



ADAMANT ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

M&M
SUPERLINK

#1

AMAZING TRIPLE ACTION

ENTER...

JAGUAR!



FANTASTIC
FIRST ISSUE!



ADAMANT ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS:

AMAZING TRIPLE ACTION

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to issue one of *Amazing Triple Action*, Adamant Entertainment's new **M&M Superlink** series. Every issue will include a grab-bag of stuff that you can plug straight into your M&M supers game, as well as plenty of advice and inspiration.

Why the name? Easy. There'll be lots of Action. You'll be Amazed. And each issue will feature a Triple helping of 'First Appearances' giving new characters for your games.

The name is also a relatively obscure comics shout-out. Back in the early 70s, the Marvel Comics Group decided to reprint classic '60s runs of some of its headline comics. These reprints gave a new generation of fans a rare chance to see what came before.

And for my money, 'what came before' is a big part of why supers gaming is so appealing. The sense of stepping into a big interconnected world, full of complexity and surprising connections, is the stuff of awesome games.

Marvel Triple Action was the reprint book for the Avengers, Marvel's premier super-team at the time. The team concept of the Avengers lends itself well to gaming: a bunch of professional heroes, the best of the best, coping with endless personal dramas while they stand side-by-side against the greatest threats the world could face. That's a great recipe for a supers game.

The Avengers is also a good model for supers games in another way: the characters are kinda weird. An intangible robot, a guy who controls ants, a girl who controls probability except when it's magic except when it's both? Sounds like the answers I get when I ask a new group, "Do you have any ideas for characters?" The Avengers always made a virtue of its unusual cast, and that gives me confidence to roll with it when players get enthusiastic about ideas that seem, to me, really odd. If the group communicates, there's always a way to make it work.

The centerpiece of each issue of ATA is the triple threat of **First Appearance** entries. One entry will be heroic, one villainous, and the third will usually sit somewhere in the middle. Some of the characters you'll meet over the next twelve issues are drawn from supers games I've run in the past. They've all been heavily revised into new versions that are perfect for ATA. The Jaguar is loosely based on a character created by my friend Bradley Rose for a game I ran a dozen years ago; Bradley has kindly given his permission for me to reimagine Jaguar for this project. (Cheers, man.)

TrickBox is where we put archetypes, new powers, new skills, etc. A box of tricks for your campaign (Get it?) **Insider Info** is a repository of organizations, groups and conspiracies. **Fight Scenery** gives you a locations. **ATA Presents** will feature an adventure plan in every installment. **Action Stations** is our column of general game advice, and **Origin Issues** will be an ongoing column providing advice on setting up a new superhero campaign.

Right, enough of me. Amazing Action awaits - get into it!



FIRST APPEARANCE

SKIMMER & C.J.

He was one of the best-known members of the Power Team - the smiling young genius weaving through battles on his flying robot sidekick. The Power Team has disbanded, but he'll keep helping the helpless and saving the world. Wouldn't you?

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Ben Lehrer

Age: 26

Ethnicity: Jewish American

Faith: Jewish (non-practicing)

Hair: Black

Identity: Publicly known.

POWER DESCRIPTION

Skimmer is a genius. He keeps several special devices to hand, and is always accompanied by his sidekick C.J.

APPEARANCE & PERSONALITY

Skimmer is short with unruly black hair, and wears a protective suit with lots of pockets for knick-knacks and gear. His lean frame is well-toned. He smiles a lot, and when he gets enthusiastic he talks faster and faster.

Skimmer is an unwitting charmer, completely unaffected and earnest with a ready ability to make friends. He's a natural conciliator and hates arguments.



PAST

Ben Lehrer was always prodigiously intelligent. By age eight he was building simple robots; by age twelve, his robotic creations amazed experts in the field. At age seventeen he made a breakthrough in the field of Artificial Intelligence: a particular set of AI algorithms interacted in an unexpected way, and the independent computer entity C.J. was the result.

Ben developed a small, sturdy transistorized body for C.J., and soon found himself caught up in a series of puzzling mysteries. Each time, Ben's intuition combined with C.J.'s processing power managed to solve the puzzle and discover the truth.



After solving a number of these mysteries, Ben and C.J. met the Power Team. A battle against the Barren had caused a containment field at the Hite Association Research Center to be damaged; as the Power Team dealt with the Barren, Ben and C.J. tracked down the entity which had escaped from containment. Using a combination of a paradoxical logic puzzle and old-fashioned trickery, Ben and C.J. recaptured it before it could harm anyone.

This success did not go unnoticed. Joe Warlock tracked Ben and C.J. down, and invited them to become support members of the Power Team. Ben eagerly accepted.

With access to the Power Team's laboratories and workshops, whole new worlds of technological invention opened up for Ben. This included the hover technology in the Power Team's Scramble Jet, itself a gift from the secretive Eternity People. Ben figured out how it worked and developed a new robotic body for C.J. This new body took the form of a small flying platform, loaded with comms gear and sensor arrays, and built so that Ben himself could ride on top of it as if it was a tiny surfboard. He wanted to be right in the thick of things, where he could do the most good.

Using the name Skimmer, Ben went on to become a stalwart member of the Power Team, and indeed the only member to remain in the team without a break until its recent dissolution. The young man's unaffected demeanor and cheerful nature won him many fans and admirers, and his obviously brilliant mind and knack for practical solutions earned the obsessive veneration of computer science and engineering graduates everywhere.

DESCRIPTION

Skimmer will probably always be a hero. Retirement holds no appeal for him, and he would feel guilty every time someone got hurt if he wasn't out there trying to stop it.

Ben's immediate parents are both deceased (separate incidents in his teenage years), so his extended

family fills the gap - a wide pool of uncles, aunts and cousins who worry about nothing quite so much as his continuing failure to find a woman to settle down with. The woman might finally have arrived, however - Skimmer has begun seeing fellow ex-Power Teamer, Tornado. The only complication is that she was the one who betrayed the team when it was at its most vulnerable.

C.J.

C.J.'s full name is Completed Job 14.2., based on Ben's old experiment notation system. C.J. is a flying vehicle for Ben, as well as an independent entity in its own right, loaded with a variety of special devices for all occasions and a very dry wit. Skimmer has never been able to replicate or even back up the C.J. algorithms. For the time being, at least, C.J. is a one-off.

THE WORKSHOP NETWORK

Skimmer discovered as a member of the Power Team that he was traveling all over the country, and often the world. Often he would find himself far from his workshop but in desperate need of it. Skimmer's Workshop Network (Sworn) enables people to make their own workshops available to Skimmer should the need arise. This has been enormously successful, and now Skimmer can travel all over and know that an adequate workshop is never far away.

To access the network, Skimmer must log into the internet and go to a hidden, secure server. He can then specify his location and the database will advise on the nearest workshops.

Outside major U.S. and Canadian cities, Skimmer can ensure that there is a workshop nearby by paying for Inspiration; in major U.S. and Canadian cities, there are so many workshops that the absence of one should be treated as a Complication.

POSSIBLE FUTURES

The New Power Team

Working alone doesn't suit Skimmer. He might decide that it's time to bring back the Power Team. Might he ask the characters to help him carry on the legacy?

Virtual Skimmer

Some of Skimmer's newest research is into mental connection with artificial intelligences. A thought communicator with C.J. is at the early prototype stage. This exchange could go horribly wrong. Skimmer's mind could end up stuck in C.J. while his body lies comatose, or perhaps C.J.'s artificial mind would be forced to cope with the complexities of life in a human body.

Who's The Man?

Skimmer's popularity might one day go to his head. He's handsome, smart and famous, which means that if he ever started to believe his own hype, he would find no shortage of willing enablers eager to ride his coat-tails and shut out anyone trying to bring him back down to earth.

SKIMMER (PL 13)

Str -1 (8), **Dex** +2 (14), **Con** +2 (14), **Int** +10 (30), **Wis** +0 (10), **Cha** +0 (10)

Tough +2, **Fort** +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

Skills: Computers +24, Craft (electronic) +24, Craft (mechanical) +24, Disable Device +20, Knowledge (technology) +20, Pilot +12

Feats: Assessment, Benefit (workshop network), Evasion, Inventor, Improvised Tools, Master Plan, Jack Of All Trades, Move-By Action, Redirect, Set Up, Sidekick 38 (C.J.), Skill Mastery (Computers, Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Disable Device)

Powers: Device 8 (headset; *easy to lose, extra effort applies to device*). Area Communication 8: radio; Datalink 5: radio, machine control feat; Sensory Shield 7: all senses; Super-Senses 3: Darkvision, Infravision), Device 4 (grapplerthrower; *hard to lose, extra effort applies to device*); Snare 9: Tether, Retract* (feats).

Combat: Attack +8, Defense +15, Initiative +2

- Grapplerthrower (ranged, Tether and Retract*):

Attack +8, Damage Snare 9

* The Retract power feat is described elsewhere in this issue.

C.J. (PL13)

Str +5 (20), **Dex** +5 (20), **Con** - (-), **Int** +0 (10),

Wis +0 (10), **Cha** -3 (5),

Tough +6, **Fort** +0 (*immune to effects requiring Fort saves unless they also affect objects*), **Ref** +11, **Will** +6

Skills: Computers +15, Notice +13

Feats: Attack Specialization (stunner) 5

Powers: Communication 8 (radio, *area effect, subtle, selective*); Comprehend Machines 2; Datalink 8 (radio, *machine control feat*); Deflect 8 (all ranged attacks, extra: ranged); Flight 2; Obscure 3 (smokescreen, *visual, 25 ft. radius*); Sonic Control 6; Snare 6 (gluespray); Stun 3 (ranged); Super-Senses 17 (accurate audio, *blindsight (radar), direction sense, infravision, microscopic vision, radio, ultrahearing, ultravision; all senses are radius-based*)

Combat: Attack +0, Defense +5, Initiative +5

- Stunner (ranged): Attack +10, Damage Stun 3



JAGUAR

Jaguar is a brooding, angry young man with a chip on his shoulder and troubles down deep. He's dedicated to fighting crime and helping his people - but for how much longer?

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Javier Fox

Age: 19

Ethnicity: Hispanic American

Faith: Catholic

Hair: Black

Identity: Secret.

