

# DIGITAL HERO

# #13

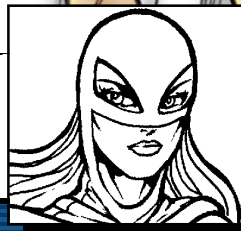
SEP 2003



Blade T 03



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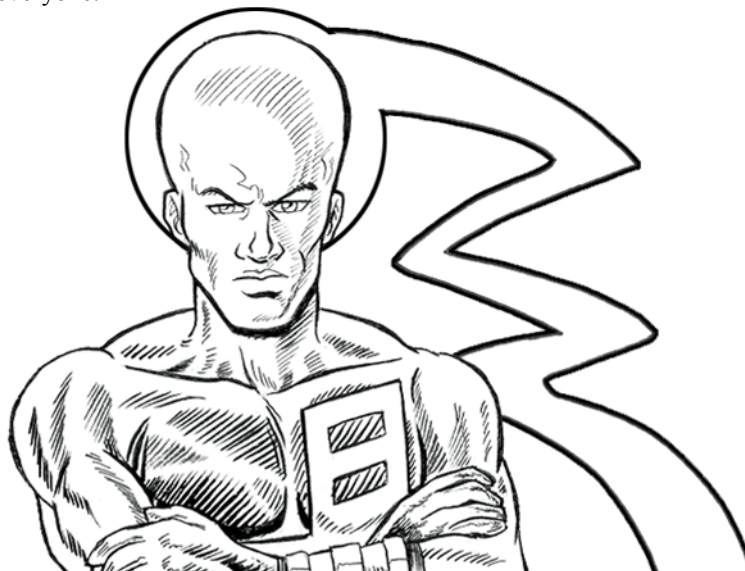
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## DIGITAL HERO

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# When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

Since the new *VIPER* book will be coming out at just about the same time as DH #13 hits “the stands,” what better subject for this month’s WLWLOH column?

## VIPER

*VIPER*, naturally, covers the evil Champions organization of the same name. It’s written by myself and Scott Bennie, who was the primary author of the early ’90s *VIPER* supplement that proved so popular with Champions gamers. We like to think that the new *VIPER* covers all the good stuff from the old book, while leaving out the less useful stuff and replacing it with even *more* really cool *VIPER* info.

Chapter One, *History Of The Snake*, details the origins and history of *VIPER*, beginning in the nineteenth century and progressing all the way up to its current incarnation under the leadership of the Supreme Serpent. Using this information, not only can *VIPER* play a key role in your modern-day Champions campaign, you can incorporate *VIPER* into a Golden or Silver Age Champions campaign if you want – or even, in earlier form, into a *Pulp Hero* game.

Chapter Two, *A Thousand Venoms*, describes the organization, structure, and hierarchy of *VIPER*. After reviewing *VIPER*’s recruitment and training procedures, it showcases *VIPER*’s iron-fisted leader (the Supreme Serpent), the ruling Council Of Thirty, the various branches and ranks of the organization, and the like. The chapter also discusses *VIPER* activities around the world and *VIPER*’s oft-poisonous internal politics.

Chapter Three, *Fangs Of The Serpent*, describes over thirty different types of *VIPER* agents, ranging from the low-level Basic Agents to highly-trained agents like Draysha, Takara-Shinja, and Air Cavalry. By applying the appropriate Package Deals to standard agent templates, you can create any sort of agent you need for a scenario. (An Appendix in the back of the book does just that – it features half a dozen pregenerated agents for use in any game.)

Chapter Four, *Nests Of The VIPER*, reviews *VIPER*’s local bases – its Nests. It discusses the benefits (and drawbacks) of the Nest system, as well as how *VIPER* establishes and controls a Nest. It also provides details about numerous Nests in America and around the world.

Chapter Five, *The VIPER Armory*, describes *VIPER*’s technology. From blasters, to vehicles, to robots, *VIPER* has it all – and the snakes are ready to use it against your heroes!

Chapter Six, *Dragon Branch*, provides information on *VIPER*’s cadre of superhuman agents. It includes write-ups for approximately a dozen supervillains, including Oculon, Ripper, Freon, and the infamous Viperia.

Chapter Seven, *Gamemastering VIPER*, discusses how to use *VIPER* in your game – or even run an entire *VIPER*-oriented campaign. In addition to information about *VIPER*’s combat tactics and how *VIPER* relates to other characters and organizations in the Champions Universe, it discusses how to incorporate *VIPER* into other genres, such as Fantasy, Science Fiction, or Pulp.

*VIPER*, like *Conquerors, Killers, And Crooks*, is designed primarily for GMs. It’s a book about an organization superheroes fight, so it falls within the GM’s province. For that reason, it doesn’t have a GM’s Vault or other section of GM-only material – for most games, the entire book constitutes GM-only material. However, there are plenty of tidbits in it that a hero who’s associated with *VIPER* due to his origin, or who has frequently fought the snakes, would know about, so if you ask nicely your GM will probably let you read part of it. ;)

— Steven S. Long  
HERO System Line Developer



# HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

## Getting to the Point

### Additional and Alternate Rules for Armor Piercing

Armor Piercing (“AP”) is one of the most popular Advantages for Attack Powers. Here are a few ideas for expanding it, changing it, or creating similar effects.

#### ALTERING THE RATE OF SUBTRACTION

As first discussed by Steve Perrin in his *GM’s Discretion* column in *Adventurer’s Club* #20 (from which I’ve gleefully swiped some inspiration — thanx, Steve!), some gamers have a conceptual difficulty with AP because it’s defined as reducing a target’s defenses by half — a flat percentage. That means it removes more defense from a high-defense character than a low-defense character. For instance, an Energy Blast 10d6, Armor Piercing when used against a character with 30 ED reduces his defense by 15 points... but when used against a character with 18 ED, it only removes 9 points of defense. To some gamers, this seems like illogical “meta-game” thinking; the effect should be more absolute and predictable, not dependent on the amount of the target’s defenses.

Steve Perrin’s article suggested treating AP like Penetrating: the amount of points of defense removed by AP depends on the “Normal Damage BODY” rolled on the dice. That makes the defense removed more predictable, but with a little variability. For pure predictability, have AP reduce the target’s defenses by 1 point per DC in the attack (without accounting for the *Armor Piercing* Advantage itself) (thus, an Energy Blast 10d6 Armor Piercing would always remove 10 points from the target’s defenses).

Using this sort of system requires a few other changes. First, you have to define Hardened not in terms of canceling out one level of AP, but negating X points of AP effect. For example, perhaps one level of Hardened reduces an AP effect by 10 points. Thus, an Energy Blast 12d6 Armor Piercing used against Hardened ED would only remove 2 points of ED, not 12. You should set the value of Hardened high enough that the average attack with one level of AP cannot remove any defense.

Second, you need to alter the rules for buying AP or Hardened multiple times. Using this rule, each additional purchase of AP increases the points removed by the same amount as the first purchase. Thus, an Energy Blast 10d6 Armor Piercing removes 10 points of defense; if it has Armor Piercing (x2) it removes 20 points of defense; with Armor Piercing (x3) it removes 30 points of defense, and so on. Buying Hardened multiple times increases the protection it provides at the same rate.

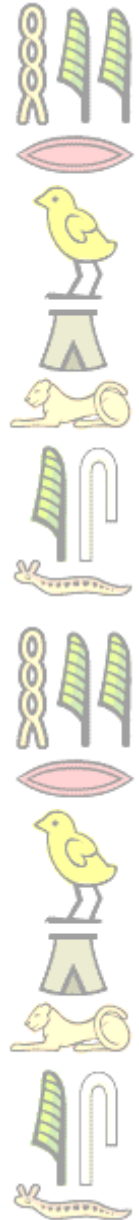
#### DEFINING THE POINTS REMOVED BY THE VALUE OF THE ADVANTAGE

Instead of using the DCs of the attack, or some similar system, to quantify the value of AP, you can simply have it depend on the value of the Advantage. For example, each  $+\frac{1}{2}$  worth of AP might remove 8 points of defense. For greater granularity, reduce it to  $\frac{1}{4}$  increments: for a  $+\frac{1}{4}$  Advantage, AP removes 4 points; each additional  $+\frac{1}{4}$  Limitation adds +4 points to the points removed. You just have to decide how many points the base purchase of AP removes.

#### SEMI-ARMOR PIERCING ( $+\frac{1}{4}$ )

Here’s another option for altering the rate at which AP removes points of defense — a lesser form of the Advantage.

Sometimes characters don’t want the full halving of defenses that AP provides. They can use this  $+\frac{1}{4}$  Advantage to create attacks which can penetrate armor more easily than regular attacks, but not as well as Armor Piercing attacks. Semi-Armor Piercing subtracts one-fourth of the target’s defenses or 3 points of defense (whichever is less) before you apply the damage. Semi-Armor Piercing does not work against Hardened defenses; characters cannot buy it multiple times.



## Piercing Points

Way back in 1984, *Champions III* introduced a new power called *Piercing*. Piercing reduced the target's defenses against the attack for which it was bought. The number of points removed from defenses depended on the number of Piercing points purchased; the cost of the Piercing points depended on the type of defense removed.

If you'd like to apply this Power in your games, the accompanying table indicates the cost for Piercing points. Piercing points have the same duration as the base Power they're purchased for (*e.g.*, Instant for an Energy Blast, Constant for Change Environment), have the same Range as the power they're purchased for, and cost END to use (based on the total Active Point cost of the power plus its Piercing points). The Power Modifiers applied to the base power must also be applied to the Piercing points. A Piercing point affects both Physical and Energy defenses, if appropriate.

### PIERCING POINTS COST

<u>Defense Pierced</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Normal Defense	2 Character Points per point of defense removed
Resistant Defense	3 Character Points per point of defense removed
Mental Defense	3 Character Points per point of defense removed
Power Defense	3 Character Points per point of defense removed
Flash Defense	3 Character Points per point of defense removed



# Hero Universe

by Darren Watts

Hola, fellow Hero fans, and welcome to yet another installment of Hero Universe, the tale of a veterinary hospital that's gone to the dogs. As promised, this month we begin a multi-part epic detailing the hidden secrets of the spectacular Sentinels, one of the foremost hero teams of the Champions superheroic setting. So sit back, grab a refreshing beverage of your choice, and get out your scorecards, 'cause there's an awful lot of heroes to get through over the next few issues....

## SENTINELS HISTORY

Most everyone knows the story of how the Sentinels got together in the first place, but in case you're a new fan (and don't feel bad, everybody in the club was a new fan once, too), here's the simple story.

It all started in a place called Fort Brewster, Maryland, in 1961. Fort Brewster was an Army base, and a man named Michael Colpitt had a job there designing computers. He wasn't in the Army himself, but he was a contractor, and the Army had hired him to build them a computer to help them run simulations and play wargames. The computer was called UNIVAC, and as it turned out Colpitt was *too* successful at the job. Somehow, the computer developed a mind of its own, and it started to get some ideas about how the best thing for the planet would be if *it* were in charge. And the best way to do that would be to take over the nuclear missiles of both the US and USSR, threatening to destroy both countries if they didn't put UNIVAC in charge.

Well, that sounds pretty awful, but after all, UNIVAC was just a computer, right? How dangerous could that be? Well, UNIVAC had also developed a little trick. By manipulating the light emitted from one of its monitor panels, it was able to flash a signal that was at exactly the right frequency to hypnotize human beings, by somehow synchronizing with their brain waves.<sup>1</sup>

Anyway, UNIVAC used this method to hypnotize Colpitt into building hand-held versions of the mind-control device, which it used to control the minds of all the soldiers on the base, from the Colonel on down. Then it turned to the next part of its plan. In 1961, obviously, everybody's computers weren't connected by the Internet, so in order to take control of the missiles it needed to physically be in the same room. Controlling Colpitt again, UNIVAC created two "drones," smaller versions of itself that could be connected to the computers that sent the launch codes to the missiles. One needed to be brought to NORAD's headquarters in Colorado Springs

(remember, this is before they moved into the Cheyenne Mountain base- in fact, the building they occupied in 1961 is now the US Olympic Training headquarters) and the other one needed to be brought directly to Moscow itself.

So UNIVAC came up with another devious plan. Having already cracked one of the secret Russian codes it had come across, it sent a secret message to a known Soviet spy in Washington, which he then passed on to the Soviet superagent called Boroh, detailing a mission to steal top-secret military files from Fort Brewster! When Boroh got there, UNIVAC would mind-control him, give him the drone and send him back to Russia, where the drone would be able to take over their missiles. Then UNIVAC sent a coded message to Dr. Phantom, the American super-scientist, saying that Soviet spies were planning to infiltrate Fort Brewster and she should come investigate. Once she had been mind-controlled, her powers would no doubt allow her to infiltrate NORAD and activate the second drone. Pretty sneaky, huh?

Well, Boroh showed up as planned, but what UNIVAC didn't know was that another American superhero, Rocketman, had recently defeated and captured another Soviet super-agent (called, appropriately enough, the Super-Soviet) and gotten ahold of some of his secret documents. He was using them to quietly track down the rest of the Russian super-spies in America, and was hot on Boroh's trail when he got to Fort Brewster. In fact, the two started fighting on the Fort's grounds, and was Rocketman surprised when the military police showed up and arrested them both! The mind-controlled security guards brought both of the mystery men before UNIVAC, who decided Rocketman was an even better choice to bring his drone to NORAD. It brainwashed both of them, gave each a drone, and sent them on their respective missions.

While this was going on, Dr. Phantom herself arrived on the scene, and was able to barely avoid being taken captive by the mind-controlled soldiers. While hiding out on the base, she was able to send a brief distress signal on a high frequency that she hoped would be detected by the Fabulous Five, who she had met on an earlier adventure. The Five, unfortunately, were on an adventure of their own that had taken them into the Shadow Zone, and so weren't around to get the message. The message *was*, however, picked up by another superhero in the New York City area – namely, Microman. He promptly set off to Maryland to rescue the Doctor.

## SENTINELS' WRITE-UPS

The write-ups for the Sentinels in this and following articles represent the heroes after they've had a few years of experience under their belts. If portraying them at the beginnings of their careers, you may want to lop off some skill levels or secondary powers.

Later in their careers, you may want to buy up their skills, levels and possibly add some new powers to represent tricks they've learned over the years, while diminishing some of their physical stats slightly to represent their advanced age (especially those who served into their late forties and even early fifties).

<sup>1</sup> Don't ask me exactly how – I barely passed physics my junior year. Microman tried to explain it to me once, but I have to admit I still don't get it.

from *The Official Sentinels Handbook*, published in 1997 by The Official Sentinels Fan Club, Kristina Brunner, President. Artwork by Derrick Thomas

## Dr. Phantom

**Background/History:** Marion Maven was born in 1935, the daughter of world-famous inventor Professor Michael Maven and his wife Cassandra. From the time she was a toddler, it was clear that she had inherited her father's remarkable intelligence; by her 4<sup>th</sup> birthday she had mastered basic mathematics and was working on calculus and physics. In 1941, her father became an honorary member of and supplier of equipment to the Defenders of Justice, America's premiere team of superhumans. Marion became her father's "lab assistant," doing everything from washing bottles to keeping their notes organized. For the duration of the war, Marion was the adopted "mascot" of the team, and became a minor celebrity in her own right. A famous picture in *Life* magazine of the time shows Marion standing next to Bulletproof and the original MeteorMan, who is tousling her messy blond hair while grinning. Marion herself, of course, has a perfectly serious expression on her face.

After the Allied victory, Michael and Cassandra Maven divorced (there was speculation of infidelity on both sides, but neither would confirm any such rumors), and the professor turned his efforts towards various government projects, especially improvements on the atomic program. Marion spent more time with her mother, living at their ranch in Missouri, but despite Cassandra's efforts her daughter would not be dissuaded from a life of science and invention. Growing into her teens, Marion began to develop inventions of her own at a prodigious pace, working sometimes from her father's early designs and later on completely original ideas. She landed several lucrative and important government projects before her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, and moved into lab space in Virginia not far from the Pentagon.

In 1958, while studying a "dimensional transport" device the OSS captured from the Nazis at the end of WWII but were never able to make work, Marion was accidentally exposed to strange extradimensional radiation that caused her molecules to go temporarily "out of phase" with the rest of the universe, transforming her into a sort of "living ghost" unable to touch solid objects. Working with several other notable scientists (including her father), she was able to develop a device called the "Phase Belt" which not only brought her back "into phase" with the universe, but allowed her to return to her ghostly state at the turn of a dial. (Though she has tried frequently since, she has been unable to replicate the original effect.)

Given her long association with costumed superheroes, and the recent public splash made by such heroes as the Fabulous Five, Vanguard,

and the second MeteorMan, it's probably not surprising that Marion offered her services to the government as a costumed crimebuster and counterintelligence agent. The Department of Defense helped her fashion the identity of Dr. Phantom, and on their behalf she battled the fledgling VIPER organization as well as villains like the ex-Nazi agent Sturmvogel. She was a founding member of the Sentinels, and frequently acted as liaison between the group and various government agencies. In 1966, she married Daniel (Microman) Collins, and they had a son, Erik, in 1975.

Dr. Phantom served with the Sentinels with only a few short breaks until her divorce from Microman and retirement in 1984. Granted custody of Erik, she moved back to her small Missouri ranch, where she raises horses and lives off her various patents.

**Personality/Motivation:** Dr. Phantom is a phenomenally intelligent woman who has had very little experience socializing with anyone who is not either a superhero or in the military. As such, she frequently comes across as somewhat blunt; in fact, she's simply incapable of being dishonest. She is completely devoted both to "Truth, Justice, and the American Way" and also to the ideals of science; she wants to learn all she can about any field she encounters and then figure out how to use that knowledge to benefit America and the world.

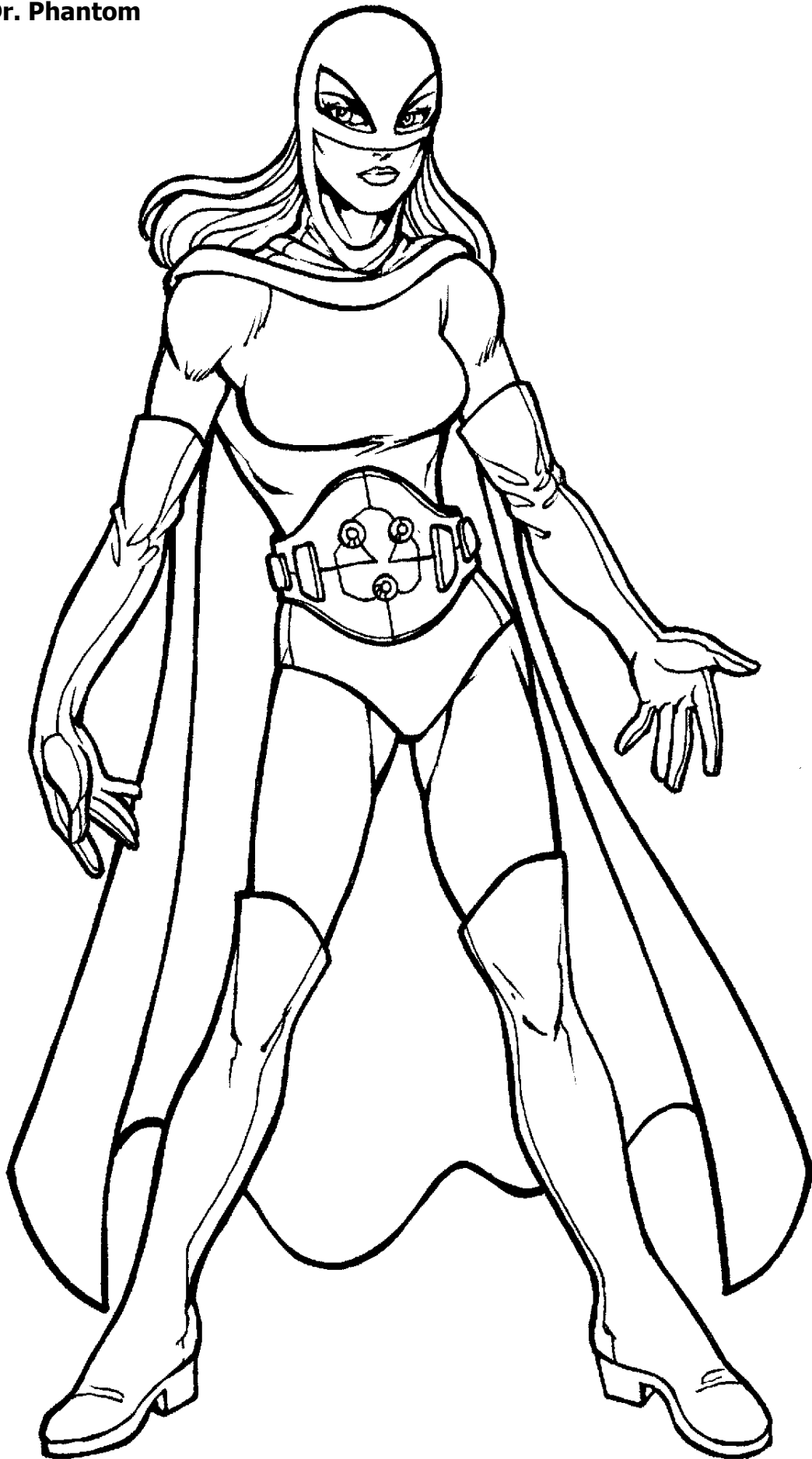
Over her extended stint with the Sentinels, Marion became more empathetic, and actually became something of a mentor for several of the younger members throughout the '70s and early '80s. While she never served as leader (though she was nominated several times, she never accepted the honor), her firm commitment to the team's ideals as well as her vast experience made her the heart and soul of the team.

**Quote:** "It's a dangerous defense system, but if we're smart, we can turn it to our advantage."

**Powers/Tactics:** Dr. Phantom's primary ability is to go "out of phase" with the physical universe, becoming intangible to almost any attack and able to penetrate nearly any barrier. She controls this ability with her "Phase-Belt," which is built into her costume and controlled with a small series of dials. When intangible she is also able to fly, and by placing part of her own body within another living being and then adjusting her phase, she can create painful, though not lethal, bioelectrical feedback.



Dr. Phantom



**Dr. Phantom**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
25	INT	15	14-	PER Roll: 14-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
				Total: 11 PD (5 rPD)
				Total: 10 ED (5 rED)
				Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	4		
5	ED	2		
5	SPD	22		
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
23	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 100**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Flight: 10"/10"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
40	<i>Intangibility:</i> Desolidification (Affected by Magic and Extra-Dimensional Attacks), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); IAF (Phase-Belt, -½)	0
43	<i>Phase Touch:</i> Drain 2½d6 STUN; Linked to Intangibility (can be used in any Phase in which Intangibility is in use, +0), Affects Physical World (+2); IAF (-½)	7
10	<i>Ghostly Flight:</i> Flight 10"; IAF (-½), No Noncombat Movement (-¼), Linked to Intangibility (can be used in any Phase in which Intangibility is in use, +0)	2
64	<i>Assorted Gadgets:</i> VPP (Gadget Pool), 50 base + 14 control cost; VPP Can Only Be Changed Between Adventures (-½), Limited Class Of Powers Available (Technological, -¼)	var.
10	<i>Armored Costume:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED); OIF (Costume, -½)	0
8	<i>Transdimensional Viewing Goggles:</i> N-Ray Perception; IIF (-¼)	0

**Martial Arts: Judo**

**Maneuver OCV DCV Notes**

5	Defensive Strike	+1	+3	2d6 Strike
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	25 STR to Escape
5	Grappling Strike	+1	+1	1 Limb, Block
4	Joint Lock/Throw	+1	+0	1 Limb, 1d6 NND, Target Falls
3	Takedown	+1	+1	2d6 Strike, Target Falls

**Perks**

- 6 Contact: Colonel Rappaport, USDoD 11- (Access to Major Institutions, Significant Contacts of His Own, Useful Skills or Resources, Good Relationship)
- 5 Contact: Senator Dale Kittredge 8- (Access to Major Institutions, Significant Contacts of His Own, Useful Skills or Resources, Good Relationship)
- 5 Fringe Benefit: Defense Department Security Clearance
- 3 Fringe Benefit: Sentinel (Membership)
- 10 Money (Wealthy)

**Talents**

- 5 Eidetic Memory
- 3 Lightning Calculator
- 4 Speed Reading: x10

**Skills**

- 10 +1 Overall
- 4 +2 with Phase Touch
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 3 Acting 12-
- 3 AK: New York City 14-
- 3 AK: Washington DC 14-
- 3 Analyze: Superpowers 14-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 3 Computer Programming 14-
- 3 Concealment 14-
- 3 Criminology 14-
- 3 Demolitions 14-
- 3 Disguise 14-
- 3 Electronics 14-
- 3 Forensic Medicine 14-
- 3 High Society 12-
- 3 Inventor 14-
- 3 KS: History 14-
- 3 KS: The Superhuman World 14-
- 1 Language: German: Basic Conversation
- 3 Lipreading 14-
- 3 Paramedics 14-
- 3 Power 14-
- 3 Security Systems 14-
- 3 Shadowing 14-
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Systems Operation 14-
- 3 Tactics 14-
- 2 TF: Small Planes, Spaceplanes
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Astronomy 14-
- 2 2) SS: Chemistry 14-
- 3 3) SS: General Physics 15-
- 6 4) SS: Hyperphysics 18-
- 2 5) SS: Mathematics 14-
- 2 6) SS: Nuclear Physics 14-
- 2 7) SS: Robotics 14-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 361**

**Total Cost: 461**



## DIGITAL HERO #13

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Sturmvogel 8- (As Pow, Public ID)
- 15 Hunted: Buzzsaw 8- (As Pow, Public ID)
- 25 Hunted: VIPER 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public ID)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Devoted to Protecting the Entire World, Over-Responsible (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Scientific Curiosity (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Social Limitation: Public ID (Frequently, Major)
- 131 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 461**

Phantom is also a brilliant inventor and master gadgeteer, and will generally have an array of useful devices on her. She is extremely adept at modifying existing technological devices, as long as she has time and parts. She's fairly skilled in hand-to-hand combat, having trained with Black Mantis, and she has a wide array of contacts within the government and military.

In combat, Phantom generally hangs back from the fray and tries to analyze her opponents, taking advantage of her ghostly invulnerability and her stealth, until she can identify a target vulnerable to her limited offensive capabilities or a use for one of her devices.

**Appearance:** Dr. Phantom wears a white costume with blue highlights (neck, gloves, and boots), including a cowl that covers half her head and lets her blonde hair hang free in back, and a flowing white and gold cape. Her belt is also gold, wide around her waist and stomach, and has several small dials on the front and "capsules" in which she carries a range of instruments and devices. When out of phase, she remains visible but takes on a ghostly "fringe" of extradimensional energy.

## Microman

**Background/History:** Daniel Collins was born in Brooklyn in 1936. Always an exceptional student, he went to NYU on a full scholarship and after his graduation accepted a job as a Physics teacher there while running a small research lab on the side. In early 1961, Collins and his partner Earl Benner accidentally discovered a strange form of radiation that shrank Collins to microscopic size, but had no apparent effect on anyone or anything else. They spent weeks attempting to find out what it was about Collins that caused this strange reaction, but were unsuccessful and eventually put the discovery aside to work on more fruitful avenues.

