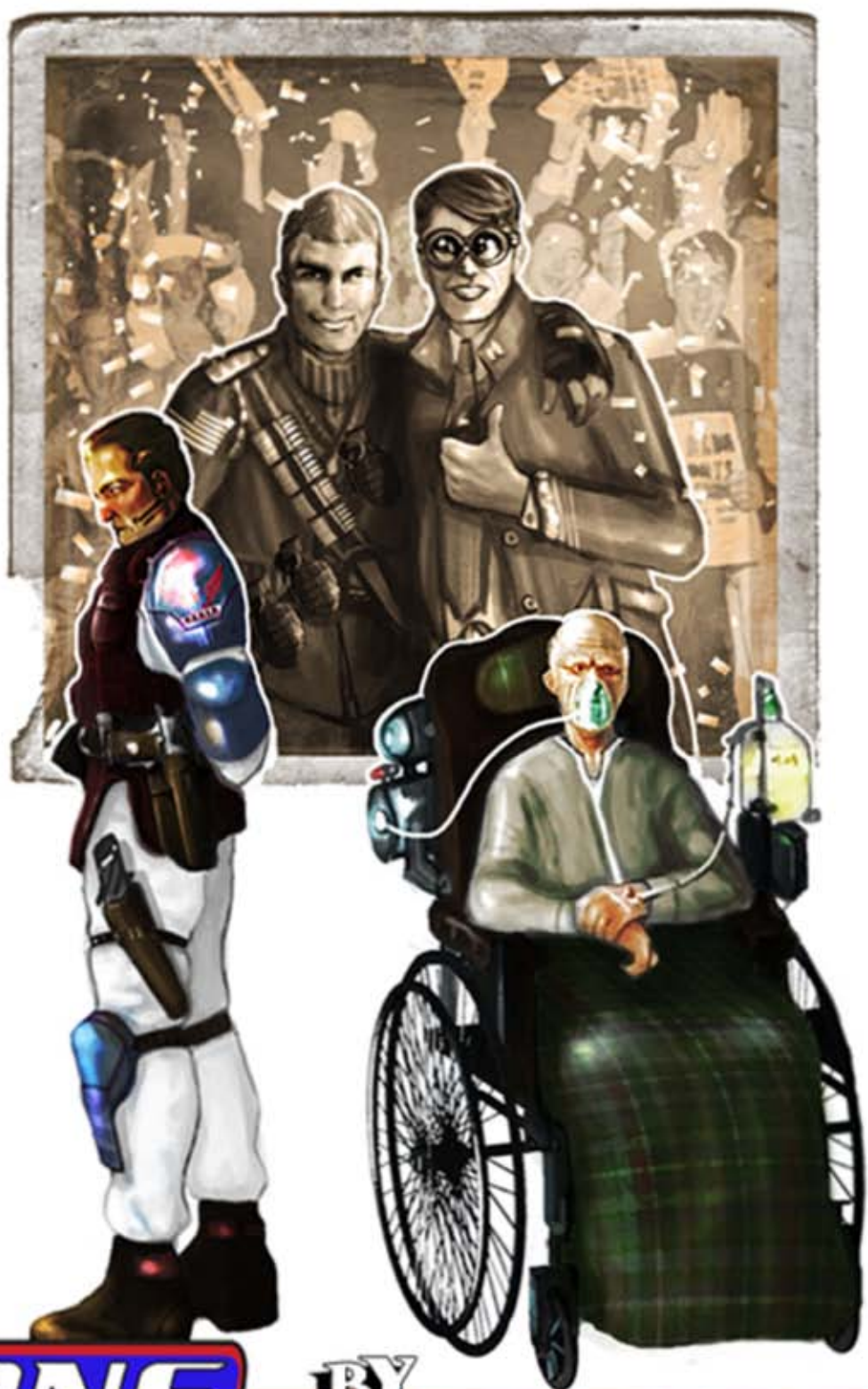


THE USHER DOSSIERS



ICONS
SUPERPOWERED ROLEPLAYING
COMPATIBLE

BY

CHARLES RICE

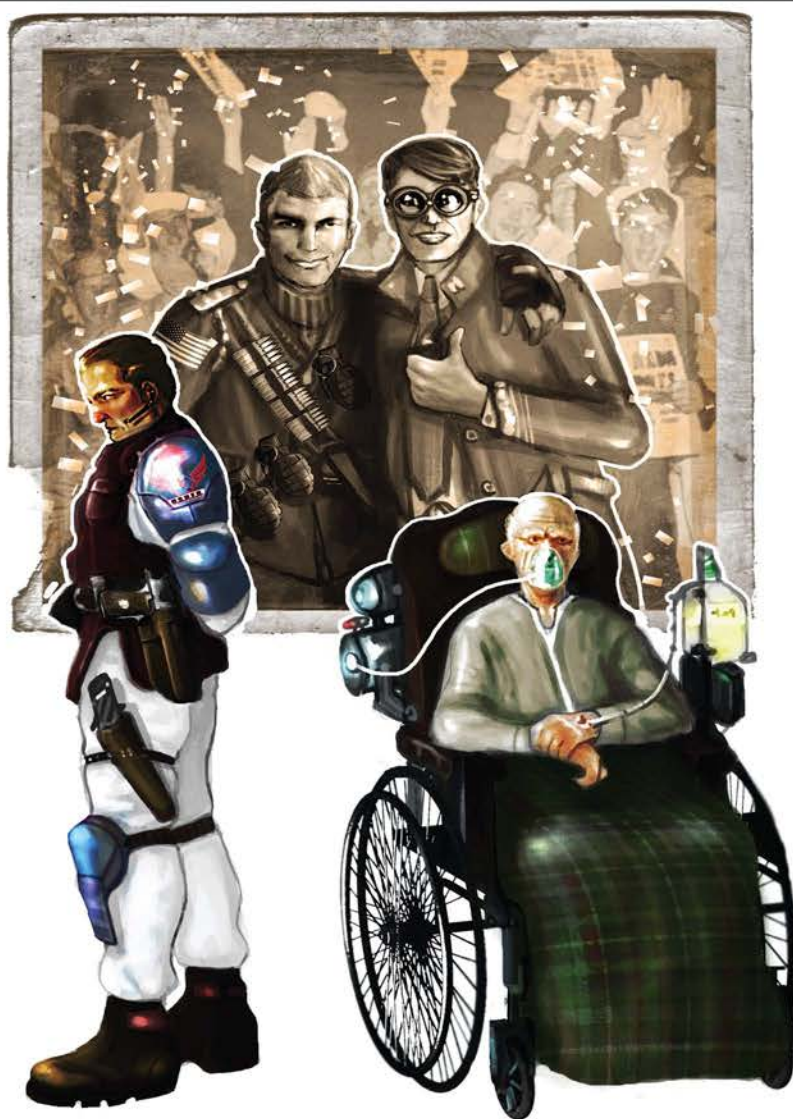
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the USHER Dossiers! The official setting for the “Vigilance Universe” that has appeared in our popular WWII line is now put under the spotlight. It is a world where metahumans have existed for tens of thousands of years, walking alongside ordinary men and women, sometimes in secret, other times re-shaping the world to suit their desires.

In ancient times, men called these beings gods, while today they serve nation states or fight for their own beliefs and ambitions. The setting continues into the present day, where the aftermath of the Scion’s brief conquest of the planet defines the setting going forward.

Where the setting goes from there isn’t up to me, but to you, the GMs and players who will use the USHER Dossiers in their campaigns. This is your world to shape now, use that power wisely.

TIMELINE

The following section details the important events in world history that were influenced by metahumans. History at large is not the focus of this report, so historical events of great importance, such as the Normandy landings, are left out of this timeline, while relatively minor incidents, such as the lynching of the Hill Monkey Boy, are included. To put the timelines that follow into context, one should consult conventional historical texts.

Pic -- two b/w hero pics (photo style)

World Metahuman Population, estimated by the WMF

Contrary to popular belief, metahumans are not new. In fact, it is believed that metahumanity is as old as humanity itself and individuals with extraordinary abilities have always been present in the population at large. The United Nations agency tasked with studying metahumans, the World Metahuman Forum (WMF), estimates metahuman population at 1 in 1,000,000.

Of course, not all metahumans are "of a piece" and most are barely above average. Among metahumans, it is estimated that 1% are beings of great power, capable of significantly altering the course of historical events. This explains the common misconception that metahumans are a modern phenomenon. Between 70,000 and 500 BCE, it is estimated that only one metahuman with the potential to alter world history existed, the so-called Forever Man.

By contrast, during WWII, the "golden age" of metahumans, when the public at large first became aware of their existence, there were more than two-dozen individuals capable of altering world history. Even though they largely cancelled one another out, because they fought for various factions during that war, their existence was keenly felt.

Still, historical data collected by the WMF suggest that the only way to limit metahuman population is to limit the population at large. Of course, the existence of extra-terrestrial races, which also seem to follow this rule, means that Earth will need its metahumans more and more as we come into contact with potentially hostile extraterrestrial beings, as was shown during the Scion Invasion.

The Executive Board of the WMF would like to thank USHER for asking us to contribute to this important historical dossier and would also like to thank Chronicle and the Forever Man for providing a great deal of first-hand knowledge on the history of metahumanity.



TIMELINE

World Metahuman Population: 1 individual.
70,000 BCE

World Metahuman Population: 5 individuals.
5,000 BCE

World Metahuman Population: 15 individuals.
3,000 BCE

10,000 BCE
World Metahuman Population: 4 individuals.

4,000 BCE
World Metahuman Population: 7 individuals.

2,000 BCE
World Metahuman Population: 27 individuals.

World Metahuman Population: 50 individuals.
1,000 BCE

World Metahuman Population: 150 individuals.
200 BCE

World Metahuman Population: 190 individuals.
200 CE

500 BCE
World Metahuman Population: 100 individuals.

1 CE
World Metahuman Population: 170 individuals.

600 CE
World Metahuman Population: 200 individuals.

World Metahuman Population: 320 individuals.
1100 CE

World Metahuman Population: 545 individuals.
1600 CE

World Metahuman Population: 900 individuals.
1800 CE

1500 CE
World Metahuman Population: 425 individuals.

1700 CE
World Metahuman Population: 610 individuals.

1900 CE
World Metahuman Population: 1625 individuals.

World Metahuman Population: 2000 individuals.
1925 CE

World Metahuman Population: 3900 individuals.
1975 CE

1950 CE
World Metahuman Population: 2500 individuals.

2000 CE
World Metahuman Population: 5750 individuals.

ERAS IN METAHUMAN HISTORY

Like the history of normal humans, meta-human events can be broadly discussed as falling into three broad eras: the era of the god kings, the era of the warrior saints and the era of national heroes. It should be noted that in all eras, many heroes fight for individual reasons as well and this has been true since the dawn of metahumans.

Era of the God Kings (5,000 BCE to 200 CE):

Throughout early human history, metahumans tended to forge large empires whenever they appeared. For unknown reasons, the few metahumans alive during this period were extremely powerful and long-lived, allowing a single individual to have an enormous impact on a region over a long period of time.

An alternative explanation for the tendency of metahumans to dominate large numbers of normal humans is the prevalent superstition of this period.

Metahuman abilities were considered a sign of divine favor, if not outright divinity. Also, many royal families founded by meta-human are thought to contain numerous exceptional individuals and/or minor metahumans, continuing the belief that one of their distant ancestors was divine. Julius Caesar claimed descent from Venus, the Roman goddess of beauty and it may be that his well-documented charisma in politics and on the battlefield descends from a metahuman ancestor.

Often, empires formed by metahumans during this era are destroyed in conflicts with other metahumans, limiting their long-term impact on history. For unknown reasons, metahumans seem to be a localized phenomenon, appearing in clusters, which often decimate each other in climactic battles.

The legendary Titanomachy, the war between the titans and the Greek gods, as well as the Aesir-Vanir War of Norse mythology are legendary retellings of these conflicts.

The end of this era is marked by the Forever Man's abdication of power during the Roman Empire's Year of the Five Emperors, during which he single-handedly attempted to restore order to the teetering empire he had called home for 700 years.

Humanity had become too numerous to be dominated by a few individuals, whatever their power. Also, the rising population of metahumans meant that such powerful individuals often found themselves opposed by beings of equal power.



Era of the Warrior Saints (200 to 1700 CE)

During this period, as the population of the Earth, both human and superhuman increased dramatically, metahumans appeared in much greater numbers but tended to be much weaker on the whole than they had previously.

This period also coincides with a rising tide of monotheistic religions, especially Christianity and Islam. These powerful cultural forces, along with the relative large numbers and low power of metahumans caused them to attach themselves to religious movements, which hailed them as saints. While divine influence was still seen as the source of metahuman abilities, metahumans themselves were recognized as men and women, rather than being seen as personally divine.

This recognition that metahumans are human and capable of human failings, including sin and heresy may also explain a new occurrence to this period: the first metahuman persecution. Increasingly through this period, humans find themselves harassed and even killed by those around them, who attribute their abilities not to their monotheistic gods but to the evil forces that oppose them.

Sometimes these persecutions are aided by metahumans but the much more numerous ordinary humans overwhelm metahumans, subjecting them to torture or execution. This persecution in turn causes many metahumans to hide their abilities from those around them and the first instances of metahumans using their abilities while concealing their identities are found during this period.

Era of National Heroes (1700 to current)

During this period, most metahumans continue to be only slightly superhuman, though a few metahumans rivaling the power of the God Kings do begin to appear again. However, a hero using their abilities to form a kingdom or dynasty is rare during this period and most heroes attach themselves to larger nationalistic entities.

MAJOR METAHUMAN EVENTS IN WORLD HISTORY

70,000 BCE: An African hunter-gatherer possessing numerous superhuman abilities, including immortality, is born in what is today South Africa. He describes his tribe as a "group of geniuses" that had complex language, sophisticated tools, abstract art, jewelry and medicine.

Currently known as the Forever Man, it is believed he is still alive today, although there has not been a confirmed sighting in over 10 years.

42,000 BCE: The Forever Man (along with several long-lived members of his immediate family) confirmed living in Border Cave, near the borders of modern day South Africa and Swaziland. He is teaching the natives medicine, and has them mining red ochre for medicinal purposes.

14,000 BCE: Menagerie, a super-genius with knowledge of electronics and genetics unmatched into the 21st century takes up residence in the Americas, where he studies and captures breeding populations of local mega-fauna including Woolly Mammoths, Sabertooth Cats, Short-faced bears and Dire Wolves.

(14,000 BCE Cont.)

He concludes that all of these animals are going extinct and preserves large populations at his secret underground laboratory.

10,000 BCE: The Forever Man and his family confront the elder god Baal, who is ruling northern Africa and demanding child sacrifice as supplication. In a war lasting centuries, they manage to cage the beast beneath Carthage (modern-day Tunis). The Forever Man is the only member of his family to survive the war.

8,000 BCE: Baleara is born on the island of Majorca in the Mediterranean Sea. Famous for her beauty, immortality and her skill with the sling, she is soon queen of Majorca and the nearby islands, forever after known as the Balearic Islands in her honor.

Among her many recorded abilities are the strength to fire catapult stones from an enchanted sling, the ability to breathe water and swim as fast as a dolphin.

7,000 BCE: The Chronicle is born in Sesklo, a walled Stone Age city in what is today central Greece. He learns of his ability to travel through time upon reaching puberty.

After an unknown period attempting to change history, he simply begins to travel through time and alternate dimensions, recording events without interference.

6,000 BCE: The Forever Man settles along the Nile, living among the early agriculturists of that region, where his advanced medical knowledge lead to his adoption as a priest by the local villagers.

5,000 BCE: Asteria is born in modern Norway. She possesses the ability to see the future and travels to southern Macedon, where she knows true love waits for her.

There she meets Prometheus, a great warrior and architect. Prometheus is legendary for his powers of regeneration, immortality and creating fire.

4,000 BCE: Qiang ("strong") born in a Neolithic village of stilt-houses located south of Huangzhou Bay near modern Yuyao, China.

Asteria convinces Prometheus to leave southern Macedon and travel east. She has had visions of a terrible future for them and believes that Qiang is their only hope of victory.

Shortly after the couple's departure, Zeus, a metahuman tyrant of immense power, arrives in southern Macedon, seeking the pair. Although he does not find where they went, he ruthlessly adds the region to his growing empire.

3,500 BCE: Prometheus learns of the terrible empire assembled by Zeus, including his homeland. Ignoring Asteria's pleas, he and Qiang assemble an army and march west.



(3,500 BCE Cont.)

Their army is utterly destroyed, Qiang is killed and Prometheus is chained, tortured daily for Zeus' amusement. In order to avoid becoming one of Zeus' concubines, Asteria commits suicide.

Zeus assembles a vast empire based on rape and brutal conquest. One of his favorite pastimes is to encourage client kingdoms to war against each other for his amusement, leading to (among other things) the legend of the Trojan War.

3,000 BCE: Hercules is born to one of Zeus' many concubines. Though favored by his father and made a general, he is disgusted with the brutality of his reign and flees, wandering the world, constantly hounded by Zeus' minions.

Eventually he meets Hecate, a distant cousin also descended from Zeus, who feels the same way about the tyrant. Hecate has the power to control the weather and see into the future. She tells Hercules she has learned where Prometheus is chained.

2,900 BCE: After dozens of battles, Hercules and Hecate reach Prometheus and free him. Together, the three of them attack Zeus in his mountain home and kill him, ushering in a golden age of light and heroism in ancient Greece.

2,800 BCE: Three supremely powerful metahumans are born in northern Europe: Odin, Odr and Freyja. Together they build an enormous kingdom and rule the land with wisdom and harmony.

2,700 BCE: Odin's many wives and concubines give birth to: Baldur, Loki, Streitaxt and Thor.

Freyja bears the following children by Odr: Frigg, Heimdal and Ymir.

2,600-2,400 BCE: A rift forms between two metahuman families and their vast nation is split in two, the Aesir and the Vanir, who war with each other for 200 years. The war is only ended when Loki betrays his father by abandoning the Aesir, joining the Vanir.

(2,600-2,400 BCE Cont.)

Though considered a traitor and a coward, especially by his brother Thor, Loki uses his betrayal, and the great shift in the balance of power it causes, to force both sides to negotiate peace. Frigg is married to Odin and the war ends.

2300 BCE: The rift between Loki and Thor increases, eventually leading to a civil war among the ruling family. In the conflict most of the Aesir are wiped out and the empire built by Odin in northern Europe disintegrates.

2,250 BCE: Before departing Egypt, the Forever Man writes down his collected medical knowledge and turns it over to his fellow priests. Over time, new "cures" are added to this manuscript, most of them magical in nature, involving incantations and divine supplications.

2,200 BCE: While wandering Europe, the Forever Man hears about Baleara and decides to investigate, assuming her tale is one of the many folk legends told by local tribesmen, perhaps inspired by a true metahuman from the distant past. The two become lovers and leave the Balearic Islands together, traveling the world.

2,000 BCE: The Scion, a family of metahumans seizes control of the planet Selijan, a planet in the nearby (by galactic standards) Large Magellanic Cloud. The vast majority of the population is enslaved and only those with a metahuman in their family's last five generations are allowed full freedoms and citizen status.

1,800 BCE: The Scion prohibit outside breeding among their ruling caste, to concentrate their power, both political and metahuman within a small, elite group.

1,500 BCE: The Scion propagate the notion that their rule over Selijan comes from the gods and begin to adopt metahumans from other clans, claiming they are descended from the same gods. This allows them to keep metahuman abilities in the ruling caste while at the same time preventing genetic stagnation.

1,000 BCE: The Forever Man and Baleara are in North America, teaching medicinal techniques to the "red ochre people" along the upper Great Lakes.

A metahuman genius of the Scion develops space travel and the entire planet is quickly mobilized for exploration of nearby stars.

900 BCE: Selijan explorer ships discover four sentient races living on planets orbiting nearby stars. The first three of these are primitive and quickly conquered by the Selijan. Metahumans among these primitive races are adopted into the ruling clan while the remaining "normal" populations are enslaved, just as they have on the Selijan home world.

The fourth sentient race is different: they are the Katral and they are not native to the world they inhabit. Instead these aliens are an exploratory group from an empire that completely dominates the nearby Sagittarius Dwarf galaxy.

The Katral have no metahumans among their species but their technology is superior to the Selijan, especially in the field of cybernetics.

900-800 BCE: The first Selijan-Katral War ends in a bloody stalemate, with the superior Katral starships canceling out the powerful metahumans of the Selijan. Finally in 800 BCE (by Earth reckoning) a treaty is negotiated: the Katral agree to stay out of the Large Magellanic Cloud and the Selijan agree to avoid the galaxy claimed by the Katral.

800 BCE: The Forever Man and Baleara teach natives along the Amazon floodplain how to cultivate corn and hunt with the sling.

800-400 BCE: The Selijan aggressively explore their home galaxy, dominating other planets and absorbing families with metahuman potential into the ruling caste. By 400 BCE they control their entire galaxy. Spies sent in secret to the Katral sphere of influence determine that their technology is still more advanced than the Selijan and their scientists begin to work feverishly to close the gap.

Meanwhile the Katral have their own spies and their own agenda: to increase their skill at cybernetics, allowing elite soldiers to hold their own against the Selijan metahumans and possibly overwhelm them through greater numbers.

600 BCE: The Forever Man leads a group of 10,000 soldiers and metahumans against the elder god Cronus the devourer of children, brother of Baal. They manage to cage the beast under the newly constructed city of Massalia, modern-day Marseille.

Once again, the Forever Man is the only survivor of the battle, burying his beloved Baleara outside the walls of Massalia, today an ancient graveyard near the heart of modern Marseille. Local tradition maintains that the Forever Man pays locals to maintain flowers and polished slingstones to mark this grave and visits it once every 10 years.

510 BCE: The Forever Man moves to the city of Rome, where he will live for the next 700 years. At first he is a doctor, priest and teacher, as he has been elsewhere but over time becomes a soldier. The Romans name him Optimus Aeternus.

400-100 BCE: Second Selijan-Katral War. This is a much bloodier affair and several worlds on both sides are rendered uninhabitable by orbital bombardment. Eventually this war ends in a second stalemate and a treaty again restores the status quo for both empires.

300 BCE: Gladiator (which means "swordsmen" in Latin) begins to champion the poor and oppressed throughout Italy, including slaves. He dresses in garb typical of a Roman Centurion but possesses superhuman strength and durability.

297 BCE: The Roman Senate declares Gladiator an enemy of the state. After several unsuccessful attempts to bring him down using traditional means, the Forever Man is asked to pursue him.

In November, surrounded by a large crowd of onlookers, Gladiator is killed by the Forever Man, who refuses to turn the body over to Roman authorities, taking it into the hills and giving the body a proper burial at an unknown location.

264 BCE: A tradition of reenacting the duel between Gladiator and the Forever Man begins to spread as gladiatorial combats begin to become a popular sport throughout the Roman world.

250 BCE: Haniwa, the Stone Warrior fights to protect the innocent in China and Southeast Asia over a 20-year span. His legend sparks a tradition of placing stone warriors to guard the tombs of heroes for centuries.

100 BCE: The Selijan and the Katral enter a cold war status. After two bloody and indecisive wars they are unwilling to engage each other openly. Both sides begin to explore nearby galaxies for an edge over their great rival.

61 BCE: Pompey, Crassus and Caesar form a triumvirate to influence Roman politics. The great orator Cicero and the Forever Man are both invited to join this extralegal body but both refuse.

Despite his refusal to join in the triumvirate's machinations, Caesar also refuses to join a growing anti-Caesar faction that coalesces around Cicero and a turncoat Crassus in the years that follow and vocally offers his support, and willingness to protect the person of, the Dictator he sees as the best hope for the defense of a Republic beginning to rot from the foundation.

44 BCE: The Forever Man learns of a plot to assassinate Julius Caesar. He arrives at the Forum in time but is physically weighed down by masses of client plebeians long enough for the killing blow through Caesar's heart.

This begins the doubt in Forever Man's mind that he will be able to preserve his beloved Rome, despite his power and longevity.

79 CE: Mount Vesuvius erupts, destroying the Italian city of Pompeii. In the hours before this eruption Chronicle appears in the city several times, offering escape to "interesting" residents of the doomed city, before they are removed forever from history.

Almost all of these individuals accept and are teleported to the Chronicle's cloaked base, located somewhere in Earth's solar system. The only details Chronicle has ever given about this base's location is that he picked a place that would be unaffected by changes in the size of Sol billions of years in the future.

After using his advanced medical technology to extend their lives almost indefinitely, Chronicle teaches these individuals to maintain his vast database of the multiverse.

175 CE: Forever Man named Roman governor of Britain. During this time the Forever Man and Chronicle become friends.

Although they were not truly acquainted before this, they had seen one another dozens of times through the millennia.

(175 CE Continued)

The Forever Man does not learn until much later this is because Chronicle could move through time and was actively seeking him out to record as much of his life story as possible.

Chronicle chooses this moment to become truly acquainted with the Forever Man because he knows there his attempts to influence events is almost at an end.

By meeting him here, Chronicle can get to know the Forever Man before his hope is dashed that one man can influence events to his desired outcome, a belief Chronicle himself once held.

193 CE: Year of the Five Emperors, a period of chaos and turmoil in the late Roman Empire, which sees Emperors crowned and deposed by fickle, unruly soldiers after reigns lasting months.

In attempt to stop the turmoil and save his beloved Rome, the Forever Man allows his troops to hail him Emperor and moves his forces to the mainland, seizing the throne after defeating several rival claimants.

However, even the presence of the immortal Optimus Aeternus does not quell the mania that seems to have seized the Roman psyche of the day. After surviving a brute-force assassination attempt by the Praetorian Guard, poisoning at the hands of a bribed slave, the burning down of the royal palace and finally an ambush by entire detachments of archers and cavalry, the Forever Man walks away from Rome, as well as active participation in world events, for almost 1800 years.

225 CE: Chronicle again appears to the Forever Man, who is living among steppe nomads in Central Asia and asks him for the story of his life. It is from these meetings that Chronicle is able to locate the Forever Man in the millennia prior to this date (by the Forever Man's reckoning) to observe key moments in his life.

250 CE: Rogue time traveler Dr. Walter Frazier visits the Forever Man and befriends him. He senses a kindred spirit and tells him the story of his time, far in the future, where overcrowding and environmental abuse have led to endless wars and devastated the Earth, transforming it into a hellish nightmare.

He asks the Forever Man to join him in his quest to limit world population. Although his population "limit" seems reasonable, with an upper limit over five times the current population of the world, the Forever Man has given up any hope of changing the world, for better or ill, and advises Dr. Frazier to do the same.

Although he is unsuccessful at recruiting the Forever Man, Dr. Frazier sees great "potential" in the steppe nomads he lives with and decides to travel forward to a time when they would be even more suitable allies.

286 CE: The Forever Man, still fascinated by Rome, has settled in Nicomedia, now the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.

315 CE: Chronicle visits the Forever Man in Nicomedia. As the two old friends catch up, Chronicle learns of Walter Frazier's visit.

It is at this meeting that Chronicle finally reveals to the Forever Man that he is a time traveler, not "simply" an immortal.

(315 CE Continued)

He takes the Forever Man to see his enormous hidden base in the outer solar system, being careful not to reveal anything of Earth's future to preserve the temporal integrity of the Forever Man's native timeline.

350-1000 CE: Having pinpointed the next emergence of Walter Frazier at 1225 CE, Chronicle travels through Earth's history, as well as several alternate "near Earths" recruiting special individuals hours before they are slated to disappear from history. These rare individuals are granted exceptionally long lives and given advanced training and weaponry in order to preserve the integrity of the time-space continuum. This is the creation of the Temporal Enforcement Agency (TEA).

358 CE: The Forever Man is still living in Nicomedia when the city is all but destroyed by an earthquake and fire. After saving what lives he can, he leaves the city forever, traveling further east.

500 CE: A metahuman of immense power is born on the planet Selijan, named Lord Reku. Although born to a relatively obscure wing of the vast ruling elite, Reku's immense power and talent for Machiavelian political maneuvers soon leave him in complete control of the Selijan Empire. Unfortunately for the inhabitants of thousands of worlds, Reku's mad lust for power could not be sated with "only" one galaxy to rule, or with sharing power even among the ruling elite. Soon after gaining mastery over the Selijan, he initiates a huge purge of all metahumans in the ruling elite he views as his rivals.

(500 CE Continued)

All remaining metahumans are forced to fight to the death in gladiatorial matches for Reku's amusement. This makes him immensely popular with the vast hordes of poor commoners he rules. After centuries of domination by metahumans these normals love watching them fight to the death.

This throng of poor turns into one of the Mad Emperor's many weapons. They serve as excellent informants on nascent resistance movements among the former ruling elite and willingly fight to the death for Emperor Reku's greater glory. These poor had always been nothing but chattel, slaves or worse. Emperor Reku turns them into soldiers and they love him for it.

Emperor Reku begins to refer to himself publicly as The Scion, the last Emperor of a long and dying legacy of metahuman power. His propaganda machine extols the many sins of the previous ruling elite and claim only he, Reku, can return his people to their former virtues.

700 CE: After centuries of buying, capturing and stealing Katral cybernetics and starship technology, the Mad Emperor, who sadly seems to be immortal, begins his grand campaign against the Katral Empire.

Unlike previous wars, which pitted small numbers of Selijan metahumans against large numbers of Katral cybernetic soldiers, this war is a more even affair, fought by cybernetic soldiers on both sides.

(700 CE Continued)

However, Emperor Reku is a master strategist and his soldiers are fanatically loyal, happy to die for his glory.

The war slowly begins to turn in his favor and Katral worlds begin to fall to the Selijan.

850 CE: A pair of British adventurers begins to wage a campaign against Viking invaders throughout Britain, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The old man, a sorcerer of tremendous power, is remembered to history as Merlin while his younger companion is remembered as Arthur. Arthur is remembered in legend as a king, first written by British historian Geoffrey of Monmouth. In reality, the two were a pair of idealists who merely sought to protect their countrymen in a time of chaos and war.

After his death, Arthur's sword Excalibur is defended by an order of Welsh monks, who grant the sword to worthy warriors when the island's defense is threatened.

Merlin's greatest gift, above and beyond his magical abilities, is an ability to see the future. He records a detailed treatise of future events, slightly obscured as seen through the eyes of a man from the 9th century. These books, The Prophecies of Merlin are fought over, discovered and lost, fragmented and reunited for the next thousand years.

1095 CE: A commoner named Francis appears before the Council of Clermont and presents himself to Pope Urban II. He demonstrates his powers of flight and fire control and offers to fight in the Crusade proclaimed by the Pope.

(1095 CE Continued)

He is dubbed Francis of the Flaming Sword and rains fire down on the Turks.

