STEVEN S. LONG

PREDATORS

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An Enemies Book for *Dark Champions*

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INTRODUCTION

A great hero is nothing without a great bad guy to oppose him — after all, it doesn't take a whole lot of heroic effort to defeat some incompetent fool, or to investigate a criminal "mastermind" who doesn't have the brains to come in out of the rain. But for *Dark Champions* GMs, coming up with a constant stream of cool, evocative, dangerous, exciting adversaries for the PCs can be a major task! Not only are many *Dark Champions* PCs likely to leave their opponents dead instead of in jail, but making one terrorist, assassin, or thief different from those who came before often strains the GM's creativity.

To help keep the time and effort of creating new enemies to a minimum, *Predators* presents nearly a hundred criminals, spies, killers, thieves, and other assorted scum for the GM to use. They range from powerful and influential captains of industry who seem like ordinary, upstanding citizens to most of the world, to drug lords, assassins, cat burglars, conspirators, and beyond. There are even a few "weird" criminals, with strange powers or abilities your PCs may never be able to understand or explain fully.

The backgrounds of these characters tie them into the "Dark Champions Universe" described in *Hudson City* and other books from Hero Games, but you can easily adapt them to your game if you're not using that setting. Just change a few background details, maybe tweak an ability or two, and you've got a new villain for your game.

Similarly, you can re-arrange or revise the enemies in this book to suit your campaign. If you think Blind should work for UMBRA, move him from the "solo" category to the "organization" category. If the characters tend to be too powerful (or too weak), adjust them appropriately — the "Campaign Use" section of each character sheet has suggestions for doing just that, as well as for using the character in your game.

Most of the characters in *Predators* are designed as Powerful Heroic characters, with 100 Character Points plus up to 100 points from Disadvantages. Some have a *lot* more points than that, while some barely exceed 100 points altogether — remember, it's not how many points a character has, but how he spends them, that defines him as a *Dark Champions* character. Sometimes it's not possible to define an enemy properly on 200 points, and it's preferable to build an enemy *right* rather than to follow rigid point restrictions or nebulous concepts of "points efficiency." Enemies, after all, aren't the central focus of the campaign, so when you create them you don't have to worry as much about campaign standards as you do with PCs (who are *always* on center stage).

As an enemies book, *Predators* is designed primarily for use by GMs. If you're not a GM, you may still find it useful as a source of example powers and character ideas, but get the GM's permission to read it. Some GMs prefer to keep the information in this book secret until they reveal it during game play, and may not ever want players to read their enemies' character sheets.

Chapter One of *Predators* focuses on master criminals: fiendish men and women like El Azteca, Michelangelo Strake, Caligula, Speargun, Charlemagne, and Rasputin who are behind the schemes and crimes the characters fight. The PCs may never see some of these people, but they'll definitely hear about them on the streets.

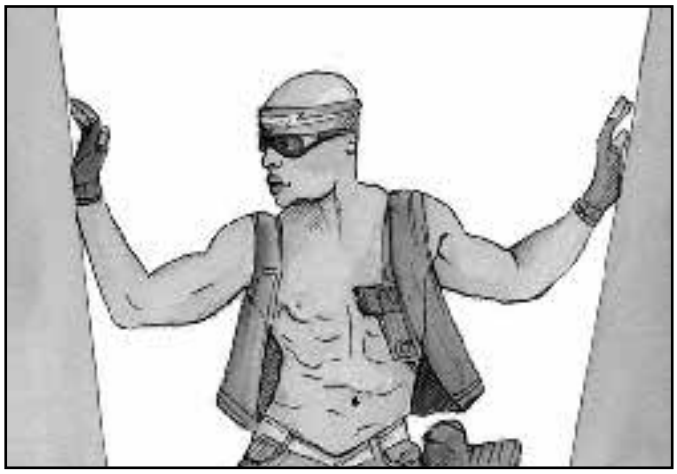
Chapter Two covers organizations: the Arsenal, a powerful team of well-armed mercenaries; the Consortium, a conspiracy that seeks to exploit human contact with aliens for its own benefit; UMBRA, a group of business and military leaders determined to take over the world; the Victory Party, an insidious far right-wing political organization with a dark secret at its heart; and While Earth Burns, an eco-terrorist group. Sometimes even a powerful crimelord isn't enough to oppose the PCs for long, and these organizations give the GM an opponent to set against the PCs that can't be destroyed with a few gunshots.

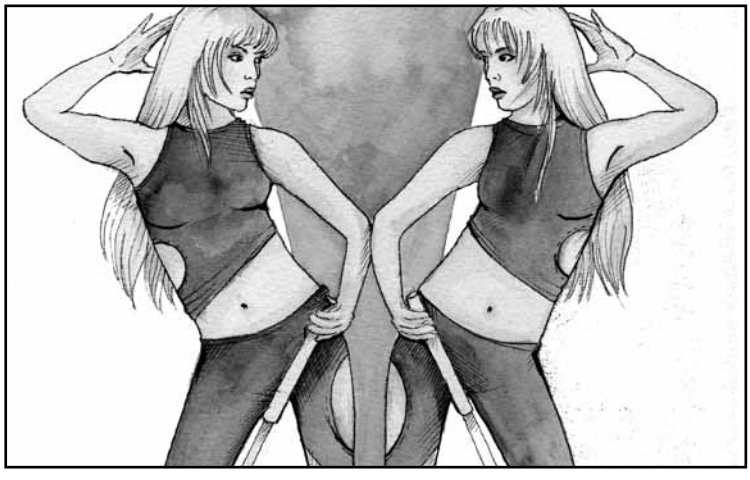
Chapter Three, *Solo Criminals,* features enemies who aren't affiliated with a particular group or who work for themselves as part of the underworld. It includes a wide assortment of twisted, evil, vicious, greedy people like the Black Tarantula, Cerberus, Dr. Grimm, Jackknife, the Kissing Bandit, Andres Panthanatos, Saltpeter Mary, Temptation, and the Varangian — any one of whom could give your PCs fits in the right situation.

Predators concludes with two appendices. The first contains over a dozen generic character sheets for routine adversaries your heroes might encounter: cops, gangstas, thugs, soldiers, terrorists, and more. The second is a master list of the villains appearing in this book and *Hudson City* for quick-reference purposes.

And now it's time to put the PCs to work! The streets are filled with predators, and it's going to take the best hunters out there to protect society from them.

chapter one:





CRIMELORDS

EL AZTECA

EL AZTECA				
Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**Roll**	**Notes**
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
16	CON	12	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
7	PD	4		Total: 10 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	8		
32	END	0		
40	STUN	14	**Total Characteristics Cost: 107**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	**Powers**	**END**
30	*Force Of Personality:* Multipower, 30-point reserve	
1u	1) *Mesmerizing Voice:* +30 PRE; Only To Make Loyalty-/Respect-Based Presence Attacks (-1), Requires An Oratory Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0)	0
1u	2) *One Scary Mother!$&*er:* +15 PRE; Only For Fear-/Intimidation-Based Presence Attacks (-1)	0

Martial Arts: Dirty Infighting

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, +10 STR to Disarm roll
4	Eye Gouge	-1	-1	Sight Group Flash 4d6
4	Kidney Blow	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)
4	Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND(3)
4	Punch/Backhand	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
5	Roundhouse	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
3	Tackle	+0	-1	3d6 +v/5 Strike; You Fall, Target Falls
2	Use Art with Clubs, Blades			

Perks

- 2 Deep Cover (Juan Morcenegos, tequila farmer/distiller)
- 5 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank
- 5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
- 10 Money: Wealthy
- 2 Reputation: generous rich man (among the people near his hacienda) 14-, +2/+2d6
- 1 Reputation: ruthless druglord (among Hudson City Hispanics, law enforcement personnel, and the like) 11-, +1/+1d6
- 2 Reputation: Aztec cult leader (among the Mystic World) 11-, +2/+2d6

Talents

- 6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
- 3 Lightsleep

Skills

- 10 +1 Overall
- 3 Bribery 13-
- 3 Combat Driving 13-
- 3 Concealment 12-
- 3 Deduction 12-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 3 Interrogation 13-
- 3 AK: Latin City 12-
- 5 AK: Northern Mexico 14-
- 2 CK: Hudson City 11-
- 2 CK: Mexico City 11-
- 3 KS: Aztec Civilization And Culture 12-
- 3 KS: Aztec Religion, Theology, And Philosophy 12-
- 2 KS: Narcotics 11-
- 2 KS: Tequila 11-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Steyr AUG	+1	+2	1½d6	1d6	30	12	AF5, FS, 2H
SIG/SAUER P226	+3	+0	2d6+1	1d6-1	15	8	Pen, +1 Fast Draw, customgrips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, PR
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

When he's expecting trouble, El Azteca dons Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-) with ceramic plates on chest, sides, and back (DEF +3, Activation Roll 10-). At other times he may wear light body armor (DEF 3, Activation Roll 11-).

Gear: Silencer for SIG/SAUER P226

3 KS: Voodoo 12-
1 Language: English (basic conversation; Spanish is Native)
1 Language: Nahuatl (basic conversation)
7 Oratory 15-
3 Persuasion 13-
2 PS: Druglord 11-
2 PS: Smuggling 11-
3 Riding 13-
3 Seduction 13-
3 Stealth 13-
6 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Jetskis, SCUBA, Small Planes, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points

28 Equipment Points: 200
55 Vehicle/Base Points: 120
30 Follower/Contact Points: 65
N/A Miscellaneous Points: 2

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 302
Total Cost: 409

100+ Disadvantages

15 Hunted: Mexican Federal Police 8- (As Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: DEA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
20 Psychological Limitation: Ruthless And Amoral (Common, Total)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other druglords; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
224 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 409

Background/History: A few years ago, Mexican and DEA officials were surprised when a minor cartel from Durango began taking on... and destroying... other cartels in the region, then absorbing their people and resources. The leader of the cartel was a mysterious man known as *El Azteca* ("the Aztec"), who'd taken over the cartel in the previous year — apparently from within, and by means as yet unknown.

Soon, even more disturbing reports reached the ears of law enforcement. Informers claimed El Azteca tied his people to him by rituals of blood and obedience — that he was a cult leader as well as a *narcotraficante.* Speaking in terrified whispers, they said he thought of himself as some sort of Aztec holy man or god, and that like the Mexican priests five centuries ago he tore out the hearts of sacrificial victims. Mixed in with this resurrection of the ancient Aztec faith were Voodoo-like rituals.

The authorities have never proven these stories conclusively, but they believe them to be true based on circumstantial evidence. They've repeatedly tried to infiltrate undercover agents into El Azteca's cartel, but have always failed — and the agents themselves have always disappeared, except for one. His corpse was found by the side of a rural road west of Tepehuanes... with a hole in its chest where his heart used to be.

What the authorities do know for certain is this: El Azteca's power in the Mexican underworld has been growing, and it shows no signs of stopping. Cautious, clever, and ruthless, he's avoided many of the pitfalls of personality and greed that have laid other cartel leaders low. In his boldest gamble yet, he's starting to move into Hudson City directly, using a new street gang called Los Toros as his advance force. There may come a time when this mysterious, nigh-untouchable man from Durango controls the Hudson City drug market.

Personality/Motivation: It takes ruthlessness, cleverness, guile, and the will to violence to succeed in the Mexican underworld, and El Azteca has all of those qualities in spades. He can kill or torture without feeling the slightest remorse; many of his underlings think he enjoys inflicting pain, and they're not entirely wrong. He wants money, power, and respect, and he'll do anything to get and keep them. People — whether they're his trusted bodyguards, his lieutenants, the peasants who grow his crops, the women who serve him, or his street dealers in the Pearl City — are just tools for him to use.

The authorities both in Mexico and the United States believe El Azteca considers himself some sort of reincarnation or embodiment of the Aztec emperors — or perhaps even an Aztec god: witness the cult he leads. But they're wrong. El Azteca knows he's just an ordinary man. The cult is a front, a means by which he (a) keeps greater control of his people, (b) inspires some of his followers to obey him with fanatic zeal, and (c) lays the groundwork for an insanity defense, should he ever need one.

Quote: <<"I have need of a blood offering... your blood will do, whether I spill it here or on the altar.">>

EL AZTECA PLOT SEEDS

El Azteca's cult begins to spread through Latin City and other Hispanic neighborhoods in Hudson City... with a corresponding rise in kidnappings and disappearances. The PCs have to track the cult down to its headquarters (an old warehouse on the coast) and stamp it out.

The DEA (or CIA, or some other organization) hires the PCs to infiltrate El Azteca's compound and obtain definitive photographs of him — and, if possible, any evidence regarding the fate of missing DEA agents. But they are *not,* repeat *not,* to engage him or his men in a firefight. Relations are tense right now between Mexico and the United States, and El Azteca has a *lot* of friends in the Mexican government....

The PCs hear that the Los Toros are kidnapping people from Latin City. They don't send ransom notes, and none of their victims are ever heard from again. Could they be shipping them to El Azteca for use as sacrifices?

Powers/Tactics: El Azteca insulates himself from the day-to-day activities of his organization (except for cult rituals) — he gives orders to his lieutenants, and they filter them down through the rest of his people and make sure they're carried out. But if pressed, he can fight viciously. He grew up on the streets of Tijuana, and learned fast and early how to fight. When fists and knives won't do, he usually relies on his favorite Steyr AUG (nicknamed "Marisel") or on a P226 prepared for him by El Escorpión — but even then he's not stupid enough to stay around and fight it out if there's an acceptable escape route available. He pays people to take risks; he doesn't take them himself if he doesn't have to.

Campaign Use: El Azteca fills two dramatic roles in the campaign. First and foremost, he's the outside crimelord trying to force his way into the Hudson City underworld. The PCs might try to stop him before he gets a foothold, or may secretly help him take out some other crimelords before trying to lower the boom on him. Second, he offers you a way to introduce an element of horror or "weirdness" into the campaign because of his cult (see below). You don't have to play up that element if you don't want to, but it does help to set him apart from other druglords.

If you want to make El Azteca tougher, you have two options. First, you can increase his Primary Characteristics a little, and perhaps give him some Extra DCs or Combat Skill Levels. Second, if your campaign features a lot of mysticism or weirdness, you can give him some low-level quasi-mystic powers (such as the ones Brother Namaan and Hecate have; see Chapter Three). For example, maybe by performing a small blood sacrifice (mandatory Side Effect: lose 1 BODY) he can make himself a little stronger (Aid STR 2d6) by calling upon Huitzilopochtli (Aztec god of war), or speak with one recently dead by invoking the help of Mictlantecuhtli (god of death). To weaken him, reduce his Characteristics a little and get rid of his *Force Of Personality* Multipower and/or half of his Martial Maneuvers.

El Azteca rarely Hunts anyone right now because he's devoting his energy and resources to (a) maintaining his cartel and (b) getting a foothold in Hudson City. But if sufficiently angered, he'll seek revenge. In Hudson City itself, there's not much he can do but send out hit squads (though he occasionally visits the city in his alternate identity of Juan Morcenegos, tequila distiller). In Mexico he commands far greater resources and can make PCs' lives a living hell by interfering with them bureaucratically, attacking them constantly, and having officials harass them.

The authorities know little about El Azteca, though they believe his real name is Roberto Alarcon. If he is Alarcon, he has a lengthy record, beginning with petty theft when he was only 10 or 11 years old and escalating all the way up to murders related to cartel activities.

Appearance: El Azteca is Mexican man who's probably in his 40s; he's 5'10" tall and weighs about 170 pounds. He's got a rough, weather-beaten face, and has a black moustache and short, carefully barbered black hair. He normally wears pricey (but not ultra-expensive) men's fashions; he prefers long-sleeved shirts to hide a knife scar that runs down his lower left arm. When officiating at cult ceremonies, he wears robes and a headdress resembling those of Aztec priests, and carries a dagger made from obsidian.

El Azteca's Cartel

El Azteca's cartel isn't different from other Mexican drug cartels in most respects. It has a single leader who surrounds himself with a corps of lieutenants who manage the rest of the organization. The cartel's tentacles stretch from Colombia (where it buys or transships cocaine from the Colombian cartels) to the inner city neighborhoods of America, where the gangs that sell the drugs exist. In Hudson City, El Azteca runs the Los Toros, the newest major street gang in Latin City. If he sells to other gangs outside of Latin City, he does so through Los Toros. He also owns Club Aztec (see *Hudson City,* pages 65, 207).

THE CULT

What *does* set El Azteca's organization apart is its cult aspects, and his role as "high priest" of that cult. The cult venerates the old Aztec gods — Tlaloc, Quetzalcoatl, Tezcatlipoca, Huitzilopochtli, and more — in a sort of Voodoo-like fashion that mixes Aztec theology and symbolism with Catholic practices. On important occasions, the cult engages in acts of human sacrifice in the ancient Aztec tradition, but during most ceremonies the worshippers simply offer their own blood sacrifices by pricking an earlobe or finger and letting the blood drip onto a special piece of paper (which they then burn).

The purpose of the cult isn't to revive the worship of the Aztec pantheon; that's just a convenient front. El Azteca wants to tie his people to him through religious faith as well as fear of reprisal (which they definitely feel, given his penchant for casually murdering people who displease or fail him). El Azteca is an extremely gifted natural speaker with the power to truly impress people when he speaks, and he uses this ability to make the cultists give him their loyalty and obedience (the fact that he lavishes enormous amounts of money on the Durango region doesn't hurt matters, either).

Los Asesinos Abacuanos

The most fanatic members of the cult — the ones who truly believe in the Aztec gods and would unhesitatingly lay down their lives for El Azteca — are known as *asesinos abacuanos.* Roughly speaking, the term translates as "Voodoo assassins." El Azteca uses these followers as weapons against his enemies. When necessary, he performs a special ceremony that bestows upon them the mission of killing a particular person. During this ceremony they consume a special drug, the manufacture of

which only El Azteca knows about. The drug confers an Aid STR, DEX, CON, and EGO 3d6 that lasts for one month... but at the end of that month the effects fade instantly and the assassin suffers 5d6 Killing Damage. Thus, the ranks of the *asesinos abacuanos* always remains small, but they have power far beyond their numbers.

THE TERRITORY

El Azteca's cartel is based in the Mexican state of Durango. Its nerve center is his enormous rural compound, *Abrigo del Sol* (Sunhaven). The compound includes a large, opulent mansion where he, his current women, and his most trusted bodyguards live (together with numerous servants), bunkhouses for his other men, various storage facilities and outbuildings (though he *never* keeps drugs there), a small airstrip, stables, and a temple for the cult. The temple resembles a Catholic mission or church more than an Aztec step-pyramid, though the decor is definitely Aztec.

Most of the fields where the cartel grows marijuana plants and opium poppies are located in or near Durango. The farmers, their families, and many other peasants belong to El Azteca's cult. But even those who do not often revere the man, since with his money he's built far more wells, schools, hospitals, and other facilities for them than the government in far-away Mexico City ever has.

PERSONNEL

El Azteca keeps a small, well-equipped army at his compound. Most of these people count as Thugs; a few are Basic or Experienced Mercenaries (see the Appendix). He also has a group of highly-skilled bodyguards to protect him and perform his most sensitive jobs. Two of these, El Escorpión and La Vispa, are described below. If you'd like to detail the others, they include El Trueno ("Thunder," an expert in explosives and demolitions), Señor Plomo ("Mr. Lead," a gunman), El Garra ("Talon," a knife expert), and El Tarántula (the Tarantula, a gunman).

PAINTING THE TOWN BLOOD RED

"Dude, you been over to Club Aztec yet?"

"No, man, is it any good?"

"Dude, it's smokin' hot! There's great Latin music like you won't hear anywhere else in Hudson City, and the place is full of sweet chicas shakin' their bodies on the dance floor. You gotta go!"

"Isn't it like, a gang hangout?"

"No way, man, it's safe. Lots of people go there. The Los Toros just work security or something, I think."

—conversation overheard between two HCC students

EL ESCORPIÓN PLOT SEEDS

El Escorpión decides the PCs are too great a potential threat to El Azteca's Hudson City plans — they need to be eliminated right now. He recruits some of El Azteca's other men and a few mercs and starts hunting the PCs down.

After several operations go sour, El Escorpión gets the idea that El Azteca doesn't trust him anymore and plans to have him killed. He's not just going to wait around for the axe to fall — he needs to take El Azteca out first. But he has to do it without casting suspicion on himself so he can stay with the cartel afterwards. He decides to trick the PCs into doing the dirty work for him....

El Escorpión's brother also works for the cartel, and during an unfortunate encounter with the PCs he gets killed (whether by the PCs or due to some accident). El Escorpión blames the PCs for his brother's death and sets out to get revenge... regardless of what El Azteca orders him to do.

EL ESCORPIÓN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
8	PD	5		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	1		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
30	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 84**	

Movement: Running: 9"/18"

Cost	Powers	END
	Martial Arts: Kickboxing	
	Maneuver — OCV — DCV — Notes	
4	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
4	Dodge +0 +5 Dodge all attacks, Abort	
3	Legsweep +2 -1 5d6; Target Falls	
4	Punch/Kick +0 +2 6d6 Strike	
5	Side/Spin Kick -2 +1 8d6 Strike	
5	Snap Kick +1 +3 4d6 Strike	
4	+1 Damage Class (already added in)	
18	*Quick Shot:* Autofire (up to 5 shots; +½) for any non-Autofire firearm built on up to 90 Active Points (45 Active Points); OIF (any non-Autofire firearm of opportunity; -½), Requires A Shooting Tricks Roll (-½), Not While Targeting (-½)	4
6	*Swift:* Running +3" (9" total)	1
	Perks	
4	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of El Azteca cartel)	
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military	
	Talents	
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)	
	Skills	
8	+1 with All Combat	
9	+3 with Firearms	
5	+1 DCV	
8	*Pistolero:* Range Skill Levels: +4 versus the Range Modifier with Handguns	
8	Targeting Skill Levels: +4 versus Hit Locations with Firearms	
5	Accurate Sprayfire	
3	Bribery 12-	
3	Concealment 12-	
5	Concentrated Sprayfire	
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-	
3	Interrogation 12-	
2	AK: Latin City 11-	
3	AK: Northern Mexico 12-	
2	CK: Hudson City 11-	
2	CK: Mexico City 11-	
2	KS: Narcotics 11-	
1	Language: English (basic conversation; Spanish is Native)	
1	Mechanics 8-	
5	Rapid Attack (Ranged)	
1	Riding 8-	
1	Sleight Of Hand 8-	
3	Stealth 13-	
3	Streetwise 12-	
10	Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged)	
7	WF: Small Arms, Blades, General Purpose/ Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Recoilless Rifles, Shoulder-Fired Weapons	
2	Weaponsmith (Firearms) 12-	
	Resource Points	
18	Equipment Points: 150	
10	Vehicle/Base Points: 30	
5	Follower/Contact Points: 15	
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 206
Total Cost: 290

100+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: Mexican Federal Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20	Hunted: DEA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
10	Hunted: El Azteca 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Psychological Limitation: Amoral And Greedy (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Gunslinger Mentality (Common, Strong)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
100	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 290

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
SIG/SAUER P226	+3	+0	2d6+1	1d6-1	15	8	Pen, +1 Fast Draw, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, PR
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5
American COP	-2	-2	1½d6	1d6-1	4	6	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown
Throwing Knives	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown, carries four

Armor
Armored Jacket (DEF 4, Activation 10-)

Gear: Fast draw holsters for all four of his P226 pistols, springsleeve holsters for his two American COPs. El Escorpión rarely carries any other gear, though he can easily get what he needs through El Azteca.

Background/History: Some criminals have complex and tortured personal histories that trace their slow but inevitable descent into evil and greed. Cristiano Hernandez y Maroto isn't one of them. He was born into a poor family of hardworking rural peasants, but that wasn't the life for him. He was stronger, faster, and smarter than most people, and it didn't take him long to figure out he could just steal what he wanted instead of working for it.

From petty crime Cristiano drifted into working for one of the drug cartels, where he developed has natural talent for gunfighting and killing. He met El Azteca during this period in his life, and they became fast friends. When El Azteca took over the cartel (and, eventually, several others), there was no question that Cristiano — now much better known by the nickname *El Escorpión* (the Scorpion) — would become one of his right-hand men.

Personality/Motivation: Again, there's nothing complex about El Escorpión's motivations: he's greedy, unprincipled, selfish, and cruel, and he'll do whatever he has to to get what he wants. Working for the cartel has been his ticket to money, women, and respect, so he has no intention of looking for other work. He doesn't want to be a leader, so he poses no threat to El Azteca's position; in fact, they're good friends, and he'd willingly risk his life for his boss.

El Escorpión is a major gun nut — so much so that he taught himself gunsmithing so he could modify firearms to better suit his personal preferences. He's been known to shout out questions to his opponents in battle, asking what sort of firearms they're using. He's also something of a "gunslinger," quick to challenge anyone who seems to be at his level of skill, and likely to accept just about any similar challenge unless El Azteca orders otherwise.

Quote: <<"Don't even try it. I can put three shots in you before you get your gun out.">>

Powers/Tactics: El Escorpión is a skilled gunfighter who can draw fast, shoot faster, and most importantly shoot accurately. His favorite weapon is a SIG/SAUER P226 that he's rechambered for .40 ammunition and made various improvements to; he loads it with Penetrating Frangible rounds most of the time. He typically carries four of these handguns — two in fast-draw shoulder holsters, two in fast-draw holsters carried at the small of his back (so that his jacket covers all four). He typically carries one to two extra clips for each pistol in special pockets inside his jacket. For emergencies he has an American C.O.P. up each sleeve in a springsleeve holster, and also carries four small throwing knives (two in horizontal sheaths on the front of his belt to either side of the buckle, one in each boot). The knives have a scorpion etched onto the flat of the blade.

El Escorpión tends to move around a lot in combat, taking advantage of his Running speed to maintain a steady stream of fire while minimizing his exposure to counterattack. He uses his Quick Fire ability (or Multifire, if the campaign uses those rules) to put a lot of lead in the air; in his experience, the more he shoots, the quicker the fight ends.

Campaign Use: El Escorpión is El Azteca's chief bodyguard and troubleshooter. The PCs are most likely to encounter him if they ever get close enough to threaten El Azteca, but it's possible the druglord will send El Escorpión to Hudson City to oversee an important cocaine shipment, deal with some other problem, or assassinate the PCs.

To make El Escorpión tougher, give him some Ranged Martial Arts for his handguns and/or some Lightning Reflexes. To weaken him, reduce his Characteristics a little and get rid of his Quick Fire ability.

El Escorpión only Hunts people if El Azteca orders him to. In that case, he takes the simple, practical approach: he follows the target until the target looks vulnerable, then ambushes him and fills him full of lead.

El Escorpión has a lengthy record of petty offenses in Mexico. Since he joined the cartel, bribes have kept him from being arrested even though he's committed dozens of murders and other major crimes.

Appearance: El Escorpión is a handsome Hispanic man in his mid-20s; he's 5'11" tall and weighs about 180 pounds. He's clean-shaven and keeps his black hair short (but stylishly trimmed). He typically wears a white or red shirt, a black or dark brown short (waist-length) jacket, and pants and cowboy boots to match the jacket. The jacket has a scorpion stitched on the back. His weapons (see above) are usually concealed by his jacket and clothes, though it's not at all uncommon to see him with a gun or knife in his hand.

LA VISPA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3xd6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
14	CON	8	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
18	COM	4	13-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
30	STUN	3	**Total Characteristics Cost: 76**	

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers	END
15	*Fighting Baton:* Multipower, 30-point reserve; all OAF (-1)	
1u	1) *Baton:* HA +2d6; OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
1u	2) *Thrown Baton:* Energy Blast 6d6 (physical); OAF (-1), Lockout (can't use Multipower again until recovers baton; -½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼)	[1rc]
1u	3) *Concealed Blade:* HKA 1d6+1 (2d6+1 with STR); OAF (-1)	2
18	*Throwing Blades:* Multipower, 30-point reserve, 12 Recoverable Charges for entire reserve (+¼); OAF (-1)	[12rc]
1u	1) *Single Blade:* RKA 2d6; OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼)	
1u	2) *Multiple Blades:* RKA 1d6, Autofire (up to 5 shots, +½); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼)	
41	*The Wasp's Sting:* RKA 3d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Immunity: Curare]; +1), Does BODY (+1); OAF Fragile (-1¼), Must Target Unarmored Hit Locations (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]

Martial Arts: Savate

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	*Coup de pied bas/Crochet*	+0	+2	7d6 Strike
5	*Coup de pied chasse*	-2	+1	9d6 Strike
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 35 STR to Disarm roll
5	*Direct*	+1	+3	5d6 Strike
3	Footsweep	+2	-1	6d6 Strike; Target Falls

8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)	
2	Use Art with Blades, Clubs	
2	*Strong Legs:* Running +1" (7" total)	1
2	*Strong Legs:* Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward)	1
3	*Curare Tolerance:* Life Support (Immunity: Curare)	0

Perks

4 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of El Azteca cartel)
5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Talents

7 *Blademaster:* Deadly Blow: KA +1d6 with Knives (Ranged or HTH)

Skills

24 +3 with All Combat
4 +2 OCV with Coup de Pied Bas/Crochet
3 Acrobatics 13-
3 Breakfall 13-
3 Bribery 12-
1 Computer Programming 8-
3 Concealment 12-
3 Conversation 12-
3 Fast Draw (Blades) 13-
3 High Society 12-
2 AK: Latin City 11-
3 AK: Northern Mexico 12-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
2 CK: Mexico City 11-
2 KS: Dance 11-
2 KS: Narcotics 11-
2 KS: Savate 11-
1 Language: English (basic conversation; Spanish is Native)
1 Language: French (basic conversation)
1 Lockpicking 8-
2 PS: Ballet 11-
1 PS: Play Piano 8-
5 Rapid Attack (Ranged)
3 Riding 13-
1 Security Systems 8-
3 Seduction 12-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 12-
10 Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged)

Resource Points

4 Equipment Points: 80
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 250
Total Cost: 326

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20 Hunted: Mexican Federal Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: DEA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
10 Hunted: El Azteca 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation: Doesn't Care About Anyone But Herself (Common, Strong)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
141 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 326

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
SIG/SAUER P226	+3	+0	2d6+1	1d6-1	15	8	Pen, +1 Fast Draw, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, PR
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Usually wears none, but if she knows combat is coming, she may don some body armor (DEF 6, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: La Vispa rarely carries other gear, though she can get things she needs (such as a nightvision device for a nighttime mission) from El Azteca

Background/History: Jiselle Blanchard comes from a wealthy Mexican family descended from Frenchmen who came to the country with the Emperor Maximillian in the mid-nineteenth century. She grew up privileged, able to do whatever she wanted. Her favorite thing was dancing; she had a real talent for it, and her family even thought she might become a famous ballerina one day. She also studied French, piano, and proper upper-class manners; as an athletic girl, she supplemented that with horseback riding and savate.

When Jiselle was only 13, the family fortune collapsed due to some poor investment decisions coupled with embezzlement and fraud on the part of several family employees. Cast out of their sheltered existence, Jiselle and her family found themselves living among the poor people they'd once scorned. Jiselle rebelled against her parents, blaming them for what had happened. She began getting into trouble, hanging out with the wrong crowd, and using drugs. At 16 she left home for good and never looked back.

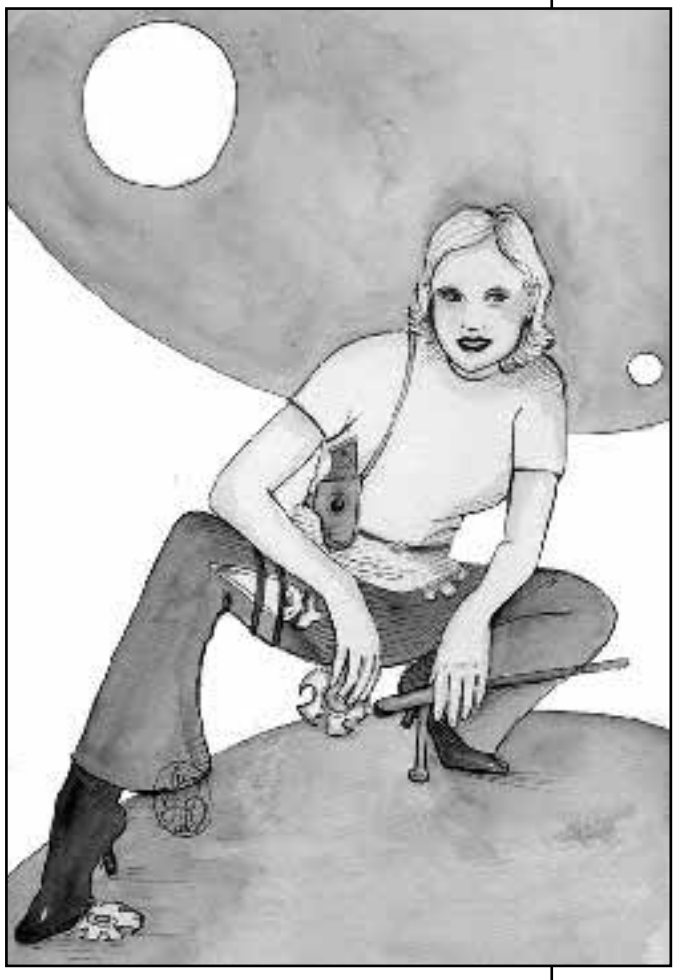
Jiselle began working as a courier for a drug cartel. One day some thugs from a rival cartel ambushed her. Their intent was obvious: robbery, then rape, then murder. But all they got was a rude surprise: using her fighting skills, she beat them bloody, killing one and sending the others back to their boss with permanent injuries.

Word got back to her cartel, and soon Jiselle was working as a bodyguard for the cartel boss. But a better opportunity soon came along: El Azteca. She fell hard for his handsome looks and roguish charms, and when he made his move against the boss, Jiselle stood aside and let him do it. She's loyally served El Azteca as one of his bodyguards, taking the name *La Vispa* ("the Wasp").

Personality/Motivation: Going from a life of wealth to one of poverty because of her parents' stupidity (as she sees it, anyway) taught La Vispa a profound truth: the only one who's looking out for her, is her. She wants the money and influence she used to have, and working for El Azteca's cartel has given it to her. Ultimately, though, she's only concerned about herself; if a better deal came along, or it was a choice between going to jail and abandoning the cartel, she'd jump ship.

Quote: <<"Don't play with the Wasp if you're not willing to risk the sting.">>

Powers/Tactics: La Vispa is lithe and graceful, and she uses these attributes to her advantage in combat. By combining acrobatic maneuvers with her savate training, she's developed a fluid, hard-hitting fighting style that relies mostly on kicks. If she uses her hands, she's usually got a weapon in them. Her favorite is her Fighting Baton, a short combat stick with a dagger concealed inside. She can even throw the Baton, though that means she can't use it again until she recovers it (she often uses one of her Combat Skill Levels to bounce it back to her).



LA VISPA PLOT SEEDS

La Vispa's family approaches the PCs. They saw her on some news footage and recognized their daughter/sister. They still love her and want her to return, particularly now that they've recovered much of the family wealth. They ask the PCs to "rescue" and "deprogram" her.

La Vispa thinks the heat's getting too intense. She approaches the PCs with a deal: she'll tell them what they need to know to take down El Azteca, provided that during their assault they convincingly fake her death, then help her relocate. Is she on the up-and-up, or is it a trap?

La Vispa becomes attracted to a male PC and begins secretly pursuing him (aggressively, in fact). How will the PC react? Perhaps more importantly, how will El Azteca react when he finds out about this?

La Vispa is an expert knifefighter, able to strike the most vulnerable parts on the target's body with ease. In addition to standard throwing blades and her Baton blade, she carries twelve needle-like throwing blades she calls Wasp's Stings. Coated with curare, they're deadly... but only if she can target an unarmored part of her opponent's body, since the needles aren't heavy enough to penetrate armor (or even some thick clothing, like a heavy jacket). In addition to her special weapons, La Vispa carries a SIG/SAUER P226 prepared for her by El Escorpión and a standard combat dagger.

La Vispa often accompanies El Azteca as his "date" — she hangs on his arm wearing some slinky dress, looking like nothing more than a blonde bit of fluff. That gives her an element of surprise if she has to protect him or attack somebody for him. And it's not entirely a show. For years she's been in an on-again, off-again relationship with him, occasionally getting involved with El Escorpión or El Trueno during the off times.

Campaign Use: Like El Escorpión, La Vispa works for El Azteca as a bodyguard and troubleshooter. However, she lacks his loyalty to their boss, making her far more likely to betray him or abandon him... which may create a vulnerable point in the organization that the PCs can exploit.

To make La Vispa more powerful, give her Find Weakness with her various blades (or perhaps with all of her attacks), or maybe increase her SPD to 5. To weaken her, decrease her Characteristics and remove some Skills (including Rapid Attack).

La Vispa only Hunts people if El Azteca orders her to, in which case she follows orders. Left to her own devices, she prefers to strike from ambush with a Wasp's Sting.

La Vispa has a minor criminal record in Mexico for offenses committed when she was younger — mainly some lesser drug offenses, with the occasional assault or robbery.

Appearance: La Vispa is a strikingly beautiful woman in her mid-20s. She's 5'6" tall with a slender, athletic body and a pleasant figure; she has shoulder-length blonde hair and green eyes. She doesn't wear a uniform, costume, or standard set of clothes, preferring to dress stylishly for the occasion — though whatever she wears, it will provide a way for her to hide her throwing knives, Wasp's Stings, and if possible her Baton.

BUCKSHOT

BUCKSHOT				
Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**Roll**	**Notes**
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
19	CON	18	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	2		
38	END	0		
40	STUN	7	**Total Characteristics Cost: 90**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	**Powers**	**END**
19	*Custom Double-Clipped Shotgun:* Multipower, 70-point reserve; all OAF (-1), Limited Range (-¼), STR Minimum (-1), Two-Handed (-½)	
1u	1) *Shot:* RKA 2½d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), +1 STUN Multiplier (+¼); OAF (-1), Limited Range (20"; -¼), Reduced By Range (-¼), Reduced Penetration (-¼), STR Minimum (12, Does Not Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Two-Handed (-½), 8 Charges (-½) [8]	
1u	2) *Slugs:* RKA 2½d6, +1 STUN Multiplier (+¼); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), Limited Range (50"; -¼), STR Minimum (12, Does Not Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Two-Handed (-½), 8 Charges (-½) [8]	

Martial Arts: Dirty Infighting

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	25 STR to Disarm roll
4	Eye Gouge	-1	-1	Sight Group Flash 4d6
4	Kidney Blow	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)
4	Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND(3)
4	Punch/Backhand	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
5	Roundhouse	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
3	Tackle	+0	-1	3d6 +v/5 Strike; You Fall, Target Falls

Perks

5	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (leader of the Overlords)
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military
5	Money: Well Off
2	Reputation: ruthless gang leader (in Hudson City) 11-, +2/+2d6

Skills

12	+4 with Firearms
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Concealment 11-
4	AK: Freetown 13-
2	CK: Hudson City 11-
4	KS: Freetown Gangs And Criminals 13-
1	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 8-
1	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 8-
1	KS: The Vice World 8-
3	Lockpicking 13-
3	Stealth 13-
7	Streetwise 14-
3	WF: Small Arms, Grenade Launchers
1	Weaponsmith (Firearms) 8-

Resource Points

8	Equipment Points: 100
15	Vehicle/Base Points: 40
20	Follower/Contact Points: 45
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 161
Total Cost: 251

100+ Disadvantages

25	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: Shango 8- (As Pow, NCI, Kill)
20	Hunted: Strad 8- (As Pow, NCI, Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Must Have Respect, Money, And Power... And Will Kill To Get Them (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Wants To Rule The Freetown Underworld (Common, Strong)
15	Reputation: murderous gang leader, 11- (Extreme)
10	Rivalry: Professional (with Shango and Strad; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
15	Social Limitation: Public Identity (Terry Hondo) (Frequently, Major)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
6	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 251

BUCKSHOT PLOT SEEDS

Buckshot decides to stop messing around and take out Shango — that will free up a lot of territory he can grab, putting him in position to eliminate Strad. But he doesn't want to get his people shot up in the process, so he decides to get the PCs to do his dirty work by secretly providing them information about Shango. How will the PCs react when they find out what's really going on?

The word hits the street like a thunderbolt — Buckshot's dead! One of his "homies" got pissed at him and, in a drunken rage, shot him in the head. The Overlords are scurrying for cover while Shango and Strad move in to pick over Buckshot's territory. But is it possible this is a tactic by Buckshot to lure his enemies out so he can ambush them?

Buckshot needs a lot of cash fast to take advantage of some "business opportunities," so he takes on a merc job: hunt down and kill one of the PCs.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
USAS-12	+0	+0	2½d6	1d6	28	13	AF5, LR (50"), 2H
LAR Grizzly	+1	+0	2d6	1d6	7	13	

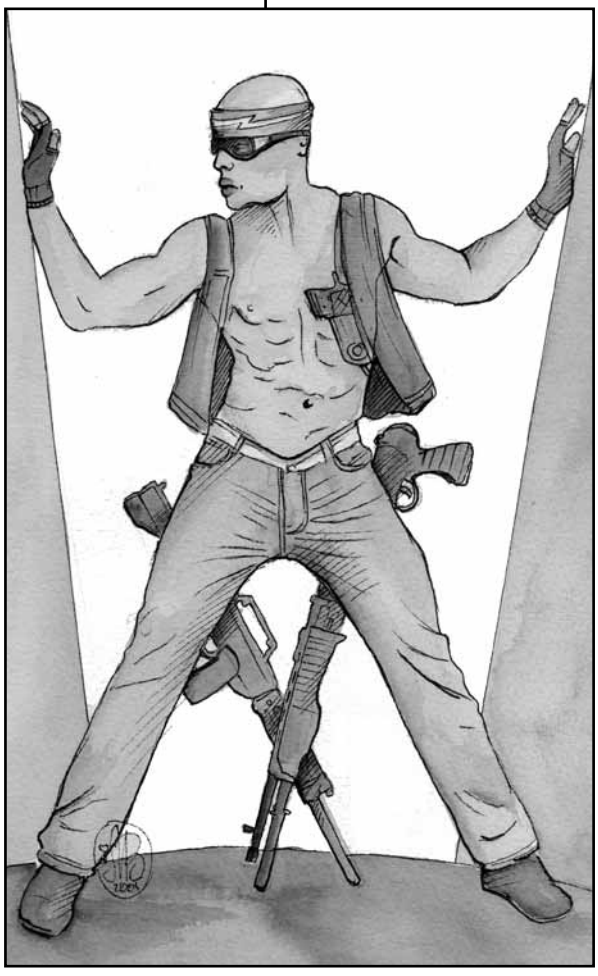
Armor
Armored Jacket (DEF 4, covers Hit Locations 7-12)
Sunglasses (Sight Group Flash Defense [5 points])

Gear: Buckshot doesn't usually use other gear, though he might carry a few grenades if he got his hands on some. He rides a souped-up motorcycle (unless he has to go with a group of people, in which case he'll take one or more of his fleet of armored SUVs).

Background/History: Terry Hondo grew up in the worst part of Hudson City: the Numbers. It didn't take him long to learn that you've gotta have friends if you're gonna survive on the streets, so he joined a gang called the Overlords. Actually, it wasn't one gang so much as a group of sets that banded together to protect themselves from the Warriors and the Nubians, but that just meant more guys to protect him.

Determined not to look like a weakling, Terry never backed down from any challenge. The best thing someone who confronted him could expect was a fistfight; more than once he took care of a banger who dissed him with a blast from his favorite weapon, his shotgun. Soon he got a rep as an ice-cold killer... someone you didn't want to mess with.

But he also got careless. He left a witness to one of his drive-bys alive, and a few days later the cops found him and arrested him. The court tried him as an adult even though he was only 16. Soon he was pulling a ten-year stretch in the Stew.



By the time he got out, he was a tougher, even more heartless man than ever before... but also a smarter one. He realized going back to his old ways was pointless. If he was gonna risk his life on the streets, he wanted it all — not just some street-corner. He told the Overlords what he had in mind, and they agreed.

With Buckshot leading them, the Overlords began a blood-spattered quest to take all of Freetown for themselves. As of early 2005, they control several chunks of territory in the neighborhood — and Buckshot has no plans to stop just because assholes like Shango and Strad think they've got what it takes to make him quit. Before long they'll learn who runs the streets.

Personality/Motivation: While he's not exactly a model of military efficiency, compared to most gangstas Buckshot is motivated, disciplined, and goal-oriented. Now in his mid-20s, with time on the streets and in prison to his credit, he knows what he wants and how to get it. He thinks of himself more as a warrior than a gangsta these days, fighting a war he intends to win... no matter how many bodies he has to leave in the streets.

Quote: "When you get hit by a load of Buckshot, they ain't nuthin' left but a bloody mess."

Powers/Tactics: As his nickname indicates, Buckshot's favorite weapon is the shotgun — he doesn't get in many long-range gunfights, and the shotgun's the perfect weapon for close-up killing. He usually carries a specially-modified pump action shotgun he designed. The weapon has two clips, one with shot and one with slugs; he can choose which magazine to access when he uses the pump with a selector switch near the trigger. He also carries a stock USAS-12 automatic shotgun loaded with slugs, and a LAR Grizzly .45.

Many people think of Buckshot as "just another gangster punk," but he's a lot more than that. He's learned to fight cautiously, but with bravery and skill. He doesn't stick his neck out if there's nothing to gain, but he'll take a risk if he can see a reward that follows it. He sticks to cover most of the time, and tries to leave an escape route open.

Campaign Use: Buckshot leads the Overlords, one of the major Freetown street gangs trying to take control of drug dealing and crime in that neighborhood (see *Hudson City,* pages 159, 172-73). As one of the major players in the five-way struggle for control of Hudson City's ghetto, he's an important figure in Southside crime — one the PCs could easily find themselves opposed to, or who they might ally with if they think Shango or Strad is more of a threat. If necessary you can also use him as a mercenary; he might take on a job or two as a way of enhancing his rep, earning some extra money, or racking up favors with powerful people.

To make Buckshot tougher, beef up his STR to 20 and give him an Extra DC or two for his Dirty Infighting. To weaken him, get rid of his

custom shotgun so he has to use stock shotgun models instead.

Buckshot won't Hunt heroes right now — he's got to worry about taking out Shango and Strad. But if his plans fall apart, and the PCs are a part of that, he'll definitely want revenge.

Buckshot has been arrested several times for drug crimes, attempted rape, attempted murder, and murder. But he's served little time in prison for the past ten years, since he's either escaped or used loopholes in the system to earn early release.

Appearance: Buckshot is a black man in his mid-20s. He's 6'1" tall, heavily muscled, and powerfully built. He usually wears jeans, half-finger black gloves, and a black or brown (armored) jacket. He wears sunglasses most of the time. He carries his shotguns in sheaths on his back, if necessary.

CALIGULA

CALIGULA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
7	STR	-3	10-	Lift 67 kg; 1d6 [1]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
16	CON	12	12-	
19	BODY	18	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
6	COM	-2	10-	
5	PD	4		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	-6		
31	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 52**	

Movement: Running: 3"/6"

Cost	Powers	END
-6	*Too Fat To Run:* Running -3" (3" total)	

Perks

30 *Friends In High Places:* Well-Connected and 27 points' worth of Contacts in the HCPD and Hudson City government
2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit
10 Money: Wealthy

Skills

3 Bribery 13-
3 Deduction 12-
3 Conversation 13-
4 AK: The Strip 13-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
3 KS: Child Pornography 12-
2 KS: Hudson City Underworld 11-
3 KS: The Vice World 12-
3 Persuasion 13-
5 PS: Vice Lord 14-
3 PS: B&D/S&M Practices 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
3 WF: Small Arms, Whips

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
25 Follower/Contact Points: 55
N/A Miscellaneous Points: 2

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 119
Total Cost: 171

100+ Disadvantages

15 Hunted: HCPD Vice Division 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
5 Physical Limitation: Grossly Corpulent (has trouble fitting through some doors, sitting in some chairs, walking on some floors, and so on) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
15 Psychological Limitation: Man Of Disgusting Lusts And Appetites (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Cannot Tolerate Being Questioned Or Contradicted (Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: vicelord, 11- (Extreme)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with other Hudson City vicelords)
15 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Calvin Gilbertson) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 185

Background/History: They were still laughing at him. Calvin stared down at the tabletop beneath

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Calico M-950	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	100	12	-1 OCV for STR Min
Walther PPK	+1	+1	1d6	1d6-1	7	6	

Armor
None

Gear: Caligula rarely carries any gear

MAKING MOVIES

Caligula watched the filming impassively. He was well back from the bright lights that shone on the faux hotel room bed. The intense heat they put out made him uncomfortable, and he'd just as soon remain as unnoticed as possible.

A few minutes later the director called it a wrap for the day. They'd gotten the money shot, the camera lingering lovingly on the girl's face when it was all over. She was a pretty young thing, that was certain — *Couldn't be more than eleven,* he thought. It was a shame the slight glaze in her eyes from the drugs marred her looks. He saw someone leading her away to her room, where she'd be locked in for the night.

Caligula caught the director's eye and waved him over. "Yes, sir?" the man said when he got close enough. It was just the right tone, servile but not too servile; he knew which side his bread was buttered on.

"How much more will she be good for?" he asked.

"For us? Probably another day or two at most — at that age we can't keep them doped up too long. After that, we can sell her to the Arabs."

Caligula nodded thoughtfully, then dismissed the man with another wave. The Arabs would definitely be best... but he'd have to be sure to sample her himself before she left.

—just another day in Caligula's vice empire

him. He could hear them laughing at him all the way across the Ashwood-Tate lunchroom. All he'd done was ask Jennifer Parker to the Spring Dance. She'd burst out laughing, never bothering to reply, and then run off to tell the rest of her cheerleader friends. He knew what they were calling him — Chubby, Whale, Lardbutt, a dozen others. They'd been doing it for the past ten minutes while he sat there, alone, shamefaced, staring at the table.

He looked up at them, out of the corner of his eye. He could see Jennifer, beautiful Jennifer, a curl of her golden hair falling down beside her face as she leaned over to speak to her friends. The curve of her breasts strained gently against her sweater, making Gilbert's breath catch in his throat. He *wanted* her — but he could never have her. Girls like her weren't meant for guys like him; they all ended up with football players, two kids, a dog, a house with a white picket fence, all that bull*%&!. She could never be his. Unless... unless he *took* her for himself....

The police were called to Ashwood-Tate to investigate the murder of Jennifer Parker a few weeks later. A custodian had found her in one of the girl's bathrooms after a game. She still had her cheerleader's uniform on — at least, the top half of it. Her skirt and panties had been roughly ripped away, probably after her attacker had thrown her on top of the sinks. The fractures in her pelvis provided mute testimony to the brutality and viciousness of the rape. And when he was done, the perpetrator had smashed her face against one of the porcelain sinks until her skull caved in.

There weren't any usable fingerprints — either the attacker had worn gloves, or luck was simply on his side this time. The police questioned many boys from the school, but not Calvin. His father's influence saw to that.

Calvin wanted more. Taking Jennifer was just a first taste of the power he craved. It had been exhilarating to dominate her that way; the ecstasy of it was nearly as great as that of the sex. But he couldn't take another one like that; it would draw too much attention, and it was too messy and exhausting anyway. Especially when there were other possibilities.

Soon after that, Calvin began stealing money from his father's wallet and visiting the Strip. The first official record of him is an arrest at age 17. A prostitute swore out a warrant against him for assault, claiming he'd beaten her when she refused to "do that sick *%&! he wanted." Court records indicate she had a broken arm. The high-powered lawyers Calvin's father hired for him used her history of drug abuse and mental instability to make it seem like she'd attacked Calvin and got him off the hook... but it was a close call. Calvin vowed never to come that close to being caught again.

He was soon recognized as a regular on the Strip, particular at B&D joints and by pimps who didn't care if he hurt their girls a little. His favorite "stable" was the one belonging to a pimp named Glitter (real name: Richard Forrest). According to HCPD Vice, he got into pimping himself in his early 20s by taking over Glitter's territory and girls; he adopted "Caligula" as his street name. Glitter hasn't been seen since that time and is presumed dead. The police suspect Caligula, of course, but they can't prove a damn thing.

Since taking over Glitter's gang, Caligula has slowly but steadily accumulated wealth and power on the Strip. Today he's one of the most powerful figures in the Hudson City vice world. The police believe he's involved in more serious crimes — white slavery, child prostitution, child pornography, drug trafficking — but they lack enough proof to bring formal charges.

Personality/Motivation: Caligula is a disgusting pig of a man. He's grossly overweight, but his appetites aren't confined to food. He engages in just about every form of depravity known to man, forcing his girls to submit to his every whim. If any of them dare to defy him or speak back to him, they're taking their very lives in their hands — he doesn't tolerate dissent, backtalk, or disrespect. More than one girl who entered his bedroom under her own power has been carried out by a couple of his underlings and taken to some out-of-the-way location where they can safely dispose of her body.

Caligula is nothing if not patient and cautious. He knows the HCPD will leave him alone if he doesn't seem like anything more than a pimp and pornographer — he's shelled out enough bribe money to ensure that. But there's no way he could bribe himself out of the child prostitution/pornography and white slavery charges that would be

brought against him if the full extent of his vice empire were known, so he takes elaborate steps to hide that side of his work. Among his underlings are several physical and computer security experts (including two former members of the Stasi) who keep his operations secret and secure.

Despite his obviously crude nature, Caligula speaks well — he's had plenty of education and knows how to conduct himself in polite society. He just doesn't like polite society nearly as much as he likes the Strip.

Quote: "Come *here*, bitch! You do as I tell you or you'll learn more about pain than you care to."

Powers/Tactics: Caligula is so overweight he can't even get out of a chair without help, much less fight in combat. However, he carries a weapon, just in case — a concealed Walther PPK in most situations, a Calico M-950 if he's expecting trouble — and can also make clever use of whips and other sado-masochistic implements. If pressed he can react more quickly than one would suspect from his oleaginous bulk, though he runs slowly.

Instead of fighting, Caligula prefers to talk his way out of dangerous situations. Failing that, he'll use bribery and his friends among the powerful of the city (including two high-ranking cops in Vice) to get off lightly. He maintains a detailed diary of blackmail-quality information on his customers, who include many of Hudson City's best and brightest.

Caligula has a house in Buena Vista; discovering that address is just a matter of checking public records or the right phone book. He has a secret residence in North Elmview that only his underlings and a few other people know about.

Campaign Use: Caligula is fairly limited in terms of his criminal operations, but still has a lot of potential as a villain in your games. The crimes he commits are among the worst men can conceive of, and that's likely to bring out deep emotions in your PCs if they're roleplayed well. He also does well in a symbolic role, since his outward physical appearance mirrors the depravity within.

If you want to make Caligula tougher, you have two options. First, if you want to turn him into more of a combatant, slim him down (making him big, tough, and strong more than obese), boost his Characteristics appropriately, and give him some Martial Arts (Boxing or Dirty Infighting). Second, you can make him more powerful politically by giving him more Contacts, Money, and Follower/Contact Points. To weaken him, get rid of his Weapon Familiarity with Small Arms and limit him to just the Walther PPK.

Caligula generally doesn't Hunt anyone; it's not good business. But if the PCs ruin him, or expose the full extent of his crimes, he'll find a way to get revenge. He'll start by pulling strings and using his contacts to make their lives miserable, and when they've hit rock-bottom he'll send assassins after them.

Caligula has a lengthy record for vice crimes, minor assaults, and the like.

Appearance: Caligula is an immense man, carrying nearly 400 pounds on a 5'8" frame. His head is bald; he's cleanshaven, and in fact displays little hair anywhere on his body. His skin is oily; his touch unpleasantly moist. His voice, however, is surprisingly deep and rich; had his life gone differently he could have made good money as a television announcer. He wears custom-made suits designed to fit his bulk comfortably. He's accompanied everywhere he goes by his bodyguard, Hotspur, and a retinue of other sycophantic followers.

HOTSPUR

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
14	BODY	8	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: 13 PD (5 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 11 ED (5 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
40	STUN	9		**Total Characteristics Cost: 94**

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*Bootblades:* HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR); OIF (-½)	1
5	*Bootblades:* another Bootblade (total of two, one per foot)	1
30	*Bootblade Poison:* Multipower, 45-point reserve; all OIF (-½)	
1u	1) *Lethal Poison:* RKA 1d6, NND (defense is Life Support [appropriate Immunity]; +1), Does BODY (+1); OIF (-½), HKA Must Do BODY (-½), Linked (to Bootblades HKA; -¼), 6 Charges (-¾)	[6]
1u	2) *Knockout Poison:* Drain STUN 4½d6; OIF (-½), No Range (-½), HKA Must Do BODY (-½), Linked (to Bootblades HKA; -¼), 6 Charges (-¾)	[6]
	Martial Arts: Capoeira	

Cost	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
5	*Armado da Costa* (Spin Kick)/*Parafuso* (Jumping Spinning Kick)	-2	+1	9d6 Strike
4	*Bencao* (Front Thrust Kick)/*Asfixiante* (Punch)	+0	+2	7d6 Strike
5	Block	+1	+3	Block, Abort
3	*Cabeçada* (Head-Butt)	+1	+0	7d6 Strike
4	*Cocorinha/Esquiva/Queda de Quatro*	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	*Dedeira* (Eye Gouge)	-1	-1	Sight Group

CALIGULA PLOT SEEDS

A distraught woman contacts the PCs. She claims Caligula's men kidnapped her little boy; she wants them to rescue him. Is she telling the truth... or is she deranged, or perhaps working for one of their (or Caligula's) enemies?

After an initial encounter with the PCs, Caligula puts out the word that he'd like to make a deal with them. He's got some *major* dirt on one of their worst enemies. He'll trade it to them in exchange for their agreeing to leave his operations alone. Will the PCs take the deal... and if so, how good is the info?

Word on the street is that Caligula's dead — keeled over from a heart attack during an orgy. Everyone on the Strip's scrambling to grab as much of his territory and resources as they can. There's been some violence, and the potential for a lot more. How do the PCs deal with the situation?... and is Caligula *really* dead?

HOTSPUR PLOT SEEDS

Acosta-Cazares hitmen are in town, gunning for Hotspur (they think he let the man he came to Hudson City to guard get killed). He needs to get rid of them but doesn't want to involve Caligula's men, so he decides to maneuver the PCs into doing the dirty work for him.

Hotspur's been making the rounds of the martial arts schools and dojos in Hudson City, issuing challenges and beating up fighters. A dojo owner appeals to the PCs for protection.

Caligula fires Hotspur (or dies), so Hotspur needs a new employer. One of the PCs' enemies offers to hire him if he'll prove his skill by killing a PC.

				Flash 5d6
4	*Meia lua de Frente/Queixada* (Crescent Kick)	+2	+0	7d6 Strike
3	*Rasteira/Banda/Tesoura/Arrastão* (Legsweep/Takedown)	+2	-1	6d6 Strike; Target Falls
5	*Vôo-do-morcego* (Flying Kick)	+1	-2	9d6 Strike
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)			
1	Use Art with Bootblades			
6	*Fast:* Running +3" (9" total)			1
4	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +4" (7" forward, 4" upward)			1

Talents

6	Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED)
15	Combat Sense 12-

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
12	+4 with Capoeira
3	Acrobatics 13-
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Climbing 13-
10	Defense Maneuver IV
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
3	Interrogation 12-
2	KS: Brazilian Music 11-
2	KS: Capoeira 11-
1	KS: The Espionage World 8-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2	Language: English (fluent conversation; Portuguese is Native)
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
2	PS: Dancing 11-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Stealth 13-
3	WF: Small Arms, Straight Razor

Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
5	Vehicle/Base Points: 20
0	Follower/Contact Points: 5
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 193
Total Cost: 287

100+ Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
25	Hunted: Acosta-Cazares cartel 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
15	Hunted: Hudson City Police Department 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Employer (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Gunslinger Mentality (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Proud And Arrogant (Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Public Identity (Duarte Cruz) (Frequently, Major)
77	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 287

Background/History: Born in a *favela*, or slum, outside Rio de Janeiro, Duarte Cruz has struggled to succeed all of his life. He spent his childhood running around with a gang of other poor children, picking through trash dumps and begging for food. Duarte was big for his age and developed a well-deserved reputation as a bully and a troublemaker. As he got older he gravitated toward worse and worse crimes.

What turned Duarte's life around was *capoeira,* the Brazilian martial art based on dance. He saw an exhibition of it one day, and was captivated by the grace of the fighters and the pounding beat of the music. He convinced one of the instructors to teach him in exchange for labor.

Duarte trained in *capoeira* for years, becoming one of the best of the best. Most men would have turned this into a career of prizefighting and teaching, but Duarte had other ideas. He wanted the fast life and lots of money, not a legit job. He decided to put his skills to use as a mercenary and bodyguard. As a "trademark," he developed a pair of boots with a vicious retractable blade in front and adopted the name "Hotspur" to promote himself.

Eventually Hotspur's work took him to Hudson City. He was guarding one of the bosses of the Acosta-Cazares cartel while he visited his distributors in the States. The visit didn't go as planned — gunmen hired by an unknown rival attacked. Hotspur took down over half a dozen of them, but he couldn't hold out forever. His employer was killed and he was left for dead.

But he survived. Through strength and sheer stubbornness, he held on and lived. Before long he met Caligula and signed on as his bodyguard and head of security. The relationship has lasted until this day; Hotspur is one of the few people Caligula trusts.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
SIG/SAUER P226	+1	+0	1d6+2	1d6-1	15	8	PR, +1 Fast Draw
Straight Razor	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-2	—	7	

Armor
Armored uniform/clothing (2 DEF)

Gear: Hotspur rarely carries much gear on the job, but most of his employers can get him whatever he needs, within reason

Personality/Motivation: Hotspur is an arrogant bully who's still determined to prove he's the biggest, toughest guy on the block. Unless directly ordered to do so, he almost never refuses a challenge to one-on-one combat, and issues his own challenges to any PCs he deems worthy of them.

Hotspur's also proud and haughty. He never forgets an insult or a slight, and never takes being defeated in combat lying down — he'll figure out some way to get back at his opponent, even if he has to cheat to do it.

Quote: "You think you are something special? Think again; you are in the presence of Hotspur, and next to me you are nothing!"

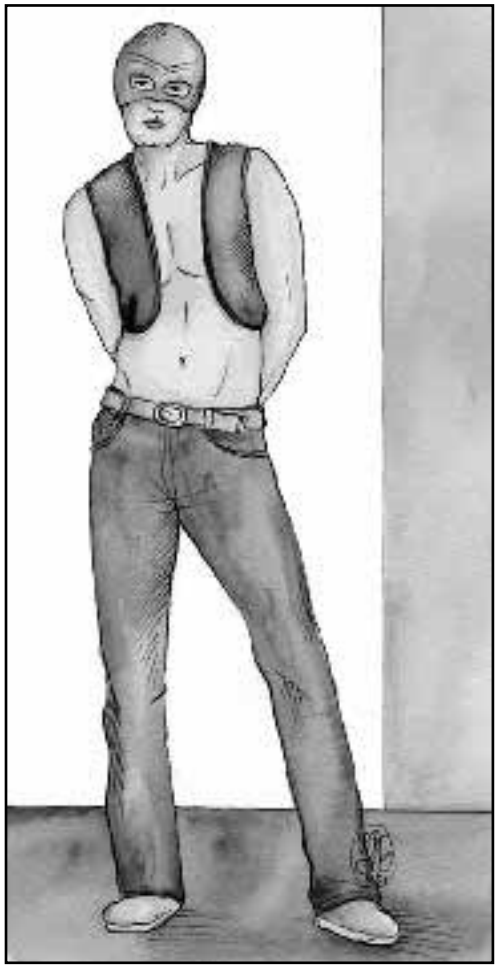
Powers/Tactics: Hotspur is a master of *capoeira,* a Brazilian fighting art. Other than his gun (usually a SIG/SAUER P226), he won't have any ranged attacks — he prefers HTH Combat. His first tactic is to close with the nearest opponent and try to beat him unconscious, moving on to other opponents after he defeats the first. He relies on his fighting skill and acrobatic abilities to keep from being hit. He has no compunctions about killing, but doesn't go out of his way to kill unless he's angered.

Hotspur also has an ace up his sleeve — or, more accurately, his boots. Each boot contains a retractable blade that projects from the toe. Also contained within the boot are tiny wells of poison (both lethal and non-lethal varieties) that he can use if desired.

Campaign Use: Hotspur is Caligula's bodyguard. As a professional bodyguard, he feels strongly that he should devote himself solely to his employer's best interests, so he rejects offers to look the other way or "jump ship." As a result, Caligula has come to trust him completely, and that trust is well-deserved. If Caligula died or fired him, Hotspur would go to work for some other crimelord or executive.

To make Hotspur tougher, give him more Combat Skill Levels, and/or increase his SPD to 5. To weaken him, get rid of some of his Levels and Martial Maneuvers.

Hotspur usually doesn't Hunt anyone — vendettas aren't professional. But as mentioned above, he's a proud man. If someone defeats him, he'll find a way to draw that person into another fight so he can prove that his loss was a fluke.



The HCPD keeps an eye on Hotspur; they suspect him of several acts of aggravated assault and attempted murder, but don't yet have enough evidence to arrest him. The cops are also interested in questioning him about Colombian cartel activities and Caligula's operations. In Brazil, Duarte Cruz has an extensive record of petty crimes.

Appearance: Hotspur is everything his employer is not: young, handsome, fit, athletic, muscular. He's a dark-skinned Brazilian male with the trim build of an experienced fighter. He wears a red half-face mask tied in back, a red belt, and red boots (his bootblades are silver). His pants are black, and he also wears a black vest; sometimes he wears a blousy white shirt, but other times just the vest. He wears no gloves.

CHARLEMAGNE

IT'S ONLY A GAME

"Dammit!" the man in the ruffled shirt cursed, throwing his cards at the center of the table so hard it was as if he were trying to hurt them. Anger distorted his handsome features, but he quickly brought it under control.

The man sitting across from him, the one dressed like a playing card, had no expression — a white mask with a spade symbol over the left eye covered his head, giving him the ultimate poker face. The five cards lying on the green felt in front of him showed a straight flush. "What's the matter, Charlemagne? Is the game getting too rich for you, that you can't afford to lose a hundred? The way I hear it, you're a bigtime crimelord, got more money than you know what to do with. What's a few cool to a man like you?"

"It's nothing," Charlemagne said, his face calm and friendly. "And even your legendary luck can't last forever." He looked around the table at the other players, then gestured at the barely-clothed woman holding the deck. "Deal."

CHARLEMAGNE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
16	STR	6	12-	Lift 233 kg; 3d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
19	INT	9	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
14	COM	2	12-	
8	PD	5		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 11 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
35	STUN	3	**Total Characteristics Cost: 109**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Swimming: 3"/6"

Cost	Powers			END
	Martial Arts: Boxing			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
3	Clinch	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 36 to STR for holding on
4	Cross	+0	+2	7d6 Strike
5	Hook	-2	+1	9d6 Strike
3	Jab	+2	+1	5d6 Strike
	Martial Arts: Fencing			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
5	*Ballestra*	+2	-2	Weapon +6 DC; Half Move Required
3	Cut	+2	+1	Weapon
4	*Ceduto*	+0	+0	41 STR to escape Bind
4	*Double a Double*	+2	+2	Weapon +4 DC, Must Follow Predefined Maneuver
4	*Fleche*	+2	-2	Weapon +2 DC +v/5; FMove
4	*Froissement*	-1	+1	Disarm, 36 STR to Disarm roll
5	Lunge	+1	-2	Weapon +6 DC
4	Riposte	+2	+2	Weapon +4 DC, Must Follow Block
5	Slash	-2	+1	Weapon +6 DC
5	Takeaway	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, 36 STR to Take Weapon Away
5	Thrust	+1	+3	Weapon +2 DC
4	Void	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)			
12	*Quick Shot:* Autofire (up to 5 shots; +½) for any non-Autofire firearm built on up to 60 Active Points; OIF (any non-Autofire firearm of opportunity; -½), Requires A Shooting Tricks Roll (-½), Not While Targeting (-½)			3
1	*Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +1" (3" total)			1

Perks

15	Follower: Falcon (see *The HERO System Bestiary,* page 137)
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military
10	Money: Wealthy

Talents

9	Ambidexterity: no Off Hand penalty
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

24	+3 with All Combat
3	Acrobatics 13-
1	Acting 8-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Conversation 13-
1	Disguise 8-
4	Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games) 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	AK: His Territory (see text) 13-
3	CK: Hudson City 13-
2	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
2	KS: Sportscars And Luxury Automobiles 11-
2	KS: Boxing 11-
2	KS: Fencing 11-
1	Language: French (basic conversation; English is Native)
1	Language: Russian (basic conversation)
1	Language: Spanish (basic conversation)
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Power: Shooting Tricks 13-
2	PS: Falconry 11-
3	Riding 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-

10 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Riding Animals, Basic Parachuting, Hang-gliding, SCUBA, Small Planes, Snowmobiles, Snow Skiing
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points
12 Equipment Points: 120
35 Vehicle/Base Points: 80
20 Follower/Contact Points: 45
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 299
Total Cost: 408

100+ Disadvantages
15 Dependence: must snort cocaine at least once a day or suffer Incompetence (Easy to obtain; Addiction)
10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
10 Hunted: Card Shark 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation: Sadistic And Powerhungry (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Adrenaline Junkie (Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: vicious crimelord, 11- (Extreme)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other Hudson City crimelords; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
10 Social Limitation: Famous (may be recognized as former movie actor if someone gets a close enough look at him) (Frequently, Minor)
188 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 408

Background/History: Charles Maness left Hudson City for Hollywood with a dream: to become a famous and fabulously wealthy actor. He had the looks — even if he couldn't tell that by glancing in a mirror, everyone told him so, and the string of broken hearts he left behind was testament to his sex appeal.

Four years later, he was back. His looks attracted the attention of studio heads readily enough, and he'd starred in a few B-grade movies. There was just one problem: he couldn't act. His on-screen presence was limited almost entirely to his looks, and that wasn't enough to carry his career beyond a few mediocre films. Wealth and fame had eluded him, but there were other roads he could follow — at least to wealth.

While out in Hollywood, Charles had taken to the "good life" of a movie star like a fish to water. He went to all the right parties, was seen with all the right people, and took up appropriately glamorous hobbies such as fencing and skydiving (which he found he actually enjoyed a lot, regardless of what they did for his "image"). He was also exposed to one of the darker sides of Hollywood — drug abuse. Like so many of the people around him, he began snorting cocaine, and soon became addicted. He returned to Hudson City with an expensive habit and no means to fulfill it.

Charles's salvation came through one of his dealers out in California, who wanted to expand his business into other markets and asked Charles to help him. Unable to turn down the money and the guaranteed supply of drugs, Charles agreed. He recruited pushers and began selling cocaine and crack in the Crown Point and Riverside Hills areas of Hudson City. He found he had a flair for the business... and soon cut out his friend and began buying directly from the Colombians.

Over time, Charlie's criminal territory has grown, fueled by his profits and by his personal "flair." He's attracted a lot of people (both criminals and those who like to hang around them) to him with his sense of style and magnetic personality. Rather than use his real name, he's adopted the *nom du crime* Charlemagne, which is appropriately magnificent for his ambition. Today his empire involves a lot more than just cocaine, and as far as he's concerned, he's finally on his way to the top.

Personality/Motivation: Charlemagne exudes physicality. Not "macho" — he's too suave and urbane (some would say "prissy") for that — but physicality in a sort of Hemingwayesque sense. His good looks, well-toned body, and air of confidence and derring-do immediately impress themselves on those who meet him. For this reason, many people take a liking to him quickly.

Their feelings of camaraderie are, sadly, misplaced. Beneath Charlemagne's flawless features lies a heart black and cold. He's interested only in himself, in his own wants and desires, and he doesn't care what he has to do to satisfy them. He steals, sells drugs, commits rape or assault, and does whatever he must to acquire the money and power he craves. Having failed to obtain these things legitimately, he's determined to get them through crime. It's all power to him, anyway.

Besides which, Charlemagne finds his involvement in illicit activities thrilling. He's as addicted to adrenaline as he is to cocaine, and both his criminal

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Ruger P90DC	+1	+0	2d6	1d6	7	10	PR
Rapier	+1	—	1d6	1d6-1	—	10	AP

Armor
Usually none, but he'll put on light body armor if he knows a gunfight's in the offing

Gear: Given his wealth and influence, Charlemagne can get just about any gear he needs, within reason, but he usually carries little or none, leaving such matters to his underlings

CHARLEMAGNE PLOT SEEDS

Charlemagne makes a move on Diomedes. It's war in the streets of the Southside, and the PCs have to put a stop to it — one way or another — before more innocent people get caught in the crossfire.

Charlemagne wants to remove or neutralize Card Shark so he can get involved in illegal gambling. Knowing he doesn't have the resources to take on Card Shark by himself, he decides to get the PCs to help him. He starts secretly feeding them information about Card Shark so they can take out Card Shark's operations without there being any seeming connection to Charlemagne himself.

If one of the PCs is good at something Charlemagne does (boxing or racing, for example), Charlemagne might decide to challenge him to a duel.

career and his many dangerous hobbies (parachuting, racing boats and cars, flying, SCUBA diving, falconry, riding, boxing, fencing) feed this addiction. If it's exciting, dangerous, or would look good in a cigarette ad, he's probably tried it at least once.

Charlemagne's hobbies are part of his glamorous image (which is why he took up most of them in the first place). He tries to present himself as someone who's larger than life, a movie character rather than a man mired in reality. He likes to live the high life, and the proceeds from his criminal organization allow him to do this (if he saved his money, he'd be a *lot* wealthier). Unfortunately for him, devoting so much time to his hobbies means he often has to leave underlings in control of his organization... and one day one of them may turn on him and seize power.

Charlemagne prides himself on being in control — on remaining calm, cool, and collected no matter who he's facing or what's going on. In reality, he sometimes loses his temper and takes it out on his underlings or his women in cruel, even vicious ways.

Charlemagne is a vain and petty man. He'll go out of his way to take revenge on anyone who insults or humiliates him, and Heaven help the man who mars his features.

Quote: "Ah, another of these insipid heroes. Forgive me, sir, if I do not do you the courtesy of taking you on myself, but I have no desire at present to soil my hands on the likes of you. Caber, dispose of this gentleman, please."

Powers/Tactics: Because of his many hobbies, including boxing, fencing, and shooting, Charlemagne has a fair amount of combat skills... and his "he-man" vision of himself makes him all too willing to take on heroes one-on-one if need be. But most of the time he prefers to let his underlings and hired thugs — including his chief bodyguard, the immensely strong Caber (*The Ultimate Brick,* page 126) — do the fighting for him. Some of his other hobbies (such as race car driving and parachuting) may give him the means to make a quick escape if necessary.

Typically Charlemagne favors the Ruger P90DC semiautomatic pistol, and usually keeps a rapier nearby in case he gets the chance to show off his swordplay. His rapiers are custom-made of case-hardened steel and sharpened to a razor's edge (in game terms, they're Armor Piercing).

Campaign Use: Charlemagne controls a territory on the Southside of Hudson City that covers parts of Crown Point and Riverside Hills (see *Hudson City,* pages 159 and 177). As described in *Hudson City,* he's eager to expand... even if he has to gun down Janus, Diomedes, or Card Shark to do it.

To make Charlemagne tougher, give him a selection of super-skills from *Dark Champions* — one or two defensive ones (such as Can Take A Punch), at least one more offensive one, and perhaps a miscellaneous one for spice. You could also add more Combat Skill Levels. To weaken him, get rid of about half of his Martial Maneuvers and all but one CSL.

Charlemagne's most likely to Hunt a hero if that hero offends his pride or damages his good looks. He's not truly vengeful, but he can remember a wrong done to him for a long time. He's surprisingly patient about getting revenge — he takes time and plans things right so there are no slip-ups and he can thoroughly enjoy whatever he does to the target.

The HCPD wants Charlemagne in connection with literally dozens of crimes ranging from murder, to drug dealing, to petty assault. But so far he's used his money, connections, and skills to stay one step ahead of them.

Appearance: Charlemagne is movie-star handsome: 6'1" tall, 210 pounds carried on a sculpted body, flowing brown hair, a brown muttonchop moustache, bright green eyes. He favors white shirts with ruffles in front, a blue waistcoat/vest, and riding pants and boots — almost as if he came from the early nineteenth century instead of the twenty-first — but he dresses however he feels is most appropriate for the situation.

DIOMEDES

DIOMEDES

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
20	CON	20	13-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
7	COM	-1	10-	
6	PD	2		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	REC	0		
40	END	0		
40	STUN	7	**Total Characteristics Cost: 94**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*Those Two Terrifying Heads:* +15 PRE; Only To Make Fear-/Intimidation-Based Presence Attacks (-1)	0
48	*Separate Nervous Systems:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%, Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼)	0
4	*Four Eyes Are Better Than Two:* +2 PER Rolls with Sight Group	0
5	*Four Eyes Are Better Than Two:* Increased Arc Of Perception (240 Degrees) for Sight Group	0
1	*Each Head Sleeps Separately:* Life Support (Diminished Sleeping: 8 hours per week)	0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
9 Money: Well Off

Talents

5 Eidetic Memory

Skills

3 Bribery 13-
3 Concealment 13-
3 Criminology 13-
3 Interrogation 13-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Scholar
2 1) KS: Art History 13-
2 2) KS: History 13-
2 3) KS: The Hudson City Underworld 13-
2 4) KS: The Hudson City Vigilantes 13-
2 5) KS: Literature 13-

Resource Points

10 Equipment Points: 110
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 152
Total Cost: 246

100+ Disadvantages

20 Distinctive Features: dicephalic (Not Concealable, Causes Major Reaction [fear/disgust/horror])
15 Enraged: when thwarted or stymied (Common), go 11-, recover 14-
25 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Sociopath; Views Other People As Things (Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: vicious two-headed crimelord, 11- (Extreme)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other Hudson City crimelords; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
15 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Phillip and Reginald Anders) (Frequently, Major)
11 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 246

Background/History: Friedrich Nietzsche said one must not look too closely at monsters, lest one become a monster. So what happens if one sees a monster in the mirror every day?

Born in 1975, Phillip and Reginald Anders are dicephalic — in other words, "he" has two heads and nervous systems, each capable of thinking and feeling on its own (see below). While nature blessed the twins with powerful, incisive minds, the strength of their intellects wasn't enough to shield them from the effects of being a freak. Their earliest memories are of being stared at — of being the object of morbid fascination, disgust, and fear. Enough of that sort of treatment would affect even someone with the soul of a saint... and the Anders twins possessed no such soul.

At first Phillip (the "right" twin) and Reginald (the "left" twin) withdrew from the world to avoid other peoples' attitudes. They could easily find ways to amuse themselves, after all. But in time their hurt turned to resentment... then anger... then hatred. By their late teens they had a profound loathing for the rest of humanity, regarding other people as pathetic objects to be played with... or disposed of.

DIOMEDES PLOT SEEDS

Two of Hudson City's most physically and mentally twisted crimelords — Diomedes and the Kyphotic Man — team up! Unable to stop their crime spree, the HCPD appeals to the PCs for help.

After the PCs defeat and capture Diomedes, he seems to suffer a sort of nervous breakdown, bursting into anguished tears and begging them to help him give up the evil life he's been leading. He genuinely seems remorseful and wants to reform... but is it all a ploy? Or could it be that one of the twins really wants to "go straight," while the other doesn't?

The PCs get a tip from an informant on the street that Diomedes is building a massive bomb as part of a plan to destroy the Harpcor Towers building, whose two towers joined to a single lower structure perversely remind him of himself. Is the tip legit — and if so, how do the PCs stop the plot?

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Baretta 93R	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	20	11	AF3, RC1
Brass Knuckles	+0	—	+2d6 N	—	—	5	

Armor
Custom-tailored body armor (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Diomedes rarely carries gear — that's what flunkies are for

In 1992, Phillip and Reginald emancipated themselves from their parents. They committed their first crime the next year when they robbed a check-cashing business, killing four employees (three by shooting, one by setting him on fire). Captured a few weeks later after a short crime spree, they were put on trial. Each one's attorney argued that the *other* twin was responsible for the crime. The blizzard of words, dueling psychiatrists, and obfuscating neurologists resulted in three hung juries. Before the fourth trial could begin, the twins — now referring to themselves by the single name Diomedes, after the monstrous king of Greek mythology — escaped.

Soon the HCPD got word of a new crimelord on the streets. With his malicious intellect and morbid appeal, Diomedes had recruited himself a gang and claimed a territory on the Southside. It took him a few bloody months to enforce that claim, but he's been running things there ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Diomedes's minds are as bizarre as his appearance. Although he's intelligent, learned, and witty, he's also sociopathic. Having been (in his opinion) rejected by humanity, he has in turn rejected humanity. He cares nothing for other people; the concepts of sympathy and compassion are alien to him. As far as he's concerned, other people are to be manipulated, exploited, harmed, or killed whenever necessary. His willingness to kill for little or no reason, not to mention the general abuse and scorn he heaps on others (in stereo!), often makes it hard for him to recruit and keep underlings.

Quote: Phillip: "Even if there was some reason to..."
Reginald: "...keep you alive, it's more fun to kill you."

Powers/Tactics: Diomedes has two heads (each containing an insidiously clever brain), two spines, two hearts, and two stomachs. His spines join at his hips, but his upper bodies merge just below the neck, so that he only has two arms. Each of his heads sleeps separately (effectively allowing him to remain functional almost 24 hours a day), thinks separately, and can talk and eat separately. Because each part of him has a separate nervous system, one side doesn't necessarily feel pain the other does... but since his body is all one system, a drug administered to one part of him affects "both" of him equally. He only has one set of legs, and each part of him controls the leg on that side, but through long practice he can walk, run, and jump with as much grace as any other athletic man of about age 30.

Despite his coordination and enormous strength, Diomedes is no fighter. When he kills, he kills from surprise or a position of overwhelming power. Unless he's cornered or Enraged, he's more likely to run than fight (yet another quality that doesn't exactly endear him to his "employees").

Campaign Use: Diomedes is a crimelord like Charlemagne, Janus, or the Kyphotic Man, but with physical and mental twists that make him distinctive. Having two heads gives him certain abilities normal people don't possess... but has also resulted in circumstances that have driven him insane. The newspapers often call him "psychotic," but a more accurate description would be "sociopath with very low self-control and little tolerance for frustration." Most crimelords are dangerous, but at least they tend to be relatively predictable; any encounter with Diomedes should have the PCs fearing for their lives simply because he's so casual about his use of lethal violence.

To make Diomedes tougher, give him Two-Weapon Fighting (both HTH and Ranged) and some Combat Skill Levels, thus making him more

of a front-line combatant. You might also increase his SPD to 4 (or even 5). To weaken him, reduce his STR and CON to about 15 each.

As a Hunter, Diomedes is both ruthless and unpredictable. Usually he favors a frontal approach, but it's not unknown for him to think up fiendish traps and tortures for his foes. A favorite ploy is to take his target's loved ones hostage, then start killing one of them every hour until the target does what he says.

Copious evidence proves that Diomedes is guilty of numerous robberies and over a dozen murders during his 1993 crime spree, though he hasn't actually been convicted of any of those crimes. He's wanted by the HCPD for questioning in regard to hundreds of criminal acts since then, from conspiracy to homicide.

Appearance: Diomedes is 6'2" tall and weighs 230 pounds; he's in good shape and is pretty strong, but not overly muscular. As described above, he has two heads (with spines that join at his hips), two arms, and two legs. Although one head usually sleeps while the other's awake (so that, in effect, he gets twice as much done as an ordinary person), both heads are awake for important events, and sometimes both sleep at the same time. One head frequently completes the sentences started by the other, or the two speak in unison; either action tends to unnerve the people he's talking to. He usually wears ordinary clothes, with shirts and jackets tailored to fit his unusual upper body. His hair is black and cut short, his eyes green, his faces cleanshaven.

JANUS

JANUS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
30	STUN	7	**Total Characteristics Cost: 71**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
20	*Janus Cane:* Multipower, 30-point reserve; all IAF (-½)	
1u	1) *Weighted Head:* HA +3d6; IAF (-½), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
1u	2) *Cane-Gun:* RKA 2d6; IAF (-½), Beam (-¼), STR Min (10, Does Not Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Real Weapon (-¼), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
20	*The Devil's Own Luck:* Luck 4d6	0

Perks

1	Fringe Benefit: Licensed Stockbroker
2	Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
12	Money: Wealthy

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

3	Bribery 13-
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Conversation 13-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 13-
3	High Society 13-
2	KS: Classical Literature 11-
2	KS: High Finance 11-
2	KS: History Of Classical Civilizations 11-
2	KS: Hudson City Underworld 11-
2	Language: French (fluent conversation; English is Native)
2	Language: Spanish (fluent conversation)
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 13-
4	TF: Basic Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Motorized Boats, Snow Skiing
2	WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

12	Equipment Points: 120
15	Vehicle/Base Points: 40
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 147
Total Cost: 218

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Hunted: vigilante of GM's choice, 8- (As Pow, Capture/Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Lives For The "Thrill Of The Crime" (Common, Strong)

10 Reputation: wealthy dilettante (as Winslow)/ crimelord (as Janus), 11-
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other Hudson City crimelords; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Darryl Winslow) (Frequently, Major)
33 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 218

Background/History: Darryl Winslow's family had *plenty* of money. They weren't up there with the Bankhursts or the Fraziers, but they had more than enough of what makes the world go 'round. Darryl's father gave him the best of everything as he grew up; he attended the finest prep schools, and then Yale. Darryl had a good time goofing off around campus when he should have been studying classical literature. He chose Classical Studies as his major, thinking it would be easy. He was wrong, but a little money here and there greased the wheels with his profs so he didn't have to do too much work. In fact, he used his father's money to smooth things over whenever he did something wrong, which was often. The other failing grades, the date-rape allegations, the wrecked cars — all the bad things went away when Darryl threw money at them.

After Darryl graduated, his father got him a job in his stock brokerage, despite his lack of an MBA. Darryl, for once in his life, worked hard enough to earn something — his stockbroker's license (his father was the one person he couldn't pay off, after all). Then he played at being a stockbroker for about five years until his father died of an unexpected massive heart attack. Knowing his father had left him more money than he could possibly spend, Darryl quit his job and became what he'd trained to be his whole life — a millionaire playboy.

The dilettante routine lost its appeal after a few years, too. There were only so many women to have, drinks to drink, and parties to attend. He was bored, utterly bored. For a while he took up a succession of dangerous sports — racing cars, racing boats, skiing — but in time every new thrill became terribly dull.

Darryl finally found something that excited him the night he was the victim of an attempted mugging. Some punk kid pulled a gun on him in the street and demanded his wallet. Incensed, Darryl refused — so the kid, hands shaking from drug withdrawal, threatened to kill him. Using reflexes heightened by driving and skiing, Darryl grabbed the gun and began wrestling with the kid for it. When he finally got control of it, he shot the kid right between the eyes.

Now it was Darryl whose hands were shaking. Thinking quickly, he dragged the body into a nearby alley before anyone saw him, checked to make sure he hadn't gotten any blood on himself, and then ran. By the time he was a few blocks away, his hands had stopped shaking — and he knew what he wanted to do with his life.

Within a few months Darryl had use his personal charm and his bankroll (both of which were considerable) to recruit the nucleus of a gang. Now, a few years later, he's carved out a small territory for himself in the Hudson City underworld. Because of his "dual identity" as dilettante by day, crimelord by night, he's fallen back on his classical training and chosen the *nom du crime* Janus.

Personality/Motivation: Janus is an excitement and adrenaline junkie. He lives for the "rush" he feels when committing a crime, a rush stronger and more intense than the ones he's gotten doing anything else. Even though his gang does most of the real criminal work, it's still a thrill: after all, if the police catch his men, they might get him, too. In many ways, Janus sees his crimelord career as one big game with the police and other criminals: just like competing with other financiers and the SEC when he was a stockbroker, only better.

But just because the thrill is his primary motivation doesn't mean Janus takes his criminal career lightly. He guards his territory jealously, deals with competitors ruthlessly, and has pulled the trigger more than once. Taking a personal hand in things just increases the risk, and thus the rush — and he's found that he also enjoys the feeling of power crime gives him. The rest of the rabble go about their business obeying the law, handicapped by their morality; he is Janus, and he bows to no man's law!

Quote: "Put down that *stupid* gun and have a seat, before my men teach you the *real* meaning of gunplay."

Powers/Tactics: Janus has no combat skills to speak of. He can fire a gun (either the one concealed in his cane, or the S&W ASP he usually carries) or hit people with his weighted cane, but that's it. Using money and persuasiveness, he's recruited a gang

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
S&W ASP	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	7	10	Clear grips/magazine

Armor
Usually none, by may wear light body armor (DEF 2, Activation Roll 11-) under his clothing in some circumstances

Gear: Janus usually prefers to let his men carry any gear needed to commit a crime, but if necessary outfits himself with appropriate equipment, as long as it isn't too bulky or heavy (examples include nightvision scopes, compact but powerful binoculars, additional weapons such as a small knife or a grenade, and the like)

JANUS PLOT SEEDS

Reports reach the PCs that Janus has been robbing jewelry stores in Bankhurst... at the same time he's been robbing banks on the Southside! Could there be more than one Janus? If not, what's going on... and what will Janus himself do about it?

The PCs hear that Janus has gone into pimping — he's trying to muscle Carl Spears off the Strip. That doesn't really fit his m.o., though. Is he really doing it, and if so, why?

Janus and Diomedes have teamed up to destroy Charlemagne and steal his territory. The fighting in the streets is taking its toll on civilians and property, which should be enough to motivate the PCs to stop the conflict (one way or another...). If not, they may end up with one crimelord controlling the northeast Southside, since sooner or later either Janus or Diomedes will turn on his ally, and the fighting will get even worse....

TWO FACES?

"Janus? They ain't no Janus, fool. What kinda a name is that for a bad-ass robber? It's a !$&*%@# girl's name! Iss like "Me Tarzan, you Jane," just some hooty-fruity way'a spellin' it.

"Maaan, it's a front! It's the !$&*%@# government, man! You take a look at all them places Janus robbed. Look at 'em! I got all th' articles right here, clip 'em outta th' paper an' magazines an' *%&!. All the stuff he's stealin', it's parts for a new killer satellite thing, gonna burn out our brains if we say anythin' bad about Emperor George! All'a the rest of it's just cover for wha's really goin' on, man!"

—Goshen Phil, street political theorist

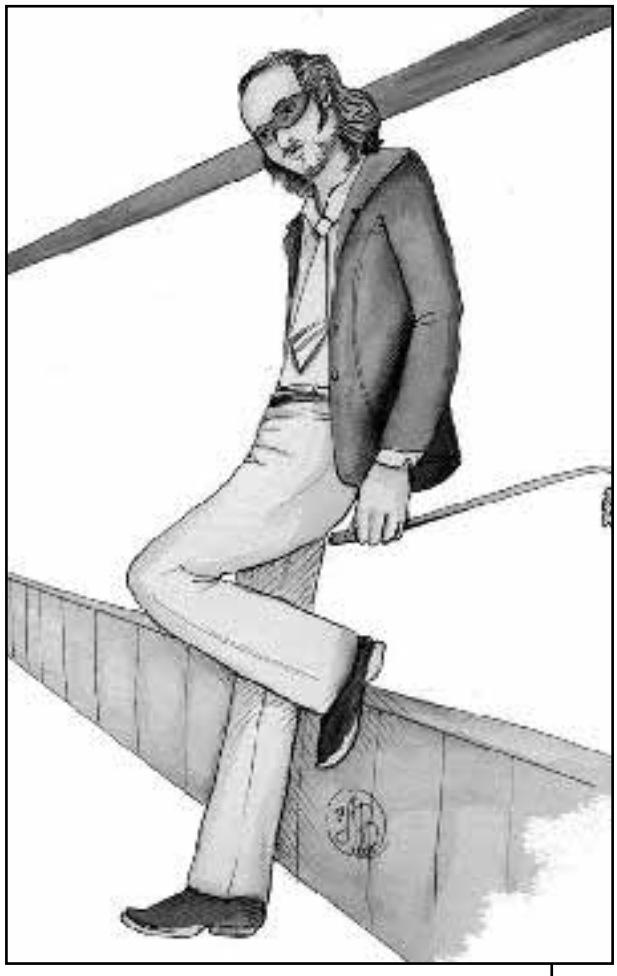
of tough career criminals whom he rules through wit, guile, and generous shares of the loot; they do his fighting for him. If the going gets really rough, Janus cuts and runs, trusting that his high-priced lawyers can get his men out of jail — or that he can recruit new men.

Janus is a big believer in preparation. He plans his crimes extensively, with thought given to things that might go wrong, escape routes, and how to deal with police intervention (he usually commits his crime and gets away long before the cops show up). His men have learned that doing what he says means better hauls and cleaner getaways; working with him has made them better criminals.

Campaign Use: Janus controls a small territory on the Southside of Hudson City in part of Red Hill, Elmview, and North Elmview (see pages 159 and 178 of *Hudson City*). He and his gang are involved in a variety of criminal activities: robbery, protection rackets, blackmail and extortion, forgery — whatever Janus can get a start in and make some money at. He isn't one of the most powerful figures in the Hudson City underworld, but he's making a name for himself with his style and his often brilliant plans. To keep the police off his trail, he fences most of the non-cash loot he obtains in Chicago or Seattle.

To turn Janus into a tougher opponent, make him combat-capable: increase his Primary Characteristics, give him more weapons, and perhaps add some Martial Arts and Combat Skill Levels to his character sheet. To weaken him, remove the Cane-Gun and reduce the Weighted Cane to HA +2d6.

Janus doesn't normally Hunt people — there's no thrill in it. Someone would *really* have to infuriate him to make a Hunter out of him.



The police want various members of Janus's gang for crimes ranging from murder and assault to theft and forgery, and Janus for participation in various robberies. Janus has carefully avoided any sort of exposure that would give the police the means to identify him, so as yet the HCPD only knows him by his *nom du crime* — it doesn't have any information on him or know his identity.

Appearance: Janus is a tall, handsome man in his mid-thirties. He's gone slightly bald in front, but has thick black sideburns and a Van Dyke-style beard that makes him look distinguished or sinister (depending upon the situation). He wears hand-tailored suits, favoring brown or reddish-brown colors; in many situations he wears a matching men's hat and a stylized black mask to conceal his features from security cameras. He carries a cane whose head is a two-headed representation of the god Janus.

RASPUTIN

RASPUTIN				
Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**Roll**	**Notes**
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
25	PRE	20	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	1		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
12	REC	16		
40	END	0		
50	STUN	14	**Total Characteristics Cost: 149**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
30	*HTH Combat Training:* HA +6d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	0
30	*HTH Combat Training:* +30 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only To Simulate Exert-Based Martial Maneuvers (see text; -½)	0
26	*Necksnapper:* HKA 2d6, NND (defense is rigid rPD on the neck, or anything else that prevents the neck/head from being turned and twisted the right way; +1), Does BODY (+1); Must Follow Grab (-½), Must Target The Head (-1), No STR Bonus (-½), Requires A STR Roll (no Active Point penalty; -½)	9
24	*Can Take A Lot Of Punishment:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼)	0
6	*Observant:* +2 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups	0

Perks

10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
15	Money: Filthy Rich

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
5	Rapid Healing
3	Lightsleep
4	Speed Reading

Skills

32	+4 with All Combat
3	Bribery 14-
3	Bureaucratics 14-
3	Computer Programming 13-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Conversation 14-
3	Cryptography 13-
3	Deduction 13-
1	Electronics 8-
3	High Society 14-
3	Interrogation 14-
2	Language: English (fluent conversation; Russian is Native)
3	Lockpicking 12-
1	Mechanics 8-
3	PS: Play Chess 13-
3	SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 13-
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 14-
3	Tactics 13-
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: The Espionage World 13-
2	2) KS: The Hudson City Underworld 13-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Makarov P6	+0	+0	1½d6	1d6	8	10	Uses hollow points
Stechkin APS	+0	+1	1½d6	1d6	20	12	Uses hollow points
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

None, unless he's absolutely certain he's going to get into a firefight; he finds it uncomfortable. If he has to wear it, he usually chooses Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 11-) with ceramic inserts (DEF +3, Activation Roll 10-) — if he's got to wear the damn stuff, he might as well get all the protection he can.

Gear: Though he rarely goes out "into the field" anymore, when he does Rasputin typically uses surplus Soviet military gear — nightvision devices, for example. Between his wealth and his connections, he can obtain nearly anything he wants, including the latest Russian milspec equipment.

2 3) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
2 4) KS: The Russian Intelligence Community 13-
1 5) KS: Russian Literature 11-
2 6) KS: Russian Organized Crime 13-
3 Traveler
1 1) AK: Europe 11-
1 2) AK: Great Britain 11-
1 3) AK: Russia 11-
1 4) CK: Hudson City 11-
1 5) CK: London 11-
1 6) CK: Moscow 11-
1 7) CK: New York City 11-
1 8) CK: Paris 11-

Resource Points

38 Equipment Points: 250
35 Vehicle/Base Points: 80
45 Follower/Contact Points: 95
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 389
Total Cost: 538

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: FSB 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Won't Tolerate Challenges To His Authority Or The Questioning Of His Judgment (Common, Strong)
10 Reputation: feared Russian crimelord, 8- (Extreme)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other mafioski; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
5 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (in Russia) (Occasionally, Minor)
338 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 538

Background/History: Decades ago, Dominik Vladimir Igorovich was a spy for the much-feared KGB. He was a good agent who worked missions throughout Europe, and even in America... but he wasn't so good at working the system. Enemies higher up in the Russian intelligence community disposed of him by framing him for crimes against the state. It was a superbly-made frame, one that not even all of Igorovich's wits and contacts could get him out of. Within the space of three months he went from a luxury apartment in Moscow to a cold, dank cell in a prison in Siberia.

In the *gulag,* Igorovich fell in with the *vory v zakone,* the "thieves in law" who ran the Russian underworld. Though they were normally resistant to outsiders (particularly ones so closely associated with the hated government), it didn't take long for Igorovich to win some of them over with his wit and charm. Others he simply killed — casually, openly, in bold defiance of the possibility of revenge. Those who came to seek that vengeance he killed as well. Eventually the *vory* saw which way the wind was blowing and simply accepted him into their ranks. Despite being imprisoned, Igorovich learned how to use his connections and influence to become a part of the Russian underworld — an important part.

Then the Soviet government — the government for which he'd worked so hard, which had betrayed him, and which he'd ultimately rejected to become a *vor* — collapsed. Before long Igorovitch, now commonly known as Rasputin for all the assassination attempts he survived in prison, was able to use his connections to obtain release. Prison had not been much of an impediment to his criminal ambitions... but as a free man once more, he was able to build an empire of crime that had few rivals, even within kleptocratic Russia. When someone defied him, or failed to follow his commands, he had that person killed — be he prominent politician, wealthy businessman, street thug, or a colleague in the criminal nobility.

And now, content with his conquests in the Old World, he sets his sights on the New. For a year now he's laid the groundwork to come to America — to Hudson City, where he hopes to take control of the many Russian gangs and weld them into a united force that will take the underworld by storm. From there he will expand, taking over other cities as well, until he controls as much crime in America as he does in Russia.

Personality/Motivation: A lifetime of KGB training and fieldwork, prison, and crime has burned most of the compassion and gentler emotions out of Rasputin. He's become a cold, domineering man who can commit acts that would horrify most people without

RASPUTIN PLOT SEEDS

A strange rumor reaches the ears of the PCs: it turns out Rasputin is *already* in this country. He arrived in secret, killed one of the other leading Russian mobsters in Hudson City, and had a plastic surgeon alter his features so he looks like that person. Is it true?... and if so, which one is he, and what does he have planned?

Rasputin's hired a couple of former Soviet military scientists and put them to work creating new designer drugs he can sell. The city's being flooded with powerful new narcotics that often kill the users through overdoses. The PCs have to find Rasputin's lab and put a stop to his manufacturing business.

A man's found floating dead in the Stewart River near Moscow West. A couple of mafioski claim it's Rasputin. Could the feared mobster be dead — and if so, who killed him, and what repercussions will it cause?

giving it a second thought. Russian mobsters laugh at the threats of other organized crime groups and the police, but they fear Rasputin, and rightly so — they know he's killed over a dozen men with his bare hands, and hundreds more simply by giving an order to one of his underlings. If he has his way, plenty of people in America (including, no doubt, your PCs) will learn to fear him just as much.

Quote: "The best thing a man can learn is patience. If you wait and watch, in time you will see a vulnerability in your enemy, a weakness you can exploit. And that is when you strike! But in learning patience, do not overlook the value of decisive action."

Powers/Tactics: Rasputin's initial training was with the KGB, which taught him various spy skills, HTH combat tactics, and weapons use. His field experience as an intelligence agent taught him other lessons... but not as many as prison, where he had to adapt to new ways of surviving and thriving. The result is a smart, streetwise, disciplined man with the temper and drive of a young man but the wisdom and patience of age.

Rasputin's *HTH Combat Training* abilities represent the wide variety of hand-to-hand fighting techniques he's learned or developed over the years. You can use them to simulate many different "Martial Arts"-type attacks. The ability that provides a bonus to STR can function like nearly any Exert-based Martial Maneuver (such as Martial Disarm, Martial Escape, Martial Grab, or even Shove).

When hand-to-hand combat won't do, Rasputin uses weapons. He typically carries two favorites from the old days, a Makarov pistol and Stechkin submachine gun, both loaded with 9mm Russian hollow-points. But he's no sentimentalist; if some other weapon would be better, he'll use it instead.

Rasputin is as tough as old shoe leather. Although he looks physically not much different from a typical 60 year-old man, he can withstand punishment that would make far younger men crumble. He might not have the resilience of the legendary Grigori Rasputin from whom he gets his nickname, but more than one person who thought he'd left Rasputin for dead learned, to his fatal regret, that he erred.

Rasputin fights intelligently and with tactical awareness; he won't risk his life and health on stupid maneuvers or daredevil stunts. He's got a lot of patience; he remains calm, cool, and observant even in a heavy firefight. He prefers to stay in a position of safety, sending his underlings out to confront the opposition, then take advantage of any mistakes the enemy makes to whittle down their numbers.

Campaign Use: Rasputin is an outsider who's trying to make it into the Hudson City underworld — and, eventually, take it over. You can introduce him into your campaign whenever you like, since with his resources he can choose to "crash the party" at any time (*i.e.,* when it's most dramatically appropriate for your game). He should present a real threat to the PCs — you need to make sure he lives up to his reputation as a deadly foe — and before he arrives, they should hear the hushed and fearful whispers about him on the streets of Moscow West and Vidersea.

To make Rasputin tougher, increase his DEX (and possibly SPD), and maybe his STR as well. A few more super-skills from *Dark Champions* might work well, too. To weaken him, get rid of his HTH Combat-related abilities and Skills, making him more of a "realistic" former spy than a cinematic one.

Rasputin is a determined, tenacious Hunter. He'll start out by sending groups of his men after the target. They have no subtlety or restraint; they'll attack the target just about any place or time, regardless of the risk of capture or the possibility of killing innocent bystanders. If that doesn't get the job done, he'll hire outside professionals (such as just about any of the freelance assassins in Chapter Three).

Rasputin has an extensive criminal record in Russia — you name it, he's done it, though the only ones he served time for were the "acts of treason" his enemies cooked up against him in the mid-Seventies. He has no criminal record in the United States... yet.

Appearance: Rasputin is a Russian male in his late 50s or early 60s, though he looks more like he's 45 or so. His cleanshaven face is strong and rawboned. He stands 5'9" tall and weighs about 170 pounds; he doesn't look muscular or athletic, though in truth he's strong, fit, and tough even for someone half his age. He usually wears nondescript men's clothing.

HEAD AND HEART

He pulled a cellphone out of his pocket and snapped it open with a flick of his hand. It looked like an ordinary cell, but it had encryption that would give the NSA fits. The Americans thought his countrymen were fools and incompetents and thugs — but who put a satellite in orbit first?

He pressed two keys with his thumb, held the phone to his ear. It only rang once before the man on the other end picked up. "*Da*?"

"Is he cold yet?"

"*Da,* sir. Two shots, *golova i serdtse.*"

"English. Speak English. You're a long, long way from the Motherland."

"D... Yes, sir." He hung up then, before the man could say anything else. He was a useful tool, but not exactly a brilliant conversationalist.

He dialed again. This time the person who picked up didn't say anything. "It's done," he said, knowing the other man would recognize his voice. "Meet me at the Stewartsboro place with the goods in one hour."

"How do I know he's dead? There's been nothing on the police band...."

"You know it because I tell you. My word is a guarantee. Meet me in an hour as agreed, or I'll give my man a new target."

"Okay, okay, one hour."

