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DARK COUGAR



Bishop

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DARK COUGAR

Identity: Brock Brannon
Sex: Male
Age: 113 (appears 34)

Side: Evil
Level: 12
Training: Strength +2,
Accuracy (unarmed HTH) +4,
Damage (unarmed HTH) +2,
-1 to be hit at range 1" or more

Powers:

1. Heightened Agility B: +17.
 2. Natural Weaponry: Razor sharp nails/claws. +3 to hit, +6 damage.
 - a. Can climb any surface safely with a 1d20 Agility save (1d100 for frictionless surfaces) – roll once per round, uses movement inches for distance travelled.
 3. Heightened Defense: -4 to be hit. No PR cost.
 4. Animal Powers (Mammal – Feline).
 - a. Diminished Senses (Night Vision): -2 to hit rolls in daylight.
 - b. Heightened Endurance (A): +11.
 - c. Heightened Strength (A): +9.
 - d. Speed Bonus: +90" ground.
 5. Regeneration: Use up to 1 Action per Turn to recover Heal Rate; does not work vs. poison/venom.
 6. (Invention; 3 points) Absorption: life-force/de-aging spell; if Dark Cougar slays another Avatar he removes one year of current equivalent age per Experience Level of the deceased Avatar.
- Weakness – Low Self Control Hunter: At least once per month Dark Cougar feels compelled to hunt worthy game (superhuman or well-trained normal), or to avoid must make a 1d20 C save; in combat once he has injured a foe he must continue to battle that foe until submission and to break free from battle must make a 1d20 Intelligence save.

Weight: 190 lbs.
Agility Mod.: —
Endurance: 22
Intelligence: 14
Reactions From: Good: -2
Hit Mod.: 14.4144
Damage Mod.: +3
Accuracy: +5
Carrying: 1089 lbs.
1d10

Basic Hits: 4
Strength: 21
Agility: 28
Charisma: 15
Evil: -2
Hit Points: 58
Healing Rate: 2.4 / day
Power: 85
Basic HTH Damage:

Movement Rates: 161" ground
Det. Hidden: 10%
Inventing Points: 12.4

Det. Danger: 14%
Inventing: (42%)

Legal Status: Wanted criminal in many national jurisdictions with few available background details known to authorities; never convicted

Origin and Background: Big game hunter, burglary and security systems expertise, mystic scholar.

In the late 1920's and early 1930's the name of Brock Brannon was synonymous with the spirit of adventure. His amazing stories of capturing wild animals for zoos around the world created demand for his services as a hunter. Larger than life, and with a streak of arrogance, Brock was always seeking to out-do contemporary rivals such as Frank Buck.

Brannon's last, fateful expedition was a dark affair. His popularity had been on the wane, and money was drying up. A large zoo had contracted him to hunt a fabled giant cougar in Peru. Local tales spoke of a giant beast, bigger than a man, and Brannon was determined to be the one who brought it back alive to secure his own future, since he knew only one thing and that was hunting.

The expedition encountered difficulties at its very outset, so that by the time it entered the foothills of the Peruvian Andes only two men remained with Brannon. Regardless, he pressed on. His hunt took him further up the mountains and as they pressed on another man was lost. Scared and panicked, the Brannon's last companion only chose to remain out of fear of returning alone and how perilous such a journey could be for a solitary traveler. The two pressed on, driven by Brannon's desire to hunt this great beast.

As the two men camped in silence at night-fall, the beast they had hunted found them. But it was no great cat, rather a man with the powers of some kind of man-cat. With terrible claws he struck, killing Brannon's last remaining companion. The man-beast then turned



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towards Brannon, the flickering fire-light casting fearsome shapes as he crouched, ready to attack. Brannon drew the knife he always kept attached to the belt and leapt at the attacker. After many minutes the battle was done, and bloodied and wounded Brannon looked down on the dying man-cat. As he looked on and the final breath of life left the creature's body, he saw the fallen thing shrink into the form of a man. At that moment he felt power suffuse his whole body, and so was born a new Cougar, Avatar of the Parliament of Cats.

Abandoning the life he knew, as Cougar, Brannon gave in to his desires to hunt. His manifestation as an Avatar was clearly different to that of his dead predecessor, with less of an obvious transformation. He travelled the world, retreating from public notice simply to hunt, whether his prey was animal or increasingly human as he gave into ever more predatory urges. Brannon began bartering his deadly services to shady men to allow him to carry on his travels.

