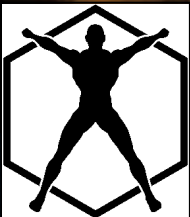


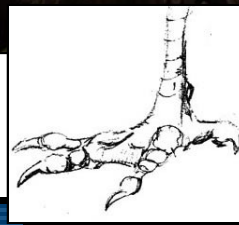
DIGITAL HERO #14



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• Animation
• Ministers
• Activation



• Monsters
• Ministers
• Miniatures



• Huts
• Totems
• Villagers

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When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

Time to get magical!

We're following up the successful launch of our new *Fantasy Hero* genre book with the release of several FH supplements, the first of which – *The Fantasy Hero Grimoire* – should be available around the time this issue of DH is published.

The “FHG” is a massive collection of spells for *Fantasy Hero* games. It has about 400 base spells, each with an average of a dozen options, for a total of approximately 4,500 spells! Many of the options are standardized (for example, remove Focus, remove Gestures, remove the Magic roll, or add Extra Time) so that you can easily customize the spells to a wide variety of magic systems and campaign settings. The index, which covers the base spells and all options I think are different enough to merit their own entry, has about 570 spells, and lists not just the page number but other useful information (Magic Roll penalty, END cost, duration, and so on).

Like the powers in *The UNTIL Superpowers Database*, the spells in the FHG are written up with a standard “template” that lets you quickly and easily determine what a spell can do and how it works. Following the template and description is a complete *HERO System* write-up for the spell suitable for copying to a character sheet.

SPELL CATEGORIES

For ease of reference, the FHG spells are organized into twelve categories based on common types of magic found in Fantasy games:

- ✦ *Alchemy*, the Art of creating potions, elixirs, and the like by mixing and activating various substances and, in the process, unlocking the magical essences within them.
- ✦ *Conjuration*, the Art of summoning beings from this and other planes of existence, and of controlling and banishing them.
- ✦ *Divination*, the Art of finding and foretelling.
- ✦ *Druidry*, spells relating to, using, or affecting animals, plants, and nature in general. (When cast by a druid, Druidry spells are a form of divine magic; see below.)
- ✦ *Elemental Magic*, spells related to the four Greater Elements – Air, Earth, Fire, and Water – as well as the Lesser Elements (such as Ice and Light).

- ✦ *Enchantment*, the Art of crafting and using enchanted items.
- ✦ *Necromancy*, magic pertaining to life, death, undeath, and related subjects, usually considered a black and evil Art.
- ✦ *Sorcery*, magics of the mind, thought, illusion, and deception, regarded by many with suspicion and fear.
- ✦ *Thaumaturgy*, the Art of transforming, altering, and redirecting energies and matter, including shapeshifting and related spells.
- ✦ *Witchcraft*, an Art combining various lesser aspects of other arts, such as Alchemy, Conjuration, Druidry, Elemental Magic, and Necromancy, as well as hedge magics and other “low spells,” but no less powerful than the other arcana for all that.
- ✦ *Wizardry*, a catch-all term for magic and spellcasting in general, but also used to refer to any spells or bodies of mystic lore not a part of any other arcana, such as spells of general utility (e.g., spells that detect or dispel magic), naming-magic, spells of sheer mystic power, and the like.
- ✦ *Divine Magic*, the spells and magic powers that priests receive from their gods.

This book will be perfect not only for FH players looking for spells for their characters, but GMs creating FH campaigns. Rather than having to create a huge selection of spells for a setting, GMs can simply refer to the FHG, indicating which options to use, which types of spells are available to characters, and so forth. We think it will really enhance the usefulness and fun of the FH line in general, and we're looking forward to hearing what you think. ;)

— Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer



HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

Machine Powers – Activate! A New Power For Activating Devices

While I was writing *The UNTIL Superpowers Database*, I created several powers that involve directly manipulating or using a weapon or device possessed by another character, usually for an effect the possessor wouldn't care for. Examples include *Legion Of Weapons* (page 46), *Legion Of Attackers* (page 154), and the *Touch Off* power in the Fire and Electricity powers sections of the Online USPD.

The difficulty with those powers is that they're all sort of "kludgy." To account for what happens when a character takes control of a weapon or like machine, the power has to be built with all sorts of open-ended effects as well as a Drain of the Charges or ammunition used. The end result gets the job done, but isn't always very satisfying... and it certainly seems unusually complicated for the simple act of activating a device.

Accordingly, I've been giving some thought to a new Power for these purposes, which I present below. While I don't think this Power is strictly *necessary* – after all, the USPD shows that you can build a power to activate machines using the standard rules – it might come in handy for some games or character concepts.

ACTIVATE

Standard Power/Attack Power

Instant

No Range

A character with Activate can turn on/off, or activate/deactivate, a machine, device, or similar object that he does not directly control, have use of, or possess the activating mechanism for (keys, password, or the like). Examples include a cyberkinetic character's ability to activate computers remotely, a device installed in a car that automatically causes all stoplights to turn green for that car, or a wizard's spell that lets him take control of another spellcaster's magic ring. Activate costs END to use.

If a character can Activate a single type of machine, or very limited class of machines (blaster pistols, Macintosh computers, Nissan Sentra automobiles), Activate costs 10 Character Points. If a character can Activate a limited class of machines (computers, weapons, automobiles), Activate costs 20 Character Points. If a character can Activate any type of machine, Activate costs 30 Character Points. The GM may increase these costs as appropriate for campaigns in which technology plays an important role, or decrease them for games in which technology is rare.

Activate is an Instant Power and has No Range. Characters often apply the *Continuous* (+1) and/or *Ranged* (+½) Advantages to it when creating powers with it.

Using Activate is an Attack Action. The character must make an Attack Roll to "hit" the device. If the device is held or carried by another character, the device has that character's DCV. If the device is not under the direct control of another character but has a DEX or DCV of its own (such as a Vehicle), use the device's standard DCV. If the device is not under the direct control of another character and has neither DEX nor DCV, calculate its DCV based on its size, or simply assign it a flat DCV of 3.

When an Activate attack succeeds, the character turns on or activates the targeted device. He does not need the key, the activation code, the password, or the like to Activate the device; he can do so automatically. (If the GM finds this unbalancing, he may require the character to make a Security Systems roll to bypass any security devices, such as electronic card-key locks; if the roll fails, the attempt to Activate the device fails, but the character may try again using the standard rules for repeated attempts to use a Skill.)

When Activated, a device turns on normally, and has any effect it would ordinarily have. For example, if the character Activates a loaded weapon (such as a gun, blaster, or howitzer), the weapon fires. In this case, to determine if the weapon's shot hits a target, the character uses his base OCV (DEX/3) plus any appropriate negative modifiers (such as the Range Modifier), but no positive modifiers. (He may, however, buy 2-point Combat Skill Levels solely for the purpose of increasing his base OCV with Activated attacks.) The GM determines who the weapon is aimed at when Activated, and thus the DCV of the potential target.

If a device has Charges or uses END (whether from the device itself or from the character who possesses it), then turning it on or using it with Activate uses a Charge or END. Thus, Activate sometimes allows a character to force another character to use up Charges or expend END. If the activation of the device is subject to any Limitations (such as Activation Roll, Concentration, or Extra Time), those Limitations apply to the character using Activate as well – even if he didn't know about them. Thus, a character using Activate may suddenly find his DCV reduced to zero when he has to Concentrate to turn on a super-weapon or the like. To avoid such difficulties, the character can cease his attempt to Activate the device, but of course this means he's used up his Phase.



An Activated device normally de-activates or turns off as soon as the character's Phase ends. But if the character applies the *Continuous* (+1) Advantage to Activate, the device remains active/turned on, and the character may control its operation as a Half Phase Action. For example, he could Activate a car, then shift it into gear and drive it along the road. He must maintain a Line Of Sight to the device to continue to control it in this manner; if he loses LOS, he immediately loses control of the device and it deactivates/turns off (or some other effect occurs that the GM considers appropriate – perhaps the device starts to run out of control). The character can, of course, attempt to regain control of the device in later Phases if he can regain LOS. If a character maintains control of a device via Continuous Activate, he may deactivate or turn off the device as a Zero-Phase Action.

If a character uses Activate to operate a device, the GM may require the character to make rolls with appropriate Skills to do so. For example, if a character tries to use Activate to drive a car, the GM might require a Combat Driving roll if the character attempts any actions other than simple driving. If the Skill Roll fails, the character immediately loses control of the device and it deactivates/turns off (or some other effect occurs that the GM considers appropriate – perhaps the device starts to run out of control). The character can, of course, attempt to regain control of the device in his next Phase.

If a character Activates a device possessed by another character, the possessor can still use the device normally on his own Phases. However, if the Activate has Continuous so that the character with Activate maintains control of the device, the possessor of the device *cannot* automatically use it normally. He must fight the other character for control of the device. Typically the GM resolves this with a Characteristic Roll Contest (such as STR Roll Versus STR Roll, DEX Roll Versus DEX Roll, or EGO Roll Versus EGO Roll), but he may choose any other method he sees fit.

A character cannot use Activate to automatically deactivate a device that's already turned on. He must first successfully "activate" the device with Activate, then use his next Zero-Phase Action to turn the device off.

At the GM's discretion, a character can also use Activate to activate or "turn on" an innate power or ability possessed by a character. An example would be forcing a lycanthrope to transform from human into animal shape, or triggering a character's Energy Blast against his will. However, characters cannot normally use Activate to deactivate or turn off innate powers or abilities currently in use; that usually requires Drain, Dispel, or the like.

Activate is most useful in campaigns taking place in industrial or post-industrial eras, or which feature a lot of technology, such as modern-day or *Star Hero* campaigns. However, characters in a Fantasy setting might use it to activate enchanted items or the like. The GM should monitor the use of Activate carefully and forbid any potentially abusive or unbalancing uses; the Power is intended to allow characters to build useful and interesting powers easily, not to run rampant Activating their enemies' weapons at every turn.



Hero Universe

by Darren Watts

Zdravstvuite, comrades, and welcome to the latest installment of Champions Universe, the column that dishes the inside dirt on the superheroes of history! This month is part two of our ongoing series on the complete lineup of The Sentinels, a team with more than forty years of history in the Champs Uni and a whole pile of characters to meet. So what are you waiting for? Let's get started! When we last left our heroes, Rocketman and the Soviet Super-Spy known as Boroh had been brainwashed by the evil super-computer UNIVAC, who gave them drone versions of itself to use to take over the respective nuclear missile programs of the USA and Russia. Meanwhile, Dr. Phantom was on the run at the Fort Brewster Army Base, pursued by mind-controlled soldiers! Yikes!

Further History of the Sentinels

Rocketman arrived at NORAD headquarters in Colorado a few hours later. (This was before the completion of the Cheyenne Mountain facility, and the base was still headquartered at an aboveground base in Colorado Springs.) One of the guards recognized him, and asked him what he was doing there. He was answered by a backhanded punch that sent him sprawling. Several other guards reacted to this, shouting threats and then opening fire, all of which was ignored by the slowly advancing man in the metal suit. The sound of gunfire alerted the staff inside, who called for a base lockdown and ordered the full alert sirens.

The unfamiliar sound of the sirens carried all the way to the nearby city of Colorado Springs, which was home to yet another hero of the time, the legendary MeteorMan. Fearing the worst, an attack or accident at NORAD headquarters, he quickly changed into his familiar black-and-gold costume and flew off to investigate.

Meanwhile, Dr. Phantom had been sneaking past various squads of Fort Brewster's military police, searching for a clue to what was going on here. She arrived at the lab building that held UNIVAC's mainframe, and slipped past the guards into the main room. There, UNIVAC surprised her with a burst of light from its brainwashing device, and Dr. Phantom began to slip under the fiendish machine's control! Just as she was about to fall completely under its spell, the lights suddenly shut off. Phantom blinked, as she came back to her senses, and was delighted to see Microman standing on the computer's console, dangling several loose wires he had just

yanked from the computer's processing unit. "Looks like I got here in the proverbial nick, huh," said the diminutive daredevil. Phantom smiled. "My hero. Let's see if between us we can't get this thing rewired and free these soldiers from their brainwashing."

Back in Colorado, Rocketman had reached the doors to the main control center, where a small squad had gathered in a last-ditch defense to keep him away from the computers that controlled America's nuclear arsenal. Bullets whizzed through the air, striking the armored hero dead in the chest and bouncing away harmlessly. Slowly, the befogged Rocketman raised his right hand, preparing to fire a devastating energy blast at the helpless troops, when from out of the sky lanced a beam of pure white energy, forming a protective shield between the advancing dreadnought and his targets. "Not so fast, big fella," shouted MeteorMan, and he swooped down to confront the strange armored figure.

At Fort Brewster, Microman and Dr. Phantom succeeded in freeing the soldiers from UNIVAC's brainwashing with a strobe light of their own, and also revived its designer Dr. Colpitt. Colpitt filled them in on the rest of UNIVAC's plan, and Dr. Phantom had the base commander put her in touch with NORAD while Microman worked on picking up Boroh's trail.

MeteorMan and Rocketman were battling each other to a standstill in the air over NORAD when Dr. Phantom got through on the radio. She quickly gave one of the base's engineers the info on how to use bright flashes of light to free Rocketman, but when the soldiers trained a spotlight on Rocketman he destroyed it with his electrical blast. While he was distracted, though, the engineer managed to grab MeteorMan and gave him the same information, who was able to free Rocketman by flashing him with his own intense flares of energy. Once his mind cleared, Rocketman was horrified at what he'd almost done, and smashed the drone with his own hands. The two heroes headed back to the East Coast.

At the same time, Microman determined that UNIVAC had hired the notorious supervillain Captain Claw, a modern-day "pirate" with his own submarine, to ferry Boroh secretly back to Moscow. He and Dr. Phantom set off in hot pursuit. What they didn't know was that while Claw was waiting for his "cargo" in New York City, he decided to pull off a quick bank robbery while he was there, which was interrupted in progress by the local superhero Beowulf. Claw

SPECIAL THANKS

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).

MeteorMan II

and his gang retreated back to the sub, where the mind-controlled Boroh was waiting for them, just in time for Beowulf, Microman, and Dr. Phantom to arrive at the same time. The resulting brawl was a spectacular one, with the three heroes coming out on top and the last UNIVAC drone being lost at the bottom of the Hudson River, where it would lie undisturbed until it was found by the villainess Stingray some years later (but that's a whole 'nother story.)

Once the dust had settled and the heroes had overseen the dismantling of UNIVAC into spare parts, the group agreed that it would be a good idea if they were to organize themselves into a formal team, in case another emergency arose that one of them could not handle on his own. MeteorMan had several suggestions based on his mentor's experiences with the Defenders of Justice, and they agreed to meet formally in a week to establish how the group would be organized.



MeteorMan II

Background/History: Tom Teller was born in Colorado in 1931, part of a large family of farmers, hunters, and general outdoorsmen. After graduating from college in 1952, he took a job as a park ranger in Sylvan Lake State Park, maintaining hiking trails and teaching tourists about the local ecology. In 1956, while hiking alone on a hilly trail, he found a burned-out crater where a meteor had apparently struck. At the edge of the crater his eye was drawn to a purple stone that seemed to glow as if lit from within. Holding the stone in his hand, he felt strange power coursing through his body. He closed his eyes, marveling at the sensation, and when he opened them he found himself floating some twenty feet in the air! A few minutes practice had him swooping and soaring through the trees, laughing as he narrowly avoided low branches. After he landed, he searched the area for more samples of the amazing mineral, but could find none. He considered bringing the stone to his superiors or the government to study, but then began to worry that his discovery would bring countless scientists, treasure-hunters and miners to his beloved parks, running roughshod over their pristine beauty while searching for more stones. He couldn't bear to see the park destroyed in that manner, and resolved to keep the stone a secret.

However, he kept the stone in his pocket, and one day when a couple of hikers were stranded by a rockslide he used his newfound powers of flight to rescue them, wearing an impromptu mask fashioned out of a scarf. When the hikers returned to civilization they told reporters about the mysterious glowing man who rescued them, and the story of the "Sylvan Lake Angel" was picked up nationally. One man who read with interest was Harrison Chase, the retired World War II-era superhero known as MeteorMan. He had also found a stone while working at a remote observatory, and fashioned the stone into a ring because skin contact with the stone was required to work his various powers. The description of the glowing flying man sounded like someone else had found a similar stone, and he set out to Sylvan Lake to find out for certain.

Chase used his own powers to create a harmless "cave-in" in an isolated hilly area, then used his radio to call for assistance. As he'd planned, Teller used his stone to fly to Chase's aid, and when he arrived Chase confronted him, revealing his own costumed identity. Chase, who was now in his mid-forties, told Teller that he wanted someone to take over the role of MeteorMan and restore the tradition of costumed superheroing that had been damaged publicly by the anti-Communist witch hunts of Senator

McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee meetings of a few years prior. In short, America needed MeteorMan again, and Teller was quickly convinced. Over the next few weeks, Chase trained Teller in how to use the stone (which Teller had set into a ring of his own), and that fall Teller made his own public debut in Denver stopping a team of bank robbers.

At around the same time, several other new heroes were appearing, like the Fabulous Five and Black Mask, and others like Vanguard were cautiously coming out of "retirement." MeteorMan II, with his easygoing charm and confident smile, became a public sensation, and when he helped form the Sentinels the team regularly looked to him to act as their leader and public spokesman. Teller served with the team continuously from 1961 to 1977, with several extended runs as the team's leader, and then spent the next four years as a reserve member. He also maintained an active solo career, battling a Rogues' Gallery of menaces across the Midwest and Central US, like Dr. Macabre, Bookworm, Frostfire, and the Smasher.

In 1981, Teller married his longtime girlfriend, jeweler Dawn Simmons, and retired to a small beach home in Southern California. There, he began training a young fan named Bobby Marrero to become the third MeteorMan. In 1985, before he was able to finish the training, the Secret Crisis struck, and Teller emerged from retirement for one last battle alongside his old allies in the Sentinels. Unfortunately, he was killed by the monster known as Decay, and his remains were buried on an alien world by his old friends Microman and Rainmaker.

Personality/Motivation: MeteorMan was one of the most famous and respected superheroes of his era, and he took that responsibility very seriously. His old-fashioned Midwestern upbringing was reflected in his strong and somewhat strict sense of morals; occasionally his teammates would tease him for always standing up when a lady entered the room, but they always respected his courage and commitment to his ideals. His ability to inspire his teammates with a dramatic speech when things seemed their bleakest was legendary.

Quote: "This might be our last fight, friends; let's make it one those monsters won't ever forget."

Powers/Tactics: MeteorMan's powers are all granted by the mysterious stone he wears in a ring under his gauntlet. Since the ring is inconspicuous and few if any people realize it's the source of his powers, he receives no *Focus* limitation on his powers. All of his powers are based on the control and manipulation of energy



MeteorMan II

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH
19	DEX	27	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll: 13-
21	EGO	22	13-	ECV: 7
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
20	COM	5	13-	
				Total: 43 PD (36 rPD)
				Total: 44 ED (36 rED)
				Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
7	PD	4		
8	ED	4		
5	SPD	21		
7	REC	0		
50	END	7		
29	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 140

Movement:

Running:	8"/16"
Flight:	25"/200"
Tunneling:	8"/16"
Swimming:	4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
60	<i>Energy Manipulation:</i> Multipower, 60-point reserve	
6u	1) <i>Power Blast:</i> EB 12d6 (vs. ED)	6
6u	2) <i>Widebeam:</i> EB 6d6 (vs. ED), Area Of Effect (7" Cone; +1)	6
6u	3) <i>Blinding Beam:</i> Sight Group Flash 12d6	6
6u	4) <i>Protective Field:</i> Force Field (30 PD/30 ED)	6
6u	5) <i>Protective Wall:</i> Force Wall (12 PD/12 ED)	6
6u	6) <i>Meteoric Flight:</i> Flight 25" (Improved Noncombat Movement (x8))	6
6u	7) <i>Solid-Energy Constructs:</i> Telekinesis (33 STR), Fine Manipulation	6
6u	8) <i>Energy-Shackles:</i> Entangle 4d6, 8 DEF	6
6u	9) <i>Hypermeteoric Flight:</i> Flight 20", Megascale (1" = 10 km; +½)	6
5u	10) <i>Energy Drill:</i> Tunneling 8" through 10 DEF	5
3u	11) <i>Cloaking Field:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group (No Fringe)	3
4u	12) <i>Protective Bubble:</i> Life Support (Safe in High Pressure, Safe in High Radiation, Safe in Intense Cold, Safe in Intense Heat, Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum, Self-Contained Breathing), Usable By 8 Others (+1)	0
9	<i>Padded Costume:</i> Armor (6 PD/6 ED); Activation Roll 14- (-½), OIF (-½)	0
4	<i>Goggles:</i> Flash Defense (5 points) (Sight Group); IIF (-¼)	0
4	<i>Healthy All-American:</i> Running +2" (8" Total)	1

2 *Healthy All-American:* Swimming +2" (4" Total) 1

Perks

- 3 Contact: National Park Service 11- (Limited by Identity, Organization)
- 3 Contact: Harrison Chase (MeteorMan I) 11- (Good Relationship)
- 3 Contact: Drake Wilson 11- (Access to Major Institutions)
- 3 Fringe Benefit: Membership (Sentinels)

Talents

- 3 Bump Of Direction
- 3 Lightsleep

Skills

- 15 +5 with Energy Multipower
- 10 +2 with HTH Combat
- 9 +3 with Power Blast, Blinding Beam, and Energy Shackles
- 4 Animal Handler (Canines, Equines, Ursines) 14-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Bureaucratics 14-
- 5 Climbing 14-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 4 KS: Superhuman History 14-
- 3 KS: Known Supervillains 13-
- 3 KS: American History 13-
- 1 Language: French (Basic Conversation)
- 1 Language: Russian (Basic Conversation)
- 3 Mechanics 13-
- 6 Navigation (Air, Land, Marine) 14-
- 3 Oratory 14-
- 5 Paramedics 14-
- 13 Power 18-
- 4 PS: Park Ranger 14-
- 3 PS: Teacher 13-
- 3 Riding 13-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 12 Survival 14- (Arctic/Subarctic, Desert, Marine, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical)
- 5 Tactics 14-
- 10 TF: Agricultural & Construction Vehicles, Equines, Hanggliding, Helicopters, Large Motorized Boats, Large Wind-Powered Boats, Parachuting, Basic, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Small Wind-Powered Boats, Spaceplanes
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Botany 13-
- 2 2) SS: Biology 13-
- 2 3) SS: Ecology 13-
- 2 4) SS: Zoology 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 313

Total Cost: 453



DIGITAL HERO #14

200+ Disadvantages

- 15 DNPC: Dawn Simmons, Girlfriend 11- (Normal)
- 15 DNPC: Wally Myrick, President of Fan Club 8- (Incompetent)
- 10 Hunted: Bookworm 8- (As Pow)
- 10 Hunted: Dr. Macabre 8- (As Pow)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code of the Hero (Very Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Protects the Innocent (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Reputation: Big Boy Scout, 14-
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID (Frequently, Major)
- 113 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 453

fields created by his ring; he can fire bolts of destructive power, generate solid shapes and constructs, or use the energy to bend light around himself and become invisible. He can fly at enormous speeds while protecting himself with a personal force field.

MeteorMan is a versatile and crafty fighter, with a solid sense of tactics and a knack for teamwork. He uses his *Power* skill extensively, developing new and creative uses for his energy constructs.

Appearance: MeteorMan wears a dark purple cowl that covers his head, eyes, and neck, but leaves his mouth and chin open. His costume features a fiery meteor on his chest, a purple rock with an red and orange trail. His shirt and pants are a lighter purple, while his gloves and boots match his dark purple cowl. His belt is a red/orange that matches his meteor's trail.

In his secret identity, Tom is a tall, handsome blonde man with broad shoulders, a dimpled chin and ready smile.

Beowulf

Background/History: Ted Spaulding was a graduate student and teaching assistant at New York University in 1961, working on his thesis on ancient Scandinavian music and poetry. One day, while searching through some dusty archives in the basement of the University's collection, he found a scroll that seemed to be centuries old, but still in remarkable condition, with a short poem written in a language similar to Old Danish. Unable to determine where the scroll had come from, Spaulding took the scroll back to his room and worked on translating it over the next several days. Finally, he thought he had managed to crack the odd dialect, and read the entire piece out loud for the first time. He immediately felt ill, and the room began to spin as he briefly lost consciousness.

When he awoke, he was no longer alone in his own head. Instead, he found himself an unwilling passenger in the body of a mighty warrior who claimed against all reason to be the actual historical Beowulf, King of the Geats and slayer of the monster Grendel. After a series of adventures in and around Manhattan as the powerful hero became accustomed to his new surroundings, the two slowly put their story together. At first, they believed that Beowulf had been pulled out of time into the present, but in months to come they would discover that the Geatland that Beowulf was from actually existed in another dimension, which had been connected to our world in ancient times (accounting for the legends that had passed into our world) but had somehow come "unmoored" in time and space and now existed in a mystical dimension parallel to our own. In his own world, Beowulf had been trapped in a cavern by an evil witch called Helith; in order to free him, a Geatish wizard/smith, called Weland, and a human wizard created a spell that would bring Beowulf back to Earth and allow him to share his existence with the human wizard's own descendant, who happened to be Ted. It was really all very confusing to Ted, who was even more unhappy to learn that the spell had further conditions; the two bodies could switch back and forth, with the other personality riding passively along, aware of what was happening and able to communicate telepathically with the dominant personality, but unable to affect anything that happened. Also, the two bodies had to switch at least once every day, and once switched they could not switch again for one hour.

