

CARTOON **ACTION HOUR**

SEASON 3



INFINIVADERS

Series Book by John Wick

INFINIVADERS



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Heroes of the World!

In the year 2019, armies from another dimension invade Earth, causing cosmic destruction!

The nefarious Doctor Zen, armed with super science and sorcery, begins transforming our world into his!

But Earth's champions have risen up to defend all of humanity against its greatest threat. Are they enough to stop... *The Infinivaders!?!?*

* * *

Infinivaders! was a short-lived science fiction/fantasy series produced in 1983 by AIG Productions and Benton Brothers Games. The series producers created a world-wide threat and portrayed an international group of heroes (from the Soviet Union, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Britain, Africa and the United States) to defeat it. Unfortunately, other cartoons were capitalizing on the thriving boom of American exceptionalism, and after accusations from conservative family groups of "subversive global government messages aimed at children," the series only lasted twelve episodes (only ten were actually shown on the air).

However, since its cancellation, *Infinivaders!* has become a cult classic, recognized for its sophisticated storytelling, deep characterization and optimistic (if somewhat naive) messages of world-wide hope and peace.

The Series

Every episode of *Infinivaders!* began the same way: with crashing scenes of magic and technological weapons, the image of Doctor Zen laughing while holding a model of the world. We learn that Zen is from another dimension, similar to ours, but in which magic and technology are one and the same. His dimension is slowly invading our own, and the only way he can conquer our world is by transforming it into Zen's dark mirror world known as "Arthe."

We see an image of both worlds, simultaneously existing together, separate, but slowly moving together. Earth is fading while Arthe (pronounced *arth-ay*) is growing stronger.

His army of orichalcum men—magically animated soldiers—marches on notable landmarks of history: the pyramids, Big Ben, the Eiffel Tower and Mount Rushmore. Zen and his armies defeat the armies of Earth and transforms the sights into twisted monuments to his own glory while the faces of Earth's residents watch in despair.

Then, a group of heroes rushes into the screen, armed with sophisticated guns and magical swords. They crush Doctor Zen's animated armies and restore the monuments back to their original forms while Zen screams in defeat, retreating back to his lair.

The heroes of the series are special men and women who have been chosen by the "spirit" of each of their people and given a sacred weapon. In Britain, Merlin gives a young woman Excalibur. In Africa, Anansi gives a young man his "story web." The spirit of Baba Yaga gives a young woman her mortar and pestle. And in the United States, the spirit of Coyote gives a young man his magical cloak that allows him to transform into any animal

or person. Other heroes were also portrayed, but usually only for one episode.

Most episodes began with the characters arguing, and because of that, Doctor Zen was able to unleash his newest plot. Only by working together were the heroes able to defeat the Doctor and his dastardly schemes.

Doctor Zen's world of Arthe was the source of his power. Earth was not the first world he had conquered; he had conquered many worlds before and used their "Earth energy" to fuel his own technology and magic. Slowly, his armies use his science-sorcery to transform Earth into his own homeworld, and every success changes another piece of our own world into his.

Each episode, the heroes find a way to stop Doctor Zen's evil plot, restoring Earth's historical monuments and natural wonders to their previous state. Of course, this gives the writers an opportunity to talk about the historical importance of these places, giving the children brief lessons in history, architecture, anthropology and archeology. For example, when Doctor Zen tried transforming the historical Israeli fortress of Masada into a "Beacon of Darkness," the heroes not only stopped his plot, but talked about the historical importance of the site. It was just that importance that drove Zen to seek it out in the first place: with each site he transformed, the people of Earth would lose both hope and their own personal identities.

The Heroes

As mentioned above, the series focused on four main characters. While they served as the chief heroes of the series, each episode included a special appearance by a local hero who exemplified the culture the main characters visited.

For example, when they went to Japan, they met with another hero who inherited the swords of Miyamoto Musashi. Together, they thwarted Doctor Zen's plans to raise the giant spider sleeping off the shores of Tokyo and turn it to his own will. The plan backfired, however, as the spider fought against Doctor Zen and his army of giant marmorkrebs (also known as marbled crayfish).

In another episode, the heroes went to Scotland where Doctor Zen tried transforming Hadrian's Wall into a massive defensive fortress. His plan failed due to the actions of a fellow named "Angus" who carried the Sword of William Wallace.

