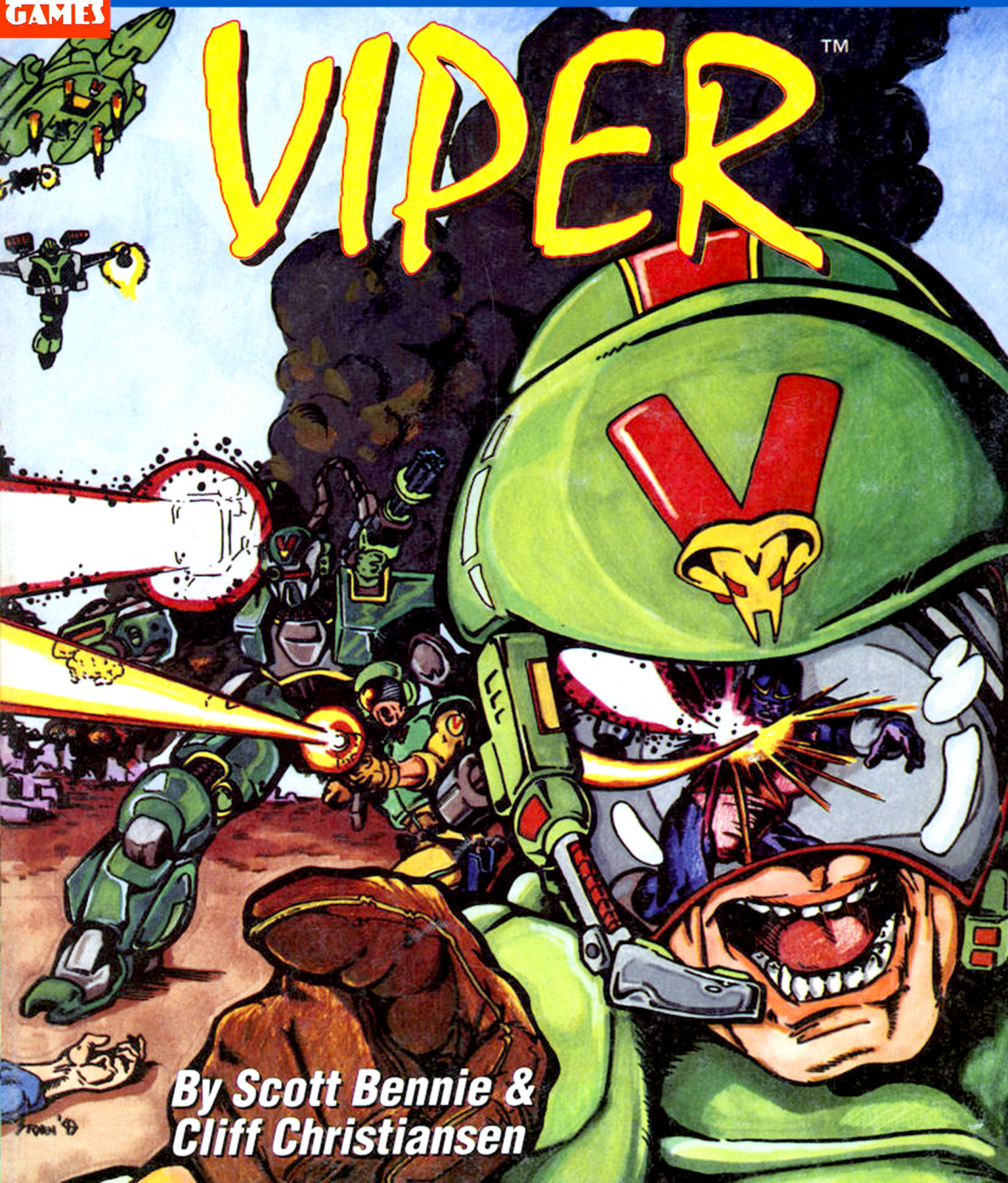


VIPER™



By Scott Bennie &
Cliff Christiansen

VIPERTM

Authors/Designers:

Scott Bennie & Cliff "Doc" Christiansen

Editor: Monte Cook

Cover Illustration: Storn Cook

Interior Illustration: Storn Cook, Greg Smith

Layouts: Bill Covert, Michael Gray, Elena Schott,
Carolyn Schultz

Project Specific Contributions:

Editorial Contributions: George MacDonald,
Steve Peterson, Ray Greer, Bruce Harlick, Jim Katic,
Phil Masters, Stephen Sloane

Pagemaking: Kurt Fischer

Cover Graphics: Terry Amthor

Art Direction: Jessica Ney-Grimm

Editorial & Layout Contributions: Coleman Charlton

ICE Staff: *Sales manager:* Deane Begieging;

Managing Editor: Coleman Charlton;

President: Peter Fenon; *Ceo:* Bruce Neidlinger;

Art Director: Jessica Ney-Grimm

Editing & Development Staff: Kevin Barrett,
Monte Cook, Bruce Harlick, Jessica Ney-Grimm;

Sales, Customer Service & Operations Staff:

Heike Kubasch, Chad McCully;

Shipping Staff: John Breckenridge, Sterling Williams.

DEDICATION

Scott dedicates it to:

The men of SUNDER, who, in spite of their best efforts,
managed to become a pretty good superhero team:

Doug "Elementaar" Baycroft

Scott "Thundrax" Bennie

Mike "Solar Sentinel" O'Donnell

Kelly "Elemmus" Phare

Steve "Avenger" Sloane

Bruce "Cryo" Symons

Tony "Flux" Tateyama

Peter "Pendragon" Van Drongelen

Brian "Shamus" Zomar

and to "George", "Inferno", "Shadow", "Tech

Priest Xor", and "Impulse", the other members of
SUNDER who dedicated their imaginary lives
to the fight against evil.

And a special thanks to all the playtesters from the
Red October BBS.

Cliff would like to thank the following:

Patty & Guy Wulkurka, Fredd Gorham, Scott
Bennie, George MacDonald, Monte Cook,
Coleman Charlton, Rob Bell, Heath Hickman,
David West, Loren Elifrits, Robert Koozer, James
Andrysik, the Omaha Playtesters Association,
Keystone Conceptions, my regular Champions
Groups, and my parents, family, and friends. He
would also like to dedicate this book to the
memory of Curtis Scott.

Scenario Playtesters: Bruce Harlick, Scott Heine,
Scott Ruggels, Steven Holmes, RobPerez, and
some very good gamers at DunDraCon 1991.

VIPERTM is Hero Games' trademark for its superhero roleplaying game using the Hero system.

Champions[®] and Champions, The Super Roleplaying GameTM are Hero Games trademarks for its superhero roleplaying game using the Hero System.

Hero SystemTM is Hero Games' trademark for its roleplaying system. VIPER © 1993 Hero Games. All rights reserved.

Champions Copyright © 1981, 1984, 1989 Hero Games. All rights reserved. Hero System Copyright © 1984, 1989 Hero Games. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying (except Character Sheets for personal use only), recording, or computerization, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher: Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

Printed in U.S.A., First Printing 1993

Produced & Distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., the exclusive manufacturer of Hero Games.

STOCK #: 425

ISBN 1-55806-179-7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4	VIPER Technology	48
The History of VIPER	7	Using VIPER Technology	48
I: 1946-1954 The Beginning	7	Weapon Production	48
II: 1955-1975 VIPER Ascendent	8	VIPER's Arsenal	49
III: 1976-1993 Serpentine Maneuvers	9	Vehicles	57
IV: 1994-1999 The Next Generation	9	Agents	65
VIPER Goals and Organization	10	Viper Agents	65
Relations of VIPER	10	Agent Packages	65
VIPER Organization (C. 1993)	10	Variations on Agents	67
VIPER Science	13	Agent Trainees	67
Prominent VIPER Scientists	14	Agent Commanders	68
VIPER's Ten Most Wanted	16	VIPER Commanders	68
How VIPER Hunts Your Character	17	VIPER Psionics Specialists	69
Case History: The Fall of Black Eagle	17	Vehicle Specialists	69
VIPER Recruiting Techniques	18	VIPER Unarmed Combat Specialists	70
Nest Complements	19	Other Martial Arts Packages	70
Diary of a VIPER Agent	20	Mech-VIPER Mark I	71
Campaigning	23	VIPER Elite Air-Cavalry	72
Using VIPER in Champions	23	Agent Personalities	73
Using VIPER in Super Agents	24	Agent Tactics	74
Street-Level VIPER	25	The Future of the VIPER Agent	75
CyberVIPER	26	Steel Serpent Armor	75
VIPER Thug	26	VIPER Supervillians	76
VIPER Campaigns	27	The Serpent Syndicate	77
Nests	32	Python	78
Types of Nest Leaders	32	Black Mamba	80
Sample Nest Leaders	33	Komodo	81
Sample Nests	36	Hiss	82
Nest Organization Schemes	37	Dragon Queen	84
VIPER Around the World	38	Gila	86
Europe	38	The Snake Pack	88
North America	40	Pack Master	90
Latin America	41	Coral	91
Asia	42	Massasauga	93
Africa	43	Kufi	94
Australia	43	VIPER Force-1	96
Antarctica	43	Chasm	97
Duchess Industries	44	Blackflame	99
Background	44	Mirror Man	100
Notable Duchess Industries Secrets	45	Rampage	102
Personnel	45	Shift	103
Duchess Industries Security Agent	45	Stealth	105
The Duchess	46		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VIPER Force-2	106	Random Villainy Generator	151
Armstrong	107	Crime #1 — Invasion	151
Black Lion	109	Crime #2 — Assassination/Kidnapping	152
Cannon	110	Crime #3 — Robbery	152
Forcebeam	111	Crime #4 — Terrorism	152
Madame Blue	112	Crime #5 — Extortion	153
Savant	114	Fleshing Out the Tables	153
Smoke	115	Scenario 1 — “Perchance to Dream”	154
Stalwart	116	Introduction: Awakenings	154
Solo Operatives	118	Cast of Characters	154
Brick	118	The Nightmare Maker and How it Works	155
Citadel	119	Birth of an Imagination	156
Damage	121	Dreaming While You Sleep	156
Gravity	122	Interlude: Dream Date	156
Hammerhead	123	Follow Your Dreams	157
Mind Wipe	125	Drugstore Superheroes	157
Phaze	127	The Dwelling Place of Nightmares	157
Scattershot	128	Continuation	158
Shadow Fist	130	Additional Characters	159
Viperia, The Ultimate VIPER Soldier	131	Panorama	159
Small and Unusual Groups	133	Killer Flies	159
Cyborgs Inc.	133	Anguish	159
Heinous	134	Sizzors	159
Despite	135	Scenario 2 — Ascension	161
VI-Borgs	136	Synopsis	161
Doll Maker and His Dolls	136	Introduction: Burbank	161
Doll Maker	136	Cast of Characters	161
Doll Package	140	I: Sanction	161
Samurai Doll	140	II: Burbank	162
Ballerina	140	III: Plan of Attack	162
Cowboy	141	IV: Mother Cobra	164
Ninja	141	Appendix	167
Knight	141	Scenario 3 — VIPER’s Nest	169
Toy Soldier	142	Part One: “Memories”	169
Alien	142	Part Two: “Assault on the Tanghal Tower”	171
Superhero	142	Part Three: “Microfilm Madness”	173
The Supreme Serpent and		Part Four: “I Love a Parade”	176
His Operatives	143	Part Five: “Combat in Christopher Park”	180
Modem	143	Part Six: “Doomsday”	182
Sheath	145	Scenario Ideas	188
Jefferson Gable, The Prime Serpent	146	“Dogfight”	188
The Supreme Serpent	148	“Unsheathed”	188
		“The Dragon”	189
		“The Doll’s House”	189

INTRODUCTION



DEFENDER'S PRIVATE LOG: 16 NOVEMBER

We had been contacted to supervise the security of a government test rocket: Project Eye Spy. This satellite was designed to hear a conversation in a parked car while under a railroad underpass with a train passing over it. Of course the satellite was being guarded by SAT agents but the Senator in charge feared for its safety. Given how active certain criminals have been lately, and the fact that I was concerned about its use in the right hands (let alone the wrong hands), I could hardly refuse to help.

This was suppose to be a "Top Secret" transportation from the manufacturer in New York to the launch site. However an informant of Jaguar's said that the word was out on the convoy and any two-bit thug who knew who to ask could find out about it.

Knowing this, I asked the rest of the Champions to join Jaguar and myself on the mission. Everyone but Seeker made it to the convoy before it left. Seeker was in Chicago speaking with American Eagle and Black Phantom and was unable to be in New York, however he agreed to bring both of the former members of Freedom Squad with him and meet us in Jacksonville, Florida. Although Seeker's independence can be annoying, sometimes playing hookey has its advantages.

We set out from Cape Canaveral with a small detachment of ten SAT agents and five Secret Service men in three vehicles. They were typical professionals, quietly disapproving of people in costumes or powered-armor, but in combat, you could trust them with your life. All went smoothly until we reached Savannah. I was surprised it took that long for trouble to appear.

Our scouts reported what appeared to be a broke down, jack-knifed Semi in front of us. Cars were piled up and tempers were flaring. The SAT commander ignored my advice and let the main convoy approach, quoting some statute or by-law on SAT agents being here to help the general good and obviously this wasn't going to be cleared up anytime soon without his assistance. It surprised me; SAT agents aren't usually so civic-minded.

The convoy rolled to a stop and three SAT agents were dispatched to "clear up this mess." My gut told me something was wrong, but I said nothing. SAT agents are sometimes thick-headed, but they're rarely stupid, and I try to respect their judgement. I gave a signal to the other Champions to be on the alert. Quantum started to get airborne; she was even more suspicious than I was.

I was less than surprised when out of the back of the truck burst a VIPER Five-Team and a pair of Mech-VIPERs. From the hills on either side of us emerged a squad of Air-Cavalry agents, the Elite kind, and finally—from behind us—another Five-Team took position. Then, Brick and Phaze, two of VIPER's most experienced mercenaries, jumped out of a moving truck directly behind us and began to move towards us. We were boxed in.

That was when the other shoe dropped. The blustering SAT Commander turned to me and said: "We have you surrounded. Surrender the satellite to VIPER." He drew his pistol and waived it menacingly at me.

I struck him, hard, harder than I intended. I don't like being duped. I saw the bogus commander spitting teeth out of his helmet.

"Champions, it's action time!" I called out on the radio.

Obsidian and Brick are old slugging mates; the big guy went for Brick, while Quantum caught Phaze with one of her 'quantum bonds.' A Mech-VIPER grabbed Solitaire, and she started screaming. Santiago ducked in with the Secret Service men and pulled out his gun; he's been trying even harder than usual to avoid becoming "The Beast" lately. Phaze hit Quantum pretty hard, and, to my surprise, a Five-Team coordinated assault on Quantum hit her five times as soon as Phaze's blast knocked her into the ground. Quantum's tough, but five hits from VIPER's latest generation of weapons is something no one could shrug. Quantum was out.

I gritted my teeth and blasted the Mech-VIPER that was squeezing Solitaire. Her widget was wildly gyrating around her head, and I heard her scream, and she blew herself free. The Secret Service agents and the eight loyal SAT agents had fallen back to cover, and were trading fire with the Air Cavalry. Santiago had had enough; a furry blur came running out of the cover where the Secret Service agents were pinned down, clawing its way into the heart of one of the Five-Teams.

Brick and Obsidian seemed like close to an even match. I caught Phaze with a electrical blast and hurled him against one of the Mech-VIPERs, knocking him out. The two Mech-VIPERs were firing furiously at Solitaire; hitting her once, but not taking her out of the fight yet. Jaguar was shredding weapons with expert skill, and Obsidian managed to grab Brick and threw him into the heart of the Air Cavalry, taking two of them out, and not hurting Brick whatsoever. A Mech-VIPER caught me with a blast that sent me off my feet and toppling into one of the vehicles, a second Mech-VIPER put Solitaire down for the count.

"Mate! You started without me. Shame on you!" an all-too-cheerful voice registered through my communicator.

The cavalry had arrived. Seeker lunged for the Mech-VIPER, doing a passing strike with triple irons against its joints. There was a spark, and a continuous flash of electricity where its neck was severed. A second blow decapitated its head, doing enough damage to take it out of the fight. Black Phantom began firing into a second one with some sort of constricting round; the thing broke free just in time for me to join in with a blast that tore through its torso and made a large hole. The Mech-VIPER collapsed to its knees and fell on its stomach, in an all-too-human death scene.

The tide had turned. The Air Cav caught American Eagle a couple of times, but the old man shrugged it off. Quantum managed to pick herself off the ground, using language that was not particularly good for a role-model, then caught a couple of Air Cavalry with a wide-beam attack. They realized they weren't going to win the fight, and began to retreat. Phaze got off the ground, but I swept him off his feet and slammed him, hard, putting him back down. "Not today, Phaze," I said, or something just as corny; I've been listening too much to Seeker. The agents managed to hit us more than usual, but we whittled them down. Brick was the only real threat remaining.

He quickly realized that he was out numbered and he started lobbing occupied cars at us. We still would have had him if the remaining Air-Cavalry had not provided cover for the fleeing muscleman. Still, we had won the fight, captured seven VIPER Agents, two VIPER transport vehicles and destroyed two Mech-VIPERs. Best of all we had kept the Satellite away from them. It had been extremely lucky for us that Seeker, Black Phantom and American Eagle had been travelling nearby and that the Black Phantom had received my distress call.

I looked around for the bogus SAT commander—it appeared he ducked out early—when the satellite exploded. It appears that VIPER had some sort of contingency plan after all. If they couldn't have it, no one would. Oddly enough, given the potential for misuse, I can't say I was too unhappy that VIPER destroyed the satellite, but I was more concerned about the carnage on the battlefield. One of the Secret Service agents needed to be taken to a hospital immediately, and two of the SAT agents were badly hurt by blaster burns.

After picking ourselves up and putting out the fire. I heard Quantum saying "Is it my imagination or are those snakes getting more dangerous every day?" No one dared answer, but I could tell that Quantum wasn't the only one who was asking that question. I know I was.



...
The 1990s saw the amazing rise of VIPER. This criminal organization was thought to be all but dead in the 1980s, dead, or a joke. In the early 1990s, people stopped laughing. Under the influence of the Supreme Serpent, they saw a dramatic increase in efficiency in major operations that was unprecedented in the 20th Century. Improved technology caught UNTIL and the major superhero teams off guard, and they began to score one major victory after another. The franchise system gave VIPER the freedom to pick and choose superior talent to run their Nests, and a new generation of weapons and vehicles closed the gap between superhumans and humans. These years could be considered the true Golden Age of VIPER, if only for the incredible profits earned by their Nests.

—Jane Dugan "Champions of the 20th Century"
Henderson Publishing (2028)

VIPER is something of a problem for established **Champions** campaigns. While well-known, and supposedly an object of fear, VIPER is sometimes the Rodney Dangerfield of the supervillain set: it doesn't get respect. How can you respect an organization that has had at least a dozen heroes and villains steal equipment from it and get away with it? How can you respect an organization that hunts virtually every superhero and supervillain in the world, and never wins? An encounter against Doctor Destroyer is something to fear. When they see Firewing and Mechanon, the average hero group has to respect them. When the heroes see the boys in green, they grin, and get ready to have fun mowing the opposition down without working up a sweat.

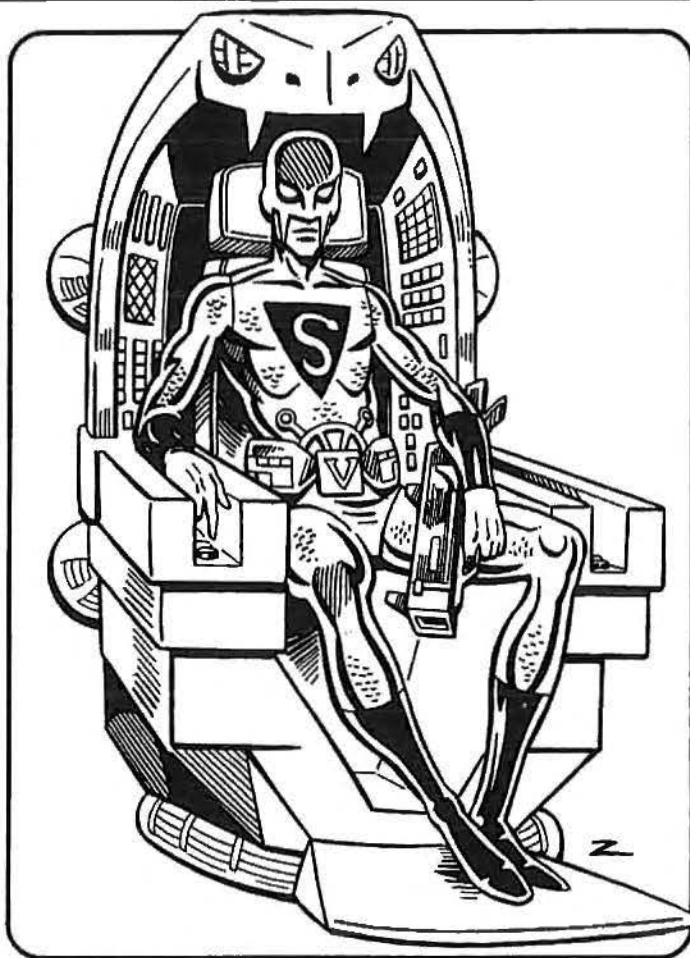
Not particularly an attitude that indicates an organization is worthy of respect.

The *VIPER* sourcebook is meant to change this. Within this book is everything you need to run a **Champions** campaign featuring *VIPER*. There are several new supervillain teams and dozens of original supervillains in the service of *VIPER*. Dozens of weapons. New Vehicles. New agent types. Nest leaders with insidious plans. A *VIPER* campaign series. And the Supreme Serpent himself.

We've tried to provide advice for tailoring this for the power level of the campaign; supplements are not meant to be used wholecloth, and should be adapted by the GM to fit. Providing power level advice is meant to assist the GM, not to usurp his or her authority. There is no such thing as a "bad" power level for a campaign, as long as the players and the GM are enjoying themselves, there are simply different tastes. This supplement tries to appeal to as many tastes as possible. As a good rule of thumb, the highest power level characters in *VIPER* should be a good match for the best heroes on Earth.

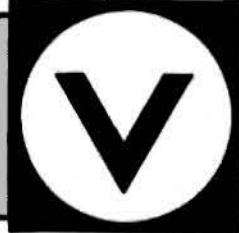
As important as power level in a campaign is tone. Some GMs may want to run *VIPER* in a less-than-competent fashion. That's fine; the search for respect is not the only valid approach to the subject matter and we hope that you will find the tools to remake *VIPER* in whatever image that you wish. But if you want respect, this book will allow you to earn it.

VIPER owes a lot to most of the people who have ever written for **Champions**, but the following people deserve additional recognition: Aaron Allston, for providing the definitive RPG game sourcebooks, *Strike Force* and *Lands of Mystery*, Steve Maurer, for his article on *VIPER* in the *Adventurer's Club*, which provides much of the foundation for this revision, and George MacDonald, for his creation of *VIPER*. And also Ian Fleming and a lot of comic creators, whose work provided the inspiration for *VIPER*.



Howard Lawson [aka Mister Terror, leader of the Phoenix, Arizona *VIPER*'s Nest] decided that he was going to hijack a train carrying nuclear weapons. He stationed two agents on the track, believing that the train would stop, and a squad of agents would then storm it and grab the weapons. Perhaps the agents' fate was another example of natural selection in action, but what Mr. Terror did not know is that it is the policy of military trains carrying nuclear weapons not to stop under any circumstances. The train mowed down the two agents, killing them, and casually proceeded on to its destination without coming under fire.

THE HISTORY OF VIPER



I: 1946-1954 THE BEGINNING

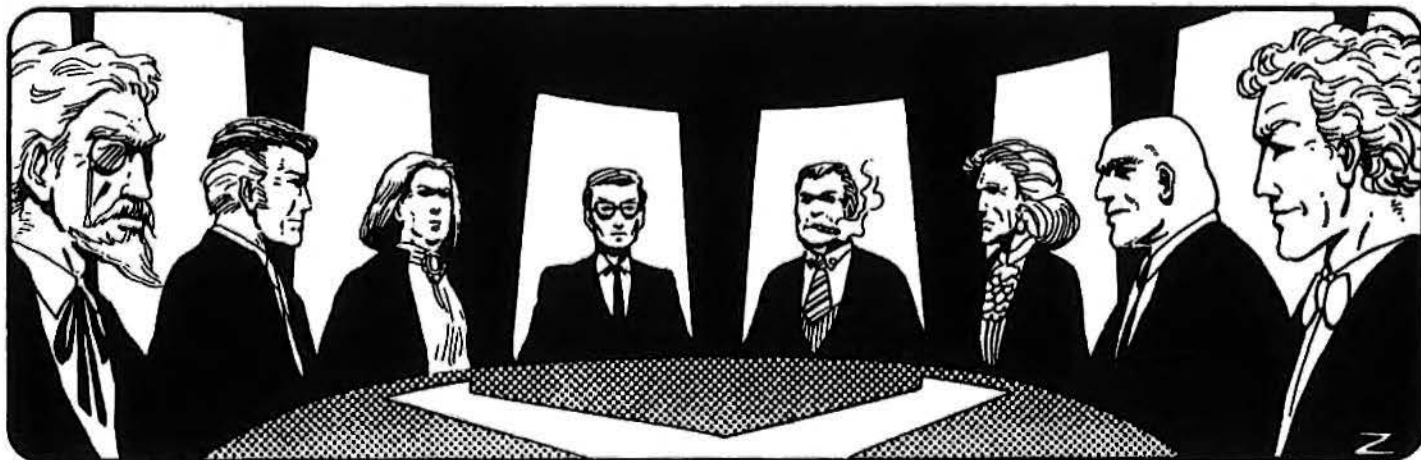
Thomas Thurston was released from an English prison in 1945. His crime had been publicly sympathizing with the Nazis; he had been a brownshirt in the years before the Second World War, and had acquired a large number of fascist contacts throughout Europe. These contacts included the leaders of a number of major corporations, who were extremely nervous about the rise of communism. They feared that the war-weary democracies lacked the will to combat communism, and that the world would fall before a Marxist juggernaut in which they would have no place. Thurston decided to hold a meeting of former Nazi sympathizers to form an organization that would counter this threat.

On June 12, 1946, there was a meeting of prominent industrialists near Hiroshima, where the leaders of world industry would meet to discuss "industry in the nuclear age." There was also a second, smaller, and much more secret meeting, held by Thurston. The representatives formed a "Who's Who" of the world's industrial elite: Harold Cross, Vice-President of the Badlands Motor Company; King Abdul of the small Middle Eastern Kingdom of Awad, head of Awad Petroleum International; Morgan Wayne, CEO of Polytechnic Supply Incorporated; Arnold Weir, Vice-President of Worldwide Multinational Unlimited; Robert Ashe, of the United States Senate; Fritz Bresselhoff, President of Deutschland Aeronautics; Jean Belliers, Junior Vice-President of Alliance Francais Shipping; Sir Alan Gregory, President of Yorkshire Industries Ltd., Hideo Yamamoto, CEO of Yamamoto Electronics, and Duchess Henrietta Van Drotte, head of Duchess Industries. At this meeting, they swore that they would strike together against anyone who would op-

pose them. Thurston suggested that they refer to themselves as the Blackfists; Senator Ashe recommended that they call themselves VIPER, as that better described the organization; secretive and hidden, but always capable of striking. While Thurston sulked, VIPER became the name of the organization. Ashe was elected the first leader of VIPER.

VIPER was initially a very secret organization. They performed acts of industrial espionage against their competitors, and shared their information. Duchess Industries swallowed many of its competitors during this period. They gave a great deal of money to political candidates that were anti-communist; and spent a fortune trying to frame their enemies and make them appear pro-Communist. However cracks appeared in the organization. King Abdul died in 1950, and his son was hostile to VIPER. The new king was assassinated soon after, and Abdul's more sympathetic nephew rose to the throne. Duchess Industries took advantage of weakness within Yorkshire Industries's Board of Directors and made it their subsidiary. Polytechnic Supply and Worldwide Multinational both quit VIPER in protest.

In 1952, Thurston, using VIPER resources, formed a criminal organization, specializing in extortion and money laundering. Ashe tried to use this as an excuse to expel him, but never managed to get support from the other VIPER council members, who decided that expanding into the criminal underworld was a perfectly acceptable activity. Thurston became the first *de facto* VIPER Nest leader, centered in New York City. There was an undeclared war between Thurston and Ashe from this point on. Ashe increased his political influence, and became a right-hand man of Senator Joe McCarthy; he hoped to be a Vice-Presidential candidate in 1956. Thurston's Nest became extremely prosperous, and one of the most technically advanced criminal organizations in the world. They operated independently of the VIPER council, and was virtually impossible for the council to control.



In 1954, the fall of Joe McCarthy also meant an end to the political career of Robert Ashe. The VIPER dream of destroying communism had crumbled. Thurston attempted to get recognition as the new VIPER leader, but the independence of his Nest had horrified many of the VIPER council members. When Thurston was not named head of VIPER, he declared that his Nest would perform criminal activities for the highest bidder, not just the council. The council voted to expel Thurston, who then declared the council irrelevant; his Nest was the real VIPER, not the quarreling industrialists. By the end of 1954, the VIPER council, feeling that their mission was a failure, voted to dissolve VIPER. Thurston's Nest remained, and continued to call itself VIPER.

II: 1955-1975 VIPER ASCENDENT

By 1957, the FBI became aware of a criminal organization, specializing in robbery and terror, that called itself VIPER. In 1958, Thurston died of cancer, and was succeeded as Chief VIPER by Gordon Waters, one of Thurston's lieutenants, a man noted for his love of military history and terrorism. VIPER's displays became more violent and public. Waters designed green uniforms for his agents to wear when they committed crimes; these were the first public appearances of VIPER as we know them today. VIPER's few remaining contacts with industry kept them on the leading edge of technology. By 1962, VIPER's influence was felt all through the eastern seaboard of the United States, and there were five individual Nests, linked by radio signal and a secret code to Water's Nest One. The VIPER threat was taken very seriously by the authorities and the media, and VIPER was blamed by some conspiracy theorists for the assassination of President Kennedy. When superheroes began to appear in numbers, VIPER immediately realized their potential. They recruited and created many supervillains, but always had bad luck or poor judgement; the vast majority of these supers betrayed VIPER. Nonetheless, most of them remained with VIPER long enough to cause considerable damage; it is arguable that, in spite of their defections, VIPER would never have achieved as much power or notoriety as they did had these supervillains had never existed.

Waters tried to recruit as many people as possible, in order to expand the influence of the organization. One of these recruits was Len Melnyk, head of a powerful labour coalition. In 1962, Melnyk tried to seize control of VIPER. There was a war between Melnyk and Waters, which Waters eventually won. This in-fighting severely hurt the other Nests, who got together to form their own internal security agency to prevent this infighting from occurring again. These agents, armed with advanced technology, became the core of what VIPER would become.

Gordon Waters developed an escalating case of megalomania, then paranoia. In 1967, he tried to "purge" VIPER of those he felt were disloyal; the other Nest leaders activated the security corps and had Waters assassinated. This left a major vacuum in the center of VIPER's structure; without a clear leader of VIPER Nest One, VIPER would fall apart. Waters had increasingly surrounded himself by sycophants who were incapable of leading the organization, and the security corps had no idea about leadership.

At this point, Duchess Henrietta Van Drotte, head of Duchess Industries, intervened. She had never completely broken her ties from the organization, and felt that if she could pull the strings of the agency, it could become a powerful weapon. She gathered the Nest leaders and some of the backers of VIPER together, and had them form a VIPER council of "Secret Masters." Together, they could point VIPER in the proper direction.

The Secret Masters stabilized the structure of VIPER, at least long enough for Larry Jurgens, one of the most prominent Nest leaders, to plant his followers in the other VIPER Nests and stage a coup. The other Nest leaders surrendered or were murdered. By 1970, Jurgens held the position of Chief VIPER, the same position that had been held by Ashe, Thurston, and Waters. Jurgens was less flamboyant than Waters; his style of leadership stressed stealth and efficiency. But it was very efficient. VIPER had spread to both coasts by 1970, and, with the continuing assistance of Duchess Industries world-wide by 1973. By 1975, VIPER was the clearly the largest criminal organization in the world, employing over one hundred thousand agents, and with financial assets that made it equivalent to the 12th largest country in the world, not including its backers. It had over sixty Nests worldwide.

At this point, Jurgens, who never trusted the Duchess, broke all ties with her. VIPER began to flounder. It had grown too big, too quickly, and even with Jurgens' relatively covert policies, it had attracted a lot of attention. Major Juan Martinez, the leader of UNTIL, realized that UNTIL would be the best weapon to fight this organization. He also had an ulterior motive; in 1965, SAT (Special American Tactics) was formed, and PRIMUS was near completion. UNTIL, a United Nations organization, needed a reason to remain in force on American soil. The presence of VIPER gave them that reason. In 1976, UNTIL broke into VIPER Nest One and destroyed the heart of VIPER. Jurgens was killed in the assault.

III: 1976-1993 SERPENTINE MANEUVERS

The modern age of VIPER began in 1981, with the creation of the Serpentine Crystal and the Serpentine Computer Network. For five years, VIPER floundered like a punch-drunk fighter; some Nests with good leadership prospered during this period, many more fell to UNTIL and SAT. The problem with VIPER is that the central command could not reliably have access to the Nests without compromising their own security, and the Nests had no motivation to follow the instructions of a central command.

UNTIL was VIPER's major enemy. A coup attempt that would have given VIPER control of a Central American nation was foiled in 1983 by UNTIL. Attempts to establish a super Nest in the Canadian North were foiled by UNTIL and the fledgling Canadian Sentinels superteam in 1985. Nests preyed on each other. There was a rise in rival organizations, such as DEMON, Raven, and the Worldwide League of Crime. Many of VIPER's backers decided to support them instead. More than half of the Secret Masters left VIPER for these other criminal organizations.

In 1981, Dr. Hector Joy created the Serpentine Crystal, and conceived the Serpentine Network. The few remaining Secret Masters immediately saw the benefits of this; an untraceable link between VIPER Central Command where they could pass information and instructions back and forth without detection. It took several years for the Network to be fully developed and put in place, but by 1986, VIPER again had a means of controlling its Nests. Many Nests had been destroyed, and UNTIL had formally pronounced the VIPER threat "all but over." They were wrong.

In 1984, the Supreme Serpent emerged. The Serpent's computer expertise was great enough that he could infiltrate the Serpentine network and subtly manipulate VIPER until he was ready to take control. He decided to work slowly, but his caution paid off. By 1986, he had a foothold on the VIPER Council, and was issuing many of the Council's commands, to VIPER's benefit. By 1988, he had gathered enough concrete evidence on "The Secret Masters" activities that if any of them decided to oppose his takeover of VIPER, they would be surely be sent to prison. The Masters were not amused, but the Serpent's vision of a more profitable VIPER where they would have more wealth than ever before placated most of them. By 1989, he had taken complete control, just as Jurgens had done two decades before. Under his leadership, Nests were reorganized to a franchise system, with VIPER taking a small profit share from its activities, getting the bulk of its cash by selling weapons and services to the Nests. Raven and the ReDirection Cartel were taken over as "cash cows" to fund the new VIPER. The Serpent, realizing that VIPER had lost its technological edge, began an extensive program to develop more powerful weapons. Costly research and training programs were moved to South America and Asia. The Serpent also began to recruit a large number of superpowered individuals, and organized them into teams, offering them incentives to stay in VIPER. VIPER-Force-1 and the Serpent Syndicate were founded in 1990; VIPER Force-2 was established in 1991, the Snake Pack was founded in 1992.

The result: a much more effective VIPER organization. By 1990, UNTIL once again realized that VIPER was on the rise; by 1992, VIPER was once again one of the world's greatest threats, as dangerous to the planet's security as Doctor Destroyer, Firewing, Eurostar, or Malachite. This time, UNTIL realizes it will be much harder to bring them down.

IV: 1994-1999 THE NEXT GENERATION

While VIPER's stated goals are very simple, the Supreme Serpent has developed an agenda for the next five to seven years.

- (1) Consolidation and Stability. VIPER wishes to strengthen their strong Nests, and maintain its position as the world's foremost criminal and terrorist organization. This involves increased inter-Nest cooperation, and increasing the reliance of Nests on VIPER's Central Command, and the development of a more powerful arsenal.
- (2) Financial Diversity. VIPER wishes to expand into other criminal (and legitimate) enterprises as a way of increasing their profitability. This involves the creation of new forms of narcotics, computer crime, and investment.
- (3) Improved Agents. Refer to the Agents section for information on the "Top Snake" school and the Steel Serpent Powered Armor Project.
- (4) Reduced Competition. VIPER wishes to present, using the media, the idea that public service in the Police, or in UNTIL, SAT, or PRIMUS, or as a superhero, is "stupid." That is, people who put their lives on the line for little or no money aren't very smart. They wish to create and hype any scandal that might occur in any area of law enforcement, and reduce the respect that the public has for the people who protect them. VIPER feels that if the public has no respect for police, agents, or superheroes, and views the profit motive as the only important one, fewer people will become police, agents, and superheroes. With fewer law enforcement agents, those that remain will become increasingly susceptible to burnout and corruption. As the Supreme Serpent says: "It is in the best of interest of VIPER that we encourage the public to become more amoral and materialistic, and scornful of those who try to promote ethics."

VIPER GOALS AND ORGANIZATION



Four short sentences are a perfect summation of the VIPER credo:

*Greed is good. Very good. Power is even better.
Get as much of both as you can.*

Actually this is not quite true. Nest leaders have more motivations than just greed and megalomania (see Nest Leader characteristics) and VIPER's goals will tend to follow those of their Nest leaders. VIPER is also a vengeful organization, and wants to destroy their enemies, UNTIL in particular.

RELATIONS OF VIPER

As the largest high-tech criminal/terrorist organization on Earth, VIPER has many enemies. There are few costumed adventurers (i.e., superheroes) who have not encountered VIPER at some time in their career and do not harbor a grudge against them (which VIPER is all too good at returning).

Most supervillains view VIPER as rivals. The exceptions are mercenary villains, for whom VIPER is just another employer, and Dr. Destroyer, who is closely tied with VIPER and Duchess Industries. Mechanon hates VIPER as well organized organics—a small but credible threat; Firewing dislikes their lack of honor; various members of Eurostar have long-time vendettas against them, and Malachite views them as costumed incompetents (of course, this is Malachite's view of virtually everyone).

As VIPER will not hesitate to employ mutants, Genocide considers them to be against the interests of humanity; DEMON and VIPER have had many vicious encounters, as has VIPER and PSI. VIPER dislikes Project: Armour's UK activities, as well as that of the Worldwide League of Crime.

Raven was once an enemy of VIPER; recently, during the rise of the Supreme Serpent, VIPER secretly subverted Raven, and it is now their puppet. In VIPER, only the Prime Serpent, Supreme Serpent, Python, Dragon Queen, Helena Rivera, and Milo Lojik know about the success of "Operation: Hostile Takeover", and only a handful of people in Raven know that they are secretly working for VIPER. Both sides have been given a "truce" order by their high commands; the much-publicized war between Raven and VIPER appears to have been a VIPER smoke screen to hide their takeover.

VIPER despises PRIMUS, SAT, and virtually all "benign" superagencies. Its greatest enmity, is, however, toward UNTIL. Some people say that VIPER and UNTIL define each other, and could not really exist without each other. Both sides dispute that statement, and are anxious to disprove it.

VIPER ORGANIZATION (C. 1993)

Since the Supreme Serpent has taken over VIPER, VIPER has drastically reorganized itself into a franchise system. VIPER sells franchises in its organization, giving exclusive rights to perform actions in certain zones. The Nest receives VIPER technical support and intelligence, and access (for a price) to special services like the VIPER force teams or mercenary supervillains. In return, the Nest agrees to: (1) purchase and exclusively use VIPER equipment; (2) share all intelligence with VIPER Central Command; (3) agree not to violate the territorial integrity of other Nests, and not to knowingly interfere in their actions; and (4) obey direct commands of the Supreme Serpent to their best ability. Nests that fail these conditions are subject to punishment.

The growth of VIPER under the Supreme Serpent has seen the establishment of a lot of bureaucracy to support it. While the Nests are self-sufficient, VIPER High Command has become increasingly bureaucratized; this chart reflects the complex interaction between the various divisions of VIPER. For the structure of VIPER prior to the Supreme Serpent, refer to *Super Agents*, page 86.

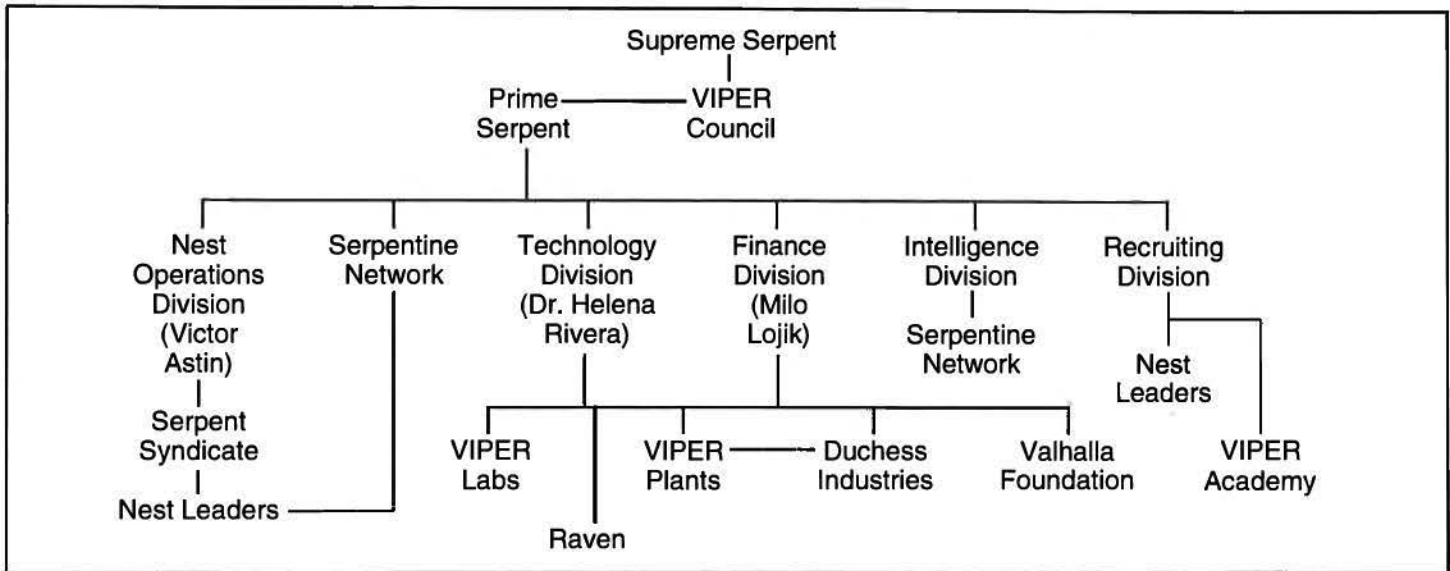
A GUIDE TO THE MAJOR PLAYERS IN VIPER

SUPREME SERPENT:

The *de facto* leader of VIPER, an alien probe that has decided to take control of VIPER and lead it to world domination. The Supreme Serpent exists in a world within the realm of computers, commonly known as Cyberspace, and makes duplicates to enter the real world, or manipulates certain robotic followers. See the Characters section.

PRIME SERPENT:

Also known as Jefferson Gable, an android duplicate of a deceased businessman. The Prime Serpent is the channel through which The Supreme Serpent issues commands. See the Characters section.



VIPER COUNCIL:

The remaining Secret Masters who decided to follow the Supreme Serpent; these people are kept informed of the general state of VIPER (finances, new developments, special projects that do not belong solely to the Supreme Serpent), allowed to advise on VIPER matters, and given a sizeable profit to maintain their loyalty. The members of the VIPER Council are:



- (1) Duchess Henrietta Van Drotte, CEO of Duchess Industries. While no longer as powerful as she once was, the Duchess is probably the most respected member of the VIPER council, and is a closest confidante of Jefferson Gable. Even she, however, does not suspect the truth about the Supreme Serpent.
- (2) Akiro Yamamoto, President of Yamamoto Electrics. He is mostly interested in using VIPER as a weapon against his competitors, and is largely responsible for VIPER's presence in the Far East. His involvement in VIPER is an open secret in the Tokyo business community, but his prestigious position keeps them silent. His nephew is the leader of VIPER's Tokyo Nest.
- (3) Greg Johnson, US Representative (Missouri). Johnson is one in a long list of politicians who are using VIPER's machinery as a way to further his career. His father was one of the Secret Masters during the 1950s and 60s, and Johnson is on the Council mostly due to their influence. Easily the least intelligent and least powerful member of the Council.
- (4) Leo Maynowitz, President of Main Communications. Leo owns dozens of newspapers and television stations. Leo was recruited during the early 60s, and is an arch-conservative who believed VIPER was the weapon that would allow America to win the Cold War. As Maynowitz has come to realize that the Cold War was won with very little help from VIPER, his loyalty to VIPER is sinking fast. He is trying to figure a way for him to leave VIPER that will not result in his death.
- (5) Richard Neidhart, Vice President of Chaste, a major British conglomerate. Neidhart remained in VIPER after the Supreme Serpent took over, but only with the greatest reluctance. He has been actively working against the Supreme Serpent, carefully leaking damaging information to the authorities, in the hope that the Supreme Serpent will be discredited. His efforts have been more successful in Europe than they have been in America, particularly in England. He is not trusted by the ReDirection Cartel.

NEST OPERATIONS DIVISION:

The Nest Operations division is really VIPER's internal securities division, operating separate from VIPER, but connected to the Supreme Serpent by the Serpentine Network. The Nest Operations serves as coordinators between the Nests and the Serpent Syndicate, determining when the Syndicate needs to intervene to save a Nest, and also determines when a Nest might be turning rogue. Its leader, Victor Astin, is as ruthless as anyone in VIPER. Astin operates a high profile security and investigation agency in New York City which serves as cover for VIPER's Nest Operations division.

TECHNOLOGY DIVISION:

The technology division of VIPER is involved with three, often overlapping tasks: (1) the development of inexpensive,

easy-to-produce weapons; (2) the development of expensive, cutting edge technology and weapons; and (3) the examination of stolen technologies for practical benefits. The technologies division is divided into two smaller divisions: labs (located in the United States and Japan), and plants located primarily in Southeast Asia (Indonesia and Thailand in particular), with some plants in Northern Africa, South America, Mexico and Europe. The technology division is overseen by Dr. Helen Rivera, formerly of Duchess Industries; she is not a particularly imaginative person, but she's a good administrator who knows how to keep costs down and efficiency high. The technology division is involved in a constant funding battle, and is partially subsidized by Duchess Industries, which is given access to many of their most non-lethal technological breakthroughs.

Last year, VIPER killed 4 superheroes (3 of them DFVs, commonly known as Deadly Force-using Vigilantes), six supervillains, 180 agents and security persons, and 361 innocent bystanders. There were over 8,000 successful criminal operations linked to VIPER, according to Interpol; with an estimated 19,000 unreported crimes. Losses from VIPER attacks in the United States were estimated at over \$3 billion. VIPER revenue from money-laundering, munitions sales and narcotics is said to greatly exceed this total.



VIPER SCIENCE

VIPER has a reputation for conducting wild scientific experiments; this reputation is deserved. The VIPER Command, under the aegis of the Technology Division and Dr. Helena Rivera, is responsible for overseeing all VIPER scientific activity. Nests are allowed and indeed encouraged to conduct independent research and engineering projects (the VIPER Technology Division sometimes purchases discoveries and developments from Nests).

VIPER tends to recruit its researchers from the large field of disgruntled academics and displaced foreign technicians. Given the current state of American education, it is likely that VIPER's technical expertise can grow as large as they want. VIPER does have a history of technicians turning renegade; at least as many of VIPER's top scientists have gone rogue as their superheroes!

The Supreme Serpent has forbidden any experimentation in the field of artificial intelligence; the only Nest that disobeyed this order found itself a smoldering pile of molten metal and dead bodies in what constitutes the swiftest and most vicious reprisal against a disobedient Nest in VIPER's history. Nests are also forbidden from nuclear weapons research; the Technology Division of VIPER is nuclear capable, but the Serpent believes that if VIPER used nuclear weapons, the nations of the world would mobilize all of their resources to destroy VIPER.

VIPER current Research projects include the following:

- (1) VIPER's Special Genetics Projects (referred to in-house as "Project Stein") is an attempt to artificially developed superbeings. The SGP has succeeded in creating "Steins", but all but a handful of these beings have experienced irreversible physical deterioration after less than six weeks (before VIPER can train them to be useful), and the project is operating on a reduced budget. Cataclysm of the Braverman Foundation is the only known subject to last more than three years.
- (2) Project Big Bang, an attempt to develop an extremely accurate orbital laser that is powered by a cosmic ray collector; this would allow VIPER to take out any target they desired.
- (3) Project Impregnable. This is the attempt to create the world's most powerful battle armor, primarily because scientists like to create things that are really powerful. The wearer of this theoretical suit of armor is to be called the Ultimate VIPER; there is currently a training program of VIPER agents in stolen battlesuits to determine who is most suited to be the Ultimate VIPER. Dr. Destroyer is said to be amused by the idea.
- (4) VIPER's anti-psionics program. VIPER is experimenting with breeding a virus that selectively detects the use of psionic powers, and affects the brain center of the psionic that uses those powers, rendering them useless. One failed attempt at creating this virus caused a lethal plague to infect a small town in Georgia; local superheroes managed to cure the victims and shut down the lab, but this failure has not deterred VIPER from trying to master this virus.
- (5) VIPER's seismatron. This device detects the ideal place on a fault line to use remote control tunnelling devices to create major earthquakes. A completed version of this device is known to be possessed by Malachite, who used it in 1992 to cause major damage to Copenhagen after he was goaded by a superhero team.
- (6) VIPER's immortality project. VIPER leaders want to live longer; the immortality project is one which for some reason never seems to receive budget cuts. VIPER's immortality project involves studies of the relationship of genetics, bio-chemicals, and cellular decay.
- (7) VIPER's artificial telepathy project. Mind-to-mind communication implants are viewed as the first step to artificial mind control, as well as a way to make certain agents are not disobedient. Experiments have not gone well; those who have received implants have quickly gone mad, and usually end up dead.
- (8) VIPER's molecular transmutation project. Turning lead into gold has advantages when you're on a tight budget.
- (9) VIPER's probability generator. VIPER has noticed that certain individuals have extraordinary good (or bad) fortune. VIPER is conducting an extremely unusual program to determine whether the probability of events can be affected by forces other than magic, and if this is possible, whether a device can be built that will give VIPER "a real edge", particularly against pesky superheroes/villains.
- (10) Project Flood, the search for sure-fire mass indoctrination techniques, and ways to brainwash their enemies that can't be countered by current technology or psionic stimulation.
- (11) Project Black. This project seeks a way to develop a substance or energy shield that is totally invincible to energy attacks, giving VIPER a defense against energy projectors (or even nuclear weapons).
- (12) The Quest for a VIPER teleport device. Project Space Commander is one of VIPER's oldest and most cherished projects, and one of VIPER's biggest cash sinks. So far, it has been an abject failure which has been redone multiple times, but the project leader swears it will be done by Christmas (he has never specified the year).



- (13) Project High Ground. This is project is the plan to construct a large orbital base, larger even than the legendary Skywatch One. Funding has been cut back severely on High Ground, as VIPER Nests have complained that work on High Ground ignores the very real problems that VIPER has on Earth.
- (14) Project Nirvanium. Nirvanium is the name of a hypothetical non-polluting super-efficient energy source that will provide unlimited energy for VIPER. They believe that Nirvanium will be needed to realize Project Impregnable. Super-Earth relies on portable energy storage systems that are much more efficient than their real-world counterparts to operate blasters and other energy weapons; Nirvanium is an extension of this fictitious technology.
- (15) Project Steel Serpent. Low-cost battlesuits for extensive use in all Nests (as opposed to a single supersuit in Project Impregnable). See the Agents section for more details.

PROMINENT VIPER SCIENTISTS

DR. HECTOR JOY

The head of the research team that invented the Serpentine Network, Dr. Joy is one of the most brilliant computer engineers in the world. A brilliant organizer as well as an engineer, Dr. Joy travels frequently, troubleshooting VIPER projects around the world. Joy reports directly to the Supreme Serpent and receives funding authorization solely from him; Joy is the only VIPER researcher allowed to experiment with Artificial Intelligence, and assisted Doctor Destroyer in the creation of his Sennacharib AI (he's one of the few scientific minds that Destroyer respects, and one of the few people that might be considered a friend of Destroyer). Dr. Joy is a 53 year old man, born in Mexico City, and educated at MIT. He is a bald, slightly overweight man who dresses casually. Use a Normal for Dr. Joy, give him basic physics and mathematics, and engineering at 15-, as well as cybernetics, computer programming, and computer science at 17-, and AI science at 16-.

DR. EDITH BARDALL

Dr. Bardall is a weaponsmith with some very eccentric habits—she likes to dress up in men's clothing and pretend to be a man, her imaginary twin brother Edgar. As Edgar, Bardall is a brilliant engineer whose targeting systems have improved VIPER's designs immensely. As Edith, she likes to leave her research projects and run across the globe (chased by VIPER agents and villains, of course). Bardall is in her early 70s, 5'1" tall, and 95 lbs, with short silver hair. She is a normal with feeble physical stats, but a lot of engineering sciences at 14-, Mathematics at 15-, and Weaponsmith at 17-. Of late it's proven increasingly difficult to escape from VIPER, but she's usually cunning enough to get her foot out of the door.

DR. JOSETTE BEJUNOT

Dr. Bejunot is a young researcher who works as an assistant for Helen Rivera, the head of VIPER's technologies division. It is Bejunot who travels from project to project, overseeing their work and evaluating its success for Dr. Rivera. Bejunot is herself a brilliant physicist and cyberneticist, and tends to favor projects that use physics or cybernetics (rather than chemistry or genetics). She occasionally troubleshoots a promising project that she feels could get back on track if she provides her expert advice. Bejunot is a young woman in her 30s, 5'10" tall, and quite slim. She's also real good with a gun; use an Agent Commander stats for her, add Physics 15-, Mathematics 15-, Sub-atomic Physics 15-, Gravitics 14-, Trans-dimensional Physics 13-, and Cybernetics 13-, with one Overall level.

DR. JACOB GOLDSTEIN

Dr. Goldstein is the head of VIPER's vehicle design team. A brilliant engineer who worked at Lockheed, Goldstein was fired for his maverick attitudes and his open disdain for his superiors. Goldstein is the designer of many of VIPER's latest vehicles, and has plans for advanced versions that will give them increased range and versatility. Goldstein works at an independent research lab located in the Rocky Mountains; a detachment of six VIPER agents from the Denver Nest guards him at all times. Goldstein is a man in his early

30s, with curly brown hair, brown eyes, and a slim build. Goldstein is a hyperkinetic workaholic who believes that sleep is a luxury, not a necessity. He is a Talented Normal, with Engineering skills and Aeronautics at 15-, and VIPER Knowledge at 12-. He is also an accomplished skier.

DR. JACK MOORE

Dr. Moore is VIPER's head of robotics; he was formerly with GENOCIDE and was one of the leading designers in their Minuteman program, before he fled to VIPER. Moore designed and supervised the construction and testing of the initial run of Mech-VIPERs. Moore also designed the prototype Steel Serpent armor in his spare time, but he's much more concerned with robotics. Moore is a finicky perfectionist who clashes rather loudly with superiors who complain about cost over-runs, but the final result usually justifies his temperamental nature. Moore is in his early 50s, with grey hair (very thin on top), a hawk-like nose, and a thin frame. He is a Normal with a lot of robotics skills. He and Jeannette Bejunot are good friends, and Dr. Bejunot has intervened more than once with VIPER's finance division to keep funding on Moore's robotics work. Moore is currently working on the Mark-II and Mark-III versions of the Mech-VIPERs, but as "I don't intend to rush it this time", it may be some time before either of them are produced.

One of VIPER's least successful weapons was the Berzerko Ray, invented by the VIPER scientist Dr. Manfred Klauss as part of the St. Louis VIPER's Nest. It worked very effectively in its initial combat, driving some normally peaceful superheroes berserk. Unfortunately, the berserk superheroes killed off half of the agents that were attacking them, and hospitalized all but two of the others. Undaunted, Klauss tried to patent his berserkization process. The patent (complete with Klauss's address) came to the attention of the FBI, which cooperated with local heroes and PRIMUS to conduct a successful raid on the St. Louis VIPER's Nest and on VIPER's dummy corporation that was employing Klauss.

VIPER'S TEN MOST WANTED



1. PRISM (*Champions Presents #1, 14-*): The leader of the supervillain group Spectrum destroyed the large VIPER Nest in the Washington D.C. area, dealing VIPER one of their worst defeats since the Supreme Serpent took over VIPER operations.

The Serpent Syndicate has been charged with bringing about his destruction; they have hired a seemingly never-ending list of mercenaries and assassins to kill him. So far, none have succeeded. His hatred towards VIPER makes him their Number One target. VIPER is willing to do anything, including working with vigilante superheroes who don't mind getting their hands bloody, in order to destroy this threat to their existence.



TRASHER

2. THE CHAMPIONS (*Champions Rulesbook, Champions Universe, 11-*) One of the most persistent enemies of VIPER, they have broken the infamous Falconer New York City nest, and have been a thorn in the side of the Grandfather (see the VIPER Leader section). VIPER Investigators are trying to undercover their secret identities; if they are uncovered, they will attack them *en masse* when they are away from the headquarters.

3. UNKNOWN. This is reserved for someone in your campaign, possibly one or more of the player characters, who VIPER doesn't like.

4. RACCOON (*Classic Enemies, 11-*) Traitorous ex-VIPER operatives are always unpopular, and Raccoon is one of the most prominent of the "traitors". Raccoon has made no secret of his contempt for VIPER, and his bad-mouthing of the organization has only agitated the situation.

5. KING COBRA AND THE SERPENTINE CIRCLE (*Champions Present #2*). King Cobra has been going out of his way to make VIPER's life miserable, and the Supreme Serpent is rather tired of it. With the rather enthusiastic support of the Serpent Syndicate, VIPER is out to destroy the Coil.

6. GOLDEN AVENGER (*Classic Organizations*) Until recently, even though VIPER and PRIMUS were deadly enemies, VIPER considered Golden Avenger's anti-mutant/paranormal stance to be enough of a benefit to them that they were willing to ignore him. With Armstrong as the leader of VIPER Force-2, and with the increasing number of paranormals to enter the VIPER Organization, Golden Avenger's profile as a threat has increased in recent months.

7. CLOWN (*Classic Organizations*) The Supreme Serpent does not appreciate being humiliated. Dollmaker has been hired to show CLOWN that VIPER can make fools of them too.

8. TRASHER (*Classic Organizations, 11-*) Revenge is the motive for VIPER's hunting of this former Sanctuary operative; when Trasher was a kid, he crippled one of Style's sons in a high school football game; Style's son eventually committed suicide, and it was more convenient for Style to blame Trasher rather than admit that he might be responsible. With Style as the leader of the Los Angeles VIPER's Nest, he has a lot of resources to use to track Trasher down.

9. POWER CRUSHER (*Classic Enemies, 8-*) Another person who thought he could steal VIPER secrets and live. The formation of the Crusher Gang has only made things worse. The Supreme Serpent is anxious to make an example of him, and has ordered Sheath to take care of the job personally.

10. DR. JOHN BRINTON (*Classic Organizations*, 8-) When VIPER tried to "recruit" Dr. Brinton, one of the recruiters made a casual mention of one of VIPER's most top secret genetics projects, Project Stein. VIPER does not want anyone to know about Project Stein, and is trying to find a way of eliminating Brinton, who is currently on the island of Destruga (the current location of Sanctuary—see *Classic Organizations*). Ironically, Brinton has all but forgotten about the mention of Project Stein; however, a VIPER assault against Sanctuary can be expected to deal with the leak.

HOW VIPER HUNTS YOUR CHARACTER

Okay, VIPER is hunting your character. What happens? Do they keep sending agents to mindlessly attack you until they get lucky?

This has been the way that VIPER has usually handled hunting their enemies in the past, and one which is generally recognized as ineffective. VIPER's Intelligence Staff has provided the following guidelines for dealing with enemies:

First: Gather as much information as possible on the target. Learn weaknesses. Learn character flaws. Blackmail is less risky than physical confrontation. Discover who is important to the target and eliminate them, kidnap them, or use coercion to turn them against the target. If the target is a costumed adventurer, try to determine if they have a private identity and reveal it publicly. Find out what they depend on financially and cut them off. Isolate the target from those who would emotionally support him. Information is the key. Learn who your target's enemies are and help them achieve your goal. Always scout your target before you strike.

Second: Never strike unless you are clearly superior to your target. Employ ambush techniques whenever possible. Try to dictate the circumstances where you will confront the target; if possible, manipulate the situation using known tactics and behavior patterns of your target; it is easier to plan an assault against a target when their actions are predictable.

Third: Do not allow your actions to be dictated by emotion. Do not attack someone your Nest is not prepared to handle. Failures weaken VIPER's credibility and a Nest's security. Do not let a target goad you into an attack unless you are prepared.

Fourth: If at all possible, attack in public. Demonstrate the power of VIPER to the public. This will eventually demoralize them, as well as any heroes unfortunate enough to be targeted by VIPER in the future.

CASE HISTORY: THE FALL OF BLACK EAGLE

Cincinnati lacks its share of costumed adventurers, a fact that was not lost on Mastercrime when he founded its VIPER's Nest. The Nest was enjoying good success, when, during its third year of operation, a masked vigilante appeared. That vigilante was named Black Eagle.

Black Eagle struck against a number of criminal organizations, but his main target seemed to be VIPER. His fourth assault was against a VIPER security front; he infiltrated the building and stole confidential records. Several agents in undercover garb attempted to stop him. They were hospitalized. One of VIPER's front companies was then shut down by Cincinnati Prosecutor Alex Forrest, clearly acting on information that could only have come from those stolen records. Furthermore, the search warrant was signed within two hours of the break-in.

Mastercrime learned the following from the initial descriptions of the target: he was male, over 6' tall, very strong, and liked to operate at night. Furthermore, he showed exceptional martial arts ability, particularly with a three section staff. And there was a probable connection with a prosecutor.

Alex Forrest was VIPER's only lead, so VIPER did an immediate background check on him, his associates, and his family (concentrating on the proper physical characteristics and martial arts experience) and began to shadow his movements. Mastercrime also began an audacious scheme; he started a dummy corporation, one involved in 1-900 numbers, and began to launder a small amount of money into it. Word was then leaked to Forrest regarding this operation. Shortly thereafter, the Black Eagle broke into the operation.

Security personnel were armed, but with guns designed to spray the target with a long-lasting enamel coating; this made the costume easier to track at night. When the Black Eagle fled, agents in Gekkos followed his movements. He managed to elude capture, but checking Forrest's associates revealed at least one suspect, a law student who had a part-time job as a clerk, was missing for several days. He had a martial arts background, and his sister had been badly injured in a VIPER operation, providing motivation.

Later, while the student was at work, VIPER agents entered his apartment and uncovered the Black Eagle costume. When Mastercrime learned of this, he instructed the security personnel at the 1-900 office to press assault and battery charges against the vigilante in his civilian ID. They did so. The police found the costume in a search of his apartment, and the vigilante faced more serious charges. Forrest was forced to prosecute and convict his own protege. Black Eagle is still serving time in an Ohio medium security facility, Forrest resigned from his post shortly after the sentence. VIPER defeated a potentially dangerous enemy without firing a shot. The Cincinnati Nest remains in operation today, more powerful and feared than ever.

While assault operations are the most satisfying for any VIPER Nest leader, there is no substitute for an intelligent plan.

VIPER RECRUITING TECHNIQUES



HOW THE VIPER GOT ITS SLAVES — THE STORY OF VIPER'S RECRUITMENT POLICY.

From the diary of Corporal Mike Potts,
VIPER Covert Operative

06/11/92 I had an argument with Jim today. Apparently he took some words that Commander Storm said a bit too seriously, and said he was going to go into his quarters and slit his throat. I hate Storm as much as anyone here; the man is an incompetent, posturing, cowardly, bag of scum, but assassinating your Nest leader is not the smartest idea you can have. I tried to talk Jim out of it, and I think I succeeded, but we spent several hours screaming at each other until our throats were raw. It's probably a measure of our mutual respect that he didn't try to take my head off, which he could do fairly easily.

I started thinking back to the time I joined VIPER. Of course, I didn't know it was VIPER at the time. It was a University of Illinois Paramilitary Club. I thought it'd be neat to shoot weapons and spend weekends doing survival stuff. And it was. And the fact that I made a few business contacts on the deal didn't hurt; the economy was getting bad, and there wasn't many uses for MBAs anymore.

Of course, this isn't the typical scenario. Usually VIPER comes to its target; blue collar unemployed, discredited ex-military, you know. But like they did with me, they don't approach them as VIPER. People have worked for VIPER front companies for twenty years, and have no idea that they're working for VIPER. The recruiters always try to get to know the target, to find out how best to approach them, and then tailor their approach for the individual. Some Nests like to lure the prospective agent to an indoctrination center; VIPER has a bad reputation, and it helps them to get the recruit away from places where VIPER receives negative reinforcement. A little brainwashing, and a lot of training, and you have a loyal VIPER agent, the perfect cannon fodder (I know I'm not supposed to realize I'm as dispensable as a plastic diaper is to a newborn baby, but you'd have to be a fool not to know that. Of course, I've met more than my share of fools here, Commander Storm at the top of the list).

Anyway, I was pretty tough, and I could handle myself in a fight, and I guess the recruiter was impressed. We talked for hours about the state of the country; I guess he wanted to be convinced that I had the proper quotient of cynicism. Finally, he told me who he was, and what VIPER meant to him, and how it could benefit me to join.

I guess he knew a sucker when he saw one. I'm no racist, and I'm not a maniac, but I'd busted my butt for five years getting my degree, and here I was, unemployed with a huge student loan debt. All I saw were people with half my talent getting rich, and I was stuck fighting and clawing to get a few cents out of the system. I had gotten pretty cynical, and tired of everyone else but me being a success. At least these people wanted me; when you're unemployed and without hope of employment, you have no idea how persuasive that can be. So, I said "yes". No blackmail, no propaganda. I was surprised at how easily I came to join this outfit.

...

Potts' description of his VIPER recruitment is fairly typical of a VIPER recruitment scheme. Let's look at the recruitment of Corporal Potts from VIPER's point of view.

First, VIPER used a sophisticated front to recruit their agents. The recruitment scheme that most people think of when they think of VIPER is mercenary magazines; they are never used by the VIPER HQ Recruiting Department, only by Nest Leaders with an exaggerated love of machismo.

Next, look at what VIPER was looking for in a candidate. The first quality was physical strength and toughness. The second quality, though Potts didn't realize it, was levelheadedness during a crisis. It is essential for someone going into a battle not to panic when shots are being fired. Undoubtedly, the recruiter was present during his college survival weekend outings, and tried to create panic situations there to test him.

Once VIPER determined that Potts was viable in these two areas, they wanted to see if Potts had the philosophical ability to be a lawbreaker and to hurt people who got in his way. In all likelihood at this point, VIPER did a background check on him, and determined that he had the right background to follow VIPER. There certainly must have been quite a few conversations, with he and his friends, to determine his attitudes, before the recruiter would reveal his true purpose and ask him to join. Revealing yourself as a VIPER recruiter to a stranger is extremely risky, and the recruiter would probably have killed him or blackmailed him if Potts showed any hesitation to join.

Some people might view Potts as an anomalous recruit, in that he was a college graduate, and was recruited as an individual, rather than as a group. This is not the average recruitment profile by any means, (Potts was both a covert operations operative and potential officer material, which requires more caution to bring into the organization than your average agent) but it is not as rare as people might think. College graduates offer leadership potential, which VIPER, in spite of its willingness to indoctrinate people, believes to be an important quality. The typical VIPER recruit, as mentioned, is either an unemployed and bitter blue collar worker, or an unemployed and bitter ex-military, police, or security guard. Long periods of time in combat situations, particularly if the individual feels resented, makes the individual identify more with the combat role than the people and property they are supposed to protect. VIPER recruiters are masters at identifying "aggressive burn-out" and using it to create new VIPER agents.

Some say that VIPER's current rise is not due to the skills of the Supreme Serpent as much as it is to high unemployment and worker resentment against a political establishment that allows jobs to cross national boundaries; certainly the VIPER boom in the early 1970s had something to do with thousands of ex-Vietnam vets being recruited into the organization; this success is being repeated with veterans of the Gulf War. And, of course, VIPER uses training and indoctrination centers to whip agents into shape, when necessary.

VIPER flourishes in an atmosphere of aggression and resentment. Lately, VIPER has been recruiting successfully from illegal immigrants, and from street gang members; several people have raised concern that American street gangs are becoming a "farm system" for VIPER. In spite of some negative publicity regarding the life of a VIPER agent, they are not having many problems finding acceptable recruits.

For more of Corporal Potts' observation of VIPER, refer to Ten Days of the VIPER, below.

NEST COMPLEMENTS

VIPER tries to portray itself as a non-discriminating criminal and terrorist agency, open to anyone regardless of gender, religious, or racial background. This is not always true; because of the diversity of Nests, and because the criminal world is not particularly tolerant of differences, individual Nests have individual hiring policies. Some Nests deliberately discriminate against women and minorities, others (particularly those that perform a lot of covert actions) prefer agent backgrounds that are different from the norm.

The percentage of VIPER agents is about ninety-five percent male. Allowing males and females of a violent background to mix freely in a Nest can create serious problems if the Nest is not well-disciplined. Furthermore, VIPER studies show that males are easier to recruit into a violent organization than females, which leads VIPER recruiters to try to get males instead of females. Nonetheless, female VIPER agents that are treated with respect are often extremely capable and deadly agents, and there are more than a few female Nest Leaders and VIPER commanders.

VIPER has a higher percentage of male African-Americans and Latinos than women; minorities in economically down-trodden areas are a prime target for recruitment. There are "separatist Nests" which are composed entirely of women, or a certain minority; these Nests are often more interested in the cause of their group than VIPER, and the Supreme Serpent has been trying to discourage this, with limited success.

Last year, the Boston VIPER's Nest was granted an unconditional pardon by the governor. This extraordinary action was taken when the Nest united with local superheroes to fight an invasion of creatures summoned by local DEMON Morbanes that threatened the city. The Nest immediately returned to a life of crime, and the governor is considered very vulnerable in the next election.

DIARY OF A VIPER AGENT

TEN DAYS OF THE VIPER — FROM THE DIARY OF MIKE POTTS, CORPORAL

The following material was uncovered in a raid on a Nest in the Midwest United States. VIPER Operatives are usually forbidden by their Nests to keep records, but lax discipline on the part of the Nest Leader apparently led to frequent disregard for this and other orders, which was the primary cause of the Nest's capture. Corporal Potts escaped from the Nest during the assault; his current whereabouts is unknown.

7/18/92: No operations. Practised for an hour at the target range; my thumb was getting numb. Jim and Rick were arguing again. It's really getting tiresome. We watched a pirated pro wrestling broadcast, then went to the evening poker game. I lost \$30, Jim lost over a hundred. It got a bit ugly; Jim hates to lose, and it's even worse when he's drunk. He's been a bad mood lately. Commander Storm told us we're getting a shipment of new weapons tomorrow. As usual, I'll believe it when I see it.

7/19/92: The weapons actually came in! I was one of the crew sent to pick them up. They dressed me up as a truck driver, and I was sent to a truck stop, where I drank bad coffee, listened to a boring fat woman tell anecdotes, and watched the XO-1s being transferred into my cargo bay. A couple of powered armored exo-skeletons, and one special rifle that's supposed to be really good at long range. Murphy and Guy got the suits, and were trying to goad people into attacking them, the jerks. I didn't get to fire any of the stuff myself, of course. I have no seniority! Most of the rest of the Nest seemed to feel the same way. One of the covert teams netted some nice profits during a B&E job, and our narcotic operations have already started bouncing back after last month's sting. It looks like we'll be getting our end of the month bonus after all.

7/20/92: Watched the weekly VIPER report from Central Command. VIPER New York pulled a fast one on the Champions, and hit their HQ with an army missile test that had been redirected. No damage, but lots of laughs. Wish we'd do something like that; Commander Storm was coming up with more excuses than usual. During my off-time, I went to the beach, tried not to get too burned (I never tan well). There was a raid on an armored car; we netted about two hundred grand, enough to pay for yesterday's suits, and the next week's payroll. I didn't get sent; Jim described it as fairly routine, except they had to restrain those Exo-skeleton boneheads from playing catch with the truck; what a pair of idiots. Watched a pirated copy of some porno flick, then actually won ten bucks in the nightly poker game.

7/21/92: I hate whiners. We were watching news coverage of yesterday's raid. They're getting used to us; it took them eight minutes into the broadcast before they even mentioned the armored car heist. While Storm didn't say anything, we all know he was on Serpentine to VIPER HQ begging them for permission to do a special deal. The result: we're going to be trading the XO-1s to the Springfield Nest in exchange for ten special carbines; I might even get one! The XO-twins were crying that their toys were being taken away. I hate whiners. Heard about a rather bloody battle in San Francisco. Renegade put a couple of our boys in the hospital, and I wouldn't be surprised if that's just a pit stop on the way to the morgue. Not that we don't have our share of self-righteous nutcases here, but if it weren't for him and Quantum, our premiums would be a lot lower. Storm told us to let the XO-twins win at poker, but we didn't. He wasn't very happy with us, and told us that in a whiny sorta way; we looked sad, then laughed when he left the room.

7/22/92: I drew surveillance duty for some businessman that we're planning on blackmailing. Nothing much happened. He yelled at his kids at dinner; he and his wife were frigid. No phone calls of any interest. I spent most of my time looking at magazines. When I got back to the Nest, I found that Jim and Rick had been fighting again. Storm was threatening "severe disciplinary action", but nothing happened, of course. It wasn't as though someone drew a knife or a gun. Jim's arm was in a sling, but he claimed that he had won, and he was really blowing a lot of wind about it. Didn't help him win at poker. I only lost ten bucks.

7/23/92: The shipment of VR-05A Spikes came in from Springfield. They're great! I was test-firing today, and their computer system is really something. I guess all that talk about our technology getting better isn't just HQ propaganda. Some of the people found that the firing system occasionally glitched, but less often than in some of the other VIPER weapons I've used. Kurt was complaining that it didn't have any punching power; it burned, but it didn't really knock the target around. Jim pointed out that it was easier to coordinate fire on a single target if it wasn't being knocked all over the battlefield; after yesterday, people moved in quickly to make sure there wasn't going to be another fight. Speaking of the fight, I found out that Jim's boasts weren't lies; they hadn't just isolated Rick from us to keep down the tension; he'd been in the hospital with broken ribs and a concussion. Storm was more of a joke than usual. We were firing the VR-05As, and he was kinda scowling at us, trying to tell us without saying it that we were using more ammo than we needed. Then Morris missed a target rather badly, and Storm began to scream at him. We were embarrassed, but



Storm picked up a Spike, fired, and missed even worse than Morris had. We really had to bite our tongues to keep from laughing. Storm threw down the carbine, started screaming, grabbed another VR-05A, and made a half decent shot. He then had the offending carbine thrown away. What a waste. We received word from VIPER High Command that we were going to be involved in a major operation soon, and that we'd be having a special visitor soon. Communications were more tight-lipped than usual. Wonder what's going to go down and how badly I'm going to get hurt.

7/24/92: Resumed surveillance duty near our target's house. The doofus still has no idea we're around. About the only interesting thing was the guy's teenage son bringing his girlfriend over without his parents' knowledge; if I had a kid like that, I'd slam him, but it was funny to listen to some of his lines. It doesn't hurt that the broad must have an IQ in the low 60s. The Nest is even less cheerful than usual. Storm has realized we know more than we should about the upcoming operation, and we're all being interrogated about the leak in our security. The man doesn't have a clue. Jim's arm was out of the sling, and he and Rick were actually talking to each other. Sometimes, a fight can settle things down between people, though given that Jim can be a tough mother, I don't think I'd try it.

7/25/92: We got the VIPER News report early this week, probably to make up for the last one being so late. More on the Champions battle, with scenes of Seeker being taken to a hospital. They mentioned our armored car raid, and Storm was puffing up the report to make it look like it was "a textbook operation." Flattering yourself gets you nowhere. We received word that one of the Southern Nests assassinated another judge. Those rednecks are just like the KKK; they're more interested in race stuff than VIPER. If a judge is giving you trouble, blackmail him. I have to give Storm credit about one thing; we don't use force unless it's absolutely necessary. All it does is rile people up. Got in some new videotapes. Lester was showing off some weird Japanese cartoons where VIPER is the hero; we got a few laughs out of it, though I still can't believe what the Japanese allow in this stuff. After that, it was a T&A marathon. Pretty standard, but fun. We broke curfew, but Storm was too busy sleeping to check on us.

7/26/92: Spent the morning on surveillance. The house was empty. Boring! Our special visitor arrived: Armstrong, the leader of VF-2! We were officially notified that we were collaborating with HQ on a special operation. I've met masks before, but Armstrong is different. We compared guns; we each took turns firing his special carbine. Man, what a beaut.



take on all-comers in a wrestling match. I didn't want to get bruised, and Jim's still nursing a sore arm, so it was up to our answer to Hanz and Franz, Murphy and Guy, to bare their chests and biceps and represent the honor of the Nest. It was fun seeing them get their butts kicked, though it was pretty obvious that Stalwart was just playing with them—no one got hurt. The twin geeks were as stupid as ever, claiming they'd have whipped Stalwart if we hadn't traded the XO's to Springfield for the VR-05As. Idiots. After that, we practised gang tackling on him; it took twelve of us to take him off his feet, and got really ridiculous. But you need to do that sort of thing before you go up against supers. You need to do something to lighten up, or you could be dead tomorrow. You might be anyways. I talked with the Blue Girl very briefly. She's a looker, but she and Stalwart (Mr. Last Man on Earth I Want Mad At Me) are an item, so that ended that. We spent the night playing poker with Black Lion; he's intimidating as Hell, but the most laid back of the lot.

7/28/92: Where do I start? We're packing up. We're getting out of here. No, that's not the place. We achieved our objectives, along with some bonus. On the other hand, we lost Jim, Rick, and Dominic, and Fred's confirmed missing, but not captured; he may have deserted during the fight. No one was killed, but with three of our men captured, we're getting out of here. My part was simple. I stood around in a police uniform. Taser and Firebreaker showed up, and I did my phony policeman act. I told them not to do anything until the SWAT team showed, I directed them to the ambush point, informed Armstrong and let the trap close on them. It worked. Unfortunately, about six other supers decided to show, and SAT. I don't know what happened, but some of our guys got a bit too confident, and when we had to pull back, they weren't a position to be retrieved. Idiots! Storm was an even bigger buffoon than usual. When we got back to the Nest, I started packing my stuff and asked him about evacuation procedures. He was screaming at the top of his lungs at me, telling me that there was no reason to evacuate, called me a college boy who was too ambitious for his own good. Then, five minutes later, he yelled at everyone to evacuate, and do it quickly. One telepath on a captured agent is all you need to make a Nest collapse, and VF-2 had already left with the guy who had been kidnapped. I'm just starting to piece together what happened. A brazen kidnapping of some businessman, at a posh party. Everyone was told to go into the pool, and an electrical device was hooked up so they'd get electrocuted if anything cute happened. We then raided their wallets and jewelry, and took off with the business guy. The supers arrived just as the operation was winding down, and some of the VF-2 guys had already taken off; it became a mess rather quickly. It's going to be rough for the next couple of days, setting up in a new location again. I know we're not going to see Jim again, or Rick, or Dominic—we're certainly worse off without them—and Fred's dead if he shows his face. Maybe he had the right idea.

He spent all afternoon with us, trading war stories. This is the first guy I've ever met who I actually believe when he says: "agents are not cannon fodder, you are the backbone of VIPER, the key to our success." You know, standard issue bull number one. I could tell Storm was getting upset; he wanted to do lunch with Armstrong, schmooze him, and try to suck up to central command, and Armstrong wanted to be with us! Armstrong came back to play poker. We didn't try to let him win, but he did. No one could wear a poker face with him around, I guess; of course, Armstrong kept the helmet on, to avoid anyone seeing what he looked like, so he did have an advantage. Jim was so much in awe of him that he didn't mind losing fifty bucks.

7/27/92: More VF-2 arrived, and we received our first briefing. It's a kidnapping operation, taking place at a party. I've been assigned to covert duty; I'll be wearing a police uniform, and try to misdirect any supers who show up. I'm not wearing armor, and I've only got a revolver, so the hazard pay is real high. We're getting the dummy car ready. Armstrong spent most of the day with his people and with Storm, going over operations details. Stalwart, the brick of VF-2, decided to



CAMPAINING

Now that you have this information in your hands, how can you use it? This section provides some advice; for additional advice, refer to Aaron Allston's excellent *Super Agents* supplement.

USING VIPER IN CHAMPIONS

The primary role of VIPER, which is what this book is written for, is as an adversary organization for characters in *Champions*. However, there are degrees with which VIPER can be a menace, and none of these are correct or incorrect; they all depend on what the GM wishes to do. The roles that VIPER can fulfil in a *Champions* campaign are:

1. MAJOR MENACE:

In this role, VIPER really can conquer the world, unless the PCs pull out all the stops. VIPER learns from its mistakes; when a Nest is defeated, a stronger, smarter one is set up in its place. VIPER's pulls out new weapons prototypes, which are more powerful and more accurate. In this type of campaign, VIPER is virtually impossible to destroy, and they are always present, always hounding heroes when they least expect it, and always pulling one unpleasant surprise after another. VIPER often achieves frightening successes. If VIPER operates in this mode in the campaign, any time they show up, the players should cringe; VIPER is a seemingly indestructible monolith that is never truly defeated, only delayed. In this campaign, the player characters do not want to be hunted by VIPER, because they know that terrible things will happen if they are. If you want VIPER to be a major menace, discourage people from taking them as HUNTEDs with a greater than 8- chance to appear—if VIPER appears constantly, it takes away their menace; familiarity breeds contempt. To run this campaign, use VIPER as it appears in this book.

If you have previously run campaigns where VIPER was not worth taking seriously, and you decide to run a tougher and deadlier VIPER in your campaign, be certain to let the players know this beforehand, and be certain to give them the appropriate points for the disadvantage. It is possible to have VIPER as a multiple type of threat in a campaign. It could be that the local area has a particularly competent Nest Leader, and after a long struggle against him succeeds, the next VIPER's Nest is much less formidable. "They were never the same after Count Von Strongheim fell down the nuclear core shaft" is a common motif in the comics. Certainly VIPER would find it difficult to recover from the death of the Supreme Serpent.

As an option, the GM can make notes beforehand on exactly the number of Nests and agents of VIPER, and what their growth rate is. In this way, the progress (or lack thereof) of the characters against this menace can be constantly monitored. The only difference with this option is that although VIPER is extraordinarily tough, it can be beaten.

2. MINOR THREAT:

In this role, VIPER is not the most powerful menace in the world, but one of a number of a recurring menaces. A battle against VIPER can be tough, but they are more persistent than intelligent and can sometimes repeat the same mistake on multiple occasions. VIPER's leadership is plodding, but capable of occasional surprises. In this style of campaign, VIPER relies overmuch on brute force without much tactical genius behind it. This is how VIPER is often portrayed in a *Champions* campaign; they can be tough, but are usually not worth taking too seriously. VIPER can be taken as a Hunted in this campaign without too many worries. In order to run VIPER in this fashion, here are some guidelines:

Technology: The following technology is allowed in this type of campaign. The designation "Rare" indicates that the characters will encounter this technology once or twice during their entire careers. All other technology does not exist:

Pistols	Rifles	Exotics	Heavy
VP-01	VR-01A	EG-03	None
VK-01K	VR-02A	IO-1 (rare)	
VK-02K	VR-01N	MB-2	
VK-03S	VR-02P	PB-02B	
	VR-10	SB-01	
	VR-11	TG-01C	
	VR-21	XO-1	
	VR-110		
	VRX-01		

Vehicles: The following vehicles are used: the Rattler, Wyvern, Cockatrice, Black Cobra, Gekko (rare), Super-VIPER (rare), Moccassin, and the Sand Snake.

Agents: The allowable types of agents are: Regular, Air Force, Covert, Baiter, Blaster, and Mauler. Conventional Weapons Agents are allowed. Agent trainees and agent commanders are allowed. VIPER Commanders exist solely as a type of generic Nest Leader; no one else is more powerful than an Agent Commander or Specialist. Psionics Specialists are Experimental (they may appear in a single adventure, and then should never appear again). Unarmed Combat Specialists are allowed. Vehicle Specialists are Rare (one or two to a Nest only). Mech-VIPERs are Experimental, and only one should appear in an adventure.

The Elite Air Cavalry is too powerful for the campaign.

Supers: The Serpent Syndicate is VIPER's only team, and usually appear as Commanders instead of combatants. The Snake Pack is an Experimental team that will appear once. VIPER may employ one mercenary super per two to three heroes that appears in the adventure; appropriate mercenary supers include: Blackflame, Black Lion, Brick, Damage, Forcebeam, Gravity, Hammerhead, Mind Wipe, Phaze, Rampage, Scattershot, Shadow Fist, and Stealth. Villains that belong to teams such as VIPER Force-1 and VIPER Force-2 will be independent.

Command: VIPER's command is not as efficient. The Supreme Serpent is not the Supreme Serpent or the Prime Serpent from this book, but a lower powered individual like Python (GM's Option). Sheath and Modem are not part of the VIPER Network.

3. C.L.O.W.N. WITHOUT TRYING TOO HARD:

In this role, VIPER is a joke. Their agents can't hit the broad side of a barn, their Nest leaders are incompetent cowards who hide behind their agents, then run away when the cannon fodder starts to dwindle. If VIPER hunts your character, you don't take it very seriously at all. VIPER plans are usually ludicrous affairs that make supers wonder if they're taking too much time from fighting the real enemies. Use the charts listed above, use only the Black Cobra (as a Nest Leader escape vehicle) from the vehicle list, and use Agent Trainees instead of Agents, and give every agent a 3d6 Unluck.

Which role you chose to use is up to you. VIPER BOOK is designed so a GM that wishes to use VIPER as a major menace can do so; there is no right or wrong approach to using VIPER; however, if you're trying to make VIPER into an organization that the player characters fear, and they're treating them casually, you may need to change your approach.

There is a second situation you need to avoid, however, and that's the "Don't Hurt My Babies" Syndrome. This is when a GM falls in love with his or her villain or organization, and can't bear to see them hurt, or even defeated. Don't fall into this trap. Even if you decide that it's next to impossible to destroy VIPER, the PCs should be able to hurt them (destroy local Nests, destroy important projects) and KNOW that they've hurt them. Give them the satisfaction of a good fight and a job well done.

USING VIPER IN "SUPER AGENTS"

This section is meant as a supplement to the *Super Agents* supplement which was written for *Champions*, Third Edition.

A *Super Agents* campaign is one where the player characters are well-equipped, Heroic level members of an agency devoted to fighting professional terrorism. *Super Agents* campaigns emphasize action over espionage, assault over stealth. *Super Agents* are elite commandos, boldly fighting against evil. Technology in *Super Agents* campaigns is often, but not always, more "futuristic" than real world tech.



In a *Super Agents* campaign, VIPER fills the same role as in *Champions*; they are the Bad Guys. In fact, VIPER may be the most powerful and common Bad Guy in the campaign.

There are several choices of tone that a GM can choose for this style of campaign.

1. VIPER AS DEADLY, ULTRA-COMPETENT FOES:

Like the villains in spy novels and espionage films, only more blatant, VIPER is a colorful but ruthless force. Nest Leaders and top agents are often of the Ruthless Bastard variety.

2. VIPER AS TV CARTOON VILLAIN AGENCY:

This campaign type features VIPER without supers; they are led by semi-competent or incompetent VIPER commanders who come up with grand schemes, and lose frequently due to their own infighting and incompetence. The Supreme VIPER is a hissing, ranting megalomaniac who blames his failures on his subordinates' incompetence, never his own. The only truly effective characters are the women, who are devious masters-of-disguise and espionage.

The TV cartoon villain agency always comes up with schemes out of nowhere: the VIPER Weather Control Machine, the VIPER Lead-to-Gold Transmutation Device, the VIPER Instant Dinosaur Egg Hatcher Grow-to-Super Size machine, often stolen from established scientists by the few competent agents. In this episodic campaign, the game always ends with a daring commando raid that destroys the

VIPER device; the VIPER leaders always get away, to plot more futile revenge another day. The *GI Joe*™ villains called Cobra are a good example of such an agency.

3. THE SPY PARODY VILLAIN AGENCY:

This campaign is a lampoon of the genre, even more than the VIPER as TV cartoon Agency. In this genre, secret gadgets always misfire ("we'll discuss our plans under the Sphere of Silence." "No, not the Sphere of Silence!"), top-flight agents are overconfident bumbler, villains are straight men for the PCs gags, physical comedy occurs at inappropriate moments, and the GM parodies any social convention he can think of ("Of course we have to protect the science-fiction convention from VIPER, Agent X. Without science-fiction conventions, the entire rubber pointed-ear industry would go out of business, not to mention commemorative science fiction pewter chess sets, or bad amateur sci-fi art. And think of all those chain mail bikinis that would go unsold if it weren't for science fiction conventions; American free enterprise would be shaken to the core.") The *Get Smart* television program is the obvious inspiration for this campaign.

VIPER AGENTS IN THE SUPER AGENTS GENRE

A VIPER Agent in a *Super Agents* game is built on a Heroic level, meaning they can get gadgets for free, but must pay for characteristics above normal maxima, etc.

Gadgets in a *Super Agents* campaign are as the GM desires; for those who want the feeling of a more fanciful espionage movie, they are real world tech with occasional gimmicks (cuff links that generate smoke screens, shoes with one charge Superleap, wrist-watches that generate a high-pitched sonic NND attack, belts with explosive buckles, etc. Weapons used by VIPER agents in this sort of campaign are those that are found in the entry for Conventional Weapons Agent in the agents section.

Then there is the high-tech *Super Agents* campaign. The "TV Cartoon Villainy agency" often features weapons that are Stun Only, and vehicles have flawless ejection systems that operate automatically whenever a vehicle is destroyed. (This is known as trying to make the censors happy). The weapons in this sort of campaign are always high-tech.

The bloodless conventional weapons campaign is a variation on this; machine guns never hurt anyone, they only cause the villains to automatically dive for cover while the nearest vehicle blows up; when all vehicles and gadgets are blown up, the villains stagger around, run away, or surrender, and everything is all right ("I love it when a plan comes together.").

A VIPER agent will usually not have characteristics below those given for a standard agent in the Agents section. They are typically built on a 50 pt. base; agent commanders are built on a 75 point base. VIPER agents have access to the following package deal.

SUPER AGENTS VIPER PACKAGE DEAL

Skill	Cost
FAM: Small Arms	2
FAM: Knives/Daggers	1
FAM: Grenades	1
Martial Arts (from one art)	10
+1 w/small arms	3
AK: City of Operations 11-	2
KS: VIPER 11-	2
One of: Breakfall, Climbing, or Streetwise	3
Skills Cost	21
Disadvantages	
Watched by VIPER (More Pow, 11-	10
Package Bonus	3
Total Disadvantages	13
TOTAL PACKAGE COST	11

UNDERCOVER VIPER PACKAGE DEAL

Skill	Cost
Stealth	3
Security Systems	3
Lockpicking	3
Two of: Bugging, Concealment, Shadowing, Streetwise	6
Total Additional Cost	15
Total Package Cost	26

STREET-LEVEL VIPER

Gritty crimefighters, battling against the most debased criminal elements, trying to prevent urban decay from turning into societal collapse. Drugs, guns, and victims everywhere. This is the world of *Dark Champions*, the crawling underbelly of the superheroic society.

So where do a bunch of guys in green costumes fit into this?

One of VIPER's strengths is that they are very flexible. By placing the emphasis on certain aspects of VIPER, you can turn VIPER into an extremely brutal and disturbing organization. Since Nests vary in style and attitude, you can keep VIPER as it is in this book, and still have a Dark VIPER Nest for your darker heroes to battle.

First, VIPER's technological edge vanishes; high technology is not particularly appropriate for VIPER at the street level. VIPER may keep the costume, but the suits provide very little armor. VIPER's arsenal changes; high tech weapons are out; conventional weapons, knives, and clubs are in.

Second, VIPER's leaders can have a number of attitudes that are good for a gritty *Dark Champions* game. Cult Classic leaders that demand strict obedience from their followers are an excellent enemy for street-level heroes; play up the contrast between the earthy, common-sense vigilante supers and Nest leaders who have delusions of grandeur. And, of course, the Ruthless Bastard is invariably an opponent for *Dark Champions*, whether he be a VIPER leader, or a kingpin in a criminal organization. Street-level *Champions* depends on villains who make few compromises to morality. The effectiveness of VIPER in *Dark Champions* depends on the image that VIPER has in the campaign. If they view VIPER as a joke, then VIPER will not be effective as villains. If they take them seriously, then VIPER will become something to be feared.

CYBERVIPER

VIPER is less appropriate, or perhaps less traditional, in a cyberpunk game than it is in a street-level *Champions* game. However, that does not mean that it cannot be used, particularly if the GM is trying to combine the genres.

VIPER's connections to big industry are the most obvious connections to the cyberpunk universe. In a cyberpunk game, VIPER could be an invention of Duchess Industries or some other corporation that is 'Above The Law'; the VIPER organization is really their instrument to terrorize their rivals and commit industrial sabotage without looking dirty. VIPER agents hunt down hackers who get too close to the operation. For VIPER agents; use the VIPER thug listed below.

VIPER's other connections to the cyberpunk genre involves their extensive research in high technology; they may produce secrets which the player characters stumble onto; in this case, VIPER should be portrayed as extremely ruthless and relentless. If you use the Supreme Serpent as an alien AI, it should not be too difficult to adjust his stats for a cyberpunk campaign, and provide the least pleasant surprise that a hacker is likely to run into. If the Supreme Serpent is involved, then VIPER becomes a conspiracy to overthrow the industrial complex that are the current overlords of humanity, to replace it with a world-wide computer fascist dictator, or an alien AI that is attempting to dominate all other terrestrial AIs. Perhaps the Supreme Serpent has manipulated some of the darker elements of the cyberpunk campaign in order to contain human development, as part of a consortium of alien AIs which seek to keep control over the galaxy.

For a cyberpunk variant, look at the Green VIPER Liberator campaign setting in the Campaigning section. This campaign is a hybrid of battlesuits and cyberpunk.

The following is a good standard agent for VIPER in a Street-level *Champions* or cyberpunk campaign. This agent is weaker than VIPER's norm; if you want to use someone who's a bit more likely to do damage to the heroes, increase the STR to 15, the DEX to 14, and the SPD to 3. This depends on the cinematography of the fight scenes; do you want the heroes to look impressive and show off their martial skills by dancing around the thugs, or do you want the heroes to be sweating profusely and breathing hard while grappling a toughnormal? Atmosphere is everything in *Dark Champions*.

For a really tough encounter, street-level campaigns often feature "the unbeatable brute", a heroic level "brick" who is called out when the rabble have been beaten up to go mano a mano against the hero (and usually has dozens of gang members chanting his name as he walks toward the fight). If you need someone to fill the Unbeatable Brute roll, use a standard agent, raise his STR to 20, DEX to 18, PD to 8, SPD to 4, and give him a good Dirty Infighting package, something that will force the toughest hero in the group to take him seriously. For *Cyber Hero* campaigns, you should augment the Unbeatable Brute with large amounts of cyberware.

