

**Aspects:** *Vast Political Influence, Cutting Edge R&D, Global Reach*

**Skills:** Fight (+4), Technology (+5), Resources (+6), Contacts (+7)

**Stunts:** Big Influence in Politics, Money Talks

**Image Stress:** 4 Boxes

**Holdings Stress:** 4 boxes

**Consequence Slots:** 1 Mild, 1 Moderate, 1 Severe (plus one extra Mild Consequence slot each for Image related consequences)

In the second example, we decided to do a quickie fractal for a world-wide conglomerate with deep political ties and vast resources. The Fight skill represents anything from its own private security force, to perhaps privately owned mercenary units.

Since physical and mental stress tracks didn't really make sense for a corporation, for this one we decided to change the stress tracks. We gave it an Image Stress representing its corporate reputation, and decided that extra stress boxes or consequence slots would be granted by the Contacts skill. We also gave it a Holdings Stress track, representing its corporate financials and business investments, and modified by the Resources skill. Both of those change the tempo of confronting the corporation, and indicate that pure physical assaults are likely to have little to no effect. If the heroes are going to oppose such a global business entity, they're going to have to find a way to target the company's reputation and finances.

You don't have to use the existing skills, either. You can create unique skills for any fractal. Matter of fact, if you look at the Expanded Super-Teams section in the Appendix: Turning the Dials, you'll see that's exactly what we did.

The Fate Fractal is a powerful dramatic tool to use in any Daring Comics series. With it, you can make characters out of anything. The only limit is your own imagination.

# CHAPTER 14: TELLING STORIES THE COMIC BOOK WAY

By now, you and your group have created the heroes, established the world they inhabit, and set all the basic assumptions for the series you're going to play. Now you have a pile of aspects and NPCs, all of it brimming with dramatic potential and waiting to come to life.

What do you do with them?

It's time to get into the real meat of the series: creating and playing through story arcs the comic book way.

## KNOW YOUR HEROES

Perhaps the most important element in creating super-hero adventures is this: Know your heroes. Study their character sheets. Note their powers and abilities.

Most importantly, understand their concepts. A good super-hero adventure should feel uniquely suited to the heroes involved and speak to their powers, their weaknesses and their concepts. If you have a super-hero team consisting of a One Man War on Crime, a Blind Avenger of the Streets, a Supernatural Spirit of Vengeance and a Genetically Engineered Super Spy Defector, then your plot featuring an Earth Controlling Servant of a Force of Nature seeking cosmic artifacts on Earth may not be the most suitable story hook for those guys. Similarly, drug dealers, gun thugs and police corruption are not the best elements for an adventure built around cosmic heroes trapped on earth.

There is nothing inherently wrong with either of the above plots, but your job is going to be a lot easier if



you are giving your heroes (and their players) hooks that they can really sink their teeth into. The more you can personalize a hook, the better. If you want to run an adventure with police corruption, see if any of your heroes are connected to the local police force. If there is a Masked Avenger who has a grudging, respectful relationship with a police detective, that adds an additional element to play with: When the Masked Avenger thwarts a police extortion shakedown, maybe they are left wondering if their detective pal is involved, or if they are aware and turning a blind eye. Maybe the detective comes to them first, knowing that they are dealing with rampant corruption that is beyond what one cop can deal with, and so they need the heroes to help them drag the skeletons out of the closet. Make sure that approaching alien army isn't hitting just any planet: Point it at the homeworld of the Cosmic Sentinel PC in your game, to give them extra incentive make sure the line is drawn in the sand. If the adventure feels like any character could have been dropped in to deal with it, then it's probably not a strong hook anyway.

Once you feel confident that you have a good fit for your heroes and the plot, you also need to be aware of the heroes' abilities and how it may impact the adventure. Mutant Psychics are great characters, but are going to overly complicate your murder mystery adventure unless you address how their psychic powers are not unraveling the plot five minutes into the adventure. This is a double-edged sword, as well, because you want to challenge your players and their characters, but you don't want to constantly block their best powers and abilities, either.

Use all of their traits to guide you in establishing just how they are most likely to interact with your adventure and how it "speaks" to them. During character creation, your players are giving you guidance on what kind of adventures appeal to them by the kinds of characters they are making, so go with that. Give them what they want. Have vengeful villains kidnap their old high school buddy. Reveal their bullying stepbrother as being in league with the alien invasion threatening to engulf Earth. A little basic research (and a refresher, even after the game has been going on for a few sessions) can go a long way towards keeping the players invested and making the characters feel like real parts of the universe and not just ciphers stepping into a role.

This isn't to say that you need to make the adventure a cake walk for the heroes, not at all. You just need to make the adventure *relevant* to the heroes, from the hooks to the villains to the subplots to the challenges.

Similarly, this helps you avoid putting them in a situation that they are incredibly ill-equipped to solve— or even participate in (that aquatic adventure to Atlantis seemed like a great idea at the time, until the player playing a living fire elemental suddenly felt kind of left out).

## DEFINING STORY ARCS

As mentioned in Chapter 13: Running the Game, a story arc is a unit of game time usually lasting from one to four sessions, and made up of a number of discrete scenes. The end of a story arc should trigger a significant milestone, allowing your heroes to get better at what they do.

In a story arc, the heroes are going to face and try to resolve some kind of big, urgent, open-ended problem (or problems). The GM will typically open a story arc by presenting this problem to the players, with subsequent scenes revolving around what the heroes do to deal with it, whether that's researching information, gathering resources, or striking directly at the problem's source.

Along the way, you'll also have some NPCs who are opposed to the heroes' goals interfere with their attempts to solve the problem. These could be your traditional comic book physical confrontation, or simply someone with different interests who wants to negotiate with the heroes in order to get them to deal with the problem in a different way.

The best story arcs don't have one particular "right" ending. Maybe the heroes don't resolve the problem, or resolve it in such a way that it has bad repercussions. Maybe they succeed with flying colors. Maybe they circumvent the problem, or change the situation in order to minimize the impact of the problem. You won't know until you play.

Once the problem is resolved (or it can no longer be resolved), the story arc is over. The following session, you'll start a new story arc, which can either relate directly to the previous story arc or present a whole new problem.

## CREATING A STORY ARC: STEP BY STEP

- Find Problems
- Ask Story Questions
- Establish the Opposition
- Set the First Scene

## FIND PROBLEMS

Creating a story arc begins with finding a problem for the heroes to deal with. A good problem is relevant to the heroes, cannot be resolved without their involvement, and cannot be ignored without dire consequences.

That may seem like a tall order. Fortunately, you have a great storytelling tool to help you figure out appropriate problems for your game: aspects.

Your heroes' aspects have a lot of story built into them. They're an indication of what's important about (and to) each character, they indicate what things in the game world the heroes are connected to, and they describe the unique facets of each character's identity.

You also have the aspects that are attached to your game—all your current and impending story arcs, location aspects, and any aspects you've put on any of your campaign's faces. Riffing off of those helps to reinforce the sense of a consistent, dynamic world, and keep your game's central premise in the forefront of play.

Because of all these aspects, you already have a ton of story potential sitting right in front of you— now, you just have to unlock it.

You can look at an aspect-related problem as a very large-scale kind of event compel. The setup is a little more work, but the structure is similar—having an aspect suggests or implies something problematic for the PC or multiple heroes, but unlike a compel, it's something they can't easily resolve or deal with in the moment.

## YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO DESTROY THE WORLD

As you will see from the examples, not all of our urgent, consequential problems necessarily involve the fate of the world or even a large portion of the setting. Interpersonal problems can have just as much of an impact on a group of heroes as stopping this week's bad guy— winning someone's respect or resolving an ongoing dispute between two characters can just as easily take the focus for a story arc as whatever grand scheme your mastermind villain is cooking up.

## PROBLEMS AND CHARACTER ASPECTS

When you're trying to get a problem from a character aspect, try asking the following questions:

- Who might have a problem with the character because of this aspect?
- Does the aspect point to a potential threat to that character?
- Does the aspect describe a connection or relationship that could cause trouble for the character?
- Does the aspect speak to a backstory element that could come back to haunt the character?
- Does the aspect describe something or someone important to the character that you can threaten?

## PROBLEMS AND GAME ASPECTS

Problems you get from a game's current and impending story arcs will be a little wider in scope than character-driven problems, affecting all your heroes and possibly a significant number of NPCs as well. They're less personal, but that doesn't mean they have to be less compelling (pardon the pun). Just as with character aspects, when using series aspects to create the story's problem, as one or more of the following questions:

- What threats does the story arc present to the heroes?
- Who are the driving forces behind the story arc, and what messed up thing might they be willing to do to advance their agenda?

- Who else cares about dealing with the story arc, and how might their “solution” be bad for the heroes?
- What’s a good next step for resolving the story arc, and what makes accomplishing that step hard?

## PUT A FACE ON IT

*While not all of your story arc problems have to be directly caused by an NPC who serves as a “master villain” for the heroes to take down, it’s often easier if they are. At the very least, you should be able to point directly to an NPC who benefits a great deal from the story arc problem not going the way the heroes want it to go.*

## PROBLEMS AND ASPECT PAIRS

This is where you really start cooking with gas. You can also create problems from the relationship between two aspects instead of relying on just one. That lets you keep things personal, but broaden the scope of your problem to impact multiple characters, or thread a particular PC’s story into the story of the game.

Ask yourself:

- Do the two aspects put those characters at odds or suggest a point of tension between them?
- Is there a particular kind of problem or trouble that both would be likely to get into because of the aspects?
- Does one character have a relationship or a connection that could become problematic for the other?
- Do the aspects point to backstory elements that can intersect in the present?
- Is there a way for one PC’s fortune to become another’s misfortune, because of the aspects?

## HOW MANY PROBLEMS DO I NEED?

*For a single story arc, one or two is sufficient, trust us. You’ll see below that even one problem can create enough material for two or three sessions. Don’t feel like you have to engage every PC with every story arc. Never hesitate to rotate the spotlight around a little so that they each get some spotlight time, and then throw in a story arc related story arc when you want to concentrate on the larger plot of the game.*

## ASK STORY QUESTIONS

Now that you have a really grabby problem, you can flesh the situation out a little and figure out precisely what your story arc is intended to resolve— in other words, what are the really grabby questions at the heart of this problem?

That’s what you’ll do in this step: create a series of questions that you want your story arc to answer. We call these story questions, because the story will emerge naturally from the process of answering them.

The more story questions you have, the longer your story arc’s going to be. One to three story questions will probably wrap up in a session. Four to eight might take you two or even three sessions. More than eight or nine, and you might have to save some of those questions for the next story arc, but that’s not a bad thing at all.

We recommend asking story questions as yes/no questions, in the general format of, “Can/Will (character) accomplish (goal)?” You don’t have to follow that phrasing exactly, and you can embellish on the basic question format in a number of ways, which we’ll show you in a moment.

Every problem you come up with is going to have one very obvious story question: “Can the heroes resolve the problem?” You do need to know that eventually, but you don’t want to skip straight to that— it’s your finale for the story arc, after all. Put other questions before that one to add nuance and complexity to the story arc and build up to that final question. Figure out what makes the problem difficult to solve.

To come up with story questions, you’re probably going to have to embellish on the problem that you

came up with just a bit, and figure out some of the W-How (who, what, when, where, why, how) details. That's also fine, and part of what the process is for.

## TOO MANY STORY QUESTIONS

*If you end up with a really large number of story questions (like eight or more), keep in mind that you don't necessarily have to answer them all in one story arc. You can bring up the questions you don't answer, either as foreshadowing or to set up stuff you're going to do in the following story arc. In fact, that's exactly how you make strong arcs: you have a pile of related story questions, and you take two or three story arcs to answer them all.*

## CHOOSING THE OPPOSITION

As a rule, your adventure needs an opposing force. Sometimes the opposing force is an obvious, overwhelming evil, sometimes it is an uncaring, unfeeling force of nature, and sometimes it is actually another well-meaning presence, such as the police, the military, or even another super-hero or team. It is important to note that the opposition is not always the mastermind. Sometimes the opposition are minions, henchmen and mercenaries serving a smarter and more capable villain. Sometimes they are hapless pawns, being used by the true villain in order to distract the heroes.

### WE MEET AGAIN

Odds are, the heroes either have a few villains in their backstory, or will pick up a few villains pretty quickly. Super-heroes tend to combat a lot of familiar faces, no matter what kind of asylum or prison they lock those villains away in. In fact, the heroes (and their players) can expect to face off with archenemies again and again, or they wouldn't be archenemies. When deciding to use an archenemy in your adventure, there are a few ways to approach this:

- **Revenge:** If this isn't the first time the hero and archenemy have crossed paths, whether from a prior adventure or from an event in the hero's backstory, then the villain could always be seeking revenge. Perhaps they form a new super team of bad guy to take on the heroes, especially if they aren't powerful enough to combat the whole squad instead. The archenemy could

be sending other villains after the heroes while waiting in the background. Bigger, dumber, more powerhouse villains tend to simply rampage in the streets to draw out their heroic counterparts (like Marvel's Juggernaut and Rhino), while villains like Sabretooth tend to stalk their adversary directly and make it very personal.

- **Fate:** Some heroes and villains just seem like their fates are intertwined. Whether it is fate, or it's just professional courtesy, other heroes tend to miss the archenemy's evil deeds, leaving the heroes to save the day in repeated clashes. In this case. The reaction from the villain can range from outrage ("Why must you keep interfering in my plans?") to a sense of playful respect ("You won this round... but I will find a way to escape prison once more, and we will dance our dance again!")

Regardless of the plan that brings the archenemy into conflict with the heroes, be wary of the encounters becoming repetitive. If The Multi-Armed Mad Genius is robbing a bank AGAIN, it can get tiresome for the players. Give the villain a new scheme to follow, or even new tactics. By that third or fourth time the PCs have fought and defeated the archenemy, any villain worth their salt will be making preparations for the heroes and their unique powers and abilities, absolutely convinced that— this time— they will thwart the heroes once and for all. Regardless, when facing archenemies, the familiarity and ongoing struggle between the heroes and their foes should be a central element, whether it is manifesting as unrelenting hatred or grudging respect.

### NEW FACES

Fighting the same villains all the time is no fun, so you should mix it up now and then. A few ideas for introducing new villains for your heroes to fight are provided below:

- **Copycat:** Some heroes can't shake a villain's legacy, no matter what. Whether the villain is dead or retired, the heroes find a new villain has stepped into their shoes, carrying on their name and brand of evil (and occasionally taking it to frightening new depths). These villains are sometimes relatives seeking revenge, but some copycats are created because a small time crook happened to find a supervillain's hidden cache and assumed their identity. If the original villain is around, they may consider that a form of flattery and team up with the newcomer, but in other cases, the heroes can find themselves caught in the middle of a villainous war.

- **Revenge:** The villain created by a hero's negligence is a well-worn trope of super-hero stories. A hero's reckless use of their powers maybe led to an accident involving a criminal (or maybe a relatively innocent bystander) who find themselves transformed in a way that they don't approve of. These villains tend to be promoted to recurring villain status pretty quickly, since folks who become supervillains in the first place aren't prone to forgiveness.
- **New Dance Card:** Sometimes a hero finds themselves fighting another hero's rival. This can be for any number of reasons, but common causes include the hero being recently deceased, the hero being off world (perhaps as part of a Crisis Crossover, with this being the player character heroes' first sign of a larger cosmic crisis brewing), or the other hero simply being busy. Many times, these are one shot conflicts, but occasionally these clashes turn incredibly personal and the villain in question is all too happy to put their new enemy on their future revenge list.
- **Giant Monsters:** Monsters as opposition doesn't always spring to mind when designing super-hero adventures, but super-hero comics and stories over the years have had many nods to both 1950s giant atomic monsters, as well as more traditional horror. A rampaging Kaiju like Godzilla, played completely straight, is practically like dealing with a natural disaster. A giant monster like that is going to be very difficult to just "punch out", so the heroes will need to focus at least as much energy on saving lives and diverting damage as they will in combat. Lovecraftian Elder Gods are another form of Giant Monster, typically having even harder to understand motivations than the "common" Kaiju.
- **Invading Forces:** A full blown invasion by troops looking to overwhelm with numbers instead of fighting a real war are another example of a Force of Nature in conflict. The Chituari in the *Avengers* movie were not a functional military unit, alien or otherwise, they were wave after wave of ferocious alien warriors who exhibited no range of emotion (and even included Big Giant Monsters to get knocked out). Super-heroes in a zombie apocalypse (large scale or small scale) will be similar to this. Hordes of oncoming, brain-eating beasties who know no fear or hesitation presents a very different challenge than a super-powered thief out to rob a luxurious penthouse or a maniacal masked terrorist with designs on ruling the world. Legions of faceless terrorist mooks generally do not fall into this category because a) they tend to be weaker and less capable than zombies/aliens/robot armies and b) they tend to have more human motivations and self-preservation instincts.