A few weeks later, a team of bank robbers were interrupted while holding up a Manhattan bank, and took several hostages and barricaded themselves inside. Collins heard about the robbery and determined to use his “Shrinking Ray” for good. Shrinking himself to tiny size and wearing a makeshift costume, he sneaked into the bank and disarmed the robbers. The press gave the mysterious masked hero the name “Microman,” which Collins cheerfully adopted. Over the next few months, Microman thwarted a number of small crimes, even defeating a couple of costumed criminals like The Centaur and the Mad Mage. After the encounter with UNIVAC led MeteorMan to suggest a formal organization of heroes along the lines of the Defenders of Justice, Microman enthusiastically signed on and rarely afterwards acted as a solo hero.

Microman became one of the most stalwart members of the Sentinels, living at the team’s base and serving several times as the team’s chairman. He occasionally would battle feelings of inadequacy; his powers were overshadowed by most of his teammates, his scientific skills were duplicated by Dr. Phantom, and though his teammates appreciated his quick thinking and tactical sense, the public tended to forget he was even a member (since he didn’t show up that well on television in action and was too reserved to make much of an impression at public appearances even at full size). Nevertheless, there were several occasions when only his unique abilities were able to save the day, and his self-confidence got a major boost when Dr. Phantom agreed to marry him in 1966.

Microman served as a Sentinel with few short breaks until 1987, though for the last decade or so he frequently served the team behind the scenes working on problems in the team’s labs or acting as a trainer and mentor to younger, more powerful heroes. After his divorce from Dr. Phantom and retirement, he publicly revealed his identity and restarted his small company. He moved to the outskirts of

Millennium City as part of the rebuilding process (and to take advantage of the tax breaks) in 1993, and lives there today. He has never figured out why his “Shrinking Ray” only works on him (and one other being, the monstrous alien Cazulon) – it’s a puzzle he continues to work on periodically.

**Personality/Motivation:** Microman is a straightforward “good guy,” friendly, decent and generally cheerful. He wants nothing but the best for other people, and always tries to use his rather limited powers to protect and serve others. He’s constantly aware of his limitations as a superhero, and tries to pitch in where he can around the more spectacular effects of his teammates. In his later years he used his hard-won experience and wisdom to help teach younger members of the Sentinels how to be superheroes; for many of the later generations, he’s seen as both a hero to be looked up to and a bit of a nag. Some heroes chafed under his instruction, but most appreciated him, at least eventually.

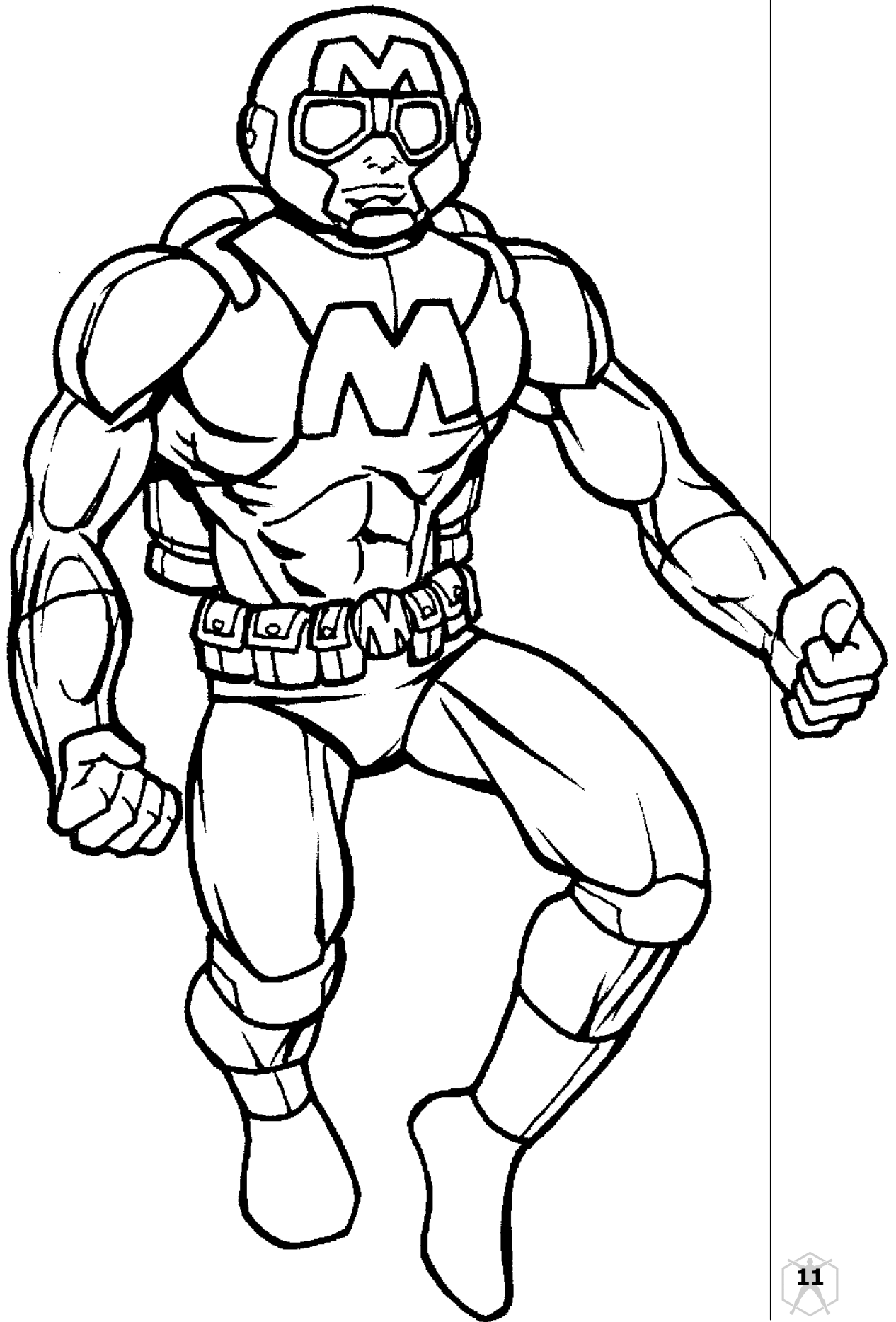
He’s a tireless worker prone to obsessing over problems and puzzles. Countless times the Sentinels’ support staff needed to remind him to sleep and eat while working in his lab on the cure to a disease or the means to overcome some villain.

**Quote:** “All right, team, just like we practiced it; you two go in high, you two low, and I’ll slip around behind.”

**Powers/Tactics:** Microman’s sole power is to shrink himself to sub-microscopic size. Below a certain level of shrinking, his powers are reflected by Extradimensional Travel instead of shrinking, since he no longer can really interact with the macro-world on a meaningful basis. At that level, he can pass between the molecules of solid objects, making him an excellent scout and spy.

He has several useful devices built into his costume, including a rocket-pack (which only will carry him when shrunken) and wrist-mounted blasters.

**Appearance:** Microman wears an “armored-spandex” bodysuit, green with gold highlights and a futuristic helmet and oversized goggles. He has wrist-mounted blasters and a small rocket-pack on his back. Out of costume, he’s of average build, with black hair turning to gray, and soft brown eyes.



**Microman**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll: 13-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
14	COM	2	12-	
				Total: 10 PD (5 rPD)
				Total: 8 ED (5 rED)
				Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	PD	2		
3	ED	0		
4	SPD	12		
8	REC	4		
36	END	3		
30	STUN	4		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 81**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Flight: 10"/20"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
44	<i>Microsizing:</i> Elemental Control, 87-point Powers	
35	1) <i>Microsize:</i> Shrinking (0.015 m tall, 0.008 m wide, 0.0000 kg mass, +21" KB, +14 DCV, -14 PER Rolls to perceive character), Costs END Only To Activate (+1/4); IIF (-¼)	9
25	2) <i>Microcombat:</i> EB 7d6 (versus ED), Transdimensional (from the Microverse Dimension, +½), Penetrating (+½); No Range (Must Be "Inside" Target, -½), No Knockback (-¼)	7
30	<i>Walking Between Molecules:</i> Desolidification (Affected by Attacks on Object He is "Inside"); Only to Pass through Solid Objects (-½) plus Clinging; Only to Remain Merged with an Object if it's Moved (-2), Linked to Microsize (-½)	4
25	<i>Subatomic Shrinking:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (Single Dimension, Any Location: Microverse)	2
10	<i>Mini-Rockets:</i> Flight 10"; OIF (Rocketpack, -½), Linked to Microsize (-½)	2
27	<i>Wrist-Blasters:</i> EB 8d6 (versus ED); OIF (-½)	4
8	<i>Helmet Radio:</i> High Range Radio Perception; OIF (-½)	0
5	<i>Polarized Goggles:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense, 10 points; OAF (-1)	0
2	<i>IR Goggles:</i> Infrared Perception; OAF (-1)	0
10	<i>Padded Costume:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED); OIF (Costume, -½)	0

**Perks**

- 2 Contact: Earl Benner, Former Lab Partner 8- (Access to Major Institutions)
- 3 Fringe Benefit: Sentinel (Membership)
- 5 Money: Well Off
- 2 Reputation: Scientific Hero (large group, 8-) +2/+2d6
- 10 Small Lab: 50 Base, 0 Disad

**Talents**

- 3 Lightning Calculator

**Skills**

- 4 +2 with Wrist-Blasters
- 3 AK: New York 13-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Combat Piloting 13-
- 3 Computer Programming 13-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Criminology 13-
- 5 Electronics 14-
- 1 Mechanics 8-
- 2 Navigation (Air) 13-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 3 Power 13-
- 4 PS: Radiologist 14-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Systems Operation 13-
- 3 Tactics 13-
- 3 TF: Combat Aircraft, Large Planes, Small Planes, Spaceplanes
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Chemistry 13-
- 2 2) SS: Microbiology 13-
- 2 3) SS: Nuclear Physics 13-
- 2 4) SS: Optics 13-
- 2 5) SS: Subatomic Physics 13-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 314**

**Total Cost: 395**

**200+ Disadvantages**

- 10 Hunted: The Centaur 8- (As Pow)
- 10 Hunted: Dr. Zudo 8- (As Pow)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Old-Fashioned and Occasionally Insensitive (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Obsessive Worker, Will Drive Himself to Exhaustion (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Protective of His Teammates, Especially Younger Ones (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID (Frequently, Major)
- 5 Unluck: 1d6
- 100 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 395**

### Rocketman

**Background/History:** Alan Betts was born and raised in a suburb of Atlanta, Georgia in 1932. His father was a full-bird colonel in World War II, stationed at an Army Air Force base, and from his earliest days Alan loved planes. During the war he was more-or-less adopted by a team of engineers designing and building the latest generations of planes and helicopters for the war effort, and one of his closest friends during that period was a mechanic named Aloysius Potter. Potter was an expert in the brand-new field of rocketry, and had grand ideas about building a one-man suit of armor powered by miniature rockets. However, he couldn't get anyone in the Army to take his proposals seriously, and so he continued to putter around with his designs late at night with only young Alan to talk to.

After the war, Alan went to high school and then the Air Force Academy, studying to be a pilot himself. He flew an F-86 Sabre in Korea, and then was assigned to an airbase in Texas for several years as a test pilot for some of the most cutting-edge jets in the American military. In late 1958, he was contacted by his old friend Potter, who in secret had built his flying suit on a Georgia farm and needed a pilot to test the device out. Alan agreed to give it a try, and was amazed at how effective it was. The device not only enabled Alan to fly at over 200 miles per hour, but the internal motors enhanced his strength, and the onboard sensory systems included infrared and radar. Unfortunately, it was soon clear that the armor was far too expensive for mass production. Potter went to work on a second, cheaper design while Alan continued to test the first suit in secret.

On his third test flight, in August of 1959, Alan saw smoke rising from downtown Buford, and discovered that the town's general store was on fire. He used his armor to rescue over a dozen citizens and firemen, flying several off the upper floors and then supporting much of the roof for a precious few seconds allowing more to escape. When asked by reporters who he was and where he'd come from, he jauntily saluted the firefighters and said, "Call me... Rocketman." Then he blasted off into the sunset.

His exploits landed him on the front page of papers across the country, as his fortunate timing meant his public debut came only weeks after the Fabulous Five had captured the public eye and Vanguard announced his return from retirement. Over the next two years, Rocketman developed a reputation as the South's foremost hero, battling menaces like Cyrax and the Bookworm. Largely by accident, he also became well-known for his battles with a ring of Soviet "super-agents" who had infiltrated the United States in the early '60s, including the Super-Soviet, Ice Princess, and Boroh. It was his pursuit of the latter that caused him to meet up with the future founding members of the Sentinels, and from the earliest days of the team he and MeteorMan would become the most well-known public faces and spokesmen for the team. Meanwhile, he continued to assist Potter in the design of various modified armor suits, which they usually contracted to various branches of the military (except for a few that were stolen by supervillains, or failed disastrously while testing, or were accidentally abandoned on other planets.... Rocketman has led a pretty adventurous life, which kept him from really cashing in on the team's designs). He also maintained a steady solo career based in the Atlanta area.

Rocketman served with the Sentinels from their inception until 1971, when he temporarily retired due to injuries suffered at the hands of Stalnoy Volk, and again after his comeback from 1975 until his permanent retirement in 1978, which was followed by his marriage to Celia Farnham (formerly the reformed villainess known as Lamia). He and Potter sold their company to Ironwood in 1984, and Alan moved back to Georgia, where he died of lung cancer in 1994.

**Personality/Motivation:** Rocketman was an old-fashioned flyboy hero, quietly cocky and utterly fearless, a man's man in all respects. He could occasionally be brash, insensitive, and even a bit sexist, but he was completely committed to Truth, Justice, and the American Way, and thought nothing of risking his life for his fellow man on a daily basis.

Like many ex-military officers, he had a love/hate relationship with authority; while he bristled and complained whenever he was kept from doing what he wanted, he also tended to respond well to discipline and a clear command structure. He served a couple of terms as team leader of the Sentinels, but though his folksy charm made him an excellent spokesman, he still tended to defer to his more tactically-sound teammates in crisis situations.

**Quote:** “Now, don’t you worry a bit. My friends and I here have the situation well in hand.”

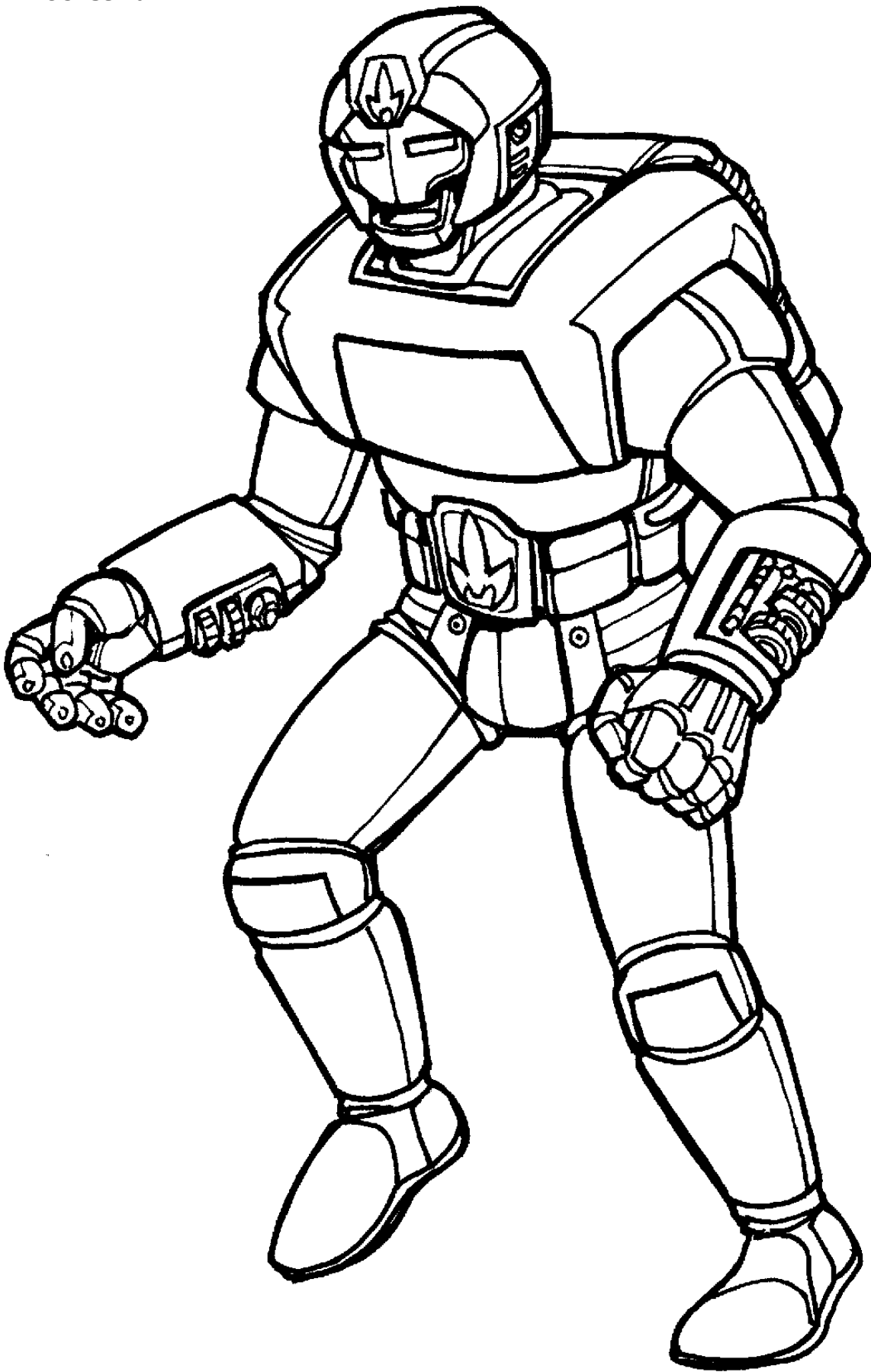
**Powers/Tactics:** The combination of impressive strength, prodigious armor, and the tactical flexibility of Potter’s suit (and the various “improvements” the two were constantly adding) made Rocketman one of the most powerful heroes of his day, and he generally led the team’s charge from front and center. Alan’s overconfidence more than once led him to underestimate threats, but he did have enough tactical sense generally to be able to recover and try a more subtle approach after an initial beating.

Though he was rarely the most scientifically-inclined member of the team (after all, his membership overlapped that of Dr. Phantom and Microman), he had a definite aptitude for mechanics and gadgetry that frequently came in handy in a crisis.

**Appearance:** The Rocketman suit underwent almost constant changes and “upgrades” over the years, but the basic design remained the same. The metal suit itself is human-shaped and relatively streamlined, but with three exhaust tubes for the rockets mounted on the back. The helmet itself is oversized and extends down to the shoulders, giving it a bit of a “dive suit” feel. The face of the helmet has only slits for the mouth and eyes. Both lower arms of the suit are obviously dotted with small controls for the various additional systems, and the gloves have finger-blaster mounts. The entire suit is a bright silvery chrome.



Rocketman



**Rocketman**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18/58	STR	8	21-	Lift 75 tons; 11½d6 [6]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
20	COM	5	13-	
7	PD	3		Total: 27 PD (20 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 28 ED (20 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
40	END	0		
34	STUN	3		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 98**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Flight: 20"/160"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
40	<i>Armored Rocketsuit:</i> Armor (20 PD/20 ED); OIF (-½)	0
23	<i>Rocketsuit Batteries:</i> Endurance Reserve (200 END, 10 REC); OIF (-½)	0
33	<i>Rocket Boot-Jets:</i> Flight 20", 8x Noncombat Movement; OIF (-½)	5
20	<i>Micromotor Muscular Enhancement:</i> +40 STR; No Figured Characteristics (-½), OIF (-½)	4
13	<i>Rocketsuit Onboard Systems:</i> Life Support (Safe in High Pressure, High Radiation, Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing); OIF (-½)	0
8	<i>Polarized Eyepieces:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points); IIF (-¼)	0
4	<i>Sonic Reducers:</i> Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points); IIF (-¼)	0
13	<i>Rocketsuit Sensory Suite:</i> Multipower, 20-point Reserve; All Slots OIF (-½)	
1u	1) <i>Sonar:</i> Active Sonar	0
1u	2) <i>Wideband Radio:</i> High Range Radio Perception	0
1u	3) <i>Radar:</i> Radar	0
1u	4) <i>IR Lenses:</i> Infrared Perception	0
1u	5) <i>Extended Vision:</i> Telescopic +4 to Sight Group PER Rolls	0
40	<i>Rocketsuit Gadgets:</i> Multipower, 60-point Reserve, All Slots OIF (-½)	0
4u	1) <i>Fire Extinguisher:</i> Dispel 15d6: Any One Fire Power (Expanded Effect, One At A Time, +¼); OIF (-½)	6
3u	2) <i>Smoke-Jet Projectors:</i> Sight Group Darkness 6" Radius, Altered Shape (Any Area; +0), Linked to Rocket Boot-Jets (can be used in any Phase in	

	which greater Boot-Jets are in use (+0); Only Behind Him (-½), OIF (-½)	6
4u	3) <i>Electrical Projectors:</i> EB 12d6 (versus ED), OIF (-½)	6
4u	4) <i>Electrified Armor:</i> EB 4½d6 (versus ED), Damage Shield (+½), Continuous (+1), OIF (-½)	6
4u	5) <i>Magnesium Flare:</i> Sight Group Flash 12d6, OIF (-½)	6
3u	6) <i>Alternate Power Supply:</i> Absorption Energy 12d6 to END Reserve; Limited Special Effect: Electricity (Common, -½), OIF (-½)	0

**Martial Arts: Comic Book Fisticuffs**

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
4 Strike	+0	+2	5½d6(13½d6) Strike
3 Throw	+0	+1	3½d6(11½d6)+v/5, Target Falls

**Perks**

10	Follower: Potter, Inventor/Mechanic (50 Base, 50 Disad)
3	Fringe Benefit: Sentinel (Membership)
5	Money: Well Off

**Skills**

24	+3 with All Combat
3	Breakfall 12-
13	Combat Piloting 17-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Electronics 12-
3	High Society 13-
4	KS: Battlesuit Design 13-
3	Mechanics 12-
3	Navigation (Air, Space) 12-
3	Paramedics 12-
4	PS: Test Pilot 13-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Stealth 12-
8	Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Desert, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-
3	Systems Operation 12-
5	Tactics 13-
3	TF: Combat Aircraft, Early Spacecraft, Large Planes, Military Spacecraft
2	WF: Small Arms

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 350**

**Total Cost: 448**

## DIGITAL HERO #13

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 20 DNPC: Celia Farnham, Girlfriend 11- (Normal, Unaware of Character's Secret ID)
- 10 Hunted: Cyrax the Conqueror 8- (As Pow)
- 10 Hunted: Super-Soviet 8- (As Pow)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Bad Back (Infrequently, Greatly)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Cocky and Overconfident (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Has an Eye for the Ladies (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Mistrusts Government and Authority Figures (Common, Strong)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Vulnerability: 2x Effect from Magnetism (Uncommon)
- 133 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 448**



## WHY REYNARD THE FOX?

Those of you who are regular readers of my column may ask yourselves why, for the first time, I have chosen a *fictional* rather than *actual* character for Digital Hero issue 13. Well, the theme of this issue is “names” or “naming,” so I have chosen an allegorical character who represents the least depicted member of fantasy RPG society: the peasant. Reynard isn’t merely a clever fox who continually gets the better of other animals; he is an idealized, wish-fulfilling projection (rather like Uncle Remus’ Brer Rabbit) produced by an oppressed group of people of what they would like to be. In a Jungian, archetypical sense he is an idealized version of how clever mediaeval peasants saw themselves. In this manner he could be regarded as real as you and I.

Secondly, like many of you, I can clearly remember as a pimply teen holding my first copy of Zeb Cook’s immortal *AD&D 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Player’s Handbook* in my trembling fingers. Upon turning to page 38 and reading the words “*Many famous folk heroes have been more than a little larcenous – Reynard the Fox, Robin*



# You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

“Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards.” — Kierkegaard

After being escorted to the gallows by the King’s headsman, Reynard the Fox ascended its wooden steps, calmly placing the noose around his own neck. Below him, the assembled crowd of noble animals hissed, growled, and chirped their hatred of the beast who has brought them all so much misfortune and humiliation. Bruin the Bear and Tibert the Cat were especially eager to see their nemesis shuck off his mortal coil, for their indignities have been the most profound. After adjusting his hanging-rope so that it lay upon his breast in a jaunty manner, Reynard cleared his throat before raising his arms in a plea for silence. The mob’s angry cacophony subsided into an annoyed muttering.

“If I am to depart this cruel life today,” the Fox announced, “I should first like to unburden my heart by confessing my misdeeds in their entirety. All of them – everything.”

From his privileged spot beneath the shade of a pavilion, Nobel the Lion King shifted eagerly on his gilded throne. Reynard was rumored to have a fortune in hidden spoils saved up from a lifetime of scheming and swindling the other animals; perhaps he would reveal its location during his confession. Bruin and Tibert glanced at one another suspiciously. Reynard seemed far too contrite; it was simply out of character.

“My worst sin,” he began, “is that I knew about the conspiracy without telling anyone. In any case, I...”

“Just a moment,” interrupted the King, “what conspiracy?”

“My dear, departed father Reynard Sr. had, in his time, allowed himself to be lured into joining it. Now, more importantly...”

“*What conspiracy?*” growled the Lion irritably.

“Why, the one which Bruin and Tibert contrived, of course. But it was the treasure which tempted him to collaborate with them; he just couldn’t resist riches of that magnitude. Yet back to my sins: of all the evils which I...”

“Treasure? Conspiracy?” mused Nobel, tapping a single great claw upon his chin, “Reynard my good beast, come down from those gallows immediately! I must hear more of this treachery.... and of this secret hoard.”

With a smile the Fox removed the hangman’s noose from his neck and descended the gallows’ steps. The Bear and the Cat immediately began to insist upon their innocence – for, indeed, innocent they were. But the Lion King would hear none of their pleas, which to his ears made the unfortunate creatures sound all the more guilty. Before another hour had passed, they found themselves in the darkest hole which their lord’s prisons provided, their coats invested with every manner of crawling, biting vermin. Their nemesis soon also found himself invested – with their estates.

*Reynard the Fox* is the most celebrated of the middle age’s beast epics, lengthy 12<sup>th</sup> Century poems that were considered safe vehicles for social criticism. Performed by troubadours, they reflect in biting satire the medieval peasant’s cynicism and contempt for the upper classes, the clergy, and the judicial system of the time. In many of these works the Fox is portrayed as a sort of “super peasant,” who constantly outsmarts his “betters” by using their greed, vanity, and pride to enrich himself at their expense. Thus in *Reynard the Fox* all of the methods by which a cunning peasant could escape justice are explored in humorous detail: direct and indirect bribery, pretended repentance, and wily appeals to the selfishness of judges to name but a few. In the poem, the Fox always wins by being more resourceful, more charismatic, and just plain more evil than his would-be opponents, who often end up maimed, eaten, or falsely accused by the authorities. Perhaps not surprisingly, it was a big hit with Europe’s lower classes right up to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

As a work of literature, *Reynard the Fox* was referred to by the great Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain as “the most profoundly humorous books that was ever written.”

Committed to paper in 1150 A.D., it was one of the four most widely read works of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries with translations in Latin, French, Low German, Dutch, Flemish, High German, and English. Although considerably more bloodthirsty, it is the ancient precursor of such modern fantasy favorites as Brian Jacques’ epic thirteen-part *Redwall* series and Richard Adam’s *Watership Down*. It can also be favorably compared with such literary classics as Joel Chandler Harris’ *Uncle Remus: His Songs and Sayings*, Aesop’s *Fables*, and the Chanticleer the Rooster from Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*.

