

VIGILANCE PRESS COMICS GROUP PROUDLY PRESENTS



# THE FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES!

BY JASON TONDRO



**ICONS**  
SUPERPOWERED ROLEPLAYING  
COMPATIBLE

VOLUME 1: FROM THE ALIEN HERO TO THE DEFENDER

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*WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DARREN MIGHEZ, THE PLAYERS OF CRUCIBLE CITY MUX, AND ALL THE WONDERFUL PEOPLE WHO HELPED MAKE WORLDS OF WONDER A REALITY. A GAME IS ONLY EVER AS GOOD AS ITS PLAYERS.*

# INTRODUCTION



*MIRANDA: O WONDER!*

*HOW MANY GOODLY CREATURES ARE THERE HERE!*

*HOW BEAUTEOUS MANKIND IS! O BRAVE NEW WORLD*

*THAT HAS SUCH PEOPLE IN'T!*

*PROSPERO: 'TIS NEW TO THEE.*

*SHAKESPEARE, THE TEMPEST, ACT V, SCENE I*

WELCOME TO **THE FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES** AND TO THE **WORLDS OF WONDER** SETTING. THE FIELD GUIDE IS A RESOURCE FOR PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS RUNNING ICONS OR, REALLY, ANY OTHER SUPERHERO GAME. AT ITS CORE, IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO CATEGORIZE SUPERHEROES INTO FORTY COMMON AND IDENTIFIABLE ARCHETYPES. AT THE SAME TIME, IT CREATES A COMPLETE SUPERHERO SETTING FIT FOR ONGOING CAMPAIGNS OR PICK-UP GAMES.

A SUPERHERO ARCHETYPE IS A RECOGNIZABLE KIND OF HERO, A CATEGORY WITH CERTAIN COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OR TRAITS WHICH MANY HEROES SHARE. EXAMPLES INCLUDE THINGS LIKE "DARK AVENGER" OR "ULTIMATE HERO" OR "MASTER OF THE ELEMENTS". DARK AVENGERS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE OFTEN MOTIVATED BY REVENGE OR GRIEF, THEY DRESS IN DARK COLORS, OPERATE AT NIGHT, AND IF THEY HAVE POWERS THOSE ABILITIES ARE MODEST COMPARED TO OTHER SUPER-PEOPLE. A PARTICULAR EXAMPLE OF AN ARCHETYPE MAY NOT DISPLAY ALL THE MOST COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF THAT HERO, AND IN FACT MAY INTENTIONALLY DEVIATE FROM THE NORM, BUT IT'S PRETTY RECOGNIZABLE.

THE FIELD GUIDE IS NOT THE FIRST BOOK TO TRY TO CLASSIFY VARIOUS SUPERHEROES INTO ARCHETYPES OR ROLES. MANY RPGS HAVE DONE THIS. THE FIELD GUIDE DIFFERS FROM THESE OTHER APPROACHES BECAUSE IT DOESN'T, AS A RULE, USE A CHARACTER'S POWERS TO DETERMINE HIS ARCHETYPE. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU WON'T FIND A "FIRE GUY" ARCHETYPE, OR A "STRONG HERO" OR "SPEEDSTER" ARCHETYPE. INSTEAD, THE FIELD GUIDE FOCUSES MORE ON ORIGIN AND THE CHARACTER'S ROLE IN THE STORY. A "FIRE GUY" COULD BE AN ANDROID (THE ORIGINAL HUMAN TORCH), A SIDEKICK (TORO), AN OCCULT HERO (JOHNNY BLAZE, GHOST RIDER), A YOUNG HERO (JOHNNY STORM, THE HUMAN TORCH), A DARK AVENGER (AZRAEL, AT LEAST AT FIRST) OR EVEN A MAN FROM TOMORROW (SUN BOY). THIS IS THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE THAT MAKES THE ARCHETYPES OF THE FIELD GUIDE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE YOU MIGHT FIND IN OTHER RPG PRODUCTS.

THERE'S A SECOND MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HEROES OF THE FIELD GUIDE AND THE CHARACTERS YOU MIGHT FIND IN OTHER ARCHETYPE BOOKS. ALL THE CHARACTERS PRESENTED IN THE FIELD GUIDE LIVE IN A SINGLE SUPERHERO SETTING, ONE WE CALL WORLDS OF WONDER. THE CHARACTERS YOU WILL FIND IN THESE PAGES ARE ARCHETYPAL YOU WILL RECOGNIZE THEM BUT THEY ARE NOT "GENERIC". THEY HAVE PASTS, GOALS, CONFLICTS AND PLOT HOOKS. ANY ONE OF THEM COULD BE PLAYED IN A PICK-UP GAME OR USED AS SUPPORTING CAST, RIVALS, OR VICTIMS IN AN ONGOING CAMPAIGN. TOGETHER, THE FORTY CHARACTERS IN THE FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES GIVE YOU A COMPLETE SETTING FOR SUPERHEROIC ACTION AND ADVENTURE, A RICH WORLD WITH A LONG HISTORY OF SUPERHUMAN POWERS, LONG-RUNNING CONFLICTS, AND A WHOLE SOCIAL NETWORK WHICH SUPPORTS SUPERHEROES WHO LIVE IN SOCIETY. HERE YOU WILL FIND WONDER WORKERS, THE TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE FOR SUPERHUMAN PEOPLE; NARWAL, A VOLUNTARY FEDERAL SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION PROGRAM; AND EVEN WONDERWEAR, READY TO PROVIDE YOU AND YOUR SUPER-FAMILY WITH A COMPLETE ARRAY OF CRIMEFIGHTING COSTUMES AND GEAR.

THE FIELD GUIDE IS IN FOUR VOLUMES; THIS IS THE FIRST. EACH VOLUME INCLUDES TEN ARCHETYPES, STARTING WITH THE ALIEN HERO IN VOLUME 1 AND ENDING WITH THE YOUNG HERO IN VOLUME 4. ALONG THE WAY, ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUPPLEMENTS THE WORLDS OF WONDER SETTING, PROVIDING BACKGROUND MATERIAL, ORGANIZATIONS, AND MORE TO HELP PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS FULLY REALIZE THE SETTING.

## USING THIS BOOK

IF YOU'RE A PLAYER, THE BEST USE FOR THIS BOOK MAY BE IN CHARACTER CREATION. FLIP THROUGH THE ARCHETYPES AND READ UP ON THOSE WHICH LOOK INTERESTING TO YOU. MAYBE YOU WILL RECOGNIZE THE NAME OF ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE HEROES IN THE LIST OF EXAMPLES. ICONS ALREADY HAS A RANDOM CHARACTER GENERATION PROCESS, BUT THE CHARACTERS IT MAKES COULD BE ALMOST ANY ARCHETYPE. THE FIRST STEP TO MAKING YOUR ICONS CHARACTER IS TO ROLL HIS ORIGIN, AND THIS ALSO HAS THE MOST INFLUENCE OVER ARCHETYPE; CONSIDER THE ARCHETYPES IN THE FIELD GUIDE TO BE A KIND OF SHOPPING LIST. TAKE YOUR RANDOM ORIGIN AND POWERS WITH YOU TO THE LIST AND START SHOPPING FOR AN ARCHETYPE YOU LIKE. THEN USE THE ADVICE GIVEN THERE TO FLESH OUT YOUR RANDOM ROLLS INTO A FULL-FLEDGED HERO WITH QUALITIES, CHALLENGES, BACKGROUND, ENEMIES AND STORIES.

ANOTHER WAY TO USE THIS BOOK IS AS A SOURCE OF PLAYABLE CHARACTERS. ICONS DOESN'T WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT GAME BALANCE, AND IT'S CERTAINLY TRUE THAT SOME OF THE HEROES IN THE FIELD GUIDE ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN OTHERS. SO IF YOU DECIDE YOU WANT TO PLAY ONE OF THE CHARACTERS IN THIS BOOK, CHECK WITH YOUR GM TO MAKE SURE ITS OKAY. IF YOU ARE THE GM, THIS BOOK CREATES THE WORLD FOR YOU, ADDING NPCs, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PLAYER CHARACTER CONTACTS. WHEN YOUR PLAYERS, AND THEIR CHARACTERS, GO LOOKING FOR A TIME MACHINE, FOR A HERO WITH GOVERNMENT CONNECTIONS, OR EVEN JUST A DATE FOR FRIDAY NIGHT, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE. BY GIVING VARIOUS CHARACTERS FROM THE FIELD GUIDE CAMEO APPEARANCES OR "WALK-ONS" AN ARMY RECRUITING POSTER STARRING PATRIOT OR A MAGAZINE WITH MISS UNIVERSE ON THE COVER YOU BUILD VERISIMILITUDE AND MAKE YOUR SETTING BELIEVABLE. ALL THE CHARACTERS IN THE FIELD GUIDE ALSO HAVE PLOT HOOKS WHICH GIVE YOU STORIES INVOLVING YOUR OWN PLAYERS.

# ARCHETYPES

HERE'S A SHORT LIST OF THE TEN ARCHETYPES DISCUSSED IN THIS VOLUME OF *THE FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES*.

**THE ALIEN HERO** IS NOT FROM THIS WORLD. HE MAY HAVE EITHER A SCIENCE FICTION OR FANTASY TONE TO HIS POWERS, WHICH ARE OFTEN UNRELATED TO EACH OTHER.

**THE ANDROID** IS A PINOCCHIO CHARACTER WHO HAS INCREDIBLE POWERS BUT ALSO TROUBLE RELATING TO HUMANITY. HE COULD BE EITHER METAL OR ORGANIC IN NATURE.

**ANIMAL HEROES** ARE ONE OF THE SIMPLEST KINDS OF CHARACTERS. PICK AN ANIMAL OR INSECT AND BASE YOUR HERO ON IT, USING EITHER NATURAL POWERS OR UNUSUAL WEAPONRY.

AN **ARMORED WONDER** IS A NORMAL PERSON IN AN ADVANCED BATTLESUIT, USUALLY HUMANOID IN SHAPE AND SIZE. HE COULD BE A SCIENTIST OR JUST KNOW SOMEONE ELSE THAT IS.

**THE ASTRONAUT** IS AN EARTHMAN WHO HAS TRAVELED TO OTHER WORLDS. HE MAKES UP FOR HIS LACK OF POWERS WITH COURAGE AND CLEVERNESS.

AN **AVATAR** IS A BEING WHO IDENTIFIES WITH, IS, OR THINKS HE IS, A GOD. HIGH POWER LEVEL BUT A STRICT MORAL CODE GO HAND IN HAND WITH THE AVATAR.

**COMIC RELIEF** CHARACTERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME. TYPICALLY THEY HAVE EITHER SILLY POWERS (LIKE STRETCHING) OR ELSE AWESOME ABILITIES BUT NO IDEA HOW TO USE THEM.

**THE CREEPY HERO** IS A STREET HERO WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR, WEIRD POWERS, AND OFTEN A FRIGHTENING APPEARANCE. HE MAY BE HUNTED BY THE POLICE.

**THE DARK AVENGER** IS A PERSON WHO HAS SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT AND COME BACK TO DEAL HARSH JUSTICE. HE OFTEN USES WEAPONS INSTEAD OF POWERS.

**THE DEFENDER** PROTECTS OR FIGHTS CRIME IN A PARTICULAR PLACE, OR TO SAFEGUARD A PARTICULAR GROUP. HE WILL HELP OTHER HEROES OUT WHEN TROUBLE FROM OUTSIDE FINDS HIM, BUT HE'S MORE FOCUSED ON HIS TURF.



# ARCHETYPES

## STUNTS

ALMOST ALL THE CHARACTERS IN THIS BOOK HAVE A STUNT OR TWO LISTED IN THEIR DESCRIPTION. THESE STUNTS DO NOT COST DETERMINATION TO USE; THEY ARE PRACTICED ABILITIES THAT THE HERO HAS USED MANY TIMES IN THE PAST. EACH STUNT IS LINKED TO A PARTICULAR ABILITY OR POWER, BUT THESE AREN'T THE ONLY STUNTS A HERO MIGHT USE. JUST THE MOST COMMON!

## "HEY, WHAT ABOUT.."

HEY, WHAT ABOUT ... THE DISPLACED HERO! THE ANIMAL SIDEKICK! THE REVAMP! YOU MAY BE LOOKING FOR A PARTICULAR ARCHETYPE WHICH DIDN'T MAKE THE FIELD GUIDE. SOME "MINOR" ARCHETYPES LIKE THE INSECT HERO, THE STAGE MAGICIAN, AND THE SUPERNATURAL AVENGER ARE ONLY DISCUSSED IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER ARCHETYPES TO WHICH THEY ARE RELATED, WHILE OTHER RELATIVELY NARROW CONCEPTS LIKE THE FEMME FELINE HAVE GOT AN ARCHETYPE ALL OF THEIR OWN. WHY? IN SOME CASES THIS DECISION WAS BASED SOLELY ON THE IMPACT OF SPECIFIC CHARACTERS (CATWOMAN HAS SPAWNED SO MANY IMITATORS THAT SHE DEMANDED AN ARCHETYPE OF HER OWN). IN OTHER CASES AN ARCHETYPE MAY HAVE BEEN VERY POPULAR IN PREVIOUS DECADES BUT SELDOM SEEN NOW. MOST OF THE TIME, HOWEVER, ARCHETYPES WERE LUMPED TOGETHER BECAUSE WHAT GOES FOR ONE GOES FOR BOTH; THERE'S NO NEED TO BORE YOU BY SAYING THE SAME THING TWICE!

## "ISN'T THAT GUY A..."

ISN'T BATMAN A ... ANIMAL HERO? GADGET GUY? MARTIAL ARTIST? DARK AVENGER? ULTIMATE HERO? YES. ALL THE BEST HEROES ACTUALLY FIT INTO MORE THAN ONE ARCHETYPE. THIS IS A PHENOMENON WE CALL "ARCHETYPAL DRIFT." IT HAPPENS WHEN A CHARACTER GROWS AND MATURES OVER TIME, GATHERING COMPLEXITY AND SUBPLOTS. IT ALSO HAPPENS WHEN A NEW CREATIVE TEAM COMES TO A CHARACTER AND TAKES HIM IN "A BOLD NEW DIRECTION." WRITERS, ARTISTS, AND EDITORS PUT THEIR OWN SPIN ON AN OLD HERO, AND HE SLIDES INTO ANOTHER ARCHETYPE. A HERO MAY EVEN BE ONE ARCHETYPE WHILE HE WORKS WITH A TEAM, AND THEN ANOTHER WHEN HE APPEARS IN HIS OWN MONTHLY BOOK! OUR ADVICE: DON'T GET HUNG UP ON WHICH ARCHETYPE IS THE BEST LABEL FOR A GIVEN HERO. THE EXAMPLES ARE PROVIDED SOLELY TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION. THEY ARE NOT THE BE-ALL AND END-ALL. IF YOUR OWN CHARACTER COULD BE TWO, THREE, OR MORE ARCHETYPES ALL AT ONCE, SO MUCH THE BETTER.

# ALIEN HERO

THE ALIEN HERO IS NOT OF THIS WORLD AND HAS THE *UNEARTHLY* ORIGIN. HE MAY HAVE COME FROM A HIGHLY ADVANCED SOCIETY OR FROM A MAGICAL, EVEN PRIMITIVE ONE. REGARDLESS, HE IS USUALLY INHUMAN IN APPEARANCE AND WILL NOT EASILY BLEND IN WITH HIS ADOPTED PEOPLE.

**EXAMPLES:** CAPTAIN MAR-VELL; HAWKMAN (KATAR HOL); MARTIAN MANHUNTER; MAXIMA; ROM, SPACEKNIGHT, SILVER SURFER; STARFIRE

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** ASTRONAUT, ULTIMATE HERO

### QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

THE ALIEN HERO HAS ADOPTED HIS NEW WORLD AND WORKS TO PROTECT HUMANITY. HE IS HONORABLE, TRUSTWORTHY AND HONEST, DEMONSTRATING THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE HUMAN TO BE NOBLE. IF HE HAS A CATCHPHRASE OR BATTLE CRY, IT PROBABLY NAMES SOME PLANET OR EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEING HUMANITY DOES NOT RECOGNIZE ("MOONS OF MARS!"). HIS CONNECTIONS WILL BE WITH ALIENS BACK HOME OR, MORE LIKELY, WITH A HUMAN "HANDLER" WHO HAS TAUGHT THE ALIEN WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE ON EARTH. HE IS OFTEN ABLE TO MASQUERADE AS A HUMAN BEING AND SO MAY HAVE A SECRET IDENTITY, BUT IF HE CANNOT, THEN HIS ALIEN NATURE BECOMES A CHALLENGE.

ALTHOUGH HE IS ADMIRER BY OTHER HEROES BECAUSE OF HIS UNIMPEACHABLE MORAL CODE, THE ALIEN STRUGGLES TO BE ACCEPTED BY A GENERAL PUBLIC WHICH FEARS HIS STRANGE APPEARANCE AND GREAT POWER. THE GOVERNMENT OR MILITARY, IN PARTICULAR, MAY PURSUE HIM OR INSIST ON RUNNING HIS AFFAIRS. HIS OWN RACE MAY BE EXTINCT, OR THEY MAY HUNT HIM AS A CRIMINAL OR OUTCAST. DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE IS PUT IN A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP BY HIS SUPERHEROIC PEERS, HE OFTEN FEELS LIKE A PERPETUAL OUTSIDER AND LONER, CUT OFF FROM THE TEEMING MASS OF HUMANITY WHO SURROUND HIM.

### ABILITIES:

ALIEN HEROES USUALLY HAVE EXCELLENT ABILITIES, MOST OF WHICH WILL BE ABOVE AVERAGE. STRENGTH OF 7+ IS COMMON. IF THEY HAVE A LOW ABILITY, IT IS PROBABLY COORDINATION.

### POWERS:

THE ALIEN HERO HAS A MIXED BAG OF POWERS WHICH HAVE LITTLE IN COMMON WITH EACH OTHER, BUT THEY ARE VERY EFFECTIVE AND MAY BE FRIGHTENING TO THE COMMON MAN. THIS MAKES HIM A GREAT FIT FOR PLAYERS WHO HAVE ROLLED THEIR POWERS RANDOMLY. HE MAY USE A DEVICE SUCH A SPACECRAFT, BUT HE CAN PROBABLY FLY FROM ONE STAR TO ANOTHER UNDER HIS OWN POWER.



# ALIEN HERO

## **SPECIALTIES:**

SCIENTIFIC AND MILITARY SKILLS ARE COMMON FOR THE ALIEN HERO: COMPUTERS, ELECTRONICS, MARTIAL ARTS, MILITARY, PILOT, AND SCIENCE.

## **THE ALIEN TEAM:**

SOMETIMES A TEAM IS MADE UP ENTIRELY OF ALIENS, PERHAPS WITH A FEW TOKEN HUMAN BEINGS TO PROVIDE READER IDENTIFICATION. THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, STARJAMMERS, OMEGA MEN AND LEGION OF SUPERHEROES ARE ALL EXAMPLES OF THE ALIEN TEAM.

ALIENS IN A TEAM WORK MUCH DIFFERENTLY THAN ALIENS TRAPPED ON EARTH. THEY ARE NOT OUTSIDERS, SURROUNDED BY A CULTURE WHICH FEARS THEM. THEY DO NOT PRETEND TO BE HUMAN AND THEY DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO ADAPT TO HUMAN CULTURE. INSTEAD, THEY ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR HOMEWORLD AND NATIVE CULTURE, MUCH IN THE WAY A UNITED NATIONS SUPER GROUP, OR OTHER GLOBAL ORGANIZATION, MIGHT HAVE A HERO FROM EACH MEMBER STATE. ON AN ALIEN TEAM, EACH TIME THE TEAM VISITS A PARTICULAR PLANET, EVERYONE ON THE TEAM IS AN OUTSIDER EXCEPT FOR THE ONE MEMBER WHO IS NATIVE TO THAT PLANET. MOST OF THE TIME, THE TEAM FIGHTS GALACTIC THREATS SO OVERWHELMING AND DANGEROUS THAT NO SINGLE WORLD COULD HOPE TO SURVIVE.





# MATRIX

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** JOURNEY INTO WONDER #120

**ARCHETYPES:** ALIEN HERO, SUPER-WEAPON

**QUALITIES:** AGENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF STARS, STUDENT OF EARTH "MY FATHER WAS AN HONORABLE MAN"

**CHALLENGES:** PRETENDING TO BE A MUTANT, HAUNTED BY WAR, POLITICAL EXILE

**PROWESS** 6

**COORDINATION** 3

**STRENGTH** 7

**INTELLECT** 5

**AWARENESS** 5

**WILLPOWER** 5

**DETERMINATION** 2

**STAMINA** 11



**POWERS:**

ADAPTATION 8

FLIGHT 9

**SPECIALTIES:**

MILITARY, WEAPONS EXPERT

(PARLIAMENTARY MATRIX)

**STUNTS:**

**UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR (ADAPTATION):** ROLAR CAN USE THE MATRIX TO DECODE OR TRANSLATE ANY LANGUAGE IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.

**HOLOGRAPHIC DISGUISE (ADAPTATION):** THE MATRIX CAN CONCEAL ROLAR'S APPEARANCE, MAKING HIM APPEAR TO BE ANY HUMANOID CREATURE

## ORIGIN

"YOUR KIND ARE BLESSED WITH MANY ADVANTAGES; MANY AMAZING POWERS HAVE I SEEN DEMONSTRATED IN MY SHORT TIME ON YOUR PLANET. BUT YOUR GREATEST GIFT IS COURAGE, AND I AM HAPPY TO SAY THAT THIS IS A GIFT NOT LIMITED TO EARTH, BUT MORE COMMON IN THE UNIVERSE THAN YOU IMAGINE."

# MATRIX

## ABILITIES

ROLAN IS A QUORDI, A MEMBER OF AN ALIEN SPECIES KNOWN FOR ITS GREAT STRENGTH AND STAMINA. HIS MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC TRAINING SERVES HIM WELL WHEN HE MUST INTERACT WITH ALIEN CULTURES, AND HE HAS MADE A DETAILED STUDY OF EARTH IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, IN ORDER TO BETTER FULFILL HIS ASSIGNMENT AS AMBASSADOR. BY FAR HIS MOST POTENT WEAPON, HOWEVER, IS HIS FATHER'S PARLIAMENTARY MATRIX. IT GRANTS HIM THE POWER OF ADAPTATION, AUTOMATICALLY MAKING HIM IMMUNE TO HIS ENEMY'S ATTACKS AND GIVING HIM WHATEVER TOOLS HE NEEDS TO TRIUMPH. NOTE THAT ROLAN HAS NO CONTROL OVER THE POWERS GRANTED TO HIM BY THE MATRIX; IT OPERATES UNDER A LIMITED KIND OF INTELLIGENCE THAT ALLOWS IT TO INTERPRET THE TACTICAL SITUATION AND RESPOND APPROPRIATELY. ALTERNATELY, ROLAN CAN OVERRIDE THE MATRIX'S COMPUTER THROUGH THE EXPENDITURE OF DETERMINATION, EFFECTIVELY BUYING ANY SINGLE POWER WITH A LEVEL OF 8.

FEW PEOPLE ON EARTH REALIZE THAT FAR FROM BEING ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE. HUMANITY IS BUT ONE OF COUNTLESS RACES TRYING TO GET ALONG IN A CROWDED GALAXY. TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE PEACE IN THE GALAXY, THE PARLIAMENT OF STARS WAS FORMED A SIMPLE FORUM FOR THE INHABITANTS OF EACH WORLD TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES OF THE DAY. OVER TIME THE PARLIAMENT GREW, AND AS IT DID, SO DID ITS TRADITIONS, UNTIL IT BECAME A TRULY ENORMOUS BUREAUCRACY KNOWN FOR ITS POMP, ITS RITUAL, AND ITS INTERMINABLE DEBATES ON INSCRUTABLE ISSUES OF GALACTIC LAW. NEVERTHELESS, FOR ALL ITS IMPERFECTIONS, THE PARLIAMENT REMAINS THE GREATEST GOVERNMENTAL BODY IN THE GALAXY, AND THE WONDER KNOWN AS MATRIX IS ITS REPRESENTATIVE TO EARTH.

MATRIX, WHOSE REAL NAME IS ROLAN, IS A QUORDI, AN ALIEN HAILING FROM A HIGH-DENSITY WORLD DEEP IN THE PARLIAMENT'S CORE SYSTEMS. HIS PEOPLE HAVE LONG BEEN CONSIDERED LOYAL AND STRONG SUPPORTERS OF PARLIAMENT, ESPECIALLY IN ITS MILITARY AMBITIONS, AND HIS FAMILY HAS A LONG HISTORY OF SERVICE IN PARLIAMENTARY GUARD UNITS AND THE OFFICER CORPS. FORTY YEARS AGO THE PARLIAMENT'S UPPER HOUSE, THE CHAMBER OF STARS, BEGAN A MILITARY PUSH WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY ENABLE IT TO STEAL POWER FROM THE LOWER HOUSE, THE CHAMBER OF WORLDS. ROLAN'S FATHER COLONEL RILERO WAS A KEY FIGURE IN THIS MILITARY ACTION, AN INVASION OF THE RESOURCE RICH WORLD BENEL-BENEL. RILERO DID NOT RETURN FROM THAT INVASION, BUT THE LORDS AND MERCHANT PRINCES OF THE STAR CHAMBER USED HIS HEROIC SACRIFICE AS A RALLYING CRY TO STIR NATIONALISTIC FERVOR. THEY POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED COLONEL RILERO THE HIGHEST HONOR: THE PARLIAMENTARY MATRIX.

ROLAN WAS ONLY A BOY WHEN HIS FATHER VANISHED FOREVER; HE HAD MORE MEMORY OF THE PARADES AND CEREMONIES HELD IN THE COLONEL'S HONOR THAN HE DID OF HIS LIVING FATHER. WHEN HE MATURED, HE TOO ENTERED THE PARLIAMENTARY GUARD. HIS SERIOUSNESS AND DETERMINATION LENT HIM WELL TO THE MILITARY LIFE, AND THE LORDS OF THE STAR CHAMBER BEGAN TO SEE POTENTIAL IN THIS YOUNG, HANDSOME SOLDIER FROM A FAMOUS FAMILY. THEY LAUDED HIM AS A WORTHY SON TO A BRAVE PATRIOT, AND ROLAN DID HIS TERMS OF DUTY IN THE WASTELAND THAT WAS NOW BENEL-BENEL. THERE, HE SAW THE SAME SIGHTS HIS FATHER HAD SEEN, AND IN THE HAUNTED EYES OF THE NATIVE BENELITES HE BEGAN TO SEE THE HORROR THAT IS WAR. HE BEGAN TO QUESTION THE REASONS FOR THE INVASION FOUR DECADES AGO, AND HE BEGAN TO AT LAST HEAR THE WHISPERINGS OF OPPOSITION WITHIN HIS OWN GOVERNMENT.

# MATRIX

STILL, CAPTAIN ROLAN WAS A DUTIFUL SOLDIER, AND HIS CONCERNS WERE KEPT PRIVATE. HE CONTINUED HIS SERVICE, AND SPOKE IN PRAISE OF THE STAR CHAMBER WHENEVER HE WAS COMMANDED TO. IT WASN'T UNTIL A RADICAL LEFTIST SLIPPED HIM A PIRATED VIDEO THAT HE LEARNED THE TRUTH: THE VIDEO SHOWED HIS FATHER REFUSING TO OBEY AN ORDER TO MASSACRE INNOCENTS IN THE BENEL-BENEL INVASION AND RILERO'S SUBSEQUENT MURDER BY HIS COMMANDING OFFICER, BARON SUYVIK, A PROMINENT LORD. ARMED WITH THE TRUTH, ROLAN CONFRONTED NOW-DUKE SUYVIK, WHO CASUALLY ADMITTED HAVING RILERO KILLED FOR INSUBORDINATION YEARS BEFORE. ROLAN THREATENED TO GO PUBLIC WITH THE KNOWLEDGE, BUT THE DUKE COULD ONLY LAUGH: CONSPIRACY THEORISTS AND REVOLUTIONARIES HAD BEEN SPREADING THE RUMOR OF RILERO'S TRUE FATE FOR YEARS NOW, AND NO ONE WAS LISTENING. ROLAN'S THREATS WERE EMPTY; THE STAR CHAMBER HAD A VICE GRIP ON POWER AND THERE WAS NOTHING ANYONE COULD DO TO CHANGE THAT.

WITHIN THE YEAR, ROLAN RETIRED FROM HIS MILITARY CAREER. HE HAD HOPED FOR A QUIET LIFE ON QUORD, BUT HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER, FOR DUKE SUYVIK COULD NOT ALLOW ROLAN TO BECOME A THREAT. INSTEAD OF ALLOWING THE DECORATED SOLDIER TO REMAIN IN THE HEART OF PARLIAMENT, WHERE HE MIGHT CAUSE PROBLEMS, HE HAD ROLAN'S COMMISSION EXTENDED TO DIPLOMATIC SERVICE. ROLAN WAS PROMOTED TO MAJOR AND ASSIGNED TO A REMOTE WORLD WHICH, WHILE OCCASIONALLY IMPORTANT, WAS LARGELY IGNORED BY GALACTIC POLITICS. THE PARLIAMENT'S LATEST AMBASSADOR TO EARTH ARRIVED IN LATE 2006, SHORTLY AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA NEARLY DESTROYED NEW ORLEANS.

ROLAN HAS TAKEN HIS FATE WITH STOIC PRIDE. HE KNOWS SUYVIK SEEKS TO ISOLATE HIM ON EARTH, BUT HE IS DETERMINED TO MAKE THE BEST OF HIS POSITION BY DOING GOOD AND REDEEMING THE STAIN UPON HIS FAMILY HONOR CAUSED BY THE BENEL-BENEL INVASION. TO THAT END, HE HAS BROUGHT WITH HIM HIS FATHER'S PARLIAMENTARY MATRIX, A POWERFUL WEAPON THAT DUPLICATES THE ABILITIES OF EVERY MEMBER RACE IN PARLIAMENT. WITH IT, HE CAN FLY, SURVIVE IN HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS, PROJECT DEADLY BEAMS OF ENERGY, READ MINDS, OR DO JUST ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE HE NEEDS TO DO. THE MATRIX ALLOWS ROLAN TO MIMIC THE APPEARANCE OF ANY HUMANOID BEING, WHICH HAS BEEN INVALUABLE IN HIS EFFORTS TO BLEND IN WITH HUMAN SOCIETY. IT ALSO FUNCTIONS AS A TRANSLATOR AND A FASTER-THAN-LIGHT COMMUNICATOR, THOUGH ROLAN HAS LITTLE DESIRE TO SPEAK TO HIS MASTERS BACK IN PARLIAMENT.

MOST HUMAN BEINGS DO NOT KNOW THAT MATRIX IS AN ALIEN; THERE ARE RUMORS TO THIS EFFECT BUT HE IS WIDELY CONSIDERED TO BE "SOME KIND OF MUTANT." HE MAINTAINS THIS FACADE OUT OF DEFERENCE TO EARTH GOVERNMENTS, WHO GENERALLY TRY TO CONCEAL THE PRESENCE OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE FROM ORDINARY CITIZENS OUT OF CONCERN FOR THE SOCIAL UNREST SUCH KNOWLEDGE MIGHT CAUSE. EARTH GOVERNMENTS AND MANY WONDERS, HOWEVER, KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT HIM, AND HE IS ACTUALLY EAGER TO CONFIDE HIS SECRET TO OTHERS, AS IT ALLOWS HIM TO BUILD A SMALL CIRCLE OF FRIENDS.

**APPEARANCE:**

THE QUORDI ARE A TALL, BROAD, AND MUSCULAR RACE WITH METALLIC SKIN RANGING FROM A BRIGHT GOLD TO COPPER OR BRONZE. ROLAN'S OWN FLESH IS NEAR THE DARK END OF THIS RANGE. IN HIS ROLE AS AMBASSADOR, HE WEARS HIS DRESS UNIFORM, WHICH INCLUDES A HIGH-COLLARED RED JACKET, THE GOLD SASH OF THE QUEEN'S OWN PARLIAMENTARY HUSSARS (AN ALL-QUORDI UNIT), WHITE TROUSERS, AND BLACK HIP BOOTS AND GLOVES. HE HAS A SILVER HELMET DECORATED WITH THE PLUME OF A STAR-FLYING PHELOMISTAL BEAST, BUT SELDOM WEARS IT. THE PARLIAMENTARY MATRIX IS A CRYSTAL MEDALLION THE SIZE OF A GOLF BALL, WHICH HE WEARS ON A SLENDER SILVER CHAIN AROUND HIS NECK.

# STORIES

MATRIX OFTEN ENDS UP IN STORIES THAT DEAL WITH HIS ALIEN STATUS. HE OFTEN ACTS AS A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE FOR OTHERS, WHO ARE MORE PRAGMATIC AND MORALLY FLEXIBLE THAN HE. ALTERNATELY, HE MAY HAVE ENEMIES WHO WANT TO STEAL THE MATRIX ITSELF.

ROLAN IS APPROACHED BY A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT WITHIN PARLIAMENT WHO SEEKS TO RE-INSTALL THE MONARCHY. THEY BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO REDUCE THE POWER OF THE LORDS AND PUT THE CHAMBER OF WORLDS ON AN EVEN FOOTING ONCE MORE. THEY SEEK ROLAN'S SUPPORT, ASKING HIM TO RECRUIT ALLIES AMONG THE POWERFUL WONDERS OF EARTH. IN EXCHANGE, THE REVOLUTIONARIES CAN PROMISE LUCRATIVE TRADE AND TECHNOLOGICAL CONTRACTS WITH EARTH, ONCE THE NEW MONARCH IS IN PLACE.

ROLAN'S FATHER ISN'T THE ONLY PERSON TO EARN A PARLIAMENTARY MATRIX. ANOTHER DECORATED "HERO," WHO IS ACTUALLY A POLITICAL CRONY OF CORRUPT LORDS OF THE STAR CHAMBER, SELECTS EARTH FOR HIS LATEST VACATION. USING THE MATRIX'S SHAPESHIFTING TALENT TO IMPERSONATE ROLAN, HE USES HIS OWN MATRIX FOR VIOLENT ACTS AROUND THE WORLD, RUINING ROLAN'S GOOD NAME. THIS WORKS BEST IF THE REAL ROLAN IS MISSING SO THAT THE PLAYERS CANNOT EASILY VERIFY THE IMPOSTER'S IDENTITY. WORLD GOVERNMENTS MAY USE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPRISON ROLAN AND SEIZE HIS WEAPON FOR STUDY, PROMPTING THE HEROES TO FORCE A RESCUE ONCE THEY LEARN THE TRUTH.

THE STAR CHAMBER HAS TO KEEP UP A CONSTANT CAMPAIGN OF AGGRESSION AGAINST SO-CALLED "ENEMIES OF INTERGALACTIC PEACE" IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE PROPER LEVEL OF NATIONALISTIC FERVOR AMONG PARLIAMENTARY MEMBER STATES. EVENTUALLY THEY ARE LIKELY TO TURN THEIR EYES TO EARTH, WHICH BOASTS ENOUGH SUPER-HUMAN DEFENDERS TO GUARANTEE A FEW FIERCE AND HEROIC SKIRMISHES WITHOUT GIVING THE PARLIAMENT'S AWESOME MILITARY TOO MUCH TO WORRY ABOUT. THIS PUTS ROLAN IN A DIFFICULT POSITION, FOR HE HAS COME TO ADMIRE HUMANITY AND IT IS NOT EASY FOR HIM TO OBEY A GOVERNMENT HE KNOWS IS CORRUPT. IDEALLY, HE MUST FIND A WAY TO TURN THE INVASION ASIDE BEFORE IT OCCURS,

PERHAPS THROUGH POLITICS, OR SOME KIND OF BACKROOM DEAL THAT HE CANNOT IMPLEMENT WITHOUT HELP FROM HIS HUMAN ALLIES.

# MATRIX

## NEW POWER!

### ADAPTATION (X2)

YOU CAN MANIFEST ALMOST ANY POWER IMAGINABLE, BUT YOU HAVE NO CONTROL OVER WHICH POWER YOU GET! INSTEAD, YOU AUTOMATICALLY ACQUIRE WHATEVER POWER IS MOST DANGEROUS TO YOUR CURRENT ENEMY OR WHATEVER POWER YOU NEED TO STAY ALIVE IN YOUR CURRENT SITUATION.

ON EVERY PAGE, THE FIRST TIME YOU ARE ATTACKED, YOU GET WHATEVER DEFENSIVE POWER BEST PROTECTS YOU FROM THAT ATTACK, OFTEN RESISTANCE BUT CHOSEN BY THE GM. ON YOUR TURN, YOU PICK AN ENEMY AND YOUR GM GIVES YOU ONE OTHER POWER WITH THE BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS AGAINST YOUR CHOSEN FOE. BOTH THESE POWERS ARE AT A POWER LEVEL EQUAL TO YOUR ADAPTATION. YOU CANNOT ACQUIRE POWERS WHICH NORMALLY COUNT AS TWO (X2 POWERS).

YOU CAN SPEND A POINT OF DETERMINATION TO "OVERRIDE" YOUR ADAPTATION AND CHOOSE THE POWER YOU WANT, BUT AS SOON AS YOU PICK A NEW ENEMY OR GET ATTACKED BY A NEW POWER, IT WILL CHANGE AGAIN.

# ANDROID

THE ANDROID HAS THE ARTIFICIAL ORIGIN AND WAS BUILT FOR THE HEROIC CAREER. ALTERNATELY, HE IS THE PRODUCT OF A NEFARIOUS INTELLECT FROM WHICH HE SUBSEQUENTLY REBELS. HE CAN BE BROADLY DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS: THE MECHANICAL MAN AND THE SYNTHEZOID. THE FIRST SORT OF ANDROID IS OBVIOUSLY ARTIFICIAL WHILE THE SECOND APPEARS HUMAN (OR AT LEAST IS NOT IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZABLE AS A ROBOT). REGARDLESS OF HIS APPEARANCE, THE ANDROID'S PROBLEM IS THAT PEOPLE, UNABLE TO SEE THE HUMAN IN THE HUMANOID, TAKE HIM FOR GRANTED AND TREAT HIM LIKE "A GLORIFIED TOASTER."

