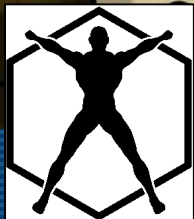


# DIGITAL HERO

# #26

DEC 2004



In this issue:

- Zombies
- Wights



- Crusaders
- Chronons
- Crosswords



- Big City
- New World
- Magic Tech



# Table of Contents

## HERO HIGHWAY

### WHEN LAST WE LEFT OUR HEROES...

Keep up with the news from Hero Games. This issue – The *Hudson City* Visitors' Bureau welcomes you to the neighborhood. 2

### HEROGLYPHS

See how Steve Long himself answers rules questions. This issue – That's about the size of it for Growth and Shrinking. 3

### YOU GOTTA HAVE CHARACTER

Cabeza de Vaca was one of the first European explorers of the New World's southeast, as well as a merchant and healer. 5

## RESOURCE ROAD

### INFORMATION THAUMATURGY

Technology and magic don't generally mix, unless experts of this magical style are on the job. 12

### THE TEMPORAL LEAGUE

Outside of time, and yet all through it, exists an agency dedicated to keeping the timestream free and clear. 21

## BURIAL GROUNDS

### BACK FROM THE GRAVE

The Undead have been depicted in numerous legends. Zombies and wights return from the grave to unleash their evil. 26

### ZOMBIE STYLE

Just because zombies are normally slow doesn't mean that they can't take advantage of a martial arts style all their own. 35

## CHARACTER CORNER

### THE COLORADO CRUSADERS

There aren't a lot of superhuman emergencies in the Rockies, but when they arise, so does this non-team of superheroes. 38

## BONUS FEATURE

### CHAMPIONS CROSSWORD

Every now and then, we need an extra page to fill out an issue. So, sharpen those pencils for the first Champions Crossword. 64

## DIGITAL HERO

### Publisher

Hero Games

### Editor

Dave Mattingly

### Authors

James Jandebour  
Steven S. Long  
Dave Mattingly  
Charles Picard  
Michael Surbrook  
Jason Walters

### Artists

Christopher Cooper  
Jason McCuiston  
Derrick Thomas

### Cover Artist

Rich Burlew

### Online

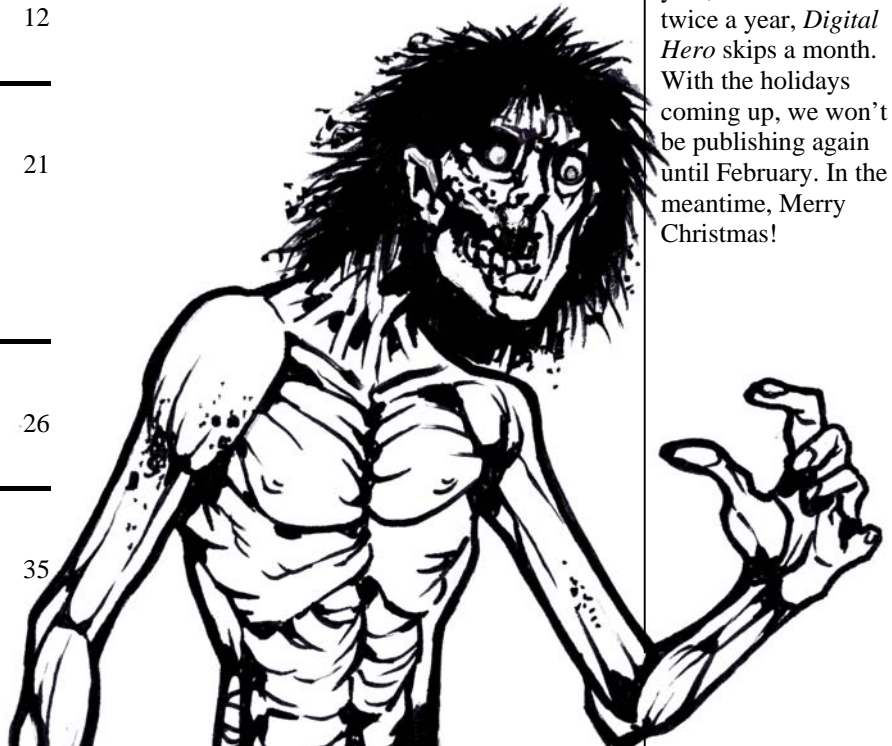
[herogames.com](http://herogames.com)

### To Subscribe

[herogames.com/digitalhero](http://herogames.com/digitalhero)

## EDITOR'S NOTE

With ten issues per year, that means that twice a year, *Digital Hero* skips a month. With the holidays coming up, we won't be publishing again until February. In the meantime, Merry Christmas!



HERO System™ is DOJ, Inc.'s trademark for its roleplaying system.

HERO System Copyright © 1984, 1989, 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

Champions Copyright © 1984, 1989, 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

Justice Inc., Danger International, Dark Champions, Fantasy Hero, and Star Hero Copyright © 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

No part of this electronic magazine may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or computerization, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher: DOJ, Inc., 1 Haight Street, Suite A, San Francisco, California 94102.

Issue #26 (December 2004)





# When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

...they were stalking through the streets of the city, guns at the ready, hunting for the street gang that gunned down one of their friends in a drive-by just a few hours ago....

And what city are they in? Hudson City! Just when you thought it was safe to go to the corner store for a carton of milk, Hero Games brings you the perfect urban environment for all your *Dark Champions* adventures: detailed, gritty, and full of scenario and character creation possibilities. *Hudson City: The Urban Abyss* is your guide to the people and places, streets and parks, and highs and lows of Hudson City in all its glory and squalor.

Chapter One, *The Pearl City*, discusses the history of Hudson City. From its founding in 1803, through the tumult and disasters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, right up to the advances of the Information Age, the Pearl City has expanded. Some would say it's healthy growth... others, more like a cancer.

Chapter Two, *The Lay Of The Land*, describes the city itself in extensive detail. After covering general urbanography — things like how the streets are laid out and what the weather's like — it delves into what's underground (providing information about sewers, rats, and other fun stuff you'll find beneath the surface) and discusses utilities and basic city services. Then comes the real meat of the chapter: detailed descriptions of all the major neighborhoods in the city, each with landmarks, shops, places to go, things to do, interesting NPCs, and of course lots of maps. Last but not least, this chapter describes the city's government, from the Mayor's office on down.

Chapter Three, *A Day In The Life*, covers day-to-day living in Hudson City. Every city has its own rhythms and routines, and the Pearl City is no different. Here you'll find information on

how Hudsonites entertain themselves, the slang they use, the media they get their daily news from, and the subcultures that call the city home.

Chapter Four, *The Long Arm Of The Law*, reviews the current state of law enforcement in Hudson City. The HCPD is a large and powerful organization that tackles a thankless task every day, and here's where you'll find out how they do it. This chapter also covers other law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, and related institutions like the Fire Department, the court system, and the prisons.

Chapter Five, *Predators*, looks at the HCPD's opposite number: the city's infamous underworld. Hudson City is notorious for its high crime rate, and this chapter shows how well-deserved that reputation can be, covering everyone from traditional organized crime groups (like the Mafia and Chinese tongs) to crimelords like Shango and Speargun.

Chapter Six, *Hot Spots For Cool Heroes*, provides detailed descriptions of a few locations that might be of particular interest to you and your heroes: the Skyline Club; Collins Guns; the Avenue of the Elms; and plenty of others.

Chapter Seven, the longest in the book, discusses how to GM a *Dark Champions* campaign using Hudson City. In addition to general GMing advice and character sheets for many criminals and NPC vigilantes, it includes the GM's Vault, which contains information about what's *really* going on in the Pearl City — things only the GM should know. It's also chock-full of character sheets for villains and NPC heroes, including the infamous Card Shark.

Hudson City is the biggest city book we've done to date — it should be nearly as large as *Millennium City* and *Vibora Bay* combined because of all the details that you need to get the right feel for a *Dark Champions* campaign. We

think it's a great place to adventure, and we hope you'll agree!

— Steven S. Long  
HERO System Line Developer



# HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

## Let's Get Small... Err, Big

### Creating An "Alter Size" Power

One aspect of the *HERO System* that has led to a lot of discussion, debate, and alternate rules over the years is the Size Powers — Growth and Shrinking. They've been reworked several times over various editions, and it continues to trouble some gamers that they don't more closely mirror one another. In the minds of some *HERO System* fans, the two powers would work better if they had greater consistency.

This column is my attempt to create a unified *Alter Size* Power that provides that sort of consistency. While I don't necessarily agree with the argument that Growth and Shrinking should "match" each other, it's a fun design experiment to try to merge them together. In the end, though, I suspect that the "solution" to this particular "problem" will annoy or trouble as many people as it will please. Such is the nature of gaming.

To unify Growth and Shrinking, it's necessary to strip away some of the granularity of, and abilities provided by, Growth. As it stands, Growth provides a lot of benefits, such as extra BODY and STUN, that have no analogue with Shrinking. A Shrunk character doesn't lose BODY, for example, even though a Grown character gains BODY. This has the additional benefit of streamlining the Growth rules by eliminating the need to discuss what happens when a Grown character gets injured and then returns to normal size. As always, a character using *Alter Size* to become larger can buy extra BODY or STUN that's Linked to the Power so that he becomes harder to kill or Knock Out (see the "Size Powers" section of *The UNTIL Superpowers Database* for many examples of similar abilities).

The *Alter Size* Power created here is a Body-Affecting Power (the "Size Powers" category can be eliminated now that there's just one Power for changing size). It's Constant, Self Only, and costs END. It costs 10 Character Points per "level" of size alteration. The standard rules for Growth and Shrinking apply unless otherwise noted. The accompanying table describes the benefits of altered size.

A character who buys *Alter Size* must decide whether he can become larger (Grow) or smaller (Shrink) when he buys the Power, and can't change this thereafter. For a +1 Advantage, *True Size Alteration*, he can become larger or smaller as he chooses (though he can't become both smaller and larger at the same time, of course).

### FURTHER TINKERING

With *Alter Size*, the only remaining points of disconnection between "Growth" and "Shrinking" are that Growing gives a character greater strength and reach. If you want to emphasize consistency, consider reducing a "Shrunk" character's abilities this way: -5 STR and  $\times\frac{1}{2}$  reach for every 10 points of Shrinking. Thus, a character using 30 points of Shrinking has one-eighth the reach of a human-sized character (which may make it difficult or impossible for him to reach some targets in HTH Combat; the GM should make that determination Phase by Phase) and -15 STR.

While this approach makes the two aspects of *Alter Size* more consistent, it also makes "Shrinking" a much less attractive ability for many characters. To counterbalance it, the GM might want to provide some additional benefit for "Shrinking" (even though that re-introduces the problem of keeping the two types of *Alter Size* consistent). For example, maybe "Shrinking" provides +1 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups per level, because small objects, details, and sensory effects are now much "larger" and more noticeable to the character. (If the GM wants to maintain consistency, perhaps "Grown" characters suffer -1 to PER Rolls per level because such things are now "smaller" and thus harder to notice.)



**ALTER SIZE TABLE**

<u>Pts</u>	<u>Height</u>	<u>Mass</u>	<u>PER Rolls</u>				
			<u>Against</u>	<u>DCV</u>	<u>KB</u>	<u>Reach</u>	<u>STR</u>
60	64.1-125m	3.21mil-25.6mil kg	+12	-12	-18"	+32"	+60
50	32.1-64m	400,001-3.2mil kg	+10	-10	-15"	+16"	+50
40	16.1-32m	50,001-400,000 kg	+8	-8	-12"	+8"	+40
30	8.1-16m	6,401-50,000 kg	+6	-6	-9"	+4"	+30
20	4.1-8m	801-6,400 kg	+4	-4	-6"	+2"	+20
10	2.1-4m	101-800 kg	+2	-2	-3"	+1"	+10
0	2m	100 kg	0	+0	+0"	+0"	+0
10	1.9-1m	99-12.5 kg	-2	+2	+3"	+0"	+0
20	.9-.5m	12.4-1.6 kg	-4	+4	+6"	+0"	+0
30	.4-.25m	1.5-.2 kg	-6	+6	+9"	+0"	+0
40	.24-.125m	.19-.025 kg	-8	+8	+12"	+0"	+0
50	.124-.064m	.024-.0032 kg	-10	+10	+15"	+0"	+0
60	.063-.032m	.0031-.0004 kg	-12	+12	+18"	+0"	+0

...and so forth, in either direction



# You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

"Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards." — Kierkegaard

"Though everyone wants what advantage may be gained from ambition and action, we see everywhere great inequalities of fortune, brought about not by conduct but by accident, and not through anybody's fault but as the will of God." — Cabeza de Vaca

"In my poverty I was forced to live on a coastal island with the Capoques Indians for more than a year in the land that is now called Texas. Because of the hard work they put me to, and their harsh treatment, I soon resolved to flee to the people of Charruco in the forests of the mainland. My life had become unbearable. In addition to other work, I had to grub roots in the water or from underground in the canebrakes. My fingers got so raw that if a straw touched them they would bleed. The broken canes often slashed my flesh; I had to work amid them without the benefit of clothes.

So I set to contriving how I might transfer to the forest-dwellers, who looked more propitious. My solution was to turn to trade. After escaping to the Charruco in February of 1530, I did my best to devise ways of making my traffic profitable so I could get food and good treatment. The various Indians would beg me to go from one quarter to another for things they needed; their incessant hostilities made it impossible for them to travel cross-country or make many exchanges. But as a neutral merchant I went into the interior as far as I pleased, traveling as far as the lands of the Oklahoma tribes. My principal wares were cones and other pieces of sea snail, conchs shaped for cutting, beads, and mesquite fruit which the Indians value very highly as it is used for medicine as well as a ritual beverage in their dances and festivities. These are the sorts of things I carried inland. By barter I got and brought back to the coast deer skins, red ochre which the Charruco liked to use for face paint, hard canes useful for making arrows, flint for arrowheads (often with sinews and cement to attach them), and tassels of deer hair which were dyed red.

This occupation suited me; I could travel where I wished, was not obliged to work, and was not a slave. Wherever I went the Indians treated me honorably and gave me food because they liked my commodities. They were glad to see me when I came and were delighted to be brought what they wanted. Thus I became well known; those who did not know me personally knew me by reputation and sought out my acquaintance. This served my main purpose, which was all the while to determine an eventual road out.

The hardships I endured in this journeying business are too long to detail — peril and privation, storms and frost, which often overtook me alone in the wilderness. By the unfailing grace of the Lord our God I came forth from them all. Because of them, however, I avoided the pursuit of my business in winter, a season when, anyway, the natives retire inside their huts in a kind of stupor, incapable of exertion.

Thus I was a merchant in this general coastal region for nearly four years, alone among the Indians and liked by them. The reason I remained so long was my intention of taking the Christian, Lope de Oviedo, away with me. Your Majesty may remember him as the strongest man that our commander (may God rest his soul) had brought along on the expedition. He was still dwelling on the coastal island amongst the Capoques, abandoned by our fellows. His companion Alaniz died shortly after their departure. To get Oviedo, now the last survivor, I passed over to the island every year and pleaded with him to come away with me so that together we might find our fellow Christians (and escape from the heathen lands). Yet Oviedo's treatment by those Indians had been much better than mine; each year he put me off, saying the next we would start.

It was, of course, the will of God that when he finally did agree to accompany me on my fourth and final visit, things did not proceed quite as favorably as we planned...."

— *The Revelation* of Cabeza de Vaca, penned for his Royal Majesty Emperor Charles V of Spain in 1542

## EXPERTS FROM *RELACION: ADVENTURES IN THE UNKNOWN INTERIOR OF AMERICA*

### *On Satan in America:*

"They said that a little man wandered through the region whom they called Badthing [*Mala Cosa*]. He had a beard and they never saw his features distinctly. When he came to a house, the inhabitants trembled and their hair stood on end. A blazing brand would suddenly shine at the door as he rushed in and seized whom he chose, deeply gashing him in the side with a sharp flint two palms long and a hand wide.... We asked them where he came from and where his home was. They pointed to a crevice in the ground and said his home was there below."

### *On Indian Medicine:*

"An Indian, falling sick, would send for a medicine-man, who would apply his cure. The patient would then give the medicine man all he had and seek more from his relations to give. The medicine man makes incisions over the point of the pain, sucks the wound, and cauterizes it. I have, as a matter of fact, tried it on myself with good results."





*On Western  
Medicine:*

"They fetched me a man who, they said, had long since been shot in the shoulder through the back and that the arrowhead had lodged above his heart. He said that it was very painful and kept him sick. I probed the wound and discovered the arrowhead had passed through the cartilage. With a flint knife I opened the fellow's chest until I could see that the point was sideways and would be difficult to extract. But I cut on and, at last, inserting my knife point deep, was able to work the arrowhead out with great effort. It was huge. With a deer bone, I further demonstrated my surgical skill with two stitches while blood drenched me...."

*On Same-Sex  
Marriage:*

"In the time I was living among these people, I witnessed a diabolical practice; a man living with a eunuch. Eunuchs go partly dressed, like women, and perform women's duties, but use the bow and carry very heavy loads. We saw many thus mutilated. They are more muscular and taller than other men and can lift tremendous weight."

**Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca**





## Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg, 3d6 [1]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
23	CON	26	14-	
21	BODY	22	13-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
16	EGO	12	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	1		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
43	END	-3		
41	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 125**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
Leaping: 3"/6"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

**Cost Powers** **END**  
22 *Christ-Like Healing Powers:* Healing BODY 2d6, Resurrection, Usable By Other (+1/4); Activation Roll 14- (-1/2), Gestures (Both Hands, -1/2), Incantations (-1/4) 5

**Perks**

- 6 Fringe Benefit: Captain, Member of the Lower Nobility
- 5 Money: Well Off

**Talents**

- 20 *Natural Language Prodigy:* Universal Translator 12-
- 3 Bump Of Direction

**Skills**

- 4 +2 with Arquebus
- 4 +2 with Crossbow
- 4 +2 with Sword
- 3 Acting 13-
- 4 Animal Handler (Bovines, Canines, Equines) 13-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 3 Paramedic 13-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 3 PS: Soldier 12-
- 2 PS: Author 11-
- 3 Riding 13-
- 7 Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical, Desert, Marine Surface) 12-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 6 WF: Blades, Bows, Crossbows, Early Muzzleloaders, Lances, Polearms, and Spears

- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Italy 12-
- 2 2) AK: North America 12-
- 2 3) AK: Southern France 12-
- 2 4) AK: Spain 12-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 125**

**Total Cost: 250**

**150+ Disadvantages**

- 15 Distinctive Features: White European in Pre-Colonial America (Concealable, Extreme Reaction, Not Distinctive in Some Cultures)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Very Complex Code of Personal Christian Chivalry (Very Common, Total)
- 5 Psychological Limitation: Slightly Mad (Uncommon, Moderate)
- 20 Rivalry: Professional (other, less-scrupulous conquistadors), Significantly More Powerful, Seek to Harm or Kill, Rival Aware
- 20 Social Limitation: White European in Pre-Colonial America (Very Frequently, Severe, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)
- 15 Unluck: 3d6

**Total Disadvantage Points: 250**

Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca was the first European to cross the North American Continent. The second-in-command of an extremely ill-fated Spanish expedition to explore Florida, Cabeza de Vaca lost a large number of his men to a West Indies hurricane before he even reached the beginning of his journey. Upon touching ground his exploration party quickly became stranded when they lost contact with their ships. Setting northward on foot, their numbers were soon reduced from 300 to 4 by starvation, hostile Indians, and disease. Yet Cabeza de Vaca pushed onward, traveling across Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and finally northern Mexico before arriving at what is now Mexico City with his four remaining comrades in 1537.

Cabeza de Vaca detailed his experiences in a report to the King of Spain entitled *The Revelation: Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America*. In addition to being one of the greatest true adventure stories ever recorded, *The Revelation* exists as an unmatched source of information on the pre-colonial Southwest's flora, fauna, and native peoples. It has also helped to cement his place in history as one of the New World's first important authors.

**OTHER IMPORTANT WORKS**

In addition to *The Revelation*, there have been several other important works of fiction, film, and history created about Cabeza de Vaca's adventures in the American Southwest. Cabeza de Vaca, Castillo, and Dorantes drew up a 30-page summary known as the *Joint Report* upon their arrival in Mexico City in 1536. It provides considerable supplementary information to his text as well as supporting the vast majority of his claims about the New World. Daniel Panger's *Black Ulysses* is a fantastic semi-fictional retelling of his journey told from the prospective of one of its other survivors: Estevanico, the Moorish slave. Its clean prose, exciting pace, and telling comments about the basic nature of the human experience make it a distinct pleasure to read. It was published to considerable critical acclaim in 1982.

The controversial film *Cabeza de Vaca* starring Juan Diego was released in American theaters in 1992. Directed by experimental Mexican filmmaker Nicolas Echevarria, the film deviates greatly (and many would argue

unnecessarily) from the author's account of his journey, to enable the director to make several telling points about exploitation, colonialism, and Christianity, often ignoring the historical fact that its main subject was a conquistador (although a rather compassionate one) who considered himself a Spanish patriot as well as a devout Catholic. Nevertheless this flawed movie does a rather excellent job of communicating the feel of many portions of *The Revelation* if not their substance.

## Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca

**Background/History:** Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca was born in the Andalusia wine center of Jerez in 1490. The descendant of a peasant soldier ennobled by King Sancho of Navarre for marking a mountain pass with a cow's skull during the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, Cabeza de Vaca (or "head of the cow") was the grandson of Pedro de Vera, the sadistic conqueror of the Canary Islands. Young Alvar grew up listening to old Pedro's tales of the New World in a house staffed with Guanche Indians that had been brought back to Spain to work as servants, an upbringing which must certainly have had an influence on his later decisions in life.

In the tradition of Spanish landed gentry, Cabeza de Vaca entered into a military career while he was still in his teens. At the age of 21 he marched in the army that King Ferdinand sent to the aid of Pope Julius II in 1511. He saw action in the battle of Ravenna in 1512 that claimed the life of some 20,000 people. The next year while in the service of Duke of Medina Sidonia he managed to survive the Comuneros civil war (which included the recapture of Alcazar from Sevillian rebels), the battles of Tordesillas and Villalar, and finally warfare against the French army in Navarre.

By 1527 Cabeza de Vaca was a veteran of enough distinction to receive a royal appointment as second-in-command in an expedition to conquer the land of Florida, a territory thought at the time to extend almost indefinitely westward across the New World. Unfortunately this mission was to be commanded by the infamous Pamfilo de Narvaez, a red-bearded, one-eyed conquistador with a reputation for both cruelty and incompetence. The expedition set out for Cuba, where it got caught in West Indies hurricane while in harbor (Alvar's account of the storm in his *Revelation* is the first written record of one). With the loss of several of their ships and a hundred of their men, the expedition was forced to refit at the now devastated town of Trinidad before setting out again.

Upon reaching the Gulf Coast of western Florida the would-be conquerors landed on an island off of the coast near Tampa Bay, where they raised various flags and announced possession of the land in the name of the King of Spain. After exploring the island a little both Cabeza de Vaca and Narvaez came to the conclusion that it was not suitable for human settlement (although there were Indians living there) and decided to explore further up the coast. A bitter argument then broke out between the two with Narvaez wanting to divide up their small army into an overland force while

sending the remainder up the coastline in their boats, while Cabeza de Vaca insisted on keeping the men together. In the end Narvaez pulled rank, and Alvar got to watch the expedition ships sail off into the distance never to be seen again.

The small force of 300 men began their march northward toward the Appalachee Bay, where a local Indian had suggested setting up a colony. It was tough going over dangerous, swampy terrain filled with hostile, well-armed, and warlike natives whose arrows were more than capable of puncturing the Spanish soldier's armor. The men had very limited rations. After weeks of fruitless marching punctuated by constant guerrilla attacks by local Indians the expedition had failed to find an ideal place to build a colony. Additionally a large portion of the men had contracted malaria. This was soon aggravated by dysentery. Pamfilo and Alvar began to take an intense disliking to one another, a situation which the commanding officer tried to solve by getting Cabeza de Vaca killed at every opportunity: sending him into hostile villages first, dispatching him on dirty-work reconnaissances, and putting him in charge of the vanguard while taking up the rear. Most of the men and officers felt trapped in the middle of this deadly argument, caught between a preference for Cabeza de Vaca's leadership and their respect for Pamfilo's rank in their king's army.

Finally making their way back to the sea, the conquistadors slaughtered their horses for food then began the arduous process of constructing five thirty-foot barges. By the end of 1527 they had lost nearly sixty of their men to disease, starvation, and Indian attacks. Desperate to escape a land that was increasingly looking more deadly than promising, they set out on their makeshift crafts in search of a way out to the open sea. Working their way around the northwestern coast of Florida they endured a series of catastrophic water-borne ambushes by Indians in canoes, further reducing their numbers. Finally, upon reaching the mouth of the Mississippi, their little flotilla became separated in the darkness as Pamfilo (whose barge contained a majority of the healthier men) abandoned the rest of his increasingly troublesome command. His final words to Cabeza de Vaca were that, "It was no longer a time when one should command another; that each must do as he thought best to save himself; that that was what he was doing now."

A storm then set in. Alvar and his men watched helplessly as the only other barge in sight sank from view, taking all of its crew with it. Winter had come to the Mississippi, making it bitterly cold for the starving men. Fighting the storm they finally reached the shore, where

a cooked meal and fresh water served to revive their spirits. Shortly thereafter friendly (and curious) Capoques Indians re-supplied the men in exchange for some trinkets. Stripping off their clothing and taking to their barge's oars the men once more attempted to brave the sea, only to have their barge swamped by a massive oncoming wave a few miles from the Capoques' village. Most of the men from his boat were killed while dozens of others from the original six barges were now scattered up and down the coastline.

Cabeza de Vaca settled into the island village for the winter. Quickly picking up their language he learned a number of survival skills from his hosts, assisting them as best he could in their various tasks. He also exhibited a talent for healing, both of the spiritual as well as the physical kind. After working for a year as a member of their village he struck out on his own to the mainland, working as a traveling merchant between the tribes of southern and northern Texas. Over the next four years he would wander as far north as Oklahoma and as far west as New Mexico.