Beowulf's adventurous nature, combined with the occasional efforts by Helith to recapture him, quickly led to the pair earning a reputation as a superhero, and when Beowulf met the heroes who would make up the founding Sentinels on their first mission he agreed to join

their band. Beowulf served with the Sentinels until 1966 (becoming the first member to leave the team when he and Ted were temporarily separated and began an extended adventure in Geatland) and a second stretch from 1973 to 1975, when they both returned to Geatland permanently (except for occasional visits and the odd interdimensional crossover epic). Beowulf still sits on the throne of Geatland, with Ted, now somewhat acclimated to the more primitive life in that mystical realm, serving as his advisor.

Personality/Motivation: Beowulf and Ted have come to a basic understanding about their shared existence, agreeing that as long as they seem to be stuck together Beowulf should use his vast strength and fighting skills in the service of good, while they search for a means of separating. Since Ted, while well-meaning, has little idea how to function as a superhero, they have agreed to work with the Sentinels, where more experienced heroes like Microman and MeteorMan can provide some guidance. Beowulf is happiest whenever he can clearly identify an evil opponent and wade into combat; gray areas and situations that can't be handled by wrestling or swordplay confuse and occasionally anger him, though as time goes on he gains better control of his temper and even revels in sneakiness once he gets the hang of it.

On the other hand, Ted's heart is in the right place despite the periodic outbreaks of mind-numbing terror his association with the Sentinels subjects him to. He rises to the occasion whenever his skills and knowledge of history allow him to contribute.

Quote: <Beowulf> "And now again, my soul knows the fire of battle!"

<Ted Spaulding> "You guys go on ahead, I'll just keep an eye on things back here."

Powers/Tactics: Beowulf is the mightiest warrior of his age, with "the hand-grip of thirty men" and weapons and armor crafted by a powerful mage/smith. Though happiest when he's able to cut loose on the battlefield, laying about right and left with deadly sword-blows, Beowulf is also a skilled tactician and surprisingly swift to adapt to situations he doesn't fully understand. His greatest weakness is his own overconfidence; there is literally no foe that he feels he can't defeat, given enough time and opportunity. When Ted is riding along in his head, he will try to fill in the gaps in Beowulf's knowledge, and over the years their mutual trust and ability to work together will increase greatly.

Appearance: Beowulf stands 6'8" tall, rippling with muscle, with long blonde hair and a thick beard. He carries a bastard sword that he

Beowulf

regularly swings one-handed, and sometimes wears a suit of enchanted armor but just as frequently strides into battle bare-chested. Ted Spaulding is a small and fairly nebbish-looking fellow, standing 5'10" but weighing only about 150 pounds, with brown hair and glasses.



Beowulf

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
38	STR	28	17-	4¾ tons; 7½d6 HTH [4]
21	DEX	33	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
30	CON	40	15-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
23	EGO	26	14-	ECV: 8
28	PRE	18	15-	PRE Attack: 5½d6
18	COM	4	13-	
15	PD	7		Total: 33 PD (23 rPD)
10	ED	4		Total: 26 ED (19 rED)
5	SPD	19		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
14	REC	0		
60	END	0		
54	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 199

Movement: Running: 11"/22"
Leaping: 7½"/15"
Swimming: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Alternate Identity:</i> Ted Spaulding: Multiform (100 Character Points in the most expensive form); Must Change Forms at Least Every 24 Hours (-½), Once Changed, Cannot Change Again for 1 Hour (-½)	0
10	<i>Toughness:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, 25%	0
4	<i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (5 PD/3 ED)	0
8	<i>Toughness:</i> Life Support (Extended Breathing, Immunity: Alcohol, Safe in Intense Cold, Sleeping: Character only has to sleep 8 hours per week)	0
6	<i>Toughness:</i> Knockback Resistance -3"	0
5	<i>Toughness:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-5) for Resistant Defenses	0
5	<i>Toughness:</i> Power Defense (5 points)	0
5	<i>Legendary Swimmer:</i> Swimming +5" (7" Total)	1
10	<i>Swift Runner:</i> Running +5" (11" Total)	1
22	<i>Rending Grip:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) (vs. PD), Penetrating (+½)	2
25	<i>Magical Armor of Weland:</i> Armor (18 PD/16 ED); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	0
7	<i>Shield:</i> +3 with DCV; OAF (-1)	0
20	<i>Naegling:</i> Multipower, 40-point reserve; all slots OAF (-1)	0
2u	1) <i>Sword of the Geats:</i> HKA 2½d6 (5d6 with STR) (vs. PD); OAF (-1)	4
1u	2) <i>Protector:</i> Missile Deflection (Any Ranged Attack); OAF (-1), Will Not Work Against Heavy Missiles (-¼)	0

Martial Arts: Geatish Swordfighting

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Charge	+0	-2	+4 DC Strike +v/5, FMove
4 Martial Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Martial Strike	+0	+2	+4 DC Strike
5 Offensive Strike	-2	+1	+6 DC Strike

Martial Arts: Wrestling

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Choke Hold	-2	+0	3d6 NND, One Limb
4 Crush	+0	+0	+6d6, Must Follow Grab
5 Grappling Block	+1	+1	One Limb, Block
3 Martial Grab	-1	-1	Two Limbs, +20 STR
3 Martial Throw	+0	+1	+2d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4 Reversal	-1	-2	+25 STR, Two Limbs

Perks

- 5 Fringe Benefit: Prince of Geatland (Member of the Aristocracy/Higher Nobility)
- 3 Fringe Benefit: Sentinel (Membership)
- 2 Reputation: Legendary Monster-Slayer and Hero (A large group, 8-) +2/+2d6

Talents

- 17 Combat Sense 13-
- 3 Lightsleep
- 22 *Magics of Weland:* Universal Translator 13-
- 5 *Resistance:* +5 to EGO Rolls to Resist Interrogation

Skills

- 24 +3 with All Combat
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 3 Analyze: Combat 11-
- 3 Animal Handler (Canines, Equines) 15-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 3 Fast Draw: Sword 13-
- 2 Gambling (Ancient Geatish Games) 11-
- 1 High Society 8-
- 4 KS: Geats 13-
- 2 AK: Notional Geatland 11-
- 3 Navigation (Land, Marine) 11-
- 3 Paramedics 11-
- 5 Rapid Attack (Hand-to-Hand)
- 3 Riding 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 2 Survival (Arctic/Subarctic) 11-
- 7 Tactics 13-
- 3 Tracking 11-
- 3 Trading 15-
- 3 TF: Equines, Large Rowed Boats, Sleds, Small Rowed Boats

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- 5 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Bows, Lances, Thrown Knives, Axes, and Darts
- 2 Weaponsmith (Muscle-Powered HTH) 11-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 338

Total Cost: 537

200+ Disadvantages

- 5 Accidental Change: Presence of Wyrd Magics 8- (Uncommon)
- 15 DNPC: Family of Hygelac 8- (Normal, Group DNPC (x2))
- 10 Distinctive Features: Enormous, Scarred Warrior (Concealable)
- 10 Hunted: Heardred 11- (As Pow, Limited Geographical Area)

- 10 Hunted: Helith 8- (As Pow)
- 5 Money: Poor
- 10 Physical Limitation: Unfamiliar with Modern Society (Frequently, Slightly)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Warrior's Code: Defend the Weak, Protect Your Honor, Pay All Debts, Party Heartily, etc. (Very Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Supremely Overconfident (Common, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Always Mistrusts Non-Humans at First (Uncommon, Strong)
- 10 Unluck: 2d6
- 212 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 537

Ted Spaulding

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 HTH
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
9	PRE	-1	11-	PRE Attack: 1½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 6 PD (3 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 6 ED (3 rED)
3	SPD	9		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	1		

Total Characteristics Cost: 26

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

Perks

- 3 Contact: NYU Librarian 11- (Access to Major Institutions)
- 5 Money: Well Off

Talents

- 3 Perfect Pitch
- 6 Combat Luck

Skills

- 2 Animal Handler (Equines) 11-
- 3 Climbing 11-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Cryptography 13-
- 3 KS: Ancient European Literature 13-
- 3 KS: Ancient Northern European History 13-

- 3 KS: History 13-
- 3 KS: Music 13-
- 3 PS: Musician (wind instruments) 13-
- 3 PS: Grad Student/TA 13-
- 3 Stealth 11-
- 4 Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Temperate/Subtropical) 13-
- 3 Linguist
- 7 Languages: Danish, Olde English, French, Gaelic, German, Latin, Russian (Fluent Conversation)
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Anthropology 13-
- 2 2) SS: Archaeology 13-
- 2 3) SS: Psychology 13-
- 2 4) SS: Statistics 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 74

Total Cost: 100

50+ Disadvantages

- 5 Accidental Change: Wyrd Magics, 8- (Uncommon)
- 15 DNPC: Tracy (sister) 8- (Normal, Unaware of Character's Adventuring Career/Secret ID)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Nebbishy, Thin (Concealable)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Nearsighted, Needs Glasses (Frequently, Slightly)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Does the Right Thing but Complains Loudly (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 100

Boroh (The Raven)

Background/History: Anatoliy Lukin was born in a small town near Moscow in 1929. His family was strongly patriotic, and though Lukin lost his father and two older brothers in World War II, he joined the army as soon as he was old enough. He volunteered for a special experimental program sponsored by the KGB in the early '50s that was a precursor to their later Super-Soldier programs, and the “treatments” (primarily odd vitamin supplements and exposure to a mishmash of various potentially metagenic substances) enhanced his overall physiology to slightly-superhuman levels. (Lukin was one of the lucky ones – few soldiers came out of the program without diseases or injuries, let alone blessed with any sort of positive mutation.)

By the late 1950s, Lukin was assigned to the “Black-13 Directorate” of foreign agents under the command of the mysterious spymaster called “Chaika” (“Seagull”), dubbed by the American media later as the “Soviet Super-Spies.” Each of these agents took a bird code name – since Lukin specialized in stealth and sneakiness, he was dubbed “Boroh,” or “Raven.” Dropped off in the United States and given orders by Chaika from a secret location in the Florida Keys, the 13th Brigade operated a series of espionage and sabotage missions up and down the East Coast, before eventually being broken up by the efforts of various American superheroes in the late '60s, primarily Rocketman, Vanguard, and the original All-American. Boroh, who was finally captured in 1967, was deported and wound up a member of the People’s Legion until his death at the hands of Afghan rebels in 1980.

Personality/Motivation: While Boroh is a genuine Russian patriot, he doesn’t particularly hold any opinions about the relative merits of Communism and Capitalism. He’s for whatever his superiors in the KGB tell him to be for, and enjoys the excitement and suspense of being a professional operative for its own sake. He never reveals how much fun he’s having to anyone else, however; that wouldn’t be “professional.”

Quote: “Spare me your tired witticisms. I have work to do.”

Powers/Tactics: Boroh is a sneaky opponent, and is well aware he can’t stand up and fight toe-to-toe with most superhumans. Instead, he uses his various gadgets and a few martial maneuvers to slow down pursuers and give himself the time to slip away. If forced by circumstances into a direct fight, he’ll try to pop off a “Black Fog” pellet and then use his CV advantage to throw some martial kicks and punches. His Super-Soldier training generally allows him to make short work of guards and policemen, and his

skills at infiltration and espionage are superlative.

Appearance: Boroh wears a bird-themed costume. He wears a black cowl that comes to a slight point at the nose, giving it a beak-like appearance. He wears a black cape that has been shaped at the bottom to have a feather-like appearance. His gloves, boots, and belt are black, and his jumpsuit is a dark grey.

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Boroh (The Raven)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [5]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
23	CON	26	14-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
16	COM	3	12-	
10	PD	5		Total: 19 PD (9 rPD)
10	ED	5		Total: 17 ED (7 rED)
6	SPD	27		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
10	REC	0		
50	END	2		
38	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 199

Movement:	Running:	9"/18"
	Gliding:	8"/16"
	Leaping:	5"/10"
	Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Armored Costume:</i> Armor (6 PD/4 ED); OIF (-1/2)	0
25	<i>Black Fog Pellets:</i> Darkness to Sight Group 3" Radius, 8 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Minute (+1/4); IAF (-1/2) [8]	
20	<i>Talon:</i> HKA 1 1/2d6 (3d6+1 with STR) (vs. PD); IIF (-1/4)	2
11	<i>Radarvision Goggles:</i> Radar (Discriminatory, Sense); OAF (-1)	0
15	<i>Catchweb Grenades:</i> Entangle 5d6, 5 DEF; 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-1/4) [4]	
5	<i>Glider Cape:</i> Gliding 8"; IAF (-1/2)	0
16	<i>Enhanced Physiology:</i> Life Support (Immunity: All terrestrial diseases and biowarfare agents, Longevity: 200 Years, Safe in Intense Cold, Safe in Intense Heat, Sleeping: Character only has to sleep 8 hours per week)	0
6	<i>Swift:</i> Running +3" (9" Total)	1

Martial Arts: KGB Commando

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Choke Hold	-2	+0	3d6 NND, One Limb
4 Martial Escape	+0	+0	+25 STR
3 Martial Grab	-1	-1	Two Limbs, +20 STR
4 Martial Strike	+0	+2	+4d6 Strike
3 Martial Throw	+0	+1	+2d6 + v/5, Target Falls

Perks

4 Contact: Chaika 11- (Significant Contacts of His Own, Very Useful Skills or Resources, Limited by Identity)

Talents

6 Ambidexterity: Reduce Penalty for Off-Hand to -1
6 Combat Luck
15 Combat Sense 13-
20 Danger Sense 13- (Immediate Vicinity)
3 Lightsleep
5 <i>Resistance:</i> +5 to EGO Rolls to Resist Interrogation

Skills

12 +4 with KGB Commando Fighting
10 +2 with DEX-based Skills
3 Acrobatics 14-
3 Breakfall 14-
3 Bugging 13-
3 Climbing 14-
3 Computer Programming 13-
7 Concealment 15-
3 Contortionist 14-
3 Cryptography 13-
10 Defense Maneuver IV
3 Disguise 13-
3 Electronics 13-
2 Forgery (Documents) 13-
3 Interrogation 13-
3 KS: US Military 13-
3 KS: KGB 13-
3 AK: Eastern Seaboard of US 13-
2 Language: English (Russian is Native, Fluent Conversation)
3 Lockpicking 14-
3 Mechanics 13-
3 Paramedics 13-
3 PS: Spy 13-
7 Security Systems 15-
7 Shadowing 15-
3 Stealth 14-
2 Survival (Urban) 13-
3 Systems Operation 13-
3 Tactics 13-
2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 314

Total Cost: 470

200+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: American Intelligence Services 11- (As Pow, NCI)
10 Hunted: Rocketman 8- (As Pow)
20 Psychological Limitation: Soviet Patriot, Firmly Communist (Common, Total)
15 Psychological Limitation: Publicly Emotionless/Professional (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Never Questions Orders (Common, Strong)
10 Reputation: Soviet Super-Spy 11- (Small Group, Extreme)

Boroh (The Raven)

5 Rivalry: Government Superheroes
(Professional, Rival is As Powerful, Seek
to Harm or Kill Rival, Rival Unaware of
Rivalry)

175 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 470



You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

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

High atop the nameless mesa a hot midnight wind blows, dusty and indifferent to the scene beneath it: a half dozen figures in long, black robes moving slowly about a complex, multicolored pattern drawn in sand upon the ground below. In the center of that pattern sit two unusual looking men. One, tall and pale with a hooked nose which any eagle could proudly bear upon his brow, wears an elaborate crown made of blackened stones upon his smooth, bald head. The other, small and brown with a flat nose and constantly shifting eyes, wears a headdress of deer antlers crested with an inhuman looking skull. Both men are naked save for a thin coating of human blood which had been painted onto their bodies in unusual, disturbing designs. They use fistfuls of some vaguely luminescent substance to put the finishing touches upon the bizarre, seemingly three-dimensional diagram which lies about them.

“Soon Brother Raven shall lift the veil of night,” murmurs the smaller man, “so that the Elder Fathers can escape their prison in the Captive Lands. I can feel... their, their hunger, Blackwell son of Roy.”

“Yesssss,” hisses the larger man eagerly, “the barrier between our dimension and the Qliphothic World grows very, very thin Coyote Howl son of Vulture Feather – very thin indeed. Soon we shall throw the door between them wide open so that those-who-once-ruled-may-rule-once-again.”

Coyote Howell nods solemnly, repeating the chant.

“Those-who-once-ruled-may-rule-once...”

“The only ruler this world has is its lord and savior, Jesus Christ!” shouts a feminine yet commanding voice, interrupting the smaller man’s chant. As the circle of robed men freeze in amazement, a figure dressed in a flowing white gown with a ship captain’s hat emerges from the darkness with a bible held out before her, her golden cape billowing in the torrid August breeze. “You shall serve the Lord your God and no other!”

The white-clad figure begins to move quickly towards the enigmatic diagram, her holy book held out before her like some

sort of protective talisman. At first the assembled cabal of evil men seems powerless to stop her; but then Blackwell, who seems to be made of sterner stuff, snaps out of his stupor, his bald head whipping backwards like a cobra’s.

“It’s that crazy evangelist woman Aimee McPherson from the newspapers!” he shouts at his fellows, “Quickly, stop her before she reaches the Qliphothic Seal!”

Shaking their heads as if suddenly awakened from some sort of bad dream, the robed figures draw blades as curvy and twisted as their damned souls from beneath the folds of their cloaks. As they do, another figure steps out of the darkness holding a badge in one hand and a Colt model 1911 pistol in the other.

“Federal Bureau of Investigations,” the man shouts, “in cooperation with the Mexican Federal Police, you are all under arrest under suspicion of murder, white slavery, and dimensional treason!”

“Bah,” growls Blackwell, “we don’t have time for these boy scout shenanigans. Brothers, kill the preacher and the G-man!”

As the cowed figures move menacingly forward, the woman in white reaches inside of her bible, producing a small revolver from a hidden compartment. She says a brief prayer then opens fire on the approaching Satanists, sending the first two to the next life with tight, well placed groupings. To her right, the FBI man opens fire with his gun, knocking over approaching cutthroats with murderous precision. But while the two heroes are occupied, Blackwell draws a small golden wand from seemingly nowhere and points it at the hapless federal agent. A sickly yellow beam shoots from its tip, engulfing him in an aura of flesh-melting flame. He drops his weapon as his horrified screams pierce the night.

“Edwin, don’t panic!” screams McPherson, “I can heal you!” Taking careful aim, she flings her bible directly into the otherworldly arrangement drawn upon the ground. Seemingly in slow motion, both Blackwell and Coyote Howl’s faces contort in terror as they dive in an attempt to catch the book. But they’re too late; it strikes true, sliding through five feet of drawings, disrupting them hopelessly. For a moment there is an ominous silence; then everything explodes in a blinding flash of white light....

SPECIAL THANKS

I would like to thank fellow *Digital Hero* writer Leah Watts for bringing this fascinating and important historical character to my attention. I’ve tinkered with poor Sister McPherson’s life a bit for dramatic purposes in an attempt to transform her from a tragic, flawed heroine into a more “four colored” protagonist suitable for use in the Champions Universe. No disrespect to her memory or legacy is intended.

Sister Aimee Semple McPherson

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
18	COM	4	13-	
				Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
				Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
				Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	PD	6		
5	ED	2		
4	SPD	19		
7	REC	4		
26	END	0		
25	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 80

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

Cost	Powers	END
7	<i>Hands of Bethesda:</i> Simplified Healing 1d6; Others Only (-1/2)	1
Perks		
18	Contact: FBI 12- (Useful Skills or Resources, Very Good Relationship, Organization)	
1	Favor: J. Edgar Hoover	
1	Fringe Benefit: Right to Marry (Can perform the marriage ceremony)	
10	Money: Wealthy	
2	Reputation: Notorious Woman Evangelist (Large Group, 8-) +2/+2d6	
Talents		
20	<i>Glossolalia:</i> Universal Translator 12-	

Skills

- 6 +3 with Handguns
- 3 Acting 13-
- 5 Conversation 14-
- 3 Cryptography 12-
- 3 Disguise 12-
- 7 High Society 15-
- 4 KS: The Bible 13-
- 4 KS: Occultism 13-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 7 Persuasion 15-
- 5 Seduction 14-
- 1 WF: Handguns
- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Canada 12-
- 2 2) AK: Hong Kong 12-
- 2 3) AK: Rhode Island 12-
- 2 4) CK: Los Angeles 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 120

Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Bizarrely Stylish (Easily Concealed)
- 15 Hunted: DEMON 8- (Mo Pow)
- 15 Hunted: Los Angeles Tabloid Reporters 14- (As Pow, Watching, NCI, PC Has a Public ID or is Otherwise Very Easy to Find, Limited Geographical Area)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Ambitious (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Extremely Religious (Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: Scandalous 11-
- 10 Social Limitation: First Famous Woman Evangelist (Frequently, Minor)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID: Agent for the FBI (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 200



Sister Aimee Semple McPherson

Aimee Semple McPherson was the first internationally famous Pentecostal evangelist. During the 1920s her name appeared on the front page of America's leading newspapers as often as three times a week. Using the most advanced technology available at the time (including the automobile and radio broadcasts) she vastly broadened the audience for the fledgling evangelical Christian movement, becoming a true pioneer in the modern American religion. She founded the Foursquare Gospel Church, now a denomination with more two million members in 30 countries, by building her 5,300 seat Angelus Temple in California. Yet she is best remembered for an infamous kidnapping scandal which the Los Angeles press "revealed" to be a cover for an amorous encounter with one of her parishioners. In reality, she had been sent on a secret mission by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover to thwart the evil machinations of a recently founded satanic cult known as... DEMON!

Background/History: Aimee Semple McPherson was born a farm girl in Ontario in 1890 to a "tambourine thumping Salvation Army" mother and a stern Methodist father. From birth Aimee was thoroughly devoted to religion; but when news of Darwin's evolutionary theory reached her school, she was thrown into an extreme crisis of faith. With her beliefs suddenly in question, she slipped into a "secular" lifestyle, where she began to attend non-church sponsored dances, read novels, and listen to popular music. Alarmed, her very religious parents brought Aimee to a tent revival sponsored by a visiting Scottish Pentecostal evangelist named Robert Semple. Semple's behavior was unlike anything the young woman had ever seen: he spoke in tongues, "faith-healed" the sick, and preached with a desperate fervor that enthralled the young Aimee. Within the space of a few weeks (and much to the astonishment of her parents) Aimee converted to this strange, new form of Christianity. She also married Semple, a man ten years her senior.

After burning her ragtime sheet music, novels, and dancing pumps, the newlyweds founded a church in Canada before leaving for Chicago, where William H. Durham, an early head of the Pentecostal movement, ordained Robert as a minister. The couple then departed on an evangelistic tour that took them to many parts of the British Empire, including England, Scotland, Ireland, Hong Kong, and parts of China. It was during this tour that Aimee began to hone a large number of skills, which would later make her a successful, charismatic preacher in her own right. But by their second wedding anniversary both Aimee (already some months pregnant) and her husband were in a Hong Kong

hospital, suffering from malaria. Robert died several days after their anniversary in August of 1910, leaving her with a one-month-old baby.

Devastated, Aimee made her way to New York where her mother was working for the Salvation Army. After working for some time at the Glad Tidings Mission, she began to roam about the country doing evangelical work. In Chicago, she met accountant Harold McPherson, whom she married in February of 1912. Accompanied by her daughter Roberta Star Semple, the two of them moved into his parent's Rhode Island home where they attempted to establish a traditional family life. Yet by the time of the birth of their son, Rolf Kennedy McPherson, in 1913 Aimee was once again evangelizing actively. She had also begun to hear a voice which she suspected to be God's urging her to dedicate her life "to the cross," but she chose to ignore it for the sake of her family.

Then, in 1913, a 23-year-old Aimee was rushed to the hospital with life-threatening appendicitis. Struggling to breathe, she heard a nurse say, "She's going." Almost immediately she heard another voice say, "Now will you go?" Believing that she was being given a choice to die right then or go into ministry, she agreed to go into the ministry. Instantly the pain was gone, her breathing eased, and she regained her strength. She also found that she had acquired new, almost supernatural powers: she could heal the sick (at least a little), speak almost any language, and exert an incredible amount of persuasion over an audience. She was soon able to leave the hospital under her own power.

Never one to do things by half, Aimee quickly set off on the road as a traveling evangelist. With her mother, husband, and children she traveled up and down the Atlantic Coast in a 1912 Packard touring "Gospel Car" with the words: "Jesus is Coming Soon-Get Ready" on one side, and the question "Where Will You Spend Eternity?" on the other side. Moving from small town to small town, the evangelical family pitched a circus tent while Aimee played piano to attract a congregation. While her missionary work proved quite successful (both spiritually and financially), the itinerant life held little appeal for Harold McPherson, who quietly separated from his wife when it became apparent that she had no intention of stopping. He left the care of their son to the mother/daughter team and returned to Rhode Island.