POWER DESCRIPTION

Jaguar is a boxer, and skilled in hand-to-hand combat. He wears a mystic charm that bestows upon him the strength and speed of a jaguar.

APPEARANCE

Jaguar wears a simple bodysuit that doesn't limit his movement. He's short and has the physique of someone who spends a lot of time in the gym. He rarely, if ever, smiles.

PERSONALITY

Jaguar is not a believer in big causes, but focuses on the immediate situation and what is right or wrong. Mostly, he sees what is wrong. He has a tendency to steam in silence for a long time then explode with anger. He takes things personally and holds grudges. He tries to look out for those who might need help, but doubts have started to creep in...

PAST

Javier Fox was a poor kid growing up in a rough part of town, and boxing kept him out of trouble. He had talent and a shot at a professional career. Then disaster struck - his beloved trainer was killed in a





boxing-related dispute that spun out of control. Javier was so furious he tracked down the culprit and beat him to within an inch of his life. He probably should have gone to prison for that, but the police never even got around to talking to him. Just more proof of how rotten everything was.

Javier sank into depression, alienating his friends and family. Then he met David Whitebird, a young Olahmo Native American from California. Whitebird had walked by mistake into a bar that did not welcome strangers. Javier stepped in to lead him out again. They got to talking, and a cautious friendship developed. Whitebird believed that he had been called to travel to the big city to help people. Javier, bemused, let Whitebird stay with him.

Over the next week, they became close friends, and finally Whitebird told Javier that he now knew the person he was here to help was Javier. He gave a gift to Javier, a mystic jaguar claw pendant, and returned to California.

Javier didn't quite know what to make of this, but he was honored by the gift. Then, when he wore the charm he discovered the real value of the gift. It gave him the strength and speed of a jaguar. Feeling a sense of responsibility, and determined to leave his self-inflicted misery behind him, he set out to help those in trouble as the Jaguar.

DESCRIPTION

Javier never had it easy. His family life was always troubled. He lives in the shadow of his brother, who graduated top honors at military school and went on to a notable career in the army. He gave up the only thing he was ever any good at after it led the murder of the only person he really trusted.

After he accepted the gift of the Jaguar, life somehow got even harder. Everything he did seemed to end up hurting someone he cared about. When he was invited by Joe Warlock to join the Power Team he thought his life had turned a corner - but being on the Power Team was a disaster. He didn't get on with anyone and became increasingly disgusted with the team's

inability to take decisive action when they could. Eventually he walked out on them. Not long after, they self-destructed completely.

Now he's back on his home turf, struggling to get by and to help people who don't seem to want any help, at least not from him. He has started to think he might have made the wrong choice when the power of the Jaguar came to him. Perhaps what the power really wanted was for him to satisfy himself for once? To live for a while like a king, no matter who gets hurt along the way? It hasn't happened yet, but Javier is perilously close to changing sides...

POSSIBLE FUTURES

True Heritage

Javier's link to the Jaguar charm may be due to a genetic connection to the Olahmo people. If he traces his genealogy, he might find that one part of his heritage is Olahmo. Perhaps the Jaguar spirit has chosen him for a reason? Perhaps the power isn't in the charm - it was in him all along?

Possessed

The jaguar spirit may become more active, speaking to Javier, giving him dream-quests, or even possessing him. What does it want? And what will it make Javier sacrifice?

Jaguar Goes Bad

All it takes is one night. Something goes wrong, tempers are lost, and suddenly there's a man down and Javier has his wallet. His financial problems for the week disappear, just like that. And the man was dirty, the money's probably stolen... With these rationalizations, so begins a slippery slope into crime.



JAGUAR (PL10)

(Note: where two scores are divided by a slash, the score on the left is the score when the Jaguar is wearing his mystic pendant, the score on the right is for when he is without the pendant.)

Str +10 (30)/+5 (20), **Dex** +10 (30)/+5 (20), **Con** +8 (26)/+3 (16), **Int** +2 (14), **Wis** +2 (14), **Cha** +2 (14)

Tough +8/+3, **Fort** +13/+8, **Ref** +15/+10, **Will** +7

Skills: Acrobatics +25/+10, Bluff +7, Climb +25/+10, Drive +15/+10, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (Streetwise) +12, Notice +17/+7, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +25/+10, Profession (Boxer) +10

Feats: Boxing suite (All-out Attack, Defensive Attack, Elusive Target, Improved Block, Power Attack, Takedown Attack), and also: Acrobatic Bluff, Attack Focus (Melee) 2, Attack Specialization (unarmed) 2, Dodge Focus 6, Improved Critical (unarmed) 4, Improved Initiative 2, Stunning Attack

Powers: Device (mystic jaguar claw pendant) 9 (easy to lose, extra effort affects user, only the Jaguar can benefit from the device; effects: Enhanced Skill* 10 (+10 Acrobatics, Climb, Notice, Stealth); Enhanced Ability (Str) 10, Enhanced Ability (Dex) 10, Enhanced Ability (Con) 10; Leaping 3, Super-senses (darkvision) 2); Strike 5 (punch, with Mighty Blow feat).

Combat: Attack +4 (Melee +6), Defense +6 (+12 with Dodge), Initiative +5
- Mighty punch: Attack +10, Damage +10 (with or without charm)



* The power **Enhanced Skill** is described elsewhere in this issue.



THE CYBERCORPS:

COIL, SCATTERSHELL & HACKER

Three ex-marines, now cybernetic killers. They will work for anyone with money to pay them.

POWER DESCRIPTION

They each have their own cybernetic modifications, but all of them are extremely tough with phenomenal reactions and an array of deadly weapons.

PAST

All three were expelled from the marines for violence against their commanding officer. One year later they appeared on the scene as thugs-for-hire, transformed into the post-human CyberCorps. Taking jobs for the highest bidder, reveling in their ability to destroy, sadistic and vicious and relentless, they are a continuing threat.

APPEARANCE & DESCRIPTION

Coil (former name: Bernard Cranshaw) is the leader of the trio. He's the tallest of the three, and is muscular and broad-shouldered. His right side is entirely covered in gleaming, polished steel. His right arm has no hand, and instead terminates in a long, heavy whip which sparks with electric energy. The palm of his left hand conceals a small aperture through which he can launch an electronet, which entangles its target in painful electrified mesh.

Scattershell (former name: Gus Polson) is thick-set and bulky, with big metal plates riveted into his torso and over his shoulders. Panels in these plates can pop open to reveal grenade launchers and the barrel of an internal machine gun. His head is untouched by cybernetics and he is the only one of the three who can go undercover - although with his bulk he will full out his suit to an extraordinary degree.

Hacker (former name: Anton van der Looy) is the most sinister of the three - both more slender and taller than Coil, with his nose and jaw concealed behind a black metal guard, and cold emotionless eyes peering out over the top. Both of Hacker's arms have been cut off midway along the fore-arm and replaced by long, gleaming blades. The blades can be retracted into his arms and a basic metal gasping claw extruded instead, but when the blades are fully retracted Hacker cannot bend his arms at the elbow. As a result, the blades are almost always at full extension. This all makes for a problematic mundane existence - Hacker can't, for example, lift a drink to his own lips. These indignities don't seem to bother Hacker in the slightest.

POSSIBLE FUTURES

Who Did This?

The CyberCorps could discover some truth about who or what gave them their cybernetic powers. Perhaps they will be forced to serve some hidden power when he makes his move?

Change Me Back

One of the CyberCorps might change his mind, and want to be restored to normality. How will his colleagues react? How will the heroes? Can he be trusted?

Set Him Free

The wife of one of the CyberCorps appeals to the heroes for help. She thinks her husband is still there, inside the cybernetic craziness. He was never a good man, but he was her husband, and what's happened to him has changed him. Is there any way to rediscover the man within? And is the wife on the level?



COIL (PL 10)

Str +3 (16), **Dex** +3 (16), **Con** +3 (16), **Int** +0 (10), **Wis** +0 (10), **Cha** -1 (8)

Tough +3, **Fort** +15, **Ref** +14, **Will** +11

Skills: Concentration +8, Notice +8

Feats: Chokehold, Improved Grab, Improved Disarm

Powers: Electrowhip: Stun 10 + Snare 10 (cybernetic enhancement; touch range; feat: tethered; Alternate Power: Electronet (ranged), Snare 8 + Stun 8, drawback: limited ammunition, 5 nets only). Super-Strength 10 (cybernetic enhancement; drawback: right arm and torso only).

Combat: Attack +10, Defense +10, Initiative +3
 - Electrowhip (melee): Attack +10, Damage Stun 10 + Snare 10
 - Electronet (ranged, only 5 ammo): Attack +10, Damage Snare 8 + Stun 8

SCATTERSHELL (PL10)

Str +3 (16), **Dex** +2 (14), **Con** +5 (20), **Int** +0 (10), **Wis** -1 (8), **Cha** -1 (8)

Tough +5, **Fort** +15, **Ref** +13, **Will** +12

Skills: Concentration +8, Notice +8

Feats: All-Out Attack, Improved Initiative, Move-By Action

Powers: Explosive launcher in torso: Blast 10 (cybernetic enhancement; extra: area). Torso-mounted machine gun: Blast 10.

Combat: Attack +10, Defense +10, Initiative +6
 - Explosive Launcher in torso (ranged): Attack +10, Damage (area) +10
 - Machine Gun in torso (ranged): Attack +10, Damage +10

HACKER (PL10)

Str +3 (16), **Dex** +5 (20), **Con** +1 (12), **Int** +0 (10), **Wis** +0 (10), **Cha** -1 (8)

Tough +1, **Fort** +13, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

Skills: Concentration +8, Notice +8

Feats: Improved Block, Improved Sunder, Weapon Break

Powers: Bladehands (cybernetic enhancement): Blast 10 (electricity), Deflect 10, Strike 10.