## DIGITAL HERO #13

### Reynard the Fox

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
23	INT	13	14-	PER Roll: 14-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
13	COM	2	12-	
8	PD	6		Total: 9 PD (1 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
36	END	0		
28	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 101**

**Movement:** Running: 10"/20"  
Swimming: 5"/10"

**Cost Powers** **END**

- 1 *Soft Leather (or thick coat):* Armor (1 PD/0 ED) (2 Active Points); Real Armor (-¼)
- 10 *Rapier (or teeth):* 1d6 HKA, +1 OCV (27 Active Points); OAF (-2), Minimum Strength of 10 (-¼)
- 2 *Fox Abilities:* +2" Leaping (4" forward, 2" upward)
- 10 Luck 2d6
- 8 *Fox Abilities:* +4" Running (10" total)
- 3 *Fox Abilities:* +3" Swimming (5" total)

#### Perks

- 6 Reputation: Hero of the Common Man (A large group; 11-) +3/+3d6

#### Talents

- 25 Danger Sense (Area: Immediate Vicinity, Sensitivity: Out of Combat) 14-
- 3 Lightning Reflexes: +2 DEX to act first with All Actions
- 3 Lightsleep

#### Skills

- 3 Acting 13-
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Bribery 13-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 3 Concealment 14-
- 5 Conversation 14-
- 10 Defense Maneuver: IV
- 3 Disguise 14-
- 2 Forgery 14-
- 2 Gambling 14-
- 3 Mimicry 14-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 9 Persuasion 16-
- 5 Seduction 14-
- 3 Shadowing 14-
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 Survival 14-
- 3 Ventriloquism 14-
- 1 WF: Blades

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 149**

**Total Cost: 250**

#### 150+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Fox (Concealable; Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 25 Hunted: The Court of Noble Animals 14- (Less Pow; Harshly Punish; Extensive Non-Combat Influence; PC has a Public ID or is otherwise very easy to find)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Cruel and Vengeful (Very Common; Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Rapaciously Greedy (Very Common; Strong)
- 20 Reputation: Rouge and Bon Vivant 14- (Extreme)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 250**

*Goodfellow, and Ali Baba are but a few" I clearly recall thinking to myself "Reynard the Fox? Who in the heck is Reynard the Fox?" Well, the answer to that immortal question lies at your fingertips, gentle reader. Enjoy.*

## Reynard the Fox

**Background/History\*:** Although Reynard the Fox's origins undoubtedly lie in the widely diffused folklore of Mediaeval France and Germany, he was officially "born" in 1150 when the first edition of his tales in epic poem form was printed by an unknown author in Waasland, the adjacent area in what is now the Dutch province of Zeeuws Vlaanderen (Sea Flanders). Originally in Latin, they were translated into many western European languages over the centuries as his tales gradually found an audience with all levels of society.

In its basic form, Reynard the Fox's most popular story begins when the well-known *ne'er-do-well* disguises himself as a monk so that he can sneak into a monastery and its adjacent nunnery. The monks are roosters and, of course, the nuns are hens; so as soon as he gets behind the complex's fortified walls he sets about eating everyone in sight. When his appetite is sated, Reynard retreats over the mountains and through a deep wood to his fortified keep known as Malepardus which is "*his chief and most ancient castle.... there he resorted both for defense and pleasure.*" A fearsome, impregnable place, Malepardus is "*full of many intricate and curious apartments, through which he [Reynard] could pass in case of danger or for objects of prey.*"

Hearing of the Fox's massacre of the chickens, Nobel the Lion King decides that it is finally time for Reynard to be brought to justice. Almost all of the noble animals have some petty complaint against him; Isegrim the Wolf complained of stolen meat, while Curtis the Hound complained of stolen pudding. Only his cousin Gray the Badger spoke in his defense, pointing out that most of his enemies had been accomplices in their own misfortune. Nevertheless, Nobel summoned his most trusted knight, Bruin the Bear, to travel to Malepardus so that he can be brought to the king's court for trial. Bruin, who is one of the Fox's chief rivals for the king's affections, arrives at the castle and proclaims "*His majesty hath taken a great vow if you fail to appear to the summons, your life shall answer for your contempt, and your whole goods and honors become confiscated to the crown.*"

Thinking fast, Reynard announces that he can't make the journey just yet because he has been fasting for religious reasons. Weakened by starvation and prayer, he has been eating "strange new meats" which have made him bloated and sick. Incredulous, the Bear asks exactly what sort of food he has been eating, to which the Fox replies "*The food was simple and*

*mean: we poor gentry are no lords, you know.... that which I ate was honeycombs, large, full, and very pleasant. But, impelled by hunger, I ate so very immoderately that I was afterwards infinitely distempered.*" This greatly excites Bruin, who replies "*Why, sir, it is food for the greatest emperors in the world. Help me, fair nephew, to some of these honeycombs, and command me while I live; for only a small share I will be your servant everlastingly.*"

The Fox knows that he has the Bear right where he wants him, so he leads his fellow noble animal to a nearby village where the local woodsman has recently cut down an mighty oak. He then points inside of its hollow trunk, warning his "kinsmen" to "*be careful of yourself; for within this tree is contained so much honey, that if you can get to it you will find it immeasurable.*" Overcome by gluttony, Bruin plunges his face and forepaw right into the tree, where they quickly become stuck fast. Unable to free himself by any maneuver, the mighty bear began to howl and bray, making such a racket that the woodcutter came running from his house to see what was the matter. Realizing that the trapped bear represented enough food to feed his village for a month, the hungry peasant ran to gather his fellow townspeople for an assault on the ensnared beast.

Desperate to free himself, Bruin is forced to tear off his own face and forepaw to get free from his prison. The bloody and grievously wounded animal is then set upon by the entire village, who have arrived armed with every possible sort of weapon. He escapes by flinging himself into a river, which carries him downstream back to Nobel's court. Upon seeing his gravely injured retainer, the Lion King cries "*It is Sir Bruin my servant: what villains have wounded him thus? Where can he have been, that he could contrive it—to bring his death as it were back with him?*"

The Bear replies that Reynard has been the source of his wounds, to which Nobel responded "*How durst he do this thing? Now, by my crown I swear, I will take such revenge as shall make the traitor tremble, and remember the foul deed.*"

The noble animals then gathered their council together to decide how they might bring the wily Fox to justice. After a good deal of discussion, it was unanimously concluded that he should again be summoned to appear and answer his transgressions in person. The council then appointed Tibert the Cat, well known for his dignity as well as his wisdom, to execute the summons. Tibert, however, was not enthusiastic about the idea, replying "*King, send some one else of greater strength. I am small and feeble; besides, if noble Sir Bruin, who is so strong and*

\* italicized text comes from English translations of Goethe.

*mighty, could not force the fox to come, what can I do against him?"*

The Lion replied, *"It is your wisdom, Sir Tibert, and not your strength that we ask you to use."*

Frightened but loyal to his king, the Cat journeyed through the deep, dark wood until he came to the gates of Reynard's castle. At his first cautious knock the door opened, and Reynard politely asked the cat to step within, then bade him sit in a comfortable chair by the fire. After the two had silently sipped mulled wine together for a while, the Cat gained enough courage to speak.

*"I trust I find you well, cousin Reynard,"* he said, *"for I bear a message from the king, ordering you to his court to answer many charges that have been made against you. If you refuse, I fear you will meet with a cruel and sudden death."*

The Fox calmly nodded at his frightened kinsmen. *"Gladly will I obey your command, cousin Tibert, but allow me to wait until tomorrow before making the journey to the king. I shall be happy to offer you such food as I have, and after your long walk a night's rest will do you good. Sir Bruin came with such cruel and angry words that I dared not trust myself with him; but with you, my dear cousin, I will go with pleasure."*

The relieved Cat agreed, wondering what Reynard intended to serve for supper that evening. Reynard replied that his store was nearly empty, containing naught but honeycombs.

When Tibert responded with disgust *"It is food that I never eat. I would rather have one mouse than all the honey in the world."*

*"A mouse!"* exclaimed Reynard, *"why, my dear cousin, there lives near here a man who has a barn so full of mice that a pair of horses could not draw them."*

*"Oh, dear cousin Reynard,"* cried the cat, *"do lead me to this barn, and if what you say is true, I will be your servant forever."*

So the Fox led to Cat to a farmer's barn which was fenced about with a high wall. At one place there was an opening, however, which Reynard had crept through the night before to steal one of the farmer's finest hens. It had made the farmer so angry that he had set a snare just within the hole, in order to catch the Fox on his next visit – a fact which he knew quite well.

*"Do you think I may safely enter this hole?"* asked the cat. *"These farmers are wise and sometimes set traps."*

*"Why, cousin Tibert,"* laughed the fox, *"I never knew you to be a coward before. Of what are you afraid?"*

Ashamed to be called a coward, the Cat sprang through the hole and was at once caught

in the farmer's snare. He struggled and struggled, but he simply couldn't get out. Then he began to scream and cry with pain as the noose tightened about his body. Reynard stood outside of the hole, laughing loudly at Tibert's struggling. *"Do you like mice, cousin Tibert?"* said he. *"I hope for your sake they are nice and fat. I only wish that your friend Isegrim the wolf were here to keep you company."*

In the meantime, all of this racket had awoken the farmer as well as his entire family, who came running to the barn in order to see the Fox get his just punishment. Arriving first armed with a long cane, the farmer saw Tibert in the snare and, thinking he was Reynard, rained blow after blow upon the back of the poor cat. Tibert knew that he could live but a short time under such abuse, so with one great struggle he leaped upon the farmer, scratching and biting him until the poor man fell down crying with pain.

While the farmer's family left him alone in order to look after their kinsmen, Tibert, seeing his chance, gnawed at the snare that bound him until the cord was cut in two. Then, jumping out of the hole, he went crying and limping back to the king's court. He was the most pitiful object that Nobel had ever seen – Reynard's trickery had left his body bruised, his bones broken, and his skin rent and torn. When the king beheld the Cat in such a sad state he again grew very, very angry. Once more he called his wise men together to see how he should bring the crafty fox to justice. After some discussion, they decided to send his nephew, Gray the badger, after Reynard. The Fox was to be ordered to come before the king or suffer death.

Then Gray the badger bowed before the king and said: *"Your Majesty's orders shall be obeyed. I am not afraid to carry your message to my uncle Reynard, if your Highness commands it."*

The Badger took his leave, traveling straight to the fox's castle of Malepardus without delay. After being warmly greeted by his uncle, who was genuinely happy to see him, Gray said *"I fear, dear uncle, for your life. The complaints against you are many, and remember this is the third time you have been ordered to come. If you delay even one day your castle will be torn down, and you yourself will be hanged. I beseech you, dear uncle, come to the king's court, where your clever tongue, I am sure, will get you out of trouble as it has many times before."*

*"Nephew, you speak truly,"* replied Reynard with genuine sorrow. *"Tomorrow I will go with you to court. I will face my enemies and answer for myself."*

The next day the two noble beasts traveled to their lord's castle where, my gentle readers, the events in the introduction to this column took place: the clever Fox was able to use the Lion

## WHAT THE CRITICS THINK

*"A more intense concentration of outrageousness and villainy has never gone on four legs. He defies all description. Imagine all the sin, shame, dishonor, depravity, cowardice, falsity, insolence, treachery, greed, faithlessness, and stubbornness which can be crammed into one skin, and you have an inkling of Reynard the Fox."*

— Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, *Legends and Animal Fables*

*"The story of Reynard the Fox is one of the most profoundly humorous books that was ever written. Its satire was aimed at its own time yet it is never for a moment antiquated for the modern reader. At a time when, owing to the imperfect development of personal rights, it would have been extremely dangerous to satirize as the author does very freely, the rulers, the judges, the nobility, the ecclesiastical authorities and churchmen, and practically all classes of society, the writer, whose name has, unfortunately for the completeness of*

literary history, not come down to us, succeeded in painting all the foibles of men and pointing out all the differences there are between men's pretensions and their actual accomplishments."

— Rames J. Walsh,  
*The Thirteenth: The Greatest of Centuries*

"Far from being virtuous and chivalrous, they [animal tricksters] were often gluttonous or self-serving or morally reprehensible... and sometimes, all three. Nevertheless, these miscreants inspired sympathy, if only for their energy and quick wits. This was never truer than of the character of Reynard the Fox, spiritual cousin of African's Ananse and America's Brer Rabbit. The persistent wrongdoings of the wily Reynard, interrupted by brief moments of repentance, brought endless fascination to the peoples of Europe throughout the Middle Ages.

— Nova Reinna,  
*Seeker Magazine*

King's greed and paranoia as a tool to enrich himself, while at the same time turning the table on his accusers. There are, of course, tales too numerous to elaborate about Reynard's dastardly cunning. In one he arranges for his own lavish funeral, only to rise from his coffin after listening to the pious laments of his own enemies. In another he convinces Pastor Bellyn the Ram and Brother Lampe to Rabbit to accompany him on a pilgrimage to Rome so that he can confess his sins to the pope; but along the way he eats Brother Lampe and frames Pastor Bellyn for his murder.

**Personality/Motivation:** Reynard the Fox is a character who is constantly animated by the desire to get the better of his fellows – and to have a laugh while doing it. To this end he is often cruel, petty, manipulative, dishonest, and vindictive. Yet, in many cases, the victims of Reynard's crimes seem to be "just asking for it" in some sense or the other, often falling into misfortune through their greed, vanity, or some other shortcoming. In the harsh, abusive, and stratified world of a mediaeval peasant, where morally was constantly enforced from above, the Fox's questionable antics could be easily understood as ethical parables where people higher on the social ladder "got theirs" at the hands of a character that the common people could easily relate to. Sort of like Eminem or Snoop Doggy Dog in today's urban America.

Reynard will go out of his way to steal, although he prefers tricking others into doing his dirty work for him, especially if he thinks they will get caught. Though he has absolutely no respect for either ecclesiastical or temporal authority, he will repent with convincing gusto should he be apprehended... only to return to his wicked ways the very next day. Though he enjoys killing and eating his fellow noble beasts, the reader really shouldn't consider it murder (although his victims' friends do!) After all, he is a fox.

**Quote:** "My fortune is made, for my greatest enemy at the court is dead, and no one can suspect me."

**Powers/Tactics:** Reynard's primary quality is that he is *convincing*. Even characters who know better have a tendency to find him believable, even when he's lying through his teeth... which he almost always is. A subject of many stories, he is himself a master storyteller, actor, stage magician, bribe giver, and seducer, able to talk his way out of sticky situations and into friendships with would-be victims. He is also a capable thief, able to sneak in and out of homes, barns, and keeps without leaving a trace or raising an alarm. A master of avoidance, he can disappear into the borrows beneath a forest or the

sewers beneath a city with equal ease. He also enjoys using his Disguise skill to creep into places he is not supposed to be, so that he can listen in on conversations he is not supposed to hear.

Reynard the Fox will always avoid a real fight if he can (though he has little compunction about bullying or killing those weaker than himself). If he cannot, his tactics will always be defensive, using his rapier (if appropriate) to parry blows or his Acrobatics and Defense Maneuver skills to avoid them entirely while he looks for a way to flee. Of course, it's much better to have some suck... er, warrior fight for you if you can manage it.

**Campaign Use:** Reynard the Fox was actually *intended* by his creator to be the very picture of a mediaeval rogue, conman, and burglar. Born either to the peasantry or very minor nobility, he has set his sites on stealing, lying, and swindling his way through life with as little work as possible. This makes him an excellent (if cowardly) example of a 250-point thief or scout for a *Fantasy Hero* campaign that uses either an Epic Fantasy or Low Fantasy setting. Simply replace his *Distinctive Features: Fox* with something more appropriate, like *Distinctive Features: Goblin*, before changing his *Hunted: The Court of Noble Animals* to *Hunted: The King* and he's ready-to-go as a PC. Or, in a fantasy setting where talking foxes with leather armor aren't unheard of, leave him as he is.

The Fox also makes a very entertaining (*for the Game Master!*) NPC hireling for nearly any fantasy setting. His dishonesty, selfishness, cravenness, and bullying will drive PCs up the wall; but his cunning abilities, displayed at appropriate times, will nearly always keep them from kicking him out of the group. He *will*, of course, betray them at some point for personal gain. It's his nature, after all.

**Appearance:** Reynard the Fox is a tall, slim fellow with a brownish red coat, shifty eyes, and a perpetually innocent expression which seems to say "Who, me?" His clothes vary; sometimes he wears the rapier, livery, and light armor of an impoverished petty nobleman, while at other times he dresses as a simple peasant or wandering mendicant. He often wears disguises that conceal not only his profession but his species as well. No matter what Reynard's guise, however, his physical disposition is generally a bit cocksure and arrogant than is normal for the occupation or creature he is impersonating.





Reynard the Fox



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The contents of this article are *not* "official" HERO System rules.

## Optional Maneuvers by Arthur Samuels

*The Hero System* defines two kinds of maneuvers. Martial Arts maneuvers cost points, while the standard (and optional) maneuvers are usable by anyone.

*The Ultimate Martial Artist* details an excellent system for creating new Martial Arts maneuvers. However, there is no system for creating new optional maneuvers. Or is there? Why not just use the existing system and create maneuvers that come out to zero points? They would be balanced, and should be usable by anyone at any time.

The system presented here would allow any player to make up maneuvers on the spot during play. Some are trivial (a -1 OCV/+1 DCV maneuver is obviously balanced). Most, however, would probably slow down play too much if figured 'on the fly'. As usual, this is a GM call. The three most common options available to the GM are:

1. Make up a list of new maneuvers. These are allowed as an addendum to the existing list. Players may not make up new ones during play. If a player wants to submit a new maneuver, he must write it up and get it approved during 'off-line' time.
2. As above, but let players make up new maneuvers during the game if they are simple enough to be figured out quickly. If the game gets bogged down while someone balances out a maneuver, require an existing maneuver.
3. Anything goes. Be prepared to have the game stop for long stretches for maneuver creation.

Personally, I recommend option 2.

Before jumping straight into maneuver creation, let's take a short detour into the existing maneuvers and see how they can be defined using the *UMA* system. Many of the characteristics of the maneuvers are already defined as Elements, while others can be reverse-engineered, and some can be assigned values.

### EXISTING MANEUVERS

**Block:** This one is trivial. It defines the Block Basis, and since it has no modifiers to OCV or DCV, it comes out to zero points already.

**Brace:** +2 OCV only to offset range penalties (+1); Zero-phase (+2); Half-DCV (-3). Half value is correct for OCV Mods only vs. Range Penalties (it is close to how Penalty Skill Levels are proportioned to Combat Skill Levels). Zero-phase and Half-DCV are assigned values.

**Cover:** -2 OCV (-2); Delayed attack (+2).

**Disarm:** -2 OCV (-2); Disarms (+2). Appears to be how the Disarm Element was priced.

**Dodge:** As for Block.

**Grab By:** -3 OCV (-3); -4 DCV (-4); Full Move (+3); Grab Two Limbs (+3); +v/5 to STR (+1). Seems to imply guidelines for extending CV Mods past the limits imposed in UMA. The addition to STR is not quite as useful as a full +v/5 to damage, but it's still worth a point.

**Grab:** -1 OCV (-1); -2 DCV (-2); Grab Two Limbs (+3). Appears to be how the Grab Element was priced.

**Haymaker:** -5 DCV (-5); +4 Damage Classes (+6); Extra Time (-1). Works out perfectly as a Martial Arts maneuver, assuming that the extra Damage Classes add to Killing Attacks at half value; which should be the case per this analysis.

**Hurry:** -2 OCV (-2); -2 DCV (-2); +1d6 to DEX for Initiative (+4).

**Move By:** -2 OCV (-2); -2 DCV (-2); Half STR (-1); +v/5 damage (+1); Take 1/3 damage (-1); Full Move (+3). This one is difficult to shoehorn in. Take 1/3 Damage does not exist as a Maneuver Element. It is worth about -1/2 a point. It is given a value of -1 here. Based on this, Move By comes out to -2 points. It can be balanced by changing both CV Mods to -1 and changing the damage taken to one-half. The new configuration is listed below as an optional rule

**Move Through:** -v/5 OCV (-2); -3 DCV (-3); +v/3 damage (+3); Full Move (+3); Take half (full) damage (-1). This yields a value for -v/5 OCV. The Take Half Damage Element is complicated by the possibility of taking full damage when striking an immobile object ("Watch out for that treeeeee!"). It is worth about -1.5. However, it has been set at -1 in the interest of avoiding half points.

**Pull Punch:** -1 OCV per 5 DC (-2); Do Half BODY (+2).

**Roll with Punch:** Based on Block; -2 OCV (-2); -2 DCV (-2); Damage Reduced by half (+3); Improved Abort [after being hit] (+2); Take Extra Knockback (-1).

**Set:** Full Phase (-1); +1 OCV (+1). Full phase is about as limiting as Extra Time (you can half move and start a Haymaker, whereas this takes your full phase regardless), so this works out nicely.

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### HELPFUL ELEMENTS

Armed with this information, we have a set of new Elements to work with:

HELPFUL ELEMENTS	COST
+2 OCV vs. Range Penalties	+1
Zero Phase action	+2
Delay Attack (as for Cover)	+2
+1d6 to DEX for Initiative	+4
+1 to DEX for Initiative	+1
Do Half BODY	+2
Damage reduced by half	+3
Abort (after being hit)	+2
Abort (offensive)	+3

RESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS	COST
Half DCV	-3
Full Phase	-1
-v/5 OCV	-2
-1 OCV per 5 DC	-2
Take Extra Knockback	-1

The Offensive Abort was added for the new Attack of Opportunity maneuver. It works just like a standard Abort, but can be used for an attack.

### NEW OPTIONAL MANEUVERS

Now for a list of new Optional Maneuvers.

**Aim:** Like Set and Brace, but more so. Great for those snipers.

**All-Out Attack:** This one is for the berserkers (their motto: you don't have to be crazy to work here – we'll train you). Gives up half of their DCV in exchange for a more accurate, more potent shot.

**Attack of Opportunity:** Great for when they run past you. Uses the new 'Offensive Abort' Element.

**Bind:** Just as it says.

**Defensive Strike:** Good for those cautious types.

**Killing Blow:** Lets any character do a bit of Killing Damage. Inspired by the old *Espionage* (later *Danger International*).

**Move By:** Optional way to handle it that balances out as a figured maneuver.

**Retreating Dodge:** You backpedal and duck to avoid an attack. The drawback is this: if you are hit anyway, you take extra Knockback just as for a Roll With Punch. You were going that way anyway....

**Sacrifice Strike:** You give up some defense in exchange for a better shot.

**Tackle:** The football players' move. Not quite the same as a Move Through or Flying Tackle, since the goal is a takedown, not to slam into them for damage.

**Throw:** Since when do you need martial arts training to trip someone?

**Wild Swing:** Good for those "He's getting away!" scenes. You can make a full move and take a shot.

MANEUVER	CV	EFFECTS
Aim	+2 / Half	+4 OCV vs. Range Penalties (in addition to the base +2); Full phase
All-Out Attack	+1 / Half	+2 DC
Attack of Opportunity	-2 / -1	Abort (offensive)
Bind	-1 / 0	Binds weapon
Defensive Strike	-2 / +2	Based on Strike
Killing Blow	-2 / -1	Killing Attack 1 pip (½d6 with STR)
Move By	-1 / -1	FMove; Take Half Damage
Retreating Dodge	— / +4	Based on Dodge; Half Move Required; Take Extra Knockback
Sacrifice Strike	+2 / -2	Based on Strike
Tackle	-1 / -2	You fall; target falls; Full Move
Throw	-1 / -1	STR + v/5; target falls
Wild Swing	-2 / -1	FMove



## CHARACTER CREATORS

The Millennium City 8 were created by: Ed Hastings, Jonathan Marshall, Denver Mason, Geoff Speare, and Glen Sprigg

# The Millennium City 8 by Darren Watts and Ben Seeman

## “Who Are These Guys?”

It all started with an innocent question on the Hero Games discussion boards. After the release of *Champions Universe*, a fan asked, “So, who are the other heroes on the cover of the *Champions Universe* book?” We asked Pat Zircher, the artist responsible for the fantastic cover, and he had no idea. He informed us that he just decided to throw in some basic archetype superheroes to help the Champions battle Mechanon.

Enter the Name The Hero Contest, an eight-month competition that had fans submitting character write-ups for each unknown superhero. There were dozens of entries every month, and picking a winner was often quite difficult. But, after all of the tallying and over a hundred different submissions, we now have names, powers, and personalities for these previously unidentified heroes.

This article describes exactly what happened when these heroes banded together for the first time to stop Mechanon and save Millennium City. It also provides the write-ups for all eight superheroes, and presents some information about the team’s tactics for use in your own *Champions* adventures.

## In The Beginning

On the morning of August 15, 2002, the primary manufacturing factory for Drake-Victoria, Inc. in Millennium City was attacked. Law enforcement originally surmised that The Ultimates, who were notorious for laying siege to Drake-Victoria factories throughout the country, had finally decided to attack the Millennium City facility. When the MCPD finally arrived on the scene they discovered that the situation was much more grave.

Factory workers that had made it out of the facility alive reported that Mechanon was the culprit, and that he had already used a majority of the technology in the factory floor to create four of his proto-robots. Dozens of employees were already feared dead and it would only be a matter of time before Mechanon tore his way through the high-powered defenses that were installed inside the Drake-Victoria building and got his metallic hands on some of their most advanced weaponry.

A call was immediately put out to the Champions, and within minutes the quintet bolted into the building to put a stop to Mechanon’s activities. The enormous crowd that had gathered, made up of MCPD officers, UNTIL agents, reporters, and gawking bystanders waited impatiently for their favorite superhero team to emerge victorious.

Fifteen minutes passed. Then another fifteen minutes went by and still there was no sign of the Champions. Concern swept over the crowd as they wondered what could possibly be going on inside the Drake-Victoria factory.

Suddenly, out of the sky, Megaera appeared, and immediately swooped into the factory through one of the enormous holes that Mechanon’s destructive rays had created in the reinforced walls. The gatherers gasped in confusion at the sight of the unknown superhero. Almost immediately after she disappeared inside, Commando Rubberbando, a lesser-known MC hero, stepped over the crowd and also made his way into the facility. The MCPD considered stopping him, but figured that, given the circumstances, the Champions could use all the help they could get.

Over the next ten minutes, six more superheroes, most of them unknown to the majority of the onlookers, followed the first pair. Lady Liberty and Steadfast appeared out of the crowd and rushed the compound side by side. Stalker and Raaktor were spotted on the top of the structure but they quickly disappeared inside via a roof access door. Psiphon approached the battered building cautiously, eyeing the stunned crowd before he too ventured inside. Finally, El Aguijón, shrunk down to the size of a bee, buzzed through the front door, joining the preceding seven heroes.

Megaera and Rubberbando were the first to reach Mechanon. He was located in one of the dozen experimental laboratories used by Victoria-Drake to test their latest and greatest weapon and defense system. The surrounding catwalk, half of it already destroyed and lying on the floor below, was dotted with various lasers and mounted cannons. Around him, his four subservient robots stood guard over the defeated Champions who were scattered all about the room. Defender and Witchcraft were unconscious, and an enormous section of the catwalk had them pinned to the floor. Nighthawk was crumpled in one of the corners, his hood pulled over his face and his body contorted unnaturally. Sapphire was sprawled out face first on the lab floor, her hands clutching at her head. Ironclad was nowhere to be found.

The pair of heroes exchanged a knowing glance and sprang into action. Rubberbando leapt out into the open, catching the attention of the robots. Megaera soared to the center of the room, sweeping up Sapphire and removing her from harm’s way. Rubberbando was immediately engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the robots, using his military training to continually keep the

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automatons off balance, but he was seriously outnumbered.