Finally, after four years of working as a merchant and medicine man Alvar felt that he had the necessary physical, linguistic, and medical skills to make the trip to Mexico City, so he gathered together those few of his fellow Spaniards he could locate (and that were willing to go) in 1534. With only a rough idea of where they were going these four men simply followed the setting sun, walking from village to village where they would trade or heal the sick, depending on the situation. Along the way Cabeza de Vaca took careful note of everything around him including the animals (he was the first European to describe an opossum), the various edible and medicinal plants, the topography, as well as the culture of the native peoples. The reputation of the four men grew to legendary proportions as they approached the colonized regions of Mexico. Cabeza de Vaca became seized by a desire to bring a humane order to the affairs of the Indians by converting them to Christianity. He had found that he could cure their sicknesses, communicate many of the core ideas of his religion, and solve many of their tribal hostilities leaving the regions he passed through in a state of relative peace. It was rumored that he was even able to raise the (newly) dead.

The four travelers were received with considerable hesitation in Mexico City. Because of certain peculiarities in the Imperial seniority system, Alvar was now the highest-ranking Spanish officer in the New World. He immediately ordered all slave raids on Indians in Sonora and Sinoloa to cease. Because of his considerable stature amongst the Indians he was able to convince the terrified populations of these

providences to return and rebuild their villages once more. In the strongest possible language he ordered that the Indians were to be won to King and Christ through unrapacious, peaceful means. Then he returned to Spain.

Upon returning home in 1537 ten years older and considerably wiser, Cabeza de Vaca composed his seminal work *The Revelation: Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America* as a formal report to the King of Spain (it was later published). This work has come to be considered one of the most culturally, artistically, and scientifically important documents composed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Although he had hoped to command a second expedition to Florida, a half-year delay during his voyage caused the commission to go to De Soto instead (Alvar was offered a second-in-command position but not surprisingly turned it down). But the King, who was impressed on many levels by *The Revelation*, came through with an alternative appointment as Governor of the South American province of Rio de la Plata, a position that Cabeza de Vaca assumed in 1540.

Alvar's first action upon assuming office was to lead a relief force to rescue the disease and Indian beleaguered colony of Asuncion. Instead of taking a yearlong sea journey via Buenos Aires he opted to lead his men directly overland across 1000 miles of unexplored and supposedly impenetrable jungle and mountain filled with cannibal tribes. He accomplished this, arriving barefoot along with his men in 1542. The following year he led an even more remarkable expedition into Paraguay in search of the legendary golden city of Manoa. Extreme hardship, particularly during the tropical rains of the fall, forced him to turn back when his men would go no further. Upon his return to Asuncion Cabeza de Vaca fell victim to the twin menaces of fever and intrigue. As governor he had strictly forbidden the enslaving, raping, and looting of the native Indians – which were exactly the activities that most Spaniards had come for. So his men deposed him, returning him wretchedly to Spain in chains in 1543.

Back in his homeland Cabeza de Vaca was allowed to languish in prison. The Council for the Indies didn't even get around to trying him until 1551, and then they gave undeserved credence to the very same lieutenant governor who had led the mutiny in the first place. His sentence was to be banishment to Africa for a period of eight years, but the King interceded on his behalf, annulled the sentence, awarding the aging conquistador a pension as well as a seat on the *Audiencia*. Alvar spent the remainder of his years composing an account of his travels in South America, which was published along with his *Relacion* under the title *Comentarios* in 1555. He died in honor in 1557.

## CABEZA DE VACA PLOT SEEDS

*Turakian Fantasy*  
**Hero:**

King Markandor of Keshman has recently received intelligence from his royal explorers of a vast, unexplored continent three months sail south across the Uncharted Seas. This land is rumored to be filled with great riches including gold, silver, diamonds, and pearls the size of children's fists. With this newfound wealth the King can raise armies enough to crush the rebellious nobles within his nation, then march south to crush Korem-Var. To this end he has chartered an expedition of three ships to be led by the loyal nobleman Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca. Would the PCs like to sign up for glory, treasure, and exploration?

*Historical Fantasy*  
**Hero:**

The PCs are a part of Cabeza de Vaca's ill-fated expedition to Florida. Stranded in the New World without weapons, clothing, or provisions, are they skilled enough to survive the arduous walk across a continent to Mexico City? Or will they attempt the dangerous sea crossing by raft back to Cuba?



*Terran Empire Hero:*

Empress Marissa III DeValiere has received word from the Ministry of Exploration that a new inhabitable world with vast natural resources has been discovered in the Vorsan Expanse. Eager to lay claim to this rich world before the Mon'dabi or Thorgons discover it, she dispatches three ships under the command of Captain Alvar Nunez to establish an outpost, chart the surface, and run a variety of scientific tests. The PCs are among his crew. Of course, as soon as they get to this new world things start to go terribly wrong....

**Personality/Motivation:** Soldier, explorer, exploiter, merchant, medicine man, aristocrat, author, and savior: it is safe to say that Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca is an extremely complex man. Like all of the great conquistadors he marches under a king's name, has discovered a fabulous country, and endured legendary suffering in the process. Yet the only real enemies he seems to have been interested in vanquishing are his own body and will. His conquests lie in the realms of the sacred rather than that of territory and treasure. Cabeza de Vaca seems to regard the hostile men he encounters in his travels to be an extension of a hostile environment, rather than personally evil themselves. His transformation from a man of war to a man of brotherhood and human kinship was involuntary, gradual, and above all wrought with suffering, but transform he has from the aristocratic grandson of the man who cruelly suppressed the Canary Islanders to a man willing to champion their cause.

Alvar is an above all sympathetic man, averse to using violence except when it is absolutely necessary. He has a gentle, powerful way about him that is seldom found anywhere except amongst the company of profound saints and holy men. Calm and commanding, he genuinely seems to derive a sort of ascetic pleasure from the physical hardships to which he has been subjected. He is not brave in the traditional, martial sense of the word. Indeed, Cabeza de Vaca has fled violence and cruelty many times in his life with seemingly little bravado. Yet, possessed of a certain spiritual strength, he is willing to face incredible hardship and almost certain death to attain his goals.

**Quote:** “[Unlike the other Europeans] We had come from the sunrise, they from the sunset; he healed the sick, they killed the sound; we came naked and barefoot, they clothed, horsed, and lanced; we coveted nothing but gave whatever we were given, while they robbed whomever they found and bestowed nothing on anyone.”

**Powers/Tactics:** As multifaceted as a crudely shaped diamond, Cabeza de Vaca has accumulated a wide variety of skills, powers, perks, and talents over his eventful life. Born an aristocrat, he has the advantages of wealth (the Perk *Money: Well Off*), status (the Perk *Fringe Benefit: Member of Lower Nobility*), and culture (the Skill *High Society 13-*). A career military man serving the Spanish Crown, he holds a significant military rank as well as possessing the many skills (such as Weapon Familiarities, Combat Skill Levels, Professional Skills, and Tactics) that a lifetime in military service brings. He has also learned a good deal about simple field surgery as a result of his time in the Emperor's service (represented by *Paramedics 13-*).

A naturally talented linguist, Alvar needs only a very brief period of time to learn nearly any language fluently (the Talent *Universal Translator*). He has an innate sense of direction which has helped him innumerable times on his many travels around the globe (the Talent *Bump of Direction* and four separate AKs). Even more significantly, Cabeza de Vaca appears to be one of those rare men who are born with supernatural levels of endurance, toughness, and resilience (represented by CON and BODY scores above 20). He has also gained the ability to live off of the land in a wide variety of desert, mountain, forest, and jungle locations.

Yet Cabeza de Vaca's most remarkable power is his ability to faith heal. Under most circumstances this peaceful soldier can perform miraculous cures through the power of prayer. “Our method,” he wrote in *The Revelation*, “was to bless the sick, breathe upon them, recite a *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*, and pray earnestly to God our Lord for their recovery. We concluded with the sign of the cross.” In fact, Alvar has become so accomplished in his abilities that there have been reports of his raising men from their deathbeds.

**Campaign Use:** The evil conquistador or military occupier is an accepted convention in many roleplaying games, usually as a villain (TSR's *Forgotten Realms: Mazteca* fantasy setting has many of these). The exploring, rapacious (yet somehow noble) adventurer is an even more popular one. Cabeza de Vaca was all of these things yet none of them. Transformed by the land he was sent to tame, he attempted a radical, personal, and documented reconciliation between the Old World and the New centuries before such concepts became fashionable. Indeed, in his attempts to convert America's aboriginal inhabitants to Christianity the line between savior and saved became so blurred that Alvar may have believed (albeit for a brief period of time) that he himself had become the living Christ which he so avidly worshiped, transformed through his own sufferings into a mirror image of that healing, benevolent prophet.

Alvar is useful as a high-level heroic NPC in any setting that requires a well-intentioned, eccentric leader (or second in command) under the GM's control, most especially if that campaign takes place in an unexplored wilderness very far from the PCs' homeland. His role should be one of assistance or guidance rather than actual leadership, however. Much as the real life Cabeza de Vaca seemed to mysteriously materialize when the survivors of his expedition needed him, this NPC should appear from time to time during their travels to guide them, heal them, act as an interpreter, or if the situation requires, save them from hostile

natives through diplomatic means. His behavior should become more mysterious, enigmatic, and inexplicable (in a benevolent way) as the adventure continues until he finally materializes for the eventual climax of the campaign.

Another possibility is that the PCs might be sent out to hunt down a Cabeza de Vaca type character that has “gone native” and led several primitive but noble tribes in a revolt against the authority of their king or church. Assuming that those institutions have some less than admirable practices this might allow for some serious soul-searching on the PCs’ part, as well as giving the Cabeza de Vaca NPC a chance to use his long neglected military abilities. For a fantastic example of this sort of plot please watch Roland Joffe’s *The Mission*, starring Jeremy Irons and Robert De Niro (al though you may want to introduce a happier ending).

**Appearance:** Cabeza de Vaca is an aristocratic looking man with dark, serious features. He has piercing brown eyes that give him a certain air of command. Often thin to the point of appearing unhealthy, he is surprisingly strong for his size and weight. He wears whatever clothing and equipment is appropriate for his location: armor and shield when in service to the King of Spain, buckskins and moccasins when traveling across the highlands of Texas, and simple loincloths when in the swamps of Florida.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

### Books

Nunez, Alvar (Cabeza de Vaca). *Relacion*, 1984, University of New Mexico Press  
Panger, Daniel, *Black Ulysses*, 1982, Ohio University Press

### Films

Cabeza de Vaca (1992), Nicolas Echevarria, New Concorde



**AUTHOR'S NOTE**

The author would like to thank Anthony Vargas for his invaluable contributions.

# Information Thaumaturgy by James Jandebour

## Introduction

In most settings, magic and technology are, at least to some extent, exclusive. Characters in science fiction settings rarely use magic, and fantasy settings are usually technologically primitive. One notable exception to this is superhero settings, where magic mingles freely with science and even super-science. However, superheroic magic is very different from fantasy magic, being flashier, less restricted, and more powerful. Another option for modern day, or even near future, magic is Urban Fantasy, in which gunplay and spell slinging work side by side. The magic in these settings is closer to that of more typical fantasy, though the way it interacts with technology needs to be addressed.

This article lists several possible spells for such a setting. Magic and science are defined as compatible as well as coexistent, able to affect and even enhance one another in certain ways. For instance, enchanted firearms (and even heavier weapons) exist, and dedicated computers can carry out some magical rituals. For ease of use, *Turakian Age* concepts and general construction rules are used, though because magic tends to be rarer in Urban Fantasy it may not be appropriate to divide the Real Cost by 3 in order to get the final cost. Of course, any of this can be easily modified.

## HIDDEN WARS AND DIVERGENT TIMES

The HERO Universe does not currently contain a published Urban Fantasy setting. However, it is easy enough to run games in the subgenre without changes to the time line. For example, in the *Champions* era, there exists a shadow war of mystic forces, and some of them could easily use Urban Fantasy style spells. Robert Caliburn is known to use enchanted firearms, and although this specific feat is rare or even unique, it demonstrates the possibility of similar magic. The city of Vibora Bay is a hotbed of underground mystical activity and odd events. Thus, there is plenty of room in the modern era of the HERO Universe for Urban Fantasy.

However, after 2020, magic fades from the Earth's universe, so if Urban Fantasy is to be used after then it will probably be a departure from the standard timeline. The easiest detail to change is the aftermath of Witchcraft's last spell (see *Galactic Champions* for details). For whatever reason, instead of the magic dying out, it is actually strengthened. This creates a mix of *Fantasy* and *Cyber HERO*, where cybernetic mercenaries work with mystics to accomplish their tasks.

## SCIENCE AND MAGIC

Though these articles assume some compatibility between magic and science, there are other options. If they are incompatible, magic is most likely unchanged by technological advance. In this case, simply take spells straight from *Fantasy HERO* and its various supplements. If they actually interfere with each other's functioning, give them Limitations to represent this. For example, a spell might be weakened if in the presence of large amounts of technology (such as in a lab or factory), so take the Limitation *Works At Half Strength In Places Of Science*. Conversely, technological equipment might suffer from an Activation Roll (or even a Burnout or Jam Roll) if too much magic is being used in the vicinity: cars stop running when gasoline spontaneously turns to salt, and sensory equipment gets random and scientifically absurd readings.

Another possibility is for science to be replaced by magic in the modern day. The world looks much like ours, but magic is the basis. Daemons and elementals are controlled by skilled drivers to build skyscrapers, communications crystals replace telephones, and carpets replace cars. The drawbacks of civilization are there, too, with hordes of imps replacing stray animals and micro-fractures in the fabric of reality replacing pollution. It is not always a fair trade.

In this case, magic is common enough to be bought as Equipment or Skills rather than Powers. Magic Skills are the equivalent of Science Skills, with Wizard the Skill Enhancer that reduces the cost, and Magic Research replaces Inventor for expanding the body of commonly usable magic. This type of game can easily be played for comic effect (as in Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* series, which has a strong element of modernity in it of this type), but it certainly does not have to be (see several novels by Harry Turtledove for examples of a serious take, most especially *The Case of the Toxic Spell Dump*).



## Information Thaumaturgy

Computers have had a profound effect upon the world, and so have had a profound effect upon magic. Since they are used to alter and move information around, as Thaumaturgy does with matter and energy, the phrase Information Thaumaturgy was invented to describe magic using computers and communications technology. This was supposed to be a joke, but as sometimes happens, the name stuck.

IT is generally considered to be a subset of Divination, but some argue that it is more properly a type of Theurgy. Certainly, many of its spells have nothing to do with the gathering of knowledge, and the computer is used more as a symbol than for its literal abilities. Like so much in scholarly circles, the debate will likely never have resolution. Either way, IT is considered to have its own Power Skill, as the possible effects are far-reaching and overlap several types of magic, much in the same way as Witchcraft. IT specialists often refer to their spells as “programs,” “routines,” or “procedures.”

Typically, IT programs have the following Limitations: OAF (Fragile Computer,  $-1\frac{1}{4}$ ), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex,  $-\frac{3}{4}$ ), and Requires an Information Thaumaturgy Roll ( $-\frac{1}{2}$ ). The computer is not Fragile in the normal game sense: it will not necessarily be broken by a die or two of damage. However, it is also not usually as resilient as a normal Focus, can be damaged easily by various types of attacks (electricity, physical shocks, high temperatures, water, and so on), and can simply break down in a variety of inconvenient situations. Because of the Complex Gestures used in casting, the penalty to the IT Roll is three greater than it would otherwise be. Instead of the usual spell options, the following are used:

- G Strong, Weak, Difficult, Easy, Lengthy, and Attentive** are all standard.
- G Combat Computer:** The computer is armored and insulated from both physical and electrical shocks. Remove Fragile, reducing the Focus to OAF (-1).
- G Attached Combat Computer:** The computer is incorporated into something difficult to remove from the wizard, such as a bracer or belt. Reduce the Focus Limitation to OIF ( $-\frac{1}{2}$ ). The cost for this option can also be used for a concealed system (IAF) or a wizard that can run his programs on any system (OIF [computer of opportunity]).
- G Control Gloves:** The computer’s keyboard and other controls have been replaced by gloves that allow it to be controlled by simple hand movements. Reduce the Gestures Limitation to  $-\frac{1}{4}$ . This can be easily changed to “Voice Recognition” by replacing Gestures with Incantations.
- G Macro:** The program can be started by the press of a single button or similarly simple action. Remove the Gestures Limitation. Unless the Focus is made Inaccessible, it is still possible to prevent the use of spells with Grabs and Entangles.
- G Combat Configuration:** IT specialists interested in personal combat (a tiny minority, to be sure) will often take both the Attached Combat Computer and Macro Options. Reduce Focus to OIF ( $-\frac{1}{2}$ ) and remove Gestures altogether.
- G Newbie’s Version:** As Apprentice’s Version.
- G Elite’s Version:** As Master’s Version.

## FAMILIAR

Wizards frequently need a familiar, a creature to help them with their work. Unsurprisingly, IT specialists tend to manufacture their own. One common form is the “Daemon,” a creature based wholly on software and living in the wizard’s computer. These creatures have a tenuous connection to all electronic media, and are thus able to give general answers about virtually any topic. Unfortunately, much of the information is false or misleading, so it is best not to rely on it too heavily. They also learn some magic from their masters, and can help in typical programming tasks.

### Daemon

5 DEX 18 INT  
18 EGO 2 SPD

**Abilities:** *Commands Of My Master:* Mind Link, One Specific Mind (Summoner), Psychic Bond; 15 points’ worth of programs (spells); Absolute Range Sense; Absolute Time Sense; Eidetic Memory; Speed Reading (x1000); Universal Translator 13-; Program: Assist Programming Task; Program: Run Programs On Command; Program: Search Database For Requested Information;

Computer Programming 17-; Cramming x2; Power: Information Thaumaturgy 18-; KS: All Information on Computerized Media 20-; SS: All Sciences on Computerized Media 20-

**100+ Disadvantages:** Distinctive Features: Mystic Aura (Not Concealable, Unusual Senses); Psychological Limitation: Totally Loyal To Programmer/Summoner (Very Common, Total)

## Offensive Programs

### CHANGE GLOBAL SETTINGS

**Effect:** Change Environment, Varying Effects  
**Target/Area Affected:** 8" Radius  
**Programming Time:** 1 Phase  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** 1 Minute  
**Range:** 15"  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -9  
**END Cost:** Charges

**Description:** The wizard can connect to the "universal operating system" and alter the environmental parameters for a nearby location. This allows a bewildering number of effects, from making the location into the Sahara Desert in miniature to high on Mount Everest. The possibilities are only restricted by having to match an environmental condition normally found on Earth: the IT specialist cannot, for example, make the environment the surface of the Sun. The program can usually only work once a day: the UOS seems to block further attempts to alter it so directly.

**Game Information:** Change Environment 8" radius, -3 OCV, Multiple Combat Effects, Varying Combat Effects, Varying Effect (Any "Setting" Effect, +1) (90 Active Points); OAF Fragile (Computer, -1¼), 1 Continuing Charge lasting 1 Minute (-1), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Limited Range (15", -¼), Extra Time (Full Phase to Activate, -¼). Total cost: 18.

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) Strong Program:** Increase OCV Penalty to -5. Active cost 110; total cost 22.
- 2) Weak Program:** Decrease OCV Penalty to -2. Active cost 80; total cost 18.
- 3) Combat Computer:** Reduce Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 19.
- 4) Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-½). Total cost: 21.
- 5) Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Two Hands from Gestures, making it -¼. Total cost: 20.
- 6) Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 21
- 7) Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-½) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 26.
- 8) Newbie's Version:** Add Side Effects (Energy Blast 3d6, -¼). Total cost: 17.
- 9) Elite's Version:** Remove Requires an IT Roll (-½). Total cost: 20.
- 10) Lengthy Program:** Increase to Extra Time (1 Turn, -¾). Total cost: 16.
- 11) Better Universal Hacking:** Increase Charges to 6 (-0). Total cost: 22.

### DELETE

**Effect:** 8d6 Major Transform  
**Target/Area Affected:** One target  
**Programming Time:** 1 Phase  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** Instant  
**Range:** 15"  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -12  
**END Cost:** Charges

**Description:** This spell can be terrifying to those not understanding its true effect, and is not much better for those that do. It apparently erases the target from existence. What it actually does is removes the properties that allow it to interact with the physical universe: mass, opacity, and so on. A living character will wander about without being perceived by most senses until the effect is somehow removed.

**Game Information:** Major Transform 8d6 (Target into Target with Desolidification Always On and Invisibility (to All Normal Sense Groups) Always On, All Primary Characteristics Reduced to 1, Healed by Another Application of This Power or Similar Effects, or a Dispel That Overcomes the Active Points of This Power) (120 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Side Effects (Side Effect Only Affects the Environment Near the Character; Delete Affects Another Target or Targets, -¾), 6 Charges (-¾), All Or Nothing (-½), Extra Time (Full Phase, -½), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Limited Range (15", -¼). Total cost: 19.

**COMPUTER CRACKING**

Most IT specialists stay away from physical combat, using their magic to avoid it or, when necessary, for attack and defense. A few, however, have concluded that this is too often insufficient. With the most common weapon at hand their reinforced computer systems, they developed various maneuvers using it, then traded those maneuvers with others online. This has become the Computer Cracking Martial Art, though it is also known by other names, most of them less than complimentary. Computer Crackers cannot take the Style Disadvantage.

**Computer Cracking:** Usable with Clubs Weapons Group; Clubs Weapon Element is Free

Maneuver	Phs	Cost	OCV	DCV	Notes
Bang	½	4	+0	+2	Weapon+2 DC Strike
Dynamic IP	½	4	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Firewall	½	5	+1	+3	Block, Abort
Hack	½	4	-2	+0	HKA ½d6
Splat	½	3	+0	+1	Weapon+v/5, Target Falls
Static IP	½	4	+0	+0	+15 STR to Resist Shove, Block, Abort

**Skills**

Computer Programming*	KS: Information Technology/Thaumaturgy World
Electronics	PS: Computer Hacker
KS: Computer Cracking Martial Art*	CuK: Geek/'Leet "Culture"
KS: Computer Systems	SS: Computer Engineering
KS: Computer Languages	

**Elements** Barehanded: +1 Use Art Barehanded

**Special Abilities:** Computer Crackers can use their systems as weapons without damaging them. This is 1 to 3d6 dice of Hand Attack, bought with the same Focus Limitation as the IT specialist's programs. For obvious reasons, the computer cannot be Fragile.

Some Crackers develop some minor magic for use with their fighting style. The most common is referred to as "Move" ("Drag & Drop" by GUI users), and allows some range for the Art.

**Move:** *Stretching 6", Does Not Cross Intervening Space (+¼) (37 Active Points); OAF (Computer, -1), Limited Body Parts (Limb with Computer, -¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼). Total cost: 15 points.*

**Defensive Programs****BORN AGAIN SHELL**

**Effect:** Teleportation, Regeneration with Resurrection

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Programming Time:** 1 Week

**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures

**Duration:** Until programmer is killed

**Range:** Self

**Magic Roll Penalty:** -7

**Charges:** 1

**Description:** The IT specialist can use this program to avert his own untimely death. It stores the essence of what he is on his home system, and programs it with spells to retrieve his corpse and repair the damage done to it. This takes at least a week of programming, and the complexity of the program means it often takes substantially longer. It also requires a fairly powerful system to store the information and run the programs, and so is bought Immobility.

**Game Information:** *Teleportation 1", No Relative Velocity, Trigger (When Killed, +¼), Difficult To Dispel (4x Active Points, +½), Armor Piercing (x2, +1), MegaScale (1" = 100,000 km, +½), Invisible Power Effects (Hide Effects of Power, Fully Invisible, +2) (75 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Week, Storing, -¼), 1 Charge (-2), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout, Storing, -1), Trigger Only (-1), Can Only Teleport to Fixed Locations (-1), Requires an IT Roll (Storing, -½) (total cost: 7 points) plus Teleportation: Fixed Location to Home Computer (1 Location) (total cost: 1 point) plus Healing 1 BODY, Resurrection, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½), Invisible to Magical Senses Group (+½) (75 Active Points); Extra Time (Regeneration-Only, 1 Day, Character May Take No Other Actions, -3), Self Only (-½), OAF (Immobile, Fragile, Home Computer, -2¼), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout, Totally Unaware of Nearby Events, Character is Unconscious while Healing, -1½), Must Follow Teleportation (-½) (total cost: 9 points). Total cost: 17 points.*

**SOFTWARE**

One option for an IT specialist is that his magic is not created by specially designed hardware, but by the software it runs. In this case, he buys his programs in the usual fashion, but the Focus Limitation only indicates the system he normally uses. With the proper equipment, which can be anything as simple as a floppy or CD or as complex as high-end networking components, he can transfer the magical software to any system the GM determines can run it (although there may be further restrictions on running the program, at the GM's option).

Although similar to taking the Computer Of Opportunity Focus, the Software Focus is not quite the same. The Focus can be thought of as "computer running enchanted software," but the software must still be there even if a computer is available. Computer Of Opportunity should still be taken if it is particularly difficult to deprive the character of the software, of course. It is often very appropriate to take Multiple Foci for this option, as it is easy to make copies of software (in fact, easier than transferring it, which requires the extra step



of erasing it from the original system), but isn't required.

### PRETTY GOOD PROTECTION

**Effect:** Force Field (8 PD/8 ED/8 Mental Defense/8 Power Defense)  
**Target/Area Affected:** Self and carried items  
**Programming Time:** Phase  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** Constant  
**Range:** Self  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -5  
**END Cost:** 2

**Description:** This program separates the programmer from normal reality just enough to make it more difficult to harm him. It defends against a wide variety of effects, but it requires a special mental key to turn off. If an enemy gains this key (usually with mind-reading magic requiring EGO level of effect, as the key is constantly in surface thoughts while the program is running), PGP can be bypassed completely as long as the enemy maintains telepathic contact and keeps the key in his surface thoughts.