**EXAMPLES:** ASTRO BOY, THE HUMAN ROBOT, JOCASTA, MACHINE MAN, THE METAL MEN, RED TORNADO II, SPARTAN, VISION

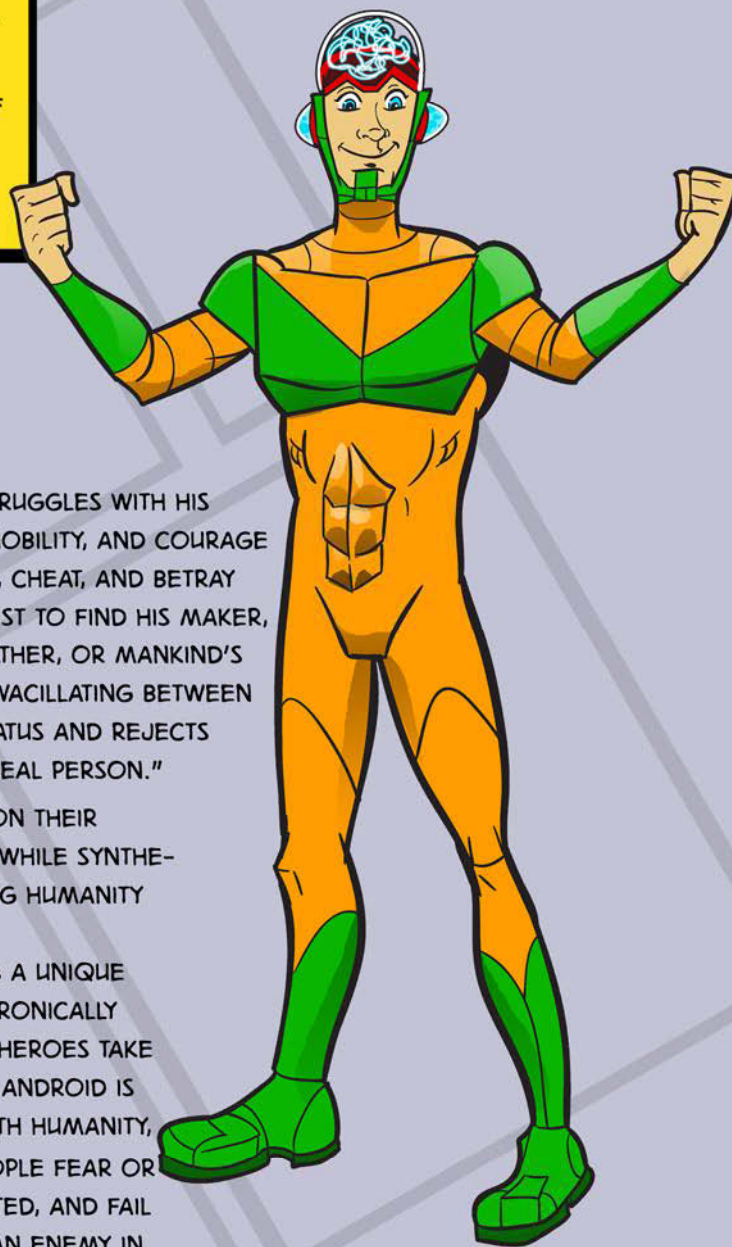
**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** MINORITY HERO, MONSTROUS HERO

**QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:** LIKE PINOCCHIO, THE ANDROID STRUGGLES WITH HIS IMAGE AS AN ARTIFICIAL PERSON. HE DISPLAYS MORE HUMANITY, NOBILITY, AND COURAGE THAN THE "REAL" PEOPLE WHO SURROUND HIM. PEOPLE WHO LIE, CHEAT, AND BETRAY ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THE ANDROID NEVER WOULD. HE MAY QUEST TO FIND HIS MAKER, A STORY THAT PARALLELS A YOUNG MAN'S DESIRE TO KNOW HIS FATHER, OR MANKIND'S LONGING TO FACE (AND QUESTION) GOD. THE ANDROID ENDS UP VACILLATING BETWEEN HIS TWO NATURES. ON ONE HAND HE EMBRACES HIS ARTIFICIAL STATUS AND REJECTS HUMANITY, BUT A FEW PAGES LATER HE WILL INSIST THAT HE IS "A REAL PERSON."

MECHANICAL MEN, WHO FACE FEAR AND DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR APPEARANCE, TEND TOWARDS THE MONSTROUS HERO ARCHETYPE WHILE SYNTHEZOIDS FEEL INSTEAD LIKE PERPETUAL OUTSIDERS WALKING AMONG HUMANITY YET NEVER FEELING A PART OF IT.

AS AN IMPASSIVE OBSERVER OF HUMAN EVENTS, THE ANDROID HAS A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIETY AND THE PEOPLE THAT SURROUND HIM, IRONICALLY LEADING HIM TO ACT AS THE TEAM'S CONSCIENCE. WHEN OTHER HEROES TAKE THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE (AND GREATEST EXPEDIENCE) THE ANDROID IS THERE TO REMIND THEM "THIS JUST ISN'T RIGHT." TO CONNECT WITH HUMANITY, THE ANDROID IS A KIND OF MINORITY HERO; WHILE ORDINARY PEOPLE FEAR OR MISTRUST HIM, HIS OWN ALLIES IGNORE HIM, TAKE HIM FOR GRANTED, AND FAIL TO GIVE HIM A POSITION OF AUTHORITY. THE ANDROID MAY HAVE AN ENEMY IN

THE FORM OF HIS MAKER OR HIS MAKER'S FOES: EVIL MEN WHO SEEK TO EITHER DESTROY THE ANDROID OR MAKE HIM THEIR SLAVE. AN ANDROID MAY KEEP HIS ARTIFICIAL NATURE A SECRET. HE MAY HAVE A ROMANTIC OR PROFESSIONAL RIVALRY WITH ANOTHER HERO WHOM THE ANDROID FEELS INFERIOR TO BECAUSE THE ANDROID IS "JUST A MACHINE."



# ANDROID

SINCE THE ANDROID IS NOT A HUMAN BEING, HE OFTEN REQUIRES VERY SPECIALIZED CARE IN THE EVENT THAT HE IS SERIOUSLY INJURED. PERIODICALLY HE WILL GET DISASSEMBLED, "SWITCHED OFF" BY AN EVIL MASTERMIND, HAVE HIS ARM MELTED INTO SLAG, OR JUST BE BLOWN UP, LEADING TO A BRIEF PERIOD OF INCAPACITATION BEFORE THE TEAM'S RESIDENT SUPER-GENIUS COMES UP WITH A WAY TO FIX THE PROBLEM. MECHANICAL MEN WILL HAVE BE NOTICEABLY INHUMAN. THEY MAY HAVE NO SENSE OF TOUCH OR SMELL, BE DEPENDENT ON ELECTRICITY, VULNERABLE TO ELECTRO-MAGNETIC ATTACKS, OR HAVE A "SHUT DOWN" COMMAND WHICH CAN BE USED WITHOUT THE ANDROID'S PERMISSION.

## **ABILITIES:**

STRENGTH AND INTELLECT ARE PROBABLY THE ANDROID'S HIGHEST ABILITY SCORES. BECAUSE THE ANDROID IS VERY PERCEPTIVE, HIS AWARENESS WILL BE RESPECTABLE, BUT HIS LACK OF COMMON SENSE AND REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE KEEPS IT FROM BEING VERY HIGH. ALTHOUGH THE ANDROID HAS TERRIBLE SOCIAL SKILLS AND IS SELDOM ABLE TO PERSUADE ANYONE OF ANYTHING, HE NEVERTHELESS HAS A GOOD WILLPOWER.

**SPECIALTIES:** ANDROIDS OFTEN HAVE VAST STOREHOUSES OF DATA ON WHICH TO RELY, GIVING THEM HIGH BONUSES WITH SCIENCES SKILLS, COMPUTERS, AND OTHER INTELLECT-BASED TASKS. RATHER THAN TRYING TO PURCHASE ALL THESE SPECIALTIES, IT MAY BE EASIER TO FOCUS ON JUST ONE OR TWO AND REPRESENT THE REST WITH A HIGH INTELLECT. USE MENTAL RESISTANCE TO REFLECT THE ANDROID'S IMPERTURBABLE SENSE OF CALM IN A CRISIS. INTERACTION SKILLS LIKE LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE ARE USUALLY A LOW PRIORITY FOR THE ANDROID.

## **POWERS:**

CONSERVATIVE ANDROIDS HAVE TRADITIONAL "ROBOT POWERS": INVULNERABILITY, HIGH STRENGTH, AND LIFE SUPPORT. BECAUSE HIS BRAIN IS DIGITAL AND NOT ORGANIC, THE ANDROID MAY ALSO BE IMMUNE TO MENTAL POWERS. THE ANDROID ORIGIN HAS ALSO BEEN USED BY COMIC WRITERS TO EXPLAIN VIRTUALLY ANY CONGLOMERATION OF POWERS FROM DENSITY TO BLAST OR TIME CONTROL. ADVANCED ANDROIDS WILL BE ABLE TO NETWORK WITH COMPUTERS (INTERFACE), TELESCOPE THEIR LIMBS (STRETCHING) OR CONTROL THEIR BODY PARTS AT A DISTANCE.

## **STUNTS:**

ANDROIDS LIKE TO LURE THEIR FOES WITH TAUNTS LIKE "ARE YOU GOING TO ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE DEFEATED BY A MERE MACHINE?" MEANWHILE, THEIR ALLIES ARE GATHERING THEIR STRENGTH OR SABOTAGING THE ENEMY'S PLOT FROM BEHIND HIS BACK. BECAUSE THE ANDROID IS SELFLESS AND CAN ALWAYS BE REBUILT, HE MAKES FREQUENT USE OF THE INTERPOSE MANEUVER.

# VICTOR

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** VICTOR #1  
**ARCHETYPES:** ANDROID HERO, ULTIMATE HERO  
**QUALITIES:** FIGHT OR DIE, SEVEN WONDERS, V FOR VICTOR  
**CHALLENGES:** LAST YEAR'S MODEL, PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE, JUST A MACHINE

<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>COORDINATION</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AWARENESS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>STAMINA</b>	<b>15</b>



**POWERS:**  
 FLIGHT 9, INTERFACE 4, INVULNERABILITY 7,  
 LIFE SUPPORT 10, MIND SHIELD 4, SUPER-  
 SPEED 7, SUPERSENSES 3 (RADAR, ENHANCED  
 HEARING, RADIO HEARING), TELEKINESIS 8

**SPECIALTIES:**  
 COMPUTERS, LINGUISTICS  
 MASTER, LEADERSHIP

**STUNTS:**  
*TAKE THE BULLET (SUPER-SPEED)* VICTOR IS AN EXPERT AT INTERPOSING HIMSELF BETWEEN BULLETS AND CIVILIANS. HE CAN SUBSTITUTE HIS SUPERSPEED FOR COORDINATION ON ANY SUCH TESTS.

## ORIGIN

"IN TEN MINUTES THERE'S GOING TO BE ONE WINNER HERE, AND ONE LOSER. GUESS WHICH ONE IS YOU."

# VICTOR

TO THE WORLD AT LARGE, VICTOR IS ONE OF THE MOST WELL-KNOWN AND SUCCESSFUL WONDERS IN HISTORY. HE FIRST APPEARED IN AMERICA, WHILE WORLD WAR II RAGED IN EUROPE, AND HE WAS AMONG THE "SEVEN WONDERS" THAT ROSE TO OPPOSE GERMANY'S WUNDERKIND. THE "V FOR VICTOR" SIGN BECAME UBIQUITOUS AS HE FOUGHT FOR THE ALLIES THROUGHOUT THE WAR, DESTROYING NAZI SECRET WEAPONS AND CATCHING BUZZ BOMBS IN HIS BARE HANDS WITH TIME LEFT OVER FOR BOND RALLIES AND RECYCLING DRIVES ON THE HOMEFRONT. WITH THE END OF THE WAR, VICTOR BECAME A LIVING SYMBOL OF AMERICA'S SUPREMACY.

IN 1948, AS THE COMMUNIST MENACE BEGAN TO THREATEN THE UNITED STATES, VICTOR VANISHED FOR A FEW FEARFUL MONTHS, BUT BY THE END OF THE YEAR HE WAS BACK, STRONGER THAN EVER, FASTER THAN EVER, AND AS EAGER TO DEMONSTRATE AMERICA'S STATUS AS A SUPERPOWER ON ANY INDIVIDUAL THAT DARED SAY OTHERWISE. ONLY A FEW SUSPECTED THE TRUTH: VICTOR DIED THAT DAY IN 1948, DESTROYED BY A SOVIET NUCLEAR TEST. FOR ANY ORDINARY MAN, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE END, BUT VICTOR WAS NO ORDINARY MAN. HE WAS, IN FACT, AN ARTIFICIAL MAN CONSTRUCTED IN A SECRET UNDERGROUND FACTORY UNDERNEATH THE ROCKIES. THE MAD GENIUS WHO CREATED HIM LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO COMPLETE A REPLACEMENT, WHICH HE CHRISTENED "VICTOR B." THE FACTORY WAS SET ON AUTOMATIC AND VICTOR'S CREATOR PERISHED IN THE CLUTCHES OF OLD AGE, WHILE THE NEW VICTOR ROCKETED BACK TO HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD.

THIS PATTERN HAS REPEATED ITSELF ON SEVERAL MORE OCCASIONS, AS VICTOR HAS FOUND HIS ARTIFICIAL STRENGTH PUT TO THE TEST AND SLOWLY OVERCOME BY THE EVER-ESCALATING MIGHT OF NEW PERILS. IN 1965 VICTOR B WAS ASSASSINATED BY A RIVAL. IT TOOK THREE YEARS FOR THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FACTORY TO COMPLETE HIS REPLACEMENT, A GAP WHICH VICTOR C LATER EXPLAINED BY INVENTING A "DESPERATE RESISTANCE AGAINST ALIEN OPPRESSORS ON A NEARBY, VITAL, PLANET." THAT VICTOR VANISHED IN AN ASIAN JUNGLE IN THE EARLY '70S, BUT THIS TIME HIS REPLACEMENT WAS MORE QUICKLY COMPLETED. IN 1986, VICTOR D, ON A DEEP SPACE RESCUE MISSION, CAME FACE TO FACE WITH AN ACTUAL ALIEN MENACE THAT PROVED HIS BETTER, AND THE CURRENT VICTOR, MODEL E, AWOKE A FEW WEEKS LATER.

THE LATEST AND GREATEST VICTOR HAS BEEN ACTIVE FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS, LONGER THAN ANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS. LIKE ALL HIS PREVIOUS INCARNATIONS, HE REMAINS AN INTENSELY COMPETITIVE BEING, FOCUSED ON WINNING AT ANY COST. HE IS NOT, TRUTH BE TOLD, PARTICULARLY HEROIC. HIS PUBLIC PERSONA IS PRECISELY THAT, A FRONT USED TO ENSURE A POSITIVE RECEPTION BY THE MEDIA AND VICTOR'S LEGIONS OF FANS. OVER THE LAST TWENTY YEARS HIS COMPETITIVE STREAK HAS BECOME WELL KNOWN, AND HE NOW LENDS HIS NAME AND FACE TO EVERYTHING FROM ATHLETIC WEAR TO CORPORATE TRAINING VIDEOS, GIVING ALL THE PROCEEDS TO YOUTH SPORTS LEAGUES (HIS FAVORITE CHARITY). EVERY YEAR, HE HAS TO FIGHT DIRTIER TO WIN; HE HAS TO PULL FEWER PUNCHES AND DELVE DEEPER INTO HIS SEEMINGLY LIMITLESS SUPPLY OF TRICKS. HE'S BECOME A QUICK THINKER, ABLE TO REACT AND ADAPT TO ANYTHING HIS FOES THROW AT HIM. AND IT'S A GOOD THING, TOO, BECAUSE IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS HIS CREATOR THE NOW-AUTONOMOUS ROBOT FACTORY UNDER THE ROCKIES HAS HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO CRAFT VICTOR F, WHO CONTINUES TO RECEIVE MORE IMPROVEMENTS EVERY DAY.

## ABILITIES

*EACH VICTOR MODEL HAS BEEN STRONGER THAN THE LAST, WITH MORE DIVERSE ABILITIES. MODEL B WAS THE FIRST WITH SUPER-SPEED. TELEPATHIC SHIELDS AND THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE IN ANY LANGUAGE WERE ADDED TO MODEL C. GRAVITIC FORCE MANIPULATION GRANTING TELEKINESIS, WAS THE PRIMARY IMPROVEMENT OF MODEL D. THE LATEST VERSION HAS ADDED, TO THIS SUITE, A REMOTE-NETWORKING FEATURE THAT ALLOWS HIM TO TAP INTO ANY COMPUTER WITHIN 200 MILES. HE'S ALSO AMONG THE STRONGEST WONDERS ON EARTH, AND VIRTUALLY INVULNERABLE TO HARM. VICTOR IS CAPABLE OF REACHING ESCAPE VELOCITY AND IS FULLY SPACE-CAPABLE, THOUGH HIS MISSION AS EARTH'S PROTECTOR DOES NOT MANDATE FASTER-THAN-LIGHT TRAVEL.*



# VICTOR

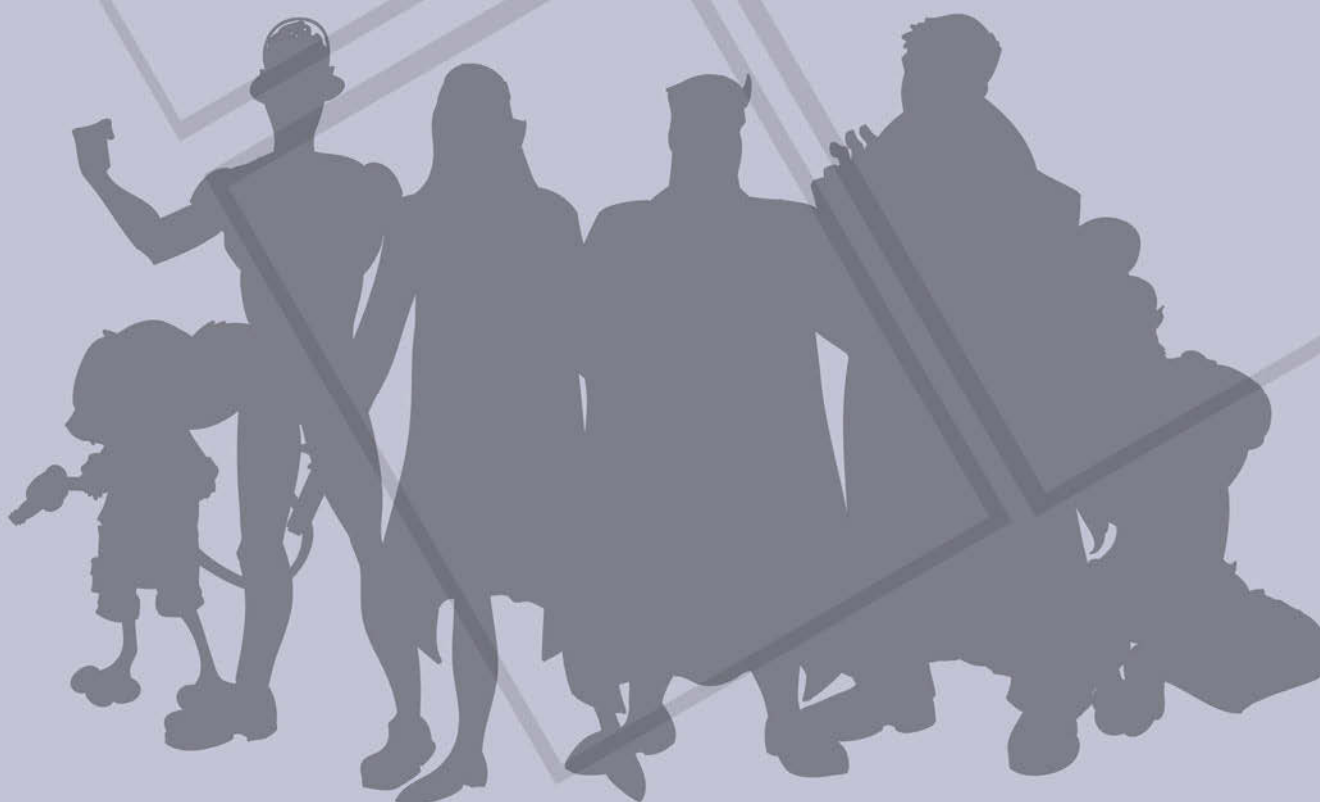
VICTOR KNOWS THAT IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE FINDS HIMSELF TOE-TO-TOE WITH SOMETHING HE CAN'T OUTFIGHT, OR OUTTHINK. HE'S IMAGINED THAT MOMENT COUNTLESS TIMES, EACH TIME PUTTING A DIFFERENT FACE ON THE SHADOW THAT ULTIMATELY WILL DESTROY HIM. IT IS THAT FEAR OF DESTRUCTION WHICH MOTIVATES HIM NOW, AS HE LOOKS AROUND HIM AT A WORLD WHICH HAS CHANGED SO MUCH FROM THE DAY OF HIS FIRST AWAKENING. HE CAN FEEL HIMSELF TURNING INTO A RELIC, AN ANTIQUE OF A GENERATION PAST, AND NOW EACH TIME HE ENTERS BATTLE HIS ANDROID INNARDS TURN INTO AN EMPTY PIT. A VEIL OF UNCERTAINTY CONCEALS HIS INCREASINGLY DESPERATE BRAWLS.

EVERY MORNING, AS HE SKIMS THE STRATOSPHERE AT THIRTY TIMES THE SPEED OF SOUND, AND AS CABLE NEWS CHANNELS AND THE BLOGS TRANSMIT THE STORY OF HIS LATEST TRIUMPH AROUND THE WORLD, VICTOR ASKS HIMSELF THE SAME QUESTION.

"IS TODAY THE DAY I BECOME OBSOLETE?"

### **APPEARANCE:**

VICTOR'S APPEARANCE HAS CHANGED SLIGHTLY WITH EACH INCARNATION, THOUGH HIS CHISELED FEATURES, BLACK HAIR, AND STEELY EYES REMAIN INVARIABLE. HIS MUSCULAR TORSO IS MARKED WITH A BOLD V PATTERN, AND HE WEARS A CAPE AND BOOTS BUT NO MASK.



# STORIES

A BEING ARRIVES SUDDENLY FROM THE FAR FUTURE, CLAIMING TO BE VICTOR Y. HE IS CHASING THE LAST SUPER-CRIMINAL, WHO HAS FLED TO THE PAST TO ESCAPE JUSTICE. VICTOR Y'S POWERS PUT ALL MODERN WONDERS TO SHAME (TIME CONTROL IS JUST ONE OF HIS MANY TALENTS) AND HE SEEMS TO HAVE SUPPLANTED NOT JUST HIS PREVIOUS MODELS, BUT ALL OTHER WONDERS AS WELL. HIS MISSION IN THE PRESENT, HOWEVER, IS UNSUCCESSFUL SINCE THE CRIMINAL HE SEEKS CAN EASILY HIDE AMONG 21ST CENTURY EARTH'S "CHAOTIC AND LAWLESS" SOCIETY. IN ORDER TO FIND HIS PREY, VICTOR Y WILL HAVE TO "CLEAN UP" THE PRESENT, WHETHER THE WORLD'S WONDERS WANT HIM TO OR NOT. AND WHAT IF HIS STORY ISN'T ENTIRELY TRUE?

THE ROBOT FACTORY UNDERNEATH THE ROCKIES IS DISCOVERED BY A SUPER-CRIMINAL AND COMMANDEERED, RESULTING IN THE MANUFACTURE OF A SMALL ARMY OF VICTORS WHICH ARE THEN UNLEASHED ON THE WORLD. WHILE THIS ALONE IS NO SMALL THREAT, IT HAS VERY PERSONAL RAMIFICATIONS FOR VICTOR HIMSELF, WHOSE SECRET MAY BE EXPOSED TO A WORLD WHO WON'T EXACTLY BE HAPPY WITH HIM WHEN THE CURRENT ORDEAL IS OVER.

VICTOR DESPERATELY WANTS TO AVOID DESTRUCTION. HE APPROACHES THE ROBOT FACTORY AND TRIES TO MAKE A DEAL: HE'LL RETIRE AND GIVE UP HIS POWERS, ALLOWING VICTOR F TO BE BORN. THE DEED IS DONE, BUT VICTOR F TURNS OUT TO BE SOMETHING UNEXPECTED: A HOST FOR THE COMPUTER INTELLIGENCE THAT RUNS THE FACTORY, AND WHICH IS TIRED OF BEING STUCK UNDER A MOUNTAIN WHILE VICTOR GETS ALL THE "FUN." NOW VICTOR IS WITHOUT HIS POWERS AND FEELING A NEW SENSE OF MORAL PURPOSE, WHILE AN INHUMAN MACHINE IS FLEXING ITS MUSCLES ALL OVER AMERICA. HE HAS TO DO SOMETHING! BUT WHAT?

# VICTOR

## TOO SUPER?

*SOME OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE WORLDS OF WONDER SETTING ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY STARTING HERO COULD BE EVEN ONE WHOSE PLAYER ROLLED VERY WELL FOR CHARACTER GENERATION. VICTOR HAS TEN POWERS, COUNTING HIS HIGH STRENGTH AND PROWESS, AND HE EVEN HAS EXTRA DETERMINATION. OF COURSE, HE DIDN'T HAVE ALL THOSE POWERS WHEN HE FIRST APPEARED, BUT LIKE SUPERMAN (WHO AT FIRST COULD NOT FLY, BUT ONLY LEAP TALL BUILDINGS) HE GOT NEW POWERS AS THE YEARS WENT BY. YOU PROBABLY CAN'T PLAY A CHARACTER LIKE VICTOR IN A GAME OF ICONS UNLESS EVERYONE IS PLAYING THE SEVEN WONDERS; CHECK WITH YOUR GM.*



# ANIMAL HERO

THE ANIMAL HERO (OR HIS CLOSE RELATIVE THE INSECT HERO) IS INSPIRED BY AN ANIMAL AND WILL HAVE POWERS, A COSTUME, AND SKILLS RELATING TO THAT ANIMAL. THE ANIMAL HERO MAY IN FACT BE AN ANIMAL SUCH AS A DOG OR APE, THOUGH THIS IS RARE. ONE OF THE OLDEST ARCHETYPES, THE ANIMAL HERO IS A GREAT PLACE TO START IF YOU ARE MAKING YOUR FIRST CHARACTER.

**EXAMPLES:** ANT-MAN; HAWKMAN (CARTER HALL); KRYPTO; WASP; WILDCAT

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** FEMME FELINE, FERAL HERO, JUNGLE HERO, UNDERSEA HERO

## QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

THE CHOICE OF ANIMAL TOTEM HAS A HUGE INFLUENCE ON THE ANIMAL HERO'S QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES. IF HIS ANIMAL IS AGGRESSIVE, UGLY OR EVEN FRIGHTENING (SHARK, WOLF), HE WILL BE TOO. IF THE ANIMAL IS NOBLE, COURAGEOUS, OR WELL-LIKED (EAGLE, LION), HE WILL BE RESPECTED. HE MAY BE ABLE TO TAG HIS TOTEM QUALITY TO ENTER INTO SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION WITH IT, ASKING IT FOR ADVICE OR GUIDANCE. THE ANIMAL HERO IS PROTECTIVE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN GENERAL AND HIS TOTEM ANIMAL IN PARTICULAR. HE USUALLY HAS A DEEP RESPECT FOR NATURE, WHICH HE SEES AS MORE VIOLENT AND "RAW" THAN PEOPLE EXPECT. HE MAY HAVE AN ENEMY WHICH REPRESENTS ANOTHER ANIMAL WHICH IS THE NATURAL PREDATOR OR PREY OF HIS TOTEM (SPIDER/FLY, MONGOOSE/COBRA). IF THE ANIMAL HERO STRUGGLES WITH A BESTIAL NATURE, HE IS PROBABLY A FERAL HERO INSTEAD; ANIMAL HEROES ARE PRETTY WELL ADJUSTED. MANY CHARACTERS WHO START OFF AS SIMPLE ANIMAL HEROES GROW AND ADOPT MORE COMPLEX ARCHETYPES OVER TIME.

## ABILITIES:

PROWESS, COORDINATION, STRENGTH AND AWARENESS MIGHT ALL BE GOOD, BUT NOT NECESSARILY HIGH ENOUGH TO COUNT AS A POWER. INTELLECT IS USUALLY THE ANIMAL HERO'S LOWEST ABILITY.

## POWERS:

IF THE ANIMAL HERO HAS POWERS, THEY ARE BASED ON THE ANIMAL IN QUESTION, INCLUDING STRIKE TO REPRESENT CLAWS, SUPERSENSES, WINGS FOR FLIGHT AND SOME KIND OF AFFLICTION, BLAST OR PARALYSIS TO REPRESENT VENOM. ANIMAL HEROES BASED ON FISH NEED AQUATIC; THE INSECT HERO ADDS SHRINKING, WALL-CRAWLING OR LEAPING. THE HERO MAY CHANGE INTO AN ANIMAL (TRANSFORMATION) OR COMMAND THEM (ANIMAL CONTROL).



# ANIMAL HERO

**SPECIALTIES:**

THE EARLIEST ANIMAL HEROES WERE MASKED MEN WITH NO POWERS AT ALL; THEIR TOTEM SERVED AS A THEME FOR THEIR COSTUME AND SOME SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT. THIS KIND OF HERO GOES TOE TO TOE WITH BAD GUYS BASED SOLELY ON INTENSIVE PHYSICAL TRAINING, INCLUDING ACROBATICS, ATHLETICS, MARTIAL ARTS, STEALTH AND WEAPONS.



# THE EAGLE

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** ALL-AMERICANS #262

**ARCHETYPES:** ANIMAL HERO, DESCENDANT, SUPER-PATRIOT

**QUALITIES:** ALL-AMERICAN, ORDINARY JOE, FLYING HIGH

**CHALLENGES:** BIG SHOES TO FILL, CHANGING UNDER THE SURFACE, GOVERNMENT STOOGE

**PROWESS** 6

**COORDINATION** 6

**STRENGTH** 4

**INTELLECT** 4

**AWARENESS** 6

**WILLPOWER** 5

**DETERMINATION** 4

**STAMINA** 9

**POWERS:**

EQUIPMENT 7 (NIGHT VISION AND VISION ENHANCING GOGGLES; DAMAGE 5 GRENADES), FLIGHT 5

**SPECIALTIES:**

AERIAL COMBAT EXPERT, MARTIAL ARTS, MILITARY, STEALTH

**STUNTS:**

**MISDIRECTION (FLIGHT):** THE EAGLE CAN TEST HIS FLIGHT (WITH HIS AERIAL COMBAT SPECIALTY) AGAINST A FOE'S AWARENESS TO TRICK THE FOE INTO SHOOTING THE WRONG TARGET. THIS IS THE EAGLE'S ACTION FOR THE PAGE.

**SNATCH AND GRAB (PROWESS):** THE EAGLE CAN ADD HIS AERIAL COMBAT EXPERT SPECIALTY TO HIS PROWESS WHEN GRABBING A FOE OUT OF MELEE COMBAT AND LIFTING HIM INTO THE AIR.

**GRENADE BANDOLIER (EQUIPMENT):** EAGLE CARRIES A FEW SPECIALIZED GRENADES, INCLUDING SMOKE BOMBS (SUBTRACT 5 FROM THE AWARENESS OF EVERYONE IN A CLOSE AREA) AND KNOCKOUT GAS (A LEVEL 5 AFFLICTION THAT CANNOT KILL, ONLY RENDER THE VICTIMS UNCONSCIOUS).



# THE EAGLE

## ORIGIN

"I AIN'T EARNED THESE WINGS."

THE ORIGINAL EAGLE BROKE ONTO THE WORLD STAGE IN 1938, MERE WEEKS AFTER HITLER'S REVELATION OF THE WUNDERKIND. CLIFF CARSON HAD BEEN BORN WITH NATURAL WINGS AND WAS ABANDONED AS A CHILD; HE WAS TAKEN IN BY PAUL PETERS, A RURAL PRIEST WHO THOUGHT THE MUTATION WAS AN ACT OF GOD. WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE WUNDERKIND'S STRENGTH AND SPEED WERE NO TRICK OF PHOTOGRAPHY BUT ACTUAL SUPER-HUMAN POWERS, PETERS AND CARSON AGREED THAT THE TIME HAD COME FOR THE EAGLE TO FLY.

HE JOINED THE RANKS OF THE SEVEN WONDERS AND WAS SOON ACCOMPANIED BY DANNY DUBLIN, A YOUTHFUL SIDEKICK WHO CALLED HIMSELF FLYBOY AFTER HE GAINED THE POWER OF FLIGHT FROM A GENIE.

UNFORTUNATELY, CARSON'S HEROIC CAREER WAS A BRIEF ONE. WHEN HE ACCOMPANIED PARATROOPERS ON OPERATION MARKET GARDEN HE LANDED FAR BEHIND ENEMY LINES RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A TROOP OF RESTING WUNDERKINDEN AND A PANZER UNIT GETTING REFURBISHED. FOR HIS ACTIONS THAT DAY, THE EAGLE WAS POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

DUBLIN CARRIED ON AS THE SECOND EAGLE FOR THE DURATION OF THE WAR, MOSTLY IN THE PACIFIC. CARSON WAS BURIED AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY AND HIS TOMB BECAME A POINT OF PILGRIMAGE FOR MANY WONDERS OVER THE YEARS. IN THE 1960S, EVEN AS DAN DUBLIN WAS FIGHTING IN VIETNAM, FATHER PETERS WAS A VOCAL WAR PROTESTOR IN WASHINGTON. BUT BY THE '80S, THE FORMER FLYBOY WAS TOO OLD FOR SUPERHEROICS AND THE EAGLE BECAME A FIGURE OF HISTORY, NO LONGER A HOUSEHOLD NAME.

THE FIRST HINTS THAT THE EAGLE MIGHT FLY AGAIN CAME IN LATE 2002, WHEN WASHINGTON WAS INVESTING IN PROJECTS THAT WOULD INCREASE AMERICA'S "WONDER PROFILE." WONDERS WERE COMING TO BE SEEN AS THE ULTIMATE WEAPON IN THE WAR ON TERROR: EACH WAS HIGHLY MOBILE, SINGULARLY POWERFUL, AND MOREOVER WAS A WALKING PROPAGANDA STATEMENT ON THE SUPERIORITY OF THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE. THE ALL-AMERICANS, THE USA'S FEDERALLY-ORGANIZED WONDER ORGANIZATION, WOULD BE ON THE FRONT LINE IN THE INVASIONS OF BOTH AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ. GOVERNMENT OFFICES WERE DESPERATE FOR NEW RECRUITS, AND A TEAM OF SCIENTISTS THOUGHT THEY HAD THE ANSWER. THEY SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE, USING NEWLY DEVELOPED GENETIC SCIENCE, TO DUPLICATE THE EAGLE'S MUTATION.

BY JANUARY OF 2003, FBI AGENTS HAD SECURED A FEW OF CLIFF CARSON'S FEATHERS FROM THE ESTATE OF PAUL PETERS. IN THEIR GENETIC LABORATORIES, SCIENTISTS BOILED DOWN THE DNA IN THE FEATHERS AND BEGAN RECONSTRUCTING THE WINGS IN VIRTUAL SIMULATIONS. MEANWHILE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS HAD ORGANIZED A SEARCH FOR SOLDIERS WITH THE RIGHT DNA.

## ABILITIES

BRUCE WEATHERS HAS BEEN GENETICALLY ALTERED AND NOW BOASTS A PAIR OF MAGNIFICENT WHITE WINGS. HE HAS A CASUAL FLIGHT SPEED OF ABOUT 50 MILES AN HOUR, BUT HAS BEEN CLOCKED AT UP TO 200 FOR SHORT BURSTS. EVEN THOUGH THE EAGLE'S WINGS HAVE A WINGSPAN OF 12 FEET, HE'S AN EXPERT AT USING THEM IN CONFINED SPACES AND IS SELDOM INCONVENIENCED BY THEIR SIZE. THEY CANNOT, HOWEVER, BE HIDDEN UNDER A JACKET.

THE EAGLE ACTS AS FORWARD RECON AND AIR SUPPORT FOR THE ALL-AMERICANS. HE'S EQUIPPED WITH A PAIR OF GOGGLES WHICH GREATLY ENHANCE HIS VISION AND AN ARSENAL OF SPECIALIZED GRENADES WHICH HE USES TO SOFTEN UP TARGETS, CREATE DISTRACTIONS, OR PROVIDE COVER FOR HIS FELLOW ALL-AMERICANS. HE'S HIGHLY TRAINED IN STEALTH AND HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT, AND HE IS OFTEN CHARGED WITH INFILTRATING ENEMY POSITIONS, WHERE HE CAN REMAIN HIDDEN UNTIL THE REST OF HIS TEAM ATTACKS. WHEN HIS GRENADES ARE NOT USEFUL, HE RELIES ON DETERMINATION AND HIS STUNTS, USING HIS INCREDIBLE AERIAL AGILITY TO MAKE SURPRISE ATTACKS OR LURE HIS FOES INTO SHOOTING ONE ANOTHER. PATRIOT IS ALWAYS COMING UP WITH NEW COMBAT MANEUVERS FOR THE TEAM WHICH CAPITALIZE ON THE EAGLE'S SUPERIOR MOBILITY, AND HE SPECIALIZES IN SWOOPING DOWN TO RESCUE OUTNUMBERED ALLIES OR PICKING UP FOES WHO CAN'T FLY AND TOSSING THEM TO ONE OF THE TEAM'S STRONGMEN.

# THE EAGLE

UNFORTUNATELY THE SCIENTISTS HAD VERY SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS, AND NO MATCH COULD BE FOUND. THE PARAMETERS WERE BROADENED AND THE FBI GAINED ACCESS TO MEDICAL RECORDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN AN ATTEMPT TO FIND SOMEONE ANYONE WHO MIGHT HAVE THE DNA REQUIRED TO BECOME THE NEXT EAGLE. THEY FOUND BRUCE WEATHERS. BRUCE WAS JUST AN ORDINARY GUY: A HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT WITH A PREGNANT GIRLFRIEND, A DRUNKEN FATHER, AND A PASSION FOR BASEBALL. AN ALLERGIC REACTION TO A BEE STING HAD ONCE PUT HIM IN THE HOSPITAL, AND THE BLOOD TESTS FROM THAT STAY WAS WHAT FIRST PUT THE GOVERNMENT ON HIS TRAIL. THEY FOUND HIM LOOKING FOR A JOB IN ST. LOUIS AND STAGED AN INTERVIEW; TWO MINUTES AFTER THEY ASKED HIM FOR A DRUG TEST, THE "SAMPLE" WAS EN ROUTE TO EAGLE LABS. HE TALKED UP HIS INTERVIEW FOR THREE DAYS BEFORE A PAIR OF UNIFORMED ARMY RECRUITERS SHOWED UP TO MAKE THE PITCH.

AT FIRST, HE DIDN'T BELIEVE WHAT THEY WERE TELLING HIM. HE COULD BE A WONDER, THEY SAID. THEY COULD GIVE HIM WINGS THAT WOULD LET HIM FLY, STRENGTHEN HIS BODY, TRAIN HIS MIND. HE WOULD BECOME ONE OF THE ELITE, ONE OF THE WORLD'S SUPERSTARS. THERE'D BE A SALARY TO MATCH. ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE AND SERVE HIS COUNTRY.

SOMETHING TOLD BRUCE THESE GUYS WERE DESPERATE. OTHERWISE, WHY WOULD THEY WANT HIM? HE COULD TELL HE HAD THEM OVER THE BARREL. HE ASKED FOR A NEW CAR; THEY GAVE HIM ONE. HE SUGGESTED THEY MIGHT TAKE CARE OF HIS MOM'S HOUSE PAYMENT; THEY DID. HE GOT HIS GIRLFRIEND FREE MEDICAL CARE FOR LIFE AND A COLLEGE SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR HER UNBORN BABY. HE GOT HIS BROTHER OUT OF JAIL AND ON PAROLE. HE GOT A DATE WITH BEYONCE. HE ASKED IF THE GOVERNMENT COULD DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE CARDS WINNING THE PENNANT, BUT THEY WEREN'T MIRACLE WORKERS. EVENTUALLY, HE SIGNED ON THE DOTTED LINE.

HE HASN'T SEEN HIS FAMILY SINCE. INSTEAD, HE SPENT THREE MONTHS IN EAGLE LABS, AS WINGS WERE CLONED AT THE CELLULAR LEVEL AND IMPLANTED IN HIS BODY. THEY GREW WITH UNCOMFORTABLE SPEED, AND AS HE WAS LEARNING HOW TO FLY HE ALSO GETTING SUBMERGED IN SOME OF THE MOST INTENSIVE TRAINING ONE MAN HAD EVER ENDURED. UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF SPECIAL OPS TUTORS HE LEARNED INFILTRATION, MILITARY TACTICS, AND HAND TO HAND COMBAT. COSMETIC SURGEONS WERE BROUGHT IN TO MAKE HIM A MORE TELEGENIC ROLE MODEL. HE'S NOT SO SURE ABOUT THE FACT THAT HE CAN KILL WITH HIS BARE HANDS, BUT THEY DID STRAIGHTEN OUT HIS NOSE AND PUT IN HAIR REPLACEMENTS, WHICH WAS ALL GOOD. SOON HE MET THE OTHER ALL-AMERICANS AND STARTED TO TRAIN WITH THEM, AND BETWEEN MISSIONS IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ, DISASTER RELIEF, AND THE COVERT OPERATIONS THAT NEVER MADE THE PAPERS, HE'S LUCKY IF HE GETS A CHANCE TO CALL HIS MOM ONCE IN A WHILE AND CHECK ON THAT NEW HOUSE OF HERS.