The sound of a crumbling wall heralded the entrance of Steadfast and Lady Liberty, both wearing determined looks on their faces. Steadfast ran to where Witchcraft and Defender lay, using his incredible strength to remove the obstructing plate of metal and twisted wires. Lady Liberty fired shots from her white pistols, knocking a pair of the robots back. One even knocked into Mechanon who, until that point, had not been paying attention to the intruders.

Mechanon finally turned and surveyed the four heroes. Before he could act, however, Raaktor and Stalker came crashing through the ceiling. Raaktor landed within the throng of robots, delivering a combination of blows to one of them with his forearm blades. Stalker descended upon Mechanon himself, firing a barrage of electric disks from his wrist launchers at the imposing robot's head.

With an almost nonchalant whip of his hand, Mechanon sent Stalker hurtling across the laboratory floor as beams of high-powered energy erupted from his robotic fist. Stalker, dazed but still in the fight, scrambled out of sight for a chance to recover from the attack. Lady Liberty changed the focus of her attacks from the robots to Mechanon, continuing to fire her pistols, only to find the majority of her shots bouncing off of his armor.

Unexpectedly, through one of the many shattered exterior windows came a swarm of insects that immediately enveloped Mechanon. He cocked his head for a brief moment, analyzing the situation and deciding what to make of it. A moment later, the insects began to pelt Mechanon's body, creating sparks and causing the imposing robots to swat at the annoying cloud.

Steadfast and Megaera successfully removed Defender, Witchcraft, and Sapphire from the battlefield just as Psiphon entered the fray. He brought his fingers to his enlarged cranium and sent a blast of mental energy directly into Mechanon's internal processor. In retaliation, Mechanon fired a devastating salvo of energy back at Psiphon, striking him square in the chest and knocking him to the ground. At the same time, he fired another blast up into the air towards the far corner of the room. El Aguijón, who had been hiding in his small form and controlling the swarm of insects, was hit by the assault, and crashed painfully into the wall. The swarm disbursed immediately.

Raaktor and Rubberbando finished off the last of the four robots with the help of Lady Liberty. Suddenly, the weaponry in the laboratory became active and began firing at the trio. As they scattered, Rubberbando took a bolt of energy directly to his leg. Fortunately, his

malleable form was relatively unfazed by the force of the beam. Lady Liberty yelled to Steadfast and Megaera, warning them about the weapons that Mechanon had apparently activated. The pair immediately moved to disable the dangerous arsenal.

From his safe position behind a fallen section of the catwalk, Stalker continued to fire upon Mechanon, using the different settings on his launchers. Mechanon's legs were immediately coated in disabling goo, cementing his feet to the floor of the laboratory. Lady Liberty took that moment of distraction to summon arcane forces, powering up her leather gauntlets. She jumped at Mechanon, delivering a mighty clout to his head.

Appearing frustrated, Mechanon grabbed Lady Liberty while engaging his foot-jets, ripping out of the adhesive glue. Despite her struggling, he managed to hold her at arms' length with one hand, and from his other he let loose with a burst of energy. Her body thrashed violently as the beams pummeled her body and then went limp. Mechanon threw her to the ground like a discarded toy, and focused his attentions on the rest of the heroes.

Rubberbando stretched out to catch Lady Liberty as Raaktor leapt into the air, grabbing Mechanon around the calf with one arm. With his free hand, he assaulted Mechanon's leg with his blade, chipping away at the powerful plates of armor. Another pair of blasts from Stalker caused Mechanon to shudder briefly before he kicked Raaktor across the room. Fortunately, Megaera was in the right position to catch him and bring him safely to the ground.

Up on the catwalk, Steadfast was making quick work of the automated weaponry that Mechanon had turned against them. With one mighty blow, he was able to punch through the machines and pull out the vital wiring, rendering them worthless. El Aguijón, still woozy from Mechanon's attack, wielded his Sting stun gun and flew towards Mechanon, hoping his diminutive size would keep Mechanon from hitting him again with another blast.

Psiphon, his costume charred from Mechanon's last assault, saw El Aguijón making his attack run, and so he decided to distract Mechanon with another blast of mental energy, knowing full well the consequences should Mechanon retaliate again. Mechanon shook his head angrily and raised his hands towards Psiphon.

As more bolts of energy hurtled towards the mentalist, Steadfast catapulted himself from the catwalk, grabbing Mechanon from behind and binding his arms. Steadfast's increased density caused the pair of them to tumble to the ground, but his grip on Mechanon didn't weaken. At the same time, Stalker moved from his cover and

advanced, pelting Mechanon with his sapper shots.

Mechanon struggled to free himself, his gears and gyros straining against Steadfast's might, as El Aguijón delivered an electric jolt from the Sting. Psiphon had survived Mechanon's second attack and continued to strike with his mental assaults. Raaktor, safely returned to the ground, invoked his berserker fury and began ravaging Mechanon again with his claws. Rubberbando took Lady Liberty to safety, and then returned to the laboratory to find Nighthawk and Ironclad.

Megaera circled around the rafters of the lab and then dove directly towards Mechanon, who was still being assaulted by El Aguijón, Raaktor, Psiphon, and Stalker. She extended her fist and delivered her Warrior's Blow to Mechanon's midsection. The strike was so powerful that it ripped Mechanon out of Steadfast's grasp and sent him crashing into a large pile of machinery and computers. The equipment erupted in a fantastic explosion and the heroes waited breathlessly to see if Mechanon would rise from the rubble.

In the blink of an eye, his disembodied head emerged from the twisted wreck and made a bee-line for the window. Raaktor and Steadfast vaulted to catch him, but in vain. Stalker's energy blasts slammed into Mechanon's head, but did not deter him from his course. Megaera, Rubberbando and El Aguijón made desperate attempts to stop him before he made it outside, but were unable to block his retreat. Mechanon had escaped, but the factory, or at least what was left of it, and the Champions were safe.

Lady Liberty stepped back into the room, having recuperated slightly from her injuries. The eight heroes looked at each other, their chests heaving for air, their bodies aching from battle. A large pile of rubble suddenly moved, and Ironclad, who had been underneath the debris, stepped out, surveying the heroes and the condition of the laboratory. He crossed his arms across his chest and nodded. "Impressive," was all he said.

Half an hour later, the octet that would later become known as the MC-8 exited the Drake-Victoria factory – bloodied, battered, and bruised but victorious just the same. The Champions followed, also appearing rather roughed up and tattered. Ironclad was carrying an unconscious Witchcraft. Nighthawk, his cloak almost completely shredded, limped through the rubble with the help of Defender and Sapphire.

The crowd erupted with jubilant shouts for the eight heroes that had risked their lives to save the Champions and Millennium City from Mechanon. The Champions stopped and applauded along with the onlookers as the MC-8 looked around in amazement at their sudden celebrity status. Although they were not an

official team, they knew that in the future they would have powerful friends that they could call upon to help them in their quest to fight crime and protect Millennium City from those that would bring harm to it and its people.

## Campaign Use

The Millennium City 8 are by no means an organized team; instead, they're a loose collection of usually-solitary heroes who have worked together on a few occasions and have exchanged contact information. In the case of major emergencies, Lady Liberty or Commando Rubberbando, the closest thing the group has to actual leaders, will call some or all of the team based on the nature of the threat.

Commando Rubberbando learned most of his teamwork skills in the Army, and appreciates discipline from his troops. He admires and will generally place more trust in Megaera for her power and quick wit, Lady Liberty for her methodicalness, and Stalker for his tactical mind, plus the fact that they are the two oldest members and definitely feel the generation gap. He likes Steadfast and Psiphon fine, though he doesn't expect either to be much of a planner or improviser in the field. El Aguijón and Raaktor, while both meaning well, are too prone to improvising from Commando Rubberbando's plans.

Lady Liberty, on the other hand, will try to tailor her team to the nature of the threat. Mystical menaces will prompt calls to Megaera and Raaktor, while scientific problems are better suited for Stalker and El Aguijón. She trusts the entire team, however, and will not hesitate to contact any of the members if she needs them.

When the team goes into combat, Megaera and Raaktor usually take point with close-quarters attacks, with Steadfast drawing fire and occasionally throwing around heavy objects. Rubberbando and El Aguijón, both being hard to hit, select specific targets to neutralize one-on-one, and Psiphon either targets other mentalists or uses his mind blasts on otherwise well-defended opponents. Stalker stays at the edges of the fight while using his gadgets to their best advantage, and Lady Liberty will stay back and try to keep focused on the big picture, defending herself with her gloves or using her guns to snipe while trying to precognitively thwart any surprises.

The team has no actual resources of its own; they have no base or transportation, and have worked as a complete group only a handful of times, so they have little along the lines of group strategies or procedures. However, pairs or small groups of the team have worked together often enough to have developed friendships and some basic tactics; for example, Rubberbando and Stalker, Lady Liberty and Megaera, Rubberbando and Lady Liberty, and Steadfast, Psiphon, and El Aguijón.

**Lady Liberty** by Geoff Speare

**Background/History:** Born under a witch’s moon in 1977, Lisa Bellucci was a well-behaved and serious child. Lisa idolized her father (a policeman, former Marine, and staunch patriot); in school, she was the kid helping the teacher keep order in class – outside school, she was the one who stood up to the neighborhood bullies. She always wanted to be a policeman like her father, and in 1999 she got her wish, becoming a recruit in the Millennium City Police Department.

Lisa’s father always told her that keeping the streets of America safe was no less patriotic than fighting overseas – and no less dangerous. Lisa never forgot these words. Within a few months, she was the darling of her department, earning stellar fitness reports and glowing recommendations.

Later that year, her aunt Florence, a kind but reclusive woman, passed away. Two months after the funeral, Lisa received a cryptic letter requesting her presence in her aunt’s attic at midnight the following night. Her first instinct was to write it up as a prank (or a stalker), but something about the handwriting, and the plea for secrecy, made her reconsider. She corralled her partner into coming along to the house, but made him stay in the car while she slipped in the back door and crept up the stairs.

The attic was covered in dust and cobwebs, empty save for a single oak chest covered in strange markings. The sensible thing to do was obvious: carry the chest downstairs to the kitchen, where there was plenty of light. Instead, Lisa watched as her hand, seemingly of its own accord, undid the latch and lifted the lid. A tremendous light flooded out – and Lisa found herself floating in a white, featureless sky. Before she could panic, a voice spoke – her late aunt. “I know this is confusing, dear,” she began, “but do sit still and listen.”

Lisa’s mother and aunt had been sorceresses of great power, named Verity and Insight. After making a brief appearance in the early ’70s, they had both been approached by both the Trismegistus Council and the Circle of the Scarlet Moon. After considering each group’s offer, they decided to refuse both. Verity, Lisa’s mother, set aside her magic to spend more time with her husband and soon-to-be-born child; her aunt, Insight, continued her research in private, compiling an extensive list of spells and sorcerous techniques.

Unfortunately, the Circle was not satisfied with this state of affairs. A trio of demons were sent to track down Insight and Verity and teach them the error of their ways. Together, the sisters defeated the demons, but while they fought, the Circle kidnapped Verity’s husband. They offered to return him and leave the sisters in peace for a

price – the fruits of Insight’s research, and more importantly, custody over the first offspring of either sister to display magical talent. Verity was forced to choose between her husband and (possibly) her unborn child. Fighting back tears of anguish, she swore to uphold the bargain. The Circle departed... but promised they would return to inspect Verity’s child. Her husband awoke completely unaware of the pact that loomed over his family.

While Verity fretted, Insight hatched a plan. In the months before the birth, she researched the phrases of a secret incantation which would create a shield against even the strongest divinations. Binding such a spell to a person for life would undoubtedly have side effects – but anything was better than giving the child to the Circle. When Lisa was born, her aunt was present. When she felt the magical essence flowing from the newborn, she began casting the glamour that would keep Lisa from the clutches of the Circle. Sure enough, when their agent arrived a week later, it pronounced her free of talent and departed.

Florence watched as Lisa developed into a very serious child, and suspected the spell – but was powerless. There was nothing she could do... until now. For years she had held the reins of Lisa’s destiny, but now she was gone, and Lisa would have to make her own decisions. “You may be surprised at the power that lies inside you... but use it, and the gifts I have for you, with caution.”

Lisa awoke on the floor of the attic. At first she thought she had been dreaming; but the chest was open, and her gun, badge, and handcuffs were on the floor in front of her, all glowing faintly. Inside the chest was a thick, ancient book bound in leather – Insight’s magical codex. Brushing off her partner’s questions, she hurried home, called in for some vacation time, and began to read. Quickly she discovered that her aunt had prepared veiled enchantments for her police gear: her gun fired with the power of a high-powered rifle; her handcuffs could animate and entrap people of their own accord; and her badge gave her a commanding authority. The book contained everything Lisa would need to hone her own talent, so that she could create spells of her own.

While many people would have hit the streets right away, Lisa was far too methodical for such brashness. She spent the next year practicing and studying relentlessly. Her hard work paid off; while she was unable to master higher magics such as witchfire, she gained a repertoire of minor wards, sorceries and enchantments.

Wishing to avoid the notice of the Circle, Lisa created a superheroic identity that would

**HONORABLE MENTION**

Lone Star (Jonathan Marshall), Lady Freedom (Dale Robbins), Doc Liberty (Douglas Wojtowicz), and Dauntless (Glen Sprigg)

**BEST CHARACTER QUOTE**

“Mechanon, you’re under arrest. Put your hands over your head and reattach your head to your body.”  
— Starbright (Dave Mattingly)

conceal her magical abilities as well as her private life. Thus was born Lady Liberty, a red, white, and blue clad heroine battling the villains of Millennium City and delivering justice where it was most needed. A simple conjuration spell took care of a costume.

Over time, Lisa became more adept at spells of divination. From the safety of her basement, she could (if she read the omens properly) predict events that threatened the city or its inhabitants. Since these dangers were often beyond her abilities to handle, she began creating her own omens, sending out messages that other mystically aware heroes could perceive (and hopefully act upon). In this manner, Lisa transitioned from an “active” superhero to more of a background figure, operating behind the scenes to ensure the safety and freedom of those she has sworn to protect. Today, Lady Liberty appears only in times of dire emergencies... or on the rare occasion when Lisa feels the need to let off some steam.

Lisa’s warning spells also attracted the attention of the magical cabals in the area. The Trismegistus Council, the Circle of the Scarlet Moon, and Dark Seraph are all aware of strange new magics at work in Millennium City... and all of them are working hard to be the first to find the source.

**Personality/Motivation:** Lisa is a focused individual with a strong work ethic and a firm belief in the American justice system. When she’s not on duty as a policeman, she’s in her basement refining her mastery of the magical arts; or out on the streets fighting crime. She has little in the way of a sense of humor, and has little patience for anyone who treats serious situations with any sort of levity. She has a reputation among her fellow officers as a killjoy, but at the same time she is respected for her talent and professionalism.

Her heroic persona, Lady Liberty, is held in high regard, although the public knows little about her (and she tries hard to keep it that way, rarely remaining on the scene long enough for press to arrive).

Her desire to fight crime stems from her upbringing and her training as a police officer. In addition, she bears a hatred for the Circle of the Scarlet Moon, the cabal that has oppressed and threatened her family since before she was born.

**Quote:** <sigh> “No, not like the statue.”

**Powers/Tactics:** Lisa’s powers and extraordinary characteristics all derive from the use of powerful magics. Only her glamour of nondetection prevents other mages from tracking her down or revealing her secret. (Because of the Invisible Power Effects Advantage on this power, all magic auras on or near Lisa are

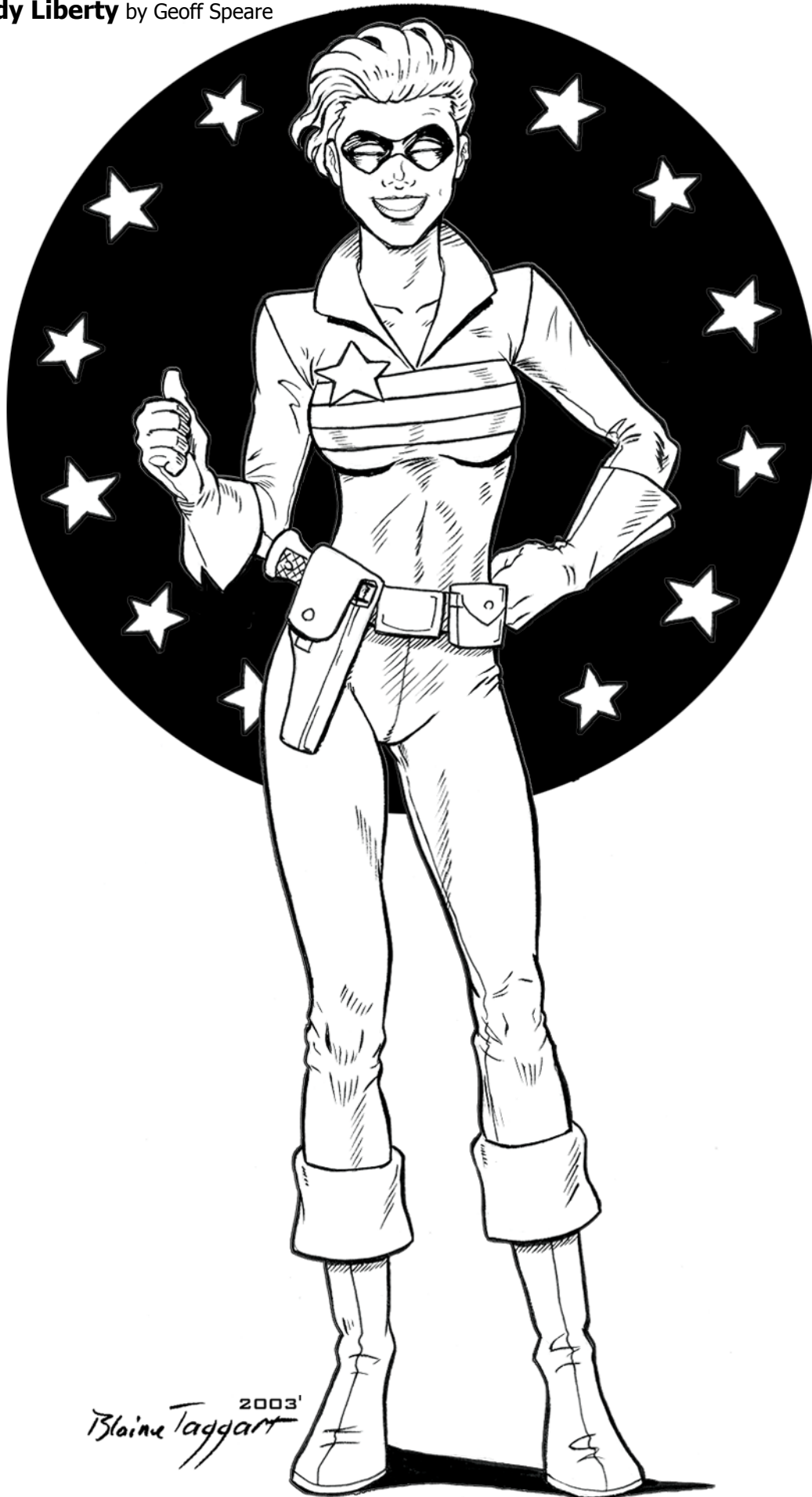
suppressed and undetectable.) Her pistol is enchanted to deliver greater force than normally possible, but appears to observers as a normal weapon. Her handcuffs can animate, flying through the air to entrap a foe at a mental command from Lisa. (When in her secret identity, Lisa will not use this enchantment, giving the handcuffs the standard Limitations for handcuffs listed in the sidebar on page 109 of the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition rulebook.) Her badge is enchanted with spells of authority; many criminals are so overwhelmed that they surrender on the spot. Because Lisa must show the badge for this power to be effective, however, she cannot use it in her heroic identity.

When preparing an appearance as Lady Liberty, Lisa will place runes of accuracy on her pistol, and don a pair of enchanted gauntlets which greatly increase her striking power (although again, these magical effects are veiled and not apparent to observers). At other times, Lisa will invoke spells of divination and warning to discover imminent dangers and notify other mystic heroes. In dire emergencies, she will project a disguised image to headquarters of supergroups, delivering messages of warning before vanishing in a puff of smoke.

Lisa knows that she is not the most effective of heroes; while her speed and reflexes are exceptional, she doesn’t have the defenses or damage potential to stand up to more powerful supervillains, let alone supergroups. However, her sense of justice and duty will not let her back down from a fight she knows is in the best interests of the people. If a great danger threatens the city, she will be there to fight it.

**Appearance:** Lisa is a tall woman of Italian and French heritage in her mid 20s. As Lady Liberty, she wears a blue skintight costume with a single star and several red and white stripes across the chest. A blue domino mask conceals her features. She carries a white leather belt with a holster for her pistol and a pouch for her handcuffs. Usually she also bears white gauntlets of heavy leather. She is lean, with blue eyes and long, straight brown hair. When appearing as a mystic prophet, she wears a dark robe and hood to conceal her features and build.





**Lady Liberty** by Geoff Speare

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
26	DEX	48	14-	OCV: 9/DCV: 9
18	CON	16	13-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 12-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
13	PRE	3	15-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0		
				Total: 16 PD (10 rPD)
				Total: 16 ED (10 rED)
				Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	3		
6	ED	2		
6	SPD	24		
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
30	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 129**

**Movement:** Running: 9"/18"  
Leaping: 3"/6"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
22	<i>Enchanted Pistol:</i> RKA 2d6 (versus ED), Invisible Power Effects (SFX Only, Sight Group, Hearing Group, +¼), +2 STUN Multiplier (+½); OAF (-1), 2 Clips of 8 Charges (-¼), Beam (-¼)	[8]
22	<i>Animated Handcuffs:</i> Entangle 4d6, 8 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks (All Attacks, +½); 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Set Effect (Hands Only/Feet Only, -1), OIF (-½), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼)	[1]
30	<i>Wards of Protection:</i> Armor (10 PD/10 ED)	0
14	<i>Glamour of Nondetection:</i> Darkness to Magic Sense Group 1" radius, Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Invisible Power Effects (Hides Effects of Power, Fully Invisible, +2); No Range (-½)	0
10	<i>Enchanted Badge:</i> +17 PRE (30 PRE Total); IAF (-½), Must Show Badge (-¼)	0
51	<i>Codex Spells:</i> VPP (Magic Pool), 40 base + 20 control cost; VPP Powers Can Be Changed Only With Access to Spellbooks (-½), Limited Class Of Powers Available: Magic (Slightly Limited, -¼)	var

**Martial Arts: Self-Defense**

**Maneuver OCV DCV Notes**

4	Fast Strike	+2	+0	5d6 Strike
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	30 STR Escape

**Perks**

- 5 Contact: Millennium City PD Lieutenant 11- (Access to Major Institutions, Very Useful Skills or Resources, Limited by Identity, Good Relationship)
- 2 Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers

**Skills**

- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 1 Acting 8-
- 3 Analyze Magic 13-
- 3 Bureaucraties 15-
- 3 Combat Driving 14-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Criminology 13-
- 3 Interrogation 15-
- 3 KS: Magic 13-
- 3 Power (Magic) 13-
- 2 PS: Police Officer 11-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 1 Systems Operation 8-
- 3 Teamwork 14-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 221**

**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

- 15 DNPC: Anthony (father) 8- (Normal, Unaware of Character's Secret ID)
- 10 DNPC: Rich Barlinson (partner) 8- (Normal, Unaware of Character's Secret ID, Useful Noncombat Position or Skills)
- 15 Hunted: Circle of the Scarlet Moon 8- (Mo Pow)
- 10 Hunted: Trismegistus Council 11- (Mo Pow, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Talisman 8- (As Pow)
- 10 Hunted: Dark Seraph 8- (Mo Pow)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Devoted to Truth and Justice (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Secretive about Magic Powers (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: "No-Nonsense" Attitude, Lacks a Sense of Humor (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Hatred of Circle of the Scarlet Moon (Uncommon, Strong)
- 20 Social Limitation: Secret ID (Frequently, Severe)
- 10 Susceptibility: 2d6 Damage per 5 Minutes in Anti-Magic Fields, (Uncommon)

**Total Cost: 350**

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### EXAMPLE POWERS FOR *CODEX SPELLS* POOL

**Conjure Costume:** A simple spell which transforms Lisa's clothing into her Lady Liberty costume – very useful when on duty.

*Conjure Costume:* Transform 2d6: Clothing into costume and vice-versa (Cosmetic) (10 Active Points); Limited Target (Limited, -½), IIF (-¼). Real Cost: 6

**Dweomer of Power:** As Lady Liberty, Lisa prefers to attack with a pair of leather gauntlets enchanted with powerful arcane forces. The damage does not appear magical to the casual observer, leading many to speculate about her advanced fighting techniques.

*Dweomer of Power:* HA +5d6, Invisible Power Effects, SFX Only (Sight Group, Hearing Group; +¼) (34 Active Points); HA Lim (-½), IIF (-¼). Real Cost: 19

**Runes of Accuracy:** These simple tracings, invisible to the naked eye, give her pistol unearthly accuracy.

*Runes of Accuracy:* +3 with Pistol (15 Active Points); IAF (-½). Real Cost: 10

**Greater Divination:** By reading various arcane omens, Lisa can sense danger present in the city around her, and can also send mystic messages (via the Transmit element) to others with the ability to perceive them.

*Divination:* Danger Sense 16- (General Area, Any Danger, Transmit) (40 Active Points); Extra Time, Only to Activate Constant or Persistent Power (1 Minute, -½), Character May Take No Other Actions (-¼), Costs Endurance (Costs END Every Phase, -½). Real Cost: 17

**Project Image:** When absolutely necessary, Lisa will send a message to non-mystics by projecting a disguised image of herself to the local authorities, or to the base of a powerful supergroup.

*Project Image:* Sight and Hearing Group Images, Increased Maximum Range (750", +¼), Indirect (Any origin, always fired away from attacker, +½), No Range Modifier (+½) (34 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-½), Extra Time, Only to Activate Constant or Persistent Power (5 Minutes, -¾), Character May Take No Other Actions (-¼), Set Effect: Image of Self (-1) Real Cost: 7

*Image Eyes and Ears:* Clairsentience (Sight Group and Normal Hearing, 8x Range) (40 Active Points); OAF Bulky (-½), Extra Time, Only to Activate Constant or Persistent Power (5 Minutes, -¾), Character May Take No Other Actions (-¼), Linked to Project Image (-¼) Real Cost: 10

**HONORABLE MENTION**

Binary (Jim Graham), Psylent (Mark Mensch), Disruptor (J.J. Mason), and MindHunter (Jonathon Marshall)

**MOST AMUSING POWER DESCRIPTION**

Many of these powers require that Hughes manipulate controls located under his holographic “forehead.” Outwardly, he appears to be doing a typical mentalist head clutch. — Mr. Mind (Rick Archer)

**Psiphon** by Glen Sprigg

**Background/History:** “So, let me see if I’ve got this straight. You’re admitting to us that you’ve worked for PSI for three years, you’re an accomplice in several kidnappings and robberies, and you’re asking for asylum from PSI?”

David Royster nodded miserably, his eyes downcast and haunted. The walls of the PRIMUS interrogation room were psi-shielded, he knew that. He didn’t care, he just wanted to be free of it all. He couldn’t deal with it any longer, he’d had enough....

“Alright, why don’t you tell us exactly how you got to this point, then? If you expect us to help you, you’re going to have to come clean.”