**Game Information:** *Force Field (8 PD/8 ED/8 Mental Defense/8 Power Defense), Protects Carried Items, Reduced Endurance (1/2 END, +1/4) (52 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1/4), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -3/4), Requires an IT Roll (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, Delayed Phase, -1/2), Can Be Bypassed with Appropriate Key (-1/4). Total cost: 12.*

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) Strong Program:** Increase all defenses to 12. Active cost 72; total cost 17.
- 2) Weak Program:** Decrease all defenses to 4. Active cost 32; total cost 7.
- 3) Combat Computer:** Reduce Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 13.
- 4) Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-1/2). Total cost: 15.
- 5) Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Both Hands from Gestures, making it -1/4. Total cost: 14.
- 6) Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 15.
- 7) Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-1/2) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 19.
- 8) Newbie's Version:** Add Side Effects (Entangle 3 DEF 3d6, -1/2). Total cost: 11.
- 9) Difficult Program:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 5 Active Points, -1). Total cost: 11.
- 10) Easy Program:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 20 Active Points, -1/4). Total cost: 13.
- 11) Elite's Version:** Remove Requires an IT Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 14.
- 12) Lengthy Program:** Increase to Extra Time (1 Turn, Only to Activate, -3/4). Total cost: 11.

### R.A.D.S. V1.4

**Effect:** +6 DCV  
**Target/Area Affected:** Self  
**Programming Time:** None  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** Constant  
**Range:** Self  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -3  
**END Cost:** 3

**Description:** In the 1980s, a pair of armored mercenaries calling themselves Mayhem and Destruction first appeared. They were only active for about a year before disappearing, but one notable thing about the team was their Rapid Avoidance Defense System. This system was later adapted into an Information Thaumaturgy program by the wizard Michael Blake, and has since been upgraded several times. It predicts not only where attacks will land, but the most efficient way to avoid them, making it very useful to stereotypically awkward computer wizards. The relatively unnatural and swift movement is somewhat tiring.

**Game Information:** *+6 with DCV (30 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1/4), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -3/4), Costs END (-1/2), Requires an IT Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 7.*

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) Strong Program:** Increase to +8 DCV. Active cost 40; total cost 10.
- 2) Weak Program:** Decrease to +4 DCV. Active cost 20; total cost 5.
- 3) Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 8.
- 4) Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-1/2). Total cost: 9.
- 5) Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Both Hands from Gestures, making it -1/4. Total cost: 9.
- 6) Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 9.
- 7) Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-1/2) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 12.
- 8) Newbie's Version:** Add Side Effects (Drain DEX 6d6, -1). Total cost: 6.
- 9) Difficult Program:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 5 Active Points, -1). Total cost: 7.
- 10) Easy Program:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 20 Active Points, -1/4). Total cost: 8.
- 11) Elite's Version:** Remove Requires an IT Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 9.
- 12) Lengthy Program:** Add Extra Time (1 Turn to Activate, -3/4). Total cost: 6.

## Movement Programs

### CHANGE DIRECTORY

**Effect:** Teleportation, Extra-Dimensional Movement

**Target:** Self and possible passengers

**Programming Time:** Half Phase

**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures

**Duration:** Instant

**Range:** None

**Magic Roll Penalty:** -6

**END Cost:** 6

**Description:** IT specialists often view the universe in terms of computers. For example, some think of spatial coordinates as a “universal directory system,” a system they can access with their magically enhanced computers. By doing so, the wizard can move himself to distant places. The best can even access other dimensions, considered “remote systems” in the parlance of IT.

#### Game Information:

##### Cost Power

- 16 *Change Directory:* Multipower, 60-point reserve; all OAF (Fragile Computer, -1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Side Effects (Random and Inconvenient Teleport, -¼)
- 2u 1) *Sub-directory:* Teleportation 22”, No Relative Velocity, Position Shift (59 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Side Effects (Random and Inconvenient Teleport, -¼)
- 2u 2) *Parent Directory (Dot Dot):* Teleportation 5”, No Relative Velocity, 512x Noncombat (60 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Side Effects (Random and Inconvenient Teleport, -¼)
- 2u 3) *Root Directory (Backslash):* Teleportation 6”, No Relative Velocity, Safe Blind Teleport (+¼), MegaScale (1” = 10,000 km, +1¼), Can Be Scaled Down 1” = 1km (+¼) (60 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Side Effects (Random and Inconvenient Teleport, -¼)
- 1u 4) *Remote System:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Dimension, Any Location) (40 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Side Effects (Random and Inconvenient Teleport, -¼)

Total cost: 23 points.

#### OPTIONS:

1) **Strong Program:** Increase reserve to 90 points. Increase slot 1 to 37” and slot 2 to 20”. Total cost: 31 points.

2) **Weak Program:** Decrease reserve to 40 points. Decrease slot 1 to 12”, slot 2 to 32x Noncombat, and slot 3 to Megascall: 1” = 1 km. Total cost: 15 points.

3) **Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 24.

4) **Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-½). Total cost: 27.

5) **Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Both Hands from Gestures, making it -¼. Total cost: 25 points.

6) **Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 27 points.

7) **Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-½) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 38.

8) **Elite’s Program:** Remove Requires IT Roll and Side Effect. Total cost: 27 points.

9) **Lengthy Program:** Add Extra Time: Full Turn (-1). Total cost: 16 points.

10) **Attentive Program:** Add Concentration (0 DCV, -½). Total cost: 18 points.

## Sensory Programs

### LIQUID CRYSTAL BALL

**Effect:** Clairsentience, Sight Group and Normal Hearing

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Programming Time:** 0

**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** 2 km

**Magic Roll Penalty:** -4

**END Cost:** 4

**Description:** This program turns the IT specialist’s monitor into a spying device, capable of seeing and hearing at two kilometers away.

**Game Information:** *Clairsentience (Sight Group and Normal Hearing), 8x Range (1000”) (40 Active Points); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½). Total cost: 11.*

## WHAT IS CYBERSPACE?

In an Urban Fantasy game, the concept of “cyberspace” can be very different from that in other settings. Of course, it could simply be a high-tech illusion, with no literal reality whatsoever. With the proper background and reasoning, that doesn’t mean that it can’t be an interesting, or even dangerous, “place” to adventure. Other settings have long used “plugging in” to the ‘Net, which allows skilled users even more speed and ability than they would otherwise have, but opens them up to specially designed attacks. Even without the element of danger, virtual worlds can still be used as interesting places to roleplay. Imagine an MMORPG that you actually seem to live in, with rules for real world trade and exchanging ideas and secrets in the local pub. While the character wouldn’t be in any real danger, some financial matters may hinge on the “game within a game”: even in our world, people have, however briefly, made money and even fair livings in such game worlds.

Of course, with magic around, that may not be the whole

story. As characters work and play more online, perhaps ways open up into other realms through cyberspace. Perhaps the “waking dream” of virtual reality creates a new realm in the Dreamlands, similar to the normal one but with even more tenuous connections to the “dreamers.” This would largely be similar to the above for most people, but skilled wizards might be able to use dream magic to enter the dream-like states of people online, and predators in the dream might be able to use their powers on such hapless victims.

It is also possible, that as the result of Art, cyberspace could be a part of the dimension of Babylon (see Mystic World for more details), realm of Art and invention. As virtual reality becomes more “real” to more people, new sections could form in the great city, ones made of pixels or polygons. Online creatures and programs might escape into this place, and become its main inhabitants. Of course, not all things given intelligence and form in cyberspace are going to be friendly: viral monsters and giant worms might very well inhabit the alleys of Babylon’s Internet quarter.



## Miscellaneous Programs

### AVATAR

**Effect:** Multiform (350 point character)  
**Target/Area Affected:** IT specialist  
**Programming Time:** Half Phase  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** 1 Turn  
**Range:** None  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -7  
**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** Many an IT specialist has an electronic persona significantly different from himself, whether for a chat, bulletin board, or game. This routine allows him to transform into this “higher form” and use its abilities, though he also gains its restrictions and foibles. Most versions of this program are highly unstable, often crashing (and returning the character to his normal form) and only lasting a short time in the best of circumstances. The Avatar spell requires GM permission if the alternate form is more points than the normal one, as will often be the case.

**Game Information:** *Multiform (350 Character Points) (70 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), 1 Recoverable Continuing Charge lasting 1 Turn (Recovered through 10 Minutes of Work Restoring Computer, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½). Total cost: 16.*

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) **Strong Avatar:** Increase Multiform to 450 point form. Active cost 90; total cost 21.
- 2) **Weak Avatar:** Decrease Multiform to 200 point form. Active cost 40; total cost 9.
- 3) **Combat Computer:** Reduce Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 17.
- 4) **Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-½). Total cost: 20.
- 5) **Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Both Hands from Gestures, making it -¼. Total cost: 19.
- 6) **Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 20.
- 7) **Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-½) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 25.
- 8) **Difficult Avatar:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 5 Active Points, -1). Total cost: 15.
- 9) **Lengthy Avatar:** Add Extra Time (1 Turn, only to activate, -¾). Total cost: 13.
- 10) **Long-Lasting Avatar:** Increase Charge duration to 5 Minutes. Total cost: 19.
- 11) **“Realistic” Avatar:** The Avatar form can only exist in Cyberspace, Babylon, or similar dimension. This is similar to Astral Projection, but the wizard is not as fully committed, and can survive the death of the Avatar. Change to: Duplication (creates 350-point form), Altered Duplicates (100%, +1) (140 Active Points); Concentration (0 DCV Throughout, Character is

Totally Unaware of Nearby Events, -1½), Duplicate Only Exists “Online” (-1½), OAF Fragile (-1¼), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), Only to Activate, -¾), Requires an IT Roll (-½). Total cost: 19.

### MATH COPROCESSOR

**Effect:** Lightning Calculator, +2 to mathematically based skills  
**Target/Area Affected:** Self  
**Programming Time:** None  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** Constant  
**Range:** Self  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -2  
**END Cost:** 2

**Description:** This spell connects the IT specialist’s mind with his computer, allowing him to make calculations at the blinding speed of a computer. Obviously, this enhances his mathematical skills, but it can also improve anything such calculations would be useful in, including ranged combat. It is a rather straightforward program, only requiring an instant to start, though it gives a -2 to other IT rolls in that same Phase.

**Game Information:** +2 Overall (20 Active Points); OAF (Fragile, Computer, -1¼), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Only Usable if Roll Can be Defined as Having a Mathematical Basis (-½), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾), Costs END (-½) (total cost: 4) **plus** Lightning Calculator; OAF (Fragile, Computer, -1¼), Requires an IT Roll (-½), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -¾) (total cost: 1). Total cost: 5.

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) **Strong Program:** Increase to +4 Overall. Active cost 43; total cost: 10.
- 2) **Weak Program:** Remove Overall Levels. Active cost 3; total cost: 1.
- 3) **Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 6.
- 4) **Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-½). Total cost: 6.
- 5) **Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Two Hands from Gestures, making it -¼. Total cost: 6.
- 6) **Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 6.
- 7) **Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-½) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 8.

## DIGITAL HERO #26

### MULTIPROCESSING

**Effect:** Aid to INT and SPD (10 Points)  
**Target/Area Affected:** Self  
**Programming Time:** Phase  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures  
**Duration:** 2 Turns for INT, 1 Turn for SPD  
**Range:** Self  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** -5  
**END Cost:** 5

**Description:** Like Math Coprocessor, this program enhances the IT specialist's mental abilities, allowing him greater insight and speed. However, if the program is not set up just right, it momentarily twists his perceptions, causing pain (the Ego Attack).

**Game Information:** *Aid Characteristics 3d6+1 (Standard Effect 10 points), INT and SPD Simultaneously (+1/2) (49 Active Points); OAF (Fragile Computer, -1/4), Gestures (Both Hands, Complex, -3/4), Costs END (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase, Only to Activate, Delayed Phase, -1/2), Requires an IT Roll (-1/2), Self Only (-1/2), Side Effects (Ego Attack 3d6, -1/2). Total cost: 9.*

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) Strong Program:** Increase to 6 1/2d6 (Standard Effect: 20 points). Active cost 97; total cost: 18.
- 2) Weak Program:** Decrease to 2d6 (Standard Effect: 6 points) and remove Variable Effect (+1/2). The spell only enhances INT. Active cost 20; total cost 4.
- 3) Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OAF (-1). Total cost: 9.
- 4) Attached Combat Computer:** Decrease Focus to OIF (-1/2). Total cost: 10.
- 5) Control Gloves:** Remove Complex and Two Hands from Gestures, making it -1/4. Total cost: 10.
- 6) Macro:** Remove Gestures. Total cost: 10.
- 7) Combat Configuration:** Reduce Focus to OIF (-1/2) and remove Gestures. Total cost: 12.
- 8) Newbie's Version:** Increase Side Effects to 6d6 Ego Attack (-1). Total cost: 8.
- 9) Difficult Program:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 5 Active Points, -1). Total cost: 8.
- 10) Easy Program:** Change to Requires an IT Roll (-1 per 20 Active Points, -1/4). Total cost: 9.
- 11) Elite's Version:** Remove Requires an IT Roll and Side Effect. Total cost: 11.

### SPELL CHECKER

**Effect:** +5 to Information Thaumaturgy  
**Target/Area Affected:** Self  
**Programming Time:** None  
**Programming Procedures:** Focus  
**Duration:** Persistent  
**Range:** None  
**Magic Roll Penalty:** None  
**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** Many IT specialists have this software installed on their systems. It allows much more complex programs to be used, as it checks and corrects commands as they are entered.

**Game Information:** *Information Thaumaturgy +5 (10 Active Points); OAF (Fragile, Computer, -1/4). Total cost: 4.*



**SPIRIT PAGE****Effect:** Mind Link**Target/Area Affected:** Single Spirit**Programming Time:** 1 Turn**Programming Procedures:** Focus, Gestures**Duration:** 1 Phase**Range:** Any**Magic Roll Penalty:** -3**END Cost:** 3

**Description:** While some mystics insist that urban magic is a soulless aberration, the IT specialist with this routine has a different opinion. It contacts a denizen of the Spirit World, allowing the wizard to send a brief message. The spirit is in no way controlled or forced to appear, so the best results are obtained if a previous arrangement has been reached with the one contacted. It is a frequent practice to store a number of extra contact “numbers” in the phone or computerized database of the system being used.

**Game Information:** *Mind Link, Any Spirit, Any Dimension, No LOS Needed (30 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), -1/4), OAF (Cell Phone, -1), Requires an IT Roll (-1/2), Costs END (-1/2), Instant (-1/2), Limited Class of Minds (Previously Contacted Spirits whose “Number” is Known, -1/2), Gestures (-1/4) (Real Cost: 5) plus +15 INT (15 Active Points); Only to Increase Minds for “No LOS Needed” in Mind Link (-2), OAF (Cell Phone, -1) (Real Cost: 4). Total cost: 9.*

**OPTIONS:**

**1) Larger Rolodex:** Increase INT bonus to +25. Active cost 55; total cost 11.

**2) No Rolodex:** Remove INT bonus. Active cost 30; total cost 5.

**3) Newbie’s Page:** Add Side Effects (Summon hostile 150 point spirit). Total cost: 9.

**4) Elite’s Page:** Remove Requires an IT Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 10.

**5) Variant Spirit Page I:** This version of the program actually draws the contacted spirit to the IT specialist. Change to: Summon 200-point Spirit, Friendly (+1/4), Expanded Class of Beings (Previously Contacted Spirits, +1/4) (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), Requires an IT Roll (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Spirit Arrives under its Own Power (-1/2). Total cost: 18.

**6) Variant Spirit Page II:** Alternatively, the IT specialist can use the Contact Perk with the Spirit option (*Fantasy HERO*, page 98). Contact: Spirit Allies (Useful Skills or Resources), Spirit Contact (x2), Organization Contact (x3) (12 Active Points) 11-

**TOKEN TELEPATHY****Effect:** Images to Hearing Group**Target/Area Affected:** Recipients of message**Programming Time:** Full Phase**Programming Procedures:** Focus**Duration:** 1 or more days, or until message delivered**Range:** 50’**Magic Roll Penalty:** -3**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** Sometimes, the IT specialist needs to get a message out, and secrecy is more important than time. It places a “token” on a nearby target, one that is spread to anyone he comes in contact with. When the designated recipient (or recipients) is reached, the token delivers a verbal message of about twenty words, then dissipates.

**Game Information:** *Hearing Group Images 1” Radius, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Uncontrolled (Lasts 1 day + 1 day per Point Roll Made By or Until All Recipients Receive Message, +1/2), Sticky (+1/2), Usable As Attack (Defense is Non-Human Class of Mind, +1), Invisible Power Effects (Hide Effects of Power, Fully Invisible, +2) (27 Active Points); Only to Deliver Spoken Message to Selected Recipients (Caster Selects One Recipient + 1 More per Point Roll Made By, -2), OAF (Networking Equipment, -1), Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), Requires an IT Roll (-1/2), Limited Range (50’, -1/4). Total cost: 5.*



# The Temporal League by James Jandebaur

## Introduction and Background

In the year 2050, Doctor Andre Washington, a brilliant physicist, was working toward defining the structure of space and time. He was employed by Harmon Research, a small company that had broken off from Harmon Industries some years before. In spite of budget reductions and other setbacks, he made his greatest discovery: a form of energy he dubbed “chronon radiation”. This energy was everywhere, and he postulated that it was responsible for holding things in their proper time and place. He further predicted that it would some day allow travel in time as well as space.

Unfortunately, Harmon Research did not have the resources of its parent company, and spent very little on security. A team of mercenaries, hired by mega-corporation Duchess Industries, broke in, badly injured Dr. Washington, and stole the research notes. This could not be proven, and Duchess covertly created the Time Branch, the purpose of which was to develop a working time travel device. In 2056, they succeeded.

What followed was a time, if the word had any meaning, of chaos and change. Duchess used their newest weapon to alter history in order to increase their power and wealth. Although they were cautious, as they did not want to damage their interests, they found history very difficult to predict. Eventually, their plans were uncovered and the Time Branch brought down, but by then great damage had already been done.

In the modified history, Duchess was much more successful in their plans, as was VIPER before it. This meant that the world’s superheroes and governments were in a much poorer position to resist when Tyrannon the Conqueror invaded. The Time Branch succeeded in making Duchess more powerful, but at the cost of two billion lives, with possibly more to come due to heightened international tensions. When Duchess’ Time Branch was shut down, extensive notes on the pristine time line and interim ones were found. It was decided that this kind of tampering had to be prevented from ever happening again.

The United Nations, still maintaining significant influence in the new time line, chose to resurrect the organization UNTIL, now standing for United Nations Temporal Investigations League. This became known simply as the Temporal League, to differentiate it from the original UNTIL. By UN order, they were to be the only ones allowed to research time travel, with the express purpose of controlling it. Journeys into the past would be allowed for

research, with supervision by the League, but for no purpose other than policing the time line.

The League’s duties ultimately proved impossible. The events were too well publicized, and though it required genius to discover time travel, it only required brilliance to recreate it. History was changing too quickly to keep up with, and further catastrophe was inevitable. The League settled on a radical solution. Using technology filched from the far future, they established the Citadel, their base of operations. They actually captured a singularity, which serves two purposes. It powers the Citadel and all of its equipment (see Singularity Power, *Star HERO*, page 173; this particular plant provides 800 END/800 REC). More importantly, it stabilizes the existence of the League in time. As a result, changes in history leave the Citadel and the League untouched, which is essential to their mission.

Once the League’s existence was assured, they altered a single event. When Dr. Washington was beginning his collegiate studies, they posed as several counselors and teachers, steering him onto a new course. While still becoming a brilliant and acclaimed researcher, his great discovery and all that came of it simply never happened.

The Temporal League now exists without a history of its own. The sacrifice was successful, however, and the time line is only threatened by a few villains, rather than dozens or hundreds. Of course, these villains are beings such as Istvatha V’han, so the League still has its work cut out for it. To counter the great power of these enemies, they have continued to recruit from history (both the “correct” one and alternate ones), and have researched a variety of devices and tricks for their agents’ use.

The Citadel is in the Solar System, but it does not remain long in a given time. It moves from the past to the future, and sometimes into alternate time lines, in order to be difficult to find. The League knows very well that if their enemies are ever allowed to bring significant forces against them, they would be destroyed. The singularity at the heart of the Citadel makes it difficult to move it in space, but Research is working on this to provide more options.

## TEMPORAL LEAGUE PLOT SEEDS

The standard League adventure: An alteration to history has occurred, one that the PC’s (whether members of the League itself or specialists recruited for one mission) are the best suited to deal with it. They must travel (or be transported) to the appropriate time, discover what happened, and correct the problem.

The Oversight Committee has ruled that Captain Chronos (from Conquerors, Killers, and Crooks) is to be avoided by field teams. Is he somehow involved with the League, or is something stranger going on?

It is decided that a hero from the past (or the future) is to be recruited into the League. Typically, just before his death or disappearance, the team must make contact, convince him of who they are, and transport him back, all without disrupting history. What happens if the hero does not wish to go, even if it means his death?

## JONATHON SAMUEL THORNE

15 STR 18 DEX  
15 CON 10 BOD  
18 INT 13 EGO  
18 PRE 8 COM  
6 PD 4 ED  
3 SPD 6 REC  
30 END 26 STUN

**Abilities:** Temporal League Package; TIC Undercover Agent Package; 12 points of Martial Arts; Ambidexterity (-2 Off-Hand penalty); Bump Of Direction; +2 Overall; Rapid Attack (Ranged); WF: Common Melee Weapons, Temporal Weapons; Demolitions 13-; KS: History 13-

**Disadvantages:** Temporal League Disadvantages; Distinctive Features: Missing One Eye, Bad Scar; Hunted: Xenovores 8-; Physical Limitation: One Eye; Psychological Limitation: Loves Freedom; Psychological Limitation: Protective of Innocents

**Notes:** John Thorne, code named "Janus", is from the middle period of the Xenovore Wars. As a member of the Terran Intelligence Command, he was assigned to Sigma Caeruleus III to work with the resistance there. Originally, he and his team were killed in an action due to faulty intelligence, though the mission

## Organization

The Temporal League is divided into three primary branches. The Temporal Oversight Committee is primarily responsible for examining historical records (provided by field teams) in order to discover anomalies. They then assign missions based on the skills of available personnel. They also police the League itself and attempt to insure that the membership does not abuse its power.

The largest branch is Temporal Investigations, the field agents (sometimes called the Temporal Investigations Corps, TIC to the Oversight Committee's TOC). This is the group that carries out the instructions of the Oversight Committee, as well as doing direct observation of important points in history. Most PC's in the League will belong to this group. The Temporal Champions are considered part of Investigations for most purposes.

The last and smallest branch is Research. This is headed by Dr. Washington, one of the first people to join the League when the UN founded it in his time line. Like all of the original membership, he has a temporal duplicate because of the change to his own history. The Andre Washington working for the League remembers well his discovery and what came of it, and will never allow the havoc to be repeated. Research is responsible for further refining the time travel techniques, as well as developing special weapons and other equipment based on the same principles. Other advances are typically acquired by field agents rather than researched at the Citadel.

## Character Building

Temporal League characters come from many times and places, so they have a wide variety of abilities and power levels. Typically, they are built on 50 points more than other characters of their home time. So, characters from Heroic ages are built on 100 Base Points and up to 100 Points in Disadvantages. This allows them to purchase the Temporal League Package, presented below, while maintaining their original abilities. Members of the Temporal Champions, the League's superpowered branch, are built on a base of 300 points. This allows them to purchase the Package and their own form of time travel, while not needing more than the standard 150 in Disadvantages. Currently, no member of the League is of a higher power level than this, leaving it to the PC's if desired.

With the GM's permission, characters can take Disadvantages related to their home time. For example, a superhero from the Champions time period might be Hunted by VIPER or have a Secret (or Public) ID. Hunteds and Reputations subtract 5 points for Limited Temporal Area, and

Social Limitations take a similar penalty for Not Limiting In Some Times. Of course, these should only be allowed if the character is going to be visiting his home time fairly often, and only if they still apply.

Different time periods often have slightly different rules for character building. This can be handled in two ways. The first is to use one set of guidelines for all characters. For example, Temporal Champions characters should all be built using the rules for superheroes, requiring that they buy all commonly used abilities, do not have Characteristic Maxima to start with, and so on. The other method is to allow characters to use the rules of their home times, but apply the same caps and other restrictions to all of them. So, a wizard from the Turakian Age (dividing spell costs by 3), a Varanyi from the Terran Empire period (with a Multipower of Psionics), and a Dark Champions spy (with a selection of free equipment from his home time) can work together because they have the same limits on Damage Classes, Defenses, and Skill Rolls.

### TEMPORAL LEAGUE PACKAGE DEAL

#### Cost Powers

- 5 *Anti-Aging Treatments:* LS (Longevity: Immortal)
- 7 *Memory Implantation:* Variable Skill Pool, 6 Base + 3 Control Cost (9 Active Points); Only Changed at Citadel, Oversight Committee Determines Skills (-1)

#### Talents/Perks

- 3 Absolute Time Sense
- 3 Anonymity
- 3 Fringe Benefit: Temporal League Member
- 20 Universal Translator

#### Skills

- 3 Deduction
- 2 Navigation (Temporal)
- 3 Paramedics

#### Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Temporal League 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, PC is Very Easy to Find, Watching)
- 15 Hunted: Forces of Istvatha V'han 8- (As Pow, NCI, Harsh)
- 15 Social Limitation: Subject to Orders (Very Frequently, Minor)

**Package Cost: 4**

## League Equipment

The Research Branch has been developing new ways of using chronon radiation for many years now, resulting in a wide selection of equipment for field agents to choose from. They also have many non-temporal items to choose from. These are primarily from *UNTIL: Defenders of Freedom* and *Gadgets & Gear*, but with GM's permission any published item is possible. The League has access to the entire history of the Earth, so very little is impossible to obtain.