Listed below are all the Heroes of Earth along with their spiritual weapons. However, this should not be viewed as an exhaustive list. We know from unpublished scripts that many more were intended. In fact, some countries even had multiple heroes (most prominently, the United States), each holding a spiritual weapon representing their homeland. We've included heroes from the five unpublished scripts as well as heroes who appeared on the show.

China

The Chinese cultural hero wielded the original drafts of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. He was a brilliant tactician, could see the weakness in any army or any plan.

North America

Infinivaders! had four "North American" heroes, each with their own cultural weapon. The first was Coyote's cloak (which allowed the wearer to shape shift), the second was Robert E. Lee's cavalry saber, the third was the spyglass of Alexander Henry and the fourth was the pen of Thomas Jefferson (which could only write the truth).

Japan

As mentioned above, the Japanese hero wielded the two swords (katana and wakizashi) of Miyumoto Musashi.

Africa

While there are many countries on the African continent, only one cultural hero was portrayed (although there were plans for many more). He wielded “Anansi’s Web” which allowed him to hear any conversation anywhere in the world.

South America

The South American hero from one of the unpublished scripts owned Quetzalcoat’s plume. This script was still in development—apparently rejected by the show’s producers—and its properties are unknown.

England

In England, the show portrayed a young woman who wielded Excalibur. She had gathered a number of “knights” who were attempting to stop Doctor Zen from changing Big Ben into a statue of himself.

Scotland

The Scottish hero owned the Sword of William Wallace. This was intended to be a two-part episode with the heroes thwarting Doctor Zen in two locations: Hadrian’s Wall and Rosslyn Chapel. The script was shortened to a single episode with the Chapel storyline cut.

Ireland

No scripts survive of the unaired Ireland episode, but interviews with the show writers indicated they intended the heroes to locate and restore a torn tapestry. The script was rejected.

France

The France episode (“Viva la Monde!”) episode was the last to air. The episode focused on the blueprints of a fantastic submarine designed by Jules Verne. The cultural hero wielded the crown of King Louis XIV (which blinded villains with the Truth of the Sun).

Spain

In Spain, Doctor Zen turned Gaudi’s Cathedral into a Colosseum of Chaos, forcing heroes to fight each other. The heroes brought the Spear of El Cid with them to Spain, looking for the hero to wield it.

Russia

The spookiest episode of the series (and the one most often referred to by parents’ groups) was “The Ghost of Baba Yaga.” Portrayed in a faithful and frightening light, Baba Yaga selects her hero with a number of tests, warning dire consequences if she fail (including gnashing her metal teeth).

Egypt

Doctor Zen has flooded the Nile with his dire army of mechanical marmorkrebs! Can the heroes—along with the real Egyptian Book of the Dead—summon the mummy kings and overthrow the vile Doctor’s nefarious plot?

Norway

The Hammer of Thor makes an appearance in the episode “Never Trust Loki.” Doctor Zen thinks he can trust the Thunder God’s villainous brother, but Loki turns out to have his homeland’s interests at the forefront of his mind.

Mongolia

In the farthest reaches of Mongolia, the ghost horse of Genghis Khan helps the heroes stop Doctor Zen from conquering Xanadu.



PC Guidelines



As written, the series revolved around four heroes:

- Brendan Truehope, a Native American man who is given a mystic cloak that allows him to transform into any person or animal. The spirit of Coyote is his benefactor.
- Eloise Glastonbury, a young British woman who is granted possession of Excalibur by Merlin himself.
- An unnamed African man who is presented with Anansi's "story web".
- An unnamed Russian woman who is given Baba Yaga's mortar and pestle.

None of this, however, is set in stone and should be considered as guidelines or suggestions for players. The players can devise their own character concepts if they would rather. Alternatively, they can select one of the characters that appeared simply as one-shot guests (see the listings elsewhere in this section) and promote them to main character status.

Star Power: 3

Tier and Trait Points: Superhuman; 28

Other Rules:

- Theme Adherence (all PCs must be chosen by the spirit of their people and presented with an item or weapon of great power)
- Required Trait (all PCs must have at least one Trait that represents the "item of power" given to them by their people's spirit)

The Villains

The chief villain of the series, the nefarious Doctor Zen, appears in every episode. However, there is a whole horde of henchmen who make semi-regular appearances who deserve mentioning.