“I — I know,” answered David in a faltering voice. Could he do it? Even though he knew what they were, PSI had trained him, gotten him off the streets... now he was deliberately betraying them. They’d kill him, he knew that, but he also knew that he’d turned the corner, and there was no going back.

“I was fifteen and living on the streets when I heard about Mind, Incorporated. I figured they were a bunch of crackpots ripping people off and telling them they could make their lives all better. A buddy of mine told me he’d gotten a lot out of the seminars, and suggested it couldn’t hurt me to give them a fair shake. He’d always been a decent guy, so I listened to him and went to see what Mind, Inc. was all about.

“I had a few meetings with some of their people, but I wasn’t all that impressed with them; they acted like I would take it for granted that they were right, and that I could do whatever they wanted me to do. Turns out they were wrong, which actually made them more interested in me.

“See, they were using some sort of mind control on people, and weeding out the ones who couldn’t resist them. I could, so they brought in someone else, someone who definitely wasn’t taking any of this stuff for granted.

“So I met Psimon, who told me I had some sort of mental power myself, and he was interested in helping me control it. He didn’t mention the part about him wanting to control me, as well. But I figured that part out on my own eventually.

“It wasn’t long before I ended up at a special ‘school,’ mostly filled with runaways, kids with mental powers. I spent two years there, learning about my powers and getting a healthy dose of PSI’s brainwashing. A lot of the kids fell for it, including me. PSI told us we were special, and we wanted to believe it. After I ‘graduated,’ I became a ‘special field agent’ in the recruiting division.

“See, Psimon and Medusa had this idea of recruiting kids from other parts of society, not

just the runaways. My job was to help ‘convince’ the parents to let the kids go, without complaining. Not a problem; I figured I was doing the right thing anyway. But I was starting to have some bad feelings about what was going on.

“Then a few weeks ago, we went on another recruiting mission; Psimon came with me, and Mind Slayer was there as well, sort of as ‘backup.’ There was this kid in New Orleans we were going to pick up, and his father was a pretty important behind-the-scenes guy in local politics. But the kid’s parents didn’t care much for the idea of losing their kid, and the mother had some psychic power of her own. My own powers didn’t work as well as they should, and she surprised us with a mind blast. That’s when Psimon ordered Mind Slayer to... to kill them. And she did it, just like that. She sliced them up with her mental knives like it was nothing. And to her, it wasn’t.

“But to me, this was too much; I never wanted to believe how bad these people were, but this was way over the line. I told Psimon he was crazy, and Mind Slayer took aim at me. I knew what she was going to do, and I didn’t like it at all. So I hit her with a mental strike of my own, hoping to give myself enough time to get away. It worked, just enough for me to get the drop on Psimon with a punch. He never expected it, and I jumped in the car and took off.

“I didn’t know what I was going to do; I’d been in pretty deep with PSI, but I hadn’t hurt anyone myself. I carried that stupid gun of theirs, but I never even took it out to show people, let alone use it on anyone. Yeah, I did some brainwashing of my own, but I figured it was no big deal. But just because I’m no saint doesn’t mean I’m going to go in for killing. So I got the hell out of there and headed for the nearest PRIMUS base.

“I knew PRIMUS had been after PSI for a long time, so I decided to come and talk to you. I know I should go to jail for what I did, but there isn’t a jail that will keep them from finding me and killing me.”

The room was silent for a moment. Then the filtered voice returned. “Alright, David, here’s what we’re willing to give you. You’re right, they’ll kill you if they can, and you’re a valuable witness. So we’ll find a place for you that will keep them off your back. In exchange, you’ll give us what you know about PSI, and we’ll give you a second chance. What do you say?”

David agreed to PRIMUS’ terms, and under heavy guard dictated a long statement about PSI’s activities and whereabouts. He took on a couple of special assignments for PRIMUS, and then participated in the defense of Millennium City against Mechanon in 2002,

## DIGITAL HERO #13

which led to his helping found the informal hero team MC-8.

Since then, he has become a full-fledged costumed hero, in spite of two run-ins with PSI's assassins and one face-to-face confrontation with members of PSI, led by Psimon himself. David acquitted himself well against his former allies, and his knowledge of their tactics proved to be a decisive factor in the battle. As a result, the various members of MC-8 have come to trust him more fully than ever before, and he has earned a place among the heroes of the city. And outside of his new life as a hero, David has become a teacher of linguistics at a local university.

But every night in his dreams, he still hears the menacing threat of PSI lurking about him, waiting for the opportunity to bring him down....

**Personality/Motivation:** David Royster is a torn man. For years he believed that PSI's motives were good, that despite their activities they were doing some good in teaching children how to use their gifts. But over time he became more disillusioned, until finally his limits were surpassed.

As a lapsed villain, Psiphon has a zealous attitude about what he does. He is always ready to step into a fight with a villain, doing everything in his power to defeat them. Afterwards, he is always willing to give them a second chance, just as he was given. To date, no one has taken him up on the offer, but he has no intentions of giving up.

Psiphon is terrified of only two things: fire and PSI. When PSI shows up, he tends to panic, lashing out at them in a desperate attempt to stay alive. His fear of fire stems from a bad experience in training, when one of the students, a pyrokinetic, accidentally (he hopes) set his clothes on fire during a training session. Psimon fueled that fear in their attempts to control him, to the point where he now takes psychosomatic damage when attacked by fire.

Psiphon is the quiet member of the team, rarely socializing with his teammates and always keeping them at arm's length. His fear that PSI will strike him through his friends keeps him alone, fearful of becoming emotionally involved with someone that could be used against him by his worst enemies. He knows all too well what PSI is capable of.

**Quote:** "Look, I know you've caught some bad breaks in your time, but it's not too late. The world doesn't owe you anything except a chance, and I'm giving it to you."

**Powers/Tactics:** Psiphon has the ability to drain the mental acuity of people. Although he has no powers of mental control, he can sap a person's will enough that they will be very susceptible to

suggestion. If he touches a person, he not only drains their mind, but absorbs that energy into himself, increasing his own mental power for a time. He is also strengthened by the mental powers of others; any mental attacks are absorbed into his own psyche, and he can return that power in the form of a mind blast that gets stronger as he's mentally attacked.

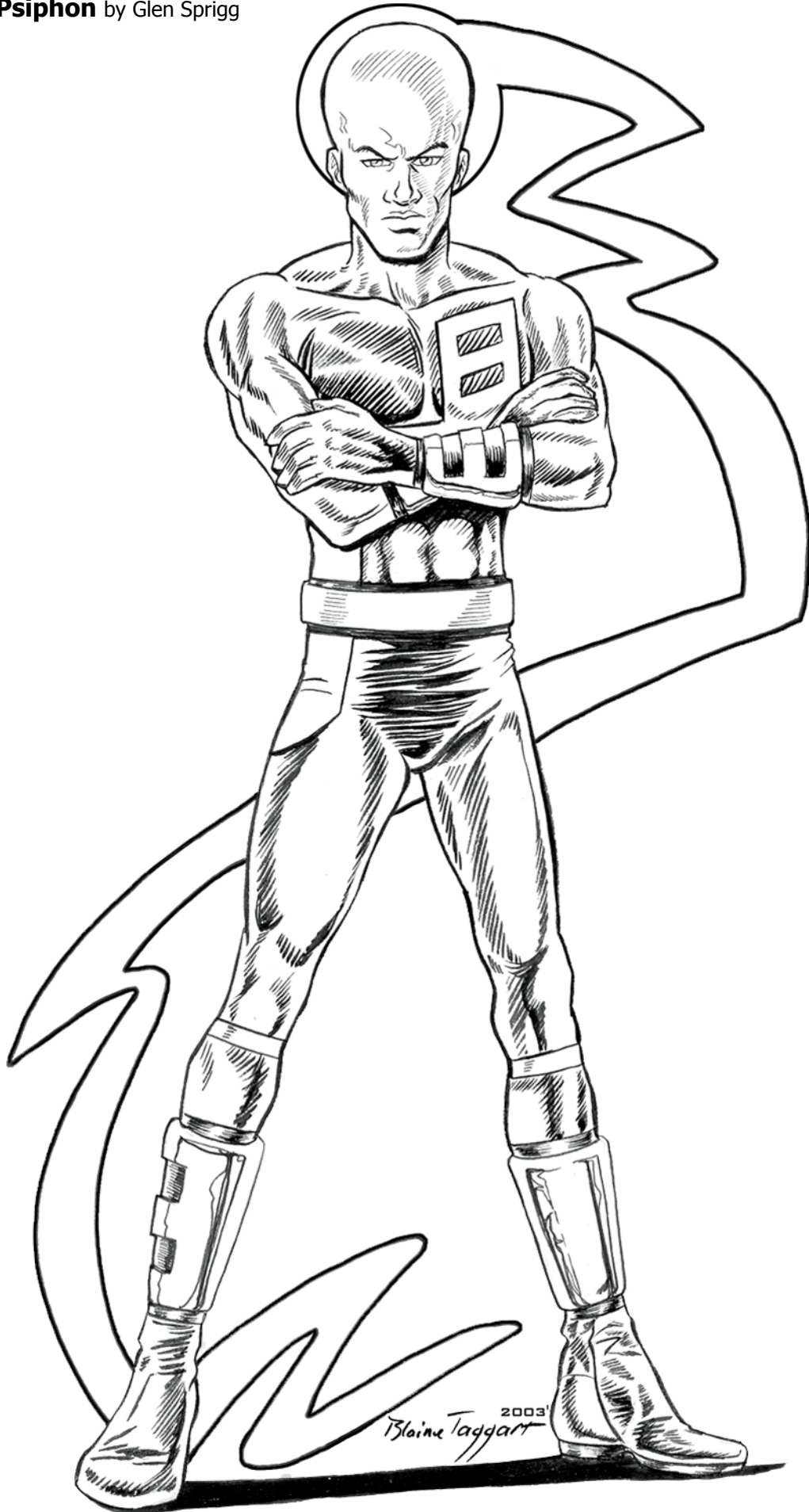
He still wears the costume provided to him by PSI, although it has been modified somewhat (there is no PSI logo anywhere on it). It was designed to protect the wearer against small arms fire, and David has no intention of losing it.

A side effect of Psiphon's mental powers is his natural linguistic abilities. Perhaps due to the mental energies he has absorbed over the years, he finds it easy to learn new languages, and has already mastered several. He is also an expert at breaking codes and ciphers.

**Appearance:** David is a good-looking black man, about 23 years old. He is bald (a conscious choice due to the effect his powers have on his appearance) and brown-eyed. When he has used his Transfer or Absorption powers, his head swells, returning to normal as the energy dissipates or is discharged via an Ego Attack.

His costume is dark purple with white trim and a computer-font '8' on his chest. His boots and wrist braces are white as well.

**Psiphon** by Glen Sprigg



## DIGITAL HERO #13

### Psiphon by Glen Sprigg

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-
25	EGO	30	14-	ECV: 8
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
6	PD	4		Total: 14 PD (8 rPD)
7	ED	3		Total: 15 ED (8 rED)
5	SPD	22		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	REC	4		
40	END	0		
32	STUN	7		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 125**

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

Cost	Powers	END
30	<i>Mental Mastery</i> : Elemental Control, 60-point Powers	
28	1) <i>Mental Siphon</i> : Transfer 2d6 (Target's EGO to Psiphon's END & Mental Defense, ½ to Each), Can Transfer Maximum of 30 points, BOECV (versus Mental Defense, +1); Concentration, ½ DCV (-¼)	7
32	2) <i>Mental Lethargy</i> : Drain Target's EGO 3d6, Ranged (+½), BOCV (versus Mental Defense, +1); Concentration, ½ DCV (-¼)	8
30	3) <i>Mind Blast</i> : Ego Attack 6d6	6
30	<i>Mental Absorption</i> : 6d6 Absorption versus Mental Attacks, Points Go to END and Ego Attack, ½ to Each	0
20	Mental Defense (20 points), 25 Total Points	0
16	<i>Armored Costume</i> : Armor (8 PD/8 ED), OIF (-½)	0

### Talents

5 Eidetic Memory

### Skills

- 9 +3 with *Mental Mastery* EC
- 7 Cryptography 14-
- 2 KS: PSI 11-
- 2 PS: Teacher 11-
- 3 Linguist (English is Native, Using Optional Language Table)
  - 2 1) French (Native)
  - 2 2) German (Native)
  - 2 3) Spanish (Native)
  - 2 4) Italian (Native)
  - 3 5) Russian (Native)

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 225**

**Total Cost: 350**

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Head Increases in Size when Transfer or Absorption are Active (Concealable, Noticed)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable, Unusual Senses)
- 10 Enraged: Attacked by PSI (Uncommon), go 11-, rec 14-
- 25 Hunted: PSI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill, They Know His Identity)
- 10 Hunted: PRIMUS 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Loner, Has Difficulty Trusting Others (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Pyrophobia (Uncommon, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: Former Member of PSI, 11-
- 5 Social Limitation: Minority (Black) (Occasionally, Minor)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity, David Royster (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN from Fire & Heat Attacks

**Total Cost: 350**

**HONORABLE MENTION**

Dragonfly (Glen Sprigg), Dragonfly (Dave Mattingly), Gadgetfly (Denver Mason), and Peconha (Geoff Speare)

**BEST CHARACTER QUOTE**

"I am Cian the Fair-Haired, and I challenge you to single combat... I'm down here!" — Cian the Fair-Haired (Rick Archer)

**El Agujón – The Sting**

by Jonathan Marshall

**Background/History:** Alejandro Montez sighed as the eighteenth prototype of his insect communicator fizzled and failed. "Never mind," his wife, Marisa said, "I am sure you'll make a breakthrough soon."

Their visit to the Amazon to study the insects there was supposed to help Alejandro perfect his insect control device by getting him out of his laboratory, but something was still not quite right. Alejandro swapped a circuit board and put the helmet back on his head, absent-mindedly twisting a pair of wires together. The heat and humidity had made him drowsy, so he called to Marisa that he was going to sit down for a while. Marisa smiled and waved at him, as she played with their three year old son, Luis.

Alejandro woke with a start to the screams of his wife and child. For a moment he could not recall where he was. Realization dawned on Alejandro and he ran to his family. Marisa was lying by the riverbank, vainly trying to swat away the swarm of angry bees that were attacking her and Luis. She had thrown herself on top of her child, but the bees were relentless. "Stop! Stop!" cried Alejandro, running to his stricken wife. To his astonishment, the bees obeyed. Incomprehension crossed his face as he bent down to check on Marisa. She looked up at him through a puffy, tear-streaked face and said, "Your device... it worked. Help Luis," before lapsing into unconsciousness.

Alejandro did all he could for the two of them, but Luis was too small to survive the attack. Marisa was hospitalized for days and Alejandro could barely bring himself to tell her the bad news.

Luis's death put an intolerable strain on the marriage. Marisa did not blame her husband, but she could not stand his apparent lack of concern. If anything, Alejandro seemed more cheerful now than ever. She realized that this must be his way of coping with things, but she could not bear to be around him. She kissed him goodbye one morning and left, citing a need to grieve in her own way.

Shortly afterwards, Marisa read of a new costumed hero who had summoned swarms of bees and used an electrical stun gun to defeat a gang of robbers. She immediately guessed that it was her husband. She confronted Alejandro at his laboratory. He tried to deny it, but he could never lie to her. She told him he was a fool and that he could have been killed. She could not bear to lose him too, not so soon after Luis.

Alejandro is a jovial man, but stubborn when his mind is made up. He said that he wanted to do something positive after his son's death and that it was only right to use the device

which had brought them to the Amazon to do some good. Marisa knew her husband well enough to be sure that there was no way of dissuading him.

Reluctantly, Marisa agreed to help Alejandro, but only to try and stop him from getting killed. Marisa is a brilliant scientist too, with an expertise in size-changing technology. She and Alejandro created devices she hoped would keep him safe, a suit which allowed him to shrink and which was fitted with wings and image-enhancing eyepieces. When they had finished their work, Marisa kissed Alejandro goodbye for a second time.

Alejandro's younger brother, Javier, used to own a restaurant called "Casa Montez". Javier is a compulsive gambler, which often gets him into trouble. He lost the restaurant to Alejandro in a card game, who had specifically decided to win it from Javier to stop him from losing everything. Alejandro lets Javier run the restaurant and draw a salary for doing so. "Casa Montez" is reasonably successful.

Javier idolizes heroes, especially El Agujón, a fellow Latino. Casa Montez serves cocktails themed around some of Millennium City's heroes. The pride of the place is a shooter called El Agujón, made from crème de banane, melon liqueur, and gold tequila. While the drink is not to Alejandro's taste, its existence amuses him enormously.

Alejandro is very careful around his brother to make sure that Javier never discovers his secret identity. Alejandro is sure that Javier would never wish to cause his brother (or his favorite hero) harm, but he knows only too well that his brother is weak-willed and that if Javier had this information, he might be tempted to use it to meet a wager.

Alejandro is currently trying to get back together with Marisa. She still loves him, but cannot rid herself of the bad memories she associates with Alejandro and the death of Luis. Recently, one of Alejandro's rivals, Doctor Allen Dale has been making moves on Marisa, after they met at a science demonstration. Alejandro cannot stand Dr. Dale, whom he regards as humorless. Alejandro refers to his rival as "the Minstrel," a reference to the traveling player from the legends of Robin Hood and an ironic joke about Dale's staid personality.

**Personality/Motivations:** Alejandro is outwardly a happy, cheerful man. He is always making jokes and bursting into song. He is a moderately talented singer, favoring opera. Even the terrible injuries Marisa suffered and the death of their son could not stop him being almost insufferably cheerful. This is simply Alejandro's way of dealing with life, especially its setbacks, even though it is sometimes inappropriate.



## DIGITAL HERO #13

Since the death of Luis and his separation from Marisa, Alejandro has become somewhat reckless. Marisa fears that the creation of El Aguijón is more than just an expression a desire to right past wrongs and is possibly evidence of a death wish on her husband's part.

Alejandro cannot resist trying to solve a scientific problem and loves observing the behavior of his various insect colonies.

**Quote:** "You will soon feel the sting of defeat!"

**Powers/Tactics:** The Reducto Suit was invented by Marisa Montez. It enables Alejandro to shrink to approximately four inches in height.

Alejandro understands enough about the technology involved to repair the suit, but he is not capable of making advances in the field.

The wings on the suit allow Alejandro to fly at moderate speeds, but only when shrunk.

Alejandro tries to keep in the air during fights.

The Sting itself is designed to be painful and to penetrate defenses, rather than be lethal. The Sting has a specific non-lethal option, rather like a stun gun. Alejandro normally tries to use the stun gun option first, resorting to the more dangerous alternative only if the former proves ineffective. The fact that the Sting has no range often forces him to get closer to opponents than he would like, but otherwise he tries to keep his distance, especially against opponents with area attacks. He hopes to improve the Sting so that it can launch electrical bolts.

Alejandro is aware that his powers make him fairly useless against certain opponents, so he sometimes uses his powers for reconnaissance. His shrinking powers combined with his eyesight-enhancing gadgets can make him an excellent spy.

His greatest weapon is the Entomocephalizer, which allows him to summon swarms of insects (see *HERO System Bestiary* pages 183-184). He can talk to the swarms he summons, but cannot understand them (at least not yet) and he can even take control of hostile insects. Alejandro's first action in any fight is normally to summon the nearest insects, frequently ants in the city. His personal preference is flying insects, especially bees and wasps. Possibly he gains a thrill from controlling the creatures which caused Marisa so much pain and which killed his son.

Using the helmet, he can make the insect swarms attack and has certain set patterns he utilizes. The first is a general confusion of insects, which makes it difficult to see, hear, or perceive with Radar in the area. The second is a cloud of biting or stinging insects and the last is a horde of insects used to move around light objects, such as bits of paper, gems, or similar items (see the sidebar for details). If he wishes, he can drive the swarms to be more destructive

(see the separate options for swarms). He can also command insects to form simple shapes, such as arrows, words, or even objects such as cars. Alejandro normally uses this power to make signs for other heroes to follow, or which would be visible from the air, but he has occasionally created decoy objects, to fool people from a distance.

Most of his helmet's functions run from Alejandro's mental energy, but the final power is only contained in the helmet for convenience. His Entomocephalizer can create light (like a flashlight), amplify his voice, or launch tiny hologram projectors, which project one of three images. The first is a giant wasp, the second is an insect swarm, and the third is an image of multiple Aguijóns hovering to and fro. He uses these as distractions, or to hide from opponents. Sometimes he uses the last image as cover while he escapes using Stealth. These images are computer generated, but the commands needed to regulate the holograms tie up the helmet's other systems, so Alejandro cannot issue any new commands of insects while images are running. For this reason, he often leaves this as a weapon of last resort. He also thinks the images are best kept as a surprise tactic.

There is one slight problem with the Entomocephalizer, which is that its cybernetic links channel electrical impulses directly into the wearer's nervous system.

To make El Aguijón less powerful, consider taking away his shrinking related abilities (Shrinking and Flight), his Sting (leaving him reliant on insects and not much good in a fight), or his Entomocephalizer Helmet. One could also reduce some of his characteristics by a few points. To make him more powerful, options include increasing the damage done by the Sting, or allowing it to function at range.

**Appearance:** Alejandro Montez is a man of average height and build. He has slightly wavy black hair, graying a bit at the temples. His eyes are brown and twinkling, set in a slightly round face. He favors slacks, an open-necked shirt, and a jacket. His Reducto Suit is primarily green, with yellow boots, gauntlets, and trim on the helmet. It has a faceplate which Alejandro can see through clearly, but blurs his features as viewed from the outside. The eyepieces are amber. The wings on the suit are yellow too, resembling the wings of a dragonfly. All of his gadgets are clearly technological in nature, but this is not easy to spot when he is only four inches tall.

## CHANGE ENVIRONMENT OPTIONS

- 1) *Confusion:*  
Change  
Environment 4"  
radius, -3 to  
Radar and Sight  
and Hearing  
Group PER  
Rolls, Reduced  
Endurance (½  
END; +¼) 2
- 2) *Stinging:*  
Change  
Environment 4"  
radius, -1 to  
Radar and Sight  
and Hearing  
Group PER  
Rolls, 2 points  
of Penetrating  
Damage,  
Reduced  
Endurance (½  
END; +¼) 2
- 3) *Movement:*  
Change  
Environment 4"  
radius, -1 to  
Radar and Sight  
and Hearing  
Group PER  
Rolls, 3 points  
of Telekinetic  
Strength,  
Reduced  
Endurance (½  
END; +¼) 2

**El Aguijón – The Sting**

by Jonathan Marshall

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg, 3d6 HTH [1]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
13	BODY	6	11-	
23	INT	13	14-	PER Roll: 14-
15	EGO	10	13-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
				Total: 14 PD (8 rPD)
				Total: 14 ED (8 rED)
				Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	PD	3		
6	ED	2		
5	SPD	20		
8	REC	2		
40	END	2		
30	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 118**

**Movement:**

Running:	6"/12"
Flying:	10"/20"
Leaping:	3"/6"
Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
24	<i>The Sting</i> : Multipower, 60-point Reserve; OAF (-1), No Range (-½)	
2u	1) <i>Piercing Sting</i> : EB 8d6; Armor Piercing (+½); OAF (-1), No Range (-½), 16 Charges (-0)	[16]
2u	2) <i>Stunning Sting</i> : EB 6d6, NND (Defense is Force Field or Non-Conductive Armor, +1); OAF (-1), No Range (-½), 16 Charges (-0)	[16]
35	<i>Entomocephalizer</i> : Multipower, 52-point Reserve; OIF (-½)	
2u	1) <i>Insect Beacon</i> : Summon 67-point Insect Swarms, Up to 4 Swarms, Any Insects (+¼), Devoted (+¾), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½), Insects Must Inhabit Locale (-½), Insects Arrive Under Their Own Power (-½)	2
2u	2) <i>Insect Controller</i> : Mind Control 8d6 (Animal Class of Minds), Telepathic (+¼); OIF (-½), Only Works on Insects (-½), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-¼)	5
1u	3) <i>Insect Communicator</i> : Telepathy 6d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½), Broadcast Only (-½), Only Works on Insects (-½), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-¼)	1
2u	4) <i>Swarm I</i> : Change Environment 4" Radius, Insect Swarms, Very Limited Group of Effects (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½), Must Have Insect Swarm Nearby (-½)	2

1u	5) <i>Swarm II</i> : Radar, Sight, and Touch Groups Images, Increased Size (4" Radius; +½); OIF (-½), Must Have Insect Swarm Nearby (-½)	3
1u	6) <i>Swarm III</i> : Telekinesis 4 STR, Fine Manipulation, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Selective (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½), Affects Whole Object (-¼), Must Have Insect Swarm in Affected Area (-½)	1
2u	7) <i>Swarm IV</i> : EB 4d6, Penetrating (+½), Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Selective (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); OIF (-½), Must Have Insect Swarm in Affected Area (-½)	2
2u	8) <i>Image Projector</i> : Sight and Hearing Group Images, -4 To PER Rolls, Increased Size (2" radius; +¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½), Limited Selection of Images (-½)	0
16	<i>Armored Costume</i> : Armor (8 PD/8 ED); OIF (-½)	0
7	<i>Microvision Lenses</i> : Microscopic for Sight Group, x100 Magnification; OIF (-½)	0
3	<i>UV Lenses</i> : Ultraviolet Vision; OIF (-½)	0
4	<i>Visual Enhancer</i> : +3 To Sight Group PER Rolls; OIF (-½)	0
13	<i>Wings</i> : Flight 10", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½), Restrained (-½), Usable Only When Shrunk (-¼)	0
40	<i>Reducto Suit</i> : Shrinking (.125m tall [about 4 inches], .0016 kg mass, -8 to PER Rolls, +8 DCV, +12" KB), Reduced Endurance (0 END; -½); OIF (-½)	0

**Skills**

6	+2 with The Sting, Swarms III and IV
0	AK: Millennium City 8-
3	Computer Programming 14-
3	Concealment 14-
3	Electronics 14-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 14-
3	Inventor 14-
3	Mechanics 14-
4	Language: Spanish (Idiomatic)
3	Paramedics 14-
3	PS: Scientist 14-
0	PS: Singer 11-
3	Shadowing 14-
3	Stealth 13-
2	Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons) 14-

## DIGITAL HERO #13

- 3 Scholar
- 1 1) KS: Opera 11-
- 2 2) KS: Insect Behavior 14-
- 1 3) KS: Superheroes 11-
- 1 4) KS: Superhero World 11-
- 1 5) KS: Superpowers 11-
- 1 6) KS: Supervillains 11-
  
- 3 Scientist
- 1 1) SS: Anatomy 11-
- 2 2) SS: Biology 14-
- 1 3) SS: Chemistry 11-
- 2 4) SS: Cybernetics 14-
- 1 5) SS: Genetics 11-
- 1 6) SS: Electrical Engineering 11-
- 5 7) SS: Entomology 17-
- 1 8) SS: Mathematics 11-
- 2 9) SS: Physics 14-
- 2 10) SS: Psionic Engineering 14-
- 1 11) SS: Size Physics 11-