Typically, a character can have a number of Real Points in equipment equal to his Temporal League Member Perk times ten. If the mission is particularly easy or difficult, the multiplier can be adjusted as the GM feels is appropriate. Temporal Champions characters, with their great personal power, generally do not have equipment allocated to them. To avoid having one PC overpowering the others, ranks should generally be kept within two points of each other. Equipment must always be either appropriate for the time that is traveled to or it must be disguised. Rarely, a mission does not require discretion, and more powerful weapons are allowed.

In addition to the items below, the *UNTIL Superpowers Database* has any number of power write ups that can have Focus and Charges added to them to create chronon-based equipment. In particular, the Teleport, Time, and Speedster Powers are good places to look. The League has also developed (or acquired, no one outside of Research seems to know which) a few Chronoportation Boxes, from *The Ultimate Vehicle*. These are typically used when large numbers of people need to be moved, such as in evacuation or actual military action by the League.

While Research has developed a number of tricks using chronon radiation, there are some things it cannot be used for. As Dr. Washington originally surmised, it acts as an "anchor" to a given time and place, but that is all. By changing the frequency of the chronon radiation of an object, it becomes displaced to the location and period appropriate for that frequency. Therefore, it can be used for travel through time and space, and several applications have been developed around this. However, it cannot be used for some traditional time-manipulation tricks, such as changing the age of a target or damaging him through hunger or thirst. It does not alter the flow of time, but only moves the subject through time. It also cannot be used to place an item or person twice in the same time: the target will simply shed the radiation, remaining unmoved. Research is always thinking, though, and some equipment has been developed that resembles some of the traditional time-manipulation abilities.

## CHRONON ADJUSTER

**Effect:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (Time Travel)

**END Cost:** 210

**Combat Modifiers:** None

**Range:** No Range

The most crucial piece of equipment the League possesses is the Chronon Adjuster. It is their primary means of time travel, and the safest. The Adjuster takes up most of the center of the station, consisting primarily of banks of computers and the massive equipment used to alter chronon radiation to the proper frequencies. It is powered directly by the singularity power plant at the heart of the base.

The actual projector room is a huge amphitheater, with a platform for subjects in the center. The projector itself is overhead, and can send as many as eight human sized subjects through time per use. The platform is surrounded by sensors and personnel monitoring the trip. They are capable of shutting the apparatus down at a moment's notice.

The artificial radiation created by the Adjuster will eventually break down, the subject returning to the platform shortly after he left. The amount of energy the subject is imbued with determines how long he remains in the target time period. This is simulated with the Time Delay Advantage. In game terms, the Adjuster is used twice: once to set up the Time Delayed portion of the Power, and once for the actual travel.

Draining the energy from the subject prematurely will also return him to his starting point. This is simulated in game terms with the Trigger Advantage. Because it cannot be Dispelled normally without sending the subject back, it is also bought with Inherent, although this is normally illegal.

**Chronon Adjuster:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Point in Time), 8x Increased Mass, Time Delay (+1/4), Trigger (If Power Would Have Been Successfully Dispelled, +1/4), Inherent (+1/4), Usable As Attack (Defense is Time Powers or Power Defense, +1) (206 Active Points); Increased Endurance Cost (10x END, -4), OAF Immobile (-2), Crew-Served (60 people, -1 1/2). Total Cost: 24 points.

was judged a success. This is when he was recruited.

Thorne believes passionately in freedom for all people, and would be willing to lay down his life again for this cause. Therefore, he fits right in at the League, having concluded that to tamper in history is the ultimate betrayal of freedom. It is unlikely that he will ever alter history on purpose, though his need to protect innocent lives may one day cause such a mistake. In the past, he has balanced his protectiveness with the knowledge of how many others could be harmed if he should change history.

In general, Thorne is assigned to covert operations, using his TIC training for infiltration and information gathering. The rare open combat operation is also likely to involve him as a sniper or scout. He's a big Caucasian man with a single dark blue eye (he won't allow a replacement for the other unless necessary for a mission, for reasons unknown) and a bad facial scar, and keeps his dirty blonde hair shaved short. He doesn't speak often, preferring to listen to what others have to say.

The specifics of the TIC Undercover Agent Package can be

found in the *Alien Wars* setting book, page 89. Thorne does not have the Disadvantages from that package, only the Abilities.

## CHRONON PROJECTOR PISTOL

**Effect:** Various attack forms, Concealment for this weapon only

**Shots:** Varies per types of ammunition carried

**Combat Modifiers:** +2 OCV

**Range:** 350"

This is the primary weapon to come out of chronon research. Combining the technologies of the chronon capacitor (a device for storing chronon radiation of a specific frequency) and chronon projector, a weapon with a variety of possible effects is created. The "shells" are the capacitors, charged to send the target to a specific destination. The ammunition is selected using a concealed pad on the weapon itself. There is no recoil to the weapon, so it is particularly accurate, and the beam hits a fraction of a second before it is fired, making it hard to avoid. The CPP can hold up to 20 rounds, and is usually loaded with 4 of each standard type. It is only issued for very dangerous missions or to high-ranking League agents.

"Send Him To Detroit" displaces the target briefly to some dangerous situation where he takes damage, the end of the Battle of Detroit being a favorite. "In The Beginning" is similar, but sends him into a situation in which his senses are overloaded. "Hospitalization" sends the target briefly to the Citadel's medical facility, where trained physicians stand by. These three rounds affect the target so briefly that they tend to overcome the defenses against chronon-based movement. "Incarceration" (which sends the target to the Citadel's holding cells) and "Intervention" (which pulls the target from real time into "fast" time, see below for example), however, have no effect on targets with those defenses.

### Chronon Projector Pistol:

#### Cost Powers

- 50 *Chronon Projector Pistol:*  
Multipower, 100-point Reserve (100 Active Points); All Slots OAF (-1)
- 3u 1) *"Send Him To Detroit" Round:*  
RKA 4d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (90 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1)
- 3u 2) *"In The Beginning" Round:*  
Sight, Hearing and Radio Groups  
Flash 10d6, Armor Piercing (+½) (90 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1)
- 3u 3) *"Hospitalization" Round:*  
Simplified Healing 6d6, Ranged (+½) (90 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1)
- 3u 4) *"Incarceration" Round:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (Citadel Cells), Ranged (+½), Usable As

Attack (defense is time powers or Power Defense, +1) (100 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1)

2u 5) *"Intervention" Round:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (Fast Time), Indirect (+½), Transdimensional (Single Dimension: Normal Time, +½), Ranged (+½), Usable As Attack (defense is time powers or Power Defense, +1) (70 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1), Can Only Be Used From Fast Time (-½)

5 +2 with Chronon Projector Pistol (10 Active Points); OAF (-1)

6 Concealment 17- (19 Active Points); OAF (-1), Only to Conceal Pistol's True Nature (-1)

**Total Cost: 75 points.**

#### Options:

The most common option is a different number of each type of round. If this is taken, use the costs in Options 1-4 for the Slots and re-figure the total cost. Total number of rounds should come to twenty or less. If a type of round is not taken at all, simply subtract the cost of that Slot from the total.

- 1) *Smaller Loadout I:* Change Slot to 1 Charge. Final Slot Cost: 2, 2, 2, 2, 1.
- 2) *Smaller Loadout II:* Change Slot to 2 Charges. Final Slot Cost: 3, 3, 3, 3, 2.
- 3) *Larger Loadout I:* Change Slot to (up to) 8 Charges. Final Slot Cost: 4, 4, 4, 4, 2.
- 4) *Larger Loadout II:* Change Slot to (up to) 16 Charges. Final Slot Cost: 4, 4, 4, 5, 3.
- 5) *Single Round Type:* Eliminate the Multipower Pool and just buy one of the individual Powers with 20 Charges (+¼). Final Cost: 63, 63, 63, 66, 41.
- 6) *Holdout Weapon:* This version is very small, so easily concealed, but can only hold 2 shots, always of the same type. Change the Concealment to +5 with Concealment, Only to Conceal Pistol (-½), and use the Single Round Type Option but reduce to 2 charges (-½). Final Cost: 37, 37, 37, 39, 28.



**FAST TIME CAPACITOR**

**Effect:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (to “Fast Time” dimension)

**Uses:** 1 round trip

**Duration:** Until used to return to “real” time

**Range:** Self

Research recently discovered a way of temporarily removing chronon radiation from a subject, storing the radiation until it is needed. When this is done, the subject is pulled “out of time”, existing between seconds until restored. This has been dubbed “Fast Time” by field teams, as it appears that everything around the user slows to a stop.

This does not give the full advantages one might expect. A person in fast time can affect nothing in real time (even if Transdimensional is purchased). Attempts have been made to create devices that will return to real time when activated, but they never seem to arrive. Research hypothesizes that it requires an effort of will, in addition to the technology, to return from fast time. The only known way to affect someone in real time is the “Intervention” round for the Chronon Projector Pistol, and this is often used in recruitment missions.

Additionally, no form of teleportation or intangibility has been found to work in Fast Time, so exploration becomes difficult unless in an open area. Because of these restrictions, Fast Time is usually used for resting and similar actions.

**Fast Time Capacitor:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (Fast Time, Any Location) (25 Active Points); 2 Charges (-1½), IAF (-½). Total Cost: 8 points.

**ORIGIN POINT CAPACITOR**

**Effect:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (time travel), merges “present” self with “past” self

**Charges:** 1

**Duration:** Permanent

**Range:** Self

Called the “Do Over” by field teams, this device is charged with the same chronon frequency as a mission starting point. By returning to the exact time and place he started, the user merges with his past self, overcoming the restriction of chronon-based travel against existing twice in a time period. This gives the user and his team a second chance to accomplish a mission, often with the added advantage of information from the “previous” attempt.

**Origin Point Capacitor:** Extra-Dimensional Movement (Single Point in Time) (40 Active Points); 1 Charge (-2), IAF (-½) (Real Cost: 11) plus Duplication (creates 200-point form), Easy Recombination (Zero-Phase Action at Full DCV) (50 Active Points); Only To Merge With Past Self (-2), 1 Charge (-2), IAF (-½), Linked (Extra-Dimensional Movement, -¼) (Real Cost: 9). Total Cost: 20 points.

**Options:**

- 1) *More Powerful I:* Increase to 300 Point Duplicate. Total Cost: 23 points.
- 2) *More Powerful II:* Increase to 450 Point Duplicate. Total Cost: 28 points.
- 3) *Less Powerful:* Decrease to 100 Point Duplicate. Total Cost: 16 points.

**TEMPORAL OVERDRIVE**

**Effect:** 21 Points Aid to Speed

**Charges:** 4

**Duration:** 1 Turn

**Range:** Self

This device is a capacitor containing “undifferentiated” chronon radiation. When released, this radiation duplicates the radiation around the user, causing him to “skip” through time for the next twelve seconds. This allows him to act more often than usual.

**Temporal Overdrive:** Aid SPD 7d6 (standard effect: 21 points) (70 Active Points); 4 Charges (-1), IAF (-½), Self Only (-½), Only Lasts One Turn (-½). Final Cost: 20.

**Options:**

- 1) *Quicker Release:* Some agents modify the Overdrive unit to release its energy in larger bursts. Change to 10d6 (standard effect: 30 points) of Aid, but only 2 Charges (-1½). Final Cost: 25.
- 2) *Larger Capacitor:* Change to 16 Charges. Final Cost: 28.
- 3) *Added Focuser:* Allows the chronon radiation to be released as a beam. Remove Self Only and add Limited Range (+¼). Final Cost: 29.
- 4) *Slow Release:* The chronon radiation is released more evenly, causing many small “temporal skips” rather than a few large ones. This allows a boost to the user’s effective Dexterity as well as Speed. Add Increases Dexterity And SPD Simultaneously (+½). Final Cost: 30.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barber, Richard and  
Anne Riches. *A  
Dictionary of  
Fabulous Beasts.*

Barlowe, Wayne  
Douglas.  
*Barlowe's Guide  
to Fantasy.*

Drnnys, Nicholas B.  
*The Folklore of  
China.*

Gill, Sam D. and  
Irene F Sullivan.  
*Dictionary of  
Native American  
Mythology.*

Guiley, Rosemary  
Ellen. *The  
Encyclopedia of  
Ghosts and  
Spirits.*

Hallakarva, Gunnora.  
*The Walking  
Dead: Draugr  
and Aptrgangr in  
Old Norse  
Literature.*

Nassau, Rev. Robert  
Hamill.  
*Fetichism in West  
Africa*

Punch, Sean M.  
*GURPS Undead.*

Rose, Carol. *Giants,  
Monsters, and  
Dragons: An  
Encyclopedia of  
Folklore, Legend,  
and Myth.*

Rose, Carol. *Spirits,  
Faries,  
Leprechauns, and  
Goblins: An  
Encyclopedia.*

Rovin, Jeff. *The  
Fantasy  
Almanac.*

Spengler, Egon.  
*Tobin's Spirit  
Guide.*

# Back from the Grave

by Michael Surbrook

## Zombies and Wights

Peter: When there's no more room in  
hell, the dead will walk the earth.  
— *Dawn Of The Dead*

## Zombies

A zombie is an animated corpse, brought to life under the command of a sorcerer. The term “zombie” probably comes from the Congo word *nzambi*, which means “spirit of a dead person.” According to Vodoun (better known in America as Voodoo) beliefs, a zombie is created by a *bokor*, a Vodoun sorcerer. He creates zombies to act as his servants and slaves, for a zombie raised from the dead has no will and is under the direct command of the *bokor*. As an interesting side note, zombies may actually exist. The chemical compounds used by a *bokor* to create a zombie contain very potent toxins and hallucinogens, which in combination may serve to mentally impair an individual to the point where he is virtually a mindless automaton.

Writer William Seabrook reported seeing actual zombies in Haiti, where they worked the canefields. According to him, they worked like robots and their eyes were “...staring, unfocused, unseeing.” Ethnobiologist Wade Davis studied zombies extensively for his 1985 book *The Serpent and the Rainbow*. He actually interviewed several zombies and learned how they had been poisoned, buried, and dug back up again. He also conducted extensive analysis on the compounds used by a *bokor* to create their zombie powders. He found these powders to contain a highly toxic combination of venom from toads, snakes, puffer fish, and an assortment of plants. This compound was given to victims, causing them to fall into a coma-like state so extreme enough to have them pronounced dead. After being buried alive, the victim would then be dug up, fed more powders, beaten, starved, and finally put to work as the *bokor*'s slave.

## Assorted Animated Dead from Around the World

Dargent Peytraud: When you wake up,  
scream, Doctor Allen. Scream all you  
want. There is no escape from the  
grave.

— *The Serpent and the Rainbow*

**Rolang:** A *rolang* is a form of Tibetan zombie. It is created using what is possibly the most disgusting ritual ever conceived. The ceremony runs as follows: the magician who desires to create a *rolang* must first lie full-length atop a fresh corpse, pressing his mouth to that of the corpse. The magician must then repeat a specific incantation in his mind. The corpse will awaken during this ritual and try to escape by struggling and jumping about. The magician, in turn, must retain his hold upon the corpse and must continue to chant his incantation. Eventually, the tongue of the corpse will protrude out of its mouth, at which point the magician will bite it off and the *rolang* will collapse. The tongue is then kept as a powerful magical object. If the magician loses his hold during this ritual, the *rolang* will turn and kill him before fleeing to haunt the local area.

**Umkovu:** This Zulu form of the zombie is a corpse dug up and returned to a semblance of life by a sorcerer. The *umkovu*'s tongue is slit to prevent it from speaking.

**Wengwa:** Found in the folklore of the Gabon people of western Africa, a *wengwa* is a corpse animated by a sorcerer to do his bidding.

## WRITE UPS OF ASSORTED ZOMBIES

Sergeant Farrell: Well, I think Bill's  
got a point. If you look at the whole life  
of the planet, we... you know, man, has  
only been around for a few blinks of an  
eye. So if the infection wipes us all out,  
that is a return to normality.

— *28 Days Later*

## Traditional Zombi

**Ecology:** A zombi (also known as a *nzambi*, *zombie*, or a *zumbi*) is created using a long and complex chemical process concocted by a *bokor* (Vodoun sorcerer). The procedure begins by giving the potential zombi a compound designed to place him into a deathlike state, allowing the victim to be pronounced dead and buried for later retrieval by the *bokor*.

This compound requires a wide range of ingredients, starting with excretions of the bouga toad, sea snake venom, ground millipedes, tarantulas, poisonous *tcha-tcha* seeds, *consigne* seeds, leaves from the common cashew tree, and leaves from the *bresillet* tree. Ground into a fine powder, the resulting mixture is buried for two days.

Once the powder is dug back up, more plants are added. These include ground *tremblador* and *desmembre* plants, as well as leaves from the *aman gupres*, *mashasa* (two types of stinging nettles), *dieffenbachia* (also known as dumbcane) and *bwa pine*. Following this, the *bokor* then adds the skins of white tree frogs, more tarantulas, a second bouga toad, and parts from four species of puffer fish. The puffer fish contains *tetrodotxin*, one of the most lethal substances in the world. Finally, ground-up human remains may be added to the mixture for a final horrific effect.

Once administrated to a potential victim, this highly toxic concoction results in a trance so deep that even a thorough medical examination will result in the victim being pronounced dead. Buried alive, the victim is helpless until the *bokor* chooses to dig them up again. At this point, the *bokor* feeds the new zombi a combination of cane sugar, sweet potatoes, and *Datura stramonium*, which is also called the “zombie’s cucumber.”

At this point, the zombi is usually mentally impaired and unable to function normally. Under the virtual control of the *bokor*, the new zombi is then sent out to work in the fields, a local bakery, or possibly to act as a shop clerk.

To prevent someone from being raised as a zombi, the body needs to have its soul removed, thus giving the *bokor* nothing to capture when attempting to create a zombi. Normally, the body is stabbed through the heart or decapitated in an attempt to empty it.

Once made into a zombi, the only way to free the victim is by feeding the zombi salt. At this point the zombi will remember who he is, regain his ability to speak and sense of taste, and return to the grave, freed from the *bokor*’s influence.

**Personality/Motivation:** A zombi only does what its creator (usually a *bokor*) tells it to do. As they have virtually no self-will, zombis have little other purpose in their lives other than doing whatever tasks have been assigned.

**Powers/Tactics:** If ordered, a zombi will attack with whatever weapon is handy. As most zombis are used for simple labor, they are generally unarmed; although field workers may have farm tools, and a zombi working in sugarcane fields will almost certainly be carrying a machete. As they feel no pain and have no sense of self-preservation, a zombi will not retreat if ordered to attack, and will fight until destroyed.

**Campaign Use:** The traditional zombi is a creature greatly feared by the Haitians. They do not fear being attacked by a zombi, but instead fear becoming one. As an interesting side note, current research into the powders made by a *bokor* in order to raise a zombi may yield some medical benefits.

This form of zombi is best used for pulp-era games, which are often rife with strange voodoo cults and witch doctors (most of which are inaccurately depicted, however) or street-level *Dark Champions* games, where the complex chemical process used to make a zombi fits in well with the more realistic feel common to such settings. For those who want a more extreme form of zombie, the Cinematic Zombie is recommended.

**Appearance:** A zombi has the same appearance after its “death” as it did while alive. The only major difference is the zombi’s glassy and unfocused stare and that a zombi is generally unaware of its environment.

## JUST ADD WATER

The ability for a *bokor* to brew up a potion that can turn an otherwise normal person into a zombi is bought as follows:

### Create Zombi:

*Major Transform 7d6 (normal human into zombi, is healed back by giving the victim salt), Delayed Effect (+¼) (131 Active Points); OAF Fragile, Requires Extensive Difficult To Find Ingredients (-1½), Concentration (0 DCV throughout brewing, -1), Extra Time (roughly 3 or 4 days to brew, -4), Limited Target (humans, -½), No Range (-½), Requires An Alchemy Roll to Brew (-½), 1 Charge (-2). Total Cost: 12 points.*

**Traditional Zombi**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [0]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
5	INT	-5	10-	PER Roll: 10-
3	EGO	-14	10-	ECV: 1
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
3	PD	0		Total: 3 PD (0rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: -11**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Leaping: 3"/6"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
80	<i>Feels No Pain:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; STUN Only (-½)	0
14	<i>Dead Body:</i> Life Support (Need Not Sleep; Safe in Intense Heat and Cold; Immune to Aging and Disease)	0
6	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance on 13 STR (0 END, +½)	0

**Skills**

- 1 AK: Local Area 8-
- 1 PS: Current Occupation 8-
- 1 WF: Machete

**Total Powers & Skills cost: 103****Total Cost: 92****75+ Disadvantages**

- 10 Distinctive Features: Glassy-eyed Stare, Generally Unaware of Environment (Concealable)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Cannot Be Fed Salt, To Do So Will Send the Zombi Back to the Grave (Infrequently, Fully)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Mute (Infrequently, Greatly)
- 0 Physical Limitation: Human Size
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Must Obey the Orders of Its Creator (the Bokor) (Very Common, Total)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 135**



## Cinematic Zombie

**Ecology:** Being dead, cinematic zombies are virtually unaffected by the weather and can be found in almost any climate. Normally, they are found in cities and other areas where large numbers of living humans (their main food source) can be found. A zombie is virtually immune to most forms of damage, and can only be killed if its brain is destroyed.

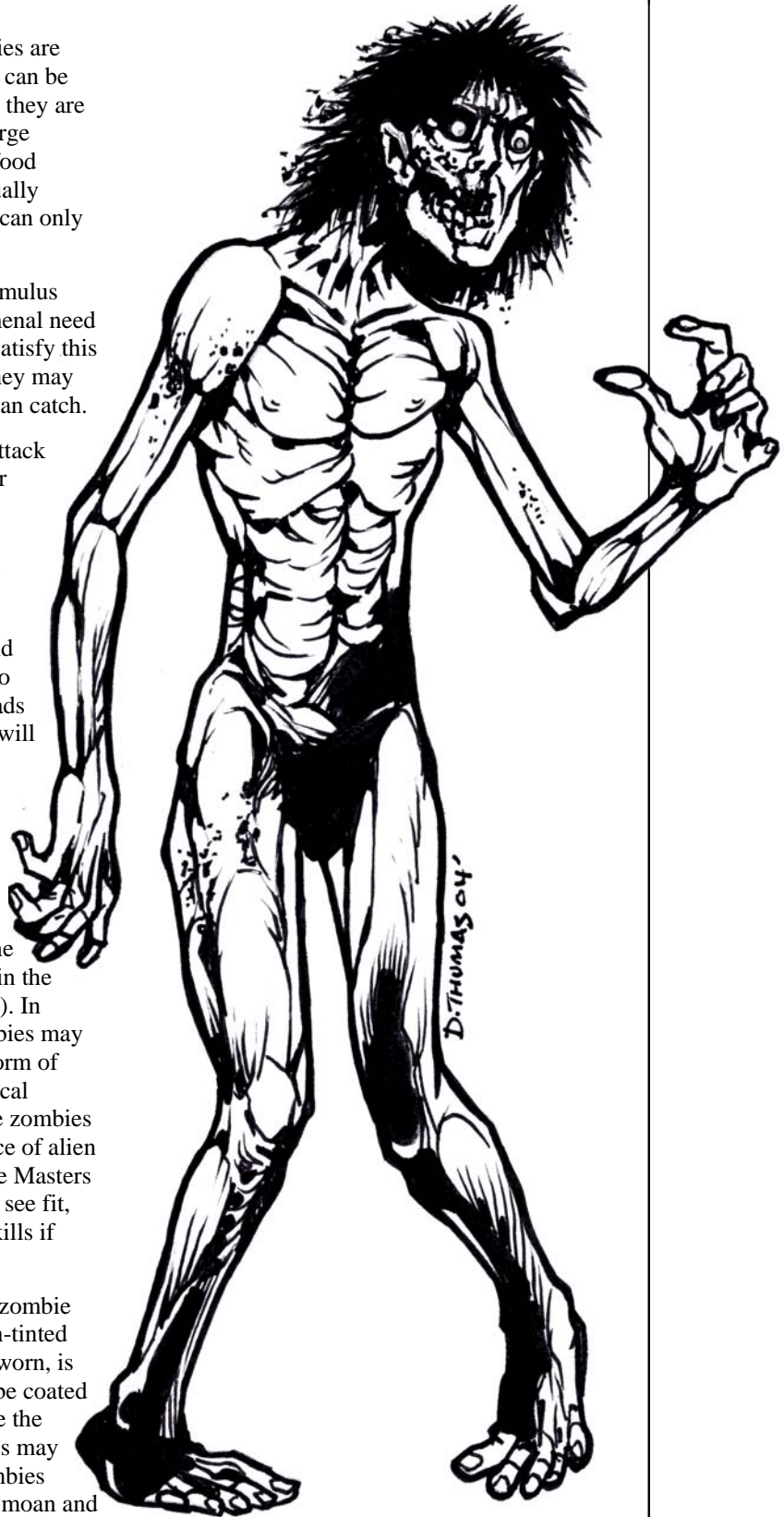
**Personality/Motivation:** The main stimulus behind a cinematic zombie is a phenomenal need to eat living flesh. Normally, zombies satisfy this need by devouring humans, although they may eat just about any living creature they can catch.

**Powers/Tactics:** Cinematic zombies attack and overwhelm their prey through sheer force of numbers. They will attempt to grapple with their target and then bite down with their teeth, chewing away at their victim until forcibly removed or their victim is dead.

Some zombies are able to speak and possess a modicum of cunning. It is also thought the bite of these creatures spreads disease and anyone killed by a zombie will soon rise as a zombie themselves.

**Campaign Use:** This is the classic zombie as seen in countless horror films (such as *Night of the Living Dead* and other George Romero classics). They are perfect for fantasy and pulp-era games, usually rising as the result of some necromancer's spell (or in the case of pulp-era games, a voodoo ritual). In modern or superheroic games, the zombies may be animated due to exposure to some form of strange radiation, toxic waste, or chemical formula. In a science fiction setting, the zombies may move about because of the presence of alien microorganisms or an alien virus. Game Masters should customize their zombies as they see fit, increasing characteristics and adding skills if needed.