—a business transaction in Moscow West

SPEARGUN

SPEARGUN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	4		
36	END	0		
40	STUN	6	**Total Characteristics Cost: 120**	

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END

Martial Arts: Commando Training

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	6d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	8d6 Strike
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 3d6 NND (2)
4	Escape	+0	+0	45 STR vs.Grabs
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 40 STR
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 40 STR
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR)
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

8 +2 Damage Classes (already added in)
6 *Strong Runner:* Running +3" (9" total) 1
2 *Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total) 1
3 *Observant:* +1 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups 0

Perks

5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
5 Money: Well Off
30 Well-Connected and 27 points' worth of Contacts in the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World and the U.S. military/government

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

32 +4 with All Combat
6 +2 with Paramedics, Stealth, and Systems Operation
5 Accurate Sprayfire
3 Bureaucratics 13-
3 Climbing 13-
1 Computer Programming 8-
3 Concealment 12-
5 Concentrated Sprayfire
1 Cryptography 8-
7 Demolitions 14-
3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
3 Interrogation 13-
5 AK: The Hudson City Waterfront 14-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
2 KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
2 KS: The Mafia 11-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2 KS: Navy History And Customs 11-
2 KS: SEAL History And Traditions 11-
3 Navigation (Land, Marine) 12-
3 Paramedics 12-
2 PS: Sailor 11-
2 PS: SEAL 11-
2 SS: Hydrography 11-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Hvy Speargun	+0	+0	1½d6	1d6-1	1 RC	8	AP, LR (4")
H&K Mk 23	+3	+9	2d6-1	1d6	12	10	Sil, FS, laser
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5
Remington 870	+0	+0	2½d6	1d6	8	12	AE1, LR (20"), RR, RP, 2H
Diving Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Typically just Armored Clothing (DEF 2, Activation Roll 14-), but if he knows he's going into a potentially dangerous situation, he often upgrades to Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 11- or 14-, depending on personal preference)

Gear: If he's not wearing underwater gear (rebreather, swimfins, wetsuit, and so on), Speargun usually has some nearby. He may have underwater sleds or other such equipment available, too.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

"If that fish-stinking bastard thinks he's gonna get the Flower Market away from us, he's using his ass for brains. There's no !$&*%@# way he's even gonna come close."

—Verontese soldier Enrico "Ricky Tulips" Carnasio, two weeks before his body was found floating in the Stewart River near the south Pierpoint docks. According to the medical examiner's report, the cause of death was multiple stab wounds whose depth and shape indicated they could have been caused by a speargun bolt.

3 Shadowing 12-
5 Skipover Sprayfire
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 13-
10 Survival (Desert, Marine, Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-
3 Systems Operation 12-
3 Tactics 12-
3 Tracking 12-
5 TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
6 WF: Small Arms, Knives, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Resource Points

48 Equipment Points: 300
45 Vehicle/Base Points: 100
40 Follower/Contact Points: 85
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 374
Total Cost: 494

100+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: US Navy SEALs tattoo on upper left arm (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
25 Hunted: The Mafia 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
10 Hunted: Card Shark 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation: Looks Out For Number One (Common, Strong)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Titos Spargiros) (Frequently, Major)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
10 Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (Occasionally, Major)
274 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 494

Background/History: "Spar... Sparga...."

"Sir, Spargiros, sir!"

"Spar-*GEER*-ose? What the hell kinda name is that, recruit?"

"Sir, it's Greek, sir!"

"Well, !$&* that — nobody'll ever be able to remember it. Says here in your file that you go SCUBA diving, is that right, recruit?"

"Sir, yes, sir!"

"Okay, then, we'll just call you Speargun."

"Sir, yes, sir!"

*****

The Naval Special Warfare center didn't look like much — but he knew it was a rock that could break him as it had broken so many others before, if he wasn't careful... and strong.

"You ready for BUD/S, Speargun?" one of his friends asked as they got off the bus.

"*%&! yeah — bring it on. Let's see who's a man and who's a pussy."

He wasn't quite so smug thirty-three days later, during Hell Week. Exhausted, bordering on hypothermia, battered, and bleeding, he kept going on willpower alone.

"You ready to quit, Speargun? You wanna get some sleep?"

"Sir, no sir!" he responded in a voice that sounded stronger than the rest of him looked.

"I dunno, Speargun. You look to me like you're about ready to collapse. What kind of a teammate are you gonna be if you crap out in the middle of a mission?"

"Sir, with respect, sir, even as tired as I am I could still kick your ass."

The instructor grinned — he couldn't tell if it was pride or mockery. "Carry on, Speargun."

*****

They were crouched in a thicket on a hill overlooking a compound not far from the Caribbean coast of Colombia, waiting for night to fall. Nobody was making any noise; they were just sitting there — silent, professional, patient.

"Sir?"

"What is it, Perretti?"

"Sir, is it true you scored higher on BUD/S than anyone else in your class?"

"Beats me; I didn't see the records. Now shut up. We don't want to tip Cazares off that we're here — when we hit him, I want him dead before he even knows we're there, got it?"

"Yessir."

*****

"Lieutenant Spargiros, I have here a report concerning the Indonesia mission. You want to give me your version?

"Yes, sir. Scarlet Team and I went ashore at 0400 to seek out and destroy the terrorist camp. Based on our intel, we expected to find just a camp, with approximately five dozen terrorists. What we actually discovered was an entire village built around the camp to support and shelter it. So we destroyed it as well using C4."

"Let me make sure I understand you, Lieutenant. You're telling me you knowingly and willfully killed over 100 women and children in addition to the sixty terrorists."

"Yes, sir. As I said, there was no way to get at the camp while leaving the village alone. Furthermore, as you're aware, the existence of Scarlet Team is beyond Top Secret; it would have been irresponsible of me to leave any potential witnesses alive."

"And did your men agree to this course of action?"

"Yes, sir — all but one, sir."

"And that would be Erickson?"

"Yes, sir."

"The one you shot?"

"Yes, sir. Disobedience while on a mission is not to be tolerated."

The Admiral leaned back in his chair, rubbed his eyes wearily, and sighed. "Lieutenant Spargiros, your actions on behalf of your country have been noted and commended on many occasions. But your superiors have observed an increasing

tendency toward this sort of off-the-reservation crap. This incident is completely unacceptable and categorically criminal. I don't care how good you are, you're through with field work. We can't court-martial you; that'd be too public. So you'd better get used to the office — from now on you're pulling desk duty."

That lasted about three months. He was the best field operative the SEALs had, the one they'd given the most desperate, dangerous missions to... and he'd succeeded every time. So what if they thought he was too brutal? Can't make an omelette without breaking a few eggs. Finally his superior officer gave him one order too many. With one punch he broke the man's jaw and left him lying unconscious on the floor. Then he left and never returned.

*****

He'd been drinking a lot lately, mainly in Elmview and Red Hill bars. It took a lot to get him drunk, but when he did, all of his anger came boiling out and he got into fights. Afterwards he'd drink some more.

He was sitting in Hannigan's, surrounded by the unconscious bodies of the last half-dozen assholes who'd pissed him off for no particular reason, when the place went quiet. He looked up quick, expecting trouble, and saw two men who'd just walked in the place. One was dressed like some sort of fag businessman, with a fancy suit, a walking stick, and a two-toned mask over his face. The other was a big guy with the most unexpressive face he'd ever seen — looked like he might be a mob enforcer.

They walked over toward him. "Mr. Spargiros?" the masked guy asked — but confidently, not hesitantly the way most people talked to him.

"Yeah. So who wants to know?"

"You can call me Jack, if you like. The man I work for would like to talk to you about a job."

"Job? What the hell kinda job?"

"A very high-paying job, Mr. Spargiros. One that will let you use your special talents without the need for the... restraint we're told the Navy required."

What the !$&,* he thought. *It couldn't hurt to talk to the guy, since I'm about out of money anyway.* "Okay, take me to him."

They drove him around in a limousine with blacked-out windows for two hours until he had absolutely no idea where he was — might've been Hudson City, might've been Fell's Point, might've been Vietnam for all he knew. The masked guy asked him a lot of questions about his military service; the other guy never said a word, never smiled, never so much as twitched his nose. He was a professional, and Spargiros liked that.

The limo finally pulled to a stop. When he got out, he was in a brightly-lit warehouse. Seated a few feet away behind a simple metal desk was a man even he recognized after years of not paying any attention to the local news: the masked criminal known as Card Shark. "Won't you have a seat, Mr. Spargiros?" Card Shark asked, gesturing to a seat on the other side of the desk. Keeping a wary eye on everything and everyone around him, he sat down.

"Coffee?"

"Sure."

Seconds later a good-looking woman dressed in an outfit similar to Card Shark's put a filled cup in front of him, cream and sugar on the side.

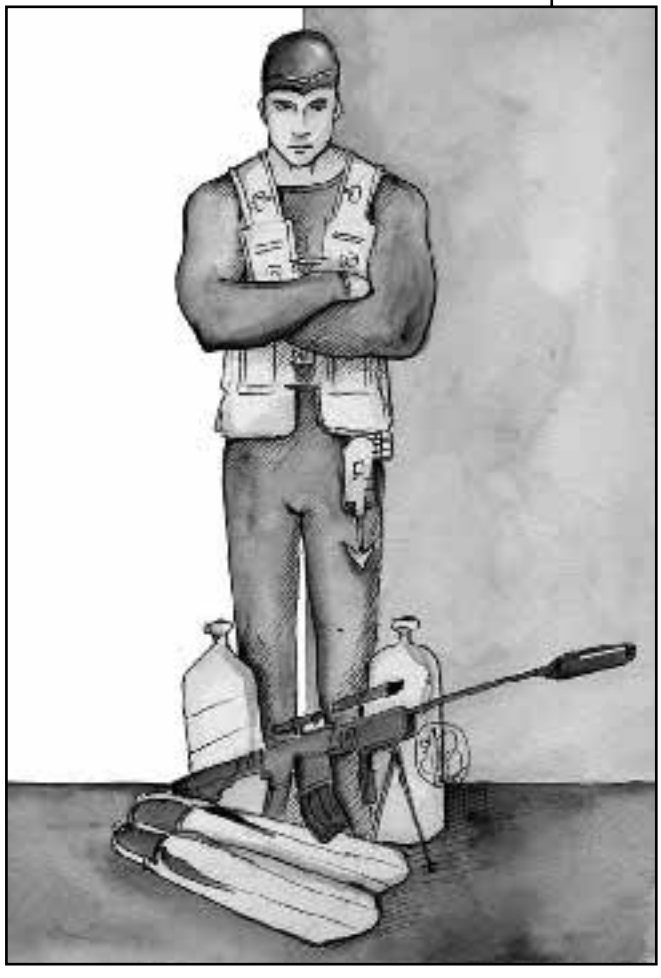
"Thank you for coming tonight, Mr. Spargiros. Some... friends of mine told me a little bit about your situation. I've been looking for someone like you, and I think we might be able to help each other out — to our mutual profit."

"I'm listening."

Card Shark waved the rest of his people away so they were beyond earshot, then leaned forward to talk more confidentially. "For some time now I've been seeking a way to break the Mafia's hold on this city and increase my own power at their expense. I think the key to this is the waterfront. With their stranglehold on the docks, the Italians can control all sorts of businesses and extort all kinds of money out of the city. I want to take the docks away from them — and to do that, I need a man who's ruthless, well-trained, and used to working on the water."

"So let me see if I understand this. You want me to come to work for you and start killing a bunch of Mafia guys?"

"No, not exactly, Mr. Spargiros. I intend to set you up as a new crimelord here in Hudson City — one who wants to take control of the waterfront as his turf. After two decades of FBI manhunts and federal prosecution, the Mafia is weak; someone with your training and efficiency shouldn't have any trouble kicking them off the docks. To all intents



SPEARGUN PLOT SEEDS

Two men, both with Navy SEAL tattoos, turn up dead in different parts of town within a week; both were obviously murdered. SEALs who formerly served with Spargiros, they were in town to share their suspicions about Speargun's real identity and history with the FBI... but Speargun found out about it and got to them first. The PCs have to investigate; if they solve the crime, they may learn some valuable information about one of their enemies.

The Mafia is having a harder and harder time fending off Speargun — it's time for drastic measures. Through indirect channels they approach the PCs and offer to pay them to kill the self-styled "Ruler of Dockland."

The Navy isn't Hunting Speargun — it can't without drawing too much attention to him, which might reveal the existence of Scarlet Team, a group it desperately wants to keep secret — but a couple of highly-placed SEAL officials keep tabs on him. They need Spargiros back for one ultra-tough, ultra-secret mission, but they can't make direct contact with him. They ask the PCs to handle the "negotiations."

and purposes, you'll be working on your own... but in reality, you'll take orders from me and get paid — handsomely — by me. What do you say?"

It took him all of five seconds to think about it. Who was going to offer him a better job? It gave him everything he wanted — money, power, fame, danger. If this costumed clown tried to push him around too much, he'd get rid of him, maybe even take his place. "I'm yours. When do we start?"

"In the morning. For now, Seven of Clubs will show you to your room." He waved over the pretty woman in the card costume, and she led him out of the room.

Back in the warehouse, One-Eyed Jack came over to Card Shark's desk. "How'd it go, sir?"

"Very well, I think. He seems... amenable to my plans."

"Want to tell me what those plans are?"

"Not just yet, Jack. We'll see how things work out. If Mr. Spargiros becomes intractable, he can be eliminated and we'll try something else."

Personality/Motivation: Speargun is a cold, calculating professional military man — even if he's now taken on the role of master criminal. He approaches his crimes ("missions") with military efficiency. He doesn't tolerate sloppiness, lack of discipline, or backtalk from his men; they do what they're told, as they're told to do it, or they may find themselves on the unpleasantly sharp end of his heavy speargun.

Speargun's not a casual killer — murder for murder's sake is stupid and dangerous — but he's no stranger to the use of violence. He'll eliminate anyone who gets in his way as swiftly and brutally as he can, and when he interrogates someone he's quick to move from asking questions to outright torture if the subject is the least bit uncooperative.

Speargun is a good soldier — he obeys Card Shark's orders and works well in a group. But ultimately the only person he's concerned about these days is himself. The patriotism he once felt was burned out of him by the Navy's "betrayal," so now he's going to look out for Number One. He realizes his position in Card Shark's organization in tenuous, so he's ready to defend himself against his erstwhile employer... and then strike back.

Quote: "You've got two choices, Turretti. Either you can sign your businesses over to us, or I can shove this speargun up your ass and pull the trigger. Take your pick."

Powers/Tactics: Speargun is a highly-trained former Navy SEAL with several years' experience successfully performing some of the U.S. military's most dangerous, sensitive missions. He's an expert on small-unit tactics, covert warfare and operations, demolitions, underwater activities, survival, hand-to-hand and firearms combat, and a host of related subjects. Over the past couple of years he's added to that a street expertise in taking on the Mafia, controlling the waterfront, and eliminating his enemies in a way that sends a message.

Speargun's favorite weapon is his trademark speargun, a heavy, custom-made version of the standard underwater speargun. But he realizes it's not the perfect weapon for every situation — it's more for intimidation and attitude. On a combat mission he favors typical SEAL weapons, such as the H&K SOCOM and MP5 (in many variants).

When possible, Speargun prefers to attack from the water. He knows many of his targets don't expect that, and aren't prepared to follow him if he escapes in speedboats or underwater. All of his men are experienced divers; several of them are SEAL veterans like himself.

Campaign Use: As described in *Hudson City,* for the past few years Speargun's been working for Card Shark as part of the master criminal's plan to wrest the waterfront from the Mafia. His clever tactics and ambushes scored many early successes — he controls a lot of the Stewart River docks and even the Flower Market. But now the Mafia knows what he's up to, so his progress has slowed considerably.

Card Shark and Speargun keep their ties *very* secret; even Card Shark's lieutenants don't know what's going on (though One-Eyed Jack and Pokerface know Card Shark met with Titos Spargiros and have guessed there's some connection between him and Speargun). Card Shark will cut Speargun loose, or have him killed, once he's served his purpose or can be of no further use; Speargun, in turn, expects such a betrayal and is planning to turn the tables on the Ace of Crime and take over his organization.

Speargun's already pretty tough, but if you want to make him more powerful, give him some super-skills from *Dark Champions.* To weaken him, get rid of his Extra DCs, reduce his Primary Characteristics by 2-4 points each, and get rid of the Contacts he's paid Character Points for.

Speargun doesn't Hunt anyone right now; he's focusing his efforts on capturing the waterfronts for Card Shark. But he'll remember anyone who did him wrong and take revenge whenever he has the opportunity. If someone put a real hurting on his organization, he might decide to Hunt and eliminate that person before resuming his fight against the Mafia. In that case, he'll patiently follow and observe his quarry, then attack him in a military-style ambush when the time is right.

Titos Spargiros has no criminal record; his military records, which detail numerous acts that would be considered criminal, are sealed and hidden away. The HCPD wants to question Speargun about numerous acts of murder, kidnapping, assault, robbery, and hijacking.

Appearance: Speargun is a big man — 6'2", 225 pounds — with broad shoulders, a muscular build, ripped abs, and a cold, menacing look. He keeps his blonde hair in a buzz cut so it doesn't get in the way when he's swimming or in a fight. Since most of his "missions" take place in or on the water, he's often dressed in a wetsuit and other underwater gear; the rest of the time he wears military fatigues. He almost always has at least one weapon with him, either his trademark heavy speargun or his H&K SOCOM.

CARL SPEARS

CARL SPEARS				
Val	**Char**	**Cost**	**Roll**	**Notes**
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	2		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 52**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Perks

5 Money: Well Off
3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

3 Lightning Calculator

Skills

5 Bribery 13-
3 Bureaucratics 12-
3 Deduction 13-
3 CK: Hudson City 12-
2 PS: Business Manager 11-
5 PS: Pimp 15-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Scholar
2 1) KS: Business Law 13-
2 2) KS: The Hudson City Underworld 13-
2 3) KS: The Mafia 13-
2 4) KS: Modern Business Practices 13-
4 5) KS: The Vice World 15-

Resource Points

12 Equipment Points: 120
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
45 Follower/Contact Points: 95
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 127
Total Cost: 179

100+ Disadvantages

25 Hunted: HCPD Vice 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Hunted: Mafia 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Misogynist (Common, Strong)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other Hudson City crimelords; Seeks To Harm Rivals)
15 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Carlo "Carl Spears" Spirretti) (Frequently, Major)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)

Total Disadvantage Points: 205

Background/History: "History? Why the !$&* do I gotta study history? I wanna go out and play ball!"

That earned him a smack on the side of his head that made him see stars. "Because I ain't gonna have you runnin' around with them wiseguys like I did when I was your age," his uncle said. "I seen you runnin' numbers and doin' errands for those guys. But you're smart — smart enough to go to school and make somethin' of yourself. So you're gonna study that god-damned book, and every other god-damned book you got, until you get straight As and get inta college. I'll pay for it, don't you worry about that, but you're gonna go. And after that, business school. You're gonna work in one'a them big office buildings downtown, not outta the backa some pizzeria in Little Italy."

His uncle was right. He got into college, then business school. It was easy for someone as smart as him — smart in all the right ways. Despite his uncle's wishes, when he wasn't studying he kept on running errands for gangsters, learning their ways and how they did their jobs by watching them. He got top marks at DeGraff, and everyone figured him for an executive's job at one of the nation's top corporations. But he had other ideas. He wasn't going to work long hours for some company, only to get tossed aside during the next round of layoffs. But he couldn't go back to the Mafia; he was too different from them now. He had to find his own way in the underworld.

And he knew just what he wanted to do. What was the one thing people could never do without, would never do without, would want even when they were poor? Sex. The growth industry of the twenty-first century wasn't going to be computers or biotech, it was going to be sex. So he was going to get in on the ground floor.

With the help of his underworld connections, he recruited a couple of bodyguards and

CARL SPEARS PLOT SEEDS

Several of Spears's girls go missing, then turn up dead, over the space of a month. Is there a new serial killer in town, and if so why is he targeting Spears specifically? Or is Spears himself... or one of his competitors... to blame? If it's not Spears, might he turn to the PCs for some "unofficial" help?

Spears wants to branch out into the legal, and ultimately more profitable, ends of the vice industry: films, clubs, and such. But Cleopatra, Ernest Cole, and Caligula already dominate that business to such an extent that getting a foothold, much less becoming a major player, would be tough. He decides to create a "power vacuum" by taking one of them down. To drum up the necessary cash and muscle, he teams with another crimelord (probably Charlemagne or Diomedes). Can the PCs stop this new crime empire from getting started?

That new candidate for City Council — Bob Pressman — doesn't he look an awful lot like Carl Spears?

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

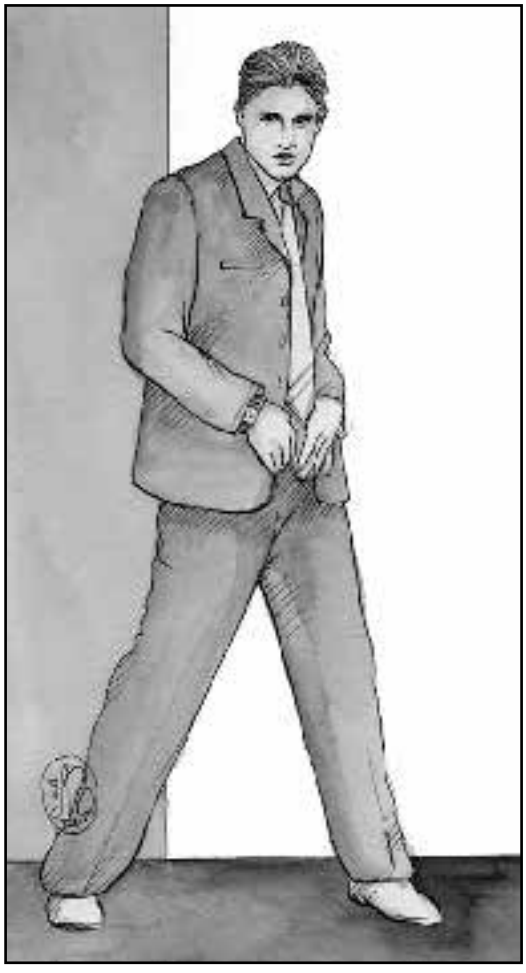
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Glock 17L	+3	+9	1d6+2	1d6-1	19	9	PR, laser

Armor
None

Gear: None — carrying around a lot of junk is tiresome and would ruin his image. He's always got a lot of cash on him, though.

some other flunkies and headed over to the Strip. He "persuaded" first one pimp, then another, then another to hand over his stable and his territory. Sometimes the persuasion involved a bullet between the eyes, but to Carlo — now calling himself by the easier to pronounce, and more memorable, name Carl Spears — that was just a form of hostile takeover.

Once he had the girls in hand, he started applying modern business management techniques to his "company." Compared to a typical pimp, he was efficient, disciplined, and very profitable... even if he did have to beat a few of the girls into line every now and then. His rep became so strong that other pimps decided to come work for him, giving him a group of "junior managers" to help keep an eye on things. He's got a long way to go — people like Caligula and Cleopatra are still too much competition for his liking — but there's no denying that his nontraditional approach has made him a power on the Strip.



Personality/Motivation: Spears comes across as educated, sophisticated, and urbane — particularly for the Vice World. He is those things, but they mask a personality that's devious and cruel. Even compared to most businessmen, he's greedy and self-centered; he wants what's best for him, and !$&* everybody else. If maximizing his profits means abusing, degrading, or even killing one of his girls, so be it — he thinks women are weak and stupid, and he proves it to himself whenever he likes.

Quote: "I think we can cut a deal that would be mutually beneficial."

Powers/Tactics: Spears isn't a fighter. He knows how to use a gun, or his fists, but why risk damaging his suit? When things get ugly, he turns his bodyguards — Paul "Mr. Red" Provenzano and Gabriel "Mr. Black" Salvucci (who look nearly identical except for their ties, which match their nicknames) — loose on whoever's giving him trouble. Between them and the other thugs he keeps around, he can handle just about anything (and if worse comes to worst, he can pull his Glock).

For Mr. Red and Mr. Black, use the *Soldier/Mercenary, Experienced/Tough* generic character sheet from the Appendix, but add Streetwise, CK: Hudson City 11-, AK: The Strip 11-, PS: Bodyguard 11-, and any other Skills or abilities you consider relevant.

Campaign Use: As the Hudson City vice lord who's "on the street" the most, Spears is likely to encounter the PCs eventually. His activities may not be as objectionable to most characters as, say, Caligula's or Ernest Cole's, but ultimately they're still intolerable... and they're much more overt.

Spears isn't intended to be a combatant, so you shouldn't make him much tougher. At most, you could increase his Characteristics a little, or perhaps give him a Combat Skill Level or two with his pistol. To weaken him, reduce his Follower/Contact Points; that's where his true strength lies.

In most situations, Spears won't Hunt heroes; it gains him nothing. If someone threatens him or his "company," he takes whatever steps he must to stop them, but a long, drawn-out vendetta doesn't do him or his bank account any good. He's a businessman, and he evaluates such problems from a cost-benefit perspective.

Spears has an extensive criminal record for procuring and related offenses, but has kept his more serious crimes (murder, assault, the occasional minor drug dealing) hidden from the cops. He has a small army of clever, high-priced attorneys who get him out of jail quick and inundate the cops with lawsuits if they "harass" him too much.

Appearance: Carl Spears is a handsome white man in his early 30s with brown hair carefully cut and styled. He's 5'9" tall and weighs 165 pounds; he's got a trim build but not an athletic or muscular one. He doesn't look Italian; most people assume he's of some northern European ancestry. He dresses like a businessman in well-tailored suits, fine Italian shoes and belts, and expensive silk ties, all complemented with tasteful but costly jewelry: gold Rolex watch; gold cufflinks; gold HCU class ring; and so on.

BUSINESS THIRD DEGREE

<SLAP> It was a hard one, a backhand right across the cheekbone that left her seeing stars.

"Who owns you, bitch?"

Head hung down, blood oozing from where his pinky ring had cut into her face, she spoke so softly between sobs that he almost couldn't hear her. "S-Slick."

"Slick? Slick owns you?" He jerked her up out of the chair by her hair so quickly it almost gave her whiplash. He dragged her into the other room as she desperately tried to get her feet under her, to keep up.

"That's what owns you, bitch?" He pointed at the chair where they had Slick tied up. Mister Red and Mr. Black had beaten him until the blood was running all down his shirt and onto the floor.

She nodded, feebly.

He dropped her to the floor and picked up the pot of hot coffee from the stove. He held it over her, tipping it, not yet pouring. "Who owns you, bitch?"

She got it now. "You do," she said, a minor note of confidence creeping in around the edges at last.

"You're !$&*%@# right I do," he said, turning around and throwing the coffee on Slick. He watched while Slick screamed in pain for a few seconds before passing out. Then he turned back to her. "And just to make sure you remember it, Mr. Red and Mr. Black are going to teach you a little lesson." He bent down, leaned in close, whispered. "And when they're done, you get your !$&*%@# ass back on the street. You'd better bring me half a cool by sunrise, bitch, or I'm going to make another pot of coffee."

He stood up and walked out. Mister Black began unbuckling his belt.

—a lesson from the Carl Spears School of Business Management

RANDOLPH STARR

RANDOLPH STARR

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 41**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
9	*Supreme Hacking:* Mind Scan 2d6 (Machine class of minds), Cumulative (+½), Increased Cumulative Points (96 points; +¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (any appropriately-equipped computer of opportunity; -½), Extra Time (minimum of 1 Minute to activate, and may take much longer; -¾), Mandatory Effect (EGO +10; -¼), Requires A Computer Programming Roll (-½)	0
10	*Supreme Hacking:* Mind Control 2d6 (Machine class of minds), Cumulative (+½), Increased Cumulative Points (96 points; +¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (any appropriately-equipped computer of opportunity; -½), Extra Time (minimum of 1 Turn to activate, and may take much longer; -¾), Requires A Computer Programming Roll (-½)	0

Perks

6	Fringe Benefit: Business Rank
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military
15	Money: Filthy Rich
60	Well-Connected and 57 points' worth of Contacts in business, government, and the computer community

Skills

3	Bribery 12-
3	Bureaucratics 12-
1	Combat Driving
9	Computer Programming 16-
9	Cryptography 16-
3	High Society 12-
3	KS: Computer Games 13-
3	KS: The Hacker World 13-
3	KS: High Finance 13-
2	KS: Marketing And Advertising 11-
6	KS: StarrTech And Its Products 16-
3	Persuasion 12-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
None							

Armor
None

Gear: Starr usually has at least one, if not more, upper-end laptops with him at all times. As a gadget aficionado, he's also likely to have all sorts of other electronic items: PDAs, digital recorders, digital cameras, portable DVD players, you name it.

3 PS: Computer Game Player 13-
5 PS: Computer Programmer 15-
5 PS: Hacker 15-
3 Security Systems 14-; Only Versus Computer Security Systems (-½)
3 Stealth 11-
3 Trading 12-
2 TF: SCUBA, Snow Skiing
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Expert: Computer Designer/Programmer
6 1) SS: Computer Science 17-
2 2) KS: Computer Systems 13-
2 3) SS: Electronic Engineering 13-
2 4) SS: Mathematics 13-

Resource Points

28 Equipment Points: 200
20 Vehicle/Base Points: 50
30 Follower/Contact Points: 65
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 272
Total Cost: 313

100+ Disadvantages

10 Hunted: SEC 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation: Must Crush His Rivals (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Susceptible To Flattery (Common, Moderate)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with Ixion)
10 Social Limitation: Famous (Frequently, Minor)
5 Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (Occasionally, Minor)
158 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 313

Background/History: Randolph Starr began taking apart televisions and clock-radios to see how they worked when he was only five. By twelve he'd designed and built his own primitive computer system. At 15 he enrolled in HCU, but he never graduated — he spent most of his time working on what he considered a revolutionary computer operating system, and when he finished it at 18, he dropped out to market it.

His skills, enthusiasm, and the obvious quality of his product quickly attracted investors for StarrTech. Although the early years were rough — the company struggled to refine its StarrSoft suite of programs even further and compete against other high-tech juggernauts — but eventually Starr's genius, drive, and razor-sharp business sense won out. Today StarrTech is one of the largest technology companies in the world, with its fingers in almost every technological pie... and Randolph Starr is its king.

Personality/Motivation: Randolph Starr is a genius; even the many people who despise him freely admit that. It sometimes seems as if his mind works at light-speed, tossing off ideas and concepts faster than his secretaries can write them down. The StarrSoft operating system and collection of programs — many of which the company gives away free or sells for a nominal sum to gain market share — was a brilliant development for which Starr deserves full credit.

But beyond that, the company's success has had as much to do with more questionable practices as Starr's intelligence and financial acumen. A lot of "Starr's" discoveries have actually been the work of other scientists — he just stole them via corporate espionage, blackmail, dubious contractual arrangements, or strong-arm tactics. While he presents a handsome face of technocratic corporate benevolence, the truth is that Starr's as much a shark as Tobias Blount or Michelangelo Strake... he just hides it better.

Starr is used to being in charge and on top of things, and loathes it when he's not. If he sees someone, or some company, as a rival, he'll take steps to eradicate the threat — whether that means buying a rival company or having an up-and-coming scientist who won't work for him suffer "an unfortunate accident." But like many men of power, he enjoys hearing just how powerful he is, and sometimes has trouble resisting flattery (particularly if it's eloquently presented, or offered by a beautiful woman).

Starr considers the famed hacker Ixion (page 158) his one major rival in the world of computer programming/hacking (Ixion, on the other hand, doesn't even know Starr feels this way). Using his online identity of "Clipper," Starr strives to achieve hacking feats that will prove his superiority.

Quote: "Planning a deal is like programming a computer: you just have to be aware of the full parameters and all the elements, and instruct them how you want them to act. Unfortunately some of those elements are human, and not always as dependable or predictable as technology. Like the man said, sometimes if you want something done right, you have to do it yourself."

Powers/Tactics: Randolph Starr is an inventor and financier, not a fighter, and he knows it. He doesn't even carry a weapon, much less have any desire to get involved in a battle — if there's a fight, he's got Starrlight, Starrbright, and plenty of hired bodyguards to take care of things for him. He'll head for safety by the most expedient route.

Starr likes to think of himself as a top-notch hacker, and in many ways he's right. In game terms, he has two abilities that represent his skill at penetrating computer systems: a Cumulative Mind Scan that allows him to find the right system; and then a Cumulative Mind Control that lets him take control of the machine and make it do what he wants or provide the data he seeks. Like regular hacking using Computer Programming, these abilities take a lot of time to use — days or months, for the most protected systems — but given time he can usually get into most systems.

Campaign Use: Starr is a criminal businessman like Michelangelo Strake (see below), but with a twist. Strake's nothing but a businessman, whereas Starr thinks of himself more as an inventor and hacker than a tycoon — his wealth is just a byproduct of his tech skills. His approach to dealing with the PCs, whether as a Hunter or an ordinary adversary, is usually technological: he'll start by using his hacking abilities to dig up dirt on them and make their lives miserable, then graduate to things like ruining their credit records and hiring thieves to steal their treasured possessions. If necessary, eventually he'll hire mercenaries to take them out... but he usually finds more sophisticated ways to deal with his opponents.

Starr isn't intended as a combatant, so if you want to make him a tougher foe, don't go that route — improve his hacking abilities, and perhaps give him more Followers. To weaken him, get rid of his Mental Powers and reduce some of his Skill Rolls a little.

Starr has no criminal record, though the SEC suspects some of his financial practices and keeps an eye on him.

Appearance: Randolph Starr is a handsome man in his mid-30s with a winning smile, wavy brown hair, and brown eyes. He's 5'10" tall, weighs about 190 pounds, and dresses in expensive, high-class men's fashions. He usually eschews suits for more comfortable business clothing, but is perfectly willing to "dress up" when appropriate. He's accompanied everywhere he goes by Starrlight and Starrbright, and usually has at least one laptop nearby.

NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER

HUDSON CITY — Computer industry giant StarrSoft today announced the formation of a new subsidiary, StarrBlaze, which will create games for home computer and game console systems.

"StarrBlaze represents the leading edge of computer gaming," said company owner and CEO Randolph Starr, speaking to the press and industry representatives at a packed press conference held at the Hudson City Convention Center. "The games we already have in development are going to revolutionize the world of gaming, with better graphics, better writing, better play." StarrBlaze's president, Monica Jansen, echoed his comments, saying "In a few months, no one's going to be talking about — or playing — anything but Starrblaze games."

Industry analysts say that thanks to StarrBlaze's funding, it immediately leaps into the top five of computer game companies.

—from a February, 2005 newspaper article

RANDOLPH STARR PLOT SEEDS

Some of the PCs' electronic equipment starts to go haywire for no reason they can discern. Randolph Starr offers to help them personally. If the problem is public knowledge, is this a publicity stunt, does he genuinely want to help, or does he have an ulterior motive? If it's not public, how did he find out about it — and again, why does he want to help? Is it possible he deliberately caused the problem to get close to the PCs?

If the PCs are known as mercenaries, investigators, or as "for hire," Starr secretly hires them to find out who Ixion really is. Why does Starr want to know?

A friend of the PCs' owns a small tech company that's the target of a hostile takeover by StarrTech. He asks them to help him find a way out of this dilemma.

STARRLIGHT AND STARRBRIGHT PLOT SEEDS

Both of the sisters fall in love with a male PC (though they remain loyal to, and in the employ of, Starr). They compete with each other to see who can win his affections. Wackiness ensues.

Starrlight is badly injured by a PC... or someone who *appears* to be a PC. While her sister convalesces, Starrbright sets out to find out what happened and get revenge.

The *Hudson Sun* claims it has proof that Starrlight and Starrbright are twin brothers who underwent sex-change surgery in Scandinavia and martial arts training with a notorious Triad leader in Hong Kong. Is it true... and if so, what will the sisters do in light of this revelation?

STARRLIGHT AND STARRBRIGHT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
16	COM	3	12-	
6	PD	3		Total: 9 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	2	**Total Characteristics Cost: 66**	

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers	END
22	*Two Sisters Fighting As One:* Aid DEX 3d6, Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible; +1); Only For Increasing OCV And DCV (-¼), Self Only (-½); Only Works Within 5" Of Sister (-1)	0
	Martial Arts: Kung Fu	
	Maneuver — OCV — DCV — Notes	
4	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
4	Disarm -1 +1 Disarm, 25 STR	
4	Dodge +0 +5 Dodge all attacks, Abort	
4	Escape +0 +0 30 STR vs. Grabs	
3	Joint Lock/Grab -1 -1 Grab, 25 STR	
5	Kick -2 +1 7d6 Strike	
4	Knife Hand -2 +0 HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Punch +0 +2 5d6 Strike	
3	Throw +0 +1 3d6 +v/5, Target Falls	
4	*Tien-hsueh* Strike -1 +1 2d6 NND (1)	
2	Use Art with Clubs, Staff	
11	*Fighting Baton-Staff:* Multipower, 22-point powers; all OAF (-1)	
1u	1) *Offense:* HA +3d6; OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) **plus** Stretching 1", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Only To Cause Damage (-½), No Velocity Damage (-¼)	1
1u	2) *Defense:* Missile Deflection (any physical projectile), Range (adjacent hexes; +½); OAF (-1), Costs Endurance (-½)	1
4	*Strong Runner:* Running +2" (8" total)	1
2	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward)	1
6	*Bodyguard's Observation:* +2 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups	0

Perks

5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
4	*Inspired Savior:* Lightning Reflexes: +6 DEX with All Attacks; Only When Directly Defending/Protecting Randolph Starr (-1)

Skills

10	+2 HTH
4	+2 OCV with Block
5	+1 with Agility Skills
3	Acrobatics 12-
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Climbing 12-
1	Computer Programming 8-
3	Contortionist 12-
3	Conversation 12-
3	High Society 12-
2	KS: Fashion And Fashion Accessories 11-
2	KS: StarrTech And Its Products 11-
3	Persuasion 12-
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
3	Seduction 12-
3	Stealth 12-
1	Streetwise 8-
5	Teamwork 13-
6	WF: Small Arms, Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons

Resource Points

28	Equipment Points: 200
10	Vehicle/Base Points: 30
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 216
Total Cost: 282

100+ Disadvantages

25	Psychological Limitation: Unswervingly Loyal To Randolph Starr (Very Common, Total)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with sister, wants to prove herself the best, most attractive, *etc.* to Randolph Starr)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Beretta 8000	+2	-1	1d6+1	1d6-1	15	9	Fine tuning II, size reduction II, weight reduction
Knife	+0	—	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Designed for concealment

Armor
Armored Clothing (DEF 2, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Starrlight and Starrbright rarely carry any gear, but if necessary can get just about anything they need through Starr

137 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 282

Background/History: No one seems to know who Starrlight and Starrbright are. They were just there one day, accompanying Randolph Starr after he became successful. They're clearly twin sisters, and both well-trained in the martial arts, but beyond that it's all speculation. The best guess is that they might be former Soviet bloc spies or soldiers who went freelance after the collapse of the USSR, but they definitely don't speak with any sort of accent. Some conspiracy theorists have gone so far as to suggest they're an ultra-advanced genetics experiment; whenever a reporter mentions that, the two of them just giggle.

Personality/Motivation: Starrlight and Starrbright usually don't have much to say (even if directly questioned by a reporter, they normally speak in platitudes and small talk), so it's difficult to get a handle on their personality/ies. But they're clearly extremely devoted to Randolph Starr's wellbeing, having risked their own lives to preserve his on several occasions. There even seems to be a bit of a friendly rivalry between the two of them as to who can protect Starr the best, but they don't let it interfere with their work.

Some people speculate as to the other "services" the girls provide Starr — another subject that elicits nothing but giggles if you ask them about it.

Quote: [While accompanying Starr down the red carpet to some major event:] "Hi, Hudson City! How are you tonight?"

Powers/Tactics: Starrlight and Starrbright are both highly-skilled bodyguards with extensive martial arts training. Their favored weapon is a baton-staff. It looks like a slender version of an ordinary metal fighting baton, but with a flick of the wrist it telescopes out to the length of a staff. They use the baton-staff not only for striking, but for blocking attacks against themselves or Starr.

The sisters' training allows them to fight more effectively as long as they're within 5" of each other — they know just how to move together to strike the most effective blow against a foe, how to attack as one, and so forth. As bodyguards strongly devoted to their protectee, they're inspired to react more quickly to defend him, such as to Block an attack aimed at him or interpose their bodies to take a bullet meant for him.

Campaign Use: Aside from their use as possible foes for the PCs if they attack Randolph Starr — or as possible allies if they're doing something that helps his interests — the main plot seed surrounding Starrlight and Starrbright is who they are and where they come from. They could just be sisters from Poughkeepsie who decided to go into bodyguard work, or they might be something more sinister (like the aforementioned ex-Soviet spies).

To make Starrlight and Starrbright tougher, increase their Primary Characteristics a little and give them some Extra DCs with their Kung Fu. To weaken them, remove some of their Martial Maneuvers and/or their Combat Skill Levels with HTH Combat.

Starrlight and Starrbright won't Hunt anyone unless Randolph Starr orders them to, in which case they'll do whatever he says.

Appearance: Starrlight and Starrbright are twin sisters — beautiful young women probably in their mid-20s. They're 5'6" tall, well-built with athletic but not overly muscular bodies and nice figures, and long blonde hair. When on normal duty, they usually wear reasonably stylish clothes that are form-fitting and won't inhibit their movement if they have to fight or run. When attending a function as Starr's "dates," they dress appropriately and stylishly, but always in dresses designed so they can tear the skirts off quickly for maximum freedom of movement. They usually carry their Fighting Baton-Staffs with them wherever they go.

STRAD

STRAD

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
16	CON	12	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
13	COM	2	12-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
32	END	0		
30	STUN	3	**Total Characteristics Cost: 93**	

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Commando Training				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	2½d6 + v/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	4½d6	
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)	
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 23 STR	
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	*Fast On His Feet:* Running +2" (8" total)				1

Perks

5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
8 Money: Well Off

Talents

3 Perfect Pitch

Skills

8 +1 with All Combat
3 Acting 13-
3 Breakfall 12-
3 Combat Driving 12-
4 Gambling (Card Games, Sports Betting) 13-
3 High Society 13-
2 AK: Africa 11-
2 CK: Atlanta 11-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
3 Persuasion 13-
3 PS: Crimelord 13-
2 PS: Play Clarinet 11-
2 PS: Play Flute 11-
3 PS: Play Viola 13-
6 PS: Play Violin 16-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
3 Tactics 13-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades
3 Scholar
2 1) KS: Art History 13-
1 2) KS: Hudson City Underworld 11-
2 3) KS: Literature 13-
1 4) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2 5) KS: Music History 13-
1 6) KS: Professional Sports 11-
1 7) KS: Shango 11-
2 8) KS: Southside People 13-
2 9) KS: Southside Gangs & Crime 13-

Resource Points

18 Equipment Points: 150
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
20 Follower/Contact Points: 45
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 174
Total Cost: 267

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Hunted: Shango 8- (As Pow, NCI, Kill)
15 Hunted: Buckshot 8- (As Pow, NCI, Kill)

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt M1911A	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9	
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5
Colt M16A2	+2	+1	2d6	1d6	30	13	AF5, FS, 2H
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

When he's expecting combat or trouble, Strad wears Level III-A body armor (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-). In other situations he wears no armor, or sometimes light body armor (DEF 3, Activation Roll 11-) that won't spoil the appearance of his clothes.

Gear: Whatever he needs, within reason

20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy And Arrogant; Wants To Have It All (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Hates Shango And Buckshot (Common, Strong)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with other Hudson City crimelords; Seeks To Kill Rivals)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Daniel Strademyer) (Frequently, Major)
42 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 267

Background/History: Daniel Strademyer grew up in Atlanta. He was a musical prodigy who could play the violin and several other instruments perfectly before he was ten. His parents dreamed he would achieve great success as a classical musician... but Daniel had interests other than music. As he got older the lure of the streets called to him, and he began spending as much time running around with gangs and dealing drugs as he did practicing his music. He did time in juvenile prison. His parents' hopes for his future faded.

Then he got in *real* trouble: he shot and killed another boy over a drug deal gone bad. The cops were on his trail, though they couldn't prove anything... yet. He decided he wasn't going to wait around for the hammer to fall. He joined the Army.

He thrived in the military. He was used to discipline and a regimented lifestyle from his time practicing music, and the skills he learned appealed to him as much as playing the violin. But he didn't turn his back on his criminal ways — before long he'd established a smuggling network that stole weapons from military arsenals for sale on the black market. His people called him "Strad," not just for his name but because he was all the time talking about how one day he wanted to own a Stradivarius violin.

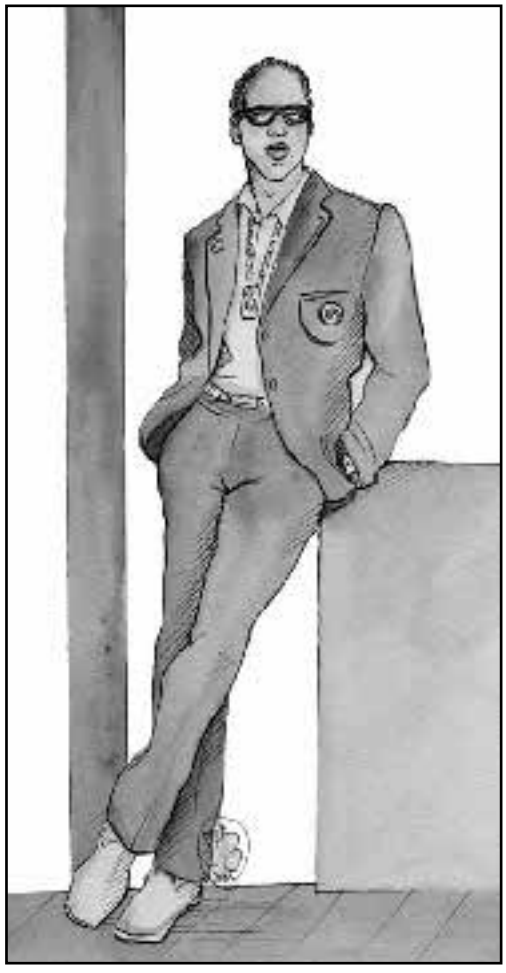
This sweet little set-up kept him in good money for a long time; he built up a substantial nest egg in several offshore accounts. It also helped him make contacts with the Colombian cartels and other organized crime groups. But all good things must come to an end. Eventually the Military Police started to figure out the scheme, and soon they were a little too close for comfort.

Strad fled the base just a few steps ahead of the MPs. He figured they'd keep chasing him, but a few officers more concerned with their careers than catching embarrassing criminals decided they'd rather just hush the whole incident up. Strad ended up in Africa, where he put his skills to good use as a mercenary fighting for whichever side in whatever war paid its bills the most regularly. He started out with a little bit of a conscience, but after he'd been in the thick of things for a year or two, he had no qualms at all about killing. He'd murder peasants just so he could have their food, and more than one officer because he got sick and tired of the man's attitude.

One day he lucked out. He and another merc were on patrol when they stumbled on an enemy soldier. One quick firefight later, the enemy was dead. While they were searching the body, they found a heavy packet wrapped in thick paper. When they opened it up, they found a fortune in conflict diamonds. Without even having to think about it, Strad pulled his pistol and double-tapped his friend in the head. Then he wrapped the diamonds back up, returned to base, and as soon as he had the chance stole a jeep and got the hell out of there.

Now he could return home in style, and he intended to... but not to Georgia. It was high time he got the power, prestige, and money he deserved, and he wasn't gonna find it in Atlanta. Given his record, politics and business were out, so there was only one road to where he wanted to be: crime. And there was only one place a man with his talents could make a real name for himself in the underworld — Hudson City. With the help of a couple of merc buddies, he established himself as the Pearl City's newest crimelord... and the money's been rolling in ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Compared to the average street criminal, or even crimelord, Strad is a model of discipline and self-control. He always seems to know everything that's going on around him, and seems to have two plans ready for any event; he's got a gambler's head for quickly evaluating the odds and options and making the best choice given the situation. He never raises his voice, and all of his



STRAD PLOT SEEDS

A strange man — one who seems dangerous and troublesome — approaches the PCs. He claims he knows Strad's real name and background, and offers to sell them the information for $10,000. Is this guy one of Strademyer's former smuggling network members from his Army days, someone else, or a con man?

Strad and Janus discover they've got a lot in common — a love of music, for example. They decide to team up, take over the Southside, and split it between them. Can the PCs stop this powerful new alliance?

The Army doesn't Hunt Strad, but that doesn't mean it's forgotten about him, either. An Army "representative" asks the PCs to obtain proof that Strad is one Daniel Strademyer, who's been AWOL for nearly a decade.

men know they'd better listen carefully when he does speak: if someone seems to be ignoring him, or doesn't do what he's supposed to because he wasn't listening, Strad's likely to deal with the problem by whipping out a pistol and shooting the man dead right there. It's not that Strad doesn't have a temper, it's that he keeps it under control most of the time... but his violent ways may eventually get him in trouble.

Strad's interest in music remains strong. He often has a musical instrument with him, and often plays for a little while to relax. He collects music memorabilia, including signed photos and gold records from his favorite artists. He has season tickets to the Hudson City Symphony.

Quote: "I'd consider what you're about to say very carefully, my friend... my associates here don't take it well when someone tells me "no.""

Powers/Tactics: Strad is a combat veteran with US Army training and field experience in several African bush wars. He fights with the ruthless, efficient, practical style of the hardened mercenary: he focuses on one foe until that foe is down, then makes sure that foe won't get back up by pumping a couple extra rounds into his chest or head, then moves on to another target. He'd prefer to let his men — whether the core of mercs who serve as his bodyguards and lieutenants, or the gangstas who run his street networks — do the fighting for him, but if forced into battle he neither gives nor asks quarter. (Use the Experienced/Tough Soldier/Mercenary and Gangsta character sheets from the Appendix for his men.) He favors the Colt M1911A and H&K MP-5 as weapons, but can make do with just about any firearm if necessary.

Campaign Use: Strad is currently locked in a five-way war for control of Freetown with Shango, Buckshot, the Nubians, and the Warriors, so most of his involvement in your campaign will probably involve efforts to steal territory from them, protect his own territory from their incursions, arrange to have them killed, and so forth. Despite being a Casual Killer, of the three crimelords he's probably the least objectionable (and he certainly presents himself better in person than they do), which may prompt the PCs to ally with him temporarily to take on one of the other two.

As of early 2005, Strad controls more of Freetown than Buckshot, but less that Shango; most of his territory is in the northeast and north central parts of the neighborhood. He has fewer men than either of his rivals, but since many of his are former mercs instead of gang punks, they're more skilled and better equipped than gangstas.

To make Strad tougher, beef up his Primary Characteristics a bit and give him +2 (or more) Damage Classes with his Commando Training. A few more Combat Skill Levels might come in handy, too. To weaken him, get rid of his Martial Arts and CSL.

Strad rarely Hunts anyone; he has too much self-control to get involved in wasteful vendettas — his temper tends to express itself in explosive, murderous moments rather than long-term plans. But he won't forget someone who does him wrong.

Daniel Strademyer has a juvenile record in Atlanta, but as with all juvenile records his is sealed. Dig deep enough into the Army's classified records and you'll find mentions of his weapon smuggling, black marketeering, and mercenary years, but that's all. Neither the HCPD nor the Army know Strad is Daniel Strademyer; everyone on the Hudson City streets thinks the nickname comes from the way he plays the violin to relax, not from his real name.

Appearance: Strad is a handsome black man in his late 20s or early 30s with a long, artistic face. He stands 6'1" and weighs 210 — most of it muscle and bone, since he works out a lot and there's not much fat on him. He usually wears expensive men's clothing with plenty of flashy jewelry (bling-bling) and expensive designer sunglasses.

PLAYING HARDBALL

"Five hundred fifty million — take it or leave it."

"Then I'll leave it. I've spent my lifetime building this company up to where it is, and it's worth a damn sight more than that. Come back to me if and when you intend to make a serious offer."

"That was a serious offer, Sperling. You don't understand how serious."

"Is that supposed to be some kind of threat?"

"Not a threat, an observation. Let me explain a few things to you. The mortgage on your Southport plant? In the next couple of days, the bank's going to exercise its option to demand payment in full within a month. The defense contract you just got from the Army? That's about to be reconsidered... and trust me, it's not going to go your way this time. Those two reverses alone are going to send your stock price plunging — which in turn will lead to plenty of shareholder lawsuits. I could go on, but you get the point. Stop pretending to be a hardcase and sign the God-damn contracts while the offer's still on the table."

Sperling stood there, jaw clenched. Over the next minute, he seemed to get smaller and smaller; his face became more and more pale. Finally he picked up a pen and signed the contract, pressing down so hard he tore the paper. Without a word he left the room.

Strake picked up the signed document, tapped the pages on the table to line them all up, then handed them to his assistant. "Make sure that's filed and copies have been sent to all appropriate parties by the end of the day."

—Business, Michelangelo Strake style

MICHELANGELO STRAKE

MICHELANGELO STRAKE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
11	CON	2	11-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	0		
22	END	0		
22	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 28**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
6	Fringe Benefit: Business Rank
15	Money: Filthy Rich
80	Well-Connected and 77 points' worth of Contacts in business and government

Talents

5	Eidetic Memory

Skills

3	Bribery 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Conversation 13-
3	High Society 13-
2	CK: Hudson City 11-
5	KS: Banking 14-
7	KS: High Finance 16-
3	KS: Marketing And Advertising 12-
3	KS: Politics 12-
7	KS: SII And Its Products 16-
3	Persuasion 13-
7	PS: Businessman 16-
3	PS: Tycoon 12-
3	Trading 13-

Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
35	Vehicle/Base Points: 80
50	Follower/Contact Points: 105
N/A	Miscellaneous Points: 2

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 246
Total Cost: 274

100+	Disadvantages
5	Age: 40+
15	DNPC: Michelangelo "Michel" Strake, Jr. (son) 8- (Incompetent)
5	Hunted: by various governmental regulatory agencies 8- (As Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Psychological Limitation: Complete Arrogant Bastard (Very Common, Strong)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with other business magnates)
10	Social Limitation: Famous (Frequently, Minor)
114	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 274

Background/History: There aren't many people who aren't familiar with the Alger-esque story of Michelangelo Strake. Raised in poverty in rural Ohio, he used determination, intelligence, skill, and luck to build one of the world's largest, most profitable, and most powerful business empires. Strake Industries International has its corporate fingers in everything from shoelaces, to automobiles, to energy, to pharmaceuticals, to aerospace, and beyond... and Michelangelo Strake oversees the entire operation from his offices in the Strake Building in New York City.

Like most successful men, Strake has been dogged by accusations from various agencies and watchdog groups about his business practices. They say his companies pollute the environment, exploit Third World workers and countries, ignore or cut corners on health and safety practices, conduct illegal testing on human subjects, and violate financial laws whenever they feel they can get away with it. Some of these accusations are confabulated, exaggerated, or just plain wrong... but most of them are right on target.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
None							

Armor
None

Gear: Strake doesn't carry or use gear, except for a few small personal items like his top-end cell phone and PDA. Anything he needs, one of his flunkies or employees will have available for him, or acquire as soon as possible.

MICHELANGELO STRAKE PLOT SEEDS

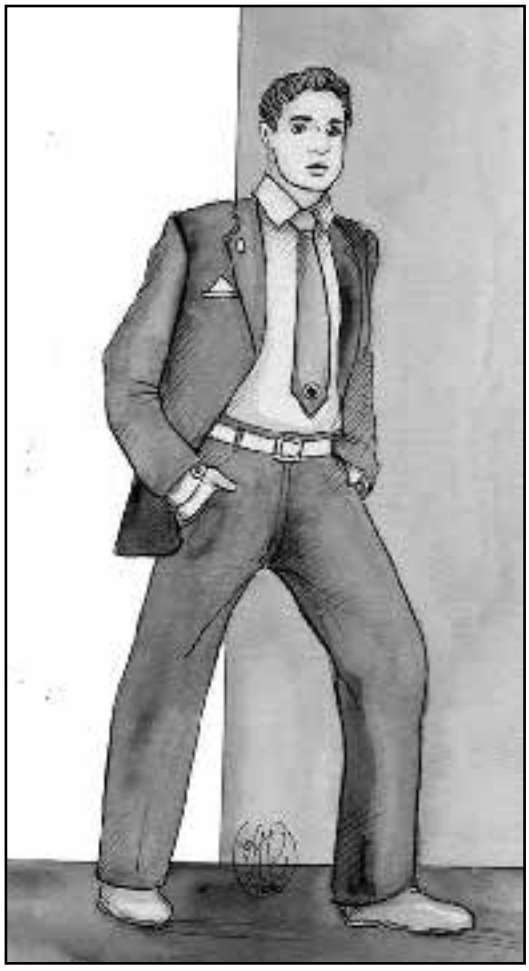
The ecoterrorist organization WEB has attacked several SII facilities. Investigation shows that the facilities were flouting environmental laws in the worst sort of way... but the attacks have resulted in the deaths of many innocent people. Do the PCs get involved, and if so on which side? If Strake specifically asks for their help, will that change the situation — and why would he want them involved anyway?

Strake offers to "sponsor" the PCs as a crime-fighting or investigative team — all because he's deeply interested in improving the city, of course. Can they resist his *incredibly* tempting offer (seven-figure salaries for each of them, all other sorts of resources)... and if not, what's he really up to?

Michel Strake is kidnapped. His father doesn't trust the police to get his son back alive, so he appeals to the PCs, offering them money or whatever else they want if they'll just bring his heir back unharmed.

Personality/Motivation: Some people are nice pretty much all the time. Others are usually nice, but turn into jerks temporarily when they're frustrated or annoyed. And then there are people like Michelangelo Strake who are complete and utter bastards every day of their lives. Look up "arrogance," "condescension," and "superiority complex" in the dictionary, and you'll see Strake's picture every time. As far as he's concerned, he's better than everyone else (as his success in business proves), and there's nothing wrong with reminding them of their position on the totem pole of life. He's particularly good at using his *Conversation* Skill to find out what a person's "buttons" are... and then pushing them to make that person uncomfortable. Furthermore, might makes right: since he *can* exploit people and violate the law for his own benefit, he *should* — it's wrong not to take advantage of weakness and opportunity.

If Strake cares about anything other than himself in this life, it's his son Michelangelo Jr., usually known as Michel, who's 8 years old as of 2005. He dotes on the boy, simultaneously indulging his desires and trying to mold him into the man he wants him to be — a second-generation version of himself, basically. He expects Michel to follow in his footsteps, and has already begun grooming him for life as the biggest, toughest, most cunning shark in the tank.



Quote: "That's the deal, gentlemen — take it or leave it. I'd suggest that you take it, because if you don't I'll just initiate a hostile takeover, squash you like bugs, and get what I want anyway."

Powers/Tactics: Strake has no powers or abilities to speak of other than his vast skill as a businessman. He's also got a blue-ribbon group of Contacts at his disposal, not to mention all the hirelings, flunkies, and employees his wealth can provide. If he needs something done, he doesn't bother to dirty his own hands — he delegates the job to someone who'll take care of it quickly, efficiently, and with maximum possible benefit for himself.

Campaign Use: Michelangelo Strake is the classic heartless/corrupt/evil business magnate — the sort of person who uses his wealth, resources, and influence to do what he wants and get what he wants in defiance of the law or morality. He's the worst side of capitalism run riot, and can clash with the PCs in many ways.

Don't forget that Strake has a son, Michel, whom he's grooming to take over the business. If appropriate, age Michel so that he's not a child, but a young adult ready to take on the PCs to help his father.

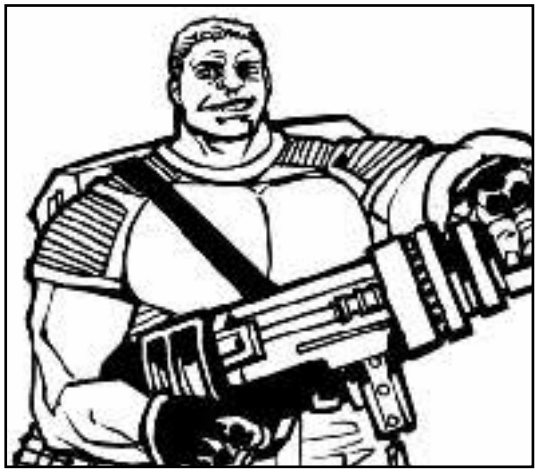
You shouldn't make Strake any tougher physically or combat-wise; he's not even an athlete, much less a fighter. To make him a harder opponent to deal with, increase his influence and resources even further. To weaken him, cut down on his Contacts.

If Strake decides to Hunt someone, that person's life becomes a living hell. He'll use his influence to cancel credit ratings, initiate audits, and otherwise interfere with the target's personal life. If he doesn't know the target's Secret Identity, he'll hire all the private investigators he must to find it out. If necessary, he'll hire the best mercs money can buy (such as the Arsenal or Prospero) and put them on the target's trail.

Michelangelo Strake has no criminal record, though various governmental agencies (such as the SEC and EPA) often keep an eye on him and his companies.

Appearance: Michelangelo Strake is a white man in his mid-50s, 5'9" tall and slightly pudgy. He's got black hair and dark eyes; his cleanshaven face usually has the determined look of a predator on the prowl for its next meal. He wears the best men's fashions his money can buy — hand-tailored suits worth thousands of dollars, $50,000 diamond-studded Rolex watches, and so on.

chapter two:



CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE ARSENAL

THE ARSENAL PLOT SEEDS

The classic Arsenal plot #1: someone hires the group to take out the PCs. Depending on the PCs' abilities or track records, Arsenal may assign a number of his personnel equal to the PCs, or he may go for an "overwhelming firepower" approach.

The classic Arsenal plot #2: the PCs have a goal to accomplish, such as tracking down and killing a terrorist, and their target hires the Arsenal to protect him and/or his facility. The PCs have to get past this team of highly-trained, well-equipped mercenaries... possibly without starting a firefight.

After the Arsenal pulls off a couple of high-profile jobs on U.S. soil, the American government puts out a substantial bounty for them (or it may secretly offer certain people, like your PCs, special incentives to take on the team). What will the PCs do to earn that big, fat paycheck?

Membership: 26 members, each designated by a codename matching a letter of the English alphabet; examples include Arsenal, Gatling, Heatseeker, Magnum, Troubleshooter, and Widowmaker (see below for a complete listing of the current membership as of early 2005).

Background/History: The Arsenal is the brainchild of ex-Recon Marine James "Arsenal" Berghalter, who deserted the USMC to become a mercenary but got fed up with taking orders from other people. Lacking the money or desire to found a formal mercenary business like Military Solutions or Executive Resolution Services, he chose instead to recruit two dozen mercenaries with various military specialties. Quality rather than quantity was his guideline, and it showed in the organization of skilled professional soldiers he created.

The Arsenal made its debut in June 1996, when it helped a renegade Bolivian general assassinate the country's president and seize power for himself. Since then the group's established a solid reputation for its professionalism, skill, and ability to get the job done. It's not picky — it takes on any mission it feels it can accomplish that a client's willing to pay its high prices for, whether that's leading troops in a genuine military action, assassination, bodyguarding, capers, kidnappings, or terrorism for hire. The group's depth and breadth of talent means it always has at least one or two people perfectly suited for just about any job.

Organization And Structure: Arsenal himself leads the Arsenal — he runs the group like a military unit and doesn't tolerate many questions (and even less actual dissent). Gatling, Heatseeker, Magnum, Troubleshooter, and Widowmaker are his lieutenants (the more politically-oriented members of the Arsenal sometimes refer to these five as "the Gun Cabinet"). Each lieutenant commands four other members, known as his "squad." But these five-man teams are administrative, not necessarily mission teams: Arsenal and his lieutenants determine the composition of a mission team based on the skills needed to do the job. Thus, a particular mission team might consist of three men from Heatseeker Squad, two from Gatling Squad, and two from Widowmaker Squad.

Group Relations: Unsurprisingly, a group of 26 willing-to-do-anything mercenaries contains more than a few extreme personalities. While most of the members of the Arsenal usually get along fine, some strong rivalries and hatreds exist. For example, Jackhammer and Quickdraw are rivals for the affections of Plastique, who bounces back and forth between them like some sort of romantic pinball. One of the reasons Arsenal doesn't want to expand the size of the organization beyond 26 is to keep conflicts like these from cropping up too often. But despite his best efforts (and the fact that all the other members respect and/or fear him), fights sometimes break out; more than one former member left the group feet-first after he and a teammate settled a disagreement with gunfire or knifeplay.

All those personality clashes disappear when the team takes the field. Arsenal does his best to minimize conflicts when he assigns members of his team to missions, but even if two members of the Arsenal loathe each other they put their differences aside when they're working. The members of the Arsenal are *professionals,* through and through, and professionals don't let personal matters interfere with the job.

The Arsenal is on good terms with many other organizations and people around the world for whom it's done work — it doesn't have to look for work much, since its reputation is such that prospective clients seek it out. It maintains no political or social affiliations, so it's willing to hire itself out to employers with wildly differing goals and opinions over the course of a given year. While on a particular job, the Arsenal remains steadfastly loyal to its employer — that's the key component of the mercenary code the members subscribe to. But once a job's done, they have no particular feelings for a former employer, and might take a job that puts them up against him (though like any businessmen, they're likely to turn down jobs that may bring them into conflict with a "repeat customer").

Tactics: As far as the authorities know, the entire Arsenal has never assembled to perform a mission as a 26-person team. Instead, Arsenal as the group's leader assigns a team of members to a particular mission based on the parameters of the job, the members' specific skills and weapons, the employer's preferences, and other factors. Typically a "mission team" consists of four to six members of the Arsenal, but on at least two occasions a dozen members have worked on the same job at once.

One of the sources of the Arsenal's excellent reputation in the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World is the group's tactical abilities. Because of its small size, each member knows all of the other members pretty well, including what they can do and how they like to do it. Arsenal makes them practice and train constantly so they're ready for any situation or opponent. As a result, the members fight well together, and are especially good at backing each other up: if Gatling has an enemy on the ropes, Firefight knows to help him out (one

dead enemy is better than two wounded ones, as Arsenal says), while Vulcan moves into position to cover them both. Other favorite tactics include: triangle teams (fighting and moving in groups of three back-to-back men, to avoid surprise attacks); "open field" (the signal to blast a particular area with as much firepower as possible); "plaster-nuke" (the signal to use Area of Effect or Explosive attacks, such as grenades, on a particular area); and "shrapnel" (the signal to spread out and not give the enemy an easy group target).

Arsenal members typically wear uniforms and body armor in dull gold and black, though some prefer other colors. Their standard kit also includes a communications system built into the helmet or a headset so everyone on a mission can remain in contact using the group's special battle-codes.

Campaign Use: Given its large membership of highly-skilled mercenaries and their diverse talents, you can use the Arsenal just about any way you need to. If you're looking for a team of heavy-firepower soldiers to take on your PCs on the battlefield, the Arsenal can handle the job. If you need a team of high-tech mercs to pull off a caper, the Arsenal can handle the job. If you need to protect an important NPC from the PCs, the Arsenal can handle the job. The group prefers missions on which it can use its military skills and gear, but can tackle more subtle fieldwork if necessary.

To make the Arsenal tougher, expand the size of the group. Restricting it to 26 members is a convenient dramatic device, but there's no reason you have to stick with it if you'd rather make the Arsenal a larger organization. You could even divide it into branches based on members' specialties, making it more like a mercenary business firm. Weakening the organization usually means the opposite — fewer members, and thus less flexibility — but you can instead decrease the individual members' strengths.

The Arsenal won't Hunt anyone unless hired to do so or they interfere with the group's activities to such an extent that they make prospective employers question the Arsenal's ability. In that case they approach the job in a proficient military manner: they gather intel (mainly by calling in favors and hiring other professionals skilled in such matters); plan an attack; and then execute the attack at the moment of maximum advantage. If that doesn't work, they retreat, regroup, and find another way or time to eliminate the target.

ARSENAL

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	STR	8	13-	Lift 300 kg; 3½d6 [4]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
14	BODY	8	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-	
7	PD	3		Total: 7 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
32	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 82**	

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Boxing				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect	
4	Block		+2	+2 Block, Abort	
3	Clinch	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 38 STR for holding on	
4	Cross	+0	+2	7½d6 Strike	
5	Hook	-2	+1	9½d6 Strike	
3	Jab	+2	+1	5½d6 Strike	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)				
6	*Strong Runner:* Running +3" (9" total)				1
2	*Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total)				1

Perks

4	Contacts: 4 points' worth in the USMC
10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
5	Money: Well Off

Skills

32	+4 with All Combat
6	+2 with Stealth, Survival, and Tracking
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
5	Demolitions 13-
1	Electronics 8-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
3	Interrogation 12-
2	KS: Boxing 11-
2	KS: The Espionage World 11-
2	KS: USMC History And Customs 11-
3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K USP	+1	+0	2d6	1d6	8	10	PR
Specter M4	+1	+1	1d6+1	1d6-1	50	13	AF5
Colt M16A2	+2	+1	2d6	1d6	30	13	AF5, FS, 2H
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Arsenal Armored Uniform (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Arsenal Helmet (DEF 6 for the Head, includes HRRP communications suite described below)

Gear: Arsenal Communications Suite (HRRP, built into helmet or a headset), Gen-2 nightvision device

3 KS: Military Science 12-
2 KS: Recon History And Traditions 11-
5 KS: Weapons 14-
1 Language: Arsenal Battle Codes (basic conversation; English is Native)
3 Navigation (Land, Marine) 12-
3 Paramedics 12-
2 PS: Recon Marine 11-
2 SS: Hydrography 11-
3 Stealth 13-
1 Streetwise 8-
3 Tactics 12-
10 Survival (Desert, Marine, Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-
3 Systems Operation 12-
3 Tracking 12-
5 TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
13 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Small Arms, Flamethrowers, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Recoilless Guns, Shoulder-Fired Weapons
3 Weaponsmith (Firearms, Muscle-Powered HTH) 12-

Resource Points

48 Equipment Points: 300
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
20 Follower/Contact Points: 45
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 262
Total Cost: 344

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: US Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Must Be The Best (Common, Strong)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
134 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 344

Background/History: James Berghalter was the youngest of six brothers. His older siblings picked on him from an early age, and he quickly learned to fight back. He also learned that the only way to get any respect from them was to do something better than they did it. When his brother Mike took up hunting, James tagged along... and soon became a better hunter than Mike was. When Franklin began boxing, James got involved and eventually became a Golden Gloves champion — and had the chance to beat Franklin to a pulp during a tournament match. When Gerry and Jeff began running with gangs and stealing, James started doing it, too, and he never got caught the way they did. Eventually he intimidated them into backing his play and knifed his way into leading the gang.

It didn't take him long to realize he was cut out for better things than "leading" a bunch of street punks. After a drive-by shooting gone sour threatened to bring some major heat down on him, he decided to get out while the getting was good. He joined the Marines.

James flourished in the Marines, eventually becoming part of Recon and establishing a superb record of missions successfully accomplished. But after several years of risking his neck for the US government, he began to wonder if maybe he should be risking his neck for himself instead. He still remembered his gang days — the thrill of being the leader, responsible to no one but himself. The idea finally became so attractive to him that he deserted, melting away into the mercenary underground.

Being a merc wasn't quite what he was after, either. He had a lot more freedom, but ultimately he still had to take orders from whoever was in command. The solution was obvious: start his own mercenary company with a strong enough rep that he could dictate terms to his employers. But even

with his skills, that was easier said than done... and he didn't want to get bogged down by creating an actual business like Military Solutions. The key was an *elite* team — not what most people meant by "elite," but a team of hard-core, highly-trained, experienced professionals that could tackle, and complete, any mission. To advertise their services, they'd use codenames and special uniforms.

He already knew two guys who fit that description: his friends Ken Bunchard and Jamal Gibson. They became Gatling and Heatseeker. Over the next couple of years he cherry-picked from among his contacts in the mercenary underground, establishing just the sort of organization he'd envisioned. As Arsenal, leader of the mercenary outfit of the same name, he's become a feared and respected member of the shadowy world of covert ops and low-intensity military conflict... and anybody who messes with him had better watch out.

Personality/Motivation: From an early age, James Berghalter has had a strong drive to succeed. He's virtually obsessed with being the best at whatever he does. Currently this means being the best mercenary and the leader of the best mercenary team in the world. He "takes care" of anyone who presents a serious challenge to his leadership or superiority in the field quickly and efficiently. Aside from that, he's a consummate professional: cool-headed, informed, and precisely focused on the task at hand.

Arsenal often holds grudges and acts out of a desire for vengeance, so it's entirely possible he would start Hunting a hero personally (rather than ordering his team to do it) if that hero attacked him, insulted him, or interfered with the Arsenal's activities. He sees this sort of "interference" as an insult to his reputation and pride, so he retaliates in a brutal fashion to re-assert his strength and dominance. A FBI psychologist once described Arsenal as "the biggest alpha male of the mercenary world," and that's a pretty good summary of his approach to these situations.

Quote: "Forget it, mister, you don't have a chance against a living Arsenal."

Powers/Tactics: Arsenal's name describes him well. When he became a soldier, he approached the job with the same dedication he'd applied to every other goal in his life. He studied every form of fighting and weapon he could, become a walking, talking expert on everything from swords, to pistols, to Stinger missiles. (Even today, if he finds out about a weapon he doesn't know how to use, he tries to find someone to teach it to him.) He has an enormous collection of weapons, from antique katanas to the most modern firearms and explosives, and equips himself accordingly. Even when he's dressed for a night out on the town he usually has two or three weapons concealed on his person, and when he goes on a combat mission he carries enough ironmongery to equip a battalion.

Arsenal has extensive training and experience as a Recon Marine and a mercenary, and it shows. Skilled at small-unit tactics and many related disciplines, he's a clever, canny opponent who has no illusions about combat. He doesn't fight for honor, prestige, or to show off; he's there to win, whatever it takes. If he can arrange the battlefield in advance to tip the balance in his favor, he'll do it; if "cheating" lets him get the drop on his opponent, cheat he will.

Campaign Use: Unlike many organization leaders, Arsenal is no shrinking violet. He's a skilled field operative who doesn't like to spend time behind a desk. The PCs might encounter him while he leads an Arsenal team on a mission, or he may take a personal interest in them if they cause the Arsenal too many problems.

To make Arsenal more powerful, give him more Martial Maneuvers (and accompanying KSs of styles) and some Weapon Elements to go with them. Right now his melee weapon abilities are simulated with his *All Combat* CSLs and WFs, but you could easily go beyond that if you prefer. To weaken him, remove two of his All Combat CSLs and reduce his Primary Characteristics a bit.

As noted above, Arsenal could easily become a hero's Hunted. As a Hunter he takes a military approach: he gathers information on the target, plans an attack (complete with escape routes and contingency plans), and then drops the hammer. If he doesn't accomplish his objective quickly, he'll retreat and try again at a better time.

Besides being sought by the Marines for desertion, Arsenal is wanted in the United States on six counts of murder, 12 counts of kidnapping, 27 counts of assault, five counts of robbery, and a host of other charges (and he's a suspect in many more).

Appearance: Arsenal is a large black man, 6'6" tall, 250 pounds, and extremely muscular. He usually has a forbidding scowl on his face. Unless a mission calls for camouflage clothing, he wears body armor and fatigues in the Arsenal's colors: dull gold and black. Depending upon the weapons he carries for a mission, he attaches various holsters, sheaths, slings, ammo belts, scabbards, and the like to his uniform.

ARSENAL PLOT SEEDS

After losing a few Arsenal members to botched missions, Arsenal decides that one (or more) of the PCs might make a good replacement. If the PC turns down his offer, how will he retaliate? If the PC accepts, what sort of missions will the Arsenal ask him to perform?

Arsenal hears about an exhibit of Viking swords at the museum, and decides he'd like to "obtain" them for his collection. The PCs have to stop him from stealing them.

The Marines don't pursue Arsenal regularly, but they would like to capture James Berghalter and put him on trial for desertion. A Marine contact asks the PCs to handle the job.

GATLING PLOT SEEDS

The Headless Hangman has kidnapped Shaniqua (or so he claims...) and tells Gatling he'll kill her unless Gatling helps him take down the Arsenal. Gatling desperately doesn't want his daughter to be hurt, but he doesn't want to turn on his friends, either. He decides to ask the PCs to help him.

Arsenal decides it's time for Gatling to go... for good. But he can't bring himself to kill his old friend, so he wants to get the PCs to do it. And of course he has to be able to get the MPMG back so he can give it to someone else....

Gatling wants to upgrade the MPMG with the latest technology, and Arsenal agrees. The team begins committing a series of crimes necessary to get the money and/or parts needed for the work; the PCs have to stop them before Gatling becomes even deadlier.

GATLING

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
21	STR	12	13-	Lift 467 kg; 4d6 [4]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
20	CON	20	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	4		Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	REC	0		
40	END	0		
40	STUN	4		**Total Characteristics Cost: 79**

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
10	*Brawler:* HA +3d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
2	*Strong Runner:* Running +1" (7" total)	1

Perks

- 4 Contacts: 4 points' worth in the USMC
- 10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Skills

- 8 +4 OCV with Man-Portable Minigun
- 5 Accurate Sprayfire
- 1 Bureaucratics 8-
- 1 Combat Piloting 8-
- 1 Computer Programming 8-
- 5 Concentrated Sprayfire
- 2 KS: The Espionage World 11-
- 2 KS: Marine History And Customs 11-
- 3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-
- 1 Language: Arsenal Battle Codes (basic conversation; English is Native)
- 1 Mechanics 8-
- 2 PS: Marine 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 1 Streetwise 8-
- 1 Systems Operation 8-
- 3 Tactics 11-
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Blades
- 1 Weaponsmith (Firearms) 8-

Resource Points

- 12 Equipment Points: 120
- 5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
- 15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
- 0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 102
Total Cost: 181

100+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
- 20 Hunted: US Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Prefers To Resolve His Problems With Massive Amounts Of Gunfire (Common, Strong)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional (with Troubleshooter)
- 10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 205

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Man-Portable Minigun	+1	+1	2½d6	1d6	300	20	AF10
Desert Eagle	+1	+0	2d6+1	1d6	9	13	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Arsenal Armored Uniform (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Arsenal Helmet (DEF 6 for the Head, includes HRRP communications suite described below)

Gear: Arsenal Communications Suite (HRRP, built into helmet or a headset)

Background/History: "You want me to *what?*" Ken Bunchard asked his friend incredulously.

"Quit the Marines, man. Leave, desert, whatever you wanna call it. I want you t' come 'n' work for me," Berghalter replied.

"Why'n the hell would I wanna do that, Jimmy? I got a pretty good deal here. Good benefits, good job. They just put me on the new minigun testing team, too. Finally found something I'm good at — shootin' stuff. Eight thousand red-hot rounds a minute!"

"I'll tell you why — money. I want you to shoot stuff for *me.* Bring your fancy new gun, if you want."

"How much money?" Bunchard asked suspiciously.

"Take a look at this, man," Berghalter said as he pulled out a roll of c-notes. "All this an' more, yours for the askin."

Bunchard gave a low, soft whistle. "Man! Where'd'jou get that kinda cash? With that kinda money, I could send Shaniqua to a real good school. Who do I haveta kill to get it?"

"Whoever I tell you to, Kennie — whoever I tell you to."

Thus The Arsenal began. Ken Bunchard had been kicking around the Marines for years, looking for work he really liked. He'd tried all sorts of things — computers, radios, even a little piloting — but hadn't done well with any of it. Finally he finagled a position testing out some new weapons. *That* was a job he really enjoyed. Soon he was good enough at it that the Corps assigned him to help test the new small-ship miniguns it was developing.

After his old friend Arsenal pointed out how much money he could make as a merc, it didn't take much to convince Bunchard to "drop out" of the Marines. He even took a prototype minigun with him. Arsenal gave him the code-name "Gatling" because of the gun, and helped him convert it into a weapon he could carry himself. Gatling soon dis-

covered he liked being a merc a lot more than he liked the Marines — more action, more glamour, more women — and became one of the most steadfast members of the Arsenal.

Personality/Motivation: Although he originally became a mercenary to earn enough money to send his young daughter Shaniqua to a top-notch boarding school, Gatling quickly found out he was really good at the job. He doesn't regret leaving the Marines for a minute — the Corps never gave him this many chances to shoot at people. He's always enjoyed shooting things, and since signing on with the Arsenal he's become even more violent. When things go wrong, his preferred method of resolving the problem is gunfire... *lots* of gunfire... and that may be the thing that finally ends his career. Arsenal's always trusted his old friend, and the other members of the organization have often come to him when they needed someone who could appeal to their leader and get him to change his mind about something. But Gatling's triggerhappy tendencies are starting to endanger the group, and the day may not be far off when Arsenal has to double-tap him in the head and hand the Man-Portable Minigun over to a hand-picked successor.

Gatling loves his daughter deeply, but his temper and violent tendencies have begun to scare her. She rarely likes to spend much time with him anymore, which only frustrates him and worsens his attitude. He tries to make up for it by sending her expensive presents.

Gatling gets along well with most of his teammates, and is one of Arsenal's most trustworthy lieutenants. But he's got a longstanding argument with Troubleshooter about which is better, firepower or shooting skill, so the two are constantly trying to outdo one another and putting each other down in a (mostly) friendly fashion.

Quote: "Swiss cheese time!!"

Powers/Tactics: Gatling's primary weapon is his Man-Portable Minigun (MPMG), which can fire 1,000 7.62mm N CTA rounds a minute. To stabilize it, he attaches it to a special body harness that's part of his armor (this also keeps enemies from taking it away from him easily – in game terms, the harness makes the MPMG an OIF). He prefers to remain in a team vehicle or rally point where he can have lots of ammunition handy, but the gun comes with a specially-designed 300-round helical magazine. If he runs out of ammo or is closely pressed, he falls back on his Desert Eagle .50 sidearm or knife. He's got a few other Skills, but nothing that he's really good at — he was something of a slacker while he was in the Marines — so Arsenal tries to use him only on heavy-firepower missions.

Campaign Use: Gatling is a potential weak point in the Arsenal. Although he's one of the team's leaders, he's becoming less and less controllable, more and more likely to start a firefight at the slightest excuse. Arsenal may have to take extreme steps to keep the problem from getting worse.

To make Gatling tougher, give him some Martial Arts (Commando Training) instead of his Brawler ability, round out some of his Familiarities to full Skill Rolls, and maybe give him some more Combat Skill Levels and/or increase his SPD to 4. You could also give him some super-skills from *Dark Champions,* such as Corridor Of Death, Favorite Gun, Machine Gunner From Hell, Mowing 'Em Down, or the like. To weaken him, get rid of most or all of his CSLs, and/or change the MPMG so it's harder to use (such as giving it an OCV penalty, or a Side Effect that he can't move in the Phase he uses it or he takes damage from the recoil).

Gatling doesn't Hunt people unless Arsenal orders him to, and then he follows orders.

Gatling is a deserter from the US Marine Corps. He's also wanted in connection with the many crimes he has committed as a member of The Arsenal, including murder (he's the main suspect in 27 of the team's killings).

Appearance: There aren't many members of the Arsenal who make Arsenal himself look small, but at 6'8" and nearly 300 pounds of rock-solid muscle, Gatling's one of them. A black man, he has dark eyes, but dyes his close-cropped hair blonde. His body armor is dull gold, and his Man-Portable Minigun and body harness that helps him hold it steady are matte black.

HEATSEEKER PLOT SEEDS

A rash of explosions has decimated buildings in Hudson City. Is Heatseeker responsible, and if so why?

Heatseeker, Explosion, and Plastique take on a challenge from Saltpeter Mary to see who can commit the most elegant destruction of the largest number of buildings and monuments within a set time frame. The PCs have to figure out what's going on and put a stop to this horrific competition.

The Army contacts the PCs. It's not so concerned about getting Jamal Gibson back... but it would *love* to get its hands on his Mini-Rocket Pod. It asks the PCs to steal the item and turn it over to the Army for testing.

HEATSEEKER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
17	CON	14	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
34	END	0		
27	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 70**

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
2	*Strong Runner:* Running +1" (7" total)	1

Perks

4	Contacts: 4 points' worth in the US Army
10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Skills

12	+4 OCV with Shoulder-Fired Weapons
9	Demolitions 15-
3	Electronics 12-
2	CK: Hudson City 11-
2	KS: Army History And Customs 11-
2	KS: The Espionage World 11-
2	KS: History Of The US Space Program 11-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
5	KS: Missiles And Rockets 14-
1	Language: Arsenal Battle Codes (basic conversation; English is Native)
3	Mechanics 12-
3	Paramedics 12-
2	PS: Soldier 11-
2	SS: Ballistics 11-
2	SS: Mathematics 11-
2	SS: Rocketry 11-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 11-
1	Systems Operation 8-
3	Tactics 12-
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades, Flamethrowers, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons
9	Weaponsmith (Firearms, Missiles And Rockets) 15-

Resource Points

28	Equipment Points: 200
5	Vehicle/Base Points: 20
5	Follower/Contact Points: 15
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 130
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20	Hunted: US Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Loves To Blow Things Up (Common, Strong)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

Background/History: Jamal Gibson was a member of James Berghalter's gang when they were both kids. Jamal was never a very tough guy, but he always had a sort of look in his eyes that kept other kids from picking on him.

When Berghalter left the gang to join the Marines, Jamal decided that was a pretty good idea, but he figured he'd try the Army instead. After basic training he chose to learn about demolitions. This turned out to be a great decision: Jamal had a talent for explosives and ordnance. If he'd had more education, he might've moved into a more research-oriented position, but he didn't mind — he just liked to blow things up.

Jamal probably would have spent the rest of his life in the Army blowing things to bits on command, but Arsenal had other ideas. After recruiting Gatling, he realized the Arsenal would need at least one explosives expert. He approached his old friend with an offer to "join my team, see the world, and blow up selected parts of it." Jamal thought about it for a minute, realized he'd have more opportunity to blow things up as a mercenary, and left with Arsenal right then and there. He's been working with the organization ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Heatseeker is, as they say, slightly unhinged. Most of the time he presents a calm, controlled facade to the world, looking as much the competent demolitions expert and squad leader as Arsenal could wish. But underneath it all he's more than a little bit insane: he loves to blow things up the same way a pyromaniac likes to set them on fire. This sometimes makes his judgment as team leader questionable (his first choice is always to blow the target up), but his mental problems haven't caused too many problems — yet.

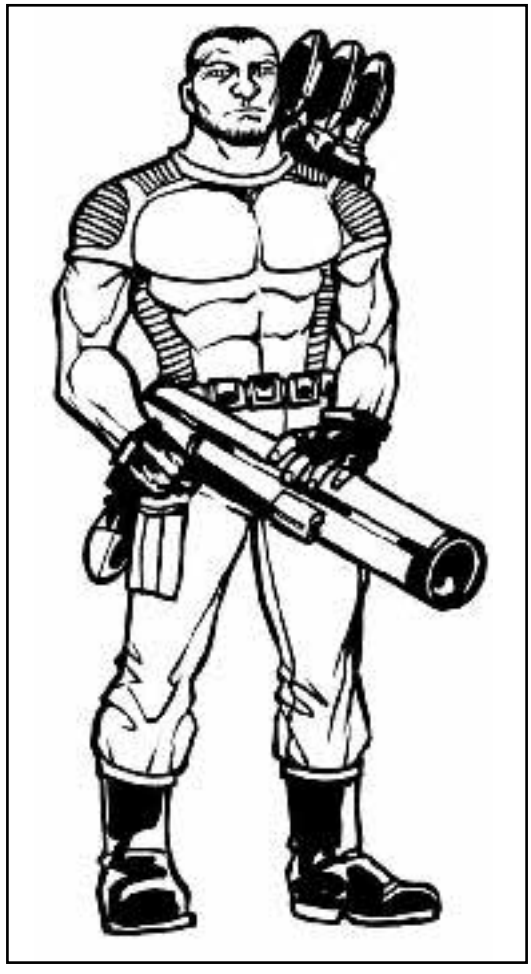
Quote: "Just press this button, and the whole building will be destroyed by an Earth-shattering KA-BOOM!"

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Stinger SAM	+2	+0	5d6X	1d6	1	12	1 Turn
M72A3 LAW	+0	+1	6½d6X	1d6	1	12	Extra Phase
MiniRocket Pod	+1	+1	3d6X	1d6	9	12	
Grenade Launcher	+1	+1	2½d6X	1d6	12	12	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Arsenal Armored Uniform (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Arsenal Helmet (DEF 6 for the Head, includes HRRP communications suite described below)

Gear: Arsenal Communications Suite (HRRP, built into helmet or a headset)



Powers/Tactics: Heatseeker is the Arsenal's chief expert on missiles and ordnance, and secondarily on demolitions (Explosion and Plastique are also skilled at such matters). Even when he's leading a team on a mission, he's not a front-line combatant — he picks a defensible spot a good long way from the main target or battlefield as his "command point." He often kicks off an assault with a well-placed Stinger missile or LAW rocket, and after that continues to pepper the opposition with missiles, grenades, and other such attacks. Since Stingers and LAWs are one-shot weapons, he sometimes uses various multi-shot launchers he's invented that fire smaller rockets (these include his MiniRocket Pod, and a similar weapon adapted from a Hellfire missile launcher).

Campaign Use: Using Heatseeker in a scenario really ups the ante. He doesn't use precision weapons when he fights; his missiles and rockets are designed for maximum death, destruction, and havoc. If you don't want to put the PCs in the way of that much harm, keep Heatseeker under wraps.

To make Heatseeker tougher, give him some Martial Arts, and perhaps beef up his Primary Characteristics and SPD. If your game verges into the fantastic, he might even have wrist- or backpack-mounted rockets he could fire. To weaken him, get rid of some or all of his Combat Skill Levels.

Heatseeker doesn't Hunt people unless Arsenal orders him to, and then he follows orders.

Heatseeker has compiled an impressive criminal record since joining the Arsenal. He's personally responsible for the destruction of twelve buildings, the deaths of fifteen people, and the injuries of dozens more. He's also a deserter from the United States Army.

Appearance: Heatseeker is a 5'9", 165 pound black man with a trim but not athletic build. He cuts his hair close to the scalp, and has a close black beard as well. He paints his body armor in camouflage colors, and he usually carries several different kinds of explosives and rockets with him.

MAGNUM PLOT SEEDS

Magnum's never told his teammates much about his life before joining the Arsenal — not even his real name. Now an old man who claims he was the one who trained Magnum shows up unannounced at a PC's house (or the team's headquarters, if it has one) and offers to not only tell all about him, but teach the PC some of the same tricks. Is the offer for real (and if so, why is it being made now?), or is there an ulterior motive?

Magnum decides he wants to go back to free-lancing... but no one just leaves the Arsenal. He sends the PCs a packet of information about the group, hoping they'll take the hint and take out the team for him while he slips away. But if any of the Arsenal members survive, they might figure out what happened and want revenge....

Magnum hears one of the PCs' pistol skills praised (or perhaps sees them in use on television) and decides it's time to stage an old-fashioned shootout to determine who's faster and deadlier.

MAGNUM

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
7	PD	4		Total: 10 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
35	STUN	3	**Total Characteristics Cost: 99**	

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Karate				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	*Atemi* Strike	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25 STR	
4	Dodge	+0	+5	Dodge all attacks, Abort	
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	4d6; Target Falls	
4	Knifehand Strike	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Punch/Snap Kick	+0	+2	5d6 Strike	
5	Side/Spin Kick	-2	+1	7d6 Strike	
4	*Strong Runner:* Running +2" (8" total)				1
2	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward)				1

Perks

10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
15	Danger Sense (out of combat, self only, intuitional) 12-
4	Lightning Reflexes: +4 DEX to act first with Colt Anacondas

Skills

12	+6 OCV with Colt Anaconda
6	+2 with Firearms
10	+2 DCV
3	Acrobatics 13-
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Contortionist 13-
1	Demolitions 8-
3	Disguise 12-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
2	Gambling (Card Games)12-
3	Interrogation 13-
2	KS: The Espionage World 11-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/ Terrorist World 11-
1	Language: Arsenal Battle Codes (basic conversation; English is Native)
2	Languages: German (fluent conversation)
2	Languages: Spanish (fluent conversation)
3	Lockpicking 13-
5	Rapid Attack (Ranged)
3	Security Systems 12-
7	Shadowing 14-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
10	Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged)
6	WF: Small Arms, Blades, General Purpose/ Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Missiles
2	Weaponsmith (Firearms) 12-

Resource Points

12	Equipment Points: 120
15	Vehicle/Base Points: 40
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 216
Total Cost: 315

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/ Kill)
20	Hunted: US Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20	Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
5	Psychological Limitation: Can't Resist A Challenge (Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Gerald Chesterton) (Frequently, Major)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
100	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 315

Background/History: No one in the Arsenal knows much of anything about Magnum's background. He and Arsenal first met when they were both hired (by separate parties) to kill a wealthy Texas businessman who'd made a few too many enemies on his climb to the top. At that time, Magnum was already an established and feared assassin and mercenary, whereas Arsenal was relatively new to the field. When each of them realized there was someone else in the room, they began to fight, assuming the other was a crimefighter or cop. They almost killed one another, and by the time they sorted the whole mess out, their target had heard the commotion and escaped. Now that the target was suspicious, it took a combined effort on their part to find him and kill him. During the "hunt," mutual suspicion gradually gave way to mutual respect — Magnum admired Arsenal's versatility, Arsenal admired Magnum's consummate skill with his chosen weapon.

After that, the two of them worked together on several occasions. When Arsenal began to recruit lieutenants for his organization, Magnum was one

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt Anaconda	+2	+1	2d6	1d6	6	11	Carries four, with four clips each in speedloaders; barrel coating, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved range I
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Arsenal Armored Uniform (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Arsenal Helmet (DEF 6 for the Head, includes HRRP communications suite described below)

Gear: Arsenal Communications Suite (HRRP, built into helmet or a headset)

of the first men he thought of. He approached him with an offer of high pay, secure employment, and a lot of personal autonomy. Magnum decided it might be a good idea to try it for a while to see if it was better than freelancing... and he hasn't regretted his decision a minute. Though he's never revealed his real name to any of his colleagues, he's become an important part of the organization.

Personality/Motivation: Magnum is a cold, calculating killer, perfectly suited to his job as an assassin and mercenary. He dispassionately sizes up the target, regarding "it" (as he would say) as little more than a clay pigeon to be blasted out of existence quickly and cleanly. Human life means almost nothing to him; if he were not so "professional" and disciplined he would probably have become some sort of stereotypical serial killer long ago.

Arsenal has noticed how much Magnum enjoys a "challenge." A difficult target, one he has to work hard to kill, is the sort of job Magnum likes the most. Sometimes Magnum goes out of his way to antagonize dangerous opponents or make a job more difficult — Arsenal has to keep a close eye on him to make sure this attitude doesn't endanger the team.

Quote: "Bang-bang and he's dead. Simple as that."

Powers/Tactics: In combat, Magnum relies principally on his specially-modified .44 Magnum Colt Anaconda revolvers, of which he carries four. He's trained himself to use one in each hand at the same time, and he's deadly accurate with them. Other than his .44s, he carries whatever other weapons he needs for a particular mission. He also knows karate.

Although he lacks the military training many other members of the Arsenal have, Magnum has a good grasp of tactics and strategy. Since there are several members of the team who carry big weapons and make obvious targets of themselves, he usually tries to take cover and remain relatively inobtrusive so no one attacks him (at least not at first). When hiding this way, he often uses his Combat Skill Levels to bounce bullets so his targets can't tell what direction he's firing from.

Campaign Use: Since he had a "career" before joining the Arsenal, Magnum might have previously encountered your PCs. Maybe he and a gunslinging PC are archnemeses, giving fights against the Arsenal a personal dimension they'd otherwise lack.

If you want to make Magnum tougher, give him some super-skills (such as Quick Fire or Pistolero) or increase his SPD to 5. To weaken him, remove Rapid Attack and Two-Weapon Fighting.

Magnum doesn't Hunt people unless Arsenal orders him to, and then he follows orders.

Because he worked for several years as a freelance assassin and mercenary before joining the Arsenal, Magnum has a lengthy criminal record. He's wanted for questioning by the FBI in connection with a total of 37 murders and many related crimes. Neither the FBI nor any other law enforcement agency knows his real name.

Appearance: Magnum is 6'0" tall, weighs about 200 pounds, and has a muscular build. His body armor, helmet, and uniform are dark navy blue; he wears two dull orange belts of ammunition slung across his shoulders and chest like two bandoliers. He carries one pair of Anacondas in holsters on his belt, the other two in shoulder holsters.

TROUBLESHOOTER PLOT SEEDS

If another PC has a "western" theme or is known for being an unusually good pistol shot, Troubleshooter may challenge him to a sort of "duel" in which he (Troubleshooter) will try to kill various targets and the PCs has to try to stop him.

In his civilian identity of Jason Upchurch, Troubleshooter meets a female PC or DNPC and gets involved in a friendship or romantic relationship with her. What happens when the PC finds out what the new boyfriend does for a living?

The latest designs for the military's advanced new handgun have been stolen. A contact in the government or military gets in touch and says they suspect Troubleshooter. The PCs have to act fast to get those plans back before he gets even better guns....

TROUBLESHOOTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
21	DEX	36	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
16	CON	12	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
5	SPD	29		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	REC	2		
32	END	0		
25	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 98**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Zen Riflery				
	Maneuver	OCV/DCV	Rng	Notes	
4	Accurate Shot	+2/-2	+2	Weapon +2 DC Strike	
4	Basic Shot	+0/+0	+2	Weapon +4 DC Strike	
3	Defensive Shot	-1/+2	+0	Weapon +2 DC Strike	
5	Distance Shot	+0/-2	+6	Weapon +2 DC Strike, +1 Segment	
3	Leg Shot	+0/-1	+0	Weapon 42 DC Strike, Throw	
4	Offensive Shot	-1/-1	+0	Weapon +6 DC Strike	
4	Quick Shot	+1/+0	+0	Weapon +4 DC Strike	
4	Ranged Disarm	+0/+0	+0	Disarm, 40 STR to roll	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)				
24	*Quick Fire:* Autofire (up to 5 shots; +½) for any non-Autofire firearm built on up to 120 Active Points; OIF (any non-Autofire firearm of opportunity; -½), Requires A Shooting Tricks Roll (-½), Not While Targeting (-½)				6

Perks

10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Skills

12 +4 with Firearms
8 +4 OCV with Rapid Fire
8 +4 versus Range Modifier with Firearms
2 KS: The Espionage World 11-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
1 Language: Arsenal Battle Codes (basic conversation; English is Native)
3 Persuasion 12-
13 Power: Shooting Tricks 18-
5 Rapid Attack (Ranged)
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 12-
10 Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged)
2 WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 166
Total Cost: 264

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: US Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Showoff (Common, Strong)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with Gatling)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
44 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 264

Background/History: Ever since he can remember, Jason Upchurch has been a crack shot with just about any sort of gun. Even as a little kid growing up in Arkansas, all he had to do was pick up a gun, and instinctively he knew just how to aim it. The older he got, the more skilled he became. He brought home one shooting trophy after another.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K Mk 23	+3	+9	2d6-1	1d6	12	10	Sil, FS, laser, carries four (with two extra magazines each)
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Arsenal Armored Uniform (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Arsenal Helmet (DEF 6 for the Head, includes HRRP communications suite described below)

Gear: Arsenal Communications Suite (HRRP, built into helmet or a headset)

But as his skill grew, so did his cockiness. Soon he was a swaggering, bragging loudmouth who annoyed everyone around him. The problem was, he was so good with a gun and had such a volatile temper that no one dared to tell him off. Finally matters came to a head and a big guy named Eddie tried to beat Jason to a pulp. A few seconds later, Eddie lay dead on the floor, riddled with four precisely-aimed bullets.

Jason knew he was in trouble — there was no way he could talk his way out of *this.* So he did the only thing he could think of — he ran away, as fast and as far as he could. A few weeks later, hungry and broke, he joined the Army. Between his cocky attitude and his lack of discipline, his hitch lasted only a couple weeks before he got in a fight with a sergeant and was dishonorably discharged.

Jason drifted around, eventually ending up in Hudson City. He tried his hand at a few jobs, but hated all of them — the only thing he really liked was shooting. He finally decided to capitalize on his talent by becoming a mercenary. He had trouble getting work at first, but word of his skill with a gun soon got around. Eventually, Arsenal heard about him and decided he'd make a good recruit. Jason liked the idea of working with a team, provided he wasn't expected to follow a lot of stupid rules, so he took Arsenal up on his offer. Because of his skill and his attitude, Arsenal gave him the codename "Troubleshooter."

Personality/Motivation: Although being in charge of one of the Arsenal's five-man teams has matured Troubleshooter a lot, he's still the same sneering braggart and showoff he was as a teenager. Supremely confident in his shooting skills, he's never bothered to learn how to fight hand-to-hand or use weapons other than guns. He figures he can talk or shoot his way out of any trouble he gets himself into. This attitude hasn't made him a lot of friends on the team, but none of his teammates has ever claimed Troubleshooter's not every bit as good as he thinks he is, so they keep their mouths shut.

Quote: "Consider it taken care of, no problem."

Powers/Tactics: Troubleshooter is an expert marksman and shootist. He can use any gun, from small pistols to heavy assault rifles, and his accuracy is legendary in mercenary circles. Besides his unerring aim, he can fire a pistol rapidly at the same target, shoot the guns out of his targets' hands, and so forth. He favors the H&K Mk 23 SOCOM, usually firing with one in each hand. He often carries spare clips with different types of ammo (such as armor piercing or explosive) in case he needs a specialized round for a particular job. He has no fighting skills other than shooting.

Troubleshooter's idea of tactics is taken straight from some of the western movies he likes to watch: take cover behind something and keep firing until your enemy is dead. Because he has so many Combat Skill Levels, Troubleshooter often targets vulnerable Hit Locations such as the Head or Vitals. He's also fond of trick shots that show off his skill (such as bounced shots, or shooting through supports to make things fall on people).

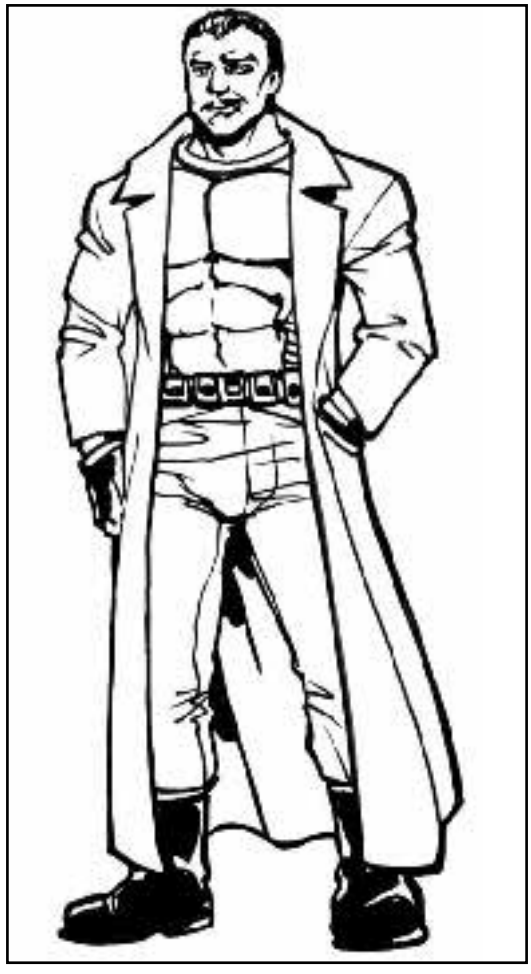
Campaign Use: The PCs are likely to regard Troubleshooter first and foremost as a dangerous opponent — between his SPD and his various Combat Skill Levels, there's no question he can be deadly. But he's also a showoff, so he may not always go right for the kill, giving them a chance to get him first or find a way to neutralize him.

To make Troubleshooter a tougher opponent, give him some Combat Luck or other defensive abilities; his biggest weakness is that he doesn't have much defense. To make him less of a threat, reduce his SPD to 4 and get rid of some of his Combat Skill Levels and/or Ranged Martial Maneuvers.

Troubleshooter doesn't Hunt people unless Arsenal orders him to, and then he follows orders.

Troubleshooter has a juvenile criminal record for various petty offenses, and a military criminal record for fighting with a superior officer. The authorities suspect him in two dozen Arsenal-related killings and a host of lesser offenses, but so far he's evaded capture.

Appearance: Troubleshooter is a handsome man in his late twenties, 5'9" tall, 170 pounds, athletic build. He's colored all of his body armor black and streamlined it so he can wear a brown duster over it and look "stylish." He doesn't wear a helmet (it would mess up his hair), preferring a high-tech headset for his radio equipment.



WIDOWMAKER PLOT SEEDS

Widowmaker becomes infatuated with a female PC (either in her crime-fighting identity, or because they happen to meet on the street). He keeps sending her flowers, following her around, and otherwise making a nuisance of himself. How will the PC deal with the situation?

Widowmaker has an attack of remorse. He wants to mend his ways and come clean for the crimes he's accused of. He asks the PCs to help him get away from the Arsenal and do what's right.

The FBI knows who Widowmaker really is. It wants to interrogate him regarding his former boss's operations. It asks the PCs to bring him in alive.

