

DIGITAL HERO

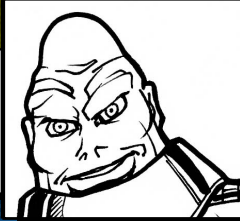
#19

APR 2004



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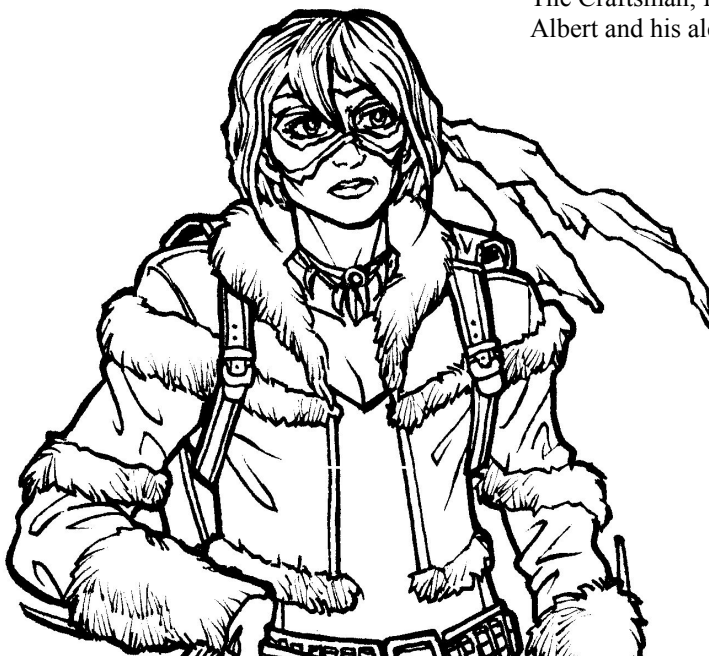
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DIGITAL HERO

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When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

As fans who follow my weekly news updates and attend my weekly online chats know, I've been spending most of my time for the past couple months working on our first setting book for *Fantasy Hero – The Turakian Age*, an epic world of High Fantasy, powerful magic, dark dangers, and adventures aplenty! I'm pleased to say that I've finally finished it, and that it will soon make its way to your game store shelves. Here's what you'll find between its covers:

Chapter One, *The Turakian Chronicles: A History Of The Turakian Age*, presents the history of the world up to the default campaign starting point – the year 5000 of the Second Epoch – including a detailed timeline that incorporates dates mentioned in other chapters. (If you want to know about the history beyond 5000 SE, you can read about it in Chapter Eight, but you have to get the GM's permission to read that.)

Chapter Two, *Commoners And Kings: The People Of Ambrethel*, describes the races commonly chosen for player characters – Men, Drakine, Dwarves, Elves, Orcs, and plenty of others. It discusses, in broad terms, what each race is like, where it lives, what it likes to do, and so forth. Package Deals are included for the races, as appropriate.

Chapter Three, *Strange And Wondrous Lands: The Realms Of Ambrethel*, is a kingdom-by-kingdom review of the lands of the Turakian Age. Each realm's description includes vital statistics for that land, information on its history (and current events), and a discussion of its geography, society, and more. This is by far the biggest section of the book – this one chapter, by itself, covers over five dozen realms and is longer than our *Millennium City* book!

Chapter Four, *Beneath The Looming Shadow: Life In 5000 SE*, discusses daily life in Ambrethel. It contains information that most characters would know, to one extent or another – calendars and zodiacs, marriage and burial customs, the prevalence of magic and how it affects society, and the like.

Chapter Five, *Warrior, Wizard, High Priest, Thief: Turakian Character Creation*, provides Package Deals, game element notes, and other information vital for creating player characters and NPCs for a campaign set in Ambrethel. It includes descriptions of things like thieves' and mages' guilds, barbarian tribes, and famous warriors.

Chapter Six, *Mysterious Ways: The Gods Of Ambrethel*, explains the religions of Ambrethel – everything from the names and attributes of the gods, to priesthoods and churches, and more. The Turakian Age contains many rich and intriguing faiths, and this chapter will not only help you choose the right religion for your character, it gives the GM all the information he needs to include priestly elements in his scenarios.

Chapter Seven, *Mystic Lore: Turakian Magic*, picks up where *The Fantasy Hero Grimoire* left off in describing Turakian Age magic. After reviewing the nature of magic in Ambrethel, it describes two new arcana (Theurgy and Ulronai Warrior-Magery), provides a selection of unusual regional spells from various parts of Ambrethel, and describes some Turakian Age-specific divine magic and enchanted items. All told, it's got nearly 100 new spells and three dozen new enchanted items!

Chapters Eight and Nine are the GM's sections, so don't read them unless you're running a Turakian Age campaign or have your GM's permission. Chapter Eight discusses how to run a *Fantasy Hero* campaign in this setting. It also includes the GM's Vault (with all the secret, GM's-eyes-only, information pertaining to the previous chapters) and a generous selection of plot seeds. Chapter Nine includes some monsters and NPCs to help the GM get the game started.

In theory, the finale to the book is going to be *The Encyclopaedia Turakiana*, a massive encyclopedic index including the pronunciation, meaning, and page reference of every name, unusual term, or other important words in the entire book. However, as of this writing, it looks like the E.T. would probably take up 80 or so pages. Since this book is already pushing toward *Star Hero* in terms of length, we'll probably save the E.T. for a free online download.

See you in Ambrethel!

— Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer



HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

Layers Upon Layers

Dealing with “Layered” Defenses

The *HERO System* rules include many different Defense Powers – many ways for characters to protect themselves from injury. Oftentimes, two or more Defense Powers can apply to a single attack. In most cases, you just add the defenses together to determine how much protection the character has. For example, if a character’s attacked with an Energy Blast, he adds his ED, his ED Armor, and his ED Force Field together to determine his total defense against the attack’s STUN and BODY.

But depending either on the type of attack or the types of Defense Powers involved, there are circumstances in which this simple “stacking” of defenses isn’t necessarily satisfying. It’s simple and easy to handle in the game, and that’s why it’s usually the default approach. But if an unusual situation arises, you may want to consider the issue of *layering of defenses* – in other words, in what order do multiple defenses apply?

Basic Principles

Before you bring up the topic of layered defenses in your campaign, keep two primary rules in mind:

1. If a character has Ablative defenses, those defenses are always “on top” – they get affected first, before any other defenses. Otherwise the Limitation may not actually restrict or hinder the character to any significant degree.
2. If a character has Damage Reduction that applies to an attack, it applies *last* – after all ordinary (subtractive) defenses diminish the damage.

In light of the guidelines discussed below, as well as common sense, dramatic sense, and considerations of game balance, the GM is of course free to waive or ignore either of these rules. But in general they should always apply, since they help to maintain the balance between attacks and defenses in the *HERO System*.

Layered Defense Guidelines

In general, here’s the order in which you should apply “layered” defenses:

1. Force Walls and other defenses that manifest outside or away from the character’s body.

2. Force Fields and other defenses that manifest at or around the character’s body, but which surround the body in such a way as to cover worn defenses.
3. Worn defenses – defenses bought through a Focus such as a suit of powered armor, an armored costume, or the like – and other defenses immediately next to the character’s body.
4. Innate defenses – defenses the character has or buys as innate abilities that aren’t listed above, including his standard PD and ED, Damage Resistance, some special effects of Armor, defenses provided by Density Increase and Growth, and so forth.

Of course, these are *guidelines*, not necessarily rigid rules. No set of rules can account for every possible combination of Powers, special effects, and in-game circumstances, so the GM should modify these guidelines as he sees fit.

Effects of Layered Defenses

In most instances, the layering of defenses has little, if any, game effect. All you need to do is add up the character’s applicable defenses and use them to reduce the damage rolled on an attack that hits him, and that’s it. But there are some situations in which layering can matter.

HARDENED

First, it may be that some of the character’s defenses are Hardened, and some are not. In that case, the Hardened defense applies in full against an Armor Piercing attack, and non-Hardened defenses have half value as usual. Against Penetrating or Indirect, any Hardened defense, no matter where it’s layered in, stops the Advantage from affecting the character.

Of course, GMs should remain wary of players who attempt to unfairly exploit this rule by buying a tiny amount of some defense and making it Hardened just to stop Penetrating attacks. As stated in the Rules FAQ on the Hero Games website, this is presumptively illegal; if a character applies Hardened to a defense, he must buy it for the entire defense. Doing otherwise is contrary to the spirit of the rules and the need to maintain game balance, and should be disallowed.



However, some GMs may prefer to establish alternate rules/guidelines. One possible method is this: if the DCs of the Penetrating attack exceed the number of points of a layered Hardened defense, the Hardened won't counteract the Penetrating. Suppose, for example, a character has a Hardened Force Field (10 PD/10 ED) and some innate Armor and PD that aren't Hardened. An 11d6 (or greater) Penetrating attack would ignore the Hardened, allowing Penetrating to have its usual effect. If that particular standard doesn't work for you, it shouldn't be too hard to come up with one that does.

Another possibility, taking a cue from my column on the subject of Armor Piercing in *Digital Hero* 13, is to have the points of Hardened directly reduce the points of Penetrating. Assume, for these purposes, that any Penetrating attack will Penetrate a number of points of damage equal to the DCs in the attack. Then, use the Hardened defense to reduce that number, and if any "points of Penetrating" remain, they affect the character as normal for Penetrating. In the above example, the target has 10 Hardened Defense and the Penetrating attack has 11 DCs, so the target is affected by $(11 - 10 =) 1$ point of Penetrating.

Lastly, the GM can establish a lower threshold than "the entire defense must be Hardened." For example, he might rule that only half of the defense needs to be Hardened to resist Penetrating, Armor Piercing, and Indirect.

LIMITED DEFENSE POWERS

Second, sometimes a character applies Limitations to some of his defenses so that they don't protect him against certain types of attack. For example, a fire elemental might have extra defense that *Only Protects Against Limited Form Of Attack* (fire; $-\frac{1}{2}$). When defenses are layered, a restricted defense may be more or less effective than it otherwise would be, particularly if, for example, the target has a relevant Vulnerability.

Similarly, other Limitations on a defense may interact with the layering of defenses. For example, suppose that one of the character's defenses is an armored costume – an OIF. If an enemy wants to attack and damage not the character, but his Focus, it may be important to know if the character has other defenses "above" the armored costume to reduce the damage before it hits the Focus. (In this situation the GM may require the character to buy a Focus that would normally be considered Accessible as Inaccessible, since it has protection that most Accessible Foci lack.)

Layering Constant Defense Powers

Related issues arise when characters have Constant Defense Powers – Force Wall and Force Field. Some characters may want to activate one of those Powers again and again (paying the END cost each time, of course) to "stack" the defenses to the point where they cannot be harmed.

In the case of Force Field, this is illegal. A character with Force Field cannot activate it multiple times to provide himself with multiple points of Resistant Defense; he can only have "one use" of a single Force Field-based power active at a time. However, characters can buy multiple powers built with Force Field and have them all active at one time if they choose (provided the GM doesn't object for some reason).

In the case of Force Wall, characters *can* create multiple Walls by taking the appropriate Action and paying the END cost for each one created. Even if activating the Force Wall is a Zero-Phase Action, the character can only create one Wall per Phase. If the character wants to create a Force Wall beyond one that's already established, the power must have the *Indirect Advantage* (to get past the initial Wall). Similarly, to "wrap" one Force Wall around another, the second Wall has to have enough inches of length to reach the entire distance (in the case of simply establishing one straight wall after another to, for example, block a corridor, this won't matter). Of course, the GM can forbid this practice in the interest of common sense, dramatic sense, and game balance; allowing characters to do this repeatedly (or perhaps at all) could significantly unbalance some campaigns (especially if the Force Wall costs 0 END to establish and/or maintain). In most cases, a character shouldn't have more than one Force Wall protecting himself; it's not "in genre" and potentially causes too many problems in the game.



Hero Universe

by Darren Watts

Selamat pagi, my friends, Romans and countrymen, as we begin yet another journey down the historical back roads of the Champions Universe. It's Volume Six of the Collected Chronicles of the sensational Sentinels, so without any further ado, let's meet the latest members!

From the Personal Files of Dan (Microman) Collins (Unpublished Audio Recording):

"<click> How's the volume on this thing? Okay? Good.

Now, where were we? Oh yeah, I left off last week with us about to make our famous trip across the galaxy, what the press would call variously the Velarian War, the Big Sentinels Vanishing Act, and later on the 'Aren't You Guys Dead' Tour. It was 1972. At that time, the Sentinels included myself, Marion (*ed. note-M Marion 'Dr. Phantom' Maven, Collins' ex-wife*), MeteorMan, Scarlet Archer, Hex, Black Mantis, Rainmaker, plus the two newest members, Iron Maiden and Lightwave. This was before Iron Maiden knew her real background story, and was suffering from amnesia, so she was staying with us while we tried to help her adjust to living on Earth. Lightwave, on the other hand, had just recently found out his true origins and that he was actually an android, and MeteorMan had talked him into putting his powers to good use as a superhero. Rocketman had recently retired after that disastrous business in Hungary with the Soviets, and Ranger had quit the team to go solo back in Dallas, which was fine as far as I was concerned because we had just never gotten along. Marion and I were going through a rough patch in our marriage, as I was spending a lot of time on my lab work, which wasn't going nearly as well as her own, and we had been trying to have a child for a couple of years unsuccessfully. So there was a lot of pressure on our relationship, though we tried very hard to keep it out of our work with the Sentinels. Don't know how well we succeeded, though. If anybody on the team noticed they were too polite to bring it up.

Anyway, that spring a bizarre collection of aliens had marched into a special session of the United Nations General Assembly and tried to abduct a woman named Amrita Sharma, who was a top aide to the Ambassador from India. Though at first the creatures seemed peaceful, when Ms. Sharma refused to accompany them they became violent and a battle with UNTIL security forces broke out, eventually involving several members of the Sentinels as the fight spread to the streets outside UN Headquarters. Scarlet Archer, Hex, and Lightwave successfully drove the aliens off and brought Ms. Sharma

back to our base in Connecticut for protection while we tried to figure out what the aliens wanted with her. That night, the aliens attacked again at our base, using advanced weaponry as well as some remarkable powers of their own, and not only captured Ms. Sharma but the entire team, myself included, as well as trashing the mansion.

Well, as it turned out, the aliens (who belonged to something called the Velarian Confederation) were from a planet located across the Galactic disk, hundreds of thousands of light-years away. The journey took weeks even for their advanced technology, though we were kept tranquilized by drugs the whole time, except for Lightwave who they managed to just "turn off." It seemed that the aliens' strange religion had determined that Ms. Sharma was actually an avatar of one of their gods, one of several who were occasionally born on far planets, and was needed to fill an important post in their government. What even they didn't know was that another faction within their church had decided that whatever the omens and signs said, no way was one of their gods manifesting on some backwater planet across the galaxy, and they could do much better installing one of their own leaders in the role of avatar. This had caused a civil war of sorts to break out on their homeworld, which we found ourselves caught up in as soon as we arrived. The aliens treated us as a sort of personal bodyguard team for Ms. Sharma, calling us her "Intercessors" (at least, that's how the translators they gave us termed it). Before long, we found ourselves split up all over the Velarian system, fending off assassination attempts and trying to convince everyone involved to let us return to Earth. We worked pretty closely with the leader of the alien expedition that had brought her back, who was sort of a superhero among his own people and went by the translated name of Bronze Star. Nice guy, once you got to know him.

Eventually, of course, Ms. Sharma came to believe that she was in fact one of these "avatars," and whether that was true or not she certainly was needed to help restore peace once we'd uncovered the real story behind her rival. Despite our efforts to convince her otherwise, she insisted on staying on Velarius, which broke Scarlet Archer's heart because he'd gotten pretty attached to her.

Once the war was over and Ms. Sharma was installed officially as a church leader, Bronze Star took us back to Earth, where the Sentinels had been officially missing for several months and, since our mansion was so trashed, everyone had assumed we were dead. Though of course

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The write-ups for the Sentinels in this and following articles represent the heroes after they've had a few years of experience under their belts. If portraying them at the beginnings of their careers, you may want to lop off some skill levels or secondary powers. Later in their careers, you may want to buy up their skills, levels, and possibly add some new powers to represent tricks they've learned over the years, while diminishing some of their physical stats slightly to represent their advanced age (especially those who served into their late forties and even early fifties).

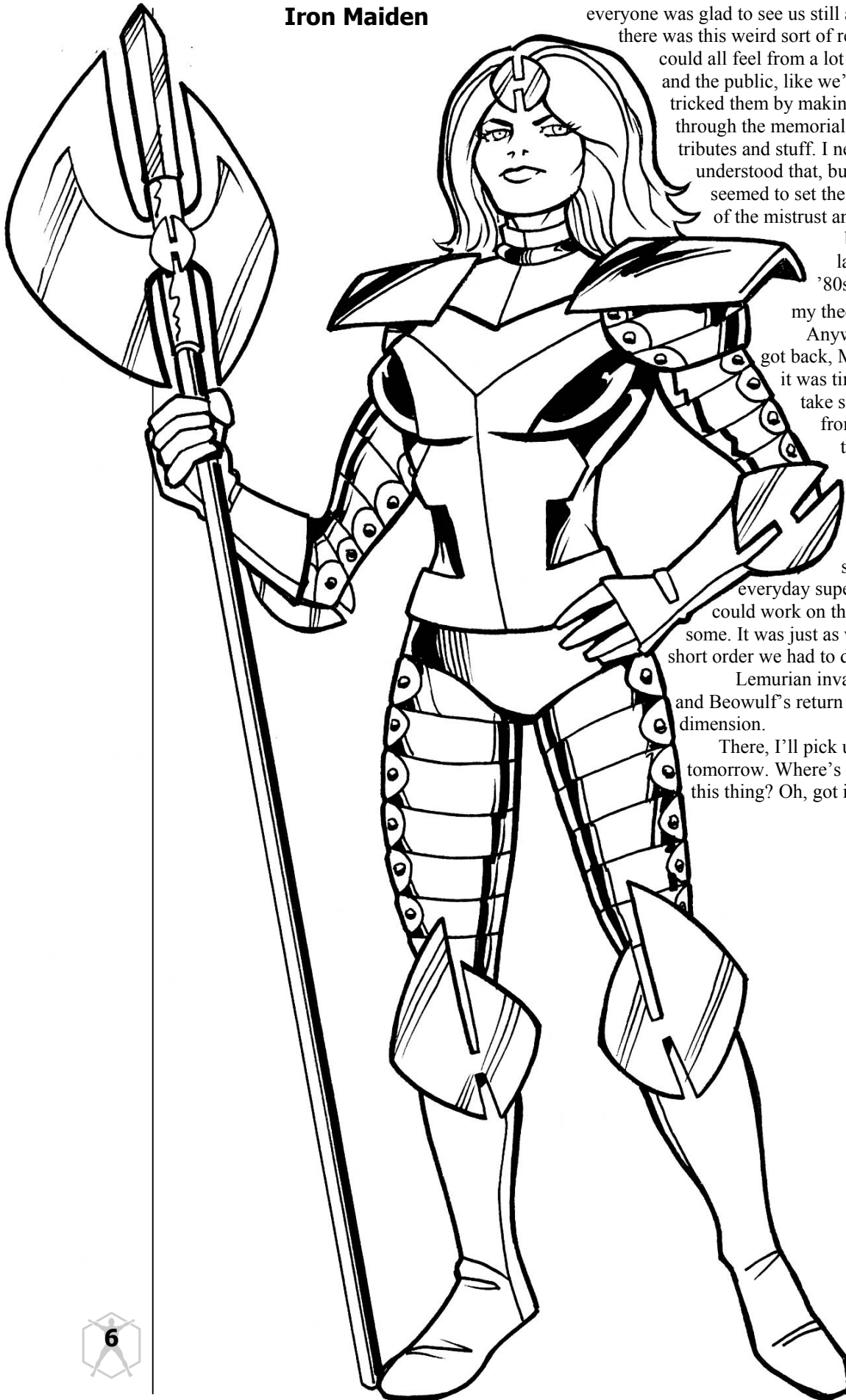
Iron Maiden

everyone was glad to see us still alive and all, there was this weird sort of resentment we could all feel from a lot of the media and the public, like we'd somehow tricked them by making them go through the memorial services and tributes and stuff. I never quite understood that, but it sort of seemed to set the stage for a lot of the mistrust and anti-supers backlash of the later '70s and '80s. At least, that's my theory.

Anyway, when we got back, Marion decided it was time for her to take some time off from active duty in the Sentinels,

thinking maybe if we weren't both under the stress of everyday superheroing we could work on the relationship some. It was just as well, because in short order we had to deal with the Lemurian invasion of Russia and Beowulf's return to our dimension.

There, I'll pick up from that tomorrow. Where's the switch on this thing? Oh, got it... <click.>“



Iron Maiden

Background/History: Cortana was born in the mystical land of Allydria, in a dimension parallel to Earth's where magic was much more powerful and common. She served as a warrior in the court of King Thav for many years, developing a reputation as a brave and daring monster-slayer. Allydria was a land of peace and light, thanks to the power of the mystical Orb of the Sun, which was used by Thav to protect and nurture his people.

In recent years, Allydria came under attack by a vampire-lord called Anathema, whose dark armies besieged the kingdom and tried to steal the Orb. Rather than allow it to fall into Anathema's hands (for he would surely pervert the magic within and use it for evil), King Thav and the High Priestess Thura drained the magic from the Orb and then hid it in the walls of the castle. The spells that could activate the Orb were mystically placed in the mind of Cortana, who was then sent to our dimension to hide from Anathema. Thav and Thura believed that as long as the Orb was kept out of Anathema's hands, Allydria would eventually win the war.

Unfortunately, the spells that sent Cortana to our dimension were dangerous and unpredictable, and when Cortana arrived in our world in February of 1972 she was suffering from amnesia. Confused and lost, Cortana was overwhelmed by the sights and sounds of Manhattan and attacked a bus that she mistook for a metal dragon with her magical halberd. Luckily for all concerned she was fairly quickly apprehended by several members of the Sentinels, who offered her a place to stay and tried to help her adjust to our world and recover her memories.

Within a few weeks Cortana found that serving with the Sentinels felt comfortable and somewhat familiar, and she officially joined the team, using the name "Iron Maiden." She served with distinction for more than two years, including the trip to Velarius and the extended conflict with the Lemurians. During this period she met the famous warrior-hero Beowulf, with whom she had a brief but torrid affair.

Meanwhile, Anathema and his forces eventually conquered Allydria, killing King Thav and driving the Priestesses into hiding. He tracked the energies of the Orb of the Sun to our dimension and sent a series of minions to retrieve it during 1974. While in conflict with one of these creatures, Cortana's lost memories returned, and she realized she needed to return to Allydria to face Anathema. With the assistance of the Sentinels and Dr. Scarab, Cortana defeated Anathema (apparently destroying him, though he has returned on at least two occasions since then) and took the crown of Allydria herself.

Since then Cortana has visited our dimension only rarely, though many of the Sentinels visited Allydria for her wedding to Prince Valt, a noble hero from a neighboring kingdom, in 1985.

Personality/Motivation: Iron Maiden was a fearless warrior from a world full of strange and wonderful magic, and therefore tended to take everything in stride. She was remarkably adaptable and mastered many of the basic elements of everyday life in her new world with impressive speed and ease. That said, there was a great deal about our world that she didn't understand, and she took great pleasure in "learning something new each day."

She generally acted with a sense of noblesse oblige. In her view, the strong have an ethical responsibility to protect the weak, and she had no tolerance for bullies or thieves. She took great pleasure from healthy, ethical violence, and greatly enjoyed battling monsters, demons, and other mystical forces of darkness. She was aggressive by nature and disliked "wasting time" debating tactics when there was monster-smashing to be done.

Quote: "If it's a fight you want, creature, I'll be the one to give it to you!"

Powers/Tactics: Iron Maiden was a fairly straightforward combat machine, with superhuman strength and a magical halberd about six feet long with an enchanted blade powerful enough to cut through steel. She would frequently use the haft end as a club in non-lethal combat. In most fights she would simply select the largest or most-dangerous-looking opponent and simply wade in with either punches or mighty swings of her halberd. Thanks to her Allydrian heritage, she was able to detect the use of magic near her.