Undeterred, Aimee traveled West in March of 1918, bringing her unique message to the planes states where, interestingly, it is believed that she and her mother were the first women to have traveled alone across the country in an automobile. In September of that same year, a field investigation into the activities of the

PENTECOSTALISM

One of the fastest growing segments of the wider evangelical movement has been its Pentecostal branch. Pentecostalism as a movement came into being in the early 1900s in a series of separate revivals. The new movement embodied an evolving body of teachings from itinerant evangelists and Bible teachers such as Charles Parham, William Seymour, and A.J. Tomlinson on the end-times, signs and wonders, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. While the early revivals associated with these individuals occurred in (respectively) Kansas and Texas, California, and the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina, the news of a "new" outpouring of God's Spirit spread quickly in North America and almost simultaneously spread, or was reported, overseas. Most distinctive about this movement was an exuberant worship style and the experience of glossolalia – speaking in tongues – which was seen as a return to the apostolic experience of the Book of Acts and the biblical Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

— *Professor Larry Eskridge, fellow at Wheaton Colleges' Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals*

THE FOURSQUARE GOSPEL CHURCH

Aimee called for a return to simple biblical Christianity and “old time religion.” A strict, old-fashioned “Bible-Christian,” she believed in “a literal Devil presiding over a literal hell, inhabited by card-players, dance-hall frequenters, drunkards, dope-peddlers, wicked women.” Aimee named her doctrine the Four Square Gospel in reference to the four cherubim in Ezekiel, representing the Savior, baptism, healing, and the Second Coming. It was, in Aimee’s opinion, “a perfect gospel. A complete gospel for body, for soul, for spirit, and for eternity.” There were four pillars of her creed: God, home, school, and government. “Remove any of these,” she warned, “and civilization topples, crumbles.” At the center of the Four Square gospel’s teachings lay individual salvation, the idea that through willpower and hard work any man could remake his life along godly lines. It was this combination of simple patriotism with strong faith that made Aimee an attractive candidate for membership in the FBI’s Special Branch.



vigilante known as “Black Mask” being conducted by a young Department of Justice agent named J. Edgar Hoover brought him into contact with Aimee in St. Louis, where the two struck up an unlikely friendship which was destined to last for the rest of her life.

Aimee’s touring might have continued for several more years, but a severe influenza epidemic swept across the United States in 1918, killing hundreds of people. With her own daughter infected with the virus and close to death, Aimee recognized the epidemic as a message from God for her to settle down and begin her work in earnest. The voice again came to her, telling her to go to Los Angeles where the Lord would provide. By December of 1918, Aimee and her family had arrived in California, where she began preaching in an upstairs room of Victoria Hall in the downtown area. “Sister,” a term often used in Pentecostalism to distinguish a female member’s newfound ties to the congregation, increasingly became a term used by the public to denote McPherson’s religious status

By 1921 Aimee had gathered enough capital together to build her own church. She selected a site on the edge of the city’s Echo Park, conveniently near trolley lines and main thoroughfares. A huge white dome-like structure, the Angelus Temple could accommodate 5,300 worshipers and was topped by a rotating, illuminated cross visible for fifty miles. The Temple also had a huge choir, a brass band, and a pipe organ. A broadcasting station, KFSG sent the Foursquare Gospel messages beyond the Temple in 1924, and a “Miracle Room” displayed stacks of crutches, wheel chairs and braces from faith cures. Two evangelical publications, the *Bible Call* (monthly) and *The Foursquare Crusader* (weekly) were published from the premises for distribution to over 400 branch churches throughout the world.

Also in the same year Aimee’s old friend J. Edgar Hoover was named acting director of the newly established Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI. From his years in the field, Hoover had become aware of the darker, more occult aspects of police work in America. He felt



that the Bureau should have potent “specialist” agents available to confront these unusual menaces when they arose. Alarmed by the founding of DEMON, he dispatched agent Edwin C. Shanahan to Los Angeles to recruit Aimee as a special agent in charge of combating “satanic” influences throughout the southwest. When she learned that there were actually organized cabal’s of “the Devil’s minions,” such as DEMON and The Circle of the Scarlet Moon, operating in the United States, she quickly agreed becoming one of the first members of the FBI’s secretive Special Division. Her outrageous

public life, filled with glamour and travel, proved to be an excellent cover for her secret government work. So effective, in fact, that her role as a government agent remained confidential until 1987, when the Foursquare Gospel Church allowed *Blessed Indeed*, a novel based on her private journals, to be released by Adair Publishing. It became an instant best seller.

Yet the event which turned Aimee Semple McPherson into a household name occurred in May of 1926, when she disappeared while swimming at the beach in Venice, California. Her congregation fell into a state of extreme panic, with thousands camping on the shore of the beach where they believed that she had drowned. Boats combed the water, scuba divers searched for her body (one even died while doing so), and a distraught follower even drowned herself rather than continue on without her beloved “Sister.” Yet no trace of Aimee could be found.

Her mother, Minnie Kennedy, received a ransom note from kidnappers, demanding \$500,000 for Aimee’s return. Convinced her daughter was dead, Minnie she discarded the note. Some 32 days later a bruised and bloody Aimee came stumbling out of the Mexican desert. She described in dramatic detail her kidnapping, torture, and subsequent escape, which involved a 16-hour hike through the Sonoran desert. Relieved, her followers prepared a lavish welcome; on June 23, 1926 a crowd of at least 50,000 people gathered for her homecoming (it was the largest crowd that had ever gathered to greet anyone arriving in Los



Angeles). Yet her critics remained unconvinced, and rumors of a Mexican “love nest” where Aimee had spent a lust-filled month with a missing parishioner persisted. In the end these rumors led to an investigation by the District Attorney. Aimee was charged with corruption of public morals, manufacturing evidence, and falsifying police reports... when the charges were suddenly and mysteriously dropped.

Her critics were quite correct, of course; Aimee had not been abducted. The entire disappearance was an elaborate ruse concocted by the FBI to cover a top-secret mission to the Mexican desert where DEMON, with the help of a corrupted Indian shaman, had been trying to open a gate between our world and that of the eldritch Kings of Edom. Although Aimee and Agent Shanahan were able to thwart their fiendish plot, it cost Shanahan his life, making him the first FBI agent to be killed in the line of duty. It also forced a badly wounded Sister McPherson to undertake a harrowing 57-mile trek across a parched wasteland, an event from which her health would never entirely recover.

Aimee’s “mysterious” disappearance was not the only source of controversy in the final decades of her life. With her health unsteady, battles between her mother and daughter Roberta over control of the church in the 1930s were widely publicized in the press – even as she attempted to do her part in the Great Depression by sponsoring soup kitchens and free medical clinics. In the end she expelled them both from the church; all three women weren’t on speaking terms by the end of her life. As the years past with unusual physical kindness, rumors of expensive cosmetic surgery (a new and controversial practice) were floated by the press. In the end Aimee was married three times, widowed once, and divorced twice. She was sued total of 55 times over various personal and professional disagreements. But regardless of

these controversies, the public continued to come to her Angelus Temple, listen to her radio broadcasts, and attend services at branch Foursquare Gospel churches around the world. As Aimee once said, “I have the passionate devotion of thousands. If the papers tomorrow morning proved that I had committed eleven murders, those thousands would still believe in me.”

Aimee Semple

McPherson died in a hotel room in 1944, the night after speaking to 10,000 people at the Oakland Coliseum. Although the city coroner listed the official cause of her death as “accidental overdose of sleeping pills,” the real reasons are far more sinister. After years of anonymously combating supernatural menace, Aimee’s failing health left her weak and unable to defend herself against the occult. Using a powerful cataleptic spell, a DEMON Morbane known as Coraxes Zeta stalked and killed her from the dream world as she slept, leaving no trace of his foul deed. Hoover, however, was not fooled by her seemingly unintentional death. A few well placed FBI hints over the next few years led the San Francisco-based vigilante Grey Guardian to a Demonhome in the Marin Headlands, where his less-than-gentle methods lead to Zeta’s death.

Personality/Motivation: Sister McPherson was a complex, paradoxical person with correspondingly enigmatic motivations. A high-minded aesthetic moralist, she was guilty of many of the sins we are so familiar with in Hollywood stars of our own time: lust, pride, and greed to name but a few. While her insane, self-promoting vaudeville-style antics were the stuff of legend in her own day, they don’t seem to have been intentionally hypocritical. She genuinely seems to have been “touched” by God -- or at least she thought that she had been. Though she may have used questionable (or perhaps simply modern) methods, Aimee brought hope to thousands of people during a spiritually troubled period of our nation’s history, then later brought those same people food, shelter, and medical care during the Great Depression. She was, essentially, the first true Hollywood evangelist, with all of the glamorous, questionable baggage one could expect from such an unlikely marriage of opposites.

AN EVANGELIST DROWNS

Through green-white
breakers swift I
leap,
Sun-sparkled seas by
body keep;
Bearer of Gospel-
Glory I
With singing angels
in my sky,
And earthly chorus at
command,
The trumpets of my
silver band!
The cripples to my
temple crowd,
I heal them, and they
shout aloud.
A thousand miles my
raptures go
Upon my magic radio.
Time, space and flesh
I rise above,
I turn them into
singing love...
What’s this? A terror-
spasm grips
My heart-strings, and
my reason slips.
Oh, God, it cannot be
that I,
The bearer of Thy
Word, should die!
My letters waiting in
the tent!
The loving messenger
I sent!
My daughter’s voice,
my mother’s kiss!
My pulpit-notes on
Genesis!
Oh, count the souls I
saved for Thee,
My Savior-wilt Thou
not save me?
Ten thousand to my
aid would run,
Bring me my magic
microphone!
Send me an angel, or
a boat...
The senseless waters
fill her throat.

Ten million tons of
waters hide
A woman's form, her
Faith deride;
While thousands
weep upon the
shore,
And searchlights
seek...and breakers
roar...
Oh, gallant souls that
grope for light
Through matter's
blind and lonely
night!
Oh, pity our minds
that seek to know
That which is so
And piteously have
forgot

That which is not!

— *Upton Sinclair,*
1926

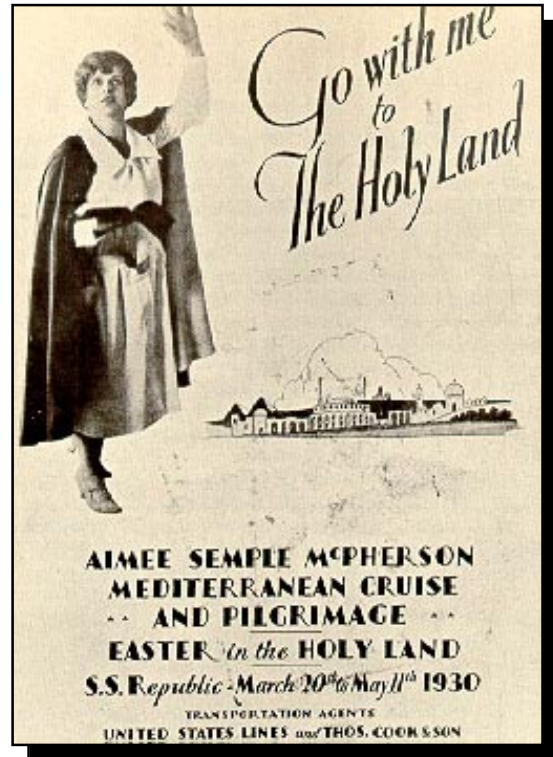
Aimee helped the FBI out of a deep sense of civic and religious responsibility. In both temperament as well as personality she was a good deal like her friend J. Edgar Hoover; an ambitious, principled but slightly decadent person who employed unusual methods to get ahead in an unusual profession. While she may have been guilty of pettiness from time to time, her basically positive and optimistic nature allowed her to land on her feet no matter what trials life brought her. She died as she lived, (in)famous, wealthy, adored, and good-looking.

Quote: “All at once my hands and arms began to tremble gently at first, then more and more, until my whole body was atremble with the power... almost without my notice my body slipped gently to the floor, and I was lying under the power of God, but felt as though caught up and floating.”

Powers/Tactics: Sister Aimee's powers lay in her ability to do that which most Pentecostal evangelists only aspire to do, namely heal the sick by laying her hands on them (her *Hands of Bethesda* power), speak nearly any language (her *Glossolalia* talent), and hold an audience of thousands enthralled (incredibly high PRE combined with a descent Oratory skill roll). It is uncertain where these powers came from, but modern scholars of the superhuman seem to agree that Aimee was a minor mutant who powers were by her near death from appendicitis. Of course, modern scholars are usually atheists; Sister McPherson thought that her powers came from God.

Before his death Agent Edwin C. Shanahan gifted Aimee with a Marlin .38 center-fire pocked revolver, which she usually kept in a hollowed out King James Bible. On those rare occasions when she found herself in a combat situation (most of her missions involved spying), Aimee used a pushed 6d6 PRE attack to stun her opponents before drawing her revolver. Her *Glossolalia* talent also gave her the ability to understand, and sometimes interrupt, spells being cast in an arcane “satanic” language. This, more than anything, else made her a unique annoyance to DEMON over the years.

Campaign Use: Aimee Semple McPherson was an interesting, eccentric, and controversial personality who remained famous throughout the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and World War Two. She is extremely suitable as an NPC in any Pulp Era or Golden Age campaign that takes place within the Champions Universe, or as a PC in a 1920s Horror Hero game. Mainly she should act as a helpful (if secretive) agent of the Government, supplying the PCs with information, advice, medical care, and occasional firepower when needed.



Appearance: Sister Aimee was a handsome, small woman with blond hair, high cheekbones, and a winning smile. Extremely fond of eccentric clothing, she has been photographed dressed as a Palestinian bride, a ship's captain, an angel, a nurse, and an ultra-fashionable movie star. Many of her outfits involve some sort of dramatic, ankle-length cape combined with flowing, Romanesque robes, a sash, and garlands of flowers. Not surprisingly, crosses also figured predominantly in her dress.

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Your Horoscope For: Virgo

by Allen Thomas

This month's installment of *Your Horoscope For*: presents a scenario for *Fantasy Hero* and *Hero System 5th Edition*. In the scenario, a small isolated village is helpless when a wyrm demands they sacrifice a maiden to its voracious appetite. But the PCs soon find out: all is not as it seems in the village of Woodbrink!

Designed for four to six 150-point PCs, if yours have more or less points you should adjust the encounters accordingly. The scenario also uses creatures presented in the *HERO System Bestiary*, specifically the Imp on page 50 and the Wym on page 67; if you don't have that product, you should substitute creatures of your own devising and adjust the adventure accordingly.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Sixteen years ago, the witch Horletta worried that what little remained of her youth was slowly slipping away. At the time Horletta was old, already a crone with bent back and drooping nose and stiff gray hair. She knew if she did not act soon, she would soon age beyond the help of her lore and demonic pacts. She would pass beyond the veil, leaving this world of the quick, and then the demons she had long bargained with would fight over her soul. It was no fate Horletta could allow to come to pass – her soul torn and rent by demons for eternity was not an end even a witch relished.

Fortuitously, a newly-married couple sought her out, traveling deep into the Owlswatch Forest to find the witch, who was only a folk tale used to frighten children in their home of Woodbrink. The couple, Oeric and Felicia Edwardson, had recently entertained an itinerant priest at their farmstead. After a dinner of mutton (the sheep freshly slaughtered in honor of their guest) and potatoes stewed with fresh basil and garlic, the Edwardsons received an ill-omen from the priest. Perhaps he offered them the foretelling in thanks for their hospitality – the ways of those who serve the divine are always mysterious – but his hosts were not thankful for his words.

Simply put: Felicia was pregnant and for her children – the priest was very stubborn about the word “children”; not a single child Felicia carried in her womb, but two or maybe even three children – for these twins (or maybe even triplets) only a poor and ill-starred future awaited.

The Edwardsons were stricken by the priest's gloomy words. A happy couple only recently married, they expected their marital happiness to become parental happiness. To hear that their future child (children if one were to believe the priest, which the Edwardsons didn't) would only

know sorrow was too much for the couple to bear. They searched for a way to avert this ill-omened future, but all of their acquaintances only shook their heads and commiserated with the couple. “Oh,” one after another exclaimed upon hearing the Edwardsons' story, “the gods are unjust! That such despair can come to such good folk as you... only further proof, when already ample existed, of the gods' injustice!”

These were not the words the Edwardsons had hoped to hear (though they certainly appreciated the kindness). They searched for an answer to their plight, not sympathy for their future despair.

Oeric recalled the stories of an old woman (perhaps some stories called her a witch; his memory was hazy on this last point) who lived in the Owlswatch Forest and was certainly wise in the ways of magic if nothing else. After all, the stories told of how she flew the night skies riding upon a pole of pinewood and lived in a hut that could travel some distance upon its three long chicken legs. Surely if anyone knew how to avert the doom facing the Edwardsons' newborn (or newborns) it would be the witch of the Owlswatch Forest. So they packed some food and began to search the forest for the witch.

As stated previously, their timing couldn't have been better. Horletta saw the pregnant woman at the entrance to her hut and jumped for joy. She put on her best, most hospitable and grandmotherly face and invited the Edwardsons in for tea. The young couple explained their problem, and Horletta said it would do her heart good to help them. If they would come back the next day, she would have the solution to all their problems.

Of course, this was a lie. After the Edwardsons left, all smiles and cheerful thoughts about the beneficence of elderly ladies, Horletta set about regaining her youth. She knew of only one way and that was to steal someone else's. She extracted what little remained of her own youth and distilled it into a foul-smelling, and likely foul-tasting, potion. When the Edwardsons returned the next day, she gave Felicia the potion. She instructed the young woman to dribble it into the mouth of her newborn and it would guarantee a long and prosperous life.

What Horletta didn't say: the witch's few remaining kernels of youth, now distilled into the blackish liquid, would come to reside next the child's own youth and over the years steal it away. Then, when the child had achieved an age Horletta felt befitting to a witch of her stature,

VIRGOAN INSIGHT

Virgo is the second of the Earth Signs, which also include Taurus and Capricorn. Its symbol is ♍, and traditionally, the sign is depicted as a virgin or maiden, sometimes with wings and bearing an ear or sheaf of corn.

perhaps sixteen or seventeen summers, Horletta would take back her youth and with it the youth of the child.

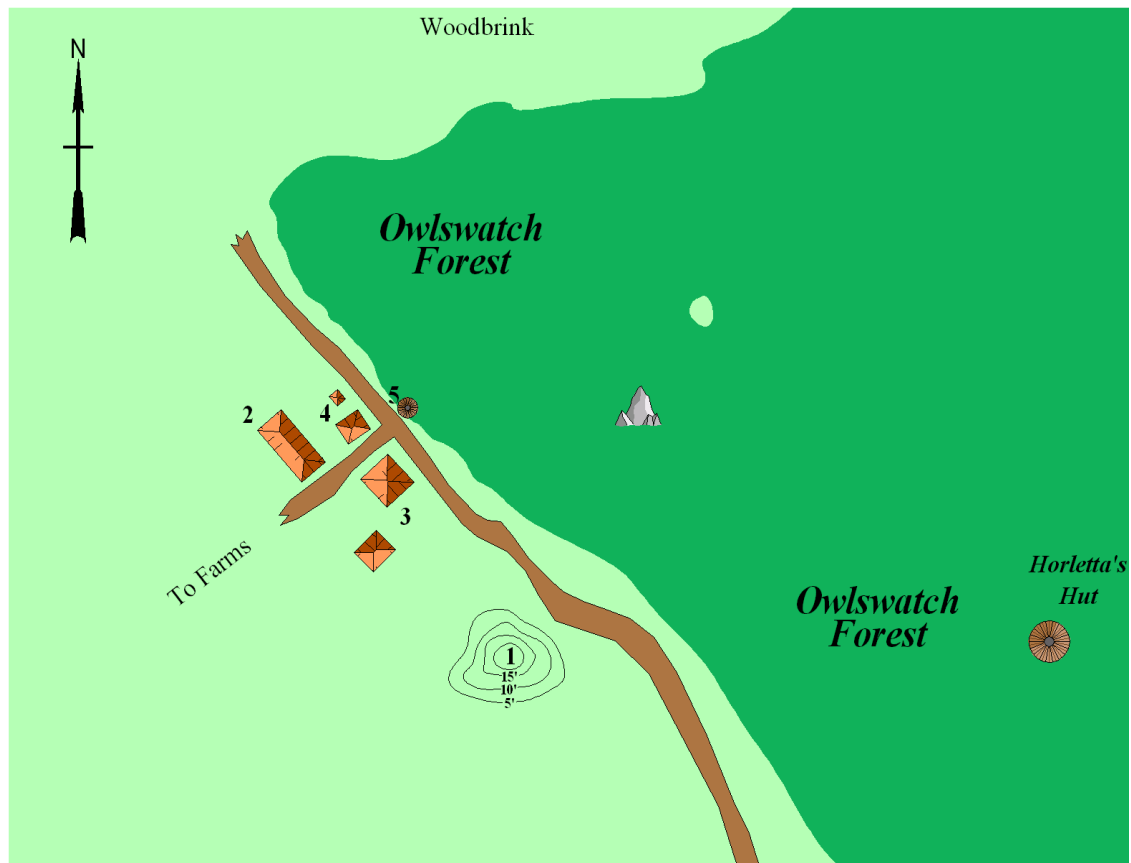
Now, the Edwardsons hadn't truly believed what the priest said about Felicia's *children*, rather than *child*. (Why they had believed his soothsaying of ill-fortune, and not that of children defies understanding – among their neighbors, the Edwardsons are known for a certain lack of horse sense.) They had neglected to mention to Horletta this part of the priest's prophecy. So when Felicia had triplets, the proud parents were quite at a loss about what to do with their one potion. The situation quickly resolved itself with a simple and elegant compromise – they gave the potion to all three children, sure that it would be efficacious.

And so, sixteen years have passed. The Edwardson daughters, three comely maidens, have never known anything but good luck. Until the coming of the wyrm to Owlswatch Forest....

INVOLVING THE PCs

The village of Woodbrink is a tiny place of fifty-two souls on the edge of civilization. The actual setting is left up to you, but wherever its location, Woodbrink should be distant from the centers of culture and government. The scenario is intended for four to six 150-point PCs. If your PCs are built on more or less points, you should adjust the encounters accordingly. Involving the PCs in the adventure is only a matter of getting them to town. A few possibilities:

- The ruler of the province (duchy, county, or the like) hires the PCs to investigate the situation. The town elders have sent word of their troubles to the ruler and he has a duty to provide for the safety of his subjects, but his other retainers are busy with matters more important than out-of-the-way Woodbrink and their claims of draconic tyranny, so he hires the PCs to investigate.
- Word of Woodbrink's poor fortune has spread through the neighboring towns and villages, and the PCs resolve to travel there to right an injustice... and maybe even profit from the wyrm's horde (for all know wyrms, kin to dragons, monger gold like misers).
- Horletta, a witch of some renown, used to get around quite a bit in the days of her youth. Perhaps she somehow has ties to a PC's background, and the group comes to Woodbrink searching for her whereabouts.
- And, of course, perhaps the PCs are walking down the road, newly set out in search of fame, fortune, and adventure. Tired, dusty from travel, and looking forward to a mug of ale, they come into Woodbrink just in time for Scene One.



Scene One: A Town Meeting

A single road runs through the village of Woodbrink. The road runs from the southeast to the northwest, and meanders along the edge of a forest. To the west of the road are cultivated fields and pastures.

When the PCs enter Woodbrink, the inn and general store are closed. They can hear loud shouts coming from a long building to the west. In the field just beyond the building stand fifteen or so carts, and twice as many horses – skinny, sway-backed horses that have to work for a living – graze in a nearby field.

The doors of the meeting hall are propped open to keep it from getting too hot. The inhabitants of Woodbrink are gathered inside. On a platform, near the wall opposite the door, stand three old men. Sitting nearby are two young women. The old men are the town elders, unofficial and *de facto* leaders of the town, named Tomal, Lodreak, and Frinkin. The young women, who all look remarkably alike, are crying. These are the Edwardson daughters: Tish and Sephina (the third daughter, Emma, has already been “sacrificed” to the wyrm). It’s impossible to tell who is who, since they are identical in all respects.

The villagers are arguing about whether to send another of the Edwardson daughters to the wyrm. The elders claim they have no other choice. Two or three villagers, including Missus Solly, the proprietress of the Beaten Mug, and Oslo Worren, owner of the general store, argue against the idea. The two young women – if the PCs enter the building, they notice the maidens wear manacles at wrist and ankle – say nothing, only continue to sob.

If the PCs speak up, the elders order them to introduce themselves. If the PCs argue on the side of the daughters, the querulous elders tell them it’s none of their business. If they volunteer to go slay the wyrm, everyone cheers the would-be heroes. The meeting is adjourned until the PCs are dead, and the wyrm sends another demand for a more delectable treat than would-be heroes – such as a young maiden of sixteen or so summers.

What’s Gone On Before: The PCs can learn the following from any of the villagers. If they don’t ask before volunteering to kill the wyrm, the proprietress of the Beaten Mug tells them the story over dinner.

Two weeks ago a family of villagers, who lived on the edge of the Owlswatch Village, awoke to find their humble farmhouse ablaze. They immediately ran from the burning house. Once outside they found that their fields were ablaze also. As they ran to the well, hoping to stave off the destruction of their home, an immense draconic beast snaked out from the

woods. Paralyzed with fear they stopped dead in their tracks. The wyrm, for it could be nothing else, stated in a rumbling and sibilant voice: “Your village will sacrifice to me one maiden of sixteen, or perhaps seventeen summers – no older, no younger – or else I will destroy all your farms. Bring the woman to the clearing fifty paces northeast of the crooked stone in one week’s time.”

Then the wyrm slipped back into the forest.

Only three girls in Woodbrink, a village of very few people, fit the wyrm’s requirements – namely, the Edwardson sisters. The villagers were loath to sacrifice one of them to a foul beast, obviously to be eaten. But they didn’t want to lose their farms and homes either. Around the middle of the week, several days before the demanded sacrifice, three young, strapping farm boys, each hoping to win the hand of one of the Edwardson sisters, volunteered to kill the wyrm. Off they went into the forest, armed with pitchforks. They never returned. So much for that hare-brained idea, the three elders groaned.

