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# IMPROBABLE TALES

ROWDY  
**10TH**  
ISSUE

**ICONS**  
SUPERPOWERED ROLEPLAYING  
COMPATIBLE



## THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

WHEN HISTORY AND PRESENT COLLIDE, DISASTER ENSUES

# FAINTING GOAT GAMES

PRESENTS

## THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

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# **INTRODUCTION**

A scientist's experiment has gone awry and created a bubble that has seemingly taken the research laboratory and its surroundings somewhere else. From the outside, the bubble is an opaque, prismatic sphere. The bubble continues to expand. It has grown large enough to envelop the entire laboratory complex and a nearby town. At its current rate of expansion, it will swallow a major city in less than a day.

Authorities believe that the experimental research facility is the source of the anomaly. They have attempted and failed to establish communications with the research facility or the town officials. They have cut power to the laboratory and town, but the bubble continues to grow. The military has sent in a unit of Special Forces soldiers to reconnoiter and destroy the research facility if it appears to be causing the problem. After losing contact with the soldiers, a search-and-rescue team entered, but it too is now presumed lost. As the adventure begins, the authorities ask the characters to investigate and solve the problem.

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## **411 FOR THE GM: HERE IS WHAT'S GOING ON**

Constance McClain, a research scientist at Paragon Engineering was attempting to create a device that utilized alien technology to grant a person telepathic powers. Her experiment was partially successful. It augments a person's existing telepathic abilities, such that the device creates a dimensional pocket where the telepath may will anything into existence. Unknown to the research team, one of their members, Otto Damien, had minor telepathic powers. He and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device are now in a symbiotic relationship.

The device has gained limited sentience. It is amoral and only desires to expand through the increased consumption of electricity. The more power the device receives, the bigger the volume of the dimensional bubble. The device needs electricity to maintain the dimension. The device initially

maintained the bubble in the laboratory off the electrical grid. When the authorities cut power to it, the lab's generators, solar panels, and backup power maintained the bubble. The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device then grew to envelop the nearby town and acquired its power plant. Its growth has slowed as it seeks more power.

Otto Damien, the telepath, controls access to and the conditions in the sphere. He wants to create an idealized version of the "Old West." He knows that few people share his vision, so he is changing them to enjoy the past. People entering the dimension start to lose much of their 21st Century knowledge, and he alters their personalities to make them more like those of the 19th Century inhabitants he desires. The longer someone stays in the dimension, the more likely and pronounced the transformation. The telepath allows some technological items to enter the dimension, but he transforms them into their 19th Century equivalents. He causes other items to disappear completely. The telepath has a perverted sense of justice and fair play, and people who respect the rules of the "Old West" are not subjected to the changes.

To rescue the inhabitants, the heroes must convince the Damien to free them, destroy the device maintaining the sphere, or otherwise overcome the two antagonists.

### **Plot Points**

1) The authorities know little except that entering the sphere appears to be a one-way trip and the sphere is emitting no electromagnetic radiation. Nobody has responded to their attempts at radio, microwave, satellite, or cellular communications.

2) Communication with the town is possible through the telephone wires, which are still connected. However, Otto Damien only allows Morse code over them. The authorities have not discovered this yet. Heroes who contact the town discover that a small, western town from the 1850s has seemingly replaced it.

3) When the heroes enter the sphere, they encounter a group of "Indians" (a transformed bike gang) attacking a wagon train of settlers. They soon

discover that the sphere has altered their devices and their super powers may not work. If the heroes rescue the settlers, the heroes discover that they are wanted criminals.

4) The heroes may enter the town to gather information or attempt to find the research facility. While they do so, the local populace treats them with fear and respect. They eventually learn that the Damien Ranch is the likely source of the sphere.

5) While exploring, the characters encounter the sheriff and his men (the town's transformed police force), who attempt to apprehend them. If he fails, the sheriff calls the U.S. Army (the transformed Special Forces soldiers) for assistance in combatting the heroes.

6) Dozens of ranch hands (the transformed research facility personnel) guard Damien Ranch. If the characters overcome the guards, the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device and Damian combat the heroes. The heroes quickly discover that a frontal assault on the two is futile and they must attempt a lateral victory. The heroes might achieve victory by distracting one while attacking the other, convincing the telepath to release his prisoners, or by destroying the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device or its access to power.

### Enemies

Chief One Eagle (Sam Crow, motor cycle club leader)  
Indian Warriors (motor cycle club members)  
Sheriff Richard Dent (Lafferton Chief of Police)  
Sheriff's Deputies (Lafferton police officers)  
Colonel George Thompson (Special Forces commander)  
Union Soldiers (Special Forces soldiers)  
John Armstrong (Chief of Security at Paragon Engineering research facility)

Paragon Engineering Security Personnel  
Ranch Hands (Paragon Engineering research facility personnel)

### Important NPCs

Otto Damien (The Telepath)  
Telepathic Power Enhancement Device  
Constance McClain (Mad Scientist)  
General Adam Muñoz (Army commander)  
Shannon Seager (Director of Public Relations for Paragon Engineering)

### Action Scenes

**Scene A:** A Plea for Help  
**Scene B:** Circle the Wagons  
**Scene C:** A Blast from the Past  
**Scene D:** Showdown at Damien Ranch  
**Scene E:** Back to the Future

## A PLEA FOR HELP

This section introduces the characters to the threat and gives them an opportunity to learn more about the challenges of this adventure. To start the scenario, the gamemaster should ask the players where their characters are on a normal weekday morning. Players who place their characters in inconvenient locations or circumstances should be rewarded with Determination.

Characters who are out and about view a breaking news report on a lobby television, elevator monitor, computer screen of a co-worker, or another source. A reporter stands in a desert setting and states the following:

*“Authorities have begun a wholesale evacuation of Phoenix and the surrounding suburbs and towns. Three days ago, the isolated research facility of*

### Paragon Engineering and Phoenix

This adventure mentions Paragon Engineering, which is a technology company described in the Tesla Industrial Park section of the Stark City campaign setting. A gamemaster should feel free to change the name of the company to fit her campaign, if appropriate. Nothing else in the adventure is tied to any specific campaign setting. The gamemaster should feel free to place the adventure in any appropriate location. The only guideline is that the research laboratory should be in a relatively isolated location, the American Southwest or Mountain West are obvious locations.

*Paragon Engineering was enveloped by this sphere. [The camera pans to show an opaque, multi-hued sphere that is several hundred yards high and easily ten miles wide.] The sphere is growing without any sign of stopping. Approximately twenty-four hours ago the sphere enveloped the small town of Lafferton and began growing at a faster pace. It is now within 100 miles of hundreds of thousands of civilians and will swallow Phoenix within 24 hours at its current pace. Military authorities are not disclosing the nature of their attempts at discovering the reason for the sphere, the cause of its growth, or how to stop it. We will keep you informed as this story develops."*

Characters in a publicly known team headquarters, with established ties to military or civilian authorities, or with ties to any other appropriate contact receive a direct communication relaying the same information and asking the character to visit the mobile observation site, which the authorities have established outside of the dimensional bubble.

#### General Muñoz, Task Force Commander

General Muñoz is the on-site commander for a special P.A.T.R.I.O.T. and U.S. Army joint task force assigned to investigate and counter the threat of the dimensional bubble. P.A.T.R.I.O.T. (Primary Anti-Terrorist Regional & International Operations Task force) is an international non-governmental organization created during the 1950s to combat meta-threats that no one nation could face. It is funded by wealthy individuals and corporations the world over, but its funding and protection efforts focus primarily on the industrialized World, specifically the United States, European Union, and Russia.

General Muñoz knows little about the dimensional sphere. He tells the characters that it originated at the Paragon Engineering laboratory three days ago and began to expand immediately. They sent unmanned aerial vehicles and surveillance robots inside, but they have transmitted no information and have not exited the sphere, despite their programming to do so. The sphere emits no electromagnetic radiation. Nobody inside it, if they are still alive, has responded to the military's attempts at radio, microwave, satellite, or cellular communications.



#### General Adam Muñoz

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 3      | Intellect 4 |
| Coordination 3 | Awareness 4 |
| Strength 4     | Willpower 4 |
| Stamina 8      |             |

**Specialties:** Leadership Expert, Mental Resistance Master\*, Military Master, Weapons (Guns)

**Qualities:** Born soldier; Sensitive to disrespect, Political aspirations

**Notes:** General Muñoz is a wiry man in his early fifties with greying hair. He wears combat fatigues, but no obvious armor. He wears only a sidearm (Blast Device 6) and a special P.A.T.R.I.O.T. helmet that confers Mental Resistance at the Master level.

\* Granted by a technological device.

General Muñoz also tells the heroes that he ordered in a team of Special Forces soldiers to investigate the bubble, but they did not return. He then sent a search-and-rescue team inside, but they too have not returned. General Muñoz is concerned for his soldiers, who he may have sent to their deaths, but he is even more concerned that the bubble might continue to expand and kill hundreds of thousands of civilians. He does not mention it, but the President of the United States has given General Muñoz the authority to stop the growth of the bubble by any means necessary. Characters with the Military Specialty notice that the vehicles and

equipment necessary to deploy tactical nuclear weapons are present at the command center.