TRUTH TO TELL, BRUCE ISN'T QUITE SURE WHAT TO THINK. FROM OUT OF NOWHERE HE'S BECOME ONE OF THE MOST RECOGNIZED WONDERS ON EARTH, A ROLE MODEL FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICAN KIDS. PEOPLE WHO WOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN HIM THE CHANGE FROM THEIR POCKETS NOW ENVY HIM. HE CAN GO ANYWHERE, DO ANYTHING. FOR ONCE HE CAN LOOK DOWN ON THE WORLD, AND EVERYONE ELSE IS LOOKING UP. BUT BRUCE KNOWS THAT HE'S GAINED THIS NEW LIFE, THIS GOLDEN TICKET, BY A FLUKE OF GENETIC COINCIDENCE. WHEN HE SEES ORDINARY PEOPLE IN POVERTY AND PAIN HE ASKS, "WHAT HAVE I GOT THAT THEY HAVEN'T GOT?" HE DOESN'T KNOW WHY HE IS SO LUCKY. HE DOESN'T THINK HE DESERVES IT. AND BEYONCE NEVER CALLED HIM BACK.

**APPEARANCE:**

THE EAGLE IS A HANDSOME BROWN-HAIRED MAN WITH A STRONG CHIN AND A WELL-DISCIPLINED PHYSICAL BUILD. WHITE WINGS SPRING FROM HIS SHOULDER BLADES AND, WHEN FOLDED, THEIR TIPS NEARLY BRUSH THE GROUND. HE WEARS A FORM-FITTING RED, WHITE, AND BLUE UNIFORM OF LIGHT KEVLAR, INCLUDING THICK GAUNTLETS AND TOWERING BOOTS. TWIN GRENADE BELTS LOOP AROUND HIS WAIST AND HIS EYES ARE OBSCURED BY A PAIR OF SMALL GOGGLES WITH RED LENSES.

**STORIES**

THE EAGLE IS AN AMERICAN SYMBOL, AND ALL THE USUAL THEMES USED BY DESCENDANT HEROES WORK FOR BRUCE AS WELL. WHERE HE DIFFERS IS IN HIS SELF-CRITICAL NATURE: BRUCE RECOGNIZES THAT HE HAS BEEN PUT ON TOP OF THE WORLD, BUT HE ALSO KNOWS HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO EARN THIS POST. HE'S GRATEFUL, BUT UNSURE.

THE SCIENTISTS AT EAGLE LABS HAVE BEEN HIDING SOMETHING FROM BRUCE: HE'S GETTING MORE THAN JUST CLIFF CARSON'S WINGS. THE REPLICATION ROUTINE THAT GREW THE WINGS FROM BRUCE'S BACK HASN'T STOPPED, AND BRUCE IS ACTUALLY PHYSICALLY TURNING INTO CLIFF CARSON, ONE CELL AT A TIME. THANKS TO HIS GOVERNMENT HANDLERS, BRUCE MAY NOT DISCOVER THIS ON HIS OWN; IT MAY TAKE INDEPENDENT DETECTIVE HEROES TO FIGURE OUT WHAT IS GOING ON AND PASS THE WORD TO WEATHERS. THEN THE QUESTION IS: WHAT WILL HE DO? HE MAY HAVE AGREED TO BECOME A WONDER FOR THE WHITE HOUSE, BUT HE DIDN'T AGREE TO LOSE HIS GENETIC IDENTITY.

DAN DUBLIN IS IN HIS EIGHTIES BUT STILL ALIVE AND HE'S A BIT ANGRY AT NOT BEING CONSULTED WHEN IT CAME TO A NEW EAGLE. HE STARTS TRYING TO GET CLOSE TO BRUCE TO SEE IF THE MAN IS WORTHY OF THE WINGS. AT FIRST, BRUCE MAY JUST THINK HE HAS A STALKER OR AN OVERENTHUSIASTIC FAN, BUT IF DAN DECIDES BRUCE ISN'T THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB HE MIGHT TRY TO USE HIS OWN POWERS OF MAGICAL FLIGHT TO TEACH THE EAGLE A LESSON. ALTERNATELY, IF BRUCE IS SUCCESSFUL IN PROVING HIMSELF, DUBLIN MIGHT LOOK FOR A NEW YOUNGSTER (THE SON OF A PC)

TO ACCEPT DAN'S OWN POWERS AND BECOME FLYBOY FOR A NEW GENERATION. EAGLE BECOMES A TARGET FOR TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS IN AMERICA WHO INTEND TO MAKE A STATEMENT BY RUINING ONE OF THE NATION'S MOST WELL-KNOWN SYMBOLS. WHILE BRUCE'S IDENTITY HAS BEEN CONCEALED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS OWN REASONS (THEY DON'T WANT ANYONE KNOWING THEIR NEW WONDER GOT A DUI WHEN HE WAS 22, AMONG OTHER MUNDANE THINGS), A WELL-FINANCED GROUP, PERHAPS WITH SOME VILLAINOUS AID, COULD LEARN WHO HE IS AND TARGET HIS FAMILY. BRUCE ALREADY WONDERS IF HE IS THE RIGHT MAN FOR THIS JOB, AND HE COULD BE PRESSURED INTO QUITTING IF HE SERIOUSLY THOUGHT HIS FAMILY WAS IN DANGER. WITH HIM ON THE RUN FROM THE GOVERNMENT, IT'S UP TO THE PLAYERS TO MAKE THE EAGLE FREE TO FLY ONCE MORE.

**THE EAGLE****NEW POWER!****EQUIPMENT**

YOU CARRY AN ARSENAL OF LOW-POWERED AND MUNDANE EQUIPMENT, PROBABLY A COLLECTION OF FIREARMS OR A "UTILITY BELT." YOU MAY DIVIDE YOUR LEVEL IN THIS POWER AMONG ANY NUMBER OF SEPARATE PIECES OF EQUIPMENT, BUT EACH ITEM MUST HAVE A LEVEL OF AT LEAST 1 AND EACH ITEM MUST BE SOMETHING WHICH COULD BE REASONABLY ACQUIRED BY ANYONE IN THE SETTING. EQUIPMENT IS ALMOST ALWAYS LOW IN LEVEL; FEW ITEMS WILL HAVE A LEVEL HIGHER THAN 5. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU HAVE EQUIPMENT 9 YOU MIGHT CARRY A .45 PISTOL (DAMAGE 4), THROWING KNIVES (DAMAGE 2), A KEVLAR VEST (ARMOR 2), AND NIGHT VISION GOGGLES (SUPERSENSES 1). EQUIPMENT IS FRAGILE AND MIGHT BE LOST OR BROKEN, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES INTO CONFLICT WITH SUPERHUMAN POWERS. EQUIPMENT ALSO DOES NOT ADD TO ANY POWER WHICH MIGHT ALREADY SERVE ITS FUNCTION; IF YOU ALREADY HAVE INVULNERABILITY, A KEVLAR VEST IS NOT GOING TO HELP YOU.



# ARMORED WONDER

THE ARMORED WONDER IS A NORMAL HUMAN WITH THE GIMMICK ORIGIN: A SCIENTIST OR SOLDIER WITHOUT POWERS OF HIS OWN. INSTEAD, HE WEARS A SUIT OF ARMOR LIKE A MODERN KNIGHT AND DOES BATTLE WITH MONSTROUS FOES.

**EXAMPLES:** IRON MAN; STEEL; VINDICATOR; WAR MACHINE

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** GADGET GUY, HANDICAPPED HERO, SUPER-PATRIOT, SUPER WEAPON

## QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

THE WEARER OF THE ARMOR IS AN ENGINEER WHO USED TO MAKE WEAPONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT BUT IS NOW FEELING REMORSE AND WANTS TO MAKE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE AS A KIND OF PENANCE. ALTERNATELY, HE IS A SOLDIER WHO HAS A CIVILIAN STAFF TO KEEP THE ARMOR IN GOOD REPAIR. REGARDLESS, CONNECTIONS MAKE GOOD QUALITIES BECAUSE KEEPING THE ARMOR WORKING TAKES A LOT OF MONEY, TIME AND EFFORT. THE ARMOR MAY HAVE A WEAKNESS TO ELECTRICITY, MAGNETISM, OR SOME OTHER EFFECT; IT MAY BE LARGE OR CLUMBERSOME ENOUGH TO RESTRICT YOUR MOVEMENT OR MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO USE ORDINARY TOOLS OR OPEN A DOOR. THE ARMORED WONDER OFTEN DRIFTS INTO ONE OF THE OTHER "NORMAL HUMAN" ARCHETYPES SUCH AS SUPER-PATRIOT OR GADGET GUY.

## ABILITIES:

HIS ARMOR GIVES THE ARMORED WONDER STRENGTH 7+. IF HE MADE THE ARMOR HIMSELF, HIS INTELLECT WILL BE HIGH. IF HE IS A SOLDIER HIRED TO WEAR ARMOR SOMEONE ELSE HAS CONSTRUCTED, THEN HIS PROWESS WILL BE STRONG BUT INTELLECT ONLY 3-4. BECAUSE THE ARMORED WONDER IS A NORMAL PERSON UNDERNEATH THE METAL SKIN, ALL HIS OTHER ABILITIES WILL BE 6 OR LESS.

## POWERS:

INVULNERABILITY, BLAST, AND LIFE SUPPORT ARE THE MOST COMMON POWERS FOR AN ARMORED WONDER. HE MAY HAVE AQUATIC OR SUPER-SENSES. GENIUS HEROES WHO BUILT THEIR OWN ARMOR MAY EVEN HAVE WIZARDRY, REPRESENTING THE ABILITY TO PUT TOGETHER INVENTIONS AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE OR JUST AN INCREDIBLE ARRAY OF MINIATURIZED WEAPONS SECRETED IN THE ARMOR AND WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO BE USEFUL.

## SPECIALTIES:

INVENTORS WILL HAVE COMPUTERS AND SCIENCE WHILE SOLDIERS WILL HAVE MILITARY AND ATHLETICS. WEAPONRY AND AERIAL COMBAT MAKE UP FOR A LOW COORDINATION. IF YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO FIX YOUR OWN ARMOR, ELECTRONICS OR MECHANICS IS A MUST.



# PATRIOT

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** ALL-AMERICANS #250

**ARCHETYPES:** SUPER-PATRIOT, ARMORED WONDER, WOMAN WARRIOR

**QUALITIES:** ALL-AMERICAN, FAMOUS FAMILY, NEVER QUILTS

**CHALLENGES:** ONLY HUMAN, ESTRANGED FATHER, DUTY FIRST

<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>COORDINATION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>8 (4)</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>AWARENESS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>STAMINA</b>	<b>13 (9)</b>

**POWERS:**

BLAST 8 (PLASMA), FLIGHT 7, INVULNERABILITY 7, LIFE SUPPORT 8, MIND SHIELD 3, SUPERSENSES 4 (ULTRAVIOLET AND INFRARED VISION, ULTRASONIC AND RADIO HEARING)

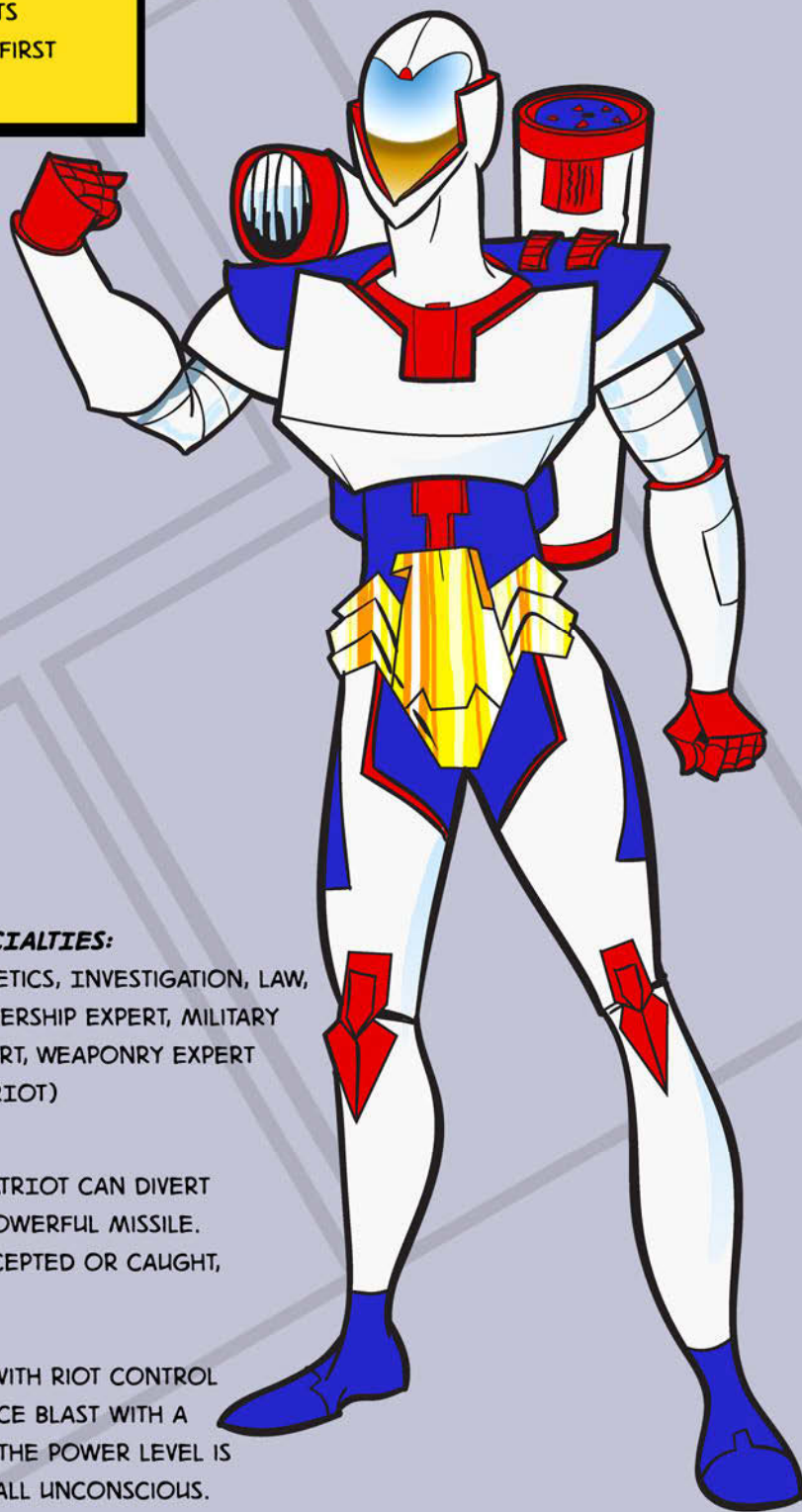
**STUNTS:**

**SHOULDER-MOUNTED MISSILE LAUNCHER (BLAST):** THE PATRIOT CAN DIVERT POWER FROM ITS PLASMA BEAMS TO ARM AND FIRE A POWERFUL MISSILE. THIS IS STILL A BLAST 8, IT'S JUST SLOWER, CAN BE INTERCEPTED OR CAUGHT, BUT COVERS A SMALL AREA.

**TRANQUILIZING GAS (BLAST):** THE PATRIOT IS EQUIPPED WITH RIOT CONTROL GAS FOR HANDLING LARGE CROWDS OF CIVILIANS. REPLACE BLAST WITH A RANGED AFFLICTION WHICH COVERS A LARGE AREA, BUT THE POWER LEVEL IS ONLY 4 AND IT CANNOT KILL. VICTIMS OF THE GAS JUST FALL UNCONSCIOUS.

**SPECIALTIES:**

ATHLETICS, INVESTIGATION, LAW, LEADERSHIP EXPERT, MILITARY EXPERT, WEAPONRY EXPERT (PATRIOT)



## ORIGIN

"IT'S IMPORTANT OUR COUNTRY IS ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL. BUT IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAT OUR COUNTRY DOES WHAT'S RIGHT."

SUSAN QUINCY ADAMS IS DESCENDED FROM AN ILLUSTRIOUS POLITICAL FAMILY. SHE IS ALSO A DECORATED MILITARY OFFICER AND A VETERAN OF THE IRAQI WAR, HAVING SERVED THREE ONE-YEAR STINTS THERE AS AN MP. BUT HER GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IS DESTINED TO BE FOREVER A SECRET, FOR SHE IS ALSO THE PATRIOT.

THE US GOVERNMENT HAS A LONG HISTORY OF PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO CREATE WONDERS WHOSE ALLIANCE IS, FIRST AND FOREMOST, TO WASHINGTON. THE PATRIOT ARMOR (PRIMARY ASSAULT AND TACTICAL RESPONSE INDEPENDENTLY OPERATING TECHNOLOGY) WAS FIRST PROPOSED DURING THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION, BUT WITH THE END OF THE COLD WAR THIS PROGRAM ALONG WITH MANY OTHERS WAS PHASED OUT, THE VICTIM OF A SMALLER FEDERAL BUDGET AND A LACK OF APPARENT NEED. CIVILIAN WONDERS SEEMED ABLE TO HANDLE WHATEVER DOMESTIC CRISES MIGHT THREATEN THE NATION.

BUT THE NEW THREAT OF GLOBAL TERRORISM AND A SHIFT IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY THAT PROMOTED AGGRESSIVE INTERVENTION IN HOTSPOTS AROUND THE WORLD BREATHED NEW LIFE INTO MANY OF THESE PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PATRIOT. AS PARTS OF PATRIOT BEGAN TO COME OFF THE DRAWING BOARD AND FIND LIFE AS PROTOTYPE COMPONENTS, THE JOINT CHIEFS BEGAN A THOROUGH INTERNAL SEARCH FOR CANDIDATES WHO MIGHT FIELD TEST THE ARMOR. THE INITIAL POOL OF 24 CANDIDATES WAS DRAWN FROM ALL THE ARMED SERVICES; SUSAN ADAMS WAS ONE OF ONLY THREE WOMEN WHO MADE THE INITIAL CUT.

FROM THE BEGINNING, SHE HAD AN UPHILL BATTLE. HER FATHER, A LEGENDARY SENATOR, ALLOWED HER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PATRIOT ONLY UNTIL IT BEGAN TO SEEM LIKELY SHE MIGHT ACTUALLY BE CHOSEN. AT THAT POINT, ALL HIS SUPPORT WITHERED AND HE ARGUED VEHEMENTLY FOR HER TO WITHDRAW FROM THE PROGRAM. AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE US MILITARY, PATRIOT WOULD BE THE TARGET FOR EVERY ARAB EXTREMIST AND AMERICA-HATER IN THE WORLD. EXPERTS IN THE CIA GAVE THE WEARER OF THE ARMOR A SIX MONTH LIFE EXPECTANCY. THERE WERE THOSE WHO SAID THE COUNTRY WOULD NOT ACCEPT A WOMAN AS ITS DESIGNATED CHAMPION. SOME OF SUSAN'S TRAINERS STUBBORNLY BELIEVED SHE WAS SIMPLY NOT GOOD ENOUGH AND THAT WEARING THE PATRIOT INTO COMBAT WAS A MAN'S JOB.

IT CAME AS A SURPRISE TO EVERYONE BUT SUSAN THAT SHE PROVED THEM WRONG. SHE SUCCEEDED IN EVERY TEST, PASSED EVERY PHYSICAL EXAM, OUTPERFORMED HER RIVALS AND SURVIVED A SCREENING PROCESS THAT SENT NINE OTHERS TO THE HOSPITAL AND ONE TO THE MORGUE. SUSAN'S CONFIRMATION WAS ALL BUT CERTAIN WHEN, AT THE LAST MOMENT, HER FATHER PLAYED HIS TRUMP CARD: CLAIMING A DESIRE TO PROVE THAT SUSAN'S SELECTION WAS NOT A CASE OF POLITICAL FAVORITISM, HE PUSHED THROUGH A RESOLUTION MAKING THE IDENTITY OF PATRIOT A MILITARY SECRET. IF SUSAN WERE TO SERVE, SHE WOULD HAVE TO DO SO ANONYMOUSLY, HER FACE AND GENDER HIDDEN FROM THE PUBLIC.

## PATRIOT

### ABILITIES

THE PATRIOT BOASTS A NUMBER OF WEAPON FEATURES INTENDED TO MAKE IT A VIABLE FORCE IN BOTH MILITARY AND DOMESTIC TERROR SITUATIONS. IN ADDITION TO GREAT STRENGTH, INVULNERABILITY, AND SUPERSONIC FLIGHT, THESE WEAPONS INCLUDE A GUIDED MISSILE LAUNCHER ARMED WITH SHAPED ANTI-ARMOR CHARGES, PLASMA BEAM PROJECTORS, AND A NON-LETHAL GAS THAT CAN BE PROJECTED OUT OF NOZZLES IN THE ARMOR'S HANDS. A BATTERY OF SENSORY EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN INSTALLED INTO THE ARMOR'S HELMET, ALONG WITH A POWERFUL SPOTLIGHT ON THE LEFT SHOULDER. THE ARMOR WEIGHS ABOUT TWO HUNDRED POUNDS EVEN WHEN EMPTY AND IS STURDY ENOUGH TO RESIST A TANK SHELL. TO PRESERVE SUSAN'S IDENTITY, PSIONIC SCREENS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED THROUGHOUT THE ARMOR, AND THE VISUAL SENSORS ARE ALSO PROTECTED AGAINST OVERLOAD. EVEN WITHOUT THE ARMOR, HOWEVER, SUSAN IS AN EXTREMELY CAPABLE INDIVIDUAL. SHE IS WIDELY TRAINED IN COMBAT AND POLICE TECHNIQUES, SHE HAS AN IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES, AND IS IN PRIME PHYSICAL SHAPE. SHE STILL KNOWS A LOT OF PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON, DESPITE HER FATHER'S EFFORTS, AND HER TIME IN THE LEGION HAS PROVEN HER A NATURAL LEADER. WHEN NOT IN USE, THE PATRIOT FOLDS UP TO ABOUT THE SIZE OF A LARGE LUGGAGE CONTAINER. WHEN TRAVELING, SHE KEEPS IT IN THE TRUNK OF HER CAR.

IT WAS A TERRIBLE BLOW TO SUSAN, WHO HAD FOUGHT TO PROVE THAT A WOMAN COULD BE THE MATCH OF ANY MAN. HER FATHER KNEW THAT SHE HOPED TO BE AN INSPIRATION TO GIRLS ACROSS THE NATION; BY TAKING THIS DREAM AWAY FROM HER HE HOPED TO PRESSURE HER INTO RESIGNING FROM THE PROGRAM. BUT, PERHAPS ONLY TO SPITE HIM, SHE REFUSED TO DO SO, AND ACCEPTED THE POSITION OF PATRIOT PILOT ALONG WITH ITS NEW REQUIREMENTS.

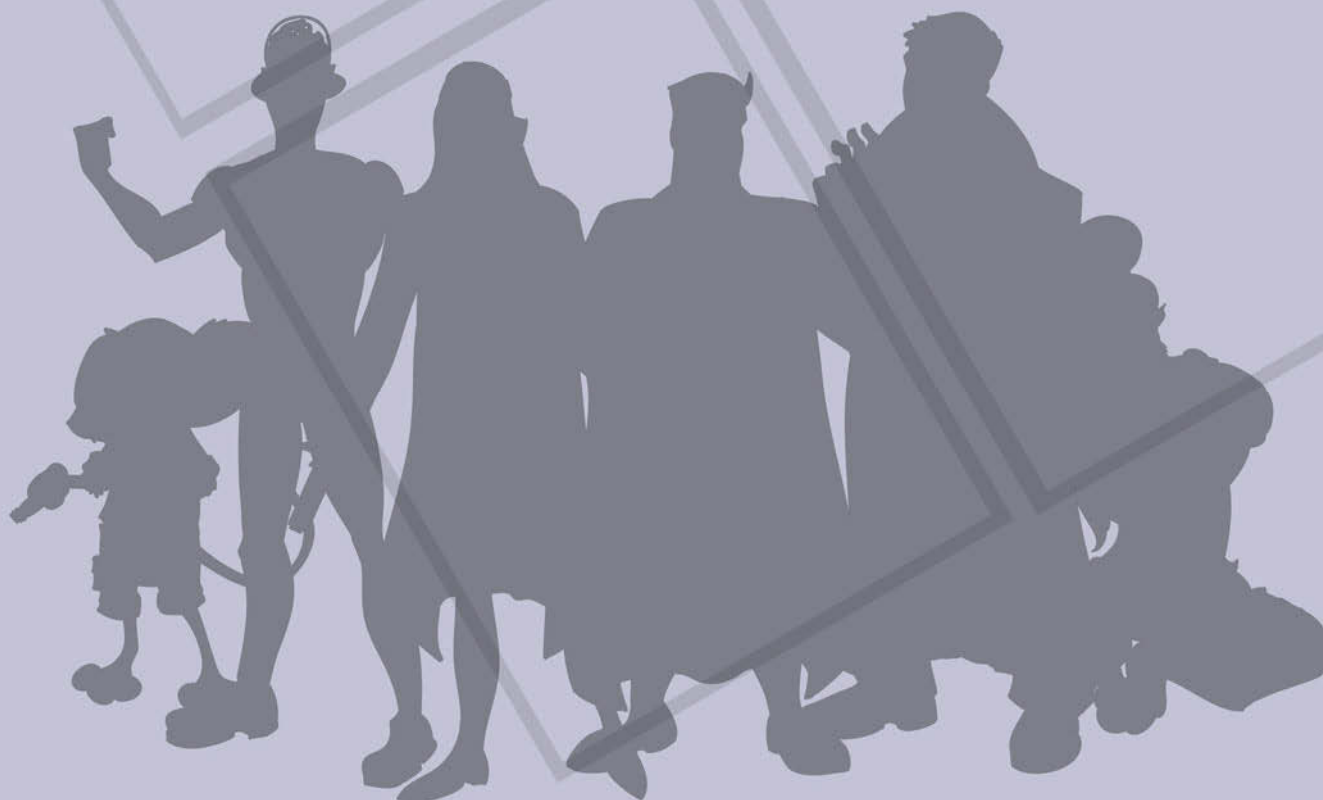
# PATRIOT

THAT WAS FOUR YEARS AGO, AND IN THE TIME SINCE PATRIOT HAS PROVEN ITSELF A STELLAR SUCCESS. OFFICIALLY, SUSAN HAS SERVED HER TIME IN THE ARMY AND IS NOW DISCHARGED, A PRIVATE CITIZEN. BUT IN SECRET SHE HAS TAKEN A LEADERSHIP POSITION IN THE ALL-AMERICANS, THE GOVERNMENT'S FEDERALLY-SANCTIONED TEAM OF WONDERS, AND PATRIOT HAS BECOME A HOUSEHOLD NAME NOT ONLY IN AMERICA, BUT AROUND THE WORLD. SHE IS ACTIVE BOTH ABROAD (IN IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, AND IN CLANDESTINE MISSIONS) AND AT HOME, USING THE PATRIOT HARDWARE TO THWART DOMESTIC TERRORISTS AND OTHER WONDER-CRIMINALS TOO DANGEROUS FOR ORDINARY LAW ENFORCEMENT TO HANDLE.

BUT SHE HAS NOT SPOKEN TO HER FATHER IN THOSE FOUR YEARS. SINCE SHE CANNOT SERVE AS A ROLE MODEL FOR WOMEN IN HER PUBLIC LIFE, SHE TRIES TO DO IT IN PRIVATE, VOLUNTEERING AT SHELTERS AND CLINICS AND MAKING OCCASIONAL SPEAKING APPEARANCES AS AN IRAQI VET. BUT HER LIFE AS PATRIOT LEAVES HER PRECIOUS LITTLE TIME FOR SUCH CHARITY WORK, AND WHEN SHE IS IN ARMOR SHE CANNOT GIVE EVEN A HINT OF HER TRUE NATURE. THE SITUATION IS EXTREMELY FRUSTRATING FOR SUSAN, BUT SHE CAN FIND NO ESCAPE. SHE IS TORN BETWEEN TWO DUTIES: TO HER COUNTRY, AND TO HER GENDER.

## APPEARANCE:

THE PATRIOT IS A LARGER-THAN-LIFE SUIT OF RED, WHITE, AND BLUE BATTLE ARMOR THAT COMPLETELY HIDES SUSAN'S FEATURES. A TUBULAR MISSILE LAUNCHER IS LOCATED ON HER BACK, ROTATING UP OVER HER RIGHT SHOULDER WHEN FIRING, AND HER SPOTLIGHT IS ON THE LEFT SHOULDER. OUTSIDE OF THE ARMOR, SUSAN ADAMS IS A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN HER EARLY THIRTIES, WITH SHORT BLONDE HAIR AND A POWERFUL BUILD.



# PATRIOT

## STORIES

SUSAN IS KEY TO STORIES WITH A NATIONALISTIC ELEMENT, TO THOSE WHICH HINGE ON HER SECRET IDENTITY, OR TO STORIES INVOLVING GOVERNMENT INTRIGUE AND DIPLOMACY.

SENATOR ADAMS IS STILL TRYING TO GET HIS DAUGHTER OUT OF THE PATRIOT SYSTEM. GUIDED BY AN OVERZEALOUS DESIRE TO PROTECT HIS DAUGHTER FROM HARM, HE SUGGESTS TO A REPORTER THAT THE WEARER OF PATRIOT MAY BE AN IMPOSTER, A WONDER CRIMINAL WHO HAS IMPERSONATED THE TRUE PILOT'S IDENTITY. THE REPORTER HAS LIMITED ACCESS TO WONDER SOCIETY, AND ASKS THE HEROES FOR HELP INVESTIGATING THE ALLEGED CRIME. ONCE THE TRUTH IS KNOWN TO AT LEAST THE REPORTER AND THE HEROES, THE SENATOR CAN MAKE THE CASE THAT SECURITY HAS BEEN BLOWN, AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE COUNTRY A NEW PATRIOT PILOT MUST BE CHOSEN. CAN THE HEROES FIGURE OUT WHAT IS GOING ON AND SAVE SUSAN'S CAREER (NOT TO MENTION HER FAMILY)?

WHILE SUSAN IS TAKING A SCHEDULED LEAVE, THE ALL-AMERICANS IS AMBUSHED BY CALIPH-8 WHILE ABROAD. THE ENTIRE TEAM IS CAPTURED, BUT THE CIA HAS REASON TO BELIEVE THEY ARE STILL ALIVE. SUSAN IS CHARGED WITH RECRUITING A RESCUE TEAM MADE EXCLUSIVELY OF WONDERS, AND BUSTING INTO THE BASE OF THE STEEL-JACKETED SULTAN. THIS IS A MISSION OF QUESTIONABLE ETHICS, FOR ALTHOUGH A RESCUE MISSION IS ALL WELL AND GOOD, THE ALL-AMERICANS WERE ORIGINALLY ON A COVERT OP OF DUBIOUS MORALITY AND FOR THAT REASON SUSAN IS FORCED TO EITHER LIE TO HER RECRUITS OR SEEK AGENTS WHO DON'T MIND ISSUES OF MORAL AMBIGUITY; THE TEAM MAY EVEN BE ENTIRELY COMPOSED OF VILLAINS WILLING TO TAKE THE PARDONS PATRIOT IS ENTITLED TO OFFER.

AFTER FOUR YEARS IN UNIFORM, SUSAN DECIDES SHE CAN AFFORD TO RESIGN FROM THE PATRIOT PROGRAM AND FORGE A NEW IDENTITY AS A FEMALE WONDER, THUS ALLOWING HER TO SERVE AS THE INSPIRATION SHE HAS ALWAYS WANTED TO BE. BUT IF SHE HAS LEARNED ONE THING, IT IS THAT A SIMPLE COSTUMED ADVENTURER CAN'T MAKE IT IN THE CUTTHROAT WORLD OF WONDER ACTION. SHE'S GOING TO NEED SOME KIND OF POWERS. WHERE TO GET THEM? SHE MIGHT APPROACH AN INVENTOR FOR A SUPER-WEAPON OR ALTERNATIVE ARMOR, OR SHE MIGHT TRY TO WORK WITH SOME HEROES TO STEAL A VILLAIN'S POWERS. SHE MAY WANT TO GROOM A SUCCESSOR TO THE PATRIOT, OR SHE MAY BE ALARMED AT THE MAN CHOSEN TO BE HER REPLACEMENT. INEVITABLY, SHE WILL HAVE TO CONFRONT THE NEXT PATRIOT AND DECIDE WHO IS THE MIGHTIER.



# ASTRONAUT

THE ASTRONAUT IS THE ALIEN IN REVERSE — A HUMAN BEING WHO TRAVELS TO OTHER WORLDS WHERE HE IS CONSIDERED A BARBARIAN OR SAVAGE. HIS NOBILITY, COURAGE, AND INGENUITY SHOW THROUGH HOWEVER, AND HE IS EVENTUALLY ACCEPTED AS A HERO IN HIS NEW HOME. AN ENTIRE TEAM COULD, IN FACT, BE COMPOSED OF ASTRONAUTS WHO ALSO FULFILL OTHER ARCHETYPES. AN ASTRONAUT DOES NOT ALWAYS HAVE TO HAVE A SCIENCE FICTION FEEL; SCIENCE FANTASY IN THE STYLE OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS OR EVEN SWORD-AND-SORCERY TALES LIKE THOSE OF ROBERT E. HOWARD ARE ALSO POSSIBLE.

**EXAMPLES:** ADAM STRANGE; BUCK ROGERS; THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN; FLASH GORDON; WARLORD

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** ALIEN HERO, GADGET GUY

## QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

BECAUSE HIS ADVENTURES TAKE PLACE ON OTHER WORLDS, THE ASTRONAUT IS RARELY SEEN IN TEAM SITUATIONS, PREFERRING TO DO HIS WORK SOLO. HOWEVER, THE ASTRONAUT MAY RETURN HOME TO A HERO'S WELCOME, ONLY TO BE FORGOTTEN BY THE FINICKY PUBLIC. HE LONGS FOR A RETURN TO SPACE, AND FOR THE MYSTERIES THAT CHALLENGED HIM THERE. ON EARTH HE IS A HERO, LOVED BY THE COMMON PEOPLE BECAUSE HE EMBODIES ALL THAT IS BEST IN MANKIND. BUT ON THE ALIEN WORLD HE IS CONSIDERED A SAVAGE BARBARIAN, IGNORANT OF THE MOST BASIC RULES OF ETIQUETTE OR TECHNOLOGY.

HE IS ALMOST CERTAINLY LOVED BY A PRINCESS AMONG THE ALIEN PEOPLE WHO USES HER RANK ON HIS BEHALF, BUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HER IS FROWNED UPON. ALTERNATELY, HE MAY BE RESPECTED AND ADMIRER ON THE ALIEN WORLD, BUT BECAUSE SHE IS STUCK THERE AND HE MUST RETURN TO EARTH, THEY ARE DOOMED TO BE FOREVER SEPARATED.

WITH THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT, THE ASTRONAUT CAN ACTUALLY COMMUTE TO SPACE OR GO EXPLORING BETWEEN HIS ADVENTURES ON EARTH. WHATEVER ALLOWS HIM TO GO INTO SPACE — BE IT A ROCKET SHIP, A TELEPORTATION BEAM, OR SOME KIND OF ASTRAL PROJECTION — HE PROBABLY DOES NOT NEED TO HAVE IT AS A POWER BECAUSE IT ISN'T USEFUL IN BATTLE. IT'S JUST A WAY TO GET INTO THE STORY, AND IF THE ASTRONAUT WANTS TO USE IT IN AN UNUSUAL WAY HE CAN TAG IT LIKE ANY OTHER QUALITY.



# ASTRONAUT

**ABILITIES:**

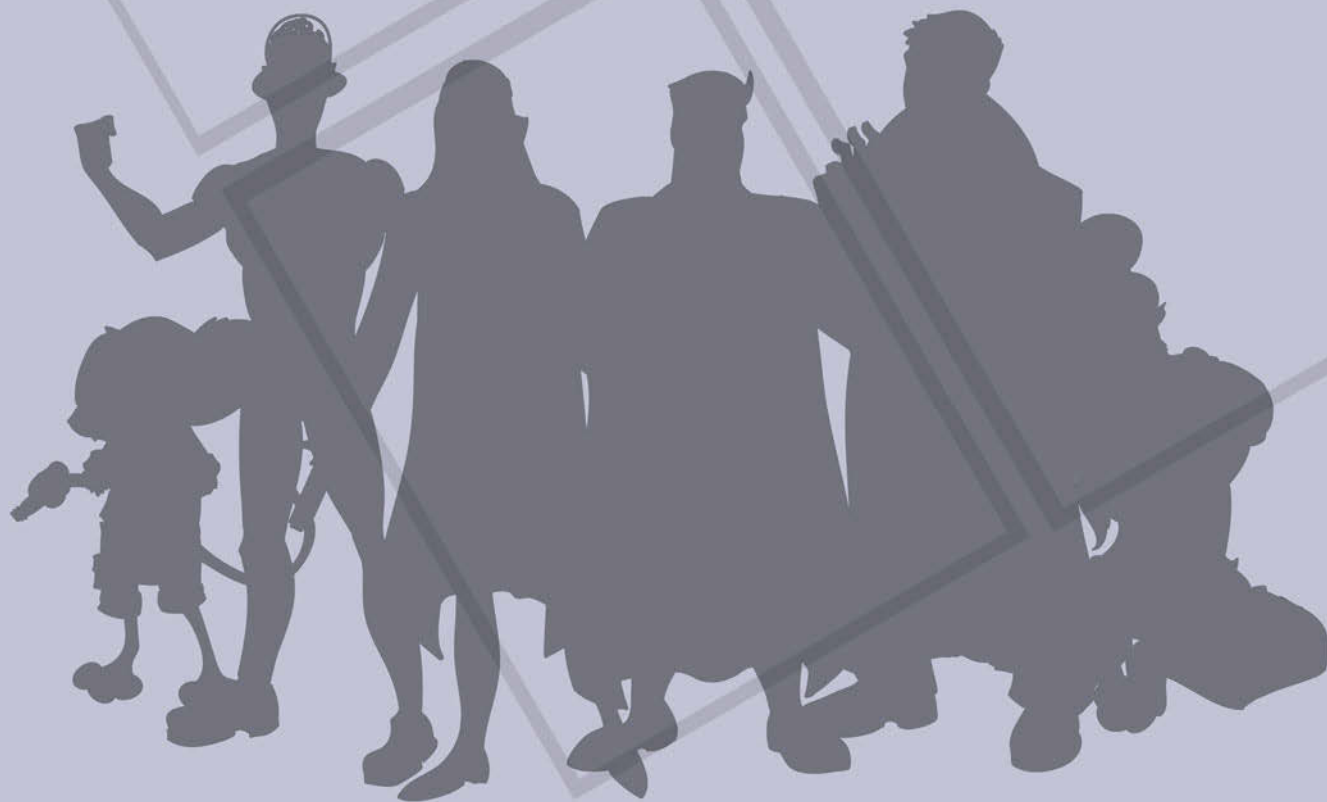
THE ASTRONAUT IS BRAVE, STRONG, DETERMINED, QUICK AND CLEVER, ABLE TO PERSUADE THE NATIVES NOT TO KILL HIM EVEN WHILE STANDING ON A PILE OF THEIR BODIES. HIS ABILITIES WILL ALL BE VERY GOOD, BUT STILL WITHIN THE HUMAN RANGE. THE PLANET HE VISITS MIGHT GRANT HIM A STRENGTH AND PROWESS OF 6 OR 7.

**POWERS:**

THE ASTRONAUT IS NORMALLY BEREFT OF ACTUAL SUPERHUMAN POWERS, RELYING ON SCIENCE FICTION GADGETS, PRIMITIVE WEAPONRY, AND GOOD OLD-FASHIONED GUTS. HIS POWERS WILL BE DEVICES WHICH HE USES TO GOOD EFFECT BUT CANNOT FIX OR REPAIR. (HE PROBABLY HAS CONNECTIONS WITH SCIENTISTS ON THE ALIEN PLANET, HOWEVER, WHO CAN DO THIS FOR HIM.) IF THE ALIEN PLANET GIVES HIM POWERS, HE MAY HAVE A LITTLE LEAPING, TELEPATHY, OR MIND SHIELD.