## ***FORCES OF NATURE***

Your opposition doesn't have to be something that can be talked to or reasoned with. Powerful forces of nature make for interesting opponents, even though they lack that human element. In these cases, the heroes may even face threats that they can't just punch or blast (or it may be all they can do). Some applications of Forces of Nature include:

- **Natural Disasters:** Sometimes a natural disaster is spawned directly from the efforts of another adversary. An enraged Lord of the Underground type may trigger a fault line, whether using innate abilities, super-science, a mystic artifact or a minion with such powers, and the heroes have to focus on the destruction, saving lives and infrastructure before they can hunt the true villain. The natural disaster may be completely naturally occurring. After all, hurricanes and earthquakes do happen, as does flooding and wildfires. Super-heroes who are explorers first and face-punchers second may discover a rift in reality that threatens to consume their dimension if they don't stop it, which often requires breaking the laws of physics...again. In each of these cases, the focus is on saving lives and damage control, and the heroes will likely have to utilize their powers and abilities in new and unique ways in order to succeed.

Other monsters, such as vampires, mummies, and werewolves, are often insanely powerful, but usually have clearer motivations and greater cunning or intelligence.

## ***GOOD FRIENDS, BETTER ENEMIES***

It is an incredibly common trope in super-hero stories for the heroes to find themselves battling other heroes for any number of reasons.

- **Misunderstanding:** This is incredibly common if one or both of the parties involved tend to be "darker", more "monstrous" or antiheroes. In this scenario, one or both sides involved in the conflict are searching for a villain on the loose

and believe they have found the villain when they have actually stumbled across the other hero(es). The fight usually lasts until one side says something that clues the other in on why they are fighting, and the heroes then team up and go hunting for the villain. Another common set-up for this scenario involves a villain actively manipulating the sides into fighting, either by framing one side or—embarrassingly enough—just pointing one group at the other and letting human nature take its course. How the heroes react to each other after fighting can vary wildly. Sometimes they become vitriolic best buds and sometimes those tempers flare wildly whenever they come face to face in the future.

- **Mind Control:** Facing a mind controlled hero is uniquely difficult, in that the non-controlled hero usually doesn't actually want to hurt the mind controlled hero, whereas the mind controlled hero generally has no such qualms. A challenge like this leaves the heroes on the defensive against their mind controlled comrade, who may be every bit as powerful (or even more so) as they are. Bonus points if they mind controlled hero is capable of taunting their foe, mentioning a deep seeded wedge issue between them (such as assumed position on a team roster, or even a romantic conflict). Expect the mind controlled hero to vehemently insist that they are not controlled, but are "showing (their) true self at last!" Using mind controlled heroes can lead to great subplots after the fact, especially if something happens during the fight to truly test the friendship.
- **Opposite Sides of the Line:** There are those occasions in which heroes fight and there is no mind control, misunderstanding or manipulation involved. Philosophical divides lead to heroes coming to blows more often than is probably healthy, whether it is something as simple as an obnoxious jerk getting punched out by a teammate, to profound disagreements in crime fighting methods placing heroes at odds, to full blown civil wars over whether or not super beings have the right to fight crime without government oversight. These conflicts tend to have the longest lasting ramifications on the heroes and their world, as friendships can be strained or even severed, and public perception of some or all involved can be drastically transformed by their actions.

When using hero versus hero conflict in a super-hero RPG, you also have to consider whether the opposing

heroes are all NPCs, or if the player character group is facing a conflict that is coming to blows. Intraparty conflict with the wrong group of players can destroy a game, but can be a compelling and interesting session (or series of sessions, depending on the scope of the situation) if all of the players involved are capable of handling the conflict in its intended spirit. As always, it is best to know your players before you put them in situations such as this.

## ***ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES***

Whole organizations can provide interesting conflict for your heroes as well. While there will almost certainly be one or more distinct personalities at the head of the organization that the heroes will eventually have to deal with, the bulk of the conflict is going to be with numbers of faceless mooks. As noted above, what separates foot soldiers of organizations from an Alien Robot Zombie army is the presence of more human thinking, coordination and tactics, as well as self-preservation instincts, though there is certain to be some crossover in the feel of the opposition groups.

- **Wrong Side of the Law:** This scenario puts the heroes squarely in the crosshairs of one or more law enforcement agencies, military branches, or multinational paramilitary organizations named after weapons and/or defensive implements. Sometimes this is because the organization in question is inherently corrupt. This happens a lot with police departments in crime-ridden cities. That's the best scenario for heroes to deal with, because their opposition are at least bad guys, even if they still have legal authority. It gets trickier when the rank and file of an organization are well-meaning individuals trying to do their duty, but the leadership has become corrupted. This places the heroes in the unique position of having to survive and avoid the enforcement arm of the organization, while targeting the corrupt head of the opposition and hopefully exposing their insidious nature. The most complex scenario involves the heroes being hunted by the organization for legitimate reasons, either because they have been framed for a crime, or because they have crossed a boundary, perhaps in pursuit of another villain. In this case, cutting loose against their opposition is almost impossible to do and still save face. Murdering a villain and then killing the cops trying to arrest you pretty firmly takes you out of hero territory.
- **Terrorists:** Luckily for super-heroes, terrorist groups in a world of superpowers tend to not



be very subtle or complicated. Whether trying to overthrow world leaders, acquire alien tech or eradicate life on Earth, terrorist groups super heroes face gravitate towards menacing acronyms (often invoking spiders, snakes and the like) and colorful uniforms that clearly mark them all as being members of the same evil organization. Members of these organizations tend to have an overreliance on technology, and are commonly serving supervillains who care little for their safety. It is not uncommon for leadership in these groups to change from time to time, as a new villain wrests control from the previous leader. Ninja clans also fall into this category, as they like to attack heroes en masse and are treated as little more than cannon fodder by heroes and villains alike. Terrorist groups tend to have confusing alignments as well, and heroes are just as likely to find a group of deranged scientists at war with an ancient ninja clan as they are to see the two groups in an (uncomfortable) alliance brokered by their leadership (at least one of whom has only recently assumed power). Anti-superhuman hate groups are also going to fall under this category.

- **Crime Doesn't Pay:** Gangs and organized crime can also provide a suitable threat for heroes. Unlike acronym terrorist groups and color coded ninja clans, their methods and schemes tend to be more direct and more grounded, with less emphasis on giant freeze rays and alien artifacts

and more emphasis on racketeering and drug running. What they lack in tactics and zealotry, they make up for in ferocity and a sense of loyalty that a hooded terrorists tend to lack. The big bosses of crime rings may have super powers, but even if they don't, they tend to employ at one or more lieutenants who are either superhuman or straddling the line between peak human ability and superhuman ability. It is a common trope for any crime boss worth their salt to have friends in high places to make things difficult for any heroes looking to shut down their operation.

Using organizations like these can be useful in making the heroes feel like the powerful beings that they are, given that most of the foes they encounter are going to be largely outmatched unless they are fielding either truly overwhelming numbers, or extremely advanced tech. Battling a whole organization will have a completely different feel than taking on a supervillain team, much less a single powerful villain, even if the organization has a few super-powered beings on retainer to join in the fight.

## PLOTTING THE COURSE

Super-hero adventures, more so than most, tend to be more reactive than proactive. Generally a villain has a plan, they begin to enact that plan, and the super-hero gets involved. Sometimes, the villain goes hunting for the hero specifically. Depending on your heroes and their method of operation, they may be more



proactive than reactive (Marvel's *X-Force*, in most of its incarnations, being a prime example of this).

There are few plots that are outright inappropriate for supers games, given the broad nature of the genre. A "typical" supers universe can easily handle any, or all, of the following (and, depending on how you handle it, maybe even all of them in the same campaign):

- Atlantis invading the mainland in response to global pollution.
- An immortal Nazi gathering the relics of Hitler's lost occult collection.
- A sentient machine seeking to obliterate human life in order to "preserve" the planet.
- A super-powered bank robbery.
- A drug kingpin launching a gang war in the streets.
- A cosmic force of nature venturing to earth in order to devour the planet's energy and sate its infinite hunger.

The first key towards selecting the plot is to make sure that it makes sense in the context of the setting. If it was established three sessions ago that an international peacekeeping force has placed an energy field around earth, then be prepared to explain to your players why an alien ship has suddenly appeared over New York. Don't have Megalomaniacal Dictators with Magic Powers robbing the downtown bank, or a villain that the heroes spent half a dozen adventures reforming go on a murderous rampage unless you have amazing reasons to explain these inconsistencies. If you do happen to run a plot that contradicts past adventures, and your players call you out on it, call an audible: A major villain has been locked up in a maximum security prison for crimes against humanity, and there is virtually no chance that he could have escaped without every hero with a connection to government and law enforcement knowing about it? What if it's an imposter? Or a clone? You are playing in a big, wacky, wondrous sandbox. Don't be afraid to use all the toys.

## ***A SENSE OF SCALE***

Be aware of the scope of your plot. If you are running a gritty, street level game, then a European dictator's quest to free his mother's tortured soul from Hell might not be an appropriate adventure for your heroes. Same with mad scientists attempting to use a super-science tractor beam to pull the moon into the Earth,

or a rogue AI's plan to overwhelm the planet with an army of machines. Your team of super-powered, interdimensional explorers may have bigger fish to fry than a counterfeit jewelry ring. Revealing that the leader of that jewelry ring is an insane, cosmic titan who worships death doesn't prove that the scope is global or galactic...it just means you have set yourself up for a very hard sale with your players.

- Personal scale adventures are appropriate for any heroes or villains. A God who has fallen in love with a mortal woman who is dying of cancer, and his quests to save her, is a personal scale adventure, just the same as a gun toting vigilante who is trying to save his estranged daughter from a psycho predator before she runs out of time. Villains for personal scale adventures can be of any power level or capability, they really just need the means to threaten the hero (whether with physical damage or the ability to upend their lives, by endangering loved ones or perhaps even having the ability to ruin their reputation or livelihood) and a reason for doing so.
- Street level adventures are generally geared towards lower powered, unsanctioned masked vigilantes, martial artists and antiheroes who have less flashy powers, though some supernatural characters and lower-end super-powered beings may find themselves embroiled in street level plots. These adventures usually only threaten a neighborhood or two, but can extend to threatening a whole city. Heroes embroiled in these missions are apt to run afoul of (and maybe even work with) the police (whether corrupt or not), as well as street gangs and organized crime. Street level adventures with a supernatural flavor may involve vampires stalking neighborhoods or minor demons preying on the weak. Street level conflict doesn't have to be violent and gritty, it just isn't likely to have ramifications to throughout the world, or even the region. One-trick, gimmicky villains are every bit at home here as drug dealers and vampires are.
- City scale adventures can occupy a similar space with street level, though the possibility of wider-spread damage tends to be much higher. Rampaging muscle men, destructive super groups, powerful superhuman leaders and their ilk threaten to eradicate a whole city, or murder large segments of the population. If mobsters or street gangs are involved, then they are either fielding super-powered soldiers or massive numbers, leading to full-scale, open warfare that can level

buildings and rack up a large body count. To use a comic book example, *Daredevil* is typically trying to protect Hell's Kitchen...*Batman* is generally trying to protect Gotham City.

- Regional threats endanger more than just a city. Large segments of the population are at risk, and it is very likely that either a full team is required in order to cover the necessary ground, or fairly strong movement powers (such as a flight, teleportation or super speed). As threats get larger, the likelihood of other heroes being called to the action increases, especially if the player character heroes are in danger of being overwhelmed. The villains behind these threats are either naturally powerful, or have access to destructive weaponry. Failing to stop a regional scale threat will dramatically alter the area, such as when Mongul destroyed Coast City in the *Reign of the Supermen* arc.
- Global scale threats endanger the entire world (not surprisingly). Whether these are full blown invasions, or mass mind control plots, these conflicts go far beyond the borders of a single nation and typically require considerable resources in order to cover the necessary ground to end the villain's schemes. Property damage the likes of which disaster films are made of tend to be the order of the day, and the entire world will be irrevocably altered if the heroes fail (and maybe if they succeed). Team-ups with other heroes are extremely common, due to the cataclysmic nature of hazards on this scale. It is not uncommon for the heroes to be approached by one of their villains, extending an olive branch in order to prevent the mastermind of the scheme from succeeding, especially if there is a chance of a large body count. This doesn't necessarily mean the villain has turned over a new leaf, just that they have a vested interest in stopping the opposition's plan. Once the threat of imminent danger has passed, the villain is very likely to go back to their own nefarious schemes and cross paths with the heroes later – or seize control of whatever terrible force the opposition was bringing to bear and turn it on the heroes.
- Cosmic scale threats can endanger anything from the galaxy to the universe to the multiverse to reality itself. The heroes are almost certainly going to require assistance, though whether that manifests itself in the form of a grand coalition of heroes, or in the aid of a cosmic entity looking out for the well-being of the universe (and there

is nothing keeping both from happening), the heroes are rarely expected to counter these threats on their own. After all, thwarting the opposition in a Cosmic scale threat almost always requires some combination of space travel and dimensional travel, and time travel can even prove to be a necessity here. At least one villain is almost guaranteed to offer their assistance, but the likelihood of betrayal is even higher. When cosmic entities are involved in events, they often had indecipherable motives and it can make telling the good guys from the bad guys maddeningly difficult, which makes teaming with an enemy who has clearer motives a much more appealing idea. For a change of pace, you may split the heroes into groups with other, NPC heroes, and allow the players to take control of those NPCs to experience playing a different character for a change of pace.

Don't be afraid to play around with the tropes and expectations. If you are running a gritty, street level game set in a "standard" super-hero universe, you can show the fallout of larger scale events, affecting the ground level, something Marvel Comics has done a nice job of in the last eight years or so. If demons are ripping through reality, your street level vigilantes may have to team up against a lone demon that slipped away from the main conflict.

Remember that, no matter the power level of your heroes, not every event or conflict has to be world shaking or earth shattering in order to be entertaining to your players and relevant to your heroes. Quite the opposite, in fact: Too many repeated global or cosmic threats, and it can become exhausting for everyone involved, as "event fatigue" sets in. It can even have the interesting side effect of making your heroes lose sight of why they are heroes, when crisis after crisis makes them forget about the reasons they became heroes in the first place.

## ***BAITING THE HOOK***

How do you convince the heroes to take the hook? Bait it. This can be the easiest thing in the world in a supers game, if the players are fully invested in playing super-heroes.

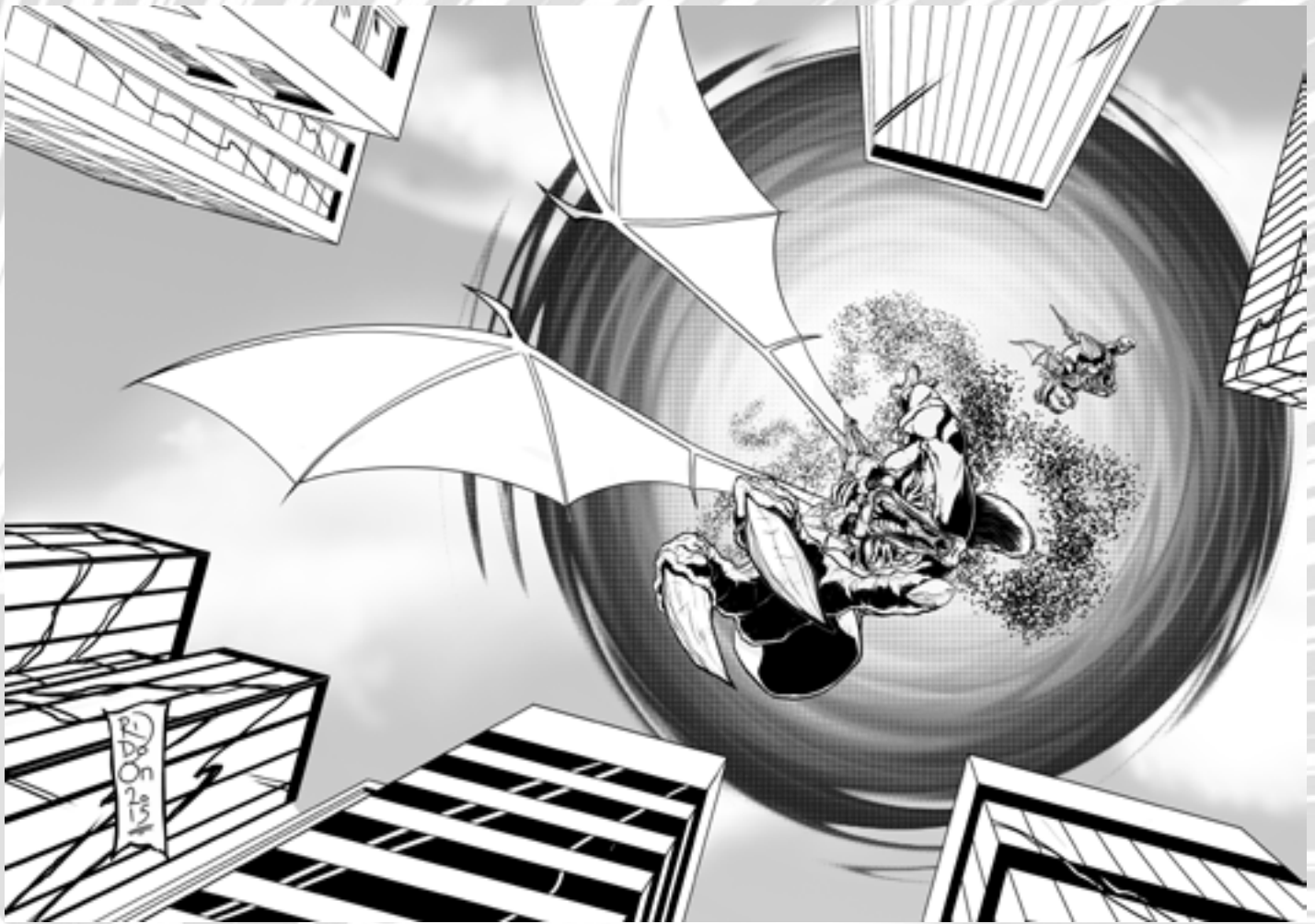
- Super-heroes, by their nature, tend to be roving crusaders who patrol nightly and rush to the site of danger when folks call for help. Street level heroes often do this at the expense of their social life, putting considerable strain on their personal relationships in order to fight crime. Heroes with this level of overdeveloped responsibility make

it extremely easy to involve in the plots...all they need is a report of a supervillain, or an innocent in danger, and they are on their way, especially if they are already on patrol and looking for criminal activity in the first place.

