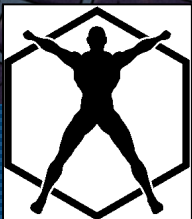
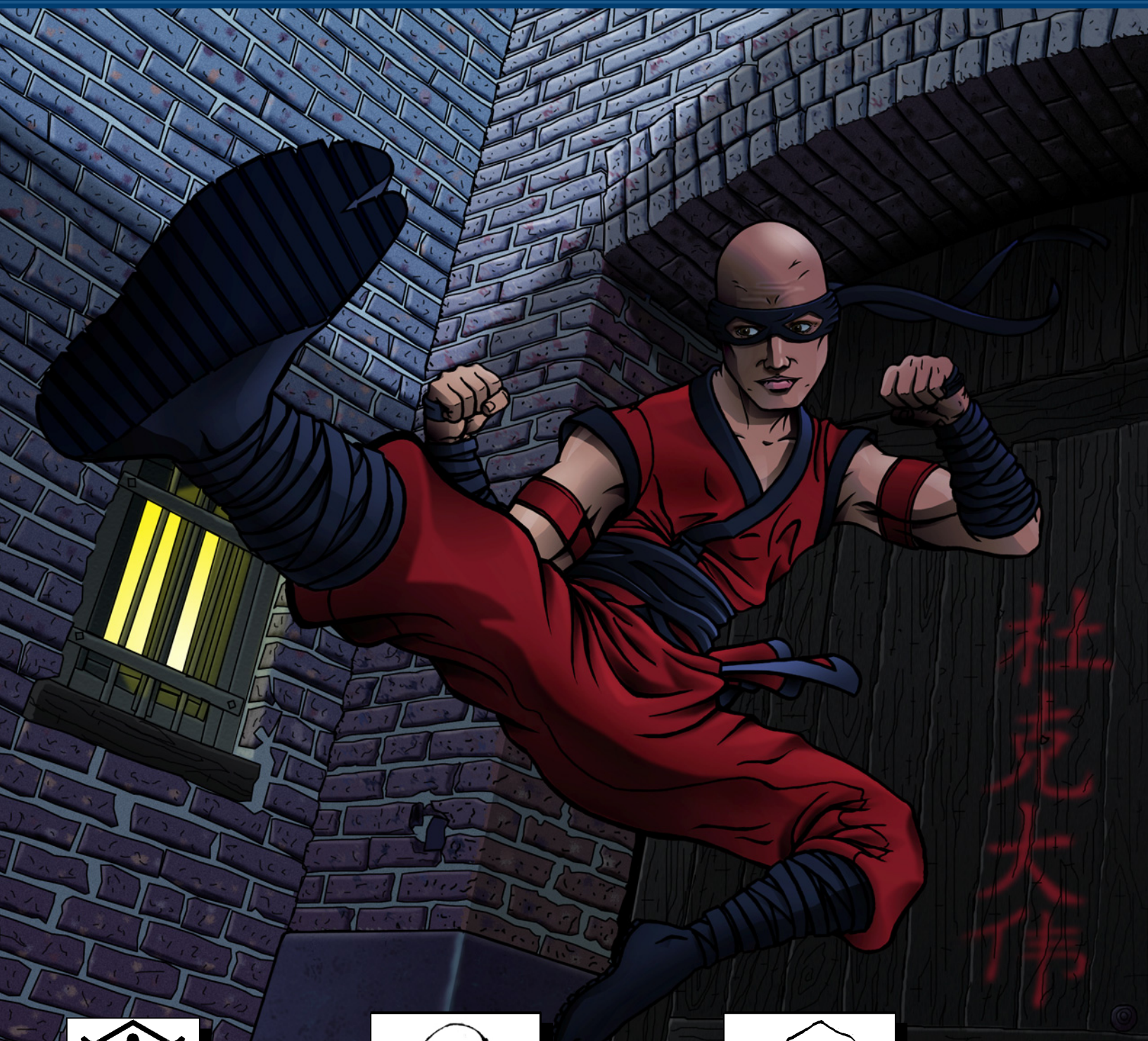


# DIGITAL HERO

# #33

OCT 2005



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- Ports
- Mines



- Combat
- Revenge
- Intrigue



- Powers
- Times
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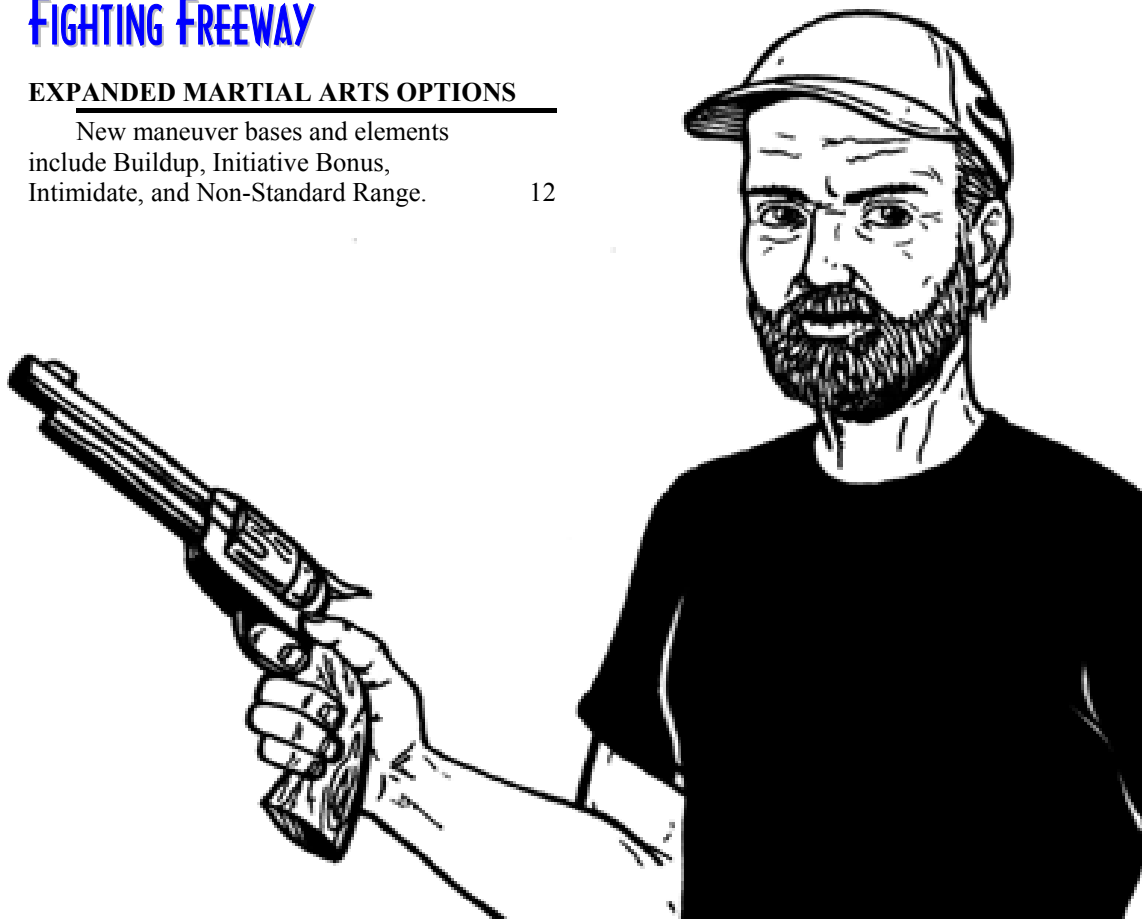
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Issue #33 (October 2005)



# When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

We had so many books debut last month – four, to be precise! – that my last WLWLOH column was probably the longest ever. This one, on the other hand, is likely to be one of the shortest, since I’m going to assume *Champions Worldwide* will be out late enough in September that it’s safe to report on it next month. That leaves us with...

## USPD II

Just when you thought we couldn’t create any more superpowers for *Champions* heroes and villains, here comes *The UNTIL Superpowers Database II*! Like the USPD it contains superpowers – hundreds of all-new ones – organized by category and type, but there are some important differences. First, it grew a little more organically. After the USPD was published, it was popular enough that Hero started an Online USPD fans could contribute to. Many of the powers in the book came from those contributions, or were inspired by comments or ideas voiced by other fans.

Second, three of the categories in the USPD – Illusion Powers, Radiation Powers, and Strength And Toughness Powers – aren’t covered in USPD2. The first two simply weren’t the subject of any fan contributions. The third was covered extensively in *The Ultimate Brick*, so there’s no need to reprint all those powers in USPD2. On the other hand, USPD2 has four new power categories the USPD doesn’t include: Chaos And Entropy Powers, Energy Manipulation Powers, Hyper-Characteristics, and Spirit Projection Powers.

Lastly, the USPD2 has a special appendix covering material from the USPD that was changed in the Revised edition, so that fans who don’t want to buy another copy of the USPD can just buy this book instead.

— Steven S. Long  
HERO System Line Developer





# HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

## Bigger than a Breadbox

### RULES FOR DETERMINING THE SIZE OF GADGETS

When I started the “what do you want to see?” thread for *Pulp Hero* a few months ago, I got a couple of suggestions/requests to include rules defining the size of weapons and gadgets. As you’ve seen by now (or soon will see, I hope!), there are no such rules in PH – I don’t think they’re necessary. The current rules for concealing objects (*HERO System 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Revised*, pages 450-51) work just fine; coming up with more detailed rules about gadget size would just cause more trouble than it’s worth.

Nevertheless, as a design experiment – which is what this column’s all about! – devising gadget size rules is an intriguing challenge. So, let’s give it a shot. My approach to this design issue is based on the premise that a gadget’s size is important for establishing two things: how easy it is to find when hidden (*i.e.*, the modifier it imposes on Concealment and PER Rolls); and its DCV. I’m not particularly concerned with an object’s actual physical size or its mass.

### THE GADGET SIZE SYSTEM

The simplest way to concoct gadget size rules is to sort of “piggyback” onto the existing Concealment and Focus rules. In this system, all devices – by which I generally mean abilities built with the *Focus* Limitation – have a Size rating that defines how easy they are to perceive and to hit with an attack. The *Gadget Size* Power Modifier replaces the Obviousness aspect of Focus: in this system, Foci are bought simply as Accessible (-1/2) or Inaccessible (-1/4); they get no additional modifier for Obvious or Inobvious.

The default Size for device is 0: it neither imposes a penalty on, nor provides a bonus to, Concealment and PER Rolls to find/perceive it, and it has a base DCV of 8. To make the gadget smaller – to increase its DCV and impose a penalty on Concealment and PER Rolls – requires the character to apply an Advantage. If the gadget is larger – it has a lower DCV and is easier than normal to find with Concealment or perceive with a PER Roll – it takes a Limitation. The accompanying table provides suggested guidelines for the *Gadget Size* Power Modifier.

**GADGET SIZE TABLE**

Size	Value	Concealment/ PER Roll Modifier	DCV	Examples*
-4	+1	-5 to -8	12	Under-the-fingernail blade
-3	+3/4	-3 to -4	11	Ring, coin
-2	+1/2	-2	10	Small gemstone
-1	+1/4	-1	9	Large gemstone
0	-0	+0	8	Derringer, mini-grenade
1	-1/4	+1	7	Small pistol, grenade, baseball
2	-1/2	+2	6	Average pistol, wand, binoculars
3	-3/4	+3 to +4	5	Large pistol, small SMG
4	-1	+5 to +8	4	Large SMG, rifle, longsword

...and so on, in either direction (minimum DCV of 0). Only devices of Size 1 or larger can be made Bulky or Immobile Foci; typically a Bulky Focus is at least Size 5, an Immobile one at least Size 8.

\* These rules do not attach a specific physical size to each Size rating. The listed examples provide a *guideline* for reference purposes, but unless the GM rules otherwise, a character can define the Size rating of his gadget – in game terms, its Concealment/PER modifier and DCV – as whatever he wants. If a character feels like having an assault rifle he can somehow easily conceal in a hat, he can, provided the GM doesn’t object. “Realistically,” a gadget should fall pretty close to the examples in the table, but not every game is realistic.



## IMPLICATIONS

Using this system has several implications that may affect your game.

First, you may encounter situations where the Concealment/PER Roll Modifier and DCV don't synch up precisely (much in the same way that the Size categories for vehicles don't specifically fit every single real-world vehicle). In that case, use the gadget's desired DCV as your main touchstone – take the Power Modifier necessary to obtain that DCV, then just accept the Concealment/PER Roll modifier (or, if you prefer, voluntarily worsen it in the interest of proper simulation).

Second, the Gadget Size rules may diminish the amount of use you get out of the *Target Size* Combat Modifier. They're much more generous with DCV than the Target Size rules are, since following the Target Size rules strictly would result in having a lot of small, easily-hidden gadgets that have lower DCVs than big, burly PCs. If the Gadget Rules are in play, you'll probably want to restrict the Target Size rules to large, immobile objects like boulders, trees, and fire hydrants.

### The Cost Affect of the Modifier

Third, and for many players most importantly, representing Size with a Power Modifier may change the points a character pays for a gadget, even though a gadget's size rarely has any impact on play. The loss of the Obviousness modifier for Focus may offset or worsen this. Here are a couple of examples:

**Fragmentation Grenade (standard build):** RKA 2d6, Explosion (+½) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Range Based on STR (-¼), 1 Charge (-2). Total cost: 10 points

**Fragmentation Grenade (Size rules build):** RKA 2d6, Explosion (+½) (45 Active Points); AF (-½), Gadget Size (DCV 7, +1 Concealment, -¼), Real Weapon (-¼), Range Based on STR (-¼), 1 Charge (-2). Total cost: 11 points

**Ring Of Invisibility (standard build):** Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½) (60 Active Points); IIF (-¼), Independent (-2). Total cost: 18 points

**Ring Of Invisibility (Size rules build):** Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Gadget Size (DCV 11, -4 Concealment, +¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½) (82 Active Points); IF (-¼), Independent (-2). Total cost: 25 points

In the first example, the difference is negligible – just 1 point. But in the second, the character has to pay an extra 7 Character Points to make his gadget small (get rid of the *Independent* Limitation, as many PCs would, and the difference skyrockets to 18 points). You can easily come up with similar examples where characters save significant points building large gadgets like rifles.

In most games, it's this issue – the change in point cost for the average gadget – that's likely to determine whether the GM adopts Gadget Size rules. If the modifiers that Size imposes come into play frequently (the PCs are often searched or examined by their enemies, or spend a lot of time looking for small objects), then maybe the cost change is worth it. But for most campaigns, it's probably not worth the effort – the standard Concealment rules work just fine.

## VARIATIONS

In some of the old *HERO System* games, such as *Justice, Inc.* or *Danger International*, there were rules for Gadget Size that defined a device's Size based on its cost: Active Points divided by 3. Thus, a gadget that costs 60 Active Points, like the first Ring Of Invisibility described above, would be Size 20. You could then decrease the gadget's size by taking an Advantage: -2 Size per +¼ Advantage.

This system suffers from many of the same problems as the old STR Minimum rules for weapons. Because the Active Points in a gadget have little or no bearing on its "realistic" size, characters end up having to spend a lot of points just to make their gadgets the proper size. For example, here's what the Ring Of Invisibility looks like using these rules and the Gadget Size chart above (since the old books provide no particular benchmarks):

**Ring Of Invisibility (old Size rules build):** Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Gadget Size (reduce Size 20 gadget to Size -4; +3), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (150 Active Points); IF (-¼), Independent (-2). Total cost: 46 points

So, the same ring ends up costing an additional 28 points! If we change the *Gadget Size* Advantage to make it a little cheaper – say, a reduction by up to half a gadget's size for each +¼ Advantage – it still costs a +2 Advantage, or 37 Real Points, to get down to ring size. A steeper reduction (up to -5 Size for each +¼) requires only a +1¼ Advantage, or 30 Real Points – still a pretty hefty cost increase. Nevertheless, some GMs may prefer a system more along these lines as a way of keeping PCs from spending points on really powerful gadgets.

# You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

"He who has money, lives long: he who has authority, can do no wrong: he who has might, establishes right. Such is history! Ecce historia!"

— Gottfried Benn

It was just another average afternoon at the Mountain Park Concrete Plant when the Killdozer came smashing through the south wall of the administrative building, reducing it to rubble, broken timbers, exploded computer monitors, and flurries of paper in a matter of moments. There had been no warning, no threats or demands made on the factory's management. Certainly no one was expecting a homemade tank attack. The terrible thing simply burst through the side of Marvin Heemeyer's bankrupt muffler shop and come dead at its neighbor, scattering employees in every direction as its massive battering ram lowered in an anticipation of destruction.

Inside of the monster machine's cement and steel control booth Marvin grinned with fiendish pleasure as he rolled its treads back and forth over the smashed remains of his neighbor and rival's large oak desk, observing the entire drama through cameras he had mounted around its outside behind shatterproof plastic covers.

The view was excellent. Marvin's grin broadened as he slowly ground his way toward the batch-plant building.

In the parking lot nearby a lone figure stood transfixed. Cody Docheff, the owner of the plant cement plant, stared in slack-jawed horror as his office was reduced to rubble by the mutant homemade tank in a matter of moments. It had finished with his office and was slowly grinding its way toward the factory's main building. It had also driven over his brand new Ford Superduty pickup truck. Finally snapping out of his appalled reverie, Docheff dashed toward a nearby CAT 963C Track Loader.

"Curse you Heemeyer, you rotten SOB!" he screamed at the Killdozer as it smashed into the side of his factory. But the man inside of the homespun tank couldn't hear him. He was having so much fun smashing hundreds of

thousands of dollars worth of cement producing equipment that he probably wouldn't have paid any attention if he did. Revenge, Martin reflected, was the most beautiful thing a man could ever experience. It was sweeter than liquor, more inspiring than money, and more satisfying than sex. His body shuttered with a distinctively sensual pleasure as he crushed a ten thousand dollar mixer beneath the treads of his machine.

Outside, several of the plant's workers opened fire on the Killdozer with hunting rifles that they had retrieved from the back of their pickup trucks. Grandby, Colorado was the sort of small western town where most people carry hunting weapons wherever they go; it had taken Docheff's men only a few moments to retrieve theirs. Marvin had counted on this. He could hear the bullets bounce harmlessly off of the walls of his vehicle. While .30-06 shells were more than enough to kill a buck deer or a small bear they couldn't hope to penetrate the Killdozer's custom armor, which was a triple layered sandwich of thick concrete and two-inch steel plates.

Suddenly there was a mighty "Clang!" as something struck the side of Marvin's tank. Glancing into his television bank, he saw that Docheff had driven a small bulldozer into the side of his modified 61.5-ton Komatsu. He laughed, and then grabbed the joystick controls of his vehicle with renewed determination. If that pushy, corrupt bastard wanted a duel mano-a-mano, tractor-a-tractor, then he would be more than happy to oblige him. He spun the Killdozer about to come at his hated foe head on.