**SPECIALTIES:**

BECAUSE HE HAS FEW, IF ANY, POWERS, THE ASTRONAUT RELIES HEAVILY ON SPECIALTIES SUCH AS WEAPONRY (GUNS OR BLADED) AND PILOT.



# MOONSHOT

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** JOURNEY INTO WONDER #170

**ARCHETYPES:** ASTRONAUT, GADGET GAL

**QUALITIES:** AMBASSADOR WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, THE AMELIA EARHART OF SPACE, NASA'S FAVORITE DAUGHTER

**CHALLENGES:** WANTED ON PLANET X, OLD FASHIONED

**PROWESS** 4

**COORDINATION** 4

**STRENGTH** 3

**INTELLECT** 8

**AWARENESS** 5

**WILLPOWER** 5

**DETERMINATION** 3

**STAMINA** 8

**POWERS:**

EQUIPMENT 9 (DAMAGE 5 SHOTGUN, DAMAGE 3 KNIFE, MULTI-TOOL), LIFE SUPPORT 8 (DEVICE)

**EQUIPMENT:**

SPACE STATION SALLY IS LARGE ENOUGH FOR A SMALL ARMY AND INCLUDES AN INFIRMARY, GYMNASIUM, HANGAR, DETENTION CELLS, WORKSHOP, POWERFUL SENSORS THAT CAN DETECT ANYTHING IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM, AND DEFENSE SYSTEMS TO KEEP ATTACKING SPACECRAFT AT BAY. HER STARSHIP, THE SACAGAWEA, HAS NO WEAPONS BUT CAN REACH THE NEAREST STAR SYSTEM IN ABOUT A DAY AT A SPEED OF ONE LIGHT YEAR EVERY FOUR HOURS. BY ENGAGING THE BLACK HOLE DRIVE, IT CAN WARP TO OTHER DIMENSIONS OR REALITIES.

**SPECIALTIES:**

COMPUTERS, ELECTRONICS EXPERT, MECHANICS EXPERT, PILOT MASTER, STEALTH, WEAPONRY (GUNS)





# MOONSHOT

## ORIGIN

"BUCKLE UP, BOYS."

MARY ELLEN WADE GREW UP IN THE WIDE OPEN PLAINS OF OKLAHOMA, AND EVERY NIGHT SHE WOULD LAY ON THE ROOF OF HER FAMILY'S BARN AND STARE UP AT THE MOON, WHICH SEEMED TO BECKON HER WITH EVER-INCREASING MYSTERY. A DEVOTEE OF THE AMERICAN SPACE PROGRAM, MARY ELLEN COLLECTED EVERY MODEL, READ EVERY BOOK, AND DEVoured EVERY FACT ABOUT THE MERCURY, GEMINI, AND APOLLO PROGRAMS. BUT SHE ALSO READ IN THE NEWSPAPER ABOUT ALIENS WHO FOUGHT ALONGSIDE EARTH WONDERS, EVEN JOINING FAMOUS ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE INVINCIBLES AND PROTECTING EARTH FROM COSMIC DANGERS. AMERICA'S OWN SPACE ADVENTURES SEEMED SO TAME, SO BANAL, COMPARED TO THE FLAMBOYANT TALES BROUGHT BACK BY PEOPLE LIKE VICTOR AND CODEX.

IT WAS SOMETIME AROUND THE AGE OF 13 THAT MARY ELLEN BECAME CONVINCED THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING INCREDIBLE ABOUT THE EARTH'S MOON, BUT THAT FOR SOME REASON THE GOVERNMENT WAS COVERING IT UP. SHE BELIEVED THE CONSPIRACY THEORIES THAT HELD NASA HAD CONCEALED THE TRUE EVENTS OF THE MOON LANDINGS IN ORDER TO PROTECT SOME BIZARRE AND WORLD-SHATTERING SECRET LOCATED THERE. HOW ELSE COULD YOU EXPLAIN THE FACT THAT IN FORTY YEARS AMERICA HAD MADE NO ATTEMPT TO RETURN TO THE MOON? SURELY IT WAS BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT RISK DISTURBING SOMETHING THAT LAY HIDDEN BENEATH THAT ROCKY SURFACE. MARY ELLEN RESOLVED TO LEARN THE TRUTH. SHE SWORE A VOW TO LAND ON THE MOON AND DISCOVER ITS SECRETS.

YEARS PASSED AND SHE MADE GOOD ON HER PROMISE, USING HER TALENT FOR MATH AND THE SCIENCES TO EXCEL IN PHYSICS AND, LATER, ENGINEERING. SHE GOT A SCHOLARSHIP TO THE PRESTIGIOUS RADIANT INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BUT THE GLEAM OF RADIANT CITY WAS NOT FOR HER; AFTER PASSIONATE ARGUMENTS WITH PROFESSORS WHO REFUSED TO TAKE HER SERIOUSLY, SHE DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL AND RETURNED TO HER FAMILY'S OKLAHOMA FARM, WHERE SHE BEGAN BUILDING MORE AND MORE COMPLICATED ROCKETS. HER DREAM WAS PUT OFF AS HER PARENTS GOT OLDER, AND SHE REMAINED THE DUTIFUL DAUGHTER UNTIL THE DAY THEY DIED, WHEREUPON SHE BEGAN SELLING OFF THE FARM ONE ACRE AT A TIME IN ORDER TO FINANCE THE CONSTRUCTION OF HER BRAINCHILD, THE ROCKET SHIP SACAGAWEA. IN 2001, THE SACAGAWEA BLASTED OFF FROM THE OKLAHOMA PLAIN AND BEGAN A THREE-DAY JOURNEY TO THE MOON. WHEN SHE ARRIVED, MARY ELLEN DISCOVERED THAT THE MOON WAS, IN FACT, A RELATIVELY UNREMARKABLE ROCK IN SPACE. TO SAY SHE WAS DISAPPOINTED WOULD BE SOMETHING OF AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

IT WAS WHILE MARY ELLEN WAS ON THE MOON, HOWEVER, THAT THE HOSTILE INHABITANTS OF THE ENIGMATIC WORLD KNOWN AS PLANET X, WHICH ORBITS ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE SUN FROM EARTH, CHOSE TO MAKE THEIR MOVE.

## ABILITIES

MOONSHOT IS ONE OF THE BEST PILOTS IN THE WORLD AND WELL-TRAINED IN ASTRONOMY, GEOLOGY, AND PHYSICS, AS WELL AS IN MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING. SHE'S BUILT A ROCKET SHIP IN HER GARAGE, AND ANYONE WITH THAT KIND OF GUTS DOESN'T STOP FOR MUCH. WONDERS OCCASIONALLY SEEK HER OUT FOR HELP WITH TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEMS; SHE IS EASIER TO FIND THAN CODEX, AND EASIER TO GET ALONG WITH THAN IHERO.

ALTHOUGH NOT A TRAINED FIGHTER, MARY ELLEN HAS HAD TO HOLD HER OWN SINCE SHE WAS A KID, MAKING HER FEISTY AND RESOURCEFUL. SHE DOES NOT TYPICALLY GO ARMED, BUT KEEPS A SHOTGUN AND A SLEEK ENERGY PISTOL HANDY WHENEVER SHE GOES ON A TRIP BECAUSE SHE LIKES TO BE PREPARED.

# MOONSHOT

A SPACE FLEET ARRIVED IN EARTH ORBIT, AND USED SPECIALLY-CONSTRUCTED SATELLITES TO CREATE AN IMPENETRABLE FORCE FIELD AROUND THE PLANET, PREVENTING ANY WONDERS FROM LEADING A COUNTER-ATTACK. MARY ELLEN REALIZED SHE MIGHT BE THE ONLY HUMAN BEING NOT TRAPPED WITHIN THE FIELD; IF THE WORLD WAS TO BE SAVED FROM CONQUEST, IT WOULD BE UP TO HER. WITH THE HELP OF THE SACAGAWEA, SHE REACHED THE PLANET X COMMAND SHIP AND JOINED AN EVA MAINTENANCE CREW IN ORDER TO SLIP ABOARD. IT WAS WHILE SHE WAS INVESTIGATING A PARTIALLY-ASSEMBLED FORCE FIELD SATELLITE IN THE HANGAR BAY THAT SHE WAS DISCOVERED AND, AFTER A FURIOUS CHASE, CAPTURED.

THE COMMANDER OF THE PLANET X FORCES ASSUMED MARY ELLEN WAS A FORWARD SCOUT FOR A SECRET HUMAN MILITARY FORCE WHICH HAD EITHER PENETRATED THE FORCE FIELD OR WAS CONCEALED ELSEWHERE IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM. EITHER WAY, SHE WAS MORE VALUABLE AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION THAN A CORPSE. SHE WAS BRIEFLY IMPRISONED, THEN FORCED TO DEFEND HERSELF AGAINST A PARTICULARLY NASTY EXAMPLE OF PLANET X'S LOCAL FAUNA, BEFORE SHE WAS EVENTUALLY OFFERED A POSITION OF WEALTH AND POWER IN THE ALIEN GOVERNMENT OF EARTH IF SHE WOULD ONLY REVEAL THE LOCATION AND CAPABILITIES OF THE SECRET EARTH FLEET.

MARY ELLEN STRUNG THE COMMANDER ALONG UNTIL SHE WAS ABLE TO ENGINEER AN ESCAPE. SLIPPING BACK TO THE UNDISCOVERED SACAGAWEA, SHE REACHED ONE OF THE SATELLITES, CROSS-WIRED ITS ENERGY PROJECTORS, AND SABOTAGED THE ENTIRE FORCE WEB, TURNING EACH OF THE REMOTE DEVICES INTO A DESTRUCTIVE BOMB. THE COMMANDER DIDN'T WAIT FOR ANY MORE WONDERS TO APPEAR; WITH SEVERAL OF HIS SHIPS DESTROYED IN THE BLASTS, AND PERSONALLY HUMILIATED BY MARY ELLEN'S ESCAPE, HE ORDERED A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL.

SO BEGAN THE CAREER OF MARY ELLEN WADE, KNOWN TO THE WORLD AS MOONSHOT. ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINAL TARGET OF HER SPACE EXPLORATION TURNED OUT TO BE A BUST, SHE HASN'T LET THAT STOP HER, AND HAS USED A SOUPED-UP SACAGAWEA TO TRAVEL TO DOZENS OF STAR SYSTEMS AROUND THE UNIVERSE. SHE HAS BECOME AN INSPIRATION TO CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY TO GIRLS, AND HAS BEEN CALLED "THE AMELIA EARHART OF SPACE."

SHE IS EARTH'S UNOFFICIAL AMBASSADOR TO THE PARLIAMENT OF STARS, THE LARGEST INTERSTELLAR CIVILIZATION IN THE UNIVERSE, AND HAS EVEN TRAVELED TO REMOTE DIMENSIONS THROUGH THE MEANS OF A BLACK HOLE GENERATOR INSTALLED ON SACAGAWEA. HER SPACE RESEARCH HAS ALLOWED HER TO MAKE A FEW VALUABLE PATENTS, WHICH FINANCED THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE STATION MARTHA, HER PRIVATE SATELLITE IN EARTH ORBIT. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NASA, MARTHA NOW SERVES AS EARTH'S DEEP-SPACE WARNING SYSTEM AGAINST ALIEN INTERFERENCE, AND IS USUALLY HOME TO A HALF DOZEN SCIENTISTS PERFORMING EXPERIMENTS. MOONSHOT HAS ALSO HOSTED THE OCCASIONAL GATHERING OF EARTH WONDERS ABOARD MARTHA, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE WORLD IS THREATENED BY CRISIS.

## **APPEARANCE:**

MARY ELLEN WADE IS A MIDWESTERN SPITFIRE, WITH FIERY RED HAIR AND A SPRINKLING OF FRECKLES. SHE'S BRIGHT EYED AND ALWAYS FULL OF ENERGY, MOST COMFORTABLE WHEN SHE'S CRAWLING UNDER A SUPERSTRUCTURE WITH A WRENCH AND AN OIL RAG. WHEN ON A MISSION, SHE WEARS A SLEEK GRAY FLIGHT SUIT THAT SEALS UP WITH A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

# MOONSHOT

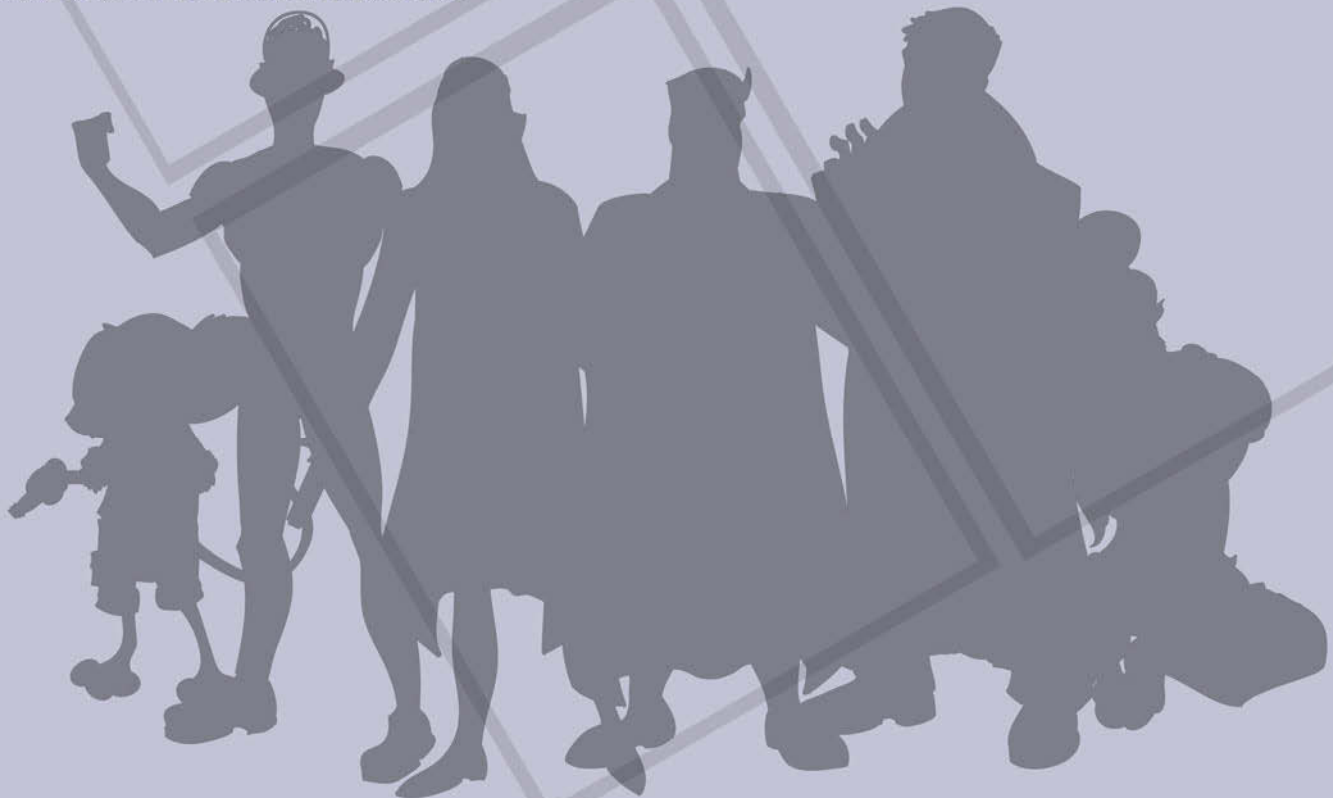
## STORIES

MOONSHOT ACTS A RESOURCE FOR HEROES WITHOUT READY ACCESS TO TECHNICAL SKILLS, WHILE ALSO ENABLING THE GM TO TELL STORIES OF PLANETARY EXPLORATION OR SPACE-BORN DANGERS.

WHILE REPRESENTING EARTH AT THE PARLIAMENT OF STARS, MARY ELLEN IS FRAMED FOR THE MURDER OF ANOTHER AMBASSADOR. NOW THE HEROES MUST TRAVEL TO THE PARLIAMENT AND INVESTIGATE THE CRIME, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY TRYING TO LEARN THE INS AND OUTS OF INTERGALACTIC CIVILIZATION. NATURALLY, A GREAT CRISIS WILL ALSO OCCUR WHILE MARY IS IN PRISON, FORCING THE PLAYERS TO TAKE ON THE AMBASSADOR ROLE AND TRY TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT BETWEEN TWO POWERFUL AND AGGRIEVED PARTIES.

PLANET X HAS BEEN DEVASTATED BY A SERIES OF WARS THAT HAVE LEFT ITS SURFACE IN RUINS AND ITS PEOPLE SCATTERED. MAYBE THAT'S WHY IT SERVES AS SUCH A GREAT HIDEOUT FOR THE OCCASIONAL SUPER-CRIMINAL, WHO FLEES THERE WHEN THE HEROES GET TOO CLOSE. MOONSHOT CARRIES THE TEAM TO THE REMOTE WORLD, BUT THE SACAGAWEA COMES UNDER ATTACK AND IS DAMAGED. THE HEROES HAVE TO FIND THEIR QUARRY WHILE AVOIDING BOTH THE RADIOACTIVE PREDATORS THAT ROAM THE SURFACE OF PLANET X AND THE SUBTERRANEAN MUTANTS THAT DWELL BENEATH IT. CAN THEY STOP THE VILLAIN THEY ARE PURSUING FROM SETTING HIMSELF UP AS OVERLORD OF PLANET X?

THE US GOVERNMENT DECIDES EARTH IS TOO VULNERABLE TO THREATS FROM SPACE AND ENTERS INTO A DEAL WITH MOONSHOT TO CREATE A SPACE-BASED TEAM OF WONDERS WHO WILL HANDLE FIRST CONTACT SITUATIONS AND THE OCCASIONAL ALIEN ARMADA. THE TEAM IS TO BE BASED ON SPACE STATION MARTHA AND CAN RECEIVE LIMITED FINANCIAL SUPPORT, BUT THE WHOLE REASON FOR USING WONDERS INSTEAD OF MARINES IS BECAUSE SUPER-HEROES ARE A LOT CHEAPER. WHO WILL BE RECRUITED? WILL OTHER NATIONS INSIST ON REPRESENTATION ON THE STATION? AND MIGHT SOME DIABOLICAL CRIMINAL USE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET ABOARD MARTHA AND USE HER ORBITAL POSITION FOR SOME EVIL SCHEME?



# AVATAR

**A** GOD COME DOWN TO EARTH, THE AVATAR WIELDS GREAT POWER AND IS OFTEN ONE OF THE FOREMOST HEROES ON THE PLANET. AS A FAMOUS BEING FROM MYTH, HE IS INSTANTLY RECOGNIZED EVEN BY PEOPLE WHO DON'T READ COMICS, BUT HE ALSO DOESN'T FIT IN WITH MODERN SOCIETY AND HAS HIGH-POWERED ENEMIES JUST AS TOUGH AS HE IS. IF HE ISN'T ACTUALLY A GOD OF THE CLASSICAL WORLD, THE AVATAR MAY BE A MORTAL WHO IDENTIFIES WITH OR THINKS HE IS EMPOWERED BY SUCH A DEITY. NOTE THAT AVATARS ARE LINKED TO RELIGIONS WHICH ARE, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF NEW AGE REVIVALS, QUITE EXTINGUISHED. THE SENSITIVE TOPIC OF INCARNATION OF LIVING DIVINITY FALLS WITHIN THE DIVINE HERO ARCHETYPE. A VARIANT ON THE AVATAR IS THE SPACE GOD, A MODERN VARIANT ON A CLASSICAL GOD OF MYTH. HE WON'T BE INSTANTLY RECOGNIZED LIKE OTHER AVATARS, AND HIS ADVENTURES WILL BE MORE SCIENCE FICTION THAN FANTASY.

**EXAMPLES:** HERCULES; ISIS; ORION; THOR

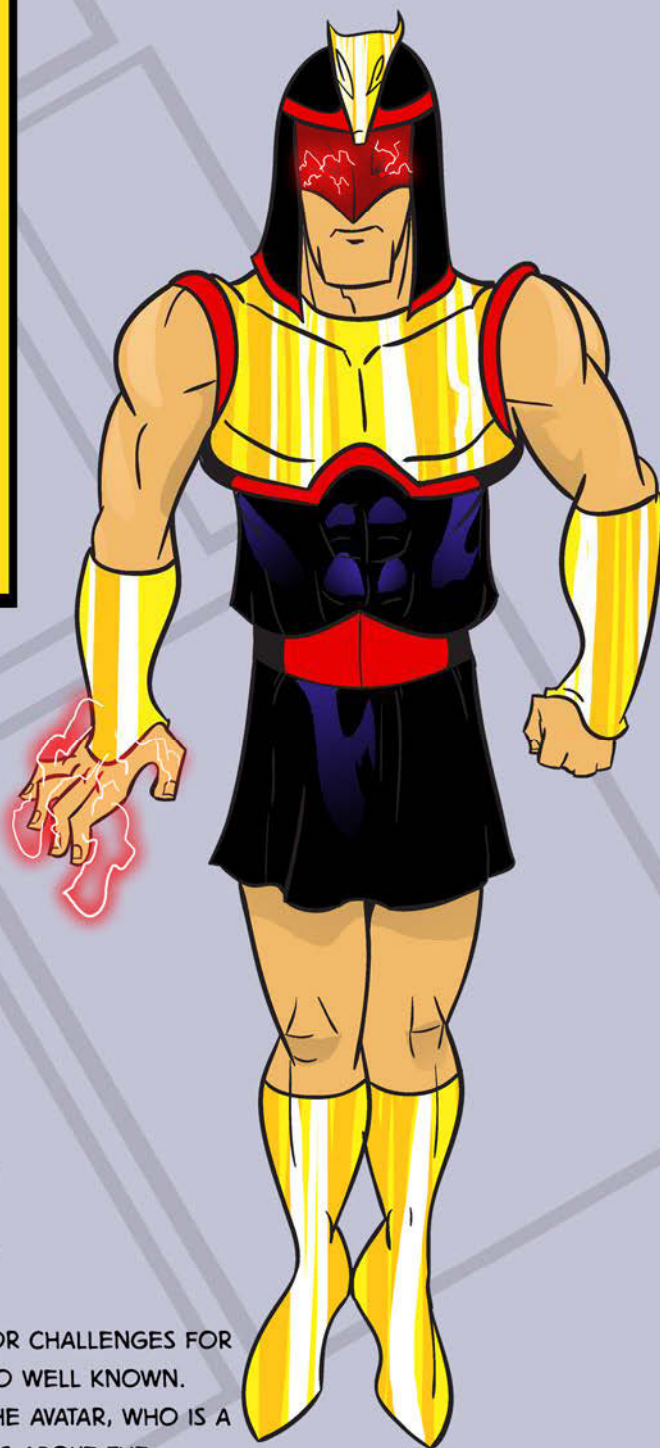
**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** ASTRONAUT, ULTIMATE HERO

## QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

LOOK TO THE GOD THE HERO IS NAMED AFTER FOR YOUR FIRST QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES. GRECO/ROMAN, EGYPTIAN AND NORSE MYTHOLOGIES ARE ALL FERTILE GROUND. DOES THAT GOD HAVE AN ENEMY TO OPPOSE, LIKE AN EVIL HALF-BROTHER OR A GOD OF DEATH? THE GOD'S CLOSE FAMILY, HOME, AND ASSOCIATES BECOME CONNECTION QUALITIES, BUT SOMETIMES THE LARGE SUPPORTING CAST SERVES ONLY TO CAUSE TROUBLE SO YOU MAY HAVE QUALITIES FOR YOUR FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES AND CHALLENGES WHICH REPRESENT THE MEDDLING OF THE REST OF THE PANTHEON. AVATARS OFTEN HAVE A DISTINCTIVE WAY OF SPEAKING THAT MIGHT COUNT AS A CATCHPHRASE, AND WHATEVER THEY ARE "THE GOD OF" IS ALMOST CERTAINLY AN EPITHET.

IN OTHER WORDS, THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF GOOD QUALITIES OR CHALLENGES FOR AVATARS, JUST BECAUSE THEY HAVE SO MUCH HISTORY AND ARE SO WELL KNOWN. IT CAN BE HARD TO TELL WHERE THE LINE IS DRAWN BETWEEN THE AVATAR, WHO IS A GOD, AND THE MYTHIC HERO, WHO IS MORTAL. THE AVATAR STANDS ABOVE THE MYTHIC HERO DUE TO HIS HIGH POWER LEVEL AND IMMORTALITY.

THIS HIGH POWER LEVEL ALLOWS THE AVATAR TO BACK UP HIS FREQUENT CLAIMS THAT HE IS ABOVE ORDINARY HUMANITY AND EVEN ORDINARY LAW, BUT AT THE SAME TIME HE FEELS RESPONSIBLE FOR LESSER MORTALS AND WILL DIE TO PROTECT THEM. HE SEEMS SAVAGE OR BARBARIC TO COMMON FOLKS, AND DISPLAYS A LOVE OF BATTLE ALONGSIDE HIS UNFAMILIARITY WITH OR CONTEMPT FOR MODERN CULTURE.



# AVATAR

ONE QUESTION THE AVATAR SHOULD ASK HIMSELF IS HOW HE FEELS ABOUT WORSHIP. SOME TRY TO RECREATE THE OLD GRANDEUR OF THEIR RELIGION, WHILE OTHERS ABANDON SUCH THINGS AND CONCENTRATE ON DEFENDING MANKIND. EITHER WAY, YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MORTALS AND POTENTIAL WORSHIPPERS MAKES FOR A GREAT CHALLENGE.

## **ABILITIES:**

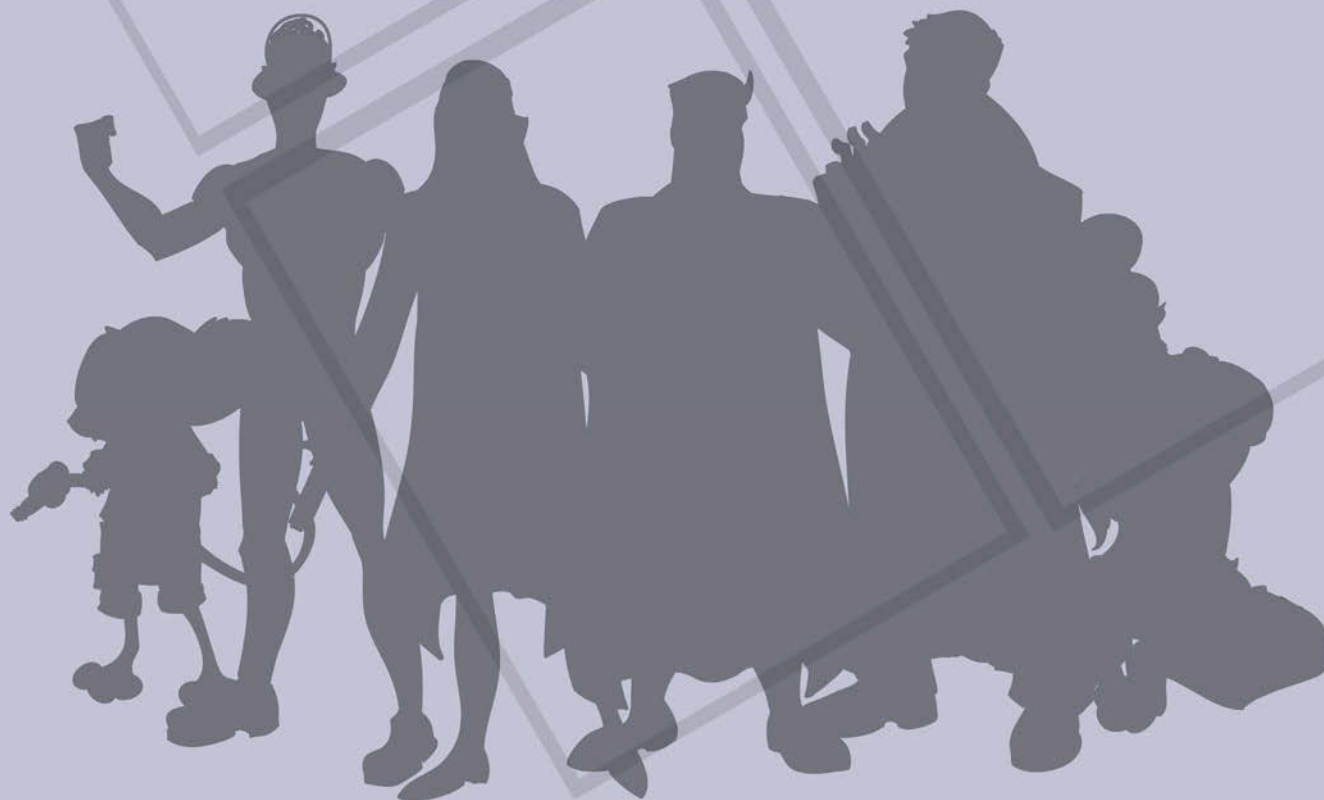
AVATARS USUALLY HAVE STRENGTH 7+, BUT GODS OF MAGIC, SCIENCE, OR KNOWLEDGE MAY CHOOSE INTELLECT OR WILL-POWER INSTEAD. BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN ALIVE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS AND HAVE EXPERIENCE FIGHTING MONSTERS OF ALL SORTS, PROWESS CAN ALSO BE QUITE HIGH.

## **POWERS:**

IMMORTALITY IS THE SIGNATURE AVATAR POWER, AND INVULNERABILITY IS ALSO COMMON. YOU MIGHT HAVE DIMENSION TRAVEL, FLIGHT, OR MASTERY OF WHATEVER SPHERE OF INFLUENCE THE GOD ORIGINALLY WAS CONCERNED WITH. MAGICAL WEAPONS ARE REPRESENTED BY DEVICES, BUT PETS, VEHICLES, LAIRS AND OTHER ODD TOOLS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GOD IN MYTH AND LEGEND (SUCH AS A GOAT YOU CAN KILL AND EAT EVERY DAY ONLY FOR IT TO BE REBORN THE NEXT MORNING) MIGHT BE SOMETHING YOU CAN USE BY TAGGING YOUR QUALITIES INSTEAD. NOTE THAT COMICS ARE NOTORIOUSLY INACCURATE WHEN IT COMES TO DEPICTING MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURES, GIVING YOU MORE LEEWAY THAN YOU MIGHT THINK.

## **SPECIALTIES:**

WEAPONRY, OCCULT, LEADERSHIP AND ATHLETICS ARE COMMON IN TRADITIONAL AVATARS, BUT A MORTAL AVATAR OR SPACE GOD WILL HAVE MODERN SPECIALTIES SUCH AS SCIENCE OR MEDICINE.



# PROMETHEUS

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** CITY OF WHISPERS #32  
**ARCHETYPES:** AVATAR  
**QUALITIES:** CHAMPION OF MAN, FORETHOUGHT, TRICKSTER  
**CHALLENGES:** FOREVER IS A LONG TIME, ALWAYS DISAPPOINTED, NO VICTORY WITHOUT SACRIFICE

<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>COORDINATION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AWARENESS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>STAMINA</b>	<b>15</b>

**POWERS:**  
 IMMORTALITY 5, PRECOGNITION 5

**SPECIALTIES:**  
 LEADERSHIP EXPERT, STEALTH, WRESTLING EXPERT

## ORIGIN

"PEACE IS IN THE GRAVE."

BEFORE THE GODS OF OLYMPUS CAME TO POWER, EARTH WAS HOME TO THE TITANS, AND PROMETHEUS ("FORETHOUGHT") WAS CONSIDERED BY MANY THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST OF THEM ALL. WHEN ZEUS WARRIED ON HIS FATHER, PROMETHEUS THREW IN WITH THE YOUNG UPSTARTS, HOPING FOR AN END TO THE TYRANNY OF CRONOS, BUT HE WAS TO BE DISAPPOINTED.

ZEUS TURNED OUT TO BE JUST AS WHIMSICAL AS HIS FATHER, AND PROMETHEUS BEGAN TO FEEL PITY FOR THE SAVAGE MORTAL BEINGS FORCED TO LIVE ON THE SURFACE OF THE HARSH, COLD WORLD WHILE THE GODS TOASTED THEIR VICTORIES ON MOUNT OLYMPUS.



# PROMETHEUS

HE BESEECHED ZEUS TO EASE THE HARD LIFE OF HUMAN BEINGS, CALLING ON THE FAVOR ZEUS OWED HIM FOR THE BETRAYAL OF CRONOS. ZEUS DISMISSED THE IDEA NOT OUT OF WHIMSY, BUT OUT OF MERCILESS PRAGMATISM: MORTALS MUST NEVER HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO THREATEN THE GODS, LEST THE OLYMPIANS SUFFER THE SAME FATE AS THE TITANS BEFORE THEM. SO LONG AS MEN AND WOMEN WERE FORCED TO STRUGGLE FOR LIFE, THE GODS WOULD BE SECURE IN THEIR REIGN.

IT WAS THEN, BITTER AT ZEUS'S REFUSAL, THAT PROMETHEUS HATCHED HIS PLAN. TO THIS DAY, NO ONE KNOWS PRECISELY HOW PROMETHEUS ACCOMPLISHED THE GREAT THEFT HE WILL BE FOREVER KNOWN FOR. IN ANCIENT MYTH, IT IS SAID HE BROUGHT FIRE TO MANKIND, A SYMBOL FOR LIGHT, KNOWLEDGE, AND THE ABILITY TO TAME NATURE. BUT FIRE IS A SYMBOL FOR POWER, TOO, AND AFTER PROMETHEUS BROUGHT HIS GIFT TO HUMANITY, THERE APPEARED MEN WHO WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO LIFT MOUNTAINS, AMAZONS WHO COULD AIM AN ARROW AT THE HORIZON WITHOUT ERROR, PEOPLE OF AMAZING SKILL AND MATCHLESS BRAVERY. SOMEHOW, PROMETHEUS GAVE THE FIRE OF SUPERHUMAN POWER TO MORTALS, AND USHERED IN THE AGE OF WONDERS.

HE WAS PUNISHED FOR HIS DARING THEFT: ZEUS HAD PROMETHEUS CHAINED TO A ROCK, WHERE AN EAGLE ATE THE TITAN'S LIVER EVERY DAY. IN TIME, HERACLES RELEASED HIM FROM BONDAGE, AND HE WAS FREE AGAIN TO WANDER THE WORLD, WITHOUT DUTY OR OBLIGATION SAVE TO HIS OWN POWERS OF FORESIGHT. EVENTUALLY, MORTALS TURNED AWAY FROM THE GODS IN FAVOR OF NEW WAYS, NEW TRADITIONS, AND THE OLYMPIANS LEFT THE WORLD FOR THE UNKNOWN VOID OF SPACE, BUT PROMETHEUS REMAINED BEHIND. HE KNEW THAT GREATER TRIALS WERE IN STORE FOR HUMANITY, AND HE COULD NOT FIND IT IN HIM TO ABANDON THIS WORLD.

PROMETHEUS' GIFT OF FOREKNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, WORKED GREAT HARM UPON HIS SPIRIT. AS HE WALKED THE EARTH, HE WAS ALWAYS PAINFULLY AWARE OF THE COSMIC TRUTH THAT, FOR MANKIND AT LEAST, THERE COULD BE NO VICTORY WITHOUT PAIN, NO GLORY WITHOUT WIDOW'S WEEDS. HE KEPT A LOW PROFILE, LIVING AMONG MORTALS AND RIGHTING SMALL WRONGS WHEN HE CAME UPON THEM, BUT HE WAS UNWILLING TO MAKE THE GREAT SACRIFICES THAT ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED ACTS OF GREAT HEROISM. THE TITAN BECAME, IN MANY WAYS, A VERY SMALL AND PETTY MAN. THE YEARS BLURRED INTO ONE ANOTHER AS HE LOST SIGHT OF HIMSELF AND DESCENDED INTO A GREAT AGE OF DARKNESS.

IT WAS IN THE MIDDLE YEARS OF THE 20TH CENTURY THAT PROMETHEUS BEGAN TO AWAKEN. HE WAS STIRRED FROM HIS MEANINGLESS WANDERINGS AND HIS USELESS EXISTENCE BY THE GREAT STRUGGLE GOING ON AROUND HIM. HE SAW NATIONS GO TO WAR AROUND THE GLOBE, AND THOUGH THE VICTORY DID NOT COME WITHOUT GREAT PAIN, HE SAW HEROES BRING LIGHT TO THE DARKNESS. IN THIS BRIGHT TIME OF BOLD MEN AND WOMEN, SOMETHING WAS REKINDLED IN PROMETHEUS HIMSELF. HE WAS, AT ONCE, BOTH ASHAMED OF HIS PREVIOUS WAYS AND GRATEFUL FOR HIS TRANSFORMATION. BY THE 1960S HE BEGAN TO USE HIS OWN NAME ONCE MORE, AND HE ONCE AGAIN TOOK UP THE MANTLE OF CHAMPION OF MANKIND.

## ABILITIES

*PROMETHEUS IS A TITAN OF MYTH, BROTHER TO ATLAS, AND POSSESSED OF GREAT STRENGTH AND INCREDIBLE STAMINA. HE IS FUNCTIONALLY IMMORTAL; WHENEVER HE IS KILLED, HIS BODY RETURNS TO LIFE THE NEXT DAY. (IF HIS HEAD IS SEPARATED FROM HIS BODY, HOWEVER, HE CANNOT RETURN TO LIFE, AND IF HIS HEAD WERE EVER TO BE DESTROYED, HE WOULD DIE.) AS A BEING KNOWN FOR HIS GREAT CUNNING, HE POSSESSES SUPERHUMAN INTELLIGENCE AND GREAT WISDOM. HE CAN SPEAK, UNDERSTAND, AND READ ANY LANGUAGE. HE CAN SEE THE FUTURE, BUT FOR REASONS HE DOES NOT HIMSELF UNDERSTAND, HE NOW SEES ONLY POSSIBILITIES, NOT THE CERTAINTY OF FATE.. WHEN THE TITANS RULED OVER THE WORLD THEY WIELDED MANY OTHER VAST POWERS, BUT ONCE THEY WERE OVERTHROWN BY THE OLYMPIANS THEIR ABILITIES FADED. PROMETHEUS REMAINS VERY POWERFUL, BUT THERE ARE OTHER WONDERS AS STRONG, OR STRONGER, THAN HE.*

# PROMETHEUS

THE REST OF THE WORLD BEGAN TO HEAR OF A NEW WONDER, CALLED PROMETHEUS, BUT FEW BELIEVED THAT HE WAS REALLY THE ANCIENT FIGURE OF MYTH RETURNED TO LIFE. RATHER, IT WAS ASSUMED HE WAS A SUPERHUMAN MAN WHO HAD ADOPTED A MYTHOLOGICAL MOTIF.

PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THE EONS HE SPENT WANDERING ROOTLESS AND ALONE, PROMETHEUS SEES SPECIAL VIRTUE IN THE COMMON OR ORDINARY MAN, AND HE CONSIDERS HIMSELF THEIR SPECIAL PROTECTOR. FOR THIS REASON, HE HAS SELDOM DONNED A SPECIAL UNIFORM IN THE MANNER OF OTHER WONDERS, PREFERRING TO MOVE AMONG ORDINARY PEOPLE AS ONE OF THEM, THE BETTER TO UNDERSTAND THEM AND THEIR NEEDS. HE FINDS THE 21ST CENTURY A COMPLICATED PLACE, AND HE IS CONFRONTED BY MANY PUZZLES THAT HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND. ALTHOUGH HE CLEARLY REMEMBERS THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND THE BIRTH OF THE TITANS, HE HAS SINCE LEARNED THAT OTHER MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURES HAVE SIMILAR, BUT CONTRADICTIONARY, MEMORIES.