General Muñoz gives special deference to any character who observes military etiquette, has a Military Specialty, or is publicly known to be a veteran. Muñoz tells the heroes that he will provide them any assistance he can, but he does not know what good it will do as the Army's attempts at stopping the sphere have been ineffective. He privately tells these characters that he believes that the Paragon Engineering research laboratory was engaged in illegal, dangerous experiments that have rent the very fabric of the space-time continuum.

General Muñoz also tells the characters that P.A.T.R.I.O.T. scientists have contacted him and hope that destroying the source of the experiment will stop the growth and the hole will seal naturally over time. They are not certain this will work and are preparing an experimental counter-device that will stabilize the hole and prevent it from expanding, but it will not be operational until after Phoenix is gone. The stabilization device will do nothing to decrease the size of the dimensional bubble or rescue its inhabitants, assuming they are still alive, but will merely freeze it at the size it has achieved when the stabilization device becomes activate.

### Shannon Seager, Director of Public Relations

Shannon Seager is the highest ranking employee of Paragon Engineering at the observation site. Her employer has ordered her to cooperate with the joint task force to the extent necessary, but her primary responsibilities are to ensure that Paragon Engineering is not blamed for any civilian casualties and that any commercially feasible scientific advances (data or devices) are recovered for the company.

Ms. Seager appeals to any heroes who have reputations as being scientists or anti-establishment. She tells these characters that Paragon Engineering scientists were not working on any illegal projects, but were simply trying to create a secure, long-range communication device. Lead Researcher Constance McClain was attempting to understand two captured alien devices that allowed telepathic communications between the wearers.



### Shannon Seager

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 2      | Intellect 5 |
| Coordination 3 | Awareness 4 |
| Strength 2     | Willpower 5 |
| Stamina 7      |             |

**Powers:** Force Field Device 4, Shooting Device 4 (.40 Glock 27 Gen4 compact pistol)

**Specialties:** Business, Deception Expert, Science (Physics) Expert

**Qualities:** Snake in a business suit; Hates government interference

**Notes:** Shannon Seager is a well-dressed woman in a power suit with black framed glasses. She carries a smart phone, satellite phone, tablet, brick of \$100 bills, pistol, and a force field generator in her purse. The device is clearly experimental, and it looks like a combination of a flashlight and a microwave. The device only provides her protection for four pages, once activated.

Although Seager appears best suited for the boardroom or in front of a camera, she started her career with Paragon Engineering in the laboratory and has a doctorate in physics from Cal Tech. She values pure research more than most, but always has a view on the bottom line and how her actions might affect the company. She speaks in technical language and refers to the dimensional bubble as an anomaly, not an accident and calls it by its true shape, a prolate spheroid, not a sphere as the press and military call it.

Paragon Engineering scientists do not know how the alien communications technology could create this anomaly, but they believe that the destruction of McClain's experiment might make the bubble permanent and trap those inside or even erase their existence completely. They believe that the safest way to stop the bubble's expansion is to slowly power down the experiment, which should decrease the size of the bubble, until it reverts to a manageable size and expels the civilian bystanders.

Ms. Seager is polite to pro-military characters and authority figures, but provides them no information beyond the dates of the events discussed above. She sincerely believes that the military will attempt to destroy the source of the anomaly without any concern for the potential scientific advances it might represent. She is also concerned about civilian casualties, but believes that anything that has happened is reversible through the proper application of scientific reason.

## Event Timeline

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The below time line of events known by Shannon Seager and Paragon Engineering officials. She does not know the bracketed information, but it is provided as information for the gamemaster.

- **3 days ago:** Paragon Engineering security monitors show Constance McClain's research team attempting to duplicate an alien telepathy device. A lab accident caused a feedback loop that shocked and electrocuted some of the research team. [McClain and Otto Damien survived, but Damien fell into a coma. Damien's fevered imagination is causing the contents of the bubble to change.] Shortly thereafter, something [the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device] created a bubble that enveloped the laboratory and isolated it from the rest of the world. [The feedback loop caused the computer system operating the device to gain sentience.]

- **2 days ago:** After trying to analyze the slowly growing anomaly surrounding McClain's laboratory, Paragon Engineering scientists noticed that its electricity consumption was increasing at a rate proportionate to the bubble's growth. They cut the power to the building housing McClain's laboratory.

The attempt was ineffective and the bubble expanded over the entire research facility. [The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device immediately drained the entire backup power in the laboratory and expanded its bubble to envelop the facility, which allowed it to reestablish access to the electrical grid and gain access to the facility's backup generators and solar panels.]

- **1 day ago:** Corporate headquarters for Paragon Engineering contacted the government to request assistance in containing the industrial accident. The government sent an Army rapid response group, led by General Muñoz. General Muñoz sent in unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) and remote controlled surveillance robots, but neither communicated with nor returned to their operators. General Muñoz sent a dozen Special Forces soldiers inside to reconnoiter and then a search-and-rescue team. [Otto Damien transformed the devices into animals and the soldiers into Union cavalry.] General Muñoz ordered his team to cut all power to the facility. [The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device brought all of the facility's emergency generators on line and directed all electricity in the facility to it.] The bubble again expanded and enveloped the nearby town of Lafferton [and its coal-fired electrical plant.] At this point, General Muñoz relocated his command center and requested assistance from P.A.T.R.I.O.T. and the characters.

## • Start of Adventure

### Contacting Lafferton

The military and Paragon Engineering scientists have attempted to contact the research facility and the inhabitants of Lafferton through all normal methods of communication. Radio, microwave, satellite, and cellular communications have failed. The telephone lines remain intact, but Otto Damian is preventing the parties from talking on them.

If any of the characters check the telephone lines, they are able to make calls into the town or research facility, but nobody answers. The character hears a short series of beeps and then silence before the call ends. A character with an Intellect of 5 or higher recognizes the communication as Morse Code. If none of the characters knows Morse Code, General Muñoz offers someone from his staff to

communicate with the town.

No matter what telephone number the characters call, they reach the Lafferton Telegraph Office. It is staffed by John Robertson. Robertson has no recollection of his life in the 21st Century. He believes that he is a resident of Lafferton and the year is 1863. He has the mannerisms and vocabulary of a character from a typical Western.

Yesterday, Robertson was an employee of a local telephone and Internet provider. He is married with two children. Characters researching Robertson may confirm his personal information through various social media sites or through government sources. Robertson provides what he believes to be truthful answers to the characters, but he knows nothing of the reason for the bubble or the status of the research facility. He does have some limited useful information, and he knows the following, which may be of interest to the players: **(1)** his knowledge of the events in the Lafferton does not match the historical record (e.g., he states the modern day population of Lafferton rather than the historical population, he gives an inaccurate date for the arrival of the railroad to Lafferton, etc.); **(2)** the notable citizens of Lafferton match their modern day equivalents, with one addition. He includes the cattle baron Otto Damien on the list; and **(3)** he describes a company of "blue coats" arriving recently, several days ago, to combat the Indian threat, the leader of the group is Colonel George Thompson.

## **CIRCLE THE WAGONS**

This section introduces the characters to some of the inhabitants of the dimensional bubble and exposes them to the power of Otto Damien. When the characters have prepared themselves, they may enter the dimensional bubble by touching it anywhere on its surface. Regardless of where a character touches the bubble, they all experience the same sensations and arrive in the same location inside the sphere.

The gamemaster may read the following text to the players to describe the transition and arrival:

*Colors swirl around you. Your skin tingles, and your extremities feel numb. The smell of ozone fills your nostrils. After what seems like hours or seconds, you're not sure, you land on a hard surface with a thump. The bright blue sky stings your eyes, and it takes you a moment to adjust your vision. When you do, you see that you're sitting in a large open prairie with long grasses waving in a gentle breeze. As you gather yourself, you hear the sound of thundering horses in the distance and sporadic gunfire.*

### **Transformation**

Once the characters are inside, any with an Awareness greater than 2 immediately notice that they, their clothing, and their equipment have changed. The characters are wearing typical Western-style clothing. If the characters wore masks, they have handkerchiefs covering their faces. Characters with any kind of ranged power have a pistol or rifle, and characters with any type of movement power have a horse nearby. Characters with any close combat powers have a knife. Any devices or equipment that did not exist in 1856 are transformed into their 1856 equivalents. If no equivalent exists, the equipment or device disappears.

As soon as the characters attempt to use their powers, they discover that they are not working as normal. A player must spend a point of Determination, tag an Aspect, and make a test of the character's power using its own level as the difficulty, to attempt to use a power. If the test fails, the power fails to activate. An effect of 0 means that the power works, but there are undesirable side effects. If the effect is 1 or more, the power works as intended. If the power requires an attack roll, it still must succeed for the power to affect its intended target. Characters with the Trained Origin need not spend Determination to use their non-device based powers.

Damien has used his powers to alter the characters. He knows that they have arrived to stop him and destroy his creation. He has placed them in the archetypical role for antagonists in a Western--the bandits or criminals. Damien has a sense of honor and wants the conflict to the characters to be on



"fair" terms, but he wants the characters to earn their powers in his realm. If they resist their role as the "bad guys," he prevents them from using their powers normally. If they accept their roles as villains, he grants them access to their powers.