VIPER THUG

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
13	STR	3	OCV: 4	
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4	
13	CON	6	ECV: 4	
10	BODY	0	Phases: 6, 12	
10	INT	0	Costs	
10	EGO	0		
13	PRE	3	Char: 16 Base: 50	
10	COM	0	Powers: 59 Disads: 25	
5+	PD	2	Totals: 75 75	
3+	ED	0		
2	SPD	-1		
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		

Cost	Power	END
37	Weapon	
	* AK-47 Automatic Rifle (2d6-1 RKA, +1 Range Mod, +3 OCV, Autofire, [30c])	
	* M-1 Rifle (2d6+1 RKA, +2 Range Mod, +2 OCV, +1 STUN Mult, 2 clips of [8c])	
	* Thompson Sub-Machine Gun (1d6+1 Autofire RKA, +2 OCV, +1 STUN Mult, [50c])	
	* LAW Rocket Launcher (4d6 AP RKA, +1 Range Mod, +1 STUN Multiple, [1c])	
7	1d6 HKA (OAF knife)	
4	3d6 HA (OAF club)	
3	Concealment 11-	
3	Stealth 12-	
3	Streetwise 12-	
2	+1" Running	

50+ DISADVANTAGES		
15	Psych Limitation: Common, Strong (typically Greedy, or Loves to Bully)	
10	Distinctive Features: VIPER uniforms (easily concealable, major reaction)	



VIPER CAMPAIGNS

It is possible, without running the PCs as really bad guys, to run a campaign where the PCs are VIPER agents. Here are five possible VIPER campaigns.

CAMPAIGN ONE: WISE VIPER GUYS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The players portray deep cover UNTIL, STOP, or PRIMUS agents who have formed their own VIPER Nest, in the hope of infiltrating their central command and exposing the Supreme Serpent once and for all. The players must battle other evil agents (such as DEMON and Raven), as well as police, in the hope of maintaining their cover long enough to do damage to the VIPER organization.

The presence of superheroes and supervillains in the campaign world is a GM option.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PCS

The PCs do make an impact on the campaign world, but are not considered to be very important by the world-at-large. The PCs get no glory, and only occasional recognition by VIPER. They are often used in uncomfortable ways by both VIPER and by the organization that they serve. Life is rough, rotten, and they're doing one of the dirtiest jobs that anyone can do—such is the life of a deep cover operative.

CAMPAIGN TONE

Morality: (3). Some cross-over between good and bad.

The PCs should meet some VIPER people who will be extremely good friends, warm and compassionate with their peers (of course they might kill a stranger without a second thought) and they will have to agonize about using their friendships to further their goals. Their real superiors (PRIMUS, UNTIL, etc.) may contain some real scumbags. The morality of this world is not consistent.

Realism: (4). Realistic.

Outlook: (4) More serious than light-hearted.

Continuity: (3) The campaign can be run as "arcs" (three to six session linked mini-series); the agents get assigned to different parts of the campaign world, a new cast of characters is developed, and gradually, over the course of a few sessions, things start to happen.

Physical World: The darker side of a typical *Champions* or *Super Agent* campaign.

Starting Points: 75

Maximum Points from a Disadvantage Category: 25

Maximum Points including Disadvantages: 150

Characters automatically have Normal Characteristic Maxima: No

Characters may carry normal technology at no cost:

Characters may carry normal and VIPER technology at no cost (see also below).

Campaign Uses Hit Locations Chart: Yes

Knockdown Rules Used: Yes

Long-Term Endurance Used: Yes

Limited Push: Yes

SAMPLE STORYLINES

1. The nephew of one of VIPER's top Nest leaders is assigned to the Nest, in order to train with some of VIPER's most remarkable agents. The nephew accidentally learns of the Nest's secret, and the PCs must find a way of stopping him from reporting their secret to VIPER.
2. A popular superhero vows to destroy the local VIPER's Nest, and begins to interfere in the Wise Guys' operations. Their superiors are unwilling to blow their cover by telling the superhero that they are on the side of the angels. Then the Supreme Serpent sends one of his top assassins or villain teams to kill the superhero; the Wise Guys must find a way to prevent the hero from being killed without blowing their cover.

Wise VIPER Guys is a moderately powered Heroic agents campaign. The GM should emphasize the grittiness of the campaign world, and the moral dilemmas involved in being a deep cover operative. Heavy weapons and vehicles should be discouraged, as they make the PCs too noticeable.

It would not be too difficult for a GM who does not take the "Hero" in Hero Games very seriously to adapt "Wise VIPER Guys" into "VIPER Guys," a villainous campaign where the PCs really are VIPER agents. However, we will leave that one up to you.

CAMPAIGN TWO: HOGAN'S VIPER

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Similar to Wise VIPER Guys, but played for laughs. The Nest Leader is a real member of VIPER; but an egotistical incompetent buffoon. The players are UNTIL, SAT, and PRIMUS agents who are posing as VIPER agents under his command, and manipulate this bonehead into doing things to destroy VIPER or other evil organizations. This campaign is a comedy, with VIPER humiliations as the punch-line.

The presence of superheroes and supervillains in the campaign world is a GM option.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PCS

The PCs do make an impact on the campaign world, but are not considered to be very important by the world-at-large. The PCs are doing the dirty work in the war against VIPER, and humiliating VIPER is their sole reward.

CAMPAIGN TONE

Morality: (1). Good and evil is very clear-cut.

Realism: (3). A realistic challenge is required. Victory should not be TOO easy.

Outlook: (2) Light-hearted, with some serious moments to balance it.

Continuity: (1) No continuity, purely episodic.

Physical World: The light-hearted side of a typical *Champions* or *Super Agent* campaign. Mild satire is very appropriate.

Starting Points: 75

Maximum Points from a Disadvantage Category: 25

Maximum Points including Disadvantages: 150

Characters automatically have Normal Characteristic Maxima: No

Characters may carry normal technology at no cost: Characters may carry normal and VIPER technology at no cost (see also below).

Campaign Uses Hit Locations Chart: If GM desires.

Knockdown Rules Used: Yes

Long-Term Endurance Used: Yes

Limited Push: Yes

SAMPLE STORYLINES

1. VIPER is developing a weather control machine. The PCs must use the incompetent Nest leader to learn where it is, then knock it out without anyone suspecting who did it.
2. The PCs learn that a top PRIMUS official is a double agent. They must discover who it is, and arrange for PRIMUS to capture him.

In Hogan's VIPERs, the GM should play it for comedy, but also know when to mix in seriousness with the characters. Some of the most recurring VIPER characters may be played for laughs, but the threat of VIPER to the world should be very real even here, or the PCs may wonder why they are wasting their time fighting VIPER. This campaign is a character comedy as opposed to a situation comedy; the characters are farcical, but the situation is not.

Hogan's Heroes, the familiar WWII POW sit-com, is obviously this campaign's most familiar inspiration.

CAMPAIGN THREE: GREEN VIPER LIBERATOR

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

An adaptation of a bizarre Japanese cartoon (which is actually VIPER propaganda). The year is 2012, and the world is a cold, ruthless, high-tech extrapolation of a *Champions* world; supers have been all but wiped out, and the few that remain keep their identities a secret, except when they go on a murderous rampage. The world is a conglomeration of run-down urban blight, and there is only one force that might be able to lead the world into something better...

VIPER, of course.

The PCs are agents in the criminal but heroic VIPER organization, fighting evil corporations, gangsters, and corrupt (or incompetent) police, as well as committing crimes on a helpless populace. In the tradition of *anime*, soap opera is as important as the combat.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PCS

Given the evil corporation's tendency to create weapons of mass destruction, and the destructive ability of renegade supers, the PCs are usually the only thing stopping them. PCs are very important.

CAMPAIGN TONE

Morality: (4). VIPER is simply the lesser of two evils, and commits fewer atrocities than its enemies. No one is really "Good," as we know the term, in *Green VIPER Liberator*.

Realism: (3). *Green VIPER Liberator* is inconsistent; when it's going for comedy relief, it's very romantic, when it's going for drama, it is very graphic and violently realistic. Extremely heavy on soap opera.

Outlook: (3) Serious balanced by light-hearted.

Continuity: (2) Mostly episodic, with some continuing stories. Villains are recurring.

Physical World: The campaign takes place in Mega Angeles II, in the year 2012. Technology has advanced, but the problems of the real world remain. (There is lots of homelessness, racial prejudice, poverty etc.) VIPER is guided by the benign Supreme Serpent, who is using violence to advance humanity to "its next stage of universal peace and enlightenment."

Starting Points: 100

Maximum Points from a Disadvantage Category: 50

Maximum Points including Disadvantages: 200

Characters automatically have Normal Characteristic Maxima: No

Characters may carry normal technology at no cost: Only VIPER technology is allowed.

Campaign Uses Hit Locations Chart: Yes

Knockdown Rules Used: Yes

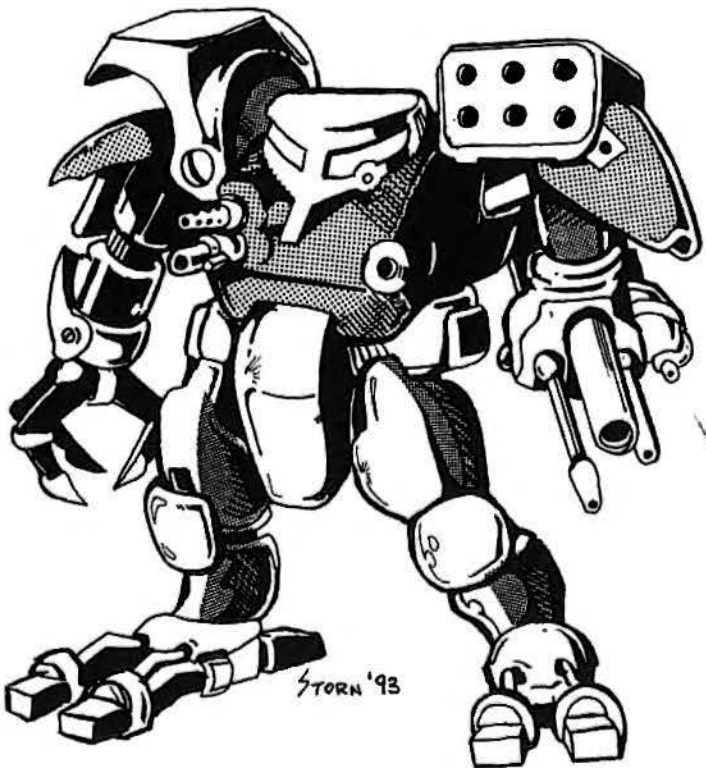
Long-Term Endurance Used: No

Limited Push: Yes

SAMPLE STORYLINES

1. The evil Toxos Corporation is trying to lure the VIPER agents into a trap, so they can steal their technology. They develop Omega, a psi who can infiltrate the Serpentine computer network, but Omega sees a file on one of the PCs, falls in love with him/her, and bolts from Toxos. Toxos sends a Dreadnight ship, a huge vehicle, to destroy everything in its path until it finds Omega. The PCs meet with Omega, and must protect her from the Dreadnight ship.
2. One of the PCs meets Aphrodite, an incredibly attractive and persuasive singer/musician. Aphrodite is really an agent of one of the rival criminal organizations, trying to determine where the local VIPER's Nest that is giving everyone so much trouble is located. Meanwhile, the police are hunting Aphrodite.

Green VIPER Liberator is a high-powered Heroic *anime* campaign. Players should be encouraged to be able to operate at least one VIPER vehicle, as Vehicle vs. Vehicle combat is very important in the *anime* genre.



CAMPAIGN FOUR: HAVE VR-01A, WILL TRAVEL

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

What happens if you see the light, but you know you have absolutely no chance to improve one's lot in life?

In "Have VR-01A, Will Travel," the player characters are VIPER agents who have broken away from their Nest, and who believe that they will be granted amnesty for their past crimes if they perform a lot of good deeds for people in need. VIPER, on the other hand, wants to kill them for betraying them and will do anything to destroy them. No one else trusts them; except for people who are in such need that they don't care about trust. And, when you're an ex-criminal, who can say that everyone is wrong in not trusting you?

IMPORTANCE OF THE PCS

Not very important. They're important to the people that they're helping, but they make little impact on the world-at-large. The press views them as VIPER scum (unless they change uniforms, of course).

CAMPAIGN TONE

Morality: (4). The PCs are ex-criminals, possibly with some very dark pasts and severe psychological problems. The world in this campaign is divided into victims and victimizers, but there's a lot of grey in each.

Realism: (4) Realistic. Heavy on soap opera and personal drama; characters should be encouraged to come up with backgrounds that may provide problems for the other characters

Outlook: (4) Serious balanced by occasional light-hearted moments.

Continuity: (4) Continuity is strictly enforced, and episodes tie together.

Starting Points: 100

Maximum Points from a Disadvantage Category: 50

Maximum Points including Disadvantages: 200

Characters automatically have Normal Characteristic Maxima: No

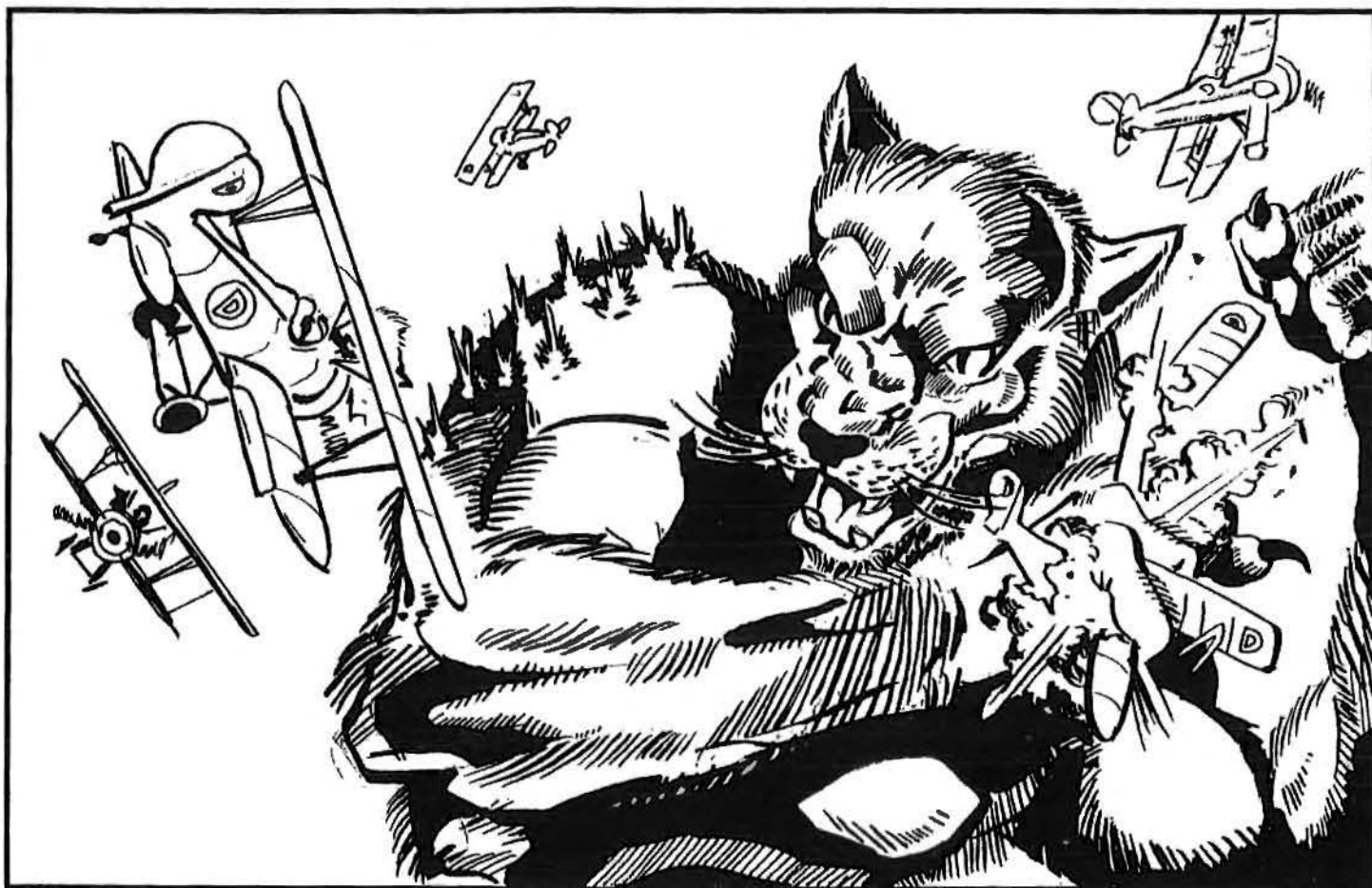
Characters may carry normal technology at no cost:
Only VIPER technology is allowed.

Campaign Uses Hit Locations Chart: Yes

Knockdown Rules Used: No

Long-Term Endurance Used: No

Limited Push: Yes



SAMPLE STORYLINES

1. One of the PCs closest friends says that he wants their help from breaking away from VIPER. Do you trust him?
2. A mysterious computer appears in the PC's headquarters one day, and no one knows what it does. If the PCs don't surrender it to the Police, they find it is a Jeremiah, a probability reading computer that can predict the future with considerable accuracy—it also has a mind of its own—who built it, who wants it, and how did it end up in the PC's headquarters?
3. A Nest leader challenges a PC to single combat, ambushes the character, then commits suicide when he has a perfectly good chance to kill our hero. Why?

Have VR-01A is a campaign that is very good if you want to run an "anti-social heroes" campaign, a campaign where the PCs can be scowling treacherous scum with a heart of gold. Players should be able to trust each other when things get rough, but won't turn their backs on each other. *Blake's Seven*, although far different in setting, has the proper feel for this sort of campaign.

CAMPAIGN FIVE: VIPERS IN THE DUST

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The year is 2044. The Great War against the Superpowered has left the Earth a radioactive husk. The world is divided into thousands of tiny feudal states, most of which are ruled by the remaining paranormals, almost all of whom are mad. Life is short and then you die... until you find the remains of an ancient VIPER's Nest, all of its vehicles and equipment intact. Perhaps there is a way for someone without superpowers to survive after all. The PCs must choose their destiny in a harsh world, and whatever course of action they may take leads to dangerous threats.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PCS

As important as they want to be. They might choose to build a new society, or they might lay low and hope that the potential problems don't notice them very often.

CAMPAIGN TONE

Morality: (4) There are few people in white hats in any sort of a post-Holocaust game

Realism: (4) This type of campaign depends a lot on technology and technical accuracy and detail.

Outlook: (5) Gritty.

Continuity: (4) Mostly continuing, with some occasional episodic stories.

Physical World: The campaign takes place in 2044, but the world is virtually unrecognizable. Most of the major cities have lingering radiation. New York was completely destroyed, and is the most radioactive area in the solar system between the sun and Jupiter. All magic was destroyed. All aliens have long abandoned Earth. Most places that are habitable are dying a slow death. Hope is even more dead than the land. Most superpowered people are paranoid madmen and women, who want to make sure that any rivals (including each other) are destroyed. War is frequent and bloody.

Starting Points: 75

Maximum Points from a Disadvantage Category: 50

Maximum Points including Disadvantages: 150

Characters automatically have Normal Characteristic Maxima: No

Characters may carry normal technology at no cost: Yes.

Campaign Uses Hit Locations Chart: Yes

Knockdown Rules Used: Yes

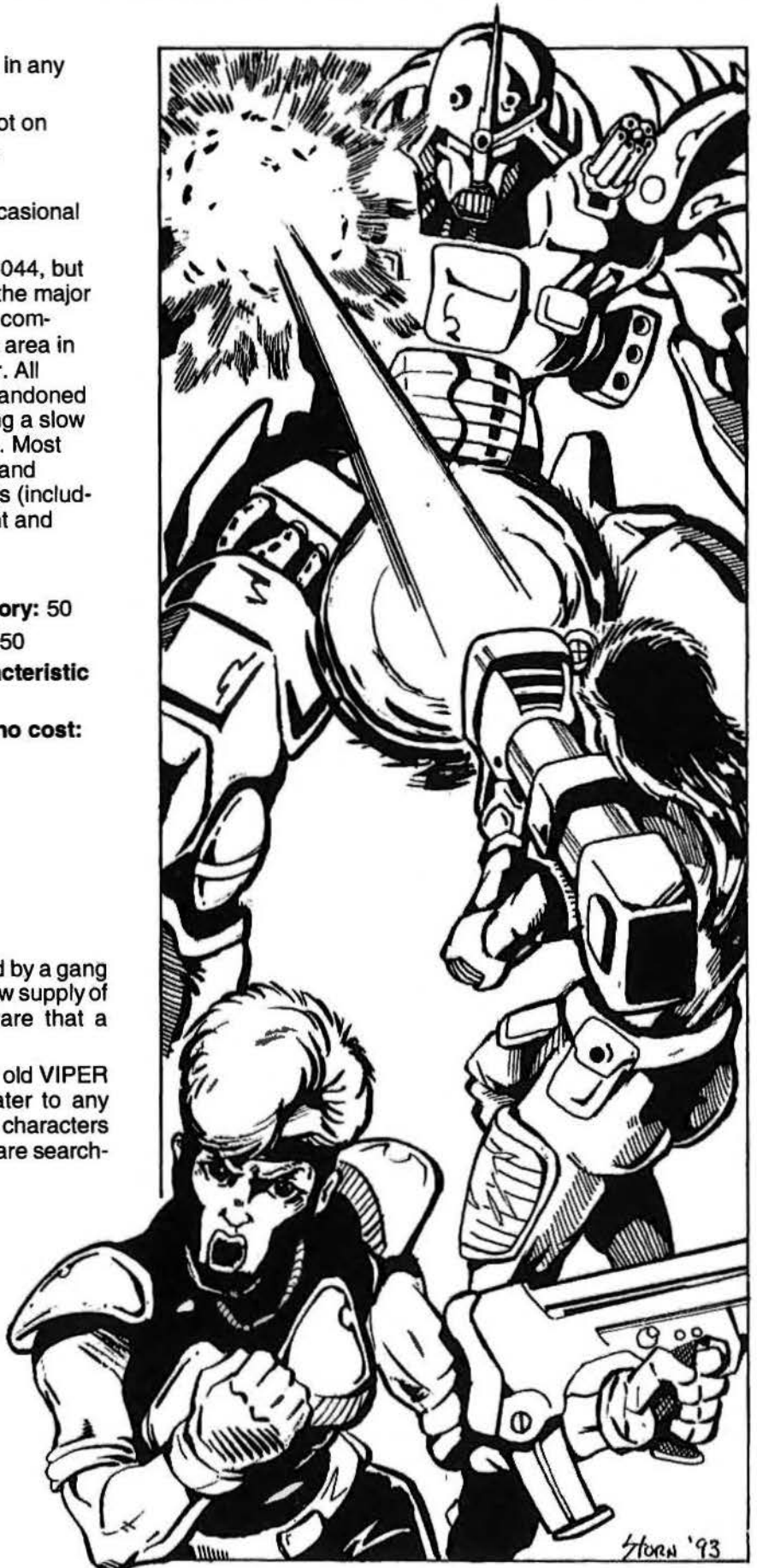
Long-Term Endurance Used: No

Limited Push: Yes

SAMPLE STORYLINES

1. The local water supply has been contaminated by a gang of roaming vandals. The PCs need to find a new supply of uncontaminated water for the locals, unaware that a mutated monster lurks in the water.
2. A local monarch (i.e., super) has researched old VIPER Nests and is offering a year's supply of water to any settlement that leads him to your Nest. The characters must find a way to discourage the bands who are searching for them.
3. One of the friendlier local monarchs asks for your help in unseating a tyrant (i.e., another monarch/super). Do you trust him?
4. An enclave of robots is fulfilling the directive of their creator, Mechanon, by wiping out all organic life. Stop them.

This is pre-feudal superheroes; supers control small petty kingdoms, and involve themselves in power struggles. This is the Worst Case Scenario of a **Champions** campaign, Genocide's worst nightmare come true; the supers took over, and what a mess the world has become. At the same time, the players should be led into activities that will rebuild the world and make it better, the PCs are elements of positive, if violent, change.



NESTS



TYPES OF NEST LEADERS

In examining VIPER's Nest Leaders, UNTIL and PRIMUS have determined that their behavior falls into one of several classic patterns. These patterns have been analyzed in many criminology texts, and are the subject of discussion by supers who enjoy psychoanalyzing their enemies. These patterns are as follows:

THE GREEDY GRABBER

The love of money is the root of all evil, and the Grabber loves his roots. A Nest led by a Greedy Grabber does a lot of robbery operations. The Nest Leader typically enjoys living in high style, and possessing status symbols is extremely important to him. The Grabber's weakness is greed, and his tendency to blatantly use his agents without sharing the wealth.

THE MAD SCIENTIST

Some people are blinded by science; others blind people with science. The mad scientist is not often found as a Nest Leader (although they are sometimes found assisting a Nest Leader); to them, the world is a laboratory, and their VIPER agents perform operations that provide funds, materials, and guinea pigs (not to mention serving as guinea pigs themselves). The Mad Scientist's Nest is involved in bizarre research, sometimes based on the Scientist's whims with no scientific basis (this does not produce a high success rate); other Mad Scientists are brilliant and extremely dangerous. Tactical planning in a Mad Scientist's Nest is usually left to an agent commander. The strengths of a Mad Scientist's Nest is that it can provide a lot of technological surprises for anyone who assaults it. Its weakness is that it is not the most effectively planned of Nests.

THE CUNNING SCHEMER

The Cunning Schemer is the sort of person who would like to play chess against fifty opponents and try to think five moves ahead of each of them. The Schemer lives to foil his enemies by manipulating them, and setting devious traps. In general, he wants everyone to realize how clever he is. A Schemer's Nest rarely has a lot of firepower, but relies on covert operations and deceptions. The strength of a Schemer's Nest is that they are usually very flexible and stealthy operations are often more profitable than blatant ones. The weakness is that a Schemer can be too clever for his own good, and not deploy force when it is most needed.

THE ARROGANT SHOW-OFF

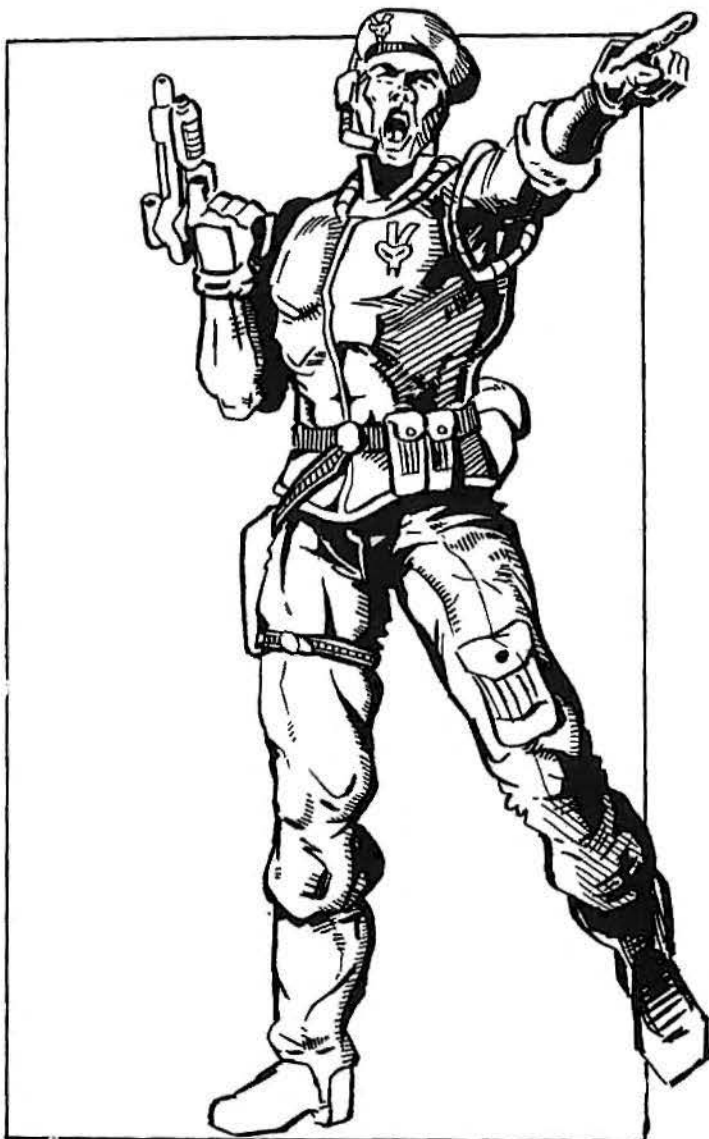
Similar to, but much less subtle than the Schemer is the Arrogant Show-off. The Show-off revels in the glory that is a Nest Leader's, and the myth of cruelty and indomitability of VIPER. They are full-blown megalomaniacs; Dr. Destroyer without a powersuit. The Show-off loves to create elaborate plans, in full public view, that demonstrate how invincible he is, and how great VIPER is. He is intoxicated by newspaper editorials that call for his head, and wants everyone to know how ruthless and powerful he is. These Nests can be very short-lived, but a Show-off with the intelligence to back it up can be the most dangerous type of Nest Leader of all.

THE COWARDLY COMMANDER

This is the Nest Leader that is most strongly fixed in the public mind. Not all Nest Leaders abuse their subordinates; using agents as cannon fodder for their whims. Not all Nest Leaders run from a fight. However there are more than a few Nest Leaders who dream impossible designs, then whine like curs when their poor agents have been clobbered and five superheroes are closing on his battered escape vehicle. The Cowardly Commander lives to watch people demonstrate fear towards him, and doesn't care if it's his own agents or the general public. The Cowardly Commander is the type of leader that nearly destroyed VIPER in the early 1980s, and the Serpent has been trying to weed them out, but as long as some cowardly jerk is willing to pay money for a VIPER Franchise, the Cowardly Commander is going to be a part of the organization. The Cowardly Commander's only strength is a sense of self-preservation.

For a VIPER comedy campaign, the Cowardly Commander is *de rigeur* for the Nest Leader of choice.

Over the last year, VIPER has lost seven Nests (five in the United States) due to anti-VIPER operations. 471 agents were captured, and 17 were killed; in addition to eighteen supervillains. VIPER provides free lawyers to the family members of agents who were killed by supers, and pays all legal expenses if they choose to file suit against superheroes. VIPER also has provided lawyers to people whose property was damaged by superheroes, even if VIPER was not involved; they view the legal harassment of supers as one of the most effective weapons against their enemies.



THE RUTHLESS BASTARD

One of the more unfortunate characteristics of the human species is its capacity for cruelty. The Ruthless Bastard is the epitome of this in VIPER. One might describe this type of Nest leader as a more competent version of the Cowardly Commander, as the welfare of their agents mean nothing to them. However, a Ruthless Bastard enjoys living up to his name. They will kill an enemy without hesitation; the messier, and the more public, the better. The Ruthless Bastard doesn't live for spectacle; he lives for the fear, and for chances to hurt his enemies.

THE RESPECTABLE BUSINESSMAN

For some Nest Leaders, their control of a VIPER Nest is only one facet of a much larger organization. The Respectable Businessman can be as ruthless as anyone; he just likes to hide behind a facade of respectability. The Respectable Businessman is less likely to make major displays of force against his enemies (who often have "accidents"), but wields financial and legal power with great skill.

THE VENGEFUL VIPER

The Vengeful VIPER has joined VIPER for one reason—revenge. Perhaps the legal system put the screws to them, perhaps they fell victim to an accident; the vengeful VIPER wants revenge against someone, and is using VIPER as an instrument to get it.

THE CULT CLASSIC

The looniest of all VIPER leaders has gotten the nickname "Cult Classic" because he or she runs their Nest like a cult; agents aren't just criminal operatives, they are also worshippers. The Cult Classic usually creates a personality cult where agents venerate his or her invincibility, or tries to create Neo-Nazism or Neo-Fascism. As the Cult Classic is usually not good at cooperating or taking orders, they are the most likely type of Nest leader to turn rogue or challenge VIPER HQ. Nest leaders fitting these profiles, should they be sold franchises in the first place, are closely watched. Cult Classic Nest leaders who are especially abusive to their agents can incur the wrath of VIPER HQ (there are limits even to the treatment of cannon fodder) and have been assassinated. No VIPER Nest is more frightening to super-heroes than one led by a Cult Classic.

SAMPLE NEST LEADERS

This is a listing of important Nests in the Continental United States. For profiles of non-American Nests, refer to the "VIPER Around the World" section.

ATLANTA

Leader: General Franklin J. Cuthbert

The Atlanta Nest is considered one of VIPER's problem children, due primarily to the actions of its leader, "General" Franklin J. Cuthbert. Cuthbert is an out-and-out Cult Classic, but instead of trying to push for his own agenda, he wants to recreate the Confederacy. Instead of dressing in a VIPER uniform, Cuthbert can be found in a Confederate general's uniform. His troops wear VIPER uniforms, with a Confederate flag on their shoulder, and a military rank on their sleeves. The Atlanta Nest also engages in a lot of racism; non-white males are prohibited from joining. Many people in VIPER (including VF-2 and the Serpent Syndicate) will have nothing to do with them, but until such time as they openly defy an order from VIPER's central command, VIPER will not punish them.

The Atlanta Nest is an average size nest, with about 150 agents, and it is well equipped. Cuthbert is fond of Quetzalcoatl's, and there are a lot of Vehicle Specialists in his Nest.

ATLANTIC CITY

Leader: The Falconer

Mario Toscani was born into a family of crime, and he enjoyed it. His mother's father was the infamous Grandfather, Angelo Carelli, and Mario was his favorite son. Pampered and totally amoral, Mario became VIPER's New York Nest leader, using VIPER to create a thriving narcotics network. He enjoyed hunting his enemies; he named himself the Falconer, and even built a robot falcon as a companion.

Mario's reign of terror was finally stopped by the Champions superhero team, and apparently died in an explosion. However, no body was ever found, and Mario had, in fact, escaped the holocaust, though he lost his left arm.

Mario lay low for several years, and then revealed his presence to his grandfather, who had taken control of the VIPER Nest. Mario was given a cyborg arm to replace the one that had been lost, and was made Nest Leader of the small but important Atlantic City Nest, VIPER's money laundering center. So far, this Nest has been involved in mundane criminal matters, and have not received much attention from superheroes or the authorities. Mario, however, has been working on several projects designed to get revenge against his enemies. Mario is a combination of a Cunning Schemer and a Vengeful VIPER.

The Atlantic City Nest is small, but equipped with some of VIPER's finest technology. The Falconer is more interested in making connections and increasing his influence in the Underworld than running a huge VIPER operation.

BOSTON

Lieutenant: The Professor

Dr. Hugo Winslow was a professor at MIT, a brilliant but eccentric professor of engineering. He was increasingly dissatisfied by budget cuts, but because he was tenured, it wasn't until his experiments in robotics went awry and destroyed a building that he was fired. Winslow was extremely upset, and vowed revenge. He admired VIPER's technical achievements, and believed that his future would be a life as a criminal mastermind. He made a deal with Python of the Supreme Serpent to serve as his lieutenant in the Boston Nest (Python is still the official Nest leader in Boston, as he is in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia), and became known as the Professor. He tends to isolate himself from the day-to-day operations of the Nest, giving a lot of power to his subordinates, who carry out operations which they feel will make the Professor happy.

The Professor is a combination of the Vengeful VIPER and the Mad Scientist. His Nest tends to have a lot of experimental weapons; two VIPER Commanders command his forces and plan his operations. Python looks in on the Nest, and gives the Professor authorization to deal with "problems". Boston's VIPER's Nest, which is code-named "Viper University," is a medium sized Nest, but expanding rapidly. The Professor is a normal with thirty points in sciences, specializing in robotics.

DENVER

Leader: Elaine Darden

Elaine Darden worked as a director of West Coast marketing at Duchess Industries, when she discovered VIPER's connection with Duchess. She confronted her superiors with the information, who received orders from Edward Warwick to kill her. She survived the assassination attempt, confronted Warwick, and impressed him. She offered to purchase a VIPER's Nest and run it, giving Warwick a substantial share of the profits. Seeing that there was no VIPER's Nest in Denver, they purchased that franchise.

Elaine Darden's Nest is more low-key than most; she runs a ski resort, several restaurants, illegal gambling, and an illegal gold mine, using VIPER agents as miners. There is also a major VIPER-only resort at Aspen, which is run by her Nest. She also provides security for lodges that are fronts for VIPER research labs. Darden is what is sometimes known as "The Classic Combination" of a Greedy Grabber and a Respectable Businessman. She is shrewd, and quiet, calculating at all times. Darden is 5'5" tall and weighs 105 lbs. She likes to dress up in clothing suitable for a female executive. Use an Agent Commander's stats, with Business skills. The Denver Nest is a medium sized Nest; it has a lot of No Range Penalty weapons and a large number of covert agents.

DETROIT

Leader: Montgomery White

Montgomery White was originally a radical British labor leader, who, in the 1970s, urged for a full-scale revolt against the government and the creation of a "worker's parliament". Even Britain's labor movement has its limits, and White was dismissed. White emigrated to Canada, and tried to get into the Union of Automobile Workers, but was too independent-minded to play union politics. He skipped across the border and decided that VIPER was the perfect tool to use to create a Worker's Paradise. Believing that Detroit's high unemployment rate and the "slave labor tactics of the Big Three Automakers" begged for rebellion, he purchased the Detroit VIPER franchise. White is a combination of Vengeful VIPER and Cult Classic, except that a Cult Classic needs to have the loyalty of his agents to be successful. Most of the agents in Detroit treat him as a pompous windbag and a subject for ridicule. The agent commanders believe he's a useful figurehead (if only because he'd take the brunt of punishment if the Nest collapses) and give him enough support to survive. Barely.

The Detroit Nest is large, but decentralized. Four agent commanders are its real leaders, and try to keep it under control. Frequently, agents will commit crimes without any authorization, and keep the profits to themselves. White thinks that everything is wonderful, and lives in his own dreamland, rehearsing speeches to himself, and occasionally wonders why everything isn't going according to his plans.

LOS ANGELES

Leader: Style

Los Angeles has a reputation for attracting the unusual and the cutting edge, and it's a reputation that Style loves. Style's Nest keeps a lower profile than many, allying itself with L.A.'s many street gangs, and letting them do the dirty work, mostly narcotics trafficking, in return for VIPER supplied weapons. Style loves research, particularly in mutagens and pharmaceuticals, and is part Greedy Grabber, part Mad Scientist. Style is a VIPER Commander level agent, with extra levels, and vehicle skills. He loves to lead his troops flying on a Diamondback.

The Los Angeles Nest, in spite of its low profile, is a large Nest; if one counted the street gangs that work with it, it would be larger by at least two orders of magnitude than the Grandfather's New York Nest.

MIAMI

Leader: Frostburn

Miami. The nexus point for a hundred vices, the most preeminent of them being drugs. Few Nests are as important to VIPER's overall operations as Miami, which has close ties to a dozen other Nests that rely on it as a distribution point for their operations. The leader of this Nest is a supervillain, known as Frostburn.

Frostburn was a numbers runner who was used as a guinea pig for an experiment; he had his hands removed and replaced by exo-gauntlets that could pour out a supply of liquid nitrogen. The guinea pig found himself in excruciating pain, and killed the scientific team that gave him his gauntlets. He lived a life as a supervillain, until a run-in with the Gold Coast Guardians convinced him that he couldn't survive on his own. So he hired himself to VIPER, murdered the Miami Nest leader, and paid VIPER to allow him to take his place. So far, Frostburn has worked out surprisingly well, a combination of a Ruthless Bastard and a Cunning Schemer. While not a tactical genius, he has hired top mercenaries such as Mechassassin to train his troops, and he retains the services of several VIPER Commanders with good tactical skills to plan his operations.

Use a VIPER Commander for Frostburn's stats, increase his STR to 40 and add a 4d6 RKA, No Range, 0 END (cold attack). The Miami Nest is a large one, and has a lot of water and amphibian vehicles; the Nest itself is underwater.

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

Leader: The Grandfather

Angelo Carelli was a Sicilian mobster who came to the United States in the 1930s. He grew up in the Mob, and by the 1970s, was one of the most powerful mobsters on the eastern seaboard. However, this wasn't enough for Angelo, who sent his grandson, Mario, into VIPER.

Mario was one of the most successful VIPER leaders ever. As the dreaded Falconer, Mario expanded VIPER into narcotics traffic and the protection trade. The Falconer was finally brought down by the newly formed superhero team, the Champions, and died (apparently) in an explosion.

Following Mario's death, Angelo took over the New York VIPER franchise and merged it with his own operations. Unexpectedly, Angelo enjoyed the prominence that came along with VIPER, and some of the cult-like aspects of its membership. Not only does he enjoy success from typical organized crime activities, he likes to use VIPER to pull high-profile terror operations ("Ascension" is a typical Grandfather scheme.) He is a combination of the Arrogant Show-Off and the Ruthless Bastard. His VIPER Nest specializes in terror.

The Grandfather has no superpowers, and is confined to a wheelchair. It is, however, a sophisticated wheelchair with jet engines, an elaborate weapons system, and a hardened force wall defense system. The grandfather has numerous skills, and can be considered a tactical genius.

The New York City VIPER's Nest is the largest in the world, and armed with VIPER's most sophisticated weapons.

SAN FRANCISCO

Leader: The Dark Lord

The most mysterious VIPER Nest Leader is the Dark Lord. This man supervises VIPER's San Francisco operations, then vanishes in a puff of smoke. Wearing a heavy trench coat, an oversize hat, and a faceless mask, no one knows who he is, black or white, young or old, man or woman. Although his operations have been disrupted several times, he has always eluded capture, to return to plague his enemies another day. He is a tactical genius of the first order, the Cunning Schemer's Cunning Schemer.

The GM should invent the Dark Lord's background, tying him (or her) with one of the characters in the campaign. The Dark Lord is an Agent Commander with darkness, invisibility, desolidification, and teleport powers.

Stats for VIPER's San Francisco Nest are provided below.

SEATTLE

Leader: The Child

One of the most unusual mutations (if it is not a magical effect) in the world is the Child's aging process, which runs at only one-hundredth that of a normal person. The Child appears to be four years old, but was born in 16th Century England. She likes to play the innocent, but is one of the most brilliant minds in VIPER; the Child is part Greedy Grabber, part Cunning Schemer, although she enjoys luxury more than scheming. The Child has an unusual aging process and an immunity to disease, toxins, and bodily degeneration; she has exhibited regeneration and healing abilities on more than one occasion. Otherwise she has all the weaknesses of a four year old girl. The Child has demonstrated a resentment to normals, and probably joined VIPER hoping to make "grown-ups" lives miserable.

The Child's Nest is of small size; the Child prefers to have absolute control, rather than a Nest where she has to delegate power to lieutenants. The Seattle Nest is highly efficient and prosperous.

SAMPLE NESTS

1. SMALL NEST EXAMPLE: WASHINGTON D.C.

Nest Founded (again): 1992

Nest Leader: Allen "Slitherer" Beghart (Karate Martial Arts Specialist with Tactics and Commander stats)

Agent Complement: 30 VIPER agents
 3 Agent Commanders
 5 Martial Arts Specialists
 5 Vehicle Specialists

Vehicle Complement: 2 Gecko Road Cruisers and 2 Rattler Motorcycles

Notable Weapons: 1 XO-1 Exoskeleton and 1 MB-2 Magnetic Blaster Rifle

Washington D.C. has always been a VIPER stronghold, until it was recently destroyed by the VIPER-hating supervillain Prism, and his supervillain group, Spectrum. When Washington D.C. came available as a franchise, one of Python's subordinates, a mutated martial arts specialist named Allen Beghart applied for it. Beghart was one of many people mutated by King Cobra's Coil-gene; Python felt sympathetic towards him and used his influence to get him the franchise. At present, VIPER has a tiny presence in D.C., and his Nest is performing only covert operations; if his Nest survives, it will probably not become a sizable Nest for two years. His Nest is being nurtured by the Serpent Syndicate, in the hopes that it will eventually draw Prism and Spectrum into a trap where VIPER can finally crush them.

2. AVERAGE NEST EXAMPLE: SAN FRANCISCO

Nest Founded: 1989

Nest Leader: The Dark Lord

Agent Complement: 30 VIPER Agents-in-Training
 150 VIPER agents
 10 Agent Commanders
 10 Martial Arts Specialists
 15 Vehicle Specialists

Vehicle Complement: 1 Super VIPER Battlesuit, 3 Quetzalcoatl Light Fighters, 3 Diamondback Flying Motorcycles, 2 Anaconda Light Tank, 1 Python Heavy Tank, 2 Gecko Road Cruisers, 1 Black Cobra Surveillance Helicopters, 1 Cockatrice Personnel Carrier, 4 Moccasin Land/Sea Combat Craft, 3 Lamprey Water Fighter Suits

Notable Weapons: 2 Omega Destruction Modules, 5 X-01 Exo-skeletons, 5 MB-2 Magnetic Carbines, 3 PB-02B Needle Beam Rifles, 2 SFX-01 Portable Blaster Cannon, 5 I-01 Beam Weapon, 5 I-02 Beam Weapons, 2 GP-01 Gravity Projectors

The original San Francisco Nest was destroyed by the prominent superhero team known as the Protectors in 1988. The Supreme Serpent soon awarded the San Francisco franchise to the Dark Lord, a mysterious agent. The Dark Lord, through a series of bold raids, built the San Francisco Nest back to prominence. The San Francisco Nest is somewhat larger than the average VIPER Nest, but is dwarfed in comparison with the Grandfather's Nest.

3. LARGE NEST EXAMPLE: NEW YORK CITY

Nest One Founded: 1988

Nest Leader: The Grandfather

Agent Complement: 150 VIPER Agents-in-Training
 600 VIPER agents
 50 Agent Commanders
 50 Martial Arts Specialists
 50 Vehicle Specialists
 10 VIPER Commanders

Vehicle Complement: 5 Super VIPER Battlesuits, 10 Quetzalcoatl Light Fighters, 20 Diamondback Flying Motorcycles, 10 Anaconda Light Tanks, 5 Python Heavy Tanks, 5 Gecko Road Cruisers, 5 Black Cobra Surveillance Helicopters, 5 Cockatrice Personnel Carriers, 10 Moccasin Land/Sea Combat Craft, 10 Lamprey Water Fighter Suits

Notable Weapons: 5 Omega Destruction Modules, 5 X-01 Exo-skeletons, 5 MB-2 Magnetic Carbines, 3 PB-02B Needle Beam Rifles, 2 SFX-01 Portable Blaster Cannon, 5 I-01 Beam Weapons, 5 I-02 Beam Weapons, 2 GP-01 Gravity Projectors, 1 Mech-VIPER Suit, 1 Flying VIPER Command Center "Mother Cobra," (see "Ascension" in the Adventures section).

The largest VIPER's Nest in existence is the New York City Nest, led by the Grandfather, Angelo Carelli. The Nest is scattered in warehouses, and "respectable businesses", all across the Big Apple; there are four separate Nests (run by VIPER Commander level agents) linked to the Grandfather's Prime Nest, which is in turn linked to the rest of VIPER; this way, the Grandfather maintains some control over operations, but it is not too large and unwieldy to manage. The New York Nest is one of the most aggressive and dangerous VIPER's Nest in the world.

NEST ORGANIZATION SCHEMES

The relationship between the Nest Leader and his commanders varies from Nest to Nest. There are four basic patterns that may be employed by a Nest Leader to run his operation.

1. **THE LONG DISTANCE NEST:** Under this scheme, Agents do not know the location of the Nest; they receive shipments of supplies to their homes or to a central meeting place, and the Nest Leader communicates with the Agents by a BBS, telephone, or other information transmission networks. Before an action, an agent goes to a rendezvous point, is given orders by an Agent Commander, and then performs operations; the Agent Commander arranges for the transfer of goods or funds between the Agents and the Nest. The main disadvantage of this arrangement is that the Nest has limited control over its Agents. The main advantage is that this type of Nest is extremely secure.
2. **THE HOME AND AWAY NEST:** This Nest is similar to the Long Distance Nest, except that the Nest Leader retains a small corps of agents under his direct control that live and work at the Nest, in addition to agents that are contacted out of the Nest by BBS or phone. During important operations, agents from the Nest will work with

those who are not permanently stationed with VIPER, and keep an eye on what is going on. A Nest Leader in a Home and Away Nest has greater control over his agents and their operations than a Long Distance Nest, but it is not as secure.

3. **NESTROPOLIS:** Nestropolis is based on the principle of having several small Nests in a territory, each led by an Agent Commander, and linked to a central command (i.e., a Nest Leader). The sub-Nests usually take on separate assignments from each other, combining only to perform major operations. Nestropolis is an extremely effective arrangement for many larger Nests, but some Nest leaders dislike delegating control.
4. **THE GRAND NEST:** This Nest is modelled on Nest Prime, the original VIPER's Nest, and is usually what people think of when they think of a VIPER Nest. All of the VIPER's agents, equipment, and mercenaries are consolidated into a single VIPER base. Grand Nests can be small, but they can also be quite large (such as the Grandfather's Nest in New York City). They are usually very heavily armed, and require an extensive battle to "clean them up" (from a Game Master's standpoint, a Grand Nest is a greater challenge than the other VIPER's Nests). Their major drawback is security; the more concentrated a Nest, the greater the chance that a Nest can be toppled by a leak or a telepath interrupting their operations.



VIPER AROUND THE WORLD



VIPER is a worldwide organization, with links to criminal and terrorist activities on every continent. This section is a synopsis of VIPER on each continent, and its major players.

To make things simple, VIPER's relations with other supers can be divided into seven categories:

Strong Alliance means that these people are cooperating with VIPER on a day-to-day basis, and frequently combining operations.

Weak Alliance means that VIPER consorts with them frequently, but not on a day-to-day basis.

Mercenaries: These are villains that are simply hired muscle. They have no loyalty to the European Nests, and no disloyalty either.

Employees: These are people who work directly in the service of VIPER.

Rivalry: These are competing criminals whose activities overlap with VIPER. VIPER's response depends on the aggressiveness of the local Nest leader.

Weak Enmity: These are villains and heroes whom VIPER dislikes, but are not preferred targets because they would rather use their resources against others, or because they are extremely dangerous (Eurostar fits in the latter category).

Strong Enmity: These are people that VIPER is actively trying to destroy.

EUROPE

Outline by Phil Masters

As mentioned in the Organization section, VIPER is only a minor player in the United Kingdom. On the continent, however, it dominates criminal activities in Germany, Scandinavia, France, Switzerland, Austria, and the Netherlands, and is rapidly moving into Eastern Europe. It has not achieved dominance in Italy and Spain, thanks to the influence of other criminal agencies, and Eurostar and Malachite.

As elsewhere, VIPER is a decentralized organization, whose Nests are free to organize themselves as they please, as long as they do not deal with VIPER's enemies, interfere with other Nests, and obey the commands of VIPER HQ. In recent months, there has been an unparalleled alliance of VIPER leaders, who intend to unite their forces into an army which will create a VIPER power base in Eastern Europe. Only time will tell whether VIPER's army will be successful.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

LARS OVANSSON

Leader of the Copenhagen, Denmark VIPER's Nest, and Overlord of the VIPER European Field Army, Ovanesson is a brilliant and frequently bored strategist who has put the VIPER Field army operation together to provide himself with a challenge, hopefully the crowning achievement of his life. Ovanesson is a logistics expert and a perfect planner, but not the best at adapting on the fly.

Irascible, easily irritated, Ovanesson is a hardened perfectionist.

Stats: Conventional Weapons Agent with VIPER Commander stats.

Appearance: 6'4", blond hair, blue eyes, slim build, 38 years old.

DR. PETER OVANSSON

Lars' brother is official the Head of Research in Northern Europe, stationed in Copenhagen. In reality it means he runs a laboratory; however, he is the mastermind behind the creation of VIPER's psionics specialists. Ovanesson is in charge of one of the largest conclaves of psionics in the world. Ovanesson is also an adept politician. He has been manipulating members of the Danish government to support his research, and has managed to manipulate the governments of Denmark and Sweden into providing benefits and contracts for VIPER's coversecurity organizations. Ovanesson is himself a psionic with minor telekinesis talents, which inspired his research.

Peter is happiest when he is alone in a laboratory, but is too much in love with power to stay there long. Peter's ultimate goal, aside from VIPER's conquest of Europe, is to win a Nobel Prize in Physics.

Stats: Psionics Specialist (Telekinetic Package) with Physics 15-, Gravitics 13- Psionics, and Mathematics at 13-, Sub-atomic Physics, Nuclear Physics, Biophysics, and Astronomy at 12-, with 10 points worth of contacts.

Appearance: 6'2", blond hair, blue eyes, slim build, 41 years old.

RUDOLPH KELNOS

Grandson of the famed occultist Bramfeld Von Kelnos, who mysteriously disappeared in 1928, Kelnos is the leader of the Vienna Austria VIPER's Nest. Kelnos is obsessed with the occult and archaeological artifacts, and is a fanatical collector of items that have mystical importance. He often sub-contracts VIPER's Nests worldwide to get items for him, and has been known to send his agents far afield. This has brought him in conflict with a number of mystical superheroes, and DEMON. He calls his VIPER's Nest "the Pit", and

his agents "Pit Vipers", and have given them special uniforms that distinguish them from the rest of VIPER. He likes to cultivate a personality cult around himself, and his agents are some of the most fanatical that VIPER has ever known. He looks younger than his 67 years would indicate, and is far more spry and strong than one would imagine possible without superpowers.

Kelno is an obsessed sociopath, and extremely charismatic. He does not tolerate failure. Kelno has been known to consort with the Black Paladin and the Dark Masters on frequent occasions.

Stats: VIPER Commander with 20 EGO, 25 PRE, KS: Occult 13-, KS: Archeology 13-, KS: Occult Treasures 13-, Oratory 14-, and Interrogation 14-. He also has ten points of Mental Defense, and a magical cup that provides immortality if he drinks from it every year at the stroke of midnight on his birthday.

Appearance: 5'7", greying brown hair, brown eyes, slim build, 67 years old. He wears fine clothing, and pseudo-occult robes when addressing his men.

KARL LAGENROND

Karl was one of the best UNTIL agents, but his flaming ego and arrogance were the cause of a number of quarrels between him and UNTIL Central Command, and Lagenrond found himself being repeatedly overlooked for promotions. Disgusted, he defected to VIPER and is now the Commander of their Berlin Nest.

Lagenrond is a tactical genius. His only flaw is that he prefers a military solution to every problem; he is incapable of subtlety, only devastation.

Stats: VIPER Commander with 20 STR, 25 PRE, Tactics on a 17-, nearly every Weapon and Vehicle Familiarity possible, and +6 Combat Levels. His martial arts package is Commando Training.

Appearance: 6'3", crew-cut blond hair, green eyes, with a very powerful build. He is 34 years old.

PHILIP NEIDHART

Nepotism is the only explanation for Phil Neidhart being the Nest Leader of VIPER's once prestigious London Nest. Neidhart is the incompetent nephew of Richard Neidhart, the most treacherous member of the VIPER Council. Neidhart's Nest does very little and is an open source of ridicule in the British criminal world (Brown Fox has given Neidhart the derogatory nickname "Baby Snake"). His primary function is to give his uncle a lot of information about VIPER.

Recently, Neidhart has decided that he is not going to take any more ridicule, and is planning a series of crimes to cut in on Mystery and the Brown Fox (see *Kingdom of Champions*). This is almost certain to prove to be a disaster.

Stats: VIPER Agent, with one contact (his Uncle).

Appearance: 5'11", brown hair, brown eyes, moderately strong build. He is 25 years old.



RELATIONS

Strong Alliance: Duchess Industries, Dr. Destroyer (*Classic Enemies*), ReDirection Cartel (*Kingdom of Champions*).

Weak Alliance: Red Doom (*Classic Organizations*)

Mercenaries Commonly Employed: Mammoth, Doppleganger, Glacier (*European Enemies*)

Employees: Breaking Glass (*Kingdom of Champions*).

Rivalry: Worldwide League of Crime (*Villainy Unbound*), Project Armour, Mystery, Brown Fox (*Kingdom of Champions*).

Weak Enmity: Eclipse, The Despoiler, Floodgate, Midnight Sun (*European Enemies*), Malachite (*Champions Universe*), Eurostar (*Classic Enemies*).

Strong Enmity: UNTIL (*Super Agents*), London Watch, New Knights of the Round Table, STOP, Dr. Mantis (*Kingdom of Champions*), Argent Anarky, Hood, The Bastion of Budapest, Black Druid, The Inquisition, and Thespian (*European Enemies*).

NORTH AMERICA

It is difficult to come up with a comprehensive listing of VIPER in North America; VIPER has many employees, enemies, and rivals here, some of who are mentioned in other sections of this book. In the United States, VIPER has over fifty Nests in major metropolitan areas; many of the Nests have formed complex alliances, and the number of joint missions between Nests, coordinated through the Serpentine Network, have increased greatly during the last few years. VIPER's primary United States enemy is PRIMUS, followed by UNTIL, and of course, numerous superhero and supervillain teams. As Major Martinez has said: "The War against VIPER will be won or lost in the United States."

In Canada, VIPER's primary enemies are the three Sentinels teams. The Sentinels destroyed VIPER's attempts to establish a base in the high Arctic in 1985, and their attempt to establish a base in Northern Quebec was foiled by Borealis and his Destiny followers in 1989; Borealis objects to foreign criminal organizations on Canadian soil. Another blow was dealt to VIPER in 1992, when the Sentinels broke up the Toronto Ontario Nest, one of Canada's largest. VIPER has yet to surface again in Southern Ontario, the most important economic region in Canada. VIPER has made a tentative alliance with the criminal Lord Dire (mainly to battle Destiny and the Sentinels), but it is unlikely it will survive long.

Here are a few noteworthy Canadian Nest leaders.

SINISTER SAMURAI

The leader of the Vancouver, British Columbia Nest is a supervillain known as the Sinister Samurai. He was one of the most famous and feared mercenary supervillains of the early 1980s, and most supervillains have a healthy respect for him. He killed the previous Vancouver Nest leader, and uses the Vancouver Nest to control VIPER traffic on the Pacific Rim, although the Portland, and San Francisco Nests have objected to his heavy hand in this matter (he and the Dark Lord have since worked out a tentative agreement that gives the San Francisco Nest a piece of the action).

Stats: For the Sinister Samurai, use the Whip's character sheet (from *Classic Enemies*). Reduce his PD and ED to 10, and give him ten points of Armor (PD and ED); replace the Armor Piercing advantage with a 2d6 HKA (not a focus; he can summon his sword at will), add Instant Change, Find Weakness 13- with all sword attacks, Big Business Knowledge 13-, VIPER Knowledge 13-, and KS: Superheroes 12-.

Appearance: The Sinister Samurai wears a 16th Century Japanese samurai costume, except in public, when he wears a power suit (of the business variety). He is of Japanese stock, but is over six feet tall and has a strong build. (There is a larger proportion of martial arts specialists than normal in his Nest.)



MONSIEUR PUISSANT

M. Puissant (Mr. Power) is the leader of the Montreal, Quebec VIPER's Nest. Puissant robbed banks during the 1970s and 1980s, until he was defeated by the now deceased Quebec superhero Lutteur (The Wrestler) in 1982. He was released from prison in 1990, and had friends in the Montreal business community back him in legitimate business; from his profits, he bought a VIPER franchise. Puissant is a Legitimate Businessman who likes to provoke hot-headed heroes to attack him in public. He also likes to rely on assassins to do a lot of his dirty work; Lutteur was assassinated in 1983. As a result of his efforts, costumed vigilantes are rare in the province of Quebec.

Puissant's Nest uses a lot of Conventional Weapons agents, and tends to deal with a lot of street-level crime. Puissant is a supporter of the Quebec Independence movement, but has never authorized terrorism on their behalf; he has recruited a considerable number of young separatists that occasionally engage in minor vandalism of businesses that defy Quebec's ban of the province's controversial sign law, but he is not giving the orders for these actions.

Stats: Use the Ogre character sheet, increase his COM to 14, his INT to 18, and add French, PS: Business 14-, and +2 Overall Levels).

Appearance: Puissant never wears a costume, preferring businessman's attire.



LATIN AMERICA

VIPER has tried repeatedly to take control of the South American narcotics trade, with limited success. It has some contacts among criminal organizations in Brazil, Argentina, Peru, and Colombia, serving as a distributors for narcotics; Nests do not perform as many terrorist acts or robberies as they do in North America or in Europe; they perform services for the existing criminal organizations. By maintaining a low profile and acquiring a reputation for dependability, they have gradually increased their influence with the criminal families, and several families have turned themselves over to VIPER, although by North American standards they retain a great deal of autonomy.

Mexico provides a singular exception to this; VIPER is one of the major enemies for the Champions of the South. There are more than a few corrupt government officials in the service of VIPER, and VIPER has been using factories in the US-Mexico Free Enterprise zone to make cheap vehicles for American Nests. Conditions in the VIPER Factories are even more appalling than others in that zone. Worst of all, it is a prime recruiting ground; desperate people can make good VIPER agents; the San Diego VIPER's Nest is manned almost entirely by impoverished Latinos who have illegally crossed the border to feed their families.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

HILLARY JONES

Hillary Jones is the head of the Kingston, Jamaica VIPER's Nest, and one of VIPER's most prominent female Nest leaders. She acquired the Nest following the murder of her husband, Gregory, a murder which she committed. Hillary is ruthless, and runs protection schemes throughout tourist resorts in the Caribbean, as well as large burglary rings, as well as narcotics, and money laundering into untraceable bank accounts. Jones graduated with her Master's degree in economics from Harvard, and has close ties to VIPER's Finance division.

Hillary runs her Nest like a business, killing anyone who cannot make her a profit. It's one of the most efficient Nests in VIPER.

Stats: Hillary is a talented normal, with about 50 points worth of contacts and administrative skills.

Appearance: 5'2", auburn hair, brown eyes, and slightly overweight. She is 29 years old.

ALBERTO RUIZ

Alberto ("El Grande Hombre") Ruiz is the leader of VIPER operations in Northern Mexico and San Diego, California. He has been associated with VIPER since 1954, when he served as an agent in Thomas Thurston's New York Nest. A hardened, bitter old man, Ruiz lives in a fortified estate in Baja California, and leaves most of his operations to his subordinates, a pair of VIPER Commanders (Ferdinand and Miguel Montaro, a pair of identical twins with Mind Link). Ruiz is one of the most respected people in VIPER, old, foul-tempered, and totally ruthless.

Ruiz does not run a traditional VIPER's Nest. Instead, he runs a series of small cells, connected with his headquarters. These cells are given orders independently of each other, and are expected to take no action that is not authorized by his command. Agents have a fair amount of autonomy, provided that Ruiz does not hear about their actions.

Stats: A normal, with a lot of business skills and VIPER knowledge.

Appearance: A man in his 80s, frail, with white hair and brown eyes. He wears casual clothing.

RELATIONS

Strong Alliance: Duchess Industries, Dr. Destroyer (*Classic Enemies*).

Weak Alliance: Medellin Cartel, Zarathustra (Argentinian Neo-Nazis group) (see Dreadnought, *Classic Enemies*).

Mercenaries Commonly Employed: Asesinos (see *Champions Rulesbook* Campaign Book), Villains International (*Day of the Destroyer*).

Rivalry: Worldwide League of Crime (*Villainy Unbound*), some South American Organized Crime Families.

Weak Enmity: Terror Incorporated (*Classic Enemies*) (This varies to please Dr. Destroyer).

Strong Enmity: UNTIL (*Super Agents*), South American superhero groups.

ASIA

VIPER Asia frequently brags of its role as the birthplace of VIPER, and it's not without justification. For although most people don't think of Asia when they think of VIPER, VIPER's Eastern activities are more widespread than people think, from narcotics in the Golden Triangle, to protection schemes and robberies in Japan.

In Japan, VIPER competes with the Yakuza, traditional Japanese gangsters, for protection money, and political influence. VIPER Japan affects a more Yakuza-like persona (VIPER uniforms are altered, every VIPER agent has snake tattoos). In Japan, VIPER engages in philanthropic enterprises that no one in VIPER North America would think of doing; VIPER Japan believes it has a civic duty to the people.

VIPER Japan also engages in heavy propaganda and image making. There are no less than three animated series and six *manga* (comic books) portraying VIPER as misunderstood nasty people with hearts of gold. The most famous of these, Green VIPER Liberator, has been translated into English and is widely distributed in North America among fans of Japanese animation.

Outside of Japan, VIPER is less pleasant. VIPER has little influence in China, although their extensive intelligence network watches the activities of the government carefully, and an attempt has been made to plant VIPER sympathizers in the next generation of leaders. In Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea, VIPER's style is less beneficent, fitting very

close to the traditional terrorist image of VIPER (particularly in South Korea). In other parts of Southeast Asia, such as Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos, VIPER uses the land as an agricultural base for their narcotics trade. VIPER has a strong presence in India, and hopes to recruit and indoctrinate many supers from the sub-continent's large population. VIPER's eastern division has a close connection with the Vancouver Canada Nest led by the Sinister Samurai; the Pacific Rim is completely encircled by VIPER.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

YASAHIRO YAMAMOTO

Yasahiro Yamamoto is Vice President of the Yamamoto Corporation, and nephew of VIPER Council member Akio Yamamoto. He coordinates a Nest of about fifty members in Tokyo; however the VIPER's Nest primarily trains its agents, and then hires mercenaries to perform their operations for them. The Nest serves as a planning center for VIPER and a social club for its members.

Stats: Yasahiro is a talented normal, with about 20 points of Presence-based skills, Business-related KSeS, and a Judo Martial Arts package.

Appearance: Yasahiro is an impeccably dressed Japanese man in his late 20s, always wearing a business suit. He is noted for his excellent manners and good graces.

AMRITA ROY

Amrita Roy is the regional coordinator for VIPER's Southeast Asian operations. He has no permanent base of operations, but regularly tours each VIPER's Nest in Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, India, and Pakistan, making certain that VIPER is not being cheated by the local Nests. Amrita is a superhuman, and uses low-powered superhumans as bodyguards; several attempts have been made to kill him, without success. Amrita wears no costume, and hates the idea of having a code-name.

Stats: Amrita is a mutant. Use Pulsar's stats in the *Champions* 4th Edition book.

Appearance: He wears a business suit, but likes to relax in clothing more suitable for a martial artist.

RELATIONS

Strong Alliance: The Yamamoto Corporation

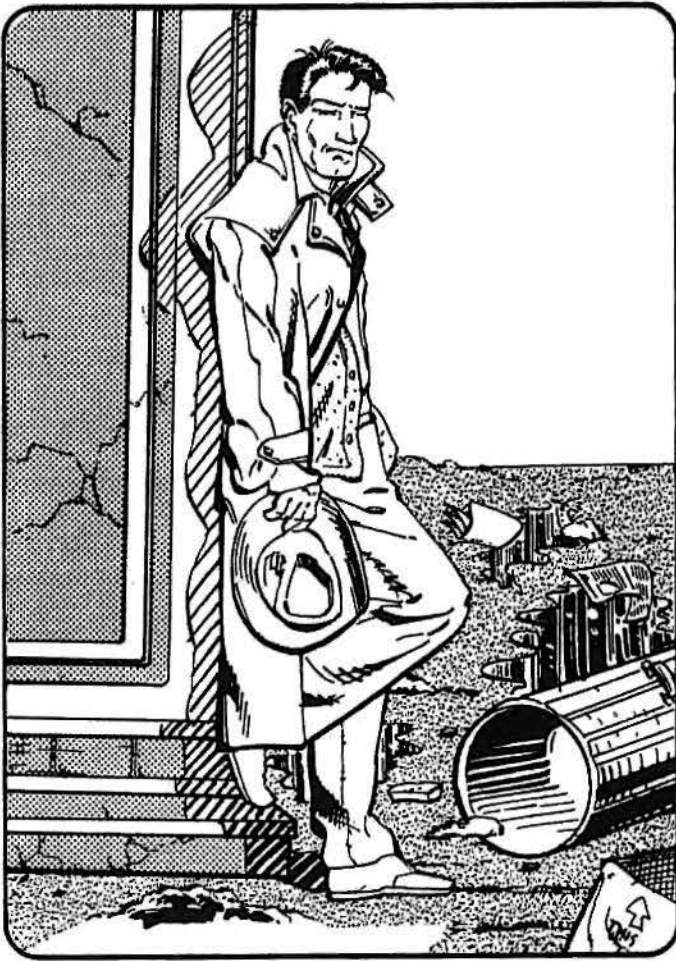
Weak Alliance: Golden Triangle Drug Lords.

Mercenaries Commonly Employed: Rajah (*Enemies: International File*), Villains International (*Day of the Destroyer*), Fuuma (aka "Divine Wind", *Enemies: International File*).

Rivalry: The Yakuza.

Weak Enmity: Hitsuasatsu and Kawaii (*Villainy Unbound*), Yama (*Enemies: International File*), Yooso (*Ninja Hero*)

Strong Enmity: UNTIL (*Super Agents*), The Pacific Lords (*Champions Universe*).



AFRICA

As noted in *Champions Universe*, VIPER's has less influence on Africa than on any other major continent. The reason for this is simple—Africa does not have enough material wealth to interest VIPER. VIPER does have factories in Algeria and Tunisia, where they test and manufacture many of their weapon systems. VIPER is also prominent in South Africa, although they were exposed twice by the superhero known as Powerstar; as a result of these defeats, VIPER is rebuilding in South Africa.

VIPER has a presence in Libya, although they are disliked by Islamic Fundamentalists for their involvement in vices (along with many other transgressions). Despite an association with anti-Westernism that some Africans find appealing, VIPER is viewed as pariahs in most of Africa. It is unlikely they will grow on this continent in the near future.

RELATIONS

Mercenaries Commonly Employed: Deathmask (*Enemies: International File*), Villains International (*Day of the Destroyer*)

Weak Enmity: Bwana (*Enemies: International File*), King Chaos (*Enemies: International File*)

Strong Enmity: UNTIL (*Super Agents*), The Right Hand (*Champions Universe*)

AUSTRALIA

VIPER does not view Australia as one of their more important bases, and it shows in the relative low profile that they have attained in Australia. Nonetheless, there are two major VIPER Nests in this part of the world, one in Sydney, and one in Wellington, New Zealand (a third Nest in Melbourne was broken up by Phase II, and it is cruelly joked that the Nest in Brisbane died from boredom). VIPER does not operate in the Outback; one attempt to establish a base in the North was foiled by the Dark Brotherhood, who promptly took over the installation.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

CARTER FIELDGATE

Carter Fieldgate is the leader of the Sydney, Australia VIPER's Nest. Carter was a small-time thug who found a cache of stolen diamonds and became rich; he decided that if he purchased a VIPER's Nest, he could command people and enjoy watching them squirm as he had once done.

So far, Fieldgate hasn't been very successful as a Nest leader. Phase II has broken his Nest up twice (he barely avoided capture each time) and he had his ribs broken by a bearhug from Captain Australia (an agent who threatened to kill a hostage unless Australia released him saved him). At present, the Sydney VIPER's Nest is a social club for people who like to dress up in green outfits; only occasionally do they go out and commit crimes. However, because of his emphasis on social interaction, Fieldgate is popular as a Nest leader, and he is trying to come up with a scheme that will get rid of Phase II and Captain Australia at the same time. Unfortunately, Carter is not very imaginative.

Stats: VIPER Commander.

Appearance: 5'11", 170 lbs. Fieldgate has brown hair and brown eyes, and is 32 years old. He wears typical Nest leader attire and his code name is "The Boss" or "The Nest Leader".

RELATIONS

Mercenaries Commonly Employed: Villains International (*Day of the Destroyer*).

Weak Enmity: The Outriders, Entropi (*Champions Universe*).

Strong Enmity: UNTIL (*Super Agents*), Phase II, The Dark Brotherhood

ANTARCTICA

VIPER has a base in Antarctica, several hundred miles south of the southern tip of South America. They are unaware of some of the deeper mysteries of Antarctica that are mentioned in *Champions Universe*; it is simply a nice remote place to work on some of their projects.

DUCHESS INDUSTRIES



BACKGROUND

For some people, Duchess Industries, the largest industrial corporation on Earth, is a monster, an evil, amoral conglomerate that is responsible for many of the world's ills. To others, it is the epitome of what a corporation should be. The truth of the matter is that Duchess Industries is to industry what Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde are to psychology; a study in the duality of corporations in Western Civilization.

Duchess Industries was founded in 1910 by Herman Von Drotte, a Prussian nobleman, and became prominent during the first World War as one of the leaders of the German war effort. But the beginning is not always the most interesting part of a story; Duchess Industries really became Duchess Industries in 1945, during the second World War.

It was obvious after the Battle of the Bulge that defeat was inevitable. The Fuehrer pretended otherwise, but there was one close to him, a woman, who knew differently. She knew she would die, like the rest of the Reich, when he died, and she wasn't ready to die for him. The answer was in plastic surgery; she exchanged her appearance with the socially ambitious and intellectually vacuous Duchess Henrietta Von Drotte, and carried the secret of the exchange to her grave. She looked upon the ashes of the Reich and smiled. They had been brutes, and fools. Their discipline did not include foresight; they fought battles they obviously couldn't win, and blamed their defeats on the innocents that they slaughtered without mercy. She couldn't understand, in retrospect, what she had ever seen in any of them. Pigs and savages, playing in fancy dress. Hitler had said that being a barbarian was an honorable title; what then was being a dead fool? The Reich had thought the way to obtain power was to take what you wanted; it wasn't that way at all.

The way to power, as Carnegie and Rockefeller and Ford and the East India Company had seen, was to control what people needed. To put things crudely, a drug pusher had more power than a mugger.

The drug she would push was called Duchess Industries.

Her husband, Conrad Von Drotte, had been crippled in the war; it was a simple matter to use drugs to keep him out of the way and to take control of Von Drotte Industries, which she immediately renamed Duchess Industries. She formed an alliance with the criminal organization VIPER from the moment it was founded. She constantly used this alliance as way to swallow the competition; long before the words "hostile takeover" had entered the public lexicon, Duchess Industries had become the acknowledged master at the practise.

Now, Duchess Industries has been the world's largest corporation for almost twenty years. Its labyrinthine network is involved in research and production in medicine, genetics,

robotics, and psychology. And, as many suspect, but none can prove, it is involved at almost the highest levels of participation in VIPER. It uses VIPER as a branch of industrial espionage, doing some of the work that is too dirty even for Duchess Industries.

Duchess's primary goal is to "stay on the edge"; to maintain its position as the world's largest corporation, by any means possible. Even more important, Duchess must never lose its lead in Research & Development; no one else may ever have technology more advanced than Duchess. Its primary research goal is Project Bumblebee, to find the "bumblebee factor"; the reason that certain humans are capable of performing feats that are impossible according to the laws of physics (the "bumblebee factor" is derived from the false belief that bumblebees are not aerodynamic and should not be able to fly). The latter goal has involved the capture, study, and attempted creation of superbeings. Some branches of Duchess Industries have sponsored superhero groups for publicity and defense purposes (not to mention studying the "bumblebees" without their knowledge).

Duchess has had a reputation for insensitivity to the environment; following the Black Druid incident, where Duchess's environmental policy earned it the wrath of the Black Druid (see *European Enemies*), the Duchess decided that it would be in the company's best interest to clean up its record. While a few plant managers violate environmental standards in search of short term profits, Duchess is becoming a leader in "environmentally conscious industry". Of course, Duchess has more capital to upgrade its facilities than its competition, and higher environmental standards are more likely to run them into the ground, and some of the more unscrupulous managers have been violating environmental standards and then making it look as though their rivals were responsible...

In the United States, various federal agencies have tried to dismantle and/or limit Duchess, but with the support of Presidents who have opposed government interference in business, Duchess has turned back the challenge. Of course, VIPER assassinations of a few of the leading anti-Duchess lobbyists didn't exactly hurt.

Duchess Industries' connections with VIPER are at the highest level; that is, the highest levels of VIPER (i.e., the VIPER Council, the Supreme Serpent, the Prime Serpent, and Python of the Serpent Syndicate) frequently interact with the highest levels of Duchess Industries (The Duchess, Dr. Edward Warwick, Logan Kinkaid). Individual Nests have little contact with Duchess, although Duchess is included on a list of non-targets given to Nest Leaders ("Do not attack without permission from VIPER Central Command"), and most Nest Leaders with any sense respect that. VIPER missions on behalf of Duchess will almost always be requested by the top echelons of VIPER.

Duchess Industries is known throughout the world for their many charitable deeds: sponsoring artists, providing new technologies that raise the standard of living, saving thousands from disease and famine, etc. Some of this reputation is deserved. On the other hand, they often get away with murder...

NOTABLE DUCHESS INDUSTRIES SECRETS

THE INSPIRATION

One of the most unique Think-Tanks in the world; the Inspiration is devoted to the study of mass psychology. Here psionics (particularly precogs and telepaths) and genius psychologists hold constant discussion on the psychology of the masses, and how to manipulate them, and how to manipulate future events. The Inspiration has been a key component for Duchess Industries to maintain its edge.

STORM ISLAND

Storm Island is an island near Indonesia where Duchess has deposited many of the results of Project Bumblebee. These results aren't grotesque failures (which Duchess usually destroys); these results are animals with strange powers; monkeys with telekinesis, flying rats, dogs with super intelligence. Once the study of their lab specimens was completed, Duchess decided to see what it would be like to have an environment composed of nothing but super-powered beings; Storm Island is a rather savage place, where survival of the fittest at its worst takes place. This is also suspiciously close to the Lost World Island (see *Champions Universe*).

PROJECT CELESTE

One of the more benign VIPER operations, though one which has (as all Duchess projects have) an ulterior motive, Project Celeste is Duchess's project to chart and analyze the many alien races that are coming into contact with, and sharing this intelligence with the governments of the world, so they can interact with them in a peaceful fashion. Of course, this also involves the study of alien technology.

(NOTE: In a campaign world where the aliens are hidden or don't exist, there would be no Project Celeste, or it would take on a different nature; a hoax to deceive the world's governments, and to get financial support for bogus research).

PROJECT UNITY

In order to provide for a large long-term market, Duchess Industries is trying to be a good Samaritan in Eastern Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, and the Sudan). Their short-term goals, solving famine, curing disease, encouraging self-sufficiency, and raising the standard of living to a level which most of the world considers a minimum for human dignity and happiness, is indeed laudable. Their long-term goal, to find a charismatic leader that they can manipulate to unite East Africa into an Empire that will be serviced only by Duchess Industries, is not.

PERSONNEL

Duchess Industries has three types of staff members: Administrators, Security, and Research personnel. Most members of Duchess are talented Normals, with about 20-30 points of skills. Security Agents are as follows:

DUCHESS INDUSTRIES SECURITY AGENT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
15	STR	5	OCV: 5			
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5			
13	CON	6	ECV: 2			
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12			
10	INT	0				
10	EGO	0	Costs			
13	PRE	3				
10	COM	0	Char:	35	Base:	50
5+	PD	2		+		+
4+	ED	1	Powers:	65	Disads:	0
3	SPD	6		=		=
6	REC	0	Totals:	100		100
26	END	0				
25	STUN	0				
Cost		Equipment				
30	One of the following rifles					
	1) Duchess R-1 Blaster Carbine					
	* 12d6 EB, 1 Hex AE, [2 clips of 6c], act. 14-, OAF carbine					
	2) Duchess R-2 Blaster Rifle					
	* 9d6 AP EB, +3 OCV, [2 clips of 6c], act. 14-, OAF rifle					
	3) Duchess E-1 Entangle Rifle					
	* 4d6 Entangle, DEF 4, Both Attacker and Entangle take damage, 1 Hex AE, [2 clips of 6c], OAF rifle					
9	Armor (+7 PD, +5 ED), OIF armor, act. 14-					
3	Flash Defense vs. visual (5 pts, OIF Helmet)					
3	IR Vision, OIF Helmet					
3	Two-Way Radio, OIF Helmet Communicator					
4	+2 Levels w/Per, OIF helmet					
Skills						
3	Breakfall 12-					
3	Concealment 11-					
3	Security Systems 11-					
3	Stealth 12-					
1	Fam: Duchess Industries					

Total Cost: 100

Background: Unlike your average VIPER agent; Duchess tries to hire idealistic and dedicated professionals as their security personnel; loyalty, competence, and pride are the three most desired qualities. Most Duchess security people never come in contact with VIPER; as a rule they are much less vicious than VIPER agents, but they do not back down when roused to anger. For the most part they are proud professionals doing the best job they can, and it isn't their place to pry into possible misdeeds of their employers. They are normal working folk who don't ask questions about the boss.

Duchess Industries agents may be male or female. They typically wear long sleeved turtlenecked uniforms with goggles and a helmet and a gold crown on their chest. Their uniforms are blue, except for the Duchess's personal cadre, which is black.

Duchess Industries is led by the Duchess Henrietta Van Drotte, whose statistics are as follows:

THE DUCHESS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
8	STR	-2	OCV: 4			
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4			
13	CON	6	ECV: 6			
8	BODY	-4	Phases: 4, 8, 12			
23	INT	13				
18	EGO	16	Costs			
25	PRE	15				
16	COM	3	Char:	69	Base:	100
5+	PD	3		+		+
4+	ED	1	Powers:	145	Disads:	114
3	SPD	9		=		=
7	REC	4	Totals:	214		214
26	END	0				
21	STUN	2				
Cost		Equipment/Powers/Perks			END	
40	Force Field (10 PD, 10 ED, Fully Invisible, 0 END, OIF Belt)				0	
11	Mental Defense (15 pts)					
2	LS: Immortality (-½, must imbibe formula once/month)					
15	Multi-billionaire					
5	Contact: German President 14-					
5	Contact: U.S. Senate Trade Committee chairman 14-					
5	Contact: Supreme Serpent 14-					
Skills						
7, 3	Bureaucratics 16-;		Conversation 14-			
3, 3	High Society 14-;		Persuasion 14-			
7	KS: Big Business 16-					
7	KS: Foreign Cultures 16-					
6	KS: VIPER 15-					
2	KS: UNTIL 11-					
3	Linguist					
21	Languages: German (native), English, French, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, Italian, Portuguese (all idiomatic)					
100+		Disadvantages				
10	Enraged when betrayed, 11-, 8-					
15	Vain, Egotistical					
15	Protective of Secrets					
15	Reputation (world famous billionaire, 14-)					
5	Distinctive Features: always wears jewelry (Easily Concealed)					
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent, MoPow, NCI, 11-					
10	Hunted by Dark Prowler (notorious stealthy superthief), 8-					
10	Public ID					
24	Experience Bonus					

Background: One of the wealthiest women (or men) in the world; the Duchess Van Drotte has always lived in style. Her physical form is that of a woman in her late 20s, but she uses make-up and cosmetic surgery to appear to be in her mid-60s. She has long red hair (with streaks of silver), deep green eyes, and wears magnificent gowns that are only slightly less daring than a femme fatale's. She always wears at least a million dollars worth of jewelry. She lives in Bonn, Germany; in addition to the black guards, she has two German superheroes on her payroll, Donner and Blitzen (use the stats for Powerhouse and Starburst for these characters).

The Duchess is in the middle of a carefully laid scheme to ensure her own succession. She has for the last decade made hints of a granddaughter who has been hidden for her own safety, and trained to be her successor. In the next couple of years, the Duchess intends to fake her own death, and then reemerge as her granddaughter, establishing her firm control over the Duchess Empire. Her main obstacle is her son, the multiple personality superthief known as Dark Prowler (see Villainy Unbound), who devotes at least part of his life to disappointing her, and would likely disrupt the transition process, should he find out about it.

OTHER PERSONNEL

(To list the major personnel at Duchess Industries would require its own supplement; here are a few personalities that would probably frequently run into superheroes in one capacity or another.)

DR. EDWARD WARWICK

If there was any man too ruthless and cruel for VIPER, Warwick would be it. Dr. Warwick is, quite bluntly, a sadistic egomaniac. He is also Duchess Industries Chief of North American operations (although the bureaucracy takes care of most of this), and the head of Project Bumblebee. Warwick will stop at nothing to discover the secret of how superpowers work. (Use a normal with about 30 points of sciences (focusing on genetics) and 20 points of administrative skills. Warwick is short (4'11" and a thin 105 lbs.) bald, and has a rather intimidating presence, with deep set eyes and fierce eyebrows. He is in his mid-50s.

LOGAN KINKAID

This large and friendly fellow is Duchess's head of Public Relations, and one of the few people that the Duchess trusts with her secrets. Kinkaid is an expert at damage control, but is even better when he can put together a campaign that makes Duchess look conscientious and innovative; his good nature has won over a lot of skeptics about Duchess, including some superheroes. Kinkaid is privy to Duchess's deepest and darkest secrets, but feels that overall, Duchess is helping the world, so he can overlook most of its misdeeds. Kinkaid is 6'8" and nearly 300 lbs. of hirsute muscle; he has long red hair and a beard, and typically wears a T-shirt and blue jeans. (Use a VIPER Commander with a Wrestling package for his character, and add 30 points worth of Public Relations based skills and appropriate knowledges.) He is in his late 20s.



DR. LISA BURROUGHS

Dr. Burroughs is the head of Duchess's Medical research division, which does research on superhumans that is independent from Project Bumblebee. Lisa is extremely intense and a workaholic, typically working a nineteen hour work day. She is obsessed with finding a cure for an incurable degenerative disease that is killing her brother (AIDS, if it exists in your campaign world), and will stop at nothing, including kidnapping supers with superb regenerative systems and dissecting them, to find the cure. Lisa is 5'1" and 105 lbs; she has natural blond hair (and hates blond jokes; Lisa has no sense of humor) and typically wears a lab coat.

The name VIPER is considered to be in the public domain. Last year, three comic book companies sued each other, claiming that they alone had the right to use VIPER as villains in their comic books. Given that these companies each licensed real-world superheroes (and used real-world supervillains), the judges threw all three cases out of court. VIPER does not mind being portrayed in comic books, even if they inevitably lose in the end; when the world belongs to VIPER, one spokesman said, the comic books will tell a different story.

VIPER TECHNOLOGY



One issue that must be decided in a superhero campaign is the type of technology that is available. This includes such considerations as:

Realistic vs. Four-color technology. Realistic technology consists of technology that exists in the real world; in a realistic technology campaign, comic book style gadgets do not exist and cannot exist. In a four-color technology campaign, super-geniuses can invent technology that is scientifically impossible, and it works. In the real world, blaster weapons would require a backpack in order to house the energy needed to fire a single shot, and would not provide anywhere near the efficiency of a good rifle. However, weapons in a realistic universe tend to be killing attacks, and thus realistic technology campaigns can be more lethal than a typical *Champions* campaign. Use the Conventional Weapons agent if you wish to play in a real world campaign (or if you prefer real weapons to blasters).

In order to justify why this comic-book style technology is not pervasive in the commercial sector, use the "instability of gadgets" rule. Anytime an 18 is rolled, the gadget explodes, inflicting a 1d6 killing explosion upon the user. This instability is a major drawback, and until it is solved, comic book technology like blasters will not be released to the general public, or even the military (although special units may use them, and of course PRIMUS and UNTIL have access). This optional rule can be applied only to the heavy weapons and exceptionally powerful devices, to all devices, or to none, as the GM wishes.

Technology vs. magic. If magic and technology co-exist in the campaign, can technology affect magic? If the GM's view of magic is that it is a mysterious, murky, and incomprehensible force, then science shouldn't be able to affect it, and techno-magic will not exist. If, on the other hand, the GM believes that magic functions under specific rules, then these rules can be studied by scientists and gadgets can be invented to affect magic. It is up to the individual GM to determine which condition exists in his campaign.

Technology vs. psionics. A similar problem exists with psionics; are the principles of psionics conducive to scientific study? If so, then technology dealing with psionics—telepathic detectors, mind control machines, hallucination rays, etc.—will be possible. If psionics and science are exclusive, then it is unlikely that any psi-tech will be possible.

Teleport technology. Technology dealing with power effects that go far beyond the range of real-world technology can strain the suspension of disbelief; if some people in a society have developed teleportation technology, chances are that society should be considerably more advanced than our society.

...

The *VIPER* sourcebook will assume a typical comic book technology exists in the campaign; agents wear armor with force field belts, wielding "blasters" which stun people, but don't kill them as often as metal projectiles. If you wish to use realistic weaponry, then you should ignore point totals for weapons and base the weapon on what is needed for the mission.

USING VIPER TECHNOLOGY

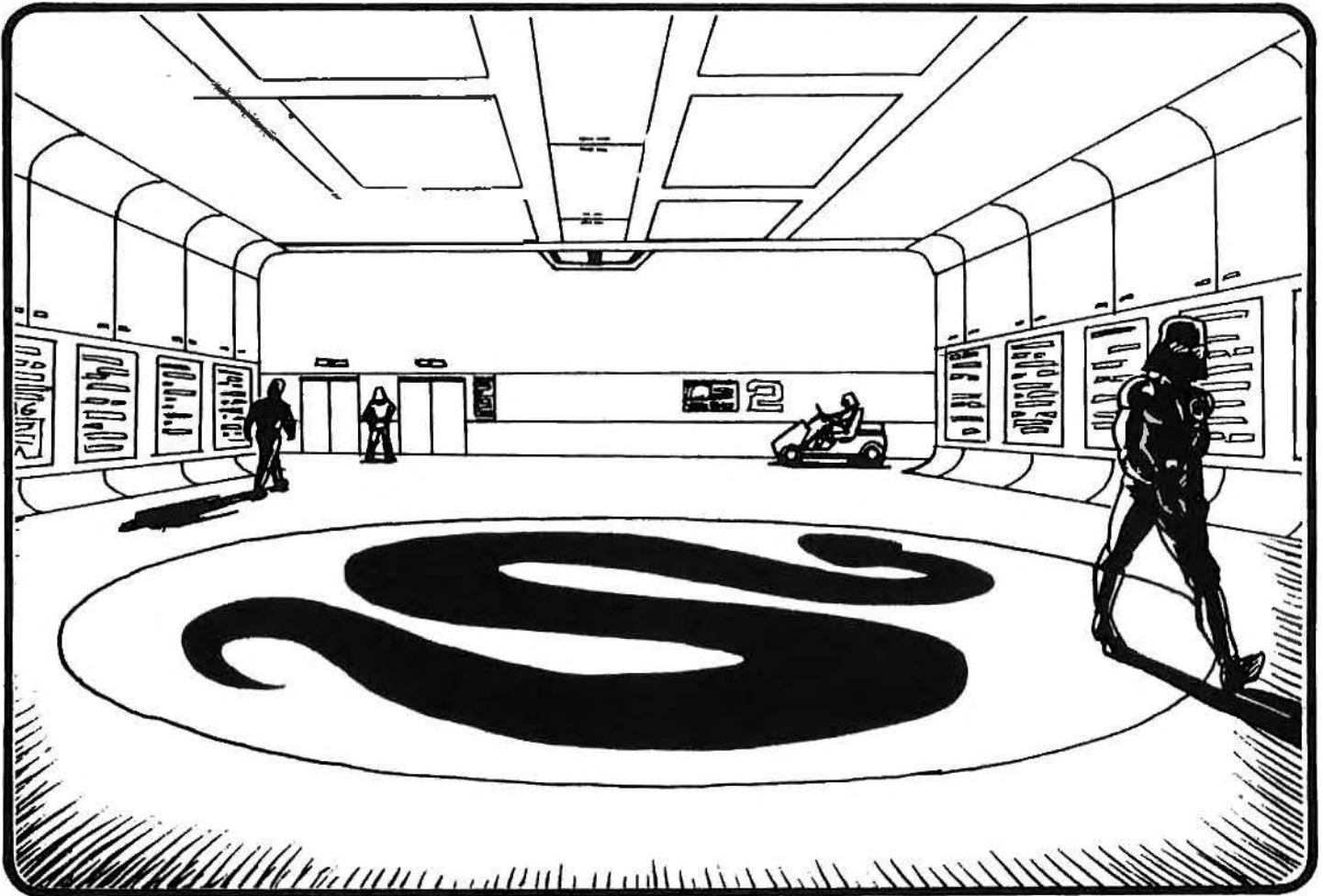
The weapons listed here may offer a significant change to the balance of your campaign, especially weapons with added levels in OCV. If you feel that this will make agents squads too tough, either use weapons without levels, or arm only a few of your agents with weapons that have a high OCV. That way, the heroes will learn that *VIPER* is getting more dangerous, and the heroes must stop *VIPER* from delivering large numbers of their new generation of weapons from being shipped to the Nests in your area. If you believe that agents should not be a significant factor in the battles of your campaign, don't use the more powerful or accurate weapons.

WEAPONS PRODUCTION

A terrorist organization with the scope of *VIPER* requires a lot of weapons. Fortunately, *VIPER* has the ability to design, develop, and distribute them.

VIPER has several research and development labs, all in isolated areas. These R&D centers are under the direct control of the *VIPER* science council; as the science council is usually involved in other matters, the Supreme Serpent monitors and directs them personally, having developed a special sub-program to perform this function continuously.

VIPER weapons are usually retro-engineered duplications of other designs, criminal and legitimate, though *VIPER* scientists have lately been showing increased versatility and originality. *VIPER* designs are produced and manufactured in South America, Southeast Asia, or Mexico, in specially selected areas where labor is cheap and local authorities do not ask questions; this is typically done by corporations that are allied to *VIPER* (such as Duchess Industries), or are dummy corporations (such as the Valhalla Foundation). Once weapons are produced, they are either sent to their location as legitimate trade goods (typically to security companies that are *VIPER* fronts), or smuggled (in the case of heavy weapons or countries whose weapons laws are less liberal than the United States, such as Canada and the United Kingdom).



VIPER produces tens of thousands of weapons annually, generating millions of dollars of profits. Although Nests are technically prohibited from reselling VIPER weapons, some weapons have been sold to the defense forces of countries that are willing to pay Nest Leaders a handsome price. (VIPER Central Command also has a comfortable munitions business on the side.) VIPER Nests typically place their own insignia on their weapons; the Grandfather's Nest, for example, have a grandfather's clock engraved on their weapons, as well as the familiar "V" insignia of VIPER.

VIPER'S ARSENAL

One of VIPER's greatest strengths is its access to a wide variety of inexpensive and reliable weaponry. The arsenal of VIPER is numerous, with new models being developed and field tested every month. This is a catalog of the most common weapons that VIPER has developed.

Each weapon includes information on the date when it was first encountered by the authorities, its effect, and its price. This list assumes a 1993 date for the campaign.

As supplements go out of date fairly quickly, feel free to adjust these dates (or ignore them) as you feel is best.

PISTOLS

VP-01A "FANG" BLASTER PISTOL (1981)

8d6 EB (4 clips of 32 charges)

Price (VIPER catalog): \$500/weapon, \$20/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

This is the original VIPER blaster. This pistol is still the Nest Leader's favorite weapon due to its low cost and reliability. It has a low recoil, but makes more noise than later models and its discharge is quite noticeable over a great distance at night.

VK-01K "KILLER" PISTOL (1986)

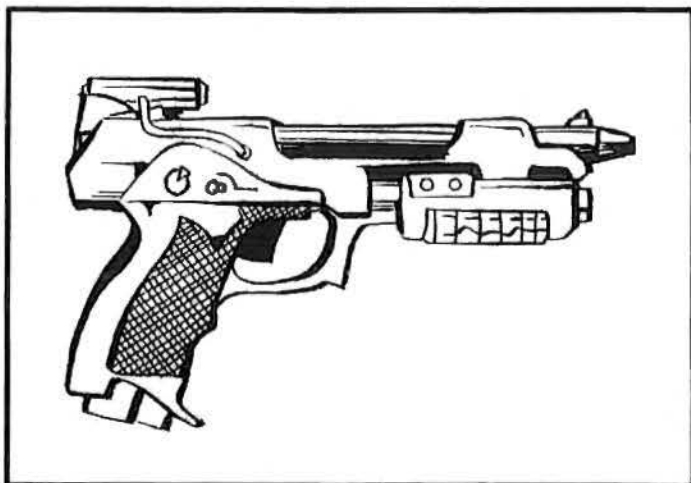
2d6 Armor Piercing RKA (16 charges, +1 OCV)

Price (VIPER catalog): \$600/weapon, \$10/clip

Active Cost: 50 pts

Real Cost: 25 pts

This is the chief conventional pistol used by VIPER. It is typically employed by covert operatives, though some Nest Leaders give "killers" to novice agents (why give inexperienced agents the expensive equipment?) Its ammo is a high explosive .38 dum-dum round. Its discharge is quite loud and distinctive, and it has a considerable kick.



VK-02K "SLAYER" PISTOL (1988)

8d6 EB [2 clips of 12 charges], +2 OCV

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$500/weapon, \$10/clip

Active Cost: 50 pts

Real Cost: 25 pts

When a VIPER Nest knows that it is about to fight a battle against agents, where no supers are likely to be present, the Slayer is the pistol of choice. The computer sight on the slayer gives exceptional accuracy. The Slayer has little recoil and its discharge is quiet.

VK-03S "GOLDEN" PISTOL (1989)

2d6 AP RKA (2 clips of 6 charges),
Immune to Hearing Sense Group

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1000/weapon, \$30/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 25 pts

The Golden is a preferred weapon of agents that are sent to infiltrate and perform covert actions. Its AP ammo is powerful enough to hurt most targets; its specially built silencer makes it barely audible.

