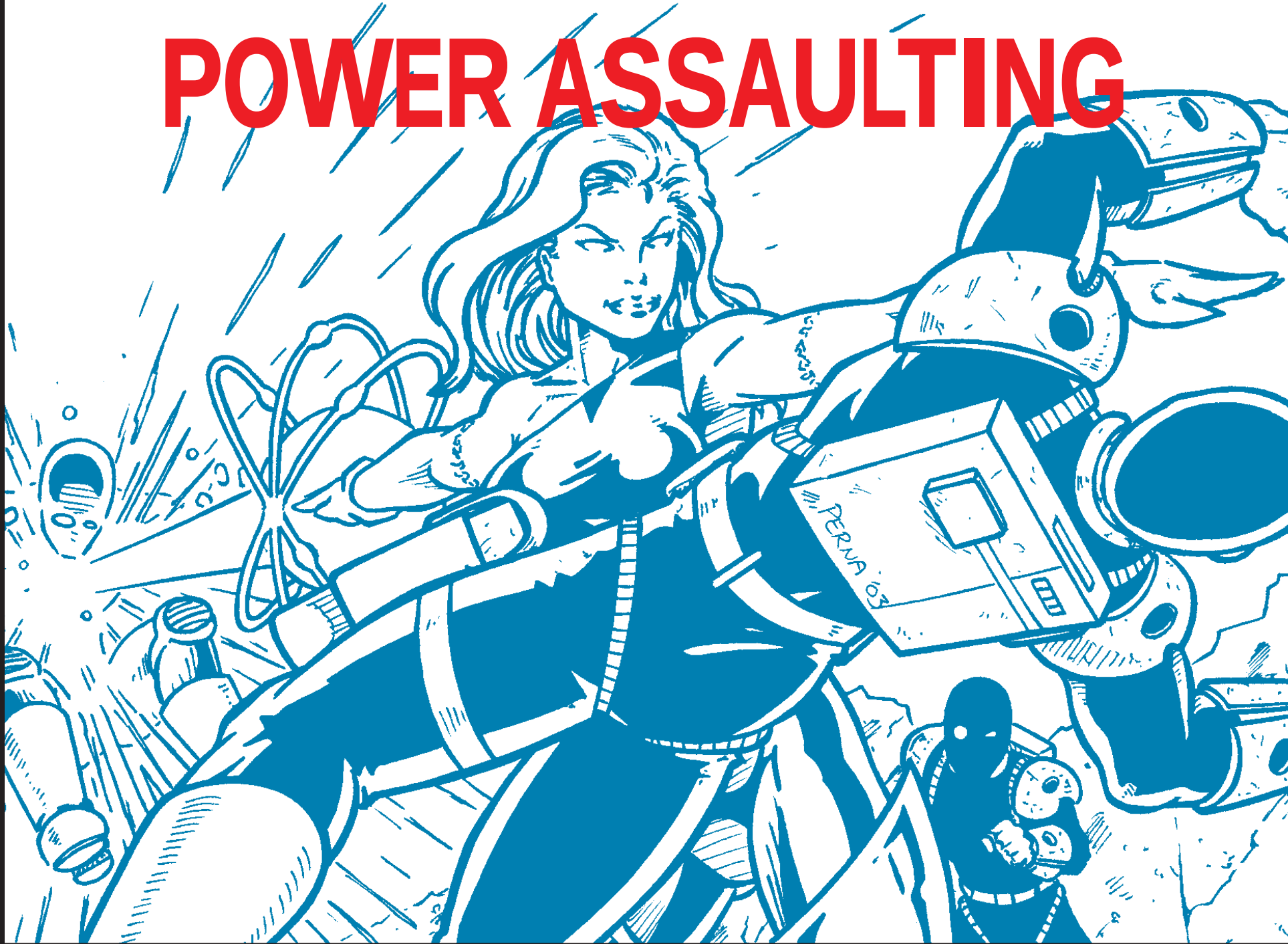




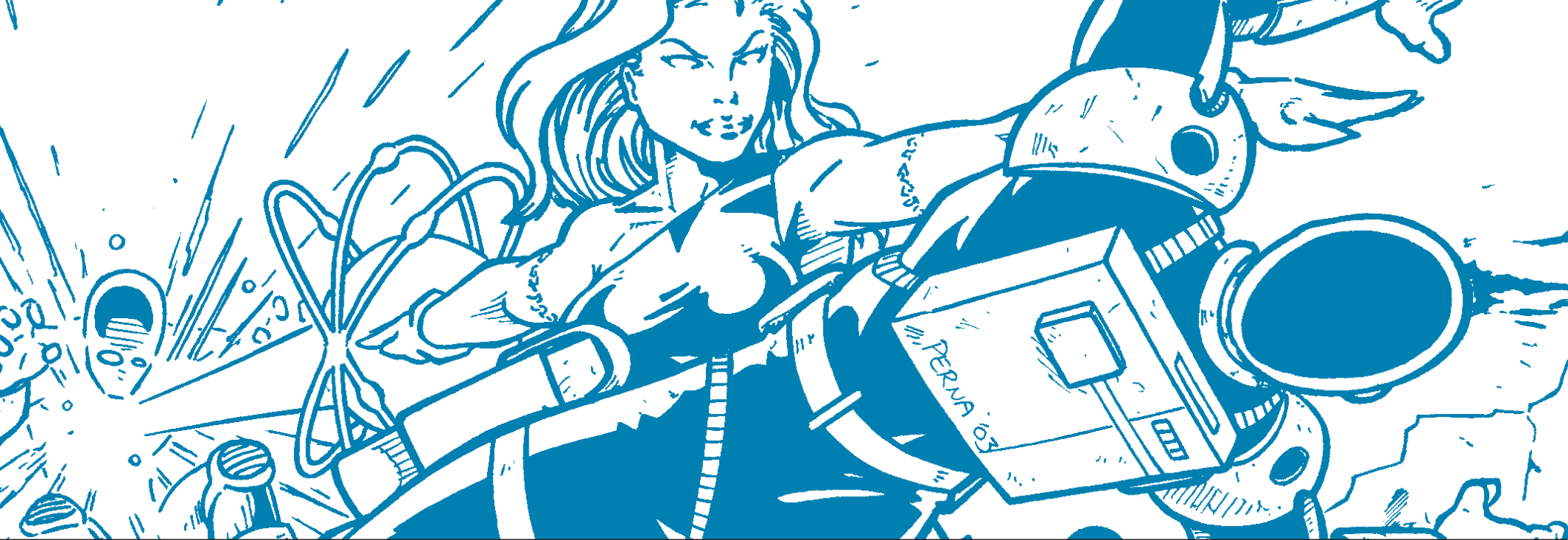
LPJ9966

DEVIL'S WORKSHOP

POWER ASSAULTING



w r i t t e n b y l e o n c o l l i n s



POWER ASSAULTING

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A team should work together. The statement might seem absurdly obvious, but it is the single most important lesson a group of superheroes (or supervillains, for that matter) can learn. Many so-called “teams” spend years trying to get a grasp on this elusive principle. Others don’t last that long and are broken by internal strife, humiliation, defeat, or some combination of the three. Those who do achieve a measure of appreciation for the idea, however, have another difficult task before them: that of actually putting it into practice. Once the members of a team understand that they have to be more than just a group of individuals on the same side, they must learn teamwork. They must maximize their individual strengths, and use them to compensate for the weaknesses of the entire team. They must become a whole more potent than the sum of its parts. In doing so, they can become unstoppable.

TEAM ROLES

Every character on a team plays at least one role, based upon the individual’s particular abilities. Characters possessing immense strength and melee combat skill may be the “Infantry” capable of dishing out large degrees of punishment, while characters with firearms or energy projection abilities may function as the “Artillery,” ranged fighters who attack opponents from a distance. Even characters with seemingly minor abilities, such as healing or “supercharging” other characters, may be considered “Psi-Ops.” In short, every character has a place on the team.

Sample team roles follow, though a GM may feel free to create new ones as desired. Obviously, there is some room for overlap. Originals, the super-strong, nigh-invulnerable characters often capable of high-speed flight and energy projection, may alternately function as Airborne, Infantry, Artillery, Armor, and Transport characters. There is nothing wrong with this, as such versatility can

only enhance a team’s performance; however, such cosmopolitan characters should take care not to overshadow their comrades. Everyone serves a purpose, and it weakens the team greatly when any character believes otherwise. Each role entry below includes Sample Abilities, the feats, skills, and powers commonly found among those who play the role. These abilities are provided simply to help players and GMs get a feel for the roles, and are not at all exhaustive. Common Maneuvers, specific acts that enhance team performance, are also included. Maneuvers are not dictated by roles. Every maneuver may be attempted by any character who meets the prerequisites. Also included in each entry are tips for working against the role in combat.

AIRBORNE

(Sample Abilities: Flight, Space Flight, Swinging)