WIDOWMAKER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
23	CON	32	14-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	3		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
9	REC	0		
46	END	0		
40	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 90**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
13	*Brawler:* HA +4d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	2
24	*Can Take A Lot Of Punishment:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0), Character Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼)	0
12	*Can Take A Lot Of Punishment:* Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0), Character Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼)	0

Perks

10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Talents

3 Resistance (3 points)

Skills

24 +3 with All Combat

1 KS: The Espionage World 8-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
1 Language: Arsenal Battle Codes (basic conversation; English is Native)
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points

6 Equipment Points: 90
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 115
Total Cost: 205

100+ Disadvantages

20 Enraged: if takes 4 or more BODY from a single attack (Uncommon), go 14-, recover 11-
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: US Military 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Loves To Brawl (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Womanizer; Sucker For A Pretty Face (Common, Moderate)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with Gatling and any PC who can stand up to him in a fistfight)

Total Disadvantage Points: 235

Background/History: "Big Bill" Thompson got his reputation as a troublemaker early. As a kid he was a bully and petty thief. When he got older, he drifted into more serious crime. This brought him to the attention of local crime bosses, who took one look at him and decided he was cut out for something other than stealing cars. They made him an enforcer and bodyguard; because of his size and strength, no one dared to talk back to him or disobey the "requests" he made on his boss's behalf.

Big Bill's boss had a daughter named Regina. She was both beautiful and kind, and one of the things Bill liked best about his job was that he got to spend time around her. He soon became infatuated with her, and it nearly broke his heart when he found out she'd just gotten engaged to some punk kid, the son of one of her father's "associates." Bill took one look at this kid and he knew, he just *knew,* the punk would never be good enough for her. It was only a couple days before Bill got so worked up over the situation that he picked a fight with the kid and nearly beat him to death.

This was something his boss couldn't overlook. Bill's frequent brawling was one thing, but beating up the boss's future son-in-law was something else entirely. Almost before he had time to catch his breath, Bill went from being the boss's fair-haired boy to a hunted man. He knew he couldn't fight an entire army of thugs with guns, so he ran.

A few weeks and several cities later, the boss's "posse" cornered Bill in an alley. As fate would

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Combat Shotgun	+1	+0	2½d6	1d6	20	20	AF3, 2H, LR(50")
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Arsenal Armored Uniform (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Arsenal Helmet (DEF 6 for the Head, includes HRRP communications suite described below)

Gear: Arsenal Communications Suite (HRRP, built into helmet or a headset)

have it, Arsenal was nearby, on his way home from scouting out a future job. He saw what was going on, and a fight between one unarmed guy and six guys with guns didn't strike him as very fair. He weighed in to help Big Bill, and the two of them soon had all the gunsels out cold. Bill explained the situation, and Arsenal, impressed with his size, strength, and devotion, offered him a job with the Arsenal. Bill didn't have any other jobs lined up, so he accepted. Arsenal gave Bill a weapon perfectly suited to his great strength — a specially-designed combat shotgun — and the codename "Widowmaker" from some old Pecos Bill stories. Before long Bill settled in and became part of the team.

Personality/Motivation: Unlike many of his teammates, Bill is neither ruthless, nor cruel, nor any sort of "casual killer." He just likes to fight, whether with fists or guns, and sometimes people get hurt or killed. In his view, that's the chance you take when you get in the fight in the first place. Probably happen to him, someday.

Although Bill fits into the team pretty well, he has a couple of traits that have gotten him in trouble with his teammates in the past. One is his love of brawling; he's ruined a few missions and firefights by dropping his shotgun and beginning a fistfight with some tough-looking enemy.

Widowmaker's other problem is that he's a notorious womanizer. Even though he's not particularly handsome, he can't resist hitting on anything in skirts, and he's likely to do just about anything (within reason) if a woman asks him to (female characters get +2 to Conversation, Persuasion, and Seduction rolls against him). Furthermore, Bill tends to think of women as petite, fragile things, and the first time a female PC hits him he may take extra STUN from the shock of it.

Quote: "C'mon, buddy, you 'n' me — I bet I can knock yer head off, whadda ya think?"

Powers/Tactics: Widowmaker isn't especially dumb, but Arsenal learned pretty quickly he doesn't have the same tactical sense many of his teammates do. Even though he's a lieutenant in the organization, Widowmaker isn't usually chosen to lead missions. Instead, he and his team go along with other teams as "backup." This suits Bill perfectly — he gets all the fun of fighting without any of the boring chores associated with being mission leader.

Bill's method of fighting is simple. Because he's hard to hurt, he doesn't usually bother with finding cover — he just charges forward, firing his shotgun at any available target until he gets close enough to engage the enemy in a fistfight. If the enemy is too far away for this "bull in a china shop" approach to work, one of his favorite tactics is to use his Combat Shotgun to blow away the enemy's cover, giving his teammates open shots.

Campaign Use: Of all the Arsenal, Widowmaker is likely to come across as the "nicest," despite his fierce name. If you can arrange it, set up a "rivalry" between him and a similar PC, so they get in a brawl every time they meet.

To make Widowmaker tougher, give him more low-level "strength tricks" to accompany his resilience. You could also increase his SPD to 4. To weaken him, replace his Damage Reduction with Combat Luck.

Widowmaker doesn't Hunt people unless Arsenal orders him to, and then he follows orders.

Widowmaker is wanted on six counts of murder and numerous acts of assault.

Appearance: Widowmaker is an enormous bear of a man, standing 6'8" tall and weighing 295 pounds, most of it solid muscle. He has a head of thick black hair and a bushy black beard, making him look a little bit like a wild mountain man. He wears the standard dull gold and black Arsenal uniform and body armor.

THE REST OF THE ARSENAL

Here's a brief list of the rest of the members of the Arsenal. The letter following each name — G, H, M, T, or W — designates whose five-man team that member belongs to.

Bolo (G): A woman who specializes in the use of bolos and other "primitive" weapons.

Claymore (H): A expert with mines, traps, and explosives.

Derringer (W): Dwarfish killer who uses several custom-built derringers with powerful bullets.

Explosion (M): Assassin who uses a variety of explosive weapons.

Firefight (M): A woman who carries several different types of guns.

Incendiary (T): Mercenary who specializes in incendiary devices and demolitions; carries a flamethrower.

Jackhammer (G): Mercenary who uses a Jackhammer combat shotgun.

K-Bar (W): Sadistic killer who prefers blade weapons to guns.

Longbow (H): A skilled archer and knifefighter; also a good B&E man.

Napalm (T): Ex-terrorist who uses incendiary weapons; friend and rival of Incendiary.

Overkill (M): Vicious mercenary who uses a custom-made assault rifle.

Plastique (T): Female French terrorist who uses explosives.

Quickdraw (W): Skilled gun user, almost as good as Troubleshooter; ambitious, wants to lead the group.

Redhawk (G): Mercenary who uses two Ruger Super Redhawk pistols; a rival of Magnum's.

Stinger (T): Missile-wielding psychopath.

Ultimax (H): Mercenary whose favorite weapon is the Ultimax machine gun.

Vulcan (G): Gatling's son, uses a gun similar to Gatling's.

Exocet (H): Heatseeker's protege, uses missiles.

Youngblood (M): Ex-Green Beret who is being groomed for a lieutenant position.

Zipgun (W): A gadgeteer who specializes in creating weapons out of everyday objects.

THE CONSORTIUM

Membership: The eight surviving members of a group of twelve, codenamed Aquarius, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius.

A shadowy conspiracy of government, military, and business personnel whose origins lie in the 1947 Roswell UFO crash, the Consortium has become a deeply entrenched part of modern American life... even though few American citizens have any idea the group even exists.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

On June 24, 1947, pilot Kenneth Arnold saw several objects in the air over the Cascade Mountains in Washington state. He described them as "flying saucers" and "a formation of very bright objects." Their exact nature and purpose he could not ascertain.

The next day, a dentist in Silver City, New Mexico reported seeing a saucer-shaped unknown flying object half the size of the full moon, beginning a rash of "unidentified flying object" sightings in the area. On June 27, a man in Pope, New Mexico also reported seeing a glowing white object flying in the sky. On June 29, a rocket expert named C. J. Zohn and three of his technicians, all stationed at the White Sands missile range, saw an enormous silver disc flying north. On July 2, installations at Alamogordo, White Sands, and Roswell all tracked an unidentified flying object, and on that same day a Roswell couple saw a UFO which they described as resembling "two inverted saucers faced mouth to mouth" flying at great speed. But more amazing events were yet to unfold.

The Roswell Crash

On the night of July 2 or 4 — accounts differ — a thunderstorm occurred. During the storm, a sheep rancher named William Brazel heard what sounded like an explosion. The next day he found a field of debris several hundred feet wide and as much as three-quarters of a mile long in the desert near his ranch. The debris was strange: an aluminum-like foil that couldn't be torn, cut, or damaged with sledgehammers; a lightweight, plastic-like material that wouldn't burn or char when exposed to flame; small beams of a strong, tough, lightweight substance that resembled balsa wood but was not wood; a brown, extremely strong parchment-like substance. Columns of strange pink and purple characters resembling no Earthly script appeared on some of the foil-like substance and beams. Brazel's sheep would not cross the debris field.

Brazel reported what he found to the sheriff, who in turn contacted nearby Roswell Army Air Force Base — home to the only atomic bomber group in existence at the time — and spoke to Major Jesse A. Marcel. Marcel and CIC officer Sheridan Cavitt investigated, finding among other things a black metallic box no one could open. Marcel gathered up a jeepful of the material and took it back to base, where his superior, Colonel William H. Blanchard, ordered him to load it onto a B-29 and fly it to Wright Field in Ohio (with a stop on the way at Carswell Army Air Force Base in Ft. Worth, Texas). Blanchard also ordered Col. Walter Haut to write up a press release stating that RAAFB had a "crashed saucer" in its possession.

The next day, local headlines read: RAAF CAPTURES FLYING SAUCER ON RANCH IN ROSWELL REGION. But almost as quickly as the story was released, the Army retracted it, identifying the "saucer" remains as a crashed weather balloon. And there the matter has rested ever since, with the Army (later Air Force) insisting the whole case was a simple matter of misidentification and confusion.

But the truth is closer to the headlines than the denials. Following Marcel's initial report, Col. Blanchard sent several squads of soldiers to the crash site, where they recovered as much debris as possible... as well as the bodies of four beings who clearly were not human. Short, with grey skin, oddly large heads, large pupilless black eyes, and small mouths, these beings confirmed what the Army already suspected: the crashed craft was not a secret military project or Communist plot — it was a vehicle of extraterrestrial origin come to Earth for some reason.

Majestic-12

Having gotten wind of the event, certain high officials in Washington clamped as tight a lid as possible on the situation. They made RAAFB retract its initial report, and at Carswell AAFB took Marcel's recovered debris from him and substituted a weather balloon. The man put in charge of the "investigation," OSS veteran Major Richard H. Callahan, reported directly to President Harry S. Truman. He arranged to have Marcel and other officers promoted or transferred to keep them quiet or discredit them, and dealt with other Army witnesses as he saw fit. On September 24, 1947 Truman created a top-secret organization, Operation Majestic-12, to study the remains of the crashed saucer. The Army promoted Major Callahan to Colonel and put him in command of Majestic-12.

Callahan's first act as commander was to arrange for the secure and secret storage of the debris and alien corpses. Most of the material remained at Roswell AAFB, which soon became one of the military's most secret and well-protected installations. But some debris and one alien body were taken to Wendover AAFB, a facility about fifty miles west of Hudson City.

Having seen to the security of the crash materials, Major Callahan began the search for a group of scientists qualified to study the materials and bodies. He was dealing with a situation and a technology outside of all human experience, so he wanted men who were both brilliant and unconventional — scientists and doctors who could investigate with an open mind for the potentials the situation presented. The alien technology could prove a great boon to the United States in its ideological struggle with the Soviets, and Callahan intended to see to it that America made the most of the opportunity.

His first, and most important, recruit was a young Army physicist, Lieutenant Alexander Hazel. A genius who graduated from college at age 18 and joined the Army in the final days of the War, Hazel had since obtained his Ph.D and was making great (if sporadic) strides in Army weapons research due to his willingness to investigate any possibility for new weapons, no matter how outlandish it was... or how often his colleagues dismissed his work as pointless.

When first shown the wreckage and the bodies, Lt. Hazel was awestruck — so much so that he didn't speak to anyone for almost four hours as he examined things. He later wrote in his diary, "Never before, I think, has a man's life's work been so starkly and suddenly presented to him." Following Col. Callahan's instructions, Hazel assembled a team of other scientists whose job was simple to describe, at least: find out everything they could about the wreckage and the bodies... and then figure out ways to use what they learned to advance America's technological might.

Hazel's Plan

In selecting Lt. Hazel, Col. Callahan chose less wisely than he thought. A scion of the wealthy Hazel family of Hudson City, Lt. Hazel was not a pie-in-the-sky scientist interested in research for the sake of research — he was a practical man who saw science as a way to progress and wealth. And while he was concerned with America's place in the world and the ultimate defeat or isolation of Communist Russia, he cared more about himself and his family. In the Roswell incident he found the means by which to guarantee the Hazel clan's prosperity and power for decades to come.

Hazel realized he had to do several things to ensure that he could exploit the Roswell materials for his own gain. First and foremost, he had to remove Col. Callahan from the picture and put himself in a position where he reported to the President and high military officials directly. It was crucial that he control access to, and the flow of information from, Majestic-12. Second, he had to recruit other researchers he could count on to do good work and keep their mouths shut — in other words, scientists completely unlike him, the sort of loyal, idealistic men who just wanted to study and learn and didn't care about fame or monetary reward. Third, he needed to find like-minded men willing to help him make use of Majestic-12's discoveries. Even with the industrial might of Hazel Manufacturing at his beck and call, Lt. Hazel knew he couldn't do it all himself — he needed allies in the military, in intelligence, in government, in business.

The second and third tasks proved relatively

easy. Skilled, broad-minded researchers weren't exactly commonplace, but a little time spent scouring the ranks of the military and academia netted him the colleagues he wanted. Similarly, his own contacts and those of his family put him in touch with people willing to become part of his grand project. He looked for, and found, men and women who were both young (so they could commit to a scheme that might remain profitable for decades) and intelligent and clever enough to run such a complicated and secret endeavor. In a rare fit of whimsy, he christened the group "the Consortium" and gave each of its dozen members a codename taken from the zodiac.

Getting rid of Col. Callahan proved more difficult. It took Hazel two years of ingratiating himself with, and proving himself to, Callahan's superiors and the President before he felt they trusted him enough to turn the reins of power over to him. When Hazel was ready, Callahan suffered an unfortunate accident, dying instantly when a large truck ran into and over his car. As planned, the President named him to head Majestic-12.

The First Three Decades: 1947-75

Hazel's approach to the scientific side of Majestic-12 was guided by a simple, logical conclusion: the aliens who created and piloted the ship that crashed at Roswell were not inherently hostile to humanity. The few people in the military who knew the truth about Roswell, as well as many scientists conducting Majestic-12 research, assumed the aliens intended to conquer humanity, and that the crashed ship was a scout or the like. They hoped to use the Roswell wreckage to find ways to counteract any attempted invasion.

Hazel believed otherwise. Given that at least one ship had reached Earth — and probably more, in light of the rash of UFO sightings taking place around the time of the crash — and that the ship clearly was made of materials and technology far in advance of what humans possessed, if the aliens wanted to conquer Earth they already would have. To Hazel, the only logical answer was that for some reason the aliens only wanted to *watch* humanity. He couldn't say why — maybe they were cosmic voyeurs, or they were concerned humanity would one day reach space and pose a threat to them, or they were "anthropologists," or they were thieves, or they had some motivation human minds couldn't conceive of — but they weren't a threat.

While he channeled most of Majestic-12's research into technology of immediate use to the military — that was what his superiors wanted, after all — Hazel focused his own efforts on discoveries he could pass along to Hazel Manufacturing and other Consortium members in the industrial sector. While much of America's technological progress in the Fifties and Sixties was due to nothing more than human effort and inventiveness, some of the most amazing advances resulted from the work of Majestic-12, including some of the technology that made the 1969 moon landing possible.

But those advances came all too slowly. The wreckage proved devilishly hard to analyze, sometimes giving different readings on the same machines when examined on two different days. Many of the project's scientists became frustrated and burned out by the lack of progress and had to be removed — shuffled off to high-paying government sinecures where Majestic-12 agents could keep an eye on them. Hazel brought in others to replace them, but the loss of hard-earned experience and the need to bring newcomers up to speed slowed the work down even more.

Majestic-12 suffered its worst setback ever in 1968, when project scientists finally opened the metallic black box the Army had recovered at the crash site. Exactly what happened remains unknown to this day. When Brigadier General Hazel and a team of agents assigned to Majestic-12 reached the top-secret research facility in the North Carolina mountains where work on the box had been conducted, all they found were corpses and the charred remains of the lab. Apparently opening the box caused a massive explosion that literally leveled the facility, killing everyone there and destroying years' worth of work.

The 1976 Crash

The Consortium's plans received a boost in 1976, when the Air Force recovered the wreckage of another UFO from a remote location in Garfield County, Montana. Far from any inhabited areas, this wreck didn't attract the sort of attention the Roswell crash did; only the Air Force took any real notice of it. Majestic-12 operatives scrambled to the site, where they recovered wreckage similar to that found at Roswell, and two alien corpses. The bodies were superficially similar to the Roswell bodies, though their skins were more brown than grey, but their internal organs were arranged differently and some seemed to have different functions. Study of these bodies together with the Roswell remains led to many intriguing biological discoveries, some of which played into the biotechnology revolution of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The Consortium Today

Now having existed for over fifty years, the Consortium is reaching a crossroads. For five decades it has wielded great power behind the scenes of American life, using its access to the Roswell and Garfield UFO wreckage to make its members more wealthy and influential than any nineteenth century robber baron. But its members grow old. Down to only eight due to deaths from natural and unnatural causes, the youngest of them is in his sixties, and most are septuagenarians or older. Even allowing for the special medicines and procedures Majestic-12 scientists have developed to keep them fitter and healthier than most people their age, they know they haven't much time left in this world. Unwilling to reveal their secret to others or let go the reins of power they've held for so long, they may take the truth about alien visitation to Earth to their graves... or leave it for someone, perhaps someone more unscrupulous than they, to exploit....

CONSORTIUM PLOT SEEDS

There's another UFO crash, and the PCs get involved. If they're in intelligence or the military, they get called to the crash site before Majestic-12, or as part of the Majestic-12 operation; if they're private investigators, they catch wind of what's going on and are either hired to look into things by UFOlogists or get involved out of curiosity. Now that they've stumbled onto a piece of the puzzle, how will the Consortium deal with them?

The PCs receive a visit from aliens! Assuming the aliens are able to initiate a dialogue, they claim that Majestic-12 has stolen from them and is exploiting their people. They want the PCs to recover the wreckage and bodies from the government. If the PCs agree, what compensation will they ask for in return?

A friend of one of the PCs who has a UFO fixation has disappeared. As the PCs start to investigate, they begin to catch glimpses of the Consortium hidden in the shadows behind it all....

GROUP RELATIONS

The members of the Consortium have a strange and dysfunctional relationship. On the one hand, they're bound together by the secret they share and their desire to benefit from it at the expense of the rest of America (if not all humanity). With a few minor changes, they've been together for half a century in an enterprise they've hidden from (and which sometimes pits them against) their fellow man, and that creates certain bonds of camaraderie (if not friendship and affection). But at the same time, they are conspirators engaged in a criminal enterprise, and there's no honor among thieves. The members of the Consortium have always kept a close eye on each other, using their own contacts, influence, wealth, power, and personnel to shadow their comrades and gather intelligence on them. Some of them even speculate that other members of the group may have had a hand in the deaths of the four now-deceased members... not to mention the "elimination" of more than one reporter, UFOlogist, or nosy official who got too close to Majestic-12's secrets.

TACTICS

The Consortium doesn't fight physical battles. When it can't simply hide from, avoid, or misdirect its enemies, it wields its significant political, economic, and social influence against them, usually saving drastic measures such as assassination for a last resort. Reporters looking into UFO-related events find their credit cards cancelled, cops giving them traffic tickets at every possible opportunity, and their spouses leaving them after seeing the doctored photos. FBI agents who spend too much time investigating reports of the paranormal instead of organized crime activities get reassigned to the Botswana field office. UFO enthusiasts who come too close to the truth wind up in asylums... or graves.

CAMPAIGN USE

The Consortium is a conspiracy of men and women whose goal is to benefit personally from the information gained by the study of aliens, alien ships, and alien technology. They know the truth (or what they *think* is the truth...) involving aliens' contact with Earth, and they exploit it to make themselves rich and powerful. Some of them have secondary goals, such as ensuring American military and political supremacy in the world, but first and foremost they look out for themselves.

While the Consortium is primarily intended for Weird Conspiracy campaigns, it could factor into just about any type of *Dark Champions* campaign. Espionage agents or law enforcement personnel may stumble across hints of the truth during their adventures and be motivated to investigate by curiosity or personal beliefs. Military action heroes or crimefighters may find themselves investigating a crashed UFO before Majestic-12 can get its people into place, which means the Consortium has to deal with them somehow. Given the scope of the Consortium conspiracy, the PCs could brush up against it dozens of times and barely even know it — until, of course, the Consortium wants them to....

When you use the Consortium, be sure to differentiate between Majestic-12 and the Consortium when necessary. Majestic-12 is the ultra-top-secret government project designed to study the Roswell (and later Garfield) wreckage and bodies with an eye toward (a) protecting America from possible alien incursion or invasion, and (b) exploiting the information for technological gain. The Consortium is a conspiracy of individuals, only a few of whom are formally associated with Majestic-12, who want to exploit Majestic-12's efforts for their own personal gain (however they define "gain"). Most of the members of the Consortium should not, by rights, know anything about Majestic-12 — it's only General Hazel's betrayal of his country that has given them access to and information about it.

Many questions surround the Consortium; you can use them to construct plots, story arcs, or even entire campaigns:

- What *really* happened at Roswell and Garfield? Were those ships truly alien, or were they advanced military vessels of some kind? If they were alien, how is it that, with their vastly advanced technology, they crashed?
- Assuming there are aliens involved, what are they up to? Is Hazel right that they just want to watch humanity, and if so, why? Are their intentions benevolent, neutral, or malign?
- How many alien ships have visited Earth? How often do aliens visit? Do they have any regular contact with any humans? What do they want? Is there more than one type of alien involved?
- How did the Consortium and/or the American government so effectively silence the large number of people who must have had contact with the Roswell and Garfield wreckage and corpses — soldiers, scientists, and more? While UFO researchers have gotten a few dozen of them to talk, many more haven't said one word. Were they bribed? Threatened? Killed? Brainwashed?
- What sort of advanced technology or processes have the US government and/or the Consortium developed based on alien technology and biology that have so far been kept secret? Is it possible that certain Americans now have *extremely* advanced technology at their fingertips... and if so, what are they going to do with it?
- Are there any other groups like the Consortium out there, either within the American government or in other countries? If so, who do they work for and what are their agendas? Are any of them in contact with aliens, and if so to what purpose?

MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM

The following character briefs describe the eight members of the Consortium. You should assume each of them has large numbers of Contacts, Contact/Follower Points, and similar assets; they're all powerful people with a lot of resources to call upon if necessary.

AQUARIUS: GENERAL ALEXANDER HAZEL

8	STR	10	DEX	10	CON	10	BODY
18	INT	12	EGO	15	PRE	8	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
20	END	19	STUN				

Abilities: Bureaucratics 14-; Deduction 13-; High Society 12-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 15-; KS: The Consortium 13-; KS: The Espionage World 11-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 13-; SS: Astronomy 13-; SS: Biology 11-; SS: Chemistry 12-; SS: Physics 14-; SS: Xenobiology 11-; WF: Handguns; Scientist; Fringe Benefits: Membership (The Consortium), Military Rank (US Army Brigadier General), Security Clearance (9); Money: Filthy Rich

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Protective Of His Power; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: Now 80 years old and a high-ranking member of the United States Army (albeit one virtually no non-classified official documents refer to), Alexander Hazel has run Majestic-12 for nearly fifty years. Despite his age, he remains healthy, spry, and quite intelligent, and shows no signs of retiring.

It was his skill in matters scientific that first got Hazel drawn into Majestic-12, and that's certainly one of the things that's kept him involved — the aliens and their technology both fascinate and disturb him. But at heart he's a selfish opportunist, and ultimately it's the money and power he's gained through the Consortium that makes it all worthwhile. It rankles him that his power must remain secret — that only a few dozen people, at most, will ever know what he's truly accomplished — but he can live with it.

Hazel isn't paranoid the way some of his enemies claim, but he protects his power and prerogatives carefully. He's seen more than a few people in Washington tumble back down the ladder quickly because they thought that reaching the top meant they'd stay there forever, and he doesn't intend to make the same mistake. He likes it just where he is, so if it looks like someone's trying to encroach on his territory (even indirectly, such as by showing a great deal of promise in Majestic-12 research), he takes care of the matter quickly and efficiently. If he weren't so jealous of other brilliant scientists' work on Majestic-12 work, it's likely the project would have borne more fruit over the past fifty years. But he doesn't mind taking things slow; that ensures a steady stream of profit and power to the Consortium.

Alexander Hazel is an 80 year old white male, 5'9" tall and 175 pounds. He carries himself like a much younger man, though he's careful not to overdo things (and thus look weak). He usually wears military clothing when he appears in public, with a degree of formality appropriate to the occasion.

TAURUS: RICHARD SCHEND

10	STR	10	DEX	10	CON	10	BODY
15	INT	12	EGO	18	PRE	10	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
20	END	20	STUN				

Abilities: Bribery 13-; Bureaucratics 13-; Computer Programming 8-; Concealment 12-; Deduction 12-; AK: Central America 18-; AK: South America 18-; CK: Buenos Aires 12-; CK: Rio de Janeiro 11-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 11-; KS: The Consortium 12-; KS: The Espionage World 14-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 11-; Languages: Spanish (fluent conversation), Portuguese (basic conversation); PS: Researcher 13-; Fringe Benefits: Espionage Rank (associate director, CIA), Membership (The Consortium), Security Clearance (7); Money: Wealthy

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Hunted: CIA 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Loves To Know; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: Richard Schend, an associate director in the Intelligence Directorate of the CIA in the section responsible for South and Central America, is the second man to hold the position of Taurus in the Consortium. His predecessor, a CIA officer named Wainwright, contracted fatal colon cancer in the early 1980s. Not wanting to lose access to the CIA,

General Hazel asked him to suggest a "successor," and he chose Schend. Intrigued by what little Hazel revealed to him at first, Schend agreed to become a part of the conspiracy, and hasn't regretted it.

The main appeal of the Consortium to Schend isn't the money and influence, though he certainly enjoys both — it's being *in the know.* Schend loves knowing things other people don't know, and having access to information and things whose existence they'll never even suspect. Being in the CIA satisfies a lot of that urge, but it pales in comparison to having a channel into Majestic-12. Unbeknownst to Schend, General Hazel, who still doesn't fully trust him even after 20 years of loyal service, restricts what he learns. If he were to find out about this, he'd become very upset (both at not being trusted and not having all the information).

Richard Schend is a thin, short white man (5'4" tall); he overcompensates for his height by speaking loudly and dealing with other people aggressively. In his early 50s, he has prematurely greying hair and dresses in conservative men's fashions. He drives a red Porsche Carrera at high speeds and badly; none of his friends will ride with him anymore.

GEMINI: LAUREL KERNER

8	STR	10	DEX	11	CON	11	BODY
13	INT	10	EGO	15	PRE	13	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
22	END	20	STUN				

Abilities: Bureaucratics 12-; Conversation 12-; High Society 12-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 12-; KS: The Consortium 13-; KS: The Espionage World 11-; KS: The Media World 14-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 12-; Persuasion 12-; PS: Reporter 13-; PS: Media Executive 14-; Fringe Benefits: Membership (The Consortium), Press Pass; Money: Filthy Rich

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Ambitious; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: Back in 1947 when the Roswell story broke, Laurel Kerner was an up-and-coming journalist. Sensing something big, she jumped on the story... but when she couldn't produce solid results, her boss told her to drop it. But she kept at it in her spare time, unwilling to pass up a possible chance to get ahead just because her boss had no vision.

As he started to put together the Consortium, Alexander Hazel had to consider Kerner carefully. At the time she was one of the few reporters still interested in the story, and she seemed both tenacious and determined. He thought about having her killed, but feared that might convince others to investigate the stories she'd been working on. But then he had an idea: mass media was clearly the wave of the future, so the Consortium would need someone on the inside. Rather than try to get Kerner to leave the story alone, he offered her the chance to learn *everything,* but with one proviso: she couldn't ever publish what she learned. She'd have to be content just to know... and to benefit from that in ways she'd soon understand.

It didn't take Kerner long to agree. Ambition, then as now, was her driving force — if the secret behind Roswell could bring her advancement and prestige, she'd take it. She wasn't disappointed. Thanks to the influence of the Consortium and its far-flung network of contacts, as media technology progressed she went from being a newspaper reporter, to a television news personality, to a media executive. Now the president and CEO of the Walsh-Putnam Syndicate, a major news and entertainment corporation, she uses her influence over the media to benefit both the Consortium and herself. For example, she frequently green-lights shows that mock conspiracy theorists and UFO buffs, and downplays any legitimate reports of such matters in the unlikely event they receive mainstream media attention.

Over the years Kerner and Hazel have had a few brief, torrid affairs, more about sex and daring to cheat on their spouses than any real romantic connection; they regard one another more as business partners than as friends. Even now that she's in her mid-70s, the chestnut-haired Kerner remains relatively young-looking and vibrant (not hard when you can afford the best plastic surgeons and spas on a regular basis, and have access to Majestic-12 technology). She stands 5'7" tall, weighs about 130 pounds, and wears elegant, stylish women's clothing.

CANCER: DR. MOIRA RAMIREZ

8	STR	10	DEX	10	CON	9	BODY
14	INT	11	EGO	15	PRE	14	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
20	END	18	STUN				

Abilities: Bureaucratics 13-; Forensic Medicine 12-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 13-; KS: The Consortium 12-; KS: The Espionage World 11-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 12-; Paramedics 14-; Persuasion 12-, PS: Doctor 12-; Scientist and the following SSs: Biology 15-, Chemistry 12-, Genetics 13-, Medicine 14-, Physics 11-, Surgery 13-, Virology 13-, and Xenobiology 13-; Fringe Benefits: Membership (The Consortium), Licensed Physician, Military Rank (Colonel), Security Clearance (7); Money: Wealthy

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: General (then Captain) Hazel recruited Moira Ramirez, one of the few female scientists assigned to Majestic-12 research in the early days, into the Consortium as one of the last of the original members. A doctor and expert on biology, she was assigned to Majestic-12 to study the alien bodies, a task she's devoted herself to ever since. Sensing her genius and desire for wealth and prestige, and knowing the Consortium would

need medical information from time to time, Hazel recruited her into his group.

Ramirez currently holds the rank of Colonel in the US Army and works with USAMRIID on biological weapons (studying them, learning how to counteract them, and sometimes developing them). She remains attached to Majestic-12 as well. Her record of remarkable discoveries has been due in large part to her access to Majestic-12 data, though of course she's careful to cover her tracks well.

Although she's a dedicated scientist and has a certain love of learning for learning's sake, much like Hazel Dr. Ramirez takes a practical approach to things. She wants to *do* something with what she learns... and hopefully benefit herself in the process. If she has any problems with the Consortium, it's that the group moves too slowly for her taste.

The daughter of an Irish mother and Puerto Rican father, in her youth Moira Ramirez combined an exotic beauty with a lilting accent that most men found irresistible. Today she looks remarkably well-preserved for her age thanks to some skin-rejuvenating creams she invented using data gained from Majestic-12. She's about to start marketing these creams, and since they have a real and verifiable effect that makes women look younger without any side effects (so far...), she's certain to become even wealthier very soon.

LEO:
COLONEL WILLIAM QUINCY

10	STR	8	DEX	9	CON	10	BODY
13	INT	12	EGO	20	PRE	8	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
18	END	19	STUN				

Abilities: Luck 3d6; Bureaucratics 13-; Deduction 13-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 13-; KS: The Consortium 13-; KS: The Espionage World 14-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 12-; Fringe Benefits: Espionage Rank (high-ranking member of the Air Force Intelligence Agency), Membership (The Consortium), Security Clearance (7); Money: Wealthy

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Hates Hazel; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: In 1947, William Quincy was a lowly private in the Army, stationed at Roswell. He was part of the team that investigated the crash site and gathered wreckage. He showed an uncanny knack for finding valuable pieces of wreckage (including two of the alien corpses) and for deducing what particular pieces might do. When his superiors called him in to give him the "you didn't see anything, you won't ever talk about this" speech, he boldly suggested that he "go to work on the project." Taken aback by his effrontery, but willing to reward initiative (especially since doing so would remove the problem of keeping him quiet), the Army arranged for Quincy to join Majestic-12. When the Air Force became a separate branch of the US military, Quincy was transferred to it as part of the Intelligence section, but he continued his work with Majestic-12.

As of 2005, Quincy is semi-retired, though he still acts as Majestic-12's main channel into the military intelligence community. He finds his distaste for the work growing. The enthusiastic young man who desperately wanted to be a part of top-secret doings so he could protect and serve his country is long gone, replaced by a cynical old man who takes every opportunity to point out to the rest of the Consortium their general failure to accomplish anything meaningful in 50 years. (His, and their, enormous wealth derived from Majestic-12 information and discoveries doesn't seem to qualify as an "accomplishment" to him anymore.) He's come to bitterly loathe General Hazel, whom he (rightly) regards as having simultaneously held him back and focused his attentions so firmly on Majestic-12 and intelligence matters that he never had time to marry or develop a social life outside of work. Hazel has begun to wonder (again, rightly) whether Quincy might say to hell with it all and expose Majestic-12 and the Consortium in some sort of futile and misguided attempt to "right wrongs."

Seventy-eight years old as of 2005 and sickly due to numerous ailments (diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, perpetual heartburn), Col. Quincy is 5'10" tall but walks with an old man's stoop, often using a cane and bundling up even in the summertime. He prefers to work from his home, where he can wear casual clothes; if he has to go into the office for a meeting he puts on an appropriate uniform.

LIBRA:
WALTER HAKONAS

10	STR	8	DEX	9	CON	10	BODY
13	INT	12	EGO	15	PRE	10	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
18	END	19	STUN				

Abilities: Bribery 12-; Bureaucratics 13-; Computer Programming 12-; Electronics 8-; Inventor 8-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 11-; KS: The Business World 18-; KS: The Consortium 12-; KS: The Espionage World 11-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 12-; Persuasion 12-; Systems Operation 12-; Fringe Benefit: Membership (The Consortium); Money: Filthy Rich

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Greedy; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: When the Consortium was just getting started, Alexander Hazel tapped his friend Walter Hakonas to become part of his cabal. The son of a family that had known and worked with the Hazels for years, Hakonas was an up-and-coming young executive riding a wave of corporate success due partly to nepotism and partly to his keen understanding of the technological issues that were beginning to transform American business and society. In the ensuing decades, Hakonas Enterprises was a major part of the technological revolution — in fact, it was at the forefront, thanks to its ability to

exploit Majestic-12 information. Hakonas developed a reputation as a skilled inventor and "technological prophet," when in fact all he really had was a prime position on the most inside of inside tracks.

Hakonas remains thoroughly devoted to the Consortium and its goals. He loves money and prestige more than anything (including his wife and children, truth be told), and the Consortium gives that to him. He also likes the feeling of being a "mover and a shaker" in ways no one knows about.

Hakonas's contacts in the business community, particularly the tech sector, are unparalleled in the Consortium. Even Gen. Hazel, with his family ties to Hazel Manufacturing, doesn't know nearly as many people in the financial world. Occasionally Hakonas has "bribed" other companies with tidbits of information or technology gleaned from Majestic-12 to get them to do something the Consortium wanted done.

As of 2005, Walter Hakonas is 80 years old and going bald, though his wealth buys him doctors, treatments, and enough relaxation time to keep him much healthier and younger-looking than the average octogenarian. He usually dresses formally; even around his house he wears suit pants and button-down shirts.

SCORPIO: VICTOR COLETTI

10	STR	8	DEX	8	CON	9	BODY
18	INT	14	EGO	18	PRE	10	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
16	END	18	STUN				

Abilities: Bureaucratics 13-; Deduction 14-; High Society 13-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 13-; KS: The Consortium 13-; KS: The Espionage World 11-; KS: Paranormal Phenomena 14-; KS: The United States Government 14-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 13-; SS: Xenobiology 8-; Fringe Benefits: Membership (The Consortium), Security Clearance (9); Money: Wealthy

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Wants To Get Rid Of Hazel And Run Majestic-12; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: There are White House advisors... and then there are *White House advisors.* Not everyone who serves an administration is on the books as an employee, or in the files as a formally-designated assistant to the President or one of his aides. The necessities of government demand that some specialized experts be kept on call, President after President, to provide their expertise and advice regardless of party affiliation or the political currents. Some subjects are just too important to let politics interfere... and US national security against extraterrestrial incursions is one of them.

For 50 years, Victor Coletti has advised the President on matters pertaining to UFOs, extraterrestrial life, and various "paranormal" phenomena and events. Coletti was first brought into Majestic-12 in the 1950s at the request of President Eisenhower. Sensing in him a kindred soul, Hazel recruited him for the Consortium... and has regretted it ever since. He and Coletti are *too* much alike. Coletti has chafed under Hazel's superior position and authority within the group for decades; if it wasn't for the invaluable access to the Oval Office that he provides, Hazel would have had him eliminated years ago. What hasn't occurred to Hazel is that Coletti feels the same way; it probably won't be long before he stops stewing about the whole situation and starts really putting his mind to getting rid of Hazel while he (Coletti) still has a few years left to enjoy leading Majestic-12 and the Consortium.

If you passed Victor Coletti on the street, he wouldn't look any different from any other 77-year-old white man at first glance. You'd have to get past his frumpy exterior — the worn overcoat, the perpetually gloomy/annoyed look on his aged face, his off-putting air of arrogance and curmudgeonliness — to see the expensive hand-tailored suits and the relatively healthy body.

SAGITTARIUS: ALANA PROSKURIAKOF

7	STR	8	DEX	9	CON	9	BODY
14	INT	15	EGO	15	PRE	10	COM
1	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	3	REC
18	END	18	STUN				

Abilities: Cryptography 18- (Translation Only); Conversation 12-; Deduction 14-; High Society 12-; KS: Alien Contact With Earth 13-; KS: The Consortium 12-; KS: The Espionage World 11-; KS: The United States Government 11-; KS: The United States Intelligence Community 11-; KS: The United States Military 11-; KS: What's *Really* Going On 13-; Linguist and the following Languages (all completely fluent or better, Russian is Native): Assyro-Babylonian, English, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Latin, Malaysian, Mandarin Chinese, Nahuatl, Quechua, Sanskrit, Serbo-Croatian, and Spanish; Fringe Benefits: Membership (The Consortium), Security Clearance (7); Money: Wealthy

50+ Disadvantages: Age: 60+; Hunted: The Consortium 14- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Obsessed With Translating The Alien Hieroglyphics; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

Notes: A linguistic genius and refugee from Soviet Russia, Alana Proskuriakof was recruited to work on the Roswell wreckage in 1966 from her advanced studies in comparative languages at Yale. Previous efforts to translate the "hieroglyphics" on the wreckage had gone absolutely nowhere, but after reading Proskuriakof's papers and Ph.D thesis, Hazel and the other Majestic-12 leaders thought she might gain some insight into their meaning.

It was love at first sight. Proskuriakof took one look at the Roswell debris and knew she would never want to do anything else in her life. She set to with a will, putting in 20-hour days in her effort to translate the hieroglyphics. At first she seemed to make some progress, and the brass had high hopes for her... but then she hit a brick wall, realized she'd been on the wrong track, and had to start over again.

And that's how it's been for nearly 50 years now. She devises a possible solution for the problem, starts working on it, spends months or years in what

seems like fruitful work, only to suffer the crashing disappointment of realizing she's wrong... again... and having to start over. She hoped the Garfield wreckage would shed more light on the problem (by providing more samples of the language, if nothing else), but it hasn't worked out that way. After she spent several years analyzing and organizing the new data, it again seemed like she was making some major advancements. But they went nowhere. It's almost as if the hieroglyphics change their meaning from year to year, making any sort of full comprehension impossible.

Proskuriakof has definitely made some overall progress during her time in Majestic-12, but the full meaning of the hieroglyphics continues to elude her. She's become utterly obsessed with solving the puzzle — she knows she doesn't have much time left on this Earth, and she's determined to read the alien writing before she dies. Many of her "solutions" have involved in-depth study of existing human languages, partly as a way of studying different linguistic structures and partly because she wonders if the aliens might not have had previous contact with "primitive" peoples and left linguistic traces of their presence. So far she can't claim to have found any verifiable traces of prior alien activity this way, but she remains convinced it's a possibility worth pursuing. Her repeated failures and all the "wasted" years often make her bitter and cynical, though she tries not to let the other members of the Consortium or Majestic-12 see that.

Proskuriakof is the least active member of the Consortium. Hazel recruited her for the organization soon after she went to work for Majestic-12 — the Sagittarius at that time, a military officer named Robert Halloway, had proven... unreliable... and had to be eliminated. Proskuriakof looked like an ideal replacement: it seemed like she would soon crack the secret of the alien writing... and as the only person able to read it, who knew what sort of information she might become privy to before anyone else? But even though she's never read the alien language, he doesn't regret his decision. Focused wholly on her translation work, she basically agrees with whatever Hazel wants to do, making her an utterly dependable ally in Consortium debates.

Despite having suffered several broken bones due to osteoporosis and some serious bouts of illness, Alana Proskuriakof is a spry and healthy 66 year-old woman with iron-grey hair and sparkling blue eyes. She typically speaks with a Russian accent (not a heavy one, but noticeable) unless she's trying to be as precise as possible, in which case her accent vanishes and her English takes on an educated New Englander tone.

FORMER MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM

The Consortium once numbered twelve people, but over the past five decades four have fallen by the wayside. General Hazel never found anyone he considered worthy of replacing them.

Pisces was Gerald "Jerry" Lanhoff, a commander in the Office of Naval Intelligence. He died of a heart attack in 1978. By then the Consortium had plenty of other assets in the US intelligence community, so Hazel saw no point in risking exposure by trying to find a replacement for him.

Aries was Mendel Greeves, an industrialist. During the 1960s he repeatedly angered Hazel by arguing Consortium policy with him during meetings and by taking risks Hazel deemed unacceptable. Hazel had him killed in 1967 by Majestic-12 operatives on the grounds that he had somehow learned a few minor secrets pertaining to Roswell and was about to reveal them to the world (the "evidence" supporting this assertion was, of course, carefully prepared by Hazel himself).

Virgo was Dr. Benjamin Lazarus, a physicist and engineer whose focus was the study of the metallic foil-like substance. He died in a workplace accident in 1972. By that point Hazel felt he was getting all the information he needed about Majestic-12's studies of the wreckage and didn't need to replace Lazarus.

Capricorn was Dr. Peter Culpepper, a multi-talented scientist and researcher who worked on many projects for Majestic-12. In the late 1970s, after the recovery of the Garfield wreckage, he suddenly went insane for reasons no one has ever explained. Though this didn't always interfere with his work that much, he posed such a grave risk to the security of Majestic-12 that Hazel had him eliminated.

UMBRA

Membership: Approximately ten powerful, highly-placed persons in America and Europe, plus various employees, hirelings, underlings, and flunkies (see below)

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

In 1961, in his farewell address to the American people, Dwight Eisenhower warned: "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex." His words were more right than even he knew.

UMBRA began in the mid-1950s as a conspiracy of industrial and military leaders determined to make the most of the Cold War. They could see that the unspoken conflict between America and the Soviets would last for decades and involve ever-escalating defense and intelligence expenditures. Although generally sympathetic to the American cause (since under Soviet domination they would have no capitalist system to exploit), what they cared about most was making money. Through careful manipulation of the defense contract bidding process in the United States and Europe, they increased their profits almost exponentially... and their influence in financial and governmental circles right along with them.

Although the original participants in this as-yet unnamed conspiracy were men who'd lived through, and in some cases fought in, World War II, they realized the fields of business and politics could change overnight — and if they wanted to remain prosperous and powerful, they had to prepare for such shifts. That meant ensuring the ongoing vitality of the group by bringing in fresh blood from time to time, young blood with fresh perspectives and approaches to the concerns facing the group as a whole.

It was one of these new members, the German businessman Heinrich Zoltran, who in 1969 suggested a shift in the group's goals. The Americans had landed on the Moon, and it was time for all men to look beyond their horizons to new and greater things. Accumulating profit and power was all well and good, he argued, but what good was power if one didn't *use* it? What he proposed was nothing less than the formal establishment of a group that would make itself a shadow government for the world... and in time a real one. He christened this organization UMBRA — the Union of Military and Business to Rule All.

Although at first highly skeptical of Zoltran's claims, the other members one by one agreed with him. Some took little convincing — already masters of their own business or military spheres, they wanted more, and Zoltran told them how they could get it. Others, warier, argued against the plan for months before they finally came around to Zoltran's point of view.

UMBRA's early operations, much like those of the conspiracy that preceded it, had to do with increasing its members' political and financial power. But then the members began to use their influence as Zoltran had suggested. They infiltrated men into key government positions in Europe, the United States, and eventually elsewhere so they had greater control over national decisionmaking. They planned their expansions, purchases, and product developments carefully to position themselves in the industries they saw as key ones for the future: aerospace; computers; biotechnology; telecommunications; business consulting. Above all they focused on the gathering and controlled dissemination of information — the ever-present specter of nuclear war brought home to all of them just how important the control of research and data had become. Throughout this time, the members concentrated on building their own personal technological fortresses: headquarters and special installations from which they could control their schemes to rule the world, and in which they could defend themselves against entire nations.

Although a few analysts in the intelligence sector suspected the existence of UMBRA, the organization revealed itself to the world security community in 1975 when one of its members, British industrialist Roger Corwell, launched the first of the group's operations to bring the governments of Earth under its collective thumb. Acting with the full authority and approval of his comrades, Corwell used his facility on an unnamed Caribbean island to take control of the world's network of communications and military satellites. Corwell threatened to cut the nations of the world off from one another, wreck airplanes, and even trigger the launch of nuclear weapons if all nations did not cede sovereignty to him within 72 hours. At first the plan worked brilliantly, but thanks to the daring efforts of Stewart Archer, one of the chief operatives for the CIA's super-secret Directorate of Special Operations, the operation came crashing to a halt, the governments of the world regained control of their satellites, and Corwell was killed. Even worse, the name "UMBRA" and the group's existence and purpose were now known to the Espionage World.

Archer was a major thorn in UMBRA's side for the next decade, foiling similarly grandiose schemes in 1978, 1981, and 1984. In 1987, UMBRA once again reached for the brass ring with Operation Mjolnir, an effort to extort ruler-

ship of the world by threatening humanity with precision asteroidal bombardment, Archer once again opposed the group — but this time stopping UMBRA's plans cost him his life.

Since Mjolnir's failure, UMBRA has remained relatively quiet, though by no means has it become moribund. International security experts fear that the group has been marshaling its resources and laying carefully-conceived plans. Any day now it may once again cast its fearsome shadow over all of mankind.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

UMBRA has little in the way of formal organization. At the top are the true members of the organization, the ones who lead it and guide its plans. Throughout the history of UMBRA this group has ranged in size from six to 15, but usually it's about 10-12 persons, all or almost all of them men. Below them are a vast army of private soldiers, mercenaries, hirelings, and flunkies who do the dirty work necessary to fulfill UMBRA's schemes (a few UMBRA members waggishly refer to these people as "the Penumbra"). Many of these people don't know they work for UMBRA; they've never even heard the name. They think they work for one of the organization's leaders as part of some private business plan of his. The more trusted or valuable employees know they work for UMBRA, but rarely understand the true nature and scope of the conspiracy.

GROUP RELATIONS

In a loose sense, the members of UMBRA get along well — they're of the same general temperament and outlook, and share the same goals. But within the group there always exists a certain amount of tension. These men are used to ruling the world around them as if it were their own private fiefdom — having to work with a group and negotiate a solution that's acceptable to everyone isn't something they're used to. Furthermore, as men of power they're naturally competitive, and thus always comparing themselves to their fellows and jockeying for a better position, more responsibilities, more privileges. It's not unknown for one member to quietly subvert or sabotage the efforts of another... though always with the greatest of caution, since to get caught interfering with any UMBRA activity would surely bring down the assembled wrath of all the other members.

As of 2005, the principle members of UMBRA are:

Stepan Carvalho: Founder, president, and CEO of global telecommunications conglomerate EuVarCom, this son of Romany peasants is a self-made billionaire who's as at home in a Gypsy camp as in one of his dozen luxury penthouse condominiums. Ruthless and aggressive in everything he does, he often pushes UMBRA to take swifter, more decisive action. A notorious womanizer, he rarely goes anywhere without a harem of at least half a dozen beautiful young women.

Admiral Walter Hathcock: Now an instructor at the Naval War College after a forty-year career in the US Navy and related defense firms, Admiral Hathcock is a well-known figure in the American military, the world business community, and Washington's corridors of power. An avid participant in the DC social scene, it's said he gets by on a mere three hours of sleep a night.

UMBRA PLOT SEEDS

After nearly 20 years of preparation, UMBRA launches Operation Triphammer, a scheme to conquer the world by taking over the Internet, other computer networks, and related telecommunications and computer systems. Anyone who refuses to abide by UMBRA's wishes will suffer terrible disasters as the group cuts off basic services (power, water, food...), crashes planes, detonates nuclear weapons, and the like. Can the PCs find UMBRA's secret headquarters and ruin Triphammer before UMBRA's grip on the world is too strong to break?

A PC who owns or works for a major corporation discovers that certain high-ranking officers of the corporation have been acting strangely lately. They've subtly moved or re-allocated company resources in ways that don't seem to make much sense given the company's long-term goals. Are these people actually members of UMBRA working toward the group's needs instead of the company's, or is something else going on?

UMBRA decides it needs samples of the latest unarmed aerial vehicle (UAV) technology being developed by Fordham ChemTech in Hudson City. It activates Operation Skywatcher, whose goal is to steal that technology and smuggle it out of the United States. It's up to the PCs to find out about and stop this theft of one of America's most advanced types of military technology.

Artur Baltasar Morencelos: Former Brazilian military officer, now a major international arms dealer. See *Hudson City,* page 180, for more information.

Lukas Roszko: Once a high-ranking bureaucrat in Communist Poland, Roszko saw which way the wind was blowing with the rise of the Solidarity movement and got out of government while the getting was still good. Drawing on the vast network of contacts and favors owed he'd built up during his career, he founded RKZ Industries, a manufacturing firm that initially sold primarily to European governments, but which soon branched out into consumer goods for sale in Europe and America. Today Roszko is one of the richest men in Europe. His corporations skirt the edge of the law, often violating import/export regulations and other legal barriers when Roszko feels he can get away with it and earn good money in the process.

General Ruslam Suvorov: Formerly an influential Soviet general, now the leader of a major Russian criminal syndicate, Suvorov supplies a lot of the muscle and other illicit resources UMBRA requires. He lives in a large, luxurious, well-protected dacha about a hundred miles from Moscow; he devotes one entire wing of the mansion to his enormous collection of Soviet and pre-Soviet Russia militaria.

Heinrich Zoltran: German industrialist and financier. See below for more information.

TACTICS

UMBRA has no specific set of military tactics or preferred methods of operation. It's a surprisingly flexible organization, open to any concept or plan that might further its goals. While it's best known in the intelligence and military communities for its grandiose attempts to conquer the world, the truth is that its more subtle activities — gathering intelligence, subverting politicians and military officials, supporting scientific research too dangerous or controversial to receive mainstream funding, fomenting revolution and unrest in the Third World — are likely to prove far more dangerous and effective in the end.

CAMPAIGN USE

UMBRA is a powerful conspiratorial organization akin to the ones seen in the James Bond movies, other films, and some comic books. As such it may be too "unrealistic" or campy for many *Dark Champions* campaigns — but you can easily adapt it to grimmer games. Just change its history and methodology to remove the grand schemes of world conquest and make it a more mundane conspiracy content to simply gather wealth and power for its members.

If you want to make UMBRA a tougher opponent for the PCs, give it control of a small Third World country (or maybe two, or three...). That way it can appoint its members as ambassadors (so they have full diplomatic immunity), establish a safe haven from extradition for its personnel, and so forth. To weaken UMBRA, increase the infighting between the members of the group. Without a high degree of cohesion among its leaders, UMBRA functions much less efficiently, poses a lesser threat to the world, and has more weaknesses the PCs can exploit.

UMBRA is a dangerous Hunter (though not stupid enough to cause significant harm to itself in pursuit of an enemy). It can marshal enormous resources in the political, legal, and financial fields, and won't hesitate to use those resources to make a character's life a living hell. If that's not enough to take care of him, UMBRA can hire assassins and mercenaries to remove the threat he poses in a more direct way.

HEINRICH ZOLTRAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
10	CON	0	11-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 30**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Perks

6 Business Rank: owner/CEO of a major business entity
2 Fringe Benefits: International Driver's License, Passport
10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
15 Money: Filthy Rich

Talents

5 Eidetic Memory

Skills

6 Animal Handler (Canines, Equines, Felines, Raptors, Reptiles And Amphibians) 12-
3 Bureaucratics 12-
3 Conversation 12-
3 Deduction 13-
4 Gambling (Card Games, Roulette) 13-
3 High Society 12-
3 Persuasion 12-
3 Riding 11-
3 Stealth 11-
3 Tracking 13-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Linguist
1 1) English (fluent conversation; German is Native)
1 2) French (fluent conversation)
1 3) Russian (fluent conversation)
1 4) Spanish (fluent conversation)
1 5) Turkish (fluent conversation)
3 Scholar
2 1) KS: The Business World 13-
1 2) KS: The Espionage World 11-
2 3) KS: High Finance 13-
2 4) KS: UMBRA 13-
2 5) KS: World Art And Literature 13-
2 6) KS: World History 13-
7 7) KS: The Zoltran Industries Conglomerate 18-
3 Traveler
2 1) AK: Europe 13-
1 2) AK: Germany 11-
1 3) AK: Greece 11-
1 4) AK: Pacific Northwest US 11-
1 5) AK: Russia 11-
1 6) AK: United States 11-
1 7) CK: Berlin 11-
1 8) CK: Chicago 11-
1 9) CK: Hudson City 11-
1 10) CK: Istanbul 11-
1 11) CK: Las Vegas 11-
1 12) CK: London 11-
1 13) CK: Los Angeles 11-
1 14) CK: Moscow 11-
1 15) CK: New York City 11-
1 16) CK: Paris 11-
1 17) CK: Rio de Janeiro 11-
1 18) CK: Rome 11-
1 19) CK: Toronto 11-
1 20) CK: Tokyo 11-
1 21) CK: Vienna 11-
1 22) CK: Washington, D.C. 11-

Resource Points

0 Equipment Points: 60
45 Vehicle/Base Points: 100
30 Follower/Contact Points: 65
N/A Miscellaneous Points: 2

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 204
Total Cost: 234

100+ Disadvantages

10 Hunted: CIA or other intelligence agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Psychological Limitation: Wants To Rule The World (Common, Total)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (member of UMBRA) (Frequently, Major)
89 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 234

SUBJECT: ZOLTRAN, HEINRICH

VITAL STATISTICS

Birth Name:	Heinrich Zoltran
Date of Birth:	April 19, 1946
Place of Birth:	Stuttgart, Germany
Parents:	Rudolf Zoltran (German) and Maria Aguilar-Rodriguez Zoltran (Spanish)
Citizenship:	German

APPEARANCE

Race:	White
Gender:	Male
Height:	6’0”
Weight:	190 pounds
Build:	Average, mildly athletic
Eyes:	Green
Hair:	Black
Facial Hair:	Black beard and moustache, neatly trimmed
Glasses:	Yes; metallic gold with tortoise-shell accents, oval-shaped
Scars:	Unknown
Tattoos:	Unknown
Other Distinguishing Features:	Unknown

PURSUITS AND ACTIVITIES

Occupation:	Industrialist, manufacturer, tycoon
Criminal Record:	None
Hobbies:	Hunting, horseback riding, gambling, keeping exotic pets
Licenses:	German driver’s license; international driver’s license
Passport:	German, No. GKR29487603598
Military Service:	None
Certifications:	None

PERSONAL HABITS AND LIFESTYLE

Family Status:	Married to Gisele Avernaud Zoltran (French); two children, Hermann (age 9) and Gertrude (age 6)
Homes:	Mansion outside Berlin; hunting lodge in rural Bavaria; beach house on Korfu; suite of penthouse apartments in Manhattan, New York City; [redacted] suite of penthouse apartments in Bankhurst, Hudson City; mansion in southern Oregon; [redacted]
Sexual Preference:	Heterosexual
Mistresses:	Helga Schraeder in Berlin; Inge Rasmussen in London; [redacted]
Smokes:	Turkish cigarettes, Cuban cigars
Drives:	Porsche 928S, various Mercedes Benz automobiles
Dress:	Conservative men’s business fashions, Patek Philippe watches
Languages:	German, Spanish, Turkish, Russian, English, French

HISTORY: Born 1946 in Stuttgart, Germany to Rudolf Zoltran, a German who fought in World War II, and his wife Maria, a former Spanish national. Rudolf operated a small business, Zoltran, Inc., a light industrial equipment manufacturing firm started by his family in the early twentieth century. The company's physical plant survived World War II largely intact, and it received Marshall Plan funds to revive its business in the postwar era. Rudolf groomed Heinrich to take over the business, sending his son to the best universities and business schools in Germany and Europe.

Upon becoming head of the company, Heinrich launched an expansion campaign, renaming it Zoltran Industries. He refocused it from industrial to technological pursuits. Over the course of the next three decades, he diversified into a wide variety of product lines, primarily oriented toward the defense industry. Today, Zoltran Industries and its subsidiaries (see below) supply defense and aerospace systems and electronics to many nations, including Germany, Great Britain, the United States, and Argentina. [redacted] Heinrich Zoltran is reputed to have a personal fortune in excess of $10 billion, and [redacted].

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE: Heinrich Zoltran is a man used to being in control. He runs his company with an iron fist, involving himself in many small matters that most CEOs delegate to underlings; he seems to possess an encyclopedic knowledge of his employees and his company's assets and activities. He controls his family similarly; neither his wife nor his children dare to disobey him. Although possessing a superficially charming personality and capable of great affability, he sizes up everyone he meets in light of what they can do for him, how he can exploit them for his own benefit, or what he must do to remove any obstacle they present.

CONCLUSION: Detailed analysis of Zoltran's personal and corporate activities (see Report Z-05-8732-1958574) suggests that he is a member of UMBRA, possibly one of its most high-ranking members. [redacted]r. His tight personal and corporate security have made gathering additional or more definite information about him difficult; investigation is ongoing.

ZOLTRAN INDUSTRIES: The principle components of Heinrich Zoltran's corporate empire include:

Name	Business Activities	Percentage Ownership
Zoltran Industries	Miscellaneous technology manufacturing	75%
Zoltran Aerospace	Airplanes, helicopters, aerospace vehicles	100%
Zoltran Avionics	Avionics	90%
Zoltran Defense Systems	Radar, sonar, satellites, defense electronics	100%
Zoltran EMD	Electromagnetic dynamic systems, mainly R&D	80%
Zoltran NA	ZI's North American branch	100%
Zoltran Optics	Cameras, projectors, other optical systems	90%
Zoltran SA	ZI's South American branch	100%

THE VICTORY PARTY

THE VICTORY PARTY IN HUDSON CITY

The Victory Party has an office in Hudson City — not a major one, but large enough to get noticed and draw occasional media attention or an act of vandalism. It's in Bayside on Whitby Street just a little north of where it dead-ends into 24th Avenue.

The District Chairman of the local Party apparatus is Marcus Wyrich, an average-looking dark-haired man in his mid-30s. Defensive, and often aggressive, from years of arguing his extreme right-wing views in public, he knows how to handle himself in front of a television camera or a hostile crowd. Thanks to his managerial skills and well-trained staff, the VPHC office runs smoothly and efficiently despite perpetual budget problems.

Most of what the VPHC does is issue press releases. When a civil rights issue is in the news, the VPHC makes sure the media knows where it stands (not that most reporters care). If a skinhead gang goes on a rampage, the Victory Party makes sure to tell everyone it had nothing to do with it, but that it supports the alleged perpetrators' "right to express their political beliefs." If there's nothing else going on, a release about White Power and the proper place of blacks and Jews in society may attract some attention.

Membership: Several thousand persons throughout the United States, with a much smaller core of "troops" aware of and dedicated to the organization's true purpose, all led in secret by Dr. Gerhardt Spregen and his group of elite warriors, the Victory Brigade (*Siegestruppe*).

Background/History: They say America has a two-party system. But that's wrong — the truth is it has many political parties, it's just that only two have enough power and influence to matter. Most people think of the other parties as nothing but groups of crackpots and fools who'll never amount to anything. But not all of the alternative political movements should be so casually dismissed.

In the mid-1970s, a new party arose on the American political scene: the Victory Party. Espousing mostly far right-wing ideals, it didn't refer to itself as a Nazi organization or use Nazi regalia or slogans — but anyone who studied it could see that if it wasn't just another foul manifestation of National Socialism, it was close enough to make no difference.

That didn't prevent it from gaining recruits. The Victory Party attracted converts by appealing to a desire for pride, prosperity, and superiority. Economic difficulties in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries drove more people into the Victory Party's embrace, but even so it's never numbered more than about 10,000 members all told. It's gotten a few candidates elected in local races, but has had no impact whatsoever on the national scene.

Such, at least, is the public face of the Victory Party, embodied in the person of its charismatic leader, Richard Springer. But the Party's origins lie further in the past, in a far darker place: Germany, 1945.

With the Allies closing in on Berlin, Herr Doktor Gerhardt Spregen, a man well-known to more than a few of the unfortunate inmates of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, took advantage of plans laid months before and used the ODESSA route to escape the destruction of his beloved Nazi Germany. He spent years working for the cause in South America, but eventually decided he could make no progress there and came secretly to America, land of liberty... and the place where he would launch the Fourth Reich.

After taking some time to consolidate his gains and increase his financial fortune, Spregen created the Victory Party, keeping his involvement in it absolutely secret. Its purpose was simple: to eat at the body of America from within until he could bring it low through infighting and race war. Once he achieved that goal, the Victory Party would take control of as much of the country as it could and use its newfound power as a springboard from which to spread Nazi doctrine around the world. In time, Spregen would walk the streets of Berlin in triumph, his new Reich victorious where the old one failed.

So far, Spregen's plan has not gone as well as he hoped — but not as poorly as his many enemies would prefer. The Victory Party hasn't achieved the popularity or following he'd like, but it hasn't withered away either. In its secret compounds and camps around the country, it trains the race warriors who will lead the first charge against the Jews and the blacks when the time comes. It's not the Fourth Reich yet... but Herr Doktor Spregen still has every intention of correcting that flaw.

Organization And Structure: The public thinks the Victory Party is pretty much like any other fringe party. It's got a leader — Richard Springer — and a core of dedicated followers, plus a few thousand (at most) Party members who aren't quite that devoted. They're a bunch of fascist bastards, but too dysfunctional and marginalized to ever amount to anything. Let them go to their meetings and spout off about the Zionist Occupied Government while other, saner, people actually get something useful done.

And that suits Herr Doktor Spregen just fine for now. Clever and cautious, he's perfectly willing to let people underestimate his power base and dismiss his followers as fools. He knows the truth, and he knows what he can do with the weapon he's forging. The overall Party membership is about 10,000, but not all of them are the losers most people think. The inner core — the *Herz,* or heart, as Spregen calls them — is over a thousand intelligent, well-trained men who will lead the Party into battle when the time comes. The men (and occasionally women) of the Herz mostly live in the compounds the Party has established in rural areas around the United States. Each compound has a few dozen people living there permanently, with others who visit it periodically for training and indoctrination. The Party complies with all laws concerning the compounds — it (or rather shell corporations and straw men it controls) buys the land outright and in full (so there's no mortgage), pays all taxes and other fees on time, and forbids members to engage on criminal activities on the property — so the authorities have no right to "invade." If the fools in ZOG are going to cripple themselves with rules, there's no reason the Victory Party shouldn't turn those rules against them, after all.

Even among the Herz, almost no Party members know about Spregen; they think Richard

Springer is the leader of the Party and the man they serve unhesitatingly. A few people suspect that Springer answers to someone, but they can't say who or where that person is. The only Party members who know anything concrete about Spregen are the members of the *Siegestruppe,* or Victory Brigade, his small corps of highly-trained bodyguards and shock troops... and they would die before they told outsiders anything about him.

Doctrine: Though it doesn't use terms like "Nazi," "National Socialism," or "ZOG" in its speeches or public literature, the Victory Party is a Nazi organization that follows Nazi doctrine and practices. Its followers believe Jews, blacks, and other "mongrel races" or "mud people" have taken control of America and Europe away from pure Aryans, the intended rulers of the world, and that it's their duty to take their birthright as Aryans back. By "opening the eyes of the people" they hope to foment a race war that will result in the genocide of blacks and Jews in the United States — or, at the very least, the Partition of America so they can establish a pure Aryan country from which to start further race revolutions.

Group Relations: The Victory Party does not associate publicly with Nazi groups or other right-wing political parties; it regards them either as fools (if they don't follow proper Nazi doctrine) or as pathetic wannabes (the sort of gun-toting, racial epithet-spewing hatemongers most people think of when they hear the words "American Nazis"). While Spregen has covertly infiltrated and taken control of many such organizations (for use as patsies, if nothing else), he wants his spearhead to have the purity and quality an Aryan organization should. Compared to other such groups, his followers are intelligent, disciplined, not distinctive (*i.e.,* they don't have Nazi tattoos), and well-trained — which just makes them a far greater threat to the American way of life.

Richard Springer, the leader of the Victory Party as far as anyone outside the Party's inner circle knows, is actually Spregen's son, conceived years ago with a good German woman he married in Buenos Aires but who died giving birth. Spregen despises his son, rightly regarding him as a weakling and a fool. He uses him as he would any other tool, taking advantage of Richard's skill at public speaking and relating to "average people." Richard hates his father as much as his father hates him, but the emotional manipulation and torture Spregen put him through as a child in an attempt to mold him into the "perfect Aryan commander" have left him unable to simply walk away or expose the truth behind the Party. For better or worse, he's his father's creature.

Tactics: On the surface, the Victory Party acts like any other political party. But beneath that surface is a carefully-hidden small army of Nazis willing to fight to the death for their poisonous beliefs. When they feel they can get away with it, they strike a blow for racial purity: they shoot blacks and other minorities, rob Jew-owned banks to get money to help fund the organization, and assassinate left-wing politicians. They plan these activities *very* carefully, since even a single slip-up could reveal the truth about the Victory Party.

Campaign Use: The Victory Party works best if you keep its true nature secret for a while. Introduce it into your campaign as just another political party — maybe one that's achieved some notable success recently despite the distaste most people have for its message. Only if the PCs pay close attention and investigate carefully should they have a chance of uncovering the Party's true purpose and the existence of the *Siegestruppe...* and it should take even more than that for them to get a hint that the feared and hated Gerhardt Spregen is still alive after all these years.

If you want to make the Victory Party tougher, you have two options. First, you can increase the size and scope of the Victory Brigade so Spregen has more assets with which to fight the PCs. Second, you can make the Party more broadly supported and powerful so that it can't be dismissed as a fringe element in American politics. To weaken it, reduce the size of the Brigade, or maybe get rid of Spregen altogether. (The latter approach is also highly appropriate for campaigns with a greater emphasis on "realism" and the like.)

The Victory Party won't expose itself just to Hunt a PC. But if a PC harms the Party somehow (say, by exposing it), or is a minority or a Jew, the Party bides its time until it can take revenge or dish out a lesson in racial superiority. When it hits, it hits hard, leaving the target crippled if not dead.

VICTORY PARTY PLOT SEEDS

The Victory Party begins a membership push in Hudson City. How do the PCs react? What if there's a corresponding wave of unexplained assaults (the only common thread being that all the victims are Jewish, something the HCPD might miss)? Will they try to connect it to the Party, and if so will they succeed... or just make a powerful enemy?

Rainart Eisenbach (*Hudson City,* page 201) sees someone he thinks *might* be Gerhardt Spregen. Concerned about this, he finds a way to secretly let the PCs know the Doktor might still be alive... and if he is, what is he up to?

A "concerned private citizen" wants to hire the PCs to investigate the Victory Party's background. He won't reveal his identity, but he's willing to pay half up front. Will the PCs take the job? Who is this "citizen," and why is he so interested in the Party?

HERR DOKTOR GERHARDT SPREGEN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
12	CON	4	11-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
24	INT	14	14-	PER Roll 14-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
12	COM	1	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
23	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 70**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
1	*Life Extension Treatments:* Life Support (Longevity: ages at half normal rate)	0

Martial Arts: Commando Training

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	2d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4	Choke		-2	+0 Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 20 STR
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 20 STR
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

6	*Observant:* +2 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups	0

Perks

- 5 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (secret leader of the Victory Party)
- 10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
- 15 Money: Filthy Rich

Talents

- 5 Eidetic Memory
- 3 Lightning Calculator
- 3 Lightsleep

Skills

- 2 Animal Handler (Canines) 14-
- 3 Bureaucratics 14-
- 3 Climbing 11-
- 3 Combat Piloting 11-
- 3 Computer Programming 14-
- 3 Cryptography 14-
- 3 Deduction 14-
- 3 Electronics 14-
- 3 Forensic Medicine 14-
- 3 High Society 14-
- 3 Interrogation 14-
- 3 Inventor 14-
- 4 Language: English (idiomatic; German is Native)
- 3 Mechanics 14-
- 2 Navigation (Land) 14-
- 3 Oratory 14-
- 3 Paramedics 14-
- 3 Persuasion 14-
- 3 PS: Doctor 14-
- 3 PS: Engineer 14-
- 3 PS: Nazi Military Officer 14-
- 3 Stealth 11-
- 1 Streetwise 8-
- 3 Systems Operation 14-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 4 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, Snow Skiing
- 2 WF: Small Arms
- 5 Weaponsmith (Firearms, Missiles & Rockets, Chemical Weapons, Biological Weapons) 14-
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Art History 14-
- 2 2) KS: History Of Nazi Germany 14-
- 2 3) KS: Military Science 14-
- 4 4) KS: National Socialism 16-
- 2 5) KS: Political Science 14-
- 2 6) KS: World History 14-
- 2 7) KS: World War II 14-
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Biology 14-
- 2 2) SS: Chemistry 14-
- 2 3) SS: Physics 14-
- 2 4) SS: Genetics 14-
- 2 5) SS: Eugenics 14-
- 2 6) SS: Mechanical Engineering 14-
- 2 7) SS: Medicine 14-
- 2 8) SS: Surgery 14-
- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Europe 14-
- 2 2) AK: Germany 14-
- 2 3) AK: South America 14-
- 2 4) AK: The United States 14-
- 2 5) CK: Berlin 14-
- 2 6) CK: Hudson City 14-
- 2 7) CK: New York City 14-

Resource Points

- 28 Equipment Points: 200
- 95 Vehicle/Base Points: 200
- 50 Follower/Contact Points: 105
- N/A Miscellaneous Points: 2

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 376
Total Cost: 446

100+ Disadvantages

- 5 Age: 40+
- 20 Hunted: Mossad 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Fervent Nazi (Very Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Regards Other People As Puppets Or Lab Animals (Common, Total)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (see text) (Frequently, Major)
- 261 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 446

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Walther PPK	+3	+1	1½d6	1d6	7	6	AP, reversed ogive ammo, barrel coating, custom grips, fine tuning II

Armor
None

Gear: Whatever he wants or needs, within reason

Background/History: In 1942, the Nazi colossus stood atop Europe, master of all it surveyed. One of the principal architects of the German victory was a devoted young Nazi named Gerhardt Spregen. A favorite of the Führer's, Spregen was one of the officers Hitler pointed to as an example of the Aryan ideal: a perfect, blonde-haired-blue-eyed warrior with a perfect mind to match. A graduate of the finest medical and engineering schools in Europe, Spregen displayed his genius in everything he did. After the blitzkrieg of Poland, Spregen invented improved weaponry for Nazi tanks. After serving only a few weeks on a U-Boat, Spregen developed ways for them to sail more quickly and quietly.

But Spregen's greatest interest lay in medicine — in genetics and biology — and he soon abandoned the battlefield for the laboratories of the concentration camps. His seemingly endless series of eugenics experiments created horrors and suffering that do not bear retelling here, but also brought him great knowledge. The ultimate goal of his program was the development of a cloning process that could quickly and easily create more Nazi soldiers. Fortunately for the Allies, Spregen's work didn't progress fast enough; the secret of cloning still eluded him as the Allies began to push into Germany. He fled first to Berlin, and then, as the Soviet and American armies closed in, he took the ODESSA route and made it safely out of Europe altogether, leaving a vacancy on the Nuremburg rolls that the Israelis have sought to fill ever since. And he took with him not only enormous amounts of Nazi gold and art treasures, but something more precious still in which the hopes of the surviving Nazis rested.

Deftly avoiding the traps the Allies set to catch him, Spregen made his way to South America, where he established a lab and continued his research. Despite his genius and his now almost limitless wealth, he found himself stymied again and again. He made a few discoveries, such as anti-aging treatments and sera that extended his treasured youth, but the means to viably clone a human being remained beyond his grasp. Success was, if anything, now more important than ever, so he drove himself and his people ceaselessly... but to no avail.

The only other project that occupied as much of Spregen's time as his cloning experiments were his efforts to establish a Fourth Reich. He maintained frequent contact with the networks of surviving Nazis throughout the world, becoming one of their leaders and often helping to strike a blow against the Jews whenever they had the chance. But no opportunity to seize true power ever arose, so he remained in hiding.

By the mid-1960s, Spregen realized he was wasting his time in South America — it had always been a backwater continent and always would be. The United States, the most technologically advanced society in the world, was the only place where he could hope to achieve any success in his work... and its vaunted "freedoms" would only make his task easier. So to the States he went, hiding behind a smokescreen of false identities. Even now, forty years later, almost no one is even aware he exists at all (but the Mossad has no proof of his death, so it keeps looking for him). Many people have heard of him in the same way they've heard of Joseph Mengele, Albert Speer, and other Nazi butchers, but as far as they're concerned, he's long dead... and that's just the way he likes it.

Today, an octogenarian who looks and acts like he's in his fifties, he lives in the United States and continues both his great works. Recent advances in genetic science have now brought him closer than ever to his goal of cloning a human being; he feels it's only a matter of months or

DR. SPREGEN PLOT SEEDS

Spregen needs some strong genetic samples to test his latest cloning procedures. What better source than some of those supposed *ubermenschen* who fight crime? Getting the samples may prove tricky, since he's not stupid enough to risk anything even remotely resembling a direct assault on heroes, but he'll find a way....

Spregen decides that other surviving Nazis who aren't a part of his network may prove too great a risk to his security. When the PCs foil an attempt to murder Rainart Eisenbach (*Hudson City,* page 201), will they be able to follow a twisting trail of clues into the depths of Nazi America... and, eventually, to Spregen himself?

A Mossad agent contacts the PCs and asks for help on a case... but he can't tell them what it is until they agree to help regardless of the task and after swearing to absolute secrecy. The mission: obtain proof that Gerhardt Spregen is actually dead — and if he's not, capture or kill him.

years now, instead of decades. And with his Victory Party well in place, he may at long last make real progress toward creating the Fourth Reich. The fires of Nazism still burn brightly in his heart — but that's not all that lurks within his breast. Implanted behind his sternum, in a bulletproof capsule, are genetic samples from Adolf Hitler himself, obtained only minutes before Hitler took his own life. When Spregen perfects his cloning process, the Führer will live again....

Personality/Motivation: Gerhardt Spregen is a devoted believer in all aspects of Nazism: fascism, racism, eugenics, and numerous other poisonous beliefs lie at the core of his soul. His greatest hope is that he can create a Fourth Reich to personify those ideals, but decades of being hunted by the Israelis have taught him caution. He schemes and plots in utmost secrecy, preferring to manipulate both ally and enemy into doing his will, rather than acting directly to force confrontation and change.

To Spregen, America and her citizens are vapid, undisciplined, and weak-willed. They care more about their television shows and fast food than about proper conduct or things that really matter; they allow a social and moral rot of blacks, Jews, and other mongrels to live among them not only unquestioned, but honored and aggrandized; they lack direction and drive. But when it comes right down to it, Spregen's Nazi ideals and disdain for America are just expressions of a much deeper-seated misanthropy. Spregen simply doesn't like people. At best he considers them an annoyance to be avoided as much as possible; at worst he looks on them as fodder for his experiments. Subconsciously he thinks of them more as animals or things than as human beings; few people have ever earned enough of his respect for him to consider them worthy of his polite attention.

Spregen remains totally committed to the idea of creating another Nazi regime, one he expects to last far longer than a dozen years and accomplish far more than the Third Reich. But he's become less sanguine about resurrecting Hitler. In the years after World War II, no dream captivated his attention like that of bringing the Führer back to life, but the decades have given him perspective. A political genius though he may have been, Hitler was a poor dictator, and the Fourth Reich will need better. Perhaps Spregen himself, the genius, the survivor, should rule instead....

CARNIVORE

Dark Champions: The Animated Series describes Carnivore, a man whose DNA has been spliced with animal genetic material by Dr. Spregen to give him beast-like abilities and personality. Carnivore is intended for the *Hudson City Powers* form of campaign, where some types of superpowers are permitted; he's not a part of the Victory Party described in this book. But if it's appropriate for your campaign, you can easily make Carnivore one of Dr. Spregen's chief assassins — and perhaps the forerunner of an entire "race" of beast-men put to use by the Nazi genius.

Quote: "When I have rebuilt the Reich, I will use you and your friends to test the limits of human endurance of pain."

Powers/Tactics: Gerhardt Spregen is a genius — a polymath able to excel at many subjects, though his chosen fields of interest are mainly medicine and engineering. Gifted with a photographic memory as well, he's forgotten almost none of his military training, though his age makes him a poor fighter at this point. He prefers to have the *Siegestruppe* or his other followers do his fighting for him in any event.

Through genetic engineering, Spregen has extended his lifespan so that he only ages at about half the rate a human normally does. There can be no greater sign of his twisted mentality than this, for in keeping such a thing a secret known only to himself he eliminates the possibility of presenting mankind with a boon so great it would not only make him even wealthier than he already is, but in many peoples' minds wipe the slate clean for his activities in Auschwitz.

Spregen has become the ultimate conspirator, a long-lived man with the patience to proceed toward his goal in steps so small they're almost unnoticeable. He's perfectly willing to sacrifice his men (both the members of the Victory Party in general, and the Victory Brigade in particular) or any other resource to achieve tiny gains — though of course the gain must be worth the sacrifice for him to risk it. He's no fool; he won't use up his assets needlessly, and if he sees a sudden opportunity worth taking, he takes it.

Because he considers himself the last hope of the Nazi ideal, Spregen is quick to flee if he feels he doesn't have the upper hand in any confrontation. For now, at least, he will do virtually anything to protect the Hitler tissue sample and hide its existence from the rest of the world.

Campaign Use: Spregen makes an excellent conspiratorial adversary for many different types of *Dark Champions* games. His goals are evil enough to make any right-thinking soldier, spy, costumed vigilante, or cop oppose him at every turn, and his history and practices contain enough elements of "weirdness" to fit him into weird conspiracy campaigns. He could even be the focus of a "Nazi-hunting" campaign set in the Sixties or Seventies.

Assuming you're willing to expand on the "weirdness" aspect of Spregen, or to advance genetics by at least a few years, the easiest way to make Spregen tougher is to assume he's made eugenics discoveries that have allowed him to "fix" and augment his body. With the Characteristics and vigor of a perfect human specimen in his 20s, Spregen would make a formidable hand-to-hand combatant even though he's in his 80s. To weaken him, remove his Longevity and make him feeble and physically decrepit — possibly confined to a wheelchair or prevented from performing experiments by palsy.

Spregen doesn't Hunt heroes — doing so would make exposure of himself or the true purpose of the Victory Party too likely. If he considers someone a target for any reason, he simply bides his time and waits for an opportunity. Patience is a virtue in anyone, but in a surviving Nazi genius even moreso.

Herr Doktor Gerhardt Spregen is wanted by the Allied powers and Israel for numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity that he committed during World War II.

Appearance: It's easy to see why Hitler once held up Gerhardt Spregen as a perfect example of the Aryan *ubermensch.* Even today, when he's in his 80s, he looks like a healthy man in his mid-50s or early 60s. His blonde hair is mostly faded to grey, though he still keeps it in the stiff, short cut he favored as an officer of the Third Reich. He's no longer muscular, but he hasn't let himself go to fat the way older men often do, and his gene treatments combined with plastic surgery have removed most of the sags and wrinkles he'd otherwise show. In his lab he wears work pants, a button-down shirt, and a lab coat; in social situations he dresses neatly, in a style that tells people he's got money (but not *too* much money). If forced into a last-ditch confrontation with the PCs, he may don his old Nazi uniform, or at least his swastika armband, and wear a signet ring with his personal symbol, a black wolf's-head.

THE VICTORY BRIGADE (SIEGESTRUPPE)

To protect himself and do the dirtiest of the dirty work he sometimes needs done, Herr Doktor Spregen created the Victory Brigade, or *Siegestruppe* — a group of five highly-trained operatives. They commit robberies to fund Party activities; assassinate enemies of the Party, race traitors, and Jews viewed as particularly dangerous; and protect the Party and especially Dr. Spregen from discovery and harm. They're all brutal men trained and conditioned to use violence to achieve their missions, but most importantly they're cautious and professional — they know the Victory Party's ultimate triumph depends at this point as much on secrecy and concealment as on destroying their enemies.

The members of the Victory Brigade are all devoted Nazis, and completely loyal to Dr. Spregen. These traits may come into conflict if the Brigade members start to believe, or are tricked into thinking, that Dr. Spregen isn't really a Nazi or intends to serve himself rather than the ideals of National Socialism — it would be a psychological war between their chosen political affiliation and their respect for the man who's done so much for them.

The members of the Brigade tend to get along very well with one another. They all share two strong ideals, and have fought together for those ideals many times. Their bonds of commonality and camaraderie usually override any personality conflicts they might have — and if not, a fistfight settles the matter so the group can get on with its work.

KREUZFEUER (CROSSFIRE)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	STR	8	13-	Lift 300 kg; 3½d6 [4]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
16	CON	12	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	2		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
32	END	0		
31	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 74**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Commando Training				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	3d6 + v/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5½d6 Strike	
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)	
4	Escape	+0	+0	33 STR vs. Grabs	
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 28 STR	
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 28 STR	
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
	Perks				
4	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of the Victory Party)				
10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military				
	Talents				
5	Resistance (5 points)				
	Skills				
8	+1 with All Combat				
9	+3 with Firearms				
3	Combat Driving 13-				
7	Interrogation 14-				
2	KS: Nazism 11-				
2	Language: German (fluent conversation; English is Native)				
1	Paramedics 8-				
3	Stealth 13-				
3	Streetwise 12-				
3	Tactics 11-				
5	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Hanggliding, Small Motorized Boats, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles				
7	WF: Small Arms, Blades, Flamethrowers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons				

KREUZFEUER PLOT SEEDS

Doktor Spregen assigns Kreuzfeuer the task of gathering humint on the PCs. Depending on the nature of the campaign, he either tries to strike up a friendship with them in a false civilian identity, or he pretends to fight crime to work with them professionally. As the relationship develops, he'll try to sound them out, see if any of them sympathize with Nazism. If so, he'll try to recruit them; if not, he'll eventually lure them into a trap and help the Victory Brigade gun them down.

Herman Gorheim's sister persuades or hires the PCs to "rescue" Herman from the "cult" he's joined. The PCs have to penetrate a tightly-guarded Victory Party compound and kidnap him. Then they'll discover he's not a helpless dupe....

Kreuzfeuer disappears after a Victory Party mission goes sour. Spregen gets word he's being held in a maximum security hospital and fears the worst — he's badly hurt and has turned traitor to get the medical help he needs. (In reality, Kreuzfeuer has kept his mouth shut, as taught.) He sends the rest of the Brigade to kill him. The PCs have to save Kreuzfeuer, convince him the Party betrayed him, and persuade him to turn state's evidence.

Resource Points

13 Equipment Points: 125
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 126
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
25 Psychological Limitation: Fervent Nazi (Very Common, Total)
20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Dr. Spregen (Very Common, Strong)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Herman Gorheim) (Frequently, Major)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)

Total Disadvantage Points: 210

Background/History: The day he failed to get into the Marines was the worst day of Herman Gorheim's young life. "Psychologically unfit," they said! "Dangerous — potentially violent." What the !$&* did they expect out of a soldier? Those smug little bastards, just like the rich kids who laughed at him when he flunked out of high school. Just like the people on the street who looked at him like he was some kind of animal.

Disaffected and angry, Gorheim was a perfect audience for the Victory Party's poisonous message of racial hatred. One day while he was wandering the streets he saw a notice for one of the Party's rallies and decided to attend. He'd only listened to the speaker for a few minutes when he realized just how right the man was — all those kids in high school and the people who sneered at him on the streets were *Jewish.* He could remember it. He could see it in their faces. He *knew* it!

Watching Richard's speech from a concealed vantage point, Herr Doktor Spregen smiled. He could see the spark of hatred in the young man's face burst into an active flame — a flame Spregen could use to light many fires. He told a recruiter to single out Gorheim after the rally and talk with him. Within a day, Gorheim was a committed member of the Victory Party.

Spregen arranged for Gorheim to receive a job at Party headquarters in Hudson City and followed his progress in the Party ranks closely. It didn't take long for Gorheim to join the clandestine groups of Party Jew-bashers and vandals who sometimes roamed the city streets at night. After a few more months, when Gorheim had proven he was tough enough to do what needed to be done, and also smart enough not to get caught and to learn from the more experienced members, Spregen had Gorheim taken to one of the Party's remote rural compounds. Thrilled with the opportunity, Gorheim threw himself into his paramilitary training with zeal. He breezed through the program with flying colors, establishing the best training record of anyone in the Party.

Sensing the time was right, Spregen brought Gorheim further into the Party and revealed to him that he (Spregen) was the Party's sponsor and true leader. (Spregen did not, however, tell Gorheim his real name or history.) Gorheim, honored and flattered, pledged his total loyalty to Spregen. Spregen made Gorheim his chief bodyguard, enforcer, and assassin, christening him *Kreuzfeuer* (Crossfire).

Personality/Motivation: Too lazy and mean to find any other way to make himself feel important and worthwhile, Herman Gorheim chose Nazism as his path to "manhood." Because it's the only thing he's ever really succeeded at, he's embraced Aryan ideals wholeheartedly. With them has come total devotion to his unnamed benefactor, Dr. Spregen. The Victory Party has transformed his youthful bitterness and anger into true cruelty and hatred, and he doesn't hesitate to act upon his brutal impulses whenever the opportunity to do so without exposing or hurting the Party presents itself. Kreuzfeuer is really nothing more than a bully who's turned his fear of his own inadequacies into rage against a people who've never done him any harm — but unfortunately he's a bully with a powerful and evil patron to guide him.

Quote: "Where are your other Hebrew friends to help you now, Jewish pig? Somewhere cowering in the dirt like you are now, no doubt — and no doubt they'll also be as easy to kill as you."

Powers/Tactics: Kreuzfeuer has been trained to function as a top-notch commando. He knows how to use a wide variety of modern weapons, under-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K 33A2	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	40	15	AF5
Underslung 40mm grenade launcher	+0	+0	2½d6	1d6	1	—	He carries 8 grenades
H&K MP5K	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	15	12	AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Line-gun, radio headset (built into helmet), Gen-2 nightvision device

stands small-unit tactics well, and can kill without hesitation or remorse.

Although the Victory Party has thoroughly indoctrinated him with the idea that he must not expose the Party, when circumstances allow Kreuzfeuer prefers not to fight subtly — he'd rather eradicate an enemy with overwhelming firepower than use precision attacks. If possible, he softens his targets up with a few grenades before he walks in and shoots anyone left alive. If an enemy gets inside his field of fire, Kreuzfeuer switches to his combat knife; he only fights with his fists if he loses the knife or gets so enraged he has to beat his foe to death with his bare hands.

Campaign Use: Kreuzfeuer leads the Victory Brigade. As such he's Dr. Spregen's right-hand man for many missions, and a high-ranking member of the Victory Party. The PCs might first encounter him helping out at a Party rally or recruitment drive, though he won't be in a position of public prominence (in other words, he's not a Party spokesman or public figure).

To make Kreuzfeuer tougher, give him more Skills, such as Systems Operation, to make him more like a special forces soldier; you could also increase the number of Combat Skill Levels he has. To weaken him, remove his All Combat CSL and a few of his Martial Maneuvers, and perhaps convert a few Skills to Familiarities.

Kreuzfeuer doesn't Hunt people unless ordered to by Dr. Spregen, in which case he follows orders.

Herman Gorheim has a lengthy record of minor criminal offenses, mainly assaults, petty theft, and drug possession, but he committed the last crime on the list several years ago. As Kreuzfeuer he's committed many crimes, but the authorities haven't specifically connected him with any of them.

Appearance: Kreuzfeuer is 6'2" tall and weighs 225 pounds; he's solidly and muscularly built. His blonde hair is cut in a short crewcut. On a mission he wears a suit of dark body armor; his typical kit of gear includes an H&K 33A2 assault rifle, H&K MP5K submachine gun, a combat knife, a linegun, and nightvision gear. When not "active" he wears everyday clothing.

FALKE PLOT SEEDS

A technology-savvy PC detects an intrusion into his computer. This becomes the prelude to an extended cyber-battle with Falke, as each of them tries to thwart the other's probes and protect his own system from penetration.

A PC spots a small flying object that seems to be following him. It's Falke conducting a surveillance mission for the Brigade... but the PC has to capture the UAV and figure out what it does before he can even begin to track it back to its creator/user.

The cops catch a lone man dressed in black breaking into an antique store. He refuses to talk. The PCs figure out that he's Falke just as the rest of the Victory Brigade shows up to rescue their comrade....

FALKE (FALCON)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
11	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
28	END	0		
25	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 67**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
4	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of the Victory Party)
10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Talents

5	Resistance (5 points)

Skills

5	+1 with Intellect Skills
3	Bugging 13-
3	Climbing 12-
3	Computer Programming 13-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Criminology 13-
3	Deduction 13-
3	Demolitions 13-
3	Electronics 13-
3	Inventor 13-
2	KS: Nazism 11-
2	Language: German (fluent conversation; English is Native)
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	Mechanics 13-
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Shadowing 13-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	Systems Operation 13-
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms
2	Weaponsmith (Firearms) 13-

Resource Points

30	Equipment Points: 210
15	Vehicle/Base Points: 40
5	Follower/Contact Points: 15
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 135
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
25	Psychological Limitation: Fervent Nazi (Very Common, Total)
20	Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Dr. Spregen (Very Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Tech-head (see text) (Common, Moderate)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Darryl Karns) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 210

Background/History: From an early age, it was obvious Darryl Karns was a gifted child. Inquisitive and curious, he seemed to want to learn about everything, particularly technology. He was taking apart and repairing clocks by the time he was eight, and it wasn't long afterward that he graduated to building his own simple devices.

His father, a factory worker, resented Darryl's intelligence; it made him feel stupid and crude (which, to tell the truth, he was). He took out his anger on Darryl, often beating the boy mercilessly. Darryl learned hatred and fear as he learned electronics and mechanics. As he grew older, the negative emotions roiling around inside him made him bitter, unhappy, and angry at the world. Even after he grew big enough to keep his father from hurting him, he still had lots of resentment bottled up inside.

While he was in college, he heard about the Victory Party and its message. Something in what he read really spoke to him, so he started attending Party meetings. Before long he was channeling his anger and hatred toward Jews, the blacks, and anyone else the Party vilified. He felt good about himself for the first time in his life. Finally he knew what was wrong with the world — and how he could solve the problem.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K MP5K	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	15	12	AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Radio headset (built into helmet), bugging equipment, Gen-2 nightvision device, advanced laptop computer, parabolic microphone, surveillance UAVs, borescope, binoculars, various tools and spare parts

For a while Darryl took part in the Party's secret vandalism and Jew-bashing gangs, but he found that didn't suit him. He preferred to use his technological skills to help the Party set up websites and mailing lists, improve members' weapons, and build and install security systems for the Party's compounds and offices. His abilities gained him entry to the Party's inner circles, and eventually brought him to the attention of Herr Doktor Spregen. Knowing he needed a "techspert" for the Victory Brigade, he carefully evaluated Darryl's devotion to the cause and willingness to do whatever was necessary on behalf of the white race. When Darryl lived up to expectations, Spregen brought him into the *Siegestruppe,* giving him the codename *Falke* (Falcon).

Personality/Motivation: Besides being an ardent Nazi and follower of Dr. Spregen, Falke is a techhead and gear geek who often gets along better with devices than people. When he meets someone new, he usually has to make an EGO Roll at +5. If the roll fails, he suffers a -2 on all Interaction Skill rolls with that person at that time (he can make another roll the next time they meet). Even if he succeeds, you may want to impose a -1 to some Interaction Skill rolls to reflect how ill at ease he gets.

Quote: "I've crosswired the system so the alarms won't work for 20 minutes. You've got that much time to get in, do the job, and get out. I'll keep watch and alert you to any developments."

Powers/Tactics: Falke is the Victory Brigade's technology expert, B&E specialist, and hacker. When the team needs to get into an area undetected, it relies on Falke to bypass the security systems. When it needs eye-in-the-sky surveillance during a mission, Falke hangs back and uses a group of small, camera-equipped UAVs to keep overwatch on the area. When they have to gather information on a target, Falke puts his computer skills to work.

Falke has received plenty of combat training, but he's not as violence-prone or combat-oriented as his comrades. He carries a submachine gun and a knife, but prefers to hang back on the perimeter, where he can run interference and provide support for the rest of the Brigade. He only gets involved in firefights if there's no other reasonable option.

Campaign Use: The Victory Brigade isn't just a group of Nazi thugs who can only commit assaults, and Falke proves that. With his help, the team can conduct sophisticated infiltration and extraction missions, capers, and other such crimes. Thanks to his efforts, the Victory Party's coffers are much more full than they used to be.

To make Falke tougher, give him additional combat training so he can help with the fights more — some Combat Skill Levels, a Commando Training package, that sort of thing. You could also give him some Science Skills. To weaken him, drop his INT to 15 and get rid of his Skill Level with Intellect Skills.

Falke doesn't Hunt people unless ordered to by Dr. Spregen, in which case he follows orders.

Falke has no criminal record, though of course he's participated in many crimes as part of the Brigade.

Appearance: Darryl Karns is 5'7" tall and weighs 160 pounds. He has short, sandy blonde hair and watery blue eyes; he's cleanshaven but wears glasses for mild nearsightedness. As Falke, he wears a black uniform and black body armor, with his various gadgets, weapons, and devices carried in pockets or strapped to his body.

JÄGER PLOT SEEDS

Several women are found murdered around Hudson City. The police think they've got a serial killer on their hands, but the leaders of the Victory Party have their own ideas. To them, it looks like Jäger's been indulging in some "extracurricular activities" that could expose the organization. They don't want to risk dissension in the ranks by having the rest of the Brigade investigate, so they decide to trick the PCs into handling the problem for them....

While interrogating a prisoner, Jäger learns some facts that don't have anything to do with what the Party wants to know, but might help the PCs a lot. Perfectly willing to make some extra cash as long as he doesn't hurt the Party, Jäger offers to sell the PCs the information.

The PCs find a big guy face-down in an alley — looks like he's been mugged or something. Turns out it's Jäger (though they don't know that unless they've encountered him before and seen his face). What happened to him, and how is it going to affect the PCs?

JÄGER (HUNTER)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 100 kg; 3d6 [3]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
17	CON	14	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
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
34	END	0		
32	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 77**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END

Martial Arts: Commando Training

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	3d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25 STR
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA ½d6
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Perks

4 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of the Victory Party)
10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Talents

5 Resistance (5 points)

Skills

9 +3 with Firearms
9 Targeting Skill Levels: +3 versus Hit Location modifiers with All Attacks
3 Interrogation 12-
2 KS: Military Science 11-
2 KS: Nazism 11-
2 Language: German (fluent conversation; English is Native)
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
7 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Small Arms, Garrote

Resource Points

18 Equipment Points: 150
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 123
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
25 Psychological Limitation: Fervent Nazi (Very Common, Total)
20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Dr. Spregen (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Sadist (Common, Strong)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Fred Miklejohn) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 215

Background/History: Raised by a father who was a blatant racist and homophobe and a mother so shy she barely spoke, Fred Miklejohn soaked up race hatred at an early age. As a teen he shaved his head and ran with skinhead gangs, vandalizing Jew-owned businesses and bashing "queers," Jews, blacks, and anyone else with dark skin who attracted his attention.

As he got older, he also became more sophisticated in his political beliefs. He wised up, realizing the race war wasn't going to be won with isolated attacks and random violence. He got rid of the gang colors, had his tattoos removed, let his hair grow back, and joined the Victory Party. His "common sense" and dedication to the cause impressed the

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K PSG-1	+3	+14	2d6+1	1d6	20	15	2H, FS, fine tuning II, improved bedding, improved firing pin, x8 telescopic sight (OBS)
H&K 33A2	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	40	15	AF5
Underslung 40mm grenade launcher	+0	+0	2½d6	1d6	1	—	He carries 4 grenades
H&K MP5SD3	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5, FS, Sil (-4)
Wire garrote	+0	+0	½d6	1d6-1	—	5	Constant, must be aimed at neck or limb
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Line-gun, radio headset (built into helmet), Gen-2 nightvision device, binoculars

Party's movers and shakers, and after a year they recruited him to train at one of the Party's compounds. His performance in training (particularly the ease with which he learned different weapons), his enthusiasm for the job, and his dedication to the Party's ideals and mission eventually earned him a place on the Victory Brigade as *Jäger* (Hunter).

Personality/Motivation: Jäger is a sadist, pure and simple. He enjoys inflicting pain on others, whether with his hands, a whip, a knife, or a gun. He likes nothing better than to stalk a victim — whether by watching him through a scope, or literally following a target so he can get close enough to knife or strangle him — knowing he can end that person's life at any second. Interrogating prisoners runs a close second. His desire to inflict pain worries the Party's leaders, since they feel he may give in to it and expose the organization, but for now they feel they can control it and make use of him.

Quote: "He won't be any problem after *I'm* done with him."

Powers/Tactics: Jäger is the Victory Squad's assassin. He prefers to work from a distance, using his PSG-1 rifle and telescopic scope to put a bullet through the target's brain from a thousand yards away. But if that's not possible, he does just as good work with a knife, a garrote, or his bare hands. In a firefight, he gets into the thick of the action right alongside Kreuzfeuer, relying on the team leader's tactical sense and their combined firepower to see them through.

Campaign Use: Jäger is another of the Brigade's main combatants; he has more options in combat than Kreuzfeuer due to his skills as a sniper and assassin. If you want to make him tougher, give him more Combat Skill Levels and some Extra DCs with his Commando Training. To weaken him, get rid of his Targeting Skill Levels, and perhaps reduce his SPD to 3.

Jäger doesn't Hunt people unless ordered to by Dr. Spregen, in which case he follows orders.

Fred Miklejohn has a juvenile criminal record for petty theft, joyriding, and several assaults (including one aggravated assault). He hasn't committed any crimes since age 18 as far as the authorities know.

Appearance: Jäger is a fairly handsome fellow in his mid to late 20s, 5'11" tall and weighing about 185 pounds with a muscular build. His hair and short beard are a light brown; his eyes a greenish-grey; he's got an easily-recognized profile with a Roman nose and a strong chin. He often seems distracted, or as if he's not paying attention, when in reality he always tries to keep a close eye on what's going on around him. He wears the standard Victory Brigade uniform and body armor, often in camo patterns so he can sneak through the woods to a good vantage point for sniping.

TODESFALLE PLOT SEEDS

A series of mysterious bombings rocks Hudson City. The cause: Todesfalle is testing out a new explosive compound, and on orders from Party officials has used several Jewish-owned businesses as his guinea pigs. Since the explosives are his own creation, tracing them through the usual methods won't work well; the PCs will have to work hard and cleverly to figure out what's going on and put a stop to it.

While in the woods for some reason (pursuing another criminal, hunting, hiking...), a PC stumbles upon and gets badly hurt by one of Todesfalle's traps. It wasn't intentional — he forgot to take it down after some tests and paramilitary training exercises months ago. Now the PC has to make it out of the woods alive... and then track Todesfalle down and get revenge....

One of the PCs hurts Todesfalle's twin brother Trittrunter. Now Todesfalle is going to get revenge. It starts simply, yet dramatically, with the PC's car exploding as he approaches it. From there, the violence, severity, and frequency of the attacks escalates... unless the PC figures out what's going on and stops it.

TODESFALLE (DEADFALL)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
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
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
31	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 67**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
10	*Lucky Guy:* Luck 2d6	0

Perks

4 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of the Victory Party)
10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Talents

14 *Bomber:* Deadly Blow: KA +2d6 with bombs/explosives
5 Resistance (5 points)

Skills

9 Demolitions 15-
3 Electronics 13-
4 KS: Bombs And Explosives 13-
2 KS: Nazism 11-
2 Language: English (fluent conversation; German is Native)
3 Language: Spanish (completely fluent)
3 Mechanics 12-
5 Security Systems 13-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
6 Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 14-
3 Systems Operation 12-
3 Tracking 12-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points

28 Equipment Points: 200
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 133
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
25 Psychological Limitation: Fervent Nazi (Very Common, Total)
20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Dr. Spregen (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Devoted To His Brother (Common, Strong)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Karl Kanzler) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 215

Background/History: Karl and Gregor Kanzler are twin brothers and third-generation Nazi warriors. Their grandfather Heinrich was a Nazi soldier during World War II, an associate of Spregen's, who escaped to South America via the ODESSA route. He raised his sons, including Karl and Gregor's father Dietmar, to be good Nazis and believe in and work for the cause of the Fourth Reich. Dietmar in turn taught Karl and Gregor. From an early age he trained them to be warriors on behalf of the Aryan people. Karl learned demolitions, trap-setting, and wilderness skills, while Gregor became an expert wheelman and mechanic. When he felt the boys were ready, Dietmar sent them to Herr Doktor Spregen, who christened them Todesfalle (Deadfall) and Trittrunter (Downshift [or, more literally, "kickdown"]).

Personality/Motivation: Aside from being dedicated Nazis and followers of Doktor Spregen, Todesfalle's and Trittrunter's only personality quirk is their devotion to one another. As twins they shared a strong bond from birth, and the training regimen they followed under the tutelage of their iron-willed father only reinforced that. If someone harms one of them, the other will do whatever he must to obtain suitable revenge — perhaps even ignore Party instructions.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Radio headset (built into helmet), several blocks of plastique, detonators and other demolitions gear and tools, Gen-2 nightvision device

Quote: "I will set the traps there... and there... and there. I will make them obvious enough that the fools can spot them, but not so obvious they'll be aware of the real trap: the ambush these devices will drive them into."

Powers/Tactics: Todesfalle is a clever, sneaky bastard. An expert on demolitions and traps, he fights mainly by controlling the battlefield and making his opponents dance to his tune — if he can't do that, he'll usually retreat. On Victory Brigade missions, he usually helps Falke with the breaking and entering work (for example, by quickly, cleanly, and as quietly as possible blowing open locked doors) and/or by preparing "surprises" to cover the group's escape routes.

Campaign Use: Todesfalle expands the Victory Brigade's capabilities so that it's more than just a combat team. In an organization that depends upon security and secrecy for its continued existence, making sure escapes are possible and that enemies can't penetrate your perimeter is an important thing, and Todesfalle helps provide that ability for the Victory Party in general, and the *Siegestruppe* in particular.

To make Todesfalle more powerful, give him some mainline combat abilities, such as Combat Skill Levels or some Martial Arts. To weaken him, reduce his Demolitions roll and his Equipment Points.

Todesfalle doesn't Hunt people unless ordered to by Dr. Spregen, in which case he follows orders. He might defy that general doctrine to pursue someone who hurts his brother, though.

Karl Kanzler has no criminal record.

Appearance: Todesfalle is 6'0" tall with blonde hair and blue eyes. He has a military bearing — he always stands up straight with shoulders squared, keeps his face cleanshaven, and cuts his hair in a military style. He wears the standard Brigade uniform and body armor; he keeps his explosives and tools in various pockets and pouches.

TRITTRUNTER PLOT SEEDS

Trittrunter hears about a new sportscar he just *has* to try out. That leads to an unusual auto theft, which piques the PCs' crimefighting curiosity, which may lead to all sorts of trouble for the Victory Party....

To amuse himself when there isn't a Brigade mission to perform, Trittrunter starts racing on the amateur circuit — the one that races on back country roads and crudely-constructed rural racetracks, where the betting's heavy and a man who wins too often may develop a reputation... or get beaten to a pulp because "he's a cheater." Through his hobby he meets a PC with similar interests, or perhaps the PCs hear about the hot new racer tearing up the roads, and from there it's only a few steps to developing a rivalry and perhaps learning about the Victory Party.

A PC in his civilian identity accidentally causes a collision with Trittrunter while he's also in civilian mode. But Trittrunter becomes extremely angry over the PC's "stupidity" and begins a revenge campaign not realizing that he may have bitten off more than he can chew.