**Appearance:** Normally the cinematic zombie appears as a walking corpse with bluish-tinted skin and wild matted hair. Clothing, if worn, is often rumpled and torn, and may even be coated with mud and dirt from the grave. Since the zombies don't heal wounds, their bodies may display graphic injuries. Cinematic zombies don't usually speak, although they will moan and gesture as they stagger about.





**Cinematic Zombie**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [0]
9	DEX	-3	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
3	INT	-7	10-	PER Roll: 10-
0	EGO	0	—	ECV: N/A
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
2	COM	-4	9-	
4	PD	6		Total PD: 4 (4 rPD)
4	ED	6		Total ED: 4 (4 rED)
2	SPD	1		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	4		
0	END	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 8**

**Movement:** Running: 5"/10"  
 Leaping: 1"/2"  
 Swimming: 0"/0"

Cost	Powers	END
17	<i>Bite:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Must Follow Grab (-½)	0
6	<i>Clawed Fingers:</i> HKA 1 point (½d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Reduced Penetration (-¼)	0
15	<i>Dead Body:</i> Does Not Bleed	0
10	<i>Dead Body:</i> No Hit Locations	0
45	<i>Dead Body:</i> Takes No STUN	0
12	<i>Dead Body:</i> Damage Resistance (4 PD/4 ED)	0
50	<i>Dead Body:</i> Life Support: Total (including Immortality)	0
-2	<i>Slow Moving:</i> Running -1" (5" Total)	0
-2	<i>Slow Moving:</i> Swimming -2" (0" Total)	0
5	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) for STR	0
5	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) on Running	0
1	<i>Tireless:</i> Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½) for Leaping	0

**Skills**

- 4 +2 OCV with Grab  
 Others as you see fit.

**Total Powers & Skills cost: 166****Total Cost: 174****75+ Disadvantages**

- 25 Physical Limitation: Instinctive Intelligence (All the Time, Greatly Impairing)  
 10 Physical Limitation: Mute (Infrequently, Greatly)  
 0 Physical Limitation: Human Size  
 5 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, Can Only Leap Half as Far as STR Indicates (Infrequently, Slightly)  
 25 Psychological Limitation: Overwhelming Desire to Eat Living (Human) Flesh (Very Common, Total)  
 10 Vulnerability: 2x BODY from Head/Brain Shots (Uncommon)  
 24 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 174****OPTIONS**

Cost	Power
42	<i>Zombie Bite:</i> Major Transform 7d6 (human corpse into zombie), Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Always On (-½), Limited Target (humans, -½), No Range (-½), All Or Nothing (-½), Must Do All of Target's Positive BODY With Bite and Clawed Fingers (-2)

0

## Wights

Aragorn: They were once men – great kings of men. Then Sauron the deceiver gave to them nine rings of power. Blinded by their greed, they took them without question. One by one they’ve fallen into darkness. Now they are slaves to his will. They are the Nazgul, Ringwraiths, neither living nor dead. At all times they feel the presence of the Ring, drawn to the power of the One. They will never stop hunting you  
 — *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*

According to its original definition, a “wight” is simply a person or a creature. But it can also mean a supernatural being. The latter definition is used here, which is of a self-willed creature risen from the dead. Although similar in some respects to a zombie, a wight operates independently of any outside (*i.e.* mortal) agency. It also differs from many types of ghosts in that it is free-willed and not restricted to a preset series of actions or a singular area. Wights do have a great deal in common with traditional vampires. The only significant difference is a wight doesn’t require a regular intake of blood to survive.

### WRITE UPS OF ASSORTED WIGHTS

Sarah: People once believed that when someone dies, a crow carries their soul to the land of the dead. But sometimes, something so bad happens that a terrible sadness is carried with it and the soul can’t rest. Then sometimes, just sometimes, the crow can bring that soul back to put the wrong things right.  
 — *The Crow*

## ASSORTED WIGHTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

**Barrow-wight:** Found in J. R. R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, barrow-wights are undead spirits inhabiting a field of burial mounds. Mostly insubstantial, the wights have an icy grip and drain their target’s physical strength through their chilling touch.

**Ecan:** According to the Coos Indians of the American Northwest, the *ecan* is a ghost that enters and animates a corpse. The *ecan* will then hide in the forest, attacking and harming poor members of the local tribes.

**K’uei:** This Chinese creature is a form of wight. It is animated by the *p’ai*, the same portion of the soul that is responsible for the creation of a *chiang-shih* (see *The HERO System Asian Bestiary* for more on the *chiang-shih*). A *k’uei* has a skeletal body with a horrible demonic face and is restricted to walking in a straight line. In China, one will often see ponds and lakes spanned by bridges built with abrupt right-angle turns and no railings at these turns. The turn and missing railing is meant as a defense against a *k’uei*, since their straight-line movement would cause them to fall into the water and be destroyed.

**Nazagul:** The name for the nine ring-wraiths found in J. R. R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* fantasy epic. The nazagul are undead warriors in the service of Sauron, and serve as his generals and field commanders. They are invisible but have a material form, can be harmed by certain physical weapons, and fear water. The Lord of the Nazagul is also known as the Witch-King of Angmar and is the lord of the barrow-wights (see above).

**Revenant:** A revenant is a generic term for any dead being that returns from the grave. Thus ghosts and vampires can also be considered a form of revenant.

**Uvengwa:** Described by the people of West Africa, a uvengwa is the spirit of one risen from the dead. It is whitish in color, with a misshapen body, one eye and webbed feet. It does not speak, but simply wanders about as if lost or looking for something.

**Zalozhniy:** These Russian wights move about freely, attacking and killing anyone they meet. They are active for only a normal human lifespan, however. The *zalozhniy* will often act as servants for various evil spirits. Worse yet, if a *zalozhniy* is destroyed it will return in a spirit form itself.

## Draugr

**Ecology:** A *draugr* is a true undead creature, for although it is dead and buried within its barrow, the *draugr* is still active and restless, and often exits the barrow to wander the countryside. Envious of those who still live, it will attack homes and livestock, kill those passing by, and generally lay waste to the countryside.

To prevent a *draugr* from rising in the first place, a number of precautions must be taken. These include laying a pair of open scissors on the corpse's chest, tying the toes of the feet together, putting needles into the soles of the feet, and laying pieces of straw under the shroud in the shape of a cross. The corpse should be removed from the home through a special "corpse-door," a doorway broken into the wall for the removal of the dead body and then bricked back up again. The body is removed from the home feet-first, and once outside, raised and lowered three times in the sign of a cross. As the *draugr* is believed to only be able to return home by the same path used to take it away, removing the body feet-first denies it a clear view of where it has been, while bricking up the temporary corpse door keeps the *draugr* from reentering the home.

Destroying a *draugr* is a dangerous but not impossible undertaking. A *draugr* can be harmed by iron weapons, but the more secure method of destroying such a creature is to grapple with and subdue the *draugr*, at which point it should be decapitated. The decapitation is the most difficult part of the process, for some legends state that one must use a sword from the *draugr*'s own burial mound, or leap between the head and the body before the corpse hits the ground, or walk counterclockwise around the body three times after removing the head. The body may then be impaled with a wooden stake and burned to ashes, which are to be scattered.

These beings are also known as *aptrgangr*, barrow-wights, or *haugbui*.

**Personality/Motivation:** The two things that drive a *draugr*'s actions the most are an envy of those who still live and an almost insatiable appetite. This envy of the living, as well as a desire to continue its old life, will cause a *draugr* to assault homes and halls, sitting astride the roof as if it were a horse and battering the roof with its heels, or bursting down the front door and attacking all those residing inside. The *draugr* will also ride or pursue the local livestock to death, kill stabled animals, and murder shepherds and unwary travelers.

A *draugr*'s hunger is such that it will readily devour any animals placed within its barrow at the time of burial. The *draugr* will then seek out more animals, such as the local livestock, and

devour them; it will even go so far as to eat people living nearby.

A close relative of the *draugr*, the *haugbui* ("mound-dweller"), is content to remain within its burial mound, but is more than willing to assault and kill anyone who violates its grave.

**Powers/Tactics:** Although still possessing some intelligence, the *draugr* tend not to use the weapons with which they were buried. Instead they will use their great strength to crush their foes, breaking necks and shattering bones. A *draugr* will also try to rend its opponent with its sharp claws and teeth, tearing a victim into pieces before devouring the remains. As the *draugr* tend to be relatively fearless, they don't tend to retreat unless strongly pressed or denied their target.

Some *draugr* and *haugbui* are said to possess magical powers (called *trollskap*). These powers include foretelling the future, altering the weather, and being able to sink down and swim through the earth. The *draugr* are also said to be shapechangers, able to assume a number of animal forms. The forms, some of which were quite monstrous, include that of a cat, a seal, a flayed bull, or a gray horse with no ears or tail and a broken back. The cat form is said to sit on a sleeper's chest and increase its weight until the sleep is smothered, an effect very similar to that of the Old Hag (see *Digital Hero* #15).

**Campaign Use:** To the Scandinavian mind, the *draugr* was a very real and very fearsome threat. Many Norse sagas include descriptions of battles between heroes and the walking dead, battles that usually go to great lengths to impress upon the reader the immense strength of the combatants. A great many parallels can be drawn between the *draugr* and *haugbui* of Norse legend and the Danish monster Grendel. Both are huge, misshapen monsters that come out at night to prey upon the living, have great strength, sharp claws, and an insatiable appetite.

**Appearance:** *Draugr* are the animated corpses of Norsemen who have been buried in *hagurs*, or burial mounds. They appear much as they did in life, except their skin is blue or black in color and their bodies, although unaffected by decay, have swelled up to great size and weight.

Draugr



**Draugr**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	1600 kg; 6d6 HTH [3]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
23	CON	26	14-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
23	PRE	13	14-	PRE Attack: 4½d6
2	COM	-4	10-	
12	PD	6		Total: 12 PD (6 rPD)
10	ED	5		Total: 10 ED (5 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
11	REC	0		
46	END	0		
45	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 110**

**Movement:** Running: 8"/16"  
 Leaping: 6"/12"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
17	<i>Bite:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Must Follow Grab (-½)	0
30	<i>Bone Crushing:</i> RKA 1d6, NND (defense is any sort of rigid Resistant PD or Lack Of Weakness for Resistant Defenses; +1), Does BODY (+1), Continuous (+1); Must Follow Grab (-½), No Range (-½)	6
12	<i>Clawed Fingers:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Reduced Penetration (-¼)	0
15	<i>Dead Body:</i> Does Not Bleed	0
4	<i>Great Weight:</i> Knockback Resistance -2"	0
60	<i>Undead Body:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
6	<i>Undead Body:</i> Damage Resistance (6 PD/5 ED)	0
47	<i>Dead Body:</i> Life Support: Total (including Immortality, excluding Diminished Eating)	0
4	<i>Great Size:</i> Running +2" (8" Total)	1
5	<i>Draugr's Eyes:</i> Nightvision	0

**Skills**

10	+2 with Hand-to-Hand
4	+2 OCV with Grab
3	Climbing 12-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Tracking 11-
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

**Total Powers & Skills cost: 230****Total Cost: 340****75+ Disadvantages**

20	Psychological Limitation: Cannot Stand the Light of Day (Common, Total)
20	Psychological Limitation: Envy the Living and Longs for Life (Very Common, Strong)
25	Psychological Limitation: Insatiable Physical Hunger (Very Common, Total)
200	Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 340****OPTIONS****Cost Power**

9	<i>Knowledge of the Future:</i> Precognitive Clairvoyance (Sight Group); Concentrate (½ DCV throughout, -½), Extra Time (5 Minutes; -2), Precognition Only (-1)	4
12	<i>Move Through the Earth:</i> Tunneling 3" through DEF 3, Closes Hole Behind; Soil Only (-1)	1
var.	<i>Shapeshifting:</i> Multiform (into various animal forms, see text)	0
70	<i>Weather Control:</i> Change Environment 4" Radius, +/-10 Temperature Levels, Multiple Combat Effects, Varying Combat Effects, Varying Effect (+1), MegaArea (1" = 1 km, +¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Extra Time (1 Turn to Activate, -¾), No Range (-½)	0





# Zombie Style by Charles Picard

Let's face it – zombies aren't fast. They aren't smart. And they don't tote fancy weapons. But they do fight in a distinctive way. Numerous movies show zombies battling smarter and faster humans with the only the advantage they have – mindless determination. Zombie Style attempts to define how they fight in *HERO System* terms. Designed for a nearly indestructible body and an impossibly high pain threshold, Zombie Style should not be allowed for mere mortals. However, if a player can justify the special effects required, then go for it! Just remember to revel in the mayhem.

Most of these maneuvers have significant DCV penalties. This reflects how ponderously the undead move. Feel free to tweak any maneuver for your campaign or your character. Information about designing Martial Arts Styles can be found in *The Ultimate Martial Artist*, pages 88-98.

Without further adieu, I give you Zombie Style. (Because even the undead hate wasting points.)

## ZOMBIE STYLE MANEUVERS

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Blow Chunks Bind	½	3	+2	-1	Bind, +15 STR, Response to Thrusting Weapon
Brutal Bash	½	3	+0	-1	STR +3d6 Strike
Disgusting Disarm	½	4	+2	-1	Disarm, +15 STR to Disarm Roll, Response to Thrusting Weapon
Gruesome Grab	½	4	+0	-2	STR +2d6 Strike; Grab, +10 STR for Holding On; Penalty Lasts for +1 Phase
Hideous Hug	½	3	+0	-2	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab, +10 STR for Holding On; Penalty Lasts for +1 Phase
Joint Juke	var.	4	+0	-2	+20 STR versus Grabs
More Brains Bite	½	5	-1	-2	HKA 1d6 (3 DC); Penalties Last for +1 Phase
Painless Parry	½	4	0	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Sadistic Smash	½	4	+0	-2	STR +4d6 Strike; Target Falls; Target Attacks First in Next Phase

### Skills

Teamwork

### Elements

Use Art with Common Melee Weapons

## Maneuver Details

**Blow Chunks Bind:** This maneuver, which may only counter an attack with a thrusting weapon, allows the zombie to capture the offending weapon inside its body. Don't shy away from a suitably gory description. GMs might want to give a slight Presence boost for success with this maneuver.

**Brutal Bash:** The standard zombie smack. Usually performed with a fist, it may also be used with a found weapon (a board, some rusty chain, and so forth) if the zombie has the Weapon Element for Common Melee Weapons.

**Disgusting Disarm:** Similar to the Blow Chunks Bind above, this maneuver allows the zombie to trap a thrusting weapon in its guts and then to pull it out of the attacker's grasp by rotating its body. For a truly nasty special effect, have the weapon stay lodged in the zombie's body when the Disarm succeeds.

**Gruesome Grab:** Along with hitting and biting, zombies love to grab their prey and hold on for dear life (so to speak). The Gruesome Grab does some damage and allows the attacker to set up for the even more deadly Hideous Hug. Because this is an all-out attack, the DCV penalty lasts for one additional Phase.

**Hideous Hug:** ("I'll love him and hug him and pet him and squeeze him.") After a successful grab, usually with the Gruesome Grab, the attacker may squeeze the soft pulp of life out of its victim. Because this is an all-out attack, the DCV penalty lasts for one additional Phase. However, unless the victim gets help quickly or somehow manages to break free, the penalty isn't going to matter much.

**Joint Juke:** ("That doesn't bend that way!") Because they don't seem to experience pain, zombies can twist joints and limbs into impossible positions. This allows them to break out of grabs by willfully dislocating a shoulder or ignoring the effects of a joint lock. You can play this one up by describing the wet snapping and tearing of ligaments.

**More Brains Bite:** Ah, the classic zombie coup de grace. This maneuver most often follows a successful grab. Once the target can't get away, it's time for a little snack. (Repeat as often as necessary.)

**Painless Parry:** One of the few broadly defensive elements in this style. It's constructed like a Dodge, but it should be played as the zombie parrying the attack with some useless piece of flesh, like, say, an arm. The zombie still gets "hit" if the attacker misses, but in game terms it's a blow that doesn't have any effect.

**Sadistic Slam:** This is a two-fisted, knuckles-scraping the ceiling, sort of blow. This maneuver packs so much force it knocks the target to the ground even if he doesn't suffer any damage. However, the force also takes the attacker off balance so that the victim gets to attack first in the next phase (assuming he's able).

## Tactics

Zombies invariably attack as a pack. To simulate this aspect of their style, I encourage you to give them the skill Teamwork. This doesn't represent years of training together, although the idea of a crack Zombie Corps is amusing, but rather the irrepressible force of the horde. Teamwork, which facilitates coordinated attacks, also makes getting the Multiple Attacker Bonus much easier. If allowed in your campaign, definitely take advantage of this bonus. Listed on page 251 of the *HERO System 5th Edition*, the Multiple Attacker Bonus saddles the defender with significant DCV penalties.

A typical zombie will close as quickly as possible, grab or hit, and then crush or bite. It will attack until its target is dead. Zombies also have a disquieting ability to pop up where you least expect them. Consider giving a handful of your gang Stealth and Tracking and hide them around the playing field like fetid little Easter Eggs.

## Disadvantages

You know what you're up against when a mob of undead guys comes a-knockin'. Therefore they are allowed to take the 10-point Style Distinctive Feature as indicated in the *Ultimate Martial Artist*, page 135. Just remember, there's a big difference between knowing what's coming and stopping it.

## Optional Rules

If you use the optional hit location rules, all the grab based maneuvers, along with the Brutal Bash, take a normal 3d6 roll. The Sadistic Smash and the More Brains Bite should be considered high shots and get a 2d6+1 roll. (Defensive maneuvers do not get hit location rolls.)

## Power Levels

With these maneuvers, even zombies with a 10 STR will test most lower-powered adventurers. For heroic level campaigns and beyond, consider buying Damage Classes to give attacks a bit more bite. A few skill levels to offset the negative DCV modifiers will make the horde tougher to take down. Zombies also have an uncanny knack of showing up when and where you least expect them. Consider granting them Stealth, Tracking, and/or Shadowing and start bringing them out of the woodwork. When all else fails, just keep 'em comin'.

Another option is to give them a leader. An evil cleric could call the shots from across the battlefield. A twisted scientist, who revivifies the dead, might retrofit his undead army with chainsaws. Or maybe the zombie legion is made up of battle savvy troopers from the beaches of Normandy brought back to life for one last fight.

## Other Notes

The Blow Chunks Bind and the Disgusting Disarm are of limited usefulness. Your opponents will quickly shy away from attacking with a thrust or thrusting weapon. However, this adjustment might prove difficult in genres like *Fantasy Hero* that emphasize swordplay.

Remember that not every one of your zombies needs all of these maneuvers. Feel free to pick a handful of moves and give them to your entire infernal mob. Or, if you don't mind book keeping, give each of your murderous abominations different 10-point packages.

## Undead Player Characters

I played a character with many zombie traits for an entire campaign. Even with a nearly indestructible body, there were many trials, tribulations, and interesting plot lines to work through. In fact this character's "theme" became There Are Much Worse Things Than Death. Eventually the campaign coalesced around the unique roleplaying opportunities that arose from going such an odd direction. I encourage players and GMs to go down this dark but fertile path if they haven't already!



## COLORADO CRUSADERS PLOT SEEDS

Grond is cutting a swath of destruction through the Rocky Mountains, and the Colorado Crusaders are the only heroes who know the area well enough to stop him without loss of life or property. Unfortunately, the members had a falling out – Justice is sick of Lionheart’s attitude, Charcoal has demanded Justice “Stop seeing the world through red, white, and blue-tinted glasses,” Blizzard is tired of the bickering and has hung up his costume, and Loup has disappeared. Can the PCs convince the Crusaders to work together to stop this menace?

UNITY comes to Colorado for a training mission, and asks members of the Crusaders to assist. They are on a recruitment drive and are hoping that, by showing the advantages of UNTIL membership (resources, teamwork, camaraderie), they can get some of the Crusaders to join.

VIPER has enjoyed relative freedom from superhero interference in the Rocky Mountains, and it wants to keep things that way. They begin targeting members of the Crusaders for elimination....



# The Colorado Crusaders by Bill Keyes

**Background/History:** “Wait... You’re not the Champions!” The rumpled man in the silver lamé bodysuit gaped at the six figures facing him. “Oh no, this won’t do at all!” The man looked extremely concerned under his cartoonishly-large googles

“What is going on here?” demanded one of the six, dressed in red-white-and-blue armor. “Are you the one responsible for the chaos out there?”

“You’d better start explaining yourself,” another one, a tall black woman, added, “Or else we’re going to have a little chaos in here, too.” She cracked her knuckles loudly to emphasize her point.

“I’m Captain Chronos, but this isn’t right.” He looked like he was on the verge of panic. “It’s not supposed to go like this – it was supposed to be the Champions. You can’t possibly... You don’t have the experience... The odds against you succeeding are astronomical...”

The man in the patriotic armor grabbed Captain Chronos and lifted him up off the ground. “The Champions couldn’t make it,” he said. “Now are you going to explain, or are we going to mop the floor with you?”

Captain Chronos did some quick calculations in his head, then nodded. “To answer your questions in reverse order, mopping the floor with me would do you little good. I am the one responsible for the chaos... at least, partly. And as for what is going on here, explaining would take far too long. Time is of the essence.”

Chronos shifted uncomfortably in the grip of the big hero and pointed behind him. “This machine is... well, it would take too long to explain how it works, but it’s essentially a temporal sump pump.”

“A what?” all six heroes asked in unison.

“A temporal sump pump. It was designed to suck up (if you will) the clogged debris that tends to pool in junctures of the timestream, then spits it back out where it will do no harm. The machine is essential to keeping time flowing freely.” Chronos allowed himself a small chuckle. “You might say it keeps Father Time’s basement dry.”

“And let me guess,” said another of the heroes, a man in a trenchcoat dripping with frost, “Something’s gone wrong.” Chronos nodded, glumly.

“OK, that makes no sense at all,” a gold and black-clad hero shook his head. “I say we go back to Plan A and mop up the floor with this guy.”

“No!” Chronos said desperately. “The machine has begun randomly pulling pieces out of time and depositing them here. If it isn’t shut down – and soon – the damage to the timestream will be irreparable! The chaos outside will continue to grow, until time itself fractures!”

The chaos outside. It started a few hours ago, on the plains of Colorado, just north of Denver’s airport. There was a shimmer in the cold winter air, a ripple in the fabric of reality, and where once nothing but prairie grass grew there stood a huge machine, at least 500 feet high and twice that wide.

Preliminary reports as to its appearance were unclear; it was surrounded by a shimmer of colored lights that flickered and wavered like the aurora borealis. It seemed to be a huge collection of gears and pulleys, cogs and cranks – in short, it looked like the inside of a giant clock.

Exactly six minutes after the machine materialized, an enraged tyrannosaurus appeared in the heart of downtown Denver. The dinosaur would have wreaked untold havoc, if not for the timely assistance of Charcoal, one of Denver’s superheroes. After a tough battle, she managed to pummel the beast into submission, but just as she was about to lower the boom, the T-rex vanished without a trace, leaving behind only odd colored lights that slowly faded.

UNTIL was called to investigate the machine, but every time they tried to approach, they were met with heavy resistance of a type they were at a loss to explain – squads of British doughboys from the First World War, who fought with a tenacity that drove UNTIL back (despite their superior firepower). The second time the boys in blue-and-white tried to move in, they were assaulted by strange futuristic troops, and again UNTIL was forced back.

Within an hour, reports were coming in from all over the state – barbaric Viking raiders tried to plunder the University of Colorado (well... the bars and pubs that ring the University, at least), only to be stopped by Lionheart, the area’s resident hero (after which the Vikings vanished as mysteriously as they appeared). A group of medieval knights rode through the streets of Fort Collins before being driven off (and just as before, the knights vanished in a puff of colored lights as soon as they were vanquished). Things around Denver just kept getting worse; it was all the local heroes could do to keep up.

It was obvious the effects were centered on the bizarre machine, just as it was obvious things were not getting better – the radius was getting larger. Just one hour after the device appeared, strange things from the seas of time were popping up hundreds of miles away. If this was allowed to continue unabated, the entire country could be in jeopardy!

"If what you're saying is true, and this machine is essential to the flow of time," Blizzard asked, "What did you do to break it?"

"I wasn't trying to break it," Captain Chronos sighed. "I was trying to fix it."

"Nice job," Lionheart muttered under his breath.

Chronos ignored the interruption. "I was attempting to install an upgrade to account for some variants in the timestream. But as you see, it didn't go completely as planned..."

"So fix it," Charcoal demanded, pointing at the little man.

"Would that it were so easy," Captain Chronos sighed again, as if trying to explain quantum physics to a child. "In order to prevent tampering with the machine, I also installed a defensive mechanism. I can't get near it."

"I've heard of you," Phantom, who had been standing at the back of the team looking around with wide eyes, finally spoke. "You're a time traveler. Why don't you go back in time and prevent yourself from installing the upgrade?"

"Don't you think I've tried?" Chronos shook his head. "The machine has destabilized time. My powers don't work. I hate to say this, but the six of you are our only hope." Chronos frowned. "I was expecting one of the big-name teams to show up – Champions, UNITY, even MC-8 – someone with a little more experience. Things are hard to predict right now, with the choral interference." He looked up at the heroes. "You'll just have to do."

---

Air Force General John Fitzpatrick offered a potential solution. His people had been working on a Super-Soldier project and had one successful test subject. Though Justice was not yet fully trained, this would be an excellent test of his abilities – especially given that the nation's leading superheroes would take too long to arrive. But Fitzpatrick was no fool. He knew any force that could drive back several teams of UNTIL agents would be a challenge even for his secret weapon. Justice needed backup.

Charcoal and Blizzard were trying to catch their breaths between battles. So far there had been dinosaurs, Neanderthal warriors, and Civil War soldiers, and the two heroes were doing their best just to keep up. They had kept Denver from being wrecked, but there was just too much for them to handle.

They watched with bewilderment as a helicopter came out of the sky and landed near them. As Blizzard and Charcoal looked on, a man dressed in red, white, and blue armor stepped out. "Your country needs you!" he announced.

"Who is this clown?" Charcoal asked. The man bristled.

Blizzard shrugged. "Seriously, what's your deal?"