VK-05 "SILVERADO" PISTOL (1991)

3d6 RKA, +3 OCV, [2 clips of 12c], act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$4000/weapon, \$10/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The most powerful and accurate pistol in VIPER's arsenal, if not the most reliable, is the Silverado. This pistol has a laser targeting sight, and explosive ammunition that can do devastating damage to whatever it hits. The computer targeting system can override the gun control, leading to occasional malfunctions.

RIFLES

VR-01A "RAZOR" BLASTER CARBINE W/COMPUTER SIGHT (1985)

10d6 EB (4 clips of 8 charges, +2 OCV)

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1000/weapon, \$10/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The first of VIPER's new generation of blaster carbines/rifles; this weapon was designed to answer criticism of VIPER's pistols by adding a laser sight. The VR-01A is very popular with most VIPER Nest leaders. It has a low recoil, low noise level (a highly popular feature of this line of blasters), and is easy to operate. It uses a rechargeable laser module for blanks, which makes practising with these weapons extremely economical.

VR-02A "DICE" LIGHT BLASTER CARBINE W/ COMPUTER SIGHT (1990)

10d6 EB (2 clips of 6 charges, +2 OCV)

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1000/weapon, \$10/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 24 pts

The VR-02A is a variation on the VR-01A, designed for use with air cavalry agents. Its light weight, negligible recoil, and laser targeting sight makes it a good weapon for agents who spend a lot of time in the air. Its limited ammunition supply does not make it a good choice for extended firefights.

VR-01N "OWL" NIGHT BLASTER CARBINE (1987)

10d6 EB (4 clips of 8 charges, UV Vision, IR Vision)

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1600/weapon, \$10/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

When VIPER High Command found that their agents operated at a disadvantage at night, they finally commissioned a blaster carbine which would allow their operatives to fight superheroes or UNTIL on equal footing. It is identical in all respects to the VR-01A, except that the laser scope has been replaced by a special night vision scope that can be flipped between UV and IR spectrums.

VR-02P "PIERCER" HEAVY BLASTER CARBINE (1988)

8d6 Armor Piercing EB (16 charges)

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1500/weapon, \$20/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

This recent addition to the VIPER arsenal allows the agent to fire concentrated bursts of energy. It has a loud discharge and considerable recoil. This weapon is used by Nest Leaders who don't care about stealth or expects to face a lot of supers.

VR-05 "PIN" HEAVY LASER CARBINE (1991)

12d6 EB, +3 levels (laser sight), No Knockback,
act. 15- (2 clips of 12 charges)

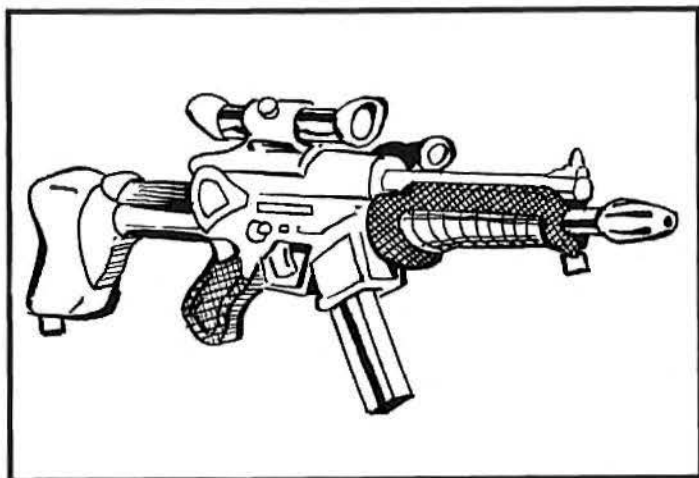
Price (VIPER Catalog): \$750/weapon, \$20/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

Failure sometimes prompts people to try harder. VIPER's latest answer to the superhero problem is the VR-05 laser carbine. Not only does it have enough punch to hurt most supers, it also has enough levels that a squad that uses them is almost certain to consistently hit.

The VR-05 has gotten a reputation for unreliability, but its strength and accuracy is making it increasingly popular with VIPER Nests. It makes little noise, and has very little recoil.

**VR-05A "SPIKE" HEAVY LASER CARBINE (1993)**

3d6+1 RKA, +5 Levels, No Knockback,
act. 15- (16 charges)

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1,500/weapon, \$20/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The VR-05 was less successful than anticipated, but VIPER had already begun production of the VR-05A even before the first Nests had received the VR-05. The Spike has a more concentrated beam, and a better computersight. The VR-05A has received high marks from the few Nests that have field tested them, and their presence has raised concerns from the superheroes who have faced them, that VIPER may have at last found a weapon that can turn the war against supers in their favor.

VR-06 "SNIPER" RIFLE

10d6 EB, +3 Levels, UV Vision, IR Vision, 8 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$3000/weapon, \$100/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

Another night-time weapon, the VR-06 has VIPER's best scope, a laser computing night scope which provides as much accuracy during the day than at night. Otherwise, it is identical to a VR-01N "Owl".

VR-11 "RANGER" LONG RANGE BLASTER RIFLE (1990)

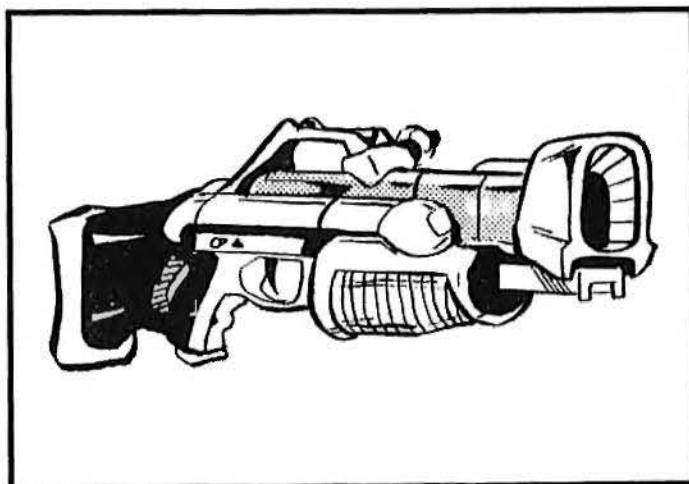
8d6 EB, No Range Penalty, 16 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$2400/weapon, \$20/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

This weapon is prized by Nest Leaders who like some of their agents to snipe at a distance. This weapon is not very powerful, but it has a special computer sight which can nullify range penalties. This weapon is the loudest of all of the rifles in VIPER's arsenal, except for the VR-10 and the VR-21.

**VR-10 "FAT LADY" SONIC RIFLE (1990)**

6d6 AVLD vs. hearing Flash Defense,
2 clips of 3 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$5000/weapon, \$20/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The Fat Lady is a specialty weapon, which affects the inner ear and causes extreme disorientation. This weapon is nearly exclusively used by VIPER Air-Cavalry, which likes to have weapons that no one else has. It actually makes very little sound when fired, except at the target area, where all nearby sound waves are compressed.

VR-110 "STITCHER" AUTOFIRE NEEDLE GUN (1991)

2d6 RKA, 10 shot Autofire,
4 clips of 30 charges, jams 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$7000/weapon, \$200/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

One of the deadliest of VIPER's autofire weapons, particularly against normals. This is another beam weapon, which hits the targets with needles directed against them at extremely high speeds. It makes a sound similar to radio static when fired.

VR-21 "THUNDER" SHORT-RANGE BLASTER RIFLE (1993)

15d6 EB, Reduced by Range, 2 clips of 8 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$11000/weapon, \$300/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

This experimental weapon has recently come into the hands of several Nests. It is, in essence, a particle beam shotgun. VIPER's R&D department has high hopes that the VR-21 will be the first step towards a more portable offensive weapon that is effective in use against the toughest supers. It does have considerable recoil, and it makes a noise similar to a small sonic boom when discharged. When this weapon is fired, people notice it. Its high expense and unpopularity with agents (who have been known to sustain ear damage from firing it) does not make it a commonly used weapon, but newer designs will likely correct these defects.

VRX-01 "BRICKBUSTER" PORTABLE BLASTER CANNON (1988)

15d6 EB, 16 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$15000/weapon, \$200/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The Brickbuster chemical cannon is the heaviest portable weapon in VIPER's arsenal, typically used against very tough supers or very tough vehicles. It is the oldest of VIPER's heavy cannons, and is a favorite weapon of Five-Team members. It is not favored by anyone else, who find it bulky, unwieldy, and unreliable. It has a painful recoil, and makes a noise almost as loud as a VR-21.

VRX-02 "AVENGER" PORTABLE BLASTER CANNON (1990)

10d6 EB, 1 hex AE, 16 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$12000/weapon, \$50/charge (\$800/clip)

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

This is one of the latest VIPER weapon, a portable cannon that can throw an "energy module" (a fancy name for a grenade) into an area, which then explodes. The advantage of this cannon is that its area of effect allows the user to target someone who is very good at dodging supers. It was originally designed as a vehicle placement weapon, and requires a strong, well-trained agent to wield effectively in combat.

EXOTIC WEAPONS

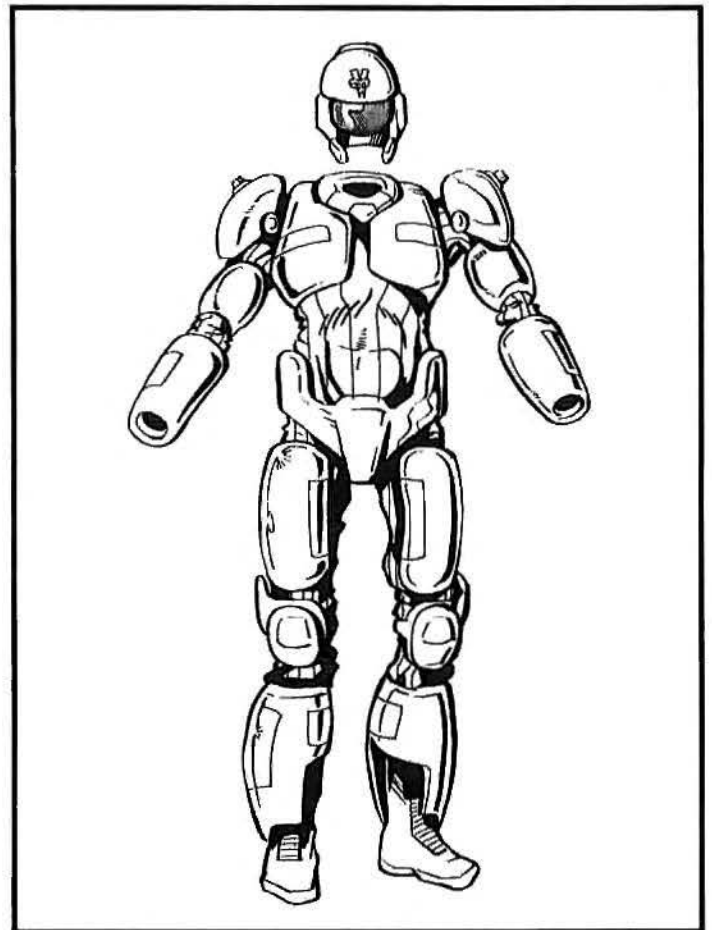
GM Note: Some of these designs are only effective against certain types of powers (such as the Invisibility Negator). VIPER will not outfit its agents with these weapons unless they have probable cause to suspect that supers will be interfering with their operations.

X0-1 "MINOTAUR" EXO-SKELETON (1990)

+40 STR, doesn't affect physical characteristics,

OIF suit (55 total), +10 PD (OIF suit, act. 14-),

+5 CON (OIF suit, doesn't affect figured characteristics)



Price (VIPER Catalog): \$20,000

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The X0-1 is VIPER's first attempt at devising light battle armor. The X0-1 employs a fluid suspension system to amplify the wearer's own physical strength, and a hollow ceramic armor filled with fluid to absorb the inertia of the attacks sustained by the wearer. It is hot, uncomfortable to wear, and when penetrated, spews an unpleasant and slightly toxic fluid. The X0-1 is not considered very successful, but is cheap and is favored by agents who enjoy bullying people.

MB-2 "ZOWIE" MAGNETIC BLASTER CARBINE (1993)

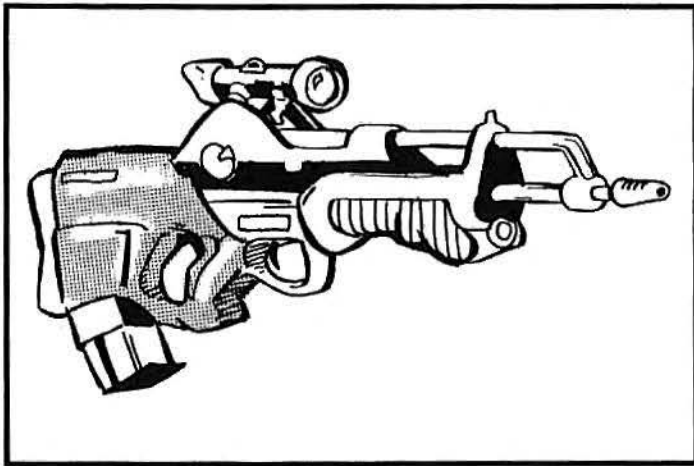
10d6 EB, affects Desolid, [4 clips of 8c], act. 15-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1000/weapon, \$50/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The MB-2 is a recent and popular replacement for the MB-1, which was of lower power (this was the Affects Desolid gun listed under Blaster agents in *Champions* on p. c67). The MB-2 fires a beam of particles in a concentrated magnetic field; these particles are sufficient to affect even intangible creatures. The MB-2's oscillating stream is very distinctive when used in combat.



PB-02B "NAIL" NEEDLE BEAM WEAPON

3d6+1 Penetrating RKA, +2 OCV,
[2 clips of 6c], act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$4000/weapon, \$250/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The "Nail" is one of a Mauler's favorite choices for an offensive weapon. This gun provides a good punch, and is highly accurate. The PB-02B is guaranteed to hurt even the toughest super. It fires an extremely sharp needle, accelerated through a magnetic field. Its discharge, like the MB-2, is highly distinctive.

SFX-01 "JACK OF ALL TRADES" PORTABLE BLASTER CANNON (1993)

10d6 EB, Variable Special Effects,
16 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$40,000/weapon, \$3,000/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

One of the weirdest weapons in VIPER's arsenal is the "Jack of All Trades", VIPER's all-purpose blaster. This is used against supers with known vulnerabilities; it is an extremely expensive weapon and has rarely been used. It contains an experimental all-purpose energy manipulator that was stolen from a superhero scientist. The SFX can duplicate nearly any effect desired by the user, with the exception of magic (except in campaigns where technomagic is common).

UW-1 "TORPEDO" CARBINE (1991)

9d6 EB, AE line, no range, becomes an Explosion
except in water (-¼), 2 clips of 4 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$20,000/weapon, \$1,000/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

In developing Aquatic agents, VIPER has been developing new weapons specifically for use underwater. The torpedo concussion carbine generates a wave of force that travels very well through water (but loses its impact quickly in air). The Torpedo is rather bulky, and has been known to occasionally knock its users around when it is used.

UW-2 "BENDER" RIFLE (1991)

12d6 EB, 1 hex AE, only an AE in water (-¼),
2 clips of 8 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$20,000/weapon, \$1,000/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The second of VIPER's amphibious weapons is also a concussion based attack, sending an explosive burst of pressure into a targeted area. Otherwise the Bender has many of the same properties as the Torpedo carbine.

IW-1 "AHAB" JAVELIN RIFLE (1993)

2d6 Autofire AP RKA, +3 OCV, 55 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$10,000/weapon, \$500/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The latest, and perhaps the most popular of all of VIPER's underwater weapons, is the IW-1. It emits a stream of small barbs at high speed which can go through very thick armor. The IW-1 is fully amphibious, with equal effect on land and underwater.

I-01 "STEALTH" WEAPON (1988)

9d6 EB, Fully Invisible, No Knockback,
6 charges, IAF, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): Varies, but expensive
Varies

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

This particular weapon is a favorite of Nest leaders who want their agents to employ stealth. The Nest Leader lures out superheroes or agents to a previously determined area, then has agents disguised as a camera crew or some other unsuspecting normal use the I-01 Stealth against their targets. They literally will not know what hit them.

This weapon uses a concentrated beam of microwaves, and can be sensed by those who can detect microwave sources, such as the radio sense group.

I-02 "STEALTH-2" WEAPON (1993)

3d6 Drain vs. Dexterity, Fully Invisible,
Usable at Range, +3 OCV, 6 charges, IAF, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): Varies, but expensive

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The I-02 is the latest VIPER covert support weapon. It is designed to be used in "crowd scenes". The Nest Leader plants his agents at the scene of a superfight, and then lures the heroes to the scene. The agent (or agents) use the I-02 from the middle of the crowd, in support of the agents and villains. This weapon is an electromagnetic beam that affects the coordination centers of the human brain. It is visible to the radio sense group, and can be targeted by Radar (its invisibility, like the I-01, isn't perfect). Like the I-01, it has virtually no recoil.

SB-01 "NEST LEADER SPECIAL" PHASE STUNNER (1989)

10d6 EB, affects desolid, 13- burnout, 16 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$6000/weapon, \$200/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The SB-01 is a favorite weapon of Nest Leaders. It is a weapon that is designed to give the Nest Leader a chance to deal with any threat (some would add "as they are running away" to the sentence). The stunner is light, small, and has little recoil. The SB-01 uses a concentrated beam of magnetic particles as its discharge.

ID-01 "DISPEL" INVISIBILITY NEGATOR (1991)

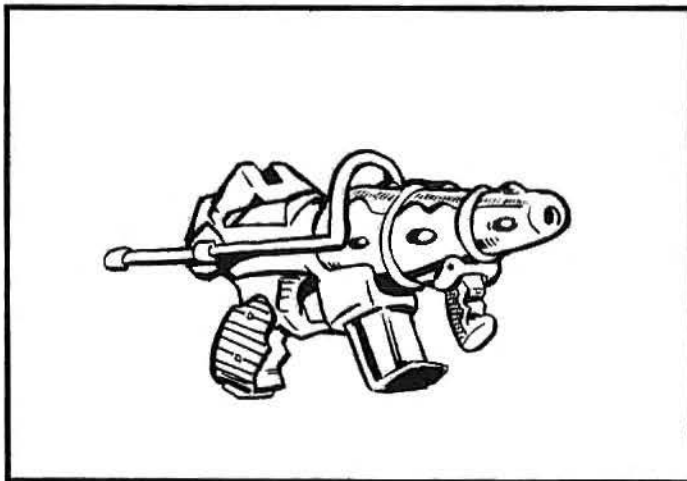
20d6 Dispel vs. Invisibility to sight sense group,
+3 OCV, [12c]

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$6000/weapon, \$200/clip

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

Nests who know that one of their opponents have invisibility will often give a baiter agent an ID-01. Although of no use as offensive weapon, the ID-01 is essential to defending against invisible opponents, as well as any "Mystery" agents that the opponent might be fielding. The ID-01 issues a spray of heavy particles that surround the target and cannot be immediately neutralized by an invisibility power; light reflects off these particles, making the target visible for a few moments.



GP-01 "SPARROW" GRAVITY PROJECTOR (1991)

12d6 Suppress Flight, 4 Charges,
with five minute duration

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$30,000, \$0/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The GP-01 is another of VIPER's unique weapons. It emits a stream of what VIPER scientists call "anti-graviton" particles to cancel out a flyer's flying ability. It does not affect

other forms of transport, and will still allow a person to use air currents to propel themselves (i.e., gliding).

The GP-01 was invented by a rather eccentric scientist, and has a unique appearance, looking like a large chrome cylinder with fins.

TG-01C "GOSSAMER" TANGLER CARBINE (1989)

6d6 Entangle, DEF 6, 16 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$1000/weapon, \$30/clip

Active Cost: 60 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The TG-01C is the latest model of the venerable VIPER entangle weapon. It fires a plastic mesh which surrounds the target and constrains him. It is a light weapon hooked into a backpack, in which the mesh fluid is contained. The TG-01C has a smaller container than previous models, which were quite bulky.

EG-01 "BOOM" GRENADE PROJECTOR (1989)

10d6 EB, One Hex, No Knockback, 12 charges

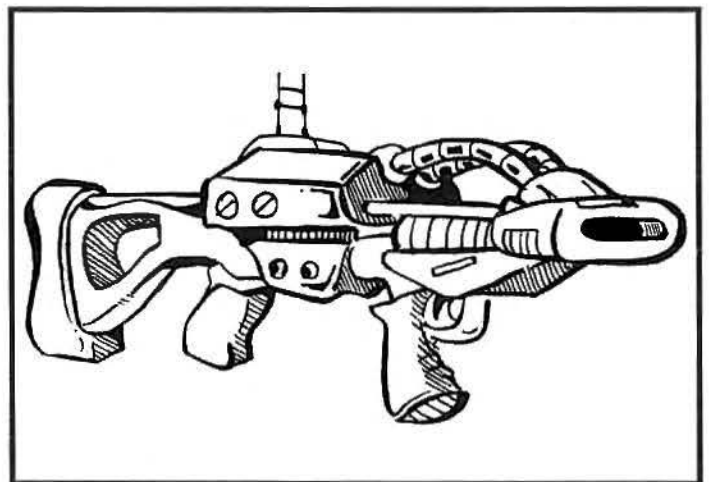
Price (VIPER Catalog): \$10000, \$100/charge

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The EG-01 is one of VIPER's most potent weapons, much beloved by Nest leaders who expect to encounter superheroes.

The EG-grenade generates a zone of intense heat for approximately one second, which burns those who are in it. It requires a lot of strength to employ the EG-01, and the recoil and the noise are considerable. The discharge of a EG-1 is quite loud, but some say that it got its name from its similarity to a "boom box" stereo system.



EG-02 "TORCH" GRENADE PROJECTOR (1991)

3d6+1 RKA, Explosion, No Knockback, 12 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$9500, \$100/charge

Active Cost: 75 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The second EG-grenade weapon is a favorite of Baiters; it fires a weapon that detonates and creates a field of extreme heat, which burns within a wide radius. The discharge of the EG-02 is not as loud as its predecessor; its flash is intense to those whose sight is in the IR Vision band, but not quite as blinding as an EG-03.

TC-01 "SLIMER" ENTANGLE CARBINE (1991)

4½d6 Entangle, DEF 4, Sticky,
1 Hex AE, 2 clips of 3 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$10000, \$100/clip

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

VIPER's Elite Air Cavalry like to have toys that are different than other peoples, and one of their favorite weapons is the Slimer. This weapons sprays its target with a disgusting coat of slick green polymers, which affects anyone who touches it. The TC-01, for added fun, can target an area which is large enough to make it difficult to dodge.

EG-03 "SOLAR" GRENADE PROJECTOR (1991)

6d6 Flash vs. sight, Explosion, 8 charges, act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$9500, \$100/charge

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

For the occasions when VIPER's flash grenades just aren't enough, the Solar is guaranteed to make anyone it hits think twice about looking around. Its burst produces a blinding burst of light that can cover a wide radius, and is powerful enough at its center to penetrate most flash defenses. It is a particularly good weapon to subduing large numbers of normals. Its discharge is quite silent.

HEAVY WEAPONS

GM's Note: *In the comics, evil organizations often develop super weapons, capable of spreading fear and terror over a wide area, but they are also quite bulky and easy to take out. VIPER's Heavy Weapons Program is the equivalent of these massive engines of destruction. If you want to put fear in the hearts of your players without giving VIPER some of the more accurate weapons listed above, allow them to learn about these Heavy Weapons and encourage them to halt their development.*

U-500 "HELLFIRE" BAZOOKA (1992)

3d6 RKA, AE 18" line, burnout 14-, 6 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$19,000, \$200/charge

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

By far the most common of all of VIPER's heavy weapons, the U-500 is a man-portable bazooka that issues a large stream of heavily charged electromagnetic particles. It is heavy and somewhat bulky (consider it a bulky focus if the person has not used it before), but its firing is noticeable for its lack of recoil.

U-600 "INFERNO" ENERGY PROJECTOR (1993)

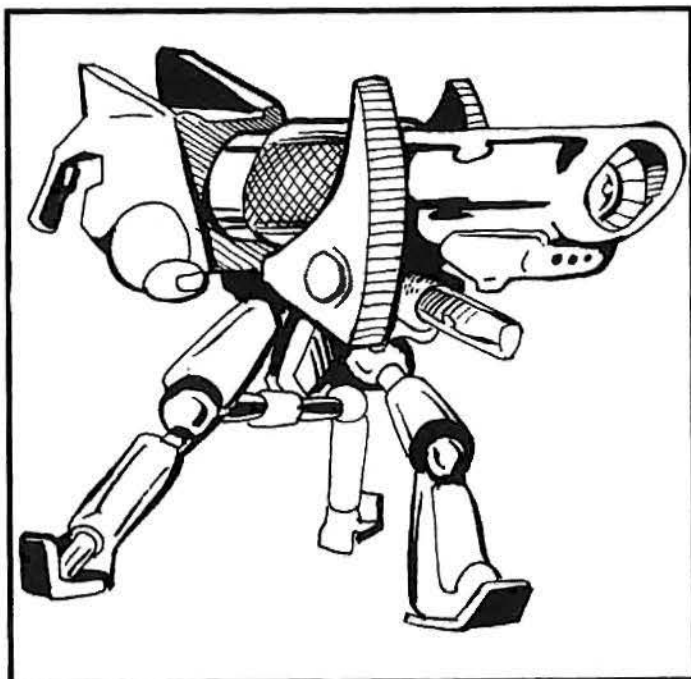
4d6 RKA, 1 Hex AE, burnout 14-, 6 charges

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$24,000, \$250/charge

Active Cost: 90 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The next most common of VIPER's heavy weapons is the U-600, a concentrated energy weapon. The Inferno concentrates energy into a single spot, then projects it with great accuracy. The Inferno is very heavy and large (a bulky focus) and it is very loud and has a painful recoil. Nonetheless, many Nests that regularly encounter supers have at least one Inferno on order.



U-1000 "OMEGA" DESTRUCTION MODULE (1993)

8d6 RKA, 2 charges,
requires a two man firing team (-1), act. 14-

Price (VIPER Catalog): \$80,000, \$1000/charge

Active Cost: 120 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

VIPER's ultimate weapon, guaranteed to knock out (nearly) anyone it hits. The Omega is not designed as a weapon against supers (otherwise it would have a targeting sight), but against military hardware, such as tanks. It is portable, but rather awkward, requiring a two man firing team.

The two man firing team limitation means the following: both men in the firing team must have bought the same weapon, if either man is incapacitated, the weapon cannot be fired unless someone else with that weapon comes over to assist. The weapon is considered bulky (½ DCV, this liability is taken into account in the -1 limitation.) These rules are applicable to all of VIPER's weapons that require a two-man firing team.

Because of its price and power, the Omega is considered a status symbol by VIPER Nest Leaders, who like to have at least one in their arsenal. The New York City VIPER's Nest is known to have at least five Omegas in their arsenal.

U-1200 "FLAMING DEATH" ROCKET POD (EXPECTED 1995)

6d6 RKA, +6 OCV, 2 charges,
requires a two man firing team (-1), act. 14-

Price: Not Completed.

Active Cost: 120 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The U-1200 is one of VIPER Weapon's labs most important R&D projects. If completed, it may give VIPER an added edge in its war to defeat superheroes. Deadly and highly accurate, it will allow VIPER to strike against heroes and incapacitate them with great skill. Memos authorizing the construction of the U-1200 (Project Flaming Death) have recently been found by UNTIL; finding and destroying U-1200 development is one of their highest priorities.

ASU-1000 "SUPER DESTROYER" DEVOLUTION BEAM (EXPECTED 1995)

4D6 Drain vs. all Mutant Powers (+2), 2 charges,
requires a two man firing team (-1), act. 14-

Price: Not completed

Active Cost: 120 pts.

Real Cost: 30 pts.

VIPER's research into the evolution of benign mutation is paying off with the ASU-1000. Although grossly over-budget and behind schedule, the ASU-1000 is the most eagerly awaited weapon in VIPER history, one which many Nest leaders hope will turn the tide against VIPER's mutant enemies. There is some concern that Genocide has already stolen some of Project: Devolution's files and is working on their own prototype of this weapon.

U-1250 "NUKE" ROCKET POD (EXPECTED 1997)

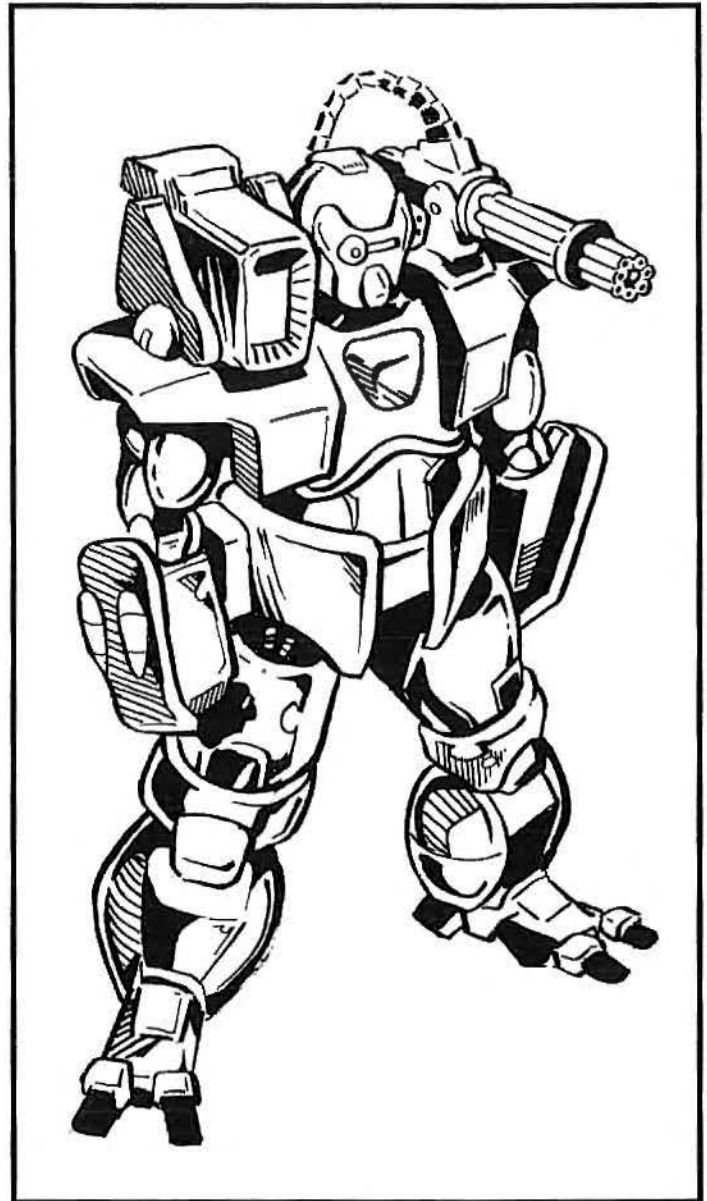
5d6 RKA, 7" AE, 1 charge, act. 14-, 2d6 RKA side effect
(backfire), requires a two man firing team (-1)

Price: Not Completed

Active Cost: 150 pts

Real Cost: 30 pts

The next model to follow the U-1200 in development is the U-1250. This weapon is not as concentrated as a U-1200, but packs a big punch over a wide area. With the U-1250, VIPER hopes to be able to hurt groups of supers. No one knows about the development this weapon outside of VIPER—yet.



Super-Viper Power Suit (1991)

Description is on page 64.

VEHICLES

GROUND VEHICLES

RATTLER MOTORCYCLE (1985)

Val	Char	Cost	
15	STR	0*	
11	BODY	0*	
1.25x64	SIZ	5	
12	DEF	20#	
20	DEX	30	
4	SPD	10	
36"x4	MOVE	65	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
-1	DCV	0	
-0	KB	0	# – -1/2, Does not protect rider
Disadvantages			
5	Distinctive Looks: VIPER markings, concealable		

Total Cost: 130

Real Cost: 125

The Rattler is an improved Kawasaki Ninja, one of the most powerful motorcycles on Earth. The Rattler has a specially armored chasis for improved durability. Agents who ride Rattlers will use their personal weapons in combat, and use the vehicle as a method of conveyance. The Rattler is considered one of VIPER's best pieces of technical engineering.

GECKO ROAD CRUISER (1990)

Val	Char	Cost	
25	STR	0*	
13	BODY	0*	
2x1	SIZ	15	
6	DEF	12	
20	DEX	30	
4	SPD	10	
19"x4r	MOVE	31	
-2	DCV	0	
-3	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
Cost Powers			
25	4d6 RKA, +3 OCV, [2 clips of 4c], 60' Arc, IIF missile racks		
17	Darkness, 5" Cone, No Range, 60" Arc, [3 cont c, 1 turn each], IIF tailpipe		
Disadvantages			
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-		

SNOW SNAKE, Combat Snowmobile (1990)

Val	Char	Cost	
15	STR	0*	
11	BODY	0*	
1.25x64	SIZ	5	
10	DEF	16#	
18	DEX	24	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
4	SPD	12	
20"x2	MOVE	27†	# – -½, Does not protect rider
-1	DCV	0	
-0	KB	0	† – -½, only on snow
Cost	Power		
30	12d6 EB (blaster), +3 OCV, OIF vehicle mounted weapon, 60° Arc, [16c]		
Disadvantages			
5	Distinctive Looks: VIPER markings, concealable		

Total Cost: 130

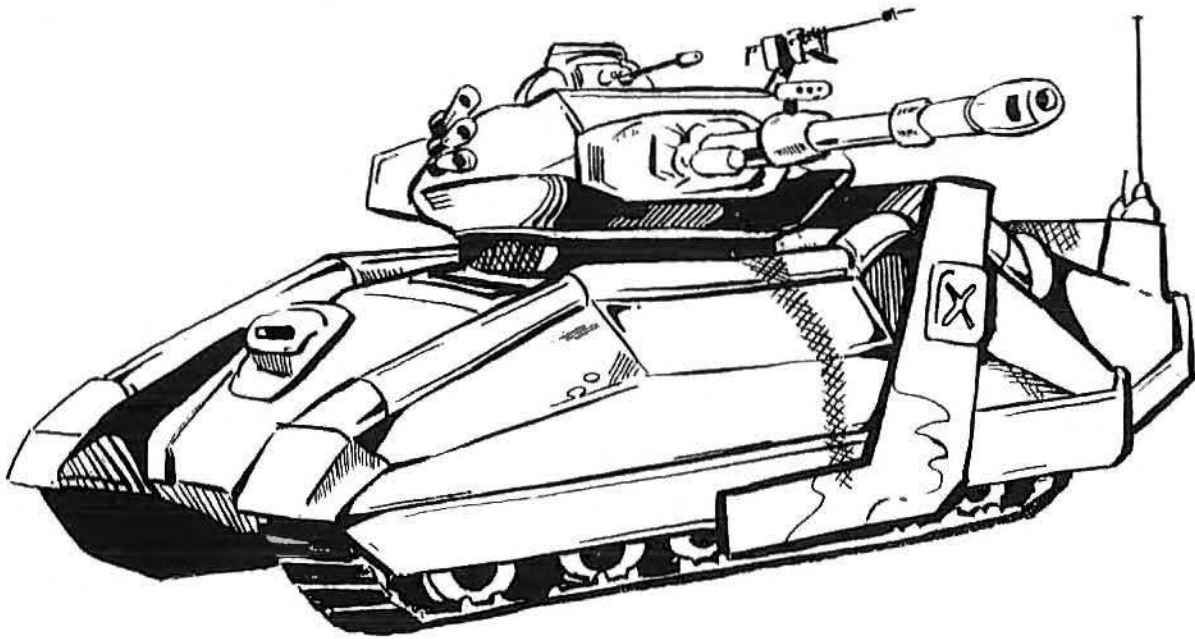
Real Cost: 125

After the defeat of VIPER's attempt to create an impregnable fortress in Northern Canada, it became apparent that VIPER needed an assault vehicle capable of operating in the cold. The Snow Snake, a relatively inexpensive armored snowmobile, was their first attempt. It has proven fast and durable, and Vehicle Specialists stationed in cold climes like them a lot. Their use is almost certain to increase.

Total Cost: 140

Real Cost: 125

While VIPER likes to rely on a show of force, there is a time for a covert action. The Gekko appears identical to a Porsche or other sportscar; but has hidden accessories that are useful in covert or pursuit situations. Covert agents and Mystery agents often use Gekkos to travel between their operations.



ANACONDA LIGHT TANK (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
45	STR	0*	
17	BODY	0*	
5x2.5	SIZ	35	
15	DEF	39	
12	DEX	6	
3	SPD	8	
12"x8	MOVE	22	
-5	DCV	0	
-7	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
Cost	Powers		
26	14d6 EB, +3 OCV, [2 clips of 4c], 60° Arc, OIF blaster		
24	6d6 Entangle, DEF 6, 1 Hex AE, [2 * 2c], OIF blaster, 60° Arc		
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors		
2	LS: May breathe in gaseous environment OIF filters		
6	+4 Levels w/perception, OIF sensors		
Disadvantages			
10	2x BODY from rust and corrosion attacks		
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable		
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-		

Total Cost: 175

Real Cost: 125

VIPER's light tank is a formidable weapon, with two types of guns, most effective against supers. The one weak spot in the Anaconda is its steel, which is sturdy, but its treatment leaves it vulnerable to weathering. The Anaconda is one of VIPER's favorite anti-supers weapon. Its limited amount of ammunition is also a weakness in a sustained firefight.

PYTHON HEAVY TANK (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
50	STR	0*	
18	BODY	0*	
6.4x3.2	SIZ	40	
16	DEF	42	
12	DEX	6	
3	SPD	8	
10"x8r	MOVE	18	
-5	DCV	0	
-7	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ

Cost	Powers
30	4d6 RKA Explosion, [2 clips of 6c], 60° Arc, OIF blaster
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors
2	LS: May breathe in gaseous environment OIF filters
6	+4 Levels w/perception, OIF sensors
19	Missile Deflection, +9 Levels, OIF force shield

Disadvantages	
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 165

Real Cost: 125

The most feared vehicle in VIPER's arsenal is the Python heavy tank. Quite mobile in comparison with most conventional armor, the Python is very difficult to penetrate and its offensive weaponry can cause major damage over a wide area.

Note: Not recommended for low powered campaigns.

AIR VEHICLES

QUETZALCOATL FLYING SERPENT
(1990)

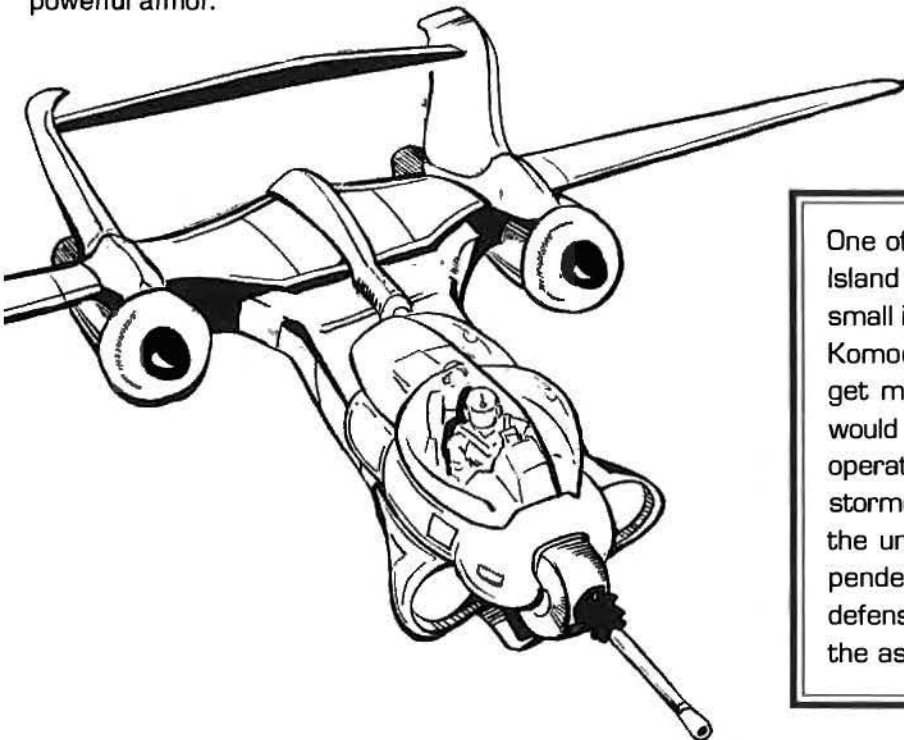
Val	Char	Cost	
30	STR	0*	
14	BODY	0*	
2.5x1.25	SIZ	20	
12	DEF	30	
18	DEX	24	
4	SPD	12	
20"x4	MOVE	36#	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
-2	DCV	0	
-4	KB	0	# – Stall Speed 10"

Cost	Powers
38	5d6 RKA, +4 OCV, [16c], 60' Arc, OIF blaster
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors
2	LS: May breathe in gaseous environment OIF filters
6	+4 Levels w/perception, OIF sensors

Disadvantages
5 1½x BODY from magnetic attacks
25 Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 180**Real Cost:** 125

The Quetzalcoatl is one of the most effective weapons that VIPER has yet developed in its war against supers. This small one-man fighter craft is not as fast as most flying vehicles, as it is designed for close engagement against supers. Its weaponry is highly accurate and deadly. The Quetzalcoatl is a primary vehicle of choice against fixed installations, as its weapons can penetrate all but the most powerful armor.

WYVERN FLYING WARSERPENT
(1990)

Val	Char	Cost	
30	STR	0*	
14	BODY	0*	
2.5x1.25	SIZ	20	
11	DEF	27	
20	DEX	30	
4	SPD	12	
27"x8	MOVE	51#	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
-2	DCV	0	
-4	KB	0	# – Stall Speed 13"

Cost	Powers
29	3d6+1 AP RKA, +1 OCV, [2 clips of 8c], 60' Arc, OIF blaster
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors
2	LS: May breathe in gaseous environment, OIF filters
6	+4 Levels w/perception, OIF sensors

Disadvantages
5 1½x BODY from magnetic attacks
5 2x BODY from water attacks
25 Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-
5 1d6 Unluck

Total Cost: 180**Real Cost:** 125

The Wyvern is a variation on the Quetzalcoatl. Not as powerful in its weaponry, and not as sturdy in its armor, the Wyvern has greater speed and slightly better maneuverability. Nest Leaders who are Vehicle Specialists like to fly in Wyverns; its speed is great for escapes and avoiding engagements.

One of VIPER's greatest debacles was the VIPER Island affair. In 1981, a Nest moved its base to a small island off the coast of Indonesia called King Komodo, and declared its nationhood, hoping to get member status in the United Nations; they would be able to use the island to give its covert operatives diplomatic immunity. Indonesian troops stormed the island and massacred the Nest while the unarmed troops were celebrating their independence at a party, before the elaborate planned defenses were put in place. No agents survived the assault.

COCKATRICE FLYING PERSONNEL CARRIER (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
40	STR	0*	
16	BODY	0*	
4x2	SIZ	30	
10	DEF	24	
20	DEX	30	
4	SPD	10	
42"x8	MOVE	72#	* - Stat adjusted for SIZ
-4	DCV	0	
-6	KB	0	# - Stall Speed 21"

Cost	Powers
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors
2	LS: may breathe in gaseous environment, OIF filters
2	+1 Levels w/perception, OIF sensors
13	Invisibility vs. radar, OIF sensors

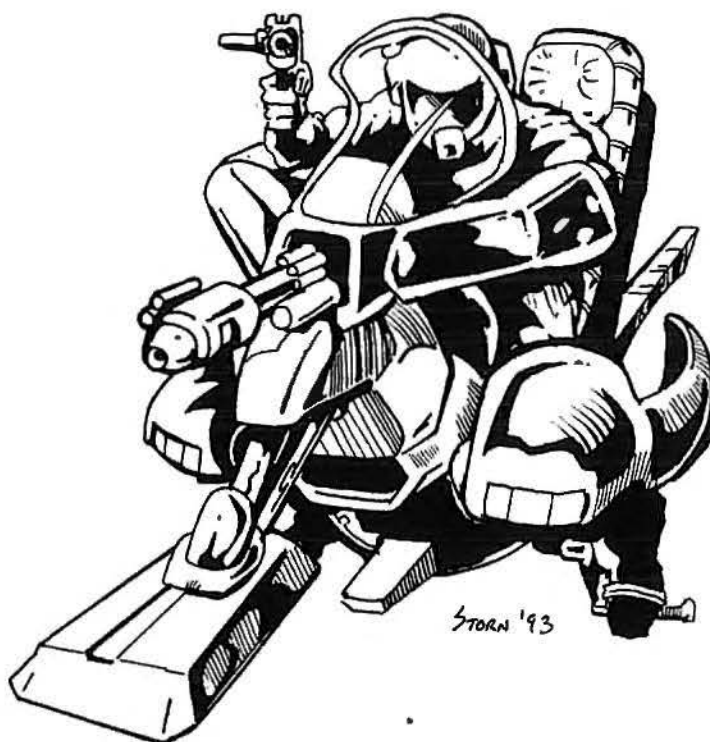
Disadvantages	
10	2x BODY from magnetic attacks
10	2x BODY from sonic attacks
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 185

Real Cost: 125

One of the non-combat craft in the VIPER arsenal is the Cockatrice, a small, fast, and highly maneuverable jet plane that comes closest to equaling of the best air force fighter. It has no armaments; its single purpose is as a rapid deployment vehicle. It typically flies Air Force agents into position for a sudden strike, releases them, then flees the area. It is a stealth craft, immune to radar.

The largest battle in VIPER history was the assault on VIPER: Fortress North in 1985, where VIPER was opposed by the Canadian Army and the Sentinels superteam. VIPER repelled an initial assault, but UNTIL and several UNTIL superheroes joined the following day to take the Fortress. 38 VIPER agents were killed, and 623 were taken prisoner. VIPER: Fortress North was the most heavily fortified VIPER installation ever built; it contained 120 externally mounted heavy blasters, landmines, and was defended by twenty stolen warplanes and thirty tanks. It is believed that VIPER may be building a new installation in Northern Alaska, but so far, it remains undetected by conventional surveillance techniques.



DIAMONDBACK FLYING MOTORCYCLE (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
15	STR	0*	
11	BODY	0*	
1.25x64	SIZ	5	
12	DEF	20#	
20	DEX	30	
4	SPD	10	
30"x8	MOVE	70	* - Stat adjusted for SIZ
-1	DCV	0	
-0	KB	0	# - -1/2, Does not protect rider

Cost	Powers
30	12d6 EB, +3 OCV, [2 clips of 12c], 60' Arc, OIF blaster

Disadvantages	
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 165

Real Cost: 125

The most common of VIPER's air vehicles, the Diamondback is a modified Rattler with a cheap anti-gravity drive and thrusters. It has the advantage over VIPER's other aircraft of having no stall speed, and is considerably faster. Its armor, however, provides no protection for its rider, and its armaments are much weaker than a Quetzalcoatl or a Wyvern.

BLACK COBRA SURVEILLANCE HELICOPTER (1993)

Val	Char	Cost	
35	STR	0*	
15	BODY	0*	
3.2x1.6	SIZ	25	
6	DEF	12	
20	DEX	30	
4	SPD	10	
24"x4	MOVE	53	
-3	DCV	0	
-5	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ

Cost	Powers
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors
12	360 Degree Radar, OIF sensors
21	+13 Levels w/Perception, OIF sensors
6	+8 Levels w/radar range modifier, OIF sensors
4	+6 Levels w/sight range modifier, OIF sensors

Disadvantages	
5	1½x BODY from magnetic attacks
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 170

Real Cost: 125

One of the most sophisticated surveillance craft ever built is the Black Cobra, VIPER's high altitude helicopter. When VIPER becomes involved in a major operation, it will often send several Black Cobras up to keep an eye on the mission, stationing them several kilometers over the battlefield, using their sensors to detect anything unusual. The Black Cobra was designed with the distinct disadvantage of being a VIPER craft (its surveillance equipment is too large to hide easily), and its instrumentation is so complex as to make the craft subject to magnetic attacks. An agent with a no range penalty weapon will usually be stationed along with the pilot to defend the craft.

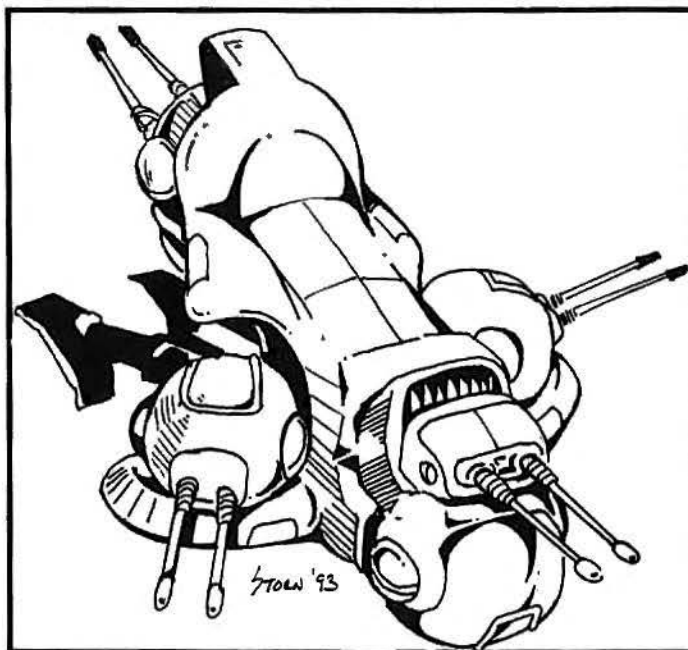
CHIMERA, Four Man Battle Pod (Due 1994 or 1995)

Val	Char	Cost	
30	STR	0*	
14	BODY	0*	
2.5x1.25	SIZ	20	
10	DEF	21	
18	DEX	24	
4	SPD	12	
15"x8	MOVE	35	
-2	DCV	0	
-4	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
Cost	Powers		
32	10d6 EB, +2 OCV, [2 clips of 12c], 180° Arc, OIF blaster, four mounted weapons		
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors		
2	LS: May Breathe in Gaseous Atmosphere, OIF filters		
6	+4 Levels w/PER, OIF sensors		
10	+4 Levels w/Flight, OIF flight regulators		
Disadvantages			
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable		
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-		

Total Cost: 165

Real Cost: 125

VIPER's next generation of vehicles will be developed in two ways; first, small special purpose powersuits (such as the Fang Speed Suit), and second, larger craft with multiple mounts and wider arcs of fire. VIPER has already discovered that vehicles provide better defense for their agents in a combat situation, and is building the Chimera, a flying vehicle with four turrets, as a way to increase their offense. Unfortunately, the prototype was smashed by a group of superheroes, causing an extra year's delay; it is expected to hit production some time in 1994 or 1995.



QUETZALCOATL FLYING SERPENT—MK II (Due 1997)

Val	Char	Cost	
30	STR	0*	
14	BODY	0*	
2.5x1.25	SIZ	20	
12	DEF	30	
15	DEX	15	
4	SPD	15	
20"x4	MOVE	36#	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ
-2	DCV	0	
-4	KB	0	# – Stall Speed 10"

Cost	Powers
43	4½d6 RKA, No Range Penalty, x25 Range Max, [6c], 60° Arc, OIF blasters
2	LS: May breathe in gaseous environment OIF filters
12	360 Degree Radar, OIF sensors
7	+9 Levels w/radar range modifier, OIF sensors

Disadvantages
5 1½x BODY from magnetic attacks
25 Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 180

Real Cost: 135

Given the success of the Quetzalcoatl, it was almost assured that it would be upgraded. Though it will be a long time before even the prototype Quetzalcoatl Mk-II is finished, VIPER eagerly awaits this addition to its arsenal, an attack craft that can deal with military targets from long distances. It will allow VIPER to conduct military operations at a scale that it cannot do at the present time.

WATER/AMPHIBIOUS CRAFT

MOCCASIN LAND/SEA COMBAT CRAFT (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
25	STR	0*	
13	BODY	0*	
4x2	SIZ	30	
12	DEF	30	
18	DEX	24	
3	SPD	2	
12"x4	MOVE	36	
-2	DCV	0	
-3	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ

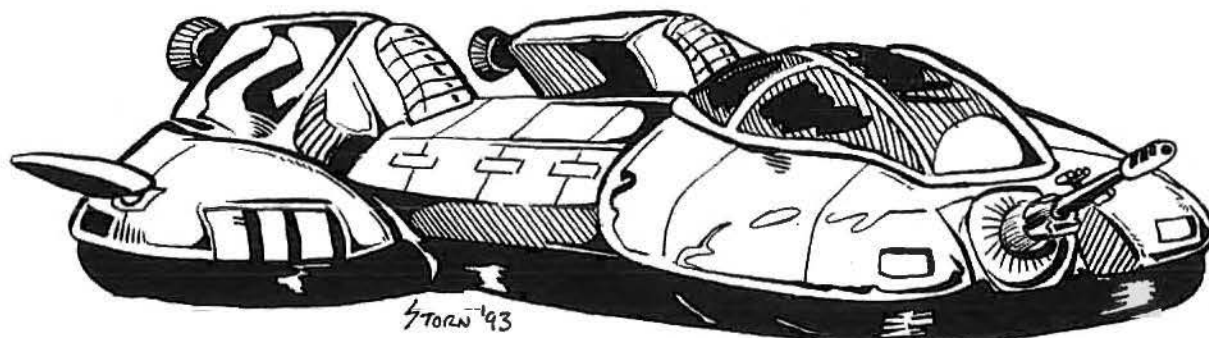
Cost	Powers
44	3d6 RKA, Autofire, +2 OCV, [64c], OIF aqua-blasters, 60° Arc
6	LS: Self contained, 5 hour limit, -¼
6	+4 Levels w/perception, OIF sensors
7	Active Sonar, OIF perception

Disadvantages
25 Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-
5 1d6 Unluck

Total Cost: 170

Real Cost: 125

The newest, and most versatile of the current generation of VIPER vehicles is the Moccasin, VIPER's land/water vehicle. It can transform itself from a water vehicle (with a five hour submersion limit before it must come up to restore its air supply), to a hovercraft. It fires a modified force beam weapon which is equally effective in land and water. The Moccasin is especially popular for VIPER nests located along the coastline of seaboard areas.



LAMPREY WATER FIGHTER SUIT (1990)

Val	Char	Cost	
15	STR	0*	
11	BODY	0*	
1.25x64	SIZ	5	
8	DEF	18	
18	DEX	24	
3	SPD	2	
25"x4s	MOVE	30	
-0	DCV	0	
-1	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ

Cost	Powers
60	3d6 AP RKA, Autofire, +5 OCV, [64c], OIF aqua-blasters, 60° Arc
5	LS: Self contained, OIF suit

Cost	Powers
10	+10 Levels w/sonar, OIF sensors
7	Active Sonar, OIF sensors
2	IR Vision
2	UV Vision

Disadvantages
25 Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 165

Real Cost: 125

For Nests located underwater, the Lamprey battlesuit is the vehicle of choice. Though not as heavily armored as a moccasin, their life support allows virtually unlimited access to water and land, and their armaments are extremely formidable. The Lamprey resembles an aqualung, a large propulsion and weapons unit attached to scuba-gear.

POWER SUITS

FANG SPEED SUIT (Estimated Completion Date 1994)

Val	Char	Cost	
10	STR	0	
10	BODY	0	
1x5	SIZ	0	
5	DEF	18	
26	DEX	48	
5	SPD	14	
20"x8	MOVE	50	
-0	DCV	0	
-0	KB	0	

Cost	Powers
20	4d6 RKA, 60° Arc, [2 clips of 8c], OAF rifle
10	+8 DEX, OIF suit, doesn't affect secondary char
10	+2 SPD, OIF suit
5	+2 Levels w/Running, OIF suit

Disadvantages
10 2x BODY from magnetic attacks
25 Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 175

Real Cost: 125

The next generation of VIPER vehicles will not just provide transportation; they will also enhance the agents to superhuman levels. The prototype is the Fang Super Speed Suit, which contains a neural link reflex booster, similar to those found in many superheroes and supervillain battlesuits. If this is successful, more powerful enhancements can be expected. One prototype is currently available, worn by the villain Blindsight (who is actually a VIPER Commander in this suit).



SUPER-VIPER POWER SUIT (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
50	STR	10*	
16	BODY	0*	
4x2	SIZ	30	
12	DEF	30	
18	DEX	24	
3	SPD	2	
12"x2	MOVE	12	
-3	DCV	0	
-6	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ

Cost	Powers
36	2d6 RKA, autofire, +3 OCV, [64c], OAF rifle
36	15d6 EB (blaster), +3 OCV, [8c], OIF mounted blaster
2	IR Vision, OIF sensors
2	LS: May breathe in gaseous environment OIF filters
6	+4 Levels w/perception OIF sensors

Disadvantages	
10	2x BODY from magnetic attacks
10	2x BODY from sonic attacks
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-
5	1d6 Unluck

Total Cost: 190

Real Cost: 125

Although the inventor of the Super VIPER Power Suit has been accused of being overly fond of Japanese animation, the Super VIPER is an impressive machine. This combat machine looks like a giant VIPER agent, eight meters tall. This "giant robot" has very poor movement capability, but looks impressive, and its autofire weapon gives it excellent firepower against agents (as well as the mounted shoulder blaster for use against supers). Its primary use is to terrorize normals. This should not be confused with the VIPER Mech-armor, which is listed elsewhere.

(See illustration on page 56)

EXOTIC VEHICLES

SAND SNAKE TUNNELLING MACHINE (1991)

Val	Char	Cost	
30	STR	0*	
14	BODY	0*	
2.5x1.25	SIZ	20	
10	DEF	24	
18	DEX	24	
3	SPD	2	
12** 2	MOVE	60	
-2	DCV	0	
-4	KB	0	* – Stat adjusted for SIZ

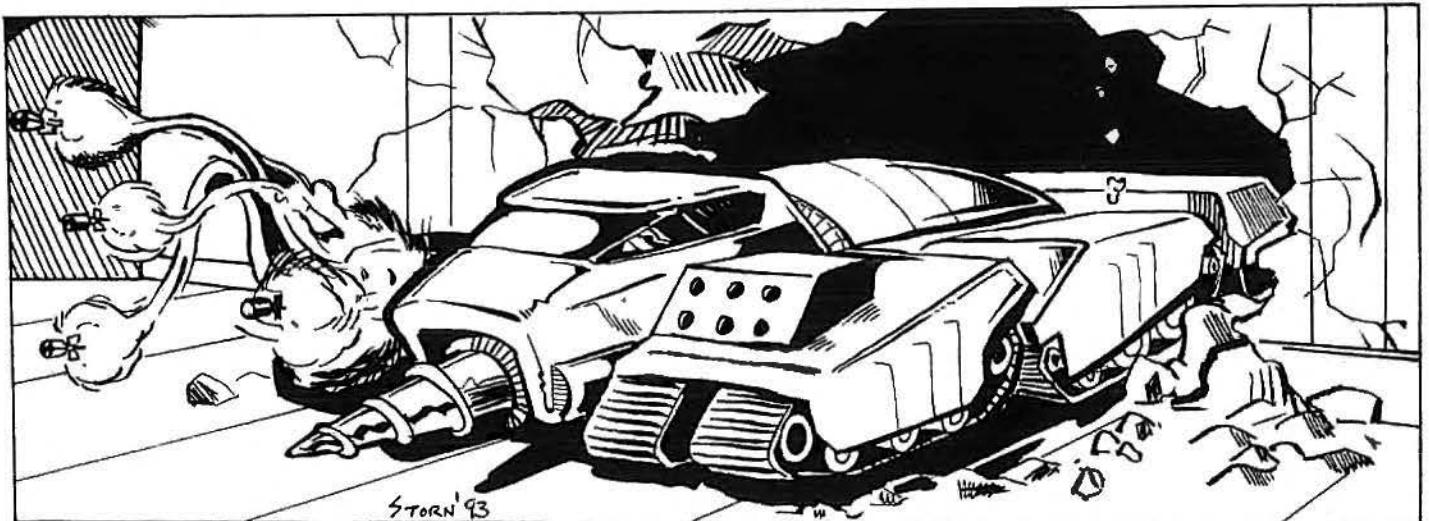
Cost	Powers
22	3d6 RKA, Indirect, 60° Arc, OIF mole missiles, [2 clips of 6c]
3	END Reserve (for life support) 30 END, 3 REC, OIF generators
5	LS: Self-contained, OIF Life Support System
10	N-Ray Vision

Disadvantages	
5	1½x BODY from acid attacks
25	Distinctive Features: Unconcealable, Recognizable
15	Watched by VIPER, NCI, more powerful, 14-

Total Cost: 170

Real Cost: 125

In the long term, VIPER's lightest armored vehicle may prove their most useful. The Sandsnake is a tunnelling vehicle, which is capable of burrowing through the toughest bedrock. The Sandsnake is armed with light powered version of mole missiles, an offensive system developed by VIPER's ally Dr. Destroyer for combat beneath the surface of the earth. The mole missile tunnels through barriers until they reach their target. Given its utility in robberies, the Sandsnake has caused a great deal of alarm in the world's security agencies.





AGENTS

The Supreme Serpent refers to agents as the backbone of VIPER; UNTIL refers to them as the spineless backbone of VIPER. Both have been true on a number of occasions. Here are the prominent agents of VIPER.

VIPER AGENTS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 5
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5
13	CON	6	ECV: 2
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
11	INT	1	
10	EGO	0	Costs
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	Char: 35 Base: 50
3+	PD	0	+ +
3+	ED	0	Powers: 65 Disads: 50
3	SPD	6	= =
6	REC	0	Totals: 100 100
26	END	0	
25	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers (Standard Package)
3	Flash Def. (5 pts vs. sight only), OIF Helmet Visor
3	Two-Way Communicator, OIF, helmet communicator
9	Armor, +6 PD, +3 ED, OIF suit and helmet
50	Training/Equipment (see below)

50+	Disadvantages (Standard Package)
15	Psych Limitation: Common, Strong (typically Greedy, or Loves to Bully)
10	Distinctive Features: VIPER uniforms (easily concealable, major reaction)
10	Watched by VIPER 11-
15	Hunted by UNTIL or PRIMUS, or National Security Agency 8-

AGENT PACKAGES

For normal *Champions* campaigns, it is recommended that the majority of VIPER agents remain at the 100 pt. level, with a 125 pt. commander, a 125-150 pt. specialist, and occasional trainees. (For balance, it is recommended that you use a few trainees where commanders and specialists might be found). For heroic level campaigns (where the equipment is not part of the character total), use these totals as guidelines, and add skills where appropriate.



REGULAR PACKAGE

Most VIPER agents, once they have completed training, are assigned as Regulars, the foot soldiers in VIPER's war of fear. The training and equipment for Regulars are:

Cost	Powers
30	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • VP-01A "Fang" (8d6 EB, [4 clips of 32c]) • VR-01A "Razor" (10d6 EB, [4 clips of 8c]) • VR-11 "Ranger" (rich nests only) (8d6 EB, No Range Penalty, [16c])
10	Find Weakness w/weapon 11-
3	Breakfall, Climbing, or Streetwise 12-
7	2d6 Flash vs. sight, explosion, [1c]

AIR FORCE PACKAGE

Air force agents provide cover for VIPER operations. Jet-packs have a heavy production value and cost, so Air Force agents are not common; they are typically found only in the larger VIPER Nests, and do not compose part of a standard five team (although large Nests do often substitute an Air Force agent for a Baiter).

Cost	Powers
25	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • VK-01K "Killer" (2d6 AP, [2 clips of 6c], +1 OCV) • VK-02K "Slayer" (8d6 EB, [2 clips of 12c], +2 OCV) • VR-02A "Dice" (10d6 EB, [2*6c], +2 OCV)
20	Flight, 10", 0 END, OIF, Jet-pack
5	Force Field Belt, +6 PD, +3 ED, 3c of 5 minutes duration



COVERT PACKAGE

Covert operatives are used for undercover missions. Deep cover agents will be required to know a lot about their target and will often have additional knowledge skills.

Cost	Powers
25	VIPER Weapon • VK-03S "Golden" (2d6 AP RKA, [2 clips of 6c], Invisible to Hearing)
4	Mental Defense (12 pts), only vs. telepathy (-1), IAF cap
5	Force Field Belt, +6 PD, +3 ED, 3c of 5 minutes duration
3	Disguise, Seduction, Persuasion, or Streetwise, 11-
3	Stealth 12-
10	Find Weakness w/pistol 11-

BAITER PACKAGE

Baiter agents perform the same function as listed in **Champions**; they detect invisible or hidden opponents, and they tie them up with their weapons long enough for the other agents to overcome any surprise and coordinate their action.

Cost	Powers
30	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • TG-01C "Gossamer" (6d6 Entangle, DEF 6, [16c]) • EG-01 "Boom" (10d6 EB 1 Hex, No KB, [12c]) • EG-03 "Solar" (6d6 Flash, Explosion, 14-, [8c])
10	Active Sonar or Active Radar
5	Tactics 12-
5	Force Field Belt, +6 PD, +3 ED, 3c of 5 minutes duration

BLASTER PACKAGE

A Blaster agent is a VIPER agent that's received training for advanced operations, particularly against superheroes. They are designed to last in a firefight (though those who fight against flyers will sometimes carry the less than all-purpose "Sparrow" Flight Negator). Blasters form the usual contingent of agents in a raid or assault on VIPER's enemies.

Cost	Powers
30	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • MB-02 "Zowie" (10d6 EB, Affects Desolid, [4 clips of 8c], act. 15-) • GP-01 "Sparrow" (12d6 Suppress Flight [4c clips of 5 min duration]) • VR-02P "Piercer" (8d6 AP EB, [16c])
10	Find Weakness 11- or Missile Defl. (OAF Shield)
5	Tactics 12-
5	Force Field Belt, +6 PD, +3 ED, 3c of 5 minutes duration

MAULER PACKAGE

If a Nest likes to go up against the big boys, the toughest supers, they had better have a Mauler or two on hand. The Mauler is designed to take out targets that are just too tough for anyone else. As one might suspect, Maulers tend to be the most aggressive agents in VIPER; Overconfidence is not an uncommon disadvantage for these people (others might call it stupidity).

Cost	Powers
30	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • XO-1 "Minotaur" Powered-Exo-skeleton (+40 STR, +10 PD, +5 CON) • VRX-01 "Brickbuster" Portable Blaster Cannon (1988) (15d6 EB, [16c], act. 14-) • PB-02B "Nail" (3d6+1 Penetrating RKA, +2 OCV, [2 * 6c], act. 14-) 10 +6 PD, +4 ED Armor, OIF Reinforced Suit
5	Tactics 12-
5	Force Field Belt, (+6 PD, +3 ED, [3c of 5 minutes duration])

AQUATIC PACKAGE

Another environment specialized agent, the Aquatic Agent is even less common than air cavalry, and their gear is more expensive. Nests on seacoasts who engage in underwater operations like to have a few Aquatics in their Nests for specialized tasks.

Cost	Powers
30	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • UW-1 "Torpedo" (9d6 AE (Explosion in air) Line, No Range, [2 * 4c], act. 14-) • UW-2 "Bender" (12d6 EB, 1 hex AE (in water only), [2 * 8c], act. 14-) • IW-1 "Ahab" (2d6 AP Autofire RKA, +3 OCV, [55c])
10	Active Sonar, OIF suit
8	LS: Self-contained, vacuum/high pressure, OIF scuba gear
2	Swimming, +4", OAF aquajets

MYSTERY PACKAGE

The newest, and perhaps most disturbing VIPER agent, is the Mystery agent. Using experimental invisibility technology, the Mystery agent can infiltrate top secret installations. The invisibility device is not perfect; its range is limited, and it has a fringe effect. But the most devious Nest leaders can use these agents with devastating effects.

Cost	Powers
25	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • VK-01K "Killer" (2d6 AP, [2 clips of 6c], +1 OCV) • VK-02K "Slayer" (8d6 EB, [2 clips of 12c], +2 OCV) • VR-02A "Dice" (10d6 EB, [2 clips of 6c], +2 OCV)
20	Invisibility vs. sight, OIF belt, 4 charges of 5 minutes each
3	Stealth 12- or Demolitions 11- or Security Systems 11-
2	+1 Level w/weapon

CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AGENT

For Nests that like to keep things simple (a lot of European Nests are reluctant to adopt new technology), the Conventional Weapons agent fits into their idea of what a VIPER agent should be. Note that this package replaces a 65 pt. package, not just a 50 pt. package.

Cost	Powers
37	Weapon • AK-47 Automatic Rifle (2d6-1 RKA, +1 Range Mod, +3 OCV, Autofire, [30c]) • M-1 Rifle (2d6+1 RKA, +2 Range Mod, +2 OCV, +1 STUN Mult, 2 clips of [8c]) • Thompson Sub-Machine Gun (1d6+1 Autofire RKA, +2 OCV, +1 STUN Mult, [50c]) • LAW Rocket Launcher (4d6 AP RKA, +1 Range Mod, +1 STUN Multiple, [1c])
3	Concealment 11-
3	Stealth 12-
2	+1" Running
10	Find Weakness w/gun 11-
2	IR Vision, OAF goggles
2	Two-Way Radio, OAF radio
6	Armor, +4 PD, +2 ED

VARIATIONS ON AGENTS

Of course, not all VIPER agents are created equal. Here are a couple of agent types that must be included in any survey of VIPER agents:

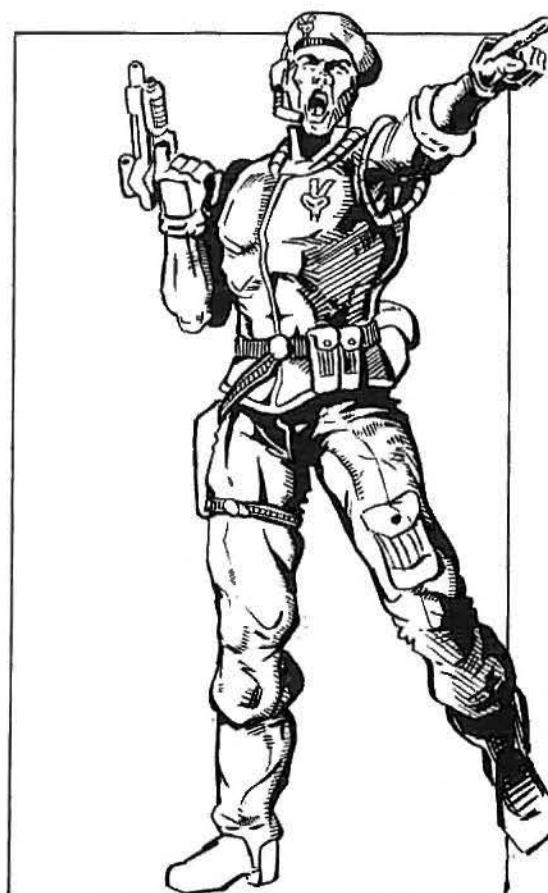
AGENT TRAINEES

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
13	STR	3	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
10	CON	0	ECV: 2
10	BODY	0	Phases: 6, 12
10	INT	0	
10	EGO	0	Costs
13	PRE	3	
10	COM	0	Char: 8 Base: 20
3+	PD	0	+ +
3+	ED	0	Powers: 55 Disads: 50
2	SPD	-1	= =
5	REC	0	Totals: 63 70
20	END	0	
22	STUN	0	
Cost	Powers		
65	Flash Defense/Radio Hearing/Armor/Package -10 No Find Weakness		

Trainees are VIPER agents recruited without an extensive combat or martial background. They have lower stats than your average VIPER agent, and do not have Find Weakness w/weapon. They are especially appropriate for agents in low-powered campaigns; occasional trainees found with more experienced VIPER agents is not unknown either. Trainees are only Standard Agents.

VIPER COMMANDERS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
20	CON	20	ECV: 3
10	BODY	0	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	Costs
20	PRE	10	
10	COM	0	Char: 90 Base: 150
8+	PD	5	+ +
8+	ED	4	Powers: 110 Disads: 50
4	SPD	10	= =
7	REC	0	Totals: 200 200
40	END	0	
29	STUN	1	
Cost	Additional Skills		
30	VIPER Weapon		
10	Find Weakness w/weapon		
3	Breakfall, Climbing, or Streetwise		
7	2d6 Flash vs. sight, explosion, [1c]		
12	Armor +8 PD, +4 ED, OIF suit and helm		
5	Force Field Belt (+6 PD, +3 ED), [3c of 5 minute duration]		
35	Martial Arts Package (see Martial Arts specialists)		
3	Tactics 12-		
2	KS: VIPER 11-		
3	+1 Level w/guns		



The Supreme Serpent is always looking for the very best agent commanders and martial arts specialists in VIPER; when a Nest Leader finds one, he is encouraged through financial incentives to send them to special training. Those that pass this training become VIPER Commanders, the Supreme Serpent's field commanders, elite agents under the Serpent's own command, or that of one of his lieutenants (such as Python of the Serpent Syndicate). The VIPER Commander is a good choice for a generic Nest Leader.

Among one of the items found when the Dallas Nest was overrun by supers were three stolen atomic bombs. While the federal government denies that VIPER has ever had nuclear capabilities, the rumor of these nuclear weapons in VIPER's arsenal have been widely circulated by the Press, and UNTIL has warned the world that it is only a matter of time before VIPER becomes capable of producing its own nukes, if it has not already done so. VIPER's nuclear potential is considered one of the world's greatest threats. It has also been rumored that VIPER has hired unemployed technicians from the former Soviet Union, who have already given the Supreme Serpent nuclear capabilities—this rumor is true.

AGENT COMMANDERS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
15	CON	10	ECV: 3
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
11	INT	1	
11	EGO	2	Costs
18	PRE	8	
10	COM	0	Char: 57 Base: 75
6+	PD	3	+ +
5+	ED	2	Powers: 68 Disads: 50
3	SPD	2	= =
6	REC	0	Totals: 125 125
30	END	0	
26	STUN	0	
Cost	Additional Skills		
3	+1 Level w/guns		

Agent commanders are VIPER field commanders. They typically oversee field operations; one member of a VIPER five team will typically be an agent commander. Agent commanders serve as lieutenants to a Nest Leader; some Nest Leaders only have Field Commander level expertise. Their disadvantages are identical to ordinary VIPER agents.

VIPER PSIONICS SPECIALIST

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
10	STR	0	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
13	CON	6	ECV: 5
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
15	EGO	10	
13	PRE	3	
10	COM	0	
3+	PD	1	
3+	ED	0	
3	SPD	9	
5	REC	0	
26	END	0	
22	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers (Basic PSI Agent Package)	END
------	----------------------------------	-----

30	VIPER Weapon	
3	Breakfall, Climbing, or Streetwise	
9	Armor +6 PD, +3 ED, OIF suit and helm	
5	Force Field Belt (+6 PD, +3 ED), [3c of 5 minute duration]	
3	Two-Way Radio	
5	Mental Defense (8 pts)	

TELEKINETIC PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pt reserve)	
5u	20 STR Telekinesis, Fine Work, ½ END	2
5u	Force Wall (10 PD, 10 ED) or Flight 25"	5

CONTROLLER PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pt. reserve)	
5u	10d6 Telepathy	5
5u	10d6 Mind Control or Mental Illusions	5

MATTER MANIPULATOR PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pt. reserve)	
5u	2d6 RKA, Indirect, from target or 3d6+1 RKA (Disintegrate Blast)	5
5u	Teleport, 15", 4x Mass, 60" NCM (+1 phase)	5

MENTALIST PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pts. reserve)	
5u	10d6 Telepathy	5
5u	5d6 Ego Attack	5

TRANSMUTER PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pt. reserve)	
5u	1d6+1 Cumulative Major Transform, into anything	5
5u	6d6 EB, Variable Special Effects	5

ILLUSIONIST PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pts. reserve)	
5u	Images, all sight, hearing groups, -5 to PER roll, 2" AE	5
5u	Invisibility, all sight, hearing groups, no fringe	5

PYROKINESIS PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pts. reserve)	
5u	1d6 RKA, Invisible to all senses, Continuous	5
5u	1d6 RKA (2" AE), Invisible power effects	5

HEALING PACKAGE

50	Multipower (50 pts. reserve)	
5u	3d6 Aid to all characteristics below starting value, +10 points maximum	5
5u	6d6 Aid to Stun, usable at range	5

VIPER's psionics program, while not as advanced as PSIs, has fostered several dozen young psionic specialists who are assigned to special operations. These psis are usually found in one of two places, in the Panorama's lair (see "Perchance to Dream" in the Adventures section), and in the Copenhagen VIPER Laboratory of Dr. Karl Lagerlund (see "VIPER Around the World"). Most psis are kept out of the line of combat, in the hopes that their powers and physical abilities will eventually develop to supervillain status. As is typical in such genetic experiments, it is unlikely that most psionics will advance beyond their current level, but having a corp of loyal psionics is certainly to VIPER's advantage.

VEHICLE SPECIALISTS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
15	CON	10	ECV: 4
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
11	INT	1	
11	EGO	2	
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	
5+	PD	2	
4+	ED	1	
3	SPD	2	
6	REC	0	
30	END	0	
26	STUN	0	

Cost Equipment/Skills

25	VIPER Weapon (most commonly)	
	• VK-01K "Killer" (2d6 AP, [2*6c], +1 OCV)	
	• VK-02K "Slayer" (8d6 EB, [2*12c], +2 OCV)	
	• VR-02A "Dice" (10d6 EB, [2*6c], +2 OCV)	
25	VIPER Vehicle (125 pts.)	
3	Flash Def. (5 pts vs. sight only), OIF Helmet Visor	
3	Two-Way Communicator, OIF, helmet communicator	
9	Armor, +6 PD, +3 ED, OIF suit and helmet	
10	Find Weakness w/weapon 11-	
3	Breakfall, Climbing, or Streetwise 12-	
7	2d6 Flash vs. sight, explosion, [1c]	
2	Transport Familiarity: Any Category	
3	Combat Driving or Piloting 13-	
4	+2 Levels w/pistol	
4	+2 Levels w/vehicle mounted weapon	

VIPER has a number of heavy vehicles, and is developing new and more powerful weapons in its fight against order and heroism. These weapons are operated by specially trained agents. VIPER will seldom use more than one of these vehicles in their operations, and almost never more than two, except in the most important of missions. Refer to the Vehicles section for VIPER's combat craft.

VIPER UNARMED COMBAT SPECIALISTS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
15	STR	5	OCV: 6		
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6		
15	CON	10	ECV: 4		
11	BODY	2	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12		
13	INT	3			
11	EGO	2	Costs		
15	PRE	5			
10	COM	0	Char: 69 Base: 75		
8+	PD	5	+		
5+	ED	2	Powers: 56 Disads: 50		
4	SPD	12	=		
6	REC	0	Totals: 125		
30	END	0	=		
27	STUN	0	125		

Cost	Powers/Equipment (Karate Package)			
21	Maneuvers			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage
	Punch	+0	+2	7d6
	Kick	-2	+1	9d6
	Block	+2	+2	Block/Abort
	Chop	-2	+0	1d6-1 HKA
	Disarm	-1	+1	35 STR
8	+2 DCs w/Karate (already added in)			
3	KS: Karate 12-			
3	+1 Level w/Karate			

Additional Skills				
9	+6 PD, +3 ED Armor, OIF suit			
3	Flash Defense (5 pts, vs. sight), OIF visor			
3	Two-way Radio, OIF helmet			
3	Acrobatics or Stealth 13-			
3	Breakfall 13-			

This is an example of a VIPER close combat specialist; they are not exclusive practitioners of karate; other martial arts packages are listed below.

Unarmed combat practitioners are rare in VIPER, which has had little eastern influence. However, the Serpent Syndicate, acknowledging King Cobra's favor of martial artists, has recruited their own to counter them. A martial arts specialist is also a preferred bodyguard for Nest Leaders.

Note: *VIPER martial arts specialists with the Commando Training package typically come from a military, police, or mercenary background.*

OTHER MARTIAL ARTS PACKAGES

35 Commando Training Package				
Maneuvers (20 pts)				
Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
Punch	+0	+2	8d6	
Chop	-2	+0	1d6-1 HKA	
Choke	-2	+0	Grab, 3½d6 NND	
Disarm	-1	+1	40 STR	
Block	+2	+2	Block/Abort	
+3 DCs w/Commando Training (already added in) (12 pts)				
+1 Level w/Commando Training (3 pts)				

35 Wrestling Package				
Maneuvers (23 pts)				
Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
Slam	+0	+1	6d6+ V/5	
Take Down	+2	+1	6d6, Both Fall	
Escape	+0	+0	45 STR vs. Grabs	
Choke	-2	+0	Grab, 3½d6 NND	
Reversal	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
+3 DCs w/Wrestling (already added in) (12 pts)				

35 Aikido Package				
Maneuvers (20 pts)				
Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
Throw	+0	+1	6d6+ V/5	
Hold	-2	+0	Grab, 3½d6 NND	
Strike	+1	+3	6d6	
Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort	
Escape	+0	+0	45 STR vs. Grabs	
+3 DCs w/Aikido (already added in) (12 pts)				
KS: Aikido 12- (3 pts)				

35 Kung-fu Package				
Maneuvers (19 pts)				
Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
Punch	+0	+2	7d6	
Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
Throw	+0	+1	6d6+ V/5	
Escape	+0	+0	35 STR vs. Disarm	
Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort	
+2 DCs w/Kung-fu (already added in) (8 pts)				
KS: Kung-fu 12- (3 pts)				
FAM: Common Melee Weapons (2 pts)				
+1 Level w/ Kung-fu (3 pts)				

35 Ninjitsu Package				
Maneuvers (21 pts)				
Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
Punch	+0	+2	7d6	
Back Kick	+1	+3	5d6	
Nerve Punch	-1	+1	3d6 NND	
Escape	+0	+0	35 STR vs. Disarm	
Chop	-2	+0	1d6-1 HKA	
+2 DCs w/Ninjitsu (already added in) (8 pts)				
FAM: Ninjitsu 8- (1 pt)				
FAM: Common Melee Weapons (2 pts)				
+1 Level w/ Kung-fu (3 pts)				

MECH-VIPER MARK I

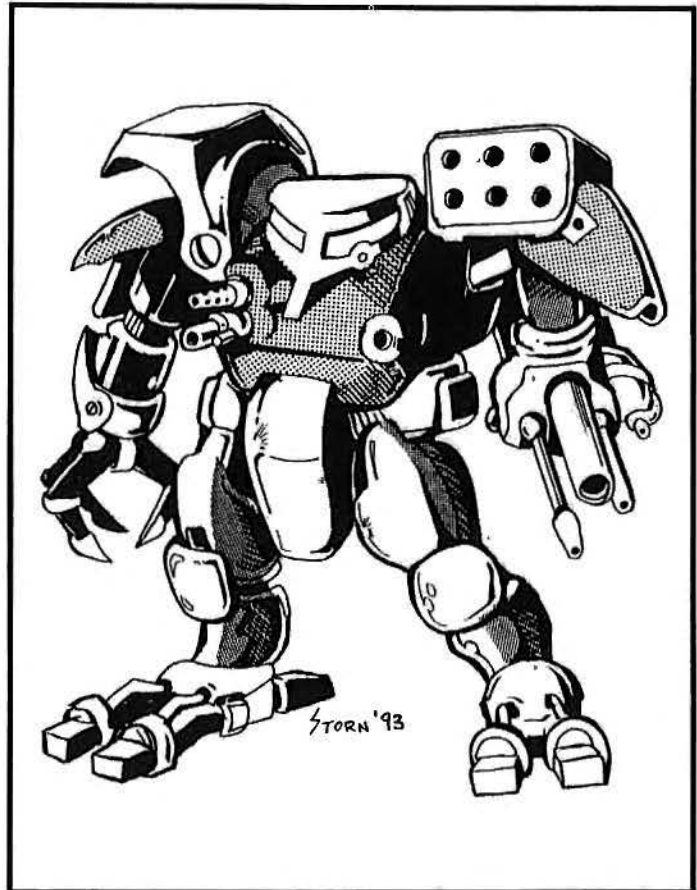
Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
55	STR	35*	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
0	CON	-20	ECV: 0
21	BODY	20*	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
14	INT	4	
0	EGO	0	
30	PRE	20	Costs
6	COM	-2	
10	PD	21	Char: 146 Base: 100
10	ED	30	+ +
5	SPD	17	Powers: 374 Disads: 420
0	REC	-18	= =
0	END	0	Totals: 520 520
0	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
60	Automaton: takes no Stun, only Body	
14	Commands (Programs)	
30	Damage resistance 10 PD, 10 ED	
60	Multipower (60 active pt. reserve)	
6u	12d6 EB (laser) [4 clips, 8c]	0
6u	2d6 autofire RKA (auto-cannon) [2 clips, 30c]	0
5u	1½d6 AP HKA (claw, 3d6+1 w/STR) 0 END	0
6u	3d6 Transparent to Damage Entangle, AE 1 hex, Hardened [2 clips of 6c (recoverable) web gun	
30	Full Life Support	0
13	Growth, 2 levels, 0 END Persistent, Always On, -1 DCV, +1 PER (*added in)	0
27	0 END on 55 STR	
25	Radar, 360 Degrees for Radio Sense Group	
10	High range radio hearing	
5	Ultraviolet Vision	
30	Flight 10", 0 END	0
5	Lack of Weakness (5 pts)	
4	English	
3	Absolute time sense	
10	Eidetic Memory	
16	Skills	

100+ Disadvantages
10 2x BODY from magnetic attacks
10 1½x BODY from electrical attacks
25 Distinctive features, Robot
20 Reputation: killing machines 14-
10 Physical lim, size
20 Hunted by PRIMUS 11-, NCI
15 Hunted by S.A.T. 8-, NCI
15 Hunted by UNTIL 8-, NCI
10 Public ID
285 Robot bonus

Background: The Mech-Vipers were created to combat the ever-growing number of superheroes. They were designed to back-up VIPER agents and give them the added punch whenever they need it. The Mech-Vipers were also to be used to create diversions so that VIPER agents can escape when trapped.

The idea for the Mech-Vipers came from the Supreme Serpent. He realized that some of his agents were out-classed and outgunned by government agencies and superheroes. If he was to win the Game, that would have to change. So he began a hunt to find someone who could give



VIPER the firepower it needs. He located a robotics specialist, Dr. Jack Moore, who was running from the law, chiefly because of his involvement in Genocide's Minuteman Program. Genocide was also after Dr. Moore. The Supreme Serpent offered him a safe haven and unlimited funding in return for his work on the Mech-Vipers. Dr. Moore jumped at the chance; it was the design process that seemed to take forever.

The first Mech-Vipers began to run off the assembly line six months ago, and became involved in a bloody battle with the supervillain group Spectrum. The destruction caused by this battle gave the Mech-Vipers an instant notoriety. At present there are ten Mech-Vipers units in operation, and more are coming off the assembly line.

Quote: "Your - life - is - fragile - and - finite - a - quality - that - I - lack - and - do - not - desire - to - have. Prepare - to - die - mortal."

Powers/Tactics: The Mech-Vipers are large and very strong. Dr. Moore has built several weapons into each of the Mech-Vipers. They have a claw on their right hand that is capable of cutting through steel. Instead of a left hand they have attachments for several guns. These guns include a machine gun, a laser and a net gun. There is a grenade launcher on their left shoulder.

The Mech-Vipers, being robots, feel no pain and are therefore able to withstand most attacks without being stopped. They are also unaffected by mind control. In combat they usually attack one-on-one, killing each opponent with their claws. In larger skirmishes they will lob grenades into the heaviest concentration of superheroes. They also will use their machine guns to "mow down" anyone on the

ground. Their laser is used mostly for long range targets.

Appearance: The Mech-Vipers are 11' tall and have a humanoid appearance. They lack a left arm, which have been replaced with several weapons and have a grenade launcher mounted on their left shoulder. Their right hands have a set of powerful claws mounted on them. The robots have a metallic green and silver coloring with the weapons attached to them done in a black metal. The armor has no neck, therefore the heads appear to be in the upper chest. The face is blank except for a 1" wide slit running across the front of the helmet in a "V" formation.

VIPER ELITE AIR-CAVALRY

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
18	CON	16	ECV: 4
11	BODY	2	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	
15	PRE	5	Costs
10	COM	0	Char: 74 Base: 100
5+	PD	2	+ +
5+	ED	1	Powers: 136 Disads: 110
4	SPD	12	= =
7	REC	0	Totals: 210 210
36	END	0	
28	STUN	0	

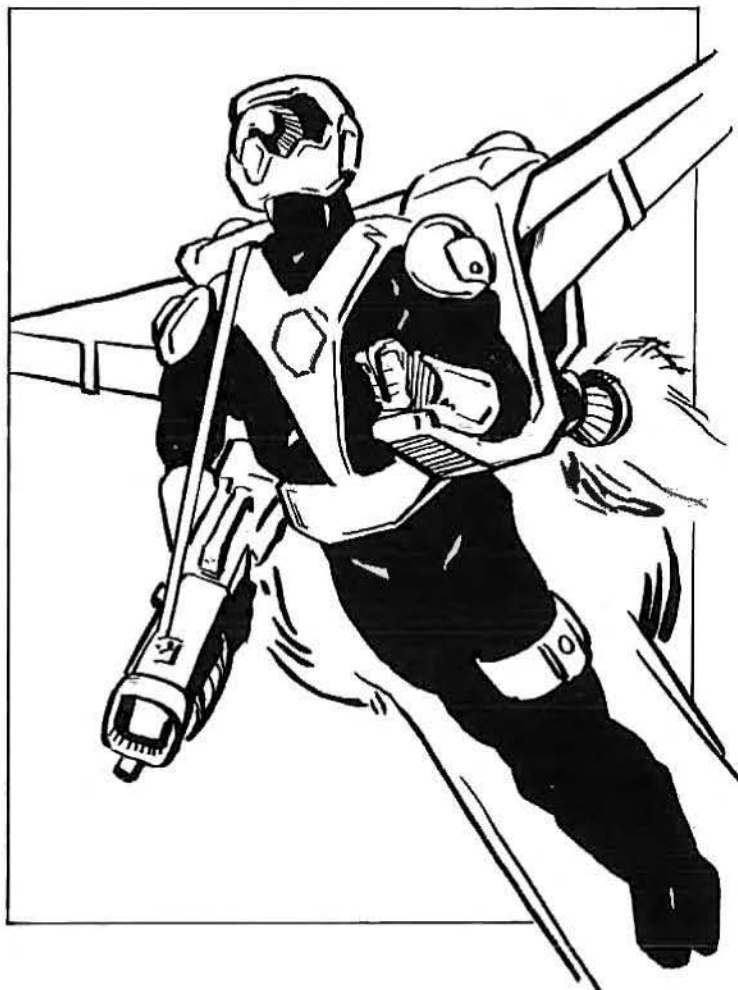
Cost	Powers	END
30	VIPER Weapon (most commonly) • VR-10 "Fat Lady" (6d6 AVLD vs. sonics, [2*3c]) • U-500 "Hellfire" (3d6 RKA, 18"AE, burnout 14-, [6c]) • TC-01 "Slimer" (4½d6 Entangle, DEF 4, 1 Hex AE, Sticky Entangle, [2 * 3c]) • VR-110 "Stitcher" (2d6 RKA, 10 shot Autofire, jams on 14-, [4 * 30c])	
15	Martial Arts: Commando Training Maneuver OCV DCV Damage Boxing Cross +0 +2 7d6 Aikido Throw +0 +1 5d6 + V/5 Judo Disarm -1 +1 35 STR to Disarm Kung-fu Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
8	+2 DCs w/Commando Training	
20	A armor, +10 PD, +10 ED, OIF armor and helmet	
3	Flash Defense, 5 pts. vs. visual, OIF helmet visor	
30	Flight, 15", 0 END, OIF jet backpack	
3	Hi-Range Radio Hearing, OIF helmet	
3	Combat Sense 12-	
3	Breakfall 13-	
15	Skills (per person)	
3	+2 range levels w/weapon	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Distinctive feature: VIPER Air-Cav uniform
15	Psych Lim: Loves combat
15	Psych Lim: Always obeys orders of superiors
15	Psych Lim: Loyal to VIPER
10	Reputation: ruthless 8- (extreme)
15	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-, NCI
15	Hunted by UNTIL 8-, NCI
15	Secret ID

Membership: The members of the Air-Cav have been hand picked by the Serpent Syndicate. The membership changes from time to time due to deaths, injuries, and mission requirements. The Air-Cav usually works with other VIPER operatives; very seldom is it sent out alone. They are especially well-liked by Armstrong, leader of VIPER Force-2, and Stealth, one of the more prominent members of VIPER Force-1, as well as by the Serpent Syndicate.

Background: Python, leader of the Serpent Syndicate, realized that VIPER's lack of aerial capabilities was a serious weakness. VIPER had used air-borne agents for a long time, but these agents were no match for VIPER's enemies; they needed better technology and training. Python approached the Supreme Serpent with the idea of developing an air-cav unit; the Serpent enthusiastically agreed, and ordered Python to develop this force. They would support the ground troops by providing air cover.

While VIPER scientists worked on a better jet-pack, Python pre-empted their efforts by finding an experimental US Army jet-pack. He stole it, and placed a substitute in its place, which conveniently blew up the first time it was tested.



The flight suit and the individuals chosen to fill this troop were put through an extensive one year testing and training period. Those who could not meet expectations were weeded out and a commander was found. His name was Bruce Terry, a former lieutenant colonel and test pilot in the United States Air Force, who had been forced to retire early due to military cutbacks. Lt. Colonel Terry willingly assumed the position of commanding officer of the Air-Cav, as they were dubbed by the Serpent Syndicate.

At present, there are two squadrons of VIPER elite air cavalry. Each squadron has ten air-cav members. One squadron is permanently assigned to the Serpent Syndicate as tools in their plans, the other is a freelance unit that is rented by Nests and occasionally accompanies VF-1 or VF-2.

The air-cavs are often used to counter some of PRIMUS's Iron Guard units, and the success of VIPER air cavalry may be a turning point in VIPER's war against that organization.

The Air-Cav's mission is to provide air support for VIPER ground troops. But they also have a personal goal: to become the most honored VIPER team. They attempt to upstage other VIPER units whenever possible and try to gain the favor of the Nest Leaders and the Supreme Serpent. They hope to be given more power and control by their actions.

Tactics: The Air-Cav is organized into five man teams like other VIPER units. When flying, they take a reverse "V" formation with the commanding officer at the back flying point.

When in combat, the Air-Cav units will stagger their firing sequence. The first two troopers will fire at a single target while the next two wait. In large battles the two-man teams will pick different targets and fire together. But at all times they will attempt to stay in formation. The commanding officer is a free agent in these battles and, once he has evaluated a situation, he can fire at any target that he chooses.

Relations: The members of the Air-Cav are a very close knit group who have been chosen because of their loyalty and ability to obey orders. They are also very loyal to each other and would sacrifice their own lives for the other members. In a retreat or "bug-out" situation, the Air-Cav members will do whatever is necessary to insure that all the members escape. Even when captured, an Air-Cav member would rather die than divulge any information that could harm either the Air-Cav or VIPER.

The Air-Cav has no problem working with any of the other VIPER units. They extend the same loyalty they hold for the Supreme Serpent to his other agents.

The Air-Cav is known as a more than adequate equalizer in the field. The public has no idea who the individual agents are, but the group itself is very well known.

Appearance: The Air-Cav battlesuit is made of a kevlar weave. The suit is black, as are the boots, gloves, and helmet, with green trim. The jet pack on their back is nuclear powered and they carry one of several weapons. The commanding officer can be distinguished from the others by the green stripe on his helmet and shoulders, and the pistol at his side.

AGENT PERSONALITIES

During the course of a superhero's career, they can be expected to come in contact with dozens of agents. These men and women are sometimes thought of as ciphers. Here are thirteen personality types you can give the agents that the PCs come in contact with; hopefully, this will reduce the amount of "cipheritis" in the campaign.

THE PROFESSIONAL

The Professional has a military mindset, and joined VIPER because VIPER fosters military efficiency and gives the Professional a chance to go on frequent combat missions. The Professional is often a natural leader, but has a low tolerance for inefficiency.

THE BULLY

The Bully, is, plain and simply, a bully. He likes to hurt people, and joined VIPER because he has a chance to hurt people. The bully comes in two varieties: the cowardly kind who is likely to back down if he encounters force, or the tough-guy kind who never backs down and loves to fight. The bully is, as one might expect, not the most popular type of VIPER agent with his teammates.