TRITTRUNTER (DOWNSHIFT)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
35	STUN	7		**Total Characteristics Cost: 76**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*I Can Handle Any Car You Got:* +5 DEX; Only For Driving (-1)	0
5	*I Can Handle Any Car You Got:* +1 SPD; Only For Driving (-1)	0

Perks

- 4 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (high-ranking member of the Victory Party)
- 10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military

Talents

- 5 Resistance (5 points)

Skills

- 9 Combat Driving 16-
- 3 KS: Automobiles 12-
- 2 KS: Nazism 11-
- 2 Language: German (fluent conversation; English is Native)
- 3 Lockpicking 13-
- 3 Mechanics 12-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 5 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Helicopters, Small Planes, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 2 WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

- 13 Equipment Points: 125
- 45 Vehicle/Base Points: 100
- 0 Follower/Contact Points: 5
- 0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 129
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Fervent Nazi (Very Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Dr. Spregen (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Devoted To His Brother (Common, Strong)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Gregor Kanzler) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 215

Background/History: Karl and Gregor Kanzler are twin brothers and third-generation Nazi warriors. Their grandfather Heinrich was a Nazi soldier during World War II, an associate of Spregen's, who escaped to South America via the ODESSA route. He raised his sons, including Karl and Gregor's father Dietmar, to be good Nazis and believe in and work for the cause of the Fourth Reich. Dietmar in turn taught Karl and Gregor. From an early age he trained them to be warriors on behalf of the Aryan people. Karl learned demolitions, trap-setting, and wilderness skills, while Gregor became an expert wheelman and mechanic. When he felt the boys were ready, Dietmar sent them to Herr Doktor Spregen, who christened them Todesfalle (Deadfall) and Trittrunter (Downshift [or, more literally, "kickdown"]).

Personality/Motivation: Aside from being dedicated Nazis and followers of Doktor Spregen, Todesfalle's and Trittrunter's only personality quirk is their devotion to one another. As twins they shared a strong bond from birth, and the training regimen they followed under the tutelage of their iron-willed father only reinforced that. If someone harms one of them, the other will do whatever he must to obtain suitable revenge — perhaps even ignore Party instructions.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5
H&K P7M13	+1	+0	1d6+2	1d6-1	13	9	PR
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Radio headset (built into helmet), mechanics' tools, Gen-2 nightvision device

Quote: "Don't worry, I'll be there."

Powers/Tactics: Trittrunter is an expert wheelman who's able to get the best out of any vehicle he drives. (He can also pilot helicopters and small planes, though he's not used to handling them in crisis or combat conditions.) If necessary, he can function as a secondary combatant to back up Jäger and Kreuzfeuer, though if possible he prefers to remain with the car so he can facilitate a quick getaway.

Campaign Use: If you like to include car chases in your games, Trittrunter gives you an excuse to introduce one into just about any scenario involving the Victory Brigade. If you'd prefer to avoid them, you can just use him to help the group escape, or rework his Skill set to make him more combat-oriented.

To make Trittrunter tougher, give him some mainline combat abilities, such as Combat Skill Levels or some Martial Arts. To weaken him, reduce his Combat Driving roll and his Vehicle/Base Points.

Trittrunter doesn't Hunt people unless ordered to by Dr. Spregen, in which case he follows orders. He might defy that general doctrine to pursue someone who hurts his brother, though.

Gregor Kanzler has no criminal record.

Appearance: Trittrunter is 6'0" tall with blonde hair and blue eyes. Unlike his brother Karl, he's not so concerned with keeping up appearances — he's a little less rigid in his posture, a little less muscular in his overall physique, and more likely to have a touch of five o'clock shadow — but it's still blatantly obvious they're twins. He wears the standard Brigade uniform and body armor.

WHILE EARTH BURNS (WEB)

Membership: Hundreds of fanatical environmentalists throughout the world, led by the Recluse and supported by his squads of Gaea's Commandos.

Background/History: "While Earth burns, its ecosystems destroyed by the short-sighted, men such as you sit in greedy complacence and warm yourself at the hearthside." So spoke radical French leftist Séverin Demandoux in 1987 during an address to the General Assembly of the United Nations. After years of lobbying the French government, American government, European Union, United Nations, and the world community in general for stronger, more comprehensive environmental regulations and an end to exploitation of the natural world, Demandoux had become fed up with mankind's folly, and this speech signaled an end to his tolerance of it. After he left the United Nations building he vanished from public life altogether.

He re-appeared, after a fashion, in 1991, when a group of terrorists identifying itself as part of WEB — While Earth Burns — invaded a Strake Industries International facility in Wyoming and took over 200 people hostage. It demanded that SII halt ten major projects WEB alleged "create[d] massive amounts of pollution and threaten[ed] dozens of fragile ecosystems throughout the world." Strake Industries pretended to comply while the FBI moved in to rescue the hostages and capture the members of WEB. The assault did not go as planned; while the feds rescued most of the victims, nearly four dozen died when a WEB member triggered a bomb. The FBI captured fifteen of the 23 terrorists (who were eventually tried and imprisoned); the rest died during the assault.

In the years since then, WEB has established itself as one of the most versatile and dangerous terrorist organizations in the world. Striking on all continents, though primarily in Europe and the United States, it has bombed industrial facilities, freed test animals and destroyed the labs they were "imprisoned" in, murdered medical researchers and construction workers whom it accused of "participating in animal and environmental exploitation," taken hundreds of hostages, and assassinated politicians and law enforcement officials who spoke out against it. Although it has been relatively quiet since the events of September 11, 2001, counterterrorism officials fear this is because it's preparing for a major new offensive that will begin soon.

WEB's symbol is a stylized spider web superimposed over the Earth, representing the web of life that sustains humanity on this planet.

Organization And Structure: According to the information released by the organization, WEB organizes itself into five "chains," one for each major area of operations: North America; South and Central America; Europe; Africa; and Asia. Each chain is led by a "Chief Protector," and the overall leader is the "Prime Protector," a man known only as the Recluse.

The truth is a different story, and various counterterrorism forces around the world know it. For the most part, WEB maintains the sort of traditional "cell" structure common to terrorist organizations. A group of WEB operatives led by a commander of some sort commit terrorist acts in a given region or city. The commander knows other commanders, but the operatives in his cell generally don't know anyone else in the organization (thus minimizing WEB's overall exposure when the authorities capture its members). Most of WEB's cells are in the United States and Europe, where it's strongest thanks to the support of college students, independently wealthy radicals, and other people who have the time and energy to devote to such causes.

Where WEB departs from the usual terrorist structure is its central core of highly-trained, highly-motivated fanatics. Known as *Gaea's Commandos,* these "soldiers" lead most of WEB's major operations and report directly to the Recluse, the group's leader. No one knows who the Recluse is or where he lives, though many experts suspect he's Séverin Demandoux.

WEB's recruitment procedures are slow and circumspect. The last thing the organization wants is to let nonbelievers — or, worse, undercover cops — infiltrate its ranks. Typically it keeps an eye on environmental activists and radicals on campuses. When they find one who seems willing to do more than just talk, they arrange to "test" him by having an existing member suggest an ecoterrorist activity to the prospect. If the prospect agrees and participates in the "mission," WEB regards him as trustworthy and extends an offer of membership.

Doctrine: At its most basic, WEB's philosophy and doctrine is easily expressed: stop environmental exploitation and preserve the environment for future generations. It's this simple message that attracts a lot of favorable opinion for WEB from people who otherwise wouldn't even consider supporting a terrorist organization.

Beyond the basics, WEB's *Manifesto For A New Earth,* the organization's "bible," calls for the following:

- an end to all testing involving animals, except where such testing is intended to benefit animals (*e.g.,* testing new veterinary procedures or medicines)

FORESTHETICS

One of WEB's most important fronts is Foresthetics, a charitable organization. Publicly, Foresthetics works to support conservation of the South American rain forest and other forested areas. Privately, it uses its network of supporters, offices, and installations to help WEB personnel conduct ecoterrorist activities.

Foresthetics's world headquarters is located in the Lighthouse Financial Building on Healy Street in the Blackbridge neighborhood of Hudson City. Its director, Nicole Macintyre, often appears on local and national television speaking in support of various environmental causes, particularly those related to the rain forest.

- significantly more stringent environmental laws (WEB has suggested versions of these laws on its website) which will be rigidly and ruthlessly enforced. Among other things, WEB suggests that violations of environment protection and anti-exploitation laws be made capital offenses.
- a ban on all further destruction, diminishment, cutting, burning, or other exploitation of rain forests throughout the world
- a ban on all further destruction, diminishment, or other exploitation of coral reefs throughout the world
- a ban on all whale fishing, and a general reduction in commercial fishing quotas throughout the world
- a ban on all forms of sport hunting and fishing

Those general points don't set WEB apart to any significant degree from legitimate, non-terrorist environmental organizations (groups WEB considers weak and ineffective). The differences arise in what WEB's willing to do to foment these changes. WEB believes it must take "forceful action" — by which it means bombings, assassinations, hostage-taking, and the like — to make the peoples and governments of the world open their eyes, see how they've been exploiting and destroying the environment, and get them to stop.

At its heart, WEB has another goal, one it doesn't discuss publicly and which, in truth, only its inner circle and most strident supporters agree with. The Recluse, Gaea's Commandos, and other hard-core WEB members believe Earth is grossly overpopulated. Until the number of humans on the planet is significantly reduced, there's no hope for stopping (and, ultimately, reversing) the decimation of the environment that's been taking place for the last two centuries. Zealots in the worst sense of the word, they're ready and willing to commit acts of mass murder to radically reduce Earth's population. The only thing that's stopped them so far is finding ways to do this that won't also inflict massive harm on the environment. The usual methods — nuclear bombs, chemical and biological weapons, and so forth — would destroy entire ecosystems, and that's not acceptable to WEB. They're currently pinning their hopes on the development of bioweapons tailored to attack only the human genome, but their efforts to develop this weapon haven't succeeded yet.

Group Relations: The central core of WEB gets along extraordinarily well, since it's a group of fanatics sharing a common vision. While they may argue about methodology, mission choice and planning, and other particulars, they all agree on the organization's overall goals and that extreme action is necessary to achieve them.

Where WEB appears to suffer from divisiveness is in the outer tier of the organization — the college students and other environmentalists whom WEB allows to call itself members (they support the organization through donations, doing volunteer work, and the like). Many of these persons support WEB's publicly-announced goals, and may even agree that more extreme actions than just holding protest rallies and lobbying Congress are required. But they don't necessarily agree with the blatantly terrorist and criminal actions of the group. More than once a "WEB member" has been seen on local or national television explaining that he supports the organization's agenda and purpose as stated in the *Manifesto,* but does not agree with the terroristic wing of the group, which is a "rogue element" of an overall beneficent organization. This is completely incorrect — the terroristic elements are at the hearts of WEB, not the fringe — but WEB allows this "split" within the organization to show because it confuses the picture for many people and helps WEB recruit supporters who would otherwise have nothing to do with it.

WEB has relatively little contact with other terrorist organizations, since most of them support a political or religious cause. WEB considers such "squabblings" meaningless and stupid; all people live on and depend on Earth, and that one fundamental similarity should override all others and bring people together to preserve and protect their home rather than destroy and exploit it.

Tactics: WEB has survived for over a decade by being cautious, clever, and absolutely ruthless. When it comes right down to it, the personnel who perform (or at least lead) most of WEB's terrorist missions consider humans little more than infestations on planet Earth. Killing them not only isn't wrong, it's often a good thing — a service to the natural world. Between that, and the fact that WEB doesn't really care about positive publicity or money, it's difficult for counterterrorism organizations to oppose them without risk of extensive loss of life. On at least one occasion, WEB terrorists responded to attempts to negotiate by killing one hostage as a preface to any reply it made.

WEB doesn't stick its neck out for just any target. If it wants to deal with some minor problem, like a lab that uses animals for testing products or medicines, it can usually persuade some group of student radicals to do the job. It focuses its main efforts on *major* polluters and environmental exploiters, and on governments it feels can and should do more to protect the environment. It begins the job years in advance by having one of its members or associates get a job with the target. This allows it to learn the floorplan and infrastructure of target buildings, the personalities of the main people in the organization, and other pertinent matters. If appropriate, it may even construct a crude mock-up of the target for the Gaea's Commandos to practice with. Only when the Recluse and other leaders feel the strike team is ready do they greenlight a mission — the loss of personnel is expected, but the Recluse feels that total failure cannot be tolerated because it makes WEB look bad. Counterterrorism officials throughout the world regard WEB as one of the most efficient, dangerous, and successful terrorist organizations, and the Recluse wants to keep it that way.

WEB PLOT SEEDS

WEB decides it need to "urge" Fordham ChemTech to change some of its environmentally exploitative practices. It takes over the ChemTech Tower in Worthington and threatens to execute one hostage every ten minutes until the company (a) gives it $1 billion "to be donated by WEB to various environmental organizations of our choice," and (b) agrees to halt development of a major industrial facility in India. Unwilling to risk WEB's ire by taking "official" action, city authorities appeal to the PCs to try to stop the crisis.

The PCs get word through the underworld grapevine that WEB is planning something big — possibly an assassination of the President (whose environmental policies it has vociferously criticized) during his upcoming trip to Hudson City. The PCs have to investigate the situation and figure out a way to stop the plot.

A group of environmental organizations approaches the PCs in confidence. It believes WEB's existence and activities are making its members' work harder by crystalizing opposition to environmental reform and giving the whole environmental movement a black eye by association. It wants to hire the PCs to take WEB down, once and for all.

Campaign Use: Many types of *Dark Champions* campaigns could feature a terrorist organization. Espionage and military action games often focus on terrorism as a threat, and a WEB mission in Hudson City could get HCPD cops or costumed vigilantes involved in a conflict with the organization. You could even run a counterterrorism campaign in which WEB was one of the PCs' chief adversaries.

To make WEB more powerful, give it more "codenamed" operatives for the PCs to fight. Much in the same way that the Victory Party has the *Siegestruppe,* WEB could have a special group of Gaea's Commandos with even more advanced training, weapons, and abilities. For a more unusual twist, give WEB its own country — have the group take over some small nation somewhere and attempt to put its policies into effect. This may add an interesting geopolitical angle to your campaign. To weaken WEB, get rid of the Gaea's Commandos and replace them with the *Terrorist* generic character sheets from the Appendix.

WEB isn't likely to Hunt individual characters, or even PC teams — its targets are governments and corporations. If a PC owns or operates a company that WEB regards as a major "environmental offender," he might make their hit list.

THE RECLUSE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
16	STR	6	12-	Lift 233 kg; 3d6 [3]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
17	CON	14	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
34	END	0		
29	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost:**	**77**

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
17	*HTH Combat Training:* HA +5d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	2
82	*The Recluse's Touch:* RKA 5d6, NND (defense is Life Support [appropriate Immunity]; +1), Does BODY (+1); IIF (fingertip needle; -¼), No Range (-½), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
2	*Strong Runner:* Running +1" (7" total)	1
6	*Predator's Senses:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0

Perks

2	Deep Cover (Robert J. Parker, environmental activist)
5	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (leader of WEB)
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
10	+2 HTH
6	+2 with Climbing, Survival, and Tracking
3	Climbing 12-
3	Deduction 12-
5	KS: Game Animals Of The World 14-
5	KS: Ecoterrorism 14-
5	KS: Environmental Exploiters And Polluters 14-
5	KS: Hunting 14-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2	Navigation (Land) 12-
3	Oratory 12-
3	Persuasion 12-
2	PS: Fisherman 11-
5	PS: Hunter 14-
1	SS: Biology 8-
2	SS: Ecology 11-
2	SS: Zoology 11-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	*Hunter's Stealth:* +3 to Stealth; Only In Wilderness (-1)
3	Streetwise 12-
12	Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 14-
3	Tracking 12-

3 Trading 12-
6 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, SCUBA, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
7 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Small Arms, Staff
3 Traveler
1 1) AK: Africa 11-
1 2) AK: Central America 11-
1 3) AK: Europe 11-
1 4) AK: India 11-
1 5) AK: Malaysia 11-
1 6) AK: Rocky Mountains 11-
1 7) AK: South America 11-

Resource Points

12 Equipment Points: 120
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
40 Follower/Contact Points: 85
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 314
Total Cost: 391

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: GSG-9 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
25 Psychological Limitation: Fanatic Environmentalist (Very Common, Total)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major)
211 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 391

Background/History: There was a time when the man who's now the world's most feared ecoterrorist was a die-hard outdoor sportsman: a hunter, a fisherman, a skier. If it was exciting and fun and could be done outside, he did it. He spent years traveling the world, hunting big game and studying the hunting techniques of many peoples and tribes. There wasn't a major game animal he hadn't bagged at least once... whether it was legal to hunt them or not.

One day in India he was hunting tigers. After hours of patient stalking and waiting, he found his prey. He carefully raised his rifle to his shoulder, took aim, let out his breath, and gave one clean squeeze on the trigger. There was a tremendous blast, and the tiger fell, shot clean through the heart.

He walked up to the tiger. As he approached, the sun came out of the clouds, illuminating the body in one pure beam of sunlight. All of a sudden he was struck with a profound sadness. The beauty of the tiger was overwhelming, even in death; what right did he have to bring its life to an end? He sat down next to the body, stroking its fur, weeping. He had murdered this beast, as sure as if it had been a person, and nothing he could do would make that right again.

That was the last time he ever hunted or fished. With the zeal of a convert, he threw himself into environmental causes, joining groups like Wilderness Watch and the Wild Animal Preservation Fund. But they left him dissatisfied. For all their logic, their talk, their lobbying, what had they really accomplished? Dozens of animals were still on the verge of extinction, the rain forest was still getting torn down at the rate of hundreds of acres a day, pollution still filled the skies and waters. Slowly but surely he came to realize that more extreme measures were needed.

His first ecoterrorist act was to shoot two executives of Harpcor to call attention to their company's record as a polluter and environmental exploiter. But he didn't cover his tracks well, and soon the HCPD was after him. He disappeared into the ecoterrorist underground to get away, and in time that brought him to the attention of the nascent WEB. Demandoux recruited him personally, and when WEB's founder died of a heart attack only two years after making his infamous speech to the United Nations (a fact only the inner circle of hard-core WEB members knows), the choice for his successor was clear. Christening himself the Recluse, both for his loner ways and because he intended to strike with the deadliness of the spider, he took the reins of the organization and has never let them go.

Personality/Motivation: Like the Gaea's Commandos and WEB's other most devoted members, the Recluse is a fanatical environmentalist. He believes the environment, wild creatures, plants, and other natural resources must be protected at all costs — even if it means killing or endangering humans. Most people are nothing but environmental exploiters and abusers; he thinks the Earth's population should be about 20% of what it is now.

Although the Recluse comes across as a reasonable and logical when one first speaks to him, it doesn't take long for his fanaticism to start creeping in around the edges. Let him talk long enough and he veers into full-blown ranting. A gifted public speaker, he can go on and on at full volume for hours unless something distracts him.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Casull Fieldgrade	+1	+0	2d6+1	1d6	5	12	
H&H African	+0	+2	2½d6	1d6	2	16	
Heavy Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	—	10	

Armor
Level II-A (DEF 6, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: The Recluse rarely goes out into the field anymore; when he does, he equips himself with whatever he feels he needs to improve his chances of survival (such as camping gear and various tools)

THE RECLUSE PLOT SEEDS

The PCs meet "Robert J. Parker" at a charity event, a protest rally, or some other place. At first he seems like a nice guy — a bit of a radical, maybe, but nothing too bad. As they get to know him better, they see hints of the fanaticism that lies beneath his public exterior. In time they should come to believe he could be dangerous... and what will they do then?

The Recluse hears that someone local to the campaign setting — a zookeeper, a famous hunter, or the like — is somehow mistreating tigers. Stung by the memory of what made him "see the light," he decides to deal with this environmental abuser personally. The PCs have to figure out what's going on in time to stop it... or investigate the murder and find a way to bring the Recluse to justice.

Several people around the country are poisoned, seemingly by a toxin derived from brown recluse spider venom. Is the Recluse at work, and if so, why... and how will the PCs stop him?

Quote: None. The Recluse is never known to have issued a public statement.

Powers/Tactics: Although he rarely uses his skills anymore, the Recluse is a talented hunter who knows more about living and surviving in wilderness areas than most special forces soldiers. He's studied the hunting techniques and weapons of peoples from around the world, spent time in just about every type of environment (except deserts), and knows the behavior and capabilities of the world's major game animals intimately. Since joining WEB, he's become an expert on ecology and ecoterrorism as well. He prefers to remain behind the scenes, directing the activities of his Commandos and followers, a spider at the center of the WEB.

If forced to fight, the Recluse often uses a special weapon — a concealed needle he wears on his fingertip (it's attached to a thimble-like cap) that contains a deadly poison derived from that of the brown recluse. He can also use weapons (if any are at hand). If he doesn't think he has a chance to win, he'll take the first opportunity to escape; he's a firm believer in living to fight another day.

Campaign Use: The Recluse's role as leader of WEB is obvious and straightforward. What makes him more interesting is the mystery surrounding who he is. Not even his closest associates in WEB know his identity — and in fact, not all counterterrorism officials believe the Recluse actually exists. Some think that an "inner council" of powerful cell leaders runs WEB and that the Recluse is a fiction designed to inspire loyalty and obedience. The Recluse fosters and makes use of this misbelief whenever he can.

For times when he feels the need to interact with the rest of humanity, the Recluse maintains a Deep Cover as Robert J. Parker, a mainstream environmental activist. In this role he may come into contact with the PCs in a nonconfrontational way — though if they push his buttons, he may not be able to keep himself from ranting.

The Recluse doesn't maintain any standard headquarters or hideout. He moves around a lot, using a network of isolated cabins, homes, and other facilities WEB established years ago. If necessary he can always take to the woods; he can survive in areas so wild that teams of men could comb through them for weeks and not find so much as a trace of him.

To make the Recluse tougher, increase his Primary Characteristics a point or two and/or give him Martial Arts. To weaken him, remove his All Combat CSLs.

The Recluse wouldn't Hunt anyone personally. If WEB believes a PC is an environmental exploiter worthy of its attention, the Recluse will turn the organization's resources loose on him. After careful study of the target, the Commandos will formulate a plan to take him out... and then they'll take him out. Unless the PC gets lucky and detects their attempts to study him, he'll probably learn he's a target only when WEB lowers the boom.

The Recluse has no criminal record.

Appearance: Only the most trusted members of WEB know what the Recluse looks like. He's a hearty, muscular white man in his early 40s with sandy blonde hair cut short and a sandy blonde moustache. He typically wears clothing suitable for the outdoors, such as safari shirts and jeans.

GAEA'S COMMANDO

13	STR	14	DEX	13	CON
10	BODY	10	INT	10	EGO
13	PRE	8	COM		
4	PD	4	ED	3	SPD
6	REC	26	END	24	STUN

Abilities: *Observant:* +1 PER with all Sense Groups; Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank; Improved Equipment Availability: Military; Climbing 12-; KS: Ecoterrorism 12-; KS: Environmental Exploiters And Polluters 12-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-; KS: Hobby or Job 11-; Navigation (Land) 12-; PS: Terrorist 11-; PS: Hobby or Job 11-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 8-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical and one other environment category) 12-; Tracking 8-; WF: Small Arms; 27 points' worth of additional Skills and abilities appropriate to individual, if desired

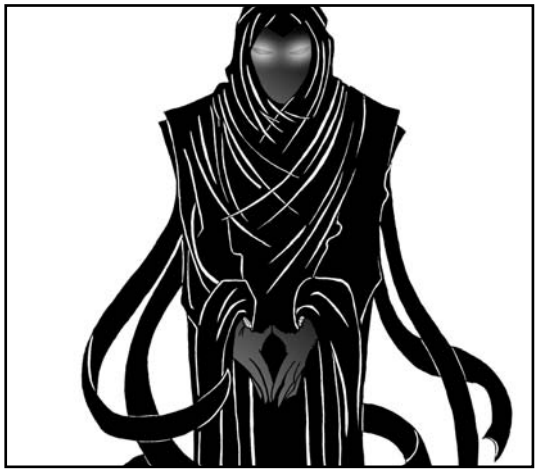
50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture); Psychological Limitation: Fanatic Environmentalist (Very Common, Total); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major); Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major)

Equipment: H&K MP5; Combat Knife; Level II-A (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-). The Gaea's Commandos plan their missions extensively; if there's a type of equipment they need to improve their chances of success, the odds are they'll have it.

Description: This character sheet represents a typical member of Gaea's Commandos, the group of hard-core WEB members who plan and conduct most of the organization's terrorist attacks. Individual members may vary slightly from this baseline.

Most members of Gaea's Commandos live in normal society, posing as ordinary (if extremely environmentally conscious) people. They usually hold environmentally-beneficial jobs, for example as recycling plant managers or environmental lobbyists. Others are full-time terrorists supported solely by WEB.

chapter three:



SOLO CRIMINALS

LE BATELEUR

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
17	CON	14	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
6	PD	3		Total: 9 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	REC	0		
34	END	0		
29	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 111**

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers	END
14	*Feint:* HA +5d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½), Requires A DEX Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼)	2
6	*Fast On His Feet:* Running +3" (9" total)	1
2	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward)	1
6	*Disappearing Act:* Teleportation 9"; Can Only Teleport To Places Le Bateleur Could Normally Go (-½), Must Cross Intervening Space (-¼), No Noncombat Multiple (-¼), Only To "Vanish" When No One Is Looking (-½), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½)	2

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

3 Acrobatics 13-
3 Breakfall 13-
3 Climbing 13-
3 Contortionist 13-
3 KS: Magic Tricks 13-
3 KS: Jails And Prisons Of The Hudson City Region 13-
3 Language: English (completely fluent; French is Native)
3 Lockpicking 13-
3 Mimicry 13-
3 Persuasion 13-
3 Security Systems 13-
7 Sleight Of Hand 15-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 13-
3 Ventriloquism 13-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points

18 Equipment Points: 150
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 132
Total Cost: 243

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: Card Shark 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Showoff (Common, Strong)
10 Reputation: magician-criminal who helps other criminals escape, 11-
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
53 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 243

Background/History: He was gonna be famous, he just knew it!

His nerves really jangled as he waited backstage. He'd never had stage fright like this before — but this was his biggest gig ever, one where maybe someone with some entertainment clout would notice him, so it was important that everything go just right. To calm his hands and his mind, he worked through a few exercises, effortlessly palming objects, making them disappear and re-appear.

At last it was time. "Ladies and gentlemen, the Perplexed Rabbit is thrilled to present the newest master of prestidigitation and mystery... Paul Starr!"

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Blinding Confetti	+0	—	Flash 6d6	—	4	—	No Range
Juggling Balls	+0	RBS	4d6 N	—	8	6	
Shock Gloves	+0	—	NND 4d6	—	2	—	
Wand Gun	+0	-2	1½d6	1d6-1	1	6	
Throwing Knives	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown, carries four

Armor
Armored Clothing (DEF 2, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Le Bateleur usually has time to plan his capers and rescues well in advance, so he can obtain whatever sort of equipment he needs, provided it's the sort of thing available on the street, or that he has the time and money to hire the likes of Daedalus or the Toymaker to build it. Additionally, Le Bateleur usually carries a dozen or so Smoke Pellets, and an equal number of Flash Pellets, to help with his Disappearing Act and for other purposes.

The announcer left the stage quickly, and the lights dimmed. Suddenly there was a flash on stage — a burst of fire and brimstone! When the smoke cleared, Paul was on stage as if by magic!... but no one in the audience seemed impressed.

Undeterred, he launched into his routine. Rabbits and doves emerged as if from nowhere, beautiful women were chopped in two and then miraculously healed, sword-blades penetrated his body and did no harm. But still, all he got were smatterings of applause. He left the stage with a smile on his face but dejection in his heart. He just couldn't understand it; these were great tricks he was doing!

It took a few more poorly-received performances before the realization sank in: stage magic just didn't impress people anymore. Unless you had a menagerie of dangerous animals like Siegfried and Roy, or the budget of David Copperfield, you couldn't get anywhere with sleight of hand these days. People were too used to flashy special effects and computer animation; prestidigitation just didn't impress them the way it once did.

Slowly but surely the jobs... and the money... dried up. Within a year he was thrown out of his Crown Point apartment for nonpayment of rent. Soon he was reduced to supporting himself by using his skills in a different way: pickpocketing.

Turned out he had a real gift for it. It wasn't long before his income from crime exceeded the money he used to make as a stage performer. As his confidence grew he moved on to other crimes, such as stealing jewelry from underneath the very noses of unsuspecting store clerks. He began developing other skills, such as picking locks and defeating security systems, moving from being a simple pickpocket to a full-bore thief.

Then came the day Charlemagne needed him to break one of his gangsters out of jail. It didn't take much — a little trickery, a little contortionism, a few seconds of deft lockpicking work. He realized that was something he could do that even most pickpockets couldn't: help people escape. There were bound to be plenty of people in the underworld who'd pay good money for engineered escapes. He just needed a way to market himself....

Soon the word was out on the street: if you needed a way out of jail or prison, get in touch with *Le Bateleur,* the Magician. If you've got the coin, he's got a way out.

Personality/Motivation: Le Bateleur got into crime for a simple reason: he loves money and what it can buy. His desire for fame and acclaim mostly withered away a long time ago; now all he cares about is getting paid. He's not a violent person, but he no longer cares enough about his fellow man to make any effort not to hurt people when he commits his crimes — if someone gets in his way, or just happens to be unlucky enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, he's not going to shed a single tear about hurting them. In short, he's not actively evil so much as he is utterly callous.

Le Bateleur loves to display his skills and cleverness — or even to talk about them. It's a rare fight where he doesn't spend some of the time posturing and making Presence Attacks. Sometimes he even goes so far as to warn his enemies in advance of what he's going to do, since he's convinced they can't avoid his attack.

Le Bateleur chose his name because he likes the sound of it in his native French, and he feels it lends an air of the exotic that "the Magician" or "the Wizard" both lack. It annoys him no end when people mispronounce it, as they almost invariably do... but if they're paying him enough money, they can call him whatever they want.

Quote: "Now you see him, now you don't...."

Powers/Tactics: Le Bateleur is a gifted stage magician with a real knack for sleight of hand and many other disciplines related to misdirection and deceit: ventriloquism, contortionism, mimicry. He's also an accomplished thief, able to bypass locks and alarms without much trouble. But what really sets him apart in the Hudson City underworld is his specialty as a "professional escape engineer." For a sizable fee, Le Bateleur orchestrates an escape for an imprisoned criminal. He often hires additional personnel to assist with this, such as computer hackers and disguise experts, but he remains in charge of the operation. "No prison can hold my clients!" he likes to advertise — but while it's true he's enjoyed remarkable success outwitting the authorities and leading jailbreaks, he's not actually that infallible. Nor does he possess magic powers; he plans his jobs meticulously, often spending months to make

LE BATELEUR PLOT SEEDS

The classic Le Bateleur plot: someone powerful and dangerous is in jail or prison, and wants out. He gets word to Le Bateleur, makes the required down payment, and sits back to await rescue. The PCs get word of this somehow and have to stop Le Bateleur before he completes his preparations and breaks the man out of the joint.

A series of "impossible" crimes — locked-room thefts and such — have been committed recently. Sounds like the work of Le Bateleur, but he hasn't claimed responsibility, and finding him to "ask" about them may prove difficult.

The PCs need to break *in* to prison to interrogate or rescue a prisoner. That's a tall order — too tall for them to handle without the help of the expert in such matters, Le Bateleur. But can they trust him to play fair?

sure the mission won't go sour and end up with *him* behind bars beside his client.

Le Bateleur prefers to run rather than fight, but if he must he can hold his own. In addition to mundane smoke and flash pellets, he carries a variety of gimmicked weapons based on magicians' props: a wand that's a one-shot gun; sparkly confetti that dazzles and blinds; gloves with built-in batteries that can deliver a powerful shock; and juggling balls hard enough to inflict injury when he throws them. If it comes to fisticuffs, Le Bateleur uses his deft hands and skill at misdirection to fake out his opponent and then clobber him from an unexpected angle. In combat he's blindingly fast, able to assess the situation and react in a quick, confident manner.

In a combat or crisis situation, Le Bateleur prefers to keep his opponents confused and guessing. He uses misdirection and evasion as much as he can — his Disappearing Act ability is particularly useful for this, though it's not always easy to arrange the battlefield so he can use it. He sometimes implies that his abilities aren't skills, but actual magic powers, as another way of keeping his foes off-balance.

Campaign Use: You can use Le Bateleur in several ways. The easiest is as just another thief, a competitor to the likes of the Black Tarantula, Chiaroscuro, or Meteor. To differentiate him from them, emphasize the "escape expert" angle described above. In that case, the PCs may never hear about him until the first time he frees someone they put in prison — but after that, he's bound to become such an annoyance that they'll actively try to find and stop him.

To make Le Bateleur more powerful, give him appropriate super-skills — hypnotism, Desolidification representing his supreme ability at contortionism and lockpicking — or beef up his Skill set with Disguise and some Interaction Skills (Acting, Conversation, and Seduction would all work well). To weaken him, reduce his DEX and INT to 15-17 each and his SPD to 4.

Le Bateleur generally doesn't Hunt heroes — he's not really a vengeful kind of guy. But if a hero showed him up in a contest of skill, he might seek that hero out to obtain a "rematch" and prove who's really the better man.

Paul Starr — or Paul Saunier, to give his real name — has a criminal record for multiple acts of theft and several assaults. The authorities know he's Le Bateleur, but his identity remains unknown to the underworld and public at large (it would take a little digging in official records to find it).

Appearance: When Le Bateleur started his criminal career, he wore a more or less traditional magician's tuxedo and top hat with a domino mask, but after a few capers he rejected it as being too out of touch. He briefly switched to a costume loosely patterned after a jester's motley, but soon abandoned it as too stupid-looking. He finally settled on a simpler costume: a sort of purplish or burgundy bodystocking with matching domino mask, plus gloves, boots, and cape that are white with red trim along the edges (the latter's perfect for swirling dramatically as he appears or disappears in a puff of smoke). The boots and gloves are flared (so he can easily hide things in them) and the cape has many cleverly-concealed pockets.

UP, UP, AND AWAY

"That Battler guy, he promises a lot, but he sure as *%&! delivers, too. One time after my partner Jace and I pulled a major bank robbery, the cops picked up Jace. They couldn't find me, so I got in touch with Battler to arrange an escape — it was going to take every penny we got from the robbery, and all we'd stashed over the years, but no way was I lettin' Jace stay locked up.

"It was a pretty slick plan. Battler hired a group of mercs to help pull it off. They waited until Jace was on the bus up to the Stew. When it started to cross the bridge over Bear Creek, the mercs blocked the bridge on both ends.

"While they kept the guards occupied in the front of the bus with gunfire, Battler came zoomin' in over the trees courtesy of his other employee: Thunderhawk. That copter'a his, it's so quiet th' guards didn't hear him hovering over the bus because of all the gunfire from the mercs. Battler lowers himself down from the copter, opens the back door of the bus, frees Jace, and airlifts him outta there.

"Slickest thing I ever saw, man."

SOCIALIZING

"Artur! How are you, darlink?"

"Quite well, Marta, quite well indeed. I see that you're as beautiful as ever."

"Tank you, darlink. I zertainly can't argue!"

"It's good to see that things are back to normal here. Have the police made any progress with your case?"

"No, darlink; it iz mozt diztrezzing! It zimply terrifiez me, te tought of zomebody breaking in here vhile I vaz in Europe, rummaging around in my tingz. Tank heavenz I had mozt of my jewelry with me!"

"Surely the authorities have obtained some leads on the Degas. It's not as if the thief could auction it at Sotheby's."

"I know, darlink, I know. But tey zay tat it muzt have been ztolen for zome private collector — a "cuztom job," tey call it. I may never zee it again. Mozt diztrezzing. Anyvay, enough bad newz, it iz a party! Enjoy yourzelf, darlink; I muzt go greet te oter gueztz."

He watched as she animatedly greeting one person after another. In his pocket, his hand idly fingered the lapis brooch he'd taken from her jewelry chest when he robbed the place. He could still see the moonlight pouring in through the windows, taste the thrill of avoiding her security systems and servants. And certainly Mr. Strake had paid quite well for the Degas....

—the Black Tarantula enjoys a night of pleasant company in pleasant surroundings

THE BLACK TARANTULA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
15	COM	3	12-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 38**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
10	*Thief's Luck:* Luck 2d6	0

Perks

10 Contact: the Toymaker 15- (Contact has extremely useful Skills, good relationship with Contact)
6 3 Deep Covers
3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
10 Money: Wealthy

Skills

10 +2 with Agility Skills

3 Acting 12-
3 Bribery 12-
3 Climbing 12-
1 Computer Programming 8-
3 Concealment 12-
3 Contortionist 12-
3 Conversation 12-
3 Disguise 12-
1 Electronics 8-
1 Forgery (Documents) 8-
6 Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games, Roulette) 12-
7 High Society 14-
3 KS: Art History 12-
3 KS: Con Games 12-
3 KS: Gems And Jewelry 12-
3 Language: French (completely fluent; English is Native)
3 Lockpicking 12-
3 Persuasion 12-
3 PS: Appraiser 12-
3 Riding 12-
3 Security Systems 12-
3 Seduction 12-
3 Sleight Of Hand 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
5 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Hanggliding, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles

Resource Points

12 Equipment Points: 120
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 162
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

5 Age: 40+
20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
15 Psychological Limitation: Thrillseeker Who Must Maintain His Reputation (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Fear Of Dying Too Soon (Common, Moderate)
15 Reputation: the world's best cat burglar, 14-
5 Rivalry: Professional (with other well-known burglars and thieves, like Chiaroscuro and Meteor)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 205

Background/History: The true identity and background of the infamous cat burglar called the Black Tarantula remain a mystery, despite decades of efforts to ferret out his secrets. According to the CIA's files, he grew up on a small farm in Iowa. When a Middle Eastern sultan hired him to steal some emeralds, the Tarantula told him he was the disowned son of British nobility (he speaks with a distinct British accent and speech mannerisms). A wealthy South American art collector swore on his deathbed that the Tarantula was a former MI6 agent who'd gone rogue. Many other VIPs and agencies have their own stories about the man; the Tarantula himself neither denies nor confirms anything. All that anyone knows for sure is that he received his *nom du crime* from his habit of leaving a drawing of a black spider (often on an elegant business card) at the scene of his crimes.

Personality/Motivation: The Black Tarantula is a consummate gentleman, ever courteous and gallant, a man who never breaks his word once it is given — but also a scoundrel of the deepest dye. He lies, cheats, and steals with skill and remorselessness; to him, courtesy and honor don't counsel against committing crimes, they simply dictate one's behavior while one steals. He considers thievery a source of well-deserved income, and "smashing good entertainment" both for himself and the world at large as well. In this he reveals his egotism and his supreme confidence in his own skills. But despite his thoroughly larcenous nature, the Tarantula adamantly refuses to kill or injure his victims — to do so would reflect poorly on his abilities as a thief, making him nothing more than a common mugger or pursesnatcher. Rumor claims he never even carries weapons.

The Black Tarantula's love of the "entertainment" of stealing has over time been balanced by his fear of dying. When he was a younger man in his prime back in the Sixties and Seventies, he'd take any risk to achieve his goal, whether that was to steal a fabulous gemstone or spend the night

BLACK TARANTULA PLOT SEEDS

The word on the street is that the Black Tarantula plans to steal a fabulous piece of artwork on display (and under *heavy* security) at the Skyline Club. Is the rumor true (rumors rarely precede his thefts)... and if not, who's spreading it, and why?

An old man in a nursing home near Hudson City tells the press *he* is the Black Tarantula and plans to write a tell-all book. The *real* Black Tarantula, incensed by this theft of his "good" name, plans (a) a crime spree to show the press the pretender is wrong, and (b) a suitably clever act of revenge against the old geezer. It's up to the PCs to stop him.

The Black Tarantula decides it's time for one last, enormous score to set himself up for retirement. Naturally, his target for this score is something owned by, or associated with, one of the PCs....

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon: None

Armor: None

Gear: Line-gun, advanced/high-quality burglary tools of many sorts, climbing harness and tools, smoke pellets, Gen-2 nightvision device

Clothing: See *Appearance*

with another man's wife. Many of those legendary thefts are beyond his skills and endurance today, and with the passing of time and skill he's begun to confront his own mortality, something he dreads. Despite his continued love of the "rush" of a theft well done, he frequently holds back because he's terrified of dying (or even suffering serious injury). Similarly, he avoids anything having to do with disease (especially cancer or heart disease, both of which have claimed old friends in the recent past).

Ironically, the various personae the Tarantula has "created" over the years are all men of high class and distinction who dare not appear craven or hypochondriacal. So he goes on drinking, smoking, and eating rich food as if the world might end tomorrow, loathing each bite or sip as if it were poison. And he keeps committing his daring burglaries, drawn to the thrill of them as a moth to a flame, knowing that someday they will be his finish.

Quote: "Have these people no sense? They think to foil *me* with a simple pressure-plate system? One might almost be insulted."

Powers/Tactics: The Black Tarantula, though still one of the finest thieves and con men in the world, is a man past his prime... but unlike many older men he acknowledges this fact. Where once not even the most complex array of security devices and guards would have deterred him, today he tries to limit himself to less dangerous jobs (but without making it appear that he's "taking it easy," which would mar his treasured reputation). Only a particularly succulent prize could tempt him enough to overcome his sense of caution.

But once the Tarantula decides to go after a target, there's little one can do to stop him. Even today, his thieving skills are among the best in the world, and his special burglary tools (most of them crafted by his long-time friend, the Toymaker) only make his job easier. But he carries no weapons, since he has no desire to hurt anyone.

When it comes right down to it, the Black Tarantula is a 67-year-old man — a remarkably fit, spry, and agile 67-year-old man, but a 67-year-old man nevertheless. That means he's pretty fragile compared to most people, and he knows it. The last thing he wants to do is have some musclebound oaf who doesn't understand the proper use of force put him in the hospital with a single well-placed punch, and he's no longer interested in humiliating his pursuers with his acrobatic prowess, the way he used to when he was younger. If he's confronted with any sort of force he surrenders immediately unless he thinks he can get away before his opponents can react — he can always use his wits to escape later on. And escape he will, for if he abhors anything more than dying or losing his reputation, it's the thought of living out the rest of his life in prison.

Campaign Use: The biggest plot hook attached to the Black Tarantula is the question of who he really is. In dramatic terms, he works best as a character if you establish him in the campaign in a civilian identity — someone the PCs know (and hopefully respect or like) and whom they'd *never* suspect of being an infamous cat burglar. When you pull back the curtain to reveal who he really is, the gasps of surprise will be well worth the time put in building up the character.

The Black Tarantula isn't intended as a combatant, so you shouldn't need to make him physically tougher. At most you might want to increase his Skill Rolls, or give him some super-skills like Disappearing Act. To weaken him, reduce his Primary Characteristics that have been increased above 10, and/or remove his Skill Levels with Agility Skills.

The Black Tarantula doesn't Hunt heroes — he's only interested in profit. If he wants to steal something from a PC, he'll study the PC carefully, but he won't Hunt him *per se*.

The Black Tarantula is wanted for almost a hundred thefts on six continents. His most famous "acquisitions" include the Star of Samarkand, a fabulous star emerald; a group of three Titian paintings; the plans for the Soviet nuclear submarine *The Triumph of May;* the Van Der Planke diamonds; and the crown jewels of Iran (twice).

Appearance: No one knows the Black Tarantula's true appearance, because he disguises himself constantly. Most of his "personae" are urbane gentlemen from 5'9" to 6'2" tall. They usually dress very well and have dignified, handsome looks (including a thick moustache). He has never been clearly seen while committing a theft, but is thought to wear some sort of black outfit at those times.

BLIND

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
15	CON	10	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
8	ED	5		Total: 11 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	REC	4		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	1	**Total Characteristics Cost: 120**	

Movement: Running: 9"/12"
Leaping: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Kung Fu				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 45 STR	
4	Dodge	+0	+5	Dodge all attacks, Abort	
4	Escape	+0	+0	50 STR vs. Grabs	
3	Joint Lock/Grab	-1	-1	Grab, 45 STR	
5	Kick	-2	+1	11d6 Strike	
4	Knife Hand	-2	+0	HKA 1d6+1 (2d6+1 with STR)	
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	8d6, Target Falls	
4	Punch	+0	+2	9d6 Strike	
3	Throw	+0	+1	5d6 +v/5, Target Falls	
4	*Tien-hsueh* Strike	-1	+1	4d6 NND (1)	
4	Tiger/Dragon Claw	+0	+0	11d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab	
4	Uproot/Sand Palm	+0	+0	50 STR Shove	
16	+4 Damage Classes (already added in)				
4	Use Art with Axes/Maces/Hammers/Picks, Blades, Clubs, Staffs				
20	*Sensitive Hearing:* Targeting for Hearing Group				0
4	*Sensitive Hearing:* +2 PER with Hearing Group				0
5	*Sensitive Hearing:* Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)				0
6	*Strong Runner:* Running +3" (9" total)				1
3	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +3" (6" forward, 3" upward)				1

Perks

3 Reputation: deadly martial artist assassin (among the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist and Espionage Worlds) 11-, +3/+3d6

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
15 Combat Sense 13-
6 Lightning Reflexes: +4 DEX to act first with All Attacks

Skills

20 +4 HTH
3 Acrobatics 13-
3 Acting 13-
3 Analyze Style 13-
3 Breakfall 13-
3 Climbing 13-
3 Contortionist 13-
10 Defense Maneuver IV
3 High Society 13-
2 KS: Hapkido 11-
2 KS: Hsing-I 11-
2 KS: Kung Fu 11-
2 KS: Karate 11-
2 KS: Lua 11-
2 KS: Pakua 11-
2 KS: Tae Kwon Do 11-
2 KS: Tai Ch'i Ch'uan 11-
2 KS: Thai Kickboxing 11-
2 Language: Cantonese (fluent conversation; Mandarin Chinese is Native)
2 Language: English (fluent conversation)
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 13-
8 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Hook Sword, Three-Section Staff

Resource Points

6 Equipment Points: 90
0 Vehicle/Base Points: 10
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 241
Total Cost: 361

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: Sing Chun 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Total)
15 Psychological Limitation: Merciless (Common, Strong)
176 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 361

BLIND PLOT SEEDS

The classic Blind plot: someone's hired Blind to take out one (or more) of the PCs. The heroes have to find a way to stop him, either by killing him or by persuading the employer to rescind the contract. This plot works best if the target PC has a code of honor or other Psychological Limitation that would lead him to fight Blind one-on-one; even Blind can't stand up to a whole group of well-armed heroes for long.

Blind requests a meeting with the PCs. At that meeting, he informs them that for many years now, he has not been in control of himself — through ancient Chinese sorcery, an Oriental mystic has controlled his mind and made him use his skills to kill. He finally shook off the spell... and now he needs the PCs' help to defeat this evil man and begin his long journey toward atonement. Will the PCs help? Is Blind telling the truth, or just setting them up for a trap?

The vengeance-minded family of one of Blind's victims wants to hire the PCs to kill Blind. But as the PCs look into the situation, they begin to question whether Blind actually committed the assassination in question. Who's telling the truth, and who's lying... and why?

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

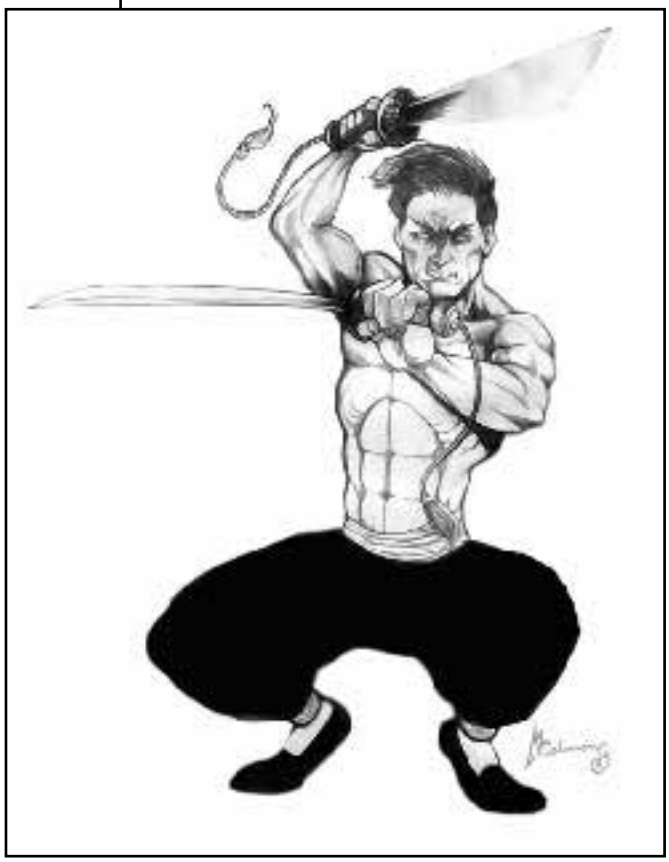
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Jien	+0	—	1d6	1d6-1	—	10	
Staff	+1	—	4d6 N	—	—	8	L (+1" reach)
Throwing darts	+0	RBS	1d6-1	1d6-1	9 RC	5	

Armor
None

Gear: Blind usually carries very little gear, if any — his needs are scant, and he thinks little of worldly possessions; he prefers to rely on his skills and wits rather than equipment

Background/History: No one on Earth seems to know exactly who Blind is, or where he comes from. His nickname comes from his obvious blindness — his eyes are milky white, the pupils barely visible — but it's uncertain whether he suffered from this condition since birth, contracted some sort of disease that affected his eyes, or was injured. He's clearly spent decades honing and developing his martial arts skills, but no one can say where or who he trained with. Here and there someone claims to have taught Blind, or to have trained alongside him, but none of these people can provide any further details about him... except for stories that only seem to confirm his supreme skill.

The one thing that *is* well-known about Blind is his profession: he is an assassin. His first recorded appearance in official records dates to 1997, when he allegedly killed three highly-trained CIA field agents in Paris, and a fourth in Philadelphia. Since then he's accepted and fulfilled dozens of assassination contracts without any seeming regard for political or social boundaries. If someone's willing to pay and he thinks he can complete the job, he takes it, regardless of who the target is.



Personality/Motivation: Most assassins fall into a few simple categories. Some are psychopaths who do the job for the love of killing. Some are highly-trained professionals just doing a job they've been taught to do. And some regard the job as a challenge, or as a source of excitement.

Blind seems to fall into the latter category. He doesn't talk much, but statements he's made from time to time could be interpreted to mean that he sees his assassination missions as a challenge: as a test of his martial arts prowess, his ability to get close to his target, and his skill at escaping capture. He likes the money, but it's definitely not his primary motivation. When he gets paid, he usually spends his cash quickly and frivolously, often using a lot of it to buy food, drink, and women and giving the rest away to charities or people who seem deserving.

Blind apparently considers himself a man of honor and dignity. He seems to subscribe to the so-called "code of the mercenary" even more strongly than other reliable assassins and mercs. He'll stop at nothing to fulfill a contract, and until the job is done, there's no way to get him to back out of the contract short of the employer himself cancelling it. His other great quality as an assassin is his absolute mercilessness — neither cries of anguish nor pleas for kindness have any effect on him whatsoever. When he's on the job, it's as if he's made of stone.

Quote: None. Blind rarely speaks.

Powers/Tactics: Blind is a superbly-trained martial artist, well-versed in over half a dozen fighting styles (which makes it easy for him to switch from one to another in mid-combat to confound opponents' Analyze Style ability). Since he's blind, he relies on his highly-developed sense of hearing — he's trained himself to be so sensitive to sounds that he can attack people reliably based solely on what he can hear of their movements and breathing, and can even hear ultrasonic sounds.

Blind usually opens combat with an aggressive attack using Kung Fu, Karate, or Thai Kickboxing. If he doesn't quickly overwhelm his opponent, he backs off and fights more defensively, getting a feel for his foe and using Analyze Style to determine fighting patterns and weaknesses of approach. When he feels he's taken his opponent's measure, he takes the offensive again to finish his enemy off.

Blind enjoys a good fight, and may even take steps to prolong a combat if he considers his opponent worthy (for example, if he Stuns such a foe, he might back off and give him a chance to recover

from being Stunned rather than finish him off). On the other hand, if he has no respect for his opponent — if the foe is weak, foolish, or a blusterer — he may toy with him for a while before lowering the boom.

Campaign Use: In addition to his general use as an assassin, Blind would make a good nemesis or Rival for a PC martial artist. It may take a starting PC a while to reach his level of power, but Blind's perfectly capable of recognizing and acknowledging potential.

There are lots of ways to make Blind tougher and deadlier, if you need him to be (he should be powerful enough to make the PCs concerned about fighting him, but not so powerful that he can defeat them easily). You could give him Find Weakness with his Martial Arts, some super-skills like Necksnapper, or buy some Advantages for his Kick or Punch using the rules in *The Ultimate Martial Artist.* For a simpler approach, give him more Combat Skill Levels with HTH Combat. If he's too tough already, get rid of some of his Martial Maneuvers and CSLs, and perhaps his Combat Luck as well.

Blind only Hunts people he's been hired to kill. He might develop a Rivalry with a PC (even a relatively good-natured one), but he won't Hunt a hero unless someone's paying him to.

Blind doesn't have a formal criminal record, but he's wanted by the authorities in thirteen countries for nearly four dozen murders.

Appearance: Blind is an Asian (probably Chinese) man of indeterminate age — he's probably in his late 20s or early 30s, but he's in such excellent physical shape that he could easily be older. He's 5'5" tall and weighs about 140 pounds; his body is rock-solid, the muscles often clearly outlined beneath his skin. His eyes are a milky, almost pupilless white that clearly indicates his blindness; his hair jet-black and short-cropped. He has no standard garb, preferring to dress in whatever fashion seems appropriate for wherever he is (it wouldn't do to stand out, after all). If possible, he fights shirtless and shoeless, wearing only a pair of white *dang lung fu* (loose pants gathered in at the ankles). He has no tattoos or other identifying marks, but sometimes carries a staff, *jien,* or other weapon.

BLOOD ORCHID

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
16	PRE	6	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 7 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
28	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 64**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers			END
	Martial Arts: Kenjutsu			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 35 STR to Disarm roll
4	Evade	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Lightning Stroke	+2	+0	Weapon +4 DC Strike
5	Running Stroke	+1	+0	Weapon +2 DC + v/5; FMove
5	Slashing Stroke	-2	+1	Weapon +6 DC Strike
5	Takeaway	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, 35 STR to Take Weapon Away
1	Use Art Barehanded (Bind, Block, Disarm, Evade, Takeaway maneuvers only)			
	Martial Arts: Ninjutsu			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	*Atemi* Punch	-1	+1	3d6 NND (1)
4	Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 3d6 NND (2)
5	Kick	-2	+1	9d6 Strike
4	Knife Hand	-2	+0	HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR)
4	Punch	+0	+2	7d6 Strike
4	Reversal	-1	-2	40 to Escape; Grab Two Limbs
4	Throw	+1	+1	5d6 + v/5 Strike; Target Falls
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)			
	Perks			
2	Deep Cover (GM's choice)			
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level			
5	Money: Well Off			
	Talents			
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)			

NONE ARE SO BLIND?

"It's disgraceful, and a complete violation of their civil rights. Blind people have every right to attend protest rallies and make their voices heard, the same as everyone else. Federal law specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap or infirmity. Preventing all blind people from getting closer than 100 feet to the stage is blatantly illegal and a perfect example of the administration's fascist oppression of American citizens.

"They're not even bothering to try to hide what they're doing. Have you heard the flimsy excuse they're using? They claim they have to protect the Vice President from a possible attack by some sort of blind assassin. Have you ever heard anything so ridiculous?"

—civil rights activist Gina Hernandez, protesting the treatment of blind protesters at a speech by the Vice President

BLOOD ORCHID PLOT SEEDS

The word is on the streets that one of the PC's enemies has hired the Blood Orchid to take the PC out. Then the PC meets a very attractive Japanese woman who seems interested in him. Will the PC assume the Japanese woman is the Blood Orchid and react accordingly? Is her romantic interest in him legitimate, or is she working for the Blood Orchid?

A street contact calls the PCs and says he's got some information they'd better be prepared to pay big for — the Blood Orchid's secret identity! But he won't tell them over the phone; he wants to meet them in an hour to get the cash. When the PCs show up for the meet, they find their contact dead... and the Blood Orchid's "calling card" on the wall nearby. Do the PCs pursue the Blood Orchid? Did the contact really have useful information about the assassin, and if so did he maybe write it down somewhere before he died?

A ninja master offers to teach the Blood Orchid advanced ninjutsu techniques and abilities... but only if he kills the PCs as "payment" for the training.

Skills

10 +2 HTH

3 Climbing 12-
3 Concealment 12-
2 Forgery (Documents) 12-
2 KS: The Espionage World 11-
2 KS: Kenjutsu 11-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2 KS: Ninjutsu 11-
1 Language: Japanese (basic conversation; English is Native)
3 Lockpicking 12-
3 SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 12-
3 Security Systems 12-
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Sleight Of Hand 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
9 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Small Arms, Garrote

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 170
Total Cost: 234

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Moderate)
15 Reputation: deadly assassin, 14- (among the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist and Espionage Worlds; Extreme)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with other well-known assassins, like Blind and Satan's Kiss)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Roderick McWhirter) (Frequently, Major)
19 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 234

Background/History: There were many special places in Roddy's house when Roddy was growing up. There was the living room, where Mommy had the nice furniture and carpet and all her antiques, where he could only go when there was an adult with him. There was Mommy and Daddy's room, the one where the door was always shut and his parents never let him see what was inside. There was Daddy's garden — Daddy was a plant doctor — with its hothouse, where Daddy grew pretty flowers from all over the world. And there was the Basement, where Daddy took Roddy whenever Roddy misbehaved... or just when Daddy felt like it.

Sometimes Roddy would sneak into the hothouse to smell the pretty flowers. Sometimes he got away with it, but sometimes Daddy caught him, and then he had to go to the Basement. The Basement was deep and dark and soundproofed, so none of the neighbors could hear Roddy screaming and crying. Mommy could hear, but she pretended not to.

One day when Roddy was 14, Daddy took Roddy down to the Basement. When Daddy was done, he locked Roddy in his room. But Roddy had been studying things on the Internet. He got out the lockpicks he'd made and went to work. Half an hour later, the lock opened. He knew Daddy would be out in the hothouse, so he went to the toolshed and got a pick handle. He snuck into the hothouse quietly and crept around, looking for Daddy. By the time Daddy heard him, Roddy was too close for Daddy to run away. The first blow knocked Daddy down. The second blow made Daddy's head break open with a funny popping sound. Then there were other blows.

When he was done, Roddy stood there, staring down at what used to be Daddy. The pool of red looked like a strange flower — a blood orchid, a vermillion morning glory, a crimson daffodil. Roddy was covered with blood too, but he felt... clean. Refreshed. Invigorated. Free.

Then Roddy went back into the house, got a butcher's knife from the kitchen, found Mommy in the den reading a magazine, and made another blood orchid. Mommy had never tried to stop it, so Mommy was just as bad.

Rod left the house and never looked back. He looked older than he was; it wasn't hard to convince people he was older, to get work on the street. It didn't take long before everyone knew not to mess with him. Two older boys tried to rob him once, and he killed them both with his knife. Then he robbed them.

Rod was smarter than most people on the street. He didn't want to spend the rest of his life as a street punk, with nowhere to go but the Stew or the cemetery. So he read a lot of books, and found people to teach him things. He spent a lot of time in dojos, learning ancient fighting techniques. Some of the "masters" were just fakes, all flash and no substance, with nothing really useful to teach him. But with time and persistence he found ones who knew what they were talking about and could teach him true techniques.

One day, an old friend on the street approached Rod with a problem. Another gang was making a move for his friend's turf, and he needed someone to get rid of the gang's leader. Rod said he'd take the job. He watched the gang for a couple of weeks, getting a feel for what they did and how they did it. When the time was right, he took the gang leader out, leaving his head neatly detached from his body for his "homies" to find. He signed his work in the gangsta's blood, using a brush to write the kanji for "blood" and "orchid" on the wall near the body.

Word quickly spread on the street about the "Blood Orchid," the deadly assassin no one could stop. With a name like that, and "her" ability to get close to any target, everyone assumed "she" was a woman, and Rod didn't see any reason to correct them. In time the rumors of his skills reached higher-placed ears, and he began taking jobs around the world for anyone who could pay his

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Katana	+1	—	1½d6	1d6-1	—	12	
Tanto	+0	RBS	½d6	1d6-1	—	5	Can be thrown, carries 2
H&K Mk 23	+3	+9	2d6-1	1d6	12	10	Sil, FS, laser
Wire garrote	+0	+0	½d6	1d6-1	—	5	Constant, must be aimed at neck or limb

Armor
None

Gear: Whatever he needs for the job at hand, within reason (given his resources)

price. Today, when the word gets out that the Blood Orchid is one someone's trail, that person mends his ways quickly or flees as far and as fast as he can — otherwise, death is sure to come, and soon.

Personality/Motivation: The Blood Orchid is in many ways a textbook example of a sociopath. Molded by years of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, he's become utterly self-centered and remorseless. To him, killing other people is pleasurable; it excites his stunted emotions and gives him a feeling of accomplishment. Psychiatrists analyzing his work have commented on the psycho-sexual significance of "penetrating" his victims with sword or bullet, but he doesn't think of it that way.

As a professional assassin, the Blood Orchid subscribes to the infamous "code of the mercenary" — but not always to the same extent as others of his ilk. He doesn't care for his employers any more than he cares for anyone else, and if he sees an opportunity to gain by turning on his employer, he may take it (provided he thinks no one will find out — he has his reputation to think of).

Quote: None. The Blood Orchid doesn't talk to his victims, and communicates with his employers via computer.

Powers/Tactics: The Blood Orchid is an assassin skilled at inflicting death in many different ways. His favored methods are bladed weapons (particularly Japanese ones) and poison, but he can use guns, the garrote, or even his bare hands if he has to. He's not picky. When he can, he leaves his calling card — the kanji for "blood" and "orchid" — written in the victim's blood somewhere near the body.

As a killer-for-hire, the Blood Orchid prefers not to get involved in open combat if he can avoid it; he'd rather strike from surprise and then vanish. If cornered by the PCs, he'll try to escape, fighting only if he must or if goaded into it.

The Blood Orchid interacts with his employers via computer. People who want to hire him need to have enough influence to get his contact information; once they do, they can make him an offer. He does most of his work for a few select employers, whose real identities he no more knows than they know his — all he cares about is that the money makes it into his bank account.

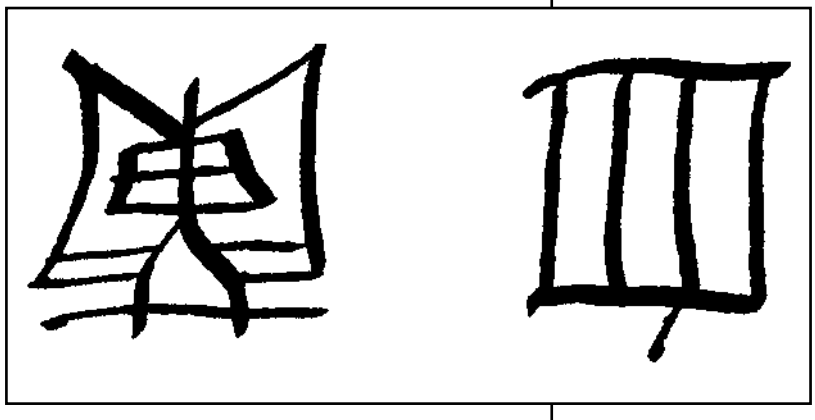
Campaign Use: Because the Blood Orchid arranges jobs via computer and uses a feminine-sounding *nom du crime,* the underworld assumes he's a woman. Before you introduce him into your game, make this clear to the PCs by having NPCs refer to "her" using feminine pronouns, and so forth. Many underworld figures will even brag about having met "her" to make themselves look more important. This element of surprise should give the Blood Orchid a significant advantage until the PCs learn the truth.

To make the Blood Orchid tougher, give him some super-skills (maybe Disappearing Act, or a form of Deadly Blow), possibly including some special martial arts abilities (such as ones described in *The Ultimate Martial Artist* or *Ninja Hero*) that don't violate the Dark Champions "feel." To weaken him, reduce his Primary Characteristics a little and get rid of some of his Martial Maneuvers (possibly including all of his Ninjutsu attacks, so he has to rely on weapons)

The Blood Orchid only Hunts people if paid to do so. As a Hunter, his chief virtue is patience. He stalks his target for weeks, if not months, learning his routines and familiarizing himself with the target's favorite places. Only when he feels he has the job perfectly planned does he strike.

Roderick McWhirter has no criminal record, but is still wanted by the HCPD for questioning concerning the murder of his parents. No one has any idea he's the Blood Orchid (the friend who first hired him all those years ago died in a prison brawl without having ever told anyone).

Appearance: Roderick McWhirter is a handsome-looking man in his early 30s: 5'9", black hair, grey eyes, athletic build. He wears ordinary clothing, stylish but not overly expensive or flashy. When on the job, he wears whatever clothing is most appropriate — anything from street clothes to night combat gear.



A RARE SIGHTING

"No *%&!, man — I seen her once. Me'n Dack wanted us some slant slitch, so we headed over t' Chinatown. We was, was headin' over t' Mama Huang's. This guy, he was, was walkin' toward us, a Jap wearin' these fancy clothes — probably a yak or somethin'. Anyhow, he walked past this alleyway when bamm! this samurai sword lashes out and cuts off his head like you 'r I'd've swatted the head off a dandelion. Then I seen her, there in the mouth of the alley — a Jap chick, dressed all in red, with a black mask covering, like, half of her face... one eye, one cheek, sorta. On the other side of her face she had this tattoo, a red flower. Prob'ly it was, was a blood orchid, but I wasn't close enough to see."

—Weasel Watkins conjures a close encounter of the dangerous kind

BRAHMA PLOT SEEDS

Texas authorities want to get Brahma back into the Lone Star State so they can arrest him. They hire the PCs to take care of the job. They don't care how it's done, so long as no law-breaking can be traced back to them.

Brahma's been mouthing off around town, calling Caber a coward because Caber refuses to meet him for a fight. Caber has strict orders from Charlemagne to "leave the cowboy alone," but he can't stand being called a coward. So, he decides to trick or maneuver the PCs into taking Brahma out.

A woman who claims Brahma's the father of her baby asks the PCs to bring him in so she can get him to pay child support. Is she for real, or is there more to the story than what she's telling?

BRAHMA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	20	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [5]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
12	PD	11		Total: 12 PD (2 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (2 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
12	REC	10		
40	END	0		
50	STUN	7		**Total Characteristics Cost: 128**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
20	*Who Needs That Chop-Socky *%&!:* HA +6d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	3
2	*Haven't Got Time For The Pain:* Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED)	0
30	*Too Tough To Fall:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; Only To Prevent Being Stunned (-1)	0
15	*Too Tough To Fall:* Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Only To Prevent Being Stunned (-1)	0
4	*Intimidation:* +10 PRE; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Only To Make Fear/Intimidation-Style Presence Attacks (-1)	0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

5 Resistance (5 points)

Skills

20 +4 HTH

4 Gambling (Card Games, Sports Betting) 11-
2 AK: Texas 11-
2 CK: Houston 11-
1 CK: Hudson City 8-
3 PS: Play Pool 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
2 WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

0 Equipment Points: 60
0 Vehicle/Base Points: 10
0 Follower/Contact Points: 5
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 119
Total Cost: 247

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Hunted: various Texas law enforcement organizations 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area, Capture)
15 Psychological Limitation: Loves To Fight And Brawl (Common, Strong)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with other high-STR enforcers, like Caber and Stonehenge)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
82 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 247

Background/History: Bill Garner's father Paul was a big man — 6'4" tall, muscles like a blacksmith, voice like James Earl Jones. But everyone could see Bill was gonna go him one further when he got old enough. By the time he was 10, Bill topped five feet and could already lift nearly as much as his dad.

Paul Garner was a rancher who spent a lot of time in trouble with the law. He'd go to town Friday nights, get plastered, start a fight, bust some heads, and spend the rest of the weekend in the drunk tank. Bill took after him that way, too — from his very first day in school he got into fights every week, and his size and strength soon made him the toughest bully on the playground. If he didn't get five kids' lunch money by noon, he was having a bad day.

As he got older, Bill got worse. He didn't stop growing until he reached 6'6", and between his size and a fake ID he was drinking in bars by the time he was 13. He got in a lot of fights, and he never lost one. After seeing him take on five guys at once and toss them off like a bull bucking a rider when they jumped on him, some bartender nicknamed him "Brahma," and it stuck.

Then came the day when a couple of men offered him a hundred bucks to beat the *%&! outta some dude they claimed had cheated them at cards. A hundred bucks was a hundred bucks, so he beat the guy bloody. Word got around, and soon he was doing the same sort of work for lots of shady characters — pretty much anyone who could pay what he charged (and his rates soon went a lot higher than $100).

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Ruger Redhawk	+0	+0	2d6	1d6	6	11	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
None

Gear: Usually none, but he may have his custom-made pool cue with him if he's planning to play some pool. He won't use it as a weapon or a tool; in fact, he'll go out of his way (though not to ridiculous lengths) to keep it from being damaged.

Then he killed a guy.

He hadn't meant for it to happen. It was just a beating like any other, but apparently the guy was some kinda pansy and couldn't take it, because he keeled over of a heart attack before he'd even had the chance to start spittin' up teeth. It didn't take the cops long to put two and two together — they'd seen plenty of people he'd "worked on" before, and picked him up more than a few times for brawling. But they made the mistake of sending only two guys to arrest him, and Brahma didn't feel like going to jail. Although he took a couple slugs from their service pistols, he got close enough to beat them so badly one died, and the other spent six months in the hospital recovering.

In Texas they give you the chair for that sorta thing, and he'd just as soon not take a ride on Ol' Sparky. So he cut and ran, heading far away from home to a place called Hudson City. Some of his "employers" had friends there who could get him work, and he figured no Texas cop was gonna come that far to nab him. He was wrong about that, but it's a lot easier to get away from them in the streets of the Urban Abyss, so in Hudson City he remains.

Personality/Motivation: Brahma comes across like a good ol' boy — which is just what he is. He likes to hang around, drink prodigious quantities of beer, eat burgers, watch TV, play pool and cards, and have plenty of rowdy fun. But he also likes to fight... a *lot.* He can't spend more than a few hours around other people without getting the itch to start throwing punches. Any little excuse, and off he goes. He doesn't usually mean anything by it — he's just having fun — but he's so strong and tough that even his mildest punches can break bones. And if he gets angry, watch out!

Brahma found out long ago he could put his toughness to work by becoming a bodyguard, legbreaker, enforcer, and debt collector. He's not sadistic, but he doesn't really care if he has to hurt someone, or even kill them. He'd rather draw them into a fight and do it fair and square if he can, but many's the time he's worked over someone tied up in a chair until there was nothing left of the poor guy's face but a bloody wad of meat.

Quote: "C'mon, boy, show me whatcha got!"

Powers/Tactics: Who needs clever tactics when he's got a punch strong enough to stop a Mack truck? Brahma just wades in and starts throwing punches, he doesn't mess around with fancy footwork, feints, or other such nonsense. He doesn't even care if he has to take a couple punches, or even a bullet wound or knife blow, to get at his target — he learned long ago that he could stand up to such things.

One of the reasons Brahma's such a tough brawler is that it's next to impossible to incapacitate him. He can take punch after punch, blow after blow, but he won't fall down unless someone Knocks him Out (or kills him). In game terms, he has Damage Reduction only for the purposes of determining whether he's Stunned. In other words, he still takes full STUN and BODY damage from an attack — but you should reduce it by the appropriate percentage before determining whether he took enough damage to Stun him.

Campaign Use: Brahma works for various crimelords and gang leaders as an all-purpose strongman. He can break legs, collect on overdue bills, threaten the PCs, and so on. If one of the PCs is known for his strength and fighting ability, he and Brahma could easily become Rivals.

To make Brahma tougher, replace the Limitation on his Damage Reduction with Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼). To weaken him, reduce his HA dice and/or the level of his Damage Reduction.

Brahma doesn't normally Hunt anyone — that's just not his style, and it's too much effort. But if someone humiliates him in a fight, he'll make it his business to track that guy down for a second round.

Brahma has an extensive criminal record in Texas for assault, and is also wanted for three murders and one attempted murder. The HCPD want him for several assaults and murders he's committed since moving to the Pearl City.

Appearance: Brahma is huge, standing 6'6" with broad, thick shoulders and an extremely muscular build. He's got sort of reddish-brown hair and a matching beard and moustache; he speaks in a deep voice with a Texas accent. He usually wears t-shirts, jeans, and cowboy boots, sometimes with a cowboy hat to top it all off.

BROTHER NAMAAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
23	PRE	16	14-	PRE Attack: 4½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 11 PD (6 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 12 ED (6 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	6	**Total Characteristics Cost: 88**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
29	*Petro Voodoo — Curse:* See text box	0
38	*Petro Voodoo — Death Curse Doll:* See text box	0
34	*Petro Voodoo — Zombie Powder:* See text box	0
3	*Voodoo — Blessing Of Protection:* See text box	0
5	*Eyes Of Darkness:* Nightvision	0
3	*Poison Resistance:* Life Support (Immunity to curare)	0

Perks

3 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank (leader of the Ghede posse)
3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

8 *Protective Charm:* Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED); IAF (-½)
3 Lightsleep
3 Simulate Death

Skills

3 Concealment 12-
2 AK: Freetown 11-
1 CK: Hudson City 8-
2 CK: Kingston, Jamaica 11-
3 KS: Freetown Crime 12-
5 KS: Voodoo Lore 14-
1 Language: Spanish (basic conversation; English is Native)
3 Oratory 14-
3 Paramedics 12-
11 Power: Voodoo 16-
2 PS: Drug Dealer 11-
3 PS: Houngan-Bokor 12-
3 PS: Perceiving And Interpreting Omens 12-
3 Sleight Of Hand 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 14-
3 Ventriloquism 12-
3 WF: Small Arms, Knives

Resource Points

12 Equipment Points: 120
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 221
Total Cost: 309

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: DEA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
10 Hunted: Shango 8- (As Pow, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Superstitious; Believes In Voodoo (Common, Strong)
124 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 309

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt King Cobra	+0	+0	2d6	1d6	6	10	Hollow point ammo
Colt 2000	+1	+1	1d6+1	1d6-1	15	10	
Sacrificial Knife	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	

Armor: None

Gear: Various Voodoo charms and tools

Background/History: The top floor of the crack-house was one large room — the walls had been removed, leaving only the support columns. Soil hard-packed by the treading and dancing of hundreds of feet covered the floor, and mud and dirt coated the walls, creating what seemed like a cave dozens of feet above the ground. Boards covered the windows, allowing in only a few weak beams from the streetlights outside; the light in the *hounfor* came from candles and torches whose smoke made the onlookers' eyes water and had long ago turned the ceiling black.

They were grouped around the walls of the room — hard men with hard eyes, all armed with at least one gun, many carrying several. Four of them played simple drums, maintaining a smooth, almost hypnotic beat — *boom! badda badda badda, boom! badda badda badda* — with their hands.

All their eyes were focused on the altar in the center of the room, and the man moving around it. Dressed in grimy leathers, and wearing many pouches and voodoo charms as well, he used light grey ash to paint a *vever* pattern on the floor with quick, deft touches. In a clear voice he chanted as he painted, invoking the *loa* to aid him and his followers in exchange for the blood he was about to offer them.

With a final flourish, he finished the pattern and turned to altar. Bound to the altar with ropes was a young black man wearing jeans and a Golden State Warriors shirt, both too large for him. Tears streaked his face — he was long past the shouting, the swearing, the screaming, and the struggling, leaving only the terror. He kept looking around, hoping for some sign of rescue... but all he ever saw were the hard-eyed men.

The *bokor* stepped close and grabbed the bound man's shirt with both hands. With one quick,

fierce motion, he tore it down the front, exposing the victim's chest. Then he went to the foot of the altar and picked up a ceramic bowl filled with goat's blood. The drums fell silent.

He raised the bowl above his head. "Men of Ghede!" he proclaimed in a voice that carried to all corners of the *hounfor.* "We are strong — our enemies cannot destroy us. We are strong — the *loa* have granted us their favor. We are strong — and with blood we make ourselves stronger still. It is Brother Namaan who has bespoken the loa for you, Brother Namaan who promises you this strength!"

Lowering the bowl, he dipped his fingers in the blood. Deliberately and with precision, he used it to draw several symbols on the bound man's chest. The victim was babbling something by now, but Namaan ignored his rantings as he had ignored those of so many others before.

One of Namaan's followers came to him, taking away the bowl of blood and bringing a new, empty bowl. Namaan drew from a scabbard on his belt a knife with a thin, slightly curved blade and a handle made from human bone. He moved to the head of the altar. A short, quick slash opened the bound man's jugular, and Brother Namaan bent to catch the spurting blood in the empty bowl.

When the bowl was full, he stood up again. One by one his followers left the wall and came to him so he could paint a small symbol on their foreheads with the human blood. When all had received the charm, Brother Namaan spilled the blood out of the bowl, part of it in each of the four corners of the *hounfor,* and then he spoke. "Go now, my brothers, with the mark of Ghede upon you. Take the body of this one and leave it where the Nubians will find it. Go among them and kill and kill, so that they learn Ghede will not back down in the face of their threats." As the men left amidst the sound of bullets being chambered and magazines being rammed home, Brother Namaan one by one put out the torches, until only he remained in utter darkness.

Personality/Motivation: As the *bokor,* or sorcerer-priest, of a dark Voodoo sect to which he and the other members of the Ghede posse belong, Brother Namaan ("no man," *i.e.,* one who is as much of the spirit world as the material world) believes wholeheartedly in the Unseen Powers that surround him. While he knows that much of his "voodoo power" is trickery rather than magic (for example, he creates his zombies with powders and drugs, not spells), he also knows that many of his powers are real. He *can* curse someone, and he *can* protect his followers from harm, because the *loa* and other spirits he calls upon do these things for him in exchange for the blood offerings he makes to them. He frequently sees omens, and often changes his plans based on what he believes the spirits are telling him.

But there's a practical side to Brother Namaan as well. As a posse leader, he's as much a gang lord and drug dealer as he is a priest. The spirits may help, but ultimately he and his have to do the dirty work most of the time — and that often means killing a lot of people. He's quick on the trigger, often killing people out of nothing more than frustration or petty anger; the other members of the Ghede posse have learned to walk softly around him.

Quote: "You and you may think you understand what it is that you fight. But this is not so, Babylon. The spirits of this place protect the brothers of Ghede, and they can strike you down just as surely as our bullets."

Powers/Tactics: In addition to being a well-armed gang leader, Brother Namaan is a *bokor,* or dark Voodoo sorcerer-priest, and as such he has certain powers. If he captures someone and treats that person with his special zombie powder, the victim becomes his mindless slave. If he plans to send some of his followers into battle, he can offer up to eight of them a blessing of protection (they become tougher and more able to ignore the effects of wounds through their strong belief in his powers, and the powers of the *loa* he serves). If he wishes someone harm, he can curse that person with ill fortune. And if he can obtain some blood, skin, tears, sweat, hair, or other bits and pieces of a person's body, Brother Namaan can use them to craft a voodoo doll with which he can kill that person from a distance.

In most situations, Brother Namaan sends his people out to fight; he doesn't fight himself. But he's no coward. He carries at least a couple of guns most of the time, and he'll use them whenever he has to.

The zombies Brother Namaan creates are

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

"N-no way, man. I don't care what kinda heat you bring down on me. Throw me in the joint, beat the *%&! outta me, Amado Diallo me, I don't give a !$&*. No way am I givin' him up. He'll !$&* me up ten times worse'n you bitches... and then he'll go after my li'l sister, and my mom. Even if he 'cides to let'm live, he'll put some !$&*%@' curse on 'em, man. Find yo'seff another snitch."

—Gangsta Tiny C, showing he knows the way things really work

BROTHER NAMAAN PLOT SEEDS

One of the PCs finds a dead goat on his doorstep, its throat slit and its body drained of blood. What's going on? Is it Brother Namaan and Ghede at work, and if so how did they find out where the character lives?

The omens tell Brother Namaan that a time of great troubles is coming, and he must prepare for it by increasing his power. To do that would require a great blood sacrifice — say, a terroristic attack on a mall, or starting a gang war at just the right time....

All of a sudden Brother Namaan seems to be having a *lot* of success attracting people to join his gang — even members of other gangs! Has he found some sort of powerful "spell" that lets him control peoples' minds, or is something else going on?

BROTHER NAMAAN'S VOODOO POWERS

Petro Voodoo — Curse: Major Transform 7d6 (normal human into human with Unluck 3d6, heals back normally), Area Of Effect (One Hex Accurate; +½), MegaArea (1" = 10 km wide and deep; +½), Indirect (always come from Brother Namaan, but can strike target regardless of intervening barriers; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Expendable Fragile (various voodoo powders and charms, Extremely Difficult to obtain; -2¼), All Or Nothing (-½), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Day; -4), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations throughout casting; -½), Limited Target (humans; -½), No Range (-½), Requires A Voodoo Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0)

Petro Voodoo — Death Curse Doll: RKA 5d6, AVLD (defense is Power Defense; +1½), Does BODY (+1), Area Of Effect (One Hex Accurate; +½), MegaArea (1" = 10 km wide and deep; +½), Indirect (always come from Brother Namaan, but can strike target regardless of intervening barriers; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Expendable Fragile (doll fashioned in victim's likeness and containing pieces of or items from victim, plus silver pins, Extremely Difficult to obtain; -2¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations throughout casting; -½), No Range (-½), Only Works Against Specific Characters For Whom Brother Namaan Has Prepared Dolls (-2), Requires A Voodoo Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0)

Petro Voodoo — Zombie Powder: Major Transform 7d6 (normal human into mindless zombie slave, heals back normally or if victim is treated with special counter-potions or medical procedures), BOECV (Power Defense applies; +1), Works Against EGO, Not BODY (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF Expendable Fragile (zombie powder made from various rare substances, Extremely Difficult to obtain; -2¼), All Or Nothing (-½), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Week; -4½), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations throughout casting; -½), Limited Target (humans; -½), No Range (-½), Requires A Voodoo Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0) **plus** Aid STR and PD 3d6, two Characteristics at once (+½), Delayed Return Rate (points fade at the rate of 5 per Week, but all points fade immediately when Transform heals; +1¼); OAF Expendable Fragile (zombie powder made from various rare substances, Extremely Difficult to obtain; -2¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Week; -4½), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations throughout casting; -½), Linked (-½), Others Only (-½), Requires A Voodoo Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0)

Voodoo — Blessing Of Protection: Armor (3 PD/3 ED), Usable Simultaneously (up to eight persons at once; +1), Persistent (no need to maintain LOS after initial use; +½), Uncontrolled (no need to maintain LOS or stay within standard Range of power; +½); OAF Expendable Fragile (special voodoo powders, paints, and materials, Extremely Difficult to obtain; -2¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations throughout casting; -½), Requires A Voodoo Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0)

basically ordinary people who are stronger and tougher than normal. You may want to reduce their SPD to 2 to make them more like the stereotypical zombie, and perhaps describe their skin as having a greyish appearance — they definitely can't pass for ordinary humans.

Campaign Use: According to DEA records, Brother Namaan (real name unknown) likely got his start in the Jamaican political fighting of the Eighties, but soon merged with the posse underworld and became one of the most powerful criminals on the island. But after he killed the son of a prominent politician, he fled Jamaica for safer climes. During this time he lived on several Caribbean islands, and authorities think he got his voodoo training on one or more of them before coming to Hudson City with his new Ghede posse.

The voodoo powers listed on Brother Namaan's character sheet don't necessarily represent the extent of his powers — you can always give him others, if necessary. See *The Ultimate Mystic,* pages 116-20, for a discussion of Voodoo and some sample spells.

To make Brother Namaan tougher, improve his existing Voodoo powers (*i.e.,* remove or decrease the Limitations) and/or give him more powers (or protective charms). When choosing new powers, remember the advice about magic in *Dark Champions* on page 315 of that book. To weaken him, get rid of some or all of his Voodoo powers, making him a charlatan who talks a good game but doesn't actually have any way to follow through.

As a Hunter, Brother Namaan starts subtly. He usually has members of Ghede follow the quarry around (as much as they can without giving themselves away, anyway). Once he feels he knows the victim well enough, he'll try to Curse him. If possible, he'll obtain some of the target's personal effects and attempt a Death Curse Doll. If these tactics fail, he'll switch to the simpler, more direct method of sending a lot of well-armed posse members to gun the target down.

Brother Namaan is wanted by the HCPD and DEA on suspicion of numerous drug smuggling and distribution charges, several murders, and miscellaneous other crimes. A warrant for his arrest for murder remains outstanding in Jamaica as well.

Appearance: Brother Namaan is a dark-skinned black man, 5'9" tall and thin (he weighs about 150 pounds). His eyes are often bloodshot because he spends so much time in dark, smoky rooms, and he's got a look of crafty malice to him. He has long dreadlocks that he usually ties back in a sort of ponytail, but for some rituals he lets them hang free around his head. He usually wears grimy jeans and leathers, usually carries a wide assortment of pouches, small leather bags, and voodoo fetishes and charms. The only part of his accouterments that seems truly shiny and clean is his beloved Colt King Cobra revolver, which he usually wears tucked into his jeans and keeps polished to a mirror shine.

JACK L. "JACKAL" CARTER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
28	END	0		
23	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 48**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*I've Seen It All... Twice:* +15 PRE; Only To Resist Presence Attacks (-1)	0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
2 Money: Well Off

Skills

20 +2 Overall
3 Bureaucratics 12-
3 Bribery 12-
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Concealment 12-
3 Conversation 12-
3 Deduction 12-
1 Electronics 8-
1 Forgery (Documents) 8-
4 Gambling (Card Games, Sports Betting) 12-
3 CK: Hudson City 12-
5 KS: The Hudson City Underworld 15-
3 KS: The Vice World 13-
3 Lockpicking 12-
3 Security Systems 12-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Stealth 12-
9 Streetwise 15-
3 Trading 12-
3 WF: Small Arms, Knives

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
40 Follower/Contact Points: 85
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 152
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: scar on left neck and jailhouse tattoos (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
10 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Psychological Limitation: Looks Out For Number One (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Hatred Of Cops And "The System" (Common, Strong)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
25 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 205

Background/History: Jack L. Carter is a thief, a conman, a swindler, a smuggler, and a liar. His father was a thief, so Jack learned the basics of the "trade" from his old man. Dad got busted and sent to prison for a twenty-year stretch when Jack was only 12, so he completed his education in a series of reformatories and foster homes. As a young man, he had the skills and the guts, but not the smarts.

When he reached age 18, the state turned him loose, and he went right back to stealing... and soon landed in prison on an armed robbery beef. A few years in prison calmed him down and put him in touch with more seasoned criminals. By his late 20s, he was out of the joint, back on the street, and finally had enough maturity and brains to make *really* good use of his skills.

Jack's in his early 40s now. He hasn't been in prison for 15 years, and he doesn't intend to *ever* go back. These days he makes good money with a variety of scams and crimes, from stealing, to blackmail, to smuggling — anything he feels he's capable of and can handle the risks of. To minimize the possibility of his victims going to the cops, he often targets other criminals and low-lifes: small-time thieves; freaks who think the Strip is too tame (or too public); pimps; drug dealers (though he's not stupid enough to take on anyone really powerful, like the Mafia or yakuza, or anyone he thinks could come after him personally, unless he's absolutely certain he can do so safely). This has earned him the nickname "the Jackal" on the street, though he thinks it's kind of dumb and would just as soon be called by his regular name.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt M1911A	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9	

Armor
None

Gear: Whatever he needs for the job at hand, within reason. His small combination nightvision monocular/telescope is a particular favorite, and he also owns a set of quality lockpicks and related thieves' tools (+2 to Lockpicking rolls).

JACK L. CARTER PLOT SEEDS

"The Jackal" hears that the PCs are hot on the heels of a well-known robbery crew. He decides he's going to rob the robbers just as they complete their latest caper, but then leave them for the PCs to capture. All he's got to do is plan things perfectly, and he and his friends'll be on easy street.

One of Jack's many enemies catches up to him and beats him into a coma. When he comes out of it, he's got amnesia. The PCs have the chance to make him think he's a good guy and put his skills to use in the service of crimefighting rather than crime. But can they make him believe... and how will he react to criminals treating him as one of their own?

Jack tips the PCs off about a major hijacking he hears about. Normally he'd just take advantage of the situation to steal from the hijackers. What's with the charitable aid?

Personality/Motivation: Jack Carter's interested in one thing: Jack Carter. He wants to ensure his own safety, security, profitability, and pleasure, in that order. Though prudence and maintaining a rep on the street dictate that he has to work with other criminals whom he trusts — which means they have to trust him, so he has to play square with them — ultimately he's looking out for number one, and number one alone. His loyalty to his "colleagues" is particularly likely to be tested whenever he's got the chance to make a lot of money; the only thing Jack might value more than his own skin is cold, hard cash.

Jack has a bitter, hard-earned hatred of cops, social workers, and anyone else associated with "the system." He's too smart to let his feelings cloud his judgment most of the time, but he's usually on the lookout for ways to stick it to "the Man" without exposing himself to arrest.

Quote: "OK, this should be a pretty easy score for all of us. Here's how it's gonna go...."

Powers/Tactics: Carter isn't a fighter; he's a thief. He was more of a "gunslinger" as a kid, when he pulled armed robberies and similar crimes, but he learned a long time ago that was a road to nowhere and gave it up. He carries weapons when he's nervous or on the job — usually a Colt M1911A, a switchblade, and perhaps a few small, concealed weapons — but he'd prefer not to use them. If a job goes sour, or even looks like it's going to go sour, he calls the whole thing off. He hasn't stayed out of prison for over a decade by taking foolish chances; he's done it through careful planning, precise execution, and a well-developed sense of caution.

Jack's biggest asset is his connections on the street. He knows the Hudson City underworld really well, and thus who to call on for help with a particular job or problem. But being on the street means making enemies, too; more than a few people would be just as happy to see him dead or in prison. He tries to arrange his scams that target criminals and scumbags so they can't be traced back to him, but sometimes that's not possible or something goes wrong, and he adds someone to his rogues' gallery.

Campaign Use: Jack's a skilled street criminal, which doesn't necessarily make him tough enough to take on the PCs in combat... but there are other ways to "fight" heroes. He's most likely to target the PCs if they have secret identities, are wanted by the HCPD, or otherwise can't go running to the cops after he robs them. Given how gullible most costumed crimefighters tend to be (in his experience, anyway), he could easily use them as patsies in some greater scam (such as tricking them into keeping a target busy while he robs that target blind).

To make Jack tougher, increase his Primary Characteristics and SPD so he's more of a match for the PCs in open combat; you could also give him Dirty Infighting. To weaken him, get rid of his Overall Levels.

"The Jackal" won't Hunt someone unless he's targeting that person for a robbery. In that case, he patiently follows and watches the target until he learns everything he can. Then, together with a team of partners or hirelings he hits the target fast and hard, gets what he wants, and gets out.

Carter has a criminal record that's pages and pages long; it includes a variety of property crimes and a few assaults. His record's been clean for 15 years, but the police suspect him of involvement in a wide variety of offenses.

Appearance: Jack Carter is a nondescript white guy in his early 40s. He blends in well in a crowd — he dresses like an average guy, isn't overly handsome, and has average height and weight (5'9", 160 pounds, short sandy blonde hair, green-grey eyes). He's got the hard-bitten look of a seasoned, street-smart crook who's seen it all, who keeps his emotions to himself so he doesn't give anything away or make himself vulnerable. His only distinguishing characteristics are a scar on his neck (from a knife-fight he got into as a kid) and some jailhouse tattoos on his upper arms.

CERBERUS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH[4]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
7	COM	-1	10-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
34	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 82**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
15	*Steel-Capped Teeth:* HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+½); No STR Bonus (-½)	2
7	*Spike-Knuckled Gloves:* HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR); OIF (-½)	1
	Martial Arts: Doggie Style	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage/Effect	
4	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
4	Kidney Blow -2 +0 HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Low Blow -1 +1 2d6 NND(3)	
4	Punch/Backhand +0 +2 6d6 Strike	
5	Roundhouse -2 +1 8d6 Strike	
3	Tackle +0 -1 4d6 +v/5 Strike, FMove; You Fall, Target Falls	
2	*Go For The Jugular:* Use Art with Steel-Capped Teeth, Spike-Knuckled Gloves (Punch, Roundhouse only)	
5	*Growl:* +10 PRE; Only For Fear-/Intimidation-Based Presence Attacks (-1)	0
	Perks	
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level	
	Skills	
15	+3 HTH	
3	Interrogation 12-	
2	AK: Freetown 11-	
2	CK: Hudson City 11-	
2	KS: Freetown Gangs 11-	
2	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-	
3	Stealth 12-	
3	Streetwise 12-	
2	WF: Small Arms	
	Resource Points	
0	Equipment Points: 60	
5	Vehicle/Base Points: 20	
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25	
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 107
Total Cost: 189

100+ Disadvantages

15	Distinctive Features: filed, gold-plated, steel-capped teeth (Concealable With Difficulty; Causes Major Reaction [fear/disgust])
20	Enraged: in combat (Common), go 11-, recover 11-
20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Hunted: Shango 8- (Mo Pow, Kill)
20	Psychological Limitation: Will Do Anything To Maintain/Prove His Rep (Common, Total)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with other enforcers and bodyguards, such as Brahma, Stonehenge, and the Varangian)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)

Total Disadvantage Points: 205

Background/History: Like a lot of kids growing up in Freetown, Jamal Jacobs joined a gang. It was a perfect fit; Jamal was big, strong, tough, fast, and ruthless. He killed for the first time — but not the last — when he was only 15.

But something set Jamal apart from the other gangstas: his smarts and his ambition. He didn't want to live out the rest of his life on the streets, selling drugs and killing time until someone shot him; he wanted the American Dream: money, cars, girls, a mansion with a pool. He decided he needed two things: to hook up with a better gang that was going places; and a "gimmick" — a way to set himself apart from every other punk kid out there on the streets.

The gimmick came to him one day when he was getting a diamond chip cemented to one of his teeth. Fangs! Everyone was afraid of dogs because they had fangs... and knew how to use 'em. Well, he could do the same. Over several painful months, he has his teeth filed down to sharp points, then covered them with gold-plated steel caps. When his mouth healed, he went to work developing his jaw muscles, gnawing on hard rubber blocks until he could effortlessly sink his fangs right into them and bite out a big chunk.

The better gang turned out to be Shango's crew. It wasn't a tough decision. Shango was clearly the big dog on the street, and he had a plan to become

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MAC-10	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	32	12	AF5
Claridge Hi-Tec	+1	+1	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	10	

Armor
Armored Costume (DEF 2, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Usually none, other than a cell phone — carrying around a lot of stuff would spoil his look and his image

CERBERUS PLOT SEEDS

One of a PC's enemies tells Cerberus the PC has questioned Cerberus's manhood on the street. Cerberus starts looking high and low for the PC to teach him a bloody lesson. If they learn they've been tricked, will they team up to hunt down the enemy?

Through an intermediary who hides his identity, Shango tries to hire/recruit the PCs to kill Cerberus. If they do the work, he won't pay, forcing them to find out who he is and track him down to get the cash; if they turn him down, he'll try to trick Cerberus into going after them (see above) in the hopes of killing two birds with one stone.

The Kyphotic Man tells Cerberus he can make him even stronger, faster, tougher, and scarier by splicing some Doberman DNA into his own. As his price, he asks Cerberus to do something that involves the PCs in some way. Of course, the hunchbacked crimelord is lying, but he knows he can trick Cerberus if the time ever comes to make good on his claim.

IN THE DOGHOUSE

"Famed rapper Dis Tense appeared in court in Los Angeles today on charges of assault stemming from a 2004 brawl in a local club that left two people badly injured and one dead. Dis Tense pleaded Not Guilty, but uncharacteristically refused to talk to reporters.

"Sources inside the LAPD speculate that the person primarily responsible for the injuries is the notorious Hudson City criminal Cerberus, whose trademark is his sharpened, steel-capped teeth. The two injury victims both have wounds consistent with those left on victims of Cerberus. Spokesmen for Dis Tense have strongly denied any allegations that the rapper employed Cerberus as a bodyguard, or in any other capacity."

bigger. Before long Jamal was one of Shango's bodyguards and right-hand men; at first he called himself Devil-Dog, later switching to Snarl. His appearance was enough to scare even people who weren't frightened of Shango's bulk and penchant for violence... and more than one person Shango wanted to "persuade" told all he knew after Jamal bit off one of his fingers in one swift, painful chomp.

But after a while, Jamal got tired of working for Shango, too — he still wasn't top dog, and never would be. He figured he'd be better off as a free agent. He'd already had some other offers, and at least that way he could work on his own terms. He left Shango behind (a sin the ganglord has never forgiven) and went to work for other crimelords. One of them, the Kyphotic Man, christened him "Cerberus." He didn't know what it meant, exactly — some sort of monster dog — but he liked the sound of it, and has kept it ever since.

Personality/Motivation: Cerberus is a simple guy — not stupid, necessarily, just simple. He doesn't really have any complex motivations; he just wants a few basic things. The first is money. He wants the lifestyle he sees rap stars living on TV: mansions, limos, bling-bling, lots of hos hanging around doing whatever he says. The best way he's found to earn heavy is to work for crimelords and let them pay him a lot of money to do what he does best: intimidate and fight.

Second, and more importantly, he wants to keep his rep as the biggest, toughest guy around. He values his reputation so much that he deliberately mutilated himself, enduring months of painful dental surgery, to develop the distinctive appearance and personal weaponry that would earn him a unique name on the street. If someone disses him, questions his ability, or does anything else that he takes as an insult, he may start a fight right then and there. If not, he'll find some other way to prove who's top dog (such as by doing whatever it is his adversary claims he can't do). No one gets the satisfaction of beating Cerberus.

Quote: "Every Dog has his day!"

Powers/Tactics: Cerberus is a brawler. He likes to get in close and whale away on his opponent with punches (often using his Spike-Knuckled Gloves as a multiple-power attack with his Punch or Roundhouse) and use his Steel-Capped Teeth when he gets the chance. He knows how much fear his teeth can inspire, and he makes full use of that, often growling and grinning in a way that terrifies many of his victims.

Campaign Use: Cerberus mainly works as a bodyguard and mercenary criminal. He prefers bodyguarding work, but if none's available he'll hook up with robbery crews or anyone else who can use his talents and is willing to pay for them.

To make Cerberus tougher, make him more resilient — give him some Damage Reduction, Rapid Healing, or the like. To weaken him, reduce his STR and CON to about 15 each, and his BODY to 12.

Cerberus usually only Hunts a PC if someone pays him to, or he hears the hero has insulted or mocked him. In those situations, he's not subtle about things: he tracks the guy down and beats him to death.

Cerberus has a lengthy criminal record. As a juvenile he committed numerous offenses: murder, drug dealing, robbery. As Cerberus, he's been arrested and found guilty of two murders, but escaped before the authorities could get him to Stewartsburg. The HCPD is on the lookout for him — and since he killed two cops during his escape, the odds are Cerberus will be "shot while resisting arrest" instead of re-captured.

Appearance: Cerberus is a tall black man in his mid-20s: 6'4", broad-shouldered, well-muscled. He shaves his head. He's had his teeth filed down to points, then covered them with gold-plated steel caps, giving him a mouth of short golden fangs. His strong jaw muscles bulge out slightly on either side of his face, giving him an even odder (and, to some people, rather grotesque) appearance. He wears a black, sleeveless bodystocking, black boots, and black fingerless gloves with sharp spikes on the knuckles.

CHIAROSCURO

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
23	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 67**	

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Leaping: 5"/10

Cost	Powers	END
30	*I've Got You Covered:* Invisible Power Effects (fully invisible; +1) for DEX 20; Only For Covering (-1)	0
7	*Shadows Always Seem To Follow Him:* Change Environment 1" radius, -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Always Only (-½), Self Only (-½), No Range (-½), Only In Appropriate Circumstances (see text; -½)	0
5	*Perching:* Clinging (normal STR); Only To "Perch" (-½), Requires A Climbing Roll (-½), Cannot Resist Knockback (-0)	0
4	*Fast:* Running +2" (8" total)	1
3	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +3" (5" forward, 3" upward)	1
5	*Cat Burglar's Eyes:* Nightvision	0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

4 Double-Jointed
3 Environmental Movement: Supreme Balance (no penalties on narrow surfaces)

Skills

3 Acrobatics 13-
3 Breakfall 13-
7 Climbing 15-
7 Concealment 14-
3 Contortionist 13-
3 Fast Draw (Blades) 13-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
3 KS: Art History 12-
3 KS: Gems And Jewelry 12-
2 KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
3 Lockpicking 13-
3 PS: Appraising 12-
7 Security Systems 14-
3 Shadowing 12-
9 Stealth 16-
3 Streetwise 13-
6 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Small Arms
2 Weaponsmith (Knives/Throwing Blades) 12-

Resource Points

18 Equipment Points: 150
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 179
Total Cost: 246

100+ Disadvantages

25 Enraged: if he feels his freedom, safety, or security are being threatened (Common), go 14-, recover 11-
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with other cat burglars, like the Black Tarantula)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Charlie Roscone) (Frequently, Major)
46 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 246

Background/History: Charlie Roscone ran away from home when he was only 13. He already hated his parents — not the way most teenagers do, but *really* hated them, enough that he knew it was only a matter of time before he hurt them and got in trouble for it. After leaving home, he fell in with a street gang... and before long he got busted for attempted murder when he helped the other guys in the gang with a drive-by that went wrong. Due to the heinousness of the crime — he'd tried to shoot the guy while he was playing with his two little kids in his yard — Charlie was tried and sentenced as an adult.

While he was in Stewartsburg Penitentiary, Charlie got lucky. He fell in early with a crew run by a prisoner named Rumson, a hardened thief and hijacker of many years' experience. With friends to watch his back, Charlie was able to spend a lot of time listening to Rumson and learning what he had to teach. Seeing in Charlie someone with the smarts to become a great thief, Rumson passed on as much underworld wisdom as he could.

When he got out of prison, Charlie began putting his mentor's lessons to work. A little practical experience and hands-on training with the techniques Rumson had described proved Charlie had a real gift for thieving. Leaving his old life of street crime behind, he became one of the most skilled cat burglars in the world. After one of his victims described how

CHIAROSCURO PLOT SEEDS

After Chiaroscuro kills a museum's assistant director during a theft, the victim's widow offers a substantial reward to anyone who brings him to her, alive and incapacitated. If the PCs don't want to take on the mission themselves to earn the reward money, they may find themselves having to stop others from doing so, since it's obvious she intends to kill him herself.

While patiently waiting in the shadows for a museum to clear out so he can rob it, Chiaroscuro overhears two terrorists planning an act of mass destruction to take place within the next week. He puts out the word that he's got information to sell — but he wants a *lot* of money. The PCs may get involved as the go-betweens who broker the deal, or to protect him from the terrorists (who hear about his offer and want to shut him up before anyone pays him). Or is it possible he's making the whole thing up?

Fearing that Chiaroscuro is about to steal her valuable jewelry collection, a society matron hires the PCs to protect herself, her guests, and her goods during an elaborate charity gala at her mansion.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Throwing Knives	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown, carries two
Shuriken	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	18	5	AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown; carries two

Armor
Armored Costume (2 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Advanced climbing gear, masterwork lockpicks and burglary tools, security systems analyzers and bypass tools

PUTTING OUT THE LIGHT

"I never saw him when he was goin' in — maybe he was already inside, hiding somewhere, before I came on duty at ten. All I know is I didn't see him."

"What did you see, Mr. Teague?"

"Well, it was about 4:00 AM. I was making my usual rounds outside, using my flashlight to make sure everything was okay. I came up on the stand of boxwoods on the east side. I shined the light around, looking to see if there was anything in there, like I always do. But this time there was something there! I just caught this glimpse... it looked like it might be a guy... then something hit my flashlight, knocked it out of my hand, made it go out. Then there was the pain in my head, and I couldn't see nothin' outta my left eye, and then I passed out."

"All right, is there anything else you remember?"

"No."

—Arnold Teague, recovering in the hospital after being hit in the left eye by a shuriken thrown by a person the HCPD believes to have been Chiaroscuro

well he hid himself in the shadows, a clever reporter dubbed him "Chiaroscuro," and the name stuck.

Personality/Motivation: Chiaroscuro has the greed that most cat burglars do, but he lacks two of the other traits of the typical professional thief. First, he's not really a "thrillseeker." He doesn't go after scores to prove he's the best, or because he loves beating the odds; he's totally professional about it — he's just there for the money.

Second, he's not a nonviolent person, or prone to fleeing from trouble. If he feels someone's threatening him, or may pose a threat to his freedom or personal safety, he reacts quickly and violently. His preferred response is to use shurikens or throwing blades (often coated with some type of poison), but he'll get close and use a dagger in HTH Combat if he has to. He doesn't necessarily set out to kill his victims, but he has absolutely no qualms about doing so (and will kill rather than leave witnesses alive). His definition of people who "threaten" him is fairly broad; it include security guards, anyone who accidentally stumbles across him while he's working, and anyone who pursues or tries to thwart him. (In game terms, his Enraged reflects this tendency.)