Combat: Attack +10, Defense +10, Initiative +6
 - Blades (melee): Attack +10, Damage +10
 - Electric blast from blades (ranged): Attack +10, Damage +10

NOTE ON PROTECTION

Because their armor is so incomplete, the Protection ability is not really appropriate for the CyberCorps - there are just too many vulnerable spots on their bodies. Instead, the characters have high Defense scores and extremely good saving throws. These high scores represent their efficient computer-assisted reactions and movement, but also their partial armor. In play, they are hard to hit, but once someone tags them on an unarmored spot they tend to go down fast. The GM should keep this in mind when adjudicating special actions taken by the player characters and describing the actions of the CyberCorps.



BONUS FIRST APPEARANCE: KARNIFEX

This mighty alien is here to gather powerful beings to his cause - whether they like it or not.

POWER DESCRIPTION

Karnifex's most significant power is his ability to teleport people without their consent. He can cause a portal to open up around them, and unless they are very quick to dive clear, they will be swept through it to wherever Karnifex desires. He also wears a fearsome suit of armor which issues electric shocks to anyone who strikes it; and has the ability to fatigue everyone in his immediate vicinity.

APPEARANCE

Karnifex is a looming, broad-shouldered 8-foot-tall creature in head-to-foot armor made of some heavy dark metal. His gleaming orange eyes peer through the visor, evaluating everything they see with non-human attentiveness. If he should ever be stripped of his armor, he will still be a fearsome figure, with a muscular humanoid shape and pale green skin.

PAST

After being elected to the position of Karnifex of the Golkoth Empire, his old identity was expunged and he became only and entirely his new position. As Karnifex, he performs special missions for the Emperor, and serves as chief executioner in the frequent purges that keep the empire pure.

Recently, the Golkoth Empire has come under attack by a fearsome and implacable alien foe. They attack without warning and without cease, and the Golkoth cannot stand long against them. The Emperor met with council, and a radical course of action was decided. The Empire needs a Star Entity to fight for them. Only such a being can stand against the invaders.

Karnifex was summoned and given his instructions. On the planet Earth, humans have manifested a range of amazing powers. One among them must be a Star Entity; or, if not, a group of them might be brought to the Empire, where (if their spirits are strong enough) they can be surgically combined into a being who might become a Star Entity. The fate of the Empire is at stake. Karnifex must not fail!

DESCRIPTION

Karnifex has recently arrived on Earth, and sure enough there are plenty of empowered beings here. His path is clear - keep seeking evidence of a genuine Star Entity, and if he is unable to find one, locate a group of beings with sufficient fighting spirit that they could host the Star Force. The invaders press closer, but thanks to the time-altering effects of warp travel, there is enough time to search well and trial some of these empowered beings to determine their fitness for transformation. The fate of the Empire is at stake. If any of the humans try to stop him, Karnifex will not hold back in defeating them. However, he will be loath to kill anyone. Any of these humans could turn out to be a Star Entity. Furthermore, the gift of execution by a full Karnifex is due only to the most honored of prisoners in the Empire; it is not a gift he will bestow on lowly humans if he can possibly avoid it.

POSSIBLE FUTURES

Adrift and Alone

Karnifex has failed - before he could return, the Empire was lost. Now he is stranded at the other end of space on a world which no doubt fears and despises him. What on earth can he do now? Try to conquer it? Try to fit in? Find a way back home to launch a suicidal attack run on the beings that destroyed his people?



KARNIFEX (PL15)

Str +8 (26), **Dex** +2 (14),
Con +0 (10), **Int** +5 (20),
Wis +0 (10), **Cha** +0 (10)
Tough +0, **Fort** +6, **Ref** +5,
Will +6

Skills: Intimidate +10,
 Notice +10

Feats: Karnifex has no
 feats.

Powers: Device 18 (armor,
 hard to lose, extra effort
 affects device; effects:
 Impervious Protection
 15, Stun 15 (as a reaction,
 when hit by a melee attack,
 against the attacker);
 Fatigue 13 (burst area);
 Teleport Portal 10 (can use
 as a ranged attack (Reflex
 DC 20 to avoid); extra:
 accurate; feats: change
 direction, change velocity,
 progression 11)

Combat: Attack +13,
 Defense +12, Initiative +2
 - Unarmed attack: Attack
 +13, Damage +8



TrickBox

ARCHETYPE: GENIUS WITH ROBOT SIDEKICK

(POWER LEVEL 10)

(Tradeoff: Defense 12 vs. Toughness Save 8)

ABILITY SCORES:

STR -1 (8)
DEX +2 (14)
CON +2 (14)
INT +10 (30)
WIS +0 (10)
CHA +0 (10)

SAVES:

Toughness: +2
Fortitude: +2 (+0 base)
Reflex: +8 (+6 base)
Will: +0 (+0 base)

SKILLS:

(Skill ranks are given for ease of adjustment.)

Computers +20 (10 ranks), Craft (electronic) +24 (14 ranks), Craft (mechanical) +24 (14 ranks), Disable Device +20 (10 ranks), Knowledge (technology) +20 (10 ranks), Pilot +12 (10 ranks)

FEATS:

Assessment, Benefit (*choose one*), Evasion, Sidekick 29 (*see below*), Inventor, Improvised Tools, Master Plan, Jack Of All Trades, Move-By Action, Redirect, Set-Up, Skill Mastery (Computers, Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Disable Device)

POWERS:

27 points worth of device powers, such as the following two devices:

- Headset: Device 5 (easy to lose; Area Communication (radio) 5, Datalink (radio) 5 with machine control feat, Sensory Shield (visual) 6, Super-senses (Darkvision, Infravision) 3

- Grapplethrower: Device 4 (easy to lose; Snare 9; feats: tether, retract*)

* the retract power feat for Snare is described elsewhere in this issue

COMBAT:

Attack +5, Defense +12, Initiative +2

POINTS TOTAL:

Abilities 26 + Skills 17 (68 ranks) + Feats 40 + Powers 27 + Combat 34 + Saves 6 = 150

POWER COSTS IN DETAIL:

Device 5 (*headset*):

Base cost 3/rank (easy to lose). 5 ranks provides 25 points of powers in the device.

- Communication 5 (base cost 1/rank, area extra +1/rank = 2/rank; 10pp)

- Datalink 5 (base cost 1/rank, plus Machine Control feat = 1/rank + 1; 6pp)

- Sensory Shield 6, visual (base cost 1/rank; 6pp)

- Super-Senses 3 (Darkvision costs 2, Infravision costs 1; base cost 1/rank; 3pp)

Total cost: 5 ranks at 3/rank = 15pp

Device 4 (*grapplerthrower*):

Base cost 3/rank (easy to lose). 4 ranks provides 20 points of powers in the device.

- Snare 9 (base cost 2/rank, plus Tether and Retract feats = 2/rank + 2; 20pp)

Total cost: 4 ranks at 3/rank = 12pp



ROBOT SIDEKICK (POWER LEVEL 10)

ABILITY SCORES:

STR +5 (20)
DEX +5 (20)
CON - (-)
INT +0 (10)
WIS +0 (10)
CHA -3 (5)

Toughness 5

SAVES:

Toughness: +5

Fortitude: +0 (+0 base) (*immune to effects requiring Fort saves unless they also affect objects*)

Reflex: +11 (+6 base)

Will: +6 (+6 base)

SKILLS:

(*Skill ranks are given for ease of adjustment.*)

Computers +15 (15 ranks), Notice +13 (13 ranks)

FEATS:

Attack Specialization (stunner) 5

POWERS:

- Communication 5 (radio; extra: area)
- Comprehend Machines 2
- Datalink 8 (feat: Machine Control)
- Flight 2
- Obscure 3 (visual - smokescreen, 25 ft. radius)
- Sonic Control 6
- Stun (ranged) 3
- Super-Senses 17 (accurate audio, blindsight (radar), direction sense, infravision, microscopic vision, radio, ultrahearing, ultravision; all senses are radius-based)

COMBAT:

Attack +0, Defense +5, Initiative +5
- Stunner Attack +10, Damage Stun 3

POINTS TOTAL:

Abilities 35 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 5 + Powers 71 + Combat 10 + Saves 12 = 145

POWER COSTS IN DETAIL:

Communication 5 (radio)

Base cost 1/rank, extra: area +1/rank

Total cost: 5 ranks at 2/rank = 10pp

Comprehend Machines 2

Base cost 1/rank, speak and understand 2/rank

Total cost: 2 ranks at 2/rank = 4pp

Datalink 8

Base cost 1/rank, plus feat Machine Control

Total cost: 8 ranks at 1/rank plus 1 = 9pp

Flight 2

Base cost 2/rank

Total cost: 2 ranks at 2/rank = 4pp

Obscure 3 (*visual*)

Base cost 2/rank for visual

Total cost: 3 ranks at 2/rank = 6pp

Sonic Control 6

Base cost 2/rank

Total cost: 6 ranks at 2/rank = 12pp

Stun 3

Base cost 2/rank, extra Ranged +1/rank

Total cost: 3 ranks at 3/rank = 9pp

Super-Senses 17

Cost as follows: accurate audio 2, blindsight (radar) 4, direction sense 1, infravision 1, microscopic vision 1, radio 1, ultrahearing 1, ultravision 1; all senses are radius-based 5 = 17pp



NEW POWERS:

ENHANCED SAVE

Effect: Ability
Range: Personal
Cost: 1 point per rank
Action: Reaction
Duration: Continuous

One of your Fortitude, Reflex or Will saves is enhanced. Each rank in Enhanced Save gives you +1 to the save. An Enhanced Save can be nullified, unlike a normal save. An Enhanced Save may also have appropriate descriptors applied to it, differentiating it from a normal save. You can freely mix normal and enhanced saves. Your total normal and enhanced save bonus cannot exceed the campaign's power level limit.

