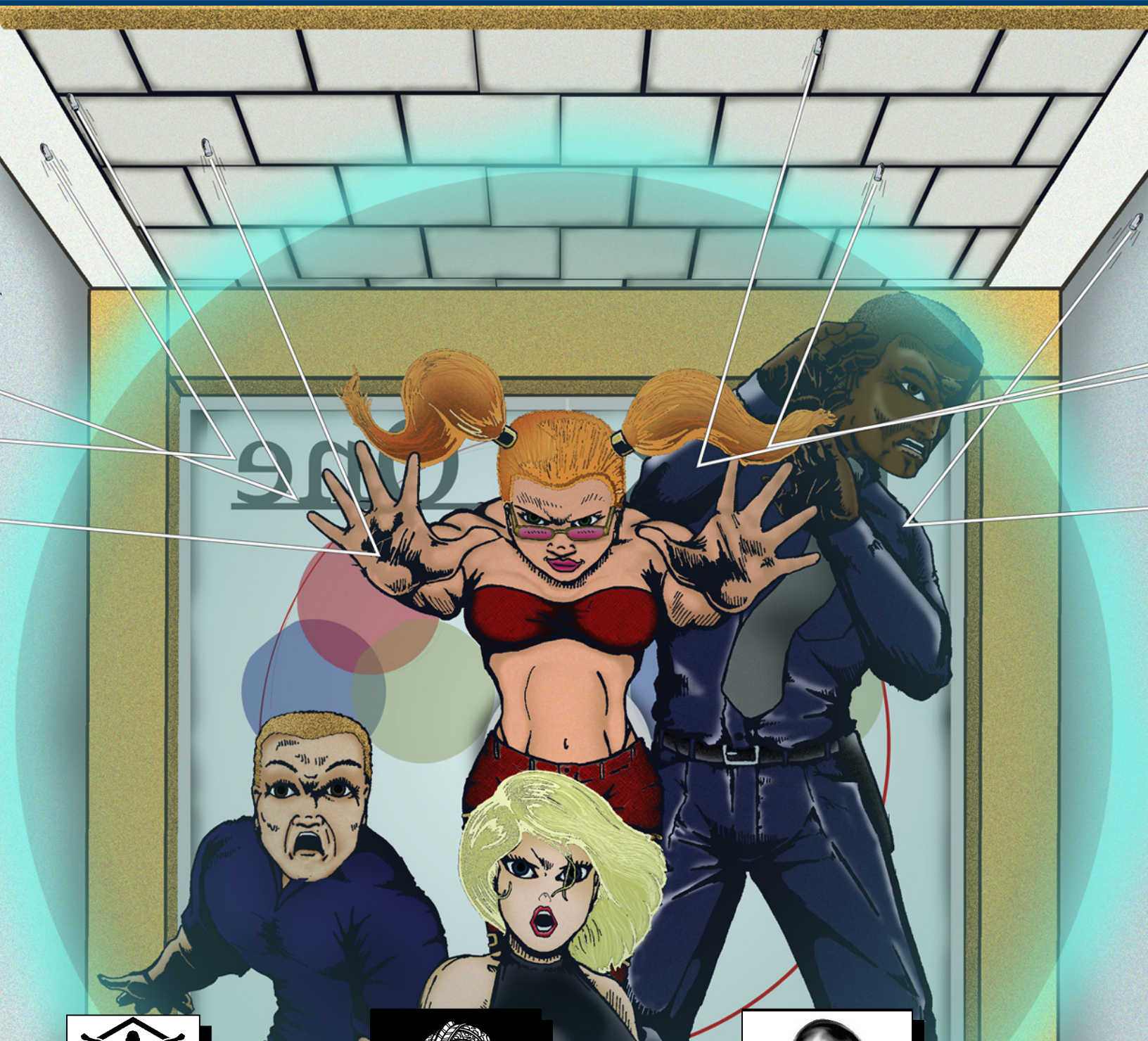


DIGITAL HERO

#34

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Issue #34 (December 2005)



When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

Since DH is now on a slightly-delayed schedule, this time around I'll cover our next two books: *The Ultimate Metamorph* and *Masterminds And Madmen*.

TIME FOR A CHANGE!

From genre to genre, one of the most popular and intriguing types of characters you can play are *metamorphs* – characters who change some aspect of their shape, form, or being. Ranging from supervillains who can copy anyone's appearance or powers, to werewolves and other lycanthropes, to robots with adjustable body parts, to free-floating minds that “change shape” by possessing living beings, metamorphs exist in fascinating variety and can add a lot to your game. I've always been really intrigued by such characters, and I'm glad to finally have a chance to delve into them in detail in a supplement. The main author on this project is Steve Metzke, who may be known to some of you from having written the old Fourth Edition supplement *Pyramid In The Sky* to these many years ago. As it happens, he's currently stationed in Iraq with the military, so keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

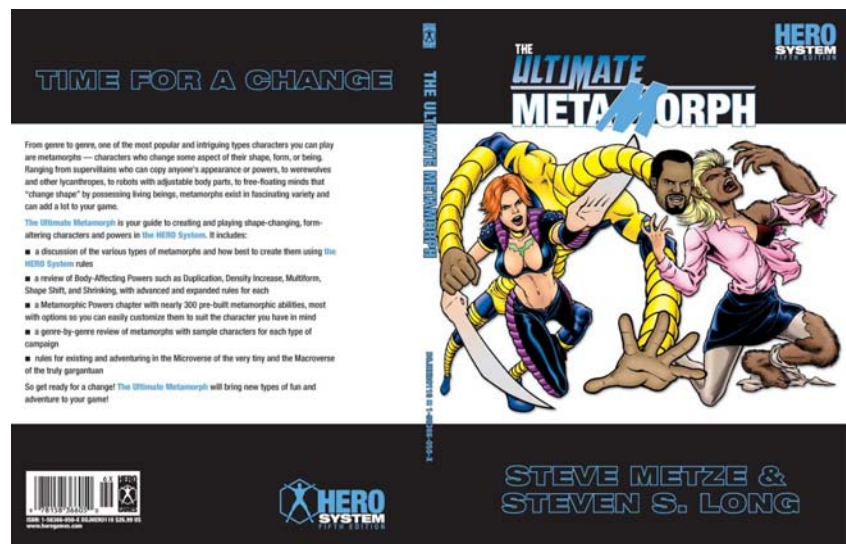
The Ultimate Metamorph examines the rules for and uses of powers and abilities that involve changing a character's physical, mental, or spiritual form. It discusses and describes how to build, run, and campaign with characters and creatures that have more than one form or state of existence, and for whom that change is a defining element of his powers, abilities, personality, or self-perception. That's why we use “metamorph,” which covers a broader range of character and ability types than “shapeshifter” or “shapechanger.” After all, in the hands of an imaginative player or GM the concept of “change” can cover many other character types and abilities.

Chapter One, *Metamorph Characters*, discussed the major types of metamorphs, with suggestions on how to build them. In addition to an extensive section on the Body-Affecting Powers (which lie at the heart of most metamorph character concepts), it reviews *HERO System Skills, Talents, Powers*, and other elements with regard to how they apply to or help metamorphs. For example, it includes two Martial Arts specifically for metamorphs (Elasticcombat and Battle Shifting), and discusses how to use Transform to simulate “Body-Affecting Powers As Attacks.”

All that segues into Chapter Two, *Metamorphic Powers*, which has almost 300 pre-built powers and abilities for just about any metamorph you can imagine (and most of those powers have one or more options, resulting in thousands of possible powers for your metamorph characters). Some of these powers appear in *The UNTIL Superpowers Database* or other *HERO System* products, but many are new, revised, or updated just for this book.

Chapter Three, *Metamorphs Genre By Genre*, reviews how metamorphs tend to function in various major genres, such as superheroes, fantasy, and pulp. It includes several sample characters for use as NPCs or pre-generated player characters in your campaigns.

Chapter Four, *Ten Thousand Forms*, covers metamorph campaigning. It discusses special ways metamorphs interact with the combat and equipment rules, and provides writeups for “generic” metamorphs (such as werewolves and kitsune) and some metamorph-related gadgets.



PULP FIENDISHNESS!

Now that *Pulp Hero* is out, we're launching our PH line with *Masterminds And Madmen*, a book of Pulp enemies by new (but highly talented and imaginative) author Rob Hudson. Like our other enemies books, it's designed mostly to save the GM the time and trouble of creating lots of adversaries on his own if he doesn't want to, and to inspire plots and adventures, but it can also give players ideas for characters and show them cool ways to build Pulp PCs.

The book has three chapters. The first, *Masterminds*, features master villains capable of giving just about any group of Pulp heroes fits: the insidious Dr. Fang and his Legion of Crime; crimelords like the Crimson Wraith and Iron Claw; deadly menaces like the Skymaster and the mysterious Geistkapitän. The Skymaster is a particular favorite of mine, and not just because John Lees has created six pages of beautiful, detailed maps of his gigantic dirigible headquarters, the Skyfortress *Cumulus*.

Chapter Two, *Fiendish Organizations*, has groups of adversaries to oppose your team of heroes. It includes the shadowy profiteers of the Cabal, the gangsters of the Coletti Mob, the evil Cult of the Nine Degrees, and the freaks of the Frankenstein Mob.

The largest chapter in the book is the third one, *Solo Villains*. It features enemies who work by themselves, or whom you can team together as you see fit. Here you'll find everything from lowlife private eyes, to swindlers and con men, mad scientists armed with world-threatening Weird Science devices, junior-grade masterminds and crimelords, jungle princesses, Nazi and Bolshevik spies and saboteurs, pirate queens, cat burglars, and mob hitmen. I think Rob's love of the Pulp genre and devilish imagination shines through the entire book, but particularly in this chapter. Several of his creations are definitely destined to become favorites of mine, and I bet of yours too!

— Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer





HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

Characters of Distinction

EXPANDING THE RULES FOR DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

A while back, someone on the boards suggested (in response to a HEROglyphs thread I started, if I recall correctly) that it might be interesting to expand or more precisely define some of the effects of the *Distinctive Features* Disadvantage. That idea sort of stuck in my head, and now I've finally gotten around to it. ;-)

My premise for this particular article is to focus on the *Reaction* element of the Disadvantage's cost calculation. I think the Concealability and Sensing elements are straightforward and don't really need any more explanation or expansion. But the question of how other characters react to someone who has an unusual appearance (however "appearance" is defined) has usually been left up to the GM's judgment or roleplaying. In some situations or campaigns, greater precision or predictability may be desirable.

The Reaction categories are defined this way:

| Value | Reaction |
|-------|--|
| +0 | Feature is Noticed and Recognizable |
| +5 | Feature is Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction or Prejudice |
| +10 | Feature Causes Extreme Reaction (abject fear, unabiding lust, utter disgust) |

At the +0 points level, *Noticed and Recognizable*, the Distinctive Feature makes the character stand out from the crowd in unpleasant or inconvenient ways. He suffers a -1 penalty on Interaction Skill rolls that could be affected by his appearance, and characters receive a +1 to INT Rolls to remember and describe his appearance later on. If a character perceiving him has a Psychological Limitation pertaining to his appearance (such as *Racist* or *Hatred Of Orcs*), the perceiver receives a further -1 to his EGO Roll to resist giving in to that Psychological Limitation.

At the +5 points level, *Always Noticed and Causes Major Reaction or Prejudice*, the Distinctive Feature begins to cause significant problems for the character; he stands out in ways that make most people uncomfortable – if not anxious, afraid, or stressed somehow. He suffers a -2 penalty on Interaction Skill rolls that could be affected by his appearance, and characters receive a +2 to INT Rolls to remember and describe his appearance later on. If a character perceiving him has a Psychological Limitation pertaining to his appearance (such as *Racist* or *Hatred Of Orcs*), the perceiver receives a further -2 to his EGO Roll to resist giving in to that Psychological Limitation.

At the +10 points level, *Causes Extreme Reaction*, the Distinctive Feature evokes major negative reactions in other people. The most common is abject fear, but loathing, disgust, hatred, and lust are just a few of the other possible reactions. He suffers a -3 penalty on Interaction Skill rolls that could be affected by his appearance, and characters receive a +3 to INT Rolls to remember and describe his appearance later on. If a character perceiving him has a Psychological Limitation pertaining to his appearance (such as *Racist* or *Hatred Of Orcs*), the perceiver receives a further -3 to his EGO Roll to resist giving in to that Psychological Limitation.

At the GM's option, some Distinctive Features, such as causing abject fear, might provide corresponding bonuses (instead of penalties) to certain uses of some Interaction Skills, primarily Interrogation. If a character is displeasing or terrifying to be around, a victim may provide information sooner to make him leave! If this occurs frequently in the game, the GM may want to require the character to pay Character Points for the bonus, since while a Disadvantage might *occasionally* help a character out in minor ways, it shouldn't benefit him on a regular basis.

“POSITIVE” FEATURES

Most Distinctive Features are ones people would automatically regard as negatives – a frightening appearance, extreme hideousness, extensive scarring, a repulsive body odor, an aura of evil. Some are “neutrals,” such as wearing a uniform or having an “ego signature”: they inconvenience the character, but they’re not automatically regarded as “bad” *per se* by most people. (In fact, some, like membership in the military, may be regarded positively by many members of society.)

A few Distinctive Features are attributes that would normally be regarded as “good” or “positive” ones. The most common of these is Extreme Beauty, but other characters might have unconcealable auras of holiness, an alluring scent, or the like. When a character wants a “positive” Distinctive Feature, you need to do two things. First, you have to define what’s so restrictive or inconvenient about this “positive” feature that it merits an award of Disadvantage points. For example, an Extremely Beautiful woman might have to put up with men constantly hitting on her, other women suffering intense jealousy of her, people not paying attention to her because they think she’s a “ditz blonde,” and so forth. Someone with an “aura of holiness” may constantly attract people desiring healing or blessings who get in his way. If the effects don’t seem that disadvantageous, the GM should reduce the value of the Distinctive Feature appropriately.

Second, you should define, and if necessary pay Character Points for, any positive effects this positive feature has. For example, no matter how many annoying lounge lizards Extreme Beauty attracts, it has plenty of advantages, too. A character who wants to take this as a Distinctive Feature should pay for a COM score that’s significantly above the campaign average, and probably for Skill Levels with Interaction Skills as well. If a positive effect has very little game effect, the GM might not require a character to pay for it – but once again, a Disadvantage shouldn’t help a character on a regular basis.

SOCIAL LIMITATION: MINORITY

Distinctive Features interacts in some ways with Social Limitation, particularly *Social Limitation: Minority*. Both affect how other characters view the character, and both tend to alter Interaction Skill rolls in some ways. The main difference between the two of them lies in the word *Distinctive* in Distinctive Features. A character who’s a member of a minority is distinctive among the majority crowd, but not necessarily distinctive among his own people or immediately recognizable or describable by someone else (“All those Chinese look alike to me”). On the other hand, a character with Distinctive Features isn’t necessarily a member of a minority, nor discriminated against because of his race or other attributes, but he’s definitely memorable, easily described in some ways, and liable to stand out even in a crowd of like people.

In some campaigns, the GM might want to consider a +0 Reaction level, *Feature makes character Stand Out*. This means he’s easy to recognize and describe (+1 to INT Rolls), but doesn’t necessarily suffer any penalties to Interaction Rolls due to his appearance. This would be appropriate for games in which one character really stands out (*e.g.*, a Masai warrior PC in a game set in 1870s Hong Kong; a character who’s one of the few four-armed Catalavans on Earth) but isn’t necessarily restricted by his appearance beyond being remembered. If there’s nothing about the character that’s memorable – he’s Masai or Catalavan, but doesn’t stand out in a group of them – then he’s probably not entitled to a *Distinctive Features* Disadvantage at all. Remember, just “looking different” isn’t disadvantageous; the character has to suffer some hindrance because of his appearance on a fairly frequent basis to qualify for Disadvantage points.



QUEEN KRISTINA

In 1933 a very butch cross-dressing Greta Garbo starred in the historical drama *Queen Kristina*, a controversial film very loosely based on the life of Kristina Wasa. In the beginning of the picture the queen's love interest appears to be Countess Ebba Sparre (played by Elizabeth Young). An early scene even features the two women kissing. Later on a confused barmaid propositions Kristina. Then she saves a handsome Antonio (played by John Gilbert) from a dangerous attacker and shares a hotel bed with him... as a man!

Although the film is supposedly infamous for "outing" the enigmatic Garbo (who never married) as a lesbian, the truth of her life has proven to be as complex as that of the queen she portrayed. Although writer Mercedes D'Acosta claimed in her autobiography that she and Garbo were lovers, recently released letters written by the deceased star seem to indicate that she was strictly heterosexual.

**You Gotta Have Character** by Jason Walters

"One ceases to be lonely only in recollection; perhaps that is why people read history."

— John Andrew Rice

Rene Descartes did not enjoy traveling through Germany. It wasn't that he lacked trust in Chanut; the little ambassador to the Swedish court was nothing if not a reliable and amiable companion. Was he not here with him right now, sharing the weary trials of the road? It was not the barbaric food, insufferable cold, or small aches and pains that came with long carriage travel. Well, not since they transferred to a luxuriously outfitted sled in Westphalia, in any case.

No, to be totally honest it was the physical danger that bothered him. Descartes was a natural philosopher, not a soldier, and loathed violence. The recently concluded Thirty Years War had devastated large portions of the German nation, leaving much of the countryside a burned out wasteland haunted by starving children and wide-eyed, ravished women. The Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin – the region they were traveling through right now – had lost over half of its population. Not exactly Versailles on a Saturday night – although the French court had certainly had a hand in its creation. He had never been happy about his own normally beloved king's actions in the recently concluded conflict.

"Even the greatest minds," he mused to himself, "as they are capable of the highest excellencies, are open to the greatest aberrations."

The end of the war had also left thousands of murderous, heavily armed mercenaries suddenly unemployed. Many, if not most, of them had simply turned to banditry in precisely the sort of lawless holdings as the ones that he, his friend, and their tiny retinue were currently traveling through. It filled him with constant apprehension.

"She is a very remarkable person," the Ambassador was saying. "The Queen knows about as much as the Academy and the Sorbonne put together, understands modern painting as well as anyone does, and knows more about the various court intrigues than I do."

"Of course." Descartes responded politely. "As you already know, I have corresponded with her extensively. Her

views are... most unusual, but very insightful. She is an entirely unique young woman."

Chanut began to nod enthusiastically, then stopped abruptly at the sound of gunfire. Alarmed, he withdrew a stumpy "wheel lock" pistol from the depths of his waistcoat. Descartes pulled aside the sled's curtains just in time to see a small cloud of gunpowder erupting from a nearby hilltop. A moment later their coachmen fell past his window, hitting the ground with a sickening thud. The entire vehicle careened wildly sideways for an instant before striking a nearby snow bank, sending the two men tumbling from their seats.

From the floor of the coach the two men heard their small escort tearing off into the forest with a shout, presumably in pursuit of the villain whom had killed their coachman. Then all was quiet for a moment. Pulling themselves upright, the two distinguished men peered above the edge of their windows like a couple of frightened children looking out of a cottage at strangers. To their mutual horror, they could see a half dozen ragged figures emerge from hiding places in the nearby snow-covered fields and begin running toward them. The whole thing had been a ruse to lure away their guards! Rene looked down at the almost ceremonial small sword that he, like all well-bred French gentlemen, carried at his side for personal protection. Not only had he never drawn it in anger, it had been over twenty years since he had even practiced fencing.

The philosopher smiled regretfully even as his companion grimly cocked back the hammer of his small weapon. Now his lazy, cynical Parisian pacifism would almost certainly cost him his life no matter what actions his more valiant friend undertook.

"Maybe," muttered Descartes to Chanut, "I can baffle these highwaymen with a free discourse on the use of hyperbolic doubt in the philosophic method. I can explain to them that noblemen have paid very good money to hear me do this in the past. Then, while I argue with them about the reality of their clubs, halberds, and muskets, you can make your escape."

His friend chuckled mirthlessly, but couldn't resist taking the philosopher's bait.

"Rene, road agents are notorious Aristotelians and reactionaries," he retorted, "so your explanation would undoubtedly fall upon deaf and hostile ears. If we were being robbed by Saracens then, perhaps, you might find an audience willing to argue the finer points of Natural Philosophy with you. They have a poetic view of the world."

Then, as the ragged robbers came within 30 yards of them, there was no more time for quips. Descartes grabbed the pommel of his sword with one hand and the handle of the door with the other. He would burst out at the last moment to die on his feet with a blade in his hand, striking at his murderers even as he fell. If he were fortunate enough to have a talkative murderer, word of his demise would get back to Paris, where it might be a poetic enough to inspire some mediocre lyricist to compose a piece in his honor. A bombastic "Thus Fell the Heretic Philosopher Whom God Himself Despised" in rhyming doggerel couplets that would, through sheer awfulness, actually outlive his philosophical achievements.

Terror was, Descartes realized, making him a little giddy.

Then, without warning, another shot rang out. One of them men running toward his side of the sled dropped his weapon then tumbled to the ground with a particularly feminine scream. A figure atop a mighty white stallion galloped into view. Dressed in mud-spattered traveling clothes with a blue scarf covering his features, he gripped enormous horse pistols in each of his gloved hands. The near-evening cold caused mighty goutts of steam shot from the nostrils of his horse. Without slowing down, he held one of the weapons straight ahead of his body, took careful aim, and killed a bewildered looking man with a stout wooden club in his hand. Then the firearms disappeared into the depths of the riding cloak to be replaced by a long, wicked looking horseman's saber.

The stallion came suddenly to a halt, its front legs clawing wildly at the air out of an obvious eagerness to resume battle. Glancing in the direction of the two men staring gape-mouthed from the window of the sled, the mysterious cavalier touched the tip of his sword to the brim of his tri-

cornered hat in a lazy salute. Descartes caught a glimpse of cold, blue, and intelligent eyes looking out at him from the space in between scarf and fedora. One of the eyes winked at him. Then the horseman turned, lowered his blade to the level of a man's neck, and proceeded to systematically slaughter the remaining highwaymen. Some stood their ground, some attempted to run, but in the end all of them lay in the snow with their life's blood forming a pool about them, a final crimson tribute to their misspent lives.

At last the horseman dismounted. Rene was surprised to see how diminutive their savior was, like a small teenage boy wearing his father's clothing and wig. Wiping mud from his chops, the rider leapt onto the sled's running board, opened the door, and joined the two men inside in a single easy motion. From the depths of his cloak he produced a metal flask that he gave to the astonished philosopher, who gratefully took a big pull. Some sort of flavored snaps burned his throat as it went down.

"Leftover *condottiere*. Contract soldiers. Nasty things; I kill them whenever I come down here." The rider's scarf fell away to reveal the smooth, whiskerless features of a young woman. "This winter is going to be a hard one, so hopefully they will all either freeze to death or go back to Switzerland and Italy soon. To be completely honest with you gentlemen, those who inhabit kinder southern lands are seldom able to survive Nordic winters. *Absit invidia*, of course."

"No offense taken, your Majesty," replied an obviously shaken Chanut. A skilled diplomat, he quickly regained his composure. "It is certainly a pleasure to see you earlier than expected. May I present to you Rene Descartes, natural philosopher, mathematician, and savant extraordinaire."