As a gathering crowd of dazed onlookers watched, the two enormous machines crashed together with a sound like a vault door slamming shut in the very depths of Hell. The CAT's bucket grappled with the Killdozer's battering ram, almost as if the machines were giant rusty crabs locking their claws together in some slow-motion undersea mating ritual. But Marvin's homemade demolisher was simply too powerful for

## QUOTES

"An unpleasant man, full of bluster and rage. I'm trying to be politically correct, but this guy was a nasty son of a bitch. He had the maturity level of a 5 year old."

— Edward Wang,  
Granby Mayor

"I've never seen him out of hand; he was the nicest guy you could ever meet. He was a good businessman; he did a fine job and he'd never overcharge you. They ruined his business when they put the concrete plant in."

— Floyd Cautrell,  
Granby Resident

"Marvin Heemeyer was psychologically out of balance. All we need in life is love and work. You get too far away from these things and your perception and perspective becomes distorted. He was just so far away from reality about how people problem-solve."

— Frank Giardino,  
Denver Psychologist

"Marvin would bend over backward to help anyone in need. All the public needs to know is that Marv was one of the best guys out there."

—Ken Heemeyer,  
brother

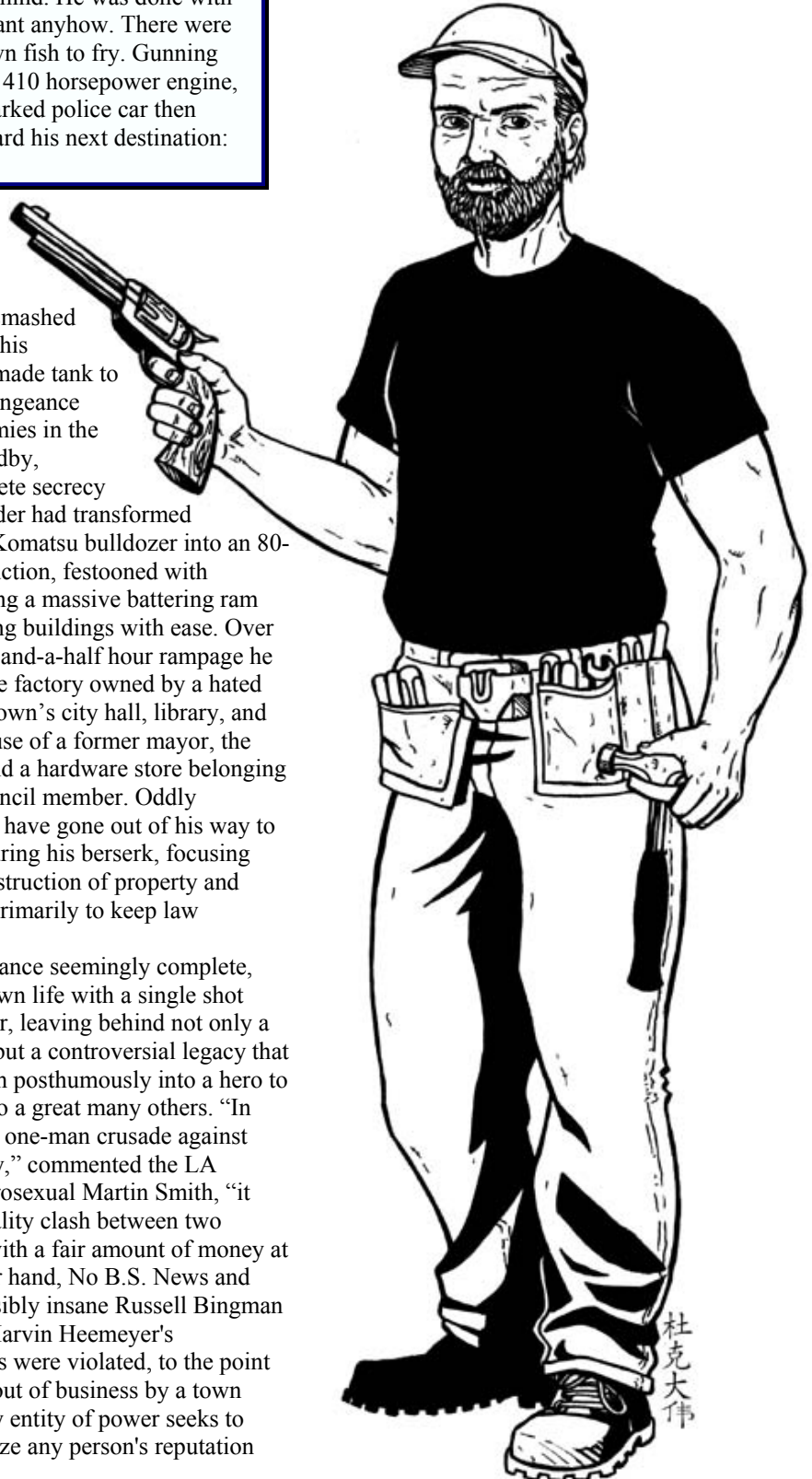


the plant owner's smaller vehicle. With a grinding of gears he slowly pushed his opponent against a low cement wall then, after Docheff had bailed out of the side of his tractor, the Killdozer simply rolled over it, crushing both the smaller vehicle as well as the wall as it emerged unscathed onto the town's main street. Marvin didn't mind. He was done with the concrete plant anyhow. There were other small-town fish to fry. Gunning the Killdozer's 410 horsepower engine, he crushed a parked police car then headed on toward his next destination: the town hall.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2004, disgruntled muffler shop owner Marvin Heemeyer smashed through the wall of his business in a homemade tank to wreak incredible vengeance upon his many enemies in the small town of Grandby, Colorado. In complete secrecy the resourceful welder had transformed his aging 61.5-ton Komatsu bulldozer into an 80-ton engine of destruction, festooned with firearms and boasting a massive battering ram capable of destroying buildings with ease. Over the course of a two-and-a-half hour rampage he destroyed a concrete factory owned by a hated business rival, the town's city hall, library, and playground, the house of a former mayor, the town newspaper, and a hardware store belonging to a former city council member. Oddly Heemeyer seems to have gone out of his way to avoid loss of life during his berserk, focusing instead upon the destruction of property and using his firearms primarily to keep law enforcement at bay.

With his vengeance seemingly complete, Marvin ended his own life with a single shot from a .357 revolver, leaving behind not only a trail of destruction but a controversial legacy that has transformed him posthumously into a hero to a few but a villain to a great many others. "In truth, this was not a one-man crusade against government tyranny," commented the LA Time's caustic metrosexual Martin Smith, "it was a nasty personality clash between two rough-edged men with a fair amount of money at stake." On the other hand, No B.S. News and Commentary's possibly insane Russell Bingman commented that "Marvin Heemeyer's Constitutional rights were violated, to the point that he was forced out of business by a town council... when any entity of power seeks to destroy and demonize any person's reputation

and character, it always uses the press and the media to do most of the job for them." In the end, the truth behind Marin Heemeyer's rampage is more complex than is generally useful for America's editorialists.





**Marvin "Killdozer" Heemeyer**

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

**Total Characteristic Cost: 70**

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

**Cost Powers END**

- 14 *Demolition Derby (Strong Demolishing):*  
 Aid 5d6, Trigger (+¼); Only Works On Vehicles (-1), Costs Endurance (-½), Others Only (-½), 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) 6
- 14 *Expert Wheelman (Strong Wheelman):*  
 Healing BODY 5d6, Trigger (+¼); Only Works on Ground Vehicles (-1), Requires A Combat Driving Roll (-½), 2 Charges (-1½), Costs Endurance (-½)

**Perks**

- 3 Street Level Equipment  
 30 Vehicle: The Killdozer

**Skills**

- 10 +2 with Ranged Combat
- 3 AK: Grandby 12-  
 3 AK: Rocky Mountains 12-  
 1 Bureaucraties 8-  
 9 Combat Driving 15-  
 3 Inventor 12-  
 3 Mechanics 12-  
 4 PS: Welder 13-  
 4 Tactics 13-  
 2 TF: Agricultural & Construction Vehicles, Large Motorized Ground Vehicles, Small Motorized Ground Vehicles  
 3 Trading 12-  
 2 Weaponsmith (Firearms) 12-  
 2 WF: Assault Rifles/LMGs, Handguns, Rifles

**Resource Points**

- 20 Equipment Points: 100  
 0 Vehicle/Base Points: 0  
 0 Follower/Contact Points: 0  
 0 Miscellaneous Points: 0

**Total Powers & Skills Cost: 130****Total Cost: 200****100+ Disadvantages**

- 20 Psychological Limitation: Obsessive (Very Common, Strong)  
 20 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Very Common, Strong)  
 10 Reputation: Malcontent, 11-  
 10 Reputation: Short Tempered, 11-  
 10 Rivalry: City Government (Professional, Mo Pow, Harm or Kill, Unaware)  
 15 Rivalry: Cody Docheff (Professional, Mo Pow, Harm or Kill)  
 15 Social Limitation: Fought City Hall and Lost In Small Town (Frequently, Major)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 200****EQUIPMENT**

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Bolt Action .50	+1	+2	3d6	1d6	7	15	2H
Ak-47	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	30	14	2H, AF5
M-1 Garand	+0	+1	2d6+1	8	15	2H	
S&W 686	+0	+0	1½d6	6	10		

**Armor:** DefTex body armor (DEF 8 on a 14- Activation Roll, plus polyethylene plates providing +3 DEF on Hit Locations 10-11 [including the sides])

**KILLDOZER PLOT SEEDS****Teen Champions:**

A fun high school field trip to a quiet mountain town goes terribly wrong when the Killdozer erupts through the side of a building to begin its rampage. Can our young heroes stop Marvin before anyone gets hurt? Can they keep him from hurting himself?

**Dark Champions:**

There's a new vigilante in town and he's smashing, not skulking, through the night. Several of The Card Shark's gambling dens have been destroyed, The Forbidden's headquarters in Sabine County has been reduced to rubble, and La EME's cocaine warehouse in Latin City has gone up in a rather dramatic ball of flame. While The Harbinger feels that this bulldozer-driving newcomer certainly has the right idea, his methods are so extreme that he has asked the PCs to bring him into line – one way or the other.

**Champions:**

One year ago, a battle between the Champions and the Ultimates in downtown Millennium City caused the inadvertent death of Martin Heemeyer's pregnant wife. Although he doesn't blame the

hero team, he has been planning his revenge on Binder's group ever sense. Correspondingly, in the middle of a battle between the PCs and the Ultimates the Killdozer comes crashing through a wall and opens fire with its .50 caliber weapon on Binder, blasting through his armor and nearly killing him. Complete chaos ensues.

The Killdozer

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
7	SIZE	35	5"x2½", 12½ ton, KB -7"
55	STR	10	Lift 800 tons; HTH 11d6 [5]
5	DEX	-15	OCV: 2/DCV: -3
25	BODY	8	
19	DEF	64	Hardened (+¼)
2	SPD	5	Phases: 6, 12

Total Characteristics Cost: 107

Movement: Running: 7"/7"  
Swimming: 0"/0"

Cost

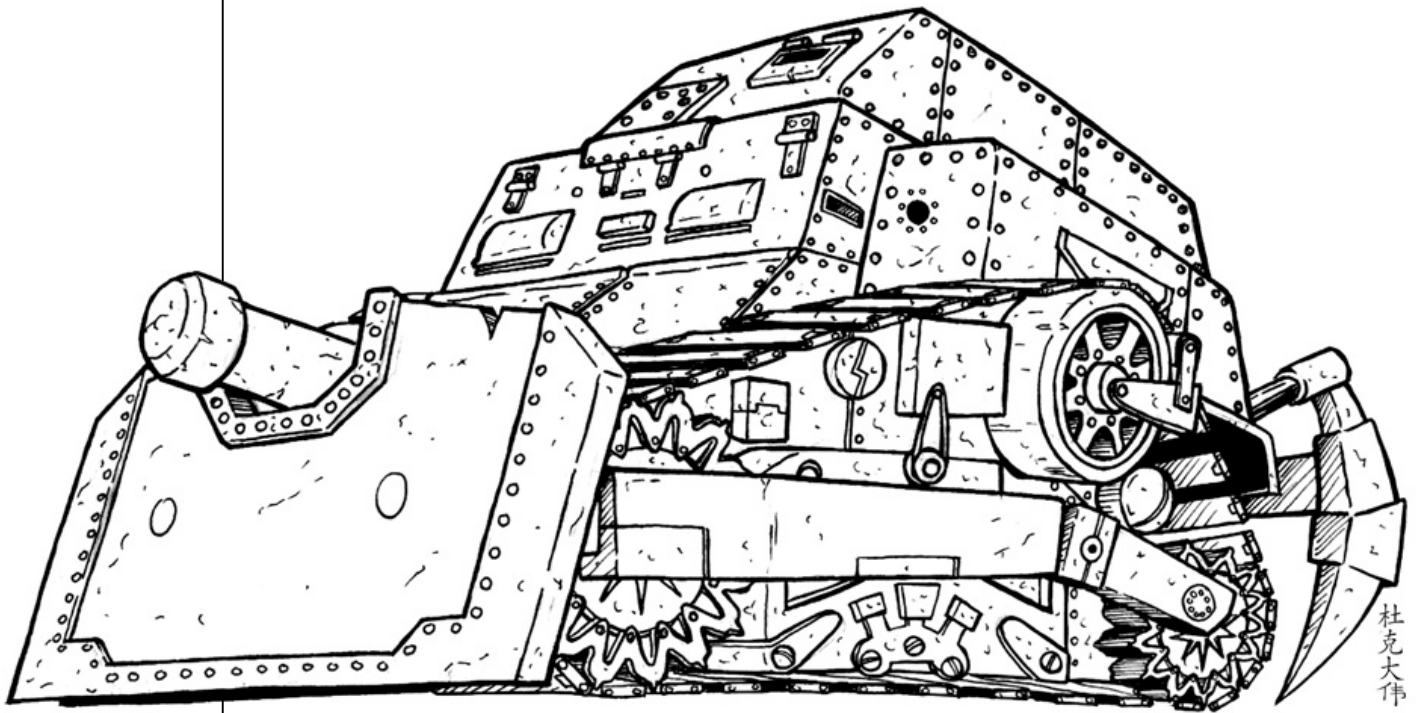
Abilities & Equipment

END

- 1 *Tracked Vehicle*: Ground Movement +1" (7" Total), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (Easily Obtained Fuel; 6 Hours; -0); No Noncombat Movement (-¼), Only on Appropriate Terrain (-¼), Limited Maneuverability (-¼), Side Effect (Damages Surfaces It Rides Over, Always Occurs, -¼) 0
- 2 *Ground Vehicle*: Swimming -2" 0
- 20 *Battering Ram*: HA +7d6 (18d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½), Real Weapon (-¼) 0
- 24 *Incredibly Heavy and Bulky*: Knockback Resistance -12" (-19" Total) 0

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 43

Total Vehicle Cost: 150



## Marvin "Killdozer" Heemeyer

**Background/History:** Marvin Heemeyer was born in Castlewood, South Dakota in 1952. The son of a World War II veteran, he joined the Air Force and was stationed in Boulder Spring, Colorado in the early 1970s. Incredibly fond of living in the Mountain State, he moved there upon his discharge and opened up a successful chain of muffler shops in the Boulder area. Although he never married, Marvin had a tight circle of friends who went snowmobiling together in the winter.

In the early 1990s Marvin leased his four muffler shops in Boulder to other operators so that he could move to Grand Lake, a small resort community nestled amongst the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountain National Park. To generate additional income he opened up the Mountain View Muffler shop in nearby Granby, a community of 1500, in 1992. He very quickly became politically active in both communities, dining each morning with members of Grand Lake's town board at the Chuck Hole Café and even publishing several issues of his own newspaper to promote his views. He was also very active proponent of legalized gambling for the area.

In 2000 Marvin took a leading role in opposing a Granby plan to allow the relocation of a concrete batch plant next to his muffler shop on the west side of town. Along with other residents and business owners he objected to proposed changes to the town's zoning ordinances that would allow the plant's construction, arguing that the dust, noise, and truck traffic would diminish the value of adjacent properties. Complicating matters further, Heemeyer and the plant's owner, Cody Docheff, already strongly disliked one another because of a previous failed business deal. Marvin also suspected the Docheff had bribed members of the town council to allow the move of his plant.

After a great deal of public debate, the town decided to allow the relocation in 2001. Heemeyer and his faction had lost, but they refused to give up. They appealed, got neighbors to sign petitions against the plant, and continued to attend meetings. But over time the number of protesters dwindled and the lawsuit Marvin filed was unsuccessful. The plant was constructed, completely cutting off his access to the road and reducing the flow of business to his shop to a trickle. Marvin purchased a 61.5-ton Komatsu bulldozer with the intention of creating an alternate road to his shop, but by now he had made powerful local enemies. The city officials rejected his request to build a road, instead fining him \$2500 for various violations including "junk cars on the property and not being hooked up to the sewer line." But to comply with the city's

requirements he would have to run a line across 8 feet of Cody Docheff's property, a request that the concrete planet owner not surprisingly denied. Marvin was effectively screwed but all the same he paid his fine, enclosing a bitter note with his check that read "Cowards."

Now certain that the town had turned against him, on December 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2003 Marvin sold his property to a trash company. The terms of the sale included a leaseback agreement that allowed him use of a walled-off 2,000 square-foot section of a metal building on the property until June 1<sup>st</sup> of 2004. He then moved his massive tractor into the space for customizing. Without telling anyone what he was planning, Marvin deeded his Grand Lake house to a friend before moving completely into the warehouse so that he could dedicate all of his time to the manufacturing of his massive revenge machine: the Killdozer.

Working alone at night for months in the closed garage, Marvin's only company was provided by CDs of movies such as Vin Diesel's "A Man Apart," the "Die Hard" trilogy, and a selection of Charles Bronson's "Deathwish" movies. Living off of canned food and vitamin supplements he welded a tight armored enclosure around the old tractor's passenger and engine compartments comprised of two inch steel plates with a 12-inch space between them. Then he filled that space with cement, making the vehicle effectively bulletproof. He removed the bucket from the front of the vehicle and replaced it with a massive "ram" for knocking down buildings. He then installed three TV cameras on the outside of the Killdozer so that he could steer using a series of monitors. The cameras were protected by shatterproof plastic and a series of blowers to keep dust off of the lenses.