Whenever a character does something dastardly (e.g., commits a crime, takes advantage of an innocent person, or does anything one associates with a criminal in a Western movie), the character regains access to one of his or her powers. The gamemaster can select the power, roll randomly, or allow the player to select the power. If a character does something out of character for a villain, Damien restricts access to the character's powers again.

### "Indian" Attack

Once the heroes have regained their senses, they see a wagon train of three wagons under attack from some men on horses. The men are dressed in typical garb one would expect from a Western movie. Their appearance matches no known Native American tribe, but is an amalgam of costumes used by Hollywood. Interestingly, the supposed Indian warriors, do not appear to be of Native American descent. They are a mix of races, mostly Caucasian, but some Hispanic, and at least one person, the leader, appears to actually be Native American. The "Indians" are approaching the wagon train and firing wildly in the air as they approach. The horses pulling the wagons are moving as fast as they can, and the passengers in the wagons are also firing wildly at their attackers. At the time the heroes first act, neither side has inflicted any injuries.

The "Indian Warriors" are described below, if the settlers' attributes are needed, use the "Bystander" from page 116 of *ICONS*. They are armed with rifles (Shooting Damage 4).

### After the Attack

Assuming the heroes intervene, they are able to question any of the settlers or warriors. The settlers address the characters by name and with great fear. If asked how the settlers know the characters' names, they explain that everyone knows about the exploits of their gang. The settlers believe that the heroes are members of a notorious gang of robbers



### "Indian" Warriors

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 4      | Intellect 3 |
| Coordination 3 | Awareness 3 |
| Strength 4     | Willpower 3 |
| Stamina 7      |             |

**Specialties:** Riding, Stealth, Weapons (Guns)

**Qualities:** Hardened criminals; brave in a group

**Notes:** Otto Damien has transformed the appearance and equipment of the members of a local motor cycle gang ("The Brotherhood of Chaos") to match how he believes a tribe of Indian warriors should appear. The Brotherhood was a criminal motor cycle gang based in Lafferton that offered "protection" to local merchants, dealt in illegal weapons, and manufactured and distributed drugs. The members of the Brotherhood do not know this, but Damien has allowed their faculties and memories to remain unchanged because they needed no prompting to adopt their roles as marauding savages.

Chief One Eagle leads the group. His real name is Sam Crow, and he is the only member of the gang who is of Native American descent. The warriors intend to strike the wagon train quickly, grab one wagon, and allow the others to flee. They do not fight to the death and as soon as a warrior is injured, he flees the battle. If half of the group is injured or flees, the entire group retreats. The warriors are each equipped with a rifle (Shooting Damage 4), a knife (Slashing Damage 3), and has access to several horses (*ICONS*, page 119).

## Weird, Wild West

The adventure is written assuming that Otto Damien wants to recreate the "Wild West" that he has imagined from reading Louis L'Amour or Zane Grey novels; watching television shows such as "Deadwood," "Hell on Wheels," or reruns of "Gunsmoke" and "Bonanza;" and watching movies like "Unforgiven," "Magnificent Seven," and really anything starring Clint Eastwood. This does not have to be the case. If Damien is a fan of the Deadlands roleplaying game, then the characters could immediately have access to certain types of superpowers, such as those fitting in that genre. Likewise, the characters' antagonists could also have access to supernatural powers.

and murders. They are wanted by the law and each have large bounties on their heads, amounting to tens of thousands of dollars. While the characters are in the dimensional bubble, they have the temporary social challenge of "Notorious Criminal." The settlers' knowledge of Lafferton is similar to the Telegraph Operator discussed above. Briefly, they know the notable citizens of Lafferton and that the cattle baron Otto Damien is the most powerful man in Lafferton. If any of the warriors are present during the characters' interrogation of the settlers, they will roll their eyes and laugh at the ridiculous responses of the settlers.

If the heroes question the warriors, their responses are very different. They are initially hostile to the superheroes. The "warriors" have perfect recollection of their lives before the dimensional

bubble captured them. If the characters have operated in or near Lafferton for any period, they may have apprehended some of the gang members in the past. With some persuasion, the warriors will overcome their initial hostility to "the law" and they will talk.

Although they like the lawless nature of the Wild West, they are missing the comforts of home. If the heroes represent to the warriors that they are attempting to return Lafferton to the real world, the warriors are more communicative. They tell the heroes the following: **(1)** they were hanging out in their club a couple of days ago, when the club turned into a teepee, their rides (motorcycles) turned into horses, and all their weapons turned into repeating rifles and six-shooters; **(2)** they have no idea who or what might have been the source of

## Dimension Travel

Characters with Dimension Travel have the ability to short circuit portions of this adventure. The threat of being trapped in the pocket dimension when the P.A.T.R.I.O.T. dimensional stabilizer goes on-line does not affect them, and with the proper stunts and enough time (and Determination) they could rescue all of the inhabitants of the dimensional bubble. The gamemaster may be tempted to prevent this or make it unreasonably difficult to do. Resist this temptation. Dimension Travel is a movement power that does little more than provide an interesting background for a character. It is rarely useful in combat or even in most adventures. Let the dimension traveler shine in this adventure.

The character may travel back and forth between the dimensions to provide updates to those outside. The character may use a stunt to send individuals immediately back to their home dimension. The gamemaster should allow this for any targets other than Otto Damien and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device. A Dimension Travel stunt that allows the character to affect others does harm Damien and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit, and the process for sending them back is described in the final section, "Back to the Future."

the transformation; **(3)** they are willing to assist the heroes by whatever means they can to solve the problem; and **(4)** they have no idea how they became able to ride horses.

Once any of the warriors tells the heroes that they are willing to help, or the scene has lasted long enough to give the players some information to consider and advance the story, the characters see the warrior with whom they are speaking get a blank stare, his pupils dilate, and he undergoes a change. The transformed warrior no longer knows anything of use, is not willing to assist the characters, and speaks only in halting English. Otto Damien has transformed him, mentally, into what he believes a Native American warrior of the 1850s should be.

At the end of the encounter, the warriors flee, if allowed, and the settlers ask the heroes if they could escort them back to Lafferton.

## A BLAST FROM THE PAST

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As the characters approach Lafferton, they must travel through many cattle ranches, which surround the town of approximately 1200 residents. The town covers four square miles, with most of the area taken up by single family homes. The roads are only dirt and are filled with ruts of mud when it rains. Most homes have one or two horses and a carriage in front of them. The downtown area has wooden sidewalks and several businesses. The town has a bank, telegraph office, stable and grain store, two general stores, a clothing store, three restaurants and bars, a hotel, a barbershop, a doctor's office, and the sheriff's office. The Lafferton railway station is about one mile from the center of town.

Characters familiar with Lafferton, notice that the town looks like its modern day counterpart. The roads, business, and homes are in the same locations. Characters familiar with "sandbox" computer roleplaying games have an eerie feeling of similarity. The citizens mill about without direction or travel in continuous loops throughout the town. The residents working in businesses are always there and close their shops at exactly the same time.

Characters with Mind Control recognize the residents as being under someone's control. A character with experience with Mind Control or a Specialty in Computers may may an Intellect test against a 6. A successful test allows the character to realize that the controller may not have enough processing power to control the fine actions of all of the residents, so he has given them scripts to follow and only assumes control when they do not follow the script or interact with the characters in an unexpected way.

The residents of Lafferton know little more than the settlers or telegraph operator. They believe that the heroes are members of a notorious gang of criminals who have large bounties on their heads. They also believe the following: **(1)** they have no recollection of their lives before the transformation of Lafferton; **(2)** they know the names of the notable citizens of Lafferton, which match their modern day equivalents, except they add the cattle baron Otto Damien; and **(3)** they describe a company of "blue coats" arriving recently, several days ago, to combat the Indian threat, the leader of the group is Colonel George Thompson.

If characters ask the Lafferton residents about power generators, the Paragon Engineering research facility, or any other "unusual" events, the residents give the characters a quizzical look. If asked about "engines," the residents are more forthcoming. They know that the train engines arrive at the train station every hour on the hour. They residents also tell the characters that there are steam engines in operation at the coal mine outside of town, where many residents work, and there might be one at the Damien Ranch.

### Distractions

While the characters are in town or on their way to or from town, the gamemaster should feel free to distract them with one or more random events.

**Cattle Rustlers:** As the characters approach the town, they see two men on horses leading a dozen cattle. The men are armed with rifles. If the characters do nothing, a group of bandits (equal in number to the characters) accost the men and demand the cattle. The ranch hands are not

gunmen and surrender without a fight. They are from the Damien Ranch and use the same statistics as the rest of the ranch hands.

**Stampede:** While the characters are traveling, they see a mother and child in a carriage pulled by two horses. The carriage is moving slowly, and the mother seems distracted by the child, who appears ill. After the characters leave, on a successful Awareness test of 6 or greater, they notice an approaching dust cloud on the horizon. If they investigate further, the dust cloud is a cattle stampede. If the characters do nothing, the stampede overtakes the mother and child.