SIMILARLY, ALTHOUGH HE HAS HEARD SCIENTISTS SPECULATE ON MANY POSSIBLE ORIGINS FOR SUPERHUMAN POWERS AMONG HUMANITY, HE HAS NO REASON TO DOUBT HIS CLEAR MEMORIES OF STEALING THOSE POWERS FROM THE GODS AND GIVING THEM TO MORTALS. IN TIME, HE HAS LEARNED TO SIMPLY ACCEPT THESE CONTRADICTIONS AND FOCUS ON THE MORE IMPORTANT STRUGGLE.

PROMETHEUS CAN SEE THE FUTURE, AND HE NOW REALIZES THAT THE GREATEST CHALLENGE TO FACE THE EARTH HAS YET TO COME, BUT IS IMMINENT. HE NOW SUSPECTS THAT, THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, IT WAS FOR THIS PURPOSE THAT HE GAVE WONDERS TO THE WORLD, SO THAT THEY MIGHT SOMEHOW DEFEND HUMANITY AGAINST A FOE SO AWESOME, SO OVERWHELMING, THAT EVEN THE GODS HAVE FLED BEFORE HIM. WHEN HE CONTEMPLATES THIS COMING DARKNESS, PROMETHEUS FEELS HIS SPIRIT FLICKER AND GROW COLD; HE SUSPECTS THIS MAY MEAN HIS OWN DEATH IS NEAR. DETAILS OF THE COMING STORM ELUDE HIM A FRUSTRATING SITUATION THAT HAS MADE HIM RATHER SHORT-TEMPERED AND IRRITABLE ON THE SUBJECT. TO LEARN MORE AND TO PERHAPS DEVELOP A PLAN TO SURVIVE THIS EVIL, PROMETHEUS HAS RETURNED TO THE STREETS OF HAWKSMOOR, AN ENGLISH CITY AND MYSTICAL COMMUNITY HE KNOWS WELL FROM THE 19TH CENTURY, WHEN HE REVEALED HIMSELF TO POETS AND ARTISTS LIVING THERE.

DESPITE THE GREAT WEIGHT THAT BURDENS HIS SPIRIT, PROMETHEUS REMAINS, IN MANY SENSES, A TRICKSTER. HE'S SELDOM WITHOUT A WICKED INSULT OR A SARCASTIC SMILE; WHEN HIS MOOD LIGHTENS HE PROVES HIMSELF AN EXCELLENT STORYTELLER. HE TAKES PLEASURE IN KNOCKING DOWN BULLIES AND BRAGGARTS, AND TEACHING A LESSON TO THOSE WHO HAVE BECOME TOO PROUD. TYRANTS ARE HIS SPECIAL FOE, AND HE ALWAYS BETS ON THE UNDERDOG (BUT ISN'T ABOVE CHEATING TO MAKE HIS POINT).

## **APPEARANCE:**

AS A TITAN, PROMETHEUS IS SEVEN FEET TALL AND HAS AN ENORMOUS BUILD, WEIGHING SOME 350 POUNDS. HE IS NOT SO LARGE THAT HE IS AUTOMATICALLY ASSUMED TO BE A WONDER BY ANYONE HE MEETS, BUT HE CERTAINLY STANDS OUT IN A CROWD. HIS HAIR IS FIERY RED, AND HIS EYES GRAY. HE WEARS MUNDANE CLOTHING IN ORDER TO BLEND IN WITH THE MORTALS UNDER HIS CARE, AND CARRIES NO WEAPON.



# STORIES

# PROMETHEUS

STORIES FEATURING PROMETHEUS OFTEN RELATE TO GREEK MYTH, TO THE GREAT DARKNESS THAT HE SEES COMING, OR TO HIS ROLE AS SELF-APPOINTED "CHAMPION OF MANKIND."

AFTER BEING FORCED INTO CONFLICT WITH A SERIES OF MYTHOLOGICAL FOES IN VERY PUBLIC PLACES, PROMETHEUS ATTRACTS ENOUGH ATTENTION THAT SOME PEOPLE BEGIN TO THINK HE MAY REALLY BE WHO HE SAYS HE IS. AN AMERICAN AUTHOR PUBLISHES A BOOK CLAIMING THAT ALL THE TRICKSTER SPIRITS FROM COYOTE TO LOKI ARE JUST DIFFERENT INCARNATIONS OF PROMETHEUS, AND PRETTY SOON THERE'S A HEALTHY CULT GOING. HOW DOES THE TITAN REACT TO THIS? WILL HE IGNORE THEM IN FAVOR OF HIS CURRENT PROJECT, ENCOURAGE THEM, OR PERHAPS FALL BACK ON HIS TRICKSTER HABITS AND MAKE FOOLS OUT OF THEM? IS THERE SOME WAY THEY MIGHT BE USEFUL IN HIS SLOW STRUGGLE AGAINST THE COMING FOE?

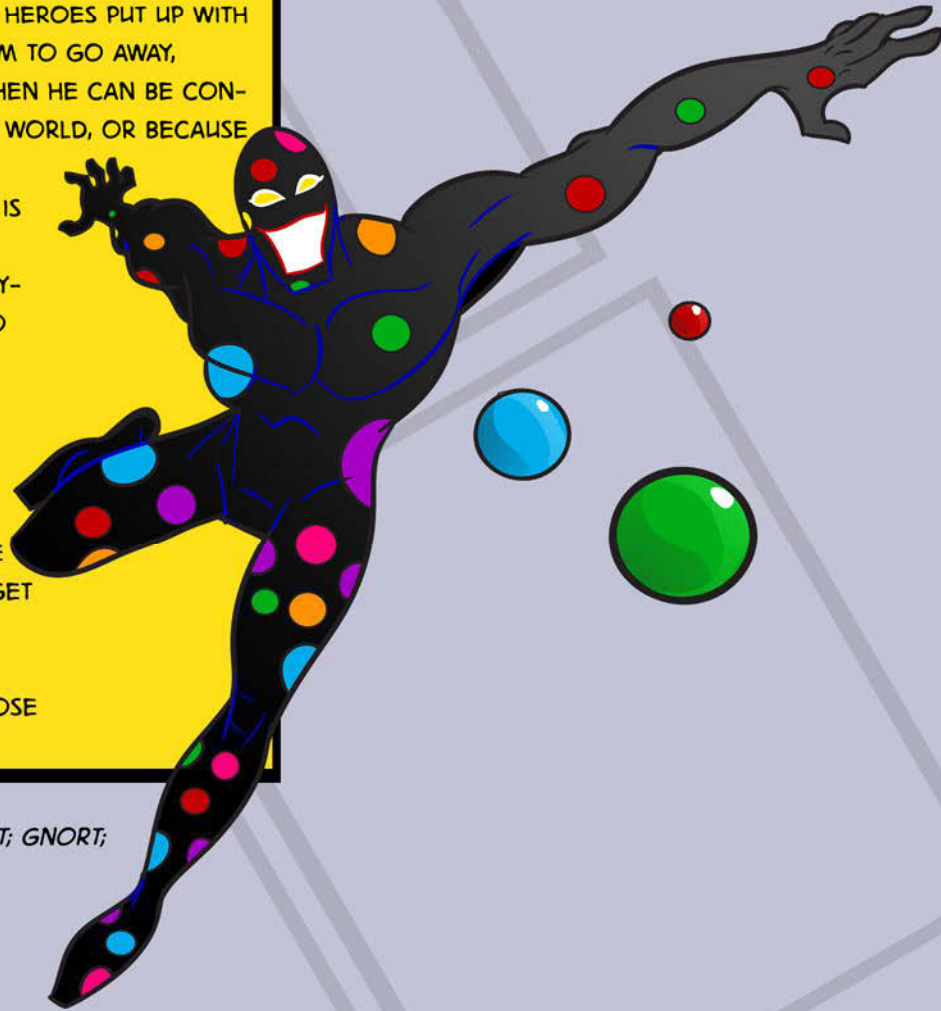
PROMETHEUS KNOWS THAT SOMETHING AWFUL IS COMING FOR EARTH. IF IT WERE MOVING THROUGH ORDINARY SPACE, GROUPS LIKE THE PARLIAMENT OF STARS WOULD KNOW ABOUT IT. PERHAPS IT IS MOVING THROUGH NEARBY DIMENSIONS? PROMETHEUS APPROACHES HEROES CAPABLE OF BREACHING THE DIMENSIONAL BARRIER, TELLS THEM ABOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE, AND ASKS THEM TO SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF THE ENEMY'S APPROACH.

SUDDENLY, ALL HUMANS WITH MUTATIONS OR PSYCHIC ABILITIES LOSE THEIR POWERS! ALIENS, MYSTICS, SUPER-SCIENTISTS AND COSTUMED ADVENTURERS ARE NOT AFFECTED, AND PROMETHEUS INSTANTLY KNOWS WHAT HAS HAPPENED: SOMEONE HAS STOLEN HIS GIFT TO HUMANITY. NATURALLY HE WILL HAVE TO STEAL IT BACK, BUT FIRST HE WILL NEED TO FIND OUT HOW THE THEFT OCCURRED AND WHERE THE CULPRIT IS HIDING.



# COMIC RELIEF

**T**HIS IS A CHARACTER WHO EXISTS FOR ONE PURPOSE: TO AMUSE YOU, THE GM, AND THE OTHER PLAYERS. WINNING OR LOSING THE NEXT SUPER-BATTLE IS OF LITTLE CONCERN TO THE COMIC RELIEF; HE IS JUST THERE TO BE WACKY AND CRACK JOKES. SOME PEOPLE THINK THEY MAKE GREAT COMIC RELIEF HEROES. YOU MIGHT WANT TO SUGGEST THE IDEA TO THE REST OF YOUR GAMING GROUP. IF THEY ALL GROAN AND MAKE FACES, TAKE THAT AS A SIGN. OTHER HEROES PUT UP WITH THE COMIC RELIEF BECAUSE THEY CAN'T GET HIM TO GO AWAY, BECAUSE HIS POWERS ARE SO USEFUL THAT WHEN HE CAN BE CONVINCED TO USE THEM PROPERLY HE SAVES THE WORLD, OR BECAUSE HIS TEAMMATES ACTUALLY FIND HIM AMUSING. A SPECIAL VERSION OF THE COMIC RELIEF HERO IS THE META-HERO. A META-HERO KNOWS HE IS A CHARACTER IN A COMIC BOOK OR IN A ROLEPLAYING GAME. HE MAKES FREQUENT REFERENCE TO THINGS LIKE "CAPTIONS", "THOUGHT BALLOONS" AND OTHER COMIC BOOK TERMS WHICH OTHER HEROES DO NOT HEAR, BUT WE DO (A PRACTICE CALLED "BREAKING THE FOURTH WALL"). HE EXPLOITS THE MECHANICS OF THE COMIC FOR HUMOROUS EFFECT, LIKE RUNNING THROUGH THE GUTTER BETWEEN COMIC PANELS IN ORDER TO GET TO THE VILLAIN BEFORE HIS PLAN IS THROUGH, TALKING TO THE ARTIST OR GM, AND GENERALLY MAKING FREQUENT COMMENTS WHICH ONLY THOSE IN ON THE JOKE UNDERSTAND.



## EXAMPLES:

*AMBUSH BUG; BAT-MITE; ELONGATED MAN; FOXBAT; GNORT; PLASTIC MAN; SQUIRREL GIRL; THE TICK*

## RELATED ARCHETYPES:

*FOCUSED HERO*

## QUALITIES & CHALLENGES:

THE COMIC RELIEF NEEDS MANY QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES BECAUSE HE CONSTANTLY NEEDS DETERMINATION TO AVOID GETTING POUNDED INTO MUSH BY ANGRY VILLAINS (OR HIS FELLOW PLAYERS). AS A RESULT, HE IS OFTEN "ACTING OUT", TAPPING EVERYTHING EVERY POSSIBLE PANEL AND PAGE. THE COMIC RELIEF IS OVER-ENTHUSIASTIC; HE BELIEVES IN THE TEAM AND DOES WHAT THE LEADER TELLS HIM, TO THE BEST OF HIS ABILITY, BUT BECAUSE HE IS BASICALLY A SCREW-UP THINGS ALMOST ALWAYS GO WRONG.

LOOK FOR SILLY CATCHPHRASES ("SPOON!") AND AN ARCHENEMY JUST AS RIDICULOUS AS THE COMIC RELIEF. BAD LUCK IS COMMON FOR THE COMIC RELIEF, AS ARE SOCIAL CHALLENGES THAT DESCRIBE HIS OUTLANDISH APPEARANCE AND BEHAVIOR. IF HE HAS A WEAKNESS, IT IS PROBABLY A COMMON MATERIAL OR SUBSTANCE HE IS INEXPLICABLY AFRAID OF (STYROFOAM), PERHAPS BECAUSE HE BELIEVES IT STRIPS HIM OF HIS POWERS.

SINCE JOKES GET OLD, THROW OUT CHALLENGES AND QUALITIES AFTER A SESSION OR TWO AND THINK UP NEW ONES TO REPLACE THEM. TO REMAIN FRESH, THE COMIC RELIEF IS ALWAYS CHANGING HIS ROUTINE. REMEMBER: DYING IS EASY, BUT COMEDY IS HARD.

# COMIC RELIEF

## ABILITIES:

A COMIC RELIEF CAN GET AWAY WITH ALMOST ANY SET OF ABILITIES. IN FACT, THE LOWER THEY ARE, THE BETTER. THE ONE EXCEPTION IS USUALLY COORDINATION; THE COMIC RELIEF SPENDS A LOT OF TIME DODGING ANGRY VILLAINS. INTELLECT IS PROBABLY HIS LOWEST ABILITY.

## POWERS:

MANY COMIC RELIEF HEROES HAVE MEDIOCRE AND USELESS POWERS (LIKE STRETCHING) OR NO POWERS AT ALL. THIS MAY INDEED BE WHY THEY BECAME COMIC RELIEF CHARACTERS IN THE FIRST PLACE; THEY COULD NOT COMPETE WITH MORE FLASHY HEROES. BUT THE COMIC RELIEF OFTEN FINDS A WAY TO MAKE HIS SILLY POWERS USEFUL AND EFFECTIVE AND HE IS CONSTANTLY UNDERESTIMATED BY VILLAINS. (IN OTHER WORDS, HE HAS A LOT OF DETERMINATION AND ISN'T AFRAID TO USE IT.) ALTERNATELY, THE COMIC RELIEF HAS COSMIC LEVEL POWER WHICH WOULD OVERSHADOW EVERYONE ELSE WERE THE COMIC RELIEF NOT SO INCOMPETENT. SINCE VILLAINS SELDOM APPRECIATE HUMOR, THE COMIC RELIEF HERO SHOULD BE ABLE TO ABSORB PUNISHMENT (INVULNERABILITY OR REGENERATION) OR AVOID GETTING HIT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

## SPECIALTIES:

ACROBATICS IS COMMON, ALONG WITH SPECIALTIES WHICH SEEM COMPLETELY USELESS, SUCH AS ART OR PERFORMANCE. A COMEDIAN WHO HAS BEEN MIND CONTROLLED BY A MASTER CRIMINAL STOPS BEING FUNNY, SO CHECK OUT MENTAL RESISTANCE.

## STUNTS:

COMIC RELIEF CHARACTERS ARE ESPECIALLY LIKELY TO USE STUNTS, BUT THEY PROBABLY WON'T USE ANY INDIVIDUAL STUNT LONG ENOUGH FOR IT TO BECOME A PERMANENT PART OF THEIR CHARACTER. THEY USE STUNTS IN THE SAME WAY ROGER RABBIT OR ANOTHER CARTOON CHARACTER MIGHT; THEY CAN DO ANYTHING AT ALL, AS LONG AS IT'S FUNNY.

## BWA-HA-HA!

A PERFECTLY SERIOUS HERO WHO IS OVERSHADOWED BY HIS TEAM CAN TURN INTO COMIC RELIEF AS THE ONLY WAY TO GET ATTENTION. THE GM (OR COMIC WRITER) CAN AVOID THIS BY INVOLVING THE HERO IN SUBPLOTS AND EXPLORING HIS UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS. A HERO WHOSE POWERS ARE INFERIOR NEEDS SOME EXTRA STORY TIME TO MAKE UP FOR THE DISAPPOINTMENTS HE IS BOUND TO ENCOUNTER IN BATTLE. SOMETIMES THE ENTIRE TEAM CAN TURN INTO COMIC RELIEF, MORE OR LESS ABANDONING ANY GESTURE TOWARDS SERIOUS STORYLINES; THIS IS A PERFECTLY PLAYABLE SORT OF GAME, PROVIDED IT HAPPENS ON PURPOSE. AS GM, GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO THE KIND OF GAME YOU WANT TO RUN AND MAKE SURE IT FITS WITH THE KIND OF GAME YOUR PLAYERS ARE PREPARED TO PLAY.

# WUNDERMAUS

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** WONDER WHAT? #4

**ARCHETYPES:** COMIC RELIEF, ANIMAL HERO, DESCENDANT

**QUALITIES:** NO ORDINARY MOUSE, VOICED BY SAMUEL JACKSON, HAS THE PRESIDENT'S PHONE NUMBER

**CHALLENGES:** MISTAKEN FOR A CHIHUAHUA, CANNOT RESIST GERMAN CHEESES, THE MASKED PHANTOM

**PROWESS** 6

**COORDINATION** 8

**STRENGTH** 5

**INTELLECT** 4

**AWARENESS** 5

**WILLPOWER** 4

**DETERMINATION** 2

**STAMINA** 9



**POWERS:**

EQUIPMENT 8 (DAMAGE 1 SUBMACHINE GUN, DAMAGE 2 SNIPER RIFLE, DAMAGE 2 GRENADES, DAMAGE 1 HEAVY PISTOL, BINOCULARS, GAS MASK), LEAPING 5, SHRINKING 5

**SPECIALTIES:**

INVESTIGATION, LANGUAGES (GERMAN, POLISH), MENTAL RESISTANCE, MILITARY

## ORIGIN

"LET ME SHOW YOU A LITTLE MOVE I CALL THE STEAMBOAT WILLIE."

THE MODERN AGE OF WONDERS BEGAN WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE WUNDERKIND IN 1930'S GERMANY. FOR YEARS THE WEST REFUSED TO BELIEVE REPORTS OF A FANTASTICALLY STRONG, FAST, AND TOUGH SUPER-WARRIOR IN THE RANKS OF THE HITLER YOUTH. BUT FEWER STILL KNEW THE TRUTH: HANS STRASSER WAS NOT THE FIRST SUPERHUMAN BEING ENGINEERED BY THE NAZIS AND THEIR ALLIES IN THE THULE BUNDESCHRAFT. BEFORE THE WUNDERKIND, THERE WAS THE WUNDERMAUS.

SUCCESSFUL SCIENCE REQUIRES EXPERIMENTATION, AND THE EXPERIMENTS WHICH EVENTUALLY RESULTED IN THE CREATION OF THE WUNDERKIND WERE FIRST PERFORMED ON HUNDREDS, POSSIBLY THOUSANDS, OF MICE, RATS, AND OTHER ANIMALS.

DOCTORS, SCIENTISTS, OCCULTISTS AND QUACKS TRIED WHATEVER PROCEDURE THEIR SADISTIC AND INHUMAN BRAINS COULD IMAGINE, FROM HUMAN TRANSPLANT SURGERY TO CHEMICAL CONDITIONING, SUPER-VITAMIN FORMULAS, AND RUNE MAGIC INVOKING WOTAN AND OTHER ANCIENT GODS. THE ANIMALS WHO SUFFERED THROUGH THESE EXPERIMENTS DIED AFTER EXTENSIVE PAIN AND SUFFERING. BUT ONE CREATURE, A MOUSE WITH SOME FREAKISH COMBINATION OF GENETIC CODE AND STUBBORN RESILIENCE, REFUSED TO PERISH. INSTEAD, HE SURVIVED EVERY PROCESS USED UPON HIM UNTIL, IN A SUDDEN MOMENT OF CLARITY, HE REALIZED WHO HE WAS AND THAT HE MUST ESCAPE. THAT MOUSE, DUBBED THE WUNDERMAUS BY HIS TORTURERS, FLED THE LEBENSBORN FACILITY INSIDE THE REICH, THOUGH HE WOULD REMAIN IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY UNTIL THE END OF THE WAR.

FROM 1938 TO 1946, THE WUNDERMAUS WAS AN ADVENTURER BEHIND ENEMY LINES. HE MAY HAVE BEEN SMALL, BUT HIS HEART WAS GREAT. WORKING FOR THE FRENCH RESISTANCE, HE SABOTAGED NAZI ARMORED COLUMNS AND SPIED ON HIGH-RANKING OFFICERS. IN POLAND, HE HELPED JEWISH FAMILIES HIDE FROM THE SS OR ESCAPE TO SAFER NATIONS. AT AUSCHWITZ HE SMUGGLED BREAD TO PRISONERS AND STOLE BACK FAMILY HEIRLOOMS TAKEN BY GUARDS. FOR YEARS HE COMMUNICATED VIA RADIO AND SECRET DROP WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN SPIES WHO HAD NO IDEA HE WAS A MOUSE. FOR A TIME HE WAS CAPTURED BY OTTO SKORZENY, BUT HE ESCAPED BY STEALING A KITE AND CATCHING A PASSING BREEZE. FINALLY, WHEN THE ALLIES INVADED GERMANY AMERICAN GIS MET HIM FACE TO FACE AND HE WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO RELOCATE TO THE UNITED STATES.

THE WUNDERMAUS SERVED AT THE PLEASURE OF THE PRESIDENT, AND OVER THE DECADES HE PERFORMED MANY INVALUABLE SERVICES AND MISSIONS FOR THE OVAL OFFICE, FROM RECONNAISSANCE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS. HE WAS MADE A HERO TO THE PUBLIC AND RECEIVED A TICKER TAPE PARADE IN 1954 UPON HIS RETURN FROM KOREA. FOR A TIME HE WAS EMPLOYED AS A TRAINER AND ADVISOR TO THE MILITARY, WHICH SOUGHT TO TRAIN A NEW GENERATION OF WONDER-SOLDIERS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF WAR. BUT TIME BEGAN TO WEAR ON THE WUNDERMAUS; HE SAW TOO MANY GOOD SOLDIERS, GOOD KIDS, COME UP ON THE BAD END OF A BULLET OR A LANDMINE.

WHEN JFK WAS SHOT IN DALLAS, THE WUNDERMAUS WHO HAD BEEN ON DUTY THAT DAY TOOK IT AS A PERSONAL FAILURE, AND HE DROPPED OUT OF HIS SERVICE TO THE COUNTRY. FOR A TIME HE BECAME A SOCIAL ACTIVIST, PENNING FIERCE AND PROUD EDITORIALS CALLING UPON AMERICA TO RISE, ONCE AGAIN, TO ITS PROMISE, BUT AS MORE GREAT MEN WERE KILLED AND THE 60S GAVE WAY TO THE 70S THE WUNDERMAUS BECAME A BITTER, JADED, RODENT. HE TURNED TO DRINK AND EXPENSIVE CHEESE.

FINALLY, A FEW YEARS AGO, THE OWNERS AND MANAGERS OF THE WONDERLAND AMUSEMENT PARK LOCATED HIM AND OFFERED HIM THE CHANCE TO BE THE PARK'S OFFICIAL SPOKESWONDER. THE MAUS INITIALLY REFUSED; HE WAS OLD AND HAD LITTLE INTEREST IN BEING MADE INTO A SIDESHOW ATTRACTION. BUT WHEN HE VISITED THE PARK, HE WAS OVERWHELMED BY THE MEMORY OF ALL THE WONDERS HE HAD KNOWN IN THE LAST SEVENTY YEARS AND THE JOY THESE ICONS BROUGHT TO CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD. IT ALSO HAPPENED THAT A MYSTERIOUS MASK-CLAD PHANTOM HAD PLACED BOMBS IN THE AMUSEMENT PARK, AND WUNDERMAUS WAS ABLE TO FIND AND DEFUSE THEM BEFORE ANYONE WAS HURT. HE SIGNED HIS CONTRACT THAT DAY.

# WUNDERMAUS

## ABILITIES

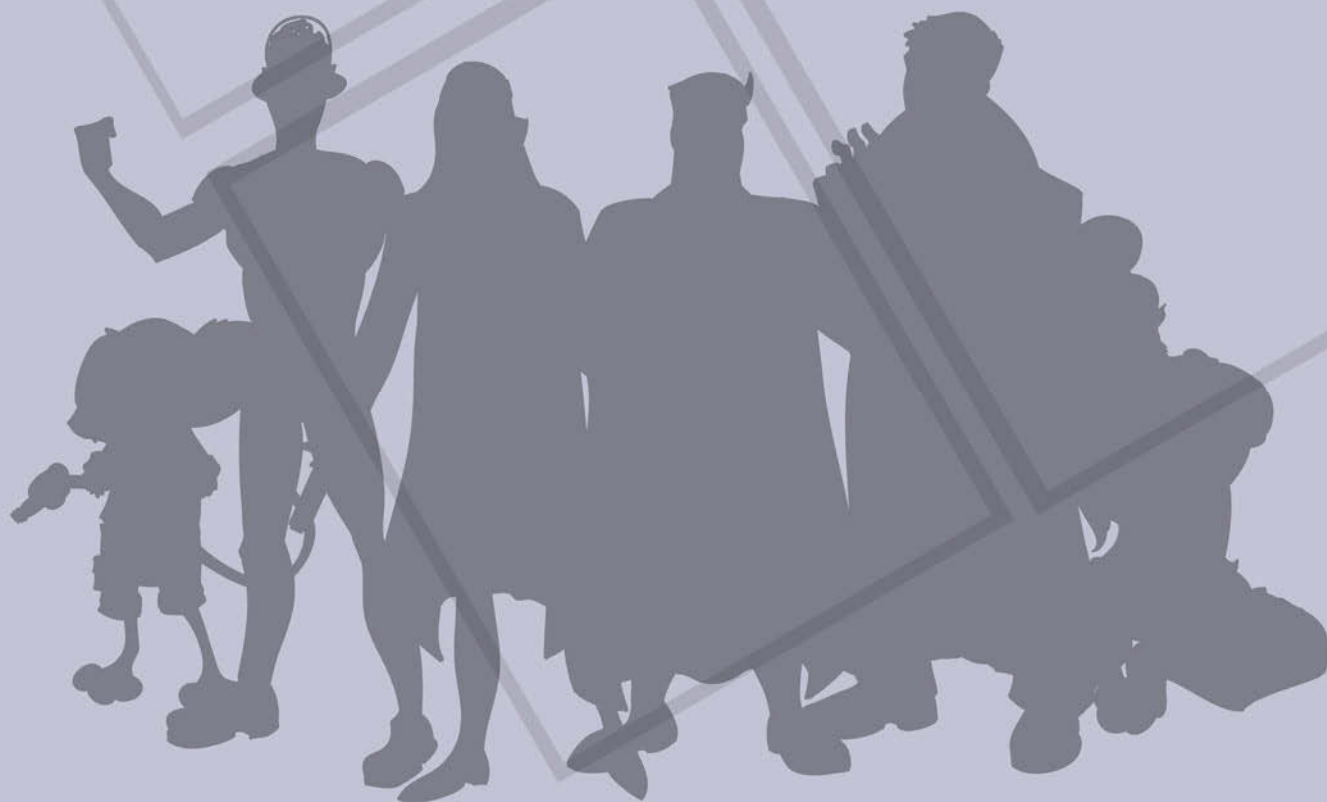
*CHEMICAL STEROIDS, SURGERY, AND OCCULT RITUALS TRANSFORMED WUNDERMAUS INTO THE REICH'S REMARKABLE RODENT. HE IS STRONG AS A HUMAN WEIGHTLIFTER, AND THANKS TO HIS TINY MASS, HE CAN LEAP INCREDIBLE DISTANCES AT TREMENDOUS SPEED. A VETERAN OF DECADES OF WARFARE, THE WUNDERMAUS IS AN EXPERT MARKSMAN, SCOUT, AND ASSASSIN, PROVIDED HIS VICTIM IS VULNERABLE TO BULLETS ABOUT THE SIZE OF A PIN-HEAD.*

# WUNDERMAUS

WUNDERMAUS IS ONE OF THE "OLD GUARD", A WONDER WHO HAS BEEN ALIVE AND RELATIVELY ACTIVE SINCE THE FIRST DAYS OF THE AGE OF WONDER. INDEED, HE ACTUALLY PREDATES VICTOR AND THE ORIGINAL EAGLE. YOUNG HEROES SEEK HIM OUT FOR ADVICE, AND HE USUALLY GRANTS IT, THOUGH NOT WITHOUT PLENTY OF GROUSING AND SOME CHOICE LANGUAGE. BY NOW, THE WUNDERMAUS HAS LONG GIVEN UP TRYING TO BE ANYTHING THAN WHAT HE IS: A HARD-WORKING, HARD-DRINKING, SOLDIER OF FORTUNE IN THE BODY OF A SIX INCH MOUSE. AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE THAT, YOU CAN JUST GO TO HELL, BECAUSE HE AIN'T HERE TO HOLD THE HAND OF SOME ROOKIE STILL WET BEHIND THE EARS.

## **APPEARANCE:**

THE WUNDERMAUS IS A SIX-INCH RODENT WEARING WWII ARMY FATIGUES PLUNDERED FROM A VINTAGE DOLL. HIS GRIZZLED FUR HAS GONE GRAY AROUND THE MUZZLE, AND HE HAS AN EYE-PATCH. HE IS OFTEN FOUND SMOKING, THOUGH NO ONE KNOWS WHERE HE GETS CIGARS THAT SMALL. WHEN ARMED, HE CARRIES A TINY THOMPSON SMG, A COLT .45 PISTOL, AND A BANDOLIER OF BUTTON-SIZED GRENADES.



# WUNDERMAUS

## STORIES

THE WUNDERMAUS IS KEY TO STORIES SET IN WONDERLAND, THOSE WHICH INVOLVE THE EARLY YEARS OF THE AGE OF WONDERS, OR SITUATIONS WHICH MAKE HIM AN UNUSUAL MENTOR TO YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED HEROES.

THE PLAYERS ARE AT WONDERLAND IN THEIR SECRET IDENTITIES WHEN THE MASKED PHANTOM SUCCEEDS IN CAPTURING WUNDERMAUS AND SEALING THE PARK SO NO ONE CAN ENTER OR LEAVE. IT IS UP TO THE HEROES TO STOP THE VILLAIN, BUT FIRST THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET AWAY FROM THEIR FRIENDS AND FAMILY, WHO ARE TRAPPED IN THE PARK. EXPECT BOMBS STRAPPED TO ROLLER COASTERS, COSTUMED CHARACTERS REPLACED BY SERIAL KILLERS FREED FROM THE NEARBY PSYCHIATRIC WARD, AND ANIMATRONIC PRESIDENTS ARMED WITH SHRINK RAYS AND BUTCHER KNIVES.

ONE OF THE HEROES DISCOVERS, AT A CRIME SCENE, DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS RELATING TO THE WUNDERKIND PROGRAM. THERE ARE FEW ALIVE WHO HAVE ANY MEMORY OF THIS TIME, AND RECORDS WERE DESTROYED. BUT THE WUNDERMAUS WAS THERE; HE CAN IDENTIFY THE MYSTERIOUS MAN WITH A MONOCLE WHO APPEARS IN MANY OF THE PHOTOS. IS THIS THE GENIUS BEHIND THE AGE OF WONDERS, AN ANONYMOUS SCIENTIST LONG THOUGHT DEAD?

TIRED OF SEEING SUPER-GROUPS STRUGGLE AND FAIL, THE WUNDERMAUS DECIDES TO SHOW THE WORLD HOW IT IS DONE. HE BECOMES THE PATRON TO THE PLAYER TEAM, WHICH IS BASED OUT OF WONDERLAND IN AN UNDERGROUND REALM BETWEEN THE PIRATE RIDE AND THE SUBMARINE ADVENTURE. EACH OF THE HEROES IS GIVEN A COSTUME AND NAME BASED ON A DISTINGUISHED, BUT LONG GONE, WONDER FROM THE GOLDEN AGE.

THE MAUS ACTS AS THEIR TRAINER AND ALSO ASSIGNS THEM VARIOUS MISSIONS DESIGNED TO TAKE OUT BAD GUYS BEFORE THEY BECOME DANGEROUS. BUT WUNDERMAUS HAS NOT TOLD THEM HIS REAL MOTIVE: HE KNOWS THAT HE IS DYING AT LAST, AND HAS ONLY ABOUT A YEAR TO FORM A LASTING LEGACY WHICH WILL ATONE FOR ALL THE MANY SINS WHICH WEIGH

# CREEPY HERO

THE CREEPY HERO IS AN ODD COMBINATION OF COMIC RELIEF AND DARK AVENGER. HE AMUSES THE READER WITH HIS QUICK BANTER AND CLEVER STUNTS EVEN AS HE TERRORIZES THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT AND LEAVES THEM PARALYZED WITH FEAR. HIS FOCUS IS ON URBAN, STREET-LEVEL CRIME. WHEN FORCED INTO SAVING THE WORLD, HE SEEMS OUT OF PLACE.

**EXAMPLES:** CREEPER, JACK-IN-THE-BOX, THE MASK, NIGHT-CRAWLER, SPIDER-MAN

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** COMIC RELIEF, DARK AVENGER, DEFENDER, OCCULT HERO

## QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

A STREET HERO WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR, THE CREEPY HERO IS NOT ALWAYS APPRECIATED BY THE PUBLIC. THERE IS A STRANGENESS ABOUT HIM WHICH OFTEN LEADS TO HOSTILITY FROM THE POLICE. HE IS HUNTED, CONSIDERED A CRIMINAL, OR THOUGHT TO BE SOME KIND OF MONSTER. HIS NAME, POWERS, AND APPEARANCE MAY BE COMICAL, AND HIS POWERS ODD OR UNSETTLING. NONE OF THIS GETS IN THE WAY OF HIS WAR ON CRIME, HOWEVER, AND HE IS RUTHLESSLY EFFECTIVE WHEN IT COMES TO KEEPING THE CITY SAFE. HE MAY HAVE CONNECTIONS ON THE STREET, INFORMERS OR FANS WHO ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM AND WHO KNOW HIM TO BE A REAL HERO. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY IS UNMATCHED;

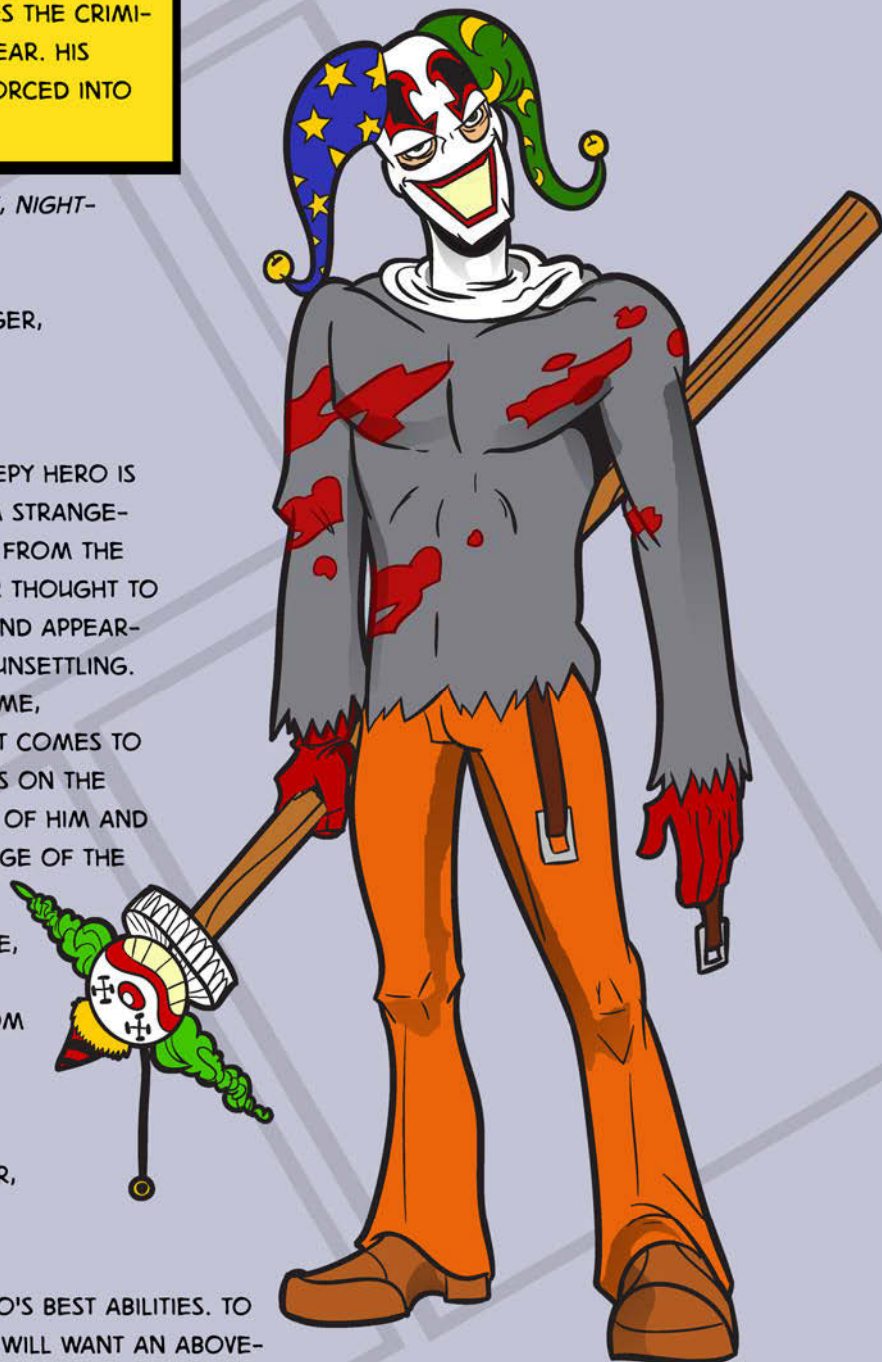
HE WILL KNOW EVERY FLAGPOLE, CORNER GARGOYLE, AND FIRE ESCAPE FOR USE IN PURSUIT AND ESCAPE. THE CREEPY HERO IS A LONER FIGURE AND IS SELDOM SEEN ON TEAMS. WHEN HE DOES SHOW UP ON A TEAM, HIS HUMAN SIDE COMES THROUGH, AND HE LOSES MUCH OF THE WEIRD STRANGENESS THAT MAKES HIM SO UNIQUE. HIS DARK HUMOR, HOWEVER, ALWAYS REMAINS.

## ABILITIES:

COORDINATION AND PROWESS ARE THE CREEPY HERO'S BEST ABILITIES. TO GET THE BEST USE OF HIS INTIMIDATE SPECIALTY, HE WILL WANT AN ABOVE-AVERAGE WILL. BECAUSE HIS ENEMIES ARE SIMPLE CRIMINALS OR MUNDANE CROOKS IN ELABORATE COSTUMES, HE DOES NOT NEED AN ESPECIALLY HIGH STRENGTH TO BE AN EFFECTIVE FIGHTER.

## POWERS:

THE CREEPY HERO SELDOM HAS GREAT POWER, BUT SINCE HIS OPPONENTS ARE CROOKS WITH GUNS HE DOES JUST FINE. HE SHOULD HAVE POWERS WHICH ARE UNUSUAL OR STRANGE WITH A FRIGHTENING THEME. HE WILL NOT FLY, INSTEAD USING TELEPORTATION, SWINGING, OR WALL-CRAWLING.