For an armament Marvin cut gun portals into the front, rear, and right hand side of the Killdozer, then welded tight enclosures around them so that return fire could not penetrate into his cab. He mounted a bolt-action .50 sniper rifle onto the front, his father's old M-1 Garand onto the back, and AK-47 that he had modified to go fully automatic onto the side. He also put a .357 revolver, a bulletproof vest, and a cooler full of beer in the driver's compartment.

Then sometime before 2 p.m. on June 4<sup>th</sup>, just two days after his lease had expired, Marvin Heemeyer coated the outside of his battletractor with grease to discourage attempts to climb aboard. Using a special crane he had constructed specifically for the purpose, he lowered himself into the Killdozer and welded himself inside never intending to emerge again. Moments later he fired up the monster vehicle's 410-horsepower engine and crashed through side of the metal building to unleash mayhem upon the town of Granby.

Marvin's first target was Docheff's concrete plant next door. Under a hail of rifle fire from the plant's employees he turned the company's administrative building to rubble before smashing the nearby batch-plant building. With the Killdozer destroying his livelihood, Cody Docheff rather bravely leapt into a CAT Track Loader and attempted to do battle with Marvin, but to no avail. The Killdozer smashed the smaller 50-ton vehicle to scrap metal then headed down Agate Ave (Granby's main street), crushing the local sheriff's Ford Expedition flat along the way as it lead a bizarre slow-motion pageant of police vehicles that had responded to 911 calls about the unfolding devastation. Under a hail of nearly constant gunfire he veered off road and headed across the parking lot of the local electric company, whose owner had once been a town board member, and took off much of the building's front. He then shoved a pickup truck through the facade of a construction company whose owner had refused to sign one of his petitions.

Leaving Agate Ave, the Killdozer worked its way toward Granby's town hall, which also housed the tiny town's library. Along the way he demolished the town playground, its small fleet of cars, and a bank where a former town board member worked. He then reduced the town hall and its library to piles of unidentifiable bricks, leaving not one stacked upon another. At this point a County Sheriff jumped on top of the moving tank and fired 37 rounds from his .40 caliber sidearm, trying to shoot a hole through the armor. When this failed to produce a result he shoved several "flash bang" down the Killdozer's exhaust pipe, also to no avail. Marvin proceeded on to the home of a former Granby mayor, which he completely destroyed. He then drove up a nearby hill to the Independent Gas Co, where he attempted to use his powerful .50-caliber rifle to explode the company's massive propane storage tanks.

Fortunately the limited arc of fire allowed by the Killdozer's firing ports prevented Marvin from completing this rather apocalyptic portion of his scheme, so he drove his battletractor back down the hill to the Gambles Hardware store, an establishment owned by another former town board member. Two things conspired against him as he reduced the family business to rubble. The Killdozer was belching smoke and leaking oil, hydraulic fluid, and diesel fuel. Either the battlegame's engine finally failed or one of its treads dropped into the shop's tiny basement, or possibly both. Either way the rampage through Granby had stopped as unexpectedly as it began after an hour and a half of destructive rage. As SWAT team members swarmed around the crippled machine they heard a single gunshot from inside of the cab. His Valkyrie's ride of

revenge over, Marvin had blown his brains out using his .357 revolver.

**Personality/Motivation:** Some say that revenge is best served up cold, but Marvin believes that revenge is best served up in massive helpings. Always a motivated and capable man, his entire personality has been warped around his singular desire not only to get even with those whom he feels have wronged him, but also to get even with them in the most apocalyptic, devastating manner he can possibly devise. Marvin doesn't expect to live through his coming revenge on those who have wronged him. All the same his focus will be on the destruction of property rather than killing; he will use his firearms for suppression and destruction rather than the taking of life.

Marvin has always been goal oriented and organized; even in mid-Killdozer death-ride he will keep his objectives firmly in mind. He will also avoid harming or damaging the property of those with whom he has no quarrel. After all, it was his quirky, obsessive sense of right and wrong that has driven him to construct the Killdozer in the first place. Before his mutation into an ill-fated angel of vengeance, Marvin Heemeyer was a pushy, rough edged but basically good man with a great love of the outdoors, his family, and his friends. It may also be that the recent death of his beloved father helped to finally push him over the edge.

**Quote:** "Sometimes unreasonable things are totally justifiable."

**Powers/Tactics:** Marvin Heemeyer is a capable welder, mechanic, and outdoorsman who constructed a uniquely massive but completely homemade tank out of an old piece of earthmoving equipment for the specific purpose of getting revenge on his enemies, real or imagined. A vigilante of sorts, he has been constructed as a 200-point *Dark Champions* character with 20 points dedicated to equipment. He also has several "super-skills" that are taken directly from that setting, including *Demolition Derby* and *Expert Wheelman*.

Marvin doesn't do things randomly. Under every circumstance he will have a plan, a list of objectives (or victims, depending on how you look at it), and a fairly good idea of how to carry them out including contingency plans if something goes wrong. As those objectives will always involve punishing those he feels have wronged him using his massive but slow moving Killdozer, one of his contingencies will always be suicide rather than capture upon completion of his goals. Marvin has no intention of going to jail.

With Hardened DEF of 19 and a BODY of 25 the Killdozer is practically invulnerable to



anything short of an anti-tank weapon. But it's very slow moving; with a top speed of only 7" and a SPD of 2 it is best used against stationary targets or extremely slow moving characters. While the Killdozer is festooned with firearms Marvin doesn't particularly want to kill anybody (unless he *does*; see below), so he will only shoot heroic PCs and police officers if he thinks they can take the damage without being terminally injured (if they are wearing armor, for example). He also has a very limited 25 degree arc of fire with his weapons, often requiring him to change the Killdozer's facing when he wants to get a clearer shot at a target.

**Campaign Use:** Marvin Heemeyer and his Killdozer have three distinct potential uses for a GM. The first and most obvious would be as an opponent for a team of low level supers; say *Dark Champions* or *Teen Champions* characters. You could have him suddenly attack their hometown, or perhaps the PCs could be on vacation somewhere. The basic story can remain the same (disgruntled welder wants revenge on town) although the details could be altered to fit your campaign. In either case Marvin won't expect to live through his "death ride," so part of the roleplaying challenge for a *Teen Champions* teen could be not only defeating the Killdozer but also convincing its owner not to take his own life. In all likelihood a *Dark Champions* team won't care whether or not Heemeyer kills himself or not, assuming they haven't already handled that problem for him already.

The second possible use is in a standard *Champions* campaign where Marvin's grudge isn't against a town but against a supervillain or supervillain team. In this alternate version Marvin had a family that was killed, deliberately or inadvertently, by the actions of an NPC villain. Under those circumstances he is a principled but desperate man who has constructed the best tool for vengeance he can. Marvin might suddenly burst through a wall in the middle of fight to attack, say, Blowtorch, throwing the entire combat into complete confusion. The PCs might also respond to a 911 call in which the Killdozer and a villain have squared off in the middle of a city in a revenge *battle royale* to the death.

A final use for Marvin and his Killdozer could be as the basis a *Champions* or *Dark Champions* character. A good man with a bad grudge armed with a homemade tank certainly wouldn't be out of place in Vibora Bay or Hudson City, assuming he could keep the property damage to a minimum. Maybe the battletractor could be possessed by the, er, "Spirit of Vengeance" or something equally original. In any case to make the Killdozer more powerful increase its speed to 3 or 4, change its movement to 10", and give its ram HTH attack another +2d6 for a dramatic 20d6 of damage!

**Appearance:** Marvin Heemeyer is a large man, standing 6'4" tall and weighing 230 pounds. He has good natured, ruddy features and short white hair that he wears with a neatly trimmed beard. He generally dresses quite conservatively, but when the PCs encounter him in his Killdozer he will be wearing body armor, combat boots, and a baseball cap.

Marvin's Killdozer has been described by a witness as looking "like a futuristic tank." It is essentially a highly augmented 61.5-ton Komatsu bulldozer that has had the bucket removed and replaced with an enormous battering ram. The driver sits in a totally enclosed compartment surrounded by two 2 inch steel plates with 12 inches of concrete between them. A similar arrangement also protects the Killdozer's engine. Marvin drives it by using a monitor bank connected to three television cameras mounted on the outside. He has portholes for guns on the front, back, and right-hand sides of the passenger compartment.

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# Expanded Martial Arts Options by Daniel Behlings

This article is a flavor enhancer for martial arts. You will find many new Elements to use when creating custom martial arts maneuvers. Elements like Initiative Bonus for blindingly fast sword strokes, or Hard To Block for that surprise Drunken Punch.

## New Options

Or, Revenge of the Kung Fu Action Theater! This section describes one new mechanic, Default Range, for martial arts styles rather than maneuvers, and then proceeds to the new Elements for martial arts maneuvers.

### DEFAULT RANGE

Not all styles are at their most effective at the same range. Long Fist style Kung Fu generally uses attacks with a greater reach than most Judo throws, and many who encounter a Monkey Boxer are caught off guard by the long reach of a tumbling Low Kick. That is why this rule allows the creator of a martial art to select a Default Range for their style, which differs from other arts, without any change in cost.

There are three ranges that a martial art style can have: Unarmed, Medium, and Long (1"). Short Range is not normally a choice because it provides only disadvantages over Unarmed, but see Optional Rule: Short Range. These ranges for martial arts styles are identical to those described for weapons on page 164 of *The Ultimate Martial Artist* and, in combat, the martial artist is affected by them as if he was wielding a weapon of the same reach. In campaigns which don't make use of the Weapon Length rules, Default Range has little effect on combat, but still provides color. Where Weapon Length does apply, Default Range creates some interesting tactical considerations.

### OCV PENALTIES

The OCV Penalties rule from the *UMA*, inflict an OCV penalty on characters with shorter weapons fighting characters with longer weapons and when a martial arts style is assigned a Default Range its practitioners are subject to these modifiers as well.

### Weapon Elements

A character using a weapon with a style that has a non-standard range fights, as far as the rules are concerned, at the range of the weapon not the Default Range of his style.

### ENCLOSED SPACES

A drawback of using a style with a long reach is that it becomes more difficult to fight in confined spaces. The Long Fist master may have an advantage over the Judoka on the open dojo floor, at least until the Judoka's first successful attack, but if they are fighting in a crowded tea parlor the Long Fist master will suffer a OCV penalty from being in a restricted area. A martial artist suffers the Enclosed Space penalties from page 165 of the *UMA* according to the Default Range of his style.

### Optional Rule: Short Range

By the rules, Short is a strictly worse range than Unarmed so there is no reason to choose it for a Default Range. However, if the GM imposes the optional -3 OCV penalty on an unarmed character's attempts to Block an armed foe, the GM could allow the unarmed character to choose Short as the Default Range for his martial art style. This eliminates the -3 OCV penalty for blocking armed opponents, but in return the character suffers Enclosed Space penalties as if fighting at Short range.

### Changing Styles

A character who knows multiple martial arts styles can switch between them at will, but when the Default Range rule is in effect, the GM should only allow a character to change styles as a 0 Phase Action once per Segment.

### NEW MANEUVER ELEMENTS

This section is replete with new Helpful and Restrictive Elements to use with the custom maneuver creation rules on pages 89-97 of the *Ultimate Martial Artist*. Most of these new Elements bring other game mechanics into the maneuver system and so don't require extensive discussion. Where explanation is needed, it occurs under the description of the Element.

## New Maneuver Basis

The accompanying table summarizes the new maneuver Basis to help maneuver creators conceptualize the new options.

NEW MANEUVER BASIS TABLE	
<u>Exclusive Basis</u>	<u>Purpose of Basis</u>
Break Weapon	Attempts to break an opponent's weapon
Disable Opponent	Impair one of a target's abilities, such as Running
<u>Non-Exclusive Basis</u>	<u>Purpose of Basis</u>
Cover Opponent	Allows the attacker to delay the effect, usually damage, of a successful attack
Intimidate Opponent	Attempts to frighten an opponent into hesitating or retreating

## New Elements

**NEW HELPFUL ELEMENTS TABLE**

<u>Element</u>	<u>Description (Maximum)</u>
Break	+1 point per 2d6 Dispel (Melee Weapon) up to 4d6, +1 point per additional 1d6 (10d6)
Cover	+2 points to delay effect of successful attack (Take Once)
Disable	+1 point per ½d6 Drain (Two Characteristics) up to 2d6, +2 points per additional ½d6 Drain. -3 points if PD or ED add to Power Defense (4d6 Drain)
Easy to Sweep	+2 points to Sweep the first two foes without penalty or +4 points to Sweep the first three foes without penalty (Take Once)
Hard to Avoid	+1 point to reduce a target's DCV bonus by 2 (Take Once)
Hard to Block	+1 point for -2 OCV to attempts to Block (Take Once)
Initiative Bonus	+1 point for +1 DEX; Only to Act First (+3)
Intimidate	0 points to add Presence Attack to maneuver. +1 point per +1d6 PRE Attack up to +2d6, +2 per additional +1d6 (+4d6 PRE Attack)
Non-Standard Range	+1 point to change a maneuver's range (Take Once)

**NEW RESTRICTIVE ELEMENTS TABLE**

<u>Element</u>	<u>Description (Maximum)</u>
Buildup	See Buildup Description (Varies)
Complexity	-1 point for each required CSL (2 CSLs)
Easy to Avoid	-1 point for -2 OCV against dodging opponents (Take Once)
Easy to Block	-1 point for +2 OCV to Block maneuver (Take Once)
Limited Circumstance	-1, -2, or -3 points (Take Once)

## Element Descriptions

This section describes each new Element in some detail.

### BREAK

Break is an Exclusive Basis and a maneuver based upon it has a chance of breaking an opponent's melee weapon.

Taking Break for a maneuver converts the attack's normal damage to Dispel dice. This form of Dispel works against any one power defined as a melee weapon, one power at a time, and has no range unless the GM allows the character to take it for a Ranged Combat Maneuver.

To use an attack with the Break Element, the character must first success with an attack roll, there is no special modifier for targeting a foe's weapon. The attacker may then roll his Dispel dice and follow the standard rules for using Dispel against a Focus. The rules of which can be found on pages 149-150 of *5ER*.

If the GM wishes for greater control over this Element, he can ignore the listed Active Points for weapons and determine the total Dispel damage required to break a weapon in other ways. There are a number of possibilities, for example: a flat total for all weapons based on how often he wishes this maneuver to be successful; or 30 for wooden weapons, 45 for metal weapons, and 50 for large metal weapons; or the total required could be based on the target rather than the weapon. Perhaps to break the weapon of an unimportant NPC requires only 30 points, but to break the weapon of a PC takes 50 or more.

Break costs 1 point for every 2d6 dice of Dispel damage up to 6d6, and 1 point for each 1d6 thereafter, to a maximum of 10d6. Strength does not add to the Dispel dice to a Break maneuver, and the maneuver cannot take any version of the STR- Element.

Extra Damage Classes and Combat Skill Levels used for damage add 2d6 dice of Dispel for every extra DC.

### BUILDUP

The Buildup Element is based on the Extra Time Limitation and is taken for maneuvers which need longer then a ½ Phase to complete, or require a rest period between uses. Buildup works well for maneuvers the attacker has to spend time aiming, or to balance special attacks that shouldn't be used every Phase.

There are five options for the Buildup Element: Delayed Phase, Full Phase, Extra Phase, One Turn without Lockout, and One Turn with Lockout. Each one functions as described under the Extra Time limitation on pages 290 and 291 of *5ER*.

Lockout refers to whether or not a character can take other actions during the Buildup time. Without Lockout the Buildup is simply a waiting period and the character can continue to move, and fight normally. With Lockout, the character can take no other actions during the Buildup period. Lockout applies only to 1 Turn Buildup, the other times have special rules.

For the cost of the Buildup element see the Buildup Cost Table. Like the Extra Time limitation, some forms of Buildup, like 1 Turn and Delayed Phase, could be combined on a single Maneuver, but this should only be done with the GM's approval.

#### BUILDUP COST TABLE

<u>Cost</u>	<u>Buildup</u>
-1 point	Delayed Phase
-1 point	Full Phase
-2 points	Extra Phase
-3 points	1 Turn without Lockout
-4 points	1 Turn with Lockout

### COMPLEXITY

Maneuvers that take this Element are so complex they require the attacker to assign 1 or 2 Combat Skill Levels solely to using this maneuver. The Combat Skill Levels used must be applicable to the maneuver, and can't be used for any other purpose while they are fulfilling the Complexity requirement.

The Complexity Element costs -1 point for 1 CSL and -2 points for 2 CSLs.

### COVER

The Cover Element is a Non-Exclusive basis which gives a maneuver additional flexibility. Just like the standard Cover Combat Maneuver, this Element allows a character who succeeds with an Attack Roll to delay the effect of the maneuver until he chooses to affect the target. The Cover Element cost 2 points and can only be taken once.

### DISABLE

Maneuvers intended to impair an opponent in some manner can take this Exclusive Basis to create an attack that causes a limited form of Drain Damage rather than Normal Damage.

Disable Damage is a Drain which works against two related Characteristics chosen when the maneuver is created. A kick intended to cripple a target's legs would affect Running and Leaping, whereas Master Ping Li's Negative Chi Touch would drain a target's Body and Constitution. The Drain power of a Disable maneuver has the One Use At A Time limitation, meaning once it is used on a target, it cannot be used a second time until the original effect has faded.



For some Disable attacks, like the Negative Chi Touch, Power Defense is the only defense power that protects a character, but for Disables that work by actually hurting the target both PD and Power Defense protect the victim. By default, a Disable works only against Power Defense, but for -3 points the target can add his normal PD, or ED, to his Power Defense when determining the effect of the Disable attack.

Disable costs 1 point for every ½d6 Drain, up to 2d6 and 2 points for every ½d6 thereafter, to a maximum of 4d6 Drain.

Strength does not add dice to a Disable attack and the maneuver cannot take any form of the STR- Element.

Extra Damage Classes and Combat Skill Levels used for damage, add dice to a Disable maneuver at a rate of ½d6 per 1 DC.

### **EASY TO AVOID**

A particularly slow attack, or one that is ineffective for other reasons, can take this Element to represent that fact. A character who attacks with an Easy To Avoid maneuver suffers a -2 penalty to his OCV against any targets who Dodges. Whether they are specifically dodging this attack or not.

Easy To Avoid costs -1 point and can only be taken once.

### **EASY TO BLOCK**

Some maneuvers are very basic and simple to counter, or easy to block for some reason, and such attacks can take the Easy To Block Element to reflect this. Easy To Block grants a +2 OCV to any opponent who attempts to Block this maneuver.

Easy To Block costs -1 point and may only be taken once.

### **EASY TO SWEEP**

Maneuvers take this Element if the meant to be used against multiple opponents. Easy To Sweep eliminates the OCV penalties a martial artist suffers when using the Sweep maneuver with this attack. The character can attack either two or three targets before Sweep penalties begin to accrue.

