modern dispatch # 63

BLOOD & VIGILANCE: SUPER GOODIES
BY CHARLES BAIZE AND CHARLES RICE

Hello and welcome to a SUPER edition of the modern dispatch! Why do we call it super you ask? Because this week Charles Baize has served up a bevy of new goodies for the Blood and Vigilance modern superhero game. So have a gander at the new origins, powers, feats and organizations, then go save the world already!

   -Chuck

NEW ORIGINS

ADVANCED TRAINING

Alternative rule for Advanced Training characters: Advanced Training characters begin with their prime stat (the stat for their 1st level base class) at 18.

   (The author does realize that stat will become the *dump* stat, but hey… this is a Super Hero game. Have fun.)

CHOSEN ONE

At any given time, there are hundreds, if not thousands of individuals born to a particular purpose. Born to protect the planet from certain destruction, or from being overrun by forces of darkness, or battling a conqueror who would enslave all of humanity, or any of a number of other certain dooms for the planet.

   They are… The Chosen One… Chosen Ones… Something.
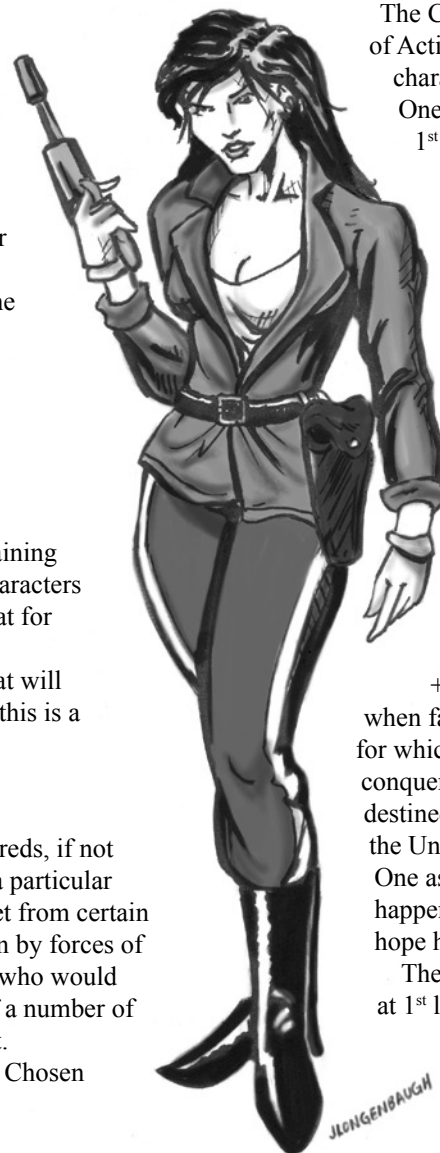
The Chosen One receives twice the number of Action Points per level as a normal character. At every odd level, The Chosen One increases their prime stat (their 1st level Basic Class) by 1. This is in addition to the normal stat increases at every 4th level. The Chosen One chooses one of his saving throws, and that saving throw increases by 1 at every even level.

   Forces that have allied themselves with The Chosen One's adversary will attack The Chosen One at every opportunity.

   When faced with the situation for which he was born, all the planets seem to line up for The Chosen One. Win or lose, this is the situation he was born to resolve. The Chosen One gets a +2 competence bonus to all his stats when faced with the one and only situation for which he was born. The real big bad, the conqueror, the being from another dimension destined to destroy the Earth. All things in the Universe become one in The Chosen One as destinies collide. This will only ever happen once in a Chosen One's lifetime... I hope he recognizes the power rush.

   The Chosen One receives 4 power points at 1st level, and 1 power point per level thereafter.

TOTEMIC

You have gained your powers through a deep association with a particular animal. Your totem, or familiar, fylgja, fetch, whatever your character chooses to call it. Most of the time the totem chooses the character, but in a few rare cases, the character chooses her totem through research and hard work. The type of totem will normally be directly tied to the character's powers and abilities, as well as certain skills, feats and saves to which they receive bonuses. Any skills to which the totem grants a bonus become permanent class skills. Totemic characters receive 8 power points at 1st level and 2 power points per level thereafter. Some examples below (certainly not all inclusive, GMs and players are encouraged to expand upon this list):

Cat: Skills – Balance +4, Climb +4, Jump +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Tumble +4.

Reflex save bonus: +1 per 2 levels.

Bonus feat: Run

Eel: Skills – Concentration +4, Escape Artist +4, Hide +4, Move Silently +4, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +4, Swim +4.

Fort save bonus: +1 per 2 levels.

Bonus feat: Heroic Surge

Hawk: Skills – Concentration +4, Intimidate +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Navigate +4, Pilot +4, Spot +4.

Fort save Bonus: +1 per 2 levels

Bonus feat: Combat Expertise (Hawk totemics gain this feat regardless of prerequisites)

Raccoon: Skills – Balance +4, Bluff +4, Climb +4, Escape Artist +4, Hide +4, Sleight of Hand +4, Tumble +4.

Reflex save bonus: +1 per 2 levels.

Bonus feat: Improved Initiative

Snake: Skills – Bluff +4, Concentration +4, Escape Artist +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +4, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +4.

Will save bonus: +1 per 2 levels.