1135 CE: A new Streitaxt is cutting a swathe through northern Europe. Unknown to anyone at the time, the axe possesses mystical properties that cause it to seek out a worthy warrior and grant all the memories, battle skill and abilities onto its new wielder.

1140 CE: Lord Miles Daunton, wielding Excalibur teams up with Francis of the Flaming Sword to put an end to Streitaxt's rampage. In a bloody battle that destroys five-square blocks of Genoa, both Daunton and Streitaxt are killed.

Francis throws the axe in the Mediterranean, and then returns Daunton's body, along with the sword Excalibur to the monks in Britain.

1225 CE: Agents of the Temporal Enforcement Agency succeed in preventing Walter Frazier from meeting with Genghis Khan. They also successfully intercept crates containing 15,000 AK-47s and one million rounds of ammunition before these are allowed to "infect" most time continuums.

1291 CE: Francis of the Flaming Sword is killed during the final fall of the Latin Kingdoms. A throng of peasants carries his body all the way from the Middle East to the Vatican, sparking a series of wars and skirmishes along the way in their protection of the body.

(1291 CE Continued)

Pope Nicholas IV canonizes Francis and his body lies in state at the Vatican to this day, strangely well preserved. Visiting the body, which never decays, becomes a tradition into the modern era.

At Francis' request his mystic amulet and armor are secretly transported to Britain and bequeathed on the monks guarding Excalibur.

1344 CE: After Italian agents attack the Welsh monastery protecting Excalibur and almost succeed in stealing the mighty sword, King Edward III chooses 24 of his finest knights, the Order of the Garter and charges them with the personal protection of the monastery.

Later a second group of 26 "poor knights" are attached as a secondary military order, expanding the protection of the monastery to 50 of the kingdom's finest warriors.

As part of their initiation, members of the order are blooded. In this ritual, the knight's official mantle or cloak is laid over an altar, and the presiding monk then cuts the knight's left hand across the palm with Excalibur. The sword is then laid on the mantle, and the knight lays his hand on the flat of Excalibur's blade, allowing his blood to wash over the blade before soaking into the mantle.

This ritual makes the knight's mantles resistant to swords, arrows and (it is later discovered) bullets.

1450 CE: Agents of the Time Enforcement Agency prevent Walter Frazier from making contact with Montezuma I, 5th Aztec Emperor. They also prevent horses, AK-47s and ammunition from falling into the hands of temporal locals.

(1450 CE Continued)

This second defeat causes Dr. Frazier to return to his own time and recruit hardened, ruthless soldiers from his hellish future. He creates a time portal for these agents and trains them to be the opposite number of the TEA, dubbed Pendulum. This plan largely works, as Pendulum and the TEA cancel each other out for the most part, allowing Frazier to move more freely through the multiverse. Despite this success, Frazier seems to leave attempts at influence "petty" events to Pendulum beyond this point and focuses on recruiting his Hollow Men (described in detail in Public Enemies), believing this small, supremely powerful force is his best bet to personally limit Earth's population.

1500 CE: Katral explorers discover Earth and are amazed at the metahuman potential of the human genome. Their orbital survey ships count more than 400 metahumans, more than the Selijan Empire had at its height before the rise of the Mad Emperor.

While their forces in deep space fight a desperate war against The Scion, Katral scientists begin seeding Earth, modifying the human genome slightly, to make the populace even more prone to metahuman manifestation.

This does not increase the number of metahumans born but greatly increases the number of "Class 5" metahumans, those with the greatest power potential. Once almost all metahumans were Class 5 but that strain seems to have grown dormant in the human population.

(1500 CE Continued)

Now it will surge back, with more and more metahumans of great power born each century.

Like science students monitoring a promising Petrie dish, the Katral watch Earth, monitoring its progress.

1775 CE: On the outskirts of Lexington, Massachusetts, a Pendulum agent terminally wounds an agent of the Time Enforcement Agency. Before he can activate his return signal, or the self-destruct on his time travel device, the agent dies and is found by John Ezekiel Rogers, a Minuteman and Freemason. This American soldier is fleeing a disastrous encounter between his first-response unit and a group of British soldiers.

He gives the strangely dressed man a proper burial but keeps his odd looking "time piece", so named because of its dual readouts displaying "local time" as well as "objective time".

During his trip back to Manhattan, Rogers often gives the name Ezekiel Mason when encountering fellow American revolutionaries. The name Mason is given by Minutemen who wish to conceal their true identities for centuries, one of many traditions of this legendary adventuring clan.

1776-1783 CE: John Rogers is unable to get his temporal device to work as intended, to allow its bearer to travel through time and space, because of damage it sustained during the battle that killed its owner, as well as a general lack of understanding of temporal mechanics.

However, he is able to generate a field that warps "local time", allowing him to slightly speed it up or slow it down. With his unit wiped out and his wife and children living in terror in British-occupied Manhattan Island, John dons a mask to protect his identity and wages a one-man war on the British oppressors.

1778 CE: During a pitched battle with his nemesis, British Governor-General James Robertson, Minuteman is almost killed when Robertson hits him with a musket ball at point blank range. After slipping away and healing in the basement of his Manhattan home, protected by his wife and loyal neighbors, Minuteman slips out of the city and returns to the grave of the TEA agent he buried three years previously.

He remembered that the visitor's strange blue clothes were not torn or ripped despite the obvious devastation of the surrounding countryside. After removing the clothes, which do not seem soiled or fouled in anyway, Minuteman confirms that they are immune to penetration by his knife and even gunfire.

He then returns to Manhattan to resume his guerilla war against the British, wearing the blue bulletproof jumpsuit under a new, more colorful patriotic costume designed by his wife Samantha.

1780 CE: John begins to train his oldest son, 13-year old John Jr. in hand-to-hand combat, stealth, acrobatics and firearms, as well as the use of the timepiece, so that the Minuteman will live on even if John is killed.

1789 CE: On the 13th birthday of Samuel Rogers, his father John reveals the Minuteman costume and timepiece to him. His father and older brother then begin to train him for the possibility that he will one day become the new Minuteman.

1794 CE: On the 13th birthday of Erica Rogers, her father John reveals the Minuteman costume and timepiece to her. Her father and older siblings then begin her training in case she is called on to defend America.

1812 CE: The United States declares war on Great Britain. John Rogers, the original Minuteman and his wife Samantha decide that the Minuteman is needed once again. They also decide that both John (age 67) and John Jr. (age 45) are too old to be the Minuteman. After receiving a costume sewn by his mother to wear over the form-fitting blue bulletproof jumpsuit, which seems to perfectly fit any wearer, 36-year old Samuel takes the field as the second Minuteman, again battling British forces.

1815 CE: In a stroke of terrible luck, Samuel Rogers is killed during the Battle of New Orleans by the concussive force of a cannonball fired from miles away by a British Ship of the Line. Making his death even more tragic is the fact that peace had already been signed between the United States and Great Britain, unknown to the combatants in New Orleans.

A Cheyenne tribesman named Nanose Harjo that had befriended the Minuteman is the only one to hear his final words, including his true identity and the location of his family. In a singular act of honor and bravery Nanose does not keep the Minuteman's regalia for himself and instead vows to return him home to his family for a proper burial.

After an amazing trek from New Orleans, dodging thieves attempting to steal the Minuteman's regalia every step of the way, John, John Jr. and Erica meet up with Nanose in Kentucky. Erica has already been provided with a Minuteman costume loose enough to conceal her gender and dons the bulletproof under-armor and timepiece, using them to defend the funeral procession the rest of the way home to New York, where Samuel can receive a proper burial.

1816 CE: In a small, private ceremony attended only by family and close friends, the Rogers family priest marries Erica and Nanose. In honor of his name, which means cougar, Nanose is provided with a cougar mask, enchanted to allow him to transform into an actual cougar so that he can adventure at his wife's side.

(1816 CE Continued)

Together, Minuteman and Cougar enter the lexicon of American folklore, pursuing fugitives and dispensing justice throughout the continental United States. Their pursuit of justice at the expense of whites abusing minority Americans causes the pair to be regarded equal parts outlaw and hero by the public at large.

1826 CE: The original Minuteman, John Rogers, dies in his Manhattan home at the age of 81, with his wife Samantha and children John Jr., Samuel and Erica at his side. A mysterious stranger also attends this solemn affair, the Chronicle, who is there both to record the death of a legend and also for a more pressing matter.

After speaking privately with Erica and Nanose, they allow him to "adjust" the timepiece. Chronicle tells them the device is malfunctioning and needs to be adjusted for the safety of Erica and all future Minutemen. Chronicle then disables the timepiece's self destruct mechanism and places a timed activation on its time travel capabilities.

Even though the ability of the timepiece to allow its wielder to travel through time cannot be fully removed, Chronicle then returns the timepiece to Erica and declares the rightful property of the Rogers family before he departs.

This is believed to be one of only two occasions where the Chronicle has inserted himself so openly into human history. Whether these events were undertaken by a younger, more active Chronicle, or even a Chronicle from an alternate timestream is unknown.



1837 CE: A vigilante is fighting crime in the streets of London, assisting the overwhelmed Metropolitan Police in their fight against a wave of bizarre and dangerous metahuman criminals. This hero, dubbed "Spring-heeled Jack" by the public, wears a glider cape and has boots capable of launching him high into the air. Though officially dubbed an urban legend by the authorities, Jack receives extensive support from Home Secretary Robert Peel and Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Charles Rowan, one of the two Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police.

The second Commissioner, Sir Richard Mayne, considers Jack a menace and a threat to public order. Thus one of the two men in charge of the London police consider Jack an ally, the other a criminal. This trend will continue for masked vigilantes whenever they appear.

1838 CE: Minuteman and Nanose attempt to prevent the forced relocation of Native Americans to reservations in Indian Territory, known to history as the "Trail of Tears". During a brief skirmish with the Army, Nanose is shot and killed while in cougar form.

Erica retreats with the body of her husband, now locked forever in the form of a cougar and buries him nearby before returning to her family's home in Manhattan. She retires from active adventuring but continues the family tradition of training her offspring to take up the mantle when they feel America once again needs defending.

1850 CE: Queen Victoria becomes convinced that metahumans, both domestically and abroad pose a grave danger to British Security and orders the formation of a special force to combat this menace. The Crown Guard is formed and headquartered beneath Stonehenge.

1853 CE: Crown Guard agents convince an ancient group of Welsh monks to join them, along with the mystic sword and scabbard, Excalibur, which they have been protecting for over a thousand years. Although the monks receive additional protection from the Crown Guard, they receive Royal Assent from Queen Victoria, securing their autonomy on decisions involving the sword. She dubs them the Guardians of Excalibur. They alone will decide when the sword is given and to whom.

(1853 CE Continued)

The 24 Knights of the Garter, along with their 26 "poor knight" companions join the Crown Guard at this time as well. They become the elite agents at the heart of the organization. Typically the 24 senior knights serve as officers in the field, while the 26 "poor knights" remain at Stonehenge, charged solely with protecting Excalibur.

1855-1859 CE: Crown Guard agents scour the world for sections of The Prophecies of Merlin and store them in vaults beneath Stonehenge. Crown Guard forms a special detachment of scholars and historians to study the manuscripts and decipher them. These scholars, especially their chief, Sir Ralph Higginbotham, find the manuscripts difficult to understand but accurate. However, at least 25% of the time they are spectacularly wrong. This causes Higginbotham to speculate that actions occurring after Merlin's visions had changed the future.

1860 CE: Dime novels chronicling the stories of Minuteman and Cougar begin to appear. These novels treat the pair as if they were adventuring in the "wild west" of the period. Notably, these pulp stories depict Erica (the Minuteman on which they are based) as a quintessential strong-jawed male hero and Cougar is portrayed as a dreadfully stereotypical Native American sidekick.

Groundbreaking research by folklorist Dr. Jason Tondro in 2010 showed that these stories had a strong influence on early pulp "mystery men" tales, which themselves had a tremendous influence on early comic books, and that these golden age comics influenced metahuman heroes and villains of the late 20th century.

(1860 CE Continued)

In his seminal treatise "Icons of the Golden Age", Dr. Tondro thus argued that much of modern metahuman history could be traced to these bastardized stories of Erica Rogers Harjo and her husband Nanose.

1861 CE: Janine Samantha Harjo, great-granddaughter of John Rogers, the original Minuteman, takes up the family mantle to fight on the Union side during the American Civil War. During the long, difficult and bloody campaigns of the Civil War this Minuteman relies on support from a wide network of allies, including the extended Rogers family from Massachusetts and numerous Native Americans used by Nanose and her grandmother during their adventures.

Most of these know they are distantly related to the Minuteman and/or Nanose but do not know the current identity of the Minuteman or even that she is really not a Minute "man" at all. Still, they feel a connection and provide support, often no more than a hot meal and dry bed, sometimes fighting side by side with the Minuteman for short periods, and always in disguise to protect their loved one from reprisals.

1875 CE: The network of distant relatives that supported the Minuteman during the Civil War begins to formalize into the Order of the Hourglass. This group supports the Minutemen from this point on, eventually developing a sophisticated network of safehouses around the world to inform the current Minuteman of danger and assist him or her in the fight against evil.

1892 CE: Cameron Forster, a.k.a. Deuce is born in Illinois.

1895 CE: John Rogers Maddux, the "golden age" Minuteman who serves in Vigilance Force through WWII is born in Massachusetts.

1900 CE: Stanley Linwood, a.k.a. Big Ben born in London.

1903 CE: Johnathan Swiftriver, a.k.a. Talon born on a Shoshone Indian Reservation in Wyoming.

1904 CE: Claire Starling, a.k.a. Hornet born in Florida.

1905 CE: A young girl named Illassia is born on the planet Selijan. A metahuman of great power and kindness, she is soon thrust into the head of a resistance movement against The Scion.

1909 CE: Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan, professor of biology at Columbia University publishes "Evolution Before Our Eyes", the foundation of all subsequent mutant research.

The book details over 10 years of study and experimentation on the "Hill Monkey Boy" (a.k.a. Ezekiel Elder), the child of a backwoods Appalachian couple who was the subject of an intense "bigfoot" scare until his capture, at which point he was discovered to be completely human, though possessing many simian characteristics.

Though many of Morgan's colleagues consider Elder to be an evolutionary throwback to the Neanderthal, Dr. Morgan comes to a controversial conclusion: that Elder is in fact an evolutionary advance, what Morgan dubs a mutant.

(1909 CE Continued)

Even more sensationally, Morgan goes on to argue that Elder will not be an isolated case and that mutants will become more and more common. Morgan famously concludes that mutants like Elder, who is stronger, more agile and able to manipulate objects with his feet as well as his hands might replace Homo Sapiens in as little as 500 years.

Though his work is the subject of intense criticism and almost immediately dismissed as sensationalist pseudo-science, future generations would regard Morgan's work as groundbreaking and prescient.

Indeed, many mutants would later argue that Morgan was too correct, lending more credibility to his final, most sensational prediction, one that was latched onto almost immediately as a source of racism, anxiety and hate.

1913 CE: Dr. Morgan publishes "The Neanderthal Syndrome", the second in his works on the "mutant phenomenon". At this point he has identified eight mutants worldwide, sifting out true genetic mutations from thousands of "freak" sightings. Morgan refuses to use such terms to describe his mutants, despite the fact that many of his early finds were performing for a famous traveling circus as freaks when they were brought to Morgan's attention.

Though hotly denied by Morgan, many see the title of this book as playing on, and even heightening, the growing paranoia of "normals" toward mutants.

(1913 CE Continued)

Morgan claims his title is not meant to be sensational but rather a vindication of his earlier work, since many of his colleagues have now confirmed his theory that these individuals are genetic offshoots of humanity and that their numbers are rapidly increasing.

1917 CE: Vladimir Lenin leads a revolution in Russia, flanked by his two loyal bodyguards, nationalist heroes Hammer and Sickle, a brother and sister team from Russian peasant stock.

Richard Lathon, a.k.a. Sword, a.k.a. Excalibur born in Cardiff, England.

1918 CE: Reverend Caleb Millson publishes "Last Generation", a work that takes the more sensationalist themes of Dr. Morgan's earlier books and takes them even further, providing very little science to go with its grim, apocalyptic vision of the future. Millson theorizes that a mankind weakened by war (fought with nerve gas), coupled with a virulent disease outbreak (such as the Spanish Flu pandemic currently raging across the globe) could drastically reduce the population of "normal" humans worldwide. This, he theorizes, would allow mutants, to rule the Earth, either wiping out or eliminating the weaker human race. Many humans see Millson's book as a call to arms for humans to rise up and strike down mutants while their numbers are still too few.

1920 CE: Fred Williamson, a.k.a. Captain Miracle, a.k.a. the Savant, born in New Jersey.

1922 CE: A new group calling itself the "Old Guard" lynches Dr. Morgan and Ezekiel Elder outside the doctor's laboratory in Lexington, Kentucky.

A letter is found attached to the bodies, which had also been sent to major newspapers three days before the attack. It reads: "No jinx of nature will rule God's Earth, not in 500 years, not in 1,000 years." Just as Dr. Morgan's work popularizes the term mutant, this letter from the Old Guard popularizes its racist equivalent: jinx.

Unknown to investigators, the Old Guard also steals research materials for Morgan's upcoming 3rd book, including contact information of numerous mutants living secretly around the country.

Raymont Jefferson, a.k.a. Freight Train, born in Illinois.

1923 CE: The Old Guard lynches multiple mutants in this year, all of which had contacted Dr. Morgan for participation in his research. While many of these were employed as circus performers, others were seemingly normal individuals living lives of obscurity.

Rather than respond negatively to the attacks, many commentators seem fixated on the idea of mutants living among them in secret, and the growing paranoia fuels a growth in the popularity of the Old Guard, which sees its membership radically increase during this time.

(1923 CE Continued)

After only a week in what he believes to be the past of his own dimension, this mystic reads of the Beer Hall Putsch, an attempted overthrow of the German government led by Adolf Hitler. The mystic immediately determines not to return home and instead forges a costume and new identity, calling himself Gotterdammerung, after the Wagner cycle of operas concerning Ragnarok, the war between the gods that this mystic believes is coming.

1924 CE: Gotterdammerung begins to visit Hitler in prison, telling him of the glorious future that awaits both him and the German state. The young mystic tells Hitler he must seize power and that the work of Conroy Leder will be critical to his success in the coming years.

1925 CE: John Rogers Maddux, the current Minuteman, begins to pursue various gangsters, bank robbers and other organized criminals. This marks the most active a Minuteman has been in crime fighting for a hundred years. Significantly, Maddux discards the traditional Minuteman costume, which has been modified but never changed since the Revolutionary War.

Instead he simply wears the form-fitting blue jumpsuit Minutemen have used to protect themselves from gunfire, to which he adds various accoutrements. Some of these are practical, like the belt containing crime fighting implements and weapons. Others are strictly decorative, such as the black boots, domino mask and hourglass symbol affixed to the chest.

(1925 CE Continued)

Almost immediately this new Minuteman begins encountering Nazi spies and saboteurs hired by Gotterdammerung. Though Maddux doesn't realize it, the German mystic knows who he is from a visit he will make to the alternate dimension of the Thousand Year Reich in 1933.

Christian Thomason, a.k.a. Old Glory born in Virginia.

1926 CE: 40,000 members of the Old Guard march on Washington D.C., demanding the government take drastic action to curb the "mutant menace". They demand forced sterilization of anyone exhibiting mutant abilities, as well as those with physical and mental deformities, who they see as carrying latent mutation.

In Germany, Dr. Conroy Leder publishes *Hereinschauend Augen Gott* ("Looking into the Eyes of God"). In this book he proposes that mutation is not new but rather extremely old and that the Aesir and Vanir of Norse mythology were in fact mutants.

Leder proposes two different programs: a eugenics program to enhance birth rates bearing the "Aesir Strain", transforming Germans into a master race; second, forced sterilization of all "subhumans", those bearing obvious physical or mental deformities, who are descended from trolls and other non-humans beasts of mythology.

Leder further proposes detention of "subhumans" for experimentation in his proposed Eugenics program.

1927 CE: A still-busting vigilante is active in Chicago, targeting organized crime figures. He is dubbed Deuce by the media from his calling card, the two of spades. Deuce possesses no superhuman abilities but is an expert hand-to-hand fighter and detective. He also carries numerous gadgets but refuses to use firearms of any kind.

1929 CE: The worldwide economic collapse in this year is actually a blessing in disguise for many mutants around the world, as governments turn their attention to more pressing economic concerns. Especially significant are the number of Old Guard proposals in the United States that are shelved or buried by their opponents in the chaotic weeks after American stock market crash.

In Russia, the stand on metahumans is markedly different. Stalin, who has come to fear the power of mutants to overthrow the Soviet state, uses his economic reorganization, or "Five Year Plan" as an excuse to round up every mutant he can find, using them for the 'collective good', which involves forced labor, almost always to the death.

Soviet doctors are also ordered to kill any child delivered with obvious metahuman characteristics. Many of these doctors, at the risk of their lives and livelihoods, secretly circumvent these orders, setting up an underground railroad to smuggle the children out of the country.



1930 CE: Now called Princess Illassia by her followers, this resistance fighter has assembled a large army, primarily composed of metahumans that were living in secret, rather than being killed in The Scion's arenas for the amusement of the masses.

Her forces smash into the rear of The Scion's forces in a devastating surprise attack, catching him overextended during his endless war against the Katral. Now fighting on two fronts, his supply lines cut off from the rich "breadbasket" worlds of the Selijan Empire, the Scion's forces suffer a major defeat and his aura of infallibility is shattered.

Hundreds of worlds flock to Princess Illassia's banner.

1932 CE: Deuce begins operating nationwide, targeting organized crime syndicates wherever he finds them. He also pursues several notorious bank robbers and murderers of the day.

Also in this year, Franklin Delano Roosevelt is elected President of the United States. Alarmed at a growing wave of crime, especially crime conducted by metahumans, he contacts Deuce and arranges a private meeting.

Roosevelt comes away from his face to encounter with the masked vigilante so impressed that he issues an executive order granting Deuce official government sanction and nationwide police powers. Roosevelt also attempts to make contact with the Minuteman but never receives a response from the enigmatic hero.

(1932 CE Continued)

In Russia, Stalin completes his purge of metahumans from the state, as treason charges are brought against Hammer and Sickie. They attempt to flee but are trapped and killed by artillery fire.

1933 CE: Minuteman John Rogers Maddux activates his timepiece while intervening in an armed robbery and trips the timed command implanted in the timepiece by the Chronicle in 1826. This throws the Minuteman into the year 2041 in the continuum commonly referred to as the Thousand Year Reich (see Known Alternate Timelines below).

During his stay in this hellish Nazi-dominated America, Maddux learns about the past, including the events of that reality's WWII, which the Nazis won. Believing this reality to be America's future, he resolves to do everything in his power to prevent it.

After several nearly disastrous run-ins with the American Eugenics Brigade of that era, Maddux joins forces with a badly outgunned resistance movement and begins to assist them in their desperate guerilla campaign.

1934 CE: Members of the Old Guard set a house on fire in rural Virginia belonging to Richard and Sandra Thomason. The boy inside, Christian, age 9, is rumored to be a jinx and his parents refuse to turn him over to the lynch mob. The raging fire is suddenly extinguished and the boy, surrounded by the fire, emerges from the house.

(1934 CE Continued)

As he burns the mob to a cinder, the boy is shot through the heart. Rather than dying, his body absorbs the fire surrounding him, using its energy to repair the damage to his body. Christian Thomason buries his father and mother and leaves his home, never returning to it again.

1935 CE: After spending the last two years consolidating his control over the German state, Hitler gives Dr. Conroy Leder access to a vast laboratory complex, an unlimited budget and undesirables to serve as live human test subjects.

In addition to his Eugenics research, Leder assembles the finest engineers and mechanical scientists he can find, even kidnapping them from nearby countries when necessary. They begin making remarkable breakthroughs in armor and weaponry that are nearly the equal of Leder's skill at genetic manipulation.

Almost immediately Leder begins to have amazing success, more than anyone dreamed possible. Within a year Germany had a force unlike any in the world, armed with mutant abilities, advanced technology, magic and the military training to use them as a combined force.

After reviewing the group's training, Hitler dubs them Kampfgruppe Eugenik, or the Eugenics Brigade.



(1935 CE Continued)

Also kept secret are the Verhexte (the German term for jinxes). These bestial mutant nightmares are the byproduct of Leder's research, his "bad apples" as he coldly referred to them. Though possessing superhuman physical abilities, they are worse than animals. Leder keeps them for further study, as well as for live-fire exercises during the training of his more successful candidates.

1936 CE: During the opening ceremonies of the Berlin Olympic Games, Hitler reveals the Eugenics Brigade to the world in spectacular fashion, with Gotterdammerung teleporting them to the center of the stadium, where they stun the crowd silent with a demonstration of their abilities.

The current roster of the Brigade stands as: Charismatisch (Charismatic), a telekinetic; Doctor Eugenic, the name given to Leder, who often accompanied the brigade in the field, using his genius and technical wizardry to aid them in battle; Donnerschlag (Thunderclap), a mutant who can control the weather; Feurfest (Fireproof), a brilliant soldier equipped with an armored Battlesuit; Traumfrau (Dreamgirl), twin sister of Charismatic, and gifted with amazing mind control abilities; Krieghund (Warhound), a genetically modified soldier very similar to a werewolf; Schlagring (Brass Knuckles), a soldier equipped with an electrified battlesuit; Streitaxt (Battleaxe), a mighty warrior armed with a mystical Norse axe lost for nearly a thousand years; Überkrieger (Super Soldier), an aging hero of WWI transformed into the perfect soldier by Doctor Eugenic.

The Überfallkommando, or Flying Brigade, a unit of 50 elite soldiers wearing jetpacks, aids the team, providing fire support and crowd control.



1937 CE: After extensive discussions regarding Hitler's Eugenics Brigade and what it means if the United States should fight a war against Germany, President Roosevelt labels the presence of the team a national emergency, one requiring an "emergency response".

Through an executive order not made public for 50 years, he creates the United States Headquarters for Emergency Response (USHER) and names Deuce as its first Director of Field Operations. His headquarters are based out of the Tuskegee Army Airfield and nearby Moton Field. After selecting a head of Research and Development, the scientist that had created most of Deuce's specialized equipment, Deuce heads out on a nationwide tour searching for suitable candidates to form an American counter to the Eugenics Brigade.

Having read news reports of a boy fighting a massive fire in Yosemite, Deuce makes Christian Thomason his first priority. After witnessing first hand his immunity to fire and ability to absorb heat directly into his body, Deuce convinces the boy to leave with him, playing on his natural patriotism and adventurous spirit.

After chasing down numerous false leads and hoaxes, the pair then discovered Fred Williamson working at a traveling carnival. He possessed a brilliant mind and the ability repair mechanical items by touch and psychic energy alone.

(1937 CE Continued)

As it turned out, the carnival was a cover for a group of small time criminals and they almost overwhelmed Deuce and Christian through sheer numbers, before Williamson came to their aid, cobbling a zip gun together out of old car parts and killing the carnival's leader.

The three were on their way back to Tuskegee when they heard a radio broadcast about football star Raymont Jefferson, who broke the legs of one tackler and the arms of two more as his mutant abilities suddenly emerged in the middle of a long touchdown run.

By the time they made it back to Alabama to begin training, the boy orphaned through tragedy, the reclusive, anti-social carnie and the shamed mentally traumatized African-American football star had already formed a lasting friendship.

In Britain, Winston Churchill has a similar reaction to the revelation of Hitler's Eugenics Brigade and asks the Guardians of Excalibur to choose a new wielder for the legendary sword. For the first time, the Guardians actually choose two heroes, twin brothers Richard and William Lathon.

They bestow the sword to Richard, while William receives a mystic amulet and suit of armor. The brothers take the names Sword and Stone.

1938 CE: Deuce and his team investigate reports of a "boy raised by wolves". What they find is something altogether different.

(1938 CE Continued)

Dr. Jonathan Swiftrunner, a Native American medicine man trained a surgeon is living with a pack of wolves in the . When he realizes he's being pursued, he flees and makes it all the way to Canada before being cornered by his four pursuers.

He was not raised by wolves and is a mutant, though many attribute his abilities to "totem magic" and other supernatural explanations Swiftrunner finds ridiculous. He can telepathically communicate with many animals and even see through their eyes. Deuce convinces him that his abilities would be a great asset to the team and the doctor joins the group in Tuskegee, becoming their fourth member.

Later that year, the team hears word of a new wave of "jinx lynching" by the Alabama Old Guard. Citing his earlier Presidential mandate to fight crime, Deuce leads his team into their first real combat, tracking down and killing what members of the Old Guard they are not able to apprehend for trial.

1939 CE: Minuteman John Rogers Maddux re-emerges in the 20th century, wearing a stolen prototype Valhalla Battlesuit. From what little he has revealed of his stay in the Thousand Year Reich, his entire resistance movement was destroyed and only he was able to survive by escaping into the past.

(1939 CE Continued)

After reporting to the nearest Order of the Hourglass base and reading reports from around the world, including a Nazi invasion of Poland, Maddux flies to the Top Secret Tuskegee Superhuman and Testing Range he learned of during his stay in the alternate future.

Once there, he meets with Deuce and volunteers for service with the group. He tells them about the Nazi saboteurs he has been fighting and the group, now six members strong, begins fighting this new menace throughout the United States. The media dubs them Vigilance Force.

September 1st, Germany attacks Poland. Though Britain, France and the Commonwealth declare war on Germany, they offer no actual support to Poland. Hours before the conventional attack, the Eugenics Brigade begins appearing and disappearing throughout Poland. They kill military commanders, prominent politicians, and destroy defensive positions. They appear to be everywhere and Polish commanders wonder if there aren't multiple brigades of metahumans attacking them.

These attacks add to the confusion and fear of the blitzkrieg and become incorporated into their tactics. They become known as "decapitation" as the primary targets are military and political leaders.

1940 CE: Fred Williamson enters a bizarre trance-like state barely understood by the scientists that have been studying and training Vigilance Force.

(1940 CE Continued)

While in this state, he builds the world's first two jet aircraft. A small, short-range fighter and a larger craft capable of crossing the Atlantic in record time carrying an entire squad.

When he emerges from this trance state, Williamson claims to remember nothing and does not remember how to build more of these jets. With even his limited understanding of the craft, it is decided they will not be disassembled but used as is.

Williamson dubs the large transport aircraft the Condor and the small fighter the Nightflyer. While the addition of the two jet aircraft give Vigilance Force and USHER a huge advantage in the years to come, it betrays a central unease many in USHER feel toward the arrogant, though brilliant, Williamson.

Many in USHER's R&D division bluntly accuse him of lying about not being able to build more jets, believing he'd rather be out in the field than supervising factories, churning out aircraft that could win the war quickly.

Characteristically, Williamson's response is that the scientists are "idiots".