Finally the week drew to a close. Oeric and Felicia Edwardson were hysterical with grief; they even tried to flee the village with their daughters. Luckily several neighbors had been keeping an eye on them and caught the family before they go too far – if they had gotten away, the villagers would have nothing to appease the wyrm’s appetite and surely all would have been lost.

After much gnashing of teeth and many rueful sighs, the village elders decided to sacrifice Emma to the wyrm. It is for the good of the community! they said to assuage their guilty consciences. So the villagers tied Emma up and left her in the clearing in the forest. She never returned, so they assume the wyrm ate her.

But before the Edwardsons could be set free, another farm and farmhouse was burned. The wyrm delivered the exact same message demanding *another* young maiden for his dinner. The elders of Woodbrink can see where this is going, but don’t seem to have any other choice... for them and the other residents of Woodbrink to leave their lands means that they will become homeless beggars, and that doesn’t sound like much of a life to any of them.

Tomorrow’s the day when the wyrm demands another young maiden sacrificed to him. Luckily, some brave and confident (perhaps overly so, the elders admit) adventurers have just arrived in town.

TROUBLE-SHOOTING: FREEING THE EDWARDSONS

If the PCs nose around the tower before entering the town, it might be time for Missus Solly to show up with the couple’s meal. Then have Missus Solly lead the PCs to the town meeting, where they can heroically volunteer to slay the wyrm.

If you choose to *not* have the PCs interrupted, the Edwardsons beg the adventurers to rescue their daughters from the other villagers who are driven mad with fear of the wyrm.

If the PCs question the Edwardsons, they do not admit to consulting with Horletta. If anyone found out their daughters drank a potion brewed by the witch, the girls would be doubly cursed. (Emma Edwardson, currently Horletta’s prisoner, knows the whole story now and shares it with her rescuers.)

INVESTIGATION

This adventure assumes the PCs rush headlong into the Owlswatch Forest to confront the wyrm. If they stop to investigate the situation however, there's much to be discovered.

- Many of the villagers remember the words of the itinerant priest – especially now that the wyrm has come and demanded the sacrifice of the maidens. (In fact, many rationalize their behavior by saying the Edwardson daughters were already doomed before they were even born.) No one knows the Edwardsons discovered Horletta though.
- The three farm boys, who went to fight the dragon and never returned, were egged on in their foolishness by the Edwardson daughters. The farm boys' parents hate the maidens for this.
- The three town elders recall stories of Horletta, and sometimes compare Missus Solly to the witch. If residing at the Beaten Mug, the PCs might overhear their jeering comparison. If asked, the elders share many a tall-tale concerning

The Village Of Woodbrink

Fifty-two people, making up eight families, reside in the village and surrounding area; most of them farm potatoes or cabbage for their livelihood. Four buildings stand in the village square; an abandoned tower stands off some distance to the south (and the PCs would have passed it if traveling north along the road).

1. The Abandoned Tower: This tower was once the residency of a sheriff and his family. Since the last sheriff died, the lord has appointed none to take his place – in the lord's court, Woodbrink is thought of as the ends of the world and a poor place to reside.

The tower itself is ramshackle and half demolished. Abandoned for three generations, many of the farmers have taken stones from the tower to build fences, pigpens, and the like. Three stories high, a stair runs up along the inside of the outer walls. On the third level, a ladder leads up to the roof. The wooden floors are solid enough – although the openings in the walls, where stones have been hauled away, lend themselves to a feeling of vertigo as one travels upwards.

In the middle of the floor on the first level is a padlocked trapdoor. Opening the padlock requires a successful Lockpicking roll. Beyond the trapdoor is a small dungeon with four cells. Locked in one of the cells are Oeric and Felicia Edwardson. They were locked up after they attempted to flee Woodbrink. They have been treated as well as one can expect when locked inside a dark and dingy dungeon – given plenty of candles to light the gloomy confines of the place, and Missus Solly brings them food and water three times a day. (She would allow them to escape, but someone always accompanies her to the dungeon – for Missus Solly's own safety, the elders claim.) To open the lock on the cell door requires a successful Lockpicking roll. This lock is better than the padlock on the trap door, and the PC suffers a -2 penalty on the attempt.

2. Meeting Hall: The meeting hall, where all the villagers can be found when the PCs arrive in Woodbrink, is a long structure made of logs cut from the Owlswatch Forest and has a thatched roof. Essentially one large open room, bare of furniture, its only feature is a platform five feet off the ground at the far end of the place.

3. The Beaten Mug: Woodbrink's only tavern and inn, the Beaten Mug is owned and operated by Wilhelmina Solly (she expects to be called "Missus Solly" by those younger than herself, a group that likely includes your PCs). A blunt and plainspoken woman, she has brown curly hair and a healthy build. She always wears pants. To explain this idiosyncrasy requires a story that Missus Solly is happy to tell.

Her husband, Mister Solly, passed away several years ago. Since he had no sons, the men of Woodbrink were in the grips of sorrowful despair – who would take over the Beaten Mug? It was the only place they could congregate and drink ale, and to go without a tavern was unthinkable. The village elders, who spent most of the twilight of their life lounging on the Beaten Mug's porch, called a meeting of the village men. One woman showed up for the meeting – namely the newly-made widow, Missus Solly.

The elders made an urgent call to those gathered men: Who will give up the virtuous life of a farmer, to run the tavern? Before any could answer, Missus Solly stood up and declared that she would continue to operate the Beaten Mug. One of the elders (each blames another for saying this) yelled, "You get out of here... this meeting is for those wearing pants only!"

Missus Solly asked disingenuously, "So a man is one who wears pants?"

All the elders nodded their bearded heads sagely and one of them (again, each blames one of his fellows) answered that yes, indeed, a man is one who wears pants.

Missus Solly left and returned shortly. She wore a pair of her deceased husband's trousers belted with a length of cord (the late Mister Solly was a large man). She stated, "I say it again. I will own and operate the Beaten Mug, and..." This next part was the height of cunning. "... I declare that the cost of an ale is one coin less." The men of the village thought this seemed a good deal and shouted down the elders' protests.

The Beaten Mug is a two-story building of stone and wood. The tavern is on the first floor and rooms for the occasional traveler are on the second. Missus Solly lives in a single story home behind the tavern, and employs two young girls (twelve and thirteen respectively) to help out around the place.

4. The Smithy And General Store: The general store is a single-story building owned by Oslo Worren, a large bald man with a black mustache. Inside the store is everything a farmer could want, but few items an adventurer really needs, and there are absolutely no weapons for sale in the store. In the backyard is a small ramshackle shed next to a smithy where Oslo works most of the day pounding out horseshoes and nails. He sleeps in a small room in the back of the shop.

Oslo is relatively new to Woodbrink. He showed up in the village one day ten years ago and hired on as a smith to the then-owner of the General Store. When that owner passed away, he willed the store to Oslo. Little do the villagers realize that Oslo is on the run. (Although some, including Missus Solly, suspect there's

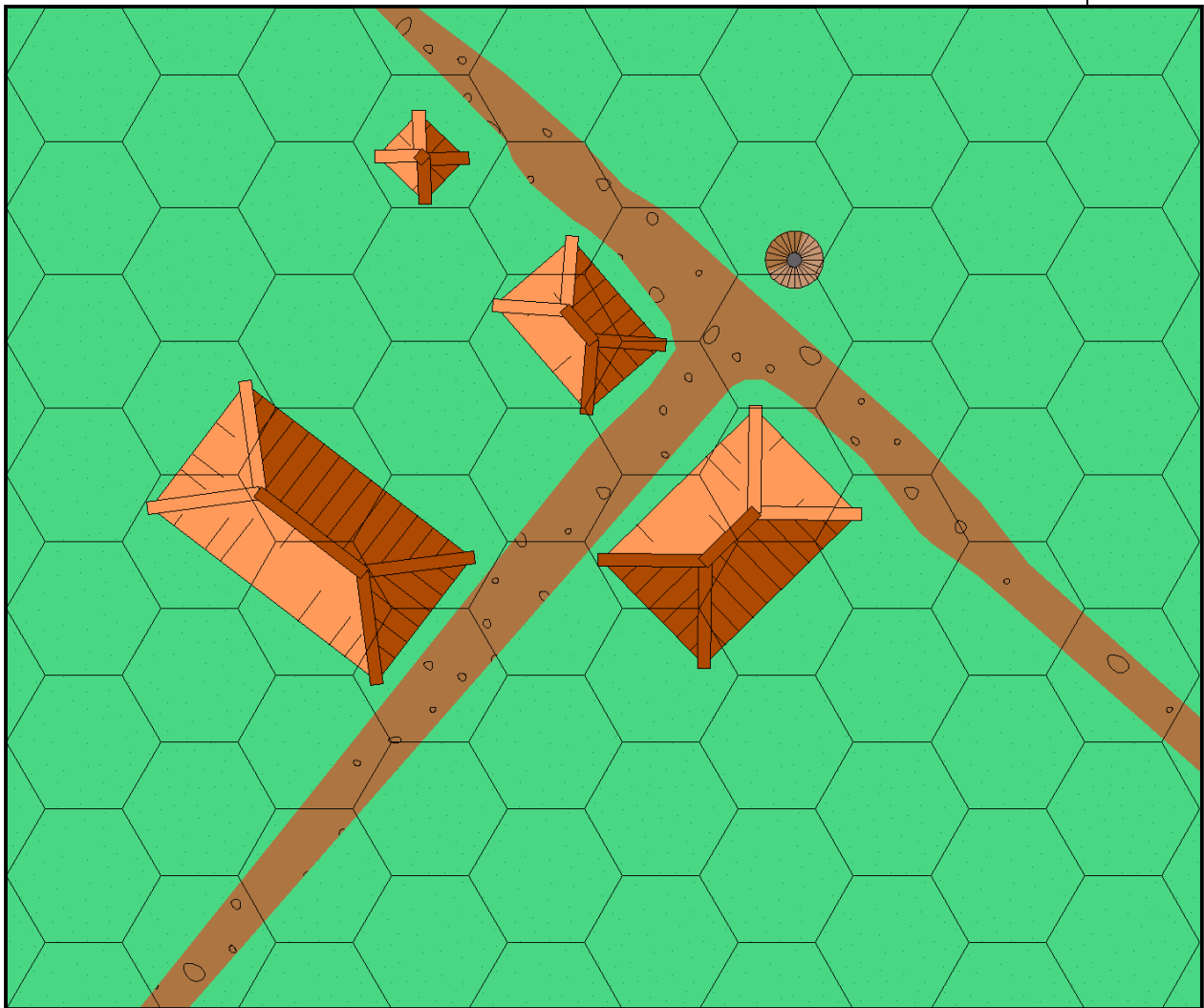
DIGITAL HERO #14

something shady about his past – no one moves to a village like Woodbrink voluntarily.)

Oslo used to be a weaponsmith in a far-off land. Guilt from the blood shed by his weapons drove him to leave his former life behind; unfortunately Oslo knows some guild secrets about the creation of weapons. When inducted into the guild, he swore to keep these secrets out of the hands of outsiders; sadly guild leadership doubts Oslo's oath now that he's fled and they've put a bounty on his head. No one has ever appeared in Woodbrink to collect, but you never know when someone will....

Oslo is capable of crafting the finest weapons; more than just an artisan, he is an artist when it comes to forging a blade. Sadly (for your average adventurer at least), because of the oath he swore to the guild and his guilty conscience, Oslo has vowed never to forge another weapon. He does however make the finest nails and horseshoes ever seen. A PC examining Oslo's forged goods notices the unusually high quality of his workmanship with a successful Weaponsmith (or other appropriate Skill) roll. For obvious reasons, Oslo refuses to discuss his past.

5. Small Shrine: Set back from the road, a small shrine stands in the shade of high-grown trees. Which god or goddess the shrine is in homage to is left up to you – a deity of the hearth and/or agriculture is appropriate.



Horletta's wickedness.

- Everyone agrees that the Edwardson daughters are very odd. They keep to themselves and often times seem to have a shifty look in their eyes. There are also rumors of witchcraft, but these are same kind of racy rumors that circulate about any close-knit group of odd young maidens.

Scene Two: The Wyrms in the Woods

So long as one of the group has the Skill *Navigation (Land)*, the PCs have no problem following the wyrm's directions and finding the clearing in the Owlswatch Forest. Nor do they have trouble finding, hidden under some fallen branches and rotting leaves, the remains of the three farm boys who sought to slay the wyrm. Oddly enough the bodies, though somewhat decayed, are not burned or shredded by long sharp claws in any way.

The PCs do have problems finding the tracks of a large draconic creature. With a successful Skill roll, a PC with Tracking knows a creature the size of a wyrm should leave tracks all over the place, but he cannot find any regardless of how hard and where he searches.

Despite a decided lack of evidence concerning its existence, the wyrm does appear, seemingly out of the blue, at nightfall....

What's Going On: Horletta has sold her one soul to a couple of different demons. The demons know this – they expect that sort of treacherous behavior from a witch – and one hopes to arrive on the scene of Horletta's death to claim his prize before the others. He (she or it) has sent two Imps, Post Hoc and Propter Hoc (or so their names sound to human ears), to watch over Horletta. The Imps consider this a great job: witches are known to do some crazy things to advert impending death and eternal torment. The Imps can't wait to add to the trouble.

When Horletta schemed to get back her rejuvenated youth from the Edwardsons' daughter (she didn't, as noted previously, know there was more than one) the Imps quickly volunteered to perform the abduction. They concocted an overly complex (truly verging on the ludicrous) plot to perform the deed. To one of Horletta's sensibilities, fading rapidly with each passing day, the plot sounded perfect. At the prompting of the Imps, she made them a magical costume – although the witch didn't realize it, the costume would be her greatest magical work (although she may have had help from the Imps' demonic master).

The Imps' plan is dress up as a wyrm and terrorize the whole village, demanding a sacrifice of a maiden. An Imp's greatest pleasure comes from watching humans succumb to their baser impulses, and the situation created by the Imps' masquerade – village elders handing over innocent maidens to a terrible wyrm – is succeeding marvelously. To make matters even better (in their demonic eyes at least) Horletta doesn't seem to be getting her youth back.

The Imps have watched the village since the fiasco started and know the PCs are coming to slay the wyrm. When the Sun goes down, they don their costume and prepare to have some fun.

A PC can detect movement in the surrounding trees with a Skill Versus Skill Contest against the Imps' Stealth 21-. Otherwise the wyrm's appearance is quite a shock – who would have thought such a huge creature could move so quietly....

Dragon Costume: The costume is some five-feet long and made of red and yellow silk stretched over a frame of wicker. At the front is a wooden mask crudely carved in the shape of wyrm's head – of course to anyone who succumbs to the magical effect of the costume, he sees no such thing. The poor victim of the magic sees a huge and ferocious wyrm, with smoke rolling from its flaring nostrils and flames licking at its sharp yellow teeth. One Imp (usually Post Hoc) wears the mask and stands at the wyrm's front. The other Imp (usually Propter Hoc) stands under the silk at the wyrm's backside.

The illusion is a major change to the setting and requires an EGO + 10 effect to succeed. The illusion is intended to cause STUN and BODY, so it requires an additional +20 effect. So, to be effective, you must get EGO + 30 against each target. The Mental Illusion uses an ECV of 6 (Horletta's ECV). The Imps choose who to attack, breath fire on, and the like; and the illusionary wyrm can only move at their top Movement. Until a character makes his Breakout Roll, he is for all effects and purposes fighting a wyrm as per character sheet on page 67 of the *HERO System Bestiary*. (You should also make a point of reading over the rules for Mental Illusions on pages 129 and 130 of *HERO System 5th Edition* before running the combat.)

The costume is fragile and the sharp swords of mighty adventurers are likely to destroy it, once they have seen through the illusion and attacked the Imps. Until a PC has succeeded in penetrating the illusion, his attacks against the wyrm, whether successful or not, do not damage the costume.

Mental Illusions 15d6, Area Of Effect (8" radius; +1¼) (206 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Gestures (Imps must run around; -¼), Incantations (Imps must roar and growl; -¼), Only To Make Wearers Appear As A Wyrms (-1). Total cost: 55 points.

Scene Three: The Chicken-Legged Hut

Once the PCs have penetrated the illusion of the wyrm, the Imps flee the clearing. They split up, but both head to Horletta's chicken-legged hut. If Post and Propter Hoc are captured, they gladly tell the location of the witch's hut.

The PCs must attempt to sneak up on the hut with successful Stealth rolls, or else Horletta knows they're coming. If she does know, she scrambles into the hut and orders it to flee from the area. Though one might think three eight-foot-long chicken legs awkward, the hut makes good time running through the forest. As they pursue, the PCs see Horletta drag an old, battered chest near the hut's entrance. During the chase, Horletta pulls out of the chest beakers and bottles filled with noxious concoctions and throws them at the adventurers. Since she lurks just inside the

hut's entrance, she has cover from the PCs' attacks. See page 249 of *HERO System Fifth Edition* for more details.

If the hut is somehow disabled, she attempts to make good her escape by flying away on her pine wood pole. She cannot carry two on the pole and must leave behind Emma Edwardson, who is tied up inside the hut a little worse for wear but otherwise unharmed. The witch has only sampled some of her blood, drawing it from a small gash on her arm; the blood was enough to let her know something had gone awry with her fiendish plan to rejuvenate her youth.

Questioning Emma, the witch quickly realized the Edwardsons had divided her distilled youth between the three daughters and she planned to gather all of them before taking her youth (along with that of the maidens) back. Luckily for the Edwardson triplets, the adventurers arrived on the scene.



Horletta

Background/History: Once Horletta was woman mighty in the ways of witchcraft. Now she is a slightly pitiful old crone who nears her death and a terrible end. Centuries old, her origins are long forgotten even by herself. If one asks the old and elderly living in the communities bordering the Owlswatch Forest, he can hear many tales of Horletta's wickedness – though no one any more really believes she still exists, and in many of the tales, her name has been changed or replaced with the name of a younger, more vigorous, and more immediately terrifying witch.

Horletta has always lived in the Owlswatch Forest, and once she was the terror of the surrounding communities. Then she faded into folk tale. Now she is barely remembered. It would be a sad end if she weren't such a foul creature twisted by wickedness.

Personality/Motivation: Horletta is senile. When she distilled the last of her youth in the potion given to the Edwardsons, she also gave up what remained of her senses. For sixteen years she has rapidly degenerated. Her single consistent thought is she must not die, because terrible things will happen to her if she does, and that is the driving force of her personality. Her only goal is to regain her youth and she'll do anything to achieve this end. But sadly, outside of retrieving the Edwardson daughters, she cannot remember any other way of turning back time.

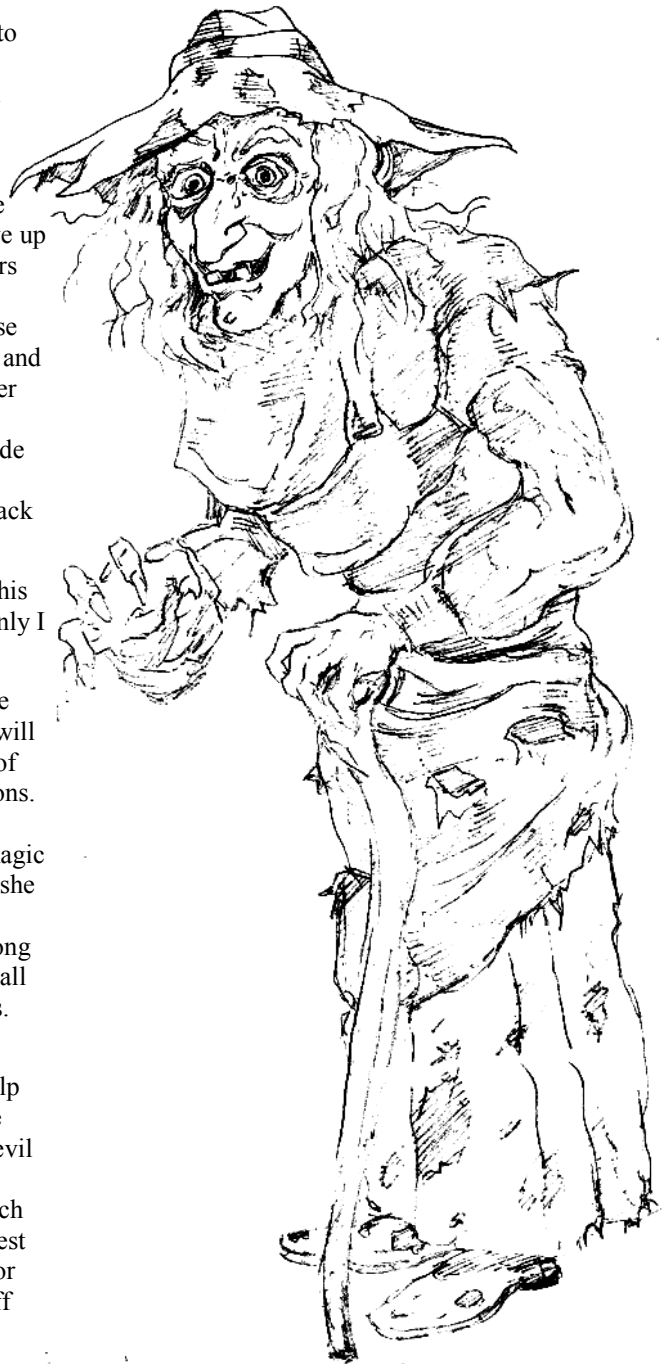
Quote: "Oh, I've just the potion for you... this will teach you to pester an old woman... if only I can remember where I put it."

Powers/Tactics: Horletta has forgotten more magic than many practitioners of witchcraft will ever know. Nowadays, she's barely capable of brewing palatable tea, let alone magical potions. The dragon costume used by the Imps to terrorize Woodbrink is likely the last great magic she will ever create (although it's also likely she had a great deal of help from some outside source). Still she has many potions brewed long ago stored around her hut, and will put them all to good use when beleaguered by do-gooders.

Campaign Use: Horletta is a great evil long past her prime. If the PCs could somehow help her remember, she could be a knowledgeable resource for magical lore and legends about evil artifacts... of course, if she does regain her memory, she once again becomes an evil witch at the heights of her power, so the PCs had best tread carefully. Horletta would hunt anyone or anything she believed could help her stave off death. Nowadays, however, she would likely follow the advice of her Impish companions,

Post Hoc and Propter Hoc, and her plans would be concocted to create maximum chaos and wreak heinous evil, rather than actually attain her goal.

Appearance: Horletta is a crone. Her face is creased with wrinkles; her skin has a yellowish tinge from too many years standing over a bubbling cauldron of gods only know what. Two bulging, rheumy eyes stare out from over a large hooked nose. Already short, she only seems smaller because of her bent back. She wears layers of ragged and torn black satin, and on her head a wide-brimmed straw hat, stained ashy gray with soot. From under her hat, her stiff gray hair sticks out at wild angles.



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Horletta

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
7	STR	-3	9-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
8	CON	-4	10-	
8	BODY	-2	11-	
15	INT	13	12-	PER Roll: 12-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
-10	COM	0	11-	
2	PD	1		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 4, 12
4	REC	2		
20	END	2		
20	STUN	4		

Total Characteristics Cost: 36

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

Cost Powers **END**
10 *Pine Wood Pole*: Flight 10"; OAF (-1) 1
-4 *Arthritic Knees*: -2" Running (4" total)

Perk

7 Vehicle: *Chicken-Legged Hut* (see below)

Skills

6 +3 OCV with Thrown Potions
6 AK: Owlswatch Forest 15-
5 Combat Piloting (Pine Wood Pole) 12-
6 KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 15-
5 KS: Flora And Fauna 14-
4 KS: Herbalism And Healing-Lore 13-
6 KS: Witchcraft 15-
4 Navigation (Land) 13-
10 SS: Alchemy 19-
11 Spell Research 16-
6 Survival (Temperate Forests) 14-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 78

Total Cost: 114

75+ Disadvantages

15 Distinctive Features: Crone (Concealable; Causes Major Reaction [fear and/or hatred])
30 Hunted: Demonic Powers 14- (Mo Pow, NCI)
15 Physical Limitation: Senile (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
25 Psychological Limitation: Fear Of Death (Very Common, Total)
10 Reputation: witch whose name is used to scare children, 8- (Extreme)

Total Disadvantage Points: 56

The Chicken-Legged Hut

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	2" x 1"; -3 KB; -2 DCV
25	STR	0	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [0]
15	DEX	15	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	BODY	0	
10	INT	0	PER Roll: 11-
4	DEF	6	
3	SPD	5	Phases: 4, 8, 12

Total Characteristics Cost: 41

Movement: Running: 9"/18"

Cost Powers **END**
12 *Three Long Chicken Legs*: Extra Limbs (3) **plus** Stretching 2", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Linked (-1/2), Always Direct (-1/4), No Noncombat Stretching (-1/4) 0
6 *Three Fast Chicken Legs*: +3" Running (9" total) 0

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 18

Total Vehicle Cost: 49

0+ Disadvantages

15 Distinctive Features: Abode Of A Witch (Easily Concealed; Causes Extreme Reaction [fear])

Total Disadvantage Points: 0

Total Cost: 34/5 = 7

The Chicken-Legged Hut

Description: A small hut of wattle and thatch, the chicken-legged hut is Horletta's home. When setting on the ground, the three chicken legs fold up underneath the hut. When on the run, the chicken legs are twelve feet long. A single entrance leads into the hut; Horletta covers this with a moth-eaten blanket. The hut seems to be sentient – it can follow simple commands from Horletta and communicates by scratching words in the dirt with one of its chicken legs (chicken scratches they might be called by some).