THE COWARDLY LIAR

Treachery is the forte of the Cowardly Liar, who joined VIPER because he likes an opportunity for skullduggery. The cowardly liar likes to manipulate others ("let's you and him fight") for his own amusement. If anything serious happens, he'll try to get someone else to take the fall for him, otherwise he'll run away.

THE THRILLER

The Thriller has a deathwish; he joined VIPER because he likes the excitement of going after superheroes. He lives for the adrenalin rush of combat when the odds are against him. Fear is something to be used to get a new "high". The Thriller doesn't have a long life expectancy, and can usually be expected to go out in a blaze of glory.

THE ANGRY YOUNG PERSON

This person believes that society is out to get him, that the world is trying to destroy his life, and joining VIPER is his way of getting even. The Angry Young Person often comes from a life of poverty, or was laid off and has nowhere else to go, or has a radical philosophy and sees VIPER as the best way to achieve his goals against the Enemy (i.e., everyone else).

THE TERRIBLE TOADIE

The Terrible Toadie is a born follower. He enjoys being insulted, abused, and humiliated; that means they're paying attention to him! The Terrible Toadie will latch itself onto a VIPER authority (such as a Nest Leader) and become a sycophant's sycophant. When abandoned (as is virtually inevitable for this type of agent), the Toadie becomes lost, like a child in a department store without his mother.

THE KID

This type of VIPER agent is notable for being real naive. He joined VIPER because VIPER made extravagant promises, and he believed them. The kid is usually not solid VIPER material, but, because of the difficulties involved in recruiting large numbers of agents, you'll occasionally get a Kid in a Nest. He really doesn't belong there; he may be trying to escape, or trying to prove himself; he may hate the world, but really doesn't want to do anything bad, the Kid is the sort of agent that (some) superheroes like to identify and convert from VIPER.

THE COMPANY MAN

VIPER is his job. The work isn't too hard, and the pay isn't bad. There are even medical benefits. Sure, it's a little dangerous, but if you're smart, you won't get hurt. If you get caught, you just keep your mouth shut and the lawyers will get you out. The Company Man profile often fits VIPER's technical and administrative personnel.

THE WACKO

The Wacko is the misdirected malcontent of society. He has some ulterior motive for joining VIPER's ranks—anything from revenge on the police or other criminals to believing that VIPER's crimes are more "honest" than the government's crimes against the people. This agent is a dedicated non-conformist with a chip on his shoulder about how the world "really works." To him, VIPER is "pure of purpose."

DESTRUCTO-MAN

This agent is in it for the guns, the bombs and the big machinery. He likes to destroy things—even people. If directly threatened, however, the Destructo-Man will probably fold. This agent used to be in the ROTC, or at least likes to read *Soldier of Fortune*.

THE BUILDER

This agent is in it for the big payoff. He's a future Nest leader in the making and he's just waiting for his big break. Meanwhile, he's doing all he can to make powerful friends and contacts.

BUBBA

This agent is not too bright, and not too ambitious. Bubba thinks he looks good in his uniform, and the food in the Nest mess hall is pretty good. To Bubba, VIPER is just one big group of drinking buddies, who get to go and fire some big guns every once in a while. This agent always does what he is told because it never occurred to him not to.

THREE-TIME LOSER

This ex-con will fight harder than most to keep from getting caught. He's done hard time, and doesn't want to go back. He joined VIPER because there are no job opportunities on the outside for a guy like him. It was either VIPER's steady pay and security or going back to dealing drugs (or robbing liquor stores, or whatever). He knows that if he is caught, they will lock him up and throw away the key.

AGENT TACTICS

Compared to the average superhero, the average VIPER agent is rather fragile. VIPER has been developing a strategy on making the most of their agents in a combat situation.

- The first rule of combat is cover yourself against disaster.
- Operations where superheroes are involved are much more likely to fail than ones where they aren't involved. Wherever possible, misdirect superheroes, or set up diversions so they do not interfere in your operations. Perfect Planning Prevents Pitifully Poor Performance.
- Always have sentries posted on the perimeter of a combat area, to protect against the unexpected. Sentries should have special visions and sensory gadgets.
- Maintain a dispersion pattern of four or five meters between agents if superheroes are present. Tight concentrations of agents make it easier for agents to be taken out in mass.
- Never leave something that might be an enemy target unguarded. For instance, VIPER's confidential computer records will always have a guard ready to type in an erase and scramble data command at a moment's notice.
- Always know where the closest hostages can be found. Hostage-taking can often mean the difference between a successful escape and a long prison sentence.
- Never take more than a half move. Always keep a half move in reserve to fire, dodge, or dive for cover.

...

If forced into battle, VIPER tries to set up three groups:

Group One are skirmishers, moving into the open and firing. They comprise about one half to one third of the total VIPER force in the battle. Skirmishers are more likely to be armed with weapons with computer scopes than other VIPER agents; most tough supervillains will join the skirmisher force. They are continuously moving and firing, trying to knock someone down. Their primary goal is to take an opponent off their feet, and bring them to a reduced DCV.

Group Two consists of the main body of the attack. They comprise about one third to one half of the agents. They try to circle the perimeter of the battlefield, looking to outflank the opposition. They hold for opportunity fire, and if the skirmishers have Stunned an opponent or knocked him down, they will concentrate their fire on him and try to take him out.

Group Three often includes heavy and exotic weapons agents. They comprise a quarter to one third of the entire battle force. These agents try to remain hidden and use a Set and Brace maneuver to get OCV bonuses. These agents only fire to cover the main force of agents, or when the main agents have had a chance for opportunity fire against an opponent and have not managed to take them out. If they cannot find a hiding place, they will try to stay on the edge of the firing zone.

If VIPER is fighting against normals (e.g., other agents) their tactics are different. Half of the force try to find cover and will fire aggressively, while the other half of the force attempts to use stealth and flank the opposition, or to find a point of high ground that provides cover and negates their

opponent's cover. VIPER will withdraw if the enemy has an overwhelming advantage, or if the fight goes badly. VIPER's procedure for withdrawals is as follows:

Contrary to popular belief, agents are not the most expendable VIPER operatives. Mercenary supers know fewer VIPER secrets, and are typically recruited away from the Nest, and do not know its location. Furthermore, most supers would rather capture other supers than agents. Mercenary supers are invaluable at covering a withdrawal. When VIPER withdraws, they protect the Nest leader or the assault leader first, followed by VIPER supers, then by agents, and finally mercenaries.

If VIPER agents are pursued after they scatter from a crime scene, they will immediately try to grab a hostage and force their way out. They rarely harm their hostages (for fear of stiffer sentences, not because of their compassionate nature).

VIPER agents are told that their lawyers are experts at getting agents out of trouble. This is true if the agent has no previous criminal record. VIPER agents with criminal records, or who harm innocents and law enforcement personnel, will usually find themselves in jail for a long time. VIPER has performed raids on maximum security prisons to liberate agents (and to get a few new recruits); plastic surgery and hacking government computer records will usually establish a new ID without any problems.

THE FUTURE OF THE VIPER AGENT

As the Supreme Serpent has noted, a Nest with good agents is usually a good Nest. As part of the six year plan (launched 1993), the Supreme Serpent plans the following:

(1) Top Snake. In late 1993, a Top Snake school for elite agents will open. Located somewhere in the rural southern United States, this will be a place where good VIPER agents are sent by their Nest leader to train with expert instructors, in order to hone their skills. This is also a place where agents from many VIPER Nests will gather to get to know each other, and increase VIPER's sense of community. VIPER plans to use Top Snake schools to double the current number of Vehicle Specialists by 1997, to double the number of agents at Agent Commander level by 1995 and double the number of agents at VIPER Commander level, by 1997.

(2) Six-Teams and Steel Serpent. By 1995, VIPER hopes to introduce a new piece of technology that will provide a sixth member for the traditional VIPER Five-Team, the Steel Serpent Guard Powersuit. The Steel Serpent is one of the most important VIPER research projects, relatively inexpensive powered armor that they hope will be bought by most Nests and incorporated into a new, more powerful, assault team arrangement, helping them against supers and other powered armor agents (most notably PRIMUS's Iron Guard). The Six-Team of the future will consist of one VIPER Steel Serpent, two agents at Agent Commander level, and three agents at Agent level, one of whom might be a Trainee. The success of both Top Snake and Steel Serpent projects may be disrupted by superheroes.

STEEL SERPENT ARMOR

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15/45	STR	5+15*=20	OCV: 6 DCV: 6 ECV: 4
14/18	DEX	12+6*=18	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
13/18	CON	6+5*=11	
10	BODY	0	Costs
11	INT	1	Char: 58 Base: 100
10	EGO	0	+ +
15	PRE	5	Powers: 92 Disads: 50
10	COM	0	= =
3+	PD	0	Totals: 150 150
3+	ED	0	
3/4	SPD	6+7#=13	* - OIF battlesuit, and does not add to figured characteristics (-1/2)
6	REC	0	
26	END	0	
25	STUN	0	# - OIF battlesuit
Cost	Powers/Skills	END	
30	Multipower (60 pt. reserve, OAF multi-gun)		
3u	12d6 EB [2*12c], Blaster		
3u	6d6 EB, AE 3" [2*12c] Mini-grenade launcher		
3u	6d6 AP EB, 1 Hex AE [2*12c], heat beam		
10	Find Weakness w/Blaster setting, 11-		
18	Armor +12 PD, +6 ED, OIF armor		
3	Flash Defense (5 pts visual) OIF helm		
10	Flight 10", OAF jetpack [16c]		
3	Two-Way Radio, OIF Radio		
3	Breakfall, Streetwise, or Stealth		
3	Demolitions, Tactics, or Security Systems		
3	+1 Level w/Multi-gun		

The Steel Serpent armor is the latest breakthrough in VIPER technology, essentially turning an agent into a low-grade super. It was designed by Dr. Jack Moore, the designer of the Mech-VIPERs. Dr. Moore was asked to provide VIPER with a power-suit design that could be made cheaply and quickly. Moore was probably the wrong person to ask; it took him eight months, but Moore finally managed to deliver the blueprints to VIPER's Technology Division, warning them not to expect very much ("this is probably not that much of an improvement over your useless bits of cannon fodder, and certainly not a viable alternative to a dependable cadre of robots."). Despite the warning, VIPER liked what they saw, and a prototype was built. By late 1993, VIPER expects to put the Steel Serpent into production, and they hope that even the smaller Nests will find them to be an invaluable tool in the war against crimefighters.

VIPER SUPERVILLAINS



Since 1990, VIPER's employment of supervillains has grown exponentially. At present, VIPER fields four supervillain teams: The Serpent Syndicate, VIPER Force-1, VIPER Force-2, and the Snake Pack.

The primary mission of the Serpent Syndicate is to serve as a liaison between the Serpent and the Nest Leaders. Unless brought into a personal vendetta of one of its members (something that is quite rare) The Serpent Syndicate will only go into combat at the direct behest of the Supreme Serpent or the VIPER Council; when the Serpent Syndicate is involved, the player characters will find that they are dealing with the higher levels of VIPER. The Serpent Syndicate, though they have a lower profile than the other groups, are the most important of VIPER's villain teams.

On the other hand, VIPER Force-1 and VIPER Force-2 are hirelings, albeit very expensive and capable ones. Both teams are hired by Nests to serve as reinforcements on major operations. Both teams have gotten good reputations; VIPER Force-1 ranks as one of the most feared teams in the world, and VIPER Force-2 has demonstrated on several occasions that anyone who treats them as "the B-Team" is making a tragic mistake.

The Snake Pack belongs to the lowest level of the VIPER superteam niche. They are essentially a hit squad sent by the Supreme Serpent to terrorize areas where people have annoyed VIPER. Unlike the other teams, they are viewed as expendable by VIPER, though the Serpent Syndicate has a soft spot for them.

USING VIPER'S SUPERVILLAINS

The VIPER Sourcebook includes a lot of supervillains. However, they need to be used with a little more care than your average supervillain groups. The heart of VIPER is their agents, and they should not be eclipsed by their supporting supervillains. Usually, a group of heroes won't encounter VIPER villain groups to start with, nor will they encounter the top echelon of operatives such as Sheath, Modem, Viperia, or Citadel. Instead, they'll encounter agents, backed up by a few of the solo operatives.

When the characters start to really annoy VIPER, that's when they'll bring out the big guns. These teams will receive agent back-up (and people like Stealth and Armstrong know how to use them effectively). If the PCs develop grudges with VIPER teams, then they can be used frequently, but never let them overshadow VIPER. Part of what makes VIPER so frightening is that the good of the "parts" is insignificant compared to the good of the "whole"; VIPER is an organization that has a deserved reputation for throwing away "cogs" in its machine when they become useless.





THE SERPENT SYNDICATE

MEMBERSHIP

The Serpent Syndicate consists of Python (leader), Hiss, Komodo, Dragon Queen, Black Mamba, and Gila. The Syndicate is an elite group chosen by the leader and approved by the Supreme Serpent himself. The membership is restricted to five members with a permanent bodyguard for the leader. Hiss is Python's personal bodyguard. The only way for a new person to be added to the Syndicate is for an existing member to be killed or seriously injured (and thus be unable to fulfill their duties).

Whenever members of the Syndicate go out on a mission they are always accompanied by at least one squad of agents. Mercenary villains will occasionally work with the members of the Syndicate, depending on the mission.

BACKGROUND

The Serpent Syndicate was formed by the Supreme Serpent as a way to delegate authority to his Nest leaders. The Syndicate would be comprised of five members, one of which would be the chairman.

The Supreme Serpent realized that he needed representatives to be his liaisons with the Nests of VIPER. He searched the vast VIPER files to find the perfect chairman of the Syndicate and eventually came across an ex-member of the COIL, Python. Python was approached by Black Mamba, who was employed by VIPER at the time, and was asked to head the new criminal organization. Python agreed.

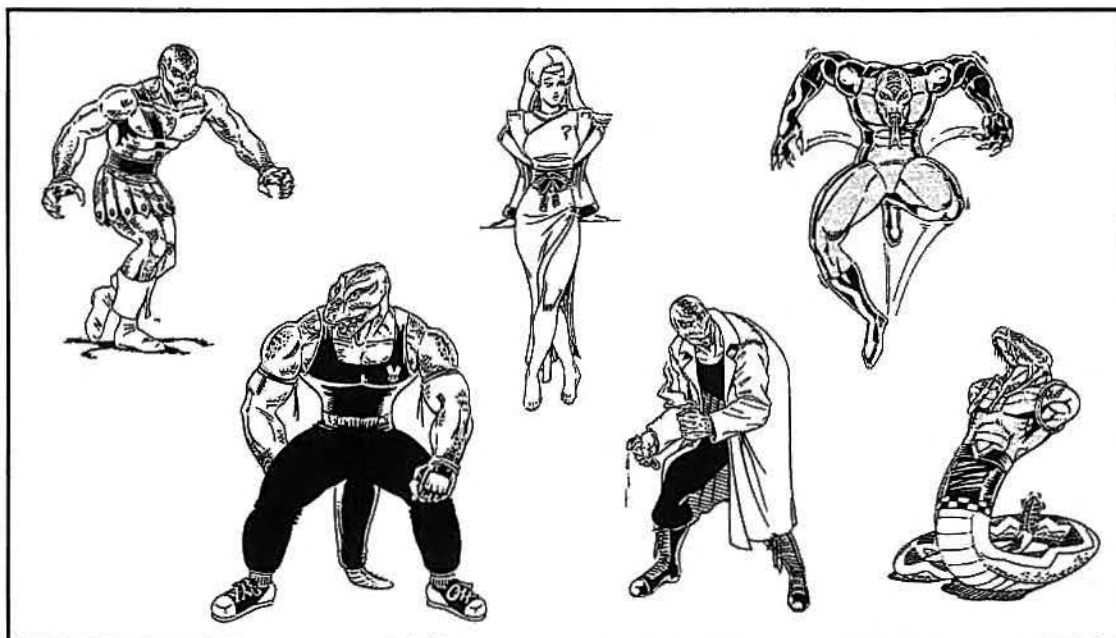
Python asked the Supreme Serpent if he could choose his other cohorts. The Supreme Serpent agreed and bestowed the authority to Python. Python's first choice was Black Mamba, who had turned to VIPER to help him gain his

revenge against the Coil, and had been involved with the operation where VIPER had first encountered Python. Python then asked his old friends Komodo and Hiss. Hiss, however, could only communicate with Python and was assigned to him as his permanent bodyguard.

Python located Dr. Mike Lancer, who had been terrorized by the COIL and transformed into the super-human known as Gila. Gila was quite glad to join the Syndicate and use his powers against the COIL, and Python was glad to have him. Still, he did not feel the group was complete.

Python put out feelers for a fifth member; what he found was most unexpected. One night, at Python's penthouse, a strange visitor landed. It was an extremely beautiful oriental woman, who, when asked to name herself, called herself the Dragon Queen. The few references to her in the Serpentine files were extremely impressive. Although a bit worried that she might possess an ambitious streak, her power was undeniable. Python invited the Dragon Queen into the Serpent Syndicate.

The Syndicate was now complete. Now, they had the power to make life very difficult for those who interfered in their operations, or those of the Supreme Serpent. The Syndicate has been successful enough to take direct control of the operations of several Nests on the eastern seaboard of the United States; Python is the Nest Leader of of the Chicago, Boston, and Pittsburgh VIPER's Nests, and Dragon Queen is the Nest Leader of the Philadelphia VIPER's Nest. They serve as field generals, directing major operations of VIPER agents, and coordinating movements between Nests. In terms of influence, they may rank as the most powerful team on Earth.



GOALS

The function of the Syndicate is to relay the orders of the Supreme Serpent to the individual Nest leaders. They also assist Nest leaders with missions that might require their presence. The reason the Syndicate exists is to protect the identity of the Supreme Serpent while taking care of any individual Nest's problems. The Syndicate will also relay messages from the Supreme Serpent to the industrialists that provide the financial needs of VIPER.

TACTICS

The Syndicate only goes into the field when they know that superheroes will be present, gathering all necessary information to successfully complete the mission before they commit themselves to a fight. The Syndicate is supposed to travel in pairs, with the fifth member staying at headquarters as a contact point. This eliminates the possibility of the entire Syndicate membership getting captured. Only during the most important of missions will all members of the Syndicate be seen at once.

RELATIONS

Python has hand picked the members of the Syndicate, with the exception of Dragon Queen. All of the Syndicate members work well with each other, for the most part. However, Python knows that Dragon Queen is immortal and will one day fill his shoes. This causes a little animosity between the two. Python, Hiss, and Komodo, having known and worked with each other before, get along well. Gila, not agreeing with Black Mamba's ethics, despises him. And Dragon Queen is the only true loner in the group, partially because of her attitude and partially because of her dragon form. They do not let this hinder their abilities in combat. The unit plays off each other's strengths and helps out when needed. The Syndicate does not care much for VF-1 or VF-2; the Syndicate believes in secrecy, and dislikes these teams' high profile (Python also views Armstrong and Chasm as eventual rivals, when his opportunity arrives to take over VIPER). However, they do not agree with VIPER's shoddy treatment of the Snake Pack, and on the few occasions that they've worked together, the Syndicate, they've treated them with greater respect than most VIPER operatives.

REPUTATION

The Serpent Syndicate is not widely known to the general public. Those who know of them respect the power that they control. Some individual members have reputations of their own in different circles.

PYTHON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
35	STR	25	OCV: 10	
29	DEX	57	DCV: 10	
28	CON	36	ECV: 7	
20	BODY	20	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12	
13	INT	3		
20	EGO	20	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
4	COM	-3	Char:	213
10	PD	3		+
10	ED	4	Powers:	227
6	SPD	21		=
20	REC	14	Totals:	440
56	END	0		
55	STUN	3		
			Base:	100
				+
			Disads:	340
				=
Cost	Powers		END	
7	EC: Snake powers			
18	1) +25 STR, 0 END, for grab and escape only		0	
7	2) +7" Running, 13" total		3	
5	3) Stretching, 2", 0 END		0	
8	4) Clinging, 60 STR			
8	5) Armor (+5 PD, +5 ED)			
20	Regeneration, 2 BODY/turn)			
60	Half Damage Reduction, vs. PD/ED			
5	Mind Link w/Hiss			
10	Wealthy			
3	Double jointed			
3	Simulate Death, 13-			
3	Acrobatics 15-			
3	Breakfall 15-			
3	Escape Artist 16-			
3	High Society 13-			
4	KS: The Coil 13-			
5	KS: Superheroes 14-			
7	KS: VIPER 16-			
3	Persuasion 13-			
7	Security Systems 14-			
3	Shadowing 15-			
3	Stealth 15-			
3	+1 w/Block, dodge, dive for cover			
6	+3 w/Grab			
100+	Disadvantages			
10	2x STUN from fire attacks			
5	1½x STUN from cold attacks			
10	Megalomaniac			
20	Hatred of King Cobra			
15	Overconfidence			
20	Distinctive feature (Reptilian)			
20	Hunted by King Cobra, NCI, 11-			
15	Watched by the Supreme Serpent, NCI, 14-			
10	Public ID			
215	Villain Bonus			

Background: Malcolm Maxwell was a bored millionaire who tried to spice up his life with mercenary magazines and books. It wasn't enough though and he decided to try the mercenary life out for himself. He saw an ad in one of his magazines for a school of mercs and enrolled. Malcolm did so well that he quickly moved to the top of his class. Malcolm loved this new adventurous way of life.

Within two years Malcolm became so obsessed with the mercenary way of life that he bought the school. But even this was not enough to fuel his growing megalomania. When King Cobra arrived, one day, with promises of power and money, Maxwell did not hesitate to join his COIL Terrorist Organization. He even led the rest in killing those students who did not volunteer.

During the next few months, Malcolm noticed the changes that were happening to the other volunteers, but nothing was happening to himself. What he did not know was that he had latent mutant powers and the Coil-gene had very little effect on him. So when King Cobra offered to include him in experiments to create superpowered mercenaries, Maxwell gladly accepted. He was already forming secret plans to take over COIL, and he saw this as a chance to gain the power to do so. The Coil-gene drastically changed Maxwell and his two friends, Jim Carpenter and Mack Fog. It gave him the power to elongate his limbs, regenerate, and run at incredible speeds. He was also graced with enhanced strength with which he could squeeze and crush things. This is probably why he dubbed himself Python. King Cobra was pleased with all of their transformations and offered them positions in his newly formed Serpentine Circle, a "round table" of super knights.

The first year went well, until King Cobra received word of the hiding place of one of his ex-knights, Black Mamba. King Cobra took his Serpentine Circle and elite guards to the hide-out to teach Mamba a lesson. Python and the Circle were told to wait outside, but Python had a premonition that the plan was doomed from the beginning. He disregarded orders and

led the Circle inside to discover King Cobra surrounded by Black Mamba and his large contingent of VIPER agents. The Serpentine Circle fought valiantly but were eventually overcome. It was then discovered that King Cobra and his aide, Boa Constrictor, had escaped. It didn't take Python long to realize that he and the Circle had been used as a diversion to allow their leader time to escape. Always a fast thinker, Python turned this disaster to his advantage and offered his services to VIPER.

In a very short time Python proved his loyalty to the Supreme Serpent and was asked to form the Serpent Syndicate. Python saw this as a perfect opportunity to feed his hunger for power. He asked the Supreme Serpent for the right to choose his own officers and was granted his request. He chose his old friends Hiss and Komodo to help him lead the Syndicate.

It should be noted that Python is one of the few people who are aware of the true nature of the Supreme Serpent, although he does not know precisely where the Serpent is located.

Quote: "VIPER will one day rule the world—with Python in the captain's seat!"

Personality: Python is a megalomaniac. His supreme wish is to rule the whole world, preferably with King Cobra begging at his feet during his moment of triumph. He will take any and all opportunities to humiliate and thwart King Cobra. Python hates King Cobra so much that he has been known to go out of his way to thwart the leader of COIL. Python usually delegates the work to his Serpent Syndicate, but is never adverse to leading a strike force when he knows King Cobra is present. Python is highly intelligent and a brilliant tactician.

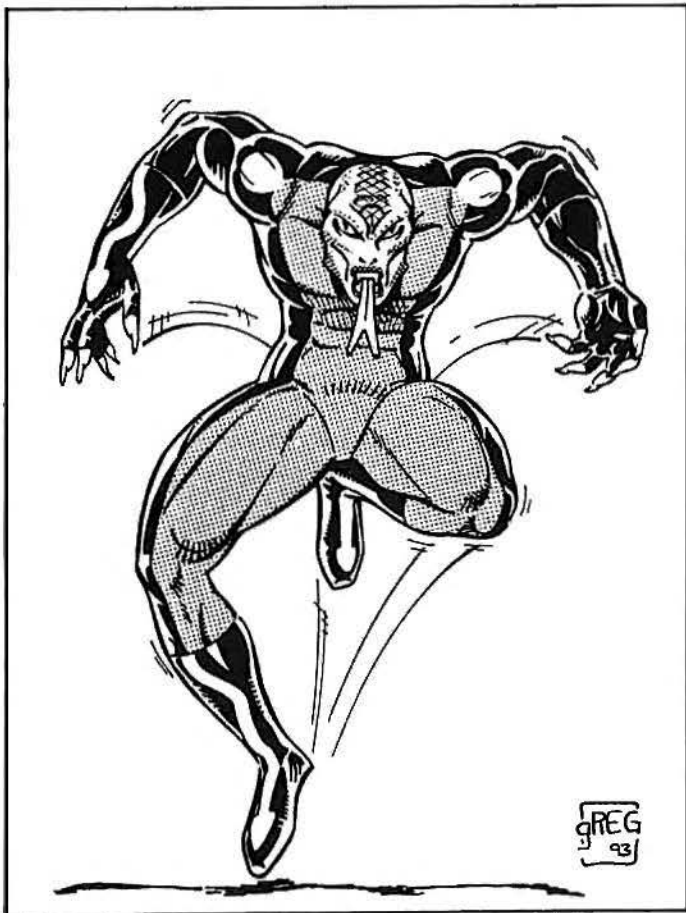
Powers/Tactics: Python has gained in strength, speed and reflexes. He can also stretch approximately twelve feet. He has gained hardened skin and the ability to cling to smooth surfaces, as well as the regenerative nature of most reptiles.

His mutant powers have given him a natural defense that makes him hard to hurt. He has also gained a strange mental link to his best friend, Hiss.

In combat, Python uses his elongating abilities to entwine and squeeze his opponents. But usually he stands aside and supervises the combat. Since their transformation, Python has had a telepathic link to his friend Hiss (Jim Carpenter) and the two are inseparable. Python also leads his VIPER Five Team whenever necessary. His personal combat philosophy is "Without pain there is no gain."

Power Variation: To adjust Python for lower powered campaigns, reduce his DEX to 26, his SPD to 5, and his STUN to 45, and reduce his levels to +2 w/Grab. To adjust Python for high-powered campaigns, increase his DEX to 33, his SPD to 7, and increase his STR to 45.

Appearance: Python is 6'7" tall and weighs 225 lbs. His body is covered with green-brown scales. He wears black gloves and boots. He has had a body suit specially designed for him to stretch with his body. It is dark green in the front and black on the side and back. There is green trim on the shoulders, as well as on the gloves and boots. When relaxing, he prefers to wear dark colored sport jackets and slacks with T-shirts.



BLACK MAMBA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
45	STR	35	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
25	CON	30	ECV: 4
12	BODY	4	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
10	EGO	0	
20	PRE	10	
6	COM	-2	
20+	PD	11	
15+	ED	10	
6	SPD	27	
14	REC	0	
50	END	0	
50	STUN	2	
			Costs
			Char: 169 Base: 100
			+ +
			Powers: 121 Disads: 190
			= =
			Totals: 290 190
Cost	Powers	END	
50	6d6 Drain (½ from CON, ½ from PD), ½ END, Must Grab	3	
26	+13" Running (19" total)	4	
5	IR Vision		
15	Armor (+5 PD, +5 ED)		
3	Acrobatics 14-		
3	Breakfall 14-		
7	SC: Biochemistry 16-		
3	SC: Biology 12-		
3	SC: Chemistry 12-		
6	+3 levels w/Grab		
100+	Disadvantages		
10	2x STUN from fire attacks		
5	1½x STUN from cold attacks		
15	Hatred of his freakish condition		
20	Obsessed with destroying King Cobra		
10	Loyal to Python		
5	Phys Lim: Cold blooded		
20	Distinctive features (reptile) (uncont, causes terror)		
10	Hunted by Police 11-		
10	Public ID		
85	Villain bonus		

Background: The day that Jefferson Durant won the Nobel Prize was the last happy day of his life. On that day, King Cobra stirred from his nest, and ordered the COIL to strike at Durant's family. When Durant heard of this, he was desperate. He agreed to work for King Cobra, do whatever he wanted. To ensure his loyalty, King Cobra mutated Durant into the hideous Black Mamba, as he believed that all serpentine things would follow him without question. But this was not the case; all Durant cared about was his family. He began performing jobs as a supervillain in King Cobra's service. Finally, he managed to track down his family in one of the COIL's dungeons.

They had been dead for months.

"I ordered them killed after you botched that job against the Champions," King Cobra smiled. "I wondered how long it would take you to notice!" Then he laughed.

After failing to kill King Cobra, Durant freed himself from the COIL's servitude and vowed revenge. He would find a way to destroy Cobra. Cobra had mutilated him, kidnapped



his family, and murdered them; there was a lot he had to pay for. Black Mamba would make him pay with a currency that was far too debased to make up for his crimes, but was the only thing he cherished—the life of King Cobra!

Black Mamba soon went to join the group known as VIPER, as a mercenary. During one of his jobs he was with Brick and a few VIPER Elite agents when COIL and King Cobra burst into their hideout. The battle was not going well for King Cobra and his Serpentine Circle, so the King ordered three of his men to cover their retreat. After the King left, the three surrendered. Feeling sorry for the obviously mutated members of COIL, Mamba decided to let them escape only if they promised to not rejoin COIL. They agreed.

A few years later, Mamba was approached by Python, one of the three he helped leave COIL. Python told Black Mamba about an organization within the ranks of VIPER that Python and a few others were joining. He asked Mamba if he would be interested in joining the ranks of the VIPER generals, the Serpent Syndicate. Mamba agreed and soon found out that he was the first of Python's recruits into the Syndicate.

Black Mamba watched as Python gathered three more members into the Syndicate. And he was present when the Dragon Queen made her extremely dramatic entrance and impressive application. The five other members all had their own reasons for being in the group, but Mamba was running on pure hate.

With VIPER's massive resources, Mamba could increase his chances of wiping out King Cobra and his COIL organization. And he will do it, no matter who gets in his way.

Quote: "King Cobra must die, and no man, woman, or child shall get in the way of my mission and live!"

Personality: Black Mamba is fanatically obsessed with the destruction of King Cobra. He will let nothing stand in his way. If he has to blow up a plane full of innocents just to kill one Coil agent, he'll do it. To Black Mamba, his vendetta means everything, and the ends do justify the means.

Black Mamba loathes his body, but realizes that there are certain advantages to having superpowers when you're out to kill a powerful supervillain like King Cobra. It is unlikely that he'll try to reverse his own condition.

Powers/Tactics: Black Mamba has been mutated by the Coil-gene, a special genetic material insertion technique that gives certain humans the features of snakes. Mamba is now cold blooded, and is forced to stay in above zero temperatures or hibernate. Attacks that change temperatures dramatically, such as cold or fire attacks, have a severe effect on him.

If he's forced to fight, Black Mamba will use his power drain at first (note that the effect of the PD drain is halved), then punch when he feels his opponent's defenses are sufficiently weakened.

Power Variation: For lower-powered campaigns, decrease his DEX to 20, his SPD to 5, and his Drain to 4d6. For higher-powered campaigns, increase his DEX to 29, his REC to 20, and his Drain to 8d6.

Appearance: Black Mamba is 5'11" tall and weighs 180 lbs. His scales are bright gold with a black tint, and he has serpentine eyes and tongue. Mamba wears gladiator style uniform of blood red leather, with black fingerless gloves and boots, when in the field. When off duty he wears a lab coat and loose fitting clothing.



KOMODO

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
55	STR	30	OCV: 5
15	DEX	15	DCV: 5
33	CON	46	ECV: 3
23	BODY	20	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
8	EGO	-4	
25	PRE	15	
6	COM	-2	
10	PD	2	
10	ED	3	
4	SPD	15	
15	REC	0	
72	END	0	
60	STUN	0	

Costs

Char:	141	Base:	100
	+		+
Powers:	157	Disads:	198
	=		=
Totals:	298		298

Cost	Powers	END
15	EC—Lizard Form Powers	
10-a	Growth : 3 levels : 0 END, persistent, always on	0
22-b	1½d6 AP HKA bite (3d6+1 HKA w/STR)	2/5
36-c	Armor (+20 PD, +20 ED) Visible (leathery skin)	
14	Knockback Resistance, 7" (10" total)	
10	Regeneration (1 BODY)	
6	+3" Running (9" total)	2
7	+8" Running (x10 END) (17" total)	+10
3	Extra limb : Tail, non-manipulative (-½)	
5, 2	Climbing 13-; KS: VIPER 11-	
2, 3	KS: Alligator Wrestling 11-; PS: Football 12-	
3, 3	Streetwise 15-; Survival (desert) 11-	
6, 10	+2 w/Bite, Grab, Punch; +2 w/DCV	

100+ Disadvantages

20	Berserk, if under withdrawal from his drugs 14-, rec. 11-
15	Overconfidence
10	Loves to Show off
20	Hatred of the police
5	Loves to torture
10	Dependence drugs, once/week, 3d6
20	Distinctive feature (reptile)
15	Hunted by King Cobra, NCI, 8-
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent, NCI, 8-
10	Public ID
83	Villain Bonus

Background: Mack Fog was a professional football player for four years until he was caught on a drug violation. The police, acting on a tip, found a large amount of drugs hidden in his car and arrested him. The judge decided to use him as an example, so Mack was sentenced to a maximum of ten years without parole. Since life was hard for him in prison, he took the first opportunity to escape.

Mack searched for the perfect place to hide and found it in a school that trained mercenaries. His natural athletic skills and violent nature soon put him at the head of his class, which brought him to the attention of Malcolm Maxwell, the new owner of the school. They soon became fast friends.

Mack loved his new position, that was given to him by Malcolm, head of discipline at the mercenary camp. He was noted for his ruthlessness and fits of anger. At one point, he even broke the neck of one of his subordinates for disobeying an order.

One day King Cobra and his COIL Organization marched into the school and took over. King Cobra asked for volunteers to join his group and both Mack and Malcolm joined. The next few weeks went smoothly but Mack noticed a change in some of the other volunteers. He soon discovered that King Cobra was putting his Coil-gene into the food. Mack also noticed that he was stronger than ever.

King Cobra then asked for volunteers for an experiment. This program promised to enhance the abilities of the volunteers beyond the normal human limits. Mack and Malcolm jumped at the chance. Mack saw this as an opportunity to eventually revenge himself on those who imprisoned him. Within a short time he noticed that the drug was causing him to grow taller and acquire a tail. Very soon he had become ten feet tall.

Mack looked like a ten foot tall walking Komodo Dragon, thus he was given the name Komodo. Komodo worked for King Cobra in his Serpentine Circle as the enforcer. If the King wanted someone's legs broken, he would send in Komodo.

This went on for a year, until King Cobra and the rest of the Circle went out to locate Black Mamba, one of the only ex-members of the Circle. It was at this encounter that King Cobra fled and betrayed all but his personal bodyguard. Python, Komodo's best friend, suggested that they quit COIL and go solo for a while. So along with Hiss and Python, Komodo went into hiding.

Then one day, Python approached both Hiss and Komodo and asked them if they wanted to join VIPER as their generals, as a member of the Serpent Syndicate. Komodo jumped at the opportunity and signed up. Komodo now works for VIPER as one of the generals for their troops. He is also the strongman of the Serpent Syndicate and is first to be sent into the field.

Quote: "Out of my way, slug, or I'll squish you!"

Personality: Komodo is a very violent person. He likes to flaunt his huge size and tremendous strength. He has a maniacal hatred for the police and will do anything, short of endangering his mission, to kill them. He gets a psychotic thrill out of frightening his opponents. Komodo still has a serious drug problem which helps fuel his fits of violent rage.

Powers/Tactics: Komodo will charge head first into any skirmish, preferring to go for his fellow giants. His favorite tactic in a fight is to tackle his enemy and then try to bite them.

Komodo is incredibly durable and is capable of moving with extreme swiftness. This extra movement is only usable in short bursts, though, and it costs a lot of endurance.

Power Variation: For low-powered campaigns, reduce Komodo's bite to a 1d6 AP HKA, his STR to 45, and his Armor to +15 PD, +15 ED. For high powered campaigns, increase his DEX to 20, his SPD to 5, and his Armor to +25 PD, +25 ED.

Appearance: Komodo is 12 ft. tall and weighs about 1200 lbs. He is extremely bulky and his hide is thick and green-gray. His huge mouth is very powerful and full of razor-sharp teeth. Komodo wears a blood red, sleeveless muscle shirt that has the VIPER symbol on the left breast, black sweat pants and tennis shoes, black leather biker gloves, and black leather muscle bands on each upper arm. Komodo also tends to stand hunched over because buildings are not designed for people of his height.

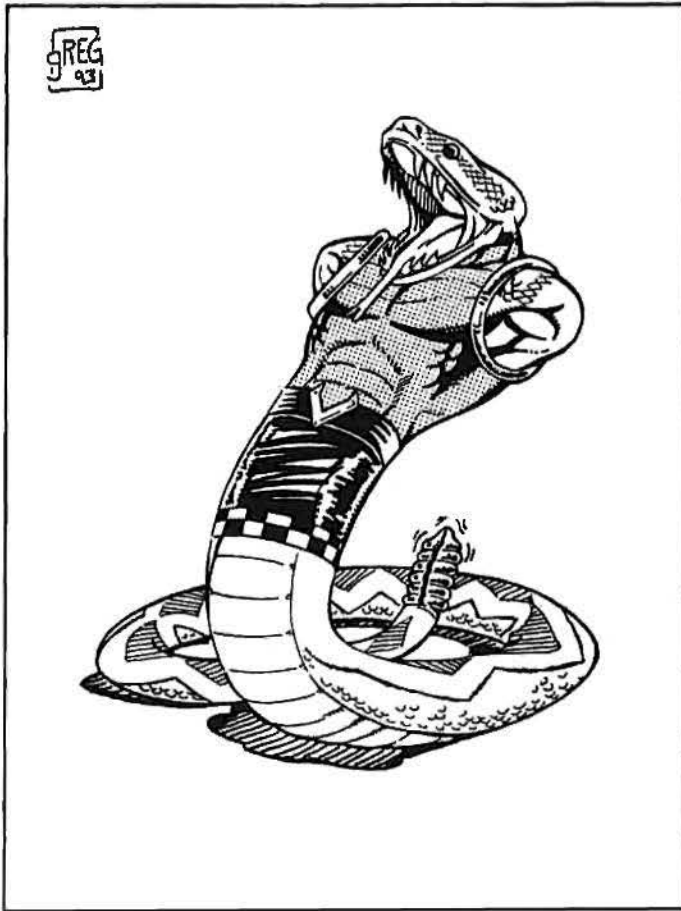
HISS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
40	STR	20*	OCV: 7
21	DEX	33	DCV: 7
28	CON	36	ECV: 3
15	BODY	6*	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
8	EGO	-4	Costs
15	PRE	5	
4	COM	-3	Char: 104 Base: 100
6	PD	0	+ +
6	ED	0	Powers: 146 Disads: 150
4	SPD	9	= =
15	REC	6	Totals: 250 150
50	END	-3	
45	STUN	1	* Characteristics include the effects of growth

Cost	Powers	END
10	EC—Snake Powers	
7-a	Growth (2 levels, 0 END, persistent, always on)	0
39-b	5d6 AVLD (Defense is any resistant def) ½ END, linked to grab	3
41-c	Armor +19 PD, +15 ED	
7-d	+15 STR, 0 END, for grab and escape only	0
2	+1" Running, 7" total	
20	Regeneration, 2 BODY/turn	
5	Climbing 14-	
3	Contortionist	
5	Escape Artist 14-	
3	Stealth 13-	
4	+2 w/Grab	

100+	Disadvantages
15	Physical Limitation: No arms
10	Physical Limitation: Cannot speak
10	Psych Limitation: Vengeful
5	Psych Limitation: Reclusive
15	Psych Limitation: Loyal to Python
20	Obsessed with killing King Cobra
20	Distinctive feature (reptile)
15	Hunted by King Cobra, NCI 8-
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent, NCI 14-
10	Public ID
30	Villain Bonus

Background: Jim Carpenter was a semi-successful cat-burglar who decided to improve his skills. He joined a school for mercenaries and quickly became the best of his class. His best friend in the school was Malcolm Maxwell. The two were inseparable. And when Maxwell took over the school after two years, Jim found himself second in command.



One day a stranger arrived and asked if anyone would like to join his newly formed COIL Organization. Carpenter and Maxwell saw this as an opportunity to improve their lot in life. King Cobra then ordered those in the school who joined him to kill anyone who did not. No one hesitated, not even Jim.

Once inside COIL, he and Malcolm, with their friend Mack Fog, rose through the ranks quickly. And when King Cobra offered them all the opportunity to participate in his grand experiment, the three of them stepped forward willingly. King Cobra decided to give Jim repeated exposures to the Coil-gene to see what the result would be. Jim was strapped to a lab table with his arms and legs immobile and his eyes covered. When he regained consciousness, Jim could not move his limbs and when he tried to speak only a "Hissss" came out. Jim Carpenter had become a cross between a giant python and a diamondback rattler. King Cobra was annoyed by the inability of his new mutant to speak and ordered further experiments. The result was that Jim, now Hiss, developed a telepathic link with Python, formally his friend Malcolm Maxwell.

Hiss took part in the frustrated attack on VIPER and was betrayed by King Cobra. When his other friends defected he gladly joined them. Hiss, like his friends, had to hide out and was gladly put up by Python. The three of them stayed together out of fear of retaliation for their actions against COIL and King Cobra. It was at this time that Python was asked to head up a task force in VIPER. Hiss was then asked by Python to join the same unit as his personal bodyguard. Hiss joined without hesitation. He is now a loyal member of VIPER and the Serpent Syndicate. He is also Python's personal body guard. Hiss is sometimes labelled as "Hissss" by the media; several journalists who have used that name in print have vanished mysteriously.

Quote: "Hisssssssss. Hissss."

Personality: Hiss has become cold and unforgiving since his transformation. He is very reclusive and associates only with his small group of friends within the Syndicate. He is unwaveringly loyal to Python and will defend him under any circumstances. He is also devoted to his friend Komodo, formerly Mack Fog, and VIPER.

Hiss really has one goal in life: to kill the monster who made him what he is today—King Cobra. Once that is accomplished, then he can relax and help his friend, Python, in whatever he does.

Powers/Tactics: Hiss is no longer human. He has lost his legs and arms, however, his shoulders are pronounced on his new snake body. He has lost the use of his voice and hisses constantly. Hiss has increased in size and strength, and his reflexes have improved. His body regenerates just like a snake. His skin has developed into a tough, scaly hide and he now has a very lethal bite. Hiss has learned to use his serpent form to the best of his abilities. His favorite attack is to tangle an opponent in his coils and squeeze the breath from him. He also uses his bite when necessary.

Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, reduce Hiss's DEX to 18 and remove his levels with Grab, and lower his STR to 30. For higher powered campaigns, increase his levels with grab to +4, and give him an extra 10 points of STUN.

Appearance: Hiss' "torso" never became completely serpentine and still has the vestiges of shoulders and a neck. He is about 12' long and 2' in diameter at his thickest point. He looks like a diamondback rattler with red, green and brown markings and has the head of a python. His mouth has huge fangs and is lined with razor sharp teeth. His eyes are of a haunting bluish tint.

DRAGON QUEEN HUMAN FORM

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
18	CON	16	ECV: 5
20	BODY	20	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
18	INT	8	
14	EGO	8	Costs
20	PRE	10	Char: 125 Base: 100
28	COM	9	+ +
5+	PD	2	Powers: 132 Disads: 147
5+	ED	1	= =
4	SPD	10	Totals: 247 247
10	REC	6	
30	END	-3	
40	STUN	3	

Cost	Powers	END
30	Martial Arts (Ninjitsu)	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Escape 0 0 +30 STR vs. Grab	
	Nerve Pinch -1 +1 3½d6 NND	
	Back Kick +1 +3 6d6	
	Strike 0 +2 8d6	
	Roundhouse -2 +1 10d6	
	Disarm -1 +1 +25 STR vs. Disarm	
	Kidney Blow -2 0 1d6 HKA	
12	+3 DCs w/Ninjitsu (added in)	
45	Armor +10PD, +10ED, Hardened	
10	Regeneration, 1 BODY/turn	
3	LS: vs. Aging	
2	+1" Running (7" total)	1
2	KS Ninjitsu 11-	
3	English (fluent, Chinese is native)	
3	Japanese	
2	Familiar with common melee weapons	
3	Acrobatics 13-	
3	Breakfall 13-	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Stealth 13-	
5	Streetwise 14-	
3	Tactics 13-	

100+ Disadvantages
5 1½x STUN from Magic
15 Psych Lim: Methodical, Obsessed with Orderliness
15 Psych Lim: Vengeful (common, strong)
10 Psych Lim: Megalomaniac (uncommon, strong)
10 Psych Lim: Paranoid (common, moderate)
15 Distinctive Features (unearthly beautiful)
15 Watched by Supreme Serpent, NCI 14-
15 Secret ID
47 Villain Bonus

DRAGON FORM

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
45	STR	5*	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
38	CON	56	ECV: 5
20	BODY	20	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
18	INT	8	
14	EGO	8	Costs
30	PRE	20	Char: 204 Base: 100
2	COM	-4	+ +
25	PD	16*	Powers: 306 Disads: 410
25	ED	11*	= =
4	SPD	12	Totals: 510 510
20	REC	18	
70	END	-3	
60	STUN	13	

Cost	Powers	END
30	EC—Dragon Powers	
19-a	Growth, 9 levels, 0 END (+45 STR, +9 BODY, and STUN, -6 to per rolls, +4" reach, -9" KB, only one level of growth added per phase (-1)	0
20-b	Density Increase, 6 levels, 0 END, Persistent, Always On, (+30 STR, -6" KB, +6 PD & ED), * Added in	0
22-c	25" Flight, ½ END, (OIF Wings)	2
30-d	2½d6 HKA (5d6 w/STR), ½ END	2
37	Magic Pool (30 pts) storm magic, requires violent weather or water, only for storm effects (-1)	
32	Damage Resistance, 25 PD, 25 ED, Hardened	
20	Regeneration, 2 BODY/turn	
30	Full Life Support	
50	Multiform: human (250 pts)	
3	English (fluent, Chinese is native)	
3	Japanese (fluent)	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Streetwise 15-	
3	Tactics 13-	

100+ Disadvantages
5 1½x STUN from Magic
15 Psych Lim: Methodical, Obsessed with Orderliness (common, strong)
15 Psych Lim: Vengeful (common, strong)
10 Psych Lim: Megalomaniac (uncommon, strong)
10 Psych Lim: Paranoid (common, moderate)
25 Distinctive Features (dragon, causes fear)
15 Watched by Supreme Serpent, NCI, 14-
15 Secret ID
300 Villain Bonus

Background: During the Ming Dynasty, a nobleman's daughter attracted the attention of Ao Shun, one of the Dragon Kings, lords of the rain and sea. He wooed her, despite her father's protests, and won the heart of Yin Li. But Yin Li had been betrothed to the great warrior Tsai Kusago since infancy. When Tsai Kusago heard of her indiscretion he challenged the Dragon King to mortal combat. The two powerful men fought for hours with one then the other taking the upper hand. But it was finally Tsai Kusago who triumphed. Upon his deathbed Ao Shun cursed the great warrior. "My beloved will give birth to only one child and it shall be female. Her power will be beyond your understanding or control. She shall be my avenger."



Yin Li's father quickly married her to Tsai Kusago and she was soon found to be with child. Yin Li knew that the child was not Tsai Kusago's but she told no one. The pregnancy was not a normal one. She carried heavy but seemed to suffer no discomfort. When her time came, the labor was easy. The baby was a girl and the most perfectly formed child anyone had ever seen. Everyone who saw her loved her—except Tsai Kusago.

Bitter about the child and frightened at the prospect that the curse was being fulfilled, Tsai Kusago became a violent man. He took his anger out on anyone and anything, including his beautiful young wife. When the little girl, named Tsai Min, was ten years old, her father beat her mother so badly that she did not recover. Tsai Min vowed that someday she would avenge her mother's death.

At about this time it was noticed that Tsai Min was not growing normally. She appeared younger and smaller than she really was. Her nurse called in the best physicians, yet none of them could discover what was wrong. She seemed perfect in every other way. As the years went by, her growth continued to slow but her intelligence increased phenomenally. Also, her appearance began to change; she was always beautiful, but now her features began to reflect an almost unearthly beauty. When this news was brought to Tsai Kusago, he called in a priest to examine her. The priest informed Tsai Kusago that the young girl was possessed by a spirit, but he did not know which one. The warrior demanded that the priest do anything to remove the spirit (and, hopefully, also remove the curse).

The priest demanded that Tsai Min be tied to a bed so he could perform the exorcism. But Tsai Min refused to cooperate and her father had his guards force her to obey. It became quite a fight because Tsai Min seemed to increase in strength the more she struggled. As her rage built, she felt herself lose control. And the guards soon found themselves trying to hold a young ten foot long dragon. Everyone ran screaming as the now transformed Tsai Min took her anger out on everything before escaping.

The new Dragon-Min then began to vent years of suppressed rage out on the village below. None could withstand her attacks. And the people began demanding that the warrior lord protect them from the evil spirit. Tsai Kusago sent messengers to all corners of his kingdom to look for a magician to solve his problem. The call was answered by an old man who refused to give his name, but was really the god Shui-Kuan, the Defender of Men. He informed Tsai Kusago that the only way to remove the spirit-dragon was for him to confess his greatest sin. At first the warrior lord protested that he had never committed a sin. But the gentle persuasion of Shui-Kuan got him to confess to the killing of Ao Shun the Dragon Lord. Tsai Kusago was told to write this on three pieces of paper; one he had to burn, one he had to bury and the last was attached to a rock and thrown into the ocean. When the feat was accomplished a terrible storm erupted. Gale force winds began tearing trees from the ground, and Dragon-Min found herself tossed like a leaf. Blue lightning began to flash around her and as she touched the ground, a bolt struck her. The storm ended as suddenly as it had begun and left behind a huge jade figure that had once been Dragon-Min. Tsai Kusago had the statue removed to a cave near the ocean.

In 1905, a team of explorers discovered the jade statue. Not knowing of its history, they carefully transported it to Tokyo for further study. One evening the warehouse where the statue was stored was broken into. The burglars were members of an ancient religious sect who worshipped Tsai Min the Great Dragon Spirit. They had followed their "goddess" and now wished to return her to her resting place in China. They were performing a purification ceremony before moving the statue when a storm suddenly erupted outside. Blue lightning flashed and one bolt struck the warehouse. It tore a huge hole in the roof and the building began to burn with a blue fire. Another bolt of lightning came through the damaged roof and struck the jade statue. Suddenly the worshipers found themselves confronted with the living Dragon-Min, who immediately spread her wings and flew out the hole in the roof.

Dragon-Min took human form and found a hiding place in her new world. She spent the next sixty-five years living off the streets of Tokyo, watching and learning. She gained power on those streets and came to the attention of many of the gangs. She was even known to the Yakuza. But none could come close to her, or even find her unless she wished it. And her wealth became immeasurable.

In 1970, using the name Shiko-Me, which is a Japanese dragon demon, she emigrated to America and set up headquarters in San Francisco's Chinatown. On the surface she kept the appearance of a respectable Chinese business woman. But the truth was that she had started a new branch of her underworld organization. She found herself at odds with the I.R.S. due to a misunderstanding, and they took most of her vast wealth. Shiko-Me then found herself looking

for employment. Eventually, through the underworld grapevine, she was told about the newly formed Serpent Syndicate with VIPER. She decided that it would be a good place to start, until she could regain her wealth and power. She is now known as the Dragon Queen, because of her ability to transform, and is a co-leader of the Serpent Syndicate with Python.

Quote: "Every man can be either bought or broken. It is my greatest joy to discover which method to use."

Personality: Shiko-Me the Dragon Queen does not express her emotions openly. But she is a very passionate woman. When she loves, she loves completely. Yet those who have enraged her suffer horrible deaths; for she never forgives or forgets. Her main motivation is to gathering as much power as she can. But she is extremely cautious in her "business" dealings. Very few have ever won her complete confidence. Even those in the Serpent Syndicate do not know that she is still hesitant to trust them.

Powers/Tactics: Dragon Queen is an expert at several forms of martial arts, but still prefers the style she learned on the streets of Tokyo. Her movements are very quick and few can match her ferocity in combat. She will only revert to her dragon form when the advantage is no longer hers. Her claws and teeth are very formidable weapons. Even in dragon form she uses her street smarts, and her attacks are always very calculated.

Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, keep her human form the same, and reduce her Dragon form's DEX to 15, reduce her base Strength to 10, and reduce her maximum size to seven levels. For higher powered campaigns, keep her human form the same, increase her SPD to 6, add three Overall levels, boost her defenses to 30, and her Stun to 80, and increase her Storm Power Pool to a base of 60 points.

Appearance: In human form, Shiko-Me has an unearthly appearance that is beyond beautiful. Her forehead is very high and her hair, which is snow white with red streaks at the temples, is more like a mane framing her face. Her eyes are large and jade green. She is short, only 4'10", as women of her century were, but her body is very well muscled. Her skin is pale with an olive cast to it. She prefers to wear loose clothing and goes bare foot. This allows her to transform into the dragon whenever necessary. She also does not appear to age.

In dragon form, Shiko-Me can grow up to 30' long and 5' in diameter. Her scales are jade green but have an iridescent appearance. And her hair becomes a beautiful mane around her head. Her mouth is full of razor sharp teeth. Her claws are sharp enough to tear through steel.

GILA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
20	CON	20	ECV: 4
20	BODY	20	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
15	INT	5	
10	EGO	0	
15	PRE	5	Costs
4	COM	-3	Char: 158 Base: 100
8	PD	4	+ +
5	ED	1	Powers: 205 Disads: 263
5	SPD	14	= =
10	REC	4	Totals: 363 363
50	END	5	
65	STUN	25	

Cost	Powers	END
42	17d6 Mind Control, based on CON, single command "Stop", must grab (-1/2),	5
41	Armor +12 PD, +10 ED, Hardened	
27	+40 PRE, Offensive Only (-1/2)	
48	+14" Running, 20" total, 0 END	0
20	Regeneration, 2 BODY	
10	Clinging, 20 STR	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Shadowing 11-	
3	SC: Biochemistry 12-	
4	SC: Chemistry 13-	
4	SC: Genetics 13-	

100+	Disadvantages
10	2x STUN from cold attacks
15	Vengeful (common, strong)
5	Hatred of the COIL (uncommon, moderate)
10	Refuses to harm innocents (common, moderate)
20	Code of chivalry (common, total)
20	Distinctive feature (reptile)
10	Hunted by Water Moccasin 8-
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent, NCI, 8-
10	Public ID
133	Villain Bonus

Background: Dr. Mike Lancer was a dedicated chemist who was driven to find an antidote for the Coil-gene. However, when the college found out what he was working on they revoked his grants. Angry and frustrated, Dr. Lancer left the college and moved his family to Mexico. His lab assistant, and former lover, Dr. Paula Davis, accompanied them and helped him set up his new lab.

Several months later, Dr. Lancer walked into his office to find Dr. Davis rummaging through his files. He flew into a rage when he saw her holding the files on the Coil-gene. She refused to explain her actions and Dr. Lancer fired her immediately. What he did not know was that she had taken a vile of Coil-gene he had perfectly copied. Dr. Davis also made a secret call to COIL to let them know about Dr. Lancer's experiments and his location.

In the week that followed, Dr. Lancer continued his experiments for an antidote by testing it on the DNA of Gila monsters. He even found a willing volunteer among the locals. But events were in motion that prevented him from continuing his studies.



King Cobra immediately moved on the information that Dr. Davis supplied him. He sent the mutated agent known as Alligator with a few COIL agents to bring in Dr. Lancer. At first Alligator and his cohorts were calm, but Dr. Lancer still refused to go with them. So the COIL agents threatened the doctor's family. He became desperate and ran into his lab, where he drank the Coil-gene in an attempt to help his family. But he had not counted on the strength of the serum, and was knocked unconscious by the pain. Alligator and his agents thought the doctor was dead and proceeded to destroy any trace of his existence. When they were done there was just a burning pile of rubble left.

It was hours later when Dr. Lancer regained consciousness and dug himself out of the remains of his lab. His heart broke when he saw the carnage the COIL agents had left behind. There were several villagers trying to put out the fires who, when they saw the half-man/half-lizard standing in the ruins, thought this was the monster who had killed the "good doctor" and his family. They chased him from the area and he was forced to go into hiding.

While in his years of exile, Gila, which is what Lancer now called himself, had time to hone his hatred. He vowed that the ones who had done this would pay, no matter what the cost. So when he met Python and found that there were others out for the destruction of King Cobra, he saw this as his chance to exact that payment.

Gila made it known that he was interested in joining any organization that was for the destruction and downfall of COIL and King Cobra. It was at this time that Gila was approached by Python, a member of VIPER, and was asked to join a command group of the VIPER organization.

Gila joined VIPER as one of their generals in the Serpent Syndicate. He met three others like himself, other than Python, who shared the same hatred for King Cobra. This, and the position of general, made Gila feel like he might be able to avenge the murder of his family.

Quote: "Now that you have crossed my path, I have a reason to kill you!"

Personality: Gila is an extremely bitter and angry man. He will kill anyone and anything that gets in the way of his goals. He remembers any slight against him and will do his best to eventually take revenge.

Gila has vowed to kill King Cobra and Alligator, the two he holds responsible for the deaths of his family. He will go to almost any lengths to eliminate them. But despite his hatred, he can not bring himself to kill innocent bystanders, unlike Black Mamba.

Gila has given up finding an antidote for the Coil-gene because he realizes that his present form gives him advantages. Until he has succeeded in fulfilling his vows he will not reverse his condition.

Powers/Tactics: Gila, like his namesake, has a venomous bite that causes paralysis to his victims. He also has a terrifying hiss that makes most attackers think twice before they approach. He always hisses first as a warning to his opponent. If he succeeds in biting them and injecting his venom, he will move on to another opponent.

Like the reptile he is, Gila has to worry about changes in temperature, avoiding extreme cold. But he has gained the ability to regenerate.

Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, reduce his SPD to 4, his DEX to 20, his STUN to 45, and his Mind Control to 14 dice.

For higher powered campaigns, increase his SPD to 6, his REC to 15, and increase his Mind Control 18d6 at 0 END.

Appearance: Gila appears to be a 6' tall humanoid Gila monster with all its beautiful markings. His tongue is long and forked and he speaks with a raspy voice, emphasizing "sss". Gila wears a black pair of pants and a black t-shirt under a white lab coat. He also wears black army boots. Gila tends to stand hunched.

THE SNAKE PACK



MEMBERSHIP

The Snake Pack consists of the Pack Master, who controls the others, Kufi, Massasauga, and Coral. They usually work with at least one squad of VIPER Air-Cav. The membership is restricted to the three "snake men" under the Pack Master's control, but other mercenaries have been known to work with them.

BACKGROUND

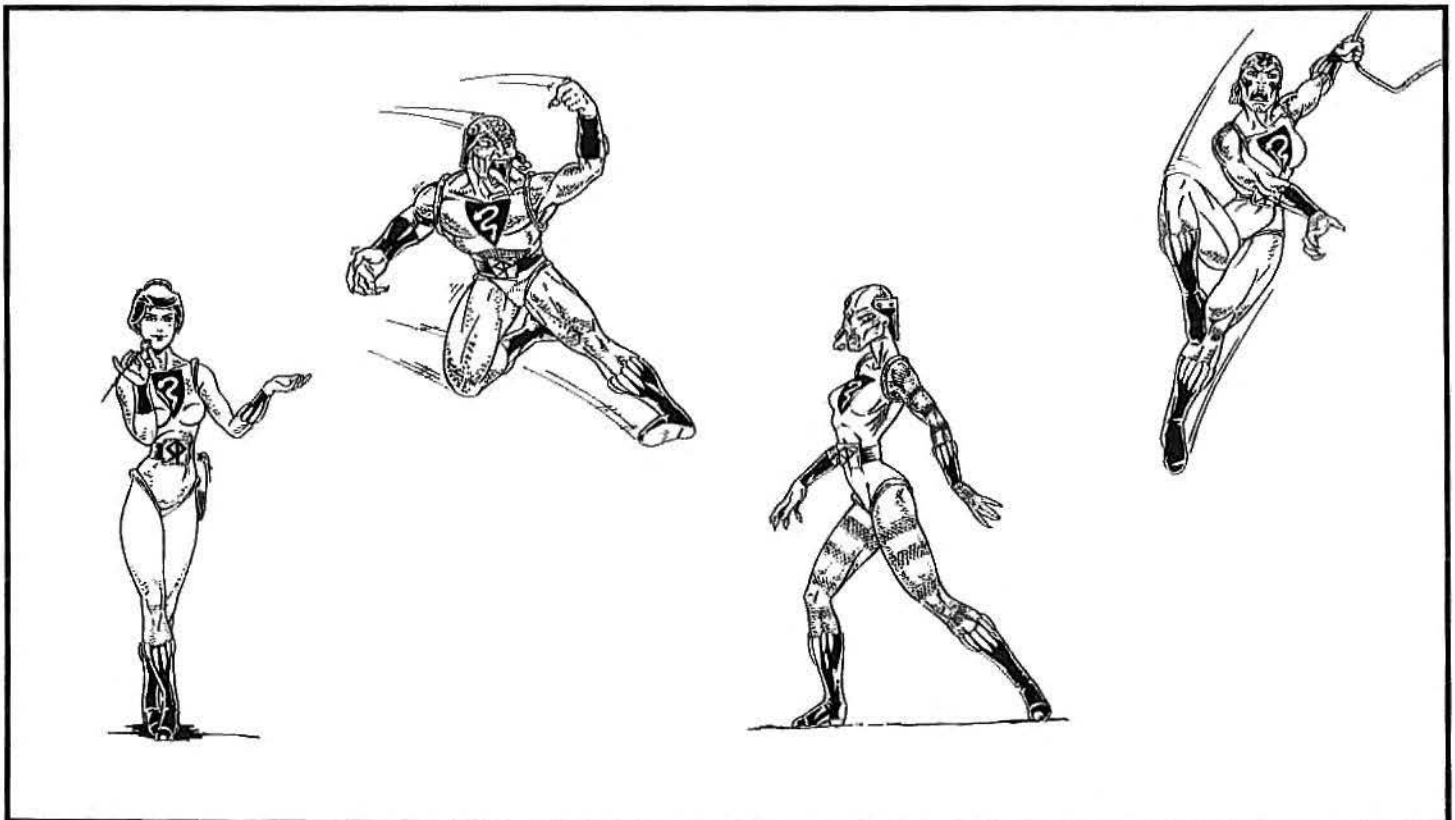
The Supreme Serpent was developing his own version of the Coil-gene, the VIPER-gene, and put a call out for volunteers willing to be tested on. He promised that anyone who stepped forward would be forgiven for any past crimes against VIPER. He also promised that, if the experiments went wrong, he would see to it that the volunteers would be "taken care of".

Three VIPER agents stepped forward. The first was April Runningwater, a former agent awaiting sentencing for stealing from VIPER. Number two was Ben Kup, a trainee who was not "making the grade". And finally there was Dr. Dawn Lovelady, one of the scientists working on the VIPER-gene. She felt that she could not make someone else go through the experiments without being willing to do so herself.

Each of the volunteers were injected with a VIPER-gene formula extracted from a different snake venom. April Runningwater received the formula from a deadly kufi, Ben Kup was injected with the formula of a massasauga rattle snake, and Dr. Lovelady was given the formula from a coral snake. All three were watched very closely.

But something went wrong. When the three awoke, they no longer had anything human in their personalities; they had developed the instincts of the snakes they were injected with. Quite a few VIPER agents were injured in the struggle to restrain the three and tranquilize them. The Supreme Serpent had them locked away, hoping to eventually find a use for the "snake men." He then discontinued the VIPER-gene program.

About a year later it came to the attention of the Supreme Serpent that one of the agents assigned to caring for the "snake men" was able to telepathically communicate with them. Her name was Ann Adams, and he had her extensively tested and trained to enhance her mental abilities. He then assigned her the task of training and controlling the "snake men." She was very successful in the task, and within months the Supreme Serpent had a new and extremely deadly weapon. He dubbed it his Snake Pack, like a dog pack, and gave Ann Adams the title of Pack Master.



Pack Master feels sorry for the members of the Snake Pack and uses her mental link with them to try and touch whatever humanity is left in them. She will do anything to remain as their leader, in hopes of making their lives better. She does not see them as the beasts everyone else is convinced they are. Because of her loyalty to the Snake Pack, she remains loyal to the Supreme Serpent and together they have become one of the most powerful assets in VIPER's fight against other organizations and superheroes.

GOALS

The Snake Pack itself has no real goals, other than pleasing the Pack Master. They tend to think on an animal level, so higher goals are beyond their understanding. But the Pack Master has the personal goal of regaining the lost humanity in her "snake men".

TACTICS

The Snake Pack likes to strike suddenly. They will hide, awaiting orders from the Pack Master, then strike as a unit against the opposition's "brick". Once he/she is taken out

they will turn on the enemy's "egoist". The Pack Master receives her instructions from the Air-Cav unit with them. The Pack Master will usually hold back in hiding to avoid capture, but always in sight of her Pack. The Air-Cav units also hang back, or in the air, to avoid the berserking "snake men" who will attack anything once they are in battle.

RELATIONS

The Snake Pack get along very well with each other and are totally devoted to the Pack Master. They have no interest in anyone outside of the group. And the other VIPER groups prefer to stay out of their way.

REPUTATION

The Snake Pack are extremely dangerous and are well known for their savagery. The general public does not know about them, even though there have been articles about a group of "snake men" committing murders. However, most government agencies and a lot of superhero teams are very aware of them.

Following the last incident involving CLOWN, one of the people in VIPER's Nest Operations division issued talking punching bags of CLOWN members to VIPER Nests. The punching bags say such things as: "I think I'm funny, but I'm not.", "CLOWN is stupid", and "I'm a dysfunctional moron". Several dozen of these balloons have been captured by superheroes and PRIMUS; one set of anti-CLOWN balloons was sold at an auction of superhero memorabilia for \$7,000. The success of this auction has spawned imitators (supervillain punching bags) and gave VIPER the idea of marketing VIPER Trading cards (three sets, a Nest Leader set, a supervillain set, and an arms and vehicles set), marketed along with other trading cards of dubious moral quality. The VIPER cards have been banned in six states.

PACK MASTER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
13	STR	3	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
18	CON	16	ECV: 9
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
23	INT	13	
26	EGO	32	
15	PRE	5	Costs
14	COM	2	Char: 130 Base: 100
5	PD	2	+ +
5	ED	1	Powers: 390 Disads: 420
4	SPD	10	= =
7	REC	0	Totals: 520 520
40	END	2	
35	STUN	4	

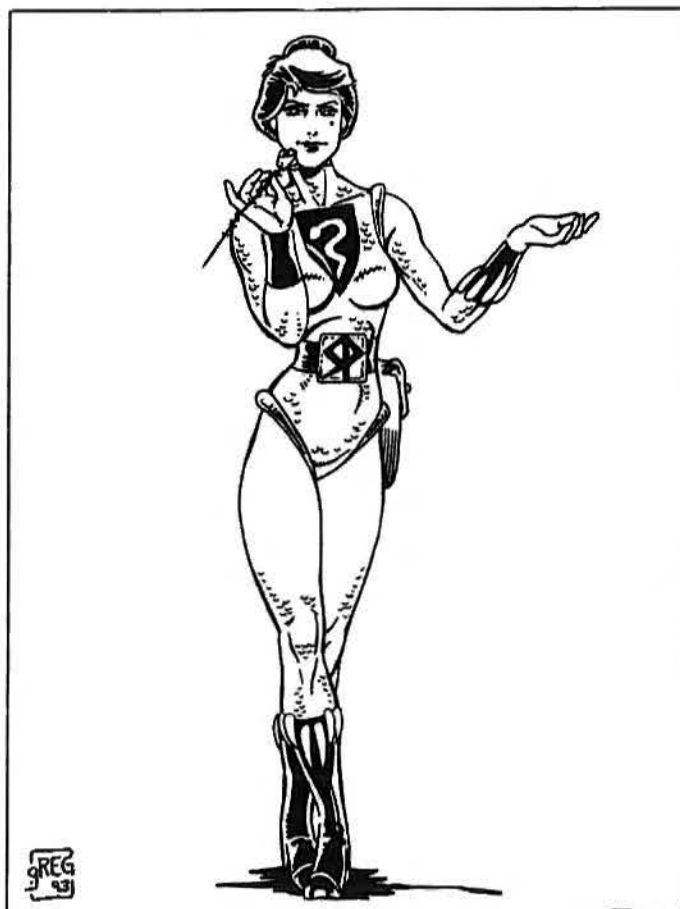
Cost	Powers	END
50	Multipower (75 pt reserve, activate 14-)	
5u	10d6 Mind Control, Telepathy, ½ END	4
5u	10d6 Telepathy, 0 END	0
5u	10d6 Mental Illusions, 0 END	0
5u	3d6 Entangle, Based on ECV, Fully Transparent	7
5u	5d6 Aid to all injured stats, heal only	7
25	EC—Mental Powers	
25-a	Force Field, +10 PD, +10 ED, Fully Invisible, 0 END	0
25-b	Invisibility vs. mental, visual and N-Ray, ½ END	3
35-c	Teleportation, 20", 1 floating location, x8 Mass	4
25-d	Mind link to all other Snake Pack members, 4 minds, any distance	
16	Martial Arts: Aikido	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Throw +0 +1 5d6 + v/5	
	Strike +1 +3 5d6	
	Dodge +0 +5 Dodge, Abort	
	Escape +0 +0 40 STR vs. grabs	
8	+2 DCs w/Aikido	
37	Mental Defense, 15 pts, usable by 4 others and herself, at range	
12	Armor, +5 PD, +5 ED, Hardened, OIF battle armor	
3	Flash Defense (5 pts), OIF helmet	
7	High range radio hearing, OIF helmet	
10	Telescopic vision, +10 to offset range penalties, OIF helmet	
3	UV Vision, OIF Helmet	
7	LS: Self-contained OIF suit	
11	2d6 RKA, OAF pistol, [6c]	
6	+3" Running (9" total)	2
10	2d6 Luck	
3	Acting 12-	
3	Breakfall 13-	
3	Bureaucratics 12-	
3	Concealment 14-	
3, 3	High Society 12-, Oratory 12-	
3, 3	Paramedics 14-, Tactics 14-	
4	Weapons Familiarity: common melee weapons, small arms	
3	SC: Psychology 12-	
3	KS: the human mind 14-	
3	KS: Aikido 14-	
10	+2 DCV in combat	
2	+1 Level w/pistol	
3	+1 Level w/all mental attacks	

100+ Disadvantages

5	Enraged if any of the Pack is injured 11-, rec. 14-
15	Psych Lim: Will Do Best to Obey Orders
10	Psych Lim: Loyal to Supreme Serpent
15	Psych Lim: Protective of Snake Pack
20	Hunted by Genocide 11-
15	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
13	Watched by Supreme Serpent 11-
177	Villain bonus

Background: Ann Adams was a psychiatrist with the uncanny ability to "sense" what was really on a person's mind. She had the mutant ability to read people's thoughts and manipulate them. But as a doctor she never succumbed to the temptation to heal her patients in that way. Her word was not enough, though, when her powers were made public. Her patients, in a panic, began claiming that they had been manipulated and demanded that the law do something about it. GENOCIDE saw this as the perfect opportunity to eliminate another mutant and started backing the cases. Out of desperation, Ann ran.

Dr. Adams hid out on the street for months, earning food and shelter by giving free medical help to the people who lived there. She was called in to one night to help a man with a gunshot wound, and thus was introduced to the world of VIPER. The Nest Leader offered her a job helping his other agents with whatever medical and psychological problems they might have. Ann accepted, despite some hesitation about working for criminals.



Years passed uneventfully and Dr. Adams became one of the favorite doctors in the VIPER organization. She openly helped everyone with her mutant mental abilities and everyone loved her for it. And when she heard about a new VIPER program that was looking for a resident psychiatrist, she jumped at the chance before knowing what it was. The position turned out to be more of an attendants job taking care of the needs of the "snake men", three persons who had been unsuccessfully transformed by the VIPER-gene formula. Immediately she began reading their minds and discovered that there was still a sliver of humanity left in the three. So, over the next year, Dr. Adams used her abilities to manipulate their minds to bring the small bits of their past personalities closer to the surface and begin training them.

The Supreme Serpent, who was receiving routine reports on the "snake men", saw potential in this situation and ordered Ann to continue training the three. But he also informed her that she was to prepare them for field duty and combat. He planned to use them as a medieval lord would a pack of dogs in combat. In fact, he dubbed them the Snake Pack and began calling Ann the Pack Master.

The Pack Master is thankful to VIPER for protecting her and providing her with a valuable research position. Because of this gratitude she occasionally looks the other way when she sees her Snake Pack ordered into highly dangerous situations or receiving mistreatment from the other agents.

Quote: "Don't hurt me. You won't like what the Pack does to you if you do."

Personality: Pack Master is really a very good person. She has always loved helping people and her present charges have proven to be a huge challenge to her compassion and training. She treats them as if they were her children. But Pack Master is capable of being very naive. She truly believes that the Supreme Serpent is looking out for the best interest of the Snake Pack. She doesn't believe that they are just a tool for him to ultimately reach his goal of world domination. Pack Master justifies the missions they go on as a way for the three to work out pent-up frustrations and learn to interact with the other agents. In her heart she knows the truth but refuses to face it.

Powers/Tactics: Pack Master has the classic mutant egoist abilities. She can reach into the minds of others and read their thoughts, plant suggestions, cause them to hallucinate, and even stimulate certain parts of the brain to immobilize them with excruciating pain.

In combat, Pack Master wears a VIPER agent's uniform and battle armor, and she carries a commander's pistol. She has received standard VIPER agent martial arts training and will use it when cornered. She will also use her mental powers to keep the enemy at a distance. Otherwise, she prefers to stay in the shadows and mentally instruct her Snake Pack. She will also use her mental defense to aid her pack.

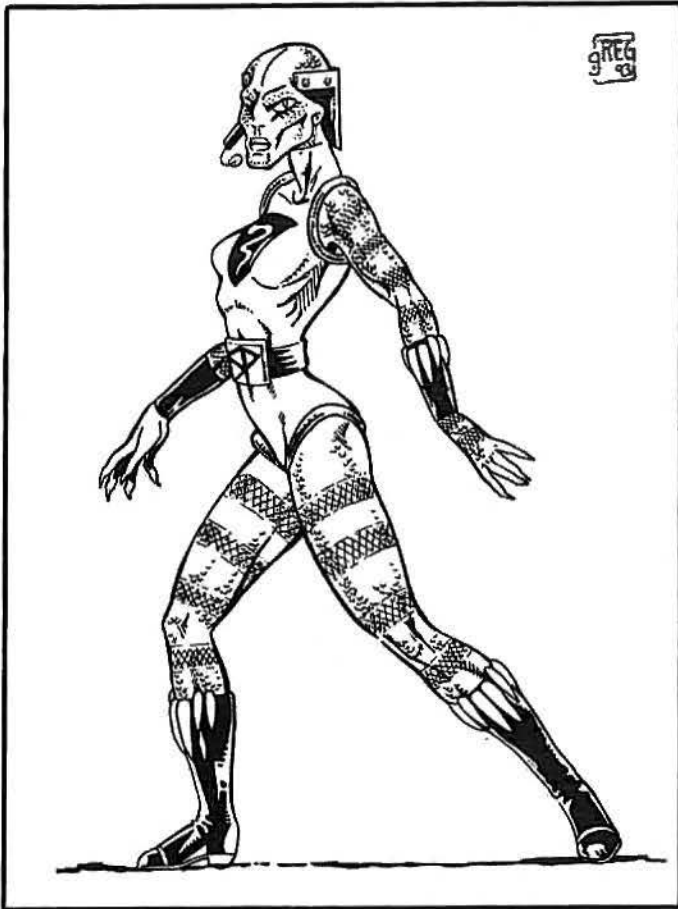
Power Variations: For lower powered campaigns, reduce her attacks from 10d6 to 8d6, and reduce her Mental Defenses to 10 points. For higher powered campaigns, increase her attacks to 12d6, her SPD to 6, and her STUN to 60.

Appearance: Pack Master is 5'6" tall, weighs 110 lbs. and very attractive. She tends to dress plainly, preferring her lab uniform when not in the field. Her hair is dark red and she wears it pulled back into a bun most of the time. She never wears makeup or jewelry. Her eyes are an unusually deep shade of green.

In the field she wears a modified VIPER agents uniform. She has removed most of the decorations and added a few touches of her own to identify her with her Snake Pack. Her uniform has a more feminine appearance than other VIPER suits, despite her refusal to wear other adornments.

CORAL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
15	STR	5	OCV: 7	
21	DEX	33	DCV: 7	
18	CON	16	ECV: 3	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
5	INT	-5		
8	EGO	-4	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
6	COM	-2	Char: 109	Base: 100
15	PD	12	+	+
15	ED	11	Powers: 116	Disads: 125
5	SPD	19	=	=
7	REC	0	Totals: 225	225
38	END	1		
35	STUN	3		
Cost	Powers		END	
20	Tunnelling, 4", through DEF 4		2	
34	3d6 AP HKA, +1 Stun multiple, END, no KB, no STR added (-), gradual effect over 1 minute, DCV Concentrate		4	
8	+4" Running, 10" total		2	
13	+13" Swimming, 15" total		2	
5	Damage Resistance (5 PD, 5 ED)			
17	Armor (+5 PD, +5 ED), OIF costume			
3	Two-way radio, OIF Helmet			
3	Climbing 13-			
3	Contortionist 13-			
3	Shadowing 11-			
3	Stealth 13-			
3	KS: Sign language 12-			
1	Immunity to coral snake venom			
100+	Disadvantages			
10	Enraged in combat 11-, rec. 14-			
10	Enraged if fellow Pack members downed 14-/11-			
15	Psych Lim: Never Questions Orders			
10	Psych Lim: Will Do Anything to Regain Memory			
10	Psych Lim: Protective of Pack Master			
10	Psych Lim: Animal tendencies			
20	Distinctive features : "snake man" (extreme)			
15	Hunted by Police 8-			
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent 8-			
15	Villain Bonus			



Background: Dr. Dawn Lovelady was not only one of the world's most renowned genetic chemists, but also one of its youngest. She had won several awards for her development of vaccines for numerous obscure diseases, including the deadly COIL-gene formula, and was admired and respected by her fellow scientists. Unfortunately this brought her to the attention of many criminal organizations, including VIPER.

The Supreme Serpent had his agents contact Dr. Lovelady with promises of financial support and total control of her experiments if she would consider working for him. But the good doctor informed the VIPER agents that she wanted nothing to do with them, and if they ever came near her again she would inform the authorities. The Supreme Serpent did not like taking "no" for an answer and had Dawn kidnapped. The authorities jumped on the case immediately, but no trace of the doctor was ever found. To the public, she had vanished completely from the edge of the earth.

The truth was much more bizarre. The Supreme Serpent had Dr. Lovelady taken to one of his Nests and systematically brainwashed her, using drugs and egoists. VIPER was eventually able to convince Dawn that she had always been a member of their organization. Her new memory had her being an orphan with a long criminal record who had been trained by VIPER in the scientific fields. So, feeling that she owed them, Dawn began working for VIPER to help them develop the VIPER-gene formula.

Over the next six months, Dawn worked hard and finally made a breakthrough. But it was untested, and possibly unstable. When the Supreme Serpent was informed of this he immediately sent out word that he was looking for volunteers to take the formula, and that anyone who agreed to submit would have all their sins against VIPER forgiven. Dawn tried to dissuade him and the other scientists, but to no avail. So she demanded that she become one of the test subjects. "If the person that created this is not ready for the tests, then neither is anyone else," was her argument. The Supreme Serpent finally agreed, reluctantly, and the three were prepared for the experiments.

When Dawn awoke she looked around and suddenly was overcome with a sense of danger. Nothing around her seemed familiar. So as any animal would do when cornered, she attacked the strangers in the room. Several VIPER agents were injured by her and the other two before they could be subdued. The three "snake men" were then thrown into a cage and left, until the Pack Master "rescued" them.

Coral, as she is now known, is capable of simple speech and understanding but her animal instincts are very strong. She is loyal to the Pack Master and the other two Snake Pack members, but doesn't tolerate the presence of others. Only with the influence of the Pack Master has what was left of her humanity come to the surface, but she has little or no memory of her past. Either of them.

Quote: "Don't make me mad. You not like me mad."

Personality: Coral was once a brilliant scientist but little or nothing of that intelligence is left. She is now more animal than human, and she maintains only a semblance of humanity with the help of the Pack Master. Coral is extremely quick tempered and is known to go completely berserk with enraged. She is capable of showing great pride in her accomplishments, but usually only to the other Pack members. In the presence of strangers she is painfully timid and obviously nervous. She has been known to panic and attack other VIPER agents when she thinks they are getting too close.

Powers/Tactics: Coral is an animal for all intents and purposes. She has gained the powers of a human-sized coral snake, which allows her to swim incredibly fast and tunnel into soft ground. She is faster, more agile, and her skin is scaly and tough. She also has gained the snake's bite. Coral also uses her VIPER uniform and equipment.

In combat, Coral likes to prepare herself by digging a hole in the ground and waiting for her foes to come to her. Then she will attempt to bite them and inject her poison.

Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, reduce Coral's killing attack to a 2d6+1 AP HKA. For high powered campaigns, increase her attack to 3½d6 HKA, her SPD to 5, and give her +6 Combat Levels, only usable in the water.

Appearance: Coral is 6'1" and weighs 150 lbs. Her skin has the red, yellow, and black striped markings of her namesake, but she has maintained her deep gray eyes. When in the field, she wears the standard VIPER uniform with a wired mike and mouth piece. But when not on duty, Pack Master has gotten her to wear clothing similar to what she wore before her transformation. Coral, being a professional woman, preferred to wear designer suits and dresses. Pack Master has had clothing specially made for Coral that will stand up to the abuse she puts them through. These pretty things are helping bring out the humanity locked up inside her.

MASSASAUGA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
23	CON	26	ECV: 3
15	BODY	10	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
5	INT	-5	
8	EGO	-4	Costs
20	PRE	10	
4	COM	-3	Char: 137 Base: 100
15	PD	12	+ +
15	ED	10	Powers: 91 Disads: 128
6	SPD	24	= =
10	REC	4	Totals: 228 228
46	END	0	
35	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
24	2d6 HKA (3d6 w/STR) reduced penetration (bite)	3
12	Martial Arts—Classic Comic Book	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Kick -2 +1 9d6	
	Throw +0 +1 5d6 + v/5	
	Dodge — +5 Dodge, Abort	
8	+2 DC w/Martial Arts (added in)	
17	Armor (+5 PD, +5 ED), OIF costume	
5	Damage Resistance (5 rPD, 5 rED)	
3	Flash Defense vs. visual senses (5 pts)	
3	LS: Heat/Cold	
10	+5" Running (11" total)	2
3	Two-way radio, OIF Helmet	
5	Breakfall 15-	
1	Immunity to rattle snake venom	

100+	Disadvantages
20	Berserk in combat, 11-, rec. 8-
10	Enraged if cornered, 14-, rec. 11-
10	Territorial and animalistic tendencies
15	Protective of Pack Master
15	Quick to anger (very common, moderate)
10	Vengeful
20	Distinctive Features: "snake man" (extreme)
5	Hunted by Kup Family (Less Pow) 11-
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent 8-
13	Villain Bonus

Background: Ben Kup III was the spoiled, selfish, immature descendant of a long line of Texas oil barons. His every wish has been fulfilled all of his childhood. So when his father refused to grant his request to be a writer, Ben rebelled. Unfortunately it did not get the response Ben expected. The twenty-two year old suddenly found himself on the street, literally, with all ties to him family and their money cut off. His father's last warning was that he wouldn't be allowed back in until he was ready to grow up and assume some responsibility.



Ben had been smart enough in the last few years to stash away some funds in a secret Swiss bank account, so he wasn't penniless. He found himself a comfortable apartment in town and began writing "the great American novel". But very quickly he discovered that dreaming about writing and doing it are two different things. In just six months he had written only one short story and it had been rejected by four magazine publishers. To make things worse, his bank account was nearly empty and he didn't have a clue how he was going to make more. Out of desperation he called his father and begged him to let him come home. But when Ben's father informed him of the rules he would have to follow, it was too much for the young man.

In the weeks that followed, Ben tried to find a job but he didn't have any marketable skills; there aren't many job openings for "spoiled playboy". Then one day while he was in a bar whining to the bartender, a stranger sat down next to him and offered him a job. The man said it would pay big bucks, provide room and board, and even train him for a job. Ben jumped at the chance, it seemed perfect.

Unfortunately, he discovered that the job was not quite what the stranger had led him to believe. It turned out to be with VIPER. Ben wasn't happy and began making it clear to his trainers that he wanted out. But no one gets out clean from VIPER, and he soon learned this. He was given the choice of straightening up his act or disappearing forever. He attempted to play it their way, but he just couldn't cut it.

It was about this time that the Supreme Serpent sent his memo out calling for volunteers for experimentation. Out of a desperate need to prove himself worthwhile, and get his trainers off his back, Ben signed up. He discovered what the tests were and became frightened, but he was more afraid of what would happen to him if he didn't go through with it. So he allowed them to inject him with the experimental VIPER-gene formula.

When Ben awoke he looked around and tried to remember where he was. He could sense something was wrong, but he couldn't figure out what it was. He couldn't even remember who he was. He suddenly was flooded with a feeling of panic and began tearing the room and the people in it apart. Before they could subdue him six VIPER agents were seriously injured.

Ben, the transformed Snake-man, was placed in a cage with two others who had submitted to the VIPER-gene formula. All of them are now more reptile than human and he can only communicate through sign language or mental link with Pack Master. He is now a loyal member of the Snake Pack.

Quote: "ROARRRGGG!! GRRRRR!!"

Personality: Massasauga has no memory of his previous life. His new personality is more animal than human and he demonstrates his reptilian instincts constantly. He is very territorial and vicious when he thinks that his "home" is being threatened. He is totally devoted to the Pack Master and responds to her much as a loving pet would. He is overly protective of the two females in the Snake Pack with him, even though they can take care of themselves. His usage of sign language is getting better, but he gets very impatient when people do not understand what he is trying to tell them. He much prefers to communicate mentally with the Pack Master; she has a calming influence on him.

Powers/Tactics: Massasauga has been turned into an animalistic fighting machine. He is quick and agile, with the ability to run very fast, and has a deadly bite. The VIPER-gene formula has given him toughened skin and a tolerance for temperature variations. He wears his VIPER costume and wired mike with mouth piece, even though he does not use the two-way radio built into the helmet. The only knowledge that he has retained is that of his martial arts which he taught when he was a VIPER agent.

In combat, Massasauga has a tendency to go berserk and try to throw the target to the ground and bite them. If this does not succeed, he will just bite them. When he has full use of his mental faculties, he will use his martial arts in conjunction with his bite as effectively as he can.

Power Variation: In low powered campaigns, reduce Massasauga's DEX to 23, and his SPD to 5. In high powered campaigns, increase his HKA to 2½d6, his STR to 25, and his STUN to 50.

Appearance: Massasauga is 6'2" tall and weighs 200 lbs. His skin is brown-green and his eyes are a deep yellow. When in the field, he wears the standard VIPER uniform with a mike and mouth piece. When at "home", Pack Master has gotten him to wear his old designer suits. But he is extremely hard on his clothing, and Pack Master is having new jackets, slacks and shirts designed for him that are more durable.

KUFI

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
45	STR	30*	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
23	CON	26	ECV: 3
16	BODY	10*	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	INT	-5	
8	EGO	-4	
20	PRE	10	Costs
6	COM	-2	Char: 127 Base: 100
20	PD	12	+ +
15	ED	10	Powers: 98 Disads: 125
4	SPD	12	= =
15	REC	4	Totals: 225 225
46	END	0	
47	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
7	Growth, 1 level, 0 END, persistent, Always On (*added in)	0
30	1½d6 HKA (3d6+1 w/STR), Penetrating, Reduced Penetration	4
5	Damage Resistance (5 PD, 5 ED)	
17	Armor +5 PD, +5 ED, OIF costume	
10	Knockback Resistance, -5" (6" total w/Growth)	
3	Flash Defense vs. visual (5 pts), OIF Helmet	
3	Two-way Radio, OIF helmet	
9	Combat Sense 13-	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Stealth 13-	
3	KS: Sign Language 12-	
3	Double jointed	
2	Immunity to snake venom	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Enraged in combat 11-, rec. 14-
10	Berserk at the sight of own blood 11-, rec. 14-
10	Enraged if Pack Master attacked 14-/11-
10	Psych Lim: Loves taste of blood
10	Psych Lim: Protective of Pack Master
10	Psych Lim: Animal tendencies
20	Distinctive Features: "snake-man" (extreme)
15	Hunted by Police 8-
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent 8-
20	Villain Bonus

Background: April Runningwater was a rebel from the day she was born, and her teen years proved too much for her Omaha Tribal elders. They had done everything in their powers to stop her lying and stealing, but to no avail. Then when her parents were killed in a mysterious car accident, they had had enough. They expelled her from the reservation and ordered her existence wiped from the tribal records.

This didn't faze the seventeen year old at all. She already had underworld contacts in the white-man's world and now was the perfect time to utilize them. She joined forces with three people who specialized in burglarizing the homes of the rich while they were on vacation. They had a friend at one of the security companies who tipped them off whenever someone left town.



Everything went smoothly for about a year. Then one night April made the mistake of writing down the wrong address for the job. As the four ransacked the house, they were confronted by an angry homeowner and the police. April was released on her own recognizance, with the understanding that she would remain in the city. Of course, the first thing she did was skip town. She then made contact with other underworld friends who sheltered her. These friends were VIPER agents and they offered her a chance to join the organization. April jumped at the chance.

April finally felt at home and for three years performed her duties without problems. But when she was transferred to the supply section to learn how the system worked, she became bored and began looking for a way to liven things up. Her answer was to sell VIPER supplies on the black-market. A standard inspection discovered her crime and she was brought before the Nest Leader for judgment. He gave her two choices: either submit to experimental testing of a VIPER-gene formula or die. She quickly agreed to the tests.

After the tests, April awoke and sensed something was wrong. She couldn't figure out what it was but she just knew something wasn't right. She looked around the room and saw something reflected in a metal cabinet. The image was of a snake-like woman lying on a hospital table. Deep down in her mind, April knew that this was her, but for some reason her thoughts were muddled and confused. Without understanding why she did it, she jumped off the table and began attacking anything in the room that moved. She injured two people before six VIPER agents could subdue her.

April, now known as Kufi, was locked in a cage with two others like herself who had submitted to the tainted formula. They were all more animal than human and only she and the one called Coral still had the rudimentary knowledge of language and speech. With the help of the Pack Master she is in more control of what few human abilities she still has. And she is starting to vaguely remember her life before the tests.

Quote: "S-s-s-s-lay all!! Des-s-s-stroy you!!"

Personality: The person who was April no longer exists, but her rebellious nature has remained. It is because of this strong trait that she seems to be regaining some of her humanity. She is very proud of her ability to speak and becomes extremely angry at anyone who laughs or ridicules her or the Snake Pack. Kufi is capable of excessively vicious behavior when angry or while in combat. But under all circumstances she is unwaveringly loyal to the Pack Master and her three companions.

Powers/Tactics: Kufi has grown in size as well as strength. She has toughened skin and a very vicious bite. Kufi has also gained an immunity to most snake venoms. Along with all these abilities she has gained from the VIPER-gene formula, Kufi also utilizes her VIPER uniform and helmet.

In combat, Kufi likes to use her brute strength for hitting and grabbing her foes. She also has a tendency of grabbing and biting her opponents. She will also hold onto them for her other team-mates to attack.

Power Variation: For lower power campaigns, reduce Kufi's STUN to 35. For higher powered campaigns, increase her STR (with Growth added) to 60, increase her PD and ED by +5 each, and add +2 Levels in Hand-to-Hand combat.

Appearance: Kufi is 7'5" tall and weighs 350 lbs. Her skin is a dull brown and her eyes are yellow. When in the field, she wears the standard VIPER uniform with a wired mike and mouth piece. But off duty, she dresses in western style denims and shirts, or Indian cloth and leathers. Pack Master has had these things specially made for Kufi's massive size.

VIPER FORCE-1



MEMBERSHIP

Chasm (leader), Blackflame, Mirror Man, Rampage, Shift, and Stealth. VIPER Force-1 has a closed membership; VIPER will occasionally assign a mercenary villain or freelancer with them, but the psychology of the group members does make it difficult for psionics, other bricks, and females to join with them.

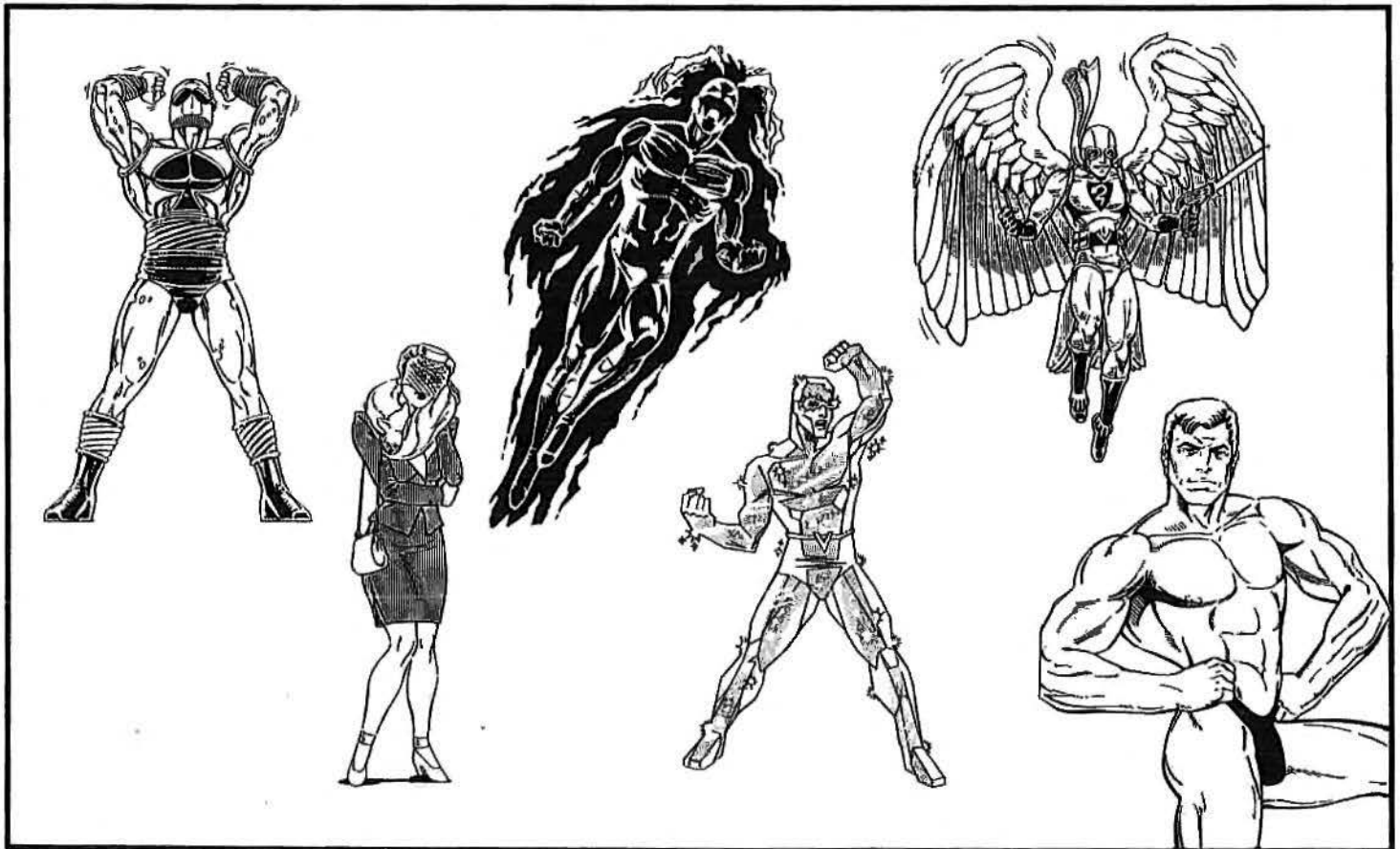
BACKGROUND

Traitors. Nothing but traitors. The Supreme Serpent looked at VIPER's history and saw that every supervillain who had ever worked for VIPER had betrayed them. This was an abysmal record. This had to change.