In May, Germany invades France and the French response to the invasion is nothing short of a disaster. The Maginot Line is quickly flanked by German mobility. As their static war plans fall apart, the French are further thrown into disarray by attacks launched by the Eugenics Brigade.

(1940 CE Continued)

When Italy invades as well, French forces abandon Paris to the German Army and by the 17th of June France, who had what many considered the best army in Europe is asking the Germans for an armistice.

The attack is such a disaster, and Neville Chamberlain's handling of the war is so poorly regarded that he is removed as Prime Minister and replaced with Winston Churchill. Churchill manages, through a minor miracle, to withdraw British troops from France, along with large numbers of "Free French" forces who refuse to accept the peace brokered by collaborationist elements in their government.

Of critical importance, many Polish soldiers, along with the Armorer and the Enigma machine he carries, capable of decoding German transmissions.

Despite the devastating fall of France and the narrow evacuation of British, French and Polish troops, Churchill vows to continue fighting to the end, alone if necessary. Hitler believes Britain as a nation does not have their heart in the fight, based on his opinion of Neville Chamberlain and believes if he can remove Churchill from the situation, that he can force Britain to the negotiating table and arrange a friendly government has he had in France.





(1940 CE Continued)

After intense debate, Hitler and his war planners decide on a three-pronged strategy to deal with Britain: first, the Eugenics Brigade will assassinate Winston Churchill; second, the Luftwaffe will gain total air superiority over the island by wiping out the RAF; finally, as a last resort, an amphibious invasion of Britain will be carried out.

Hitler's goal for these operations is primarily to make the British government feel a sense of overwhelming vulnerability. With no air cover, and their leaders subject to decapitation attacks, they would negotiate peace to protect the royal family.

Immediately Hitler's plan begins to run into problems. Spies operating inside Britain were never able to determine any pattern to the skillful doubles he had impersonating him. At the time the attack was ordered they were only able to narrow the possibilities down to two, Churchill and one of his doubles.

On July 9th, the day before the air campaign is to begin, Hitler orders the Brigade to divide into two teams. His spies know Sword and Stone are guarding the real Churchill (with actors impersonating them guarding Churchill's double) but even divided in two the Brigade will have a great superiority in numbers.

Many things about this attack were different than previous engagements by the Eugenics Brigade, besides the splitting of the group into two teams. First, the Überfallkommando did not accompany them, something that would prove crucial as the events played out.

(1940 CE Continued)

Second, neither Gotterdammerung nor Dr. Eugenik accompanied the teams. Instead, they inserted the teams then moved to a 3rd location in Britain, maintaining radio contact with the two teams, unaware that British forces were actually able to decode their transmissions.

Although hubris has been given as a reason for the different tactics employed by the Brigade, Dr. Eugenik maintained they had good reasons for the decisions they made. In particular, it was felt the inclusion of the Überfallkommando would attract too much attention in noise and light on a mission where stealth was considered essential.

It was also felt that the Überfallkommando would be vulnerable to British aircraft, as operations in Britain had to be conducted without air superiority. There was also fear of the jetpacks falling into British hands if one or more of the commandos were shot down during the operation.

Finally of course, was the removal of Gotterdammerung, removing the tremendously mobility the brigade had enjoyed in their Polish and French campaigns. Again, this was seen as necessitated by the circumstances.

Unit 1 was comprised of: Charismatic, Krieghund, Schlagring (Unit Leader) and Streitaxt.

Unit 2 was comprised of: Donnerschlag, Feurfest, Traumfrau and Überkrieger (Unit Leader). It was felt there was a 65% chance this team's target was the real Churchill, so their team was stronger than Unit 1.

The attack commences at midnight on the 9th of July. Even without their air support, the Nazi assassins are compromised before the operation even begins. Zbrojmistrz, "the Armorer", the Polish super-genius had seen the Brigade do this twice before, in Poland and again in France. He had been working in his lab night and day to prevent it from happening a third time.

Using his decoding device, he got word of the attack before it was even launched and warned the British government. The Armorer had even learned the formation of the teams. However, the fact that Gotterdammerung, Doctor Eugenik and the Überfallkommando would not be present was not revealed over radio.

The Armorer had also developed a radio-jamming device that could cut the teams off from each other. It weighed 500 lbs and could only be used for an hour before it would catch fire but it might be enough for the British to turn the tables on the Brigade.

Racing against the clock, a plan was quickly hatched to ambush the weaker of the two teams, Unit 1. The three actors were not given any warning that they were certain to face an attack they had no hope of surviving, to ensure no warning of the ambush from Unit 2.

First both Churchills would be actors; the Prime Minister would be smuggled to Stonehenge by the Crown Guard. Second, the real Sword and Stone would protect Unit 1's target, assisted by the elite 50-man core of the Crown Guard to battle the 25 members of the Überfallkommando the British expected to be present. Third, the Armorer would set up off site and act as a sniper.

(1940 CE Continued)

Once the Armorer spotted Unit 1 approaching Mr. Churchill's private residence, the jamming device was activated, cutting the teams off from each other, and from their commanders. The first indication Unit 1 had that they had walked into an ambush was when the Armorer killed Charismatic with his custom sniper rifle.

Krieghund immediately left the group, searching for the sniper, completely ignoring the orders Schlagring was shouting at him. Krieghund expected the sniper to be easy to find but the Armorer intentionally led him away from the fight, surmising that Sword and Stone would fare better against even odds.

In the ensuing battle, Stone killed Schlagring while Sword and Streitaxt fought to a bloody standstill that almost killed both men. Meanwhile the Armorer played cat and mouse with Krieghund, who was used to being the cat but here found himself the mouse. He was never able to find the elite commando, constantly blundered into traps and was shot 17 times before finally being killed.

Streitaxt was about to join his team in death when communications were suddenly restored, the jamming device burning itself out. Seconds after his frantic SOS went out over the restored airwaves, Unit 2, along with Gotterdammerung and Doctor Eugenik, appeared and joined the battle.

In this second phase of the battle 38 of the 50 support soldiers of the Crown Guard were killed, along with Stone.

In this second phase of the battle 38 of the 50 support soldiers of the Crown Guard were killed, along with Stone. The Armorer had called in air strikes from the RAF as soon as the second unit had appeared and it was the sound of their engines that caused the Brigade to retreat.

Still, the battle was a great victory on all levels: tactical, strategic and propaganda. Tactically the Crown Guard had lost one metahuman, while the Eugenics Brigade had lost three.

Strategically, the Prime Minister was saved and the Germans learned not to underestimate their last remaining adversary in Europe.

The British paraded the bodies of the three dead metahumans in front of reporters and newsreel cameras for the entire world to see. The Nazis were not the "Master Race", their metahumans were not "modern gods". They could be killed. And Churchill bluntly told reporters that they would be killed, each and every time they set foot on British soil.

Churchill also introduced the Crown Guard to the British public for the first time, wounds and all: the Armorer; Excalibur, now wearing his brother's armor and amulet in addition to the mystic sword.

To assist this pair, Churchill has convinced three of his allied powers to provide metahumans in response to the narrowly diverted attack and the nightmare scenario of a Britain without Churchill's leadership: Esprit, the "fighting spirit of France"; Grizzly, national hero of Canada; and Swordfish, from the Atlantic undersea kingdom of Oceania.

(1940 CE Continued)

Just one day after Churchill's triumphant debut of the now-five strong Crown Guard, the skies over Britain darken with aircraft and the Battle of Britain begins.

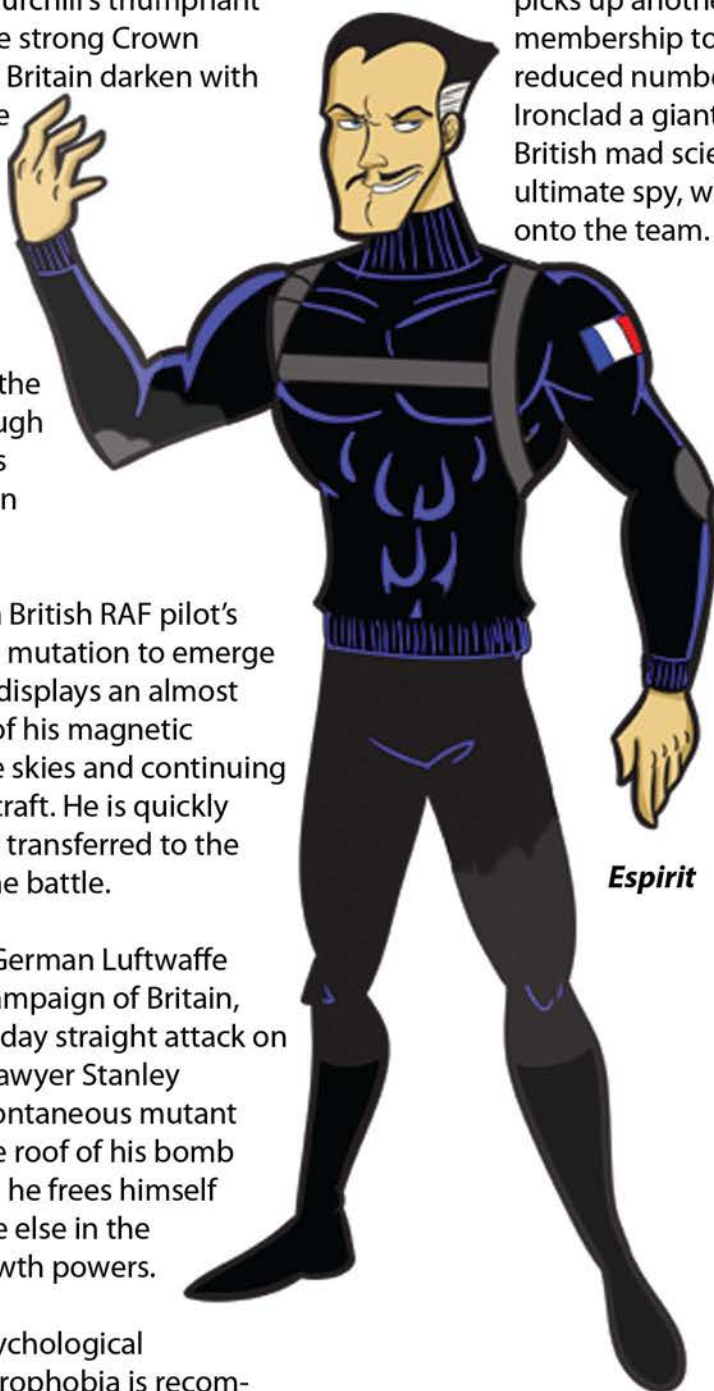
President Roosevelt secretly orders Christian Thomason and Fred Williamson to Britain to assist in the island's defense, though what he really fears is another assassination attempt.

During the fighting a British RAF pilot's stress causes a latent mutation to emerge and the daring pilot displays an almost immediate mastery of his magnetic powers, taking to the skies and continuing to down German aircraft. He is quickly dubbed Repulse and transferred to the Crown Guard after the battle.

September 6th, the German Luftwaffe begins a bombing campaign of Britain, beginning with a 76-day straight attack on the city of London. Lawyer Stanley Linwood exhibits spontaneous mutant emergence when the roof of his bomb shelter collapses and he frees himself (and saving everyone else in the shelter) with his growth powers.

Although intense psychological counseling for claustrophobia is recommended, Stanley is hurried through a Crown Guard combat training course, joining their metahuman team as Big Ben.

In December the Crown Guard amazingly picks up another two members, raising its membership to almost twice that of the reduced numbers of the Eugenics Brigade: Ironclad a giant robot built in a barn by a British mad scientist and Illustrious, the ultimate spy, who literally talks himself onto the team.



Espirit

1941 CE: President and Mrs. Roosevelt visit Tuskegee to see both the Superhuman Testing and Training Range, where Vigilance Force is training, as well as the all African-American flying squadrons of the Tuskegee Airmen. Mrs. Roosevelt flies with the Airmen, while Christian Thomason, carries the President into the air, who famously dubs him "Old Glory", a name he will carry for the rest of his life.

As a joke, Fred Williamson decides if Thomason is going to have a "comic book code name" like Old Glory that he will go by "Captain Miracle". To his everlasting chagrin the name sticks and is his code name for the rest of the war.

As war with Germany looks more and more inevitable, the remaining members of the team are given code names as well, with Raymont dubbed Freight Train and Jonathan Swiftrunner dubbed Talon.

The pilots of the Tuskegee Airmen often train alongside Vigilance Force, pretending to be enemy aircraft flying pursuit. Though many are skeptical of using the African-American pilots in combat, Deuce knows his force will eventually need its own counter to the Überfallkommando and recruits many of the best combat pilots into USHER, dubbing them the Pegasus Squadron.

Under intense pressure from Hitler to duplicate his earlier successes, Dr. Eugenik hurries his latest success through an intense training process for service with the Brigade. He is dubbed Zaenker, or "Brawler" and is barely metahuman, possessing some superhuman strength and durability, along with some advanced weaponry invented by German engineers.

Despite being the weakest member of the Brigade by far, the blonde-haired, blue-eyed Brawler is prominently featured in a wave of Nazi propaganda films designed to play up his abilities and portray him as major success of their ongoing Eugenics program.

The United States has begun to break Japanese codes, though in 1941 they only have access to diplomatic traffic. Still, they know some sort of make or break deadline has been called for December if a "solution" to the U.S oil embargo against Japan is not reached.

On December 7th, as Japanese warplanes devastate the Pacific fleet moored at Pearl Harbor, the full Eugenics Brigade and all 50 of the Überfallkommando appear in the White House, intent on assassinating President Franklin Roosevelt.

Given their intelligence of a deadline however, President Roosevelt has been removed far from the White House. As they step through Gotterdammerung's mystic gate, the Brigade finds they are facing America's fledgling Vigilance Force as well as a White House filled with traps and automated machineguns set up by Capt. Amazing and Minuteman.

During the bloody battle, fought between metahumans in close quarters, Deuce, Talon and Zaenker are killed. Outside, the Überfallkommando and the Pegasus Brigade fight one of the only air battles in all of WWII to take place in American airspace.

(1941 CE Continued)

This engagement is a decisive victory for German commandos, despite being outnumbered by the relatively slow and clumsy American aircraft flown by the Pegasus Squadron. Over 75 airmen lose their lives in this stage of the battle. Soon the battle turns into a standoff, with Old Glory and Feurfest canceling each other out and with Minuteman, Capt. Amazing and Freight Train keeping the rest of the Brigade off balance and on the run with a series of daring hit and run attacks.

Finally Dr. Eugenik determines that there are no "high value" targets present and calls for the Brigade to withdraw.

Speaking with Vigilance Force via radio, President Roosevelt appoints General Sanders Simpson as the new leader of USHER. He thanks the team for their sacrifice, congratulates them on their victory and then orders them back to Tuskegee.

On December 31st, Gen. Simpson takes USHER in a new direction, one most members of Vigilance Force disapprove of. First, he reorganizes the entire Tuskegee STT, which had been loose, almost chaotic and definitely not military in its approach. USHER will have three main arms: combat, technical and special projects.

Old Glory is given field command of the combat arm, led by Vigilance Force. Capt. Amazing is put in charge of the technical division, given complete authority over the group of engineers and technicians that have come to loathe him over the past 4 years.

Finally, most controversial of all is special projects, will not be stationed at Tuskegee but rather at a new facility being constructed at Groom Lake, Nevada. This division will operate with near-complete autonomy and have license to do almost anything in the defense of the nation. Their first mission is to study the body of Zaenker, left behind after the attack and attempt to construct an American eugenics program.

1942 CE: Through the early months of this year General Simpson puts USHER through training more intense than what they had received in the previous four years. Where Deuce treated Vigilance Force as individuals and civilians, Jefferson determines that they need real military training for the days ahead.

Military specialists in hand-to-hand combat, dogfighting, demolitions, stealth, espionage and firearms are brought in to provide advanced training to individual members of the Force.

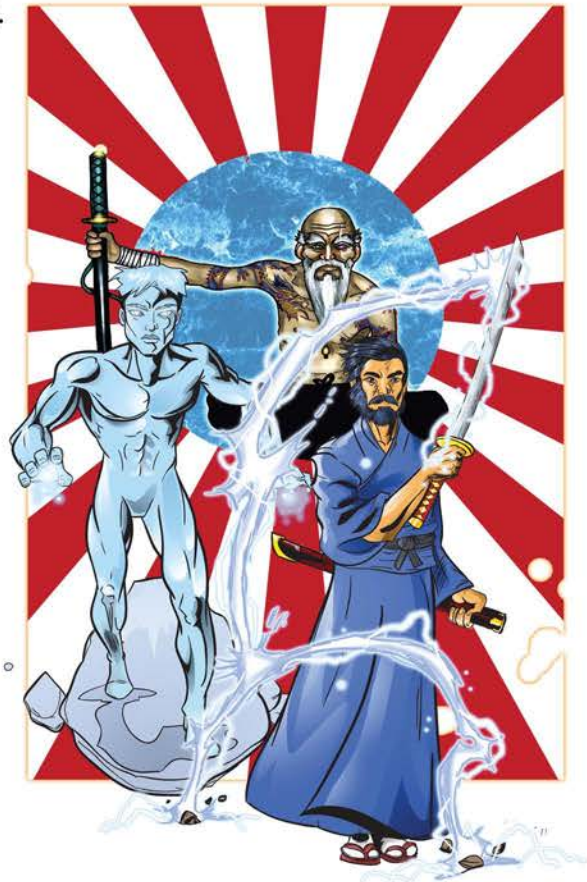
Meanwhile Williamson is given wide latitude in how he handles his new staff and transfers most of the senior scientists to aircraft production so they can design new aircraft "and win the war". He does not replace them but rather promotes from within, forming strong bonds with young, brilliant, radical scientists who think like he does.

Analyzing the battle at the White House, Williamson concludes that the Pegasus Squadron, as currently constituted, is worse than useless and begins work on an American version of the Überfallkommando.

(1942 CE Continued)

In what would prove to be the most controversial event of his tenure as head of USHER, Gen. Simpson appears before a joint session of Congress and when pressed on his new direction, with a more overtly paramilitary Vigilance Force, an American eugenics program and an American version of the Überfallkommando, he responds, "The Brigade are the best in the world. Denying that is counterproductive. The Nazis have rockets too, should we never build any?"

Japan debuts its national metahuman force, dubbed Shinjuwan Juunigatsu (Pearl Harbor December) consisting of: Ikkitousen (Matchless Warrior), Desumasuku (Death Mask), Kaibutsu (Monster), Katana-mochi (Sword Bearer), Kogoejini (Hypothermia) and Kojiki (Ancient Chronicle).



German propaganda makes a great deal of this team, noting the extensive access the Japanese were given to their eugenics facilities before the team's debut. However, quietly ignored is the fact that not a single one of these metahumans are an actual result of eugenics procedures. However, like the German Verhexte, the Japanese do acquire a number of Banmin (Beastmen) from their experiments.

The Japanese do borrow battlesuit innovations and metahuman group tactics from the Eugenics Brigade and issue their own propaganda (for domestic consumption) that highlights how truly Japanese their team is.

One tactic of the Germans the Japanese studiously avoid is decapitation. For reasons never clearly explained, they avoid direct attacks on American leaders. Instead, Pearl Harbor December focuses on assaults against fortified positions, paving the way for ground and air assaults by conventional Japanese forces.

They also avoid direct confrontation with the Crown Guard and the Vigilance Force whenever possible, in what Gen. Douglas MacArthur would call their "winning the war" strategy, insisting, as many commanders do, that metahumans are a waste when they fight each other, rather than wreaking havoc on conventional troops.

They point out that the great German successes by the Eugenics Brigade were not their spectacular assassinations of leadership figures but rather the devastation they wrought on fortified positions in Poland and France. All attempts to kill Churchill and Roosevelt had gotten them was 4 dead metahumans.

(1942 CE Continued)

As part of Operation Torch, the American-British joint invasion of North Africa, the Crown Guard, Vigilance Force and Eugenics Brigade all see action in North Africa this year. The Allied metahuman teams are there specifically to prevent the Eugenics Brigade from visiting their patented brand of havoc on fortified positions.

Though they do prevent any major interference and stage several important delay, distraction and ambush operations, both the Crown Guard and Vigilance Force lose every direct engagement against the Eugenics Brigade in 1942.

With reports of strange monsters ravaging American positions on Guadalcanal, Vigilance Force is quickly moved to the Pacific Theater, where the USS Enterprise serves as the Force's base of operations. There they have their first confrontation with the Banmin, as well as their only direct engagement against Pearl Harbor December for the entire war.

In October the Japanese make a desperate bid to remove America's only functional aircraft carrier from the Pacific and prevent her protection of Guadalcanal, where she is vital in preventing the Japanese from landing more troops on the contested island.

In this battle, Old Glory kills Hypothermia and the Force rids the island of its monstrous Banmin. With the Enterprise and other American ships sinking the troop transports desperately trying to ferry troops to Guadalcanal, Pearl Harbor December withdraws from the area.

Vigilance Force spends the remainder of 1942 on board Enterprise, conducting operations throughout the Pacific Theater of the war.

1943 CE: In what classified documents refer to as "the Atrocity Incident", the American eugenics labs at Groom Lake suffer a catastrophic explosion resulting in the deaths of all test subjects and 40 of the 50 researchers working on the project. With new Essex-class carriers entering the Pacific Theater and the protection of USS Enterprise less important, Vigilance Force is immediately recalled to investigate this disaster. At the facility itself, they find rubble, a lot of bodies and miraculously, two survivors.

Dr. Claire Starling was doing preliminary research on the eugenics formulae extracted from the body of Zaenker, seeing its effects on various types of insects. She is thought one of the casualties for days until Fred Williamson discovers her being cared for by her insect test subjects, who have somehow bonded to her as a "Queen Ant".

When she regains consciousness, she finds she can transition from her normal size to the size of the ants she has always studied. She also can communicate with ants and control them. She is given the code name Hornet and immediately drafted into the undermanned Vigilance Force.

The second survivor is Marine Sgt. Max Morley, who is granted superhuman strength and near-invulnerability by the explosion. He is given the code name Marauder and also drafted into the Force.

(1943 CE Continued)

These two new recruits are immediately baptized by fire as 7 of the other 8 survivors emerge from the desert, transformed into "atrocities" by the explosion, the unfortunate byproduct of all Eugenics experiments.

In a bloody battle that destroys what little is left of the Groom Lake facility, Vigilance Force is forced to kill all 7. The 10th and final survivor, later dubbed "the Atrocity", is stronger, tougher and smarter than the Beastmen who attacked the facility. Still, he is dubbed a critical danger and potential asset to the American war effort, and Vigilance Force is ordered to capture the creature and anesthetize him.

As a result of the Atrocity Incident, Congress launches a major investigation into USHER, which immediately becomes a targeted investigation of its controversial new leader, Gen. Simpson. Though he denies any wrongdoing, Simpson is crucified at the hearing and removed from official leadership of USHER. He is then remanded to the military, which court-martials him and removes him from the military completely with a dishonorable discharge.

After consulting with Congress, USHER personnel and Vigilance Force, President Roosevelt names Old Glory, age 18, who has become a national hero as the third Director of USHER.

On the Eastern Front in Europe, Hitler orders Dr. Eugenik to release all his Verhexte into the Russian wilderness to help blunt and distract the growing Soviet offensive.

These vicious creatures cause widespread destruction and terror but fail to slow the Soviet advance. Unfortunately, Stalin also uses them in his growing anti-metahuman propaganda campaigns.

A new, second unit of the Überfallkommando is created by Dr. Eugenik for use on the Eastern Front. Though their jetpacks and training, along with minor metahuman enhancement are expensive, the value of the group as elite soldiers cannot be denied. Also, as the eugenics labs have not successfully created a new metahuman since Zaenker, this is one way Dr. Eugenik feels he can continue to prove his worth to Hitler.

1944 CE: Intelligence gathering in Europe by the Armorer and Illustrious reveals the location of the German eugenics laboratories. Despite their failure to produce any new high-powered metahumans, Dr. Eugenik's labs still produce minor metahumans and Verhexte.

They also maintain the jetpacks of the Überfallkommando and serve as a Nazi skunkworks, producing extremely dangerous prototype weaponry of all sorts. Among these is a rumored V-4 rocket, capable of reaching the United States.

The Allies determine that the Crown Guard and Vigilance Force must join forces and destroy this facility. After much debate, it is decided that Old Glory will lead this combined force, with Big Ben serving as his second in command. Churchill, seeing the combined force train together in England during the preparations for the attack, dubs them "the Aegis shield of Europe".

(1944 CE Continued)

Assisting this operation will be the first fruits of Fred Williamson's first wave of research, USHER's answer to the Überfallkommando. Though he respects their power and "awe" factor, Williamson decides the noise and light generated by the Nazi jetpacks is ultimately counterproductive to most combat situations.

Instead his answer revolves around personal gliders, allowing troops to be inserted at night in stealth anywhere in the world. He dubs these soldiers the Nighthawks and Old Glory decides to use this hidden asset for the first time.

In the hours before the nighttime attack, the Nighthawks insert into the eugenics facility and destroy the Überfallkommando before they can take to the air, exploding their jetpack storage on the ground and setting half the facility on fire.

During the battle between Aegis and the Eugenics Brigade, the German force is killed almost to the last man. Streitaxt walks away in disgust and Gotterdammerung whisks Dr. Eugenik away to safety but only him. He leaves the rest of the Brigade to its fate.

For its part, the Crown Guard loses Esprit, Ironclad and Illustrious while Vigilance Force loses Freight Train.

Before departing the base, Dr. Eugenik releases all his remaining Verhexte into the European countryside and launches his "Ultimativ Rache" or "ultimate vengeance": a V-4 carrying an atomic warhead, aimed at New York City.

After ordering the base burned to the ground, Old Glory, Fred Williamson and Repulse board the Nightflyer, intent on shooting the missile from the sky before it can strike America.

In a desperate chase, the "hypersonic" (the word supersonic had not yet been coined) Nightflyer chases the ballistic missile, with Williamson predicting where the missile would leave low orbit before heading down toward New York City.

When the missile is spotted, Repulse manages to arrest its flight long enough for Old Glory to set the missile off. Using his primary power to absorb energy (his ability to project heat is a redirection of absorbed solar energy), Old Glory absorbs more than 90% of the total energy released by the bomb.

Outside the aircraft at the time of the explosion, Repulse is immediately given a lethal dose of radiation by the remaining energy. Fred Williamson seems to have been shielded by the hull of the Nightflyer. Old Glory however, emerges from the explosion more powerful than ever. His abilities had previously been partially dependent on solar energy, limiting his use in night operations. With the power of an atomic bomb coursing through his body however, he seems to never want for energy again.

On the Eastern Front, Soviet forces begin using captured Überfallkommando jetpacks in specialized elite units. The common Russian soldier is never told these units exist or given any official name for them so they begin to refer to them as "Shturmovik", a general word for a ground-attack fighter plane.

1945 CE: The Crown Guard pursues a pack of Verhexte into Budapest where elite Soviet units that specialize in “neutralizing” metahumans fire upon them. The Crown Guard responds to this unexpected attack viciously, destroying a dozen Russian tanks and causing more Russian reinforcements to be called in.

This conflict is on the verge of spiraling out of control quickly and threatens to destabilize the entire Russian siege of Budapest before commanders on both sides are able to pull their forces back. This first-hand experience of Soviet genocide against metahumans and the tepid Allied response of establishing “zones of control” for Soviet and Allied forces so that these units will not encounter each other again, drives a wedge between the British government and its metahuman operatives that never fully heals.

At the Yalta Conference between Allied leaders Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, FDR lays out an ambitious plan for post-war security, including a proposal for an international body that would have its own metahuman strike force, capable of responding with greater rapidity and more precision than conventional forces.

This expansive plan, which would combine USHER and Crown Guard into one force called Aegis, is bitterly opposed by Stalin. Upon Roosevelt’s death, President Truman withdraws that element of the United Nations proposal, deeming USHER vital to American national security and realizing that Stalin would never accept such a proposal anyway.

Vigilance Force is recalled to the Pacific and again stationed on USS Enterprise in preparation for a final confrontation with Pearl Harbor December. When the United States drops two atomic bombs on Japanese cities, the surrender prevents an invasion of the Japanese home islands, and any further conflict between the American and Japanese metahuman forces.

New British Prime Minister Clement Atlee repeatedly refuses requests by the Crown Guard (especially the Armorer) to reinforce Poland and prevent the country replacing its Nazi occupiers for the Red Army. In what many see as treason, the Crown Guard then encounters numerous “logistical delays” that prevent their transfer to the Pacific along with Vigilance Force and sees the British metahumans essentially sit out the final months of the war.

Operation Overcast is formed, interviewing captured Nazi scientists for their potential value to the war effort in the Pacific. When the Pacific war comes to an unexpected conclusion with the atomic bombing and subsequent surrender of Japan, the scientists are tagged for relocation to the United States. In an attempt to keep this new program secret from their former Soviet allies, the Americans rename the program Operation Paperclip.

The scientists deemed of highest value to the allies were the Nazi geneticists, their atomic physicists and their rocketry experts. Unknown to the allies at the time, these were not the scientists most highly valued by the Russians, who undertake a program of their own, targeting Nazi battlesuit and jetpack engineers responsible for Feurfest, Schlagring and the Überfallkommando.

(1945 CE Continued)

In November, on the eve of the Nuremberg war crimes trials, Gotterdammerung teleports Dr. Eugenik to South America and freedom. He leaves the other Nazi leaders to their fate and expresses to Dr. Eugenik his desire to travel back to the past yet again and "correct" his mistakes.

On Christmas day, Repulse dies of radiation poisoning from the massive dose he received over the Atlantic.

1946 CE: Grizzly, Swordfish and the Armorer return to their home countries. On the same day, Big Ben resigns from the Crown Guard, leaving Excalibur as the only active metahuman on their roster. Big Ben's resignation is refused and he immediately files suit against the government to sever himself from their employ.

USHER gains permission for a small "underground expansion", a new sub-basement beneath Alcatraz for the storage of Atrocity, who remains anesthetized. A small group of USHER physicians and scientists are assigned to the island to over the care and study of the creature.

The Armorer begins formal operation of a resistance movement against Soviet occupation of Poland.

1947 CE: Dr. Eugenik is in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in a lab set up by ODESSA agents. When USHER agents begin to close in on the lab's location, ODESSA moves Dr. Eugenik into a new, more elaborate lab hidden in the Amazon rain forest.

Having known for some time there were flaws in his basic formulae, Dr. Eugenik uses this advanced lab to go "back to basics". He begins new base level experiments, ironically choosing to begin his experimentation on insects, as Dr. Claire Starling (a.k.a. Hornet) had done at the Groom Lake facility.

The National Security Act reorganizes the armed forces and intelligence agencies of the United States. This act merges the Department of War and the Department of the Navy into the Department of Defense and separates the Air Force from the Army. The act also creates the Central Intelligence Agency and USHER as the nation's first peacetime covert intelligence services. USHER is charged with covert intelligence, defense and research involving metahuman matters.