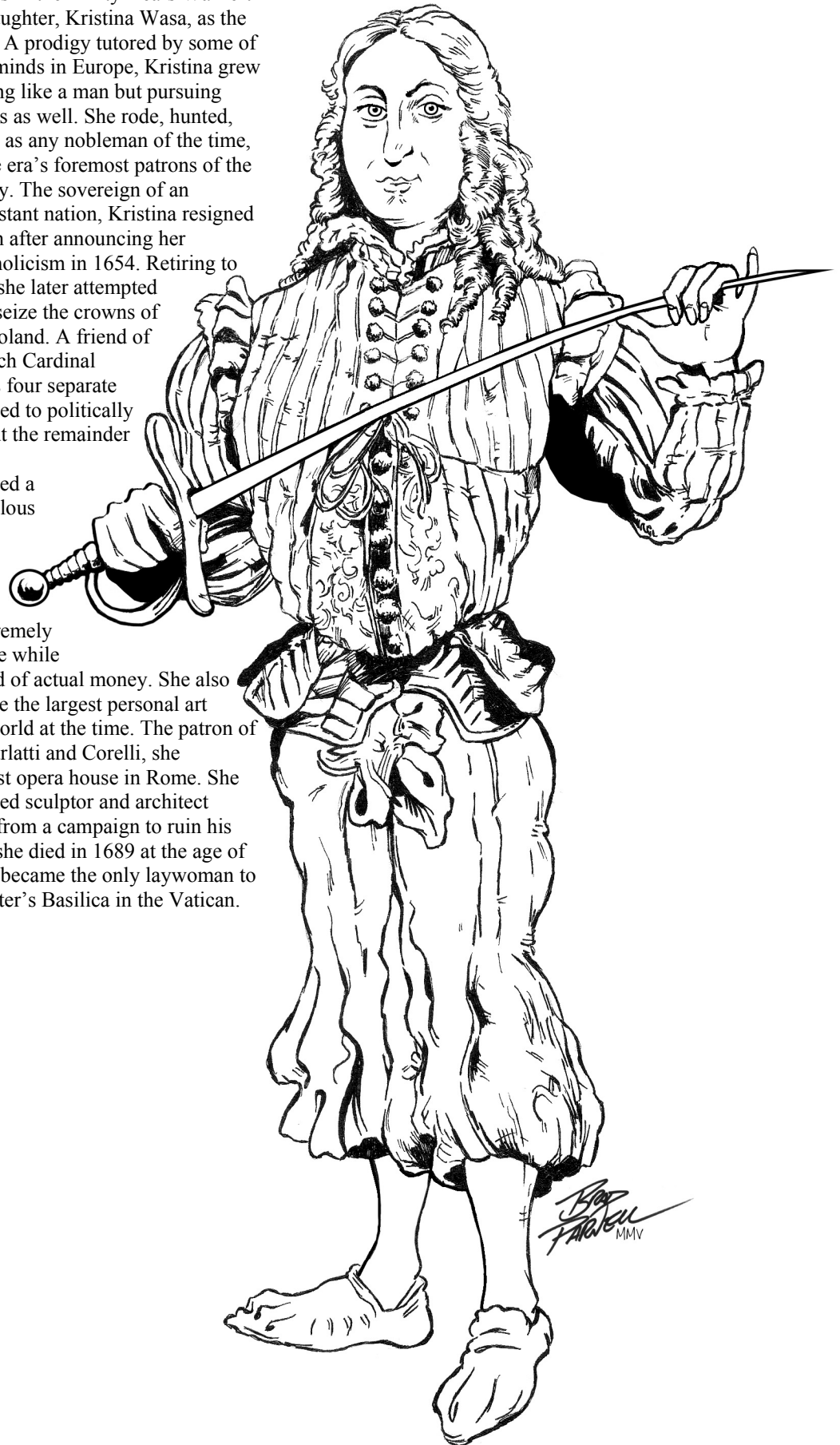
Rene felt his jaw drop.

"We appreciate your willingness to leave your estates in Holland for our capital," replied the Queen in a somewhat different tone of voice, "We are sorry that we couldn't wait for you to get to Stockholm, but we have some pressing questions that need to be answered. We're not accustomed to waiting, Monsieur Descartes. Since you will be working for us, there is no time like the present to acclimate to this fact. Now, in your *Meditations on First Philosophy* you stated that..."

Queen Kristina Wasa of Sweden

The untimely death of the soldier-king Gustavus Adolphus in the Thirty Years War left his six-year-old daughter, Kristina Wasa, as the Queen of Sweden. A prodigy tutored by some of the most brilliant minds in Europe, Kristina grew up not only dressing like a man but pursuing masculine pastimes as well. She rode, hunted, and fenced as well as any nobleman of the time, and was one of the era's foremost patrons of the arts and philosophy. The sovereign of an aggressively Protestant nation, Kristina resigned the Swedish crown after announcing her conversion to Catholicism in 1654. Retiring to France then Italy, she later attempted unsuccessfully to seize the crowns of both Naples and Poland. A friend of the infamous French Cardinal Mazarin as well as four separate popes, she continued to politically intrigue throughout the remainder of her days.

Kristina also led a completely scandalous personal life. A notorious lesbian and cross dresser, she somehow maintained an extremely luxurious existence while perpetually in need of actual money. She also managed to acquire the largest personal art collection in the world at the time. The patron of the composers Scarlatti and Corelli, she constructed the first opera house in Rome. She also saved the famed sculptor and architect Giovanni Bernini from a campaign to ruin his reputation. When she died in 1689 at the age of 63, Kristina Wasa became the only laywoman to be buried in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican.



Queen Kristina Wasa of Sweden

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|----------------------|
| 13 | STR | 3 | 12- | 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1] |
| 17 | DEX | 21 | 12- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 13 | CON | 6 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 3 | | Total: 6 PD (0 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 2 | | Total: 5 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 3 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 26 | END | 0 | | |
| 24 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 46

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2½"/5"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Perks

- 15 Fringe Benefit: Head of State of a Single Nation, Member of the Aristocracy/ Higher Nobility
- 6 Reputation: Eccentric Queen of Sweden (Large Group) 11-, +3/+3d6

Skills

| Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Damage |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|--|
| Martial Arts: Fencing | | | |
| 3 Cut | +2 | +0 | 2d6+1K |
| 4 <i>Fleshe</i> | +2 | -2 | 2d6+1K + v/5; FMove |
| 4 Parry | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 3 <i>Pasata Soto</i> | +2 | +2 | 2d6+1K + Foe's v/5, You Fall, Response to Ballestra, Fleche, Lunge |
| 4 <i>Prise de Fer</i> | +1 | -1 | +23 STR Bind |
| 5 Slash | -2 | +1 | 2½d6K |

EQUIPMENT

| Weapon | OCV | RMod | Dmg | STUNx | Shots | Notes |
|----------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 2 Wheel-Lock Pistols | +0 | +0 | 1d6 | +0 | 1 | 8 Clips, Act. 12-, 1 Turn, ½ DCV |
| Cavalry Saber | +1 | | 1d6+1 | +0 | | |

- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 3 Acrobatics 12-
- 3 High Society 12-
- 3 Persuasion 12-
- 3 PS: Rulership (Queen of Sweden) 12-
- 3 Riding (Land Based) 12-
- 4 WF: Early Firearms, Blades, Bows
- 3 Linguist
 - 1 1) Language: Flemish (Basic)
 - 4 2) Language: French (Idiomatic, Literate)
 - 1 3) Language: German (Conversation)
 - 2 4) Language: Greek (Conversation, Literate)
 - 1 5) Language: Italian (Conversation)
 - 1 6) Language: Latin (Conversation, Literate)
 - 1 7) Language: Spanish (Conversation)
 - 0 8) Language: Swedish (Native)
- 3 Scholar
 - 2 1) KS: European History 12-
 - 2 2) KS: Fencing 12-
 - 2 3) KS: Philosophy 12-
 - 2 4) KS: Theology 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 104

Total Cost: 150

75+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Cross-dressing Woman (Concealable)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Compulsively Unorthodox Thrill-Seeker (Uncommon, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Proud ("inordinate self-esteem") (Common, Strong)
- 15 Reputation: Troublesome and Meddling Queen, 11- (Extreme)
- 10 Social Limitation: Queen of Sweden (Frequently, Minor)
- 15 Social Limitation: Woman in Renaissance Society (Very Frequently, Minor)

Total Disadvantage Points: 150

KRISTINA WASA PLOT SEEDS

The Grand Tour:
With the European Continent still convulsed by the violence of the Thirty Years War, a desperate Chancellor Oxenstierna hires the PCs for a secret mission. Kristina Wasa, the headstrong Swedish crown princess, has vanished, leaving behind only a brief note indicating her desire to go on a "grand tour" of Germany. Their assignment is to retrieve the young monarch before any harm can befall her; but will the PCs become the rescuers or the rescued?

Girl's Night Out:
Princess Kristina's court maidens (the PCs) want to have a wild night out on the town without male supervision. The cross-dressing monarch agrees to accompany them as a male "escort" during their adventure to the taverns and bawdyhouses of Stockholm. Unfortunately, secret agents of the Austro-Hungarian Empire planted within the Swedish government have gotten word of this adventure. They have dispatched a team of skilled assassins to murder the princess while she is unprotected and indisposed.

Unfortunately for the would-be assassins, Kristina has no intention of being a victim.

The Bibliophile: With the Thirty Years War drawing to a close, Queen Kristina has dispatched the PCs on a final pre-armistice mission into war torn Germany. She wants them to steal the entire contents of Prague's vast libraries, and then return the vast literary cache to Stockholm for the Queen's reading pleasure. But first they must sneak, fight, and bribe their way across French, Austrian, and Spanish lines to get there.

Queen Kristina Wasa of Sweden

Background/History: Kristina Wasa was born in Sweden on December 8th, 1626 to King Gustav II Adolf and his wife, Maria Eleonora of Brandenburg. Her mother, who had been promised a son by the court astrologer, was disappointed by her birth but her father the king had no such misgivings. "She will be a clever girl," he told his friend and advisor Oxenstieria, "She has already deceived all of us."

Thus the king set about raising the princess as a prince. From a young age she was taken on diplomatic journeys abroad and even onto the battlefield, where she delighted in the sound of cannon fire and musket shot. She was rigorously trained in the manly arts of horsemanship, swordsmanship, and statecraft. He also officially made Kristina his royal heir.

In 1632 King Gustav was killed in action during the Thirty Years War. With the queen mother emotionally wrecked by the loss of her husband, the Swedish council of regents crowned Kristina sovereign with Chancellor Oxenstieria as her trustee. They also immediately enrolled her into an intensive, 12-hour-a-day curriculum at the hands of a council of savants headed by theologian Johannes Matthiae. Showing unusual intellectual capabilities, the young monarch rapidly learned to speak German, French, Italian, Spanish, and to read Latin. She is also trained in philosophy with a particular focus on Stoics such as Tacitus, Epictetus, and Seneca.

At the age of 15, Queen Kristina became an active participant in the governance of her kingdom. She attended meetings of the council of regents and the Estates, the organization of Sweden's large property holders. Her first act upon becoming full monarch at the age of 18 was to divest her former trustee Oxenstieria, who had begun to show signs of interest in her crown, of all his ministerial powers. She then became the driving force behind putting an end to the conflict that had not only cost her father his life, but also devastated much of central Europe as well. To end the Thirty Years War quickly and decisively she gave up many of Sweden's continental possessions, a decision that has been alternately praised and condemned by historians to this day. She also organized a massive royal library mainly composed of books looted from Prague.

In 1648 Kristina began to assemble a sizable group of scholars, savants, and philosophers at her court. She convinced the reclusive intellectual Descartes to move to Stockholm, where he lived with the French ambassador Chanut. The queen and the savant met to discuss philosophy, theology, and mathematics every morning at 5:00 am sharp. She also began to doubt her Lutheran faith, a crisis of conscience

that caused her to begin a clandestine correspondence with the Jesuit monks Malines and Casati. Although seriously concerned about her obligations to her people, Kristina began to sincerely consider chastity as an alternative to marriage, an institution that deeply frightened and repulsed her.

Two years later, Descartes contracted pneumonia. Although Chanut tried desperately to nurse him back to health he perished, plunging Kristina into a deep depression that quickly drove her to a nervous breakdown. Her aversion to marriage, always a matter of concern for the Swedish state, and rumors of a lesbian affair with the beautiful Countess Ebba Sparre had also put considerable pressure upon the young monarch. After some considerable soul searching she decided to abdicate in favor of her cousin, Charles X Gustav. Amidst great pomp she crowned her successor with her own hands, then left Sweden immediately with her court women and personal possessions. As soon as she reached the continent, however, she abandoned her retinue, donned men's clothing, and rode out alone on horseback for a yearlong tour of Europe.

Upon completing her grand tour of Europe in 1655, Kristina visited Pope Alexander VII in Rome and publicly converted to Catholicism. She then embarked upon a two-year period of wandering about the continent in search of knowledge, political influence, and scandal. She attempted alternately to seize the thrones of Naples and Poland, studied alchemy, chemistry, and astronomy with such great minds of the period as Lubenitz and Cassini, and held an academy in France dedicated to discussion of the nature of love. In 1667 she settled permanently in Rome, where she established a palatial household that included an observatory complete with two in-house astronomers. Kristina then began a career as a socially conscientious author, publishing a letter on tolerance for French Huguenots in the *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres* and writing a manifesto defending Italian Jews. She also began work on her two-volume work *Les Sentiments Horiques* and *L'Ouvrage de Lisir: Les Sentiments Raisonnables*, both of which were published after her death along with an unfinished autobiography. She remained a strong patron of the arts for the rest of her life.

In 1674 Kristina held an *Academia Reale* that included physiologist Giovanni Borelli and her friend the astronomer-mathematician Cassini. In the same year she founded an academy for philosophy and literature, helped to open the first public opera house in Rome, and sponsored the work of the artists Scarlatti and Corelli. She also helped to refute a campaign to discredit the sculptor and architect Giovanni Bernini in 1680.

Kristina Wasa died peacefully on April 19th, 1689, at the age of 63. She is the only laywoman to be buried in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. Interestingly, although historians for centuries labored under the assumption that the former Queen was lesbian, evidence decoded from her personal diaries in the 19th Century indicate that she was the lover of Cardinal Decio Azzolino, as was rumored to be the case in Rome in her day. While this does not preclude her having been Countess Ebba Sparre's lover, it does suggest that Kristina's personal life was rather more complex than was previously suspected.

Personality/Motivation: Kristina Wasa loves controversy, adventure, and herself in precisely that order. She is in fact the only authority figure she respects, a detail that would be more offensive in a less engaging woman. With that said, Kristina is an exhausting person whose behavior constantly exasperates those around her. She often gets her way simply because it is far easier to say "yes" to the aggressive ex-queen than to say "no" to her. Her reputation as an eccentric always precedes her – a fact that Kristina uses to her own advantage whenever possible. Still, even her enemies will reluctantly admit that Kristina isn't a bad, or precisely rude, person. "She's completely extraordinary," commented a contemporary, the French biographer Madame de Motteville, "Nearly all her actions are in some way extravagant. In no way does she resemble a woman; she doesn't even have the necessary modesty. Yet, somehow, it is not difficult to pardon all her irregularities."

If Kristina can be said to have to have a single dramatic character flaw it is pride, or to be more precise an "inordinate self-esteem," as another of her generation put it. She has a distinct tendency toward self-absorption; a kind of preoccupation with her own virtues, accomplishments, and interests that sometimes blinds her to the consequences of her actions. She also spends far more time worrying about how she will be viewed by history than is healthy for a normal person. Having been born and raised in a certain peculiar manner she cannot, even after ceasing to be the Queen of Sweden, give up the trappings of royalty. Kristina even insists upon maintaining a sort of "pseudo court" as part of her home life, complete with state accouterments and extravagancies.

On a more positive note, her conversion to Catholicism has done nothing to abate Kristina Wasa's loathing for false piety and prudishness. She never loses an opportunity to embarrass authority figures, either secular or ecclesiastical, who possessed too much of either of these vices. For although she possesses several character flaws, Kristina's courage, her belief in human

rights and liberty, and her general lust-for-life go a long way toward mitigating her faults.

Quote: "I love the storm and dread it when it falters."

Powers/Tactics: Kristina Wasa is a skilled hand-to-hand fighter whose martial abilities combine dexterous acrobatics with fencing skills. Like her father before her, she is an aristocratic cavalier in the classic sense: as comfortable in the saddle with a sword in her hand as she is at a diplomatic reception in Vienna. Brave to the point of foolhardiness but always certain of herself, Kristina in particular enjoys 11th hour rescues of members of the opposite sex.

An accomplished polyglot with eight languages at her command, Kristina is also a respected philosopher with a reputation for particularly erudite, stoic views on the human condition. She is used to giving orders that are quickly and accurately obeyed but never hesitates to lead by example in dangerous situations. If the PCs encounter Kristina while she is still queen of Sweden, she will have all of the resources of a powerful and prosperous European nation at her disposal.

If you wish to make Kristina more powerful, increase her SPD to 4, her PD to 8, and give her some additional Combat Skill Levels with her cavalry sword. Also add at least one Penalty Skill Level with her pistols. If you wish to decrease her abilities, remove Kristina's Combat Skill Levels, several of her fencing maneuvers, and decrease her DEX to 12, thus reducing her OCV and DCV.

Campaign Use: Although in most historical periods women were confined largely to domestic roles, the majority of HERO campaigns are set in worlds where the genders enjoy more-or-less equal status. Kristina Wasa is thus usable as either the template for an unorthodox, swashbuckling woman who lives outside of society's rules, or as an example of an eccentric female adventurer in settings where such behavior is more common. Sometimes even sexist societies are willing to make exceptions for unique individuals. For example, opera singer and duelist La Maupin was able to live openly like a man in Paris largely due to her unique musical abilities. In much the same manner, Kristina Wasa's status as a sovereign monarch meant that she could live in whatever manner she chose, regardless of convention.

Kristina makes an excellently annoying NPC heroine whose goals will always seem to combine upstaging and bossing about the PCs with getting them into serious trouble. In fact, the swashbuckling ex-queen gets people into and out of sticky situations with a peculiar sort of nonchalance that would be infuriating in a less

OTHER WOMAN SWASHBUCKLERS

Louise Labe: The Belle of Cordiere was the striking, intelligent daughter of a Lyon merchant in the early 1500s. A noted poet and philosopher, Labe learned to ride and fight at a young age, both of which she continued to do for most of her life. She fought for France against the English near Calais, and was considered by many to be the modern version of an Amazon.

La Maupin: One of the few female duelists active in France during the reign of Louis XIV, La Maupin was an actress and singer with the Paris Opera. She routinely challenged gentlemen to duels, generally winning due to her superior skill with a blade. She specialized in singing men's roles written in female vocal ranges, dressing as a man both on as well as off stage. An open lesbian, La Maupin had affairs with many of the most notable society woman of her period. She was eventually prosecuted for "sodomy."

Lady Harley Briliana: During the English Civil War, royalist Lady Briliana found herself in charge of her husband's castle when

Roundheads unexpectedly attacked it. She successfully defended her family estate for almost a year, becoming a symbol of the Cavalier cause while doing so. Although she died in childbirth before the King and her husband could raise the siege, the Roundheads allowed her retainers to depart unmolested as a sign of respect for her courage.

Catalina de Eranso: Originally a nun, Catalina fled the cloister to set sail for South America in search of adventure. Taking the name Don Alonso Diaz Ramirez de Guzman, she fought for Spain in Chile and Peru as a common soldier for many years. So successful of an impersonator was she that her own brother failed to recognize her when they served together. Her secret was revealed when she was wounded in 1624, but Pope Urban VIII gave her special permission to dress as a man out of recognition for her service to Christendom.

engaging person. She might ride out of nowhere to save them from bandits in the morning, only to embroil them in some sort of pointless, self-serving political mischief by the afternoon. Attempts to reason with her or get her to change her ways will be met with incredulous disbelief, as in her own mind Kristina is the heroine in a charming tale in which the PCs are only supporting characters.

If she is being used as a PC while she is still queen of Sweden (or some other useful place), Kristina could also be used as either a useful contact or even a patron, sending the PCs out of various adventures to further her political agenda. To purchase her as *Contact: Queen Kristina Wasa (Major Institutions, Significant Contacts, Very Useful Skills, Limited by Identity) 13-* would cost 7 points.

Genre By Genre: The historical Kristina Wasa was a dashing, controversial swashbuckler of the sort that often appears in Fantasy campaigns, especially Low Fantasy games that take place in a low magic setting resembling Renaissance Europe. There isn't any reason that a character like her wouldn't be found in a High or Epic Fantasy game, however, especially in an urban area. In a *Champions* campaign Kristina could easily be turned into moderately powerful superhero by raising her STUN to 40, her SPD to 4, and her PD to 12. Also give her appropriate items from Steve Long's *Gadgets and Gear* like an electro-sword and some sort of light armor. An avenging *Dark Champions* Kristina Wasa might favor a real sword, a pair of semiautomatic pistols, and a have a grim attitude toward the wicked at heart.

A *Star Hero* Kristina Wasa might be the renegade captain of her own battle-tested starship, much like the character of Queen Emeraldas in Leiji Matsumoto's epic *Captain Harlock* series. Or, in a *Pulp Hero* game, she might be a crusading archeologist that has cast aside her royal heritage to seek out adventure in the darkest heart of Africa. A Kristina Wasa found in the violent but colorful world of *Ninja Hero* might be a famed European swordswoman who has gone to the wild, wild East in search of wealth and adventure.

Appearance: Kristina Wasa is a small, slender woman with cream-colored skin and quick blue eyes. One of her shoulder is slightly higher than the other, a defect she hides extremely well using properly tailored clothing. She is extremely masculine, with a relatively deep voice and aggressive body language that seems much more suited to a man. She also peruses pastimes, both athletic and intellectual, generally considered to be masculine, giving her a uniquely androgynous air. Many people assume that she is a particularly effeminate young nobleman when they first meet her.

Kristina wears exclusively men's clothing that has been tailored to conceal her femininity, especially her shapely figure. Her only nods to femininity are her love of face powders and unique wigs that, although technically heavy men's wigs, hang down at the back in a subtle imitation of a woman's coiffure. She is often openly armed with a brace of wheel-lock pistols and a long cavalry saber that once belonged to her father.

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Leftover Hero

by Steve Metze

Dr. Electron

Background/History: Jenny Klein was born a child prodigy, and her greatest idol was a female superhero named Photon. Math, music, science, and language skills came naturally to Jenny, and she studied them all in hopes of becoming more like her hero. Although she grew up in a lower-class family, by the time she was 11, she had her first Bachelor of Science Degree with dual math and French majors. When most of her peers were entering college, Jenny had become a virtuoso on the piano and the violin, earned Masters Degrees in French, Music, and Computer Science, and Doctorate Degrees in Math, Physics, and Chemistry. Her drive for knowledge was unstoppable. Given unlimited grants to perform scientific research, she at last could pursue her dream of achieving super powers. In only three years, she had perfected a technique for converting every single cell in her body into a living battery. After only a few minor setbacks, she did what no other person had ever accomplished; she simply flipped a switch and became super-powered overnight. She kept this transformation secret, and she originally called herself Photon II, after her idol. Sadly though, her studies and scholarly friends and experiments had taken up all of her time, and at the age of 25 she realized she had completely left her family behind. In her shadow, Jenny's parents had grown to resent one another, and had both quit their jobs to leach off of Jenny's success as a scientist. Attempting to bring her family closer together, she revealed her new super-persona to her parents. This was the worst thing she could have done, and soon they had betrayed her trust for their own 15 minutes of fame. They did the talk show circuit, wrote unauthorized biographies on Jenny's life, marketed a line of Photon II dolls, and generally stooped to any depth to make money off of her. Naturally, it wasn't long before enemies of Photon II had Jenny's parents killed. After making sure the assassins were sentenced to a long and painful prison term, Jenny and Photon II immediately faded from the public eye. A year later, Jenny returned to the scientific community under a new identity, and Photon II was replaced by the dark and mysterious Dr. Electron.

Personality/Motivation: Once an idealistic youthful dreamer, Dr. Electron is now somber, cynical, and withdrawn. Her primary motivation as a child was being able to impress her parents, and when they died because of her success, her inspiration was shattered. For months she was content to devote most of her time to scientific pursuits, while using Dr. Electron at night to help

take out her frustrations on the underworld. Unfortunately, recently several particularly manipulative people, their origins clouded in obscurity, have approached her with promises of a union of superheroes. Listless and vulnerable, Dr. Electron accepted this partnership as a way to easily get the guidance, money, and contacts necessary to fight crime. To date, Dr. Electron believes that she and her unknown benefactors are part of a secret hero group, with a few contacts in various organizations as their pawns (although she does not know who or in what organizations, she does know that the group is well connected). Dr. Electron knows nothing of any other potential members of this unnamed organization. Dr. Electron is happy to go about her scientific research and wait for instructions, assuming that if they don't call her, she must not be needed. She also assumes that when they do call, it must be something very important and worthy of her giving her all. Because these calls are her only real social contact since the death of her parents, and because the ploy of being in a prestigious organization really has given Jenny a new sense of worth, Dr. Electron often only hears what she wants to hear about the big picture of her actions.

Quote: "Yield or burn!"