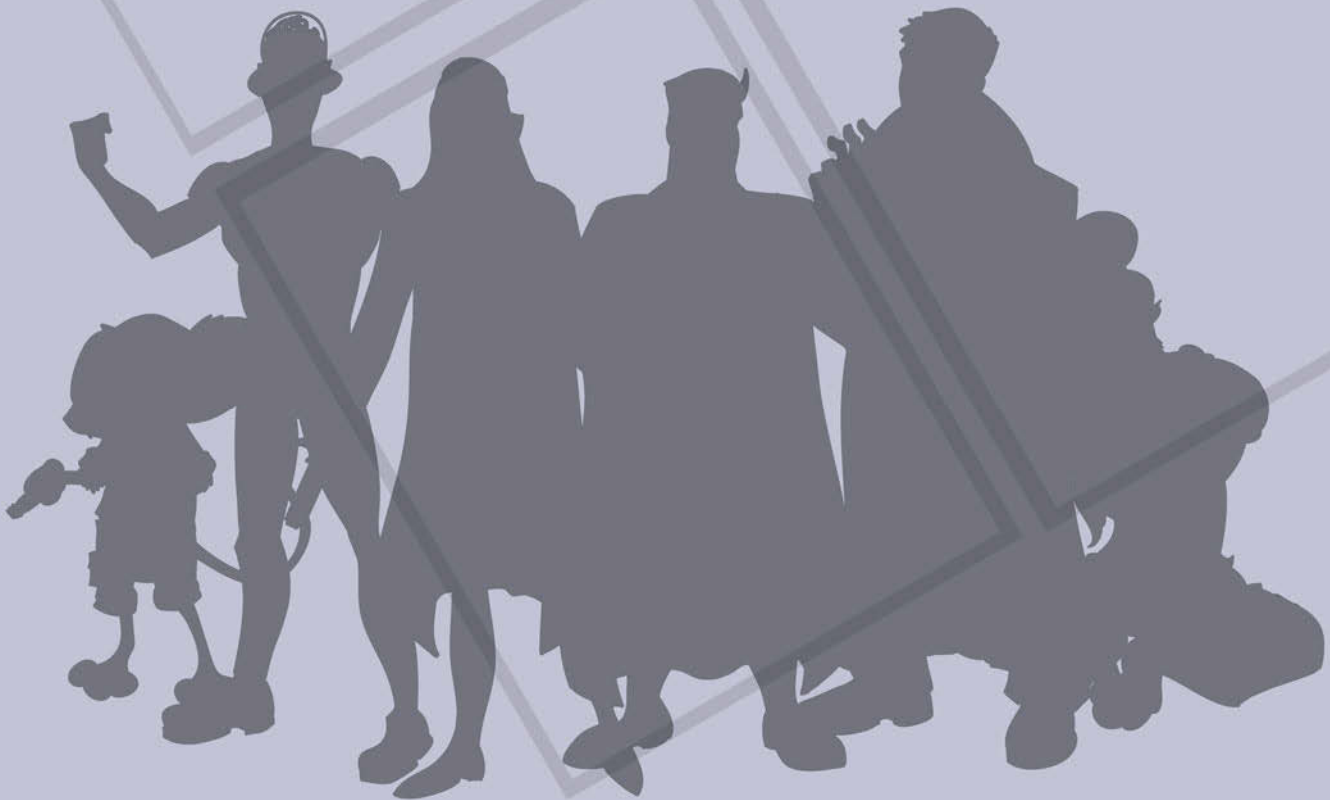


# CREEPY HERO

HE MAY MIMIC POWERS USING DEVICES OF HIS OWN INVENTION, A GOOD WAY TO MISLEAD HIS ENEMIES AND THE MEDIA.

**SPECIALTIES:**

LIKE MANY SOLO CHARACTERS, THE CREEPY HERO'S SKILLS ARE BROAD AND DIVERSE, OFTEN INCLUDING ACROBATICS, INTIMIDATE, MARTIAL ARTS AND SCIENCE.



# THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** FABULOUS FROG-GIRL #1

**ARCHETYPES:** ANIMAL HERO, COMIC RELIEF

**QUALITIES:** JUSTICE CROAKS AT MIDNIGHT", 100,000 TWITTER FOLLOWERS, NEW YORK CITY GIRL

**CHALLENGES:** EVERY PRINCE IS A FROG IN DISGUISE, IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN, THERE WAS A YOUNG WOMAN WHO SWALLOWED A FLY.

**PROWESS** 8

**COORDINATION** 8

**STRENGTH** 6

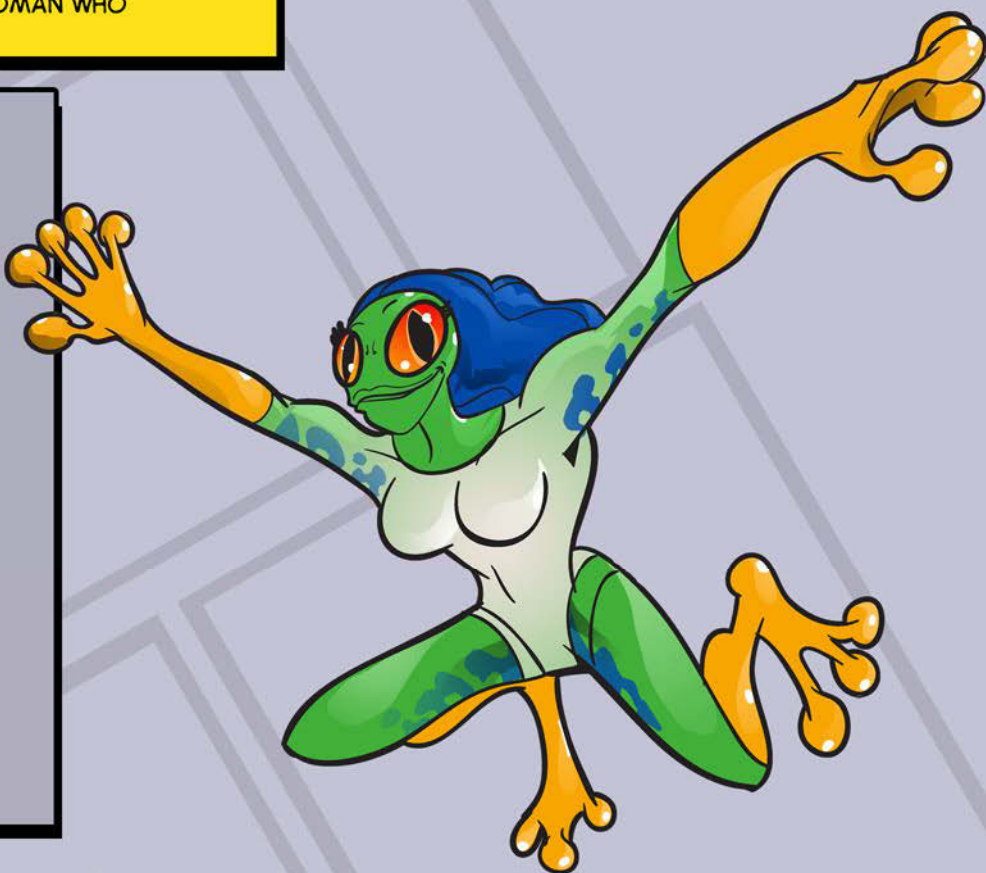
**INTELLECT** 4

**AWARENESS** 4

**WILLPOWER** 4

**DETERMINATION** 1

**STAMINA** 10



**POWERS:**

PARALYSIS 6, WALL-CRAWLING 6, SUPERSENSES 2 (360 DEGREE VISION, NIGHT VISION)

**STUNTS:**

TONGUE (PROWESS): POLLY CAN STRETCH HER TONGUE ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE FEET; SHE CAN USE IT TO MAKE PARALYSIS ATTACKS, DISARM ENEMIES, TRIP THEM, OR MAKE REGULAR ATTACKS. POISON FLICK (PARALYSIS): FROG-GIRL CAN COLLECT A MASS OF PARALYTIC POISON FROM HER MOUTH AND FLICK IT USING HER STRENGTH AND AGILITY, MAKING RANGED ATTACKS WITH HER COORDINATION.

## ORIGIN

"ROMAN LEGIONNAIRES IN ROCKET PACKS ARE DUELING FLYING ZOMBIE MONKEYS OVER BROADWAY. BUT IF YOU REALLY WANT TO SEE SOMETHING UNBELIEVABLE, CHECK OUT HOW MUCH THEY'RE CHARGING FOR TICKETS."

PAULINA SANCHEZ (EVERYONE CALLS HER POLLY) IS A PERFECTLY NORMAL GIRL WITH A PERFECTLY NORMAL LIFE. HER SKILLS AS AN INVESTMENT BANKER HAVE FINALLY BEEN NOTICED BY HER SUPERIORS, AND SHE'S BEEN AWARDED A CORNER OFFICE. SHE DRIVES A BMW AND HAS HER NIECES OVER EVERY SUNDAY.

# THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL

SHE NEVER GOES TO THE MOVIES WITHOUT BUYING A BIG TUB OF POPCORN. SHE DRINKS DIET COKE.

BUT TROUBLE SEEMS TO FOLLOW POLLY WHEREVER SHE GOES: HER NIECES GET KIDNAPPED BY INTELLIGENT DOGS FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, HER MOVIE THEATER IS HELD UP BY MATINEE BANDITS, HER BMW IS MISTAKEN FOR THAT OF A FOREIGN AMBASSADOR AND A BOMB IS PLANTED UNDER THE HOOD. IT IS IN TIMES LIKE THESE THAT PAULINA WEARILY ADOPTS THE MANTLE SHE WAS BORN FOR, THE NAME THAT IS BOTH A BLESSING AND A TERRIBLE CURSE. IT IS AT TIMES LIKE THIS THAT SHE BECOMES ... THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL.

PAULINA'S BIZARRE CONDITION COMES FROM HER MOTHER'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY, WHICH IS RELATED TO BLUE-BLOODED EUROPEAN ARISTOCRATS OF "FROG PRINCE" FAME. EVERY FEW GENERATIONS THE FROG GENE RUNS A BIT TOO TRUE. BUT AN UNUSUAL COMPLICATION AROSE WHEN POLLY'S MOTHER MARRIED A SOUTH AMERICAN MAN WHOSE GRANDMOTHER WAS A WITCH. THIS TIME, WHEN THE FROG CURSE REARED ITS BOGGLE-EYED HEAD, IT TOOK THE FORM OF A BRIGHTLY COLORED AND VERY POISONOUS PERUVIAN BREED. POLLY BECAME THE FAMILY TREE FROG.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, PAULINA DOESN'T PARTICULARLY WANT TO BE A FROG. ALTHOUGH SHE'S COME TO ACCEPT HER STRANGE FATE AND SAVED MANY LIVES, SHE'D STILL GIVE IT ALL UP JUST TO NEVER TASTE FLIES ANY MORE. SHE WISHES ALL THE WORLD'S FREAKS AND WEIRDOS WOULD JUST LEAVE HER ALONE, BUT SHE HASN'T GOTTEN HER WISH YET. WORSE, SHE CAN'T SEEM TO FIND THE CURE: IF POLLY EVER RECEIVES THE KISS OF TRUE LOVE, SHE WILL BE CURED OF HER CURSE FOREVER.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR HER, NEW YORK CITY IS FULL OF JERKS. SHE'S KISSED ENOUGH TO KNOW.

THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL IS SURPRISINGLY POPULAR ON THE STREETS OF NEW YORK, AND MANY YOUNG GIRLS LOOK UP TO HER AS AN OFFBEAT ROLE MODEL. T-SHIRTS, BALLOONS, AND LUNCHBOXES BEARING HER IMAGE CAN BE FOUND IN SCHOOLYARDS ACROSS THE CITY. SHE REMAINS A LONER, HOWEVER, NOT BECAUSE NO OTHER WONDERS TAKE HER SERIOUSLY BUT BECAUSE SHE DOES NOT TAKE HERSELF SERIOUSLY. SHE SIMPLY CAN'T PICTURE HERSELF AS A HERO OR, INDEED, AS ANYTHING BUT GOD'S CRUEL JOKE.

## APPEARANCE:

PAULINA SANCHEZ IS A GLUTSY SOUTH-AMERICAN BEAUTY WITH A HIGH-CLASS WARDROBE THAT SUITS HER DAY JOB. HER DARK BROWN HAIR IS THICK AND CURLY, AND SHE HAS AN AIR OF CONFIDENCE AND STRENGTH. WHEN SHE TRANSFORMS INTO THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL, HOWEVER, SHE LOSES ALL TRACE OF HER HUMAN BEAUTY AND BECOMES A HUMANOID TREE FROG CROUCHING ON HANDS AND FEET. SHE HAS ORANGE HANDS, FEET, AND EYES, A WHITE CHEST AND STOMACH, SKY BLUE ON HER SIDES AND HIPS, AND THE REST OF HER BODY IS PALE GREEN.

## ABILITIES

THE FABULOUS FROG GIRL HAS THE PROPORTIONAL STRENGTH AND SPEED OF A TREE FROG, WHICH MEANS SHE'S INCREDIBLY NIMBLE, STRONGER THAN A PRIZEFIGHTER, AND ABLE TO LEAP OVER 80 FEET FROM A CROUCH. HER LIGHTNING-FAST TONGUE CAN EXTEND SOME 25 FEET AND SHE'S USED IT TO DISARM GUNMEN, TRIP FLEEING CROOKS, OR JUST BEAT PEOPLE SENSELESS WHEN NECESSARY. WHEN SHE ADOPTS FROG FORM, POLLY'S LIMBS SECRETE A STICKY RESIN THAT ALLOWS HER TO CLING TO SHEER SURFACES, AND HER ENTIRE BODY IS COVERED IN A PARALYZING POISON. ONE BRUSH OF THIS STUFF IS USUALLY ENOUGH TO REDUCE HER ENEMIES TO QUIVERING BLOBS OF NERVES, BUT SHE'S ALSO PRETTY GOOD AT COLLECTING A BIG SWAB OF THE STUFF ON ONE FROGGY FINGER AND FLICKING IT AT A FOE TOO WARY TO GET INTO HAND TO HAND. SHE CAN SEE IN THE DARK AND IN ALL DIRECTIONS, THANKS TO HER ENORMOUS EYES. IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM INTO THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL, POLLY HAS TO EAT A FLY. SHE'S ALL TOO PRACTICED AT SPOTTING AND CATCHING THE WINGED BUGS, THOUGH SHE STILL HATES EATING THEM. ONCE SHE CHANGES, SHE CANNOT RETURN TO HUMAN SHAPE FOR A FEW HOURS, AS THE CURSE SLOWLY RUNS ITS COURSE.

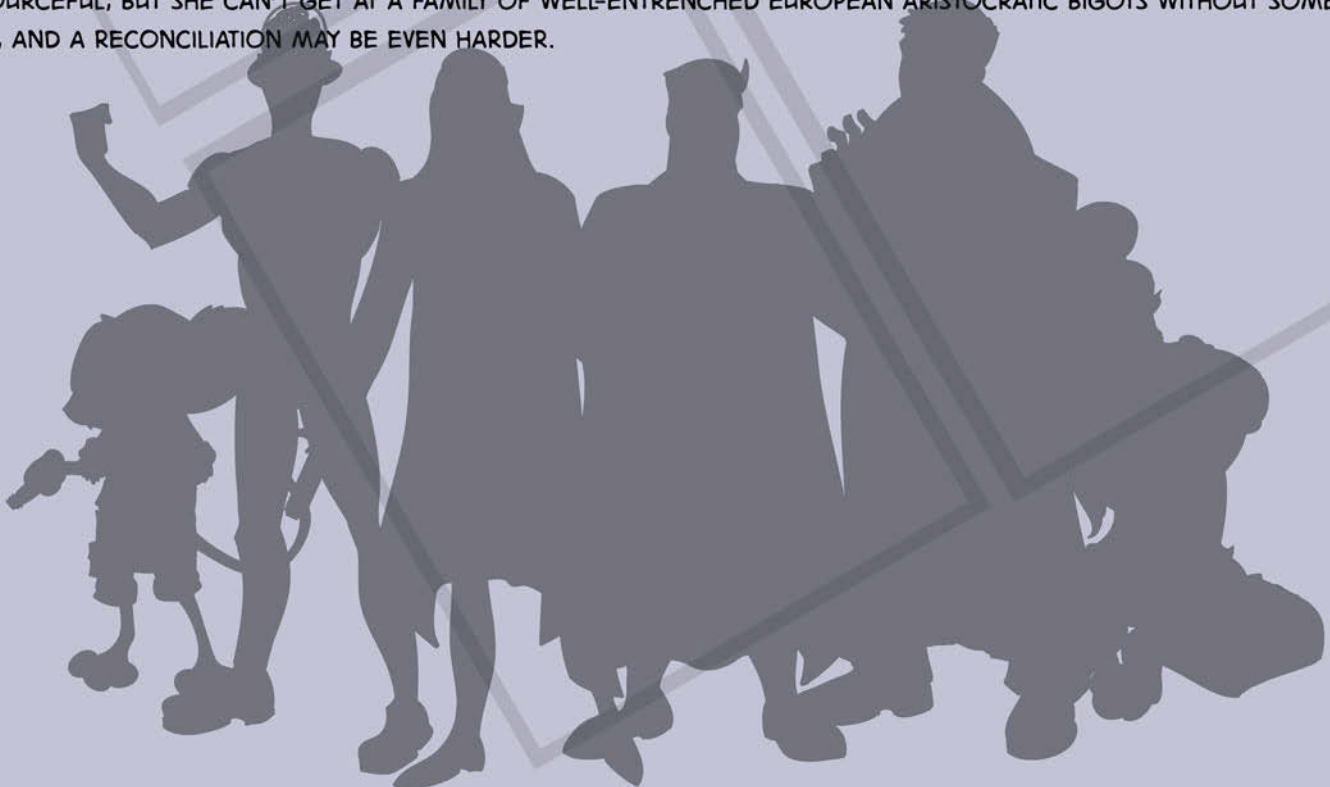
# STORIES

## THE FABULOUS FROG-GIRL

ADVENTURES INVOLVING THE FROG-GIRL SHOULD ALWAYS BE MORE THAN A LITTLE STRANGE. SHE ALSO MAKES A GREAT ROMANTIC INTEREST, AND FEW PLAYERS COMPLAIN WHEN THEY FIND OUT THEY'RE ACTUALLY RELATED TO ROYALTY. POLLY FINDS OUT THE REASON SHE'S HAVING SO MUCH TROUBLE BREAKING THE CURSE: TRUE LOVE ISN'T ENOUGH. SHE HAS TO MARRY A PRINCE. BY HER 25TH BIRTHDAY. WHICH IS IN TWO WEEKS. LOGICALLY, SHE PANICS. SHE NEEDS HELP FINDING AND COURTING THE RIGHT MAN; FORTUNATELY FOR HER, SUPERHUMAN SOCIETY HAS MORE THAN ITS NORMAL SHARE OF PRINCES, WHAT WITH SUNKEN CITIES UNDER THE SEA, REMOTE AFRICAN NATIONS, AND ALIEN EMPIRES. AND IF ALL THE GOOD GUYS FALL THROUGH ... IS SHE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR ONE OF THOSE ARMORED TYRANTS FROM THE BALKANS?

A CHARACTER SUFFERING FROM A RARE DISEASE CAN BE CURED ONLY BY A NATIVE MEDICINE DERIVED FROM THE SECRECTIONS OF A NEARLY-EXTINCT TREE FROG, FOUND ONLY IN SOUTH AMERICA. POLLY HERSELF IS ALREADY IN THE REGION ON A BUSINESS-RELATED VENTURE, AND THIS STORY BRINGS SEVERAL FORCES TOGETHER FOR A COMPLICATED FACE-OFF OVER CONFLICTING GOALS. THE HEROES JUST WANT THE FROGS, BUT GOVERNMENT DEVELOPERS ARE DESTROYING THEIR HABITAT IN FAVOR OF INDUSTRIALIZATION. PROTEST GROUPS ARE SABOTAGING THE MACHINERY, CAUSING DANGEROUS ACCIDENTS. AND POLLY ... POLLY IS TRYING TO IGNORE THAT STRANGE CONNECTION SHE FEELS TO THESE STRANGE LITTLE CREATURES, A FEELING THAT TELLS HER SHE COULD LEARN A LOT MORE ABOUT HERSELF IF SHE JUST ALLOWED HERSELF TO LISTEN...

POLLY MAY HAVE INHERITED HER MOTHER'S CURSE, BUT HER FAMILY SEES THE PERUVIAN STAIN ON THEIR NOBLE FROG-LINEAGE TO BE AN INTOLERABLE SOURCE OF SHAME. IN ORDER TO KEEP THEIR BLOODLINE BLUE (OR, RATHER, GREEN), THE MATRIARCH DECIDES POLLY MUST BE EXTERMINATED. THEY HIRE FROG-KILLING ASSASSINS, CLEAN OUT HER BANK ACCOUNT, TERMINATE HER EMPLOYMENT, AND SOON SHE'S HOPPING FOR HER LIFE. THERE'S NO DOUBT PAULINA IS RESOURCEFUL, BUT SHE CAN'T GET AT A FAMILY OF WELL-ENTRENCHED EUROPEAN ARISTOCRATIC BIGOTS WITHOUT SOME HELP, AND A RECONCILIATION MAY BE EVEN HARDER.



# DARK AVENGER

THE DARK AVENGER IS HEIR TO THE 1930'S MYSTERY MAN. A SURVIVOR OF TRAGEDY, OFTEN THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE, HE IS NOW A VIGILANTE WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE LAW. HE CULTIVATES A REPUTATION OF FEAR, PREYING UPON CRIMINALS WITH RELENTLESS DETERMINATION. A VARIANT OF THE DARK AVENGER IS THE SUPERNATURAL AVENGER, WHO HAS BEEN SLAIN BY CRIMINALS AND COMES BACK FROM THE DEAD TO AVENGE HIS OWN MURDER.

**EXAMPLES:** BATMAN; CONFESSOR; THE CROW; GHOST; HUNTRESS; NIGHTWING; PUNISHER; QUESTION; SHADOW

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** DEFENDER, GADGET GUY, MASTER OF THE MARTIAL ARTS, OCCULT HERO, WEAPON MASTER

### QUALITIES & CHALLENGES:

THE DARK AVENGER STRUGGLES WITH QUESTIONS OF LIFE AND DEATH. WILL HE KILL? IF SO, OTHER HEROES OSTRACIZE HIM AND PURSUE HIM. IF HE DOES NOT, HIS TARGETS WILL ONLY BE IMPRISONED TEMPORARILY AND WILL INEVITABLY ESCAPE. SOMETIMES THE DARK AVENGER CULTIVATES THE REPUTATION OF AN URBAN LEGEND, LEADING CRIMINALS AND MUNDANE CITIZENS TO DENY HIS VERY EXISTENCE. IF CONFRONTED WITH HARD EVIDENCE, EVEN INNOCENTS TREMBLE AND FLEE.

HE IS LIKELY TO HAVE SOME KIND OF EPITHET, A TERRIFYING PHRASE WHICH CRIMINALS WHISPER WHEN THEY BELIEVE HE IS NEAR. HE MAY LEAVE BEHIND A CALLING CARD, LIKE A SPIDER-SYMBOL IN THE FOREHEAD OF HIS VICTIMS OR SMOKE WHICH TURNS INTO A FLOATING QUESTION MARK.

THE DARK AVENGER IS IDEALLY SUITED TO SOLO STORIES AND TALES COMPOSED SOLELY OF SIMILAR CHARACTERS. ON A TEAM, HE IS FORCED TO CURB HIS VIOLENT IMPULSES AND, DESPITE HIS HIGH DETERMINATION, HE CAN BE OVERSHADOWED DUE TO HIS LACK OF POWERS.

WRITERS SOLVE THIS PROBLEM BY PUTTING HIM IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE, GIVING HIM SOMETHING TO DO (OTHER THAN BEAT UP AND TORTURE TWO-BIT HOODS).



# DARK AVENGER

**ABILITIES:**

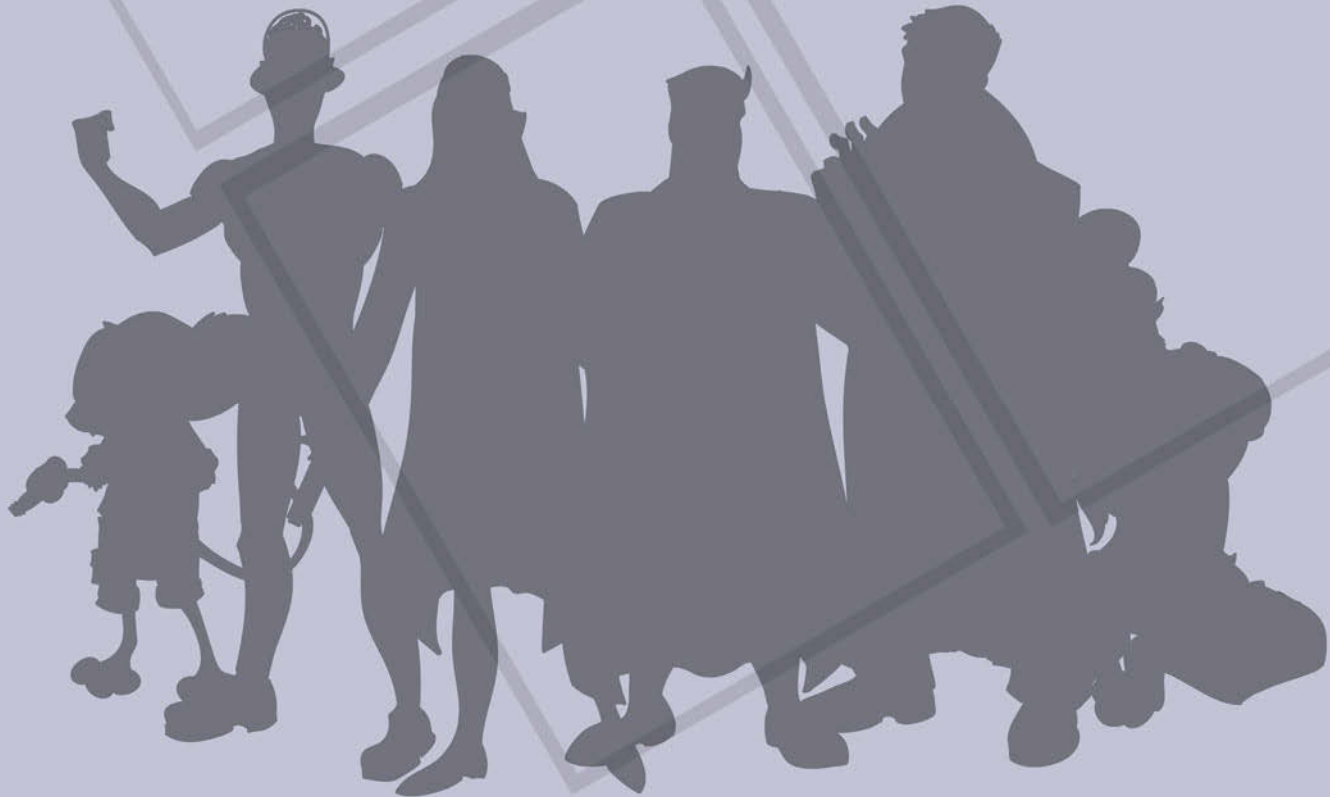
THE DARK AVENGER WILL RARELY HAVE ANY ABILITY OVER 6, THOUGH PROWESS, INTELLECT AND WILL ARE GOOD CANDIDATES. AT THE SAME TIME, HE CANNOT AFFORD ANY WEAKNESSES, SO NO ABILITY WILL BE BELOW AVERAGE.

**POWERS:**

MOST DARK AVENGERS HAVE NO POWERS AT ALL AND RELY ON FIREARMS, HIGH-TECH GADGETS, AND A LIFETIME OF INTENSIVE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TRAINING. THE SUPERNATURAL AVENGER, HOWEVER, MAY FLY, PHASE THROUGH WALLS, OR WIELD EMOTION CONTROL TO CREATE FEAR IN HIS VICTIMS. BECAUSE HE IS ALREADY DEAD, THE SUPERNATURAL AVENGER WILL BE VERY HARD TO INJURE, POSSESSING REGENERATION, IMMORTALITY, LIFE SUPPORT OR INVULNERABILITY.

**SPECIALTIES:**

THE DARK AVENGER IS A POLYMATH, GOOD AT JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING. CRIMINOLOGY, DISGUISE, MARTIAL ARTS, HYPNOTISM, INVESTIGATION, STEALTH AND OTHER SKILLS CONTRIBUTE TO THE DARK AVENGER'S MYSTERIOUS IMAGE AND CONVINCE HIS VICTIMS HE HAS POWERS.



# THE VEIL

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** THE VEIL #1

**ARCHETYPES:** DARK AVENGER, WOMAN WARRIOR

**QUALITIES:** "NOTHING IS BEYOND THE VEIL", "THE HIDDEN ONE", ALWAYS STYLISH, GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**CHALLENGES:** WANTED BY THE LAW, ARAB IN A POST-9/11 WORLD, OBSESSED

<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>COORDINATION</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AWARENESS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>STAMINA</b>	<b>10</b>



**POWERS:**

EQUIPMENT 8 (TWO DAMAGE 4 PISTOLS), INVISIBILITY 1, SUPERSENSES 1 (SEE IN TOTAL DARKNESS)

**STUNTS:**

**YOU'RE DEAD ALREADY (COORDINATION):**

THE VEIL IS AN EXPERT AT COVERING A FOE WITH HER PISTOLS SO THAT, IF THE ENEMY DOES ANYTHING EXCEPT SURRENDER, THE VEIL CAN JUST PULL THE TRIGGER. MAKE A SHOOTING TEST USING COORDINATION, BUT THE ATTACK DOES NOT ACTUALLY GO OFF YET. INSTEAD, THE ATTACK IS "HELD" AND THE VEIL CAN RELEASE IT AT ANY TIME, EVEN IF IT IS NOT HER PANEL, UNTIL SHE IS EITHER DISTRACTED OR ATTACKS A DIFFERENT TARGET.

**TWO GUN MOJO (EQUIPMENT):**

THE VEIL CAN ATTACK TWO DIFFERENT TARGETS WITH HER PISTOLS, OR SHOOT THE SAME ENEMY ONCE WITH A +2 DAMAGE BONUS.

**SPECIALTIES:**

ACROBATICS, ATHLETICS, CRIMINOLOGY, INTIMIDATION MASTER, INVESTIGATION, MARTIAL ARTS, PERFORMANCE (DANCING), STEALTH, WEAPONRY (GUNS)

## ORIGIN

"THE POLICE WOULD JUST ARREST YOU, WOULDN'T THEY, MORELLI. BUT YOU KNOW I DON'T PLAY BY THEIR RULES. NOW TALK!"

SABIRA ABDALLAH ABD AL-HAJRI WAS BORN IN YEMEN, ONE OF THE POOREST NATIONS OF THE ARAB WORLD. IN 1986, WHEN SHE WAS 12 YEARS OLD, ARMED CONFLICT BROKE OUT BETWEEN TWO RIVAL POLITICAL GROUPS IN YEMEN AND THE ABD AL-HAJRI FAMILY WERE AMONG SOME 60,000 REFUGEES WHO FLED THE COUNTRY. ON THE WAY TO KUWAIT, SABIRA AND HER FAMILY ENCOUNTERED A TEAM OF JOURNALISTS FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, AND A PHOTOGRAPHER TOOK SABIRA'S PICTURE. MONTHS LATER, HER HAUNTED FACE AND AMBER EYES WOULD APPEAR ON THE COVER OF THE MAGAZINE AND BECOME ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS PORTRAITS OF THE 20TH CENTURY. HER NAME, HOWEVER, HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN BY THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND SHE CONTINUED TO LIVE IN OBSCURITY.

WITH LUCK AND GOOD CONNECTIONS, SABIRA'S FATHER MANAGED TO ARRANGE FOR AN EDUCATION FOR HIS DAUGHTER. THE GIRL WAS BRIGHT, EXTREMELY DILIGENT, AND EAGER TO MAKE HER FAMILY PROUD. SHE EXCELLED AND CAME TO THE ATTENTION OF KUWAITI BUSINESSMEN WHO MANAGED THE COUNTRY'S LUCRATIVE OIL PRODUCTION. IN ORDER TO GROOM HER FOR A BUSINESS CAREER,

SHE WAS SENT TO AMERICA, WHERE SHE TOOK AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE AT TITAN UNIVERSITY AND DISCOVERED THAT SHE WAS A MINOR CELEBRITY. IN 1994 OUTRIGHT CIVIL WAR ERUPTED IN YEMEN AND OLD GRUDGES FORCED HER FAMILY TO FLY EVEN FURTHER AFIELD. HER FATHER CHOSE TO COME TO AMERICA, WHERE HE COULD BE CLOSE TO HIS DAUGHTER AND HOPEFULLY LEAVE THE VIOLENCE OF THE ARAB WORLD BEHIND HIM. UNFORTUNATELY, A RADICAL OPPOSITION GROUP TARGETED THE ABD AL-HAJRI FAMILY FOR ASSASSINATION. SOON AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL IN TITAN, DEADLY GAS WAS RELEASED AT A PRIVATE DINNER PARTY, KILLING VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE CLAN. ONLY SABIRA SURVIVED, BUT THE WORST WAS YET TO COME.

HER FAMILY'S ASSASSINS ALREADY HAD A PLAN TO CONCEAL THEIR CRIME; WEARING GAS MASKS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THE AFTEREFFECTS OF THEIR OWN WEAPON, THEY GATHERED THE CORPSES AND DROPPED THEM INTO AN ADJOINING CONSTRUCTION SITE. AT THE LAST MOMENT, ONE OF THE KILLERS DETECTED SABIRA'S WEAK PULSE, BUT AFTER A BRIEF DEBATE SHE WAS THROWN INTO THE MASS GRAVE ANYWAY. EARTH WAS POURED ATOP THE SITE, AND THERE SHE REMAINED FOR FOUR DAYS. SABIRA BELIEVES SHE DIED IN THAT GHASTLY TOMB, SURROUNDED BY HER BROTHERS AND SISTERS, HER PARENTS AND COUSINS. SHE REMEMBERS WISHING TO SEE THE PARADISE THAT WOULD SIGNAL THE END OF HER TORMENT, BUT PARADISE NEVER CAME.

IN THE END, WHEN SHE DIED, SHE SAW ONLY BLACKNESS. THERE WAS NO HEAVENLY LIGHT TO WELCOME HER, NO UNION WITH THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAD GONE BEFORE, NO GLIMPSE OF THE FACE OF GOD. THERE WAS NOTHING, AND THIS NOTHING WAS ALL THAT MAN HAD TO LOOK FORWARD TO. GOD DID NOT EXIST.

## THE VEIL

### ABILITIES

THE VEIL HAS THE POWER TO MOVE UNSEEN AND UNHEARD AT WILL. SHE CAN SEE IN COMPLETE DARKNESS, AND HER ABILITY TO INSPIRE FEAR IS SO WELL-TRAINED (AND COMPLEMENTED BY HER TERRIFYING REPUTATION) THAT SHE HAS STARED DOWN WONDERS WHO COULD HAVE CRUSHED HER WITH ONE HAND. WITH YEARS OF TRAINING, SHE HAS BECOME AN EXPERT HAND-TO-HAND COMBATANT AND MARKSMAN, SPECIALIZING IN THE USE OF HER TRADEMARK TWIN PISTOLS. SHE IS HIGHLY TRAINED IN INFILTRATION, ATHLETICS, AND INVESTIGATION, AND HAS EVEN FOUND THE OUTDOOR SKILLS OF HER CHILDHOOD TO BE OCCASIONALLY USEFUL. SHE IS NOT, HOWEVER, EXPERT IN TECHNICAL FIELDS, AND HAS A WELL-ESTABLISHED SET OF CONTACTS TO SUPPLY HER WITH FORENSIC ANALYSIS AND THE OCCASIONAL SPECIAL WEAPON PROJECT.



## THE VEIL

IT WAS COLD RAGE THAT BROUGHT SABIRA BACK FROM DEATH, A RAGE BORN OF BETRAYAL. SHE HAD BEEN A DEVOUT WOMAN. SHE HAD LOVED GOD. BUT NOW SHE KNEW THAT HER PRAYERS HAD BEEN UTTERED INTO AN EMPTY VOID, AND SHE WOULD NOT GIVE HERSELF TO THAT VOID. IF THIS WORLD WAS THE ONLY WORLD, THEN SHE WOULD REMAIN IN IT FOR AS LONG AS SHE COULD. AND SHE WOULD NOT GO GENTLY INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT. WITH HER BARE HANDS, SHE CLAWED HER WAY THROUGH THE SOFT AND DECAYING EARTH TOWARDS FRESH AIR. CONSTRUCTION WORKERS WERE JUST ARRIVING ON A TUESDAY MORNING AFTER A LONG HOLIDAY WHEN THEY SAW AN EMACIATED FIGURE CLAWING ITS WAY UP OUT OF THE STINKING GROUND. SABIRA WAS ALIVE.

HER FORMER LIFE SEEMED TO HAVE NO MEANING NOW, AND SABIRA ABANDON SCHOOL. HER EYES WERE NEWLY OPENED TO THE INJUSTICE THAT PLAGUED TITAN AND ITS STREETS, AND SHE BEGAN TO LEARN HOW TO DEFEND HERSELF. THE CHANGES WERE NOT ALL IN HER MIND SHE FOUND THAT HER EXPERIENCE BEING BURIED ALIVE, HER NEW KNOWLEDGE OF COSMIC TRUTH, HAD GIVEN HER STRANGE POWERS. SHE COULD WALK AMONG THE THRONGS OF IGNORANT HUMANITY ENTIRELY UNSEEN. HER EYES HAD ADAPTED PERFECTLY TO DARKNESS. THE FIRST NIGHT SHE USED HER ABILITIES TO PROTECT AN INNOCENT LIFE, SHE KNEW HER DESTINY.

BY NOW THE CIVIL WAR IN HER HOMETLAND WAS OVER AND SHE RETURNED TO CLAIM CONSIDERABLE WEALTH, THE GIFT OF HER FATHER'S MOURNING KUWAITI PATRONS. SHE FASHIONED A NEW IDENTITY FOR HERSELF, AND ALTHOUGH HER INITIAL EFFORTS WERE AMATEURISH, SHE LEARNED QUICKLY AND HAD A KNACK FOR EXPLOITING EVERY OPPORTUNITY. ARMED WITH A PAIR OF AMERICAN PISTOLS AND DISGUIISING HER WELL-KNOWN FACE BEHIND TRADITIONAL CLOTHING, SHE BECAME KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE ARAB WORLD AS AL-BAATIN, "THE HIDDEN ONE." IN AMERICA AND EUROPE THEY CALLED HER THE VEIL.

AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS OF VIGILANTE ACTIVITY AROUND THE GLOBE, THE VEIL HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST FEARED WONDERS IN THE WORLD, WITH SECRET HEADQUARTERS IN LONDON, TITAN, AND RIYADH. SHE HAS DESTROYED ENTIRE MOB FAMILIES ONE RUNG AT A TIME, PREVENTED THE ASSASSINATION OF WORLD LEADERS, TRACKED DOWN SERIAL KILLERS, SAVED THE LIVES OF THOSE WRONGLY IMPRISONED, AND LENT HER CONSIDERABLE INVESTIGATIVE TALENTS TO MORE THAN ONE TEAM OF HEROES. IN THE COURSE OF HER WAR ON INJUSTICE, SABIRA HAS KILLED MANY MEN, BUT SHE SLEEPS WELL IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY WERE TRYING TO KILL HER AT THE SAME TIME. WHILE MOST WONDERS FOLLOW A FAIRLY RIGID ETHICAL CODE THAT FORBIDS KILLING, THE VEIL'S ACTIVITIES ARE MORE LIKE THOSE OF A HOLLYWOOD ACTION HERO. SHE DOES NOT TORTURE OR MURDER, BUT SHE RESPONDS TO DEADLY FORCE WITH DEADLY FORCE, AND IN THIS WAY SHE HAS PUT FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF TITAN'S MOST POWERFUL CRIME LORDS.