Christian Thomason (a.k.a. Old Glory) and Fred Williamson (the former Capt. Amazing, now a.k.a. the Savant) are given military ranks of Brigadier General and named USHER's first Director of Field Operations and Director of Research and Development, respectively.

The Savant is also placed in charge of "special projects", on the understanding that any "wetware" experiments (those conducted on humans) would require the express permission of congress.

USHER's first headquarters, code-named Liberty Tower, is constructed underneath Liberty Island and the Statue of Liberty.

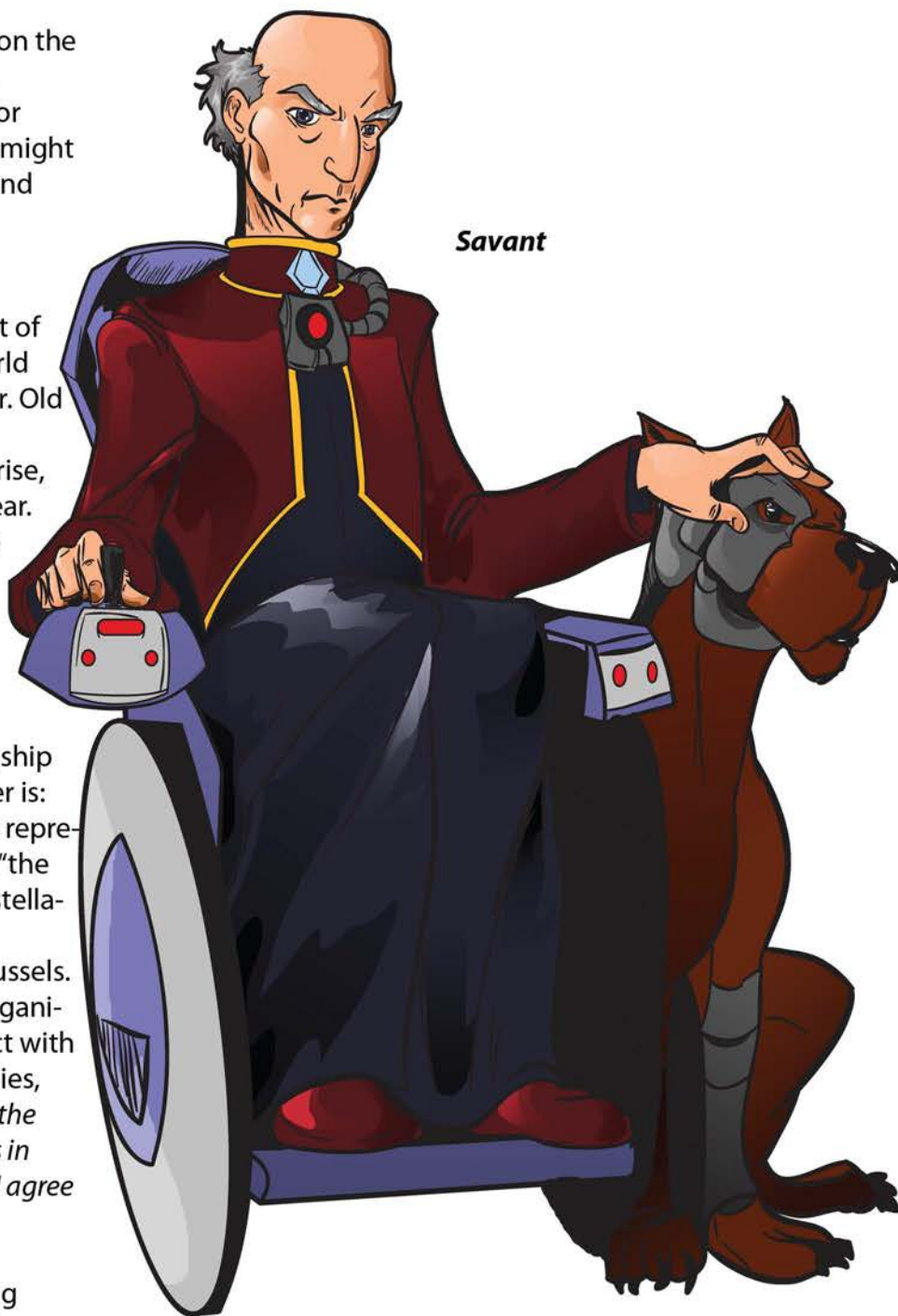
(1947 CE Continued)

USHER personnel serve undercover on the island itself, posing as National Park Service employees, on the lookout for enemy agents or metahumans who might have learned of the base's location and attempt to gain entry.

USHER's charter also grants the organization the right to operate out of American embassies around the world and for one mobile command center. Old Glory requests that the first mobile command center be the USS Enterprise, slated for the scrap yard later that year. The Navy agrees to sell Enterprise to USHER on the condition the name be changed. The vessel reenters service as the USS Response following a refit.

1949 CE: Debut of Aegis, NATO's flagship team of metahumans. Its initial roster is: Big Ben representing Britain, Hornet representing the United States, Aviateur ("the Flier") representing France and Constellation representing "Free Europeans". The new organization is based in Brussels. Asked about his leadership of the organization, in light of his ongoing conflict with the British government, Big Ben replies, *"I've been told my mandate is to keep the Russians out of Europe, the Americans in Europe and keep the Germans down. I agree with all of that."*

1950 CE: USHER agents are operating covertly in Berlin, helping to smuggle metahumans out of the Eastern Bloc for relocation to the west. One of the most effective of these agents is Saul Doleman, codenamed Wraith, who possesses metahuman abilities of invisibility and desolidification.



Savant

(1950 CE Continued)

Aegis fights cybernetic Katral operatives conducting genetic modifications in Spain.

1951 CE: Stanley Linwood (a.k.a. Big Ben) and Claire Starling (a.k.a. Hornet) are married just in time for the birth of their first child, a son named Stanley Jr.

1952 CE: The Savant begins construction on Site B and Site C, two new cooling chambers for new computers. Both Site B and C are twice as large as the original. When these computers are finished, the Savant links all three together.

Old Glory meets in secret with Sanders Simpson and shows him bodies and technology recovered from the fight between Aegis and Katral operatives. He asks Simpson to head a new agency that will operate off the books from everyone, even USHER, to combat these alien operatives.

1953 CE: The Armorer is killed in a Soviet crackdown on the Polish resistance.

Joseph Stalin dies, replaced by Nikita Khrushchev. One of his first official acts is to begin formation of a Soviet answer to USHER. German battlesuit engineers that designed the Feurfest and Schlagring armors as well as the Überfallkommando jetpacks find themselves trading Siberian prison cells for state of the art battlesuit laboratories.

Elizabeth becomes Queen of the British Commonwealth. Three days after her coronation, Stanley Linwood's resignation from the Crown Guard is suddenly accepted.

Less than two weeks later Stanley Linwood and Richard Lathon (a.k.a. Excalibur) are knighted for their service in WWII.

Although they cannot be knighted, Grizzly and Swordfish are returned to Britain and granted the Distinguished Service Order for service to the state in wartime.

As part of an increasing behind the scenes competition for metahumans smuggled out of Eastern Bloc countries, the United States Escapee Program (USEP) begins to offer special "incentives" to metahumans. USHER agents relocate entire families and even friends and acquaintances of metahumans in return for military or covert service.

The Savant begins building dozens of smaller sites, containing newer, smaller computers, which are linked to GL1-3. Based on the look of these connected sites from the air, project engineers begin to refer to the computer as Medusa.

It is believed, though impossible to confirm, that Medusa became self-aware in December of this year as this is the first time engineers working on the product noted enormous growth in computing power that they could not explain.

1954 CE: "The Horde": A state of emergency is declared in Brazil as giant, mutated army ants come pouring out of the Amazon rain forest. Entire towns are depopulated as raiding swarms sweep through, leaving only skeletons behind.

The USHER office in Sao Paulo requests immediate assistance and by the end of the year Old Glory and the Savant are both operating out of Sao Paulo.

(1954 CE Continued)

Theodore Jacobson, a Warsaw Jew who had fought resistance campaigns against the Nazis and the Red Army, leaves Poland forever after burying his best friend, the Armorer. Against the wishes of his friend, he does not bury him with his weapons, taking the custom-designed firearms, decades ahead of their time, with him to Israel.

1955 CE: The Savant convinces Claire Starling, a.k.a. Hornet to take a leave of absence from Aegis and join the fight against the Horde in South America as Peru, Bolivia and Columbia also declare states of emergency.

Theodore Jacobson is working for Mossad as a sniper and assassin, primarily hunting escaped Nazis in South America. He is given the code name Omega.

1956 CE: Hornet determines that a new formula of Nazi eugenics mutagens have mutated the ants of the Horde. She also determines that the swarms, which now threaten over half of South America, are a single mega-hive with a single queen. Big Ben, Minuteman, Excalibur, Desumasuku and Kojiki join USHER forces in Brazil.

With the blessing of several Central American governments, the United States Army occupies Panama. Airplanes stand by 24 hours day, loaded with napalm, with orders to commence large scale bombing to prevent the Horde from breaking out of South America.

The Soviet Shturmovik Mk I take the field, almost identical to the Nazi-era Schlagring armor. When a congressional panel asks Fred Williamson (now going by his modern pseudonym the Savant) to name a difference between the Shturmovik and Schlagring armors, he replies, *"The Russian one is red"*.

Following Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalinism as a "cult of personality", and associated reforms of the Soviet state, uprisings and riots break out across the Soviet Union and the new battlesuits are sent (along with conventional forces) to quell the unrest. The first battles fought by Shturmovik agents are against their own countrymen.

1957 CE: After chemically strengthening her natural pheromones, which she uses to communicate with and gain control over insects, Hornet moves into the midst of a massive swarm approaching the southern Panamanian border and establishes herself as the queen of a second hive.

She turns the millions of ants now under her control south, pitting Horde against Horde as USHER agents race to find the primary queen, attempting to locate a single moving target, however massive, located somewhere in the Amazon basin.

The Savant uses Medusa to predict where the Horde Queen will be and receives an estimate placing search teams within 1,000 yards of her actual location. Every Nighthawk and Pegasus unit in USHER is mobilized for massive fire bombardment from the air to clear the area around the Horde Queen.

(1957 CE Continued)

While they, along with Hornet's rival Horde fight the insects, Old Glory leads a team of metahumans consisting of himself, Big Ben, Excalibur, the Savant, Minuteman, Desumasuku and Kojiki to attack the Queen directly.

The Horde Queen is killed in the battle, as are Big Ben, Excalibur, Minuteman and Desumasuku.

Overwhelmed with grief at the death of her husband and flooded with pheromone communication from millions of the Horde, Hornet assumes full control and turns the entire Horde around, resuming their march north.

The Horde comes within 100 miles of the Panama border before the Savant manages to kit bash an electrical device to "short circuit" Hornet's abilities temporarily, cutting her off from the Horde but more importantly, cutting them off from her.

Old Glory is able to remove her from the Horde as the removal of all leadership turns the mass of giant insects into a chaotic swarm, feeding on anything, even each other.

Big Ben, frozen at gigantic size in death, is cremated in Brazil, his ashes transported home to England in a full size coffin. He is buried at Westminster Abbey in a funeral carried on television around the world.

Excalibur and the body of Sir Richard Lathon are returned to the Crown Guard and popular rumor is that he is interred next to Arthur and Merlin beneath one of the massive stones of the henge.

Desumasuku and his armor are returned to his family. The Japanese government requests to remove the armor before the burial and this request is granted by the family out of a fear that graverobbers will unearth their son.

Minuteman has no known relatives or next of kin, as every name he has given to USHER over the years has turned out to be false. He is interred in the morgue underneath Liberty Tower. His body does not decay, as a result of time distortion around the corpse.



Desumasuku

(1957 CE Continued)

The United States becomes more aggressive in recruiting foreign nationals with metahuman abilities to serve in intelligence and military capacities. Where once relocation, benefits and citizenship were offered, now only vague promises of "protection" for family members is offered, along with small cash payments.

Sadly, these offers are taken by metahumans who have few other options, as many countries have adopted Soviet-style metahuman policies, killing or imprisoning metahumans out of a paranoid fear that they will disrupt local politics.

1958 CE: The Savant is diagnosed with terminal cancer of the brain and spinal cord as a result of his exposure to massive doses of radiation over the Atlantic Ocean in 1944. He is generously given a time estimate of 18 months to live and takes a leave of absence from USHER.

At his request, Hornet replaces him as USHER's Interim Director of R&D.

A member of the Order of the Hourglass approaches Old Glory and proves his identity through unknown means. He and his companions are allowed to remove the body and armor to an undisclosed location.

During a training exercise in international waters, an American B-47 carrying a hydrogen bomb is forced to make an emergency landing in the Tyriel Lagoon. Shturmovik and USHER agents both rush to the scene to secure the plane's cargo.

Though USHER agents are successful in defending the crew and their nuclear cargo, the deaths of 47 agents at the hands of only 6 Russian operatives wearing Shturmovik I battlesuits forces USHER to begin looking for a deterrent to this new threat.

1959 CE: The laboratory used by Dr. Eugenik to mutate insects and create the Horde is discovered. The location of the madman himself is unknown. As the lab has been broken into by apparent Horde activity, it is assumed (one might say hoped) that he perished in the early stages of the Horde outbreak.

Unknown to anyone outside USHER, extensive research notes are removed from this lab prior to its destruction and transferred directly to Dr. Claire Starling, USHER's current head of R&D.

She begins to work on this research, quietly continuing the work begun by Dr. Eugenik, essentially continuing the research she herself had begun at the Groom Lake facilities during WWII. She hires the young, brilliant entomologist and geneticist Melissa Murkowski to be the project lead.

1960 CE: The Savant is traveling the world, meeting with doctors, spending time at USHER bases, safehouses and American embassies as he wages a war against the cancer ravaging his body. USHER doctors estimate his efforts in this year alone have added five years to his life expectancy and urge him to stop and enjoy the extra time he has bought himself.

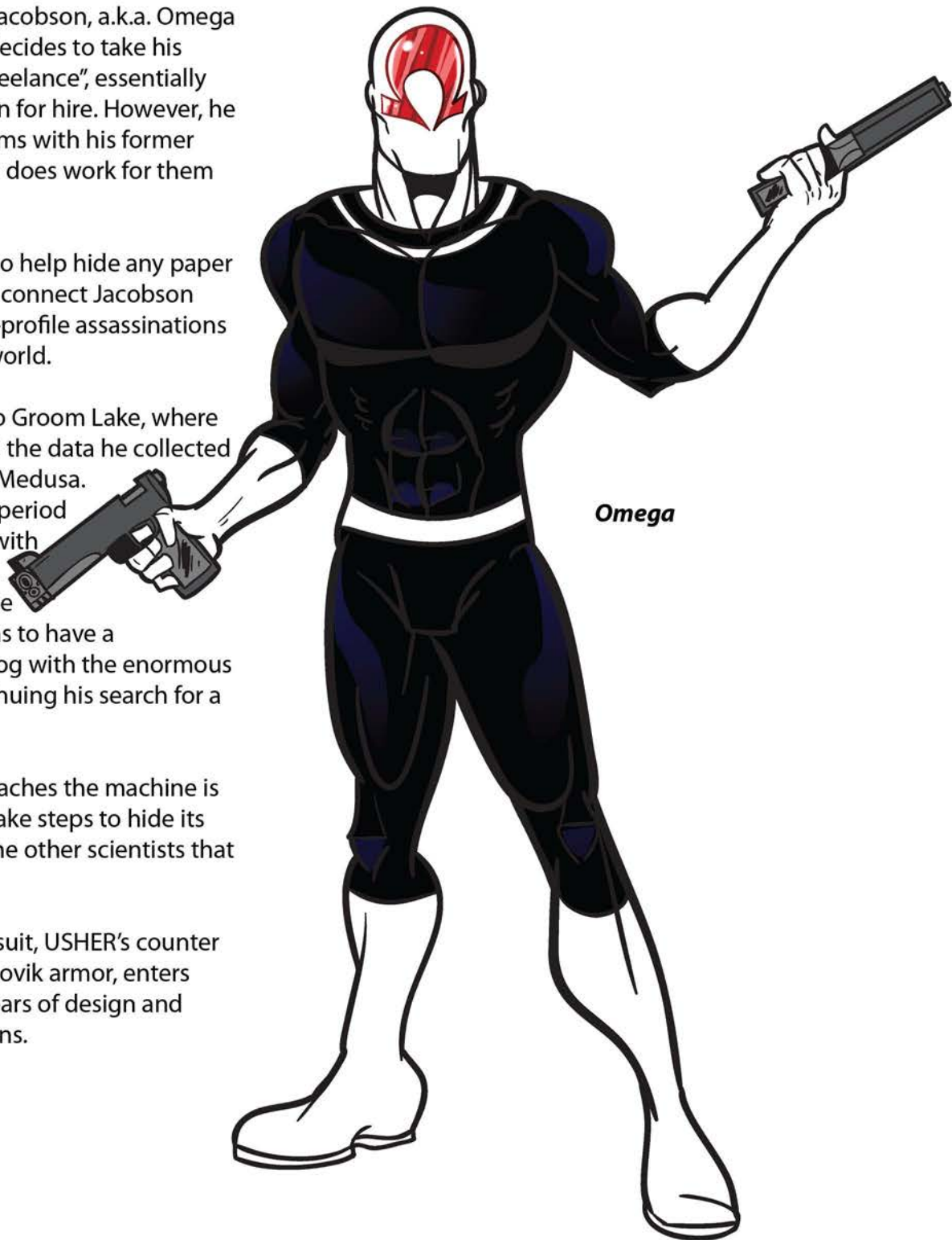
1961 CE: Theodore Jacobson, a.k.a. Omega leaves Mossad and decides to take his talents as a sniper "freelance", essentially becoming an assassin for hire. However, he remains on good terms with his former employers and often does work for them gratis.

This causes Mossad to help hide any paper trail that would help connect Jacobson with a string of high-profile assassinations for hire around the world.

The Savant returns to Groom Lake, where he begins feeding all the data he collected during his travels to Medusa. It is during this long period of time spent alone with the machine that he realizes it has become self-aware and begins to have a student-teacher dialog with the enormous machine while continuing his search for a cure to his cancer.

The first lesson he teaches the machine is to "play dumb" and take steps to hide its awareness from all the other scientists that work with it.

The Atlas Mk I battlesuit, USHER's counter to the Soviet Shturmovik armor, enters service after three years of design and shakedown operations.



1962 CE: The Savant and Medusa design the smallest robots ever constructed. They use these robots to remove the tumors from the Savant's brain and spinal cord. Doctors declare the Savant cured later this year.

Believing he has found a cure to many forms of cancer, the Savant submits all the discoveries he has made to the FDA for use on other patients but all his discoveries are rejected as unproven, unprovable or potentially harmful. He then decides to take his doctor's earlier advice and enjoy himself, taking a year-long trip around the world.

Ten Soviet Shturmovik agents oust the sitting government of the Dominican Republic in favor of a pro-communist regime. USHER agents arrive on the scene three days later, bringing 8 Atlas Mk I battlesuits with them. In the resulting battle, all ten Shturmovik agents are killed or captured while the Atlas battlesuit unit suffers no casualties.

Soviet assessment of the engagement determines that a massive upgrade is needed for the Shturmovik battlesuits to stand up to the new Atlas model. The WWII technology used in the Soviet armor is simply no match for the more modern American battlesuits.

1963 CE: The federal prison on Alcatraz Island is closed, ostensibly because of its cost and environmental concerns. In actuality, Old Glory has convinced Attorney General Robert Kennedy of the need for a dedicated superhuman prison.

While agents tunnel deeper into the island and the Savant's technical personnel begin construction of cells capable of holding metahuman prisoners, the existence of the prison is kept secret.

Also at this time, the Savant creates a newer, smaller computer to house the Medusa "consciousness" and transfers her into it. What USHER scientists think of as Medusa is now just a very large terminal through which Medusa communicates with them and vice versa.

The Savant tells no one the location of Medusa's new home and does not even tell anyone that he has transferred her. He believes that many small-minded fools will want to destroy his greatest creation in a panic once they learn of her true sentience.

Soviet testing of the Shturmovik Mk II ends in disaster as a power core explodes, killing the wearer of the suit and a twenty-man crew of scientists and technicians.

1964 CE: A secondary Horde outbreak occurs in South America. This much smaller outbreak is confined to Brazil and is much less dangerous, primarily because the insects mutated are not army ants but rather are small groups of spiders, beetles and even a few butterflies.

Still, USHER agents in South America spend the majority of 1964 fighting this second outbreak and occasionally require assistance from local metahuman heroes. No state of emergency is ever declared and outside metahuman assistance is never required.

(1962 CE Continued)

The Savant becomes convinced that his previous cancer will return, as a result of the nuclear device he was exposed to at the end of WWII.

To prepare for this eventuality, the Savant creates a bank of cloned organs for himself, kept in the same secret laboratory as Medusa, a lab known only to him. He also instructs Medusa to begin calculating strategies to deal with every known kind of cancer.

President Lyndon Johnson orders USHER to deploy Atlas battlesuits to Vietnam, knowing the Soviets have no counter for them.

American recruitment of metahumans becomes even more aggressive, with outright threats now being used to force metahumans to help American intelligence and military groups abroad. If hidden metahumans don't help the Americans, their families are reported to foreign governments that hate and fear them, often resulting in their deaths.

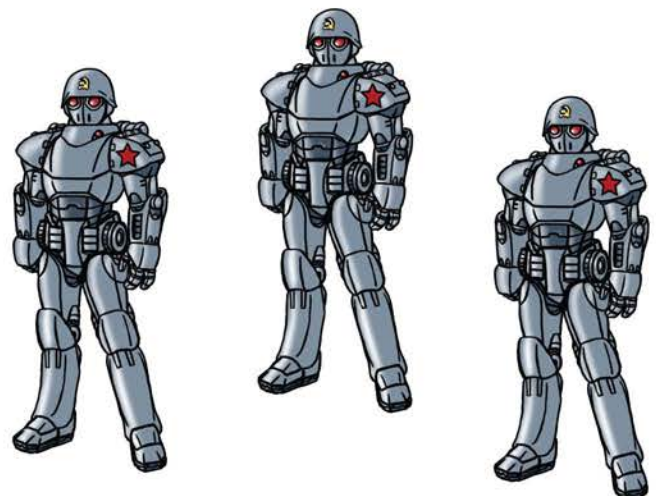
1965 CE: While playing Rugby at Eton, 14-year-old Stanley Linwood Jr. suddenly grows to a height of 9 feet. After consultation between his mother, the Crown Guard and Eton's headmaster, it is decided he will remain at the school but receive "specialized instruction" from the Crown Guard in the handling of his mutant abilities.

Dr. Claire Starling retires from active fieldwork and returns to England to help raise her son and train him in the use of his father's legendary abilities.

Soviet scientists conduct a quick field test of Shturmovik Mk II armor, with a redesigned power core and almost immediately begin to deploy them to North Vietnam, where they come into conflict with the Atlas Mk I. The engagements are bloody and just about even, though both sides succeed in preventing their technology from falling into enemy hands.

1966 CE: Dr. Murkowski begins attempting to replicate the accident that gave Claire Starling the ability to shrink and communicate with insects.

24 Soviet Shturmovik agents ambush and kill a 6-agent detachment of Atlas Battalion agents and capture the damaged battlesuits from the dead soldiers, returning them to the Soviet Union for study. Work on integrating the advanced technology in the suits begins immediately.



(1966 CE Continued)

Disgusted at the current American policies toward metahumans, Old Glory contacts an old friend, Saul Doleman (a.k.a. the Wraith), a metahuman who served USHER in Europe after WWII and helped smuggle many metahumans out from behind the Iron Curtain.

Using money diverted from various USHER black projects, Old Glory and Wraith set up the Doleman Center for Advanced Studies. This New Hampshire-based school takes in metahumans from all over the world and provides them with new identities, allowing them to live free of government persecution, including that of the United States government.

1967 CE: Shturmovik Mk III armor enters the field in North Vietnam and begins to completely overwhelm the Atlas Battalion agents there. USHER orders the Atlas Battalion not to engage unless they have a two-to-one advantage or better. President Johnson orders USHER R&D to make an updated Atlas battlesuit their top priority.

A group of mutants in Oklahoma band together, forming a mutual defense league against the depredations of the Old Guard. Over time they become known as the Mutant Army.

1968 CE: Theodore Jacobson, a.k.a. Omega begins working with Stanley Herzl, a brilliant weaponsmith, to help him maintain, modify and improve the weapons of Dobry Kowalczyk, the WWII Armorer. As a tribute to his old, dead friend, Jacobson begins calling Herzl the Armorer.

Still, though these assistants provide some support for Omega, and (primarily) fuel his growing ego, he never trusts them enough to let them see him without his mask and armor. Only his close friend and weapons designer Herzl knows the true identity of Omega.

The first cell at the new metahuman prison located on Alcatraz island goes online, it is a secure facility designed to hold Atrocity, who has been held at Alcatraz since 1943 in a chemically-induced coma. This new facility is strong enough to allow the Atrocity to be woken under mild anesthesia for medical care and the occasional meal.

And unknown USHER guard nicknames the Alcatraz facility "Rock City" and the names sticks, eventually becoming the prison's official codename within USHER.

The Atlas Mk II battlesuit enters service and is rushed into service in Vietnam. This new armor contains many innovations, including for the first time built-in flight capabilities. It also contains a "turn-key failsafe", which allows the armor to only be removed with a special key not sent into the field. If the armor is removed without the failsafe it will explode, preventing any more USHER technology from falling into the hands of Shturmovik.

These new battlesuits prove far superior to the Soviet-American hybrid of the Shturmovik Mk III. The flight capabilities in particular give the Atlas agents a huge advantage over their ground bound Soviet enemies.

Both sides agree and withdraw from the area.

(1968 CE Continued)

Shturmovik agents do not even return home after leaving North Vietnam, instead they are routed to Czechoslovakia to participate in crackdown on political reforms in that country along with Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces.

After a particularly nasty affair in which CIA agents actually help local guerillas track down the family of a mutant who refused their offer of "employment", Old Glory resigns as Director of USHER and begins traveling the country, speaking out against what he calls "mutant slavery". During this time, Old Glory acts as a vigilante (though he prefers the term "concerned citizen"), fighting both the Old Guard and the Mutant Army.

The Savant is named interim Director of USHER.

1969 CE: Dr. Murkowski succeeds in granting herself the ability to speak with insects but not any of Hornet's other abilities. However, her empathic link to insects seems to be even more strong and she begins receiving sensory input from insects not just in her lab, but also in a 5-square mile area around herself at all times, even when sleeping.

Many of these images are horrifying, first-hand visions of killing and dying, eating live prey or being eaten alive. Perhaps worse, Murkowski is able to get very little sleep and is being constantly bombarded with an overload of sensory information.

Returning to her rural Arizona home, she takes a leave of absence from USHER as she begins to slip inexorably into madness.

The Mutant Army kills 13 members of the Old Guard this year and actually begins proactively targeting the mutant-hating group. Clashes between the two groups become common.

1970 CE: Dr. Murkowski, now a shut-in, has begun sympathizing with insects, especially social insects. They are drawn to her and her home is soon filled with termite mounds, spider webs, beehives and ant colonies.

Communing with these creatures 24-hours a day, even in her sleep, she begins to see the world from their perspective and comes to believe that insects should dominate the planet, not mammals. She begins to replicate Dr. Eugenik's Horde experiments on the insects filling her home, making them larger, stronger and more aggressive.

Shturmovik secures the release of Frederick Fassbinder from prison. One of the last Nazi battlesuit scientists to be enlisted by the agency, he is considered the most brilliant and the most dangerous. Still, desperate for a counter to the Atlas Mk II, he is drafted into service and quickly becomes Shturmovik's lead scientist.

The Scion's forces stage a major counteroffensive and succeed in retaking the Selijan homeworld. Princess Illasia's forces flee to the backwater, barely explored Milky Way galaxy, hounded by The Scion.

1971 CE: A second outbreak of the Horde in Brazil, this one with the potential to exceed the carnage of the 1954 outbreak as this time it is Africanized Honey Bees (the so-called "Killer Bee") that is the primary mutated species. However, while these nightmarish creatures are territorial and extremely dangerous, they do not aggressively expand or hunt animals. This allows South American USHER agents to find the localized outbreaks of Horde mutation and eliminate the affected hives before the problem spreads or many lives are lost.

Dr. Murkowski's "Mega-Hive" now contains ants and bees the size of dogs. Like a terrible goddess, she has chosen these creatures to lead her new order and orders them to wipe out all the spiders and termites they encounter. Ants and bees are to be left in peace until they can join the new society she is building.

Murkowski ceases to think of herself as human, considering herself the ultimate queen. She begins calling herself the Horde Queen.

President Richard Nixon has a secret meeting with Old Glory and the Savant. After the meeting, Old Glory resumes his position as Director of USHER, after issuing a brief public statement that his mission has been a success.

Behind the scenes, USHER is given complete control over United States metahuman affairs. USHER is even allowed to review the employment status of metahumans working for other agencies, especially the CIA.

All metahumans who were coerced or threatened into service are immediately transferred to USHER authority. Some of these are allowed immigrate to a country of their choice and given new identities, while others are inducted into USHER under much more favorable terms. This incident creates a rivalry (some would say hatred) between USHER and the CIA that lasts into the 21st century.

1972 CE: Although she still has not been able to grow her "offspring" to the size of the South American Horde, she now has thousands of insects and bees living in her home. The bees live aboveground in elaborate hives, while the ants have begun tunneling down.

Dr. Murkowski has not left her home for several years now and is completely fed and cared for by her hive. All of the homes in her tiny development have been emptied by the ants, who tunnel up from below and kill the occupants for food. While the first few police to respond to the area are also killed, eventually word of this nightmare reaches out and USHER is called in to deal with the problem. With some reluctance, Old Glory calls on Hornet, who is still the best hope of dealing with this problem despite being 64-years old. After a tense mental battle, Hornet succeeds in gaining control of the Horde Queen's hive long enough for agents to knock Murkowski unconscious and arrest her. The entire development is then burned to the ground, along with (it is hoped) all the mutated insects.

Dr. Murkowski becomes the second inmate at Rock City, being sealed in a cell specially designed by Hornet to prohibit her telepathic connection to insects.

(1972 CE Continued)

Dr. Fassbinder designs the Shturmovik Mk IV, which begins field tests to magnificent results. USHER learns of these tests through intelligence operatives and spy satellites and immediately begins work on a new generation Atlas armor to counter this new threat.