Powers/Tactics: In human form, the only powers Jenny has are her heightened physical statistics and her ability to sense various nearby energy forms. When she transforms into Dr. Electron, however, she actually becomes living energy. She can alter her form to become all existing forms of "pure" energy (the electromagnetic spectrum, electricity, radiation, fire, and so forth), and her Powers change accordingly. Her Elemental Control gives her a basic form – super-expanded energy, super-compressed energy, an energy sponge, and/or one of the types of energy listed above. The Multipower gives her attacks and abilities based on her form. If she were in the form of living x-rays, she could use the Invisibility power (although, in every form, she is invisible to scent because she is made of living energy) shoot an Energy Blast of "hard" x-rays, fire an RKA of concentrated x-rays, surround herself with a burning particle field of energized x-rays, or Flash someone with x-rays to blind them, all while still being able to Absorb the BODY damage done from an x-ray attack. Note that when she becomes planet-sized, her STR goes up to 350, only relative to planets. This is enough to affect the moon, or a large comet, but not the Earth unless she also Absorbed her maximum level of potential energy. In all cases, she would

LINE DEVELOPER'S NOTE

As often happens with large books like *The Ultimate Metamorph*, I ended up cutting a few characters – not necessarily because they were bad or I didn't like them, but to save space, make room for more important/useful characters, or the like. But that's no reason you can't see 'em here in the pages of *Digital Hero!* As usual with *Leftover Hero*, I haven't in edited, reviewed, or math-checked this material, though, so it may conflict with the contents of those books or have other problems. *Caveat l auditor.*

pass out from the effort. When she becomes sub-atomic, she can travel through phone-lines at faster-than-light speeds, and affect electronic equipment from the inside. Her favorite tactic is to taunt a villain into calling her (with a ransom, threat, or clue) and then to fly through the phone lines to wherever the villain is hiding. Should she ever suspect that she will be facing odds beyond what she is capable of, she will change into electricity form and then stick something metal into a light socket until she has absorbed enough energy to even the odds. Because her body is a living battery, water shorts her out rather quickly. She cannot handle concentrated streams or bursts or even brief contact with water in her energy forms. Furthermore, her body has developed a dependence on energy, and Dr. Electron must either bathe herself in an ion field at least once every day, or spend an hour in the vacuum of space absorbing unfiltered cosmic radiation, in order to remain healthy.

Campaign Use: Dr. Electron makes a good tragic villain, particularly as a tool of a more powerful villain related to the heroes. She is withdrawn and vulnerable, at least right now, and has been tricked before into actions which appeared to benefit the general good, but were actually designed to take out an enemy of a local villain, or acquired something a local villain wanted. She is the classic scientist so wrapped up in her pursuits that she doesn't realize the consequences of her actions. You can't get lies past her that she could verify scientifically (for example, she'll never believe at face value that she needs to push the earth one degree out of orbit to save the environment), but villains in the past have discovered that if they pretend to be, say, the CIA, they can convince her that certain people need to be attacked and so forth. If Dr. Electron isn't powerful enough for your campaign, increase her Multipower and the attacks within it. If she's too powerful, remove her ability to affect the planet, and reduced her Damage Reduction to 50% or 25%.

Appearance: Jenny Klein is half African American and half Korean American. While Photon II had dressed similarly to the hero of the same name, Dr. Electron is completely different. She wears gargoye sunglasses, black gloves, baggy pants, a black vest, a white T-shirt, and an impossibly large black cloak. Her hair is buzzed to near baldness, and she always glows and crackles with the energy of the form she is currently taking.

DIGITAL HERO #34

Dr. Electron

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|----------------------------|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200kg; 3d6 HTH [1] |
| 25 | DEX | 45 | 14- | OCV: 8/DCV: 8 |
| 25 | CON | 30 | 14- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 25 | INT | 15 | 14- | PER Roll: 14-/21- |
| 15 | EGO | 10 | 12- | ECV: 5 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 3 | PD | 0 | | Total: 3 PD (0 rPD) |
| 15 | ED | 10 | | Total: 15 ED (0 rED) |
| 6 | SPD | 25 | | Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 |
| 10 | REC | 4 | | |
| 50 | END | 0 | | |
| 39 | STUN | 9 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 164

Movement:

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| Running: | 6"/12" |
| Leaping: | 3"/6" |
| Flight: | 10"/20" |
| FTL: | 1 LY/Year |
| Teleport: | 10km |

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 20 | <i>Energy Powers:</i> Elemental Control, 50-point Reserve; Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | 0 |
| 11 | 1) <i>Enter the Microverse!:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (any location in a related group of dimensions [all Microverses], corresponding to the point character is at in this dimension); Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Extra Time (Turn; -1/4) | 0 |
| 11 | 2) <i>Enter the Macroverse!:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (any location in a related group of dimensions [all Macroverses], corresponding to the point character is at in this dimension); Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Extra Time (Turn; -1/4) | 0 |
| 51 | 3) <i>Energy Sponge:</i> Absorption 6d6 (energy, to either STR, EB, or RKA), Can Absorb Maximum of 100 points' Worth of Energy [This would add a total of 30 points of STR to the Push The Planet ability], Delayed Fade (5 points per Hour, +1); Variable Effect (+1/4); Can Only Absorb Energy that Matches Current Form (-1) | 0 |
| 36 | 4) <i>Energy Forms:</i> Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, Radio, Smell/Taste, and Touch Group, Infrared Perception, N-Ray Perception, and Ultraviolet Perception, any energy form); Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Difficult to Dispel (+1/4) | 0 |

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 240 | 5) <i>Push the Planet:</i> +350 STR; Area Of Effect (One Hex; +1/2), MegaScale (1" area = 10,000km, enough to affect an Earth-sized planet; +1/4), Transdimensional (from the Macroverse to the normal-sized world; +1/2), Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4); Only in Macroverse (-1/2), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout; -1), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1/2), Cannot Do Damage (-1/2), No Figured Characteristics (-1/2) | 61 |
| 10 | 6) <i>Planetary Disruption:</i> RKA 1d6; Area Of Effect (One Hex; +1/2), Penetrating (+1/2), MegaScale (1" area = 10,000km, enough to damage an Earth-sized planet; +1/4), Transdimensional (from the Macroverse to the normal-sized world; +1/2), Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4); Only in Macroverse (-1/2), Only Affects Structures and Large Natural Formations (-1), No Conscious Control (affects random parts of the planet; -1) | 3 |
| 24 | <i>Energy Manipulation:</i> Multipower, 30-point Reserve; Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | |
| 1u | <i>Invisible Energy:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group and Smell/Taste Group; Must Match Current Energy Form (-1/2) | 3 |
| 2u | <i>Concentrated Energy:</i> Energy Blast 4d6; Variable Special Effect (energy to match his current form) (+1/4) | 3 |
| 2u | <i>Focused Energy:</i> RKA 1d6+1; Variable Special Effect (energy to match his current form) (+1/4) | 3 |
| 2u | <i>Pure Energy Form:</i> Energy Blast 3d6; Damage Shield (+1/2), Variable Special Effect (energy to match his current form) (+1/4) | 3 |
| 1u | <i>Energy Burst:</i> Sight Group and Radio Group Flash 1d6; Area Of Effect (4" radius; +1/2); No Range (-1/2) | 3 |
| 36 | <i>Energy Body:</i> LS: Total; Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | 0 |
| 48 | <i>Energy Body:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | 0 |
| 48 | <i>Energy Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | 0 |
| 16 | <i>Ride Energy Waves:</i> Flight 10"; Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | 2 |
| 17 | <i>Surfing the 'Net:</i> Teleportation 10", MegaScale (1" = 10 km; +3/4); Only through Phone Lines (-1) | 2 |

| | | | | |
|----|--|---|----|--|
| 8 | <i>Energy Travel:</i> FTL Travel (1 Light-Year/Year); Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4) | 0 | 5 | Hunted: Scientific Community 14- (Less Pow, Watching) |
| 20 | <i>Energy Sense:</i> Detect Energy 14-, Discriminatory, Analyze | 0 | 20 | Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Total) |
| 20 | <i>Spatial Correspondence Detection:</i> Detect Point in Normal-Sized Space Corresponding To Current Position in the Microverse, +7 PER to Detect, Targeting | 0 | 15 | Psychological Limitation: Driven for Knowledge (Very Common, Moderate) |
| 17 | <i>Analyze Micro-electronics:</i> Microscopic Vision x10000, Discriminatory, Analyze; Transdimensional (from the Microverse to the normal-sized world; +1/2); Only Transdimensional (not in Microverse) (-1/2), No Range (must be on or "inside" target; -1/2) | 0 | 15 | Psychological Limitation: Great Love of Music (Very Common, Moderate) |
| 10 | <i>Download:</i> Rapid on Sight; Transdimensional (from the Microverse to the normal-sized world; +1/2); No Range (must be "inside" computer; -1/2) | 0 | 15 | Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major, nuclear physicist) |
| 4 | <i>I'm in Here:</i> Sight Group Images; Transdimensional (from the Microverse to the normal-sized world; +1/2); Only on Computer Screens (-2), No Range (must be "inside" computer; -1/2) | 1 | 20 | Susceptibility: to water, 1d6 damage per Phase from water (Very Common), Only in Heroic Identity |
| 6 | <i>I'm in Here II:</i> Audio Group Images; Transdimensional (from the Microverse to the normal-sized world; +1/2); Only through Audio Speakers (-1), No Range (must be "inside" audio device; -1/2) | 1 | 8 | Vulnerability: 2x STUN from Water (Uncommon), Only in Heroic Identity |

Total Disadvantage Points: 876

Talents

- 4 Environmental Movement (Zero G)
- 3 Lightning Calculator
- 3 Perfect Pitch

Skills

- 3 Computer Programming 14-
- 5 Cramming
- 5 KS: Music 14-
- 3 KS: Piano and Violin 12-
- 4 Language: French (Native)
- 3 Scientist
- 18 SS: Math, Physics, Sub-Atomic Physics, Chemistry, Biophysics, Nuclear Physics, all 15-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 712

Total Cost: 876

250+ Disadvantages

- 20 Accidental Change: to normal form when stunned or unconscious 14- (Common)
- 25 Dependence: Must bathe in Ion Bath or Cosmic Rays from the unfiltered sun (i.e., in space) (Common) (3d6/day)
- 10 Hunted: Government 11- (As Pow, NCI, Watching)

The Freak

Background/History: Born into an abusive and dysfunctional family, Arnold Krebcke became a juvenile delinquent early on, spending most of his formative years in and out of various foster homes and detention centers. By the time he turned 18, Krebcke had amassed such an extensive criminal record that he was given the option of a lengthy prison sentence or enlistment in the armed forces. Not surprisingly, Krebcke chose the military and quickly gained a reputation for insubordination and other disciplinary problems. In spite of, or perhaps because of this, he was chosen by the top secret branch of the government (then a sub-branch of the CIA) known as the Raymond Project. This organization was covertly involved in experiments into the creation of artificial paranormal powers. After many long months of testing, they discovered Krebcke possessed latent paranormal genes, and he was subjected to a battery of chemical and radiological stimuli in an attempt to activate any powers that might exist. While immersed in a nutrient bath, an “accidental” (so the report read) but powerful short in the electrical system sent a strong current through Krebcke’s body. Krebcke was left horribly disfigured and comatose, but when he awoke several weeks later, he had unaccountably gained the ability to manipulate and elongate his body. The Raymond Project recognized his talent and, despite his increasingly unstable behavior, trained him for use as a top secret assassin, carrying out his “hits” for the intelligence community, both foreign and domestic. By executive order, Krebcke was “fired” from the Raymond Project after a particularly messy execution, and officially listed as “missing, presumed dead.” Several months later, however, he resurfaced as a freelance assassin, operating on behalf of SAT (Special American Tactics), the Mafia, and others worldwide. Since then, Krebcke, now calling himself The Freak, has appeared on a number of occasions, almost always as a contract killer for one or more of his major international clientele. In the past few years, however, The Freak’s already tenuous mental state has apparently further deteriorated, and he has been involved in several random attacks on physically attractive men and women.

Personality/Motivation: Over the years, The Freak’s rage over his disfigurement has consumed him to the point where he now takes great pleasure in exacting revenge on the physically normal, especially the beautiful. Throughout his career, he has been used as a sort of unguided missile by various manipulators, essentially pointed in the direction of the intended victim, and released to wreak his havoc.

When in a killing frenzy, The Freak is reduced to manic giggles and screams, completely given over to hatred. The Freak is extremely dangerous and completely unpredictable. His bizarre powers and mental instability make him an extreme danger to anyone unfortunate enough to cross his path. However, The Freak can be very cunning and rational when not in combat. While Shape Shifted to appear as an alias or some other specific individual, he becomes unnaturally calm and cool headed, carrying out the imitation almost flawlessly for significantly long periods of time.

Quote: “(slash)... He! he! he! (gurgle)”

Powers/Tactics: Through an unknown process, The Freak has gained the ability to stretch or elongate all or parts of his organs, limbs, and tissues. Unfortunately, over the years, this malleability has gradually deteriorated his “normal” form and caused severe deformities (see below.) With concentration and effort, The Freak can repair these deformities, or even assume a completely different facial and bodily appearance. The longest he has been known to sustain such a change without a short rest, however, is about an hour. When not concentrating, his body continues involuntary smaller changes about once every hour or two. In some cases, these alterations are merely revolting (and quite visible to the human eye.) In other cases, he has been known to temporarily grow additional limbs, animal body parts such as suction cups or hooves, or sometimes even something just completely unidentifiable. Unlike a true metamorph, The Freak cannot increase or decrease the total volume or mass of his body at all, nor does he have much control over his skin color or the texture of his flesh. He is capable of molding into almost any shape, including a perfect sphere or a flat sheet approximately one inch thick, and in this later form, he has been able to change his skin color to roughly match most floors, ground surfaces, or walls. The Freak’s epidermis is highly elastic and resilient, enabling him to absorb kinetic impacts with little damage. Since he can elongate individual portions of his anatomy, The Freak has evolved the tactics of stretching his fingers into long twisted tentacles and his fingers and toenails into sharp claws. He is apparently able to exert his full strength, which appears to be above the normal human maximum, even when fully extended. The Freak has also been observed to distort his jaws into a gaping maw and to completely envelope full-sized persons into his form, suffocating them. In one instance, The Freak compressed his body into an extremely compact form and slithered through an ordinary water pipe.

Campaign Use: The Freak makes a good mercenary villain, particularly if you want something creepy and disturbing. His powers may also provide you with some plot seeds. The Freak may be searching for a cure for his constantly changing form, or be after those who originally did this to him. He is also a ready-made serial killer murder mystery, since he can take the form of most (white) humans, can sneak in past most defenses, and has recently taken to lashing out at the ultra-attractive, particularly if they are also famous. If The Freak isn't powerful enough for your campaign, increase some of the Powers in the Multipower, such as the RKA and the HA. Also increase his Characteristics (primarily DEX, CON, SPD, and REC.) If he's too tough already, lower his STR and get rid one or two of his Multipower slots.

Appearance: When in his "normal" form, The Freak is quite unattractive. His physical deformities include a severely elongated left arm, a hunchback, a clubbed right foot, and extensive maxillofacial disfigurements. Furthermore, when observed up close, his skin can be seen constantly squirming, twisting, bulging, and pulsating with a life of its own. Only by concentrating on Shape Shifting his entire body can The Freak hide these abhorrent traits, and then (for short periods of time) he can appear to be almost anyone.

DIGITAL HERO #34

The Freak

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400kg; 4d6 HTH [2] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 15 | INT | 5 | 12- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 18 | PRE | 8 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 2 | COM | -4 | 9- | |
| 6 | PD | 1 | | Total: 6 PD (6 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 4 ED (0 rED) |
| 5 | SPD | 22 | | Phases: 3,5,8,10,12 |
| 9 | REC | 0 | | |
| 40 | END | 0 | | |
| 34 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 92

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 4"/8"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 70 | <i>Elastic Body:</i> Multipower, 70-point Reserve | 0 |
| 2u | 1) <i>Engulf:</i> Entangle 5d6, 5 DEF, Stops a Given Sense (Sight and Hearing Groups); Feedback (character takes all damage done to break out of the Entangle by victim or anyone else; -1), Lockout (can only Entangle one person, and cannot use other stretching powers except <i>Suffocate</i> , <i>Constriction</i> , or <i>Attack Internal Organs</i> , while the Entangle remains in effect; -1/2), No Range (-1/2), Cannot Form Barriers (-1/4) | 7 |
| 3u | 2) <i>Suffocate:</i> EB 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing]; +1), Continuous (+1); No Range (-1/2), Must Follow Grab or Entangle (-1/2) | 6 |
| 2u | 3) <i>Constriction:</i> EB 12d6; No Range (-1/2), Gradual Effect (6 Minutes, 2d6/minute; -3/4), Must Follow Grab or Entangle (-1/2), Must Maintain Grab or Entangle (-1/2) | 6 |
| 3u | 4) <i>Attack Internal Organs:</i> Energy Blast 4d6, Penetrating (+1/2), Continuous (+1); No Range (-1/2), Must Follow Grab or Entangle (-1/2) | 5 |
| 1u | 5) <i>Super-Contortionist:</i> Desolidification; Cannot Pass through Solid Objects (-1/2), Does Not Protect against Damage (-1), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout; -1), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1 1/2) | 4 |
| 2u | 6) <i>Claws:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) | 2 |
| 1u | 7) <i>Club Fist:</i> HA +3d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-1/2) | 2 |
| 1u | 8) <i>Elongated Limbs:</i> 1" Stretching | 1 |

| | | |
|----|--|------|
| 1u | 9) <i>Malleable Form:</i> Shape Shift (Sight Group and Touch Group; any humanoid form), Imitation, Reduced Endurance (1/2 END; +1/4); Concentration (0 DCV; -1/2), Extra Time (one minute; -1 1/2), Cannot Change Skin Tone or Hair Color (-1/2) | 2 |
| 3u | 10) <i>Totally Flat Form:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Chameleon (-1/2), Concentration (0 DCV; -1/2) | 0 |
| 12 | <i>Uncontrollable Mutations:</i> Variable Point Pool (Body Powers Pool), 10 base + 5 control cost; No Conscious Control (-2) | var. |
| 15 | <i>Constantly Changing Body:</i> Lack of Weakness (-5) for PD, ED, and Resistant Defenses | 0 |
| 30 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50% | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, 25% | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Damage Resistance (6 PD) | 0 |

Perks

| | |
|----|--|
| 32 | Contacts: U.S. CIA Agent, Brazil Underworld Leader, Mexico Underworld Fence, Colombian Underworld Drug Smuggler, Former Russian KGB Agent, Nicaraguan Paramilitary Officer, Middle East Paramilitary Soldier, Afghanistan Paramilitary Freedom Fighter (all have Very Useful Skills or Resources and Significant Contacts) 12- |
| 3 | Well Connected |

Skills

| | |
|----|--|
| 16 | +2 with All Combat |
| 5 | +1 with Hand-To-Hand Combat |
| 3 | Concealment 12- |
| 5 | Disguise 12- |
| 3 | Interrogation 13- |
| 4 | KS: CIA Operations 13- |
| 2 | Language: Arabic (fluent) |
| 1 | Language: Chinese (basic) |
| 2 | Language: Russian (fluent) |
| 3 | Language: Spanish (completely fluent w/accent) |
| 3 | Security Systems 12- |
| 5 | Shadowing 12- |
| 3 | Stealth 13- |
| 5 | Streetwise 14- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 254

Total Cost: 346

150+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Always changing (Concealable, Always Noticed)
- 25 Enraged: Berserk in combat (Common, Go 8-, Recover 11-)
- 15 Enraged: when Fighting Physically Beautiful (Uncommon, go 11-, recover 11-)
- 15 Hunted: CIA 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Hunted: Israeli Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, Kill)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Hatred of Physically Beautiful (Common, Strong)
- 96 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 346

The Deep Druid

Background/History: The Deep Druid is a lover of nature who took a different path than others of the same name. He began as Thomas Fulbright, a simple peasant, who wandered the forests every day in search for nuts and berries. One day, however, he found a fox that had been shot with an arrow by a hunter, but was still alive. The creature was suffering horribly, and its suffering changed Thomas forever. He attempted to nurse the creature back to health, but his lack of medical skills failed him, and the creature died. Thomas accepted that it was not his calling to change the course of natural events once they had started, but that he was destined to stop humans from interfering. At that point, he began his pilgrimage into the great forests of the land. He learned to forage, he learned to survive the elements, and eventually, he became so in touch with Nature, that the spirits of Nature spoke to him. Over time, he became able to channel these spirits, and fortunately, his will was strong enough to resist their attempts to completely take him over.

Personality/Motivation: The Deep Druid is the type of druid who doesn't manipulate nature, so much as observe it. He has no summoning, controlling, or ability to speak with animals, but can watch them unhindered, either by masking his scent, or smelling like one of them. He exists by foraging off plants and nuts and berries, and by drinking water directly out of streams and ponds. He lives to protect his forest, and by extension, any forests nearby. He understands that humans need space to live and hunt and farm, and he accepts that. However, he also believes they have expanded far enough, and should learn to use what they have. He will not tolerate even a single tree being cut down in his forest if he can help it. He does not interfere with trees or animals dying of natural causes, but will ruthlessly slaughter any humans who cause harm to a part of his wooded realm. He is called the Deep Druid because he lives so deep in the forest that few people have ever seen him. Unfortunately, he often hears about atrocities to his forest after the offenders are gone, and must go searching "civilization" for them. This has caused him many problems, as he has almost entirely forgotten how urban areas function, and if he spends more than a day outside of his forest, he starts to weaken and die.

Quote: "I am the Dark Druid, and I speak for the trees"

Powers/Tactics: The Dark Druid has several forms. For the animal forms, they are common animal forms with his INT, and should therefore be taken right out of the *HERO System Bestiary*. He most often uses the wolf form for tracking

and spying, the bear form to scare off trespassers, and the swarm form to attack large crowds without fear of them being able to attack back. His spirit form is reserved for dangerous threats to the forest. In all forms, he must fight to keep his identity, and will eventually lose his personality if he stays too long in any of his forms. His claws usually remain normal fingernails, and only extend during an actual strike. His ability to hide in the forest is unmatched, and can thwart even the best tracker or bloodhound. He has used this on more than one occasion to sneak around and pick off large parties of hunters one at a time.

Campaign Use: The Dark Druid is a good guardian of a forest for characters to encounter. He is both helpful, if they share his views, or tragically one-mindedly harmful, if players, say, stop to hunt for food or chop down wood to make a fire. His reputation is small, but severe. He could be the sole source of "haunted forest" legends, particularly with exaggerated stories of his Spirit form. Characters in his forest might sense a presence, but find no tracks or scent. One of their men-at-arms might be mauled by a bear or wolf in the middle of the night, or the entire group might be attacked by a deadly swarm of stinging insects. In all cases, the players might never know they were fighting the same person, although they would suspect the events were related. He could also act as a "guide" through the woods in order to watch over the party. He would warn them that only foraging of nuts and berries is allowed, and honestly guide them if they abide by those rules. If the Dark Druid isn't powerful enough for your campaign, increase some of the animal forms to more severe supernatural sizes. If he's too powerful, the easiest thing to do is reduce the Spirit form down to something more manageable.

Appearance: For the most part, the Dark Druid looks like a short unkempt monk of some sort. He never carries weapons, or packs, or food or water, and wears only plain brown robes he's woven from dead moss and vines. His hair and beard stick out in all directions, although he usually takes the time to pull out any twigs or leaves that get stuck in them. When in his Spirit form, he looks like himself with buck horns on his head, sharp teeth, claws, and his body outlined with glowing swirling ghosts.