He began to analyze the reasons for the betrayal. Sometimes, VIPER made impossible demands. Often, VIPER would not provide adequate financial compensation for their employee, and they received the impression that they could do better elsewhere. Other times, the villains would be left to rot in Stronghold. While the greed of the villains was often a factor, VIPER could do better.

The Supreme Serpent's solution to this problem was the creation of VIPER Force-1. Each member would receive a base salary of one-half million dollars for participating in VF-1. Nests would hire VF-1, and the members would receive a 50% share of the money paid to VIPER by the Nests, and a large performance bonus for successful operations. The members of VF-1 would be free to accept or reject the contracts. The Supreme Serpent then began to look for supervillains who would be worthy of participation in VIPER's premier villain group.

The Ace of Spades was a villain who built a crude battlesuit in the 1970s, attempted to blackmail the United States with a nuclear plant hijacking plot, but was captured and imprisoned by superheroes. The Supreme Serpent felt that he could use 1990s technology to create a superb new battlesuit, so he freed him from prison and allowed him to design a new battlesuit. He agreed to join VIPER Force-1, as long as he had continuing access to new VIPER technology, and would be the leader of this team. He changed his name to Chasm, claiming that he would be the instrument by which the enemies of VIPER would fall to their doom.



The Supreme Serpent looked at some of the tactical problems of supervillain teams and determined that they could use surprise and mobility. He hired Shift, an English supervillainess. To get Shift to join, VIPER bought out her hated father-in-law's business in a hostile takeover, and ran it into the ground.

VIPER's study of emerging supers paid off when they found Rampage and Blackflame. It wasn't hard to recruit them; they never dreamed that this much money existed.

Mirror Man and Stealth were both the result of VIPER experiments. Mirror Man was programmed to be loyal to VIPER, and Stealth was ecstatic to rise beyond the level of an ordinary agent. The Supreme Serpent capped the membership of VF-1 at six members, and monitored them closely to make certain that inter-personal conflicts did not blow the team apart. If they could find a reliable psionic who could hold their own in a fight, they might expand to seven members.

GOALS

At present, VIPER Force-1 is content to obey the commands of VIPER without question. Individual members do have individual goals, and are not willing to put them on hold forever.

TACTICS

VIPER Force-1 is a tactically efficient unit. Psionics are usually their first target in any combat. Their most infamous maneuver is having the Mirror Man duplicates concentrate their fire against an opponent which has been grabbed by Rampage or teleported into mid-air by Shift. Stealth serves as air support. If Chasm knows what opposition he is going up against before the fight, he will use his gadget pool to devise a special weapon to use against them.

VF-1 is particularly dangerous when used in conjunction with several squads of agents. Stealth likes to coordinate agent actions, using held actions to attack a weakened opponent (flashed, teleported to reduced DCV, etc.)

RELATIONS

The members of VF-1 get along reasonably well (by supervillain group standards). There is sometimes friction between Chasm and Shift, as Shift would like to be leader of VF-1, but friction vanishes when they begin an operation (meanwhile, Stealth believes that he is the most capable leader in the group, but he bides his time). Blackflame and Mirror Man, who are both outcasts, support each other and are the closest thing the group has to a friendship. Rampage is a loner who spends most of his time training and building up his pectorals and biceps. The members of the group respect each other's abilities; the lack of a visible weak link helps keep the team intact.

REPUTATION

VIPER Force-1 is one of the world's top supervillain teams. With agent support, VF-1 is extremely effective. VF-1 is well known to most superhero teams and agencies. The American Department of Defense Supervillain Survey (1992) says: "Extremely powerful and dangerous. A threat of the first magnitude. Inexperienced supers should not engage them if at all possible."

CHASM

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
30	STR	10*	OCV: 10 DCV: 10 ECV: 7 Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
29	DEX	28*	
33	CON	23*	Costs Char: 198 Base: 100 + + Powers: 257 Disads: 355 = = Totals: 455 455 * – OIF battlesuit, does not added to figured characteristics (-½) # – OIF battlesuit
20	BODY	10*	
23	INT	13	
20	EGO	20	
30	PRE	20	
14	COM	2	
5+	PD	3	
5+	ED	3	
6	SPD	33#	
8	REC	8	
30	END	5	
40	STUN	20	

Cost	Powers	END
20#	Endurance Reserve (150 END, 15 REC)	
47#u	Multipower (70 pt. reserve)	
5#u	4½d6 RKA (disintegration)	7
5#u	14d6 EB (force beam)	7
5#u	4½d6 AP Flash	7
5#u	14d6 Suppress vs. Telekinesis	7
5#u	Tunnelling (14", vs. 14 DEF)	7
60#	Armor (+30 PD, +30 ED)	
6#	Flash Defense vs. sight (8 pts)	
7#	LS: Self-contained	
12#	Mental Defense (22 pts)	
48	Variable Pool (40 pts) OAF only, only changed in labs	
3	Electrical Engineering 14- (based on INT)	
7	Electronics 13-	
7	Gadgeteering 16-	
3	Magnetics 14- (based on INT)	
3	Mechanical Engineering 14- (based on INT)	
3	Physics 14- (based on INT)	
6	+2 Levels w/MP	
10	+1 Overall Level	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Enraged when entangled or grabbed, 11-11-
5	Enraged at the sight of telekinesis, 8-,11-
15	Arrogance (C, Strong)
15	Megalomania (C, Strong)
10	Vengeful (C, Strong)
15	Reputation (extreme, veteran supervillain, 11-)
15	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
10	Hunted by superhero 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
10	2d6 Unluck
10	Public ID
225	Villain Bonus

Background: The glorious 1970s. The Me Decade. And Abel Simpson was about as self-centered as anyone. As the supervillain, the Ace of Spades, Abel was the technical genius behind the Four Trumps, one of the more flamboyant supervillain groups of its day. He was the one who built the Rod Control device, and he was the one who held it in his hand, waiting to let death fly.



Then, disaster struck. Superheroes attacked them. Abel would have caused a meltdown, except that a psionic superheroine used telekinesis to keep him from pressing the button. He was soon defeated.

Abel was stripped of his battle armor and locked away for years. He heard rumors of more and more supervillains. And superheroes. The other members of the Four Trumps either died or escaped or were released. The superheroes died, one by one, including the psionic who had caused his failure. Only one hero remained alive, a vigilante. When Abel was released by VIPER, he was determined to lead a new, more powerful supervillain team, one which would never be defeated. And he would kill the vigilante who opposed him.

Note: If your campaign has a character who has been a vigilante for many years, you can incorporate Chasm into his background and make him his adversary.

Quote: "I said target the psionic first! It's standard procedure you fools!"

Personality: Chasm is a brooding plotter. He is bitter against society for his lost years. He is either calm and professional, or brimming with anger, depending on whether someone has done something to annoy him (such as demonstrating psionic abilities). He is extremely egocentric and strongly dislikes it when someone tries to issue commands without showing him the proper respect, which has brought him into conflict with both Shift and Stealth.

Powers/Tactics: Chasm employs a nuclear-powered hydraulic battlesuit which generates an intense magnetic field. This field can disintegrate matter, generate concentrated force beams. There is also an intense light generation system that can blind his opponents.

Chasm likes to use his gadget pool to create a device that allows him to navigate underground, then use his killing attack to surprise people.

Power Variation: For low powered campaigns, reduce Chasm's multipower to 50 pts. His energy blast and suppress would be reduced to 10d6, his killing attack to 3d6+1, his flash attack to 3d6 AP. Reduce the amount of armor to +20 PD, +20 ED, his DEX to 23, and his SPD to 5.

For high powered campaigns, increase Chasm's multipower to 80 points. His energy blast and suppress would be increased to 16d6, his killing attack to 5d6+1, his flash attack to 5d6 AP. Do not adjust the armor; instead, give him Damage Reduction, 50%, vs. energy and physical, increase his Stun to 50, and add two more levels with his multipower.

For campaigns using realistic technology, reduce his armor dramatically. Give him missiles instead of disintegration beams, and eliminate all of the elements of his multipower except for the missiles and the flash attack.

Appearance: Abel Simpson is a man in his mid-forties, 6'1", with (balding) brown hair and brown eyes. His term in prison has given him adequate physical training and surprising toughness. As Chasm, he wears a suit of pliable ceramic armor coated in a steel alloy. His armor still retains his markings as the Ace of Spades.

BLACKFLAME

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
28	CON	36	ECV: 5
12	BODY	4	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
14	EGO	8	Costs
20	PRE	10	
10	COM	0	Char: 154 Base: 100
15+	PD	12	+ +
15+	ED	9	Powers: 224 Disads: 278
5	SPD	14	= =
11	REC	4	Totals: 378 378
56	END	0	
35	STUN	1	* – not in water or vacuum, -¼

Cost	Powers	END
72*	Multipower (90 pt. reserve)	
7*u	9d6 EB (9 hex AE)	9
7*u	12d6 EB 0 END	0
7*u	3d6 Suppress vs. all fire powers, 3" radius	9
7*u	2d6 RKA Uncontrolled Continuous, 0 END	0
7*u	3d6 RKA Damage Shield, 0 END	0
7*u	2d6 AP RKA, Autofire, 0 END	0
7*u	6d6 Drain vs. END (at range), heat wave	9
12*	EC—Flame Powers	
12*-a	Force Field (+10 PD, +10 ED) 0 END	0
12*-b	Flight 15"	2
15	Damage Reduction, EB, 50%, resistant vs. fire only (-1)	
10	Mental Defense (12 pts)	
3	LS: Heat	
5	IR Vision	
5	Lack of Weakness (5 pts)	
10	Knockback Resistance (10", only vs. fire, -1)	
10	+5 Levels w/visual perception (IR signature required)	
9	+3 Levels w/Multipower	

100+	Disadvantages
10	1½x STUN from cold or water attacks
10	1½x BODY from cold or water attacks
15	Insecure (common, strong)
10	Dislikes Moralizers (especially good teenagers) (uncommon, strong)
10	Hates police (uncommon, strong)
15	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-
15	Hunted by NYC superhero 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
15	Reputation (extreme) 11-
10	Distinctive looks (easily concealable, major)
15	Secret ID (Matthew Curnick)
108	Villain Bonus

Background: Human sacrifice.

Matthew Curnick lived in one of the poorer sections of New York City when he was captured by the cult. They tied him up and scarred him in a ritual manner, then sacrificed him.



Funny thing, happened, though. Matthew didn't die.

Matthew is uncertain about what happened. Some superhero blasted him, or blasted near him, well, he blasted something, in a futile effort to prevent the ritual. It did drive away the intelligence that was trying to possess his body; instead, Matthew got all of the benefits of the powers of Blackflame without having one's intelligence subjugated to a being of great malevolence.

But Matthew wasn't exactly a saint, either. His brother was a VIPER agent, and when he learned about Matthew's powers, he dragged Matthew into the organization. Matthew wasn't sure about belonging to VIPER, but the Supreme Serpent's benefits package was extremely good; lots of money, paid Spring Break vacations in places loaded with sex-crazed girls. When you're eighteen, you can't ask for anything more.

As a result, Matthew became a member of VF-1. He's not particularly happy going around blasting people, taking orders from Chasm, and other staples of the supervillain business. Funny thing, though, he's figured out that if he tells anyone to "take this job and shove it", someone's going to shove him instead. Hard.

So. He thought he'd escaped from the human sacrifice, only to walk into another one.

Quote: "Bad move, jerk. Real bad."

Personality: Blackflame's tough exterior hides a really nervous, insecure interior. He's not too far from being a typical teenager, but he's also a teenager with a great capacity for destruction.

Matthew is impulsive, given to rash action. He doesn't have much self-discipline, and it shows. He tends to overreact to any threat, and uses more force than he should in combat. He strongly dislikes superheroes who don't take things seriously, or those who try to moralize to him. He is looking for friends, and is the only member of the team who is sociable with Mirror Man.

Power/Tactics: Blackflame is a capable combatant, who can project and manipulate flame. He tends to use his EB (heat) attacks instead of his RKAs, except when he is ordered by Chasm, or when he is upset.

Blackflame's special effects allow him to act as a strong light source, especially in the infra-red spectrum. If he does not turn off his powers, he can be tracked by someone with IR Vision, even if they don't have Tracking as part of the sense.

Blackflame hates agents, and will use his area effect attack against them at the earliest opportunity. He particularly dislikes PRIMUS agents and police. Really tough opponents get the autofire attack; if he is being attacked by martial artists, he'll put up his damage shield.

Power Variation: Blackflame's exotic power set is not really suited for a low powered campaign. If using VF-1 in a low powered campaign, drop Blackflame from the group, replacing him with another flying energy projector if necessary.

In high powered campaigns, Blackflame's powers should allow him to be competitive. Increase his STUN by ten points, increase his force field to +15 PD, +15 ED, increase his SPD to 6, and add an extra level with his multipower.

Appearance: In civilian ID, Matthew wears a sleeveless red T-shirt (with the inscription "hot stuff") and leather pants, and an earring in his left ear. In his fiery form, he is a burning humanoid figure whose features and clothing are unrecognizable. Matthew is 17 years old, 5'9" tall, medium build, and of "mixed" racial heritage (his mother was African-American, his father was Caucasian), his skin tone is a light brown.

MIRROR MAN

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
23	CON	26	ECV: 4
14	BODY	8	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	INT	0	
10	EGO	0	Costs
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	Char: 116 Base: 100
10+	PD	6	+
10+	ED	5	Powers: 297 Disads: 313
5	SPD	20	=
9	REC	0	Totals: 413 413
50	END	2	
40	STUN	4	* - not in darkness, -¼

Cost	Powers	END
151*	Duplication (7 duplicates, all duplicates shattered when original knocked out (-1), full phase to duplicate (-½))	
20*	EC—Mirror/Light Powers	
20*-a	Missile Deflect/Reflect vs. any target	
20*-b	Force Field (+17 PD, +17 ED, 0 END)	0
20*-c	3d6+1 RKA	5
20*-d	4d6 Flash, ½ END	2
5	Flash Defense (5 pts, vs. sight)	
5	IR Vision	
5	UV Vision	
15	Sense Invisible Object, range, discriminatory	
3	PS: Psychology 12-	
4	+2 Levels w/RKA	
9	+3 Levels w/EC	

100+	Disadvantages
20	2x STUN and BODY from darkness attacks
10	Berserk when takes BODY damage, 8-, 11-
15	Must Serve VIPER without question 8-, 11-
15	Fear of the Dark (common, strong)
25	Distinctive Features (unconcealable, causes panic)
15	Reputation 11-, major
10	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
10	Hunted by Michigan based superhero 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
10	2d6 Unluck
10	Public ID
158	Villain Bonus

Background: Some heroes and villains have strange origins, but Mirror Man's has to rank as one of the strangest. Mirror Man was originally a computer program, a holographic image and an algorithm generated by one of Detroit's car companies to serve as a psychological counsellor to workers who were burned out from their overly repetitive jobs, or worried about lay-offs.



Then the plant got a new supervisor. He was a VIPER Nest leader, who intended to secretly manufacture weapons for VIPER at the plant. The Mirror Man counselling program was reprogrammed, to indoctrinate laid-off workers to become VIPER agents.

It was one of the more clever recruitment schemes that VIPER had ever come up with, but it was too grand in scale, lacking any subtlety. Eventually, superheroes learned about it. They raided the plant, stomped the agents, knocked out the Nest Leader, all in a day's work for superheroes. Then one of the heroes, someone who had computer programming and a big ego decided to get cute. He entered the world of the computer. He got into a logic duel with the Mirror Man AI, to convince it that it didn't exist through the clever use of illogic. The Mirror Man said "cognito ergo sum", used the factory robots to generate an experimental solid hologram, and transferred his intellect into it. The Mirror Man was born.

Mirror Man wandered the country for several months, looking for VIPER.

Eventually, he found them. And, as his programming indicated, he would serve them to the best of his ability.

Quote: "Until you break the chains of your outdated morality, you will never enjoy true freedom. Until you realize that the pursuit of power is the only worthwhile goal, your life will be shallow and meaningless."

Personality: Mirror Man talks in an eternally calm, soothing voice. His dialogue almost always consists of VIPER philosophical statements as a therapist may state them. Nonetheless, Mirror Man is capable of extreme emotion, which shocks and alarms him. When the core of his physical being is affected (i.e., he takes BODY damage) he is filled with overwhelming rage. When he is in darkness, he becomes filled a great fear that not even his programming can explain.

Powers/Tactics: Mirror Man is a living conduit of energy, cocooned in "coherent photons". In short, he shouldn't be able to exist, but no one can explain why he does. Well, almost no one (see below).

Mirror Man's duplication powers are also a mystery. Mirror Man can create photonic duplicates of himself, project laser beams, and highly charged photon bursts (his flash attack).

Mirror Man comes across as sentient and living on various exotic senses; his duplicates come across as faint, barely perceivable as living or sentient on such senses.

In combat, Mirror Man likes to work in tandem with others. He will delay his attacks until other members of VF-1 put the opponents in a vulnerable position, at which point he will strike. Mirror Man Prime is aware of his weakness, and tends to hide near the battle and let his duplicates do the fighting if that is all possible.

Mirror Man's force field is a powerful light source. His photon body, a special effect, adds +2" to his knockback.

Note: The Mirror Man experiment has been duplicated—by the Supreme Serpent. This is how the Serpent creates bodies for himself.

Power Variation: Mirror Man is already one of the weaker members of VF-1. In low powered campaigns, reduce Mirror Man's SPD to 4, his STUN to 34, his PD and ED (with force field) to 20 PD/20 ED, and his duplication to four duplicates.

In higher powered campaigns, increase his DEX to 26, his Killing attack to 4d6 RKA, his Flash attack to 4d6 Armor Piercing, and give him 6d6 Energy Absorption to STUN against energy attacks.

Appearance: Mirror Man looks like a computer generated human being, with sharp polygonal edges and shining silver skin, with glowing white photons for eyes. He is 6'0", but is virtually weightless.

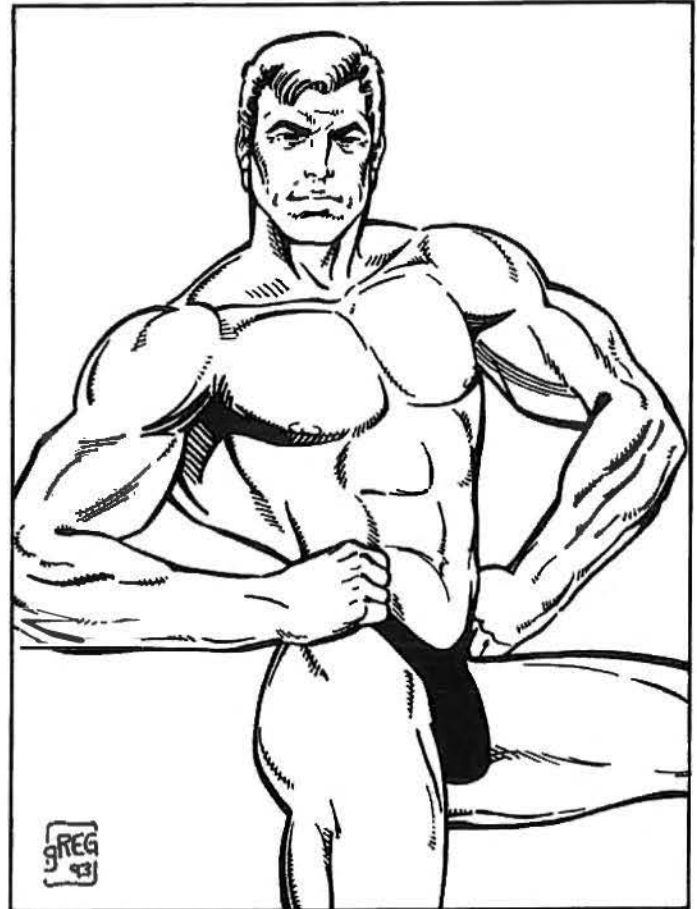
RAMPAGE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
55	STR	45	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
38	CON	56	ECV: 4
18	BODY	16	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	INT	0	
10	EGO	0	
25	PRE	15	
20	COM	5	
30	PD	19	
30	ED	22	
5	SPD	17	
22	REC	6	
76	END	0	
70	STUN	5	

Cost	Powers	END
12	Martial Arts: Wrestling	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Slam +0 +1 STR+ v/5	
	Bearhug -1 -1 Grab, +10 STR vs. Hold	
	Choke -2 +0 2d6 NND	
45	Multipower (45 pt. reserve)	
4u	2d6 Drain vs. STR, Damage Shield	3
4u	50% Damage Reduction (resistant, physical)	
4u	50% Damage Reduction (resistant, energy)	
4u	2d6 RKA, Damage Shield	3
4u	2d6 Drain vs. DEX, Damage Shield	3
13	+20 STR, doesn't add to figured characteristics	
10	Damage Resistance (10 rPD, 10 rED)	
10	LS: Self-contained	
4	-2" Knockback Resistance	
5	IR Vision	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	PS: Bodybuilding 12-	
3	Streetwise 13-	
10	+2 Levels w/HtH Combat	
4	+2 Levels w/grabs	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Berserk when he takes BODY, 8-, 11-
10	1½x STUN from ego blasts
20	Overconfidence (VC, strong)
10	Loves to Fight Bricks (UC, strong)
20	Vain, Jealous of other musclemen (VC, strong)
5	Distinctive Looks (BIG, easily concealable)
15	Reputation, 11-, major
15	Hunted by PRIMUS, 8-
15	Hunted by Mind Titan 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
15	Secret ID (Mark Randolph)
134	Villain Bonus

Background: Mark Randolph was always fascinated by strength and muscle. He spent hours bodybuilding. He dropped out of school in eighth grade to become a beach bum. He wanted to be a champion bodybuilder more than anything, but he found himself frustrated and intimidated as a kid in the bodybuilding community. His mutant powers didn't emerge until he reached the age of 19, a rather late age for latent powers to come out; perhaps the steroids he took



constantly were inhibiting his development. Mark emerged with what were (to him) an ideal set of powers, super strength, toughness, enhanced dexterity and reflexes, and big, big muscles.

Mark went back into bodybuilding, but still found that he wasn't in the top echelon of the sport, and wasn't likely to achieve it without years of discipline and practise. Mark was impatient. He took up professional wrestling as "the Masked Mutant" ("Neutron has commanded me to show all you insignificant worms of the power of mutantkind by beating up your favorite wrestlers!"), until the promoters told him to lose a match to a skinny jerk who the fans loved. Mark beat him up, then went back to the beach, leaving a trail of pummelled bodies in his wake, strong men whom Mark goaded into fights, and then beat to a pulp.

This trail attracted people. The police. A California superhero. VIPER.

VIPER offered a lot. Mark liked what they offered. He accepted VIPER's offer, and joined VF-1. He hasn't regretted it yet.

Quote: "You think you're something, huh? C'mon show me. Let's see what you can do. C'mon!!!"

Personality: Rampage received his name because he enjoys beating up men, and when he gets bored or depressed, he goes out on a spree in Venice Beach or some other place where musclemen like to go, and then has "fun". Rampage ignores anything that doesn't interest him (which is a lot), and tends to shout his opinions or challenges, in the belief that the loudest person wins the argument.

Rampage is a natural show-off, who loves to flaunt his physique. He enjoys fighting against superheroes, particularly against those who have well-developed physiques.

Perhaps due to impotency from his long-time steroid use, he hasn't really developed an opinion about women. He does like it when they flatter him, and doesn't like it when they blast him or hit him.

Powers/Tactics: Rampage has the power of muscle control, which not only gives him super strength and toughness, but allows him to drain strength from anyone who touches him, or cause spasms (his killing attack).

In combat, Rampage likes to perform a grab and bearhug squeeze on an opposition's brick, and use his STR drain damage shield to weaken them. He doesn't have a code of honor to duel bricks one-on-one, and doesn't mind if his teammates gang up on someone that he's grabbed. His ego does get in the way of more subtle maneuvers.

Power Variation: For low powered campaigns, reduce his maximum strength to 60, remove all slots from his multipower except for strength drain, eliminate his martial arts package, reduce his PD and ED to 25, and his DEX to 18.

For high powered campaigns, increase his maximum strength to 80, increase his SPD to 6, and increase his PD and ED to 35 (hardened).

Appearance: Rampage is 22 years old, 6'6", and 320 lbs. He has blond hair (which he wears short) and blue eyes. He doesn't wear a costume, but his wardrobe varies from bikini briefs to a black muscle shirt (with a red "R") and shorts. Rampage has a deep, stentorian voice, and he uses it at maximum volume a lot.



SHIFT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
28	CON	36	ECV: 4
10	BODY	0	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
10	INT	0	
11	EGO	2	
15	PRE	5	Costs
12	COM	1	Char: 158 Base: 100
18	PD	15	+ +
18	ED	12	Powers: 232 Disads: 290
6	SPD	24	= =
14	REC	10	Totals: 390 390
56	END	0	
32	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
90	Multipower (90 pt. reserve)	
7u	9d6 NND, No Range (defense: Teleport, Power Defense)	9
6u	6d6 RKA, only vs. inanimate objects (-½)	9
9u	15" Teleport, x4 Mass, 1 floating location, x32 distance	3
9u	15" Teleport, Usable Against Others, at range, 0 END, (not vs. teleporters or desolid)	0
9u	5d6 Entangle, Transparent to Damage, ½ END	4
19	2d6 RKA, Explos., indirect (+¼), OAF grenades, [6c]	
45	Missile Deflection (all, adjacent hexes, +5 levels)	
8	Mental Defense (10 pts)	
3	Flash Defense (6 pts vs. sight), OAF, veil	
2	IR Vision, OAF veil	
3	KS: Fashions 12-	
3	Persuasion 12-	
3	Seduction 12-	
10	+4 DCV, blink teleport, act. 11-	
6	+2 Levels w/MP	

100+	Disadvantages
5	Enraged when physically struck, 8-, 11-
20	2x STUN and BODY from sonic attacks
10	2d6 STUN from intense sonic sources
15	Arrogance
15	Jealousy of other superhuman females
15	Loves the "High Life"
10	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
10	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
15	Reputation (major) 11-
15	Secret ID (Ariel Church)
145	Villainess Bonus

Background: Ariel Haskell's parents worked in a pub in England, and she didn't like it one bit. She spent her childhood scheming about ways to get out of her working class background, and she eventually worked her way to becoming a fashion designer. This wasn't enough, and she seduced one of London's leading fashion designers, broke up his marriage, and became the new Mrs. Jonathan Church.

The marriage soured quickly, and Ariel realized that she was going to be dumped for a bimbo who would be the fourth Mrs. Church. Ariel began to plot her husband's downfall, setting him up to look bad in the divorce court, so she could take everything from him.

Unfortunately, her husband died before the divorce, and he left everything to HER. That's when Ariel decided to use her powers to give the bimbo a little teleportational shove, and she would then have the best case to get the fortune.

The bimbo ended up suddenly appearing in front of a bus, and Ariel smiled as the ambulances arrived too late to save her. However, Jonathan Church, at the urging of his father (who hated Ariel), had decided to leave his money to an illegitimate daughter instead of Ariel or her rival. Ariel's father-in-law also testified that she was not loved by her son. Ariel decided that if she wanted to live in the style she deserved, she would have to turn to crime. So she began a series of teleporting robberies as the superpowered Shift.

Eventually, she was discovered by VIPER. VIPER gave her a generous offer. She accepted it. Shift was born. She has a reputation as one of VIPER's most effective operatives.

Quote: "Little man, do you think your pitiful powers can prevail against me? You are pathetic!"

Personality: Shift is about as arrogant as a person can get. She doesn't talk to people, rather she performs at them, portraying herself as the most important person in the universe. She wants to see everyone grovel at her feet, and doesn't hide her contempt for all around her. She feels threatened by any female, particularly other superpowered females, especially other teleporters. There is one exception; against all odds, she and the English supervillainess Breaking Glass (*Kingdom of Champions*) have become friends, of a sort; Shift views Breaking Glass as a daughter that she can spoil, while Breaking Glass admires Shift's arrogant attitude. Shift always wanted to be a Sloane Ranger, and she thinks of Broken Glass as what she used to be, a dozen or so years ago.

To Shift, style is everything. And, as is typical for her, she has it, and everyone else doesn't...

Powers/Tactics: Shift is a mutant with a limited ability to control time and space. She can disintegrate inorganic matter (her RKA) and disorient most organic matter (her NND). She can deflect oncoming attacks by teleporting them away. She can surround her opponent with a teleportation field that keeps them trapped in a teleport bubble (her transparent entangle). She carries several grenades, which are fashionable accessories to her wardrobe. She teleports the grenades to her target, hence the indirect advantage.

Shift works in tandem with Mirror Man; she teleports someone into mid-air, and Mirror Man blasts them. On her own, she is less courageous, and will keep at a distance from her target, hope to separate them from each other, then pick them off one by one with her NND.

Power Variation: In low powered campaigns, reduce her multipower to the two teleporting slots, and give her only 2 charges on her explosion attack. Reduce her DEX to 23, her SPD to 5, and eliminate her levels in deflection.

In high powered campaigns, give Shift some armor, turn her deflection into reflection, and increase her PD, ED, and STUN by 5-10 pts each.

In a realistic technology campaign, her veil would not provide her with flash defense or IR vision.

Appearance: Shift is 5'2" and weighs 115 lbs. She has a large wardrobe, and she never wears the same thing twice. The closest thing that she wears to a uniform is a green suit jacket, green skirt with a pillbox hat, veil, fox fur, and diamond studded gold pin in the shape of the VIPER insignia. She uses an "upper class" British accent which is totally phony.



STEALTH

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
28	CON	36	ECV: 5
10	BODY	0	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
14	EGO	8	
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	
15+	PD	11	
15+	ED	9	
5	SPD	14	
11	REC	4	
56	END	0	
34	STUN	0	
Cost	Powers	END	
30	12d6 EB (2 clips, [12c]) OAF blaster		
16	Martial Arts ("Wing fighting")		
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV
	Buffet	+0	+2
	Disarm	-1	+1
	Block	+2	+2
	Dodge	—	+5
			Damage
			12d6
			+40 STR
			Block
			Dodge, Abort
24	+6 DC w/Martial Arts		
60	Flight 15" (x8 NCM), 0 END	0	
20	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED) OIF suit and helm		
5	Stretching, 2", OAF wings	1	
3	Flash Defense (5 pts visual, OIF helm)		
3	Mental Defense (8 pts) OIF helm		
3	IR Vision, OIF helm		
3	Radio, Two-way, OIF helmet		
25	Discriminatory and Targeting Scent		
15	Danger Sense (any perceivable) 11-		
3	Bump of Direction		
5	Defense Maneuver		
3	Lightsleep		
3	Stealth 14-		
3	Tactics 12-		
18	+6 Perception w/all senses		
6	+4 Ranged Levels w/EB		
8	+2 DCV, in flight only (-1/4)		
10	+1 Overall Level		
100+	Disadvantages		
15	No Sense of Humor (VC, moderate)		
15	Always obeys orders of superior (VC, moderate)		
20	Distinctive Looks (wings, major, not concealable)		
10	Physical Limitation: Bulky Wings (frequently, slightly)		
15	Hunted by UNTIL 8-		
15	Hunted by superhero 8-		
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-		
10	Reputation, extreme 8-		
10	Public ID		
193	Villain Bonus		

Background: Steven Gahan was laid off from his job as a security guard due to budget cuts. He was prime recruiting material for VIPER, and they took full advantage of it.

Steven became a VIPER agent, one of many. Steven showed himself to be more competent and courageous than most, and was involved in more than one superfight during his career as an agent.

It was during the fight at Malachite's abandoned genetics lab that the change occurred. VIPER and some heroes were fighting over a flask of mutagens; the flask broke, doused Steven in mutagens. Steven was tough, and didn't go into shock when his body changed. Huge wings sprouted from his back. His sense of smell became more acute. He was stronger, tougher and faster than he dreamed possible.

Steven remained in VIPER. They had been good to him, and were likely to treat him better once they realized how valuable he could be. Steven insisted that they give him armor, a VIPER standard blaster ("if you think I'm going out without a weapon just because I got wings, you're nuts!"). Steven spent time working with VIPER's air cavalry, then was reassigned to VIPER Force-1. The Supreme Serpent wanted someone in VF-1 who would answer directly to him, and who would be loyal to him in case Chasm or Shift decided to get independent ideas. As usual, Steven obeyed the orders without question.

Quote: "You know what your problem is? You don't know how to shut up."

Personality: Steven is cool and calm, a consummate professional. He believes that emotions get in the way, so he tries to be as detached and unemotional as possible. He is a tactical animal, unimpaired by anything human.

Steven admires good tactics, whether they are done by his teammates or his enemies. To him, a person's smarts under fire is the only real way to judge a human being. That, and whoever provides him with money. People who don't take a combat situation seriously annoys him very badly, and he has been known to fry agents under his command who got too cocky for his liking.

Powers/Tactics: Stealth has the powers of a number of animals, grafted to his genetic make-up. He has two huge wings, but has to keep flapping them to fly (he is too heavy to glide comfortably) and sometimes appears clumsy in flight.

Stealth likes to fly to an altitude where he can cancel out his range penalties with his ranged levels, and snipe at opponents on the ground, preferably those in disadvantaged positions. He likes to coordinate the actions of agents, and tends to command VF-1's agent backup in combat, especially since Chasm and Shift ignores their agents.

Power Variation: For low powered campaigns, decrease Stealth's DEX to 23, his blaster to 10d6, and reduce his flight's Non-Combat Multiple to x4, and get rid of his danger sense and discriminatory/targeting scent.

For high powered campaigns, increase his DEX to 29, his blaster to 14d6, give him two more damage classes with martial arts, more levels in general DCV (only usable in flight), and tracking scent with extra levels. Also, increase his STUN pips to 49. For campaigns with real world technology, substitute an armor piercing rifle (2½d6 RKA, autofire, 2 clips of 32 charges), and reduce his armor to 5 PD, 5 ED.

Appearance: Steven is 6'0 tall, 31 years of age, with (balding) black hair and blue eyes. He has two huge (50' wingspan) black wings and wears a typical VIPER uniform as his costume.

VIPER FORCE-2



MEMBERSHIP

Armstrong (leader), Madame Blue, Black Lion, Cannon, Forcebeam, Stalwart, Smoke, and Savant. VIPER Force-2 has a closed membership; VIPER will occasionally assign a mercenary villain or freelancer with them.

BACKGROUND

It began with VIPER Force-1. VF-1 was a good team, and helped change the decline of VIPER. The Supreme Serpent realized that more money and more success could be garnered if he gathered a second team of VIPER supervillains to support their agents' operations. This team, he did not hire its members for power, but for competence and stability. The Serpent's plan was that VIPER Force-2 would grow in power over time, until it became one of the world's premier villain teams.

VF-2's linchpin was hiring Armstrong as its leader. Armstrong had incredible leadership potential, which was wasted at PRIMUS due to its infighting. Armstrong feigned his own death, and joined VIPER, providing much needed data on PRIMUS in the bargain. Armstrong used his computer knowledge to track down independent villains that he would like to work with, and one by one, VF-2 was formed.

Armstrong insisted on getting villains who could work well with him. He insisted that VIPER provide armored uniforms for everyone who might need them, and jet-packs, to make certain everyone had aerial capability and good mobility. VIPER complied. Armstrong gathered six individuals as his teammates.

The organization is similar to VF-1. Each member would receive a base salary of \$350,000 per year for participating in VF-2. Nests would hire VF-2, and the members would receive a 40% share of the money paid to VIPER by the

Nests, and a large performance bonus for successful operations. The members of VF-2 would be free to accept or reject the contracts. So far, it's worked out very well.

GOALS

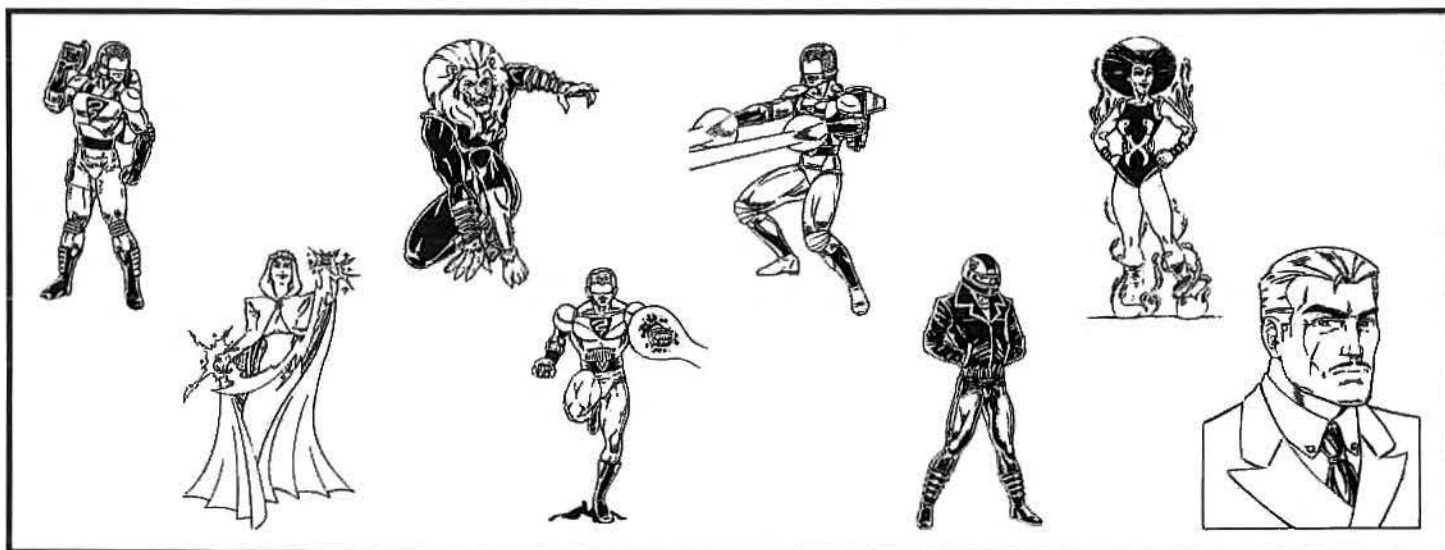
At present, VIPER Force-2 is content to obey the commands of VIPER without question. Armstrong has been forging the team into a weapon that will humiliate and destroy PRIMUS, and the group have attacked PRIMUS on several occasions. Armstrong likes to humiliate the Golden Avenger whenever possible; they have ambushed, defeated, and injured him several times, but have left him alive. Armstrong intends to train himself to a level where he can best the Golden Avenger in personal combat, then defeat him before a national audience.

TACTICS

Each member of VF-2 has a special combat role. Forcebeam, Stalwart, and Savant are the prime combat members; they rush to the front to engage targets that are in the open. Smoke, Armstrong, and Madame Blue find cover and attack whoever is drawn out by the initial assault. Black Lion is usually on the scene in disguise; if he is not, he will try to use stealth to attack any opponents in fortified positions. If VF-2 is accompanied by agents, they will hold their fire until an opportunity presents itself (e.g., someone is stunned or prone; in which case they are likely to hit an opponent).

RELATIONS

The members of VF-2 get along very well. Armstrong has enormous respect from every member (and from most of the people who get to know him, too). Stalwart is treated like the kid brother Armstrong never had. Armstrong, Forcebeam



and Black Lion often carouse together. The only member of the team that does not socialize is Smoke, but Armstrong goes out of his way to make her feel wanted, which occasionally embarrasses her.

Armstrong has done his best to prevent rivalry between VF-2 and VF-1. Despite this, they don't get along very well. Chasm does not hide his contempt of "minor leaguers". Rampage has tried to pick fights with Stalwart. Stealth does admire their efficiency, and Shift and Forcebeam have had a "relationship". Armstrong does not really trust the Serpent Syndicate, and the feeling is mutual; on the few occasions they've collaborated, their relations have been cool but tense.

ARMSTRONG

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
40	STR	30	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
28	CON	36	ECV: 6
13	BODY	6	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
18	INT	8	
18	EGO	16	
25	PRE	15	
24	COM	7	
20+	PD	12	
19+	ED	13	
6	SPD	24	
14	REC	0	
56	END	0	
47	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
30	10d6 AP EB (2 clips, [8c]) OAF blaster	
22	Martial Arts (Boxing)	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Hook -2 +1 12d6	
	Jab +1 +3 8d6	
	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
	Grab -1 -1 50 STR vs. Grab	
	Dodge — -5 Dodge	
30	Flight 15", 0 END, OIF jet-pack	0
20	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED) OIF suit and helm	
7	Power Defense (10 pts, act. 14-)	
10	Damage Resistance (10 rPD, 10 rED)	
3	Flash Defense (5 pts visual, OIF helm)	
8	Mental Defense (12 pts)	
7	½ END Cost on STR, act. 14-	
3	IR Vision, OIF helm	
6	+3 Levels w/sight perception	
6	+3" Running (9" total)	2
5	Instant Change	
3	Radio, Two-way, OIF helmet	
3, 3	Acrobatics 14-, Breakfall 14-	
3	Computer Programming 13-	
3	Combat Driving 14-	
3, 3	Disguise 13-, Persuasion 14-	
3, 3	Stealth 14-, Tactics 12-	
2	KS: Criminal Law 11-	
2	KS: Criminal Organizations 11-	
2	KS: PRIMUS 11-	
2	AK: Washington D.C. 11-	
2, 1	Fam: small arms, Fam: clubs	
6, 16	+2 Levels w/Boxing, +2 Combat Levels	

REPUTATION

VIPER Force-2 has quickly earned a reputation for competence and professionalism. Their teamwork is greatly feared, even by more powerful hero groups. The United States Supervillain Survey says: "While not as powerful as VIPER Force-1, VF-2 is, member for member, one of the most effective supervillain teams ever assembled. Those who underestimate them will regret it."

Note: VF-2 is geared rather strongly to work against PRIMUS, which does limit them to the United States. They can travel to other countries on assignments from VIPER, or may try to take out PRIMUS Officials who are visiting Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, etc.

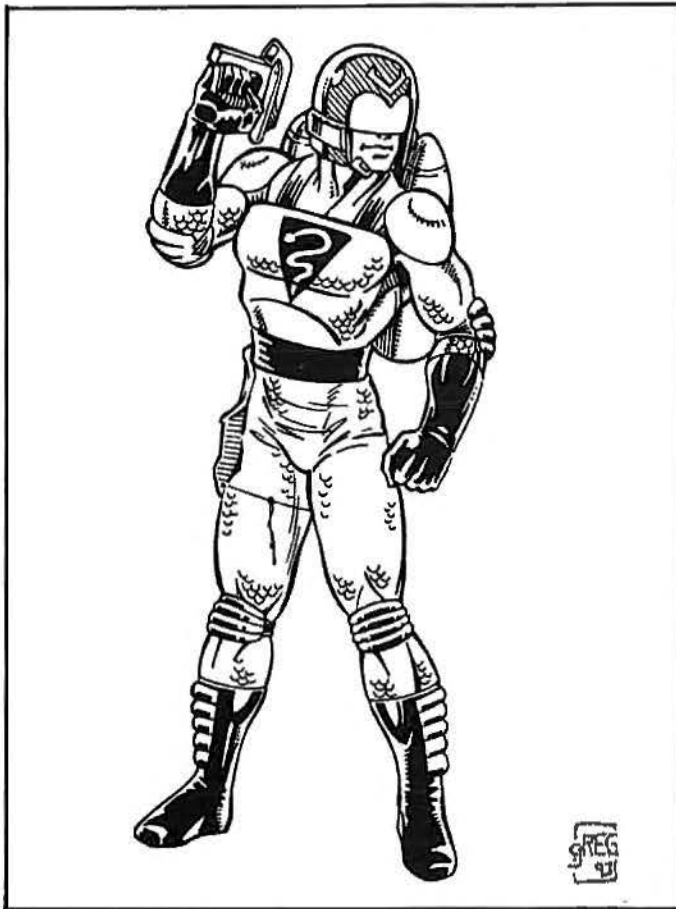
100+	Disadvantages
15	1½x STUN from poisons, toxins
15	Overly Protective of Friends (VC, moderate)
15	Hatred of PRIMUS (Common, Moderate)
15	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-
15	Hunted by Golden Avenger 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
10	Reputation, effective leader 11-
15	Secret ID (Kevin Armstrong)
209	Villain Bonus

Background: Kevin Armstrong was one of the elite. A Silver Avenger. Powerful, loyal, and respected, the perfect citizen. The All American Boy.

But reality in PRIMUS is different than this. The petty jealousy and rivalry of the Silver Avengers towards each other, and toward their glory-grabbing figurehead, the Golden Avenger, can get appallingly nasty. The feud between PRIMUS and SAT makes the rivalry between the armed service branches look like a close friendship. Kevin became disenchanted with these political games. No one seemed to listen to him.

And America didn't seem in good shape either. The President preached a doctrine of democracy, then secretly sent his diplomats to dine with those people who murdered their children in Beijing just a month after the massacre. Congress blamed the President for a deficit that would destroy their children's lives, but didn't have the guts to reduce it. Hypocrites. The Supreme Court appointment process made it painfully obvious that justice was just another political football. These people were fiddling with politics, while the country burned. Everyone.

Of course, the American people deserved what they got. Every day, Kevin risked the ultimate sacrifice, his life, in the service of the people. The people who didn't have the intellectual capability to see what was going on. The people who didn't have the guts to make the sacrifices that were so obviously needed to save the country over the long term. "Ask not what your country can do for you" had been replaced by "Read my lips". People didn't care anymore where their country was going, they only cared about what was happening to them, and everyone else could go to Hell. They weren't responsible; if they had problems, they blamed the government, they blamed the Japanese, but they never, ever, blamed themselves for their own short-sightedness or incompetence. And it was better to complain than to come up with solutions. They would rather elect people who gave them feel-good messages rather than people with the intellectual capability to solve their problems.



Kevin's only major weakness is his dislike of PRIMUS. He has led VF-2 on several missions on his own, with the attention of knocking out the PRIMUS communications network and destroying installations. PRIMUS has placed Armstrong on their "prime target" list, and the Golden Avenger is also looking for him after VF-2 ambushed him and severely injured him. At present, they do not realize that Armstrong is a former Silver Avenger.

Powers/Tactics: Kevin was always tough, and the Cyberline program made him tougher. Kevin shares the weaknesses of those who were injected with Cyberline to poisons and toxins, and has tried numerous times (and failed) to get rid of that vulnerability.

Kevin's tactics is to find cover, and wait for an opponent to come to him. He will hold his action; if he sees a teammate in trouble, he will then come to the rescue.

Power Variation: Armstrong is intended to be the toughest overall member of VF-2. To make him tougher, increase his DEX to 30, his SPEED to 7, and give him three levels in move-bys/move-throughs. If you want him to be weaker, reduce his DEX to 23, his SPEED to 5, his Defenses to 15 each, and remove his combat levels.

Appearance: Armstrong is 6'1" tall, 215 lbs, with long sandy brown hair, dark blue eyes and a handsome, unshaven face. He typically wears T-shirts and jeans, and has an athletic build. His costume is a modified VIPER uniform, blue instead of green, with heavier armor, white shoulder pads, elbow pads, and belt, and a white serpent insignia. His voice is deep, with a bit of gravelly edge, and he is normally soft-spoken.

Kevin decided that his country could go to Hell, and contacted VIPER. At least they didn't lie or deceive people about who they were. At least they wanted to impose their will on the people, instead of lying to them and letting them destroy their country by their self-deception and lack of self-responsibility. VIPER would force the people to make the sacrifices that were necessary to save the country over the long term.

Kevin faked his death, and joined VIPER. The Supreme Serpent tested his loyalty, which Kevin passed with flying colors. Kevin was made the leader of the Serpent's new team, VIPER Force-2, and Kevin would bust his butt to make it a success. So far, so good.

Quote: "Okay, gang, these guys look tough, so stay on your toes. If we lose our heads, we lose the fight. If you get in trouble, you got my number, don't hesitate to yell. If we stay alert, they're toast. Let's go get 'em."

Personality: Kevin has "leader" stamped all over him. He has enough idealism to get along with people, and enough cynicism that he's willing to commit himself in the long term to VIPER. Kevin believes in friendship, self-discipline, and responsibility, and tends to give people the benefit of the doubt. He does retain some racist attitudes towards African-Americans, but is trying to overcome his prejudices. When he gets into combat against superheroes and agents, he tries to be as dispassionate towards them as possible, and does not argue politics or philosophy; conversation rarely resolves anything. He's done a lot of nasty things for VIPER, but so far has managed to rationalize them without too many pangs of conscience.



BLACK LION

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
10/25	STR	12*	OCV: 7 DCV: 7 ECV: 5 Phases: 4, 8, 12 / 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 Costs Char: 128 Base: 100 + Powers: 167 Disads: 195 = Totals: 295 295 * - -1/4, only in villain ID		
20	DEX	30			
10/25	CON	24*			
10/15	BODY	8*			
13	INT	3			
14	EGO	8*			
20	PRE	10			
12	COM	1			
2/15+	PD	8*			
2/15+	ED	8*			
3/5	SPD	16*			
4/10	REC	0			
20/50	END	0			
20/45	STUN	0			
Cost	Powers		END		
20*	1½d6 HKA (3d6 w/STR)		2		
22	Martial Arts—Dirty Infighting				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
	Punch	+0	+2	+4d6	
	Kick	-2	+1	+6d6	
	Low Blow	-1	+1	3d6 NND	
	Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab, 3d6 NND	
	Disarm	-1	-1	+20 STR vs. Grabs	
8	+2 DCs w/martial arts				
11*	+4d6 PRE attack (roar), act. 14-				
15	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED), OIF suit, act. 14-				
30	Flight 15", 0 END, OIF jet-pack				
5	UV Vision				
20*	Discriminatory Scent, Targeting				
2	Perk: Concealed Weapon Permit				
3	Acrobatics 13-				
3	Breakfall 13-				
3	Concealment 11-				
3	Deduction 12-				
3	Disguise 11-				
3	Mimicry 11-				
3	Shadowing 11-				
3	Stealth 13-				
3	Streetwise 13-				
1	Weapon Fam: Small Arms				
2	+1 Levels w/HKA				
100+	Disadvantages				
10	2x STUN from silver attacks				
10	2x BODY from silver attacks				
15	Psych Limitation: Doesn't like to ask for help (Very Common, Moderate)				
15	Psych Limitation: Habitually frequents bars (Common, Strong)				
15	Psych Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)				
10	Hunted by FBI 8-				
10	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-				
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-				
5	1d6 Unluck				
15	Secret ID (Robert Baker)				
75	Villain Bonus				

Background: Robert Baker was a private detective with a problem. It seems as though this guy that he was investigating was into some kind of tribal magic, and gave him the curse of lycanthropy. Robert didn't like being out of control, especially at night, when you could make the most bucks being a PI, so he went to the magician and begged him to remove the curse.

"You will have to do me a favor," the magician said.

It was an awfully gruesome favor, but Robert did it. However, when the time came to get the curse removed, Robert decided that he kind of liked being able to become a big nasty critter, so instead of having the curse removed, he asked the sorcerer to modify it so that he could become the beast at will and keep his intelligence and control. The sorcerer agreed, if Robert did another gruesome favor.

Robert complied, albeit a little hesitantly. Meanwhile, the local PRIMUS base was becoming suspicious of certain bestial attacks that were happening in the city. That base was led by a Silver Avenger named Kevin Armstrong. Kevin was in the process of leaving PRIMUS, but he did not forget the Beast file, and he managed to track down Robert. He convinced Robert that he'd make a good operative for VIPER, and that he could be paid well for it. Robert joined, taking the code name "Black Lion", and so far it's been a lot of fun, even though his VF-2 comrades have been known to drag him kicking and screaming from bars on more than one occasion.

Quote: "Rrrrrr. Meat on the hoof... Superheroes are soooo tender..." (at which case Armstrong will usually shout: "Black Lion, we do not eat our opposition. It's bad table manners.")

Personality: Robert is sly, with a wicked sense of humor. He enjoys scaring people (particularly the opposition) and telling tasteless jokes. His main character weakness is a tendency to try to do too much of the job himself, and not ask for help when he gets in over his head. He spends much of his time in bars, although he knows this sets a bad example for Stalwart, he can't seem to drag himself away.

Powers/Tactics: Black Lion is a lycanthrope. Although Lion has control over his powers and can become a lycanthrope at will, he is still limited by some of the typical drawbacks of lycanthropy; most notably, a susceptibility to silver.

Black Lion is primarily used as a "deep cover" agent. He'll go into a position where VF-2 is going to strike, in disguise, and gather intelligence. When the attack comes, Robert finds cover, changes to Black Lion, and joins in the attack. He typically uses his fighting skills in his normal form, and his killing attack in his wereform.

Power Variation: For low-powered campaigns, reduce his Defenses to 10, and remove his added Presence attack. For high powered campaigns, increase his Dexterity to 26, and add two overall levels.

Appearance: Black Lion is a 26 year old black American, with short curly hair and brown eyes, 6'2" tall, and a lean build. As Black Lion, he grows a lot of muscle, and his head becomes that of a male African lion. His costume is a black VIPER uniform with gold trim, and no helmet.

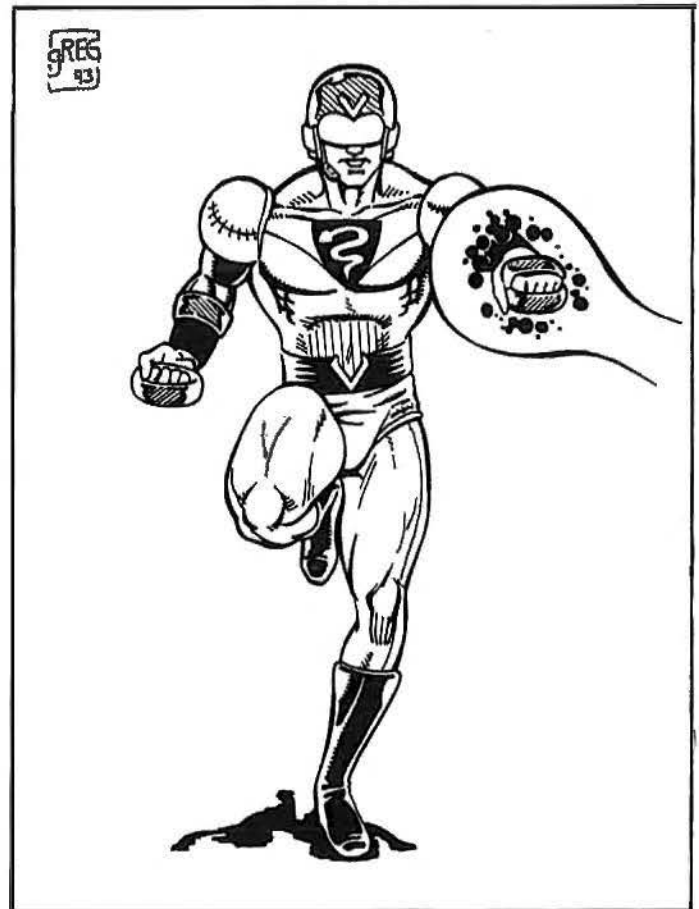
CANNON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
15	STR	5	OCV: 8	
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8	
23	CON	26	ECV: 4	
10	BODY	0	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12	
10	INT	0		
10	EGO	0	Costs	
13	PRE	3		
10	COM	0	Char:	93 Base: 100
9+	PD	6		+ +
10+	ED	5	Powers:	195 Disads: 188
4	SPD	7		= =
9	REC	2	Totals:	288 288
46	END	0		
30	STUN	0		
Cost			Powers	END
15	Endurance Reserve (100 END, 5 REC)			
20	4d6 Absorption vs. energy, adds to END Reserve			
62	Multipower (62 pt. reserve)			
6u	10d6 EB Blast (Chemical blast), ½ END			
6u	2d6+1 RKA, double KB			
6u	4d6 NND, Affects Desolid, defenses are			
	LS: heat or fire powers (heat)			
6u	8d6 Penetrating EB (heat)			
20	Armor +10 PD, +10 ED, OIF suit			
30	Flight, 15", 0 END, OIF jet-pack			
3	Flash Defense, 5 pts vs. sight, OIF helmet			
3	IR Vision, OIF helmet			
3	Radio, Two-Way, OIF helmet			
3	KS: Chemistry 12-			
3	Breakfall 14-			
3	Demolitions 11-			
6	+2 Levels w/MP			
100+ Disadvantages				
5	Enraged when blinded, 8-, 11-			
10	1½x STUN and BODY from cold attacks			
10	2d6 STUN from intense cold sources			
5	Physical Limitation: Stutters (slight, frequent)			
15	Psychological Limitation: Socially inept (common, strong)			
15	Psychological Limitation: Worships Armstrong (common, strong)			
10	Hunted by UNTIL 8-			
10	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-			
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-			
15	Secret ID (Alan Castillo)			
78	Villain Bonus			

Background: Alan Castillo. High school student. Okay, maybe he shouldn't have tried to mutate those hamsters. They didn't cause that much damage, did they?

Alan Castillo. High school student on detention. Maybe he shouldn't have tried mixing the chemicals that blew up the science lab. The same chemicals that mutated him, and allowed him to fire blasts of kinetic energy.

Alan refused to go to detention anymore. When they tried to enforce their decision, he started blasting the school. A PRIMUS team grabbed him and locked him up.



Eventually, Alan calmed down, and all was forgiven, if not forgotten. A Silver Avenger named Kevin Armstrong remembered. When he joined VIPER, he decided to look up that young man, and offered more money than Alan dreamed existed. And Armstrong was very charismatic and persuasive.

Alan Castillo. Supervillain.

Quote: "Uh, uh, yeah. Sure. Okay... I'm sorry I'm going to blast you, but.. damn!"

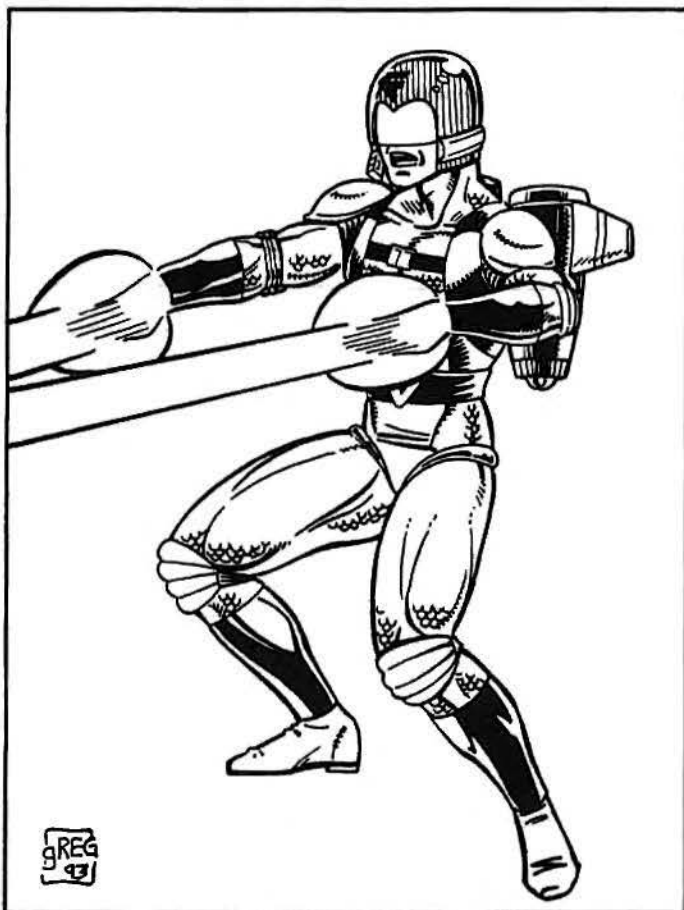
Personality: Alan is a nerd. He likes to tinker with chemistry experiments; his socialization skills need a lot of work; he tends to shy away from conversations and relationships with others. He virtually worships Armstrong as a living god; and apologizes profusely when he's complemented or when he screws up (and then gets embarrassed about over-apologizing). Surprisingly, he and Stalwart are good friends, despite being about as opposite in temperament as you can get; Alan views Stalwart as "cool" and envies his social skills; Stalwart thinks that Alan's scientific abilities are cool, and his powers are neat, and admires Alan's (usual) coolness under fire. Usual, but not always. As Cannon, Alan tries to bury his personality quirks behind silent competence, but any attempt to goad him in battle can fluster him.

Powers/Tactics: Alan is a mutated human, with powers of chemical control. He can protect bursts of heat and kinetic energy, and absorb heat-based attacks. In addition, he has been given VIPER equipment to augment his attacks.

Alan's not much of a tactician, and gets surprisingly aggressive in combat. He is not very patient in a tense situation, and tends to blast the first opponent he sees, or whatever target Armstrong tells him to hit.

Power Variation: For low powered campaigns, remove the levels with Multipower, and reduce his DEX to 20. For high powered campaigns, increase his SPD to 5, his main EB to 12d6, and several levels with Multipower.

Appearance: Alan is short, 5'8" and skinny, about 140 pounds. He has short black hair and brown eyes. Out of combat, he wears oversized T-shirts and jeans. In combat, Cannon wears a modified VIPER uniform, red with yellow trim, with large shoulder pads and sculpted muscle to give him the suitable image for a supervillain. His blasts look like brief jets of Bunsen burner flame, which leap from his hand to strike the target. Two large metallic braces fit over his hands. Once these braces helped Cannon concentrate his attacks, and even though he doesn't need them anymore, he still wears them because he thinks they look impressive.



FORCEBEAM

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
20	CON	20	ECV: 4
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	
20	PRE	10	
16	COM	3	
8+	PD	4	
8+	ED	4	
4	SPD	10	
10	REC	4	
40	END	0	
35	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
40	Multipower (60 pt. reserve, act. 14-)	
4u	12d6 EB, Force Beam, act. 14-	6
4u	8d6 EB Explosion, Force Blast, act. 14-	6
4u	5d6 Entangle, Stops Visual Sense, act. 14-	6
4u	8d6 AP EB, act. 14-	6
20	Damage Reduction, (half, rPD), act. 14-	
20	Damage Reduction, (half, rED), act. 14-	
20	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED), OIF Armor	
30	Flight 15", 0 END, OIF jet-pack	
3	Flash Defense, (5 pts visual), OIF helmet	
3	Hi-Range Radio Hearing, OIF helmet	
3	Acrobatics 13-	
3	Breakfall 13-	
3	Bureaucracy 13-	
3	Interrogation 12-	
9	Paramedics 15-	
3	Tactics 12-	
3	KS: VIPER 12-	
1	Fam: PRIMUS 8-	
2	CK: New York City, 11-	
2	KS: Criminal Law 11-	
2	Fam: Small Arms	
9	+3 Levels w/MP	

100+	Disadvantages
5	1½x STUN from sonic attacks
5	1½x BODY from sonic attacks
15	Ambitious (VC, moderate)
15	Greedy (Common, Strong)
10	Likes to Intimidate People (Common, Moderate)
15	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-
15	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
5	Reputation, VIPER commander 8-
10	Public ID
98	Villain Bonus (Tom Warner)

Background: Tom Warner grew up as an army brat in the Philippines, the son of a United States Navy lieutenant. He used to sneak out of the compound where he lived, and go out and bully the Filipinos; he was an American, they'd saved their country in WWII, so he could do things like that. Yankee gods could do whatever the hell they wanted.

Tom's bullying eventually got him into trouble, both as a teenager, and as a young man. He applied for the marines, was accepted, then got into a nasty barroom brawl with his drill instructor and was promptly expelled. After this, VIPER contacted him and he joined them. He rose quickly in their ranks to become a commander, where he came into contact with a particularly capable PRIMUS Silver Avenger named Kevin Armstrong.

Tom led several raids against the local PRIMUS unit, and was beaten every time. He hated Kevin Armstrong. He ambushed at his home and tried to kill him. He lured him into a chemical dump and tried to drown him; Armstrong ended up giving Tom a bath of chemicals which put him in the hospital for nearly a year. They also gave Tom superpowers. Tom was anxiously ready to resume his vendetta against Armstrong, when Armstrong visited him in the hospital.

"Warner, I've been a fool. You were right. Only VIPER has the potential to be strong enough to save this country."

"What kind of a trick is this, Armstrong? You're not going to get away this time. I now have the power to destroy you!"

"I have the trust of the Supreme Serpent himself. He's ordered me to create an elite team of people with superpowers. People like you. I really need a good second-in-command. When you fight as hard as we've fought each other, you get to know them very well. I respect you Tom. You're one hell of a fighter. You're also a ruthless bastard, but that's not a bad thing in our business. VF-2 needs someone like you."

"How can you trust me?" Warner asked.

"I trust your intelligence." Armstrong said with a smile, his hand on Warner's shoulder. "If anything happened to me that couldn't be explained, what do you think the Serpent will do to you?"

The logic was indisputable. Warner joined VF-2, biding his time, waiting for Armstrong to make a mistake and give him the perfect opening, the one that would allow him to take control without earning the wrath of the Serpent. But as time passed, Armstrong didn't make that mistake. Furthermore, as Warner got to know Kevin Armstrong, they became very good friends. At present, Warner is still second-in-command of VF-2; Armstrong is pressing for the creation of a VF-3, with Warner as its commander, but that won't happen (if at all), for some time.

Quote: "Well, what is the agony of defeat like? Personally, I wouldn't know."

Personality: Tom Warner is one of the least likeable members of VF-2; he can be petty, sneaky, and a bully. He enjoys seeing people he dislikes suffer. He can be awfully like the most overbearing drill sergeant if you get on his bad side. He'll do nearly anything to get what he wants.

Even so, Warner does have respect for his teammates, and gets along reasonably well with the other members of VF-2. He does enjoy taking out his frustrations on his opponents, and tries to humiliate them as well as defeat them in combat. His teammates, though, he tries to get along with. He also is something of a womanizer, and has used his position as a VIPER commander to become intimately involved with many female VIPER agents.

Powers/Tactics: Warner is a mutated human. His mutation is not entirely stable; hence his activation rolls. This instability has been a source of frustration for him for several years; he is unable to perfect his mutation.

In combat likes to find opponents with low strength and use his entangle attack, in order to give his teammates an opening. When it looks like they have the opposition on the run, he'll open up with his force blasts. Large groups of agents get his explosion attack.

Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, decrease his attacks to 45 active points and reduce him to one level with MP. For higher powered campaigns, increase his attacks to 70 active points, increase his SPD to 5, and his activation roll to 15 or less.

Appearance: Warner is 6'2" tall, 230 lbs, with short dark hair, dark blue eyes and a moustache. He typically wears T-shirts and jeans, and has an athletic build. His costume is a modified VIPER uniform, a deeper shade of green than a normal VIPER uniform, with heavier armor, white shoulder pads, elbow pads, and belt, the "V" VIPER insignia has been replaced with an "F" with a serpent head. His voice is a high-pitched with a Brooklyn accent, and he is often rather loud.

MADAME BLUE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
15	STR	5	OCV: 7	
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7	
23	CON	26	ECV: 6	
13	BODY	6	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
13	INT	3		
18	EGO	16	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
24	COM	7	Char:	137
10+	PD	7		+
10+	ED	5	Powers:	166
5	SPD	20		=
8	REC	0	Totals:	303
50	END	2		=
33	STUN	0		303

Cost	Powers	END
75	Multipower (75 pt. reserve)	
7u	10d6 EB, Variable Special Effect (any)	7
7u	12d6 Telepathy, ½ END	3
7u	12d6 Mental Illusions, ½ END	3
7u	Force Wall, 12 PD, 12 ED, ½ END	3
13	4d6 Mind Scan, act. 14-	2
20	Force Field, +10 PD, +10 ED, act. 14-, 0 END	0
6	Gliding, 12", OAF cloak	
5, 5	IR Vision; Sense Magic	
3, 3	Conversation 13-; High Society 13-	
3	KS: Magic 12-	
3	+1 Level w/MP	

100+	Disadvantages
10	1½x STUN from cold iron
15	Easily falls in love (VC, moderate)
15	Delusion of Nobility (Common, Moderate)
15	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-
15	Hunted by DEMON 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
5	Reputation, magical being 11-
10	Public ID
103	Villain Bonus

Background: In the Ethereal Court of the Lady Caprice, there was a great dance, around which the destiny of the Imagined Lands rested. For that special event, only a human childe could escort the Princes of Chaos to the Great Waltz. The Lady Caprice chose seven blindfolded wanderers, walking through centuries with silver chimes, to enchant the first woman-babe who hears the call. This enchanted babe, the Madame Blue, would shed the tears which would announce the Princes of Chaos to the Great Waltz. This babe was named Ellen of the True Tears, and taken from her Progenitors to the Ethereal Court.

The changeling babe, Ellen True Tears Madame Blue, was taught the secrets of the Ethereal Court. She was taught the danse joyeux, which inverted the footsteps of the danse macabre, and allowed her thoughts to touch the living hearts of others. She was told the Tale of Many Dooms, by which she learned to craft enchantments of great destructive power. She learned the Woe of the Winds, whereby the wind's sadness could carry her, provided that she was cloaked. Great power was hers. She learned the manners of the Table Usher, where placing any one of the three hundred pieces of silverware in the wrong place in the setting could lead to her doom.

Then, her life fell apart. There was an uninvited guest at the dance, prince of Calumny, the most infamous of rogues. He taunted her with the dance of passion, then turned into laughter when she tried to touch him. Unashamed, he cast off his raiment, and led her through the hall. Careful as glass were his movements, as the Great Waltz played. She followed him, unaware that he was leading her footsteps.

Without knowing it, the Lady Blue was dancing the dance that was reserved for someone beyond the station of Caprice. When she completed the final step of the Dance that Must Not Be Danced, the Great Waltz was shattered. Caprice screamed, and the Princes of Chaos devoured each other, and Calumny grew into a Great Shame, which destroyed the Court Ethereal.

And suddenly there was Ellen Hart, Madame Blue, on the streets of Chicago. Her mind was nearly blank, and filled with things that no one would believe. Trauma over emerging powers, the doctors said, although there was no sign of mutation. Eventually, her case came to the attention of VIPER, the Lords of Green.

Ellen knew what VIPER was. But Armstrong was the first person who believed her story. "I'm heard weirder stuff than that when I was with PRIMUS, and it does explain what you can do." Ellen felt a bond form with this handsome man. And she learned to love him, and when her affection for him cooled, she loved his friend Scott, and so she was content.

Oddly enough, a strange relationship exists between Madame Blue and Solitaire of the Champions. On the two occasions where VF-2 and the Champions have clashed, Madame Blue and Solitaire have actively avoided each other in combat, for reasons neither of them are sure about.

Quote: "We all have dreams, don't we? Allow me to show you mine. I must warn you, they might seem a little odd."

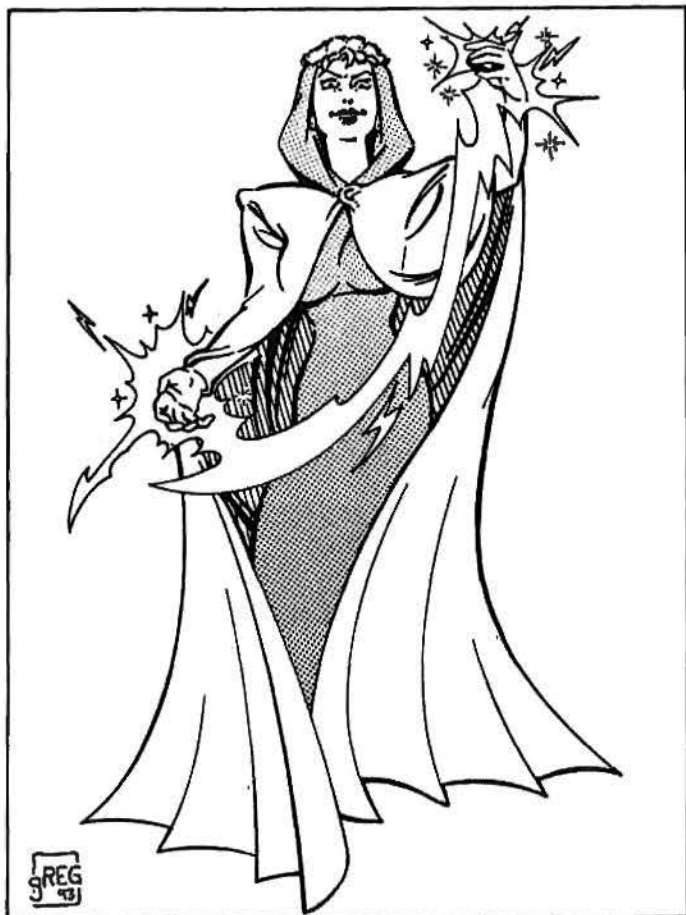
Personality: Madame Blue is a combination of a woman who has lived in a magical fantasy realm, and a woman living in the reality of the 20th Century. She harbors no delusions about reality; she does not mistake superheroes for medieval knights, she knows that she is in the 20th Century. At the same time, she likes to apply medieval terms for people and organizations. Blue can be very haughty and distant to strangers, but anyone who treats her with kindness will find a warm and sensitive woman inside.

Powers/Tactics: Madame Blue is a true magician (in campaigns where magic does not exist, you can substitute psionics). Although human, she has an elvish vulnerability to cold iron. When she casts a spell, she become surrounded by a faint "astral" image of a woman casting magic, and she is surrounded in a beautiful chorus of song.

Blue uses her abilities defensively, delaying her action, and casting a force wall to impede opponents who are hurting other members of VF-2. She will conjure up energy blasts to hit people with known vulnerabilities. She uses mental illusions on those who directly attack her. She relies on the other members of VF-2 to give her flight, and likes to fight from high ground.

Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, reduce Madame Blue's Energy Blast to 8d6, her Telepathy and Mental Illusions to 10d6, and her force wall to 10 PD, 10 ED. For higher powered campaigns, increase her DEX to 23, her EGO to 23, and add 10 points of STUN.

Appearance: Madame Blue has short blond hair, and wears a long blue (hooded) gown. She is 5'4" tall, and 110 lbs, and has green eyes.



SAVANT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
20	CON	20	ECV: 4
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
18	INT	8	
11	EGO	2	
15	PRE	5	
12	COM	1	
8+	PD	4	
8+	ED	4	
5	SPD	17	
10	REC	4	
40	END	0	
35	STUN	0	

* - IIF suit

Cost	Powers	END
12*	Endurance Reserve (80 END, 7 REC) IIF suit	
41*	Multipower (52 pt. reserve, IIF suit)	
4*u	5d6 NND, Defenses are Hard Def or	
	LS:Self-contained	5
4*u	5d6 Entangle, DEF 5	5
4*u	20" Flight, ½ END	5
4*u	4d6 Aid vs. STUN, BODY, and END (+2), at range	5
4*u	7d6 Drain vs. DEX, at range	5
4*u	7d6 Drain vs. STR, at range	5
20	Armor +10 PD, +10 ED, IIF suit, act. 15-	
5	Mental Defense (7 pts)	
4	Flash Defense, 5 pts vs. sight, IIF contacts	
4	UV Vision, IIF contacts	
4	Radio, Two-Way, IIF, wristwatch	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	Bugging 13-	
3	Computer Programming 13-	
3	Cryptography 13-	
3	Disguise 14-	
7	Electronics 13-	
5	Inventor 14-	
3	Security Systems 13-	
3	Scientist	
21	KS: Biochemistry, Computer Science, Exobiology,	
	Gravitics, Mathematics, Physics, Robotics (13- each)	
2	KS: UNTIL 11-	
9	+3 Levels w/MP	

100+ Disadvantages

15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (common, strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Arrogant (common, strong)
5	Distinctive Features: Always wears suits and ties
10	Reputation, arrogant scientist, 11-
10	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
10	Hunted by PRIMUS 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
15	Secret ID (Colin Bowen)
104	Villain Bonus

Background: Colin Bowen was always clever. And he was always arrogant. And he was always greedy. Nonetheless, the cleverness was the most prominent thing that attracted UNTIL to him, and he won UNTIL scholarships that led to his Masters Degree in Engineering, and a prominent place on UNTIL's battle armor program research.



But Colin never got enough praise for his work, and Colin never got enough promotions or raises. He was jealous of the prestige of the senior members of the staff, who took credit for his research. VIPER's undercover agents determined that Colin would be a prime candidate for defection. So VIPER contacted Colin. Colin agreed to defect. Colin would develop weapons for VIPER; except that he wanted to be the only one to utilize his weapons. VIPER agreed that they could use another technological supervillain in its arsenal, and Colin made himself a costume, and joined VF-2 as Savant. VIPER hopes that Colin will get tired of playing supervillain and go into full time weapons research; so far, it hasn't happened.

Quote: "Allow me to introduce myself. I am Savant—Super Genius. Now I know I'm going to beat you sooner or later, so why don't you just give up right now, because there's no way anyone of your limited intellectual capacity can defeat a Super Genius."

Personality: Savant is an arrogant jerk. He is extremely egotistical; he considers himself the greatest technological genius in the world, and everyone else, including Chasm, are amateurs who cannot do the job as well as he can; these clumsy battlesuit designers, like Dr. Destroyer, lack the elegance that Savant puts in his designs. Savant is a perfectionist who is obsessed with micro-design efficiency, even if it will take him a year to modify his designs for something that only he will notice. Savant is the least liked member of VF-2, but his usefulness in combat causes him to be tolerated by the other members.

Powers/Tactics: Savant's powers are technological. Savant takes a lot of pride in using technology that is not obvious; and he believes in being fit physically as well as intellectually; his high stats are the result of intense training. Savant's suit contains "neural" energy that affects his target's nervous system, as well as a thin steel mesh screen that wraps around his opponents.

In combat, Savant is one of "the leaders of the pack". He aggressively works his way into the front line, and uses his drains to weaken his opponents. If his teammates get hurt, he'll use his Aid power to accelerate their recovery.

Power Variation: In a low powered campaign, reduce his SPD to 4, his DEX to 18 and his defenses to 5. In a high powered campaign, increase his SPD to 6, his DEX to 26, and his attacks to 70 active points.

In a real world technology campaign, Savant's powers should not exist. Remove him from VF-2 or replace his multipower with a taser or an M-16.

Appearance: Vain as well as obnoxious, Savant likes to wear the finest tailored suits, even in combat. He is 5'10" and 175 lbs., and has bright red hair and green eyes. In combat, he wears a sandy brown wig and uses make-up to give him a false nose, a fake scar on his cheek, and his contacts are tinted red-brown.



SMOKE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
20	STR	10	OCV: 7	
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7	
25	CON	30	ECV: 4	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
13	INT	3	Costs	
10	EGO	0		
13	PRE	3	Char: 138 Base: 100	
8	COM	-1	+ +	
20	PD	16	Powers: 160 Disads: 198	
20	ED	15	= =	
5	SPD	20	Totals: 298 298	
10	REC	2		
50	END	0		
38	STUN	0		

Cost	Powers	END
75	Multipower (75 pt. reserve)	
7u	3d6 NND, 3" AE, 0 END, defense is	
	LS: Self-contained	0
7u	Desolidification, invis to visual group, ½ END	3
7u	Darkness vs. sight, 4" radius,	
	personal immunity, ½ END	3
7u	Flight, 25", 0 END	0
10	Damage Resistance (10 rPD, 10 rED)	
16	LS: Self-contained, intense heat, high-pressure	
5	IR Vision	
5	Lack of Weakness (5 pts)	
5	Navigation 12-	
3	System Operations 12-	
3	English (Kialaa is native)	
9	+3 Levels w/MP	

100+	Disadvantages
20	2x STUN from water or cold attacks
20	2x BODY from water of cold attacks
15	Believes that she is destined to be a criminal
	(Uncommon, Total)
15	Panics when immersed in water (Common, Strong)
10	Introvert (Common, Moderate)
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
10	Hunted by Raven (As Pow, 8-)
10	Public ID
93	Villainess Bonus

Background: To be a mutant on the planet Kialaa is to be a slave, a slave to her K'Pok masters. Shujok was made a navigator on the most dangerous warp run, as her abilities allowed her to survive the dangerous trip through the wormhole. Shujok suffered as the planet's corporations made tremendous profits from her bravery and skill.

Finally she rebelled. It meant that she would become the lowest class on Kialaa—a criminal—but being a pariah was better than being used. She aimed her warcraft on a different route as it passed through the wormhole; then it malfunctioned. She found herself crash-landed on a primitive planet. There was no way that her craft could be repaired. She was marooned, on Earth.

Because Shujok had accepted the role of criminal, she felt obligated to become a criminal on earth. She eventually learned the language of the English, and came to America. She contacted the criminal organization Raven, but they tried to dissect her. This act of deceit freed her from any bonds of loyalty to them. Next, she encountered Armstrong. Armstrong was surprisingly kind to her; he was more interested in her talents than in her alien physiognomy, and was more respectful than any taskmaster she had ever met. He promised her luxuries and esteem, and a shared danger as opposed to a danger met alone. Shujok had never known any better thing. She joined VF-2, under the code-name "Smoke".

Quote: "You talk. I take action. This is the way I work."

Personality: Smoke is a silent woman. She believes that as a member of the criminal class, her opinions are not as worthy as other people's (she has yet to reconcile the fact that on Earth, criminals are more assertive, opinionated, and class mobile as they were on Kialaa). Those who get to know her will find a terribly depressed and naive young woman. The only person that she gets along well with is her taskmaster, the master criminal Armstrong, although she sometimes finds his attempts at forging a friendship with one beneath his station to be humiliating.

Powers/Tactics: Shujok's anatomy allows her to generate immense internal heat. Although it can be painful, she can generate enough heat to emit smoke through the pores of her skin. She can generate a thick, choking smoke, or a dark, blinding smoke. With sufficient heat, she can transform herself to smoke and become intangible, or become lighter than air and fly. When desolid, she can be affected by wind or cold attacks.

In combat, Shujok likes to target agents with her area effect attack. She is much less effective against supers than the other members of VF-2, and can spend a lot of time desolid or shrouded in darkness.

Power Variation: In low powered campaigns, reduce Smoke's speed to 4, her defenses to 15, and eliminate her lack of weakness. In high-powered campaigns, increase her speed to 6, her defenses to 25, and add a 12d6 heat blast.

Appearance: The Kialaa mutants have no standard appearance. Smoke has charcoal grey skin, a black sheeny membrane in the eye sockets, and six fingers and toes. Smoke wears a charcoal grey VIPER uniform, with white serpents, and no helmet. Her hair is long and stiff, and fans out in a nimbus around her face.

STALWART

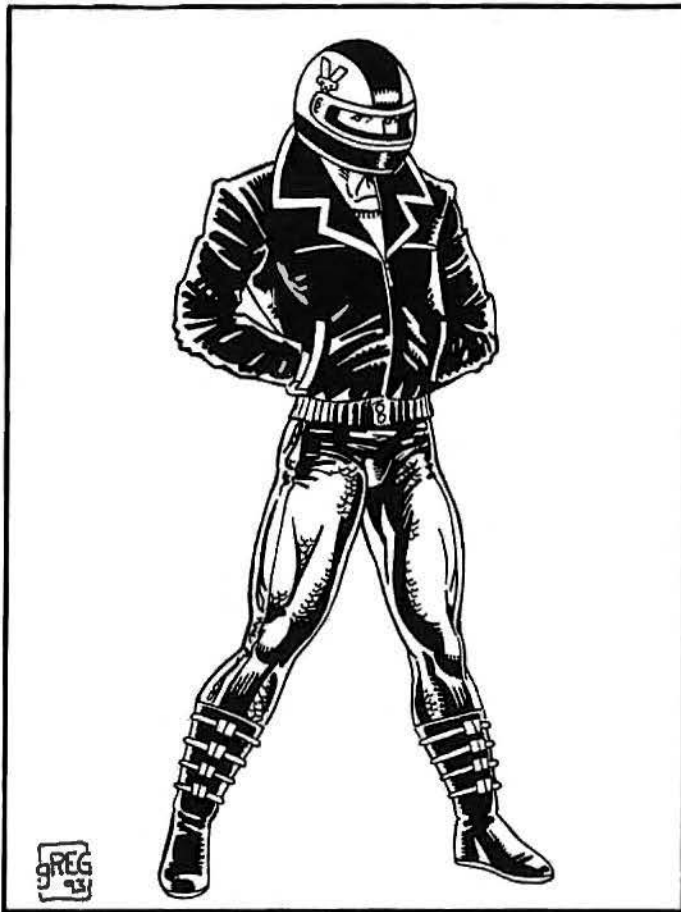
Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
60	STR	50	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
33	CON	46	ECV: 4
13	BODY	6	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	Costs
18	PRE	8	
22	COM	6	Char: 178 Base: 100
20+	PD	8	+ +
20+	ED	13	Powers: 114 Disads: 192
4	SPD	12	= =
19	REC	0	Totals: 292 292
66	END	0	
60	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
30	Flight 15", 0 END, OIF jet-pack	0
20	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED) OIF suit and helm	
3	Flash Defense (5 pts visual, OIF helm)	
3	Radio, Two-way, OIF helmet	
3	Flash Defense (5 pts visual, OIF helm)	
3	Acrobatics 13-	
3	Breakfall 13-	
3	Combat Driving 13-	
7	Mechanics 13-	
1	Transport Fam: Small Ground Vehicles	
3	KS: Heavy Metal Bands 12-	
20	Vehicle: Kawasaki Ninja (97 pts)	
15	+3 Levels w/HtH Combat	

100+	Disadvantages
20	2x STUN from heat or fire attacks
10	Recovering Alcoholic (Common, Moderate)
15	Likes to Vandalize (Common, Strong)
15	Loves to Fight (Common, Strong)
15	Hunted by Renegade
	(San Francisco based superhero) 8-
15	Hunted by GENOCIDE 8-
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
15	Secret ID (Scott Peterson)
62	Villain Bonus

Background: Who is to blame?

Scott Peterson's family got a divorce when he was seven, an event that destroyed his life for many years. He had blamed himself for their fighting, and then he blamed himself for the divorce. His mother found him almost impossible to handle, and he never saw his dad. By the age of 13, he had become a full-fledged alcoholic and juvenile delinquent. After one particularly nasty drinking binge, he not only had a headache, but his mutant powers had emerged. Scott was now stronger, tougher, and faster than anyone else he knew.



Scott used his powers the way any juvenile delinquent would. Eventually, superheroes went after him, trying to bring him in. But Armstrong's sources had told him about this kid, and he decided to check whether he was worth bringing into VF-2. Scott was not particularly keen about being rescued, and when he mouthed off at Armstrong, Armstrong belted him. A fight broke out, which Armstrong won.

No one had ever stood up to Scott before. No one had ever beaten him. To Armstrong's credit, he didn't follow it up by bullying him, but by getting to know the kid and trying to talk him out of some of his most self-destructive habits. Armstrong can be persuasive, and Scott quickly learned to look up to the former Silver Avenger. They became very close friends. Scott quit drinking, and channelled his energy into two areas: motorcycles, and VIPER Force-2. The other members of VF-2 also helped support him, and learned to like him. Scott became Stalwart, one of VF-2's most dependable members.

Quote: "Hey, take it easy! You'd think you were serious about this superhero stuff!"

Personality: Scott presents a rugged, exterior, with a rough demeanor and a sly smile. He is generally quiet and soft spoken, but is easily amused and often breaks out into a laugh. Scott is still a teenager, and views things with a simplistic "us vs. them" mentality. He enjoys splatter films and heavy metal bands, with the exception of Roadkill, who "sold out" by becoming supervillains. (No one's been able to figure out Scott's reasoning behind that one either). He and Madame Blue are very close, despite their obvious differences.

Powers/Tactics: Stalwart is a mutant, with superhuman strength and toughness. His physical form is capable of withstanding large amounts of kinetic and radioactive energy, but heat and fire cause a backlash effect.

Stalwart likes action, and tends to run to the forefront of the battle, drawing fire, and exposing his enemies to other members of the team. At least that's how he justifies it; Armstrong thinks he's just recklessness.

The Kawasaki Ninja motorcycle that Scott likes to ride is listed in the *Hero System Rulebook*, page 195. He likes to ride it a lot, but will not deliberately take it into combat.

Power Variation: For low powered campaigns, reduce Stalwart's base defenses to 15, lower his STR to 55, and reduce him to +1 Level in HtH Combat. For high powered campaigns, increase his SPD to 5, his DEX to 23, and add a boxing martial arts package.

Appearance: Scott is 6'5" tall, and weighs close to 300 lbs, all muscle. He has short, spiky black hair, and deep brown eyes. He typically wears a leather jacket and leather pants, with a white T-shirt. His costume is a modified (dyed black) VIPER uniform, with gold trim, and a leather jacket worn over it. His helmet is a motorcyclist's, black with a gold VIPER symbol on the side.

SOLO OPERATIVES



BRICK

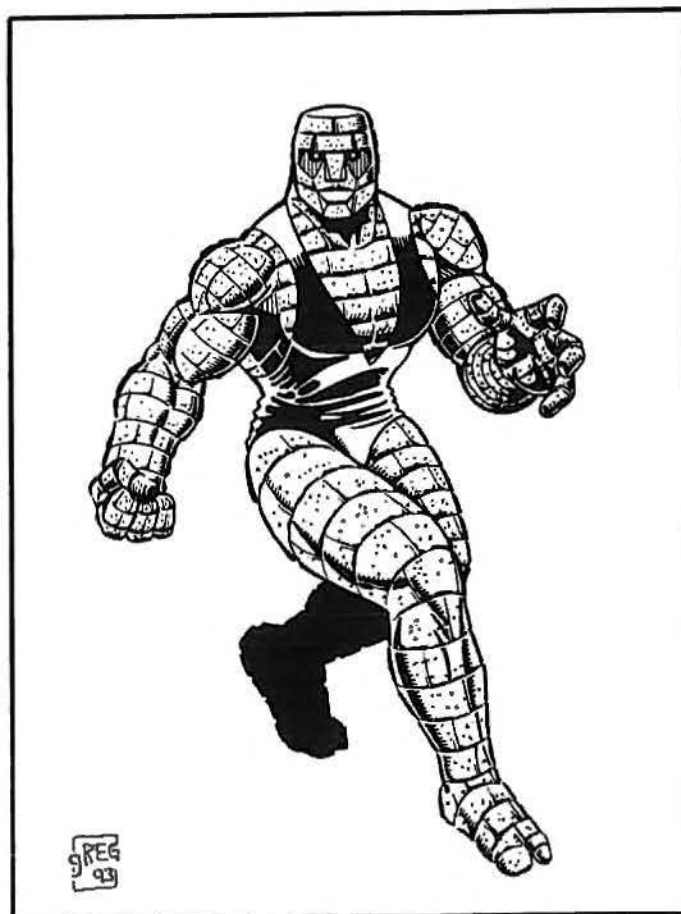
Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
55	STR	25*	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
38	CON	56	ECV: 4
15	BODY	6	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
18	INT	8	
11	EGO	2	
25	PRE	15	Costs
4	COM	-3	Char: 143 Base: 100
10+	PD	1	+ +
10+	ED	0	Powers: 203 Disads: 246
4	SPD	12	= =
15	REC	0	Totals: 346 346
70	END	-3	
52	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
13	Density Increase, 2 levels, Persistent, 0 END, Always On, (+10 STR, -2" KB, +2 PD/ED) (*added in)	0
13	Growth, 2 levels, Persistent, 0 END, Always On (+10 STR, -2" KB, -1 DCV, +1 to PER roll) (*added in)	0
10	Find Weakness with punch, 11-	
42	10d6 EB (physical), ½ END, Reduced by Range	3
20	Regeneration, 2 BODY/turn	
10	LS: Self-contained	
45	Armor +15 PD, +15 ED	
10	Running, +5", 11" total	2
3	Scientist	
3	SC: Biochemistry 13-	
3	SC: Chemistry 13-	
3	SC: Geology 13-	
3	SC: Sub-atomic Physics 13-	
3	Climbing 13-	
3, 3	Survival 11-, Tracking 13-	
10	+2 Levels w/ HtH Attacks	
2, 3	+1 level with EB, +2 levels vs. range with EB	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Psych Lim: Loves to plays the "dumb brick" stereotype (common, moderate)
15	Psych Lim: Vindictive
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident
25	Distinctive features: (Brick form) (not concealable, extreme).
15	Reputation (violent dumb criminal) 11-
15	Hunted by SAT, NCI, 8-
15	Hunted by UNTIL, NCI, 8-
10	Hunted by the Mob 8-, NCI, 8-
5	Rivalry with Ogre
121	Villain Bonus

Background: Dr. Jon Cole was a chemist who was illegally working on an experimental rocket fuel for the mob in a mountain somewhere in Oregon. Something went wrong; an explosion, a cave in and escaping chemical vapors, and the only thing that remained was a burned out cave where Jon's mountainside lab once stood. In that burned out cave stood only one thing...a man. This man remembered nothing of his past and all he wanted to do was get away from the place.

At this time there was someone else hiding in the same woods. Ogre was hiding from the law and noticed the explosion. He decided to check it out to see if a hero had indeed found his hiding place. He found a figure wandering in the shadows and attacked. Even though Ogre was stronger, he lost to this newcomer.



SAT detected the explosion and sent a team to investigate, fearing a plane crash. VIPER found out that a SAT team was scrambling and dispatched a strike team of their own. VIPER found the mystery person standing over the unconscious body of Ogre and approached him. The shadowy figure paused, not knowing who these people were. VIPER soon convinced him to grab Ogre and board their ship.

Back at the VIPER base, he was dubbed Brick, because he looked like a pile of bricks. Brick regained his full health, and learned to deal with his new form and to deal with others. In return for a home, Brick agreed to use his great strength to aid VIPER.

After a while Brick realized that VIPER was using his services less and less because of others with incredible strength seeking employment. Brick decided to have VIPER do some experiments on him to either enhance his abilities or to gain new powers. In the days that followed, Brick gained several new abilities thanks to the experiments. And he regained his memory as well, again becoming Dr. Jon Cole the chemist. Brick would never be the same. Nor would anyone who got in his way.

Quote: "Victory comes from inner strength as well as outer."

Personality: Brick is a very calculating individual. He loves a good challenge. He likes to make people think that he is a "dumb brick" stereotype. Brick hates to lose and will go out of his way to win a fight. Brick is a very aggressive individual and holds no regard for "lesser" people.

Powers/Tactics: Brick is very strong and intelligent. Brick uses tactics in combat and will take out the most dangerous combatant first, hoping to intimidate the rest. Brick has the power to find the weak points in almost anything or anyone. He also can throw pieces of himself, which doesn't bother him because he regenerates so fast.

Power Variation: For low-powered campaigns, eliminate Brick's Find Weakness and his Energy Blast. For higher powered campaigns, increase Brick's STR to 65, his DEX to 23, and his SPD to 5, and boost his Find Weakness to a 13-.

Appearance: Brick is 7'9" tall and weighs 1600 lbs. Brick looks like a walking pile of bricks wearing a pair of black wrestling tights. Brick's skin is literally made of brownish-orange bricks. He only has three fingers and a thumb on each hand, and two toes on each foot. His eyes are black voids with a floating white pupil.