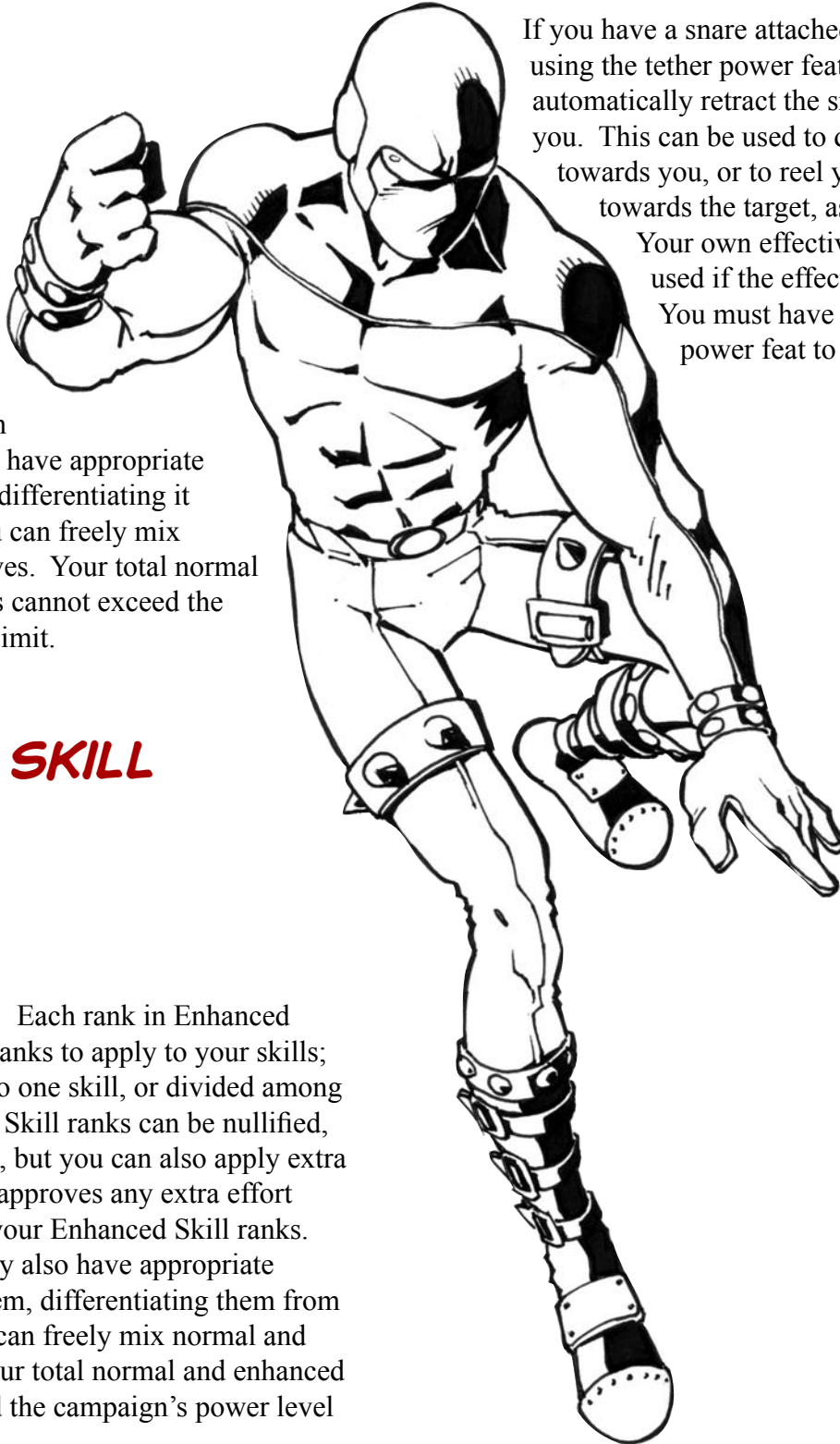
ENHANCED SKILL

Effect: Skill
Range: Personal
Cost: 1 point per rank
Action: Reaction
Duration: Continuous

Your skills are enhanced. Each rank in Enhanced Skill gives you 4 bonus ranks to apply to your skills; these can all be applied to one skill, or divided among several skills. Enhanced Skill ranks can be nullified, unlike normal skill ranks, but you can also apply extra effort to them. The GM approves any extra effort use in conjunction with your Enhanced Skill ranks. Enhanced Skill ranks may also have appropriate descriptors applied to them, differentiating them from normal skill ranks. You can freely mix normal and enhanced skill ranks. Your total normal and enhanced skill ranks cannot exceed the campaign's power level limit.

RETRACT (NEW POWER FEAT FOR SNARE)

If you have a snare attached to your target using the tether power feat, you can automatically retract the snare towards you. This can be used to drag the target towards you, or to reel yourself in towards the target, as a free action. Your own effective Strength is used if the effect is resisted. You must have the Tether power feat to take Retract.





ARCHETYPE: CHARMED SCRAPPER

(POWER LEVEL 10)

(Tradeoff: Defense 12 vs. Toughness Save 8)

ABILITY SCORES:

(With charm/without charm)

STR +10 (30)/+5 (20)

DEX +10 (30)/+5 (20)

CON +8 (26)/+3 (16)

INT +2 (14)

WIS +2 (14)

CHA +2 (14)

SAVES: (with charm/without charm)

Toughness: +8/+3

Fortitude: +13/+8 (+5 base)

Reflex: +15/+10 (+5 base)

Will: +7 (+5 base)

SKILLS:

(Skill ranks are given for ease of adjustment)

Acrobatics +25/+10 (5 ranks), Bluff +7 (5 ranks),
Climb +25/+10 (5 ranks), Drive +15/+10 (5 ranks),
Gather Information +12 (10 ranks), Intimidate +12
(10 ranks), Knowledge (Streetwise) +12 (10 ranks),
Notice +17/+7 (5 ranks), Sense Motive +14 (12
ranks), Stealth +25/+10 (5 ranks), Profession (Boxer)
+10 (8 ranks)

FEATS:

(The charmed scrapper presented here has training in boxing. Another set of combat feats could be switched in to represent another kind of physical discipline.)

Boxing suite (All-out Attack, Defensive Attack, Elusive Target, Improved Block, Power Attack, Takedown Attack), and also: Acrobatic Bluff, Attack Focus (Melee) 2, Attack Specialization (unarmed) 2, Dodge Focus 6, Improved Critical (unarmed) 4, Improved Initiative 2, Stunning Attack.

POINTS TOTAL:

Abilities 25 + Skills 20 (80 ranks) + Feats 37 +
Powers 33 + Combat 20 + Saves 15 = 150



POWERS:

(The power Enhanced Skill is described on the previous page.)

- Device (mystic charm) 9 (easy to lose, extra effort affects user, only the chosen user benefits from the device; effects: Enhanced Skill 10 (+10 Acrobatics, Climb, Notice, Stealth); Enhanced Ability (Str) 10, Enhanced Ability (Dex) 10, Enhanced Ability (Con) 10; Leaping 3, Super-senses (darkvision) 2
- Strike (punch) 5. Feat: Mighty Blow.

COMBAT:

Attack +4 (Melee +6), Defense +6 (+12 with Dodge), Initiative +5
- Mighty punch: Attack +10, Damage +10 (with or without charm)



VILLAIN ARCHETYPE: ALIEN GATHERER (POWER LEVEL 15)

ABILITY SCORES:

- STR +8 (26)
- DEX +2 (14)
- CON +0 (10)
- INT +5 (20)
- WIS +0 (10)
- CHA +0 (10)

SAVES:

- Toughness: +0
- Fortitude: +6 (+6 base)
- Reflex: +5 (+3 base)
- Will: +6 (+6 base)

SKILLS:

Intimidate +10 (10 ranks), Notice +10 (10 ranks)

FEATS:

This archetype has no feats.

POWERS:

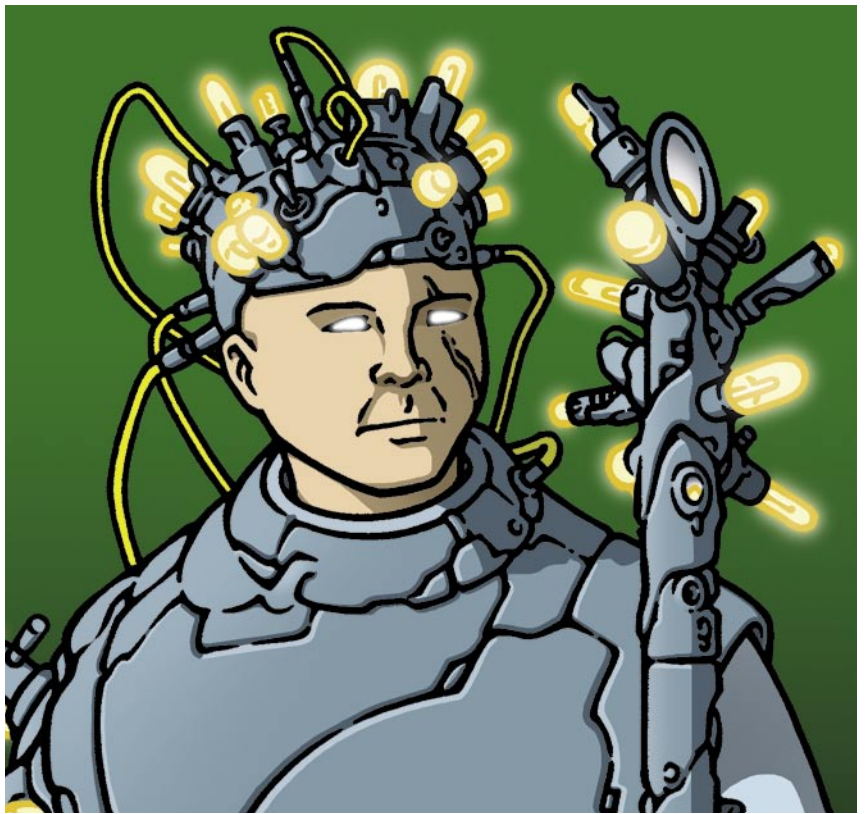
- Device 18 (armor, hard to lose, extra effort affects device; effects: Impervious Protection 15, Stun 15 (as a reaction, when hit by a melee attack, against the attacker)
- Fatigue 13 (burst area)
- Teleport Portal 10 (can use as a ranged attack (Reflex DC 20 to avoid); extra: accurate; feats: change direction, change velocity, progression 11)

COMBAT:

Attack +13, Defense +12, Initiative +2
 - Unarmed attack: Attack +13, Damage +8

POINTS TOTAL:

Abilities 30 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 0 + Powers 194 + Combat 50 + Saves 15 = 307



POWER COSTS IN DETAIL:

Device 18 (armor):

Base cost 4/rank (hard to lose). 18 ranks provides 90 points of powers in the device.