"My deal," the armored man announced, "Is that my codename is Justice, I'm with the US Air Force, and you are coming with me. We're going to put a stop to this madness, before it gets any worse."

"Are you for real?" Charcoal asked, beginning to grow annoyed.

Blizzard put his hand on her shoulder.

"Actually," he said, "If he knows what's happening, maybe we should go along."

"And maybe he's the one causing it," said a voice, from above. A figure in black and gold armor gracefully leapt down from a nearby rooftop. "This whole thing stinks of a military experiment gone wrong."

"Lionheart," Justice said. "I was hoping we'd track you down. We'll need your help as well."

"I come to find out what the hell is going on, and I stumble upon a poster boy for the military-industrial complex," Lionheart sneered. "What are the odds?"

Justice reddened, but Blizzard stepped between them. "We don't have time to bicker," he said calmly. "I don't know what's causing all this craziness, but if Justice says we can stop it, I think we need to go with him."

Lionheart reluctantly agreed – "At least, until we find out what's going on" – and the four heroes were flown to the edge of the disturbance, the point beyond which UNTIL's efforts had failed.

---

"Didn't you install a failsafe device?" Lionheart, ever the practical engineer, asked.

"Of course I did," Chronos rolled his eyes in exasperation. The heroes stared at him, waiting for the other shoe to drop. "Well," the little man continued. "At least, I started to install the failsafe..."

"How do we turn it off?" Charcoal asked.

"The machine itself isn't causing the problems; the upgrade I added to it is. The mechanisms are complex, and it will take time to explain the proper shutdown procedure..."

Justice cut him off. "What if we break it?"

Chronos paused. "That would work, but you must realize it's an irreplaceable piece of equipment. Simply breaking it would..."

"Good enough for me," Justice shrugged. "Let's go."

Without hesitation, the heroes rushed into the machine, leaving a stammering Captain Chronos behind. He shook his head as they disappeared. "If this doesn't work, I take comfort in knowing I won't need to write a will."



UNTIL's plan was to stage a massive assault, in the hope of distracting the defenses and allowing a small group to slip in. The superheroes' mandate was simple: head for the device, find out what it was, and bring it down.

UNTIL launched their attack and, as predicted, defenders appeared from nowhere to stop them. Taking advantage of this distraction, the heroes raced toward the machine and met no resistance – until they reached their destination. As they came within a hundred meters of the giant clock, a furry form leapt from a gully and snarled at them. "What is that?" Justice asked, pulling back.

"A werewolf," Charcoal answered, trying to flank it. "Another defender?"

"Whatever it is, it's in our way," Lionheart said, moving in the other direction. "But werewolves don't exist."

"Men who generate cold don't exist either," Blizzard chuckled. "And yet, here I am."

Before they could attack, a soft voice stopped them. "Wait," it said. "He means you no harm." The heroes turned to see a beautiful woman materialize behind them.

"I know you," Lionheart said. "Ghost Girl?"

The woman smiled and walked to the werewolf, past the others. "They call me Phantom. I've come to help," she caressed the wolf's head with a gentle hand. "As has Loup." The wolf whined and licked her hand as if he and Phantom were old friends.

"If we're done wasting time with introductions," Justice announced, "We still need to put this clock out of commission."

The six heroes, most of them unsure what they were doing and who these others were, cautiously approached the machine. There, sitting on a rock, was a little man wearing a silver lamé bodysuit.

"Five'll get you ten, he's our culprit," Lionheart said.

It wasn't difficult to find Captain Chronos' upgrade – surrounded by giant brass gears and cogs, it was a sleek, polished silver box; a high-tech piece of weird science among the old-school clockworks. It was considerably harder getting to it. "Do you think this is what he meant when he said the machine had defenses?" Blizzard asked, ducking under a tomahawk hurled by an angry Native American brave. The tribe materialized out of thin air and had instantly attacked the heroes.

"If it is," Justice answered, picking up one of the warriors and hurling him into a knot of others, knocking them all down, "This should be a cakewalk."

"Actually," opined Charcoal, wiping a bead of sweat from her brow and looking up at a

curtain of colored lights shimmering before her, "I think *that's* more like what he meant."

Stepping out of the light was a virtual mountain of muscle – ten feet of lumpy flesh and sinew, clutching a tree trunk in its calloused, gnarled hand and wearing nothing but a bearskin loincloth. "Which era of history do you suppose he's from?" Lionheart asked, gaping up at the thing.

The primitive monster roared a challenge and swung its club at Charcoal. The weapon shattered into a million fragments, but it did its job. The team's heaviest hitter was down, crumpled in a heap on the floor.

The others sprang into action. Justice flew in to try to grab the beast, but it moved with a speed that belied its great size, snatching the hero out of the air and smashing him against the nearest wall. Lionheart and Loup leapt simultaneously. Loup latched on to the thing's throat, causing it to bellow in pain. Lionheart tried to sweep the giant's legs out from under it, but it was too big and heavy for even a man of his skill to budge. Blizzard stepped up, a shower of frost erupting from his hands and enveloping the giant, who howled as ice formed around his body.

Quietly, Phantom appeared behind the creature and placed her hands on either side of its head. Her eyes glowed and her face took on a horrifying cast, and the monster groaned, then slowly collapsed to the floor.

"Quick! Wreck it, before more of them appear!" Lionheart shouted. He and Loup vaulted at Chronos' upgrade, hammering it with expert blows and razor-sharp claws until there was nothing left but scrap.

As soon as they were done, a ripple passed through the machine. "I think that's our cue to leave," Charcoal said, unsteadily getting to her feet and rubbing her head. She picked up Justice and the team fled back the way they came. They escaped the giant clock just as it vanished in a shimmer of light, leaving no sign it ever existed.

No sign, that is, except Captain Chronos, who stood exactly where the heroes left him. "Against all odds, you succeeded," he said. "Though by destroying my upgrade – which I guarantee will have repercussions. Now I have to deal with this mess you made."

"The mess *we* made?" Charcoal demanded.

"Not so fast," Justice, now able to stand on his own feet, stepped up to Chronos. "There are people who want to talk to you..."

Chronos smiled. "Not today," he said, shaking his head. "But we will meet again, Crusaders. I promise you." And with that, he was gone.

"Typical supervillain," Lionheart sighed. "He disappears just as we're about to put the hurt on him." The six heroes, battered and weary,

silently watched a phalanx of UNTIL airships approach.

“Say,” Justice broke the silence. “Why did he call us Crusaders?”

---

“Each of us witnessed the severity of the crisis, and we pulled together to end it,” Justice announced at the press conference. “Though we’re not a team.”

“But you worked well together,” a reporter insisted. “You were able to stop a situation that UNTIL couldn’t handle.”

“We saw a problem, and fixed it.” Blizzard answered. “But we’re not a team.”

“Would you work together again, if another crisis came up?” another reporter asked.

“Of course,” Charcoal responded. “We’re not a team, but if something threatened the safety of this city, I speak for everyone when I say we’d be there.”

“So you’d call your mission together a success?” still another reporter queried.

Lionheart nodded. “It was an absolute success. I’d be proud to work alongside any one of these heroes, even though we aren’t a team.”

And that was all it took. Colorado had never, until this time, rated a superhero team, and every media outlet in the state trumpeted the appearance of this one. The fact that all the heroes denied being a team was conveniently forgotten or ignored, and the Colorado Crusaders were born – in the minds of everyone except its members.

**Group Relations:** For the most part, the members of the Colorado Crusaders don’t get along. It’s not that they actively dislike each other (usually); it’s that their personalities and motivations are so different they don’t really want anything other than a coolly professional relationship. As a rule, when they get together they bicker (a lot!) but they pull together when danger looms.

The Crusaders don’t maintain formal relationships with other teams, though they would be willing to work with any who come to the area (the Crusaders’ home turf advantage would be a help to any visitors). Most superteams outside Colorado might be surprised at just how independent the Crusaders are, expecting a more formal team (as is found in many cities), rather than a loose collection of far-flung individuals.

The Colorado Crusaders don’t have a base, don’t hold meetings, and don’t have a leader, but because an emergency may require their attention, Justice has provided everyone with radio communicators which allow them to contact one another in emergencies.

Everyone in the group (with the exception of Phantom) thinks “Colorado Crusaders” is a stupid name, making them sound more like a professional sports franchise than a superhero team. However, no one has come up with any alternatives, so the name has stuck.

**Tactics:** They keep meaning to work on that... Every time the Crusaders complete a mission, someone invariably says, “We should get together and try out some group tactics.” They’ve been a “team” now for nearly a year, and that hasn’t happened.

On the other hand, they’ve worked together enough (individually and as a group) that they all have a pretty good idea of what the others are capable of, and when the situation is desperate they have a way of pulling together to perform feats which surprise even the most insightful foes.

In combat situations, Justice acts as the de facto leader. He has an excellent grasp of tactics, and is able to shout loud enough for the others to hear him over the din of battle. After the fight is over they loudly debate the merits of his plans, but in life-and-death situations they’ve learned to trust his judgment.

**Campaign Use:** The Colorado Crusaders is not a world-renown, globetrotting team. As a rule, the members of the CC don’t even leave their hometowns very often. However, when something looms to threaten the Rocky Mountain region, they will be there. Though based in Colorado, they range as far as Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Kansas, and Nebraska (states which lack a large superhero presence).

Any team performing an investigation in these areas may run into one or more members of the Crusaders (who may also be investigating). Large menaces that threaten the region may invite the attention of all the Crusaders.

UNTIL has been pressuring the Crusaders to become UNTIL Affiliate, and has offered to help set up a base in Denver. UNTIL believes the Colorado Crusaders would be a valuable asset in the war against super-crime – especially in the relatively unguarded Midwest/Rocky Mountain region – and the Denver HQ has devoted a considerable amount of time and resources courting them.

As time goes by, the Crusaders may take UNTIL up on its offer and evolve into a regular team, complete with a headquarters, team vehicle, and official roster. Alternately, the fiercely independent heroes might grow apart, fighting alongside each other less often, perhaps even leaving the state for greener pastures. Other supers in the Rocky Mountain region might join up, giving the team a less local and more regional feel.

## PLOT SEEDS

During a fight, Justice's armor is breached. Normally he would power down, but for unknown reasons his energy pours out uncontrollably and destructively, and will not stop. Can the heroes learn what went wrong, and put an end to it?

What is his reaction when Justice learns about the eleven *Project: Justice* volunteers who died before he gained his powers?

Justice is accused of breaking the Uniform Code of Justice, and is put on Court Martial. He insists he was only following orders. Who is responsible for his actions?

## Justice

**Background/History:** Brendan Ramirez was born the son of a poor farmer in the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado. Athletic and bright, it was no surprise when he won a scholarship to the Air Force Academy, where he was noted for his sense of duty. He graduated near the top of his class and was soon flying fighter jets.

Unknown to Brendan, the government has tried a number of "super-soldier" projects to create enhanced warriors, but few of them have been successful. The latest, code named *Project: Justice*, was an attempt by the Air Force to replicate the conditions that created Victory (from *Champions Universe*). Brendan was put on the short candidate list – not only was he an ace pilot who valued duty over all, but he also registered as an inactive mutant.

Brendan had no qualms when General Fitzpatrick's team contacted him, and soon he found himself bathed in odd chemicals and irradiated with strange energies. Unlike many such experiments, Brendan's body reacted positively to the procedure and he became a living battery of power. The experiment was a complete success!

But there were side effects. His body radiated energy faster than it could replace it – left alone, he would power down after just a few minutes. The doctors solved this problem by creating a special armored uniform, which provided just enough shielding to prevent his power from leaking out uncontrollably. The second problem: Brendan's body glowed like a lightbulb. He would never again be able to live a normal life.

But Brendan's didn't mind this inconvenience if it meant serving his country. He couldn't be more proud. He began training to use his powers, and the Air Force had a new superhero at its disposal.

Justice doesn't know it, but twelve men volunteered for *Project: Justice*, and he is the only survivor. The doctors don't know what enabled him to withstand the procedure. Many of them chalk it up to dumb luck.

**Personality/Motivation:** Justice is the ideal soldier – brave, noble, patriotic, dutiful, and eager to follow orders. He volunteered for *Project: Justice* with his eyes fully open to the potential danger, and since the experiment was successful, he is even more confident than ever. In his mind, his powers make him virtually unstoppable, so he is not afraid of anything the world throws at him. His sense of justice – not to mention his new abilities – will see to his eventual victory.

Justice likes the idea of a team – though he is of the opinion that they should get more stable members than the current group. He is

one of the few who would be willing to make the Crusaders a formal unit, but his superiors aren't interested in teaming their superhero with a bunch of unstable civilians.

If there's anything he can't stand, it's Charcoal's victim mentality. The woman wants to blame everyone else for the problems in the world, instead of doing something to fix them. She's been blessed with amazing gifts, yet she can't think of anything to do with them except stop muggers.

They argue incessantly, but Justice appreciates Lionheart's strong opinions and heroic demeanor – though he hates it when Lionheart flaunts his orders. Of everyone on the team, Justice thinks Lionheart has the best chance of making it in the superhero world.

Justice doesn't understand Blizzard. It's obvious the man doesn't want to be here, so why does he continue to show up? Justice isn't sure whether to be impressed by Blizzard's devotion, or angry that he's acting the part of the superhero against his will.

Similarly, Justice isn't sure about Phantom. She claims to be a ghost, and because of that she pretends to be beyond the concerns of the living. She's wrong, and she needs to face up to the fact that she has a duty to the world.

Loup is a cipher. Is he a mutant, a genetic experiment, an alien, or something else entirely? Though Loup follows orders, this unknown quality makes Justice a little wary and unsure whether to trust the creature.

**Quote:** "This one's for the U.S. of A!"

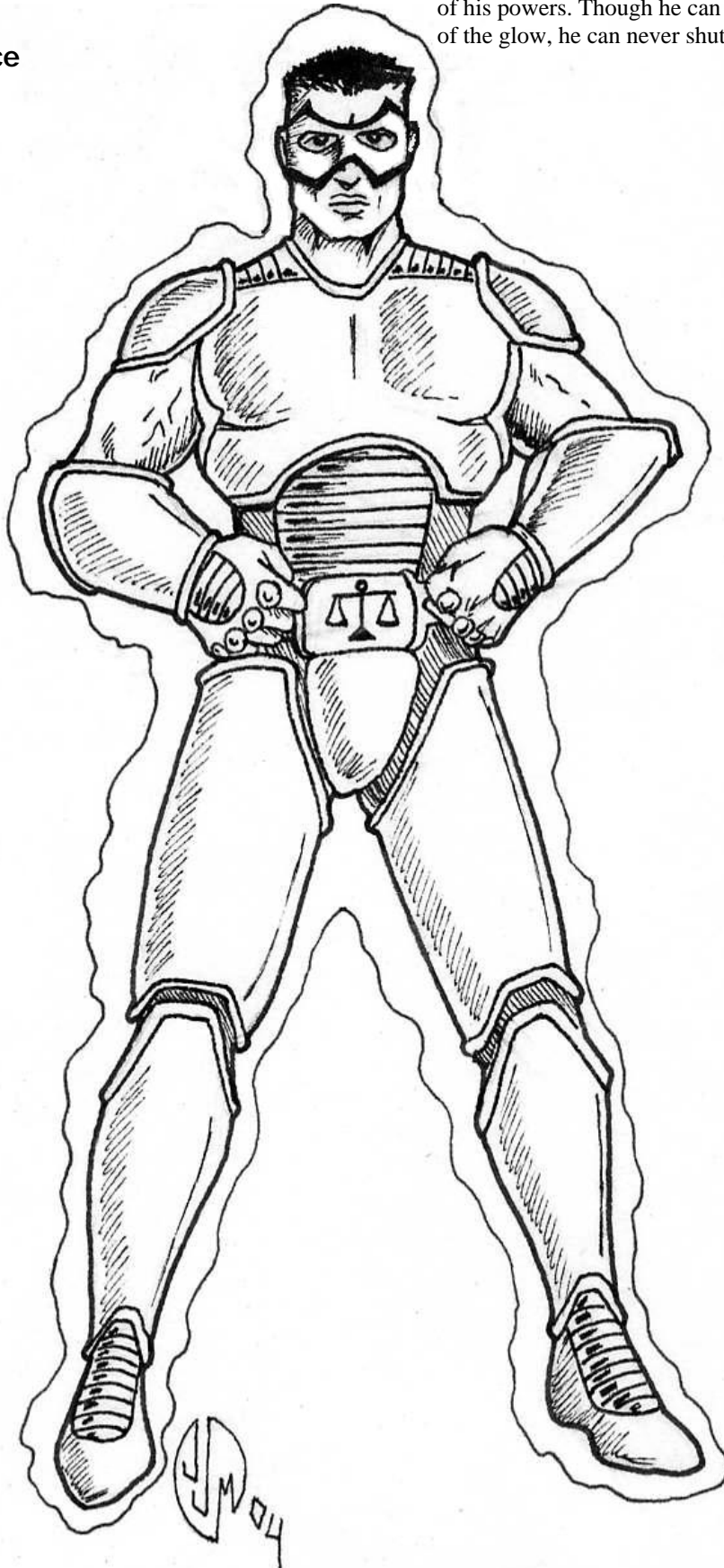
**Powers/Tactics:** Though powerful, Justice can only channel his energy to one ability at a time – either increase his strength and durability, fly, or fire bolts of "cosmic energy." Depending on his needs, he can go toe-to-toe with most bricks, blast his foes, or use flight to gain a tactical advantage. He is smart and disciplined and never falls into a pattern his foes might exploit – his greatest strength is his versatility.

**Campaign Use:** Justice does nothing without approval from his chain of command, but he might be anywhere the Air Force has a pressing interest – whether that's a battlefield or a public event. Any PCs who work for the government might be asked to take Justice along – either as an advisor or as a full-fledged teammate. Justice will not hesitate to bark orders at anyone of a lower rank, and he will jump through hoops to follow the orders of anyone higher than he is. Justice would only become a Hunter on the orders of his superiors, in which case he would be a relentless foe, using all the means at his disposal to bring down the enemy with maximum efficiency.

To make Justice more powerful, change his Multipower to an EC (allowing him to use all his powers at once). To tone him down, lower the points of his Multipower and his defenses.

**Appearance:** Justice is a handsome 28-year-old Latino with short brown hair, clean-shaven angular jaw, and a weightlifter's build. As Justice, he wears white body armor with red and blue trim. He continually glows as a side effect of his powers. Though he can alter the intensity of the glow, he can never shut it off completely.

## Justice



**Justice**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30/50	STR	20	15-	1½ tons/25 tons; 6d6/10d6 [3/5]
24	DEX	42	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
25/35	CON	30	14-	
18/23	BODY	16	13-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
14	COM	2	12-	
18	PD	12		Total: 28 PD (10 rPD)
18	ED	13		Total: 28 ED (10 rED)
6	SPD	26		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
12	REC	2		
60	END	5		
50/60	STUN	4		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 183**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Leaping: 10"/20"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"  
 Flight: 22"/352"

Cost	Powers	END
60	<i>Cosmic Energy:</i> Multipower, 60-point Reserve	
6u	1) <i>Blaster:</i> 12d6 Energy Blast	6
6u	2) <i>Defy Gravity:</i> 22" Flight, 16x NCM	4
4u	3) <i>Supercharge:</i> +20 STR <b>plus</b> +10 CON <b>plus</b> +5 BODY; No Figured Characteristics (-½) <b>plus</b> +10 STUN	0
7	<i>Energy Shielding:</i> Power Defense (10); OIF (Armor, -½)	0
20	<i>Armored Costume:</i> Armor (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (Armor, -½)	0
7	<i>Constant Glow:</i> Sight Group Images, 1" Radius, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Only to Create Light	
	(-1), No Range (-½), Always On (-½)	0
15	<i>Luck of Heroes:</i> Luck 3d6	0
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -½), Affected as Hearing and Radio (-¼)	0

**Perks**

- 5 Fringe Benefit: Rank
- 4 Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance

**Skills**

- 3 +1 with Multipower
- 3 Combat Piloting 14-
- 2 KS: Military Procedure & Protocol 11-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 3 Power: Cosmic Energy Manipulation 12-
- 2 PS: Air Force Pilot 11-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 3 Teamwork 14-
- 3 TF: Combat Aircraft, Helicopters, Small Planes
- 2 WF: Small Arms

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 167****Total Cost: 350****200+ Disadvantages**

- 30 Dependence: Must Wear Armor or Suffer 1d6 Drain from His Multipower Every Turn (Common)
- 20 Distinct Features: Glows (Not Concealable, Always Noticed)
- 15 Hunted: US Air Force 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Patriotic (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Reluctant to Kill (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Frequently, Major) (Brendon Ramirez)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject to Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 10 Vulnerability: 1½x Effect from Drain/Suppress/Transfer (Common)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

## Blizzard

**Background/History:** Anders Deacon never set out to be a superhero. He had a normal life, a daughter, a loving wife and research partner, and a good job at Cryonics, Inc. Then one day it all came apart. He and his wife were working in the lab when VIPER, interested in stealing new technologies, attacked. He doesn't remember what happened (he dimly recalls gunfire, screaming, and explosions), but it left him in the hospital for eight weeks. His wife... his wife never made it.

While he was still in mourning, his powers manifested, and his daughter convinced him to use his newfound abilities for good. Even now, she refuses to let her father drop out of life. His wife would've never allowed that.

For his first act as a superhero, Blizzard went after the VIPER cell that attacked his company. Though he managed to defeat them, it was a hard-won victory. In return, VIPER has made several attempts on his life. This has made him much more cautious in how he approaches conflict. Despite his superpowers, he is still mortal.

Anders still works at Cryonics, though there is concern for his "condition." They don't know about his double life, but they are aware his body remains room temperature at all times. Cryonics is hunting Blizzard because they know his powers are similar to Anders' condition, and they want to study him in order to find a cure.

**Personality/Motivation:** Though he hides it from the world, the emotional scars from his wife's death haven't healed yet. Blizzard does his best to get by, but in quiet moments he sometimes breaks down. The only thing that keeps him going most days is his daughter. In fact, the only reason he put on a costume is her idealistic insistence that he use his powers for good.

He has always taken his duties seriously and that has not changed since the accident. He is quiet and reserved, and seldom speaks unless he has something important to say. Blizzard suffers from mild clinical depression. He has refused to see a therapist (for fear he could accidentally reveal his Secret Identity), but he takes medication to keep it under control. Blizzard is overly cautious because he fears death and because he doesn't want to leave his daughter all alone.

Blizzard thinks the idea of a team has merit, but he's got too many things on his plate to pursue the idea. Plus, he doesn't think the current group gets along enough to be effective – to be a good team, everybody has to have similar goals and compatible personalities. The Crusaders don't fit the bill.

He sees Justice as a strong hero and a capable leader, but tied too closely to the military to be free to lead a superhero team. Blizzard feels Justice deliberately antagonizes Charcoal and Lionheart in order to get a rise out of them, which is not appropriate behavior for a man in his position.

He has worked alongside Charcoal on several missions, and while he appreciates her pragmatic approach to things, he doesn't like it when she pries into his personal life. He neither wants nor needs her help, so he keeps a cool distance between them.

While Blizzard likes Lionheart's charm, the boy's gung-ho attitude is bound to get him killed. Lionheart doesn't seem to realize they have a dangerous, life-or-death calling, and any slip-ups are bound to hurt someone. He's a loose cannon and doesn't belong on a team.

Though he has only worked with Loup a few times, Blizzard knows there is more to this wolfman than meets the eye. He has considered following Loup to find out where he goes (and who he really is), but the opportunity has not presented itself.

He dislikes Phantom because whenever she is around, the conversation inevitably turns to death – and that's a topic he doesn't want to talk about. He does his best to steer clear of her when the group comes together.

**Quote:** "Just because I'm *dressed* like a superhero doesn't mean I have to *act* like one."

**Powers/Tactics:** Blizzard is a thinking man. He doesn't like to get into conflicts without a clear idea of who he is facing and what their capabilities are; he hangs back long enough to evaluate the opposition. Once he engages, he stays at the edge of the fight, using his Cold Snap and Icy Blast – he doesn't like to "get mixed in" if he can help it. If faced with a large number of enemies, he will cover the battlefield with a Cold Storm or an Ice Fog in order to hamper their effectiveness. He doesn't do this when fighting alongside the others, though – he's too cautious to hinder his own teammates' abilities this way. Because of his calculating nature and cool head, Blizzard might some day make an effective team leader – if he can get over his depression.

Blizzard can perceive through Darkness (including his own Ice Fog), since he doesn't so much "see" heat signatures as "feel" them. He himself radiates no heat whatsoever – his body is always at room temperature, so he is effectively invisible to heat sensors.

**Campaign Use:** Blizzard is a reluctant superhero. While he has no problem using his powers for the betterment of his fellows, he doesn't like wearing tights and spouting

## PLOT SEEDS

Blizzard's powers suddenly spiral out of control as his body begins sucking in all the heat from the area around him. As the radius grows wider and the ice storm grows worse, can the PCs help him find a cure before the entire city is frozen solid?

VIPER agents stage a bank heist, and when they botch it they flee to a nearby elementary school where they take the children and teachers hostage. Can Blizzard rescue his daughter (and the other hostages) without revealing their connection?

Blizzard hears rumors that his wife isn't dead – VIPER is keeping her in cryogenic stasis. Are the rumors true, or is this just an elaborate trap?



soliloquies. He would rather be in his lab than on the front lines. To this end, he will often volunteer to do the research and/or legwork that are often necessary to catching criminals. Blizzard would Hunt anyone associated with the VIPER assault that led to the death of his wife.

To make Blizzard stronger, add more slots to his EC and Multipower and give him some Combat Skill Levels. To cool him down, decrease the Points in his Multipower.

**Appearance:** Anders Deacon is a 36-year-old man of average height and build, with short, messy dark hair and blue eyes. As Blizzard, he wears black lace-up boots, ice-blue tights (somewhat to his humiliation), gloves, and a mask that covers his face but leaves his hair free. Despite his embarrassment, he feels he has to wear this costume – his daughter made it for him, and she expects him to put it on whenever trouble strikes. For practicality (not to mention modesty), he covers his uniform with a dark blue trenchcoat. When using his powers, ice crystals form in the air around him, coating his clothing and hair with frost.