POTIONS

Although much of her magical prowess has dwindled to nothing, Horletta has a few potions still in her possession. The ones described below are potions she tosses at the PCs while her hut runs through the forest. Unlike other potions, these are not imbibed, but rather used as grenades. The charges do not represent doses, but instead the number of each type Horletta has on hand. Many of the potions were brewed long ago and some have gone inert over the intervening decades; this is represented by an Activation Roll. You may include other potions among Horletta's possessions (such as those described on page 282 of *Fantasy Hero*) at your discretion.

Potion of Denuding: For the briefest moment, the individual hit by this potion is rendered ghostly. Sadly for the target, his possessions are not affected and they drop from his ghostly form to lie in a heap on the ground. Then the character returns to tangibility. In game terms, the target is only Desolid for a Segment – just long enough for him to lose hold of his equipment – then he returns to his normal self and may proceed to retrieve his possessions.

Desolidification (affected by magic), Usable As Attack (+1), Ranged (+½), Delayed Effect (+¼) (110 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout brewing; -1), Extra Time (6 Hours to brew; -3½), Requires An Alchemy Roll (to brew; -½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Instant (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 12 points.

Potion of Flaming Doom: Less spectacular than its name might imply, this potion bursts in a small ball of flame.

RKA 1d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex Accurate; +½), Penetrating (+½), Delayed Effect (+¼) (34 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout brewing; -1), Extra Time (6 Hours to brew; -3½), Requires An Alchemy Roll (to brew; -½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 4 points.

Potion of Fulminating False Alarm: Much more spectacular in effect than the Potion of Flaming Doom, this potion explodes in a bright flash of light that blinds those caught in the area of effect, and then the liquid evaporates into a heavy cloud of smoke.

*Darkness to Sight Group 3" radius, Delayed Effect (+¼) (37 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout brewing; -1), Extra Time (6 Hours to brew; -3½), Requires An Alchemy Roll (to brew; -½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1) (total cost: 5 points) **plus** Sight Group Flash 4d6, Explosion (+½), Delayed Effect (+¼) (35 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout brewing; -1), Extra Time (6 Hours to brew; -3½), Requires An Alchemy Roll (to brew; -½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Linked (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1) (total cost: 4 points). Total cost: 9 points.*

Potion of Underbrush Overgrown: This potion, a gardener's nightmare of the highest order, causes the surrounding underbrush to explode in rapid growth. Vines whip around and entrap those caught in the area of effect.

Entangle 3d6, 3 DEF, Area Of Effect (1" radius; +1), Delayed Effect (+¼) (67 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout brewing; -1), Extra Time (6 Hours to brew; -3½), Requires An Alchemy Roll (to brew; -½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 7 points.



Leftover Hero

by Steven L. Long

A Few Outtakes From The *Fantasy Hero Enemies Book*

We still ended up with a few bits and pieces we couldn't quite fit into the *Monsters, Minions, and Marauders* book for one reason or another. Rather than letting them go to waste, I thought you might enjoy seeing them here in the pages of *Digital Hero*.

— Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer

Bujanga

Ecology: The bujanga is a forest guardian creature in the form of a gigantic winged reptile. It does not need to eat or sleep, though it may do so for the sheer enjoyment. It usually lives in a cave in the forest, but may build a nest-like lair in the largest, tallest tree in the forest.

Personality/Motivation: The bujanga's main goal is to protect and preserve the forest it lives in, and all creatures that call it home. Sometimes it also helps people lost in the woods to find their way out. It has no objection to hunters and woodsmen taking enough game or wood to support themselves and their families, but overforestry, needless slaughter of animals, or any other sort of wholesale destruction earns its wrath.

Powers/Tactics: If it must fight, the bujanga uses its powerful natural weapons – teeth, claws, tail. It usually opens with an all-out, aggressive attack followed by a Presence Attack in the hope of scaring its foes away; if that doesn't work it will become more clever, if necessary retreating and hiding so it can make a sneak attack later.

Campaign Use: The bujanga gives you an opportunity to teach the heroes to expect the unexpected. When they first encounter a bujanga, they're likely to consider it "just another dragon" and attack. When they find out, hopefully before anyone gets badly hurt, that it's actually a relatively beneficent forest guardian, they'll learn that first impressions aren't always the correct ones.

Appearance: The bujanga is a fearsome-looking creature resembling a giant lizard with reptilian wings – similar to a dragon in the eyes of many, but clearly different as well.



Bujanga

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
35	STR	25	16-	Lift 3 tons, 7d6 HTH [3]
21	DEX	33	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
25	CON	30	14-	
23	BODY	26	14-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
14	COM	2	12-	
15	PD	8*		Total: 15 PD (10 rPD)
15	ED	10*		Total: 15 ED (10 rED)
4	SPD	9		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
12	REC	0		
50	END	0		* Does Not Protect
60	STUN	6		Hit Location 18 (-0)

Total Characteristics Cost: 199 (+64 w/ NCM)

Movement:

Running:	6"/12"
Flight:	15"/30"
Leaping:	4"/8"
Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
47	<i>Bujanga Weapons:</i> Multipower, 47-point Reserve	
5m	1) <i>Bite:</i> HKA 1½d6 (3d6 with STR)	2
4m	2) <i>Talons:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½)	2
2m	3) <i>Tail Bash:</i> HA +3d6 (10d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½)	1
10	<i>Scaly Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED); Does Not Protect Hit Location 18 (-0)	0
30	<i>Tough Body:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%	0
16	<i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -8"	0
8	<i>Strong Mind:</i> Mental Defense (12 points total)	0
8	<i>Magical Beast:</i> Power Defense (8 points)	0
45	<i>Bujanga's Form:</i> Life Support (Total)	0
30	<i>Wings:</i> Multipower, 30-point Reserve	
2u	1) <i>Flying:</i> Flight 15"; Restrained (-½)	3
1u	2) <i>Wing Buffet:</i> HA +2d6 (9d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½)	1
5	<i>Bujanga's Eyes:</i> Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	<i>Bujanga's Eyes:</i> Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	<i>Bujanga's Nose:</i> Tracking for Normal Smell	0
9	<i>Bujanga's Senses:</i> +3 PER with all Sense Groups	0
5	<i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb, Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0

Skills

20	+2 Overall
3	Concealment 13-
15	AK: The Forest It Lives In 25-
15	KS: Forest Creatures 25-
3	KS: History 13-
3	Persuasion 15-
3	Stealth 13-
26	Survival (Its Forest) 25-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 325

Total Cost: 524

75+ Disadvantages

10	Physical Limitation: Huge (up to 16m tall; -6 DCV, +6 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Frequently, Slightly)
10	Physical Limitation: Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Slightly)
5	Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, Can Only Leap Half as Far as STR Indicates (Infrequently, Slightly)
25	Psychological Limitation: Protector of the Forest and Its Denizens (Very Common, Total)
399	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 524

Iron Demon Warriors
Honor Guard of the Demon Prince of Strength

Description: These iron demons, much larger and stronger than typical for their kind, serve as the honor guard of the Demon Prince of Strength. They have four arms, with which they each wield two demonic greatswords. These swords are personal Foci; if taken from a living iron demon, they will not function for another being; once an iron demon dies, its swords immediately rust away into nothingness.



Iron Demon Warriors

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
50	STR	40	19-	25 tons; 10d6 HTH [5]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
30	CON	40	15-	
30	BODY	40	15-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
15	PD	5		Total: 15 PD (15 rPD)
15	ED	9		Total: 15 ED (15 rED)
5	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
16	REC	0		
60	END	0		
70	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 203 (+102 w/ NCM)

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
 Flight: 12"/24"
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
30	<i>Demonic Greatsword:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1)	0
5	<i>Demonic Greatsword:</i> Another Greatsword, as Above	0
30	<i>Spit Lava:</i> RKA 3d6, Penetrating (+½); Limited Range (8"; -¼), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
37	<i>Demonic Claws:</i> HKA 1½d6 (3d6+1 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½)	4
30	<i>Demonic Horns:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR)	3
60	<i>Infernal Shield:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
7	<i>Iron Demon's Skin:</i> Hardened (+¼) for 15 PD/15 ED	0
19	<i>Iron Demon's Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (15 PD/15 ED), Hardened (+¼)	0
50	<i>Infernal Form:</i> Life Support (Total, including Longevity: Immortality)	0
16	<i>Demon Wings:</i> Flight 12"; Restrainable (-½)	2
5	<i>Demon's Eyes:</i> Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
6	<i>Four Arms And A Demonic Tail:</i> Extra Limbs (3), Inherent (+¼)	0

Skills

- 25 +5 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 3 Concealment 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 5 Rapid Attack (HTH)
- 10 Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH)
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 345

Total Cost: 548

75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Distinctive Features: Aura of Infernal Evil (Concealable; Causes Fear)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Must Obey Anyone Who Knows Its True Name (Infrequently, Fully)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Restricted by Pentagrams, if Confined within a Pentagram Cannot Leave or Affect Anyone or Anything Outside the Pentagram (Infrequently, Fully)
- 5 Physical Limitation: Large (4m; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to Perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Utterly Evil (Very Common, Total)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Utterly Loyal to the Demon Prince of Strength (Very Common, Total)
- 25 Susceptibility: to Holy Places and Objects, Takes 2d6 Damage per Phase Demon is on Holy Ground, in a Holy Place, or within 1" of a Holy Object (Common)
- 343 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 548



Miniature Hero, Part Two

by William Keyes

Customizing Your Miniature

Are you one of those gamers who have seen miniatures used in RPGs for years, but you haven't had any idea on how to start using them in your own games? Then this article is for you. It should give you an idea of how to get started, without spending a lot of money while learning the basics.

"All right. Grond is mad now, so he's going to pick up that ice cream truck and hurl it at Doctor Lightning. What's the good Doctor's DCV?"

"I went offensive on my last action, so it's seven."

"Taking into account range penalties, Grond rolls and scores a hit! Doctor Lightning is now trapped under the truck, gasoline and melted ice cream pooling up around him, and he takes...."

"Wait a minute. That's not Doctor Lightning's miniature – that's Emerald Admiral. Doctor Lightning is on the rooftop."

"Oh. I'm sorry, I couldn't tell who was who. In that case, Grond didn't throw the truck at the Doctor but at the Admiral, who is now crushed underneath the wreckage, and...."

"Hold on a second. Emerald Admiral's DCV is eleven. Would Grond have still hit?"

"I don't remember what I rolled. All right, let's just start this whole phase over again. Grond is mad, so he's going to pick up a nearby ice cream truck and hurl it...."

So, now that you have that perfect (or nearly perfect) model of your character, what are you going to do with it? You could just take it out of its blister pack and set it on the table, ready to play. You may already notice a difference between using a miniature and using card counters or dice to represent your hero on the battlefield. But is that enough?

When the tabletop is crowded with unpainted, bare metal miniatures, it can be difficult to tell one from another – especially at a distance. Is that figure with the sword Swordsman or the Black Paladin? Is the miniature with the robe and staff the Sorceress of Light, or Anubis? Lean in close to make certain you're blasting a villain and not one of your teammates!

Some of the best things about superheroes are their colorful, often flamboyant, costumes. Where would Superman be without bright blue tights and red cape? Who would care about a Batman who wasn't wrapped head-to-toe in his distinctive black cloak and cowl? Without the stars and stripes that emblazon his outfit, Captain America

would be just another clown with a shield. A painted miniature brings the look and feel of these great comic book heroes to life in your game.

You spent all that time designing and building your hero, and you know every detail about him – from how many tons he can lift to where his DNPC girlfriend works. Of course you know exactly what he looks like. Now that you've found a great miniature to represent him on the battlefield, it's time to pull out all the stops and paint your superhero, just like he deserves. You'll find that a painted miniature truly comes alive on the tabletop!

As I discussed in my last article, it can be very difficult to find the perfect model. Your goal should be to find a figure that will be a good representation of your character on the battlefield. Remember that superheroes are a diverse lot – two heroes with similar powers might look completely different. Some heroes wear masks, some don't; some have big flaring gloves and boots, some don't. Doctor Lightning may wear darkened goggles to protect his identity, but the model you found doesn't have anything on his face. That's OK. If the figure is 90% accurate, that should be plenty good enough. One of the ways to make a less-than-perfect model much closer to what you want is by painting it.

And what if the figure is great, except for one or two glaring details? If the miniature that you found is carrying a gun but your hero has a Code Against Killing, how do you reconcile that? The answer is easier than you might imagine – convert the miniature to fit your ideal. Small things like weapons can be added or removed with just a little superglue and a little elbow grease.

The Tools of the Trade

What do you need to start painting? The first thing is obvious – a place to paint. You'll want to set yourself up somewhere comfortable, where you're not likely to be disturbed, and that has good lighting. Lighting is important. The last thing you want to do is hurt your eyes by squinting at a tiny miniature for an hour. I recommend a table lamp with at least a 60-watt bulb that you can set up nearby. Most hobby stores sell specialized lamps that come with a magnifying glass attached, and these are a big help when you're painting details, but I wouldn't recommend spending the money unless you're planning to paint a lot of figures. You'll also want to cover your table to guard against spilled paint. Some old newspapers will work just fine.

Next, you'll need a palette, a water cup, a rag or some tissues, and of course, paintbrushes. Palettes are inexpensive and easily available from any art or hobby store, but you don't even need to

spend money. A piece of tinfoil wrapped shiny-side-up around some stiff cardboard works just fine. Don't use one of your good cups for your water cup, because it will get stained. I use a disposable plastic cup, so if it gets dirty or cracked I can just throw it away. Remember to change the water frequently, or your paints will become "muddy." To clean your brush, you'll want a soft, clean rag or some paper towels.

Your brush is the most important tool you'll have while painting miniatures, so you don't want to skimp on this area. You'll want to look for a brush with a firm point. Be wary if the bristles of the brush look "feathered" or are split. Beyond that point, which brushes you buy is up to you – some people prefer natural hairs, some people prefer synthetic. In any case, I recommend buying four brushes – a 0 round, a 3/0 round, a 5/0 round, and a 10/0 round. The 0 is the largest of them and is good for painting wider areas, like your hero's cape. The 10/0 is a tiny brush, useful for getting those really small details (like eyes), and the 5/0 and 3/0 brushes are your all-purpose workhorses. I recommend buying one cheap brush, size 3/0 or larger, for such tasks as mixing paints, washing, glazing, and drybrushing; these jobs will wreck the bristles of a brush, so you don't want to use an expensive brush for them!

What paints should you buy? As a person who has been painting miniatures for more than 20 years, take my advice – don't buy those small, expensive bottles of paint you find at your gaming store. They can cost as much as US\$3.00 for a ½-ounce bottle, and they are not worth the price. Go down to your local "big box" hobby/craft store like Michael's® or Hobby Lobby® and look for their craft acrylic section. The paints made by companies like Apple Barrel, Americana, FolkArt, and Delta Ceramcoat are perfect. You get 2 ounces of paint for as little as \$.50 per bottle, and (here's the kicker) it's the *exact same paint*. You also have hundreds of colors to choose from, instead of the 30 or so your game store probably has on its shelf. It should go without saying to never buy any paint that is leaking, half-empty, or dried out.



The Tools of the Trade

If all you're doing is painting your miniature, you've got everything that you'll need. If, on the other hand, you still need to do some conversion work, you'll need to pick up a few more tools. All of these should be available from your local craft store, and are not too expensive.

The first thing you'll need is a modeling knife (sometimes called an X-acto® knife). There are many types available; I prefer the type with blades that can be removed and replaced, since I find a lot of uses for my knife. You will also need what is known as a "pin saw," or a tiny saw designed for jewelry makers and modelers. If your knife has replaceable blades, it's likely you can find a pin saw that fits it. X-acto makes a variety of blades, including tiny saw blades.

You'll want a variety of tiny metal files so that you can smooth out rough spots on your figure. They come in a lot of different sizes and shapes; you'll want at least a round one and a wide, flat one. You'll also probably want a pair of needle-nose pliers. Finally, you'll need some cyanoacrylate, or Superglue™, as it is commonly known. You can find a number of different types of glue at your local hobby shop, though for simple conversions the stuff you buy at the grocery store is good enough. You'll want some white glue (Elmer's®, or sometimes called PVA glue) as well.

Creating Your Masterpiece

Now, do you have your tools? Do you have that quiet, well-lit place to paint? Then let's get started! I'm going to take you on a step-by-step process of converting and painting one of the world-famous *Champions* – none other than that heartthrob of millions, Sapphire!

CHOOSING YOUR FIGURE

The first step, of course, is finding the right miniature. Sapphire, according to her description, has long, straight hair. She wears tight clothes accessorized with a short leather jacket, and high-heeled boots. She often wears a choker. (Note that we do not mention any colors in her description – that comes later, when we're painting.)

After searching through any number of online catalogs, we've found a pair of miniatures that fit this description pretty well. Both figures are from I-KORE's© Void™ (www.i-kore.com) game. The first, from a package of "Militia" figures, fits the description nicely – short jacket, long hair, tight clothes. The problem is that she's carrying a gun, which Sapphire would never do.

The second figure, from a package called "Female Militia," also fits pretty close, with long hair, a short jacket, and high-heeled boots. She's wearing a miniskirt, but Sapphire's description specifically states that she "often tries different costumes, depending on her mood." A short skirt seems like it would fit her personality. Of course,

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this figure is packing a handgun as well, so whichever one we choose we're going to have to do some modifications.

Of the two figures, I like the second one best – there's something about the model's face and hair that attracts me, and I don't mind if Sapphire's costume is modified just a little bit, as long as it's still in character for her. Sometimes, with your own heroes, you'll discover this to be the case – you'll find a great looking miniature that isn't quite right, but something about it attracts you, so you just have to use it for your character.



Model #1

Model #2

CLEANING YOUR FIGURE

Take your new miniature out of the package and study it closely. You may see tiny slivers of metal sticking out of the figure's toes, hands, elbows, or backside. This is called "flash," and it should be removed before you proceed any further. Take one of your small metal files and carefully scrape the flash off the figure. You may also see a tiny line along the sides of your miniature. This is a "mold line," which, like flash, is a natural byproduct of the casting process. The mold line can be eliminated by gently filing it off, preferably with a round metal file.

CONVERSION

Now it's time to start the conversion. Take your pin saw and carefully cut the model's right hand off at the wrist, where her arm meets her sleeve. Always cut away from yourself – those tiny blades are sharp! Try to make the cut as straight as possible, and be careful not to cut away any of her sleeve. Don't lose that hand. You might want to use it for another conversion, later. You might consider gluing it to the other miniature's wrist, when you're finished with this conversion, since it's so easy to lose small pieces.



Cut Off the Right Hand

Next, take the other model out of the package – the one with the gun in her left hand (You see? There's a great reason to buy packages with multiple figures in them!). Using the pin saw again, cut her right hand off at the wrist. You may want to bend the arm outward a little so you have a good angle to cut from. Bend it slowly and carefully – the metal is very flexible as long as you don't abuse it. Again, you'll want to keep the cut as straight as possible. If you aren't sure how much to cut, err on the side of caution – it's easier to trim some extra metal off than it is to add the metal back on!



Transplant the Right Hand

Now, glue the new hand onto Sapphire's wrist, using only a tiny dot of Superglue. The more glue you use, the longer it will take to dry, so you want to use as little as possible! Don't get any glue on your fingers, but if you do, wipe it off on a tissue or rag and try again. Once the glue sets, put the model aside and let the glue cure for 10-15 minutes. Remember that even though Superglue creates a very strong bond, it won't be as strong as the original. Some people might recommend that you attach the hand to the arm using a tiny pin, but pinning something as small as a hand is a very difficult process. Just be careful with the miniature and you shouldn't have any problems. If you accidentally drop the miniature and the hand breaks off, take one of your files and smooth out the hand and arm (removing any dried glue), then just glue it again.

Once the glue is completely cured, you'll need to attach the model to its base. A tiny drop of Superglue on either side of the tab at her feet should do the trick. If she doesn't stand up

straight, or if the glue refuses to set, wipe the glue off with a tissue and use your needle-nose pliers to put a little bend in the tab; this will make the tab fit more securely within the base. Again, let the glue set for 10 minutes before you handle her again.

The Void miniature we're using comes with its own round plastic base. Some figures come with a square plastic base, or a metal base, or they come with a base already attached. It really doesn't matter what shape the base comes in, or what it is made of. If it needs to be attached, this same procedure works just about every time. You should smooth out the base of miniatures that come with their base already attached, so the figure stands up straight – mold lines and flash often hide here.

PRIMING

Now it's time to **prime** your model. A coat of primer sticks to metal better than a coat of acrylic paint. Most people prefer a white spray-on primer, which is a very versatile color that allows you to paint lighter colors (like yellow) right on top. If you're painting a dark figure (for a *Cyber Hero* or *Dark Champions* game), you might prefer black primer. Make sure you spray the primer in a well-ventilated area (open up the garage door or go outside), and spray over newspaper or into a cardboard box (you don't want to leave splotches of paint all over the sidewalk). You can find spray primer at your neighborhood game shop, but a can of generic automobile primer from the hardware store costs considerably less. Make sure whatever primer you buy is flat, not glossy. Acrylics don't stick very well to glossy paint. Follow the instructions on the can, and remember that you want to apply a very light coat of primer, so as not to obscure the detail of your figure. Too little primer is much better than too much.



Primed for Painting

BASE COAT

Once the primer is dry (which can take anywhere from just a few minutes to an hour), it's time to apply the **base coat**. A base coat is an application of solid color to one part of the figure. For Sapphire, we're going to give her black boots and hair; bright blue skirt and blouse; a blue-black leather jacket; and her bare skin is going to be flesh-colored.

A base coat is a solid color of paint on the figure. When you're first learning how to paint, concentrate on getting the base colors in the right places; you don't have to worry about the advanced techniques. If you want your hero to have a red cape, paint his cape red. When you get confident enough to try shading and highlighting, your base colors may be darker or lighter than the final results.

Remember also that acrylic paints dry very quickly, so fixing mistakes is easy. If the red from the cape gets on your figure's blue tights, touch up the tights with blue. If the blue gets on the cape, touch up the red. The best advice I have ever heard with regards to painting miniatures is that painting well is not a matter of never making mistakes, but of fixing mistakes so it looks like they never happened.

For the lovely Sapphire, we're going to paint her skirt and top Navy Blue (Delta Ceramcoat), mixed in with a little True Blue (Apple Barrel) to lighten it up. Her boots, belt, and hair are Black (available from any manufacturer). We also paint the space beneath her skirt Black. Her jacket is a dark blue-gray color called Denim Blue (Folkart), and her skin is Peach Sherbet (Americana). We can at this point pick out some silver highlights as well: the buttons on her jacket, her belt buckle, and the silver trim around her bustier are painted with Metallic Gunmetal Gray (Folkart). I haven't yet begun to paint her base; that comes last.

Sapphire doesn't wear a mask (who needs a secret identity when you're a beloved international celebrity?), but if she did, we could paint it right on her face. One of the things that used to frustrate me when looking for great superhero miniatures was that few of the models out there wear masks. But a superhero mask is pretty simple to paint. Draw an imaginary horizontal line from one side of the figure's face to the other, crossing the tip of the nose. Instead of painting the upper part of the face in fleshtone, paint it the color of her mask, from her nose up to her hairline.

If this is the first figure you've ever painted, you may want to stop after you're happy with the base coat. Once you've finished Captain Lightning's distinct blue-and-yellow costume, that may be good enough for tabletop play; you won't mistake him for the Emerald Admiral ever again. These next steps are meant for those who want to go one step beyond and make their figure a source

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of genuine pride in their painting accomplishments – but they are entirely optional.



Apply Base Coat

WASHING

Washing is the most basic technique you can use to shade your figure. Brush a dark-colored paint, thinned with water, over an area of the figure so the paint pools in the recesses. It takes some practice; the consistency of your wash has to be just right. If it's too thick, the wash doesn't flow into the recesses. If it's too thin, it doesn't darken the recesses enough. Washes take longer to dry than your base coat, so give it a while – I've found 20 minutes to be just about right, but this may vary based on the temperature and humidity in your region. Don't try to speed up the drying process by putting your figure under a hot lamp. The colors will dry unevenly and will end up looking splotchy.

Sapphire's jacket is much too light, so I wash it with a 50-50 mix of Black and water. Shading light colors (like flesh) is tricky, since a dark wash makes the color look dull, so I wash her skin with a mix of Peach Sherbet and Velvet Brown (Delta Ceramcoat), mixed with about 70% water. This darkens her skin considerably. I also fill her eye sockets with Velvet Brown. Her hair and boots need no shading – where can you go from black? – and her skirt and top are dark enough for our needs already; in fact, they are too dark, so we'll lighten them in our next step.



Wash

HIGHLIGHTING

Now you want to make your figure look three-dimensional. The wash has picked out all the valleys; now you want to highlight the peaks. There are several different ways to highlight your figure. I'll only talk about two of the most common.

The first technique is called **Drybrushing**. This form of highlighting looks great on textured areas, such as fur or chainmail. Drybrushing is the simplest type of highlighting. Start with a dark base color, such as black for chainmail or dark brown for fur. Dip an old, scruffy brush (I use an old size 0 brush) into a lighter tone of paint, then wipe most of the paint away onto a tissue. Lightly dust your brush over the texture, and the remaining paint sticks to the raised areas but leaves the recesses dark. You can repeat the technique with successively lighter tones and voila! You'll get great looking fur on Jaguar, and beautiful metallic chainmail armor for Black Paladin.

Layering is another technique for highlighting your figure. It involves careful application of successively lighter tones to the peaks of your figure, one after another, after the previous layer has dried. This is a more difficult process, but the results are well worth the effort.