The Deep Druid

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 13 | STR | 3 | 12- | Lift 200kg; 3d6 HTH [1] |
| 16 | DEX | 18 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 11 | BODY | 2 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 18 | EGO | 16 | 13- | ECV: 6 |
| 18 | PRE | 8 | 13- | PRE Attack: 3½d6/7½d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 3 | PD | 0 | | Total: 3 PD (0 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 4 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 4 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 7 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 4 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 74

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2½"/5"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 12 | <i>Druidic Forms:</i> Multiform (150-point Grizzly Bear form, 100-point Wolf form, 75-point Stinging Insect Swarm, 225-point Spirit form, true form is 150-point Human form); Personality Loss (1 Turn, Gradual, Total, EGO Roll; -1¾), Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1½), Requires a Druidic Magic Roll (No Active Point modifier; -0) | 0 |
| 9 | <i>Lesser Spirit Channeling:</i> +20 PRE; Costs END (-½), Concentration (½ DCV; -¼), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Requires a Druidic Magic Roll (No Active Point modifier; -0) | 2 |
| 12 | <i>Claws Of The Beast:</i> 1d6 HKA (2d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 2 |
| 23 | <i>Pass without Trace:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group; Chameleon (-½), Only in Woods (-¾), plus Invisibility to Smell/Taste Group and Hearing Group; Only in Woods (-¾), plus Gliding 6"; Ground Gliding (-¼), No Noncombat Movement (-¼), Only in Woods (-¾) | 4 |
| 13 | <i>Mask Scent:</i> Shape Shift (Smell/Taste Group, animal scents), Imitation; Concentration (0 DCV; -½), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Requires a Druidic Magic Roll (No Active Point modifier; -0) | 3 |
| 4 | <i>Foraging:</i> Life Support (Safe Environments: Intense Cold and Intense Heat; Diminished Eating: Doesn't need to eat); Only in Woods (-¾) | |

Talents

3 Bump of Direction

Skills

- 3 Concealment 12-
- 3 Druidic Magic (Power, EGO based) 13-
- 4 KS: Animals 13-
- 4 KS: Local Forests 13-
- 3 KS: Nature Spirits 12-
- 4 KS: Plants 13-
- 2 Language: Elfish (Fluent)
- 2 Language: Fey (Fluent)
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 2 WF: Common Melee Weapons

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 106

Total Cost: 180

75+ Disadvantages

- 5 Dependence: must pray in forest once per day or suffer Weakness and take 2d6 damage (Very Common)
- 10 Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable only With Unusual Senses)
- 25 DNPC: Forests and Nature (must protect them from humans and humanoids, not from "natural" fates) 11- (Incompetent; group of animals and plants)
- 20 Enraged: when forest or animals harmed unnecessarily (Common, Go 11-, Recover 11-)
- 10 Hunted: Goblins 11- (As Pow, Limited Geographical Area, Kill)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Knows Little of Civilization (Infrequently, Greatly)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Extreme Environmentalist (Common, Total)
- 5 Reputation: forest demon, 8-

Total Disadvantage Points: 180

DIGITAL HERO #34

Spirit Form

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400kg; 4d6 HTH [2] |
| 20 | DEX | 30 | 13- | OCV: 7/DCV: 7 |
| 20 | CON | 20 | 13- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll: 12-/15- |
| 18 | EGO | 16 | 13- | ECV: 6 |
| 18 | PRE | 8 | 13- | PRE Attack: 3½d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 4 | PD | 0 | | Total: 8PD (4 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 8ED (4 rED) |
| 5 | SPD | 20 | | Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 40 | END | 0 | | |
| 35 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 113

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 8"/16"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 10 | <i>Spirit Appearance:</i> +20 PRE; Attacks Only (-1) | 0 |
| 20 | <i>Claws and Teeth of the Beast:</i> 1d6+1 HKA (2½d6 with STR) | 2 |
| 8 | <i>Swirling Spirits:</i> Armor (4PD/4ED); Not Versus Fire or Silver (-½) | 0 |
| 17 | <i>Call Storm:</i> Change Environment 16" radius, -2 to PRE for purposes of resisting fear-based Presence Attacks, -2 to Sight Group PER Rolls, -2 to DEX Rolls to move within; Personal Immunity (+¼); 1 Continuous Charge lasting 5 Minutes (-¾), Only in Woods (-¾), No Range (-½) | 0 |
| 4 | <i>Legs Of The Beast:</i> Leaping +4" (8" Total) | 2 |
| 7 | <i>Natural Regeneration:</i> Healing 1d6 (Regeneration; 1 BODY per Turn), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Persistent (+½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -¼), Self Only (-½) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Nature Sense:</i> Enhanced Senses +1 PER to all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Nature Sense:</i> Enhanced Senses +3 PER to Sight Group | 0 |

Skills

| | |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 10 | +2 with Hand-To-Hand Combat |
| 3 | Concealment 12- |
| 4 | KS: Animals 13- |
| 4 | KS: Local Forests 13- |
| 5 | KS: Nature Spirits 14- |
| 4 | KS: Plants 13- |
| 2 | Language: Elfish (Fluent) |
| 2 | Language: Fey (Fluent) |
| 3 | Stealth 12- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 112

Total Cost: 225

75+ Disadvantages

| | |
|----|---|
| 25 | Distinctive Features: Swirling ghosts (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction) |
| 25 | DNPC: Forests and Nature (must protect them from humans and humanoids, not from "natural" fates) 11- (Incompetent; group of animals and plants) |
| 30 | Enraged: when forest or animals harmed unnecessarily (Common), go 14-, recover 8- |
| 15 | Hunted: Wizards 8- (As Pow, NCI) |
| 10 | Physical Limitation: Knows Little of Civilization (Infrequently, Greatly) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Extreme Environmentalist (Common, Total) |
| 15 | Reputation: forest demon, 14- |
| 15 | Susceptibility: to urban areas. 1d6 damage per Phase (Uncommon) |

Total Disadvantage Points: 225

Dead Ed

Background/History: Dead Ed wasn't his original name. He doesn't really remember it, since it has been so long since he used it. Dead Ed was once studying to be a great fighter. He learned the basics, and then decided he was ready to collect glory and adventure. With a stolen sword, he snuck into the local wizard's tower with the intent of dueling. Unfortunately, he bumped into some rather complicated equipment and a very volatile alchemy experiment. The entire top of the tower blew up, and Ed was killed. The story, sadly, does not end there. The wizard turned out to be more of a necromancer than a straight wizard. A few rituals later, and Dead Ed's soul was trapped in his dead body. He was ordered to search for every component of the equipment he'd blown up, and to rebuild the tower by hand. Once he'd done that, he would be granted "true" freedom and death. In the decades and then centuries that followed, Dead Ed was able to rebuild the tower, and recover most of the pieces of the necromantic machine. A few key, and naturally rare and expensive, sections, had been stolen, sold, and traded to parties unknown. Dead Ed continues the ruse of searching, but really mostly gets into trouble and wanders the countryside looking for pity.

Personality/Motivation: Dead Ed was once a man on a mission. Now, he's all but given up. He's tried just about every way he can think of to commit suicide, and nothing has worked. On a good day, he has a dry wit and subtle sense of humor. On a bad day, he is sullen and moody, and has a dry wit and subtle sense of humor. He has learned about necromancy over the years, and will occasionally take interest in learning more, but, for obvious reasons, most necromancers aren't willing to share with him. He has no need for food and water technically, since he comes back after each time he starves to death, but tends to eat a drink an obnoxious amount when given the opportunity. He doesn't care much for money, or food, or power, his primary motivation is either to find a way to end his eternal curse, or to do get pity for how pathetic his life is, or to do something remotely interesting beyond normal drudgery.

Quote: "Hey you! Yeah, you... with the knife. Be a pal, and, bring me my arm..."

Powers/Tactics: Dead Ed's primary power is to be dead. He can absorb huge amounts of arrows, drink poison, and so forth. He still "dies" from all of things fatal to a normal human, but only for a few seconds usually. Any significant BODY damage causes one of his rotting limbs to fall off. Each limb is capable of independent action (although, they almost always attempt to

kill whatever is nearest to them), but are usually controlled by Dead Ed. He can, for example, detach an arm, and send it crawling down a pipe, and still be able to feel what it feels from a distance (including pain.) The attack of a detached arm is almost always a slow limb Grab, and the attack of a detached leg is usually an unskilled kick of some sort. He can pop out an eye and still see through it wherever he leaves it. One of his favorite, and truly disturbing, tricks, is to detach an arm or hand, stick an eye on top of it, and send it "crawling" off somewhere as a mobile spy device. His greatest ability has only been used once. He discovered, while walking through a fresh battlefield, that corpses were attracted to him in some mystic way. He can, with concentration, absorb parts and pieces from fairly recent cadavers, causing him to grow in both stature and strength to enormous sizes. If he is ever Stunned or Knocked Unconscious while in this form, he collapses into a pile of bodies.

Campaign Use: Dead Ed is really designed for comedy relief. He's depressed, he's sarcastic, and he's dead. GMs could best exploit this by giving him some important piece of information and putting the players on a quest that relied on that information. For example, the players might know that they are going to fight a necromancer, and need regular translations from the Language of the Dead. His knowledge of history could also be potentially useful. Whenever insulted, Dead Ed should probably try and kill himself. Any chance for a "dead" pun is a bonus ("need a hand?"), but always dry, and with no appearance that he finds himself funny. If Dead Ed needs more power for your campaign, increase his Characteristics (primarily DEX, and SPD) and give him some weapons. If he's too tough already, lower his STR and increase the time between his resurrections.

Appearance: Dead Ed generally wears a hooded cloak whenever possible, but when seen in his "normal" state, looks like a man in his mid-twenties who has been dead about two weeks.

DIGITAL HERO #34

Dead Ed

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400kg; 4d6 HTH [2] |
| 13 | DEX | 9 | 12- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 20 | CON | 20 | 13- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 5 | 11- | PER Roll: 11- |
| 10 | EGO | 6 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 2 | COM | -4 | 9- | |
| 4 | PD | 0 | | Total: 4 PD (0 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 4 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 7 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 40 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 58

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

Cost Powers **END**

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 6 | <i>Detachable Eyes:</i> Clairsentience (Sight Group); Fixed Perception Point (the eye; -1), Visible (perception point can be perceived; -1/4), OAF Fragile (eye; -1 1/4) | 2 |
| 9 | <i>Detachable Limbs:</i> Duplication (creates 4x 50-point Limbs); Altered Duplicates (100%, +1); No Conscious Control (-2), Only When Takes At Least 2 BODY Damage (-1), Side Effect (can't use limb until it is reattached; -1/2) | 0 |
| 15 | <i>Control Limbs:</i> Mind Link, specific group of up to four minds (his limbs), No LOS Needed; Feedback (STUN only; -1) | 0 |
| 17 | <i>Gather The Dead:</i> Growth (+45 STR, +9 BODY, +9 STUN, -9" KB, 50000KG, -6 DCV, +6 PER Rolls to perceive character, 16m tall, 8m wide); Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Gradual Effect (1 point of Growth every minute, 45 minutes total; -1), OAF Bulky (one "fresh" body per point of Growth; -1 1/2), Concentration (0 DCV; -1/2) | 0 |
| 16 | <i>Undead Regeneration:</i> Healing 1d6 (Regeneration; 1 BODY per Turn), Resurrection (others can stop resurrection by keeping body parts separated, or by curing the curse), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Persistent (+1/2), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1/4), Self Only (-1/2), Cannot Heal Body Lost From Limbs Detaching Until Limbs Reattach (-1) | 0 |
| 15 | <i>Undead Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant 25% | 0 |

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 15 | <i>Undead Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant 25% | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Near Automation:</i> +10 CON; Only To Prevent Being Stunned (-1) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Near Automation:</i> +20 PRE; Defense Only (-1) | 0 |
| -4 | -2" Running (4" Total) | 1 |

Talents

4 Double Jointed

Perks

2 Contact: City Guard 11-

Skills

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | +1 with Hand-To-Hand Combat |
| 4 | KS: Necromancy 13- |
| 4 | KS: World History 13- |
| 3 | Language: Language of the Dead (Fluent) |
| 3 | Shadowing 12- |
| 3 | Stealth 12- |
| 3 | Streetwise 12- |
| 2 | WF: Common Melee Weapons |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 142

Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

| | |
|----|---|
| 20 | Distinctive Features: Dead (Concealable, Extreme Reaction) |
| 15 | Hunted: Priests 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching) |
| 20 | Physical Limitation: Dead (All the Time, Greatly) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Excessively depressed and suicidal (Common, Strong) |
| 10 | Reputation: Undead Warrior 8-, Extreme |
| 20 | Social Limitation: Dead (Very Frequently, Major) |

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

Dead Ed Limb

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400kg; 4d6 HTH [2] |
| 5 | DEX | -15 | 10- | OCV: 2/DCV: 2 |
| 0 | CON | -20 | 9- | |
| 2 | BODY | -16 | 10- | |
| 0 | INT | -10 | 9- | PER Roll: 10- |
| 0 | EGO | -20 | 9- | ECV: 0 |
| 5 | PRE | -5 | 10- | PRE Attack: 1d6 |
| 2 | COM | -4 | 10- | |
| 4 | PD | 0 | | Total: 4 PD (0 rPD) |
| 3 | ED | 3 | | Total: 3 ED (0 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 5 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 0 | REC | -8 | | |
| 0 | END | 0 | | |
| 0 | STUN | -12 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: -92

Movement: Running: ½"/1"
Leaping: ½"/1"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 22 | <i>Undead Regeneration:</i> Healing 1d6 (Regeneration; 1 BODY per Turn), Resurrection (others can stop resurrection by keeping body parts separated, or by curing the curse), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Persistent (+½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Self Only (-½) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Undead Stamina:</i> Reduced Endurance on STR (0 END; +½) | 0 |
| 1 | <i>Undead Stamina:</i> Reduced Endurance on Running (0 END; +½) | 0 |
| 15 | <i>Undead Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant 25% | 0 |
| 15 | <i>Undead Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant 25% | 0 |
| 45 | Takes No Stun | 0 |
| 10 | No Hit Locations | 0 |
| 15 | Does Not Bleed | 0 |
| -11 | -5½" Running | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Hard to Hit:</i> +2 DCV | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Easily Hidden:</i> +2 to Concealment; Self Only (-½) | 0 |
| 4 | <i>Hard to Perceive:</i> +2 to Stealth | 0 |

Skills

3 Stealth 10- (12-)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 141**Total Cost: 50****100+ Disadvantages**

- 20 Distinctive Features: Rotting (Concealable, Extreme Reaction)
- 20 Physical Limitation: Dead and Small (All the Time, Greatly)

Total Disadvantage Points: 140

Cuthalu

Background/History: As the name implies, the Old Ones arrived to this plane of existence long before the dawn of human beings. Multi-dimensional, magical, and immortal, Cuthalu and the other Old Ones ruled the cosmos for millennia after millennia, until their great war with early human-gods of legend. While no power could actually kill the Old Ones, their one great weakness was that they could all be bound by geometry, and thus, the early gods were able to banish the Old Ones to the darkest reaches of the earth and of the sky. But bound or no, the Old Ones had seen humans, and now they had subjects to try to tempt, rule, and devour. Cults rose from the myths, and the Old Ones were able to instruct loyal followers on ways to break the ancient binding symbols, potentially freeing Old Ones like Cuthalu to walk the earth after eons of maddening and insatiable hunger.

Personality/Motivation: Cuthalu is of another dimension, and consequently, it is unfair to judge the Old One's personality in human terms. On one level, Cuthalu could easily be considered a super-genius. On another level, it must be treated as a beast capable of only animalistic instincts such as lust and hunger. The best way to describe Cuthalu in human psychological terms is, in a word, mad. Every possible human personality disorder is possible at any moment within an Old One, although at any moment they are capable of appearing calm and rational as well. Old Ones do tend to show a special fondness for "consuming" those who summon and worship them, perhaps treating those poor individuals as boring, spent, and no longer of any entertainment value.

Quote: While Cuthalu has no specific identifying quote (it speaks The Language of The Dead, for example), its multitude of mouths are always chattering and howling in a loud, chaotic discord of horribly fervent clamor.

Powers/Tactics: Cuthalu exists at several "whens" and at several "wheres" at once. Its memory transcends linear time, and its body never fully resides only on any one plane of existence. Cuthalu's appearance and existence are so contrary to normal living creatures, that merely seeing this Old One is often enough to drive most mortals insane (via the Transformation attack.) Cuthalu is immortal, and "killing" the summoned physical body will only send it back where it came from.

It is, all the time, spewing forth smaller demonic creatures. Sometimes these wander off to do its bidding, other times it simply toys with them and consumes them back into itself. There seems to be no rhyme, reason or pattern to this spawning process, although the number seems to be at least a little limited (either that, or

Cuthalu's hunger is so much it can't stand to have very many of these things walking around without eating one.)

At any time, Cuthalu can sprout up to 100 tentacles or limbs of up to thirty feet in length. These limbs wander in and out of reality, able to seem to exist only part of their length, with usually parts of their middles missing. Attacking the creature with any significant physical attack other than cold iron or holy attacks will probably not cause any noticeable damage. Cuthalu can sense life forms at a tremendous range, and has even been known in the past to strike out at them with blasts of devastating mental energy for no real reason at all. By far though, its most horrific power is its ability to "consume" living creatures, damning them to an eternity within the extra-dimensional hells woven into Cuthalu's very being (ala the Extra-Dimensional Travel.) While this takes a few seconds, it cannot be resisted by any normal human in physical contact with Cuthalu, and it leaves nothing but a dark green smudge where the victim stood. Legend has it that Cuthalu prepares a special hell within its own body tailored to fit the fears and anxieties of each individual victim.

Finally, while holy and cold iron weapons cause pain to all the Old Ones, each one of them has an individual special geometric shape that can imprison them indefinitely. A five pointed shape, either a pentagram or a pentagon, is the only shape that can imprison all of the Old Ones beyond what their individual symbols can.

Campaign Use: Cuthalu is obviously a super end-all be-all monster. It should only be used as the master creature behind the plan, or something that other villains are regularly trying to summon. GMs should allow players to encounter several of the smaller duplicates first (noting that they not only regenerate but come back from the dead) to get a feel for what they are up against. Legends should abound, and players should be given a chance to find at least one Holy weapon or weapon of Cold Iron before going anywhere near this thing. Also, a simple pentagram or pentagon on the door to wherever this creature is kept will keep it locked inside, which gives players a chance to "visit" it and still have a way to keep it from getting out. If Cuthalu isn't powerful enough for your campaign, what kind of campaign are you running? If you need to, shorten the time on the Extra-Dimensional Travel, raise its speed, and add a HKA to the tentacles. If it is too tough of a creature, reduce or remove the Transformation attack, and make the Extra-Dimensional Travel only possible through a ritual performed by his cult followers.

Appearance: Cuthalu appears (at least to the normal eye, other forms of sight – particularly Spatial Awareness and N-Ray Vision – see

completely different things) as a sixty foot circle of unclean amorphous blob constantly busy creating and destroying groups of eyes, tentacles, limbs, mouths, random appendages and smaller creatures that are often quickly consumed again by the larger form. In addition, parts of it may seem “missing” at times, leaving strange but neatly cut gaps in its form.

Lesser Duplicate

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

Total Characteristics Cost: 19

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2½"/5"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 15 | <i>Claws:</i> HKA 1d6 (1½d6 with STR) | 2 |
| 10 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%; Not versus Cold Iron or Holy Magic (-½) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%; Not versus Cold Iron or Holy Magic (-½) | 0 |
| 1 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Damage Resistance (1PD/1ED) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Alien Mind:</i> Mental Defense (5 points) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Alien Body:</i> Power Defense (5 points) | 0 |
| 13 | <i>Malleable Form:</i> Desolidification; Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Cannot Pass through Solid Objects (-½), Does Not Protect against Damage (-1), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout; -1), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1½) | 0 |
| 22 | <i>Demonic Regeneration:</i> Healing 1d6 (Regeneration; 1 BODY per Turn), Resurrection (others can stop resurrection by banishing main body or binding it in a pentagram), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Persistent (+½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Self Only (-½) | 0 |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 81

Total Cost: 100

100+ Disadvantages

- 20 Distinctive Features: Formless Amorphous Creature (Concealable, Extreme)
- 25 Enraged: Berserk in Combat (Common, Go 8-, Recover 11-)
- 20 Hunted: Forces of Good 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
- 10 Hunted: Wizards 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Can be bound by pentagram (Infrequently, Fully)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Native language is the Language of the Dead; Does not speak any English (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Hatred of Everything (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Wants to Destroy World (Common, Strong)

Total Disadvantage Points: 245

DIGITAL HERO #34

Cuthalu

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|---------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 35 | STR | 25 | 16- | Lift 3 tons; 7d6 HTH [4] |
| 20 | DEX | 30 | 13- | OCV: 7/DCV: -1 |
| 30 | CON | 40 | 15- | |
| 30 | BODY | 40 | 15- | |
| 20 | INT | 10 | 13- | PER Roll: 13- |
| 25 | EGO | 30 | 14- | ECV: 8 |
| 35 | PRE | 25 | 16- | PRE Attack: 7d6 |
| -10 | COM | -5 | 0- | |
| | 7 PD | 1 | | Total: 7 PD (3 rPD) |
| | 6 ED | 0 | | Total: 6 ED (3 rED) |
| | 5 SPD | 20 | | Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| | 13 REC | 0 | | |
| | 60 END | 0 | | |
| | 70 STUN | 7 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 223

Movement: Running: 3"/6"
Leaping: 7"/14"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 35 | <i>Uncontrollable Mutations:</i> Variable Point Pool (Body Powers Pool), 30 base + 15 control cost; No Conscious Control (-2) | var |
| 30 | <i>Demonic Powers:</i> Elemental Control, 60-point Powers | 0 |
| 6 | 1) <i>Malleable Form:</i> Desolidification; Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Cannot Pass through Solid Objects (-1/2), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout; -1), Does Not Protect against Damage (-1), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1 1/2) | 0 |
| 30 | 2) <i>Huge Mass:</i> Knockback Resistance -30" | 0 |
| 13 | 3) <i>Demon Spawn:</i> Duplication (creates 8x 100-point Duplicates); Altered Duplicates (100%, +1); No Conscious Control (-2) | 0 |
| 24 | 4) <i>Warp Mind:</i> Ego Attack 4d6; Armor Piercing (+1/2); Not Against Characters with Holy Background or Holy Symbol (-1/4) | 6 |
| 18 | 5) <i>Impossible Form:</i> Major Transformation 1d6 (humanoid to insane humanoid, heals back with extensive religious or psychological help), Area Of Effect (12" Radius; +1 1/4), Continuous (+1), Invisible Power Effects (+1), Persistent (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Always On (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), Only When Looked At (-1/4), Not Versus "Holy" or "Innocent" (-1/2) | 0 |
| 20 | 6) <i>4th Dimensional Body:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (to private chaotic hell, up to 400kg at once), Useable As Attack (does not work on | |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| | characters with Extra-Dimensional Movement, Desolidification, or Power Defense; +1), Damage Shield (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Continuous (+1); Always On (-1/2), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1/4) | 0 |
| 20 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Not Versus Cold Iron or Holy Magic (-1/2) | 0 |
| 20 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Not Versus Cold Iron or Holy Magic (-1/2) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Malleable Body:</i> Damage Resistance (3PD/3ED) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Alien Mind:</i> Mental Defense (10 points) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Alien Body:</i> Power Defense (7 points) | 0 |
| 45 | <i>Alien Body:</i> LS: Total | 0 |
| 10 | No Hit Locations | 0 |
| 15 | Does Not Bleed | 0 |
| -6 | -3" Running | 1 |
| 30 | Detect Life Energy 13-, Targeting, Discriminatory, Analyze | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Demonic Regeneration:</i> Healing 1d6 (Regeneration; 1 BODY per Turn), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Persistent (+1/2), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1 1/4), Self Only (-1/2) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Sprouting Limbs:</i> 100 Extra Limbs; Invisible Power Effects (+1) | 0 |
| 44 | <i>Extra-Dimensional Tentacles:</i> Stretching 5"; Does Not Cross Intervening Space (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) | 0 |

Skills

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2 | KS: Ancient History 11- |
| 7 | KS: Magic 16- |
| 9 | KS: The Occult 18- |
| 2 | Language: Arabic (fluent) |
| 2 | Language: Chinese (fluent) |
| 4 | Language: Latin (fluent, idiomatic) |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 417

Total Cost: 640

100+ Disadvantages

| | |
|----|---|
| 25 | <i>Distinctive Features:</i> Giant Amorphous Mass (Not Concealable, Extreme) |
| 25 | <i>Enraged:</i> Berserk in combat (Common, Go 8-, Recover 11-) |
| 15 | <i>Enraged:</i> when senses "Holy" or "Good" People (Uncommon, Go 11-, Recover 11-) |
| 30 | <i>Hunted:</i> Forces of Good 14- (As Pow, NCI, PC has Public Identity, Kill) |
| 10 | <i>Hunted:</i> Wizards 8- (Less Pow, NCI, Kill) |
| 15 | <i>Physical Limitation:</i> Can be bound by pentagram (Infrequently, Fully) |

- 15 Physical Limitation: Gigantic (32m across; -8DCV, +8 PER rolls to perceive) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Native language is the Language of the Dead; Does not speak any English (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Hatred of Everything (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Megalomaniac (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Wants do Destroy World (Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: Horrific Demon, 11- (Extreme, Known Only to Occultists and Wizards)
- 15 Unluck: 3d6
- 20 Vulnerability: 2x BODY from Cold Iron and Holy Attacks (Common)
- 265 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 640

The Pod People

Background/History: Exactly where they came from is unknown, although it has always been theorized that the Pod People came from the stars. It began in a small rural city as a few isolated incidents, and grew into an international invasion attempt. Hundreds of people were killed and replaced in their sleep as this horror tried to spread across the country. Eventually, the Pod People were stopped, although since no one is sure where they came from, no one can be sure all of them were defeated, or that there aren't more of them waiting to make a second attempt.

Personality/Motivation: Pod People aren't exactly evil by nature, but it is their nature that forces them to commit what we would consider evil and barbaric acts. They are born as giant melons and then put into hibernation. When a living creature of close to human size falls asleep near one of them, they glide over to the target (on almost microscopic tentacles) and attach themselves to some part of their body. Once attached, the Pod People begin draining the life force from their victim. Once all of their life force has been stolen and the victim is dead, the Pod People use the energy to mold their bodies into exact replicas of the victims (complete with most memories and skills) and they live the rest of their lives in this new body. Since this is the only way the Pod People can reproduce, they do not consider it to be an evil act at all. Quite simply, it is "them or us," and just as humans must eat living things, so too must Pod People drain the life force from living creatures in order to survive. Naturally, they recognize how vulnerable they are in the pod state, and being intelligent creatures, are constantly working on new schemes to help them prosper. Make no mistake however, their sense of self-preservation is as high as any creature's, and they have no qualms about wiping out one race for the perpetuation of their own.