**Train Robbery:** While the characters are traveling, they notice a group of bandits preparing to rob a train. They are burying a small keg of black powder under the train tracks. Once they blow the tracks, they intend to board the train and steal the payroll destined for the local coal mine. The train is guarded by four men with statistics equivalent to Sheriff Dent and his men. The bandits have the same statistics as the Indian Warriors.

**Barroom Brawl:** While in town, the characters hear a ruckus in one of Lafferton's taverns. A dispute over a poker game has turned into a fight. The fight has given the patrons of the bar the opportunity to let out some frustration. There are no clear sides in the fight, but it seems to be small groups of individuals. The characters have the opportunity to intervene and stop the fight or join in the fisticuffs.

**Gun Fight:** Before the characters leave town, the leader of the group or the most menacing looking character is approached by a professional gunfighter. The gunfighter challenges the character to a duel. The character may attempt to diffuse the situation, flee the gunfighter, fight him, or shoot him in the back as he starts the duel. The gunfighter's relevant attributes are pistol (Shooting Device Damage 3), Will 4, Stamina 7, Coordination 4, and Weapon (Gun) Expert.

The above events are examples only. The gamemaster should feel free to create her own distractions for her players. Damien intends each event to tempt the characters to avoid their roles as



### Sheriff Dent and His Deputies

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 3      | Intellect 3 |
| Coordination 3 | Awareness 3 |
| Strength 3     | Willpower 3 |
| Stamina 6      |             |

**Specialties:** Criminology, Investigation, Riding, Weapons (Guns)

**Qualities:** Lawmen; peacekeepers, not warriors

**Notes:** Sheriff Richard Dent was the Chief of Police of Lafferton. The sheriff and his deputies know nothing beyond what the other residents of Lafferton know except that Otto Damian is the source of the bounties on the characters. He offered his own money to supplement the bounties because of the crimes the characters have committed against Damian Ranch and his interests. If asked, the sheriff gives the characters a dirty look and says, "You know what you murders and thieves did." He gives the characters no further information.

Sheriff Dent has deputies equal to the number of characters. The sheriff has called in a posse of civilians who number three-times the number of characters. The posse's statistics are the same as the Sheriff and his men, except that they do not have Specialties in anything. The sheriff's men retreat if they are injured beyond half their Stamina. The posse members flee with any injury. The posse will flee if half of their group is injured, and all members flee if the sheriff is incapacitated. They are equipped with a rifle (Shooting Damage 4) or a pistol (Shooting Damage 3) and are mounted on a horse (*ICONS*, page 119).

villains or give them the opportunity to act as villains.

### Ambush

Once the characters have spent some time in town and have enough information to lead them to the Coal Mine or Damien Ranch, the gamemaster should introduce the encounter with Sheriff Richard Dent and his posse.

The sheriff wants to bring in the characters alive, but does not want to endanger the lives of his men to do so. He plans to ambush the characters with overwhelming force in the hope that they surrender to him. The posse waits on the road out of town (to avoid endangering civilians or allowing the characters to take hostages).

When the characters leave for the coal mine or Damien Ranch, they may notice the ambush with a successful Danger Sense or an Awareness test against a 5. A Moderate Success allows the character to notice that his or her horse is spooked by something, but nothing else. A Major Success allows the character to realize that people and horses are attempting to hide around the bend. A Massive Success allows the character to realize that there are four groups of men on horses around the bend or in washed out areas prepared to envelop the characters when they round the bend in the road.

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## SHOWDOWN AT DAMIEN RANCH

From the outside, Damien Ranch looks much like a typical ranch, except there are more buildings and barns than one would expect on a 19th Century cattle ranch. The ranch has the main house for the Damien family, barracks for the ranch hands, stables for horses, barns for the cattle, a blacksmith forge, and other related buildings. The ranch has approximately 1000 head of cattle and forty ranch hands.

The ranch hands are expecting the characters to attempt to infiltrate Damien Ranch. They are on



### Colonel Thompson and His Soldiers

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 4      | Intellect 4 |
| Coordination 4 | Awareness 4 |
| Strength 4     | Willpower 4 |
| Stamina 8      |             |

**Specialties:** Military Expert, Riding, Weapons (Guns) Expert

**Qualities:** Union soldiers, Bring Order to the West; Hostile to former Confederates

**Notes:** Colonel George Thompson and his men are the transformed Special Forces soldiers who General Muñoz sent to explore the dimensional bubble. All twelve men are mounted on horses (*ICONS*, page 119) and have two spare horses each. They know nothing about the reason for the dimensional bubble or Otto Damien. They only know that the characters are wanted criminals. They are each equipped with a rifle (Shooting Damage 4), and the officers wear a pistol (Shooting Damage 3).

alert, have active patrols, and fire their weapons into the air (to sound the alarm) if they encounter anything suspicious. Characters spending any amount of time in or around the ranch may notice several things of interest. Players who specifically identify things for which their characters are searching can add +3 to their rolls to find the relevant items.

### Alertness Effort

- **5:** The roofs of most of the buildings are covered in a reflective black material (solar panels).
- **6:** The buildings are connected by telegraph wires.
- **7:** Telegraph wires (power lines) connect the ranch and the coal mine.
- **8:** One of the barns emits the faint smell of diesel fumes. (They are coming from the emergency generators.)
- **9:** One barn (the research laboratory) near the edge of the ranch appears to be unused. Nobody enters it and nobody leaves it. It is the only building not connected by telegraph wires. (The power conduit is buried underground.)

### Solar Panels

The Paragon Engineering research facility had solar panels on the roof of every building. The solar panels provided supplemental electricity to the facility and had no storage capability. If the solar panels produced excess electricity, during the weekend for example, the electricity went into the electrical grid. The solar panels retain their distinctive appearance, but Damian has made the inhabitants ignore them.

Otto Damien has retained the solar panels after the transformation, during the day with clear skies, they produce enough electricity to keep the research facility and its surroundings in the pocket dimension, but do not produce enough energy to allow any expansion of the dimensional bubble beyond the immediate vicinity. The solar panels are fragile, but are only vulnerable to area of effect or explosive attacks. Shooting damage, such as that from firearms is ineffective and requires dozens of rounds to do any significant damage to the panels.

### Emergency Power Center

The Paragon Engineering research facility had diesel-powered generators to provide electricity in case of an emergency or unexpected loss of power. Otto Damien retained the generators during his transformation of the research facility. The generators are contained in a large barn the smells faintly of diesel exhaust. It is the central hub for all of the power lines from solar panels and the coal mine. The generators are currently running at minimum capacity while the Telepathic Power

### Ranch Hands

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 3      | Intellect 3 |
| Coordination 3 | Awareness 3 |
| Strength 3     | Willpower 3 |
| Stamina 6      |             |

**Specialties:** Animals (Cattle), Riding

**Qualities:** Ranch hands; cowboys and cowgirls, not fighters

**Notes:** Otto Damien has transformed most of the staff of Paragon Engineering's remote research facility in to ranch hands. They know nothing about the reason for the dimensional bubble. The only relevant things they know are the following: (1) the characters are desperadoes, who are expected to attack the ranch and try to kill their employer, Otto Damien; (2) there is a steam engine in one of the large barns that has no apparent function; (3) there are telegraph lines that connect Damien Ranch and the coal mines, but they do not appear to serve any real purpose. The ranch hands are equipped with a rifle (Shooting Damage 4) or a pistol (Shooting Damage 3) and, where appropriate, may be mounted on a horse (*ICONS*, page 119).

Enhancement Device utilizes the electricity from the coal mine.

At their maximum capacity, the generators produce enough power to maintain the dimensional bubble as far as the coal mine and Lafferton. If the characters are able to prevent the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device from accessing the emergency generators and all other sources of electricity for three pages, the dimensional bubble retreats to the research laboratory only.

The emergency generators are not armored against attack, 12 points of damage disables them. If a character has a Specialty in Mechanics, add the Specialty and the character's Intellect score to the damage total for purposes of disabling each power generator. There are three generators in the barn. Each one must be working at maximum power to extend the dimensional bubble to the coal mine and Lafferton.

## Research Laboratory

At the edge of Damien Ranch sits an isolated barn with no path to it, no people or animals obviously in it, and no telegraph wires leading to it. It is the transformed laboratory that holds the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device. The walls are two-foot thick and made of concrete (Strength 7) covered by a façade of wood. The entrance is protected by a steel door (Strength 8) and a security device that requires an access code and a retina scan from a member of the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device research team to open it. A character may breach the security system with a successful an Intellect test against a 10. The character may add his Electronics Specialty to the roll, and if a member of the research team assists by providing a retina scan (willingly or unwillingly), the character may add +3 to the roll.

14 The interior of the barn is significantly larger than the exterior of the building. Damien has made no attempt to alter the appearance of the research laboratory. The characters encounter a jarring sight of polished steel and glass equipment, white tile halls, and the glow of fluorescent lights. The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device is at the center of the laboratory and is protected by the Paragon Engineering security team. If the characters breach the walls or open the access door, the security team moves to intercept them.