## Blizzard



**Blizzard**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
23	CON	26	14-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll: 13-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
14	COM	2	11-	
7	PD	4		Total: 22 (15 rPD)
7	ED	4		Total: 22 (15 rED)
5	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
9	REC	4		
60	END	7		
35	STUN	4		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 130**

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

Cost	Powers	END
60	<i>Generate Freezing Temperatures:</i> Multipower, 60-point Reserve	
6u	1) <i>Icy Blast:</i> EB 12d6	6
6u	2) <i>Freezing Blast:</i> EB 9½d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
6u	3) <i>Cold Snap:</i> EB 4d6, Area Of Effect (1 Hex, +½), NND (Defense is Heat-Generation Powers or Immunity to Cold, +1)	6
6u	4) <i>Block of Ice:</i> Entangle 6d6 BODY, 6 DEF	6
15	<i>Temperature Manipulation:</i> Elemental Control, 30-point Powers	
15	1) <i>Cold Storm:</i> Change Environment 2" Radius, 4 pips NND (Defense is Heat-Generation Powers or Immunity to Cold)	2
15	2) <i>Ice Fog:</i> Darkness to Sight Group 3" Radius	3
15	3) <i>Ice Armor:</i> Force Field (15 PD/15 ED)	3
17	4) <i>Room-Temperature Body:</i> Invisibility to Infrared Perception, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Always On (-½)	0
4	<i>Feels Neither Heat Nor Cold:</i> Life Support (Safe in Intense Heat and Cold)	0
15	<i>Detect Heat and Cold:</i> Infrared Perception (Touch Group), Targeting	0
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -½); Affected as Hearing & Radio (-¼)	0

**Perks**

- 4 EM: Icewalking (No Penalties on Ice)
- 3 Lightning Calculator

**Skills**

- 3 +1 with Multipower
- 3 Computer Programming 13-
- 3 Electronics 13-
- 3 Inventor 13-
- 3 Power: Ice Tricks 13-
- 2 PS: Researcher 11-
- 1 Teamwork 8-
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Chemistry 13-
- 2 2) SS: Cryonics 13-
- 2 3) SS: Genetics 13-
- 2 4) SS: Physics 13-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220****Total Cost: 350****200+ Disadvantages**

- 20 DNPC: Kelsey (daughter) 11- (Incompetent, Aware)
- 20 Distinct Features: No Body Heat (Not Concealable, Uncommon Senses [Touch])
- 20 Hunted: Cryonics, Inc. 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Study)
- 25 Hunted: VIPER 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Mourning Over His Late Wife (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Overly Cautious (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major) (Anders Deacon)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

## PLOT SEEDS

Charcoal has angered enough gangers, pimps, and drug dealers that they pool their money to hire the best assassin they can find. As tough as Charcoal is, she knows she's no match for the likes of Mechassassin, so she approaches the PCs for help.

The Institute for Human Advancement is holding their annual conference in Denver, and Charcoal has gone missing. Coincidence, or is there a darker side to this "benign" lobbying organization?

Bulldozer comes to town, looking for that "colored girl" who thinks she's tougher than him. Unfortunately, Charcoal is at a medical conference on the east coast. The PCs have to stop this enraged powerhouse before he wrecks the whole city (and worse, ignites racial tensions the likes of which Denver has never seen!)

## Charcoal

**Background/History:** When Yvette was a girl growing up in the mean streets, she decided someday she wanted to help people. She couldn't stand the thought of abandoning anyone who needed her help.

As she grew, so too did her powers. They came progressively, from the time she was a child. When she was six, she was stronger and faster than any of the other children in school. At the age of ten, she could lift nearly 1000 pounds. By the time she graduated high school, it was apparent to her she was a mutant – but since her powers developed so gradually, she learned to control them, keep them hidden, and not let anyone know, not even her own mother.

Yvette made it to college on an athletic scholarship, but she didn't just want to play sports. She worked hard and kept her grades high, and when she finished school, she was a full-fledged MD. After her residency, she went back home to open a clinic. Her practice runs on a shoestring budget; she only takes what people can afford to pay, and sometimes that means giving her services away for free. She rarely has two nickels to rub together, and she still lives at home with her mother, but she doesn't care. She could be making a lot of money in a private practice in the suburbs, but she can't abandon those who need her help.

But she learned people in the 'hood need more than a doctor. Sometimes, they need a hero. One night while she was working late, some punks broke into her clinic looking for drugs to steal. They didn't bargain on what they found – an angry, super-strong bee-yotch who took them all down and left them, battered and bruised, on the steps of the nearest police station.

Yvette had found another way to help people. Before long, she had a costume and a mask and took to patrolling the streets after dark, stopping crimes as they occurred. She's built a reputation, but not everyone likes her style. She's clashed with gangs, pimps, drug-dealers, and other lowlifes, and some of them put a price on her head – not enough to attract the attention of any big-leaguers, but enough that she has to deal with would-be assassins on a frequent basis. Unfortunately for them, they've chosen to pick on one of the strongest superheroes in the west.

It also didn't take long to attract the attention of UNTIL, which has tried several times to recruit her for UNITY, but she's turned them down. She has no interest in traveling the world to stop crime when there is still so much to do at home. Nonetheless, they keep an eye on her, hoping she'll think about their offer.

Yvette got her codename from some wags in the media. When she first appeared on the scene, she was all the rage on the radio. A talk show

host made the comment that Denver had a new superhero, a female brick – or, as he put it, a "brickette." From that, people began to call her Charcoal, and the name stuck. It's not the name she would have chosen for herself, but she's grown to like it.

**Personality/Motivation:** As a doctor, Charcoal takes her Hippocratic Oath very seriously. She feels she has a duty to help anyone in need, both as a doctor and as a superhero – especially if they are in some way helpless. This makes her a great hero. Unfortunately, it also makes her an annoying busybody who always sticks her nose in, whether she's wanted or not. Though people appreciate her assistance, they can do without her attitude. Charcoal will never willingly put innocents in danger, and anyone who plays fast and loose with the lives of civilians will earn her wrath. Because of her deeply caring personality, she will often stop to help innocents rather than capture the bad guys.

Charcoal has a strange relationship with the Colorado Crusaders. On the one hand, she thinks the idea of a team taking on menaces the individuals couldn't handle is a solid one. On the other, she can't stand being around these people for very long, so she's reluctant to commit to anything. She also fears if she hangs out with superheroes, she'll lose touch with her humble roots. To her, the Crusaders are a nice concept and little more.

She has no patience for Justice and his gung-ho military attitude. She thinks he's just another clown in a red, white, and blue suit who substitutes patriotism for genuine concern. However, she has to admit he has the courage and confidence to get things done, so in an emergency situation she has no problem following orders. After the crisis is over, she has plenty of time to tell him exactly what she thought of his tactics – and she does.

She likes Blizzard. He has a quiet, calm, and yet forceful personality she appreciates. He doesn't speak unless he has something to say, so when he opens his mouth Charcoal always listens. She's worked more closely with Blizzard than with any of the others. She can sense he's depressed, and she's tried to talk to him about it many times. She feels, as a doctor and a friend, she can help. However, he has rebuffed her attempts to draw closer.

Charcoal finds Lionheart's white liberal attitude almost as annoying as Justice's right-wing nonsense. It's one thing to be concerned about the welfare of others; it's another to feel high-and-mighty just because you've got a social conscience. While she sympathizes with Lionheart in theory, in practice the two of them argue with each other more than with Justice.

She thinks Loup is... creepy. It's hard for

## DIGITAL HERO #26

someone who bench presses freight trains to admit she's frightened by someone, but there is something about Loup that gives her the chills. Maybe it's the stories of *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Peter and the Wolf* her mother told her when she was growing up, or maybe it's the way he looks at her with those intelligent yet inhuman eyes, or maybe it's the way his whines, snarls, and barks sound like he's trying to talk.

Whatever it is, she doesn't like it, so she pretends he's not there.

Charcoal feels for Phantom, but the poor girl has got to stop being so clingy and emotional all the time.

**Quote:** "Do y'all need a little help here?"

**Powers/Tactics:** Charcoal is extremely strong and tough – one of the strongest heroes in the western United States, but she has no formal combat training. Though a good person and a true hero, she fights dirty when necessary (a result of her rough upbringing). Because of her immense strength, near invulnerability, and relative quickness, she has few tactical variations beyond "punch 'em 'til they fall down."

**Campaign Use:** Charcoal can be used to fill in the gap between street-level *Dark Champions* superheroes and Four Color heroes. She is a powerful super with amazing abilities, but she grew up amid wretched poverty in the dirty streets, and she knows firsthand what the effects of crime are. Still, she's kept a heroic outlook on life. She could be a mentor or guide for lower-powered heroes who want to make their neighborhood a nicer place to raise a family, or a foil for those with a darker and more violent outlook. Because of her respect for human life, she might Hunt anyone who leaves a high body count.

To make Charcoal tougher, give her Martial Arts, such as the Dirty Infighting style. A few Brick Tricks from *The Ultimate Brick* (like "Scattershot") would make sense. To tone her down, reduce her STR, her Defenses, and her DEX.

**Appearance:** Charcoal is a very large, very striking African-American woman, standing 6'4" with well-developed muscle tone. She weighs roughly 400 lbs, but a casual viewer can't tell – though tall, she is trim. She keeps her hair short and doesn't wear jewelry except on special occasions. When working in her clinic, she keeps it simple: a white smock over comfortable slacks and sensible shoes, with a pocket full of candy for the kids. Her costume consists of a black sleeveless skintight uniform with red highlights and black gloves, boots, belt, and mask.

**GM's Note:** My favorite Charcoal moment was when the PCs were about to face off with the baddies. Charcoal stepped up to the biggest, strongest, toughest-looking villain, checked him out up and down, nodded in grudging approval, then stuck out her chin – daring him to take his best shot. He wound up to give her a good, old-fashioned Haymaker, and she sucker-punched him in the vitals. Perfect roleplaying!

Charcoal



## DIGITAL HERO #26

### Charcoal

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
60	STR	50	21-	Lift 100 tons; 12d6 [6]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
30	CON	40	15-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	Per Roll: 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
30	PD	18		Total: 30 PD (15 rPD)
30	ED	24		Total: 30 ED (15 rED)
5	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
18	REC	0		
60	END	0		
65	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 222**

**Movement:** Running: 17"/34"  
Leaping: 12"/24"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
15	<i>Super-Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (15 PD/15 ED)	0
10	<i>Super-Strong Eyes:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)	0
10	<i>Super-Strong Ears:</i> Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points)	0
10	<i>Very Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -5"	0
2	<i>Super-Strong Lungs:</i> Life Support (Extended Breathing [1 END per Minute])	0
9	<i>Super-Tough Body:</i> Life Support (Safe in Heat, Cold, Vacuum, Pressure, and Radiation)	0
10	<i>Super Immune System:</i> Life Support (Immunity to All Terrestrial Diseases and Biowarfare Agents)	0
22	<i>Super-Fast:</i> Running +11" (17" Total)	2
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -½), Affected as Hearing & Radio (-¼)	0

#### Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Licensed Physician

#### Skills

- 5 +1 with Hand-to-Hand Combat  
9 +3 with All Medical Skills  
3 Paramedic 12-  
3 Power: Brick Tricks 12-  
2 PS: College Sports 11-  
3 PS: Medical Doctor 12-  
3 SS: Medicine 12-  
3 Streetwise 13-  
1 Teamwork 8-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 128**

**Total Cost: 350**

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinct Features: Mutant (Not Concealable, Unusual Senses)  
20 DNPC: Shoshone Brown (elderly mother) 8- (Incompetent, Unaware)  
10 Enraged: Innocents are Hurt/Threatened (Common, Go 8-, Recover 14-)  
15 Hunted: Drug Lords and Street Gangs 14- (Less Pow, Kill)  
20 Hunted: UNTIL 14- (More Powerful, NCI, Watching)  
5 Money: Poor  
10 Psychological Limitation: Busybody (Common, Moderate)  
15 Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Common, Strong)  
15 Psychological Limitation: Hippocratic Oath (Common, Strong)  
10 Psychological Limitation: Won't Abandon Anyone Who Needs Help (Common, Moderate)  
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major) (Yvette Brown)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**



## PLOT SEEDS

While on a covert mission, Lionheart is captured by guerillas. The US government wants this situation cleaned up as quickly and quietly as possible, before the press gets wind of it and starts an international incident.

Lionheart breaks into a corporation's high-security compound and steals a packet of incriminating information. All the police know is he was breaking and entering, and now he's Wanted. Can the PCs help him get his information to the proper authorities, all the while dodging police and the corporation's security forces?

Lionheart breaks into a corporation's high-security lab and accidentally releases a dangerous chemical – a zombie-virus that animates corpses and turns them into bloodthirsty monsters. Can the PCs stop the zombies, contain the accident, and help Lionheart get the incriminating evidence to the authorities – all while dodging the corporation's security teams?

## Lionheart

**Background/History:** “Boy Genius.” That’s what they called him, from the time he was able to talk. Richard Lionetti took apart and reassembled a broken TV when he was 6, and when he was finished it worked like new. He had his first patent at 10 and left for college by the time he was 14. Richard was not just attracted to cerebral pursuits; he looked for physical challenges as well. Track & field, martial arts, gymnastics – he excelled in them all. With two PhDs and three Olympic gold medals under his belt by the age of 20, Richard sought out a new challenge.

It wasn’t hard to find one. Though he was pursued by a number of Fortune 500 companies, a man with his intellect, charisma, and vision could never be a corporate drone. Instead, he founded his own company – Lionheart Industries. Richard was not only the CEO, but also its top engineer, and Lionheart quickly became one of the military’s top suppliers of weapons and equipment.

But Richard grew disillusioned. He saw violence on the news every night and wondered, “Did my inventions contribute to this?” His conscience grated on him more and more every day, until he finally had enough. He dissolved Lionheart Industries, sold off its assets, and used the proceeds to form the Lionheart Foundation – an organization devoted to the betterment of mankind. He carefully courted a group of investors, men and women who, like him, imagined making the world a better place.

Keeping his mind and body honed to a keen edge, Richard worked hard to see his dream come about. Since weapon design and development was what he knew best, he created armor and weapons that would allow good men and women to defend themselves, and the world, from injustice and tyranny.

Of course, his inventions had to be field-tested, and who better than to do that than the man who knew the systems inside and out? Though the armor and weapons were still prototypes, Richard was never a man to waste a good opportunity. A new superhero appeared – at first stopping robberies, then putting an end to mob activities, then going so far as to expose corporate and government corruption. Lionheart’s work has ended the career of many a mafia boss, shady corporate leader, and crooked government official.

His investors don’t know Richard is Lionheart – they think the man inside the armor is a hired hand, a mercenary employed to test the suit. If they found out about Richard’s extracurricular activities, funding for the Lionheart Foundation would dry up – investors are notoriously protective of their money, and

having their top man put his life on the line every day is a huge risk.

Though mostly a local hero, Lionheart has been known to travel the globe, righting wrongs like a modern knight errant. He has rescued hostages, busted international drug rings, and even defeated terrorist cells. These activities upset the CIA to no end. They view him as a rogue, a wildcard, and a destabilizing element. Though they’ve never issued an official statement about his activities, they are watching him very closely.

**Personality/Motivation:** Richard is curious about everything, especially the way things work. This includes not only machines and electronics, but large social systems like corporations and governments as well. He wants to explore everything about the world around him, having new experiences and learning new things. Though he has no detective training, he has a nose for trouble and a willingness to follow it wherever it might lead.

He considers himself a champion of the underdog, a man dedicated to the principles of the hero. His own experiences in the corporate world have led him to distrust people in positions of power, and he goes out of his way to expose corporate and government malfeasance.

Lionheart thinks the idea of a team is stupid, and lets the others know this every time they get together. “I work better alone,” he insists. Nonetheless, whenever he is called by one of the other members of the Crusaders, he comes. Blizzard thinks Lionheart just likes showing off – which in some ways is true. Lionheart never misses an opportunity to show Justice who is the better hero.

He really doesn’t like Justice, on a personal or professional level. He believes the man is the worst kind of government stooge. He also believes Justice can be convinced of his mistakes through reasoned debate – so the two of them argue constantly. Lionheart is likely to ignore Justice’s battlefield orders, which makes the rest of the team think he’s a loose cannon.

On the other hand, Lionheart likes Charcoal and enjoys her company. He considers her an intellectual equal, and likes to debate with her. He is not aware that Charcoal finds these discussions annoying; even if he did, he probably wouldn’t stop.

He believes Blizzard is a total stick. For a scientist, the man has no sense of curiosity and no desire to go beyond the borders others have set. Lionheart has a hard time masking his disappointment.

Lionheart refuses to believe Phantom is a ghost. To him, ghosts, fairies, goblins, and demons are all constructs of a primitive mind trying to deal with things it cannot understand.

## DIGITAL HERO #26

He knows there's a rational explanation for her condition – probably some sort of mutation (the fact that she doesn't show up on Mutant Detectors brings him much consternation).

Similarly, he doesn't think Loup is a werewolf. He suspects some corporation was playing with genetics and accidentally fused wolf and human DNA. He has no idea Loup can become human at will; indeed, he thinks Loup is little more than an animal, and treats him as such.

**Quote:** “God, I love my work!”

**Powers/Tactics:** Lionheart does not have any superpowers, but his inventions allow him to compete in the big leagues. He never shies away from a fight, bounding in with limitless enthusiasm and a wisecrack on his lips. He prefers hand-to-hand combat, using Jeet Kune Do in conjunction with his Combat Staff. If someone proves too tough, he will attempt to entangle them with Sticky Bombs or blind them with Flash Bombs. If he feels the need to make a dramatic entrance (or exit), he'll bring out the Smoke Bombs. And although he really shouldn't count on it, he has been saved by amazing luck on more than one occasion.

**Campaign Use:** Lionheart is the most active hero in Colorado; the only one who sought out the adventuring lifestyle. He is certainly the most flamboyant, seeking new thrills and challenges. PCs are likely to meet him outside his stomping grounds, as he travels the country (and the world) following leads or looking for trouble. Because he is so active, he's made a lot of enemies, from the mob to a number of corporations he's busted. Lionheart would make a relentless and determined Hunter, following leads wherever they might take him, stalking and gathering information about his prey before he finally made his (very public) attack.

To make Lionheart more effective, give him additional Skills (Deduction, Criminology, and Forensics would make sense) and Skill Levels, and maybe a small VPP Gadget Pool to represent his access to technology (listening devices, high-tech lockpicks, telescopic sights, and so forth). To reduce his power, get rid of his bandolier of grenades.

**Appearance:** Richard is a tall, dark-haired man in his mid-20s with stunning features and a charming smile. He is always fashionably but casually dressed, and frequently has a young lady on his arm. As Lionheart, he wears shining gold armor (helmet, breastplate, pauldrons, greaves, and vambraces) over a black bodysuit, emblazoned with a gold lion rampant. He wields a 2½-meter metal quarterstaff with deadly skill, and wears a black bandolier covered with pouches. Those pouches that don't contain his grenades are filled with tools to help in his battle against crime.

# Lionheart

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift: 400 kg; 4d6 [2]
25	DEX	45	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
18	CON	16	13-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
23	INT	13	14-	PER Roll: 14-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	13-	PRE Attack: 3d6
16	COM	3	12-	
10	PD	6		Total: 25 PD (15 rPD)
10	ED	6		Total: 25 ED (15 rED)
5	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	REC	0		
50	END	7		
35	STUN	3		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 141**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
Leaping: 14"/28"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Bandolier of Grenades:</i> Multipower, 60-point Reserve; OAF (Bandolier, -1), 4 Charges each (-1)	
2u	1) <i>Flashbombs:</i> Sight Group Flash 8d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex, +1/2); Range Limited by STR (-1/4), OAF (Grenades, -1), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
2u	2) <i>Grenades:</i> EB 12d6; Range Limited by STR (-1/4), OAF (Grenades, -1), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
2u	3) <i>Sticky Bombs:</i> Entangle 4 DEF, 5d6 BODY, Entangle and Character Both Take Damage (+1/4); Cannot Form Barriers (-1/4), Range Limited by STR (-1/4), OAF (Grenades, -1), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
2u	4) <i>Smoke Bombs:</i> Darkness to Sight Group 4" Radius, Personal Immunity (+1/4); Range Limited by STR (-1/4), OAF (Grenades, -1), 4 Continuing Charges Lasting 1 Turn Each (-1/2)	[4]
10	<i>Combat Staff:</i> Multipower, 20-point Reserve; OAF (Quarterstaff, -1)	
1u	1) <i>Blunt Trauma:</i> Hand Attack +4d6 (8d6 with STR); HA Lim (-1/2), OAF (Quarterstaff, -1)	4
1u	2) <i>Pole Vault:</i> Leaping +10" (14" Total); OAF (Quarterstaff, -1)	3
1u	3) <i>Deflect Attack:</i> Missile Deflection (All Ranged Attacks); OAF (Quarterstaff, -1)	2
4	<i>Long Reach:</i> Stretching 2"; OAF (Quarterstaff, -1), No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Always Direct (-1/4)	1

30	<i>Battle Armor:</i> Armor (15 PD/15 ED); OIF (Armor, -1/2)	0
7	<i>Shielded Helmet:</i> Flash Defense (10), Sight Group; OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0
7	<i>Shielded Helmet:</i> Flash Defense (10), Hearing Group; OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0
3	<i>Low-Light Visor:</i> Nightvision; OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0
6	<i>Internal Air Supply:</i> Life Support (Self Contained Breathing); OIF (Armor, -1/2), 1 Continuing Charge Lasting 1 Hour (-1/4)	[1]
13	<i>High-Tech Camouflage:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group; IIF (Armor, -1/4), Bright Fringe (-1/4)	2
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -1/2); Affected as Hearing & Radio (-1/4)	0
10	<i>Incredibly Lucky:</i> Luck 2d6	0

## Martial Arts: Jeet Kune Do

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Dodge	--	+5	Dodge, Abort
4 Punch/Elbow Strike	+0	+2	6d6 Strike
3 Grab/Joint Lock	-1	-1	30 STR Grab Two Limbs
4 Nerve Strike	-1	+1	2d6 NND
1 Use Art With Quarterstaff			

## Perks

5 Money: Well Off

## Skills

6	+2 with Staff
3	Acrobatics 14-
3	Breakfall 14-
3	Climbing 14-
3	Concealment 14-
3	Demolitions 14-
3	Electronics 14-
3	Inventor 14-
2	KS: Government Agencies 11-
3	Lockpicking 14-
3	Mechanics 14-
3	Paramedic 14-
3	Security Systems 14-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 14-
2	Survival: Temperate/Subtropical 14-
1	Teamwork 8-
3	Tracking 14-
2	Weaponsmith: Muscle Powered HTH 14-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 209**

**Total Cost: 350**

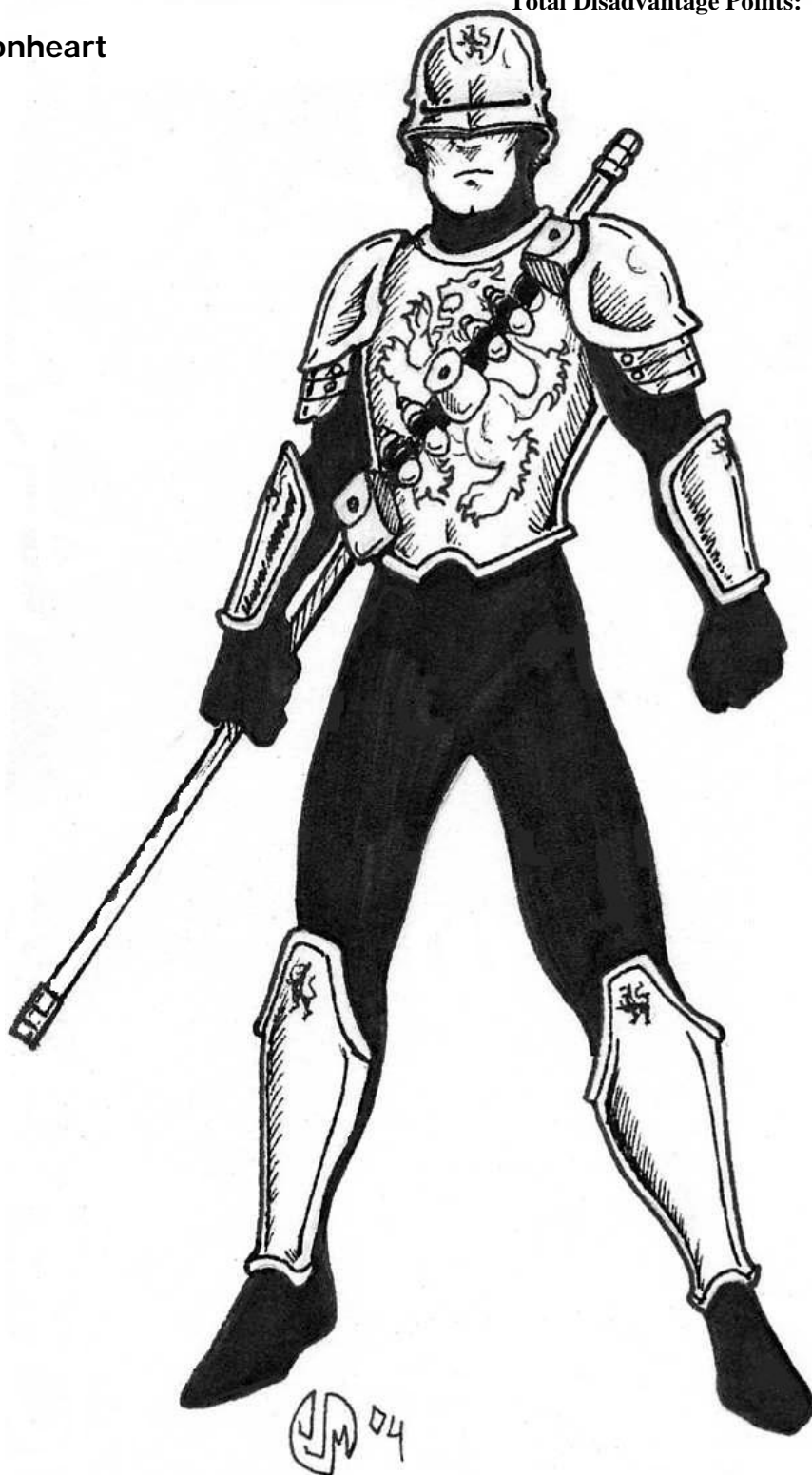
## DIGITAL HERO #26

### 200+ Disadvantages

- 10 DNPC: Current Girlfriend 8- (Normal, Unaware)
- 15 Hunted: CIA 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Hunted: The Lionheart Foundation 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Mafia 11- (Less Pow, Kill)
- 10 Hunted: Criminal Corporations 14- (Less Pow, LGA, Kill)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code Against Killing (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Curiosity (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Doesn't Trust the Government (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Rivalry: Professional (with Justice, Player Character, Rival is Aware)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major) (Richard Lionetti)
- 15 Unluck: 3d6

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

### Lionheart



## PLOT SEEDS

The longer Loup remains in wolf form, the more feral he becomes. He becomes less reluctant to call on the power of the wolf. As a human, he acts more and more like an animal; as a wolf he begins to forget he was human. What will happen if the heroes can't convince him to remain human?