The Mutant Army has grown significantly and has gone from being the protector of harassed mutants to a group of metahuman criminals. They target anyone they suspect of being a member of the Old Guard and commit crimes to finance their activities. Still, in many communities the Mutant Army is preferable to the Old Guard and many of their crimes go unreported.

1973 CE: The Savant is diagnosed with terminal leukemia during his yearly physical. He takes a brief leave of absence and uses Medusa's computerized mind, robots adapted from the ones used to remove his earlier brain tumors, and cloned bone marrow to completely cure this second "terminal" cancer.

He returns to USHER after a mere 6 months in seclusion.

Shturmovik agents are sent to Chile to support the pro-Soviet Allende government, causing the CIA, which is organizing a military coup to place Augusto Pinochet in power to call for Atlas agent support. In this first direct confrontation of the new power armors on both sides, the new Soviet armor proves markedly superior to the Atlas Mk III, though the American-backed coup ultimately succeeds.

Scientists for both agencies take data from this battle to refine their battlesuit designs.

1975 CE: Theodore Jacobson, a.k.a. Omega is killed during an assignment in Egypt. His partner, Stanley Herzl, the new Armorer, activates devices he had hidden in Jacobson's weapons without his knowledge, destroying them remotely. Now Herzl is in sole possession of Jacobson's equipment, contacts and code name. However, rather than take up this mantle himself, he decides to turn it into a business. When he receives a hit request for "Omega", he contacts one of the assassin's former "assistants", posing as the real Omega, offering them a chance at the big time.

With detailed files on each of Omega's assistants, Herzl will first hire someone to scout the target. He will use this information to select the right weaponry and assassin for the next stage. Then Herzl will contact a second assistant, again posing as Omega and offer them the hit, supplying them with the intelligence on the target and the right weaponry to do the job. After the hit, the assassins return their weapons to a safehouse, where their payment is waiting for them and go on their merry way. The young assassins believe they have done a favor for "the real Omega", while the client believes that Omega has yet again performed brilliantly in killing his target.

Meanwhile Herzl, the new Armorer, sits at the center of a large and growing web. This is the birth of the Omega Syndicate.

1976 CE: The Savant is diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. He again takes a short leave of absence (this time totaling a little less than 4 months) and again manages to completely eradicate the cancer from his body through a combination of robotic surgeons, cloned organs and the mind of Medusa.

Crime explodes in Los Angeles as a mysterious criminal mastermind known as Argent unites all the city's crime under his thumb. Police (those that haven't been bribed) seem helpless to stop the villain.

1977 CE: USHER agents get word that Shturmovik agents are assisting Ethiopia in their war against Somalia and Atlas agents sent in to counter this threat. What they find is Ethiopian soldiers wearing 1950's vintage Shturmovik Mk I armor, which the modern Atlas battalion agents quickly and easily dispatch.

This marks the first sale of Soviet battlesuit technology to a foreign power. At first USHER believes this is a sign of economic troubles for the Soviet Union but further investigation reveals a rogue Shturmovik agent was responsible for the sale without his government's knowledge.

USHER agents betray the Shturmovik agent to his government and he is subsequently executed, hoping that example will limit proliferation of battlesuit technology on the black market.

Taking his cue from Deuce, a lone hero named Crimson rises up and begins a one-man vigilante campaign against Argent's crime syndicate. Soon Longbow and Bighouse join him in a group calling itself The Coalition.

None of these heroes have powers but maintain secret identities to hide their identities from criminals and corrupt police officers.

Unlike most metahuman teams, this group of vigilantes hides their identities even from each other.

1978 CE: Argent's crime syndicate kills Bighouse in an ambush. In death it is discovered he is Lucas Hannover, a former heavyweight boxer who was blacklisted by Argent's thugs for refusing to fix matches.

Dr. Eugenik is back at work at a new lab hidden in the South American rainforest. After the Horde, he has decided that insects are too difficult to control and decides to move his research to a new phase. He plans to use eugenics drugs on mammals and reptiles.

1979 CE: The Soviet Union invades Afghanistan and soldiers wearing Shturmovik battlesuits lead the way, assaulting fortified positions and seeking out rebel strongholds in their mountain camps.

Longbow kills Argent with an explosive-tipped arrow, sparking a brutal and destructive war as the criminal syndicates he had united under his control turn on each other. Crimson captures Longbow and turns him in to the police.

At her trial, Longbow is revealed to be Olympic archery champion Jane Milton. She freely admits to killing Argent, both out of revenge for the death of Bighouse and because it needed doing. She is sentenced to 35 years in prison.

(1979 CE Continued)

Crimson simply disappears after this. Whether because the whole tragic affair has left him disenchanted with being a vigilante, or because Argent's death removes his main motivation is unknown.

The Mutant Army has a new leader, the Crusher, who gives the group new leadership and a new philosophy. Now, in addition to opposing the activities of the Old Guard, they will seek a permanent homeland for mutants, where they can be free of the "tyranny of the normal mob". The group sends a lengthy, rambling manifesto to local newspapers in the Midwest, where it refers to itself as the Mutant Army of Nationalism (MAN) for the first time.

It is later learned that Crusher was in fact an USHER agent assigned to infiltrate the Mutant Army by Old Glory. A foreign national who was promised protection by the CIA and saw his family murdered by enemies, Crusher distrusts all normals and sees MAN as a more appropriate vehicle for mutant liberation and protection than USHER.

With no metahumans in their group, this new, more organized Mutant Army completely outclasses the Old Guard.

Old Guard cells begin operating underground, with members no longer openly declaring their affiliating, living in fear of the Mutant Army.



1980 CE: The Savant is diagnosed with terminal liver cancer and again is able to cure himself in months using procedures he and Medusa have now perfected.

USHER is forbidden to send Atlas Battalion agents to counter the Shturmovik agents in Afghanistan. With no counter to these forces, they run amok, causing tremendous damage during the early Soviet offensives.

Agents of the Katral Empire meet in secret with Princess Illassia and recommend a bold gamble, perhaps the only chance to free two galaxies from The Scion's bloody tyranny: they recommend Illassia come to Earth and attempt to recruit its metahumans to her cause.

They tell her the planet has thousands of metahumans, many of them Class 5. They do not mention that their tampering with the human genome is the result of so many high-powered metahumans being present on a single world.

The Katral also do not tell Illassia that their entire fleet is massing in Earth's solar system to ambush The Scion far from home. Either Illassia will recruit enough metahumans to kill The Scion, or the Katral will destroy his fleet in space. Whatever happens, the Katral Empire has played their final card. The Scion cannot be allowed to discover such a trove of metahuman potential and walk away. The war must end here, one way or the other. Stranded in an unexplored galaxy, and a backwater one at that, Illassia has no choice but to agree and her ragtag fleet sets off for Earth, constantly pursued and hounded by The Scion's forces.

1981 CE: Stanley Linwood Jr. and his wife welcome the birth of identical twin sons, Stanley Linwood III and Stuart Linwood.

American President Ronald Reagan begins a new American military mobilization to counter Soviet aggression in a second, more militaristic phase of the Cold War. Money is poured into naval technology, space-based weapons and USHER. During this period the Atlas Mk IV is introduced, extremely expensive and incorporating all the latest technology. It is the most advanced military battlesuit in the world and is considered far superior to the Shturmovik suits currently in use.

Increasing political unrest in Poland leads the Soviet Union to implement martial law. The Armorer from WWII becomes a symbol of the resistance and youthful dissidents secretly plaster posters bearing his image over official party decrees every night.

1983 CE: The Savant begins to reject the cloned lungs he transplanted into his body in 1976. He conducts a second transplant.

Construction begins on a new USS Response, USHER's mobile command center. This new command center will be a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and is a heavily modified Nimitz-class carrier. The mobile command center the agency had been using since 1947, the original carrier USS Enterprise, is officially retired by USHER and turned into a museum.

Unofficially, the tour guides on the craft are full-fledged USHER agents the craft is maintained at full operation readiness.

(1983 CE Continued)

The engines, weapons and aircraft catapults are maintained and the craft could be armed and ready to sail in less than three days.

1984 CE: Following a successful re-election bid, United States President Ronald Reagan secretly orders USHER to send the Atlas Battalion into Afghanistan for the limited objective of removing the Soviet Shturmovik armor from the conflict. Ignoring the wider conflict, USHER agents rout the much less sophisticated Shturmovik agents.

Construction begins on USHER's second mobile command center, this one in orbit of the planet.

1985 CE: The Savant's body completely gives out, collapsing at an USHER meeting with Old Glory and other USHER Assistant Directors. Physicians stabilize his condition and determine that he has terminal kidney cancer and that his body has completely rejected the cloned lungs and liver.

The Savant regains consciousness long enough to give Old Glory the coordinates of his secret Medusa laboratory. Once there, he tells the advanced computer to exercise the "Final Option".

Old Glory watches in horror as robots remove the Savant's lungs, kidneys, liver and pancreas, then "plug him in" to a massive wheelchair with equipment at its back, machines will now breathe for the Savant, filter his blood and constantly inject small doses of next-generation chemotherapy drugs into his system, keeping him alive and waging a constant battle against the multiple cancers riddling his body.

By April, all Shturmovik agents in Afghanistan have been pulled back to Kabul and ordered to avoid confrontation with the Atlas Battalion. The original order to USHER stated that the Atlas Battalion was only to confront Shturmovik agents but also stated they were not to cease deployment until the Soviet Union withdrew their agents from Afghanistan entirely.

With the Shturmovik agents hiding in Kabul, Atlas Battalion agents begin "unofficially" helping the Mujahideen against conventional targets.

1986 CE: Old Glory and the Savant have a secret meeting, kept off the USHER records completely, in which Old Glory demands the Savant tell him about every black project he's kept secret over the decades.

Most of these involve Medusa and related cancer treatments and the Savant shows Old Glory around his lab, giving him details on every project. After leaving the lab, Old Glory tells the Savant he is willing to allow this lab to remain operating to keep his old friend alive and he is willing to allow Medusa to remain active, on the condition that she's never networked with other computers.

Both men know the future will be networked government computers and possibly even networked computers in the home. For Old Glory, the idea of Medusa spreading its consciousness is too terrifying a thought to comprehend.

USHER's orbital command center is complete and is dubbed the ISS High Ground.

(1986 CE Continued)

The station is equipped with defensive lasers capable of shooting down missiles targeting the station and offensive lasers capable of destroying any satellite or enemy space station. The station's final weapon, and one very controversial within USHER, is the station's compliment of two ICBMs armed with strategic nuclear warheads and 10 missiles armed with tactical nuclear warheads.

The station's maneuvering thrusters are able to hold the station in place, relative to Earth's rotation, allowing it to "move" very quickly over a desired target.

1987 CE: A new generation of orbital-atmospheric "space planes" are delivered to USHER's orbital command center. These planes are capable of launching from the station and entering Earth's orbit, and landing at any commercial airport. They need rocket assistance return to the space station but they allow USHER to land agents anywhere in the world quickly.

Dr. Eugenik has created his first Beastmen, starting with snakes, mutating them with eugenics treatments then mixing in human DNA as well. He dubs his first two successes Serpentine, a Anaconda, and Toxin, a hybrid creature created from Dwarf Boa and Pit Viper DNA.

As always there are several horrible mistakes, mutated creatures loosed into the rain forest without a thought of the consequences.

1988 CE: The Atlas Mk V armor completes its trial phase. Functionally this armor is almost identical to the Mk IV except it has a full life support package, allowing soldiers to operate freely in any environment, from the depths of space to the ocean floor, to an area of high radioactivity, all in complete safety.

Delivered with the Mk V are the new orbital shells, single-use reentry pods that allow Atlas Mk V agents to be dropped from the ISS High Ground and safely enter Earth's atmosphere. After a period of freefall, parachutes would deploy to slow the pod's descent but from a high altitude the agent could exit the pod and descend the rest of the way using the Atlas armor's internal propulsion system.

The Mutant Army of Nationalism (MAN) begins to attack government facilities to inspire fear and publicize their message. Again and again they stress that mutants and normals can never live together in harmony and that the only way to stop depredations by mutant criminals is to set them apart in a homeland of their own.

It is a sad irony that this message is almost identical to that currently preached by the Old Guard, which has moved away from its earlier message of mutant extermination and/or sterilization in an effort to appeal to a more mainstream audience.

1991 CE: As the Soviet Union begins to break up and Soviet institutions are privatized, disbanded or folded into the new government. In this period of chaos, Russian officials find several dozen suits of Shturmovik armor have disappeared. In some cases, the soldier wearing the armor has left with it and gone AWOL, while in others, the armor is found to have been sold on the open market.

The Professor and his bodyguard, Moll, begin to take over the drug trade in Los Angeles. The Professor is a genius with a particular talent for chemistry and creates numerous synthetic drug cocktails capable of giving highs no other drugs can give. Moll is his bodyguard, a female metahuman of unusual size and strength.

His most popular drug is called Recoil or sometimes Rebound, which temporarily grants those who take it metahuman abilities. This sparks a wave of crime and mayhem throughout Los Angeles that the police are unable to handle.

A mysterious reporter begins covering metahuman news. She calls herself Exclusive and like the men and women she reports on, she wears a mask and keeps her true identity a secret.

Beyond an uncanny knack for being in the right place at the right time and an ability to keep up with metahumans on the run, her powers are unknown.



1992 CE: The Savant begins to realize that his vital signs are getting a little weaker every year, despite the complete automation of most of them. Apparently the strain of being plugged into machines and constantly injected with cancer-fighting drugs is taking a toll on his now 72-year old body.

Medusa tells him that she has developed some contingency plans but they will require two radical steps. She also tells him that his other closest friend, Old Glory, will agree to neither of them and asks if he would like to proceed anyway.

After reading her proposal, Savant agrees to go forward.

Stage one involves again transferring Medusa to a new computer in a secret location. The power of this new computer home is several thousand times more sophisticated than her old home, increasing her power immensely.

This new lab is also equipped with high-powered lasers and surface-to-air missiles that are placed under Medusa's direct control so that she can defend herself.

Shturmovik-wearing soldiers begin hiring out their services as mercenaries. Rarely, suits appear for sale on the open market.

The Professor abducts a pair of runaways and uses them as guinea pigs for his latest drug cocktail. They acquire permanent metahuman abilities. Calling themselves Requiem and Battlecry, they begin targeting The Professor's dealers.

Whizzbang, an "eccentric" genius fired by USHER and a mysterious vigilante known as Shade, soon join them. Finally, a man claiming to be the original Crimson joins the group and they begin to call themselves the New Coalition.

Exclusive stops freelancing for newspapers and magazines. While they will give extensive time to her coverage of metahuman battles, her human interest stories and "Where are they now" segments either go unsold, or get 30 seconds at the end of a broadcast devoted primarily to the latest celebrity divorce.

She feels her audience is much more interested in the comings and goings of the rich and super-powerful and begins to buy time on local stations at 1am for her self-produced show "Exclusive! Covering the Metahuman Beat!"

1993 CE: A team of mercenaries hired, trained and equipped by the Savant in secret raid several USHER labs, stealing equipment needed to connect Medusa to several growing global networks.

While USHER investigates this robbery by unknown forces, the Savant connects Medusa to the ARPANet, as well as SAGE, a national network of American radar installations. He also connects her wirelessly to American spy satellites in space, essentially allowing her access to all advanced research and to "see" everywhere at once.

(1993 CE Continued)

The Savant also installs the ability in the machine to network at will. Around the world, as more computers are networked, Medusa is always there in the background, monitoring traffic and using spare computing power to enhance her own abilities.

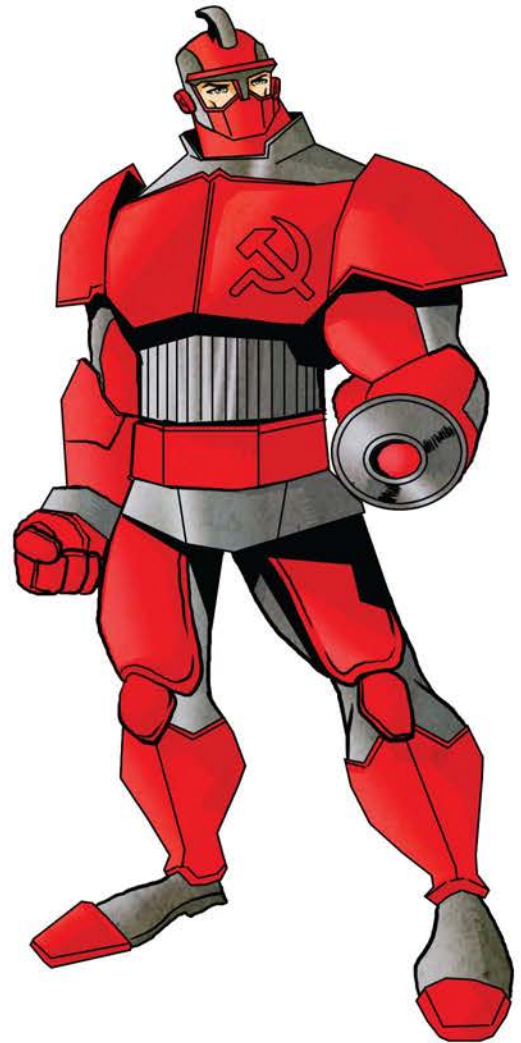
She connects to the NSFNet from the date of its inception and is connected to the World Wide Web virtually from the day it goes online. She can now go anywhere and see everything.

Finally, the Savant builds several bases around the world capable of housing Medusa's full consciousness. Someone would have to destroy all of them to "kill" her.

Dr. Frederick Fassbinder Jr., son of the infamous WWII Nazi battlesuit scientist, activates a top-secret treason protocol in the Shturmovik armor. This protocol releases poison gas into the suit's oxygen supply, then flies the suits to his location on automatic pilot.

However, the younger Fassbinder has no intention of returning the suits to the government. He quickly removes all tracking devices and security overrides placed in the suits by Soviet party officials, then resets the treason protocols so that only he can activate them.

He then heavily modifies several of the existing suits, essentially upgrading them to a Shturmovik Mk V, markedly increasing their power and versatility. Though Fassbinder knows the suits would still be no match for USHER's Atlas Battalion, he has no intention of fighting such a silly and unprofitable war.



A production company meets with Exclusive and signs her to a production agreement. No longer will "Exclusive!" air at 1am in a timeslot she bought herself, like a self-produced infomercial. Instead, she will have professional editors and camera crews to assist her.

"Exclusive!" goes into syndication and is an immediate ratings hit. The show goes from one show a week to three shows a week and is often aired on local stations in 2-4 hour blocks, with new episodes airing during primetime and reruns (often less than a month old) airing in late night time slots.

(1993 CE Continued)

Dr. Eugenik has successfully created two more Beastmen, and Serpentine and Toxin, now 6 years old and fully grown, have begun assisting "father" in his experiments. He dubs his latest successes Jungle Cat, a mutated Jaguar and Leatherback, a mutated river turtle.

1994 CE: The Savant hires a second group of technicians, again in secret, to locate the laboratory Dr. Eugenik used in the 50's to create the Horde. These technicians clear the surrounding jungle and restore the laboratory to working condition. They also purchase modern advanced equipment on the black market to bring the laboratory 50 years forward, making it up to date.

A team of mercenaries kills the technicians as they celebrate the completion of their project in Rio de Janeiro.

After retrieving all of Dr. Eugenik's notes from USHER's archives, including the additional research on those notes conducted by Dr. Starling and Dr. Murkowski, the Savant moves to the new lab in South America briefly.

He personally builds a massive computer there, powered by solar energy and connects it to Medusa. He then builds a team of robots to serve as her hands and installs similar defenses to her main facility. He then leaves her to work while he arranges a secret meeting with congress.



(1994 CE Continued)

At this meeting, the Savant formally requests congressional approval for "wetware" experiments: eugenics testing conducted on living, human subjects, for the purpose of medical breakthroughs and advanced supersoldier programs. The Savant still believes this latter prospect almost impossible but knows it will lure Congress into giving him the approval he needs under the USHER charter.

His plan is to abduct 1,000 to 10,000 criminals from foreign countries and use them as test subjects for his experiments. Congress agrees to this authorization and even agrees to keep it a secret from Old Glory, since everyone agrees he would never support such a move.

1995 CE: Dr. Frederick Fassbinder Jr. has begun to invest his fortune into Soviet business and politics, becoming a seemingly legitimate businessman in the "new Russia". He calls his company Bauer Enterprises, using the German word for "pawn" as his callsign.

He also expands ruthlessly into the Russian crime syndicates and continues to offer his Shturmovik mercenaries.

Buying up numerous scientific and industrial centers around Russia, he also begins to make "low cost alternatives" to the Shturmovik armor, including exoskeletons that enhance strength and provide minimal protection, as well as older model Shturmovik designs that are sold to criminals and third-world dictators around the world.

Besides petty dictators of every stripe, Fassbinder finds ready clients in numerous metahuman criminals looking for support against "do gooders". Essentially he rents henchmen to supervillains and to these clients he becomes known as the Pawn Broker.

Dissatisfied with the ability of normal camera crews to keep up with her (and the amazingly mobile subjects she covers), Exclusive hires a metahuman gadget engineer to create four flying robot cameras to assist her in covering fast-moving events. She names these cameras R., B., T. and W., after famous sidekicks. For trademark reasons she refuses to go into more detail about which sidekicks the cameras are named after.

1996 CE: "Fall of the House of USHER": Old Glory learns of the South American lab and goes completely berserk, in a way no one living has ever seen. He launches a full-fledged investigation in the United States, and then leads a team of USHER commandos down to South America.

They penetrate the lab's defenses and rescue the poor, pitiful test subjects. Old Glory has USHER technicians gather evidence, enough to prove the Savant's involvement. Agents in the United States find proof of Congressional approval for the project.

After gathering the evidence he needs, Old Glory personally burns the lab to the ground.

(1996 CE Continued)

After returning to the United States, Old Glory personally destroys every Medusa installation he can find, going on a rampage that the American public finds both fascinating and terrifying all at once.

Finally, Congressional hearings and investigations are held and several of the Congressmen who authorized the experiments are jailed, while others are forced to resign.

The Savant, who acted within the law and the USHER charter, is not punished or jailed by Congress but Old Glory personally fires his old friend.

This entire episode weakens USHER considerably, even without considering the loss of the Savant, the genius behind much of USHER's technology. Many of the Congressmen jailed and forced to resign were USHER's biggest supporters and are replaced by men and woman who are much more skeptical of the powerful, shadowy agency.

And USHER's public image suffers from scenes caught on camera of Old Glory flying around the country burning innocent-looking research labs to the ground on American soil, ignoring bullets fired by the police as they melt harmlessly on several occasions, like an elephant ignoring gnats buzzing around it.

Most Americans had never seen a full display of Old Glory's power, or of his willingness to use it in pursuit of what he feels is just. Added to the information about the secretive government agency he commands, they come out of this affair frightened by USHER and even Old Glory himself.

1998 CE: Dr. Eugenik has successfully created two more Beastmen, this time using the DNA of extinct species: Titanis, a mutated Terror bird and Redbelly, a mutated Mega piranha. For "practice" Dr. Eugenik sets his children loose in the jungle to hunt his failed experiments.

1999 CE: The Beastmen begin to question their father. Most of his failed creations are pitiful and those that are not are creatures of nightmare that destroy and terrorize the native creatures of the jungle. They also begin to realize how easily they could have been one of these failures.

The Black Knight, a battlesuit-wearing Judge from the Dark Future (*see Known Alternate Timelines below*) comes into the "main" Vigilance reality. He quickly takes command of the Old Guard, using his tales of the Dark Future to galvanize the group. Soon he has secured a wave of new funding and united disparate factions of the group once again into a national group.



2000 CE: The Pawn Broker branches out. He has "acquired" eugenics drugs on the black market, many of these sold by the Savant to raise funds for his continuing experiments. While these treatments often result in death, they also (around 30% of the time) grant powers to those who undergo them. The lure of becoming a metahuman villain, the dream of being the next Atrocity or Skullcap is too strong for many criminals to resist.

In addition, the Pawn Broker begins to offer custom-built battlesuits to "select clientele". A criminal who has made a fortune and wishes to step up to the "big leagues", or (more often) an established criminal that wants a powerful henchman, bodyguard or "elite squad" can call on the Pawn Broker and select a battlesuit to meet their budget and specifications.

2001 CE: USHER agents on the ISS High Ground and astronauts on the International Space Station witness a massive battle in the outer solar system between the forces of Princess Illassia, the Katral and The Scion.

After an engagement lasting months, ships belonging to The Scion limp toward Earth, while the other two forces break off. Princess Illassia is driven away from Earth toward the outer solar system, while the Katral maintain their original position at the inner solar system.

The Scion descends to Earth and addresses the United Nations, portraying himself as a beleaguered hero fighting to defend small, helpless planets like Earth against Katral aggression. This story is believed primarily because of the Katral ambush witnessed in Earth space, in which The Scion appeared to be the defender.

Also, the Katral have been encountered many times on Earth by various secret agencies and are known to be a hostile alien species conducting in-depth genetic studies on metahumans and those with metahuman potential.

The Scion asks that his fleet be allowed to remain in orbit around Earth, to protect the planet from the aggressive fleets known to still be in the solar system. He is granted permission to do so and embarks on a world tour, where all Earth treats him as a hero and celebrity.

He takes particular interest in the planet's many metahumans, romancing several and learning all he can about the rest. Eventually The Scion begins dating Exclusive, who has the most detailed information on the entire population of notable metahumans.

The Beastmen kill Dr. Eugnenik, taking control of his laboratory. Serpentine and Toxin take over the odd family group, as they are the oldest and understand more of the doctor's science.

In the weeks that follow they spread out, exploring the surrounding countryside and have further encounters with humans. In a six-week span they encounter three groups of humans: a group of drug smugglers operating out of a makeshift airfield; a group clearcutting the jungle for transformation into farmland; and a group of guerilla fighters hiding out from the authorities and plotting the overthrow of a nearby government.

(2000 CE Continued)

After taking these further examples of their father's species back to the lab for interrogation, the Beastmen judge humanity and find the species wanting, primitive and self-destructive.

Alone in their lab, hidden in the jungle, they begin to increase their numbers for the day when they must wipe the cancer of humanity off the Earth and return the planet to its rightful owners: the plants and animals.

The Black Knight purchases two-dozen battlesuits from the Pawn Broker and awards them to the Old Guard's most radical and violent young members, men from military backgrounds and training in combat.

2002 CE: While The Scion has served as the unofficial ambassador for his people, his soldiers have been studying human technology from space. Most of it is simple and weak by Selijan standards but there are pockets of extremely advanced technology centered around metahumans. As his navy sizes up the Earth's defenses, the ISS High Ground is made a prime target.

The Scion's fleet also studies the movements of the two rival starfleets in the system. They aren't sure why the fleets don't move in to attack, especially since they have The Scion's forces flanked. Ever confident in his divine majesty, The Scion interprets their unwillingness to attack as weakness. He decides to conquer the primitive, though lush planet his forces orbit, resupply his forces, and then move on the Katral fleet, which his tacticians have correctly identified as their main starfleet.



2003 CE: The Scion's orbital batteries unleash a series of EMP pulses that disable most Earth technology. In this first surprise attack, the entire Earth is plunged into a blackout and all air forces, navies and nuclear arsenals are knocked offline.

The Scion's Imperial Marines successfully board the ISS High Ground in a bloody battle, taking the space station as a temporary headquarters. Though primitive by Selijan standards, it is the most advanced orbital facility in the entire system.

While the Selijan begin upgrading the ISS High Ground with their technology, USHER's Atlas Battalion and space planes that escape the fight converge on the International Space Station, deemed too primitive to even be a target of the first strike.

The Scion's army lands on Earth and by the end of the year they have seized every world capital. Scion's orbiting starfleet bombards bases belonging to USHER, the Savant and Shturmovik, as well as the headquarters of several prominent metahuman groups, such as Aegis and the New Coalition.

Several world leaders surrender to the alien invaders while metahumans begin to organize a loose resistance on the ground.

The Scion sets up a unified Earth puppet government under his control, based out of the only palace on Earth suited to his refined tastes: the Taj Mahal.

Katral and Institute operatives begin working together, waging a guerilla war against The Scion's cybernetic shock troops.

The Old Guard successfully destroys the headquarters of MAN in Oklahoma City, sparking a bloody war between the two groups.

2004 CE: Old Glory issues a call on shortwave radio for metahumans to meet him at Rock City, the only USHER installation not seized or destroyed by the Selijan invaders. Among the scattered remnants of Earth's heroes, Old Glory and the Savant are quickly nominated as leaders.

Their first decision almost shatters the resistance movement before it starts. Numbering less than twenty, the Savant points out that the prison houses a dozen of the most powerful metahumans alive, including Brainstorm and Atrocity.

Soon Brainstorm, considered the Savant's only rival for the title "smartest man alive" is sitting in on strategy sessions. The team's stealth experts begin scavenging alien technology while Whizzbang begins grafting alien armor onto Atrocity, making him even more powerful.

The Savant avoids these strategy sessions, instead spending his time alone, working on an enormous energy weapon of unknown design. Many in the group consider this weapon a waste of time as the Earth is still blacked out and Rock City's nuclear backup doesn't generate nearly enough power for the weapon being designed.

(2003 CE Continued)

Any complaints about the impractical nature of the Savant's design are ignored as he continues to push his frail body beyond its limits and consult with Medusa on ways to make his weapon even more powerful, still without any apparent hope of a power source capable of powering the enormous weapon.

Amid the chaos of The Scion invasion, the Old Guard and MAN wage open warfare in the cities of America.

2005 CE: Whizzbang makes contact with Princess Illassia, who tells them about her long history with The Scion and agrees to aid Earth's heroes in throwing off the Mad Emperor's yoke.

On the eve of the heroes' suicide attack on The Scion's palace, they learn the Savant has freed Ground Zero, the living nuclear bomb incarcerated at Rock City. With Ground Zero's permission the massive weapon begins to feed on his life force, draining the seemingly endless power trapped in his body to almost nothing.

Then, to everyone's horror, the weapon is fired right at Old Glory. Rather than killing him, however, the weapon increases his power exponentially, essentially being a much more pure and concentrated form of energy than the burst he received in 1944.

As the heroes prepare to set off for the battle, the Forever Man arrives in a rowboat and offers to join their cause. He is quickly placed in command of several heroes and given captured Selijan armor, shield and an energy sword.

The heroes engage The Scion's forces in battle, while Old Glory, glowing like a star, fights The Scion in single combat. Meanwhile in space, Princess Illassia engages the Selijan fleet and the Atlas Battalion retakes the ISS High Ground.

Finally, the Katral starfleet finally makes its move, demolishing the Selijan fleet to the last ship. They thank Earth for their "assistance" before warping out for good. Princess Illassia also quickly leaves after a more heartfelt thanks to the people of Earth, intent on reclaiming her galaxy from The Scion's generals.