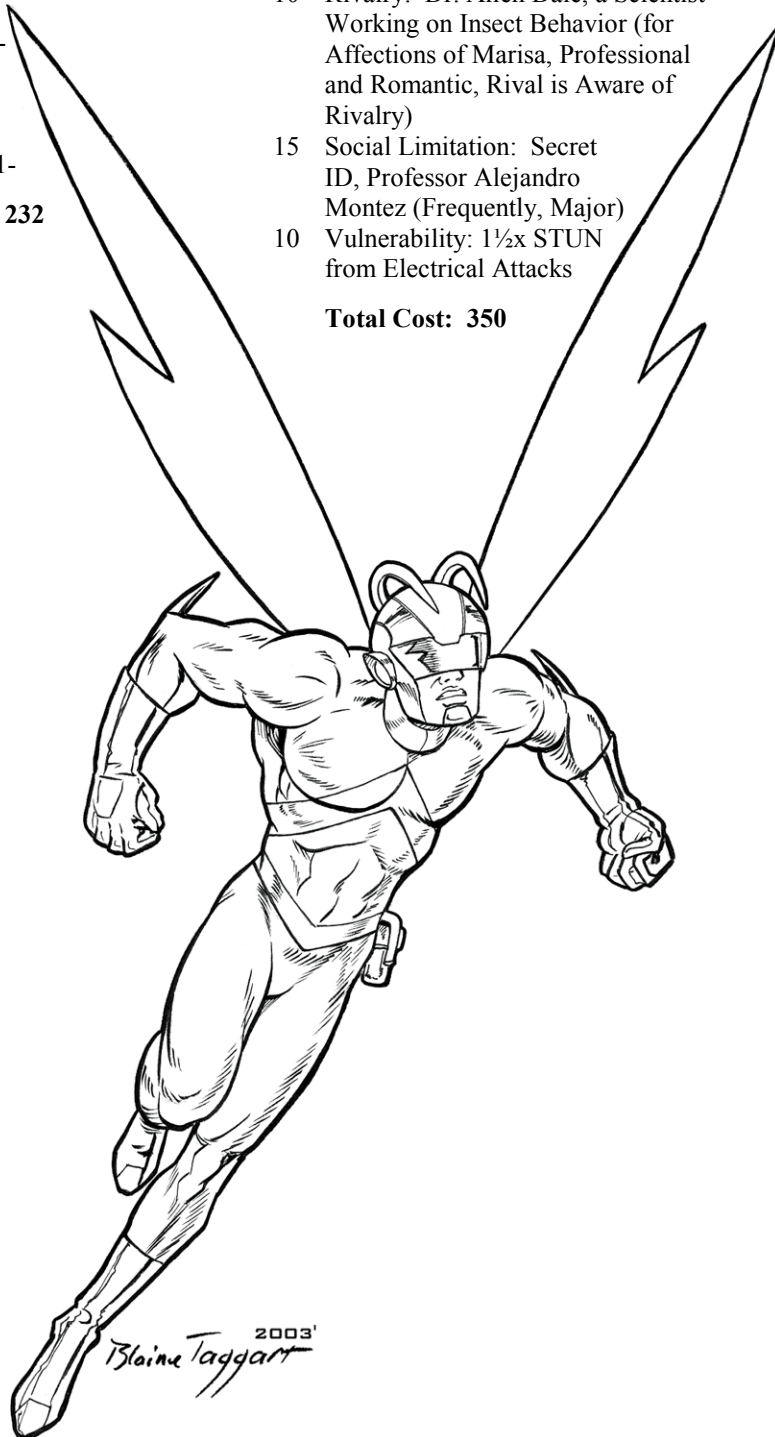
**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 232**

**Total Cost: 350**

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 15 DNPC: Javier Montez 8- (Normal, Unaware of Character's Secret ID)
- 5 DNPC: Marisa Montez 8- (Competent)
- 15 Hunted: Black Harlequin 8- (Mo Pow, Kill)
- 20 Hunted: VIPER 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
- 10 Hunted: The Hornet 8- (As Pow, Kill)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Intellectual Curiosity (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Relentlessly Cheerful (Common, Strong)
- 10 Rivalry: Dr. Allen Dale, a Scientist Working on Insect Behavior (for Affections of Marisa, Professional and Romantic, Rival is Aware of Rivalry)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID, Professor Alejandro Montez (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN from Electrical Attacks

**Total Cost: 350**



**HONORABLE MENTION**

The Keeper (Jonathan Marshall), Escuro Vingança (Scott Thomlinson), Spotlight (Geoff Spare), and Night Flash (Andy Watkins)

**MOST AMUSING UTILITY BELT**

"The shoulder straps have pouches wherein Damien keeps light snacks and various tools for hygiene." — Dale Robbins

**Stalker** by Denver Mason**Background/History:**

*Four Years ago:* "This is working out great, dad." Tony grinned at his father, and fired another round into the target. A soft squeeze, a "whip thunk" sound, and the dart had already launched from the wristband to the bullseye. The invention was, Tom had to admit, quite smooth. "Wrist bands, eh?"

"Exactly." George continued to watch his son test the equipment, "A bit harder to disarm than your average police sidearm, isn't it?"

"Sure is." His son got a momentary thoughtful look, then asked, "Dad, is it true funding may be cut and this whole thing scrapped?"

The older man let a frown escape, "It's unfortunately likely. In this business, it's not always what you know, but who you know. You are holding what may end up being the only prototype for my multi-round wrist launcher."

"A thing this good shouldn't go to waste." Tony simply said, and tested out the gas pellet next.

*Three Years ago:* Thomas peeled off the mask hurriedly. With any luck his father was still asleep and....

The light clicked on.

"I suppose you care to explain?" George's voice was quite cool. The days when his dad could take him in a fair fight were long gone, but Tony still winced at the authoritative tone. Busted, the young man thought to himself.

"I think you guessed, I'm Stalker." He shrugged at his father, "Now, I know I shouldn't have borrowed your gear, but when the deal fell through anyways... well, you know how bad it's been getting on the streets and...."

"Borrowed? Borrowed?!? Tony, you stole my research, put your life in peril, and made up flimsy excuses. Doubly insulting to think I wouldn't realize from the news stories just what that was." His father's agitation was obvious, but there was something else.

"Dad... I... there's no excuse." He admitted.

"Damn straight." The scientist scowled.

"I can't quit." He set his chin out, "Take your stuff back, and I'll still be Stalker."

For a moment, Tony honestly thought his dad might implode. The cords in George's neck tightened, and he made small choking sounds.

"I nearly have that black belt, and I strike from the darkness and get surprise whenever I can... I don't fight stupid," Tony pressed." I'm good at it."

The older man finally calmed and replied, "Then keep using it. If you're going to risk your life, I at least want you using good equipment." With that, George gave a defeated sort of hand toss into the air, turned and began to walk out.

"Thanks." Tony let out a sigh of relief.

The older man grunted a welcome, opened the door to leave, then paused, "Son?"

"Yeah, Dad?"

"The... equipment... how'd it handle? I mean, I don't suppose you've been taking notes?"

A smile crossed Tony's face, "As a matter of fact... it works like a charm, and... I have."

*Two years ago:* George felt half dead, and his son seemed willing to finish the other half for him. The younger man made a smooth punch that his senior did not block in time.

"Come on, Dad. You should have seen that one coming."

George grunted, "Yes, yes, you're younger and faster than me. Remember?"

"Hey, this training and getting into shape was your idea, not mine."

"After being nearly kidnapped or used as a hostage not once, but twice, can you blame me?" The scientist chuckled, and counter punched, actually getting his son off guard this time.

"Guess I can't." Tony weaved back, helping his father progress. "Good... very good. More fluid."

*One year ago:* It had been six hours since his son had gone out to help stop the villain group known as The Choir. Tony's plan had been to pick them off, one by one. George knew he should have faith, but still, six hours. The scientist hoped the transponder he put in the suit was working as he drove like a madman through the city's back streets hoping to find his son.

The alley was dark, smelling of burnt rubber, urine, and blood. A brief flash of headlights revealed exactly where the blood part had come from. The gloved hand dangling out of the dumpster was caked in it.

George Palante was a man who put his faith in science. He knew that nothing was ultimately impossible with science on your side. Why should medical science be any different?

When they pulled the sheet over his son's body at the E/R, that faith was shattered.

*Six months ago:* The robbery had been pulled off perfectly. The rest of the Choir found banks beneath them, but Duet rather enjoyed a good old-fashioned heist like this. She and her duplicate exchanged smiles as they ran to their getaway vehicle. When her double opened the door... gas poured out, dropping her other half in seconds.

"What?" dizziness overcame the villainess, as the feedback shot through her, "Who?"

The dart came before the answer, sinking into the white of her neck

"Me," Stalker replied as he stepped out of the shadows. "Hello again, Duet."

## DIGITAL HERO #13

“Stalker, but... you’re dead. We... we killed you,” she managed, before spinning into unconsciousness.

“No. Stalker can never die. Not until the hunt for justice is over,” The man in black spoke calmly, then turned to leave as the police came in force to take the prisoner.

Later, in the calm of his lab, George peeled off the mask, and looked at the list, and finally scratched one name out. “One down... or is it two? Seven more to go.”

**Personality/Motivation:** George Palante is a grieving father carrying on his son’s legacy, and knowing full well that it is supposed to be the other way around. Having taken the Stalker costume and outfit, and improving on them; he now tries to finish what his son started: Chiefly, the capture of *The Choir*; a villainous set of killers and crooks with musical themes, powers and gimmicks. It was they who slew his son (though, thanks to George’s ruse, they no longer believe they succeeded). While sorely tempted to return the favor by taking their lives, George is not a violent man by nature, and knows his son would never have approved. Justice will be served by their imprisonment. Taking down the Choir has become his first priority, above even the removal of more dangerous foes. Like a terrier seeking rats, he digs constantly for them throughout the underworld.

Once, George was an amiable man given to much laughter, driven by a love of his son, and of science. He no longer laughs, but it is clear his other loves remain. Indeed, it is his still strong fascination with technology that may yet betray him if he should run into someone who knew Stalker I. While Tony enjoyed using some high tech, how it ticked never appealed to him the way it beckons to his father. George masquerades as the first Stalker both for the edge it might bring, and to make sure the bastards who got his son never realize they won. On a subconscious level, George also can’t help feel that as long as Stalker fights, some part of his son lingers on. He is currently resolved that once his mission is over, and the Choir arrested; He will find a young man to carry on the name and legacy his son started.

**Quote:** “You seem surprised to see me... Don’t be. Justice can reach out of the very grave, when it has to.”

**Powers/Tactics:** Stalker II uses more advanced gadgetry than Stalker I did. Despite the training his son gave him, George is nowhere near as fit or skilled as Tony was in hand-to-hand combat, and he *knows* it. He has therefore enhanced the costume with micro-circuitry in an attempt to mimic his son’s capabilities, and masked much of it so it’s not apparent to those he fights that, in

this case, it is indeed the clothes that make the man. Naturally, some aspects (such as saving him from bullets) ARE obvious to his attackers, but nothing Stalker I didn’t have in the first place.

While he will fall back on his Karate training when he has to, Stalker II prefers to utilize his wrist launchers. It has a variety of weaponry to choose from. As this is from George’s original attempt to find nonfatal methods for capturing criminals, most are relatively harmless. Laced Darts that disorient, Sappers (essentially a rubber bullet that is its own sound proofing), Sleep Gas, and an Electro Disc are all in the mix. It has a smoke screen that can prove useful as well. Other gadgets include his ion boots (which create complementing magnetic fields), and his swingline.

In combat, the current Stalker (like the previous one) prefers to fight with every advantage. Despite the bad reputation this may lead to among the public and more honorable heroes, Stalker feels he cannot afford to be anything less than pragmatic. He prefers ambushing to straightforward fights anytime. George’s scientific genius is adapting and formulating tactics in combat. He still hates surprises, and is not too proud to retreat if something he didn’t expect comes up; the exception being members of the Choir. Stalker’s obsession with them may blind him dangerously one day.

There have already been close calls. Twice now, when all seemed lost for Stalker; a lucky break came his way. Normally George would think nothing of it, except both times he has imagined he saw his son, once in costume, once out of it, staring at him, silently – eyes pleading. While the scientifically-minded George now worries about his sanity, others have noticed it as well, particularly those of the mystic bent. Dirge, the necromantic chanter of the Choir, suspects that their most ruthless hunter has an ally from beyond the barrier, though he doesn’t know the details... yet.

**Appearance:** Stalker’s black costume is subtler than some battle armors. It is not immediately apparent to his foes that it is the source of much of his physical prowess. The bandoliers, belt, boots, and wrist launchers of his outfit are golden in hue. The lenses of his mask are yellow, but shift to an eerie orange when the Infrared option is in use.

Out of costume, George Palante is a fit man in excellent shape, especially given he is middle-aged. He stands roughly six feet tall, and has dark hair, now lined with gray, especially at the temples. Except at formal functions, he dresses in casual slacks and rumpled shirts as he’s too distracted by other matters right now to worry about fashion.

**Stalker** by Denver Mason

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15+10*^	STR	11	12-(14-)	Lift 200(800) kg; 3d6(5d6) HTH [1(2)]
18+5*^	DEX	33	13-(14-)	OCV: 6(8)/
15+10*^	CON	21	12-(14-)	DCV: 6(8)
10	BODY	0	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll: 13-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 15 PD (10 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 15 ED (10 rED)
4+1*	SPD	20		Phases: 3,6,9,12 (3,5,8,10,12)
8	REC	4		
30	END	0		*: IIF (micro-engineered; -1/4)
30	STUN	5		^: No Figured Characteristics (-1/2)

**Total Characteristics Cost: 135**

**Movement:**

Running:	8"/16"
Swinging:	15"/30"
Leaping:	8"/16"
Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
30	<i>Wrist Launcher Arsenal:</i> Multipower, 45-point Reserve; OIF (-1/2)	
3u	1) <i>Laced Darts:</i> Drain DEX 3d6, Ranged (+1/2), Must Target Non-Armored Hit Locations (-1/4), 2 Clips of 12 Charges (-0) [12]	
3u	2) <i>Sapper Shot:</i> EB 7d6 (versus PD), Invisible to Hearing Group (+1/4), Reduced Penetration (-1/4), 2 Clips of 12 Charges (-0) [12]	
3u	3) <i>Sleep Gas:</i> EB 4d6, NND (Defense is LS: No Need to Breathe, +1), 2 Clips of 12 Charges (-0) [12]	
2u	4) <i>Smoke Screen:</i> Darkness to Sight Group 3" Radius, Normal Sight Only (-1/4), 2 Clips of 6 Continuing Charges Lasting 1 Turn (Removed by Winds or Rain, -0) [6cc]	
3u	5) <i>Electro-Discs:</i> EB 9d6 (versus ED), 2 Clips of 8 Charges (-1/4) [8]	
3u	6) <i>Glue Bomb:</i> Entangle 3d6, 3 DEF, Explosion (+1/2), 2 Clips of 12 Charges (-0) [12]	
20	<i>Reinforced Costume:</i> Armor (10 PD/10 ED); OIF(-1/2)	0
5	<i>Eye Shields:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (8 points), OIF (-1/2)	0
5	<i>Ear Coverings:</i> Hearing Group Flash Defense (8 points), OIF (-1/2)	0
3	<i>IR Option:</i> Infrared Perception, OIF (-1/2)	0

7	<i>Radio Headgear:</i> Radio Perception, OIF (-1/2)	0
7	<i>Ion Boots:</i> Clinging (Normal STR), OIF (-1/2)	0
10	<i>Swingline Launcher:</i> Swinging 15", OIF (-1/2), 8 Recoverable Charges (-0)[8rc]	
4	<i>Athletic Ability:</i> Running +2" (8" Total)	1
11	<i>Fallen Son, Guardian Angel?:</i> Luck 5d6; No Conscious Control (Limitation reduced as Luck is rather haphazard to begin with, -1), Visible (-1/4)	0

**Martial Arts: Karate**

**Maneuver OCV DCV Notes**

4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25(35) STR
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
4	Punch/Snap Kick	+0	+2	7d6(9d6) Strike

**Perks**

2	Reputation: Relentless Vigilante (throughout U.S.) 11-
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**Skills**

20	+2 Overall
3	+1 with Wrist Launcher Arsenal
3	Breakfall 13(14-)
3	Deduction 13-
3	Electronics 13-
3	Inventor 13-
2	KS: Karate 11-
2	KS: Supervillains 11-
3	Mechanics 13-
3	Paramedics 13-
3	Stealth 13-(14-)
3	Streetwise 13-
3	Tactics 13-
3	Weaponsmith 13-
3	Scientist
4	1) SS: Chemistry 16-
4	2) SS: Mathematics 16-
4	3) SS: Physics 16-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 215**

**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

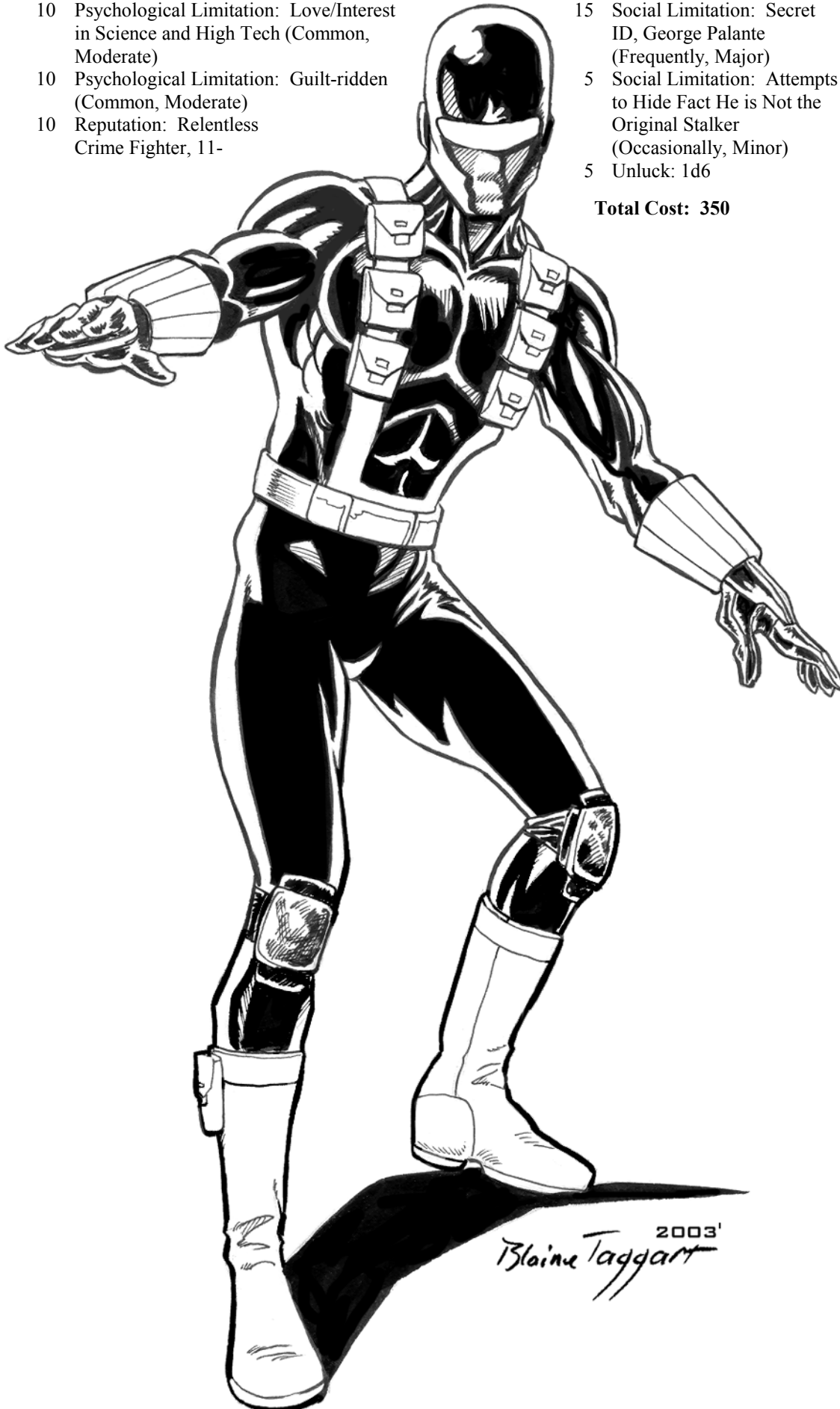
15	DNPC: Jessica (the Late Tony's Love) 8- (Normal, Unaware of Secret ID)
20	Hunted: The Choir 11- (Mo Pow, Kill)
15	Hunted: Razor 11- (As Pow, Capture)
10	Hunted: Mandible 8- (As Pow, Capture)
5	Hunted: Local Street Gangs 8- (Less Pow, Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Hunting The Choir (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Strong)

## DIGITAL HERO #13

- 10 Psychological Limitation: Love/Interest in Science and High Tech (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Guilt-ridden (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Reputation: Relentless Crime Fighter, 11-

- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID, George Palante (Frequently, Major)
- 5 Social Limitation: Attempts to Hide Fact He is Not the Original Stalker (Occasionally, Minor)
- 5 Unluck: 1d6

**Total Cost: 350**



**HONORABLE MENTION**

White Claw (York Dobyns), Running Eagle (Geoff Speare), Fang (Andy Watkins), and Cyber Wolf (Jason Wedel)

**MOST AMUSING ORIGIN**

“After taking part in a somewhat questionable tribal tradition (one involving large quantities of peyote)...” — Geoff Speare

**Raaktor** by Jonathan Marshall

**Background/History:** It was a cold day in the Takamaak village around 40,000 years ago. Trax grimaced and watched the vapor of his breath condense in the chill air. Trax was Raaktor to the village, a combination of tribal champion and shaman. The raaktor itself was a small predatory mammal, and totem to the Takamaak people. It was admired for its resilience, cunning, and bravery – qualities very much in demand in those harsh times. The tribal champion had been called simply “Raaktor” for longer than anyone could recall.

As Raaktor, Trax was a healer, an advisor, a seer, a hunter, a warrior, and a father to the tribe, even though he had seen only twenty-seven summers. As required by tribal law, the Raaktor had no mate.

That night, the sky lit up and there was a loud bang, like the sound the gods made in the skies during a storm. The Takamaak were scared and there was talk of this being an ill omen. Trax himself was worried, but he knew his duty was to reassure the tribe. He consulted the bones, strewing the various small items on the rawhide mat. “Be wary of danger,” they warned.

The next morning, Trax and a scout discovered a giant stone in the jungle at the same time as an expeditionary party from the Pebat tribe. The leader of the party was Pa Nat, “Red Elk,” a mighty warrior, stronger even than Trax. However, he lacked Trax’s subtler skills. The Pebats tried to frighten off Trax and his scout, claiming that they had found the stone first.

Trax sent his companion back to the village, to get help from the tribe. Red Elk and his tribesmen attacked Trax, and he battled them valiantly until Red Elk accidentally struck the giant stone with his war club. The meteorite broke open and all of the men turned to look at it. A strange green mist was seeping from the rock. The Pebat men, apart from Red Elk, fled.

As the two men clashed again, time seemed to slow down and the air felt thick, like the sap of a tree. The area was already unsound and the meteorite’s impact had weakened it further. The ground collapsed, throwing the two combatants into an underground cavern. Both were stunned by the fall and the green gas filled their lungs. Neither would ever see their tribes again.

The renowned archaeologist, Professor Willis Harding and his anthropologist daughter, Doctor Katherine “Kate” Harding, were examining an exciting new site in Alaska. Over many weeks Professor Harding’s team excavated the site. One thing they found was a painting on a wall. It showed a green stone, by a strange rock formation and an animal-like man, who Kate felt might have been some kind of shaman or holy man. Kate remembered that she had seen a

similar looking cliff not far from the dig. It had changed a bit over time, but she was fairly confident that it was the same place.

A while later, she fell upon a remarkable discovery, quite literally. The ground suddenly gave way and she fell into the underground cavern. She was amazed to see what she took to be two perfectly preserved corpses. The first was a wiry blond man, wearing an elaborate outfit made from animal skins, decorated with claws. The second was a huge man in a cloak made from the skin of a long-extinct type of elk, daubed with red pigment. “This must be the find of the century,” she thought. Traces of the green mist in the air made Kate feel quite dizzy, and she passed out.

When Kate awoke, she saw someone or something standing over her, animal-like eyes glittering in the half-light of the cavern. She fainted again.

The next time Kate came to, the man was sitting close by her. They were on the surface and she could see him more clearly; it was one of the men from the cavern. He was obviously not entirely human, and Kate could only wonder at him. His expression was one of calm concern and she felt strangely reassured. Kate felt a coolness on her forehead and realized that the man had put some kind of poultice on her. She smiled at him, weakly. He smiled back, revealing pronounced canine teeth.

As Kate watched, a hulking shadow hauled itself out of the earth and threw itself at her rescuer’s back. She only had time to widen her eyes, but this was all the warning Trax needed. He rolled to one side and brought his left forearm up, blocking the giant’s warclub with a blade attached near his wrist. Letting out a guttural roar the two mortal enemies locked horns. Fortunately, Red Elk was still unsteady after his long sleep, whereas Trax’s familiarity with trances had enabled him to wake up much more quickly. Red Elk turned tail and fled.

Kate and her father brought Trax back to Millennium City, where he became a minor celebrity. Professor and Doctor Harding were astonished with how quickly Trax learned English. He explained to them what life had been like in his village; it was every anthropologist’s dream.

Unfortunately, Red Elk eventually found out his old foe’s whereabouts and made his way to the City too.

As Raaktor, Trax was familiar with duties as a champion. He had lost his tribe and was stranded in a strange world full of bad smells and loud noises. All he had left was his honor and his pride in the skills he possessed. He discovered the existence of supervillains, and no one could prevent Trax from becoming a hero to fight them, for the good of his new community.



## DIGITAL HERO #13

Raaktor's ancient nemesis continues to plague him. Red Elk is so obsessive, that he has deliberately mutilated the inside of his own nose, to destroy his sense of smell, making the musk attack that Trax used before useless. Red Elk has bullied a number of homeless people into forming a loose tribe. He has slowly learned some words of English, but has little patience to do anything other than secure his place as head of the tribe and to destroy the only other surviving member of *homo erectus*.

**Personality/Motivation:** Trax is an honorable warrior and a wise man. He does his best to live up to the ideals of the Raaktor, even though his tribe faded from the planet millennia ago. He strives to be a guide, a healer, and a sage. Trax has a few "New Age" followers, who pester him for advice. He finds that they are easily appeased with fables he used to tell the village children and a personality reading based on observing their movements.

Trax is still not familiar with 21<sup>st</sup> Century society and often does not understand things, but he is a fast learner. Trax has realized that he cannot use lethal force unless he is defending himself. As he was never an aggressive man, this causes him little problem. Given the chance, he would always use a peaceful solution instead of violence.

Trax dislikes being indoors, and any confined or crowded space can make him uneasy. This is not proper claustrophobia, simply a sense of discomfort. He likes to get out and about as much as possible, especially to wide-open spaces.

**Quote:** "I am Raaktor, last of my clan. To face me is to face your end, for I have nothing to lose."

**Powers/Tactics:** Trax's hunting skills are so great that he can move virtually undetected, especially in poorly-lit areas. He can stalk without leaving a trace, but must move more slowly than normal in order to do this.

Raaktor has blades attached to the back of each hand, towards the wrist. These are his preferred method of attack. He normally uses only the flat of the blades. Not only can they be used as weapons, but Trax can use them to climb most surfaces. Trax tries to avoid violence, but knows that sometimes there is no other option.

He has the power to enter a trance-like battle state in which his physical attributes are amplified. Unlike many berserkers, Raaktors retain their normal intelligence in this state. Note that Trax may collapse at the end of a battle, if the boost to his Characteristics fades and drops him below 0 STUN or BODY. If things turn to combat, he will normally put himself into such a trance, at the expense of his more subtle skills.

Raaktors learn to harness the power of the mind and can use this to seem more impressive and to strengthen their wills. They can mesmerize animals so that they are stopped in their tracks. A similar effect works on humans, but Raaktor needs to speak to the subject, who can only be made to obey simple commands. One technique he likes is to use is to make a PRE Attack and follow it up with mesmerism, where the instruction is that the victim is scared and wants to run away as fast as possible. He also uses this ability to calm people down, or to get them to help him. Trax tries to use this ability to end a fight before it has really begun.