- Impervious Protection 15 (base cost 1/rank, impervious extra +1/rank = 2/rank; 30pp)
- Stun 15 (base cost 2/rank, Action increase to Reaction +3/rank, limited to use only on successful melee attackers -1/rank = 4/rank; 60pp)

Total cost: 18 ranks at 4/rank = 72pp

Fatigue 13:

Base cost 2/rank. Extras: Area Effect (Burst) +1/rank.

Total cost: 13 ranks at 3/rank = 39pp

Teleport 10:

Base cost 2/rank. Extras: Accurate +1/rank, Attack +1/rank, Portal +2/rank, Ranged +1/rank
 Power feats: Change Direction, Change Velocity, Progression 11

Total cost: 10 ranks at 7/rank plus 13 points in power feats = 83pp



VILLAIN ARCHETYPE: CYBERNETIC THUGS (POWER LEVEL 10)

ABILITY SCORES:

STR +2 (16)
DEX +2 (16)
CON +2 (16)
INT +0 (10)
WIS +0 (10)
CHA -1 (8)

SAVES:

Toughness: +2
Fortitude: +15 (+13 base)
Reflex: +14 (+12 base)
Will: +9 (+9 base)

SKILLS:

(Skill ranks are given for ease of adjustment.)
Concentration +8 (8 ranks), Notice +8 (8 ranks)

FEATS:

Three combat-related feats, for example, Chokehold, Improved Grab, Improved Disarm

POWERS:

50 points worth of cybernetic powers, such as:
- Explosives, Blast 10 (Extra: area effect) and
Firearm: Blast 10

or:

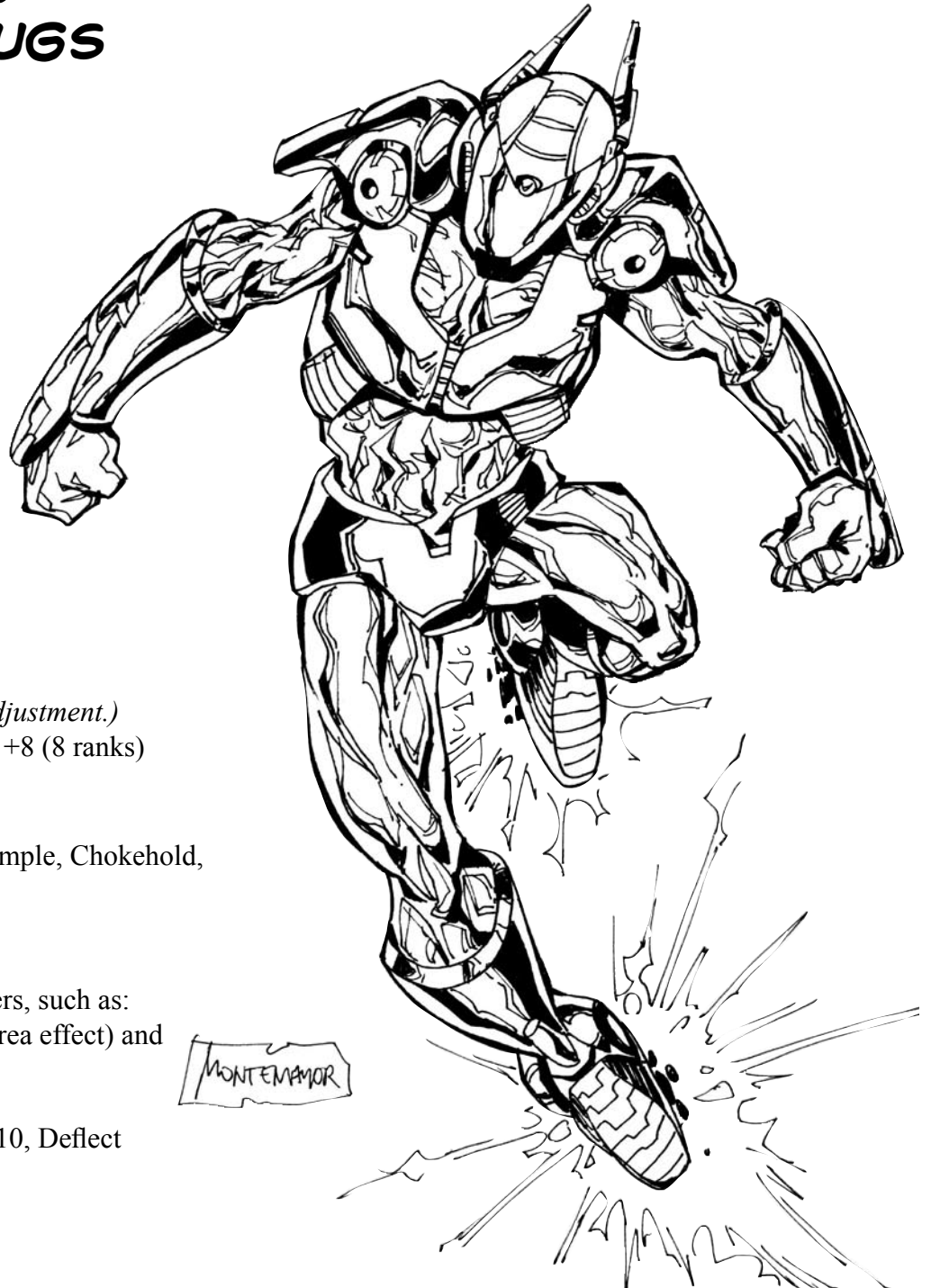
- Inbuilt melee weapon: Strike 10, Deflect
10 and Super-strength 10

COMBAT:

Attack +10, Defense +10,
Initiative +3

POINTS TOTAL:

Abilities 16 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers
50 + Combat 40 + Saves 34 = 150





Insider Info

SKIMMER'S WORKSHOP NETWORK

[SWORN]

Skimmer is a geek who made good. He loves nothing more than figuring out the intricacies of new technology and arguing about stuff on the internet. Also, he's saved the world a bunch of times. Is it any surprise that he's a hero to so many of his fellow geeks? And is it any surprise that they responded when he put out a call for help?

ORIGINS OF THE WORKSHOP NETWORK

On June 7, 2004, in the aftermath of a particularly arduous battle in Texas, Skimmer posted on his blog:

Wondering... Always seems I have to scramble to rig some device we desperately need using nothing more than chicken wire, a broken ZX81, a car battery and a glue gun. Course I keep a bunch of stuff on the Scramble Jet - but! There's a bunch of reasons why I might lose access to that. Usually because it keeps getting blown up. (We're trying to get that ironed out.) I wonder if what would save lives is a decent little workshop, nothing too fancy, just kitted out with all the basics, and accessible to wherever I might be. And as I might be anywhere, there'd need to be a bunch of them. A network of workshops.

So I ask, in the spirit of wondering: would you guys mind too much if I dropped out of the sky and borrowed your workshop for an hour when the world was on the line?

Within thirty minutes the domain name www.

skimmersworkshopnetwork.org had been purchased and nearly five hundred people had created accounts. The site was slashdotted the following day, and by the end of the week more than two thousand people had signed up. There are now roughly twelve hundred verified active workshops on the database, with about another four thousand entries listed as unverified or status unknown. The network is concentrated in the United States but it reaches all over the world to places such as Chile, Ghana, Syria and even one workshop in Scott Base, Antarctica.

JOINING THE WORKSHOP NETWORK

Anyone is welcome to join the Workshop Network. The first step is to create an account on the website. Once logged in, you can participate in the discussion forums and submit your workshop to the database. The form asks you for your location, details about the size and nature of your workshop, and a way of contacting you at short notice. You are not required to list your real name. Additionally, you must tick a disclaimer box absolving the Workshop Network of any responsibility for attack by supervillain or any other misadventure. Then, click 'send', and you're done - or as they say in the network, you're "sworn in".

SECURITY ON THE WORKSHOP NETWORK

The Workshop Network is currently managed by seven administrators, who maintain the database and manage the site. They are all U.S. citizens



currently based in the U.S. Each of these seven has met Skimmer personally. They are assisted by about twenty site moderators, who answer questions, weed out spammers and internet “trolls” and generally keep the peace on the Sworn forums.

The admin team are all obsessed with encryption and security, and keep up with the latest advances in this field. Their worst nightmare is that a member of the workshop network should be seriously hurt or even killed because of a security breach. While the tone among the network is stoic (‘if it comes to that, then it shows we’re helping to save lives’, as one poster put it), the seven know that not only would an innocent

life be lost, but the media fallout and inevitable membership drop would probably kill off the network entirely.

There are multiple backups of the database all over the U.S. The seven have been forced to balance their desire to ensure the database cannot be lost with their desire to limit opportunities for it to fall into dangerous hands. The final number of backups and their locations is kept secret.

There is no way to ensure that a database entry is real - there have been numerous cases of nonexistent workshops being submitted to the database, although none of these have tripped Skimmer up during an actual crisis situation. To limit this effect the community devised a verification system, where trusted senior members of the community visit other workshops in their general area in order to give advice and confirm their existence. Workshop verification is not required, but verified workshops are given higher profiles in the database than unverified ones, and forum members with verified workshops tend to have higher status than those who don’t.

Thus far there have been no instances where a member has been revealed as an enemy of the Power Team, but it stands to reason that there are spies among the site’s many thousands of members. Such infiltration can achieve little, as there simply isn’t much information to be had. Only the database, should it fall into enemy hands, is of any real value, and that is carefully guarded.

WHO’S WHO IN THE WORKSHOP NETWORK

“Jaconda” is the best-known administrator in the network. Despite this high profile, no known photos of him exist on the web, and it isn’t entirely clear where he lives. He is, or claims to be, married, but that’s all anyone





knows for sure. Even less is known about his fellow admins.