The Airborne character is capable of aerial movement. She provides teammates with support from above, frequently by raining projectile attacks on foes, carrying allies to safety, or distracting larger, earthbound opponents. Often, she possesses abilities that fit another role, as well. Many Airborne characters possess superhuman strength and durability as well, which makes them ideal, mobile Brawlers. The Airborne character’s primary advantage lies in her maneuverability. She can fly over or around barriers and non-flying opponents to reach locations, hostages, or targets that would otherwise be inaccessible. Furthermore, it is difficult for non-flyers to keep up with her. In most combat situations, she must be engaged by either an Artillery character or another Airborne character, as she can easily stay out of melee range.

The winged werebat is Airborne. The primitive character, raised by apes, who travels by swinging on vines from treetop to treetop, is Airborne. The hang gliding cat burglar is Airborne.

Against the Airborne: Flying characters can be difficult to beat, due to their maneuverability and

speed. The Artillery role is usually the best weapon against flyers, but the Support role works well, too. An earthbound character able to attack from a distance may somewhat negate the mobility advantage of Airborne characters. Infantry characters may be better off leaving flyers to more capable teammates, but in a pinch, sufficiently strong individuals may get lucky hurling improvised weapons, such as cars, rocks, people (*it is not recommended to hurl comrades who cannot fly into the air*), etc. Other than Artillery, the best characters to deal with Airborne combatants are other flying characters. When two or more Airborne characters engage in battle, the outcome often depends on their other powers. Crafty Airborne characters might carry Artillery, Support, or Psi-Ops teammates into battle with them to better overwhelm other flyers.

Common Airborne Maneuvers: Bombs Away, Catch, Interference, Postal Service.

ARMOR:

Sample Abilities: Durability, Immunity, Toughness feats; Alternate Form (Solid), Amazing Save (Damage), Armor, Force Field, Growth, Mental Protection, Protection, Regeneration, Super-Constitution.

The Armor character absorbs damage. This is the individual whose job it is to take the hits from attacks, environmental effects, etc. Armor characters are almost always Infantry as well, but this need not be the case. The Armor role’s advantage lies in its ability to endure abuse and adversity for far longer than any other character role. He stands firm where others would fall. He will not be stopped by collapsing buildings, heavy gunfire, or speeding trains, though he may be resistant to psychic attacks, instead. Many Armor characters are deterred only by Support or highly capable Infantry.

The man with the iron skin is Armor. The giant who absorbs kinetic energy is Armor. The mechanic with a suit of high-tech armor is Armor.

Against the Armor: Infantry characters usually combat Armor characters, who in turn provide a reasonable distraction for Infantry. Support characters are frequently a better weapon against Armors, as many of their abilities do not allow a Damage save, which is usually the Armor character's specialty. Smart teams will use psychic Supports to distract and weaken Armor characters or Airbornes to carry them from the fray. Exceptionally dense Armor characters may be forced into bodies of water or dropped from long distances (*the resulting craters might keep them out of the way for a time*).

Common Armor Maneuvers: The Human Shield, Interference.