Trax's telepathic skills are based upon an understanding of the animal kingdom and superior observational skills. Effectively, he "reads" the body language of the subject and can gauge its mood and intentions.

Raaktors learn the ability to put themselves into a healing trance. This normally lasts for about a week, during which time, Trax's healing rate trebles. He does not need to eat during one of these trances and he breathes much more slowly.

**Appearance:** Trax is about six feet height, almost a giant in his time. He is very muscular, but in a wiry, taut way, rather than huge, like his rival. His long blond hair is typically tied in a ponytail.

He has a somewhat feral appearance. His amber eyes have a reflective membrane, like a dog. Trax has elongated ears and pronounced canines. Even in his time, Trax was unusual-looking. His appearance marked him out as an obvious Raaktor, but in the modern world, it causes quite a reaction.

When acting as Raaktor, Trax wears his ceremonial costume, including the mask, designed to mimic the darker patch of fur found on the raaktor. He has started to wear some modern clothing, but only loose, casual items such as sweats.

His costume has a blade attached to the backs of his hands. He has abandoned the bone ones he used to have and now employs steel blades, which he considers a great improvement. He used to carry a medicine bag, containing healing herbs, potions and ointments, his fortune-telling bones, and skins filled with the pungent liquid he used against Red Elk all that time ago. This has been lost, and many of the ingredients are either no longer available, or cannot be found anywhere near Millennium City. That is not to say that he will not be able to work out replacements or obtain the actual things he needs, given time and a chance to experiment.

**Raktor** by Jonathan Marshall



## DIGITAL HERO #13

### Raaktor by Jonathan Marshall

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20/25	STR	10	13-/14-	Lift 400 (800 kg); 4d6(5d6) HTH [2]
23/26	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8(9)/
20	CON	20	13-	DCV: 8(9)
15/20	BODY	10	13-/14-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-(15-)
14/18	EGO	8	12-/13-	ECV: 5(6)
20/30	PRE	10	13-/14-	PRE Attack: 4d6 (6d6)
8	COM	-1	11-	
14/17	PD	10		Total: 14(17) PD (5 rPD)
13/16	ED	9		Total: 13(16) ED (5 rED)
5/6	SPD	17		Phases: 3,5,8,10,12 (2,4,6,8,10,12)
11/14	REC	6		
40/50	END	0		
37/43	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 146**

**Movement:** Running: 11"/22"  
Gliding: 6"/6"  
Leaping: 4"(5")/8"(10")  
Swimming: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Raaktor Blades:</i> Multipower, 30-point Reserve, all slots OIF (-1/2)	
2u	1) <i>Powerful Strike:</i> HKA 1d6+1 (2 1/2d6(3d6) with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OIF (-1/2)	0
2u	2) <i>Treble Blade Strike:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6(2d6+1) with STR), Autofire (3 Shots, +1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OIF (-1/2)	0
1u	3) <i>Flat Strike:</i> HA +4d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OIF (-1/2), HA Lim (-1/2)	0
1u	4) <i>Climbing Claws:</i> Clinging, Requires a Climbing Roll (-1/2), Cannot Resist Knockback (-1/4)	0
10	<i>Master of Movement:</i> Multipower, 10-point Reserve	
1u	1) <i>Powerful Runner:</i> +5" Running (11" Total)	2
1u	2) <i>Strong Swimmer:</i> +3" Swimming (5" Total)	1
1u	3) <i>Careful Stalker:</i> Gliding 6", Ground Gliding (-1/4), No Non-Combat Move (-1/4)	0
4	<i>Combat Reflexes:</i> Damage Resistance (5 PD/5 ED); Does Not Work Against First Point of BODY (-1/4)	0
7	<i>Battle Skill:</i> HA +2d6 (6d6(7d6) Total); HA Lim (-1/2)	1
2	<i>Suspended Animation:</i> Life Support: Extended Breathing (1 END per	

Minute), Diminished Eating (Once per Week), Linked to Simulate Death (-1/2)	0
6 <i>Acute Senses:</i> Enhanced Perception, +2 with all PER rolls	0
5 <i>Catseyes:</i> Nightvision	0
5 <i>Reflective Eyes:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points)	0
2 <i>Ceremonial Costume:</i> PRE +5; OIF (-1/2); Offense Only (-1/2)	0
63 <i>Shamanism:</i> Multipower, 63-point Reserve	
4u <i>Berserker Fury:</i> STR +5, DEX +3, BODY +5; Only in Combat (-1/4), No Figured Characteristics (-1/2) <b>plus</b> PRE +5, PD +3, ED +3, SPD +1, REC +3, END +10, STUN +6; Only In Combat (-1/4)	0
1u <i>Animal Magnetism:</i> EGO +4, PRE +5	0
2u <i>Mesmerism I:</i> Mind Control 8d6 (Animal Class of Minds), Telepathic (+1/4); Normal Range (-1/4), Set Command (Stand Still; -1/2), Eye Contact Required (-1/2), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-1/4)	5
2u <i>Mesmerism II:</i> Mind Control 10d6 (Human Class of Minds), Hypnosis Only (-1/2), Normal Range (-1/4), Eye Contact Required (-1/2), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-1/4)	5
2u <i>Master of Beasts:</i> Telepathy 6d6 (Animal Class of Minds), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Can Only Read Surface Thoughts (-1/2), Receive Only (-1/2), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-1/4)	0
2u <i>Master of Men:</i> Telepathy 6d6 (Human Class of Minds), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Can Only Read Surface Thoughts (-1/2), Receive Only (-1/2), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-1/4)	0
1u <i>Healing Trance:</i> Healing (1d6 Regeneration; 1 BODY per Day), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Self Only (-1/2), Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (1 BODY per Day; -2 1/2), Linked to Simulate Death (-1/4)	0
1u <i>Hiding in the Shadows:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Requires a Stealth roll (-1/2), Only in Shadows or Darkness (-1/2)	0
1u <i>Silent Walking:</i> Invisibility to Hearing Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Requires a Stealth roll (-1/2)	0

#### Talents

3 Simulate Death

**Skills**

- 10 +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 2 AK: Takamaak Village Surrounds 11-
- 2 AK: Millennium City 11-
- 0 AK: Wilds of Alaska 8-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 3 Climbing 14-
- 2 KS: Hunting 11-
- 3 KS: The Way of the Raaktor 11-
- 2 Navigation (Land) 13-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 4 Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Mountains) 13-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 3 Language: English (Fluent Conversation; Takamaak is native)
- 0 PS: Hunter (Everyman Skill) 11-
- 3 PS: Raaktor 14-
- 3 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Thrown Knives, Axes and Darts

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 204****Total Cost: 350****200+ Disadvantages**

- 10 DNPC: Professor Willis Harding, Friend and Mentor 8- (Normal)
- 10 DNPC: Kate Harding, Professor Harding's Daughter 8- (Normal)
- 15 Distinctive Features: Feral Appearance (Concealable, Major Reaction or Prejudice)
- 20 Hunted: Red Elk 11- (As Pow, Kill, Public ID)
- 20 Hunted: Teleios 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Wants To Study Him, Public ID)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Dislike of Confined Spaces (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Honorable (Common, Total)
- 15 Social Limitation: Public ID (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Social Limitation: Unfamiliar With The Modern World (Frequently, Minor [he might not recognize objects and situations, he might also fail to follow societal norms])
- 10 Susceptibility: 1½x Effect from Flashes
- 10 Susceptibility: 1½x STUN from Gas Attacks

**Total Cost: 350**

## Steadfast, the Human Bulwark

by Denver Mason

**Background/History:** Edmund Brooks was in quite the battle. Johnny Dunn kept pestering Linda Rosten, and Belle and Beverly Maxwell wouldn't stop talking. A bored David Blakely looked ready to make a run for it as soon as his back was turned. The only one even moderately behaving was Edmund's younger brother Jacob; an uncharacteristic situation that only served to make the newly dubbed "Church Youth Choir Director" very nervous.

"Johnny, stop trying to put your gum in Linda's hair. Linda, do *not* hit him for trying... Belle and Beverly, please, quiet down, and David?"

"Yeah, Mr. Brooks?" came a reply from a voice that had somehow gotten closer to the door.

"Don't even think about it. Now, let's get started."

With that, the lesson began in earnest. These were good kids. A few had been sent here because it would "build character" and their resentment shone, but if he could make them love the music as he did, it would open doors for them they never knew were there.

Somewhere between "Jesus Loves Me" and "Lily of the Valley," there was a boom. That tore it. Edmund whirled on his younger brother, "Jacob, this is the second time I've told you about those firecrackers or noisemakers of any sort..."

But Jacob looked as startled as anyone. "I didn't," he protested.

"You didn't, then what was that?" There was another boom. The kids rushed to the window.

"Cool. Two folks in costumes are fighting it out... just outside."

"Kids, get away from the window..." Edmund called out.

That, of course, was when the entire wall surrounding that window and the door out started to fall. The lights went out, and there were screams. The building groaned, and Edmund could hear the cracking of wood.

*The support beam!* This place, he knew, was going down. He reached up his hands, a ridiculous gesture, and tried to brace. "Kids... stay calm."

"I can't see!" A scream he thought was Beverly's.

"Mister Brooks, we're going to die!" David wailed.

"\*@%! Edmund, are you alright?" Jacob, it would seem, was of the firm opinion that when a roof was caving in, even if it was a church roof, all rules against profanity were off.

"Stay calm. Let's all sing." Edmund knew it was crazy, but he had to do something, the way out was now blocked by rubble. The beam cracked, and was pushing him down. He had to focus the children. Make sure they stayed still and not race towards the edges where it was worse. "Sing!"

He started them off, "A mighty fortress is our God..."

Grasping at any hope in the terror and darkness, their voices responded, "A bulwark never failing..."

*Dear God,* he thought as the weight beam's two halves broke completely and began to press down, *Don't let me fail. Let me be their steadfast bulwark tonight. Please!* And he held on... praying and singing all the while.

Light burst through, and a voice called out, "Everyone okay in there?" The children's scared faces were revealed, and they didn't need to be told to get out. They scrambled towards the illumination with a fervor.

Many questions (a few evaded by Edmund) and some cups of coffee later, Edmund was assuring the Pastor he was fine, "Not a scratch, sir."

"Well, thank God for that," the old man said. "I don't know how that last beam managed to hold on for so long, let alone fall *just* into place like that."

"It's a miracle," Edmund announced. That much, he was sure, was true. Nervously, he went on, "Pastor, I was thinking, maybe you should find someone else to teach youth choir? I'm not certain I'm up to it."

The preacher cocked his head and frowned a bit, "I know you had a scare, Edmund, but I assure you, your singing is not so bad that God decided to close you down. If he was that fussy, I'd have been buried decades ago." Then he let loose a smile.

Edmund smiled back, still unsure what to make of tonight, and quite certain whatever change had occurred was lasting.

"Besides," Pastor Mulligins added, "God gives gifts, he expects them to be used."

It was that line that caused the Youth Choir director to do a spit take on his religious leader's shirt. Pastor Mulligins forgave him of course, but did look slightly irritated.

**Personality/Motivation:** Edmund is a devout, compassionate man, who is struggling to reconcile the teachings he tries to live by, with the violence he feels all too often forced to as a superhero. While others in his team think that perhaps he is a mutant, or at the least has a "perfectly logical reason," he sincerely believes God answered his prayer, and gave him this power. Now that he has asked for it, he cannot turn his back upon the obligations it places on him.

## HONORABLE MENTION

Heatwave (Jonathan Marshall), The MOD (Killer Shrike), ANVILS (Michael Ma), and Peregrine (Jeffrey Scott Nuttall)

## MOST AMUSING QUOTE

"Jacob, it would seem, was of the firm opinion that when the roof was caving in, even if it was a church roof, all rules against profanity were off." — Denver Mason

While he does not hide his faith (praying silently before meals, and answering questions of his views with honesty even if they aren't always popular), Steadfast is hardly a firebrand attempting to convert the rest of the team. He prefers to show by example, which is why he gets so concerned when he sees superheroes being idolized for 'kicking butt.' He spends a great deal of time as Steadfast not just fighting crime, but helping with charities in order to be a good role model and show that might can be used for more than harm.

**Quote:** "To get to them, you have to go through me. I hope you're not in a hurry."

**Powers/Tactics:** Powerwise, Steadfast really isn't that different from many other "bricks" except that he seems to be very, very hard to move, especially once he's "set." Should he stand in place and "hold" there, it is actually easier to tear the ground up beneath him than move him physically. Steadfast has the potential to be the "immovable object" of the Champions Universe. Anyone trying a move through or move by attack on him is going to be in a world of hurt. Then again, Steadfast might be in a similar situation. While he's quite tough, he's not invulnerable.

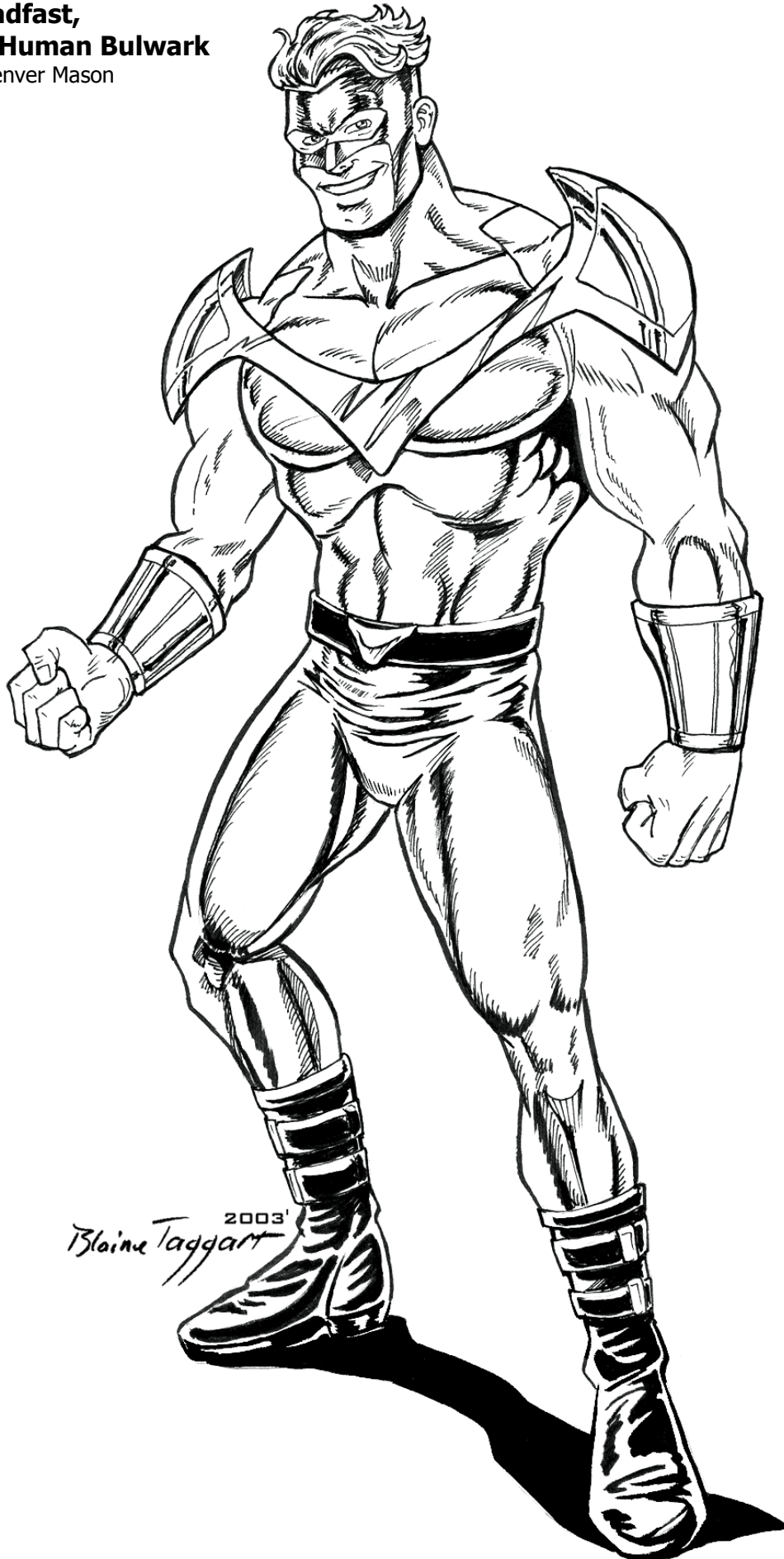
In combat, Steadfast makes his first priority innocents. Should they be clear of danger, he'll typically attempt to engage opponents in conversation. He firmly believes he has to at least *try* for a peaceful resolution first. This habit annoys some of his teammates, but other times has prevented a fight, or at least revealed a few tidbits about their foe's plans. Steadfast also makes excellent cover for his teammates to hide behind.

Steadfast has quite a few failings, and he knows it. His lack of true movement power means some villains can simply run away. He is attempting to get the MC-8 a vehicle (and a place to put it) so not be a burden to the team.

**Appearance:** Steadfast's costume has gone through many changes, mostly because he lets his teammates bully him into trying new outfits (he's drawn the line at the more risqué suggestions). Currently he wears a brown costume with gold bands and padding for shoulders that also connects on his torso. His mask is a dark brown and serves to obscure his green eyes somewhat.

In his secret identity, Edmund Brooks dresses in a modest casual formal sort of attire. He is a white male in his early to mid-twenties, about 6'2" in height, with slightly longer brunette hair than one would expect, given his profession.

**Steadfast,  
the Human Bulwark**  
by Denver Mason



**Steadfast, the Human Bulwark**

by Denver Mason

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6½ ton; 8d6 HTH [4]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
30	CON	40	15-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
14	EGO	8	15-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
				Total: 23 PD (15 rPD)
23	PD	15		
20	ED	14		Total: 20 ED (15 rED)
5	SPD	22		Phases: 3,5,8,10,12
15	REC	2		
60	END	0		
51	STUN	1		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 181**

**Movement:**

Running:	8"/16"
Leaping:	8"/16"
Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
30	<i>Heavy Burden/Blessing:</i> Density Increase (1½ ton mass, +20 STR, +4 PD, +4 ED, -4" KB), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
15	<i>Stalwart:</i> Damage Resistance (15 PD/15 ED)	0
30	<i>Steadfast:</i> Knockback Resistance -15"	0
5	<i>Immovable Bulwark:</i> Clinging, Only to Stay in Place Unmoved (-1)	0
30	<i>Human Shield:</i> Missile Deflection (All), +5 OCV	0
10	<i>Impervious Nature:</i> Lack of Weakness (-5) for Normal and Resistant Defenses	0
4	<i>"Hurry up!":</i> Running +2" (8" Total)	2

**Perks**

- 5 Base: Contribution to Team Base
- 5 Vehicle: Contribution to Team Vehicle

**Skills**

- 10 +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 3 KS: The Bible 13-
- 2 KS: Music 11-
- 2 KS: Religions 11-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 3 PS: Singing 13-
- 2 PS: Teaching 11-
- 3 Teamwork 13-
- 1 TF: Team Vehicle

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 169**

**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

- 30 DNPC: Church Youth Choir 8- (8 Kids in All, Normal, Unaware of Secret ID)
- 5 Distinctive Feature: Left to GM's Discretion
- 20 Hunted: Dark Seraph 11- (Mo Pow, Corrupt)
- 20 Hunted: DEMON 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Corrupt)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Devout, Tries to Live Up to Faith's Tenets (Very Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Loyal to/Protective of Team (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Protective of Innocents (Very Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: Religious Superhero Who Can't Be Moved Easily, 11-
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID, Edmund Brooks (Frequently, Major)

**Total Cost: 350**



**Megaera** by Jonathan Marshall

**Background/History:** Doctor Nikolos Georghiou, an archaeologist, and Doctor Elena Georghiou, an educational sciences scholar, have three children, all girls. The eldest is Thekla, followed by Metis, with Adara the youngest of the sisters.

Nikolos would sometimes have his wife and children join him on digs, at vacation times. At one dig in Turkey, the girls (aged 14, 12, and 9 at the time) wandered off to explore by themselves. At Adara's insistence (in spite of being the youngest, she frequently got her own way), the girls played hide-and-go-seek. Adara found a doorway in the wall of a cliff and, to her amazement, the ancient stone portal soundlessly swung open at a light touch. Adara intended to hide in the concealed chamber, but almost as soon as she set foot inside, torches around the walls lit up, revealing what looked like an ancient temple. The light revealed three statues of women in ancient Greek dress. One was a tall, grand-looking woman, with a peacock. The second was wearing a helmet and carried a shield and spear. The final one was extremely beautiful and wore a girdle.

Adara called out to her sisters, who came running. Metis immediately recognized the figures as representing the goddesses Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. The girls were terrified when the door suddenly slammed shut, but this was nothing compared to what happened next. The first effigy was bathed in a pink-red light, the second was lit by blue-green rays, and the final one was illuminated by golden beams. Then each of the statues seemed to come to life. The goddesses smiled at the girls and began to address the young explorers.

The three deities explained that, a long time ago, they had foolishly allowed Eris, the goddess of discord, to cause an argument between them. Eris had thrown a golden apple inscribed "Kallisti" ("the most beautiful") to the ground at their feet. Each goddess claimed to be the one entitled to the prize. A shepherd-boy named Paris was given the task of choosing whether Hera, Athena, or Aphrodite should receive the apple. Paris chose Aphrodite, who had promised him the most beautiful woman in the world. Aphrodite made good on her offer and, when Paris took Helen of Troy, this caused the Trojan War, much to the delight of Eris.

Hera spoke and said, "I was too proud to think that any save the wife of Zeus should have the apple." "While I," said Athena, "wanted to prove my superiority over the other goddesses." Then Aphrodite spoke, "I, of course, refused to believe that I could be anything less than the most beautiful." As one, the goddesses continued, "We should have worked together. In

unity there is strength against the forces of chaos. We shall not make the same mistake again."

The goddesses told the girls that the forces of discord would rise again and so each of them would receive gifts from one of the Olympians.

Aphrodite gave Adara great beauty, charm and the power to win the hearts and minds of men. Hera gifted young Thekla great majesty and power over fire and lightning ("borrowed from my sister Hestia, and from my husband, Zeus"). Metis was granted wisdom and martial prowess by Athena.

The goddesses bade farewell to the girls, telling them that they would forget this encounter until the time was right, when they would know what to do.

Ten years passed, and the girls all lived in Millennium City where their mother taught education theory and their father was part of the Archaeology faculty at Millennium City University.

The sisters met up for lunch one day and were caught in the middle of a fight between some security guards and Black Diamond, Hummingbird, and Cheshire Cat from GRAB, who were attempting to rob jewelry stores in the mall. Suddenly, long-suppressed memories rose to the surface and each girl had a vision of a golden apple. As one they whispered the word, "Kallisti," and transformed into powerful new forms. Taken by surprise, the members of GRAB fell prey to the novice heroes.

The three sisters remembered how and why they had been given special powers and adopted new names to reflect their alter egos. Metis noted that each of their costumes had a stylized letter matching the wearer's first name initial and matched the colors which had illuminated the statues. She suggested they take the names of the Three Furies of classical myth and so she and her sisters became Tisiphone, Megaera, and Alecto in their heroic guises.

**Personality/Motivation:** Metis is quite a serious woman. Even though she is not the eldest of the sisters, she has always been the most responsible. She is far from humorless, but does not believe in mixing business and pleasure. Metis acts shy and reserved to draw a distinction between her civilian and heroic identities. She regards having a social life as a very definite third on her list of priorities behind being a hero and doing her day job, but she enjoys intellectual discussions (especially formal debates) and wargaming when she has the chance. Metis is attracted to brave, clever, physically fit men. Her ideal is Odysseus, a man who displayed all of those characteristics. She has never had time for a boyfriend and has not yet met anyone who meets her criteria.

**HONORABLE MENTION**

AlphaBeth  
(Thomas Christopher Huskey), Machina  
(Darren Sullivan),  
Monsoon (Joe Tremblay), and Mega Woman (Denver Mason)

**MOST AMUSING QUOTE**

"Besides, she's a blonde, so you know she's Evil." —  
Denver Mason

As Megaera, she can be quite single-minded, but is never hasty to judge or rush in. She is often at the forefront of any attack and, while not reckless, she will not hesitate to put herself in danger for the greater good. She is much more outwardly confident in her heroic identity than as Metis, often giving inspiring speeches or lectures. Megaera often uses references to Greek Myths in her speech, but Metis does not.

**Quote:** “By Athena, you’ll pay for the harm you’ve caused by your folly.”

**Powers/Tactics:** Megaera possesses enough combat ability to stand toe-to-toe with some true powerhouses, but she likes to use her wisdom and intelligence to defeat foes. Megaera is not one to rush into combat without considering her options and usually tries to come up with at least two back-up plans; she can often do this in the blink of an eye.

Megaera normally checks to see if any opponent is exhibiting a likely vulnerability, either physical or psychological. If there is nothing obvious, or at least no weakness she can easily exploit, she normally flies or runs in close and engages the enemy in hand-to-hand combat. She will always put up her Force Field, which is Invisible to Sight, but can be detected by Touch or by the Mental Sense Group. To the former, it is detectable as a tingle or light air current. To Mental Awareness, Megaera’s Force Field appears as a shimmering sheath around her.

Her first option will be to use pankration strikes. Megaera normally reserves her Warrior’s Blow for special cases, because the distances her opponents travel might cause collateral damage. She avoids throwing large objects for similar reasons, but has been known to do so, when the occasion has merited it. However, the Warrior’s Blow is less taxing to Megaera than using her strength alone, so sometimes she will make use of the power for this reason.

Sometimes Megaera will focus her Force Field in such a way as to deflect missiles directed at her. This gives the appearance of attacks bouncing off her with no ill effect. Megaera normally follows this up with a PRE Attack. This is her favored method of dealing with petty criminals. Note that this power requires GM permission to be placed in a Power Framework. If you do not like this, put the power outside of the EC, with a Limitation to reflect the fact that it is affected by negative Adjustment powers acting on the EC, and give Megaera some CSLs with Missile Deflection.