Sapphire needs no drybrushing (though if we wanted to lighten her hair, that would be the technique we used). But she does need some layering to pick out the details. I add a little bit of White (available from any manufacturer) to the Navy Blue and use layering until the highlights seem right. We'll do the same with her jacket, mixing Black and Denim Blue, eventually highlighting all the way up to pure White. The stark highlights make it look like she's wearing shiny leather. Her boots get a blend of Black, Denim Blue, and eventually White to make them look shiny as well. We highlight her skin first with Peach Sherbet, then with a blend of Peach Sherbet and AC Flesh (Delta Ceramcoat), then finally with pure AC Flesh. Her lips get a touch of Tentacle Pink (Citadel), then a tiny spot of White to make them look moist.



Highlight

GLAZING AND DETAILING

Similar to a wash, **glazing** involves using paint thinned with water. However, glazing leaves a hint of color over the entire area, not just in the recesses. If highlights are too bright, you can blend them into each other with a glaze. If Doctor Lightning's pauldrons are supposed to be a dull yellow-orange and you made them too bright, you can thin some orange paint and glaze it.

Sapphire's jacket and boots look a little too gray, and her dress is a little too bright, so we need to use a glaze to blend the highlights and dull the colors a bit. A glaze of Navy Blue (about a 60% mix of paint with 40% water) takes the skirt down a bit. A Black glaze on the jacket and boots does the same for them. To add color and detail to her hair, we use a glaze mixture of Black and Navy Blue.

After you have shaded and highlighted to your satisfaction, it is time to pick out the details. Eyes, teeth, tattoos, and superhero heraldry are all great details to add to your figure. The sapphire gem in her belt buckle is Navy Blue layered with True Blue. We put a tiny spot of Black on the top of the gem, then highlight that with a White spot on both the top and bottom. This makes the gemstone look shiny. Her silver belt buckle and jacket buttons are highlighted with Metallic Silver Sterling (Folkart).



Glaze and Detail

Eyes are always a special case. First, I fill the eyesocket with Velvet Brown (as described previously). Next I paint the white of the eye with White, leaving a border of Velvet Brown around the eye. Then I paint the iris with an appropriate color – Velvet Brown contrasts nicely and looks great on most figures, but Sapphire's case we want to give her crystal-blue eyes, so a tiny dot of True Blue does the trick. If you make a mistake, you can always paint over the error – trust me, even people who've been painting for years still sometimes have trouble with the eyes!

BASING

Once you're happy with how your figure looks, it's time to fix up its base. Some figures come with their own pre-textured base; others (like our Sapphire model) have a simple plastic or metal disk. **Basing** your figure is always an optional step. Sapphire looks great just as she is. But for the best effect on the tabletop, nothing beats a good base.

My Champions game usually takes place on the streets of the city, so I want Sapphire to have an urban-looking base – black asphalt is simple and looks good on nearly any miniature. A small bag of modeling sand, available from any “big box” hobby store, is perfect for this step. They come in a variety of colors, from white to black to red to green, and they only cost a couple of bucks for a small bag that'll last for years (I just recently bought my second bag in 5 years... and I paint a lot of miniatures!). White and black are your most versatile sand colors.

Your figure's paint job needs to be completely dry before you begin the base. First, use an old scruffy brush to apply a tiny amount of white (Elmer's) glue on the top of the base. Make sure you cover the entire top of the base, but be careful not to get any glue on your figure's feet. It doesn't take much glue to cover the base – a tiny dot the size of a pencil lead is enough. Now, dip your figure into the sand. Make sure the sand covers the entire base. Take the figure out and shake off any excess sand. You may need to use an old paintbrush to brush away any sand that got onto your figure's legs, as well as any sand that sticks to the edges of the base. Let it dry for a good hour. If you didn't buy colored sand, or if the sand is the wrong color, you can paint it. A mix of 30% water to 70% paint will cover the sand nicely without obscuring the rough texture. When it is dry (give it another hour or so), you can drybrush it with a lighter color (dark gray drybrushing makes lovely asphalt). Paint around the edge of your base with black, gray, white, green, or brown (depending on the color of your tabletop battlefields), and let it dry.

You can add details to your base (skulls for Dr. Destroyer, bits of urban rubble for a brawler, or whatever your imagination comes up with) if you like, but for most games this is not necessary.

SEALING

You want to protect your figure from chips and damage, especially if you're going to be using it for tabletop play. **Sealer** is available in spray-on and brush-on form. Sealer is clear and can be matte or glossy. I prefer a matte finish, but glossy sealer is tougher; therefore I first coat the figure in a light spray of glossy, then add a second coat of matte sealer after the first coat has dried. Just like with your paints, you can go to your local hobby shop and buy an expensive sealer, but I've found that an inexpensive can of auto sealer from my local hardware store does just as well.

Now you're finished; your figure looks great and is ready to go on the table. Just imagine how jealous your fellow players will be when the Emerald Admiral appears on the table, looking just like you always pictured him.

Also, think about how fantastic your superhero battles will look when everyone has a great-looking painted figure on the table. Using miniatures – especially painted miniatures – to represent your heroes is a great way to bring your games to life. Colorful figures add a touch of comic book action to your tabletop battles, and can help recapture some of your favorite moments from the movies, TV, or the comics.

Painting your figures can be difficult work, but it is well worth the amount of effort you put into it. Not only does it look great during your games, but a well-painted figure is a source of pride and great memories for years to come.

"Armadillo is hurt, so he's going to make a break for it. He runs full speed toward the exit...."

"I'm going to use my held action to blast him with a Shock Bolt before he can get there. I've got a good angle on him, so even if I miss I'm not going to endanger any of the bank employees that Wyvern has cowering in that corner. I roll and score a solid hit!"

"Good job. The knockback is going to blow him right through the teller's window, where he lands hard on and flattens one of his own henchmen."

"Excellent! Looks like these guys picked the wrong bank to rob! Now I'm going to... wait a minute, who's that guy in the armor? Is that Black Paladin? Oh no! Looks like the bad guys have called in reinforcements...."



The Finished Product!

Refigured STUN Multipliers

by W. Jason Allen

STUN Multipliers Refigured

Have you ever been in a session where the plot has thickened perfectly, the players are in the fight of the century, and at the most critical point, the hero decides to use his RKA flame blast to finish off the villain? He rolls his STUN Multiplier, hoping for at least a 4, which he needs to get a good shot in and finish the villain once and for all. The die rolls – and it's a 1. The villain's hair washes back from the blast, singeing, but doing no real harm. The villain grins, pulls back for a haymaker, and the hero blanches, knowing he's about to go down.

Doesn't that just bite? Well, it doesn't have to.

Instead of trusting your dice to give you the STUN Multiplier you need at that critical moment, the GM can designate a 'default' STUN Multiplier that all Killing Attacks will use unless changed by modifiers or called shots. Or if the GM wants to keep some of the random element but eliminate the lowest and highest rolls, a 1d3 STUN Multiplier spread can be used.

For example, say Aaron wants to eliminate the random factor of STUN Multipliers entirely. Being a fair GM, he wants the Killing Attack damage averages to match the Energy Blast averages as closely as possible. The average roll on a d6 is 3.5, so he sits down to figure out what the average damages would be, using a STUN Multiplier of 3.5.

The match is not exact, but the averages are comparable. Killing Attacks average higher, and perhaps they should. They are intended to be lethal, after all. But with a STUN Multiplier of 3.5, and rounding to the next whole number, Aaron has created a stable and consistent way of solving the random STUN Multiplier problem.

Now, let's say, Aaron decides to curb the random nature of STUN Multipliers, but he doesn't want it at a set number. He still wants players to roll for the STUN Multiplier, but doesn't want the extreme highs and lows. A standard 1d6-1 Stun Multiplier roll has a range of 0-5, with the 0 always rounded to a 1. Effectively, a Killing Attack can have a STUN Multiplier between 1 and 5. The way a 1d6-1 averages, there is a greater chance for a low roll than a high roll. A 1 or a 2 is a 1, a 3 is a 2, and a 4 is a 3. You have to beat the average d6 roll just to get a decent STUN Multiplier.

So to fix this, Aaron decides to narrow the STUN Multiplier range. Dropping the possibility of getting a 1 or a 5 as STUN Multipliers, he rules that players will roll 1d3 to get the STUN Multiplier. A roll of 1-2 gets a STUN Multiplier of 2, a 3-4 gets a multiplier of 3, and a 5-6 gets a

ENERGY BLAST			KILLING ATTACK			
Dice	BODY	STUN	Dice	BODY	STUN _x	STUN
1d6	1	4	+1	1	3.5	4
2d6	2	7	½d6	2	3.5	7
3d6	3	11	1d6	4	3.5	14
4d6	4	14	1d6+1	5	3.5	18
5d6	5	18	1½d6	6	3.5	21
6d6	6	21	2d6	7	3.5	25
7d6	7	25	2d6+1	8	3.5	28
8d6	8	28	2½d6	9	3.5	32
9d6	9	32	3d6	11	3.5	39
10d6	10	35	3d6+1	12	3.5	42
11d6	11	39	3½d6	13	3.5	46
12d6	12	42	4d6	14	3.5	49
13d6	13	46	4d6+1	15	3.5	53
14d6	14	49	4½d6	16	3.5	56
15d6	15	53	5d6	18	3.5	63
16d6	16	56	5d6+1	19	3.5	67
17d6	17	60	5½d6	20	3.5	70
18d6	18	63	6d6	21	3.5	74
19d6	19	67	6d6+1	22	3.5	77
20d6	20	70	6½d6	23	3.5	81

4. This method is more balanced with the random element still present. If he wished STUN Multipliers to be on the high side of the average, the spread could be shifted: 1-2 gets a 3, 3-4 gets a 4, and 5-6 gets a 5. Conversely, a low-end STUN Multiplier could be set with 1-2 getting a 1, 3-4 a 2, and 5-6 a 3. If you want to keep your players, I'd recommend against that last spread. The accompanying charts show the averages for STUN Multipliers 2-5.

Now, if a player buys his Killing Attack with a +1 Increased STUN Multiplier, he still gets exactly that. If the game is using a base 3.5 STUN Multiplier, the player uses a 4.5 multiplier. If by some chance he took a -¼ Limitation, -1 Reduced STUN Multiplier, he would use a 2.5 multiplier. The same applies for the 2-4 multiplier spread, just add or reduce as the purchased modifiers dictate.

Reduced STUN Multiplier (-¼): A Killing Attack with this Limitation reduces the amount of potential STUN damage it can do to a target. This Limitation in no way reduces the amount of BODY damage inflicted.

For each -¼ Limitation value, the character takes a -1 to the STUN Multiplier, to a maximum of -¾ Limitation value. The minimum STUN Multiplier in any situation is 1.

This Limitation can be used to represent low-shock Killing Attacks, such as needles or certain beam weapons. The attacks are still deadly, but they do not do as much impact damage as attacks without this Limitation.

DIGITAL HERO #14

ENERGY BLAST			KILLING ATTACK			
Dice	BODY	STUN	Dice	BODY	STUN _x	STUN
1d6	1	4	+1	1	2	2
2d6	2	7	½d6	2	2	4
3d6	3	11	1d6	4	2	8
4d6	4	14	1d6+1	5	2	10
5d6	5	18	1½d6	6	2	12
6d6	6	21	2d6	7	2	14
7d6	7	25	2d6+1	8	2	16
8d6	8	28	2½d6	9	2	18
9d6	9	32	3d6	11	2	22
10d6	10	35	3d6+1	12	2	24
11d6	11	39	3½d6	13	2	26
12d6	12	42	4d6	14	2	28
13d6	13	46	4d6+1	15	2	30
14d6	14	49	4½d6	16	2	32
15d6	15	53	5d6	18	2	36
16d6	16	56	5d6+1	19	2	38
17d6	17	60	5½d6	20	2	40
18d6	18	63	6d6	21	2	42
19d6	19	67	6d6+1	22	2	44
20d6	20	70	6½d6	23	2	46

ENERGY BLAST			KILLING ATTACK			
Dice	BODY	STUN	Dice	BODY	STUN _x	STUN
1d6	1	4	+1	1	4	4
2d6	2	7	½d6	2	4	8
3d6	3	11	1d6	4	4	16
4d6	4	14	1d6+1	5	4	20
5d6	5	18	1½d6	6	4	24
6d6	6	21	2d6	7	4	28
7d6	7	25	2d6+1	8	4	32
8d6	8	28	2½d6	9	4	36
9d6	9	32	3d6	11	4	44
10d6	10	35	3d6+1	12	4	48
11d6	11	39	3½d6	13	4	52
12d6	12	42	4d6	14	4	56
13d6	13	46	4d6+1	15	4	60
14d6	14	49	4½d6	16	4	64
15d6	15	53	5d6	18	4	72
16d6	16	56	5d6+1	19	4	76
17d6	17	60	5½d6	20	4	80
18d6	18	63	6d6	21	4	84
19d6	19	67	6d6+1	22	4	88
20d6	20	70	6½d6	23	4	92

ENERGY BLAST			KILLING ATTACK			
Dice	BODY	STUN	Dice	BODY	STUN _x	STUN
1d6	1	4	+1	1	3	3
2d6	2	7	½d6	2	3	6
3d6	3	11	1d6	4	3	12
4d6	4	14	1d6+1	5	3	15
5d6	5	18	1½d6	6	3	18
6d6	6	21	2d6	7	3	21
7d6	7	25	2d6+1	8	3	24
8d6	8	28	2½d6	9	3	27
9d6	9	32	3d6	11	3	33
10d6	10	35	3d6+1	12	3	36
11d6	11	39	3½d6	13	3	39
12d6	12	42	4d6	14	3	42
13d6	13	46	4d6+1	15	3	45
14d6	14	49	4½d6	16	3	48
15d6	15	53	5d6	18	3	54
16d6	16	56	5d6+1	19	3	57
17d6	17	60	5½d6	20	3	60
18d6	18	63	6d6	21	3	63
19d6	19	67	6d6+1	22	3	66
20d6	20	70	6½d6	23	3	69

ENERGY BLAST			KILLING ATTACK			
Dice	BODY	STUN	Dice	BODY	STUN _x	STUN
1d6	1	4	+1	1	5	5
2d6	2	7	½d6	2	5	10
3d6	3	11	1d6	4	5	20
4d6	4	14	1d6+1	5	5	25
5d6	5	18	1½d6	6	5	30
6d6	6	21	2d6	7	5	35
7d6	7	25	2d6+1	8	5	40
8d6	8	28	2½d6	9	5	45
9d6	9	32	3d6	11	5	55
10d6	10	35	3d6+1	12	5	60
11d6	11	39	3½d6	13	5	65
12d6	12	42	4d6	14	5	70
13d6	13	46	4d6+1	15	5	75
14d6	14	49	4½d6	16	5	80
15d6	15	53	5d6	18	5	90
16d6	16	56	5d6+1	19	5	95
17d6	17	60	5½d6	20	5	100
18d6	18	63	6d6	21	5	105
19d6	19	67	6d6+1	22	5	110
20d6	20	70	6½d6	23	5	115



Cause and Effect: Flying Carpets

by John Taber

Sailing in the clouds is my dream. The flying carpet will be difficult to attain but the sensation of flight must be pure ecstasy. I can almost feel the breeze blowing through my hair, the only sound the whipping wind....

Look! Up in the Sky!

There are several ways to build flying devices in the *Hero System 5th Edition*. This article will explain various ways that a flying device, like a flying carpet, can be purchased. With these basic concepts and some minor tweaks your heroes or villains can buy that enchanted carpet, silver surfboard, or mini-jet sled.

The flying device that will be designed in this article should be able to fly at least 10" per Phase and carry the weight of at least four people. The device should also be able to act at a given range from the controller. For example, the controller should be able to send the carpet to go pick up a falling comrade while he waits at the top of the precipice. It would be desirable that the carpet be able to perform some type of ramming attack or binding maneuver.

Five different approaches will be discussed for building a flying carpet special effect. Two of the concepts use Powers, one will use the Vehicle rules, one will use the Automaton rules, and the last will be built as a Heroic Character. The Active Points of these devices can be altered by the GM to fit the power level of his campaign. The amount of flight can be raised or lowered as the GM requires. The flying carpets designed in this article can easily be adapted for use in Fantasy Hero or Champions style campaign settings.

Special Effect Concept

Aladdin owns a flying carpet. The carpet can carry himself and up to three other passengers. The carpet should act at range and optionally be able to ram and/or roll up a given target. The carpet should also stay flying if Aladdin is knocked unconscious.

Analysis

This section contains a brief analysis of the various methods outlined below.

- The flight power model (Idea #1) can't ram or bind opponents. This is a distinct disadvantage over the other ideas.
- Idea #1 and Idea #2 use Powers to build the special effect. Thus these models take the character actions to get any type of response. In all cases at least a half Phase action is required by the controller. In full moving flight the character would get no other actions. A knocked out character would force the carpet to just hover. With Ideas #3, #4, and #5 the carpet can act on its own and can carry the user to safety even if the controller is knocked unconscious.
- Idea #3 is a good concept except that it falls under the Vehicle rules, and so Vehicle Damage rules must be followed. Any damage that gets through the vehicle's defense could severely hamper or even entirely disable the movement Power. See the Vehicle Damage table on page 322 of the *Hero System 5th Edition*. Any severe damage would likely require a Combat Piloting roll by the AI pilot.
- The AI and Character forms of the flying carpet can be affected by mental powers. Imagine your flying carpet getting mind controlled!
- The Automaton and Character ideas take STUN damage and can be stunned for a Phase. With some adjustments idea #4 could include other Automaton Powers like Takes No Stun to resolve this deficiency.
- Idea #5 is a complete follower with an extensive set of disadvantages. These disadvantages might cause friction between the carpet and the "owner."

Hopefully these ideas for a flying carpet can be utilized in your games. The key is to pick the method that suits the play style you desire. If you want something simple take the first idea.

If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions for future Cause and Effect articles please contact me at john_taber@znet.com.
GAME ON!

LIMITED FLIGHT

The simplest implementation is to use Flight with various Advantages and Limitations. This method uses only the power of Flight and does not allow the user to bind or ram attackers with the carpet.

Magic Carpet: Flight 10", Usable As Attack (does not work on characters with Flying or Acrobatics, up to 4 people at once, +1½), Ranged (+½), No Range Modifier (+½), Indirect (+¾), Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) (105 Active Points); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), Incantations (must give verbal commands to the carpet; -¼), If Power is Used at Range It Can't Be Used by the Controller (-½), Flyer Can Be Knocked Off the Carpet if Affected by Knockback (will force power to be used on the target again; -½), Attack Takes Effect When Carpet Reaches Target (assume carpet moves at 20" per phase of the attacker; -¼), Carpet Must Be Able to Physically Reach the Target for Power to Function (-¼). Total cost: 18 points.

Example: Aladdin needs to surprise a guard at the princess' door. A thin smile crosses his lips. With a slight gesture of his finger and a subtle verbal cue Aladdin orders the carpet to carry the guard out of a nearby window. Aladdin makes a hit roll and as the guard is within 20" the carpet will affect him this phase. The carpet quickly whisks the guard up and out of the window. Aladdin then enters the princess' bedchamber with a flourish of his cape....

MULTIPOWER

A slightly more complicated power construct builds the flying carpet using a Multipower. This method accomplishes all of the specified requirements.

Cost	Powers	END
16	<i>Flying Carpet:</i> Multipower, 70-point reserve, all slots [Independent (-2), OAF (-1), Incantations (-¼)]	
1u	1) <i>Soar:</i> Flight 10", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Usable As Attack (does not work on characters with Flying or Acrobatics, up to 4 people at once; +1½); Flyer Can Be Knocked Off the Carpet if Affected by Knockback (will force power to be used on the target again; -½), Common Limitations (-3¼)	0
1u	2) <i>Wrap Up:</i> Telekinesis (18 STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), No Range Modifier (+½); Attack Takes Effect When Carpet Reaches Target (assume carpet moves at 20" per phase of the attacker; -¼), Carpet Must Be Able to Physically Reach the Target for Power to Function (-¼), Common Limitations (-3¼)	0
1u	3) <i>Whip:</i> EB 5d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), No Range Modifier (+½), Indirect (+¾); Carpet Must Be Able to Physically Reach the Target for Power to Function (-¼), Attack Takes Effect When Carpet Reaches Target (assume carpet moves at 20" per phase of the attacker; -¼), Carpet Must Be Able to Physically Reach the Target for Power to Function (-¼), Common Limitations (-3¼)	0

Total cost: 19 points.

Example: To Aladdin's surprise the princess is not alone in her bedchamber! Sitting next to his veiled beauty is the king's evil advisor, Shakur. Again with a flick of the wrist and a verbal command Aladdin sends out the carpet. Now the carpet will attempt to bind the advisor so Aladdin can make his escape with the princess. Aladdin rolls to hit Shakur with a telekinetic grab. The advisor is aware of the attack and there is a penalty for a grab. The luck of the pharaohs is with Aladdin and he manages to hit Shakur. The advisor can break out of the carpets hold if he can beat the carpet's strength roll. On Shakur's phase he makes a strength roll. Shakur's strength is a 15 so he needs a 12 or less. He rolls an 8 and makes the roll by 4. The carpet has a strength of 18 and has a 13 or less roll. The carpet rolls a 14. Shakur escapes and grabs the wrist of the princess. Aladdin quickly grabs her other wrist, the princess is now held between the two like a turkey wishbone!

A VEHICLE WITH AN A.I.

This concept for the flying carpet will use the vehicle rules. An AI computer pilot controls the vehicle. In this case the AI is a magical force trapped in the carpet and not a true “computer brain.”

Flying Carpet (Vehicle)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
1	SIZE	5		1¼”x¾”
20	STR	5	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
12	BODY	1	11-	
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 6
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
0	DEF	-6		

Total Characteristics Cost: 45

Movement: Flight: 10”/40”

Cost	Powers	END
25	<i>Soar:</i> Flight 10”, 4x Noncombat Movement	2
14	<i>Magically Tough:</i> Armor (8 PD/6 ED); Coverage Only Protects Passenger from Below (-½)	0
5	<i>Corners Can Grab Or Strike:</i> Extra Limbs (4 corners), Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0
-12	<i>No Ground Movement:</i> -6” Running	0
-2	<i>No Water Movement:</i> -2” Swimming	0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 30

Total Cost: 75

55+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Magic Aura (Not Concealable, Recognizable, Uncommonly-Used Senses)
- 5 Susceptibility: to Dispels, 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)
- 10 Vulnerability: 1½x BODY from Fire (Common)

Total Disadvantage Points: 75

Pilot (AI)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll: 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

Total Characteristics Cost: 38

Cost Skills

- 5 Combat Piloting 14-
- 2 Navigation (Air) 11-
- 1 Language: English: Basic Conversation
- 1 Program: Fly Carpet From Point A To Point B
- 1 Program: Follow Masters Flying Instructions
- 1 Program: Grab With Corner
- 1 Program: Strike With Corner

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 12

Total Cost: 50

30+ Disadvantages

- 20 Psychological Limitation: Must Obey Orders From Master (Common, Total)

Total Disadvantage Points: 50

Total Cost: 17 points.

Example: Knowing that the princess is held Aladdin orders the carpet to grab the princess. The carpet flies over and makes a hit roll using one of his corners (i.e. the Extra Limbs). The carpet rolls well and manages to grab the princess. Aladdin and Shakur have an effective combined strength of 20. The carpet has a strength of 20. A contested strength roll is performed and the carpet wins. The carpet snatches up the fair princess and quickly rises into the air....

DIGITAL HERO #14

AN AUTOMATON

The next idea is to design the flying carpet as an automaton. This implementation gives the effect of having a semi-intelligent carpet (i.e. Disney's carpet from the animated Aladdin movie).

Flying Carpet (Automaton)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll: 11-
0	EGO	0		ECV: N/A
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
14	COM	2	12-	
4	PD	0		Total: 8 PD (4 rPD)
4	ED	0		Total: 8 ED (4 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
0	END	-20		
32	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 54

Movement: Flight: 10"/20"

Cost	Powers	END
15	Does Not Bleed	0
10	No Hit Locations	0
40	<i>Soar:</i> Flight 10", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2)	0
12	<i>Magically Tough:</i> Armor (4 PD/4 ED)	0
46	<i>Magic Carpet Body:</i> Life Support (Diminished Eating: Need Not Eat, Diminished Sleeping: Need Not Sleep, Immunity: All Terrestrial Diseases and Biowarfare Agents, Immunity: All Terrestrial Poisons and Chemical Warfare Agents, Longevity: Immortal, Safe Environment: High Pressure, Safe Environment: Intense Cold, Safe Environment: Low Pressure/Vacuum, Self-Contained Breathing)	0
5	<i>Corners:</i> Extra Limbs (4), Inherent (+1/4); Limited Manipulation (-1/4)	0
10	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance On STR (0 END; +1/2)	0
-12	<i>No Legs:</i> -6" Running	
-2	<i>No Legs Or Arms:</i> -2" Swimming	

Skills

- 1 Language: English: Basic Conversation
- 2 Navigation (Air) 11-
- 1 Program: Fly From Point A To Point B
- 1 Program: Follow Masters Flying Instructions
- 1 Program: Grab With Corner
- 1 Program: Strike With Corner

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 131

Total Cost: 185

115+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Animated Magical Carpet (Concealable, Major Reaction)
- 10 Physical Limitation: No Sense Of Smell Or Taste (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Must Obey Orders From Master (Common, Total)
- 5 Susceptibility: to Dispels, 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)
- 20 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN and BODY from Fire (Common)

Total Disadvantage Points: 185

Total cost: 23 points.

Example: Knowing that the princess is safe, and hearing the approaching guard, Aladdin dives out of the nearest window whistling for the carpet. The princess laden carpet bolts out the window hot on Aladdin's tail. The carpet grabs the falling Aladdin and flies to safety.

