

FREEDOM SQUADRON

Recruit Mission: Highest Bidder

By Ross Watson

El Guapo has become disgruntled with Gorgon's arrogance. The luchador-turned-arms dealer recently came into possession of a potent occult artifact, and he's chosen to offer the item to both Freedom Squadron AND VENOM—the highest bidder gets the prize. The team needs to find out more about the prize up for offer and determine the location of the auction itself. VENOM is very interested in acquiring the artifact for themselves—namely, **Hex** has a very personal reason to claim the item for her own research.

A video message showing **El Guapo** at an abandoned amusement park is picked up by Uplink. Expressing annoyance with Gorgon's self-importance, he makes an offer to both sides for a very rare weapon he's acquired—a silver stiletto said to be once owned by **Vlad Tepes** himself. According to rumors, the weapon bears certain enchantments and could be used to power a very potent dark ritual. **Hex** is interested, but **El Guapo** has encoded the location of the meeting and will only release the location a few hours before the deal is to be made.

The team's mission is to find out what the item is, what it can do, and what it has to do with VENOM's plans for a spell to create vampires of their own.

Researching the Prize

Mirage describes the situation and suggests that the item must have some connection to **Hex**. This is due to **Hex**'s unusual interest in racing to find out more about just what **El Guapo** is offering. There are some indications that the occult artifact could be used for a powerful ritual of some kind.

Mission Parameters:

- **Mission Complexity:** Medium Complexity (2/3/4)
- **Mission Difficulty:** Medium Difficulty (18 Successes)
- **Mission Risk:** Medium Risk (GM gains Bonus Bennies for every two players)
- **Enemy Leadership:** Highly Competent (d10, Wild Die)

A failure means that the team is ambushed by **Hex** and a large group of VENOM Shadow Fangs. The heroes are at a disadvantage without knowing exactly what **El Guapo** has for sale—this is represented by all team members suffering a -2 penalty to all trait rolls for the first round of combat.

A success means that the team learns what the prize actually is: **El Guapo** has located a silver stiletto that, according to legends, belonged to **Vlad Tepes** himself. “**Dracula's dagger**” in **Hex**'s hands might be just what she needs for a dark magic ritual that could create some vampires under VENOM's control.

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Showdown at the Amusement Park

El Guapo chose a closed amusement park for the auction site, having stationed four WASPS hidden within numerous tents, rides, and concession stands as backup. The heroes have just a few moments to talk to El Guapo before Hex and a handful of Shadow Fangs attack, intending to steal the artifact rather than bargain for it. El Guapo and the WASPS fight in self-defence only for the first two rounds. After that, El Guapo decides that helping Hex is better than the alternative and joins her in trying to destroy the Freedom Squadron team. The amusement park counts as an Urban zone.

EL GUAPO

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Driving d6, Fighting d12, Intimidation d8, Investigation d6, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8, Thievery d8, Throwing d6

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 15 (5)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Loyal, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Block, Brawler, Bruiser, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, (Improved) Combat Sense, Command, Command Presence, Connections (Black Market), Dirty Fighter, Dodge, (Improved) Extraction, (Improved) First Strike, Fleet-Footed, (Improved) Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Killer Instinct, Level Headed, (Improved) Martial Artist, Natural Leader, Nerves of Steel, Steady Hands, Strong Willed

Gear: Enhanced Kinemesh Armor (+5, +3 Toughness), Enhanced Shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6+2, AP 3; on Shaken, target must make a Vigor check at -2 or be Incapacitated).

Special Abilities:

- **Personal & Professional Pursuits:** El Guapo has the Focuses of Business (Mastery), Gambling, Politics, and Professional Sports.