“Frownyface” of Whitewater, Wisconsin is one of the most popular members of the workshop network. Like Skimmer, he’s a geek’s geek with a friendly demeanor and positive attitude. He achieved notoriety when Skimmer visited him to make use of his workshop - the first-ever use of the workshop network. Skimmer was never able to publicly reveal what he had done in the workshop or what the emergency was, but he did confirm the visit and commended Frownyface for his excellent workspace. This, combined with Frownyface’s natural good humor, catapulted him into the upper echelons of the Workshop Network’s social hierarchy.

“Lynelle B” of Wyoming admits that she has not a single technical bone in her body, and wouldn’t know a widget from a do-what. Nevertheless, after being patiently talked through the process by fellow Sworners, she has fully equipped her spare room for Skimmer’s use. She’s ready for him to come by any time of the day or night. For anything.

WHAT NEXT FOR THE WORKSHOP NETWORK?

Requisitioned

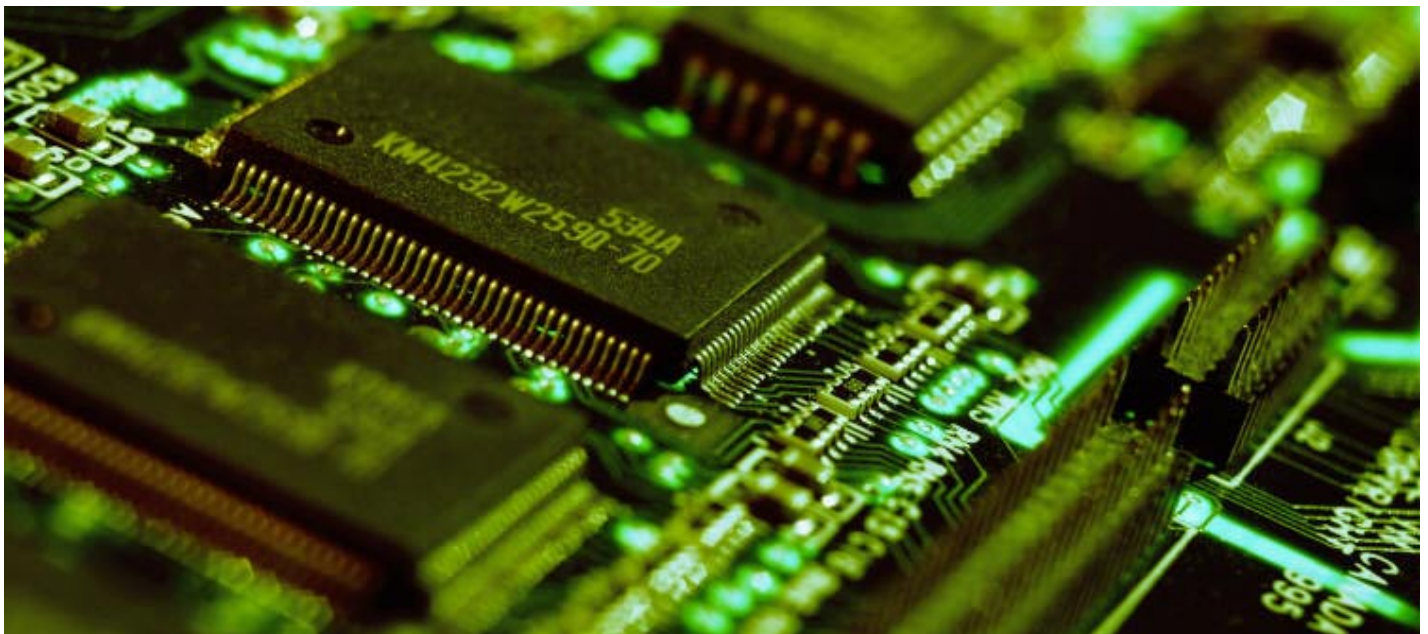
The U.S. Government demands a copy of the Workshop Network Database. How will the network respond? Why does the government want the database? Who is really pulling the strings?

Backlash

Any online success story attracts its bashers, and this is no different. There will never be a shortage of online voices charging Sworn with arrogance, censorship, opposition to freedom of speech and cult-like behavior towards Skimmer. What if these backers attract the support of a powerful enemy of Skimmer? What if they turn their bashing campaign into something more concrete?

Targeted

The worst has happened - somehow, the database records have been compromised. Whenever the Power Team head out to a new location, Skimmer finds the local workshops have been devastated, and sometimes the Sworn is dead. Who is behind it? How will Skimmer react? How will the Sworn community react? Will the network continue, or will this tragedy be its end?





Fight Scenery

TAPETE ISLAND

Far out in the Pacific Ocean is a beautiful island, Tapete. It is an island paradise with an ancient protector...

OVERVIEW

Tapete Island is a large and beautiful island with a sheltered harbor and abundant greenery. A steep mountain rise on the western side dominates the entire landscape. The southern side of the island shares

this height. There, the thick jungle ends in a cliff-face drop to the sea, 200 feet at its highest point. The island's total population is about 900 people. Sample names: Arenui, Manua, Tehei, Temaru (men); Hina, Orama, Ranitea, Raina (women).

HISTORY

Polynesian peoples settled Tapete Island around 300AD, at a similar time to nearby French Polynesia.



Tapete is the local name for the silvertip sharks that are frequently found within the harbor. Tapete was just far enough away from Tahiti and the rest of French Polynesia to develop its own distinct culture. Tapete beliefs encompass ancestor spirits, tapu restrictions and animism. The island's mountain, Matamaunga, is seen as the island's protector and the seat of honored ancestors. Legends say that should a terrible threat come to the island, Matamaunga will stand up and do battle.

OLD MEETING HOUSE

An old meeting house is located in the northeast corner of the island. Its ancient petroglyphs and elaborate carvings have made it a regular stop for academics and tourists. Of particular interest are the the carved ancestors within the marae - the eyes of each carving are inset with gleaming black pearls. They are a source of great pride, and no Tapete Islander would ever think of stealing them (nor have the opportunity, given the frequency of visits by islanders and visitors). According to legend, when a hero of Tapete died, his eyes would fall out and become two black pearls. This was a sign that his spirit had gone to join Matamaunga in the mountain.

NUIREA

The island's main village is located on the harbor. Nuirea is a slow-paced, happy little town, with several general stores, a couple of hotels offering beach cabins and rooms, and civic offices from which Tapete manages its affairs.

HARBOR

The shallow harbor is enclosed on three sides by sandy beaches overhung with coconut palms. The water is clear enough that people on boats or canoes crossing the harbor can easily see the bottom. They will often see sharks as well. These sharks aren't really maneaters, but they have been known to attack humans, and the locals show them plenty of respect. Use the standard shark statistics in the core book.

MATAMAUNGA

It is a three-hour walk to the top of the mountain, but one that affords spectacular views of the rest of the island and the surrounding Pacific Ocean. Furthermore, the mountain legends are not without truth. There is life in the mountain. When the Tapete are threatened, the upper eastern face of the mountain will come to life, detaching itself from the rest of the rocky earth and standing up as a humanoid figure. This mighty animated spirit will then walk down the mountain to wreak havoc on whatever is threatening its people, and will probably keep wreaking havoc until every outsider has left the island. Matamaunga does not use language, but can communicate through telepathy, using only simple visual symbols and emotions. A clever character may be able to use this language to get Matamaunga on side, however briefly.

MATAMAUNGA (PL16)

(Tradeoff Defense +12 vs. Toughness +20)

Str +20 (50), **Dex** +0 (10), **Con** +15 (40), **Int** +0 (10), **Wis** +0 (10), **Cha** +0 (10)

Tough +20, **Fort** +15, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

Skills/Feats: Intimidate +10, Stealth -20

Size: Awesome (200 ft. tall, 40 ft. space, 20 ft. reach)

Powers: Growth 20 (*permanent*); Immunity 9 (*life support*); Mental Blast 16 (*160 ft. cone*); Protection 4

Combat: Attack +9, Defense +0, Initiative +0

- Punch (melee): Attack +9, Damage +20

- Grapple (melee): Attack +9, Grapple +62



ATA Presents...

ISLAND OF TRIAL

The alien **Karnifex** has decided to scoop up some of this planet's super-powered beings and force them into a trial. He hopes that the most resourceful and courageous among them will be suitable to help save his distant planet. The rest can simply be destroyed.

This adventure plan provides a way to bring a disparate group of heroes together and give them a taste of co-operation. In comics, supers teams often arise from accidental groupings just such as this. The scenario is also entirely appropriate for an established group of characters, however.

HOOK

Karnifex chooses the characters to undergo his trial. From his ship, he will locate the heroes remotely. Using his teleport attack he will take the characters away from whatever they are doing and deposit them on the other side of the world, on Tapete Island (see the Fight Scenery in this issue).

From the characters' point of view, their typical days will be interrupted by a flash of light as Karnifex's teleport portal engulfs them. Then, suddenly, they are in the middle of a village on a tropical island at a different time of day. (For reference, Tapete Island is 6 hours behind New York City.)

The characters will immediately realize they are not the only ones who have been brought here. Also

present are four or five other characters, similarly abducted from wherever they were before. These other characters may be a mixture of heroes, villains, or those in between. (The CyberCorps, Skimmer and the Jaguar are all appropriate fellow abductees for this adventure.)

The characters will have appeared in two groups, not far from each other but clearly distinct. Mixing up these groups is a good way to add complication to this scenario - if two competing characters are placed on different teams, for example, some conflict will certainly ensue.

Before anyone can do much to evaluate their situation, a holographic image of Karnifex appears and addresses the two groups.

You have been selected for trialling. I have divided you into two teams. Around this island I have hidden five power pieces. The team that returns with the most power pieces will win the contest, earn a reward and be returned home. The team that loses will be teleported into the depths of space, there to die a horrible death. And if there is no clear winner, then you will all be killed. You have one hour. Begin.

Then the holographic image disappears.

DEVELOPMENT

How the characters respond to Karnifex's instructions is up to them, but self-interested characters (particularly any villains) will not hesitate to seek out power pieces. Finding the pieces will probably be seen as a good idea, even as the characters try to figure out a way of escaping Karnifex's wrath.

The power pieces are each the size of a basketball, and they emit a golden glow. They are virtually indestructible (Toughness 20). They emit energy on a broad spectrum, and can be detected by a wide variety of super-senses; unless there is good reason to exclude a sense, any character's super-sense can Detect a piece if it is in range. Each piece is made of an odd lattice, and they can be easily gripped and carried in one hand, although they are bulky and awkward.