ARTILLERY

(*Sample Abilities: Far Shot, Multishot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot feats; Energy Blast, Mental Blast, Snare, Telekinesis, Weapon*)

The Artillery character is a combat-oriented individual whose expertise lies in fighting at a distance. The character may project concussive blasts of energy or hurl extra-durable explosive bolas. So long as he is capable of regularly making ranged attacks, he may be considered Artillery. This character is often quite effective at ambushing opponents, as escaping notice is much less difficult from a distance, and an unaware target is an easy target. Movement is important to the Artillery character, as his advantage relies greatly on his ability to stay out of opponents' range. Usually, he must be confronted by another ranged fighter, but super-fast characters and flyers can also be effective, as their abilities may allow them to quickly close in and rob him of his tactical advantage.

The ex-gangbanger, armed with a mystical TEC-9, is Artillery. The mutant capable of projecting powerful beams of searing light is Artillery. The reptilian alien who spits a stream of caustic acid is Artillery.

Against the Artillery: Distance is the greatest ally of the Artillery character, and the bane of his enemies.

The best weapon against him is other Artillery characters or Airborne characters who also play the Artillery role. If such individuals are unavailable, then other characters may help Infantry to close the distance to the Artillery character's position (*see Postal Service, Bombs Away, and Speedball Special maneuvers*). Also, certain Support characters may be able to hamper the Artillery's abilities, using powers such as Obscure, Dazzle, and Illusion. Artillery characters who derive their powers from guns, thrown weapons, or similar devices may be disarmed and rendered helpless by crafty Transports and Airbornes.

Common Artillery Maneuvers: Cover Fire, Urban Renewal.

INFANTRY

(*Sample Abilities: Combat Sense, Natural Weapon, Strike, Super-Dexterity, Super-Strength, Weapon*)

The Infantry character focuses is on melee combat. He may be supernaturally strong, acrobatic, or simply well-armed. Perhaps the character does not possess any powers at all. Whatever the nature of his abilities, the Infantry character's primary combat function is to close with an enemy and attack. While extremely limited in function, Infantry role remains one of the most versatile available to a team. Although at first glance, characters capable of flight, ranged attacks, and superhuman speed might have a distinct advantage over a melee combat specialist, but a resourceful Infantry character can perform feats of strength, speed, and wit to even the odds. He may hurl sharp or heavy objects (*or particularly agile allies*) to emulate the Artillery role's ranged attacks, or tear up great slabs of earth to use as shields. If he possesses sufficient strength, he may even construct crude bridges and pathways to enhance his mobility when confronted with flying or swimming foes.

The skilled samurai with the enchanted blade is Infantry. The massive demon, incredibly strong and wreathed in hellfire, is Infantry. The knife-wielding expert assassin is a Infantry.

Against the Infantry: Infantry characters most often square off against other Infantry. Nearly any other character may effectively combat Infantry, but Artillery, Airborne, and Transport characters often work best because of their range and mobility advantages. Sometimes, Support characters can soften up Infantry enough so that the rest of the team can better combat them. Being so easy to attack, Infantry characters must often rely on the rest of the team for support, distractions, and protection.

Common Infantry Maneuvers: Catch, Hold 'em Steady, Speedball Special, Urban Renewal.

PSI-OPS

(*Sample Abilities: Connected, Inspire, Leadership feats; Animation, Boost, Create Object, ESP, Force Field, Healing, Luck, Super-Charisma, Telepathy*)

The role of Psi-Ops is one of the most important a character can play. Despite the name, Psi-Ops does not necessarily imply psychic abilities so much as a gift for bolstering the team's morale and performance, though it's definitely possible for a Psi-Ops character to use mental powers to accomplish this. Regardless of whether the character's abilities are obvious or subtle, they are a psychological asset to the team. This role serves to enhance a team's capabilities, strategies, or chances of success. Every team leader should, to some degree, be able to function as Psi-Ops, even if he simply calls out instructions or heartens his comrades (*represented largely by the Leadership and Inspire feats*). Unlike other characters who can, with a little ingenuity, use their respective abilities to protect, enhance, or encourage teammates, the Psi-Ops character's abilities are specifically geared toward one or more of these ends. Often viewed as weak or useless by the unwise, characters playing this role are undoubtedly appreciated by the teammates who benefit from their abilities.

The mutant who can project force fields to protect himself and his teammates is Psi-Ops, as is the psychic who can see into the past and the future. The charismatic character who uses his political connections to get teammates out of prison is Psi-Ops.

Against the Psi-Ops: Psi-Ops characters are frequently major targets in violent confrontations. These characters are often team leaders and ability bolsterers. Although they can be powerful, most focus on protecting or enhancing their teammates, so it's often a good idea to disable these characters at the beginning of combat, much like Support characters. If a team is unable to neutralize this character at the beginning of the battle, Support characters may be able to sufficiently restrict his abilities until the rest of the team can deal with him.

Common Psi-Ops Maneuvers: Interference

SPECIAL FORCES

(Sample Abilities: Alternate Form, Gadgets, Possession, Shapeshift, Sorcery)

This character is capable of playing more than one or two of the roles mentioned here. She might be a shapeshifter, able to perform many different functions for the good of the team. The Special Forces character often plays a Psi-Ops role, but this need not be the case. A character capable of taking any animal form can just as easily be a team's default Infantry. Although functional in a number of roles, the character might be somewhat more limited in her performance than others. For example, a mystic character with the Sorcery ability can function as Artillery, but she may not be quite as accurate as her team's ex-mercenary gunman, who's devoted his entire life to firearms training. Additionally, the fact that she needs to speak words of magic and wave her arms around in an obvious manner make her somewhat less useful during covert missions than that same

gunman with a silenced pistol. All the same, the role's versatility is her primary advantage, and her ability to perform a number of functions can catch unwary opponents off guard. The Special Forces character is often underestimated by her foes, and as a result, she has many opportunities to prove her worth.

The shapeshifter, capable of taking any animal or humanoid form, is Special Forces. The original, super-strong, nearly invulnerable, and faster than a speeding bullet, is a Special Forces. The psychic who uses her powers to mimic the abilities of her foes is a Special Forces.

Against the Special Forces: For anyone who does not play a similar role, Special Forces characters are usually quite difficult to defeat alone. Special Forces characters are incredibly adaptable, and their opponents must be, too. It often requires the combined efforts of multiple characters playing different roles to best a Special Forces character. Usually, though, if opposing teams have Special Forces, such characters match up against one another to prevent their comrades from being bested one by one by a more adaptable opponent.