Appearance: Iron Maiden stands about 6'5" and weighs about 200 pounds. She is leanly-muscled, with long brown hair that falls to the middle of her back, brown eyes and a quick and charming smile. Her magical armor is shiny purple and silver and fairly form-fitting, with stylized boots and gloves. Her halberd has a haft about five feet long and a foot-long axe-like blade at the head, as well as a small pike extending from the top.

Iron Maiden

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	6400 kg; 8d6 HTH [4]
24	DEX	42	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
24	CON	28	14-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 15-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
20	COM	5	13-	
16	PD	8		Total: 28 PD (17 rPD)
15	ED	10		Total: 27 ED (17 rED)
5	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
13	REC	0		
48	END	0		
45	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 193

Movement:	Running:	9"/18"
	Leaping:	8"/16"
	Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
25	<i>Magical Halberd:</i> Multipower, 50-point reserve; all slots OAF (-1)	
2u	1) <i>Blade:</i> HKA 3d6 (5½d6 with STR); OAF (-1) plus Stretching 1"; OAF (-1)	5
1u	2) <i>Haft Strike:</i> HA +2d6 (10d6 with STR); OAF (-1), HA Lim (-½) plus Stretching 1"; OAF (-1)	2
9	<i>Halberd Charms:</i> Naked Modifier: Armor-Piercing on HKA (+½); OAF (-1), Only vs. Magical Defenses (-½)	+2
22	<i>Magical Armor:</i> Armor (12 PD/12 ED), Hardened (+¼); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	0
10	<i>Allydrian Gem:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (Single Dimension), x8 Increased Weight; Extra Time (1 Turn), -1¼, OAF (-1), Incantations (-¼)	3
11	<i>Dagger:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½); OAF (-1)	2
12	<i>Mystical Awareness:</i> Detect Magic 13- (Unusual Group), Discriminatory, Sense	0
5	<i>Night Vision:</i> Nightvision	0
6	<i>Warrior's Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0
5	<i>Natural Toughness:</i> Damage Resistance (5 PD/5 ED)	0
6	<i>Swift:</i> Running +3" (9" Total)	2

Martial Arts: Halberd Fighting

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Bind	+1	+0	Bind, 50 STR
4 Charge	+0	-2	+2DC+v/5, FMove
4 Disarm	-1	+1	50 STR Disarm
4 Parry	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Strike	+0	+2	+2DC
1	Weapon Element: Polearms and Spears		

Perks

- 3 Fringe Benefit: Membership
- 2 Contact: High Priestess Thura (Useful Skills or Resources) 8-

Talents

- 6 Ambidexterity (-1 Off Hand penalty)
- 3 Lightsleep
- 4 Mounted Warrior (HTH Combat)
- 3 Resistance (3 points)

Skills

- 3 Acrobatics 14-
- 3 AK: Allydria 13-
- 2 Animal Handler (Equines) 14-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 3 Climbing 14-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 High Society 14-
- 3 Language: Allydrian (completely fluent)
- 2 Navigation (Land) 13-
- 5 Oratory 15-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 3 Riding 14-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 4 Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Mountain) 13-
- 7 Tactics 15-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 2 TF: Riding Animals
- 6 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Lances, and Staffs
- 2 Weaponsmith (Muscle-Powered HTH) 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 222**Total Cost: 415****200+ Disadvantages**

- 10 Distinctive Features: Very Tall And Muscular Woman (Concealable)
- 15 Hunted: Anathema the Bloodlord 8- (Mo Pow, Harshly Punish)
- 5 Money: Poor
- 10 Physical Limitation: Unfamiliar with Earth's History (Frequently, Slightly)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Unfamiliar with Post-Renaissance Technology (Frequently, Greatly)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Noblesse Oblige: Protects the Weak and Helpless (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Enjoys Fighting Monsters (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Quick-Triggered, Jumps to Conclusions (Common, Strong)
- 10 Unluck: 2d6
- 105 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 415

Lightwave

Background/History: Lightwave is an android, an artificial being created by Dr. Victor Padgett in 1971. Padgett, a brilliant inventor and roboticist, had nearly completed his first two androids but had run out of money and was unable to attract any additional investors. Distraught, he finally accepted money from the criminal organization VIPER to complete his project, and with their financial and technical assistance he created both Lightwave and his “brother” Volt. When the VIPER Nest Leader Carl Carreno announced his intentions to use the androids for criminal purposes, however, Padgett tried to sneak out of the base with the two and was killed by VIPER security guards. The androids were turned over to VIPER scientists, who programmed the two with false memories of having been VIPER agents themselves, who had received their powers as part of a “super-agent” program. Once their programming was complete, the two were ordered to attack and kill VIPER’s number-one enemy, MeteorMan II.

However, Lightwave found that ethically he was opposed to murder, and was horrified by his own false memories of his criminal past. In his first two battles with MeteorMan he failed to kill the hero when the opportunity presented itself, and finally he turned on his partner Volt and helped MeteorMan defeat both Volt and Carreno’s Nest. Out of spite, Carreno revealed to Lightwave that he was not in fact human, as he believed, and then before he could be stopped destroyed a “control console” he had been carrying that he claimed kept Lightwave functioning. With the console’s destruction, Lightwave collapsed to the ground as though dead.

However, MeteorMan did not accept that his newfound ally was dead, and brought the android to Sentinel headquarters. There, Dr. Phantom and Microman were, after several months, finally able to reactivate Lightwave, and offered him a place on their team. Lightwave was gratified to have the opportunity to live again in freedom, and served with the Sentinels with distinction for almost twenty years. During that time he explored every facet of his humanity, including falling in love with a librarian named Colleen Hoyle, who he lived with for many years. Lightwave finally was destroyed utterly in battle with Dark Seraph in 1991, sacrificing his own life to save several of his teammates.

Personality/Motivation: Lightwave was a truly selfless creature, who constantly struggled with his own issues of identity but never failed to give everything he had for his fellow man. He spent many years trying to reform his “brother,” Volt, who spurned his efforts and remains an active supervillain even today. Generally quiet and a bit shy, he tended to fade into the background of most of the Sentinels’ social gatherings, though he was well-liked and quite sensitive to the feelings of his teammates. In battle, his powers were frequently spectacular to watch, and so he received a fair amount of media attention, which he almost always tried to defer to someone more comfortable in public.

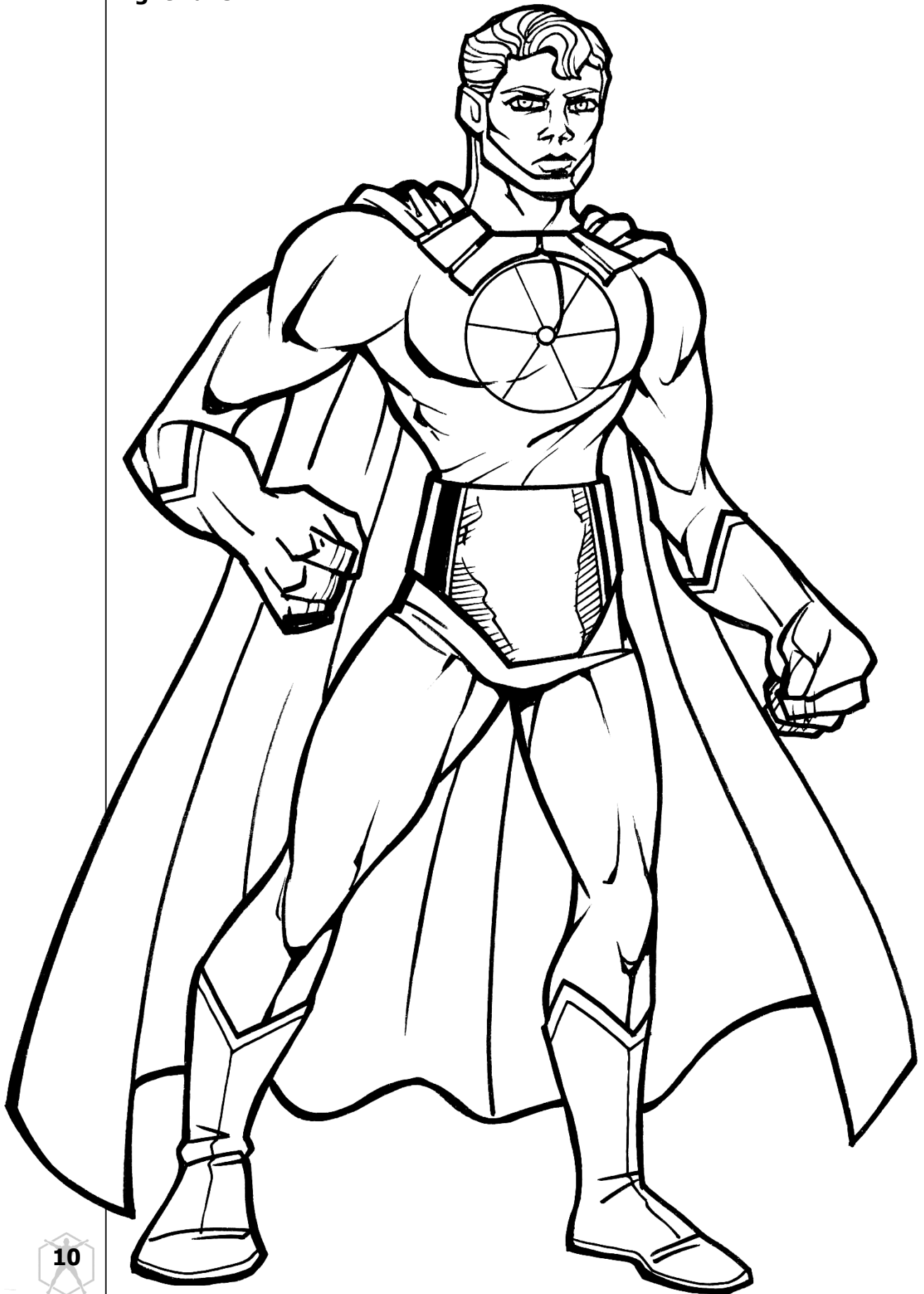
Quote: “I cannot allow you to continue harming these people. Please surrender peacefully.”

Powers/Tactics: Lightwave has the power to manipulate, control and create light in his immediate area. He can generate light at varying intensities, from blinding flashes, to focused cutting lasers, to strobing patterns of dazzling colors. He can also create holograms, three-dimensional light-images, and even animate them, though since they produce no sound or odor they rarely succeed in fooling anyone. (He’s had much greater success with stationary images.) He can also cause light to bend around his own body, rendering himself effectively invisible.

He is also able to fly, manifesting a rainbow-colored trail briefly behind himself when doing so. As an android, he also has no need to eat or sleep and is immune from many forms of attack.

Appearance: Lightwave appears to be a tall, handsome blonde man, about 6’4” and 190 pounds, with piercing blue eyes. If anything, his features look a little *too* perfect and symmetrical. His costume is primarily light blue, with a bright “color-wheel” symbol of intersecting shades on his chest, and a long, dark blue cape. He wears no mask.

Lightwave



DIGITAL HERO #19

Lightwave

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	1600 kg; 6d6 HTH [3]
22	DEX	36	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
26	CON	32	14-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
22	INT	12	13-	PER Roll: 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
18	PD	12		Total: 18 PD (0 rPD)
17	ED	12		Total: 17 ED (0 rED)
5	SPD	18		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
11	REC	0		
52	END	0		
42	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 170

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 6"/12"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
50	<i>Light Attacks:</i> Multipower, 50-point reserve	
5u	1) <i>Light Flare:</i> Sight Group Flash 10d6	5
4u	2) <i>Laser:</i> RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+½); Beam (-¼)	4
5u	3) <i>Dazzle-Blast:</i> EB 5d6, No Normal Defense (Sight Group Flash Defense, +1)	5
19	<i>Light-Based Powers:</i> Elemental Control, 38-point powers	
19	1) <i>Lightbending:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)	1
19	2) <i>Hologram:</i> Sight Group Images Increased Size (16" radius; +1), ±2 to PER Rolls, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼)	1
19	3) <i>Blinding Light Field:</i> Darkness to Sight Group 3" radius, Personal Immunity (+¼)	4
10	<i>Protected Eyes:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points)	0
5	<i>Enhanced Lighting:</i> Nightvision	0
24	<i>Antigraviton Manipulation:</i> Flight 15"; Physical Manifestation (Bright Glowing Rainbow Trail, Fades in 1 Turn; -¼)	3
46	<i>Android Form:</i> Life Support (Does Not Eat, Sleep, or Breathe; Immunity to All Diseases, Biowarfare Agents, Poisons, and Chemical Warfare Agents; Longevity 200 Years; Safe in High Pressure, Radiation, Intense Cold, Intense Heat, Low Pressure/Vacuum)	0
5	<i>Artificial Brain:</i> Mental Defense (8 Points Total)	0

Perks

3 Membership: Sentinels

Talents

3 Absolute Time Sense
3 Bump Of Direction
5 Eidetic Memory
3 Lightning Calculator
3 Perfect Pitch

Skills

9 +3 with Multipower
10 +2 with Hand-to-Hand
3 Disguise 13-
3 SS: Psychology 13-
3 SS: Robotics 13-
3 Stealth 13-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 281

Total Cost: 451

200+ Disadvantages

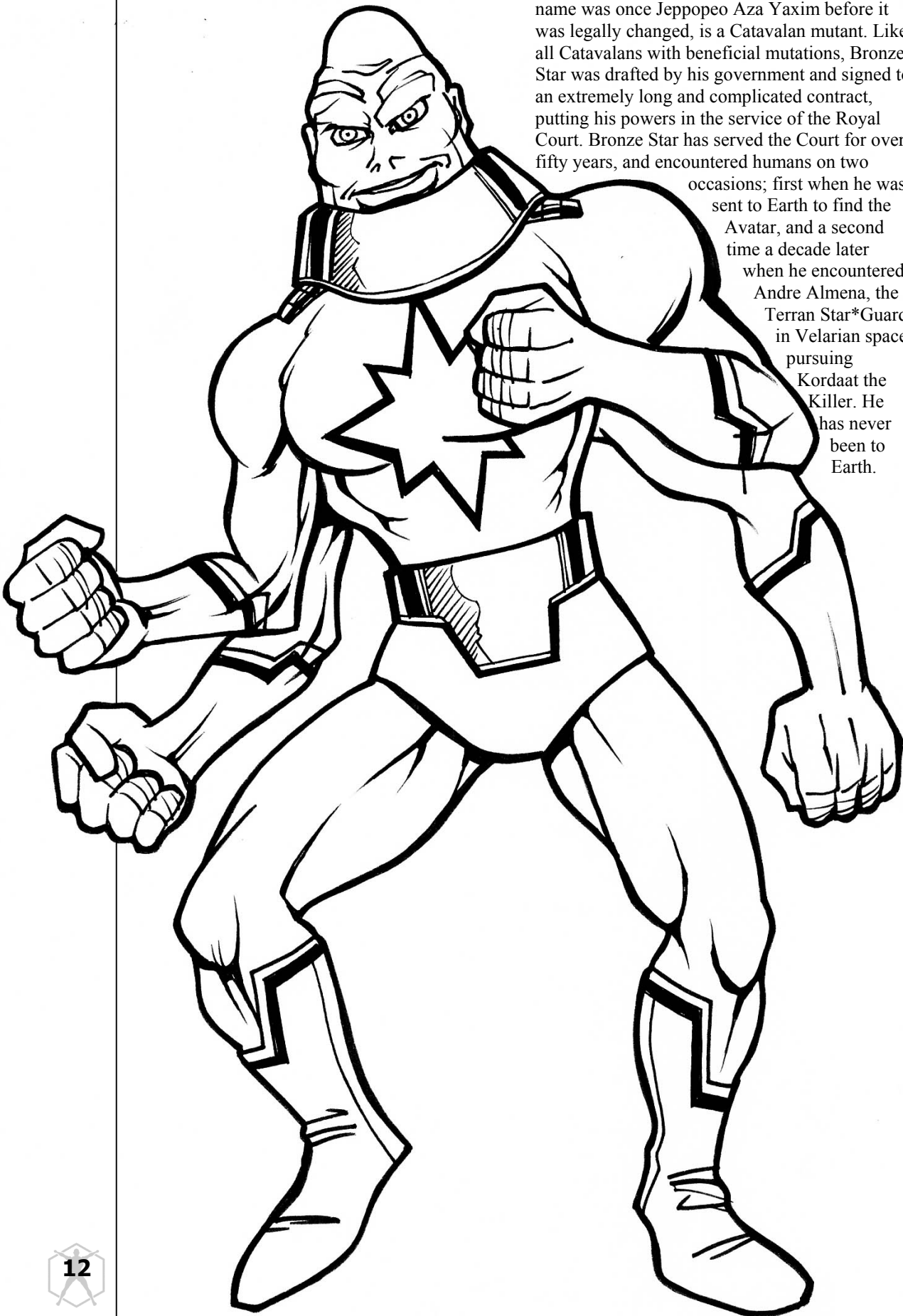
15 DNPC: Colleen Hoyle 11- (Normal)
25 Hunted: VIPER 11- (As Pow, NCI, PC has a Public ID, Harshly Punish)
15 Hunted: Volt 8- (As Pow, PC has a Public ID, Harshly Punish)
10 Physical Limitation: Susceptible to Cyberkinesis (Infrequently, Greatly)
15 Psychological Limitation: Insecure Over His Failings as a "Real Human" (Common, Strong)
20 Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Very Common, Strong)
10 Social Limitation: Public ID (Occasionally, Major)
10 Vulnerability: 1½x STUN and BODY Electrical-Based Attacks (Common)
121 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 451

Bronze Star

Background/History: Bronze Star, whose real name was once Jeppopeo Aza Yaxim before it was legally changed, is a Catavalan mutant. Like all Catavalans with beneficial mutations, Bronze Star was drafted by his government and signed to an extremely long and complicated contract, putting his powers in the service of the Royal Court. Bronze Star has served the Court for over fifty years, and encountered humans on two

occasions; first when he was sent to Earth to find the Avatar, and a second time a decade later when he encountered Andre Almena, the Terran Star*Guard in Velarian space pursuing Kordaat the Killer. He has never been to Earth.



Bronze Star

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [2]
23	DEX	39	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	3		Total: 18 PD (10 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 16 ED (10 rED)
4	SPD	7		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
40	END	0		
33	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 105

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
 Leaping: 5"/10"
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
70	<i>Stellar Force</i> : Multipower, 70-point reserve	
7u	1) <i>Stellar Web</i> : Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF (Stops Sight)	7
7u	2) <i>Stellar Flare</i> : Sight Group Flash 14d6	7
7u	3) <i>Stellar Force</i> : Telekinesis (45 STR)	7
20	<i>Armored Costume</i> : Armor (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (-½)	0
28	<i>Blaster</i> : Energy Blast 9d6, 32 Charges (+¼); OAF (-1)	[32]
12	<i>Sword of Office</i> : HKA 1½d6 (3d6+1 with STR); OAF (-1)	2
6	<i>Catalavan Arms</i> : Extra Limbs (2), Inherent (+¼)	0
1	<i>Catalavan Longevity</i> : LS (200 Years)	0

Perks

- 3 Fringe Benefit: Planetary Police Powers
 30 Advanced Tech (ATRI 9+)

Skills

- 16 +2 with All Combat
 6 +2 with Stellar Force Multipower
 3 Breakfall 14-
 5 Bureaucratics 14-
 3 Combat Piloting 14-
 3 Electronics 12-
 3 AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 12-
 3 AK: The Velarian System 12-
 2 Navigation (Space) 12-
 1 Tactics 8-
 3 Two-Weapon Fighting 14-
 2 TF: Science Fiction & Space Vehicles
 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Energy Weapons

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 245**Total Cost: 350****200+ Disadvantages**

- 5 Distinctive Features: Four Armed, Seven Feet Tall, Bald (Concealable, Not Distinctive in Some Cultures)
 15 Hunted: Enemies of the Catalavan Government 8- (As Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, PC has a Public ID, Harshly Punish)
 15 Hunted: The Catalavan Government 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, PC has a Public ID, Watching)
 15 Psychological Limitation: Faithful Believer in Scomaru Shaan (Common, Strong)
 15 Psychological Limitation: Honorable, Keeps His Word (Common, Strong)
 10 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Frequently, Minor)
 75 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 350

Personality/Motivation: Bronze Star is utterly devoted to his duties for the Royal Family and the Church, and will happily risk his life in their defense. Beyond those duties, he is quite amiable and even a bit chatty, with a sly sense of humor. He genuinely likes meeting aliens and interacting with new cultures, though he has no desire to give up his own.

Quote: "So. Two arms, huh? What's that like?"

Powers/Tactics: Bronze Star was born with the mutant ability to manipulate strands of energized proto-matter, using it to form nets, barriers or even to physically garb and move objects. The strands themselves glow bright yellow, and people wrapped in them can usually not see through the glare. In cases where his power is ineffective, he also carries both a blaster rifle and a sword. Tactically Bronze Star works quite well with teams, binding dangerous opponents and setting them up for others to take down.

Appearance: Like all Catalavans, Bronze Star is tall (about 7'), thin, and hairless, with four arms and a fairly pointy head. His costume is dark brown, with a high collar and a "starburst" symbol on the chest.



HERO OR VILLAIN?

Jim Savage is an incredibly enigmatic figure whose very existence provides a unique set of problems for modern historians, especially those who view the past through the darkly colored lenses of their individual prejudices. The facts of his life have become distorted with time, and those distortions have been worsened by modern misunderstanding. Here are some examples:

“An American businessman named Jim Savage succeeded through duplicity to temporarily pacify the Miwok town near the gold field. In recent months, however, Savage had shown himself incapable, or unwilling to constrain the abusive miners. The most militant Miwok, now under the leadership of Governor Teneiya, had withdrawn for defense into the Yosemite Valley. The Miwok reached the limits of their patience and were persuaded by their Yokut neighbors to join them in an attack on the foreign mining camps. They knew by now that even though Savage was a relative, he was keeping most of the gold wealth for his personal fortune.”

– Dr. John M. Anderson, author and militant Idaho hermit



You Gotta Have Character by Jason Walters

“Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards” — Kierkegaard

The two rough-looking men casually dismounted from their exhausted horses, tossing their bridles over the hitching post with a practiced nonchalance. Sunburned and filthy from weeks in the saddle, they ambled into the isolated trading post like kings walking into their own castles and began picking at the products on the shelves, carefully stepping over a massive pile of bearskin rugs in one corner. After a few moments had passed a young Tulare Indian woman emerged from behind a curtain in the back of the store and walked over to the two men, pausing expectantly as she drew near.

“Can I help you men,” she asked them in polite but heavily accented English.

The two filthy men glanced at one another quickly.

“We was looking to get a little something,” commented one of them with a leer.

“Yeah,” snickered the other one as he looked the maiden up and down, “and I think we just found it too. Get yer gear squaw cause your coming along back to our claim with us.”

The young woman stared at the two menacing miners for a moment then burst out laughing.

“What’s so darn funny,” demanded the first one.

“You won’t be laughing when we’re finished with ya,” shouted the second, looking more than a little confused by her reaction.

Actually holding her sides with laughter the comely Tulare finally managed to pull herself back together enough to draw some breath.

“I am second wife of Chief Jim Savage,” she gasped out between laughs, “you’re in his trading post. He’ll not be happy when he hears you threaten to steal his second best wife. So if I were you I would leave very quickly.”

Suddenly looking more frightened than confused, the second man took a quick step backwards only to slam into a solid wall of beard, blonde hair, and muscle. The pile of rugs had risen from the floor.

“We– we was only kidding, Mr. Savage,” he sputtered, his eyes wide pools of abject terror.

“Yeah,” stammered the other, “all we wants is some hard tack. Really.” He backpedaled quickly away from the towering mountain man only to run his backside into the barrel of a sawed-off shotgun which had suddenly appeared in the Indian maid’s hands.