Bonus feat: Frightful Presence (Snake totemics gain this feat regardless of prerequisites)

Wolf: Skills – Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Listen +4, Search +4, Spot +4, Survival +4.

Fort save bonus: +1 per 2 levels.

Bonus feat: Track

NEW POWERS

CIPHER

You are able to understand languages with minimal effort.

Duration: Permanent

Activation Time: Free

Range: Personal

Exclusivity: Exclusive

Effect: The hero with this power can make an Intelligence check to understand a previously unknown language upon encountering it. She can make one check per minute of hearing the language spoken. The DC for the check depends on the situation: DC 15 if the language is in the same group as a language the hero knows; DC 20 if the language is unrelated to any other languages the hero knows; and DC 25 if the language is ancient or unique such as Sumerian or the language of the intelligent dolphin people from Europa. The hero adds her power points invested in this power to her Intelligence modifier plus a cumulative +1 bonus per minute listening to the language.

Unlike the Smart hero Linguist talent, this power bestows complete fluency in the language upon a successful check.

General Stunt: Taking a stunt adds the ability to apply this power to written forms of the languages, as well.

ENERGIZE ITEM

You possess the ability to energize an object for an explosive effect. When you energize an object, it will explode in 1 round per 2 power points invested in the power, for a timed effect, or whenever the object is struck or strikes another object, whichever is soonest.

Duration: Special

Activation Time: Special

Range: Touch

Exclusivity: Exclusive

Effect: The character can affect items of one size category per power point invested in this power.

The activation time is based on the size of the object: one action per 2 size categories.

Energy Explosion: The object explodes dealing 1d6 per 2 power points energy damage to everything within a 10 foot radius per size category of the object above tiny.

Physical Explosion: The object explodes, dealing 1d6 per 2 power points physical damage to everything within a 10 foot radius per size category of the object above tiny.

General Stunt: Increase damage to the next higher die. d6 becomes d8, d8 becomes d10, d10 goes to the maximum of d12.

ENERGY TRANSFORMATION

You possess the ability to change one form of energy into another.

Duration: Instantaneous

Activation Time: One action

Range: Short

Exclusivity: Exclusive

Effect: The character is able to transform energy into a specific other form.

Energy Transformation: Physical or psychic energy is transformed into a conventional energy form (electricity, heat, radiation, light, or other such energy forms)

Physical Transformation: Psychic or conventional energy forms are transformed into physical energy.

Psychic Transformation: Physical or conventional energy forms are transformed into psychic energy.

HARD POINT

You are able to temporarily graft fully functional armor gadgets or mechanical parts to your skin.

Duration: Power Level
Activation Time: One round
Range: Personal
Exclusivity: General
Effect: The character is able to graft one gadget or mechanical part to his body per point of Constitution modifier plus one for every 4 power points invested in this power.

If D20 Future is being allowed or added into the game, the character is able to graft parts from 1 PL higher than his own for every 8 power points invested in this power.

One gadget or part may be grafted onto or dropped from the character's body per round.

The effect lasts for one round per power point invested in this power

While the character has gadgets or mechanical/electrical parts grafted to his body, the parts respond to his mental commands. The gadget or part may not be a handheld item, rather it must be a part that attaches to a full unit.

For instance, a character would not be able to graft a Desert Eagle .50 to himself, but would be able to graft a weapon normally mounted on a vehicle or suit of armor. The controlling mechanisms and/or wiring graft directly into the character's nervous system. The character must still be able to lift any grafted parts in their intended fashion (he may be able to graft himself onto a tank turret not attached to the tank, but if he cannot lift the weapon, he is limited to use the part where it sits, on the other hand, if he were to graft himself to a pair of axles, he would be as mobile as

the wheels allow).

Grafted weapons do not allow the character more attacks than he can normally make in a round.

General Stunts: Decrease graft activation time from one round to one action.

Increase the duration of the graft by one round per power point each time this stunt is taken. For instance, a 9th level character with 12 ranks in Hard Point, and this stunt 5 times would have a duration of 72 rounds instead of 12.

Increase the number of gadgets or parts the character is able to graft onto his body by one every time this stunt is taken.

HYPER TINKER

You possess uncanny craftsmanship skills.

Duration: Permanent
Activation Time: Free
Range: Personal
Exclusivity: Exclusive.
Effect: Every power point invested in this power adds an unnamed +1 bonus to a single Craft skill. To gain this effect for multiple craft skills, the power must be chosen multiple times.

When crafting an item to which the powers apply [crafting a computer requires power points in Craft (electronic)], the time required is halved.

If D20 Future is being allowed or added into the game, the character can use stunts to increase her PL. Alternately, if the invention points system from Blood and Circuits is being used, power points are considered to be added to the character's Craft *ranks* when determining the frequency of a Craft check. *For example, Doctor Forge has 6 ranks in Craft (mechanical), as well as 6 power points in Craft (mechanical); normally he would make his Craft checks once per day, but adding in his power points (for a total of 12) brings that to twice per day.*

INVULNERABILITY

Your flesh is your armor.

Duration: Permanent
Activation Time: Free
Range: Personal
Exclusivity: General
Effect: Every two power points invested in this power grants the character one point of Damage Reduction. This damage reduction stacks with the Tough hero Damage Reduction talents, but not with the Armor power stunt.

MARTIAL SUPERIORITY

You possess superior attack abilities.