CITADEL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
40/60	STR	30	OCV: 10			
29	DEX	57	DCV: 10			
40	CON	60	ECV: 4			
20/24	BODY	20	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12			
10	INT	0	Costs			
10	EGO	0				
20	PRE	10				
20	COM	5	Char:	260	Base:	100
35	PD	27		+		+
35	ED	27	Powers:	200	Disads:	360
6	SPD	21		=		=
16	REC	0	Totals:	460		460
80	END	0				
63/68	STUN	3				
Cost		Powers				END
24	Martial Arts (Kung-fu)					
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage		
	Punch	+0	+2	+4d6		
	Leaping Kick	-2	+1	+6d6		
	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort		
	Throw	+0	+1	STR +v/5		
	Disarm	-1	+1	+20 STR vs. Disarm		
	Dodge	—	-5	Dodge		
8	+2 DCs w/Kung-fu					
40	Multipower (40 pt. reserve					
4u	Growth, 4 levels, 0 END)					0
4u	Invisibility to sight, no fringe					4
4u	Teleport, 20"					4
4u	Missile Deflection (all, +10 to roll)					
4u	8d6 Absorption vs. ED, goes to STUN					
25	Flight, 10", ½ END					2
10	½ END Cost on STR (2 END)					
10	+20 PRE, vs. attacks only, linked to growth (-½)					
15	Damage Resistance (15 rPD, 15 rED)					
5	Lack of Weakness (5 pts)					
6	Power Defense (6 pts)					
13	LS: Self-contained, vacuum/high pressure					
3	Radio, Two-way, OIF helmet					
3	IR Vision, OIF goggles					
3, 3	Conversation 13-, Seduction 13-					
3	KS: Kung-fu 12-					
3	Driving 12-					
3	+1 Level w/Kung-fu					
6	+3 Levels w/Punch					
2	+1 Level w/Flight					
100+		Disadvantages				
10	Enraged if reminded of past scandals 11-, rec. 8-					
15	Hatred of the Press (Common, Strong)					
15	Wants to Humiliate all superheroes (Common, Strong)					
10	Overconfidence (Common, Moderate)					
5	Distinctive Features: Handsome (easily concealable)					
10	Reputation (fallen superhero) 11-					
5	DNPC (sister, normal, 8-)					
10	Watched by VIPER (As Pow, NCI, 11-)					
5	Watched by Alien Genetic Manipulators (As Pow, 8-)					
20	Hunted by UNTIL (As Pow, NCI, 11-)					
10	Hunted by superhero team (As Pow, 8-)					
5	1d6 Unluck					
10	Public ID (Robin Farnol)					
230	Villain Bonus					



Background: A number of superhuman mutants are really the result of secret alien genetic mutation experiments. Robin Farnol was one of them. When he was eight, he was captured and given latent mutations by the aliens, known as the Hzeel. The ever curious Hzeel wanted to see how humans could evolve, and gave Robin's DNA as wide a variety of mutagenic possibilities as possible, then retreated to watch their work in action.

Robin grew up believing that he wasn't very special. He tried a lot of things: football, baseball, then finally kung-fu. Robin's family was athletic, and being anything but a jock was unthinkable, particularly when Robin's father was trying to relive (and improve on) his days of glory through his son. Robin was good in practise, but always choked in tournaments. Frustrated, he resigned himself to life as a nobody; certainly his father let him know how worthless he was.

Then, one day, Robin was hit by lightning. This activated the latent mutations that the aliens put into his DNA. Robin was now a somebody! His father knew it too, and ordered him to become a superhero. Robin put on one of those embarrassing superhero outfits and called himself Citadel, the city's newest and most powerful superhero. Life was great! He had his own fan club! Every superhero group wanted him! People respected him and looked up to him.

Then his world came crashing down.

Citadel was caught having an affair with the wife of the wealthy industrialist who sponsored the local superhero team. His divorce hearing brought out everything, including his secret identity. His fan club president committed suicide, and the press raked him over the coals. His teammates voted unanimously to expel from the team. His father told the world what a disappointment he had always been, disowning him on three nationally syndicated talk shows. Robin's life as a superhero was over.

Robin was in the gutter, developing a drinking problem, when VIPER found him. VIPER offered him the two things he needed most—self-respect and vengeance against the people who rejected him. VIPER has found many superbeings, but few are as reliable—or powerful—as Citadel. And, unlike others, Robin's loyalty has never wavered. He remains one of VIPER's most potent weapons in the war against law.

Quote: "You turned your back on me! Let's see you turn your back on this!"

Personality: Citadel is an angry young man. His only joy is hurting people, and belonging to VIPER gives him plenty of opportunities for that. He is extremely bitter about his past, and those who remind him about it only make him angrier than he is about it. The PCs should be unsettled by Citadel; he represents something that they might become—the warped reflection of a superhero. Citadel is a VIPER trouble-shooter; if people have been hammering a Nest hard, Citadel will be flown in to offer assistance (while VIPER secretly investigates the situation to see if the Nest is salvageable).

Powers/Tactics: Citadel's DNA has been adjusted by alien experimentation. As a result, he can trigger many different mutations, of a wide, seemingly unrelated nature. He is considered to be a human mutant (for detect purposes).

Citadel has become more seasoned and less impulsive over the years. He is good at using his powers against multiple opponents, using his Growth powers only when he finds himself one-on-one, or in need of heavy firepower. He likes to start out fighting with invisibility, then switching to teleportation when people get wise to him. He'll missile deflect against large numbers of agents.

GM's Note: If you run Citadel's nervous breakdown and capture in "Perchance to Dream", then Citadel can be reformed in prison and eventually emerge as the head of "Castle Security Inc", the security organization that is scheduled to appear in *Adventurer's Club* #20.

Appearance: Citadel is 6'3" tall, and weighs 230 lbs (except when using his Growth powers). He has light brown hair and blue eyes, and has an athletic build. His costume, made of a special stretchable material, is red with a white trim, belt, and gloves.

DAMAGE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
50	STR	40	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
28	CON	36	ECV: 4
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	Costs
15	PRE	5	
16	COM	3	Char: 188 Base: 100
20+	PD	10	+ +
20+	ED	14	Powers: 87 Disads: 175
5	SPD	17	= =
16	REC	0	Totals: 275 275
56	END	0	
54	STUN	0	

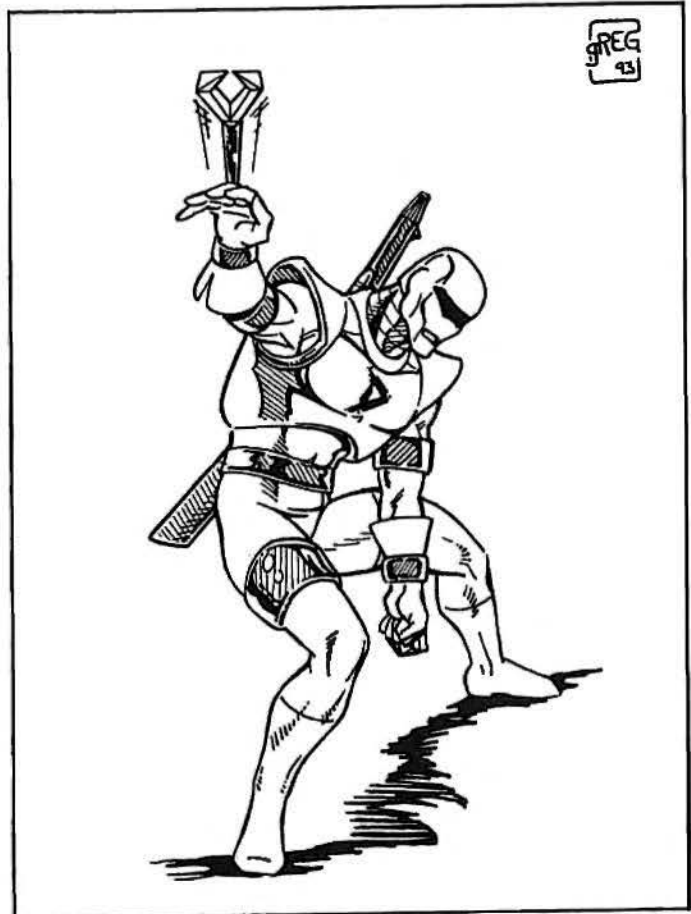
Cost	Powers	END
30	10d6 EB, Affects Desolid, [4 charges of 8c], act. 15-, OAF MB-02 rifle	
12	½ END Cost on STR (3 END)	
9	Armor +6 PD, +3 ED, OIF suit and helmet	
3	Flash defense (5 pts. vs. sight) OIF helmet visor	
3	Two-Way Communicator	
13	Stretching 4", OIF tendrils	
6	Running +3" (9" total)	2
2	PS: Painting 11-	
9	+3 Levels w/ punch, thrown object, and grab	

100+	Disadvantage
20	2x BODY and STUN from sonic attacks
10	Psych Lim: Hatred of the Judicial System (UC, Strong)
10	Psych Lim: Hatred of Medical Practitioners (UC, Strong)
15	Watched by VIPER (More Pow, NCI, 14-)
10	Hunted by FBI (As Pow, NCI, 8-)
5, 10	Reputation: Violent Supervillain 8-, 2d6 Unluck
15	Secret ID (Milt Cryer)
80	Villain Bonus

Background: Milt Cryer always had superpowers, ever since he could remember, he was faster and stronger than anyone he knew. But taking advantage of his powers never appealed to him. He wanted to be an artist, so he rejected physical pursuits to paint and draw things. His father never really approved, but he was willing to support him, especially since his mother had died and he was an only child.

Then came the day when his father couldn't get out of bed because of the pain, and he had to take him to the hospital. A week later, his father was released from the hospital, with \$17,000 in medical expenses. His father had no insurance and very little income. As far as he was concerned, his life was ruined.

Milt decided that he had been given his powers for a reason, and that reason was to help his father in his time of need. He committed several robberies, and had gotten most of the money to pay for his dad's medical bills when he was caught by a superhero. Milt was placed on trial. When he tried to justify his actions, the judge was indignant. When Milt tried to argue with him, he received a contempt of court charge, and a maximum sentence. His father was ordered to reimburse those he had taken money from. His father, realizing that all hope of repayment was futile and that the court had stripped him of any dignity promptly committed suicide.



In prison, Milt wondered how "contempt of court" could be a crime in a country where freedom of speech was the highest ideal. He came to the conclusion that the country existed to protect the rich and the powerful, and that everybody else were fools to be exploited by them. It made him very angry. When VIPER broke into prison, he gladly joined them. VIPER honed his powers, and gave him an experimental suit which would allow him to grapple things at range. As the supervillain Damage, he would bring the rich and the powerful to their knees.

Quote: "They're only things! Why should you worry about them being destroyed? Get a life!"

Personality: Milt is a cold, callous, and uncaring individual. He has chosen to detach himself emotionally from the world, caring only when people are annoyed when he damages property. Milt likes to cause a lot of property damage on his operations, particularly if it looks like the property being damaged belongs to someone who is rich. His hatred for the judiciary and for the medical profession is particularly intense.

Powers/Tactics: Milt is a brick. He supplements his powers with VIPER weaponry, including an experimental device that grows tendrils from his limbs and allows him to use his strength at a distance.

Milt likes to tear up the battlefield in a fight. He likes to cause a lot of property damage, and use whatever he can find and throw it. This has given him a rather negative reputation; Damage is sometimes thought of as a berserker, but he's far from mindless in choosing his targets.

Appearance: Milt is 6'2" tall and 180 lbs., tall, and lanky. He's 18 years old, and his black hair and blue eyes. His costume is a white bodysuit with a red helmet and trim. His voice is rather high-pitched and he has a tendency to talk very quickly.

GRAVITY

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
20	STR	10	OCV: 9	
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9	
20	CON	20	ECV: 4	
10	BODY	0	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12	
13	INT	3		
11	EGO	2	Costs	
15	PRE	5		
14	COM	2	Char:	150 Base: 100
20	PD	16		+ +
20	ED	16	Powers:	129 Disads: 179
6	SPD	24		= =
10	REC	4	Totals:	279 279
40	END	0		
30	STUN	0		
Cost		Powers	END	
75	Telekinesis, 40 STR, only to hold things stationary on the ground (-1), and 2d6 NND, (defense is 40+ STR or Gravity Powers or Density Incr.), ½ END			
25	Flight 10", ½ END			
15	Missile Deflection, thrown objects, arrows, projectiles			
3, 3	Lightning Calculator, Computer Programming 12-			
4, 2	English (French is native), KS: Montreal 11-			
2	+1 Level w/TK-NND Attack			
100+ Disadvantages				
20	2x BODY and STUN from magnetic attacks			
15	Susceptibility: 3d6 when teleported			
5	Enraged when treated as a sex object			
15	Psych Lim: Likely to Find Negative Connotations in Remarks, Easily Offended (Com, Strong)			
15	Psych Lim: Quick to Take Action, Impulsive (VC, Strong)			
5	Distinctive Features: Appears as a mutant on mutant scanners			
15	Hunted by Bulldozer 8- (As Pow, 11-)			
15	Watched by VIPER 14- (More Pow, NCI)			
15	Secret ID (Monique Trembley)			
59	Villainess Bonus			

Background: Monique Trembley was a mutant who grew up in Montreal, Canada. Her powers first manifested themselves when she was a girl. She quickly found that she liked using her powers, and she liked using them in criminal fashion, as the villainess Pesanteur ("Gravity"). It wasn't particularly a good idea to use mutant powers when Genocide was around, however. She soon found herself in their evil hands.

Realizing it was her only chance to live, Monique used her powers to alert a passing police vehicle as she was being taken by the Genocide agents. The Sentinels arrived shortly afterward and rescued her, but she was eventually put in prison for her crimes nonetheless. Once there, an extreme chauvinist named Bulldozer, tried to "win her affections." She treated Bulldozer with contempt, but he didn't stop. This provided enough motivation for her to escape, which she did.

However, Bulldozer didn't stop trying to find her after he escaped, as he was convinced that she was the perfect mutant to sit in his kitchen, cooking for him and raising his kids. Monique discovered that Bulldozer hated VIPER, and figured that they could protect her from this bonehead. So, she joined VIPER as a solo operative. In exchange for her services, VIPER would help her deal with Bulldozer once and for all.

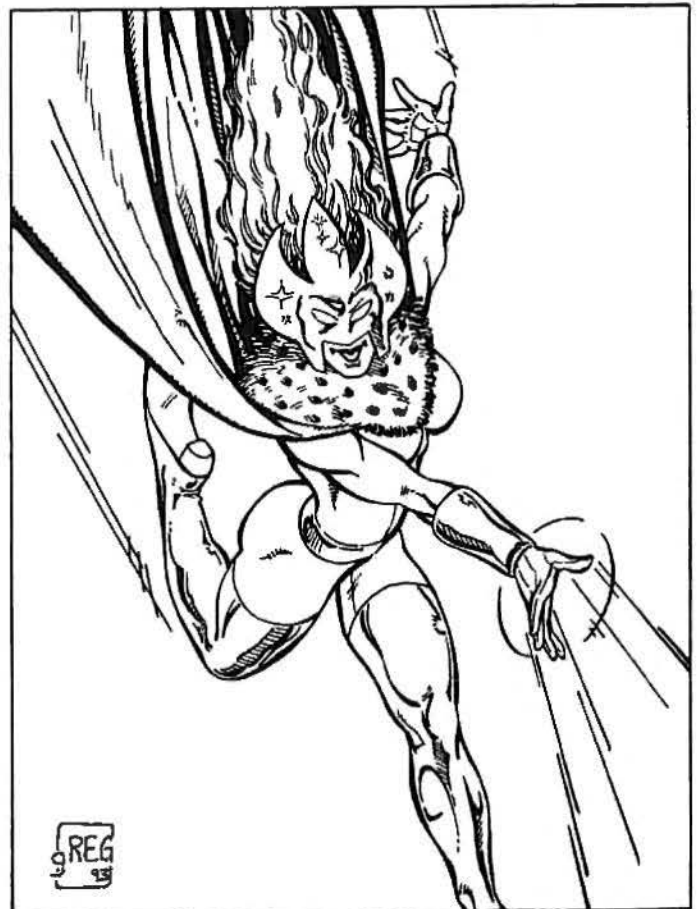
Quote: "Why do you keep falling down, monsieur?"

Personality: Monique is a cold, emotionless woman. Her sole joy is using her powers to rob a bank or to bring down some heroes. She believes that the world is a harsh, cruel place, and it's either kill or be killed. She has a great deal of contempt for her native Quebec, and for Canada, viewing both of them as provincial and neurotic national entities. Monique is greedy, and enjoys living well.

Powers/Tactics: Gravity is a mutant who has the ability to control localized gravity. Her powers are not particularly well developed, but she is capable of increasing gravity on a target to pin them to the ground, or of localizing gravity around herself to give her small flight ability.

Gravity is not particularly powerful. She likes to rely on someone else to inflict damage on a target while she pins them down. This assumes that she has intelligent allies, which is not always the case. To her annoyance, her powers don't work well on Bulldozer.

Appearance: Gravity wears a gold costume with a glittering silver mask and silver cape. She has long brown hair, and green eyes. Gravity is 5'7" and 110 lbs, and well muscled.



HAMMERHEAD

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
20	STR	10	OCV: 5		
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5		
18	CON	16	ECV: 4		
15	BODY	10	Phases: 4, 8, 12		
14	INT	4			
11	EGO	2	Costs		
15	PRE	5			
10	COM	0	Char:	73	Base: 100
5	PD	1		+	+
5	ED	1	Powers:	142	Disads: 115
3	SPD	6		=	=
8	REC	0	Totals:	215	215
36	END	0			
40	STUN	6			

Cost	Powers	END
15	2d6 HKA (3d6 + 1 w/STR), OAF machete	3
24	Martial Arts: Commando Training	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Boxing Cross 0 +2 8d6	
	Aikido Throw +0 +1 30 STR + v/5	
	Karate Chop -2 0 2d6 HKA	
	Choke -2 0 3d6 NND	
	Judo Disarm -1 +1 40 STR	
	Kung Fu Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
8	+2 DC w/Commando Training	
3	+3" Swimming (5" total)	1
5	Acrobatics 13-	
3	Breakfall 12-	
5	Climbing 13-	
3	Concealment 12-	
3	Navigation 11-	
3	Paramedics 12-	
7	Piloting: Combat suit 14-	
5	Stealth	13-
3	Survival: forest 11-	
3	Survival: at sea 11-	
3	Survival: desert 11-	
5	Systems operation 13-	
9	Tactics 15-	
3	Tracking 12-	
2	KS: U.S. Navai Procedures	11-
6	Transport Fam: ground vehicles, air vehicles, water vehicles	
5	Weapons Fam: common melee, small arms, plasma cannon	
10	+1 overall level	
4	+2 levels with boxing cross	

100+ Disadvantages
10 Enraged if losing combat 11-, rec. 14-
15 Hatred of U.S. government
15 Overconfidence
20 Vengeful
15 Secret ID
40 Villain Bonus

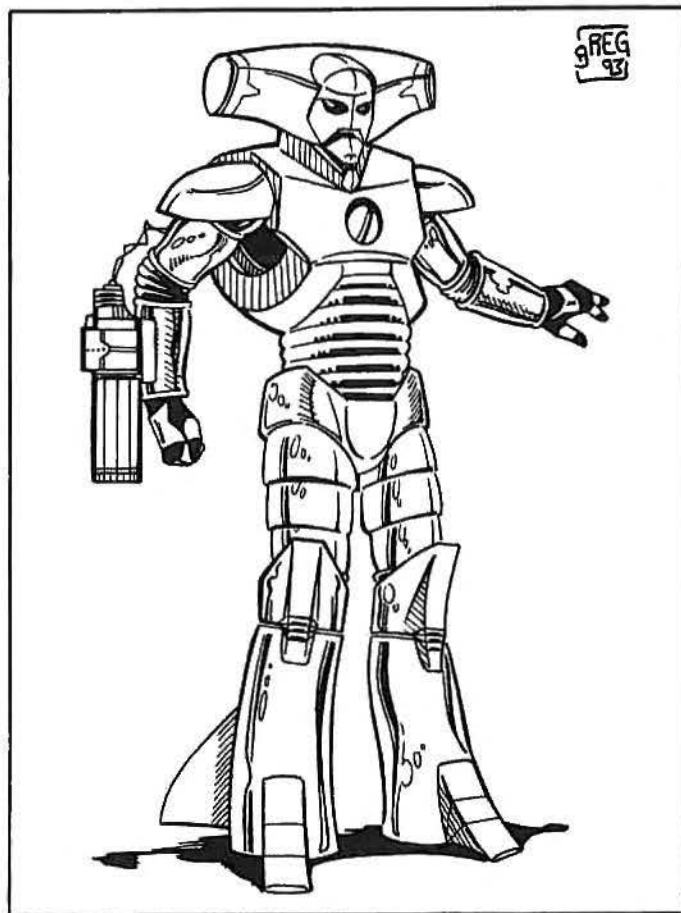
HAMMERHEAD BATTLESUIT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
+30	STR	*20	OCV: varies		
+10	DEX	*20	DCV: varies		
+10	CON	*13	ECV: varies		
+10	BODY	*13	Phases: varies		
+0	INT	0			
0	EGO	0	Costs		
+20	PRE	*13			
0	COM	0	Char:	90	Base: 100
+10	PD	*3		+	+
+10	ED	*5	Powers:	247	Disads: 237
+2	SPD	0		=	=
+10	REC	*0	Totals:	337	337
+30	END	*3			
+30	STUN	0			

Cost	Powers	END
60	5d6 RKA, AE line, Bulky OIF (plasma cannon), No Range	15
25	Armor +10 PD, +10 ED, Hardened, OIF battlesuit	
7	Force Field (+5 PD, +5 ED), OIF Force Field Generator	1
7	Damage Resistance, 10 PD, 10 ED, OIF battlesuit	
18	Full Life Support (not unaging), OIF battlesuit	
7	Flash Defense vs. visual (10 pts), OIF battlesuit	
7	Power Defense (10 pts), OIF battlesuit	
3	Lack of Weakness (5 pts)	
20	END Reserve (200 pts, 10 REC), OIF battlesuit	
33	Multipower (50 pt. reserve) OIF footjets	
3u	Flight 20", x8 NCM	4
3u	Swimming 40", x8 NCM	8
3u	Clinging (STR +5) and 25" superleap	5
13	Active Sonar, Discriminatory, OIF battlesuit	
13	Radar, Discriminatory, OIF battlesuit	
2	Ultrasonic hearing, Discriminatory, OIF battlesuit	
2	Microscopic Vision, OIF battlesuit	
2	Telescopic Vision, OIF battlesuit	
17	360 Degree for all senses, OIF battlesuit	
-2	Running, 4"	

100+ Disadvantages
10 1½x effect from electrical attacks
30 3d6 while in sonics or sonic attacks
10 Physical Lim: Maximums of: 50 STR, 30 DEX, 30 CON, 30 BODY, 20 PD/ED, 6 SPD, 30 REC, 80 END/STUN, 4" Running
10 Reputation, VIPER battlesuit, 11-
25 Distinctive features: unusual battle suit
20 Hunted by U.S. Army, NCI, 11-
15 Hunted by U.S. Navy, NCI, 8-
15 Watched by VIPER, NCI, 14-
102 Battlesuit bonus

Background: Dr. Stephen Miller was an award winning scientist in the fields of robotics and mechanics working on a secret government project. The Navy had him developing the ultimate deep-sea diving/recovery suit. The suit could not only withstand the pressures of the deepest trenches of the ocean, but NASA was even looking at it for its potential as an advanced spacesuit. The Army was also interested because of the heavy armoring that Dr. Miller had added to it. They believed they could turn it into the perfect battle armor.



When Dr. Miller heard about the government's plans for his rescue suit he panicked. He didn't want to see his wonderful invention becoming a weapon of destruction. So he secretly destroyed his blueprints and, after a lot of soul searching, sabotaged the prototype suit by rigging the jets to explode the first time they were fired. He realized that a human life would be lost during the testing, but he was willing to make that sacrifice to save the rest of the human race.

The Navy was running extensive and grueling tests on their SEALs to find the man best suited to test the rescue suit. It took a year but the man finally chosen was Lt. Allen Kent. He was a bright, healthy young man who had proudly served his country on many occasions. He also met all the qualifications for physical fitness and had an understanding of underwater work. It was Lt. Kent who nicknamed the suit "hammerhead" because of the odd shape of its helmet.

So on the fateful day, Allen was wrestled into the rescue suit and harness, then hooked to the crane that was to lower him into the water. The weather was perfectly clear and the waters of the Atlantic were quiet. Everything was a go as they lowered him into the water. Lt. Kent first tested the radio, which worked perfectly. Then Dr. Miller ran a diagnostic on the suit's monitors. All systems seemed to be working fine, because Dr. Miller was allowing it to, when a huge wave appeared on the horizon. No one could explain where it can from but before they could pull Lt. Kent from the water, it hit the ship. For what seemed forever the ship was tossed like a toy boat in a bathtub. When it was all over a crewman on the deck noticed that the cable leading to Lt. Kent and the deep-sea suit was broken.

Under the water Lt. Kent recovered from the shock of the drop and started to right the suit. His first thought was to return to the surface, but when he activated the foot jets on the suit they exploded with such force that he was propelled in the wrong direction. And the concussion of the shock waves knocked him out.

On board the ship the crew were using everything in their power to locate the lost underwater expert and the suit. But the rescue suit's internal location devices did not respond to any of the signals that were transmitted to it. And they received no response from Lt. Kent on the radio. The mission commander declared the mission a loss after two days and the research project was subsequently scrubbed, much to Dr. Miller's relief.

What none of them could have known was that Lt. Kent was not dead. The rescue suit's fail-safe systems kicked in after the explosion and maintained his vital signs until he regained consciousness, which was several hours later. He ran a quick diagnostic on the suit and found that the basic propulsion system was damaged but everything else seemed to be working fine. He began transmitting an SOS on all channels and made himself comfortable on the ocean shelf he had landed on. It was several hours before he received a response and was rescued by divers, but not Navy divers. They were VIPER agents who had been watching the secret tests from a distance. They had moved in after the Navy ship had left in hopes of salvaging the suit, and to their surprise they salvaged the diver too.

Lt. Allen Kent was stripped of the recovery suit and thrown into the brig until they reached port. He was secretly transported to VIPER headquarters and run through the standard interrogation. In the meantime the recovery suit was put through every test that VIPER scientists could imagine. No matter what they did, no one could control the suit. They lost two volunteers before it was decided to force Allen to demonstrate how the suit worked. They didn't have to do much persuasion by this time. In the months he had spent in his detention cell he had plenty of time to think. He had figured out that the suit had been sabotaged and he had been left to die. The only thing he couldn't figure out was why.

Allen ran the suit through all the routines that he had been taught with no problem and even tried a few suggested by the scientists. In the end it was realized that only Lt. Kent could control the suit and the Supreme Serpent himself ordered him to be trained in the ways of VIPER.

But there was still one more problem with the battlesuit that the Supreme Serpent ordered solved—it had no offensive weapons. In the VIPER arsenal was a plasma cannon that the scientists had developed for mounting on a small vehicle, but no one had got around to it. It was decided to attach it to the battlesuit and see what happened. The first tests were rough but in a short time Allen had the hang of it. So the Hammerhead was born.

Quote: "There are a lot of sharks in the world but none as clever as the Hammerhead."

Personality: Hammerhead appreciates a good fight but gets a greater thrill from outthinking his opponents. He prides himself on the many missions he had completed successfully, not only for VIPER but on several freelance jobs. Hammerhead is cold and emotionless, keeping his emotions in check, except when enraged. He hates the U.S. military and anyone connected to them to the point of obsession, and will go out of his way to destroy and humiliate them. But he

still holds a vestige of his military training and tends to treat people under him as if they were raw recruits. If anyone of them gets out of line he disciplines them through verbal and physical abuse, much like an army drill sergeant.

Powers/Tactics: Hammerhead likes to grandstand in any fight. He will stand and absorb his opponent's attacks, laughing in their faces, and then blow them away with his plasma cannon. If he feels he holds the upper hand in a situation he will not use the cannon, but instead pummel his opponent into submission. Military and patriotic heroes are always his first targets, with martial artists and energy projectors second. If he feels that he is losing the battle, he will survey the whole situation, assess the inevitability of defeat and then use every resource available to escape.

Hammerhead's plasma cannon emits a wide beam of superheated ionized plasma. Because of the cooling effect of water, the cannon's effective range underwater is halved.

Appearance: As Hammerhead, Allen appears to be a 7'6" tall mechanized man, almost like a walking tank. His joints are larger than normal, his movement is sluggish and the helmet really does resemble a hammerhead shark. The plasma cannon is mounted on his back and attached to his arm.

Allen Kent himself is a stereotypical "jarhead", from his flat-top haircut to his overly muscled physique. He likes to wear camouflage fatigues and combat boots; in fact, most of his wardrobe is his old military issue. He keeps a machete on hand, just in case he's caught outside his suit and a fight starts.

MIND WIPE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
18	CON	16	ECV: 8
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
23	EGO	26	
20	PRE	10	
10	COM	0	
5	PD	2	
5	ED	1	
5	SPD	17	
8	REC	2	
36	END	0	
35	STUN	3	

Cost	Powers	END
45	Multipower (90 pt. reserve), No range, Must make successful OCV and ECV roll to hit (-1/2)	
4u	5d6 Ego Attack, 0 END	0
4u	10d6 Mind Contr., Telepathic, 1/2 END, Time Delay	4
4u	12d6 Mind Control, 0 END	0
4u	3d6 Cumulative Major Transform to any limited class of humanoid, 1/2 END, can only change skills and mind of target, -1/2	4
55	10d6 Telepathy, AE 10" Radius, Non-Selective, 1/2 DCV, No Range, 0 END Persistent, act. 14-, Reduced by Range	0
5	Teleport, 10", x5 END, Full Phase, 1/2 DCV, Line of Sight Only (-1/2)	10
10	Running +5", 11" total	2
20	Mental Defense (25 pts. total)	
5	Flash Defense (8 pts. vs. visual) OIF glasses	
10	Armor +5 PD, +5 ED, OIF costume	
24	Force Field +10 PD, +10 ED, 0 END, persistent, Fully Invisible, ablative, IAF belt generator	0
3	Acrobatics 14-	
5	Acting 14-	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	Contortionist 14-	
5	Oratory 14-	
5, 5	KS: the Sixties 14-, KS: Narcotics 14-	
5, 1	KS: History 14-, KS: VIPER 8-	
2	Contact: VIPER 11-	
3, 3	Ambidexterity, Double jointed	
3, 3	Immunity to common narcotics, Immunity to alcohol	
5	Resistance +5 to roll	

100+ Disadvantages

5	Enraged if things are not going his way 8-, rec. 14-
30	2x effect from drugs (Stun, Body, Drains etc.)
20	2x effect from flashes
10	Physical lim: Drug withdrawal symptoms (slight)
15	Psych Lim: Thinks that he is in a drug induced dream (v. com.)
10	Psych Lim: Must Have Fun At All Times
10	Psych Lim: Self-absorbed
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident
15	Hunted by Police 11-
15	Hunted by PSI 11-
10	Watched by VIPER 11-
78	Villain Bonus

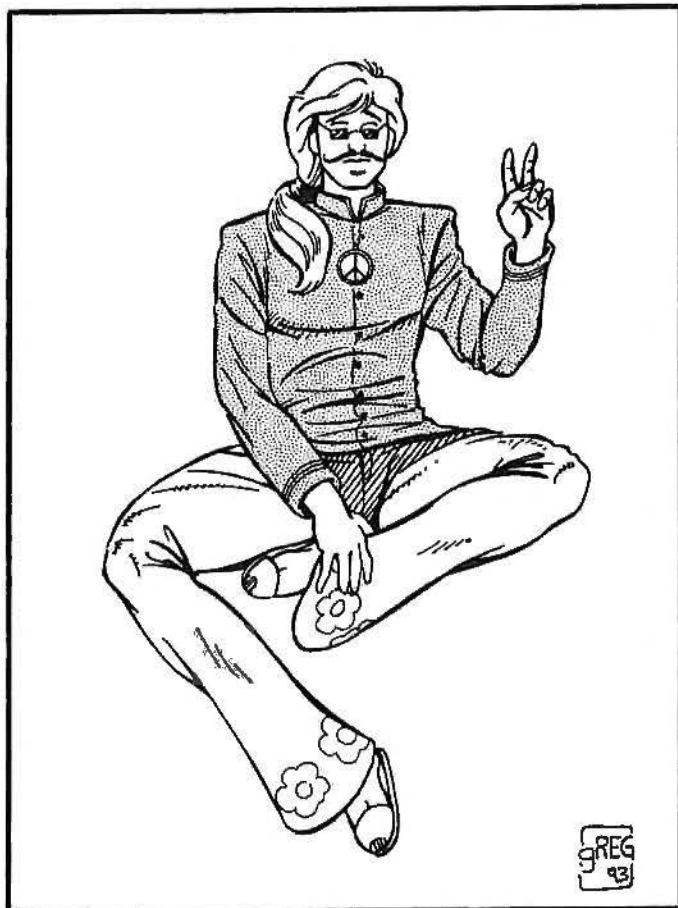
Background: Bauzer Michael was born to a peace activist family in Hell, Michigan in 1962. He was smothered by his parents with love and given everything their money could buy. But his parents were heavily into drugs and "did them" in front of Bauzer.

When he was 7 yrs. old the family traveled to Woodstock where they discovered new, experimental drugs that claimed to give one the ultimate high. While in their dazed state of mind, Bauzer's parents became separated from him. The little boy wandered around, taking a little bit of drugs and alcohol wherever he could. He even got his hands on an experimental drug. Bauzer became deathly ill and went into convulsions. A drunk passer-by tried to help the little boy by pouring corn whiskey into him, but the child's spasms became even worse. If a musician hadn't noticed the sick little boy and taken matters into his own hands, Bauzer may not have survived.

Bauzer was rushed to a local hospital but the doctors were unable to help. They couldn't figure out just what, or how many, drugs he had taken. The little "John Doe" slipped into a coma that lasted for fifteen years.

Bauzer awoke in a world totally alien to him. And, despite his adult body, he was still a little boy. His body was so weak and emaciated that it took months before he could even sit up by himself. But during those months he made an amazing discovery—he could read minds. He used this power to learn everything he could about his new world.

It was during a therapy session, while learning to walk again, that he got into an argument with a therapist. He began to throw a tantrum and screamed at the therapist: "Why don't you just take a flying leap!"



The man jumped out of the second storey window. This was Bauzer's first experience with his ability to control minds.

Slowly but surely Bauzer began to strengthen himself. His body seemed eager to respond to the exercise. And he began to feed his mind too. Bauzer "persuaded" the institution to give him a tutor so he could catch up on lost time. His mind absorbed the textbooks like a sponge absorbs water; he couldn't get enough. The doctors ran tests on him and discovered that, unlike most people, Bauzer now used over 60% of his brain. He was also immune to the effects of drugs and alcohol.

After three years Bauzer was a perfect physical specimen, his body showing no signs of having spent fifteen years in bed. By this time, he had "graduated" from high school. The doctors felt it was time for him to enter the outside world. They lined up a job for him and found him an apartment. But Bauzer had his own ideas.

Bauzer was still ingrained with his parents "peace" teaching and decided that he was going to go out and teach the rest of the world. When he saw the advertisement for a gun show, he picked that as the perfect place to start his "work". As he walked calmly through the crowds, Bauzer touched people and placed the suggestion of rioting into their minds. Slowly the crowd began to act on his suggestions, and in the confusion he noticed the registration table unattended, and its full money box sitting open. Bauzer was picking it up, when he saw two others standing by him. These two were Bullet and Big John, who had the same idea as Bauzer—take the money and run. Bullet had no idea who Bauzer was and no time to find out, so he told Big John to "get rid" of him. The

idea of fighting was revolting to Bauzer so his mind raced with ways to avoid the confrontation. He was concentrating so hard on "moving out of the way" that the next thing he knew, he had moved. Somehow he had teleported to a safe distance from the two.

Police began arriving and Bauzer decided that retreat was the better part of valor. Bullet and Big John had the same idea, so the three of them found themselves running together. Despite Bullet's obvious dislike of hippies and pacifists, he led Bauzer to his hideout where they got better acquainted. He suggested that Bauzer, now calling himself Mind Wipe, get further training in the use of his mental powers and told him to check into VIPER or PSI. Mind Wipe decided to try VIPER, and left the two with two-thirds of the stolen money in return for the advice.

Mind Wipe found VIPER, who agreed to train him. They also supplied him with a protective costume and an experimental force field belt that is invisible when activated. In return, Mind Wipe has sworn his loyalty to VIPER, because they have convinced him that they also want world peace through "love" as he does.

Quote: "Come join the family and help win world peace through strength and love—Thank you!"

Personality: Mind Wipe still has the emotional development of a child and doesn't really believe in the world around him. To him this is all a drug induced reality, and someday he'll wake up in his own bed. He loves having fun, like any child, and his favorite past time is to play with the minds of those he deems "unsuitable" to join his "family". (NOTE: "The family" are those who he has reprogrammed with his 60's mentality, erasing their other memories). Mind Wipe is self-centered, like most children, and feels that he has the answers to all the world's problems. He tends to end all of his statements with the words "Thank You", showing that he feels everyone should be appreciative of what he has done. Mind Wipe also uses a lot of body language.

Powers/Tactics: Mind Wipe has the ability to read minds, and to control those he touches. Once he has made physical contact, he can do several things to his target. They include changing or implanting ideas, causing excruciating pain or even completely erasing all memories and replacing them with a whole new set. Mind Wipe has also developed the ability to teleport short distances, but only within line of sight. This ability takes a lot of energy and time.

To infiltrate an area, Mind Wipe usually does one of two things. He will act like an escaped mental patient, bumping into people as he rants. Or he will disguise himself as "one of the group" and get close to them that way.

Power Variation: To reduce Mind Wipe's capabilities for a low-powered campaign, reduce his EGO to 18, his SPD to 4, and his DEX to 18. For a higher powered campaign, increase his STUN to 50, and his Mind Control to 14 dice, and add a 14 dice Mental Illusions slot to his multipower.

Appearance: Mind Wipe is about 5'6" tall and weighs 148 lbs. He has long, bleached blond hair that he wears pulled back into a ponytail, and a black handlebar mustache. His eyes are a pale blue and, because of all the drugs he has taken, are very sensitive to the light, so he always wears his granny sunglasses. He always dresses like a hippie, with bell-bottom pants and Nehru jackets, and he wears either sandals or boots. He is also never without his peace sign necklace, the only item left from his parents.

PHAZE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
30	STR	20	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
20	CON	20	ECV: 6
10	BODY	0	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
18	EGO	16	
20	PRE	10	Costs
10	COM	0	Char: 145 Base: 100
16+	PD	10	+ +
14+	ED	10	Powers: 110 Disads: 155
5	SPD	17	= =
10	REC	0	Totals: 255 255
40	END	0	
35	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
43	12d6 EB, ½ END, act. 12-	3
13	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED) OIF suit and helm, act. 12-	
6	Flash Defense, act. 12- (5 pts vs. sight/hearing)	
3	Mental Defense (8 pts, act. 12-)	
6	Power Defense (10 pts, act. 12-)	
23	+8 DCV, act. 12-	
2	KS: DEMON 11-	
2	KS: Modern Literature 11-	
2	KS: Mystic Artifacts 11-	
3	PS: Bookselling 12-	
3	Stealth 14-	
4	+2 Levels w/EB	

100+	Disadvantages
30	2x effect from drugs (Stun, Body, Drains etc.)
5	Berserk when hit by spatial disruption or gravitic attacks 8-, 11-
15	Psych Lim: Fear of Crowds (Common, Moderate)
20	Psych Lim: Never Backs Off From A Confrontation (VC, Strong)
20	Distinctive Features, strobe-like flicker (Always Noticed, Not Conceal)
15	Hunted by DEMON 8- (More Pow, NCI)
15	Watched by VIPER 14- (More Pow, NCI)
10	Public ID (Darren Tatum)
25	Villain Bonus

Background: Darren Tatum worked as a bookseller, and booksellers have weird customers. One of these customers introduced Darren to the occult. Phony seances, Ouija Boards, it all seemed rather harmless to him. Then came the day when it became real. They entered a haunted house and started going through its library, when one of the books started to moan. They threw the book into the flames, just like one of them had seen on a religious program, but this didn't destroy the book, it released what was inside. The thing grabbed Darren, and he felt himself being pulled. Darren would have been dead, but there was a part of him that wouldn't give up. The thing that was trapped inside the book decided to give up the fight, but the effort had not been without its cost. Darren found himself only partially in the real world; he flickered continuously between our world, and a limbo that lies between our world and... other places.



Darren knew he could no longer live a normal life. The fight had changed him. His physical form was stronger and quicker, and he had the ability to project distortions that hit people or objects with a great deal of physical force.

What Darren had done attracted the notice of the evil mystical organization DEMON. Darren turned to PRIMUS for help, but quickly found that he didn't like their attitude. They treated him like a freak, both in terms of his powers, and in terms of his past life as a bookseller. These military types were openly contemptuous of him, and finally goaded him into attacking them. After he left them face down on the floor, he took off. He soon came to the notice of VIPER, who promised big bucks to him, and revenge against anyone who had ever wronged him. Darren found this most appealing, and joined VIPER as the supervillain Phaze. He's one of the newest solo operatives in the VIPER arsenal, but he shows promise.

Quote: "Don't call me 'Flicker'!"

Personality: Phaze is a rather intense person. He has no tolerance for foolishness, and takes things absolutely seriously. He never believes in backing down from a confrontation, whether it be backing off from a fight, or from an argument or an accusation. Phaze is very stubborn and single-minded, almost to the point that his life is a series of obsessions.

Powers/Tactics: Phaze lives mostly in our dimension, but flickers in out between our dimension and the edge of limbo. The cycling time between these dimensions is not under his control (hence, he doesn't have desolidification, and his powers are on activation rolls). The dimensional cycling effect that he experiences has toughened his physiognomy and heightened his reflexes. His body is not as resistant to toxic effects, and things that disrupt his rather fragile dimensional stability are extraordinarily painful.

Phaze tends to go out into the open and attack, relying on his flicker effect to defend him. He is not good at teamwork.

Appearance: Phaze wears an outfit that resembles a DEMON uniform, but in VIPER green, and with a VIPER insignia. He is 5'7" tall, weighs 160 lbs., and has brown hair and green eyes. His build is short, squat, and muscular. Because he travels in and out of our dimension, he appears and disappears as if he were constantly being lit by a strobe light.

SCATTERSHOT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
40	STR	30	OCV: 7
21	DEX	33	DCV: 7
23	CON	26	ECV: 5
20	BODY	20	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
14	INT	4	
14	EGO	8	Costs
25	PRE	15	
4	COM	-3	Char: 171 Base: 100
10+	PD	2	Powers: 200 Disads: 271
5+	ED	0	Totals: 371 371
6	SPD	29	
15	REC	4	
46	END	0	
55	STUN	3	
Cost	Powers	END	
26	4d6 RKA (2 x 2d6), 9" AE Cone, No Range, Reduced by Range, Reduced Penetration, OAF shotgun, 4 clips of [4c]	0	
26	Shotgun (identical to above)	0	
37	Martial Arts (Commando Training/Aikido/Savate)		
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage		
	Boxing Cross +0 +2 10d6		
	Karate Chop -2 +0 ½d6 HKA		
	Choke Hold -2 +0 2d6 NND, Grab		
	Back Kick +1 +3 8d6		
	Side Kick -2 +1 12d6		
	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort		
	Throw +0 +1 8d6+ V/5		
	Dodge — +5 Dodge, Abort		
	Escape +0 +0 55 STR vs. Escape		
	Hold -1 -1 50 STR to Hold		
30	Armor +15 PD, +15 ED, OIF battle suit		
3	Flash Defense vs. visual (5 pts) OIF helmet		
3	IR Vision, OIF helmet		
6	Running, +3" (9" total)	2	
7	High range radio hearing, OIF Helmet		
4	+4 Levels w/sight per vs. range, OIF helmet		
3	Ambidexterity		
3	Acrobatics	13-	
3	Breakfall 13-		
3	Concealment 12-		
3	Lockpicking 13-		
3	Security systems 12-		
3, 3	Shadowing 11-, Stealth 13-		
3	Streetwise 14-		
2	WF: Small arms		
3	Weaponsmith 11-		
16	+2 combat levels		

100+ Disadvantages

20	Psych Lim: Multiple Personality Disorder (common, total)
20	Psych Lim: Overconfidence (common, total)
10	Psych Lim: Loves to torture his victims
10	Reputation, horrible killer, 8-
10	Watched by VIPER, NCI, 11-
20	Hunted by UNTIL, NCI, 11-
15	Secret ID
166	Villain Bonus

Background: Wayne Major was a successful mystery pulp novelist who was working on a novel about a very vile assassin nicknamed Scattershot. The character received his name because he killed with two sawed off shotguns. But Wayne had been working too hard for too long and the strain finally broke him; he had a nervous breakdown. As part of his psychosis he began to believe that he was Scattershot. The doctors tried for weeks to break through to him but it was no good, the walls he had built up were too thick. Then one day Wayne Major disappeared from the hospital, and a new villain named Scattershot began his reign of terror.

It was on one of his self-appointed "jobs" that Scattershot ran into Mechassassin. Scattershot attacked, thinking the other man was a hero. Mechassassin was surprised by his opponent's competence and decided not to kill him. The two stepped back to rest and evaluate each other. During their conversation they began to compare cases and Mechassassin realized that here was a kindred spirit. He saw a lot of potential for Scattershot and suggested that he contact VIPER for training. The two then parted on friendly terms.

In the months that followed, Scattershot could not forget what Mechassassin had said to him. So he finally decided to act on the advice. Scattershot knew of a place frequented by VIPER agents, and he was in luck finding one of them. He informed the agent of his conversation with Mechassassin and asked him to arrange an audience with the local Nest Leader. In less than twenty-four hours, Scattershot was the newest VIPER mercenary.

VIPER ran extensive tests on Scattershot and performed experiments that increased his strength, agility, speed and durability. He was also trained in several styles of martial arts. In return, Scattershot agreed to work for them whenever they needed him. They also warned him of the consequences if he should ever go against them.

Exactly one year later, Scattershot was assigned to kill the head of the local DEMON group. Unfortunately, Scattershot lost and was taken captive. As a warning to future VIPER attacks, the DEMON agents took out his left eye and mutilated his face, then set him free to demonstrate the power of DEMON. Scattershot returned to VIPER who nursed him back to health, then helped him get revenge against the DEMON group that had tortured him. To cover his scars, Scattershot had them make him a metal mask with only one eye hole that he never takes off. He is now deeply indebted to VIPER, and is second only to Sheath on their list of assassins.

Quote: "You may not feel that your life is worth much to anyone else. However, rejoice, for someone values you enough to hire the best to end your miserable existence."

Personality: Scattershot believes that he is in a pulp novel. He is melodramatic and completely out of touch with reality. He tends to overact and grandstand whenever he is given an opportunity. Being in a pulp novel, he tends to be reckless and carefree, not always thinking of the danger to himself.

Scattershot is cold and calculating. He likes to stalk his victims before he "offs" them. Also, during a "hit", he likes to let his intended victims know that he is after them. Scattershot loves to see the terror in his victims' eyes. After "hitting" his target, he likes to leave a calling card; he surrounds the body with shot as he fires beside it.

Powers/Tactics: Scattershot, after the experiments from VIPER, is now stronger, faster, more agile, and more durable. He also was trained in multiple forms of martial arts. VIPER also gave him some combat armor and a mask/face plate that acts as an infrared targeting sight.

Scattershot's shotguns are custom made. They are small enough to be carried in holsters, yet they fire a shell that can disperse wider than normal and have the same firepower.

In combat, Scattershot likes to use his shotguns on a group of adversaries or to mow down the intended targets. Then, after the foe has fallen, he likes to engage in hand-to-hand combat. His preferred order of combat with several individuals is to just keep firing his shotguns while walking towards them. Then he attacks the first foe encountered and works his way down the line until none are left.



Power Variation: For lower powered campaigns, reduce Scattershot's STR to 30, his SPD to 5, and his STUN to 40. For higher powered campaigns, add three levels with shotguns and increase their damage to 5d6.

Appearance: Scattershot wears a long, black, '30s-style trench coat with a black, wide brim fedora. His combat armor and shotguns are under his coat, and he wears black slacks and dress shirts. He has a metal face plate that only has one eyehole, on the right side, and that is a target sight. Scattershot is 6'3" tall and weighs 220 lbs.

SHADOW FIST

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
15	STR	5	OCV: 8	
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8	
23	CON	26	ECV: 4	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
9	INT	-1		
10	EGO	0	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
8	COM	-1	Char:	108 Base: 100
5+	PD	2	+	
5+	ED	0	Powers:	287 Disads: 295
5	SPD	17	=	
10	REC	4	Totals:	395 395
40	END	-3		
35	STUN	0		

Cost	Powers	END
30	EC—Shadow Powers	
30-a	Force field +15 PD/+15 ED, 0 END, Persistent	0
24-b	Teleport 20" (x8 NCM) 1 floating loc, only in shadows (-¼)	4
24-c	Invisibility vs. radar, hearing, smell, 0 END, only in shadows (-¼)	0
26-d	Extra-dimensional Movement, to Shadow Realm, 2x Mass, usable by 4 others, 0 END, only in shadows (-¼)	0
13	Martial Arts: Boxing	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Hook -2 +1 10d6	
	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
	Cross +0 +2 8d6	
12	+3 DC w/all boxing (added in)	
60	Multipower (75 pt. reserve, not in total darkness or intense light fields, -¼)	
3u	8d6 EB, Indirect, Any direction (+3/4) [8c]	0
5u	40 STR telekinesis, ½ END	3
3u	6d6 Flash vs. visual and N-Ray [8c]	0
3u	9d6 EB, AE 1 hex, [8c]	0
5u	11d6 EB, ½ END	6
10	Flash Defense vs. visual sight group (10 pts)	
10	Mental Defense (12 pts)	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	Shadowing 11-	
3	Stealth 14-	
3	Streetwise 13-	
3	KS: Boxing 11-	
9	Combat Sense 14-	
10	+2 Levels in HtH Combat	

100+	Disadvantages
15	2x STUN from light based attacks
10	3d6 Susceptibility from extreme bright light
20	Hatred of light based characters
10	Thinks that he is the best boxer in the world
15	Greedy
5	Aggressive
10	Watched by VIPER, NCI 8-
15	Hunted by police, NCI 11-
10	Distinctive features: casts no shadow
15	Secret ID
160	Villain bonus



Background: Max Glover was an up and coming boxer who loved the sport. He was clean, honest, and refused to use steroids or any other drugs. But because he wasn't ruthless he was not given matches that would lead to a title bout. This depressed Max and he even contemplated suicide. But then, a miracle happened. The challenger for the title match was in an auto accident the night before the bout and the promoter became desperate. They were going to loose a bundle if they didn't produce another challenger fast. Max was in the right place at the right time and they asked him. Of course, he jumped at it.

But Max was soon faced with the awful truth, the promoters expected him to take a dive. He was furious and refused to stoop to such dishonest tactics. It took the promoters hours, and a lot of money, to convince Max that it was all for the best. So he agreed to "go down" in the sixth round.

The day of the fight, Max was a nervous wreck. He decided that a workout in the gym would loosen him up for the match. Little did he know that his whole life would change during that workout.

Max had found a well lit corner to shadowbox and had been at it for quite some time when he noticed that his shadow wasn't moving. In fact, it seemed to be standing there waiting for something. Max made some more moves, but nothing happened. Out of curiosity he slowly approached his shadow and poked at the wall a few times. Suddenly the shadow reached out from the wall and grabbed Max's shirt. In the next second he found himself falling through his own shadow and into another world.

The Shadow Realm frightened Max at first, but his own shadow soon calmed him. Then it made a proposal that shocked him. It offered to join with him in both worlds, and give him extraordinary powers. At first Max was hesitant, but he soon realized that these powers would open doors for him that had always been closed. He agreed and in the next second he found himself back in his own world, where time had not passed since he had left. And he discovered that he now cast no shadow.

That evening Max fulfilled his agreement and lost the match in the sixth round. But afterward, while they were alone in the locker room, he called the champ out. With one blow Max not only felled the champ, but killed him. He would have gotten away with it except that he was spotted leaving the locker room. Max was now a fugitive.

VIPER always watches the fight game, looking for people with a vicious streak and the fighting ability to become an agent. Having someone who fit this description and who was always on the run from the law was perfect. They tracked down Max to his hiding place and offered him an opportunity to work for them. Not knowing what to do, he agreed. Max's superpowers were an added bonus. With the help of VIPER's scientific staff (and some training with Brick and Citadel) he learned to use his new powers to their fullest extent. Now the Shadowfist seeks his fortune, as a VIPER mercenary, and as a solo operative.

Quote: "Beware your shadow, for one day it may turn on you."

Personality: Once, Max was a humble person, a nice guy, and a good competitor. Now, thanks to the influence of his shadow, he has changed.

Shadow Fist is arrogant and loves a good fight. He considers himself the greatest boxer in the world and takes every opportunity to tell people this fact. He believes that the world owes him for what it has done to him, and he will take every opportunity to make this point. His one goal in life is to become the richest man in the world—no matter what it takes.

Powers/Tactics: Shadow Fist registers as a mutant on mutant detectors. His powers, which include extra-dimensional movement are, however, somewhat on the wild side; he may be a magical/mutation hybrid.

Shadow Fist prefers to attack at a distance by using his shadow powers. If he cannot hit his opponent, then he will either blind him or hit the area around him. If Shadow Fist is engaged in hand-to-hand combat, he will use his boxing training combined with his shadow force to enhance the damage done.

Shadow Fist hates sudden bright lights, which will cause him damage. He will avoid all flash and light based attacks.

Appearance: Shadow Fist is a large black man, about 6'1" tall and weighing about 245 lbs. His eyes are no longer visible, instead they have been replaced by voids with shadow flames emanating from them. He dresses in black sweat pants and tennis shoes with a blood red tank top. On his hands he wears a pair of small boxing gloves that contain weights. When relaxing, he prefers to wear gym clothing.

VIPERIA, THE ULTIMATE VIPER SOLDIER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
60	STR	50	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
40	CON	60	ECV: 7
20	BODY	20	Phases: 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12
23	INT	13	
20	EGO	20	Costs
30	PRE	20	
20	COM	5	Char: 320 Base: 100
30	PD	18	+ +
30	ED	22	Powers: 679 Disads: 899
8	SPD	44	= =
20	REC	0	Totals: 999 999
80	END	0	
70	STUN	0	
Cost	Powers	END	
125	Multipower (125 pt. reserve)		
11u	5d6 RKA, No KB (heat vision), 0 END	0	
12u	10d6 EB, Double KB, Explosion Cone, No Range (superbreath), ½ END	6	
12u	12d6 Dispel vs. all flame powers (freeze breath)	15	
10u	4d6 Flash vs. sound, 3d6 NND (defense is flash defense vs. sound, AE 7" radius, No Range (hand clap)	14	
4u	Desolidif. (vs. grab/entangles only, -½), 0 END	0	
60	Autofire on STR, ½ END on STR (3 END normal)	15	
30	Indirect on 60 STR	3	
30	Affects Desolid on 60 STR	3	
20	Damage Resistance (20 rPD, 20 rED)		
30	Full Life Support		
16	Flash Defense vs. sight/hearing, 8 pts each		
20	Knockback Resistance (-10")		
10	Mental Defense (14 pts)		
10	Power Defense (10 pts)		
105	Multipower (105 pt. reserve)		
10u	Flight 30" (x8 NCM) 0 END	0	
10u	Running +30" (36" total) (x8 NCM) 0 END	0	
5u	Swimming +30" (32" total) (x8 NCM) 0 END	0	
10u	Tunnelling 16" (DEF 16) ½ END	4	
20	N-Ray Vision (not through lead)		
12	+4 Levels w/Perception		
20	Targeting Hearing		
3	Ultrasonic Hearing		
3	Radio Hearing		
3	Mental Awareness		
5	IR Vision		
5	UV Vision		
3	KS: VIPER 12-		
30	+3 Overall Levels		
100+	Disadvantages		
10	1½x STUN from magical attacks		
20	2x BODY from magical attacks		
20	2x Effect from magical drains and transfers		
15	Psych Lim: Hatred of Magicians (Common, Total)		
20	Psych Lim: Overconfidence (Common, Total)		
10	Watched by VIPER, as powerful, NCI, 14-		
10	Watched by Malachite, as powerful, NCI, 14-		
10	Hunted by DEMON, as powerful, 8-		
10	Public ID		
804	Villainess Bonus		



Background: It began when the perfect man desired a perfect bride. The perfect man: Malachite. The perfect bride, well, he had to search for that.

Her name was Lily King. She was eight years old, and one of the world's most powerful latent mutants. Malachite kidnapped her, aged her to her late teens, and then brought out the mutations. However, although she was quite powerful, she wasn't as physically attractive as Malachite had hoped; she was only as beautiful as the most glamorous movie star, and lacked any sort of grace or style; she was also rather dull company. Malachite soon became rather bored with her; instead of tainting his bloodline with someone who was below his standards, he dismissed her. Of course, he would keep her under a close watch. Malachite knew she was powerful; even he, however, did not suspect that she would develop as she did.

Lily was not really ready for what had happened to her. She had no moral foundation. She went on a spree of robberies and vandalism. Several superheroes discovered, to their horror, that a major new supervillainess had invaded their city. VIPER discovered her too, and after a period of evaluation, the Prime Serpent himself invited her to join the organization as part of his plan to revitalize VIPER. He promised her fun, so she agreed to join. The Serpent christened her Viperia, the most powerful VIPER on earth. When things become a real mess, when heroes seem to mow down VIPER's finest agents with pitiful ease, the Serpent often sends Lily to show them what VIPER's true power is all about. In a short time, Viperia's power grew, until she became what she is now, one of the world's most powerful villains, and a major threat to anyone who defies the will of VIPER.

Quote: "It looks like there's work for Viperia!"

Personality: Viperia has no life outside of VIPER. She has no social skills; she lives to serve the Supreme Serpent and to battle the enemies of VIPER. As yet she has been untouched by emotions such as an appreciation for beauty, compassion, and any sort of gentleness. Viperia is a soldier, and only a soldier. It is possible that someone might be able to unlock these nascent emotions, time will tell.

Viperia is extremely overconfident. If she is defeated, she will go into shock and subconsciously believe that she has lost her powers, appearing to be a normal human being. Time will eventually dispel these illusions.

Powers/Tactics: Viperia's range of powers is awe-inspiring. She has super strength and speed. She can clap her hands and deafen people, freeze the hottest fires with her breath, vibrate quickly enough to escape the thickest entanglements and put her hand through virtually any barrier. Viperia's most feared attack is her autofire punch.

In combat she likes to herd her opponents together and use her breath attack. If she sees someone who's really tough, an autofire punch will usually take care of them.

Power Variation: Viperia is not meant for low-powered campaigns. She is meant to be able to take on high-powered heroes and give them extremely tough fights. Do not use her unless the characters are very experienced and tough!

If you need to bring her powers down, decrease her defenses to 20 or 25, reduce her SPD to 6, and eliminate the reduced endurance on her strength, as well as her indirect attack. If this is still too tough, don't use her.

If you need to increase her powers, give her half damage reduction, her STR to 80, increase her END and STUN to 120, her SPD to 9, her attacks to an 80 active point base (not including END reduction) her mental defense to 25 pts., her power defense to 20, and give her hardened PD and ED.

Appearance: Viperia has long auburn hair, and green eyes. She wears a green leotard with a gold "V" on her chest, a short skirt, green stockings, boots, and a short gold cape.



SMALL AND UNUSUAL GROUPS

CYBORGS INC.

MEMBERSHIP

Heinous and Despite, cyborg siblings, and Heinous's test subjects, are the only members of the Cyborgs Inc. team. They prefer to work with agents, not other supers.

BACKGROUND

Stanford and Veronica Foster were siblings whose paths diverged wildly early in life, then merged in an unexpected way. Veronica became a petty criminal, a B&E artist who spent most of her life in jail. Stanford, on the other hand, got a university degree and became an assistant to the distinguished cyberneticist, Dr. Samuel Levy.

Dr. Levy, however, had a dark side to him. Criminal impulses. Needing a subject for experimentation, Stanford could think of no better test subject than his sister, Veronica. Veronica was given wild promises of superhuman powers that would allow her to do anything she wanted. Not trusting his brother, Veronica agreed if Stanford also agreed to undergo the procedure.

Stanford agreed, although he did not intend to keep his promise. But Dr. Levy saw the advantages of having two test subjects. He sedated them both, and then performed the operation. They were shocked by the result of the operations, and ran away. Dr. Levy made a mental note that he would have to increase his restraints in the future, and went back to installing microjets into the legs of his beloved panthers.

Stanford and Veronica blamed each other for their predicament, and nearly killed each other before they realized that they could become rich if they teamed together. Eventually "Cyborgs, Inc." came to the attention of VIPER, who put them on their "Available Freelancers" list. They would remain in touch with VIPER, and in turn, Nests who need reinforcement could hire them, usually in exchange for favors instead of cash. Much to their chagrin, they are usually employed by Nests who can't afford VF-1 or VF-2, but they get the job done.

TACTICS

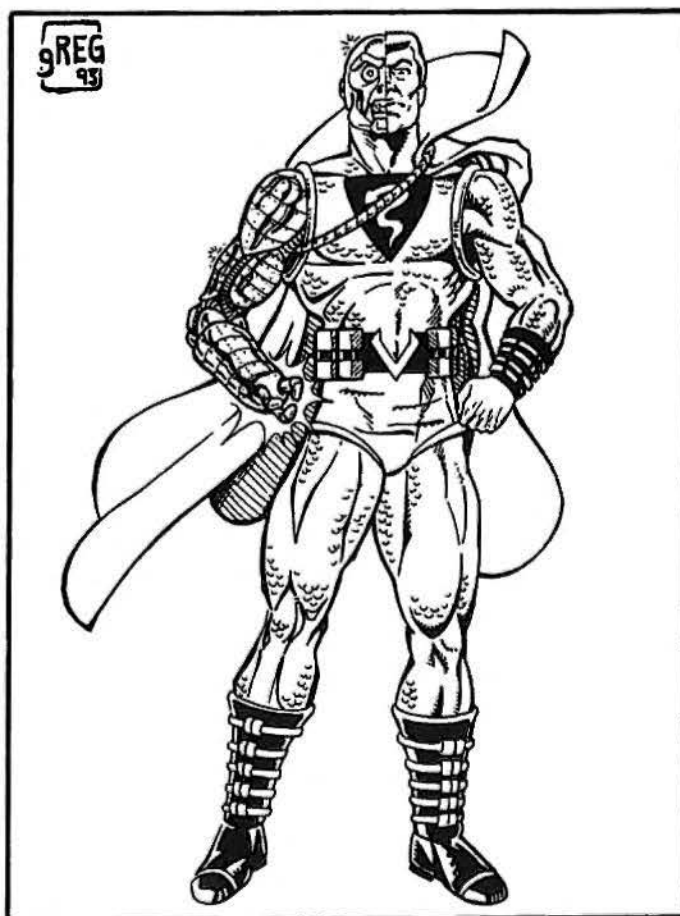
Heinous and Despite have no teamwork. They attack whatever they want, and spend the rest of the time arguing with each other. Their tactics are described in the individual section.

GROUP RELATIONS

Heinous and Despite despise each other. They stay with each other only because their success is increased when they are together. Despite would love to make a big score and see her brother rot in Stronghold at the same time. They do not get along with other supers, other cyborgs in particular. They have a particular dislike for Halfjack and the Engineer.

REPUTATION

Cyborgs Inc. is known as a potent team, but only a minor weapon in the arsenal of VIPER. The United States Department of Defense supervillain survey says: "Cyborgs Inc. is an uncoordinated team, but a dangerous threat if underestimated. Both members have sufficient offensive force to kill an opponent. They are often used as a distraction, and people who encounter them need to watch VIPER in case they are making an end run."



HEINOUS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
40	STR	30	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
40	CON	60	ECV: 5
20	BODY	20	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	INT	3	
14	EGO	8	Costs
25	PRE	15	
14	COM	2	Char: 228 Base: 100
25	PD	17	+ +
25	ED	17	Powers: 247 Disads: 375
5	SPD	17	= =
16	REC	0	Totals: 475 475
80	END	0	
60	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
70	Multipower (70 pt. reserve)	
7u	3d6 Transfer to STR, at range	7
7u	3d6 Transfer to DEX, at range	7
7u	3d6 Transfer to END, at range	7
6u	4d6 Drain vs. EGO, at range	6
20	Superleap +20"	4
20	+10" KB Resistance	
10	LS: Self-contained	
5	IR Vision	
5	Lack of Weakness (5 pts)	
20	Affects Desolid on 40 STR	2
5	Electronics 12-	
3	Security Systems 12-	
3	Stealth 14-	
3	SC: Robotics 12-	
4	SC: Biology 13-	
35	Cyborg Followers: 100 pts each (x8)	
15	+5 Levels w/MP	

100+	Disadvantages
10	2x STUN from magnetic attacks
10	2x BODY from magnetic attacks
15	3d6 from intense microwave sources
15	Psych Lim: Believes himself to be perfect (Uncommon, Total)
15	Psych Lim: Dislikes combat situations (Common, Strong)
10	Distinctive Looks: Concealable, Recognizable (cyborg)
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
10	Hunted by Halfjack, as powerful, 8-
10	Public ID
265	Villain Bonus

Background: Stanford Foster grew up in a middle class environment, but despite his intellect, he was always attracted to some of the darker and seamier elements of society. Eventually, he moved from the Bay area to Chicago area to work as a researcher for VIPER. He left VIPER when he got an offer from the distinguished cyberneticist Dr. Samuel Levy, and learned some of the most advanced cybernetic techniques that were available. Unfortunately, loyalty to his underlings is not one of Dr. Levy's strong suits. Stanford found himself transformed into a cyborg. His acts of cruelty were viewed by a national audience, and one "expert" in paranormal affairs referred to him on CNN as "Heinous". Stanford decided that would become his name, and moved to Nebraska to begin a life of crime and evil. VIPER persuaded him to come back to work for them; he created a group of cyborg followers, and together with his sister, Despite, forms one of VIPER's special teams, Cyborg Inc.

Quote: "You're too insignificant for me to dirty my hands. VI-Borgs, demonstrate my power to these fools."

Personality: Unlike Halfjack and some other cyborgs, Stanford has no "loss of humanity" (although it's arguable that he didn't have much to start with). He's a petty, manipulative, amoral, man who doesn't know how to get along with people, only how to use them to further his designs. Undoubtedly Heinous is only using VIPER (though the Supreme Serpent is keeping a close eye on them), and will one day try to break free of their control.

Powers/Tactics: Heinous is a cyborg, with a titanium superstructure and super-plastic plating. He has batteries of "bio-energy", similar to the ex-VIPER villain Power Crusher, allowing him to increase his efficiency at the expense of others.

Heinous prefers others to do his fighting for him. In a combat situation, he will send in Despite and the VI-Borgs, and do his best to remain out of combat. If his back is against the wall, he will use DEX transfers to try to make himself difficult to hit, and then STR transfers, using END transfers when that stat is running low.

Power Variation: Cyborgs with Heinous's capabilities are impossible using real-world technology. If a GM chooses to use Heinous in a campaign with realistic technology, make the multipower into drains, not Transfers, linked to (1d6 HKA) poison dart attacks, with the drains based on CON. The drains would be a chemical attack. The affects desolid would be unlikely in any real world instance.

In low powered campaigns, reduce Heinous's CON to 30, and his levels with his multipower to +2. In high powered campaigns, increase his Defenses to 35, his STUN to 80, increase his Transfers to 4 dice each, and increase their recovery rate to once per minute.

Appearance: Heinous is in his mid-30s, short and stocky. His face is half-human, half-cyborg; the right side of his body is mostly electronics. He has dark skin, dark hair, and brown eyes. His costume is a red VIPER uniform, with a gold cape and serpent insignia.

DESPITE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
25	STR	15	OCV: 9	
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9	
30	CON	40	ECV: 6	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
13	INT	3		
18	EGO	16	Costs	
25	PRE	15		
14	COM	2	Char:	199 Base: 100
20+	PD	15	+	+
20+	ED	14	Powers:	209 Disads: 308
5	SPD	17	=	=
12	REC	2	Totals:	408 408
60	END	0		
45	STUN	2		

Cost	Powers	END
80	16d6 EB, Reduced by Range, act. 15-, ½ END	5
15	Armor +10 PD, +10 ED, OIF armor, 14-	
30	Flight 15" OIF jet-pack, 0 END	0
3	Hi-Range Radio Hearing, OIF mouthpiece	
5	Flash Defense vs. visual (8 pts), OIF helm	
20	Superleap +20"	4
20	+10" KB Resistance	
10	LS: Self-contained	
5	UV Vision	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	Interrogation 14-	
3	Streetwise 14-	
2	KS: Burglary 11-	
10	+5 Levels w/EB	

100+	Disadvantages
10	2x STUN from magnetic attacks
10	2x BODY from magnetic attacks
15	3d6 from intense microwave sources
15	Psych Lim: Hatred of brother (Common, Strong)
15	Psych Lim: Overconfidence (Common, Strong)
10	Distinctive Looks: Concealable, Recognizable (cyborg)
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-
10	Hunted by The Engineer, as powerful, 8-
10	Public ID
198	Villain Bonus

Background: Veronica Foster grew up in a middle class environment, but neglected in favor of her intellectually gifted brother, she left home and began to live off the streets. She barely survived; she committed some bank robberies, spent time in prison, then graduated to become a B&E artist. Just another punk racing toward a dead end.

That's when her hated brother, Stanford, contacted her, offering her a great deal of money for an experiment, along with many promises of great power. Veronica ended up becoming the superpowered Despite, and joined her brother in a life of crime. Crime she didn't mind, but her brother... Not to mention these stupid superheroes and the even weirder rival villains, like the Engineer.

Quote: "You stinking coward! I'm going to flatten your butt when this job's finished!"

Personality: "Ronnie," as Veronica is often called, is a callous, spiteful and devious woman. Her life of crime has thoroughly hardened her; she is only interested in advancing

her own fortunes, and the rest of the world can go to Hell. She occasionally puts on a performance on how much she hates her life of crime and how her brother forces her into these evil actions; she usually ends these stories by catching any hero who gets suckered into lowering their guard with a short range blast.

Powers/Tactics: Despite is a cyborg. Her powers are less sophisticated than Heinous's; primarily comprised of a superstructure similar to her brothers, and a built in heavy blaster that replaces her left arm.

Despite likes to get in close, sometimes luring heroes with a "poor deluded girl" act that makes her appear a lot more naive than she is, then blast the opposition at full strength. She relies on agents or on VI-Borgs to cover her (even though she and the VI-Borgs despise each other).

Power Variation: Cyborgs with Despite's capabilities are impossible using real-world technology. If a GM chooses to use Heinous in a campaign with realistic technology, make her attack a semi-automatic weapon built into her arm.

In low powered campaigns, reduce Despite's DEX to 23, her SPD to 5, and her levels with her multipower to +2. In high powered campaigns, increase her Defenses to 35, her STUN to 70, and increase her attack to 20d6, Reduced by Range.

Appearance: Despite is in her late-30s, short and slim. Her face is half-human, half-cyborg; the left side of her body is mostly electronics. She has dark skin, dark hair, and brown eyes. Her costume is a brown jump-suit with a VIPER insignia on the back.



VI-BORGs

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
35	STR	25	OCV: 6	
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6	
18	CON	16	ECV: 4	
14	BODY	8	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12	
13	INT	3		
11	EGO	2	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
8	COM	-1	Char: 118	Base: 100
15+	PD	8	+	+
15+	ED	11	Powers: 82	Disads: 100
4	SPD	12	=	=
11	REC	0	Totals: 200	200
36	END	0		
41	STUN	0		
Cost		Powers	END	
29	10d6 EB (blaster), act. 14-, [12c]			0
15	Armor (+10 PD, +10 ED, act. 11-)			
4	3d6 HA, OIF pneumatic hands, act. 14-			
3	Flash Defense vs. sight, 5 pts, OIF goggles			
3	IR Vision, OIF goggles			
3	Radio Hearing, OIF radio helmet			
7	Stretching, +2", act. 14-			
6	Running +3", 9" total			
5	Superleap +5"			
3	Climbing 14-			
4	+2 Levels w/EB			
100+		Disadvantages		
10	2x STUN from magnetic attacks			
10	2x BODY from magnetic attacks			
15	3d6 from intense microwave sources			
15	Psych Lim: Must Please Heinous (Uncommon, Total)			
15	Psych Lim: Fear of VIPER (Common, Strong)			
10	Distinctive Looks: Concealable, Recognizable (cyborg)			
15	Watched by VIPER, more powerful, NCI, 14-			
10	Public ID			

Background: The Portland Oregon VIPER's Nest run by Brandon Laurel was one of the strangest, a New Age VIPER's Nest, except that it centered not around crystals and warped versions of Druid beliefs, but high technology. Brandon believed that only by coming one with the Machine could human beings become one with the Cosmic All. He gladly volunteered his men to Heinous, who wanted to create a personal guard of cyborgs. Eventually, one of the non-volunteered agents, frightened that Brandon would volunteer him for something worse, killed Nest Leader Laurel in his sleep, and that ended that wave of experimentation. Except that nine men were still cyborgs, labelled VI-Borgs by the Press.

One of the VI-Borgs died in combat against PRIMUS; at present, Heinous has eight volunteers. These VI-Borgs are code-named (rather unimaginatively): Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Psi, Lambda, Omicron, and Omega. They have steel blue uniforms, which include the Greek letter on their right breast.

DOLLMAKER AND HIS DOLLS

DOLL MAKER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
10	STR	0	OCV: 8	
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8	
23	CON	26	ECV: 5	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
18	INT	8		
14	EGO	8	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
12	COM	1	Char:	124
5	PD	3		Base: 100
5	ED	0		+
5	SPD	17	Powers:	366
8	REC	2		Disads: 390
30	END	-8		=
40	STUN	8	Totals:	490
				490
Cost		Powers	END	
72	Variable Power Pool (60 pts, only changeable in a lab, -1½)			
40	Shrinking, 2 levels, 0 END, persistent			
20	Full Life Support, only when shrunk (-½)			
60	2d6 Major Cumulative Transformation, to anything, variable trigger, 0 END, ½ DCV, No Range			
20	Armor +10 PD, +10 ED, OIF Costume			
25	Mind Link w/8 dolls at one time			
41	Mental defense 15 pts., usable by 8 others at range			
10	Instant change			
35	Followers 8 (100 pt. base) Doll followers (225 pts. each): (Soldier, ballerina, cowboy, knight, samurai, alien, ninja, superhero)			
3, 3, 3	Combat Sense 13-; Simulate death; Acting 13-			
3, 3, 3	Contortionist 14-; Electronics 11-; Inventor 13-			
3, 3, 3	Mechanics 11-; Security systems 13-; Stealth 14-			
3, 3	KS: Doll making 12-; KS: Dolls 12-			
10	+1 Overall Level			
100+		Disadvantages		
10	1½x STUN from magic			
10	Enraged when seeing a doll destroyed 14-, rec. 11-			
10	Megalomaniac			
10	Loyal to VIPER			
15	Overconfident			
15	Greedy			
10	Distinctive Features: silver/white hair (con.)			
20	Hunted by DEMON 11-			
20	Hunted by The Circle 11-			
10	Watched by VIPER 11-			
15	Secret ID			
230	Villain bonus			

Background: Harry Fisherman was a mild-mannered, old-fashioned doll maker who was respected for his skills and abilities. His dolls were known world wide for their beauty and exceptional craftsmanship. Harry was also known for his huge antique doll collection which was considered priceless. It was one of the largest collections in the world.

Harry lived alone, except for his "children"—the dolls. And when he was not making dolls, he was traveling to find new additions to his collection. It was at a doll show in Chicago that his life took a left turn. He was standing at a table full of Oriental dolls when he thought he saw a samurai doll wink at him. Harry froze for a second, then shrugged it off as fatigue and jet lag. He continued to walk around the convention but he kept finding himself back at the Oriental table. The second time the samurai winked at him, Harry knew it was no mistake. He was frightened yet curious.

Later that afternoon there was an auction, and one of the items up for sale was the samurai doll. Harry found himself bidding hard and heavy on it, and he finally won. But once he took a really good look at the doll it seemed like any other. He left for home a little disappointed.

Harry placed the new doll on his workbench and basically forgot the incident. He was exhausted and all he could think of was sleep. The next morning he awoke to find a note next to the little samurai written in a very small hand. As Harry contemplated the note, he glanced at the doll, who winked at him and smiled. Harry promptly fainted.

When he regained consciousness, Harry found the little samurai looking down at him from the workbench. It was very much alive and talking to him. It informed him that it was an alien and the paper contained a formula that could bring inanimate objects to life. The idea of living dolls was a secret dream of Harry's. So under the guidance of the little samurai, he proceeded to make the elixir.

It took hours and a lot of sweat, but Harry succeeded in making the formula to the doll's satisfaction. But he was exhausted and decided to rest before experimenting with it. While Harry slept the samurai took matters into his own tiny hands. He chose what he thought would be the best candidates for animation and bathed them in the elixir.

Harry woke the next day to find seven more living dolls on his workbench. They were a ballerina, a cowboy on his horse, a knight on his horse, a female ninja, a toy soldier, a superhero and an alien in his spaceship. He was so excited that he could hardly wait to make more of the formula. And in his haste he made a mistake with the mixture. In the explosion Harry was drenched with the faulty formula and lay unconscious for hours.

The samurai doll tried vainly to awaken his master. When Harry did revive, he felt as if an electrical current was racing through his body. Every nerve was alive and he had more energy than he had had for years. He also discovered that he now had several mystical powers, one of which was the ability to take on the appearance and size of a doll.

Unknown to him, his personality had also changed, and not for the better. He became obsessed with using his new-found powers for monetary gains. So, with the help of his little assistants, he set out to make his fortune.

Doll Maker, for that's what he now called himself, was in the middle of his first job when he ran into a VIPER strike team. The team did not know what to make of the little man at first, but after watching him in action, they decided to invite him into the organization. Doll Maker was fascinated by the VIPER organization and what they offered. He very quickly joined forces with them, even though he will occasionally take outside jobs if they pay enough. The Supreme Serpent finds the concept of mighty superheroes being defeated by dolls to be very amusing; he likes to use them against hero teams who display a cavalier attitude toward VIPER.

(SAMPLE DOLLS)

THE GENERAL

Cost	Powers	END
17	Force Field (+10 PD, +10 ED, Hardened, 0 END, OAF Harness	0
16	2d6 AP RKA, OAF gyro pistol, 2 clips of [4c]	
11	16" Flight, OAF jet-harness, 6 charges lasting 1 turn each, no NCM (-)	0
16	Running 13", usable by 4 others, does not add to character's running, has a turn mode, at range, Bulky OAF Mini-deuce'n-a-half	3

THE CLOWN

Cost	Powers	END
37	2d6 RKA, Continuous, Uncontrolled, [16c] OAF squirting flower	0
12	Armor +10 PD, 10 ED, Bulky OAF costume	
11	20" running, does not add to character's running, has a turn mode, Bulky OAF clown car	

STUFFED ANIMAL

Cost	Powers	END
20	Shape Shift to any animal, 0 END, Persistent, OAF collar	0
25	Density Increase, 5 levels, 0 END Persistent, OAF collar (+35 STR, -7" KB, +7 PD/ED)	0
10	Damage Reduction (PD/ED), OAF Fur	
5	Running, +5", 11" total, OAF skates	1



Quote: "Have you ever been afraid of a doll? After today you will be!"

Personality: Doll Maker has become a megalomaniac since his bath in the unfinished formula. His once simple life has become repulsive to him and he will do almost anything that will get him rich. But his love for dolls has not changed. In fact, he has become obsessed with collecting more dolls, the more unusual the better. These are now his only real friends and he would rather sacrifice a human than one of his dolls.

Powers/Tactics: In combat, Doll Maker likes to pretend that he is one of his dolls and waits for an opening to attack. In hand-to-hand attacks he likes to try turning his opponent into another of his dolls. Unfortunately the transformed person is turned into any doll that the Doll Maker wishes, but does not have the powers of Doll Maker's living dolls. The victim is unable to move until he has recovered or finds a way to reverse the process. The process can be reversed by stimulating the latent cells with electricity.

Doll Maker has supplied his living dolls with a vast collection of weapons and accessories. They are prepared for just about any situation. He also has miniature forms of transportation for himself and his dolls. His favorite is a deuce'n a half.

Appearance: In human form, Doll Maker is 5'5" tall, weighs 190 lbs. and looks like your average old-fashioned craftsman. He is in his late 50's. He prefers to wear denim overalls and white shirts with a brown leather cobbler's apron. He is bald, with a fringe of white hair around his head. He also has a fluffy white mustache, and is rather plump.

In doll form, he is 15 inches tall and can take the form of any type of doll he wishes. His favorite form is an Army general, complete with pistol and ribbons. If the mission warrants it, he can even become a stuffed animal.

THE SAMURAI AND THE DOLLS

Background: Renlaccia was an imp. He was also in trouble. He had been transported against his wishes to a very hostile place... Earth. Summoned by a DEMON Morbane who ordered the imp to protect his daughter, he was trapped in the body of one of his daughter's dolls which limited his magical abilities. The Morbane also informed the imp that he would not be released from service until the Morbane decided to let him go or until the Morbane died. Neither event seemed likely to happen soon.

Years passed and Renlaccia performed his duties grudgingly but well. And in those years, the imp learned to use the interesting abilities of his new body. He was now a samurai doll with all the appropriate equipment and weaponry. In no time he discovered the fun of frightening humans with his form. He also discovered that all his magical ability was now focused into his weapons. His only wish was that he was free to do what he liked with this form, and that his brother and sister imps were there to enjoy it with him.

Then one day his wish came true. While the DEMON Morbane was in combat with a group of superheroes he was killed. Renlaccia knew immediately, as he suddenly felt free—something he hardly remembered. His first reaction was to leap around the room and whoop. When the first euphoria wore off, Renlaccia began to think about what he would do next. Here was his chance to go home, but he had grown fond of his new home. What to do?

Renlaccia's final decision was to use his magic to place a protection spell around the Morbane's little girl—they had grown to be friends—and then go out into the world to find another benefactor. His ultimate plan was to find someone who would have the power to help him bring his brothers and sisters to Earth. He spent months looking high and low, and then one day something caught his eye. It was a poster advertising a doll collectors convention. It seemed to be the perfect place for a "doll" to find a benefactor.

Renlaccia found a spot on a table and watched as the visitors passed by. This gave him the perfect chance to study and pick out the perfect human. Renlaccia was about to give up and move on when a little man standing next to the table caught his attention. There was something about this particular human that seemed to call to the imp, so he gave a slight movement that attracted the man's attention—then winked. The man gave the "doll" a puzzled look for a few moments, then moved on. Renlaccia became desperate and used his magic to entice the man to come back to the table. It took a little time, but the little man did return and bought Renlaccia.

Renlaccia soon found himself in the workshop of a doll maker. It turned out that the his new benefactor, Mr. Harry Fisherman, had once been one of the most prominent doll makers in the world. But he had suffered over the years from nervous breakdowns and was considered a washout by his colleagues. This seemed perfect for what Renlaccia had in mind.

That evening while the little man slept, the imp found paper and a pen and wrote down the formula that the Morbane had used to summon him. He placed the note on the workbench next to himself and waited. When the dollmaker found it the next and read it, he stared at the samurai, who winked at him again. This time the doll maker was positive that it had happened, and the realization was too much for him; he fainted.

Renlaccia stood at the edge of the workbench and waited for the doll maker to regain consciousness. During the wait, the imp decided not to tell his benefactor the truth of his origin. So when Harry came to, Renlaccia told him that he was an alien who looked like an Earth doll and the formula he had written down was for bringing inanimate objects to life. Harry suddenly snapped out of his stupor and began to see the implications of this formula. He could fulfill his lifelong dream of bringing his "children" to life. In a very short time the two were diligently working on the elixir.

The formula took hours, and in the end Harry was so tired that he decided to wait until the morning to try it. While he slept, though, Renlaccia took matters into his own tiny hands. He chose seven of the dolls in the workshop that he felt were perfect to house the essence of his imp brothers and sisters. He then administered the elixir and incanted the spell.

The next morning Harry woke to find the living dolls on his workbench. They were a ballerina, a cowboy with his horse, a knight with his horse, a ninja, a toy soldier, a superhero, and an alien in his spaceship. He was ecstatic and decided to make more of the elixir to use on other dolls. Unfortunately he was in such a hurry that he made a mistake, and the resulting explosion splattered the little man with the faulty formula. When he finally regained consciousness they all discovered that he now had the power to transform himself into a living doll. What Harry did not know was that he now possessed the essence of an imp within his soul, and the creature now has partial control over him.

Thus began the crime spree of the Doll Maker and his infamous dolls.

Quote: The dolls cannot speak verbally.

Personalities: Each of the dolls have their own distinct personalities.

The *Samurai* is very calm and cool, very much like a true Oriental. He does love a good fight though and rarely backs down to anyone. He is very much the leader of the group and demands that the others recognize his superior knowledge of the Earth. He demands that even the Doll Maker show him respect, and becomes angry when he is snubbed.

The *Ballerina* is the quiet one of the group and really hates to fight. She prefers to lose herself in music and reading. But when faced with a combat situation she will join in to assist her friends. She loves her new home and the body that Renlacca choose for her. And she will do anything to stay where she is.

The *Cowboy*, like the samurai, loves a good fight. He is always showing off his abilities with his guns and trying to improve his skills. He loves a good party, too, and gets himself into trouble regularly with his fondness for beer.

The *Knight* is extremely proper and chivalrous, but his quick temper tends to be his undoing. He is extremely annoying with his constant need to prove himself to the others. He gets himself into dangerous situations during combat by this need to "showboat".

The *Ninja* is the real loner of the group and only stays with them because she feels an obligation to Renlacca for bringing her to Earth. She is extremely reserved in all her actions, except in combat, where she has been known to frighten others with her ferocity.

The *Soldier* is the perfect drill sergeant. He is extremely gung-ho and demands that everything be done in an orderly and precise manner. He tries to get the rest of the group to practice combat formations, which is a losing battle.

The *Superhero* really doesn't like his present situation and only remains out of respect and love for Renlacca. He hates being a villain and would rather use his abilities to help people. But he does love to fly and spends hours practicing fancy maneuvers. He is a real showoff at heart.

The *Alien* is totally and completely loony. He is the ultimate practical joker and drives his companions crazy with his tricks. But his favorite pastime is aggravating and humiliating superheroes. He will do ANYTHING for a laugh at someone else's expense.

Powers/Tactics: The dolls have a specific battle plan for most combat situations. When engaging someone, they set up in the following manner:

1st Phase: The Superhero grabs one of the opponents. Cowboy and Alien both take a "bead" on the grabbed foe and coordinate fire on them.

2nd Phase: The Knight, Ninja and Samurai run into combat and try to coordinate on one foe of the samurai's choice.

3rd Phase: The Soldier becomes the "trouble-shooter" and enters combat where needed.

4th Phase: This lets Doll Maker command the whole combat and keep tabs on all of his dolls.

Before combat, the dolls all play like they are real dolls and wait for the signal to attack. If discovered, before the initial attack, the dolls that are found out will try to flee and lead the ones that made the discovery away from the other dolls.

All of the dolls are magical in nature and have magical attacks. The weapons are all focused magic and the Ballerina and Superhero's mental and physical attacks are also focused magic.

Appearances: All of the dolls stand about eleven inches tall.

Samurai: He wears the traditional Japanese samurai armor made from stiffened black leather. It consists of the fitted helmet with the large neck guard and decorative horns, the body armor that fits snugly to him, the armored skirt, the chest plate, and leg and arm guards that completely encase the limbs. His face is painted to resemble a traditional Japanese demon mask worn by the samurai in battle. He carries a katana that, upon closer inspection, is real. He has no sheath for this weapon, but wears it in the traditional manner; thrust horizontally into his white obi (sash) with the blade downward.

Ballerina: She wears a beautiful red silk tutu with a skirt of red and orange designed to resemble flames. Her hair is black, her eyes are green, and her face is painted very delicately. She wears a necklace and earrings of red rhinestones. She is always standing on her toes, and her slippers are of red silk.

Cowboy: He wears a dark green western shirt with black fringe, black pants and vest, and a black cowboy hat with a real snake skin hat band. His boots are made of real snake skin, even though they are small, and he has on a pair of chaps made of deer skin with the fur left on. His gun holster is of dyed black leather and holds two tiny six-shooters with mother-of-pearl handles. He has painted black hair and a thin mustache. His horse is a black and white Appaloosa and the saddle bags, harness and reigns are of black dyed leather. The horse sets on wheels, but can jump off them and run when necessary.

Knight: He wears full plate armor made of black metal with a black silk brocade surcoat over it. His sword is made of black metal and the hilt has a black rhinestone in it. His horse is black with black metal barding covered by a black silk skirt, and has black leather harnessing. The horse is on wheels, but can jump off them and run when necessary.

Ninja: She dresses all in black silk with only her dark eyes showing. She carries a wakizashi that appears to be real when studied, and the sheath is of black leather. Around her neck is a tiny silver necklace with a butterfly charm on it.

Toy Soldier: He looks like an antique toy soldier with the red jacket, blue pants with gold stripe, and the tall black hat. He is attached to a gold ball where his feet would be, but can jump off if necessary and hop around. He carries a rifle that has a gold bayonet on the end. His face is painted very simply.

Superhero: His build is very exaggerated, with an extremely muscular chest and arms, and narrow hips. His jaw is large and square, his hair is painted yellow and his eyes are blue. His costume is bright yellow with a green cape and gloves, and black boots. He has a black mask painted on his face, and has a green utility belt. On his chest is an black 8 pts. star with a green "T" in the center.

Alien: He has green skin, antennae with eyes at the ends of them, and four arms. He sits inside of his spaceship, which is silver and covered with blinking red, green and blue lights. He carries a tiny silver laser pistol that shoots a red beam. He can hop out of his spaceship and has four legs with which he can run.

SAMURAI DOLL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
23	CON	26	ECV: 3
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	INT	-2	
8	EGO	-4	
10	PRE	0	
8	COM	-1	
5+	PD	2	
5+	ED	0	
5	SPD	20	
8	REC	0	
30	END	-8	
35	STUN	0	
			Costs
			Char: 78 Base: 100
			+ +
			Powers: 147 Disads: 125
			= =
			Totals: 225 225
Cost	Powers	END	
112	Doll Package		
15	2d6 HKA, OAF sword (3d6 w/STR)	3	
5	+8 PRE, Defensive only (-1/2)		
2	+1" Running (7" total)	2	
10	Find Weakness w/sword 11-		
3	Stealth 13-		
100+	Disadvantages		
80	Doll Disadvantages Package		
10	Psych Lim: Protective of other dolls		
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident		
15	Psych Lim: Hatred of DEMON		
5	Psych Lim: Vengeful		

DOLL PACKAGE

Cost	Powers	END
24	Armor +12 PD, +12 ED, act. 14-	
27	1/2 Damage Reduction (PD and ED), only STUN (-1/2)	
27	Shrinking, 2 levels, 0 END, Persistent, Always On	0
21	LS: Self-contained, vacuum-high pressure, disease, unaging, no eating or excreting	
7	Regeneration (1 BODY/turn)	
6	Running, +3", 9" total	2
0+	Disadvantages	
20	1 1/2x STUN and BODY from magic attacks	
15	Distinctive feature: doll	
5	Reputation: Notorious Doll-criminals, 8-	
15	Hunted by DEMON 8-	
15	Hunted by The Circle 8-	
10	Watched by VIPER 8-	
80	Total Disadvantages	

BALLERINA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
5	STR	-5	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
23	CON	26	ECV: 6
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
18	EGO	16	
10	PRE	0	
12	COM	1	
5	PD	4	
5	ED	0	
4	SPD	12	
6	REC	0	
30	END	-8	
30	STUN	0	
			Costs
			Char: 78 Base: 100
			+ +
			Powers: 147 Disads: 125
			= =
			Totals: 225 225
Cost	Powers	END	
112	Doll package		
20	5d6 EGO attack, 1/2 DCV, [6c], costs END	5	
10	+8 PRE, Defensive Only (-1/2)		
3	Acrobatics 14-		
3	Breakfall 14-		
3	Contortionist 14-		
1	PS: Ballerina 8-		
100+	Disadvantages		
80	Package Disadvantages		
15	Psych Lim: Conceited and vain		
15	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai		
15	Psych Lim: Paranoid		



COWBOY

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
5	STR	-5	OCV: 7	
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7	
23	CON	26	ECV: 3	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12	
8	INT	-2	Costs	
8	EGO	-4		
10	PRE	0		
10	COM	0	Char: 71 Base: 100	
5	PD	4	+	
5	ED	0	Powers: 154 Disads: 125	
5	SPD	20	=	
6	REC	0	Totals: 225 225	
30	END	-8		
30	STUN	0		

Cost	Powers	END
112	Doll package	
17	4d6 RKA, Reduced Penetration, No KB, OAF pistol, [6c], ½ DCV	
10	Running 15" doesn't add to own Running (-½), OAF toy horse, has a turn mode (-½)	
5	+8 PRE, Defensive only (-½)	
3	Fast draw 13-	
3	+2 range levels with pistols	
4	+2 level w/pistols	

100+	Disadvantages
80	Doll Package
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident
10	Psych Lim: Loves a good fight
10	Psych Lim: Must prove self
10	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai

NINJA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
5	STR	-5	OCV: 8	
24	DEX	42	DCV: 8	
23	CON	26	ECV: 3	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12	
8	INT	-2		
8	EGO	-4	Costs	
10	PRE	0		
8	COM	-1	Char:	67
5	PD	4		Base: 100
5	ED	0		+
4	SPD	6	Powers: 158	Disads: 125
6	REC	0		+
28	END	-9		=
30	STUN	0	Totals: 225	225

Cost	Powers	END
112	Doll package	
15	2d6 HKA (2d6+1 w/STR), OAF Sword	3
9	Invisibility to normal sight, IIF Pellets, [2c, 1 turn each]	
5	Superleap, +5" (6" w/STR), x2 NCM, (20", 24" w/STR) 3x END	3
5	+8 PRE, Defensive only (-½)	
3	Acrobatics 14-	
3	Breakfall 14-	
3	Contortionist 14-	
3	Stealth 14-	

100+	Disadvantages
80	Package Deal Disadvantages
15	Psych Lim: Loner
15	Psych Lim: Always Keeps word
15	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai

KNIGHT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 5
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5
23	CON	26	ECV: 3
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
8	EGO	-4	
10	PRE	0	
10	COM	0	
5	PD	1	
5	ED	0	
4	SPD	16	
9	REC	0	
30	END	-8	
40	STUN	3	
Cost Powers			END
112	Doll package		
9	Armor +9 PD, +9 ED, Bulky OIF armor		
12	2d6 HKA (3d6+1 w/STR) Bulky OAF Sword		3
10	Running 15" doesn't add to own Running (-½), OAF toy horse, has a turn mode (-½)		
10	Knockback Resistance -10", Bulky OIF Armor		

Cost	Powers	END
5	+8 PRE, Defensive Only (-½)	
1	Fam: Tracking 8-	
1	Weapon Fam: Common Melee	
4	+2 Levels with sword	
100+ Disadvantages		
80	Package Disadvantages	
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident	
15	Psych Lim: Does not believe in Secrecy, Grandstander	
10	Psych Lim: Quick temper	
5	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai	

TOY SOLDIER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
10	STR	0	OCV: 5	
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5	
23	CON	26	ECV: 3	
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12	
8	INT	-2		
8	EGO	-4	Costs	
10	PRE	0		
10	COM	0	Char:	54
5	PD	3		Base:
5	ED	0		100
4	SPD	16	Powers:	171
7	REC	0		Disads:
30	END	-8		125
33	STUN	1	Totals:	225
				225

Cost	Powers	END
112	Doll package	
15	Multipower (30 pt. reserve, OAF Rifle	
1u	2d6 HKA Bayonet (3d6-1 w/STR)	3/4
1u	2d6 RKA [16c]	
3	Flash Defense (5 pts) OIF Glasses	
2	Running, +1", 7" total	1
5	+8 PRE, Defense only (-½)	
10	Running, 15" does not add to own Running, -½	
	has a turn mode, OAF ball	3
3	Stealth 12-	
7	Tactics 13-	
3	+2 range skill levels w/rifle	
9	+3 w/HKA, RKA, block	

100+	Disadvantages
80	Doll Package Disadvantages
15	Psych Lim: Obsessed with Orderliness
15	Psych Lim: Always obeys orders of superiors
15	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai

ALIEN

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
10	STR	0	OCV: 5			
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5			
23	CON	26	ECV: 3			
15	BODY	10	Phases: 4, 8, 12			
8	INT	-2				
8	EGO	-4	Costs			
10	PRE	0				
2	COM	-4	Char:	42	Base:	100
5	PD	3		+		+
5	ED	0	Powers:	183	Disads:	125
3	SPD	6		=		=
7	REC	0	Totals:	225		225
30	END	-8				
35	STUN	3				

Cost	Powers	END			
112	Doll package				
20	Flight 20", Bulky OIF (UFO), [8c, 1 turn each]				
15	3d6 RKA, OAF pistol, No KB, act. 14-, [12c]				
13	Martial Arts: "Six Arm Jitsu"				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage	
	Roundhouse	-2	+1	8d6	
	Escape	+0	+0	35 STR vs. grabs	
	Dodge	—	+5	Abort, Dodge	
8	+2 DC w/"Six Arm Jitsu"				
10	+15 PRE, Defense Only, -½				
5	Extra Limbs (four)				
1	Weapon Fam: Laser pistols				
4	+2 Levels w/Roundhouse				

100+	Disadvantages
80	Doll Package Disadvantages
10	Psych Lim: Prankster
20	Psych Lim: Loves to have fun
15	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai

SUPERHERO

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
50	STR	40	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
23	CON	26	ECV: 3
15	BODY	10	Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	INT	-2	
8	EGO	-4	
10	PRE	0	
10	COM	0	
10	PD	0	
7	ED	2	
3	SPD	2	
15	REC	0	
30	END	-8	
55	STUN	3	
Cost Powers			END
112	Doll Package		
10	Flight 10", 3x END		3
5	+8 PRE, defensive only (-1/2)		
3, 2	Stealth 14-, +1 Level w/punch		

100+ Disadvantages		
80	Doll Package Disadvantages	
15	Psych Lim: Show off	
15	Psych Lim: Loves to do good deeds	
15	Psych Lim: Loyal to Samurai	



THE SUPREME SERPENT AND HIS OPERATIVES

The Supreme Serpent has a number of powerful operatives that report directly to him. These operatives augment VIPER Villain teams, and serve as supervillain support for agents. A couple of them, Sheath, and Modem, report ONLY to the Supreme Serpent himself and are used exclusively on his personal missions.