Quote: None, although, whenever they realize a human is trying to masquerade as one of them, they tend to point and scream to alert their comrades.

Powers/Tactics: Until a Pod Person gets a new body, they are essentially very slow defenseless giant melons. Their main power comes in their ability to steal the life force, memories, and form of another person (or animal.) Their Drain actually numbs the victim from feeling it so they stay asleep throughout the process. While this Drain goes on, the Pod Person reads into the depths of the victim's mind, remembering almost everything. When the target is dead, the Pod Person assumes their identity, complete with Perks and Talents. While thus far it has never been confirmed, there are rumored to be "royal"

Pod People out there capable of taking over even paranormal bodies.

Campaign Use: Pod People are the evil infiltrating force that slowly take over and replace already existing groups, governments, or entire worlds. Since once they become someone, they are almost indistinguishable from the original (except, perhaps, through telepathy or some type of cellular examination), they could make players paranoid very quickly. Their primary power and influence will be based on how many of them you allow in the area at a time. If the Pod People aren't tough enough, give them a head start and have them take over a few people before the players notice them. If you only have a few of them, and need them more powerful, increase their ECV, and allow them to use their Drain at range. If they are too powerful, take the Invisible off the Drain, and increase the time it takes to make the change.

Appearance: In their initial state, Pod People appear as human-sized eggplant-looking melons. During their transformation, they pulse with an eerie violet light, and once the transformation is complete, their appearance becomes identical to that of their victim in every way.

The Pod People

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|------------------------|
| -25 | STR | -35 | 7- | Lift 0 kg; 0d6 HTH [0] |
| 12 | DEX | 6 | 11- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 14 | CON | 8 | 12- | |
| 5 | BODY | -10 | 10- | |
| 12 | INT | 2 | 11- | PER Roll: 11- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 0 | PRE | -10 | 9- | PRE Attack: 0d6 |
| 0 | COM | -5 | 9- | |
| 0 | PD | 0 | | Total: 0 PD (0 rPD) |
| 3 | ED | 0 | | Total: 3 ED (0 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 8 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 1 | REC | 6 | | |
| 28 | END | 0 | | |
| 1 | STUN | 2 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: -22

Movement: Running: 1/2"/1"
Leaping: 0"/0"

Cost Powers **END**

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 106 | <i>Mimic Power:</i> Variable Power Pool (Mimic Pool), 90 base + 45 control cost; Cosmic (+2), Mimic Only (-1), Requires Skin-To-Skin Contact (-1/2), Only for Multiform (up to 400 point characters, all with <i>Imitation</i> ; -1/4), Only Once Ever and Permanent (-2), Extra Time (5 Minutes; -2), Side Effect (death if interrupted; -1); Linked (to BODY Drain; -1/2) | 0 |
| 11 | <i>Drain Lifeforce:</i> Drain BODY 1d6; Invisible to Touch Group and Hearing Group, effects of Power invisible to target (+1); 1 Continuing Charge lasting 5 Minutes (stopped by cutting or removing tentacles; -3/4), Charges Never Recover (-2) | 0 |
| 29 | <i>Drain Memories:</i> Telepathy 20d6; Invisible to Mental Group (+1/2); No Range (-1/2), Receive Only (-1/2), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 5 Minutes (stopped by cutting or removing tentacles; -3/4), Charges Never Recover (-2), Linked (to Drain; -1/2) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Tentacles:</i> Stretching 2"; No Velocity Damage (-1/4), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 5 Minutes (stopped by cutting or removing tentacles; -3/4), plus Desolidification; Cannot Pass through Solid Objects (-1/2), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 5 Minutes (stopped by cutting or removing tentacles; -3/4) | 0 |
| 45 | LS: Total | 0 |
| 10 | +20 PRE; Defense Only (-1) | 0 |
| 10 | 10 Mental Defense (13 Total) | 0 |
| -11 | -5 1/2" Running | 1 |
| 20 | Detect Life Energy 11-, Discriminatory, Analyze | 0 |

Talents

3 Eidetic Memory; Only for stolen memories (-2)

Skills

4 KS: Pod People Culture 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 245

Total Cost: 223

100+ Disadvantages

- 25 Distinctive Features: Big inanimate pod (Not Concealable, Extreme Reaction)
- 20 Hunted: Galactic Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Imprison)
- 25 Physical Limitation: no limbs (except tentacles), face, eyes, and so forth (All the Time, Fully)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: desperately wants to "hatch" (Very Common, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: Alien invasion "disease," 8- (Extreme, Only to a small group)
- 25 Social Limitation: secret identity as an inanimate object (Very Frequently, Severe)
- 3 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 223

Jane Beier (Joie de Mourir)

Background/History: Life really began for Jane Beier when a she was in a horse-and-carriage accident at age 7. Her parents were both killed, and she was trapped under an overturned carriage for 28 hours before someone rescued her. Unable to cope with the situation psychologically, Jane created an “imaginary friend” who was the cause of all her troubles and misery. Orphanages and foster homes followed, always horrible experiences, and always blamed on Jane’s invisible tormentor. By her late teens, Jane’s alter ego had gained a complete personality of her own. Everything “good” Jane did was done by Jane, everything “bad” was done by Jane’s suppressed second personality, although it didn’t have a name back then. The “bad” personality “forced” Jane to fight and commit crimes to take out her frustrations. Jane traveled the world looking for a cure for her affliction. She visited mesmerist after mesmerist, and even consulted with some spiritualists, but nothing worked.

During one session, Jane became convinced that her alternate personality was a real person. She rebelled against this mysterious stranger, spending any time she could studying criminology, philosophy, and meditation, all the while searching for a reason this enemy killed her family when she was a child.

The final split came during a confrontation with a pair of muggers in a deserted alleyway. Jane was appropriately frightened and willing to give over her wallet, but the muggers wanted to toy with her. They beat her, cut her, gagged her, and threatened to throw her into the river, when she finally could take no more and passed out. When she woke up, she discovered the two muggers dead at her feet, and the words “Joie de Mourir,” which translates to “Joy of death,” written on the wall in blood.

From that point on, Jane began to search the world for the evil that had plagued her life. Driven to solve this mystery, she eventually became a private detective to help find her enemy.

Personality/Motivation: In her Jane persona, she is somewhere between Sherlock Holmes and Mother Theresa. She loves to bring peace into the lives of others, and will go to extraordinary lengths to help out another human being. Her one motivation and fear is Joie de Mourir, her arch nemesis. No matter what Jane is doing at the time, always in the back of her mind, she is searching, waiting, and preparing for her foe adversary to strike again. In her Joie de Mourir persona, she is every bad characteristic a person could ever reject. She has spent all of her time “away” from Jane doing odd jobs as an international assassin. She isn’t the best or

anything, but she has yet to get caught. She really likes killing people and torturing them even more. Her trademarks are leaving absolutely no one living and being able to finish a job in under 30 minutes. Although no one understands why, she does every job in under 30 minutes because 30 minutes after every battle the Jane persona reclaims dominance over the body. This dominance lasts until Jane sees an act of extreme violence or blood actually being drawn. 5 minutes after which, she is replaced again with Joie de Mourir. This dark persona is relatively fearless and cool-headed, except for when someone mistakes her for Jane. While she will never admit it, the name terrifies her, and she flies into a murderous rage almost the instant she hears it. Joie de Mourir is always on the lookout for the return of her lost foe, and often pays thugs and sets up elaborate ambushes to attempt to catch Jane. Joie is convinced Jane is around every corner, waiting to grab from behind and force her back into a dull and useless life of mediocrity. Joie, naturally, would die first. No amount of proof will convince either of these personas that they aren’t two different people, and attempting to do so will only bring unfavorable responses... very unfavorable in Joie’s case.

Quote: As Jane, “The mind of a criminal is a horrid and fantastic thing. To catch one, you must learn to think like one.” As Joie de Mourir, “Please, you must understand, nothing will give me greater pleasure than to hear a nice, long, painful scream.”

Powers/Tactics: Jane’s favorite tactic is not to fight. She relies heavily on her enhanced social skills to talk her way out of a situation. Her acting skill is a direct result of years of “make believe” as a child, and she has an uncanny knack for blending in wherever she goes. The favorite tactic of Joie de Mourir is to use the same ability to get close to a person, and then knife them someplace dark when no one is looking. She somehow inherently knows her violent activities have a 30 minute clock, and doesn’t bother to try and figure out why, but this does affect her planning. Joie de Mourir hates being related to Jane so much, she will always attempt to conceal the physical resemblance, particularly by wearing a wig and covering her face. She *never* wants to be recognized as Jane. Whenever the change first happens, Joie usually quickly leaves the area to minimize the chance that anyone nearby might confuse her for Jane.

Campaign Use: Jane is another good mystery villain and ally at the same time. Unlike someone diabolically clever and evil, she is truly good in one form, and truly evil in another. The fact that she will vehemently pursue her nemesis

can only make her seem more believable as two people. If Jane needs to be more powerful for your campaign, give her some more combat abilities, increase her SPD, and potentially give her a revolver. If she is too powerful, lower her Joie form's SPD, and remove her combat skills appropriately.

Appearance: Jane Beier tends to wear modest but well-made dresses: prim Victorian woman's attire. She has a pretty face and shoulder-length blonde hair. When her Joie de Mourir personality takes over, Joie does everything she can to dissociate herself from the hated Jane — she dresses provocatively, dyes her hair black, and dispenses with Jane's proper Victorian conduct in favor of wanton, malicious, and murderous behavior.

DIGITAL HERO #34

Jane Beier (Joie de Mourir)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 10 | STR | 0 | 11- | Lift 100kg; 2d6 HTH [1] |
| 16 | DEX | 18 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 12 | CON | 4 | 11- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 18 | INT | 8 | 13- | PER Roll: 16- |
| 18 | EGO | 16 | 13- | ECV: 6 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 14 | COM | 8 | 12- | |
| 2 | PD | 0 | | Total: 2 PD (0 rPD) |
| 2 | ED | 0 | | Total: 2 ED (0 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 4 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 4 | REC | 6 | | |
| 24 | END | 0 | | |
| 21 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 69

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

Cost Powers **END**

- 15 *Alternate Personality Form:*
Multiform (275-point Alternate Personality [Joie de Mourir] form, true form is [Jane] 225-point human form), Invisible Power Effects (+½); Personality Loss (Instant, Sudden, Total, Automatic; -4), Reversion (weaker form, -½) 0
- 13 *Master Actor:* Mental Illusions 6d6; Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Self Only (-1), Only to Appear and Act Like Someone Who Belongs in the Setting (-1), Must Always Apply +10 Level "Target Will Remember The Illusion As Being "Real" After It Has Ended" (-½) 0
- 10 Mental Defense (10 points) 0
- 9 +3 PER 0

Talents

- 5 Eidetic Memory

Perks

- 17 Contact: Scotland Yard 11-; Organization
- 2 Fringe Benefits: Member of the Lower Nobility
- 2 Fringe Benefits: Private Investigator License
- 1 Money: Well Off
- 1 Reputation: Sleuth 11- (single city)

Skills

- 7 Acting 14-
- 5 CK: Local City 14-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Contortionist 12-
- 3 Conversation 12-
- 3 Criminology 13-
- 3 Cryptography 13-
- 7 Deduction 15-
- 5 Forensic Medicine 14-
- 3 High Society 12-
- 3 KS: Philosophy 12-
- 5 KS: Criminals 14-
- 5 KS: Universal Forensic Trivia 14-
- 2 Language: French (Fluent)
- 1 Language: Gallic (Basic)
- 1 Language: German (Basic)
- 1 Language: Latin (Fluent)
- 3 Lockpicking 12-
- 5 PS: Detective 14-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 156

Total Cost: 225

100+ Disadvantages

- 10 Accidental Change: five minutes after being near strong violence or seeing blood shed 11- (Uncommon)
- 20 DNPC: Street Urchins, 8- (Incompetent; group)
- 20 Hunted: Alternate Personality 11- (As Pow, NCI, thwart and embarrass, Public Identity)
- 5 Hunted: Underworld 8- (As Pow, NCI, watching)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Honorable (Common, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: Pacifist, 8-
- 15 Social Limitation: Female in Victorian era (Very Frequently, Minor)
- 10 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Frequently, Minor)
- 10 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 225

Joie de Mourir

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200kg; 3d6 HTH [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 15 | CON | 10 | 12- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 18 | INT | 8 | 13- | PER Roll: 15- |
| 18 | EGO | 16 | 13- | ECV: 6 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 14 | COM | 8 | 12- | |
| 3 | PD | 0 | | Total: 3 PD (0 rPD) |
| 3 | ED | 0 | | Total: 3 ED (0 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 22 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 6 | | |
| 30 | END | 0 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 3 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 116

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 3"/6"

Cost Powers **END**

- 13 *Master Actor*: Mental Illusions 6d6; Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Self Only (-1), Only to Appear and Act Like Someone Who Belongs in the Setting (-1), Must Always Apply +10 Level "Target Will Remember the Illusion as Being "Real" After It Has Ended" (-½) 0
- 8 *Stiletto*: HKA ½d6 (1d6 with STR); Armor Piercing (+½), OAF (Stiletto; -1) 2
- 10 Mental Defense (14 Total) 0
- 3 +6 PRE; Defense Only (-1) 0
- 6 +2 PER 0

Talents

- 6 Combat Luck

Perks

- 18 Contact: Underworld 12-; Organization
- 1 Money: Well Off

Skills

| Maneuver | OCV | DCV | Notes |
|--|-----|-----|----------------|
| Martial Arts: Street Fighting | | | |
| 4 Dodge | +0 | +5 | Dodge, Abort |
| 4 Escape | +0 | +0 | +15 STR Escape |
| 4 Punch | +0 | +2 | +2d6 |
| 4 Neck Strike | -1 | +1 | 2d6 NND |
| 10 +2 with HTH Combat | | | |
| 5 Acting 14- | | | |
| 5 Contortionist 14- | | | |
| 3 Criminology 13- | | | |
| 3 Cryptography 13- | | | |
| 5 Disguise 14- | | | |
| 3 Fast Draw 13- | | | |
| 3 Gambling 13- | | | |
| 5 KS: "Criminals" 14- | | | |
| 5 KS: "Local City" 14- | | | |
| 2 Language: French (fluent) | | | |
| 3 Lockpicking 13- | | | |
| 3 Persuasion 13- | | | |
| 3 Seduction 13- | | | |
| 3 Shadowing 13- | | | |
| 5 Stealth 14- | | | |
| 5 Streetwise 14- | | | |
| 3 Tracking 13- | | | |
| 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms | | | |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 159

Total Cost: 275

100+ Disadvantages

- 15 Accidental Change: 30 minutes after committing act of strong violence 11- (Common)
- 15 Enraged: when called "Jane" (Uncommon, Go 11-, Recover 11-)
- 20 Hunted: Alternate Personality 11- (As Pow, NCI, imprison)
- 15 Hunted: Police 8- (As Pow, NCI, imprison)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Sadist (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Never Leaves Victims Alive (Common, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: Assassin, 8-
- 15 Social Limitation: Female in Victorian era (Very Frequently, Minor)
- 10 Social Limitation: Public Identity as Jane (Frequently, Minor)
- 50 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 275

Dual

Background/History: As long as there has been life, there has been competition. Plants compete for sunlight, animals compete for territory, and humans compete for everything. So strong is this sense of competition on Earth, that eventually it spawned an anthropomorphic spiritual embodiment. Dual was “born” in the subconscious mind of an individual who called himself Alexander. From that brain, Dual could only watch the conquering of the known world. After Alexander died, Dual vanished from the face of the planet, and awoke centuries later in the mind of a mutant who called herself Hera during the Trojan War. Dual was able to offer her subliminal suggestions while she dreamt, having learned much from Alexander. Dual next appeared in the body of Remus, and was able to take over this body when Remus slept, posing as his twin brother Romulus. As the years went by, Dual passed from body to body, always craving competition (usually in the form of battle), and gradually gaining more and more control over its “hosts.” Sun Tzu, Boudicca of Britain, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, Attila the Hun, Charlemagne, Genghis Khan, Joan of Arc, Pontiac, George Washington, Shaka Zulu, and Napoleon were all merged with the spirit of competition throughout most of their lives. By the mid-1800s, Dual was easily able to completely take over any host it entered.

However, during one of the days of the “Old West,” Dual finally tried to dominate a (mutant, as it turns out) host that was a strong-willed and competitive as it was. A terrible mental battle followed, and the end result could best be considered a tie. The spirit of competition was merged with a Texas settler. Memories of the ancient world were replaced with memories of crossing the plains on a covered wagon. A new template was formed for Dual’s personality, and from that moment on, Dual would travel from host to host as a gunslinger. Dual takes its name from the fact that it always shares a brain with its hosts, giving each host a form of dual personality. The name “Dual” itself also has a dual nature in the sense that it was chosen to be easily mistaken for a challenge to duel. Dual refers to itself as an “it” because it spends half of its existence in male hosts and half in female hosts, and it has never had any romantic affiliation with either.

Personality/Motivation: Where once Dual traveled through time from body to body as the spirit of competition, now it lives in a perpetual “Old West,” living only to prove that it is the best at one-on-one combat. Dual cannot resist a fair duel of any sort. Nothing is better than a “choose your weapon” kind of dispute. No matter *what*, Dual will *always* drop whatever it is

doing for a chance to try and outdraw an opponent. Often during such conflicts, Dual’s overconfidence will overcome reason, and Dual will aim to disarm or to shoot off an article of clothing rather than to wound or kill. Should Dual ever lose a fair fight, he will regard the winner as an honorable foe, and never challenge them again (although he will still accept a challenge.) If someone somehow escapes a fight, or refuses a fight, or beats him through “cheating,” vengeance becomes the only possible motivation, and Dual will hunt the “chicken” down for showdown after showdown, host after host, year after year, century after century, until Dual finally kills them.

Quote: “Heh, heh... (grimace, sniff, slowly spit) Drrraaaaw.”

Powers/Tactics: Dual has the powers of the old spirit of competition merged with the skills of the Old West. Dual’s guns are real, but they fire spiritual energy rather than actual bullets, and as such never need reloading. In combat, Dual prefers to play with combatants wherever possible. Shooting a gun out of someone’s hand or ricocheting a shot to hit someone from behind is far more entertaining than actually just blowing someone away. Dual’s magical nature provides little protection to its hosts, but does give them faster reflexes. If Dual’s host is ever wounded to -5 BODY or less, Dual will be forcibly ejected from the current host and will have wait in the Netherworld for a new one. Dual is well aware of this, and often takes advantage of this immortality. Dual will, for example, gladly put a bullet through its host’s head rather than accept capture. If Dual is ever knocked out, stunned, or beaten into a coma by attacks that are Transdimensional into the Netherworld, the original personality of the host will surface (usually confused and begging for help) and remain dominant until Dual regains consciousness. It is possible to rid hosts of Dual by reducing them to -5 (or fewer) BODY, and then somehow healing them after Dual has left. Dual cannot voluntarily leave a host once he’s taken them over, and he has to wait a month before taking over a new host.

Campaign Use: Dual is a good reoccurring villain. The fact that he can appear in friends or family makes it all the better. Since he’s been around for eons, that means ancestors, old timers, immortals, and time travelers will more than likely have encountered him in some form before. This is particularly interesting if a player needs information from the past, and has to ask Dual for it. If Dual isn’t powerful enough for your campaign, give him the ability to bounce from body to body instantly instead of waiting a month, or increase his “empowered” combat skill

levels and all physical characteristics. If he is too powerful, change it so he's expelled from any unconscious host, lower his SPD, and lower his combat skills appropriately.

Appearance: Whenever Dual enters a new host, it immediately begins transforming (in a mundane way) the host's appearance into that of a gunslinger. It goes to buy (or steal, if the host doesn't come equipped with any money) chaps, spurs, blue jeans, boots, a black vest, a bandanna, a huge duster and a black cowboy hat. Dual then steals a horse, and then rides off to one of the waiting caches of authentic circa 1865 Colt .45 pistols and it has hidden over the years. In this outfit, the gender of Dual's current host is often obscured. In any case, Dual cackles frequently, always talks with a senile, ancient, crackling voice and a distinct southern drawl, and generally refers to everyone else as either "Sonny" or "Girly."

DIGITAL HERO #34

Dual

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| -25 | STR | -35 | 7- | Lift 0kg; 0d6 HTH [0] |
| 12 | DEX | 6 | 11- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 14 | CON | 8 | 12- | |
| 5 | BODY | -10 | 10- | |
| 12 | INT | 2 | 11- | PER Roll: 11- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 0 | PRE | -10 | 9- | PRE Attack: 0d6 |
| 0 | COM | -5 | 9- | |
| 0 | PD | 0 | | Total: 0 PD (0 rPD) |
| 3 | ED | 0 | | Total: 3 ED (0 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 8 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 1 | REC | 6 | | |
| 28 | END | 0 | | |
| 1 | STUN | 2 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: -22

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 0"/0"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 38 | <i>Weapons:</i> Multipower, 75-point Reserve. All OAF (-1) | 0 |
| 2u | 1) <i>Pistols:</i> RKA 1½d6; Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Autofire (2-3 shots; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); OAF (pistols; -1) | 4 |
| 3u | 2) <i>Shoot Enemy Weapons:</i> Telekinesis (20 STR); Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); OAF (pistols; -1), Only For Disarm (-1) | 4 |
| 2u | 3) <i>Ricochet Shots:</i> RKA 1½d6; Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Indirect (+¼), Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); OAF (pistols; -1) | 4 |
| 63 | <i>Possess Power:</i> Mind Control 14d6; Telepathic (+¼); Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), No Range (-½), Must Always Apply +10 Level "Target Will Not Remember Actions" (-½) | 0 |
| 68 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> +8 DEX, +3 SPD, +5 CON, +1 ED, +1 PD, +1 REC, +10 END, +6 STUN; Usable By Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the | |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| | Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Usable by Other (-½) | 0 |
| 55 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> Mental Defense (20 Points); Usable Simultaneously (+½), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½), Personal Immunity (+¼); | 0 |
| 20 | <i>Sense Life Forms:</i> Detect Life, Discriminatory, Analyze; Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½) | 0 |
| 30 | <i>Possess Power:</i> Clairvoyance (Sight, Hearing, and Touch Group, can see into "real world" dimension); Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Through the Senses of Others (-½), No Range (-½) | 0 |
| 16 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> +2 with All Combat; Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Usable by Other (-½) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> +2 with Pistols; Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Usable by Other (-½) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> +2 with Multipower; Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Usable by Other (-½) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> +2 with Pistols; Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Usable by Other (-½), Only to Cancel Range Penalties (-1) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Empower Subject:</i> +2 with Pistols; Usable by Other (+¼), Persistent (+½), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +½); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-½), Only Usable by Other (-½), Only To Cancel Size Penalties (-1) | 0 |

- 7 *Empower Subject:* Lightning Reflexes (+4); Usable by Other (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +1/2); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-1/2), Only Usable by Other (-1/2) 0
- 8 *Empower Subject:* Fast Draw (Agility Roll +2); Usable by Other (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +1/2); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-1/2), Only Usable by Other (-1/2) 0
- 8 *Empower Subject:* Riding (Agility Roll +2); Usable by Other (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +1/2); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-1/2), Only Usable by Other (-1/2) 0
- 5 *Empower Subject:* Martial Strike; Usable by Other (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Transdimensional (from the Netherworld to the real world; +1/2); Only Transdimensional (not in Netherworld) (-1/2), Only Usable by Other (-1/2) 0

Skills

- 4 KS: The Old West 13-
- 2 Language: Apache (fluent)
- 2 Language: Cheyenne (fluent)
- 2 Language: Comanche (fluent)
- 1 Language: Navaho (basic)
- 3 Language: Spanish (fluent w/accnt)
- 9 Tracking 14-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 372

Total Cost: 350

100+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Gunslinger (Easily Concealable, Noticed)
- 20 Enraged: when beaten in an unfair fight (Uncommon, Go 14-, Recover 11-)
- 10 Hunted: Native American Shaman 8- (As Pow, imprison)
- 15 Physical Limitation: must stay with current "host" until they reach -5 BODY (Frequently, Greatly)
- 5 Physical Limitation: must wait a month between "hosts" (Infrequently, Slightly)
- 15 Physical Limitation: still thinks it is the Old West (Frequently, Greatly)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: cannot resist a fair fight (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Uncommon, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: Spirit of Competition, 8-
- 25 Susceptibility: to "host" body going near burial grounds or into graveyards, 3d6 damage per phase (Uncommon)
- 110 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 350



Mythic Hero

by John R. Ivicsek Jr.