In each episode, there are also the “converted.” These are people who have become transformed by Doctor Zen’s science-sorcery. Once citizens of Earth, they are now citizens of Arthe: dark reflections of their previous forms. Otherwise heroic folk become twisted and evil, serving the Doctor without question. The most common form they take are his “Monstrous Marmorkrebs”, which resemble giant, armored sand crabs. (Interviews reveal that the head writer of the project had a son who was interested in the critters which is why they appeared so often on the show.)

The Doctor’s main henchmen appear below.

Professor Demesne

“Professor Demesne” appears as a bald man with glowing eyes, hidden by dark glasses. When he lifts his glasses and gazes into the eyes of another, he can control their destiny, dooming them to a horrible fate.

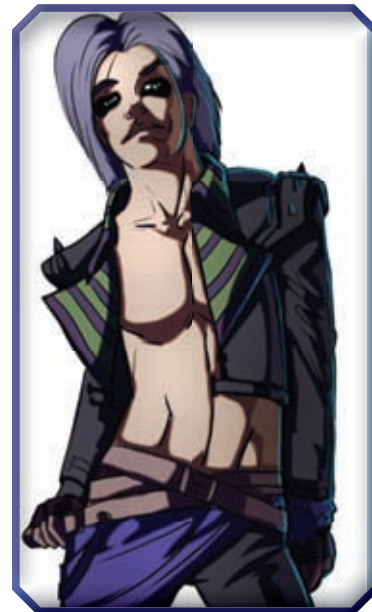
Professor Demesne often plots to overthrow Doctor Zen, hoping to allow his superior to do all the hard work, then snatch victory from him at the last moment. He is the inventor of the technology that allows Zen to travel between worlds



and is also responsible for the majority of the Doctor’s insidious science-sorcery devices.

Count Null

Count Null is not under Zen’s command, but serves as a mercenary for the Doctor when he calls upon him. In exchange for resources that have been exhausted on Arthe (such as silver and gold), Count Null serves as a troubleshooter for the Doctor. Specifically, he captures cultural weapons, keeping them out of the hands of Earth’s heroes. He and his “Nullists” (an admitted play on “nihilists”) scavenge our world looking for things such as the Holy Grail, the Declaration of



Independence, Shakespeare’s Lost Play, the Magna Carta, Aristotle’s Second Book of Poetics and other items, both real and fantastic. Then, they trade these items to Doctor Zen for payment.

The heroes often run into Count Null during their adventures, providing a sideplot for them to engage whilst thwarting the plans of Doctor Zen.

The Blue Lady

A creature that even Doctor Zen himself fears, the Blue Lady is described by one character as “an ancient monster, even older than Arthe itself!” What this exactly means was never explained on the show or any of the unpublished scripts. The Blue Lady showed up in only one episode

("Cold Blue") and her presence served as a kind of deus ex machina. Rather than capture a piece of Earth's legacy, Doctor Zen's plan was to capture the Blue Lady. The plan went entirely wrong with the Blue Lady escaping Doctor Demesne's trap and stealing away Doctor Zen at the end of the episode. The next episode, Doctor Zen reappeared without any further mention of her during the series.

When the show creator, Jerome Ryback, was asked on *The Infinivaders! DVD extras* about the Blue Lady, he said, "I don't know. She just felt right. She's one of those things that's scarier if she doesn't have an answer."



The Grabbers

Doctor Zen employs huge machines that look like mechanical marmorkrebs (one of the producer's sons was a fan of them) he calls "the Grabbers." The machines are the size of dirigibles, floating slowly through the sky, shining many eyes like search lights through the cities. When they find people, they grab them up and transform them into the inhabitants of Zen's world.

In the show, Grabbers are the "Big Bad." If a Grabber shows up, heroes generally run away. Fighting a Grabber is like trying to fight an aircraft carrier; there's just no way for a small group of heroes to do it. In only one episode, *November Science*, do the heroes actually try to fight a Grabber: they sneak inside of it and destroy it from the inside.

As powerful as Grabbers may be, they cannot transform the Heroes of Earth. If they try, the attempt fails. Thus, Grabbers are more concerned with capturing heroes and bringing them back to Doctor Zen.

Using a Grabber in an episode is a way of showing the power Doctor Zen has in the world. Heroes should *run and hide* from Grabbers, not try to fight them.