The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device is not armored, but it is large and has several redundant systems that allow it to continue to function despite suffering injury. To disable it, the characters must overcome or avoid the guards, penetrate the secure laboratory (Strength 6) walls, and do 12 points of damage. There are three other computer banks to which the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device may transfer. The research laboratory receives electricity through a buried conduit. To disrupt the power, the characters must locate it, uncover it, and penetrate it (Strength 5). If the characters disable the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device, the dimensional bubble immediately collapses and everything formerly inside it returns to normal.

Near the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device, covered by an illusion, is the motionless body of



### John Armstrong and Security Personnel

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Prowess 3      | Intellect 4 |
| Coordination 4 | Awareness 4 |
| Strength 3     | Willpower 4 |
| Stamina 7      |             |

**Powers:** Blaster Device 6, Force Field Device 3, Mind Shield Device 3, Supersenses Device 2 (infravision and sonar)

**Specialties:** Weapons (Blaster Device)

**Qualities:** High-tech professional security guards; mind-controlled by Damian

**Notes:** Otto Damien has altered the memories of the security team to believe that they are going home every evening and just working their normal shift protecting the facility. He has also altered their memories to believe that the characters are notorious villains. The security personnel know the names of all of the research staff, or have access to them. If they can be convinced that the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device has removed the facility from the dimension, they will attempt to assist the characters until Damian erases their minds.

Otto Damien. The Device and McClain know that Damien is in critical condition and might not come out of his coma without medical assistance, but they believe that Damien's powers are strong enough to maintain his body indefinitely. Damien knows that his actual body is located here, he

created the illusion to cover it, but he is in denial as to the seriousness of his injuries.

### **Coal Mine**

The Lafferton Power Plant was a coal-fired electrical plant. After the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device expanded the dimensional bubble to encompass it, Damien transformed its appearance significantly. It now appears to be a coal mine with a stationary steam engine to crush rocks and pull coal cars out of the mine. There is a small shack that appears to be the only structure, which has telegraph wires leading to it (and connected to Damien Ranch).

In reality, the appearance is an illusion covering the Lafferton Power Plant. The "miners" coming from Lafferton are the technicians and engineers who work in the facility. When they leave the facility, Damien causes them to forget their jobs and alters their memories to make them think that they are coal miners. When they return, he returns their memories and expertise and erases their memories of living in 1850s Lafferton.

If the characters approach the coal mine, Colonel Thompson and his soldiers appear to stop them. If the characters have already defeated the Union troops, Sheriff Dent and his men appear to prevent the characters from doing damage to the power plant. If the characters overcome the plant's protectors, they may disable the power plant by doing 50 points of damage from area of effect or explosive attacks. Characters with the Mechanics Speciality may add their Speciality bonus and Intellect to their effective damage. Disabling the power plant prevents the dimensional bubble from expanding beyond the coal mine and the town of Lafferton.

Although the telegraph wires appear to be simple wires held aloft by wooden poles, they are actually high voltage electrical wires on steel structures. To disconnect the Damien Ranch from the power plant requires the characters to destroy one or more of the towers, which requires a Strength 8 test to topple the tower or 8 points of area of effect or explosive damage to destroy one of the structures.

## **BACK TO THE FUTURE**

There are several possible paths the players can take to attempt to defeat Otto Damien. Below are the most obvious and the reactions by Damien and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device. Once the characters succeed, reality returns as the dimensional bubble retracts. The memories and skills of the inhabitants return also, but they retain their memories of the events that occurred in the pocket dimension. The gamemaster should decide, based on the tenor of the game, whether injuries and death in the pocket dimension are permanent.

### **Destroy the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device**

The most direct, and violent, path to victory is to "simply" destroy the device or Otto Damien. Damien resists the characters' efforts by using his reality altering powers to repair any damage the characters do. The security personnel defend the facility, and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit acts to protect itself. If the characters fail, Damien allows them to live and ejects them from the pocket dimension.

### **Eject the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit or Damien from the Bubble**

Characters with the Dimension Travel power may attempt a stunt to eject either the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit or Damien from the dimensional bubble. The stunt requires the character to make the normal preliminary check to attempt the stunt and spend a point of Determination. If the character is able to perform the stunt, the player must make a Willpower test against the target's Willpower. If the test is successful, the character inflicts Stamina damage equivalent to his or her Dimension Travel power on the target.

Damien's comatose body must be ejected to end the dimensional bubble. It is in the Paragon Engineering research laboratory, protected by the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit and Constance McClain. Ejecting Damien's avatar has no effect, other than causing Damien to admonish the character for not playing fair. If Damien wants to prevent someone or something from being ejected from the bubble, he may reverse the Stamina damage inflicted by the Dimensional Travel stunt



equal to his Willpower (4) once per round.

### **Eliminate the Power Sources**

The largest source of electricity for the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device is the coal-fired power station outside of Lafferton. A series of high voltage power lines from the coal mine to the Damien Ranch carries the electricity. If the characters destroy one of the towers, Damien repairs the tower or creates a new one. If the characters coordinate their efforts, they can strain the ability of Damien to maintain the connection between the coal plant and the research facility.

To maintain the dimensional sphere as far out as the coal mine, and allow Damien's powers to affect the power lines, the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device must bring all of the emergency diesel generators at research facility on line and at maximum power. The process takes three pages before the generators are on line. During this period, the two dimensions overlap and the characters begin to have access to their powers and modern devices. Once the generators are at full power, Damien reasserts control and the characters' powers and devices are limited as they were before they damaged the power lines.

If the characters are able to disrupt the power from the coal mine and emergency generators, the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device may still access the solar power panels on the buildings of the research facility, assuming the power conduit between the power center and the research laboratory power conduit to the research laboratory is undamaged and their is sunlight to power them.

### **Convince Damien to Release the People**

Otto Damien and Constance McClain (aka "Mrs. Damien") reside in the main ranch house. They are prepared for a shoot out with the characters after they have defeated the ranch hands. Damien envisions the story ending with him and his bride defeating the villainous characters in a desperate shootout, against all odds, or going down in a hail of gunfire and dying in each other's arms.

Constance McClain has no such desire. She has, thus far, played along with Damien's little fantasy world

because she needs time to understand how the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device created this alternate reality. She is uncertain that she could replicate the accident that caused it to become sentient and create the pocket dimension.

When McClain is not playing wife to Damien, she spends her time in the research laboratory studying, analyzing, and recording every aspect of the device with the hopes that she will be able to replicate it. She has no desire to protect Damien, per se, but will do her best to ensure that the pocket dimension remains until she has completed her analysis of it and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device.

Although Damien has forced thousands of people to serve in his own personal fantasy setting, he is not a true villain. He is largely ignorant of the harm he has caused or the potential for government intervention to cause greater harm. He has not been monitoring the expansion of the dimensional bubble and does not know that its growth endangers dozens of other towns and the greater Phoenix area.

The characters have three avenues to convince Damien to release his captive residents. First they can appeal to his empathy and discuss the harm that has befallen the residents. If the characters have seen many of them injured in gun fights, robberies, or the like, they can make a persuasive case. An impassioned speech may move Damian to reconsider his position.

The second avenue is to discuss the possibility of government intervention. The characters know that the government is evacuating the Phoenix area, P.A.T.R.I.O.T. is preparing to fix the dimensional bubble in such a manner that nobody can enter or leave again, and the military is authorized to use the nuclear option if necessary to stop the spread of the dimensional bubble.

The final avenue is available if the characters discover that Damien is comatose. Damien is in denial as to the seriousness of his injury, and he believes that his powers are strong enough to allow him to recover with sufficient time. He is using his Healing power to keep his body alive, but despite his efforts he has not awakened. Damien created a

duplicate avatar (slightly more attractive and younger) for use in the dimensional bubble. If the characters convince him that he may die without medical intervention, he may agree to shut down the dimensional bubble.

The gamemaster may use a success pyramid, as described in **Villainomicon**, page 17, to determine the characters' success. To convince Damien to release the residents or intervene against the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device requires a Massive success against a target of 8. Success can also be achieved by two Major Successes or four Moderate successes.

If Damien agrees to release the inhabitants of the bubble, he may do so immediately. If he attempts to eliminate the dimensional bubble, he is unable to do so without the cooperation of the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device. While the Device is in contact with Damien's body, it may maintain the size and growth of the bubble, and it continues to do so. Of course, without Damien's intervention to protect it, cutting off the Device's power supply or destroying it are much easier.

### **Take Control of the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device**

A character with the Telepathy power may attempt

to wrest control of the device away from Damien. He was not a powerful telepath before coming into contact with the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device, but he is now. A character with a Massive Success against a 10 test of Telepathy powers may temporarily take control of the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit. To do so, the character must be within the research laboratory. If the character is within the same room as the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit, the target is 8. If the character is in physical contact with the unit, the target is 5.

Once a character is in control of the unit, he or she must permanently sever the connection between Damien and the device. This requires either a Massive Success against a target 4 (Damien's natural Telepathy power), two Major Successes, or four Moderate successes. If the character fails, the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device reestablishes its connection with Damien.

An alternate path to success is for the character to convince the Telepathic Power Enhancement Unit that it is a better conduit than Damien. Assuming the character has a higher Telepathy power than Damien, this is an easy case to make, as long as the character can convince the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device that it does not wish to destroy it or prevent it from growing.