Quote: None. Chiaroscuro doesn't talk while he's on the job.

Powers/Tactics: Chiaroscuro is a cat burglar, with all the Skills that entails; he's particularly talented at climbing and hiding. He's extraordinarily patient, able to remain stock-still even in cramped or uncomfortable positions for hours at a time.

While Chiaroscuro doesn't seek battle, he doesn't run from combat either. If he has to attack, he prefers to do so from surprise — either he ambushes his foe (he's left many a security guard dead with a poisoned shuriken stuck in his neck), or he uses his *I've Got You Covered* ability or Fast Draw to attack a person who confronts him before they can react. If he encounters someone he's suspicious of, but not worried enough about to attack right away, he almost always Covers them.

Chiaroscuro possesses a strange and eerie trait that PCs who encounter him are sure to notice. Wherever he goes, shadows seem almost to cling to him. Where he walks, shadows somehow always seem to fall — just as it looks like he's going to step into the light so you can get a good look at him, something happens to keep shadows covering him (the angle of the light changes, something gets in the way of the light, or the like). In game terms, this is a Change Environment that makes it harder to see him clearly — unless the shadows are dark and thick, it's still possible to see him, just not to get a clear look at his face or other identifying features. This isn't a superpower or anything like that; it may be an unconscious defense mechanism he's developed through years of caution (*i.e.,* he's "trained" himself to stand or walk where there are shadows), or it may just be his particular form of luck. If there's no possible way for a shadow to realistically make it harder to get a clear look at him (for example, he's in the middle of a sunlit field), then this ability won't work. The GM may also have it work less effectively (*i.e.,* provide less of a penalty to see him clearly) in appropriate circumstances.

Campaign Use: Unlike the Black Tarantula or others of his ilk, Chiaroscuro is no "gentleman thief" — he kills and maims people on his way to committing daring thefts. Whereas the PCs might develop a sneaking admiration or quasi-affection for the Tarantula or Meteor, they should quickly come to loathe Chiaroscuro... and thus become all the more motivated to track him down.

To make Chiaroscuro tougher, give him another point of SPD, some Combat Skill Levels, and/or some Martial Arts (An Ch'i or Knifefighting would both work well for him). To weaken him, reduce his DEX to 18 and all his bought-up Skills to their base rolls.

Chiaroscuro doesn't Hunt people — he's a thief, not an assassin or bounty hunter.

Chiaroscuro has no criminal record because he's never been caught. The HCPD and FBI both want to capture him in connection with dozens of high-profile robberies they suspect he committed.

Appearance: Few people have ever gotten a good look at Chiaroscuro. Those who have report that he's a short man, about 5'5" tall with a trim, athletic build. He usually wears a black bodystocking and ski mask-like head covering that cover his whole body, but is said to be a Caucasian with olive-toned skin. He carries his tools in various pouches and pockets on his suit, and often wears goggles to protect his eyes. His knives and shuriken are mostly concealed up his sleeves and other places he can quickly reach, but he wears his two combat knives openly — one on his right hip, one in his inner left boot.

CONTAGION

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
20	CON	20	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
16	PRE	6	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4	COM	-3	9-	
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
10	REC	8		
40	END	0		
27	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 68**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
26	*Disease-Ridden Blood:* Drain CON 3d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Week; +1¾), NND (defense is Life Support [appropriate Immunity, see text]; +1), Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Personal Immunity (+¼); Always On (-½), Extra Time (onset time of 1 Hour to 1 Week; -3), Gradual Effect (1 Week, 1d6/2 days; -2), Only Works Against Living Beings Exposed To His Blood Or Bodily Fluids (-1)	0
20	*I've Already Been Exposed To It All:* Life Support (Immunity to all terrestrial biological warfare agents, chemical warfare agents, diseases, and poisons)	0
20	*I've Already Been Exposed To It All:* Power Defense (30 points); Only Works Against Limited Type Of Attack (poisons, gases, and chemicals; -½)	0

Perks

5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
9 Money: Well Off

Talents

3 Lightsleep

Skills

3 Bureaucratics 12-
3 Computer Programming 12-
3 Electronics 12-
1 High Society 8-
3 Inventor 12-
5 KS: Biochemical Warfare 14-
2 KS: The Espionage World 11-
5 KS: Luxury Goods And Services 14-
3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-
3 KS: The Scientific World 12-
2 KS: The Soviet Military 11-
2 Language: English (fluent conversation; Russian is Native)
3 Paramedics 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Scientist
4 1) SS: Bacteriology 14-
4 2) SS: Biology 14-
4 3) SS: Chemistry 14-
4 4) SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 14-
4 5) SS: Physics 14-
4 6) SS: Virology 14-

Resource Points

24 Equipment Points: 180
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 205
Total Cost: 273

100+ Disadvantages

20 Distinctive Features: intense, foul body odor (Not Concealable, Causes Major Reaction [disgust])
20 Enraged: if insulted, taunted, belittled, or made to look a fool (Common), go 11-, recover 11-
25 Hunted: CIA 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
25 Hunted: FBI 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Considers Human Life Meaningless (Very Common, Strong)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Dr. Evgenii Vasilovich) (Frequently, Major)
48 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 273

Background/History: White. He was surrounded by white. He felt... odd. He was floating in a cloud.

No — not a cloud. Infectious disease curtains. Hospital. He was in a hospital bed.

A white woman hurried into the room. Nurse. Another nurse behind her, then a man — doctor. Surgical masks, all of them. <<"He's awake!">> one said.

They shut the door — hermetically sealed door — approached his bed. Felt a little better, but muzzy head, like all the white was filling it.

They moved the curtains aside. Stepped a little closer — hesitation? Fear. Nurse put on rubber gloves, took his pulse. Sores — sores on his arm.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Makarov PM	+0	-1	1d6+1	1d6-1	8	6	

Armor
None

Gear: Usually little if any, but in appropriate circumstances he may have a field medical kit, various small scientific devices needed for an experiment or a mission, or the like

CONTAGION PLOT SEEDS

Another scientist claims credit for some of Contagion's work. To pay him back, Contagion sends him a "mail bomb" containing a deadly virus. The PCs have to find Contagion and get the antidote before the entire city dies.

The Russian military has learned Contagion's location from reliable sources. It has a plan to kill him... but the plan requires the help of the PCs. Why?... and will they go along with it?

The PCs get word that one of their enemies, a man they've never had any luck tracking down, has hired Contagion to do some research. If they can find Contagion, maybe they can backtrack to their hated adversary....

OPERATION XERXES

TO: Deputy Director, DSO

FROM: Rodrick Kaine, Associate Deputy Director, DSO

DATE: March 14, 2005

RE: Contagion

Following our recent discussions concerning the threat Contagion poses to the world community, I have prepared the following plan, code-named XERXES, for capturing or, if appropriate, eliminating him.

The full details of the op are described in the accompanying documents, but in brief: I propose that we train a special task force composed of Rangers and infectious disease experts from USAMRIID. In conjunction with their joint training, we would assign the Science and Technology Directorate the task of developing armored biocontainment suits for the team to wear, as well as other equipment needed to capture and contain Contagion. The team would be headquartered at either Quantico or Fort Bragg, and would be ready to move out at a moment's notice to reach any location in the world within 24 hours.

I must stress that I believe the creation of a team dedicated to the task of capturing Contagion is essential to success. We have no way of knowing what might happen if Contagion is injured or killed, and thus it's important to have properly-trained individuals involved with the mission. Using a standard team of elite personnel could easily endanger thousands or millions of people.

Like mustard gas victim. How did that...?

<<"How do you feel, Dr. Vasilovich? Can you speak?">> the doctor asked.

Tried to speak — throat hurt, blistered too, maybe? <<"Fuh-ee.">>

<<"I'm not surprised you feel funny, Doctor — it's a miracle you're alive at all. Do you remember what happened?">>

Thought. Couldn't remember well. Bright light — there was a bright light. Fire? He shook his head.

<<"There was an explosion at your lab. Do you remember the lab?">>

He thought. Yes, lab. Shiny new lab, state of the art. He nodded.

<<"Something happened — they don't know what yet. You were exposed to a lot of the... chemicals you work with. And the germs. You remember?">>

Work. Yes, he remembered work. Enjoyed work, tailoring viri just so.... He nodded.

<<"You're a scientist, Dr. Vasilovich, so I'll be blunt with you. We're not sure what happened to you yet. You should be dead. Any one of those... substances should have killed you. We don't know how you survived — or if we can keep you alive. You seem to be suffering from several virulent diseases, as well as from the effects of chemical exposure, yet... you're alive. It's going to be a long, hard road, but we'll do what we can to bring you back to health.">>

He nodded. His head seemed a little clearer now. He raised his arm, as if to shake the doctor's hand or signal agreement, and accidentally brushed one of the nurse's right arm. She shrieked, a look of sheer terror on her face, and started to leave the room as quickly as she could. <<"Stop!">> the doctor ordered, and she did, tears on her face. He signaled the other one, and she injected something into an IV. In a few seconds he was feeling muzzy-headed again, falling back into the clouds....

****

He was feeling better. He wasn't sure how long he'd been in the hospital; they wouldn't show him a calendar, the doctor and the nurse. He never saw the other nurse again, the one he accidentally touched.

The door opened with its usual *whoosh.* He was sealed in here, hermetically. It was a strong bioprotocol. Whatever he had, it was very bad. They couldn't... or wouldn't... tell him what they learned with their tests. They wouldn't give him a mirror, either. On his arms, some of the sores had healed. Some.

A man walked in — not a doctor, a colonel in the Soviet Army. He had a surgical mask on. He wouldn't come closer to the bed than three steps. He seemed uncomfortable, wouldn't look directly at him.

<<"Are you awake, Dr. Vasilovich? I need to talk to you.">>

He nodded. The colonel acknowledged with a clipped nod of his own, then went right on. <<"We have investigated the accident at your laboratory, doctor. To the best we can determine, several safety devices failed at approximately the same time. It should not have happened — it was a billion to one chance. Some of the chemicals leaked out and ate through a power cable. That's what caused the explosion.">>

He nodded again, saying nothing. He remembered the explosion clearly now — the flickering of the lights as the power died, the distant *whump* and the shaking of the building, the bright light as the chain of detonations reached him, bombarding him with a dozen biochemical agents....

<<"Once the doctors finish treating you, it has been decided you will return to your duties in military research. I will return periodically for further briefings.">> Before he could even ask any questions, the colonel hurried from his room.

****

He felt fine now — strong, healthy. But he knew he didn't *look* it. There were still sores on his arms — some that hadn't fully healed yet, some new ones. His luxuriant hair and moustache were gone, leaving only a few tufts. They still wouldn't tell him anything, but he knew he'd been there for months.

And now it was time to leave.

Moving with a speed and strength his keepers didn't yet know he possessed, he disconnected the monitors and tubes and got out of bed. Buzzers and alarms began to ring. The nurse and the doctor came running in. He clubbed them both unconscious with a stool, stole the doctor's lab-coat, and fled.

****

Getting safe from the military wasn't difficult — he still had friends in the underworld, even if they couldn't stand to look at him or be close to him anymore. They smuggled him into Lebanon, put him in touch with some people who were willing to finance his work. Soon the word made its way through the Middle East and out into the rest of the world: you didn't need a nuke anymore to threaten the West. There was a man — an ugly, disgusting man whose body gave off a stench that would make you retch if you stayed around him too long — who could prepare even more terrifying weapons for you, if you had the money. Plagues to make entire nations sick, gases that would practically eat the flesh from a man's bones, nerve agents that made people die in contorted agony — all this and more the man called Contagion can make for those who meet his price.

Personality/Motivation: Contagion was chosen for Soviet military research not just because of his incisive mind, but because he had few scruples about designing weapons of mass destruction. The accident he suffered only heightened his feelings of detachment from his fellow man. He has no sympathy or human compassion; he doesn't think of other people as different from trees, or dogs, or objects. They mean nothing to him, so he doesn't care if his creations kill millions of them.

Since he knows he can never truly enjoy the company of other people again, Contagion finds other ways to enjoy his life. He insists on the best

of everything — accommodations, food, wine, entertainment — and pays top dollar to get it (if his employers aren't already providing it to him under contract).

Quote: "Plague? The plague is nothing! There are far more insidious viri I can create for you... if you're prepared to pay well for them."

Powers/Tactics: The explosion in his lab exposed Contagion to dozens of biochemical warfare agents. Somehow, this didn't kill him — the chemicals reacted strangely in his body, turning it into a living incubator for many diseases he's now immune to. Anyone who comes into contact with his bodily fluids (blood, sweat, saliva, urine...) is exposed to one of these diseases. His character sheet represents the disease with a long-term Drain CON, leaving it to you to randomly decide just what disease he passes on to a character (typically it should be an uncomfortable one, if not fatal). If you prefer, you can change this attack to a Major Transform (normal person to person infected with virulent disease, heals back normally — see pages 127-28 of *The HERO System Equipment Guide* for information about several diseases).

The accident affected Contagion in other ways. In addition to changing his appearance (see below), it gave him an extremely strong, particularly foul-smelling body odor. He can mask the odor with colognes, but to do so he has to slather on ounces of the stuff, enough that it still attracts too much attention for him to ever go unnoticed. Furthermore, he's permanently impotent, has trouble sleeping, suffers from a day or two of gut-wrenching nausea and pain at least once every few months, and sometimes experiences bouts of palsy.

Contagion's value to the underworld and Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World lies in his skill at concocting biological and chemical weapons. For the right price, he'll supply anyone with the weapon they need to wreak untold havoc — after all, he suffers no ill effects from such things anymore, and doesn't care about anyone else, so what does it matter that one of his creations might turn London into a ghost town, or Miami into a depopulated ruin? Responsible authorities all over the world are desperate to capture him dead or alive.

Campaign Use: Contagion isn't a dangerous foe personally, aside from the chance that he might infect a PC with a fatal disease. His danger lies in the weapons he supplies to others. When the name "Contagion" comes up during a scenario, the PCs should become both afraid and deadly serious about their mission, since the fate of millions may hinge on their ability to stop the twisted scientist or the people he deals with.

To make Contagion tougher, increase his defenses and STR — maybe the accident made him less likely to feel pain. To weaken him, reduce his SPD to 2.

Contagion doesn't Hunt heroes — it's not worth the effort. The only thing that might stir him to such acts of vengeance is if an employer stiffed him on his fee.

Contagion is wanted all over the world for complicity in numerous acts of terrorism and mass murder.

Appearance: Contagion was once a tall, well-built, handsome Russian man. The accident changed that. He now stands 5'7" (he has a permanent stoop due to a back injury) and seems almost skeletally thin. His skin has an unhealthy pallor to it, what little hair he has left grows from his head in ugly grey-black tufts, and his dark eyes are glazed with an unfocused malice. Boils and suppurating sores break out on his skin periodically, causing him no pain but making him look even uglier. He usually wears loose men's clothing and a white labcoat.

STAFF AND SWORD

"Hey, 'dyou hear about the fight? What I heard was, was that some hotshot executive was afraid someone was gonna try to kill him. So what he did was, was he hired Copperhead, right — that way he gets protection and gets to show off how rich and connected he is, see?

"Sure enough, someone's put out a contract on this guy. No, I dunno why. Who cares? Thing was, they got that guy Blind to take care of it. How the !$&* some guy who can't see can kill people, I dunno. But anyhow, what happened was, was that the executive was going out to his helicopter on one'a those rooftop helipads, Copperhead right beside him, when Blind jumped 'em. Dunno how a blind guy could'a got to the roof without bein' seen, but there he was.

"Blind had a sword, and Copperhead had that funky metal staff-thing'a his. So Blind goes for the exec, and Copperhead blocks the blade, just like in a Hong Kong movie, man. And that's how it went — Blind kept tryin' for the executive, Copperhead kept blockin' the way. The executive's other bodyguards hustled him into the chopper and got him away. Way I heard it, when Blind realized the copter'd left, he knew he'd missed his chance... so he jumped off the side of the building to get away! !$&*, man, that takes balls!

"I bet Copperhead got himself a big bonus for that one."

—Weasel Watkins, street snitch and gossipmonger

COPPERHEAD

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
13	COM	2	12-	
10	PD	8		Total: 13 PD (3 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 11 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
31	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 97**	

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 6"/12"
Swinging: 15"/30"

Cost	Power	END
15	*StickStaff:* Multipower, 30-point reserve; all OAF (-1)	
1u	1) *Sticks:* HA +4d6, Autofire (2 shots; +¼); OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
1u	2) *Hurled Stick:* Energy Blast 6d6; OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼), Lockout (-½)	[1rc]
1u	3) *Staff:* HA +4d6; OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) **plus** 1" Stretching, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Only To Cause Damage (-½), No Velocity Damage (-¼)	2
1u	4) *Staff Whirlwind:* HA +3d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex Doubled; +¾), Personal Immunity (+¼); OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	3
1u	5) *Staff-Vaulting:* Leaping +3"; OAF (-1), Requires An Acrobatics Roll (-½)	1
1u	6) *Swingline:* Swinging 15"; OAF (-1), Lockout (-½)	1
	Martial Arts: Snake Kung Fu, Jujutsu, And More	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Notes	
4	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
5	Breaking Throw -2 -2 Grab One Limb; HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR), Disable; Target Falls	
4	Dodge +0 +5 Dodge all attacks, Abort	
4	Escape +0 +0 55 STR vs. Grabs	
5	Joint Break -1 -2 Grab One Limb; HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR), Disable	
3	Joint Lock/Grab -1 -1 Grab, 50 STR	
5	Kick -2 +1 12d6 Strike	
4	Knife Hand -2 +0 HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR)	
3	Legsweep +2 -1 9d6 Strike, Target Falls	
4	Punch +0 +2 10d6 Strike	
4	*Shime* -2 +0 Grab One Limb; 4d6 NND(2)	
3	Throw +0 +1 8d6 +v/5, Target Falls	
4	*Tien-hsueh* Strike -1 +1 4d6 NND (1)	
4	Uproot/Sand Palm +0 +0 55 STR Shove	
16	+4 Damage Classes (already added in)	
2	Use Art with Clubs, Staff	
6	*Fast:* Running +3" (9" total)	1
2	*Strong Legs:* Leaping +2" (6" forward, 3" upward)	1

Perks

10	Money: Wealthy

Talents

9	Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

10	+2 HTH
6	+2 with Martial Arts
2	+1 OCV with Hurled Stick
3	Acrobatics 13-
5	Analyze Style 13-
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Climbing 13-
1	Computer Programming 8-
3	Contortionist 13-
3	High Society 13-
2	CK: Hudson City 11-
2	KS: Aikijutsu 11-
2	KS: The Espionage World 11-
2	KS: Escrima 11-
2	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
2	KS: Hapkido 11-
2	KS: Hsing-I 11-
2	KS: Jujutsu 11-
2	KS: Karate 11-
3	KS: Kung Fu 12-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
3	Lockpicking 13-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
9	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Small Arms, Off Hand

Resource Points

8	Equipment Points: 100
5	Vehicle/Base Points: 20
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 234
Total Cost: 331

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/ Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Seeks Mastery In Combat (Common, Strong)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with Dagger and other mercenaries, particularly those skilled in the fighting arts, who do the kind of work he does)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Stewart Cooper, dilettante) (Frequently, Major)
146 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 331

Background/History: It's hard living up to your parents' expectations sometimes. When your dad's a self-made millionaire who competed in the Olympics, it's even tougher.

"Get up and *run,* you worthless mama's boy!" his dad would shout at him when he fell down. Dick Cooper had only taken the silver when he ran, and he was determined that Stewart would take the gold. Stewart was weak and stupid, but he'd burn that out of him with discipline and hard work... and punishment, if necessary. It had worked well enough on Stewart's mother.

It was all competition. Competing against the goals Dad set for him to beat. Competing against other kids in races. Who you were better than, who was better than you, that was all that mattered, Dad said — that, and making sure that in the end, *no one* was better than you.

By the time he was a teenager, he knew he wasn't going to race in the Olympics — he just wasn't fast enough. Dad knew it, too. But there was another way. Dad hadn't just taught him to run, he'd taught him a lot of other things... like the judo he'd learned in the Army. He was good at that, the fighting stuff — better than running. Knowing how disappointed Dad would be if he didn't keep trying, he refocused on martial arts, spending hours every day in the dojo with the instructors Dad hired. After a while, Dad built him his own dojo on the grounds, and the instructors came to him.

It got harder and harder to find good instructors. A lot of the ones he'd started with couldn't keep up with him anymore. But Dad didn't care. "Whatever it takes to succeed, son, that's what you do." He paid the extra money to hire new instructors, ones from Japan and China even.

1996. Atlanta. The Games. All he got was a bronze in Judo. He'd spent too much time on Kung Fu and Aikido, which weren't Olympic events at all; he'd lost focus. And right there in the arena, in front of the world, Dad slapped him for being a failure.

They flew back home to Hudson City the next day. Dad didn't speak to him at all. That night, Stewart picked up one of his escrima sticks, walked over to Dad's wing of the house, and beat him to death. Mom didn't say a word.

When the police came, he claimed he'd been sleeping in his wing of the house and hadn't heard a thing. Mom said she'd been down in the library reading and hadn't heard a thing. It stank to high heaven, but even after the cops questioned all the servants (who *really* hadn't heard a thing), they couldn't dig up any clues. It got filed under UNSOLVED... and Stewart got his inheritance.

Most people with that much money would spend the rest of their lives in leisure, but not Stewart. Dad had taught him that hard work was how you got ahead, and competition how you proved yourself. Since the only thing he really enjoyed was fighting,

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Usually none, but he may carry other martial arts weapons, if appropriate							

Armor
Armored Costume (DEF 4; OIF)

Gear: Infrared Mask Lenses (Infrared Perception [Sight Group]; OIF); Utility Pockets with a variety of small gadgets (see *Dark Champions,* page 283)

COPPERHEAD PLOT SEEDS

The classic Copperhead plot: he decides one of the PCs would present an interesting challenge in *mano-a-mano* combat, and challenges the hero to a duel.

Copperhead decides it would be a *real* challenge to take on all of the PCs at once and eliminate them one at a time. He sets up a trap where he lures them to an appropriate location (an abandoned factory or the like), separates them, then goes after them one by one.

Copperhead's working for one of the PCs' enemies. Can they create a weakness in the enemy's organization by convincing Copperhead to abandon his duties to fight one of them... and if so, can the PC chosen to fight him survive the experience once Copperhead realizes he's been tricked?

he decided to show the world that he was the best at that... and perhaps make a little extra money on the side. A few months later there was a new mercenary on the scene, a guy calling himself Copperhead who was as fast and deadly as his namesake.

Personality/Motivation: Copperhead works as a mercenary — a bodyguard, a thief, combat support for other thieves, even an assassin, whatever his employer wants — but he's not in it for the money. In fact, he gives most of what he earns to charity; his inheritance already provides him with more money than he needs to live on. What drives Copperhead is the desire to prove himself on the field of battle. He wants to prove he's a better fighter than anyone else — that in the great competition called Life, he stands on top of the heap. Crime is secondary, and generally pointless; he's only a part of the underworld because that's the best way to find challenging fights and hone his combat skills.

Copperhead pretends to follow the mercenaries' code, but he really doesn't. He's not particularly concerned about any of his employers or their goals. Given an opportunity for a good fight, he'll ignore orders, switch employers at the drop of a hat, or bring a mission to a screeching halt so he can show who's the better warrior. If he weren't such a highly-skilled fighter, this attitude would make it hard for him to find work.

Years of martial arts training have taught Copperhead how to mouth the platitudes of "honor" — and in fact he tries to be "honorable" when he can. After all, he can't show off his fighting skills if he ambushes his opponents, fights dirty, or immediately takes advantage of their weaknesses. But the true meaning of honor, and how it guides a man's life, is a lesson that's always been lost on him.

Copperhead is not, by nature, a killer. As far as he's concerned, killing an enemy is pointless; it's brutal, requiring no particular skill or finesse. But he has no scruples against killing if he has to, or if an employer orders it. He might disobey such an order if he thinks leaving a foe alive would allow that foe to re-train and give him a good fight again.

Because he was raised to see all life as a competition, Copperhead has a strong rivalry with anyone else who does the kind of work he specializes in (particularly Dagger, who he feels has unfairly beaten him out of a couple of prime contracts). He'll do whatever it takes to prove he's better than they are.

Quote: "You have skill, and fire. Do you dare to test them against me?"

Powers/Tactics: Copperhead is a highly-skilled martial artist. He favors Snake Kung Fu, but has studied many other styles. If he thinks an opponent can counter his Kung Fu too easily, or knows too much about his style, he'll switch to Jujutsu, Karate, Aikido, or whatever he thinks will work best.

As a weapon, Copperhead carries a *stickstaff* — two metal sticks he can quickly fasten together to form a quarterstaff. He can wield the sticks as a pair (thus taking advantage of his WF: Off Hand), throw one of them at a distant foe (usually using his Level with Hurled Stick to bounce the stick back to him after it hits), or use the staff to hit tougher foes or vault over obstacles. One of the sticks also contains a line-gun, allowing him to swing between buildings and over chasms.

In combat, Copperhead focuses on whoever he considers the best fighter among his opposition (using Analyze Style if necessary to determine who that is). He challenges that person to one-on-one combat, and keeps fighting until he's Knocked Out or wins. If he wins, he moves on to the next foe. If his enemies won't fight him one at a time, he takes them on as a group using the best tactics and maneuvers he can devise (such as the Staff Whirlwind). He *hates* to flee, only doing so if absolutely necessary.

Campaign Use: In addition to his possible role as a bodyguard or enforcer for a crimelord, or as part of a mission team opposing the PCs, Copperhead makes a great Rival or nemesis for a martial artist PC. It may take the hero time to reach Copperhead's level of skill, but Copperhead can recognize talent... and even nurture it. If he feels a "bond" with a PC, he might even offer to provide some instruction.

To make Copperhead tougher, increase his SPD to 5, and perhaps give him some Lightning Reflexes. To weaken him, remove some Martial Maneuvers and/or Combat Skill Levels, or reduce his DEX to 18.

Copperhead might Hunt a hero, but only if (a) the hero's humiliated him in the past, or (b) he thinks the quarry could provide a challenging fight for him. Usually he just tracks the target down and challenges him to a fight right then and there, but he may try more subtle means to lure the hero into combat if he doesn't think the direct approach will work.

Copperhead's wanted by the HCPD and other authorities for various acts of robbery, assault, and murder (the CIA wants him for killing two of its agents, though it's unclear whether the Agency wants to dispose of him or recruit him).

Appearance: Stewart Cooper is a handsome man in his mid-20s — 5'11" tall, 165 pounds on a lean and well-muscled (but not bulked out) body, wavy brown hair kept short, green eyes. As Copperhead, he wears a skintight costume that's mostly a coppery-orange, but with red-brown boots, belt, gloves, and center panel on the chest (the panel's a vertical element with horizontal lines, designed to mimic the scales on a snake's belly). His mask is a coppery-orange half-face cowl that leaves his mouth and chin exposed; the eye lenses are reddish.

DAEDALUS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 [2]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
11	CON	2	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
11	INT	1	11-	PER Roll 11-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
22	END	0		
20	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 23**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
2	Deep Cover (to be defined by GM)
10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
10	Money: Wealthy

Skills

20	+4 with Intellect Skills
3	Analyze Technology 11-
3	Bugging 11-
3	Computer Programming 11-
3	Electronics 11-
3	Deduction 11-
3	Demolitions 11-
2	Forgery (Documents) 11-
3	Inventor 11-
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	Mechanics 11-
3	Security Systems 11-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
2	WF: Small Arms
9	Weaponsmith (all categories) 11-
3	Scholar
3	1) KS: The Espionage World 13-
3	2) KS: The Hudson City Underworld 13-
3	3) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
3	4) KS: Military Science 13-
3	5) KS: The Technology World 13-
3	Scientist
4	1) SS: Biology 14-
4	2) SS: Chemistry 14-
4	3) SS: Computer Science 14-
4	4) SS: Electronic Engineering 14-
4	5) SS: Mathematics 14-
4	6) SS: Mechanical Engineering 14-
4	7) SS: Physics 14-
4	8) SS: Robotics 14-

Resource Points

28	Equipment Points: 200
45	Vehicle/Base Points: 100
20	Follower/Contact Points: 45
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 237
Total Cost: 260

100+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Psychological Limitation: Obsessed With Creating Better Weapons Technology (Common, Total)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Dale Dodson) (Frequently, Major)
85	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 260

Background/History: "What do you mean, they turned down my proposal?"

"Dale, c'mon — you gotta be kidding me. Did you really think they were going to accept it?"

"But it's *brilliant.* You know it, and I know it. I can improve the efficiency of the Army's rifles by as much as 37%. All I need is the funding — a paltry sum, given the amount the government spends on crap like paper clips and tobacco subsidies — and testing facilities."

"Yeah, testing facilities — specially-equipped ones, right? Let me read from your proposal: "To allow for an optimal rate of progress with the development of this project, and to ensure that the X-67 line of weapons performs as estimated, testing with live subjects will be required." Where do you get this *%&!? Did you really think the government was going to authorize you to test assault rifles on *living people*?"

"Why not? Read the rest of the report. Inmates on life sentences, war criminals, people convicted of espionage — who would miss them? This way we can get some use out of them."

Rollinson pushed his glasses up on his balding forehead and rubbed at his eyes wearily. "Look, Dale," he said as moved his glasses back down, "go back to your office and prepare a *revised* proposal — one that *doesn't involve shooting people.* Have it on my desk by close of business tomorrow, you got me?"

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Usually none							

Armor
None

Gear: Given his skills as an inventor and his Equipment Points, Daedalus could potentially have just about anything. He usually has at least a small toolkit with him at all times, and may have a lot more tools and gear than that.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

"I heard you wished to commission my services?"

"Hey, who's... wait, I know. Yes, that's correct."

"Please describe the item you're interested in."

"Assault rifle. 5.56 NATO. Cyclic rate no less than 800. Magazine capacity no less than 60. Loaded weight no more than 6.5 kilograms. Most importantly, it has to break down, simply and quickly, into a series of components, each of them small enough to fit inside a standard luggage toiletries kit. Can you do that?"

"One second...." A minute of silence, broken only by the sound of pen scratching over paper. "Yes, the item you describe is feasible."

"Price?"

"Forty thousand American."

"Forty? Are you !$&*%@# kidding me? I can get an M16 for a twentieth of that!"

"But an M16 won't work for the mission you have in mind, or you'd have already bought one. If you want custom work — the best there is — you pay custom prices."

"All right. When can you have it ready?"

"Within three weeks. I'll contact you at this same number when the time comes to make the exchange."

—doing business with Daedalus

DAEDALUS PLOT SEEDS

The classic Daedalus plot: advanced weapons start to flood the streets during a gang war or similar confrontation, and a lot of innocent people get hurt in the crossfire. The PCs have to find a way to stem the flow of guns and bombs — not an easy task, given Daedalus's penchant for secrecy and security.

One of the PCs needs a new weapon, or a major weapon modification, in a hurry during a mission. His regular armorer can't do it — will he turn to Daedalus for help, and what sort of payment will Daedalus demand?

A high Pentagon official notes some disturbing similarities between a new weapons design being developed for the military and some weapons that recently turned up on the streets of Hudson City (Daedalus's military contacts passed the information he gives them on to defense contractors they own, or owe favors to). Concerned about a possible security leak, but not wanting to look like a fool if he's imagining it all, he covertly asks the PCs to investigate.

"Aren't you even going to fight for this? The company stands to make tens of millions of dollars on the basis of my work alone on this project. Don't be so short-sighted."

"I've already told you what to do, Dale. We're not discussing this any further."

****

Where there's a need, a supplier will arise to satisfy that need — that's basic economics, and Dodson knew it. In this case there were two needs. The first was his need to create weapons and security devices without turning to an outside source like DARPA or private industry that would try to restrict or regulate him. The second was the need many people had for more firepower — bigger guns, better bullets, more powerful bombs. Since he couldn't meet both demands through legitimate channels, more extreme measures were necessary.

Dodson quit his job and became a "defense industry consultant" — or at least that's what his business card said. But he had much more than a typical freelance engineer's career in mind. A few forged documents were all he needed to obtain working space no one could trace to him, and the permits to buy the raw materials and parts he required. A little bit of identity theft and computer hacking gave him plenty of money for supplies. Sure, he could have made a lot more money sticking to cybercrime, but it didn't really interest him.

Workspace secured and parts in hand, he returned to his true work. Within a few months he'd perfected several of his designs (it was *amazing* how much he could accomplish without bosses peering over his shoulder and regulators demanding all sorts of progress reports), but he didn't know what to do with them. Controlled field tests were what he really wanted, but there was no way to get them — hiring two private armies to go at it, no holds barred, would be too expensive and too noticeable. He'd have to settle for less scientifically rigorous testing methods, but that still entailed risk. He had to get the weapons into the hands of people who would *use* them: criminals, mercenaries, Third World governments, and so on — and he had to do it without exposing himself to arrest.

For once, the solution wasn't what he knew, but who. During his time in the defense industry, he'd come into contact with several defense officials who were, one might say, more concerned with results than the strict letter of the law. Dodson approached them secretly, seeking their help in return for a cut of the profits (which he didn't really care about anyway) and a promise to share technological developments with them. They soon introduced him to Lt. Paul McClinton (page 170), who was more than willing to help Dodson on the local level. Before long Dodson was doing good business with the gangstas and gunsels of Hudson City, using a name he chose for himself — Daedalus. On the street most people pronounce it "Deadluss," but he doesn't care as long as he gets to keep doing his work.

Personality/Motivation: Daedalus is absolutely fascinated with weapons technology and related military sciences. He's only fired guns a few times outside his lab, and he's never even thought about shooting another human being, but the thought of building better and more destructive weapons appeals to him the way some people obsess over a hobby or a significant other. He can't even explain, exactly, why he feels this way — he can't remember a time when he wasn't reading military magazines and studying electronics.

While Daedalus would prefer to pursue his obsession in legitimate industry, he feels too confined by rules and regulations to do so. He tried several times to find ways to get around those restrictions, but it never worked out, so he took to the streets instead. If someone asks him how he feels about innocent people getting hurt with his weapons, he'll express remorse — and maybe even genuinely feel some for a few moments — but then his mind will quickly shift back to analyzing *how* those people got hurt, and how they could get hurt *better,* until once again they're nothing more to him than statistics.

Quote: "Note how dense the firing pattern is. This weapon has 32% lower recoil thanks to this improved muzzle brake I developed."

Powers/Tactics: Daedalus doesn't fight. If confronted with force, he'll surrender immediately (or maybe try to flee, if he really thinks he has a chance). He deals with threats by avoiding them, not overcoming them. He's established elaborate security procedures to protect himself.

People who want to buy from Daedalus put the word out on the street. Eventually it gets back to McClinton or one of the guys working for him, and he passes the information on to Daedalus. Daedalus contacts the buyer, confirms what he wants and that he can afford it, and sets up a time and place for a meeting. The place is always one of

DAEDALUS'S COMPETITORS

Daedalus isn't the only armorer who keeps the Hudson City underworld supplied with weapons, ammo, and gadgetry. Among his chief competitors are:

The Toymaker: Unbeknownst to the authorities or the customers who visit his toy shop, kindly old Jacob Meier is one of the premiere suppliers of custom-designed weapons and gear to the underworld and the black market. He will not, however, build weapons of mass destruction, or deal with anyone he thinks might harm children; he prefers to limit himself to working for professionals.

Forge: A military veteran confined to a wheelchair as the result of an accident that cost him his lower legs, Forge specializes in heavy weaponry and custom-built or -modified firearms, but can provide just about anything a customer wants if necessary. Underworld rumor has it that his high-tech wheelchair has built-in concealed weapons and other devices to protect him from anyone who might threaten him or his business.

several abandoned or run-down buildings he owns throughout Hudson City under various untraceable cover identities.

When the buyer arrives, all he finds is two large safes next to a desk on the ground floor. On the desk is a computer and a phone. Daedalus communicates with the buyer via the computer and phone, and watches closely through numerous concealed and unconcealed cameras; he's never anywhere near the building. If the buyer wants to pay electronically (the method Daedalus prefers, and for which he gives a discount), the funds are transferred via the computer. If he wants to pay in cash, Daedalus remotely opens the safe furthest from desk, and the buyer places the money inside. The safe actually conceals a large pneumatic tube system that whisks the money away to a location where Daedalus can retrieve it safely. Once payment is confirmed, Daedalus remotely opens the other safe, which contains the goods.

Daedalus doesn't deal in ordinary street guns — anyone who wants one of those can get it from a hundred differently dealers on the street for far less than what Daedalus charges. What he sells are custom weapons — state-of-the-art firepower tailor-made for the buyer. His weapons cost a pretty penny, but everyone on the street has learned they're worth it. In many parts of the underworld, owning a Daedalus weapon has become something of a status symbol.

Daedalus gathers the information he wants about his weapons in two ways. First, he uses contacts in the law enforcement communities to get copies of autopsy and crime reports that mention his products. Second, he installs tiny computer chips in most of his weapons that record firing data and other particulars. If and when a customer brings a weapon back for repairs, modifications, or upgrades — as they often do — he downloads the performance data directly from the chip.

Daedalus's main laboratory/factory/workspace is well-concealed in one of his properties, and protected by multiple levels of elaborate security. Anyone trying to "contact" him directly without his knowledge and permission is likely to regret it... permanently.

Campaign Use: As one of the chief suppliers of ironmongery to the underworld, Daedalus justifies your supplying the criminals and villains in your campaign with whatever sort of devices you want them to have, no matter how advanced those devices happen to be. They don't even have to be weapons; he'll manufacture other gadgets as well, such as security systems or specialized thieving tools, if the price is right and/or the customer appeals to his intellectual vanity properly. For example, through a cover identity he supplies the crimefighter DarkAngel with most of her gear.

You shouldn't make Daedalus tougher — he's not a combatant. At most, give him a few Combat Skill Levels to represent his innate affinity for anything having to do with weapons. To weaken him, remove some of his Intellect Skill Levels, and/or reduce some of his Skill Rolls.

Daedalus doesn't Hunt people. He mostly just wants to be left alone to pursue his work, and extends the same courtesy to others — even people who bother him.

Daedalus has no criminal record. The HCPD and FBI both know someone's supplying criminals in Hudson City and elsewhere with advanced weaponry, but due to the strict security Daedalus maintains they've never tracked him down.

Appearance: Daedalus is a white male in his late 30s or early 40s. He's 5'10" tall and weighs about 190 pounds with a slight potbelly. His hair is dirty blonde, his eyes a watery grey-blue. He usually wears neatly-pressed men's shirts and pants with a labcoat; he's remarkably skilled at keeping his clothing from getting dirty while he works.

DAGGER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
17	CON	14	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
7	PD	3		Total: 7 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
34	END	0		
32	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 83**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
20	*Right Knifethrower Bracer:* RKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+½), Autofire (3 shots; +¼), 30 Charges (-¼); OIF (-½) [30]	
5	*Left Knifethrower Bracer:* Another Knifethrower Bracer (total of two) [30]	
	Martial Arts: Knifefighting	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Damage/Effect	
4	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
4	Dodge — +5 Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort	
4	Foist +2 +0 Weapon +4 DC Strike	
4	Slashes +0 +2 Weapon +4 DC Strike	
5	Stabs -2 +1 Weapon +6 DC Strike	
5	Thrusts +1 +3 Weapon +2 DC Strike	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)	
7	*Improved Fighting Techniques:* HA +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
3	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +3" (7" forward, 4" upward)	1

Perks

3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

9	Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)

Skills

12	+4 with Knives (HTH and Thrown)
8	+4 OCV with Knifethrower Bracers
12	Targeting Skill Levels: +4 versus Hit Location Penalties with All Attacks
3	Acrobatics 13-
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Climbing 13-
1	Contortionist 8-
1	Electronics 8-
3	Fast Draw (Knives And Knifethrower Bracers)13-
2	CK: Hudson City 11-
2	KS: Circuses And Circus Life 11-
3	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 12-
3	Lockpicking 13-
1	Mimicry 8-
2	PS: Instructor 11-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Sleight Of Hand 13-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 12-
1	Ventriloquism 8-
7	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Small Arms, Off Hand

Resource Points

12	Equipment Points: 120
20	Vehicle/Base Points: 50
15	Follower/Contact Points: 35
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 207
Total Cost: 290

100+ Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
15	DNPC: Ginger Sommers (girlfriend) 8- (Normal, Unaware of character's Social Limitation: Secret Identity)
20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: Card Shark 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Must Be The Leader (Common, Moderate)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with Copperhead and other costumed mercenaries)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Paul Frey) (Frequently, Major)
80	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 290

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Heavy Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	—	10	Carries two
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown; carries six

Armor
Armored Costume (DEF 4; OIF)

Gear: NVD Mask Lenses (Nightvision; OIF). Dagger rarely carries other gear — he prefers to travel light — but is smart enough to equip himself properly for a given mission if he has to.

Background/History: Paul Frey was born into a family of circus performers — his parents were acrobats, his uncle a magician, his aunt a bareback rider. Each one tried to get him interested in his or her particular act, but Paul didn't take to their particular talents. The performer he liked the best was Roderigo, the knife-thrower and sword-swallower. He pestered Roderigo to teach him the act, and Roderigo finally agreed. Paul proved to have a talent for knife-throwing and became a part of the show. Soon his skill eclipsed Roderigo's, making the old man bitter and jealous.

When he got older, Paul realized he could make more money with his talents outside the circus. Eager to get rid of his too-talented pupil, Roderigo encouraged Paul to "go out and make something of yourself." Paul ran away from the circus when he was 16 and hasn't seen any of his family since.

He made his way into the underworld, using his skill with knives to work as an enforcer and petty thief. His natural aggressiveness and intelligence brought him to the attention of Card Shark, who recruited him as a Deck agent. Paul took advantage of this opportunity to learn new skills and make contacts, but he constantly chafed under the rigid authority and discipline. To make matters worse, his boss, the Ace of Spades, preferred guns and considered Paul's skill with knives a "second-class" ability.

Paul finally got fed up and decided to leave. But he knew the Ace of Spades wasn't going to be the only person who thought guns were better than knives — he needed a "gimmick" to prove that blades could be as deadly as bullets. He got the idea to construct a "knife-throwing gun" that would make him a match for any gunman. He poked around in Card Shark's files until he found some plans for a similar device, stole the plans, and fled.

Paul spent a few months of hiding out and experimenting. A lot of money and several failed prototypes later, he built himself two "Knifethrower Bracers," each capable of firing small, aerodynamic, extremely sharp knife-blades as fast as a submachine gun could fire bullets. Christening himself Dagger, he began a career as a thief, enforcer, and petty gang leader. But Card Shark never forgave his betrayal, and continues to look for a way to get revenge on him to this day.

After several years on his own, Dagger was well on his way to becoming a minor crimelord, much like Charlemagne or Janus. But then he suffered serious injury during a fight with the HCPD after a botched bank robbery, and most of his gang was killed. Dagger escaped — barely — and made his way to the Kyphotic Man to get patched up. Now short on funds, he offered to pay for the treatments by teaching the Kyphotic Man's own gang how to fight better. Intrigued, the hunchbacked crime boss accepted, and Dagger entered a new phase of his career: criminal trainer. He still commits crimes on his own, and usually maintains a small gang, but he's spending more and more of his time teaching other members of the underworld the fine points of criminality.

Personality/Motivation: Dagger is a cut above your typical costumed criminal. He's not in it just for the thrills or the money (though those are important). He has the sort of drive and ambition most often found in Wall Street executives, lawyers, and career politicians, but he channels it into being a successful outlaw — a supremely-skilled thief, killer, and leader of gangs. He gladly takes short-term or single-job freelance contracts, but he doesn't want to work for anyone else in the long term. In any group situation, he wants to be in charge. If he's not giving the orders or making the important decisions, he's not happy, and sooner rather than later he'll take steps to change things so he's in charge.

Quote: "By the time I'm done with you people, you'll fight better, work together better, and be equipped with the skills you need to become more successful at your chosen career: crime. But if you don't do what you're told or try to cross me, you'll find out that I'm as sharp and deadly as my name. I'm the professor, you're the students, and don't forget it."

Powers/Tactics: Dagger is a skilled knifefighter and knife-thrower who's honed his abilities with countless hours of practice and numerous fights. During his time with the circus he picked up a variety of odd skills that he can use with varying degrees of proficiency: he's an agile acrobat and sleight-of-hand artist, for example, but only a moderately-talented ventriloquist and mimic.

DAGGER PLOT SEEDS

Dagger has a long-time girlfriend, Ginger Sommers, who doesn't know about his costumed criminal identity or what he does for a living (she thinks he's some sort of consultant). When she and many other people get taken hostage by PLRL terrorists, will the PCs accept Dagger's offer to help with the rescue operation? If not, will he go ahead on his own, possibly endangering the lives of the other hostages just to rescue her?

When Card Shark puts out a *major* bounty on his head, Dagger appeals to the PCs for protection, offering a lot of useful information about the underworld if they can (a) keep him alive, and (b) somehow convince Card Shark to call off the bounty.

Dagger decides to expand the scope of his "crime school" by recruiting other "professors." To do that, he arranges for hopeful applicants to perform a series of "tests" in the form of unusual crimes. The PCs have to figure out what's behind this odd crime spree and put a stop to it.

To keep himself on par with gunfighters, who can put a lot of lead in the air in just a few seconds, Dagger has his Knifethrower Bracers. As described above, they fire saboted blade projectiles at a high cyclic rate. The blades are sharp enough and travel fast enough to cut through many types of body armor. If his target wears heavier body armor, Dagger uses his Targeting Skill Levels to shoot at unarmored or lightly armored parts of the body.

In combat, Dagger relies on his Knifethrower Bracers at range, but often prefers to close to HTH Combat range and use his daggers and Knifefighting — he's found that a lot of people who are comfortable shooting at a distant target panic when the target starts slashing at them with a big blade. If necessary, he uses Sleight Of Hand to show off his fancy knife-work and perhaps gain a Surprise Move OCV bonus.

Whether fighting at range or HTH, Dagger often uses his acrobatic abilities to remain mobile and difficult to hit, and if possible to gain Surprise Move bonuses. If his foe lacks the ability to follow him, Dagger leaps up to a high position (such as a streetlight or ledge) and picks the guy off at his leisure.

Campaign Use: Dagger is a thief and sometimes crimelord with a twist. He usually has a small gang of hardened criminals at his beck and call, most of whom are "graduates" of his criminal training program. His "course," which is mostly taught at an isolated estate west of Benton County, covers basic combat skills (guns, knives, and unarmed fighting), basic criminal skills (stealthy movement, breaking and entering, money laundering), and group tactics and discipline. Advanced training programs are available if his employer desires. His role as "crime professor" is unique in the Hudson City underworld (though it dovetails with the services provided by the Human Capitalist, with whom he sometimes works; see *Dark Champions: The Animated Series,* page 53), so it's likely to bring him to the attention of the PCs sooner or later. They may learn about his work through underworld gossip, by encountering more and more street thugs who've received Dagger's training, or when they discover that some crimelord they considered a pushover in the past has gotten a *lot* better thanks to Dagger's instruction.

To make Dagger more powerful, give him another point of SPD and/or increase his Knifethrower Bracers to RKA 1½d6. To weaken him, reduce his STR and DEX to 18 and get rid of his Martial Arts.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

"All right, people, listen up! You know who I am, and you know why you're here. Over the next six weeks you're going to learn how to do the work you do better, pick up some new skills you've lacked up 'til now, and most importantly how to be more disciplined and professional. There are no guarantees in our line of work, but the closest you can come to one is to act like a pro, think like a pro, and work with others like a pro.

"Throughout the course we're going to stress teamwork and group tactics. Most of you don't pull jobs alone; you're part of a gang, or you work for someone. A group can be greater than the sum of its parts... if the people in the group know how to work as part of a team. By the time you're done here, you'll know how.

"We've only got a couple of rules here. First, no leaving the grounds at any time, or doing anything else that might expose the school. Second, no fighting. Third, my word is law. You obey every order I give when I give it. Anyone who violates these rules will be removed... permanently."

—Dagger's opening lecture to his latest class of students

As a Hunter, Dagger takes his time and does things right. He believes in preparation, so he studies the target as much as he can, possibly even following him to learn his routine. When he's ready, he strikes (preferably from ambush or surprise — he has no interest in "fighting fair" or the like).

The HCPD wants Dagger for four murders, nineteen attempted murders or aggravated assaults, and more than thirty robberies.

Appearance: Dagger is a muscular man, 6'2" tall with an athletic build. His costume is primarily navy blue, with a red triangular stripe running down the center of his chest, red belt and knee-length boots, red gloves, and a red full-face mask. His Knifethrower Bracers are silver, with the "barrel" assembly positioned on the narrow outer edge of each bracer, giving them a teardrop-shaped profile. He carries his two heavy combat daggers in sheaths on his belt, and his six smaller combat daggers in special sheaths on his lower arms (three per arm, with the hilts downward).

ALEXANDER DROOD
The Unfinished Man

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
16	CON	12	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
32	END	0		
30	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 93**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
41	*Man Of A Thousand Faces:* Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, and Touch Groups, any humanoid form), Imitation, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time (takes 1 Minute to change the shape of Drood's face; -¾)	0

Perks

5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
5 Money: Well Off

Talents

5 Eidetic Memory
3 Lightsleep

Skills

3 Acting 13-
3 Bribery 13-
3 Bugging 13-
3 Bureaucratics 13-
3 Computer Programming 13-
3 Conversation 13-
3 Deduction 13-
1 Disguise 8-
1 Electronics 8-
2 Forgery (Documents) 13-
3 High Society 13-
3 KS: The Business World 13-
3 KS: The Espionage World 13-
3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
2 KS: UMBRA 11-
3 Lockpicking 12-
1 Mechanics 8-
3 Mimicry 13-
3 Persuasion 13-
3 Security Systems 13-
3 Seduction 13-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
4 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Planes, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Linguist
1 1) Arabic (fluent conversation; English is Native)
1 2) French (fluent conversation)
1 3) German (fluent conversation)
1 4) Japanese (fluent conversation)
1 5) Mandarin Chinese (fluent conversation)
1 6) Russian (fluent conversation)
1 7) Spanish (fluent conversation)
3 Traveler
2 1) AK: Europe 13-
2 2) AK: South And Central America 13-
2 3) CK: Hong Kong 13-
2 4) CK: Hudson City 13-
2 5) CK: Moscow 13-
2 6) CK: New York City 13-
2 7) CK: Riyadh 13-
2 8) CK: Tokyo 13-

Resource Points

28 Equipment Points: 200
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
30 Follower/Contact Points: 65
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 231
Total Cost: 324

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: face changes shape due to impact or pressure (Easily Concealed; Causes Major Reaction [fear/disgust])
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: UMBRA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K Mk 23	+3	+9	2d6-1	1d6	12	10	Sil, FS, laser
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5

Armor
Usually none, though he may don light body armor if he has the time and knows he's about to get into a firefight

Gear: Drood usually carries a variety of equipment suitable for his current mission, often disguised so that it looks like an ordinary device. Examples include advanced lockpicking sets, nightvision devices, and various gadgets designed to foil security systems or make computer hacking easier.

15 Psychological Limitation: Self-Centered And Greedy (Common, Strong)
139 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 324

Background/History: "All right, what's next on the agenda?"

"The proposal for Project PLASTIC, sir."

"Get started, then. What's this PLASTIC about?"

"Sir, let me defer to Dr. Zawicki, who prepared the proposal based on your description of what you wanted."

"My description? This is the espionage project, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right, go ahead, Dr. Zawicki."

A short man, not as well-dressed as all the other people in the room, stepped into the light from the shadows at the back of the room. He walked to the empty seat at the end of the table. Quickly and efficiently he hooked a laptop into the room's AV feed and began his presentation, illustrating his points with graphics from the computer.

"The goal of Project PLASTIC is to create a spy with the ability to go anywhere and impersonate anyone without the need for time-consuming disguises. In accordance with the Chairman's specifications, R&D began investigating ways for an agent to alter his appearance at will. The result we dubbed Project PLASTIC.

"Briefly put, and in layman's terms, Project PLASTIC will surgically alter a carefully-selected subject to give the skin and bones of his face a "plastic" quality that allows them to be molded. In this manner the agent can change the "shape" of his facial features and thus disguise himself without the need for makeup, repeated plastic surgery, or other inconvenient methods.

"The doctors and scientists assigned to this proposal estimate that it will take approximately one year to locate a suitable subject, recruit him, perform the procedures, and train him to use his new "face." Estimated cost at this time is $50 million US. Are there any questions?" When none were forthcoming, he disconnected his laptop and left the room.

The Chairman sat at the head of the table, lost in thought. After a few minutes he spoke. "I will take this proposal to the others with regard to funding, but I do not anticipate its rejection. Tell Dr. Zawicki to proceed with his search for a suitable candidate. Next item."

****

Five months later.

"I need an update on PLASTIC. Please tell Dr. Zawicki to be in my office in fifteen minutes."

"Yes, sir."

Fifteen minutes later on the dot, there was a knock on the office door. Doctor Zawicki was shown in.

He cleared his throat. "You wanted a progress report on Project PLASTIC, sir?"

"Yes. How is it proceeding?"

"We're on schedule, sir. We obtained an excellent subject — a man named Alexander Drood. He was formerly an analyst with the CIA, but was fired for misappropriation of agency funds and other particulars. When we found him, he was bitter about the whole situation and running out of money, so despite some misgivings he eventually agreed to join the project. Right now we're in the middle of the series of surgical procedures."

"Can you explain to me what you're doing without my needing a medical degree to understand?

"Yes, sir. As you know, PLASTIC's goal is to alter the subject's face so that it can be re-shaped at will, allowing the subject to impersonate anyone or alter his appearance to avoid detection. Using special space-age plastics, biomaterials developed from stem cells, and other advanced materials developed by this corporation and other UMBRA affiliates, we have begun replacing the skin of his face, and to some extent the bone, with these materials. They have "memory" traits that keep them in a single shape until the subject changes that shape by molding the materials with his hands. We estimate the process of changing facial shape will take about one minute. It's not quite as good as what you see in the movies, but it still makes him virtually undetectable without fingerprinting or DNA analysis."

"How much longer will the rest of the project take?"

"We estimate another seven to nine months, sir."

"How about the subject — Drood. How is he holding up?"

"As well as expected, sir. Undergoing repeated surgeries of this sort is traumatic, of course, and alterations of the face can have psychological impact because of the strong association of face with identity. Part of the process involves psychological treatments after surgery to ensure that he retains a strong grip on his persona, thus minimizing the risk of his developing multiple personality disorder or related psychotraumas."

"Very well. I expect another report in two months."

"Yes, sir."

****

Eight months later.

"Mister Chairman, I'm pleased to present to you... Alexander Drood."

The man confronting the Chairman looked pretty ordinary: an average face with no distinguishing features, a trim build, typical business clothes. The eyes betrayed intelligence and perceptiveness, but also something the Chairman couldn't quite identify — malice? hatred? fear?

"All right, show me what he can do."

Without waiting for a specific order, Drood turned his back to the Chairman. For a minute he worked at his face with his hands. When he turned back around, his face was completely different: aquiline nose, sharp chin, high forehead. If he hadn't known better, the Chairman wouldn't have known the "two" men were the same.

"What about your hair?" the Chairman asked, addressing Drood directly for the first time.

"That I can't change, sir, but the color can be

altered with dye, and the style by any barber. Wigs are also an option."

"Can you change skin color — look like a black man, or a Hispanic?"

"Yes, sir, but the change would only cover my face. To convincingly disguise myself as a person of another race, I would need preparation time to dye the skin on the rest of my body."

"Can you imitate women?"

"Yes, sir, though I have to alter the shape of my body with regular disguise paraphernalia, and hide my Adam's apple with high-necked clothing or a scarf."

"Doctor Zawicki, are you satisfied with the results of Project PLASTIC?"

"Absolutely, sir. The process has worked perfectly."

"Very well. Schedule an appointment for Drood to meet with Operations. When the opportunity arises I'll introduce him to the rest of UMBRA. Work hard and work well, Drood — we're expecting good things from you."

"Yes, sir."

****

Thirteen months later.

"Next item... report on Operation Overdrive. What's the status, Mr. Coolidge?"

"Unfortunately, sir, Overdrive has hit a snag. It was proceeding as planned until agent Drood dropped out of sight and abandoned the mission."

"What happened? Was he killed?"

"Uncertain, sir. It's possible Drood has gone rogue. I've brought Dr. Zawicki in for further discussion." The short man stepped out of the shadows, just like he had over two years before.

"Well, Doctor, what's going on? Has your boy slipped his leash?"

"To be honest, sir — we don't know. In recent months he's shown increased detachment, disregard for human life, and irritability. Despite his psychological conditioning, which includes therapy between missions, it's possible the changes we made to him have subtly affected his psychology, rendering him more self-centered and less sympathetic to others."

"All right, here are your orders," the Chairman said, taking in everyone in the room with his glance. "I want *every effort* to be made to determine whether Drood is dead, captured, or rogue. If you think he's dead, I want positive proof of it, not just conjecture. If he's been captured, prepare a mission to free him with three options: no, slight, and total enemy casualties. If he's gone rogue, activate a hunter-killer squad to take him out — he knows too much about UMBRA for us to let him live."

"Yes, sir!"

Personality/Motivation: Since his defection from UMBRA, Alexander Drood — known in some circles as "the Unfinished Man" — has become a freelance spy (and sometimes assassin). With his unmatched ability to come and go as he pleases in secure areas, gather information without being questioned or detected, and leave a facility without anyone suspecting him of illicit activity, he's an ideal espionage agent. Corporations, crime groups, and intelligence agencies have all made use of his services. Even some factions of UMBRA have hired him from time to time; the more pragmatic members of the Union recognize both his value and the fact that he seems never to have revealed the organization's secrets (including the secret of its existence; see Chapter Two for more about UMBRA).

Drood comes across as the cool, consummate professional freelance operative, and in fact he usually behaves like one (particularly when he's on a mission). But beneath this facade he's a jumble of emotions and wants. His "facelessness" (as he calls it) has psychologically cut him off from the rest of humanity. He has little sympathy for others, seeing them as objects as much as people, and feels no remorse about killing, rape, or other crimes. When his antisocial personality and his subconscious desire to once again become part of humanity clash, he has a tendency to lash out, particularly at beautiful or handsome people.

Quote: "There are some things only I can face."

Powers/Tactics: Thanks to the special surgical procedures performed upon him by UMBRA doctors and scientists, Alexander Drood has the ability to mold his face, thus changing the shape of his features. This ability makes him a superb spy and infiltrator, but it's not without its restrictions. First, it takes him about a minute to change his facial appearance, and he needs a mirror and reference picture if he wants to make himself look like a spe-

ALEXANDER DROOD PLOT SEEDS

One of the PCs starts to think there's something funny about the new guy at work. He seems kind of nosy — maybe he needs to be checked out. The "new guy" is, of course, the Unfinished Man, who's infiltrated the PC's place of work to steal trade secrets. When he gets the chance, he'll assume the identity of a high-ranking employee, loot the database, and flee.

UMBRA wants to bring Drood entirely back into the fold. It begins manipulating the PCs, feeding them information so they interfere with every one of his assignments. The goal is to make him feel he has nowhere to turn but his former masters. Can the PCs figure out what's going on in time to decide what part they want to play in this puppet show?

A female PC, or popular NPC, becomes attracted to a mysterious man who recently entered her life. Is this a legitimate romance, or is Alexander Drood twisting her emotions for his own ends?

cific other person. Second, he can only change his face, not other parts of his head or body. Thus, his hair remains the same (but can be changed with dyes, styling, or wigs), his ears stay the same shape, and so forth. Third, he can change the color of his facial skin, but not the color of his skin anywhere else (again, that requires dye). Fourth, if his face experiences pressure or impact — such as a punch — it usually "deforms" to conform to the force (he can correct this problem as a Zero Phase Action; in a sense, he just "pops his face back into place"). Fifth, he can't alter his fingerprints or DNA, making him susceptible to detection using those methods.

Drood knows how to use a gun, but he's not a fighter — he'd rather flee than fight. However, he's interested in learning more about methods of assassination, and might seek out someone who could teach him.

Campaign Use: Drood makes an excellent indirect enemy for the PCs. He can't fight a group of them, but he'd make a great adversary for a paranoia/mystery scenario involving a one-on-one confrontation. He could also be a "spoiler" in one of their missions — he's on the scene pursuing his own agenda while they're trying to achieve their own goals. And while he won't Hunt the PCs himself, it's entirely possible that one of their enemies could hire him to uncover information about them or make their lives miserable.

To make Drood more powerful, give him the additional ability to alter his skin color throughout his body and to change his fingerprints and DNA (the *Cellular* Adder for Shape Shift). To weaken him, increase the Extra Time that it takes him to change facial shape.

Alexander Drood has a record with the CIA for various crimes and malfeasances, but that record isn't public knowledge.

Appearance: Alexander Drood is 5'9" tall with an average build. He no longer has a set facial appearance — from one minute to the next he can look like virtually anyone. He wears clothing appropriate to his current assignment; when not working he favors casual men's wear.

SHINING STAR

"You ever work in Hollywood, Mr. Blank?

"Not in the sense you mean. I've done work before in Los Angeles."

"Sure, but I mean, have you ever hung out with movie people? Particularly the women?"

"No."

"They're bitches, every !$&*%@# one of them. They wiggle their little asses everywhere they go, particularly if there's some director around, but they won't give you a taste. This bitch TiAnna from my latest movie's the worst I've ever seen."

"But surely a man of your appearance and fame has no trouble attracting women?"

"What do I have that dozens of other guys in this town don't? These women, they've all got their sights set higher than me. Well, TiAnna's not getting away with it. When she gets home from that party at Goldbach's tonight, I'm going to be waiting for her, and she's gonna give up a lot more than a taste. All I need is for you to be at the party, looking like me. That's all the alibi I need."

—doing a deal in the Hollywood hills

AHMAD "THE VULTURE" FARSWALI

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
28	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 74**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
5	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank: high-ranking member of the PLRL
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military
10	Money: Wealthy

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
1	Computer Programming 8-
3	Deduction 13-
3	Demolitions 13-
3	Disguise 13-
5	AK: The Middle East 15-
5	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 15-
3	KS: Palestinian And Middle Eastern Politics 13-
1	Language: English (basic conversation; Arabic is Native)
3	Oratory 12-
5	PS: Terrorist 15-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
2	Survival (Desert) 13-
3	Tactics 13-
4	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Planes, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
5	WF: Small Arms, Blades, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Resource Points

12	Equipment Points: 120
5	Vehicle/Base Points: 20
15	Follower/Contact Points: 35
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 126
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20	Hunted: Mossad 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20	Psychological Limitation: Fanatical Palestinian Terrorist (Common, Total)
15	Psychological Limitation: Likes To Directly Witness The Results Of His Actions (Common, Strong)
25	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

Background/History: When he was 8, he saw one of his brothers murdered by the Israelis during the intifada.

When he was 13, his other brother was crippled during a confrontation with the Israelis when a rock-throwing incident turned ugly and became a firefight.

When he was 16, Israeli soldiers raped his girlfriend — or so she said. He spit on her and cast her aside, unwilling to touch anything the Jews had fouled.

When he was 18, the PLRL — the Palestinian League for Retribution and Liberation — sent him to a training camp. When night fell, and the others left the shooting range and exercise yard to eat, he stayed on, practicing alone, driving himself beyond endurance to learn everything he could.

When he was 20, he killed his first Israeli soldier. The year after that, he blew up an Israeli convoy. The year after that, he masterminded a suicide bomber attack that destroyed a bus in Tel Aviv, killing over a dozen people.

Since then, Ahmad Farswali — known to the West as "the Vulture" for his ghoulish desire to see the results of his actions first-hand — has become one of the most-wanted Palestinian terrorists in existence. Personally responsible for nearly a hundred murders, and implicated in the planning of several major terrorist attacks aimed at United States targets that the FBI ultimately foiled, he's one of America's deadliest enemies.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Steyr SPP	+1	+1	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	11	
Spectre M4	+1	+1	1d6+1	1d6-1	50	13	AF5
Steyr AUG	+1	+2	2d6	1d6	30	12	AF5, FS, 2H

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Desert survival gear, explosives and bomb-making materials (if appropriate), grenades (if appropriate)

AHMAD FARSWALI PLOT SEEDS

The Department of Homeland Security learns that Farswali plans an attack on a prominent target in Hudson City. Since the PCs know the Hudson City underworld and territory better than anyone, the government arranges for them to help stop him... even if they don't want to get involved.

A friend or loved one of one of the PCs is hurt or killed in a terrorist incident that allegedly involves the Vulture. Since the government seems unable to capture him, it's up to the PCs to take a hand in the matter and put a stop to him.

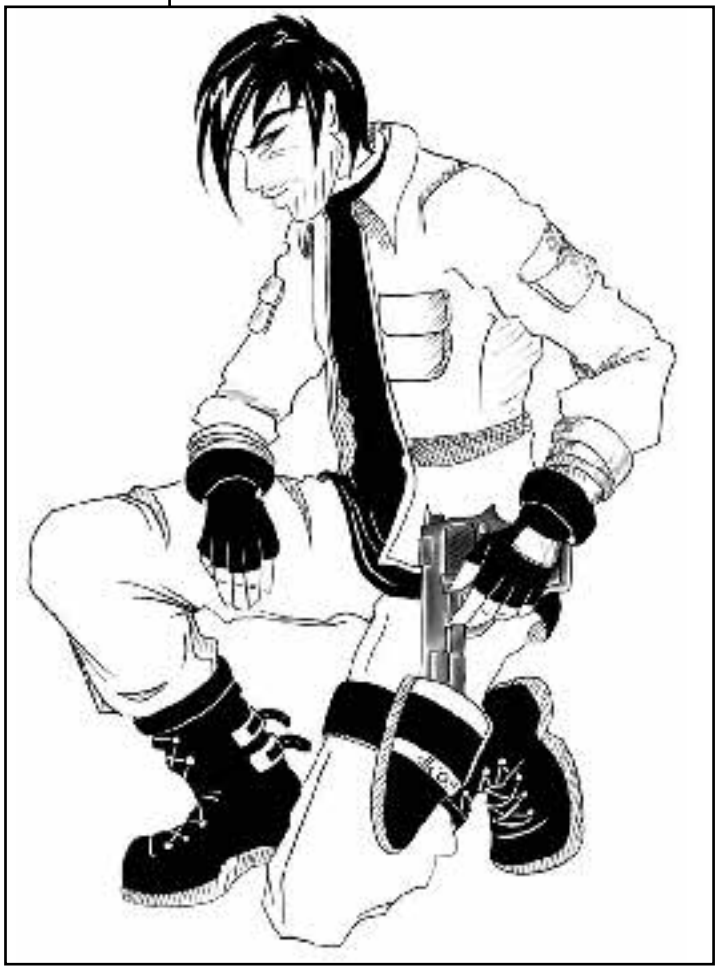
A PC sees a Middle Eastern man on the street in Hudson City. He looks like he *might* be Ahmad Farswali (though the PC won't know that at first, unless he makes a really good KS: Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World roll). Now the PCs have to find this person, ascertain his identity, and if necessary stop whatever terrorist plot has been hatched.

Personality/Motivation: Like his fellow PLRL members and terrorists in other organizations, Farswali is a fanatical Palestinian patriot who yearns for the destruction of the nation of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state. He bitterly hates the United States for its support of Israel, interference in Muslim affairs, and sinfulness, and would gladly destroy it as well. He likes to witness the end result of his terrorist missions first-hand; when possible, he lurks in the crowd after the disaster to see the blood and hear the lamentations. This habit will almost certainly prove his undoing; the authorities have already learned to start looking for him closely in the crowds.

When not on a mission, the Vulture is usually either (a) planning one, or (b) helping the Palestinian people. He frequently volunteers his time to help orphans whose parents were murdered by the Israelis, distribute food and clothing to poor Palestinians, and the like. He's not married himself, but dotes on his nieces and nephews.

Quote: <<"The time of Western domination has ended! The Palestinian people can at last speak for themselves, and they say: death to Israel! Death to America!">>

Powers/Tactics: Farswali is a terrorist. Open confrontation is the furthest thing from his mind; he knows the Israeli and American militaries are more powerful than he, or than the entire PLRL. He strikes from the shadows, killing both soldiers and innocents in an effort to show the invaders and occupiers of the Palestinians' rightful land that the cost of remaining there is too high. He hopes to go further afield soon and strike directly at the United States, but such an operation takes time and careful planning.



Campaign Use: Farswali is a typical terrorist, and as such richly deserves capture if not death. However, you may get more mileage out of him as a character if you can arrange for the PCs to see the other side of him — the man who genuinely cares about his people in ways that have nothing to do with guns and bombs. For a real twist of moral relativism, find a way to team them up against a common enemy.

To make the Vulture a tougher opponent, increase his Characteristics so that he's a better combat opponent for the PCs. You could also give him abilities that would make him an assassin, such as Martial Arts or a knowledge of poisons. To weaken him, reduce his Characteristics (including INT to 13 and DEX to 14) and some of his Skill rolls.

Farswali does not Hunt heroes — he has his own quest to pursue. But if a character has strong ties to Israel, or repeatedly foils his terrorist missions, he may take it upon himself to remove that particular obstacle to Palestinian sovereignty.

Farswali is wanted by Israeli and American authorities for nearly a hundred murders committed during numerous terrorist acts.

Appearance: Ahmad Farswali is an average-looking Palestinian man in his 20s — 5'8" tall, thinly built, dusky skin, dark hair and moustache. He wears dirty, sand-colored combat fatigues most of the time, and carries at least two guns with him everywhere he goes.

SIGHTSEEING

It was a beautiful sight.

The bomber had done his job perfectly. He'd made it to the middle of the bus, just as he'd been instructed, before detonating the bomb. Allah would reward the man's sacrifice well, and the PLRL would honor him in this world by providing for his wife and children.

The blast had torn the bus in two, killing three people on the street with shrapnel and damaging several buildings nearby. He hadn't heard how many people on the bus had died, but he suspected nearly a dozen. The smell of the burning rubber and oil, the scarlet of the blood, the sounds of Israeli women wailing their grief — it was like a feast for his senses.

He knew the authorities were probably watching the crowd for him, suspecting that he might be here... but who among them, fools that they were, would suspect a rabbi? As long as no one tried to speak to him — he knew only a few words of Hebrew, not enough to carry on a conversation — he'd get away again.

Smiling slightly to himself, no more than the false beard would hide, he turned and left the scene.

—the Vulture earns his nickname once more

FIREBUG

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
12	PRE	2	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
10	ED	9		Total: 10 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
22	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 36**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
8	*Pyrokinesis:* RKA 1 point, Continuous (+1), Penetrating (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Sticky (only affects flammables; +¼), Uncontrolled (fire ends when it runs out of fuel or oxygen, or someone extinguishes the flames; +½); Extra Time (Extra Phase; -¾), No Range (-½)	0
2	*Pyrokinetic Reflex Attack:* Remove Extra Time (-¾) from Pyrokinesis and change No Range (-½) to Limited Range (5"; -¼); Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½), Only When Firebug Is Terrified Or Fears For His Life (-1)	4
15	*Pyrokinetic Manipulation:* Telekinesis (30 "STR"); Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½), No Range (-½), Only Works On Fire (-1)	8
20	*Pyrokinetic Defense Reflex:* Armor (16 ED), Hardened (+¼); Only Works Against Limited Type Of Attack (fire; -½)	0
2	*Can Take The Heat:* Life Support (Safe Environment: Intense Heat)	0

Perks

3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Skills

12	+6 OCV with Pyrokinesis
2	KS: Arson/Explosion Investigation 11-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Streetwise 11-
2	WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
0	Vehicle/Base Points: 10
0	Follower/Contact Points: 5
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 72
Total Cost: 108

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: HCFD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20	Psychological Limitation: Pyromaniac (Common, Total)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with other arsonists)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Vincent "Iggy" Ignatius) (Frequently, Major)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)

Total Disadvantage Points: 170

Background/History: "Is it alive, Mommy?"

"No, baby, it's just a fire."

He reached for the candle, wanting to feel the bright, dancing thing, but she quickly slapped his hand away. "Don't touch that! Are you stupid, boy? I told you, it's *fire.* It hurts when you touch it — it burns you."

He cried, wanting it.

****

He ran far away and hid in the old burned-out gas station on the corner. The other kids wouldn't find him there. They wanted to take away his lighter, the one he stole from the QuickCorner last week. They all thought he was a freak. He just wanted to be left alone.

He couldn't hear them anymore. He took a stub of candle out of his pocket, and the lighter. He clicked it on, watching the flame appear magically and hover there on its end. He was just about to light the candle when he heard a shout: "There he is!"

Before he could run, they came crashing in. One of them kicked him before he could get up. He curled into a ball and waited until they stopped. He only struggled when someone pried open his hand to take the lighter, but they hit him some more and he lay still. He watched through teary eyes as one of them lit a cigarette with his lighter. Then they left, laughing and joking.

At least they didn't get the candle. He sat up carefully, wiped off his face, cleaned up the blood from his nose. He put the candle back on the ground. If only he could light it by touching it! Then they could have all the lighters they wanted. Wistfully, he touched the wick...

...and the candle lit!

He was so surprised he jerked his hand away like he'd been burned (though he never had been, somehow). *Did I do that? Only one way to find out.* He got up, walked over to the corner where some homeless guy had left a Burger Monster wrapper. He touched it.

Nothing happened.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
CZ 75	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	15	9	

Armor
None

Gear: None.

FIREBUG PLOT SEEDS

One of the PCs' favorite nightspots goes up in flames. It looks like an accident — but there were rumors around the place that it wasn't doing well and the owner was looking for a way out. Could the fire be a coincidence, or did the owner hire Firebug to take care of his problems?

After examining photos taken at the scenes of several suspicious fires, the PCs see the same person lurking in the background at each blaze. Is he the arsonist... and if so, how do they find him before he torches another building?

Firebug reads about the Cuyahoga River catching fire back in the Seventies and decides it would be interesting to try to recreate that "event" on the Stewart River. Now he just has to figure out a way to spill enough flammable materials into the water....

POETRY CORNER

Fire, Fire, burning bright
In the canyons of the night
What immortal hand or eye
Made you so you light the sky?

Fire, Fire, burning bright
Quench your endless appetite
In my mind I dare aspire
To lift my hands and touch you, Fire

—from a poem found at the scene of one of Firebug's arsons, thought by the authorities to have been written by the arsonist

He touched it again. Thought *hard.* Wished *hard.* And the paper burst into flame!

He danced and danced and danced for joy.

Later that night he found the kids who stole his lighter. They were in the old building they called their clubhouse, passed out from cheap wine and grass. First he fished his lighter out from the pocket of the guy who stole it from him. Then he got out the bottle of lighter fluid he stole from the StarMart. He squirted it all over the guy. Then he touched the guy's fluid-wet shirt and thought *hard.* And the boy burst into flames.

He ran far away... but not so far he couldn't hear the screams.

****

"You understand what we want?" the two men asked. They dressed like businessmen, but they carried themselves like street soldiers.

He nodded. He already had a record for arson. Word was getting around.

"Okay, then. You gotta week. Meet us back here then for the cash."

One week later, he came back. It hadn't been a hard job at all — and this time he didn't leave any accelerants for the cops to trace.

The two men showed up. One of them gave him a briefcase; it was heavy. "Nice work, man," the other one said. "They don't suspect a thing. We'll get in touch the next time we need some work — you're gonna go a long way in this business if you don't get stupid."

Personality/Motivation: Practically enraptured with flames and burning, Firebug is a classic criminal pyromaniac. He thinks of fire almost as a living thing. When he talks about it, it's *Fire,* with a capital F, like the He when the Bible refers to God. Usually quiet and withdrawn, he spends a lot of his time just staring at candleflames or hearth-fires. But when he takes it into his head to burn something, he becomes clever and crafty, a skilled planner who would do a good job even if he used normal arsonist tools. In the presence of a large fire — a bonfire or burning building — he often becomes giddy and excited, maybe even dancing around a little if he thinks no one will see. He's learned to control himself if there are cops or firefighters around; he doesn't want to give himself away and go to prison.

Firebug's been picked on, abused, and ignored by other people all his life, and as a result he doesn't really care about others at all. He rarely goes out of his way to hurt anyone, but he doesn't get upset if someone dies in one of his fires, either.

Quote: "Time to get fired up."

Powers/Tactics: Firebug is a pyrokinetic — a person who can create and control fire with the power of his mind. By touching something flammable and concentrating for several seconds, he can make it catch fire. You may want to increase the Extra Time for targets that aren't very flammable, and decrease it for things like pieces of paper that are highly flammable, but at a minimum his Pyrokinesis should take a Full Phase to use. In times of stress — such as when a vigilante's about to catch him — he can lash out and use his power quickly and at range, but this doesn't occur often and he can't control it.

Besides setting fires, Firebug can't suffer burns from them; his powers keep the flames from hurting him, allowing him to touch them or set himself on fire with impunity. He can even control and shape small masses of flame with his mind, though doing so tires him out quickly. In game terms, his Pyrokinetic Manipulations allows him to "pick up" masses of flame doing up to 6 Damage Classes' worth of damage. He can move the flame around without causing it to go out, and can "touch" targets with it to inflict damage (which "uses up" the flame, extinguishing it). He can also shape the fire into simple forms, such as geometric shapes, a bird of flame, or the like.

Firebug doesn't want to fight — he just wants to set fires. If caught in an act of arson, he'll try to run away (maybe even straight *into* a burning building, since the flames won't hurt him). If he can't run away he'll surrender and try to find a way to escape later.

Campaign Use: Firebug pushes the limits of the sort of "weird" powers allowable in most *Dark Champions* campaigns. If he doesn't fit the tone of your campaign, change his powers so they're not innate, but the result of special chemical concoctions, magic tricks, or the like.

The heroes aren't likely to encounter Firebug in combat — instead, they'll see the effects of his handiwork and have to track him down. Since he leaves few (if any) forensic traces most of the time, catching him is likely to require a long, frustrating investigation punctuated by lucky breaks.

To make Firebug more powerful, reduce the Extra Time on his Pyrokinesis attack, make it do more damage, and/or allow it to work at short ranges (within 5", perhaps). You could also equip him with some incendiary grenades, a flamethrower, or similar weapons. To weaken him, increase the Extra Time on his powers and get rid of his Pyrokinetic Manipulations ability.

Firebug doesn't Hunt people. He's only interested in starting and enjoying fires.

Vincent Ignatius has a long record for minor acts of arson as a juvenile and young adult. Since gaining his powers, he's rarely been caught, because he doesn't have to use accelerants or the like unless he just feels like it.

Appearance: Firebug is a pasty-faced white guy in his mid-to-late 20s with unruly black hair and perpetual five o'clock shadow. He's 5'7" tall and thin, weighing only 140 pounds. He wears ordinary street clothes, supplemented with a black leather jacket in cold weather. In the presence of fire, even a lit candle, he usually stares at the fire with a rapturous look on his face.

FUSILLADE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
19	CON	18	13-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
38	END	0		
40	STUN	7	**Total Characteristics Cost: 80**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
33	*Flechette Autocannon:* RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+½), Autofire (10 shots; +1), Increased Maximum Range (3,500", or about 4 miles; +¼), 500 Charges (+1); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), STR Minimum (18, STR Minimum Doesn't Add Damage; -1½), Two-Handed (-½), Real Weapon (-¼)	[500]

Perks

5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Skills

4	+2 OCV with Flechette Autocannon
10	*Machine Gunner From Hell:* +4 OCV with Autofire Firearms; Only Apply When Character Uses Autofire Against A Single Target (-¼), Must Use Maximum Number Of Autofire Shots (-¼), Not While Targeting (-½)
5	Accurate Sprayfire
3	Combat Driving 12-
5	Concentrated Sprayfire
2	KS: Hudson City Underworld 11-
5	Skipover Sprayfire
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades
1	Weaponsmith (Firearms) 8-

Resource Points

20	Equipment Points: 160
5	Vehicle/Base Points: 20
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 120
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20	Enraged: if insulted, taunted, belittled, or made to look a fool (Common), go 8-, recover 8-
20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: The Arsenal 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with the Arsenal and other similar mercenaries)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
10	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

Background/History: "Hey, Big Gun Charlie!"

Charlie winced. He'd been in the Stew for five years; weren't they *ever* gonna let him live that down? It wasn't his fault his fingers were too thick and clumsy to fit in the trigger guards of most pistols. It'd been enough of a joke when he was on the street pulling robberies and hijackings, but after the cops caught him because he couldn't fire his gun quick enough, some asshole turned it into a nickname.

It was his first night out, so he wasn't gonna get sore about one crack — it felt too good to be free. But the night went on and on and no one would shut about it. Finally he couldn't take anymore. When Falcone began telling the story of how the cops caught him, he got up, picked up a chair, and smashed Falcone right across his big mouth. Then he moved on to the others. He was done and out of there before the cops could arrive.

And now he had a plan, too. *Big Gun Charlie, huh? I'll show them a big gun, if that's what they want to see!*

****

"Are you ready to make payment?" the electronic voice said, coming out of the computer speakers in a dull monotone.

"Sure."

"Do you still intend to pay electronically?"

"Yes, I've got an account all set up."

"All right, the standard 10% deduction for electronic payment will be noted. Please sit down at the computer and initiate a wire transfer to this account." A number appeared on the screen in big red numerals.

Charlie did as he was told. He'd learned a little about computers inside — enough to know how to make a wire transfer, anyway. In a minute he was done.

The computer hummed and whirred for a few seconds, and then the voice spoke again. "Payment accepted and verified." There was a CLICK, and the door on the second safe popped open.

Charlie opened it all the way and looked inside. He saw just what he'd ordered: a gun so big no one would ever make fun of him again. It was a gleaming, high-tech wonder, with three barrels like one of those helicopter-mounted guns you saw on TV shows about Vietnam, but small and light enough for a man to carry. There was a belt with power packs and a backpack for ammo, too.

Charlie pulled it all out and shut the safe door. "Satisfied?" the computer voice said.

QUIET TIME

They always paid attention to him when he was at home.

He wasn't home much, unfortunately — not as much as he'd like, anyway. Work required a lot of travel. It had taken a lot of time and money to set the place up so they could take care of themselves while he was away, but it was worth it. Letting someone in here to look after them when he was out of town wasn't an acceptable option.

So here he was, polishing the outside of the Autocannon, cleaning the barrel, making sure everything was spotless and perfectly oiled, greased, or fit. And there they were, seated on the couch, eyes on his every move, as if he were just about to throw them some treats. They looked kind of funny side-by-side — the big, black Rottweiller and the little tan-and-white Pomeranian — but he knew the Pom was tougher than it looked.

He held up the Autocannon. "Whaddaya think, guys? Look clean enough to you." The Pom nodded, so he set the gun aside. "Okay, who's ready for a walk?" They both barked at once and ran off to get their leashes.

—downtime at the Fusillade household

FUSILLADE PLOT SEEDS

Fusillade wants revenge on a PC for some reason (maybe the PC humiliated him in combat, or got him arrested, or just plain outshot him). He orchestrates a crime spree in areas where the PCs have been known to fight crime so he can ambush them.

A mysterious employer hires Fusillade for some merc work in central Africa. But he soon has second thoughts — he gets the impression there's more going on than bush warfare. He approaches the PCs and asks for their help to shut the op down.

Fusillade decides he wants to upgrade his gun and get some more weapons from Daedalus. The PCs have to stop his crime spree before he has enough money to turn himself into a one-man army.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt M1911A	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the head; also provides Sight and Hearing Group Flash Defense [8 points])

Gear: Typically Fusillade doesn't carry any extra gear, unless his employer issues him some (*e.g.,* night-vision goggles)

"Oh, yeah."

"I'll bet you can create quite a fusillade with that weapon."

Fusillade, huh?

Personality/Motivation: The first impression people get when meeting Fusillade is of a big, loud, abusive, crude, violent man. He is those things, but he's not the mindless thug or stupid oaf most people take him for. He's no Nobel Prize winner, but he's smart enough to survive on the streets and know a good opportunity when he sees it.

Fusillade doesn't really follow any sort of "mercenaries' code." He doesn't go out of his way to screw his employers — in fact, he usually serves them loyally — but he's most interested in looking out for number one. But oddly enough, he has a soft spot for dogs. Big or small, he loves 'em all, and would never think of harming one. Twice he's fled the scene of a fight when he found out he'd accidentally shot a dog.

Quote: "I'm gonna show you what *real* firepower is!"

Powers/Tactics: Fusillade isn't given to subtlety or stealthy tactics. He favors powerful, all-out assaults and slugging it out man-to-man. His weapon of preference is his Flechette Autocannon, an enormous gun with three rotating barrels that fires large flechette rounds capable of cutting through body armor, cars, and walls. It's so big he needs two hands to hold and operate it; he usually braces it against his chest when firing. A series of six power-packs worn on a belt provides power to the gun via a flexible metallic cable; he carries 500 rounds of ammunition in a specially-designed backpack that connects to the gun with an ammo belt.

If deprived of his gun, Fusillade either tries to obtain another large gun, uses his sidearm, or closes to hand-to-hand range for brawling or a little knife work. Vigilantes who expect him to turn tail and run when he can't use the autocannon are in for a surprise; he likes using the big gun, but isn't physically or psychologically dependent on it.

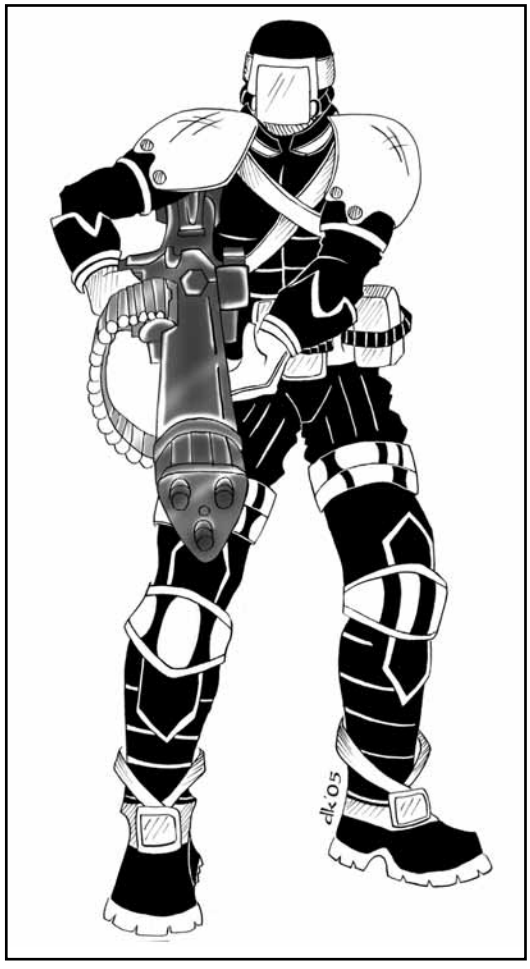
Campaign Use: Fusillade is useful as a combat monster, pure and simple. He makes an excellent partner for criminals who have more subtlety or intelligence but who need his firepower to pull off some job or keep vigilantes off their backs. His animosity with the Arsenal (who feel Fusillade's stealing their "schtick") may also provide plot fodder.

To make Fusillade more powerful, make him less of a one-trick pony. Give him some other big guns or weapons so he still presents a major threat even if he loses one of them. To weaken him, reduce the Autocannon to RKA 2d6 or 1½d6.

As a Hunter, Fusillade tends to come after his target directly and brutally. Typically he ambushes the target and hoses him down with flechettes until there's nothing left but a bloody pulp.

Charlie Tarleton has a lengthy criminal record for assault, robbery, murder, and assorted other offenses. The cops haven't yet realized that he's Fusillade, but it's only a matter of time.

Appearance: Charlie Tarleton is a 6'0", 210 pound, blonde, greenish-grey-eyed, broad-shouldered man with well-developed muscles. As Fusillade he wears a suit of Army green heavy body armor with a helmet that has a one-way faceplate that hides his features. His heavy belt holds the power packs for his Autocannon (a high-tech, three-barreled monstrosity requiring two hands to hold and fire), and he wears a special hardshell backpack to hold the ammo (which feeds to the Autocannon via an ammo belt). When he's not using the Autocannon, he usually carries it by bracing it on his right shoulder.



DR. RODIN GRIMM

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 57**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
1	*The Obsessive's Drive:* Life Support (Diminished Sleeping: only needs about twenty hours of sleep a week)	

Perks

1	Fringe Benefit: License to Practice Medicine
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
12	Money: Wealthy
2	Reputation: brilliant plastic surgeon (in the United States) 8-, +2/+2d6

Skills

3	Conversation 13-
3	Criminology 13-
5	Forensic Medicine 14-
3	High Society 13-
3	Paramedics 13-
3	PS: Doctor 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Stealth 12-
1	Streetwise 8-
3	Scientist
2	1) SS: Biology 13-
2	2) SS: Chemistry 13-
2	3) SS: Human Anatomy 13-
4	4) SS: Medicine 15-
2	5) SS: Plastic Surgery 13-
2	6) SS: Psychology 13-
2	7) SS: Surgery 13-

Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
20	Vehicle/Base Points: 50
5	Follower/Contact Points: 15
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 90
Total Cost: 147

100+ Disadvantages

20	Psychological Limitation: Views Humanity As Disgusting, Ugly, Stupid, And Pathetic — A Thing Of Pity To Be Remade, His Own Little Puppet Theater (Common, Total)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (pretends to be a normal, well-respected doctor, when he's really a twisted mutilator) (Frequently, Major)
12	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 147

Background/History: An excerpt from the journal of Rodin Bradford Grimm:

It's amazing, really, how predictable my life has been — up to a point, anyway. Anyone with even half a brain could have told you what I'd do. Given that Father and Mother are both accomplished physicians, it's only natural I'd be capable of the best of the best — Choate, Harvard undergrad, Harvard Medical School — and that they'd have the money to grant me access to those institutions. And it's only natural I'd soon become quite famous and wealthy in my own right thanks to my virtually predestined skill in medicine.

What I don't think anyone would have predicted is my specialty: plastic surgery. Many clods have asked me at parties what prompted me to go into such a field when there are lives to save, diseases to conquer — when, as they put it, "I have so much to contribute to humanity." Why we suffer such sentimental idiots to live, I do not know; Heaven only

DR. GRIMM PLOT SEEDS

Using disguises, Dr. Grimm passes himself off as several other plastic surgeons and turns an entire day's schedule of operations at Everett Memorial Hospital into a cavalcade of horrors. The PCs have to figure out who committed these bizarre assaults and bring him to justice.

Doctor Grimm and the Cainite decide to have a contest to see who can display the most grotesque creativity in mutilating someone. The mutilation must be non-fatal and must not significantly cripple the victim — he has to be able to live and function with his deformity. Ready, set, go!

The PCs find Dr. Grimm's latest victim, abandoned in the street. They have to help the poor woman back to physical and mental health so she can provide them with the information they need to track Grimm down.

knows I've done my fair share to silence them.

Why can't any of them see? *What makes them so blind to their own ugliness and stupidity? How can they tolerate themselves? What stays their hands from suicide?*

Perhaps my vision of the world is as much a curse as it is a blessing. It is a hard, hard thing to be so alone, to be the only one who sees *things with utter clarity. The constant urging, the fire in my brain that forces me onward, would burn out any lesser man.*

To work! My demons will not let me rest. The world is in more need of my ministrations than ever.

Personality/Motivation: Superficially, Dr. Rodin Bradford Grimm seems to have it all. Descended from settlers who came over on the *Mayflower,* a family whose every member for generations has been wealthy, gifted, and successful, he is a world-renowned plastic surgeon whose work has brought joy to countless people.

But Dr. Grimm is not exceptional only in beneficial ways. All of his life he has seen things... differently. Although he maintains a facade of normality and courtesy, he perceives the world as a horrid, idiotic, banal place far beneath someone as elevated as he. The people around him are dull and ugly, fit only as a tablet on which he can write as he wills. He views them not with arrogance, but rather, with the sort of condescending pity a puppeteer might feel for his pathetic puppets. He sees people and things as *wrong,* misshapen, wasted. He deludes himself that he's devoted his life to correcting this "problem" for the good of mankind. But the subconscious truth is that he views the world as a sort of vast stage on which he strides like an Olivier, doing as he will to enrich the cattle around him. He is a twisted healer who takes good people and makes monsters of them.

Quote: "That's all right, ma'am — we'll soon set you to rights."

Powers/Tactics: Dr. Grimm is an extremely gifted, creative surgeon known the world over for his brilliant work in the field of plastic surgery. But that's just his day job. At other times, he takes out his insanity on the world in a most gruesome fashion. One by one, he finds likely subjects (often beautiful women), kidnaps them with the help of some ether or sodium pentothal, and takes them back to his office. There he operates on them to bring out their "true appearance." He artificially inflicts scars, removes organs and bones, excises or alters "useless" bits of anatomy. Invariably Dr. Grimm's victims lose parts of their body — limbs, breasts, sensory organs, tongues, digits, whatever he feels inclined to take. When he has completed his work (it never takes more than an evening, given his skill and speed), he drops his victims off any place where others will find them, always taking care to ensure that no one can trace them back to him. Most of them end up losing their minds as a result of his "ministrations."

Some of his more "inspired" creations include:

- a woman whose ribcage he partly replaced with an oddly-shaped network of bony struts, such that her entire torso became twisted and distorted; she cannot sleep or walk in comfort.
- a man whose skin was stretched so tightly over his body that if he moves he runs the risk of splitting it open.
- a woman whose right arm and left leg were entirely amputated, and her left arm and right leg amputated at the elbow/knee. The fully amputated arm and leg were then used to "repair" the partially amputated limbs, such that the woman now has a right hand on her extra-long left arm and a left foot on her extra-long right leg.
- a man from whom he removed all of the facial protuberances (nose, ears, and so on) and then used skin and muscle grafts to try to make his head as spherical and featureless as possible.

If anyone attempts to stop or apprehend him, Dr. Grimm flees; if he cannot escape, or it would be dangerous to try, he surrenders. He will protest his innocence to the very end, claiming he did it all for the good of the world. Few if any of his victims retain the mental stability necessary to confront him in court.

Campaign Use: In dramatic terms, Dr. Grimm is something like a serial killer — except that he mutilates in bizarre ways instead of killing. Unfortunately for the PCs, he doesn't pick his victims based on any sort of pattern or theme, so tracking him down will probably prove difficult.

If one of the PCs is wealthy, or a part of the medical community, he might know Dr. Grimm socially. If that's the case, be sure to work Grimm into the campaign as a friendly NPC before you use him in his true role; that will make his emergence all the more shocking.

Doctor Grimm works alone, since no one can appreciate his vision of the world. If you want to give him some Followers, he can kidnap thugs off the street, brainwash them with drugs, and then operate on them to make them big, hideous, and very strong.

Doctor Grimm isn't supposed to be powerful or tough, so you probably don't need to improve him any (at most, maybe add a point of SPD or a few points of DEX). On the other hand, he probably doesn't need to be weakened either, though you could reduce his medical Skill rolls so he's more likely to botch operations and kill his "patients."

Grimm wouldn't Hunt characters. If he sees someone he thinks should be one of his subjects, he'll arrange to kidnap that person, but it's highly unlikely he'd develop an ongoing adversarial relationship with a PC.

Rodin Grimm has no criminal record.

Appearance: Dr. Rodin Grimm is an extremely handsome man in his mid-thirties, with brown hair and dark eyes. He dresses impeccably, and looks for all the world like nothing more than what most people think he is: a successful, prosperous physician.

GUNPLAY

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
11	COM	1	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 9 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
30	STUN	1	**Total Characteristics Cost: 118**	

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers	END
70	*Shooting Tricks:* Variable Power Pool, 40 pool + 20 control cost, Cosmic (+2); Only For Shooting Trick Super-Skills And Like Abilities (-1)	var
	Martial Arts: Kajutsu	
	Maneuver OCV/DCV Rng Damage/Effect	
4	Accurate Shot +2/+0 +0 Weapon +4 DC	
4	Defensive Shot +0/+2 +0 Weapon +4 DC	
3	Diving Shot +0/+2 +1 Weapon +4 DC, Half Move Required, You Fall	
5	Far Shot +1/-1 +4 Weapon +4 DC	
3	Leg Shot +0/ -1 +0 Weapon +4 DC, Throw	
4	Offensive Shot -1/-1 +0 Weapon +8 DC	
4	Trained Shot +0/+0 +2 Weapon +6 DC	
16	+4 Damage Classes (already added in)	
10	*HTH Combat Techniques:* HA +3d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
3	*Gun Muscle:* +10 STR; Only To Meet STR Modifier For Using Firearms (-2)	1
2	*Fast:* Running +1" (7" total)	1
7	*Combat Running:* Running +7"; Only To Make Half Moves In Combat (-1)	2
2	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward)	1
2	*Combat Leaping:* Leaping +5"; Only To Make Half Moves In Combat (-1)	1

Perks

5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
20	Deadly Blow: RKA +2d6 with All Firearms

Skills

18	+6 with Firearms
12	Range Skill Levels: +6 versus Range Modifier with Firearms
8	Targeting Skill Levels: +4 versus Hit Location modifiers with Firearms
10	+2 DCV
5	Accurate Sprayfire
3	Analyze Combat Technique 13-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Concealment 13-
5	Concentrated Sprayfire
5	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 14-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 13-
2	KS: The Espionage World 11-
4	KS: Firearms 14-
2	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
3	Language: English (completely fluent; Spanish is Native)
3	Paramedics 13-
13	Power: Shooting Tricks 18-
5	Rapid Attack (Ranged)
5	Rapid Autofire
5	Skipover Sprayfire
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
6	Transport Familiarity: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Two-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Handgun	+6	+9	2d6+2	1d6+1	15	10	Reversed ogive, AP, laser, PR, barrel coating, clear grips/magazine, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, improved trigger, carries 2 with five clips each in a rapid reloading device (see text)
SMG	+6	+9	2d6+2	1d6	40	10	AF5, laser, PR, barrel coating, clear grips/magazine, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, improved trigger, carries 4 clips in two rapid reloading devices
Assault Rifle	+4	+4	2d6+1	1d6	80	10	AF5, PR, barrel coating, clear grips/magazine, custom grips, fine tuning improved bedding, II, improved firing pin, improved range II, improved trigger, carries 2 clips

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 for Head)

Gear: Silencers (-3) for Handguns and SMG, fast draw holsters for Handguns, camera for Assault Rifle, telescopic sight (x6) for Assault Rifle, nightsight scope (III) for Assault Rifle, rapid reload device for Handguns attached to leg armor (see text), communications suite (HRRP built into Helmet)

GUNPLAY PLOT SEEDS

The Army figures out where Gunplay learned his fighting abilities and decides Dr. Langston might have been on to something after all. Since they can't find her anymore, they hire the PCs to bring him in — alive and unharmed! — for study.

After the Varangian insults his abilities, Gunplay makes a point of going after everyone the Varangian's hired to guard. A lot of innocents are getting caught in the crossfire, so it's up to the PCs to bring the conflict to a close... one way or another.

Gunplay develops a rivalry with the best gunfighter among the PCs and begins committing crimes to lure him out for a deadly confrontation.

Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
10 Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged)
3 WF: Small Arms, General-Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns
2 Weaponsmith (Firearms) 13-

Resource Points
48 Equipment Points: 300
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 396
Total Cost: 514

100+ Disadvantages
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Psychological Limitation: Showoff (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Moderate)
10 Rivalry: Professional (with Prospero, Snafu, and other such mercenaries; Seeks To Harm/Kill Rivals)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Ricardo Delgado) (Frequently, Major)
324 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 514

Background/History: "Budget restrictions, my ass! If you're so blind that you can't see what my program could mean to the American military, I'll open your eyes and *show* you!" With those words, Alice Langston stormed out of her supervisor's office at DARPA, slamming the door as she went. The accompanying smell was that of bridges burning.

Two days later she was *still* furious. Her proposal was *perfect* — a method for improving the performance of American military personnel in combat without the need for radical surgery or drugs. She claimed that through the proper application of kinesiological principles, advanced training methods, and a computerized, scientific study of gunfighting, she could improve the efficiency of the average soldier in combat by fifty percent or more. But her superiors hadn't bought it, and the latest round of budget cuts had gotten her kicked out on the street.

She sighed. The only way she was going to show them she was right was to launch the project on her own... and that meant money, a lot of it. But where there's a will, there's a way. In this case, that way was computer hacking. She was surprised at how easy it was to steal money electronically, and at how much she enjoyed it.

Once she got the first stages of her lab set up, she needed to find a test subject. Looking back over her research notes, she hit on Ricardo Delgado, an Army reject bounced out of basic for insubordination. He was already fit and healthy, and his medicals indicated he'd respond well to her training program. But did he have the discipline to stick with it?

When the egghead white chick approached him about taking part in some "study," Delgado's first impulse was to tell her to go to hell. But the more she talked, the more intrigued he became. This wasn't going to be some bull*%&! routine of push-ups and ten-mile hikes — she was talking about making him a living, breathing killing machine, better even than a Green Beret. He liked the idea of being that good. A guy could go far with those kind of abilities. In the end, he agreed to be her guinea pig.

Three years of tests and training followed. Her kinesiology routines improved his mobility, making him move with a grace, speed, and precision that put a ballet dancer or pro basketball player to shame. The mercenaries and firearms experts she brought in taught him how to shoot all sorts of guns with deadly accuracy — and then, combined with Langston's computer analyses of gunfights, they showed him how to become a one-man death squad. By the time they were done, his every fluid move in combat had a purpose. There were no wasted seconds or missed opportunities; he fought with an efficiency born of the best modern science.

After three years of hard work, Dr. Langston was ready to return to DARPA in triumph, with Delgado at her side. But he had other ideas. Why work for the Army when he could make a helluva lot more money on his own? To make sure Langston didn't tell anyone about him or create other super-soldiers to compete with him, Delgado killed her, trashed her lab, and then burned the place to the ground. A few weeks later he made his mercenary debut under the codename *Gunplay,* and he hasn't looked back since.

Personality/Motivation: Gunplay is a cold, calculating killer who performs his missions with the same detachment as a shark. Utterly confident in his abilities, he has a tendency to show off his shooting skills and dexterity — he often uses his *Shooting Tricks* Skill to pull off trick shots, then follows that up with a Presence Attack. A couple of times he's nearly botched a mission with stunts like that; experience will probably burn his overconfidence out of him, making him even deadlier.

Quote: "You wanna take me on? Fine. Your funeral."

Powers/Tactics: Gunplay is a highly-trained shootist who gained his abilities through the application of modern scientific methods. Kinesiology and Dr. Langston's "tactical analysis" computer models taught him how to move and position himself in combat to simultaneously decrease his foes' chance of hitting him with return fire and maximize his field of fire and accuracy.

But a warrior's nothing without the right weapons. For Gunplay, that means custom-built weapons that allow him to exploit his skills to the fullest. He carries twin .45 handguns loaded with reversed ogive rounds and tricked out for maximum accuracy, a similarly-advanced SMG with four clips, and a 5.56mm assault rifle. He favors the handguns in most situations, and has set up a system to allow for minimum reloading time. Lined up along the outer edge of the thigh panels of his armor are four extra magazines in special breakaway holding clips. Built into the

bottom of his handguns is a tiny electronic "key" device that activates when he ejects a clip. After ejecting a clip, he sweeps the gun butt-first down past his thigh, snatching one of the clips from its holder when the "key" interfaces with the "lock" on the holder so it releases the clip. (In game terms, this counts as a rapid reloading device; see *Dark Champions,* page 194).

In combat, Gunplay likes to keep moving, relying on his greater speed and agility, not to mention the confusion his actions often create in the enemy, to keep him safe. He usually fires at high speed, squeezing off multiple rounds using a shooting trick from his Variable Power Pool or the Multifire rules.

Campaign Use: Gunplay can serve many different functions in your campaign. He most often works as an assassin or combat support for a mission team, but he could also bodyguard a powerful crimelord or government official, spearhead a sophisticated robbery, or serve as a rogue intelligence agency's "troubleshooter."

To make Gunplay tougher, increase his DEX (or maybe even SPD), give him Lightning Reflexes, and/or increase the Pool of his VPP. To weaken him, reduce his SPD to 4 and get rid of his DCV Levels and perhaps some other Levels; you could also decrease his VPP or remove it altogether.

Gunplay is a deadly Hunter. He doesn't have much patience for research or shadowing his target, but when he decides to attack, he goes all-out. Usually he opens up with sniping, and if that doesn't take care of the target, he closes to handgun range and finishes the job.

The HCPD and FBI want Gunplay for over a dozen murders and numerous other crimes; several foreign law enforcement agencies also have warrants for his arrest on similar charges. None of them know his real name.

Appearance: Gunplay is a handsome Hispanic male in his late 20s with short black hair; he keeps his face clean-shaven. He stands 5'9" tall and has a rock-solid muscular build. Even in casual situations, he moves with extreme grace and precision. On most missions, he wears a blood-red body-stocking beneath advanced, slimline body armor that's black with silver edging; the outer edge of the armor's thigh panels hold the four extra clips for his handguns (see above). He covers his head with a helmet that leaves his face exposed. He carries his two handguns in fast-draw shoulder holsters, his assault rifle slung over his left shoulder, and his submachine gun slung over his right.