Common Special Forces Maneuvers: Any Maneuvers appropriate to the character's other roles are acceptable.

SPECIALIST

(Sample Abilities: Skill Focus, Talented, Track feats; Computers, Craft, Demolitions, Disable Device, Knowledge, Repair, Science, Survival Skills; Datalink, Gadgets, Super-Intelligence, Super-Skill)

Exceptionally skilled in a particular field, the Specialist character uses a specific body of knowledge or area of expertise to aid the team. The Specialist role is actually quite limited in that it does not always come into play. The character's particular skills may or may not be useful on every mission. For example, for a team trapped in an ancient,

booby-trapped pyramid, the swashbuckling, archaeologist would likely be an ideal Specialist character, while the same adventurer would hardly be of any use in tracking an urban vampire through big city ghettos. Most Specialist characters compensate for this limitation by choosing a large number of skills and fields of knowledge in which to excel. The Super-Intelligence ability is an excellent way to attain this state. Other characters choose to supplement their expertise with abilities or devices that allow them to perform capably in other roles.

A former thief who uses her skills to allow the team silent entry to secure locations is a Specialist. The scientist who uses his knowledge to deactivate villains' contraptions is a Specialist. The computer programmer who hacks top secret files to uncover corporate and federal secrets is a Specialist.

Against the Specialist: In combat, it is often not necessary to waste too much time attacking Specialist characters unless they are playing other roles as well or working to perform undesirable acts (*like setting an unwanted bomb*). Purely specialist characters are usually more fragile than Infantry and Armor characters, and can often be dispatched quickly by skilled combatants. A Specialist character probably carries weapons or dangerous, spectacular devices, so a combatant who is not confident in her ability to disable him in one turn would be wise to attempt disarming or grappling him. Support characters are usually quite effective at using their abilities to minimize the Specialist's efficiency.

Common Tactics and Techniques: Weird Science

SUPPORT

(Sample Abilities: Dazzle, Force Field, Illusion, Invisibility, Luck, Mind Control, Neutralize, Obscure, Paralyze, Telepathy)

The Support character enhances the team's effectiveness by limiting the capabilities of their opponents. While other characters may also seek to weaken the opposition, the abilities of the Support character are

geared specifically towards this end. Whether she clouds minds, obscures sight, or neutralizes powers, she can be a frustrating adversary. Though her abilities rarely cause harm directly, they frequently pave the way for other dangers posed by the environment, her comrades, or something else entirely. The Support role is often unwisely ignored in combat, at least until it becomes obvious that such abilities can make a significant difference.

The inventor carrying dazzling flares and smoke bombs is Support. The telepath capable of controlling the minds of her enemies is Support. The elementalists who uses her powers to surround foes with walls of earth is Support.

Against the Support: It is unwise to dismiss Support characters as harmless. Often, their abilities can weaken opponents enough to completely turn the tide of a battle. A Support character who blinds opponents is probably much more dangerous to have fighting beside a crack marksman than another marksman. A character has a better chance of dodging two bullets than of dodging one when he cannot see. As a result, Support characters are best eliminated in the first rounds of combat. Ranged fighters, especially, should feel obliged to spend a round removing these characters from the battle before they tilt the scales too much. Luckily, most Support characters are much less difficult to disable than Armor or Infantry characters.

Common Tactics and Techniques: Cover Fire, Interference, Urban Renewal.

TRANSPORT

(Sample Abilities: Heroic Surge, Move-By Attack, Rapid Strike feats; Running, Spinning, Super-Speed, Swimming, Teleportation, Time Control)

The Transport character is capable of some form of supernaturally fast movement. Few can keep up with her, save another Transport character. Any individual with a movement speed significantly faster than that of a normal character may be considered Transport.

The Transport character is capable of a wide variety of feats, most of which involve avoiding danger and hazardous situations. Her teammates can also benefit from her incredible speed and maneuverability. This makes her an excellent defensive character, usually capable of both protecting weaker characters and drawing attackers' attention.

The mystic character with the strength and speed of the cheetah is Transport. The kid from the future who rides a super-fast, vectored thrust hoverboard is Transport. The time traveler who teleports across town in an instant is Transport.

Against the Transport: The Transport is one of the most difficult characters to combat, as she is usually incredibly difficult to strike. If possible, individuals engaged in melee combat with Transport characters should attempt to catch her off-balance by using Bluff or Taunt skills. Area attacks, which are almost guaranteed to do some damage, are similarly useful against Transports, as are mental attacks, which target the mind rather than the super-fast body. Other Transport characters can be invaluable in keeping them occupied and away from teammates for a time. Also, Support can be incredibly useful against Transport characters. Abilities such as Dazzle and Mind Control can stop a Transport in her tracks.

Common Transport Maneuvers: Catch, Interference, Postal Service, Speed Cushion, Warden.

TEAM COMPOSITION

Not every team has all of the bases covered. Some teams must do without Airborne or Artillery characters. The trick is to use sound tactics to make up for such deficiencies. When pinned down under the heavy fire by opposing Artillery, a team with no Artillery of their own might be able to have two Infantry characters perform the Speedball Special maneuver to reach the target. Or perhaps, a Transport character may use her powers to carry or

teleport Infantry to the attacker's position. This is the essence of teamwork. Individual strengths should be used to overcome collective limitations.

Everyone on a given team should play one or more roles, though certain characters usually fit more snugly into particular roles than others. A heavily-armed government black ops team of psionic mutants may contain a number of people who could qualify for the Infantry, Specialist, and Artillery roles; however, it may be helpful to view the characters comparatively in order to properly gauge their potential as a team. The most skilled ranged combatants with the most effective attacks should probably be established as the "main" Artillery. The best close-quarters fighters should be the "main" Infantry. And the characters with the skills most pertinent to the current mission should be the "main" Specialists.