Savage, who was naked save for a pair of fringed buckskin chaps, glared down at the two prospectors through a set of cold blue eyes. He clutched a massive tomahawk in one hand and an equally huge revolver in the other. Then, suddenly, his expression softened until it broke into a frightening grin seemingly the size of a rifle stock.

“Well, boys, that’s alright,” he shouted reassuringly, “I’m sure we can work something out. Where did you say that OUR claim was, again?”

Jim Savage, King of the Tules

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 12 PD (4 rPD)
8	ED	5		Total: 12 ED (4 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
41	STUN	10		

Total Characteristics Cost: 80

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
 Leaping: 3"/6"
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
5	<i>Rough and Tumble Fighting:</i> HA +1½d6 (4½d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½)	1
10	<i>Bullet Catching Trick:</i> Missile Deflection (Bullets & Arrows); Restrained (-½)	0

Perks

- 11 Fringe Benefit: Indian Chief, Army Major, Sorcerer
- 3 Reputation: King of the Tules (A medium-sized group) 11-, +3/+3d6

Skills

- 2 +1 with Knife
- 2 +1 with Pistol
- 2 +1 with Rough and Tumble
- 3 KS: Agriculture 12-
- 3 KS: Mining 12-
- 3 Linguist
- 0 1) Language: English (Idiomantic, Literate)
- 1 2) Language: French (Fluent)
- 1 3) Language: German (Fluent)
- 1 4) Language: Miwok (American Indian, Fluent)
- 1 5) Language: Spanish (Fluent)
- 1 6) Language: Tejon (American Indian, Fluent)
- 1 7) Language: Tulare (American Indian Trade Language, Fluent)
- 1 8) Language: Yokut (American Indian, Fluent)
- 1 9) Language: Yosemite (American Indian, Fluent)

- 3 Persuasion 12-
- 3 PS: Trader 12-
- 5 Survival (Desert, Mountain, Temperate/Subtropical Forests) 12-
- 3 Tracking 12-
- 4 WF: Blades, Bows, Early Percussion Firearms, Thrown Knives/Axes/Darts

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 70**Total Cost: 150****75+ Disadvantages**

- 15 DNPC: Five Indian Wives 8- (Useful Position or Skills, Group DNPC x4)
- 5 Distinctive Features: Renegade Mountain Man (Easily)
- 20 Enraged: When His Tribes are Threatened by Outsiders (Common, Go 8-, Recover 8-)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Short-Tempered (Frequently, Minor)
- 10 Reputation: King of the Tules, 11-
- 5 Social Limitation: Renegade White (Occasionally, Major, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)

Total Disadvantage Points: 150

Background/History: Not much is known about Jim Savage's early years. It is reasonable to assume that he began his life as a particularly well-educated Midwestern farmer who, like many other nameless thousands of young men, was lured west by an irresistible combination of gold fever, adventure, and free land. What is known is that the trip west from Illinois cost him the lives of his young family: both his wife and baby daughter perished on the long journey to California. Arriving heartbroken and destitute on the west coast in 1846, Savage was befriended by several Indian scouts who taught him the language and culture of the Tulare Tribes.

Jim went native, becoming what other white settlers often referred to as a "renegade." He grew his hair long, dressed in buckskins and wolf's fur, and practiced the religion of the local tribes. Impressed by his strange ways and physical prowess, five separate tribes took the remarkable step of naming the 25 year-old mountain man their chief. To seal the bargain he took a wife from the royalty of each tribe, formally making himself a relative of their clan leaders. To the Tulare Nation Jim Savage became a leader of sorts, a combination sorcerer/ambassador who they hoped would help them navigate their way in the confusing world of white men. But to the American and Mexican settlers of the San Joaquin Valley he was known simply as *El Ray Tulares*: The King of the Tules.

"The records show that one early resident of the area, Jim Savage, employed Chinese to work the San Joaquin River for him. At first, Jim was involved in fighting the Indians, but as the area became more populated, he made friends with them, even to the extent of marrying at least five Indian girls, one from each tribe. He is given credit for the discovery of Yosemite Valley on March 27, 1851, and named it after the tribe which inhabited it."

— Madera County Historical Society

"Jim Savage took up the Adobe Ranch and started a store out near where Doc Leach formerly had one. I remember one time I happened to be in the store when a squaw came in and asked for some raisins. Savage put the scales on the counter and told her to put what gold she had in one of the pans, then he balanced the other side in raisins. I asked him if the raisins were worth their weight in gold. He said, 'Oh, she doesn't want gold. What she wants now is raisins.'"

— Joe Kinsman, last surviving California mountain man

JIM SAVAGE PLOT SEEDS

Western Hero: A Paiute Indian princess has been kidnaped by bandits and taken into the largely unexplored mountains to the east of Reno! The PCs, who are friends with the Paiute Indian chief, have agreed to go after her but they desperately need the services of the best guide money can buy. Fortunately Jim Savage is available.... for a price.

Fantasy Hero: They say that the legendary dwarven mine of Delvingholm is filled with riches beyond the imaginings of mortal men. Unfortunately the mine is located deep within the heart of the Blood Tusk Mountains, a nearly impassible range of ragged peaks filled with terrifying monsters. The PCs will need the help of the renegade human warrior known as Bossman Savage if they hope to make it to the mine alive.

Star Hero: The PCs are soldiers who have been dispatched to a colony planet to help put down a native rebellion. When they arrive, however, they encounter a human settler named Savage who patiently explains that things are not exactly what they seem....

Jim Savage, King of the Tules



Industrious and ambitious by nature, Jim then set out to enrich himself with the help of his newfound followers and family. He built three trading posts along the Los Angeles to Stockton miner's trail through the valley. After discovering several gold veins of his own, Savage put his new wife's brothers and fathers to work in the mines, raking in thousands of dollars of precious ore in exchange for rifles, ammunition, food, and various trinkets. But his roll as a fierce Indian protector wasn't entirely self-serving. Jim provided plows, seeds, and various other agricultural implements to those tribes who had been forced off their land, and taught them the ways of farming. He worked hard at building friendly ties with every tribe within 100 miles of each of his trading posts, often interceding on their behalf when land-crazed white settlers threatened to drive them from their traditional hunting grounds. He wasn't against using violence against his fellow Americans to defend the five tribes who had made him their king, either. By the time Jim Savage was 31 he was one of the most hated, feared, and respected men in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Unfortunately this period of relative happiness and prosperity for both Savage and his followers was not to last. The increasing strain placed upon native populations by the influx of white settlers was slowly but surely becoming intolerable. The number of armed confrontations between Indian braves and farmers began to steadily increase until it came to a head in 1850 with an incident known as the Woods Massacre, a dispute in which 15 ranchers were tortured and murdered by renegade members of the Yokut Nation. In the wake of this episode California Governor John McDougall ordered the creation of a special brigade to put down what had become an all-out Indian rebellion and broker a series of peace agreements. Known as the Mariposa Battalion, this small army was to be commanded by the two men who the Governor felt inspired the maximum possible fear and respect in the Indians: infamous local judge and gunfighter Walter Harvey and Jim Savage, who seems to have felt that he could somehow salvage the entire situation. Because of his mastery of native tongues and backwoods trails Savage was made the battalion's major, while Judge Harvey was relegated to the position of second in command.

Over the next three months the 75 men of the battalion traveled through blinding snow over trails known to no other white man besides Major Savage in search of renegade Indian tribes. They became the first whites to explore the sheer granite domes and towering waterfalls of Yosemite. Killing scores of natives as they went yet leaving many villages in peace, these

men encountered some 120 bands of Indians and returned home with 19 signed treaties. It was (at least on paper) a remarkable achievement. The treaties were quite fair by the standards of the time, giving the Indians some 7% of California's territory including hundreds of thousands of acres in the fertile Tulare Lake basin. They were also unenforceable. New settlers broke the agreements literally before the ink was dry.

Although he had struggled mightily, Savage had failed in his efforts to reconcile the two worlds in which he lived. Too add insult to injury Judge Harvey, who had never forgiven Jim for beating him out as leader of the Mariposa Battalion, organized a posse to raid Savage's rancheria for renegade Indians. Upon finding a group of Yokutes armed only with bows and arrows camped out there, Harvey's men fired several volleys of shots at the terrified Indians killing nine and wounding scores of others. Enraged beyond reason Savage began hunting Judge Harvey down, finally cornering him at a trading post along the Kings river. The two men exchanged heated words which ended with Savage knocking the judge to the ground. Although bystanders tried to restrain him, Jim continued to punch and kick his opponent – who promptly drew a revolver and shot him through the heart. Although Savage fell dead without a word his reputation was so great that Harvey continued to shoot his lifeless body just to be sure.

The Yokuts buried their strange chief on his rancheria before beginning his wake, a ceremony which involved death chants and ritual dancing. "I have never seen such profound manifestations of grief," wrote one observer, "The very blood within one curdled at the scene."

Personality/Motivation: Jim Savage is a man living on the thin edge of the wedge. Being an exploiter *and* a protector *and* a liberator *and* an oppressor to the Tulare Indian Nation all at once requires a certain sort of protean personality generally only found in famous politicians, notorious villains, and religious leaders. It's hard to say whether or not Savage was a hero with several severe personality flaws, including avarice, bloodlust, and a tendency towards double-dealing, or a villain with a conscience. One thing is certain, though; Providence in her eternal wisdom had cursed Jim Savage with an impossible task. To an aggressive growling nation hungry for the goldfields and farmland of California the Indians were little more than a curious inconvenience to be swept to one side as quickly as possible. For a white man of the period to go "renegade" was almost unheard of. To actually become one of their leaders or act as some kind of protector, even a very flawed one, was not just to swim against the tide of historical inevitability. It was actually insane.

Perhaps the loss of his wife and infant daughter on that hard road west actually drove this uniquely passionate man mad with grief; but more likely he was none too stable in the first place. In conversations Savage is bellowing, passionate, opinionated, and possessed of a marvelously overbearing physical presence. Yet Jim Savage is a mass of contradictions. While capable of extreme acts of violence he is more given to negotiation and discussion in times of crisis. Notoriously greedy and opportunistic he is also conversely generous and honorable. Savage is also oddly worldly with a gift for languages and a keen understanding of human behavior.

Quote: “There is a good horse, bridle, spurs, and leggings which belong to me. I fetched them for the purpose of letting you have them to leave the country with. For leave you shall, whether it be to Nevada or the Promised Land.”

Powers/Tactics: A contemporary once said of Jim Savage, “No dog can follow a trail like he can. No horse can endure half a much.” An archetypical mountain man, he is physically far beyond the human norm: tougher, stronger, and faster. From his Indian followers he has not only learned five native languages (Miwok, Tejon, Tulare, Yokut, and Yosemite), but also extensive tracking and wilderness survival skills. A doughy warrior, he is equally comfortable stabbing, chopping, shooting, or simply pummeling his opponent to death using his bare knuckled *Rough and Tumble* fighting skills.

A gifted natural linguist Savage also speaks four European languages: English, French, Spanish, and German. He is a highly persuasive businessman who has also dabbled in mining and farming. He holds the rank of Major in the California state militia as well as being the recognized chief of five separate Indian nations.

Curiously, Savage’s reputation as a sorcerer springs from this careful and selective use of a parlor trick taught to him by a circus performer. He can actually snatch bullets and arrows out of the air, providing that his hands are free and the projectiles are moving at a relatively slow “black powder” velocity. It was the use of this trick that allowed him to initially assume leadership of the Tulare Nation. After that his reputation alone proved sufficient enough to convince other tribes to elect him their leader.

Campaign Use: Jim Savage is just the sort of character one finds out on a frontier. Dynamic, self-reliant, and not a little greedy he fits easily into the lawless environment typical of any newly-settled wilderness. Able and willing to act in a half-dozen different capacities he can enter the PCs’ lives as the owner of a convenient trading post, a mercenary fighter, or as a guide through those uncharted badlands they simply

must cross. Should the PCs exhibit the regrettable tendency to slaughter all of the primitive tribesmen they stumble upon they could conceivably encounter the King of the Tulares in a significantly less pleasant capacity as he endeavors to vengefully hunt them down.

While Jim Savage’s role in a *Western Hero* campaign in obvious he is equally suitable for use in a *Fantasy Hero* setting. Simply replace his shotgun and pistol with a crossbow and a sword, his Indian followers with orcs (or their equivalent), and his language skills with things like “orc” and “hill giant” to create Bossman, Savage King of the Blood Tusk Mountains. He could also be relocated into a *Star Hero* setting by turning his Indian followers into alien natives, updating his weapons skills, and modifying his language skills as appropriate.

Appearance: Jim Savage is a large, barrel-chested man with a booming voice which intimidates people wherever he goes. A long golden mane of hair flows down his back almost to his waist like the adorning fur of a predatory lion. An equally impressive blonde beard cascades like a follicular waterfall from every square inch of his face below his eyes. His arms are long and heavily muscled to the point that they almost explode from his shirts when he lifts things. Savage’s eyes are unnerving to look directly into; a shocking, deep intrusive blue.

El Ray Tulares dresses in the distinctive fringed buckskin, moccasins, and chaps of a Tulare tribal warrior with the distinctive wide-brimmed “mule-skinners” felt hat pulled down low over his brow. When the winter months set in he dons an enormous flowing coat sewn together from the skins of a dozen vicious mountain wolves trapped by his wives in the highlands of the Tulare river basin. Daily violence is a way of life in the pre-Civil War California, even for those without enemies. Correspondingly Jim, who has a considerable number of them, is a walking arsenal of weaponry. He keeps a short double-barreled shotgun slung over his left shoulder, a Walker revolver and two tomahawks tucked into his belt, and a huge “Arkansas toothpick” knife tucked into his boot at all times.

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Power Locked in Crystal Fire by Steven S. Long

The Mystic Properties of Gems and Stones

Mankind has long been fascinated by gemstones – their pure color, the way light glints off of them, the crystal fires that seem to dance in their depths. So it's only natural that arcane and mystic powers would be attributed to many different types of gems. And it's just as natural for gamers to use this ancient lore to enhance and improve their games.

The magical powers or qualities associated with a particular type of gemstone usually depend upon several things. The first is color. Colors have long held magical or lucky connotations, and those relations carry over to gemstones of that color. For example, green jade is associated with money and prosperity in some instances, and red stones with blood. Some common color associations for gems are:

<u>Color</u>	<u>Properties</u>
Black	Stability and Resilience. Power. Protection. Invisibility.
Blue	Water and the Ocean. Sleep. Peacefulness. Healing. Purification.
Green	Life. Fertility. Healing. Money, Prosperity, and Luck.
Orange	As Red, but of lesser effect. Personal Power. Luck.
Pink	Calmness. Love. Peace. Happiness.
Purple	Mystic and psychic power in general. Higher forces. Healing. Peace. Obedience.
Red	Blood. Birth and Death. Healing. Fire. Protection.
White	Sleep. Psychic powers. Luck. Protection after dark. The Moon.
Yellow	Communication. Travel.

The second factor is the stone's properties. For example, diamond, the hardest natural substance known to man, is mystically associated with strength and invulnerability. Third is the element or deity that the stone has historically been associated with. A gem associated with Poseidon, for example, might grant powers over the ocean.

In roleplaying games, mystic gems are useful primarily for two things. The first is as a material component for a spell. A spell that cures or prevents insanity might require some ground topaz, or a small intact topaz. Needless to say, this can get quite expensive, since gems are valuable, and only the wealthiest characters will be able to afford to cast spells with material components like diamonds and rubies. However, this may serve as a way for the GM to keep such spells from being used so frequently that they unbalance the campaign. Second, gems are often magical items themselves, or a part of magical items – amulets, talismans, crowns, sceptres, and swords often feature gems as decorations, and these gems can impart magic to the items themselves. A bloodstone set in a sword's pommel or hilt might make the sword a powerful magical weapon, for example.

GMs may rule that the quality of a mystic gem affects the strength or power of a magical spell or object that the gem is used with. Thus, a stone of poor quality might reduce a spell's effect by half if it is used as a component for that spell. Player character mages would therefore have to be sure that they were obtaining gems of sufficient quality for their spells. An entire quest could be constructed around obtaining a particularly high-quality jewel (or even a specific gem, like one from an idol in an abandoned temple) for use in a magic ritual.

Some examples of gems and their mystic properties are listed below. Since gems are typically worn, the user of a mystic gem is often referred to as a "wearer," but this should not be taken to mean that wearing the stone is required.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I wrote this article several years ago for *Troll*, a gaming magazine that folded so quickly they never had time to publish it. It was written "generically," without rules for any rules system, so it doesn't contain any *HERO System*-specific information. But hopefully we'll have the chance to cover this subject in greater detail, including *HERO* rules and write-ups, in the future.

— Steven S. Long

AETITES

Description: A concretion or “stone” found in the stomach, head, or neck of an eagle.

Properties And Uses: Aetites (also called aquilaeus) is very powerful. They bring good fortune, and make the wearer brave and valorous. They also cure illness, promote good health and longevity, and can ease labor and prevent miscarriages.

Note: Concretions are found in many different types of animals; some of the more common are listed below. Generally, concretions are thought to contain the mystic essence of the animal in crystallized form, and to provide the beneficial qualities associated with that animal to the wearer.

AGATE

Description: A type of chalcedony with colored bands and markings.

Properties And Uses: Agate has many different uses. It provides strength and courage. If worn as an amulet, it makes the wearer eloquent and an inspirational orator, and “strengthens the heart.” If the amulet is engraved with a serpent, it instead protects against snake and insect bites and poisons. In many different forms, agate can be used to prevent storms, make someone tell the truth, or increase fertility. Some types or colors of agate provide protection against many different threats or dangers, promote peace and happiness, or ensure victory in battle or success in any endeavor. Because agate comes in many different colors, it may also have additional associations or mystical properties based on those colors (see above).

ALECTORIUS

Description: A concretion or “stone” found inside a rooster. To obtain one, leave a dead rooster in an ant hill for nine days; only the stone will remain at the end of this time.

Properties And Uses: Alectorii are powerful good luck charms. Anyone who wears one will find that wealth comes his way and people do what he wants. They bring power and courage to the wearer, and can break or dispel magical spells. Alectorius talismans also promote marital harmony and prevent thirst.

ALEXANDRITE

Description: A grass-green form of chrysoberyl which turns red under artificial light.

Properties And Uses: This rare and precious gemstone is also magically powerful. It brings good fortune and love to the wearer.

AMBER

Description: Translucent fossilized resin of coniferous trees, usually pale yellow, orangeish, or brownish in color.

Properties And Uses: Amber possesses great mystic power, and aids all kinds of magic. It promotes life and spirit, and offers protection against diseases, particularly those associated with the eyes; looking through amber is said to improve the sight (and perhaps, in a fantasy setting, provide various forms of mystic sight). Reddish-colored amber also protects against plague, poisons, and all forms of evil magic. Lastly, since amber easily takes a static charge when rubbed, it can serve as a material component for spells involving lightning or electricity.

AMETHYST

Description: A purple-colored quartz gem.

Properties And Uses: Amethyst is a passive and spiritual stone which has no association with death, anger, strong emotions, or violence. It protects against drunkenness, strengthens prayers, and can cure or prevent poisoning or sterility. If worn when sleeping (or placed under the pillow), it brings good sleep and pleasant dreams (and in a fantasy setting, maybe prophetic dreams as well). If worn during the day, it is said to make the wearer wise and clever; to protect against thieves, illness, sorrow, and all forms of danger or harm; and, if worn by a man, to attract the love of a good woman.

AQUAMARINE

Description: A pale blue-green semiprecious variety of beryl.

Properties And Uses: As its name suggests, this gemstone is associated with water and the ocean. It aids all forms of water magic, and psychic powers as well. It also offers protection to those who journey on the sea.

AVENTURINE

Description: A translucent greenish or reddish form of quartz with flecks of mica or other minerals suspended in it.

Properties And Uses: Aventurine has long been associated with luck and wealth, and so is favored for spells and talismans relating to, among other things, gambling. It also improves intelligence, perception, creativity, and health.

AZURITE

Description: A deep blue stone whose color derives from copper.

Properties And Uses: Azurite's mystic powers all relate to the mind. It enhances psychic powers, and is often used in spells or magical items which help to foretell the future. Because of its color, it is sometimes associated with water or the nighttime sky.

BERYL

Description: A green stone which is opaque or transparent.

Properties And Uses: Beryl is primarily associated with love, romance, and water. It brings love and harmony to married folk, and protects against lust and unhealthy desires. It can also provide protection from enemies and psychic powers, make the wearer a skilled debater, bring the wearer skill in manners, and promote cheerfulness. It is said that gazing into a beryl allows one to see the future; many "crystal balls" are actually made of beryl, not clear crystal. Therefore beryl is ideal as a material component or ingredient in divinatory spells and items.

BEZOAR

Description: A concretion or "stone" from the stomach, intestines, or liver of a deer or goat.

Properties And Uses: Bezoars are usually reduced to a powder and drunk with wine, so they would make a good ingredient for potions. Powdered bezoar provides strength and longevity, and cures poisoning. It can also be worn as an amulet to cure or prevent poisoning.

BLOODSTONE

Description: A greenish form of chalcedony with reddish spots of jasper which resemble blood. It is also called heliotrope (but should not be confused with the plant of the same name).

Properties And Uses: Bloodstone is thought to promote longevity and to make the wearer famous. It is also associated with healing and physical strength. For women, it prevents miscarriages and makes childbirth easier. Anyone who puts a bloodstone under his pillow is said to receive dreams of the future. As its name implies, bloodstone also carries powerful combat magic; spells and magical objects with bloodstone as a material component can defeat enemies, open doors, break chains and bonds, cast down stone walls, and speed the healing of wounds received in battle.

CALCITE

Description: A crystal which may display many different colors, including transparent, blue, orange, pink, and green.

Properties And Uses: Calcite has a unique "double refraction" property – it displays two of anything seen through it. For this reason it is used to "double" the effects of magic, boosting the power of spells and enchanted items. The stone's color indicates which types of magic and spells it is most effective with (see above).

CARNELIAN

Description: A fiery red form of chalcedony.

Properties And Uses: Carnelian protects against many different phenomena: anger, envy, jealousy, hatred, and other negative emotions; skin diseases; insanity and nightmares; lightning and storms; harmful telepathy; and magic. It can boost courage and make the wearer eloquent. It is associated with fire, and as such would be a good component for firebolt spells, wands that project fireballs, and the like.

CASTOR

Description: A concretion or "stone" from a beaver.

Properties And Uses: Castors are extremely useful as a form of contraception when powdered and drunk, or worn as an amulet. If mixed into an ointment, castors can help cure or prevent nerve diseases.

CELONITIS

Description: A concretion or "stone" from a tortoise.

Properties And Uses: Celonitis provides visions of the future. It can be powdered and drunk, worn as an amulet, or gazed into.

CHALCEDONY

Description: Chalcedony is a pale, translucent form of quartz. Occasionally it is milky white in color.

Properties And Uses: Chalcedony is a powerful gemstone which is usually associated with the Moon and water. It makes the wearer vigorous, strong, and lucky in law and love. It also protects against illusions, evil spirits, insanity and depression, nightmares, and fear.

CHELIDONIUS

Description: A concretion or "stone" from a swallow, usually red or black in color.

Properties And Uses: Chelidonii are usually made into amulets by wrapping them in linen and placing them under the left armpit. When so worn, they protect against insanity, illness, and loss of memory.

CHRYSOCOLLA

Description: A blue, blue-green, green, brown, or black mineral. It is sometimes found mixed with malachite and turquoise in a substance called Eilat stone.

Properties And Uses: Chrysocolla is said to have properties of calming, soothing, relaxing, and healing. It stems violent emotions and behavior.

CHRYSOLE

Description: Magnesium iron silicate, usually yellowish or greenish and transparent.

Properties And Uses: As an amulet, chrysolite protects the wearer from madness, fear, and foolish behavior. When powdered and drunk, it prevents lung diseases; in a fantasy setting, it would be a good ingredient for magical potions which allow the drinker to breathe underwater.

CHRYSOPRASE

Description: An apple-green type of chalcedony.

Properties And Uses: Like amber, chrysoprase strengthens eyesight. It also promotes happiness, and protects against greed, selfishness, and nightmares.