Beowulf

Sometime before the 10th Century AD, the great epic of Beowulf was penned. It has become one of the seminal works of English literature and the basics of the tale have been retold in a million different ways. It even became a highly modified book/movie when Michael Crichton wrote "Eaters of the Dead" which was renamed "The 13th Warrior" by the time it hit the big screen. Again, our goal is to provide you the GM with two options for these characters. One will be the low powered or "realistic" option; the other is for your higher powered games.

But first, a little background on our characters. Grendel was a savage monster that pillaged the great hall of the Dane King Hrothgar each night. He was unstoppable and carted off as many as 30 warriors at once to be devoured in his lair. This continued for 20 years and nothing would work to drive away or slay the monster. The Danes even turned to pagan worship to try and appease the monster, but it was for naught. The tale of Hrothgar's woe spread on the lips of poets across the land and reached the ears of the mightiest warrior of his day, Beowulf.

Many urged Beowulf to go, though they were loath to lose him. They felt that only a warrior of Beowulf's prowess could end this unceasing curse on Hrothgar's Kingdom. So gathering 14 companions, Beowulf set sail across the ocean to save Hrothgar.

He was well received in the court and many remarked on his noble carriage. Hrothgar remarked that he knew Beowulf as a lad and that he possessed the strength of thirty men. Hrothgar felt that he had surely been sent by God to save the Danes from Grendel. There was one who was jealous of Beowulf though, named Unferth, who asked if this was the same Beowulf who was bested in strength during a swimming contest. At which point we get the full tale of that contest. It lasted 7 days, Beowulf was in full mail, he slew 9 sea monsters during it, and warded off whales with his sword. This quieted most comment, and Beowulf then announced that he would match Grendel in strength. He would not use his sword as it would be too easy.

That night Grendel came to a hall full of sleeping warriors, and one nigh invincible warrior. Beowulf and Grendel locked thews and for once, the monster knew fear. They battled back and forth, and Beowulf's men tried to aid their leader with their swords, but discovered Grendel was enchanted against all blades. Beowulf needed no aid, however, and tore off Grendel's arm, ending the fight as the monster ran away to its home in the moors.

But here things get interesting. While Beowulf is out being feasted and rewarded for his daring, Grendel's mother attacked the Danes. If Grendel was bad news, his mother was the ultimate Oedipal nightmare. She slaughtered many of the Dane warriors and took the arm of her son from the hall to lie at his side.

Beowulf set off after Grendel's mother and found her after diving into dark turgid mass of water. It took Beowulf "the best part of a day" to get to the bottom, and there he entered the cave of Grendel and his mother. Battling there, his sword failed to bite and failed him. He wrestled with Grendel's mother, but she was even stronger than her son. Thrown from the beast, Beowulf spotted a giant-made sword that no normal man could heft and used it to cleave the head of Grendel's mother. The sword then melted for it had been a battle icicle, and with the head and hilt in his hands, he returned to Hrothgar.

Beowulf's adventures continue, but the above is what concerns us. It's the most famous of his exploits and the basis for our characters. And again, we have a small misnomer with the term "Low End" as only 130-odd points separates the two versions. However, the changes do take away a lot of the more fantastic elements or make them just extraordinary. Either version saves 35 points if he does not have to pay for his equipment.

Instead of trying to differentiate Grendel's powers at two levels, I'm including Grendel's Mom who is obviously the nastier of the two anyway.

Beowulf



杜克
大伟

DIGITAL HERO #34

Beowulf (High End)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|------------------------------|
| 40 | STR | 30 | 17- | 6400 kg; 8d6 HTH [0] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 25 | CON | 30 | 14- | |
| 18 | BODY | 16 | 13- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 18 | EGO | 16 | 13- | ECV: 6 |
| 25 | PRE | 15 | 14- | PRE Attack: 5d6 |
| 18 | COM | 4 | 13- | |
| | | | | Total: 23 PD (13 rPD) |
| 10 | PD | 2 | | |
| 10 | ED | 5 | | Total: 23 ED (13 rED) |
| 5 | SPD | 22 | | Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| 13 | REC | 0 | | |
| 50 | END | 0 | | |
| 51 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 167

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 8"/16"
Swimming: 6"/12"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 20 | <i>Heroic Fortitude:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; STUN Only (-1/2) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Well Trained:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-5) for Resistant Defense | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Well Trained:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-5) for Normal Defense | 0 |
| 13 | <i>Fearless:</i> +20 PRE; Defensive Use Only (-1/2) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Child of the Sea:</i> Life Support: Water Breathing (Expanded Breathing) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Child of the Sea:</i> Swimming +4" (6" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2) | 0 |
| 12 | <i>Long Thews:</i> Running +2" (8" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2) | 0 |
| 20 | <i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2) on STR | 0 |

Equipment

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 13 | <i>Sword, Bastard (Wielded in One Hand):</i> HKA 1 1/2d6 (3d6+1 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/2) | 0 |
| 9 | <i>Golden Embossed Coat of Mail:</i> Armor (7 PD/7 ED); OIF (-1/2), Activation Roll 14- (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Crested Helm:</i> Armor (7 PD/7 ED); Activation Roll 8- (-2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Wood Board Banded in Iron:</i> Armor (8 PD/2 ED); OAF (-1), Real Armor (-1/4) | 0 |

Perks

| | |
|---|--|
| 8 | Reputation: Greatest of the Geats (Large Group) 11-, +4/+4d6 |
|---|--|

Talents

| | |
|----|--|
| 12 | Combat Luck (x2) |
| 16 | Crippling Blow |
| 10 | Deadly Blow: +1d6 (any circumstances, any HTH weapon) |
| 2 | EM: No Penalties in Water |
| 5 | Lightning Reflexes: +3 DEX to Act First with All Actions |
| 3 | Lightsleep |
| 5 | Rapid Healing |

Skills

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 10 | +1 Overall Level |
| 16 | +2 with All Combat |
| 15 | +3 with Hand-to-Hand Combat |
| Martial Arts: Those Mighty Hands | |
| Maneuver OCVDCV Notes | |
| 4 | Breaking Throw -2 -2 1 Limb, 2d6K, Disable, Target Falls |
| 4 | Choke Hold -2 +0 1 Limb, 3d6 NND |
| 5 | Joint Break -1 -2 1 Limb, 2d6K, Disable |
| 4 | Joint Lock/ Throw +1 +0 1 Limb, 2d6 NND, Target Falls |
| 4 | Block +2 +2 Block, Abort |
| 4 | Escape +0 +0 65 STR vs. Grabs |
| 3 | Grappling Throw +0 +2 12d6, Target Falls, Must Follow Grab |
| 3 | Takedown +1 +1 10d6, Target Falls |
| 4 | Disarm -1 +1 60 STR Disarm |
| 4 | Weapon Bind+1 +0 60 STR Bind |
| 5 | Offensive Strike -2 +1 14d6 Strike |
| 8 | +2 Damage Classes (added in) |
| 7 | Use Art with Axes, Maces, Hammers, and Picks, Blades, Clubs, Empty Hand, Off Hand, Polearms and Spears, Two-Handed Weapons |
| 5 | Analyze Combat 13- |
| 3 | Breakfall 13- |
| 3 | Climbing 13- |
| 5 | Defense Maneuver I-II |
| 7 | Hoist 14- |
| 3 | KS: Legends and Lore 12- |
| 4 | KS: Warrior's Code 13- |
| 5 | KS: Military Customs and Courtesy 14- |
| 0 | Language: Danish (Native) |
| 2 | Language: Swedish (Conversation) |
| 1 | Language: Norwegian (Basic) |
| 7 | Navigation (Land, Marine) 14- |
| 7 | Oratory 16- |
| 5 | PS: Sailor 14- |
| 6 | PS: Soldier 15- |
| 3 | Stealth 13- |
| 10 | Survival (Arctic, Marine, Mountain) 14- |
| 5 | Tactics 13- |
| 8 | TF: Riding Animals, Large Rowed Boats, Large Wind-Powered Boats, Rafts, Sleds, |

Small Rowed Boats, Small Wind-Powered Boats

- 3 Tracking 12-
- 5 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Off Hand

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 380

Total Cost: 547

200+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: Grendel or his Mother 11- (As Pow, Public ID)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Prone to Long Pontification on the Nature of Heroism (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Stubborn (Common, Strong)
- 10 Social Limitation: Famous (Frequently, Minor)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject to Orders (Vassal of Hrothgar) (Very Frequently, Major)
- 252 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 547

Beowulf (Low End)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| 30 | STR | 20 | 11- | 1600 Kg; 6d6 HTH [1] |
| 16 | DEX | 18 | 11- | OCV: 5 /DCV: 5 |
| 23 | CON | 26 | 11- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 11- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 15 | EGO | 10 | 11- | ECV: 5 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 11- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 14 | COM | 2 | 11- | |
| 8 | PD | 2 | | Total: 18 PD (10 rPD) |
| 8 | ED | 3 | | Total: 18 ED (10 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 14 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 11 | REC | 0 | | |
| 46 | END | 0 | | |
| 42 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 118

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Leaping: 6"/12"
Swimming: 4"/8"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 7 | <i>Heroic Fortitude:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%; Requires a CON Roll (-1/2), STUN Only (-1/2) | 0 |
| 2 | <i>Well Trained:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-2) for Resistant Defense | 0 |
| 2 | <i>Well Trained:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-2) for Normal Defense | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Fearless:</i> +10 PRE; Defensive Use Only (-1/2) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Child of the Sea:</i> Life Support: Water Breathing (Extended Breathing: 1 END per 5 Minutes) | 0 |
| 2 | <i>Child of the Sea:</i> Swimming +2" (4" Total), Reduced Endurance (1/2 END, +1/4) | 1 |
| 5 | <i>Long Thews:</i> Running +1" (7" Total), Reduced Endurance (1/2 END, +1/4) | 1 |
| 7 | <i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (1/2 END, +1/4) on STR | 0 |

Equipment

- 13 *Sword, Bastard (Wielded in One Hand):* HKA 1 1/2d6 (3d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-1/4), STR Minimum (-1/2) 0
- 9 *Golden Embossed Coat of Mail:* Armor (7 PD/7 ED); OIF (-1/2), Activation Roll 14- (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4) 0
- 6 *Crested Helm:* Armor (7 PD/7 ED); Activation Roll 8- (-2), OIF (-1/2), Real Armor (-1/4) 0
- 7 *Wood Board Banded in Iron:* Armor (8 PD/2 ED); OAF (-1), Real Armor (-1/4) 0

DIGITAL HERO #34

Perks

- 6 Reputation: Greatest of the Geats (Large Group) 11-, +3/+3d6

Talents

- 6 Combat Luck
- 16 Crippling Blow
- 2 EM: No Penalties in Water
- 3 Lightning Reflexes: +2 DEX to Act First with All Actions
- 3 Lightsleep

Skills

- 10 +1 Overall Level
- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 15 +3 with Hand-to-Hand Combat

Martial Arts: Those Mighty Hands
Maneuver OCVDCV Notes

- 4 Choke Hold -2 +0 1 Limb, 2½d6 NND
 - 5 Joint Break -1 -2 1 Limb, 1d6+1K, Disable
 - 4 Joint Lock/ +1 +0 1 Limb, 1½d6 NND,
- | | Throw | | Target Falls |
|--------------------|-------|----|-------------------------------------|
| 4 Block | +2 | +2 | Block, Abort |
| 4 Escape | +0 | +0 | 50 STR vs. Grabs |
| 3 Grappling | +0 | +2 | 9d6, Target Falls, Must Follow Grab |
| 4 Disarm | -1 | +1 | 45 STR Disarm |
| 4 Weapon Bind | +1 | +0 | 45 STR Bind |
| 5 Offensive Strike | -2 | +1 | 11d6 Strike |

- 4 +1 Damage Class (added in)
- 7 Use Art with Axes, Maces, Hammers, and Picks, Blades, Clubs, Empty Hand, Off Hand, Polearms and Spears, Two-Handed Weapons

- 5 Analyze Combat 13-
- 3 Breakfall 12-
- 3 Climbing 12-
- 5 Defense Maneuver I-II
- 7 Hoist 14-
- 3 KS: Legends and Lore 12-
- 5 KS: Military Customs and Courtesy 14-
- 4 KS: Warrior's Code 13-
- 0 Language: Danish (Native)
- 2 Language: Swedish (Conversation)
- 1 Language: Norwegian (Basic)
- 7 Navigation (Land, Marine) 14-
- 7 Oratory 15-
- 5 PS: Sailor 14-
- 6 PS: Soldier 15-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 10 Survival (Arctic, Marine, Mountain) 14-
- 5 Tactics 13-
- 8 TF: Riding Animals, Large Rowed Boats, Large Wind-Powered Boats, Rafts, Sleds, Small Rowed Boats, Small Wind-Powered Boats
- 3 Tracking 12-
- 5 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Off Hand

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 292

Total Cost: 410

200+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: Grendel or His Mother 11- (As Pow, Public ID)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Prone to Long Pontification on the Nature of Heroism (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Stubborn (Common, Strong)
- 10 Social Limitation: Famous (Frequently, Minor)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject to Orders (Vassal of Hrothgar) (Very Frequently, Major)
- 115 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 410

Grendel



杜克大伟

DIGITAL HERO #34

Grendel

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| 40 | STR | 30 | 17- | 6400 kg; 8d6 HTH [0] |
| 13 | DEX | 9 | 12- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 28 | CON | 36 | 15- | |
| 22 | BODY | 24 | 13- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll: 11- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 30 | PRE | 20 | 15- | PRE Attack: 6d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 15 | PD | 7 | | Total: 21 PD (12 rPD) |
| 10 | ED | 4 | | Total: 16 ED (12 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 17 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 14 | REC | 0 | | |
| 56 | END | 0 | | |
| 56 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 152

Movement: Running: 10"/20"
Leaping: 8"/16"
Swimming: 8"/16"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 30 | <i>Teeth and Claws:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Restrainable (-½) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Armor (6 PD/6 ED) | 0 |
| 50 | <i>Enchanted by Forces Most Fell:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%, Hardened (+¼); Only Works against Weapons Forged by Man (-½) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-3) for Normal Defense | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-3) for Resistant Defenses | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Damage Resistance (6 PD/6 ED), Hardened (+¼) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Massive Body:</i> Knockback Resistance -3" | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Amphibious:</i> Life Support: Water Breathing (Expanded Breathing) | 0 |
| 9 | <i>Amphibious:</i> Swimming +6" (8" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) | 0 |
| 13 | <i>Long Limbed:</i> Running +4" (10" Total), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼) | 1 |
| 20 | <i>Unholy Stamina:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) on STR | 0 |

Talents

- 2 EM: No Penalties in Water
- 10 Follow-Through Attack

Skills

- 10 +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 5 Climbing 13-
- 5 Navigation (Land, Marine) 12-
- 3 Shadowing 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 12 Survival (Arctic, Marine, Mountain) 14-
- 3 Tracking 11-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 217

Total Cost: 369

200+ Disadvantages

- 25 Distinctive Features: Massive Monster with Powerful Claws (Not Concealable, Extreme)
- 15 Hunted: Beowulf 11- (As Pow)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Malicious (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Wants to Kill All of Hrothgar's Men (Common, Total)
- 5 Unluck: 2d6
- 79 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 369

Grendel's Mom

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| 45 | STR | 35 | 18- | 12½ tons; 9d6 HTH [0] |
| 10 | DEX | 0 | 11- | OCV: 3 /DCV: 3 |
| 25 | CON | 30 | 14- | |
| 24 | BODY | 28 | 14- | |
| 15 | INT | 5 | 12- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 13 | EGO | 6 | 12- | ECV: 4 |
| 35 | PRE | 25 | 16- | PRE Attack: 7d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 18 | PD | 9 | | Total: 24 PD (12 rPD) |
| 11 | ED | 6 | | Total: 17 ED (12 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 20 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 14 | REC | 0 | | |
| 50 | END | 0 | | |
| 60 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 163

Movement: Running: 10"/20"
 Leaping: 9"/18"
 Swimming: 8"/16"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 45 | <i>Nasty and Vicious Enchantments:</i> Variable Power Pool, 20 base + 5 control cost; Magic Based Enchantments Only (-½), Requires a Skill Roll (Magic, -½) | |
| 30 | <i>Teeth and Claws:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Restrainable (-½) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Armor (6 PD/6 ED) | 0 |
| 50 | <i>Enchanted by Forces Most Fell:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%, Hardened (+¼) (75 Active Points); Only Works against Weapons Forged by Man (-½) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-3) for Normal Defense | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Lack Of Weakness (-3) for Resistant Defenses | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Tough Hide:</i> Damage Resistance (6 PD/6 ED), Hardened (+¼) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Massive Body:</i> Knockback Resistance -3" | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Amphibious:</i> Life Support: Water Breathing (Expanded Breathing) | 0 |
| 9 | <i>Amphibious:</i> Swimming +6" (8" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) | 0 |
| 13 | <i>Long Limbed:</i> Running +4" (10" Total), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼) | 1 |
| 22 | <i>Unholy Stamina:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) on STR | 0 |

Equipment

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 23 | <i>Big Nasty Dagger:</i> HKA 2d6+1 (4½d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) | 0 |
|----|---|---|

Talents

- 2 EM: No Penalties in Water
- 10 Follow-Through Attack

Skills

- 10 +1 Overall Level
- 10 +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 5 Climbing 12-
- 6 KS: Arcane and Occult Lore 15-
- 11 Magic 15-
- 5 Navigation (Land, Marine) 13-
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 11-
- 12 Survival (Arctic, Marine, Mountain) 15-
- 3 Tracking 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 294

Total Cost: 457

200+ Disadvantages

- 25 Distinctive Features: Massive Monster with Powerful Claws (Not Concealable, Extreme)
- 5 Enraged: Grendel Injured/Killed (Uncommon, Go 8-, Recover 14-)
- 15 Hunted: Beowulf 11- (As Pow)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Malicious (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Wants to Kill Any Humans (Common, Total)
- 15 Unluck: 3d6
- 162 Experience

Total Disadvantage Points: 457



The Repairman

by Dean Shomshak

The Repairman

Background/History: Rick Ribál turned his engineering skills to profitable use building specialty guns and gadgets. He was nicknamed the Argentine, for his immigrant ancestry; his swooping “A” logo became well known among gun enthusiasts. Most of his work consisted of rebuilding guns to make them more accurate and reliable. Rick also custom-built more unusual guns for a more exclusive clientele. He told himself he didn’t really *know* his clients were criminals; a guy might want a gun that shoots bullets of ice for... a novelty. Yeah, that’s right.

When the FBI cracked down on organized crime in Rick’s city, though, things got messy. A Mob soldier tried to tie up a loose end by killing Rick with one of his own guns. Rick survived the assassination attempt but his wife did not. After that, Rick testified and named all his special clients — a who’s who of Mob enforcers. Rick still went to jail for supplying weapons to assassins, and his daughter went to foster care.

Rick got out several years early for good behavior and started a quiet life as a self-employed appliance repairman. At least that’s what his parole officer thinks... Secretly, Rick built his most advanced gun yet, and many other devices besides. By night, Rick puts on kevlar and a mask and hunts the city’s criminals. Crime still owns the city, and the Repairman needs to fix that particular problem. It’s the only way he can ever stand to look his daughter in the face again.

Personality/Motivation: Rick Ribál blames himself for the death of his wife and the crimes committed with the help of his custom guns. His quest for atonement led him to vigilantism — but not murder. The Repairman uses his gun and gadgets to capture criminals and present the law with all the evidence needed to put them in jail. Rick strongly believes that if he resorts to killing, he’s no better than the criminals he hunts.

The two most important people in Rick’s life are now his teenage daughter Alma and his parole officer. He tries to regain custody of Alma from his wife’s sister, who loathes him; Alma wants this too since she dislikes her strict and straitlaced aunt. Rick sees his daughter as much as he can. Rick’s parole officer is unfortunately diligent in keeping an eye on him. Not only must Rick hide his activities as the Repairman; he tries to convince his parole officer he can be a good father to Alma.

Rick is also a devout Roman Catholic. When he isn’t sure about the right course of action, he often consults a priest who runs a homeless

shelter. His Contact with Father Murphy sometimes results in the Repairman learning about threats to street people the law ignores.

Quote: “Of *course* I’ve got it bugged.”

Powers/Tactics: The Repairman’s principle gadget is his *Multi-Gun*. This amazing weapon can fire several sorts of projectiles, from normal bullets to miniature net grenades. Rick prefers to Entangle foes, and then knock them out with *Tranq Bullets* or *Rubber Bullets*. If an enemy is too hard to hit, he uses the *Flash Mini-Grenade* to blind him. He reserves his regular bullets to shoot locks, damage Foci or attack robots.

Rick also carries bugging and surveillance equipment, plus a variety of other small gadgets (his Gadget Pool). He also carries a Taser and an Asp, a small metal truncheon with a telescoping handle, as backup weapons. The Repairman’s gadgets stay close to the limits of real technology: They may be smaller or easier to use than real-world devices, but he has no actual super-technology. The GM should create one list of the devices Rick routinely carries, and another of devices he keeps in his workshop for special occasions. Putting one gadget away and readying another for use takes between one Turn and one minute. The Repairman can create new gadgets with several hours in his workshop, and the GM’s permission.

Rick fights cautiously. He knows he’s just a fragile human being with some special gadgets. He stays well away from his foes and takes cover whenever possible; better still, he shoots from surprise or under cover of a *Smoke Mini-Grenade*. (He won’t use the smoke if he knows an ally can’t see through it.) The Repairman also tries to learn everything he can about a criminal before confronting him. He often spends weeks trailing minor mobsters (aided by his *Radio Tracer*, a projectile that sticks to cars and he can track from far away using his *Mini-Console*) to find their superiors and gather evidence against them. Even if the evidence Rick assembles through hidden cameras, wiretaps and other thoroughly illegal surveillance isn’t admissible in court, it can lead the police to evidence that is. Repairman’s fondness for surveillance makes other vigilantes joke that while some heroes don’t know the meaning of fear, the Repairman doesn’t know the meaning of privacy.

Campaign Use: The Repairman is a PC ready to play for a Heroic-level *Dark Champions: The Animated Series* campaign. GMs can also use him as an NPC ally for heroes in such a

REPAIRMAN PLOT SEEDS

One of the Argentine’s former clients looks him up and wants a new gun. He hints that something unfortunate could happen to Alma if Rick doesn’t do what he wants. Can the Repairman locate and capture this skilled assassin before he makes good on his threat? Can he do it without exposing his own Secret Identity? And can he do it without being killed by a gun he built?

Rick Ribál finally wins custody of Alma. Turns out, she’s as smart as he is, and figures out her daddy is the Repairman. Fortunately, she’s thrilled. Unfortunately, she wants to become his sidekick. Now what?

Copies of the Argentine’s special guns appear on the black market. The authorities think Rick Ribál has broken his parole and haul him in. He uses his one phone call to contact a PC, and asks him to find the real source of the knock-off weapons — before the cops find the Repairman’s hidden workshop, wreck his Secret Identity, and send him to jail.



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campaign. The Repairman is easily adapted to other *Dark Champions* campaigns; for instance, as a high-tech super-spy.

To make the Repairman more powerful (as for a "Powers" *DC: TAS* campaign), scale up his *Multi-Gun*, increase the size of his Gadget Pool, and add Skill Levels and SPD. To make him less powerful, eliminate his Gadget Pool, or remove *Multi-Gun* slots and some of his Skills.

As a hero, the Repairman hunts criminals — especially criminals who use the custom guns he built as the Argentine. He could also hunt vigilantes who prefer to kill criminals instead of capturing them.

The Repairman

Appearance: Rick Ribál is a slender but athletic Latin man in his mid- to late-30s, with short, black hair. As the Repairman, he wears a tight-fitting jumpsuit of dark gray ballistic cloth with brown boots, gloves, padded vest, belt, and holster. His vest and belt carry many pockets for gadgets and components. More pockets ring the tops of his boots. Gray metal bracelets around his gloved wrists shoot his grapnel-tipped swinglines. Repairman also wears a dark gray helmet fitted with night-vision goggles; other gadgets can screw into the goggles or a radio receiver. The *Multi-Gun* is a carbine-sized with a pistol grip and a pull-out shoulder brace, with two barrels and a drum carrying the smaller magazines for the different ammunitions.