When creating a team, the roles members play become especially important. While a team does not have to possess a member for every possible role, it is undesirable to have only one or two roles available to a team. A group of five Infantry characters is likely to be ineffective in any situation other than a brawl. Limiting the skills available to the team limits the team's versatility, and as a result, its strength. Five close-combat specialists aren't much better than one in a battle against flying, armored, robot wasps with minigun attachments. It is not, however, inadvisable to have more than one Infantry or Specialist or Airborne character, so long as the team has a pool of potential roles to draw from, as opposed to just one or two.

MANEUVERS FOR A TEAM

This section includes a number of maneuvers intended to provide teams with more opportunity to benefit from teamwork. Many have prerequisite feats and abilities. All maneuvers are optional. The GM may feel to exclude any she feels will not

enhance her game or create and add her own. If desired, she may even require characters to purchase individual maneuvers as feats or power stunts.

BOMBS AWAY

(Prerequisite: Move-By Attack, as well as Flight, Leaping, Swinging, or equivalent ability)

An Airborne character passes overhead and hurls a heavy object or sturdy companion at a target below, using his momentum more than his strength to increase Damage. He must strike the target with a ranged attack. A thrown object is simply treated as an improvised ranged weapon, while a companion, on a successful ranged attack roll, immediately makes a melee attack of her own, and is considered to be ramming at the flying character's Speed (that is, his total Speed for the round).

CATCH

(Prerequisites: None)

The character attempts to catch a falling comrade before she hits the ground, possibly reducing or eliminating the resulting damage. During his turn in a round, the character may move a distance up to his base movement rate (*or that granted by a power, such as Swimming*) to arrive beneath the comrade and attempt to catch her. The character attempting the maneuver makes a Strength check (DC 5). His margin of success is subtracted from the distance (*in feet*) of the comrade's fall for the purposes of determining damage. Any remaining damage is divided between both characters (*if the remaining damage is an odd number, then the falling character receives the higher damage bonus*). Reduce the damage bonus by one for every size category the catcher is larger than the falling individual. Similarly, increase the damage bonus by one per size category the catcher is smaller than the falling individual.

An Airborne character may similarly catch a falling individual he can reach in one round, though doing so requires a melee attack roll against a DC 10 (*if the subject is willing*) or the individual's flat-footed Defense score (*if the subject resists*). If the roll is successful, then neither character suffers damage, and the flying character is left holding the subject. Failure indicates that the character misses, and the falling individual continues to plummet. A flying character holding a comrade is still subject to encumbrance rules and weight limits, and may be slowed or pulled to the ground if he catches a particularly heavy companion.

COVER FIRE

(Prerequisite: Rapid Shot)

A ranged attacker spends a full action to saturate an area with enough attacks to prevent foes from moving through it without risking injury. Cover Fire affects an area with a radius equal to five times the power rank of the attack. The character makes an attack roll. Everyone in the affected area must succeed at a Reflex save (*DC 10 + the attack's power rank*). Those who fail compare their Defense scores to the assailant's attack roll. All characters whose Defense scores are less than the attack roll suffer the effects of the character's attack. This technique is excellent for discouraging pursuit, pinning down opponents, and herding enemies. A character may lay down cover fire for as long as he likes, so long as he spends a full action each round to do so. For the duration of the technique, though, he is considered flat-footed, and loses all Dexterity and Dodge bonuses to Defense. This ability cannot be used by a character whose basic attack requires a full attack action. If the attack form in question has the Area extra, then targets who fail their Reflex saves are subject to an area attack as normal.

THE HUMAN SHIELD

(Prerequisites: None)

The character uses her body to protect a companion from ranged attacks or specific environmental condi-

tions, such as falling debris. A sufficiently large individual (*of a size category at least equal to that of the character being protected*) may interpose herself between an adjacent companion and the path of danger to provide the companion with up to ½ cover. This increases to ¾ cover if the character is one size category larger and full cover if she is two or more sizes larger. For each additional companion to be protected, reduce the cover provided by one level. An attack that misses the companion due to the cover modifier strikes the shielding character, regardless of her Defense. The character herself may not attempt a Reflex save, so if the maneuver is used to provide a cover-based Reflex save bonus, the shielding character automatically fails. This tactic is best used by Armor characters.

INTERFERENCE

(Prerequisites: None)

The character uses the Taunt skill to draw enemy attacks and attention away from teammates. Airborne, Armor, and Transport characters have the best luck with this tactic, as high Defense scores and Damage Saves render opponents' attacks futile more often than not. Under most circumstances, this ability may only have one target at a time, though the GM may rule otherwise for particularly cruel Taunts.

POSTAL SERVICE

(Prerequisites: Any power with a related movement effect)

The character carries a companion, allowing her to benefit from his Speed and Defense values. The companion, however, can take no move action herself. Depending on his strength, the carrier may suffer penalties due to encumbrance. If the character is struck by an attack that would have failed were it not for being encumbered, his companion is struck instead (*if the character is carrying more than one companion, determine randomly which is struck*). A sufficiently strong individual might carry multiple companions, offering each the benefit of his speed and Defense. This technique works great for keeping

weaker characters, especially noncombatants, safe from harm.

SPEEDBALL SPECIAL

(Prerequisite: Super-Strength)

The character uses another individual as a projectile, hurling her at a target. For all intents and purposes (*range increments, maximum distance, etc.*), the hurled character counts as a thrown improvised weapon. The thrower makes a ranged attack against the target, while the hurled character makes a melee attack. Both rolls must overcome the target's Defense for this maneuver to be successful. The hurled character is considered to be charging the target, and she has the option of substituting the thrower's Strength for her own when calculating attack and damage bonuses. This maneuver is often used to allow one character (*usually Infantry*) to quickly close with a target. It also allows strong characters to hurl teammates to areas they couldn't otherwise reach, such as high precipices, ventilation ducts, and treetops.

SPEED CUSHION

(Prerequisite: Super-Speed)

Similar to the Catch maneuver, Speed Cushion allows a sufficiently fast character to prevent a falling companion from suffering damage on impact by running in circles beneath her fast enough to create a column of air to significantly slow the fall. To do so, the character makes a power check using Super-Speed or an equivalent power (DC 5). The character's margin of success is subtracted from the distance (in feet) of the comrade's fall for the purposes of determining damage. Any remaining damage is applied to the falling character.