A CHARACTER

In this implementation the carpet is constructed completely as a character. The soul of Sultan Ahmet, a once powerful ruler, is trapped inside a magic carpet.

Author's Note: This version of the flying carpet is actually used in an adventure that is posted on a web site that I run. The adventure is set in Columbia's Harn. If you would like to download the adventure proceed to my web site at: http://la.znet.com/~the_lair/herohq.htm

Flying Carpet (Character)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [0]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
8	EGO	-4	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (8 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (6 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
7	REC	0		
16	END	-6		
27	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 39

Movement: Flight: 10"/20"

Cost	Powers	END
27	<i>Soar:</i> Flight 10", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Always On (-½)	0
-12	<i>No Legs:</i> -6" Running	0
-2	<i>No Legs Or Arms:</i> -2" Swimming	0
6	<i>Four Corners:</i> Extra Limbs (4), Inherent (+¼)	0
46	<i>Magic Carpet Body:</i> Life Support (Diminished Eating: Need Not Eat, Diminished Sleeping: Need Not Sleep, Immunity: All Terrestrial Diseases and Biowarfare Agents, Immunity: All Terrestrial Poisons and Chemical Warfare Agents, Longevity: Immortal, Safe Environment: High Pressure, Safe Environment: Intense Cold, Safe Environment: Low Pressure/Vacuum, Self-Contained Breathing)	0
7	<i>Magic Wards:</i> Damage Resistance (8 PD/6 ED)	0
10	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END) on STR	0

Skills

- 5 +1 with Hand-To-Hand Combat
- 3 Acrobatics 12-
- 3 AK: Sarkum 12-
- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 3 High Society 12-
- 1 Language: Harnese: Literate (Not An Everyman Skill)
- 2 Navigation (Air) 12-
- 3 Oratory 12-
- 3 Persuasion 12-
- 3 PS: Sultan 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 111

Total Cost: 150

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Magic Carpet (Not Concealable, Major Reaction, Uncommonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Corners Have No Fingers, Fine Manipulation is Difficult (Infrequently, Greatly)
- 10 Physical Limitation: No Sense of Smell or Taste (Frequently, Slightly)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Strongly Sticks to His Decisions (Common, Moderate)
- 5 Psychological Limitation: Pompous Aristocrat (Uncommon, Moderate)
- 5 Susceptibility: to Magic Dispel, 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon)
- 20 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN and BODY from Fire (Common)

Total Disadvantage Points: 150

Total cost: 15 points.



Finding Your Inner Totem

by Joshua Keezer

“Who you are bridges the gap between spider and man. You’re not the first. There are totemistic powers that go back to the dawn of time. Their presence remains like a race memory.”
— *Amazing Spider-Man Vol. 1 #32*

Animal Totems

Numerous cultures believe that humans are watched over by an animal spirit in our journey through life. Native American and Shamanistic cultures are usually associated with Spirit Animals but not all believe in them. Some cultures believe that these spirits are passed down from your ancestors, where others believe that they are acquired at some point during their lives.

The core shamanistic belief is that you are exposed and surrounded by any number of animal spirits at any given time. While these have an influence on you, the individual only has a single Animal Totem, often referred to as a Soul or Power Animal. An Animal Totem is the inner qualities of the individual.

One common assumption about spirit animals is that they are made of the qualities that others see in you. This is the reverse of the actual philosophy. The true spirit animal comes from who you are not from how you are seen. While your inner self may have qualities observable, the true spirit within can only be discovered by the individual. Identifying your inner spirit animal becomes difficult due to this. You must first learn to understand yourself before the animal within will awaken.

Another common assumption is the role of a spirit animal. Some people think of Spirit Animals as guardians that will appear when needed. In truth these guardians are always there and providing constant support in everyday life. However, when a time of desperation arises, these Spirit Animals suddenly grow and become more obvious. Also, not all Spirit Animals are guardians. Many are simply companions or healers.

The role of the Animal Totem in the game doesn’t have to be this strict. The nature and the origin of it in the game can always be more cinematic but it is strongly encouraged that players respectful the spiritual nature behind them. Regardless of the origin behind the Animal Totem or its nature, the character should reflect the animal he has chosen.

Animal Totems require players to have a deep understanding of self. This is not intended for casual players who play strictly for the thrill of adventure. It is meant to provide a deeper

level of character to the player. Just picking up a totem code will drastically influence the play and the feel of a character. Often it will make the character more serious or more lighthearted, which may have detrimental effects on gameplay. It is strongly encouraged that before anyone decides upon picking up an Animal Totem that they consider all possible repercussions.

Basic Rules

When playing a character with an Animal Totem, there needs to be structure behind it. To construct a totem animal you need three things. You need the animal type of your totem. You need a totem power, which is what the Animal Totem adds to your character. You also need a Totem Code, which is the set of restrictions the Animal Totem imposes on the character.

A totem power is a Multipower with a Limited Power Limitation binding the character to a strict code of conduct called a Totem Code. So long as the character remains within the guidelines of the Totem Code they continue to have access to animalistic powers.

A Totem Power is limited to only four slots that have specific rules for them. This is intended to give a balance to these powers to prevent abuse, but still give the powers enough flexibility. Four slots allow the player to build enough powers to make the character more versatile, but are restricting enough to avoid being overpowering or abusive.

The GM should always have final say on a totem power. Because of the drastic influences the totem will have on both the character and possibly the game itself. The GM may also have suggestions or input that will help the player design the powers or figure out the animal that best fits the character. It is also important to involve the GM early on in the process to give him a chance to find a way to fit it into his story line.

Finding Your Animal Totem

Something to the dead squirrel seemed tragic to Justice. It was such a small, fragile creature that had met its fate on a roadside. Justice had seen hundreds of murder victims in his days of service, but nothing had made his heart ache they way this one creature did.

Animal Spirits don’t just appear one day. It is a two-fold process in which a character begins to see the animal part to him and learns how to embrace it. Once the character has begun to embrace the animal, the animal spirit becomes stronger within the character and begins to support him.

INNER TOTEMS

Gregor Douglas scheduled three weeks off from his job loading boxes of frozen salmon in Vancouver to get away from it all. It wasn’t that he disliked his job. He loved working at the factory even it wasn’t his dream of working for the police. Instead, Gregor felt a need to spend some time off because he felt like something was changing inside of him. It had begun some five months previous when a poorly loaded box slipped and fell off the truck. Gregor felt like someone had taken over his body and moved him out of the way in time to avoid being crushed.

Three months ago, Gregor noticed another unusual event. He had been up in his apartment watching some late night TV during the storm when the power cut out. As he worked his way to find his flashlight, he had this vague notion that just for a second, he could truly see in the pitch darkness of the cold winter night.

Now with the winter weather behind him, Gregor planned an outing into the wilderness. He wanted to be completely alone to provide an atmosphere in which he could reflect upon his thoughts. He

parked his car and loaded on his pack. Then, Gregor began the long ten-mile hike into the wilderness. There he set up camp and prepared a fire for his food.

After eating, Gregor stared at the radiant glow of the fire. As he admired the warmth and gentleness of the fire he noticed something. In the very coals of the fire where what looked like two soft glowing eyes. He fixed his sight on them, which only made them become clearer. The eyes seemed to be staring back at him. Even more strange was that these eyes seemed to be familiar to Gregor.

As if the eyes were not enough strangeness in the fire, the fire began to stir and the eyes stopped staring and moved their attention up to the sky. Then, the fire erupted in a huge flare and the eyes, which now had a connected serpent face, came rushing out. Like a portal, the head rose from the flames, immediately followed by a neck, nearly two meters long. Then, the fire erupted in size again to accommodate the large leathery flame wings. After the wings, the fire died back down enough for the tail to come out from the flame. Had Gregor been paying attention, he might

For players, the first step is figuring out what animal best fits the character. Just picking an animal that closely fits isn't enough for finding your animal. While "Wolf" or "Fox" is certainly appropriate, it doesn't tell you much about your character's nature. The totem needs to be specific and defining. Red squirrels aren't like grey squirrels. They are smarter and less aggressive but more timid. Flying squirrels are more carefree than most others of the same species. It is important that when you pick your animal, you spend a good amount of research on it. This animal will be greatly defining your character.

Some characteristics are less obvious than others. Ask yourself if your animal is aquatic, avian, or quadrupedal. Once you have figured that out start looking at more refined categories. Is your character a small bird or a hunter? When you know more about what best fits your character you can begin looking at the specific types of animals.

Building Your Totem Powers

First, the totem powers are built on a Multipower framework with four slots. Because of the strict totem code required of the character to embrace, all powers in the framework receive the limitation Totem Code (-1). It is up to the player and the GM whether the powers within the framework are fixed or flexible. There is no limit on how large the point reserve can be on the Multipower.

Animal Spirits are only representations of the inner spirit. Spirits are passive and as such, cannot cause direct harm. They may still provide a person with abilities that can be harmful. Because of this, no slot in the totem power can be an attack power. Slots that can increase attack powers are highly recommended to take limitations to prevent them from doing this. For example, a character following a Bear Totem, could have +25 STR, Only for Calculating Casual STR (-1).

Each slot in the Multipower serves a specific purpose to the character. The first three slots should each consist of an Adjustment Power, a Movement Power, a Defensive Power, or improved Characteristics. The first three slots also should avoid reusing powers from similar categories of power. The fourth slot should provide a unique animalistic ability, and if necessary can reuse any of the categories of powers from the first three slots.

MOVEMENT POWERS

Movement powers must either enhance a preexisting movement or mimic an animalistic power with the movement power. If you are enhancing a preexisting movement, try to keep the total movement down and focus more on power advantage modifiers. With movements

that mimic animalistic powers, they should never surpass your current level of ability.

Enhanced Preexisting Movement Examples

- 25 *Galloping Stride*: Running +10", Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼) 1
- 27 *Tree Scaling*: Clinging +45 STR, Invisible Power Effects (Hearing, +¼), Difficult to Dispel (+¼) 0

Mimic Animalistic Power Examples

- 16 *Elusive Movement*: Teleport 8", Invisible Power Effects (Sight and Hearing, +¾), RSR (Stealth, -½), Only to Cross Intervening Space (-¼) 1
- 15 *Dream Walking*: Extra-Dimensional Travel (Dreamscape), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Body Remains Behind (-1) 0

ADJUSTMENT POWERS

Adjustment powers are meant to assist either the player or an ally. They are not meant to weaken the enemy's abilities. With adjustment powers, you need to make sure that you have a logical special effect explanation.

Example Adjustment Power Examples

- 26 *Battle Spirit*: 3d6 Physical Absorption to END, Delayed Rate of Return (20 Minutes, +¾) 0
- 16 *Troll Flesh*: 2d6 Healing (Regeneration, 2 BODY per Turn), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½), Self Only (-½) 0

DEFENSIVE POWERS

There's no lack of defensive powers to choose from. However, some of them are less appropriate than others. Armor should not be used at all. Instead it is advised to use Damage Resistance in its place. Force Wall should also be avoided completely. Remember to take into consideration the special effect of a power. Building a totem power with Force Field alone may be inappropriate as it is physically noticeable and is not overly animalistic. However, Force Field with Invisible Power Effects could help represent a Mystical Aura for a Dragon Totem.

Defensive Power Examples

- 45 *Mystic Aura*: Force Field (10 PD/10 ED), Protects Carried Items, Invisible Power Effects (Sight, +½) 3
- 30 *Stubborn Nature*: Power Defense 30 0

CHARACTERISTICS

Improving characteristics is the most open of all power structures. The only guideline necessary is that the characteristics should be something that the totem animal has strength in naturally. The two common ways to use

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characteristics is either to place emphasis on one or to balance them out evenly among several.

Characteristics Examples

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 15 | <i>Ease of Burden:</i> +30 STR, Only for Calculating Casual STR (-1) | 3 |
| 30 | <i>Clever Mind:</i> +10 INT, +5 EGO, +10 PRE | 0 |

UNIQUE POWERS

This is for a power of the player's choice. It can be something that could fall into the first three slots of the power or something all together unique. The power still requires GM approval and the power used cannot be an Attack Power. The actual choice of power depends on the nature of the character. Enhanced Senses is highly encouraged to give the character an interesting flavor.

Unique Power Examples

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 22 | <i>Know Intent:</i> Sense Intent, Ranged, Increased Arc of Perception 360° | 0 |
| 30 | <i>Chameleon:</i> Invisibility to Sight (No Fringe), Reduced Endurance Cost (0 END, +½), Chameleon (-½) | 0 |

ACTIVE POINT LIMITS

A Totem Animal only provides a minuscule amount of influence on character. Powers within the Multipower framework should have an Active Point limit to reflect this. It is recommended that none of the powers have more than a tenth of the total point value of the character. Should the player be designing a Totem Character, the Active Point limit is doubled.

TOTEM FOCI

An important question to ask about the Totem Power is whether it is necessary to require a focus. Having a focus could indicate that the character feels the need to symbolize his totem. It also could be a manner of staying close to the totem. Almost all foci for Animal Spirits are some sort of necklace or pendant. These may have hairs or feathers from the type of animal. It also could have a visual representation. Other foci commonly used include decorative jewelry, daggers, and walking sticks.

Sample Finished Totem Power

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 10 | <i>Red Squirrel Totem:</i> Multipower 25-point Reserve, IAF (-½), Totem Code (-1) | |
| 2m | 1) <i>Squirrel Mind:</i> +10 INT, +5 EGO | 0 |
| 2m | 2) <i>Tree Leap:</i> +5" Leaping (7" Total), 8x Noncombat Movement, Accurate | 1 |
| 2m | 3) <i>Slippery Mind:</i> Mental Defense (20 points) | 0 |
| 1u | 4) <i>True Motives:</i> Sense Hostile Intent, Ranged | 0 |

Totem Codes

A totem code is a set of oaths taken on by the character that he will follow as a part of the powers granted to him. These oaths need to be restricting and appropriate for the totem animal. Further, the oaths should not be universal and can vary based on the animal of the totem.

Totem Codes should have at least three oaths to them. The first oath should almost always be an oath of respect to the type of animal of your totem. This should encompass the broad range of animal. If the totem animal is an uncommon animal, it may extend to similar animals. A red fox Totem Code would prohibit harming any fox. A canary Totem Code might prohibit the character from harming any songbird. The remaining oaths are up to the design of the player but should all be of equivalent to a partially limiting Psychology Limitation or an uncommon conditional limitation.

If the Player or the GM does not feel the Totem Code carries the appropriate value, they can always figure out the total separately. The Limitation is a combination of Side Effect that always occur whenever the character does some specific act, and Limited Powers should the player pick a Totem Code Oath such as "Will Not Work In Front of Cats." A player may have designed a Totem Code that is more appropriately suited with a -1 ½ Limitation or, the GM may find that Totem Code is similar enough to one of the character's Disadvantages to warrant only a -¾ Limitation.

TOTEM CODE FOR GREY WOLF

- 1) Always respect and honor the wolf. Never harm or kill a wolf. Never turn your back to a wolf in need.
- 2) Your coworkers are your pack and you should treat them as if each member were another wolf.
- 3) A promise is a promise and must always be kept.

Buying the Totem Power

Once the totem has been built and the GM approves of everything all that remains is for your character to pay for it and add it to his character. This can prove to be some difficulty as the totem power could cost anywhere from 20 to 40 experience points depending on how it was built. If you started saving points before you learned your totem animal you could have saved enough points to pay for this.

Once the totem power has been fully designed, all that remains is for the character to acquire it. While the details to this vary from character to character, it should not be something that happens overnight. It is encouraged that the

have noticed the fire go dead once the creature had fully emerged. However, Gregor had his attention fixed on the large twelve-meter long, serpent dragon in front of him.

Gregor was at a loss for words and so just stared until the dragon itself spoke, "It is good to finally see you in person, Gregor Douglas."

The voice created a resonance in Gregor's very soul that was comforting, "You were the one who pulled me out from the box!" The dragon smiled with pride and allowed Gregor to continue, "I've always felt you there, but what, and who are you?"

The dragon levitated itself down so that its eyes were level with Gregor, "If you must call me by a name then call me Karagor. I am a part of you Gregor; I am your ancestral guardian."

Gregor relaxed his position now that Karagor was not hovering above him, "Why are you here now?"

Karagor smiled, "Because it is time for you to make a change. You have wanted to for some time and now is that time. I am here to prepare you for that change."

Gregor nodded in acknowledgment, "So what will you teach me?"

Karagor rose and moved past Gregor, deeper into the woods, “The way of the dragon. Now come with me and we shall begin.”

Gregor followed Karagor towards his dream. He had always wanted to fight crime. When he was younger, he had attempted to take the Officer’s Exam to become a law enforcement officer. After failing the exam he took the job at the salmon factory where he continued to work for three years. He was sure he could pass the exam again if he tried but his fear of failure always stopped him short of doing so.

The first part of the training lasted a week. Gregor simply followed the dragon when the dragon moved, slept when the dragon slept, and ate when the dragon ate. After the fourth day he had begun to notice that he was moving faster, his physical endurance and strength were greatly improving, and that it was easier to see and hear things at night. By the end of the week Gregor felt he could run a marathon without any difficulty at all.

The second part of the training took the remainder of Gregor’s vacation. Karagor taught him how to focus his mind to surround himself in a physical barrier to

player and GM sit down and discuss possible ways that the player could acquire this.

The character could be expected to spend three hours at night in a meditative trance in the woods while his comrades are out fighting criminals, researching, or just sitting around roleplaying. The character might also be expected to take a fast of some kind such as not using any of their powers for a week or even longer while they reflect inwardly on their own self. If the game is conveniently going to be having a large time skip, the character could wander off during that time to answer spiritual questions.

Creating a Totem Character

Totem characters are different from characters that pick up totem animals. These are characters whose embodiment is the very animal they hold as their totem. They have spent years or perhaps their entire life trying to better understand this animal. This is for creating characters with Totem Codes, not for adding on Totem Codes to existing characters.

Totem Characters still have totem powers that come directly from the animal. These powers never require the character to take a focus and are much more potent, allowing the maximum Active Points in the power to increase at around 50 points.

- 22 *Grey Wolf Totem Powers:* Multipower 45-point Reserve, Animal Totem Code (-1)
- 3m 1) *Mighty Stance:* +40 PRE, Only for Presence Attacks (-½) 0
- 4m 2) *Wolf Strike:* +10” Running (16” total), 8x Noncombat Movement, Reduced Endurance Cost (0 END, +½) 0
- 4m 3) *Determination:* Power Defense (40 points) 0
- 2u 4) *Wolf Nose:* Tracking Scent, Discriminatory, 10x Speed, Microscopic, Targeting 0

Unlike regular characters, Totem Characters have trained in the ways of the same animal that is their Totem Animal. They are like regular characters that adopt Totem in that the Totem Power is built under the same guidelines.

However, the character is now allowed to build powers outside of the Totem Power. This is the only possible way for a character to have an animal based Attack Power. A hawk Totem Character, for example, could have the ability *Talon Strike* built as a Hand Killing Attack with Reduced Penetration.

The Totem Code still only applies to the Totem Power unless the player chooses to use this Limitation on other powers that fall outside it. Remember, however, if the character is built

with Disadvantages similar to the Totem Code, the Limitation is not worth the full value.

When building a Totem Character, the most important thing is the background.

Characteristics would more directly reflect the animal if the character was raised by animals rather than a tribal shaman. A Caribou Totem Character might have more nature-based skills while a Rat Totem Character could be loaded with technology skills. All powers and abilities should reflect the animal in some manner. It is important that the player avoid any contrary ideas such as giving Flight to a Cheetah Totem Character.

Unusual Totem Animals

The word “animal” is, in truth, a misnomer. One does not need to have an animal as a totem. You can just as easily have an igneous rock or an oak tree as your totem. It is also without saying that you can choose mythological animals such as a Chinese dragon or a unicorn. There have even been cases of people who have taken humans as their totem.

There is one rule for totems that must be closely followed. Totems must be natural. You cannot choose a deck of cards or synthetic leather as your totem. Unusual totem animals also make the Totem Code more difficult to design. Even if you are in a fantasy campaign, you aren’t going to encounter phoenixes regularly enough to justify only three oaths in the code.

In these cases you need to explore what your totem represents symbolically. A phoenix is usually the depiction of death and rebirth. In this case, perhaps a phoenix totem is forbidden to interfere in the natural cycle of things or stop those who do interfere in the cycle. If Weather Girl is causing heavy rains over Jeffersonville, Phoenix may be obligated to stop her before it reached the point that flooding begins.

The rules are still the same with unusual totems though it does give the player a bit more leeway as to how to build their powers. It is important that the GM pay closer attention to the structure of the Totem Power with unusual totems as it easier to get more outlandish powers this way.

- 12 *Phoenix Totem:* Multipower, 25-point Reserve, Totem Code (-1)
- 1m 1) *Internal Flame:* +10 ED 0
- 1m 2) *Phoenix Wings:* +5” Flight (9” Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) 0
- 1u 3) *Fire Immunity:* 50% Energy Damage Reduction, Set Effect (Fire, -½) 0
- 2m 4) *Healing Flame:* 2d6 Healing, Self Only (-½) 0

TOTEM CODE FOR PHOENIX

- 1) The phoenix is a sacred creature and should be respected in all ways.
- 2) Fire can create and fire can destroy. Fire should be used in responsible manners only.
- 3) All things flow upon a natural cycle. It is important to maintain and protect this cycle.
- 4) The phoenix is a loyal being and must aid those he is close to in a time of need.

Violating the Totem Code

The totem code is a serious set of rules that must be followed regardless of the situation. The character must take careful action to guard against violating these rules. Any action that violates this code should result in severe consequences.

When a character has violated the code, the GM should carefully weigh the actions to determine the appropriate punishment. Sometimes a character will be in a situation where they feel that they need to make a sacrifice on their totem code. Situations like this should not invoke stiff penalties. On the other hand, the character did violate the code and all violations should result in some form of punishment.

For example, Grey Wolf and his companions discover that the enemy is guarding their base with a pack of starving wolves that are being mind controlled. Grey Wolf decides that the best way to deal with the situation is to let the others go ahead while he takes the wolves on himself. In the battle that follows, two of the wolves die. This is a violation of his totem code and the punishment should at the very least involve a temporary loss of his totem powers.

Had Grey Wolf found another way to deal with the situation such as challenging the alpha male of the pack he would not have lost his powers. Instead the GM decides that he must atone for his actions before the powers will return. Grey Wolf later both helps the remaining pack reintegrate itself into the wilderness and honors the fallen with a special service. The GM rules that this is appropriate and allows his powers to return.

Vagrant or persistent violations of the totem code should require more than the above steps to restore the code. This may require that the character take a dangerous journey or complete an impossible task. It is also not outside the GM's power to treat the Totem Code in a similar manner to an Independent Limitation and rule that the power has been lost forever. This punishment should only be used when it is clear that the character is not honoring the code.

In the end, the actual result for violating the totem code is up to the GM. Players are reminded that they should not be violating the code. This may make situations extremely difficult but no more so than your typical disadvantage would.

Wrapping It All Up

Your character's totem power is built and the experience has been spent. You have worked out with the GM the way your character has acquired the totem. Now the only thing that remains is working with the growth in your character.

A well-played character is going to be significantly changed from this experience. He has either found a piece of himself that was missing or discovered something that was already there. It is important to remember that this totem spirit is as much part of your character as he is a part of it.



protect him from attacks. It took Gregor nearly six days of training before he could even get the barrier in place. The rest of the time focused on improving what Gregor could create, making it both stronger and easier to create.

After the training was over, Gregor returned to his long abandoned campsite and gathered his things. He head out on same path he took in and was amazed at how simple it seemed compared to three weeks ago. Once Gregor was home he gave his notice at work. After he was done at the salmon factory, Gregor applied for his Officer's Exam. This time he passed.

The Medieval Village: Gate to Adventure

by David Howard

You cross the muddy and rutted road on a rainy day. Rain drizzles down from the angry sky and a peal of thunder rips the heavens above you. You see a warm light, burning bright, through the window of a wooden building across the road and want some physical relief from the three stormy days you've experienced this week.

A man in a blue linen garment and a brown cloak approaches you, gazing into your eyes when he gets close enough. "Good day friend, what are you doin' about," he asks. The man then eyes your quality longsword, his gaze lingering over its encrusted hilt.

"Seeking shelter," you respond, brushing some storm-torn leaf bits off your coat.

"And whereabouts are ya from?" he asks, his right eyebrow rising.

"From Camelot Village over yonder," you say, tiredly pointing east.

"Well, sire, tell me about yourself," he says, wrestling with a large, knotted club that is resting on his shoulder.

You sigh as you realize you have encountered the village Bailiff and are about to be interrogated. This will be a long night...

THE TIME PERIOD AND REGION COVERED

I will cover the typical 13th Century village including: buildings and their functions, the medieval villager, villager professions, home life and habitat, profession and personality of lords, lords and villager relationships, nature of the medieval village, a typical day in the life of a medieval villager, Player Character origins in medieval villages, and other topics addressing and examining the medieval village.

This article will focus on British villages of the 13th Century. The village I will use as an example will be Elton, the village used by Frances and Joseph Gies in their book *Life in a Medieval Village*. I will also reference the village used by Gwyneth Morgan in her book, also titled *Life in a Medieval Village*.

TYPES AND USAGE OF MEDIEVAL VILLAGES

There are basically three types of constructed medieval villages:

- **Walled:** Either by stone or wood
- **Partially Walled:** wherein a walled keep was usually present and sections of the village may be walled in
- **Unwalled**

There are many different versions and materials used in the construction of each type, as each village was adapted to its own particular circumstances. The needs and defense technology of the particular era, region, and country the village varied greatly as well.