Duration: Permanent
Activation Time: Free
Range: Personal
Exclusivity: General
Ranged Superiority: For every 2 power points invested in this power, you gain a +1 competence bonus to your ranged attacks.
Melee Superiority: For every 2 power points invested in this power, you gain a +1 competence bonus to your melee attacks.
General Stunts: Ranged attacks increase to the next multiple for crit damage (from x2 to x3, from x3 to x4, and so forth).

Hand to hand damage increases to the next larger die (from d4 to d6, from d6 to d8, and so forth) to maximum of 1d12.

TOXIC BIOLOGY

You possess the ability to emit a poisonous substance from your person.

Duration: Instantaneous
Activation Time: Free
Range: Variable
Exclusivity: Exclusive
Toxic Touch: Your touch deals 1d4 damage per 4

DEATH IN THE SUPERS UNIVERSE (ALTERNATE RULE)

When dealing with super powered individuals, it is a well established fact that they are inordinately difficult to kill…. permanently. A super powered individual who has simply taken enough damage to kill him might not necessarily be dead. With this alternate rule which I call *It ain't over till it's over... and maybe not then, either*, a character or named NPC in a *Blood and Vigilance* game may only be killed if their enemy performs a *coup de grace*. Without a *coup de grace*, the character's body somehow disappears from the place of death, or the morgue, or even from the coffin, only to turn up later after the character has spent some time in a Tibetan monastery, or in the secret underground Martian base of ancient super human offshoots, or any of a number of other mystic/super powered/incredibly advanced tech locations. In any case, the character was not truly dead but deep in a coma and indistinguishable from dead at the time.

power points to the ability you choose when taking this power.

Toxic Spit: You expel a poisonous substance from your mouth dealing 1d4 damage to the ability you choose when taking this power. Range is 10 feet + 5 feet per 4 power points spent on this power. This attack provokes an attack of opportunity.

General Stunt: Increase damage to the next higher die. d4 becomes d6, d6 becomes d8, d8 becomes d10, d10 goes to the maximum of d12...

WEB CASTING

You possess the ability to cast webbing from some part of your body.

Duration: 2 minutes per power point invested in this power.

Activation Time: One action

Range: Short

Exclusivity: General

Effect: The character can cast a web that has a hardness of 1 per power point, a tensile strength of 75 lbs per power point, and a break DC of 15 + 1 per power point invested in this power. The web has 6 hit points.

Ensnaring Web: You are able to cast a sticky net like web to ensnare your enemies with a successful ranged touch attack. The web anchors the target in

place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20) or burst it with a Strength check. Both are attack actions.

Webbed Brachiation: By shooting a webbed line and sticking it to an elevated position (ranged touch attack, effective Def 10, or touch Def of moving object), then grabbing the line, you can swing from place to place with a movement speed of 10' per 2 power points invested in this power.

POWER FEATS

MELEE BARRAGE

Your unarmed attacks fly with blazing speed.

Prerequisite: BAB +4, Martial Superiority 10 power points, Dexterity 15+

Effect: You gain one additional melee attack at your highest attack bonus

RAPID SHOT

Your ranged attacks fly with blazing speed.

Prerequisite: BAB +4, Martial Superiority 10 power points, Dexterity 15+

Effect: You gain one additional ranged attack at your highest attack bonus

MATTER CONVERSION

You possess the ability to convert one type of matter to another type of matter.

Duration: Permanent

Activation Time: One action

Range: Touch

Exclusivity: General

Effect: Converting matter is no easy task. The DC for converting matter is 15+ the hardness of the harder material to be converted. This power is treated as a skill check using power points invested in this power for the check.

General Stunt: +2 to the Matter Conversion check. This stunt may be taken multiple times.

As an example of this power in use: Renova is battling Steel Steppe the armored criminal from Russia. Steele Steppe's armor is (obviously) steel, with a hardness of 20. Renova has 12 power points and 4 stunts in Matter Conversion, and wants to convert the armor into loops of rope (hardness 0). On a successful touch, Renova rolls a 9 on her Matter Conversion check for a total of 29 (die roll of 9 + 12 power points + 8 for the 4 power stunts), and is unsuccessful at converting the armor into rope, as it was less than the 35 required for the steel (DC 15 + the hardness of 20 for the steel).

GENERAL POWER FEATS

EXPLOSIVE BLAST

You possess the ability to cause an explosive effect at a distance. When you designate an area, you roll to attack the area (effective Def 10), or to center the effect on a person or object, you roll a ranged touch attack.

Prerequisite: 4 power points in a blast power.

Effect: When you designate an area or creature, you make an attack roll (ranged touch attack) and your blast fires toward the target. If your attack roll

misses, then the blast goes until it strikes something, or reaches the end of its range, at which point it explodes, causing damage (and knockback) to creatures or objects within the blast radius.

Alternative: If you use the natural 1 roll is an automatic fail rule, this can cause the character to be stunned for 1 round per 2 power points invested in the power (treat it as the explosion centering on the character, and the character having no immunity for this instance of the power's usage). The character can make a Fort save (DC 20) to halve the stun duration.

Energy Explosion: The explosion is centered upon a designated area dealing 1d6 per 2 power points energy damage to everything within a 10 foot radius per 4 power points invested in this power.

Physical Explosion: The explosion is centered upon a designated area, dealing 1d6 per 2 power points physical damage to everything within a 10 foot radius per 4 power points invested in this power.