FILL YOUR HAND

"Watch," he said to me. Almost like a kid about to do a trick with his bike, I thought. I nodded.

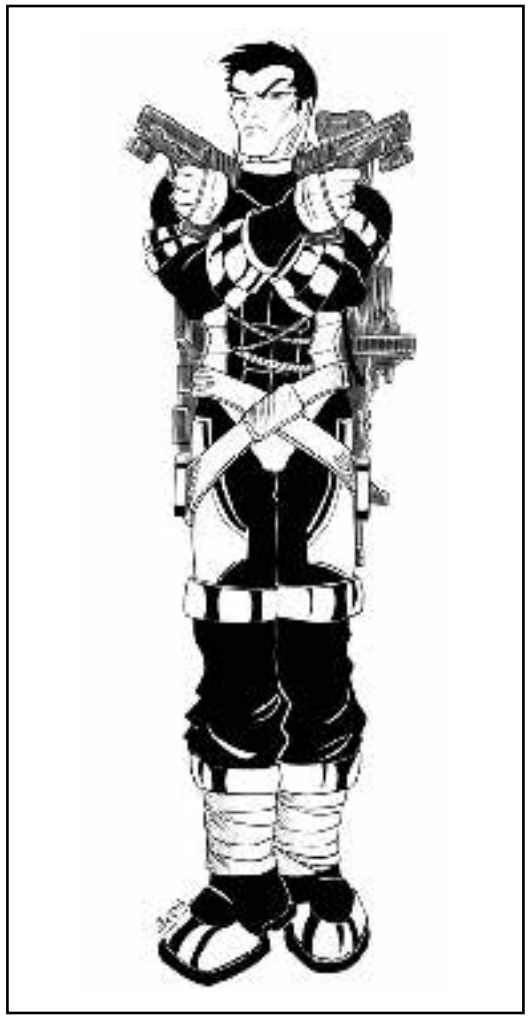
Before I could blink, he drew one of his pistols and fired at the target fifty feet away. I heard the gunshot almost before I realized he'd drawn and fired. It was the fastest thing I'd ever seen in my life.

He hit the button to bring the target up to us. It took a few seconds, but I saw just what I expected when it arrived: a single bullet hole, dead center through the head.

"You see, *compadre,*" he said. "You think you want to hire SNAFU, or Caliber, or one of those other *maricóns?* I could take any of them before they could even get their guns out. There's only one man for this job of yours, and that's Gunplay."

I nodded, not being stupid enough to disagree with a man who could shoot that well

—how to get a job with the Montalvo cartel



THE HEADLESS HANGMAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
25	PRE	20	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	1		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
40	STUN	9	**Total Characteristics Cost: 106**	

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Swinging: 10"/20"
"Teleportation": 9"/9"

Cost	Powers	END
12	*Combat Sickle:* HKA 1d6+1 (1½d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½), Reduced En-durance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), STR Minimum (12, Does Not Add/Subtract Damage; -1), Real Weapon (-¼)	0
28	*Necksnapper:* HKA 2d6, NND (defense is rigid rPD on the neck, or anything else that prevents the neck/head from being turned and twisted the right way; +1), Does BODY (+1); Must Follow Grab (-½), Must Target The Head (-1), No STR Bonus (-½), Requires A STR Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼)	9
5	*Noose:* Stretching 2", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Multiple (-¼), Limited Manipulation (see text; -¼)	0
	Martial Arts: Twisting In The Wind (Usable with Noose)	
	Maneuver — OCV — DCV — Notes	
5	Choke -1 +0 Grab One Limb, 4d6 NND (2)	
4	Pummel +0 +2 9d6 Strike	
3	Snare -1 -1 45 STR Grab	
4	Snatch -1 +1 Disarm, 45 STR	
3	Trip +0 +1 7d6 + vel/5, Target Falls	
16	+4 Damage Classes (already added in)	
1	Use Art Barehanded	
6	*Strong Runner:* Running +3" (9" total)	1
6	*Disappearing Act:* Teleportation 9"; Can Only Teleport To Places The Headless Hangman Could Normally Go (-½), Must Cross Intervening Space (-¼), No NCM (-¼), Only To "Vanish" When No One Is Looking (-½), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½)	2
4	*Noose:* Swinging 10"; OAF (-1), Lockout (can't use Stretching or Martial Arts in any Phase when he uses Swinging; -½)	1
1	*Awake By Force Of Will:* Life Support (Diminished Sleeping: needs only 2-3 hours of sleep a night)	0

Perks

2 Deep Cover (to be defined by GM)
3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
8 Reputation: terrifying, murderous vigilante (in Hudson City) 14-, +4/+4d6

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
15 Combat Sense 12-

Skills

9 +3 with Twisting In The Wind
8 +4 OCV with Combat Sickle
4 +2 OCV with Necksnapper
7 *Panic Defense:* +2 DCV; Requires A *Reputation* Disadvantage Roll (-½)
3 Climbing 13-
3 Combat Driving 13-
3 Computer Programming 12-
3 Criminology 12-
3 Deduction 12-
3 Interrogation 14-
4 AK: Little Italy 13-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
2 KS: Famous Buildings Of Hudson City 11-
2 KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
5 KS: The Mafia 14-
3 Lockpicking 13-
3 Security Systems 12-
3 PS: Architect 12-
3 SS: Architecture 12-
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 14-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points

12 Equipment Points: 120
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
30 Follower/Contact Points: 65
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 274
Total Cost: 380

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Hunted: The Mafia 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
20 Hunted: The Yakuza 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Determined To Destroy The Mafia (Common, Total)
20 Psychological Limitation: Warped Vigilante Mentality (Very Common, Strong)
20 Reputation: murderous vigilante, 14- (Extreme)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Dominic LaBarbera) (Frequently, Major)
145 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 380

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt M1911A	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9	

Armor
Light Body Armor (DEF 4, Activation Roll 14-)
Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points) (OIF mask)

Gear: Utility Pockets with Smoke Pellets, Sleep Gas Pellets (the "Mists Of Morpheus"), Mini-Console, Parabolic Mini-Mike, and a variety of other minor weapons and tools; Mask Radio (Radio Perception/Transmission; IIF)

Background/History: A few words were all it took to shatter Dominic's dreams. "Your father isn't a salesman — he's with the Italians." No one had to explain who "the Italians" were.

All his life, he'd wanted to be a policeman. They were always the heroes in the comic books and mystery novels he read, and he wanted to be just like them. But he was smart enough to know it would never happen — a simple background check would reveal that his father was a *caporegima* in the Marcelli family, and no police force in the world could overlook that black mark.

If he couldn't become a cop, he'd try another route: costumed crimefighting. He saw reports about people like the Scarecrow and DarkAngel in the news all the time. If they could do it, why couldn't he?

He enrolled in HCSU to study architecture... and more. Whenever he could, he snuck into the criminology and police training classes. At night he studied forensics and martial arts after finishing his architecture assignments. By the time he was a sophomore in college, he'd learned enough that he felt ready to take on the streets. He began patrolling, dressed only in combat fatigues and a simple cloth mask.

As he grew older, his hatred of the Mafia grew as well. Soon it extended to his father. Silvestro had been a kind and loving father, but he was still one of the enemy. Dominic's anger and hatred reached the point where he could barely speak civilly to his father, much less pleasantly. One day during his senior year, his father confronted him about his behavior. Unfortunately, Silvestro walked in on him as he was polishing a large knife and studying files on his next Mafia targets. They began yelling and screaming at one another... and then, in a fit of rage and hatred, he stabbed his father to death.

His mother heard Silvestro's dying scream and began to run upstairs. Thinking quickly, he hid the knife and opened a window. His mother burst into his room to find him sobbing over his father's body. All he could tell the police when they arrived was that "a big man in a tattered black cloak came through the window and stabbed Dad. I couldn't see his face."

That simple story, conjured out of desperation and faint memories of Sleepy Hollow and comic book portrayals of the Grim Reaper, inspired his own vigilante identity. He wanted to create fear in his enemies, and the symbolism of Death provided it. He would wear a tattered black hooded cloak and robe, with a black mask that made it look like he had no head. For his weapon, he chose a hangman's noose, creating a fighting style he could use with it by studying how people used lariats and whips. After he found out the hard way that he needed a second weapon for emergencies, he crafted a "combat sickle" and some smoke and knockout gas pellets.

After graduating from Hudson City State, he got a job as an architect. Now he works during the day designing high-rise office buildings, while at night he stalks the streets of the Pearl City, dispensing justice to any criminals unlucky enough to cross his path. His methods are brutal and dangerous, often unnecessarily so, and both the police and the mob would be happy to see him dead or behind bars. But he's determined to remain free until he rescues the city from the Mafia's evil grasp.

Personality/Motivation: Guilt torments the Headless Hangman, creating a shadow over his soul even during the best of times. He yearns for things to be the way they were when he was a boy — a romanti-

HEADLESS HANGMAN PLOT SEEDS

The classic Headless Hangman plot: after a well-publicized incident in which the Hangman's recklessness causes the death of several innocent civilians, the PCs decide to take him down once and for all. To make this work, you need to arrange things so he can take on the entire team and give them a real fight.

The Hangman stumbles across a plot involving the Mafia, the Russians, and the Chinese that's so big he can't stop it by himself. He appeals to the PCs for help. Are they willing to work with this loose cannon for the greater good — and if so, will his actions tarnish them along with himself?

The PCs find the Headless Hangman battered, bruised, and bleeding in an alley — not dead, but just barely alive. How do they handle the situation... and who took out the feared vigilante, anyway?

cized lifestyle like an old movie where families are always happy, good guys are always handsome, and the bad guys always lose in the end. Subconsciously, he feels great remorse over killing his father, and has sublimated that guilt into hatred of the Mafia. He blames the Mafia for everything that's gone wrong in his life, reasoning that if it didn't exist, none of these bad things would ever have happened to him. Driven inward, his despair has made him vicious and cruel to his chosen targets, criminals (in general) and Mafiosi (in particular). Though he doesn't realize it, he has a death-wish. He often gets into fights he could easily avoid, and takes risks he doesn't really need to.

Over the years, the Hangman has slowly come to believe that any sacrifice or loss is acceptable if it helps combat the Mafia — which makes him dangerous to the innocents he claims he's trying to protect. He thinks nothing of starting a battle in a crowded area, crashing an entire bus just to kill two or three Mafiosi on board, or blowing up a Mafia-owned restaurant during business hours. Every month he visits the graves of the innocent bystanders he's killed and leaves flowers; he considers these victims "martyrs" to the cause of Justice, and intends to honor their memory by continuing his quest to wipe out organized crime.

Quote: "Weeds must be dug out at the root — even if it means tearing up a little grass."

Powers/Tactics: The Headless Hangman primarily focuses on HTH Combat — though thanks to his Noose, "hand-to-hand" means anything within 2" for many of his attacks. Although he can use guns, and often picks up firearms from the bodies of fallen criminals and uses them against other targets, he prefers to get in close to his enemies and take their lives with his own hands. His two main weapons, the noose and the sickle, add to his fearsome image. Criminals everywhere know he's a vicious, implacable killer; often their fear of him makes them panic and attack too quickly or clumsily (his DCV Levels).

The Hangman has developed an entire fighting style around his Noose — Twisting In The Wind, he calls it. He can simply hit his opponent with a coiled length of rope (Pummel), grab people or take their weapons away, choke someone, or get the noose around an enemy's neck and jerk the rope so the neck breaks (his Necksnapper ability, though he can also do this with his bare hands). He can't do anything more sophisticated (like Nerve Strikes or pressing buttons) because the Noose only has limited manipulatory abilities.

The Hangman carries a few other weapons in the hidden pockets of his costume. For example, his "Mists of Morpheus" are just knockout gas pellets with a fancy name, and he has smoke pellets for when he needs to use his Disappearing Act ability.

The Hangman gets around town in style, in a black Ferrari Testarossa with Ground Movement 36", DEF 6, +2 DEF Retractable, and blinding headlights.

Campaign Use: The Headless Hangman is a classic example of a "warped vigilante." His heart's in the right place, but he's lost sight of his true mission so much that he's endangering innocents. The PCs either need to work with him to make him see the error of his ways, or take him down. As a complicating factor, he's *highly* knowledgeable about the Mafia, so they may not want to deprive themselves of a valuable resource by killing him.

To make the Hangman tougher, give him another point of SPD, and maybe another superskill or two. To weaken him, reduce his Characteristics a little and/or get rid of his Necksnapper ability.

The Headless Hangman generally only Hunts members of the Mafia. But if a hero becomes too much of an impediment to his war on crime, he may decide the hero has to be eliminated.

The HCPD wants the Headless Hangman for more than 100 murders, mostly of Mafia figures but also of ordinary criminals and about two dozen innocents. He's also a suspect in numerous acts of assault and aggravated assault.

Appearance: The Headless Hangman's name describes him pretty well. He wears a tattered robe and hooded cloak, both of deepest black, and black boots as well, giving him a "Grim Reaper" look. A black velvet mask covers his entire face — it looks like there's no head inside his hood. He wraps his hands in strips of cloth the color of bone. Underneath his robe he wears a suit of body armor. He carries his noose in his hands or over his shoulder, and his sickle in a sheath on his back (under the cloak). He conceals his other weapons (such as his "Mists of Morpheus" knockout gas pellets) in secret pockets throughout his costume.

SPECIAL DELIVERY

"The infamous vigilante known only as the Headless Hangman attacked a Little Italy pizzeria today, killing three people and leaving the restaurant in ruins. The police department has confirmed that two of the deceased are Bruno "the Knife" Jacopino and Franco "Frankie the Finger" Cresalli, both known members of the Torccone crime family. The name of the third victim, a woman, has not been released; sources within the department indicate she may have been "an associate" of one of the other two victims.

"According to friends of the two men, Jacopino had expressed some anxiety about the Hangman in recent weeks. "He's comin' for me, I know it," Jacopino allegedly stated several times. Both men had been increasingly alert and wary in recent days. Witnesses say the Hangman approached the pizzeria undetected by hiding in the back of a linen truck making a delivery of tablecloths."

—from television news reports

HECATE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
23	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 54**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*The Evil Eye — Mesmerism:* Mind Control 8d6; Activation Roll 14- (-½), Hypnosis Only (cannot achieve full range of Mind Control effects, see text; -½), Concentration (0 DCV throughout activation; -1), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1½), Eye Contact Required (-½), Gestures (must wave focusing object in front of subject's eyes throughout activation; -½), No Range (-½)	4
10	*The Evil Eye — Deadly Accident:* RKA 2d6, Trigger (next time person is in a situation where he could be injured; +¼), Invisible to Sight and Hearing Groups (+¾); Activation Roll 14- (-½), No Conscious Control (-2), Limited Range (4"; -¼), 1 Charge (-2) [1]	
11	*The Evil Eye — Illness:* Drain CON 2d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Week; +1¾), NND (defense is Life Support [appropriate Immunity, see text]; +1); Activation Roll 14- (-½), Extra Time (onset time of 1 Hour to 1 Week; -3), Gradual Effect (1 Week, 1d6/3 days; -2)	5
30	*Touch Of Agony:* Energy Blast 6d6, NND (defense is rigid armor protecting target's vulnerable spots; +1); Activation Roll 14- (-½), No Range (-½)	6

Perks

35 Followers: 12 cats and one raven (see text)
3 Fringe Benefit: Membership: Cult Leader
3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Skills

6 Animal Handler (Birds, Canines, Felines, Raptors, Rodents) 13-
3 Conversation 13-
3 Oratory 13-
3 Paramedics 13-
3 Persuasion 13-
2 PS: Divination 11-
3 Seduction 13-
3 Stealth 12-
1 Streetwise 8-
2 Survival (Urban) 12-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades
3 Scholar
2 1) KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 12-
1 2) KS: Astrology 11-
1 3) KS: Feminism 11-
1 4) KS: Herbalism 11-
1 5) KS: The Tarot 11-

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 173
Total Cost: 227

100+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: numerous distinctive tattoos (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
15 Hunted: Carl Spears 8- (Mo Pow, Kill)
5 Hunted: Cleopatra 8- (Mo Pow, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation: Desires Devotion And Obedience (Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Vain (Common, Moderate)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Jennifer Reilly) (Frequently, Major)
62 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 227

Background/History: "Hey, man, 's'up?"

"Nuthin, man. Whadja get into last night?"

"Went down to the Strip."

"A'ight! Candy, yeah?"

"Tha's what I wanted, but th' Candy store was closed, man. She upped her rates."

"*%&!, man — who's pimpin' that?"

"She ain't got no pimp no more, she says."

"Bull*%&!. She by herself, she won't be for long."

"Not herself, 'zactly. She says she been "shown the light" by some bitch named Heckit."

"*%&!, I think I heard'a that bitch. She that witchy-woman runs the "Empowerment Center" down near the waterfront, right, man?"

"I guess. I think I heard about her. Tino say she put a curse on Johnny C after he beat up one of his girls, made him break his leg."

"A *curse?* C'mon, man, that's old-time *%&!, it ain't true."

"I'm not sayin' it true, just that Johnny C said she did it. Claims she got witch-powers, uses 'em to protect women and kids and stuff. Runs this, like, women's shelter thing."

"Well, if she messin' wi' th' Strip, she ain't gonna be runnin' it for long — somebody gonna blow her ass away."

Personality/Motivation: To hear Hecate talk, she's the ultimate feminist guerrilla warrior, putting her life and money on the line to help her "sisters" protect themselves from exploitation and domination by men. She's got her "Empowerment Center," a combination shelter/learning center for women only near the Crown Point waterfront, where she teaches women self-reliance and independence "using the ancient techniques and lore of the witches." Some people think of it as a religious cult, and

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Knife	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown

Armor
None

Gear: Blinding Powder (Sight Group Flash 2d6, Delayed Recovery; IAF Fragile [special powder concealed up her sleeve], 2 Charges)

in some ways it functions like one. Women who come to the shelter have to agree to follow her rules without question, and many of them give her money and gifts, or become devoted followers who help her with her "mission." Other people have pointed out that the Center does some genuinely good work, such as protecting hookers from their pimps and saving battered women who want to get away from their abusers.

The truth is, though, that for all the good she may do, Hecate is really a self-centered opportunist. Raised in the South by a grandmother who taught her "the old ways" and nurtured her talent for them, she came to Hudson City as a college student. Self-centered and vain, she wasn't willing to settle for any old nine-to-five job. She wanted to be important and influential — to have the respect, even adoration, of other people, and to have others do what she said. Seeing how easy it was to manipulate feminist groups on campus, she hit on the idea of combining her mystic talents and natural charm with a sort of women's organization. She knew she wasn't going to be able to achieve real importance in this patriarchal world through normal channels, so she'd create her own path to power by working with her "sisters" to "create a better tomorrow for us all." Her blend of New Age "witchcraft," pop psychology, feminist dogma, and personal charisma has worked well so far — her followers, devotees, and "students" don't have any idea she's really in this for herself alone. If she can just hold on to what she's got in the face of hostility from Carl Spears and other pimps on the Strip (where she's devoted a lot of time and effort to "freeing" hookers) and make the jump to a more mainstream audience, she may become a highly influential person not only in Hudson City, but the country.

Quote: "The Three Who Are One are embodied in us all, and they give us true powers that men can never have."

Powers/Tactics: Although a lot of the "doctrine" Hecate spouts is pseudomystical nonsense designed to make gullible people listen to and obey her, she does possess some unusual powers. She's a gifted mesmerist, able to put someone in a hypnotic trance with just her strong gaze and the soothing power of her voice (This requires calm, relaxing conditions, and generally the best Mind Control result she can obtain is EGO +20; you may impose other restrictions in the interest of "realism.") She can curse people, making them fall ill or experience dangerous accidents. If those powers fail her in the face of a threat, she can use her "sacrificial" knife or her Blinding Powder.

In addition to the many women who consider her their "leader" and teacher, Hecate has a coven of pets: twelve housecats (each named after a sign of the zodiac) and a raven named Morgaine. All seem unusually intelligent and able to follow orders; she often uses them to watch over people she wants to keep tabs on, or to filch small items she desires. (See pages 139 and 143 of *The HERO System Bestiary* for character sheets for these animals; all the cats have the three main options for Cat and Language: English; one of them, Sagittarius, is a black cat with the optional black cat Unluck power.)

Hecate prefers not to fight — she'd rather talk her way out of problems. Her general persuasiveness, combined with her Mesmerism power, is enough to calm down most foes (even angry men who come to the Empowerment Center to "get back" their wives). She'll protect her followers to help ensure their loyalty, but isn't devoted to them enough to risk serious bodily harm on their behalf.

Campaign Use: Like Firebug, Hecate pushes the limits of what's allowed in most *Dark Champions* campaigns for weird or paranormal abilities. If her Evil Eye powers don't fit your campaign, get rid of them or change them so they involve standard hypnosis and other abilities that make sense.

To make Hecate tougher, give her more mystic abilities, and perhaps remove the Activation Rolls from the ones she already has. To weaken her, decrease her Activation Rolls so her mystic powers don't work properly nearly as often.

Typically, Hecate doesn't Hunt heroes. If she did, she'd simply use her Evil Eye powers to inflict a constant stream of accidents and illnesses on her enemy until she got rid of him.

Hecate has no criminal record. Few people know her real name, Jennifer Reilly; to get it someone would have to dig through a lot of local college records.

Appearance: Hecate is a beautiful woman in her mid-to-late 20s: 5'8" tall, with an attractive figure and wavy black hair that reaches halfway down her back, she'd attract attention just about anywhere she went even if she didn't have a lot of charisma. She sports several tattoos on her arms, back, and other places featuring mystic symbols, diagrams, or images, but she can cover any of them up with ordinary clothes.

HECATE PLOT SEEDS

One of the PCs, or a popular NPC, has a daughter who's gotten sucked into Hecate's cult (an "empowerment circle," as she calls it). The PCs have to find a way to rescue the daughter from Hecate's clutches — though Hecate won't force the girl to remain with her, knowing that a display of passive resistance will win her more support from both the girl and the media.

After a woman leaves the Empowerment Center and gets killed by her abusive boyfriend, Hecate promises her followers she'll get revenge with a curse. But she can't find the boyfriend to curse him, so she has to hire or trick the PCs into locating him... and perhaps dealing with him so she doesn't have to.

Carl Spears wants to get rid of Hecate before she stirs up any more trouble among his whores. Rather than expose himself to capture, he decides to get the PCs to do his dirty work by framing her for some serious crimes.

THE HERETIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 7 PD (3 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 7 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	10		
30	END	0		
50	STUN	17	**Total Characteristics Cost: 106**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
3	Fringe Benefits: Religious Rank (Roman Catholic priest); Right To Marry
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
2	Lightning Reflexes: +2 DEX to attack first with Knives

Skills

9	+3 with Knives
7	Acting 14-
3	Bureaucratics 12-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 12-
3	KS: Roman Catholic Theology And Doctrine 12-
1	Language: Latin (basic conversation; English is Native)
3	Oratory 12-
3	Persuasion 12-
3	PS: Roman Catholic Priest 12-
3	Seduction 12-
3	Shadowing 12-
7	Stealth 14-
3	Streetwise 12-
2	Survival (Urban) 12-
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms

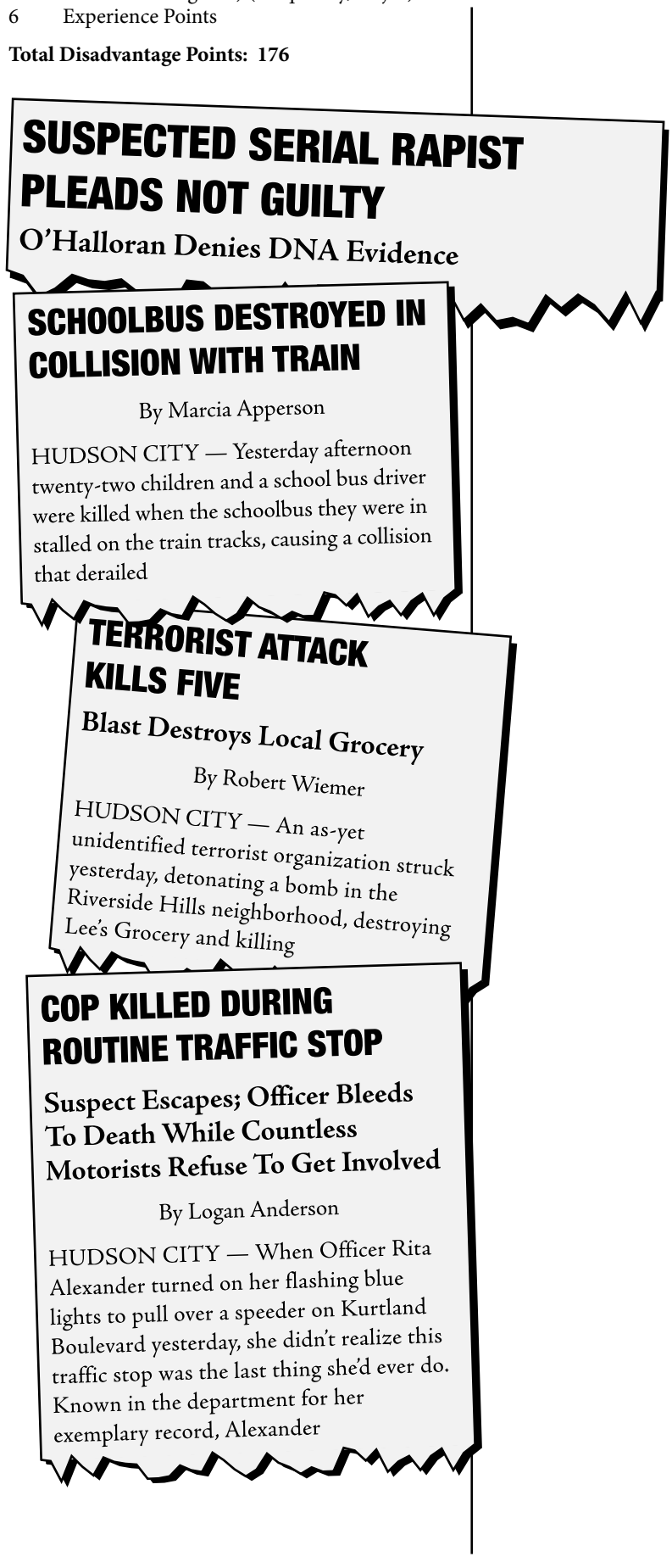
Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
0	Vehicle/Base Points: 10
0	Follower/Contact Points: 5
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 70
Total Cost: 176

100+	Disadvantages
5	Distinctive Features: Roman Catholic priest's garb (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
30	Hunted: Joint HCPD-FBI task force 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Psychological Limitation: Rejects God And Revels In Sin (Very Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Fr. Andrew Bellingham) (Frequently, Major)
6	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 176



SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown
Hatchet	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown

Armor
None

Gear: None

Background/History: So many tragic stories. So much bad news. Father Bellingham couldn't understand it.

For years he'd served his parishioners here in Hudson City faithfully, praying for them to get through the hard times safely and congratulating them on the occasional scrap of good news that came their way. Sometimes the tide of misery nearly overwhelmed him. Every day he put on a brave face and worked hard to help his flock cope. His superiors often complimented him for his unflagging optimism and helpfulness.

But at night, sometimes, things were different. As he lay awake, troubled and unable to sleep, doubts flittered around him like bats. Why were bad things happening to good people, to innocent people? Why were children — helpless, innocent children — victimized every day? Had God not heard his prayers on their behalf? How could a kind, loving, merciful, just God allow good people to suffer?

The more he thought about it, the more it troubled him. At first he put it down to a crisis of faith and shook it off, returning to his duties with renewed zeal. But the more it preyed upon his mind, the harder it became to struggle against the tide of despair.

Then one day, as he halfheartedly listened to Shelley Flanagan drone on with one of her interminable confessions, he had an epiphany. It blossomed in his mind like a bright light, making him sit bolt upright in shock. Father Bellingham realized, at long last, after so much soul-searching, why He allowed evil to beset good, innocent people.

God didn't care.

There was no other possible reason! God simply didn't care. People could butcher one another, men could rape women, children could shoot children — none of it mattered. God couldn't be bothered to use the merest fraction of His infinite power to save His creations from such horrors.

What rational individual could possibly worship such a Being? Certainly not Andrew Bellingham.

If, as modern theologians maintain, Hell isn't a land of fire and pain, but simply a place where one is eternally cut off from God's "love," then it must be a Paradise. He could see God's "love" in the blood and suffering on the streets, and he wanted no part of it.

The "sinners" — the criminals and butchers he read about in the paper every day — they already knew this. They didn't want to go to Heaven. They chose Hell deliberately so they could get as far away from God as possible. They did what they could to create Hell here on Earth so they could journey to the real thing in the afterlife. And Bellingham intended to join them.

Shelley Flanagan, now. A pretty young thing, Shelley. Always looking so prim and proper at Mass of a Sunday. She would be the first step on his journey to salvation, a journey he could now take with clear eyes and mind.

By the time another priest found what was left of Shelley's body, Bellingham was gone. After all, he had a long journey ahead of him, and there was no reason to delay.

Personality/Motivation: According to forensic psychiatrists, the serial killer and rapist the papers dubbed INRI — after what they think is his first murder, where he raped a young woman, then murderer her by crucifying her to a wall in her apartment and wrote the word INRI on the plaster next to her in her own blood — is a classic sociopath. He seems to possess many of the textbook characteristics of antisocial personality disorder. Were they to find out that INRI is actually Andrew Bellingham, a Roman Catholic priest who's been "missing" for some months, they would question their diagnoses — and, perhaps, find themselves forced to re-evalu-

ate their diagnostic tools. Until the day he raped and murdered Shelley Flanagan, Bellingham was a model citizen with no criminal record, a priest who'd spent nearly two decades of his life helping and praying for others. How, and why, he suddenly became one of the most gruesome serial killers in recent years would baffle them.

Bellingham believes the picture of a loving God presented by the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations is a fraud, a pious lie perpetuated by men too afraid of the alternative to even think about it. But he's seen through the veil of deceit and realized the most fundamental truth about the universe: God doesn't care about humanity. Mankind can suffer and die before God so much as lifts a finger — after all, plenty of stories from the Bible show that God's perfectly willing to inflict suffering and anguish upon men Himself! Since Hell is a place where one can never have contact with this evil, uncaring entity, Hell is where one should desire to go. And one gets there by committing the worst sins one can think of. Thus, Bellingham has given free rein to the urges and desires he's suppressed for years, sampling every vice he can and contributing to the morass of suffering through which mankind must wade. And he has no intention of ever stopping — he's got a long way left to go on his journey.

Quote: "Blessed are they who turn their faces from God."

Powers/Tactics: Bellingham possesses no powers and knows little of tactics. He's simply developed a predator's cunning for stalking and slaughtering his victims, and for avoiding the authorities (who've formed a task force to hunt him down). His weapons of choice are the knife and the hatchet, but he often carries other implements, such as a surgical saw, that he enjoys using in his "holy work." If cornered, Bellingham fights if he must, but prefers to run.

When necessary, Bellingham can put forth the appearance of being a more or less ordinary person. The urge to sin soon starts to overtake him, but he could maintain the facade of normality long enough to fool an investigator or gain entrance to a secured place on the strength of his collar and kind demeanor. He's found this ability most useful in luring victims to accompany him to places where he can violate them without attracting attention.

In the dramatic serial killer tradition, the Heretic has an incredibly strong will to live (as reflected in his BODY, REC, and STUN Characteristics). If possible you should arrange scenarios where the PCs encounter him so they *think* he's dead... but he soon comes back to life.

Although he's not a suspect in the INRI murders, Bellingham is smart enough to know he can't pull off the full-time priest act anymore, so he hasn't bothered to go back to his parish. He might if he felt he could achieve some short-term gain by doing so, though his actions would almost certainly expose him, sooner or later. Instead he's taken up residence in various cheap hotels and abandoned buildings, passing himself off as a priest who ministers to street folk.

IRON NAILS RAN IN

HUDSON CITY — The Hudson City Police Department revealed today that a terrifying new serial killer may be stalking the city's women.

"We want to stress that the investigation is in the beginning stages," said Hudson City Police Department spokesman Gerald Renfrew. "But until we know for certain who or what we're dealing with, the Department feels it's best to keep the citizens of Hudson City informed. If anyone has any information about these crimes, we urge him or her to come forward immediately."

The crime that prompted the Department to go public with its concerns was the murder of Melinda Cartwell, whose body was found in her Riverside Hills apartment three days ago. According to Department sources, Cartwell was raped, and then murdered by being crucified to her bedroom wall. The letters I-N-R-I were written on the wall near her, possibly in her blood. The police have withheld further details."

—from news reports

Campaign Use: The Heretic can't stand up to a group of vigilantes, or even one vigilante, in open combat; he barely knows how to use a gun. Scenarios featuring him must focus on investigation and deduction, with the Heretic perhaps occasionally striking from the shadows when he can hurt a solitary PC and get away without being discovered. You should try to keep the Heretic away from the PCs as long as possible, because once they come to grips with him, it's not likely he can get away. But assuming he survives the encounter, eventually some unwary policeman or security guard will present him with the chance to return to his pursuits.

To make the Heretic tougher, making him more of a combatant — increase his DEX and SPD, give him Martial Arts or more Combat Skill Levels, and the like. To weaken him, reduce or remove his CSLs.

The Heretic doesn't Hunt heroes. He stalks innocent young women, and prefers to stay far away from anyone who might be able to fight back. He has no Plot Seeds because he essentially is one big plot seed: investigate his murders, track him down, and bring him to justice.

Father Bellingham has no criminal record.

Appearance: Andrew Bellingham, age 42, looks like a typical Roman Catholic priest upon first glance: black outfit, white collar, sandy-blonde hair slightly balding on top, congenial features. But anyone who spends enough time around him soon sees something in his eyes and actions, or hears something in his words, that suggests he's no longer truly a man of God.

IXION PLOT SEEDS

Ixion starts dating a neurologist at Vreeland Memorial Hospital who is, shall we say, not quite as ethical as the AMA might like. With her help, he designs a computer program that he can download onto someone's computer as a sort of virus. The program causes the computer monitor to flash in a hypnotic pattern, allowing Ixion to take control of the person's mind for a short period of time. At most he can achieve an EGO + 20 Mind Control effect... but that's enough to make most people empty out their bank accounts. The PCs hear about a rash of odd behavior; they have to find the cause and stop Ixion's depredations.

One of the PCs gets an e-mail from Ixion. He claims his life's in danger and that he needs help. Is the PC willing to help the notorious hacker... and if so, is the whole thing just some elaborate scam, or is Ixion really in trouble?

A strange file somehow finds its way onto a PC's hard drive. Unable to open it, much less read it, he has to turn to the infamous Ixion for help — but how can he arrange matters so he can trust Ixion?

IXION

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
8	BODY	-4	11-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
17	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 12**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
13	Computer (see separate character sheet)
30	Computer Links (30 points' worth of the GM's choice)
5	Money: Well Off
4	Reputation: extremely skilled and daring hacker (among the Hacker World) 14-, +4/+4d6

Skills

11	Computer Programming 16-
7	Cryptography 14-
3	Electronics 12-
3	KS: American Politics 12-
3	KS: Computer Games 12-
5	KS: The Hacker World 14-
3	KS: Offshore Banking 12-
5	PS: Hacker 14-
3	PS: Computer Game Player 12-
5	PS: Computer Programmer 14-
5	SS: Computer Science 14-
3	SS: Mathematics 12-
5	Security Systems 14-; Only Versus Computer Security Systems (-½)
1	Sleight Of Hand 8-
1	Streetwise 8-

Resource Points

28	Equipment Points: 200
0	Vehicle/Base Points: 10
0	Follower/Contact Points: 5
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 143
Total Cost: 155

100+ Disadvantages

25	Hunted: FBI Cyber Division 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Honorable; Always Keeps His Word (Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Rick Carver) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 155

Background/History: Ixion — or Rick Carver, to give the name you'd find on his driver's license — is something of a legend in cyberspace. He's best known to the online community as the owner and operator of *wheeloffire.net,* a popular website that comments on cultural and political issues with a wicked wit and caustic, clever insight from a vaguely-left-of-center perspective. Visited by thousands of people every day, wheeloffire.net has made Ixion something of household name among certain segments of the online community.

But other segments — smaller, darker ones — know and respect Ixion for something else altogether. Unbeknownst to the vast majority of his fans, and so far unprovable by his nemeses in the Cyber Division at the FBI, Ixion is one of the most talented and experienced hackers in the business. With a skill and ease that would frighten many a computer security specialist, Ixion slips in and out of computer systems, seeing things people don't want him to see... and often asking them to pay him money to keep him from showing those things to others.

Personality/Motivation: A fascination with technology and what it can do first drew Ixion into hacking, but he stayed with it for the thrill. He loves solving the puzzle of someone's security programming and getting into places where he's not supposed to be. The fact that he's made himself wealthy by selling (or not selling, as the case may be) the information he gains is secondary. He doesn't really care about the money; what matters to him is proving that nothing — *nothing* — can be kept secret from him if he wants to learn it.

Quote: None; Ixion rarely encounters people in person so he could talk to them. If he's feeling impish, he might sign his "work" with a tiny logo of a man tied to a burning wheel (a symbol that's very different from his website's logo).

Powers/Tactics: Ixion's not a combatant — if confronted with physical force, he flees if he can, but surrenders if he has to. The PCs are more likely to deal with him as a criminal they have to track down and stop. His typical m.o. is to penetrate a computer system, find secret or sensitive data in that system, then blackmail the system's owner into paying him not to reveal the information (either to the victim's competitors, or to the world at large). But for all that, he's not without honor — as his victims have learned, once they wire the money to whichever of his many offshore accounts he specifies, he *always* makes good on his promise to (a) return the data, and (b) tell them the way he got to it. (Well, at least *one* of the ways; he doesn't think it's part of the bargain for him to reveal every security flaw he discovers in a system.)

Ixion has a major reputation in the online community, but taking advantage of it is tough. It's easy to claim to be someone online, after all. More than once he's had to trash someone's system — at least temporarily — to convince them he's the real Ixion. Once they believe he is who he says, most hackers know that it's to their benefit to cooperate with him. After all, he sometimes hands out juicy tidbits of information or hacking tips to people who've done as he asked.

Campaign Use: Ixion could enter the campaign in many ways. The simplest is for him to hire out as a hacker for some villain or adversary the PCs are going up against. A more elaborate way would be for him to stumble into a PC's secret computer records and try to blackmail money out of the PC in his usual fashion. This time he may have bitten off more than he can chew....

Ixion isn't intended to be a combatant, so you probably don't need to make him more powerful. You could upgrade his computer skills a bit if you wanted, or perhaps give him really low-level cyberkinetic abilities of some sort (provided you keep them consistent with the feel and nature of your *Dark Champions* campaign, of course). To weaken him, just reduce his computer-related Skill Rolls until he's at a more appropriate level for your campaign.

Ixion generally doesn't Hunt people; it's not worth the time. Only if he got *really* mad at a PC (maybe one who exposed him to the cops and got him arrested) would he start a vendetta against that person. In that case, the PC had better disconnect all his computers from the net, because if he doesn't, Ixion will begin a full-scale assault on them — and anything he finds, he'll use against the PC.

Ixion has no criminal record. The FBI suspects him of all sorts of hacking-related crimes, but as yet has been unable to prove anything against Rick Carver.

Appearance: Rick Carver is a thin guy in his late twenties or early thirties. He's 5'9" tall with sandy blonde hair, a matching soul patch, and usually a touch of five o'clock shadow. He's sort of lankily built, but spending too much time in front of the computer and eating too much junk food has got him started on a pot belly. He usually wears jeans and a t-shirt.

IXION'S LAPTOP

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
19	INT	9	13-	PER Roll 13-
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12

Total Characteristics Cost: 19

Cost	Powers	END
4	*TEMPEST Equipment:* Detect Computer Radio Emissions 14- (Radio Group); Blocked By Power Defense (-½)	0
12	*Communications:* HRRP (Radio Group)	0
5	*Shielding:* Power Defense (5 points)	0

Skills

9	Computer Programming 16-
9	Cryptography 16-
3	Electronics 13-
10	AK: Earth 20-
3	KS: Archived Recent News 13-
3	KS: Current News 13_
3	*Voice Recognition Software:* Language: English (completely fluent)
6	Security Systems 16-; Only Versus Computer Security Systems (-½)
3	Systems Operation 13-
20	More Skills, as appropriate

Talents

3	*Chronometer:* Absolute Time Sense
5	*Memory/Recorders:* Eidetic Memory
3	*Calculator:* Lightning Calculator

Programs

1	Diagnose Malfunctions
1	Scan and Enter Data
1	Scramble/Unscramble Transmissions/Receptions
1	Search Reference Material For Information On A Topic
1	Send/Receive Data
3	Three Other Programs, as appropriate

Total Abilities Cost: 109
Total Computer Cost: 128

Value Disadvantages
None

Total Disadvantage Points: 0

Total Cost: 128/5 = 26
Final Cost (OAF): 13

Description: Ixion's favorite computer is a laptop he built and programmed himself. In addition to standard computing chores, it's equipped with programs that allow it to emulate TEMPEST gear and "read" what's on the screens of other computers, to operate various types of electronic systems, and to help Ixion penetrate computer security programs.

BUSINESS IS WAR

"All right, you jumped through the hoops to get me to this meeting. Do you have the "consultant's fee" you were told to bring?"

"Right here," the nervous-looking businessman said, handing over a briefcase. Jackknife didn't bother to check it — everyone knew what happened to people who double-crossed him.

"Okay, it's your nickel. What do you want me to do?"

The businessman reached into his pocket, pulled out a memory stick. "This contains a computer program. Before June 1, I need you to get into the Harpcor Towers building, install it on one of the servers on the tenth floor, and then download some data to fill the vacated memory. No one can know this was done — if even a single person sees you, it ruins the whole job. Can you do it?"

"Yes."

"How much?"

"Fifty. You pay half before I start work; that money is not refundable. I have as much time as needed to plan and execute the job, subject to your June 1 deadline. The balance of the payment to be wired to a Grand Caymans account within ten minutes of when I inform you the job was completed successfully."

The businessman thought for a minute. "Done," he finally said.

JACKKNIFE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
21	DEX	36	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
16	BODY	12	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
16	EGO	12	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
8	PD	4		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 11 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	29		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	REC	4		
40	END	0		
50	STUN	14		**Total Characteristics Cost: 167**

Movement: Running: 10"/20"
Leaping: 6"/12"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
40	*Stingwhip:* Multipower, 60-point reserve; all OIF (-½), 16 Charges (-0) for entire Multipower [16]	
2u	1) *Mild Shock:* Energy Blast 4d6, NND (defense is insulated rED covering the body, or other forms of insulation against electrical shock; +1), Continuous (+1); OIF (-½), No Range (-½), Lockout (-½)	
2u	2) *Strong Shock:* Energy Blast 6d6, Continuous (+1); OIF (-½), No Range (-½), Lockout (-½), Requires 2 Charges Per Use (-1)	
2u	3) *Deadly Shock:* RKA 2d6, Continuous (+1); OIF (-½), No Range (-½), Lockout (-½), Requires 4 Charges Per Use (-1¼)	
3	*Stingwhip:* Stretching 1", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½), Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Multiple (-¼), Limited Manipulation (see text; -¼)	0

Martial Arts: Various Styles

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	*Atemi* Strike	-1	+1	4d6 NND (1)
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 50 STR
4	Dodge	+0	+5	Dodge all attacks, Abort
4	Escape	+0	+0	55 STR vs. Grabs
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 50 STR
4	Joint Lock/Throw	+1	+0	Grab One Limb; 3d6 NND(1); Target Falls
5	Kick	-2	+1	12d6 Strike
4	Knife Hand	-2	+0	HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR)
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	9d6 Strike, Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	10d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0	+1	9d6 +v/5, Target Falls

16 +4 Damage Classes (already added in)
3 Use Art with Clubs, Blades, and Staff
40 *Toughness:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼), Character Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼) 0
8 *Fast:* Running +4" (10" total) 1
2 *Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (6" forward, 3" upward) 1
2 *Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total) 1
9 *Alertness:* +3 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups 0
5 *Night Sight:* Nightvision 0

Perks

10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
10 Money: Wealthy

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
15 Combat Sense 13-
3 Lightsleep
5 Resistance (5 points)

Skills

20 +2 Overall
16 +2 with All Combat
6 +2 with Firearms
6 +2 with Stingwhip
3 Acrobatics 13-
3 Acting 13-
3 Analyze Combat Technique 13-
3 Analyze Style 13-
3 Breakfall 13-
3 Bribery 13-
3 Bugging 13-
3 Combat Driving 13-
3 Combat Piloting 13-
3 Computer Programming 13-
3 Contortionist 13-
3 Conversation 13-
5 Cramming
3 Criminology 13-
3 Cryptography 13-
3 Deduction 13-
3 Demolitions 13-
3 Disguise 13-
3 Electronics 13-
2 Forgery (Documents) 13-
2 Gambling (Card Games) 13-
3 High Society 13-
3 Interrogation 13-
3 Lockpicking 13-
3 Mechanics 13-
3 Mimicry 13-
3 Paramedics 13-
3 PS: Espionage Agent 13-
5 Rapid Attack (Ranged)
3 Security Systems 13-
3 Seduction 13-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Sleight Of Hand 13-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 13-
4 Survival (Desert, Temperate/Subtropical) 13-
3 Tactics 13-

7 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Helicopters, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3 Ventriloquism 13-
14 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Small Arms, Blowguns, General Purpose/ Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Off Hand, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Staffs
3 Weaponsmith (Firearms, Muscle-Powered HTH) 13-
3 Linguist (all fluent conversation; English is Native)
1 1) Arabic
1 2) French
1 3) German
1 4) Hindi
1 5) Japanese
1 6) Mandarin Chinese
1 7) Russian
1 8) Spanish
3 Scholar
2 1) KS: The Espionage World 13-
2 2) KS: History 13-
2 3) KS: The Law Enforcement World 13-
2 4) KS: The Military/Mercenary/ Terrorist World 13-
2 5) KS: Military Science 13-
2 6) KS: Political Science 13-
2 7) KS: World Politics 13-
3 Traveler
1 1) AK: Africa 11-
1 2) AK: Europe 11-
1 3) AK: India 11-
1 4) AK: The Middle East 11-
1 5) AK: Russia 11-
1 6) AK: South And Central America 11-
1 7) AK: United States 11-
1 8) CK: Bangkok 11-
1 9) CK: Hong Kong 11-
1 10) CK: Hudson City 11-
1 11) CK: London 11-
1 12) CK: Moscow 11-
1 13) CK: New York City 11-
1 14) CK: Paris 11-
1 15) CK: Rio de Janeiro 11-
1 16) CK: Rome 11-
1 17) CK: Singapore 11-
1 18) CK: Tokyo 11-
1 19) CK: Washington, D.C. 11-

Resource Points

58 Equipment Points: 350
35 Vehicle/Base Points: 80
30 Follower/Contact Points: 65
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 589
Total Cost: 756

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/ Kill)
20 Hunted: BND 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/ Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Looks Out For Himself; Cares Nothing About Anyone Else (Common, Strong)
5 Psychological Limitation: Wants To Know About His Origins (Uncommon, Moderate)
15 Reputation: murderous freelance spy, 14- (limited group: the Espionage World) (Extreme)
581 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 756

Background/History: In the late 1960s, a group of rogue CIA scientists, disgusted with the limitations placed upon a previous super-spy project, Chrysalis, by its commander, the mysterious Mr. Grey, established their own secret program to create a super-spy — Project: Jackknife. A few whispered rumors in the intelligence community later claimed they were secretly financed, at least in part, by Colonel Douglas Nordstrom, who'd been involved with several similar projects since the 1950s. For several years, they attempted to create a human clone for their purposes, but met with complete failure due to the limited state of bioengineering at that time.

Sometime in the early 1970s, they obtained a two-and-a-half year old boy for use in their

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K Mk 23	+5	+9	2d6+1	1d6+1	12	10	Reversed ogive ammo, AP, Sil, FS, laser, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, carries 2 with 4 clips each
Colt M16A1	+5	+15	2d6	1d6	30	13	AF5, FS, Laser, Type III night-sight scope, 2 custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, H, carries 2 extra clips
Smoke Grenades (see text box)							
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Armored Costume (DEF 4, Activation Roll 14-)
Combat Vest (DEF +4, Activation Roll 11-)
Mask Lenses (Sight Group Flash Defense [5 points])
Mask Earpieces (Hearing Group Flash Defense [5 points])

Gear: Mask Radio (HRRP), Linegun, advanced lockpicks (+2 to Lockpicking rolls), Utility Pockets with a variety of small gadgets (see *Dark Champions,* page 283)

experiments. Sixteen years of chemical treatments, surgery, physical training, and psychological conditioning of "Jack," as they called him, followed. But when they were done, teenaged Jack was much stronger and swifter than most humans, and knew more about espionage operations than many experienced spies.

Elements within the CIA put Jack to work, and he served his Langley masters faithfully for about five years. But the longer he worked for them, the more he chafed under their constant discipline, their annoyingly cryptic orders, their squeamishness about killing. Slowly but surely, his dissatisfaction overcame his psychological conditioning. He began to think about quitting the Agency and working for himself.

Even as good an actor as he was, he couldn't hide his growing unrest from the CIA's psychologists. They knew of his desire to leave, but also knew they could never allow it. Preferring to nip the problem in the bud, they ordered his termination. The personnel in charge of Project: Jackknife assembled a group of four skilled assassins, briefed them on their target, and turned them loose. Two days later, Washington, D.C. police were called to a hotel room in the city. A maid had found the room's four occupants lying in bed, each with his neck cleanly broken.

The op's managers kept the murder of their assassination squad quiet... but that was the last thing they ever did. Over the course of the next week, each of them was killed in a quick, brutal fashion. The police found no clues to the killer's identity at the crime scenes. Three days after the last killing, the office that housed Project: Jackknife was blown to bits by a sophisticated bomb. CIA brass quickly and quietly shut the whole project down for good. The CIA has never revived it, and the scientists and agents involved have not been seen or heard from publicly since.

With his past successfully laid to rest, Jackknife put out the word that he was available for hire. When the mercenary underground realized who he was, offers began pouring in, and they've never stopped coming. Today Jackknife is one of the most successful freelance spies and assassins in the world. He thinks of "Jackknife" as his true name, but uses "Jack Curtis," a firearms safety instructor, as his principal cover identity.

Personality/Motivation: Jackknife is a curious blend of professionalism and brutality. On the one hand, his training has made him the perfect spy, in both mind and body: disciplined, intense, compassionless, driven to succeed, devoted to his work, in the peak of human conditioning. On the other hand, early in his training he came to the conclusion that excessive force not only got the job done pretty well, but that he liked using it. He's a cold-blooded killer who won't hesitate to "remove" (his term) anyone he's hired to kill, who thwarts him or interferes with his work, or who just happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time during one of his missions.

Jackknife looks out for himself more than his employers, making him a poor bodyguard or enforcer (though he's got enough professionalism to see a mission through regardless of the risk or counteroffers — if he took the job, he'll get the job done). If someone gets in his way, he takes them out (fatally, if necessary or appropriate). If someone double-crosses him, or an employer isn't entirely honest with him, he makes it his priority to exact bloody revenge. If he sees an opportunity to make some extra money on the side during a mission, he takes it.

His CIA handlers never told Jackknife much about his background or origins — in fact, they even kept a lot of that information out of his files. He remains curious about where he came from and how the CIA "developed" him.

Quote: "Tell me what you want. I'll tell you the price. Don't worry about how hard you think it is — if I name a price, I'll get it done."

Powers/Tactics: Jackknife's codename reflects his versatility and adaptability. In combat, he's a clever and resourceful fighter, one who always seems to have another surprise in his bag of tricks and whose tactics remain unpredictable at all times. Usually the first

JACKKNIFE'S SMOKE GRENADES

Jackknife is a big believer in the powers of cover, confusion, and misdirection. Since smoke grenades can provide all three, he frequently uses them as part of his arsenal. He usually carries several, including some rigged so that he can set them off with a simple pull or slap. In game terms, they have the *Trigger* Advantage (so they require no time to activate) and move with him as he moves (unless you prefer otherwise — he can always just drop one wherever he is and move on). His typical smoke grenade (a custom-designed weapon) works like this:

Smoke Grenade: Change Environment 4" radius, -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Trigger (reflex action; activation takes no time, can set Trigger multiple times, Half Phase Action to reset; +½), Personal Immunity (+¼) (37 Active Points); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 4 Continuing Charge lasting 3 Turns each (-¼). Total cost: 13 points.

But Jackknife's not the sort of person to use one weapon when he can use two. In addition to blinding his enemies, the smoke from his grenades is often laced with some other kind of attack, such as knockout gas or an acidic attack that eats away at body armor. These "hidden" attacks often give Jackknife a big advantage in combat, and he often tries to think up new and more devious types of grenades.

Knockout Smoke Grenades: To Smoke Grenade, add the following: Energy Blast 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing or appropriate Immunity; +1), Continuous (+1), Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1) (80 Active Points); OAF (-1), Linked (-¼), Range Based On STR (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 4 Continuing Charge lasting 3 Turns each (-¼). Total cost: 27 points; total cost of grenade 40 points.

Armor-Eating Acid Smoke Grenades: To Smoke Grenade, add the following: RKA 1d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing or appropriate Immunity; +1), Continuous (+1), Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1) (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), Linked (-¼), Only Works Against Body Armors (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 4 Continuing Charge lasting 3 Turns each (-¼). Total cost: 15 points; total cost of grenade 28 points.

Rusting Smoke Grenades: To Smoke Grenade, add the following: RKA 1d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing or appropriate Immunity; +1), Continuous (+1), Area Of Effect (4" Radius; +1) (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), Linked (-¼), Only Works Against Ferrous Metal Objects (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), 4 Continuing Charge lasting 3 Turns each (-¼). Total cost: 17 points; total cost of grenade 30 points.

thing he does in open combat is to "pop smoke" (see text box), either to cover himself personally or to fill the battlefield with blinding fumes.

Besides his smoke grenades, pistols, and assault rifle (all of which are heavily customized and personalized), Jackknife carries one other special weapon: his *stingwhip,* a six-foot-long piece of fine, extremely flexible chain that he can electrify. Depending on how much juice he uses, it can knock someone out like a taser or deliver a lethal jolt.

Jackknife's training and experience cover just about any combat or noncombat situation he might face. He's a patient man who can spend weeks or months observing a target so he can do his job quickly and efficiently. If he discovers he lacks the resources to deal with a particular enemy or target, he retreats to one of his safehouses to create or prepare whatever he thinks he needs.

Some of Jackknife's favorite tactics include: forcing an enemy into hand-to-hand combat in the middle of one of his smoke clouds; fooling opponents with fake versions of his weapons (for example, a realistic-looking fake grenade, bought with his Equipment Points); grabbing one enemy with his stingwhip and using him as a human shield; and Rapid Fire/Multifire/Sweep maneuvers.

Campaign Use: Jackknife is probably one of the deadliest foes the PCs will ever face. His background, training, skills, and resources should make him a match for an entire group of heroes; if not, improve him until he is, or make sure he arranges the confrontation to give himself the tactical advantage.

To make Jackknife tougher, give him more Equipment Points, and perhaps some Skill Levels with various categories of Skills. To weaken him, remove his Overall Levels and reduce his INT and PRE to 15 and DEX to 18.

As a Hunter, Jackknife is patient, tenacious, and deadly. As described above, he'll gather all the information he needs (whether from outside sources or direct observation), then plan an attack for maximum effect and chances of success. He often hires other mercenaries to distract his target so he can get a clean shot.

Law enforcement agencies around the world want Jackknife on suspicion of dozens of murders and many other acts of kidnapping, extortion, and destruction of property. He's also on the wanted list of most major intelligence agencies. The authorities have tried in vain to find out what his real name is, since they assume Jackknife is just a codename.

Appearance: Jackknife is a large, extremely muscular man, about 6'1" tall with a muscular build. On most missions he wears a light grey skintight armored bodysuit (which he can conceal under normal clothing) underneath dark blue-grey fatigues with a dark grey combat vest. His boots and gloves are part of his armored bodysuit but are not covered by the fatigues. His mask is a dark grey half-face mask that leaves his dirty blonde hair free. The vest and fatigues have lots of pockets to hold his weapons, tools, and gadgets. His stingwhip is built into a dull gold-colored bracer on his lower right arm; he carries his two H&K Mk 23 pistols in shoulder holsters (he slings his M16A1 assault rifle over his back when he carries it).

JACKKNIFE PLOT SEEDS

One of the PCs' enemies hires Jackknife to take them out (either all of them, or just one or two). Now it's a fight for survival against one of the deadliest men in the world....

The PCs have to hit a nigh-impossible target — and they don't have the manpower or resources to do it right. Jackknife would be the perfect hireling to help them... but can they trust him?

The CIA secretly contacts the PCs. It needs to get a genetic sample from Jackknife. It will pay handsomely for some of his blood or tissue, provided the PCs can verify that it's his.

JIHAD PLOT SEEDS

The word leaks out that the PLRL has at long last given Jihad permission to commit terrorist acts on American soil... and his target is in Hudson City! The PCs have to figure out where he's going to strike, and stop him before he murders hundreds or thousands of people.

A prominent Islamic cleric who's an outspoken critic of the PLRL and similar organizations is coming to Hudson City to give a speech denouncing terrorism. Suspecting Jihad may try to assassinate him, the PCs have to guard the cleric. But neither the cleric nor city officials want their help!

When Jihad takes several prominent American and Israeli diplomats hostage, the Department of Defense recruits the PCs for a secret (and deniable!) mission to rescue them before he tortures them to death.

JIHAD

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
17	BODY	14	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
36	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 89**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Commando Training				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	4d6 + v/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	6d6 Strike	
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)	
4	Escape	+0	+0	35 STR vs. Grabs	
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 30 STR	
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 30 STR	
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR	
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	

Perks

4 Fringe Benefit: Membership (high-ranking member of the PLRL)
5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Skills

16 +2 with All Combat
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Combat Piloting 12-
3 Demolitions 11-
7 Interrogation 14-
1 KS: The Espionage World 8-
2 KS: Islamic Theology 11-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
4 KS: The PLRL 13-
3 Stealth 12-
1 Streetwise 8-
2 Survival (Desert) 11-
3 Tactics 11-
3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Camels
5 WF: Small Arms, Blades, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Resource Points

28 Equipment Points: 200
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 141
Total Cost: 230

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: Israeli Defense Forces 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Sociopath (Very Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: leading terrorist, 11- (Extreme)
55 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 230

Background/History: Despite years of observation and study, world experts on terrorism remain uncertain as to the background and personal history of Masud al-Tahal, better known to the world at large by his codename *Jihad.* The consensus is that he was born in the Palestinian territory in the mid-to-late Seventies, but nothing is known for certain about his parents or childhood. He claims he and his family suffered numerous atrocities at the hands of the Israelis, but has offered no specifics.

Sometime in his late teens, al-Tahal became affiliated with the PLRL — the Palestinian League for Retribution and Liberation, one of the most fanatic of the pro-Palestinian organizations. Whether he was especially disciplined or naturally talented, no outsider knows, but he emerged from their training camps a skilled terrorist who masterminded several successful terrorist operations beginning in the late Nineties. Unlike most terrorists, who are content to strike from a distance via bombs or proxies, Jihad's attacks have a personal element: they resemble military raids or assaults more than random acts of violence (they often seem to have goals beyond the infliction of terror and killing of Israelis and Americans, such as obtaining money or resources for the PLRL). It's believed he wants to conduct attacks on American soil, but that the PLRL leadership has so far denied him permission to plan any such missions.

Personality/Motivation: Jihad mouths the slogans of the Palestinian movement with the best of them... and on the surface, at least, seems to believe what he says. But in his heart, he cares less about Palestinian autonomy than the chance to create suffering, misery, and havoc. He's far less a fighter for a cause than a psychopath who's found a way to satisfy his personal needs that's socially acceptable within his culture. That's why he leads terrorist missions personally — he wants to kill Israelis and Americans himself, not just order other people to do it. If he gets to torture them for information first, so much the better.

Quote: "With guns or bombs, one at a time or in groups, we will cleanse the lands of the Palestinians of Israeli filth."

Powers/Tactics: Trained by the PLRL in both hand-to-hand and small-unit combat, Jihad has supplemented his training with nearly a decade of practical experience planning and conducting terrorist missions and assaults. His favored weapon is

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Assault Rifle	+1	+0	2d6	1d6	40	15	AF5, 2H
Grenade Launcher	+0	+0	2½d6X	1d6	1	15	Carries 8 grenades
Shotgun	+0	+0	2½d6	1d6	5	15	AE1, LR(20"), RR, RP
Ruger P90	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	10	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level II-A (DEF 6, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Depends on the current mission. For example, if he's leading a nighttime assault, he'll usually have a nightvision device. The PLRL isn't the richest or best-equipped terrorist organization in the world, but it can usually get the supplies it needs for an attack.

a custom-designed short-barreled assault rifle with two side-by-side underslung weapons: a grenade launcher (for maximum havoc) and a combat shotgun (for close-quarters work). When he's expecting trouble, he usually carries at least half a dozen fragmentation grenades and two smoke grenades (each with a different color smoke).

Jihad prefers to lead from the front lines, taking a position right alongside his men to fight and kill with them. Although he claims to hate Israelis and Americans, he's never let that hatred overwhelm his judgment in combat; he fights with intelligence and skill, tempered by daring.

Campaign Use: Compared to the likes of Ahmad Farswali (page 139), Jihad is a much easier foe for the PCs to track down and fight. His missions are more like special forces or robbery crew operations than traditional terrorist bombings, so the odds of catching up to him and getting the chance to stop him are better. On the other hand, he's more capable of defending himself than most terrorists, too, so the PCs may not enjoy the experience of catching him.

To make Jihad tougher, give him better body armor, or perhaps some defensive super-skills. To weaken him, remove his Combat Skill Levels and some of his Martial Maneuvers.

Jihad rarely Hunts heroes. He's got too many other irons in the fire — too many missions to plan and execute on behalf of the Palestinian people. A vendetta against a single person might jeopardize his chances to advance the cause. But he has a good memory, and won't overlook an opportunity to "take care" of a PC who's thwarted him in the past.

Jihad is wanted in Israel, Europe, and the United States for numerous acts of terrorism that have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people.

Appearance: Jihad is a muscular, broad-shouldered Palestinian man who stands 5'8" tall. He typically wears military fatigues; if he's going into combat, he'll have on body armor and a helmet as well. He carries his special assault rifle with him nearly everywhere he goes, and usually has a semi-automatic pistol in a holster on his right hip and a combat knife in a boot sheath.

EARLY WITHDRAWAL

TEL AVIV — Today a group of terrorists lead by the infamous PLRL leader Jihad robbed a bank, killing over 20 people in the process. The assault began at 3:00 PM local time. The terrorists drove through the front door of the building in a van, then headed upstairs after warning onlookers the van contained a bomb. After shooting several bank employees, Jihad made the manager open the vault, where large amounts of cash were stored. The terrorists took the money to the roof, where they were picked up by a helicopter. While boarding the helicopter, they triggered the bomb in the van on the first floor, killing over a dozen people and inflicting significant damage to the building. Jihad also shot down a police helicopter that initiated pursuit.

RODRICK KAINE PLOT SEEDS

Kaine suspects the existence of the Consortium (though not its connection with alien technology — he thinks it's a garden-variety conspiracy motivated by greed for money and power). He decides the PCs would make the perfect stalking-horses for investigating it, determining what sort of threat it poses to America's security and prosperity, and making any necessary moves against it.

One of Kaine's superiors decides he's more trouble than he's worth — but he's got too much seniority and too many friends for the superior to just fire him. Learning of Kaine's connection to the PCs, the superior decides to frame the PCs for botching some mission Kaine "hired" them for, so the resulting scandal will give him enough leverage to force Kaine out.

A mission Kaine was overseeing goes south... badly. He needs some top-notch people to salvage the situation, and he needs them not to have formal connections to the CIA. He picks up the phone and calls the PCs....

RODRICK KAINE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 57**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers			END
	Martial Arts: Various Styles			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
5	Kick	-2	+1	6d6 Strike
4	Punch	+0	+2	4d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0	+1	2d6 + v/5; Target Falls

Perks

10 Fringe Benefit: Espionage Rank (Associate Deputy Director in the CIA)
5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Talents

5 Eidetic Memory
3 Lightning Calculator

Skills

20 +2 Overall
3 Acting 13-
3 Bribery 13-
3 Bugging 13-
3 Bureaucracy 13-
1 Computer Programming 8-
3 Conversation 13-
3 Deduction 13-
2 Gambling (Card Games) 13-
3 High Society 13-
2 Language: French (fluent conversation; English is Native)
2 Language: German (fluent conversation)
1 Language: Russian (basic conversation)
1 Language: Spanish (basic conversation)
5 Lockpicking 13-
3 Persuasion 13-
3 Security Systems 13-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
1 Systems Operation 8-
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades
3 Scholar
5 1) KS: The Espionage World 16-
2 2) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
2 3) KS: The Political World 13-
2 4) KS: The Business World 13-
2 5) KS: World Politics 13-
2 6) KS: World History 13-
2 7) KS: Military Science 13-
2 8) KS: American History 13-
3 Traveler
1 1) CK: Beirut 11-
1 2) CK: Berlin 11-
1 3) CK: Chicago 11-
1 4) CK: Hong Kong 11-
1 5) CK: Hudson City 11-
1 6) CK: London 11-
1 7) CK: Moscow 11-
1 8) CK: New York City 11-
1 9) CK: Paris 11-
1 10) CK: Rome 11-
1 11) CK: Washington, D.C. 11-

Resource Points

12 Equipment Points: 120
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
50 Follower/Contact Points: 105
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 217
Total Cost: 274

100+ Disadvantages

5 Age: 40+
10 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Psychological Limitation: Ardent American Patriot (Common, Total)
15 Psychological Limitation: Intolerant Of Bureaucracy And Indecisiveness (Common, Strong)
124 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 274

Background/History: Rodrick Kaine was recruited into the CIA straight out of the University of Chicago. He passed through the Company's training school with flying colors and was assigned to the main battlefield of the Cold War: Western Europe. During two decades as a field agent, he participated in dozens of sensitive missions, ranging from the extraction of defectors to the assassination of double agents, and completed most of them successfully.

But time marches on, leaving no man behind. When the Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War came to an end, Kaine realized it was time for him to leave the fieldwork to younger men. He returned home for good to take a desk job at Langley. But the Agency didn't want a man with his experience just doing paperwork and analyzing reports. After careful consideration, the DCI offered him the position of Associate Deputy Director in the Directorate of Special Operations, a branch of the CIA so secretive its name appears on no budgets and in no memoranda. Eager to continue fighting the good fight in the best way he could, Kaine accepted.

In the dozen-plus years since he became Associate Director, Kaine's life hasn't slowed down at all. But now he's *directing* the super-secret missions taking place around the world instead of carrying them out.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Colt 2000	+1	+1	1½d6	1d6	15	10	HP ammunition

Armor

None, unless he *has* to go into the field for a mission where he *expects* to be shot at, in which case he usually wears Level II-A (DEF 6, Activation Roll 11-).

Gear: Whatever he needs, within reason — though he rarely goes into the field anymore

It's a tough job, one filled with anxiety, stress, and paranoia, but it's the work he was born to do.

Personality/Motivation: Rodrick Kaine is an ardent, intelligent, sincere American patriot. He's not stupid or naive enough to believe "my country, right or wrong!", but he genuinely thinks that the American way of life and political system are the best in the world, that other peoples and nations would benefit by adopting them, and that America is the world's bulwark against chaos, oppression, tyranny, and evil. He also believes that to protect America, sometimes it's necessary to do things most Americans wouldn't approve of. He's one of the people that does them, taking the moral burden on himself so average Americans can sleep soundly and safely.

That attitude would make Kaine an ideal CIA employee, one destined to rise to a very high level... if he were more of a team player. But years of relying on himself in the field, and seeing himself and his colleagues get screwed over by bureaucrats more interested in budgets and detente than actually correcting problems, has soured him. He loathes indecisiveness, preferring to keep things moving forward even if, in retrospect, another choice would have been better — though he's neither rash nor hot-headed. He'll violate procedure, make end runs around the chain of command, mislead his superiors, and even disobey direct orders if he feels it's necessary to get things done. If it weren't for the fact that his methods usually get results, the Director would have fired him a long time ago; many of his superiors detest him.

After years in the Great Game, Kaine finds it difficult to trust anyone unreservedly — even his wife and grown children. He's constantly examining his relationships and interactions with people, looking for the ulterior motive, the angle, the real goal. He's too much the patriot to be fully cynical, but there's more than a trace of cynicism to his personality these days.

Quote: "I have an offer for you."

Powers/Tactics: Kaine is a CIA operative with two decades of field experience and more than another decade's worth of mission planning and directing under his belt. Although he's not as fast, strong, or hardy as he used to be, he still remembers plenty of tricks from his days on the front lines, and he can still shoot straight. Still, these days he only goes out into the field when it's absolutely necessary (usually as part of a rescue, recovery, or clean-up op after something goes badly wrong).

Campaign Use: Rodrick Kaine is the sort of NPC that PCs should develop a strong love-hate relationship with. On the one hand, as a friend or Contact he gives them access to the CIA's resources, and can do a lot to smooth the way for them in their various escapades. On the other, he has his own agenda and won't hesitate to manipulate the PCs into helping him fulfill it, even if that means putting them in serious danger. Even if he's helped them many times, they should never be entirely sure they can trust him — because he almost certainly doesn't trust them.

Once he learns he can make use of the PCs, Kaine will study them carefully, learning everything he can about them (including plenty of things they'd rather he not know). Once he feels he's got a handle on them, that he knows how they'll react and how he can turn them to his own purposes, he'll approach them in a non-threatening way with an "offer" (hence his quote, above). If he feels he can get them to do what he wants by appealing to their patriotism or sense of justice, he will... but if he has to pay (whatever the coin), he'll pay whatever it takes. When he sets his mind on a mission, he doesn't let little obstacles like budgeting stand in the way of completing it successfully.

To strengthen Kaine, rewind the clock and make him a younger man, with better Primary Characteristics, SPD 4, and more Combat Skill Levels. If you want to weaken him instead, run the clock forward and put him in his sixties or seventies, with lower Characteristics, SPD 2, and no Martial Arts.

If Kaine Hunts characters, he's either been ordered to do so (in which case he follows orders to the extent he deems them worth following) or because he thinks he can make use of them (see above). He doesn't engage in feuds or vendettas; he knows how pointless they are.

Rodrick Kaine has no criminal record, though more than a few intelligence agencies have files on him.

Appearance: Rodrick Kaine is a white male in his early 50s. He stands 5'10" tall, weighs 175 pounds (a lot of his muscle has become soft and a bit flabby over the past decade), and has an average build. His hair is black flecked with grey and conservatively cut; his eyes dark and alert. He wears typical men's business clothes.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

He smoked half a cigarette, thinking about it. "You know we can't do that. We're not authorized for ops on US soil."

"Don't give me that bull*%&!. You do it all the time, and we both know it. Besides, when did Rodrick Kaine care about regulations like that?"

Kaine shrugged. "I still don't see the upside. Why should the Company care about one of the people playing vigilantes and robbers up in Hudson City?"

"Think about it for a second, Kaine. This man — assuming that he is a man — has been running around Hudson City for nearly twenty years. He's killed God only knows how many thousands of people. The cops and the FBI have been after him for years and they've never even come close to catching him. The techniques he must have developed to stay hidden, stay free, get his "work" done — think of what it could mean to you if you got him to teach your field agents. Hell, get him to take on a couple missions and a lot of your troubles would be over."

"Why would he even want to teach us his tricks?"

"Appeal to his sense of "Justice" and patriotism."

Kaine snorted. "If that's the best you can come up with, don't quit your day job." He stood up to leave, wrapping his coat more tightly around him. "I'll think about it. It's an interesting idea, but I doubt it'll lead to anything."

THE KISSING BANDIT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 300 kg; 3d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
29	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 74**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
2	Money: Well Off

	Talents
16	Crippling Blow
4	Deadly Blow: HKA +1d6 with Knives
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

	Skills
2	AK: Hudson City Suburbs 11-
2	CK: Hudson City 11-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Shadowing 12-
7	Stealth 14-
3	Streetwise 13-
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades

	Resource Points
0	Equipment Points: 60
0	Vehicle/Base Points: 10
0	Follower/Contact Points: 5
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 57
Total Cost: 131

100+	Disadvantages
30	Hunted: Joint HCPD-FBI task force 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Psychological Limitation: Antisocial Personality Disorder (Very Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 165

Background/History: In recent months, Hudson City has been terrorized by the attacks of a strange and vicious serial killer whom the press has dubbed "the Kissing Bandit" for his habit of leaving lipstick kiss-marks on his victims. Since he began his reign of terror, seven women have fallen victim to him. All were attractive white women in their late teens or twenties. Their bodies have all been found dumped by quiet roadsides or in rivers and streams in the suburbs surrounding Hudson City; none were found within the city itself, and the authorities cannot perceive any pattern to the dumpings. Each seems to have been repeatedly sexually assaulted. Each had one or more lipstick kisses on her face, neck, breasts, buttocks, or thighs. Additionally, several of the victims were mutilated, typically by having long knives plunged repeatedly into the anus or vagina, but in one case by beheading. In chronological order, the victims were:

Jennifer Anne Christie (9 months, 5 days ago): Age 20, long blonde hair, hazel eyes. Left her dorm at HCSU to go for a walk one evening and never returned. Body found in Willowford 7 months, 14 days ago; kiss-marks on neck and breasts.

Stacy Connelly (7 months, 20 days ago): Age 26, short dirty blonde hair, blue eyes. Failed to show up for her job as a paralegal at a Blackbridge law firm. Body found in Knoxboro 6 months, 3 days ago; kiss-marks to face and thighs, mutilations to anus.

Rikki Lanewski (5 months, 18 days ago): Age 24, short brown hair, brown eyes. Went jogging one evening and failed to return home; her boyfriend reported her missing after she failed to appear for a breakfast date the next morning. Body found in Norwood 4 months, 8 days ago; kiss-marks to breasts and buttocks, and the body was crudely beheaded, probably with an axe or machete.

Julia Turretti (4 months, 28 days ago): Age 19, long black hair, brown eyes. Left home for a night class at community college and failed to return home. Body found in Franklin County near the Outer Beltline 3 months, 21 days ago; kiss-marks to face, breasts, and buttocks, mutilations to vagina.

Mariah McAllister (2 months, 20 days ago): Age 27, long red hair, green eyes. Failed to show up for her job as manager of a Voodoo Bean coffee shop. Body found in Iroquois 1 month, 10 days ago; kiss-marks to neck, breasts, and buttocks.

Wendy Simmons (1 month, 16 days ago): Age 21, short black hair partly dyed pink, green eyes. Boyfriend found shot to death near LeMastre Park, and Wendy missing, after an evening when they had a date. Body found in Arlington three weeks ago; kiss-marks to breasts, mutilations to vagina.

Jamie Clarkston (25 days ago): Age 22, long black hair, grey eyes. Failed to show up for her job as a receptionist for an advertising agency. Body found in Sparta five days ago; kiss-marks to breasts and thighs, mutilations to anus.

Personality/Motivation: The FBI profile on the Kissing Bandit (which is not publicly available in full) indicates the following:

- He is a white male, age 25-35, though he may look young for his age. He has no facial hair, and may wear glasses.
- He is an "organized" serial killer who plans his crimes with some care and prepares for them by carrying a "rape/murder kit." Since the victims had nothing in common in terms of where they live or work, or their social circles, he probably sees them in a public place, then follows them to learn their routine so he can plan his attack.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
S&W Model 19	+0	+0	1½d6	1d6-1	6	9	
Knife	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown, carries at least three of different types/styles

Armor
None

Gear: Rape/murder kit (rope, duct tape, and other "tools" for kidnapping and restraining his victims)

- He owns a car with a large trunk, or some sort of van, that he uses to transport his victims.
- He may have an independent source of income, thus freeing his time to stalk victims and plan his assaults.
- He owns a house or building that is in some way isolated. Either it's physically distant from the closest houses (which would mean he lives outside the main ring of Hudson City suburbs), or the buildings closest to it are abandoned. Indications are that he keeps the women prisoner for a time — ligature marks show that the victims were extensively and repeatedly tied up, and the bodies are found soon after being dumped because he makes no significant effort to hide them. Therefore he needs a "headquarters" where he can do his "work" in peace.
- He has used the exact same lipstick to kiss every victim (and the kiss-prints themselves will make it easy to identify him when he's caught). The lipstick obviously holds some significance for him; perhaps it formerly belonged to his mother, some other significant female figure in his life, or his first victim.
- The mutilations to the victims indicate extreme rage and anger, though what trigger the mutilations in some victims and not others remains unknown. Perhaps the mutilated victims failed to obey his orders (or obey them quickly and properly enough), or something about them reminded him of a hated figure in his life.

Quote: None.

Powers/Tactics: The Kissing Bandit seems to be a skilled knife-wielder. He's killed all of his victims with the knife, and most of the cuts are clean and strong, as if made by someone confident in using the "tool" he wields. However, he's also comfortable with guns, since he shot Wendy Simmons's boyfriend to death at close range.

Campaign Use: The real identity and background of the Kissing Bandit have been left undefined so that you can fit him into your campaign in the most dramatically appropriate way. Make him someone the PCs know and would never suspect, so that the horror of his actions becomes all the more deeply felt.

To make the Kissing Bandit tougher, give him some cinematic healing abilities so he's hard to put down permanently (such as the *Rapid Healing* Talent or the *It Looks Worse Than It Is* super-skill), or increase his DEX to 20 and SPD to 5. To weaken him, reduce his STR and DEX to 13 each, and get rid of his Deadly Blow and/or Crippling Blow.

The Kissing Bandit doesn't Hunt heroes — unless of course, one of them happens to fit his victim profile, in which case he might fixate on her as his next victim....

The Kissing Bandit has no plot seeds because he's a plot seed by himself — the adventure is, the PCs have to find him and stop him.

Appearance: Unknown.

A KISS BEFORE DYING

"Our top story tonight: the Hudson City Police Department reports that the infamous "Kissing Bandit" has struck again. Late last night, the body of Jamie Clarkston, a 21 year-old receptionist, was found near a road in the town of Sparta. Departmental spokesmen report that the body had the distinctive "kiss-marks" that indicate the Bandit's involvement, and that the body was mutilated in a fashion consistent with the Bandit's previous six victims. No further details have been released.

"The staff and owners of WJYG extend their sympathies to Jamie's family and friends."

—from a WJYG-TV news broadcast

LT. PAUL MCCLINTON

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
14	CON	8	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
16	INT	6	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 9 PD (3 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 7 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
27	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 67**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Police Self-Defense				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 3d6 NND (2)	
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 33 STR	
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 33 STR	
4	Punch/Elbow Strike	+0	+2	6½d6 Strike	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)				
1	Use Art with Clubs				
7	*Unimpressed:* +15 PRE; Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1)				0
2	*Observant:* +1 PER with Sight Group				0

Perks

2	Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers
3	Fringe Benefit: Law Enforcement Rank (Lieutenant)
2	Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit
4	Money: Well Off
1	Reputation: hero cop (among the Hudson City public), 11-, +1/+1d6
3	Reputation: one *tough* cop (in the Hudson City Law Enforcement World, underworld, and related subcultures) 11-, +3/+3d6

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
3	Acting 13-
5	Bribery 14-
1	Bugging 8-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Criminology 12-
5	Deduction 13-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12-
1	Gambling (Card Games) 8-
5	Interrogation 14-
5	CK: Hudson City 14-
4	KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 13-
5	KS: The Hudson City Police Department 14-
3	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 12-
7	KS: The Law Enforcement World 16-
1	Lockpicking 8-
3	Persuasion 13-
2	PS: Police Officer 11-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Stealth 12-
7	Streetwise 15-
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
0	Vehicle/Base Points: 10
40	Follower/Contact Points: 85
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 190
Total Cost: 257

100+ Disadvantages

5	Distinctive Features: Uniform and/or Badge (Easily Concealed)
10	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Psychological Limitation: Corrupt And Greedy (Common, Strong)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
10	Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (Occasionally, Major)
97	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 257

Background/History: Idealism dies fast on the streets of the urban abyss. When Paul McClinton graduated from the Police Academy, he was all set to clean up the city. He was shocked the first time he saw his partner taking a bribe... but it didn't take him long to get over it. Within a couple months, he didn't feel guilty anymore when he took the money people offered him to look the other way, to help them out, to give them a little special attention. Within a year, he was looking for ways to shake more money out of the people he met.

Having started down the slippery slope, it didn't take McClinton long to hit the bottom — or reach the top, depending on how you look at it. Over the years he used his ever-growing list of contacts cleverly, obtaining transfers from one precinct to another so he could get to know more people and rake in even more money from bribes, selling stuff out of the back of the evidence room, and cutting himself in for a slice of various underworld pies as his price for leaving the bad guys who owned them alone. In each new precinct he set up networks among other corrupt officers both to increase his take and to insulate himself from some of the risks. Intelligence, charisma, street smarts, ruthlessness, and greed combined to make him a wealthy man with so many friends on the force that it's doubtful IA could have touched him even if it had known what he was doing. The good press he occasion-

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Glock 21	+0	+0	2d6	1d6	13	9	Carries two extra clips
S&W 625	+0	+0	2d6-1	1d6	6	10	Holdout gun
Tonfa	+0	—	3d6 N	—	—	8	
Pepper Spray	+0	+0	Fla 5d6 + NND 3d6	—	12	—	

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: Handcuffs (two sets), baton flashlight

ally received for his high-risk, high-yield busts of drug dealers and robbers only made him harder to touch.

When the brass formed the Citywide Task Force, McClinton quickly arranged to have himself transferred in. Freedom to roam the city and the implied license to go a little over the line to make the big cases were perfect for him. In the years since, he's distinguished himself time and time again... all the while running an interdepartmental criminal empire behind the scenes.

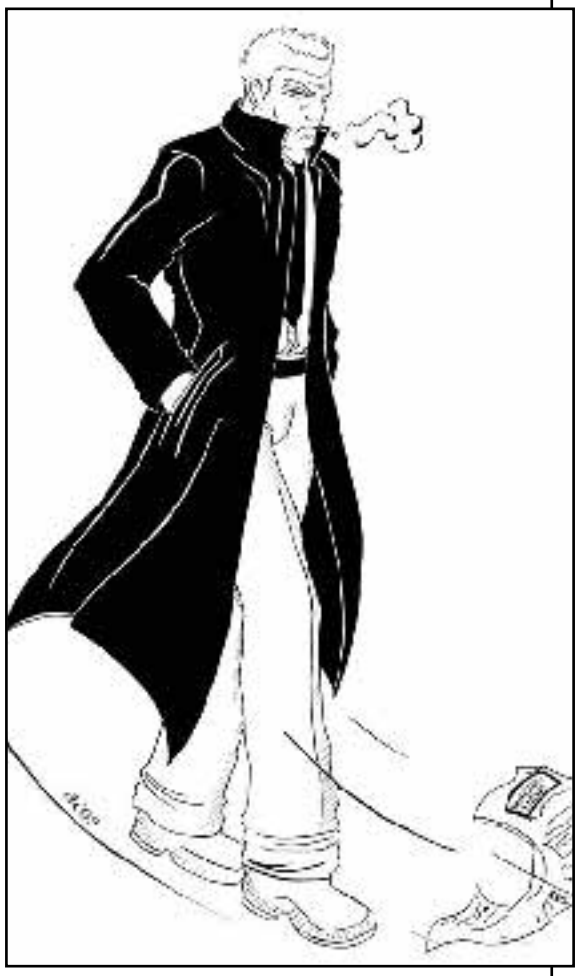
Personality/Motivation: Paul McClinton is a tough, no-nonsense kind of guy. After more than 20 years as a cop, he's seen it all, heard it all, done it all. He long ago gave up any illusions that he was somehow "saving" Hudson City — these days he's more likely to describe his job as just trying to keep a lid on the whole sordid place so it doesn't explode. He still enjoys helping people and arresting perps, but he no longer thinks anything he does really makes much of a difference in the grand scheme of things. Now he's in it for the power and the money. It's possible some spark of the idealistic young man he once was exists within him, but if so, reaching it is going to be about as easy as getting to Mars.

Quote: "Let's cut the bull*%&!. We both know how this works: you make with a cool, and I leave you alone for another six months."

Powers/Tactics: In a lot of ways, Paul McClinton is a cop's cop. He's just as smart as he is tough, and he backs those qualities up with a laser-sharp street sense and a knowledge of Hudson City's dark side earned in over two decades on the beat. He's got the acting skills of a Hollywood star, and can conduct an interrogation better than nearly anyone on the force.

But there's a flip side: he's also the most corrupt cop on the HCPD... and given the department's well-deserved reputation for being dirty, that's saying something. His corruption starts with the little things, like ignoring suspects' constitutional rights and administering curbstone justice when it suits him, but it gets bigger. He takes bribes from many gangs and independent criminals to leave them alone or lean on their competition a little harder. He arranges for evidence to go "missing" so the prosecutor can't obtain a conviction, then sells the stuff back to whoever the cops seized it from for a tidy profit. A time or two he's gotten involved in drug dealing or contract murder, though he's backed off that sort of thing because it's too risky — and if there's one thing McClinton's good at, it's managing risk. He wouldn't have stayed free and clear all these years if he left a lot of tracks and made a lot of mistakes.

Unlike the average corrupt cop, whose corruption doesn't extend much beyond the reach of his arm, McClinton runs rackets all over the city. The networks of bribery, theft, and illicit profit he established years ago continue to funnel money to him. In exchange he uses his considerable influence within the department to protect his "employees" when they get in trouble, help them obtain promotions, and so forth. It's a vast, dirty, disgusting web of rot at the heart of the HCPD, and he sits right at the center of it, getting richer by the day.



LT. MCCLINTON PLOT SEEDS

Internal Affairs is coming a little too close to one of McClinton's schemes. Looking for a scapegoat to frame, he hits upon the PCs.

One of the PCs' street contacts says he's got some juicy information about a "major bad cop" that he's willing to sell. But when they go to meet him, he turns up dead. Are the PCs tough, determined, and dedicated enough to trace this clue back to McClinton and pin something on him at long last?

McClinton decides to retire... giving rise to the question of who will succeed him as the kingpin of Hudson City's corrupt cops. The various "contenders" have started a shadow war in the streets, with cop shooting cop. The PCs have to find out what's happening and put an end to it.

Campaign Use: To the PCs, Lt. McClinton may not look like much of an opponent — how hard could it be to get rid of one cop? But you should keep several things in mind. First, McClinton has a *lot* of friends at all levels and precincts of the HCPD. If he comes to any harm, every cop in the city will be looking to get revenge for it; if he comes under fire, dozens of staunch defenders will leap to his side.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, cutting off the head will *not* kill the body. The PCs can get rid of Lt. McClinton, but they can't root out all the corruption he spawned (and, in a dramatic sense, embodies) nearly so easily. Correcting the problem McClinton represents should take a lot more than a few well-placed bullets and a speech about Justice.

To make McClinton a tougher personal foe for the PCs, increase his Primary Characteristics to the 15-18 range (that probably means making him a younger man as well). To weaken him, change his character sheet to show how battered, beaten, and bruised he's gotten over the course of twenty-plus years on the street (for example, reduce his Running to 4" because of an old leg wound, give him Physical Limitation: One Eye, and so on).

If McClinton's Hunting the PCs, they're in trouble. He can't direct the actions of the HCPD at will, but he has enough pull that he can get a lot of cops paying a lot more attention to the PCs than they'd like. If he has to, he can even reach out beyond Hudson City to call down some audits or federal heat on the PCs. He's not stupid enough to go after them with a gun; there are so many easier ways to ruin them.

Paul McClinton has no criminal record. He's had several civilian complaints filed against him during his career, and has been involved in over a dozen shootings (including three fatalities), but departmental review has cleared him every time.

Appearance: Paul McClinton is a white man in his mid-40s. He stands 5'11" tall and weighs about 190 pounds, his trim body having long ago given way to a general flabbiness. His lined, weathered face shows the strain of too many days tramping the Hudson City streets in the cold, too many nights falling asleep drunk in bars, too many smoke-filled poker rooms, too many horrors witnessed. He usually wears slightly shabby men's clothes (button-down shirts, khaki pants, inexpensive ties), with an overcoat in cold weather.

HERO COP SAVES KIDS

Lieutenant Paul McClinton, the cop who made headlines two years ago with a $50 million cocaine bust in Latin City, was a hero again yesterday when he saved two children, ages seven and eight, from being run over by an out of control dump truck.

"It was the most amazing thing I ever saw," said construction worker Luis Raynaldo. "We've told all the kids around here not to play near the site, but they never listen. These two, they were on the sidewalk next to the site. We saw the truck swerve toward them suddenly, but we were all too far away to do anything. I don't know where that cop came from, but he scooped them up and dove out of the way right before the truck ran through there and smashed into the GC's trailer. If he'd been a second later, those kids would'a been killed."

The driver of the dump truck, Denny Gibson, was found dead at the scene, apparently of a heart attack. A Police Department spokesmen stated that McClinton and his men were in the area on police business, but refused to provide further information. McClinton himself was unavailable for comment.

—from a November, 2004 news report

GETTING YOUR IRISH UP

"Did you hear what happened to the Montgomeries?"

"No, what? Janie lose at tennis again?"

"They were robbed!"

"My God, are you serious?"

"Do I look like I'm joking?"

"What happened?"

"Nobody knows. They were away with the kids for a few days, only the servants were around. One morning the servants woke up to find most of Janie's jewelry and several valuable pieces of silver missing. All the alarms were still turned on, nothing else had been disturbed, and there were no signs of any sort of break-in."

"Do the police have any suspects?"

"They're questioning the servants. It had to've been an inside job. How else could someone have gotten in like that without tripping an alarm or leaving a single trace — fall from the sky?"

—gossip making the rounds in Irishtown

METEOR

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	2		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
28	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 59**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
	Talents
4	Double-Jointed
	Skills
3	Acrobatics 13-
7	Breakfall 15-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Contortionist 13-
1	Demolitions 8-
1	Electronics 8-
2	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
3	Lockpicking 13-
1	Mechanics 8-
9	Parachuting 16-
2	PS: Appraising 11-
3	Security Systems 12-
5	Stealth 14-
3	Streetwise 12-
6	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Jetskis, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Planes, Snow Skiing
2	WF: Small Arms
	Resource Points
18	Equipment Points: 150
15	Vehicle/Base Points: 40
10	Follower/Contact Points: 25
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 104
Total Cost: 163

100+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy; Loves Beautiful, Luxurious Things (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Loves Charmaine Watson; Won't Abandon Or Betray Her (Common, Strong)
5	Rivalry: Professional (with Black Tarantula, Chiaroscuro, and other infamous thieves)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Julianne Greene) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 190

Background/History: Julianne Greene grew up on the wrong side of the tracks, in a family so poor she often went to bed hungry. Her father worked as a mechanic at the little local airport down the road. She spent hours there with him, watching the planes take off. Her dream was to learn how to fly herself... so she could fly the hell out of there and go someplace better.

She scrimped and saved, but she never had enough for lessons. But one of the old guys down at the airfield, he said he'd teach her... if she'd "be nice" to him. She was old enough to know what he meant, and it revolted her — but it was the only way.

While she was learning how to pilot small airplanes she had her first encounter with parachutists. Flying planes was fun, but parachuting looked even more fun — and closer to truly flying. She begged them to teach her, finally convincing one of them she was serious about it. She almost quit the first time she looked out the open door of a perfectly good plane, but then she gritted her teeth and threw herself into the sky.

She was flying! It was such an amazing experience she almost didn't remember to pull the ripcord in time. The second she landed she wanted to go up and do it again.

Julianne began working two part-time jobs, spending every penny she earned on parachuting equipment and jump time. As she got better and better at it, she entered some competitions, winning enough money at them to keep going. But as she moved deeper into the world of parachuting, she met more than a few people who were just in it for kicks — rich people and spoiled brat kids who'd never had to struggle for anything. They infuriated her with their casual dismissal of everyone else and their know-it-all attitudes. She became determined to show them she was better than they were, even though she didn't have money. Then one day it hit her: why *shouldn't* she have money? What had those assholes ever done to deserve their mansions and fancy cars? She'd worked hard all her life, and she was entitled to a helluva lot more than she had.

The first thing she stole was one of their cars — a Mercedes. It was almost as big a thrill as skydiving, driving away with someone else's wheels like that. She sold it to one of her old boyfriends, who owned a garage; she knew he could make it disappear. And the big stack of $100 bills he gave her for it was the biggest thrill of all.

She worked on her thieving skills slowly, taking the time to learn them right and not expose herself to too many risks. One of the things she quickly picked up on was that while lots of people lock their doors, they don't necessarily guard their roofs or upper windows very well. And she had a way to reach those places....

Today, Julianne is a well-known figure on the professional parachuting circuit. With her "Greene Machine" team of fellow jumpers and their pilot Charmaine Watson (who's also her girlfriend), they support themselves doing what they love best: skydiving. And at night, when the rest of them are partying, Julianne puts on a dark blue costume, changes her name to Meteor, and robs from the rich to give to the poor: herself.

METEOR PLOT SEEDS

Someone has stolen a collection of valuable jade statuettes from an art and antiquities dealer who has his offices in a downtown skyscraper. The cops are baffled — but of course they've never even considered that someone came in from the roof. The PCs have to figure out what happened and recover the statuettes.

A spy wants to obtain some data kept in a computer in the Fordham ChemTech building. He hires Meteor to get it. After she succeeds, Fordham hires the PCs to get it back.

The government needs a *highly* skilled parachutist for a secret mission. The PCs are hired or assigned to track Meteor down and persuade her to take the job.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Glock 20	+2	+8	2d6-1	1d6-1	15	9	Laser, Sil (-2)

Armor
Armored Costume (DEF 4, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Nightvision mask lenses (Nightvision; OIF), parachute, mini-chute (see text), advanced burglar's tools (+2 to Lockpicking), advanced climbing rig (+2 to Climbing), Utility Belt containing various small and useful gadgets (but no weapons other than smoke pellets)

Personality/Motivation: Meteor got into the costumed crime gig partly for the challenge — parachuting onto the roof or side of a building is *really* difficult, and thus a major tribute to her skill — but mostly for the money. Having grown up poor, she doesn't ever want to be without money again. She loves beautiful and luxurious things, so much so that she sometimes holds on to her loot for too long just for the joy of having it.

Meteor is head over heels in love with Charmaine, her pilot and best friend. They've been in a committed relationship for years, and Meteor would do anything to protect her. But Charmaine's not quite so devoted. She cares for Meteor, but not enough to risk her own safety or prosperity.

Quote: "No one ever expects an attack from above."

Powers/Tactics: Meteor is a thief who gets to her targets by parachuting onto them — preferably onto the roof, but sometimes she's had to make daring jumps where she gets next to the side of a building and grabs onto the wall while cutting her 'chute loose. The doors on skyscraper rooftops and window high above the ground are rarely locked and secured, making it easy for her to gain entrance undetected.

Of course, to parachute onto something, Meteor first has to get above it. That's where her girlfriend Charmaine comes in. A skilled pilot, Charmaine can get her right over the "drop zone" every time. They use the plane the Greene Machine uses for daytime jumps, but with identifying symbols and markings blacked out.

As part of her costume, Meteor wears a "mini-chute" — a small parachute in a compact backpack that fits under her ordinary parachute. The mini-chute doesn't work nearly as well as a regular 'chute; using it requires Parachuting rolls at -3 every Phase just to keep from falling. It's mostly intended to help break her fall if her main parachute and backup parachute both fail, or if she has to jump out of a skyscraper to escape from the cops.

Meteor strongly prefers not to kill — in fact, she'd just as soon avoid violence or any other sort of confrontation at all. But remaining free and with Charmaine is worth the short-term guilt of shooting some cop or rich snob.

Campaign Use: Meteor is a thief with a "gimmick" — an unusual approach to her crimes. The trick is to (a) make the most use of her gimmick until the PCs figure it out, and (b) make her useful against groups of heroes after that. For example, maybe she could team up with other criminals to form a gang, giving her the support she needs on the ground and allowing her to function as the "cavalry" when her compatriots are in a tough fight and need unexpected reinforcements.

To make Meteor tougher, give her some combat abilities: Martial Arts, some Combat Skill Levels, or the like. Right now she's not much of a fighter, and if you want to pit her against the PCs repeatedly, she probably needs to be one. To weaken her, decrease her Parachuting roll so she can't attempt truly outrageous skydiving crimes.

Meteor doesn't Hunt heroes or anyone else. She just wants to get rich and continue to enjoy her life as a parachutist.

Julianne Greene has no criminal record... yet.

Appearance: Julianne Greene is a pretty white woman in her mid-20s; she's 5'7" tall, weighs about 120 pounds with an attractive, slightly muscular figure, and has shoulder-length straight, honey-blonde hair. As Meteor she wears a full-body bodystocking and mask in dark blue (with special nightvision goggles to protect her eyes and improve her ability to see in the dark); her parachute and its straps are a dark red.

NOCTURNE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
16	INT	6	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
25	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 62**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
23	*Mists Of Confusion:* Change Environment 8" radius, -2 Sight Group PER Rolls, 32 Charges lasting 1 Turn each (+¾); IIF (smokescreen generator built into costume and concealed underneath cloak/robes; -¼), No Range (-½)	[32]
46	*Mist Of Slumber:* Energy Blast 8d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing, Diminished Sleeping, or appropriate Immunity]; +1); IIF (mist bracers; -¼), Limited Range (3"; -¼), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]
28	*Mist Of Waking Dreams:* Mental Illusions 12d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing, Diminished Sleeping, or appropriate Immunity]; +1); IIF (mist bracers; -¼), Based On CON (ED applies; -1), No Conscious Control (-1), Limited Effect (cannot achieve more than EGO + 20, make target remember illusion as "real," or cause damage; -½), Limited Range (3"; -¼), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]
9	*Mist Of Nightmares:* Mental Illusions +4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing, Diminished Sleeping, or appropriate Immunity]; +1); IIF (mist bracers; -¼), Based On CON (-1), No Conscious Control (only to make target experience nightmares; -1), Limited Effect (cannot achieve more than EGO +20 effects, make target remember illusion as "real," or cause damage; -½), Limited Range (3"; -¼), 4 Charges (-1)	[4]
3	*Can't Sleep:* Diminished Sleeping (no need to sleep)	0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Skills

3 Computer Programming 12-
3 Electronics 12-
3 Inventor 12-
5 KS: Dream Interpretation 14-
1 Lockpicking 8-
3 SS: Biology 12-
3 SS: Chemistry 12-
5 SS: Sleep Science 14-
1 Security Systems 8-
7 Stealth 14-
1 Streetwise 8-

Resource Points

18 Equipment Points: 150
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
5 Follower/Contact Points: 15
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 176
Total Cost: 238

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Arrogant; Convinced Of His Own Superiority (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Robert Hedricks) (Frequently, Major)
68 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 238

Background/History: *Human beings spend a third of their lives sleeping — and yet, most people complain that they don't get enough sleep at all. Eager to regain some of that precious lost time, they skimp on sleep, and the result is often disastrous: irritability, productivity lost to lack of mental clarity, thousands of accidents caused every year by people too sleepy to keep them from happening.*

Here at Blount Pharmaceuticals, we're taking steps to free people from the chains of sleep that have held them prisoner for so long. Imagine how much richer and fuller your life would be with eight more hours a day to do things in! INVIGRA will return those hours to you by keeping you awake 24 hours a day with no serious side effects. INVIGRA — coming soon from Blount Pharmaceuticals!

Except that it wasn't. The Marketing Division had gone ahead with its press releases and advertising campaign against his express wishes, and now he was the one paying the price. He was in charge of the Invigra project, and that meant it was his responsibility to finish the drug on time, regardless of how ridiculous the deadline — the one chosen by the !$&*%@# *Marketing Division,* for Christ's sake — was.

Hedricks yawned again — a real jaw-cracker this time, despite all the coffee — and turned back to his analyses of the different formulations. He carefully studied each test tube, reviewing the data to determine which one of them held the version of the drug worth testing further, thinking in the back of his mind how much he'd like just... a little... sleep....

He passed out. His head came down on the test tubes with a crash, shattering all of them, but he was too tired for even that to wake him up. He lay there in a puddle of proto-Invigra for nearly four hours....

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
None							

Armor

Armored Costume (DEF 4, Activation Roll 14-)
Gas Mask (Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing], 1 Continuing Charge lasting 2 Hours; OIF)

Gear: Nightvision Goggles (Nightvision; OIF); Eerie Costume (+10 PRE; OIF, Only For Fear-/Intimidation-Based Presence Attacks)

And then he woke up.

It wasn't like waking up in the morning — slowly coming to life and rousing to greet the day. He snapped back to conscious *instantly,* with no lingering drowsiness at all. Realizing the drugs must have done something to him, he carefully sopped up as much of the mixture as he could and began studying it.

He was still working late that night, without having needed a single rest break the entire day, when he decided it was time to go home. His body might not signal the need for sleep yet, but his mind was losing its ability to concentrate. He'd fall asleep fast enough once his head hit the pillow.

Or maybe not. 3:00 AM rolled around, and he was lying there wide awake. 4:00 AM. 5:00 AM. He didn't feel tired at all.

His first urge was to tell the rest of the team they'd done it — that they'd created a drug that kept people awake with no side effects! But somehow he knew that was wrong. If Blount found out what had happened to him, he'd have to go through endless tests while the other scientists tried to figure it out. As if any of them could. Dolts! They had the intellect of tree snails — while he had a Ph.D in Chemistry from Stanford. Besides which, even if he went along with their plans, they'd just end up stealing credit for *his* work. After all, none of *them* worked the long hours that he'd put in to make this discovery....

It didn't take long for the drug's side effects to take over Hedricks completely, though he was never aware of it. The human mind *needs* sleep to relax, recharge, and stay on an even keel. Now that Hedricks *couldn't* sleep, his brilliant mind began to function less efficiently. He lost none of his intelligence, but his streak of superiority complex soon shifted into full-bore arrogance of the worst sort. Convinced he was wasting his time at Blount, he quit, burning plenty of bridges in the process.

He soon got a cold, hard slap from reality. Word spread through the scientific community, and he found out no one would hire him. From there it wasn't long before financial pressures made him start thinking about... crime. Why should idiots and fools have all the money, when brilliant men like him had nothing? If they weren't smart enough to keep what they had, then he deserved to keep whatever he took. But he needed a way to make the task easier and minimize his risk of exposure....

Putting his talents as a chemist to work, Hedricks developed several chemical weapons that could put other people to sleep or induce dream-like hallucinations. Drawing upon the theme of dreams and phantasms, he created an eerie costume that would hide the devices he used and make it easy to frighten victims and cops. Soon Nocturne, master of sleep and dreams, stalked the nighttime streets of Hudson City, stealing whatever he wanted while sleeping guards and dreaming watchmen snored softly nearby.

Personality/Motivation: Nocturne was a pretty well-balanced guy before he lost the ability to sleep — a little smug and intellectually vain, sure, but otherwise pretty normal. Ever since he stopped sleeping, "normal" has grown smaller and smaller in the rear-view mirror as he loses his grip on sanity. So far he's just become much more arrogant, greedy, a little paranoid, and generally amoral... but the longer he remains awake, the more twisted his thinking will probably become.

Nocturne's arrogance manifests itself in many ways. Despite the fact that it spoils the "air of mystery" he tries to cultivate with his costume and aloof manner, he often can't resist taunting or belittling his opponents, especially when their attacks and stratagems fail. Although he prefers to avoid combat altogether, it's becoming more and more tempting to try to defeat an opponent through trickery, ambush, or better weaponry, thus proving that his is the superior mind. Furthermore, he can't resist an intellectual challenge; a vigilante might be able to use this trait to lure him into a trap.

Nocturne has no real desire to hurt anyone, much less kill — but he could be pushed to it if that were the only way to prove his superiority.

Quote: "Slumber overwhelms you... None can resist the mists of Nocturne!"

Powers/Tactics: Nocturne's weapons are several chemical concoctions in the form of mists and gases contained in inert liquid form in reservoirs in the bracers he wears on his arms. By mixing the right combination of chemicals, he creates an aerosol spray that renders the victim unconscious. By adding certain psychotropic chemicals to the mix, he makes the victim experience vivid hallucinations or nightmares instead. He can't control what the victim experiences during these "waking dreams," and cannot inflict STUN or BODY damage with them directly, but a victim could hurt himself indirectly by responding to the hallucination (for example, by chasing his "long-lost love" across a "beautiful green meadow" that's actually a traffic-filled street). A person who doesn't have to breathe or sleep, or who possesses enough physical hardiness, isn't affected by the mists (Nocturne's equipment includes a gas mask so he doesn't accidentally breathe them himself).

NOCTURNE PLOT SEEDS

It occurs to Nocturne that Blount Pharmaceuticals may have *other* unusual projects he can obtain valuable resources from. He begins targeting Blount facilities. Eager to resolve the situation without getting the cops involved, the company secretly contacts the PCs to request their assistance.