- Government sponsored heroes, or any hero with legal authorization, can simply be assigned missions. Heroes of this sort have some form of commanding officer or handler who can point them in the direction of the nearest plot hook (often like a loaded gun). The whole thing can even scream “bad idea”, but heroes in this position tend to have little room to refuse or negotiate. These heroes usually get a full debriefing to go along with their orders, but the agency intelligence is sometimes suspect, either due to intelligence gaps or due to law enforcement agencies in super-hero universes having the unfortunate habit of being infiltrated and corrupted (the larger the agency, the more likely it will become compromised over the course of the campaign. Depending on the nature of the mission and the sponsoring agency, the heroes may find themselves with troublesome directives, or even outright conflicting orders.
- Supernatural heroes are often drawn to trouble. A Hellish Spirit of Vengeance may sense when innocent blood has been spilled and find themselves rushing headlong into the fray. Alternately, the heroes could be cursed so that they are drawn together against their will whenever trouble is brewing, whether they actually get along with one another or not. The common thread that heroes drawn in this way share is that they often don't have a choice, as mystical forces forcibly dictate them into action. Heroes beholden to mystical forces that use them like pawns and foot soldiers have been known to go too far in attempting to stem the flow of darkness around them so they can cease their team-ups. A hi-tech variant of this would be an advanced satellite detection system that draws the hero that controls it into the conflict after the latest round of villainous deeds, though the High Tech Hero usually has the ability to refuse the call, whereas mystical beings are often forced into conflict by the powers they serve.
- Heroes have connections. Villains can target those connections, accidentally or intentionally. A bank robbery is a standard super-hero scenario. A bank robbery with a hostage situation certainly complicates things. If the

hostage is the spouse or significant other of one of the heroes, the whole mess becomes more sensitive. Even calm and reserved heroes are more apt to get emotional and make mistakes, because the consequences of failure have a much bigger price. A brutal villain targeting a police officer is enough to make any decent hero's blood boil, but when the officer that is down happens to be the one friend the heroes have on the force, the villains will almost certainly invoke the ire of their more even-tempered counterparts. These situations are all incidental, but common. Imagine a villain who intentionally targets a friend, ally or loved one of the heroes. The reason many heroes have secret identities is so that their loved ones can be protected from the psychos and villains they commonly face. When one of those psychos realizes that the attractive couple in the community pages of the newspaper is a super-hero and her “normal” spouse, they may well decide to target the hapless husband. Just be careful not to overdo this trope. You don't want to punish your players for having human connections to their characters. While tragedy is a common motivator for super-heroes, it's also one that's largely better off left to backstory instead of an in-game misery tour.

- The hero can become the target themselves. Whether blatant (a villain emerges, or returns, and wreaks havoc, directly calling the heroes out) or subtle (a villain in the background sends hired guns after the hero, perhaps to strike during the conflict), you can take the guesswork out of it by making it very personal and direct and urgent. Having the team headquarters bombed after a stressful mission is going to put your heroes on high alert against your villains, no doubt. Consider the personality of your villain when you utilize this option: Are they the type to play mind games? Do they have all the subtlety of a sledgehammer? Do they want to kill the hero, or are they more interested in destroying everything the hero believes in? The villain's mindset goes a long way towards helping you determine just how they would attack your heroes. Marvel's Sabretooth used to stalk Wolverine on his birthday and tear out his throat, forcing his healing factor to save him, just to prove a point. The Red Skull wasn't content with killing Captain America at the end of *Civil War*, he needed the gun shots to come from Cap's brainwashed girlfriend. Doctor Doom is more concerned with humiliating Reed Richards



than he is killing him, and so on. If your villain is going to outright target the hero, make sure their methods are consistent with their personalities.

Ultimately, the better the bait you provide to the heroes, the more invested they feel and the less likely they are to feel like you are just pushing them in a certain direction. Give them a reason to want to interact with the plot, above and beyond “so you have something to do”.

## ***LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION***

When you know who is involved (the heroes and their opposition), what is going on (the plot) and why the heroes care (the hook), put some thought into the where. Location can make an encounter every bit as memorable as the villains or the plots. Many powers and abilities can become more useful, or more problematic, depending on the locations the heroes are visiting over the course of the adventure, and some locations may play into specific weaknesses of the heroes or villains involved.

- **City Streets:** Fighting on city streets is incredibly commonplace stuff in super-hero adventures, daytime or night time. Most city streets offer interactive elements such as cars, lamp posts, street signs and manhole covers for the characters to use. Crowds can become an issue, especially when a fight first begins. If the hero is pursuing a villain through a crowd, then flashy displays of power in order to stop them is liable to lead to collateral damage. Hostages are also in abundant supply for villains needing an advantage. The skies are usually open enough that fliers and the like can jockey for prime position, and multiple fliers can find themselves in a dogfight pretty quickly.

- **Dogfighting:** Flying characters don't have to limit themselves to hovering a few feet above the ground, in arm's reach of their opponents. What's the fun in that? Whether the characters are wearing flying powered armor, are propelled by cosmic energy or have bonafide wings, they can take the fighting high above ground in a battle of aerial superiority. The skies can be fairly wide open, but a cunning fighter can pull the fight near building tops and use those structures

to gain the upper hand. One huge danger of fighting in the skies is that the landing is typically long and rough, and a hero or villain defeated in the sky many not have the strength or capability to soften their landing.

- **Under the Sea:** On or below sea level can make for a change of pace, for sure. Characters with connections to undersea kingdoms are occasionally underestimated, but an aquatic character fighting a land dwelling character can have a huge advantage, as a land dwelling character will need special equipment in order to breath underwater, or superpowers that allow them to survive without air, and even then they are less likely to have the freedom of movement that an aquatic hero does. The deeper the fight goes underwater, the more visibility is reduced (at least for those not used to it) and the greater the chance of a powerful underwater creature or two getting involved...and that's not taking into account an aquatic character being able to control the animals themselves.
- **Urban Combat:** Dark alleyways and abandoned warehouses tend to be the order of the day for gritty, street level combat, and we are discussing them together because they share certain similar characteristics. For one, the police are rarely quick to respond, and they are not always working on the side of law and order when they do. Visibility tends to be low, between the darkness and the claustrophobic arrangement of the area. This allows stealthy melee characters opportunities to create ambush situations against their opponents, and skilled heroes or villains can eliminate a numbers disadvantage by utilizing the environment. Enhanced senses can help a hero avoid surprises, but big, flashy powers are going to either be limited in their effectiveness or do a lot of property damage.
- **Mystic Sites:** A villain looking to acquire ancient power can lead the heroes to mystical sites of power, creating a fantasy cat and mouse game. Magical temples of lost societies are often filled with traps both mundane and mystical, leaving the heroes to dodge poisonous darts and infernal fire alike. Dormant guardians may come to life and seek to destroy all intruders, or the villain may have already acquired the means of controlling the guardians (or at least becoming invisible to them). Mystic sites, especially older ones, can be particularly unstable, and extended conflicts can lead to the

whole area caving in around them, which can be hazardous for all parties. Some sites are also connected to other dimensions, and the super powers adventures could tear a hole in reality, leading to any number of complications.

- **Other Dimensions:** Venturing to another dimension, by choice or by accident, can prove to be a grab bag of new elements for the heroes to deal with. Whole new, unrecognizable species, powers acting in usual manners (like a character with magnetic or gravity control powers learning that those forces are dramatically altered in another dimension, for better or for worse), spontaneous eruptions of magic or energy. These are the kinds of hazards that dimension hopping heroes may face. Dimensions that are very similar to their own may actually be alternate realities, where they meet familiar faces in unfamiliar roles. Whole campaigns can be set in alternate dimensions, with the heroes being pulled from individual realities and shuffling through time and space, never knowing what strange twist awaits them in their travels as they try to get back home.
- **Wilderness:** This really applies to any area that's not heavily settled. From tracking rampaging green goliaths into desert nuclear testing sites to hunting furry, cannibalistic creatures into the Canadian wilderness, not every adventure has to feature the bright lights of the big city. Hunting a villain in subzero temperatures before they can reach their hidden superweapon in the Arctic Circle can make for every bit as intense and memorable of an adventure as a fight through downtown Washington D.C. Heroes tend to have less collateral damage to worry about in these areas, though eco-conscious characters will want to avoid wrecking the local eco system by throwing around radioactive blasts and destroying creature habitats. This level of damage tends to get hand-waved unless the hero and/or villain are particularly nature or industry focused, for some reason.

Don't be afraid to take advantage of the fact that super-hero games envelope a large range of genres and subgenres and let the locations for your adventures reflect that. Using wide spread of environments can force your heroes into using their superpowers in new ways, developing new tactics to account for the unusual circumstances, helping each encounter stand out in their minds and challenging their players to find new ways to approach situations.

## ***MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE...***

A good super-hero story is about more than just guys in spandex beating each other up, and the same thing is true of super-hero games. The best heroes tend to have lives and loves and troubles and struggles. It matters that your hero can't pay the bills, and they are about to have their electricity cut off because they got fired from their fourth job in six months. Sometimes, these outside commitments intersect with the primary conflict (like when a supervillain happens to accidentally pick out the hostage that's married to a super-hero), but plots like these tend to be secondary to the alien invasions, super-prison breakouts and interdimensional struggles.

Many times, Subplots are personal storylines that help the heroes become three dimensional characters, rather than cardboard cutouts with colorful costumes and flashy powers. Thematically, they often run alongside the main plot in a complementary manner. Other times, subplots can be slow-brewing schemes by villains that grow into major plots in later adventures. The importance of subplots, as well as the types of subplots used in your games, should be dictated by the interests of you and your players. More so than any other aspect of a super-hero adventure, a subplot should be constructed with your specific heroes in mind, but there are some common ideas that can be used:

- **Bad, Bad Bosses:** If a hero in your game has a day job, they could easily have the boss from Hell. Just how horrible is up to you. They could just constantly hound the hero at their day job, giving them work assignments that make it difficult to slip away and fight crime, or constantly hounding them for disappearing on the job. In these cases, the boss isn't a bad guy per se, as they are merely living up to their responsibilities, but they do become an antagonist by default, as they are actively impeding our heroes. One payoff to this scenario may see the boss learning of the hero's double life and deciding to help them fulfill their societal responsibilities. Another outcome could see the boss reveal themselves as a villain in their own right and try to destroy the hero upon discovering their identity. Alternately, there may not be anything remotely subtle about the bad boss at all. They spend their days railing on about horrible the hero and their allies are, and maybe even bankroll the very supervillains that attack and attempt to kill the hero, unaware that they are employing the very focus of their anger.

In cases like this, it is much harder for the hero and Bad Boss to come to terms, but stranger things have happened.

- **Home is Where the Heart Is:** Heroes with a family have an extra layer of responsibility. As discussed above, heroes with family members can find those attachments targeted (accidentally or on purpose), but that is hardly the extent of the complications a family can add to a hero's life. Super Parents have all the anxiety of parenting, combined with constantly fighting supervillains. In a super-powered world, drug dealers don't try to hook your kid on marijuana, they try to hook them on Meta Human Hormones that give users super powers and rage problems. Spouses who are constantly being abandoned so their significant other can fight giant monsters and alien invasions are likely going to have their patience tested after a while, even though their super-spouse is simply trying to secure a world for their family. Depending on how superpowers are treated in your campaign, a young wife who finds herself pregnant with a superhuman's baby could provide for a whole other type of "Mom-to-be" nerves.
- **The Dating Game:** Romance can be a touchy subject in tabletop games, with some groups steering around it, some groups lightly touching on it, and some groups embracing it fully. It is a very common trope in super-hero stories, and so it merits discussion here. At its simplest, this subplot involves the hero trying to balance dating and being a hero, with the hijinks of having to run off in the middle of a date – or ditch the date altogether – in order to fight crime. The typical resolutions either involve the date getting fed up with the treatment and growing cold towards the hero, or the date discovering the hero's identity (and accepting or rejecting the hero at that point). Other times, the flirtation begins with another hero. This can have an adverse effect on the team's dynamic, especially if (would be) couple begin ignoring orders or altering tactics because of their romantic interest. It can get incredibly tense if two heroes on a team begin dating and it doesn't work out. A third variant can have a hero becoming attracted to a villain. Played out over time, this can lead to the hero's judgement involving the villain being questioned, or the villain intervening to assist the hero on occasion. Eventually, the hero and villain have to decide if their goals and

desires are compatible, or if they are doomed to be enemies. A final variant has a romantic interest revealed as a villain, who may or may not have been aware they were dating a hero. This can be shocking and unnerving for both sides, realizing they have been sleeping with the enemy. Using romance in a game can be tricky and your players may want nothing to do with it. Be open about the possibility of romantic subplots and handle with care.

- **A Phantom Menace:** Maybe you have a cool, new villain you want to use (or a cool, old villain to bring back). Maybe you don't want to just spring the villain on the heroes just like any other adventure. One subplot destined to become a full blown A plot is the rise of a powerful villain. This can be handled in a number of ways, such as the heroes clashing with the villain's agents, or another powerful villain falling prey to the new rising power. Clues and signs about the villain can be sprinkled across multiple adventures, subtle at first, then growing in prominence so the heroes can both dread and anticipate its arrival. Another variation of this is to provide the heroes with a series of seemingly unrelated adventures, only to reveal that they were all linked to the plans of a villainous Mastermind. In that event, be prepared to have the villain explain exactly what he did and when, especially if the heroes inadvertently helped him by taking out the competition.

Regardless of the subplot, or subplots, that you employ, they should enhance the game experience for player and GM alike. If you and your players want a heavy focus on super-hero slugfests, and identities and characterizations are low priority for everyone, then don't include 'em. There have been several successful comic books that have been story-lite and action heavy and that's alright: There is no wrong way to play unless people aren't having fun.

## ***WHAT A TWIST!***

Sometimes, when you scratch the surface of a situation, you find more surface underneath. Sometimes, you find something dark and dangerous and completely unexpected. Plots often have twists, and this is true in fiction and roleplaying games. Plot twists can keep your players on their toes, and turn a predictable situation on its ear. Some common plot twists have been discussed above, but there are many ways to surprise your players and their heroes:

- Discovering that a fellow hero is another supporting character that the heroes are already connected to, especially if the supporting character is a love interest, or a typically antagonistic character.
- Learning the identity of a villain and discovering that they are already connected to the villain, especially if it is a friend or love interest.
- Discovering that the villains the heroes are battling are in the thrall of another, more powerful villain, who has organized them for a sinister purpose.
- Investigating a series of crimes and discovering that the authorities have named the hero the prime suspect: Due to evidence that points firmly in their direction.
- A character is revealed as having been replaced by a shapeshifter or decoy (robots, aliens and shapeshifting characters all apply).
- The villains are being backed by government entities. Bonus points if it's not a shadow government, but the actual authorities funding villains to attack the heroes.
- As the heroes are outmanned and outgunned, they are rescued by a known supervillain who fends off their foes and offers them escape. The villain gives their reasons for helping, and it's up to the heroes to decide if they can trust the villain.
- A character appears who claims to be the long lost parent of one of the heroes (or the true parent, if both biological parents are accounted for).
- A character appears who claims to be one of the heroes from the future, sent back to avert a horrible catastrophe.
- One or more of the heroes is revealed to be an alien/clone/robot and was unaware of it all along. Be incredibly careful with this one, unless you know your players incredibly well.
- A hero's business or place of employment has been bought out in a hostile takeover... by a businessman that the hero knows is actually a supervillain.