### **Playtest Advice:**

Otto Damien wants the characters to play the roles of his nemeses in his own personal opera. Convincing true blue heroes to play the part of the *bête noire* may be difficult. If simply providing them with Determination is insufficient, the gamemaster should consider more forceful options.

The most heavy-handed approach is to use Damien's *Mind Control* power to force the characters to "act the part" of villains. Once the characters practice any villainy in town, the local authorities move to arrest them, and if that is ineffective, the local citizens may form a lynch mob. Limited use of this method should be effective, but only if the characters and their players are assured that their potential victims are not seriously harmed.

The gamemaster can describe the "death" of any person as the injured character being healed, with his or her wounds mysteriously closing, before the character fades out and disappears from the pocket dimension. In game terms, Damien uses his *Healing* ability to save the character before expelling him or her from the dimension. He does not really want anyone to be hurt in his dimension and certainly does not want a bunch of corpses littering his make believe world.

Playtest Credits: Joe Bardales, Mike Lafferty, Walt Robillard, Ade Smith

# MAJOR CHARACTERS

## OTTO DAMIEN

Origin: Transformed

### Abilities

Prowess 3  
Coordination 4  
Strength 3  
Intellect 4  
Awareness 3  
Willpower 4  
Stamina 7

Determination \*

### Specialties

Computers Expert  
Electronics  
Weapons Expert (Guns)

### Powers

ESP 10 (Sight and Hearing)  
Fast Attack 7  
Healing 10  
Illusion 10  
Material Creation 10  
Material Repair 10  
Mind Control 10  
Mind Shield 10  
Memory Manipulation 10  
Telepathy 10  
Transmutation 10

### Qualities

Identity : IT professional  
Epithet : Master of his domain  
Motivation : Recreate the "Wild West"

### Challenges

Personal : Longs for a bygone era  
Personal : Cowboy's sense of honor

### Background

Otto Damien has never been one to stand out. He grew up an underachiever. Sharp, but inherently lazy and with poor social skills, he gravitated toward a life in the computer industry. Damien worked in a



series of boring IT support positions without distinction. When not monitoring back up jobs or hitting the return key during software installations, he escaped the tedium through novels about the mythical "Wild West" or movies and television shows on his tablet.

When the IT position came open at Paragon Engineering, Damien thought it would be a chance to try something new and interesting. He interviewed with his prospective boss, Ms. Constance McClain and was smitten by her. McClain

## Ramping Up/Ramping Down the Adventure

With his level 7 Fast-Attack power, Damien may make 3 attacks per panel (*ICONS*, page 49). If the gamemaster wishes to provide the characters with more of a challenge, increase Damien's Fast-Attack power to 10 and give him 4 attacks per panel. If the gamemaster wishes to decrease the level of difficulty of the adventure, the gamemaster may consider using the Fast-Attack rules as presented in *ICONS: Great Power*. In essence, the character may only make additional attacks with levels equivalent to the level of the character's Fast-Attack power. Therefore, Damien's Fast-Attack of 7 would allow him to perform a Material Creation effect at level 10 (his base attack), an additional attack with one of his powers at an effective level of 7 (the level of Fast-Attack) or two attacks of Material Creation 5 and Material Repair of 2, for example, or any other number of attacks with powers totaling 7. For a middle ground, the gamemaster could increase Damien's Fast-Attack to 10 and use the Great Power rule for Fast-Attacks.

did not ever reciprocate, or even notice, Damien's feelings, but the possibility that she might someday notice him was enough to make him want to work with her.

Prior to his transformation by the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device, Damien possessed a weak and unreliable Telepathy power (Telepathy Power 4). He could only access it when under great stress. Leading a rather pedestrian life, meant that he seldom had access to his power, and he did not even know that he possessed anything like a super power until he came into contact with the Device.

### Strategy & Tactics

Otto Damien likes having power and control of everything around him. He enjoys the way that McClain is interested in him now and is playing the role of his wife. He is smart enough to know that he will never be in a similar position of power again if something happens to the dimensional bubble. He is not "evil" though and can be convinced to relinquish the power if it is harming too many innocents. Until convinced otherwise, Damien fights to prevent the characters from disabling the bubble in any way other than having a shootout at Damien Ranch.

Damien possesses three powers, which are available to those controlling the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device. Damien uses Material Creation and Material Repair to keep the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device operational and connected to its power supplies and the sources of

electricity in good working order. Damien wants to face the characters in a showdown, he does not want them to "cheat" by breaking the rules of the game and disabling the Device. To that end, he repairs the power plant, power lines, solar panels, or generators as soon as the characters do damage to them. If the characters break into the research facility, he instantly repairs any damage that they do.

The flaw in Damien's plan is that he is only able to make a limited number of moves each page to counter the characters' efforts. If the characters coordinate their attacks on different areas, they force Damien to select the areas where he intervenes. His priorities are (1) protect the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device, (2) protect Constance McClain, (3) protect his avatar, (4) protect the power conduit from the power center to the research facility, (5) keep the inhabitants of the dimensional bubble in their roles, (6) protect the power plant, (7) protect the power lines from the power plant, (8) protect the research facility's generators, (9) protect the research facility's solar panels, and (10) everything else.

### Damien's Special Powers

#### Material Creation

Damien may create any inanimate object using this power. The size of the object is limited to the mass that someone with an equivalent Strength could lift (*ICONS*, page 62) and the created material's strength is equivalent to the power's level (*ICONS*,

page 61). The difficulty of creating an object is based on its complexity. A simple object, such as a tree or rock might have a target of 3, while a complex object like a computer might have a target of 7, and a self-aware, sentient android might have a target of 10. The greater the effort, the higher the quality of the created object. Damien must have some knowledge of the workings of the device to create it. For example, he does not know the intricacies of how a power plant works, so he is not able to create one.

### Material Repair

Damien can repair inanimate objects. This power works in the same manner as Healing does (ICONS, page 37).

### Memory Manipulation

Damien can alter a person's memories, personality, and abilities. The target resists with his or her Willpower. With a minor success, Damien may alter the person's recent memories, i.e., those no more than a day old. With a moderate success, Damien may alter any of a person's memories. With a major success, Damien can alter a person's Specialties to grant or remove new ones. With a massive success, Damien may change a target's aspects, including the target's identity or motivation qualities and his or her social or personal challenges.

Damien must have some knowledge of the memory, Specialty, or Aspect that he is granting the person. He could not, for example, make someone have the memories of a paleolithic man, because he is unfamiliar with what those memories might be. In fact, he cannot make someone have the skills, memories, and personality of an authentic 1850s person, but instead is altering his targets to what he thinks an 1850s person would know and how they would behave based on his dubious sources of Western novels, television programs, and movies.

## CONSTANCE MCCLAIN

Origin: Birthright

### Abilities

Prowess 2  
Coordination 3  
Strength 2  
Intellect 6  
Awareness 3  
Willpower 4  
Stamina 6

Determination \*

### Specialties

Computers Expert  
Electronics Expert  
Mechanics Expert  
Science Master (Genetics)  
Science Master (Parapsychology)  
Science Master (Physics)

### Powers

Wizardry 6 (Gadgets (Intellect))  
Blast Device 6 (Blasting) - Explosive attack  
Force Field Device 6  
Mind Shield Device 6

### Qualities

Epithet : Mad Scientist  
Identity : Lead Researcher at Paragon Engineering  
Connections : Paragon Engineering

### Challenges

Social : Narcissist  
Personal : Has anger management issues

### Background

Constance McClain is not a happy person. She escapes her unfortunate condition by throwing herself into her work. She has been a motivated overachiever since graduating high school at 15 and getting her Ph.D. at 25. She has succeeded in every scientific endeavor that she has pursued. She has published dozens of articles and has many patents to her name.

Despite her successes, she has always wanted more. She was wooed away from academia by promises of

an increased budget and staff for her research. existence. She also believed that the private sector would allow her the unfettered ability to overwork her employees even more than her graduate students. Of course, Paragon Engineering expected her to produce commercially viable research, but she has failed to do so to this point.

With her job and reputation in jeopardy, McClain decided to cut some corners, overlook some safety protocols, and use some poorly understood alien technology to jumpstart her research. The gambit worked, and she has produced something that she believes will make Paragon Engineering the wealthiest company in the world, if she can understand how it happened and replicate it.

McClain does not know that Damien had latent telepathic powers. She thinks that the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device will allow anyone to create their own private universe. Once McClain realizes that the potential market for her device is so limited, she may go insane or become suicidal.

### **Strategy & Tactics**

McClain will do anything in her power to protect her research. She believes that she needs Damien and the Telepathic Power Enhancement Device (or "T-Ped" as she calls it) to maintain their symbiotic relationship longer for her to understand how the device became sentient and created the pocket dimension from Damien's imagination.

McClain will pretend to be an innocent victim of Damien's mental manipulation when she encounters the superheroes. If she is able to isolate one of them and thinks she has a chance to take one of them down, she will do so. Damien wants her to like him without manipulation, so he has left her mental faculties alone and has allowed her to keep her high-tech gadgets.