These benefits only apply when the character is attacking multiple targets, not if he is attempting to Sweep the same target several times.

The GM may also wish to limit Easy To Sweep maneuvers by allowing them to be used only against the intended number of targets, rather than as starting place for a martial artist to attack many foes.

Easy To Sweep costs 2 points to attack two targets at -0 OCV, or 4 points to attack three targets at -0 OCV.

### **HARD TO AVOID**

The Hard To Avoid Element makes it difficult for a target to get out of the way of an attack. It does not, however, affect the target's ability to Block the attack. Characters attacked by a Hard to Avoid maneuver have any bonuses to their DCV reduced by 2. This could include Combat Skill Levels assigned to DCV, or modifiers from a Combat Maneuver like Dodge or Defensive Strike. Hard To Avoid has no effect on a target's base DCV derived from Dexterity, nor does it provide an attacker with a bonus to OCV in any form. This element serves only to cancel DCV bonuses, but it is cumulative with any ordinary OCV bonuses bought for the maneuver.

Hard To Avoid costs 1 point for a -2 DCV and may be taken once.

### **HARD TO BLOCK**

When applied to an attack maneuver, this Element will make the attack more difficult to Block. Any opponent who attempts a Block suffers a -2 OCV. Hard To Block affects only the Block maneuver and not Missile Deflection, but if taken on a Ranged Martial Arts attack, it affects Missile Deflection and not Block.

Hard to Block costs 1 point for a -2 OCV and can be taken only once.

### **INITIATIVE BONUS**

Attacks intended to be very fast can take this Element to grant them a special Dexterity bonus for acting first. Buying Initiative Bonus is the same as buying the Talent Lightning Reflexes for a single action, except the extra cost can affect whether or not the maneuver qualifies to be a Martial Arts Maneuver.

As mentioned in the description of Lightning Reflexes on page 90 of *5ER*, a maneuver with an Initiative Bonus becomes, effectively, a Full Phase maneuver because it's not possible for a character to, say, move at a DEX of 10 before attacking at a DEX of 13. However, a martial artist can buy Lightning Reflexes for actions he wishes to use in the same Phase as a maneuver with an Initiative Bonus. This Element is cumulative with Lightning Reflexes.

You will not find an Initiative Penalty Element, instead, use Buildup (Delayed Phase).

Initiative Bonus costs 1 point for +1 DEX for acting first, up to a maximum of +3 DEX.

## INTIMIDATE

Intimidate is a Non-Exclusive Basis who's effect is to add a Presence Attack to an ordinary martial maneuver, and to allow the maneuver to grant bonus dice to that PRE Attack.

When a maneuver with Intimidate is created the creator chooses whether the Presence Attack will occur before or after the other effects of the maneuver. For example, a Weapon Flourish intended to daunt a foe and then strike him would place the Presence Attack before the normal attack. In this case the normal attack gains whatever benefits the Presence Attack can deliver. On the other hand, a maneuver which is very impressive or violent, or both, would place the Presence Attack after the rest of the maneuver. In this case the attack must usually be a success for the Presence Attack to take effect, but the PRE Attack also gains any applicable Violent Action bonus. The placement of the Presence Attack for a maneuver with the Intimidate basis does not affect the cost of the maneuver.

It is also possible to create maneuvers based solely on the Intimidate basis. The classic knife throwing trick of pinning a target's sleeve to the wall, for example. It does no damage and doesn't really hinder the target, but it can make the target think twice about his actions.

Attacks with Intimidate plus Basis can be used with the Sweep or Rapid Fire Combat Maneuvers, but the Presence Attack will occur only once. If Intimidate is the only Basis in the maneuver then it cannot be Swept, but the PRE Attack can still affect multiple targets.

Intimidate costs 0 points, and bonuses to the Presence Attack cost 1 point for each +1d6 up to +2d6, and 2 points for each +1d6 to a maximum total of +4d6.

## LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCE

Limited Circumstance is a variable Restrictive Element for creating maneuvers that can only be used in special conditions such as Only Standing in Water, or Target Must be Behind Character.

The value of this Element is determined by the rarity of its circumstance, which could be almost anything. When choosing a condition, keep in mind that this Element is a limitation on when a maneuver can be used, not when a character can take the maneuver. Constant qualities of a character are not legitimate circumstances. For example Limited Circumstance (DEX of 15+) is not allowable, but (Only When At More Than Half Total Stun) would be valid for a maneuver that requires the character to be mostly unstunned to use.

## LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCE COST TABLE

Cost	Rarity of Circumstance
-0 point	Very Common
-1 point	Common
-2 points	Uncommon
-3 points	Rare

Limited Circumstance also has the benefit of eliminating, within reason, penalties based on its circumstance. For example, a maneuver that can only be used while kneeling, can be used without any penalties for being in a kneeling position. Other attacks the character makes might suffer from his lack of mobility. This effect should be observed carefully by the GM because it could be used as a cheap way around common penalties. Limited Circumstance (Only while Sweeping), for example.

Because this Element can greatly restrict a martial artist's ability to use a maneuver, such limited maneuvers may not be very popular. If the GM wishes to encourage players to take more maneuvers with this Element he can allow the maneuver's final cost to be less than 3 points. If the circumstance is Uncommon the maneuver's final cost can be as little as 2 Character Points, and if the circumstance is Rare the maneuver can cost as little as 1 point.

## NON-STANDARD RANGE

If a martial arts style has a Default Range, then a maneuver may take this Element for one point to change its natural range. Campaigns which do not use the Default Range rule could still allow select maneuvers to take this Element.

Non-Standard Range costs 1 point to change to any available Range.



# Temporal Titans and Tyrants by James Jandebour

The Temporal League (see *Digital Hero* #26), as the covert police force of history, has made a number of dangerous enemies over the years. Fortunately, the more powerful of these are as yet unaware of the exact nature of the opposition, so are unable to destroy the League. The fact that some of them would easily be able to do so is the reason that the League is a covert force.

In addition to its enemies, the League keeps several subjects under observation, hoping to prevent damage to the timeline rather than having to repair the damage. These are generally not time travelers, but have either the potential to become so or the ability to alter their future by sheer power. They are not directly opposed, no matter what atrocities they commit, as long as they commit no crimes beyond those recorded by history. Many League members regret this, but they understand the necessity.

What follows is a list of individuals the League is interested in. The descriptions include current relationships, as well as one or more plot seeds for each. In addition to notes on characters published by Hero Games are three new characters (one Superheroic, one Heroic, and one monster). There is also a new version of Teleios, now calling himself the Superior Man, after he has given finally put aside pride and given himself powers, powers that have made him a threat to the whole of history.

## Established Characters

**Istvatha V'han:** By far the greatest threat to history the League faces, she has significant personal power, natural time-traveling abilities, and virtually unlimited resources. Fortunately, she seems more interested in conquering the Earth and its universe in the regular timeline, so her plots against the history are relatively subtle. If this were not the case, she could easily gather her forces in a time period in which they could not be resisted. Hopefully, this strategy will never change, as this type of attack could not be opposed by the League. Still, she often sends agents to make small changes in order to make her overt invasion plans easier.

*Plot Seed:* In the year 3000, the Kolvel Engine worked perfectly, greatly improving on the spacewarp drive. Seventeen years later, Istvatha's forces invade, and without the opposition of superbeings, win the war. The heroes need to return to 3000 and find out where the change took place to allow this. See *Galactic Champions* for more information.

**Dr. Destroyer:** Zerstoiten, as the greatest technological genius of the Champions era, could very well develop a time machine. Psychological profiles reveal he is unlikely to alter the past, as he is intelligent and cautious enough to want to avoid changing his own history. However, he may attempt to raid future eras in the hopes of increasing his technological superiority, and there is always the chance that his arrogance will defeat his genius.

*Plot Seed:* Dr. Destroyer has been seen in the 31<sup>st</sup> Century. Have the fears of the League become fact, or is something else happening?

**Dr. Macabre:** The League primarily keeps Macabre under observation to learn more about the Janus Key. They have been unable to find references to it in other times, and so they gather information on it the one time it has surfaced. The Key is capable of bridging dimensions, and the League is concerned that may include time.

*Plot Seed:* Information about the Janus Key leads the League to believe it may have been created by a pre-human race. The most likely candidates appear to be the Elder Worm. How does a field team verify this in one of the most dangerous times in Earth's history? What do they do about it if it is true?

**Dr. Yin Wu:** Yin Wu doesn't seem directly interested in time travel, but his vast mystic powers could alter his own time sufficiently to disrupt history. He is under observation only through historical records, as attempts to observe his demesne have resulted in the loss of several highly trained agents.

*Plot Seed:* The sorcerer makes a bargain with higher beings for the power to alter the world all at once. The League must discover the provisions of the agreement and reverse it, thus returning the world to its former state.

**Captain Chronos:** No one is sure why, but the Temporal Oversight Committee has ruled that Captain Chronos is to be avoided at any reasonable cost. If interaction is unavoidable, his purposes are not to be interfered with, and he is to be given any aid he requests. However, he is not to know about the League.

*Plot Seed:* The team is sent on an easy recruitment mission in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and shortly after achieving success is accosted by Captain Chronos. He tells them they are the only hope for the timeline, and before they can object, deposits them elsewhere. There they will remain stranded, as they were moved by an outside force, until they accomplish whatever obscure or bizarre mission he gives them.

**Epoch:** This Dragon Branch member from the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries does not appear to have the power to travel through time so much as the ability to manipulate its flow. Therefore, he is only under observation at this time, though attempts will be made to apprehend him if he should expand his repertoire.

*Plot Seed:* VIPER discovers that, with artificial assistance, Epoch is capable of time travel. The Temporal League is very interested in preventing this discovery, and sends a team to sabotage the research before it succeeds.

**Kal Turak:** While there are currently no reports that the archvillain that gave his name to an age is interested in travel through time, he is under observation. He has already changed his own established future on three known occasions. Takafones, however, does not appear to be as much of a threat to history, as in this form he has become a slave to destiny, and is incapable of changing it. At least, this is the hope.

*Plot Seed:* The villain discovers a ritual that will reveal his destiny and, further, allow him to change it. Either local heroes must prevent him from gathering one or more of the rare items needed in the ritual, or the League must take a direct hand in preventing him from finding the ritual in the first place.

**Tyrannon the Conqueror:** The mystical overlord is certainly capable of magic that can rend time. However, he has so far failed to be much interested in such attempts.

*Plot Seed:* Agents of Tyrannon have entered Earth's past, stealing certain mystical items that have long been lost. This causes no overt changes in the timeline, but the League certainly does not wish this to continue. A team is sent to deal with it, which may require gathering a team of more powerful characters to battle Tyrannon's forces directly while the League members undo whatever damage has been done.

**Unknown:** This individual attacked Senatorial hopeful Jack Mattingly in the year 2003. He appeared to be a white male, early 20s, with dark hair. He appeared in front of the crowd, causing a feeling of vertigo in the onlookers. This strongly implies some form of warping of space-time, as does his method of attack (he aged the candidate about fifty years). Obviously, the League seeks to apprehend him, and have teams scouring the histories for any information they can find of similar attacks.

*Plot Seed:* One of the League's sources has information about this man. The League must get to the informant and keep him safe. If the suspect is, indeed, a time traveler, the adventure may become a four-dimensional chess game, with him altering events to eliminate the threats, followed by the League countering his changes.

**Wardens of Time:** No member of the League has ever encountered a member of this mysterious race. It is largely believed that they are a fable, though a number of normally reliable sources insist they exist. This, and the recently acquired Chronoportation Boxes, reputed vehicle of the Wardens, cause League members to wonder if the rumors are true. Of course, if the reports about the Wardens are to be believed, they and the League are allies, or at least have the same mission.

*Plot Seed:* A mysterious man with odd affectations is met by the League. He gives them some much-needed information, but rather than answering further questions, turns and steps behind some landmark. It then fades away. Was he one of the Wardens, and is his information reliable?

**Zeitgeist:** The German chronomanipulator is under careful scrutiny, much like the villain Epoch. If anything, he is subject to even more intense observation. This confuses some field teams, who question why the hero needs more supervision than the villain.

*Plot Seed:* The League would like to evaluate this hero's powers, and possibly recruit him. A team is dispatched to bring him to the Citadel, a mission requiring persuasion, as Zeitgeist's powers protect him from being moved through time against his will.



## New Characters

### Teleios, the Superior Man

**Background/History:** In the year 2020, the world was at war, and the human race was in danger of extinction. Teleios, seeing an end to his personal laboratory, chose to become directly involved. He had some years before obtained cell samples from Viperia. While her genetic structure did not directly lead to an understanding of her powers (as they are magical), it did give him ideas on how to generate similar abilities. He created a modified clone, and, as he had years before, transferred his mind to this still more powerful form. With his new body, he joined the heroes in fighting the invaders, though his motives were far from noble.

The enemy eventually defeated, Teleios found his new body weakening. He spent days in fruitless research, trying to reverse his condition. In desperation, he used his great speed to break the barriers of time, and fled into the future. There, in the year 3001, he hoped to find the answer. Instead, he found salvation, and immediately began to recover. He still does not know what the cause of his weakness was, but after experimentation he has discovered that he cannot go into certain time periods without it returning.

Now, he travels throughout history, and sometimes into space, searching for new knowledge and working toward making humanity into his physically perfect, mentally pliable slaves.

While the Temporal League knows of this villain, they have so far been unable to track his origins. It is likely that he escaped from an alternate timeline that has been corrected, making it particularly difficult to deal with him by manipulating history.

**Personality/Motivation:** Much the same as it ever was, just with a larger pool of experimental subjects. However, he is much more willing to engage the PC's in personal combat, toying with them to demonstrate his superiority. He will take any opportunity to show his abilities, both new and old, though he ultimately takes the greatest satisfaction in outwitting his foes. As such, he will often not use the most efficient tactics possible, as he wants to humiliate as well as defeat enemies. Wise adversaries will take advantage of this tendency.

**Quote:** "I cannot believe I waited so long to give myself true power. The possibilities for experimentation are so greatly expanded. Allow me to demonstrate."

**Powers/Tactics:** Teleios possesses all the abilities he once did, except where replaced in this version of the character. These can be found in Champions Universe, page 134. However, since leaving his home time, he often lacks the supplies and equipment he needs to use his Biochemical Wizardry (represented by the Expendable Focus Limitation on the Pool).

He makes up for this with incredible physical power. Because of his thorough understanding of his new abilities and his extensive scientific knowledge, he is able to use them in surprising ways, represented by the Intelligent Use Of Powers Variable Pool. The main use of the Pool is a variety of Brick Tricks (possibly including Naked Modifiers to STR), but it can also be used for more esoteric abilities, such as the Example Powers.

In general, there are some things he will simply not do unless pushed to extremes. He still has the same pride that caused him to delay giving himself powers for so many years, and will not engage in simple brutality. He must prove his cleverness as well as his superiority. Therefore, most Powers that simply increase his damage, make it Armor Piercing, and so on will not be considered. He might use his Pool to do Killing Damage, but with no more Damage Classes than his Strength normally does. He much prefers to confuse and bedazzle opponents with a new trick than to simply pound them into submission.

Powerful as he is, he does have weaknesses. In addition to the possibility of playing on his Psychological Limitations, his new body requires the presence of high levels of magic. If he travels to a time lacking the background magic of the Champions Universe setting, his Powers become unreliable and he will begin to take damage after a day. He is also more vulnerable to magical attacks than he used to be, and is no more protected from esoteric attacks than ordinary mortals (he has no Mental or Power Defense). These provide the most effective ways of bringing him down. Unfortunately, he is likely to develop counters to at least some of these weaknesses, given enough time and experience.

**Campaign Use:** In this form, Teleios is a Mastermind Villain more in the mold of Dr. Destroyer. He is much more interested in world conquest than he used to be, in order to have free reign to experiment. PC's are most likely to encounter him working towards his new goals: gathering resources with which to create cloned armies, altering innocent bystanders to be his slaves, and so on. Time traveling PC's might be called on to thwart his attempts at altering human genetics at some point in the distant past. In combat, he is intended as an opponent for entire

### TELEIOS PLOT SEEDS

In the 31<sup>st</sup> Century, Teleios finds the remains of the Warlord's flying fortress. Within, he discovers remaining samples of "blue boy" tissue. Remembering Moreau's success with Oculon, he decides to see what the tissues will do when grafted to human subjects in this new time, with its much more powerful superbeings.

Teleios remembers the mysterious note that first put him on the path to power. He decides to go back and find out who left those formulae, and perhaps leave his own addendums to them. Can the heroes stop him? Should they even try? After all, it may turn out he is creating his own history. And if he isn't, who is his mysterious benefactor? Even the League does not know.

It is the best of all possible worlds the PC's wake into. They get up, dress, and go about their daily business. The Overlord Teleios has long weeded out imperfection in the human race, and they are grateful as they begin their ascent to the stars. The heroes have some doubts, but surely things are better since the coming of their ruler,

right? How can the villain be defeated when the heroes don't even remember that anything is amiss?

teams or very powerful characters (such as in *Galactic Champions*).

If too powerful for a campaign, remove his Biochemical Wizardry, either due to lack of resources or atrophying skills, and either remove the Intelligent Use Of Powers or replace it with a Multipower. Also drop his STR, DEX, and CON until they are more appropriate and remove the Damage Reduction. If too weak, increase his Physical Characteristics until they are at the appropriate level, and possibly increase the Intelligent Use Of Powers pool. As he is not practicing them as regularly, he shouldn't have his original abilities improved.

**Appearance:** Basically as described in Champions Universe, though more muscular. His eyes glow yellow when he uses his new powers, and he has a tendency to hover about two feet above the ground rather than walking.

## EXAMPLE POWERS FOR INTELLIGENT USE OF POWERS POWER POOL

**Rewriting Genetic Codes:** Using his Heat Vision and extensive knowledge of the human genome, Teleios is able to transform his subjects into physically perfect human specimens with a genetic predisposition to obedience. There are a variety of other transformations that he can cause, but this is one of his favorites.

*Rewriting Genetic Codes:* Major Transform 5d6+1 (Human Into Perfect Human Specimen, normal healing) (80 Active Points); Limited Target (Human; -1/2). Total Cost: 53

**Faster than the Eye Can Follow:** The Superior Man is capable of exceeding his normal Flight speed, able to seemingly move instantly from place to place. If he needs to do so, he can vibrate into intangibility, so this Power does not take the Must Cover Intervening Space Limitation.

*Faster than the Eye Can Follow:* Teleportation 40". Total Cost: 80.

**Breaking the Time Barrier:** By leaving the Earth and pushing his Levitation to the utmost, Teleios is able to match the speed of light. After doing so, he is free to travel through time as well as space, and his brilliant mind gives him great fine control over such trips.