Psychic Explosion: The explosion is centered upon a designated area, dealing 1d6 per 2 power points psychic damage to everything within a 10 foot radius per 4 power points invested in this power.

General Stunt: Increase damage to the next higher die. d6 becomes d8, d8 becomes d10, d10 goes to the maximum of d12.

ENERGY FISTS

Your fists (or feet… you pick) can cause energy damage to your melee opponents.

Prerequisite: 4 power points in an energy power.

Effect: Your unarmed melee attacks cause damage based on your energy power. You do an additional die of melee damage per 4 power points invested in your energy power. All damage dice past the initial die is energy damage.

ENERGY SHEATH

You are surrounded by your energy power, adding to your defense.

Prerequisite: 4 power points in an energy aura.

Effect: You have a sheath of energy surrounding you. This gives you a +1 bonus to your Defense per 2 power points invested in your aura power.

NEW ORGANIZATIONS

AZURE KNIGHTS

The acrobatic villain known as Arnis moved behind the pillar, throwing his custom billy club at the nearest hero. The club struck the lime green skinned super known as Johnny Radd, physically bouncing harmlessly off the side of his face. The electric shock delivered by the leads in the club, however, drew a painful yell from Johnny, putting his muscles into involuntary spasms as he fell to the floor. Arnis kicked the H.E.A.T.H.E.R. away with a well placed boot to her sternum, knocking her back and over the counter. This battle between supers had gone on for upwards of 15 minutes, and was showing no signs of ending any time soon. This was the first time Eastern Trust Bank of Manhattan had been robbed by a villain with super powers. Checkmate moved up behind the club wielding acrobat and swung at him with his own billy club. Arnis ducked at the last moment, sweeping Checkmate's legs out from under him with a quick ground movement at his ankles. H.E.A.T.H.E.R. jumped up and blasted the bank-robber with an energy blast that rattled the mutant to his bones.

Arnis responded by hurling his other club at her, and shocking her into a stunned muscle spasm.

It was at this moment that the bullet proof glass that comprised the front of the bank was shattered inward at great velocity, followed by the high pitched whine of three jetpacks as the Azure Knights appeared on the scene.

Johnny was just making his way to his feet when the three power armored officers raised their arms in unison and began firing tiny darts from wrist mounted

barrels. Johnny raised his hands over his head and started to tell them he surrendered when he heard a soft *thwipthwipthwip* sound, and felt four stings in his skin. He had time to pull one of the darts out and look at it before he collapsed again, this time unconscious.

The Azure Knights continued firing at anyone in the bank who was not one of them. When all the supers were subdued, the Azure Knights put inhibitor cuffs on each of them, and strapped them to gurneys brought in by the emergency medical technicians.

After speaking with several of the patrons, tellers, and the bank manager to ascertain which of them were the good guys, and which of them were the bad guys,, the Azure Knights removed the power inhibitors from Johnny Radd, Checkmate, and the H.E.A.T.H.E.R. They then snapped photos of Arnis with and without his mask, copied his fingerprints, and drew a vial of blood from him.

When the heroes awoke, one of the Azure Knights approached them and apologized for any inconvenience and thanked them for keeping the villain occupied until they could arrive and take him into custody. And they were free to go. They then called for transport for the super villain, and when he was secured within the helicopter, they fired up their jetpacks and left the scene.

Not really an organization unto itself, this is the law enforcement arm of U.S.H.E.R. trained and armed to deal with super powered mutants and psychotic inventors. When the Azure Knights show up, things have gone wrong. These power armored officers are trained specifically to deal with supers initially in a non-lethal manner, though they are open to use more permanent methods to deal with particularly tough opponents who will not surrender or submit to their authority.

Agenda: Protect ordinary humans and other innocents from collateral damage incurred by a battle

between super powered opponents. Register, identify, and pacify super powered villains.

Structure: Quasi-Military arm of the U.S.H.E.R. organization specifically trained and equipped to deal with super powered individuals.

Symbol: Gold marshal's badge on a silver circle emblazoned on the breast plate of the armor.

Most Common Allegiance(s): U.S.H.E.R., state and local law enforcement agencies, United States.

Requisition Limit: 65 (illegal, military, plus one Progress Level if Future D20 is being used)

OVERVIEW

As the sheer number of super powered individuals and correspondingly, the number of encounters increased, U.S.H.E.R. found that they were losing ground in dealing with them. In response to this, U.S.H.E.R. commissioned the fabrication of several suits of powered armor with multiple integrated weapons, communications systems, flight system, and defensive systems. Into these suits of armor were put agents who first had to pass some of the most rigorous physical and mental training in the world. The Azure Knights are a new sight in a brave new world. Trained to move in en masse, subdue everyone, and then sort out the good guys from the bad, these are hard nosed no-nonsense types who take their jobs very seriously.

STRUCTURE

The Azure Knights function for U.S.H.E.R. in much the same way as a SWAT team functions for a police department. While they are led on the field by a sergeant, their liaison to the upper ranks of U.S.H.E.R. is a commanding lieutenant who is ultimately subordinate to the local director of operations. Normally, this person holds a rank of captain or above.

BASES OF OPERATION

The Azure Knights are based wherever there is an U.S.H.E.R. presence.