CINNABAR

Description: A red ore of mercury.

Properties And Uses: Ancient Chinese mystics considered cinnabar to have properties related to immortality. Thus, it could be used in a fantasy setting (as it was in real life) as an ingredient in potions designed to confer longevity, or even immortality.

CORAL

Description: A yellowish or pinkish stone formed from the skeletons of certain types of marine animals.

Properties And Uses: Coral amulets protect the wearer from the evil eye, demons and their kin, magic, storms, poisoning, epilepsy, tuberculosis, foolish behavior, and some other diseases. Red coral is said to fade when its wearer becomes ill.

DIAMOND

Description: Superhardened carbon. Diamonds can come in many colors, but the purest and most powerful are clear.

Properties And Uses: Diamonds are magically very powerful. They make the wearer strong, invulnerable, and victorious in battle. They bring good luck. They enhance spirituality and spiritual powers. They protect the wearer from magic, the evil eye, and nightmares. They can also be used to detect adultery.

DRACONTITIS

Description: A concretion or “stone” from a snake. Dracontitii, or snakestones, are small and glass-like; they are usually colored green or blue, and may be streaked with red or white.

Properties And Uses: To be magically useful, a dracontitis must be removed from a snake that is still alive. Such a snakestone is said to float on top of the water rather than sinking. Dracontitii are said to bring success to the wearer in whatever he does.

EMERALD

Description: A deep green form of beryl.

Properties And Uses: Emerald has most of the properties of beryl, but stronger. An amulet made of emerald brings love, prosperity, success in business, good luck, and the power of prophecy. Emerald can also be used to banish evil spirits, ease childbirth, or detect infidelity in a spouse or loved one. Emeralds are sometimes considered to have protective properties; they guard travelers and help prevent or “cure” possession.

FLINT

Description: Several varieties of hard opaque quartz, often used to start fires.

Properties And Uses: Because of its hardness, flint is thought to provide protection against many phenomena: incubi, nightmares, and evil spirits, among others. Flint can also bring rain if it is thrown over the shoulder towards the west.

GARNET

Description: A silicate combined with various elements. Its most well-known color is red (similar to ruby), but it can also be orange-red, brownish, purple-red, pinkish, green, yellow-green, or black, depending upon what elements form it.

Properties And Uses: Garnets is thought to increase strength, health, and endurance. It also offers protection against demons, nightmares, all sorts of “negative energies,” and skin diseases. In a fantasy setting, garnets might also be useful for detecting shapeshifted or polymorphed creatures such as lycanthropes. Protective magical items or charms featuring garnets are popular with many warriors or warrior-cults.

HEMATITE

Description: A silvery, black, or reddish-brown iron ore.

Properties And Uses: Also called “bloodstone” because it leaves a reddish color behind when rubbed or washed, hematite has been associated with blood, rebirth, healing, and the protection of warriors for centuries.

JACINTH

Description: A form of zircon which usually has a reddish-orange color.

Properties And Uses: Jacinth amulets are said to offer protection against insanity, depression, hypnotism, and psychic powers; they also make the wearer prosperous, amicable, and alert. Jacinth colored deep yellow can be given to someone to win his (or her) affection; thus it might make a good component for spells which mentally control or charm the target. Because they change color according to the weather, jacinths could also be components for storm spells.

JADE

Description: A green mineral found in Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific.

Properties And Uses: Jade is a powerful gemstone associated with, among other things, Chinese magic. Jade amulets bring wealth, love, good fortune, prosperity, health, and longevity to the wearer. Jade also grants power over the weather.

JASPER

Description: An opaque type of quartz or chalcedony, usually colored green, but sometimes red or brown.

Properties And Uses: Jasper protects against hallucinations, nightmares, and dangerous whims. In fantasy games, it would be ideal for spells and magical items which detect or dispel illusions, lies, secret doors, and the like.

JET

Description: A deep black form of marble, agate, or coal.

Properties And Uses: Also called “witch’s amber” or “black amber,” jet possesses mighty magic. It can protect against hallucinations, thunder and lightning, demons, poisons and venoms, and magic. When powdered, it can drive out demons which are possessing a body or cure any disease, or it can be used to enhance psychic powers. It is also said to promote beauty, fertility, and growth. Jet can also be used as a component in invisibility spells or items (as can many other black stones). Like amber, with which it is often associated, jet becomes charged with static electricity when rubbed; therefore it makes a good component for lightning- and electricity-based spells.

LAPIS LAZULI

Description: A deep blue stone with golden flecks of pyrite.

Properties And Uses: Lapis has been associated with gods and royalty for thousands of years, and thus is thought to possess great magical power. It aids healing magic, improves eyesight, strengthens psychic powers, has protective properties, and cures sadness.

LODESTONE

Description: A greyish-colored iron oxide.

Properties And Uses: Also called magnetite, lodestone is magnetic. It thus is reputed to have magical properties associated with attraction; it is said to draw wealth, prosperity, success, sex, and other desirable things to the wearer. It also “draws illness from the body.” It can be used in invisibility charms as well.

MALACHITE

Description: A deep green stone, veined with bands of lighter green

Properties And Uses: Malachite is used to detect danger (it will break when danger approaches) and to provide protection or attract love. It also adds power to magic spells.

MARBLE

Description: Carbonated lime, in a variety of colors

Properties And Uses: Marble has powerful protective properties. It is most often used in buildings (such as altars, walls, and floors) to protect those within them, rather than as a personal charm. When used for personal protection, it is usually bound to the arm or worn in a necklace.

METEORITE

Description: A meteorite is a stone and/or metal object (typically composed of nickel and iron) which has fallen to earth from the heavens.

Properties And Uses: Meteorites form powerful protective charms. They defend the wearer against all forms of magic, disease, storms, and accidents. “Star-iron” is a common component in magical items which dispel or defend against magic; it is also used to make powerful magic swords.

MOONSTONE

Description: Opalescent feldspar colored blue, white, and/or pink. Because of a light phenomenon called adularescence, it sometimes appears to be lit from within.

Properties And Uses: As its name implies, moonstone is associated with the Moon; in fact, some say its magical properties increase during a waxing Moon, and fade as the Moon wanes. It provides protection for travelers, promotes fertility and restful sleep, strengthens psychic abilities, and assists divinatory magic.

OBSIDIAN

Description: A deep black, glasslike stone produced by volcanoes. The Aztecs and other Precolumbian tribes often made razor-sharp weapons by carefully chipping it.

Properties And Uses: Obsidian is used for protection magics and magics associated with the element of Earth. It also enhances divination spells; mirrors or balls of obsidian are very useful for scrying.

ONYX

Description: A translucent form of chalcedony with colored layers or bands. There is also black onyx, which is particularly powerful.

Properties And Uses: Onyx's magical properties relate to protecting those who are in battle or dangerous situations; as such, it would be useful as a component in magical shields, defensive spells, and the like. It also makes the wearer brave and valorous.

OPAL

Description: Opal comes in two basic varieties. Fire opals, also called girasols, are multicolored, with hues of red, pink, orange, and blue. Black opals are jet black and glassy.

Properties And Uses: There are two different schools of thought about the magical properties of opal. Some say it is a stone which brings bad luck and misery upon those who wear it; thus, it could be used in spells to inflict various kinds of harm on one's enemies. Others say that because of fire opal's many colors, it is lucky and can act as a "battery" for magical energies, thereby enhancing any spell or magical item. It is also used in invisibility spells.

PEARL

Description: A secretion of the oyster to isolate and protect it from harmful irritants that get inside its shell.

Properties And Uses: Pearls are widely regarded as bringing long life, good health, and luck to the wearer. They are associated with the Moon and water, and can enhance spells relating to those things. However, some say that pearls bring bad luck instead of good.

PERIDOT

Description: A greenish stone (magnesium iron silicate).

Properties And Uses: Peridot, usually set in gold, is said to be highly protective against such phenomena as magic, the evil eye, illusions, and nightmares. It can attract love and wealth, promote healing and good health, and calm those who are angry or afflicted with other violent emotions.

PUMICE

Description: A tannish or greyish volcanic stone which has many tiny air-filled veins or cavities in it. It is very light to hold and rough to the touch.

Properties And Uses: Pumice is the only stone which floats on water. Because of this property, it is sometimes thought to be useful as a component in spells of banishment and exorcism – it "repels" evil beings and energies just like it "repels" water.

RHODOCROSITE

Description: A beautiful pink stone, sometimes veined with lighter pink or white.

Properties And Uses: Rhodocrosite is supposed to enhance physical energy and stamina. It makes an excellent material component or ingredient in spells and items that increase strength or endurance, or which allow the wearer to tolerate pain.

RUBY

Description: A precious stone which is colored a deep red or crimson. In some books, rubies of a specific shape are called “carbuncles.”

Properties And Uses: Rubies provide protection against evil spirits, enemies, hypnotism and similar types of magic (including psychic powers employed for malevolent ends), melancholy, bad dreams, misery, disease, poisons, and impure thoughts. They darken when evil approaches, giving a valuable warning; if the wearer becomes ill or is poisoned, the stone fades, and its power is lost forever. Because of their great value, rubies are also thought to bring wealth and prosperity.

Rubies are supposed to enhance magical energies and powers in general. Therefore they would be a good component for just about any spell or magical item. At the GM’s option, if a spell or item does not require ruby (or some other stone that aids magic) as a component, adding ruby (or other stone) as a component will increase the spell’s or item’s power by as much as 25%, depending upon the value and quality of the ruby.

SAPPHIRE

Description: Blue corundum (aluminum oxide).

Properties And Uses: Like the other precious stones of great value, sapphire has many powerful magical properties. It provides protection against fevers, diseases of the eye, devils and evil spirits, injuries in general, poisons and venoms, captivity, fraud, envy, and treachery. It makes the wearer brave and courageous, and brings him good health, love, and a peaceful mind. It also enhances some psychic powers, particularly precognitive ones.

SARD

Description: A reddish-yellow or brownish type of quartz.

Properties And Uses: Sard’s magical properties are available only to women. They use it to attract love and good fortune and provide protection against evil magics.

SARDONYX

Description: Chalcedony layered with brown sard.

Properties And Uses: Sardonyx is said to improve the wearer’s bravery, valor, eloquence, and joy. It is also sometimes used in protective or luck-drawing magic.

SPINEL

Description: A deep blue stone (superficially resembling sapphire), also found in red, black, pink, or green varieties.

Properties And Uses: Spinel is said to have two, basically unrelated, properties. First, it attracts money and promotes the wearer’s prosperity. Second, it gives the wearer greater strength, energy, and endurance. Thus it is a good component for many different spells.

STAUROLITE

Description: Greyish stones whose crystals form into crosses or Xs. Staurolites are found in North Carolina, Virginia, New Mexico, France, and Scotland. They are also known as Fairy Crosses or Cross Stones.

Properties And Uses: Although staurolites are often associated with Christianity due to their shape, they are also considered general good luck charms. Because of their four-in-one shape, they are thought to enhance any magic relating to the Four Elements.

TIGEREYE

Description: A brownish-yellow stone; its name comes from the occurrence of golden-yellow streaks amid solid brown in many samples, which look like cats’ eyes.

Properties And Uses: Tigereyes are powerful protective charms; Roman soldiers wore them into battle for this reason. Because they offer such good protection, they also improve one’s courage and confidence. Some say they attract wealth and improve health as well.

TOADSTONE

Description: A concretion or “stone” from a toad.

Properties And Uses: Toadstones detect and protect against poisons. They grow warm when in the presence of poisons or venoms; they are often set inside rings, so that the warmth can be felt in the wearer’s finger and thus alert him. In addition they protect houses against fire and boats against sinking; in a fantasy setting, they might protect against fire in general.

TOPAZ

Description: A silicate and aluminum gemstone, usually orangeish or greenish in color.

Properties And Uses: Topaz is usually worn as an amulet which brings wisdom, good looks, love, and wealth; cures insanity; and protects the wearer from greed, lust, madness, injury, disease, sudden death, evil magic, and intrigue. Topaz is also used for invisibility spells and charms.

TOURMALINE

Description: A crystal which is transparent when viewed from the side, but opaque when viewed from the ends. It comes in a wide variety of colors.

Properties And Uses: Tourmaline's properties generally depend on its color (see above). Some varieties are also thought to aid astral projection or the use of psychic powers.

TURQUOISE

Description: A blue-green stone (hydrous copper aluminum phosphate).

Properties And Uses: In general, turquoise brings good luck and courage. It protects the wearer against falls (especially from horses), hatred, evil magic, violence, poison, serpents, accidents, and the evil eye. It is said to change color according to its owner's health, becoming darker as the wearer becomes more ill.

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Creating Your Own Mystic Gems

GMs and players are encouraged to create their own magical gemstones rather than relying solely on the list given above. After all, your fantasy world (or other campaign setting) is different from the real world, so it may very well have different gems.

When creating your own gems, use the guidelines and list above as examples of what can be done. Make sure that your creations are logical within the confines of magical philosophy or thought. For example, the color green is associated with life and fertility, so don't give a magical green gemstone properties relating to death, destruction, and warfare. However, the color and deity associations may be very different in your fantasy world – maybe green stands for death and destruction there because it is the color of the God of Death – so be sure to follow your fantasy world's logic, rather than "real-world" logic, in such a case.

Using Magical Gems In Jewelry

In addition to the magical qualities of the gems themselves, how they are worn – what type of jewelry they are carried in – can be important.

Rings: Rings are usually associated with protection and with binding, because they are thought to (a) keep some magic outside the body while (b) binding some magic inside the body. As such, they are best for carrying magical gems that offer protection (such as jacinth) or which enhance some quality of the wearer (such as spinel).

Necklaces: Because they lie near the heart, necklaces are best for gems which enhance emotions or attract love. Since they surround and bind the body, necklaces (especially if made almost entirely of a particular stone or stones) can be very powerful.

Earrings: Because they are near the ears, eyes, and head, earrings are best used to carry gemstones which improve perception, provide warnings, increase psychic powers, or make the wearer eloquent.

Bracelets: Since bracelets are on the arms near the hands – the means by which one exerts strength – gems which increase strength or provide courage are the best choice for them.

Magical Gems Quick-Reference Chart

<u>Quality</u>	<u>Gemstones</u>
Adultery – Detect	Diamond, Emerald
Alertness	Jacinth
Amicability/Cheerfulness	Beryl, Jacinth
Attract Womens' Love	Amethyst
Banish/Exorcise Evil Spirits	Emerald, Jet, Pumice
Beauty	Jet, Topaz
Blood	Hematite, Ruby
Bravery/Courage	Aetites, Agate, Alectorius, Carnelian, Onyx, Sapphire, Sardonyx, Tigereye, Turquoise
Calmness/Relaxation	Chrysocolla, Peridot
Childbirth – Ease/Aid	Bloodstone, Emerald
Combat/Victory In Battle	Agate, Bloodstone, Diamond, Onyx
Contraception	Castor
Creativity	Aventurine
Danger – Detect	Malachite, Ruby
Destroy Stone Walls	Bloodstone
Earth	Obsidian
Eloquence	Agate, Beryl, Sardonyx
Eyesight/Prevent Eye Disease	Amber, Chrysoprase, Lapis Lazuli
Fame	Bloodstone
Fertility/Growth	Agate, Jet, Moonstone
Fire	Carnelian
Four Elements	Staurolite
Good Luck	Aetites, Alectorius, Alexandrite, Aventurine, Chalcedony, Diamond, Emerald, Jade, Sard, Sardonyx, Staurolite, Turquoise
Healing/Health/Cure Illness	Aetites, Aventurine, Bloodstone, Castor, Chrysocolla, Garnet, Hematite, Jade, Lapis Lazuli, Lodestone, Pearl, Sapphire, Tigereye, Turquoise
Insanity – Cure	Topaz
Invisibility	Jet, Lodestone, Opal, Topaz
Invulnerability	Diamond
Life/Spirit – Promote	Amber, Amethyst, Pearl
Longevity/Immortality	Aetites, Bezoar, Bloodstone, Cinnabar, Jade, Pearl
Love	Alexandrite, Beryl, Jacinth, Jade, Malachite, Peridot, Sapphire, Sard, Topaz
Magic – Enhance	Amber, Calcite, Opal, Ruby
Magic – Break/Dispel	Alectorius
Marital Harmony	Alectorius, Beryl
Moon	Chalcedony, Moonstone, Pearl
Open Doors	Bloodstone
Peace/Happiness/Joy	Agate, Chrysoprase, Sapphire, Sardonyx
Poison – Cure/Detect	Bezoar, Toadstone
Prayers – Strengthen	Amethyst
Predict Future	Beryl, Bloodstone, Celonitis, Emerald, Moonstone, Obsidian, Sapphire
Protection – General	Agate, Amethyst, Emerald, Flint, Lapis Lazuli, Malachite, Marble, Obsidian, Sardonyx, Tigereye
Protection – Accidents/Falls	Meteorite, Turquoise
Protection – Captivity	Sapphire
Protection – Disease/Plague	Amber, Amethyst, Chelidonium, Coral, Meteorite, Ruby, Sapphire, Topaz
Protection – Drunkenness	Amethyst
Protection – Enemies	Beryl, Ruby
Protection – Epilepsy	Coral
Protection – Evil Magic/Evil Eye	Amber, Coral, Diamond, Peridot, Sard, Topaz, Turquoise

Protection – Evil Spirits/Demons	Chalcedony, Coral, Emerald, Flint, Garnet, Jet, Ruby, Sapphire
Protection – Fear	Chalcedony, Chrysolite
Protection – Fire	Toadstone
Protection – Foolishness/Whims	Chrysolite, Coral, Jasper
Protection – Fraud	Sapphire
Protection – Greed/Selfishness	Chrysoprase, Topaz
Protection – Hallucinations	Jasper, Jet
Protection – Illusions	Chalcedony, Peridot
Protection – Injuries	Sapphire, Topaz
Protection – Intrigue	Topaz
Protection – Loss Of Memory	Chelidonium
Protection – Lung Disease	Chrysolite
Protection – Lust/Desires	Beryl, Ruby, Topaz
Protection – Madness/Depression	Amethyst, Carnelian, Chalcedony, Chelidonium, Chrysolite, Jacinth, Ruby, Topaz
Protection – Magic	Carnelian, Coral, Meteorite, Peridot, Ruby
Protection – Miscarriages	Aetites, Bloodstone
Protection – Negative Emotions	Beryl, Carnelian, Sapphire, Turquoise
Protection – Nightmares	Carnelian, Chalcedony, Chrysoprase, Diamond, Flint, Garnet, Jasper, Peridot, Ruby
Protection – Poisons/Venoms	Agate, Amber, Amethyst, Coral, Jet, Ruby, Sapphire, Turquoise
Protection – Psychic Powers	Beryl, Carnelian, Jacinth, Ruby
Protection – Sinking	Toadstone
Protection – Skin Diseases	Carnelian, Garnet
Protection – Snakes	Agate, Turquoise
Protection – Storms/Lightning	Carnelian, Jet, Meteorite
Protection – Sudden Death	Topaz
Protection – Thieves	Amethyst
Protection – Thirst	Alectorius
Protection – Travelers	Aquamarine, Emerald
Protection – Treachery	Sapphire
Protection – Tuberculosis	Coral
Protection – Violence	Turquoise
Protection – Warriors	Hematite, Tigereye
Psychic Powers – Enhance	Aquamarine, Azurite, Jet, Lapis Lazuli, Moonstone, Sapphire, Tourmaline
Rebirth	Hematite
Sadness – Cure	Lapis Lazuli
Sleep/Good Dreams – Promote	Amethyst, Moonstone
Spirituality – Enhance	Amethyst, Diamond
Storms – Prevent/Raise	Agate
Strength/Endurance	Agate, Bezoar, Bloodstone, Chalcedony, Diamond, Garnet, Rhodocrosite, Spinel
Strengthen The Heart	Agate
Success – General	Agate, Dracontitis
Truth – Compel	Agate
Water/Ocean	Aquamarine, Azurite, Beryl, Chalcedony, Pearl
Wealth/Money/Business Success	Alectorius, Aventurine, Emerald, Jacinth, Jade, Lodestone, Peridot, Ruby, Spinel, Tigereye, Topaz
Weather/Rain – Control	Flint, Jade
Weather/Rain – Detect	Jacinth
Well-Mannered	Beryl
Wisdom/Cleverness	Amethyst, Aventurine, Topaz



Anime Martial Arts

by Michael Surbrook

THREE ANIME MARTIAL ARTISTS IN SEARCH OF A CAMPAIGN

For truly high-powered action, nothing beats anime. By the same token, many anime characters, and especially anime martial artists, are often capable of superhuman feats. Anime characters can be found in any setting and time period, and any genre as well.

This article presents three Anime Martial Artists, as defined on pages 9-10 of *Ninja Hero*. They are all built on a 200-point base, ignore the limits of Normal Characteristic Maxima, and pay for all the weapons and armor they use.

The characters are, in order of point totals: Amayultare (300 points), a dark elf archer designed to be used in high-powered Epic and High-Fantasy settings; Amber Long (350 points), who is meant to be a part of the author's own Shugysha Daigaku ("Student Warrior University") campaign setting, but who can easily be used in a *Champions* or *Fantasy Hero* setting; and Shina Arakawa (375 points), an extremely high-powered *ronin*, who is best suited for over-the-top *chambara* and *wuxia* games.

Amayultare

Background/History: The world of the elves is divided into two halves. On one side are the high elves, who are fair of skin and hair, and live their long lives in the sun. On the other side are the dark elves, who as their name suggests are dusky of skin, and live deep within dank forests and desolate wilderness, and conduct most of their affairs under the cover of nightfall. And just as the high elves are content to live as one with themselves and their world, the dark elves are consumed with avarice, desiring power magical and secular. Thus, while the high elves exist in harmony with their surroundings, the dark elves plot and scheme constantly, seeking to do unto others before it is done unto themselves.

At times, different factions of dark elves will vie with each other for power, battling for supremacy. To the victor will go the spoils, while the losers will find either death, or if they are lucky, banishment.

Amayultare is one such dark elf. When her House fell into ruin following a bloody coup, she fled her homeland, heading east into the lands of men. She took with her only what she could carry in her hands and on her back, vowing that she would rather live among the dour and brutish race of man than submit to her House's conquerors.

Of course, Amayultare's status among humans was only slightly better than the

treatment she would receive from her high elf cousins. She soon found the most acceptance among the less savory elements of human society, where she quickly made a name for herself as a bow-for-hire. Soon assassinations became the norm, and much to Amayultare's delight, she found the human world to be not that much different from the world of the dark elves after all.

Personality/Motivation: A former member of the nobility (or so she likes to let others believe), Amayultare is now no more than an outcast who must do whatever she can to get by. However, she still retains some of her old pride and sense of dignity, and will go without rather than accept charity or largess. Interestingly enough, she has no problem with stealing in order to get what she wants, quantifying such an act as proof of her skills (and the fact most things – such as fine food and drink – are wasted on humans anyway).

Her life among the plots and conspiracies of the dark elven Houses has made Amayultare virtually unable to put her trust into anyone but herself. She tends to look for hidden motives behind any act, especially selfless ones. She also expects people to lie as a matter of course, and never accepts any offer at face value. On the other hand, she herself tends to be true to her word, mainly due to her elvish pride rather than any desire to make up for past misdeeds.

As a bow-for-hire, Amayultare has learned the value of remaining true to her employer. She will attempt to complete any contract she accepts, and will return her payment in full if she fails to do so. In addition, she will stay loyal to her employer until the contract is fulfilled, and will never divulge such information as who she is working for, who her target is, or how much she has been paid.

Quote: "One hundred pieces of silver will buy you one arrow – and an end to all of your troubles."

Powers/Tactics: Like all elves, Amayultare is highly agile, with an impeccable sense of balance. She can step so lightly as to not make any sound, and is capable of running along narrow tree limbs without falling. Due to her dark elf heritage, she can see quite well in the dark, and has eyesight and hearing far sharper than the human norm. But her most impressive power is with the elvish longbow.