A huge, wild animal is hunting the streets at night. It has already killed criminal lowlives twice. Has Loup finally gone off the deep end, or is this the work of another, similar creature?

In his duties as a police officer, Lou runs into a situation bigger than he can handle. He tries to transform into Loup, fails, and barely survives the situation. Though apparently free of his curse, he finds himself incomplete without the wolf. Why has the power of Loup left him?

## Loup

**Background/History:** The Reisman family has a long tradition of police work. Lou's grandfather was a cop, his dad was a cop, and Lou never wanted to be anything but a cop. Too bad fate had something different in mind. He had been on the force for less than a year when he was called to investigate reports of a wild animal loose in the suburbs. All he saw were two glowing red eyes. His hand never made it to his sidearm. When he woke the next morning, he was lying in a ditch ten miles from where he parked his car, his clothes completely shredded but not a mark on his body.

Investigators decided the animal must've dragged him away, though they couldn't explain why he was unharmed by the experience. He was declared fit for duty and went back out on the streets. Two nights later, a hopped-up punk slashed him with a knife. In an instant, everything went red. He couldn't believe it, but he became a werewolf. After dealing with the punk, he concentrated on his human form, and found he could control the change. He took some personal time off – he had to know if he was going insane. But it was true; he could change from a man to a wolf, and back again.

He tried to hide what had happened, to forget anything was wrong at all, but the wolf had a way of sneaking up on him. When he was hurt, he couldn't control it – the wolf took over. He withdrew from his friends at work and was in danger of becoming a recluse, when one day he met Phantom.

Responding to a call about squatters in an old abandoned house, he went in to check. Inside, he found a girl – no, not a girl, a beautiful woman, dressed in red. She didn't say anything, she just stared at him sadly, like she expected him to run away. In the dark, it took him a moment to realize something was wrong – the girl was translucent, like a ghost.

But rather than becoming frightened, Lou was concerned. "Are you all right?" he asked her. The woman gasped and began to disappear, but Lou stepped up to her. "Don't go!" he said. "I'm here to help. You're the one who stopped that bank robbery, aren't you? The one they call Phantom?"

Phantom looked more frightened of him than he did of her, and Lou somehow knew he finally found someone who might understand what he himself was going through. "You don't have to be afraid," he said softly. "I have a secret, too. I'll show you, if you promise not to be frightened..."

Phantom giggled – imagine, a ghost frightened of a mortal! Then Lou changed into the wolf. Phantom was amazed; she had finally found a kindred spirit. The two of them sat long

into the night, talking not only about their strange powers, but about their duty to use those abilities to help others. They promised one another they would each turn their curse into a blessing.

Loup walked out of the old abandoned house feeling like he'd gotten a new lease on life. He still doesn't like the wolf, but he understands now he can't hide from the world. Since that night, he's become the best police officer he can be – and backed by the power of Loup, he's done better than anyone ever imagined.

**Personality/Motivations:** Lou is a dedicated cop who dislikes resorting to violence if he can help it. He takes a calm, rational approach to police work that his fellow officers admire, but too often he finds himself caught in something bigger than he is. He doesn't understand the supernatural, but he frequently finds himself enmeshed in it. Because of this, he's gotten a bad reputation as a cop to whom strange things happen. The fact that he and Loup are often seen in the same areas only heightens this reputation.

Loup is an animal, a creature Lou is barely able to keep in check. It takes almost all his willpower to suppress the animalistic urges that fill his mind. He doesn't like Loup very much, though he has to admit having the strength of a werewolf comes in handy when things get tough. Still, he hates losing his humanity every time the wolf comes out, and he lives in constant fear that someday he might completely lose control.

Loup has a strong pack mentality and likes working with the others in the team... at least, as individuals. When they all get together, the negative emotions upset him. Lou, as a man, thinks the whole thing is silly and wants nothing to do with the team – except Phantom, who has sympathy for his "condition." Of the Crusaders, only Phantom knows he is a werewolf who can switch back and forth between his two forms. Charcoal, Blizzard, and Lionheart have met Officer Reisman a few times, but don't realize he and Loup are one in the same.

Loup gets along best with Phantom, the only Crusader who can understand him when he tries to speak. Is she really a ghost? Loup doesn't know – but to him, that's not important. What's important is that she is a friend. Lou, as a man, feels much the same way – she's someone who understands what he's going through. The two of them don't see one another very often, but when they do, anyone can see the friendship between them.

Loup can tell Blizzard has had some tragedy in his past; to Loup's enhanced canine senses, the man reeks of despair and depression, which makes the wolf hesitant to approach him. Lou sympathizes with Blizzard's difficulties, but

believes he needs to get beyond it and start living in the present.

Charcoal is quite a person, caring and helpful. She would make a good addition to the Police Force, even without her mutant abilities. As a cop, Lou has worked with her a number of times and has always been impressed. The trouble is, to Loup she smells like a frightened child who puts on a brave show but lashes out at the world due to her insecurity.

Lionheart is nothing but a clown in a colorful costume, running around like the world's savior, but without having to obey the rules that make society work. His methods are too gung-ho, his attitude is too cocky, and his presence is nothing but a hindrance on proper law-enforcement. Loup, on the other paw, loves to work alongside the playful, rough-and-tumble Lionheart, and considers him a true pack-mate.

Loup follows Justice's orders without hesitation, as Justice is obviously the Alpha-Male of the pack. He strives to gain Justice's approval – the fact that Justice is wary of him only makes him try harder. Lou admires the sacrifices Justice has made for his country, but doesn't even begin to understand what could have motivated the man to do so.

**Quote:** (Lou): "Don't make me angry..."  
(Loup): "Grrrrrr..."

**Powers/Tactics:** Lou is an above-average police officer, but he has no special powers or talents... except one. He can transform into Loup – a giant wolf, armed with sharp claws and superhuman strength, who can heal injuries within minutes, see in the dark, smell a drop of blood in a bucket of water, and hear a mouse squeak from thirty yards away. Unfortunately, when he becomes Loup, Lou loses much of what makes him human – he can't help but behave in animalistic ways (he's been known to chase down and kill deer), and can barely keep Loup's wild nature in check. He also can't talk (though he tries, growling and barking in a strange pantomime of speech), and his paws are barely functional as hands. He doesn't like to become Loup, unless no other option presents itself.

In a fight, Loup is fearless and wild, bounding across the battlefield and attacking his enemies with fierce abandon. The man inside the wolf keeps Loup's worse instincts in check, so he never kills nor uses his razor-sharp claws on anyone who cannot take the damage. He doesn't think tactically, and will tend to immediately attack the strongest-looking foe (going after the "Alpha") regardless of other threats or more important targets. Loup is happy to follow commands from anyone else on the team – he actually fights much better when someone is there to direct his fury.

**Campaign Use:** Lou is a dual-use character. As a cop, he can be one of the people heroes interact with on a daily basis. As a werewolf, he has a darker, more supernatural bent. He can fit into both four-color and darker Champions games, as a supernatural ally, contact, or even foil. Loup might Hunt anyone with a supernatural background, looking for a way to cure (or at least better understand) his condition. Also, as a police officer, he could go after anyone hunted by the law.

To make Loup more powerful, increase his STR, DEX, CON, REC, and STUN, and give him Damage Reduction. To reduce his power, lower those stats and consider giving him a Vulnerability to Silver. Loup's human form paid points for his mundane police equipment, and did not take the Normal Characteristic Maxima Disadvantage. To make him more along the lines of a Heroic-level character, you may consider changing these things.

**Appearance:** Lou is a good-looking police officer in his late 20s, with sandy blonde hair, blue eyes, and a well-trimmed moustache. He is about 5'10", in excellent shape, and when not in uniform wears jeans and a flannel shirt.

Loup is a huge wolf-like creature. His legs are digitigrade; he is most comfortable on four paws, but can stand up straight when he needs to – looking like a 7'-tall humanoid wolf. From a distance, he appears to be a huge wolf; up close, anyone can tell he is not normal. He has gray fur with black markings, canine features, and sharp claws.



Loup



## DIGITAL HERO #26

### Loup (Human Form)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
13	CON	6	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
12	COM	1	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	2		
28	STUN	1		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 65**

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

Cost	Powers	END
40	<i>Werewolf Form:</i> Multi-form (Assume 350-point Wolf Form; True Form is 175-point Human Form)	0
12	<i>9mm Sidearm:</i> RKA 1d6+1, 16 Charges in 4 Clips (+¼); OAF (Sidearm, -1)	[16]
6	<i>Nightstick:</i> Hand Attack +3d6 (5½d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½), OAF (Nightstick, -1)	1
6	<i>Handcuffs:</i> Entangle 2d6, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+½); Hands Only (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), No Range (-½), 2 Recoverable Charges (-1), OAF (Handcuffs, -1)	[2]
4	<i>Flak Vest:</i> Armor (3 PD/3 ED); OIF (Flak Vest, -½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Real Armor (-¼)	0
3	<i>Sunglasses:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (5); OAF (Sunglasses, -1)	0
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -½), Affected as Hearing and Radio (-¼)	0

### Martial Arts: Police Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3 Aikido Hold	-1	-1	Two Limbs, 23 STR
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	23 STR Disarm
4 Boxing Jab	+0	+2	4½d6 Strike
1 Use Art With Nightstick			

### Perks

2 Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers

### Skills

2 CK: Denver 11-  
3 Criminology 12-  
2 KS: Criminal law 11-  
3 Persuasion 12-  
3 Shadowing 12-  
3 Streetwise 12-  
1 Teamwork 8-  
2 WF: Small Arms

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 110**

**Total Cost: 175**

### 200+ Disadvantages

15 Accidental Change: when Takes BODY 11- (Common)  
5 Distinctive Features: Police Uniform (Easily Concealable)  
10 Hunted: Denver Police Department 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Area, Watching)  
15 Psychological Limitation: Dislikes Loup (Common, Strong)  
10 Psychological Limitation: Reluctant to Kill (Common, Moderate)  
5 Reputation: Spooky Cop 11- (Only Known to Law Enforcement Personnel)  
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major) (Lou Reisman)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 175**

**Loup (Wolf Form)**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	Lift 1.6 tons; 6d6 [3]
25	DEX	45	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
18	CON	16	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll: 14-
8	EGO	-4	11-	ECV: 3
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
10	COM	0	11-	
23	PD	17		Total: 30 PD (7 rPD)
23	ED	19		Total: 30 ED (7 rED)
6	SPD	25		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
13	REC	6		
50	END	7		
45	STUN	3		

**Total Characteristics Cost: 188**

**Movement:** Running: 16"/32"  
Leaping: 6"/12"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Werewolf:</i> Elemental Control, 20-point Powers	0
13	1) <i>Paws Like Iron:</i> Hand Attack +6d6 (12d6 with STR); HA Lim (-1/2)	2
20	2) <i>Razor-Sharp Claws:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR)	3
11	3) <i>Supernatural Healing:</i> Healing 2d6 (Regeneration), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); Self Only (-1/2), Extra Time (2 BODY per Turn, -1/4)	0
11	4) <i>Tough Hide:</i> Armor (7 PD/7 ED)	0
10	5) <i>Fleet Feet:</i> Running +10" (16" Total)	3
5	<i>What Big Eyes You Have:</i> Nightvision	0
3	<i>What Big Ears You Have:</i> Ultrasonic Hearing	0
15	<i>What a Big Nose You Have:</i> Tracking Scent, Discriminatory & Analyze (Smell/Taste Group)	0
9	<i>Wolf's Keen Senses:</i> +3 Perception	0
2	<i>Thick Shaggy Fur:</i> Life Support (Safe in Extreme Cold)	0
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -1/2), Affected as Hearing and Radio (-1/4)	0

**Talents**

15 Danger Sense (Self Only, Combat) 14-

**Skills**

10	+2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
3	Breakfall 14-
3	Climbing 14-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Power: Werewolf Powers 11-
3	Stealth 14-
3	Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 11-
1	Teamwork 14-
3	Tracking 14-

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 162****Total Cost: 350****200+ Disadvantages**

25	Distinctive Features: Werewolf (Not Concealable; Extreme Fear)
20	Enraged: when Takes BODY (Common, Go 11-, Recover 11-)
20	Hunted: Denver Police Department 11- (More Pow, NCI, LGA, Arrest)
15	Physical Limitation: Can't Speak (Frequently, Greatly)
20	Physical Limitation: No Fine Manipulation (paws) (All the Time, Greatly)
15	Psychological Limitation: Animal Mentality (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Code Against Killing (Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major) (Lou Reisman)
5	Vulnerability: 1½x Effect from Gas (Uncommon)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

## Phantom

**Background/History:** They say after a long time a ghost forgets her life. If that's so, the hero now known as Phantom has been dead for a long time, because she cannot recall her past. Her earliest memories are of coming out of an old abandoned mining camp, walking down the main street of a small mountain town, and seeing people fleeing in fear.

Lost and confused, she closed her eyes, wishing herself elsewhere, and suddenly she was gone, fading out like mist after a mountain rainstorm. She opened her eyes to the clanging of alarms. She looked around to find herself in a bank lobby. Customers and employees cowered on the floor while masked men with guns ransacked the place. One of the men spotted her. "Get on the floor!" he shouted, pointing his shotgun at her. Still lost and confused, she didn't know what to do. His finger tightened on the trigger and he blasted her, point-blank.

The wall behind her was virtually obliterated, but to everyone's amazement she was completely unharmed. Unable to take in what was happening, she turned to the robbers and angrily demanded they stop what they were doing. The robbers' shock turned to panic. One of them screamed. Another fainted. The rest of them dropped their guns and stood in mute horror. When the police stormed the bank, they found the terrified criminals begging to be arrested. Headlines the next day read "Phantom Prevents Bank Robbery," and from then on that's what people called her.

Phantom moves from place to place, helping people and stopping crimes. She never strays from the mountains – there is something about the high country that draws her in, as if she has some forgotten, unfinished business there. She is most comfortable in old, empty houses, but she can't bring herself to abandon civilization completely. Most recently, she has taken to living in an abandoned turn-of-the-century schoolhouse in northern Colorado. Someday, perhaps, she'll remember her life, and maybe she'll leave this mortal world and go to the place she belongs.

**Personality/Motivation:** Phantom is, as far as she is concerned, a ghost. With her abilities, what else could she be? Therefore, she tries to cultivate an air of detachment from the living. But despite her unfortunate condition, she can't bring herself to ignore the problems of the world, and this motivates her to be a hero – even if most people are frightened by her appearance. Because being dead is a terrible burden, Phantom acts to protect human life whenever possible. She will take great risks to help another person. The worst has already happened to her, and she hates the thought that someone else might have to suffer her fate.

Phantom is very lonely. She has cut herself off from most human contact (deciding the dead and the living aren't supposed to interact), so she has no close friends. People are frightened of her, so she considers loneliness to be her fate. When she does meet someone who isn't afraid, she grows very shy – stammering, looking at her feet, and fading in and out of visibility.

Phantom has a fascination with superheroes and supervillains, and she loves the idea of a team. She's so lonely most of the time that any sort of camaraderie is an improvement over her everyday life – even the bickering that happens whenever the Crusaders get together. She is the only member who wishes they could be a real team. She is the most likely to join UNITY, should they try to recruit her – though she does not want to leave her mountain home.

Phantom likes Justice because he is confident and forceful. She likes Charcoal because of her no-nonsense attitude. She loves Lionheart's cocky and carefree demeanor, and Blizzard's quiet calm really appeals to her. Basically, she likes everyone on the team (though the feeling isn't mutual in most cases), but gets along best with Loup, with whom she feels kinship – they are both outcasts (and she's the only one who can understand him when he tries to talk).

**Quote:** "Boo!"

**Powers/Tactics:** Phantom doesn't like combat, and tries to avoid it. She usually opens up a fight with her Frightening Visage (in which she takes on the aspect of a horrible undead monster), hoping to scare foes into surrendering before a blow is struck. If that doesn't work, she lurks around the edges of the battlefield, invisible and intangible, and attempts to strike from surprise – grabbing an opponent from behind with her Soul-Chilling Touch. She acts as backup for the rest of the team, going wherever she is needed most.

Her Desolidification allows her to walk through walls effortlessly, but she cannot pass through energy barriers, and it does not render her immune to energy attacks, so she is very careful around those who can hurt her – though dead, she still feels pain.

**Campaign Use:** Phantom is a cipher with no past, hunted by enemies she does not remember. She has the makings of a tragic hero with background full of question marks – What killed her? Who was she really? Is she a ghost, or does she simply manifest seemingly-supernatural powers? Why can't she remember her past? Has she been around for a long time (as she believes), or is she a new to the world? And finally, who is the unknown supernatural entity that Hunts her, and what does he want? She could make an

## PLOT SEEDS

GRAB has appealed to Phantom's longing for a place in the world, and now these superpowered thieves have a new member who can walk through walls and turn invisible. Can the PCs convince Phantom her new "friends" don't mean her well?

Hauntings wrack the west – poltergeists, strange noises, ghostly visions everywhere... one old lady was frightened to death when a horrible specter leapt out of her refrigerator! Is Phantom somehow responsible for this spate of supernatural activity?

A group of ghostbusters has come to Colorado in the hopes of debunking the "myth" of Phantom. They use their weird-science gadgets to capture her, and then begin experimenting in the hopes of finding out what she really is. Can the PCs rescue her before their experiments destroy her (or unleash something horrible on the world)?

interesting contact for any supernatural or magic-using PC; however, Phantom is unlikely to Hunt anyone, for to do so she would have to take a more active role in the affairs of the living.

To make her more powerful, increase her Ghostly Powers EC and give her some KS: Magic skills to reflect the time she's spent studying the world beyond our own. She might also acquire a haunted house Base, complete with frightening tricks and traps to keep the curious away. To make her less powerful, reduce the size of her Ghostly Powers EC (particularly the Force Field and Ego Attack.)

**Appearance:** Phantom is a beautiful young woman with pale skin, long red hair, and emerald green eyes. Despite her beauty, she is obviously not of this world – anyone can see she is transparent. She wears a clingy, blood red gown complimented by a flowing crimson cloak that flutters as if blown by some otherworldly breeze. When she grows angry or frightened, her features take on a horrifying, decayed, monstrous cast, which can terrify even the bravest soul. Unlike most of her compatriots, Phantom does not hide her face behind a mask – even if she knew who she really was, who would care?

## Phantom



## Phantom

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
18	CON	16	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
23	EGO	26	14-	ECV: 8
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
7	PD	5		Total: 20 PD (13 rPD)
7	ED	3		Total: 21 ED (14 rED)
5	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
9	REC	6		
40	END	2		
25	STUN	1		

Total Characteristics Cost: 127

<b>Movement:</b>	Running:	6"/12"
	Leaping:	2"/4"
	Swimming:	2"/4"
	Flight:	20"/40"

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Ghostly Powers:</i> Element Control, 40-point Powers	
27	1) <i>Soul-Chilling Touch:</i> Ego Attack 6d6; No Range (-1/2)	6
11	2) <i>Terrible Visage:</i> +40 PRE; Costs END (-1/2), Only to Cause Fear and Resist PRE Attacks (-1/4)	4
20	3) <i>Cold to the Touch:</i> Force Field (13 PD/14 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2)	0
10	4) <i>Walk Through Walls:</i> Desolidification (Affected by Energy); Does Not Protect Against Energy Attacks (-1)	4
40	5) <i>Haunting:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2)	0
20	6) <i>Ghostly Flight:</i> Flight 20"	4
6	7) <i>Walk The Astral Plane:</i> Teleportation 14", MegaScale (1" = 10 km, +1/2); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1 1/2), Concentration (0 DCV Throughout, -1)	3
11	<i>Ghostly Body:</i> Life Support (Need Not Eat, Need Not Sleep, Does Not Age)	0
5	<i>Nocturnal:</i> Nightvision	0
6	<i>USAF Radio:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission; OIF (Radio, -1/2), Affected as Hearing & Radio (-1/4)	0

## Perks

3 Anonymity

## Talents

25 Danger Sense (Self Only, Any Danger) 11-

## Skills

4 +2 with Ego Attack

3 Concealment 11-

2 KS: Superheroes &amp; Supervillains 11-

3 Power: Ghostly Abilities 11-

3 Stealth 14-

3 Shadowing 11-

1 Teamwork 8-

Total Powers &amp; Skills Cost: 223

Total Cost: 350

## 200+ Disadvantages

25 Distinct Features: Ghost (Not Concealable, Extreme Fear)

20 Hunted: Unknown Supernatural Entity 11- (As Pow, Easy to Find, Kill)

10 Physical Limitation: Amnesia, Cannot Remember Her Past (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)

15 Psychological Limitation: Code Against Killing (Common, Strong)

15 Psychological Limitation: Shy (Very Common, Moderate)

15 Psychological Limitation: Thinks and Acts Like a Ghost (Common, Strong)

20 Social Limitation: Ghost (Very Frequent, Major [People Fear Her])

15 Susceptibility: Unholy Items, 1d6 Damage per Phase (Uncommon)

15 Unluck: 3d6

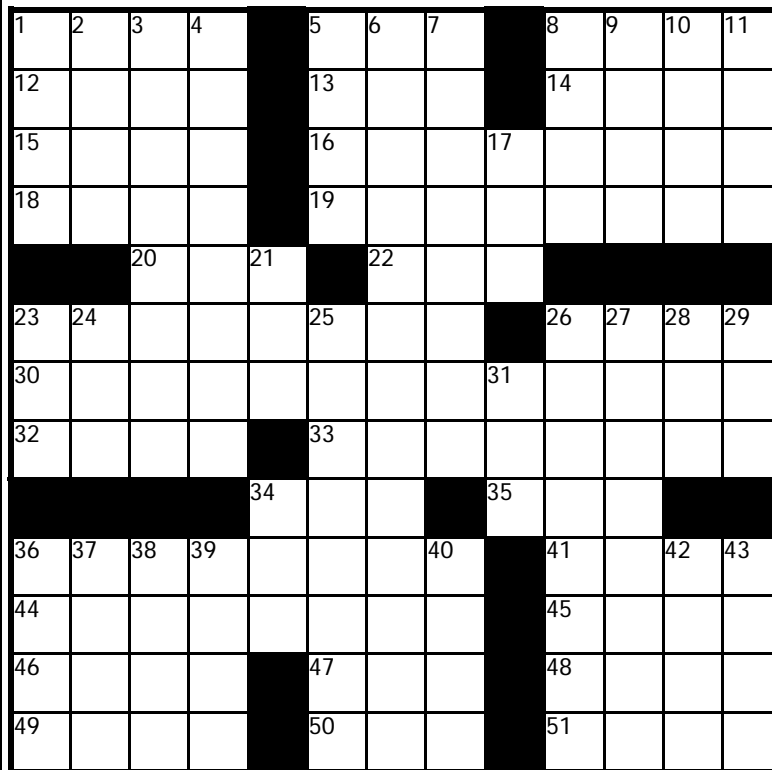
Total Disadvantage Points: 350



# Champions Crossword

by Dave Mattingly

## Well, Blow Me Down!



### ACROSS

1. Takofanes
5. "Little" car of song
8. Lost fish?
12. *No es esto*
13. Weird Al's opus
14. Jet missile types
15. Maroon veggie
16. Damien's mom, in film
18. '70s Kirby comic
19. Acid identifier
20. Harley's Puddin'
22. ATM transfer
23. Car conflagration?
26. The first ten of twenty-six
30. Bowls over, unexpectedly?
32. Pearl divers
33. Not Constantinople
34. Amt
35. Nearest star
36. Motivation for superheroes?
41. Agitate
44. How Harbinger travels by sea?
45. Synth sound file
46. Not a pro
47. Ball holder
48. Fruit drinks
49. Backtalk
50. Einstein's alphabet soup?
51. Steve Long's entrance exam?

### DOWN

1. DC brawler
2. Thing
3. Alternative to black coffee?
4. Rhymed buns
5. Big drink at 7-11
6. Method for building sub sandwiches?
7. Type of Area
8. Dark Champions archetype
9. French state
10. At the end of *el brazo*
11. This can lift 25 kg
17. Early machine gun
21. NYC Airport
23. Toothbrush-endorsing group
24. km, tbsps, °F, e. g.
25. Rank below Brother
26. Not quite a Competent Normal
27. Rags
28. Home of the Wanda Bass Music Center
29. Dial 5
31. Not EBs or HAs
34. \_\_\_\_ vadis?
36. Jumpin' Jack Flash?
37. Companion to 35-across
38. Dynamites
39. Baseball stat
40. 1/12000 Turns
42. Thought
43. Multiple 2-downs