The first power piece is located in the shallow harbor, about twenty feet down. It can be easily seen at night, but is much less obvious during the day with the sunlight reflecting off the water surface. This power piece is protected by a number of sharks, which congregate around the power piece in response to its humming. They are hungry and ready for a feast. Any characters venturing into the water will have to contend with the hungry sharks. There will be one to three sharks which take an interest in any one character. More characters will draw more sharks to the scene.

The second power piece is located in a cave on the southern cliff-face. The narrow cave only allows one person to enter at a time. The power piece is hidden ten feet into the cave. Its glow will only be spotted by someone inspecting the cliff-face for something unusual (Notice DC 20, or Notice DC 15 at night). The power piece has been inserted into a wall, and now it supports the cave ceiling - removing the power piece will cause the ceiling to collapse over the entrance, sealing the character within the cave! This problem can be Noticed (DC 20, or DC 15 if the character is specifically checking for problems) and avoided (Disable Device DC 20) by a careful character. If the cave entrance collapses, there is enough air for two hours of breathing (so two people could survive for one hour). The blockage is about

three feet thick (Toughness 9, must fail a Toughness save by 14 or more to be disabled, or by 19 or more to be destroyed).

The third power piece is located in the old meeting house, surrounded by pearl-eyed ancestor carvings. There, the glowing light from the power piece reflects off the black pearls to create a strange, mystical aura in the meeting house. Anyone who steps or looks into the meeting house while the power piece is within is subjected to a Confuse 7 effect (Will saving throw to avoid this effect).

The fourth power piece is located within the village of Nuirea. It has appeared in the cellar of the Tuvalu





Bar, where the bar's owner Atea discovered it a short time ago. Atea is convinced the power piece is either a nuclear bomb or a gigantic treasure, and until he works out which he's not telling anyone where it is. Finding this piece is easy if the characters use detection equipment; otherwise, Gather Information (DC 15) and Sense Motive (DC 15) will be needed to figure out Atea is hiding something, and then guess what that something is.

The fifth and final power piece is located on the mountain; more specifically, it is located in the mouth-space of the ancient and mighty Matamaunga. As soon as the first trouble breaks out on the island, Matamaunga will wake, and stride forth across the island, ready to destroy those who would despoil the meeting house, protect the Tapete Islanders, and smash anyone who is not an Islander, in that order of priority.

TWIST

Karnifex is actually there on the scene. His small alien ship is hovering, silent and fully cloaked, about 150 ft. above the village. The characters might stumble upon this fact as part of their normal searches and scans. If they do, they might be able to force their way into the ship and confront Karnifex. The ship itself is fairly fragile - it is Karnifex himself who is most dangerous.

If the ship has not already been revealed by the time the mountain comes to life, Matamaunga's strange senses allow it to locate the ship and wrench it out of the sky. While Matamaunga crushes the ship into rubble, Karnifex will spill free, and the characters will be able to confront him.

What they do when faced with Karnifex is a different matter entirely. Karnifex doesn't need his ship to use his teleport power, but he does need the ship to return home to his people. He will probably be ready to negotiate, should the characters initiate this, and may even reveal the true reason for the trial.

Should anyone attack Karnifex, his response will depend on how angry and threatened he feels. If he decides to flee, his Teleport power means there is little

anyone can do to stop him. If he decides to stay, he will turn his awesome power on the characters, and will likely overwhelm them. He will be careful not to kill them, of course, since they might turn out to be just the people he was sent here to find. For this reason, he will not teleport anyone into deep space, despite his initial threat.

Karnifex's goal if his ship is damaged or destroyed is to escape the island with whatever remnants he can. With time, he will be able to rebuild his ship and continue with his mission.

Karnifex's Ship: Strength 40, Speed 6, Defense 6, Toughness 10, Size Huge, capable of warp travel across great distances, full communications monitoring suite tapped into satellite imaging and allowing Karnifex to use his teleport attack on anything that is live onscreen.

RESOLUTION

Karnifex will probably not succeed in his quest this time, but his commitment to it will not waver. If he escapes, as is likely given his power and teleportation ability, he will return in the future to continue his trials.

The Tapete Islanders will hopefully make it through the trial unscathed. Matamaunga will return to its position atop the mountain. Life will go back to its ordinary gentle pace.

The characters may have a difficult time getting home - planes only come to Tapete Island once a week. Nevertheless, they have probably met some new supers while being part of the trial, and from these relationships new friendships, rivalries and teams might grow.



Action Stations

TYPES OF TEAMS

Roleplaying games are a group activity, and in supers games, groups mean teams. Following are a few common kinds of teams, and suggestions for managing a team of that type in your game. Sitting down together as part of character creation to discuss what kind of team you'll use in your game is a really good way to lay the foundation for a successful supers campaign.

THE ELITE TEAM

This is the big one. In any game universe, there will usually be only one team like this, made up of the big hitters, the best of the best. These are the guys you turn to when the fate of the world is at stake. They have accepted the responsibility of being Earth's best and last hope. Everyone aspires to match them. Every villain fears them. Almost nothing can stop them.

An elite team is almost always established by the supers themselves, when two or three big names see the value of assembling a group to deal with those threats that are too great to face alone. The founding members of an elite team will usually have a special status within the team, and the tone and attitude of

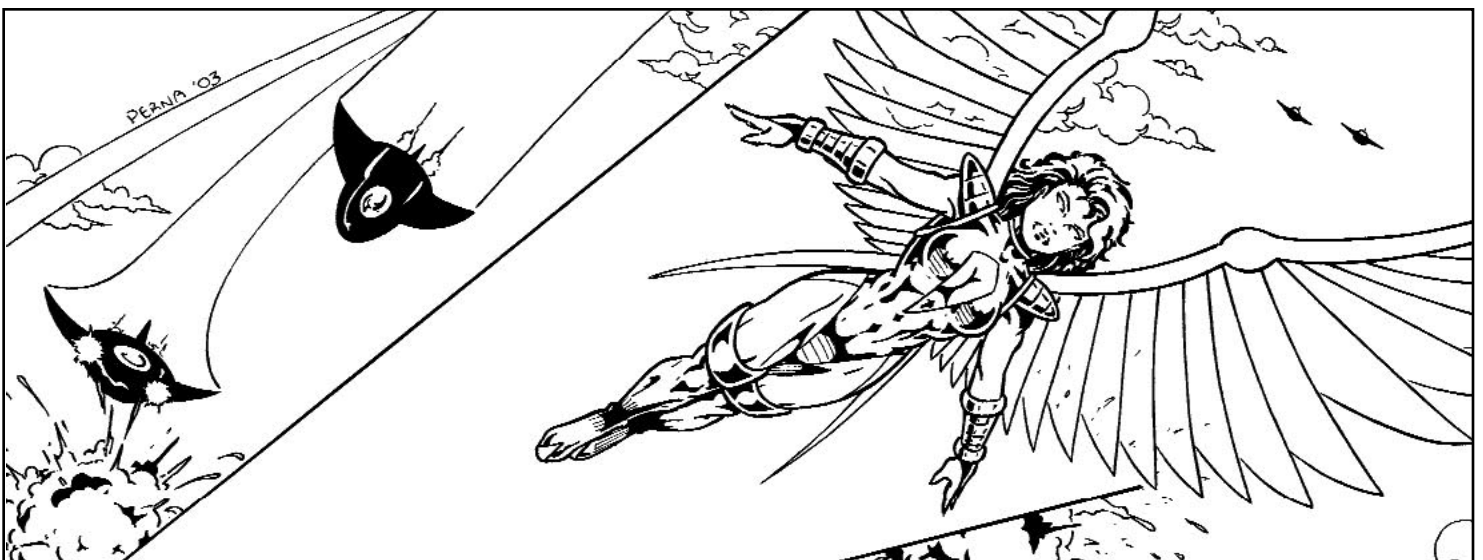
the team will spring from the perspective of these founding members.

PL 13-15 is probably appropriate for an Elite Team. The characters will probably not be novices or amateurs. The team will develop substantial information resources, battle tactics and back-up plans. Personal disputes will, of course, occur but they will generally be talked through between missions; members of a team like this will almost certainly be too professional to let disputes interfere with their action out in the field.

Alternatively, the Elite Team could be presented as aspirational - perhaps the player characters hope to become members one day, and in the meantime seek the approval of the Elite Team, or perhaps a mentoring relationship.

Elite Teams rarely end or fall apart except in the most unusual circumstances. If they do, then eventually another Elite Team will emerge to replace them.

Possible storyline: a second Elite Team is set up to compete with the first, and the two teams espouse different approaches. Incompatible personalities set up a conflict that will come to the fore when the stakes are at their highest.





THE EMPLOYEE TEAM

For some, supers work is not a calling - it's a job. Governments, companies, private security agencies, non-governmental organizations and others sometimes see the benefits of putting a squad of supers on the payroll. The Employee Team has a boss and a mission statement. They try and do what's right, but they do it from the perspective of their employer.

Employee teams vary a great deal depending on the nature of the employer. A city council hiring a supers team to provide support to its police and emergency services will result in one kind of team, whereas a multinational company hiring several heroes to promote its brand and protect its interests will produce quite a different team.

There will almost always be tension between the team members and their employers. Managers will make decisions that seem senseless or counterproductive; directives will be received that seem morally repugnant; orders will be handed down to stay out of affairs that intensely interest the members. Whether or not members can undertake any activity on their own is a key point to establish with this kind of team. In some situations, a hero who does some personal work might end up facing a disciplinary committee.

PL 10 is fine for an Employee Team. The players and GM should work together to hash out the details of the employer and the relationship between heroes and their boss. It is not necessary to work out all the details in advance, but it is crucial that players know how to run their characters while on the job. The group should also consider what general type of mission assignments will be appropriate for this sort of team.

Alternatively, an Employee Team could be created by a secret patron, whose true intentions may be straightforward or mysterious. In this case, the details of the employer-employee relationship may never be determined, and any decisions by the patron may remain inscrutable.