Back home, Amayultare was the best archer in her House. But as even the least of elven archers can put most humans to shame, this

artwork by Erica Giroto

means Amayultare is virtually unmatched in her skill with the bow among men. She is so accurate with her Elvish longbow she can fire arrows into gaps in armor, hit specific points of the body to inflict painful wounds, fire arrows two and three at a time, and if given a moment to prepare herself, hit a target at almost any range. Even with more mundane human bows she is still capable of impressive feats of archery (*i.e.* Her Multipower can be used only with her Elvish longbow, while her Martial Arts maneuvers can be used with both her Multipower *and* any normal bow she may find.).

Amayultare prefers to strike from range, hitting her foes before they even have a chance to see her. Her ability to see in the dark and her sense of balance means she will often attack at night while hidden in the branches of a tree or some similar location. Unarmored targets will be hit with a Basic Shot or a Vitals Shot, while anyone in armor will be hit with her Armor Piercing attack. If pressed, Amayultare will flee, counting on her speed and agility to make her escape.

Campaign Use: Amayultare is meant to represent the classic anime dark elf. She is beautiful, haughty, and dangerous. Her skill with the bow puts her firmly in the realm of “epic fantasy,” and she is meant for high-powered fantasy games where characters are capable of impressive physical and magical feats (such as seen in many anime). In a campaign she works best as an enigmatic mercenary who does and goes where she pleases. She doesn’t even have to be an assassin, but can also sell her services as a bounty hunter or even a huntress of beasts and monsters.

To make Amayultare more powerful, increase her STR to 15, her DEX to 23, and make her bow a 2d6 RKA. Make her plate armor all DEF 8, and give her +4 with her Multipower, +2 with Bows, and +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat (you can even add some spells if desired). To make Amayultare less powerful, eliminate her Multipower, and simply arm her with a basic elvish longbow (1 ½d6 RKA). You can also remove her Incredible Balance and Silent Movement powers to make her more in line with normal humans.

Amayultare will Hunt PC heroes if paid to, otherwise she will ignore them (if human), or avoid them (if elven). She might Hunt a hero who insults her or otherwise offends her sense of pride.

Appearance: Amayultare stands 5’5” with the lithe and supple build so typical of elves. Her skin is a warm shade of brown and her eyes are a pale ice blue, while her waist-length hair is silvery-white. As with all elves, her facial features are narrow, while her ears are very long and leaf-shaped, tapering to a sharp point.

Amayultare wears a long sleeved knee-length white tunic with gold trim, slit up the sides and over the hip to facilitate movement. Over this she wears a blued-steel breastplate and paldrons, etched with silver tracery. Matching vambraces are strapped to her forearms. On her legs, Amayultare wears knee-high leather boots, over which she fastens plate greaves, leaving only her thighs bare. Around her waist is her swordbelt, which supports her rapier on her left hip and her quiver on her right. Next to the rapier hangs a large pouch, in which she keeps money and other valuables.

Amayultare



Amayultare

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	100 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1]
21	DEX	33	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
16	CON	12	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 14-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
18	COM	4	13-	
6	PD	3		Total: 13 PD (7 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 13 ED (7 rED)
4	SPD	9		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
40	END	4		
25	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 92

Movement:	Running:	8"/16"
	Flight:	8"/16"
	Leaping:	8"/16"
	Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
32	<i>Læva Techniques:</i> Multipower, 37-point reserve, 24 Recoverable Charges (+¾); All OAF (Elvish Longbow; -1)[24rc]	
1u	1) <i>Basic Shot:</i> RKA 1 ½d6	
1u	2) <i>Hitting The Weak Spot:</i> RKA 1 ½d6, Armor Piercing (+½); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	
1u	3) <i>Rapid Fire:</i> RKA 1 ½d6, Autofire (3 shots; +¼); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	
1u	4) <i>Vitals Shot:</i> RKA 1 ½d6, +2 Increased Stun Modifier (+½); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	
1u	5) <i>Distance Shot:</i> RKA 1 ½d6, No Range Modifier (+½); Extra Time (Delayed Phase; -¼)	

Martial Arts: Læva (Elvish Archery)

	Mnvr	OCV	DCV	Rng	Notes
4	Basic Shot	+0	+0	+2	Weapon +2DC Strike
4	Disarm	+0	+0	+0	28 STR Disarm
5	Distance Shot	+0	-2	+6	Weapon Strike; +1 Segment
5	Far Shot	+1	-1	+4	Weapon Strike
5	Offensive Shot	-1	-1	+0	Weapon +4 DC Strike
4	Quick Shot	+1	+0	+0	Weapon +2 DC Strike
0	Use Art With Bows				

- 17 *Two-Handed Rapier:* HKA 1d6+1 (2d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1) **plus** +1 OCV; OAF (-1)
- 8 *Breastplate:* Armor (7 PD/7 ED); Activation Roll 11- or Locations 9-13 (-1), OIF (-½)
- 7 *Plate Vambraces And Greaves:* Armor (6 PD/6 ED), Activation Roll 11- or Locations 7 and 15-18 (-1); OIF (-½)
- 11 *Incredible Balance:* Flight 8"; Only If In Contact With A Level Surface (-½) 2
- 6 *Quick Movement:* Leaping +6" (4" upward, 8" forward) 1
- 4 *Quick Movement:* Running +2" (8" total) 2
- 6 *Elvish Senses:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups 0
- 8 *Silent Movement:* Invisible To Hearing Group (+½) and Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) for up to 8" of Running 0
- 4 *Long Lived:* Life Support (Longevity: ages at one-fourth normal rate) 0
- 5 *At Home In The Dark:* Nightvision 0

Talents

- 6 *Nimble Fingers:* Ambidexterity (-1 with Off Hand)
- 3 Environmental Movement (Impeccable Balance)
- 3 Light Sleep

Skills

- 6 +2 with Bows
- 10 +2 with Læva Techniques Multipower
- 3 +1 with Shadowing, Stealth, and Tracking
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 4 Language: The Common Tongue (Idiomatic; [Dark] Elvish native)
- 3 Lockpicking 13-
- 3 PS: Assassin/Bounty Hunter/Huntress 12-
- 3 PS: Fletcher 13-
- 3 Seduction 13-
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 13-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 12-
- 2 TF: Riding Animals
- 3 Tracking 12-
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

Total Powers & Skills Cost:**Total Cost: 300**

DIGITAL HERO #19

150+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Dark Elf (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable; Not Distinctive Among Dark Elves)
- 15 Hunted: Dark Elves (Mo Pow, Capture/Kill) 8-
- 5 Hunted: High Elves (Mo Pow, Watching) 8-
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Sense Of Pride And Arrogance (Common, Moderate)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Trusts In No One But Herself (Very Common, Total)
- 10 Reputation: Dark Elf (sneaky, underhanded, and not to be trusted) 11-
- 15 Social Limitation: Minority (among humans)/Outcast (among elves) (Very Frequently, Minor)
- 45 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 300

THE DRAGON: AUGUST LONG

Amber Long's father is August Long, a fairly well-known doctor in the Malibu area. He's tall, handsome, dark-haired and dark-eyed, in excellent physical shape, and married to an equally tall and beautiful blonde-haired actress. He's also well over 700 years old...

What most people don't know is that August Long is a *kioh-lung*, or Chinese dragon. He first came to America in the mid-1800s, following the flood of Chinese immigrants who were shipped over to labor on the railroads. He lived and worked among them as a doctor and as a protector, enforcing his own brand of justice on those individuals (both Chinese and American) who would abuse and take advantage of his fellow immigrants. Eventually, he helped found Chinatown in San Francisco and ended up settling down in his newfound homeland. By the time he thought about returning to the land of his birth, the Communists had taken over, turning China into a place no dragon could call home.

As he's been in America for well over 150 years, August has married before --



Amber Long

Background/History: As the daughter of a Chinese dragon (albeit one in human form) and a blonde and blue-eyed Hollywood actress, Amber was destined for an interesting childhood. She grew up tall and strong, learned the art of kung fu from her father and how to surf from her mother. Her ability to control the weather came naturally; having the ability to make any day a sunny one made her rather popular with the other kids, even if Amber's eyes had vertical, snakelike pupils. Anyone who made the mistake of teasing her about her eyes usually ended up tossed into a fence by a freak gust of wind (if they were lucky), or sent home with blacked eyes and a bloody nose.

As she grew older, Amber managed to rein in some of her temper, settling more for cutting down opponents with words rather than physical force. Training with her father also helped, and she grew interested in medicine and helping (rather than hurting) people. Of course, every now and then, a good right cross still managed to work wonders.

Upon graduating high school, Amber was given the option to attend the world-renowned Shugysha Daigaku, better known in the West as "Student Warrior University." The chance to train with some of the best martial artists in the world was too good to pass up, and Amber was more than willing to go. She has since gone on to become one of Shugysha's top students, both academically and martially. She also works as one of the school's nurses, applying her medical training to helping heal the various martial arts-related injuries that are a constant feature of life at Shugysha Daigaku.

Personality/Motivation: August Long is prone to say his daughter suffers from an excess of her *yin* nature, and in many ways he's right. Although Amber isn't evil or malicious by any stretch of the imagination, she does have a strong independent streak and enjoys going her own way. However, she does mean well, and her father tends to overlook her more outrageous actions (such as her often questionable choice in clothes) figuring she'll grow out of it in time and find a way to balance the inner demands of her *yin* and *yang*.

Amber herself knows that her rather unusual parentage (not to mention her unmistakable appearance) means she'll never have a normal life, so why not make the best of it? She likes living life to the fullest and loves to dance, surf, swim, and otherwise make the most of her college years. She knows they won't last and figures that now is her one chance to truly have some fun before settling down. But life isn't all fun and games, and Amber does have her serious side. She has a strong interest in medicine,

stemming from her father's lessons in acupuncture, herbary, and his stories of the great hero Wong Fei Hong. In some ways she wants to become a modern Fei Hong herself, combining ancient Chinese medicines with more modern practices in order to better help people, all the while using her martial skills to help the downtrodden and oppressed. (No one ever said Amber's worldview was perfectly in synch with everyone else's.)

Quote: "Naturally I look good in a bikini – years of kung fu training will do that for you. Of course that also means I can kick your tail from one end of the island to the other."

Powers/Tactics: Amber's unique heritage is responsible for her superhuman levels of strength, agility, and endurance, as well as her physical beauty. It has also granted her some control over the weather, allowing her to summon (or remove) rainstorms at will, call down bolts of lightning, generate deafening crashes of thunder, or produce strong winds. She is also quite at home in the water, able to move as freely when submerged as she can on land. When fighting she tends to rely just on her kung fu skills, as her more supernatural abilities require far more effort and time than she can easily afford to expend in the average martial arts battle. In certain situations, such as being outnumbered, or if lives are at stake, she will use her powers, often by summoning a bolt of lightning to strike the most powerful foe she can find and hoping such a display (defined as a PRE attack) will break the will of the rest of her enemies. If fighting with allies, she may hang back, using her powers to support her teammates, especially if vastly outnumbered or if fighting powerful and/or supernatural foes.

In combat Amber's tactics are fairly basic: get in close and use her superior strength to put the opponent down. She possesses a fairly comprehensive repertoire of martial arts maneuvers and is capable of using them to great effect. Usually she will Block and then Punch, switching to Kicks if she thinks she can surprise her foe or if he's been Stunned. A Stunned foe may also be subject to a Legsweep, or Joint Lock followed by a devastating Dragon's Claw. Although she doesn't normally carry weapons, Amber is trained in the use of the staff and won't hesitate to arm herself if the situation warrants it.

As she is not a full-blooded *kioh-lung*, Amber's control over her weather manipulation abilities isn't absolute. Any use of her powers creates quite visible and spectacular weather patterns, albeit brief and highly localized ones. As these patterns (such as swirling clouds, flashes of light, low rumblings, and so on) occur high in the sky, it is quite easy to find Amber once she starts using her abilities. In addition anyone with

Amber Long



although this is the first time he's wed a Westerner -- and has other children besides Amber (although not many). Amber, interestingly enough, seems to have more power than any of her siblings, a fact that doesn't sit well with some of them. Fights have happened before, regardless of August's attempts to mediate disputes.

August Long's character sheet should be based off of the write-up for a *kioh-lung* seen in the *HERO System Asian Bestiary*. His human form should be roughly 500 points, with powers and characteristics similar to Amber's (albeit on a greater level), extensive knowledge of the martial arts (such as Kung Fu and Tai Ch'i Ch'uan), excellent medical skills, and a limited form of weather control.

Linda Long, Amber's mother, combines physical beauty with a keen mind. Not only is she an actress and model, but also practices the martial arts (in her case Hsing-I and Tai Ch'i -- which is how she met August), and is involved with various physical fitness programs for children in both California and the United States. Anyone expecting Linda to be just another "bubble-

headed blonde Malibu beach bunny" is going to be sadly mistaken.

Amber Long

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	1600 kg; 6d6 HTH [3]
21	DEX	33	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
21	CON	22	13-	
12	BODY	4	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll: 12-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
30	COM	10	15-	
12	PD	6		Total: 12 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	9		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	0		
42	END	0		
38	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 136

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 12"/24"
Swimming: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
40	<i>Daughter Of The Dragon:</i> Multipower, 90-point reserve; All Extra Time (Extra Phase; -3/4), Incantations (-1/4), Visible (-1/4)	
3u	1) <i>Call Lightning:</i> EB 12d6, Indirect (always comes from the sky; +1/4); Extra Time (Extra Phase; -3/4), Incantations (-1/4), Visible (-1/4)	7
3u	2) <i>Crash Of Thunder:</i> Hearing Group Flash 8d6, Explosion (+1/2); Incantations (-1/4); Extra Time (Extra Phase; -3/4), Incantations (-1/4), Visible (-1/4)	6
3u	3) <i>Strong Winds:</i> TK (30 STR), Area Of Effect (9" Cone; +1); Affects All Parts Of Target (-1/4), Extra Time (Extra Phase; -3/4), Incantations (-1/4), No Range (-1/2), Visible (-1/4)	9

Martial Arts: Shaolin Dragon Kung Fu

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	50 STR Disarm
4 Dragon Claw	+0	+0	12d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
4 Escape	+0	+0	55 STR versus Grabs
3 Joint Lock/Grab		-1	-1 Grab Two Limbs, 50 STR for holding on
5 Kick	-2	+1	12d6 Strike
3 Legsweep	+2	-1	9d6 Strike; Target Falls
4 Punch	+0	+2	10d6 Strike
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)		
1	Use Art With Staff		

- 5 *Daughter Of The Dragon:* Life Support
(Longevity: Immortality) 0
- 1 *At Home In The Water:* Life Support
(Extended Breathing: 1 END per Turn) 0
- 6 *Those Legs Go All The Way Up!:*
Running +3" (9" total) 2
- 6 *And They're Strong Too!:* Leaping +6"
(12" forward, 6" upward) 1
- 3 *Affinity For Water:* Swimming +3" (6"
Total) 1
- 22 *Summon/Dispel Rain:* Change
Environment 16" radius, -1 to Sight and
Hearing Group PER Rolls, Megascale
(1" = 1 km; +1/4), Reduced Endurance (0
END; +1/2), Vary Environment
(create/stop rain; +1/4); Extra Time
(Extra Phase; -1/2), Incantations (-1/4), No
Range (-1/2), Visible (-1/4) 0
- 2 *She Has Her Father's Eyes:* +2 PER
With Normal Sight

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Doctor's License

Talents

- 3 Ambidexterity (Off Hand penalty of -2)
- 3 *At Home In The Water:* Environmental
Movement: Aquatic Movement (no
penalties while in water)

Skills

- 10 +2 with Hand-To-Hand
- 4 +2 OCV with Call Lightning
- 10 *Not Just Another Pretty Face:* +2 with
Intellect Skills
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 1 Bureaucratics 8-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 3 Gambling (Go, Mahjongg) 12-
- 3 Paramedic 12-
- 1 PS: Doctor 8-
- 3 Power: Storm Magic 12-
- 3 Seduction 15-
- 2 SS: Biology 11-
- 4 TF: Jetski, SCUBA, Surfboard,
Windsurfing
- 2 WF: Common Martial Melee Weapons
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Chinese Healing 12-
- 2 2) KS: Chinese Mythology 12-
- 2 3) KS: Chinese Philosophy 12-
- 2 4) KS: How To Look Good For Any
Occasion 12-
- 1 5) KS: Martial World 11-
- 2 6) KS: Medicine 12-
- 1 7) KS: Shaolin Kung Fu 11-
- 1 8) KS: Supernatural And Occult World 11-
- 2 9) KS: Who's Who On Campus 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 214

Total Cost: 350

DIGITAL HERO #19

200+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Bright Green Eyes With Vertical Pupils (Easily Concealable; Noticed And Recognized)
- 15 Distinctive Features: Incredibly Beautiful (Concealable With Difficulty; Causes Major Reaction [desire])
- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Always Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
- 10 Enraged: If her looks, skills, or parents are insulted (Uncommon), go 8-, recover 11-
- 5 Hunted: Assorted Magicians, Occult Experts, And Supernatural Beings 8- (Mo Pow, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Numerous would-be boyfriends 14- (Less Pow, Mild)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Free-spirited And Independent (Very Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence In Her Physical Abilities (Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: incredibly sexy school nurse, 14- (Limited Group, students at Shugysha Daigaku)
- 10 Social Limitation: Famous (on campus) (Frequently, Minor)
- 50 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 350

the ability to sense *ch'i* or magical energy will easily detect her (yet another reason she isn't wild about using her powers unless she really needs to).

Campaign Use: Just about every video fighting game in existence has its designated "sex pot" character, and in the Shugysha Daigaku setting Amber is it. As an upperclassman (Amber is a Junior), she can be used as an occasional contact in the medical department (a good place for PCs to first meet her when one is brought in after a fight) or as a part-time ally of the heroes. She could even serve as a potential romantic interest for a male PC, provided he was flamboyantly skilled enough in the martial arts to catch her eye.

To make Amber more powerful remove the Extra Time limitation from her powers This will allow her to create various weather effects almost instantly, and will give her a great deal more flexibility with her powers. If you don't want to do that, then increase her DEX, CON, and SPD, add another Damage Class, and give her more combat skill levels. If she's too powerful for your campaign drop her DEX and CON to 18, remove her Damage Classes, and remove her +2 OCV with Call Lightning.

Amber doesn't bother to Hunt anyone. She doesn't see the point. However, she will respond if "called out" and takes a dim view of anyone who makes disparaging comments about her looks, her skill, or her parents.

Appearance: Amber stands a long-legged six foot even, with skin a sun-burnished bronze and an ankle-length fall of blonde hair. Her eyes are bright green with vertical pupils, a sight some find a touch unsettling, thus her penchant for sunglasses. Her physique is a well-balanced combination of athletic fitness and buxom curves, with the end result being almost physical perfection. (The merest rumor Amber is going swimming is enough to start a majority of the male students stampeding to the beach!) She is very much a "clothes horse" and has a bewildering variety of outfits, ranging from skintight silken cheongsams to loose tee-shirts and shorts combinations. If called out for a fight, she wears a fairly formfitting knee-length long-sleeved tunic/coat with a high-collar and a circular cutout over the center of her chest, a sash wrapped tight around her waist, trousers gathered at the ankle, socks, and slippers. The coat is bright green with gold trim, the sash is yellow, the trousers darker green, the socks white, and the slippers black.

Shina Arakawa

Background/History: When Admiral Perry and his black ships reached Japan in 1853, it marked the beginning of the end for the Tokugawa Shogunate, even if no one at the time knew it. Within a few years, Japan signed multiple trade treaties with several foreign countries, and the country began to open itself up to outsiders after more than 200 years of self-imposed isolation.

As the Tokugawa Shogunate slowly died, many of the traditional elements of old Japan fell by the wayside. One such element was the samurai class. No longer needed in this new world, they were dismissed from service, as their former lords either fell from power, or became businessmen instead of warlords.

Shina Arakawa is one such masterless samurai. With no lord to serve, she has taken to wandering the land, surviving in these turbulent times through a judicious combination of her wits, her body, and her sword. She knows the era of the samurai is ending, and soon her kind will be obsolete. But Shina is not one to give up easily. She has decided to live out her remaining years as a true samurai, by serving not just a single master, but Japan itself. She will ply her sword in an effort to ensure her nation will be strong enough to meet the challenges of the future.

Although Shina's ambitions are noble ones, she has decided to go about accomplishing them in a rather unusual manner. Instead of leading by example, she is content to wander from town to town, selling her sword to anyone willing to meet her prices. But there is a method to her seeming madness. To Shina, one of the biggest drains on her nation's strength is the abundance of criminals, gamblers, and gangsters. They encourage honest folk to waste their time and money, and lure hardworking farmers and tradesmen into lives of decadence and corruption. So she plays the part of a penniless vagabond *ronin*, living, among the among the *heimin* ("base people") and the *hinin* ("non-persons"), while waging a private war on those she feels to be a cancer eating away at the heart of her beloved Japan.

Personality/Motivation: Life on the road has had an interesting effect on Shina. In many ways, she has virtually become a criminal herself in order to best fight other criminals and gamblers. As she travels about, she tends to stay in cheap and disreputable inns, plays at dice to make a little money (and cheats if she can), and will provoke fights with other gamblers in order to kill one or two as an example of her prowess. Once she's sent a man to the graveyard, Shina will then sit back and wait for either a challenge from the local enforcers or (more likely) a job offer.

Once hired, Shina will then do her best to convince her new master to try and wipe out all other opposition. She will gladly volunteer to do the deed herself, and if given the go ahead will pursue her objectives with ruthless efficiency. In many ways she is quite the merciless killer, dispatching her foes with a distinct lack of compassion.

Those the gamblers and gangsters oppress, however, are a different story. Shina will help them in various and often subtle ways, often secretly passing along large portions of her pay (and she tends to demand exorbitant amounts for her services) to farmers and craftsmen. In some cases, she will even hire herself out to townsfolk to defend them against a particularly brutal gang, asking for nothing more than daily meals in return.

Quote: "The Young Master wants me to send a message to Boss Hideki by killing a few of his men. Someone tell the cooper to get three coffins ready."

Powers/Tactics: Along with a great deal of her dignity, Shina has also abandoned many of the pretenses of what constitutes "proper" samurai combat. One-on-one sword duels may have worked once, but in this more modern age necessity precludes honor. Shina can and will use any means at her disposal to achieve victory, and just as likely to draw her Colt Walker revolver (a massive black-powder pistol) as her sword. In a fight she will usually start by cutting down her foes at range with her revolver, and then drawing her katana to deal with the survivors. In more desperate straits (such as a fight in an inn or bathhouse) she will fight with katana in one hand and revolver in the other, switching to katana and wakizashi once the revolver is empty. If in need of a distraction, she will even go so far as to throw her swords into an opponent, supplementing her lost weapon with one taken from a previously slain foe.

Although her sword work has become unconventional, Shina is still a master of the aptly named Flying Dragon Kenjutsu. She is quite capable of throwing a blinding flurry of blows in the face of a few seconds, and often uses the Dragon Brandishes His Claws technique in one-on-one sword fights. Against a group of foes she will use her Dragon Sweeps His Tail technique to cut down as many attackers as possible, or will use the Dragon Emerges From His Pool to gain herself some breathing room. If hard-pressed and unable to maneuver, she will use Fury Of The Dragon to keep her foes at bay until she's cut enough down to switch tactics. For the most part, Shina prefers go on the offensive in fight, as experience has shown most of her foes to be mediocre swordsmen at best.

Campaign Use: An English-speaking female samurai with a Colt Walker revolver? Isn't that just a bit anachronistic? Of course it is, but here it has been done on purpose. Shina, isn't meant to be a historically accurate representation, but instead is modeled after the kinds of characters seen in such anime and manga as *Blade of the Immortal*, *Ninja Scroll*, and *Raven Tengu Kabuto*. Thus, her Japan is roughly as historically accurate as Sergio Leone's (*The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly*) Old West was. Campaign-wise, Shina makes a good bodyguard for a group of PCs, or can serve as a guide and interpreter for a group of English-speaking PCs. If used at cross-purposes to a group of PCs, you might want to make sure her heroic nature eventually comes out, in order to keep the heroes from simply dismissing her as just another gangster.