*Breaking the Time Barrier:* FTL Travel (Real Cost: 10) plus Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Point in Time) (60 Active Points); Linked (FTL Travel; -1/4) (Real Cost: 48). Final Cost: 58.

Teleios, the Superior Man



**Teleios, the Superior Man**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
80	STR	70	25-	Lift 1.6 ktons; 16d6 [8]
30	DEX	60	15-	OCV: 10/DCV: 10
40	CON	60	17-	
30	BODY	40	15-	
50	INT	40	19-	PER Roll: 19-
30	EGO	40	15-	ECV: 10
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
30	COM	10	15-	
16	PD	0		Total: 36 PD (36 rPD)
16	ED	8		Total: 36 ED (36 rED)
8	SPD	40		Phases: 2,3,5,6,8,9,11,12
24	REC	0		
80	END	0		
90	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 388**

**Movement:** Running: 20"/40"  
 Leaping: 16"/32"  
 Swimming: 25"/50"  
 Flight: 25"/50"

Cost	Powers	END
200	<i>Intelligent Use Of Powers:</i> Variable Power Pool, 80-point Reserve, No Skill Roll Required (+1), Zero-Phase Change (+1)	var.
180	<i>Biochemical Wizardry:</i> Variable Power Pool, 150-point Reserve; Biochemical Powers Only (-1/4); All Slots OAF Expendable (Difficult to Obtain New Focus, -1 1/4)	var.
40	<i>Engineered Psionic Enhancements:</i> Elemental Control, 80-point Powers	
42	1) <i>Flight (Telekinesis):</i> Flight 25", Position Shift, Usable Underwater (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (1/2 END, +1/4)	3
41	2) <i>Invulnerability (Telekinesis):</i> Force Field (22 PD/22 ED), Protect Carried Items, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2)	0
40	3) <i>Heat Vision (Pyrokinesis):</i> EB 16d6	8
8	<i>Tough Skin:</i> Hardened (+1/4) for 16 PD, 16 ED	0
20	<i>Tough Skin II:</i> Damage Resistance (16 PD/16 ED), Hardened (+1/4)	0
75	<i>Tougher Skin:</i> Armor (20 PD/20 ED), Hardened (+1/4)	0
60	<i>Superhuman Resilience:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
50	<i>Perfect Body:</i> Full Life Support including Immortality	0
28	<i>Fleet-Footed:</i> Running +14" (20" Total)	3

**Talents**

8 Speed Reading (x1000)

**Skills**

5 Navigation (Dimensional, Hyperspace, Space, Temporal) 19-

3 Power: Strength Tricks 19-

157 Original Skills and Talents for Teleios, the Perfect Man

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 957****Total Cost: 1345****250+ Disadvantages**

- 10 Dependence: High Levels Of Background Magic, Takes 2d6 Damage and Powers Gain 11- Activation Roll (Common, 1 Day)
- 15 Distinctive Features: Perfect Superhuman Body (Not Concealable)
- 20 Hunted: Temporal League 11- (As Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Megalomaniac (Common, Total)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Regards Humanity as Fodder for Experiments (Common, Total)
- 10 Reputation: Master Supervillain and Tamperer, 11- (Extreme, Known Only in Some Time Periods)
- 10 Unluck: 2d6
- 10 Vulnerability: 1 1/2x STUN from Magic (Common)
- 980 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 1345**



## The Unchanged

**Background/History:** The Unchanged claims to be the first of the true race of Man born into the world. Whether or not this is true, he is certainly ancient. He sometimes tells stories of pre-history, of times when Takafones still lived, and even older times when the Elder Worm ruled. He was present, in the background, of many major events of history, almost never getting directly involved. Thus, though he is old and experienced, by and large he has personally had little impact on human history.

Because of his desire for a normal life, he has taken many wives and lovers over the centuries, and while he is unable to father children, he has raised many. He has kept track of much of his extended family, and is on good terms with many of them. Some have made a name for themselves, some have remained obscure, but he loves them all, for they are his children and grandchildren. A few know something of his history, though they do not know his current human identity.

He does not know how he came to be immortal, and does not much care. He simply wants to be left in peace to pursue as normal a life as possible. Unfortunately, he has many enemies that wish his secrets. What is sometimes worse, he also has friends that need his help.

**Personality/Motivation:** The Unchanged simply wants to be left alone, for the most part. As of the 21st Century, he has married and adopted two children, and goes by “John Smith.” He does not wish to see his loved ones hurt, though he knows that in a paltry few years he will have to leave them as he has all the others.

While he does put his extended family before all others, he also cares a great deal about what happens to humanity as a whole. He will not turn aside a genuine request for aid, though he will become disgusted if the problem could have been solved just as easily by others. He does not wish to be bothered unless it is something he is uniquely qualified to handle, and in the modern age of wonders, that is quite rare.

After millennia of seeing death and destruction, the Unchanged wishes to cause as little of it as possible. He will not take a sentient life, and encourages others to refrain from doing so. While he understands that they will die some time, he wants them all to have the chance to live and grow, even the vilest. He despairs sometimes of the worst, though.

**Quote:** “All right, who is it this time? V’haan? Takafones? Destroyer? Let’s get this over with.”

**Powers/Tactics:** The Unchanged is, in spite of appearances, a “skilled” character. His Eternity Of Experience Multipower mostly represents his supernatural level of competence. He has studied

and practiced to the point that a Skill Roll is no longer appropriate, as he is sure to succeed to some extent with any he attempts (as well as being able to do things Skills would not allow). This does not mean that he will succeed at a particular endeavor, as other factors are involved. For example, although his Investigation Power (Clairsentience) will certainly function (his “Criminology roll” will succeed), it will only give him a general idea of what happened recently, not all the details, and not enough to short-circuit the adventure. He should be used to advise PC’s and give needed hints, not overshadow them: they should still solve the mystery, defeat the villain, and so on.

In combat, he is likely to start with using Application Of Force, Ancient Martial Skill, and Escaping Main Force. If he finds it difficult to avoid attacks, he may begin using Ready For Blow. However, he is much more likely to attempt to avoid fighting, as he recognizes that he is not up to dealing with most superbeings. He will only get involved if it is necessary to protect lives, even willing to “die” for them if necessary.

His strangest attribute, and the main reason the Temporal League is interested in him, is his uniqueness among the time lines. He only exists in what the League calls the “main line”, and it is difficult to remove him from it. Chronon energy does not move him, and even if history is changed, he is not. Moreover, he remembers all the time lines he has ever been a part of, including any altered one he happens to be in. This makes him a valuable ally to the League, as well as a great curiosity.

**Campaign Use:** The Unchanged could act as something of a mentor for heroes, or a Contact with useful abilities. While he does not have skills in game terms, he does by conception, and his Revealing Secrets Power can be used to allow PC’s to spend experience or even make small changes to their abilities, with GM’s permission. He can also make an appearance when history has been altered, to warn those that may be unaware of it and help to ferret out what has changed.

If he is too powerful for a campaign, reduce the Eternity Of Experience Multipower until at an appropriate level. Most of his other abilities should remain, as they define the character. If he is too weak, add more slots to the Multipower, possibly including some magical spells he has learned or gadgets he has invented. Mainly, though, he should be given more Super Skill style abilities, of which only the barest sample is shown here for space. See Dark Champions for many more examples. If that is still not enough, either increase the Pool itself, give him some abilities and defenses outside of it, or increase his Characteristics.

## UNCHANGED PLOT SEEDS

A stranger approaches the PC’s and tells them that history has changed, that he was their friend and mentor and needs their help. Do they believe him, and in any event, how can they fix things?

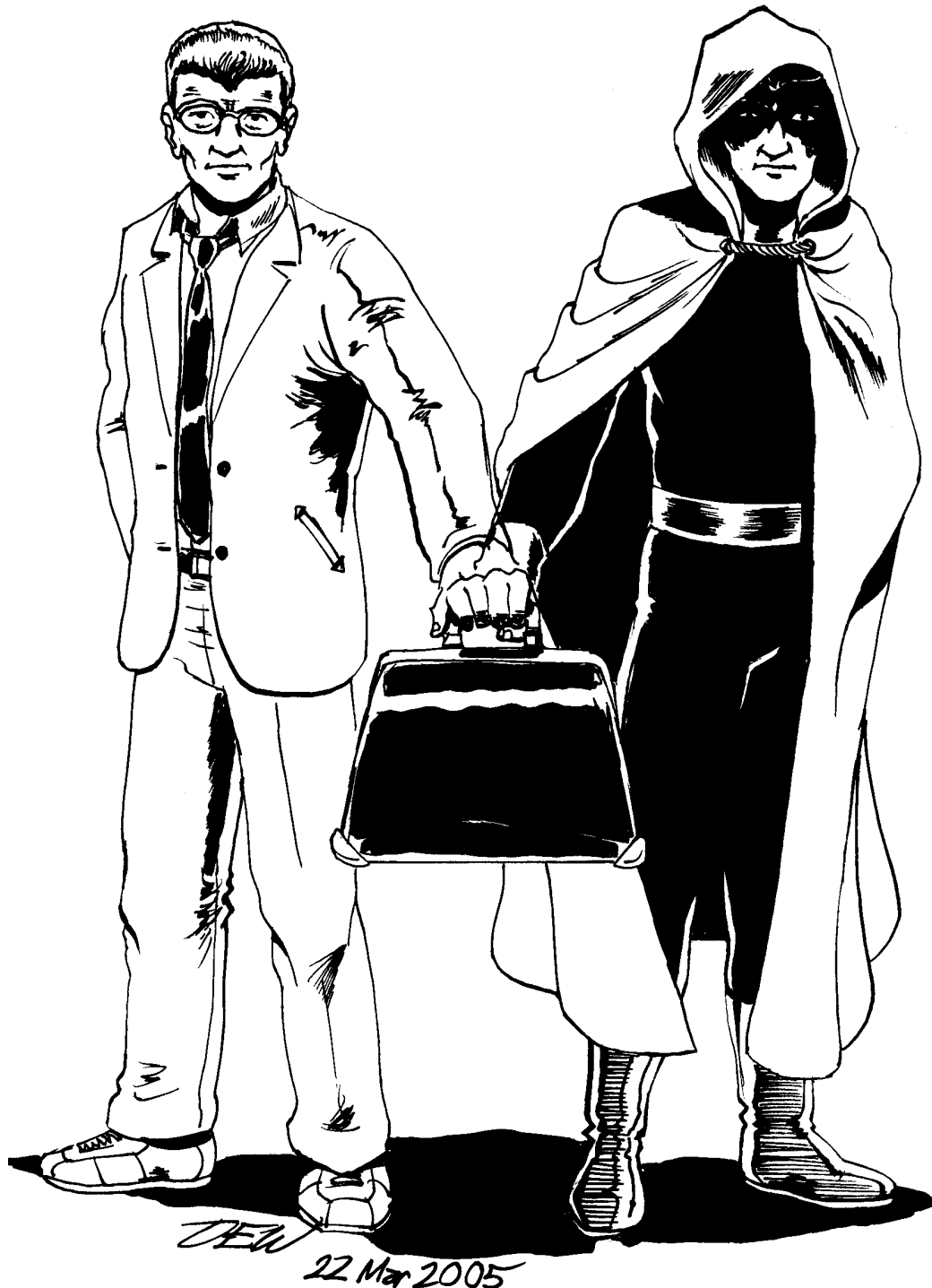
An unassuming CPA has gone mad, withdrawing completely from reality. His doctors can’t help him, and don’t even have an idea of what is wrong. His family approaches the PC’s (especially telepaths or mystics) for help. Can they help him, and will they find out his past while doing so? If they do, will they tell his wife and adopted children?

Dr. Destroyer has revealed to the world that he has found the secret to eternal youth. He magnanimously offers to share this with any nation that overthrows its government and swears allegiance to him. Can the PC’s find the source of this secret and rescue the Unchanged from Destroyer’s clutches? What will be the public’s reaction if they find out what the source of Destroyer’s discovery was, and what happened to it?

If he must have actual Skills, they should be bought to a level where they will not fail often, even at penalties, perhaps by buying Skill Levels with the Limitation, Only To Counter Penalties. Also, see Luck for options that can make it less likely that he will fail a roll. He should not have Skills at so high a roll that he can automatically overwhelm anyone in a Skill Versus Skill contest: the idea is that he does not fail rolls because of his long experience, but he is still able to be outdone by other characters and circumstances beyond his control.

## The Unchanged

**Appearance:** The Unchanged is a small, dark-complexioned man, apparently in his early thirties. He wears his hair short as of 2004, and is clean-shaven. He has brown hair and eyes. Normally, he is very nondescript, and prefers it that way, but is able to give an aura of great dignity and power when he wishes. As John Smith, he is a stereotypical CPA, with thick glasses, a somewhat rumpled suit and tie, and ink spots on his fingers after work. He maintains this because it seems to be what people expect, though he can overdo it. When acting with heroes, he sheds this demeanor, dressing in a gray robe that obscures both his face and his build and makes him much more imposing.



## The Unchanged

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
30	INT	20	15-	PER Roll: 15-
30	EGO	40	15-	ECV: 10
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 8 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
40	END	0		
40	STUN	0		

Total Characteristic Cost: 178

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Leaping: 4"/8"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
120	<i>Eternity Of Experience:</i> Multipower, 120-point Reserve	—
4u	1) <i>Application of Force:</i> +40 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); No Figured Characteristics (-½)	0
2u	2) <i>Ancient Martial Skill:</i> +12 DEX; No Figured Characteristics (-½)	0
2u	3) <i>Escaping Main Force:</i> Force Field (8 PD/8 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
6u	4) <i>Ready For Blow:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%	0
2u	5) <i>Tumbling:</i> Flight 10", Position Shift, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Must Begin and End Phase on Ground (-½)	0
3u	6) <i>Information Gathering:</i> Telepathy 4d6 (Human), MegaArea (1" = 10 km; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Area Of Effect (10" Radius, +1), Continuous (+1), Cumulative (96 Points, +1), Fully Invisible Power Effects (+1); Extra Time (20 Minutes, -2½)	0
2u	7) <i>Investigation:</i> Retrocognitive Clairsentience (Sight Group, Normal Hearing, and Normal Smell), Mobile Perception Point (up to 6" per Phase), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Extra Time (5 Minutes, Character May Take No Other Actions, -2¼)	0
2u	8) <i>Reasoning:</i> +60 INT; Concentration (0 DCV Throughout, -1), No Conscious Control (Only Effects Cannot be Controlled, -1)	0
3u	9) <i>Great Orator:</i> +30 PRE	0
1u	10) <i>Ascent:</i> Clinging (Normal STR)	0

- 1u 11) *Revealing Secrets:* Major Transform 1d6 (standard effect: 3 points) (Sentient Being into More Competent Sentient Being, Healed by Not Using New Abilities, or by Normal Healing if Result is Higher Points Than the Target [Experience Needs to be Spent to be Permanent]), Improved Target Group (Any More or Differently Skilled Character, +½); Extra Time (1 Day, Character May Take No Other Actions, -4¼), Limited Target (Sentient Beings Only, -¼) 2
- 5u 12) *Friends Everywhere:* Summon 16 200-point Creatures, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼), Expanded Class of Beings (Any Family Member, +¼), Loyal (+½); No Conscious Control (Only Effects Cannot be Controlled, -1), Arrives Under Own Power (-½) 5
- 17 *Immune to Historical Changes:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (Current Timeline), Trigger (When History is Changed, +¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); No Conscious Control (-2)
- 18 *Melding of Selves:* Duplication (430-point Form), Easy Recombination (0-Phase Action at Full DCV); No Conscious Control (-2), Only to Merge With Alternate Self (-2), Linked (Immune to Historical Changes, -¼)
- 16 *Unchanged Forever:* Healing 1 BODY, Can Heal Limbs, Resurrection (Dies if Killed by Certain Higher Powers), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time (Regeneration-Only) (1 Day, -2¾), Self Only (-½) 0
- 30 *Unchanging:* Power Defense (20 Points), 2x Hardened (+½) 0
- 15 *Unchanging:* LS (Immunity: All Terrestrial Diseases and Biowarfare Agents, Longevity: Immortal) 0

## Perks

- 3 Anonymity

Total Powers &amp; Skill Cost: 252

Total Cost: 430

## 200+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Strange Aura (Not Concealable, Unusual Senses)
- 25 DNPC: Children 8- (Incompetent, Unaware, x2 DNPCs)
- 15 DNPC: Wife 8- (Normal, Unaware)
- 15 Hunted: Forces of Dr. Destroyer 8- (As Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 15 Hunted: Takafones 8- (Mo Pow, Kill)

- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code Against Killing (Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Loves Family and Humanity as a Whole (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Wishes For an Ordinary Life (Very Common, Moderate)
- 10 Reputation: Immortal Being from Ancient Times, 14- (Known Only in Mystic Circles)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret ID (John Smith) (Frequently, Major)
- 80 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 430**

**Dr. Erika Germain**

**Background/History:** For Dr. Erika Germain, life was good. She had always been intrigued by the work of Andre Washington. When his data and prototypes relating to chronon radiation were taken, her interest in his work landed her the lead in Duchess Industries' Time Branch. Her list of successes over the next six years was impressive. Aside from the time machine itself, she and her people developed the temporal stability field, crucial to the plan of altering history. With it, the agents remained unaffected by their own work, and data could be transferred to new timelines via "safe boxes". She was also responsible for planning out strategic historical changes. Dr. Germain was the most powerful member of Duchess aside from the Chairman. She had plans to change even that, and soon. Then...

For Dr. Erika Germain, life was unsatisfying. She had been interested in cybernetics since a bad knee injury years before, one she had never recovered from. While a well-respected member of mega-corporation Duchess Industries, she knew she should be doing better. Still, the pay was good, and the subjects plentiful, so she bided her time. Then, in 2056, she found a small container on her desk, covered in electronics she did not recognize. Opening it, she found a standard data pad. It responded to her own password, so she read through the contents.

The pad detailed work she had never done, but used her speech patterns and personal shorthand. It detailed historical events she knew nothing of, so she thought at first it was some form of fiction, but soon she found the data on time travel. The more she thought about it, the more she thought it might actually work. More importantly, she realized that history had been changed, and in such a way as to deny her the power she craved. Unfortunately, she needed more information and funding to develop the process, to put things right, and doubted that Duchess or anyone else would be willing to give it to her. Secretly, she has been making plans, slowly gaining what she needs. Eventually, she will have everything that has been taken from her, and nothing will stand in her way.

**Personality/Motivation:** Dr. Germain cares nothing for others, only for herself and her own power and comfort. As a cybernetic surgeon, she has developed a reputation for lack of scruple in her field, something difficult to do in the 2050's. The time travel data, which she still does not fully understand, is a means to an end for her, the restoration of her proper place in the world. She well knows of the billions that will be killed or harmed by this, but it simply does not matter to her.