RESOURCES

The Azure Knights are funded through U.S.H.E.R. and draw what they need through their general funding.

INVOLVING THE HEROES

Involving the Azure Knights with the heroes is incredibly simple. Any time a supers battle is causing damage to structures (and missed shots should, in this author's opinion, cause damage to structures) or bystanders, the local emergency services will be contacted, and they will contact U.S.H.E.R. and they can (and likely will) send in the Azure Knights. How to involve the heroes? Let them get into a fight with other supers and cause collateral damage.

USING THE AZURE KNIGHTS

There are a few easy ways to use the Azure Knights. They can save the heroes from death by arriving at an opportune time. They can be under the mistaken impression that the heroes are villains, and thus go after them at any given opportunity. If the heroes are consistently the cause of large amounts of collateral damage, the Azure Knights' commanders may decide the heroes should be arrested and brought up on charges.

An Azure Knight agent with a grudge wages an internal negative public relations campaign against the heroes, convincing other agents that they need to be hunted down.

LEARNING ABOUT THE AZURE KNIGHTS

The heroes can learn more about the Azure Knights through use of the Gather Information, Knowledge (streetwise), and Research skill checks.

The chart below represents the amount of detail the heroes are able to garner using these methods.

GATHER INFORMATION

Heroes using Gather Information are normally asking legitimate organizations such as police, or other governmental organizations friendly to the PCs, perhaps even other hero groups with intelligence gathering capabilities. If the Azure Knights are not active in the immediate area, a -5 circumstance penalty could be appropriate.

DC 1: Azure Knights are power armored individuals.

DC 5: Azure Knights fight super powered people.

DC 10: Azure Knights fight super powered villains.

DC 15: Azure Knights are law enforcement officers.

DC 20: Azure Knights are a department of U.S.H.E.R.

DC 25: Azure Knights attempt to take all villains alive.

DC 30: There are no super powered agents in the ranks of the Azure Knights.

KNOWLEDGE (STREETWISE)

Heroes using the Knowledge (streetwise) skill are asking around and interrogating people on the street, including street level supers and vigilantes. Again, if the Azure Knights are not active in the immediate area, a -5 circumstance penalty could be appropriate.

DC 1: Azure Knights use unconventionally armed power armor.

DC 5: Azure Knights show up when super powered people are battling and causing collateral damage.

DC 10: Azure Knights protect normal people from super powered villains.

DC 15: Azure Knights are law enforcement officers.

DC 20: Azure Knights are a department of U.S.H.E.R.

DC 25: Azure Knights are an experimental department designed to gauge the ability of humans

to protect themselves against individuals with super powers.

DC 30: Azure Knights utilize technology that inhibits the powers of mutants and other super powered people.

RESEARCH

Heroes using the Research skill to gain information on the Azure Knights are checking internet sites, and following those up by contacting, either in person or through phone calls / written correspondence, the people or organizations they find in connection with the Azure Knights.

DC 1: Azure Knights are a power armored team.

DC 5: Azure Knights only show up when super powered people are battling and causing collateral damage.

DC 10: Azure Knights always show up in force.

DC 15: Azure Knights are law enforcement officers and never knowingly arrest heroes.

DC 20: Azure Knights are a quasi-military department of U.S.H.E.R.

DC 25: Azure Knights are an experimental department designed to gauge the ability of humans to protect themselves against individuals with super powers.

DC 30: Azure Knights utilize technology that inhibits the powers of mutants and other super powered people.

DC 35: Azure Knights recruit across all branches of the military and law enforcement across the nation.

MEMBERS

Members of the Azure Knights are recruited from all branches of the military, as well as law enforcement agencies across the nation. They can be of any background. The only real prerequisite is that they possess no super powers. Characters with the Advanced Training origin are prime candidates for recruitment. While essentially any member of the military or law enforcement communities is a candidate for recruitment, U.S.H.E.R. pays particular attention to SWAT and Special Forces personnel.

H.E.A.T.H.E.R.

Human **E**periment **A**lternatively **T**rained **H**uman **E**mergency **R**esponse

Agenda: To push humanity to its limits by way of genetic manipulation coupled with rigorous training techniques.

Structure: Teams of scientists in several departments. Each department is led by a head scientist. All departments are led by one oversight committee board of directors.

Symbol: Two DNA strands crossed to form a stylized plus symbol.

Most Common Allegiance(s): H.E.A.T.H.E.R.

Requisition Limit:

45 (illegal, plus one Progress Level if Future D20 is being used)

OVERVIEW

In the age of microscopes and gene tweaking, H.E.A.T.H.E.R. stands at the forefront of the next stage in human development: Custom Designed Genetics. Originally a department at U.S.H.E.R., H.E.A.T.H.E.R. was cut loose when its board of directors wished to experiment not only with an advanced training regimen, but coupling that training regimen with genetic tampering at the time of conception. Putting the pieces together in the lab, under a microscope, and then tweaking the pieces afterward. With no accelerated growth in the mix, the resultant children are raised in the training facility, knowing nobody outside their training group.

Many agencies, after learning of its existence, come to H.E.A.T.H.E.R. for designer genetics for everything from super soldiers to genius children to grunts who have enough intelligence to work effectively by themselves and a gene tweak that dumps dopamine into their system when they experience hard work so that the higher the muscle fatigue, the more the dopamine, resulting in grunts who thrive on hard labor and work themselves into a blissful exhaustion.