By simply removing her revolver, Shina can be used in virtually any period samurai drama, although her origin and motivations might have to be altered a bit for use in earlier time periods. If you wish for Shina to keep her firearm, then make it a single-shot wheellock pistol, and she can then be used in any post-Sengoku era setting and campaign.

At 375 points, Shina is at the top end of the *chambara* scale, and doesn't need to be any more powerful (although you could give her additional maneuvers from Flying Dragon Kenjutsu). To downpower her, give her only 2 levels with Hand-to-Hand, drop her hit location skill levels, the PRE bonus from her pistol, and her Danger Sense.

Shina Arakawa doesn't bother to Hunt heroes, unless they are working for a rival gangster or crime boss.

Appearance: Shina stands 5'6", with a long-legged and well-endowed figure she's fairly proud of. She has brown eyes and long black hair (red in more anime settings) that normally falls past her waist, although she tends to keep it tied up with a length of pale purple silk knotted into a large bow. As befits her personality, she won't hesitate to use her face and figure to her advantage, and is quite willing to use her body to distract or surprise an opponent, or to seduce anyone she wants something from.

As Shina only has one set of clothing, she usually is found wearing a dark blue ankle-length *kimono* covered with scattered gold chrysanthemums, a wide white *obi* decorated with a pattern of red, orange, and yellow maple leaves, and a black *haori* set with the mon (three feathers) of her old clan in gold. Her clothing is all travel-worn and fraying a bit at the edges. When acting as a *yojimbo* she might be dressed differently, especially if her client is well-off and provides her with a change of clothing (usually to show her off to his peers).

When on the road, Shina will have a *shoiko* (shoulder bag) slung over her left shoulder and across her body so it will rest on her right hip, thus allowing for easy access to her swords, which are kept tucked into her *obi*. In the bag she keeps such effects as a little money, her *kiseru* (a Japanese pipe), a small quantity of tobacco, powder, shot, and a mold for making additional rounds for her pistol (which is kept tucked inside the front of her kimono).

Shina Arakawa



江理香

Shina Arakawa

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
25	DEX	45	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
18	CON	16	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
20	COM	5	13-	
6	PD	3		Total: 9 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	REC	2		
36	END	0		
30	STUN	1		

Total Characteristics Cost: 132

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
 Leaping: 3"/6"
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
31	<i>Hiryuu-ryu Sword Techniques:</i> Multipower, 62-point reserve; all OAF (katana; -1)	
1u	1) <i>Dragon Brandishes His Claws:</i> HKA 1½d6 (2d6+1 with STR), Autofire (3 shots; +¼)	3
3u	2) <i>Dragon Emerges From His Pool:</i> HKA 1½d6, Area Of Effect (10" Line; +1); Linked (to Running; -¼) plus Running +6"	7
2u	3) <i>Dragon Sweeps His Tail:</i> HKA 1 ½d6 (2d6 with STR), Area Of Effect (One Hex, Doubled; +¾), Personal Immunity (+¼)	5
2u	4) <i>Fury Of The Dragon:</i> HKA 1½d6, Damage Shield (+½), Continuous (+1); Requires A Successful Attack Roll (-½), Power Stops Working Instantly if The Character Is Stunned Or Knocked Out (-¼), Not When Grabbed (-¼), No STR Bonus (-½)	6
23	<i>Katana:</i> HKA 1½d6 (2½d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), plus Ranged (+½) for HKA 1 ½d6; OAF (-1), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Range Based On STR (-¼)	0/[1]
15	<i>Wakazashi:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1) plus +1 OCV; OAF (-1), plus Ranged (+½) for HKA 1d6; OAF (-1), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Range Based On STR (-¼)	0/[1]
13	<i>Colt Walker Revolver:</i> RKA 2d6, Increased Stun Multiplier (+¼); 6 Charges (-¾), OAF (-1)	[6]

3 *That's A Big Gun:* +10 PRE; Only To
Intimidate (-1), OAF (Colt Walker
Revolver; -1)

**Martial Arts: Hiryuu-ryu Kenjutsu
 (Flying Dragon Kenjutsu)**

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Coiling Dragon Stands Firm	+1	+0	25 STR Bind
5 Dragon Ascends to Heaven	+1	+0	Weapon +v/5; Full Move
5 Dragon Cavorts Among the Clouds	+0	+4	Dodge All Attacks, Abort; Full Move
4 Dragon Denies His Yin Nature	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5 Dragon Expresses His Displeasure	-2	+1	Weapon +4 DC Strike
4 Dragon Returns to the Sea	+2	+0	Weapon +2 DC Strike
4 Dragon Secures His Pearl	-1	+1	25 STR Disarm
Use Art With Blades			

Perks

10 Fringe Benefit: *Kirisutogomen*
 (License to Kill Lower Classes)

Talents

6 *Veteran Chambara Samurai:* Combat
Luck
22 *Genshin:* Danger Sense (out of combat,
sense) 13-

Skills

20 +4 Hand-To-Hand
 4 +2 OCV with Colt Walker Revolver
 8 +4 OCV versus Hit-Location Penalties
 with Swords
 2 AK: Honshu 11-
 3 Analyze Sword Style 13-
 3 Breakfall 14-
 5 Defense Maneuver II
 3 *Iaijutsu:* Fast Draw (Common Melee
Weapons) 14-
 3 *Quick To Get Her Gun Out:* Fast Draw
(Firearms) 14-
 4 Gambling (Board and Dice Games) 13-
 3 High Society 13-
 2 KS: Gamblers, Gambling, And The
Japanese Underworld 11-
 2 KS: *Cha-no-ryu* (Tea Ceremony) 11-
 1 Language: English (Basic)
 1 Language: Japanese (Literacy)
 2 PS: Create Ammunition 11-
 2 PS: Samurai/Yojimbo 11-
 3 Riding 14-
 5 Streetwise 14-
 5 WF: Blades, Off-Hand, Pistol, Thrown
Knife, and Thrown Sword

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 243

Total Cost: 375

200+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable)
- 15 Distinctive Features: Extreme Beauty (Easily Concealable; Major Reaction [lust])
- 15 Hunted: Local Yoriki (police) 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Money: Destitute
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Disdain For Criminals, Gamblers, and Gangsters (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Manipulative and Deceitful (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Overconfident in Her Sword Skills (Very Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: ronin (and thus, a troublemaker), 11-
- 70 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 375



Customizing the Campaign by James Jandebour

Introduction

There are times when even the most flexible game system seems to break down. A specific ability seems impossible to create, or is simply more expensive than it should be. One or more abilities are too powerful for a given setting. The setting, itself, may cause trouble: at first glance, maybe another system would work better, or house rules can be added to better fit the genre.

As might be guessed, these possibilities are not explored in this article.

One solution to these problems simply requires a slightly different approach: rather than changing the character, change the environment he interacts with. By applying the *HERO System*'s character building rules judiciously, a number of new effects become possible, up to and including the game's "feel."

Example: *In order to have faster, deadlier combats for a Fantasy Hero campaign, the GM decides to use many of the optional rules for damage. He also decides that most opponents will have reduced BODY and STUN scores, so they drop easily, and restricts PCs to 10 BODY until they have acquired a certain amount of experience.*

In the same campaign, a group of sun worshippers is completely immune to most heat-based attacks. The GM wishes to allow Heroic level PCs to be members of this religion. Therefore, he requires that all appropriate attacks take the Limitation: Does Not Work Against Targets with Life Support: Safe in Intense Heat, worth a -1/4 Limitation. The Life Support is part of the religion's Package, as well as being bought by some other creatures, such as fire elementals.

Obviously, this is not something the players will be able to do on their own. It is a way for the GM to encourage certain ideas in a campaign. Still, by the GM and the players working things out in cooperation, some perhaps overlooked tools can be found in The Ultimate Gamers' Toolkit.

General Concepts

The basic idea is to design the characters, objects, and if necessary the overall environment of the world to allow the desired effects. This is not as complex as it initially sounds, because most changes will be done to large groups, not individuals. For example, a set of traits that all "Average People" will have only has to be developed one time, not for each character in the

world. Some guidelines will need to be applied on an individual basis, of course, but having them will usually make the character building process easier, not more complicated.

Disadvantages

Perhaps the easiest and best-known way of altering the world with the character building rules is Disadvantages. There are already examples in the published work, such as applying Normal Characteristic Maxima to heroic-level games and the ability for holy people to drive off Undead (*HERO System Bestiary*). These examples suggest two different ways of using Disadvantages to change the world: by applying them universally or applying them to groups.

EVERYMAN DISADVANTAGES

Like Normal Characteristic Maxima, the GM can decide to apply any Disadvantage to the population of the world as a whole. The obvious use is to enforce genre conventions. For example, in the article *Saturday Morning Supers*, by Derek Heimforth (*Digital Hero #11*), all characters have the Physical Limitation: Must Make Soliloquy Each Phase or Lose Action (counted as Physical because there is no way of overcoming it with an EGO Roll).

Example: *A GM wishes to run a campaign based around a secret war taking place between psychically gifted agents, but feels that the Mental Powers are too weak and unreliable for the setting. He decides that everyone has the Vulnerability: 2x Effect from Mental Powers, for no points. Of course, the strong-willed may purchase Mental Defense or even Damage Reduction, but no one can ever actually buy off the Disadvantage.*

GROUP DISADVANTAGES

Disadvantages can also be used to simplify the construction of Powers having an effect on a group. The Undead mentioned earlier are an example of this, as are the demonic forces being driven off by magical wards (also in *HERO System Bestiary*). Either of these things could be done with Powers, but it is simpler to alter the creature to be affected.

ABSOLUTES

Absolute Effects are something of a “flaw” in the *HERO System*. In general, it doesn’t do them well. This, however, is by design: there is supposed to be a counter to everything. Still, sometimes they are desirable for a given campaign.

Powers

Of course, the majority of the *HERO System*’s character creation rules are in designing Powers, and they can be used to greatly alter the game. Mostly, this will be done with guidelines for Powers rather than the Powers themselves, such as Active Point limits. Still, no-cost Powers (including Skills and Characteristics) can certainly be used to alter how the game is played. This is basically what Equipment is, Powers that characters are able to get without game cost.

GUIDELINES

There are a number of possible guidelines that can apply to a campaign. The most common is the Active Point limit, and related to this is an example from *Fantasy Hero*, Absolute Effects. This relies on some form of trusted upper limit for power levels. For example, if the highest amount of STUN possible to inflict in a campaign is 60, then a 60 Defense confers absolute invulnerability. As long as the limit is never exceeded (or if the GM applies the True Absolutes option, again from *Fantasy HERO*), the Power may always be relied upon to function properly.

In a similar manner, Limitations can be required in order to facilitate difficult effects. For example, creatures can be rendered immune to ordinary weapons by putting the Limitation on the weapons, Not Against Magical Creatures. This can be used as another method of creating Absolute Effects, and also for less extreme changes.

Example: *A player asks his GM how to design a poison curing Power he would like for his healer. The GM suggests using Dispel, Any One Poison. However, after looking up the active costs of various poisons, he realizes that this will be too expensive. He imposes a -¼ Limitation: Easy To Dispel on all poisons, so they react to Dispels as though a quarter of their actual cost.*

Finally, when designing the guidelines, disallowing certain abilities is always an option. This can not only simplify the game in more traditional ways (disallowing time travel and precognition, for instance), but can again make it easier to build certain character types. For example, eliminating the Affects Desolid Advantage makes it possible to build truly invulnerable characters with Desolidification. Then, only the character’s specific weakness, decided when the Power is purchased, could harm him, though this weakness should be more common than usual.

EVERYMAN POWERS

No cost Powers are another way to modify the system. The easiest change to make is to expand the equipment lists, possibly adding new types of items. For example, in a High Fantasy campaign, perhaps magic items are so common that they can be created and purchased in much the same way as regular equipment. An alternative is the Equipment Pool, where every character has a number of points which may be assigned to pre-built equipment (basically, a Gadget Pool with no cost).

It is also possible to go still further, and allow personal Powers to be possessed at no cost. In this case, all that is paid for is the ability to access those Powers. The most obvious example is magic, for which *Fantasy HERO* describes the idea well in the Rules Issues section (specifically, Spell Skills and Eligibility Requirements). For instance, Skills could be purchased that allow the character to cast pre-built spells rather than purchasing the spells themselves. This concept can be applied to any setting in which some form of Power is very common throughout the population, or simply to help balance characters with innate abilities that don’t go beyond what normal equipment could provide.

Example: *An alien race in a Star Hero campaign has the ability to fire a brief pulse of energy from a small gland in their “forehead” (in fact, the study of this gland lead to the common blaster). It is about as powerful as a blaster pistol, and has similar Limitation values, so the GM decides to charge a Perquisite: Member of Blaster Race, for 2 points, rather than charging for the Power itself.*

Another possibility is to give everyone in the campaign (or possibly just the PCs and important NPCs) sets of Powers to modify game play. Characters are given free abilities to encourage them to play in certain ways, or to reinforce genre conventions. For example, a comic book style game might provide all characters with the Power, No One Could Have Survived That, which would be Regeneration with the Resurrection option.

Example: *In an Action/Adventure style game, the GM wants to encourage improbably heroic acts. First, he makes sure everyone has Skills and other abilities in line with this concept, and then he gives every character Luck, Standard Effect Option for 9 points, using the second option under that Power. This means they can add or subtract nine points during a game session from any die rolls made, so they can change missed rolls at dramatically incorrect times into successes.*

Campaign Example: Champions

There are a number of ways these ideas can make a superhero game still more “super.” One is to design the world in a way that effectively has a “trump” effect for superpowers. Here is a possible list of rules changes, written up in the way suggested by this article.

1. Smashing Things: All regular items have a Vulnerability: 2x BODY from Superpowers (Very Common).
2. Invulnerability: Ordinary Killing Attacks, such as firearms and knives, are required to take the Standard Effect on the STUN Multiplier, so it is always 2, base. This prevents high defense superheroes from taking STUN from rifles or the larger knives.
3. Strong Mentalists: The average human has a 1½x Vulnerability to Mental Powers.
4. Dodging as a Defense: Area Effect attacks are usually required to be either Selective or Non-Selective, meaning that DCV becomes a very effective defense much of the time. Martial Artists and Speedsters should beware, though – Mental Powers and other specialty attacks are not uncommon.

These modifications allow for certain comic book characters to be built fairly easily, with lower point expenditure than normal. For example, a Brick does not need to have over a 24 Defense in order to bounce bullets (up to RKA 2d6) off of his chest all day, or higher than a 50 STR to demolish a tank. This while still being beatable by supervillains built along similar lines, and without needing huge numbers of dice, which helps to simplify the game a bit.



Piloting Maneuvers by Ben Seeman

Martial Arts for Hotshot Fighter Jocks

The Ultimate Vehicle has a discussion on Vehicle Maneuvers and provides a list of maneuvers that a vehicle operator can perform as well as their effects and the Combat Piloting skill roll penalty for performing the maneuvers. This article goes a step beyond and makes available a mechanism by which players can build their own specialized maneuvers. Instead of simply applying a penalty to Combat Piloting to achieve a specific combat effect, players can decide exactly what the maneuver does, how much it will cost, and what penalties, if any, are to be applied.

Performing Piloting Maneuvers

As described in TUV, Piloting Maneuvers require a preliminary half-move of movement. Depending upon the vessels current velocity, that could be anywhere from 1" up to the full inches of the vessels half-move. Once that half-move is complete, the pilot attempts the maneuver by making a Combat Piloting Roll.

If the roll is successful, the vessel will have the bonuses and penalties dictated by the maneuver. If the maneuver fails, the bonuses are not applied, but the GM may wish to still make any penalties still occur. At any rate, once the vessel has moved and the pilot has made a successful roll, the effects from the maneuver are active.

After a maneuver has been performed, neither the pilot nor the vessel may take any other actions because the Piloting Maneuver counts as an Attack Action. However, if the vessel has a gunner with an un-used action that phase, he may fire after the maneuver has been performed and is granted the bonuses and penalties from the maneuver.

If the maneuver has an FMove element, requiring a Full Move, the bonuses and penalties become active immediately and are in effect throughout the entire Full Move. This allows gunners to perform strafing runs and the like. This is similar to the Move-By and Move-Through Martial Maneuvers where the character can attack while moving and is granted the OCV and DCV modifiers while in motion instead of at the end of the maneuver.

Buying Piloting Maneuvers

Unlike martial arts, pilots do not need to buy a minimum of 10 points worth of Piloting Maneuvers. Whereas martial arts are based on traditions and forms, and therefore are all closely related, fighter pilots develop their own unique techniques and so it doesn't really make sense to require pilots buy a minimum number of maneuvers all belonging to the same tradition. Some pilots may have only one fancy move that they're really good at, and should be allowed to purchase just that maneuver.

By no means does that suggest that maneuvering packages can't be developed. Perhaps there are flight schools in your campaign world that offer pilots the opportunity to learn a specific set of abilities. Any characters graduating from any fighter-training academy would know maneuvers that were similar.

Building Piloting Maneuvers

Piloting maneuvers are constructed in a similar manner to martial arts in the HERO System. See pages 88-97 of the *Ultimate Martial Artist* to see how martial arts are built. The techniques used to build piloting maneuvers are based primarily on what can be found on those pages. Like martial arts, the cost of a Piloting Maneuver should be between 3 and 5 points.

MANEUVER BASIS

<u>Basis</u>	<u>Purpose of Bases</u>
Dodge	The maneuver is meant to perform a defensive action only.
Strike	The maneuver is meant to precede an offensive action by the vessel.

A pilot's options are relatively limited when it comes to the basis of the maneuver. The odds are that he will perform a defensive maneuver, usually providing extra DCV, or an offensive maneuver to improve the chances of the pilot or gunner successfully hitting the enemy or the operations officer's ability to lock on a tractor beam.

HELPFUL ELEMENTS

Element	Description	Maximum
Abort	+1 if the maneuver can be Aborted to	Take Once
Brake	+1 for +5" deceleration	+4
DCV+	+1 per +1 DCV / +1 per additional target	+4/+4
Drift	+2 for every hex line of drift	+6
Evade	+3 break sensor lock	Take Once
FMove	+3 if the maneuver requires a Full Move	Take Once
OCV+	+2 per +1 OCV / +2 for x2 targets	+4/+4
STR+	+1 per +5 STR up to +10, +2 per additional +5 STR	+6
Turn	+1 for -1" Turn Mode	+4
Spin	+2 for additional hex facing	+4

Abort

For a +1 maneuver cost, the pilot can Abort his next phase to this maneuver. The Abort element cannot be used for an offensive maneuver.

Brake

This element allows the pilot to decelerate quicker during a maneuver. +1 for every additional 5" used when calculating deceleration.

DCV +

When a maneuver improves a vessel's defense, apply DCV bonuses. +2 maneuver cost per +1 DCV versus one target vehicle. To increase the number of vehicles the maneuver is active against, add +1 point.

DCV -

A lot of offensive maneuvers may lower a vessel's defenses. In that case, DCV penalties can be applied. -1 maneuver cost per -1 DCV versus all enemies.

Drift

Use this element to allow the vessel to slide in a certain direction while maintaining it's heading. +1 for each +1" of drift.

Follow

Sometimes a pilot will perform a series of complex maneuvers that can only be performed in an explicit sequence. Apply a -3 to the cost of the maneuver if it must follow a specific preceding attack.

RESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS

Element	Description	Maximum
DCV-	-1 per -1 DCV	-2
Follow	-2 if maneuver must follow previous maneuver	Take Once
OCV-	-1 per -1 OCV	-2
Roll-	-1 for -1 to Skill Roll	-6
STR-	-1 for half STR, -2 for no STR	-2

FMove

To allow a fighter to perform strafing maneuvers, the FMove element needs to be applied. This +3 point element requires that the vessel perform a Full Move, but it also the pilot or gunner to attack while moving.

OCV +

Offensive maneuvers generally provide OCV bonuses. +2 maneuver cost for +1 OCV versus 1 target. To double the number of target, add 2 points.

OCV -

When a maneuver has impaired a vessel's targeting accuracy, OCV penalties should be utilized. -1 maneuver cost for -1 OCV versus all enemies

Roll

-1 point for every -1 penalty applied to the pilot's Combat Piloting roll.

STR +

A pilot can position his vessel in such a way to provide bonuses to the power of any tractor beam it is using. +1 maneuver cost for +5 STR up to +10 STR and +2 cost for every +5 STR over +10 STR.

STR -

If a pilot makes an erratic turn, tractor beams can lose their effectiveness. -1 maneuver cost for half STR and -2 for no strength, effectively severing any tractor beam.

Turn

For +1 for -1" Turn Mode allows the pilot to make sharper turns during the maneuver. The new Turn Mode is in effect during the prerequisite Half-Move, so if this element is in the maneuver, make the Combat Piloting roll before performing the maneuver.

Vehicle Elements

For the sake of common sense, pilots need to also buy a Vehicle Element to go along with the maneuvers they have purchased. Like Transport Familiarity, one Vehicle Element (VE) costs 1 Character Point, or 2 Character Points for an entire category (Terran Starships, Mon'dabi Fighters, etc...).

Size Matters

The majority of the maneuvers that can be built in this way should be limited to smaller craft. It is not logical for an *Apocalypse* dreadnaught to be able to perform some of the twists and turns required by these maneuvers without additional difficulty. Vehicles with a Size of 10 or less can perform these maneuvers without any Size penalty.

However, for every point of Size higher than 10, the Combat Piloting roll suffers an additional -2 penalty. The pilot of an *Apocalypse* could attempt to perform a Piloting Maneuver but would have a -34 modifier. Pilots of larger vessels are generally better off performing standard Vehicle Maneuvers (TUV p178) where there are no penalties applied for vehicle size.

Using Piloting Maneuvers

Obviously, these maneuvers apply mostly to a specific type of *Star Hero* game but they can also be used in a modern setting involving fighter jets in a war campaign. These rules can be used sparingly, only when the specifics of a dogfight are important to the outcome of a session, or a whole campaign or series of games can be dedicated to this style of combat by running a "Top Gun" style of campaign. As a GM or player, it's all entirely up to and the sky is the limit.

Example Maneuvers

Below is an example of different ways to build new Piloting Maneuvers.

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Str	Roll	Other
Sweet Lock	½	4	+4	-2	—	-2	—
Shrug	½	5	+0	+4	—	-4	Dodge, Abort
Strafe Run	1	4	+3	+0	—	-5	FMove
Tractor Lock	½	5	+4	-2	+10	-3	
Button Hook	½	4	+2	—	—	-3	Turn (-3")

Sweet Lock and *Shrug* are pretty straightforward. The former is an offensive action that provides OCV bonuses and DCV penalties. The latter is a defensive maneuver that can be Aborted to.

Strafe Run is a Full Move maneuver that gives the vessel an OCV bonus. This allows any other crew members manning weapons or tractor beams to use the bonuses at any point during the ships Full-Move.

Tractor Lock is a maneuver that specializes in providing a better angle for the ships tractor beam to lock on an enemy. This provides better targeting and better beam strength.

The *Button Hook* maneuver is a maneuver that allows a vessel to turn around quickly to face a pursuing enemy. It also provides a bonus to OCV.



Varuna, Ltd. by Allen Varney

“Varuna, the all-seeing or all-enveloping one ... With his thousand eyes he was believed to see all and know all; the secrets of men were not secret to him ... Varuna saw all things, far and near, and ... he could perceive whether truth or falsehood dwelt within a man ... In post-Vedic days, ... he became at last only the god of the sea.”

— Robinson and Wilson,
Myths & Legends of All Nations
(Doubleday, 1950)

In a world of superpowered villains, it makes sense that the Normals would try to find out as much as possible about them.

Varuna, Limited, a wholly-owned non-profit subsidiary of the Unity Foundation of Vancouver, collects vast amounts of data on all known supercriminals. It makes this information available free to all duly-appointed law enforcement officials.

Covertly, and for reasons of its own, Varuna, Ltd., also investigates superheroes. The PCs may only gradually come to learn of Varuna’s dual motive, and their discovery may pose a dilemma.

Background

Varuna, Ltd., is the brainchild of philanthropist Calvin Chatwin, the embodiment of the classic Horatio Alger rags-to-riches story.