Twists for twists sake aren't recommended. If you have a perfectly good plot and twist, and the players figure it out early on, it may be that you did a good job of setting clues, and they picked up on them. Kudos. Don't then throw in a nonsensical twist for the purpose of getting one up on them. There is nothing wrong



with giving the players what they expect, and giving them what they expect (and making it make sense) is always preferable to throwing them a curveball that is completely out of left field, all in the name of surprise.

## SET UP THE FIRST SCENE

Start things off by being as unsubtle as possible: take one of your story questions, come up with something that will bring the question into sharp relief, and hit your players over the head with it as hard as you can. You don't have to answer it right off the bat (though there's nothing wrong with that, either), but you should show the players that the question demands an answer.

That way, you're setting an example for the rest of the session and getting the momentum going, ensuring the players won't dither around. Remember, they're supposed to be super-heroes; give them something to be proactive about right from the get-go.

If you're in an ongoing series, you might need the first scenes of a session to resolve loose ends that were left hanging from a previous issue. It's okay to spend time on that, because it helps keep the sense of continuity going from issue to issue. As soon as there's a lull in momentum, though, hit them with your opening scene fast and hard.

### GM TRICK: POWERFUL FIRST SCENES

*Asking the players to contribute something to the beginning of your first scene is a great way to help get them invested in what's going on right off the bat. If there's anything that's flexible about your opening prompt, ask your players to fill in the blanks for you when you start the scene. Clever players may try to use it as an opportunity to push for a compel and get extra fate points right off the bat—we like to call this sort of play “awesome.”*

## DEFINING SCENES

A scene is a unit of game time lasting anywhere from a few minutes to a half hour or more, during which the players try to achieve a goal or otherwise accomplish something significant in a story arc. Taken together, the collection of scenes you play through make up a whole issue of play, and by extension, also make up your story arcs, arcs, and campaigns.

So you can look at it as the foundational unit of game time, and you probably already have a good idea of what one looks like. It's not all that different from a scene in a comic book—the main characters are doing stuff in continuous time, usually all in the same space. Once the action shifts to a new goal, moves to a new place related to that goal, or jumps in time, you're in the next scene.

As a GM, one of your most important jobs is to manage the starting and ending of scenes. The best way to control the pacing of what happens in your session is to keep a tight rein on when scenes start and end. Let things continue as long as the players are all invested and enjoying themselves, but as soon as the momentum starts to flag, move on to the next thing.

### STARTING SCENES

When you're starting a scene, establish the following two things as clearly as you can:

- What's the purpose of the scene?
- What interesting thing is just about to happen?

Answering the first question is super-important, because the more specific your scene's purpose, the easier it is to know when the scene's over. A good scene revolves around resolving a specific conflict or achieving a specific goal. Once the heroes have succeeded or failed at doing whatever they are trying to do, the scene's over. If your scene doesn't have a clear purpose, you run the risk of letting it drag on longer than you intended and slow the pace of your session down.

Most of the time, the players are going to tell you what the purpose of the scene is, because they're always going to be telling you what they want to do next as a matter of course. So if they say, “Well, we're going to the thugs apartment to see if we can get some dirt on him,” then you know the purpose of the scene, and it's over when the heroes either get the dirt, or get into a situation where it's impossible to get the dirt.

Sometimes, though, they're going to be pretty vague about it. If you don't have an intuitive understanding of their goals in context, ask questions until they state things directly. So if a player says, “Okay, I'm going to the nightclub to meet with my contact,” that might be a little vague—you know there's a meeting, but you don't know what it's for. You might ask, “What are you interested in finding out? Have you negotiated a price for the information yet?” or another question that'll help get the player to nail down what he's after.

Also, sometimes you'll have to come up with a scene's purpose all on your own, such as the beginning of a new story arc, or the next scene following a cliffhanger. Whenever you have to do that, try going back to the story questions you came up with earlier and introducing a situation that's going to directly contribute to answering them. That way, whenever it's your job to start a scene, you're always moving the story along.

The second question is just as important. You want to start a scene just before something interesting is going to take place. Comic books are especially good at this— usually, you're not reading for more than a couple of pages before something happens to change the situation or shake things up.

"Cutting in" just before some new action starts helps keep the pace of your session brisk and helps hold the players' attention. You don't want to chronicle every second of flying or running across town to get to the thug's apartment. You want to start as they have already arrived, and are now involved in the action of trying to get inside.

If you get stumped by this question, just think of something that might complicate whatever the purpose is or make it problematic. You can also use the GM trick mentioned earlier and ask the players leading questions to help you figure out the interesting thing that's about to happen.

If you have a clear purpose going into every scene and you start just before some significant piece of action, it's hard to go wrong.

## ***ENDING SCENES***

You can end scenes the way you start them, but in reverse: as soon as you've wrapped up whatever your scene's purpose was, move on, and shoot for ending the scene immediately after the interesting action concludes.

A lot of your scenes are going to end up the same way. The heroes might win a conflict or achieve a goal, but there's likely something else they're going to want to do afterward.

Instead of lingering at that scene, though, suggest that they move on to a new one, which helps answer one of the unresolved questions from the current scene. Try to get them to state what they want to do next, and then go back to the two questions for starting scenes above— what's the purpose of the next scene, and what's the next bit of interesting action to come? Then dive right into that.

The one time you should exhibit restraint is if it's clear that the players are really, really enjoying their interactions. Sometimes people just want to yammer and jaw in character, and that's okay as long as they're really into it. If you see interest starting to flag, though, take that opportunity to insert yourself and ask about the next scene.

## ***HIT THEIR ASPECTS***

Another good way to figure out the interesting action for a scene is to turn to the heroes' aspects, and create a complication or an event-based compel based on them. This is especially good to do for those heroes whose aspects did not come into play when you made up your story arc problem, because it allows them to have some of the spotlight despite the fact that the overall story does not focus on them as much.

## **THE STORY ARC IN PLAY**

So, now you should be ready to begin: you have a problem that can't be ignored, a variety of story questions that will lead to resolving that problem one way or another, a core group of NPCs and their motivations, and a really dynamic first scene that will get things cooking.

Everything should be smooth sailing from here, right? You present the questions, the players gradually answer them, and your story rolls into a nice, neat conclusion.

Yeah... trust us, it'll never happen that way.

The most important thing to remember when you actually get the story arc off the ground is this: whatever happens will always be different from what you expect. The heroes will hate an NPC you intended them to befriend, have wild successes that give away a bad guy's secrets very early, suffer unexpected setbacks that change the course of their actions, or any one of another hundred different things that just don't end up the way you think they should.

Notice that we don't recommend predetermining what scenes and locations are going to be involved in your story arc— that's because we find that most of the time, you're going to throw out most of that material anyway, in the face of a dynamic group of players and their choices.

Not all is lost, however. The stuff you have prepared should help you tremendously when players do something unexpected. Your story questions are

vague enough that there are going to be multiple ways to answer each one, and you can very quickly axe one that isn't going to be relevant and replace it with something else on the fly without having to toss the rest of your work.

Also, knowing your NPCs' motivations and goals allows you to adjust their behavior more easily than if you'd just placed them in a static scene waiting for the heroes to show up. When the players throw you a curveball, make the NPCs as dynamic and reactive as they are, by having them take sudden, surprising action in pursuit of their goals.

## RESOLVING THE STORY ARC

A story arc ends when you've run enough scenes to definitively answer most of the story questions you came up with when you were preparing your story arc. Sometimes you'll be able to do that in a single session if you have a lot of time or only a few questions. If you have a lot of questions, it'll probably take you two or three issues to get through them all.

Don't feel the need to answer every story question if you've brought things to a satisfying conclusion—you can either use unresolved story questions for future story arcs or let them lie if they didn't get a whole lot of traction with the players.

The end of a story arc usually triggers a significant milestone. When this happens, you should also see if the game world needs advancing too.

## USING THE ROGUES GALLERY AND SUPPORTING CAST

When creating an issue or story arc, never forget the Rogues Gallery and Supporting Cast members the players chose for their characters during the character creation process.

Although you need not always use them, the Rogues Gallery are villains specifically tailor-made to oppose their heroic counterpart (and as the GM, you should be completing the Rogue's character sheet as a Main NPC to reflect exactly that). Each rogue automatically knows one of the hero's character aspects, and once per Issue the rogue can invoke (for a +2 bonus) or compel that aspect against the hero at no fate point cost. Yes, the hero can resist the invocation or compel, but doing so costs a fate point from the player that goes into the GM fate pool at the end of the scene.

Supporting cast members are another way to make a storyline personal for one or more heroes. These were the NPCs the players created during character creation to become a part of their hero's personal world and story. It might have been a wife or husband, a teenaged son or daughter, an elderly aunt, an astute family butler, or any other type of character they could come up with. Use the Supporting Cast members the players created to not only ground them into the story world through interesting role-playing scenes, but to also provide all sorts of obstacles. Maybe the elderly aunt suffers a heart attack and is placed in the hospital, and their health and possible death weighs on the hero. If the hero doesn't have a character aspect representing the supporting cast member (and having one is not required), then make that a situation aspect at just the right moment. That way, either way it's handled, the hero will be able to use that aspect to drive himself harder, or compel it against him to have it cause a dramatic complication for him. Perhaps he suddenly gets a fear of his aunt's death, hesitates, and the villain manages to escape.

The point is, make sure to use the heroes' Rogues Gallery and Supporting Cast, if not as the inspiration for an Issue's storyline, then at least as a scene or two within an Issue. Doing so makes the story more personal for the player and character, and invokes that sense of taking part in an unfolding comic book series. Of course, not every Issue or storyline needs to focus on a Rogue or Supporting Cast member, and as a matter of fact, they shouldn't. But when used occasionally throughout a series, they're guaranteed to add a sense of personal investment and continuity into the series.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Having discussed some of the various elements that go into creating a super-hero adventure, we now have to put all of those elements together to make an adventure. The level of writing you do is going to be up to you, and some would argue that there is such a thing as too much preparation.

One of the simplest approaches to take with writing a super-hero adventure is to ignore the heroes. That may not make much sense at first, but villains tend to be the main drivers of conflict in super-hero adventures. Heroes are rarely for hire (though there are some notable exceptions), and are not visiting ancient temples and dungeons to take their treasures for their own. Start with your villain and detail their plans. Take the heroes into account only as far as

the villain is likely to. If the villain is the archenemy of the heroes, they practically expect the heroes to try to thwart them, so put some thought into any realistic countermeasures. If the villain has never crossed paths with the heroes before, then it may not make sense for them to have countermeasures in place. Once this is complete, identify the likely point in the plan in which the heroes will become aware of the villain's plot. If it makes sense, apply a strong, baited hook here (such as the villains attacking the office building of a hero's loved one). Otherwise, let the villain's plot run and allow the heroes to react when they become aware, while they are doing other things (out on patrol, stopping muggings, on dates, having a poker game with their super-hero buddies). This approach may provide a somewhat looser narrative, and will likely require decent improvisational skills from the GM.

You can tightly script a super-hero adventure, with scene by scene breakdowns that helpfully walk the characters through the plot. One advantage to this is that you can build in scenes and situations that specifically play to the heroes' strengths and test their weaknesses. Extra planning and forethought allow you to ensure that no one is left out and let you identify potential trouble areas that the heroes' powers and skills may exploit in the adventure. One downside to this is that folks who tightly script their adventures often feel bound to that script, which is a dicey proposition in any roleplaying game, but can be particularly constricting in the gonzo genre stew that is super-hero RPGs. Getting too hung up

on the "right" way to resolve a conflict can rob you and your players of some brilliant stories as super-hero characters often have the ability to not only think outside the box, but to teleport the box to another dimension and blow it up.

This kind of rigid thinking can also lead to "railroading", in which player choice is largely removed and they are directed from one scene to the next. Now, this is not an indictment of railroading. Again, this is a "know your players" thing. Some groups are happy to buckle up and take a ride, as long as the view is good. Others want to know that they are influencing the direction the story is going in. Tightly scripting while avoiding railroading can be done by scripting scene to scene and plotting multiple directions for an adventure to take. The downside to this is that you are likely to create material that will never actually be used in play, which can seem wasteful (though a really good idea left unused can always be dusted off, reworked and plugged into a later scenario).

A third method involves loose outlining. This is similar to the first method, but more emphasis is placed on the overall adventure and what the heroes are or are not doing, rather than just on the villain's plans and leaving it up to the heroes to disrupt. This method tends to allow for fewer surprises than the first, but leaves more spontaneity in play than the second does. This can be more easily done if you know your players and their playstyles well, by anticipating their likely reaction to situations to allow you to focus on adventure areas they are more likely to be drawn to.



When planning the adventure, think ahead: Are you intending to run more adventures, or is this a one shot? If it's a one shot, don't give the villain quite as many escape options, so the adventure has a better chance of having a more satisfying conclusion. If adventure is part of an ongoing campaign, you can keep your options open and give the villain more potential

“outs”, as the heroes are more likely to see them again in the future.

Don't be afraid to let your heroes be awesome. Super-heroes are cool and powerful and tough. Let them be cool and powerful and tough. Give them challenges that they excel in, and legions of mooks that can't withstand their might. Let them be the heroes of their own story, even if they are not necessarily the strongest or most powerful heroes in the game world.

This doesn't mean you can't challenge them, or that things should never go wrong. Quite the opposite. If the heroes have suffered a crushing setback, it is all the more important that they get the chance to show off and make an impact. If the last adventure ended in horrible tragedy and the villain beat them down and got away, then it might be a great time to work in a rescue scenario so people they are saving can remind them that they are larger than life beings to them. They don't have to win all the time, but if every adventure is a losing proposition, then the heroes aren't going to feel very heroic.

Be prepared, but be flexible. Super-hero adventures are notorious for being easy to shred due to unforeseen consequences of how certain powers interact with certain situations. When you are planning an adventure, you are trying to account for the capabilities of every hero in your game. The individual players are only looking at each situation as it applies to their hero, so they are generally way more focused on how their ability to control mammals can help them solve a situation than you are because their character is their sole interface with the situation you have crafted for a whole group. That's okay. Super-heroes break limits and bend the laws of reality all the time. Your players are almost certainly going to surprise you with what they do and how they do it. That's generally a good thing. Don't punish them for being creative, but let villains adapt to their tactics if they use the same ones over and over.

Remind the heroes they are part of a larger universe (unless, of course, they aren't), and let them see the impact of their actions. Having a “cold open” of an adventure involve the heroes and an NPC guest star teaming up to take down a fairly strong, but minor, villain can be a nice touch that keeps them invested in the game world, especially when that villain comes seeking revenge, or that hero becomes bait for one of your hooks in the future.

For all the advice about making sure heroes “make sense” for an adventure, don't be afraid to discard it all in the name of something fun and interesting. The *X-Men* were, and are, an allegory for civil rights, but they have had multiple iconic adventures in outer space. The Punisher recently took advantage of Earth's heavy hitters leaving planet Earth to stop an invading force by targeting the hidden leaders of New York's mob scene, knowing no one was going to be around to stop him from turning it into a massacre if he needed to. Most folks recall Hulk's various “Leave me alone!” battles with the military and other heroes, but did you know he was involved in Desert Storm-like conflict to overthrow a brutal Middle Eastern dictator?

Super-hero adventures are science fiction, fantasy, horror, crime drama, comedy, soap opera, wuxia and political thriller all in one. They are big, sweeping epics, but they work best when grounded in quiet character moments. It is not only possible to embrace the absurdity of telepathic gorillas trying to take over the world, possibly while aligned with mind controlling star fish, but to play that absurdity completely straight. Batman takes his maniacal, clown-faced archnemesis as seriously as he does the undead creature that haunts his city's swamps, and he treats them both with the same gravity that he does white-skinned Martian invaders. There is literally no limit to the elements that can be believably introduced into a “standard” super-hero adventure, as long as it is fun and interesting.