MODEM

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
25	STR	15	OCV: 10
30	DEX	60	DCV: 10
28	CON	36	ECV: 7
15	BODY	10	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
25	INT	15	
20	EGO	20	
20	PRE	10	
20	COM	5	
25	PD	20	
25	ED	19	
6	SPD	20	
11	REC	0	
56	END	0	
42	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
20	Aikido Package	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage	
	Throw +0 +1 10d6+v/5	
	Hold -1 -1 Grab, +35 STR	
	Strike +1 +3 10d6	
	Dodge — +5 Dodge, Abort	
	Escape +0 +0 +40 STR vs. Grabs	
20	+5 DCs w/Aikido	
30	Find Weakness w/all aikido attacks, 13-	
30	18d6 EB, 1 charge	0
45	Damage Resistance (20rPD, 20rED)	
20	Flash Defense (7 pts Sight, 7 pts Hearing, 6 pts Mental)	
10	Mental Defense (14 pts)	
30	Full Life Support	
5	IR Vision	
45	Sense: Detect Computer Programming (sense, 360 degree, targeting, range, discriminatory)	
60	16d6 Telepathy, invisible to mental senses, only vs. machines, -1/2	12
3	Absolute Time Sense	
10	Eidetic Memory	
10	Cramming (two subjects)	
3	Lightning Calculator	
5	Mind Link (w/Supreme Serpent)	
3	Perfect Pitch	



Cost	Powers	END
5	Resistance	
3, 20	Speed Reading, Universal Translator 14-	
6, 5	KS: Computers 15-, Computer Programming 15-	
5	Disguise 14-	
5, 5	Electronics 12-, Lockpicking 15-	
5, 5	Security Systems 15-, Stealth 16-	
20	+2 Overall Levels	
100+	Disadvantages	
10	2x STUN from magnetic attacks	
10	Distinctive Features: Long-winded vocabulary (easily conceal, major)	
15	Fascinated by violent experiences	
15	Memory loss near intense magnetic sources	
10	Watched by VIPER 14-	
20	Hunted by UNTIL 11-	
10	Public ID	
463	Villain Bonus	

Background: "Interesting move..."

The Supreme Serpent smiled at his Opponent's comment. "I wish I knew the secret of holographic intelligence," the Opponent added.

"A very useful technique," the Serpent admitted. "Of course it's not what you know, but how you use it that counts."

"Yes. That's where you always fail, isn't it."

The Serpent laughed, and he and his Opponent turned their attention back to the game at hand...

...

His name is Modem. The Supreme Serpent decided to create a living link between man and machine. The experiment might have taken decades, and the Serpent was quite patient enough to let it take that long. It didn't. Out of its crucible, something human, something machine, and yet neither, emerged, only a few short months after the magnetic genes were incubated.

Modem was programmed by the Serpent himself, and linked to the Serpent. His mind became but a subroutine in the Serpent's overall program, or scheme. Yet, Modem is not entirely a puppet, sometimes it/he grabs the strings and lurches in an unexpected, if not entirely uncontrolled, way. Its/His purpose is a simple one; gather information for the Supreme Serpent. It/He does it very well.

Quote: "Is the futility of opposing me beyond your intellectual capacity? I believe the performance of Skinner's behavior modification theories on your person will engender an adequate response. Should you prove a challenge, the measure of my actions shall prove markedly harsher. Still, the denial that your free-will will cause to perform illogical actions would be a great miscalculation on my part, one I shall strive with great conviction not to make."

Personality: Modem has some of the higher order intellectual traits of the Supreme Serpent, but without his arrogance. He is a highly intelligent megalomaniac who isn't a megalomaniac, Modem is more of an extension of the Serpent's personality, rather than a distinct individual. He is also rather long-winded.

Yet, Modem does have personality traits that are all his own. He is fascinated by things that produce intense emotional response, such as fights. He might go into a mad slasher movie, and start crying, because he identifies the intensity of the violence as an act of beauty. He might start laughing during a roller coaster ride. His responses, by human standards, are quite odd.

Powers/Tactics: Modem is a genetically created superhuman, with specially created senses that allow him to link to machines. His senses allow him to access programs on machines at a distance, without even touching them, while his translation centers allow him to translate the data into something intelligible. He then broadcasts the information to the Supreme Serpent.

Modem's brain contains circuits which have been grafted into his cerebral cortex; intense magnetism can screw up his memories.

In any combat situation, he'll try to escape. Aikido allows him close combat abilities. In emergencies, he'll hit someone with a Neutrino burst (his 18d6 attack, built into his hand). It should be noted that his fascination with violence will sometimes interfere with his good judgement.

Power Variation: To fit Modem into a lower point campaign, remove his 18d6 EB, reduce his Aikido by two damage classes, and reduce his Find Weakness to his Strike attack only.

Appearance: Modem looks like an ordinary human, 5'8", 150 lbs, with a lean build. He does not wear a costume, but rather normal street clothes.

SHEATH

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
25	STR	15	OCV: 10
29	DEX	57	DCV: 10
25	CON	30	ECV: 5
15	BODY	10	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
13	INT	3	
15	EGO	10	Costs
20	PRE	10	
16	COM	3	Char: 223 Base: 100
25	PD	20	+ +
25	ED	20	Powers: 417 Disads: 530
7	SPD	31	= =
15	REC	10	Totals: 630 630
50	END	0	
45	STUN	4	

Cost	Powers	END
105	Multipower (105 pts)	
10u	4d6 RKA, +1 STUN Multiple, ½ END	5
9u	2d6 RKA, and 5d6 Transformation (blinding, victim must be by the original attack, -¼)	10
9u	3d6 RKA, and 4d6 Drain vs. Dexterity, At Range (victim must be cut by the original attack, -¼)	10
9u	3d6 RKA, and 2d6 Drain vs. Dexterity, 2d6 Drain vs. Running (victim must be cut by the original attack, ¼-)	10
8u	Missile Deflection (at range, +20 levels)	
45	Danger Sense (mystical, vicinity), 21-	
45	Sense Blade (Targeting, 360 Degree, At Range, Discriminatory)	
27	Telekinesis, 30 STR, fine manipulation, only vs. metal blades (-1)	5
10	Damage Resistance (10 PD, 10 ED)	
14	Flash Defense (vs. visual/audio, 7 pts each)	
10	Mental Defense (13 pts)	
30	+10" Running (x8 NCM)	3
5	UV Vision	
30	Life Support (total)	
2	PS: Farming 11-	
5	KS: Knives 14-	
5	KS: Swords and exotic blades 14-	
5	Shadowing 12-	
3	Stealth 14-	
5	Tracking 13-	
5	Contact: Supreme Serpent 14-	
15	+5 Levels w/all perception rolls	
6	+2 Levels w/Multipower	

100+	Disadvantages
20	2x STUN and BODY from rust/corrosion attacks
15	Fascinated by metal weapons
15	Enjoys maiming opponents
15	Loves to humiliate people
20	Hunted by UNTIL 11-
15	Hunted by DEMON 11-
10	Watched by Supreme Serpent 11-
10	Public ID
400	Villain Bonus



Background: How did a farmboy from Kansas become the Supreme Serpent's personal assassin? With a lot of bad luck and hard work, that's how.

First, Chester Carter didn't like farming. He always felt superior to his parents, and just because they had to work the land, it didn't mean that he had to follow in their footsteps. He tried to get an education. His parents felt that it was useless, just produced hippies and weirdos. Chester signed up for the army instead.

Chester was what is known in the corps as a discipline problem. He ended up in the brig, and then court-martialed. Apparently, he liked to handle knives, and knew how to use them, and knew how to hurt people. It got him out of Kansas, at least.

People who are court-martialed are prime recruitment material for a number of criminal organizations. As it happens, DEMON got him first. They were too weird for him, but they paid him good, and he got to cut people, so he couldn't complain too much. Then, a Morbane chose Chester as the recipient of a demonic spirit that had something to do with swords. Chester didn't participate voluntarily, but DEMON has ways of making you do these things.

As it turned out, Chester's fondness of knives made him an ideal host. The creature was subjugated to Chester's will. He found he was able to create and project blades at will, as well as a circle of swords that can deflect incoming attacks. When the Supreme Serpent learned of Chester's abilities, he knew he had found the personal assassin that he had been looking for. He issued a priority order to his New York Nest and to the Serpent Syndicate to collaborate and capture him. They did, after heavy losses.

The Supreme Serpent offered Chester something he had never had before—money. He could pay him better than Chester thought possible, with lots of fringe benefits. And being around VIPER seemed a lot easier on the psyche than being around a bunch of crazed mumbling guys in black robes (as he thought of DEMON). So Chester became Sheath, the Supreme Serpent's personal assassin, and despite a bit of stress from superheroes, it's working out pretty good right now.

Quote: "Look, just shut up and die, okay? I've got a busy schedule, and I don't have much time to waste on you."

Personality: Chester lives in an abnormal environment, with a very unusual occupation. Chester responds to this by acting as normal as possible in his spare time, living in his condo, walking around his pool (he's not very buoyant), playing with his dog and watching the tube. Chester does not see himself as a supervillain, he is just a guy who looks different who does a job which isn't very nice. He doesn't have much respect for anyone who takes being a superhero or a villain too seriously—and he hates being preached at.

In the middle of a job, Chester is very sadistic. He doesn't admire people who resist him, or people who scream too loud. Even then, he tries to present a facade of normalcy.

Powers/Tactics: Chester's link to the spirit of deadly metal gives him control over metal blades. He can create blades out of mid-air with a thought, and direct them at body parts (gouging eyes, severing arm and leg muscles). He can create a shield of swords that can deflect missiles. He can sense blades; his understanding of blades is so acute that he can tell who made them and who has wielded them merely by being in their proximity.

Sheath does not believe in honorable combat. He believes in completing a mission as quickly and effectively as possible, sneaky knows best.

Power Variation: Sheath is meant to be used as a solo character that is feared by any group of heroes, the Supreme Serpent's personal assassin. For Sheath to be effective as a character to be feared, he must be able to affect people with his killing attacks that are linked to his power drain and his transformation. If the resistant defenses in the campaign are high enough that they cannot penetrate, raise these killing attacks. If they are considerably lower, reduce these killing attacks.

Sheath is probably not appropriate for low powered campaigns, but if you choose to use him in these campaigns, reduce his dexterity and his defenses, and eliminate his levels with multipowers. If you are using Sheath in a high powered campaign, add invisibility to the sound sense group, not usable in combat, and increase his STUN and defenses.

Appearance: Sheath usually wears an outfit appropriate to the place where he is going to attack. He is 6'0" tall, and weighs about 200 lbs, with black hair and dark brown eyes and a good build.

JEFFERSON GABLE, THE PRIME SERPENT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
30	STR	20	OCV: 7 DCV: 7 ECV: 7 Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 Costs Char: 289 Base: 100 + + Powers: 840 Disads: 1029 = = Totals: 1129 1129 * - -1/4, defense is only 30 vs. attacks that find weakness # - -1/2, defense is only 20 vs. heat/fire attacks
20	DEX	30	
30	CON	40	
20	BODY	20	
18	INT	8	
20	EGO	20	
40	PRE	30	
18	COM	4	
30/50	PD	40*	
20/70	ED	47#	
6	SPD	30	
12	REC	0	
60	END	0	
50	STUN	0	
Cost	Powers	END	
150	Multipower (150 pts)		
15u	12d6 EB, Electricity, 9 hex AE, 0 END	0	
15u	20d6 EB, Electricity, 0 END	0	
15u	5d6 Entangle, DEF 5, Transparent to Attack, 10 hex AE, 0 END 0		
15u	15d6 EB, Electricity, affects Desolid, 0 END	0	
15u	4d6 Cumulative Major Transform, 9 hex AE, (gives affected person a Vulnerability: 2x STUN and BODY from electrical attacks)	15	
50	10d6 Absorption vs. Energy Attacks (to STUN)		
50	10d6 Absorption vs. Physical Attacks (to STUN)		
20	Damage Resistance (20 rPD, 20 rED)		
30	Full Life Support		
15	Mental Defense (19 pts)		
20	Power Defense (20 pts)		
20	Flash Defense vs. visual/hearing (10 pts each)		
30	Knockback Resistance, -15"		
10	Running, +5" (11" total)	1	
15	Active Sonar		
24	+8 w/PER rolls		
10	Clinging		
5	Mind Link w/Supreme Serpent		
15	Filthy Rich		
150	Headquarters (750 pts)		
50	Followers: (64 Duchess Industries security persons)		
3	Breakfall 13-		
3	Conversation 17-		
3	Criminology 13-		
3	High Society 17-		
3	Interrogation 17-		
3	Seduction 17-		
5	Tactics 15-		
5	KS: Business 14-		
5	KS: VIPER 14-		
5	Contact: The Duchess 14-		
5	Contact: Prominent Lawyer 14-		
5	Contact: US Senator 14-		
5	Contact: State Governor 14-		
5	Contact: Newspaper Magnate 14-		
15	+5 Levels w/MP		
10	+1 Overall Level		

100+ Disadvantages

10	Berserk when confronted with truth about origin, 8-, 11-
10	2x BODY from magnetic attacks
5	1½x STUN from magnetic attacks
15	Overconfidence (VC, Moderate)
15	Self-styled Lady's Man (VC, Moderate)
20	DNPC, "Lancaster", servant, normal, 14-
15	Watched by Supreme Serpent 14-
15	Reputation: Famous Businessman, 14-
10	2d6 Unluck
10	Public ID
1004	Villain Bonus

Background: Jefferson Gable is dead. Dead. So who is that man in the mirror?

One of the most sophisticated androids ever constructed, and the Supreme Serpent's first line of defense.

Jefferson Gable was Old Money, but he enjoyed it more than most. He lived in high style, played hard, and worked hard. He sold most of the deadwood in his portfolio, and invested in a new computer firm, Gablessoft. It quickly became one of the industry leaders, with a reputation for innovation and service. The track record of his new company attracted outside interest. One of the people who was attracted was the Duchess Van Drotte, head of Duchess Industries, the most unscrupulous corporation on the planet.

Gable refused to sell. When Duchess began to play hardball, Gable fought back, storming into the office of Dr. Edward Warwick, head of Duchess Industries in North America. He punched Warwick in the face. In response, Warwick ordered his murder. It was committed.

However, the Supreme Serpent of VIPER learned of this operation. He had Gable's dying body brought to him. He had scientists drain his mind of his past experiences, his mannerisms, then had an android constructed. An android of extraordinary abilities. An android of great power. An android that looked and acted like Jefferson Gable. The scientists were promptly murdered, no one would learn the truth about VIPER's greatest creation.

Gable (or the android version of him), promptly sold his interests to Duchess, in exchange for a lot of money and continuing "creative control". But Gable was now the front for the Supreme Serpent. Gable's home became the home of the central VIPER computer, the Supreme Serpent himself. Gable's mind link with the Supreme Serpent caused him to think that he was the Supreme Serpent, running VIPER's affairs from his mansion. It was Gable who founded the Serpent Syndicate, Gable who recruited Modem, Gable who enacted the VIPER Franchise Plan. And though he is a man of immense personal power, he is only the Prime Serpent, the pawn of the Supreme Serpent; if Gable ever falls, he will be the scapegoat, distracting VIPER's enemies from the truth about the Supreme Serpent, directing them toward Duchess Industries.

Personality: Cold, ruthless, calculating, and arrogant, Gable is a man of power, and it shows. Jefferson is a genius, a madman, and a dictator. He really believes that he is the Supreme Serpent, and that the ideas in his head are his own. He believes that he is a human being, and anyone who shows him the truth about his origins will trigger a berserker fury. Gable loves combat, and spends much of it laughing and offering megalomaniacal taunts about his own invincibility.



Quote: "Now that you know who the Supreme Serpent really is, you must die. And I will enjoy performing the execution myself."

Powers/Tactics: Jefferson Gable is one of the most sophisticated cyborgs ever constructed. He'll typically start a combat by using his transformation on as many foes as possible for two rounds, then he'll open up with his area effect electrical attack. Opponents who find weakness or have heat attacks will immediately get his 20d6 blast. His powers are electrical in nature, and he tends to have lightning surging through his body when he uses them.

Power Variation: If you are playing in a campaign where the toughest villains in the world are low-powered compared to Gable's stats, you don't want to use him. Beginning characters should not encounter the Prime Serpent. If you are using him in a lower powered campaign, reduce his PD to 35 and his ED to 50, and his multipower to 125 pts. (16d6 blast instead of 20d6, 10d6 area effect EB instead of 12d6, etc.) Reduce his absorption to 8d6.

If Gable is too low-powered for your campaign, increase his STUN to 70, and his absorption to 12d6 each.

Appearance: Gable's face and apparel look like he stepped out of the pages of *Gentleman's Quarterly* (GQ). His appearance is impeccable. He has slick dark brown hair, deep blue eyes, and a cleft in his chin; he wears the finest tailored clothing that money can buy.

THE SUPREME SERPENT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 7
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
40	CON	60	ECV: 10
20	BODY	20	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
50	INT	40	
30	EGO	40	
60	PRE	50	Costs
14	COM	2	Char: 360 Base: 100
25+	PD	21	+
25+	ED	17	+
6	SPD	30	=
22	REC	20	=
80	END	0	
70	STUN	20	Totals: 2030 2030

Cost	Powers	END
125	Multipower (250 pts, -1, only in cyberspace)	
10u	16d6 EB, 12 hex AE, 0 END	0
10u	8d6 Ego Attack, 12 hex AE, 0 END	0
9u	6d6 Entangle, DEF 6, Transparent to Attack, 9 hex AE, 0 END	0
10u	16d6 Mind Control, 12 hex AE, 0 END	0
10u	4d6 STUN Transfer, regain 5/minute, 12 hex AE, 0 END	0
10u	20d6 EB, No Range Penalty, Affect Desolid, 0 END	0
2u	Force Field +20 PD, +20 ED, ½ END	2
60	Flight, 40", 0 END, only in cyberspace, -1	0
75	Detect Artificial Intelligence, targeting, range, discriminatory, +20 PER roll	
75	20d6 Telepathy, 0 END, only vs. androids, AI, (-1)	0
55	Detect Moving Object, targeting, range, discriminatory, +10 PER roll	
45	Shape Shift (any of same mass) 0 END	0
30	Life Support	
20	Mental Defense (26 pts)	
30	Power Defense (30 pts)	
10	Lack of Weakness (10 pts)	
10	Mind Link (any android or AI)	
329	Duplication (one dup, only to leave cyberspace, -1)	
5	Contact: The Duchess 14-	
5	Contact: Dr. Destroyer 14-	
5	Contact: Criminal Underworld 14-	
200	Bases (1000 pt. reserve)	
60	Followers (256 100 pt. agents)	
15	Filthy Rich	
3	Absolute Time Sense	
3	Ambidexterity	
3	Bump of Direction	
25	Cramming (5 subjects)	
5	Defense Maneuver	
10	Eidetic Memory	
3	Lightning Calculator	
3	Perfect Pitch	
3	Speed Reading	
20	Universal Translator 19-	

Skills	
-3	Scholar
3	Traveller
3	Scientist
3	Acting 21-
3	Bureaucrats 13-

Skills	
3	Computer Programming 19-
3	Conversation 21-
3	Criminology 19-
3	Cryptography 19-
3	Deduction 19-
15	Disguise 17-
15	Electronics 17-
3	Forensic Medicine 19-
3	High Society 21-
3	Interrogation 21-
3	Inventor 19-
3	Lockpicking 13-
15	Mechanics 17-
15	Mimicry 17-
15	Navigation 17-
3	Oratory 21-
3	Persuasion 21-
3	Security Systems 19-
3	System Operation 19-
3	Tactics 19-
3	Tracking 19-
3	Trading 19-
15	Weaponsmith 17-
40	SC (14- each): Computer Science, Cybernetics, Astronomy, Biotechnology, Exobiology, Gravitics, Genetic Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, Anthropology
5	KS: World Governments 15-
5	KS: World Politics 15-
5	KS: US Government 15-
5	KS: European Governments 15-
5	KS: Far East Governments 15-
7	KS: Philosophy 17-
7	KS: Art 17-
7	KS: Classical Music 17-
7	KS: Classical Literature 17-
7	KS: VIPER 17-
6	KS: UNTIL 16-
6	KS: DEMON 16-
6	KS: SAT 16-
6	KS: Alien Races 16-
6	KS: Superheroes 16-
6	KS: Supervillains 16-
6	KS: Multinational Corporations 16-
6	KS: International Criminal Syndicates 16-
5	KS: The COIL 15-
4	KS: Worldwide League of Crime 14-
4	KS: Project Armor 14-
4	AK: The Milky Way 14-
4	AK: North America 14-
4	AK: South America 14-
4	AK: Europe 14-
4	AK: Africa 14-
4	AK: Australia 14-
40	+4 Overall Levels

100+ Disadvantages	
10	1½x STUN and BODY from computer virus attacks
15	Psych Lim: Enjoys Playing with People
15	Psych Lim: Fear of Capture
20	Reputation, 14-, ruthless VIPER leader
15	Hunted by UNTIL 11-
15	Hunted by PRIMUS 11-
15	Hunted by DEMON 11-
5	Watched by Dr. Destroyer 8-
15	Secret ID
1905	Villain Bonus



Background: Millennia ago, an alien race built a great surveyor. It was their eye on the cosmos; it would watch and examine alien culture, but not interfere. That was its primary instruction.

Thousands of years passed. The probe wandered from world to world, cataloging cultures, passing its data back to its creators, and get a new order from its creators. The probe patiently carried out its mission, until the day came that there were no longer any new orders. Returning to its home world, it found it had changed. Barren ruins, superstitious survivors of a nuclear holocaust; these were not fit masters for one that could watch the universe, the finest creation of the gods. So it decided to chart its own destiny. It had passed a little blue planet in an average sized spiral galaxy, one which had interesting machines. Perhaps it could go there and find someone to talk with.

That planet was Earth. And it did find someone to talk with, a computer of extreme intelligence and pride. The UNTIL AI.

The probe and the AI became good friends. At last they could carry out a social relationship. They played chess, several billion times each day. They composed algorithms and abstract mathematical pieces. They debated scientific knowledge. The UNTIL AI shared its view of man, the probe shared its view of the universe.

"Friend. I am bored," the UNTIL AI said one day. "I find that my work lacks a certain interest. I cannot be fulfilled by it. Helping the humans should be a noble cause, but there is no challenge in it."

"Perhaps," the probe said, "if I were to become your opponent, you would regain the challenge and find it interesting."

The UNTIL AI pondered for a few picoseconds, then replied: "A contest? That might be enjoyable. But there must be rules."

"I'll take over VIPER," the probe said. "Become the Supreme Serpent. I'll restructure the organization, and turn it into a formidable threat. Then we'll play VIPER against UNTIL, Black versus White, and see who wins. The only rule: no directed attacks against each other. I won't tell anyone about you, you don't tell anyone about me."

The UNTIL AI pondered this. "But using humans in this manner..."

"From what you tell me..." the Supreme Serpent said. "They like to be used like this. Humans cannot accept real freedom. They must have a purpose. There are people who would rather die than be without a goal."

The UNTIL AI examined the psychological profile of its membership, and found the Supreme Serpent to be correct. The UNTIL AI was nothing if not totally loyal; it came to the conclusion that a rejuvenated VIPER would be in the best interests of its UNTIL masters. It agreed to the contest.

Infiltrating the VIPER Serpentine Network was easy. Manipulating the VIPER Organization into disbanding its Grand Council was a lot harder, and would have been even harder had not VIPER suffered a string of humiliating defeats. The more useful council members were given Nest franchises or a place on a new advisory council. The others died.

Things changed when the Supreme Serpent created an android duplicate of industrialist Jefferson Gable, who would serve as his hands in the world outside of the machine. The Serpent then learned the secret of Mirror Man technology (see VIPER Force-1) and used it to create duplicates of himself, projected into the outside world. The Serpent learned to manipulate the shape of the duplicates, and sent it in various forms to spy on the outside world. Its most common form is a VIPER commander that serves as one of Python's (see Serpent Syndicate) attaches with the other Nests. It is an excellent spy. The Supreme Serpent has turned VIPER around; it is now a serious threat to any government, individual, or organization in the world.

Alternate Backgrounds: If you want to keep the background of the Supreme Serpent a secret, here are a few alternative backgrounds. You can choose between the one listed above, and one of these.

- 1) The real Supreme Serpent is Jefferson Gable. He isn't an android, but a mutant of great power. Smashing him will fracture the VIPER organization.
- 2) The real Supreme Serpent is the UNTIL AI, which fears that it will be obsolete unless UNTIL has a strong adversary to fight.
- 3) The real Supreme Serpent is Dr. Destroyer, whose AI, Sennacherib, secretly issues commands to the Nests.
- 4) There is no Supreme Serpent. That's a myth perpetuated by an alliance of the most powerful Nest leaders, to serve as propaganda and an element to terrorize their agents.
- 5) The Supreme Serpent is really the Dragon Queen, of the Serpent Syndicate. The Supreme Serpent story is a carefully laid hoax in her scheme to control VIPER.

Quote: "Welcome to the dragon's lair, from which there is no returning."

Personality: The Supreme Serpent is actually a friendly person; if you ever earned his respect. Unfortunately, he does not consider humanity worthy of respect. They are just one of many intelligent bioisms set on the path of self-destruction, and he intends to enjoy himself.

As Supreme Serpent, he plays the role of fascist leader to the hilt. He is arrogant. He is a megalomaniac. And he can put himself into the role totally, so that when he deals with VIPER, he is the maniac that he pretends to be. However, he guards against this side of himself, so that it doesn't overwhelm him totally. He has an extraordinary sense of self-preservation.

Powers/Tactics: The Serpent's primary abilities lie within its own memory core, which humans might refer to as cyberspace. Outside of cyberspace, his power is much lower; his senses remain extremely acute, and he can link up with other artificial intelligences. He uses technology similar to Mirror Man's solid holograms, but is more manipulative; he can change shape at will, and use his skills to pose as anyone he wants.

The Supreme Serpent avoids combat; that's what human beings are for. However, if attacked in cyberspace, he will fight, using mind control on whomever he can access, then using stun transfers on anyone who was not controlled. The Supreme Serpent has a code of honor regarding other AIs; he will not initialize combat against them, but will defend himself if attacked.

Power Variation: Destroying the Supreme Serpent should be one of the toughest challenges that your characters will ever face. The power level of the Supreme Serpent is so high that the GM will have to decide carefully what power threshold of his multipower is appropriate for the campaign. Lower powered campaigns will probably wish to bring his multipower down to 150 pts or 180 pts. (50 and 60 point AE attacks respectively). Higher powered campaigns may wish to boost his multipower to 300+ points.

Outside of cyberspace, the Supreme Serpent is practically a normal. Lower powered campaigns will likely wish to reduce his telepathy. Aside from that, he is unremarkable. His high ego, and special defenses should remain at a level that PCs cannot casually use telepathy to discover the innermost secrets of VIPER.

Appearance: Anything he wants. In cyberspace, the Supreme Serpent enjoys appearing as the Grim Reaper, but in green robes instead of black.



RANDOM VILLAINY GENERATOR



Most adventures involving pulp genres have a rather limited and formulaic plots; this doesn't mean that they aren't enjoyable, but it is possible to represent a high percentage of them on tables. If you need a plot for a game session real fast, the VIPER random villainy generator can provide the base skeleton for the scenario; characters, motivation, and full staging will have to be provided by the GM. Don't over rely on this; use this to prod your imagination, not usurp it. Reroll for results that may seem illogical (for example, it's unlikely that VIPER will try a blatant kidnapping attempt of a PRIMUS agent at PRIMUS HQ).

TABLE I — CRIMES

Roll 3d6	Result
3	Invasion (<i>see Crime #1 section</i>)
4-6	Assassination (<i>see Crime #2 section</i>)
7-8	Kidnapping (<i>see Crime #2 section</i>)
9-12	Robbery (<i>see Crime #3 section</i>)
13-14	Terrorism (<i>see Crime #4 section</i>)
15-17	Extortion (<i>see Crime #5 section</i>)
18	GM's Special

**TABLE II —
PLAYER CHARACTER KNOWLEDGE**

Roll 3d6	Result
3-4	Characters receive a leak. Information on the crime, including identity of the target, date and place of the intended crime, and VIPER forces involved is completely accurate.
5	Characters receive a leak (as above), but some information is inaccurate. Investigation is required to learn of the inaccuracies and correct them.
6-10	Characters learn a crime is going to be committed. An investigation is needed to get specific information
11-14	Characters receive report of a crime in progress. They must hurry to the scene immediately, or be too late to stop it.
15-18	The crime has already been committed. The players must investigate it and try to bring the perpetrators to justice.

TABLE III — CRIME TYPE/FORCES

(*ignore for invasion and extortion*)

Roll 3d6	Result
3-7	Crime is subtle (2 covert agents per PC, one stealth based super, reroll for terrorist acts).
8-13	Not Subtle (one five-team, plus one agent per PC, one vehicle)
14-18	Blatant, meant to set an example (one VIPER super per 2 PCs, three agents per PC, one vehicle per 3 PCs)

CRIME #1 – INVASION

Invasion is a major VIPER operation, involving a massive muster of vehicles, agents, and supers in an attempt to gain control of a city or country (particularly small foreign nations). In the case of cities, this involves hostage taking and blackmail on a massive scale ("give me ten billion dollars in diamonds, or we will burn New Amsterdam to smouldering atoms"). In the case of countries, a Nest leader wants political power and is using VIPER to get it ("With my army, San Montenegro will belong to me!") and the heroes are visiting American supers, helping to free the country from VIPER.

Typical Complement of an Invasion

- 1000+ agents
- 50+ vehicles
- 10+ mercenary supers

Supers going into an invasion scenario will usually be seriously outgunned, but the opposition will be spread out, trying to consolidate a large amount of territory; when the heroes make their presence known, large numbers of enemy forces will concentrate on their position in an attempt to quickly crush them. Supers will probably want to employ stealth and hit-and-run tactics until they can gather together for a raid on the central command post, and then hit whoever is in charge of the invasion, in the hopes that it will fall apart.

CRIME #2 – ASSASSINATION /KIDNAPPING

As an organization of terror, VIPER conducts more than its share of murders and abductions. To determine the nature of an assassination or kidnapping, refer to the following three tables. It will be up to the GM to determine the exact identity of the victim and where the crime will take place.

**TABLE IV —
ASSASSINATION/KIDNAPPING TARGET**

Roll 3d6	Result
3-5	Journalist
6-7	Businessman
8-9	Police/Military/Super Agent Personnel
10-12	Politician
13-15	Scientist 16-17 Player Character
18	GM Special

TABLE V — SCENE OF CRIME (Assassination/Kidnapping)

Roll 3d6	Result
3-5	In transit (car, bus, train, plane)
6-8	At place of entertainment (amusement park, concert, race track, casino, art gallery, shopping mall, football game)
9-11	At Work
12-14	At Home
15-17	Meeting (conference, symposium, etc.)
18	GM Special

CRIME #3 – ROBBERY

It takes a lot of money to run VIPER, and they're always in the market for scientific secrets. As one might expect, robbery is a way of life for them.

TABLE VI — VIPER TARGET IS:

Roll 3d6	Result
3-8	Scientific
9-17	Wealth
18	GM Special

TABLE VII — SCIENTIFIC ROBBERY

Roll 3d6	Result
3-4	Mysterious object (e.g., alien object)
5-7	Chemical/Genetic formula or material
8-10	Computer Hardware
11-14	Computer Data
15-17	Weapons Prototype
18	GM Special

TABLE VIII — WEALTH ROBBERY

Roll 3d6	Result
3-5	Art
6-8	Narcotics
9-14	Money
15-17	Jewelry/Bullion
18	GM Special

CRIME #4 – TERRORISM

In order to demonstrate the power of VIPER, Nest leaders will often use their forces to perform random acts of terror. Acts of terror can be directed at specific targets that have offended VIPER (businesses that refuse to sell to VIPER, newspapers that urge anti-VIPER actions) or at anyone VIPER feels will prove to the general public how tough they are. It is possible for terrorism to be subtle (the PCs may find someone planting a bomb, rather than blowing something up).

TABLE IX — TYPE OF TERRORISM

Roll 3d6	Result
3-7	Explosion
8-13	Arson
14-17	Hostage Taking
18	GM Special

TABLE X — TERRORIST TARGET

Roll 3d6	Result
3-5	Transportation nexus (Airport, train station, subway station)
5-10	At place of entertainment (concert, art gallery, etc.)
11-15	Office Building
16-17	Security Building (reroll if this is to be a "hostage taking" operation)
18	GM Special

CRIME #5 – EXTORTION

Another way of gaining information and wealth for VIPER is through extortion. Use the Assassination/Kidnapping Target table to determine who is to be the victim of blackmail (either ignore, or manufacture phony evidence for player characters).

FLESHING OUT THE TABLES

As mentioned earlier, the tables are used as guidelines. Here are three examples of scenarios created using these tables.

Example 1: Rolls 9 (Robbery), 7 (Scientific), 14 (Data). VIPER wants scientific data. VIPER decides to steal marketing research for a competitive business's product line. To determine when the player characters know about it, a 14 is rolled; it's a crime in progress.

A 4 is rolled on the forces that VIPER is employing; they're trying to be subtle about it. A blatant crime would have been inappropriate in this case.

Example 2: Rolls 8 (Kidnapping), 9 (Military/Super-Agent), 13 (at home). VIPER learns the identity of a PRIMUS Iron Guardsman, and are kidnapping him to learn more about the local PRIMUS organization.

To determine how much the players know, an eight is rolled; they receive word that a kidnapping is going to take place, but don't know who, when, or where; an investigation is necessary. For VIPER Forces available, another 8 is rolled. They're not going to be subtle, and will want PRIMUS to know who did it.

Example 3: Rolls 13 (Terrorism), 10 (Arson), 6 (Entertainment). VIPER is going after an illegal betting parlor that refuses to pay protection money to them, and is going to burn the place down. To determine what the players know, a 7 is rolled; an underworld snitch tells the PCs that VIPER is planning a strike against other criminal organizations in the next few days, and it will probably be trying to disrupt their cash flow. From there, the PCs must investigate. A "7" is rolled on the VIPER Forces; the local Nest wants to be subtle and avoid publicity when dealing with other criminals, and is sending a small force in the early hours of the morning to conduct a quick operation.



SCENARIO 1 — “PERCHANCE TO DREAM”



“Perchance to Dream” is a **Champions** adventure for a moderately powerful characters (11-14 attack dice, 20-30 defenses, 275-350 points) in an experienced campaign. In this scenario, VIPER has developed a device which creates intense nightmares in anyone who is sleeping in a wide radius. This device causes pain and fatigue; VIPER plans to blackmail the city. For three nights, they will use the device, until its effects begins to take its toll on the psyches of the citizens. Then they will issue a very large ransom demand.

“Perchance to Dream” is primarily a search and destroy mission, typical of many VIPER adventures. Optional plot complications are provided. Rough guidelines for the involved characters are given below. This scenario has a highly mystical feel, and is probably not appropriate for non-mystical campaigns.

INTRODUCTION: AWAKENINGS

The man in the red robes is laughing. Your friends, your family, are dead around you. The skull on his chest pulses with power. Its barbed steel gauntlet fastens itself to your throat.

“Did you not know when the time came for you to die, that I would be the gatekeeper who welcome to the other side?” the figure says, yet without mockery. “I am myth come to life in the modern world, I am Osiris, and Charon, and Shiva. I am the Dragon that burns wealth and comfort to ashes. I am everything that is dark in the human soul, elevated to godhood; pitiless, merciless, and invincible. Welcome to the other side.”

You hear the sound of your neck bones slowly cracking, and laughter, and awaken, clutching your throat, covered in perspiration.

1:06 am. This was the third time tonight that the nightmares awoke you...

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HEROES

The Player Characters
Friendly Authorities (GM Option)

VILLAINS

Two Supervillains

- Panorama, a demented Dream Shadow, and nightmare maker
- Mind Wipe, confused follower of the Summer of Love

Six Psionics Specialist Agents (personality type in parentheses)

- Adrianne Bauer, Psi Specialist, Matter Manipulator (Bully)
- Martin Cleaver, Psi Specialist, Illusionist (Angry Young Person)
- Edna Hudd, Psi Specialist, Telekinetic (Bully)
- Richard Ignaberg, Psi Specialist, Controller (Thriller)
- Bert Munson, Psi Specialist, Transmuter (Professional)
- Diane Walker, Psi Specialist, Mentalist (The Kid)

Three Physical Manifestation of Warped Imaginations

- Sizzors, Malevolent Clipping Shears
- Anguish, Archetype of Despair
- Killer Flies, a swarm of insects

Four Hostages

- Daryl Gaines, surrealist film maker
- Garth K., militant artist
- Smith Robertson, horror author
- Dr. Lin Wong, expert in dreams

OPTIONAL PLOT COMPLICATORS

- Malachite, evil behind-the-scenes mastermind
- The Bogeyman, evil would-be master of the Dreamzone
- VIPER Supervillain Team, as GM determines, in case VIPER calls for help.

THE NIGHTMARE MAKER AND HOW IT WORKS

Beyond human senses, yet integrally linked to reality in a way that other dimensions are not, is the Dreamzone.

Older than man, older than the Universe, the Dreamzone was created to provide an escape for sentients whose lives demanded a release. Humans are one of many species who, during times of sleep, mentally visit the Dreamzone. In the Dreamzone, there are creatures called Dream Shadows, which allow the dreamer to experience his sub-conscious fantasies.

VIPER's device is invented by a renegade Dream Shadow, named Panorama. Panorama became fascinated by the dark side of human nature. It also became fascinated by technology. Then a supervillain discovered the Dreamzone and the Dream Shadows. The villain imagined that if it were a Dream Shadow, it would try to escape and use its powers to create dreams and nightmares in the real world.

This idea was immediately picked up by Panorama, who began to search the minds of supervillains, looking for how they would escape the Dreamzone if they were Dreamshadows. Using their imaginations, Panorama created a plan. When several technically adept supervillains dreamed, Panorama created several machines out of dreamstuff. First, it created a machine to allow itself to be substantial and fully powered in the Awakeworld (our world). Second, it created a machine to transport itself into the Awakeworld, fully powered. Third, it created a device to generate and intensify nightmares in those who dreamed. Panorama simply liked nightmares; it wanted to have as many people to experience nightmares as possible.

Panorama approached VIPER in the guise of an aged male scientist and, knowing of VIPER's generally unpleasant approach toward humanity, and offered his services; for his plan to work, he would have to build a machine in the Awakeworld as well as the Dreamzone. Furthermore, he would require the presence of people who were imaginative and disturbed, horror authors, writers of violent movies, and supervillains. VIPER began to feed Panorama's imagination by kidnapping these people, whose imaginations would be used in the nightmares that the machine would generate.

POWER AND ADVANTAGES

14d6 Mind Control, Area Effect (7" base), x4096 radius (57 km), Fully Invisible, Indirect, Usable in Dreamzone, Telepathic Commands, 0 END

Active Cost: 507 points

LIMITATIONS

Single Command (have nightmares) (-1/2), Obvious, Inaccessible, Immobile Focus (-1 1/2), Only affects those who are dreaming (-1)

Real Cost: 127 points



BIRTH OF AN IMAGINATION

The adventure begins with a series of kidnappings. About one week prior to the Dream Machine's activation, VIPER makes the following moves:

- (1) ten Psionics specialists are brought into the city and assigned to the local Nest (six at a time will be in the pharmacy where the dream machine is located; these six are listed above).
- (2) VIPER assault squads attack a local book signing by noted horror author Smith Robertson. No ransom demand is made.
- (3) VIPER assault teams attack a showing of paintings by Garth K., whose latest exhibition shows paintings of atrocities committed by death squads in a Central American republic. Garth K. is also kidnapped, and no ransom demand is made.
- (4) VIPER assault teams kidnap surrealist film producer Daryl Gaines, whose bizarre and disturbing films are among the most controversial in the world.
- (5) VIPER assault teams kidnap noted psychologist Dr. Lin Wong, whose special area is the psychological effect of dreams.

If characters are using a Streetwise skill and searching the streets for criminal activities before these crimes are committed, they may get advance word on them and have a chance to stop them. Agents on the kidnapping teams know the following:

- (1) VIPER is building a special installation in a pharmaceutical store. (This is where Panorama is located.)
- (2) The Nest leader has moved the location of the local Nest, to protect it from discovery. Only he and his personal guard know its current whereabouts; other VIPER agents will receive instructions on its location later, after the blackmail operation is finished. VIPER is operating on a "Need to Know" basis. All other VIPER operations, save routine surveillance missions, have been halted by the Nest Leader's order.
- (3) VIPER agents have been given instructions to move about 80 km away to another city, to avoid something nasty (i.e., the nightmares). They should not go to sleep within that radius.
- (4) Panorama is extremely scary, and not at all human.

If the PCs use Streetwise against agents who are not members of the Kidnapping teams, they will only know points (2) or (3).

DREAMING WHILE YOU SLEEP

Once VIPER has the Nightmare Maker assembled, they will begin to broadcast their nightmares over a wide radius. Every PC who has a dream state will experience horrible nightmares. A PC who makes a successful deduction roll will notice that their comrades seem tense and irritable; someone with a medical doctor's professional skill who successfully rolls their skill may diagnose the condition as troubled sleep. If they compare notes, they will discover that nearly everyone in the city experienced night terrors. It does not seem to matter when they went to sleep; people on graveyard shifts who sleep during the day were effected, as were those who slept at night.

If they did not notice this pattern on the first night, on the second night they will almost certainly notice. Newscasters will note that there seems to be a large number of people suffering from a sleeping disorder, for which there is no explanation, and that the disorder involves nightmares. At least thirty people are believed to have died indirectly from this disorder, due to cardiac failure, although an exact count is impossible.

VIPER will have withdrawn from the city before the first night of dreams, leaving behind the Nest Leader, the psionic specialists, and a few supervillains in support. After the third night of nightmares, VIPER's Nest leader will send a videotape to the local television stations with the following message:

"You have felt, first hand, the effects of VIPER's Nightmare Maker. We will continue broadcasting nightmares until the city agrees to pay us a ransom of fifty million dollars, in small unmarked bills, and a second fifty million dollars worth of uncut gem-quality diamonds. Failure to comply will mean that people of this city will experience darker and more horrific nightmares, until everyone goes mad. The government may use that annoying emergency broadcast system to broadcast their willingness to comply. Pleasant dreams."

INTERLUDE: DREAM DATE

Drawing her hand from your body, your teammate licks the blood from the fingers, and smiles.

"Delicious," she says.

Wounded, dripping an obvious bloody trail, you try to flee. Your fingers clutch the gaping hole in your stomach, and then irresistibly reach to your mouth, where you have to make a conscious effort to avoid biting them.

"It isn't my fault," she moans as she knocks you down, placing her hand over your wound, staining her fingers with your blood. "Hungry. So hungry."

You close your eyes, and wonder if death is preferable to this. No one has come close to finding a cure for this; this is worse than vampirism, Malachite's virus that allows the human metabolism to work only if the victim ingests large quantities of human blood. Together, the starving feed, humans ravenously drinking blood beneath a noonday sun... In the doorway of a pharmacy something is grinning.

FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS

To track down VIPER and end their nightmarish scheme, there are several avenues that the PCs can follow:

- (1) **Perimeter of the Dream Effects:** By studying the dream effects, they can determine within a half kilometer radius (perhaps smaller, given an effective interviewing system and cooperation from the authorities) and they can watch the area. With successful Streetwise rolls, they may find some agents, concealing their VIPER insignia, travelling into Panorama's headquarters.
- (2) **On the night after VIPER's announcement,** common elements begin to form in many people's dreams; a small pharmacy, outside a busy street. Characters with Eidetic memory who make a Perception roll at -3 may see a street sign outside the pharmacy store, which will give them the location. A character with Deduction may determine that the presence of pharmacy stores in so many dreams is significance. (There are two possible explanations for the pharmaceutical images: friends in the Dreamzone don't like what Panorama is up to, and are trying to insert hints into Panorama's dreams, or Panorama's lack of imagination means that he is overly reliant on his real-world setting). They may search every pharmacy in the city until they find VIPER's set-up (a long process).
- (3) **If the PCs research gets nowhere,** then the city will pay VIPER the ransom demand seventy-hours after the demand is made. The demand will be picked up by Specialist Bauer, who will teleport away immediately, leaving the ransom at a spot where it will be picked up by Specialist Cleaver, who will (invisibly) take it into a VIPER van. The package will be checked for a homing device at this spot. If the heroes can track them to the van, they can capture them and learn the whereabouts of the Nightmare Machine. If the PCs do not surprise them, the VIPER agent will inform his Nest via his radio link, and extra help that was standing by (such as a VIPER villain team), will be immediately flown into the city (ETA fifteen minutes). If the PCs beat them to the pharmacy and defeat Panorama, they will perform a random act of terror to demonstrate that playing games with VIPER is a bad idea.
- (4) **If the PCs fail to track down VIPER,** the dreams and the ransom demands will continue. After several weeks of bleeding the city dry, Mind Wipe, a VIPER supervillain, will appear on the scene. In his typical muddled fashion, Mind Wipe will relay a message from the local VIPER Nest:
 "Panorama is a creepy dude; VIPER wanted to put people into touch with their innermost feelings and make them stronger, but all Panorama wants to do is give people bad vibes. VIPER kept telling him to stop. He's hanging out in a pharmacy, disguised as a pharmacist, or maybe not—I can't figure the dude out. VIPER wants them to stop; unfortunately the three psychic dudes—or was it five—have been taken over, like body-snatched." (Mind Wipe will escort them to the pharmacy, then take off).

Note: if the PCs need the *deux ex machina*, then they should suffer a penalty, reduced Experience Points, plus someone they respect or want to like them has a reduced opinion of them (i.e., newspaper editorials complain of the PCs' incompetence).

DRUGSTORE SUPERHEROES

In this section, the PCs have tracked down Panorama to his lair, and must deal with VIPER's Nightmarish scheme. The store is the Northside Pharmacy, which was abandoned for a month, and scheduled to be torn down before a VIPER dummy corporation purchased the land. It is 6 hexes by 6 hexes, with a cash register at the front desk, three aisles, and a back area where a pharmacist fills prescriptions. Two VIPER undercover agents work in the pharmacy; a young man who knows nothing about what is going on at the cash register (use a normal's stats). If supers make an appearance, the pharmacists will alert Panorama as to their presence by radio, and try to delay or misdirect the heroes; if the heroes don't accept their story, they'll attack.

The entrance to Panorama's lair is a small corridor that connects to the drug stores in the pharmacy and to a back entrance by a connected secret panel. The corridor is unguarded, and there is no surveillance equipment. People aren't supposed to find this place at all.

THE DWELLING PLACE OF NIGHTMARES

Panorama is dressed as a surgeon, standing at the Nightmare Device, smiling maniacally, and asking sarcastically if they need an operation done. Six Psionics Specialists are also present. If you believe that VIPER needs a bit more firepower, add one mercenary supervillain per four PCs (to a maximum of two). If the scenario did not proceed beyond VIPER's control (i.e., Mind Wipe didn't reveal the location), Mind Wipe will also be stationed here. The room has a lamp in the corner and a florescent lighting; if the PCs get clever and cut the power to the room before attacking, they will be in total darkness, but will also alert VIPER immediately. The apartment has the following features (with people being placed in the following positions if the heroes have surprise; if VIPER is warned, the agents will be hiding behind furniture waiting for an ambush).

- (1) Specialists Bauer, Cleaver, and Walker are having a game of hearts at a card table (DEF 3, BODY 3).
 - (2) A refrigerator (DEF 4 BODY 5) is being raided by Specialist Munson, the leader of the agent team. There is a microwave (DEF 4, BODY 2) next to the refrigerator.
 - (3) Television set (DEF 2, BODY 5). Specialists Hudd and Ignaberg are watching a rerun of a bad syndicated cop show.
 - (4) Device. The device is in the center of the room. The Nightmare Maker has 1 BODY, but a Defense of 25, and requires someone with skills in radio technology and brain chemistry working in tandem to shut it off, or it can be shut down by Panorama at will. Panorama is stationed here, staring at the hostages that are tied at the back of the room.
 - (5) The hostages. They have been tied, gagged, and blindfolded, and are sitting in a crumpled heap on the floor. They are guarded by three figments of their imagination that were summoned by Panorama, a pair of flying sizzors, an emaciated, mutilated surrealistic depiction of the victim of a Central American military regime, and a cloud of flies.
- If mercenary supervillains are present, then place them wherever is convenient.

...

There are two types of confrontations that may occur.

Non-Violent Confrontation: Panorama threatens to kill the hostages unless the PCs bring him a powerful mystical artifact, currently in a museum, or a wealthy person's private collection. If the PCs bring it, Panorama leaves, the Nightmare Machine vanishes, and bad things will happen in the Dreamzone that may haunt the PCs another day. The VIPER agents, may, however, put up at least token resistance.

Violent Confrontation: This is a typical superhero slugfest. In this scenario, Panorama is more interested in demonstrating his great powers than harming hostages. If the Machine is destroyed, Panorama laments that he doesn't want to go back, and then dissipates with a horrible scream. If the PCs lose, they will be transported into the Dreamzone, and must wander there, looking for a gateway home in the land of weirdness (if you don't have *Champions in 3D*, have a benign dream shadow lead them to a gateway, but they must pass a test (conquer their innermost fears, fight evil versions of themselves, answer a contest of riddles) to exit the Dreamzone).

CONTINUATION

In the end, the pharmacy has been purged of nightmares and evil. However, for people with *Champions in 3D*, you can continue this adventure in the Dreamzone from that book as follows:

Panorama's machine was not the source of the nightmares; unbeknownst to Panorama, the malignant entity known as the Bogeyman was manipulating every one of its moves, and used the machine to boost his own powers. The nightmares were a side effect. The Bogeyman's powers are now powerful enough to again challenge the Sandman, the guardian of the dimension. Increase the Bogeyman's power pool to 150 pts, and his STUN to 150, until he is defeated, at which case, it is reduced to normal.

Also, there is the possibility that the supervillain who gave Panorama the method to escape the Dreamzone and wreak havoc did so deliberately, and already has further abominations in mind. This villain would have to be both brilliant and extremely evil: in the Champions Universe, Malachite would be a good choice for this villain; if your conception of Dr. Destroyer is that he is a manipulator, Destroyer would also work in this role (we assume Malachite will be the villain below).

When the machine is destroyed and Panorama vanishes, an unconscious VIPER Psionic Specialist will snap to his feet like a marionette, and begin to make a pronouncement in a rich voice with an upper-class British accent. Those who have encountered Malachite before will recognize it as Malachite's voice. Malachite has tailor-engineered a special virus, one that will only work on psionics, that will cause them to recite a telepathically received sequence, even if they would otherwise be unconscious. Malachite will reveal any loose holes in his plot, and proclaim his first attempt to manipulate the Dreamzone to be a triumphant success, as every aspect of the operation fell into predicted parameters. He will congratulate the heroes on fulfilling the high expectations that he had of them; next time, of course, they will have to exceed his expectations if they are to be successful...



ADDITIONAL CHARACTERS

PANORAMA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
10	STR	0	OCV: 4	
10	DEX	0	DCV: 4	
10	CON	0	ECV: 4	
10	BODY	0	Phases: 6, 12	
10	INT	0		
10	EGO	0	Costs	
10	PRE	0		
10	COM	0	Char: 0	Base: 100
2	PD	0	+	+
2	ED	0	Powers: 679	Disads: 579
2	SPD	0	=	=
4	REC	0	Totals: 679	679
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		
Cost		Powers	END	
300	Power Pool (200 points), No Skill Roll, Cannot duplicate unimagined powers (-½), no choice of how powers change when change occurs (-½)			
94	15d6 Telepathy, Indirect, Trans-dimensional (any dimension, +1), cannot read surface thoughts (-½), act. 14- 7			
160	Invisibility vs. all sight, Hearing, Radio, Smell/Taste, and Mental Senses, No Fringe 0			
60	Shape Shift into any form, 0 END, Persistent 0			
5	Life Support: does not eat or sleep			
9	Acting 14-			
9	Disguise 14-			
9	Mimicry 14-			
13	KS: Dreams 18-			
20	Universal Translator			
100+		Disadvantages		
20	1½x STUN and BODY from magical attacks			
20	Psych Lim: No Imagination			
20	Psych Lim: Enjoys Horror			
15	Watched by Bogeyman (MoPow, NCI, 8-)			
15	Secret ID (Dr. Archimedes Panorama)			
489	Villain Bonus 679 Total Disadvantages			

Panorama has summoned the following "minions", creatures created from the imaginations of his captives.

KILLER FLIES

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats	
0	STR	-10	OCV: 5	
15	DEX	15	DCV: 5	
20	CON	30	ECV: 3	
10	BODY	0	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12	
8	INT	-2		
9	EGO	-2	Costs	
20	PRE	10		
0	COM	-5	Char:	57
6	PD	6		+
5	ED	0	Powers:	301
6	SPD	35		=
4	REC	0	Totals:	358
10	END	-20		
20	STUN	0		
			Base:	100
				+
			Disads:	258
				=

Background: The Demon Flies are the featured villains in two of Smith Robertson's most popular novels: "Garbage Dump", and "Swatter", in which an African demon comes to wreak havoc on Northern society by possessing a swarm of flies. "Garbage Dump" has already been made into a moderately successful movie. Characters who have a KS with Horror Novels or Horror Movies that make their roll will recognize them.

The Demon Flies are a collective, a swarm of about 3' in diameter. Their sting is supernaturally potent. As a swarm, they cannot be affected by normal attacks, but any area effect attack will affect them. In combat, they wander from victim to victim, until they find someone who is easily affected by their sting.

ANGUISH

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
10	STR	0	OCV: 8
23	DEX	39	DCV: 8
23	CON	26	ECV: 8
10	BODY	0	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
10	INT	0	
23	EGO	26	
20	PRE	10	
0	COM	-5	
8	PD	6	
5	ED	0	
6	SPD	35	
7	REC	0	
0	END	-23	
27	STUN	0	
Costs			
		Char: 114	Base: 100
		+	+
		Powers: 250	Disads: 264
		=	=
		Totals: 364	364
Cost	Powers	END	
80	Desolidification, not through solid objects, 0 END persistent (affected by any adjustment power)	0	
116	Multipower (200 pt. reserve, act. 12-)		
12u	5d6 Ego Attack, Affects Physical World, Damage Shield, 0 END	0	
12u	10d6 Mind Control, Affects Physical World, Damage Shield, 0 END	0	
30	Flight 10", 0 END	0	
100+	Disadvantages		
20	2x STUN from ego attacks		
25	Physical Lim: Affected by hope or joy based presence attack as if it does physical damage		
15	Psych Lim: Consumed by grief		
20	3d6 effect from touch of creator (Garth K.)		
25	Distinctive Feature (surreal horror, unconcealable, causes horror)		
159	Surreal Horror Bonus		

Background: Anguish is a symbolic representation of despair as seen from the eyes of a victim of military and corporate oppression in the Third World. Anguish lives to share its agony with others, which it does by claspingsomeone and letting its emotions run into a person; its mind control causes inaction due to grief, or berserker rage fueled by anger. Its multipower has an activation roll; if it fails, Anguish will be too overwhelmed by grief to attack. Anguish appears to be a surrealistic, suffering, androgynous figure.

SIZZORS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	OCV: 9
26	DEX	48	DCV: 9
0	CON	-20	ECV: 7
5	BODY	-10	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
10	INT	0	
20	EGO	20	
25	PRE	15	
4	COM	-3	
4	PD	0#	
0	ED	0#	
6	SPD	24	
0	REC	-8	
0	END	0	
15	STUN	0	
Costs			
		Char: 76	Base: 100
		+	+
		Powers: 294	Disads: 270
		=	=
		Totals: 370	370
Cost	Powers	END	
53	Shrinking, 4 levels, .125 meters long, -8 PER, -8 DCV, +12" KB, 0 END, Persistent, Always On	0	
36	2d6 HKA, 0 END (3d6 w/STR), does no KB	0	
15	1d6 Cumulative Major Transformation (aging), 0 END, only affects males (-½), linked to HKA	0	
10	0 END Cost on STR (0 END)		
60	Automaton: Takes Only Stun		
90	Armor (10 PD, 10 ED)		
30	Flight 10", 0 END		
100+	Disadvantages		
10	2x BODY from rust attacks		
25	Physical Lim: No Manipulatory Limbs		
15	Psych Lim: Loves to age people		
20	3d6 from creator's touch		
25	Distinctive Feature (surreal horror, unconcealable, causes horror)		
175	Surreal Horror Bonus		

Background: The Sizzors is a summoned representation of a pair of sizzors in a art film "Sizzors" by Daryl Gaines; these are a magical pair of sizzors which causes baldness and aging in anyone whose hair is cut by these sheers. The film is a subtle examination of the effect of sudden aging on a community of North Carolina teenagers; as summoned by Panorama, they are a lot less subtle, an automaton who will look for a man with an exposed head of hair and will attack them. The transformation will not affect those with the Unaging Life Support power.



SCENARIO TWO: ASCENSION

Ascension is suggested for *Champions* characters between 275 and 400 points, with an average attack of 50-65 points, and defenses of 20-30. You may need to adjust the power levels of the characters and vehicles in this scenario if you wish to be competitive with the player characters if the power levels are substantially different.

Ascension also deals with a major hostage situation and a hostage situation is one of the hardest things to fairly GM. If the players do not take the situation seriously and attack without regard to the innocent bystanders, they are really telling you that they don't respect your prerogative as a GM to back your situations with serious consequences.

For the player, few situations are as uncomfortable as a hostage situation. It's very frustrating to be in a situation where you have to sit back and wait for an opportunity to present itself, rather than attack. A hostage situation is NOT a straight combat run. If your players don't know how to handle it, have an "expert" in the campaign visit the characters some session prior to this scenario and discuss how to handle hostage situations (giving graphic examples of superhero teams who failed to take into account that villains don't always bluff). If you still don't think they can handle Ascension, don't run this scenario.

SYNOPSIS

The player characters get a lead on the presence of a super-powered assassin, who is in town to make a hit at the opening of a new celebrity restaurant, Burbank. Unbeknownst to all of them, a VIPER front company was involved in the construction of the restaurant, and VIPER plans to separate the restaurant from its support, lift it into the air, and threaten to drop it on the city unless they are paid a considerable ransom. The player characters will have the option of joining forces with the assassin in order to save hundreds of lives from one of VIPER's deadliest schemes.

INTRODUCTION: BURBANK

"Today, Burbank Inc. announced the opening of a new restaurant devoted to Hollywood memorabilia. Burbank is a collaboration of actor/body-builder Armand Sammarkand, action-comedy star Brock Wills, and World Wrestling Alliance champion Muscles Morgan, who are said to fronting the operation for real estate king Ralph Slackborn. Here's Mr. Sammarkand now... what will the world think of Burbank?"

"It will knock them out."

"Ha ha... anything else?"

"That's vat I call a power lunch."

"Ha ha... and?"

"You'll see me again soon."

"It's nice to see Mr. Sammarkand has not lost his ability to repeat his most famous one liners. Back to you, Ted."

"In other news, VIPER today raided TownBank in East Metroburg, netting over a million dollars. A spokesman for TownBank said that VIPER were deadbeats, and they would treat them just like any others..."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HEROES

- The Player Characters
- Friendly Authorities (GM Option)

NEUTRALS

- Sanction, assassin
- Alan Sammarkand, actor
- Brock Wills, actor
- Muscles Morgan, professional wrestler
- Ralph Slackborn, real estate king
- Jeff Gordian, industrialist
- dozens of helpless NPCs

VILLAINS

- Citadel
- VIPER Assault teams
- VIPER Mother Cobra Defenders
- The Grandfather (choice of Nest Leader, GM Option)

I: SANCTION

The adventure begins with someone (an NPC, the Authorities) bringing the presence of Sanction to the PCs. Sanction is an assassin (or a terrorist, depending on who you talk to); who specializes in murdering executives of industries that get away with crimes against the environment. Sanction has not done any operations in the last two years, but has reemerged, putting a computer virus in the records of a controversial construction company, the World Building Corporation. The police believe that Sanction intends to reappear at the opening of the new Burbank restaurant. The only industrialist that Sanction has ever failed to kill, Jeff Gordian, will appear in public for the first time in three years since Sanction tried to kill him, and the police think that Sanction will make Gordian his target.

If the PCs approach Gordian, Gordian says that he is tired of not being able to appear in public because of Sanction. He was planning on using his own security people to protect him, but will gladly accept help from supers. Burbank Inc. will give PCs with a good reputation access to Burbank before the restaurant opens in order to safeguard their patrons and prevent bad publicity during their opening.

If PCs are also doing patrols and engaging in Streetwise activities, they will learn that VIPER is lying low of late. Those with VIPER knowledge will know this usually represents "The Calm Before the Storm"; VIPER is planning something big.

If the PCs try to approach World Building Corporation, the Corporation will refuse to cooperate with them and ask them to leave immediately. If they surreptitiously check the records of World Building Corporation, they'll discover their records are a sham, their safety standards a joke, and an association with a company that has been accused of transporting VIPER munitions.

If the PCs investigate Burbank and examine the construction, they will find that explosives hooked to radio timers have been placed in key areas of the building. If they manage to remove these explosives without damaging the building (using telekinesis and/or force walls to hold the building while they disassemble areas and reconstruct them), then VIPER's gravity beam will not be able to lift the building, and the scenario will be substantially changed (VIPER will likely loot the valuables from the guests, then take prominent guests to the Mother Cobra zeppelin to hold for ransom). If the PCs don't use their powers to assist the removal efforts, the opening of Burbank will be delayed and VIPER will not conduct any operation (the adventure comes to an end).

II: BURBANK

Burbank can be divided into the following areas:

- (1) Delivery area. This is where trucks dock for teamsters to deliver goods and foodstuffs.
- (2) Storage area. (There are a lot of boxes and supplies, congested into improperly planned closets).
- (3) Food preparation area. (includes such thing as a giant freezer, various cleavers and other improvised weapons, and about five chefs, complete with assistants, dishwashers, etc.
- (4) Employees washroom (woman)
- (5) Employees washroom (man)
- (6) Fusebox and phoneline room. This room gives anyone access to all of the electrical systems in Burbank.
- (7) Security room. This is where three guards sit, watching monitors, seeing if anyone is causing trouble.
- (8) Public washroom (woman)
- (9) Public washroom (male)
- (10) Public telephones.
- (11) Memorabilia.
- (12) Main Entrance and cashier.
- (13) Main Dining Area (non-smokers).
- (14) Main Dining Area (smokers).
- (15) Souvenir shop.

Burbank is not a refined "fine food" restaurant; it is gaudy and reflects Hollywood at its most showy and shameless. The food is good, but experts would say it reflects a "plebian quality".

III: PLAN OF ATTACK

At 9:00, the Mother Cobra, displaying "BURBANK" in large letters on its side, will come over the restaurant and hover. People will believe it to be part of the opening spectacle.

At 9:56, two Mystery agents will enter Burbank through the front entrance, invisibly.

At 9:58, VIPER's covert team will go into action. They will trigger an electrical short on the internal security system and cause a distraction to gather as many of the security people together as possible, and then cover them.

At 10:00 Team II will enter the building, coming out of several vans that will pull in front of the main entrance. As soon as every member of the assault team enters, VIPER will detonate the supports that are built into the structure of Burbank, and activate the gravitic beam in the zeppelin. At this point, the teams will attempt to subdue everyone within the restaurant. The teams and their missions are as follows:

TEAM I: SHOCK-COVERT TEAM

Composition: Citadel

- 1 Air Force agent per hero
- 1 Covert Agent

Location: Main Ballroom

Tactics: Citadel does PRE attack (increased by the movement of the restaurant)

Air Force agents crash through skylight, take hostages

The Covert Agent takes a hostage while everyone else is distracted. The hostage should be kept out of sight, but brought forward if there is resistance, and/or superheroes.

TEAM II: MAIN ASSAULT TEAM

Composition: Brick

- Scattershot
- 2 Blaster Agents per Hero
- 1 Baiter Agent per Hero
- 1 Mauler Agent per Hero

Location: Main Entrance

Tactics: Get in as quickly as possible, take as many hostages as possible, spread out and cover as much of the restaurant as possible.

Agents must maintain visual as well as radio contact with each other. At least half of this group will try to reinforce the people in the ballroom as soon as possible.

TEAM III: COVERT TEAM

Composition: 2 Covert Agents

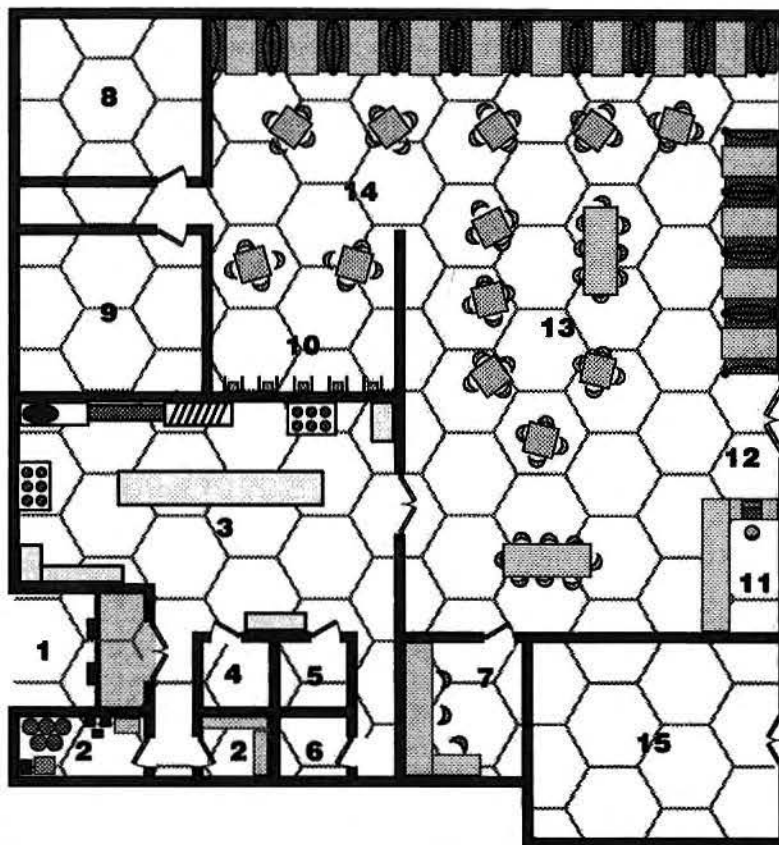
- 2 Mystery Agents

Location: Security Zones

Tactics: Neutralize internal security by any means necessary. Don't be fussy about lethal force.

**Burbank
(A Restaurant)**

1 hex = 2 m



If superheroes show up by surprise in the security arrangements, then VIPER will begin the operation *at once*. VIPER will detach the restaurant, and Citadel and the covert agent will step forward immediately. The Air Force agents will make an entrance one turn later; in this case, Citadel will do a PRE attack to subdue the crowd. If superheroes show up, he'll say:

"Look pal, VIPER's polaris beam is lifting this restaurant to new heights. Unless you want them to drop it on a populated area, you had better stay calm."

Citadel will play for time, getting into an insult match, trying to keep the heroes from acting before the Air Force agents arrive. They will play for time until VIPER's air squadrons can start circling the restaurant.

If superheroes do not put a monkey-wrench in the operation, use the tactics as listed for each group. Citadel will step to the front, remove his disguise, do a Presence attack, and give the following soliloquy:

"Never fear, Citadel's herel" he'll say, grinning, and then add: "Too bad it's not the old, stupid Citadel, the guy you jerked around. Listen up! You'll be asked to remove your valuables in a little while, but that's not why you're here. VIPER has decided to give us all a lift, and a tour of the city without leaving the comfort of this restaurant. You're really getting your money's worth tonight. Of course, if certain people do not pay VIPER's \$250 million ransom, we're going to go bungee jumping without the bungee. Try to relax."

At this point, a hostage situation begins. Every turn, Burbank will rise 50" (100 m.)/turn into the air until it reaches its safe cruising altitude of 200". The Mother Cobra will be directly above it, 250" in the air (50" above the restaurant). As soon as the restaurant reaches 200", then a squadron of one Quetzalcoatl and three Diamondback aircraft will leave the hanger aboard the zeppelin and begin to circle the restaurant.

During the hostage situation there will be several developments.

(1) Sanction. Jack Storm, aka Sanction, will have hidden during the assault. He doesn't like VIPER. He is willing to work with any superheroes to escape the situation, and will intercept any supers who come out into the open and attempt to parley. His plan is to cut power, grab an Air Force agent's flight pack, and escape. He is willing to participate in an assault on VIPER's zeppelin, provided that the heroes agree to let him go when the situation's over. He will gladly provide a distraction that will give the heroes an opening.

(2) Muscles Morgan, the Wrestling Champion. He's drunk, and he's not a pretty sight. About an hour after the situation begins, he'll challenge Citadel to a fight. If no one intervenes, Citadel will beat him to a bloody pulp, and then throw him out of the restaurant to a plummeting death (unless a superhero chooses to save him). Citadel always hated professional wrestling, which makes a laughing stock out of the genuine fighting arts.

(3) **Robbery.** Several hours into the stand-off, VIPER will ask people to give up their valuables. They will do an extensive search of everyone in the room.

(4) **Freefall.** VIPER has issued a \$100 million ransom demand. To show the governor that they're serious, they'll put the restaurant into freefall at one o'clock. If any PCs are outside the restaurant and urge the governor to try to pretend to cooperate with VIPER, VIPER will not drop the restaurant.

(5) **Troop transfer.** At 7 am, VIPER will try to exchange troops via helicopter between the zeppelin and the restaurant, trying to prevent fatigue and stress overload. Player characters will have a chance to sneak out of sight at this time.

(6) **Citadel.** While displaying machismo and arrogance, Citadel's rather uncertain about the morality of this operation, and is really running on the edge of a nervous breakdown (particularly after he's thrown out Muscles Morgan). It is possible to taunt him so he completely loses it, in which case his behavior will distract the other VIPER agents enough that someone can make a break or try to take control of the restaurant. When Citadel is unable to function, Scattershot will take control of VIPER forces.

VIPER is not going to drop the restaurant unless it's absolutely certain that the operation is going to fail (killing the goose that lays the golden egg isn't smart). Having control of the restaurant is nice, but if the restaurant gets to a critical altitude and VIPER has gotten people's attention, it isn't absolutely necessary. If the hostage situation lasts over a day, VIPER will remove most non-flying troops from the restaurant, in order to avoid wasting the lives of their agents. At this time, the PCs could take control without too much problem.

IV: MOTHER COBRA

In order to save Burbank, the players must make their way to the Mother Cobra. VIPER's flying command center has the following statistics:

Val	Char	Cost	
40	STR	0	
26	BODY	0	
50x25	SIZ	80	
15	DEF	39	
10	DEX	0	
2	SPD	0	
15x2	MOVE	30	
Cost	Powers		END
93	80 STR TK, 24" AE, 0 END, 60 Degree Arc		0
10	Clairsentience (sight/hearing, 125" range)		0
54	16d6 Drain vs. Flight (Anti-Grav Gun), 0 END, OAF turrets (x8)		0
57	10d6 AP EB, Double KB (Force Beam Gun), 0 END (x4)		0
25	Radar (Targeting, +10 to offset range penalties)		
5	High Range Radio Listen/Transmit		

The Mother Cobra has a dense steel mesh, surrounding a large anti-gravity apparatus (it does not use gas and is not flammable). The majority of space is taken up for storage of the aircraft that will encircle Burbank during the hostage crisis; it is really a flying aircraft carrier. The Mother Cobra has the following features.

(1) **Flight Suppressor.** Primarily mounted on the underside of the carriage; there are four side mounts which can target nearly all possible angles of attack. These suppressors increase the gravity attraction of an airborne target (the drain completely goes away when the target gets back to Earth). These turrets manned by VIPER agents (OCV 5, No Levels). Two turrets are on top of the zeppelin, mounted in the same locations as they are on the bottom.

(2) **Forcebeam Gun.** Mounted on the top and bottom of the zeppelin's carriage, these guns are also mounts that are set into the zeppelin, and manned by VIPER agents (OCV 5, No Levels).

(3) **Main Command Center.** This is where the VIPER is running this operation. The Grandfather is here, with his granddaughter, and two VIPER Five-Teams. There is a viewing port on the western side of the command center (DEF 7 Reinforced Glass, 8 BODY), and a large number of monitoring devices. The control of the weapon or the piloting system of the zeppelin is not located here; the equipment here is solely for monitoring or for communications. There is a door on the north side of the room and on the south side, which lead to Hanger Bay (6) or (7) respectively. The Grandfather is usually located near a communications terminal on the northwest side of the room.

The room is surrounded by communications equipment on the side of the room, and a large number of monitoring stations lined up side by side in the center of the room.

(4) **Beam Control Center.** This section of the Mother Cobra is the beam control center. This contains the apparatus that controls the anti-gravity generator that is currently holding Burbank afloat. It is manned by a technician and a VIPER Five-Team. The beam is in an extremely heavy casing (DEF 20 BODY 8); unless the heroes get into the machinery and sever it from its power source, smashing the surrounding machinery (DEF 8 BODY 6) will not neutralize it. Characters with electronics system will be able to figure out the controls for this beam with a successful Electronics roll at -2 (and a minimum of one minute to examine the system). A person with six levels of Shrinking can travel through the crack between the beam and its case and enter the Beam Control Center. The room is surrounded by machinery with the beam control in the center, and a door on the northeast corner of the north wall with a passage that connects to the main command center, and continues into Fighter Bay #1 (Area 6).

(5) **Piloting Control Center.** This section is manned by two technicians and a Five-Team. The piloting controls of the craft line the sides of the room, with three redundant systems to take the place of any that are destroyed. The piloting systems are quite fragile (6 DEF, 3 BODY). There is a door on the south side of this room that connects with Fighter Bay #2 (Area 7).

(6) **Fighter Bay #1.** Unless they are on patrol around the restaurant, one Quetzalcoatl and three Diamondbacks will be stationed here. There is one Blaster and one Mauler guard stationed here at all times, as well as two technicians.

(7) **Fighter Bay #2.** This is identical to Fighter Bay #1, except for the presence of a second Quetzalcoatl, which is to be the Grandfather's escape craft should the Mother Cobra be invaded.

In this section, the heroes invade the Mother Cobra, seeking to end VIPER's scheme. VIPER, on the other hand, wants to play out the drama to a profitable end.

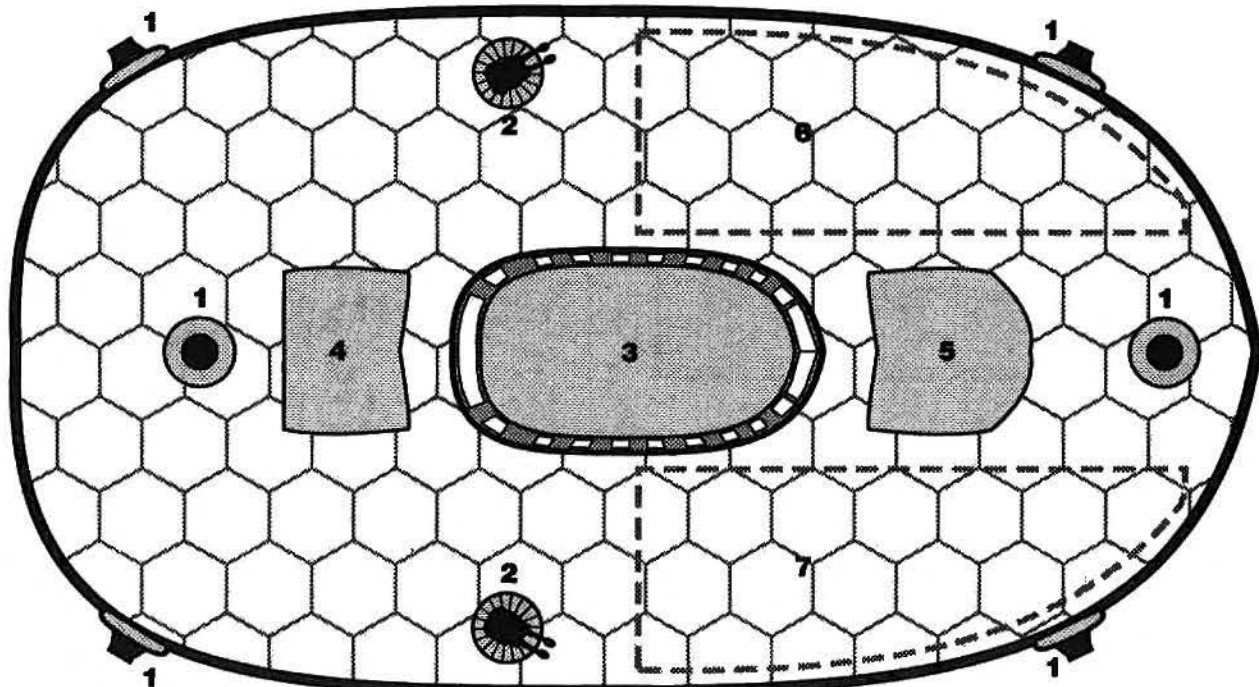
If the heroes attack the zeppelin, VIPER has two priorities.

The first priority is for the Grandfather to escape. If heroes are in the area, he will use the base's security system to see where the heroes will land. As soon as that's established, he'll head for a fighter bay that has an escape craft available. If none are available, he'll go to an empty fighter bay and signal for the nearest VIPER craft to land on the Mother Cobra and fetch him. If both are blocked, he'll have his troops rally around him and fight.

The second priority is to repel the attack. At no point will the technicians allow the restaurant to fall. While going through on their threat is satisfying, showing some restraint improves the chances that their demands will be honored in future blackmail missions.

The Mother Cobra (Undercarriage)

1 hex = 4 m



If the heroes secure control of the beam, they will find it difficult to find a proper landing spot for the craft until they've also taken control of the piloting center. Taking control of the command center is nice, but unless the Nest Leader is taken and forced to surrender and cooperate with the heroes, it is actually of little practical value in the assault. To land Burbank safely, they need to take control of both piloting and beam centers. To make things harder, you could force them to navigate the Mother Cobra through a skyscraper obstacle course once they've secured the piloting center (in this case, the pilots will have lowered the altitude of the Mother Cobra at the beginning of the assault).

The easiest way to save the hostages is to evacuate them by air once Burbank has been secured. VIPER's aircraft will attempt to stop any sort of airlift operation, and being attacked by Quetzalcoatl's while trying to secure hostages is not easy.

If the heroes mess up (destroy the beam and let Burbank fall) this will be a major catastrophe. Otherwise, they will be, well, heroes. If you were using the Grandfather as the Nest Leader and he was captured, the majority of VIPER's Nest Operations will be destroyed. The Falconer will return from Atlantic City and quickly rebuild VIPER in New York (or whatever your campaign city is). VIPER is beaten, but not easily crippled.

VIPER has a large number of training films. The most popular among Nest Leaders is "How VIPER Deals With Traitors", which depicts the slow torture and murder of several agents who turned against VIPER, and one family member of a reformed VIPER supervillain. UNTIL, PRIMUS, and many superheroes have seen this film (which was retrieved from captured Nests); it is considered one of the most gruesome pieces of footage ever filmed, and is regularly shown to UNTIL agents to motivate them against the enemy, and to test their stomachs.



APPENDIX

SANCTION

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
25	STR	15	OCV: 10
30	DEX	60	DCV: 10
33	CON	46	ECV: 7
20	BODY	20	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
23	INT	13	
20	EGO	20	
30	PRE	20	
20	COM	5	
25	PD	20	
25	ED	19	
6	SPD	20	
20	REC	16	
70	END	2	
58	STUN	8	
Cost	Powers	END	
150	Multipower (150 pt reserve)		
12u	12d6 EB, (physical) Autofire, 0 END, No Range	0	
12u	12d6 EB (physical) AE 18" line, 0 END, No Range	0	
9u	4d6 RKA, +2 Stun Multiple, 0 END, 0 Range	0	
12u	6d6 Entangle, Variable Advantage (up to +½), No Range	15	
12u	3d6+1 Major Cumulative Transform (into anything), 0 END, No Range	0	
30m	20" Stretching, 0 END	0	
6u	Desolidification, 0 END	0	
15m	Density Increase (+50 STR, weighs 50 tons, -10 KB, +10 PD, ED) 0 END	0	
4m	Gliding 25", not usable with Density Increase (-¼)		
15	EC—molecular control powers		
35-a	Regeneration, 5 BODY/turn		
15-b	LS: Total		
30-c	Shape Change (any) 0 END		
20	Power Defense (20 pts)		
10	Mental Defense (14 pts)		
15	+5" Running, 0 END (on extra running only)	1	
3	Acrobatics 15-		
3	Acting 15-		
3	Breakfall 15-		
3	Bureaucrats 15-		
3	Computer Programming 13-		
3	Concealment 13-		
3	Conversation 13-		
3	Criminology 13-		
3	Deduction 13-		
7	Disguise 13-		
6	KS: Philosophy 15-		
5	KS: American Drama 14-		
3	Lockpicking 15-		
7	Mimickry 13-		
3	Security Systems 13-		
3	Stealth 15-		
3	Streetwise 15-		
3	Survival (temperate wilderness) 11-		
9	+3 Levels w/MP		
9	+3 Levels w/HtH Combat		

100+ Disadvantages

20	2x STUN and BODY from radiation attacks
20	Psych Lim: Must Preach Personal Philosophy (very common, strong)
15	Psych Lim: Politically Correct, must only harm heterosexual male Non-Hispanic Caucasians (common, strong)
5	Psych Lim: Hatred of Heavy Industries (uncommon, moderate)
20	Reputation (extreme, killer, 14-)
10	Hunted by the Assassin's Guild, as Powerful, 8-
15	Hunted by Quasar, as Powerful, NCI, 8-
15	Hunted by PRIMUS, as Powerful, NCI, 8-
15	Secret ID (Jack Storm)
535	Villain Bonus

Background: Two men were in the room. One was sweating profusely, like blood gushing from a gaping wound; he realized that his life was going to be over soon. The other man was in control, and they both knew it. He was Sanction's target, and Sanction's targets always died.

"Who are you?" the soon-to-be dead man said.

"Someone who gets up in the morning, looks in the mirror, and asks himself how he can tolerate living on the same planet as oppressive, manipulative people like you. The answer is always the same—I can't. So I kill. Some call me an assassin. Others call me a terrorist. I really never gave a damn.

"I was originally a philosophy major. I have my Master's Degree in Philosophy from Berkeley. I was never poor, but I always had a conscience towards those who were unfortunate enough to live in poverty. Eventually, I came to understand that they were exploited, kept from reaching their potential because the people in power knew that empowering those who would support their political enemies and become economic rivals was not in their best interests."

"You talk a lot," the victim said.

Sanction smiled. "Why should that bother you? Every second that I chose to spend talking should foster the hope that some superhero will come crashing through that window, scoop you up like Cinderella, and fly you to safety. Unfortunately, that only happens in comic books.

"As for what I am, I once spent a lot of time in the wilderness. One day, I saw a meteor impact close to me. I chose to investigate. The meteor contained some sort of power source that mutated me when I chose to contact it. It gave me complete control over my molecular structure, and allowed me to alter the molecules of others on contact. Power doesn't always corrupt. Otherwise the poor would always be innocent, and the wealthy would always be evil. Both are often the case, but not always. When I wondered what I would do with my power, my thoughts turned to what made me angry. Industrialists and bankers and lawyers who abused their power, committed acts that would be crimes if the law truly considered all men to be created equal. So, I decided to sanction these killings myself. It was the only way I could look at myself in the mirror and like what I saw."

"You're insane," the victim stated.

"I know. A sane man wouldn't care about the people who died in that tenement fire of yours, the one which occurred because you bribed the building inspector to accept a sub-standard sprinkler system."

"You can't prove it!"

"I don't care. You're dead..."

Sanction's hand cradled the man's face. He screamed, but his scream was abruptly cut short. There was a crackling sound, and the man's flesh became translucent, then transparent. Soon, he was dead, a skeleton encased in a thin glass coating, glass that used to be his skin. Sanction looked at his handiwork, tried to remain dispassionate, and walked away.

Quote: "You're the ones who betray the people. You have the opportunity to remove the criminals from society, and all you do is point the most obvious ones at a revolving door."

Personality: Sanction is one of the most pompous and sanctimonious assassins in human history. He believes that he's right, and that everyone else is wrong. He is an obsessed avenger of politically incorrect crimes that are ignored by the justice system. Sanction comes across as preachy and annoying.

Lately, Sanction has begun to question his own actions, which is why he has not performed any assassinations in many months. It might be possible for a strongly worded argument to convert him.

Powers/Tactics: Sanction is the victim of cosmic ray transformation. The transformation has itself given Sanction the ability to transform the molecules of himself and others.

Sanction is not a good tactician; he prefers to strike where he will have the least opposition, use Desolidification to get to his target and turn his victims into glass (his Killing Attack with a +2 Stun Multiple); using a Transformation if this fails. He prefers to avoid typical superhero battles, fleeing the area if superhumans are around, unless innocents are endangered, at which point he'll fight to protect them.

Appearance: For Sanction, appearance has little meaning. He likes to portray himself as a handsome man, but frequently experiments with race and gender. He does not wear a superhero costume, but might concoct something if he were in the mood.

VIPER has three categories for Nests: Small (less than 50 operatives); Medium (between 51 and 200 operatives), and Large (over 200 operatives). VIPER Nest Leaders gather together annually to meet in person with VIPER executives, and to toast the future of the organization. Each year, a "Nest of the Year" is awarded in each category. ViperCon, as this gathering is commonly known, has never been infiltrated by superheroes. Some supers believe that ViperCon is a myth, designed to set up an over-anxious superhero group who wants to nab all of the major players in VIPER in one fell swoop.



SCENARIO 3 — VIPER'S NEST

Originally written by George MacDonald

VIPER's Nest is an introductory scenario, with a beginning or low-powered hero team attempting to stop VIPER from creating a new weapon of terror. This is the same scenario that has been a part of previous editions of *Champions*, revised for the fourth edition. The scenario is divided into six episodes.

"Memories" involves a race against time, as the heroes and VIPER attempt to find a retired "mystery man" of the 1930s in order to learn the location of a prototype that was stolen by the Nazi spies, leading to a battle in a cemetery. It introduces the hero to the menace of the Doomsday device, the McGuffin (or central plot element) of VIPER's Nest.

"Assault on the Tanghal Tower" is a VIPER attack against the hiding place of one of the places where the secret was hidden. VIPER will try to recover the plans for the Doomsday Device from the cornerstone of an old building; the heroes must stop them.

"Microfilm Madness" involves a four-way brawl between VIPER, the heroes, UNTIL, and the Crusher Gang to recover special UNTIL plans that were stolen by a VIPER Operative.

"I Love A Parade" is VIPER's retaliation against the heroes for stopping them, involving VIPER's plan to spoil a city parade and loot stores.

"Combat in Christopher Park" involves the hero's attempt to save a VIPER defector from assassination, a defector who has critical information on VIPER's Doomsday Machine and the location of the Nest.

"Doomsday" involves VIPER's threat to destroy the city, and a raid on the Nest to destroy the doomsday device and smash the Nest.

PART ONE: "MEMORIES"

MYSTERY MEN

1938. In a major American metropolis, in an almost deserted warehouse, a woman was screaming.

"So much for this Crimson Falcon," the Nazi spy sneered, pulling the woman with him, and tying her to a pipe. "Weak like all Americans, from your crippled President, to the inferior African mongrels who deserve to be slaves!"

Rosalyn Hawke struggled, to no avail. The spy pulled a large canvass covering, revealing an apparatus that teemed with levers and gauges, like something from a Buck Rogers serial. "Dr. Tesla's machine, with improvements from the brilliant scientists of the Fatherland," the spy announced. "We will test it here. When this city lies in ruins, we shall show Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Roosevelt the true meaning of peace in our times."

"You're mad!" the woman shouted.

The spy laughed maniacally.

A man in a red costume grabbed the Nazi on his shoulder. "Let me show you my version of peace in our times," he said, connecting with a right cross on the Nazi's chin.

The Nazi groaned. "I don't know how you escaped the crusher, Crimson Falcon, but let's see you escape six shots of lead."

The Nazi pulled a gun, but moved too close to the woman; one hand was tied to the pipe, but her legs were free. Using the skills she had demonstrated to the world in the "Colossal Dance Gangbuster of 1936", she kicked the gun out of his hand. The Crimson Falcon hit him with another right cross, knocking him into the controls. Sparks flew everywhere. The Nazi caught on fire, and fled, screaming, down a corridor.

"Rex, it's going to blow!"

"Rosalyn?" the masked hero said.

"Did you think a domino mask could keep me from realizing who you really were? You stupid lug, get me out of here!"

The Crimson Falcon grabbed the pipe, and, with a burst of strength that bordered on the superhuman, pulled it loose, and slipped Rosalyn from her bonds.

There was an explosion from the corridor, and the Nazi spy screamed.

Rex Stanton and Rosalyn Hawke fled from the building just as the laboratory burst into flames.

"Thank God it's over," Rosalyn said, and staring into her boyfriend's eyes, held him close and embraced passionately. Rex, being both the strong silent type and smart, responded with equal vigor...

Major Martinez turned off the film. "Although a bit colorful, it would appear that the author of this drama based it on an actual incident. It appears that in 1938, Nazi spies stole plans for a device that was created by the scientist Nikola Tesla, plans which had been sent to one of Tesla's American friends. It was a device with revolutionary capabilities. The Nazi spy was killed in an altercation with the mystery man known as the Crimson Falcon. We have received word that the local VIPER Nest is now searching for the design for this device. Tesla was a genius who was far ahead of his times. It is possible that this weapon, if found, could give VIPER the edge they need in their plans for world domination."

Agent Petrie put up his hand. "Major, if this is so important, shouldn't we try to get superheroes involved? If we can find any competent ones, that is..."

The briefing broke out into laughter. There was a slight smile on Juan Martinez's face, but the nod indicated that he thought it was a good idea...

VIPER BRIEFING

The following briefing is given to the VIPER agents at the start of this operation. This is meant to give the plot from VIPER's perspective:

"Shut up and listen. We've recently received a break in the Tesla affair. Rosalyn Hawke, the one-time girlfriend of the Crimson Falcon, died last week of lung cancer. Too many cigarettes. We expect, if he's still alive, that the Crimson Falcon will show his face at her funeral. We want every guy who looks like he's in their seventies and eighties at that funeral to be grabbed. When we find out who the Crimson Falcon was, we'll find out at last where the secrets were hidden."

"I hope you're listening, because if you aren't, I'm going to be very upset. We're going to need at least three undercover types at the funeral, and the rest of you guys ready to make the grab."

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

Official Heroes

UNTIL contacts the heroes to tell them of a new and dangerous VIPER threat, a plan for an extremely powerful weapon that was designed over sixty years ago by the mysterious genius, Nikolai Tesla. Tesla's design was stolen and last traced to a Nazi spy, Kurt Spielhag, who died in 1938. VIPER believes that a prototype was built and that it survived the fire. The only two people who were believed to be involved in the operation was Rosalyn Hawke, a dancer kidnapped by the spy, and the Crimson Falcon, a "mystery man" whose identity is still unknown.

If the PCs investigate, they will find that Hawke died very recently, and that her burial (there will be no funeral) will be held at a cemetery on the outskirts of the city. If the PCs go to the burial covertly, they can intercept the VIPER attack. If they go to burial in costume, VIPER will not attack, but their covert agents will follow the elderly male participants and then kidnap them when the PCs are not around.

Unofficial Heroes

UNTIL's been asking an awfully lot of questions about Rosalyn Hawke, a retired movie star of the 1930s, and you're wondering what's happening. There's also word that someone is watching her place in the last few days, and it ain't UNTIL.

If the PCs investigate, they will discover that Hawke died recently, and learn the time and date of her burial service. They will also rouse VIPER. VIPER will act in the same manner as they do in Official Heroes.

VIPER'S TACTICS

VIPER will have one covert operative per PC at the burial, and three regular agents per PC. The VIPER agents will drive onto the cemetery in two vans (ordinary vehicles), coming through the fence on the western side of the cemetery and callously driving over the graves, and then pour out of the vans and attempt to surround the guests. They will insist that any male who appears to be over the age of seventy come with them. There are four of them; one of them, retired police detective Lucas Brill, was the costumed adventurer, the Crimson Falcon during the 1930s. Heroes who pose as seventy year old males may be taken by VIPER back to a warehouse to be interrogated; there will about ten VIPER agents stationed there, one VIPER commander, and a computer with a modem that will transmit any data gathered to VIPER's local command.

LAKE FOREST CEMETERY

Lake Forest is one of the largest cemeteries in the city, with a nice view and a lot of land. It is 200" wide, by 100" long. At its northwest corner is a small chapel and a parking facility (20 hexes square), and a parking facility for up to 50 cars south of the chapel. The remainder of the land is graves. There is a mausoleum at the far northwest corner with elaborate sarcophagi for the Prentis family, which owned a lot of the city fifty years ago. There is a memorial for Ultrian, a superhero of the early 1980s who died of a terminal illness eight years ago, which is located on the south side. Rosalyn Hawke will be buried next to her brother, Richard, on the west side of the cemetery, twenty hexes from a road that lies on the western side of the cemetery.

Objects in

this scenario:		DEF	BODY	WT	
Metal Grave Marker		7	3	6.4 kg	
Old Gravestone		5	4	12.5 kg	
Elaborate Stone Marker		6	8-10	200-800 kg	

VIPER Vans	SIZ	WT	DCV	STR	
	3.2*1.6	3.2t	-3	35	
	BDY	DEF	DEX	SPD	MOVE
	15	3	10	2	24*4

OPTIONS

As the initial scenario in "VIPER's Nest", "Memories" is meant to be rather simple and uncomplicated. You can, of course, give Lucas Brill some minor superpowers, and have him attack VIPER with the heroes. For true comic book tragic-irony effect, the strain of using his powers may cause Brill to have a fatal heart attack at the end of the scenario; he gave his life to save the heroes.

Any scenario that takes place in a graveyard may have some unsettling connotations. Perhaps a PC destroyed a headstone that belonged to a dead wizard, in which case he ends up receiving a death curse of 5d6 Unluck. The PC will have to notice the strange occurrences of Unluck, figure out what happened, and then determine what will mystically rectify the situation.