URBAN RENEWAL

(Prerequisites: Power Attack)

A character with a sufficiently powerful attack form topples a nearby structure, such as a building, hill, pillar, stalactite, etc. in such a way as to enable its

use as a bridge, incline, or pathway. This allows a character without special movement abilities, such as Flight or Swimming, some degree of maneuverability when confronted with those who have them. So long as a fitting collapsible structure (*determined by the GM*) is nearby, the character may expend extra effort to, for one turn, gain the use of Shape Matter at a power rank equal to that of the power being used. Super-Strength is the most common power used with this maneuver, but Energy Blast, Telekinesis, Element Control, or Natural Weapon may work just as well.

WARDEN

(Prerequisites: Amazing Save (Reflex), Super-Dexterity, or Super-Speed)

The character uses his incredible reflexes to protect nearby companions from certain types of danger, such as area effect attacks, collapsing floors, and falling debris. By expending extra effort, the character may allow others within reach to use his Reflex save instead of their own. This ability can only be used once per turn, and it is still possible for the character to fail his Reflex save.

WEIRD SCIENCE

(Prerequisite: Appropriate Craft, Knowledge, or Science Skill)

A character may roll an appropriate Knowledge skill (DC 15) and expend extra effort to discover a way to temporarily augment the abilities of another. The abilities in question must be derived from a power source related to the body of Knowledge used. For example, a super-genius character may use his Knowledge (*Mechanics*) skill to augment a battlesuit character's Super-Strength, which is derived from a super-science power source. It takes one full round action to perform the necessary modifications, provided the character possesses the proper tools (*GM's discretion*). This technique effectively functions as the Boost power at a rank equal to half of the modifying character's Intelligence bonus (*round down*) and the extra ranks bleed off at a rate of one

per round (*stacking limits still apply*). Failing the Knowledge roll by more than 10 indicates that the character has somehow messed things up, and the target suffers a Drain effect on the power or ability in question at a rank equal to one-half the character's Intelligence bonus (*round down*), with a minimum of one rank.

Alternatively, the character may wish to allow the target to use a new ability she does not currently have. If this is the case, his Knowledge roll DC is 25, though he must still use extra effort. If the Knowledge roll fails by more than 10, the target character suffers the Drain effect on one related power (*and all associated extras*) chosen by the GM. Success allows the target one use of a power she does not normally possess. Sustained or Permanent powers may not be simulated using this maneuver.

SAMPLE TEAM TACTICS

Described below is a sample team called the Tetrad. Little information on their personal habits, motivations, and aspirations is given because such things are, in the context of this text, irrelevant. The group is presented to show that even teams without the benefit of numerous roles and extensive membership may use the abilities they do possess to be a more effective force. GMs should feel free to make use of the Tetrad and their tactics as best suits their campaigns.

SAMPLE TEAM: THE TETRAD

Predictably enough, the Tetrad consists of only four members. They are an otherdimensional team of mutant mercenaries who often serve as bodyguards and problem solvers. The fact that the team members appear to be identical makes some postu-

power assaulting

late that perhaps they are clones, but the team's origins remain unknown. No one knows exactly where the Tetrad came from, but their home is likely an alternate Earth.

The Tetrad works very well together, and each member knows how to use his abilities to complement those of his companions. Though the Tetrad is not as powerful as some established teams, it is formidable, nonetheless.

The members of the Tetrad are identical in form and in dress. All are well-proportioned, nondescript males with no noticeable body hair. Their cream-colored long coats and hats call to mind the Victorian era and contrast sharply with their plain, dark sunglasses.

MR. SWEET (PL 10, SPECIAL FORCES)

Mr. Sweet leads the Tetrad. His genius and charm are irrefutable, and his comrades trust him completely. Mr. Sweet's brain is capable of psychically duplicating the effects of any abnormal biological or mutagenic qualities he comes in contact with. Doing so creates a psychic backlash that renders the target's ability unusable for a time. The end result is that Mr. Sweet is capable of "stealing" superhuman powers possessed by those he touches. He also possesses low-level telepathic capabilities that he uses to communicate with the team.

Mr. Sweet: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+1S, punch), +4 ranged (+5L, pistol); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +10, Repair +11, Science (Biotechnology) +10, Science (Psychology) +9, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Taunt +11.

Feats: Assessment, Connected, Inspire, Leadership, Point Blank Shot.

Powers: Super-Intelligence +5 [*Extra: Super-Charisma; Source: Training; Cost: 3 pp*], Telepathy +3 [*Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp*], Transfer +10 [*Extra: Expanded Powers, Slow Recovery; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp*].

Equipment: Heavy Pistol +5L [*Weapon; Cost: 1 pp*].

MR. TALLEY (PL 10, ARMOR/INFANTRY)

Mr. Talley is an exceptional martial artist, almost inhumanly agile and precise. He can manipulate his skeletal structure to a limited degree. This ability allows him to grow razor-sharp bone extensions of varying lengths and shapes that may be used as deadly weapons. His mastery of body also allows Mr. Talley to dramatically increase his size and strength, though he will not do so unless circumstances demand it.

Mr. Talley: PL 10; Init +7 (+2 Dex, +5 Super-Dex); Defense 22 (21 with Growth; 15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (40 ft. with Growth); Atk +8 melee (+8L, claws, +13L with Growth), +7 ranged (+5L, pistol); SV Dmg +5, Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Balance +9, Demolitions +3, Drive +10, Intimidate +6, Spot +3.

Feats: Blind Fight, Dodge, Durability, Improved Grapple, Improved Pin, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Takedown Attack, Toughness.

Powers: Growth +5 [*Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp*], Natural Weapon +5 [*Extra: Quills; Source: Mutation; Cost: 3 pp*], Super-Dexterity +5 [*Source: Training; Cost: 4 pp*].

Equipment: Heavy Pistol +5L [*Weapon; Cost: 1 pp*].