The Orichalcum Men

Zen's most standard troops are his orichalcum men, terrifying magical robot soldiers that provide the opportunity for violence without murdering actual human beings.

Orichalcum men carry "mercurial rifles" that fire ice beams, fire beams and storm beams. Ice beams freeze their targets in a block of ice. Storm beams trap users in violent storms. Finally, while orichalcum men shoot fire beams at heroes, they almost never hit. When they do, the human is stunned rather than burned.

Orichalcum men often use them on architecture to cause physical risks, such as jumping out of the way of falling gargoyles and the like.



Heroes of Arthe

Although Doctor Zen is the lord and master of Arthe, he does have enemies. On two occasions, the heroes of Earth meet "the heroes of Arthe." These are men and women who are not beholden to Zen's influence and attempt to stop his assaults on other worlds.

We meet these heroes in two episodes: "Neverman" and "Kiss of Fate."

Mr. Never

In "Neverman," we are introduced to Mr. Never, a resident of Doctor Zen's Arthe who tries to fight against the Doctor, hoping to restore Arthe to its people. He wants to overthrow Zen, but his resources are limited. He is a master of the "science-sorcery" of Zen's world and often helps the heroes of Earth in their battles.

Mr. Never appears as a tall fellow in a black trench coat. He wears a wide-brimmed slouch hat that cover his features in a long shadow. Show creator Jerome Ryback said, "We were keeping his eyes secret for a long time, but we didn't know what that secret was. We were waiting for it to hit us over the head. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to find out."

Lady Fate

In the episode, "Kiss of Fate," the heroes meet the mysterious woman known as "Lady Fate." Although she openly works for Doctor Zen, she is secretly working against him. She uses Zen's trust in her to inform Arthean rebels and Earth heroes of his plans. Zen suspects she is a traitor, but can never prove it. He is also too beguiled by her beauty to believe the "Lies!" Professor Demesne tells him.

Although she does not possess the "sorcery-science" of Zen or Mr. Never, she is still a skilled spy and thief, capable of stealing the most treasured items. Three of the episodes begin with Lady Fate notifying the heroes of Zen's plans and one involves saving her when she is finally outed by Professor Demesne.

Episodes

Here are a few sample episodes from the *Invinivaders* series for you to use for your own group.

"The Infinivaders!"

The opening episode begins with the invasion already in full force. People running for their lives, being transformed into mindless slaves, and buildings changing into the strange, alien architecture of Doctor Zen's homeworld. We meet America's hero, a man named Brendan Truehope, a Native American running from the giant mechanical marmorkrebs, when he stumbles in a cave and discovers the Spirit of Coyote. The Spirit tells him others around the world are fighting Doctor Zen using ancient powers of the world



awakened by Zen's invasion. Coyote gives Truehope his cloak, which allows Brendan to change into any person or animal. Then, Coyote magically teleports Brendan to France where other heroes are fighting the armies of Doctor Zen.

"Heroes of Arthe"

In the second episode, Truehope encounters freedom fighters native to Arthe who struggle against the tyrannical Doctor Zen. To maintain the resistance, they must keep their activities secret, and thus, act through the heroes of Earth. They maintain their anonymity by speaking in shadows with distorted voices. They give advance information to Truehope, telling him Doctor Zen is looking for an artifact in Africa: Anansi's Web. While in Africa, Truehope and his friends meet another Hero of Earth—Africa's hero—and assist her in defeating Doctor Zen's plans.

"Viva La Monde!"

In *"Viva la Monde!"*, the heroes travel to southern France to do battle with a captured legend: the Tarasque. Doctor Zen has summoned this ancient monster and twisted it to his will, forcing it to hunt down and destroy Heroes of Earth. As it turns out, the Tarasque was really just a distraction to keep the Heroes from Zen's real goal: a fantastic submarine designed by Jules Verne called "the Nautilus." After befriending the Tarasque (with a song), the Heroes bring their newfound ally to stop Zen from acquiring the Nautilus.

"Excalibur"

In Britain, a young woman named Eloise Glastonbury has discovered Excalibur and become the Hero of the British Isles. The Heroes of Earth join her as Doctor Zen has transformed Big Ben into a massive statue of himself, casting a spell of terror over London. The people of the city cannot move for the horror in their hearts and the Grabber over London lifts them up, one by one, and transforms them into denizens of Arthe. To fight the Grabber, the Heroes allow themselves to be captured and put inside the Grabber where they can destroy it from within, using the magical power of Excalibur to override its magical engine.