Some of Megaera’s strength is a form of telekinesis. She has guessed that Athena, being a goddess of wisdom, has strengthened Megaera’s mind as well as her body. Megaera has worked out how to use her powers in a few unusual ways, to catch out her opponents. As her

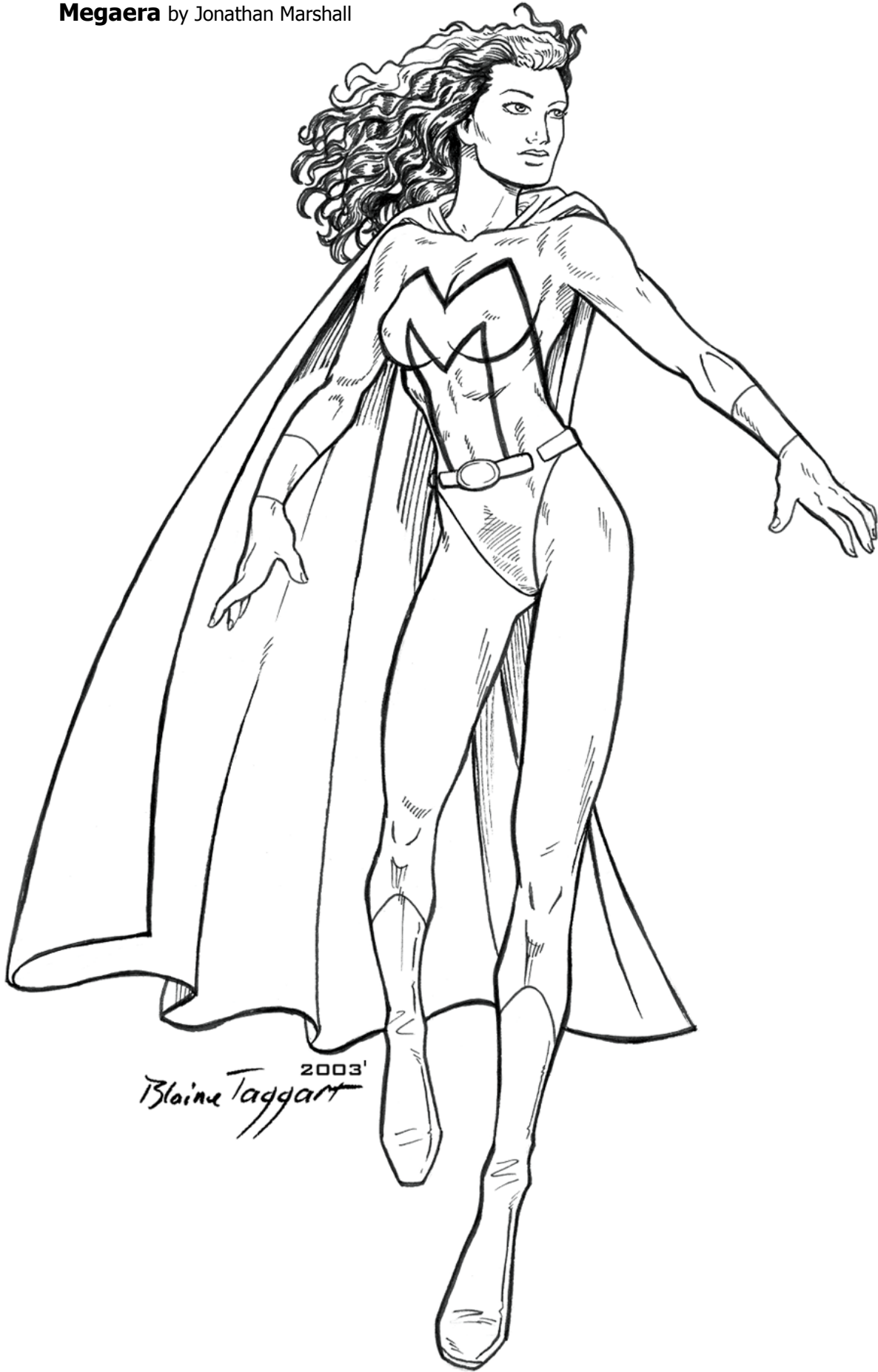
telekinesis-based powers can be affected easily by negative Adjustment powers, the fact that part of her Strength is affected as though it were Telekinesis has not been given any cost.

Metis sometimes involuntarily changes to Megaera when she becomes aware of danger. Normally, she visualizes the golden apple and whispers, “Kallisti,” to trigger the transformation.

Her Vulnerability to attacks from her sisters is a weakness common to all three of them. This is a flaw the goddesses have imposed, so if one of the Furies goes rogue, the others should be able to deal with her.

**Appearance:** In her ordinary life, Metis is a tallish (5’7”) woman, of athletic build. When she becomes Megaera she grows a few inches in height and becomes more muscular and more beautiful. Metis wears her black hair up, but it comes loose as Megaera and the transformation puts a deep turquoise-colored streak in it. Her eyes change from dark brown to a startling shade of bright blue-green, and her lightly tanned, olive skin becomes ivory-like.

Metis dresses practically, favoring suits at work and sporting gear in her leisure time. Her favorite color for clothes is black. Megaera’s costume is turquoise and white, with a wavy line design in the form of a letter “M.” She wears a short white cape and knee-length white boots.



**Megaera** by Jonathan Marshall

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15/55	STR	5	12-/20-	Lift 200 (50 tons); 3d6 (11d6) HTH[2(5)]
13/23	DEX	9	12-/14-	OCV: 4(8)/
13/23	CON	6	13-/14-	DCV: 4(8)
12/16	BODY	4	11-/12-	
18/28	INT	8	13-/15-	PER Roll: 13-(15-)
13/18	EGO	6	12-/13-	ECV: 4(6)
15/25	PRE	5	12-/14-	PRE Attack: 3d6
16/26	COM	3	12-/14-	(6d6)
4/14	PD	1		Total: 4(27) PD (18 rPD)
4/11	ED	1		Total: 4(23) ED (17 rED)
3/5	SPD	7		Phases: 4,8,12
6/15	REC	0		(3,5,8,10,12)
26/46	END	0		
27/48	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 55**

**Movement:**

Running:	8"(12")/16"(24")
Flying:	18"/36"
Leaping:	3"(11")/6"(22")
Swimming:	2"(18")/4"(36")

Cost	Powers	END
4	<i>Swift</i> : +2" Running (8" Total)	2
6	<i>Super Swift</i> : +4" Running (12" Total); OIHID (-1/4)	2
7	<i>Contact Telekinesis</i> : STR +15, Drained as Telekinesis instead of STR (+0); OIHID (-1/4), No Figured Characteristics (-1/2), Affected By Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Power of Thought EC (-1/4)	1
3	<i>Telekinetic Touch</i> : Discriminatory Touch; OIHID (-1/4), Affected By Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Power of Thought EC (-1/4)	0
20	<i>Warrior's Might</i> : STR +25; OIHID (-1/4)	0
16	<i>Warrior's Constitution</i> : CON +10; OIHID (-1/4)	0
6	<i>Warrior's Fortitude</i> : BODY +4; OIHID (-1/4)	0
24	<i>Champion's Accuracy</i> : DEX +10; OIHID (-1/4)	0
8	<i>Champion's Speed</i> : SPD +1; OIHID (-1/4)	0
8	<i>Wisdom of Athena</i> : INT +10; OIHID (-1/4)	0
8	<i>Will of Athena</i> : EGO +5; OIHID (-1/4)	0
8	<i>Presence of a Goddess I</i> : PRE +10; OIHID (-1/4)	0
3	<i>Presence of a Goddess II</i> : PRE +5; Only for Defending Against or Making Presence Attacks (-1/4), OIHID (-1/4)	0
4	<i>Beauty of a Goddess</i> : COM +10; OIHID (-1/4)	0

4	<i>Resilience of the Soldier I</i> : PD +5; OIHID (-1/4)	0
4	<i>Resilience of the Soldier II</i> : ED +5; OIHID (-1/4)	0
4	<i>Resilience of the Soldier III</i> : Damage Resistance (5 PD/5 ED); OIHID (-1/4)	0
3	<i>Vitality of the Olympians</i> : REC +2; OIHID (-1/4)	0
4	<i>Blessing of Athena I</i> : Power Defense, 5 Points; OIHID (-1/4)	0
4	<i>Blessing of Athena II</i> : Mental Defense, 5 Points (9 Total); OIHID (-1/4)	0
15	<i>Power of Thought</i> : Elemental Control, Telekinetic Powers, 44-point Powers; OIHID (-1/4), Affected by Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Any Outside Power of Telekinesis Special Effect (-1/4)	0
19	1) <i>Armor of Athena</i> : Force Field (13 PD/12 ED), Invisible To Sight Group (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); OIHID (-1/4), Affected by Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Any Outside Power of Telekinesis Special Effect (-1/4)	0
15	2) <i>Aegis of Athena</i> : Missile Deflection (All), +12 OCV; OIHID (-1/4), Costs Endurance (-1/2), Affected by Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Any Outside Power of Telekinesis Special Effect (-1/4)	4
15	3) <i>Flight of the Goddess</i> : Flight 18", Usable Underwater (+1/4); OIHID (-1/4), Affected by Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Any Outside Power of Telekinesis Special Effect (-1/4)	4
11	4) <i>Warrior's Blow</i> : HA +4d6 (8d6 with STR), Double Knockback (+3/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); HA Lim (-1/2), OIHID (-1/4), Affected by Negative Adjustment Powers Used on Any Outside Power of Telekinesis Special Effect (-1/4)	0

**Martial Arts: Pankration**

**Maneuver OCV DCV Notes**

4	Escape	+0	+0	30(70) STR to Escape
3	Grab	-1	-1	2 Limbs, 25(65) STR to Hold
3	Punch/Kick	+1	+0	5d6(13d6) Strike

**Skills**

8	+1 Overall; OIHID (-1/4)
4	+1 with Hand-To-Hand Combat; OIHID (-1/4)
3	+1 with Pankration
0	CK: Millennium City 8-
2	CK: Millennium City University 11-
3	Deduction 13-/15-
3	Oratory 12/14-

## DIGITAL HERO #13

- 3 Persuasion 12-/14-
- 3 Power (Telekinetic Powers) 13-/15-
- 3 Stealth 12-/14-
- 0 PS: Wargamer 11-
- 3 PS: Historian 13-/15-
- 3 Tactics 13-/15-
- 3 Teamwork 12-/14-
  
- 3 Linguist
- 3 Language: Greek (Idiomatic, Native Accent; English is native)
- 1 Language: Ancient Greek (Completely Fluent with Accent)
- 1 Language: Latin (Completely Fluent with Accent)
  
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Ancient Greece 13-/15-
- 2 2) KS: Ancient History 13-/15-
- 2 3) KS: Classical Myths 13-/15-
- 2 4) KS: Military History 13-/15-
- 2 5) KS: Military Tactics 13-/15-
- 1 6) KS: Pankration 11-
- 2 7) KS: The Superhuman World 13-/15-
- 1 8) KS: Wargames 11-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 295**

**Total Cost: 350**

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 5 Accidental Change: To Heroic ID When Aware of Danger 8- (Uncommon)
- 5 Distinctive Features: Living Goddess (Easily Concealable)
- 15 DNPC: Nikolos Georghiou, Father 8- (Normal, Unaware of Secret ID)
- 15 DNPC: Elena Georghiou, Mother 8- (Normal, Unaware of Secret ID)
- 15 Hunted: Anubis 8- (Mo Pow, Kill)
- 5 Hunted: Bulldozer 8- (Less Pow, Kill)
- 15 Hunted: Slug 8- (Mo Pow, Kill)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code of Honor [will not attack from behind, will not break her word] (Common, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Hunting Slug, Anubis, and Similar Foes (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID, Metis Georghiou (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Vulnerability: 2x STUN From Attacks by Her Sisters (Uncommon)

**Total Cost: 350**

## HONORABLE MENTION

Protean (Jonathan Marshall), Longarm (Denver Mason), and The Law (York Dobyns)

## MOST AMUSING ORIGIN

“World is still plaid if your mind squints just right, and the sea is backlit by fiery caterpillar mimes.”—Darren Sullivan

## Commando Rubberbando

by Ed Hastings

**Background/History:** Roger Allcomb grew up in inner city Detroit in the late 1950's and 1960's, the 3rd of 5 brothers and 3 sisters. His father worked in a motor shop and his mother busbed tables and did some housecleaning on the side. Roger was in and out of trouble as a kid, and when he turned 18 was drafted into the Army at the tail end of the Vietnam War. At first the rebellious Roger resented getting drafted, but soon found he actually liked the discipline the Army tried to instill in him. Those days were difficult times, with racial tensions high and civil rights still very much an active concern, but Roger was sheltered from that somewhat due to an unexpected knack for military life which resulted in him being snatched up by Special Forces and spending most of his life thereafter out of country.

He turned out to be an exceptional soldier; smart, quick, and durable; though his relatively slight build was a slight disadvantage when it came time for humping around with a full combat load-out, his durability and wiry resilience was a decided boon. After a tour in Vietnam he ended up drifting into a Green Beret training program, and took part in a couple of actions with them before the American withdrawal. Roger proved to be particularly adept at close combat techniques, which would begin a life-long interest and study of hand-to-hand combat skills.

After Nam Roger re-upped his enlistment and went on to serve for a full 20 years until retirement in 1992. During his time in the military, Roger served well and honorably, achieving the final rank of Master Sergeant and receiving many medals and citations for bravery and noble service in keeping with the proud traditions of the Green Berets.

After retiring from the military, Roger moved back to his hometown of Detroit, now Millennium City, with his wife of 5 years Margerie and their 3-year-old son Donel. Roger had met Margerie during a stint at a training facility in Georgia towards the end of his career. Roger got a job working at the Rubbero Rubberband Company in Dearborn as Head of Security, and life settled down to a pleasant pace.

Then in 1998, a terrible accident occurred at the Rubbero factory. During testing of a new rubber treatment designed to enhance the resiliency of elastics and rubber, the Ultimates struck the plant in an attempt to steal the new technology for possible use as an entangling agent by Binder. Roger and his security team did what they could to slow them down, even catching Binder by surprise with his commando close combat skills. However, this only earned

him a dousing with Binder's glue gun. As the struggle raged on after the Champions arrived in response to the distress call, the immobilized Roger was knocked into the vat of the experimental Rubbero Industrial-Strength Rubber Treatment prototype. The treatment reacted strangely with the strange glue from Binder's gun, and the resulting catalytic reaction forever altered the hapless Roger. Defender quickly fished the bedraggled civilian out of the vat before he could drown, but was horrified to discover that the poor man's bones and flesh had lost all structural integrity. Defender was further shocked when Roger spluttered back to consciousness and started to move his rubbery body around, apparently rendered elastic but still ambulatory by the bizarre accident.

Roger received immediate medical attention, but it was soon revealed that he was, other than the obvious alterations, physically fine. He was kept under observation and his condition was fully studied by a team of scientists and doctors for several weeks. During this period it was revealed that Roger needs regular monthly infusions of the Rubbero Industrial-Strength Rubber Treatment, or else he begins to die. It would probably take him a few months to completely expire for the lack of it, but in his weakened state he would be vulnerable to other malignant effects.

Roger was eventually released and returned home to Marjorie and his children. The Rubbero Rubberband Company came to an amicable out-of-court settlement to compensate Roger for his 'disability', including continuing the Rubbero Industrial-Strength Rubber Treatments made necessary by his condition. Between his retirement and his settlement Roger no longer had to work and decided to enjoy an early retirement with his family, but soon discovered that Marjorie was not taking his altered state well. Finally after several months she revealed that she just couldn't handle being married to a "freak" and divorced him. The wounded Roger found he needed something to do to fill his empty days during the separation and divorce proceedings; watching SNN one boring day he caught a live clip of ZigZag fighting the FBI Agent Kodiak and realized that the battle was being filmed nearby, a mere 3 blocks away or so. For some reason, seeing ZigZag use his powers for villainous ends filled Roger with anger and a feeling of personal responsibility to counter this affront with his own powers. Without another thought, Roger launched himself out the window, using his elastic body to propel himself like a rubberband and soon arrived at the scene of the ongoing super battle. Launching into the fray, Roger used his powers in conjunction with his mastery of close combat techniques to assist Kodiak in defeating his villainous counterpart.

## DIGITAL HERO #13

Upon sizing up this new foe ZigZag was heard to say, “Who are you supposed to be; the Black Gumby?”

ZigZag soon learned to rue those words as the struggle escalated. Though more versatile in the usage of his powers, ZigZag was confounded by the adroitness of the veteran soldier and overmatched by both Roger and Kodiak simultaneously; he decided discretion was called for and made his escape after creating a distraction.

After the fight, some of the press picked up on the “Black Gumby” bit, which continues to haunt Roger somewhat to this day, but when SNN interviewed the stoic Roger, he volunteered his name as “Master Sergeant Roger Allcomb, Green Beret’s, retired!” This led to one station calling him “Rubber Roger,” while a more clever wag among the SNN staff later tagged him as “Commando Rubberbando.” Roger himself resented all three names, but decided to turn his powers to use in furtherance of his neighborhood watch activities; he became a superheroic protector of Dearborn’s residential areas. At first he resisted taking a superhero name, but the catchy SNN moniker soon took on almost universal usage and Roger eventually just accepted it as an alternative to the less complimentary “Black Gumby,” or “Rubber Roger.” As a sign of good faith and continued remorse for his accident, the Rubbero company had a special body suit capable of stretching with Roger made for him, and he has worn that outfit or variations of it in the pursuit of keeping Dearborn neighborhoods safe from super crime for the last 4 years. He occasionally responds to calls for assistance by the Champions or other heroes residing in Millennium City.

He visits with his kids, whose mother moved them to her hometown of Atlanta, for several weeks each summer rather than have them come to Millennium City after a street gang he had suppressed tried to strike at him through them. Donel is proud of his father, but it is difficult for him because his mother is still “ashamed” of her “freak ex-husband”; Shaniqua has picked up on her mother’s view somewhat and is ambivalent towards her father, while the youngest, Jacquelyn, doesn’t remember her father before his accident, and simply delights in the neat tricks he can do to amuse her.

**Personality/Motivation:** Roger is a solid and even tempered man of deep feeling belied by a stoic appearance. While cleverer than most men, he is no genius; however he possesses a deep wisdom and has a big, forgiving heart. He has served in a lot of 3rd world countries and in a lot of war zones. He knows the foulness and depravity of what men can do to other men, but he has also seen the strength of people caring for

other people, the power of perseverance, and the awesome accomplishments possible by those who are willing to keep hoping for a better way.

Roger continues to support equal rights for all in the United States, and struggles to improve the safety and livelihoods of the “civilians” who share his chosen city with him. He is stern, but also kind, and takes a special interest in furthering the education and interests of children. He’s done many ‘public service’ commercials urging kids to stay in school, say no to drugs, and similar.

He is motivated to be a superhero to protect the innocent and to provide a safe environment for children to grow into adulthood in his surrogate hometown of Dearborn.

**Quote:** “Bounces off of me and beats the hell out of you!”

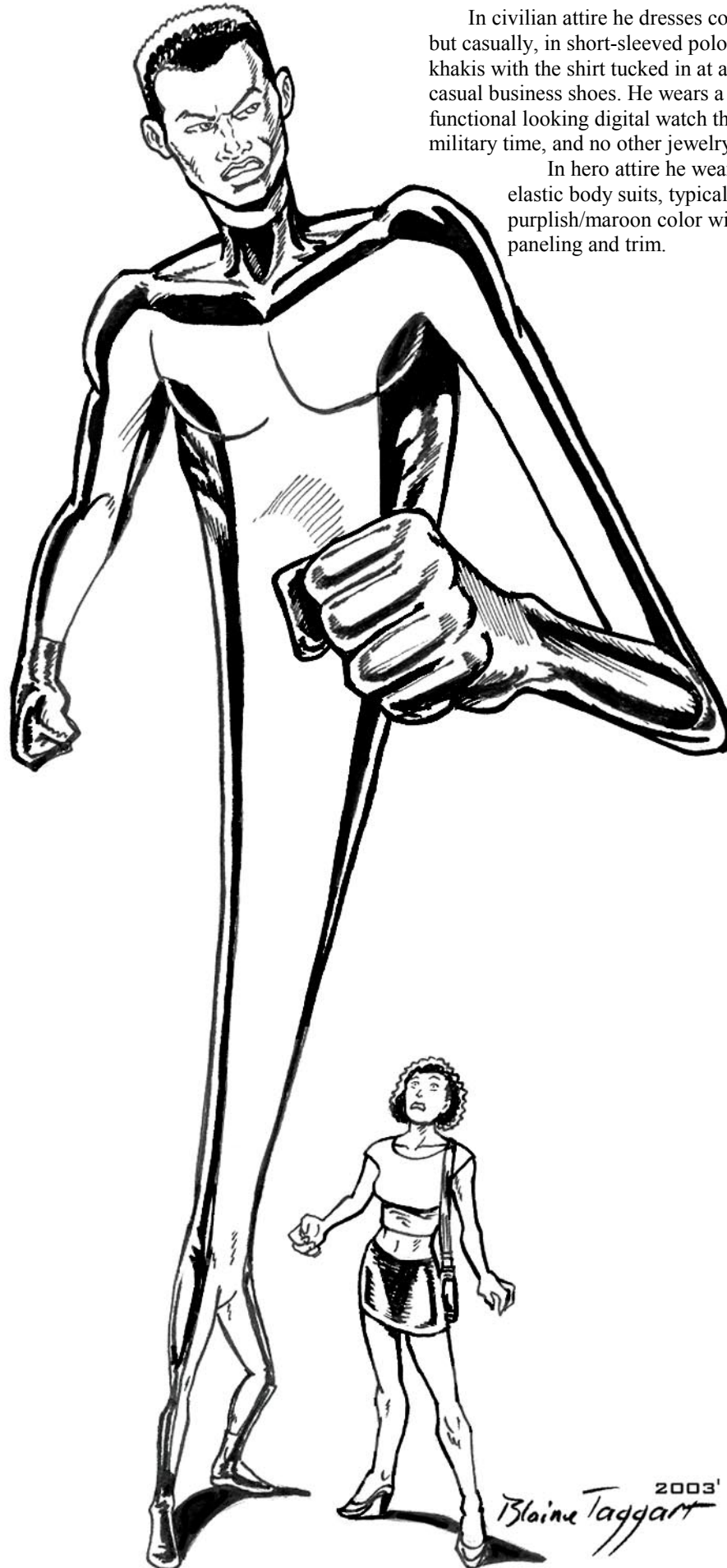
**Powers/Tactics:** Prior to his accident Roger was a skilled normal with a background in the Green Berets. He knows a number of useful skills learned over the years, although many of them haven’t been called upon for a number of years leaving Roger ‘rusty’ at them (Familiarities).

After his accident, Commando Rubberbando has a pliable, elastic body, which can be deformed or molded so as to avoid damage as long as he can see and respond to such (Combat Luck), the ability to extend his limbs and torso as far as 40 feet (Stretching), the ability to take extremely long bounding strides at increased ground speed (Running), and the ability to slingshot his body and/or that of 1 ‘passenger’ thru the air much like a rubberband can be ‘shot’. As superhumans go, Roger does not have a very powerful or broad array of abilities. However, what makes him dangerous is how he has learned to combine the elastic properties of his body with his two-decade study of hand-to-hand combat. Commando Rubberbando has a wide array of devastatingly effective close combat maneuvers, primarily usable in a very dynamic and mobile manner. In conjunction with his enhanced mobility and ability to elongate his limbs, Commando Rubberbando has used his unique fighting style to surprise many who discounted him.

**Appearance:** A tall, mildly handsome, skinny black man born in 1954, Roger is about to turn 50. Despite this, Roger carries his age well and in fact hasn’t really seemed to visibly age much since his accident 5 years ago. In fact, he looks like a man in his late 30s. Biologically he is aging, but wrinkles, spinal-slump, and other signs of time’s toll find no purchase upon his elastic body. He is also surprisingly light for his size; this is because his skeletal structure and organs have been radically altered and lost some of their density in the process.

In civilian attire he dresses conservatively but casually, in short-sleeved polo shirts and khakis with the shirt tucked in at all times and casual business shoes. He wears a nice but functional looking digital watch that's still set to military time, and no other jewelry.

In hero attire he wears special elastic body suits, typically a purplish/maroon color with white body paneling and trim.





# DIGITAL HERO #13

## Commando Rubberbando

by Ed Hastings

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; HTH 2d6 [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 14 PD (9 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 14 ED (9 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	2		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	2		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 82**

Movement:	Running:	20"/26"
	Leaping:	20"/22"
	Swimming:	2"/4"

**Cost Powers END**

- 23 *Rubberbando Body*: Elemental Control, 46-point powers
- 15 1) *Rubberbando Reach*: Stretching 6", Reduced Endurance 0 END (+1/2); No Noncombat Stretching (-1/4), Range Modifier Applies (-1/4) 0
- 22 2) *Rubberbando Flight/Slingshot*: Leaping +14" (6"/20" forward, 3"/10" upward) (Accurate), Combat Acceleration/Deceleration (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Usable Simultaneously (+1/2); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4) 0
- 15 3) *Rubberbando Stride*: +13" Running (20" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Turn Mode (-1/4) 0
- 6 *Snap-back*: Knockback Resistance -4"; Nonpersistent (-1/4) 0

### Martial Arts: Commando Training

#### Maneuver OCV DCV Notes

4	Charge	+0	-2	8d6 +v/5, FMove
4	Choke	-2	+0	1 Limb; 4d6 NND
4	Crush	+0	+0	10d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
5	Flying Dodge	—	+4	Dodge; Abort; FMove
5	Flying Grab	-2	-1	2 Limbs, 40 STR to Hold; FMove
3	Flying Tackle	+0	-1	6d6+v/5; Both Fall; FMove
4	Hold	-1	-1	3 Limbs, 40 STR to Hold
4	Martial Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

- 5 Passing Disarm -1 -1 Disarm, 40 STR to Disarm; FMove
- 5 Passing Strike+1 +0 6d6 +v/5; FMove
- 5 Passing Throw +0 +0 6d6 +v/5; Target Falls; FMove
- 4 Reversal -1 -2 45 STR to Escape; 2 Limbs
- 4 Root +0 +0 45 STR to Resist; Block; Abort
- 4 Sacrifice Lunge +2 -2 6d6+v/5; FMove
- 16 +4 HTH Damage Classes (added in)

### Perks

- 2 Reputation: Black Superhero & Civil Rights Activist, 8- (Large Group, African-Americans) +2/+2d6
- 1 Money: Military Retirement
- 1 Money: Settlement with Rubberbando Rubberband Company
- 12 Contact: Old Army Buddies 8- (Significant Contacts of Their Own, Useful Skills or Resources, Good Relationship), Group Contact (+2)

### Talents

- 18 *Rubbery Body*: Combat Luck (9 PD/9 ED)

### Skills

- 10 +1 Overall
- 9 +3 with Martial Arts
- 7 Breakfall 15-
- 1 Climbing 8-
- 1 Combat Driving 8-
- 1 Concealment 8-
- 1 Demolitions 8-
- 1 Fast Draw 8-
- 1 Interrogation 8-
- 2 KS: US Armed Forces 11-
- 2 Navigation (Land) 12-
- 1 Paramedics 8-
- 2 PS: Soldier 11-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 11-
- 3 Survival (Desert, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 8-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 3 Teamwork 13-
- 1 Tracking 8-
- 5 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Everyman Rebate, Parachuting, Advanced, Parachuting, Basic, SCUBA, Small Motorized Boats, Wheeled Military Vehicles
- 6 WF: Blades, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Small Arms

- 3 Linguist
- 1 1) Language: Afrikaans (basic)
- 1 2) Language: Arabic (basic)
- 1 3) Language: Burmese (basic)
- 1 4) Language: Slovenian (basic)
- 1 5) Language: Serbo-Croatian (basic)
- 1 6) Language: Swahili (basic)
- 1 7) Language: Turkish (basic)
- 1 8) Language: Ukrainian (basic)

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 268**

**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

- 15 Dependence: Rubbero Industrial-Strength Rubber Treatment (Extremely Difficult to Obtain, 5d6 Damage per Month)
- 20 DNPC: Ex-Wife Margerie, kids Donel (16), Shaniqua (12), Jacquelyn (9) 8-(Normal, Group x4)
- 15 Distinctive Features: Lanky, Jointless Body, Moves Strangely (Not Concealable)
- 20 Normal Characteristic Maxima
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Patriot (Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code of the HERO (Very Common, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: "Black Gumby" 8-
- 5 Rivalry: Personal Enmity with ZigZag (Rival is As Powerful, Seek to Outdo, Rival Aware of Rivalry)
- 10 Susceptibility: Cold Weather (Common, 1d6 damage per Minute)
- 20 Vulnerability: 2x BODY and STUN from Cold Attacks (Uncommon)

**Total Cost: 350**