MR. PAYTON (PL 10; AIRBORNE/INFANTRY)

Mr. Payton is a genius, every bit as intelligent as Mr. Sweet, only not so charming. An expert computer

hacker, Mr. Payton is a devastating martial artist, though he is not as physically strong or durable as Mr. Talley. His ability to use his saliva to generate duplicates of himself, however, makes him every bit as deadly. Through the course of his intensive training, Mr. Payton has trained his body and mind to the point that he is far more resistant to damage and mental effects than a normal human. His grapple gun casts ultra-strong cables he can use for climbing and swinging. Mr. Payton's machine pistol is a step up from the guns carried by his comrades, though it is not as powerful as Mr. Sharp's rifle.

Mr. Payton: PL 10; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 18 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (Swing 50 ft.); Atk +4 melee (+6S, punch), +6 ranged (+5L, pistol); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Computers +11, Disable Device +9, Disguise +4, Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +4, Search +10, Spot +2.

Feats: Blind Fight, Blind Sight, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Move-By Attack.

Powers: Duplication +5 [*Extra: Mental Link; Source: Mutation; Cost: 3 pp*], Strike +10 [*Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp*], Protection +5 [*Extras: Mental Protection, Sensory Protection; Source: Training; Cost: 4 pp*], Super-Intelligence +5 [*Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp*].

Equipment: Grapple Gun [Swinging +10; Cost: 1 pp], Machine Pistol +5L [*Weapon; Extra: Multifire; Cost: 1 pp*].

MR. SHARP (PL 10; AIRBORNE/ARTILLERY)

Mr. Sharp is an expert marksman and deadly assassin. His primary weapon is a silenced, high-powered rifle that can breach the toughest armor. Although he is adept at avoiding attacks, Mr. Sharp usually remains hidden a safe distance from fierce combat. His body is slightly malleable, and as a

result he can, to a limited degree, change shape. He can even stretch his limbs or flatten portions of his body and glide on thermals. Perhaps his most dangerous quality, however, is his ability to alter his skin color to match his surroundings. His clothing duplicates this effect, though it is unknown how this is accomplished. Few of Mr. Sharp's victims ever see or hear him.

Mr. Sharp: PL 10; Init +3 (*Dex*); Defense 17 (14 *flat-footed*); Spd 30 ft. (*Glide 30 ft.*); Atk +7 melee (+1*S*, *punch*), +9 ranged (+10*L*, *rifle*); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +3, Disguise +3, Hide +6, Move Silently +6, Search +4, Spot +5, Taunt +7.

Feats: Accurate Attack, Evasion, Far Shot, Move-By Attack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Surprise Strike.

Powers: Amazing Save (*Reflex*) +5 [*Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp*], Blending +5 [*Source: Mutation; Cost: 1 pp*], Combat Sense +3 [*Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp*], Elasticity +5 [*Extra: Disguise; Power Stunt: Gliding; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp*].

Equipment: High Powered Rifle +10*L* [*Weapon; Extra: Subtle; Cost: 2 pp*].

TETRAD TACTICS

The Tetrad enjoys quite a bit of overlap as far as roles are concerned. An effective blend of Infantry, Specialist, Special Forces, Support, and Artillery abilities makes the team fairly well equipped to deal with most threats.

One of the Tetrad's primary strengths is the fact that certain roles are shared by every member. Every team member is armed and fully capable of functioning as Artillery, which is helpful against flying opponents. Also, every character has sufficient skill in one or more areas to function as a Specialist in addition to their other role(s). Mr. Sweet is an expert in the sciences, as well as a skilled tinkerer (*Repair*).

Mr. Talley is a crack driver (*Drive*) and can usually be trusted to provide the team with transportation. It is also interesting to note that he is the only member of the Tetrad with any skill with explosives (Demolitions), a fact that, by default, makes him the team's explosive expert, despite his relatively low skill. Mr. Payton is a computer expert (*Computers*), as well as a passable sneak (*Hide, Move Silently, Open Locks*), which makes him the team's Specialist on infiltration missions, although Mr. Sharp is no slouch in that area either (*Blending, Disguise, Hide, Move Silently*).

Under Mr. Sweet's leadership, the Tetrad has developed strategies and plans to help maximize their strengths. Tetrad tactics differ based on circumstances. Sample Tetrad strategies follow.

AMBUSH · ATTACKING THE UN-AWARE OPPOSITION

Mr. Sweet: Mr. Sweet uses his telepathic abilities to keep in contact with his team, silently giving commands and communicating battle strategies to his comrades. Against super-powered opponents, Mr. Payton frequently uses the Bombs Away maneuver to send Mr. Sweet hurtling towards a formidable-looking character, who Mr. Sweet promptly attacks with his Transfer ability. Once the team has spent the element of surprise, Mr. Sweet (*telepathically*) uses his Leadership and Inspire feats to keep everyone performing well, as described in Direct Confrontation.

Mr. Talley: Mr. Talley's specialty is, predictably enough, Direct Confrontation. When it is necessary to lie in wait for an opposing character or group, Mr. Talley usually hides at a safe distance (*much further away than the others, due to his lack of stealth skills*) with a Mr. Payton duplicate. When Mr. Sharp fires the first shot, the assigned Mr. Payton duplicate swings Mr. Talley into the fray, using the Bombs Away maneuver to enhance Mr. Talley's first attack.

Mr. Payton: When setting up for an ambush, Mr. Payton creates the maximum number of full-powered

duplicates possible. He ensures that at least one duplicate stays with each of the other team members to provide protection, transportation, and support. Mr. Payton and his duplicates are quite stealthy and have few problems avoiding notice. Once the action starts, Mr. Payton usually has his duplicates swing the rest of the team (*except for Mr. Sharp*) into combat with the targets. Mr. Talley is hurled using the Bombs Away maneuver, while Mr. Sweet is deposited near a formidable ranged combatant or flyer so that he may acquire the opponent's powers.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Sharp is always the first to attack when the team ambushes a target. When everyone is in position, Mr. Sharp opens fire at the most formidable looking opponent. Once the first attack is made, the others emerge from hiding to engage. Mr. Sharp remains hidden and continues to attack from out of sight, using his Accurate Attack and Precise Shot abilities to minimize risk to his comrades. His Blending ability and the Subtle extra on his rifle help him to remain hidden from view. Mr. Sharp uses Cover Fire to impede, or at least weaken, opponents who try to close in with Mr. Sweet or Mr. Payton.