**Quote:** "Does that hurt? Well, just think of it as the price for helping others, which is to say, me."

**Powers/Tactics:** Dr. Germain does not engage in combat herself, having no ability for it. She has great resources to place between herself and her enemies, or to pursue various goals that require physical force. In addition to Duchess, she also has a small but growing number of troops, kept loyal to her by micro-explosives planted in their skulls by her while she was performing other procedures.

Due to a combination of her own inventions, the support of Duchess Industries, and the notes from her other selves, Germain has access to a higher level of technology than most of the world. She primarily uses this advantage to outfit her troops with more advanced cybernetics, though she also has somewhat better computer systems and software for her own use. She can also have whatever bits and pieces of futuristic tech the GM feels is necessary and appropriate.

**DR. GERMAIN  
PLOT SEEDS**

A new group of cybernetically enhanced toughs have blown into the PC's home town. Their firepower and reflexes are of unknown and advanced design. Who is supplying them, and why?

Cyberspace has been primarily the domain of an elite group. Now, technology is hitting the market from Duchess Industries that may make them obsolete. How is this being manufactured, and what does Duchess stand to gain by giving the ability of skillful hackers to ordinary citizens?

Germain has gathered enough information and resources to begin the construction of a working time machine. She begins having the prototypes she needs stolen from their developers. Can the PC's put together the pieces before Germain does?

**Campaign Use:** Germain is primarily meant for games based around time travel, though she may also be used in CyberHERO campaigns with a twist. She is a selfish woman who has devoted her life to personal power, and is slowly working towards undoing the Temporal League's work. If she succeeds in recreating her former self's work, she will then begin making strategic changes in the timeline, probably starting with turning her past self to its study. She sees herself replacing the Dr. Washington she has read about in the notes, giving herself a significant head start over what she had previously.

Germain is not intended to physically confront the PC's, so if she is too weak for a campaign it is most appropriate to increase what she has access to. Possibly, she has new resources from fairly normal means (including theft, espionage, and assassination), or because of limited success with the time travel technology. This could lead to an increase in either her Wealth or Advanced Technology Perks, or she might gain actual Followers of significant power.

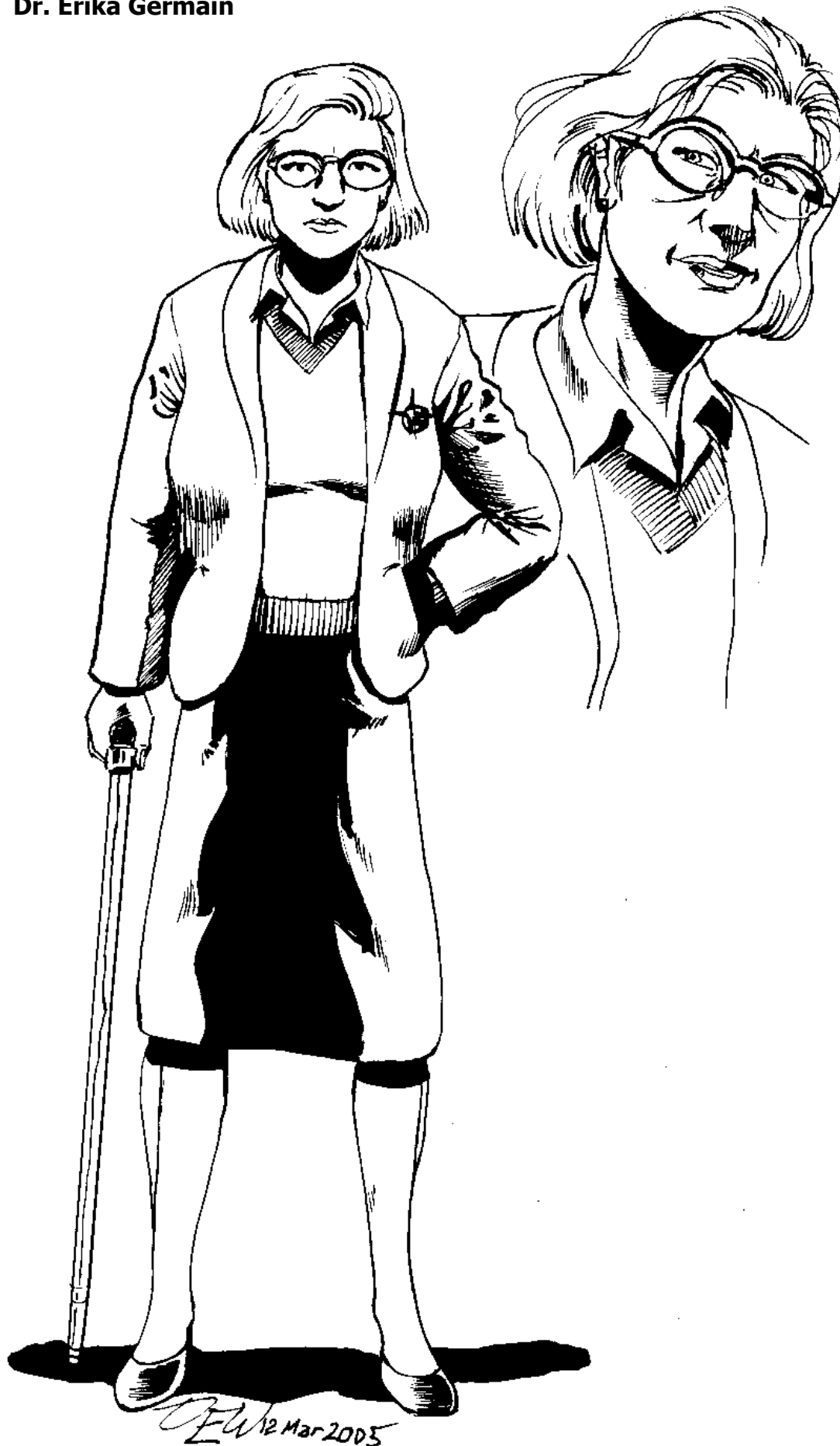
The most appropriate place for a personal confrontation with her is cyberspace, since she has access to powerful computer systems and software. She may eventually give herself cybernetic enhancements as a campaign progresses, allowing her to confront the heroes physically, but this should be toward the end of (or at least a significant change in) her career. Knowing the PC's are coming for her eventually, she would want to be prepared.

To make her weaker, reduce her standing at Duchess. She may have been distracted lately by her new experiments, or perhaps she was caught siphoning funds for unknown purposes and is being watched carefully. Also reduce her level of Wealth, and possibly her Computer Link to the Military. Finally, remove the Advanced Technology Perk.

The Temporal League is currently unaware of Germain's discovery. If they ever find out about it, they will certainly take careful note of her activities. She knows this, as the organization was started in her previous self's time line, so is very careful to cover her tracks, even from history.

**Appearance:** Erika Germain is a severe looking woman in her early forties. She is in good physical shape, wears reading glasses most of the time (her eyes are brown), and has very short blonde hair. She wears business attire exclusively, unless in surgery, though she will wear a lab coat over it when working.





**Dr. Erika Germain**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
23	INT	16	14-	PER Roll: 14-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
2	PD	0		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 22**

**Movement:** Running: 4"/8"  
Leaping: 2"/4"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

**Cost Powers END**

- 9 *Neural Interface:* Rapid (x100,000) with Sight Group; Concentration, (0 DCV Throughout, Character is Totally Unaware of Nearby Events, -1½), Only for Computerized Information (-1) 0
- 22 *Message From Another Life:* Retrocognitive Clairsentience (Sight Group), Alternate Timelines, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); OAF (Datapad, -1), Retrocognition/Alternate Timelines Only (-1), Only to See Notes from Other Selves (-1) 0

**Perks**

- 15 Advanced Tech (see text)
- 3 Computer Link: Duchess Industries Systems
- 3 Computer Link: US Military Systems (Covert Access)
- 5 Fringe Benefit: Membership: Duchess Industries
- 10 Money: Wealthy

**Talents**

- 3 Absolute Range Sense
- 3 Absolute Time Sense
- 5 Eidetic Memory

**Skills**

- 1 Bureaucratics 8-
- 10 Computer Programming (Hacking and Computer Security, Personal Computers, Artificial Intelligence, Cyberspace, Mainframes and Supercomputers, Military Computers) 15-
- 3 Deduction 14-
- 3 Electronics 14-
- 7 Inventor 16-
- 3 Paramedics 14-
- 3 PS: Surgeon 14-
- 3 Security Systems 14-
- 2 Systems Operation (Medical Sensors) 14-
- 3 Scholar
- 1 1) KS: Alternate Histories 11-
- 1 2) KS: Duchess Industries 11-
- 2 3) KS: History 14-
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Computer Engineering 14-
- 4 2) SS: Cybernetic Engineering 16-
- 1 3) SS: Mathematics 11-
- 1 4) SS: Temporal Engineering 11-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 131****Total Cost: 153****75+ Disadvantages**

- 5 Distinctive Features: Neural Interface (Easily Concealed)
- 15 Hunted: Duchess Industries 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, PC is Very Easy to Find, Watching)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Lamé, Needs a Cane to Walk (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Wishes to Restore "Proper" Timeline (Uncommon, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy and Powerhungry (Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: Ruthless and Unprincipled Cybernetics Researcher for Duchess Industries, 11- (Extreme, Small Group)
- 10 Social Limitation: Secret: Pursuing Change to the Timeline (Occasionally, Major)
- 3 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 153**

**Qliphothic Tracker**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [4]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
30	INT	20	15-	PER Roll: 15-
30	EGO	40	15-	ECV: 10
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
0	COM	-5	9-	
10	PD	6		Total: 10 PD (10 rPD)
10	ED	6		Total: 10 ED (10 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
40	END	0		
40	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 177**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Leaping: 4"/8"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
90	<i>Warping Reality:</i> Multipower, 90-point Reserve	—
9u	1) <i>Finding Prey:</i> Mind Scan 6d6 (Human), Transdimensional (Any Dimension, +1), Cumulative (144, +1)	9
9u	2) <i>Warping Minds:</i> Ego Attack 6d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
9u	3) <i>Sensory Overload:</i> Sight, Hearing, Mental, Smell/Taste, and Touch Groups Flash 5d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼), AVLD (Ego Defense, +¾)	4
9u	4) <i>Travel Beyond:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Dimension, Any Location), 64x Increased Weight, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	3
9u	5) <i>Time Has No Meaning:</i> Extra-Dimensional Movement (Any Point in Time), 64x Increased Weight	9
9u	6) <i>Space Has No Meaning:</i> Teleportation 7", 64x Increased Mass, Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼), MegaScale (10 km, Can Be Scaled Down 1km (+¾))	4
9u	7) <i>No Substance:</i> Desolidification (Affected by Magic and Dimensional Attacks), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible, +1)	4
10	<i>Qliphothic Flesh:</i> Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED)	0
45	<i>Qliphothic Form:</i> Full Life Support	0
14	<i>Qliphothic Mind:</i> Mental Defense (20 points)	0
10	<i>Qliphothic Form:</i> Power Defense (10 points)	0
30	<i>Tentacled Horror:</i> Stretching 6", Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); No	

Velocity Damage (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼)	0
12 <i>Entwining Tentacles:</i> +20 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Only For Grabbing & Squeezing (-1), No Figured Characteristics (-½)	0
5 <i>Tentacled Horror:</i> Extra Limbs (10)	0

**Talents**

3 Absolute Time Sense
3 Bump Of Direction
2 Trackless Stride

**Skills**

16 +8 OCV with Grab
5 Rapid Attack (HTH)
3 Tracking 15-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 311****Total Cost: 488****75+ Disadvantages**

20 Vulnerability: 2x Effect from Dispel Summon (Common)
393 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 488****Qliphothic Tracker**

**Background/History:** These creatures are sometimes summoned to track and capture a specific victim and bring him to the summoner, but sometimes appear for their own inexplicable purposes or those of more powerful Qliphothic entities. The Tracker appears as a formless center mass with several eyes floating in it, with ten or more tentacles extending from the body in random spots. When using its Warping Reality Multipower, it becomes almost painful to look at, as space warps about it and its target.

When on the hunt, it "sniffs" through space and other dimensions for its designated prey, and then moves to his general location. It first attacks with its many tentacles, resorting to other powers if the prey or his allies proves too powerful for this attack. It is expert at using the tentacles all at once, using the Sweep Maneuver to capture as many as five opponents at a time. Once its tentacles are filled, it will return to its starting point, holding and doing damage to all it has captured.

All Qliphothic creatures are of some interest to the League, since they ignore the normal laws of causality (even more than the League and other time travelers do). However, the Trackers are of particular interest, as they tend to roam time and space and kidnap people from history. Being allowed to take one person of their choice seems to be the standard payment for a service.

**QLIPHOTHIC HORRORS**

For general information on Qliphothic creatures, see *Monsters*, *Minions*, & *Marauders*.

## USING TARAVANE

Taravane has been designed to be easily integrated into any fantasy campaign, be it Swords and Sorcery or Epic High Fantasy. The human-only laws, along with the lack of genre-specific information (such as spells) and minimal references to the events outside the city walls mean that with a few name changes, the city can easily be added to your current campaign. Taravane has also been designed to be useful regardless of what system you use. When necessary, notes regarding the integration of Taravane into your campaign have been added.

# The City of Taravane by Parker Emerson

Welcome to the city of Taravane (pronounced TĀR-ah-vān), a human metropolis on the Great Sea, a city of intrigue and conflict, a home to many, and a port-of-call to more. Known as the City Behind the Cliffs, Taravane can serve as both a center of adventure, and as a starting off point for greater exploits.

## The History of Taravane

Originally, Taravane was a small pirate haven called Hogan's Rest. The strong winds and slow currents a mile off the coast put Hogan's Rest in the middle of the coastal shipping lanes, while the high-cliffed harbor made it both easily defensible and a safe harbor for ships. Hogan's Rest swelled in size, until it boasted a permanent population of over fifty thousand. Yet with the death of the legendary pirate Targus the Tall, merchant guilds and bordering nations were emboldened to end the threat Hogan's Rest posed to passing ships.

Just over a hundred years ago, a fleet of ships and an army of soldiers laid siege to Hogan's Rest, and the citizens of the city surrendered after two days of bloody fighting. The city was turned into a military protectorate, and renamed Taravane after the Admiral's nephew. The very reasons that Taravane appealed to raiders made it appealing to merchant vessels. With the promise of a safe harbor against the threat of the constant storm of the Great Sea, Taravane prospered quickly, and within ten years its population nearly doubled.

Unfortunately, old habits die hard, and the independent nature of the people of Taravane remained strong. The old rulers of Taravane looked at their newfound riches and understood the value of legitimacy, but they felt the burden of taxes and tariffs, and questioned the reasoning behind being a military protectorate.

Ten years after the fall of Hogans' Rest, a local ship-builder by the name of Garus Trenchild orchestrated a swift and bloodless midnight coup, and by morning had imprisoned the Governor of Taravane, along with the few loyal military leaders. Criers rode throughout the town, telling of Trenchild's rise to power, and of his promise to rule the city fairly for one year, when a more stable government would take over. Trenchild had been well-liked in the days of Hogan's Rest, and the people of Taravane quickly accepted their new leader.

Worried about a return to piracy, the guilds and nearby kingdoms were initially outraged by the uprising in Taravane. Yet as months went on, and Taravane strictly enforced a policy of turning away known pirates and allowed merchant ships to dock in the harbor (in truth,

with lower tariffs), the sovereignty of Taravane as an independent city-state was eventually acknowledged by all the coastal powers.

True to his word, Garus Trenchild stepped down one year after True Taravane Eve (as it came to be called), yet was quickly elected as High Guildmaster, and subsequently as High Magistrate. The city has retained the same government outlined by Trenchild, and has remained independent since that fateful evening.

The city has continued to grow, and now boasts a population of a little over 150,000, and exists peacefully as an independent city state and commercial hub.

## THE OUTLAWING OF NON-HUMANS

The following section outlines the eventual outlawing of all non-humans in the city of Taravane. If your campaign doesn't have any races other than humans, feel free to ignore it. (Or change all the non-humans to humans and use it as a way to justify the slightly xenophobic nature of Taravanians. If your campaign does use other races, the following section uses orcs, dwarves and elves, but these can easily be changed to whichever races exist in your campaign.

However, just under fifty years ago, three unrelated events would change the city of Taravane forever. In the late winter, when storms ravaged the Great Sea and the Taravanian harbor is filled with stranded ships, the grown daughter of a wealthy noble was attacked and murdered by a group of orcish sailors on leave. A huge outcry resulted, and the orcs were sentenced to death. A week later, however, a group of dwarves got in a drunken brawl with some locals, and while no blame was placed by the law on either party, the brawl resulted in a fire, which burned down a large part of the city, and in which many citizens were killed. And just as the city began to rebuild, an elven mage had a psychotic fit, and in the throws of insanity began killing indiscriminately (including his close friends).

In response to these tragedies, the predominantly human public demanded change, and the High Council responded to the people. One the first day of Spring, the High Council declared that all non-humans would be outlawed from the city, upon penalty of death. All non-humans were evicted, and their property

artwork by Matt Benya



confiscated. Angry about the way they were being treated, many non-humans fought back, which only reassured the people and the High Council they were doing the right thing. A year and a half later, with the coming of the winter storms, bowing to pressure from many merchant guilds, the High Council allowed non-humans into Docktown, however, they are not allowed to own property or run businesses – they may simply seek lodging, and trade in the Open Market.

## Geography of Taravane

On the coast of the Great Sea sits Hogan's Harbor, a large bay set into the mountainous cliffs that run for miles in each direction. The mountains to the east make access to the harbor by land, and to the city, difficult at best. In the summer, Taravane is accessible by a small number of treacherous passes that are only navigable by a skilled guide. In the winter, Taravane is all but cut off from the outside world by land. Strong north winds to the west, coupled with light currents, create a popular trade route, which makes Taravane a major port of call, where ships make repairs and restock their supplies. The city is set into a depression in the south cliffs, and the short stone walls that surround the city are an almost purely decorative feature.

The weather in Taravane reflects its location on the Great Sea – strong weather throughout the season. In winter, the great storms that ravage the Great Sea also affect Taravane, filling the city with snow and gusty winds. Come spring, Taravane is sunny and warm, with cool breezes off the sea making the weather perfect nearly every day. Summer in Taravane is intensely hot, such that nearly a third of the ships arriving in the summer bear ice for the city. And the fall is a rainy and windy season that weakens the roofs just enough to make the winter snows that much more unbearable.

The city itself is divided into five districts, each of which is separated by high stone walls, through which there are one or two gates (and generally a few well-hidden doors). In relative order from north to south, the districts are Docktown, the New City, the Old City, the High Quarter, and the Scholar's District.