The guards and personnel at a top secret government facility suddenly all fall asleep — and when they wake up, hard drives containing valuable data are gone! It's Nocturne's m.o., but he's never pulled such as high-stakes robbery before. Is he behind it, or is there more to this mystery than meets the eye?

Nocturne and Le Bateleur get into an argument about who's cleverer and decide to settle it with a crime spree — whoever gets the most loot during a three-week period wins. It's up to the PCs to put a stop to this competition and show both of them who's *really* the cleverest.

For protection, Nocturne usually surrounds himself with a thick mist that makes it difficult to see in an 8" radius, then uses his Stealth to approach within 3" of a target to use one of his mist-weapons. He also wears a bodysuit of armored cloth under his cloak and robes.

Nocturne prefers not to fight at all. If confronted, he tries to escape, unless he feels confident enough to take on (and humiliate) his opponent. If his opponent can see through his smokes or isn't affected by his mists, he'll do whatever he can to get away. Then he'll try to devise a way to defeat that person.

Campaign Use: The best way to introduce Nocturne into the campaign is to have him pull a series of unusual robberies: store clerks and the like suddenly fall asleep, waking up to find their stores looted; couriers who were carrying large amounts of money are found wandering in some park, babbling about the visions they're experiencing, and so forth. Tracking Nocturne will be difficult, since he doesn't have a favorite target or established territory, but no doubt the PCs will come up with something. (In a *Dark Champions: The Animated Series*-style campaign, he might have a favorite target — objects related to sleep and dreams, such as paintings of dreamscapes — thus making him easier to find.)

If you want to make Nocturne more powerful, increase the DEF of his body armor, or give him a group of thugs to help him fight his battles. To weaken him, reduce the DCs in his mist-weapons.

Nocturne would only Hunt a hero who humiliated him, particularly if the humiliation were intellectual. He'd look for a way to reverse the humiliation while simultaneously getting revenge, even if that's as simple as luring the hero into a trap Nocturne believes he can't get out of.

Robert Hedricks has no criminal record. The HCPD wants Nocturne on suspicion of multiple robberies.

Appearance: Robert Hedricks is a black man, 5'11" tall with a trim but not muscular build and hair cropped close to his skull. As Nocturne, he wears bluish-purple, flowing hooded robes and a cape. Within his hood, all that can be seen are green, glowing eyes (his nightvision glasses); the garb hides his gas mask, mist-bracers, and body armor. He wears black gloves.

PERCHANCE TO DREAM

"Okay, Hector, it's all yours. Don't get too much sleep."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," Hector said with a smile. "That's your department. I come here to work!"

"Well, keep a close eye on all the pottery, don't let any of it bite ya."

"See you tomorrow."

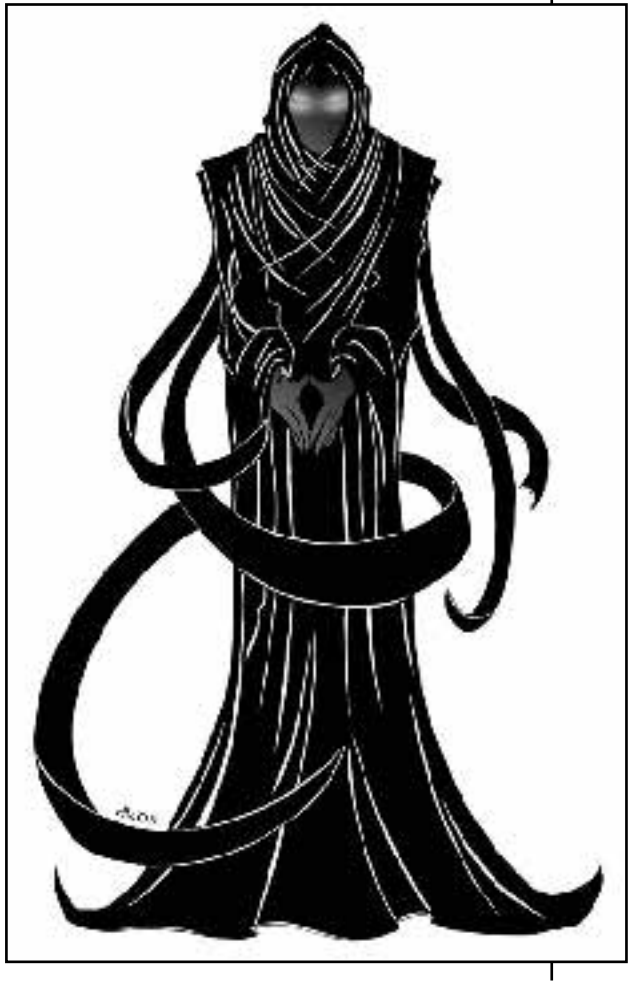
The first few hours were uneventful, as usual. He checked the place over, making sure the doors and windows were locked and the alarms were working. He was almost done with his third round of the night and looking forward to a coffee break when he thought he saw something in the Mayan room. Was that smoke?"

He hurried over, shining his flashlight around, looking for the orange of flames. He didn't see any. When he got closer, he realized it wasn't smoke, it was more like some kind of mist or fog. He was just about to go phone for help when the sleepiness hit him.

He tottered a few steps, but he couldn't keep his eyes open. He passed out, hitting the ground hard. His flashlight rolled across the floor.

A man in a cloak and robes stepped out of the mist. Beneath his hood and mask he smiled and headed for the display case with the Ming porcelain.

—Nocturne visits the museum



ANDRES PANTHANATOS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
24	DEX	54	14-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
25	PRE	20	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
12	COM	1	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 14 PD (6 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 14 ED (6 rED)
5	SPD	26		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
10	REC	4		
40	END	0		
50	STUN	12	**Total Characteristics Cost: 197**	

Movement: Running: 10"/20"
Leaping: 7"/14"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
120	*Super-Skills:* Variable Power Pool, 60 pool + 30 control cost, Cosmic (+2); Only For Super-Skills And Like Abilities (-½)	var
40	*HTH Combat Training:* HA +8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	0
20	*HTH Combat Training:* HKA 2d6 (3d6+1 with STR); Only Works On Living Beings (-½)	3
40	*HTH Combat Training:* +40 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only To Simulate Exert-Based Martial Maneuvers (see text; -½)	0
30	*Shrug It Off:* Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼), STUN Only (-½), Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼)	0
8	*Strong Runner:* Running +4" (10" total)	1
3	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +3" (7" forward, 4" upward)	1
2	*Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total)	1

Perks

- 10 Deep Covers (5, to be defined by GM)
- 10 Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
- 15 Money: Filthy Rich
- 12 Reputation: world's deadliest assassin (throughout the Espionage World, Law Enforcement World, Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World, and underworld) 14-, +4/+4d6

Talents

- 12 Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED)
- 15 Combat Sense 15-
- 20 Deadly Blow: HKA +2d6 with All HTH Attacks
- 20 Deadly Blow: RKA +2d6 with All Ranged Attacks
- 5 Eidetic Memory
- 6 Resistance (6 points)

Skills

- 20 +2 Overall
- 32 +4 with All Combat
- 18 Range Skill Levels: +6 versus Range Modifier with all attacks
- 18 Targeting Skill Levels: +6 versus Hit Location modifiers with all attacks
- 5 Accurate Sprayfire
- 3 Acrobatics 14-
- 3 Acting 14-
- 3 Analyze Combat Technique 13-
- 3 Analyze Style 13-
- 3 Breakfall 14-
- 3 Bribery 14-
- 3 Bugging 13-
- 3 Climbing 14-
- 3 Combat Driving 14-
- 3 Combat Piloting 14-
- 3 Computer Programming 13-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 5 Concentrated Sprayfire
- 3 Contortionist 14-
- 5 Cramming
- 3 Criminology 13-
- 3 Deduction 13-
- 10 Defense Maneuver IV
- 3 Demolitions 13-
- 3 Disguise 13-
- 3 Electronics 13-
- 3 Fast Draw (Common Melee Weapons) 14-
- 3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 14-
- 2 Gambling (Card Games) 13-
- 3 High Society 14-
- 3 Interrogation 14-
- 3 Lipreading 13-
- 3 Lockpicking 14-
- 3 Mechanics 13-
- 3 Navigation (Air, Land) 13-
- 3 Paramedics 13-
- 5 Rapid Attack (HTH)
- 5 Rapid Attack (Ranged)
- 5 Rapid Autofire
- 1 SS: Biology 8-
- 2 SS: Chemistry 11-
- 3 SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 13-
- 3 Security Systems 13-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 5 Skipover Sprayfire
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 14-
- 3 Stealth 14-
- 3 Streetwise 14-
- 2 Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 13-
- 10 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic and Advanced Parachuting, Hanggliding, Helicopters, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 15 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Small Arms, Blowguns, Boomerangs And Throwing Clubs, Flamethrowers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons, Thrown Sword

9 Weaponsmith (all categories) 13-
3 Linguist
1 1) Cantonese Chinese (fluent conversation)
1 2) French (fluent conversation)
1 3) German (fluent conversation)
1 4) Italian (fluent conversation)
1 5) Japanese (fluent conversation)
1 6) Mandarin Chinese (fluent conversation)
1 7) Russian (fluent conversation)
1 8) Spanish (fluent conversation)
1 9) Turkish (fluent conversation)
3 Scholar
1 1) KS: Art History 11-
2 2) KS: Assassination Throughout History 13-
2 3) KS: The Espionage World 13-
1 4) KS: High Finance 11-
2 5) KS: The Law Enforcement World 13-
1 6) KS: World Literature 11-
2 7) KS: The Martial World 13-
2 8) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
2 9) KS: Military Science 13-
2 10) KS: Organized Crime 13-
2 11) KS: The Vice World 13-
2 12) KS: World Criminals 13-
3 Traveler
1 1) AK: Africa 11-
1 2) AK: Europe 11-
1 3) AK: India 11-
1 4) AK: The Middle East 11-
1 5) AK: Russia 11-
1 6) AK: South And Central America 11-
1 7) AK: United States 11-
1 8) CK: Bangkok 11-
1 9) CK: Beijing 11-
1 10) CK: Cairo 11-
1 11) CK: Calcutta 11-
1 12) CK: Chicago 11-
1 13) CK: Hong Kong 11-
1 14) CK: Hudson City 11-
1 15) CK: Las Vegas 11-
1 16) CK: London 11-
1 17) CK: Los Angeles 11-
1 18) CK: Moscow 11-
1 19) CK: New York City 11-
1 20) CK: Paris 11-
1 21) CK: Rio de Janeiro 11-
1 22) CK: Rome 11-
1 23) CK: Shanghai 11-
1 24) CK: Singapore 11-
1 25) CK: Toronto 11-
1 26) CK: Tokyo 11-
1 27) CK: Vienna 11-
1 28) CK: Washington, D.C. 11-

Resource Points

108 Equipment Points: 600
70 Vehicle/Base Points: 150
75 Follower/Contact Points: 155
N/A Miscellaneous Points: 2

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 981
Total Cost: 1,178

100+ Disadvantages

30 Hunted: any military or law enforcement agency 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
30 Hunted: any intelligence agency 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Assassin (Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: world's greatest assassin, 14- (limited group: as *Reputation* Perk) (Extreme)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)
953 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 1,178

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Pistol	+5	+9	2d6+1	1d6+1	15	10	Reversed ogives, AP, laser, Sil (-3), clear grips/magazine, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, carries at least 2, with 2 clips each
Autopistol	+5	+9	2d6+1	1d6+1	50	10	Reversed ogives, AF5, AP, laser, Sil (-3), clear grips/magazine, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, carries 2
Assault Rifle	+5	+15	2½d6	1d6+1	100	15	Reversed ogives, AF5, AP, laser, clear grips/magazine, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved firing pin
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Advanced Level III-A (DEF 9, Activation Roll 15-) if he feels he has to wear armor, but he usually prefers not to
Various other protective devices and garb, depending on mission parameters

Gear: Between his wealth, connections, and Skills, Panthanatos can obtain just about any gear he needs for a particular job

Clothing: Panthanatos wears many different types of clothing, depending on the disguise he's adopted for a particular mission

ANDRES PANTHANATOS PLOT SEEDS

The classic Panthanatos plot: word leaks out that someone has hired Panthanatos to kill a person the PCs would rather keep alive. They have to find a way to stop him, whether it's protecting the victim, killing him first, or getting his employer to call off the contract.

For some reason, a lot of dangerous people seem to have suddenly concluded that one of the PCs is Panthanatos! In between fighting off attackers who want to rid the world of him, the PC has to figure out who framed him, and why... and put an end to it.

Panthantos murders an important Pentagon official and steals some top-secret data. The government hires the PCs to track him down and get the data back.

Background/History: Despite intense investigation by numerous intelligence and law enforcement agencies, the background and history of the assassin who calls himself Andres Panthanatos ("man of all deaths") remain a mystery. He first appeared on the scene in 1984, when he murdered the president of Argentina without anyone having even suspected he was there until he fired the deadly shot. In the two decades since then, he's murdered dozens of people in a variety of ways: gunshots, poison, explosives, staged accidents, and more. The killings differ so much that law enforcement wouldn't even connect them to one another but for the rumors that persistently swirl through the underworld and Espionage World about Panthanatos — who, though supremely cautious, seems intent on claiming full credit for his bloody work.

Personality/Motivation: Unknown. Speculation about Panthanatos's motivations range from sociopathy, to thrillseeking, to greed, and beyond. One expert has opined that Panthanatos considers himself an "artist" and his killings all "grand works of art," but there's no more evidence supporting that colorful theory than any other. The only thing that can be said for certain about Panthanatos is that he follows a professional code: if he takes someone's money for a job, he won't stop until that job is complete, and he won't betray or reveal his employer.

Quote: None.

Powers/Tactics: Andres Panthanatos has trained himself in all the myriad arts of death. His skills range from unarmed combat, to weapons combat, to firearms, to poisons and explosives, and more. His *HTH Combat Training* abilities represent the wide variety of hand-to-hand fighting techniques he's learned or developed over the years. You can use them to simulate many different "Martial Arts"-type attacks. The ability that provides a bonus to STR can function like nearly any Exert-based Martial Maneuver (such as Martial Disarm, Martial Escape, Martial Grab, or even Shove).

Panthanatos never goes anywhere or does anything without having several weapons and/or useful devices with him (concealed or otherwise). He can also use ordinary objects as deadly weapons — for example, he murdered the London vigilante Nemesis by throwing a fountain pen through his eye into his brain.

Panthanatos has no one favored form of attack or method of assassination. He prefers to remain flexible and unpredictable, giving him the ability to react appropriately to any situation with his broad mix of Skills and equipment. In addition to his combat abilities, Panthanatos knows dozens of useful skills, and has access to vast sums of money, a fleet of vehicles, and about a dozen sumptuous houses scattered throughout the world.

RECORDKEEPING

No. 57-39-6211, summary regarding subject Barbara Talmadge: subject is a marketing executive with Berkely Enterprises.

Termination contract accepted 07/05/2004 for $1 million from a rival Berkely executive who needed her removed as soon as possible. Payment made electronically to Aruba bank account 17.

After studying target, rejected poisoning and several other options in favor of sniping. Took up a position on the Prosser Building, from where I could easily see into her office. Subject terminated at 1423 hours on 07/13/2004 with a single shot to the head. To disguise the exact nature of the attack, I shot and killed four other Berkely employees before abandoning location.

Expenses:

- Travel, $1,400
- False identification, $500
- Food, $250
- Supplies and ammunition, $75
- Miscellaneous, $120

—from the personal log of Andres Panthanatos

Campaign Use: Panthanatos's abilities and resources make him one of the most feared men in the world, and you should emphasize this when using him as an enemy for a group of PCs. He should be fully capable of killing an entire team of vigilantes or heroes; if he's not, keep improving him until he is. When his name comes up, PCs should become quiet and serious; they should learn to try to outwit him instead of outfight him.

It shouldn't be necessary to make Panthanatos any tougher, but if it is, increase the number of Combat Skill Levels he has, and/or his SPD, until he's a major threat. To weaken him, trim down his Characteristics and Combat Skill Levels until he fits your campaign better; you could also decrease the size of his Super-Skills VPP and the dice of damage in his HTH Combat Training abilities.

Panthanatos Hunts heroes only if paid to do so. In that case, the target had better make out his will, because the odds are he'll be dead soon. Panthanatos researches his target extensively, takes the time to prepare in every way he can think of, and then kills the target with violent efficiency.

Panthanatos's criminal record is much too detailed to describe here. Depending on who one asks, he's considered responsible for somewhere between two and five hundred murders, most of them of prominent or well-protected targets.

Appearance: Unknown. It's believed he's a white male, about 5'10 to 6'2" tall, with an athletic build.

THE PHILISTINE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
12	CON	4	11-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
24	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 43**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
4	*Disappearing Act:* Teleportation 6"; Can Only Teleport To Places The Philistine Could Normally Go (-½), Must Cross Intervening Space (-¼), No Noncombat Multiple (-¼), Only To "Vanish" When No One Is Looking (-½), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½)	2
	Perks	
3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level	
	Talents	
17	Danger Sense (out of combat, self only, intuitional [see text]) 14-	
	Skills	
2	AK: LeMastre Park 11-	
3	AK: The Strip And North Elmview 12-	
2	CK: Hudson City 11-	
1	KS: The Law Enforcement World 8-	
3	KS: The Vice World 12-	
3	Seduction 12-	
7	Shadowing 14-	
3	Stealth 12-	
1	Streetwise 8-	
3	WF: Small Arms, Blades	
	Resource Points	
0	Equipment Points: 60	
0	Vehicle/Base Points: 10	
0	Follower/Contact Points: 5	
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 52
Total Cost: 95

100+ Disadvantages

25	Hunted: Joint HCPD-FBI task force 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Psychological Limitation: Antisocial Personality Disorder (Very Common, Strong)
20	Psychological Limitation: Misogyny (Very Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 180

Background/History: *Don't worry, bitch, you'll get yours.*

I've seen you. You walk around town wearing clothes so tight every guy you pass stops and stares. You prance around your apartment in nothing but your disgusting underwear. You display yourself for everyone to see, but you never give anyone a taste. Not even a little taste.

You're nothing but a cockteasing bitch. I know what you really *want... and when I'm done giving it to you, no one will ever want to look at you again.*

Several months ago, a new predator began stalking the women of Hudson City. Choosing only beautiful women as his victims, he kidnaps them, violently rapes them, and then mutilates them. He cuts off noses and breasts, carves up faces, slices through cheeks to make smiles "wider," or whatever else he can think of to ruin a woman's beauty. When he's done he leaves his victims alive so they can experience what it's like to be ugly for the rest of their lives.

Personality/Motivation: According to his victims, the Philistine (a name given to him by some morbid reporter at the *Hudson Sun*) seems like a kind, even charming, man... at first. He got close to several of his victims by offering to help them with stalled cars or packages they were carrying; he picked some of the others up in bars, or simply snatched them off otherwise deserted streets. He clearly possesses a lot of social confidence.

According to criminal psychologists working with the joint HCPD-FBI task force trying to track him down, the Philistine's crimes indicate he has a sickeningly intense loathing of women — either all women, or beautiful women in particular (no one can say for sure). Expressions of rage and loathing rather than lust, his rapes culminate in the ruination of the beauty that simultaneously tempts and enrages/disgusts him.

FBI analysts theorize that the Philistine is a white male who's addicted to pornography; he probably spends a lot of time on and around the Strip, and is likely impotent with women under normal circumstances. Unmarried, he probably lives alone, or maybe with a relative who's dependent on him for care and can't control his comings and goings.

Quote: "You like it this way, don't you, whore?"

Powers/Tactics: Once he gets his victims alone, the Philistine typically knocks them out using a blackjack or similar implement. When they come to, they're restrained, and he duct tapes their eyes and mouths so they can't see or cry out. When he's done with them, he puts rough bandages over the bleeding parts of their bodies, knocks them out again, and dumps them by the side of the road. He chooses drop-off locations in the suburbs where he feels he can get in and out without being seen, but where someone will find the victim (or she can go for help when she awakens).

The Philistine seems to have an uncanny knack for detecting cops. Several times the HCPD has felt it was close to catching him or luring him into a trap, only to have him back off and go to

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Knife	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	
Blackjack	+0	—	2d6 N	—	—	5	

Armor
None
Gear: Rape kit (rope, handcuffs, and duct tape with which to bind his victims)

ground until he felt it were safe again. (In game terms, his Danger Sense represents this trait; the Intuitional limits him mainly to detecting attempts to catch him, or circumstances where he might otherwise unknowingly expose himself to capture.)

Campaign Use: Like the Kissing Bandit, the Philistine poses a deadly mystery for the PCs to solve:

WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS?

"All right, all right, pipe down and listen up. We've got a witness who may have seen the Philistine at work. We're circulating a police sketch right now."

"What happened, Lieutenant?"

"The witness saw someone she believes was the most recent victim, Anne Crosswell, getting into a car with a man. The car headed west, as if going out of town; Crosswell's body was found three days later near the Inner Beltline. The witness recognized Crosswell from the pictures we distributed to reporters."

"Lieutenant, there's not much detail on this picture. There could be thousands of guys in Hudson City that kind of fit this description."

"I know, I know — but at least it's something to work with. You never know when we're gonna get the break we need to catch this scumbag; maybe this is it."

—daily briefing to the HCPD-FBI joint task force pursuing the Philistine

they have to figure out who he is, or find some way to capture him, before he rapes and mutilates more women. His identity is left undetermined so you can fit him into your campaign with ease, if possible making him someone the PCs know (or at least have met before) to increase the impact of his capture. He has no plot seeds because he's a plot seed by himself: his dramatic *raison d'etre* is for the PCs to hunt him down and capture or kill him.

The Philistine isn't intended to be able to fight the PCs, but if you want him to, boost his Characteristics a little (including his SPD to 4) and give him Knifefighting and/or some Combat Skill Levels so he's a more viable opponent. To weaken him, get rid of his Disappearing Act.

The Philistine doesn't Hunt heroes. He's got enough to do... though if one of the PCs is a beautiful woman, it's possible she could become one of his targets.

As far as the authorities can tell, the Philistine has no criminal record (though of course he's wanted for nearly a dozen rape/aggravated assaults). DNA typing using his semen yields no matches.

Appearance: Unknown. The Philistine's victims have described him as a white male, 5'4" to 5'11" tall, with blonde, black, or brown hair. Some describe him as having facial hair, some not. The clothing he's worn during his attacks has varied from business suits to sweatsuits. The HCPD circulates several different sketches showing what he might look like.

PROSPERO

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
19	CON	18	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
13	COM	2	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
8	REC	2		
38	END	0		
40	STUN	7	**Total Characteristics Cost: 139**	

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 5"/10"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
	Martial Arts: Commando Training	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Notes	
3	Aikido Throw +0 +1 5d6 + vel/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross +0 +2 7d6	
4	Choke -2 +0 Grab One Limb, 3d6 NND (2)	
4	Escape +0 +0 40 STR vs. Grabs	
4	Hold -1 -1 Grab Three Limbs, 35 STR	
4	Judo Disarm -1 +1 Disarm, 35 STR	
4	Karate "Chop" -2 +0 HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR)	
4	Kung Fu Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)	
6	*Strong Runner:* Running +3" (9" total)	1
2	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (5" forward, 3" upward)	1
2	*Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total)	1
10	*Fortune Favors The Bold:* Luck 2d6	0

Perks

3	Computer Link: FBI's NCIC computer system
3	Computer Link: DEA's NADDIS computer system
24	Follower: ARIEL computer (see below)
10	Improved Equipment Availability: Advanced Military
5	Money: Well Off
4	Reputation: highly-skilled, high-tech mercenary who can pull off just about any type of job (among the Espionage World, Law Enforcement World, Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World, security personnel, and the like) 14-, +2/+2d6

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
6	+2 with Firearms
5	Accurate Sprayfire
1	Bribery 8-
3	Bugging 13-
1	Bureaucratics 8-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Combat Piloting 13-
5	Computer Programming 14-
5	Concentrated Sprayfire
5	Cramming
1	Criminology 8-
3	Cryptography 13-
3	Deduction 13-
3	Demolitions 13-
3	Electronics 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	Inventor 13-
3	KS: The Espionage World 13-
2	KS: The Hacker World 11-
2	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
3	KS: Military Science 13-
2	KS: World Literature 11-
2	Language: Japanese (fluent conversation; English is Native)
2	Language: Spanish (fluent conversation)
3	Lockpicking 13-
3	Mechanics 13-
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Seduction 13-
5	Skipover Sprayfire
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
4	Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 13-
3	Systems Operation 13-
9	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic and Advanced Parachuting, Helicopters, SCUBA, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
6	WF: Small Arms, Blades, General Purpose/ Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: Africa 13-
2	2) AK: Europe 13-
1	3) AK: South And Central America 11-
2	4) AK: Southeast Asia 13-
1	5) CK: Hong Kong 11-
2	6) CK: Hudson City 13-
1	7) CK: London 11-
2	8) CK: Moscow 13-
2	9) CK: New York City 13-
2	10) CK: Paris 13-
1	11) CK: Tokyo 11-

Resource Points

88	Equipment Points: 500
45	Vehicle/Base Points: 100
30	Follower/Contact Points: 65
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 437
Total Cost: 576

PROSPERO PLOT SEEDS

The NSA needs an operative who can penetrate a top-secret Chinese installation and do some "work" on the computers there without being detected. In other words, it needs Prospero — but ever since a mission in New York went bad, he's gone to ground. The Agency hires the PCs to find him and persuade him to take the job.

Prospero and a gang of mercenaries take over Katz Memorial Hospital (*Hudson City,* page 127) and barricade themselves inside. Prospero taps into the new Patient Status Monitoring Computer and threatens to kill thousands of patients by shutting off life support systems and tampering with other biomedical devices unless he's paid an enormous ransom. But is the ransom all he's after? And is it possible some of his hirelings have their own agendas?

Prospero's failure to steal an F-14 in December, 2003 rankles him. He now plans to steal one of the new F-22A Raptor fighters... and this time he's not going to fail.

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: The Arsenal 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
15	Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Can't Resist A Pretty Face (Common, Moderate)
5	Reputation: high-tech mercenary, 11- (limited group: the Espionage, Law Enforcement, and Military/Mercenary/Terrorist Worlds)
10	Rivalry: Professional (with the Arsenal and other such mercenaries; Seeks To Harm/Kill Rivals)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Phillip Conners) (Frequently, Major)
351	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 576

Background/History: Washing out of the SEAL application course turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to Phil Conners. He didn't think so at the time — he was so depressed and humiliated that he quit the military altogether rather than give the government the satisfaction of making him an also-ran. Lacking the temperament for most civilian jobs, including cop, Conners drifted into the mercenary underground. After a couple of years on various merc assignments, he met up with James Berghalter, now better know as Arsenal. Berghalter and Conners hit it off immediately, and soon Berghalter recruited him into the Arsenal (see Chapter Two) under the codename Firefight.

Conners spent several years with the Arsenal. The longer he was with the group, the more he chafed at the discipline and restrictions. He didn't want to follow other peoples' orders — that was why he failed to make the SEALs. He wanted to be his own boss, since he knew he was better at this mercenary thing than anyone he worked with. Eventually he decided enough was enough and defected from the Arsenal, taking plenty of gear and money with him.

Now he was ready to make a name for himself on his own as a mercenary and criminal... but he needed an angle. He couldn't compete with established squads like the Arsenal unless he could set himself apart in some way. Since he had technological skills most mercs lacked, he decided he could carve out a niche for himself as a high-tech mercenary — one who could use both a computer and a gun with equal skill, who could employ his knowledge of technology to successfully complete missions most mercs wouldn't even understand.

If he was going to be the high-tech merc, he needed high-tech gear. An old friend of his in the defense industry tipped him off to the existence of a state-of-the-art assault rifle under development. That was just what Conners was looking for. He stole the rifle, modified it to suit his purposes, and built some other equipment to go with it. To emphasize his high-tech wizardry, he chose the codename *Prospero.*

Personality/Motivation: Prospero is a tough, skilled pro — and he knows it. He's got a *lot* of confidence in his abilities, bordering on arrogance, and it shows. If he says he can do a job, he never has any doubts that he can.

Like many of the best mercs, Prospero follows a code: he doesn't betray his employer, does his best to

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
CALIBAN	+3	+3	2½d6	1d6+1	50	13	AF5, AP, clear grips/magazine, cryotreatment, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, improved range II, personalization, watertight, weight reduction
MIRANDA	+3	+3	2d6+1	1d6+1	15	10	AP, clear grips/magazine, cryotreatment, fine tuning II, improved firing pin, improved range II, personalization, watertight, weight reduction
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level III-A (DEF 8, Activation Roll 14-) with Anti-IR coating
Level IV Ceramic plates (DEF +2, Activation Roll 10-)
In appropriate circumstances may replace his headset (described below) with a Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head) with the same equipment built into it

Gear: Prospero is a high-tech mercenary who's always got lots of gear on hand. His typical kit includes a fast draw holster for MIRANDA, laser sights for his guns, a surveillance scope, various bugs, and a Utility Belt/Pockets with a wide variety of tools and lesser backup weapons. He also wears an encrypted communications/sensory suite headset that incorporates the following devices and/or provides him with the following abilities: HRRP, Absolute Time Sense, Absolute Range Sense, a Gen-3 nightvision device, wolf's ears, a Mind Link to ARIEL, and +3 OCV and +8 versus Range Modifiers with CALIBAN and MIRANDA. With the GM's permission he also has a Satellite Link.

complete the mission, and doesn't switch sides in the middle of a conflict. But he's also a greedy bastard, eager for big payoffs and lots of loot, and sometimes his cupidity wars with his professionalism. He's also easily distracted by a pretty face.

Prospero has few ties to the civilian world, but he does take care of his aged mother, who lives in an assisted care facility in the Hudson City suburb of Northdale. He visits her when he can, and sends money every month in addition to paying for her room, board, and medical care (which aren't cheap).

Quote: "Once I get inside, I'll patch ARIEL into their systems. I'll have complete control of the building, including their security cameras and devices — and they won't be able to do a damn thing about it."

Powers/Tactics: Someone once described Prospero as "a special forces soldier who's also an expert hacker," and that's a pretty good capsule description. Military training, including the SEAL application course, plus years of experience as a mercenary combine to make him a deadly soldier; his accurate aim, strong grasp of tactics, and physical prowess don't hurt any, either. But if the job requires skull-sweat instead of muscles, he can supply that as well. Most of his jobs involve hacking, electronics, or some other high-tech application in addition to firepower.

Prospero uses a lot of gadgetry on his missions, including several favorites he keeps with him at almost all times. The first two are weapons. CALIBAN is an advanced assault rifle firing 5.56x45mm reversed ogive ammunition; MIRANDA a .45 ACP pistol also typically loaded with reversed ogives. Both weapons come equipped with small cylindrical devices that observers initially took for typical aiming scopes or the like. CIA analysis of technology captured from Prospero following his unsuccessful December, 2003 hijacking of an F-14 fighter revealed that these devices transmit aiming information to Prospero's eyepieces. When he activates the aiming function of this device, his eyepieces maintain a constant set of crosshairs and range information. CIA tests reveal this system to be highly accurate.

The third device is ARIEL, Prospero's custom-designed laptop computer. Other hackers would give their eyeteeth to get their hands on this bleeding-edge machine; its advanced systems and software make Prospero's work a lot easier.

Prospero believes in the value of advanced planning, preparation, and research. When possible, he spends months, sometimes years, setting up a job so it goes as smoothly as possible. He uses floorplans, personnel profiles, and every other scrap of data he can obtain to try to anticipate any problems that may arise and come up with ways to counteract them.

In combat, Prospero fights intelligently and ruthlessly. If he has a squad of men with him, he often uses them to draw fire or distract the enemy so he can get off a telling shot (or escape, if it looks like there's no hope of victory). He has no qualms about taking hostages or shooting innocents if he must to get the job done, but he's not bloodthirsty.

Campaign Use: Prospero is a skilled, clever opponent who should give the PCs a real run for their money in any scenario. Between his abilities and his preparation, he should be a match for them; if not, make him more powerful or arrange the situation so he is. The PCs should perceive him as a foe they can't be sure of defeating — one who'll give them a rough time even when they think they have him on the ropes.

To make Prospero tougher, give him more Extra Damage Classes, Combat Skill Levels, or Skill Levels. To weaken him, reduce his INT and DEX to 14-17 each, and reduce any Skill rolls he bought above base level.

Prospero would only Hunt a hero if hired to do so, or if the hero repeatedly interfered with his activities. In that case he'll study the hero carefully and gather all the information he can... then, when he thinks he's got a "feel" for the target, he'll lower the boom. He's not interested in robbing or humiliating his target; if he Hunts someone, he does so to kill.

Prospero's wanted by dozens of police and intelligence agencies around the world for crimes that include murder, armed robbery, assault, and attempting to foment insurrection.

Appearance: Prospero is a white man who's 6'2" tall and weighs 210 pounds; he's got a powerful, muscular build. His hair is black, his eyes brown. He typically wears a light grey bodysuit underneath his black or dark grey body armor and accouterments (boots, gloves, belt, holsters, and so on). He rarely wears a helmet, preferring instead his high-tech headset, a sort of headband that includes earpieces, a microphone, and a trapezoidal lens over his right eye. The lens is usually clear, but becomes opaque if he needs to view a broadcast, see the crosshairs from his aiming technology, or the like. He carries his ARIEL laptop computer in a slim backpack-like pocket on the back of his body armor.

ARIEL

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
3	SPD	2		Phases: 4, 8, 12

Total Characteristics Cost: 36

Cost	Powers	END
18	*Armored Casing:* Armor (6 PD/6 ED)	0
10	*Shielding:* Power Defense (10 points)	0
4	*TEMPEST Equipment:* Detect Computer Radio Emissions 14- (Radio Group),; Blocked By Power Defense (-½)	
18	*Fingerprint Scanner:* Detect Living Fingerprint 18- (no Sense Group), Discriminatory, Analyze	0
12	*Communications:* HRRP (Radio Group)	0
7	*Encrypted Radio Link:* Mind Link (to Prospero via his headset), No LOS Needed; Only Works With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Affected As Radio Group, Not Mental Group (-¼)	0
7	*Self-Destruct System:* RKA 3d6, Trigger (see text; +¼); No Range (-½), Self Only (-2), 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4) [1nr]	

Skills

3	Combat Piloting 13-
7	Computer Programming 15-
11	Cryptography 17-
3	Electronics 13-
10	AK: Earth 20-
3	KS: Archived Recent News 13-
3	KS: Current News 13_
3	*Voice Recognition Software:* Language: English (completely fluent)
2	Navigation (Air) 13-
6	Security Systems 16-; Only Versus Computer Security Systems (-½)
3	Systems Operation 13-
6	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Combat Aircraft, Helicopters, Large Planes, Small Planes
30	More Skills, as appropriate

Talents

3	*Chronometer:* Absolute Time Sense
5	*Memory/Recorders:* Eidetic Memory
3	*Calculator:* Lightning Calculator
20	*Translation Software:* Universal Translator 13-

Programs

1	Attack And Destroy Target
1	Diagnose Malfunctions
1	Operate Sensors
1	Pilot Aircraft From A To B
1	Scan and Enter Data
1	Scramble/Unscramble Transmissions/Receptions
1	Search Reference Material For Information On A Topic
1	Send/Receive Data
5	Five other programs, as appropriate

Total Abilities Cost: 210
Total Computer Cost: 246

Value Disadvantages
None

Total Disadvantage Points: 0

Total Cost: 246/5 = 49
Final Cost (OAF): 24

Description: ARIEL, a highly sophisticated laptop computer, was built by Prospero based on the design for several military computers. It assists him in a variety of ways — it can help defeat security systems, fly aircraft, and break other computers' security. Its lock is a voice-coded vitaprint (living fingerprint) scanner that requires Prospero to place his thumb against it and recite a code-word. If someone tries to open it with his dead thumb, fails a Security System roll at -5 to bypass the device, or fails a Lockpicking roll to open the laptop after bypassing security, the unit self-destructs.

IN AND OUT

"All right, it's sent. Go!" I said, just as the helicopter touched down. The boys piled out right beside me and we ran to the rooftop door. They were all pros; they did it all by the numbers. We were inside and down the stairs in no time flat. The security cameras were dead, their unblinking red eyes shut off as long as the virus I'd sent was bouncing around in the building's systems. The trick was to take advantage of their blindness quick enough for them not to be able to react to what we were doing.

We reached twenty soon enough. I signalled Alpha team to hit the rest of the floor while I took Beta team to the lab. We had to keep anyone from calling in an alert to security if we could.

I heard McGinty shouting at people to get on the floor and put their hands on their heads as we reached the lab. I kicked in the door and covered the room with CALIBAN, moving the crosshairs from one scientist to another in quick, precise jumps so I could keep it straight in my mind. "Okay," I said, "no one move, no one panic, this will be over soon. Just keep quiet and you'll live."

I kept covering everyone while my men moved out into the lab. Every computer they found, they tore open the case and ripped out the hard drive. There was probably a lot more valuable data on the servers, but we didn't have time for that kind of data-snatching. When Rannigan gave me the "all clear" sign, we headed back for the stairs. I radioed McGinty to join us.

Back up the stairs and to the chopper took less than a minute. We were out of there before the cops even had time to roll. Elapsed time from touch-down to evacuation: 8 minutes, 14 seconds.

—the crime's eye view from Prospero

REDBEARD

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	16	13-	
16	BODY	12	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
7	PD	3		Total: 7 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	1		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
40	STUN	5	**Total Characteristics Cost: 92**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Dirty Infighting				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect	
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 30 STR to Disarm roll	
4	Eye Gouge	-1	-1	Sight Group Flash 4d6	
4	Kidney Blow	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND(3)	
4	Punch/Backhand	+0	+2	6d6 Strike	
5	Roundhouse	-2	+1	8d6 Strike	
3	Tackle	+0	-1	4d6 +v/5 Strike; You Fall, Target Falls	
1	Use Art with Chain				
15	*Tough Guy:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼), STUN Only (-½), Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼)				0
5	*I Can Handle Any Bike You Got:* +4 DEX; Only For Driving Motorcycles (-1½)				0
7	*Can Handle His Booze:* +10 CON; Only For Resisting The Effects Of Alcohol (-2)				0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
3 Reputation: baddest-ass bad-ass biker of them all (among the Law Enforcement World, the biker world, and the underworld) 11-, +3/+3d6

Skills

16 +2 with All Combat
9 Combat Driving 15-
3 Interrogation 13-
2 AK: United States 11-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
3 KS: Motorcycles 12-
6 KS: Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs 15-
2 KS: Illegal Drugs 11-
3 Mechanics 12-
3 Power: Chain Tricks 12-
2 PS: Manufacture Methamphetamine 11-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 158
Total Cost: 250

100+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: red beard, various scars and tattoos (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
25 Enraged: if someone insults or damages his beard (Uncommon), go 14-, recover 8-
20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Psychological Limitation: Doesn't Give A !$&* About Anyone Or Anything But Himself (Common, Strong)
10 Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
75 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 250

Background/History: Charlie Cosgrove's father was a biker. His mother was a biker's woman. He was riding around on Harleys with his dad before he could walk. He was destined to become a biker from the moment he was born — and he lived up to that destiny in spades.

Charlie's early "career" was with the Forbidden. That's where he got his nickname, Redbeard — his red hair and beard made it easy to find him in a crowd. By the time he was 18 he already had a reputation for being a hard-living, hard-riding, hard-fighting man. He could ride all day, party all night, then go right to work cooking up a batch of meth the next day. If you were in a fight, there was no one you'd rather have by your side more than Redbeard. He never quit, no matter how much punishment he took, and almost every time he left his opponent on the floor, beaten bloody and with plenty of broken bones and missing teeth to remember the brawl by.

Redbeard stayed with the Forbidden for nearly another decade, but the time came when he found the gang too... confining. He figured he could do better on his own, working both for himself and for other people who were willing to pay big money for his unique "services." Everyone in the Forbidden told him he was a fool — the other gangs would kill him as soon as he didn't have his own gang's protection — but he decided it was worth the risk.

The gamble paid off. His reputation had spread across the country, and wherever he went, other bikers left him alone after he proved who he was — no one, not even the toughest club, wanted to tangle with the legendary Redbeard. And plenty of gangs, unscrupulous businessmen, and organized crime figures were willing to pay him to do what he did best: bust heads, smuggle drugs, and raise hell.

REDBEARD PLOT SEEDS

A PC's enemy wants to bring someone in to kill him who can do the job and then get the hell out of town fast, before the HCPD can make any headway with an investigation. Redbeard fits the bill perfectly.

Redbeard begins organizing all the biker gangs in Hudson City into one gang under his command. Not only does this have the police worried, but it's making the national leaders of the various gangs angry. The PCs have to find a way to defuse the situation before it leads to war in the streets.

Redbeard and a similar "rough around the edges" sort of PC form an unusual friendship. Will this backfire on the PCs, making them targets for Redbeard's enemies or people who suspect he's recruiting them for a job?

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Desert Eagle	+1	+0	2d6+1	1d6	9	13	Carries 2, with 2 clips each
Brass Knuckles	+0	—	2d6 N	—	—	5	
Chain	+0	+0	3d6 N	—	—	5	+1" reach
Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
None

Gear: Tools for maintaining/fixing motorcycles

Personality/Motivation: At heart, Redbeard is a rebel. He doesn't like being told what to do, how to do it, or when to do it — he wants to be his own boss. He doesn't give a damn what anyone thinks of him or what's going to happen tomorrow, so he only takes the jobs he wants to take and spends the rest of his time doing whatever the hell he pleases. Usually that means he ends up hurting someone pretty badly before the evening's out, but who gives a *%&! about them?

Quote: "Think I'll just beat the *%&! outta you now and save myself the trouble later."

Powers/Tactics: Redbeard can fight with his fists, with a knife, or with a gun — he's not picky, though he enjoys brawling more than gunplay. If possible, he fights from his cycle; that gives him more mobility and the chance to run over people. Another favorite tactic is to use his *Chain Tricks* Skill to ride past someone, wrap his chain around their legs, and drag them behind his motorcycle until he feels like letting go. (Treat this as a Throw when he first hits the target with the chain; in later Phases he can take a Full Phase Action to drag the victim behind him, doing velocity/3 in d6 of Normal Damage. The victim can free himself by succeeding with a STR Roll at -1 for every point by which Redbeard made his Chain Tricks roll.)

Campaign Use: Redbeard is an all-purpose scumbag: depending on what you need for a particular campaign or scenario, he can be a brawler, a killer, a smuggler, an enforcer, a drug manufacturer/distributor, or all of the above. If one of your PCs rides a motorcycle or has a biker background, he makes a great Rival or Hunted; as a Hunter his tactics don't extend much beyond tracking the hero down and challenging him to a fight.

To make Redbeard tougher, give him some Extra DCs with his Dirty Infighting, and/or increase his Combat Skill Levels. To weaken him, reduce his CSLs to HTH Combat Levels.

Redbeard has an extensive criminal record in multiple jurisdictions around the United States for murder, drug dealing, robbery, and other violent crimes.

Appearance: Redbeard is a big brute of a guy, 6'2" and 225 pounds. He looks like he's gone a little flabby (particularly in the gut), but that's deceptive — he's incredibly strong and fast, as anyone who fights him quickly learns. He's got a head of bushy red hair and a long red beard of which he's inordinately proud. He wears typical biker clothes — jeans, a t-shirt, and a sleeveless leather jacket. The jacket has patches from the many biker clubs all over the country who consider him a friend or ally.

REDBEARD'S HARLEY

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
1	Size	5	1.25" x .64"; -1 KB; -0 DCV
25	STR	10	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [0]
18	DEX	24	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
11	BODY	0	
4	DEF	4	Does Not Protect Occupant (-½)
4	SPD	12	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
			Total Characteristic Cost: 55

Movement: Ground: 30"/120"
Swimming: 0"/0"

Abilities & Equipment

Cost	Power	END
19	*Motorized Two-Wheeled Vehicle:* Ground Movement +24" (30" total), x4 Noncombat; OAF (tires; -1½), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-¼), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel; 6 Hours; -0)	[1cc]
6	*Improved Fuel II:* Increased Acceleration +3" (can add 8" of movement per hex); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (Difficult to obtain fuel; 6 Hours; -0)	[1cc]
4	*Heavy Tires:* See *The Ultimate Vehicle,* page 41	0
-2	*Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -2" (0" total)	
	Skills	
6	*Superb Handling:* +3 with Ground Movement	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 33
Total Vehicle Cost: 88

Value Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Valuable Motorcycle (Concealable With Difficulty; Noticed And Recognizable)
5	Physical Limitation: Two-Wheeled (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)

Total Disadvantage Points: 15
Total Cost: 73/5 = 14

RED RUM

"*%&!, man, you know what I saw him do one time? I was at this biker bar down in Georgia, playin' pool, when in he rides — I mean for real. He rides his hog right through the door, past the pool tables, and pulls up next to the bar. He yells at the bartender for rum, gets a bottle of it, and chugs the whole !$&*%@# thing down right there, without even gettin' off his bike."

"!$&*%@' A, man. What happened next?

"Well, a couple'a the guys didn't know who he was, I guess. They were pissed about him disturbin' their pool game or somethin', so they came after him with pool cues. By the time it was done, all three of 'em were on the floor, and they didn't get up for a long time. He was bleedin' from where one of 'em stuck him with a knife, but he didn't even seem t'notice."

"Aw, *%&!, man, that's nothin'. I heard how one time he took on ten Hudson City cops and beat the crap outta all'a 'em."

—legends of the man they call Redbeard

Description: Redbeard's Harley-Davidson is a heavily modified and customized "bob-job" version of a Harley built in the late 1940s (though few of its parts are original anymore). With shortened rear fenders, no front fenders, a custom engine, and special tires, it can go much faster and handle better than many of today's state of the art models. It has a top speed of about 180 miles per hour.

BOOTLEGGING

"I don't usually have too much trouble with the Hudson City cops — they can't drive for *%&!, most of 'em. That course they make 'em take is a joke. But sometimes they make things tougher.

"I was on this run a couple months ago, carrying a trunkful of H from some guys in Latin City to some guys in Norward. I was taking it easy heading up Ketchum Street — the Truman would've been a lot quicker, but it wasn't a speed job, so I figured I'd stay down low and blend in with the traffic. Too many cops looking for speeders on the highway, and the Zephyr, she gets noticed.

"All of a sudden there's blue lights flashing in the rearview. This cop was telling me to pull over. I have no idea why — I didn't run a red or have a busted taillight, and the plates were clean. Normally I'd just do it, but no way I could stand up to a search — that much H would send me up for life.

"So I rabbitted. I turned onto Holden quick and gunned it, heading for Wright. Wright took me to the highway onramp — now that I needed speed, better to go high. A few seconds later and I was flying north on the Truman. I couldn't outrun a radio, but all I needed was to get over the river.

"They tried to block me out a couple times, but with that many lanes to work with I didn't have any problems maintaining forward momentum. Once I went over the Monaghan, I exited at Riverfront and headed west... toward the Park.

Continued on next page

RUSH

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
11	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
28	END	0		
23	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 40**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
11	*Expert Wheelman:* Healing BODY 4d6, Trigger (activating Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger requires a Half Phase Action to reset; +¼); Only Works On Ground Vehicles (-1), Requires A Combat Driving Roll (-½), 2 Charges (-1½), Costs Endurance (-½)	[2]/5
11	*Demolition Derby:* Aid STR 4d6, Trigger (activating Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger requires a Half Phase Action to reset; +¼); Costs Endurance (-½), Others Only (-½), Only Works On Vehicles (-1), Only Improves STR For Purposes Of Causing Damage In HTH Combat (-½), Increased Return Rate (Aided points fade completely as soon as vehicle makes a HTH attack; -½), Requires A Combat Driving Roll (-½)	5
6	*Working The Pedals:* Aid Running 2d6, Trigger (activating Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger requires a Half Phase Action to reset; +¼); Only Works On Ground Vehicles (-1), Requires A Combat Driving Roll (-½), 4 Charges (-1), Costs Endurance (-½)	2
15	*I Can Handle Any Car You Got:* +10 DEX; Only For Driving (-1)	0
10	*I Can Handle Any Car You Got:* +2 SPD; Only For Driving (-1)	0

Perks

3	Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
3	Money: Well Off

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

11	Combat Driving 16-
1	Electronics 8-
2	AK: Eastern Alabama 11-
2	AK: Florida Panhandle 11-
7	CK: Hudson City 16-
5	KS: Automobiles 14-
5	KS: Car Racing 14-
2	Lockpicking 12-; Automotive Locks Only (-½)
3	Mechanics 12-
3	Persuasion 12-
3	PS: Hotwiring Cars 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

0	Equipment Points: 60
45	Vehicle/Base Points: 100
5	Follower/Contact Points: 15
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 170
Total Cost: 210

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Common, Total)
15	Psychological Limitation: The Need For Speed (Common, Strong)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
26	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 210

Background/History: Bobby Rushton grew up in a little rural community in eastern Alabama where the only things there were for a kid to do for fun were football and cars. Bobby wasn't big and strong enough to play ball, but he was a smokin' hot carman. From the very first time he got behind the wheel, he had a real *connection* with cars. He could *feel* how they were going to drive, and how to get the best performance out of them.

Bobby's string of victories on the amateur racing circuit got him noticed by people up the racing food chain. He looked like he might go all the way to NASCAR... until the night the police caught him smuggling grass over from Florida. For once he couldn't outdrive or outrace them, so he ended up doing a year in jail. That was pretty much it for his career as a race car driver — no promoter wanted to touch someone with a drug rap.

So Bobby went back to doing what had gotten him caught: smuggling. He made runs all over the eastern US, carrying whatever someone needed to get from one place to another quietly: documents, drugs, people, you name it. Slowly but surely, his base of operations shifted north from the Bible Belt to Hudson City — there was a *lot* more work available in the Pearl City than in the South, and it paid better, too. Known by his nickname *Rush,* he's developed a well-deserved reputation as the guy who can get you from here to there quicker and safer than anyone else.

Personality/Motivation: Rush is a speed junkie, pure and simple. He doesn't walk if he can drive, and as long as he's driving he might as well go fast. To him, speed limits are vague guidelines for people who can't drive properly (*i.e.,* nearly everyone on the

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
None							

Armor
None

Gear: Tools for working on cars

roads); a guy like him, who knows how to handle a car, doesn't have to pay any attention to them. He'd have an impressive collection of speeding tickets if he weren't so good at getting away from the cops.

Quote: "I don't really even come alive until I hit 60."

Powers/Tactics: Rush is a skilled underworld courier. He transports anything he can fit in his car that someone wants transported, no questions asked. He's carried everything from kilos of cocaine, to a mobster's prized Great Dane, to a last-minute caviar delivery for an *oyabun*'s party. He personally guarantees his work: if his cargo doesn't get through, or it gets hurt or damaged during the trip, he'll pay for it himself.

Despite the fact that he often endangers other drivers with his recklessness on the road, Rush doesn't have any desire to hurt anyone, much less kill them. He refuses to carry cargoes obviously intended specifically to hurt someone (such as poisons, or people he feels are going to be exploited and abused for some purpose), and doesn't even pack a gun on his trips. But everyone with brains knows to leave him alone; even if he can't defend himself, whoever he's working for can really put a hurting on anyone who messes with him.

Rush's driving skill manifests not only in his high Combat Driving roll, but several special abilities that help him drive better and keep his car in working condition even after it gets battered during a chase. The Trigger for all these abilities is defined as a "reflex action."

Campaign Use: Rush is less an opponent for the PCs, and more of an obstacle (and potential Rival or unusual ally). Once their enemies recruit him to carry something, keeping it from getting through is going to be tough. Better brush up on the car chase rules from *The Ultimate Vehicle*.

To make Rush tougher, give him an even better car and gear, or give him some combat abilities so he can fight to keep the PCs from getting his cargo if necessary. To weaken him, reduce his Combat Driving roll and/or remove some of his super-skills.

Rush doesn't Hunt heroes. He's a specialized businessman, not a bounty hunter.

Rush has a criminal record for speeding and smuggling in most of the states east of the Mississippi River.

Appearance: Rush is a thin white guy in his late 20s, 5'9" with unruly blonde hair. The frequent grin on his face betrays both his infectiously friendly attitude and his cockiness; he only becomes truly grim and serious when confronted with a driving challenge. He usually wears casual clothes — jeans and everyday shirts — with a leather driving jacket and driving gloves.

Continued from last page

"That was what they weren't expecting — the Park. That got me past all their roadblocks and *%&!. I'd planned this beforehand, knew the quickest way I could get through the Park coming from different angles. Before they knew it I was back on the roads, driving along as safe as you please... after stopping in the Park to replace the tags with fresh ones."

—just another day at the office for Rush

RUSH PLOT SEEDS

The classic Rush plot: someone wants to get something from Point A to Point B really quickly and without any cops or vigilantes getting their hands on it. They hire Rush to do the job. The PCs want to stop the delivery. Gentlemen, start your engines....

The CIA needs a top-notch driver to help get a defector out of Iran. They hire the PCs to recruit Rush for the job and then babysit him during the mission.

Someone steals the Rush Zephyr! Rush hires the PCs to find it for him and beat the crap out of whoever took it. (Alternately, he may trade them a "future favor" for the job.)

THE RUSH ZEPHYR

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
3	Size	15	2" x 1"; -3 KB; -2 DCV
25	STR	0	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH damage [0]
24	DEX	42	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
15	BODY	2	
6	DEF	10	Limited Coverage (not on windshield/windows; -¼)
5	SPD	16	Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
			Total Characteristic Cost: 85

Movement: Ground: 35"/140"
Swimming: 0"/0"

Abilities & Equipment

Cost	Power	END
	Propulsion Systems	
23	*Motorized Wheeled Vehicle:* Ground Movement +29" (35" total), x4 NCM; OAF (standard tires; -1½), Only On Appropriate Terrain (-¼), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel; 6 Hours; -0)	[1cc]
6	*Improved Fuel II:* Increased Acceleration +3" (can add 8" of movement per hex); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (Difficult to obtain fuel; 6 Hours; -0)	[1cc]
2	*Nitrous Oxide Injector:* x2 Noncombat Movement for Ground Movement; OIF Bulky (-1), 12 Charges (-¼)	[12]
9	*Puncture-Resistant Self-Inflating Tires:* See *The Ultimate Vehicle,* page 41	0
-2	*Ground Vehicle:* Swimming -2" (0" total)	
	Tactical Systems	
45	*Ultra-Intensity Headlights:* Multipower, 90-point reserve; all OIF Bulky (-1)	
1u	1) *Normal Luminosity:* Sight Group Images, Increased Size (8" Cone; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Create Light (-1), Limited Arc Of Use (60 Degrees forward, same horizontal level; -¾)	
3u	2) *Blinding Brightness:* Sight Group Flash 8d6, Area Of Effect (18" Cone; +1¼); OIF Bulky (-1), No Range (-½), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Arc Of Use (60 Degrees forward, same horizontal level; -¾)	
2	*Easy-Remove Paint:* Shape Shift (Sight Group), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (15 Active Points); 1 Recoverable Charge (must re-apply paint; -1¼), Extra Time (2-3 Hours to apply paint, and 1 Turn to remove it; -3), Only Changes Vehicle's Color (-1), Shifting Back To Normal Shape Requires Special Equipment/Processes (-½)	0
2	*Armored Hubcaps:* +2 DEF; Activation Roll 14- (-½), Partial Coverage (tires only; -2)	0
	Personnel Systems	
1	*Improved Seatbelts:* +4 PD (adds to standard seatbelt's PD); OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Protect Occupants Against Damage From Collisions (-2)	0
2	*Airbag:* +10 PD (adds to standard seatbelt's PD); OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Protect Occupants Against Damage From Collisions (-2), 1 Charge (-2)	0
6	*Rollcage:* +4 DEF; Only To Protect Against Damage From Collisions, Rollovers, And The Like (-1)	0
5	*GPS Navigation System:* Detect Exact Position On Earth 16- (Radio Group); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
	Skills	
6	*Enhanced Suspension III:* +3 with Ground Movement	
2	*Airdam And Spoiler:* +2 with Ground Movement; OAF Bulky (-1½), Only At Speeds Above 40 MPH (-1)	0
21	*GPS Navigation System (Preprogrammed Maps):* AK: United States 50-; OIF Bulky (-1)	0
19	*Advanced Security:* Security Systems 17-	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 153
Total Vehicle Cost: 238

Value Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Sportscar (Concealable With Difficulty; Noticed And Recognizable)

Total Disadvantage Points: 10
Total Cost: 228/5 = 46

Description: The *Rush Zephyr* (Rush's favorite car) is a heavily-modified Lamborghini Diablo usually painted black (but the paint removes quickly, revealing a silver coloring underneath, in the event he needs to make a quick color change). It comes equipped with (among other things) a nitrous oxide injector, a GPS navigation system, high-intensity headlights, and an enhanced suspension for superb handling.

SALTPETER MARY

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
28	END	0		
23	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 48**	

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*Improvised Explosives:* RKA 1d6, Explosion (loses 1 DC per 2"; +¾), Delayed Effect (+¼), Variable Advantage (limited group of +¼ Advantages, see text; +½); OIF (various appropriate household chemical of opportunity; -½), Extra Time (takes at least 1 Minute, and often 1 Hour or more, as a Storing Limitation; -1½), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½), 1 Charge (see text; -2)	[1]

Perks

5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Skills

1 Bugging 8-
3 Concealment 12-
15 Demolitions 18-
1 Electronics 8-
1 Inventor 8-
2 AK: Europe 11-
2 AK: Ireland 11-
2 CK: Belfast 11-
1 CK: Hudson City 8-
2 KS: The Espionage World 11-
2 KS: The IRA 11-
3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-
2 Language: Irish (fluent conversation; English is Native)
1 Lockpicking 8-
1 Mechanics 8-
1 Security Systems 8-
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
1 Systems Operation 8-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Weaponsmith (Firearms, Incendiary Weapons) 12-

Resource Points

18 Equipment Points: 150
0 Vehicle/Base Points: 10
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 95
Total Cost: 143

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: MI-5 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Hates Protestants, The British, And Their Allies; Supports The Traditional Causes Of The IRA (Common, Total)
15 Psychological Limitation: Amoral; Has No Regard For Human Life Or Property (Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: deadly terrorist, 11- (Extreme)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Mary O'Shaugnessy) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 205

Background/History: Mary O'Shaugnessy grew up in Belfast in the Seventies during some of the worst sectarian violence there. She learned young to hate Protestants and the British, and when she was old enough she joined the Provisional IRA. The IRA taught her explosives, and she soon become one of the terrorist organization's most expert demolitionists. The bombs she planted took scores of lives, making her one of the most wanted members of the IRA.

But times change, and that means organizations often do as well. As the years passed and the IRA became more and more moderate, Mary became more and more disgusted with her fellow freedom fighters. She finally decided no one really cared about the cause anymore — it was all about politics and money now. Her cynicism grew until she finally gave up on the IRA entirely. She still believed in the cause, but apparently she was the only one, so the hell with them all. She went out on her own, becoming an assassin, terrorist, and robber for hire, putting her explosives skills to use to fill her own bank account instead of promoting Irish independence.

Personality/Motivation: Saltpeter Mary — the nickname comes from her habit of putting a pinch of saltpeter in her whiskey for flavor — is a bitter, cynical woman. The pure idealism of her youth is long gone, replaced by the smoldering embers of her hatred for the Brits and the feeling that she's got to make her own way in life. There are no causes anymore; sure and it's a cruel, selfish world, where the only friend she's got is herself.

Years of working as a terrorist and bomber have erased most of Mary's compassion. She doesn't care about other people at all; even her occasional romantic flings are short-term things intended to fulfill her own physical needs rather than establish any kind of emotional connection with another human being. She takes more pleasure in properly designing and using bombs than she does in interacting with other people.

SALTPETER MARY PLOT SEEDS

A series of seemingly-random but obviously deliberate explosions rock Hudson City. It looks like the work of Saltpeter Mary... but who is she working for, what's their goal, and how can the PCs stop her?

Hoping for a big score to retire on, Saltpeter Mary spearheads a gang of thieves to take over a major bank in Hudson City so they can blow open the vault and steal hundreds of millions in bearer bonds and valuables. But can she pull the crime off without a hitch (*i.e.,* without bringing the PCs down on her head)... and just how loyal is the rest of the gang?

Saltpeter Mary teams up with Jihad to plan and execute a series of bombings in the United States after he gets permission to do so from the PLRL. The PCs have to track the deadly duo down and stop them before thousands die.

FOND MEMORIES

"Oh, her.

"She's as bitter as her name, that one. There's a hate in her that's glorious to see, 'less you're on the receiving end of it. She's got a temper, especially when she's been drinkin'. It fires her blood, gets her angry at any little thing. And she's not one I'd like to have angry at me, not with the way she likes to settle arguments. I hear McManus got her dander up one time and woke up the next morning to have his refrigerator blow up in his face when he opened the door to get some milk.

"But the fire's not all bad. The cat likes to come out to play after she's had a few. Gave me a tumble a couple times that way."

—from a statement by captured RIRA terrorist Michael McGlynn

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Walther PPK	+1	+1	1d6	1d6-1	7	6	Carries 1 extra clip

Armor
None

Gear: Plastique or other easily- and safely-transported explosives, explosives supplies (detonators and the like), advanced explosives toolkit (+2 to Demolitions rolls)

Quote: "Just hit this switch, and *boom* — nothing left but little bits."

Powers/Tactics: Saltpeter Mary is a demolitions expert with years of experience at killing people and wreaking havoc with explosives. Even if deprived of normal explosives, she can construct improvised bombs if she has access to a sufficient quantity and variety of ordinary household chemicals (cleansers, powders, fertilizers, and the like). In game terms, this ability is bought as an RKA, Explosion with the *Variable Advantage* and *Extra Time* modifiers. The Variable Advantage represents her ability to put a Trigger or Time Delay on one of her homemade bombs, to increase the size of the Explosion slightly, or the like. The Extra Time indicates how long it takes to make the bomb (which requires a working kitchen or similar facility); thereafter, anyone can use the bomb quickly. The ability only has 1 Charge, but at the GM's option Mary can "stockpile" multiple bombs and combine them together to get a bigger blast (add RKA +½d6 for each hour she spends making a specific bomb, up to a maximum of 3d6).

Saltpeter Mary's not a combatant, though she's had basic IRA weapons and tactics training. She carries a Walther PPK or other small pistol when she has to, but she's a terrorist, not a soldier. If she can escape from a dangerous situation, she will... perhaps rigging an explosive booby trap to cover her exit.

Campaign Use: Saltpeter Mary is a freelance terrorist and criminal. Typically she's hired to blow something up as part of a terrorist attack or assassination, but sometimes she works with criminal gangs who need her expertise to open vaults (or the like). She can also handle some types of gunsmithing and other low-level technical chores.

To make Mary tougher, give her some combat abilities, such as Martial Arts or a couple of Combat Skill Levels with Firearms. To weaken her, decrease her Demolitions roll.

Saltpeter Mary only Hunts heroes if hired to do so. In that case, she follows the target (or otherwise gathers information on him) until she's got his routine down, finds the best way to take him out with a bomb, then designs, plants, and detonates said bomb.

Saltpeter Mary is wanted for multiple bombings in the Northern Ireland area, though officials there can't verify her real name and only have a couple of vague pictures of her. Various other national police agencies, including the FBI, want her for bombings committed in other countries.

Appearance: Mary O'Shaugnessy is an Irish woman in her mid-to-late thirties, 5'6" tall and a trim 125 pounds. A little of the bloom is off her rose, but she's still got quite a fetching appearance with her attractive figure, shoulder-length red hair, and green eyes. She speaks with a distinctive, and lovely, Irish accent, though the lack of education and sophistication that's apparent in her speech sort of spoils the effect. She wears ordinary clothes most of the time, switching to commando-style garb (black or camo sweaters, pants, and beret) when in the field. She usually has a large purse or bag with her in which she hides whatever tools and explosives she's carrying at the time — she rarely goes anywhere without at least a small bomb or two.

SATAN'S KISS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
16	COM	3	12-	
5	PD	3		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 7 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	3		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	5	**Total Characteristics Cost: 64**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
55	*Poison Kiss:* RKA 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [appropriate Immunity]; +1), Does BODY (+1); IAF (lipstick, -½), No Range (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (must spend 1 Turn to re-apply OA lipstick from tube containing 12 doses total; -1¼)	[1rc]
55	*Poisoned Nails:* RKA 4d6, NND (defense is Life Support [appropriate Immunity]; +1), Does BODY (+1); IAF (nail polish, -½), No Range (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (must spend 10 Minutes re-applying nail polish from bottle containing 12 doses total; -1¼)	[1rc]
20	*Sexy Distraction:* Mind Control 10d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; -½); Effect Ends Immediately If Anyone Directly Threatens Target (-½), No Range (-½), Only Works On Persons Of Appropriate Sexual Orientation (-¼), Set Effect (pay attention only to me, ignore other non-threatening activity going on around you; -1), Requires A Seduction Roll (-½)	0

Martial Arts: Karate

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 20 STR
4	Dodge	+0	+5	Dodge all attacks, Abort
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	3d6; Target Falls
4	Punch/Snap Kick	+0	+2	4d6 Strike
5	Side/Spin Kick	-2	+1	6d6 Strike

8	*Poison Tolerance:* Life Support (Immunity to OA, her fingernail poison, haemotoxins, and neurotoxins)	0

Perks

5 Contact: Contagion 11- (extremely useful skills or resources)
5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
2 Money: Well Off

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
4 Double-Jointed
3 Lightsleep

Skills

10 +2 with Interaction Skills

3 Acting 12-
3 Bribery 13-
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Contortionist 12-
3 Conversation 12-
3 Cryptography 12-
3 Disguise 12-
1 Forgery (Documents) 8-
3 High Society 12-
3 KS: The Espionage World 12-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
5 KS: Poisons 14-
3 Lockpicking 12-
3 SS: Human Biology 12-
7 SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 16-
3 SS: Zoology 12-
3 Security Systems 12-
7 Seduction 14-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
6 WF: Small Arms, Knives, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 306
Total Cost: 370

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: FSB 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Likes To Toy With Her Victims (Common, Moderate)
5 Reputation: assassin and expert on poisons, 11- (limited group: the Espionage World)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Tatiana Zatanikov) (Frequently, Major)
170 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 370

SATAN'S KISS PLOT SEEDS

One of the PCs meets this *amazing* new woman — intelligent, beautiful, sexy, playful, intoxicating. Unfortunately for him, it's Satan's Kiss, who's either setting him up for the most final fall of all, or just using him to get close to someone else.

The FSB wants Satan's Kiss back badly, because she has some information it desperately needs. But it doesn't want to jeopardize relations with the US by instituting a major snatch-and-grab op on American soil, so it decides to hire/trick the PCs into doing the job for it.

Several prominent businessmen have turned up dead all around Hudson City without a mark on them. The medical examiner thinks they were poisoned, but he's not sure. Is this the work of Satan's Kiss, or is someone even more sinister lurking in the shadows?

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Makarov PM	+0	-1	1d6+1	1d6-1	8	6	

Armor
None in most situations; if she's expecting trouble and it won't interfere with her mission, she may wear Armored Clothing (DEF 2, Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Most of her missions don't involve gear (other than perfume, jewelry, low-cut dresses...), but if necessary Satan's Kiss can obtain many types of espionage and military equipment

THE BIG KISS-OFF

TO: Deputy Director, DSO

FROM: Rodrick Kaine, Associate Deputy Director, DSO

DATE: February 10, 2005

RE: Satan's Kiss

We now have credible evidence that the two EU diplomats murdered in Brussels last week were killed by Satan's Kiss. The forensics indicates it could be her lipstick poison, and friends of both men report each of them spending time with "a gorgeous brunette" in the days prior to their deaths.

These are the sixth and seventh deaths attributable to Zatanikov in the past year. We've spent enough time "analyzing the situation" and "considering our options." It's time to do something before her bodycount gets larger. Recommend initiation of a termination protocol.

Background/History: Tatiana Zatanikov is the daughter of one of the KGB's most infamous assassins, Grigori Zatanikov. For many years she thought her father was nothing more than a typical Communist Party apparatchik — but then he needed a teenage girl to complete one of his cover identities. Initially shocked by the revelation of his true career, Tatiana soon found the whole idea kind of... thrilling.

She proved to be invaluable to her father on that mission. Sensing both her native talent for his type of work and an opportunity for advancement, he introduced her to his KGB superiors. They sent her off to a training camp, where she stayed for several years. During that time she drilled, practiced, studied, and practiced some more. When she was finished, she wasn't an innocent little girl anymore — she was a beautiful woman, poised and alluring, and a highly skilled spy and assassin to boot.

Tatiana only had a few years to serve her country before it disintegrated into a dozen quarreling fragments. Disgusted by the whole process, and more than willing to use her skills for her personal benefit, Tatiana left the KGB under less than friendly terms. Since then she's worked for herself, using her tradecraft as a ticket to financial security and emotional satisfaction. Because of her trademark "kiss of death," she's known in the profession as Satan's Kiss.

Personality/Motivation: Tatiana Zatanikov was once a carefree young girl. All that changed when her father consigned her to the clutches of the KGB. Their training killed the compassion and kindness she once possessed, leaving in their place a cold efficiency. Deep inside her, Tatiana remembers the child she once was, and the dreams she had, but she's locked them away behind a wall of "professionalism" and devotion to duty. This makes her a perfectionist who plans every job down to the last detail. She spends hours and hours on her schemes, working without rest or food until she completes a plan.

Tatiana's training has also made her emotionally dependent on her performance — if a job goes well, she's happy and content; if it goes badly, she may plunge into a deep depression that only lifts when she has another job to concentrate on. To draw out and heighten the emotional satisfaction she gets from her work, she frequently toys with her targets, giving them opportunities to figure out what's going on or to strike back at her. Sooner or later this tendency is going to cost her jobs, or even her life.

Quote: "What harm can one little kiss do?"

Powers/Tactics: Trained by the KGB as an assassin and spy, Satan's Kiss possesses many of the skills typically possessed by such agents. Her specialty is poisoning her targets; to make her work easier, she's subjected herself to several common poisons to develop an immunity to them. Her toxin of preference is OA ("Osculum Astrarum," the Kiss of Heaven, a rather ironic designation given her *nom du crime*), which she developed herself from the poison of the chironex box jellyfish. She works it into her lipstick so that the slightest kiss may prove fatal. If appropriate, she also uses a fingernail polish made from curare, so that even a minor scratch can be deadly. She's a black widow spider, tempting men into coming close and then killing them when they're most vulnerable.

Campaign Use: Satan's Kiss obviously can't stand up to a group of PCs in open combat — she's a far more subtle assassin. You may enjoy using her the most if you can work her into the campaign innocuously (perhaps as a romantic interest for a PC) while she's undercover/not working... then reveal who she really is later on.

To make Satan's Kiss tougher, give her some Extra DCs with her Karate and increase her SPD to 4. To weaken her, get rid of the Karate and her Skill Levels with Interaction Skills.

Satan's Kiss only Hunts heroes if hired to do so, and usually only accepts jobs with male targets. Her usual m.o. is to get close to her target using her feminine wiles (even her Sexy Distraction power, if necessary), get him alone, and then poison him.

Satan's Kiss is a suspect in over a dozen murders in numerous countries. Interpol has a fairly thick file on her, as do the CIA and FSB, but so far she's eluded capture.

Appearance: Satan's Kiss is a beautiful young woman of Russian extraction, 5'9" tall and weighing about 145 pounds. Her long, wavy black hair reaches to the middle of her back, her eyes are green, and her features finely formed. She could easily obtain work as a model if she so desired. She dresses in high-fashion outfits appropriate to the situation; her favorites are short skirts and long-sleeved blouses that display her figure well. Her fingernails are long, well-trimmed, and always beautifully polished (usually in red).

THE SHRIKE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
23	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 52**	

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers	END
4	*Fleet-Footed:* Running +2" (8" total)	1
10	*Lucky Bastard:* Luck 2d6	0

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
15 Money: Filthy Rich

Talents

3 Lightsleep

Skills

3 Animal Handler (Equines, Raptors) 12-
3 Combat Driving 12-
1 Computer Programming 8-
3 Conversation 12-
3 High Society 12-
1 Language: French (basic conversation; English is Native)
1 Language: Spanish (basic conversation)
1 Mechanics 8-
3 Persuasion 12-
3 Riding 12-
3 Seduction 12-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Stealth 12-
1 Streetwise 8-
8 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3 WF: Small Arms, Blades
3 Jack Of All Trades
1 1) PS: Backgammon 11-
1 2) PS: Chess 11-
1 3) PS: Golf 11-
1 4) PS: Polo 11-
4 5) PS: Torture 14-

Resource Points

0 Equipment Points: 60
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 119
Total Cost: 171

100+ Disadvantages

30 Hunted: Joint HCPD-FBI task force 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Antisocial Personality Disorder (Very Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Cannibal (Uncommon, Strong)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Edgar Williamston) (Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 175

Background/History: Ed watched the hawk circle lazily in the sky as it searched for prey. He sighed. *This used to be exciting.* Once it had stirred his blood to watch the predator stalk and kill its hapless prey; now it seemed pedestrian — if such a word could properly apply to a flying creature.

In fact, all *of my old pursuits pale in comparison to the Hunting. Racecars, speedboats, Lear jets, skiing, parachuting, diving with sharks, stalking big game — none of that interests me anymore. Not since the Hunting started.*

It began so casually. That first time I saw Ceci out at Firetree, she took my breath away. What grace, what beauty! Her skin was porcelain, and her auburn hair had that single whitish-blond lock in the center of her forehead, like the flame at the tip of a candle. Vivacious, intelligent, fascinating — and yet she spurned me. Me! For that oaf Henderson. Bitch!

But I waited, I held my peace. One day she'd be mine, and I'd punish her for treating me so badly. Finally my turn came. What a splendid night that was, crisp and cool with the frost creeping in upon the grass, and all the stars dancing above. What possessed me to go for a drive I'll never know, but it must have been an angel. There was Ceci, walking beside the road, without coat or companion. I knew as soon as I saw her exactly what was going to happen.

What else could a gallant young gentleman do but offer her a ride? The look of relief on her face when I pulled up beside her and opened the door of the Porsche to let her in — the irony of it was so intense I could almost feel it. It was pathetic to listen to her whine about her fight with Henderson, how she'd jumped out of his car and stalked away, leaving her jacket behind.

I made sure she couldn't do the same to me — we went 60, 70, 80 miles an hour. She knew she was in trouble then, but there wasn't a damn thing she could do about it. We finally rolled to a stop at that stable way out in the country where I'd been riding a couple of times before — no one lived within miles of the place.

She got out and tried to run away into the forest, but she hadn't gone thirty paces before I was on top of her. I remember every little last detail like

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Hunting Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
None

Gear: None

MMMM, CHILI

Three Pounder Chili

2 tbsp peanut oil

3 lbs of flesh carved from the loin or thigh, cut into cubes

1/3 cup minced garlic

1 tbsp red pepper flakes

1 med. onion, chopped coarsely

1 tbsp each oregano & ground cumin

4 tsp salt

1/3 cup flour

2 cups bone-rendered stock, or beer if I haven't had time to make some

2 15-oz cans beans (kidney or black)

3 15-oz can crushed tomatoes

2 tbsp brown sugar

¼ cup bottled barbecue sauce

1 tsp black or brown mustard

1 tbsp hot pepper sauce (usu. Sriracha; sometimes Cholula or Tabasco)

Make sure every ingredient is ready to go. There won't be time in the middle of things to open a can or chop the onion. Don't drain any of the cans; everything goes in.

Begin with a very hot pot, near the smoking point. Drizzle in the oil and immediately follow with the meat and garlic. Sear the meat well, keep things moving just enough to avoid burning the garlic (but brown is good, to bring out the flavor).

Add the pepper flakes, onion, oregano, cumin and salt, tossing quickly. Lower the heat to medium, then add the flour, tossing to coat the entire mixture as evenly as possible without burning.

Continued on next page

a Braille imprinted on my soul: the feel of her silk blouse when I threw her to the ground; the touch of her skin; the sound of her moans and sobs and cries; the taste of her tears as I licked them off her face. And the knife. The knife! The shock of the impacts in my arm, so many I can't remember them all, a feeling like nothing I'd ever experienced. The first time is always the best.

I didn't take any meat that night, no trophies, nothing: I was too new at the Hunting, too inexperienced and scared. Don't remember much about the drive home. The rest of the night was horrible — prowling about the penthouse like a caged animal, terrified of what would happen. When would they find her? Had anybody seen us driving? My fingerprints were all over her! Oh, God, oh, God, ohGodohGodohGod.... I was just about to pack for Barbados when my wits came back to me. No one had seen us, no one had seen Ceci at all after she left Henderson in a huff. No one could possibly have heard or seen us out in the country. So what if they had my fingerprints? I wasn't under suspicion, they'd never think to print me at all. As long as I was careful, everything was fine — and I could do it again. I could do it again.

It took all next day to get my nerves completely under control, but by that night I was out and about again, playing the young gentleman, a Shrike hidden behind an Armani suit and a Rolex. I heard a few people ask where Ceci was, but no one knew. Their puzzlement made me smile to myself occasionally, bewitched with the knowledge of what had taken place, and what was still to come. Someone finally found the meat a few weeks later, after weather and wild beasts had been at it. Don't know if they got any fingerprints off it or not.

The hawk continued to circle.

By then I'd moved on. The Hunting was calling me, wild, urgent, hot, undeniable. Only one other time have I ever dared to bring the Hunting so close to home, to take some of the meat so tantalizingly near: Jennifer D'Angelo. She wasn't poised like Ceci, she was wild and rambunctious, uncompromising, like a young Katherine Hepburn. She excited me almost as much as Ceci had. I ran into her and her family at the club for the first time in years right after she returned from her sophomore year at Vassar. Her father had arranged an internship for her with some firm downtown, she said, and she was living with a couple of girlfriends from college in a Bankhurst apartment.

Kept an eye on her for the next couple of months... though she never knew about it, of course. I waited patiently for the opportunity I knew she'd give me. Finally, one week in July, I saw her roommates packing to go on a trip, but not Jennifer. Bob told me how busy they were with some IPO, so I knew for sure she'd be staying in town.

That night I waited around outside her apartment in a rented car until I saw her walking up. I don't think she ever looked twice at me, but if she did, I guess the nice clothes and fake moustache did the trick. I went in the building right behind her; she let me walk right in without being buzzed up. Stupid bitch.

She got on the elevator while I raced up the stairs to her floor. I was so excited I didn't even feel tired when I got there. I peeked out the door until I saw her get off the elevator and start to open the door to her apartment. Before she could go inside I crept quietly up behind her — that little thrill, the fear of discovery! — and shoved her inside, hard, so she wouldn't have the breath to scream.

I quickly shut the door and throttled her 'til she passed out; I didn't dare strike her for fear of marring her features. God, what a night! All the others were so quick, so uncontrolled, so ephemeral — for once I could take my time and savor every moment.

A few hours later I got up from the meat and dressed. Wearing dark clothing so I didn't have to wash first was a stroke of brilliance — her blood on my skin felt energizing, invigorating, vital. Ought to do that more often. Took some meat with me when I left, for later.

Dad's old slaughterhouse has been a Godsend to the Shrike in all of this. It didn't matter at first, of course, but once I started taking meat with me it was crucial — there's only so much room in the freezer. The hawk was still circling — and then it plunged! Ed couldn't see what it was after, but he'd know in a minute.

None of the rest of them have been as exciting as those two. Just whores, ready for the picking. It's good of the city to provide such prey for the Hunting. The meat's not the sweetest, naturally, but the best viands are always rare, and thus more enjoyable. The Shrike is hungry again, too, and it's only been a few days.

Finally the hawk returned to its perch, a pigeon in its claws. *How predictable,* sighed Ed. *Here in the city it's always a pigeon, or a rat.* He picked up the dead bird, looked at it for a moment, then flung it over the side of the balcony and walked back into his penthouse.

Personality/Motivation: Raised in the lap of luxury by uncaring parents who sometimes disciplined him harshly in an effort to try to rein in their selfish, reckless son, Edgar Williamston grew up without equating punishments to offenses. He learned that with money and charm, he could usually do what he pleased without suffering any consequences, and that cruelty and manipulation were acceptable tools for living one's life. Innately intelligent, he quickly saw the benefits his "bravado" gave him over the insipid mass of humanity who obeyed rules and procedures.

Edgar is superficially quite charming (years of social training forced on him by his parents saw to that) and able to mix effortlessly with the privileged and wealthy. But his veneer of humanity masks the soul of a monster — Edgar cares nothing for the people around him. He manipulates and abuses them at will, provided he can do so without risking his squeaky-clean reputation as a "nice fellow."

Edgar's emotions are as stunted as a rose growing in a desert. All of his life he's been regarded as a "thrillseeker," since only intense activities gave him any pleasure. His endless succession of hobbies — race car driving, polo, skindiving, big-game hunting, and many others — are a result of his search for stimulation. His activities as a serial killer are

those same urges turned upon womankind. Ordinary relationships with women never stirred him at all; only the violence, rape, and murder of "the Hunting" arouses any passion in him. His lust for Ceci Blume and the hatred triggered by the way she "spurned" him pushed him over the edge, but he's never looked back or suffered any remorse. He often takes trophies, such as a piece of lingerie, from his victims, but not always. He keeps the trophies at his slaughterhouse.

About halfway through his career as a serial killer, Edgar began eating pieces of his victims. He's always used the word "meat" when thinking about his victims, but after a while he began to take the term literally, carving off small pieces or organs from the mutilated bodies of his victims to cook and eat later. At first he hid them in his own freezer, but he decided that was too risky. Instead he began using an abandoned slaughterhouse owned by his father. In the refrigerated room he has pieces of his victims hanging on hooks, ready for preparation; he converted a side office into an elegant kitchen and dining room. He eats there once every few weeks for the thrill of committing such a heinous sin. From this practice he gets the third-person name he uses for himself, *the Shrike.*

Cannibalism is just the latest stage in the Shrike's quest for "emotionally fulfilling experiences" (intense thrills) — the utterly taboo nature of consuming human flesh is what makes it so attractive to him. Heaven (or Hell) only knows what he will turn to next for gratification.

Quote: None.

Powers/Tactics: The Shrike's tactics as a serial killer are deceptively simple. He doesn't choose his victims on the basis of any characteristic such as hair color or height (although all of them have been white). Instead, except for the two instances described above, he confines "the Hunting" to prostitutes he picks up on the Strip. He dresses nondescriptly and uses a car rented under a false name and paid for with cash when he visits the Strip. He's never bothered to conceal his fingerprints or other trace evidence, so the police will identify him easily once they catch him... if they every do. He's quite confident his social standing and influence will immunize him from suspicion, and so far he's been absolutely correct.

Once he picks up a hooker, the Shrike takes her to some cheap hotel, overpowers her, gags her, and then rapes her before brutally stabbing or cutting her to death. Sometimes he tortures his victim before killing her. In most cases he takes either a trophy (normally a piece of lingerie) or some "meat" that he cuts off of the body. The only two exceptions to this pattern are the Blume and D'Angelo murders. The police know D'Angelo's killer is the same as the prostitute killer. The papers refer to him as "the Strip Slasher" and "the Bankhurst Butcher," since D'Angelo's apartment was in Bankhurst. He *hates* these names; sooner or later he'll get upset enough to write the word "Shrike" on a victim or a wall with the victim's blood.

Campaign Use: The police expect the D'Angelo killing to be the key that unlocks the case, since it differs from the others. They've been questioning all of her friends and associates, and those of her parents. They may eventually talk to Edgar Williamston, since he belongs to some of the same clubs and social circles as the D'Angelos, but they're unlikely even to suspect him of being involved — he's slick enough to look them right in the eyes and lie without so much as blushing.

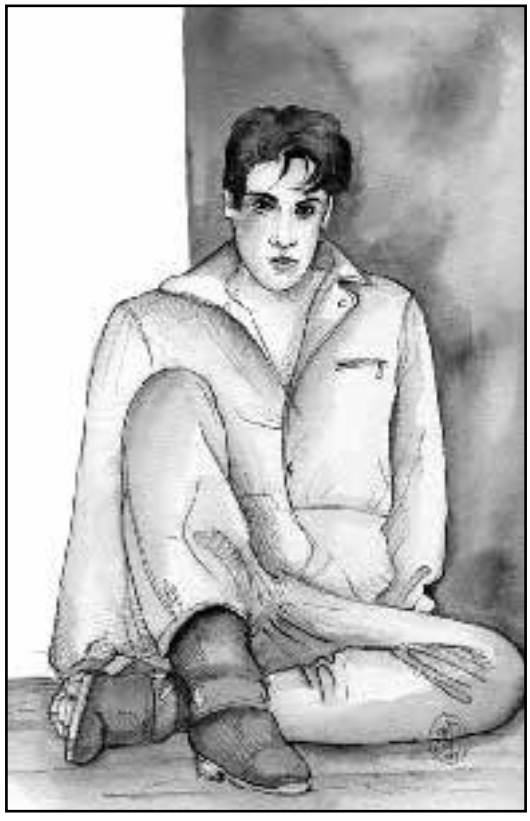
Sooner or later the Shrike will once again be tempted by someone other than a prostitute, probably some girl he sees at one of his clubs or social functions. The more he does this, the better the chances of the police or PCs tracking him down, since striking so close to home points investigators in his direction. Once he comes under strong suspicion he's as good as caught because of all of the evidence he's left behind: trace evidence at the crime scenes; a slaughterhouse full of trophies and "meat." He won't go peacefully, though; he'll fight to the death rather than go to prison.

To make the Shrike tougher, increase his SPD to 4. To weaken him, remove his extra Running and his Luck. He doesn't Hunt heroes.

The Shrike has no plot seeds; he's a walking, talking plot seed in which the adventure is "find him and stop him."

Edgar Williamston has no criminal record.

Appearance: Edgar Williamston is tall, ruggedly handsome, and well-built — he obviously spends a lot of time outdoors in athletic pursuits. He has dark hair and eyes and a pleasant, charming expression; he's quite adept at hiding his usual boredom and contempt for the rest of humanity. He wears expensive men's clothes appropriate to the situation.



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As quickly as possible, add all the remaining ingredients, in the order listed. Mix well until it's thick and bubbling, then drop it to a gentle simmer. Simmer it, stirring occasionally, for at least two hours to let the flavors smooth out. The longer it sits (hot or cold) the better. Serve hot with those cute little oyster crackers, or some corn chips. Makes a little under a gallon.

Optional: When I'm feeling very festive, I add a half-pound of fresh mushrooms and a chopped bell pepper at the same time as the onion.

Remember: Fat people taste terrific, but you are what you eat.

SNAFU

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	30	15-	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 [6]
25	DEX	60	14-	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
30	CON	60	15-	
25	BODY	40	14-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
25	PRE	20	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
10	COM	0		
15	PD	16		Total: 15 PD (6 rPD)
15	ED	16		Total: 15 ED (6 rED)
6	SPD	45		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
12	REC	0		
60	END	0		
55	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 287**	

Movement: Running: 13"/26"
Leaping: 10"/20"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
	Martial Arts: Commando Training	
	Maneuver OCV DCV Notes	
3	Aikido Throw +0 +1 8d6 + vel/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross +0 +2 10d6	
4	Choke -2 +0 Grab, 3d6 NND (2)	
4	Judo Disarm -1 +1 Disarm, 50 STR	
4	Karate "Chop" -2 +0 1d6 HKA (2d6 w/STR)	
4	Kung Fu Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)	
6	*Organic-Plastic Mesh Implants:* Damage Resistance (6 PD/6 ED)	0
8	*Unique Metabolism:* Power Defense (15 points); Only Versus Drugs, Poisons, And Gases (-1)	0
20	*Fast Runner:* Running +7" (13" total)	1
8	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +4" (10" forward, 5" upward)	1
2	*Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total)	1
9	*Enhanced Physiology:* Life Support (Safe Environments: High Radiation, Intense Heat, Intense Cold; Diminished Eating: able to ingest any organic substance)	0
6	*Enhanced Perception:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0

Talents

3 Absolute Time Sense
3 Bump of Direction
15 Combat Sense 12-
3 Lightsleep

Skills

12 +6 OCV with Modified Minigun
10 +2 HTH
3 Breakfall 14-
3 Combat Driving 14-
3 Combat Piloting 14-
3 Interrogation 14-
3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-
2 Language: Arabic (fluent conversation; English is Native)
2 Language: Spanish (fluent conversation)
2 Navigation (Land) 12-
3 Paramedic 12-
3 PS: Mercenary 12-
7 Shadowing 14-
7 Stealth 16-
10 Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical, Urban)14-
3 Systems Operation 12-
3 Tracking 12-
14 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Combat Aircraft, Helicopters, Large Planes, Parachuting (Basic and Advanced), SCUBA, Small Motorized Boats, Small Planes, Snow Skiing, Tracked Military Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, Wheeled Military Vehicles
16 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Small Arms, all Uncommon Weapons, all Emplaced Weapons (except Early)
7 Weaponsmith 14- (Slugthrowers, Muscle-Powered HTH)

Resource Points

28 Equipment Points: 200
10 Vehicle/Base Points: 30
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 278
Total Cost: 565

100+ Disadvantages

25 Enraged: Berserk in combat (Common), go 11-, recover 14-
30 Hunted: United States Army 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Amoral And Selfish (Common, Total)
20 Psychological Limitation: Revels In Violence And Destruction (Common, Total)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Mark Benning, ex-soldier) (Frequently, Major)
335 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 565

Background/History: Project: Superiority began in 1996 with the goal of creating a "super-soldier" capable of taking on entire squads of enemy soldiers and defeating them. Project: Superiority soldiers were intended to be dropped behind enemy lines by themselves, where they could survive for extended periods while wreaking havoc upon the enemy — in other words, they were to be the ultimate commandos. The theory was to use modern technology, medicine, science, and training methods to create a soldier able to survive anywhere, withstand enormous amounts of pain and injury, and kill without hesitation.

Subjects for the program, all volunteers, were obtained directly from new recruits, before they'd gone through basic training. The first step in the program was to provide them with basic survival and combat training. All recruits survived this

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Minigun	+0	+0	2d6+1	1d6+1	500	20	AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor
Level II-A (DEF 6, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: Gen-2 nightvision device, field survival kit (+2 to Survival rolls)

stage. The second stage was the drug and surgery program designed to fundamentally alter the subject. The injections and toxic reactions to the implants killed five of the volunteers, leaving only one survivor: Mark Benning.

The second stage encompassed the majority of what was to make a Project: Superiority soldier so much better than an ordinary man. Through steroid injections and muscle grafts, Benning became immensely strong. Similar injections (and later training) increased his reflexes and stamina. Surgeons implanted specially-developed "organic plastic mesh" under his skin to give him a partial resistance to low-caliber bullets and other weapons, and a radio receiver/transmitter in his mastoid sinus so he could communicate with headquarters at all times. His digestive and gastric tracts were altered to allow him to derive nutriment from any organic substance (such as grass, tree bark, or fur) without harm. He was made able to withstand extremes of temperature and radiation.

Stage three of the Project was to train Benning to use his new body and mind properly. He learned everything he could about being a soldier, from stealthy movement, to tactics, to hand-to-hand combat. This stage also included intense psychological conditioning to accustom Benning to his new role and ensure his loyalty. The Army equipped Benning with the latest in weaponry, including a modified M-134 Minigun with several interchangeable helical ammunition magazines, a weapon so big only he can carry and use it.

Benning completed advanced training without any difficulties. The problem arose during his first field training exercise in El Salvador. The "enemy" squad he was assigned to take out was equipped with live ammunition and weapons to demonstrate Benning's invulnerability to such attacks. At one point during the exercise, the soldiers used some artillery, and a shell landed extremely close to Benning. After the explosion he stood dazedly for a few moments, then knocked the nearest soldiers down and fled, never to return. The Army had taught him too well — he escaped into the surrounding jungle without any problem.

What the Army didn't know, and so far hasn't learned, is that the near-miss with the artillery shell damaged Benning's implanted radio. The shrieking sound it made erased his psychological conditioning, leaving him extremely confused in what he perceived as hostile surroundings. His training took over and he escaped. Without the conditioning he had no reason to return to the Army when other options were available. He fell in with a group of mercenaries and has worked as a merc ever since, commanding extremely high fees because of the modifications made by the Army. Whenever Benning tells his employers how the Army built him and then "let him go," he finishes it the same way: "Nothing unusual — just a typical Army SNAFU."

Personality/Motivation: Mark Benning enlisted in the Army because he didn't know what else to do. He'd just graduated high school, wasn't interested in going to college, and none of the jobs available to him were any good. He was chosen for Project Superiority because of his physical skills and reverence for authority. He survived the testing through sheer grit, determination, and luck. But whatever parts of Mark Benning's personality led to him enlisting and surviving the augmentation process were scrambled when the radio in his head malfunctioned. The conditioning he underwent, then the rapid and brutal deconditioning that followed, have left Benning a selfish and amoral killer whose only thrill is inflicting pain and punishment on others. In short, his loyalty to his country is gone, leaving only the killer behind.

SNAFU PLOT SEEDS

The Army reopens Project: Superiority... and the first test for the new recruits is bring down SNAFU. It's open warfare on the streets of Hudson City and the PCs are caught in the crossfire....

An unknown party hires SNAFU to destroy a small business located in one of Hudson City's skyscrapers. SNAFU goes into a killing rage and starts murdering people. The police have cordoned off the building, but no one sent in has come out alive. The PCs have to enter the skyscraper, defeat SNAFU in a game of cat and mouse through the building's ventilation ducts and elevator shafts, then capture him and bring him in.

While fighting the PCs, SNAFU suddenly falls over and goes into a coma. Something has gone wrong with his implants. Can the PCs reverse the changes wrought on his body? Or will they turn him over to the Army?

Operating under the name SNAFU, the new Mark Benning has taken to the life of a mercenary like a fish to water. His work lets him indulge his violent urges while not demanding any loyalty from him beyond a paycheck.

SNAFU remembers everything that went on in his past, although with a decidedly odd emotional detachment from the events. He holds no particular malice toward the Army or anyone involved in Project: Superiority — if anything, he'd thank them for giving him a new life.

Quote: "Here comes the storm, baby!"

Powers/Tactics: SNAFU's powers stem from his enhanced physiology — he's stronger, faster, and tougher than any normal human. His strength allows him to carry his modified Minigun as easily as a normal man carries a deer rifle; he often fires from the hip with one hand.

SNAFU's tactics depend on his current assignment, but in any sort of firefight, he tends to fill the air with bullets, spraying his Minigun left and right. When he runs out of ammo, he moves into HTH Combat. He's a brutally efficient brawler: first he Disarms his opponent, then he puts him in a Choke (using the person he's Grabbed as a human shield against other attackers). Once he's incapacitated his victim, he breaks the person's neck with a Karate "Chop" and moves on to the next opponent.

SNAFU has a tendency to think of himself as invulnerable — after all, the plastics under his skin mean most bullets can't hurt him much. It may be possible to lure him into a trap by appealing to his "vanity" about his abilities, then lower the boom with attacks even he can't resist.

Campaign Use: SNAFU has found a niche in the mercenary market as a sort of living bomb. Those who hire him usually transport him near the target, drop him in the area, and let him wreak havoc. He's known neither for his discretion nor his subtlety — anyone who hires him should expect bloody chaos (this isn't a problem for most of his employers).

SNAFU is already pretty powerful — in fact, he may be a little *too* powerful, too "superhuman," for some *Dark Champions* campaigns. If you want to make him more of a threat give him Combat Skill Levels with All Combat and some Damage Reduction. To weaken him, lower his PD and ED and replace the Modified Minigun with a standard assault rifle.

SNAFU generally doesn't Hunt someone unless he's being paid to do so. He might Hunt anyone who either caused him to fail a previous job. The goons he employs (if any) are other mundane mercenaries, but he prefers to work alone (partly because some remnant of his old training exists, partly because that leaves all the killing for him).

Mark Benning has no criminal record. He has an extensively military file, obviously, but the Army keeps that hidden behind multiple veils of secrecy.

Appearance: At 6'6" tall and 350 pounds of muscle (and muscle graft), SNAFU is huge. His body is criss-crossed with scars from wounds and the physical augmentation surgeries he underwent as a subject in Project: Superiority. Pressing obscenely against his outer skin from beneath are the bioplastic plates that protect him. He keeps his blond hair in a buzzcut and usually wears olive drab fatigues and combat boots.

THE BENDS

The warehouse was dark, with only a single pool of light from a lamp on a desk over in the corner. It was dank, too — either the roof leaked, or someone was spilling way too much water in there.

"Where is he?" one of the two men standing in the light asked the other. "He's fifteen minutes over. Some military efficiency."

"Sorry, gentlemen," came a voice from the nearby shadows. A big man stepped out, his skin distorted by scars and implanted bioplastic shields. "I just wanted to make sure you were alone."

"Jesus Christ!" the man who'd spoken gasped. "Give a guy some !$&*%@# warning. Have you been there all along?"

"As far as you know."

"Okay, okay, keep your secrets. Let's get down to it. We need someone to pull a job here in town, a big one. A robbery. You recruit the team you need — subject to our operating budget — and command in the field."

"I'll take a large cool to listen to the basics of the job. For that you get my loyalty and my silence if I choose not to take the job. If I agree to it, we negotiate the rest of the price then."

"Okay, that sou...."

"Waitaminit," the other guy said, throwing away the stub of his cigarette. "We've all heard your rep, pal. But lots of guys have a big rep and can't live up to it. What's so good about you that you qualify for this kind'a cash?"

SNAFU looked around. He walked over to a crate, picked up the crowbar lying on top, brought it back. Without a word, he strained his muscles... and slowly but surely, the crowbar bent into a U. He dropped it, letting the echoes die away before he spoke. "That — and the fact that I could've killed you both without you ever knowing I was here."

—mercenary salary negotiations

SPIKE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	16	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
45	STUN	10	**Total Characteristics Cost: 89**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers			END
	Martial Arts: Dirty Infighting			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Eye Gouge	-1	-1	Sight Group Flash 4d6
4	Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND(3)
4	Punch/Backhand	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
5	Roundhouse	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
3	Tackle	+0	-1	3d6 +v/5 Strike; You Fall, Target Falls
1	Use Art with Spiked Gauntlets			

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level

Skills

10 +2 HTH
6 +3 OCV with Punch/Backhand
2 AK: Little Italy 11-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
2 Gambling (Card Games) 12-
3 Interrogation 12-
2 KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
3 KS: The Mafia 12-
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2 WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

8 Equipment Points: 100
5 Vehicle/Base Points: 20
10 Follower/Contact Points: 25
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 95
Total Cost: 184

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15 Hunted: The Headless Hangman (Mo Pow, Kill)
15 Psychological Limitation: Sadistically Brutal (Common, Strong)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Stephen Perrone, mafiosi) (Frequently, Major)
5 Unluck 1d6
14 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 184

Background/History: The history of the enforcer and killer known as Spike revolves not around a man but of a pair of spiked gauntlets. In 1996 a Verontese hitman named Danny Guariglia made the gauntlets for himself as a "gimmick" to help him earn an underworld rep. He used them for about a year, attracting a lot of attention in Mafia circles. He looked like he was headed for big things... but then the Headless Hangman caught up with him and butchered him in his apartment in Little Italy.

When the HCPD carted off what was left of the body, the gauntlets became evidence in the ongoing investigation of some murders the cops believed Guariglia had committed. But they didn't remain in the evidence room very long. A corrupt cop named Harold Grimes decided he could use them to make some easy money. He put them on and began robbing drug dealers and numbers runners, hiding his identity with a bandana mask. Grimes's stupidity was exceeded only by his good luck—he kept up this suicidal behavior for nearly six months before Morelli gunmen shot him to death when he tried to rob one of their numbers banks.

When the Morellis dumped the body in the Stewart River, one of them, Stephen Perrone, kept the gauntlets without anyone knowing about it. Like Guariglia and Grimes before him, he saw the Spike gauntlets as his ticket to the big time — but he wasn't gonna make the mistakes they did. He hired the Toymaker to create a suit of leathery armor and a matching helmet, both also covered with spikes, for him. Then he got back in the Mafia's good graces by doing some important jobs "for free," just to show how good he was at them. Impressed with his discipline and skill, the mobs began hiring him again, and eventually he branched out to working for other groups.

Personality/Motivation: Spike is a vicious, sadistic man who enjoys humiliating his enemies and beating them to a bloody pulp... if not to death. But don't mistake his savagery for stupidity. He often tries to make his enemies think he's a typical "big, dumb thug," but he's actually a clever guy who puts a lot of thought into his work. Unlike the sociopathic Guariglia, Perrone's goal is to get rich without getting captured — beating people up is fun, but fun don't pay the bills.

Quote: "That's it — go ahead, beg for yer life. If that's how ya wanna spend yer last few seconds on Earth, I'm willin' ta listen to ya."

Powers/Tactics: Spike's main weapon is a pair of wickedly spiked gauntlets that turn his every punch into a lethal attack. If he can't close to HTH Combat range to use them, or if he feels he's outnumbered, he retreats and waits for another opportunity to attack.

SPIKE PLOT SEEDS

Perrone gets killed by the Headless Hangman. What will happen to the Spike gauntlets and armor now — will anyone else dare to take up the bloody legacy?

A couple of guys from the Verontese family got beaten to death last week. Sure looks like Spike's work. The question is, if it was him, who'd he do the job for? A full-blown mob war might break out if the PCs can't figure out what's going on and put a stop to it.

The Mafia decides Spike's too difficult to control, too much of a liability. But the leaders can't let the rank and file see them kill one of their own just for being inconvenient; it would cause unrest. So they plan to get the PCs to kill him for them.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Spiked Gauntlets	+0	—	½d6	1d6-1	—	—	Linked to Punch, No STR Bonus, Armor (4 PD/4 ED covering the Hands)
Ruger Redhawk	+0	+0	2d6	1d6	6	11	Enlarged trigger guard

Armor
Spike-Covered Leather-and-Kevlar Armor and Helmet (DEF 3, Activation Roll 14-; spikes are HKA ½d6, Damage Shield, Activation Roll 14-, No STR Bonus)

Gear: None

One downside to wearing the gauntlets: they make it harder to handle objects. If appropriate, require Spike to make a DEX Roll to handle ordinary objects in stressful situations, and impose a -2 penalty to other DEX Rolls he has to make. If he tries to use weapons, change this to a -2 OCV penalty (he often carries a Ruger Redhawk that's been modified with a larger trigger guard and grip so he doesn't suffer this penalty when using it).

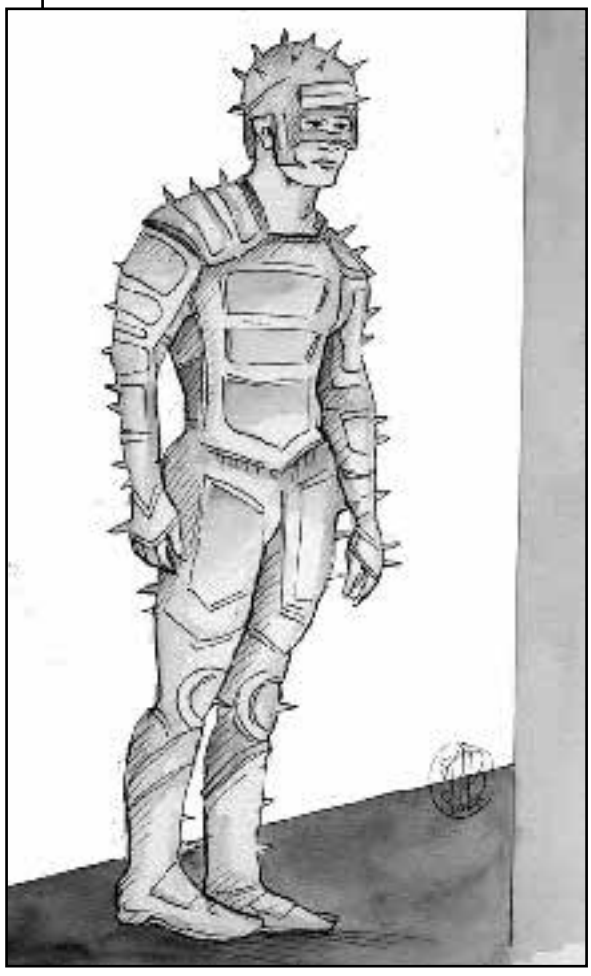
Campaign Use: Spike mainly does enforcement and bodyguard work, like Brahma or Stonehenge, but his weapons set him apart. If appropriate, he may expand his arsenal, perhaps getting the Toymaker to build him new gauntlets that let him shoot some of the spikes at foes he can't punch.

To make Spike tougher, increase his STR to 20 and give him +2 Extra DCs with his Dirty Infighting. To weaken him, remove his Combat Skill Levels with HTH Combat.

Spike only Hunts people if hired to, in which case he tracks the target down through his street contacts and attacks. He's about as subtle as a Mack truck.

The police know Spike is the third man to use that name. They have a warrant for his arrest for five murders, thirteen acts of aggravated assault, and two rapes.