He began to research the origins of his magnificent powers as best he could. He consulted with those few Avatars with whom he crossed paths in the years since his change. He sought of mystics and scholars of the mystical and arcane. Years passed and time took its toll. His body was aging, and he did not wish it so; he revelled in his new power and wanted to do so for as long as possible. A chance encounter with a master of the magic arts in a dusty shop in a Parisian back-street suggested to him that he could prolong his life with the right ingredient – the life-force of other Avatars of the Parliament of Cats. And so began Cougar's Great Hunt.

His Great Hunt began when he sought out the beneficiary of the mantle of the Tiger, a British superhero who had been once stationed in India as a military officer. Locating Tiger at his Home Counties mansion, Cougar stealthily crept in. Ever obsessed with the thrill of the hunt, Cougar stalked the darkened halls, allowing his prey to sense his arrival. However Tiger was unprepared for the ferocity and power of Cougar's attack and fell at his hands. As he died, Cougar drank in his life-force, and years fell away, rejuvenating him. In the decades that followed more and more Avatars would fall to the hands of Cougar. As the deaths accumulated he became known as Dark Cougar, the Hunter of Avatars, although his original identity and origins has remained a mystery to the other Avatars.

At a Gathering of Avatars, entreaties were made to the power of the Cougar to relinquish connection with the predatory Dark Cougar. The Parliament replied that which was given could not be taken away, and so the Avatars have had to live in the knowledge that a fearsome predator stalks them even as they pursue their own targets.

Today Dark Cougar travels the world, hunting as is his wont. Every few years he will seek out another Avatar to replenish his youth, but he is careful to take them as they become more powerful as that has a greater effect on taking the years away from him. In that time he has acquired a reputation among the super community as a deadly villain, one whose talents are frequently in demand. As a hunter Dark Cougar prefers to work alone, but will join forces with others when to do so coincides with his desire to hunt more challenging prey. Dark Cougar currently is the equivalent to being in his mid-thirties in age.

Combat Tactics/M.O.: Against a single target Dark Cougar enjoys the thrill of the hunt, prolonging his chase by stalking his prey for as long as possible before striking, preferably in territory that removes potential advantages for his target (such as enclosed environments to restrict fliers; day or night environments against those ill-suited to them). Against multiple foes he will usually attack as part of a pack, whether hired underlings or more rarely other super-criminals. In these instances he will usually pick a foe to best match or test his own skills, and attack from a flank before engaging against just his chosen prey, often overlooking the wider mission parameters as he seeks to measure himself.

Personality/Character Traits: Dark Cougar has become immersed in the persona he has crafted as a twisted representation of the Avatar that he was. He has long since shed the trappings of his former life, and now what remains is a vicious predator, who will give in to his own cruel need to hunt super-human 'game'. He maintains human identities only as a means to an end, to enable cross-border travel and so forth. To other Avatars he is the bogeyman, the thing that hunts them from the darkness.

Dark Cougar is naturally a loner, but will join occasionally join with others to meet his own needs, yet remains aloof, wrapped in arrogant self-assurance. As it becomes harder to cross borders undetected in the modern age, he has become increasingly reliant on specialist services catering to super-criminals to help him move about as he renews himself by hunting and dispatching other Avatars of the Parliament of Cats, and this reliance on others vexes Dark Cougar.

When confronted with another Avatar he sees the confrontation as sport or entertainment, but ultimately only as a transitory diversion, so self-assured is he in his abilities.

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ADVENTURE HOOKS

Blood Sacrifice – If a player-hero is an Avatar, or has abilities resembling those of an Avatar, it is likely they could cross paths with Dark Cougar as he seeks first to establish whether or not they represent one of the powers of the Parliament of Cats, then whether they are powerful enough to be worth his time to renew himself, or if he is better to wait until they have become more powerful.

The Waning Spell – The spell that Dark Cougar has relied on for decades to rejuvenate him and make himself periodically younger has begun to fail. Initially he sees unexpectedly limited de-aging from disposing of an Avatar (possibly an acquaintance of the heroes?). Then his next victim yields no renewal. Dark Cougar is certain his targets were Avatars so it appears his power is on the wane; he will make deals with any dark force able to reinvigorate his power of de-aging. And what if those dark forces have the heroes in their sights or have crossed paths with them before...?