At the northernmost point of the city lies Docktown, arguably the most wild and dangerous part of Taravane. Docktown is a place of constant flux, where most of the cities trade occurs, at least on a street level. Frequently seen as the seedier neighborhood of Taravane, and it is, Docktown is generally exempt from many of the decrees of the High Council. Non-humans are allowed in Docktown, as are gambling establishments and brothels. Docktown is filled with inns and taverns and shops, many of which

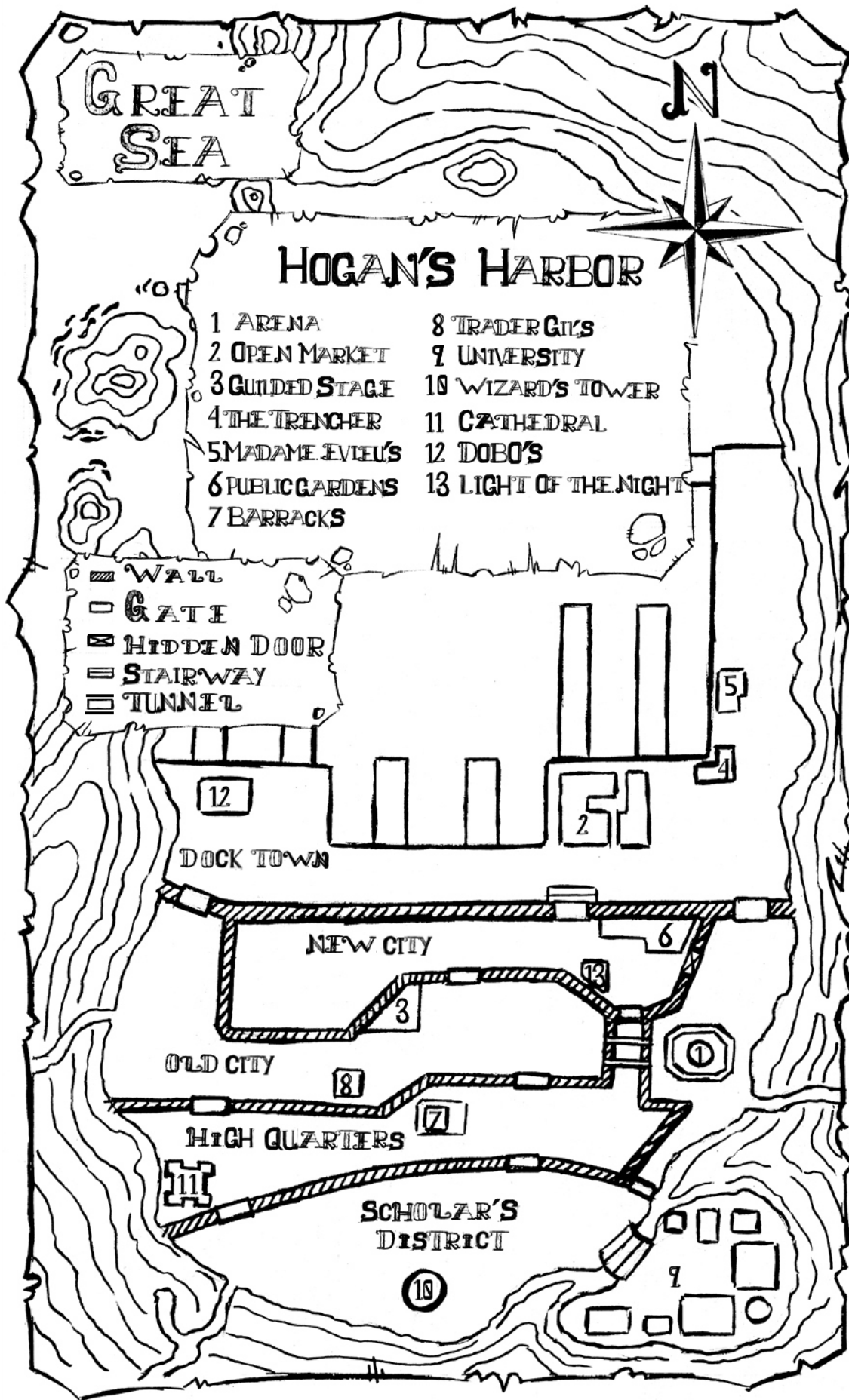
cater to sailors, yet much of which also serves the locals. The architecture of the district is a menagerie ranging from old structures originally built in the days of Hogan's Rest to new palaces built by wealthy merchants not established enough to buy property in the New City. Docktown is connected by one well-guarded gate to the New City and by two to the Old City.

Built in the ashes of the "Blaze of Madness," the New City is the wealthiest part of Taravane. Filled with stone palaces and apartments, the streets are generally packed with the horses and carriages of the nobles and wealthy merchants who make their home there. To buy property in the New City, the transfer of the deed must be signed by three nobles, which generally involves a large number of favors and bribes. Some merchants have been blacklisted, and as such are forced to hold onto less than desirable property since they cannot move, yet even a cramped apartment in the New City is seen as such a mark of power that any merchant would choose it over a palace anywhere else. The district is best known for its gardens, as many of the gated palaces employ entire legions of gardeners. The New City is connected by one gate to the Docktown (which is highly patrolled, and you aren't allowed in without a summons unless you live there) and by another guarded gate to the Old City.

Appropriately named, the Old City is the section of Taravane that originally comprised Hogan's Rest – indeed, it is frequently referred to as Hogan's Rest. Generally consisting of dilapidated structures of both wood and stone, the Old City is where many low level administrators and poor-but-established merchants make their home. A plethora of dead-ends, alleyways and twisting avenues make this a very difficult section of town to navigate if you're not familiar with it (generally, some sort of appropriate skill check is required to navigate through the district quickly), and some sections of the Old City are only accessible through buildings. The Old City has a gate to the New City, two to Docktown, two to the High Quarter and one the Scholar's District.

High up into the cliffsides sits the High Quarter. It is here in the smallest district that most of the administration meets, including the High Council chamber. Most guild headquarters are located here, and the representatives of many neighboring nations have residences in the High Quarter. The district boasts an architectural level of quality second only to the New City, and boasts some of the tallest structures in Taravane. Like the New City, all the streets are paved in the High Quarter, not just the main thoroughfares. The High Quarter is home to the High Magistrates palace, one of the nicer estates in the city and the nicest outside of the New City. The



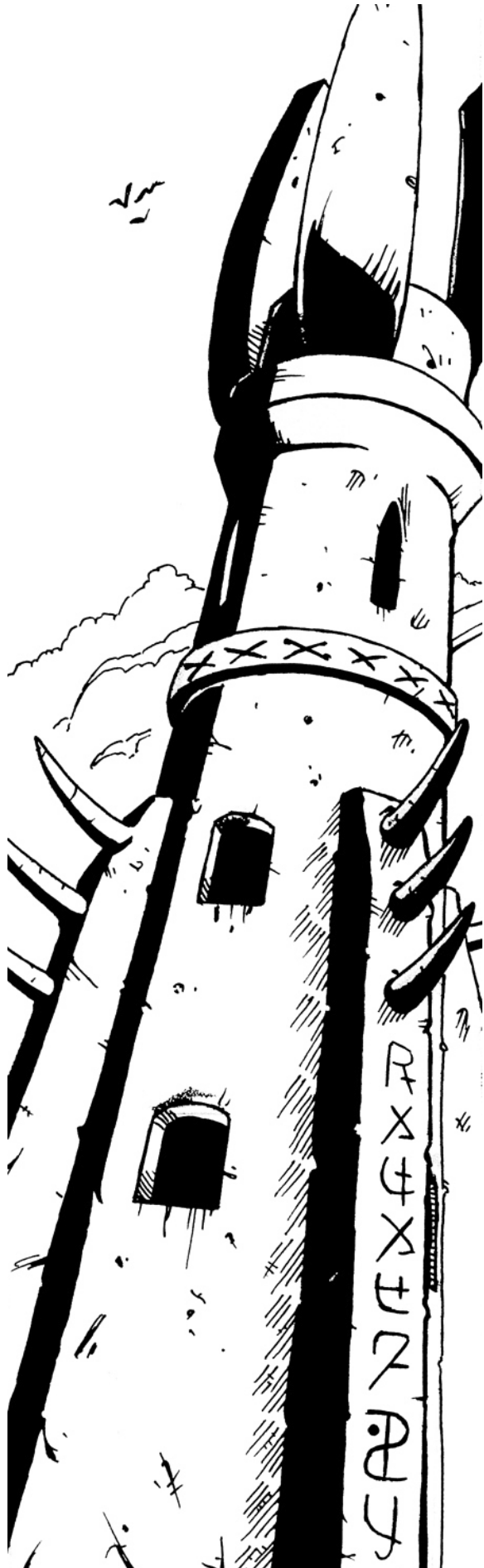


High Quarter has gates to Old City and the Scholar's District, and one gate to the New City.

Set to the west of the rest of the city is the Scholar's District, a sprawling section of town dominated by the Taravane University, a small but noted school of learning, since unlike many other universities the Taravansians do not impose any sort of cultural dogma upon the academics at the university. The Scholar's District is also home to the Wizard's Tower, the closest thing to a wizard's guild that exists in Taravane. Due the occasional magic run amok, and the distance from the rest of the city, the Scholar's District's low property values have resulted in large buildings, and to the allowance of space between the buildings. Unlike the rest of the city, the Scholar's District does not adhere to any concept of night time – whereas Docktown and the New City come alive at night, and the Old City and the High Quarter all but shutdown, the Scholar's District continues to function at night the same as it does during the day – shops are still open, and people still walk the streets going about their “daily” business. The Scholar's District is connected by two gates to the Old City and by one to the High Quarter.

### Government and Military

The City Behind the Cliffs is ruled by a High Council, and each Councilor achieves his position differently depending on the seat he occupies. Overall, there are ten High Councilors (frequently referred to simply as Councilors) – three Nobles, two High Guildmasters, the City Warden, the Bishop, the University Chancellor, and two Publicans. Frequently, prominent diplomats are asked to sit in on meetings and contribute, although they are not afforded a vote. The High Council elects from within itself a High Magistrate, who acts both as representative of the Council, and as speaker for Taravane when visiting dignitaries wish to meet the leader of the city. While the High Council makes all policies for Taravane and only the High Council can declare war on another nation (which has never happened), the High Magistrate is the final court of appeal for any crimes or conflicts. Any tie in voting between the High Council results in a decision by the High Magistrate.





Publican

The three Noble Councilor seats are open only to royalty (titled citizens descended from Hogan's Rest's ruling pirates), and are generally elected from within the noble houses (an election may be called by any noble at any time, but a noble may only call for an election once a year). Only one Noble Councilor from any house may be elected. There are two High Guildmaster seats on the council, each filled by a representative elected from the heads of all recognized Taravane guilds. The City Warden is the head of the Taravanian military and city watch, and he appoints his own successor (or if he dies without appointing one, his position is appointed by the High Magistrate). The Bishop is the head of the Cathedral, and the University Chancellor the head of the University. Every spring one of the two Publican seats goes up for election in the city, with all citizens being able to vote. While anyone can run, a high measure of popularity is required and the incumbent almost always wins.

The city is protected by both the Guard and the Watch. The Guard is composed of 500 soldiers whose job it is to protect the city and the harbor. There are 480 soldiers and twenty officers, but in times of conflict there are over a thousand conscripts who can be called upon, who meet to train on the third and fourth days of each season. The Guard reports to Captain Rylie. The Watch is broken down into two groups the Watch and the Night Watch. The Watch is about



Captain Rylie

a 1,000 city guards, and the Night Watch is about 1,500. Each has its own captain, and all three Captains report to the City Warden. Taravane also has a navy consisting of a number of the faster fishing vessels that can be retrofitted in short notice and staffed with conscripts (the fishing ships belong to Taravanians who take a monthly allowance in return for the promise of their ship if Taravane is attacked by sea).

The laws of the city are pretty straight forward. Don't murder, steal, or damage. Gambling is allowed in a personal form (such as dice or card games), but gambling houses must pay a percentage to the city and may only operate in Docktown. Prostitution is legal in Docktown, and nowhere else. Slavery is illegal in Taravane, and any slaves who set foot on land are immediately granted asylum and freedom. However, the city does not interfere with slave ships in the harbor, and respects the rights of the captain of the ship.

## Religion

Due to the pirate history of the city, Taravanians are not very religious, yet they are notoriously superstitious. Most citizens carry fetishes and good luck charms, much to the chagrin of the established clergy. In the High Quarter there is a magnificent cathedral that practices the more orthodox religion of the region, and the cathedral maintains a few smaller churches in each of the other districts. The cathedral is run by the Bishop Dagias Artholomew. Ironically, the established church is

supported by the vice taxes – the church receives one third of all taxes on gambling and prostitution.

As an international port of call, Taravane has a large transient cleric population – ministers of the faith from all over the world stopping in the city to transfer to another ship frequently end up making the city their home in an attempt to serve the locals. There are also a large number of pilgrims in the city at any given time, traveling from their homes to the mecca that they seek. Characters in search of a priest of any given religion should have no trouble finding them.

The superstitions of the Taravanians are many, and reflect the diverse heritage of a city founded by raiders and outcasts. Most Taravanians, especially those in the Old City, will not start a fire inside a tavern or an inn, but will instead light things from existing fires, or bring the fire inside from another source. Taravanian locals try to avoid walking alone when dressed in fine clothes; not just for safety from thieves – they walk in pairs or groups even through crowded streets in the middle of the day. It's also considered ill luck to bite a coin for authenticity outside (in the Open Market, there are special huts constructed just for this purpose).

## Important Events

A city as cosmopolitan as Taravane, and with immigrants from all reaches of the world, is home to all manner of celebrations of all cultures. It's a good bet that any given holiday will be celebrated somewhere in the city. But the City Behind the Cliffs is also home to many of its own celebrations, festivals, and days of remembrance.

On the first day of winter when no ships set sail from the harbor, Taravanians gather in taverns and inns and the homes of friends to celebrate Warm Embers Eve, to acknowledge that winter is finally here. Warm Embers Eve happens within the first week or two of winter, and when autumn draws to a close, children will sit in the harbor and wait to see if no ships will leave. When the sun sets with all the ships still harbored, the fires are built high, the thickest mead is brought out, and families and friends celebrate the coming winter and say goodbye to true warmth.

The first ship to sail from the harbor after the first day of spring is dowsed in a shower of flower petals and ribbons, as Taravanians gather at the watch-towers on the cliffs to send them off in style. Then two parades head back from the watch-towers towards the Cathedral to hear a special sermon from the Bishop.

Like most communities, Taravane celebrates the natural holiday – the solstices and the beginning of seasons. However, there are a few

slight differences. Taravane doesn't celebrate the first day of spring, but instead they party on the last night of winter by staying in, abstaining from drink and eating a large meal with family and friends and giving thanks for surviving another winter. On the day after the summer solstice, Taravanians dress in dark colors and spend the day without indulgences like music and tasty foods.

In late spring, Taravanians vote for their new publican on the anniversary of the independence of Taravane. After the town votes and the new publican is announced, the city celebrates with dancing and fireworks (and drinking, of course). This day is known as True Taravane Eve.

When the autumn winds set in, and the ground gets to cold for the dead to be buried in the ground and must instead be buried at sea, the City Behind the Cliffs spends a day in remembrance of lost friends and relatives. On the Day of the Lost, people do not talk to their friends or family for an entire day. Anyone they consider themselves close to, they ignore, as if they weren't there. Many fights frequently break out when people talk to others they don't consider themselves close to, and offend them because the other thought the bond was stronger. Talking to one's friends or family on the Day of the Lost will generally incur the disdain of anyone watching.

## Notable Locations

While the most frequent patrons of the Arena are the poor and destitute, the small coliseum does attract wealthier citizens during festivals and for more famous death sentences (Taravane has a policy of all sentences of death shall be carried out in an entertaining manner for the people). Located in the Old City and filled with pits, traps and ample seating, the Arena is capable of hosting all forms of gladiatorial combat save for naval reenactments and larger battles.

Like all major cities, Taravane boasts a loud and lively bazaar where traders the world over can attempt to buy or sell anything they're looking for. The Open Market in Docktown is nothing special as bazaars go, although for a human city it has a higher than normal representation of other races, as the Open Market is the cheapest form of entertainment for those confined to Docktown. Tents and stalls fill a large enclosed area in which every domestic good, and quite a few exotic ones, are up for sale or trade. Pickpockets roam free, and the Watch has trouble keeping crime in check in the Open Market, as wild and convoluted a place as it is.

When the newest play arrives in Taravane, it is quickly purchased by Arivian Dale, the owner and manager of The Guilded Stage, and goes up

within the week. Built against the wall that separates the Old City and New City, the Guilded Stage is famous in Taravane for being the only theater that offers special showings to the residents of the New City – extra guards, catered food, extra fires in winter, and of course, extra admission – which makes it the theater most recommended to visitors to the city.

For a wild night of drinking, the most infamous tavern in all of Taravane is Trenchild's Trencher, in the heart of Docktown. Owned by Thelius Binden, and run by his sister Anaelia, the Trencher (as it is affectionately known) is packed by sunset almost every night. Performers perform there every night, both musicians and entertainers. Only two blocks from Madame Evieu's, Trenchild's Trencher is the best place for older boys to work up their courage to visit the Madame. Grizzled sailors and tired locals pack the tavern to the rafters.