DR. ZEN**Star Power:** 4**Qualities**

- ☐ ☐ Extra-Dimensional Conqueror
- ☐ Wants to transform Earth into Arthe
- ☐ Megalomaniacal

Traits

SCIENCE-SORCERY 7 (Versatile: ENERGY BLAST
[Action Feature], DIMENSIONAL TRAVEL, FLIGHT,
SEE DISTANT PLACES; 4 undefined Traits)

EVIL THINKER 6

FIGHTING PROWESS 6

LEADER 7

ARMORED BODY 5

OBSERVANT 5

PROFESSOR DEMESNE**Star Power:** 3**Qualities**

- ☐ ☐ Treacherous Inventor
- ☐ Plans to overthrow Dr. Zen
- ☐ Raspy voice

Traits

GAZE OF DESTINY CONTROL 4 (Action Feature;
Disadvantage – Only works when target character looks at
his eyes)

INVENTOR 6

TECHNO-PISTOL 5 (Accessory)

DECEITFUL MIND 4

KNACK FOR ESCAPING 3

SNEAKY FIGHTER 3

COUNT NULL**Star Power:** 2**Qualities**

- ☐ ☐ Mercenary
- ☐ Enigmatic
- ☐ Enjoys causing trouble... especially if money is involved

Traits

ARTIFACT SEEKER 4

RESOURCEFUL 3

THINKS THINGS THROUGH 3

TROUBLESHOOTER 3

SLIPPERY 2

WELL-CONNECTED 2

GRABBER**Star Power:** 4**Qualities**

- ☐ ☐ Giant Robotic Crayfish
- ☐ Slow-moving
- ☐ Can't "think" fast

Traits

IMPENETRABLE BODY 12 (Action Feature;
Disadvantage – the rating becomes 5 if the crucial check
against it is physical and comes from inside its body)

IMMENSE STRENGTH 12

PINCERS 10

MORPH CAPTIVES 6 (Transform Others – target is
transformed into a Monstrous Marmorkreb* or another
form of the GM's creation; Disadvantage – victim must
have gained at least one Setback Token via PINCERS
and must still be trapped by them; Disadvantage –
Transformation takes 3 full rounds, with the victim having
a chance to either escape or resist it with his will or stamina
as per the rules on page 51 of the rulebook); Advantage:
Once completed, the transformation is permanent, though
characters can find scientific or sorcerous ways to reverse it)

MULTIPLE SEARCHLIGHT EYES 4 (Advantage –
unaffected by darkness)

SLOW FLOATING 4

** The character effectively becomes his own Goon squad under Dr.
Zen's control, using the appropriate game stats (see below).*

MONSTROUS MARMORKREBS

Star Power: 1

Goon Rating: 2

Special Rules:

- Hard to Defeat
- Special Attack (Pincers)

ORICHALCUM MEN

Star Power: 1

Goon Rating: 0

Special Rules:

- Special Attack (Mercurial Rifles*)

** Can fire various beams for different effects (ice beams, storm
beams, fire beams, etc.). Have fun getting creative with Setback
Tokens given by these weapons!*

NULLISTS

Star Power: 1

Goon Rating: 0

Special Rules: None

MR. NEVER**Star Power: 3****Qualities**

- ☐ ☐ Hero of Arthe
- ☐ Facial features always obscured by shadows
- ☐ Hopes to restore Arthe to its people

Traits

SCIENCE-SORCERY 5 (Versatile: SHADOW BLENDING,
TELEPORTATION, HEIGHTENED AGILITY;
3 undefined slots)
CAPABLE FIGHTER 4
STARE OF JUSTICE 4*
DECISIVE THINKER 3
UNVREAKABLE WILL 3

** What does his stare do? It was never revealed in the show, which gives you a lot of leeway. Get creative with it.*

LADY FATE**Star Power: 2****Qualities**

- ☐ ☐ Undercover Mole
- ☐ Secretly works against Dr. Zen
- ☐ Dr. Demesne actively tries to “out” her as a traitor

Traits

SPY 4 (Action Feature)
PERSUASIVE 3 (Situational Setback – versus Dr. Demesne)
ATHLETIC 3
STEALTHY 3
THIEVERY 3
TRAINED COMBATANT 2