Employee Teams are fragile. If the team ever becomes perceived as a liability to the employer, its future will be in doubt. If it ever acts against the employer, it will certainly be discontinued. If the employer goes out of business or changes hands, the terms of employment might be radically changed and members might no longer wish to be part of the team.

Possible storyline: The employers of two Employee Teams become rivals, and start pitting their teams against each other. The heroes have no beef with each other - how far will they take their loyalty to their employers, and how much hurt are they willing to dish out to their rivals?

THE PURPOSEFUL TEAM

Some teams assemble for a particular purpose. Perhaps it is to explore the multiverse, or to oppose a criminal syndicate's activities, or to protect a particular city neighborhood. Whatever the purpose, all members of the team must subscribe to it (some more than others perhaps), and all activities by the team will ultimately serve this purpose (or, at the very least, not work against it).

PL 10 is fine for a Purposeful Team. The key question is, what is the purpose? Deciding on the team's mission will set the tone of the game more than anything else. All the characters will be built in relationship to the purpose, and all the adventures will bear some relationship to that purpose.

Alternatively, a Purposeful Team could be created for a purpose that is secret or mysterious. Maybe only one or two of the members know the team's purpose. Maybe none of them do and the team's missions are given to them by a magical talking stick or a supercomputer from the moons of Jupiter. Discovering the true purpose of the team's existence should be the central ongoing plot point in the campaign.

Purposeful Teams are sturdy as long as the purpose still exists. Until the reason for being plays itself out,

a Purposeful Team will probably keep going through thick and thin. The purpose is bigger than all of them.

Possible storyline: The purpose around which the team is built comes into unexpected conflict with the different personal goals of every one of the characters. How will they choose? And can all those dilemmas at one time possibly be a coincidence?

THE OUTSIDER TEAM

Life is tough, sometimes, and banding together is a good way to cope. The outsider team forms from those who are hated or feared by society, or on the run from the government or some evil power. They live life on the fringes, rarely understood, helping each other keep going, making tough choices every day, trying to do the right thing for no other reason than it's the right thing to do.

A lower-powered game is often a good idea for an Outsider Team, PL 7-9 or perhaps PL 10 but with fewer points to spend on their characters. The players and GM need to decide why the team are on the outside, and how harsh life is for them - are they constantly on the run and scrabbling to survive, or are they outsiders due to a low level of prejudice and misunderstanding?

Alternatively, an outsider team could be on the outside because of its goals. Perhaps the team is made up of anarchists determined to overthrow the government, or true patriots determined to uncover corruption amongst the powerful.

Outsider teams are always fragile. They could fall apart for any number of reasons. Personal relationships are frequently strained due to the pressures of being outsiders. The forces acting against the team have plenty of ways of weakening and undermining the team's viability. Few outsider teams last for long.

Possible storyline: The Outsider Team is offered a chance at legitimacy. A powerful company contacts them and agrees to back them and manage their public relations crisis, so they can step out of the shadows

and receive the reward they are due for their heroism. Can such an offer be trusted? Even if the company is on the level, wouldn't that just make the team sell-outs?

THE BOUND FATES TEAM

Sometimes characters don't have a say in who they're on a team with. Maybe the meteorite that gave them their powers gave them all a permanent psychic link to each other. Maybe the demon they fought when they first got together is always going to keep going after all of them, and they have to stay together to stand a chance against it. Maybe they all share a mysterious sigil on their shoulders, the true meaning of which remains unclear. In all these cases, the team is bound together by fate.

PL 10 is fine for a Bound Fates team. The group should decide what the nature of their bound fate is, how much is known by the characters (and the players), and how their characters feel about this forced co-operation.

Alternatively, a Bound Fates team could have chosen this course. Perhaps they all completed a blood brothers ritual? Perhaps they made a mystical vow to each other? What if one member chose but the others had no choice?

Bound Fates teams are incredibly strong, by their very nature. They resist any attempt to tear them apart until the fate that binds them is resolved.

Possible storyline: the team receive a chance to be free of the fate that is forcing them to stay together - but at the cost of their powers. Is freedom worth losing their superhuman nature? What if it's a gamble whether their powers stay or go - who will take a chance? And must all of them agree, or can they each decide for themselves?



Origin Issues

#1: SETTING UP A GROUP

So you want to play a Supers game? Great! There's a heck of a lot of fun to be had by leaping into the world of the comics. But a word of warning - dive in too fast, and it might go a little bit wrong. The battlefields of roleplaying are littered with the sad remnants of supers campaigns that failed.

Supers campaigns carry a particular set of problems with them, and most of those problems go back to the source material. Unlike many other types of games, superhero comics are incredibly varied. Different people can share the same enthusiasm for supers but have vastly different interests and expectations. Unless these differences can be managed, it's likely they'll cause some problems, somewhere along the line.

The very first thing you want to do, if you're thinking of playing a supers game, is sit down with the entire group and have a big chat about the type of supers game it's going to be. This should cover a bunch of different things. Use the following talking points to get yourselves going:

INITIAL INSPIRATION

Many games start because the GM or one of the players has an idea. Is that the case here? What are the ramifications of that idea? Is everyone happy to run with the idea? Is the idea open to modification before play starts if other people have interesting ideas? Is there enough freedom in the idea that everyone else won't feel they're just supporting characters in someone else's story?

What comics (or movies or books or TV shows) might this game draw on for inspiration? What is it about the inspirational material that is worth following?

GAME TONE

Will the tone be bright and light-hearted, with cartoonish villainous and no true sense of danger, or dark and angry, with the real possibility of death for all the characters, or somewhere in between?

Will right and wrong be clearly distinct, or will morality be drawn in numerous shades of grey?

How heroic will the characters be? What will be the main motivations of the characters?

What kind of stories will the game lend itself to telling? What kind of adventures will the characters have?

GAME SETTING

Will the setting predominantly feature low-level powers, or will mountain-smashing heroes and villains be fairly common?

Will the characters be part of the first wave of supers in the settings history, or is there a long tradition of superheroics before them?

Will the game be set in the present day, the future, the past, or on some alternate earth?

Will the game be set in a major American city (the traditional stomping ground of superheroes in the comics) or somewhere else entirely?

CHARACTER STRUCTURE

Will the characters be part of an organized group or team, or will they be independent characters whose lives keep crossing over?



If part of a group or team, what is the nature of that group? Is it a formal employment situation, for example for a government agency or a private interest? Is it a heroic group with a long tradition of world-saving? Is it a new group of outsiders, banded together to help each other get along in a world that fears them?

If not part of an organized group, how will interaction between the characters be justified? Will the characters have intertwined social and romantic ties? Will the game largely follow different storylines, with players taking turns to sit waiting for their moment in the spotlight?

How will player absences be handled, should they occur? Is there an in-built rationale for the occasional absence of a character?

How will character rivalry be handled? Heroes in comics often disagree and occasionally fight - but in comics, if a dispute gets serious then a character can be easily written out for an issue or a year or given a whole new series with different characters. These possible outcomes aren't feasible in an RPG. Will players and GM brainstorm ways to resolve disputes so the characters can all stay together in the game? Will a player be encouraged to create a new character, should their first abandon the group after a heated argument?

PLAY ISSUES

Will the tone decided above be hard-and-fast for every session, or will some sessions explore a different feel entirely?

How much will the direction of the game be determined by the GM, and how much by the players? Can players introduce their own subplots? Can they introduce any kind of subplot, or just subplots related to their complications or their personal life? Can they introduce subplots for the other players?

Will the game be potentially ongoing forever, as long as players are interested? Or will the game be a limited series, with an in-built storyline finale?

PULLING IT TOGETHER

If you've talked through all of the above, and everyone in the group is in agreement about the answers to the questions, then you're more than ready to roll. Congratulations - you've already done an enormous amount to ensure your game will survive! Now you can start getting into the really fun part - coming up with characters.

Next issue: Coming up with character concepts...

GIVE US SOME

Knockbacks!

WE NEED LETTERS FOR OUR LETTERS PAGE! QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, RANTS, RAVES, YOU NAME IT!

SEND EMAIL TO

MORGUE@GMAIL.COM

OUR LETTERS PAGE WILL BEGIN WITH ISSUE TWO!



Last Minute Rescue

And that wraps up the first issue of *Amazing Triple Action!*

There are eleven more issues to come, each of which will feature a mix of people, places, rules, advice and adventures. Over this series we'll get a chance to explore plenty of different possibilities for fun supers games.

The Big Two comics companies have been publishing comics for a long time. Over the years, their shared worlds have become filled up with an incredible variety of characters and situations. One world has room for a space knight licensed from a failed toy line, a cynical talking duck, and a hero who became, literally, Satan. The other lets an ancient plant spirit share space with a happy super-family and a hero who discovered he was a character in a comic book. And all of these diverse characters fit together somehow. Any of them could meet.

Over the next eleven issues, *Amazing Triple Action* is going to pursue this broad-church approach. I believe it makes for fun gaming to have a great big world where you never quite know what's around the next corner. Within these pages over the months to come you'll find plenty of material to keep your game full of surprises.

I gotta say, I really am excited by this series. Every feature in *ATA* is going to be usable in your game. Most people play supers games in a world of their own creation, and the content in *ATA* will be entirely plug-and-play so you can throw it right into your game without the slightest bit of hassle.

Which is not to say there won't be connections linking together the content of *ATA*. Rest assured that, over the series, the characters and situations in *ATA* will link together into a more elaborate whole. There are even a few secrets which will be revealed in the fullness of time...

However, none of this is going to interfere with the plug-and-play readiness of everything you'll find within these pages. There will be no complex "ATA universe". That wouldn't be much use to a gaming community that values flexibility and modular content. No, everything here designed to be easily dropped into your home game with a minimum of fuss and a maximum of fun.

Huh, now I'm starting to worry that this page is going to tip over from "explanation of what *ATA*'s about" into "enthusiastic PR guff", so I'm going to quit while I'm (hopefully) ahead. I hope you've enjoyed this issue, and will stick around for the ride for the year to come. Tell your friends, tell your enemies, and buy an extra copy for your sidekick - it's going to be Amazing!

Peace,
morgue

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