Unwalled villages were, by and large, the standard of the day. Within the defensive strategy of the time period, castles were highly relied upon to provide an intimidating and strategically challenging presence. So rather than rely on the individual defensive capability of each particular village, for defense of that particular village, the local authority relied upon strategically placed castles in the region to provide intimidation and tactical support. Large towns, though, were by and large walled after the 12th Century.

Villagers took refuge in the nearest castle that had room for the villagers. Thus many towns and villages were abandoned during wartime, and inhabited afterwards. As Phillip Warner states in his book *The Medieval Castle: Life in a Fortress in Peace and War*:

The first warning would be terrified peasants from outlying areas who had lost what little property they had possessed, and been lucky to escape with their lives.... If a larger event than a raid was taking place, the district must be put into a state of defense. Peasants, cattle, stores, weapons, and food must all be brought into the castle.

Though Warner also notes that refuge for villagers in a castle was not guaranteed. It was at the sole discretion of the Baron or Castellan who commanded it.

The castle was not held by a community as a town was, and when it afforded refuge, it did so on its own terms.

MEDIEVAL VILLAGE PROFESSIONS

Basically, there were three professional categories in medieval times:

- **Leader:** Noble and Commoner
- **Religious:** Both Clergy and Religious (Monks, Nuns, Lay Brothers)
- **Trade**

These categories are typified in many movies and novels set in medieval times, but usually not fully explained.

Leaders were lords, stewards, bailiffs, and reeves. Lords were generally nobility, but often clergy. Stewards were freemen and sometimes petty knights. Bailiffs were sometimes the second sons of a noble. Reeves were successful peasants of great repute, high production, and great success within a particular village.

Whether noble or clergy, the lord's role in the 13th Century was mainly political. He spent long periods away from the village and his estate, especially as politics became more complex in the late 13th Century and after. Basically the management of the manorial estate was left to the *Steward*, whom the lord checked up on periodically. The *Bailiff* and *Reeve* were, respectively, second and third in command to the steward, third and fourth in command to the lord.

The saying "Lord of the Manor" is a generalization; landowners were both nobles, and bishops or abbots. Often lords of the manor were petty knights, but sometimes an earl or count. As to clergy, all were not necessarily nobles, though the honorific of "lord" was often loosely used.

Religious, whether priest, lay brother, or monk, had a very big part in medieval life in 13th Century England and other countries. In English villages there was always a church, unless the village was too underdeveloped. If the village was too underdeveloped, the Catholic Mass was celebrated in a town hall outside or at the lord's manor. This was a rare occurrence, except in the expansion phase of Britain, which took place in the 12th Century and in other later periods.

Trade workers in the typical medieval village were farm workers and field hands. Trade workers including merchants, who traded goods and imported and exported them. The merchant profession grew slowly in this time period, but since all the goods of the village belonged to the landowner, either the landowner himself (rarely) or the steward (often) conducted the trade and bargaining.

As trade increased, the mercantile class grew in power and influence. Money is a derivative of power, and merchants began to be much more independent of the landowner and have greater influence over him, because of the power money provided. Eventually merchants had their own businesses and trades – this trend began in the 10th Century. By the 13th Century merchants had their own cargo ships and were sailing the seven seas. Concerning the motivation and commercial preference of guilds, Gergard Rempfel had this to say:

Both types of guilds [merchant and craft] sought recognition as privileged, self-governing associations. They sought special immunity from outside interference and they achieved it with varying degrees of success.

Specialization of trades, such as cobblers, bakers, and farmers began mostly in the 10th Century. It would not be unusual to find such specializations more strictly understood and defined in the 12th Century. With the advent of trade guilds in the 10th and 11th Centuries, the specializations became more pronounced. There were even legal ramifications in many countries by the 12th Century.

THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGE: DESCRIPTION AND SUMMARY OF BUILDINGS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

There were generally six archetypal buildings within the medieval village:

- Lord's
- Steward's
- Religious
- Commercial
- Individual Housing
- Agricultural

Larger villages had taverns and inns, but the typical village cited by France Gies in his book *Life in a Medieval Village* averages about 200 plus residents. No tavern or inn was found here.

As a side note, the total population of England at the time is approximately 1.5 million to 2 million people. We are dealing with a very small population density in the 13th Century, considering the present population in England is approximately 60 million. In the United States it's over 270 million. The population density averaged about 20 people per square mile. Compare that with today with a population density of approximately 233 people per square mile Great Britain and 80 in the United States.¹

¹ Keep in mind with the United States data, that we have large uninhabited or sparsely inhabited regions, like northern Alaska. U.S. Census Bureau data for U.S. U.K. Environment

The only comparison with medieval village population levels in the United States is a rural and isolated town, which very few people have experienced. Only later when commercial and economic systems, the driving engines of villages, were more developed did villages increase in size, number, and variety of building archetypes.

The rank of lord varied from bishops and abbots to knights and barons. Often the landowner was the pettiest of the noble class, but in larger villages, towns, and small cities, landowners could be a count or even a duke.

It is interesting to note that the title “lord” was not a positional title in the noble hierarchy. Formally and at state occasions, any noble except a knight could be called lord. Lord simply meant that one held a rank above knight. Thus you would have “Lord *Baron* William of Locksley, not “*Lord* William of Locksley.”

The landowner’s manor was much larger than the average villager’s. It had many support buildings such as a granary, barn, possibly a kitchen, manorial worker’s housing, and other storage structures. As is typified in much medieval fiction, the lord’s house was a grand place, at least compared to the common villager’s hovel. In large towns the landowner lived in a castle or keep, which is a much more grandiose structure than your typical village landowner’s.

Stewards were the village mayors, so to speak, as compared to the manor lord. But their responsibilities were much broader, including administration of the landowner’s personal food stock, villagers’ production levels, and worker quotas.

Stewards’ roles were much more broader than managers in our present society, though, since they also were judges and clerks. Their buildings showed this contrast compared to other villagers buildings. They were larger than a villager’s hovel, with a smaller number of support buildings than the lord’s manor. On the steward’s sub-manor, a barn and granary were common. Unlike the landowner’s buildings, the steward’s sub-manor did not have worker’s housing of its own.

The average *Villager’s* housing were typically wattle and daub huts, wood buildings coated with clay, as Gwyneth Morgan notes:

... ‘wattle and daub’ – thinner branches interwoven with pliable twigs (like willow), reeds and grass, and plastered with mud or clay to keep out the wind.

The roofs were thatched, that is, covered with reeds obtained from a riverside. These buildings were very flammable. Many were lost in fires. Almost all hovels had dirt floors, on which food remains were left, and chickens and other animals moved underfoot. Daily sweeping with a straw broom took place, to clean up the previous day’s leavings of bones and bits of food from the night before.

Most hovels had fires in the middle; the smoke flowed upward through a hole in the roof. The average villager didn’t have a fireplace in this era, since stone was very labor intensive and therefore expensive. The average villager lived a very mean life, compared to our pampered 20th Century life.

Commercial and Agricultural buildings were also wattle and daub with thatched roofs; including barns and even taverns. Other commercial buildings included the bakery and the occasional brewery. The entire village used bakeries. To cook, the villager had to cook in the Baker’s oven, for which the villager was charged a small fee.

Religious buildings were generally Churches and even Abbeys. These buildings were often made of stone with thatched roofs, or even wood shingled roofs, in the case of Abbeys and larger churches. A rector (local priest) had his own house, which varied in construction materials and architecture. In large towns Cathedrals, where a local bishop resided, were mostly stone. All religious buildings were of much better quality than the landowner’s manor. Many villagers made great sacrifices to construct a church, and town inhabitants sacrificed to construct a cathedral. The villagers and landowner all generously donated time, money, and talent, since to work to build a church or Cathedral, was thought to be working for God.

The cock crows and James jumps out of bed, the cold dirt floor of his hovel stinging his feet with its autumn chill. He quickly hops to the nearby fireplace, his feet soaking up the warmth of floor surrounding the fire, its wood coals glowing redder as he blew heavily on them. He throws kindling on the coals, and swiftly the kindling lights and blazes.

His mother yells in his ear to get to work. James throws on his dull gray tunic and pants, and his thin leather shoes, and runs to breakfast with grainy bread and beer for the meal.

Off to the fields James runs, hearing the yell of the Reeve ordering men to their plows. James runs to the barn and harnesses Bessy into his iron and wood plow. The field awaits, and the seed must be sown before the spring is high.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGER

While a little dramatized, the above example characterizes beginnings of a day in the life of a medieval villager. Villagers worked according to the sun, and were up at dawn. Plowing was not as grueling a work as it sounds, since the oxen did most of the work. The plowman only had to guide the plow, and often had help from other villagers who broke up clumps of mud and assisted the plow when it got stuck.

A medieval life was not a glamorous life. Seed and plow were the tools of the trade. Certainly the average farmer had sore muscles after plowing, since the all instruments were muscle- and oxen-driven.

Though most villagers were farmers and field hands, there were still a fair share of bakers, who leased their ovens from the manor lord. Also, a blacksmith was in residence typically, though his value was not as great and practical as the baker's. The blacksmith usually paid less in rent than the bakers, demonstrating his lower income.

The average workday for the villager was from dawn to dusk – about twelve hours at least. Generally days were longer, since most of the work took place in spring, summer, and early fall – the planting and harvesting seasons. Villagers were allowed off for holydays of the Catholic Church – Sundays, and feast days like Christmas and Easter.

TYPICAL MEDIEVAL GARB

The disparity between landowner garb and villager garb was plain to those who saw it. Medieval garb was called costume. Lords often had clothes of rich color, and made of various materials such as silk and velvet. By contrast, the typical medieval villager wore a drab gray tunic and drab gray pants. Women wore dresses only. It was illegal at many times in history for women in many provinces to wear pants, though this was found more often in the 14th than the 13th Century.

In the 13th Century there were specialized costumes for each class of citizen. The general three classes of costume were noble, scholar and clergy, and commoner. All had various style of clothing they wore. To wear a different class' clothing was a fineable offense or even an imprisonable offense. If malicious intent was found for the purpose of deception, death could result. Needless to say, the bureaucracy was extensive and the laws firmly, sometimes even rigidly, applied.

Generally there were four types of costume in medieval times: Noble, clergy, academic, and commoner. Clergy costume was often the same as academic costume, since most clerks and academics were taught at the Cathedral school. The four types of dress were evident in style, materials, coloring, and accessories.

Noble dress varied in quality and sumptuousness. To demonstrate, King Edward the First went about in the plain garments of a peasant, except on Church feast days. As noted by Herbert Norris in his book *Medieval Costume and Fashion*, he responded to a bishop admonishing him for in unsumptuous attire:

[Edward I] thought it impossible to add to or diminish real worth by outward apparel. "What could I do more in royal robes, Father, than in this plain gardcorp [short-sleeved tunic]?"

The religious motivation of kings in medieval times cannot be understated. It is quite possible, and likely, Edward I was motivated by religious sentiment of the day, where Church Faithful emphasized outward humiliation to witness to their God's glory.

This being said, so as to show exception, noble dress by and large was sumptuously simple. There were broiders of patterns: either of colored material or gold, but compared to the 14th Century where brightly colored patterns, complex designs, and multicolored broiders were the standard of the day, 13th Century clothing was very plain and simple.

The middleclass was recently emerging with freeman and freewoman becoming more common. The middle classes' costumes were

more refined than the peasants', with garments made of cloth or a good stout linen. Simple broiders of colored cloth adorned their costumes – these were middle class woman's garments. If they worked in the field, their garments were commonly like the villan's (serf's); a "coat was of a [coarse] cloth called cary" (Gies' *Life in a Medieval Village*).

The peasantry, basically the property of their lord, wore garments made of varying composition – some made of cary cloth, some made of linen – depending on the prosperity and success of the peasant.

THE PERSONALITIES OF LORDS

The role and profession of the lord is generally covered under "Professions" above, but the typical landowner personality is not. Lord's personalities varied considerably, but generally in England they were tolerant souls who only became incensed at worker quotas not being met, though accounts vary. But even becoming incensed at worker quotas not being met was rare. Lords were by and large away at court, or off to other political affairs so often that their effect was not felt in the community at large, except through their policies.

Sometimes, in the case of Edwardian Society, the society existing during the reign of King Edward I (1272-1307), military occupation was commonplace. Especially in Wales, which Edward conquered and occupied, the lord could be a tyrant at times. The militarism of Edward was felt throughout the kingdom, especially in Wales.

The manor lord's presence was felt through the village steward. The policies the steward enacted were a reminder of the lord's authority. The steward also enforced whatever policies the lord wanted, though the steward had great leeway in that enforcement. Occasionally a wicked landowner would show up, but this was not the rule, but the exception. Religion seemed to have a great influence in those days.

Some earlier historians have taken the position that medieval life of the average villager was oppressive, depressing, and unfulfilling, though recent articles have focused on the positive reports of medieval commoners. G. G. Coulton in his book *Medieval Village, Manor, and Monastery*, writes about these reports from some authoritative sources. G.G. Coulton quotes Anselm, a Medieval Bishop and Saint, who writes:

Feudalism, in spite of its generous maxims... soon stiffened into a hard system of customary law, interpreted and administered by those who had the stoutest arm and the fewest scruples.

But Gwyneth Morgan in *Life in a Medieval Village* takes another stance:

[Robert Fitzralph, the manor lord] must see that... every tenant is treated fairly.

Implying that there was some system of accountability in place, whether it be a church or state system.

VILLAGERS' RELATIONSHIP TO THE LORD

As stated in the last section, the villagers' relationship with the lord of the manor was very loose and distant. The villagers' relationship to the lord was primarily through the steward. In the lord's name the steward gave away individual housing and assigned work to commoners. The villagers could appeal to the lord in certain cases, but the villager may have had to wait quite a while to have his case heard, since the lord was frequently away for long intervals.

The lord of the manor could only dispense *low justice*: that is, crimes of lower import that affected only the village community and not the county or country at large. Low justice courts made decisions that did not affect the member's status or rank within the group. Crimes that involved capital punishment, treason, or matters that affected the whole country were tried in the high courts of the king. These high court crimes were called cases of *high justice*.

Also present was the Church Court of the Catholic Church that had influence on the noble courts. Bishop Robert Grosseteste, a Bishop in the 13th Century writes on this view of Church and State being cooperative partners:

"...there are, we know, two principles of government in the human race... the priesthood and the kingship."

The bishop or parish priest intervened in civil cases, and this intervention was frequently heeded. Whether it was heeded for reasons of religious devotion, or the possible penalty of excommunication in notorious cases, isn't certain. It is also true as Gwyneth Morgan describes:

Lord Robert [the manor lord] presides over [the manor court] and he sits with his steward... Father Hugh and the parish clerk at a long table with parchment, quills, and ink, ready to record all the cases....

Thus we can see that the Church was intimately involved in cases, if not just in a clerical capacity, and may have acted as a type of conscience of the court.

DIGITAL HERO #14

THE NATURE OF THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGE AND ITS INHABITANTS

The nature of the medieval village is that it served a threefold purpose:

- To make the manor lord and king money.
- To provide for the common defense in times of war.
- To safeguard its citizens and inhabitants.

Especially in the early middle ages the lord of the manor's obligation to the king was primarily militant. The lord of the manor provided soldiers for the king's army and tributes and taxes for the king's coffers. This, basically, comprised the feudal relationship between king and baron.

Money is tied to human labor, which generates money. Human labor is the means by which goods are produced, and goods are the means by which money is made. Thus the availability of human labor became an issue of great importance. So much was this an issue that there were fines levied and tributes paid to the manor lord if labor was lost. In the case of a daughter of a commoner married off to a man from another village, a tribute called a "merchet" was paid. In Elton village, quoting France and Joseph Gies:

It was more expensive [for a woman] to marry a freeman or outsider, or to marry at will, since the lord risked losing the woman's services, chattles [movable possessions], and future children.

The merchet was only paid in the case of a substantial dowry being paid. It seems the financial solvency of the dowry payer (fiancée, bride, or in-law family) was cause for the merchet.

For safeguarding the citizens of the country, county, town, or village, a force of men was trained for times of war. Villagers, who owed fealty to the lord of the manor, would have to take up arms and be trained in the art of war. Able-bodied men were required to take up arms, and the caring for the village while these men were away was left to a few men left behind, the women, and the older generation of villagers.

Every year or so the troops were trained, they took up arms and were commonly drilled in the fields. Freeman (freed serfs) owned and were required to be proficient with weapons and what meager armor they could afford. A sword was commonplace, and sometimes the freeman owned a shield

It took a relatively long time for a king to call up an army. Training men to the level of professional military expertise was a grueling course, and very time consuming. When calling up an army, the king could expect at least a four-month delay between his call to arms and the troops being on the field ready for battle.

The attitude of kings towards armies is summed up in Henry de Bracton's *On the Laws and Customs of England*:

To rule well a king requires two things, arms and laws, that by them both times of war and of peace may rightly be ordered. For each stands in need of the other, that the achievement of arms be conserved [by the laws], the laws themselves reserved by the support of arms. If arms fail against hostile and unsubdued enemies, then will the realm be without defense; if laws fail, justice will be extirpated, nor will there be any man to render just judgment.

HEARTH AND HOME: MEDIEVAL VILLAGE ORIGINS FOR CHARACTERS

If the GM were looking for village origins for characters, either PC or NPC, he would have to keep in mind the above information of station, rank, and title. The GM would also have to keep in mind that families of reeves were actually a less reputable lot. They often were in trouble and often fell amiss of the law. Joseph and Frances Gies note several records of Elton wherein the reeve families had run amiss of the law:

That these families [reeve families] also figure prominently in the court roles for quarrels, suits, infractions, and acts of violence is a striking fact, corroborating Edward Britton's observations to the same effect about Broughton [Village].

Keeping this in mind a good reeve family Player Character would outshine other family members and may also have black sheep in the family whose name he is trying to redeem. Reeves were chosen on an annual basis and their poor reputations prove the choice of annual selections prudent.

If the adventurer family is a farmer, baker, or other commoner family, the adventurer's renowned deeds may elevate his family to leadership status or, if he is knighted, move them completely to noble status. Such cases of families elevating in this manner are not unheard of, and many historical books tell the tale of this happening.

If the adventurer is knighted or made a more powerful noble, he might have a manor of his own, and herein would his family reside. In all probability his father, brother, or cousin would become the steward and run the manor while his knighted relative is away. This opens up adventure possibilities, to include noble in-fighting and other political intrigues.

Generally, commoners were known by a last name from community of origin, such as Cuthbert of Lindesfarne, a small town, but commonly also had last names such as Bent, Reeve, and Abovebrook. But I will not dwell on names here, since that goes beyond the purpose and intent of this article.

CLOSING

In closing, I covered the essentials to a village infrastructure, including buildings and their functions, the manor lord, and many other topics. This article can be saved for reference, as a starting point for developing and village and the village's inhabitants.

Generally speaking, the high points are:

- Commoners (Villeans) were generally poor. Some villeans were more prosperous than others, and some became freemen. Some served as Reeves, the first level business and production managers.
- The manor lord's authority was demonstrated and exercised through the village steward who was in charge when the lord was away. Village stewards were sometimes petty knights on large manors.
- Villages, generally, had small populations of around 200. Larger communities were called towns, and were generally walled in the 13th Century.
- Religion was a major part of villager life. The Church even had its own court, and bishops intervened in civil cases, especially in scandalous and notoriously unjust cases.
- Villagers commonly worked from sunrise to sunset, with days off only on holy days, church feast days, and Sundays.

GATES TO ADVENTURE: ADVENTURE IDEAS IN AND THROUGH THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

Many scenarios are possible in, and through, the medieval village. I will address a few here. All of these scenarios can probably be adapted to a particular genre.

Fantasy

- **Sheep in Sheep's Clothing:** The snooping neighbor finds some amulets, which are the religious ornamentations of a strange cult. But what seem to be the instruments of a deranged cultist playing innocent could be the village wizard's apparatus or the magical items of the villager who is a retired adventurer – incognito.
- **The Mysterious Cave:** While exploring a nearby area, following rumors of a village expatriate who speaks of bandits raiding the area, the adventurer(s) travel to the village. Speaking with villagers, they hear rumors of a cave up north where several villagers have disappeared. Discovering the location of a strange cave hidden behind some thick brush, the adventurer(s) see the head of a goblin raider pop up. The goblin raider's head popping up is followed by the snarl of a large wolf.
- **The Life Mead:** A local city inn has been noticing increasing health and rapid recovery from illness of its commoners. Many elderly commoners have noticing increased vitality and stamina, and some gray hairs have been darkening. Following a trail of clues, the party finds a small village and its brewery, which is making an earthy-scented heady mead. The fountain of youth in a mug?

Little does the party know the high priest of the demon lord Ozoriel has noticed the mead as well, and his demonic forces have infiltrated the village.

Horror

- **Wolf in Sheep's Clothing:** One of the villagers, a long-time inhabitant, is not what he seems. Strange amulets are found in his shed by a snooping neighbor. The amulets are religious ornamentations of a strange cult
- **Home Base:** The medieval village could serve as a home base to our hero(es). Strangers to the town could provide interesting mysteries, such as strange dress or jewelry, pale skin and an archaic mode of speech, which indicates the mysterious stranger is more than just a visitor.
- **Wolves in Sheep's Clothing:** The whole village is a front for an evil cult. Even the lord is part of this cult. Outwardly they appear a domesticated community. At night, however, screams can be heard far off in the hills as they sacrifice their victims, especially newcomers.

Generic

- **Escaped Villain:** A villain and enemy of the adventurer(s) escapes to a nearby village. The adventurer(s) follow him; little do they know he is the lord of the manor.
- **The Lynch Mob:** Based on rumor, conjecture, and hearsay, a lynch mob grabs a visiting stranger for assaulting the daughter of a local farmer. The crowd surrounds a tree at night yelling at their victim, ropes and torches in hand, as the heroic adventuring party rides forth on their white horses. Little do the adventurers know, the target of the lynch mob is guilty for the crime, and he disappears when the do-gooders try to rescue him, a flash and puff of smoke covering his escape.

These are just some adventure ideas located in, or found from the knowledge of a small village. There are many other scenarios possible.

ROLES AND ROLEPLAYING

SUGGESTIONS: CHARACTERIZATIONS AND TYPES

Some of these roles overlap, but that is to account for larger or smaller village size. Under manor roles, I gave the character the modern day equivalent of their positional job responsibilities, job title, and authority.

LORD OF THE MANOR

An aloof character with many political concerns occupying him. Noble, estimable, and intelligent. Strong, but not heroic, prowess with weapons.

- **Title:** Petty (poor, politically weak) knight, knight, baron.
- **Manor Roles:** CEO, company president, lawmaker, appeals court judge.
- **Authority:** Low court judge, hire/fire, discipline, policy maker.
- **Placement:** Mostly absent from village, King's court, foreign city, crusades (rare), village manor.
- **Roleplaying Roles:** Greater Vampire, cult leader, evil wizard, bishop, abbot, hero, shapechanging dragon.

STEWARD

A semi-aloof character with jurisdictional and business authority in the village.

- **Title:** Petty knight, freeman.
- **Manor Roles:** Company president, company executive vice president, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operations officer.
- **Authority:** Magistrate, hire/fire, discipline, policy implementer/maker, operations officer.
- **Placement:** Village, manor, absent from village (uncommonly), crusades (rarely), king/duchal/count court (rarely), foreign city (almost never), domestic city (sometimes).
- **Roleplaying Roles:** Lesser vampire, lycanthrope, spy, murderer, thief, wizard, evil cleric, cult leader, good cleric, minor hero.

These are some of the roles and characterizations that can be applied to some of the positions in the village. They are here to give you a template to work with in designing these characters. The bailiff and reeve can have similar bents as the steward, though the bailiff would make a good werewolf, since he is patrolling and away so often.

A NOTE ABOUT MY RESEARCH METHODS

I engage both in what is called primary and secondary research. Primary research is studying the original texts for oneself and doing one's own interpretation. This kind of research is beyond my aptitude. I engaged mostly in secondary research, which means to study the works of noted authorities in the field. I quoted translated original texts wherever possible, and I make no presumptions about my methods, this article is only meant to be a brief summary of the most common consensus amongst medieval historians.

RECOMMENDED READING

Morgan, Gwyneth, *Life in a Medieval Village*

Very clear and concise primer on Medieval Villages. Well-illustrated with drawings and photographs. Possibly the most concise, clear, and to-the-point primer available – a must-read.

Gies France and Joseph, *Life in a Medieval Village*

Popular historical book on the medieval village with many important details about daily villager life, village legal and political structure, income, monetary systems and many other topics. Not as clear as Camelot village, but the trivia and minutiae are invaluable.

Warner, Phillip, *The Medieval Castle: Life in a Fortress in Peace and War*

Possibly the best book on castles I have read. Clear, concise, and factual.

Camelot Village

www.camelotintl.com

An excellent and comprehensive primer on the typical medieval town with topics such as town professions, buildings, economy, and layout. A very concise and clear presentation. These facts are applicable to medieval villages as well. Includes medieval music and background sounds.

Henry Pirenne, *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and the Revival of Trade*

A well-known author in history circles, and international expert on medieval life and medieval history.

Castle Location Map in England

www.castlewales.com/maps.html

Locates all castle locations in England on a territorial map.

Medieval Demographics

www.io.com/~sjohn/demog.htm

An excellent site on roleplaying, world-building, and the demographic levels required for certain businesses and buildings.

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Sorted according to the themes. All sources were noted in the article. Most sources have overlapping topics and subjects with other sources. Rather than repeat these sources over and over again, I will simply reference sections.

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