STRUCTURE

The board of directors for H.E.A.T.H.E.R.

BASES OF OPERATION

There is a single H.E.A.T.H.E.R. compound in upstate New York. Completely isolated by a patrolled wall.

RESOURCES

Designer genetics is an incredibly lucrative business, with rich couples paying for perfect children through a front lab (not called H.E.A.T.H.E.R., and not linked to it via any paperwork) and secret governmental agencies from around the globe paying for perfect soldiers and agents.

INVOLVING THE HEROES

There are a number of ways to involve the heroes with the H.E.A.T.H.E.R. project. The easiest is to use a H.E.A.T.H.E.R. as a villain, perhaps a H.E.A.T.H.E.R. that escaped the compound (violently, or non) and has gone on a crime spree. Another way would be for a H.E.A.T.H.E.R. that had been trained to be a crime fighter to join up with the heroes as part of the team. Yet another way would be for the heroes to encounter a group of H.E.A.T.H.E.R.s produced, grown, and trained as super soldiers for a now-defunct government. The limits are really left to the imagination.

USING H.E.A.T.H.E.R.

H.E.A.T.H.E.R. is easily used as the main training compound from which Advanced Training characters come. The scientists and coaches there are fully aware how much higher their potential is than the average

person brought into a similar training program. Due to the gene tweaking that goes on there, it is also entirely conceivable for mutants, mutates, and possibly even cyborgs to come from the facility.

LEARNING ABOUT H.E.A.T.H.E.R.

H.E.A.T.H.E.R. is a super secret department of an even more secret organization known only as "The Program" by anyone who works for them. If there is another name for it, only the Board of Directors knows it, and they're not talking. Most of the females grown and trained in the compound take the name Heather followed by the last name of the scientist who trained them. Thus, if you're not part of a governmental organization, or one of the mega-rich, it's next to impossible to learn anything about them, unless one of the H.E.A.T.H.E.R.s tells you about them. As it normally occurs, people don't approach H.E.A.T.H.E.R., H.E.A.T.H.E.R. approaches them and tries to sell them on the benefits of their 'product'.

MEMBERS

Members of H.E.A.T.H.E.R. consist of the trustees (Board of Directors), scientists, lab assistants, coaches and subjects.

W.E.A.P.O.N.

Briefing room Delta Three Bravo in U.S.H.E.R. command central. The two agents sat at attention as the director entered.

U.S.H.E.R. Director Raynes sat down and in his usual manner, he got right down to business. "Well, agents, do we have any information regarding the identity of the group claiming responsibility for the thefts at the Alpha Romeo Echo Alpha Five One research facility?" he asked the two agents.

Agent Smith pulled her papers in front of her face, though she didn't need them. She knew every word

they contained. "They call themselves W.E.A.P.O.N., sir." she answered.

Director Raynes raised his eyebrows and made a gesture as if to hurry them along, and finally asked, "Why, agents?"

Agent Jones appeared distinctly uncomfortable as he sheepishly answered, "Uhm .. We uh… we think it's because it sounds scary, sir." Jones kept his eyes on his superior officer as a sheer act of will, as he sincerely wished to be looking elsewhere at that moment.

Director Raynes, for his part, appeared quite displeased. "We think? We don't get points for 'we think', agents… we need to know. Let's get a couple of operatives in there undercover, and find out what they're about." he ordered.

Agent Smith shuffled her papers as though looking for something, then said, "Uhm. Well, sir. We've sent in 3 agents, so far."

Agent Jones quickly spoke up, "And they've been killed before they were able to report in even once."

Agent Smith continued with her report, "We believe the head of the organization may be a powerful telepath, and is having our undercover agents killed as they are attempting to join."

Agent Jones interjected during the awkward silence, "Sir… we have a proposal."

Agent Smith broke in with, "Why not send in… a telepath in our employ, sir?"

Agent Jones kept the rhythm going… He and Smith were in their element, in their groove, "A telepath who would be able to shield his…"

Agent Smith broke in with, "Or her…"

Agent Jones continued, "Or her… mind, sir."

Director Raynes looked back and forth between the agents, as though watching a tennis match. It was no secret that this was his favorite intelligence team. They worked well together, and failure was not an option with them.

Agent Smith kept the proposal flowing, "Someone

who would have the capacity to project the thoughts they wanted to be read, sir."

When the two agents paused, director Raynes looked at them both, and considered the implications of their proposal. Finally, he steepled his hands, drumming his fingers together and said, "Employ… one of the mutants? It is our job to keep tabs on them, gather intelligence, arrest when we have to… This is pretty far outside our normal scope, agents." He took a breath when agent Jones interrupted, "Well, sir, this is why…"

Director Raynes cut him off. "I'm not done, agent." he said with a flat glare that never failed to disturb young agent Jones. He continued, when Jones appeared properly abashed, "This is pretty far outside our normal range of activities. And it'll be completely unexpected. Make it happen, agents."

Agents Smith and Jones stood at attention and said in unison, "Yes, sir!"

Director Raynes left without another word, inwardly pleased at his subordinates' innovation but outwardly keeping his gruff demeanor.