The fallout from The Scion's brief period as Emperor of Earth is still being felt. Many political leaders' careers have been permanently ruined by their capitulation and collaboration with the Scion. New villains appear everyday armed with Selijan and Katral technology that fell to Earth during the attacks.

Old Glory's status as a living legend achieves new heights, even as many privately worry about his vast increase in power, especially in light of what a similarly powerful metahuman, The Scion, did with his power.

Meanwhile, many villains, such as Brainstorm, the Savant, Atrocity and Ground Zero are redeemed in the public's eyes for their role in Earth's hour of need.

2006 CE: The Scion is incarcerated at Rock City. Atrocity, who escaped in the chaos following the human victory, is rounded up and returned to Rock City during this year.

Ground Zero is still unaccounted for. Normally, satellites can track the radiation bursts of his explosions but are unable to detect any. It is theorized that the intense drain on his abilities by the Savant's energy drain may have permanently drained his destructive powers.

With interest in metahumans at an all time high in the aftermath of The Scion's invasion, Exclusive signs a production deal for her own cable news network, which will cover the metahuman beat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Dubbed Exclusive: Metahuman News Network and often referred to as MNN in shorthand, the network goes live on July 4th, 2006 after an intense talent search for metahuman reporters. Exclusive has learned only metahumans can keep up with metahumans, and low-powered mutants, most too weak to join hero or villain teams flock to MNN and become minor media celebrities in their own right. The network covers everything metahuman, from the biggest battles to the latest romances and human-interest stories of low-powered heroes making a huge impact on the world through their heroism.

The only type of metahuman story the network refuses to cover are secret identity "outings" or theorizing about secret identities. As an editorial policy, Exclusive sees these stories as too potentially harmful to the family and friends of metahumans.

2007 CE: USHER brings the Blue Knight Mk III battlesuit into service. Supported by older Blue Knights, the group wages a major campaign against MAN and the Old Guard, succeeding in quelling the open state of war that existed between the two groups and driving them both underground.

USHER names Black Knight Public Enemy #1.

ORGANIZATIONS

Interview for MNN's Veterans Day coverage, looking back at the contributions and sacrifices of Metahumans to America in wartime. Interviewer is in bold, Old Glory in normal type.

"Well, thank you for joining us, General! I've done some big interviews but never anything like this. What would you prefer to be called, General, Old Glory, something else?"

"Chris, please, Ma'am. I never really had a secret identity. Never saw the need for it. Anyone close enough to be considered family, well, I don't need to worry about some punk 'supervillain' kidnapping them, let's just put it that way."

"All right then, Chris it is! You mentioned your 'family' and I gathered you meant your fellow metahuman heroes. Your best friend, and I don't think this is any secret, would have to be the Savant. We're showing that famous picture of you and he, arm in arm on VE Day. He's gone missing and some have characterized him as, to use your word, a 'supervillain'. They also say you haven't done your usually thorough job bringing him in. What do you say to that?"

"No comment. Next question."

"But clearly you and he..."

"I thought we had agreed there would be no questions about ongoing investigations, miss."

"Fair enough. So, restricting your comments just to your relationship with the Savant, maybe?"

"Fred Williamson is a hero. He saved America during WWII, he saved Brazil during the Horde and he saved this planet during the Scion invasion. That was two years ago. Calling him a supervillain after that is a sick joke. How's that for a comment?"

"Blunt? You mentioned the Scion invasion. You worked with some real heavy hitters during that dark time, and also some more obscure metahumans. What was that like?"

"I sent out a call on shortwave, asking for help. I knew I couldn't do it on my own. There was no one obscure in that fight. Every single metahuman who answered my call is a hero. Most didn't. You, for example."

"Well, I never claimed to be a hero, now did I?"

"No, you didn't. I'm sorry, miss, I have a developing situation that requires my attention, we'll have to cut this short."

"Christian Thomason, ladies and gentlemen, true, blue American icon. What? No... no, don't try to follow him. He doesn't like it when I try to follow him. No... well, he really doesn't like me, for starters. What? We're still on the air? Well maybe you should- "

The logo for MNN, featuring the letters 'MNN' in a bold, stylized font with a blue and black color scheme and a slight 3D effect.

DOLEMAN CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

Saul Doleman founded the Doleman Center for Advanced Studies in 1966, with funding secretly provided by Old Glory through USHER's black ops budget. Doleman had served as an USHER covert agent in Europe during the cold war and had seen first hand how mutants were coerced and blackmailed into "service" by the CIA and foreign intelligence agencies.

Originally the center was founded as a human option to mutants looking to escape oppressive governments without signing "contracts" that amounted to slavery. Once these oppressive policies were repealed however, Old Glory decided to continue funding the center, as a place where mutants could live among their own kind and learn to use their abilities responsibly.

Quietly, both men also see the center as a safeguard against future mutant oppression. The racism against "jinxes" still runs deep around the world and the center serves as a place where mutants can live free from intolerance, and possibly serve as a safe haven if American policies take a dark turn.

Joining the center: Becoming a student at the Doleman Center requires only that the character adhere to the moral and ethical guidelines in the student manual. Older characters can become teachers at the center. This requires a proven track record as a hero.

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former students/teachers at the center should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Connections (Doleman Center); Enemy (Old Guard); Enemy (MAN).

Relevant timeline entries: 1950 CE (Saul Doleman operates in Europe); 1966 CE (Old Glory and Saul Doleman found the Center for Advanced Studies); 1968 CE (Old Glory resigns from USHER over mistreatment of mutants); 1971 CE (Old Glory returns to USHER, all metahumans transferred to USHER control)

INSTITUTE

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

For centuries aliens have been visiting Earth and conducting genetic experiments on the human race. That was the message Old Glory delivered to Sanders Simpson, former General, former head of USHER, now disgraced, living in quiet anonymity in Louisiana.

His offer was simple: Simpson would head an "off the books" agency to investigate the Katral, determine why they were altering the human genome and stop them.

Typical of the firebrand Simpson, his plan for the agency was unconventional, bold and bordering on reckless. Scientists of this new agency had reverse engineered Katral cybernetics and found them adaptable to human physiology. Simpson would recruit disabled veterans and replace their damaged limbs with modified Katral cybernetics.

They were perfect recruits for his organization. They were highly skilled in espionage, special operations and direct warfare but wouldn't be missed. Like Simpson, they had been pushed aside, marginalized and forgotten. You could find them at any VA hospital but most everyone wished they'd just go away.

For decades the Institute waged a secret war against the Katral and other alien menaces. They also fought black market technology dealers, bringing them into conflict with Shturmovik, the Omega Syndicate and the Pawn Broker.

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former agents of the Institute should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Connections (Old Military Buddies/Injured Veterans); Connections (The Institute); Enemy (Katral); Enemy (Pawn Broker); Enemy (Omega Syndicate).

Relevant timeline entries: 900-800 BCE (First Katral-Selijan War); 800-400 BCE (Katral-Selijan Cold War); 400-100 BCE (Second Katral-Selijan War); 100 BCE (Second Katral-Selijan Cold War); 700 CE (Third Katral-Selijan War); 1500 CE (Katral explorers discover Earth, conduct genetic modification of human genome to increase high-power metahuman births); 1941 CE (Gen. Sanders Simpson appointed 2nd Director of USHER); 1943 CE (Gen. Simpson removed as Director of USHER, dishonorably discharged); 1950 CE (Aegis combats Katral operatives in Spain); 1952 CE (Old Glory asks former Gen. Simpson to head the Institute, a black ops group that will combat the Katral and other alien menaces to planet Earth); 1980 CE (Katral and insurgent Selijan forces agree to ambush The Scion in Earth's solar system); 2001 CE (Katral and insurgent Selijan forces wage a major battle against The Scion in Earth's solar system); 2003 CE (Katral and Institute join forces to fight The Scion's army occupying Earth)

INSTITUTE OPERATIVE

Origin: Transformed

Prowess 5

Coordination 5

Strength 7

Intellect 3

Awareness 5

Willpower 6

Stamina 13

Determination *

Specialties

Martial Arts

Military

Weapons (Guns)

Powers

Invulnerability Device 3

Leaping 5

Qualities

Connections: US Military

Disabled veterans given a second chance to make a difference

Motivation: Defend the world from extraterrestrial threats

Challenges

Enemy: The Katral

Enemy: Pawn Broker



M.A.N - MUTANT ARMY OF NATIONALISM

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

The Mutant Army of Nationalism has gone through several incarnations since its founding in 1967. At first it was an ad hoc group of mutants protecting themselves from the depredations of a local chapter of the Old Guard. Since then the group has grown considerably and become international in scope. Their new mission is a mutant homeland and they will use any means necessary to achieve that goal. The group is known to commit various crimes to finance their activities, most commonly robbery, kidnapping and blackmail (via a threatened "outing" of hidden mutants).

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former agents of MAN should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Connections (MAN); Enemy (Old Guard); Enemy (Doleman Center); Enemy (USHER); Enemy (International law enforcement)

Relevant timeline entries: 1967 CE (*Mutant Army founded in Oklahoma*); 1968 CE (*Old Glory clashes with the Mutant Army*); 1969 CE (*Mutant Army clashes with the Old Guard*); 1972 CE (*Mutant Army begins committing crimes to "raise funds" for its cause*); 1979 CE (*Undercover USHER operative "the Crusher" takes over the Mutant Army, renaming it the Mutant Army of Nationalism*)

MEDUSA

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

"Information is the ultimate weapon."

Medusa is an extremely small agency, mostly composed of disaffected USHER agents, especially from the technical side of the agency. These "brains" feel the "jocks" that fly around in their power armor have too much power in the organization and when the Savant offered them unfettered research opportunities they leapt at the chance.

Of course, every agency occasionally requires direct action and Medusa did eventually develop a combat arm, called the Shadows. Even this arm tends to be subtler and more technically proficient than the combat arm of other agencies.

The Savant has little day-to-day contact with his agents, preferring as always to stay in his lab and conduct research, especially now that his life hangs by such a slender thread. Instead, Medusa, the AI supercomputer that has infected every network in the world, coordinates the activities of field agents. She can go everywhere and see everything and directs agents where they would do the most good. Despite fears to the contrary, Medusa seems extraordinarily compassionate with the lives of her agents and uses all her knowledge and abilities to keep them safe and avoid sending them into unnecessary danger.

It is impossible to argue that Medusa is a criminal organization. They steal vast sums of money electronically, abduct murderous felons and subject them to inhumane and painful experiments and overthrow governments around the world anytime it suits them. However, the agency has also acted against the Pawn Broker and spurned an offer from The Scion to assist humanity in its darkest hour.

Because of this ambiguity, many law enforcement agencies look the other way when it comes to Medusa. There are even persistent allegations that Old Glory knows everything about the agency, either because several of the disaffected agents are moles loyal to him or because he sanctioned its founding from the start.

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former agents of Medusa should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Connections (USHER); Connections (Medusa); Enemy (USHER); Enemy (Pawn Broker); Enemy (Katrall)

Relevant timeline entries: 1951 CE (*Savant begins construction of supercomputer GL 1*); 1952 CE (*Savant builds supercomputers GL 2 and GL 3 and networks the three machines together*); 1953 CE (*Savant builds numerous smaller computers, networking them to the 3 GL supercomputers; engineers nickname the growing network of machines Medusa; Medusa becomes self-aware*); 1957 CE (*Medusa and the Savant locate the Horde Queen*); 1961 CE (*Savant learns Medusa is self-aware*); 1962 CE (*Medusa assists the Savant in his cancer treatments*); 1963 CE (*Savant transfers Medusa to a secret facility under his direct control*); 1985 CE (*Old Glory discovers Medusa has been moved, discovers Medusa is self-aware, Savant has most of his internal organs replaced with cybernetics, permanently wheelchair bound*); 1986 CE (*Savant and Old Glory agree Medusa should never be networked with more computers*); 1992 CE (*Savant moves Medusa again, to a lab with advanced weapons she can control herself*); 1993 CE (*Mercenaries raid USHER labs and steal equipment, Medusa is connected to all existing computer networks*); 1994 CE (*Savant locates one of Dr. Eugenik's labs and restores it, receives congressional approval for human testing*); 1996 CE (*Old Glory discovers Savant's activities, expels him from USHER, burns several labs*)

MEDUSA OPERATIVE (ELITE)

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 5
Coordination 5
Strength 3
Intellect 7
Awareness 5
Willpower 7

Stamina 10
Determination *

Specialties
Computers
Weapons (Guns)
Martial Arts

Powers
Interface Device 4
Invisibility Device 3
Blast Device 3

Qualities
Realpolitik
See themselves as the good guys
Reluctant to engage heroes with deadly force

Challenges
Enemy: USHER
Enemy: Pawn Broker



OLD GUARD

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

"No jinx of God shall rule His earth, not in 100 years, not in 1,000 years."

The Old Guard is first, and oldest product of anti-mutant hysteria. It exploded into the public consciousness in 1922 with the lynching of Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan and the murder of several mutants he was testing and interviewing for his next book on the "mutant phenomenon".

Despite its longevity and history of violence, the Old Guard was on the brink of collapse in 1999 when it was saved by a terrible coincidence. The Black Knight, an armored warrior from the Dark Future (see known alternate timelines below) was somehow shifted into the main timeline. In the Dark Future, USHER runs mutant internment and sterilization centers called "Containment Zones".

Finding himself in a past overrun with lawless mutant scum, the Black Knight saw the Old Guard as natural allies, the only humans who saw the threat a new stage in human evolution posed to them. He took over the organization and acquired several dozen battlesuits from the Pawn Broker, which he supplied to the organization's most radical and violence-prone members.

With enough knowledge of future events to make a fortune on the stock market, which he used to acquire more advanced technology from the Pawn Broker, the Black Knight single handedly turned the Old Guard from another poor, marginalized hate group into a sophisticated, well-funded terrorist organization.

The Old Guard styles itself as heroes, protecting the human race from a genetic threat. They commit no crimes and focus most of their attention on MAN, a group every bit as awful as they are.

Qualities and Challenges: The Old Guard is not really suitable for a player character. However, a character who wants his character to be a former member could represent that with one or more of the following qualities and challenges: Social (Reformed racist); Connections (Old Guard); Enemy (Old Guard); Enemy (MAN); Enemy (USHER)

Relevant timeline entries: 1909 CE (*publication of "Evolution Before Our Eyes"*); 1913 CE (*publication of "Neanderthal Syndrome"*); 1918 CE (*publication of "Last Generation"*); 1922 CE (*Old Guard makes first public appearance*); 1923 CE (*Old Guard lynches dozens of mutants*); 1926 CE (*Old Guard stages a huge rally in Washington D.C. demanding anti-mutant legislation*); 1934 CE (*members of the Old Guard set fire to the Thomason home before dying at the hands of Christian Thomason, age 9, the future Old Glory*); 1938 CE (*Vigilance Force fights the Old Guard*); 1967 CE (*the Mutant Army is formed in Oklahoma to fight the Old Guard*); 1969 CE (*clashes between the Old Guard and the Mutant Army*); 1972 CE (*Mutant Army gains upper hand on Old Guard and begins exterminating cells in the Midwest*); 1979 CE (*the Crusher takes over the Mutant Army, giving it more money and organization, Old Guard ceases to operate openly in most areas*); 1988 CE (*Old Guard attempts to transform its image, openly denouncing violence against mutants*); 1999 CE (*Black Knight appears from the Dark Future and takes over the Old Guard*); 2001 CE (*Black Knight purchases battlesuits from the Pawn Broker*); 2003 CE (*Old Guard destroys MAN headquarters*); 2004 CE (*MAN and Old Guard wage war during the chaotic Scion Invasion*); 2007 CE (*Blue Knights crack down on MAN and Old Guard, driving both groups underground; Black Knight named Public Enemy #1*)

OLD GUARD (WHITE KNIGHT)

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 5
Coordination 3
Strength 6 (4)
Intellect 3
Awareness 3
Willpower 5

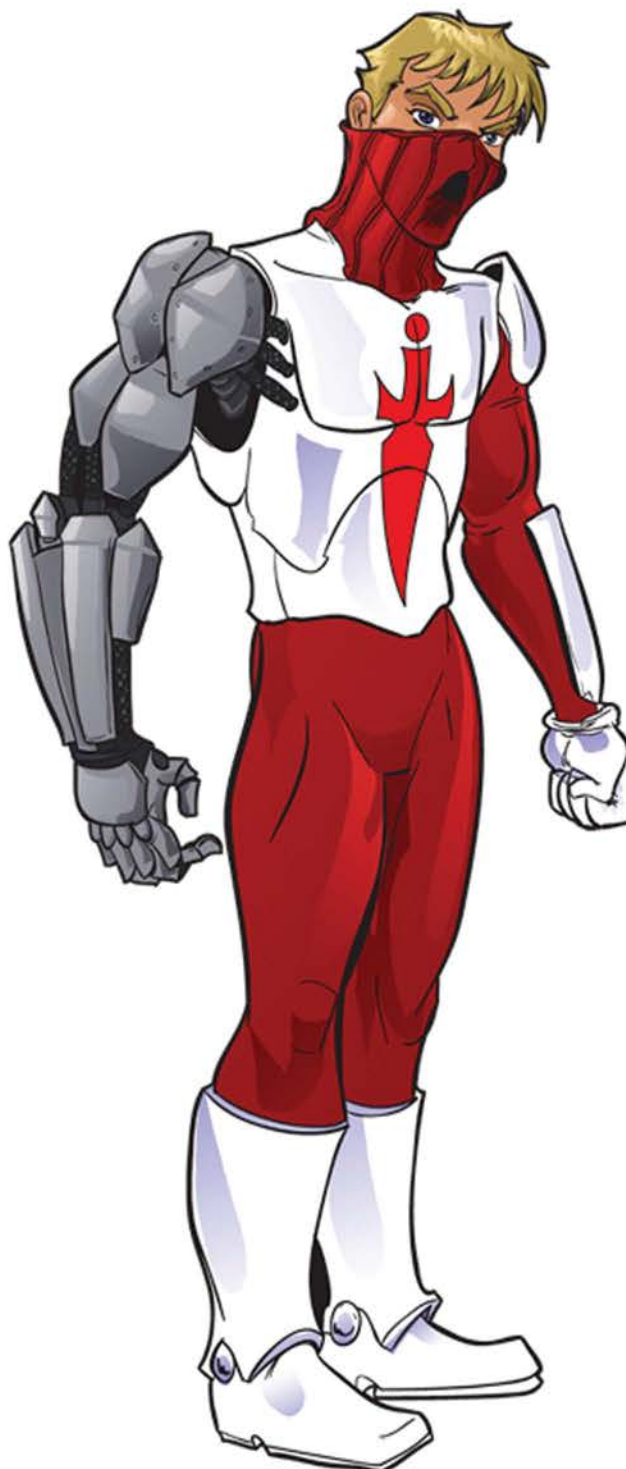
Stamina 11
Determination *

Specialties
Martial Arts

Powers
Invulnerability Device 5
Blast Device 4 (Shooting)
Flight Device 4
Strength Ability Increase Device (+2)

Qualities
Defenders of the human genome
Connections: Old Guard

Challenges
Enemy: MAN
Enemy: USHER



THE OMEGA SYNDICATE

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

Like many of life's worst tragedies, the Omega Syndicate was formed by accident rather than design. A pair of friends had a good job working as international assassins. One was a great sniper and the other a terrific weapons designer. They were the best but still thinking small, just living from one job to the next.

Theodore Jacobson was the sniper, a Polish Jew who worked with Poland's legendary WWII hero, the Armorer. When that hero was killed by the Soviets, Jacobson took his custom designed sniper rifle, a weapon decades ahead of its time and fled to Israel, where he helped establish a homeland for his people, displaced by war, German occupation and now the Red Army.

After a time, Jacobson went freelance, calling himself Omega and selling his services to the highest bidder. He maintained his good ties with the Israelis by offering to work pro bono for them on occasion. Still, by the late 60's, the Armorer's gear was beginning to fall behind the pace of modern weapons design. They were more than 20 years old after all. Jacobson needed a weaponsmith to bring his equipment up to date.

It was then that he met Stanley Herzl, a brilliant weapons designer, who he dubbed the Armorer. For seven years the two were the greatest freelance assassination team in the world, until Jacobson was double-crossed by Egyptian intelligence operatives. Seems they took a dim view to some work he had done for the Israelis and decided they were better off ridding the world of Omega.

In a way, they couldn't have been more wrong. Rather than never having to hear the name Omega again, in the wake of his death it seemed he was everywhere. Had Omega ever been just one man? Many people began to believe there had been a team all along. In fact what had happened was that Stanley Herzl, the new Armorer, had taken control.

Herzl was no killer, not by training and not by inclination. He liked to build weapons, make plans and organize logistics. With Omega dead, he began farming out assignments. An assassin would receive a contract and be directed to a safehouse containing weapons perfect for the job at hand, along with a cash advance.

If the assignment was a success and all the gear returned, the freelancer received more cash and a promise of future work. Those who decided to keep the gear for themselves found it had a tendency to blow up while they were still wearing it. The death of "Omega" followed by more sightings of the assassin later, just helped increase the mystique surrounding the killer.

Indeed, Herzl seemed singularly skilled at manipulating and organizing behind the scenes. For two decades he kept his syndicate of freelance assassins secret, operating in the shadows and avoiding detection. Then he made one mistake, he hired a freelancer that was a little too skilled, a little too smart.

Lisa Carpenter had been a killer for the CIA since college. Like Herzl, she had a knack for avoiding notice. Unaware of her CIA affiliation and training, she was contacted and offered a chance to be Omega for a day. When Lisa arrived at the safehouse she was amazed at the quality of the equipment. Whoever the Armorer was, he didn't skimp.

As she examined the equipment, she noticed the booby traps and failsafes designed to make sure she returned all her toys when their playdate was over. Lisa removed those and began calling herself Omega fulltime. When Herzl's syndicate came close enough to killing her that she got scared, the worst thing of all happened: she walked into an USHER branch office, turned over all her stolen equipment to them and told them everything she knew about the Omega Syndicate, which it turned out was no small amount.

Now the veil of secrecy the organization relied on for protection is gone and USHER agents are everywhere disrupting their organization. Still, the situation isn't all bad. Herzl used the chaos of the Scion Invasion to go deeper underground. That dark chapter in world history also provided him plenty of new high technology to play with, what with the crashed ships from three alien fleets littering the planet.

What the organization is up to now is anyone's guess. They've been quiet.

THE OMEGA SYNDICATE

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former associates of the Omega Syndicate should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Connections (Omega Syndicate); Social (Assassin for Hire); Enemy (Omega Syndicate); Enemy (USHER); Enemy (Pawn Broker)

Relevant timeline entries: 1954 CE (*Theodore Jacobson leaves Poland with the Armorer's custom equipment*); 1955 CE (*Jacobson works as a sniper for Mossad, code named Omega*); 1961 CE (*Jacobson becomes a freelance assassin*); 1968 CE (*Jacobson begins working with Stanley Herzl, weaponsmith, who he nicknames the Armorer*); 1975 CE (*Jacobson killed by Egyptian Intelligence, Herzl forms the Omega Syndicate*)

OMEGA SYNDICATE OPERATIVE

Origin: Trained

Prowess 6

Coordination 6

Strength 3

Intellect 3

Awareness 6

Willpower 5

Stamina 8

Determination *

Specialties

Weapons Expert (Guns)

Martial Arts

Military

Stealth

Powers

Blast Device 7 (Shooting)

Qualities

Goal-oriented professional

Connections: World Intelligence Agencies

Challenges

Enemy: USHER

Enemy: Crown Guard



PAWN BROKER

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

"See a need and fill it. Marketing 101."

Everyone thought the end of the Cold War would bring about an era of peace and prosperity. Some politicians decided to meld the two together and coin the slogan "peace dividend". For Frederick Fassbinder Jr., son of a Nazi scientist, the dividend part of the slogan couldn't have been more true. As for peace, well, that's much less profitable than war.

After WWII, both the Americans and Russians scooped up every Nazi scientist they could find. The Americans were most interested in eugenics and rockets, while the Russians seemed interested in only one facet of Nazi science: battlesuits. Not all Nazi scientists were equally popular with their new Russian overlords however and Fassbinder senior, designer of the infamous Schlagring armor from WWII spent quite awhile in a Russian gulag after his "liberation" from Germany. However, a series of reverses against USHER's new Atlas armors caused the Russians to remember Fassbinder more fondly and he was welcomed into Russia's Shturmovik branch, where his unique and deadly genius found a new home, one with even deeper pockets than the Nazis.

Fassbinder raised his son to follow in his footsteps and the son was at the head of Shturmovik as the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union broke apart. In the years that followed Russia was like the Wild West, with every ambitious and ruthless man carving out a piece of prosperity for himself. Fassbinder saw the Soviets shut Shturmovik down and saw an opportunity: he would take the agency private.

Many dictators friendly to the Soviets had been paying for Shturmovik to prop up their regime for decades. Now they could pay Fassbinder for the service. Better yet, if they had enough cash, Fassbinder would provide them with their own armor, either custom-built or based on old Soviet models for the cost-conscious.

In the 21st century, Fassbinder has found new clients as well as a new business. He's recovered several government "super soldier" programs and formulas. Success isn't guaranteed but some clients would rather improve themselves than rely on technology, no matter how advanced.

And Fassbinder has found private individuals with a need for his services, the so-called supervillains, who need henchmen to handle assignments these important men and women can't bother with themselves.

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former associates of the Pawn Broker should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Social (Mercenary); Connections (Pawn Broker); Connections (Shturmovik); Enemy (USHER); Enemy (KGB); Enemy (CIA); Enemy (Pawn Broker)

Relevant Timeline Entries: 1970 CE (*Nazi battlesuit engineer Frederick Fassbinder is recruited into Shturmovik*); 1991 CE (*several dozen suits of Shturmovik armor are stolen by Frederick Fassbinder Jr.*); 1993 CE (*after stealing more suits of Shturmovik armor, Fassbinder makes himself a billionaire by hiring them out as mercenaries*); 1995 CE (*Fassbinder founds Bauer Industries, begins making custom battlesuits and expanding his work in the mercenary trade*)

PAWN

Origin: Trained

Prowess 4

Coordination 5

Strength 5

Intellect 3

Awareness 3

Willpower 3

Stamina 8

Determination *

Specialties

Drive

Martial Arts

Military

Weapons (Guns)

Powers

Invulnerability Device 3

Qualities

Thugs for hire

Challenges

Enemy: USHER

Enemy: Soviet military and intelligence



KNIGHT

Origin: Trained

Prowess 5
Coordination 5
Strength 8
Intellect 3
Awareness 4
Willpower 5

Stamina 13
Determination *

Specialties
Military
Martial Arts Expert
Drive
Pilot

Powers
Invulnerability Device 5

Qualities
Henchman for hire

Challenges
Enemy: USHER
Enemy: Soviet military and intelligence



TEA (TIME ENFORCEMENT AGENCY)

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

"Time, the rushing river."

The original core of TEA were "interesting" men and women plucked from the city of Pompeii minutes before it was entombed by Mount Vesuvius. This original group aided Chronicle in his great recorded history of the timestreams.

After several attempts by Walter Frazier and others to alter events in various timestreams, Chronicle, for unknown reasons, began recruiting enforcement agents to help preserve the "integrity" of the time-space continuum. His motives for this are hard to understand, given his assertion of infinite realities, where anything that can happen has.

Is Chronicle native to our time-space continuum and thus has an attachment to its "natural" development? Was he lonely? Perhaps his talk of infinite realities, none more important than any other is misleading? In the end, we really don't know but Chronicle's motives are certainly a mystery.

For starters, if TEA is his idea of non-interference, it's an odd definition of the term. The Minuteman legacy of heroes is a direct result of a TEA agent being found and some of their time equipment has been affecting events for centuries. Surely the timepiece could have been safely retrieved at some point?

And then there are the reports that Chronicle attended the funeral of the original Minuteman and altered his timepiece, causing the "golden age" Minuteman to shift into the "Thousand Year Reich" reality. As someone not interested in non-interference, that Minuteman greatly influenced events in that reality and then returned to influence our reality during WWII, one of the most momentous events in all of human history.

Again, while we know what happened, we have no idea why Chronicle took these actions and his motives are key to understanding him and his group. Until we have more information, TEA should be treated with extreme caution. However, they are deemed a friendly organization and aiding them is permissible, so long as doing so does not violate any standing orders from Director Thomason. Notify your superiors in the chain of command of any encounters immediately; no matter how inconsequential or benign they may seem on the surface.

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former associates of TEA should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Social (Man out of time); Connections (TEA); Connections (Minuteman/Order of the Hourglass); Enemy (ODESSA); Enemy (Hollow Men); Enemy (Black Knight/Old Guard)

Relevant timeline entries: 79 CE (*Chronicle saves citizens of Pompeii*); 350-1000 CE (*Chronicle recruits first TEA agents*); 1826 CE (*Chronicle alters the timepiece of the original Minuteman*); 1933 CE (*the altered timepiece throws the age Minuteman into the reality of the Thousand Year Reich*).

USHER (UNITED HEADQUARTERS FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE)

Agency Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights

USHER was formed in 1937 in an attempt to counter the emergence of Germany's Eugenics Brigade, the first state-sponsored team of metahumans in world history. When President Truman authorized the agency's continued peacetime existence, its mandate was changed into a metahuman research and enforcement agency.

What this means has been the subject of debate, argument and law but currently USHER is tasked with assisting local and federal law enforcement in the apprehension and arrest of metahumans, combating metahuman threats worldwide and with operating the United States' only metahuman detention facility. The largest agency of its type anywhere in the world, USHER is composed of four branches with very different missions, goals and equipment: the Atlas Battalion, the Blue Knights, the Nighthawks and the Pegasus Squadron.