# CHAPTER 15: ADVANCING THE SERIES

## DEFINING VOLUMES

When you sit down to play Daring Comics, you might just play a single Issue. That's a viable way to play the game, but let's assume that you want it to go a bit longer. What you need, then, is a volume.

A volume is a complete storyline with its own themes, situations, antagonists, innocent bystanders, and endgame, told in the span of a few Issues (somewhere between three and six, usually). You don't need to have everything planned out (in fact, you probably shouldn't, given that no meticulously planned story ever survives contact with the players), but you need to have an idea of where things begin and end, and what might happen in the middle.

Think of a volume the same way you would when reading a comic book volume (also called graphic novels, nowadays). It tells its own story and ends when it's done; you provide some form of closure and move on. Sometimes you move on to another story, and sometimes your volume is just the first in a series of volumes. That's when you have a series.

## DEFINING SERIES

When you have multiple volumes that are connected and told in a sequence, and that have an overarching story or theme that runs through all of them, you have a series. series are long, taking months or even years to complete (if you ever do).

Of course, that doesn't need to be as scary as it might sound. Yes, a series is long and large and complex. You don't, however, need to come up with the whole thing at once. As with a volume, you may have an idea where it begins

and ends (and that can be helpful), but you really only need to plan a volume at a time.

See, the players are so prone to shaking things up and changing things on you that planning more than one volume at a time is often frustrating and futile. Planning the second volume of a series based on the events of the first volume, how it turned out, and what your players did, though— well, that can make for very satisfying play.



## BUILDING A VOLUME

The easiest way to build a volume is not to build one, we suggested that if you have a lot of story questions, you can reserve some of them for the next volume. Then, in your next volume, add some new questions to go with the unanswered ones. Keep going along that route, and you'll have material for three or four volumes without doing that much additional work. In addition, that lets you incorporate changes to the characters' aspects organically, rather than making a plan and having it disrupted.

That said, we know some GMs want to have a greater sense of structure for the long run. We recommend using the same method for building volumes in the previous chapter to build volumes, but changing the scope of the story questions you come up with. Instead of focusing on immediate problems for the PCs to solve, come up with a more general problem, where the PCs are going to have to solve smaller problems first in order to have a chance at resolving the larger one.

The best places to look for volume-sized problems are the current or impending problems of places or organizations that you came up with during series creation. If you haven't made any up yet for a particular place or group, now might be a good time to do that, so you have material for the volume.

Then go through the same process of picking opposing NPCs, keeping in mind that their influence is supposed to be more far-reaching in a volume than in a single volume.

## BUILDING A SERIES

Again, the easiest way to do this is not to bother — just let your ideas and story questions flow from one to the other and create the series story for you. Human beings are pattern-making machines, and it's very likely that you'll naturally pick up on what the long-term plot devices of your series need to be by keying into unanswered questions as the Issues progress.

However, if you want to do a little bit of focused planning, the advice is the same as for a story arc, except you're generalizing even more. Pick one story question to answer, which the PCs will spend their issues building to. Then, jot down some notes on what steps will lead to answering that question, so you have material for storylines to come.

The very best aspects to look at for a series-level problem are your setting's current or impending problems, because of their scope.

## ADVANCEMENT AND CHANGE

Your characters aren't going to remain static through the entire series. As their stories play out, they'll have the chance to grow and change in response to the events that happen in play. The conflicts they face and the complications they overcome will alter your sense of who they are and push them toward new challenges.

In addition to your characters, the game world will change also. You'll resolve threats as you play, or change the face of a location, or make such an impact on the world that one of the issues may need to change. We'll get more into world advancement later.

Character advancement in Daring Comics comes in one of two flavors: either you can change something on your sheet to something else that's equivalent, or you can add new things to your sheet. The opportunities you get to do this are collectively called milestones.

## DEFINING MILESTONES

A milestone is a moment during the series where you have the chance to change or advance your character. We call them milestones because they usually happen at significant "break points" in the action of a game — the end of an Issue, the end of a story arc, and the end of a volume, respectively.

Usually, those break points immediately follow some significant event in the story that justifies your character changing in response to events. You might reveal a significant plot detail or have a cliffhanger at the end of an issue. You might defeat a major villain or resolve a plotline at the end of a story arc. You might resolve a major storyline that shakes up the series world at the end of a volume.

Obviously, things won't always line up that nicely, so GMs, you have some discretion in deciding when a certain level of milestone occurs. If it seems satisfying to give out a milestone in the middle of an Issue, go ahead, but stick to the guidelines here to keep from handing out too many advancement opportunities too often.

Milestones come in three levels of importance: minor, significant, and major.

## MINOR MILESTONES

Minor milestones usually occur at the end of an Issue of play, or when one piece of a story has been resolved. These kinds of milestones are more about changing your character rather than making him or her more powerful, about adjusting in response to whatever's going on in the story if you need to. Sometimes it won't really make sense to take advantage of a minor milestone, but you always have the opportunity if you should need to.

During a minor milestone, you can choose to do one (and only one) of the following:

- Switch the rank values of any two skills, or replace one Average (+1) skill with one that isn't on your sheet.
- Change any single stunt for another stunt, or a single power or special effect for another of equal or lesser cost (and yes, you get back any unused Hero Points, which you can immediately spend).
- Purchase a new stunt, power, or special effect, provided you have the refresh to do so. (Remember, you can't go below 1 refresh.)
- Rename one character aspect that isn't your Concept.

This is a good way to make slight character adjustments, if it seems like something on your character isn't quite right— you don't end up using that stunt as often as you thought, or you resolved the **Revenge Against the Terenza Family** that you had and thus it's no longer appropriate, or any of those changes that keep your character consistent with the events of play.

In fact, you should almost always be able to justify the change you're making in terms of the game's story. You shouldn't be able to change **Hot Tempered** to **Staunch Pacifist**, for example, unless something happened in the story to inspire a serious change of heart. GMs, you're the final arbiter on this, but don't be so much of a stickler that you sacrifice a player's fun for consistency.

## SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES

Significant milestones usually occur at the end of a story arc or the conclusion of a big plot event (or,

when in doubt, at the end of every two or three Issues). Unlike minor milestones, which are primarily about change, significant milestones are about learning new things— dealing with problems and challenges has made your character generally more capable at what they do.

In addition to the benefit of a minor milestone, you also gain both of the following:

- One additional skill point, which you can spend to buy a new skill at Average (+1) or increase an existing skill by one rank.

When you spend your skill point, it's worth one step on the ladder. You can use it to buy a new skill at Average (+1), or you can use it to increase an existing skill by one step on the ladder—say, from Good (+3) to Great (+4).

You might notice that this means that the further you get up the ladder, the harder it is to quickly advance your skills. This is intentional, no one is going to be able to get to the point where they're awesome at everything, all the time.

When increasing skills, though, make sure you abide by the skill column.

## MAJOR MILESTONES

A major milestone should only occur when something happens in the series that shakes it up a lot— the end of a volume, the death of a main NPC villain, or any other large-scale change that reverberates around your game world.

These milestones are about gaining more power. The challenges of yesterday simply aren't sufficient to threaten these characters anymore, and the threats of tomorrow will need to be more adept, organized, and determined to stand against them in the future.

Achieving a major milestone confers the benefits of a significant milestone and a minor milestone, and all of the following additional options:

- If you have an extreme consequence, rename it to reflect that you've moved past its most debilitating effects. This allows you to take another extreme consequence in the future, if you desire.
- Take an additional Hero Point, which allows you to purchase a new Stunt, a new Power, a special effect for a power, or even increase your Refresh by one. You can also bank the Hero Point until you reach future Major Milestones, if a stunt,



power, or special effect costs more than one point (though it's probably better to just drop it into your Refresh until that time).

- Advance a skill beyond the series' current skill cap, if you're able to, thus increasing the skill cap.
- Rename your character's Concept if you desire.

Reaching a major milestone is a pretty big deal. Characters with more stunts are going to have a diverse range of bonuses, making their skills much more effective by default. Characters with higher refresh will have a much larger fountain of fate points to work with when issues begin, which means they'll be less reliant on compels for a while.

GMs, when the player characters go past the skill cap, it will necessarily change the way you make opposition NPCs, because you're going to need foes who can match the PCs in terms of base competence so as to provide a worthy challenge. It won't happen all at once, which will give you the chance to introduce more powerful enemies gradually, but if you play long enough, eventually you're going to have PCs who have Epic and Legendary skill ratings— that alone should give you a sense of what kind of villains you'll

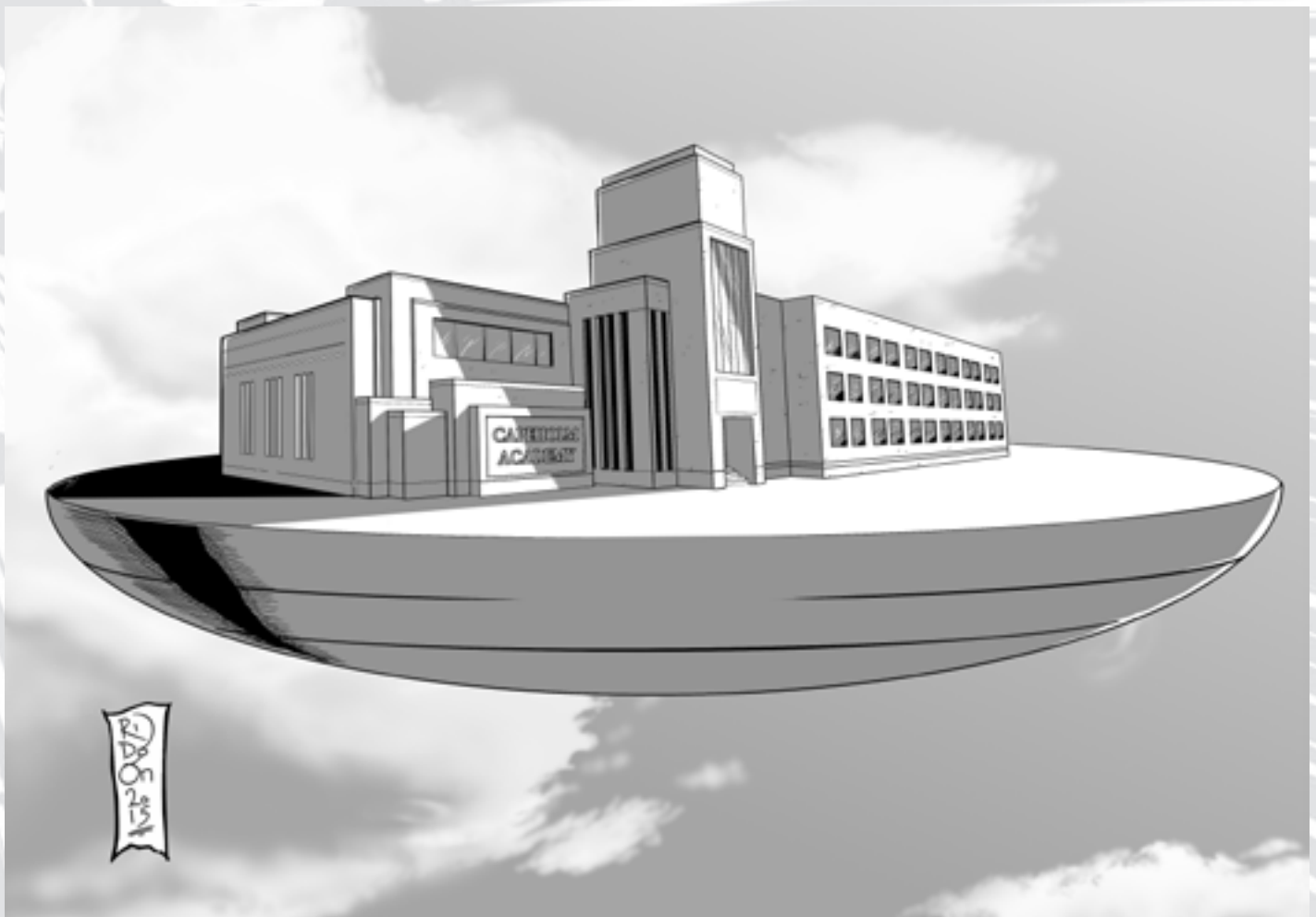
need to bring to get in their way.

Most of all, a major milestone should signal that lots of things in the world of your game have changed. Some of that will probably be reflected in world advancement, but given the number of chances the PCs have had to revise their aspects in response to the story, you could be looking at a group with a much different set of priorities and concerns than they had when they started.

## WORLD ADVANCEMENT

The characters are not the only ones who change in response to events in the game. Player characters leave their mark on locations (and their faces) with their passing. Things that were crises and major issues at the start of a game get addressed, resolved, or changed. Things that weren't major problems before suddenly blossom with new severity and life. Old adversaries fall to the wayside and new ones rise.

GMs, when the players are changing their characters through milestones, you should also be looking at whether or not the aspects you originally placed on



the game during game creation need to change in response to what they've done, or simply because of lack of use.

Here are some guidelines regarding each milestone.

### **FOR MINOR MILESTONES**

- Do you need to add a new location to the game, based on what the PCs have done? If so, come up with some NPCs to help give more personality to the location and add an issue to the place.
- Have the PCs resolved a problem in a location? Get rid of the aspect, or maybe change it to represent how the problem was resolved.

### **FOR SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES**

- Did the PCs resolve a problem that was on the whole game world? If so, remove (or alter) the aspect.
- Did the PCs create permanent change in a location? If so, create a new problem to reflect this, for better or for worse.

### **FOR MAJOR MILESTONES**

- Did the PCs create permanent change in the game world? If so, give it a new problem to reflect this, for better or for worse.

You don't need to make these changes as precisely or as regularly as the players do. If anything, you should be as reactive as you can. In other words, focus on changing those aspects that the player characters have directly interacted with and caused the most change to.

If you have aspects you haven't really explored yet, keep them around if you think they're just waiting their turn. However, you can also change them in order to make them more relevant to what's going on in the moment, or simply to give the PCs more of a sense of being in an evolving world.

Also, keep in mind that if the PCs remove an impending problem, another one must arise to take its place. Don't worry about this immediately— you need to give your players a sense of enacting permanent change in the game world. But after a while, if you notice that you're low on impending problems, it's probably a good time to introduce a new one, whether on the setting as a whole or on a specific location.

## **ADVANCING COLLATERAL DAMAGE CONSEQUENCES**

Whenever there are Collateral Damage Consequences left at the end of a story arc, as GM you have a little creative work to do. Mechanically speaking, collateral damage consequences should clear at the end of a story arc, but naturally they just don't simply go away. Instead, they are combined (if there are more than one) and moved into new series aspects. You can either make them a new series aspect that the heroes must somehow overcome, or combine them with an already existing series aspect to show an overall increase to an already existing problem.

*In the current series, which originally started as an underworld street level tale and over time has evolved into something larger, the two series aspects are: Alien Shape-Shifting Agents Amongst Us as the broad problem, and Alien Infiltration of Law Enforcement as the immediate problem.*

*At the end of the current story arc, the Collateral Damage Consequence of Heavily Damaged Skyscrapers was left unresolved.*

*Mike looks at the consequence, and has a choice to make. He could use it to make a new location aspect for downtown representing the massive damage and loss of business operations (and potential jobs to the citizens). He could also simply take such an aspect and make it third new series aspect, something like: Weakened City Economy or Citizens Angry at the Super-Powered Population.*

*His third option is to somehow take that aspect, and weave it into one of the already existing series aspects, thereby broadening the problem.*

*Mike decides to do just that, and takes the Heavily Damaged Skyscrapers consequence the Alien Infiltration of Law Enforcement series aspect, and combine them into a slightly larger problem. He calls the reworked series aspect Law Enforcement Crackdown on Super-Hero Activity, which represents both the original series aspect as well as fallout for the collateral damage the heroes caused.*

## **DEALING WITH NPCs**

Remember, GMs, when you add a new location to the

setting, you want to add at least one new NPC to go with it. Sometimes, that might mean moving a person from a location you're not going to use anymore. powerful and influential.

Likewise, when there's a significant change in an issue for a location or the setting, you need to evaluate if the current NPCs are sufficient to express that change. If not, you might need to add one, or alter an NPC you have in a significant way— such as add more aspects or revise existing aspects to keep that character relevant to the problem at hand.

Most of the time, it should be pretty obvious when you need a new face for a location— when the old one dies or is somehow permanently removed from the series, or is boring now, it's probably time to change things up.

## ***RECURRING NPCs***

There are essentially two ways to reuse NPCs. You can either use them to show how the PCs have grown since they started, or use them to show how the world is responding to their growth.

With the former, you don't change the NPC, because that's the point— the next time the PCs meet them, they've outclassed them, or they have new worries, or they've somehow grown past that NPC, who remains static. Maybe you even change the category they're in— where they were once a main NPC, now they're a supporting NPC because of how the PCs have grown.