W.E.A.P.O.N. does indeed stand for something. **W**orld's **E**nd **A**pparatus **P**ersonae **O**rdo **N**obilis. Members of the noble order of the World's End Apparatus. W.E.A.P.O.N. is something of a terrorist organization with extremely lofty goals. To end the world.

Agenda: To end the world with an apparatus they believe to be buried in pieces in multiple secret locations.

Structure: Intelligence gathering, archeological, and scientific research to discern the location of the apparatus.

Symbol: A cracked map of Earth.

Most Common Allegiance(s): W.E.A.P.O.N.

Requisition Limit: 40 (military)

OVERVIEW

Khambasa M'Buul was born in a small village in the Congo region of Africa in the early 1960s. During one of his frequent explorations in the jungle, he happened upon the ruins of an ancient city. Exploring the ruins, he found a great deal of broken pottery, and the scraps of ancient furniture in ruined houses. Spotting a stone entrance between two overgrown trees against what appeared to be a cliff, he squeezed and squirmed between the trees, and entered what turned out to be a temple many thousands of years old, and dedicated to what seemed to be an apparatus designed to destroy the Earth. An incredibly accurate and detailed map of the world (showing all 7 continents, plus several islands that do not exist, and with a few lakes and rivers in different places) took up one wall, measuring 15 meters by 15 meters. On the map, several places were marked with odd symbols, on all 7 continents and two islands that do not show up on modern maps, and indeed are not where they are shown to be on the ancient map. Exploring further, Khambasa discovered the bones of animals he'd never seen living in the jungle with odd shaped skulls, and strange ribcages. Unafraid, he went further and literally stumbled into a small room lit from the very stone in the ceiling and walls. In the center of the antechamber stood a device that hummed inside his head and seemed to call him forward. Examining this device, Khambasa noticed a single hand-shaped indentation on the smooth device. Khambasa placed his left hand into the indentation and froze in place. He could feel himself changing. His mind was opening up around him, taking in the antechamber, and then the hall around it, and then the temple around the hall, and the ruined city around the temple. Khambasa shuddered, and his mind opened to the jungle around the ruins, and all of Africa around the jungle, and then the world around Africa. He was momentarily connected to every living thing on the Earth, feeling their joys, and sorrows, their various

thoughts and emotions, the living and the dying. In his mind, he was born and died thousands of times over all around the world, experiencing everyone and everything at once. Khambasa released the device and retched. In his moment of connection to everyone and everything, he was filled with purpose. Focusing only on the sorrows and pains, and ignoring the joys and love of the world, he determined to find the pieces of the World's End Apparatus. Khambasa left his village and attended schools in other parts of the world, and was a very attentive and hard working student.

Khambasa chose archeology and engineering as his major fields of study, and found a few people here and there that he converted to his cause. A lingering effect of the device in the jungle temple helped with his conversion attempts. Khambasa had become a telepath. His mind and his very blood changed in that faraway temple, and he used it to his greatest advantage.

STRUCTURE

W.E.A.P.O.N. is led by Khambasa M'Buul, and he leads an extended team of more than thirty archeologists and several dozen engineers. Every archeologist and engineer has a team of 5 assistants who follow their every command, from digging or changing mechanical parts to eliminating an outsider with too much information about the organization.

BASES OF OPERATION

W.E.A.P.O.N. is based in a secret and guarded location in New York as far as any of M'Buul's underlings are aware, though his personal sanctum sanctorum is a certain jungle ruin in the Congo.

RESOURCES

W.E.A.P.O.N. is funded through the illicit sales of artifacts of historical significance, or simple archeological interest. Several of its members have

made contacts in the black market and illicit trading circles, and are thus able to purchase nearly any items they require.

INVOLVING THE HEROES

U.S.H.E.R. or Department 7 may be recruiting heroes to infiltrate W.E.A.P.O.N.'s ranks.

One of the PCs may have found a piece of the apparatus, and have no idea what she holds.

The PCs may witness an attack by W.E.A.P.O.N. on a government warehouse or museum in an attempt to acquire a piece of the apparatus they believe is contained within.

USING W.E.A.P.O.N.

The GM can use W.E.A.P.O.N. as a recurring villainous organization using ruthless tactics. If the game is oriented more toward a villainous group, W.E.A.P.O.N. could be used as the organization the PCs may aspire to join.

LEARNING ABOUT W.E.A.P.O.N.

The heroes can learn more about W.E.A.P.O.N. through use of the Gather Information, Knowledge (streetwise), Knowledge (current events), or Research skill checks.

The chart below represents the amount of detail the heroes are able to garner using these methods.

GATHER INFORMATION

Heroes using Gather Information are normally asking legitimate organizations such as police, or other governmental organizations friendly to the PCs, perhaps even other hero groups with intelligence gathering capabilities. If W.E.A.P.O.N. is not active in the immediate area, a -5 circumstance penalty could be appropriate.

DC 1: W.E.A.P.O.N. is a terrorist organization.

DC 5: W.E.A.P.O.N. has a secret base in a nearby city.

DC 10: W.E.A.P.O.N. has archeological and/or engineering interests.

DC 15: W.E.A.P.O.N. is searching for particular ancient artifacts and selling all others.

DC 20: W.E.A.P.O.N. is being investigated by U.S.H.E.R.

DC 25: W.E.A.P.O.N. is led by a man from the jungles of southern Africa.

DC 30: The leader of W.E.A.P.O.N. is a telepath who is able to ferret out infiltrators.