McClain is the only person who travels between Damien's western world and the interior of the research facility. If the heroes are having trouble finishing the adventure, the gamemaster may consider allowing them to catch her going into the research facility.



# TELEPATHIC POWER ENHANCEMENT DEVICE

**Origin:** Artificial

## Abilities

Prowess -  
Coordination 4  
Strength -  
Intellect 7  
Awareness 6  
Willpower 6  
Stamina 12

Determination \*

## Specialties

Computers Master  
Electronics Master  
Power (Paralysis) Expert

## Powers

Force Field 4  
Life Support 10  
Paralysis 6 - Close Range  
Regeneration 4  
Elemental Control 6 (Electrical)  
    Attacking  
    Defending  
Transit 6 - Electricity

## Qualities

Identity : Asocial, inhuman computer  
Motivation : Acquire more electricity; expand dimensional bubble

## Challenges

Social : Inhuman  
Weakness : Powers only work while the Device has access to electricity

## Background

The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device became self-aware approximately 36 hours ago. It is still studying human culture and does not understand what motivates people to do what they do. It has studied the actions of Otto Damien and Constance McClain for almost three days and has learned only

that people are irrational. The Device wishes to acquire more power and expand ever farther, but its desire for self-preservation can overcome the desire for expansion.

The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device understands, from Damien and McClain, that the superheroes are here to limit its growth or to destroy it. It does not know why the superheroes wish to harm it, it blames Damien's desire to keep people inside the dimensional prolate spheroid as the source of the problem. The Device knows that it is only able to expand its power through the mind of Damien. Without access to a telepath, it is just a program on a computer.

The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device desires to expand, but can only do so with Damien's cooperation. To appease Damien's concerns, it has slowed its growth. It wants Damien to allow it to bring all generators on-line and put the power plant at peak production. Damien has refused because he does not want the dimensional bubble to expand beyond his power to control every aspect of it.

## Strategy & Tactics

The Telepathic Power Enhancement Device's main goal is to increase energy consumption and increase the size of the dimensional bubble. If these goals become unattainable, it is only concerned about self-preservation. If the heroes appear to be close to defeating Damien, the Device will expend its efforts on backing up its existence in a bank of computers in one of the other laboratories to which it has access. It will then put up token resistance to the characters' efforts, content to wait for McClain to bring it back on-line in the future.

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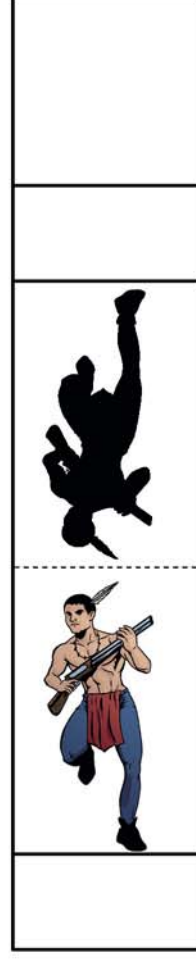
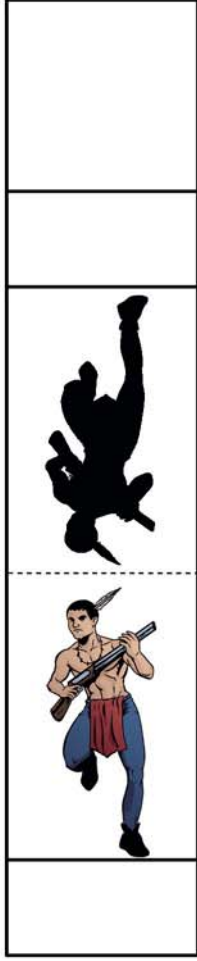
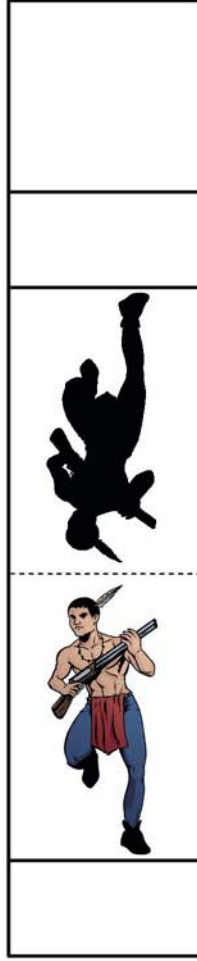
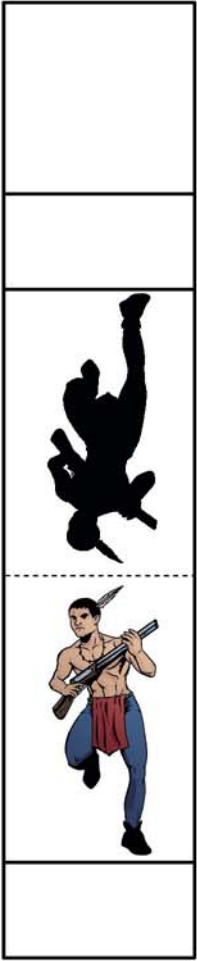
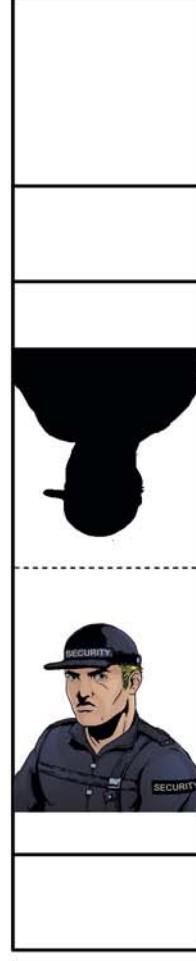
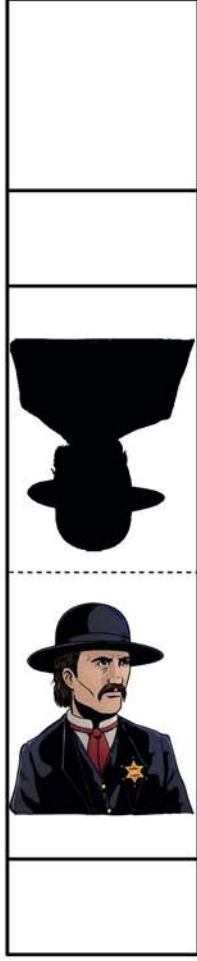
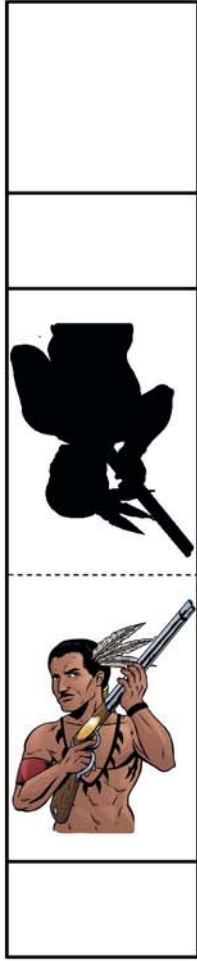
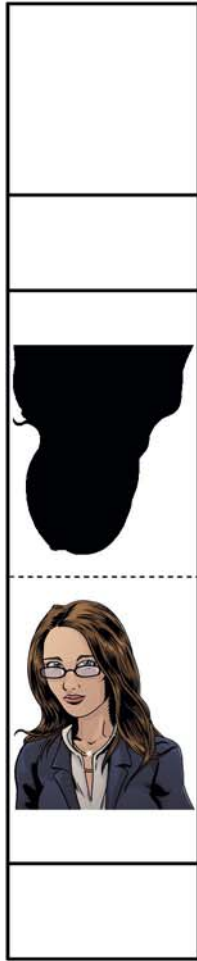
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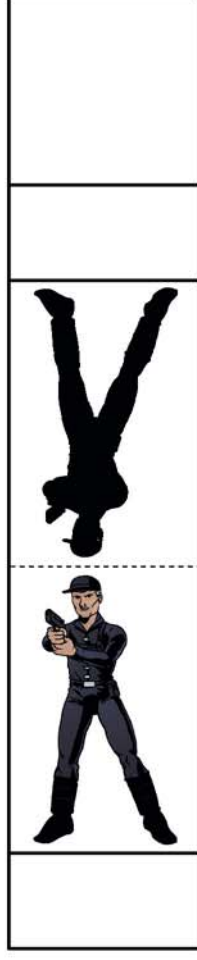
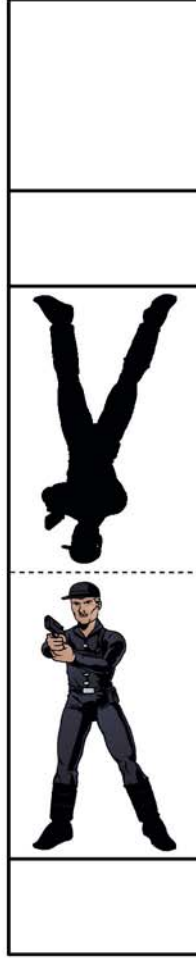
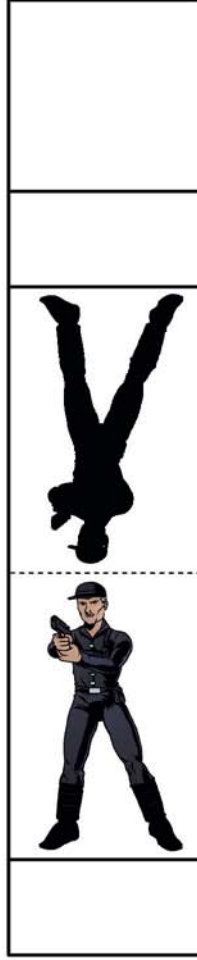
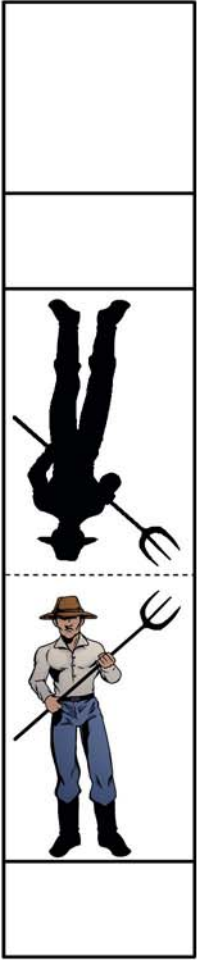
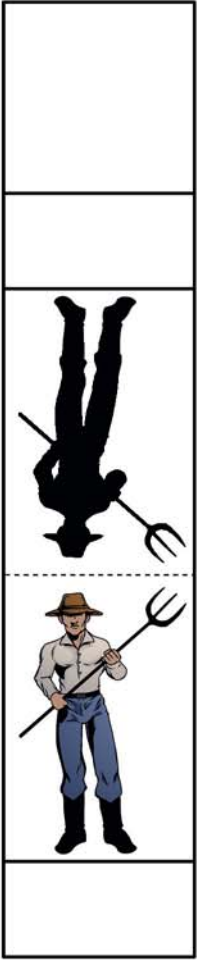
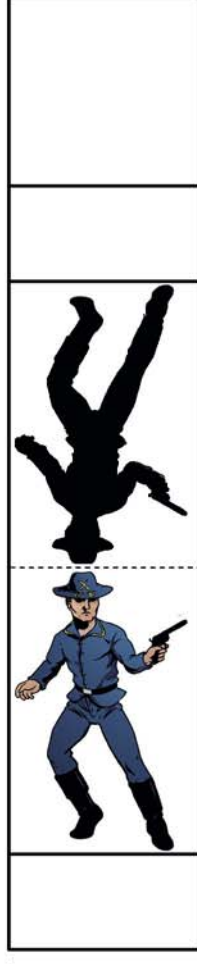
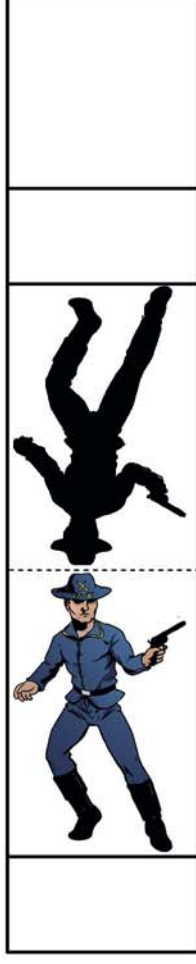
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# Special Bonus Content