With the latter, you allow the NPC to advance like the PCs have— you add new skills, change their aspects around, give them a stunt or two, and otherwise do whatever is necessary to keep them relevant to the PCs' endeavors. This kind of NPC might be able to hang around as a nemesis for several volumes, or at least provide some sense of continuity as the PCs become more



# APPENDIX: TURNING THE DIALS

The Daring Comics Role-Playing Game is designed around the Fate system from Evil Hat Productions. Being a Fate game, that means the system is easily hackable to make new rules, create rules variations, and pretty much make it do whatever you want at the gaming table. Evil Hat Productions already provided a lot of good, variant rules concepts in their Fate Toolkit book, and there's also a treasure trove of variants posted across the internet by the Fate Community.

Since Daring Comics is a toolkit system where we expect you to hack the heck out of it to get the right feel for your comic book series, we're also going to help out along those lines in this final chapter. Throughout the next several pages, we're going to provide you with some of our hacks for the game, and hopefully inspire you to create some of your own and share them with the larger Fate Community.

Fate Veterans will recognize some of these variants from other Fate games. That's unavoidable, though. While we expect the veterans out there to already

know this stuff, we also have to keep in mind that some folks might be trying out the Fate system for the first time through Daring Comics. If the variant from another Fate game worked, we didn't feel it was a good idea to reinvent the proverbial wheel just for the sake of doing so. The rules already worked, and plugged right in to represent other facets of superhero comic book concepts. Altering them just for the sake of doing so, in our opinion, would have ignored one of the core strengths of an OGL system.

What this Appendix does is goes through the Daring Comics rulebook chapter by chapter, and provides some variations to the already established rules. Not all chapters will see hacks in this Appendix, and it would be impossible to cover every possible variant that could be conceived. All we're doing is laying some groundwork to hopefully get your own brainstorms brewing.

As with any Fate game, when you start turning the dials, especially if you turn too many at once, you will



probably find some balance issues during play as you start mixing and matching more and more ideas. Don't worry too much about that. Simply find the right combination that works best for your group, that you consider fun, and get out there fighting for justice.

## CHAPTER 3: SERIES CREATION

By default, Daring Comics assumes that every hero on the team (i.e. the player-characters) will be of the same Series Level and Experience Level. But that doesn't necessarily be the case, especially since it is rarely the axiom in comic books.

The following variant allows for creating a super team with player-character heroes of different Series and/or Experience levels.

### ***DIFFERENT SERIES LEVELS***

Teams in comic books very often run with characters that would fit into very different Series Levels. The Off the Charts alien who can move mountains, the Urban Protector with an armory of devices and highly trained skills, the man in power-armor, and even a guy with just extensive training and a quiver of trick arrows.

In Daring Comics, you are not required to run a game with each member of your team having the same number of Hero Points. Mix it up. The Series Level is there to provide a benchmark, to show you in the numbers how powerful one member is in relation to the others.

But when running a team of different Series Level characters, consider the following option to give a little extra push to those of lesser Hero Points. Keep in mind that this is an option, and the GM is not required to employ it.

When running a series (or even a single Issue) with different Series Levels of player-characters, take the highest Series Level and compare it to the rest of the characters. For each step another player-character is below that Series Level, they start the Issue with an extra fate point. This does not affect their Refresh, it's just a free fate point or two to make sure they get their share of the *Oooomph!* that everyone gets in a comic book.

*Phalanx is a character that falls into the Off the Chart category. He's a major heavy-hitter*

*capable of taking on galactic level threats.*

*All the other members except one other, fall under the Earth's Mightiest level.*

*Meanwhile, Sure-Shot is an Urban Protector kind of guy. Sure, anything is a bullet in his hands, but outside of that and some training, he really isn't super-powered.*

*Whenever Sure-Shot is on a team with Phalanx, he gets three extra fate points at the start of the Issue. All the other members get one extra fate point when working with Phalanx.*

### ***DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE LEVELS***

You could also do the same for members of different Experience Levels— granting an extra fate point for each step lower in Experience Level the hero is to the most experienced hero on the team.

Using the Series Level example, if Sure-Shot's experience level was Know the Ropes and Phalanx was Highly Experienced, Sure-Shot would gain an additional two free fate point under this option, granting him a total of five extra fate points at the beginning of an Issue where he was working directly with Phalanx.

Or perhaps you'd prefer to do it for variant Experience Levels, but not Series Levels. The choice of whether or not to use the extra fate point options, and how to use them, is completely up to you. Figure out what's the most fun for you, and have at it.

## DIFFERENT TEAM EXPERIENCE

*If you want to represent a super team with a lot of experience, or very little experience, the guideline below gives a suggested modifier to the number of Team Points. The modifier is not per player, it is a flat modifier to the Team Points they already receive.*

*For teams with members of different experience levels, use the highest experience level. Although it's usually argued that a team is only as strong as its weakest member, we're talking super-heroes— where the experienced mentor or member usually has the biggest impact on what a team can do.*

**New/Young Heroes:** +0

**Know the Ropes:** +1

**Been Around the Block:** +2

**Highly Experienced:** +3

## CHAPTER 4: CHARACTER CREATION

Want to change character creation around a bit? Try these hacks to get you started. The first covers running a short origin story for each player-character, while the second option shows a quick-and-dirty method of making characters quickly for a one night pick-up game.

### ORIGIN STORY

Origin stories are a staple of super-hero comic books, but don't always translate as well at a gaming table. Naturally, that's all dependent on the dynamics and playstyle of the group, but we thought we'd offer it as an option.

#### STARTING THE ORIGIN STORY

An origin story is a great way to start character creation with a bang by using vignettes that target each player. It's just like playing a normal game of Daring Comics, but focuses on helping each player define their character. Most players will have at least a general idea of who they want to be, but they may be fuzzy on the details.

Start in medias res— when you start with action, you give the player opportunities to make choices about their character.

A character starts her origin story with one fate point and their Concept aspect already chosen.

#### CHOOSING NEW SKILLS

During the origin story, call for a lot of skill rolls. Whenever the player must make a skill roll and doesn't want to roll at Mediocre (+0), he can assign that skill to one of his empty slots. Once assigned, it's part of the character.

#### CHOOSING NEW ASPECTS

Throw the player into a variety of different situations, pit him against a variety of different difficulties. When the player runs into trouble, when he needs a +2 or a reroll for example, suggest an aspect to him. If he takes you up on your suggestion or comes up with his own aspect, let him invoke it once for free and give him a fate point!

#### CHOOSING NEW STUNTS

You can offer the player new stunts the same way you offer him new aspects— offer him something that might get him out of a tight spot, or allow him to do something he needs to do. Once the player uses a stunt, it becomes part of his character and costs the required Hero Points.

#### CHOOSING POWERS

This is also a good time for the player to have his character thrust into situations that will start to define his power sets, or run a scene for the character showing his true origin and source of gaining his powers. As with stunts, place the character into situations where the player can start deciding on some base powers to add to the character. Once the player uses a power, it becomes part of one of the character's power sets and costs the required Hero Points.

#### INVOLVING THE OTHER PLAYERS

Playing a character's origin story is a communal activity! Other players can jump in to play NPCs— you can suggest they do this, too, if you need someone to play a particular character. They can even jump in with their own characters, whether or not they've gone through their own origin story yet.

Other players can also suggest aspects, but only if those aspects define a relationship with their own characters. If the two players define a relationship

during an origin story, they both get an aspect and a fate point— which the other player can use in his own origin story!

## ENDING AN ORIGIN STORY

Follow an origin story to an appropriate conclusion, but try not to let it last longer than fifteen or twenty minutes before you move on to the next origin story. The idea is to play through an origin story for each player at the table during a single session. Once the origin stories are completed, the players can spend any remaining Hero Points, skill slots, and aspect slots, to finish up character creation.

### PICK-UP STYLE FOR BEGINNING A SERIES

*The pick-up style of starting a game can also be used when creating a Series, which offers a less math option for getting started, since slots and points can be spent during play. The only difference is that if using this style to create a Series, make sure to go through the Series Framework steps.*

*Players still do not need to create their Rogues Gallery and Supporting Cast before the first Issue, and may indeed encounter such creative choices during play and flesh them out between gaming nights. If that option is used, the player simply marks the awarded skill point or Hero Point with the rest he has in the bank.*

## THE PICK-UP GAME

The pick-up game is simply a one-shot gaming session where you and your friends decide to play a game of Daring Comics with pretty much zero prep time. It's for those nights where you're all wondering what to do, and decide to do a little role-playing at the last minute.

Typically, Daring Comics requires a lot of creative thought to get started. The entire group sits down at the table, determines all the different tones and levels of the Series they want to play, determines their aspects, skills, stunts, and powers, and can take an entire game night— or maybe two nights, depending on the size of the group.

At the same time, nothing in Daring Comics says that every part of character creation much be done before

the first Issue. There is absolutely nothing wrong with a player banking an Aspect slot or two, some skill slots, and some Hero Points and filling in those blanks during actual play.

The principle is the complete basis of a pick-up game as well.

## PICK A SERIES TYPE

First, pick the Series Level, Series, Tone, and Experience Level. This should go quick— what type of story do you want to tell? It also governs a couple points of consequence recovery, beginning Refresh, and allots the skill points and Hero Points.

Since this is a one-shot game, don't worry about going through the steps for designing the Setting. The GM will use only what comes to mind and what he needs for the one-night story, plus the players using the Create an Advantage action in play will help define individual scenes and encounters as needed.

## THE FIVE ASPECTS

At this stage, you only need your Concept aspect. If you can think of a Motivation aspect as well, that's even better, but don't sweat it right now. You can figure that out in play.

For the remaining three aspects, if you have them in your head, don't hesitate to put them on the character sheet. If not, some or all of them will come to you during play.

## SKILLS, POWERS + STUNTS

At this stage you'll have your starting skill points and Hero Points. Skills still use the column method, and the skill chapter gives some column breakdowns based on skill points and what you want your apex skill to be ranked.

Jot down a couple of skills you feel the character would definitely have in the column. Once again, you don't have to spend every point or fill every slot at this point, just make sure you follow one of the example columns in the skills chapter.

Do the same for your Hero Points. If you know a couple of powers or stunts your character would have, make the purchases.

Make sure you make note of your remaining skill points and Hero Points so you can spend them as needed during play.

## ROGUES GALLERY AND SUPPORTING CAST

Since this is a quick-and-dirty, one-shot gaming session, a pick-up game doesn't use a Rogues Gallery and Supporting Cast. That's not to say you can't create them if you can do it quickly, but they're far from necessary.

## PLAY THE SESSION

The GM has a story notion, the players have at least beginning details of their characters, and now it's time to start the Issue. During the session, the players will fill in any remaining aspect slots, skill slots, and spend Hero Points. It'll mostly be composed of the character facing a certain obstacle in the story, and the player determining at that moment whether or not the character would have an aspect, skill, stunt, or power, that would assist. If so, the slot is filled in or the points spent, and it becomes part of the character.

### PICK UP GAME VS CONVENTION OR DEMO GAME

*The difference between a pick-up game and a convention or demo game is in the prep time. A pick-up game has pretty much zero prep time— it's a spur of the moment decision to play a session of Daring Comics, and it meant to last just one-night. That means that it's idea to start the story with a few parts of the character, and fully expected to discover the rest as needed during the session.*

*For a convention or demo game, the person running the game should have the player-characters already pre-made to hand out to players, and already have something of a setting in mind for the story, including at least one Series Aspect to tell the players what the theme of the story is intended to be. Like with a pick-up game, the players won't be worrying about creating parts of the setting— it's still a one-shot story. But they should have fully created characters given to them so that they can see how Daring Comics plays.*

## STEP THREE: SUPPORTING CAST AND ROGUES GALLERY

Originally, each supporting cast member a player creates grants them an additional skill point, while each Rogue grants them an additional Hero Point. But what about those series where the heroes are more skill or power based? If it works better at your table, use the following variant.

For those power-heavy games, instead of a supporting cast member granting an additional skill point, both supporting cast members and Rogues grant the player an additional Hero Point. Likewise, for a skill-heavy series, the inverse is also true: both supporting cast members and Rogues grant an additional skill point.

The GM can either set either variant as a series whole, meaning it applies to every player uniformly, or can assign a variant as needed on a player-by-player basis, as long as the entire group agrees. What that means is that one player might use the core rules version, while another might have both types of NPCs grant them a Hero Point, while a skill-heavy street vigilante or scientist type might have both types of NPCs grant additional skill points.

## CHAPTER 6: SUPER-TEAMS

The Super-Team chapter explained how to create a super-team that focuses on the player-characters, their adventures, and how having a super-team can benefit them during play.

But what about the robust and large super-teams we see in comic books? The ones with a dozen, or even dozens, of heroes on the roster?

Daring Comics handles them as a separate character, but also something of a minor character. For those familiar with the Fate system, you'll recognize this method as the Fate Fractal.

### THE EXPANDED SUPER TEAM

The expanded super-team represents the heroes outside of the main characters (i.e. the player-characters). Except for when the players had taken a Super-Team stunt such as Reverse Member, the team is considered an abstraction when it comes to the narrative. That means that the specific members need not be determined and created; the team works as a single unit and the details are created on a narrative basis as needed.



This expanded super-team, though likely comprised of many heroes, is considered a single character.

## ***REQUIRED STUNT***

Using an expanded super-team in your Daring Comics series requires the players to take the following super-team stunt when building the core team.

### **ROBUST TEAM**

The super-team is more than just a small handful of heroes— it's an expansive and diverse roster that can both assist and hinder the core team throughout the series.

## ***STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES***

The expanded super-team begins with a number of stress boxes equal to the Series Tone. It begins with one of each type of consequence slots, except that it cannot take an extreme consequence.

## ***EXPANDED TEAM ASPECTS***

The core super-team aspects created by the players represent how the concept of the team functions for them as the story's main characters. For the expanded super-team, the players should create two entirely new super team aspects, which can represent absolutely anything about the team. These two aspects are used only during the Expanded Team Adventures detailed later, and are not used by the player-characters in their stories. Likewise, the expanded super team can only use these two team aspects and cannot use the two that are part of the player-characters' core super-team.

## ***THE SKILLS***

Unlike full characters, super-teams only possess four skills to use in their peripheral scenes. All of the skills can use any of the Four Action types, however is needed for the scene, though the GM has the right to call for only a specific skill to be rolled.

The four skills are:

**Combat:** This skill covers the full range of normal combat, from fist fights, gun play, to using weapons. It handles both the offensive and defensive portions of conflicts, and includes super-powers.

**Expertise:** How much knowledge can the expanded team bring to bear, whether through investigation and clue analysis, science or sorcery, or even general academic subjects? This skill represents such things.

**Social:** The Social skill covers interacting and dealing with others, whether through getting them on your side and willing to assist the team, intimidating them into submission, or even calling upon allies and contacts the team might possess.

**Undercover:** This skill deals with being stealthy, breaking into places, using disguises, and all the other actions in the scene that mean the team doesn't want to be discovered.

The expanded super-team rates each skill from Mediocre (+0) to Good (+3), and each step on the ladder can only be used once.

## ***SKILL POINTS AND HERO POINTS***

After the two aspects are decided and the four skills have been assigned a place on the ladder, the players can now do a little team advancement.

The team has 3 skill points with which to increase skills. Each additional step on the ladder costs one of the three points.

The players also has 10 Hero Points with which to create stunts for the team, or purchase a specific super-power or two. By purchasing a super-power, the players are saying that these specific powers provide a true benefit when the team is on an adventure. Obvious choices would be powers like Blast, Hardiness, Invulnerability, and Melee Attack, but truly creative players will discover a lot of options.

## ***REFRESH***

The team begins with a refresh based on the Series Tone. Like with a normal character creation, beginning Refresh can be spent to gain additional Hero Points.

## ***ADVANCING THE EXPANDED TEAM***

The expanded super-team advances under the same rules as the core super-team. When the players reach a milestone and are awarded a skill point and/or hero point, each player must decide whether to apply the reward to their own character, to the core team (in the case of the Hero Point), or to the expanded team (in the case of the skill point or Hero Point). The same principle applies as already mentioned in the Super-Team chapter: you are putting aside your individual needs in exchange for focusing on making the entire team better.

## ***SUPER TEAM ADVENTURES***

An adventure for the expanded super-team is a periphery scene that should take no more than 15 to 20 minutes to play. These adventures can only happen once per Issue, and can be called for by the players or the GM.

### ***DEFINING THE ADVENTURE***

An expanded super-team adventure must somehow link to the main storyline of what the player-characters are going through. It could be secondary raids on villain safe houses that were discovered, the tracking down and questioning of a particular suspect, or even the analysis of strange technology that was discovered and taken back to the base.