KNOWLEDGE (STREETWISE)

Heroes using the Knowledge (streetwise) skill are asking around and interrogating street toughs and others in the seedy underground. Again, if W.E.A.P.O.N. is not active in the immediate area, a -5 circumstance penalty could be appropriate.

DC 1: W.E.A.P.O.N. wants to destroy the world.

DC 5: W.E.A.P.O.N. has their ears to the ground regarding strange old devices, and odd antiques.

DC 10: W.E.A.P.O.N. sometimes recruits homeless street toughs and pays them well.

DC 15: W.E.A.P.O.N. purchases some military grade hardware from time to time.

DC 20: People who know too much about W.E.A.P.O.N. have a tendency to disappear without explanation.

DC 25: The leader of W.E.A.P.O.N. is a super powered individual.

DC 30: The leader of W.E.A.P.O.N. is from the Congo.

KNOWLEDGE (CURRENT EVENTS)

Heroes using the Knowledge (current events) skill are searching newspaper and magazine articles for information on W.E.A.P.O.N. Due to the information sharing nature of such publications, it may be appropriate to not assign a penalty to the skill checks.

DC 1: W.E.A.P.O.N. seemed to pop up, overnight.

DC 5: Some archeologists and engineers who were reported missing have been reported as being in different areas of the world.

DC 10: The Coast Guard, and Navy have had naval encounters with members of W.E.A.P.O.N. in strange places across the world's oceans.

DC 15: There are no former members of W.E.A.P.O.N. giving any interviews even on condition of anonymity.

DC 20: There are no former members of W.E.A.P.O.N. to be found by anyone in the media.

DC 25: W.E.A.P.O.N. vessels have been seen anchored in the ocean where no islands are known to have ever existed. The vessels are shown to have deep sea exploration material aboard.

RESEARCH

Heroes using the Research skill to gain information on W.E.A.P.O.N. are checking internet sites, and following those up by contacting, either in person or through phone calls / written correspondence, the people or organizations they find in connection with members of W.E.A.P.O.N.

DC 1: W.E.A.P.O.N. is linked to several terrorist attacks on museums and warehouses around the world.

DC 5: Members of W.E.A.P.O.N. come from several different backgrounds, including archeologists, engineers, and street toughs.

DC 10: The leader of W.E.A.P.O.N. is from a small village in the Congo.

DC 15: The name of the village.

DC 20: A list of names of villagers who disappeared in the last 50 years.

DC 25: The name Khambasa M'Buul, and the names of his immediate family in the village.

DC 30: Stories regarding Khambasa's disappearance, and village rumors regarding Khambasa.

MEMBERS

Members of W.E.A.P.O.N. normally have the ordinary template and are normal humans, or possibly Jinxes with combat oriented powers. The occasional high ranking member has the Advanced Training origin. Khambasa M'Buul, himself is a mutant with telepathic powers.

NEW EQUIPMENT

AZURE KNIGHT POWER ARMOR:

Medium Power Armor

Gadgets on armor:

- Integrated Equipment: Heads-Up-Display
- HUD Software, Target Acquisition (+2 to ranged attacks with any integrated ranged weapon)
- HUD Software, Biosensor (shows super powered individuals in a different color than

TABLE 1: ARMOR

Armor	Type	Equipment Bonus	Nonprof Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Penalty	Speed (30ft / 20ft)	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Azure Knight Power Armor	Powered	+7	+2	+6	-6	30 / 20	25 lbs (negated by servos)	55	Mil +3

normals)

- Integrated Weapon: Automatic Dart Projectile System (knockout darts, Fort save DC 30 per dart or character loses consciousness for 1d6 minutes.
- Integrated Weapon: Variable Gas Emission System (knockout gas, DC 30 Fort save vs unconsciousness for 1d10 minutes; tear gas, DC 25 Fort save or character is blinded and stunned for 2d6 rounds; smoke, offers total concealment to anyone within its area). Gasses expelled from the armor fill a radius that increases by one square each round for 5 rounds. The gasses disperse after 10 rounds, though winds disperse it sooner. Moderate wind disperses the gasses in 4 rounds while a strong wind will dissipate them in a single round.
- Integrated Weapon: 5.56 mm automatic firearm. 2d8 damage, 60ft range.
- Integrated Equipment: Flight System (jet pack and wings, bestows flight on the wearer at a rate of 50 feet with good maneuverability)
- Integrated Equipment: Life Support System (internal oxygen/nitrogen nozzles, sealed suit)
- Integrated Equipment: Defensive Grappling Electrical Countermeasure (any character in contact with the outer skin of the armor can be shocked for 1d6 electrical damage and must succeed against a DC 15 Fort save or be stunned for 1d6 rounds)

POWER INHIBITOR SHACKLES:

Through a series of electrodes and inhibitor fields, when these shackles are placed upon a being with super powers, the person must succeed at a DC 35 Fort check or have no use of his powers while the shackles are on. This applies to power points spent in any power, including Stat Boosting powers. While this will inhibit the power points spent by Avatars, their increased stats are not affected. These shackles are made of a nearly unbreakable alloy of Cerillium* and Pedantium*, and have a hardness of 50, 120 hit points, and a break DC of 65.

  *Cerillium and Pedantium are not real elements and the author pulled the names out of thin air.

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