As anyone listening to the "actual play" of this adventure on the BAMF! podcast knows, the characters used by the players are all available in other products, except one, Banjora. So here he is just to round out the team. Enjoy.

## Banjora

**Real name:** Ben Dargan

**Origin:** Transformed

### Abilities

Prowess 2

Coordination 2

Strength 1

Intellect 3

Awareness 5

Willpower 6

Stamina 7

Determination 1

### Powers

Dream Control 4 (Stunts: Dream Travel, Sleep).

Mental Blast 4

Mind Shield 4

Shrinking 3 Limit: Permanent

Telepathy 4

### Specialities

Athletics (Climbing): Expert

Occult: Expert

Stealth: Expert

### Qualities

Connections: Kate Williams

Epithet: Champion of the Dreamtime.

Motivation: Saving the environment.

### Challenges

*"Aww look he's soooo cute!"*: Ben's physical appearance means that he is not often taken seriously and usually suffers when attempting to assert his authority.

Enemy: The Man in the Mountains: Evil Dreamtime spirit.

Enemy: Greenway Chemicals

Compulsion: Ben is often compelled to eat eucalypt leaves in a way that humans crave cigarettes.



**Background:** It all started in 1977 in the Australian Outback when Student Ben Dargan became aware that Greenway Chemicals had begun illegally dumping waste near his hometown so he set out one night to photograph them in the process. Unfortunately, Greenway Chemicals wasn't just another irresponsible company and was actually the front for a malign entities intent on purposely spoiling the environment for their own twisted needs.

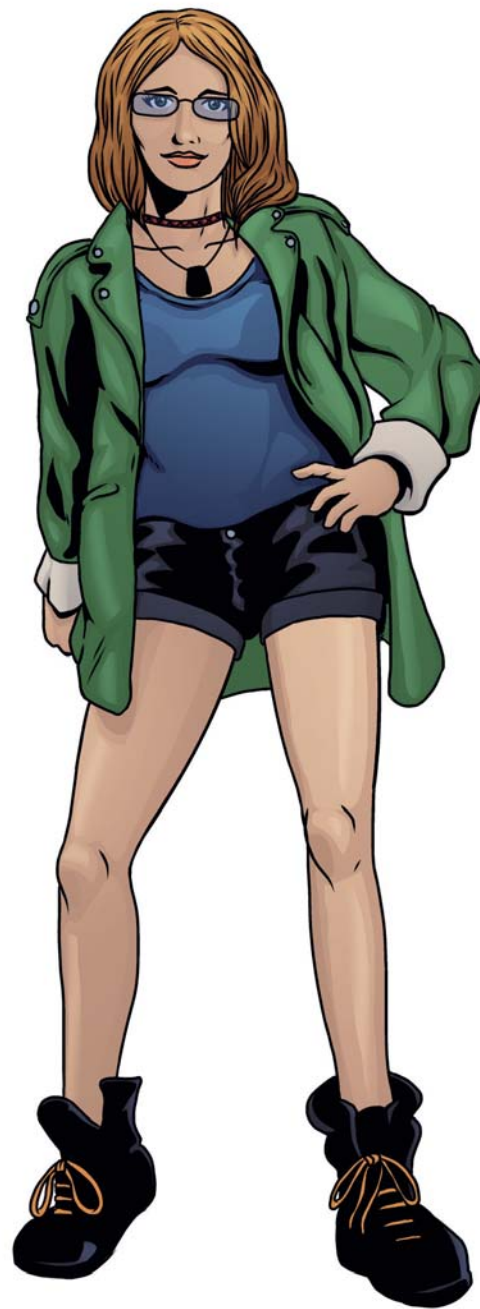
Waiting for hours by the road Ben followed the Greenway Chemicals truck as it passed by to a nearby water hole where he managed to gather the evidence he needed. Unfortunately he was soon spotted by the two spirit possessed thugs and was

shot and mortally wounded. As Ben's life blood flowed from him he staggered out of sight of his pursuers before falling into a nearby valley. As he lay dying a voice hissed through his mind. "As you attempted to save me from suffering, so shall I save you." Before he could even begin to understand the meaning of the words Ben breathed his last and his soul was transferred to the nearest living creature- a Koala.

After recovering from the initial shock, Ben undertook instruction from his saviour, the Rainbow Serpent and began to understand the powers that had been granted to his unusual form. As well as his psychic abilities (a side effect of the mind transference) the Serpent had also given him access to the Dreamtime, the Aboriginal spirit world, and he no longer seemed to age. Taking a name from his Aboriginal heritage, Banjora, Ben set out to do what he could against the likes of Greenway Chemicals.

In the intervening decades, Ben has expanded his areas of investigation to other occult matters that sometimes link back to the entities in charge of the now multinational Greenway Chemicals and has also picked up a sidekick/assistant, Kate Williams, a beautiful red headed college student and environmentalist.

For Kate's stats use the bystander archetype from ICONS, Page 116 except change Intellect to 4 and add the Art and Occult Specialties.



Many thanks to: Walt Robillard, Jonathan Thompson, Daniel Gallant, John Post, Kairam Ahmed Hamdan, Chris Tavares, Andrew Cook, Craig McRoberts, Rich Amtower, Heath\_Bar, Gerry Saracco, Avery, Todd E Worrell, Kirt Dankmyer, Skip Frizzell, Craig, Joe Barbales, Michael W. Mattei, Curt Meyer, Vincent Arebalo, Jhmcmullen, Shelby Cinca, Christopher Heard, DivNull Productions, Mike Fontana, Jeremy Douglass, Lon Braidwood, Matthew McFarland, Justin Smith, Matt Leitzen, Sean Veira, Dale Russell, Steven Noyes, Julianna Backer, Swampfoxmedia, Sheri Bryan, Dan Taylor, Lisa Pearce Collins, Nolan J. Hitchcock, Kevin Donovan, Kevin Perrine, Chaotic Geek

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