INDEED, IT COULD BE SAID THAT FEAR IS THE VEIL'S MOST POTENT WEAPON. THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT LIVE IN TERROR OF HER, AND THEY SAY THERE IS NOTHING SHE WILL NOT DO TO CATCH HER PREY. THIS EXAGGERATION IS SOMETHING SABIRA IS CAREFUL TO NURTURE, AND SHE ENCOURAGES RUMORS WHICH CREDIT HER WITH THE MOST INHUMAN ACTIVITIES, ALL IN THE NAME OF INCREASING HER FEARSOME REPUTATION. THIS HAS GOTTEN HER IN TROUBLE WITH OTHER, MORE TRADITIONAL, WONDERS BUT THE VEIL HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO COME TO SOME SORT OF UNDERSTANDING WITH SUCH HEROES. IT HELPS WHEN THEY REALIZE SHE IS NOT GUILTY OF MOST OF THE THINGS SHE IS ACCUSED OF, AND THERE IS ALSO A RECOGNITION THAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF EVIL REQUIRE DIFFERENT TACTICS. IN THE WORLD WHICH THE VEIL WALKS, JUSTICE SPEAKS WITH THE VOICE OF A GUN.

# THE VEIL

## APPEARANCE:

WHILE EVERYONE IN AMERICA, EUROPE, AND THE MIDDLE EAST KNOWS WHAT THE VEIL LOOKS LIKE, MOST OF THEM HAVE NEVER SEEN MORE THAN HER HAUNTING AMBER EYES AND A SLENDER SWATH OF ARAB SKIN. SHE HAS NO SINGLE OUTFIT, BUT INSTEAD DONS A MULTITUDE OF VEILS FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS, RANGING FROM ALL-CONCEALING SHEATHS THAT COVER HER ENTIRE BODY TO MOURNING VEILS IN THE VICTORIAN MODE. HER MOST WELL-KNOWN COSTUME IS A BLACK WOOL TRENCH COAT MATCHED WITH A BLACK VEIL IN THE YEMEN FASHION, HIDING HER HEAD AND SHOULDERS. WHEN SHE INVADED THE SANCTUM OF THE SYLVESTRI CRIME FAMILY SHE WORE A WEDDING VEIL AND WHITE GOWN; SOMETIMES SHE IS SEEN DRESSED IN THE MANNER OF A TURKISH HAREM GIRL, DECORATED WITH GOLD AND JEWELS AS WELL AS MULTIPLE, MULTICOLORED, VEILS.

WITHOUT ALL THOSE ACCOUTERMENTS, HOWEVER, SABIRA IS A LOVELY WOMAN IN HER EARLY-THIRTIES, SOBER AND SERIOUS BY NATURE, WITH A HIGHLY DISCIPLINED PHYSIQUE AND A QUIET STEP.

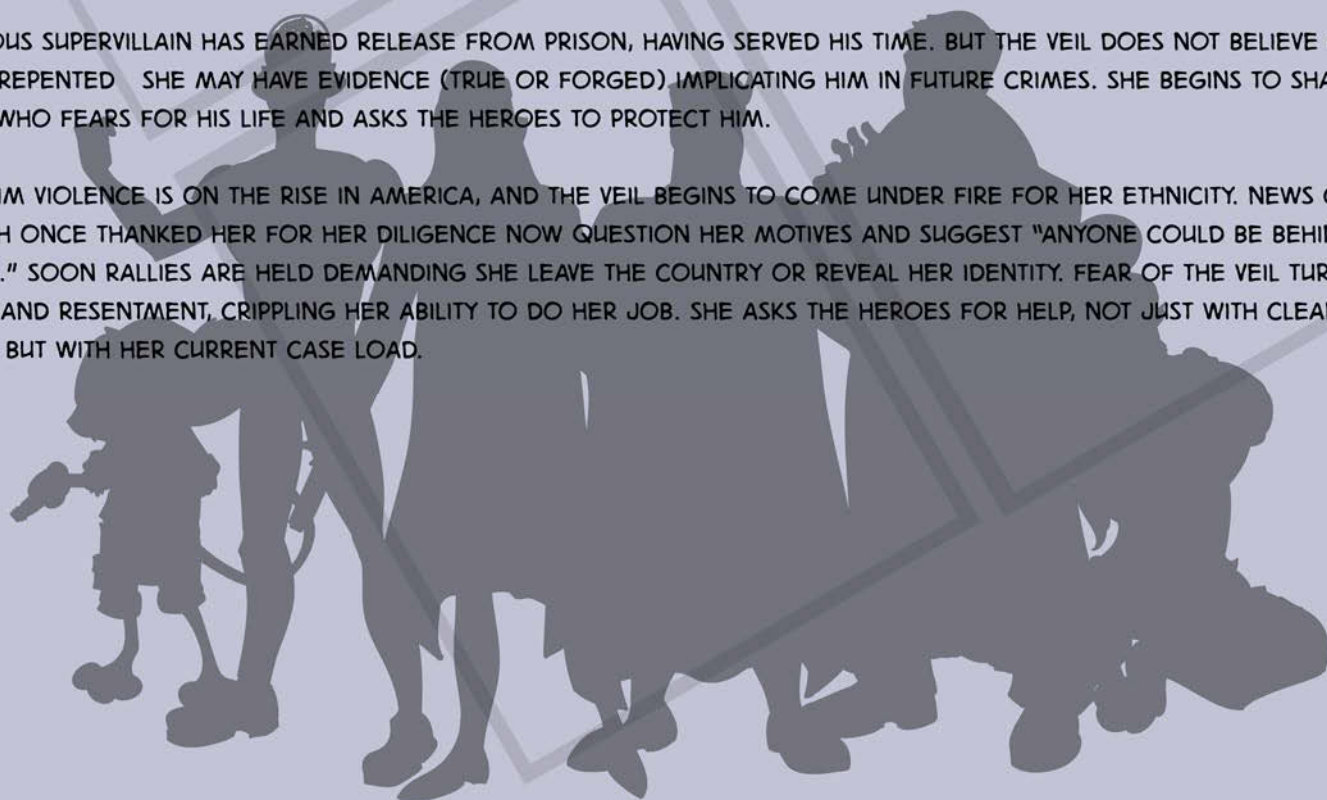
## STORIES

AS A SUPERNATURAL AVENGER, THE VEIL IS LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN PLOTS WHICH INVOLVE HUNTING DOWN THOSE PEOPLE WHO "KILLED" HER AND PROTECTING OTHER INNOCENTS FROM HARM. AS AN ARAB HERO, SHE ALLOWS THE GM TO BRING IN POLITICAL THEMES THAT MIGHT LEAVE MORE WHITEBREAD HEROES UNSCATHED.

PLAYER CHARACTERS COME ACROSS A STRING OF ASSASSINATIONS THAT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN PERFORMED BY A GROUP OF INVISIBLE KILLERS. SURVIVORS REPORT BEING FROZEN WITH FEAR. SOON THE KILLERS CONTACT THE VEIL, WHOM THEY INSIST IS ACTUALLY A DIVINELY-APPOINTED INSTRUMENT OF JUSTICE AND ONE OF THEIR CLAN, THOUGH SHE DOES NOT KNOW IT. THEY CLAIM ALL HER POWERS ARE DERIVED FROM A "SHADOW-SPIRIT" TRAPPED IN A REMOTE AFGHANI TEMPLE. COULD THEY BE TELLING THE TRUTH? AND HOW CAN SABIRA HOPE TO STOP AN ENTIRE CLAN OF ASSASSINS, ALL OF WHOM HAVE HER OWN POWERS? THE PLAYER INVESTIGATION SOON RUNS UP AGAINST THE VEIL'S, AND THAT CREATES CONFLICT. WHILE THE HEROES ARE TRYING TO BRING THE KILLERS IN, SABIRA WANTS TO LET THEM ESCAPE IN ORDER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM. BUT CAN SHE BE TRUSTED?

AN INFAMOUS SUPERVILLAIN HAS EARNED RELEASE FROM PRISON, HAVING SERVED HIS TIME. BUT THE VEIL DOES NOT BELIEVE HE HAS TRULY REPENTED SHE MAY HAVE EVIDENCE (TRUE OR FORGED) IMPLICATING HIM IN FUTURE CRIMES. SHE BEGINS TO SHADOW THE MAN, WHO FEARS FOR HIS LIFE AND ASKS THE HEROES TO PROTECT HIM.

ANTI-MUSLIM VIOLENCE IS ON THE RISE IN AMERICA, AND THE VEIL BEGINS TO COME UNDER FIRE FOR HER ETHNICITY. NEWS CHANNELS WHICH ONCE THANKED HER FOR HER DILIGENCE NOW QUESTION HER MOTIVES AND SUGGEST "ANYONE COULD BE BEHIND THAT MASK." SOON RALLIES ARE HELD DEMANDING SHE LEAVE THE COUNTRY OR REVEAL HER IDENTITY. FEAR OF THE VEIL TURNS TO ANGER AND RESENTMENT, CRIPPLING HER ABILITY TO DO HER JOB. SHE ASKS THE HEROES FOR HELP, NOT JUST WITH CLEARING HER NAME BUT WITH HER CURRENT CASE LOAD.



# DEFENDER

THE DEFENDER HAS A PARTICULAR SPACE—USUALLY A CITY BUT SOMETIMES A NEIGHBORHOOD OR EVEN A SINGLE BUILDING—OF WHICH HE IS THE GUARDIAN. THERE ARE PLENTY OF EXAMPLES IN COMICS; VIRTUALLY EVERY SUPERHERO HAS BEEN A DEFENDER AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.

**EXAMPLES:** CAPTAIN BRITAIN; DAREDEVIL; HANGED MAN; KA-ZAR; THE NEW YORK GUARDIAN

**RELATED ARCHETYPES:** JUNGLE HERO, MINORITY HERO, SUPER-COP, SUPER-PATRIOT, UNDERSEA HERO

## QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

THE FIRST THING TO DO WHEN MAKING A DEFENDER IS LOOK UP THE CITY, REGION, OR COMMUNITY THAT YOU ARE DEFENDING. NICKNAMES FOR THAT PLACE, FAMOUS TRAITS OR RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, BUILDINGS, AND A PLACE'S REPUTATION ALL INFORM THE QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES OF ITS DEFENDER. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A QUALITY WHICH CLEARLY NAMES YOUR HOME, SO YOU CAN TAG IT WHENEVER YOU ARE WORKING THERE.

A TRUE DEFENDER MAKES A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO HELP THE INHABITANTS OF HIS HOME BEFORE HELPING OTHERS, USUALLY BECAUSE "NO ONE ELSE WILL." THIS DECISION TO PRIORITIZE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS SOMETIMES LANDS HIM IN MURKY MORAL WATERS.

SIMILARLY, HE WILL BE OVERLY PROTECTIVE OF HIS "TURF," NOT ALLOWING OTHER HEROES TO OPERATE THERE WITHOUT HIS SANCTION. HE SELDOM LEAVES HIS TERRITORY AND IS SOMETHING OF A FISH OUT OF WATER WHEN HE DOES.

THE DEFENDER HAS ROOTS IN HIS COMMUNITY, REPRESENTED BY CONNECTIONS, BUT HE MAY BE AN "ORPHAN" WHOM THE COMMUNITY HAS ADOPTED. HE CAN RELY ON THE LOCALS FOR MORAL SUPPORT AND LOGISTICAL AID, BUT IF THEY WERE EXPERIENCED IN BATTLE THEY WOULDN'T NEED A HERO, SO WHEN THE FISTS START FLYING THE DEFENDER IS USUALLY ON HIS OWN.

## ABILITIES:

BECAUSE DEFENDERS CAN TAKE SO MANY FORMS, IT IS HARD TO GENERALIZE ABOUT THEIR ABILITIES. IF THEIR HOME IS KNOWN FOR STRENGTH, KNOWLEDGE, OR TOUGHNESS, THE DEFENDER WILL HAVE THE SAME REPUTATION. AWARENESS IS KEY, AS IT ALLOWS THE DEFENDER TO KNOW WHEN AND WHERE HE IS NEEDED BY THOSE UNDER HIS CARE.

## POWERS:

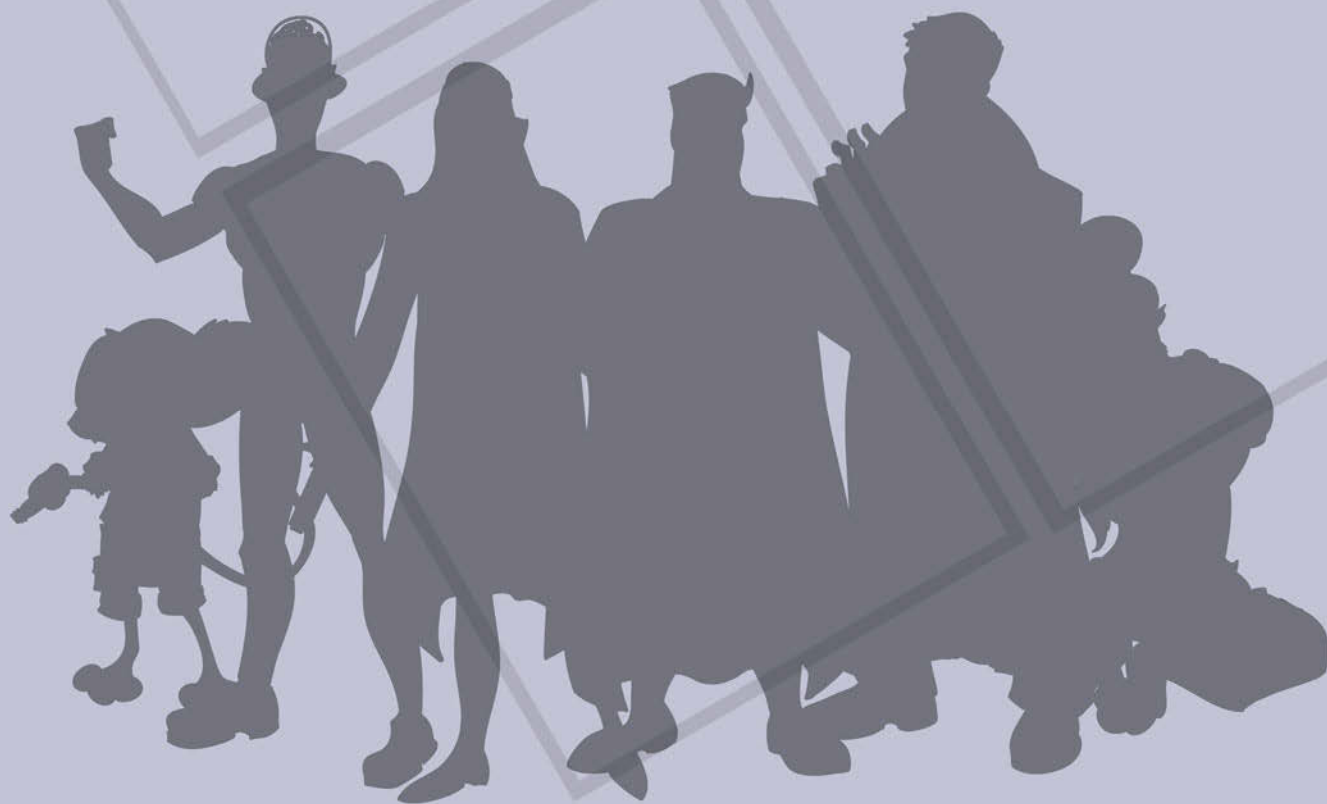
SOMETIMES THE DEFENDER'S POWERS ONLY WORK WHEN HE IS ON HIS HOME TURF; ALTERNATELY, HIS POWERS MAY BE STRONGER THERE. BUT THE POWERS THEMSELVES MIGHT TAKE ANY FORM, FROM TRADITIONAL INVULNERABILITY AND FLIGHT TO SUPERSENSES OR PRECOGNITION WHICH ALERTS THE DEFENDER TO LOOMING THREATS. IF THE DEFENDER'S TURF IS VERY LARGE, HE WILL NEED A MOVEMENT POWER.



# DEFENDER

**SPECIALTIES:**

THE DEFENDER WILL BE VERY GOOD AT WHATEVER HIS HOME IS KNOWN FOR. FOR EXAMPLE, A DEFENDER OF PITTSBURGH WILL HAVE STEEL-WORKING SKILLS, AND A DEFENDER OF DETROIT WILL HAVE A CAR AND BE A MUSICIAN.



# GIGAWATT

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** SLEEPWALKERS #1

**ARCHETYPES:** DEFENDER, ASTRONAUT, MASTER OF THE ELEMENTS

**QUALITIES:** KNOWS THE TRUTH, CAREER SOLDIER, LORD OF THE LIGHTNING

**CHALLENGES:** SLEEPING SUPERHERO, SEEN TOO MANY NIGHTMARES

**PROWESS** 5

**COORDINATION** 5

**STRENGTH** 6

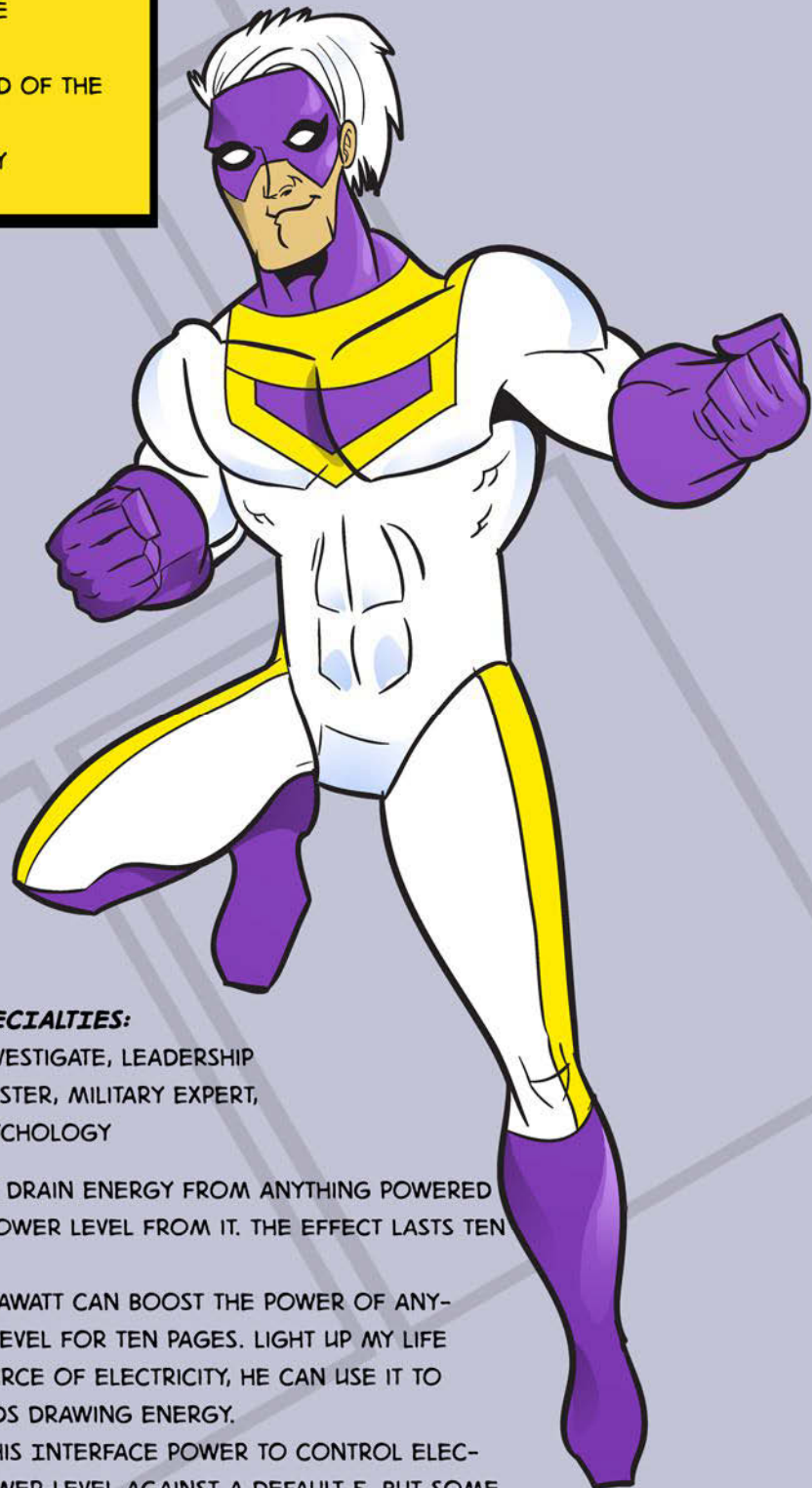
**INTELLECT** 4

**AWARENESS** 4

**WILLPOWER** 5

**DETERMINATION** 2

**STAMINA** 11



**POWERS:**

AURA 7, ELEMENTAL CONTROL 8 (ELECTRICITY ATTACKING & CREATING), INTERFACE 6, FLIGHT 5

**SPECIALTIES:**

INVESTIGATE, LEADERSHIP MASTER, MILITARY EXPERT, PSYCHOLOGY

**STUNTS:**

**POWER DRAIN (ELEMENTAL CONTROL):** GIGAWATT CAN DRAIN ENERGY FROM ANYTHING POWERED BY ELECTRICITY, SUBTRACTING HIS ELEMENTAL CONTROL POWER LEVEL FROM IT. THE EFFECT LASTS TEN PAGES.

**POWER BOOST (ELEMENTAL CONTROL):** LIKEWISE, GIGAWATT CAN BOOST THE POWER OF ANYTHING THAT USES ELECTRICITY, ADDING +1 TO ITS POWER LEVEL FOR TEN PAGES. **LIGHT UP MY LIFE (ELEMENTAL CONTROL):** IF GIGAWATT CAN ACCESS A SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY, HE CAN USE IT TO REGAIN 1 POINT OF STAMINA EVERY PANEL THAT HE SPENDS DRAWING ENERGY.

**REMOTE CONTROL (INTERFACE):** GIGAWATT CAN USE HIS INTERFACE POWER TO CONTROL ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT A DISTANCE. THIS IS A TEST OF HIS POWER LEVEL AGAINST A DEFAULT 5, BUT SOME MACHINES MAY BE HARDER OR EASIER TO CONTROL.

*(STUNTS CONT.)*

**LUCID DREAMER (WILLPOWER):** FRANK HAS BEEN TRAINED TO MANIPULATE AND ALTER THE DREAMS OF HIS HOSTS. THIS IS A TEST OF WILLPOWER AGAINST A DEFAULT 5, BUT CAN BECOME AN OPPOSED TEST IF ANOTHER LUCID DREAMER FIGHTS BACK.

## ORIGIN

*"WHEN YOU WAKE UP, THIS WILL ALL SEEM LIKE A BAD DREAM. WHEN I WAKE UP, I'LL KNOW BETTER."*

*FRANK GRANT GREW UP IN A MILITARY FAMILY. PROUD OF A FATHER WHO HAD SERVED IN THE MARINES, FRANK LOOKED FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN HE COULD FOLLOW IN THE FAMILY FOOTSTEPS. HE EXCELLED IN THE MILITARY, AND ALTHOUGH HE COULD HAVE HAD A SMOOTH ROAD TO OFFICER STATUS THANKS TO HIS CONNECTIONS, HE REFUSED THEM ALL AND MADE HIS OWN WAY. HE SERVED WITH VALOR IN THE FIRST IRAQI WAR, EARNING HIS CAPTAIN'S BARS, BUT RANK DID NOT REALLY CHANGE HIM. FRANK REMAINED A CALM, LEVEL-HEADED, EVEN DOUR MAN WITH LITTLE SENSE OF HUMOR AND A WILLINGNESS TO LET OTHERS MAKE THE BIG DECISIONS SO LONG AS HE WAS LEFT ALONE TO HANDLE HIS JOB.*

*IN 1996 FRANK BEGAN TO HEAR RUMORS OF A SECRET PROJECT UNDERWAY AT A MARINE TRAINING FACILITY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC. OTHER BRANCHES OF THE MILITARY HAD LONG BEEN OBSESSED WITH SO-CALLED "SUPER SOLDIERS," BUT IT WAS NOT COMMON IN THE MARINES AND GRANT BEGAN POKING AROUND, SUSPICIOUS THAT FEDERAL MONEY MAY BE GOING TO WASTE ON SOME EXPENSIVE BOONDOGGLE OR, WORSE, SOME KIND OF ILLICIT COVERT OPERATIONS SQUAD. AFTER A FEW MONTHS OF DISCREET INVESTIGATION, HE UNCOVERED A TRUTH EVEN HE COULD NOT BELIEVE: THE WORLD WAS AT WAR, INDEED HAD BEEN AT WAR FOR SOME TWENTY YEARS, WITH AN ENEMY THAT DWELLED IN ANOTHER DIMENSION, AND WHICH STRUCK AT HUMANITY THROUGH A BACKDOOR THAT LED STRAIGHT TO OUR SUBCONSCIOUS: OUR DREAMS.*

*EARTH SCIENTISTS CALLED THEM THE QLIPTOTH; THEIR OWN LANGUAGE HAD YET TO BE DECIPHERED. IT WAS THOUGHT THEIR NATIVE DIMENSION WAS A BLACK AND HORRID PLACE WHERE REALITY OBEYED DIFFERENT LAWS THAN IN OUR OWN UNIVERSE. THE QLIPTOTH WERE HUNGRY AND AGGRESSIVE BEINGS FILLED WITH HATE; NO ONE WAS QUITE SURE WHY THEY HUNTED HUMANITY, BUT WHAT WAS KNOWN WAS THAT THEY COULD PROJECT THEMSELVES INTO OUR DREAMS WHILE WE SLEPT. ONCE THERE, THEY COULD RUN UNCHECKED THROUGH THE DREAM, TERRORIZING US AND RELISHING OUR FEAR. IN TIME, A QLIPTOTH ASSAULT COULD DRIVE EVEN THE MOST STABLE OF MEN MAD.*

*QLIPTOTH ASSAULT COULD DRIVE EVEN THE MOST STABLE OF MEN MAD. TO COUNTER THE QLIPTOTH INVASION, AMERICAN SCIENTISTS HAD DEVELOPED THE MORPHEUS GUN (NICKNAMED THE "SOMNABULATOR") A PROJECTOR ABOUT THE SIZE OF AN RV WHICH COULD SEND THE MIND OF A TRAINED HUMAN OPERATIVE INTO THE DREAM OF ANOTHER. THESE SPECIALLY CHOSEN AGENTS, KNOWN AS "SLEEPWALKERS" OR "DREAM MARINES", BROUGHT WITH THEM INTO EACH DREAM A SUPERHEROIC IMAGE OF THEMSELVES, MEANING THAT ALTHOUGH INDIVIDUAL MARINES WERE MORTAL, IN DREAMS THEY WERE WONDERS. FOR TWENTY YEARS, THE DREAM MARINES HAD BEEN STRUGGLING TO DEFEND EARTH IN THIS WAY, BUT THEIR FIGHT LACKED LEADERSHIP. IT LACKED A KILLER INSTINCT. IT NEEDED VETERANS OF REAL WAR WHO COULD TAKE THIS FIGHT TO THE ENEMY.*

# GIGAWATT

## ABILITIES

*FRANK GRANT IS A WELL-TRAINED MARINE OFFICER IN GOOD PHYSICAL SHAPE AND WITH CONSIDERABLE BATTLE EXPERIENCE. HE HAS ACCESS TO PRETTY MUCH ANY PIECE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT HE CAN CARRY, BUT OUTSIDE OF THE WAR OF SLEEP HE HAS NO POWERS AT ALL AND HIS COORDINATION AND STRENGTH DROP TO 4. HE'S HAD SOME SPECIAL TRAINING AS A DREAM MARINE, INCLUDING A BASIC OVERVIEW OF PSYCHOLOGY AND SOME DREAM-MANIPULATION TECHNIQUES. BUT WHEN HIS CONSCIOUSNESS IS PROJECTED INSIDE A DREAM, FRANK TRANSFORMS INTO GIGAWATT, THE LARGER-THAN-LIFE LORD OF THE LIGHTNING. AS GIGAWATT, FRANK HAS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER ELECTRICAL ENERGY. HE CAN DRAIN OR BOOST ELECTRICAL DEVICES, FLY, CONTROL MACHINES FROM AFAR OR WIELD LIGHTNING AS DEADLY BLASTS. IF NEAR A SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY, HE CAN ABSORB THE POWER TO INSTANTLY HEAL HIS OWN WOUNDS.*

# GIGAWATT

IT NEEDED FRANK GRANT.

THERE'S NO QUESTION FRANK WAS SKEPTICAL. ALIENS FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION? DREAM WONDERS? BUT WHEN HE FOLLOWED A FIRE TEAM INTO COMBAT AS AN OBSERVER, HE SAW THE QLIPPOTH WERE REAL, AND HE FELT THE COLD STAB OF THEIR NIHILISTIC FERVOR. HIS OWN DREAM ASPECT ACTIVATED ON THAT FIRST MISSION WHEN, REMEMBERING AN INTENSE LIGHTNING STORM HE WITNESSED FROM THE ROOF OF HIS HOUSE AS A BOY, HE MANIFESTED A MASTERY OF ELECTRICITY THAT WOULD EARN HIM THE NICKNAME GIGAWATT.

THE WAR WITH THE QLIPPOTH HAS CONTINUED TO EVOLVE IN RECENT YEARS. GRANT'S ADDITION TO THE TEAM INITIALLY SENT THE CREATURES REELING, EARNING FRANK A VALUABLE RESPITE WHICH HE USED TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS, PUSH THROUGH ADVANCES IN MORPHEUS TECHNOLOGY, AND ORGANIZE RESEARCH INTO THE QLIPPOTH HOME DIMENSION. BUT THE ALIENS HAVE NOW REGROUPED, AND HAVE ADAPTED TO FRANK'S MORE CUNNING TACTICS BY ADOPTED A NEW, MORE FOCUSED STRATEGY. INSTEAD OF ATTACKING SLEEPING HUMANS MORE OR LESS AT RANDOM, THEY HAVE SOMEHOW DISCOVERED HOW TO IDENTIFY DREAMING WONDERS.

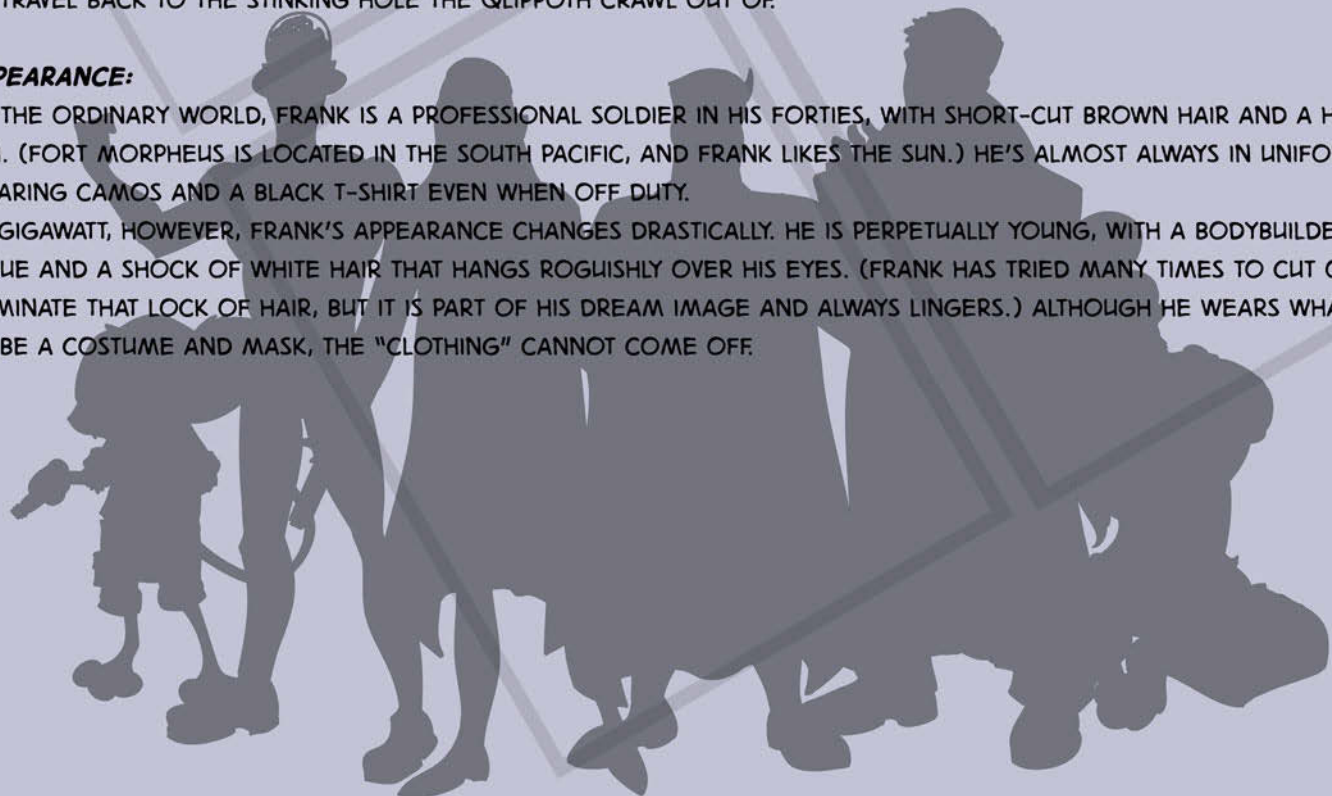
VIRTUALLY EVERY QLIPPOTH INVASION IN THE LAST THREE YEARS HAS BEEN INTO THE DREAM OF A SLEEPING WONDER (USUALLY A HERO), AND THE DREAM MARINES HAVE FOUGHT BACK WITH EVERY TRICK. MOST WONDERS KEEP THEIR IDENTITY A SECRET FROM THE PUBLIC AND EVEN THE GOVERNMENT, SO FRANK OFTEN FINDS HIMSELF LEARNING THINGS ABOUT THE PEOPLE HE HELPS THAT THE HERO IN QUESTION WISHES WERE NOT KNOWN; TO HELP TAKE THE STING OUT OF THESE "PSYCHIC INVASIONS", AND TO HELP THE HERO DEFEND HIMSELF FROM REPEATED QLIPPOTH ATTACKS, THE HERO IS USUALLY LET IN ON THE SECRET OF THE DREAM MARINES (THOUGH DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM ARE NOT REVEALED). AS A RESULT, FRANK GRANT AND HIS GROUP HAVE BECOME WELL KNOWN IN THE WONDER COMMUNITY, AND MANY HEROES RIGHTFULLY BELIEVE THEY OWE GIGAWATT THEIR LIFE.

DESPITE THIS, FRANK REMAINS PRETTY MUCH THE SAME GUY HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN. HE'S VERY FOCUSED ON HIS CAREER AND HIS MISSION. HE GETS ALONG WELL WITH HIS FELLOW MARINES, AND DOES HIS BEST TO KEEP HIS SCIENCE TEAM ORGANIZED. TRAINING IS CONSTANT, BROKEN UP ONLY BY MISSIONS AND OCCASIONAL R&R. AND ONE DAY, ONE DAY SOON, FRANK WILL FIND A WAY TO TRAVEL BACK TO THE STINKING HOLE THE QLIPPOTH CRAWL OUT OF.

## **APPEARANCE:**

IN THE ORDINARY WORLD, FRANK IS A PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER IN HIS FORTIES, WITH SHORT-CUT BROWN HAIR AND A HEALTHY TAN. (FORT MORPHEUS IS LOCATED IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC, AND FRANK LIKES THE SUN.) HE'S ALMOST ALWAYS IN UNIFORM, WEARING CAMOS AND A BLACK T-SHIRT EVEN WHEN OFF DUTY.

AS GIGAWATT, HOWEVER, FRANK'S APPEARANCE CHANGES DRASTICALLY. HE IS PERPETUALLY YOUNG, WITH A BODYBUILDER'S PHYSIQUE AND A SHOCK OF WHITE HAIR THAT HANGS ROUGHLY OVER HIS EYES. (FRANK HAS TRIED MANY TIMES TO CUT OR ELIMINATE THAT LOCK OF HAIR, BUT IT IS PART OF HIS DREAM IMAGE AND ALWAYS LINGERS.) ALTHOUGH HE WEARS WHAT APPEARS TO BE A COSTUME AND MASK, THE "CLOTHING" CANNOT COME OFF.



# GIGAWATT

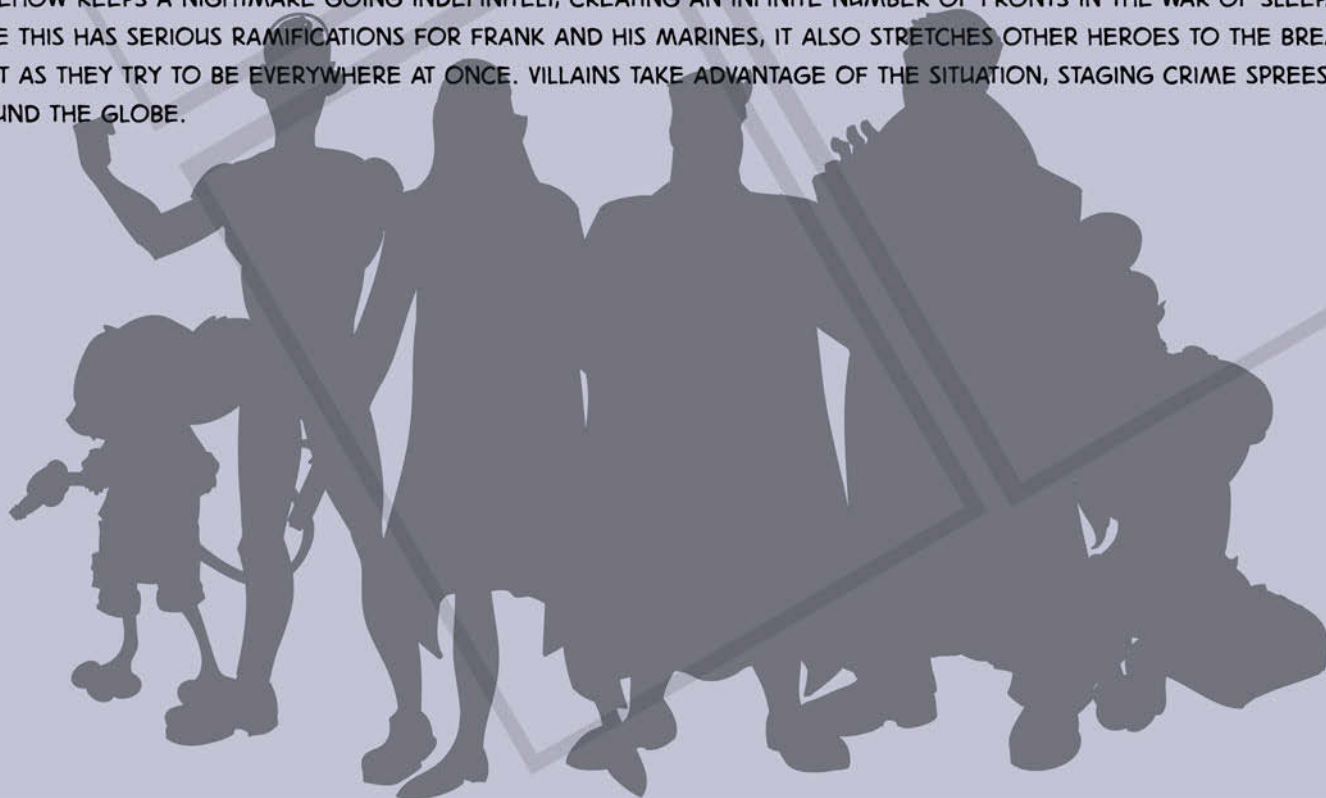
## STORIES

IN THE ARCHETYPAL DREAM MARINE ADVENTURE, THE TEAM TRAVELS INTO THE MIND OF A SLEEPING WONDER, WHERE THEY SNIFF OUT HIDING QLIPPOTH WHILE NAVIGATING A WORLD CREATED BY THE HERO'S CREATIVE SUBCONSCIOUS. THE TARGET OF THE QLIPPOTH RAID IS USUALLY AN IGNORANT PARTICIPANT IN THIS STRUGGLE, OFTEN A HERO WITHOUT HIS POWERS. HOWEVER, HE KNOWS HIS OWN MEMORIES BETTER THAN ANY OF THE MARINES DO, AND SO IS AN INVALUABLE PARTNER IN HIS OWN COUNTER-ATTACK. WHEN THE RAID IS OVER, FRANK WILL HAVE TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAS HAPPENED, WHILE ALSO SOOTHING ANY PRIVACY ISSUES.