He was born Khalid Chatterjee in 1944 in Karachi, India, now Pakistan. Khalid was a Sikh, and Muslim intolerance forced his family to leave the region while he was still a child. Two days after their arrival in New Delhi, a bandit attack left Khalid an orphan. He slept under bridges and in railway stations, and he stole food to survive.

In 1957 the teenaged Khalid escaped to Egypt and from there to England, working passage on a tramp freighter. During the next decade, he gained a rudimentary education doing odd jobs and haunting London libraries. When he applied to emigrate to Canada in 1967, he used a new name, Calvin Chatwin.

Chatwin earned a bachelor’s degree in business in Toronto, then moved to Vancouver just in time for the big real estate boom of 1972-75. He invested wisely, lived unusually cheaply, plowed all his profits back into further investment, and by 1975 the onetime orphan was worth over seven million Canadian dollars. By 1980, with a wife and new family, he was worth \$35 million; after the 1985 depression, \$100 million. He was verging on \$200 million in

1988, when 44-year-old Calvin Chatwin experienced his crisis of conscience.

“How much money does one person need,” he asked, “when so many more live in poverty and fear?” With this thought, he placed most of his fortune in trust. The Chatwin Unity Trust funded a foundation to help Third World citizens and improve the peace in North America.

Note: So far, Chatwin’s history parallels, almost exactly, that of Canadian millionaire Stephen Sander, whose philanthropy has attracted much media attention.

The Origin of Varuna

Here the history of Chatwin diverges from that of Sander, for one year ago Chatwin’s Unity Trust headquarters fell victim to supervillain assault. The villain and motive depend on your campaign; choose an established, independent villain of medium-low power but deep nastiness, such as Blowtorch from the *Conquerors*, *Killers*, and *Crooks* supplement for *Champions*.

This attack, which destroyed the building and injured many employees, almost disillusioned Calvin Chatwin. But rather than abandon Unity, he rebuilt the headquarters, with (note!) no new defenses or additional security arrangements – but this time, he also created Varuna, Ltd.

Named for the Indian deity, and specifically the pre-Vedic incarnation that knew all, Varuna combined state-of-the-art computer equipment with satellite uplinks to the FBI, Interpol, UNTIL, and other major law-enforcement agencies. Over the next months, its small but competent staff compiled one of the world’s largest private databases on supercriminal activities.

Today, Varuna’s staff of 40 people tracks every known supervillain’s movements; tries to discern their motives and goals; and catalogues their powers, abilities, and known weaknesses. Varuna, still headquartered in Vancouver, maintains branch offices in Washington, New York, other major sites of supervillain activity, and your campaign city.

How Heroes Can Use Varuna

Varuna answers data requests from any law enforcement official, free of charge. They may answer other requests, including those of journalists and the general public, but results are unpredictable and usually incur a token fee of at least \$5 to \$10. A Varuna report may include:

- A full dossier of a villain's appearance, fingerprints (where known), publicly-known history, abilities, and weaknesses; known relatives; Hunteds and criminal charges pending; and, in some cases, the villain's particular rivalries or known Psych Lims.
- Videotapes or CD-ROM disks of the villain's public battles, when available.
- A tracking report, updated at least monthly and more often as necessary, listing the villain's whereabouts or, when this is unknown, confirmed sightings of the villain.
- Addresses of expert sources, including NPC hero groups who have fought the villain.

Low priority reports, or those made to the public, omit fingerprints, known relatives, and source addresses.

DETERMINING THE CONTENT

How do you decide what's in a report? Most facts are judgment calls; but if you don't care or can't decide whether a given fact appears in the report, have the PC asking the question make an INT roll. Success means he or she finds the answer.

REPORT TIME

Turnaround time for reports varies; the staff assigns priority according to the immediacy of the "situation" – the all-purpose word for any encounter involving a supervillain. Report times run as follows:

- *Ongoing hostage or life-threatening situations*: report time 1-5 minutes via satellite datalink.
- *Current situations, not life-threatening*: report time as #1, barring priority conflicts; otherwise 5-10 minutes, via telephone lines.
- *Immediate situation aftermaths*: report time 5-10 minutes, usually interspersed amid Varuna's lengthy phone interviews with all available witnesses. Reports via telephone, or via satellite telelink from Varuna's "stringers" – freelance field operatives.
- *Imminent situations or villain threats* (i.e., no current situation but time-sensitive): report time 5-15 minutes, by phone or fax.
- *Other requests by recognized agencies or officially deputized hero groups*: report time 1-12 hours, by fax (preferred) or phone.

- *All other requests*: report time 1-3 days, by mail. These customarily incur the processing fee mentioned above, but Varuna asks this as a courtesy when it sends the report. So the default rate rises quite high, as you may expect.

How Varuna Uses the Heroes

Sounds great, doesn't it? A full and reliable information source for PCs who need exposition in a hurry. No more tedious investigation, brilliant deduction, and roleplaying encounters with interesting NPCs. Yippee.

You know there ought to be a good reason to introduce such a play-deadening agency. Here it is: Varuna's information-gathering applies not only to villains, but (covertly) to superheroes. The local administrator, with motives of his own, uses the "research on your foes' strengths and weaknesses" angle to discern just as much or more about the PCs' strengths and weaknesses.

Heroes should have little reason to suspect Varuna, since the inquiry is so low-key. Say Varuna acquires a videotape of Captain Paragon beating Orgo the Brick with a titanic energy blast. "Now we know Orgo is vulnerable to energy blasts," say Varuna's staffers. If that same tape happens to show Orgo stunning Captain Paragon with a water balloon, why should Captain P. surmise anything untoward?

Gradually Varuna begins using its collected data against the heroes – behind the scenes at first, and finally (almost) openly. A later section discusses the development of Varuna's role during the campaign.

Varuna's Staff and Management

The local branch offers an eclectic bunch: some Jimmy Dugan-type DNPCs, a couple of half-mad scientists, a former Capitol Hill hooker, and a disguised supervillain.

Barry Hogness

Receptionist and dispatcher

STR	10	DEX	9	CON	14	BODY	12
INT	13	EGO	9	PRE	11	COM	8
PD	2	ED	3	SPD	2		
REC	5	END	28	STUN	24		

"That's pronounced HOH-ness, silent 'g,' thank you very much." When the PCs contact Varuna, they'll probably meet Barry first. He's not long on looks (mainly because he's too long on kilograms), but Varuna clients deal mostly by phone and fax. For them, Barry offers a mellow voice and constant awareness of the current disposition of Varuna's resources.

Skills and Talents: Bureaucratics 11-, Computer Programming 12-, Conversation 11-, Systems Operation (phone phreaking) 12-. KS: Law Enforcement Agencies and other appropriate Knowledge and Professional Skills.

Perks: A couple of low-level Contacts among NPC hero groups or law enforcement agencies.

Appearance: An extremely obese young man with a short black beard and no moustache. Though hardly past 20, Barry is already starting to bald. He wears a badly-fitting Big & Tall business suit and a shy look.

Monica Lanwright

Public Liaison

STR	9	DEX	11	CON	10	BODY	10
INT	15	EGO	15	PRE	18	COM	22
PD	2	ED	2	SPD	2		
REC	4	END	20	STUN	20		

When the PCs contact Varuna, Barry Hogness probably sends them right over to Monica, the all-purpose media and hero contact at Varuna. She can explain the organization's goals, purposes, and history; and she'll probably charm every male hero with her flirtatious manner and her knowledge of their deeds and reputations.

Skills and Talents: Bureaucratics 13-, Contortionist 11-, Conversation 13-, Gambling 11-, High Society 13-, KS: Hero Groups, Language: French (Conv.), Language: Spanish (Conv.), Persuasion 13-, Seduction 13-, Streetwise 13-, WF: Handguns, Well Connected. Monica also gives great phone.

Perks: Lots of Contacts and Favors in Washington, though they don't necessarily like to hear from her.

Appearance: A platinum blonde in her late 30s, starting to develop laugh lines but quite attractive and shapely. Large, classy wardrobe.

Background: Boy, that name sounds familiar – wait a minute! Monica Lanwright! Wasn't she that bimbo – er, lady that Senator Owen Dougherty hired as a secretary? Turned out she used his office to run Washington's highest-priced ring of call girls, and Dougherty furnished their, eh, places of employment using HUD funds. Big sex scandal a few years back. Dougherty had to resign, and whatever happened to that Lanwright woman?

Today Monica hopes to resurrect her reputation through public service. She also enjoys hobnobbing with superheroes, who command power almost as great as Senators but without the accompanying perversions.

Heinz Krauskopf and Gunther Krieger

Research fellows at Varuna's labs

STR	10	DEX	10	CON	10	BODY	10
INT	20	EGO	12	PRE	8	COM	8
PD	2	ED	2	SPD	2		
REC	4	END	20	STU	20		

Skills and Talents: Inventor 13-, Electronics 11-, Language: English (Fluent with Accent, German is Native), Scientist; SS: Biochemistry 13-, SS: Genetics 13-, SS: Superhuman Biology 13-. Scholar; miscellaneous pertinent Knowledge Skills.

Appearance: Both Krauskopf and Krieger are dowdy, gray-haired, nearsighted, balding on top, and absent-minded in their wardrobe. One looks like a stretched version of the other; Krauskopf is the tall one.

Background: We all know the plot schematic – outsider goes to scientific establishment with crazy idea, gets rejected, vows revenge – and the refrain: “They called me mad! I’ll show them all! Hahaha!”

These two elderly scientists went just the opposite way. One a respected geneticist in Zurich, the other a West German biochemist, they jointly stumbled on gene factors that appeared to bestow paranormal abilities. But despite their confirmed results, they feared to announce their results to the world. “This can’t be right,” they thought. “We’ll be laughing stocks.”

So years ago Krauskopf and Krieger officially retired from their profession. (They draw income from a basic patent vital to the sterile-gauze industry). The two became something like camp-followers of the newly emerging superhuman community. They’ve tried to study every new superhuman who comes along, but most of these dislike the idea.

Therefore, Krauskopf and Krieger have joined Varuna as research scientists. They devote their efforts to designing techniques and mechanisms to defeat known supercriminals. Their success is up to you; if they’re good, their gadgets can give the PCs the key to success; if they’re bad, they provide comic relief.

The irony here is that though Krauskopf and Krieger haven’t vowed revenge on anybody -- haven’t pried into things humankind was not meant to know -- have no ambition to rule the world -- nevertheless, they are, in fact, nuts. Krauskopf works 19 hours a day and has no life outside his work. Krieger, though genial, occasionally speculates that space aliens may be controlling his mind. Just a couple of crazy guys, you know?

Varuna's Stringers

These Normals report from the field, nationwide, on villain activities. They’re typically young, hungry, and fascinated by superhumans; otherwise, they have little in common. Varuna pays stringers a token fee for each verified report, but none of them are in this for the money. They want the experience, and the thrills of being right at the scene of a major hero/villain clash. (An ideal occupation for DNPCs!)

DIGITAL HERO #19

Calvin Chatwin

Founder and titular head of Varuna

STR	10	DEX	10	CON	13	BODY	10
INT	18	EGO	12	PRE	20	COM	14
PD	2	ED	3	SPD	2		
REC	5	END	32	STUN	22		

The heroes probably have no reason to meet Chatwin, but if they do, Chatwin occasionally visits the campaign city on business. He always stops in at the Varuna offices for some informal morale-boosting.

Skills and Talents: PS: Finance 14-, Bribery 13-, Bureaucratics 13-, Conversation 13-
Language: English (Fluent with Accent, Urdu is Native), Language: Hindi (Fluent with Accent), Streetwise 13-, Survival (New Delhi) 11-.
Chatwin is a Traveler with many Area and City Knowledges.

Perks: Formerly Wealthy, now Well Off.
Lots of Contacts and Favors. If you count loyal employees as Followers, Chatwin has dozens.

Appearance: Short, slender, and dried out, but with a wiry strength and amazing endurance. Dark tan skin; triangular face, clean-shaven (not a devout Sikh, remember); expensive Saville Row suits and dapper appearance. Soft-spoken, with a lilting voice. "Most glad to meet you. Perhaps you can help us today to help others?"

Bill Chowning [real name: William Chow]

Senior administrator, local branch

Look in your handy Secret Identity Index. William Chow is the supervillain Utility. Chow is the normal but brilliant gadgeteer who likes to outfox supers. He specializes in long-range strategy, and he designs gadgets play on a hero's individual weaknesses.

So, what better front than Varuna? Here Chow collects data on his potential or established foes, the PCs. Then he employs Varuna's labs to work up his Vulnerability-punching devices. All the while, Utility tracks his villainous rivals worldwide, with an eye toward desirable targets he can seize himself.

Appearance: In his secret identity, Chow is a thin, youngish-looking man with wiry black hair and a wide, friendly face. His features hold perhaps a touch of the Oriental. What piercing black eyes!

Background: Check out Utility's entry in *Conquerors, Killers, and Crooks*.

Varuna's Offices

Varuna, Ltd. occupies a small middle-altitude office in the city's major skyscraper. White walls, tan carpet, hardwood desks with computer terminals – it all looks nice enough, if generic.

Half a dozen clean-cut employees file reports by computer, stand over fax machines and photocopiers, or consult files from a long row of voluminous filing cabinets. The atmosphere feels energetic but not especially interesting.

Chow/Chowning's private office, at the back of the room, holds a wall safe cleverly hidden behind his desk, which rests flush against the wall (-3 to Concealment rolls to spot). Depending on the stage of the campaign plot below, the safe contains complete dossiers on the PCs. Otherwise, Utility keeps nothing incriminating in the office.

All this puts off the PCs' interests and suspicions, the better to zap them with the devious plot outlined below.

Varuna: The Long-Term Plot

This proceeds through approximately the following phases:

Introduce Varuna. A police captain or UNTIL lieutenant waves a file folder and spouts off knowledgeably about the evil at hand. Arouse the players' curiosity about his or her source. The file folder contains Varuna's address and phone number.

Make Varuna Useful. When the next villain threatens, the heroes can contact Varuna, meet Barry Hogness and Monica Lanwright, learn about Varuna, and gain extensive, accurate information that helps them in the current peril.

Play this low-key, like, "Here's this new plot device that lets me give you clues without a lot of hassle." The players should suspect nothing when Varuna's stringers ask for reports or videotapes of their battles.

If feasible, let a hero's DNPC hire on as a stringer for Varuna. What a good excuse to plunge the dependent into the midst of future battles!

Leave It Like That for a While. The next few adventures establish Varuna as part of the campaign background. Maybe the heroes can stop in at the local branch office to visit the DNPC, but otherwise no one should think twice about it. Meanwhile, Utility is gathering information about the heroes.

Enter: The Plot Device! Utility is meditating a great scheme to overcome an entire superteam at once. To this end, he plans to build a powerful Plot-Device-class gadget that can, for instance, control every PC's mind. Utility must gather several rare components to build this machine.

One of these components – for example, a pure quartz crystal grown in space during a shuttle mission experiment – now becomes available. To distract the PCs from interfering with his theft of the crystal, Utility arranges a diversion through Varuna.

Varuna tells the PCs of some known supervillain team's upcoming plot – a scheme unrelated to any of Utility's plans. Utility arranges for Krauskopf and Krieger to provide the PCs with gadgets attuned to the villain team's weaknesses. The PCs take the gadgets, cream the villains easily, and think all the better of Varuna. Elsewhere, meanwhile, Utility steals the crystal he desires.

(Should the heroes connect these two incidents, Chowning has arranged a convenient fall guy, a stringer with a criminal record. Chow claims that the guy intentionally withheld evidence of Utility's plan. Forged records bear out Chowning's story. Remember, Utility covers all the angles.)

The Big Backstab. After some intervening scenarios designed to put the players off-guard, the other major component of Utility's plot device comes online – say for instance, a secret computer program designed for the Pentagon. This time the PCs are guarding the device themselves.

Utility hires some heavy supervillain muscle. As Bill Chowning at Varuna, he tells the PCs that these villains are conspiring to steal the computer program. He provides the heroes with more gadgets that work against the villains – supposedly.

In fact, during the ensuing battle the gadgets betray the heroes; they just energize the villains, and/or they backfire on the PCs. The bad guys steamroll the good guys, then steal the computer program for Utility.

When the PCs recover, they deduce that something is wrong at Varuna. When they investigate, they run right into Utility's completed plot-device gadget, and they have to fight him at a severe handicap. Of course, the DNPC also manages to fall into danger.

Now What? The aftermath reveals Utility's manipulation of Varuna. Headstrong PCs may go public with the whole story, discrediting Varuna and forcing it to disband.

More circumspect heroes may turn Utility over to authorities, but let Varuna remain functional. This earns Calvin Chatwin's gratitude, and he can become a minor patron for the heroes. In later episodes Varuna should prove less comprehensive, since it lacks Utility's close knowledge of the criminal underworld. But Varuna still works as a convenient source of exposition.

Wolfsbane

by Dave Mattingly

Background/History: Rosalita London was a fitness/action junkie. Cycling, kickboxing, gymnastics, mountain climbing... if it was athletic, she could probably give it a good shot. She had a good relationship with her husband, the police officer, who shared her love of action and roughhousing. When their daughter was born, Lita slowed down on the physical activity in order to stay home and raise their family.

That all changed when her family was attacked by a werewolf! Her husband Jack was killed defending her, and her daughter Mary was left at death's door. Devastated, she stayed with Mary at the hospital. When the girl died eight days later, her grief turned to fury, and she determined to hunt down the werewolf that had taken away everything in her life.

Now, she calls herself Wolfsbane, and dresses in a fur jacket and leather mask. She carries her husband's service pistol, loaded with silver bullets. She normally wears a backpack of various athletic gear, such as climbing equipment, a collapsible hang glider, and bandages. She drives a hardtop Jeep painted to look like a roadkill werewolf has been splattered across the front grille (although she can cover that part up with a car-bra when she's not "on the job," and she likewise changes out her "WF BANE" license plate).

Personality/Motivation: Lita is motivated by one thing: revenge. She would like nothing better than to kill the werewolf that murdered her husband and daughter, and to kill his "pack family" afterwards.

Before the tragedy, Lita was very determined, but generally friendly. Now, however, her demeanor has darkened. Her primary expression has become a grimace; unless she's in costume, where it becomes a scowl.

When she kills a werewolf, she leaves a calling card – a small metal wolf's head (a boyscout kerchief holder) with a nail driven through it.

Powers/Tactics: Lita is a very athletic woman in her late twenties. She can run, leap, and swim better than most, and she's versed in a number of physical skills, including kickboxing.

While in Wolfsbane costume, she wears a fur coat (made of werewolf fur), with leather gloves (made from werewolf skin) with small silver rings on the fingers (to maintain effective punches). She wears a silver choker (to prevent bites), and wears silver-tipped shoes (all the better to kick you with, my dear wolf).

She wields her husband's service revolver, which she has loaded with silver bullets. Her old friend Father Abrams is skilled in silversmithing, and he takes silver and bullets from her, and melts down the silver to coat them.

She also carries a backpack full of sports and survival gear. Anything from flippers to a flare gun to a paintball rifle (with specially ordered silver paint) could be in there, depending on what she thinks she might need for the evening's hunt.

Quote: "Bad puppies like you need to be fixed."

Appearance: Lita is a quarter-Italian woman in her late twenties. She has a slim athletic figure, olive skin, black hair flowing back to her shoulder blades, and brown eyes.

As Wolfsbane, she wears a fur coat, leather gloves with small silver rings, silver-tipped shoes, and a leather mask.

SAMPLE GEAR

- 5 *Bandages:* Healing 2d6; OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0)
- 1 *Compass:* Bump of Direction; OAF (-1)
- 3 *Flare Gun:* Images; Only to Create Light (-1), OAF (-1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Minute (-½)
- 3 *Flashlight:* Images; Only to Create Light (-1), OAF (-1)
- 1 *Flippers:* Swimming +2"; OAF (-1)
- 4 *Hang-Glider:* Gliding 10"; OAF (-1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Hour (-½)
- 1 *Inflatable Life Preserver:* Swimming +1", 0 END (+½), Persistent (+½), Usable By Other (+¼); OAF (-1)
- 2 *Nightscope:* Nightvision; OAF (-1)
- 4 *Paintball Gun:* Cosmetic Transform 2d6, Partial (+½); OAF (-1), 2 Charges (-1½)
- 4 *Pitons:* +3 with Climbing; OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0), Linked to Rope (-½)
- 6 *Roller Blades:* Running +3" (12" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); OAF (-1) **plus** HA +1d6; HA Lim (-½), OAF (-1), Linked to Kick (-¼)
- 5 *Rope:* +3 with Climbing; OAF (-1)
- 5 *SCUBA Tank:* Self-Contained Breathing; OAF (-1), 1 Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Hour (-0)
- 3 *Tent:* Change Environment (Dry, Calm), 0 END (+½), Persistent (+½); OAF (-1), Extra Time: 1 Minute to Set Up (-1)
- 6 *Tent Spikes:* HKA ½d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1), 4 Recoverable Charges when Thrown (-¼), Ranged Limited by STR (-¼)

Wolfsbane

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
12	BOD	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
16	COM	3	12-	
6	PD	3		Total: 10 (5 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 10 (5 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
40	END	0		
30	STN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 100

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
 Leaping: 5"/10"
 Swimming: 3"/6"

Cost	Powers	END
12	<i>Pistol:</i> 1d6+1 RKA, +1 OCV; OAF (-1), 4 Clips of 8 Charges (-0)	[8]
5	<i>Fur Coat:</i> Armor (4 PD/4 ED); OAF (-1), Activation 14- (-½)	0
3	<i>Wolfsbane:</i> +10 PRE; Only versus Werewolves (-1), OAF (-1)	0
18	<i>Athletic/Survival Gear:</i> 15-point VPP; Limited Type (-½), OAF (-1)	var.
6	<i>Athletic:</i> Running +3" (9" Total)	2
2	<i>Athletic:</i> Leaping +2" (5" Total)	1
1	<i>Athletic:</i> Swimming +1" (3" Total)	1

Martial Arts: Kickboxing

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Block	+2	+2	
4 Defensive	+0	+2	6d6
3 Legsweep	+1	+1	4d6, Target Falls
5 Offensive	-2	+1	8d6
4	+1 Damage Class (added in)		

Perks

- 6 Contact: The Athletic World 11- (Organizational)
- 5 Contact: Detective Randall Scott 11- (Husband's Partner, Good Relationship, Access to Resources, Useful Skills)
- 5 Contact: Joshua Kilgore 11- (Dot-Com Friend, Good Relationship, Access to Resources, Useful Skills)
- 4 Contact: Father Jeremy Abrams 11- (Childhood Pastor, Good Relationship, Useful Skills)
- 5 Money: Wealthy

Skills

- 3 +2 versus Range Penalties for Small Arms
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 1 AK: Hudson City Surroundings 8-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 1 CK: Hudson City 8-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 3 Combat Driving 13-
- 3 Contortionist 13-
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 2 KS: The Athletic World 11-
- 1 KS: Kickboxing 8-
- 1 KS: The Occult 8-
- 2 KS: Sports 11-
- 2 KS: Werewolves 11-
- 1 Language: Italian (Basic)
- 3 Navigation (Land, Sea) 12-
- 3 Paramedic 12-
- 1 PS: Sports Therapist 11-
- 3 Riding 13-
- 1 Seduction 8-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 Survival 11-
- 4 TF: SCUBA, Hang-Gliders, Bicycles, Common Watercraft
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Bows

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 150**Total Cost: 250****150+ Disadvantages**

- 5 Dependence: Anti-Depressant (-1d6 PRE and EGO per Day)
- 15 Enraged: when Fighting Werewolves (Uncommon, go 11-, rec 11-)
- 15 Hunted: Werewolf Master 8- (Mo Pow)
- 10 Hunted: Police 8- (As Pow, NCI, Mild)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Adventure Seeker (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Grieves for Family (Uncommon, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Hunting Werewolves (Common, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: Dangerous Vigilante 8-
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID

Total Disadvantage Points: 250

Wolfsbane



The Craftsman by Dave Mattingly

Background/History: Noah Carpenter has a knack for do-it-yourself projects. He always has.