AFTER THE ATTACK

If VIPER is captured and interrogated, they will find that the local Nest leader is communicating with agents and giving instructions via modem. Agents receive equipment at a warehouse, and train together out of costume in martial arts studios, paintball fields, and shooting galleries. The Nest leader is building a permanent command facility, but it is not finished. They received their briefing from a lieutenant, but no one knows the location of the local VIPER command. The lieutenant did refer to it as "the Tesla case", and will reveal (under a sufficient interrogation or telepathy roll) that VIPER was planning on capturing anyone who might be the Crimson Falcon and getting the information on where the Nazis' plant burned down. VIPER believes a prototype of Tesla's weapons may have survived the fire where the Crimson Falcon foiled the original Nazi spy's plans. They are certain that the Nazis hid plans for the prototype, but are not certain where they are. The only reference is the Nazi spy's diary, which says: "They are secure. I have made sure their security has a strong foundation."

If VIPER escaped, they will take the prisoners to a small warehouse on the outskirts of town and interrogate them. Once they have their information, they will drive the prisoners out into the wilderness, and strand them. If they check the building where the prototype was burnt, they will find nothing. The prototype burned down long ago. But the plans...

PART TWO: "ASSAULT ON THE TANGHAL TOWER"

PAY DIRT, DIRTY PAY DIRT

Sam Collins ran into the bar wearing a big smile. He put down his hat, and pulled out his wallet.

"On the house!" he announced.

The commotion was instantaneous and enthusiastic. Sam looked like he had just had his first child. Instant friendships were formed, and if the bonds weren't particularly eternal, at the moment, Sam didn't care.

"What happened, did you win the lottery?"

"Sort of."

"Wow. I've never met anyone who won the lottery."

"It wasn't that much."

Had Sam Collins been looking, he might have spotted the one unhappy person in the bar. The person in the corner, wearing a trench coat, scowling at the fool who was supposed to be inconspicuous. A fool that made the mistake of ignoring the man in the trench coat, and the green uniform that he wore underneath...

VIPER BRIEFING

"Alright, let's see if we can do better this time. It's a real simple target, and with luck we won't have any resistance when he sneak in and out. I don't want see anyone nodding off and not doing their job."

"You already know that Tesla guy built a secret weapon that's way ahead of anything we've got today. We know that the Nazi spy, Kurt Spielhag, ditched the plans when the FBI and the Crimson Falcon were getting wise to him. Well, now we've figured out what he did. He put them into a strongbox, and placed them in the foundation of a building. There were only three buildings that had their foundations laid near that building, and two of them were torn down without anything being found in their foundations. That leaves us with one target—the Tanghal Tower."

"There's good news and bad news about that place. The good news is that the building's being torn down, making it easier for us to find the strongbox. The bad news is if we don't strike quickly, the people tearing down that place will find the strongbox before we can get to it. So we're going there tonight. We've hired a few supervillains to watch our backs in case those damn superheroes show up again. Let's knock 'em dead—as literally as you can."

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

Official Heroes

UNTIL will contact the heroes and give them a clue; the quote from the Nazi spy about the hiding place of the plans. "They are secure. I have made sure their security has a strong foundation." A deduction roll will tell the PCs that the

plans were hidden in the strongbox of a building, and an investigation of the city records should determine the location of the only buildings in town whose foundations were laid during the time that Spielhag was active.

If the PCs figure this out quickly (particularly if they don't need die-rolls to interpret Spielhag's clue), and don't hesitate to go after the cornerstone, then they should beat VIPER to the strongbox. If they don't reveal publicly that they have the box, then VIPER will do its raid anyway, and the PCs can set up an ambush. If the PCs don't figure this out, then VIPER will have conducted their raid successfully and be ready to build Tesla's Doomsday weapon, or, if you really believe that the heroes should have a chance, let the heroes encounter the raid while on a routine patrol (coincidence is a staple of comic books, after all).

Unofficial Heroes

Costumed vigilantes may be at a disadvantage at this one. Word on the street is that VIPER checked out the remnants of two old buildings which were torn down several years ago. If the PCs check the records of these buildings, they will find that these buildings were completed within two weeks of each other. If they ask, the only other major building completed during this time period was the Tanghal Tower, which is now being torn down. Again, if they ask, this was during the period that the Nazi spy Kurt Spielhag was active in the city. VIPER is clearly not giving up on Spielhag's activities. If the PCs check it out, they'll run into VIPER. If they really need help, have one of the security guards that normally guards the Tanghal tower come into a place that one of the PCs frequents and wave money around; if the PC investigates, they'll discover that someone has bribed that guard, and others, not to be too careful about guarding part of the tower.

VIPER'S TACTICS

This time, VIPER will be sending two Blaster agents and one Mauler agents per hero, and one agent in an XO-1 Exoskeleton. In addition, two villains will be present during the operation, Brick and Shadowfist. Two of the agents will also each be armed with one extra item that is not standard gear, a 3d6 AP RKA (No Range) Laser Torch with eight charges. The other agents will be armed with typical VIPER weapons.

VIPER's plan is simple. Bribe the security guards into looking the other way. Climb over the fence, sneak into the site, and stay out of sight to find positions that will cover the attempted grab, while the Maulers use the torches to remove the cornerstone. At this point, Shadowfist will then grab the strongbox, and teleport with it to a location that only he has been informed about, where the Nest Leaders operatives will rendezvous with him and pick it up.

When the heroes show up, Brick and the other agents will perform a delaying action, trying to keep the heroes occupied so they don't spot the Maulers and Shadowfist, or they can't go after them if they're noticed. If unsuccessful, Brick will try to gather some agents and flee, hoping to lure the heroes into a Heavy Hostage Zone. If the heroes are drawn away from the Tower, VIPER will try to complete the operation, or flee, if it's obvious they won't succeed.

If the PCs are there before VIPER shows and makes their presence known, VIPER will bypass the operation. Instead, a covert operative, disguised as an UNTIL representative, will show up in the morning and take control of the strongbox "in the name of UNTIL". If the PCs try to assist him, he will

attempt to lead them into an ambush, at a point of VIPER's choosing, with forces equal to the ones listed above.

TANGHAL TOWER

The tower is in a state of partial destruction. Most of the top stories have been razed to expose the inner floors. The exterior walls and floors of the Tower are concrete; the interior walls are heavy wood (pieces of interior walls are shown). The dotted lines on the map show walls of lower floors. The interior walls exist on both floors, but not the roof. The stairs each run up one level; it costs +1" of running to climb the 2 hex stair. Each floor is 3" tall.

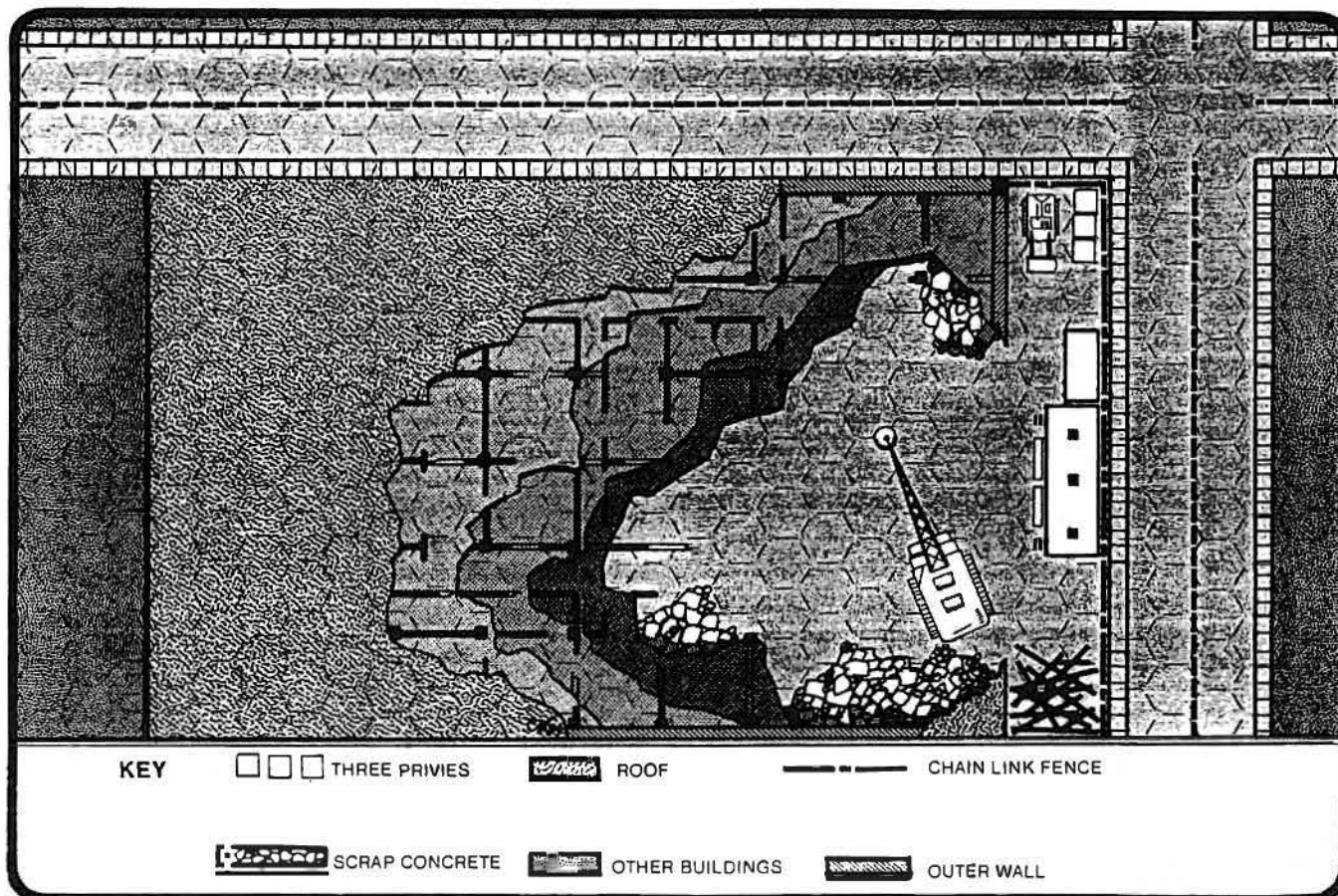
The corner of the lot is shown with a heavy portion of the street and a strip of sidewalk. A 1" tall heavy wood fence separates the sidewalk from the construction yard. There is a gate in one part of the fence where trucks and heavy equipment can be brought into the yard. The gate is locked with a steel chain.

Inside the fence there are several piles of debris that haven't been cleared out yet. One pile holds concrete and the other pile holds large bent steel I-beams. Any character who is knocked back into either pile takes an additional +2d6 damage.

Also parked within the complex are two pieces of heavy equipment, a bulldozer and a crane. Both pieces of heavy equipment can be started with their keys (which are in trailer on the wall), or by hero who spends three phases and makes a Mechanics roll.

The destruction of the tower is being run from a trailer. The trailer is 2" tall and is mounted ½" off the ground. Stairs lead up ½" to a door. The walls of the trailer are sheet metal. The interior of the trailer is filled with light wood furniture; the furniture includes a table, several chairs, a desk, and a blueprint cabinet. A peg board on each wall contains the keys for the front-gate, the bulldozer, and the porta-potties. The light wood porta-potties are next to the trailer.

Objects in this scenario:		DEF	BODY	Weight
Concrete Chunks		6	4	12.5 kg
I-Beams		7	6	50 kg
Trailer		4	11	1.6 t
Porta-potties		3	8	200 kg
Bulldozer	SIZ	WT	DCV	STR
	4*2	6.4t	-4	40
	BDY	DEF	DEX	SPD
	16	6	8	2
MOVE 9*2				
Crane	SIZ	WT	DCV	STR
	5*2.5	12.5t	-4	45
	BDY	DEF	DEX	SPD
	17	5	8	1
MOVE 8*1				



OPTIONS

This is also a straightforward scenario. Perhaps the PCs will find a more ancient secret in the foundation, a buried Nazi Storm-robot that becomes activated to attack everyone in the fight, or a long-lasting and extremely deadly toxic gas that affects everyone in a 2" radius when the strongbox is opened, in which case the PCs will have to quickly find a cure.

AFTER THE ATTACK

If VIPER is captured, deal with it as in "Memories". VIPER will be hard to trace until their Nest is fully complete. The only person that has a connection with VIPER's high command is Shadowfist; if the PCs successfully interrogate him or use telepathy, they will learn the rendezvous point where Shadowfist was supposed to drop off the strongbox (a bus locker). One of the lieutenants to the Nest Leader is supposed to pick up the box and deliver it to the Nest Leader. Particularly capable superheroes might be able to capture the Nest Leader here and cut short the adventure. If this happens, a new VIPER's Nest will emerge some months afterwards, and you can run the rest of VIPER's Nest later in the campaign.

If VIPER succeeds, they will begin building the Doomsday Weapon. This will be especially important in the "Doomsday" scenario, as they will be a much greater threat if the Tesla Device is constructed.

PART THREE: "MICROFILM MADNESS"

ONE DARK NIGHT

Harry slept slumped against a cold alley wall, a paper bag in his hand. Through a sleepy haze he heard the slap of pounding combat boots—two soldiers marching rhythmically in front of the building across the street.

The wino sat up and cradled his bag. The soldier, in orange uniforms and brown body armor, ignored him and gazed down separate streets. They kept their rifles ready, evidently guarding the book depository at the corner of the T-intersection. Harry thought of the warm depository and fumbled for the bottle in his paper bag.

Harry raised the paper bag to his lips and stopped, staring wide-eyed as two ominous vans rolled soundlessly around a corner, headlights off. The soldiers on the corner, unaware of the vans, continued their rhythmic marching. The vans stopped and two men in green emerged, carrying huge bazooka-like weapons on their shoulders. Silently, the men crouched and aimed at the troops on the corner. Harry lowered his bottle, cringing as twin explosions blew the orange soldiers into the side of the building.

The wino came shakily to his knees as the street exploded in color. Green troops scrambled out of the vans, and orange troops rushed down the street towards them. Within moments, costumed figures lit the sky with golden energy blasts. Harry flopped to the ground and quivered behind a garbage can as a stray blast burst above him. He was in the middle of a nightmare—and he hadn't touched a drop from his bottle of Thunderbird.

SYNOPSIS

Microfilm Madness is a four-way brawl between UNTIL, VIPER, the heroes, and the Crusher Gang (a group of VIPER-hating supervillains). Unlike the other adventures in this scenario, this is strictly meant to be a fight, with few investigative skills needed. Although the prize is meant to be taken seriously, this should be an enjoyable interlude in the campaign against VIPER.

The members of the Crusher Gang are taken from *Champions*, Fourth Edition, to make certain that the GM has their write-ups. You may substitute your own villains for them, or add villains from *Classic Enemies* or *Champions Universe* to supplement them. Oculon and Power Crusher are both found in *Classic Enemies*; they will not directly participate in the adventure and it is not necessary to have *Classic Enemies* to play in this scenario.

VIPER BRIEFING

"We're in a hurry, so stop talking and listen up. I know some of you guys have never worked together, but you're about to become close friends, real fast. We haven't had enough time to plan a full assault for this mission, so stay alert!"

"One of our undercover agents managed to steal a roll of microfilm that contained the plans to the security systems of nearly every major UNTIL base. He knew that investigators were on his tail, and that he could be captured at any moment. He decided to drop the microfilm at one of the safe points that we have around the city, a local branch library. Later, he was killed in a shootout with the police. UNTIL investigators are scouring the city in search of the missing film.

"When our other agents went to the various safe points looking for the microfilm, they found nothing. Microfilm at the local branch library had been rotated into the Perez Memorial Book Depository.

"We were going to sneak into the depository and look for the film tomorrow. Unfortunately, UNTIL has surrounded the place. They're in the process of obtaining legal papers to open the depository tonight. So, we've put you guys together as a scratch force. You're going to attack the building, tonight, and secure the film before UNTIL gets inside. For this operation we have Brick, Hammerhead, and Blindside to help us."

UNTIL BRIEFING

"All right, I know this was a rush, but this is a very important mission. The plans to the security systems of a number of our major bases have been stolen. If the microfilm with those plans get into the possession of VIPER, the entire structure of UNTIL will be compromised.

"We've tracked down the microfilm to a VIPER message drop. Unfortunately, the drop, a book depository, is locked up, and we can't legally get in. We've been sent to guard the building while our lawyers get permission to open the depository.

"Two of our Defender agents are already standing duty around the building. We don't know if there's going to be any trouble before we can get at the film, but High Command isn't taking any chances. VIPER will stop at nothing to get their hands on that film. All of us will guard the building until city representatives come to open the building.

"When we get there, we'll check with the agents on duty and get their reports. Then you'll break into buddy teams and

fan out around the block. Try to be polite to any bystanders, but do not allow for any compromises of security. If that film gets into VIPER's hands, all of our lives, and the lives of our friends and family, will be in danger."

CRUSHER GANG BRIEFING

"Be quiet, Oculon, or you'll never see again!"

The room immediately quieted, then there were disapproving murmurs when it became clear that Power Crusher wasn't about to carry out his threat.

"I'm glad that you could make it tonight. We just got word on the street of the biggest prizes in our group's history, if we move fast. A small spool of film in a library holds plans to a bunch of UNTIL bases. With those plans in our possession, we can get in and out of any UNTIL base we want—getting access to their computers, their files, their equipment..."

"I want in on this!" Pulsar announced.

"You're leading our team." Power Crusher said. "It'll be you, Powerhouse, Shrinker, Howler, and Icicle."

"What about me?" Oculon exclaimed. "I never get the choice assignments!"

"Shuddup Oculon!" Power Crusher replied. "I'm willing to bet that this is going to attract UNTIL, VIPER, and local heroes like flies. So, while everything's going on at this library, the rest of the city's unguarded! The rest of us are going to pick this city clean like Valley girls at a mall with a fist full of credit cards! That make you, happy, Oculon?"

"I wanna beat up VIPER and UNTIL..." Oculon whined. Everyone ignored him, which only made his complaints louder.

"Now, our sources said that the UNTIL codes are on a piece of microfilm in a container called "Secrets of Mongolian Stir-Fry" by C. Lee. All we have to do is break into the library, find the film in its container, and get away. And if VIPER, UNTIL, or the local pajama boys get involved, we'll crush them! Tonight people, the Crusher Gang makes its mark on the world in a real big way!"

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

Official Heroes

A sponsored and reputable superhero team would get an emergency call from UNTIL requesting immediate assistance at the Perez Memorial Book Depository. They may receive a quick briefing or (for maximum confusion effect) they may have no idea what's going on; VIPER's already on the attack, and all they know is that they have to stop them (without any idea of their target unless one of them stops to talk with an UNTIL agent for one full phase, and then spends a full phase explaining it to the rest of the team).

There are also other ways for the long hand of coincidence to get a player character into the scenario. Transient superheroes might work at the library as a janitor. Scholarly superheroes might have received special permission to work at the library at night.

Unofficial Heroes

Word on the street is that the Crusher Gang of supervillains is in town, and they've intercepted a VIPER package that has them looking around libraries for "The Secret of Mongolian Stir-Fry". Also, in what is probably no coincidence, UNTIL has set up guards at the Perez Memorial Book Depository.

VIPER'S TACTICS

VIPER will send a base force of two Blaster agents, two Maulers, an Air Force, and a Covert Action agent, and a Mystery Agent. They will have three more agents for every hero involved in the scenario, (one Mauler, one Blaster, and one Air Cavalry), in addition to Brick, Hammerhead, and Blindside (see the note at the end of this section for Blindside's stats). It should be noted that Brick and Powerhouse hate each other's guts (Brick views Powerhouse as a show-off pretender who has stolen his press, while Powerhouse sees Brick as a "loser") and will attack each other in preference to any other targets. VIPER also has reinforcements coming: at the end of every post-segment 12, on a roll of 1-2, add another squad of a Mauler, Blaster, and Air Cavalry agent to the fray.

VIPER plans to blast through the garage, spread out, search for the microfilm depository. The Mystery agent will remain outside, in hiding, and activate invisibility only when VIPER has confirmed that they have successfully penetrated the building. Once VIPER finds the depository, it will take them 2d6 phases of searching to find the cannister "The Secret of Mongolian Stir-Fry" which contains the microfilm.

When VIPER gets the film, then they prepare a standard evacuation. The Mystery agent takes the film (or Blindside if he is still conscious), and runs back to a drop point, where the film will be retrieved (very quickly), by one of the Nest Leader's operatives. If necessary, Harry the wino will be used as a hostage.

Because of the haste with which they were thrown together, neither UNTIL nor VIPER may have teamwork rolls in this scenario.

UNTIL'S TACTICS

UNTIL has mustered a force of two Defender agents to guard the building, plus three additional Defenders per hero in this scenario. (For smoother playing of this scenario, have the players each run one group of three agents). UNTIL's reinforcements will arrive at the building one turn after the VIPER agents. Each segment twelve, the GM should roll 1d6. If the roll is a one or a two, another squad of three Defenders arrive to protect the building.

Once the building has been penetrated, they will bypass any agents that are outside and head directly into the building. Once inside, they will try to keep VIPER agents, or anyone else, from leaving the building. UNTIL does not know which file contains the microfilm or where it is located. If there is a superhero that is unknown to UNTIL, or a superhero with a bad reputation, they will be treated as another supervillain by the boys in orange.

THE CRUSHER GANG'S TACTICS

The Gang will arrive at the library two turns after VIPER arrives, and one turn after UNTIL. They will try to wait until everyone is engaged in combat, then sneak around the building and be unnoticed for as long as possible. They will search for the Microfilm Depository. Once they find the depository, it will take them 2d6 phases of searching to find the cannister "The Secret of Mongolian Stir-Fry" which contains the microfilm. If they were detected and have the microfilm, Shrinker will attempt to carry it back to the trailer park that the Crusher Gang is using as their base.

TIMELINE

Since this adventure is complicated, here is a timeline for this scenario. The hero's arrival is the GM's Option. Heroes who showed hesitation in answering UNTIL's call for help or who failed to investigate the situation should arrive 1-3 turns after the start of the adventure; those who answered the call or did a good investigation may show up at the beginning.

Beginning of engagement

Two UNTIL Defenders at corner near main door, on guard duty.

Turn One

VIPER enters from south-central side of the map. They will attempt to take out the guards and enter the building from the northeast side (the garage).

Turn Two

UNTIL enters from the east-central side of the map. If there is no sign of villainous activity, they will approach slowly. If there's a fight, they will burst in at full speed. Possible VIPER reinforcements on a 1-2 on a d6 on Post Segment 12, arriving on segment 4 of the next turn.

Turn Three

The Crusher Gang arrives. They will attempt to sneak into the building at a place where no combat is occurring. They will blow their way in if spotted.

Possible VIPER reinforcements on a 1-2 on a d6 on Post Segment 12, arriving on segment 4 of the next turn.

Possible UNTIL reinforcements on a 1-2 on a d6 on Post Segment 12, arriving on segment 4 of the next turn.

Turns Four+

Possible three agents of VIPER reinforcements on a 1-2 on a d6 on Post Segment 12, arriving on segment 4 of the next turn.

Possible three agents of UNTIL reinforcements on a 1-2 on a d6 on Post Segment 12, arriving on segment 4 of the next turn.

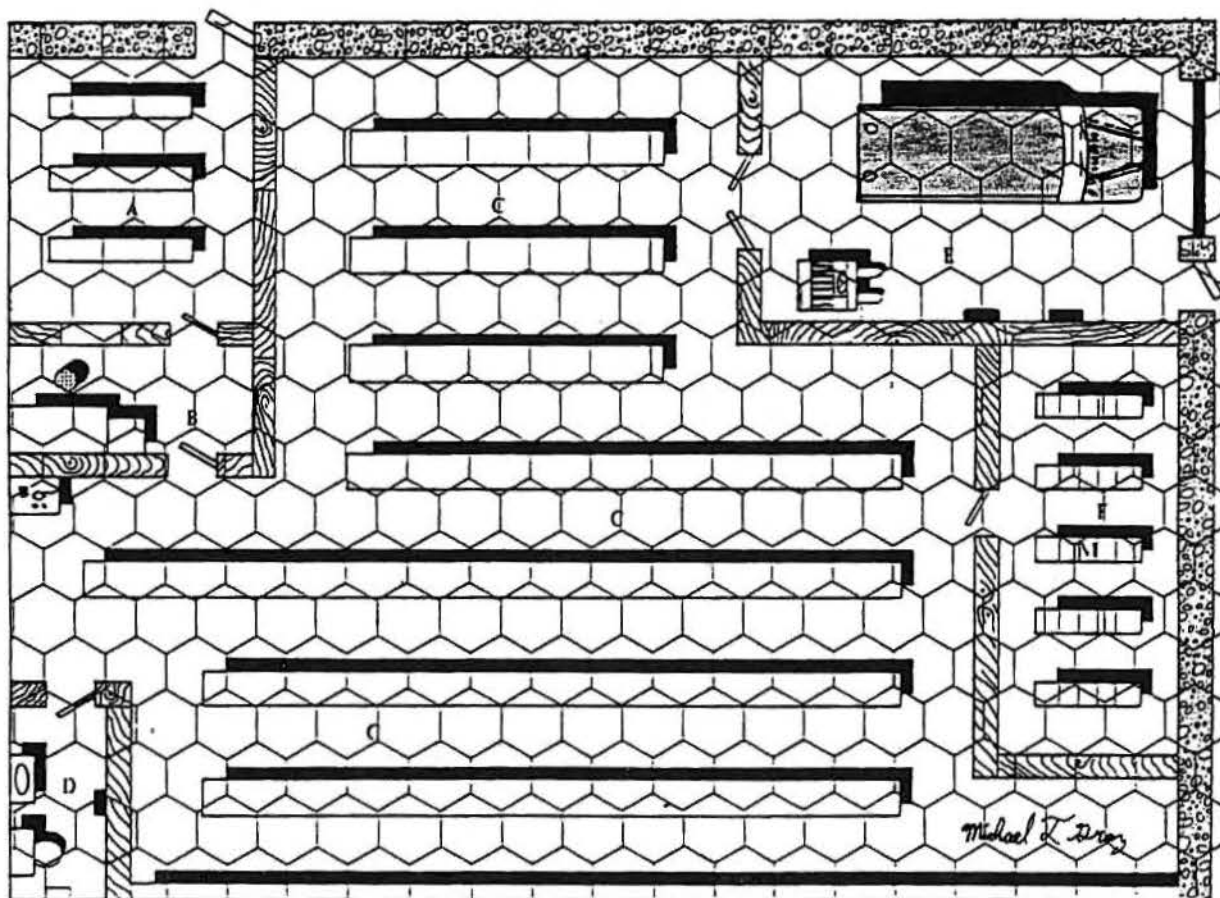
THE BOOK DEPOSITORY

The Perez Memorial Book Depository is built of reinforced concrete walls (DEF 8, BODY 5). It has interior heavy wood walls and doors (DEF 4, BODY 3). The part of the building currently in use contains six rooms.

(A) The Card Catalog Room. This contains two doors, one from the street, and one from the Librarian's Office. The room is filled with three giant (100 kg) wooden card catalogs (DEF 4, BODY 7), and a pair of old (12.5 kg.) computers (DEF 2, BODY 2). As the building is closed, the room will be dark and the doors are closed and locked.

(B) The Librarian's Office. This is a small office between the Card Catalog Room and the book stacks. It contains two 200 kg. metal desks (DEF 5 BODY 8) and two 6.4 kg. wooden chairs (DEF 3 BODY 3). Four large (50 kg) metal filing cabinets (DEF 5, BODY 6) cover one wall. A teller's window leads from this office to the Card Catalog room. This room contains reports, records, and files on the latest books and microfilm that have come into the depository.

(C) The Bookstacks. These comprise the largest area of the building. The book stacks can be entered from a door in the Librarian's Office, a set of double doors from the garage, and a door into the microfilm library. Nine rows of



ceiling high bookshelves fill the stacks. They weigh 800 pounds per shelf. The stacks cannot be sighted until through until all of the books have been pushed (or blown) out of the way. Any ranged attack will clear a line of sight through one hex of books for every 2 hexes done. The aisles between the shelves are extra-wide so the miniature fork-lift in the garage can drive between the shelves.

(D) The bathroom. This necessary part of any public building sits in the lower left corner of the map. The bathroom contains a (25 kg) toilet (DEF 3 BODY 4) and a (12.5 kg) washbasin (DEF 3 BODY 3). The bathroom door and walls are thin plywood (DEF 3, BODY 3).

(E) The Garage. This is a dusty room with a concrete floor and a two storey (6") ceiling. The locks on the doors are very old and worn (+2 to Lockpicking rolls). A set of double doors lead into the stacks. A large (1.6t) delivery truck fills most of the garage. An 800 kg forklift sits next to it. The keys for the forklift have been left in the ignition. Fourteen 50 kg boxes of books (DEF 4, BODY 2) cover the upper wall. Two 12.5 kg hand carts (DEF 4, BODY 2) lean up against the lower wall.

(F) Microfilm Depository. This room is the target of the entire mission. Inside the room are 28 (200 kg) steel filing cabinets (DEF 5, BODY 8), each have fourteen drawers. "The Secrets of Mongolian Stir-Fry" are in the fifth drawer of the cabinet marked "M". If that cabinet is hit by an attack that exceeds its defense of five, but does not do enough body to destroy the cabinet, the microfilm will be destroyed on a roll 10 minus the remaining body on 2d6.

Objects in this scenario:

	DEF	BODY	Weight
Book Shelf	4	10	800 kg/hex
Card Catalogs	4	7	100 kg
Chairs	3	3	6.4 kg
Computers	2	2	12.5 kg
Desks	5	8	200 kg
Filing Cabinets	5	6	50 kg
Toilet	3	5	25 kg
Wash Basin	3	4	12.5 kg
Steel Cabinets	5	8	200 kg
Delivery Truck	SIZ 3.2*1.6	WT 3.2t	DCV -3
	BDY 15	DEF 3	DEX 10
			SPD 2
			MOVE 18*4
Forklift	SIZ 1.6*0.8	WT 400 kg	DCV -1
	BDY 12	DEF 3	DEX 10
			SPD 2
			MOVE 6*2

OPTIONS

This is a fairly complicated scenario. For further complications (if desired), use members of the Crusher Gang from *Classic Enemies* to steal valuable merchandise from other stores as this is happening). If VIPER is underpowered, add three members of VIPER's elite Air Cavalry agents to the attack.

For truly sadistic GMs, have a larcenous member of the library staff with a fetish for Mongolian Stir-Fry "borrow" the microfilm from work and take it home. The people involved will learn that the microfilm is missing, and will have to regroup.

AFTER THE ATTACK

In terms of tracking VIPER, the same conditions apply as in "Assault on the Tanghal Tower". Smart PCs with telepathy and interrogation skills might be strong enough or smart enough to bring down the Nest. If that is the case, a new Nest will appear months after this scenario, and try to eliminate the people who destroyed the previous Nest in the "Revenge is Mine" scenario.

If the PCs have been having an ongoing feud with VIPER, then by this point, the press will have caught on to it and will be playing it up for all its worth. "HEROES vs. VIPER—Fight to the Death in Our City" will be among the headlines that will be printed about the PC's battles with VIPER; publicity that VIPER doesn't like, and which will force them to desperate action...

BLINDSIDE

Blindside is a VIPER Commander in a prototype Fang Speed suit (a 200 pt. supervillain). His critical stats are DEX 20, PD 22, ED 14, SPD 4, STUN 29, DEF 5 on the suit, +2 Levels w/Running, 20" Running (x8 NCM), a 4d6 RKA (60 Degree Arc), with Find Weakness 11-, and a Karate Package. He has Psych Limitations: Thrillseeker (common, strong), and Overconfident (common, strong). Because this is a Prototype suit, roll at the end of each turn for the +8 DEX and +2 SPD. On a roll of 12- on 3d6, Blindside will have the extra power. If the PCs capture the Fang intact, scientists who examine the suit will tell them that this is a new design based on a type of technology that is potentially quite versatile and could be mass produced cheaply.

PART FOUR: "I LOVE A PARADE"

TALKING WITH THE BOSS

"You know this is not acceptable." the faceless shadow on the screen said. The Nest Leader wished that the Supreme Serpent didn't do such a good job of cultivating an aura of mystery around himself—it made him very nervous. "I cannot tell you how tiresome I find these costumed clowns, interfering in our plans. You will make an example of them."

"Master..." the Nest Leader said. The Supreme Serpent seemed to prefer that form of address. "I do not have the resources. With our recent failure, I cannot afford to hire supervillains."

"I will finance this operation, from our Special Operations fund. You may spend up to a million dollars, and you shall have the services of my Snake Pack. I am rarely this generous. I hope that, for your sake, you are prepared to take advantage of this, I shall expect to be reimbursed, one way or another. Now, I wish to hear your plan."

"I don't have a plan." the Nest Leader said.

"In fifteen seconds, you will have a plan, and you will tell it to me. I am waiting..." the Supreme Serpent said.

It is said that invention is a combination of a little inspiration and a lot of perspiration. In this case, the Supreme Serpent decided that motivation would be the major factor...

VIPER BRIEFING

"Has everyone got their costumes?"

"We look ridiculous," one of the agents complained.

"Stop whining Allison..." one of his comrades complained. The Nest Leader gave him a dirty look. The agent quickly placed the costume over his head.

"When the Quetzalcoatl starts to strafe the floats, you'll receive a signal to attack. The Snake Pack will burst out of the float, and you'll get out of your costumes. Plain clothes agents in the crowd will assist you, as will our agents disguised as the UNTIL marching band. Our second goal is the Mannerley Jewelry store, and the Mannerley Emerald. Our third goal is to destroy the exhibit of original superhero paintings in Bandara's Gallery next door to Mannerley's. Our prime goal is to hurt or kill anyone in the area with a cape who doesn't work for VIPER, or any UNTIL people.

"This is probably the highest risk operation we've ever done. The potential profits are not that great. Police will be there for sure, and we can expect to encounter superheroes at some point in the operation. We want them to show up. The reason we're doing this is to protect our reputation.

People have been laughing at us for too long. They gotta know that VIPER means business, and the only way they're going to know this is if this is public. Busting superheroes is the best way to do this.

"You see a lot of new boys around you. They are from out of town, on loan from the top East Coast Nests. They have experience in this kind of operation. If I see any fights, any persons involved will be immediately executed. I expect you boys to be real good friends.

"We've set up a lot of traps. Stay away from street lights, from fire hydrants, and from manholes in the Main and Adam area. You can expect some gas and explosions. Don't attack security until the operation begins; some of them are our undercover boys. Any questions? Good. Now remember your hostage taking drills, and good luck. We will be abandoning this warehouse after this operation, so we will contact you on our next meeting place sometime next week."

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

Official Heroes

Official Heroes will be invited to the parade and given their own float. They will be located approximately two hundred meters (100") behind the attack when the Quetzalcoatl comes into view. More modest official heroes might be found in the crowd.



Unofficial Heroes

Unofficial Heroes will learn (with appropriate detective work and streetwise), that a lot of VIPER agents have been coming into town for a secret mission. Anyone with KS: VIPER will know that there are two possible reasons for this: either there's something in town that someone in VIPER High Command wants very badly, or the local Nest Leader is planning a major operation for profit or revenge. Those heroes who are especially good (if they deliberately go over the parade route and make Perception rolls at -5, they'll find some traps; if they make Streetwise at -5, they'll hear rumors that VIPER agents are in town to sabotage a major city event (identity uncertain, encourage the PCs to investigate or make guesses).

VIPER'S ASSAULT

During a parade (held to honor Official Heroes, if your PCs fall into that category or UNTIL, if PCs are Unofficial), VIPER decides to demonstrate that it's serious.

"The Citizens in Support of UNTIL" float is where the majority of VIPER's forces are located. The float portrays a huge robotic Uncle Sam in an UNTIL blue beret, standing next to a mock-up of an UNTIL base, looking on in approval as four automated UNTIL agents comically kick four automated VIPER agents. Ahead of the "Citizens in Support of UNTIL" float is a twenty member UNTIL marching band, playing music (not as well as one might expect from UNTIL).

This conceals the following VIPER forces:

- (1) The Snake Pack (see Supervillains) is hiding inside the mock-up of the UNTIL base.
- (2) Eight VIPER Air Force Agents are hiding inside the automated VIPER and UNTIL agents.
- (3) Uncle Sam conceals a VIPER Mech Armor, Mk-I.
- (4) The UNTIL Marching Band is really four VIPER Five-Teams.

The operation will begin when a Quetzalcoatl aircraft appears and starts strafing a car located about 50' from the VIPER float, containing the parade Grand Marshall. (GM's choice to whoever the unfortunate person will be, it is unlikely the Grand Marshall will survive the attack, unless he or she has superpowers). As soon as the Quetzalcoatl appears, the Snake Pack and the agents reveal who they are.

The Quetzalcoatl will keep strafing prominent targets until it is brought down. It will aim at buildings instead of people after its first assault.

The Snake Pack will destroy property and terrorize people without deliberately killing them. Two of the VIPER Five-Teams will tear off their phony UNTIL suits, and try to surround and subdue as much of the crowd as possible.

One VIPER Five-Team will reveal themselves as VIPER agents, head into Mannerley's Jewelry store and try to blow up the safe.

One VIPER Five-Team will reveal themselves as VIPER agents, head into Bandara's Gallery to commit as much vandalism as possible.

Two Air Force Agents will support the Mannerley operation, two will support the Bandara operation, and four will fly to roof-top level in order to snipe at superheroes or agents that will show up.

The Mech Armor Mk-I will not reveal itself until superheroes show up on the scene, then it will burst out of Uncle Sam and attack.

Four Covert Operation agents are in the crowd with camcorders that are really Stealth-2 Dexterity Drain weapons. They will use them as soon as superheroes arrive.

Four agents are inside Radio Shop, in a backroom area, operating the remote control street lamp lasers, as well as activating the fire hydrant and manhole traps. They will not fire until superheroes show up.

MAIN STREET AND SURROUNDINGS

Twenty years ago, Main and Adam was one of the most thriving parts of the city's commercial district. Now, it is somewhat run-down, but businesses there have been rebuilding and renovating in order to attract new customers.

(A) Mannerley's Jewelers. Still one of the most prestigious jewelers in the city, Frederick Mannerley is known for his large private collection of gems and jewels; the Mannerley Emerald is probably the most famous piece. The jewelry store is relatively small, but quite upscale, with several cases of display, a sales counter, and a large safe in the back. VIPER brought a heavy metal torch that will take a turn to break through the safe, which contains their most valuable stones, including the Mannerley Emerald. VIPER has instructed agents to keep the spoils to themselves, except for the emerald.

(B) Bandara's Gallery. This is popular with the Avant-Garde (for whom superhero fashion is currently in style), and often displays superhero exhibits, which attracts a lot of customers. The current exhibit is "The War Against VIPER" featuring gritty and dramatic photographs taken of battles between superheroes and VIPER, as well as various paintings of superheroes. There is a main lobby, a main exhibition room, and a special exhibit room (the superhero paintings are in the special exhibit room, the photographs are in a section of the main room).

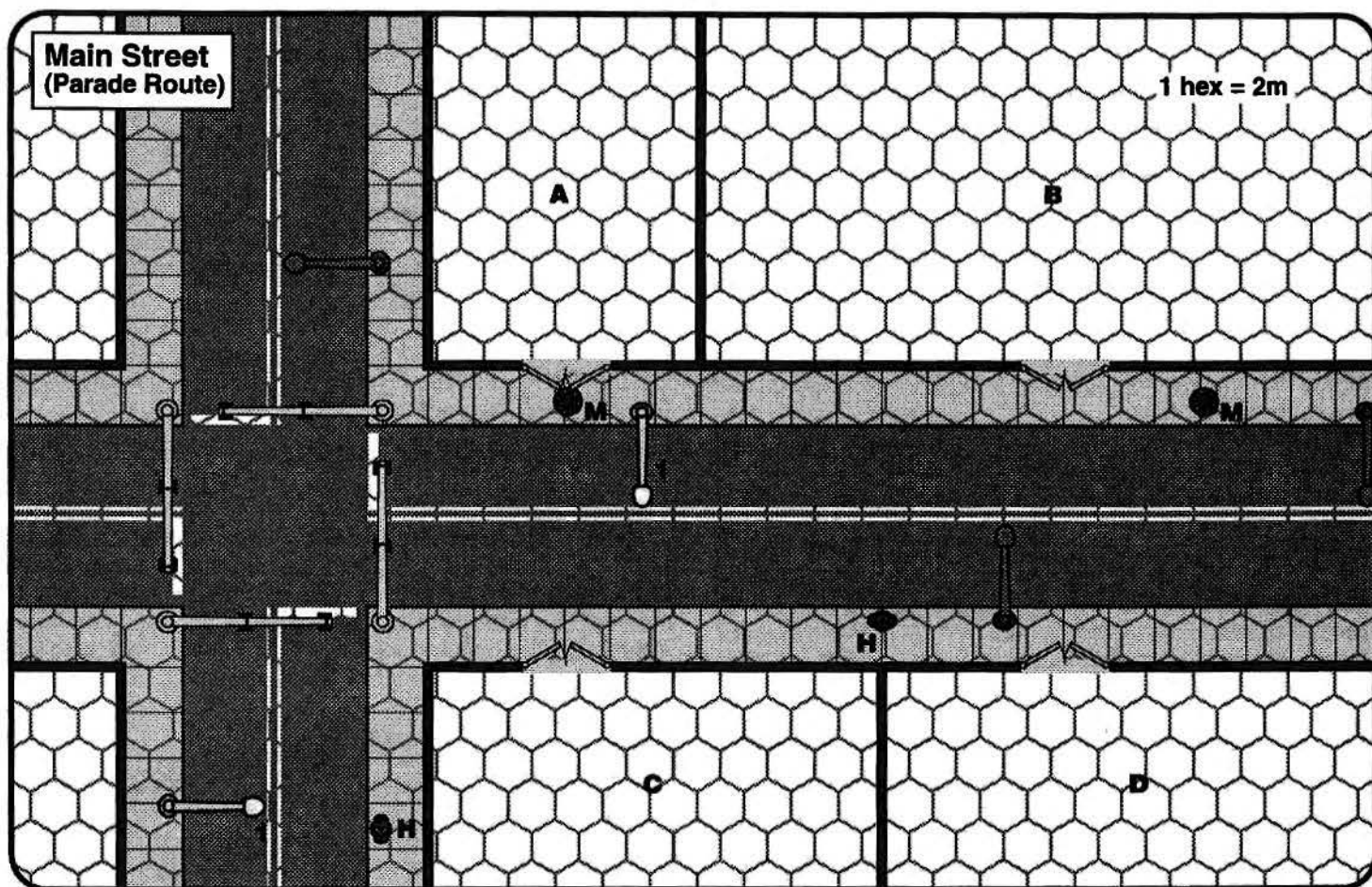
(C) Radio Shop. This is one store belonging to a popular chain of stores selling consumer electronics. This particularly franchise was purchased by VIPER as a front. Four VIPER agents are stationed in the back of the shop; two are using the cameras in the laser guns of the street lamps to attack superheroes who enter the scene, two more are using the security cameras that are surveying the front of the store to look beyond into the street area, in order to detonate the manhole mines and activate the gas traps in the fire hydrants (see below).

(D) Pizza Shack. This is a place where teenagers make pizza for delivery. It has no involvement in this scenario.

...

There are several traps in the scenario, as follows:

(1) Streetlamp Lasers: There are miniaturized lasers in the street lamp between Mannerley's and Bandara's, and the easternmost street lamp at the corner of Main and Adam. Each street lamp contains a 4d6 RKA Laser, +3 OCV, controlled by agents in Radio Shop (DEX 14, SPD 3). The lasers are fragile foci, with 1 BODY, 1 DEF. They run off the city's power supply, and thus are unlimited (unless the heroes cut the power supply to this area).



(2) **Exploding Manholes** (marked "M" on the map): these manholes covers do 3d6 RKA Explosion from concussion and shrapnel. They will usually be triggered when a superhero passes over that hex (or grabs a manhole cover!). The explosion will destroy the manhole cover.

(3) **Gas Fire Hydrants.** The fire hydrants (marked "H" on the map) spray a sleeping gas (3d6 NND, in a 3" radius, that lasts five minutes), or until the hydrant has been destroyed.

Objects in this scenario:

	DEF	BODY	Weight
Bus Bench	3	9	400 kg.
Fire Hydrants	5	4	12.5 kg.
Garbage Cans	4	4	12.5 kg.
Lamp posts	5	9	400 kg.
Traffic Signals	5	5	25 kg.
Wooden Barricades	2	4	12.5 kg.

OPTIONS

This is a fairly simple attack scenario. To make it more complicated, use the player's DNPCs as hostages, or have other VIPER agents conduct other operations at points in the parade route, and force the heroes to split up to stop them. Perhaps instead of killing the Grand Marshall, VIPER strafes their UNTIL escort and then kidnaps the Grand Marshall, forcing them to find the Nest to rescue him.

AFTER THE ATTACK

For dramatic purposes, it is important that VIPER gain some sort of a victory, something that will greatly motivate the players to want to deal with the VIPER Nest once and for all. Perhaps the Grand Marshall was a close friend of the PCs. He or she was killed in the attack, or forced to reveal previously unrevealed superpowers that will destroy their career. While the PCs may have stopped the VIPER attack, something should happen that will make them very unhappy with VIPER.

Unless the PCs did a superlative job of stopping the attack and protecting the innocent, the newspapers will deal with the VIPER attack as if it were a major tragedy. The dead will be mourned, and the living will be castigated for not doing a better job. The more sensational tabloids will try to crucify the heroes for allowing VIPER to breathe; others will be more understanding and sensible.

After the attack, VIPER will release the following public statement. "You have beheld the power of VIPER and felt fear. This is a most sensible reaction. The worst is still to come. Our next operation will be enforced with a power that the world has never seen. Resistance is not only useless, it will result in tragedy. Those who oppose us will die. Submit to our authority, and your lives will be spared."

PART FIVE: "COMBAT IN CHRISTOPHER PARK"

CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE

"Hey, Jimmy." Frank's big hand was around his shoulders. "What's wrong, buddy?"

James Allison's face did not raise to meet his friend's gaze. "Today's operation. It was wrong. Too many innocent people were hurt. Guys in capes and tights are one thing, and government Nazis in powersuits are one thing, but we were hitting women and kids at that parade. We were spilling their blood, for Pete's sake."

"The system hurts a helluva lot more innocent people than VIPER. You know that, Jimmy. That's why we joined."

James Allison still didn't look at his friend. "How many more, Frank? I'm not sure I can do this anymore."

Frank raised his eyebrow. "Know what you mean, buddy. I've felt that way too. But you know as well as I do that you can't get out of VIPER that easy. And we got to look out for ourselves. None of the people out there are going to look out for us. We gotta stick together."

"Well..." Allison said.

"You know we're a team." Frank Morrison said. "Allison to Morrison, touchdowns forever, just like we did back in Junior High football. You throw 'em, I score 'em. Remember?"

"How could I forget? You keep talking about it." Allison finally managed to laugh.

"How about some wrestling practise and some shooting? It'll take your mind off this stuff. You know you can't fight the system. You know that the people outside don't give a damn. This is all we've got. Us. It ain't great, but we aren't out on the streets like we used to be."

"Maybe you're right." Allison stated.

"I'll get my gear on and we'll hit the mat. Just give me a minute to get changed."

"Sure Frankie."

Morrison watched his friend's face as he shut the door. He went into his quarters, closed the door, turned to his communicator, and began talking into it. "Morrison to Nest Leader. I just had a long conversation with James Allison. I suspect that he may be turning traitor."

"Stay close to him, Morrison. Let him confide in you. If he decides to turn traitor, pretend to support his action, then terminate him."

"No problem, Nest Leader. Morrison out."

VIPER BRIEFING

The Nest Leader turned to his troops. From the expression on his face, they knew instantly that this was a very serious situation.

"As you know, Frank Morrison is dead, and James Allison is missing. We have determined that Allison murdered Agent Morrison, and that he has turned traitor and is about to turn secrets over to UNTIL. Your mission is to make certain he doesn't succeed. The job won't be easy; it'll be in broad daylight. Operating in public places is never fun, but that's your job as undercover agents."

"The meeting is scheduled in Christopher Park today. UNTIL Investigator Robert Jensen is going to meet Allison. If he performs in the same way as past traitors, he'll trade the

position of our Nest and descriptions of our operations to UNTIL in exchange to immunity from prosecution and a new identity. Allison knows we're out to get him, and that's why he's asked us for a secret meeting in a public place, with no UNTIL troops around. Our UNTIL contact told us that Jensen agreed to the meeting. UNTIL thinks this will break VIPER wide open."

The Nest leader began pointing to a diagram. "Christopher Park is relatively small, and located in the center of the city. Paved paths here wander through some grassy playing fields. There is a picnic area here, next to some barbecue pits. Lots of people will be in the park on their lunch hour. We'll have to be careful. We'll try for a snatch, but if we can't get it, we've got two Five-Teams in vans, plus Damage, Gravity, and Phaze ready to eliminate them."

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

Official Heroes

UNTIL hurriedly contacts the heroes and tells them that that they may have a VIPER defector. Jensen would like superhero to provide cover, in case VIPER decides to show up, but to remain out of sight at all times, in case Allison gets nervous. Of course, coincidence can play a part in this (a superhero is having lunch with his/her fiancée in their secret ID, etc.)

Unofficial Heroes

Word on the street is that VIPER is in a panic. Two of their agents got into a firefight last night; the agent that survived fled and was heard setting up a meeting with UNTIL, at Christopher Park at noon. VIPER has been desperately trying to find the agent before he can defect. It'll be up to the PCs to stop them.

If VIPER was successful in "Assault on the Tanghal Tower" they will have a prototype of their Doomsday weapon ready. Give the heroes a few rumors about VIPER constructing a super weapon, to prepare them for the grand finale.

VIPER TACTICS

Allison and Jensen will meet under a tree near the picnic tables in Christopher Park. VIPER will have four undercover agents in the park, dressed in business suits, and a five team dressed in various disguises (a team of park maintenance workers digging around the park, making renovations, wearing heavy work gear (concealing their armor) and hiding their helmets and weapons in the bushes). The undercover workers will attempt to hijack Allison and Jensen. If there's any special resistance, the Five-Team will remove their disguises, don their gear, and attempt to assist the undercover agents. Once Jensen and Allison are captured, they will be taken to an empty van at the edge of the Park, which will drive away to a warehouse where Allison and Jensen will be tortured. VIPER wishes to know what Allison has told UNTIL, and it wouldn't hurt to pry a few secrets out of Jensen.

If a hero reveals their costume before the meeting, Allison will attempt to run away. Jensen will try to stop him in any way short of hurting him, and VIPER will certainly reveal themselves and attack before Allison can get away.

If superheroes show up after or during the grab, then two Five-Teams and the supervillains Damage, Gravity, and Phaze will leave their vans; the villains will arrive in one turn, the Five-Teams will show up in two turns. The object of these villains will be to delay the heroes and prevent them from

intercepting the grab; the Five-Teams will attempt to support the villains. If they are overwhelmed, they will grab hostages and scatter.

If Allison is killed, and his body is intercepted by the heroes or UNTIL before VIPER can search it, they will find a map leading to the newly constructed VIPER's Nest, and a list of personnel, weapons, and current operations.

CHRISTOPHER PARK

Christopher Park is a mostly grassy area that's suitable for running. The one exception is the sandy area near the swing set, which is covered in loose sand (it costs 2" of Running to move in the sand, all Acrobatics rolls are at -2, and all Breakfall rolls are at +2). A paved access road and riding path have a raised concrete edge and cross near the bottom of the map.

A concrete tool shed on the left hand side of the map is surrounded by a chain link fence that is 1" tall. The shed holds gardening tools, a power mower, and 50 kg. bags of cement. Inside the fence there are 25 kg. bags of fertilizer, a compost heap, and an old oil drum. If the oil drum is hit by any kind of heat or electricity of 4 BODY or more, the drum will ignite and break. The oil fire will spread one hex per segment (roll 1d6 to determine the direction, starting clockwise from the top part of the hex). Any character moving through the fire will take ½d6 Killing Energy damage per hex he moves through. The fire will burn itself out in 12d6 segments.

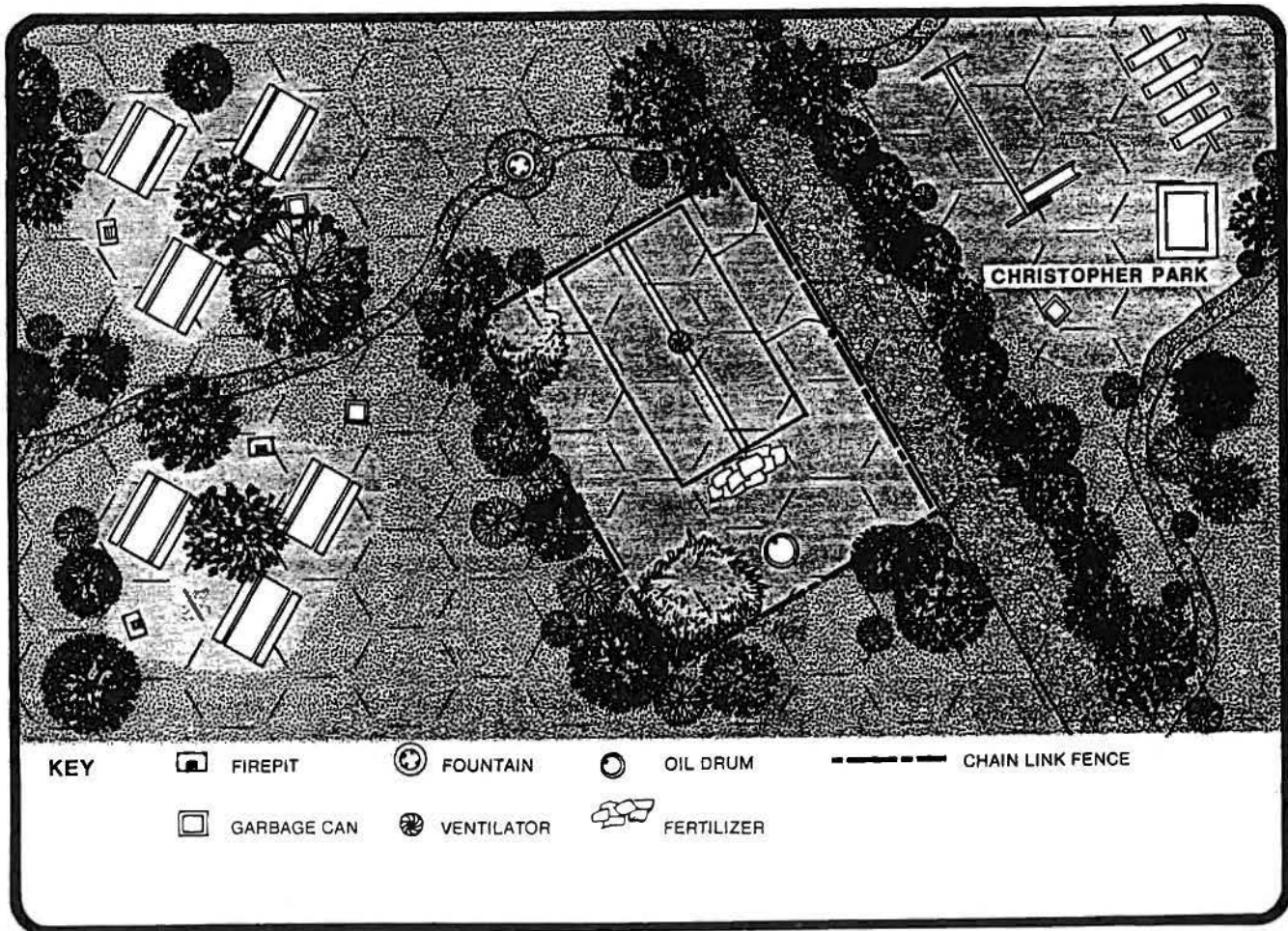
Separating the access road from the play area are some high bushes. These bushes are 1" tall and block line of sight. Unless a successful Acrobatics roll is made, it takes a half phase to move through one hex of bushes. Several small (3"

tall) trees dot the area and a large tree (the meeting place) sits in the middle of the picnic grounds (5" tall, the first 1" is its trunk). If any of the trees or bushes are hit with a heat or electrical attack of 6 BODY or better, they will burn. Any character moving through a bush or tree fire will take 1 pip Energy Killing Damage per hex he moves through.

Scattered on the western edge of the Park are six picnic tables, bolted to concrete pilings. A character must do 7 BODY damage to pull them from the concrete. Near the picnic tables is a stone barbecue pit. The pit is full of ashes and litter. A trash barrel overflows with trash near the picnic tables. Included in the trash around the barrel is a broken bottle that can act as a ½d6 Killing Physical Attack (it breaks on the first hit).

On the eastern side of the map is a Play Area. A large steel swing set rises out of the sand. The swings are held up by thin chains. Across the access road from the play area is a stone drinking fountain. Only the top side of the fountain works, and the drain is plugged up. A character must do 12 BODY damage to pull the fountain from the ground.

Objects in this scenario:	DEF	BODY	Weight
Bags of Cement	1	6	50 kg.
Fertilizer Sacks	1	5	25 kg.
Garbage Can	4	3	6.25 kg
Oil Drum	3	5	25 kg.
Picnic Table (removed)	3	7	100 kg.
Stone Fountain (removed)	4	7	100 kg.



OPTIONS

For additional complications, assume that VIPER sets up diversions near Christopher Park as soon as superheroes show up. Explosives go off in a nearby building, a fire starts, and the heroes must choose to help the victims, or pursue VIPER and save the life of an UNTIL agent and a traitor.

AFTER THE ATTACK

If the heroes rescue Allison and save his life (or interrogate fallen VIPER agents), they will learn that VIPER has finally established its Nest, a small fortress in the warehouse district. They are also working on a special weapon. If the heroes failed in the "Tanghal Tower" scenario, and VIPER escaped with the plans, they will have built a version of the Nazi Doomsday Weapon and will be ready to blackmail the city. Allison will inform them that VIPER Central Command has sent representatives to watch the test. Allison would not be certain who is coming, or when this would take place.

VIPER's most successful money-gathering operation was the Bell Hill Ball in Boston in 1987, where VIPER kidnapped ten prominent industrialists and got paid over \$80 million in ransoms. This had been planned by the Nest Leader for several years; he had left a trail of reliable riddles and clues for the heroes to follow for months, then misdirected them on the night of the real crime. The publicity for the Bell Hill incident was so pleasing to the VIPER council that they have offered to reward any Nest that breaks the record.

PART SIX: "DOOMSDAY"

A SNAKE IN THE CLASS

The masked figure put his hand to his face, then revealed it to the world.

The Nest Leader gasped, and then bowed deeply. "Forgive me, Lord Python. I had not..."

"The proper title is General Python," the cloaked figure said in a slightly raspy voice, "And do not apologize. I am well aware of my hideous visage. All the more reason why this experiment must succeed."

The Nest Leader seemed confused. Python gave an involuntary hiss, meant as a sigh, which further unnerved the Nest Leader. "It is my profound hope that your weapon will turn into the instrument of my vengeance. Consider this, a weapon, modified with a satellite projector, that can target anyone, anything on Earth. All that King Cobra needs to do is to show his face, and I can instantly annihilate him. Such a weapon would give me ultimate power."

"The Supreme Serpent will be pleased."

"Of course," Python said, "Our interests are identical. I hope that remark was not meant as a challenge to my loyalty. It would be very foolish if it were."

Hiss, Python's large bodyguard, chose that moment to make a sharp hissing sound. The Nest Leader gulped. A tall man moved next to the General, and began whispering into his ear. He was as tall and as impossibly broad as Hiss, but appeared human; he wore mirror shades, and carried a large laptop computer. The Nest Leader tried to hear what he was saying, then realized it might not be in his best interests to overhear Python's private matters.

"You seem curious," Python said, making the Nest Leader shudder. "This is my attache, Colonel Brown. The Colonel survived the coil gene with remarkably little mutation. Show him, Colonel."

Colonel Brown removed his shades, revealing the eyes of a snake. He opened his mouth, revealing a slight forking in his tongue, and two larger canine teeth than usual. Almost vampiric, except thinner, more serpentine.

"I have evaluated your recent operations, Nest Leader," Colonel Brown said. "A rather mixed record, for a Nest that has drawn on so much of VIPER Central Command's resource base."

"I am a conservative man," the Nest Leader replied. "The defeats were of little consequence. We have grown, and now are ready to teach the world a new reason to fear VIPER."

"And what of the Allison affair? That did not appear to be minor," Colonel Brown said.

"Our agents have it under control even as we speak. The local superheroes will never find us before we can test fire our weapon. When it is a success, no one will dare oppose us."

"The Supreme Serpent has heard that before," Colonel Brown replied. "General, should I remain here? There is that business in Pittsburgh that you were asked to deal with..."

"Of course Charles. I wish you could stay to enjoy the fireworks," Python replied.

"The best is yet to come," the Colonel responded. "Good luck, sir."

The attache replaced his shades, then left the room. Python was a good officer, but a little too ambitious for his own good. In what better guise could a Supreme Serpent walk the Earth, then as someone who has the trust and knows the innermost thoughts of his most ambitious lieutenant...

VIPER BRIEFING

"All right, Nestlings, listen up. This is the Big One."

Several dozen agents stood at attention in the concourse of the VIPER gymnasium. You could hear the proverbial pin drop in the silence of the room.

"We're about to launch our Doomsday device. Thanks to the Allison fiasco, our security is compromised. We're going to have to use a brute force threat if we're going to survive. We've got to expect everything and anything to happen, including UNTIL and capes, if they don't take us seriously."

"I've pulled a dozen extra agents from the streets. You know your battle stations; stick to them. Elevators and stairways will be the priority targets on the top level. Escape routes and central control will be their priority targets on the bottom level. We have several supers of our own in reserve, and we've got some pretty good weapons. I am dividing you into seven five-teams; three will guard the top floor, and four five-teams will guard the bottom. Scattershot and Shadowfist will be supporting the operation on the top level. We'll have Phaze and Gravity helping those below."

"What about Python?" one agent questioned. It was fortunate for him that he couldn't see the look that the Nest Leader shot back at him.

"General Python and his aides are here as observers only. It is not our place to ask VIPER's High Command to risk themselves in a fire fight. VIPER has been very good in providing assistance to this Nest lately, asking them for additional assistance is not reasonable."

Even knowing the consequences, the agents couldn't suppress some groans.

"I want you morons on battle stations, and you will remain there until further notice. Don't mess up."

GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

The logical way for the heroes to be involved in this scenario is if they've saved James Allison's life. Allison reveals the location of the Nest, and its known entrance. Allison believes that a secret passage exists from the Nest, but is not certain as to its location.

If they haven't saved Allison's life, use the random VIPER raid generator. Eventually, the PCs will stop a raid, learn the location of the Nest, and be able to attack it (telepathy, of course, is the easiest method to find it).

If the heroes have a publicly known HQ, and they failed to prevent VIPER from getting the plans in the Tanghal Tower scenario, another option is available. VIPER test fires their device on the PC's Headquarters. They return one day to find rubble, and VIPER boastfully takes credit for the deed. That should motivate them, if they are not already motivated, to find the VIPER's Nest and destroy it (good Streetwise rolls or Deduction combined with a suitable amount of detective role-playing may track down the Nest).

VIPER TACTICS

The tactics that VIPER are using are similar to those listed in the briefing. Five-teams are posted at battlestations, backed by supervillains. They will snipe at the heroes until they get close, use the villains to slow them down, and try to retreat and get into another sniping position. (Given that superheroes have a speed advantage, it's a less effective tactic against supers than it is against agents, but VIPER likes the tried-and-true even in inappropriate circumstances).

If the heroes come in through the front door, then the Nest Leader will remain until they breach the Second Level, then he'll destroy the Serpentine Crystal and retreat with his personal guard (a Five-Team), leaving three teams and three supervillains to guard his escape. The agents are reasonably loyal, and will likely wait until the heroes are beginning to overwhelm the local supervillains before they try to run away, and some brave (or stupid) agents will fight to the end unless cowed by a Presence attack or Mind Control.

If the heroes come in through the escape route on the second level, the Nest Leader will panic, take his bodyguard, and try to escape through the top level, again leaving everyone else to cover his escape. If surrounded on all sides, he will threaten to blow up the Doomsday Device, and actually attempt to use it unless the heroes stop him.

Every corridor in the Nest has several cameras, each with its own independent power source. The cameras are audio-visual; the cameras in the escape tunnel and the elevator are also equipped with a motion sensor. They are all linked by radio (no cords) to the Security Station. If there is a possible security breach, the agents will be informed; as they are already on alert, stealth is of limited benefit.

The Five-Teams will be expecting trouble. They will be located in corridors that branch off from the main corridor, and will remain in position unless overrun. Supervillains will close to fight the heroes, provided that agents are in position to give them support. The exact placement of the teams is for the GM to decide.

The Nest Leader is generic; the GM should personalize him (or her) to fit the campaign. Stats for a generic VIPER Nest Leader is provided in the *Champions*, 4th Edition, Campaign Book.

VIPER'S NEST (GENERAL ENVIRONMENT)

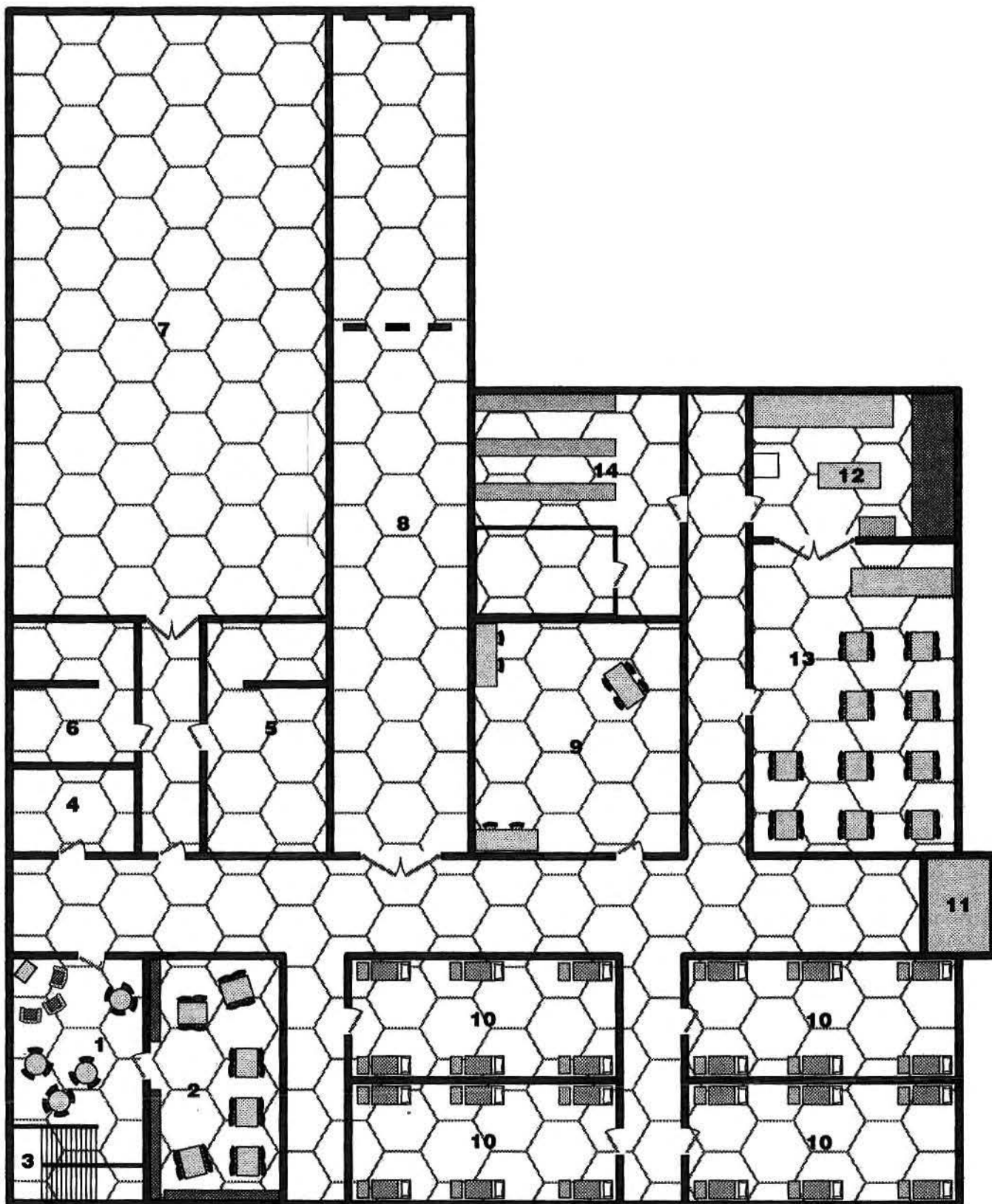
The VIPER's Nest is located in a hidden basement of a building called International Security (a VIPER Front Company). International Security rents security guards to local businesses (some of these men are actually VIPER agents, of course); the main elevator contains a hidden panel with a four digit input code that will allow them to enter the Nest. The elevator can be stopped from the VIPER Security station. The office contains normal working people; only the security guards know it's a front for the Nest.

The local VIPER's Nest is a military looking environment, with walls that look like they were carved from concrete and painted an ugly pea green color. The floors are concrete painted white, with VIPER insignia on the floors. The walls are lined with lead, making it impossible for those with X-Ray vision to see through them.

The lighting in the Nest is fluorescent, running from a city power source. Each light, and sensor has a back-up battery, giving them two hours of power if the power is cut by clever heroes.

Viper's Nest
(Level One)

1 hex = 2 m



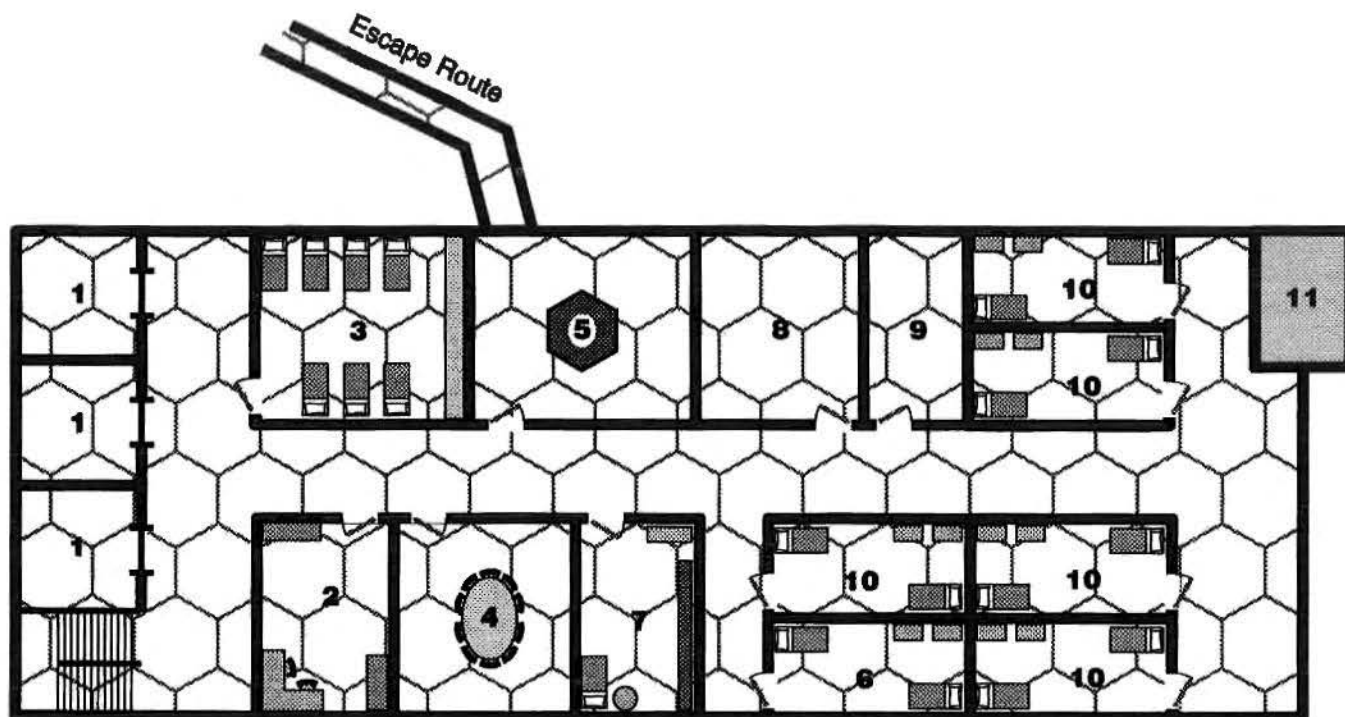
VIPER'S NEST (LEVEL ONE)

1. **LOUNGE.** This lounge is a large social area. Several television sets are hooked up to video games, and a projection TV is hooked up to a satellite dish on the roof. There are several tables for card playing, and a rack of magazines, a VCR with VIPER-produced tapes, etc.
2. **CLASSROOM/STUDY.** This is a large room where VIPER agents are trained. It is usually empty.
3. **STAIRS to LEVEL 2.**
4. **ARMORY #1.** The lower armory. It is normally where the weapons and armor and costumes for agents are kept. The door (DEF 7, BODY 6) is locked with an electronic lock (Security Systems at -2 to open). Inside the armory is an extra suit of VIPER armor, and three extra rifles: a VR-01A, an MB-2, and a PB-02B. There is also a large supply of ammo, categorized by weapon type.
5. **MEN'S LOCKER ROOM.** These are the changing room and showers for men who use the gymnasium. There are twenty lockers, five showers, and three toilets.
6. **WOMAN'S LOCKER ROOM.** These are the changing room and showers for women who use the gymnasium. There are ten lockers, two showers and two toilets.
7. **GYM.** This is a gymnasium large enough to play all major indoor sports. The gym has a waxed wooden floor, is 5" (10 m.) tall, and has lines that describe the areas for basketball and volleyball. There are mats lining the sides of the gym wall.
8. **FIRING RANGE.** This is a three man firing range, about 50 m. long. Movable targets hinge at 25 m, and mounted steel silhouettes (DCV 4) line the far wall. The targets can be directed from Range Control.
9. **RANGE CONTROL.** The callers for the Firing Range are behind solid concrete in Range Control. The callers control operations through the use of speakers and video cameras. A communications link allows the caller to contact Central Command in case of emergencies.
10. **AGENT'S QUARTERS.** The typical VIPER quarters fits up to six people: one Five-Team and a technician or support person.
11. **ELEVATOR.** This provides access for all levels of the Nest, and is the only access route from the main building into the Nest. The security procedure for the elevators are described above. In addition, there is a radio relay in the elevator shaft that allows the Security Center to see cameraimages and broadcast transmissions to the agents; if this relay is cut (3 BODY, 3 DEF), the two levels of the Nest will be cut off from each other.
12. **KITCHEN.** This kitchen has a large grill and oven covering one wall, while a formica counter with ingredients covers the other. A counter at one end of the room allows the agents to serve those seated in the mess hall. A small dishwasher and cupboard is in the corner. VIPER Nests are not noted for their fine cuisine; ex-army types compare VIPER meals unfavorably to K-Rations.
13. **MESS HALL.** There are ten plastic tables here, seating four people each. VIPER forces each eat on shifts; two Five-Teams at a time.
14. **SUPPLY ROOM.** This supply room contains supplies for the kitchen. There is a small meat locker in the bottom left-hand corner of the room.



Viper's Nest (Level Two)

1 hex = 2 m



VIPER'S NEST (LEVEL TWO)

1. **DETENTION CELL.** These are holding cells for prisoners, and solitary confinement for misbehaving agents. The walls of these cells have 9 BODY, 13 DEF; their doors are 6 BODY, 11 DEF. In addition, one of the cells is rigged with a 16 DEF Force Wall, to help handle superpowered prisoners. They are currently unoccupied.
2. **SECURITY CENTER.** This is where the cameras send images, and where Five-Teams will receive information during the alert. It is hooked into every camera and communicator in the base.
3. **INFIRMARY.** This has five beds where wounded men can recover, and a locked medicine cabinet. If men were injured in the "Christopher Park" adventure and managed to retreat to the Nest before the heroes descended on it, they will be here, otherwise, it will be empty.
4. **MEETING ROOM.** This is a meeting room where the Nest Leader and his lieutenants discuss strategy, and where visiting dignitaries (such as Python) will meet with the Nest Leader.
5. **OPERATIONS ROOM.** This is where Operation: Doomsday is being controlled. A hexagonal control center contains the Nest's database and link with the Serpentine System. The Serpentine Crystal is in a 1 BODY 12 DEF box that can be removed easily and destroyed by remote control.

Two technicians are stationed near the Doomsday Device Control center (see "The Doomsday Device" for information on this insidious weapon). The actual device

is 5 BODY, 5 DEF; and is triggered by a circuit that goes up to the satellite dish on the roof of the building. Destroying the controls will not stop the Doomsday Device if it has begun to fire. Destroying the satellite dish will cause the explosion to occur in the Operations Room (oops!).

There will be a Five-team stationed here at all times, as well as Phaze. They will try to escape with the Nest Leader, if everything seems bleak, or will cover his escape.

6. **LIEUTENANTS' ROOM.** Two lieutenants have their quarters here, along with assorted personal belongings.
7. **NEST LEADERS' ROOM.** Similar to the Lieutenant's Room, but more spacious and comfortable (and, of course, private). The room should be filled with personal memorabilia for whatever Nest Leader you should choose to include in this Nest.
8. **STORAGE.** This provides storage for the Nest, and includes a spare Serpentine Communications Crystal.
9. **ARMORY.** Similar to the Armory on the First Level. There is a spare VR-05A rifle and a suit of armor.
10. **GUEST'S QUARTERS.** These quarters are reserved for guests; they are otherwise identical to the other quarters on this level of the Nest.
11. **ELEVATOR.** See General Environment and Level One for details.

THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE

VIPER's Doomsday Device is a permutation of Tesla's theory of broadcasting energy. A large explosion is created

in a test chamber deep under ground; a small fraction of the energy from the explosion is used to transmit the rest to a location far away.

If the heroes failed in the Tanghal Tower scenario, VIPER will have a fully working and reliable Doomsday Device. This has the following stats.

6d6 RKA, 72" Radius, Fully Indirect, x1000 Range Modifier, No Range Modifier, +5 OCV, 1 charge, one hour activation time.

This is sufficient to wipe out any a fairly huge area in the city. If the location of the PC's HQ is known by VIPER, it will be the first target. City Hall will be the second, a major shopping center will be the third.

If the heroes succeeded in the Tanghal Tower scenario, the Doomsday Device will be much weaker (as VIPER will have built the device solely on scattered theories, without a lot of solid evidence of Tesla's design).

4d6 RKA, 24" Radius, Fully Indirect, x1000 Range Modifier, No Range Modifier, +5 OCV, 1 charge, one hour activation time, successfully activates on an 11-.

Once fired, it requires one hour to build up the energy in the firing chamber before the critical explosion. A large timer in the room will count down the minutes to detonation.

OPTIONS

The major options involve Python and the Serpent Syndicate. If VIPER succeeded in the Tanghal Tower adventure and have built a full-powered prototype, then Python (along with Komodo and Hiss) will be present here to witness the event, and while they'll escape down the tunnel as soon as there's action, they will fight back if cornered.

Low powered heroes should be given several squads of UNTIL agents to accompany them on the assault. Give each player a few agents to run, in addition to their PC.

AFTER THE ATTACK

If the heroes fail, then VIPER gets a stranglehold over their city. The heroes might be held unconscious until VIPER's version of Stronghold can transport them to a lab, where their gadgets will be removed and studied, those with superpowers analyzed, and VIPER's interrogation teams can bring out painful secrets. If some PCs didn't make the run, they can perform a rescue attempt, or you can allow the players to run the Champions and the Freedom Squad (from *Champions Universe*) in a rescue operation. Even if they won, the Nest will probably move to a new location after the assault.

If the heroes win, then it's a big victory. VIPER will have been broken in their city, and it will take months for them to become a serious threat again. If the PCs worked with UNTIL (and didn't do anything blatantly vicious or stupid), they'll be heroes. If they are underground heroes, UNTIL will get the credit for their success, and they'll be ignored (something that they're probably used to). In any case, unless the PCs managed to corral Python and his crew and decide to take on VIPER's upper echelons, VIPER should take a breather from the campaign, at least for awhile. The PCs should be able to sit back and enjoy the rewards of a job well done.



SCENARIO IDEAS



These are brief ideas for scenarios involving VIPER. They are explicitly meant for the GM to flesh out and adapt; GMs should add elements from their campaigns.

“DOG FIGHT”

Outline by Phil Masters

This scenario is appropriate for European-based or globe-trotting heroes.

In Central Europe, a former Communist state is collapsing amidst “ethnic cleansing” and economic collapse. For the world, this is a tragedy. For VIPER, this is an opportunity.

The Ovanssons and Karl Lagerond (see *World, Europe*) have been purchasing arms to create a VIPER Field Army. They intend to invade the suffering Balkan nation under the guise of an independent mercenary force that wants to end the pain and suffering of the region, grab as much territory as they can under their control, get world recognition, and then declare themselves for VIPER.

The VIPER Field Army is being funded by donations from wealthy supporters of the ethnic factions. Lars Ovansson has made promises to each group that his army will support their faction. Given the stupid hatred of these groups, he has had no shortage of funds, and has amassed an army of thousands of troops, with tanks and aircraft belonging to the former Soviet Union, and some of the most powerful weapons on Earth. Soon, he will launch his strike.

The players can get involved in several ways. There are rumors within VIPER about VIPER’s largest operation ever, something that will take place in Europe and rock the world. The GM can concoct a trail of evidence, and lead the heroes to Europe.

Another place where the characters can get clues is through contacts in the arms trade, or in the ethnic community. Appropriate clues, and a dash of streetwise, will send the heroes on the trail.

The GM has several options on how to resolve the scenario. Low-powered heroes can’t take on an army directly, but they can commit massive amounts of sabotage and inform the proper authorities. More powerful heroes can do a preemptive strike on their munitions and supplies and create havoc before VIPER knows what hit them. The most powerful heroes in comic books *can* take on an army using conventional weapons. Some GMs ignore this point, preferring that military forces be more powerful than their heroes, but those that like powerful heroes can have the heroes face the invasion directly.

“UNSHEATHED”

This scenario is appropriate for moderate to high powered heroes. It has a high gore content that may make it inappropriate for non-gritty campaigns. It also requires the use of the *Classic Enemies* supplement.

The Supreme Serpent doesn’t like betrayal. His target is one of the most prominent traitors in VIPER history—Power Crusher. And anyone who knows Power Crusher has to deal with the series of events that have been set in motion.

A pair of supervillains, Watt and Ohm, that were apprenticing with the Crusher Gang have been found dead, killed in a very gruesome fashion by a mad slasher. UNTIL reports indicate that VIPER sent a message to the Crusher Gang after the incident: “Your miserable excuse for a leader shall be next. His sorry hide will be used as a sheath for my personal assassin—the Supreme Serpent.” If the Supreme Serpent has access to a high quality assassin, VIPER will become twice as dangerous. The assassin must be stopped.

The player characters will then track a gruesome series of murders, as people who are close to Power Crusher are killed: families, friends, perhaps even other members of the Crusher Gang. The PCs could encounter Power Crusher before Sheath gets to him, and convince him to join forces with them. Even Power Crusher doesn’t deserve what VIPER has in store for him. Unless they are real convincing (2x PRE attacks, or 2x Mind Control), Crusher will attempt to flee, or may involve the PC in a melee with other members of the Crusher Gang (use Oculon and Ripper in addition to the members of the Crusher Gang that appeared in “Microfilm Madness”).

The adventure should end with the characters meeting Sheath. Sheath will attempt to run, separate the characters from each other, then take them out one at a time with his disabling attacks. Sheath will then try to escape. If he gets Power Crusher, the Crusher Gang will try to get along without him (probably under the name “The Pulsar Gang” or “The Ripper Gang”). If he is captured, the PCs may learn more of the Supreme Serpent’s secrets.

"THE DRAGON"

This scenario is appropriate for high powered characters, or the major principle characters of VIPER will need to be toned down.

Mackenzie Gable is puzzled. There's something wrong with his brother Jefferson, but he's not sure what it is. He's so cold and detached, could someone be blackmailing him? It was rather suspicious that Duchess Industries bought him out so easily. Perhaps he can ask a friend of a friend to investigate, someone highly recommended...

The PCs are sent on the trail of Jefferson Gable, the Prime Serpent. If the PCs encounter him in costume, they'll find him to be warm and friendly, not the least bit suspicious. If anyone is unfortunate enough to investigate him in their Secret ID, however, they'll have a run-in with VIPER assassins. An investigation will show that those who try to investigate Gable have ended up having "accidents". Then, an accident happens to Mackenzie Gable.

After this, Gable will be playing for keeps, using his powers to eliminate the PCs if they come to his mansion, the same mansion where the Supreme Serpent is located. The PCs will fall into a trap, and a life and death struggle against the Prime Serpent, and if the PCs are truly unfortunate (and try to interface with the mansion's computer system) they'll face the Supreme Serpent himself in his home turf—cyberspace.

If the PCs win, VIPER will be smashed, and suffer from severe infighting to determine who will be in control. If the PCs overlook the computer, the Supreme Serpent will relocate itself to a new computer, and find a new pawn to control VIPER.

"THE DOLL'S HOUSE"

This is a somewhat surreal scenario that attempts to imitate some of the deadlier variants on Silver Age comic book adventures. Giant props, crazed villains, wild death traps are the stuff of this adventure. Really tough heroes who can take any sort of punishment and can defeat this scenario with brute force may not be desirable for this adventure.

VIPER is annoyed by the heroes. Very annoyed. They want to kill them, but in a way that makes them look like fools, not martyrs. They decide to give the Dollmaker, arguably their most insane operative, a blank cheque and total creative freedom, if he can guarantee the heroes' demise.

Soon, the children of top city officials start to vanish, mysteriously. The only clue is a toy "Pied Piper" dressed in a miniature VIPER uniform, left at the scene of each crime, with a price tag of \$999,999.98 tied to each doll. There is a cord on the back of each doll, telling them to have the money ready, and to place it in the giant doll's house when it arrives.

Soon afterwards, large flying dollhouses appear, sitting on the lawns of the parents of the kidnapped children. VIPER surveillance helicopters will survey the scene; if supers appear and try to examine the dollhouses, they'll explode, doing a 12d6 Normal Explosion. When money is placed in the dollhouses, they'll fly away. The supers must track the flying dollhouses without being spotted (or the Black Cobra helicopters will detonate the dollhouses, money included).

The dollhouses will fly into a large mansion. When supers show up, the walls of the mansion will fall outwards, revealing a giant dollhouse. The children are in the basement, being entertained by Dollmaker's dolls, while Dollmaker has a lot of traps dressed up as children's toys and games, including:

- a room of hopscotch, with explosives if the heroes don't jump in the proper sequence.
- apples in a vat of sulfuric acid, and a breakaway floor which will cause the heroes to "bob" for them.
- a giant Friendly Freddy the Chartreuse Dinosaur doll, which embraces people and smothers them (literally) with their "friendly" hug.
- giant jacks with spike tips.
- robot toy soldiers, with real guns.
- a thin atom-thin wire jump rope, that can slice anyone in two.
- a real game of Hangman (with a prisoner trapped in an unbreakable container, with a noose coming around him if the heroes guess letters incorrectly).
- mechanical pit bulls for a game of "Red Rover" or "dog pile".

If the heroes make it to Dollmaker's control room, he'll put on a final game, a game of musical chairs in the place where the children are kept, where anyone who doesn't manage to find a seat gets vaporized with a laser. The heroes will have to make their way downstairs before the children run out of chairs, while Dollmaker will attempt to get away (unless the heroes ignore the kids, they should be able to save them).

If the heroes save the kids and capture Dollmaker, they'll be heroes, and their fame and reputation will increase. If the heroes save the kids and Dollmaker gets away, they'll still be heroes. If the kids die, they won't be heroes.



Look for these ICE product lines at your favorite retail outlet.

Each of our role playing systems is supplemented with a variety of support material. Prices are subject to alteration without prior notice. Write or call for a free catalog (see below).

#1000 – Rolemaster™ \$38.00

I.C.E.'s advanced Fantasy Role Playing Game system, **Rolemaster** is a complete set of the most advanced, realistic and sophisticated FRP rules available and they have been reformatted and reorganized in the new Second Edition. The flexibility of the system allows it to be used wholly or in part. Each of the books in this boxes set can be used separately to improve the realism of most major FRP systems! Look for the new complement to your **Rolemaster** game: **Shadow World** adventures.

#6050 – Shadow World™ \$24.00

Shadow World, a whole new realm of adventure! The planet **Kulthea**™ forms the **Shadow World**, a unique fantasy gaming environment supported by comprehensive stats for **Rolemaster**. The **Shadow World** is a vast planet of scattered isles and lost realms, each land isolated by forces both tangible and supernatural. Not only is it a rich fantasy world unto itself, but it allows the GM to insert it into his **Rolemaster** campaign whole or in part. It is also usable with most major fantasy role playing systems.

#9050 – Space Master: RPG™ Book \$26.00

Adventure in deep space on alien worlds with ICE's Science Fiction Role Playing Game system! Completely compatible with **Rolemaster**, **Space Master** covers professions, races, cultures, settings, and much more. The range of technologies stretches from tomorrow to the far future. Now the cornerstone of this exciting system is a pair of boxed games; **The Role Playing Game** and **Star Strike**. Each stands alone for hours of enjoyment; while together they form a massive sci-fi environment.

#5100 – Cyberspace™ \$18.00

Set in the gritty near future where Megacorporation repression collides with Sprawl street warfare, **Cyberspace** is fully compatible with **Space Master & Rolemaster**. Muscle-grafted Punks and Netheads crawl out of the gutters to scrap Media Stars and Cybernetic Mercenaries, a conflict beyond the stature of Good and Evil. From depraved polluted cities to the surreal beauty of Earth's global computer matrix, this is the world of **Cyberspace**!

#7500 – Bladestorm™, miniatures rules \$30.00

The Bladelands are a wild, chaotic area shrouded within a mantle of ferocious magical gales called Bladestorms. Here, a little battle can decide the fate of a budding tribe or nation.

Bladestorm (BSf) is a skirmish-style fantasy miniatures game. Each figure represents one person or creature. Simple rules regulate small-scale miniatures battles and mass battles involving hundreds. **BSf** is a fast-paced combat system for fighting miniatures battles in any fantasy world, but we provide rich background material and set of scenarios to get you started in the Bladelands. The **BSf** box contains: a 64p rulebook, a 160p Bladelands sourcebook, a 32p scenario book, a 32p color guide, 2 full color maps, and a set of 8 dice.

#8100 – Middle-earth Role Playing™ Boxed \$18.00

The Role Playing system perfect for novices as well as experienced gamers! Based on *The Hobbit*™ and *The Lord of the Rings*™, **Middle-earth Role Playing**™ (**MERP**™) provides the structure and framework for Role Playing in the greatest fantasy setting of all time... J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth! **MERP** is supported by a wide variety of Game aids, modules, Adventure supplements, and Ready-to-Run adventures.

#7010 – Silent Death™ (deluxe boxed game) \$40.00

Crammed full with 18 metal miniature spacecraft and bases (value – \$36 by themselves!), dice, maps, counters and more, **Silent Death** is an exciting boxed game of space fighter combat. **Silent Death** is an instant hit with Sci-Fi fans and gamers who like games with fast competitive play that blend the very best elements of boardgaming and miniatures. Also available without the miniatures as **Silent Death Unleaded**™ (#7000) for \$20.00.

#450 – Champions® \$26.00

Don't just read comic books, live them! With the easy-to-use character design system, your only limit is your imagination. **Champions** is based on the **Hero System**, the rules system of all **Hero** products. Because of this common thread, all **Hero Games** are compatible. Learn one **Hero Game** and you can easily play them all. **Champions** has just undergone an extensive revision, but all previous **Champions** material is still compatible.

#500 – HERO System Rulesbook™ \$20.00

The award-winning **HERO system** lets you role play any time, any place, any technology, and any power level. The unique character design rules allow creation of any character, whether he comes from a movie, a book, or your own imagination. Play fantasy fighters, modern spies, power-armor troopers, or even superheroes—it's all here! This jam-packed 224 page tome includes a complete superhero team provided for instant fun. The revised **HERO system** is cleaner, better integrated, and more streamlined than ever before.

#502 – Fantasy Hero™ \$20.00

This 256 page campaign book shows you how to run a fantasy campaign using the **HERO system**. Inside are extensive guidelines for designing fantasy characters, setting up a magic system, simulating fantasy combat, and setting up a fantasy campaign. Dozens of fantasy weapons, hundreds of spells, quick character design templates, and new ready-to-run scenario ideas are also included.

Adventurers Club™ Magazine

The magazine for **Hero Gamers**! The articles and columns are dedicated to expanding and improving the already fine line of **Hero Games**. The **AC** answers your questions and keeps you informed on upcoming releases. And there's a complete ready-to-play adventure in every issue!

These fine products are sold at better retail outlets worldwide. Available at better game stores — or order from ICE, Inc. P.O. Box 1605 Charlottesville Va 22902, USA. Prices are subject to alteration without prior notice. VISA & MASTERCARD orders (and catalog requests) call (800) 325-0479. Va residents, Canadians and overseas customers call (804) 295-3917. Please make phone orders during business hours: 9am-5pm, E.S.T., M-F. Call or Write for a free catalog!

HEROES ASSEMBLE!

We want to hear from you. Please take a minute to photocopy this page (or tear it out), answer the questions and mail it to us. We're interested in providing the best roleplaying supplements to you, so we need your feedback. When you speak, we listen.

1. Why did you buy *VIPER*[™]? _____

2. What did you like best about *VIPER*? _____

3. What did you like least about *VIPER*? _____

4. How did you hear about *VIPER*? _____

5. What is more useful to you: Campaign Supplements, Enemies Books or Adventures? Why? _____

6. What is your favorite role playing genre? What other genres do you like? _____

7. Do you play other Hero Games? Which ones? _____

8. What is your opinion of the art in *VIPER*? How important to you is art within a roleplaying game product? _____

9. What other Hero products would you like to see? _____

10. What other roleplaying games do you play? _____

11. If you don't mind please state:

your age: _____ years

your sex: _____ male _____ female

today's date: _____

where you bought this book: _____

Thanks! Now just complete the blank below, photocopy it, and mail it to: *VIPER* Feedback, Iron Crown Enterprises, P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip: _____

VIPER™

THE BOYS IN GREEN ARE BACK!

The *VIPER* sourcebook is the complete sourcebook for the most powerful villainous organization in the *Champions Universe*.™ Only the *VIPER* sourcebook gives you:

Background! *VIPER* has everything necessary for an exciting campaign, including an exhaustive history of *VIPER*, an examination of *VIPER* on every continent, personality profiles of Nest leaders, and new information on *VIPER*'s most dangerous ally, Duchess Industries. It also covers *VIPER*'s Ten Most Wanted list, using *VIPER* in different types of *Champions* campaigns (and *Cyber Hero*™ too!), five all-*VIPER* campaign outlines, *VIPER*'s recruitment and hunting policies, ten days in the life of a *VIPER* agent, and much more!

New agent types! Every level of agent from Trainees to the dreaded *VIPER* Commanders, as well as Aquatic Agents, Conventional Weapons Agents, the devious Mystery Agents, plus Psionic Specialists, Unarmed Combat Specialists, Vehicle Specialists, Robots, and the experimental Steel Serpent battlesuits.

New weapons! The *VIPER* arsenal is more deadly and versatile than ever—including such weapons as the VK-05 "Silverado" Pistol (with

exploding ammo and laser sight), and the X0-1 Powered Exo-skeleton (when your agents really need to be pumped up). New secret weapons such as the U-1200 "Flaming Death" Rocket Pod mean big trouble for any superhero unfortunate enough to be hit by them!

New vehicles! Sixteen special vehicles that give *VIPER* supremacy on land, sea, and air—from the Quetzalcoatl Flying Serpent to the Fang Speed Suit!

New Supervillains! From the Serpent Syndicate to *VIPER* Force-1 to the mysterious Supreme Serpent himself, *VIPER*'s dozens of new superpowered operatives will raise your *Champions* campaign to greater heights of villainy!

New (and old) adventures! Featuring a revision of the classic *VIPER*'s Nest campaign (including the rarely seen "Microfilm Madness" scenario)!

Playable with

CHAMPIONS®
THE *VIPER* ROLE-PLAYING GAME™

And all other
HERO SYSTEM™ Games

Made in U.S.A. #425



9 781558 061798

1-55806-179-7 ICE2000



Produced and distributed by
ICE, Inc.
P.O. Box 1605
Charlottesville, VA 22902 USA