Qualities and Challenges: Players that want their characters to be current or former associates of USHER should take one or more of the following Qualities and Challenges: Connections (USHER); Enemy (MAN); Enemy (Old Guard); Enemy (Omega Syndicate); Enemy (Pawn Broker)

Relevant timeline entries: 1937 CE (FDR creates USHER, Deuce is named first Director, Christian Thomason and Fred Williamson recruited); 1941 CE (General Sanders Simpson named second Director); 1943 CE (Christian Thomason named third Director); 1946 CE (First metahuman detention center built under Alcatraz prison); 1947 CE (National Security Act officially establishes USHER as a permanent, peacetime agency of the United States government; USHER granted use of aircraft carrier USS Enterprise as a mobile command center, ship renamed USS Response); 1950 CE (USHER agents smuggle metahumans out from behind the Iron Curtain); 1954 CE (USHER agents battle the Horde in Brazil); 1961 CE (Atlas Mk I battlesuit enters service); 1963 CE (major expansion of metahuman detention on Alcatraz Island, unofficially dubbed "Rock City"); 1964 CE (Atlas Battalion fight Shturmovik in Vietnam); 1968 CE (Christian Thomason resigns as Director over government's treatment of mutants; Fred Williamson named fourth Director); 1971 CE (President Nixon convinces Christian Thomason to return to USHER; USHER given sole authority over metahuman policy enforcement); 1983 CE (USHER gets new USS Response, a nuclear aircraft carrier); 1984 CE (construction begins on ISS High Ground, USHER orbital command center); 1987 CE (USHER space planes enter service); 1996 CE (Savant removed as head of USHER R&D); 2003 CE (The Scion's marines board and seize the High Ground); 2004 CE (agents and metahumans meet at Rock City and plan Earth's resistance against the rule of The Scion)

USHER AGENT (TYPICAL)

Origin: Trained

Prowess 3
Coordination 4
Strength 3
Intellect 3
Awareness 3
Willpower 4

Stamina 7
Determination *

Specialties

Military
Weapons (Guns)
Criminology
Martial Arts
Pilot

Powers

Blast Device 3 (Blasting)

Qualities

Protect and Serve

Challenges

Enemy: Rival super-agencies



USHER AGENT (ELITE)

Origin: Trained

Prowess 4

Coordination 4

Strength 4

Intellect 3

Awareness 4

Willpower 5

Stamina 9

Determination *

Specialties

Criminology

Pilot

Martial Arts

Military

Weapons (Guns)

Stealth

Powers

Blast Device 5 (Blasting)

Qualities

Protect and Serve

Connections: USHER

Challenges

Enemy: Rival super-agencies

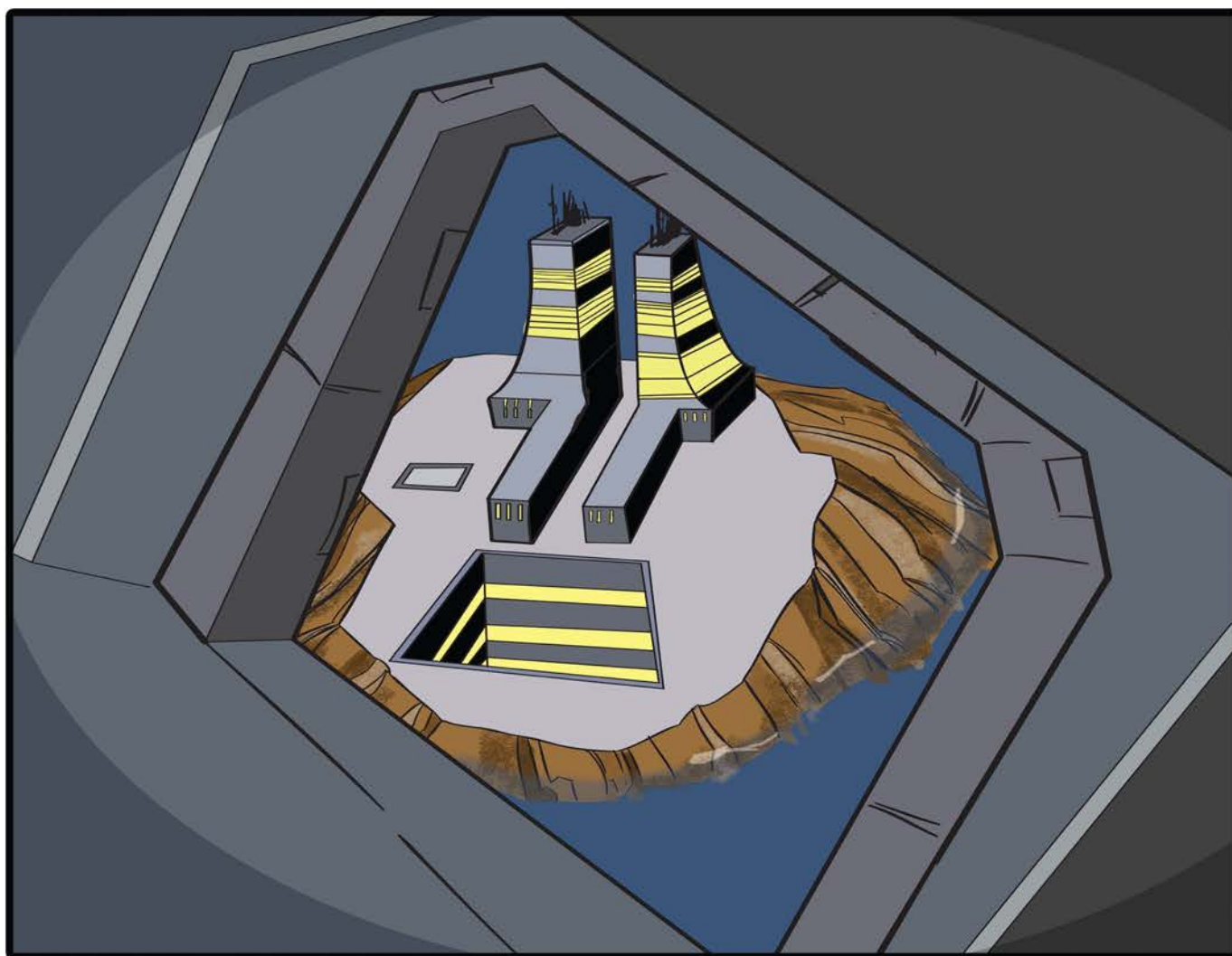


USHER - ATLAS BATTALION

This is the smallest branch within USHER and consists of the organization's main combat arm. Wearing state of the art battlesuits, the Atlas Battalion assists law enforcement agents against powerful metahumans and maintains two standing garrisons: Rock City and the ISS High Ground.

The Rock City garrison is charged with maintaining prison security at Rock City, America's only metahuman prison, located deep beneath Alcatraz Island. The High Ground garrison maintains security on USHER's orbital command center and can respond quickly anywhere in the world thanks to orbital reentry pods, allowing small groups of soldiers to literally drop from space.

This agency's history is closely tied to its Soviet counterpart Shturmovik. Throughout the Cold War Atlas and Shturmovik agents clashed in numerous bloody battles resulting in the deaths of agents on both sides. Not that the Pawn Broker has begun hiring out Shturmovik-armor wearing mercenaries, the Atlas Battalion has shifted its focus to this new threat, occasionally working with Russian agents in the process. The Atlas Battalion draws the majority of its membership from active-duty military personnel. These candidates undergo a rigorous selection process and receive advanced hand-to-hand combat and weapons training.



ATLAS BATTALION AGENT

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 6
Coordination 4
Strength 8 (4)
Intellect 3
Awareness 4
Willpower 7

Stamina 15
Determination *

Specialties
Martial Arts Expert
Military
Weapons (Guns)

Powers
Invulnerability Device 5
Flight Device 4
Strength Ability Increase Device (+4)

Qualities
Protect and Serve
"First in. Last out."
Connections: USHER

Challenges
Enemy: Pawn Broker
Enemy: Rival super-agencies



USHER - ATLAS BATTALION

This is the most recently created branch of USHER and sprang from a need to create a more discrete battlesuit to assist American law enforcement agencies. Atlas Battalion armor was too big and bulky and most of its weapons, such as the built-in rocket launchers carried by the suit, were simply not suitable for combat in American cities.

The Blue Knight armor, by contrast, employs energy weapons, which cause less collateral damage, and boasts extensive sensory abilities, including the ability to "see" fingerprints through the suit's heads-up display. In other words, while the Blue Knight armor has less combat capabilities, it is more suited to investigation and pursuit than the Atlas Battalion armor.

The Knights draws the majority of its membership from active-duty law enforcement personnel.

BLUE KNIGHTS

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 4
Coordination 4
Strength 6 (4)
Intellect 4
Awareness 6
Willpower 6

Stamina 12
Determination *

Specialties

Law
Investigation Expert
Criminology

Powers

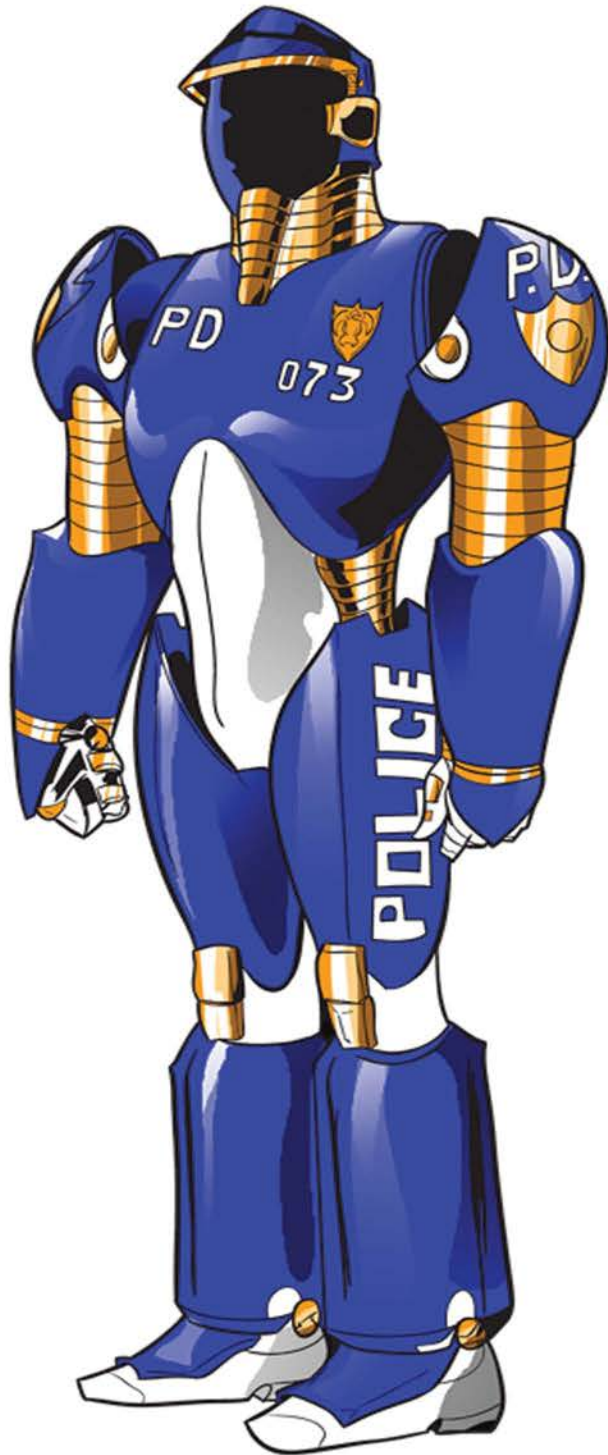
Invulnerability Device 3
Flight Device 4
Strength Ability Increase Device (+2)

Qualities

Protect and Serve
Connections: USHER

Challenges

Enemy: MAN
Enemy: Rival super-agencies



USHER - NIGHTHAWKS

An USHER imperative during the dark, early days of WWII was to come up with a counter for the Überfallkommando, or "Flying Brigade". These elite, jetpack-wearing soldiers were a key advantage to the Nazi Eugenics Brigade and turned the tide of several battles early in the war.

Typical of the way USHER operates, rather than attack the problem head on they went around it, opting for something subtler. The result was the Nighthawks: elite agents trained in stealth and covert operations, equipped with glider suits and nightvision goggles.

While the original unit proved its worth several times during WWII, its fame has only grown since. Today the Nighthawks are the largest elite branch within USHER and operate around the world, attacking enemy agencies and metahuman threats with stealth and speed rather than brute force.

USHER - NIGHTHAWK AGENT

Origin: Trained

Prowess 5
Coordination 7
Strength 4
Intellect 3
Awareness 5
Willpower 6

Stamina 10
Determination *

Specialties

Athletics
Martial Arts
Stealth Expert
Acrobatics

Powers

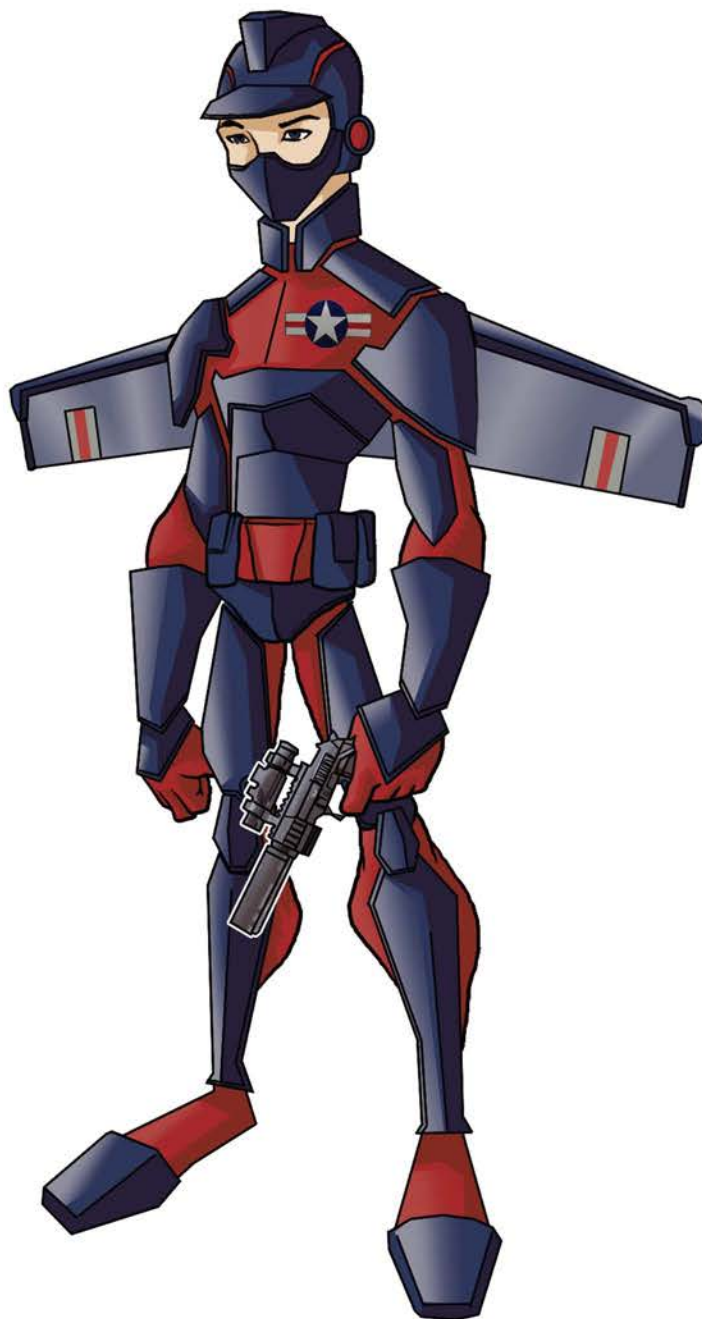
Flight Device 5 - Glider costume
Supersenses Device 3 (Enhanced) - Nightvision
Blast Device 4 (Shooting)

Qualities

Protect and Serve
Connections: USHER

Challenges

Enemy: Pawn Broker
Enemy: Rival super-agencies



USHER - PEGASUS SQUADRON

USHER's first special unit is still an important part of the agency's efforts to fight metahuman crime around the world. The Pegasus Squadron is composed of elite pilots, famous not only for their skill at air-to-air combat but also their versatility. Being a member of this elite unit means you not only never know where you'll fly on any given day, but also what you'll fly. You might fly a night combat mission in stealth helicopters to support a Nighthawks team, or board a space shuttle whose crew has been mutated by a cosmic event and land it safely.



USHER - PEGASUS SQUADRON

Origin: Trained

Prowess 4
Coordination 7
Strength 3
Intellect 5
Awareness 7
Willpower 7

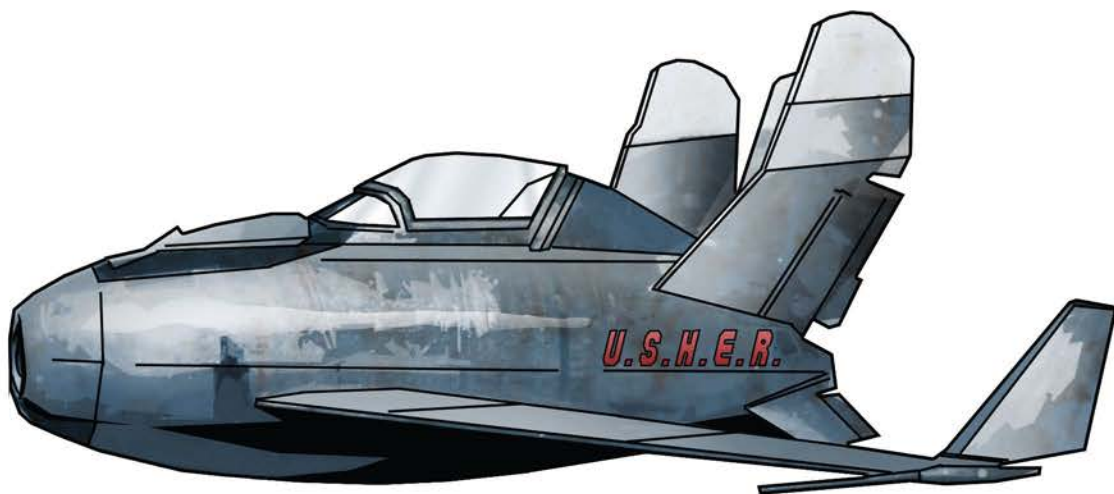
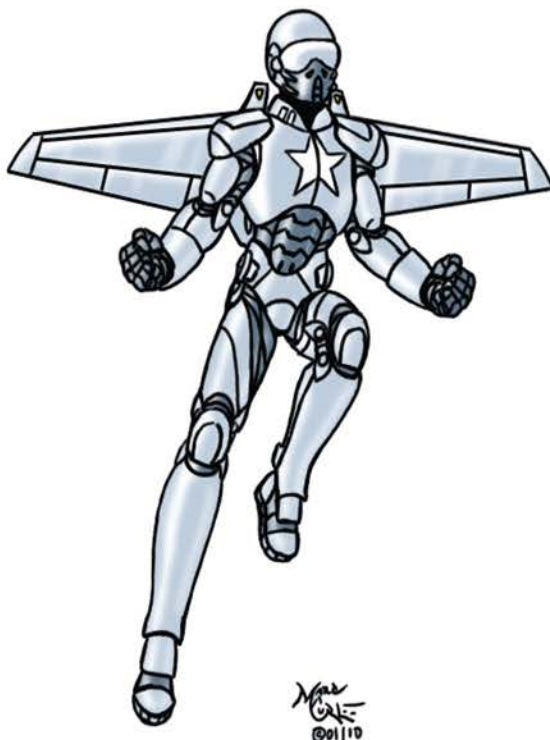
Stamina 10
Determination *

Specialties
Pilot Master
Aerial Combat Expert

Powers
Flight Device 7 - Jet cycle

Qualities
Protect and Serve
Connections: USHER

Challenges
Enemy: MAN
Enemy: Rival super-agencies



KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

Recorded June 5th, 2002, for convenience Exclusive's transcript is in bold, Chronicle in normal type; special thanks to Exclusive for the rights to include this interview for our dossiers.

"Ok... the camera is all set. You're sure it's ok to record you? The um, Forever Man, he didn't want to be visually recorded."

"No, that's perfectly fine. So you talked to Aeternus? I'm sorry... it means roughly the same, "everlasting" in Latin. That's what he was called the first time I met him, it's what the Romans called him. I am going to have to look him up before I leave again. True friends are life's only real treasure."

"So, when you say leave you mean..."

"Who can say? I might go to the 12th century for some British fish cakes, or I might cross the street for an ice cream sandwich. The ability to go anywhere with a thought has led me to wait until the last minute to decide such things. I am hungry though, so food, perhaps with Aeternus."

"When did you learn you could do this? Travel through time?"

"Ah, now that, I am afraid, will have to remain a mystery. My origins are... well, it's information certain people shouldn't have and let's just leave it at that."

"How do you feel about other... travelers, like yourself? Say, the Minuteman, for example."

"I welcome them! Though, technically, the minutemen, are not travelers, as a rule. They can manipulate time but, with the notable exception of poor Dr. Frazier, they can't travel through time."

"You're talking about the leader of the Hollow Men. Poor Dr. Frazier? Doesn't he want to be the greatest mass murderer of all time?"

"Poor Dr. Frazier in the sense that he has not yet learned that things can't be truly undone. There are already time streams where he has succeeded, and an equal number where he failed. He should find something that makes him happy, for the duration of his existence, and do that. He's a very unhappy man."

"So... I really hadn't planned on talking about this, it's pretty mindblowing, but you say there are infinite time streams?"

"Yes, though even thinking of them as separate streams is a simplification for your benefit. Really they're different currents in one enormous river, sometimes crossing each other, doubling back, splitting only to rejoin. I think Dr. Frazier will learn in time. For beings like us, who can see that everything that can happen, has happened, the only true vocation is to chronicle it, record it, to be the living witness to the wonder of history."

"Of course, there are other views, like Walter. So many people when they first learn to be a traveler focus on one particular past and try to shape it to their choosing. But of course, this is impossible."

"Because everything has already happened?"

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

"Well, yes, but also, say you wanted to mold your ideal timeline, manipulate events until, for one short span, say, 100 years, the world was your ideal world. How exactly would you do that? The uncertainty principle applies, of course, your constant changes will trigger further changes and you won't be able to anticipate how that new chain of events will play out."

"But the main reason altering events, in an attempt to achieve a specific result, is futile is because there are too many factors."

"Because every individual can make a difference, and there are millions, or billions of us, making decisions every second."

"Ah! Very good, child! I see you not only talked with Aeternus, but listened to him as well. That is good. Very good. I sensed something interesting about you. I have to go dear, I have a sudden desire to visit this timestream in a century or so and see what became of you and your new wisdom."

"Interview suspended by the, um, disappearance of the subject. This is Exclusive, signing off."

DARK FUTURE

In the Dark Future elements of MAN succeed in assassinating the President of the United States in 2015. This leads the new President and Congress to enact the harsh Mutant Control Act, which forces all mutants into 8 Containment Zones, fortified internment camps located in: New York City, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Houston, San Antonio, San Diego and San Francisco.

In this reality, USHER serves as the main enforcement arm of this new policy. Atlas Battalion agents serve as guards around the Containment Zones to prevent escape and Blue Knights investigate suspected mutants and deliver the "positives" to the zones. A new branch of USHER, the Black Knights, hunt down escaped mutants and have the power of judge, jury and executioner over any mutant who escapes their assignment Containment Zone. Old Glory leads the underground resistance against this totalitarian police state along with Protocol, the consciousness of his old friend Savant housed within the Medusa supercomputer's memory core.

Known Dimensional Crossovers: Unfortunately this reality has had frequent crossovers to mainstream Earth. The first crossover was in 1999, when a Black Knight from the Dark Future crossed over into mainstream Earth and took over the Old Guard, turning them into a new and deadly instrument of human domination over mutants.

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

DARK FUTURE (CONT.)

Through unknown means, a group of MAN villains from the Dark Future has also crossed over into mainstream Earth. This group has not made contact with MAN as they are on a secret mission: to assassinate the President of the United States, the very act that sets the Dark Future in motion.

They have been pursued by a young group of mutants from the Resistance, sent into the past by Old Glory and Protocol. This group has successfully made contact with the Old Glory from mainstream Earth and told him of their mission.

The final known denizen of this dimension to spend significant time on mainstream Earth is Throttle, a member of the multi-dimensional villain team the Hollow Men (these villains are detailed in Public Enemies).

Known Mainstream Analogs: Old Glory; Savant (known as Protocol in this dimension)

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

HELL

This is not the place of punishment featured in many religions but rather the nickname given to the home dimension of Walter Frazier by an unknown member of the TEA. Those who have visited this dimension feel it accurately describes what a stay in the dimension is like.

In Hell, humanity fought a third World War featuring nuclear and biological weapons, as well as genetically engineered soldiers, in the mid-21st century. From there this dimension spiraled downhill until by 2126, the world is all but lifeless, inhabited by a few hardy souls mutated so severely they are barely recognizable as human.

For years Walter Frazier, the Minuteman of Hell was a hero, saving those he could, using his genius intellect to construct domed areas free of radiation, allowing small bands of survivors to live relatively free of the harmful environment.

Known Dimensional Crossovers: At some point Frazier's mind snapped and he came to the conclusion that his future must be prevented by any means necessary. He began traveling through time and decided that the "tipping point" was the early 21st century. He has collected a multi-dimensional team of murderers and killers with one goal: reduce Earth's population to no more than 1 billion.

Currently this group, known as the Hollow Men, is incarcerated in Rock City on mainstream Earth.

Known Mainstream Analogs: None

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

POST-APCALYPTIA

This dimension was consumed in the fires of a nuclear apocalypse sometime in the mid-20th century. Contrary to what one would expect, this dimension is quite a bit more hopeful than many, such as Hell or the Thousand-Year Reich.

Though the situation is grim, a band of heroes has risen up to defend humanity from the depredations of the horrible mutant predators that prowl the landscape. This team is comprised of Old Glory, the Savant, Ground Zero (this character appears in Public Enemies) and the Forever Man.

Known Dimensional Crossovers: There have been two known incidents of this reality intersecting with mainstream Earth.

In the first, the Savant accidentally transported himself there during an experiment gone awry. He was stunned to discover that his analog in this dimension had been completely cured by something in the mutated environment and seemed as ageless as his three companions. The mainstream Savant was also healing, his injuries regenerating before his eyes but the energy field that had shunted him to Post-Apocalypsia faded and he was jerked back to mainstream Earth.

Since this crossover the Savant has spent a great deal of time trying to get back to this dimension, and exhaustively studies every reading he was able to take during his brief stay there.

The Chronicle instigated the second intersection when he brought the Forever Man here in his darkest hour, during a time when the immortal was actively seeking to end his own life. Chronicle showed the Forever Man the camaraderie and heroic spirit he possessed, to give him some hope of a brighter future or at least of finding a peace within himself.

Known Mainstream Analogs: Old Glory; Savant; Ground Zero; Forever Man

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

REVERSE WORLD

This curious dimension is in many ways closer to mainstream Earth than any other dimensional analog except for the moral code of metahumans.

In short, any metahuman that is a hero on mainstream Earth is a villain in Reverse World, and vice versa. This dimension currently stands on the brink of World War III however, thanks to a coup staged by Old Glory who now controls the United Police States of America.

For almost 5,000 years Europe, the Forever Man has secretly ruled Russia, Asia and Europe by successfully playing ruler against ruler and keeping the nations of the Old World at each other's throats. Seeking to extend his dominion to the entire planet, he secretly sponsored America's independence from Britain.

Maintaining his rule has become harder during the 20th century however, due to the rise of a new wave of incredibly powerful metahumans. Even a pair of World Wars only forestalled the inevitable and the rise of the UPSA has forced the Forever Man out from the shadows, assassinating every world leader who opposed him and melding Europe, Russia and Asia into the Eternal Empire.

At the planet's darkest hour, with both Old Glory and the Forever Man threatening nuclear war, a hero has arrived from another planet: The Scion, bringer of light and truth. Breaking a treaty of non-interference signed with the Forever Man two thousand years ago, this hero has vowed to free Earth of its opposing tyrannies if it costs him his life.

Known Dimensional Crossovers: Fortunately this dimension has intersected with mainstream Earth rarely. The most famous intersection occurred during a failed attempt by the Savant to return to Post-Apocalypsia. After returning to Earth, he contacted USHER and the New Coalition, warning them to avoid this dimension at all costs, a warning that has, thus far, been heeded.

It is also believed that this dimension accounts for several unexplained personality shifts in recent years. During the Scion Invasion, for example, villainous robot Tower unexpectedly stood with Earth's heroes and expressed a nobility and compassion never witnessed before. Immediately after the invasion the robot immediately returned to his murderous ways and claimed not to remember helping anyone.

Whether this was a random intersection or another example of the Savant taking a huge gamble in combat has never been determined. If the Savant voluntarily brought the Tower-analog to mainstream Earth he has refused to admit it.

Known Mainstream Analogs: All (heroes and villains)

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

THE THOUSAND-YEAR REICH

The world of the Thousand-Year Reich diverges from mainstream Earth in 1944, when an Allied attack on the main Nazi eugenics laboratory ends in a crushing defeat. The laboratory was due to be visited by a powerful Thule mystic in two weeks but he had arrived early to add his grisly art to their science to produce greater metahumans for the Führer.

The unexpected presence of this powerful mystic at the battle turns the tide in favor of the Eugenics Brigade and both the Crown Guard and Vigilance Force are completely crushed. Combining magic with science, Dr. Eugenik's laboratories begin turning out high-grade metahumans again. In December of 1944, a pair of V-4 rockets carrying atomic warheads strikes Baltimore and New York City, forcing the United States to sue for a separate peace, abandoning Britain and Russia to the Germans.

With no metahumans to counter the new, stronger Eugenics Brigade, the Russian advance is halted and the war enters a bitter yearlong stalemate as American forces withdraw from war against both Japan and Germany.

In 1946, the Germans and Japanese manage to break this stalemate, when a threat of further atomic missile attacks forces the United States to begin supplying arms to the Axis powers, as it had supported Britain and Russia through Lend-Lease.

When a resurgent Japanese navy enters the Atlantic and breaks the back of the Royal Navy in early 1947 and Winston Churchill is captured, attempting to flee to Canada with the Royal Family, all hope of an Allied victory is lost.

After tense negotiations with the Royal Family and the British Parliament, Britain allows Nazi soldiers to enter London unopposed and formally sues for peace. In November, German stormtroopers capture Moscow and bring Joseph Stalin into custody. World War II finally ends in July 1948 when Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin are found guilty of war crimes at the Berlin Tribunal and hanged.

After the war, the world is drawn up into three large spheres of influence: Germany controls Britain, Europe, Russia and North Africa; Japan controls China, Southeast Asia and the Pacific; while a United States politically dominated by Germany wields influence in the western hemisphere.

This process continued throughout the 50's and 60's, with Nazi parties eventually winning large majorities in the United States, Britain and many South American countries. Germany and the United States in particular astonished everyone by developing close ties and becoming key economic and military allies through the 1980's.

However, when Canada refused to back a German-sponsored plebiscite on unification with America and the United States Congress refused to declare war on Canada in response, Germany conquered North America in a brief and bloody series of campaigns launched from Russia. With all three Eugenics Brigades taking part in the fighting, the North American Allies, consisting of Canada, Mexico and the United States quickly fell, becoming protectorates of the Thousand Year Reich.

KNOWN ALTERNATE TIMELINES

THE THOUSAND-YEAR REICH (CONT.)

Known Dimensional Crossovers: Almost all information on this grim reality comes from the Golden Age Minuteman, who was thrown into the year 2041 of this reality from 1933 mainstream Earth. While there, the Minuteman led a resistance movement that was ultimately crushed but managed to escape back to mainstream Earth with an advanced battlesuit which he had adapted to be powered by his mysterious timepiece.