While it might be attractive for players to focus on the Combat skill as the Apex skill for the expanded team, the GM should be sure to run these little side adventures in such a way that the same skill isn't always used from one to the next.

### ***BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE***

During an Issue, the players or GM can call for an expanded super-team adventure simply by stating that they want one, and then defining the purpose of the adventure. The GM has final authority on whether or not the adventure will take place for the proposed reason. For example, the players might propose one for hunting down and questioning a suspect in an ongoing investigation into new, alien-tech weapons coming into the city. The GM, however, might veto the proposal because he already has a dramatic scene planned for that part of the story, and he specifically wants the player-characters involved.

### ***THE ADVENTURE: AN IMPORTANT POINT***

The important thing to remember is that the adventure is meant to be an abstract representation of the background members of the super-team. That means that the exact who and what of the membership is not vital. Cover the member descriptions, the types of powers going off under the Combat skill, and the details from a narrative perspective.

### ***RUNNING THE ADVENTURE***

Running an expanded team adventure comes into two types: the Conflict and the Contest.

## ***THE CONFLICT ADVENTURE***

The conflict adventure is exacting what it sounds like: the team's heroes are taking on villains in a flashy, and often environmentally lethal, brawl-for-all.

### ***CREATING THE OPPOSITION***

The GM creates the opposition the same as the players created their expanded team. He chooses two aspects, assigns the four skills, and takes some stunts and powers. Unlike the players, however, the GM doesn't have to worry about specific skill points or Hero Points— he creates a representation of the opposition that is enough to provide a suitable challenge.

### ***RESOLVING THE CONFLICT***

Conflict is resolved the same as any other conflict scene in Daring Comics. It's broken down into exchanges, with the change that initiative is determined solely by the Combat skill. Collateral Damage Consequence slots are not available to the expanded super-team.

Once the conflict is over, the player-characters or GM get a reward. These reward is to be used in the main brunt of the story— in other words by or against the main player-characters at some point in the Issue.

**Villains Concede:** The GM gets a Fate Point, but players get a situation aspect representing what the expanded team achieved that can be used at any point during the Issue, and can only be invoked or compelled by the player-characters. There is no roll needed to place the aspect when the players decided to finally bring it into play.

**Villain gets Taken out:** The players get a situation aspect the same as above, plus each player-character receives a fate point.

**Heroes Concede:** Each player gets a fate point for their main-character, but the GM gets to place a Boost on one of the characters, with no roll necessary, at some point during the Issue.

**Heroes get Taken Out:** The players don't get any additional fate points, and the GM gets a situation aspect at some later point in the Issue, with one free invocation, that only his NPCs can invoke or compel.

### ***THE CONTEST ADVENTURE***

The contest adventure is great for what the expanded super-team has to achieve an objective, but direct conflict is not involved. Examples might include tracking down a suspect or interrogating someone,

trying to uncover the secrets of a piece of alien tech before something happens, and so forth.

These adventures are run exactly as a normal Contest.

## THE OPPOSITION

The GM decides what skill is to be used by the team, and chooses a skill and rank for the opposition. In this instance, the GM does not need to create the opposition as per a Conflict Adventure (though he can if he wants to), but only needs to pick a skill and assign it a rating.

## RESOLVING THE CONTEST

Resolve the contest as normal, with the first side to get three or more victories declared the winner.

Based on the results of the contest, the player-characters or GM receive the following rewards.

**Team Failure:** If the players fail the contest, regardless of whether it allowed the opposition a success or success with style, the GM gets a relevant situation aspect to bring into play later that only his NPCs can invoke or compel.

**Team Success:** If the team succeeds, the player-characters get a single situation aspect that only they can invoke or compel placed on a scene at some later point in the issue.

**Player Success with Style:** For a success with style, the players get the situation aspect as above, and each player-character also receives a free invocation.

## CHAPTER 7: SKILLS

For those series where the heroes can't take as much damage as their traditional four-color counterparts, Physique and Will do not add extra stress boxes or consequence slots to the character. In order to get the extra stress boxes and consequence slots, the character must possess levels in the Hardiness power.

## CHAPTER 9: POWERS

This section provides a few examples of how to hack the pre-built powers to change how they function in the game at their base level. Whether or not your Series will use these examples of the powers or the versions contained in the Powers chapter should be discussed as a group. These example are not meant to be exhaustive, as trying to accomplish that could entail reprinting the entire Powers chapter with new

designs and ideas. This is just meant to give you a starting point for your own variants.

When looking at Blast, Invulnerability, and Melee Attack, both of which have a Variant #1 and Variant #2, it's ideal to have the variant types play together. In other words, those powers should use either the core version, Variant #1, or Variant #2, together.

## ADOPTIVE MUSCLE MEMORY (4)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You're able to mimic the movement, such as fighting ability, acrobatics, and so forth, of people you've observed.

To use the power, you must first observe the target in action (such as in combat) for at least a full minute. At the end of that minute, make a an Overcome action. You gain the target's rating in Accuracy, Athletics, Fight, or Weapons, as well as associated Stunts (whichever skills and Stunts you observed them using), until the end of the scene.

If you are watching a group of people, you can mimic the skills (highest rating) and Stunts of everyone you are watching, but your attention is not as focused and your opposition to do so increases by +1 per each additional person.

Although you do not maintain the skills for good, you do continue to receive a long lasting bonus. Whenever you face an opponent whose movements you've duplicated in the past and you use the Create an Advantage action representing that fact, you gain a +2 bonus to the roll.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Advanced Muscle Memory (1):** You can view and mimic your target faster. Each time this applied to the power, your required time to view the target is reduced -1 step on the Time Increment table.

## HEY! I KNOW YOU!

For *Adoptive Muscle Memory*, when you meet an opponent for the first time in play, you may spend a fate point to add a story detail that you've observed him in the past, and therefore take the *Create an Advantage* action as mentioned in the power description.

This isn't a simple matter of spending the point and jumping forward, but you must actually narrate something of how you last met, or what you did to observe the character. The GM has veto power if the previous encounter doesn't make sense in the context of the story.

## ANIMAL MIMICRY (3)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

The character can mimic the powers of animals up to one zone away by making an *Overcome* action. Add +1 to the opposition for each additional zone between the animal and the character.

There are no hard and fast rules on what powers a particular animal possesses, and the GM and player should assign them as makes sense. For each Shift generated on the roll, the hero may add one Power Level of ability from that animal.

For example, a hero who gains three Shifts on a roll to mimic the traits of an elephant might spend those Shifts on *Super-Strength 1*, *Unstoppable 1*, and *Density 1*.

The character can cancel mimicked traits at any time, but the traits last no longer than the end of the current scene.

### SPECIAL EFFECT

**Menagerie (1):** The character can mimic the traits of more than one animal at a time, but each additional animal imposes a cumulative +1 to the opposition.

## BLAST (1-6), VARIANT #1

**Design Notes:** This power works almost the same as the core version. The primary difference is that a Blast can do zero damage on a tie. The effects of the various blast types listed in the core rules remain the same, except where noted below.

**Skills:** Accuracy

You can fire some sort of distance attack, whether a plasma beam, concussive force, ice shards, fireballs, or even spikes. Each power level grants you +1 to your Accuracy rolls when using the power, up to a maximum of +6, and has a range of: power level +1 zones away from the character.

Applying special effects to the power customizes it to fit the type of blast your character can fire. Below are examples of how to create various types of Blast with one or two special effects. Use them as examples for building your own, or apply them to your character for a ready-to-play power. Simply purchase your levels of Blast, and then add the cost below to the final total.

**Concussive (2):** One a successful hit, for each Shift you reduce your damage, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one. You also gain a +2 bonus when using your blast to *Create an Advantage*, such as **Stunned**, or **Weakened Structure**.

**Energy (1):** One a successful attack, for each Shift you reduce your damage, you extend the range of your blast by an additional zone.

## BLAST (2), VARIANT #2

**Design Notes:** This version is a lot more muted as far as overall combat effect goes, and is really idea for combining with the *No Crunch Gear* method mentioned later in the Appendix. The effects of the various blast types listed in the core rules remain the same, except where noted below.

**Skills:** Accuracy

You possess some sort of awesome ranged attack, whether it's beams from your eyes, mouth, hands, or even a device.

Instead of invoking your *Power Set Aspect* for free once per scene only for a reroll, you may now invoke it once per scene for free for a reroll or a +2 bonus to the roll.

Additionally, all Accuracy rolls while using your power receive +2 to the roll.

Applying special effects to the power customizes it to fit the type of blast your character can fire. Below are examples of how to create various types of Blast with one or two special effects. Use them as examples for building your own, or apply them to your character for a ready-to-play power. Simply purchase your levels of Blast, and then add the cost below to the final total.

**Concussive (2):** On a successful hit, for each Shift you reduce your damage, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one. You also gain a +2 bonus when using your blast to Create an Advantage, such as **Stunned**, or **Weakened Structure**.

**Energy (1):** On a successful attack, for each Shift you reduce your damage, you extend the range of your blast by an additional zone.

## DUPLICATION VARIANT AND OTHER MINION SUMMONING POWERS

*The Duplication variation can also be used to create a variant of similar powers, such as Animal Summoning, Animate, and Summoning.*

### DUPLICATION (3)

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You are never truly alone, and have the ability to make more of— you!

The Duplication power allows you to make a number of exact copies of yourself. To call forth your duplicates, make a skill roll. You gain one temporary aspect related to your duplicates for each Shift generated on the roll, and get one free invocation (in total, not per aspect). The exact number of duplicates are not determined by the roll, and are a narrative feature.

The Shifts can also be used to gain additional free invocations as well. To do so, apply the extra Shifts beyond the first to free invocations instead of gaining additional temporary aspects.

To combat and remove the duplicates from the scene, your opponents must roll against passive opposition equal to your Controlling skill plus one for every Shift you gained on the roll. In other words, if your Controlling skill is Fair (+2) and you gained two Shifts on the roll, the passive opposition to remove your temporary aspects (i.e. destroy your duplicates) is Great (+4). On a success a single aspect is removed. On a success with style, the aspect is removed and the opponent gains a boost.

Duplicates last until the aspects are removed, or until the end of the scene. To control them longer than a scene without an additional roll, you must spend a fate point at the beginning of the scene.

By spending a fate point, you can also invoke your aspect for a narrative effect, such as going off on their own to investigate a clue at another location or tailing someone. If a skill roll would be needed during the “away scene,” use the skill ranking of your character since the duplicates are the same as you.

Your duplicates do not possess their own Duplication power.

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Damage Soaking (3):** Once per issue, the hero can “absorb” a duplication aspect to automatically heal Consequences. It takes one temporary aspect to heal two points of consequences, so a Mild Consequence would require absorbing one aspect, a moderate consequence requires two aspects, and a severe consequence requires three aspects.

**Sacrificial Lamb (2):** The hero can spend a fate point to transfer any damage suffered by himself to one or more of his duplicates (i.e. aspects). Each aspect absorbs 2-Hits before it is removed from play. Any damage that cannot be applied to a duplicate is taken by the hero.

### LIMITS

**Shared Damage (-1):** Any time an aspect is removed by an opponent, the hero takes 2-Hits of damage. Invulnerability does not negate this damage.

**Psychic Feedback (-1):** Whenever an aspect is removed by an opponent, the hero must make a Will roll against Opposition equal to the number of Shifts gained on the opponent’s roll to remove the aspect, or fall unconscious for the remainder of the conflict.

## DUPLICATE DUPLICATION

*We'll put this Special Effect as a side idea, only because we've seen it in comic books. Allowing this option can greatly affect the balance of a game, however, and requires additional paperwork for the player if used. So, include it as a playable option with care.*

**Duplicate Duplication (5):** Your duplicates possess the Duplicate power the same as you do, and can continue to make copies of themselves ad infinitum. Keep a separate record of which duplicate (i.e. aspects) have also created their own aspects. If you, the player, have maintained your sanity by the end of the scene, you've accomplished an incredible feat.

## INVULNERABILITY (1-6), VARIANT #1

**Skills:** None

The hero is resistant to damage. Additionally, all Defend rolls where your Invulnerability power would apply receive +1 per power level, to a maximum of +6.

### SPECIAL EFFECT

**Absorption (1):** Your Invulnerability also has the ability to absorb and channel either physical (kinetic) or energy damage as per the Absorption power. For each 2-Hits of the energy type you absorb (round up), you gain +1 to Attack and Overcome actions, but the energy must be used by your next turn or it dissipates.

To possess expanded absorption abilities, purchase Absorption special effects at the normal cost.

**Unstoppable (2):** Once the hero gets moving, he adds his Invulnerability level as a bonus to resist other characters attempting to stop his momentum. The hero can automatically break objects with a Material Strength up to twice his Invulnerability level simply by purposefully ramming into them.

## INVULNERABILITY (2), VARIANT #2

**Skills:** None

Instead of invoking your Power Set Aspect for free once per scene only for a reroll, you may now invoke it once per scene for free for a reroll or a +2 bonus to

the roll on Defend actions where your Invulnerability would have an effect.

Additionally, all Defend rolls where your Invulnerability power would apply receive +2 to the roll.

### SPECIAL EFFECT

**Absorption (1):** Your Invulnerability also has the ability to absorb and channel either physical (kinetic) or energy damage as per the Absorption power. For each 2-Hits of the energy type you absorb (round up), you gain +1 to Attack and Overcome actions, but the energy must be used by your next turn or it dissipates.

To possess expanded absorption abilities, purchase Absorption special effects at the normal cost.

**Unstoppable (2):** Once the hero gets moving, he adds a +4 bonus to resist other characters attempting to stop his momentum. The hero can automatically break objects with a Material Strength up to twice his Physique plus four by purposefully ramming into them.

## MELEE ATTACK (1-6), VARIANT #1

**Design Notes:** This power works almost the same as the core version. The primary difference is that a Melee Attack can do zero damage on a tie. The effects of the various Melee Attack types listed in the core rules remain the same, except where noted below.

**Skills:** Fight

Your hero has some sort of powerful, up close and personal attack, whether claws, flaming hands, ice encased fists, even concussive force punches, or even a weapon that's beyond the scope of the mundane. Each power level grants you +1 to your Fight rolls when using the power.

Applying special effects to the Melee powers customizes it to fit the type of attack he uses. Below are some ready-made, low cost examples of how to create some types of Blast with one or two special effects. Use them as examples for building your own, or apply them to your character for a ready-to-play power. Simply purchase your levels of Melee Attack, and then add the cost below to the final total.

The bonus from Melee Attack does not stack with the bonus from Super-Strength (see Super-Strength, Variant #1). Instead, you use the greater of the two (though you still purchase a secondary effect from the Melee Attack power).

**Energy (2):** When you succeed with style on an attack, you may spend a fate point to ignore a target's

imperviousness, as well as gain +2 Hits on your attack. If the target is not Impervious, you gain +3 Hits.

## ***MELEE ATTACK (2), VARIANT #2***

**Design Notes:** This version is a lot more muted as far as overall combat effect goes, and is really idea for combining with the No Crunch Gear method mentioned later in the Appendix. The effects of the various blast types listed in the core rules remain the same, except where noted below.

Your hero has some sort of powerful, up close and personal attack, whether claws, flaming hands, ice encased fists, even concussive force punches, or even a weapon that's beyond the scope of the mundane.

Instead of invoking your Power Set Aspect for free once per scene only for a reroll, you may now invoke it once per scene for free for a reroll or a +2 bonus to the roll.

Additionally, all Fight rolls while using your power receive +2 to the roll.

Applying special effects to the Melee powers customizes it to fit the type of attack he uses. Below are some ready-made, low cost examples of how to create some types of Blast with one or two special effects. Use them as examples for building your own, or apply them to your character for a ready-to-play power. Simply purchase your levels of Melee Attack, and then add the cost below to the final total.

The Fight bonus from Melee Attack stacks with the bonus from Super-Strength, Variant #2.

**Energy (2):** When you succeed with style on an attack, you may spend a fate point to ignore a target's imperviousness, as well as gain +2 Hits on your attack. If the target is not Impervious, you gain +3 Hits.

## ***SHAPESHIFT (2)***

**Skills:** Magic, Mental, or Power

You can shapeshift into any animal or inanimate object. For the ability to shapeshift into other people, add Chameleon to your power set.

To shapeshift, make an Overcome action. You gain one temporary aspect related to the new form you've assumed for each Shift generated on the roll, and get one free invocation (in total, not per aspect). To gain additional free invocations, Shifts can be applied to additional free invocations instead of gaining additional aspects.

The aspects last until the end of the scene, and should represent something from the particular form, such as ***Agility of a Monkey***, ***Strength of a Rhino***, ***Fly like a Falcon***, and so forth.