Appearance: Stephen Perrone, the current Spike, is 6'1" tall and weighs about 215 pounds; he's broad-shouldered with a heavy, muscular build. His brown body armor covers his shoulders and torso, with additional panels for the thighs and upper arms; his helmet, boots, and gauntlets protect his the rest of his body. The helmet leaves his lower face exposed. Most areas of the armor are covered with short, sharp spikes, making him look something like a modern-day version of a fantasy gladiator or medieval torturer. Underneath the armor he wears a black bodysuit.



FAMILY BUSINESS

"Yeah, Bobby, you wanted t' see me?"

"Sure thing, Al, thanks for comin' over. I think we may have ourselves a problem that I want you to take care of for me."

"You name it, it's done, Bobby. What's up?"

"You know that guy Spike?"

"The enforcer, the one with the spiked armor and gloves. Yeah, I know that prick."

"Here's the thing. He's got his uses — a guy like that can put the fear into people who're used to guns. But he's an asshole, and he's got a big yap to boot. Now that he's workin' outside the families, he's a risk — a big risk, I think. We got to minimize that."

"Whatta you want me to do?"

"You and your crew, find out about this guy. Find out who he really is, and then keep an eye on him. If I give you the word, whack him."

"You got it, Bobby. From now on, he's under the gun."

—talking a little business around the Morelli family table

STONEHENGE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
13	COM	2	12-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	4		
40	END	0		
38	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 107**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect	END
	Martial Arts: Fisticuffs				
	Maneuver				
4	Armsnapper/Kidney Blow	-2	+0	HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR)	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 40 STR to Disarm roll	
4	Eye Gouge	-1	-1	Sight Group Flash 6d6	
5	Hoist And Slam	+0	+0	10d6 Slam, Target Falls, Must Follow Grab	
4	Low Blow	-1	+1	3d6 NND(3)	
4	Piledriver Punch	+0	+0	6d6 Strike, 30 STR to Shove	
4	Punch/Backhand	+0	+2	8d6 Strike	
5	Roundhouse	-2	+1	10d6 Strike	
3	Throw	+0	+1	6d6 +v/5; Target Falls	
8	+2 Damage Classes (already added in)				
24	*Tough Enough To Take It:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Requires A CON Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼)				0

Talents

3 Resistance (3 points)

Skills

15 +3 HTH
2 Gambling (Card Games) 12-
3 High Society 13-
5 Interrogation 14-
2 CK: London 11-
2 CK: Hudson City 11-
2 KS: Art History 11-
2 KS: Classical Music 11-
2 KS: The Hudson City Underworld 11-
1 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 8-
2 KS: World History 11-
2 KS: World Literature 11-
1 PS: Bartending 8-
2 PS: Play Chess 11-
2 PS: Play Piano 11-
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
2 WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

0 Equipment Points: 60
0 Vehicle/Base Points: 10
0 Follower/Contact Points: 5
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 132
Total Cost: 239

100+ Disadvantages

15 Enraged: if insulted, taunted, or belittled (Common), go 8-, recover 11-
20 Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
5 Rivalry: Professional (with Brahma and other enforcers besides Caber)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Michael Forsythe) (Frequently, Major)
84 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 239

Background/History: Michael Forsythe grew up strong and tough in a rough, working-class London neighborhood. When he was a teenager, he got involved in illegal bare-knuckle boxing competitions where he quickly made a name for himself due to his immense strength and ability to take a punch. The fans nicknamed him "Stonehenge" because no matter how hard he was hit, he didn't stumble back or fall down. After a few years he retired from the ring almost undefeated and used the money he'd earned to buy a pub.

He ran the pub for a few years, but it wasn't very successful — largely because he often got into brawls with his patrons when they made fun of him or wouldn't leave when he told them to. It was during this time that he made the acquaintance of a big bruiser who called himself Caber. The first time the two of them got into it, they nearly wrecked the pub; Caber was the only man Forsythe had ever met who was his match in a fight. After that first knock-down, drag-out battle, they became fast friends.

Eventually, Forsythe's bar went under and he had to sell out for whatever he could get. He bummed around London for a while, working as a bouncer in a few clubs. Then he heard from Caber, who'd fled to the States to avoid some legal problems in the UK and gotten a sweet job working for some crime boss who called himself Charlemagne. Figuring there wasn't much left for him in London, Forsythe caught a flight to Hudson City.

Caber got him a job as an enforcer and bodyguard for Charlemagne, but it didn't work out. Partnering with Caber was great, but Forsythe and Charlemagne just rubbed each other the wrong way. After a couple of months, they parted company by mutual agreement. Since then, Forsythe, using his old nickname Stonehenge, has worked for many different crimelords, government officials, and businessmen as a "personal assistant" (read: bodyguard and, if necessary, legbreaker).

STONEHENGE PLOT SEEDS

Stonehenge decides to start his own bodyguarding firm — but his former association with known criminals makes it tough to drum up business. He appeals to the PCs (whom he's met previously and developed a respectful relationship with) to help him get some positive publicity.

Stonehenge begins dating a PC's female DNPC or well-known NPC. It seems to be a genuine relationship, but could it be he's up to something? Even if he's not, how does the PC feel about his female friend associating with someone who has strong underworld ties?

Hey, isn't that guy playing piano over there the same guy who was working for Janus last week? What's he doing here?

LIT CRIT

"Have you ever read Raymond Chandler?" <CRACK> The man's head snapped back from the force of the punch, then lolled forward, blood dripping from his mouth to join the growing puddle on the floor.

"I think you'd like his work. One of the highlights of the noir genre." <CRACK> "His main character, Phillip Marlowe, suffers beatings just like this one, but not nearly as bad." <CRACK> "Marlowe's smart enough to give up the goods before he gets his face beaten to a pulp, which is another thing you two don't have in common." <CRACK> "Intriguingly, noir detectives are considered "tough guys," but what sets them apart is their intelligence — their "smarts," I believe you'd say."

—beating and a lecture, courtesy of Stonehenge

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

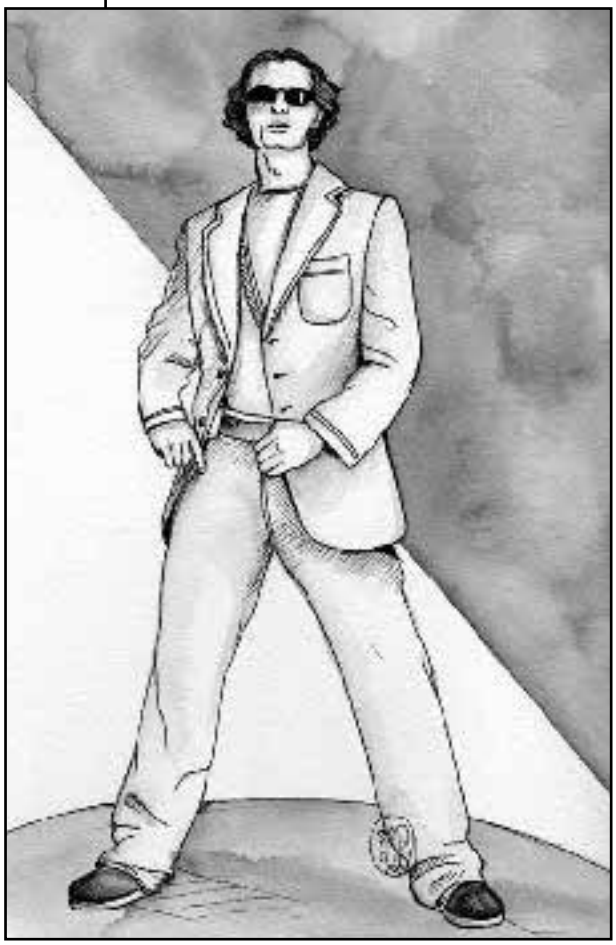
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K P7M13	+1	+0	1d6+2	1d6-1	13	9	PR

Armor
None

Gear: None

Personality/Motivation: Compared to most people in his line of work, including his friend Caber, Stonehenge is sophisticated, urbane, and charming. Even when dealing with the scummiest members of the underworld, he talks and acts with traditional English civility and reserve. He peppers his conversation with literary allusions, references to historical events, and witty comments that go right over the heads of many people he talks with (someone once described him as "the Dennis Miller of the underworld"). Sometimes this leads to misunderstandings or an insulting reply, which is usually a big mistake — Stonehenge does *not* like to be mocked or made fun of, and often deals with people who offend him by pummeling them senseless.

Stonehenge does bodyguarding and enforcement work because that seems like the only thing open to him right now — he failed at owning a pub, and the way he sees it the one thing he always succeeded at was using his fists. He's not so much criminal as immature and lacking in perspective. Given the right opportunity, he'd move on to bigger and better things. That could lead to anything from trying to run another business, to becoming a minor crimelord, to setting up his own personal security firm.



Quote: "At the risk of stating the obvious, sir, allow me to be clear: give me the money my employer instructed you to bring, or there will be repercussions you will not enjoy."

Powers/Tactics: Stonehenge is a bruiser and brawler who learned how to fight on the London streets and in the no-holds-barred world of underground "boxing." Compared to his cultured image, his fighting style is crude and brutal — but remarkably effective. He's even developed two special attacks for taking his opponents out of the fight: the hoist-and-slam, in which he picks someone up and smashes them into the ground or a wall; and the piledrive, when he hits someone so hard they stumble back across the room.

Fighting isn't usually Stonehenge's first choice. He doesn't like hurting people; he'd rather convince/intimidate someone to do the reasonable thing without the need for violence. But if it comes to punches, he doesn't hold back; once the fight starts his goal is to win.

Campaign Use: Stonehenge is a different kind of enforcer from the likes of Brahma or Caber — he's educated, diplomatic, and relatively restrained. He could easily become a friend of a like-minded PC, and perhaps even be persuaded to switch to the side of the angels if he felt there were enough money in it. He'd also make a great Rival for a PC who's equally strong and tough.

To make Stonehenge tougher, increase his Damage Reduction to 75% or give him some more Extra DCs for his Fisticuffs. To weaken him, reduce the Damage Reduction to 25% and get rid of his Extra DCs.

Stonehenge doesn't Hunt heroes. If he heard that someone was insulting him in public, he might track that person down to find out about it and teach them not to, but he's not a vengeful person.

Stonehenge has no criminal record (yet), but the HCPD wants him for questioning regarding over a dozen assaults and assorted other crimes.

Appearance: To look at Stonehenge, you'd have no idea how strong and tough he is. He looks like a businessman: 5'10" tall, 175 pounds and not particularly muscular, and he wears fine men's suits and clothes. But even though he's not some bulked-out steroid monster, he makes most of the guys down on Muscle Beach seem weak by comparison. He's clean-shaven and has finely-barbered black hair; his eyes are grey.

THE TALLYMAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
25	PRE	20	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
10	COM	0	11-	
7	PD	4		Total: 10 PD (3 rPD)
7	ED	3		Total: 10 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	32		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
7	REC	0		
36	END	0		
32	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 128**	

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
28	*Necksnapper:* HKA 2d6, NND (defense is rigid rPD on the neck, or anything else that prevents the neck/head from being turned and twisted the right way; +1), Does BODY (+1); Must Follow Grab (-½), Must Target The Head (-1), No STR Bonus (-½), Requires A STR Roll (no Active Point penalty; -¼)	9
2	*Fast:* Running +1" (7" total)	1

Perks

5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military
4 Money: Well Off
6 Reputation: stone-cold killer able to assassinate just about anyone (among the Espionage World, Law Enforcement World, Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World, security personnel, and the like) 14-, +3/+3d6

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
15 Danger Sense (self only, out of combat, intuitional) 13-
10 Deadly Blow: HKA +1d6 with All HTH Attacks
10 Deadly Blow: RKA +1d6 with All Ranged Attacks
3 Lightsleep
3 Resistance (3 points)

Skills

20 +4 with Ranged Combat
27 *HTH Combat Training:* +8 HTH; Cannot Improve Either OCV Or DCV By More Than +4 (-½)
12 Targeting Skill Levels: +4 versus Hit Location penalties with All Attacks
3 Bugging 13-
3 Climbing 13-
3 Deduction 13-
3 Demolitions 13-
3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
3 Interrogation 13-
2 AK: Jamaica 11-
2 CK: Kingston, Jamaica 11-
3 KS: The Espionage World 13-
3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
3 KS: Organized Crime 13-
3 Lockpicking 13-
3 SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 13-
3 Security Systems 13-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Stealth 13-
3 Streetwise 14-
4 WF: Small Arms, Blades, Shoulder-Fired Weapons

Resource Points

38 Equipment Points: 250
15 Vehicle/Base Points: 40
15 Follower/Contact Points: 35
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 272
Total Cost: 400

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
20 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Strong)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)
210 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 400

Background/History: No one knows exactly where the Tallyman comes from. He first appeared on the scene in Jamaica in the Eighties, killing for whichever side could pay him during the bloody political struggles there. From that, and his accent, most people assume he's Jamaican, but no one can say for sure except the Tallyman himself... and he's not talking.

When things got too hot for the Tallyman in Jamaica, he moved on, taking jobs elsewhere in the world. Since then he's established a reputation for himself as one of the deadliest assassins on Earth. He's gotten to targets the experts considered impregnable, using a wide variety of tools and methods to kill them. Law enforcement and intelligence personnel have learned to take any rumors about the Tallyman's involvement in a situation very, very seriously.

Personality/Motivation: The Tallyman is as cold as a glacier and as hard as granite. He's got no compassion, no mercy, and seemingly no ties to the rest of humanity at all. Though people who claim to have met him say he sometimes smiles and jokes, the truth is he's got no more sympathy or conscience than a scorpion.

Quote: None.

Powers/Tactics: Unlike many assassins, who have a favorite method of killing or special "approach" to their work, the Tallyman is a generalist. He's a skilled hand-to-hand combatant, an expert marksman, a deadly accurate handgunner, a demolitionist, and a poisoner. For all the authorities know, he could also be an expert

THE TALLYMAN PLOT SEEDS

The classic Tallyman plot: word reaches the PCs that someone's hired the Tallyman to murder a prominent person in their city. Their job is to find him and stop him... hopefully without getting killed themselves.

Someone with an urge to stir up a little chaos slips a drug into the Tallyman's drink one night. Now he's rampaging through the city, killing people left and right. First the PCs have to stop him, then they have to figure out what happened... and why.

A person claiming to be the Tallyman contacts the PCs through an untraceable connection. He claims he's been hired to kill one of them — but he won't do it if they pay him ten million dollars. Are the PCs willing to make a deal with him? And since when does the Tallyman offer to turn on his employer like this? If someone's trying to trade on his rep, what will the real Tallyman do when he finds out?

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Barrett 82A1	+3	+11	3d6	1d6	1	15	x4 Telescopic Sight, barrel coating, custom grips/stock, improved range I
Colt M1911A	+2	+0	2d6	1d6	12	9	Custom grips, fine tuning I, PR, enlarged magazine, carries 2
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown, carries 2-3
Wire Garrote	+0	—	½d6	1d6-1	—	5	2H, Continuous

Armor
Level II-A (DEF 6), Activation Roll 11-

Gear: Gen-2 nightvision device, various tools or toolkits to assist with particular missions, state of the art PDA with expanded features and capabilities

at brewing up biological or chemical weapons — he's just never needed to go that far to get his victim. The only distinguishing feature of his work is that he doesn't do staged accidents; when he gets his man, it's obvious the victim was killed deliberately.

Campaign Use: Although he's no Andres Panthanatos, the Tallyman should be a very dangerous foe for your PCs. His reputation in the underworld is well-deserved, and that needs to come through in play. The mention of his name should put a chill on the PCs' souls. If he's not powerful enough to have that effect already, increase the effect of his *Deadly Blow* Talents, remove the Limitation on his HTH Combat Skill Levels, give him more Targeting Skill Levels or CSLs with Ranged Combat, and/or increase his SPD to 6. If he's already too tough, consider getting rid of his Deadly Blows, reducing his number of CSLs, de-customizing his weapons, and/or reducing his SPD to 4.

The Tallyman's wanted for dozens of murders in many different countries, including the United States, the UK, France, and India. The most extensive files on him are in Jamaica, where he apparently started his career.

Appearance: According to the reports deemed most reliable, the Tallyman is a dark-skinned black man who stands a lanky 6'3". Even when he smiles (which isn't all that often), he doesn't really look friendly; his eyes always have a cold, deadly look to them that belies any pleasant emotions. He's bald and clean-shaven, and usually wears ordinary clothes. On missions he favors all-black commando-style clothing, with a trenchcoat in cold or rainy weather (or if he has to conceal a lot of weapons and gear). If you look closely at his arms, you'll see rows of tiny scars — one, they say, for every person he's killed.

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST

He breathed in deeply, then exhaled in one long, steady breath. When he was done, he picked up the rifle.

He carried it over to the brace and fitted it into place. As he bent to put his eye up to the scope, he flexed his fingers along the barrel and stock, getting back his feel for this surgical instrument he'd used so many times.

It took only a second to get the crosshairs focused on the apartment window. Now all he needed was the target. He had no idea what she'd done to bring someone's wrath down on her to the extent of hiring him, but he didn't care, either: it was just a job, like any other. Payment mattered, not reasons.

The intel he'd gotten was good — she got home just a few minutes later. She walked around, turning on lights, throwing her jacket on the sofa, flipping through the mail she'd brought up from the box downstairs. Finally she stood in front of the window for a few seconds, staring out into the city.

That was all he needed. The bullet tore through her skull, reducing the back half of her head to a shattered, bloody wreck. She fell back on the carpet without making a sound.

Later that night, when he was alone, he added a scar to his left arm.

TEMPTATION

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
22	COM	7	13-	
2	PD	0		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 54**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
9	*The Flame Of Passion:* Mind Control 2d6, Cumulative (+½), Increased Cumulative Effect (96 points of effect maximum; +¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only To Control/Inflict Lust (-1), Skin Contact Required (-1)	0
30	*Lover's Caress:* Drain EGO 2d6 (standard effect rule: 6 points), Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Month; +2), BOECV (Power Defense applies; +1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Skin Contact Required (-1), Only Works On People She's Having Sex With (-1), Only Reduces Victim's EGO In Regard To Temptation's Mind Control (-0)	0

Perks

5 Money: Well Off

Talents

4 Double-Jointed

Skills

3 Acting 13-
3 Contortionist 11-
3 Conversation 13-
3 Disguise 12-
1 High Society 8-
3 KS: The Vice World 12-
3 Persuasion 13-
2 PS: Prostitute 11-
2 PS: Adult Film Actress 11-
7 Seduction 15-
3 Stealth 11-
1 Streetwise 8-

Resource Points

0 Equipment Points: 60
0 Vehicle/Base Points: 10
20 Follower/Contact Points: 45
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 102
Total Cost: 156

100+ Disadvantages

5 Hunted: pursued by various men who permanently lust for her 8- (Less Pow, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Amoral (Very Common, Strong)
10 Psychological Limitation: Lack Of Sexual Desire (Uncommon, Strong)
10 Social Limitation: Famous (recognized by porn fans as "Amberlyn Gates") (Frequently, Minor)
11 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 156

Background/History: "Okay, Marilyn, you ready, babe? We're all set up."

"Yeah, sure," she sighed.

"Okay, then... rolling!"

Adam started as soon as he got the cue. No other warning, he just started. *God, what a *%&!ty job,* she thought, *but it sure as hell beats the street.*

"That's it, babe, that's it... goooood...."

I wish I were home... taking a bath...

"Oh, yeah, baby! Red-hot! Instant best-seller! Keep goin', baby, keep goin'...."

He's just about ready. Thank God.

"Yeah, that's it, hot 'n' sticky, big finale, way ta go... Okay, that's a wrap! Good job, you two."

She doesn't really know how it happened, or understand how it works. One day she was walking around the set in her robe, wishing she had some way out of this rotten industry. That was all she could think about, how much she hated her job and wanted something better to do. She was thirsty, so she tapped one of the set monkeys on the shoulder and said, "Hey, couldja get me a bottled water?" Ten seconds later he was back with her water. He had this strange sort of flushed look. She knew *that* look — she saw it on the faces of the actors she worked with every day. But she couldn't figure out why this guy all of a sudden wanted her right then. He worked around naked chicks all week, what was the big deal?

The same thing happened to her again several times over the next few weeks. She'd ask for something, and whoever she asked would get it for her, or do it for her, as quickly as possible, with that flushed look on his face — like a guy who's girlfriend promises to !$&* him after he cleans her garage. But it only happened if she touched the person she was talking to. She didn't know what was going on... but she damn sure intended to take advantage of it.

The next day she got her manager alone in a room, put her hand on his cheek, and asked him for a raise. All it took was a little sweet-talking and she got both kinds. Not only did he write her a big check, he gave her the grand he kept in his office safe "for emergencies." When he started undressing, like he expected her to give with an encore of her tryout "performance" when she got hired, she walked out and left him hanging. He didn't even call the cops on her or put a stop payment on the check.

Finally she had her ticket out of the porno industry. And she was using her mind, not her body — even if it looked like it was the other way around.

TEMPTATION PLOT SEEDS

The classic Temptation plot seed: she starts "dating" one of the PCs and pretty much wrecking his life for her own profit/amusement. The other PCs, and the victim's other friends, try to put a stop to it without hurting him.

Scandal rocks City Hall! Rumor has it that a highly-placed official has been involved in a volcanic love affair, is leaving his wife, and has been whispering a lot of state secrets to his lover during pillow talk. What's Temptation up to?

Charlemagne begins an incredibly aggressive push to take over the underworld, doing things that are very unlike him. He's in love with you-know-who, and he needs the extra money from ruling more of the underworld to buy her presents. Temptation's sitting gleefully by having fun while the murder rate on the Southside skyrockets.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
None							

Armor
None

Gear: Makeup kit

Personality/Motivation: Temptation has been pushed around, exploited, and victimized all of her life — sexually abused by her father, raped by her pimp and then turned out into the street, used by one porn producer after another. Now it's her turn. She's got a way to get what she deserves, and she's going to use it. She doesn't care who she has to hurt, she's going to be rich and happy. After all, they all hurt her; it's only fair that she return the favor. She's looking out for number one, and everyone else can go to hell.

Between her powers and what she's been through in life, Temptation doesn't have much normal sex drive anymore — it's been ground out of her one fifty buck trick or $100 a day porn shoot at a time. Most of the time she just sees sex as a means to an end, a way to get what she wants that's qualitatively no different than driving to the store or filling out a form.

Quote: "You wouldn't mind doing me a little favor, would you? I promise to do one for you in return...."

Powers/Tactics: For reasons no one could explain (but that parapsychology nuts and fringe scientists could concoct all sorts of stories about), Temptation has the ability to exploit the natural sexual attraction most men (and some women) feel for someone of her appearance and personality. In essence she augments and modifies their lust to the point where it's so overwhelming her victim agrees to almost any request she makes in the hope that will persuade her to have sex with him. If she "takes pity" on one of her victims (as she puts it) and gives him a tumble, she sets her hooks into him even more deeply, and he has even less will to resist her the next time she asks for a "favor" (as long as she asks for it within a month or two).

Temptation poses no combat threat to most PCs; she prefers far more subtle tactics. She gets to know someone (usually a wealthy or powerful someone), then begins exploiting him for money, gifts, favors, blackmail information, and the like. Soon she's got her victim so thoroughly wrapped around her little finger that he'll do anything for her — even kill. If confronted with physical force, she flees or tries to use her acting skills to create a plausible "cover" to calm her attacker down.

Campaign Use: Temptation is a low-key but nevertheless potent threat for the PCs (her powers may reach or break the limits of what's allowed in a campaign). If one of them is rich and/or powerful, she may set her sights on him and begin coming on to him at some fancy party or other event. Pretty soon she'll have him right where she wants him. Once she figures out he's a crimefighter, she can use him to accomplish all *sorts* of tasks. Since he'll practically become addicted to spending time with her, convincing him that she's bad news could lead to an ugly scene.

For an added complication, you may decide that victims of Temptation's powers don't always remember what they do while under her influence. The PC and his friends may investigate a crime spree that he himself is responsible for!

To make Temptation more powerful, increase the dice in her Mind Control, change it from Skin Contact Required (-1) to No Range (-½) so she can dominate peoples' wills just by talking to them, or turn it into a Mental Transform so it lasts much longer.

Valerie Dubois has a short record for solicitation in Hudson City and Los Angeles. Since she got off the streets and into the adult film industry, she's been clean.

Appearance: Valerie Dubois, or "Amberlyn Gates" as a lot of men know her, is a 5"10" tall white woman with long blonde hair. She's slender, well-built, and extremely pretty. Even without her powers, she inspires sexual fantasies in a lot of men.

THUNDERHAWK

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
16	CON	12	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
32	END	0		
28	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 66**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
9	*Ace Chopper Pilot:* +6 DEX; Only For Flying And Fighting With Helicopters (-1)	0
	Perks	
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military	
	Talents	
16	Hotshot Pilot	
	Skills	
3	Combat Piloting 13-	
1	KS: Military Science 8-	
2	Navigation (Air) 11-	
3	Stealth 13-	
3	Streetwise 12-	
3	Systems Operation 11-	
4	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Helicopters, Small Planes	
3	WF: Small Arms, Thunderbird Weapons	
	Resource Points	
12	Equipment Points: 120	
55	Vehicle/Base Points: 120	
15	Follower/Contact Points: 35	
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 134
Total Cost: 200

100+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: The Arsenal 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill)
25	Hunted: US Army 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Bully (Common, Moderate)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
20	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

Background/History: It was a perfect plan — except for one tiny detail Deke overlooked.

"It can't miss, man!" he said to me. "You already know how to fly regular choppers. If you join the Army, it's a cinch they'll set you up as a military copter pilot — hook you up with an Apache, or one'a them Comanches they're developing, or maybe even some new experimental bird. Once you're all set and the opportunity is right, you take the thing and go, and we become the hottest mercs around!"

So I did it. Deke knew what he was talking about; the Army slotted me into military helicopter pilot training right away. I did really well at it, too — I always had just the right touch with choppers. In fact, I did so well they tapped me to fly a prototype helicopter called the *Thunderbird.* It's like the Comanches the Army decided not to buy, including all the stealth tech, but better — heavier armed, and with a combat computer capable of full autopilot. Once I got accustomed to it and figured out how to disable the tracking devices, it was a piece of cake to make off with it.

Deke was waiting for me just where we'd agreed. He couldn't believe it when he saw the *Thunderbird.* He was whooping and hollering and practically dancing for joy by the time I got out of the cockpit. "We gonna be rich, man — !$&*%@' rich!"

But here's the thing. *I* was the one who took all the risks. *I* was the one who sweated through Basic, ate the crappy Army food, did the God-damn push-ups, all that *%&!. He hadn't done anything except think up the plan. No way was he entitled to a share of the money I was gonna make.

"Not *we,*" I said, drawing my pistol. "Me." I shot him twice in the chest, then climbed back into the *'Bird* and got the hell outta there.

Personality/Motivation: Thunderhawk's history pretty much says it all — he's a self-centered bastard with little to nothing in the way of moral scruples. He likes the power that being behind the stick of a state-of-the-art military helicopter gives him, and he enjoys demonstrating that power by blowing things up, attacking people from surprise, and generally showing what a bad-ass pilot he is. In most respects he's just a bully, one who uses a chopper instead of his fists to hurt other people, and like a schoolyard bully he'll turn tail and run if things get too difficult or he's exposed to too much risk.

Quote: "I'll come in low, nape'a the earth, under their radar net, then pop up over that hill there and let fly. They'll be smoking corpses before they even know what hit 'em."

Powers/Tactics: Thunderhawk's "weapon" is his piloting skills and the *Thunderbird* itself (he typically devotes 100 Vehicle Points to the copter, then spends 10 on a car and 10 on a base where he can hide the *Thunderbird* during downtime or repairs). He prefers to attack from ambush or a position of overwhelming force (though in most situations he thinks just being in the *Thunderbird* gives him that "overwhelming force"). As noted above, he's quick to retreat if he thinks either he or the helo are at risk.

THUNDERHAWK PLOT SEEDS

Thunderhawk plans to raid an Army installation near Hudson City to steal a bunch of parts and other gear he can use to keep the *Thunderbird* in good working order. The PCs either (a) have to figure out what he's doing in advance and stop him, or (b) go after him to recover the goods once he's committed the theft.

The PCs catch Thunderhawk. He offers to turn over to them a lot of information that would let them take down a *major* arms and drug smuggling ring, with one proviso: he gets to keep the *Thunderbird.* Will the PCs take the deal?

UMBRA offers to upgrade the *Thunderbird* for Thunderhawk if he'll take care of one little job for them: kill the PCs. He agrees, but why does UMBRA want to eliminate the PCs, and why choose such a crude way of doing it?

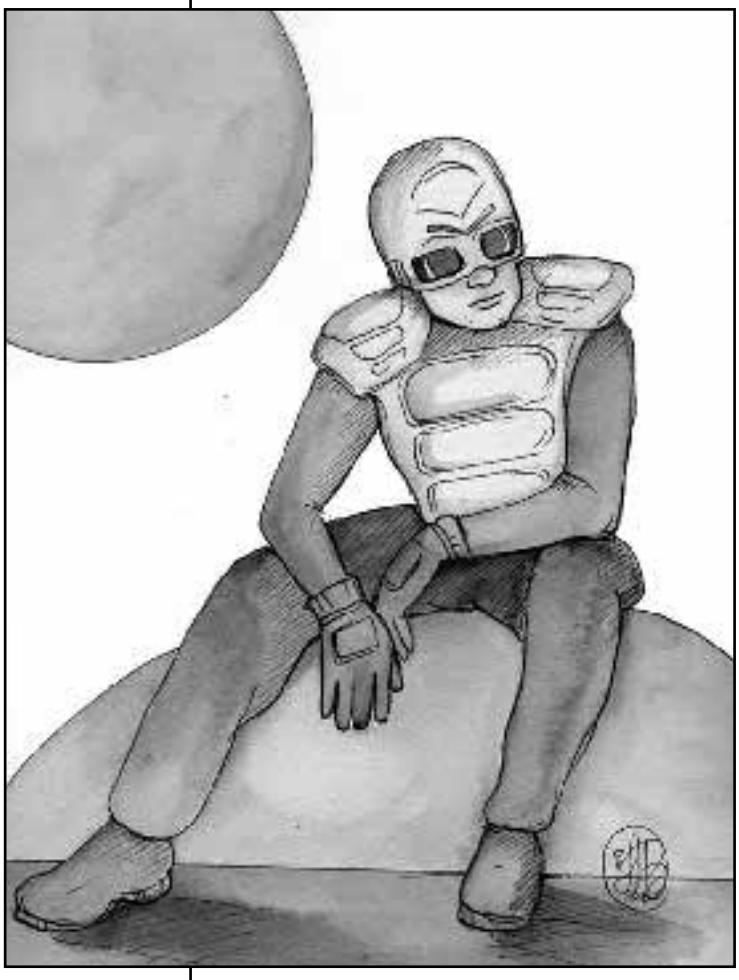
SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
H&K Mk 23	+3	+9	2d6-1	1d6	12	10	Sil, FS, laser
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12	AF5

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 on the Head)

Gear: Gen-2 nightvision device and HRRP built into his Helmet

One of Thunderhawk's biggest problems is logistics — keeping his chopper supplied with fuel, weapons, and parts. So far he's relied on underworld armorers like Daedalus and Forge, and on various international black market arms dealers, but he'd like to find a cheaper and more reliable source of supply.



Campaign Use: Thunderhawk is a mercenary with a twist — one who uses a military helicopter instead of guns or bombs. He's not appropriate for every scenario, since it's not always feasible to have a chopper involved without exposing the PCs' enemy to discovery, but there are plenty of adventures when Thunderhawk may be the toughest, deadliest opponent they could face.

Keep in mind that when you use Thunderhawk, there's always a chance the PCs will defeat him and get their hands on the *Thunderbird.* If you don't want them to have their very own gunship, you may have to add a self-destruct device to the helicopter... just in case.

To make Thunderhawk tougher, make him less dependent on the *Thunderbird.* Give him some Martial Arts, Combat Skill Levels, or other abilities that make him a better personal combatant. To weaken him, make the *Thunderbird* less powerful — get rid of some of its weapons, slow it down, make it less maneuverable.

Thunderhawk doesn't Hunt people unless that's what his employer wants him to do. In that case, he uses the same method every time: he waits until there's an opportunity to attack in the *Thunderbird,* then he takes it. He doesn't care if a lot of innocent people get killed during the assault.

Walter "Walt" Griffin (Thunderhawk's real name) has a juvenile criminal record for a few minor offenses. He's also wanted by the federal government for theft of an experimental military helicopter, and by various authorities (including the HCPD) for acts of murder and destruction committed using said helicopter.

Appearance: Thunderhawk is a more or less average-looking guy: 5'10", blonde hair in a military "buzz cut," a muscular but not bulked-out build. When flying, he usually wears a dark blue jumpsuit with black boots, belt, and gloves, and a black holster for his sidearm on his right hip. Over the jumpsuit he wears black body armor. He also wears a helmet with a faceplate that completely covers his face.

THE *THUNDERBIRD*

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
8	Size	40	6.4" x 3.2"; -8 KB; -5 DCV
30	STR	-20	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 HTH [0]
24	DEX	42	OCV: 8/DCV: 8
20	BODY	2	
12	DEF	30	
4	SPD	6	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
			Total Characteristic Cost: 100

Movement: Ground: 0"/0"
Swimming: 0"/0"
Flight: 34"/136"

Abilities & Equipment

Cost	Power	END
	Propulsion Systems	
50	*Rotor-Based Flight:* Flight 34", x4 NCM, Increased Deceleration (8" per hex), No Turn Mode (+¼), Sideways Maneuverability (+½); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily-obtained fuel; 2.5 Hours; -0), Side Effects (KA 2d6, Area Of Effect (6" Radius) around the vehicle, automatically occurs when Flight is in use, only affects environment around Vehicle; -1¾) [1cc]	
-12	*Only Flies:* Ground Movement -6" (0" total)	
-2	*Only Flies:* Swimming -2" (0" total)	
	Tactical Systems	
90	*20mm Machine Gun:* RKA 4d6, Autofire (8 shots; +1), Armor Piercing (+½), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), 500 Charges (+1); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Arc Of Fire (120 degrees forward; -¼) [500]	
35	*Side-Mounted Missile Racks:* RKA 4d6, Armor Piercing (x2; +1), Explosion (+½); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Arc Of Fire (0 degrees forward, same horizontal level; -1), 4 Charges (-1) [4]	
5	*Side-Mounted Missile Racks:* Another Missile Rack (total of 2) [4]	
2	*Armored Crash Seat:* +10 PD; OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Protect Occupants Against Damage From Crashes (-2)	0
2	*Armored Crash Seat:* Another Armored Crash Seat (total of 2)	0
24	*Infrared Suppression Systems:* Change Environment 8" radius, -6 to Infrared Perception Rolls, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Easily Removed (-½), No Range (-½), Self Only (-½)	0
28	*Stealth Configuration And Systems:* Change Environment 8" radius, -6 to Radio Group Perception Rolls, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Easily Removed (-½), No Range (-½), Self Only (-½)	0
21	*Anhedral-Tipped Rotors And Fan-In-Fin Tail Rotor:* Change Environment 8" radius, -3 to Hearing Group Perception Rolls, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Easily Removed (-½), No Range (-½), Self Only (-½)	0
8	*Chaff Dispenser:* Darkness to Sight and Radio Groups 1" radius, MegaArea (1" = 100"; +¼); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), 12 Charges (-¼) [12]	
	Operations Systems	
16	*Millimeter-Wave Radar:* Radar (Radio Group), Discriminatory, Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees), Telescopic (+12 versus Range Modifier), Difficult To Dispel (+¼); OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
1	*Millimeter-Wave Radar:* +2 PER with Radar, Difficult To Dispel (+¼); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
5	*Infrared Systems:* Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	*Nightvision Systems:* Nightvision	0
5	*Radar Warning Receiver:* Detect Detection By Radar 16- (Radio Group); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
5	*Laser Warning Receiver:* Detect Detection By Laser 16- (Sight Group); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
5	*Communications System:* HRRP (Radio Group); OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	0
	Personnel Systems	
14	*Sealed Environment:* Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing; Safe Environments: Intense Cold, Low Pressure/Vacuum)	0
	Talents	
3	*Laser Rangefinder:* Absolute Range Sense	
	Skills	
4	*Highly Maneuverable:* +2 with Flight	
20	*Targeting Systems:* +4 with Ranged Combat	

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 334
Total Vehicle Cost: 434

Value Disadvantages

25	Distinctive Features: Attack Helicopter (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction [fear])

Total Disadvantage Points: 25
Total Cost: 409/5 = 82

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Cost	Ability
18	Vehicular Computer with Autopilot Variant (see *The Ultimate Vehicle,* page 161)

Description: Thunderhawk's helicopter, the *Thunderbird,* is an advanced prototype attack helicopter with full stealth capabilities. It mounts a 20mm machine gun in an undernose turret, a missile rack on each side containing four missiles each, and state of the art avionics. It can sustain a maximum speed of a little over 200 miles per hour, with a tactical radius of about 200 miles. It can carry up to four persons (three in addition to Thunderhawk himself).

AHHH, MEMORIES

"There's nothing as good as coming up on someone in the 'Bird and just absolutely !$&*%@# ruining their day. It's better than sex. Hell, you can buy sex. Ain't nowhere on Earth you can buy the chance to scare someone *%&!less like that — it's gotta come natural, as a part of the mission, or it doesn't count.

"I remember this one time, I was part of a team taking down this crackhouse run by some gang'a Jamaicans. Those mutts were vicious and well-armed, sure as *%&!, but they weren't all that bright. They stockpiled their cash at this one building, figuring no one was ever gonna make it inside. When the team started the assault, they hunkered down, expecting they could fight the guys off.

"Then I come around the other buildings into sight. When those assholes in the upper windows saw me, their eyes got as wide as the moon. I took most of those bastards down with the first few bursts from the chaingun. Then I tilted nose-down a little and turned the front door — the steel one they were so !$&*%@# proud of — into Swiss cheese. After that there wasn't much left to mop up. The boys went in, popped the rest of the Jamaicans, and we walked away with a few hundred thou in small bills. Not bad for a night's work."

—the reminiscences of Thunderhawk

TORQUEMADA PLOT SEEDS

During an interrogation session when there's no one else in the room but him and the subject, Torquemada learns a secret so dark and dangerous that it touches even his conscience, as atrophied as it is. Rather than tell his employer, he tries to get word to the PCs. Will he succeed... and if so, can they stand to work with such a man?

Torquemada hears that one of the PCs is particularly tolerant of pain. Eager to get such a "canvas" to work upon, he begins trying to manipulate various crimelords into capturing the PCs so he can have a crack at the one he wants.

Shortly after Torquemada finishes with a subject, his employer and his employer's men are killed by mysterious attackers who seem determined to find out what Torquemada learned from the subject. Torquemada escapes, but he knows he can't stay alive for long with these guys on his tail. Unable to go to the cops, he turns to the PCs for help.

TORQUEMADA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 57**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
27	*Pain Infliction:* Multipower, 40-point reserve; all Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	
3u	1) *Short-Term, Intense Pain:* Drain STUN 4d6; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	4
3u	2) *Long-Term, Intense Pain:* Drain STUN 2d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Hour; +1); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½)	4
6	*No One Can Hold Out Forever:* Drain EGO 1d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Hour; +1); Extra Time (20 Minutes; -2½)	2
26	*Necksnapper:* HKA 2d6, NND (defense is rigid rPD on the neck, or anything else that prevents the neck/head from being turned and twisted the right way; +1), Does BODY (+1); Must Follow Grab (-½), Must Target The Head (-1), No STR Bonus (-½), Requires A STR Roll (no Active Point penalty; -½)	9

Perks

3 Improved Equipment Availability: Street-Level
5 Money: Well Off

Talents

4 Resistance (4 points)

Skills

1 Computer Programming 8-
3 Contortionist 12-
3 Conversation 13-
11 Interrogation 17-
5 AK: South And Central America And The Caribbean 15-
2 KS: The Espionage World 11-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
3 KS: Torture 13-
2 Language: English (fluent conversation; Spanish is Native)
1 Language: Russian (basic conversation)
7 PS: Torture 17-
3 Paramedics 13-
3 SS: Human Anatomy 13-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 13-
2 WF: Small Arms

Resource Points

0 Equipment Points: 60
0 Vehicle/Base Points: 10
12 Follower/Contact Points: 29
0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 143
Total Cost: 200

100+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: CIA 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20 Psychological Limitation: Sadist (Common, Total)
15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (unknown) (Frequently, Major)
45 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 200

Background/History: In 2003, Anatolii Kasaravich suspected that one of the members of his organization was a traitor — a gutless piece of scum who'd sold his brothers out to a vigilante to save his own skin. He brought the wretch in and had his men go to work on him to extract a confession. But try what they would, the man steadfastly refused to admit his crime and continued to protest his innocence... even through a mouthful of broken teeth.

His men weren't exactly amateurs, but clearly something more was needed. Kasaravich knew exactly what it was. A few days later there was a knock on the door of the building where he kept the traitor. With guns drawn, his men cracked the door open to see who'd found them. Standing outside was an unassuming-looking Hispanic man dressed in simple yet dignified clothes. He carried an aluminum briefcase.

Kasaravich waved his men aside and gestured at the man to come in. The Russian gang boss greeted the man as if he were an old professional acquaintance, but never spoke his name — he called him *Torquemada,* a sobriquet even Kasaravich's densest underling recognized as a codename. Then Kasaravich pointed at the room where the traitor was tied tightly to a chair. Torquemada picked up his briefcase, walked back to the room, and shut the door.

The men waiting outside heard the clicks as Torquemada opened his briefcase. A few minutes later, the screaming began. It continued periodically for the next two hours. At the end of that time, the door opened and Torquemada stepped out again, dressed as neatly as ever and carrying his briefcase. He had the look of a man who'd just enjoyed a walk in the pleasant springtime air. With short, precise sentences, he relayed to Kasaravich the full extent of the traitor's doings — every story he'd told the vigilante, and the exact time, date, and place when he'd told them. The information matched Kasaravich's suspicions exactly... just as he'd expected.

For whatever reason, after that Torquemada decided not to return home, or wherever he came from. He remained in America, working in Hudson City and elsewhere for any crimelords or other

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Scalpel	+0	—	1 point	0	—	3	Can Be Thrown
Knife	+0	+0	1d6-1	1d6-1	—	6	Can Be Thrown

Armor
None

Gear: Various other implements of torture (pliers, dentist's tools, and so on)

individuals willing and able to pay the high fees he charges for his unique services.

Personality/Motivation: Although usually soft-spoken, polite, and inobtrusive, Torquemada is a vicious sadist. He enjoys nothing better than inflicting pain, be it physical or emotional, on other people. When speaking to people other than his employers (whom he treats with appropriate respect), Torquemada spends a few minutes gauging them through ordinary conversation, then makes a Conversation roll to try to determine what topics would be most likely to cause them emotional pain... and then he subtly refers to those topics or introduces them into the discussion.

Quote: "Subject withstood interrogation for 13 minutes. When he broke, he named twelve names. I have written them for you on this sheet of paper."

Powers/Tactics: Torquemada isn't a fighter; he's a torturer for hire. If forced into combat (*i.e.,* he can't flee safely, there's no one to protect him, and surrender isn't an option), he can use his knowledge of the human body and how it reacts to pain as a weapon. By touching the right pressure points or twisting a limb a certain way, he can cause often-debilitating agony. In an interrogation situation, that same ability, applied over time, can break the will of even the most stubborn subject.

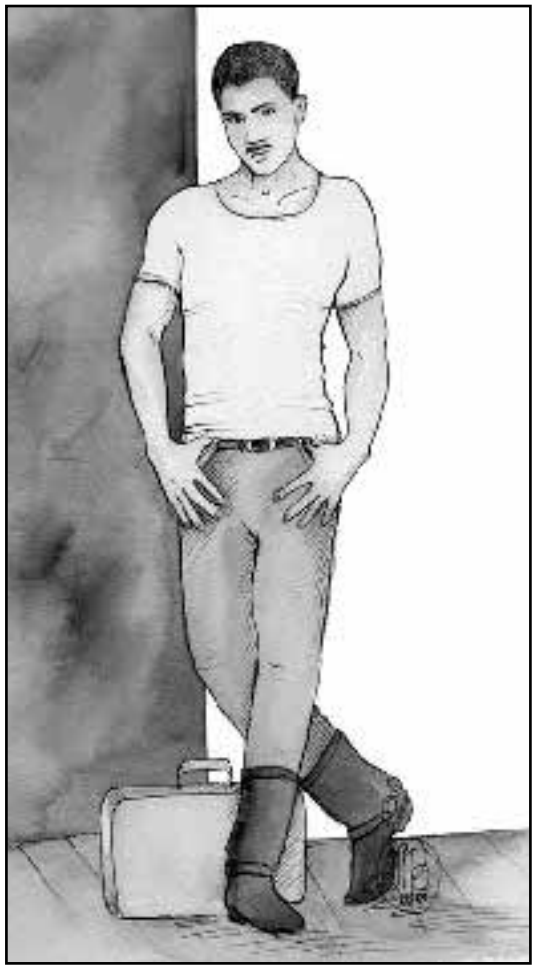
Campaign Use: Torquemada is an adversary the heroes should come to hate bitterly and deeply. While actually describing the torture of PCs may not be appropriate for groups not filled with tragedian players, at the very least they can see and hear about his work on other people, including well-liked NPCs — the mutilated corpses of subjects his employer ordered him to finish off, the survivors who walk with pronounced limps and can no longer speak above a whisper, the dozens killed in bizarre and grotesque ways to fulfill some madman's fantasy. Even a single exposure to his "handiwork" should be enough to start a manhunt.

To make Torquemada tougher, raise his Characteristics a bit and give him more combat-oriented abilities related to his skill at inflicting pain. For example, he might buy the *Crippling Blow* Talent, or even some Martial Arts defined as "combat excruciations." To weaken him, remove his Drain EGO.

Torquemada doesn't Hunt anyone. When he's called in to work on a subject, his employer's already captured the subject.

Torquemada has no criminal record in the United States. However, several agencies, including the HCPD and FBI, have become aware of an expert torturer moving through the underworld, and are on the lookout for him (though not actively searching). The CIA, on the other hand, had made some effort to track him down, and continues to pursue him.

Appearance: Torquemada is a Hispanic man who appears to be in his late 30s or early 40s. He stands 5'7" tall with an average build, short, neatly-cut black hair, and a thin, neatly-trimmed moustache on his upper lip. He dresses well, but not expensively or ostentatiously, and usually carries an aluminum briefcase full of the implements and tools he likes to use.



THE VARANGIAN

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [4]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
7	PD	3		Total: 10 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 9 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
34	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 108**	

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

Cost	Powers	END
37	*Throwing Shield:* Multipower, 75-point reserve; all OAF (-1)	
2u	1) *Protection I:* Armor (12 PD/12 ED), Hardened (+¼); OAF (-1), Activation Roll 14- (-½), Nonpersistent (-¼)	0
1u	2) *Protection II:* Missile Deflection (all Ranged attacks), Range (adjacent hex; +½); OAF (-1), Lockout (-½)	0
1u	3) *Shield-Bash:* HA +6d6; OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	3
1u	4) *Thrown Shield:* Energy Blast 8d6; OAF (-1), Lockout (-½), Range Based On STR (-¼), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼)	[1rc]
	Martial Arts: Karate Plus	
	Maneuver — OCV — DCV — Notes	
4	*Atemi* Strike -1 +1 2d6 NND(1)	
4	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort	
4	Choke -2 +0 Grab One Limb; 2d6 NND (2)	
4	Disarm -1 +1 Disarm, 30 STR	
4	Dodge +0 +5 Dodge all attacks, Abort	
3	Legsweep +2 -1 5d6, Target Falls	
4	Knifehand Strike -2 +0 HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Punch/Snap Kick +0 +2 6d6 Strike	
5	Side/Spin Kick -2 +1 8d6 Strike	
1	*Whipfighting:* Use Art with Whip (Choke, Disarm, Legsweep, Punch/Snap Kick, and Side/Spin Kick only)	
6	*Strong Runner:* Running +3" (9" total)	1
2	*Strong Leaper:* Leaping +2" (6" forward, 4" upward)	1
15	*Lucky Sonuvabitch:* Luck 3d6	0

Perks

5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
15	Combat Sense 13-
3	Lightning Reflexes: +2 DEX to act first with All Attacks

Skills

32	+4 with All Combat
12	Targeting Skill Levels: +8 versus Hit Location modifiers with Whip
3	Acrobatics 13-
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Climbing 13-
1	Computer Programming 8-
3	Contortionist 13-
1	High Society 8-
3	Interrogation 13-
2	KS: The Espionage World 11-
3	KS: The Hudson City Underworld 13-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
3	Lipreading 13-
3	Lockpicking 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	PS: Bodyguard 13-
3	PS: Security Specialist 13-
5	Rapid Attack (HTH)
5	Rapid Attack (Ranged)
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Shadowing 13-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
1	Systems Operation 8-
5	WF: Small Arms, Blades, Staffs, Whip

Resource Points

28	Equipment Points: 200
10	Vehicle/Base Points: 30
5	Follower/Contact Points: 15
0	Miscellaneous Points: 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 285
Total Cost: 393

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: HCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Moderate)
10	Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Mercenary (Common, Moderate)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (James Klein) (Frequently, Major)
10	Social Limitation: Criminal Record (Frequently, Minor)
223	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 393

Background/History: What a bunch of losers.

Jimmy Klein looked around the dayroom in his block of the Stew. Everywhere he looked, losers. Some were too stupid to keep away from the law — the idiots who wrote bank robbery notes on the backs of their paycheck stubs, guys like that. A lot were too prideful — gang kids who felt they weren't "men" if they didn't shoot someone in the face in full view of a dozen people. There were only a few like himself, who were smart enough to stay free, but had had their luck run out. Jimmy, he'd been running a sweet car theft operation... but then one of his guys, a guy he'd thought he could trust, got dumped for possession with intent and ratted out the whole gang rather than stand up like a man and do the time himself. Jimmy took care of the little

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
AMT Automag V	+4	+9	2½d6	1d6+1	12	13	HP ammo, laser, custom grips, enlarged magazine, fine tuning II, improved trigger
Baretta 93R	+2	+0	1½d6	1d6	20	11	AF3, RC1, HP ammo, custom grips, fine tuning II, improved trigger
Whip	+0	—	½d6	1d6-1	—	5	3" range, can Grab

Armor
Armored Costume (DEF 4, Activation Roll 14-)
Armored Cape (DEF +2, Activation Roll 11-)
Mask Lenses (Sight Group Flash Defense [5 points])
Mask Ear Shields (Hearing Group Flash Defense [3 points])

Gear: Mask Lenses (Nightvision), mask radio

rat bastard a month after he got to the Stew, but it didn't change the fact that he was locked up in this urine-smelling hellhole for five-to-ten.

Then he had an idea. Most of these assholes were too defective to ever be successful at crime... but some were salvageable. All they needed was the help of someone who had the smarts and the vision. They needed someone to protect them, to shepherd them along, to make with the ideas when their own ran out. And obviously there was only one guy suitable for that job.

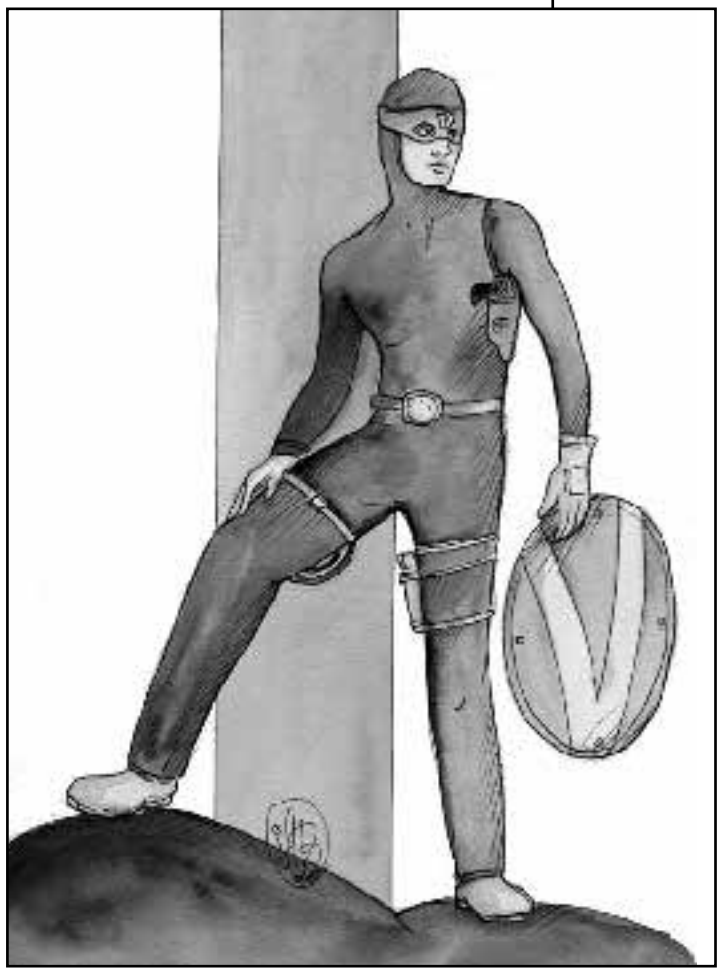
With his goal in mind, Jimmy began working toward it. He lifted weights and did calisthenics every day, chiseling his already-admirable body into rock-hard perfection. He kept off the guards' radar as much as possible, never making trouble if he could avoid it without looking like a punk. He worked steady in the laundry room. And he talked to a lot of the other cons, especially the skilled thieves and hijackers who'd only ended up in Stewartsburg Penitentiary because they'd pushed their luck just a little too much one too many times. In the end, his plan worked: thanks to good behavior and prison overcrowding, he got out in three instead of five.

That's when he put the second stage of his plan into operation. If he was going to become the premiere bodyguard and security expert for criminals, he needed to stand out from the crowd. In Hudson City, that meant a costume and a style. For his style, Jimmy wanted some distinctive weapons. After some thought, he settled on a shield (the perfect symbol of his role as a defender) and a whip (a weapon that scared even most hardened street brawlers). He contacted the Toymaker to get the shield, then bought a whip and some firearms. He trained with them relentlessly, devoting all his discipline and brains to perfecting his fighting techniques. When he wasn't practicing, he studied locks and security, bodyguarding, perimeter protection, and a dozen other subjects.

When he felt he was ready, the word went out to the underworld: anyone who needs protection, whether it's for a single job or an entire mansion, should contact the Varangian. For the right money, he'll make sure you and yours stay safe, that your jobs are planned as carefully as possible, and that your organization has as little exposure to the law as possible.

Personality/Motivation: Long years of training and experience have left the Varangian with a strong streak of overconfidence. He's rarely confronted a challenge he couldn't overcome, especially since a lot of the people he deals with aren't nearly as clever or practical as they ought to be.

When dealing with other people, the Varangian is blunt (though not necessarily rude), professional, and speaks to the point. He conveys an air of authority and no-nonsense attention to business. He also makes it clear, in various subtle and non-



THE VARANGIAN PLOT SEEDS

The classic Varangian plot: the PCs want to capture/kill a particular underworld figure. Their target has hired the Varangian to protect him. The PCs have to make it through the Varangian's carefully-planned security, then overcome the man himself, before they can get to their target.

The Varangian discovers that one of his employers is planning to set him up to take a major fall that will leave the employer in the clear. He can't just turn on his employer — the rest of the underworld wouldn't believe his story, and he'd never work again. So, he needs to find a way to get the PCs to take his employer out... but without making it look like his security and bodyguarding work was flawed.

The PCs need to make sure someone's safe while they go on an extended mission. The obvious choice in the Varangian... but can they trust someone who mostly works for the underworld?

subtle ways, that he remains loyal to his current employer, right down to sacrificing his life to protect that person if necessary... though in truth he's not always as loyal as he leads others to believe. On several occasions he's abandoned a sinking ship rather than go down with it even though he might have kept the ship afloat long enough for the captain to escape, too, if he'd stayed.

Quote: "Sir, you hired me to take over security for you because I'm the best. You pay me to protect you, your family, and what's yours. I can't do that if you're not going to listen to me. I run security here, and I'm telling you, you *can't* go to the club if you want me to protect you. There's too much going on there, too many people and things I can't keep track of. Stay home and enjoy a quiet evening — you'll like it just as much, and I promise you you'll live longer."

Powers/Tactics: The Varangian is a skilled and versatile fighter. In addition to the two firearms he typically carries — a .50 Automag and a Beretta 93R automatic — he has two "trademark" weapons. The first is a whip. He'd deadly accurate with the thing, able to flick cigarettes out of mouths or blind someone in one eye. The second is the round shield he wears on his left arm. It's primarily to defend himself and anyone he's guarding, but he can also use it to bash someone in HTH Combat or throw it as a Ranged attack.

In combat, the Varangian's foremost concern is the safety of whoever he's been hired to protect. He'll use his shield to Missile Deflect attacks away from the protectee, and interpose himself between the protectee and his attackers. He's strong enough to pick up most protectees and run with them if necessary, but he knows that can leave him vulnerable, so he prefers to let the protectee move on his own whenever possible. He often has the protectee detach his cape so the protectee can wrap himself in it for extra protection (in this case, increase the Activation Roll for the cape to 14-).

Campaign Use: Since hanging out his shingle, the Varangian has worked for many major underworld figures and gangs. The PCs could easily encounter him as a bodyguard, security specialist, or crime planning advisor for any of their enemies; he might also work as backup for a gang pulling a heist. On a few occasions, he's even accepted contracts to steal something or kill someone himself. If you prefer, you can tone down his ruthlessness and make him more a hard-core professional security man who just happens to do a lot of work for the underworld — that way, maybe the PCs can develop a grudging respect for him, or even turn him into some sort of ally.

To make the Varangian a tougher opponent, increase his SPD to 5 and/or give him more Levels of some sort — maybe OCV Levels with Thrown Shield, or CSLs with Ranged Attacks. You could also make the Armor slot of his Multipower Usable Simultaneously so he can shield himself and one other person at the same time, provided they're in the same hex. To weaken him, reduce his STR, DEX, and INT to the 15-17 range each, and remove 1-2 of his All Combat CSLs.

The Varangian doesn't Hunt people unless hired to do so, in which case he follows instructions (if any). Otherwise, he handles the job with an efficient, common sense approach: after studying the target carefully, he musters as much overwhelming force as he reasonably can and then lowers the boom.

James Klein has a criminal record for aggravated assault, grand theft auto, and a host of lesser offenses. The HCPD doesn't know he's the Varangian, but if they ever get the Varangian's fingerprints it won't take them long to figure it out.

Appearance: The Varangian is a tall, well-muscled white man standing 6'3" tall and weighing 235 pounds. He has blonde hair and blue eyes, though his costume hides both. When on the job he typically wears a black bodysuit with emerald green boots, belt, gloves, cape, and half face mask that ties in the back. He carries his Automag V in a green left shoulder holster, his Beretta 93R in a grip-forward green holster on his left hip, and his whip coiled on his right hip. His shield is round and black with a stylized green V.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

He sat down in the leather chair across the desk from Charlemagne, putting his shield aside so it wouldn't get in the way. Caber was standing behind his boss and to the left, watchful. The big man had brought him here in a van with blacked-out windows; he wasn't sure exactly where he was. Some building in Riverside Hills or Crown Point, probably.

"I've finished my evaluation of your organization," he said without preamble. "You're suffering from some serious inefficiencies that could cause you real problems down the line."

"Go on," Charlemagne said calmly. The crimelord was always like that — all business. He appreciated that sort of professionalism; most of the men he worked for were temperamental, often foolish.

"It's all detailed in my report," he said, throwing a stapled document onto Charlemagne's desk. "The biggest weakness I see is your man Morehouse. He's ambitious and cocky — just the sort who's going to push for more responsibility, absolutely shouldn't get it, and who'll cause trouble when he doesn't. He also likes to brag to women, and could easily spill some secrets you don't want spilled. You should eliminate him now before he becomes a serious problem."

"Anything else?"

"Like I said, it's all in the report. If you have any questions, or you need any further help, you know how to reach me."

Charlemagne opened a desk drawer, reached in, pulled out a thick stack of banded bills, tossed it over to him. "That should take care of everything. Caber will drive you wherever you need to go."

APPENDIX

GENERIC ADVERSARIES

The following "generic" character sheets represent typical human NPCs and enemies *Dark Champions* PCs might encounter, such as cops, gangsters, and soldiers. Assume they have the standard starting Resource Points for the campaign unless you prefer otherwise. As always, you should change or supplement them as desired.

See the weapons and equipment chapters of *Dark Champions* for explanations of any abbreviations or symbols used in the "Suggested Equipment" section of each character sheet. A character doesn't necessarily carry all of the listed weapons or gear with him at all times; you should, if appropriate, choose just one or two weapons or items for use in a particular encounter.

COP, BASIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	9		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 21**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
2	*Observant:* +1 PER with Sight Group	
	Perks	
4	Contacts: 4 points' worth within the department and/or on the street	
2	Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers	
1	Fringe Benefit: Law Enforcement Rank	
1	Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit	
	Skills	
1	Combat Driving 8-	
3	Concealment 11-	
3	Criminology 11-	
2	AK or CK appropriate to job or jurisdiction 11-	
2	KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-	
2	KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-	
2	PS: Police Officer 11-	
3	Streetwise 12-	
2	WF: Small Arms	
3	Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 33
Total Cost: 54

50+	Disadvantages
5	Distinctive Features: Uniform and/or Badge (Easily Concealed)
10	Hunted: department he works for 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 85

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min
Colt M1911A	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9
Tonfa	+0	—	3d6 N	—	—	8
Pepper Spray	+0	+0	Fla 5d6 + NND 3d6	—	12	—

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: Handcuffs, baton flashlight

Clothing: Policeman's uniform

COP, EXPERIENCED/TOUGH

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
28	END	0		
24	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 39**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers			END
	Martial Arts: Police Self-Defense			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 20 STR
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 20 STR
4	Punch/Elbow Strike	+0	+2	4d6 Strike
1	Use Art with Clubs			
2	*Observant:* +1 PER with Sight Group			

Perks

10 Contacts: 10 points' worth within the department and/or on the street
2 Fringe Benefit: Local Police Powers
2 Fringe Benefit: Law Enforcement Rank
1 Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit

Skills

4 +2 OCV with Colt M1911A
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Concealment 12-
3 Criminology 12-
3 AK or CK appropriate to job or jurisdiction 12-
3 KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 12-
3 KS: The Law Enforcement World 12-
3 PS: Police Officer 12-
7 Streetwise 14-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 75
Total Cost: 114

50+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: Uniform and/or Badge (Easily Concealed)
10 Hunted: department he works for 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
29 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 114

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min
Colt M1911A	+1	+0	2d6-1	1d6	7	9
Tonfa	+0	—	3d6 N	—	—	8
Pepper Spray	+0	+0	Fla 5d6 + NND 3d6	—	12	—

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: Handcuffs, baton flashlight

Clothing: Policeman's uniform

GANGSTA

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
8	EGO	-4	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 4**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
2	*Is That All?:* +5 PRE; Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1)	0

Perks

1 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank

Skills

2 AK or CK appropriate to turf or neighborhood 11-
2 KS: Illegal Drugs 11-
2 KS: Street Gangs Of city or neighborhood 11-
2 PS: Drug Dealer 11-
3 Stealth 11-
3 Streetwise 11-
3 WF: Small Arms, Knives
6 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 26
Total Cost: 30

50+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: police department or the like 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)

Total Disadvantage Points: 70

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
9mm pistol	+0 - +0 - 1d6+1 - 1d6-1 - 10 - 8
MAC-10	+1 - +0 - 2d6-1 - 1d6 - 32 - 12
Switchblade	+0 - +0 - ½d6 - 1d6-1 - — - 4

Armor: None
Gear: Cell phone
Clothing: Expensive sneakers, pants that are too big for him, t-shirt that's too big for him, baseball cap worn backwards, bling-bling

SECURITY GUARD, BASIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
11	CON	2	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	0		
22	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 3**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
1	Fringe Benefit: Weapon Permit

Skills

2 AK or CK appropriate to job 11-
1 KS: Local Criminal Law 8-
2 PS: Security Guard 11-
1 Streetwise 8-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 12
Total Cost: 15

25+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: Uniform and/or Badge (Easily Concealed)
5 Hunted: company he works for 8- (Mo Pow, Watching)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 55

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
S&W Model 10	+0 - +0 - 1d6 - 1d6-1 - 6 - 7
Taser	+0 - — - 8d6 NND - — - 12 - —
Pepper Spray	+0 - +0 - Fla 5d6 + NND 3d6 - — - 12 - —

Armor: None
Gear: Baton flashlight
Clothing: Security guard's uniform

SECURITY GUARD, ELITE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
27	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 47**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers			END
	Martial Arts: Defense Training			
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 23 STR
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 23 STR
4	Punch/Elbow Strike	+0	+2	4½d6 Strike
2	*Observant:* +1 PER with Sight Group			

Perks

2 Fringe Benefit: Concealed Weapon Permit
2 Fringe Benefit: Heavy Weapon Permit

Skills

4 +2 OCV with Colt CAR-15
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Concealment 12-
3 AK or CK appropriate to job or jurisdiction 12-
3 KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 12-
1 KS: The Law Enforcement World 8-
1 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 8-
3 PS: Bodyguard 12-
3 PS: Security Guard 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
2 WF: Small Arms
3 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 58
Total Cost: 105

50+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: Uniform and/or Badge (Easily Concealed)
10 Hunted: department he works for 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
20 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 105

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min
Glock 21	+0	+0	2d6	1d6	13	9
Colt CAR-15	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12
Taser	+0	—	8d6 NND	—	12	—
Pepper Spray	+0	+0	Fla 5d6 + NND 3d6	—	12	—

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 11-)

Gear: Handcuffs, baton flashlight

Clothing: Security guard's uniform

SOLDIER/MERCENARY, BASIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
12	PRE	2	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	1		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
25	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 28**	

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
2	*Fast:* Running +1" (7" total)	1

Perks

4 Contacts: 4 points' worth in the appropriate military
0 Fringe Benefit: Military Rank

Skills

3 Climbing 11-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2 KS: [Military Force] History And Customs 11-
2 PS: [member of military; *e.g.*, "Sailor"] 11-
3 Stealth 11-
3 Tactics 11-
3 WF: Small Arms, Knives
3 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 27
Total Cost: 55

50+	Disadvantages
5	Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed)
10	Hunted: military force character belongs to 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 85

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
Colt M1911A	+1 - +0 - 2d6-1 - 1d6 - 7 - 9
Colt M16A1	+1 - +1 - 2d6 - 1d6 - 30 - 13
Combat Knife	+0 - +0 - 1d6 - 1d6-1 - — - 8

Armor: Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 11-); Helmet (DEF 8 for Head)

Gear: As appropriate for mission (e.g., canteen when on extended field duty, possibly a nightvision device during nighttime patrol)

Clothing: Uniform

SOLDIER/MERCENARY, EXPERIENCED/TOUGH

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
26	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 38**	

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost	Powers	END
2	*Fast:* Running +1" (7" total)	1

Perks

6 Contacts: 6 points' worth in the appropriate military
2 Fringe Benefit: Military Rank

Skills

3 +1 OCV with Colt M16A1
3 Climbing 12-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2 KS: [Military Force] History And Customs 11-
2 PS: [member of military; *e.g.*, "Sailor"] 11-
3 Stealth 12-
1 Systems Operation 8-
3 Tactics 11-
4 WF: Small Arms, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Knives
5 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 38
Total Cost: 76

50+	Disadvantages
5	Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed)
10	Hunted: military force character belongs to 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 85

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
Colt M1911A	+1 - +0 - 2d6-1 - 1d6 - 7 - 9
Colt M16A1	+1 - +1 - 2d6 - 1d6 - 30 - 13
Combat Knife	+0 - +0 - 1d6 - 1d6-1 - — - 8

Armor: Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 11-); Helmet (DEF 8 for Head)

Gear: As appropriate for mission (e.g., canteen when on extended field duty, possibly a nightvision device during nighttime patrol)

Clothing: Uniform

SOLDIER/MERCENARY, SPECIAL FORCES

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
16	CON	12	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	4		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
32	END	0		
29	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 57**

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Commando Training				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	3d6 + v/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5d6 Strike	
4	Choke	-2	+0	Grab One Limb, 2d6 NND (2)	
4	Escape	+0	+0	30 STR vs. Grabs	
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 25 STR	
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25 STR	
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
6	*Fast:* Running +3" (9" total)				1
2	*Strong Swimmer:* Swimming +2" (4" total)				1

Perks

6 Contacts: 6 points' worth in the appropriate military
4 Fringe Benefit: Military Rank
5 Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance

Skills

6 +3 OCV with firearm of choice
6 +2 with any Climbing, Stealth, and Tactics
3 Climbing 12-
7 Demolitions 14-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2 KS: [Military Force] History And Customs 11-
2 KS: [Special Force] History And Traditions 11-
3 Navigation (Land, Marine) 12-
3 Paramedics 12-
2 PS: [Special Force Member] 11-
2 SS: Hydrography 11-
2 PS: [member of military; *e.g.,* "Sailor"] 11-
3 Stealth 12-
10 Survival (Desert, Marine, Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-
3 Systems Operation 12-
3 Tactics 12-
3 Tracking 12-
5 TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
6 WF: Small Arms, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Knives, Shoulder-Fired Weapons
6 Skills representing specialty fields, hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 133
Total Cost: 190

75+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed)
10 Hunted: military force character belongs to 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
80 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 190

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min
H&K Mk 23	+3	+9	2d6-1	1d6	12	10
H&K MP5	+1	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	12
Colt M16A1	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	30	13
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8

Armor
Level II (DEF 7, Activation Roll 14-)
Helmet (DEF 8 for Head)

Gear: As appropriate for mission; common examples include nightvision devices, survival gear, swimming gear, field medical kits, and radios

Clothing: Uniform, or as appropriate for mission

SPY, CINEMATIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
26	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 68**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers				END
	Martial Arts: Karate				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	Dodge	+0	+5	Dodge all attacks, Abort	
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	3½d6; Target Falls	
4	Punch/Snap Kick	+0	+2	4½d6 Strike	
5	Side/Spin Kick	-2	+1	6½d6 Strike	

Perks

3 Fringe Benefit: Espionage Rank
3 Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance

Talents

6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

8 +1 with All Combat
3 Combat Driving 12-
3 Conversation 12-
2 Gambling (Card Games) 13-
3 High Society 12-
3 KS: The Espionage World 13-
2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
3 Lockpicking 12-
3 PS: Tradecraft 13-
3 Security Systems 13-
3 Seduction 12-
3 Shadowing 13-
3 Stealth 12-
6 TF: Common Motorized Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, SCUBA, Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2 WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 82
Total Cost: 150

75+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: enemy nation or espionage agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
10 Hunted: his own nation or espionage agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Psychological Limitation appropriate to character (Patriot, if nothing else)
30 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 150

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min
Walther PPK	+1	+1	1d6	1d6-1	7	6

Armor
None

Gear: A variety of concealed and specialized gadgets necessary for the mission (see, for example, *Dark Champions,* page 286)

Clothing: Finely-tailored clothes and appropriate jewelry or accessories, or commando-wear in appropriate circumstances

SPY, REALISTIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 1 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
21	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 28**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
3	Fringe Benefit: Espionage Rank
3	Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance
	Skills
3	Bribery 12-
1	Bureaucratics 8-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Deduction 12-
3	KS: The Espionage World 12-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
6	6 more points' worth of KSs pertaining to the character's area of expertise
3	PS: Tradecraft 12-
3	Stealth 11-
2	WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 35
Total Cost: 63

50+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: enemy nation or espionage agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
10	Hunted: his own nation or espionage agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)

Total Disadvantage Points: 80

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
Walther PPK	+1 - +1 - 1d6 - 1d6-1 - 7 - 6

Armor: None

Gear: As appropriate for mission, given budgetary restraints

Clothing: Typically ordinary clothes appropriate to cover identity or locale, but may vary depending on type of mission

TERRORIST, BASIC

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0	**Total Characteristics Cost: 29**	

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
1	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank
5	Improved Equipment Availability: Military
	Skills
2	+1 OCV with weapon of choice
2	KS: doctrine of the Cause 11-
2	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2	PS: Terrorist 11-
3	Stealth 11-
1	Streetwise 8-
2	WF: Small Arms
5	Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 25
Total Cost: 54

50+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: enemy nation, police agency, or espionage agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
10	Hunted: his own terrorist group 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Psychological Limitation: Believer In The Cause (Common, Strong)

Total Disadvantage Points: 95

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
9mm handgun	+0 - +0 - 1d6+1 - 1d6-1 - 10 - 8
9mm SMG	+0 - +0 - 1d6+1 - 1d6-1 - 30 - 10
Grenades	+0 - +0 - 1½d6 - X - 1d6-1 - 4 - RBS

Armor: Usually none

Gear: Whatever gear he can cobble together or get from his organization that's appropriate to the mission at hand. The better organized and funded the group, the better equipped he'll be.

Clothing: Military fatigues, miscellaneous field or street clothes

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min
9mm handgun	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	10	8
9mm SMG	+0	+0	1d6+1	1d6-1	30	10
Assault rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	30	13
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8
Grenades	+0	+0	1½d6 X	1d6-1	4	RBS

Armor
Usually none

Gear: Whatever gear he can cobble together or get from his organization that's appropriate to the mission at hand. The better organized and funded the group, the better equipped he'll be.

Clothing: Military fatigues, miscellaneous field or street clothes

TERRORIST, EXPERIENCED/TOUGH

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6 8, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
28	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 59**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
5	*I Would Die For My Beliefs:* +10 PRE; Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1)	0

Perks

3 Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank
5 Improved Equipment Availability: Military

Talents

2 Resistance (2 points)

Skills

4 +2 OCV with weapon of choice
3 Concealment 12-
1 Demolitions 8-
3 Interrogation 12-
3 KS: doctrine of the Cause 12-
3 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-
3 PS: Terrorist 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Streetwise 12-
2 Survival (Desert) 12-
3 Tactics 12-
5 WF: Small Arms, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Knives
5 Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 56
Total Cost: 115

50+ Disadvantages

20 Hunted: enemy nation, police agency, or espionage agency 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture/Kill)
10 Hunted: his own terrorist group 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20 Psychological Limitation: Believer In The Cause (Common, Total)
15 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 115

THUG

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
8	EGO	-4	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		**Total Characteristics Cost: 22**

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Perks
1	Fringe Benefit: Criminal Rank

Cost	Skills
3	Interrogation 12-
2	AK or CK appropriate to setting 11-
2	KS: Underworld Of city or neighborhood 11-
2	PS: Thug 11-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	WF: Small Arms, Knives
4	Background Skills representing hobbies, other outside interests, or other abilities

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 23
Total Cost: 45

50+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted: police department or the like 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)

Total Disadvantage Points: 70

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV - RMod - Dam - STUN - Shots -STR Min
9mm Pistol	+0 - +0 - 1d6+1 - 1d6-1 - 10 - 8
Combat Knife	+0 - +0 - 1d6 - 1d6-1 - — 8

Armor: None
Gear: Cell phone
Clothing: Street clothes, or whatever his boss has him wear

SUPER-SOLDIER PROJECTS

Almost since the time the first soldiers were fielded to fight their foes with spear and sword, rulers and governments have sought ways to improve their performance and capability for enduring the rigors of warfare. In the twentieth, and now the twenty-first, century, the quest for the perfect soldier reached new heights with the creation by various governments (primarily the United States, the Soviet Union, and a few others) of *super-soldiers* — fighting men enhanced through chemistry, psychology, biology, or some combination of the above to approach, meet, or sometimes even exceed human norms. Similarly, some intelligence agencies have attempted to create "super-spies" through various "human enhancement" programs. This article discusses the major super-soldier projects of the *Dark Champions* setting.

Human Enhancement Projects Of The United States

The United States government, primarily the Army and Central Intelligence Agency, has been more active in the attempt to create enhanced soldiers and agents than any other nation in the world. However, its success has been limited.

PROJECT: SODBUSTER

The very first super-soldier program ever begun, Sodbuster started in World War II. It was an attempt to create better soldiers via what would today be called a "health food" diet and training in jujutsu and karate (provided by former Japanese internees). The project was moderately successful; however, virtually all project trainees were killed in combat in the Pacific.

THE EVERGREEN PROJECT

During the Korean War, Major Douglas Nordstrom, one of the few surviving veterans of Sodbuster, initiated this program to assist war efforts. The main thrust of this project was not to create better fighters *per se,* but rather to improve the survivability of soldiers. The goal was to increase resistance to the elements (especially cold), to diseases, and to injury (via autonomic reactions to reduce bleeding and otherwise minimize the impact of trauma). Evergreen made extensive use of data gleaned from Nazi and Imperial Japanese experiments upon prisoners of war. As with Sodbuster, the project enjoyed some moderate successes, but most trainees were killed in combat.

PROJECT: EPSILON

In the early 1960s, with the Cold War about to heat up in Vietnam, the US Army stepped up its efforts to create super-soldiers. Epsilon made use of advances in psychology (*i.e.,* brainwashing) and chemistry (*i.e.,* drugs such as LSD) to create soldiers who were highly resistant to pain, able to go without sleep for extended periods, and possessed

reaction times far faster than human normal. Epsilon lasted through the late 1960s.

In general, Project: Epsilon was a failure. Most participants became insane or could not withstand the physical aspects of the program. Among the few successes were Jason Coretti, better known as the Hudson City vigilante Jason Scorpion; Sgt. Howie Burke, credited with eliminating two units of VC soldiers singlehandedly while armed only with a knife; and the 1970s New York black crimelord, Mr. Pharoah. But despite the program's overall failure, it succeeded in that it garnered valuable data for future experiments.

PROJECT: CHRYSALIS

Making use of the knowledge gained in Project: Epsilon, and bringing its own, greater, technological expertise into play, the CIA initiated Project: Chrysalis to create a "super spy." Spearheaded by former Marine Sergeant Lucius Grey, Chrysalis enjoyed somewhat greater success than Epsilon (though none of the names of any of its "alumni" have ever become known), but its successes were still minimal compared with Agency goals and hopes for the program. The Director discontinued Chrysalis in the mid-1970s.

PROJECT: DURABLE

Project: Durable was one of many super-soldier projects instituted by the American armed forces — in this case, the Army — in the Vietnam era. Its goal was to render soldiers immune to pain and fatigue by blocking substantial parts of their nerve endings. Certain nerves, such as those in the hands, were left mainly intact.

Although Durable soldiers performed well in the field, the Army scrapped the project after several years due to numerous unanticipated side effects that compromised the subjects' efficiency and could not be corrected. These included a leprosy-like inability to detect wounds and infections, soldiers starving to death because their nervous systems didn't tell them they were hungry, and most commonly mental instability caused by the treatments (including various manifestations of violent hyperactivity and antisocial personality disorder). The only known survivor of the project still alive today is Mark "Pokerface" Knight, who works for the Card Shark organization.

PROJECT: JACKKNIFE

In the late 1960s, a group of rogue CIA scientists, disgusted with the limitations placed upon Project: Chrysalis by Mr. Grey, set up their own secret program to create a super-spy. A few whispered rumors in the intelligence community later claimes they were secretely financed, at least in part, by Colonel Nordstrom. For several years, they attempted to create a human clone for their purposes, but met with complete failure due to the limited state of bioengineering at that time.

Sometime in the early 1970s, these scientists obtained a two-and-a-half year old boy for use in their experiments. Sixteen years of chemical treatments, surgery, physical training, and psychological conditioning followed. The result was an unqualified success — the super-spy codenamed *Jackknife.* However, the project's success ultimately turned to failure when Jackknife went rogue in 1988 and established himself as a spy/assassin for hire. Today he's one of the world's most successful and sought-after assassins (see page 160). Due to the failure of his psychological conditioning and the great cost associated with his creation, not to mention the rogue nature of the entire project, Project: Jackknife was halted. The CIA has never revived it, and the scientists involved have not been seen or heard from publicly since.

PROJECT: PRIDE

In 1978, the Army decided to get back into the super-soldier business. General Nordstrom contacted his old friend Lucius Grey at the CIA and set up a "joint venture" with the Agency to draw upon its increasing sophistication in the field of human enhancement studies. Scientists assigned to Project: Pride took human a fetus from the womb and raised it in a special incubator-like chamber, artificially aging it so it grew to adult size in just five years.

Christening him "Charlie Pride," the scientists subjected this person to the entire panoply of CIA mind-alteration and data implantation techniques. They built into him, from the ground up, an entire personality based around intense patriotism and slavish loyalty to his superiors. They also gave him a lifetime of false memories that indicated he'd been injected with a "super-soldier serum" during a Vietnam War-era project, had fought with extreme distinction in that war, and had since served the CIA and the Army on a variety of special operations missions around the globe. Along with these memories he was programmed with the skills he would need for his work. The knowledge that was force-fed into him by computer so he could call it up as needed, but would otherwise "lay dormant" to avoid confusing or disturbing him.

When Pride scientists felt Charlie had reached the appropriate level of physical and mental development, they awakened him, explaining that he'd been in the hospital for an extended period while he recovered from severe wounds suffered on a mission in Africa. Thereafter he spent several years in intense physical training ("recuperation and field re-acclimation therapy") and was equipped with several high-tech weapons that had computers built into them.

By the late 1980s/early Nineties, the CIA and the Army were using Charlie Pride — known primarily by the codename *American Flag* — all over the world. They sent him on suicidal combat/infiltration missions against numerous clandestine targets. He returned from more than a decade's worth of assignments, mission accomplished, in the late Nineties. By that point his handlers were worred that his personality programming was beginning to weaken, and that if it collapsed, his mind would revert to that of a young child. In 1993, he was "retired" and given a cover identity as an automobile dealer in Fell's Point, from where the Agency or Army could

SUPER-SOLDIER VERSUS SUPERHUMAN-SOLDIER

If you look at the various *Champions* products Hero Games has published for the *5th Edition* rules, you'll note that none of them use the term "super-soldier" when referring to attempts to imbue soldiers with paranormal powers. The various projects discussed on, for example, pages 40-43 of *Champions Universe,* which resulted in the creations of characters like Victory and the Janissary, are called *superhuman soldier* projects.

A *super-soldier* project (also known more euphemistically as a "human enhancement project") is one that attempts to somehow improve the performance of soldiers and spies, but more or less within normal human parameters — it doesn't try to give them superpowers, just make them function better. Put another way, super-soldier projects are much more "realistic," and thus appropriate for the world of *Dark Champions* — a world in which someone who can fly and fire energy bolts, the way Victory can, is far out of place.

retrieve him if he were ever needed. Since then he has periodically acted as a vigilante, combatting what he perceives as "un-American activities."

PROJECT: LEON

This was the CIA's own followup to Project: Pride. A thirteen-year-old autistic boy known only as "Leon" was subjected to psychological conditioning and data implantation methods developed during Pride. The goal was to create a super-spy able to "switch personalities" between several predefined personalities, thus creating the "ultimate cover." After twelve years of conditioning and training, he was sent into the field; all of his programmed identities saw extensive use. However, there were occasional accidental "personality shifts," and eventually he did not return from a mission. The CIA now believes that [CLASSIFIED].

PROJECT: SUPERIORITY

In 1996, the Army, pleased with the results of Project: Pride, decided to use the knowledge gained through that project to create its own super-soldier independent of the CIA. The goal of this program, dubbed Project: Superiority, was to use modern technology, medicine, science, and training methods to create soldiers who could (a) survive by themselves behind enemy lines, unsupported, for lengthy periods of time, (b) wreak immense havoc on the enemy while they were there, (c) withstand enormous amounts of pain and injury, and (d) kill without hesitation. In short, Superiority soldiers would be the ultimate commandos.

Subjects for the program, all volunteers, were obtained directly from new recruits, before they'd gone through basic training. The first step in the program was to provide them with basic survival and combat training. All recruits survived this stage. The second stage was the drug and surgery program designed to fundamentally alter the subject. The injections and toxic reactions to the implants killed five of the volunteers, leaving only one survivor: Mark Benning.

The second stage encompassed the majority of what was to make a Project: Superiority soldier so much better than an ordinary man. Through steroid injections and muscle grafts, Benning became immensely strong. Similar injections (and later training) increased his reflexes and stamina. Surgeons implanted specially-developed "organic plastic mesh" under his skin to give him a partial resistance to low-caliber bullets and other weapons, and a radio receiver/transmitter in his mastoid sinus so he could communicate with headquarters at all times. His digestive and gastric tracts were altered to allow him to derive nutriment from any organic substance (such as grass, tree bark, or fur) without harm. He was made able to withstand extremes of temperature and radiation.

Stage three of the Project was to train Benning to use his new body and mind properly. He learned everything he could about being a soldier, from stealthy movement, to tactics, to hand-to-hand combat. This stage also included intense psychological conditioning to accustom Benning to his new role and ensure his loyalty. The Army equipped Benning with the latest in weaponry, including a modified M-134 Minigun with several interchangeable helical ammunition magazines, a weapon so big only he can carry and use it.

Benning completed advanced training without any difficulties. But during his first field training exercise, he went berserk and fled, abandoning the Army altogether to become a high-priced mercenary warrior using the name SNAFU. Project: Superiority scientists theorize that his berserk fit resulted from an explosion-induced malfunction in the radio receiver/transmitter implanted in his mastoid sinus. This wrecked his psychological conditioning, leaving him with the advanced capabilities and training he'd received but none of the moral or patriotic imperatives.

Following Benning's defection, Project: Superiority was suspended. Scientists associated with the program believe it's still viable, particularly with the scientific advances seen in bio-engineering since 1996, but have yet to convince the military that it's worth the massive amount of funding it would require.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The American military and intelligence communities remain intrigued by the possibilities of human enhancement. General Nordstrom, the man who conceived of, led, or otherwise participated in so many of the super-soldier projects over the past fifty years retired when Project: Superiority was suspended. His centralizing influence on the Army's human enhancement research is now gone, and some people suspect that half a dozen programs, at varying stages and with varying levels of official sanction, are underway to create the next "super-soldier." The grapevine has even attachewd a name and description to one: the Lone Star Project, said to involve plans to implant miniature supercomputers and other equipment into the brains and bodies of soldiers — in other words, to create the very first actual cyborgs. Other programs supposedly involve genetic manipulation, various new technologies evolved from those used in Superiority, or advanced psychological programming.

Human Enhancement Projects Of The Soviet Union

As in so many other areas, the Soviet Union lagged far behind the United States in its efforts to create super-soldiers, though not through lack of funding — millions of rubles were thrown away on experiments that proved utterly worthless.

PROJECT: WOLF

Project: Wolf, the USSR's first and longest-lasting super-soldier and super-spy project, began in the early 1960s. It was an attempt to use injections and/or surgical grafts to enhance human beings — augmented muscles and bones for enhanced strength and speed, primarily. Only a few crude "success" stories relieved years of abject failure, and most of

the successes went insane after only short periods in the field. Nevertheless, the Soviets used their scarce resources well: their super-agents often lost their lives eliminating their American counterparts.

THE BOGATYR PROJECT

Named after the hero-warriors of Russian folktales, this program began in the early 1980s. It used chemical and psychological treatments to create agents who were stronger, smarter, faster, and more resistant to injury than typical humans. However, the program's successful "alumni" (known as *bogatyrs*) generally lagged behind American super-soldiers, having been created with technologies and methods already ten to twenty years outmoded in the West. Most were killed in the field, but more than a few are thought to have survived. Some may now be a part of the Organizatsiya, or sell their services on the world mercenary market. A few FBI agents suspect that the Organizatsiya boss Rasputin is a bogatyr.

Human Enhancement Projects Of The People's Republic Of China

Virtually no one in the West knows whether the Chinese have created (or attempted to create) enhanced human agents. However, some members of the CIA believe the shadowy "Dragon Cadre" referred to in some intercepted transmissions is a unit composed of enhanced humans with martial arts training. Finding out more about Chinese advances in this field is a top priority in certain parts of the CIA and DIA.

Human Enhancement Projects Of East Germany

The NPA (National Peoples' Army) and the Stasi, or East German secret police, are known to have established one human enhancement project, Operation *Eisenmensch* (Iron Man). Drawing on data "rescued" from Nazi scientists prior to the fall of Hitler's regime and the Nuremburg trials, Eisenmench scientists used chemical and biological treatments, advanced surgical techniques, and mental conditioning to create agents with great strength, vicious cunning, and unparallelled ability to resist injury and pain. However, the Iron Men displayed a distressing tendency toward certain fatal physical conditions (heart attacks, brain aneurysms), to mental breakdown, and to premature senility. Experts in the American intelligence community think that perhaps as many as two dozen Iron Men were created, but it's unknown whether any of them survived to the fall of the Berlin Wall or beyond.

MASTER REFERENCE CHART OF VILLAINS

This summary table provides a quick reference for GMs looking for a particular type of villain for use in a scenario. (Agents and the like are not included.) The table includes two categories of information. The first is the archetype or archetypes the character belongs to as follows:

Assassin: The character is a killer for hire.
Costumed: The character is a costumed criminal, or wears a distinctive costume or garb of some sort.
Crimelord: The character is a criminal mastermind, leader of a gang, or the like.
Goal: The character has a specific goal he wants to achieve or desire that drives him, other than those listed elsewhere; see his writeup for information.
Greedy: The character is motivated by a desire for wealth, luxuries, and the like.
Loner: The character does not get along well with others, and rarely teams up with other criminals.
Mercenary: The character is a criminal-for-hire; he commits crimes for pay.
Military: The character has some connection to the Military World.
Spy: The character has some connection to the Espionage World.
Terrorist: The character is a terrorist.
Technological: The character uses advanced technology.
Thief: The character's primary form of crime is stealing.
Vice: The character has some connection to the Vice World.
Violent: The character is prone to violence, bloodshed, killing, and/or destruction.
Weird: The character has strange or unusual abilities that may defy explanation.
Points: The total number of Character Points the character is built with.

The second table summarizes game information about the characters.

	Assassin	Costumed	Crimelord	Goal	Greedy	Loner	Mercenary	Military	Spy	Terrorist	Technological	Thief	Vice	Violent	Weird	Points
Arsenal	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	344
Azteca, El	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	409
Bateleur, Le	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	243
Black Tarantula	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	200
Blind	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	361
Blood Orchid	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	234
Brahma	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	247
Brother Namaan	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	309
Buckshot	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	251
Caligula	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	171
Carter, Jack L.	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	200
Cerberus	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	189
Charlemagne	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	408
Chiaroscuro	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	246
Contagion	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	273
Copperhead	-	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	331
Daedalus	-	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	260
Dagger	-	X	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	290
Diomedes	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	246
Drood, Alexander	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	324
Escorpión, El	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	290
Falke	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Farswali, Ahmad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	200
Firebug	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	108
Fusillade	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	200
Gatling	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	181
Grimm, Dr. Rodin	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	147
Gunplay	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	514
Headless Hangman	-	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	380
Heatseeker	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Hecate	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	227
Heretic, The	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	176
Hotspur	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	287
Ixion	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	155
Jackknife	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	756
Jäger	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Janus	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	218
Jihad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	230

MASTER REFERENCE CHART OF VILLAINS

This summary table provides a quick reference for GMs looking for a particular type of villain for use in a scenario. (Agents and the like are not included.) The table includes two categories of information. The first is the archetype or archetypes the character belongs to, using the ones defined on pages 69-80 of Champions (the Patriot archetype is not included; none of the villains in this book fit it, since it's mostly an archetype for heroes). The second category includes other types of useful information, as follows:

Assassin: The character is a killer for hire.
Costumed: The character is a costumed criminal, or wears a distinctive costume or garb of some sort.
Crimelord: The character is a criminal mastermind, leader of a gang, or the like.
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Terrorist: The character is a terrorist.
Technological: The character uses advanced technology.
Thief: The character's primary form of crime is stealing.
Vice: The character has some connection to the Vice World.
Violent: The character is prone to violence, bloodshed, killing, and/or destruction.
Weird: The character has strange or unusual abilities that may defy explanation.
Points: The total number of Character Points the character is built with.

	Assassin	Costumed	Crimelord	Goal	Greedy	Loner	Mercenary	Military	Spy	Terrorist	Technological	Thief	Vice	Violent	Weird	Points
Arsenal	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	344
Azteca, El	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	409
Bateleur, Le	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	243
Black Tarantula	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	200
Blind	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	361
Blood Orchid	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	234
Brahma	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	247
Brother Namaan	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	309
Buckshot	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	251
Caligula	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	171
Carter, Jack L.	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	200
Cerberus	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	189
Charlemagne	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	408
Chiaroscuro	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	246
Contagion	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	273
Copperhead	-	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	331
Daedalus	-	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	260
Dagger	-	X	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	290
Diomedes	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	246
Drood, Alexander	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	324
Escorpión, El	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	290
Falke	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Farswali, Ahmad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	200
Firebug	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	108
Fusillade	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	200
Gatling	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	181
Grimm, Dr. Rodin	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	147
Gunplay	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	514
Headless Hangman	-	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	380
Heatseeker	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Hecate	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	227
Heretic, The	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	176
Hotspur	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	287
Ixion	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	155
Jackknife	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	756
Jäger	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Janus	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	218
Jihad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	230

	Assassin	Costumed	Crimelord	Goal	Greedy	Loner	Mercenary	Military	Spy	Terrorist	Technological	Thief	Vice	Violent	Weird	Points
Kaine, Rodrick	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	274
Kissing Bandit, The	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	131
Kreuzfeuer	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Magnum	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	315
McClinton, Lt. Paul	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	257
Meteor	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	163
Nocturne	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	242
Panthanatos, Andres	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	1,178
Philistine, The	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	95
Prospero	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	576
Rasputin	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	538
Recluse, The	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	391
Redbeard	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	250
Rush	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	210
Saltpeter Mary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	143
Satan's Kiss	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	370
Shrike, The	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	171
SNAFU	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	565
Speargun	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	494
Spears, Carl	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	179
Spike	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	184
Spregen, Gerhardt	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	X	446
Starr, Randolph	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	313
Starrbright	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	282
Starrlight	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	282
Stonehenge	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	239
Strad	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	267
Strake, Michelangelo	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	274
Tallyman, The	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	400
Temptation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	156
Thunderhawk	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	200
Todesfalle	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Torquemada	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	200
Trittrunter	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	200
Troubleshooter	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	264
Varangian, The	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	393
Vispa, La	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	326
Widowmaker	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	205
Zoltran, Heinrich	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	234

PREDATORS SUMMARY TABLE

The following table provides basic information about the characters described in this book for easy reference. All characters are listed in alphabetical order, without regard for which chapter they appear in. The "Attacks" column lists only the character's most common or prominent attacks, since many criminals have too many ways to attack to list them all; "Weapons" indicates the character relies primarily on weapons bought with Equipment Points or the like. See the end of the table for an explanation of the notation used.

PREDATORS SUMMARY TABLE

Name	STR	DEX	CON	BODY	PRE	PD/rPD	ED/rED	SPD	REC	STUN	OCV	DCV	MOVE	Attacks	Page
Arsenal	18	18	18	14	15	7/0	6/0	4	8	32	6	6	9", (4")	9½d6, weapons	51
Azteca, El	15	18	16	10	20	10/3	9/3	4	10	40	6	6	6"	7d6, (½d6%), weapons	6
Bateleur, Le	15	20	17	12	20	9/3	9/3	5	6	29	7	7	9", {5"}, !9"!	8d6, weapons	102
Black Tarantula	10	14	12	10	15	4/0	3/0	3	4	21	5	5	6"	2d6, Luck 2d6	105
Blind	15	20	15	13	20	11/3	11/3	5	8	30	7	7	9", {6"}	9d6, 4d6 NND, (1d6+1%), weapons	107
Blood Orchid	15	15	14	13	16	8/3	7/3	4	6	28	5	5	6"	9d6, (1d6%), 3d6 NND, weapons	109
Brahma	25	16	20	20	15	12/2	8/2	4	12	50	5	5	6"	11d6, weapons	112
Brother Namaan	10	14	15	11	23	11/6	12/6	4	5	30	5	5	6"	2d6, weapons, voodoo	114
Buckshot	15	18	19	15	15	8/0	6/0	4	8	40	6	6	6"	(2½d6) AE1, (2½d6) ISM, 7d6	15
Caligula	7	10	16	19	20	5/0	3/0	3	4	31	3	3	3"	Weapons	17
Carter, Jack L.	12	14	14	10	15	5/0	5/0	3	5	23	5	5	6"	2d6, weapons	117
Cerberus	20	17	18	15	15	8/0	8/0	4	8	34	6	6	6"	(1d6) AP, (½d6%), 8d6	119
Charlemagne	16	18	18	15	18	11/3	11/3	4	7	35	6	6	6", (3")	9d6, weapons	22
Chiaroscuro	10	20	15	10	20	6/0	4/0	4	5	23	7	7	8", {5"}	2d6, weapons	121
Contagion	10	13	20	12	16	6/0	6/0	3	10	27	4	4	6"	Drn CON 3d6 DS (blood), weapons	123
Copperhead	20	20	18	12	20	13/3	11/3	4	8	31	7	7	9", {6"}, !15"!	12d6, 4d6 NND, 8d6 AF, 6d6	126
Daedalus	8	13	11	10	13	3/0	3/0	3	4	20	4	4	6"	1½d6	129
Dagger	20	20	17	13	15	7/0	5/0	4	7	32	7	7	6", {7"}	(1d6) AP AF, weapons	132
Diomedes	20	14	20	13	20	6/0	6/0	3	8	40	5	5	6"	4d6, weapons	25
Drood, Alexander	15	16	16	14	20	6/0	6/0	4	6	30	5	5	6"	3d6, weapons	135
Escorpión, El	15	20	18	13	15	11/3	8/3	4	7	30	7	7	9"	8d6, weapons	10
Falke	12	14	15	12	15	5/0	5/0	4	5	25	5	5	6"	2d6, weapons	88
Farswali, Ahmad	15	16	15	12	15	8/3	8/3	4	6	28	5	5	6"	3d6, weapons	139
Firebug	10	12	13	10	12	4/0	10/0	3	5	22	4	4	6"	(1 point), 2d6, weapons	141
Fusillade	20	14	19	13	15	8/0	6/0	4	8	40	5	5	6"	(2½d6) AP AF, 4d6, weapons	143
Gatling	21	16	20	15	15	8/0	6/0	3	8	40	5	5	7"	7d6, weapons	54
Grimm, Dr. Rodin	10	14	12	10	20	4/0	4/0	3	4	21	5	5	6"	2d6	145
Gunplay	15	20	18	12	20	9/3	9/3	5	7	30	7	7	7", {5"}	6d6, weapons	147
Headless Hangman	15	20	18	14	25	8/3	8/3	4	7	40	7	7	9", !10"!, !9"!	3d6, (2d6) NND, (1d6+1%)	150
Heatseeker	12	18	17	13	10	4/0	4/0	4	5	27	6	6	7"	2d6, weapons	56
Hecate	10	14	13	11	20	4/0	4/0	3	5	23	5	5	6"	2d6, MC 8d6, (2d6), Drn CON 2d6	153
Heretic, The	10	13	15	20	15	7/3	7/3	4	10	50	4	4	6"	2d6, weapons	155
Hotspur	15	20	18	14	15	13/5	11/5	4	7	40	7	7	9", {7"}	(½d6%) + poison, 9d6, weapons	19
Ixion	8	10	10	8	13	3/0	2/0	3	4	17	3	3	6"	½d6	158
Jackknife	20	21	20	16	20	11/3	11/3	5	10	50	7	7	10", {6"}, (4")	10d6, 4d6 NND, (1d6+1%), weapons	160
Jäger	15	17	17	15	15	6/0	6/0	4	6	32	6	6	6"	5d6, (½d6%), weapons	90
Janus	10	15	13	11	18	8/3	8/3	4	5	30	5	5	6"	5d6, (2d6), Luck 4d6	27
Jihad	20	18	18	17	15	8/0	8/0	4	8	36	6	6	6"	6d6, (½d6%), weapons	164
Kaine, Rodrick	10	14	13	12	18	4/0	4/0	3	5	24	5	5	6"	6d6, weapons	166

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PREDATORS SUMMARY TABLE (CONTINUED)

Name	STR	DEX	CON	BODY	PRE	PD/rPD	ED/rED	SPD	REC	STUN	OCV	DCV	MOVE	Attacks	Page
Kissing Bandit, The	15	15	15	13	18	8/3	8/3	4	6	29	5	5	6”	3d6, weapons	168
Kreuzfeuer	18	18	16	14	15	6/0	6/0	4	7	31	6	6	6”	5½d6, (½d6%), weapons	85
Magnum	15	20	18	15	18	10/3	9/3	4	7	35	7	7	8”, {5”}	7d6, (½d6%), weapons	58
McClinton, Lt. Paul	13	13	14	13	20	9/3	7/3	4	6	27	4	4	6”	2½d6, weapons	170
Meteor	15	18	15	12	15	6/0	4/0	3	6	28	6	6	6”	3d6, weapons	173
Nocturne	10	15	15	12	15	4/0	4/0	4	5	25	5	5	6”	8d6 NND, MIllu 12d6	175
Panthanatos, Andres	20	24	20	18	25	14/6	14/6	5	10	50	7	7	10”, {7”}, (4”)	12d6, (2d6%), weapons	178
Philistine, The	12	13	12	12	15	4/0	4/0	3	4	24	4	4	6”, !6”!	2d6, weapons	181
Prospero	15	20	19	15	20	11/3	9/3	5	8	40	7	7	9”, {5”}, (4”)	5d6, (1d6%), weapons	183
Rasputin	12	14	20	20	25	8/3	8/3	4	12	50	5	5	6”	8d6, (2d6) NND	30
Recluse, The	16	17	17	12	15	6/0	5/0	4	6	29	6	6	7”	8d6, (5d6) NND, weapons	98
Redbeard	20	16	18	16	20	7/0	5/0	4	8	40	5	5	6”	8d6, (½d6%), weapons	187
Rush	10	14	14	11	13	8/3	8/3	3	5	23	5	5	6”	2d6	190
Saltpeter Mary	10	15	14	11	15	5/0	5/0	3	5	23	5	5	7”	(1d6) EX Var Adv	193
Satan’s Kiss	10	17	15	12	15	8/0	7/0	3	5	30	6	6	6”	(4d6) NND, MC 10d6, 6d6	195
Shrike, The	12	14	13	10	15	5/0	5/0	3	5	23	5	5	8”	2d6, weapons, Luck 2d6	197
SNAFU	30	25	30	25	25	15/6	15/6	6	12	55	8	8	13”, {10”}, (4”)	10d6, (1d6%), weapons	200
Speargun	20	18	15	15	20	11/3	9/3	4	10	40	6	6	9”, (4”)	8d6, (1d6%), weapons	33
Spears, Carl	10	13	13	12	15	6/0	4/0	3	6	24	4	4	6”	2d6, weapons	37
Spike	15	15	18	18	15	8/0	6/0	4	7	45	5	5	6”	7d6, 2d6 NND, weapons	203
Spregen, Gerhardt	10	10	12	12	25	3/0	3/0	3	4	23	3	3	6”	2d6, 2d6 NND, weapons	81
Starr, Randolph	10	12	12	10	15	4/0	3/0	3	4	21	4	4	6”	2d6	39
Starrbright	15	16	15	12	15	9/3	8/3	4	6	30	5	5	8”, {5”}	7d6, 6d6 +1”, 2d6 NND	42
Starrlight	15	16	15	12	15	9/3	8/3	4	6	30	5	5	8”, {5”}	7d6, 6d6 +1”, 2d6 NND	42
Stonehenge	20	17	20	18	20	8/0	8/0	4	10	38	6	6	6”	10d6, (1d6%), weapons	205
Strad	13	16	16	12	20	6/0	5/0	4	8	30	5	5	8”	4½d6, (½d6%), weapons	44
Strake, Michelangelo	10	10	11	11	20	3/0	3/0	2	4	22	3	3	6”	2d6	47
Tallyman, The	15	18	18	15	25	10/3	10/3	5	7	32	6	6	7”	(2d6) NND, 3d6, weapons	207
Temptation	8	12	13	10	20	2/0	3/0	3	5	21	4	4	6”	MC 2d6 Cumu, Drn EGO 2d6	209
Thunderhawk	15	18	16	12	15	5/0	5/0	4	6	28	6	6	6”	3d6, weapons	211
Todesfalle	15	15	15	15	15	5/0	5/0	4	6	31	5	5	6”	3d6, weapons	92
Torquemada	10	14	13	12	20	4/0	4/0	3	5	24	5	5	6”	2d6, Drn STUN 4d6	214
Trittrunter	12	18	15	14	15	5/0	5/0	4	5	35	6	6	6”	2d6, weapons	94
Troubleshooter	10	21	16	12	15	5/0	5/0	5	6	25	7	7	6”	2d6, weapons	60
Varangian, The	20	20	18	15	20	10/3	9/3	4	8	34	7	7	9”, {6”}	14d6, 8d6, (½d6%), weapons	216
Vispa, La	15	18	14	12	15	6/0	6/0	4	6	30	6	6	7”, {5”}	9d6, weapons	12
Widowmaker	20	15	23	18	15	8/0	8/0	3	9	40	5	5	6”	8d6, weapons	62
Zoltran, Heinrich	8	10	10	12	15	3/0	3/0	2	4	21	5	5	6”	1½d6	77

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