So, when his mother was run over when a drive-by shooting car was fleeing the pursuing rival gang, and the corrupt police had accepted too many bribes from both of the gang in question to investigate, he took matters into his own hands.

Burning with a cold fury, he swore to make the criminals (and that term included the cops) pay for what they'd done.

Personality/Motivation: The Craftsman is a hands-on kind of crimefighter. He believes that the only way to ensure justice is to take the fight to the streets himself, and he doesn't mind fighting dirty enough to see the bad guys fall to their own devices.

He takes pride in his work, and won't do a job unless he can do it right. He does realize, though, that at times, doing the job right means leaving his own work in ruins, like if he needs to set a trap that will collapse on itself (and its victim).

His philosophy of "safety first" has saved him considerable trouble, but it also acts as a signature habit, which sometimes endangers his secret identity.

Quote: "You want to avenge a crime, you gotta do it yourself."

Powers/Tactics: The Craftsman has a variety of home improvement gadgets, including a toolbelt of his most commonly used tools, and a toolbox for everything else.

For GMs that don't like multipowers with too many slots, the points from his toolbelt reserve slots can go into his VPP, by adding the No Skill Roll and No Time Advantages to the Control Cost. This would allow him to pull out whatever he needs at the time.

It can be argued that his duct tape and 40-ft cord toolbelt slots could be written up with a lot more versatility (what gamer couldn't find more than a hundred uses for tape and rope?), and if you need them to be more rigidly defined for your game, they can be pulled out of the toolbox VPP easily enough.

The perfect tool in his toolbelt is there to represent the variety of benefits that can be gained from being properly equipped. Additional leverage or lifting capacity (extra STR), additional accuracy or flexibility (extra DEX), measurement or calculating power (extra INT), etc.

The skill roll on his toolbox represents his preparation and forethought for stocking exactly what he'd need.

His base, The Shed, contains a stockpile of raw materials and additional tools. It is considered to be a laboratory/workbench for his PS: Handyman skill.

His Analyze Construction skill is normally used to find weak spots in enemy bases and foci, as well as to bolster his own projects against such attempts.

Campaign Use: The Craftsman is intended for a *Dark Champions* game. There, he can act as a fixer/supplier for the PCs, or as a potential foil, by stepping too far over the vigilante line.

To increase his power level, strengthen his armor, raise the points in his toolbelt and toolbox, give him some construction-related vehicles (like maybe a souped-up bulldozer), and add some combat levels. To lower his power level, lose the toolbox and levels, and lower his stats to 13s.

Appearance: Noah is a white man in his late 20s. He's 5'11" and a lean 140 pounds. His hair is brown, his eyes are blue, and his fingernails are perpetually black from working with his hands all day.

As the Craftsman, he wears tinted safety goggles to disguise his appearance, Kevlar coveralls, a hardhat, and work boots and work gloves. He wears a well-stocked toolbelt around his waist, and normally carries a metal toolbox with a variety of specialty tools inside.

The Craftsman

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 10 PD (5 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 10 ED (5 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
40	END	5		
40	STUN	10		

Total Characteristics Cost: 96

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
 Leaping: 2"/4"
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Toolbelt:</i> Multipower, 30-point Reserve; OIF (-½)	0
1u	<i>Hammer, Wrench, Crowbar:</i> HA +3d6 (6d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); HA Lim (-1), OAF (-1)	0/1
1u	<i>Nail Gun:</i> RKA 1d6, Autofire (3 Shots, +¼), 30 Charges (+¼), Penetrating (+½); OAF (-1)	[30]
1u	<i>Drill:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), 2x Penetrating (+1); OAF (-1)	3/4
1u	<i>Welding Torch:</i> RKA ½d6, Continuous (+1), 250 Charges (+1); No Range (-½), OAF (-1)	[250]
1u	<i>Tacks, Nails, Caltrops:</i> Drain Running 1d6, Area Of Effect (1 Hex, +½), Trigger (Stepped On, +¼); 16 Charges (-0), OAF (-1)	[16]
1u	<i>Sawdust:</i> EB 1d6, No Normal Defense (No Need to Breathe, +1), Area Of Effect (Accurate, +½); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1) plus Flash 3d6 (Sight and Smell), Area Of Effect (Accurate, +½); 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1)	[4]
1u	<i>Duct Tape:</i> Entangle 2 DEF 4 BODY; Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), 16 Charges (-0), OAF (-1)	[16]
1u	<i>40-ft Cord:</i> Stretching 6"; 4 Recoverable Charges (-½); OAF (-1)	[4]
1u	<i>The Perfect Tool:</i> Succor 3d6 (Any one Physical Characteristic, +¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Variable Effect (Any Tool, +¼); Only to Assist in Handyman Task (-1), OAF (-1)	0
1u	<i>Oil, Grease:</i> Change Environment (slippery), 2" Radius, -3 DEX Rolls; 4 Charges (-1), OAF (-1)	[4]

36	<i>Toolbox:</i> VPP, 30-point Reserve (Use <i>Power Skill</i> to Change); OAF (-1), Only Tools (-½)	var.
8	<i>Protective Apron, Boots, and Gloves:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED); Activation 15- (-½), OIF (-½)	0
7	<i>Hardhat:</i> Armor (10 PD/10 ED); Activation 8- (-2), OAF (-1)	0
5	<i>Safety Goggles:</i> Flash Defense 10; OAF (-1)	0

Perks

10	<i>The Shed:</i> Base (50-points base)
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Skills

9	+3 with Tool Combat
9	+3 with Handyman Skills
3	Analyze Construction 12-
3	Electronics 12-
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	Mechanics 12-
1	Streetwise 8-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Power Skill (Tools) 12-
3	Jack of All Trades
1	PS: Alarm System Installation 12-
1	PS: Builder 12-
1	PS: Contractor 12-
1	PS: Electrician 12-
1	PS: Foreman 12-
1	PS: Handyman 12-
1	PS: Inspector 12-
1	PS: Landscaper 12-
1	PS: Locksmith 12-
1	PS: Mechanic 12-
1	PS: Painter 12-
1	PS: Pest Control 12-
1	PS: Plumber 12-
1	PS: Roofer 12-
1	PS: Security Inspector 12-
1	PS: Tree Removal 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 154**Total Cost: 250**

125+ Disadvantages

- 10 DNPC: Younger Sister Jessica 8- (Normal)
- 15 Hunted: Bulldozer 8- (More Pow, Kill)
- 15 Hunted: The Demolition Crew 8- (More Pow, Kill)
- 10 Hunted: Police 8- (Less Pow, Capture, NCI)
- 20 Normal Characteristic Maxima
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Gruff (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Pride in Work, Never Do a Half-Assed Job (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Safety First (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Vigilante, Works Outside the Law (Uncommon, Strong)
- 5 Reputation: Dangerous Vigilante 8-
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Noah Carpenter) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 250

SAMPLE TOOLS FROM THE CRAFTSMAN'S TOOLBOX

Saw: HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), Continuous (+1); OAF (-1)

Boxcutter: HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); OAF (-1)

Caulk, Grout, Cement: Entangle 4 DEF 2 BODY; Can Only Form Barriers or Seal Cracks (-1); OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0)

Magnet: Telekinesis 5 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Continuous (+1); Only Affects Ferrous Metal (-1), Only to Pull (-1), OAF (-1)

Clamp: Clinging (30 STR), Usable as Attack (+1); Only to Hold Still (-½), OAF (-1)

Tape Measure, Level, Plumb, etc.: Detect Measurement, Distinctive, Variable Special Effect (+¼); OAF (-1)

Ladder: +6 to Climbing Roll; Bulky OAF (-1½)

10-ft Extension Cords: Stretching 3", Usable by Other (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Only Usable by Electrical Devices (-1), Requires Outlet (-1), 4 Recoverable Charges (-½), OAF (-1)

Hydraulic Jack: Stretching 1", Usable as Attack (+1), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Only for Lifting (-½), OAF (-1)

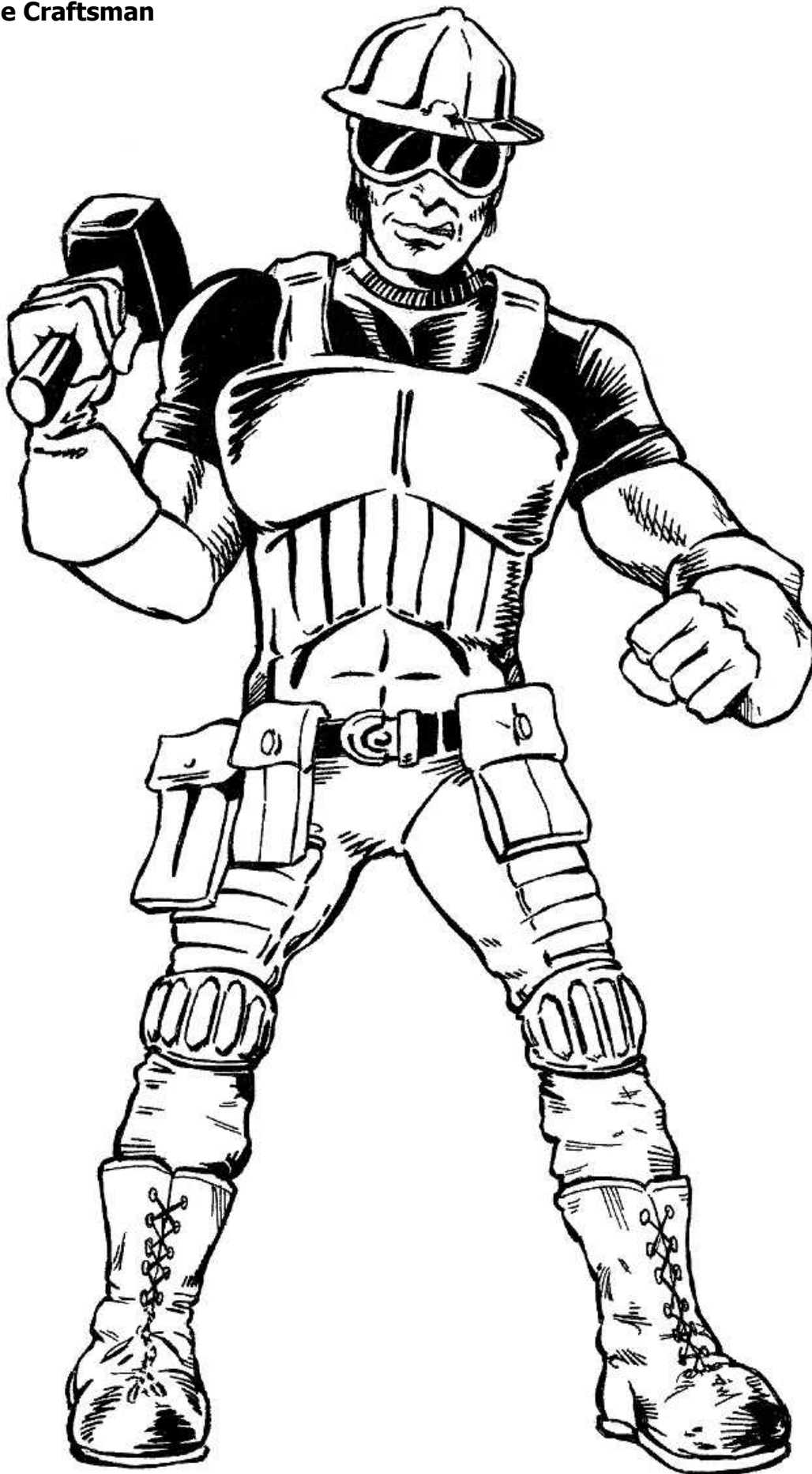
Batteries: Endurance Reserve (200 END, 0 REC), Usable by Other (+¼); Only to Power Electrical Devices (-1), 8 Charges (-½)

Chainsaw: HKA 1d6, Continuous (+1); OAF (-1), Fuel Charge (-0)

Jimmy: Lockpicking Skill +6; OAF (-1)

Stump-B-Gone: RKA 1d6+1, Explosion (+½); OAF (-1), 2 Charges (-1½)

The Craftsman



Albert the Alchemist by Dave Mattingly

Albert Grand

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4 / DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 10 (6 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 10 (6 rED)
2	SPD	-1		Phases: 6, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
25	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 37

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2"/4"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost Powers **END**

- 50 *Alchemy*: Variable Power Pool, 45-point reserve; OAF (-1), Potions Only (-½), Requires a Skill Roll to Brew (-½), Activation 11- (-1) 0

Magical Equipment

- 3 *Alchemical Laboratory*: +5 to Alchemy Skill Rolls; OAF (-1), Bulky (-½) 0
- 3 *Magical Armor*: Armor (6 PD/6 ED); Activation 14- (-½), OAF (Specially treated leather; -1), Independent (-2) 0
- 4 *Sling of Accuracy*: +2 OCV, +2 Range Levels; OAF (-1), Independent (-2) 0

Skills

- 6 +2 with Magical Skills
- 1 AK: Southern Kingdom 8-
- 1 AK: Northern Kingdom 8-
- 5 Alchemy 14-
- 1 Animal Handling 8-
- 1 Cryptography 8-
- 1 High Society 8-
- 3 Invention 13-
- 2 Language: Southern Kingdom
- 3 Magic 13-
- 3 Paramedic 13-
- 2 PS: Alchemist 13-
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Alchemy 13-
- 1 2) KS: Faiths & Pantheons 11-
- 1 3) KS: Healing 11-
- 1 4) KS: Herbs 11-
- 1 5) KS: Medicine 11-
- 2 6) KS: Potions 13-

- 2 Survival 8- (Plains, Jungles)
- 3 Trading 12-
- 2 WF: Common Melee
- 1 WF: Sling

Total Skills & Powers Cost: 112

Total Character Cost: 145

75+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Hairless (Easily Concealable)
- 10 Hunted: Royalty of Neighboring Kingdom 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 5 Physical Limitation: Vegetarian (Infrequent, Slight)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Curiosity (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Optimist (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Rivalry: Zarkoff Platinus, Alchemist at Large (Superior Position)
- 20 Social Limitation: Exiled from Neighboring Kingdom

Total Disadvantage Points: 145

Background: Albert "the Alchemist" Grand is originally from the campaign region, but has spent the last several months in a neighboring kingdom to the south. While there, he lucked into an assignment at the palace.

Things were going great for a while, but then the princess became ill, and Albert's expertise could not save her, despite his assurances. Every now and then, potions go dud, but Albert was certain that the healing potion was still potent – he had mixed it himself just the evening prior. Albert suspects that the potion was tampered with by his rival, Zarkoff, but he has no proof. Albert has been exiled from the southern kingdom, and is just now returning to his home.

Personality/Motivation: Albert's primary motivation at the moment is to find paying work. He took with him what he items could carry, as he quickly got the bum's rush from the south. When he's not sweating his next silver, he's friendly and engaging. When it comes to matters of nature, science, alchemy, and herbs, Albert positively effervesces.

Powers/Tactics: Albert can brew enchanted potions, grind magic dusts, concoct lotions and salves of power, and otherwise create magical items. He wears a specially-treated leather armor that is twice the toughness of normal leather when struck, but is very light and free-flowing. He'd love to once again get his hands on the rare ingredient he needs to reproduce the process. In combat, he uses a magical sling (which he

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purchased from a traveling bunjo man) to hurl his magical bombs or ordinary sling stones.

Appearance: Albert is completely hairless as the result of an alchemical accident early in his career. He is thin, and stands a wiry 5'8". He often carries his sample case with him, which holds a hearty stock of mixtures and ingredients.

Albert's Alchemical Stock

The following items don't cost Albert points; they are part of his pre-brewed potions and sundries from before the campaign starts, and are treated as normal equipment. This is essentially his list of recipes, as well. He can brew more of these potions as necessary.

Potions

- 14 *Acid*: RKA 1d6, Penetrating (+½), Continuous (+1), Trigger (Pour; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); 2 Boostable Charges Continuing for 1 Turn (-1), OAF (Vials; -1), Range Limited by STR (-¼)
- 15 *Alertness*: No Need to Sleep **plus** Lightning Reflexes with All Attacks +2 **plus** Enhanced Perception (All) +2 **plus** Fast Draw, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); 1 Charge Lasting for 8 Hours (+½); OAF (Vial; -1)
- 13 *Antitoxin*: Immunity to Poisons and Diseases, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); 1 Charge Lasting for 1 Hour (-¼), OAF (Vial; -1)
- 9 *Aura of Terror*: Aid 2d6 to PRE, Slow Fade (Hour; +¾), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); Only to Cause Fear (-1), OAF (-1), 1 Charge (-2)
- 12 *Concentrated Water*: Major Transform 1d6 (Air in Water), Cumulative (+½), Trigger (Pour; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (-1), No Range (-½)
- 5 *Flight*: Flight 5", Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vial; -1), 1 Charge Lasting for 5 Minutes (-¾)
- 11 *Glue*: Entangle with 2d6 BODY and 4 DEF, Trigger (Pour; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vial; -1), 1 Charge (-2), Range Limited by STR (-¼)
- 13 *Growth*: Growth (2x Size) **plus** Running +2" **plus** Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) on both, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vial; -1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Minute (-1)
- 9 *Hallucination*: Mental Illusions 6d6, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vial; -1), Random Illusions (-1), 1 Charge (-2)
- 12 *Healing (minor)*: Simplified Healing 2d6, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vial; -1), 8 Charges (-½)
- 13 *Healing (major)*: Heal BODY 3d6, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vial; -1), 2 Charges (-1½)
- 9 *Holy Water*: RKA 1d6, Penetrating (+½), Continuous (+1), Trigger (Pour; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); Only Against Undead (-1½), 4 Boostable Charges Continuing for 1 Turn (-1), OAF (Vials; -1), Range Limited by STR (-¼)
- 12 *Invisibility*: Sight Group Invisibility with Fringe, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 4 Charges Lasting 5 Minutes (-0), Only when Not Attacking (-½)
-1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Minute (-¼)
- 15 *Lethargy*: Drain 1d6 STUN and ½d6 END, Continuous (+1), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 2 Charges Lasting 5 Minutes (-½)
- 14 *Love*: Mind Control 6d6, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 4 Boostable Charges (-¾), Set Effect (Love the First Person You See; -½)
- 13 *Poison (minor)*: EB 2d6, NND (versus Zootoxin Immunity; +1), Does BODY (+1), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 2 Charges Lasting 1 Minute (-¾)
- 13 *Poison (major)*: RKA ½d6, Increased STUN Multiple +4 (+1), Penetrating x2 (+1), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Minute (-¾)
- 10 *Purify*: Dispels 8d6 versus Any One Disease or Poison (+¼), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 1 Charge (-2)
- 12 *Sleep*: EB 2d6, NND (No Need to Sleep; +1), Continuous (+1), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 2 Continuing Charges Lasting 1 Minute (-¾)
- 11 *Strength*: Aid STR 2d6, Delayed Fade Rate (Lose 5 points per 20 Minutes; +¾), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), Self/Drinker Only (-½), 2 Charge (-1½)
- 10 *Suggestibility*: Drain 2d6 EGO, Delayed Return Rate (Regain 5 points per 5 Minutes; +½), Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 1 Charge (-2)
- 20 *True Invisibility*: Sight, Hearing, and Smell Groups Invisibility, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1)
- 13 *Truth*: Mind Control 6d6, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); Set Effect (Tell the Truth; -½), OAF (Vials; -1), 1 Charge (-2)
- 9 *Warning*: Danger Sense (Intuitive) 11-**plus** Lightsleep, Trigger (Drink; +¼), Usable by Other (+¼); OAF (Vials; -1), 2 Charges Lasting 1 Hour (-0)

- 14 *Vision*: Night Vision **plus** Enhanced Perception +4 Sight **plus** Telescopic Vision +4, Trigger (Drink; +1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4); OAF (Vials; -1), 4 Charges Lasting 5 Minutes (-0)

Dusts

- 7 *Bounty*: Minor Transform 3d6 (Seeds into Seeds that Yield Twice the Crops), Trigger (Intermix with Seeds; +1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4); OAF (Small Box; -1), 2 Charges (-1½), Extra Time 1 Day (-4)
- 11 *Tracking*: Tracking Sense (Normal Sight), Discriminatory, Analyze, +10 to Tracking Roll, Trigger (Sprinkle on Footprint; +1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4); OAF (Small Box; -1), Only to Track Footprints (-1), 1 Charge Lasting 1 Hour (-1/4)
- 11 *Summoning*: Force Wall 4 rPD, Hardened (+1/4), Invisible to Non-Magic Senses (+1/2), Affects Desolid (+1/2), Interdimensional (+1/4), Backlash (+1/2), Transparent to Physical and Energy (+1), Trigger (Sprinkle in a Circle; +1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4); OAF (Small Box; -1), Only affects Interdimensional Creatures (-2), 2 Charges Lasting 1 Hour (-0), Restricted Shape (Circle; -1/4)
- 3 *Water Breathing*: Breathe Underwater, Trigger (Snort into Nostrils; +1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4); OAF (Small Box; -1), 1 Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Hour (-0)

Bombs

- 11 *Blindness*: Sight Group Flash 4d6, Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4), Explosion (+1/2); OAF (Throw; -1), Range Limited by STR (-1/4), 2 Charges (-1½)
- 11 *Fire*: RKA 1/2d6, Continuous (+1), Sticky (+1/2), Explosion (+1/2), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Throw; +1/4); OAF (Pouch of Powder; -1), Range Limited by STR (-1/4), 2 Charges Lasting 1 Turn (-1)
- 15 *Sleep*: EB 2d6, NND (No Need to Sleep; +1), Continuous (+1), Explosion (+1/2), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Throw; +1/4); OAF (Pouch of Powder; -1), Range Limited by STR (-1/4), 2 Charges Lasting 1 Minute (-3/4)
- 17 *Stink*: Change Environment in 8 Hex Radius, -2 Smell PER, -1 OCV, -1 DCV, Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Throw; +1/4); OAF (Pouch of Powder; -1), Range Limited by STR (-1/4), 6 Charges Lasting 1 Minute (-0), Explosion (-1/4)
- 12 *Tangler*: Entangle 1d6 BODY 2 DEF, Explosion (2x Area; +3/4), Entangle and Character Both Take Damage (+1/4), Backlash (failed escapes actually entangle the characters further, instead of causing damage; +1/2), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Throw; +1/4); OAF (Pouch of Powder; -1), Range Limited by STR (-1/4), 2 Charges (-1½)

Lotions

- 9 *Accuracy*: +2 OCV, +6 versus Range Mods with Any One Ranged Attack, Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Arrows/Stones/etc. 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), 2 Charges Lasting 5 Hours (-1/4)
- 13 *Invulnerability*: Force Field 25 PD, Hardened (+1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Character or Item 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), 1 Charges Lasting 5 Hours (-1/2)
- 12 *Fire*: RKA 1½d6, Increased STUN Multiple (+1/4), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Arrows/Stones/etc. 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), 6 Charges (-3/4)
- 4 *Light*: Sight Group Images, 4" Radius (+1/2), 6 Charges Lasting 8 Hours (+1), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Arrows/Stones/etc. 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), Only to Create Light (-1)
- 8 *Regeneration*: Simplified Healing 1d6, Can Heal Limbs, Continuous (+1), Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Lost Limbs 5 Minutes (-2), 1 Charge Lasting 5 Minutes (-3/4)
- 10 *Slipperiness*: Telekinesis 20 STR, Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Character or Item 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), 1 Charge Lasting 5 Hours (-0), TK Can Only Be Used to Escape Grabs/Holds (-1), TK Has No Range (-1/2)
- 12 *Toughness*: Force Field (8 PD/8 ED) **plus** Knockback Resistance 4", Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Character or Item 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), 3 Charges Lasting 5 Hours (-0)
- 10 *Weightlessness*: Telekinesis 20 STR, Usable by Other (+1/4), Trigger (Rub On; +1/4); OAF (Lotion; -1), Extra Time to Rub in Lotion on Character or Item 5 Minutes (Preparation time, not Attack time; -1), 1 Charge Lasting 5 Hours (-0), TK Has No Range (-1/2), TK Can Only Be Used to Make Carried Object Lighter (-1)