THE ARGENTINE'S GUNS

The Repairman does not use the guns he invented as the Argentine, but these unique weapons remain in circulation. Rick Ribál seeks to destroy his creations so they cannot be used for further evil. Here are two of the Argentine's more remarkable guns for criminals to wield:

The Gun That Shoots Through Walls:

This gun fires a bullet within a bullet. The main bullet punches through the wall. The sub-munition then fires, hopefully to strike the target on the other side of the wall. Of course, this requires some way to see the target. Rick Ribál also invented a system of tiny cameras to plant in a room, linked to a viewscreen that serves as a gunsight, so the gunman could aim at his target.

Rifle: RKA 2d6, Indirect (attack can pass through one intervening barrier with no more than 3 DEF and 4 BODY, +½) (45 Active Points); OAF (gun, -1), STR Minimum (9; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage, -1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 12 Charges (-¼). Total cost: 12 points.

Targeting Cameras: N-Ray Perception (Sight Group) (blocked by normal darkness or radio jamming) (10 Active Points); IAF (tiny hidden cameras, -½), Only to see into one pre-selected and prepared room (-1), Requires a Systems Operation Roll (-½). Total cost: 3 points. Total cost: 15 points.

The Very Long Range Sniper Rifle:

This rifle shoots long, large bullets equipped with small wings and an ultra-miniature avionics system. The bullet never tumbles, and actively returns to its initial flight path, despite deflection by air currents. It is amazingly accurate over great distances. The rifle needs a correspondingly powerful telescopic sight.

Rifle: RKA 2 ½d6, Increased Maximum Range (x5, or 1,500", +¼), No Range Modifier (+½) (70 Active Points); OAF (rifle, -1), STR Minimum (10; STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage, -1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 6 Charges (-¾). Total cost: 16 points.

Telescopic Sight: +14 versus Range Modifiers for Sight Group (21 Active Points); OAF (sight attached to gun, -1), Concentration (0 DCV, -½). Total cost: 8 points.

Total cost: 24 points.

EXAMPLE POWERS FOR AUXILIARY GADGETS VPP

Gas Mask: Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing) (10 Active Points); OAF (gas mask, -1), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (chemical filter, easily obtained, 1 hour, -0), User still needs air (-½). Total cost: 4 points.

Mini-Console, Locator Setting: High Range Radio Perception, Telescopic (+2 versus Range Modifier) (15 Active Points); OAF (radio receiver and antenna, -1), Requires a Systems Operation Roll (-½). Total cost: 6 points.

Mini-Console, Wide Setting: High Range Radio Perception, MegaScale (1" = 1 km, +¼) (15 Active Points); OAF (radio receiver and antenna, -1), Requires a Systems Operation Roll (-½). Total cost: 6 points.

Miniature Shotgun Microphone: +10 versus Range Modifiers for Hearing Group (15 Active Points); OAF (microphone, -1), Requires a Systems Operation Skill Roll (-½), Concentration (½ DCV, must Concentrate throughout, -½), Narrowly directional (-½). Total cost: 4 points.

Radar Monocle: Radar (15 Active Points); OAF (monocular attachment to visor, -1). Total cost: 7 points.

Deep Sonar (Special Gadget): N-Ray Perception (Sight Group) (blocked by soundproofing) (10 Active Points); IAF (sonar emitters and viewscreen, -½), Requires a Systems Operation Roll (-½), Only reveals outlines of objects based on density discontinuities (-½), Only in a fixed and limited area (-½), Extra Time (1 Minute to activate, -¾). Total cost: 3 points.

Hang Glider (Special Gadget): Gliding 10" (10 Active Points); OAF (fold-out hang glider, -1), Concentration (½ DCV, must Concentrate throughout, -½). Total cost: 4 points.

Mimic Microphone (Special Gadget): Hearing Group Images, -3 to PER Rolls (14 Active Points); IAF (hidden microphone and speaker, -½), No Range (-½), Set Effect (mimic one pre-programmed voice, takes hours and recordings of the desired voice to change, -1), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Hour (battery, -¼). Total cost: 4 points.

TYPICAL EQUIPMENT

Asp: HA +3d6
Taser: EB 6d6, NND
 [defense is insulated rED];
 No Range, 6 Charges
Ballistic Cloth Body Armor: Armor (6 PD/6ED)

The Repairman

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 15 | CON | 10 | 12- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 18 | INT | 8 | 13- | PER Roll: 13- |
| 11 | EGO | 2 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 13 | PRE | 3 | 12- | PRE Attack: 2½d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 8 | PD | 5 | | Total: 8 PD (0 rPD) |
| 7 | ED | 4 | | Total: 8 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 2 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 30 | END | 0 | | |
| 28 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristic Cost: 68

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

| Cost | Equipment | END |
|------|---|------|
| 19 | <i>Auxiliary Gadgets:</i> Variable Power Pool, 15-point Reserve; OIF (vest with lots of pockets, -½), Only from Authorized List, difficult to add new slots (-¼) | var |
| 21 | <i>Multi-Gun:</i> Multipower, 42-point Reserve; OAF (Gun, -1) | 0 |
| 2u | 1) <i>Bullet, Normal:</i> RKA 2½d6; OAF (Gun, -1), 16 Charges (-0) | [16] |
| 2u | 2) <i>Bullet, Rubber:</i> EB 8d6; OAF (Gun, -1), 16 Charges (-0) | [16] |
| 2u | 3) <i>Bullet, Tranq:</i> EB 4d6, NND (Defense is Immunity, Force Field or Hardened rPD, +1); OAF (Gun, -1), 16 Charges (-0) | [16] |
| 1u | 4) <i>Mini-Grenade, Flash:</i> Sight Group Flash 5d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex, +½); OAF (Gun, -1), 6 Charges (-¾) | [6] |
| 1u | 5) <i>Mini-Grenade, Smoke:</i> Darkness to Sight Group and Infrared Perception 3" Radius; OAF (Gun, -1), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (-½) | [4] |
| 1u | 6) <i>Mini-Grenade, Web:</i> Entangle 2d6, 2 DEF, Takes No Damage from Physical Attacks (+¼), Area Of Effect (One Hex, +½); OAF (Gun, -1), 6 Charges (-¾) | [6] |
| 1u | 7) <i>Radio Tracer:</i> Images to Radio Group, +3 to PER Rolls; Usable As Attack (Allows Character to "Stick" the Image to a Target, +1), Ranged (+½), 3 Continuing Charges Lasting 5 Hours (+½); OAF (Gun, -1), Set Effect (Detectable Signal, -1), Only Perceivable on Special Radio Frequencies (-0) | [6] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | <i>Goggles:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points); OIF (Goggles, -½) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Goggles:</i> Nightvision; OIF (Goggles, -½) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Swingline:</i> Swinging 10", OIF (Swingline Cuffs, -½) | 2 |
| 7 | <i>Gripping Boots:</i> Clinging; OIF (Boots, -½) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Laser Targeting:</i> +2 Levels on <i>Trick Gun</i> ; OAF (Gun and Sight, -1) | 0 |

Perks

2 Contact: Father Murphy, 11-

Skills

- 10 +1 Overall Level
- 4 +2 versus Range Penalty with Guns
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Bugging 13-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Deduction 13-
- 3 Electronics 13-
- 3 Inventor 13-
- 2 Language: Spanish (Conversational)
- 3 Lockpicking 13-
- 3 Mechanics 13-
- 3 Security Systems 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 3 Systems Operation 13-
- 3 Weaponsmith (Slugthrowers) 13-
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 131

Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

- 20 DNPC: Alma Ribál (Daughter) 11- (Normal, Unaware)
- 15 Hunted: Local Organized Crime 11- (As Pow, NCI, Limited Area)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Very Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Need for Atonement (Common)
- 5 Reputation: Wizard Gunsmith, the Argentine, 11- (Limited Group [gun enthusiasts, assassins])
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 15 Social Limitation: Criminal Record, On Parole (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 200



Mind Over Matter

by Charles Braden

Mentalists and Their Impact

An age ago, before the oceans drank Atlantis and the rise of the sons of Arius, there was an era of adventure. It was during this time that the great mystic T'Sarr was born. T'Sarr was born under the sign of the Great Eclipse, when the sun was dark for a day and the moon hidden for a night. Great signs and portents to herald the coming of the greatest oracle of the age.

Far away, in a galaxy spinward from our own, there dwelt a race of beings known as the Katarie. Although their planet was a cold, desolate place the Katarie grew and thrived by virtue of their powerful minds. The weakest of them could accelerate the growth of food in their underground farms while the strongest could melt stone with a thought.

In the news last night: Another missing child found alive thanks to the mentalist known as Fortune. Fortune, a relative newcomer to our city, has been aiding police in finding the children who are apparently being kidnapped and then released by person or persons unknown. Police have stated that they are closing in on the kidnapper and expect an arrest in a matter of days. When asked about his powers Fortune replied "I've been blessed with a few minimal mental abilities and a great desire to help others. I'm just glad that my ability to see the future, as meager as it may be, has enabled me to help the police find these poor children alive and unharmed."

How many times, as a player, have you heard the GM flatly state "No mentalists... they mess up my plots too easily."

How many times, as a GM, have you cringed as the group mentalist proclaims "Since we have a warrant to search his home, his property, and his person I'm going to use Telepathy on him to discover where he hid the bomb."

Mentalists, characters who possess one or more Mental Powers, cause more extreme reactions than virtually any other character archetype. As enemies, players normally fear them. As characters, they are often loathed by the GM. There seems to be little in the way of middle ground. The following article hopes to find some of that elusive middle ground and give players and GMs alike a few ideas on how to make Mentalists fun and effective but not overpowering.

The GM should give Mentalists a close scrutiny to make sure that their powers won't unduly disrupt his game, but they can be balanced if allowed with caution.

EGO ATTACK

Possibly the most common Mental Power there is, an Ego Attack is similar to an NND Energy Blast with a few important differences. First, Ego Attack can only be blocked by Mental Defense under normal circumstances. In addition, it is invisible to the unaided eye and uses ECV to hit. Also, like other Mental Powers, it has No Range Modifier.

Indeed, one might ask 'Why is Ego Attack so much cheaper than an NND Energy Blast to achieve the same effect?' There are several reasons. The main one is that, unlike NND Energy Blast where the user defines the defense, Ego Attack always uses Mental Defense. Ego Attacks also do not do Knockback.

Ego Attack is not often considered an abusive power and therefore most GMs have no problems with it. It does damage, plain and simple, and therefore its effects are predictable. Unusual Advantages may make an Ego Attack more effective (like Continuous) but they add proportionally to the cost and so balance out.

MIND LINK

This is another Mental Power that is difficult to abuse and thus causes little concern. Mind Link enables the Mentalist to connect with one or more minds in a sort of mental party-line telephone call. The effect is similar to a shallow two-way Telepathic communication, just affecting more people at a time. Since the same thing can be accomplished with a good High Range Radio and a scrambler, Mind Link is not likely to be seen as abusive.

TELEKINESIS

While not technically a 'Mental Power' (it isn't based on ECV), Telekinesis is often seen as a power fitting into the Mentalist mold. However, like the powers discussed above Telekinesis is not often seen as an abusive power. Yes, it can easily be used to frustrate certain types of characters (Martial Artists really hate TK) but no more so than an Entangle. It does less damage point for point than an Energy Blast (3 character points for 2 points of TK Strength) and its effects are both visible and suffer from range modifiers.

One of the advantages of TK is that it can affect targets indirectly. This means that the user can hold items behind a target to hide them or even tap someone on the shoulder to distract them. Both of these feats would require Invisible Power Effects but you get the idea. Again, all of these neat and nifty abilities cost points and thus balance out with the effectiveness of other powers of the same cost.

MIND SCAN

As another staple Mental Power, Mind Scan is a favorite of players. However, the GM must be aware that the power can be built to be overly effective. This can be done easily (and cheaply) by simply buying an inordinate number of Skill Levels with Mind Scan. Such a character can easily upset a criminal investigation that the GM had hoped would last a session or two.

Example: Seeker buys Mind Scan 8d6 for 40 points. He also buys an additional 10 Levels with the power (at 2 points each) for 20 points. The total Active Points in the power is 60, typical for many Superhero games. But with this power Seeker can scan 100,000 minds at a time with no ECV minus thanks to his extra Levels. In a city of a million people that means that Seeker can find the suspect in ten phases if he has the Endurance.

Pretty easy, huh? Kind of makes the cops obsolete if you have enough Mentalists in the city. Just Scan for a minute or so, locate the suspect (who likely has an EGO of under 15), get 25 or more on the 8d6 (about average) and suddenly you have his direction and distance. The Mentalist then moves that way and narrows his scan until he has his quarry.

But not so fast. Minds that the character is not familiar with are at a -1 to -5 to Scan. According to the Mind Scan chart (Fifth Edition pg 134) the character can Scan 1,000 people at a -6. Assuming that the Mentalist has never met the suspect before and the GM assigns him a -4 to the Scan he can still look... but now he'll have to Scan the city 1,000 times to try and hit the target. He can try for more people... at a significant minus to his ECV roll to hit that is. This means that the GM still gets his investigation because the player will have to narrow his search area down to a reasonable number of people in order to have a chance. This represents the best of both worlds; The GM gets his plots more or less the way he planned them and at the same time the player gets to use the powers he spent all those points for.

The key is to limit the number of bonus Levels the character can have to the point where he can't just Scan the whole city at one time. The GM should also be aware of how many dice of Mind Scan the character has. Up to 5d6 can generally be considered a 'tracking level' since a typical roll will only enable the character to determine the direction to the target. At 6d6 an average roll against a normal target will not only determine direction and distance but also enable the Mentalist to use any other Mental Powers he has. This means that he might smite down the suspect with an Ego Attack, command him to freeze with Mind Control or even render him helpless with a Mental Illusion. This is one of the great fears that many GMs face: a character that can reach out and strike down an enemy without regard to distance or line of sight. Pretty scary stuff....

One way around this is to limit the number of dice used through the Mind Scan based on the range to the target. A penalty of -1d6 per mile is not unreasonable and will result in the character being able to attack the target but not simply crush him. Another way to restrict the abuse of Mental Powers used through a Mind Scan is to link the two together. The number rolled for the Mind Scan effect is the maximum that can be done with any other Mental Power.

Example: Seeker has managed to narrow his search for his quarry to a single neighborhood, about 1,000 people. He rolls to hit and succeeds. Next he rolls his 8d6 for effect and gets a total of 23. Since his other Mental Powers are limited to what he gets for Mind Scan effect, any powers he uses through the Scan are limited to 23 points. This means 23 Stun from his Ego Attack, 23 points from Mind Control, and so on.

Mental Powers tied to Mind Scan in this way may take a -¼ Limitation: Effect Limited to Mind Scan Effect.

MENTAL ILLUSIONS

Mental Illusion is one of the more troublesome Mental Powers for GM. One of the reasons that Mental Illusion is sometimes difficult to deal with is the fact that a clever player can use it in an almost endless number of different ways. Assuming that the target has an EGO of 15 and no Mental Defense, a Mentalist with 10d6 of Illusions can slow or stop an enemy by making the street seem like glue. He can also make a new enemy appear where one does not exist and strike the target or fire an Energy Blast at him. More subtle Illusions, like a closed door being open as the target attempts to rush through it, can be just as effective and even easier to create.

Even though the amount of actual damage that an Illusion can cause is limited by the amount rolled on the Illusion dice, the sheer flexibility of this power can cause headaches for the GM. Imagine the result on a Stunned foe if an Illusion is cast on him (while he flies) that up is down. Naturally, the target will try to level out or fly 'up' which might result in an extremely painful crash. This is just one of the ways that Mental Illusions can be made much more effective than the cost of the power might imply.

One way to limit the effectiveness of this power is by strictly adhering to the level of change desired by the character and making less likely events more difficult. This makes it less likely that the character will be able to do complex Illusions without more than the average number of dice.

Example: Seeker, having finally cornered his foe, Dr. Menace, is locked in combat with the villain. Dr. Menace is attempting to escape in his Menace Mobile down a crowded street. Seeker attempts to create an Illusion that the small car in front of Dr. Menace is actually a large truck, in the hope of slowing him down. The GM rules that this is a Major change so Seeker needs EGO+10 to get the desired effect. If Dr. Menace collides with the 'truck' instead of swerving, he will take STUN damage equal to the Illusion roll, if that roll is 20+ Menace's EGO (+10 for the Major Effect, +10 more for STUN damage). However, if Seeker wanted to hurt Menace directly and create an Illusion of a small plane crashing on him the GM might rule that such an unlikely event in the middle of the city requires EGO+20 to completely alter the setting. Thus Seeker would need EGO+30 in order to do STUN damage to Dr. Menace.

This does not mean that characters can't cause damage with their Illusions, only that they have to try and work with their surroundings better to achieve the desired effect. Another possibility is to give the target a bonus on their roll to break out of the Illusion if they successfully make an Intelligence roll. This means that intelligent enemies are more likely to be able to disbelieve that the Illusion is real.

Example: Dr. Menace, with his INT of 20 and his EGO of 15, has a chance to 'break out' of an Illusion that has been used on him. On the first phase after the Illusion is established Dr. Menace attempts his breakout roll. He normally has $(9+EGO/5)$ or a 12 or less to start with. However, because Seeker rolled 15 points over what he needed to get his effect, Dr. Menace now needs $12 - 3 = 9$ or less to break out. Not good. But the GM, knowing how smart Dr. Menace is, allows him to make a complimentary skill roll based on his Intelligence. He makes his INT roll by 2, giving him +1 on his breakout roll.

The GM should feel free to substitute an INT-based Skill roll for the INT roll if he feels it's appropriate. For instance, a pilot with KS: Piloting 13- may use this skill roll instead of his normal INT roll if he's trying to break out of an Illusion based on piloting.

MIND CONTROL

The ultimate headache power for most GMs and one of the main reasons that Mentalists are often barred from many games. A good Mind Control can make an opponent more likely to surrender, force him to give up a hostage, or even something as simple as attack a target he might otherwise avoid. As with Mental Illusions, a clever player can often get more bang for his buck with this Power and seriously disrupt an otherwise well-devised plan of the GMs.

One example of a good Mind Control trick is to get the enemy Martial Artist (whom the character knows has few defenses) to attack the group Brick who is just holding his Phase in preparation for the event. The enemy attacks, doing little damage, and then the Brick rips up a hunk of street covering roughly a hex and pastes said Martial Artist. The Mind Control chart (5ERP203) shows that if the target's EGO+10 can be reached then he will "perform actions he normally wouldn't mind doing." The target will also "believe any statement which does not contradict reality under direct observation." Since holding an action is not normally a visible event the Martial Artist could not know he was being set up. If the character knows his foe has it in for the Brick then the command can be even easier.

Mind Control can, at the request of the GM, be limited in its effect so that it cannot do STUN, for instance. The GM should also remember to pay attention to the wording of the command. If it's at all vague or misunderstood then the target may behave in an unexpected manner or get a bonus to break the control. The Controller must also convey the command to the target somehow. If the power is not bought as Telepathic or carried along a Mind Scan then the command must be verbal. Shouts over a long distance on a battlefield can be misunderstood or not heard at all. A target affected by a Sound Flash will not be hearing anything for a while and may be immune. Remember also that if the target can hear a shouted command, then his friends may hear it as well, and act accordingly.

TELEPATHY

Another Power guaranteed to make the GM shiver, Telepathy is probably the Mental Power that is most easily abused in game play. A brief peek with Telepathy will reveal the target's current thoughts... like, 'Boy I hope they don't ask about that stolen weapon in my basement!' A moderately deep probe will reach into the target's memories and possibly implicate him or her in a crime committed in the past. A deep probe might reveal an otherwise calm person's homicidal tendencies.

One thing that often holds a Telepath in check is the law. In some game worlds Telepathy can be construed as an illegal search. As such, any information gained from such a search will be inadmissible in court. A Telepath that conducts such a search may be the victim of a lawsuit or criminal charges himself.

Another thing that may make Telepathy a less than easy road is the nature of the information being sought. Complex information may require multiple phases to extract. Information of a nature not familiar to the Telepath may be confusing or difficult to understand. If a Telepath wishes to switch from a surface scan to a deep scan, then the target's Psych Limitations may come into play and give him a bonus to break out.

One way to make the Telepath's job a little harder is to insist on a Concentration or Extra Time Limit on the power. This means that the Telepath can still use his power, but it will require time, making him more vulnerable to attack. Another way is to state that the target must be unconscious or not resisting in order to get more than a surface scan. Such a Limitation would be worth -1/2 in most games.

In the instance of the Telepath that decides to disregard the law and read the suspect's mind anyway, grave repercussions should result in many cases. Even if the hostage is recovered, the bomb disarmed or the crime solved, the perpetrators will likely go free. This will upset the local authorities to no end, as they now have to try and catch the criminal again in a different crime. Not an easy thing when the suspect is now aware that he's being observed. The restrictions on legal searches will mean that the Telepath will either need a law enforcement representative, and a search warrant or very strong probable cause. Regardless, once the suspect calls for legal counsel, any Telepathic scans will likely be delayed too long to be useful.



Crossing Over

by Joseph J. Parton

Worlds Beyond Measure

Extra-Dimensional Movement. The “Stop-Signed” power that can send the most experienced GM running for cover. In fact, some GMs would feel safer giving a monkey a gun than letting a player jump dimensions and, in most cases, they would be right. But it doesn’t have to be this way. Extra-Dimensional Movement can be a fantastic way of expanding your gaming world, allowing new insights into old heroes, villains, and settings. It can let the brave GM explore new themes, attitudes, and environments without harming their current setting. It can also add (pardon the pun) a whole new dimension of fun to your existing game, and all the GM has to do is be brave, be smart, and be just crazy enough to try.

No one article can hope to cover all of the ins and outs of such a broad topic, even a full length sourcebook would find it impossible to cover the, literally, infinite number of alternate worlds and dimensions. Instead what this article will try and cover are the basic types and styles of such worlds, as well as providing some interesting plot hooks and examples of the power that players and GMs, new and old, of the *HERO System* can use to liven and expand their existing games.

Why should any GM even consider using alternate dimensions in their game? Well, they allow many of the exact same stories and adventures possible in the always-popular Time Travel genre without any of the mind (and game) destroying paradoxes that can arise from such journeys. Also, they allow GMs to push the limits and play out incredibly big scale events and scenarios on a battlefield that can be left behind afterwards with out any of the long-term, possibly campaign ending, effects in their own setting. Do you want to destroy the world? Using extra dimensions you can, and still have the Characters end up back home nice and safe in their own beds at the end of the session.

Once you have decided to make use of extra dimensions the next thing to do is decide exactly how extra dimensions will work in his campaign. Are there an infinite number of them where anything and everything is possible? Or are there only very few dimensions in their game, possibly only one? Also, how will the heroes journey to these dimensions and how will they get back home?

One thing to remember is that once you open the can of worms that Alternate Worlds presents it can some times be difficult for heroes to know for sure if they have made it back to their one true dimension. This can be especially difficult if you are using an infinite number of

worlds very similar to your own setting. One thing a GM might wish to consider is setting up an “Anchor” in the heroes’ home world. An “Anchor” can be anything you decided upon, but it is something that the hero knows to exist *only* in their home dimension and nowhere else. Once they find their way back to this “Anchor” then they know that they have truly returned home.

There are three main types of extra dimensions: Mirror Worlds, Fantastic Worlds, and Elemental Worlds. What follows is a brief description of each.

Types of Alternate Worlds

MIRROR WORLDS

Mirror Worlds, also know as Alternate Earths, are dimensions that exist as “Earths That Could Have Been.” These are by far the most common of extra-dimensions and will most likely make up the majority of locations in any game. In fiction, Mirror Worlds get their name from the fact that they are often used to show the characters a dark or distorted reflection of themselves or their world. This should also be one to the goals of the GM.

Mirror Worlds are also useful in showing how every action the heroes or NPCs take can affect the world for the better... or the worse. Players can experience alternate earths where one small change in the past could have lead to a world much more advanced then what they are used to, or to a world that has been blasted back to the stone-age. If the GM wishes he can “revisit” previous battles that the characters have fought and show them how thing might have been different for everyone if they had won (or lost). In many ways, Mirror Worlds can act like the Three Ghosts from Charles Dickens’ *A Cristmas Carol* – showing the players what they, the world, and their DNPCs might have been like if they had taken a different path in life.

Using an alternate earth to show or teach lessons can be interesting, but GMs should be careful and avoid “preaching” their own beliefs or views in these cases. A world which the Nazis won WWII because America never entered the war, can showcase and reaffirm the players’ belief in standing up to the enemies of society, despite the dangers and costs, both physical and emotional, but be careful to keep the focus on the adventure and not the politics of the situation.

Mirror Worlds can also be of great use as a tool for foreshadowing future events in your campaign. For example, the players, while on an unrelated adventure on an alternate earth, might read about a politician who leads the world to the brink of nuclear war. Then, once they get back

home, they discover that their world's version of the same man has begun running for office. What will the players do? Can they really try and stop this man for something his alternate version did? Will that grim reality become their own?