The Dark Power – A cabal of nefarious sorcerers engages Dark Cougar as a bodyguard as they seek to create a ritual to raise an unspeakable Thing That Man Was Not Meant to Know. Dark Cougar agrees as the cabal has promised access to the plane of the Parliament of Cats after the unspeakable horror is summoned – and if Dark Cougar can sacrifice the power at the heart of the Parliament, he is convinced he could become an immortal mystical power, the god of the dark hunt.

AVATARS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF CATS

Dark Cougar is but one Avatar of the Parliament of Cats. Each Avatar is named for a big cat and the ranks of the Avatars wax and wane over the years as some mantles are temporarily lost, while others maintain a strong tradition of legacy. The Parliament has no formal gathering on the earthly plane, except through its Avatars in the rarest of times, called Gatherings when Avatars from across the world descend upon some hidden clearing or remote wilderness spot to commune with the Parliament and with each other. Indeed some Avatars do not ever fully understand the connection of their super-human abilities to a greater whole.

Some of the Avatars spend their whole adventuring careers or lives ignorant and unknowing of the Parliament and other Avatars, while some Avatars may work closely with other agents of the Parliament.

With the rise of superhuman adventurers, many Avatars have donned costumes and become active, almost all simply adopting their Avatar name as their super-name. Many have turned their special abilities to the pursuit of

justice, but a fair few have become criminals; it appears that natural tendencies are heightened.

The history of the Parliament stretches back thousands of years, as does its use of human agents as Avatars. However there are no written records of the Parliament, and what history is known is largely maintained by oral tradition among those Avatars who delve into such mysteries and in the dusty tomes of scholars of the arcane and occult. What results from this is a myriad of sometimes contradictory tales about the origins of the Parliament of Cats, its lineage, and its role.

One suggestion is that the Parliament is a coalescing of the eternal spirits of a feline-humanoid race now long-dead. One Avatar, Puma, has suggested that following an adventure into space recently he believes that such a race may have been extra-terrestrial, while other Avatars dismiss this suggesting an extra-dimensional origin for such a species.

Another myth surrounding the founding of the Parliament is that it is somehow the legacy of the world's cat gods. Whatever the case, the Parliament rarely communicates directly about its history with its Avatars, focusing instead on its goals, so finding any truth is a potentially impossible task.

The goals of the Parliament are seemingly many and varied, but on closer examination are clearer than at first apparent: the protection of the sanctity of the Parliament; the preservation of nature's order; the pursuit of justice; the preservation of freedom. However Avatars are not bound by these tenets and some such as Dark Cougar clearly act violently in opposition to them. Nonetheless it is notable that many of the Avatars do act in courageous ways to uphold those principles, even if unknowing of the source of their powers. It is almost as if the parliament is able to guide the mantle of Avatar into the hands of an individual whose beliefs align with their own, even if some grave mistakes do occur.

Avatars typically adopt the name of the Power that grants their boon, such as Puma, Tiger or Lion, whether knowingly or not, but this is not always the case.

Creating an Avatar

One or more players may be allowed or encouraged to play an Avatar by an interested Gamemaster, however just one Avatar per team is a recommended limit for variety.

Avatar characters determine their number of powers as usual; however they have some restrictions as to which tables they may roll on for Powers. Avatars must allocate at least one roll to the Avatar Powers table (a new table only available to Avatars); they may only allocate up to one roll to each of the Powers, and Magic/Psionic Items, and/or Magic/Psionics tables; there are no restrictions to rolls on the Skills table other than available rolls.

Avatars Powers Table

01-03	Absorption
04-16	Animal Powers*
17-19	Astral Projection
20-31	Heightened Agility (B)
32-37	Heightened Defense
38-49	Heightened Senses
50-61	Natural Weaponry
62-67	Pet
68-73	Regeneration
74-85	Speed Bonus (Ground)
86-88	Transformation (A)
89-91	Transformation (B)
92-97	Weakness Detection
98-00	Willpower

*Roll on the Avatar Animal Powers Table below.

Avatar Animal Powers Table

Roll 1d4 times on this table.

01-05	Diminished Senses
06-21	Heightened Agility (A)
22-25	Heightened Charisma (A)
26-33	Heightened Endurance (A)
34-49	Heightened Senses
50-57	Heightened Strength (A)
58-73	Natural Weaponry
74-78	Reduced Charisma
79-84	Special**
85-00	Speed Bonus (Ground)

** For Special results refer to the Animal/Plant Powers description in the main rule-book.