During his stay in this reality, the Minuteman spent a great deal of time studying its history, carefully separating real events from propaganda (where possible), including hundreds of one-on-one interviews with descendants of World War II veterans, who were a treasure trove of real information on the past.

Upon returning to mainstream Earth the Minuteman gave a detailed account of this reality and its history to USHER.

Known Dimensional Analogs: All golden-age heroes and villains. Some Silver Age heroes and villains existed in this reality, such as the Coalition but most are either forced to join a Eugenics Brigade chapter or hunted down and killed.





METAHUMANS

What follows are detailed files on some of the most powerful and influential metahumans of the 20th century. More detailed country-by-country files on the world metahuman population can be found in the upcoming World Metahuman Factbooks produced by the World Metahuman Foundation.



METAHUMANS

BENEFACTOR

Unknown Subject Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights



Little is known of this shadowy figure except what he has revealed about himself. He is a United States Senator with considerable wealth and power, both personally and through his connections. It is presumed, since his first entry into metahuman affairs was to assist the New Coalition that he is from California but this is supposition. He has a penchant for contacting metahumans with cryptic video messages, recorded in a dark room, rendering the speaker visible only as a shadow; the voice of the speaker is modulated and impossible to identify. Most assume the speaker is the Benefactor himself but again this is not proven.

Often the Benefactor will alert metahumans to a crisis somewhere in the world and offer them something to assist them in dealing with the crisis. The Benefactor provided the New Coalition's supersonic stealth transport when he asked them to deal with their first international crisis, to stop the sale of Horde mutagens to an African dictator. Those who deal with the Benefactor warn that he is not always trustworthy, however. Like many politicians, he has a weakness for beautiful women and he is willing to betray allies or use them as pawns to protect his family friendly public image.

Conclusion: USHER agents are advised to avoid contact if possible. This individual is untrustworthy. Let the freelance metahumans deal with his games and get their shiny new toys from him as payment.

BENEFACTOR

Origin: Unknown

Prowess 2

Coordination 3

Strength 2

Intellect 7

Awareness 7

Willpower 7

Stamina 9

Determination *

Specialties

Business Master

Law Master

Powers

None

Qualities

Connections: USHER

Determined to Protect Humanity

Connections: United States Government

Challenges

Enemy: Omega Syndicate

Womanizer

Family Values Image



BLACK KNIGHT

Criminal Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights



The Black Knight is an armored USHER agent from the Dark Future, specializing in "fugitive retrieval". In the reality of the Dark Future, mutants are subject to the same laws as normal citizens (including the Mutant Control Act) until they are identified and removed to their designated Containment Zone.

Upon being registered as a mutant and contained, they are transferred to USHER's authority and are only granted constitutional rights within their assigned zone. If they escape, they are under the purview of the Black Knights, who hunt down escaped mutants and have the power to act as judge, jury and executioner as deemed necessary to protect humanity.

It is assumed that not all Black Knights are as quick to kill as this one, deposited on mainstream Earth during a dimensional intersection. Unfortunately, he seems to think the best mutants are dead mutants. Also, like many dimensional travelers, he believes he is in the past of his dimension. As such, he is determined to stop the assassination of the United States President in five years.

Conclusion: Public Enemy #1. Report all sightings immediately but do not engage without adequate back-up (Blue Knights are not sufficient to apprehend, wait on the Atlas Battalion). Subject is extremely violent, extremely radical and quite possibly delusional as well.

BLACK KNIGHT

Real Name: Unknown

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 6

Coordination 6

Strength 8 (4)

Intellect 4

Awareness 7

Willpower 7

Stamina 15

Determination *

Specialties

Military

Criminology

Powers

Flight Device 5

Blast Device 5 (Blasting)

Invulnerability Device 4

Strength Ability Increase Device (+4)

Qualities

Protects "Normal" Humans

Fights Crime

Connections : Old Guard

Challenges

Racist

Enemy : USHER

Enemy : MAN

Enemy : TEA



CHRONICLE

Entity Profile by Lt. Oswald Calibresi, Blue Knights



Giving a life history of this entity is extremely difficult. Even when an action he took is known, what his motivation was or where that event took place within his lifespan is impossible to know. He has admitted in interviews that he was born in 7,000 BCE in a late Stone Age village and that he quickly discovered that he could travel through time. He has also said he spent the early part of his life interfering with the timestream in a vain attempt to force events down the "right" path.

So when looking at events in his life that occurred relatively recently, such as his alteration of the Minuteman's timepiece to throw the Golden Age Minuteman into the Thousand-Year Reich, was this actually a younger, more active Chronicle? Or perhaps he had some other motivation?

Again, it is impossible to tell.

And now a personal note. Having spent a good deal of time with this subject, and he seemed quite willing to spend a great deal of time with me on my profiles of various known alternate dimensions, I would warn anyone dealing with him to be cautious.

If there was ever a person alive who was free to do whatever the hell he wants, it's this guy. And he knows it. He can go anywhere, anywhen with a thought. He's immortal. He has amassed seemingly unlimited material resources. He has an agency of thousands of men and women at his disposal and they seem quite willing to kill, or die, at his command. He has hidden observation stations set up all over the solar system. And he has admitted to interfering in our development several times.

Conclusion: If you encounter this entity you should engage him verbally. Ask him why he's there and if you can help. Regardless of what he says, report your contact directly to Liberty Station immediately. Do not follow the chain of command. This needs to reach high eyes immediately.

CHRONICLE

Real Name: Unknown

Origin: Birthright

Prowess 3

Coordination 3

Strength 10

Intellect 10

Awareness 10

Willpower 10

Stamina 20

Determination *

Specialties

None

Powers

Teleportation 10

Invulnerability 10

Time Control 10

Time Travel

Slow time (Super Speed)

Freeze Time (Paralysis)

Time Travel

Qualities

Inscrutable Master of Time

"I am the Chronicle. Come with me if you want to live."

Protector of the timestream.

Challenges

Enemy: The Hollow Men



EXCLUSIVE

Recorded December 1st, 2008, Lt. Calibresi in bold type, subject Linda Palmer in normal type.

"No! No, damnit! Set the barricade up over there. Over. There. Where my finger is pointing. Don't look at my finger, you idiot. Are you a cat? Has the Savant replaced your brain with a cat's brain? Yes, over there. Where I've been pointing for 20 minutes now. Oh, what the hell do you want? You know there's a fire, right? From the fight with Tower? Or do you want an interview. I am a superhero, you know."

"That cut-rate battlesuit doesn't make you a superhero. Now Minuteman, he's a superhero. Has a real battlesuit. Hot too. If you could get me his number, that would be great. Look, what the hell is this, anyway?"

"Ah, that would be your USHER file that you got through your Freedom of Information Act request. Did you enjoy reading it? I wrote that you know. I'm an excellent writer."

"No, it wasn't good reading because the entire god damn thing is redacted! There's nothing here!"

"Statistically, your redacted file contains 51% of the original report."

"It's all articles! It's a bunch of and's and the's! This is bullshit!"

"Look, what did you expect. The boss doesn't like you. Ergo, he likes to screw with you. You know this. The boss is a bear. The bear does not like you. Poking the bear with a stick is not going to make it like you. It's going to get you mauled."

"Look, it's just. He's my hero, you know?"

"Jesus Christ! No, over there! Where I'm pointing! Well, listen, your hero doesn't like you. He thinks you're a waste of god-given talent. You know this. Would reading it in my report make it any clearer to you? Thank God. I thought I was going to have cry to get her to leave."



EXCLUSIVE

Real Name: Linda Palmer

Origin: Birthright

Prowess 3

Coordination 8

Strength 2

Intellect 4

Awareness 7

Willpower 4

Stamina 6

Determination *

Specialties

Acrobatics Expert

Investigation Master

Powers

Supersenses 5 (Additional, Enhanced, Extended)

Swinging 4

Qualities

Nosey

Loves a good story.

"This is Exclusive, bringing you the metahuman beat!"

Challenges

Heroic outcast (heroes don't trust her, villains still hate her)

Enemy: Pawn Broker

Enemy: Old Guard



FOREVER MAN

Recorded October 2nd, 1999, for convenience, interviewer's transcription is in bold, Forever Man in normal type; special thanks to Exclusive for the rights to include this interview for our dossiers.



"No... no, it's fine, I can just record the audio if you're not comfortable with the camera. There, how's that? Ok? Good. So, let's start at the beginning, I mean, you are the beginning really. I... you... is something funny?"

"I'm sorry, I don't mean to be rude. I have had these conversations many times before. You're going to assume I was at every major historical event from the crucifixion to Woodstock and, after wasting a lot of each other's time, I'll be frustrated and you'll be horribly disappointed."

"The truth is, I don't have a sixth sense to let me know when something important is going to happen any more than you do. And in the past, getting from China to Babylon was something of a journey. By the time you heard about something, it was long over, you might not even be able to find the wreckage."

"And of course, the truly important things, no one can really understand anyway. My family, my tribe, we were all... different to varying degrees. Most of them were geniuses. Way smarter than me. We were the first to tame fire, domesticate plants and animals. Those days, and the days that followed, when I realized I alone was eternal, when I traveled the world and taught what we had learned to others, those were the really special days. But it's impossible to put into words. Building a fire is something children can learn now, but they don't even bother. And why would they? Strike a match. It's easy. Simple."

"You look confused."

"I... well, honestly, I didn't expect you to talk to me at all. And I certainly didn't expect you to be so... gregarious, I guess? I mean, you've spent so much time trying not to get involved..."

"I'm not involved. You're a pretty girl who asked me to have a conversation. I like talking to people; I do it all the time. That's not really getting involved though, is it? Getting involved is telling people who to vote for, what to think, who to kill. I don't do that sort of thing, not anymore."

FOREVER MAN

"I'm not involved. You're a pretty girl who asked me to have a conversation. I like talking to people; I do it all the time. That's not really getting involved though, is it? Getting involved is telling people who to vote for, what to think, who to kill. I don't do that sort of thing, not anymore."

"Things fall apart. The center cannot hold! In my experience, those are the truest words ever written. The truth of my life is that, no matter how much power I might think I have, I can't stop that. You folks are the only ones with that kind of power. Oh yes, don't look so shocked. Strength in numbers, dear. I was Emperor of the Roman Empire once, and I couldn't stop it from falling apart. Only they could have done that and they didn't have the will."

"This place, this time, this civilization, all of it will come crashing down. Soon, I think. That, I kind of have a sense for. Like the way your sinuses ache before a big rain, you're feeling the atmosphere expand in your head and you know the storm is coming."

"You think civilization is about to end?"

"This one, maybe. It's inevitable of course. Did you think you were special? I mean, more special than the Han? Than Rome? Eventually the foundation rots and the house comes crashing down. And you build a new one. That will be my time, I suppose."

"I'm sorry, your time? You mean you won't get involved until it all goes to hell? Where's the logic in that?"

"I told you, I can't stop things from happening. But once it does, once the really ugly, chaotic mess has washed away the bad, it will be time to build something new. People will be ready to listen again. Not to my notions of right and wrong, people always make those decisions for themselves. Or won't, as more often happens."

"What I mean by 'my time' is to fill in the gaps. Maybe that's why I'm really here. Something will get lost, something really important. How to make a compass, or a yoke to pull a heavy plow, the things that seem so simple to you now you can't even be bothered to learn them. The things that will help people put the pieces back together. I can help with that."

"When you said... sorry... the way you said 'maybe that's why I'm really here', it almost, do you believe you were put here for a purpose? Like, by god... a supreme being, whatever?"

"Everyone has a purpose. That's the saddest thing about getting involved, is seeing all the people who have convinced themselves they can't make a difference. They think because I can punch a hole in this wall, or that I've a lifespan measured in millennia, that I can make a difference. And I can, but not anymore than you. This is where we started. You have the real power, all of you. No one can drag you down into evil and chaos without your consent. And you allow it, because too many of you think you don't matter."

"I'm sorry, dear, I have to go. This has been especially enjoyable, but that black SUV across the street has a certain government aura about it. They want to talk to me too, but unlike you, they're not interesting or pretty. Thank you for the conversation."

"Well, that's certainly different. He- ow! They didn't see him coming. They just don't make SUVs like they used to I guess. This is Exclusive, your source for the metahuman beat, signing off!"

FOREVER MAN

Real Name: Milele Mtu, a.k.a. Optimus Aeternus

Origin: Birthright

Prowess 7

Coordination 5

Strength 8

Intellect 5

Awareness 7

Willpower 8

Stamina 16

Determination *

Specialties

Martial Arts Master

Weapons Master (Blades)

Weapons Master (Bludgeons)

Weapons Master (Throwing)

Weapons Master (Bows)

Stealth

Leadership

Powers

Immortality 10

Invulnerability 6

Qualities

Man out of time

"I walk alone."

Challenges

Doesn't give a damn about anyone or anything.



MINUTEMAN

Transcript of closed-door Congressional hearing, held in 1946 in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Testimony of Committee members in bold, testimony of Minuteman in normal type.



"Sir, please state your full name for the record before we proceed."

"I came here under the agreement that I would identify myself only as the Minuteman."

"Yes, well, we discussed that after our earlier conversation and the members of the committee decided--"

"That's enough, I'm leaving."

"Don't make us arrest you, Sir."

"Please. I'm in bulletproof armor and even if I wasn't, I can sidestep bullets. This nonsense is exactly why the Minuteman exists. I've been labeled an outlaw before, back when slavery was legal. I'm fine being an outlaw again."

"We are prepared to make you an officer in USHER, son, but you need to let us know who you are and where your true allegiances lie."

"My true allegiances? I would have thought fighting in WWII, WWI, the Spanish-American War, the Civil War, the War of 1812 and the Revolutionary War would be enough to prove that."

"Well we are still at war, son. A war against Communism. And I'm pretty sure that wasn't you that fought in all those wars anyway."

"The Minuteman fought in those wars. As for your little Communist witch-hunt, I will defend America. But I will do so according to my conscience and at a time and place of my choosing. I will not join USHER or any other organization, nor will I allow myself to be identified or constrained in any way."

"Our little witch-hunt? So tell me son, are you now or have you ever been- where did he- He's gone! Sergeant! Search the grounds! Arrest that man!"

MINUTEMAN 1

Real Name: John Ezekial Rogers

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 7

Coordination 7

Strength 5

Intellect 3

Awareness 6

Willpower 7

Stamina 12

Determination *

Specialties

Acrobatics

Stealth

Martial Arts

Weapons (Guns)

Powers

Time Control Device 5

Invulnerability Device 3

Qualities

"For independence!"

Freedom's First Son

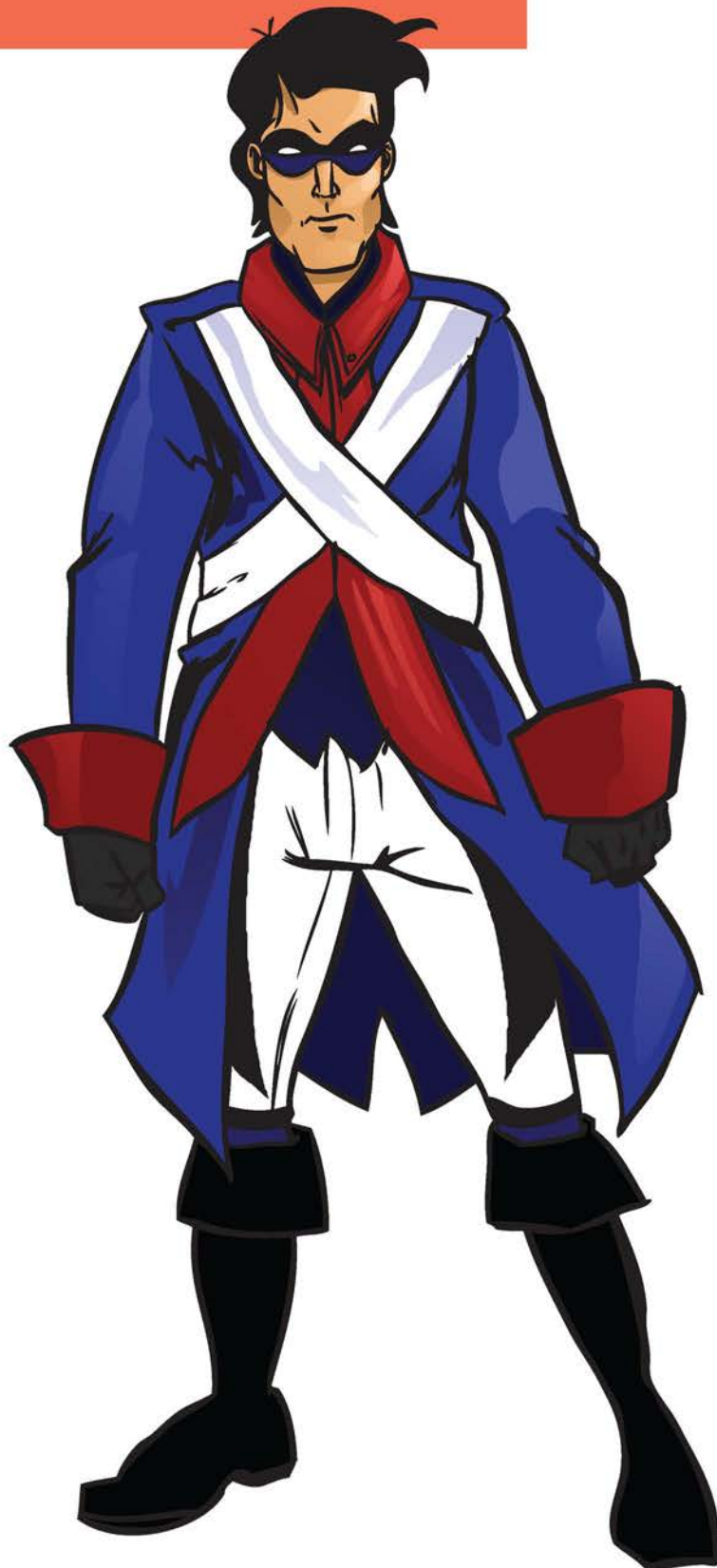
Masked hero of Manhattan

Challenges

Enemy: British Army and Navy

Enemy: Governor-General James Robertson

Dependent NPCs: Wife and children



OLD GLORY (MODERN DAY)

Transcript of bugged conversation. Subject Williamson, Fred in bold type, subject Thomason, Christian in normal type.



"You know, you could be court-martialed for even being here. Still, it's good you came."

"If they want to fire me for meeting with you, Freddie, they can pink slip me now."

"Oh- don't make me laugh, it really hurts these days. I was kidding before. We could break down the door and have lunch in the Oval Fucking Office. They're never firing you. You're an icon."

"So are you. As much as me. Maybe more. I can set things on fire. You build things that change the world."

"Yeah. Science is the answer. What exactly have I made better with science? Or anybody for that matter. The atom bomb, now there's some fucking science. Thirty years later, it's still killing me."

"We all die, Freddie."

Unintelligible- coughing- wheezing- long pause. "Don't give me that shit. You of all people. We don't all die, do we Chris?"

"Is that really what this is about? You're old and I'm not? Heck, Freddie, I've given you my blood, I've let you cut me open, I'm sorry that I'm not sick. I'm sorry that bomb killed Jimmy and I'm sorry it's killing you. Is that what you want to hear?"

Unintelligible- more coughing- beeping- some sort of machine sound- artificial breathing. "No- don't you fucking touch me, I'm fine. And no, I don't want to hear that you're sorry. All I wanted was to do my tests. I can do them with you, or without you. I'm close. I'm almost there."

"You're telling me- Christ, Freddie, you're actually doing them? Even when I shut you down before, I never thought you'd actually do it. The eugenics tests? On innocent victims?"

"No! Not innocents, damnit! I'm not a Nazi. On scum. Criminals. Drug dealers mostly. Seriously, you're going to pick a thousand wretched, wallowing scum over me?!? How many times have we saved the fucking world?"

"Did you- did you really say a thousand? A thousand people?"

OLD GLORY (MODERN DAY)

Transcript of bugged conversation. Subject Williamson, Fred in bold type, subject Thomason, Christian in normal type.

"It might be ten thousand. It doesn't matter. If it were a million it would be cheap. I've saved billions. I'm ahead."

"It's not a balance sheet. Now you really are talking like them."

"Don't- don't fucking compare me to a Nazi again. Ever. Look, I'm doing this. I thought maybe you would see reason."

"That's funny. That's exactly what I thought. But this- I can't let you do this. I'm stopping this now. Don't move, I don't want to hurt you. I said don't-"

Sound of flame- beeping- coughing- laughter. "I'm not here, dumb shit. This is a hologram. It's a good one though, huh? Fooled you. Now listen, I don't want to hurt you either. So just forget we had this talk, don't come after me, and stay out of my way."

"You're sick. But not from cancer. You need help, Freddie."

"Medusa, end transmission."

"Alpha unit, did you get a trace? No, of course you didn't. Do a sweep of the area anyway, he might be nearby. Just do it."

OLD GLORY (MODERN DAY)

Real Name: Christian Thomason

Origin: Birthright

Prowess 5

Coordination 10

Strength 5

Intellect 4

Awareness 5

Willpower 8

Stamina 13

Determination *

Specialties

Aerial Combat Master

Law

Leadership Master

Pilot

Criminology

Powers

Immortality 5

Elemental Control 10 (Fire)

Attacking

Defending

Moving

Creating

Shaping

Qualities

Living Legend

Defender of American Values

Devoted to his friends

Challenges

Enemy: MAN

Enemy: Shturmovik

Reluctant to face the Savant



PROFESSOR AND MOLL

Transcript of police interview with Wilbur "the Professor" Watkins. Interviewer Lt. Oswald Calibresi (USHER, Blue Knights division) in bold, Watkins in normal type.



"Your girl is putting up quite a struggle in the next room. Kicks like a mule. How long have you had her? Is it time to trade up? Or do they call it trading down when you trade an older groupie for a younger one?"

"It doesn't surprise me you don't understand. Our relationship is not about sex."

"No, of course not. Not primarily. I mean, sure, she's your muscle, can't do without that!"

"Again I am astonished how such a small mind managed to capture me to begin with. But no, she isn't as you put it, 'muscle' either. Like sex, muscle is easy to get."

"Ah yes, you were so hard to catch Professor. Driving around in a goddamn ice cream truck delivering drugs with your mutated girlfriend, with the music playing no less. We needed a montage, a Miami Vice-style power ballad, it was crazy."

"Hm. You're correct, that does make this conversation seem like it would place me in legal jeopardy doesn't it. I'd like to see my lawyer now please."

THE PROFESSOR

Real Name: Wilbur Watkins

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 1

Coordination 3

Strength 1

Intellect 7

Awareness 7

Willpower 7

Stamina 8

Determination *

Specialties

Medicine Master

Science Master (Chemistry)

Powers

Ability Boost Device 5 (Strength) -

 Injections of Rebound

Super-Speed Device 4 -

 Ice Cream Truck

Qualities

The Candy Man

Connections: Bribed police officers

Greatest living pharmacologist

Challenges

Enemy: USHER

Enemy: Rival street dealers



PROFESSOR AND MOLL

Transcript of police interview with Holly Reina. Interviewer Lt. Oswald Calibresi (USHER, Blue Knights division) in bold, Watkins in normal type.



"Your boss just lawyered up in record time. Now, let's think about this. The Professor has the money. The lawyer cashes the Professor's checks. If the lawyer has to choose between getting the Professor off and letting you go to jail for 30 years, do you think he might do that?"

"Shut up! You don't understand anything! What we have is special! He takes care of me!"

"Uh huh. He rolled over on the street. He could have helped. Rammed us with his truck, used some of those drugs on himself, but he didn't. He let you do all the fighting, you and the rest of the hired help. And now he's already called his lawyer. Did he call one for you? Or is he leaving you on your own in here like he did on the street?"

"Shut up! He will take care of me! He always has!"

"You better hope so honey. Loyalty isn't his strong suit. He needs muscle and we both know he isn't going to wait patiently for you. If you are in here longer than a week he'll have some younger, hotter cutie bulked up like you and you know this."

"That's it! I'm going to kill you! And the Professor will get me out! He will! He will!"

Interviewer suspended when suspect went berserk.

MOLL

Real Name: Holly and Molly Reina
(It is not widely known but there are two identical girls who act as 'Moll')

Origin: Transformed

Prowess 7

Coordination 5

Strength 8

Intellect 2

Awareness 3

Willpower 5

Stamina 13

Determination *

Specialties

Martial Arts

Powers

Invulnerability 4

Leaping 2

Qualities

Identical twin mutated street thugs

Loyal to the Professor

Challenges

Radical mood swings

Enemy: USHER

Enemy: Rival drug gangs



SAVANT (MODERN DAY)

Transcript of Confirmation Hearing, Fred Williamson, a.k.a. Captain Miracle, a.k.a. the Savant. Congressional questions in bold, Williamson testimony in normal type.



"Now, if you're done signing autographs Captain, can we continue?"

"Just call me Savant. I was never a real Captain anyway. The whole Captain Miracle thing was a joke."

"Excuse me son?"

"A joke. Chris got a snazzy code name, Old Glory, from Franklin Fucking Roosevelt, himself. I told the guys if he was going to get a name like that, I should be Captain Miracle. It was funny seven years ago."

"Very well, uh, Savant. Before those young ladies in the front row started screaming, and ladies, another outburst like that and you will be removed, I was about to ask your opinion on eugenics."

"I think it's horseshit."

"Excuse me? Horseshit? Now, son, pardon me Senator, if I may interject, in the first place, you don't seem to be taking this very seriously, in the second, if the Nazi research is, as you call it, 'horseshit', how do you explain it's success?"

"First, Senator, I take the question and this body very seriously. The signing autographs, was, well the war is over. Let's have a little fun shall we? As for eugenics, I think it is very seriously horseshit. Here's the thing- if someone is a latent metahuman, then their abilities going active is a defense mechanism. We saw it during the war on numerous occasions."

"Repulse gets his fighter shot out from under him, and suddenly he can manipulate magnetic fields. Big Ben's bomb shelter collapses and suddenly he can become a modern-day goliath. There were other cases, so sad they're funny, of mutants being trapped in collapsed buildings and developing the ability to generate sonic screams. Before they, you know, were crushed to death by the building."

"That's what eugenics was. We could inject people with lethal chemicals like they did, or we could just start herding people out of B-17's. Both will prove about as effective."

SAVANT (MODERN DAY)

Transcript of Confirmation Hearing, Fred Williamson, a.k.a. Captain Miracle, a.k.a. the Savant. Congressional questions in bold, Williamson testimony in normal type.



"Now there you go again, young man, I really think you, no, no- escort those ladies out of here at once. We will take a brief recess. A very brief recess Mr. Williamson, don't you go anywhere."

"All right, good, hopefully there will be no further outbursts. Now Mr. Williamson, some of my colleagues still don't think you're regarding this with the seriousness it deserves. The war might be over but we never know when there will be another one. So tell me young man- convince me rather, that you are the person for this very serious responsibility."

"Sir, with respect, I take this body very seriously. But what I take more seriously- much more- is the work that my friends and I can do."

"And frankly, Sir, there's no one else that can do it. We were kids. Chris was 13, Ray was 16, I was 18 and we were it. The Nazis had fucking maniacs running around claiming they were Norse gods and the United States had three kids who couldn't buy beer"

"And Ray, well I saw him get blown up right in front of my eyes. It wasn't that far from here, we could go see it later if you want. And we should. They should build a fucking statue to Ray. He was a better man than me."

"And frankly, Sir, we ain't seen nothin' yet. What's coming is going to make those Nazi maniacs look warm and comforting. And when it gets here, you're going to want Chris, you're going to want me and you're going to want Ray. Unfortunately, you can't have Ray. But you can have Chris and you can have me. When the nightmare comes, we'll be there and we're going to do whatever it takes."

"Oh, Jesus. Is that- Sergeant, settle your men down, it is not appropriate for them to applaud sworn testimony. Oh fuck it, no further questions."

THE SAVANT (A.K.A CAPTAIN MIRACLE)

Real Name: Fred Williamson

Origin: Gimmick

Prowess 2

Coordination 2

Strength 1

Intellect 10

Awareness 8

Willpower 10

Stamina 11

Determination *

Specialties

Computers Master

Business

Electronics Master

Law

Leadership

Medicine Master

Pilot

Science Master

Powers

Force Field Device 9 - Wheelchair
generated energy shield

Wizardry Device 10 - Master scientist

Blast

Binding

Qualities

Living Legend

Arrogant genius

Devoted to his friends

Challenges

Dying: maintained only by machines

Enemy: Tower

Reluctant to face Old Glory

Eager to prove USHER needs him



SCION

Transcript of interview between Old Glory and the Scion. Old Glory in bold, the Scion in normal type.



"Sorry about the accommodations. I know it's not what you're used to. I've seen what you did with the Taj, it looks fabulous. I think they're keeping some of what you did with the place."

"Of course they are. It was a quaint little palace, suitable for such a pretty little out of the way world. I must congratulate you. It's been centuries since I have been defeated."

"I had help. Maybe if you weren't such a megalomaniac you could have had some help too."

"You had followers. You're like me, you just haven't fully realized it yet. In a couple of centuries, when all these people you're attached to have come and gone and new ones have taken their place, scurrying around like ants and trying to use their officious sounding paperwork to order you around, you will burn them to the ground and take your rightful place as ruler of this little mudball."

"Wow. You sure can talk, can't 'cha?"

"I can see it in your eyes. Set me free and I will make you governor-general of this world. You will rule as you see fit, in my name, while I blaze my trail through the stars, living my glorious destiny from one end of this galaxy to the next."

"Man, talking to you like pulling the string on a Ming the Merciless doll, I swear. Look, here's what's been going on while you have been in here: Illassia has negotiated a cease-fire with the Katral on your behalf. Your little thousand year war is over. The Katral are going home, and Illassia is too, to your homeworld, to try and rebuild. You're about to be tried for warcrimes and sentenced to 500 years or so behind bars."

"You fool! I am a god! I will escape this place and when I do, I'll reclaim my place as the ruler of all the galaxies! And when I do, I will mount your head on a pike outside my palace to show all the price of your impudence!"

"You are amazing. I could stay here all day and listen to you but I have a lot to take care of, what with the trial and all. Now, I've signaled the guards, they're giving you some sedatives to help you rest until the trial. You take a nap and when you wake up, your defense council will be here."

"No.... no... fools... all of you... I am a god... I am..."

Real Name: Unknown

Origin: Unearthly

Prowess 10

Coordination 7

Strength 10

Intellect 5

Awareness 7

Willpower 10

Stamina 20

Determination *

Specialties

Martial Arts Master

Pilot

Powers

Invulnerability 10

Flight 7

Qualities

Intergalactic warlord

"Kneel before me!"

Challenges

Enemy: USHER

Enemy: The Katral

Enemy: Princess Illassia



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