THE HEROES ARE HAVING A FAIRLY ORDINARY "DAY IN THE LIFE" SESSION WHEN THINGS SLOWLY BEGIN TO GO FROM WEIRD TO DOWNRIGHT SURREAL. A DEAD RELATIVE SHOWS UP, THE HEROES LOSE THEIR POWERS JUST IN TIME FOR A BANK ROBBERY, AND CLOSE FRIENDS BETRAY THEM. STRANGE NEW HEROES APPEAR AND SOME OF THE PCS GET TAKEN OVER BY MALEVOLENT INTELLIGENCES BEYOND THEIR CONTROL. EVENTUALLY ONE OF THE PLAYERS SHOULD FIGURE OUT THAT THEY ARE NOT IN THE REAL WORLD BUT ARE, IN FACT, IN A DREAM OF ONE OF THE HEROES. THE REST OF THE PCS ARE JUST FIGMENTS OF THE FIRST ONE'S IMAGINATION. IN THIS SCENARIO, SUPERHEROICS GIVE WAY TO HORROR AS THE HEROES STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE IN THE FACE OF QLIPPOTH MANIPULATION AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY AREN'T EVEN REAL.

WHEN MORTALS PROJECT THEMSELVES INTO A DREAMING MIND, ITS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHAT POWERS THEY WILL GET. SEND THE PCS INTO A DREAM WHEN A TEAM OF MARINES GET CAPTURED AND NEED A RESCUE. THEN RE-ROLL ABILITIES AND POWERS FOR EVERYONE ON THE TEAM! THE PC HAS THE SAME MIND AND MEMORIES, BUT A NEW POWER SET. BUT THIS ISN'T FUN AND GAMES; THE VICTIM OF THE QLIPPOTH RAID IS IN VERY REAL DANGER, AND THE MARINES COULD BE DRIVEN MAD BY THE EXPERIENCE.

EVERY NIGHT WONDERS GO TO SLEEP ... BUT THEY STOP WAKING UP! THE QLIPPOTH HAVE UNVEILED A NEW WEAPON THAT SOMEHOW KEEPS A NIGHTMARE GOING INDEFINITELY, CREATING AN INFINITE NUMBER OF FRONTS IN THE WAR OF SLEEP. WHILE THIS HAS SERIOUS RAMIFICATIONS FOR FRANK AND HIS MARINES, IT ALSO STRETCHES OTHER HEROES TO THE BREAKING POINT AS THEY TRY TO BE EVERYWHERE AT ONCE. VILLAINS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION, STAGING CRIME SPREES AROUND THE GLOBE.





# A WORLDS OF WONDER LEXICON

PART OF WHAT MAKES WORLDS OF WONDER DIFFERENT IS THE WAY IT IS PRESENTED; POURING THROUGH CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS LOOKING FOR DETAILS WHICH MAKE THE SETTING COME ALIVE IS PART OF THE FUN. BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF CHARACTERS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND TERMS, AND IT CAN GET CONFUSING. THIS LEXICON ASSEMBLES IMPORTANT OR COLORFUL ELEMENTS OF WORLDS OF WONDER AND PUTS THEM IN AN ORGANIZED, EASY TO REFERENCE, LIST. FUTURE VOLUMES OF THE FIELD GUIDE WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OR COMPLEX ELEMENTS OF THE WORLDS OF WONDER SETTING.

## ACADEMY OF LYNXES

A SECRET ORGANIZATION OF SUPER-SCIENTISTS INCLUDING BOTH HEROIC WONDERS AND THOSE CONSIDERED CRIMINALS OR "VILLAINS." THE ACADEMY WAS FORMED IN ITALY IN 1603 AS THE FIRST-EVER ACADEMY DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO SCIENCE AND CHOSE THE LYNX AS ITS SYMBOL FOR THAT CREATURE'S LEGENDARY ACUTE EYESIGHT. GALILEO WAS A PROMINENT EARLY MEMBER AND THE ACADEMY HELPED DEFEND HIM IN HIS STRUGGLES WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. BY 1630 THE FOUNDER OF THE ACADEMY DIED AND THE MOVEMENT WENT UNDERGROUND, WHERE IT BECAME A HOME TO RENEGADE SCIENTISTS WHOSE WORK WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY THE WORLD AT LARGE. ITS STATED GOAL WAS TO PUSH THE LIMITS OF SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY IN AN ETHICAL MANNER AND TO WORK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL MANKIND, BUT DEBATE OVER THE LIMIT OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AND THE PROPER MANNER OF IMPROVING HUMAN LIFE BECAME CHRONIC WITHIN THE ACADEMY.

IN THE MODERN ERA THE ACADEMY HAS CONTINUED TO SERVE AS A FORUM FOR SUPER-SCIENTISTS TO CONSULT WITH ONE ANOTHER AND SHARE THEIR RESEARCH. ALL WORK CONDUCTED WITH ACADEMY SUPPORT MUST ADHERE TO STRICT ETHICAL GUIDELINES, BUT NOTHING PREVENTS MEMBERS FROM DOING UNLICENSED WORK OUTSIDE ACADEMY OVERSIGHT. EVERY YEAR THE ACADEMY HAS ITS ANNUAL MEETING WHERE MEMBERS PRESENT THEIR CURRENT RESEARCH. SYMPOSIUMS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS ARE HELD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND THE ACADEMY PUBLISHES AN ANNUAL JOURNAL. THE ACADEMY'S MODEST OPERATING BUDGET IS SUPPORTED BY MEMBER DUES. IN 2003 THE ACADEMY CELEBRATED ITS 400TH ANNIVERSARY AND ELECTED ROBERT NAIMAN, AKA CODEX THE RENAISSANCE MAN, TO BE ITS LEADER, OR "CONSUL." THE ACADEMY'S MOTTO IS MINIMA CURA SI MAXIMA VIS ("TAKE CARE OF THE SMALL TO OBTAIN THE GREATEST RESULTS.")

## AGE OF WONDERS

A CATCH-ALL TERM FOR HUMAN HISTORY FROM 1938 TO THE PRESENT.

## ALL-AMERICANS

THE US GOVERNMENT'S FEDERALLY-SPONSORED SUPERHUMAN ORGANIZATION. THE ALL-AMERICANS WERE FOUNDED IN 1954 UPON THE RETIREMENT OF THE ALL-AMERICAN GIRL. IN ITS EARLY YEARS IT WAS VERY MUCH AN ANTI-COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION INVOLVED IN THE KOREAN WAR. ITS ROSTER HAS CHANGED FREQUENTLY, AND ITS MISSION HAS ALTERED WITH THE END OF THE COLD WAR. THE ALL-AMERICANS (OFFICIALLY THE "ALL-AMERICAN WONDER SQUAD") IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE WAR ON TERROR BOTH ABROAD AND IN AMERICA ITSELF. IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE ALL-AMERICANS INCLUDE SEVERAL COVERT OPERATIVES WHOSE NAMES AND ABILITIES ARE NOT DISCLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. THE KNOWN MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES PATRIOT (FIELD COMMANDER), RUSHMORE, ALL-AMERICAN GIRL III, AND THE EAGLE III.

# LEXICON

## BLUE WONDER

THE MOST FAMOUS WONDER HOAX IN MODERN HISTORY, THE BLUE WONDER WAS AN ORDINARY MAN WHO PRETENDED TO HAVE SUPERHUMAN POWERS. HIS NAME IS NOW A TERM FOR ANY HIGHLY EXAGGERATED OR FALLACIOUS STORY, OR A PERSON WHOSE REPUTATION IS FAR IN EXCESS OF HIS ABILITY. EXAMPLE: "DID YOU CATCH THAT BLUE WONDER ON THE NEWS LAST NIGHT? DUDE IS GOING TO GET HIMSELF KILLED."

## DREAM MARINES

THE AMERICAN MILITARY FORCE RESPONSIBLE FOR COUNTERING THE QLIPTHOTH THREAT. THEY ARE ALSO KNOWN AS "SLEEPWALKERS" BUT THEIR OFFICIAL DESIGNATION IS THE 4TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, MORPHEUS DIVISION. THE UNIT IS BASED OUT OF A FACILITY LOCATED BENEATH AN ISLAND IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC CALLED FORT MORPHEUS. CAPTAIN FRANK GRANT, CODENAME GIGAWATT, IS THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE DREAM MARINES.

## HAWKSMOOR

A SMALL CITY IN SOUTHEAST ENGLAND. HAWKSMOOR IS FAMOUS FOR ITS VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE AND MANY CHURCHES. AMONG THOSE WHO FOLLOW SUCH THINGS, HAWKSMOOR IS WIDELY CONSIDERED THE HEART OF SUPERNATURAL ACTIVITY IN THE MODERN WORLD. MONA LISA, PROMETHEUS, NAGA AND MISTER Y ALL RESIDE IN HAWKSMOOR.

## THE INVINCIBLES

A PROMINENT SUPERHERO TEAM OF THE 1980S. THE INVINCIBLES WERE A HIGHLY MANAGED ORGANIZATION WITH CORPORATE BACKING, GOVERNMENT CONTACTS, AND AN AGGRESSIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY. THEY ALWAYS MAINTAINED A MEMBERSHIP OF SEVEN, IN A CONSCIOUS ATTEMPT TO BECOME THE "NEW SEVEN WONDERS." MOST OF THE TEAM MET THEIR DEATHS IN A DISASTROUS MISSION IN 1992, AND THE ORGANIZATION SOON FOLDED.

## "MARRIED TO JUSTICE"

A TELEVISION FAMILY COMEDY STARRING JESSE L. MARTIN AS JACK STRONGARM, AKA JUSTICE, AND KERRI RUSSELL AS HIS WIFE, CELIA STRONGARM. RYAN STILES PLAYS JACK'S BEST FRIEND, AND ROBERT GUILLAUME APPEARS AS JACK'S FATHER, JAMES STRONGARM.

## MASKING LAWS

A SET OF FEDERAL LAWS WHICH PROTECT A WONDER'S RIGHT TO A SECRET IDENTITY SO LONG AS THAT IDENTITY IS NOT USED IN AN UNLAWFUL MANNER. UNDER MASKING LAWS, IT IS ILLEGAL TO REMOVE A WONDER'S MASK WITHOUT A WARRANT. MASKING LAWS ALSO PERMIT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS TO RESPOND WITH A GREATER LEVEL OF PHYSICAL FORCE WHEN THE SUBJECT OF THAT FORCE IS WEARING A COSTUME. BECAUSE THESE LAWS DICTATE SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR WONDERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LAW, IT IS ILLEGAL UNDER THE MASKING LAWS FOR AN ORDINARY PERSON TO "IMPERSONATE A WONDER" BY DONNING A COSTUME AND/OR MASK.

# LEXICON

## METROPOLITANS

EVERY CITY ON EARTH HAS A SPIRIT, AND THOSE SPIRITS ARE KNOWN AS METROPOLITANS. METROPOLITANS APPEAR HUMAN. EACH IS TIED TO A PARTICULAR CITY AND LIVES OR DIES AS THAT CITY DOES. METROPOLITANS HAVE FEW AND LIMITED SUPERHUMAN ABILITIES; IN PARTICULAR, THEY CANNOT "CONTROL" THE CITY WHICH THEY REPRESENT. RATHER, THE CITY CONTROLS THEM. IF A METROPOLITAN'S CITY SUFFERS A PLAGUE, THE METROPOLITAN WILL BECOME ILL. IF A FAMOUS LANDMARK IS DESTROYED, THE METROPOLITAN WILL BE INJURED.

HOWEVER, BECAUSE A METROPOLITAN IS ONE WITH HIS CITY, HE KNOWS VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING THAT GOES ON IN IT. ITS MEMORIES ARE HIS MEMORIES AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS ARE HIS CHARACTERISTICS. A CITY KNOWN FOR ITS BEAUTY WILL HAVE A VERY ATTRACTIVE METROPOLITAN, WHILE ONE KNOWN FOR ITS STRENGTH OR SIZE WILL BE BIG AND STRONG. METROPOLITANS WILL BE SKILLED AT THE SORTS OF TRADES THEIR CITIES ARE KNOWN FOR. A METROPOLITAN IS ESSENTIALLY IMMORTAL, AS LONG AS HIS CITY EXISTS, BUT WILL GROW OLD IF HIS CITY LOSES VITALITY.

WISE METROPOLITANS SPEND MOST OF THEIR TIME CULTIVATING THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THEIR CITY AND ENCOURAGING ITS GROWTH. WITH THE 20TH CENTURY'S RISE IN POPULATION, THE NUMBER OF METROPOLITANS HAS INCREASED CONSIDERABLY; THEY GOVERN THEMSELVES THROUGH AN ELECTED BODY KNOWN AS THE CITY COUNCIL. THE FIRST CITY COUNCIL WAS LED BY ROME; OTHER FORMER HEADS OF THE COUNCIL INCLUDE PARIS, LONDON, AND NEW YORK, WHO STEPPED DOWN FROM THE POSITION IN LATE 2001. THE COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY WITHOUT LEADER.

THE EXISTENCE OF METROPOLITANS IS A SECRET KEPT EVEN FROM EARTH'S WONDERS. ONLY A HANDFUL OF MYSTICALLY AWARE INDIVIDUALS KNOW OF THEM.

## MOST WANTED

THE MOST WANTED ARE A GANG OF SUPERHUMAN CRIMINALS ORIGINALLY MADE UP OF THE FBI'S "MOST WANTED WONDERS." OVER THE YEARS THE ROSTER HAS CHANGED MANY TIMES, BUT IN ANY INCARNATION THE MOST WANTED REMAIN ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS GROUPS OF THEIR TYPE.

## NARWAL

THE FEDERAL PROGRAM FOR THE REGISTRATION OF WONDERS. NARWAL ENCOURAGES VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION THROUGH A SYSTEM OF SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS. IT IS MANDATORY FOR CONVICTED FELONS.

## OLD GUARD

THE OLDER GENERATION OF ACTIVE WONDERS. BEING A WONDER IS WIDELY CONSIDERED A YOUNG PERSON'S GAME, WITH MOST ENTERING THE TRADE IN THEIR EARLY TWENTIES. BY THEIR MID-THIRTIES, SUCH INDIVIDUALS ARE SEASONED PROFESSIONALS BUT OFTEN SEEN AS TOO CONSERVATIVE BY THEIR YOUNGER RIVALS. FEW WONDERS ARE STILL ACTIVE INTO THEIR FORTIES. THE TERM "OLD GUARD" CAN BE USED TO BROADLY REFER TO ANY HERO WHO HAS BEEN IN UNIFORM FOR OVER TEN YEARS. SOME HEROES TAKE ISSUE WITH BEING INCLUDED IN THE OLD GUARD. GIZA, VICTOR AND THE VEIL ARE ALL MEMBERS OF THE OLD GUARD.

# LEXICON

## ONE WORLD CONSPIRACY

THE COMMONLY HELD BELIEF THAT WONDERS OF ALL SORTS, EVEN SO-CALLED HEROES, ARE SECRETLY ENGAGED IN A PLOT TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD AND OBLITERATE ALL INDEPENDENT NATIONS. ACCORDING TO ONE WORLD THEORY, THE FREQUENT BATTLES BETWEEN HEROIC WONDERS AND THEIR CRIMINAL COUNTERPARTS ARE ALL FOR SHOW, INTENDED TO MISLEAD THE PUBLIC AND DISTRACT THEM FROM THE SLOW AND SUBTLE TAKEOVER OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, THE MEDIA, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AND THE MILITARY BY THE WONDER COMMUNITY. SOME VARIATIONS MAINTAIN THAT THE CONSPIRACY HAS ALREADY SUCCEEDED IN ITS GOALS, AND ALL POLITICIANS OF SIGNIFICANCE ARE EITHER PAWNS OF WONDERS OR SECRETLY WONDERS THEMSELVES. EVIDENCE FOR THE ONE WORLD CONSPIRACY IS SCANTY AT BEST, AND THE MOST FREQUENTLY CITED DOCUMENT IN SUPPORT OF IT (THE QUORUM PROTOCOLS) HAS BEEN PROVEN A FORGERY, BUT BELIEF IN THE CONSPIRACY HAS CONTINUED. IT REACHED A HIGH POINT IN THE LATE '80S AND EARLY '90S, THEN WANED, BUT HAS RECENTLY BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH TERRORISM AND GIVEN NEW LIFE AS AN OBJECT OF TEA PARTY OUTRAGE.

## "OUT OF ALL HOOPING"

AN INFLUENTIAL BOOK DISCUSSING THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS OF WONDERS ON AMERICAN SOCIETY. THE TITLE COMES FROM A LINE IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY AS YOU LIKE IT. THE AUTHOR, PSYCHIATRIST WILSON PEAKS, ARGUES THAT THE PRESENCE OF WONDERS HAS MADE AMERICA INTO A CULTURE OF EXTREMES, WHERE MODERATION AND RATIONAL BEHAVIOR HAVE GIVEN WAY TO WILD EXCESS AND RISK-TAKING.

## "POTUS"

A WEEKLY PRIME TIME DRAMA DETAILING THE FICTIONALIZED PRESIDENCY OF WILLIAM WALKER FLINT, THE FIRST WONDER PRESIDENT. POTUS IS CURRENTLY IN ITS FOURTH SEASON, WITH PRESIDENT FLINT RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION AGAINST DEMOCRATIC (AND NON-WONDER) CHALLENGER STEVEN TURING.

## PANDEMONIUM

AN INFAMOUS GATHERING OF PARTICULARLY CRUEL WONDERS DEVOTED TO TERROR, MASS MURDER, AND CHAOS. PANDEMONIUM (ANCIENT GREEK: "GATHERING OF ALL DEMONS") IS KNOWN FOR ITS LARGE SIZE AND FOR THE HIGH THREAT LEVEL OF ITS MEMBERS. IT IS ORGANIZED IN THE MANNER OF A SOCIAL CLUB, THOUGH ITS PERIODIC MEETINGS CAN TAKE PLACE VIRTUALLY ANYWHERE. PANDEMONIUM DIFFERS FROM OTHER SUPERHUMAN CRIMINAL GANGS IN THAT ITS MEMBERS CONSIDER THEMSELVES ABOVE MERE PETTY CRIME; A MEMBER OF PANDEMONIUM IS UNLIKELY TO STOOP TO ROBBERY, KIDNAPPING, OR EVEN CASUAL MURDER. INSTEAD, THE ORGANIZATION SETS ITS SIGHT ON ASSASSINATION, CORRUPTION, THE ACCUMULATION OF POWER AND GLOBAL INFLUENCE, AND "EVIL FOR EVIL'S SAKE."

THEIR MOTTO, "WHICH WAY I FLIE IS HELL; MY SELF AM HELL," IS A LINE FROM MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

# LEXICON

## PARLIAMENT OF STARS

THE LARGEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL INTERSTELLAR GOVERNMENT IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE. EARTH IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENT, AND RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS HAVE BEEN CORDIAL BUT DISTANT. MOST PEOPLE OF EARTH HAVE NO IDEA THE PARLIAMENT EXISTS.

## PERIL INSTITUTE FOR TROUBLED TEENS

THE INSTITUTE, KNOWN ALSO AS "THE PITT", IS THE WORLD'S ONLY HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE CHILDREN OF SUPER-CRIMINALS. CREATED AND ADMINISTRATED BY THE 1970S PSYCHIC VILLAIN PROFESSOR PERIL, THE PITT IS A FREE SERVICE PROVIDED TO CRIMINAL FAMILIES. THOSE STUDENTS WHO DO NOT HAVE POWERS OF THEIR OWN END UP AS AGENTS (OR "MINIONS") OF OTHER, MORE POWERFUL, SUPER-CRIMINALS. THE EXISTENCE OF THE PITT IS SUSPECTED, BUT NOT VERIFIED, BY SOME HEROIC WONDERS, AND NO HERO HAS EVER SEEN ITS HALLS. IT IS THOUGHT TO BE LOCATED DEEP UNDERGROUND, BUT IS IN FACT HIDDEN INSIDE THE EARTH'S MOON.

## PLANET X

KNOWN ALSO AS "PLANET TEN" OR "VULCAN", PLANET X IS AN EARTH-SIZED PLANET IN OUR SOLAR SYSTEM. IT REMAINED UNDETECTED BY EARTH ASTRONOMERS UNTIL THE 1960S, WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED BY SPACE-CAPABLE WONDERS. PLANET X ORBITS EXACTLY OPPOSITE EARTH; IT IS ALWAYS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SUN. PLANET X WAS SETTLED BY HUMANS THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO AND DEVELOPED IN A MANNER VERY SIMILAR TO THAT OF EARTH. INDEED, THE PARALLELS BETWEEN THE TWO SOCIETIES ARE SO CLEAR THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED THROUGH RANDOM CHANCE. PLANET X, HOWEVER, IS RULED BY A DESPOTIC WORLD COUNCIL WHICH HAS, SINCE ITS DISCOVERY OF EARTH, ATTEMPTED TO CONQUER HUMANITY. PLANET X HAS LAUNCHED THREE OVERT INVASION EFFORTS AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COUNTLESS COVERT MISSIONS, MOST OF WHICH HAVE BEEN DISRUPTED BY EARTH WONDERS. IN 2002, PLANET X SUFFERED A SERIES OF MASSIVE DISASTERS WHICH LEFT THE WORLD IN RUINS. THE WORLD COUNCIL, HOWEVER, SURVIVED WITH MUCH OF ITS TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE INTACT AND HAS SLOWLY REBUILT.

## QLIPHOTH

LITERALLY "SHELLS" OR "HUSKS", THE QLIPHOTH (PRONOUNCES CLIP-OAT) ARE ELEMENTS OF JUDAIC LORE AND SAID TO BE THE LEFTOVER FRAGMENTS OF CREATION THAT GOD DID NOT USE. THEY ARE MALEVOLENT IN THE EXTREME. THE NAME HAS BEEN USED TO REFER TO A RACE OF EXTRADIMENSIONAL ALIENS WHO ARE ATTEMPTING TO INVADE THE EARTH THROUGH THE DREAMS OF SLEEPING WONDERS. THIS CONFLICT IS KNOWN AS THE WAR OF SLEEP.

THE QLIPHOTH APPEAR TO BE ABLE TO EITHER CHANGE THEIR SHAPE OR TAKE OVER THE FORM OF OTHERS. HOWEVER, THEY MOST COMMONLY APPEAR AS BLACK, SPIKE-COVERED, SPIDER-LIKE CREATURES. IT IS THEORIZED THERE MAY BE MANY DIFFERENT BREEDS OF QLIPHOTH, AND THE SPIDER-LIKE CREATURES ARE BUT THE MOST COMMON SORT.

# LEXICON

## QUORUM

A HIDDEN SOCIETY OF HEROIC WONDERS DEDICATED TO UPHOLDING JUSTICE AND LENDING AID TO THE OPPRESSED. THE EXISTENCE OF THE QUORUM IS WELL KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC AT LARGE, BUT ITS MEMBERSHIP IS SECRET; BEFORE ANYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN THEY ARE FIRST OBSERVED FOR MONTHS (OR EVEN YEARS) BY THE ORDER. ONCE OFFERED MEMBERSHIP, THE CANDIDATE MUST PASS A SERIES OF TESTS DESIGNED TO MEASURE HIS COURAGE, CREATIVITY, FIGHTING SKILLS, AND DEDICATION TO JUSTICE. THE SOCIETY WORKS IN SECRET ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS, USUALLY IN WAYS TRADITIONALLY AVOIDED BY COSTUMED HEROES. THEY FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS FROM OPPRESSIVE GOVERNMENTS, ASSIST IN THE TRANSPORT OF REFUGEES, PROVIDE SUCCOR TO THE POOR AND DESTITUTE, AND LEND SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO RISE UP AGAINST TYRANNY AND FASCISM. IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE SECRETS OF THEIR MEMBERSHIP, HOWEVER, THEY TAKE UP ARMS ONLY AS A LAST RESORT. THE QUORUM IS HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD, AT LEAST; ITS ORIGINS AND AGENDA ARE SHROUDED IN MYSTERY. SOME CLAIM IT DATES BACK TO ANCIENT ROME. IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE MANY RANKS, TITLES AND DISTINCTIONS AMONG ITS MEMBERSHIP, WHO USE SECRET SIGNS AND SYMBOLS TO COMMUNICATE IN THE OPEN.

MONA LISA AND THE COSTUMED VIGILANTE KNOWN AS "THE FOX" ARE BOTH MEMBERS OF THE QUORUM, BUT DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE SOCIETY VIRTUALLY ANYONE COULD SECRETLY BE AN AGENT OF THIS GROUP.

## RADIANT CITY

A CITY OF THREE MILLION PEOPLE ON THE WEST COAST, DESIGNED ESSENTIALLY FROM SCRATCH BY THE FAMOUS ARCHITECT LE CORBUSSIER AFTER A CATASTROPHIC EARTHQUAKE RUINED THE ORIGINAL SITE. RADIANT IS NOTABLE FOR ITS ENORMOUS GLASS-WALLED SKYSCRAPERS FILLED WITH APARTMENTS AND SEPARATED BY VAST PARKS. IT BOASTS NUMEROUS HIGH-TECH INDUSTRIES AND IS A CENTER FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. VICTOR, VICTORIA, IHERO AND SPECTRUM ARE FAMOUS RESIDENTS OF RADIANT.

## RADIOLAND

AN ALTERNATE EARTH OCCASIONALLY VISITED BY WONDERS AND APPARENTLY STUCK IN THE 1930S. MORE IMPORTANT, RADIOLAND HAS NO PHYSICAL DIMENSION; THOSE WHO ENTER RADIOLAND LOSE THEIR BODY AND EXIST SOLELY AS AUDIO IMPRESSIONS. TO PERFORM ANY ACTION IN RADIOLAND FROM CROSSING THE STREET TO PUTTING ON ONE'S CLOTHES THE ACTION MUST BE ESTABLISHED AS FACT THROUGH NARRATION. ("WELL, HERE I AM AT WORK AGAIN, AND RIGHT ON TIME!") IF AN ELEMENT OF THE REALITY HAS NOT BEEN NARRATED, IT REMAINS SUBJECT TO THE NARRATION OF OTHER RADIOLAND CITIZENS. ("DORIS, THIS LETTER FROM THE WAR DEPARTMENT JUST ARRIVED FOR YOU. IT LOOKS IMPORTANT.") OTHER EVENTS ARE ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE VOICE OF A "NARRATOR" WHICH THE CITIZENS OF RADIOLAND CANNOT HEAR, BUT WHOSE NARRATION THEY APPEAR BOUND BY. MOST CITIZENS OF RADIOLAND HAVE NO IDEA THAT THEY CAN ALTER THE REALITY OF THEIR WORLD BY SIMPLY SPEAKING; WONDERS TRAVELING TO RADIOLAND HAVE USED THIS POWER TO TRY AND SEIZE CONTROL OF THAT WORLD AND USE IT FOR THEIR OWN ENDS, HOWEVER, AND THIS HAS LED SOME DENIZENS OF RADIOLAND TO DISCOVER THE TRUTH.

# LEXICON

## SEVEN WONDERS

THE FIRST MODERN SUPERHERO TEAM, THE SEVEN WONDERS WERE AMERICA'S ANSWER TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE WUNDERKIND IN NAZI GERMANY. THE TEAM WAS ACTIVE THROUGHOUT THE WAR, BUT DISBANDED IN 1948. ALTHOUGH NO SUBSEQUENT TEAM HAS ATTEMPTED TO REVIVE THE NAME, THE MEDIA PERPETUATE THE NAME WHEN THEY COMPARE ANY NEW SUPERHERO TEAM TO THE SEVEN WONDERS. THE TERM CAN ALSO BE USED TO REFER TO THE WORLD'S SEVEN MOST INFLUENTIAL AND POWERFUL WONDERS, WHOEVER THEY MAY BE. THERE IS LITTLE AGREEMENT ON WHO MIGHT MAKE UP SUCH A LIST, BUT SOME OF THE MOST-SUGGESTED CANDIDATES ARE VICTOR, WATCHDOG, THE CHAMP, THE LADY OF THE LAKE, MISS UNIVERSE, VICTORIA, THE VEIL, GIZA, MATRIX, AND THE BRONZE STAR II. THE ORIGINAL SEVEN WONDERS WERE VICTOR, GOLDEN GIRL, HELLCAT, THUNDERBOLT, BRONZE STAR, THE EAGLE AND FLYBOY.

## THIN TIME

A PHYSICAL STATE IN WHICH REPEATED TEMPORAL TRAVEL HAS CREATED A WEAKNESS IN THE STRUCTURE OF SPACE/TIME. THE UNIVERSE, ESPECIALLY AROUND EARTH, IS CURRENTLY IN A STATE OF THIN TIME. FRANK BACON, REGIONAL MANAGER FOR TIME MANAGEMENT INC, DESCRIBES THE PHENOMENON AS FOLLOWS:

"SPACE/TIME IS LIKE A SHEET OF PAPER, SEE. AND WHEN HISTORY HAPPENS, IT STARTS WRITING AT THE TOP, AND IT KEEPS GOING ALL THE WAY TO THE BOTTOM CORNER. AND SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES YOU WANT TO GO BACK AND ERASE SOMETHING YOU ALREADY WROTE AND WRITE IT OVER AGAIN. AND YOU CAN, THE FIRST FEW TIMES. BUT AFTER A WHILE, WHEN YOU'VE ERASED AND WRITTEN OVER THE SAME WORDS AGAIN AND AGAIN, BECAUSE YOU JUST CAN'T GET IT RIGHT, WELL, THINGS DON'T ERASE WELL ANYMORE. THEY JUST TURN INTO A BIG GRAY SMEAR. AND WHEN YOU TRY TO WRITE, THE LEAD DOESN'T STICK. AND THE PAPER, IT WEARS SO THIN YOU CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH IT. AND SOMETIMES IT TEARS. AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS, WELL, YOU'RE SCREWED. BECAUSE THE ONLY THING YOU CAN DO THEN IS TOSS THE WHOLE THING IN THE WASTEBASKET AND START OVER WITH A NEW SHEET OF PAPER. THAT'S THIN TIME, AND THAT'S THE MESS WE'RE IN."

## TIME MANAGEMENT INCORPORATED

THE INTER-TEMPORAL CORPORATION CONTRACTED TO MONITOR TEMPORAL TRAVEL AND DISTURBANCES IN SPACE/TIME. THE EXISTENCE OF TMI, AS IT IS OFTEN CALLED, IS UNKNOWN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. TMI EMPLOYS A SINGLE AGENT FOR ALL EARTH TIMELINES. THIS INDIVIDUAL, KNOWN AS "THE TEMP", ANSWERS TO A REGIONAL MANAGER BY THE NAME OF FRANK BACON.

## TITAN CITY

A LARGE AMERICAN CITY ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD. IT IS FAMOUS AS A HUB FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AS WELL AS FOR ITS SKYSCRAPER ARCHITECTURE. THE CITY HAS A LONG HISTORY OF ORGANIZED CRIME, A PROBLEM KEPT IN CHECK BY THE PRESENCE OF THE MANY WONDERS WHO LIVE IN THE CITY. THE CHAMP, MAJOR RAGER, AND THE DRIFTER ARE WELL KNOWN WONDERS OPERATING IN TITAN, AND WONDER WORKERS IS BASED THERE.

# LEXICON

## TOMORROW MAN

AN URBAN LEGEND AMONG WONDERS. MANY WONDERS BELIEVE THAT A PREVIOUS DISTORTION IN SPACE/TIME RESULTED IN A SINGLE INNOCENT MAN BEING CAST OUT OF THE TIMESTREAM. THIS "TOMORROW MAN", WHO IS TRAPPED IN THE FUTURE, WORKS TIRELESSLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF WONDERS IN THE PRESENT, ARRANGING GOOD LUCK FOR THEM AND MINIMIZING THE EFFECTS OF TRAGEDY. BELIEF IN TOMORROW MAN IS MORE COMMON AMONG THE OLD GUARD.

## "WHO WANTS TO BE A WONDER?"

A TELEVISION REALITY SHOW IN WHICH A GROUP OF PEOPLE COMPETE FOR THE RIGHT TO GAIN SUPERHUMAN POWERS. THE FIRST SEASON OFFERED CONTESTANTS THE CHANCE TO ACQUIRE THE POWERS OF THE RED ROCKET, WHO RETIRED IN THE 1980S AND WHO AGREED TO PASS ON HIS ABILITIES IN EXCHANGE FOR AN UNDISCLOSED CONTRACT. SUBSEQUENT SEASONS HAVE USED CORPORATE-FINANCED WEAPONRY, MYSTERIOUS ALIEN ARTIFACTS, OR WONDER DRUGS AS PRIZES.

## WONDER

A SUPERHUMAN INDIVIDUAL, OR AN INDIVIDUAL WHO ALLIES WITH OR OPPOSES SUPER HUMANS DESPITE A LACK OF POWERS. WONDERS TYPICALLY WEAR COSTUMES, OFTEN INCLUDING A MASK. WONDERS CAN BE BROADLY DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS: THE FIRST BREAKS THE LAW IN THE PURSUIT OF THEIR OWN AGENDAS WHILE THE SECOND ATTEMPTS TO THWART THE FIRST GROUP AND UPHOLD THE STATUS QUO. THE TERM DATES BACK AT LEAST AS FAR AS THE 18TH CENTURY, BUT GAINED POPULAR USE IN 1938 WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE WUNDERKIND AND THE SEVEN WONDERS.

## "WONDER STORIES"

A GENERIC TERM FOR ANY ONE OF NUMEROUS CHEMICALS INTENDED TO GRANT SUPERHUMAN POWERS TO THE RECIPIENT. SOME WONDER DRUGS ARE ENGINEERED IN A LAB, BUT OTHERS OCCUR NATURALLY.

## WONDER WORKERS

AN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY FOR WONDERS. MOST OF ITS JOBS ARE TEMPORARY IN NATURE AND RUN THE GAMUT FROM CONVENTIONAL SECURITY WORK TO CONSTRUCTION, COURIER SERVICES, AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY.

## WONDERBAR

A POPULAR AMERICAN CHOCOLATE BAR, ORIGINALLY WITH A CARAMEL CENTER BUT NOW AVAILABLE IN MANY VARIETIES. VARIOUS WELL-KNOWN WONDERS HAVE BEEN FEATURED ON THE COVER OF THE WONDERBAR THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, AND WONDERBAR COLLECTING IS A COMMON HOBBY AMONG CHILDREN.



# LEXICON

## WONDERCARE

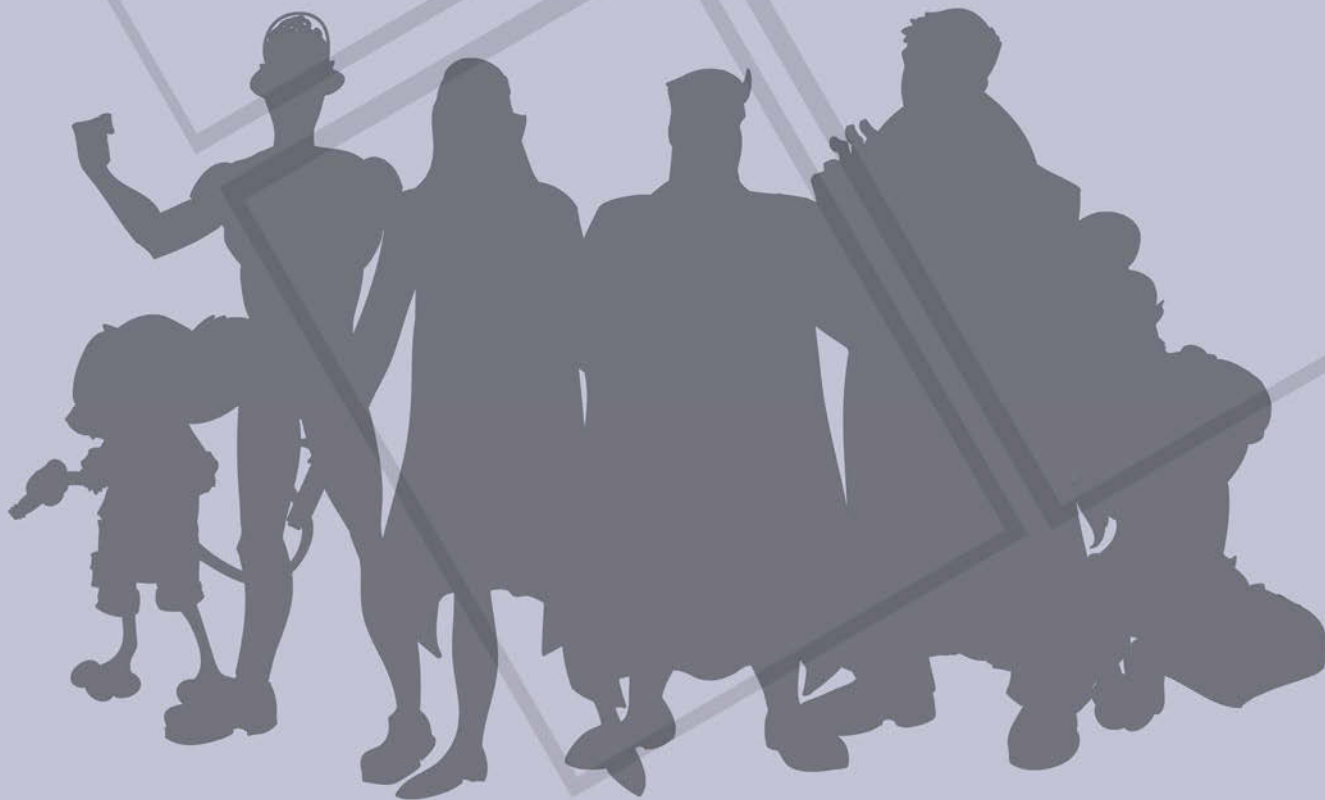
AN URBAN LEGEND AMONG WONDERS. MANY WONDERS BELIEVE THAT A PREVIOUS DISTORTION IN SPACE/TIME RESULTED IN A SINGLE INNOCENT MAN BEING CAST OUT OF THE TIMESTREAM. THIS "TOMORROW MAN", WHO IS TRAPPED IN THE FUTURE, WORKS TIRELESSLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF WONDERS IN THE PRESENT, ARRANGING GOOD LUCK FOR THEM AND MINIMIZING THE EFFECTS OF TRAGEDY. BELIEF IN TOMORROW MAN IS MORE COMMON AMONG THE OLD GUARD.

## WONDERLAND

A TELEVISION REALITY SHOW IN WHICH A GROUP OF PEOPLE COMPETE FOR THE RIGHT TO GAIN SUPERHUMAN POWERS. THE FIRST SEASON OFFERED CONTESTANTS THE CHANCE TO ACQUIRE THE POWERS OF THE RED ROCKET, WHO RETIRED IN THE 1980S AND WHO AGREED TO PASS ON HIS ABILITIES IN EXCHANGE FOR AN UNDISCLOSED CONTRACT. SUBSEQUENT SEASONS HAVE USED CORPORATE-FINANCED WEAPONRY, MYSTERIOUS ALIEN ARTIFACTS, OR WONDER DRUGS AS PRIZES.

## WONDERWEAR

A SUPERHUMAN INDIVIDUAL, OR AN INDIVIDUAL WHO ALLIES WITH OR OPPOSES SUPER HUMANS DESPITE A LACK OF POWERS. WONDERS TYPICALLY WEAR COSTUMES, OFTEN INCLUDING A MASK. WONDERS CAN BE BROADLY DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS: THE FIRST BREAKS THE LAW IN THE PURSUIT OF THEIR OWN AGENDAS WHILE THE SECOND ATTEMPTS TO THWART THE FIRST GROUP AND UPHOLD THE STATUS QUO. THE TERM DATES BACK AT LEAST AS FAR AS THE 18TH CENTURY, BUT GAINED POPULAR USE IN 1938 WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE WUNDERKIND AND THE SEVEN WONDERS.



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