Mirror Worlds do not just have to be about "heavy" subject matter though. They can also be great ways to let off some steam and have a laugh. Have the players fight evil versions of themselves (or maybe even **play** evil versions of themselves), or in a twist have some *really good* versions of the players show up, convinced the players are the evil versions of *themselves* (this works best when the players are playing dark, antiheroes), determined to take them down.

Despite the infinite number of them, the one thing all Mirror Worlds have in common is that all of the regular rules governing nature, reality and powers apply there just as they do in your regular campaign (for places where the old rules need no longer apply see the Fantastic Worlds section below).

MIRROR EARTH PLOT HOOKS:

On a Mirror Earth (OAME), aliens have enslaved humanity and super beings are forced to fight each other in giant gladiatorial arenas. A ragtag group of rebels have managed to breach the fabric between dimensions and seek out the heroes, hoping that they will travel back with them and help reclaim their world.

OAME a supervillain has killed the character's alternate self. Now that alternate version's DNPC has contacted the hero and is begging him to come through and avenge his alternate version's murder. But how will the hero defeat a villain who has already killed "him" once before?

OAME superheroes have taken command of all government, military, and police functions and they rule over regular humanity with an iron fist, using powers such as telepathy and precognition to arrest people before they have even committed a crime. Although it is in the name of the greater good, will the heroes really stand by and let this perversion of justice continue? And by even thinking about it, have they already become hunted criminals?

FANTASTIC WORLDS

These are dimensions that can very greatly from our regular world, either in setting, in "rules" or both. They require more work on the part of the GM to prepare and describe, but the extra effort can be well worth it. Fantastic worlds allow the GM's imagination to run free. Want to play in a magic-filled medieval fantasy setting for a session of two? No problem. How about a story on a far future world orbiting a dying star? Sure, if that's what you like.

The most important thing to remember about these types of worlds is that the rules are what you make them. All bets are off, and the GM should use that to make things very interesting for the players. In this world are the character powers more powerful (double the active points) or less (quarter the active points)? Maybe their powers do not work at all? Or maybe only magical powers work here? It is up for the GM to decide what would be the most interesting and fun experience for him and his players.

Fantastic worlds can also allow the players the chance to interact with any famous characters, myth, and legends that the GM will allow. Hang out with the Norse Gods. Fight alongside Amazon Princesses. Live the dream.

Fantastic worlds can serve as great "vacations" away from a standard superhero game. By taking away all of the heroes' superpowers and placing them in a medieval fantasy world you can allow the players to experience a whole other world of game play while still using the same characters and personalities that they know and love. It can also force them to rely more on their skills, talents and wits, rather than brute force. Likewise, in a normally low-powered game it can allow the players to experience powers beyond their wildest dreams. They may never want to return home.

FANTASTIC WORLD PLOT HOOKS:

The heroes find themselves On a Fantastic World (OAFW) where their superpowers do not work and all Characteristics return to normal human levels. Unfortunately for the characters, the supervillains native to this dimension do not suffer the same drawbacks. Will the heroes be able to stand up and make a difference without their powers, or will they run and hide? What is that makes them heroes anyways, is it *just* their powers or is it something more?

OAFW the heroes find that their powers are slowly getting more *powerful* as time goes by. At first this is fantastic, then the headaches start... Every use of a power is causing more and more internal damage that even Regeneration cannot heal. Soon it is a race against time to find a way home before their supercharged powers literally rip them apart. Unfortunately, enemies are pursuing them and they have to constantly use their powers to fend them off.

The Fiendish Dr. Tomorrow has located a dimension rich in the mineral Torbinium, an essential ingredient in the making of Giant Death-Rays. He is kidnapping women from across the globe, including any female DNPCs, to work in the Torbinium mines. Now, it is up to the heroes to save "The Slave Women of Dimension X."

Elemental Worlds

Perhaps the simplest of the Extra-Dimensions, Elemental Worlds, sometimes called Elemental Planes, are dimensions composed of the very basic forces of nature. Earth, Air, Fire and Water are most common, but many others can exist in your campaign. All manner of Electromagnetic Radiation can have their own dimensions, as can other, less expected but still very natural, forces. Hate, Love, Fear. All of these can be dimensions if the GM so decides. Worlds of Nightmares, Dreams, Good, and Evil also fall under the heading of Elemental Worlds.

Although sometimes hard to find uses for in the most games, Elemental Worlds can often serve as the source of a villain's powers, or, in the case of Nightmare and Dream realms, the chance for very odd and dangerous psychological explorations by the heroes.

The most important thing to remember about Elemental Worlds is that they are PRIMAL. They are harsh, dangerous worlds stripped away of everything but their very base natures. They are places mankind was never meant to venture into and the only reward for carelessness in an Elemental World is death.

ELEMENTAL WORLD PLOT HOOKS:

A new, incredibly powerful, supervillain has come to town. All heroes who have tried to stop him have failed. He seems to have access to almost infinite levels of power. Just when things are at their darkest, one of the characters' scientific contacts makes a discovery. Whenever the supervillain uses his powers, the walls between dimensions seem to weaken. Is it possible that this villain has somehow tapped into a dimension of pure power and is using it to fuel his dark ambitions? Now, can the heroes find a way to separate the villain from his extra-dimensional power source before it is too late?

Strange and unexplained "Hot Spots" are appearing across the planet, with temperatures in some areas reaching such heights that water is boiling and paper is suddenly combusting. Talk about global warming! Investigation shows that the Dimension of Fire is burning through into our world, but how can the heroes stop such an awesome force of nature? And, who would want to cause such a disaster and why...?

As an alternative to the Fire Dimension in the plot hook above, have the wall between our dimension and the Water Dimension "spring a leak." Now with the Earth rapidly flooding, the heroes have to somehow find a way to plug the extra-dimensional hole and stop the flood to end all floods.

So, now you know where you are going. The next question is....

How to Get There

In many cases, the heroes will not have any control over any extra-dimension travel that they partake in. It will be a plot device, used and controlled by the GM, to add excitement to a campaign. Scientific experiments gone wrong, accidents with ancient artifacts, and mystical spells and curses will usually send the heroes on their way. The source of the adventure will be exploring the strange new world and somehow finding their way home.

However, some GMs may wish for the heroes to have the power to travel to alternate dimensions when necessary, and how you cross over can be just as interesting and fun as where you eventually end up. So if you are going to Cross Dimensions, you might as well do it in style.

To this end it is recommended that in all but the most cosmically powered games the power *Extra-Dimensional Movement* be used in conjunction with the Power Limitation *Focus*. This allows the GM some control over the heroes' access to dimensional travel, and prevents players from using dimensional travel as an easy escape from dangerous situations or for quick local jaunts.

These Foci can be as elaborate and convoluted as the players wish and the GM allows. As long as it adds character and flavor to the focus, and fits within the campaign's guidelines, nothing is impossible and every *Extra-Dimensional Movement* device and adventure can, and should, by their very nature, be extraordinary.

So, in closing, here are three examples that could be used as is, or modified for your campaign, to get your players "crossing over."

Dr. Longbottom's Cross-Dimensional Chamber

Description: A large metal cylinder that still looks much like the deep-sea pressure chamber Dr. Longbottom built it from. Originally built to help locate and rescue "The Slave Women of Dimension X" Dr. Longbottom now uses it to explore the infinite number of worlds adjacent to our own. Using advanced Quantum Particle Alteration Techniques, made possible by a large and steady supply of Ether, the Cross-Dimensional Chamber recreates the conditions of alternate dimensions, down to the tiniest variable, inside its walls. Then, when the environment inside the chamber *exactly* matches the environment of the target dimension, its occupants can open the inner door and walk across to that other world.

Game Information: The Cross-Dimensional Chamber creates a gateway for heroes to cross between dimensions. Outside of the chamber, Dr. Longbottom, or someone else trained in its use, operates the control panel and makes the necessary modifications to the environment inside so that it matches the target dimension. The exact details of the target dimension must be known before use, or the "Cross-Dimensional Scanner" must be used to locate and "read" the other dimension's environment first. If the other dimension is hostile to human life (a vacuum, high radiation, or heat), characters inside the chamber must take the proper precautions (safety suits, power armor) or suffer the same effects as if they were on the surface of that world. Once the correct conditions are met, the inner door can be opened, and they can cross into the alternate dimension. The gateway will remain open for as long as the door is open and the conditions inside the chamber remain constant. As an important safety measure Dr. Longbottom built the chamber so that only one door, the outer door (for entering and exiting the chamber) or the inner door (for crossing over) can be open at once. This prevents a possible hostile environment (or invading force) from spilling out uncontrollably into our world.

The Cross-Dimensional Chamber: Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Dimension, Any Location), Usable By Others (+1/4), Area Of Effect (One Hex, +1/2), Variable Special Effects (Any SFX, +1/2), Continuous (+1) (146 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2), Arrangement (-1/4), Extra Time (1 Minute, Character May Take No Other Actions, -1 3/4), Gate (-1/2), Activation Roll 14- (-1/2), 4 Recoverable Charges (Usable Only Once Every Six Hours, -1/2); Total Cost: 22 points.

Merick's Ring of the Summoned Hero (a/k/a Hitching-A-Ride)

Description: A rather plain-looking ring with a large, non-valuable stone set in it. Totally unremarkable at first glance, but when the stone is pressed, it triggers what is perhaps one of the most annoying and potentially dangerous Extra-Dimensional Movement foci ever created.

Crafted by old, powerful (and some would say slightly befuddled) sorcerer, Merick's Ring of the Summoned Hero magically "intercepts" or "hitch-hikes" along any mystical summoning taking place anywhere in the entire multiverse of dimensions, and sends the ring's wearer (and anyone unfortunate enough to be in contact with him) to that location instead.

The wearer of the ring has no choice in his destination and, as a strange side effect, often finds himself compelled to help the summoner as if he had been the intended object or person of the original spell. Since there are an infinite number of alternate dimensions, there will always be someone or something, somewhere using the power of summoning at any time, and if the ring is activated the wearer will always have somewhere to go and someone to help.

Game Information: Fairly simple in its creation and design, the Ring of the Summoned Hero can be a great plot device to send heroes on all sorts of seemingly random (mis)adventures. It allows the GM a great way to "force" players into adventures, situations and plot devices that they normally would never accept, fall for, or think of, while still being staying "in game." It can also be a great way of fitting in the occasional one-shot unusual adventures or purchased modules that would not normally "fit" in your regular game universe.

This item can also be dangerous, because it allows the players an "escape" from dangerous situations, but this can be avoided by reminding the players that once they start leaping dimensions, and putting things right, they may never find their way back home ("Oh, boy...") and where they end up could be much worse than where they are leaving.

Hitching-A-Ride: Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Dimension, Any Location), Usable Simultaneously (up to 4 people at once; Others Must Be Touching User, +3/4) (79 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1 1/4), No Conscious Control (Only Effects Cannot Be Controlled, Only to "Hitchhike", -1), IIF (Magic Ring, -1/4); Total Cost: 22.

The Scroll of the Bloody Steps

Description: This ancient artifact is one of eight still believed to be in existence. Tibetan monks originally created it in the early 7th Century using a dark and powerful ritual that has since been lost with the passage of time. When it was still being practiced, wise monks would ritually cut the soles of their feet and walk across sheets of parchment in a well-choreographed series of steps leaving behind a trail of bloody footprints. As they reached the end of the parchment they would cross over into the alternate mystical dimension known only as the Badlands.

Legend has it that anyone who rolls out the parchment and walks barefoot across it, being careful to stay on the exact footprints of the original creator, will also find themselves crossing over into the Badlands.

Originally, it is believed, there were up to 30 of these scrolls, but time, political upheaval, and the very fragile nature of the rice paper they were created with, has left only a few of these scrolls still in existence. To collectors of mystical items and to the students of dark and forbidden lore these few remaining scrolls are priceless gateways to an alternate dimension no longer reachable by any other mystical means. Any ambitious mystic learning of the existence or location of one of these scrolls would not be above murder to acquire it.

Gaming information: Knowing your destination on the other side of your journey is not necessary, the scroll will transport you across no matter what, although the location you end up in is completely at the discretion of the GM. Once the heroes become familiar with some of the geography of the Badlands, they can try and journey to any location that they can firmly picture in their minds. They must concentrate on this location during the crossing and it is not always completely accurate. Deviations of up to 5 miles from the intended location are common.

Apart from following in the exact footprints on the scroll there are other, not as well known, rules for making the scroll work. First, it must be laid out facing directly east to cross over, and then placed facing directly west, as it is located in the Badlands, to make the journey back. It takes great concentration to make sure that you are placing your feet in exactly the right location on the scroll and the strain of making the trip can be quite taxing on the body. Lenient GMs may allow characters to use the scroll to attempt the crossing in socks, or even shoes, but it is recommended that if they do so they take an equal amount of STUN damage (or, in extreme cases, even BODY damage) to that of the regular END drain they suffer.

Up to four people can use the scroll at one time, although the other users must start walking the scroll before the person in front of them finishes his journey across. As soon as the last person to cross has reached the end, the scroll rolls up behind him and can be found at his feet on the other side, ready to be used again.

Scroll of the Bloody Steps: Extra-Dimensional Movement (Single Dimension, Any Location), Usable Simultaneously (up to 4 People at Once, +³/₄) (44 Active Points); Independent (-2), Increased Endurance Cost (5x END, -2), OAF Fragile (-1¹/₄), Arrangement (-¹/₄), Gestures (-¹/₄), Concentration (¹/₂ DCV, -¹/₄); Total Cost: 6 points.



**EDITOR'S
NOTE**

The contents of this article are *not* "official" HERO System rules, and are presented as an alternative for those wishing to experiment with the game system.

Deconstructing DEX by Gary Mei**Practicing Safe DEX**

DEX is one of those Characteristics that in my opinion gives far too much bang for the buck. +3 DEX costs 6 points (after the savings for SPD which virtually all characters buy up) and gives the following:

- +1 OCV with all combat
- +1 DCV with all combat
- +3 Initiative
- +3/5 Agility Skills
- +3/5 Dex Rolls

Let's compare alternatives.

+1 General Combat Skill Level costs 8 points and gives +1 OCV or +1 DCV or +½ DC or +1 ECV (with GM permission). It's 2 points more expensive and doesn't provide any bonuses to Initiative or Skill Rolls. Plus it only provides 1 total CV rather than the 2 that come with the DEX. Its only advantages are possible use as ECV and ability to trade for some damage. It just simply doesn't stack up.

+1 CSL with a broad group such as Ranged Attacks or Hand-to-Hand Attacks costs 5 points. It gives +1 OCV or +1 Limited DCV or +½ DC. It's 1 point cheaper than the DEX, but it provides only half of the total CVs as the DEX, and any DCV it applies is limited to the same type of attacks that its OCV is applicable to. Thus +1 CSL with Hand-to-Hand combat could only be used as DCV versus Hand-to-Hand attacks, and +1 CSL with Ranged Attacks could only be used as DCV versus Ranged Attacks. The exception is a CSL dedicated to DCV which provides unlimited DCV, but can't be used for OCV, Initiative, or Skill Rolls.

2 or 3 Point CSLs could be efficient, but in general the DEX is a much better buy.

My suggestion is to split Dex into 3 components.

- OCV
- DCV
- Initiative and Skill Rolls

Agility

The basic Characteristic (let's call it Agility) would remain a Primary Characteristic at a cost of 1 Point. Agility Skill Rolls and DEX Rolls would be calculated at 9 + (Agility/5), and Initiative would be based on Agility.

NEGATIVE AGILITY

The penalties for Negative DEX in 5ER are far too harsh if Agility is a 1 Point Characteristic. This criticism also applies to INT or PRE since it's relatively easy to Drain most characters to negative values, and most characters would be devastated by a Drain of any of these. One simple fix is to treat the first 10 points of any Characteristic as a Defense for the purpose of Adjustment Powers. Alternatively, you can ignore the worst aspects of negative characteristics (needing to make a DEX Roll to attack or move), and simply treat Negative Agility normally. Initiative would be based on the negative value and Agility or DEX Rolls would drop below 9- using the negative total to determine the final roll.

Combat Values**OFFENSIVE COMBAT VALUE (OCV)**

OCV would be considered a Special Power that costs 5 points to provide +1 to hit an opponent using a standard attack. It is Constant and costs no Endurance. +2 OCV may be traded to add +1 DC to an attack, but only if there are no Limitations on the OCV.

DEFENSIVE COMBAT VALUE (DCV)

DCV would be considered a Special Power that costs 5 points to provide a +1 to avoid being hit by an opponent using a standard attack. It is Constant and costs no Endurance.

Power Frameworks

Because OCV and DCV are considered Special Powers, they must receive GM permission to be placed in a Power Framework. They may be placed in an Elemental Control if they take the *Costs Endurance* Limitation.

Normal Characteristic Maxima

In a campaign where Normal Characteristic Maxima apply:

- Agility would have a maximum value of 20 normally, 15 for Age 40+, and 10 for Age 60+
- OCV/DCV would have a maximum value of 7 normally, 5 for Age 40+, and 3 for Age 60+

Of course any OCV/DCV bought as a Power or Talent would not be subject to this.

Possible Limitations

APPLIES TO A BROAD GROUP OF ATTACKS (-½)

OCV or DCV with this Limitation apply to a broad group of attacks such as Ranges or Hand-to-Hand. This Limitation may also apply to other broad groups with GM permission such as US Military Weapons. DCV with this Limitation apply to Ranged or Hand-to-Hand attacks depending on which attack the CSL is applicable to (this DCV applies versus all attacks while Dodging).

Example: Eagle Eye is excellent with Ranged weapons. He purchases +4 OCV (20 Active Points); Applies to a Broad Group of Attacks (-½) for a total of 13 points. He now has +4 to hit when using a Ranged Attack.

Example: The Boxer is very good at avoiding damage against Hand-to-Hand attacks, but he's no better at dodging a bullet or laser than anyone else. He purchases +3 DCV (15 Active Points); Applies to a Broad Group of Attacks (-½) for a total of 10 points. Now he has +3 to avoid being hit by any Hand-to-Hand attack, but Ranged Attacks ignore this +3.

Example: A targeting computer that is part of Metal Monstrosity's powered armor purchases +4 OCV (20 Active Points); OIF (-½), Applies Only to Ranged Attacks (-½) for 10 points.

APPLIES TO A TIGHT GROUP OF ATTACKS (-1) ▲

OCV or DCV with this Limitation apply to a tight group of attacks such as 3 related Maneuvers/Attacks, all Swords, a single Martial Arts style, or a single Multipower. DCV with this Limitation apply only while the character is using that specific type of attack and only apply to Ranged or Hand-to-Hand attacks depending on which attack the CSL is applicable to (this DCV applies versus all attacks while Dodging if Martial Dodge is included in the Martial Arts style or Dodge is one of the 3 related Maneuvers selected). Halve this Limitation value for DCV if the DCV applies to all Attacks while the MA is using a Martial Maneuver (Ranged Martial Maneuvers count as long as the Character has at least as many Points in Standard Maneuvers as Ranged Maneuvers)

Example: The Swordsman is lightning with any sword. He purchases +3 OCV (15 Active Points); Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-1) for a total of 7

points. He now has +3 to hit when using any sword type weapon.

Example: Night Marauder uses the Shadow Martial Arts style. He purchases +4 DCV (20 Active Points); Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-1) for 10 points. Now whenever he uses a Shadow Martial Arts Maneuver, he has a +1 to avoid being hit by a Hand-to-Hand attack, or +1 versus all attacks while Martial Dodging.

APPLIES TO A SINGLE ATTACK OR MANEUVER (-1½)

OCV with this Limitation applies to only one Attack or Maneuver. DCV may not take this Limitation.

Example: An M-16 has +2 OCV built into it. It is 10 Active Points and has OAF (-1), Applies to a Single Attack or Maneuver (-1½) for a total of 3 points. Now anyone using the M-16 has +2 to hit.

Example: Grizzly Bear is especially good at hugging an opponent. He purchases +2 OCV (10 Active Points); Applies to Grab (-1½) for 4 points. Now he's +2 to Grab any opponent, but those Levels do not help his Strike or Block.

Combat Skill Levels

Regular Combat Skill Levels may be treated as Talents under this system:

- **+1 with a Single Attack** would be built as +1 OCV; Applies to a Single Attack or Maneuver (-1½) for 2 points.
- **+1 OCV with a Tight Group of Attacks** would be built as +1 OCV; Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-1) for 2½ points.
- **+1 with Martial Arts** (where the CSL could be used for OCV or DCV) would be built as +1 OCV and +1 DCV; Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-1), Lockout (-½) for 4 points. The Lockout applies since the Character is unable to use the 'CSL' for OCV when it's set in DCV and vice versa.
- **+1 with Martial Arts** (where the CSL could be used for OCV or DCV and the DCV applies versus all attacks while the Character uses a Martial Maneuver) would be built as +1 OCV; Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-1), Lockout (-½) for 2 points **plus** +1 DCV; Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-½),

Lockout (-1/2) for 2½ points. Total cost: 4 ½ points.

- **+1 with Ranged or Hand-to-Hand Attacks** would be built as +1 OCV and +1 DCV; Applies to a Broad Group of Attacks (-1/2), Lockout (-1/2) for 5 points. Alternatively, +1 unlimited DCV would cost 5 points under both the old and new system.
- **+1 with All Combat** is a little trickier. It would be built thus, for 8 points.

| | |
|----|------------|
| 5 | Multipower |
| 1u | 1) +1 OCV |
| 1u | 2) +1 DCV |
| 1u | 3) +1 ECV |

I would recommend keeping all the half points under this method since each represents a significant percentage of the cost for each of these Talents.

PENALTY SKILL LEVELS

A Penalty Skill Level would be built in the same way as a regular CSL with the addition of an additional ‘Only to Cancel Penalties’ Limitation (-1/2). Thus:

- **+1 PSL with a Single Penalty** would be built as +1 OCV; Applies to a Single Attack (-1/2) Only to Cancel Penalties (-1/2) for 1½ points (rounded).
- **+1 PSL with a Tight Group of Penalties** would be built as +1 OCV; Applies to a Tight Group of Attacks (-1), Only to Cancel Penalties (-1/2) for 2 points.
- **+1 PSL with Any Penalty** would be built as +1 OCV; Only to Cancel Penalties (-1/2) for 3 points.

PLUSES

The costs of OCV/DCV/Initiative/Skill Rolls matches their utility compared to other Powers/Skills/Talents of similar cost.

Previously, DEX was such a bargain that there was a virtual ‘DEX Arms Race’ where the slowest, clumsiest bricks were as agile as Olympic Gymnasts or the best Martial Artists or Boxers in the real world. Now with the subsidy removed, there is likely to be a wide range of Agility with conception (and the number of Agility Skills) being the most important factor.

This makes Agility comparable to INT or PRE, which give +1 to a broad group of skills. Elegance and uniformity in the rules is always a plus.

General OCV/DCV is fairly expensive but Limited OCV/DCV is relatively cheap. This seems to fit many character conceptions better.

CV, CSLs, and PSLs now all relate to each other in an obvious and uniform way.

Potential Problems

The most obvious is that total CV has become much more expensive. A Character that was previously dependent on high DEX now has less advantage over other characters. This is partially made up by the fact that the rules for Martial Arts are fairly generous and Martial Artists and Speedsters were the ones most dependent on high DEX.

Since total CVs are likely to be lower than under a standard *Champions* game, there is less spread between Supers and Normals. Supers are less imposing (compared to Normals) than previously. This may or may not fit genre.

-1 as a Limitation value for ‘Martial Arts Only’ feels a little high, but it’s the logical progression from -1/2 for ‘Range/Hand-to-Hand Only’. It becomes relatively cheap to become virtually unhittable with Martial Arts, but the standard +1 CSL with MA only costs 3 Points instead of 2½ and it can be used for OCV or damage instead of just DCV.

The GM must be very careful to watch that the CV range isn’t too skewed or unbalanced. This observation applies to regular HERO System games as well, of course.

Design Notes

I tried to get a ‘CSL’ to have the same cost as its old value. For the most part, I succeeded, but there are a few slight differences. The ‘PSLs’ match perfectly.

A CSL with Martial Arts costs 4 points now instead of 3. A small but very significant difference. On the plus side, the MA could spend a mere 4½ Points and purchase a much more useful ‘CSL.’

I allow only non-Limited OCV to trade for DCs because otherwise there would be the strange situation where +2 CSLs would be cheaper and more useful than +1 DC at 0 END. Under the current HERO System rules, for example, EB +1d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2) costs 7½ points while +2 CSLs with the EB (and a tight group or two additional related attacks) would cost 6 points. The CSLs allow you to increase damage or OCV, at a cheaper price than the EB.