DIRECT CONFRONTATION · HEAD-TO-HEAD COMBAT

Mr. Sweet: In the thick of combat, Mr. Sweet will usually perform a support role. He shies away from melee fighting unless a stolen power can help him perform better. Primarily, he relies on ranged attacks, either his pistol or a stolen power (*such as Dazzle or Energy Blast*) to supplement the combat abilities of his teammates. When combating a flyer in areas with large buildings or other elevated structures, Mr. Sweet is often carried through the air by one of Mr. Payton's duplicates, where he attempts to steal her flight powers for his own use. This often results in the flying character falling from the sky. Mr. Sweet makes excellent use of his Leadership and Inspire feats, issuing commands and warnings via his Telepathy power. This keeps the team focused and the battles rela-

tively silent. Mr. Sweet is fond of telepathically taunting foes engaged in combat with his companions, goading them into making critical mistakes.

Mr. Talley: In the thick of battle, Mr. Talley is quite effective. His almost inhumanly fast reflexes make him difficult to strike, and his natural weaponry complicates close combat. Against particularly formidable foes, he uses his Growth ability to further enhance his physical power. In this form, he is supernaturally strong and much more durable. Mr. Talley is prone to using the Speedball Special maneuver to hurl Mr. Payton duplicates at foes, sometimes in rapid succession. Another favorite technique is to use the Urban Renewal maneuver to limit the mobility of opposing Transport characters. His reflexes allow him to be an effective Warden for his teammates. Mr. Talley is willing to be a Human Shield for any wounded or hard-pressed teammates except for Mr. Payton duplicates, who he sees as expendable.

Mr. Payton: Mr. Payton usually remains behind cover in battle, relying largely on his duplicates to engage foes. From here, he usually attacks with his machine pistol. If the weapon has no effect on his targets, or if an opponent closes to melee range, then Mr. Payton falls back on his incredible martial arts training, despite the greater risk to his person. He tries to ensure that every member of the team (*himself included*) is assisted by at least one duplicate. Mr. Payton's duplicates often work hard to flank foes and protect allies using the Cover Fire and Human Shield maneuvers (*though Mr. Payton himself rarely performs the latter*).

Mr. Sharp: If caught out in the open, Mr. Sharp works hard to stay out of melee range. He uses his Elasticity power to avoid close combatants, and tries to find a location inaccessible to them. Mr. Talley and Mr. Payton do their best to cover him. Characters who do manage to engage Mr. Sharp in melee combat find him to be a competent foe, and he uses his Point Blank Shot feat to its fullest potential. He is quite fond of taunting his opponents into carelessness. Though not as

confounding as Mr. Sweet, Mr. Sharp does have a quiet, dark sense of humor. Once free of melee interference, Mr. Sharp attempts to eliminate opposing Artillery and Airborne characters, in that order, to better allow his teammates to use their own talents.

INFILTRATION · GAINING ACCESS TO RESTRICTED AREAS

Mr. Sweet: When discretion is important, Mr. Sweet usually leaves matters to the rest of the team, giving a set of orders and trusting his comrades to follow through. When fast-talking or bluffing is necessary for a mission's success, however, Mr. Sweet takes the lead, using his incredible social skills and telepathic powers. In some cases, he accompanies Mr. Sharp, borrowing his teammate's Blending ability, while Mr. Sharp uses his own Disguise power.

Mr. Talley: Although Mr. Talley is not a trained spy, his natural athletic ability makes him quite good at skulking. On covert operations, he often slinks alongside Mr. Payton and Mr. Sharp, but for the most part, he leaves obstacles like locked doors to his companions. Mr. Talley is always present on any mission that calls for the use of explosives.

Mr. Payton: Mr. Payton is a good all-around infiltrator, skilled in disguise, stealth, and security countermeasures. He is almost always present on covert operations. Sometimes, as the only one qualified, Mr. Payton must go in without the immediate support of his teammates. Luckily, his ability to make duplicates of himself ensures that he is never truly alone.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Sharp is capable of using his powers to alter his appearance, and he often does so to infiltrate secure locations. He can also be quite stealthy, due largely to his Blending power, and when he must get into places unnoticed, he usually can. Sometimes, when Mr. Sweet's expertise will be necessary on a given mission, Mr. Sharp allows the team leader to absorb his Blending ability. In such instances, Mr. Sweet benefits from Mr. Sharp's Blending, while Mr. Sharp relies exclusively on his Disguise ability. In this case, when fast-talking

becomes necessary, a hidden Mr. Sweet communicates via telepathy with Mr. Sharp, letting him know what to say or do.

ESCAPE · GETTING THE HECK OUT OF THERE

Mr. Sweet: As the least combat-oriented character, Mr. Sweet is often the first to flee from combat. Though not cowardly, he knows his teammates can cover his back more effectively than he could theirs. If possible, Mr. Sweet uses a stolen power to flee.

Mr. Talley: If the team has a getaway vehicle, Mr. Talley drives it. Mr. Talley's driving ability borders on the supernatural, and he uses every trick in the book (*and a few that aren't*) to evade pursuit. If no getaway vehicle is present, Mr. Talley usually relies on a duplicate of Mr. Payton to carry him away from battle.

Mr. Payton: It's Mr. Payton's job, or rather Mr. Payton's duplicates' job, to make certain that everyone makes it out of a dangerous encounter. Mr. Payton himself and Mr. Sharp have their own movement abilities, but Mr. Sweet and Mr. Talley usually need assistance. Using grapple guns, the duplicates attempt to carry the other members of the Tetrad, whether or not they are conscious, to safety. If the team has an escape vehicle, the duplicates meet up there.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Sharp is usually the last one to leave a battle, covering the escape with his high-powered rifle. He frequently uses his Gliding ability to flee from opponents while Blending to somewhat throw off their aim. When speed is of essence, he is assisted by a duplicate Mr. Payton. If a getaway vehicle is available, Mr. Sharp usually clings to the top or hangs out a window, using Cover Fire to discourage pursuit.

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