The aspects are assumed to carry the appropriate narrative context along with them, such as using ***Agility of a Monkey*** to easily maintain balance.

## ***SPECIAL EFFECT***

**Menagerie (1):** The character can mimic the traits of more than one animal at a time, but each additional animal imposes a cumulative +1 to the opposition.

**Rapid Power (1):** The roll to use the power counts as a free action instead of a normal action.

## ***SUPER-STRENGTH (1-6), VARIANT #1***

**Skills:** None

You are stronger than mere mortals, able to achieve feats of strength and hit with a force others usually only imagine.

Each level in Super-Strength provides you with +1 to Fight for melee attacks, and a +1 to Physique rolls that involve a raw application of strength, such as and breaking things or making or breaking grapples, but not to lifting things.

The general lifting ability of super-strength is shown on the Super-Strength Lifting Benchmark table below. To lift a weight, make a roll using Mediocre (+0) skill rating plus your Super-Strength bonus in an Overcome action against the indicated opposition. When lifting weight limits found on the normal Lifting Benchmark table, no roll is necessary.

Super-Strength	Lifting Benchmark
Mediocre (+0)	Lifting a car is no problem
Average (+1)	Semi trucks are weapons in your grasp
Fair (+2)	You could lift a fully loaded jet fighter
Good (+3)	Modern tanks are not a weight problem for you
Great (+4)	You can heft a small building
Superb (+5)	You can move large buildings
Fantastic (+6)	With your strength, Battleships can be carried
Epic (+7)	You are strong enough to rais an aircraft carrier
Legendary (+8)	At this levelm your strength can lift a sky scraper
Monstrous (+9)	You could lift the Great Pyramid of Giza
Colossal (+10)	You can move mountains
Unearthly (+11)	You could lift an island
inconveivable (+12)	Your strength is a plot device, congrats!

You gain +2 bonus to Fight when using Super-Strength in melee combat. Additionally, you gain +2 to all Physique rolls that involve a raw application of strength, such as and breaking things or making or breaking grapples, and lifting things.

The general lifting ability of super-strength is shown on the Super-Strength Lifting Benchmark table below. To lift a weight, make a Physique roll plus your Super-Strength bonus in an Overcome action against the indicated opposition. When lifting weight limits found on the normal Lifting Benchmark table, no roll is necessary.

This power can be taken up to three times, with each additional application adding an additional +2 bonus to the Physique rolls, but no additional bonus to the Fight roll. In other words, purchasing Super-Strength three times would cost 4 Hero Points, provide a +2 bonus to Fight when using Super-Strength in melee combat, and a +6 to all Physique rolls that involve a raw application of strength, such as and breaking things or making or breaking grapples, and lifting things.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Enhanced Lifting (1):** You add your Physique to lifting rolls involving Super-Strength.

**Ground Slam (2):** The hero can strike the ground and hit everyone in the zone. Doing so means using a Create and Advantage action with +2 bonus to place an **Off-Balanced**, **Staggered**, or similar situation aspect on them. They can Defend against the attempt.

## ***SUPER-STRENGTH (2, 3, 4), VARIANT #2***

**Skills:** None

You are stronger than mere mortals, able to achieve feats of strength and hit with a force others usually only imagine.



Super-Strength	Lifting Benchmark
Mediocre (+0)	Lifting a car is no problem
Average (+1)	Semi trucks are weapons in your grasp
Fair (+2)	You could lift a fully loaded jet fighter
Good (+3)	Modern tanks are not a weight problem for you
Great (+4)	You can heft a small building
Superb (+5)	You can move large buildings
Fantastic (+6)	With your strength, Battleships can be carried
Epic (+7)	You are strong enough to rais an aircraft carrier
Legendary (+8)	At this levelm your strength can lift a sky scraper
Monstrous (+9)	You could lift the Great Pyramid of Giza
Colossal (+10)	You can move mountains
Unearthly (+11)	You could lift an island
inconveivable (+12)	Your strength is a plot device, congrats!

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

**Ground Slam (2):** The hero can strike the ground and hit everyone in the zone. Doing so means using a Create and Advantage action with +2 bonus to place an **Off-Balanced**, **Staggered**, or similar situation aspect on them. They can Defend against the attempt.

## SPECIAL EFFECT VARIANTS

For those most part, little to no change is needed for special effects. If Blast or Melee Attack Variant #1 is used, simply adjust any indicated Weapon Rating to a +1 bonus to the relevant attack skill roll per level.

In the case of those powers using Variant #2 in your games, the following Special Effects and Limits are also adjusted.

## CONCUSSIVE (1)

For each Shift you reduce your damage, you knock your target back two zones instead of the normal one zone.

## EXTENDED RANGE (1)

For each Shift that you reduce your damage, you extend the range of your attack by an additional zone.

## IMPERVIOUS (1/2)

This special effect is optional and requires GM and group consensus before being added to a campaign. It applies to the **Invulnerability** power.

Although Daring Comics allows any character to risk injury if the opponent can generate enough Shifts on an attack, sometimes in comic books certain characters are just completely immune to a type of damage up to a certain threshold.

A character with the Impervious special effect is immune to all damage of a particular type. It could be applied to energy damage, physical damage (such as blades, bullets, and low-yield explosives), mental damage, or even damage from arcane spells (such as a mystic themed blast

At the **Low Impervious** level, the character negates the first 3-Hits of damage from attack of the appropriate type. At **Highly Impervious**, he negates the first 4-Hits of damage from attack of the appropriate type.

Sometimes, an attack will fall between the cracks and will have to be judged on a case-by-case basis. A Concussive Force blast against a character Impervious to Weapon Rating in energy attacks could be argued to be a physical attack, but as shown in comics it might sometimes affect the character as though it were an energy based attack.

Regardless of whether or not a character is Impervious, they can still suffer knockback from an attack as normal, even if they can't be damaged by it.

## MEGA-ATTACK (1/2)

Typically, this special effect is found in power-armor themed powers, but can be applied to just about any type of character with the right explanation.

Once per issue, you can double the damage of a successful hit with an attack power. The increase lasts for one attack only. There are two levels to this special effect.

**Basic:** The power immediately shuts down after the attack. Additionally, you take Stress, and then Consequences if you don't have enough Stress boxes, equal to the number of levels the power was enhanced. The Consequences must be repaired or recovered as normal.

For example, let's say you hit with your Energy Beam for 4-Hits of damage, and used the special effect to increase that to 8-Hits. After the attack, Energy Beam is shutdown. Additionally, since Energy Beam damage was increased by 4 levels, you take 4-Stress. If you can't cover the Stress, you take any overflow as Consequences.

Energy Beam is automatically recovered at the end of the scene. To recover it during the scene requires spending a round on an Overcome action against an opposition equal to the amount of increase the Hits received. In the above example, that would be a Great (+4) Opposition.

The recovery action, though, can only be attempted **once during the scene**.

To recover during a scene, roll whichever skill would make narrative sense (such as a Controlling skill, Physique Technology, or Will).

**Advanced:** The power still shuts down after the attack, but this version allows you to first apply those levels to reduce your other powers, before you have to consider Stress or Consequences. These changes last until the end of the scene in which the special effect was used, then your power levels return to normal.

If you don't have enough, overall power levels to absorb the required reduction, then all your powers are completely shut down **and** you take any overflow as either Stress or Consequences.

If a power does not have Power Levels (such as Shrinking, Teleportation, and so forth), the power can take 1 point of reduction and is shut down.

Just as in the basic version, you *can* attempt to recover the lowered powers during the scene. Doing so requires an Overcome action with opposition equal to the total number of reduced levels to be recovered.

However you decide to handle it, the recovery action can only be attempted **once during the scene**. Otherwise, all reduced power levels are automatically recovered at the end of the scene.

*Americannon has Energy Blast, Flight 3, Forcefield 3, and Hyper-sense 3 (Dark Vision,*

*Full Vision, Hyper-Hearing). He successfully hits for 4-Shifts of damage and doubles that for 1 action, making it a 8-Hits of damage.*

*Afterward, he can either take 4-Stress, or reduce some of his other powers by a total of 4 levels. He reduces Hyper-Sense by 3, and Flight by 1.*

## **PENETRATING (2)**

When you succeed with style on an attack, you may spend a fate point to ignore a target's imperviousness, as well as gain +2 Hits on your attack. If the target is not Impervious, you gain +3 Hits.

## **LIMITS VARIANTS**

### **DAMAGING (-1)**

Each round the hero uses the power, he takes 2-Stress. Invulnerability does not help against the damage.

# **CHAPTER 10: DEVICES AND GEAR**

The following Variant to the Devices and Gear chapter shows how to keep normal, everyday gear and weapons as aspects on the character sheet instead of dealing with a skill bonus or weapon rating.

This variant is really ideal when using Variant #2 for the Blast, Invulnerability, and Melee Attack powers.

Building devices remains unchanged, since devices use powers as their own power set, and power variants have already been covered.

## **NO CRUNCH GEAR METHOD**

In this variant, important everyday gear and weapons are handled through aspects. A gear aspect can be as generic or as descriptive as you desire. If you're the sort for whom guns are important but interchangeable, maybe you just have a **Revolver** or a **Sniper Rifle**. If you want to get a little more specific, maybe it's a Pristine Colt .45 or a Silenced XM21. Want to drill down even more? Give yourself My **Father's Service Pistol** or My **Well-Used, Modified XM21**. The point is that, if it's important, it gets an aspect. Things like your jacket and shoes, your sunglasses, your car keys— maybe even your car— don't need aspects, unless they become important to the story.

A gear aspect functions like any other aspect: you can invoke it, and other people can compel it— or

invoke it— against you. You can invoke a gear aspect any time it would be useful: invoke your **Press Pass** to get a little closer to that crime scene.

An aspect on gear might also suggest the best situation in which to use it or delineate what makes it different from others of its kind (like a sniper rifle being ideally suited **For Long-Range Work** or a particular model that **Never, Ever Jams**).

There's one final rule when it comes to gear aspects, GMs— you can take them away. If a hero is starting to rely a little too much on a piece of gear, or if it just feels like time to shake things up, find a reason for that aspect to go away. Doing this is a compel, so the player can refuse it— and that's fine— you don't want to take away your players' favorite parts of the game. Also, getting rid of the aspect doesn't necessarily mean that the player loses that piece of gear permanently. A **Press Pass** can lose its aspect when the character gets suspended, and a **Revolver** can be shut down when it runs out of ammo. In both cases, there's a narrative way to get the aspect back, and sometimes that can kick-start an adventure on its own!

Obviously, too, under this variant the gear is not assumed to have a Complication attached by way of its normal nature. The Gear Aspect serves the same function by being compelled.

We recommend against going overboard with this and giving every single item the character owns an aspect. This is a game about your hero, not about his or her stuff. For the most part, you should assume that if your character has a particular skill, that includes the appropriate stuff to use that skill effectively. Reserve Gear Aspects for items that have actual story value. In other words, a super-powered hero probably doesn't need gear aspects, but a vigilante who's totally reliant on his military-grade weapons and armor does.

## TOO MANY ASPECTS?

*If a hero has five aspects and maybe four or five gear aspects, plus there are scene aspects and consequences and what have you, isn't that too many aspects? It sure can be! Here's a secret: gear aspects are basically portable situation aspects. As such, they can do a lot of the heavy lifting that situation aspects can, if you feel like there's too much going on in a scene. You don't want to eliminate situation aspects altogether, but if each street vigilante player-character has a number of gear aspects, start with fewer situation aspects.*

*It's also a good idea to limit the number of gear aspects each hero has. Not every piece of gear needs its own aspect, so limiting them to three, two, or even one signature piece of gear is perfectly fine.*

## ADJUSTED STUNTS

If you decide to use the No Crunch Gear Method, then the following example stunt from the Stunts chapter should be modified as follows:

### ARSENAL

You begin the game with a small arsenal to wage your war on crime. You begin play with Kevlar armor and three types of weapons. Create gear aspects to represent your main armor and weapons, which can be as simple as **Kevlar Armor** or **Modified M-16 Rifle**.

## CHAPTER 12: COMIC BOOK ACTION

Below are two suggestions to help you make your comic book battles last even longer.

### CHECK TWO STRESS

This method allows for characters to survive many more hits in a fight, but mimics some of the extraordinary battles we've seen in comic books.

Check up to two boxes at once, add their values together, and reduce the hit by that many shifts. So for example, a character with five stress boxes

can take up to 9 shifts of harm in a scene without resorting to a consequence.

## EXTRA EFFORT

This option can have some wild effects on die rolls in a Daring Comics game, and can even partially underscore the fate point economy, but when combined with the Check Two Stress option, is a bit more manageable.

Extra Effort means that the character is digging deep within himself for an extra push to complete a certain task— even attempting to land a serious blow in a conflict. Voluntarily check a currently unused stress box anytime for a bonus on a roll. The bonus equals the value of the checked box.

# CHAPTER 13: RUNNING DARING COMICS

Although the main portion of the Daring Comics rules offers plenty of advice on creating different types of NPCs, this following option allows for player-characters to possess their very own sidekick— a significant NPC that is always at their side.

## SIDEKICKS

Sidekicks are a regular staple of super-hero comics. From a boy-wonder to a kid super-speedster, older heroes regularly mentor the younger, up-and-coming generation.

The following guidelines are for creating NPC Sidekicks for your hero. If another player is portraying a PC sidekick, create the character normally.

## PAYING FOR THE SIDEKICK

Gaining a sidekick comes with an inherent cost: the Sidekick stunt. By purchasing the stunt, the player is stating that his sidekick is not only a major part of the story, but is a regular part of his main character. Without the stunt, the sidekick should be treated as a revolving supporting cast member— meaning the GM decides when and if to use the sidekick in a storyline.

## SIDEKICK (STUNT, 4 HERO POINTS)

*Your hero has a sidekick that fights by his side, trains under him, and for whom he is responsible— not only for his safety, but for turning him into the hero he'll one day become.*

## CREATING THE SIDEKICK

Create the sidekick as outlined below:

- Three Aspects
- Experience Level one or two levels below the hero
- Series Level equal to or one level below the hero
- Full allotment of series given stress boxes, and one of each consequence type
- Begins with half the refresh of the hero (round up).

## PLAYING THE SIDEKICK

When using the sidekick in play, it acts on the hero's initiative. To have the sidekick act on its own initiative, the player must spend one of his hero's fate points. Otherwise, the sidekick performs actions as normal, and for all intents and purposes is treated the same as any other character.

Whenever the hero reaches a Milestone, so does the sidekick, providing he took part in a majority of the scenes in an Issue, Story Arc, or Volume.

## DEATH OF A SIDEKICK

A hero who's sidekick is killed or murdered will find himself in a very bad place. Losing a sidekick is like losing the closest possible family member you can imagine.

If a sidekick should die, the player must immediately change out one of his aspects (except Concept and Motivation) to represent the mental and emotional trauma of the loss.

A sidekick should never be killed arbitrarily (thus the required change of aspect) and should always be part of a storyline agreed upon by both the GM and player. As such, the player does not regain the 2 Hero Points originally spent on the stunt.

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# CHARACTER SHEET

**ID**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Secret ID: \_\_\_\_\_  PUBLIC  PRIVATE

Hair: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes: \_\_\_\_\_ Refresh: \_\_\_\_\_

**ASPECTS**

Concept: \_\_\_\_\_

Motivation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

**SKILLS**

Fantastic (+6): \_\_\_\_\_

Superb (+5): \_\_\_\_\_

Great (+4): \_\_\_\_\_

Good (+3): \_\_\_\_\_

Fair (+2): \_\_\_\_\_

Average (+1): \_\_\_\_\_

**STUNTS**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Power Set: \_\_\_\_\_ Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Effects and Limits

Power Set: \_\_\_\_\_ Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Effects and Limits

### HEADQUARTERS

Point Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_

Features:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

### COMPLICATIONS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Physical Stress

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨

Mental Stress

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨



○

○

○

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○

○

Mild Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

Moderate Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

Severe Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Consequence \_\_\_\_\_



**SERIES WORKSHEET**

Series Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Series Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Series Tone: \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Broad Problem Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediate Problem Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE BROAD VIEW:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE FOCUSED VIEW:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE PEOPLE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**SUPER TEAM SHEET**

Super Team: \_\_\_\_\_

**ASPECTS**

Charter: \_\_\_\_\_

Friction: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUNTS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**HEADQUARTERS**

Point Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_

Features:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**TEAM ROGUES**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TEAM EMBLEM**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPORTING CAST + ROGUE SHEET**

**SUPPORTING CAST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPORTING CAST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPORTING CAST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPORTING CAST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ROGUE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ROGUE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ROGUE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ROGUE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aspect: \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_