FREEDOM SQUADRON

HEX

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Fighting d10, Investigation d8, Notice d10, Occult d10, Persuasion d6, Spellcasting d12, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 13 (5)

Hindrances: Curious, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Attractive, Dirty Fighter, Elan, (Improved) Level Headed, Occultist, Wizard

Gear: Enchanted Armor (+5 Armor, +2 Toughness, +4 Vigor checks vs environmental conditions), Enchanted Black Magic Staff (+2 Fighting, Damage Str+d6+2, +2 Parry, Reach 1), Amulet of Dark Power (+2 Spellcasting, Danger Sense)

Powers: armor, blast, bolt, boost/lower Trait, damage field, deflection, detect/conceal arcana, dispel, invisibility, obscure, zombie. **Power Points:** 40

Special Abilities:

- **Arcane Multitasking:** Hex ignores the first -2 penalty when casting two spells on the same round.
- **Occult Expertise & Scholastic Pursuits:** Hex has the Focuses of Anthropology, Arcana (Mastery), Archaeology, History, Legends, Necromancy, Religion, Rituals, and Vampires.
- **Power Casting:** Hex does +2 damage with the *blast* and *bolt* power.
- **Practiced Invocation:** Hex automatically gains the raise effect for a simple success when casting *armor* and *deflection*.



FREEDOM SQUADRON

VENOM SHADOW FANGS

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

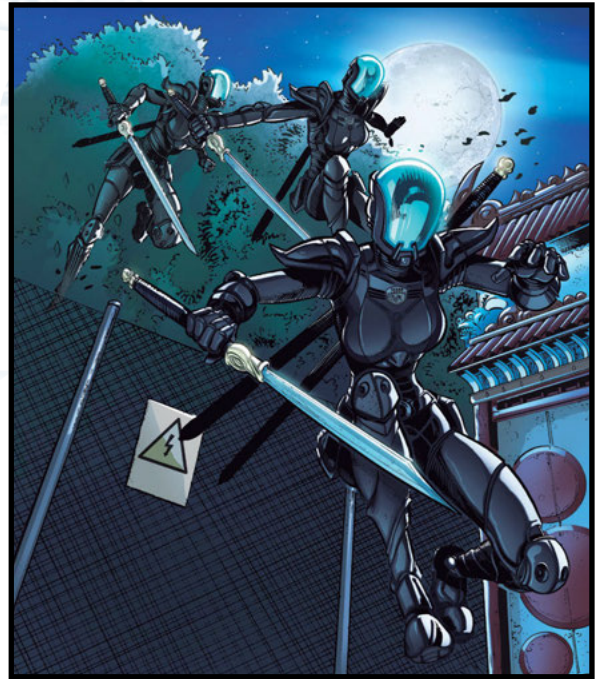
Skills: Athletics d8, Computers d6, Fighting d10, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8, Survival d6, Thievery d8, Tracking d8, Tradecraft d8

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Hindrances: Loyal, Obligations (Major—VENOM), Vow (Major—Serve Toxin)

Edges: Acrobat, Alertness, Assassin, Counterattack, Dodge, Fighting Style (Evasive), First Strike, Fleet-Footed, (Improved Frenzy), Improvisational Fighter, (Improved) Martial Artist, Quick, Quick Draw, Thief, Tricky Fighter

Gear: Shadow Fang Armor (+3, +1 Toughness), Shadow Fang Sword (Str+d6+2, AP 2), VENOM Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 2), infiltration tools.



FREEDOM SQUADRON

VENOM WASPS

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6,
Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6,
Shooting d8

Cha: -2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13 (6)

Hindrances: Ugly, Vow (Major—Obey programming
and VENOM commands)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Fleet-Footed, Level Headed,
Two-Fisted

Gear: None (see below)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +6:** Advanced alloy structure.
- **Claws:** Str+d6, AP 2.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; does not breathe; immune to poison and disease; ignores one level of wound penalties.
- **Fearless:** All WASPs are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** WASPs will not be damaged by a second Shaken result.
- **Sensor Suite:** +4 to Notice checks; can detect chemicals, radiation, and heat sources.
- **Weapon Mount:** Plasma Arm (Cone, Damage 2d10, HW).
- **Weapon Mount:** Laser (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, AP 4). Because it's a laser, the WASP suffers no Autofire Penalty.