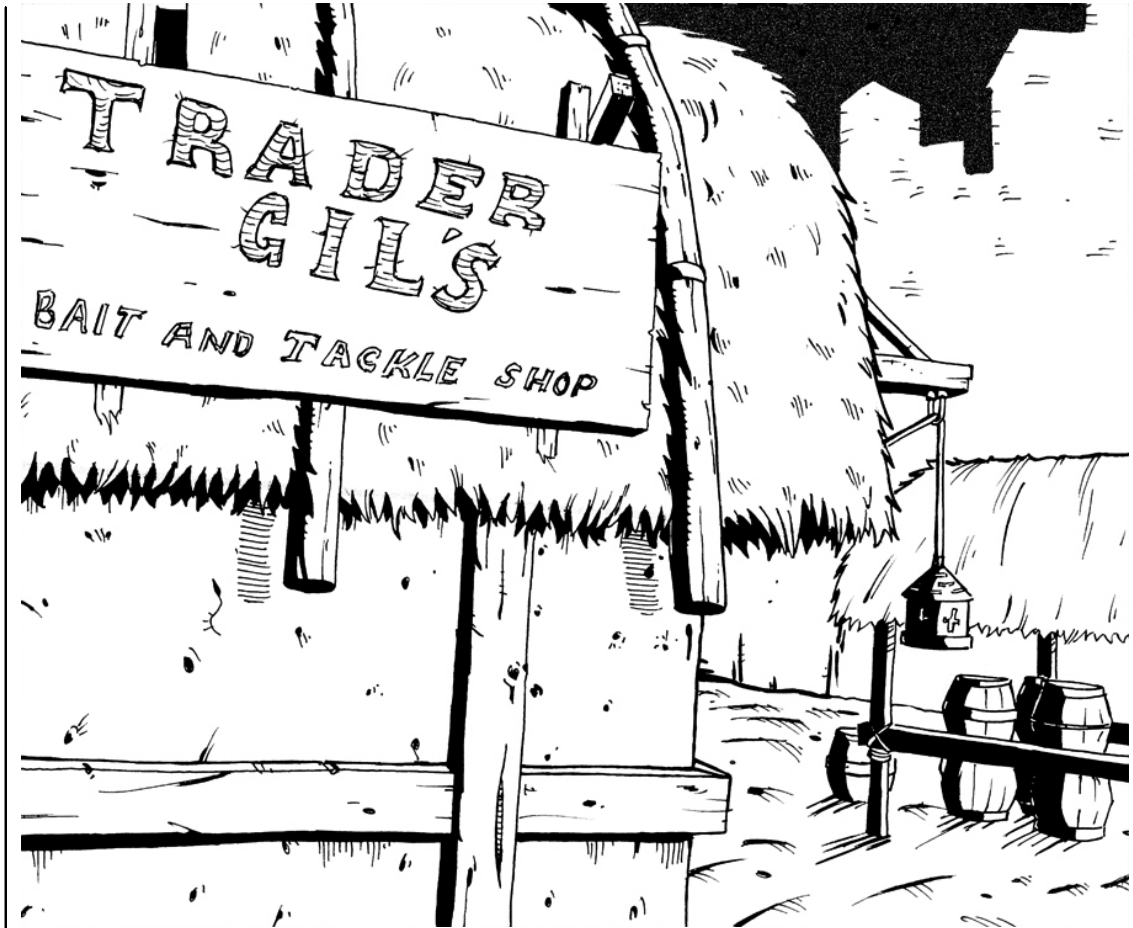
For company of the evening, the tired adventurer need look no further than Madame Evieu's, a well-staffed brothel around the corner from Trenchild's Trencher. Madame Evieu's girls begin every night with a review of musical numbers and dances. After the show, the audience members bid on an evening with each of the dancers. Well known, and well loved, by all who make regular visits to Taravane, even if not to stay, Madame Evieu's is a popular night spot in the Old City.

In the New City near the gate to Docktown are the Public Gardens. One of the nicer gardens in the New City, the Public Gardens are accessible by admission to any who wish to enter. While nicer flowers and fountains can be found in many of the more famous private gardens, it is in the Public Gardens that the hedges are trimmed into great shapes – entire battles are recreated in green, and statues of all the famous figures from history, and from the more popular plays, can be found. A great place for a walk, a lunch, or a public meeting between enemies.

Due to its mercantile nature, the city contracts out much of its police work to mercenaries – although mercenaries generally have to earn the trust of the Watch to receive important jobs. Much of these jobs are offered at The Barracks, which in addition to being the center of Guard and Watch operations, and the home of most of the Watchmen and soldiers, also acts as a center of operations for the hiring of mercenaries and dispensation of funds. Its stark stone architecture stands out in solid contrast to the rest of the High Quarter.

Once a simple fishing shop, Trader Gil's Bait and Tackle Shop, known as Trader Gil's for short, has grown into a one-stop shop for the intrepid adventurer. Stocking everything from durable clothing to quality trail food, Gil Varias





and his son Oberto are well known throughout the Old City. Trader Gil's carries everything a party setting out for adventure in the world needs – the more common herbs and animal parts for spells, a wide variety of tools for the more industrious players, and also has a small but popular bar for adventurer-networking.

The sprawling campus of the Taravane University in the Scholar's District is almost as enjoyable a walk as the Public Gardens. The large grass lawns and the stylish wood buildings make the campus as beautiful as it is rigorous. What used to be a small college twenty years ago has quickly bloomed under the leadership of Chancellor Binitine into a well respected institution of learning. The University is especially renowned for its studies in Astronomy and Astronomical Navigation. The University also runs a very respectable Arcane Studies department, from which are drawn all apprentices at the Wizard's College.

Opposite the Scholar's District from the University, built atop one of the tallest hills in the city, is the Wizard's Tower. Home to the Wizard's College, the Wizard's Tower is a place of mystery and danger. While those familiar to the powers of the arcane walk through its halls with ease, those without the experience or a guide risk injury, death, or worse. Rumored to

exist within the halls of the Wizard's Tower are portals to other worlds, monsters from the darkest pits of the imagination, and weapons that are generally associated with large groups of wizards.

One of the most majestic buildings in the High Quarter, and in the city, is the Cathedral. Five spires that are designed to look as if they were grown from the earth (and are rumored to actually have been) stand out against the skyline. Home to the Bishop Artholomew and his legion of priests, the Cathedral is where all High Councilors are sworn in, and where most nobles are granted their titles. Deep beneath the Cathedral are the labyrinthine catacombs where all prominent figures of Taravane's history are interred, all the way back to Targus the Tall.





Chancellor Binitine

Filling out the trio of famous Docktown night spots is Dobo's, the largest casino in Taravane. Dobo's hosts all kinds of games of chance, and accepts wagers on all sorts of events, from on what day of winter will fall Warm Embers Eve to how many arrests will the Night Watch make in a given night? Dobo is a short little man with wispy gray hair who dresses in high quality clothes twenty years out of fashion, but he is generally liked, though he can grate on one's nerves.

For wealthy citizens who don't want to leave the New City, there is the hidden casino The Light of the Night. Accessible via a secret passage in the back of a quality tailor's, the Light of the Night is a high-stakes gambling house with tough security and a very elite clientele. The owner, Waltor Ungdorp, employs a wide variety of magic detection devices to prevent cheating, and pays a lot of bribes to both the Thieves' Guild and to members of the Night Watch to prevent interference.



Bishop Dagias

## Influential Factions

The oldest of the three great houses, House Targane traces its roots back to Targus the Tall and all his illegitimate daughters. House Targane is ruled by its stern matriarch Lady Adella Targane, and is very tradition-bound. They are the wealthiest house, and own most of the nicer estates in the New City. The Targanes own many diverse investments, and are most interested in seeing the status quo of the city preserved. They are staunch defenders of the city, and very opposed to seeing city change. The Targanes are on very good terms with Captain Arendelling, especially Adella and her eldest daughter Seliph.

The family of House Vayus are descended from the invading soldiers who settled down when Hogan's Rest fell. They are the smallest and most devious of the three great houses, but they are masters of the game and hold great influence over the city. High Guildmaster Grayson is a close friend of House Vayus, as are many of the High Magistrate's close friends. While no great friend of the Vayuses, Publican Angles is deep within their pockets. The Vayus family is, for all intents and purposes, led by the



Lady Adella

aged Lord Discelli Vayus. The Vayuses own one of the fastest fleets of ships on the Great Sea, and they make a very healthy living transporting messages and easily perishable goods. They are masters of trading secrets, and are generally the first to know of any developments in Taravane.

One of the newest royal families, and one that has quickly risen to be one of the three great houses, is that of House Trenchild. The descendents of Garus Trenchild have risen to power through the use of judicious marriages. The Trenchild royal family (which are seen as direct descendents and the only legitimate heirs) are known around Taravane for their great affairs, and their playful nature. The most famous Trenchild lovers are Sir Paulus and his mother (and head of the Trenchilds) Lady Marianne. Although the family of House Trenchild is jocular and epicurean in nature, they are not to be taken lightly, for they are a craft house, and well liked by many in power.

One of the most inertly powerful forces in Taravane is the Dockworker's Guild. Without the Dockworker's Guild, the city would shut down. There are always a million grievances the dockworkers feel they are suffering from, but they only go on strike when the Guild tells them to. They say that whoever controls the dockworkers controls the city. Currently, the Dockworkers Guildmaster is involved with one of the Trenchilds, and is pretty much in her thrall.



Lady Marianne

Making their home in the Wizard's Tower is the Wizard's College, something that is registered with the city administrators as a guild yet to those who know it is so much more. The Wizard's College does not just govern the wizard's who comprise its membership, but actively seek to change the world. Its goals are unknown, but the Wizard's College possesses more power in their arcane magics than any of the other guilds. The Wizard's College will accept any wizard of demonstrable power, but will only accept apprentices from within the University. However, as the University becomes more and more embroiled in the politics of the city, this is something the head of the college, Guildmaster Balda, seeks to change.



Lord Vayus



Karlos Horidime

## Notable NPCs

As the head of House Targane, Lady Adella Targane is arguably one of the most powerful people in the City Behind the Cliffs. She is a simple woman, who dresses formally and rarely jokes. Her plump figure and grey hair, along with her stern personality, make her seem much older than her forty-two years.

The most ambitious of the three captains, August Arendelling is also the youngest. His sharp features and wavy blonde hair make him a favorite among the young ladies in the New City, while his charm and deference make him well-liked among the older nobles. Not the greatest tactician, and not the greatest leader, August does have a solid mastery over the arts of politics, and there is a lot of pressure on Warden Efastius to nominate August as his successor.

An eclectic and absent minded man, Chancellor Binitine Saed is the spitting image of an academic. Frequently late, and often lost, Binitine is not a man to be underestimated, for the vacant look in his eyes hides a very deep understanding of what's going on. Unable to grow hair of any sort due to a research accident years ago, the Chancellor's piercing eyes generally command the attention of whomever they're focused on – when they're not focused on the ceiling or closed.

A formal but friendly man, Bishop Dagias Artholomew is a lover of pomp and circumstance. While he remembers who his friends are, and especially his enemies, and will work hard to help out an ally, the Bishop demands formality even from his closest friends – nobody calls him Dagias, even his closest friends refer to him as Bishop Artholomew, or just Bishop. The portly man enjoys a simple life and appears to truly find happiness and meaning in his religion.

While House Vayus has no formal leader, and infighting is common, it takes a lot of confidence for a Vayus to go against Lord Discelli Vayus. The old man is an intimidating figure – over six feet tall, with white temples, an eye patch, and a well trimmed beard – and is even craftier than rumored. An expert with the rapier, Discelli also has a fondness for botany.

The master of Taravane's military, Jacque Efastius is a legend amongst the commoners, and a thorn in the side of the nobility. Efastius rose through the tanks of the Night Watch the traditional way, starting as a common watchman. He was promoted to the captain of the Night Watch when his predecessor was murdered by his unhappy wife, and he became the City Warden when the previous Warden decided to retire. He is a gruff, bald man with a close-cropped beard of gray. He is hard on his soldiers, but fair, and has both the respect and the love of his men.



Efastius

When night falls, the city comes under the jurisdiction of Karlos Horidime. The stout head of the Night Watch is known to his loyal watchmen as Cap'n Karl, a nickname he tolerates if only because his curly red hair and slight stutter would create new monikers if he ever expressed distaste for Cap'n Karl. While he comes across as an unassuming man at first, those who have seen him work know he possesses a dizzying intellect and very dangerous fists. Within in the Watch and the Guard, Karlos is the favorite to replace Efastius, and is Efastius' personal choice, if he doesn't succumb to the politics.

Once a lowly innkeep, Lyle Grayson is now the most powerful man in Taravane. Rising from inn owner and respected baker to Guildmaster of the Cooking Guild. Due to his clear-cut morality, and sharp observational skills, Lyle was respected enough to be elected to the High Council as one of the two High Guildmasters, and then, after intense bickering between the Vayuses and the Targanes, won the High Magistrate election as the dark horse candidate of the council. While Lyle continues to know little of politics, his simple beliefs in what is right and wrong have guided him well in the two years of his office, and the City Behind the Cliffs has prospered under his rule. Even as leader of the city, Lyle continues to bake, and he often arrives at important meetings with a dusting of flour in his black hair.



Grayson

While many women in their forties have long settled down, Lady Marianne Trenchild has only gotten more promiscuous in her old age. In order to ensure the legitimacy of her son, she coerced her lover to marry her, then paid him an exorbitant fee to leave Taravane, and then had the marriage annulled by the Bishop. The Lady Marianne dates a number of men at any given time, and is not embarrassed by using her exquisite beauty (even for a woman of her age) to further her aims.

The most notorious libertine in Taravane, Sir Paulus Trenchild has inherited virtually all his mother's infamous traits, from her bright red hair to a love of cards. Unlike most nobles, Sir Paulus is equally at home in both Docktown and the New City. Sir Paulus is good friends with Chancellor Binitine, but other than that he doesn't seem to care for close friendships – merely lovers.





Sir Paulus Trenchild

One of the tallest people in Taravane is Quinchin Blaad, the High Guildmaster of the Mason's Guild. The lanky mason always seems out of place, an awkward and uncomfortable person, except for when he is building something. Quinchin recently finished some remodeling of the Cathedral, and is currently working on the High Magistrate's palace. The Mason's Guild is powerful enough, and Quinchin is wealthy enough, that he is able to mostly ignore the plotting and intrigue that occur in metropolitan politics.

Well into his sixth term as publican (and his office is referred to as the Elder Publican), Rodert Angles is an aged statesman who exists almost exclusively to prolong his office. Always well-dressed and politely noncommittal, Rodert is always a perfect gentleman.

The only female member of the High Council, Sarstra Iosis is also one of the most liked by the populace. A former priest at the Cathedral, Sarstra was recently convinced by Sir Paulus to run for the office of the Publican. She did, and she won. This the first term for the beautiful singer and minister of faith. The fact that she is the younger sister of Madame Evieu is something that is not often spoken of.



Blaad

## Adventure Ideas

A wealthy merchant announces he has proof he is a descendent of Targus, of a previously unknown illegitimate daughter. House Targane denies his claim, and hires the players to look into his proof. Is the merchant really a Targane, or is this another plot by House Vayus to take power?

Warden Efastius has heard rumors that the Targanes may be plotting his assassination in the hopes of Arendelling rising to power. The Warden hires the players to investigate these rumors and to act on any information they find.

Dobo has begun to lose an inordinate amount of money on the Night Watch bets, and thinks a group of watchmen may be purposefully arresting a certain amount of people each night to skew the bets. Due to the bad blood between Dobo and Karlos, Dobo hires the players to investigate.

People have begun mysteriously dying in Docktown, and all of them are human. The Barracks offers a reward for an answer, but the people are clamoring for an expulsion of non-humans from the city.



Iosis

Tower Guards on the cliffs of the harbor report seeing a ship with bright red sails sailing in and out of the harbor, but the harbormaster has no record of a ship fitting that description ever docking in Taravane. The players are commissioned to solve this mystery.

Two clerics have disappeared in the depths of the catacombs beneath the Cathedral, and the Bishop has ordered the catacombs closed until an answer can be found. One of the Bishop's prefects hires the players to cleanse the catacombs of whatever force is haunting beneath the Cathedral.





# The Galactic Miners' Guild

by Bob Greenwade

In the galaxy of the Hero Universe, many sentient species dwell underground naturally. Toractans and Kalishari (described on pages 22-23 and 37, respectively, of *Terran Empire*) are the most prominent, but there are doubtless several others.

While the Toractans are best known for their mining skills, most subterranean species have at least a little more familiarity with the craft than surface-dwellers. As these species joined the galactic tableau, their miners have joined together to share the skills and “tricks” they’ve developed. While most such abilities are intended to help the mining process along, some are good for defending an embattled tunnel complex.

In 2474, the various mining unions and guilds of the known subterranean species banded together to form the Galactic Miners' Guild.

## The Galactic Miners' Guild

Also known as the GMG or occasionally just The Guild, the Galactic Miners' Guild exists to promote high quality in mining. Its goals include quick and efficient labor, maximum use of resources, technical advancement, and environmental responsibility. It also acts as a labor union for miners; given its charter goals, its history is not nearly as spotty as those of many other unions, since it's recognized from the beginning that the continued financial success of mining companies is vital to that of its membership.

From its inception on into the thirty-first century, GMG membership is dominated by Toractans, with Kalishari dominating the rest. Korundar (described on page 44 of *Terran Empire*) and Dasmaa (mentioned on page 9 of the same book) also make up significant minorities. Nearly all sentient species, including Humans, are represented to some extent.

Membership in the GMG is worth a 1 point Perk. The main benefits of this are salaries from collective bargaining agreements, and Guild-sponsored schooling to learn new mining techniques, including the Skills and Powers listed in this article. While nearly anyone can learn any of the Skills and most of the Powers, without Guild membership they'd need to find a private teacher.

Naturally, higher union ranks are worth more points.

## Mining Skills

Several Skills are particularly appropriate for Guild members. Some take on different meanings or applications when used by miners.

The Skills listed in the Package Deal (following this Skills discussion) but not discussed here are appropriate for miners but do not need any special rules or perspectives.

### ANALYZE

Two forms of this Skill are specifically appropriate for a miner. Both operate essentially within the basic rules for Analyze (as shown on page 32 of the *HERO System 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*).

#### Analyze Rock

This Skill allows the character to analyze the structure and stability of a rocky surface or construct. With a successful roll, the character can tell (for example) how much weight a rock bridge or overhang can hold, how likely a tunnel or cave is to collapse, how easily an area can be excavated, and similar information.

#### ANALYZE ROCK TABLE

##### Makes

Roll By	Information Gained
0 (Exactly)	The target's general mineral composition (marble, shale, sandstone, or whatever) and how generally sturdy it is compared to other structures and surfaces made of the same mineral
1 or 2	About how much weight the structure can support (within about 5 STR), how tough it is (within about 2 DEF), and how imminent a cave-in might be (within two steps on the Time Chart)
3 or 4	As above, but within half the stated margins
Half or Better	As above, but exact

## ADVENTURES IN MINING

To the average person, mining may seem like an incredibly boring pursuit. In reality, while it often does carry the thrill of discovery and other excitements of its own, life as a miner is hardly the kind of thing that great adventure fiction is made of.

Nonetheless, many writers have come up with ways to make things interesting — the dark, underground setting of a mine can create quite the proper mood for a mysterious scenario in any genre.

Underground murder mysteries, slave labor, buried artifacts, subterranean creatures, mystic horrors, underground civilizations, and many other features have all been the seeds of adventures that at least start out in mines. A clever GM can use these ideas to create interest for a “super-miner” PC, or even build a campaign around a mining colony in a science fiction or fantasy game.

## WOULDN'T MACHINES BE DOING THAT?

It may seem odd, in a technologically advanced milieu such as *Alien Wars* and *Terran Empire*, for miners to be so skilled at manual labor. After all, many other manual tasks are taken over by machines, so why not mining?

There can be many reasons for this. The most oft-cited is a distrust of machines, even with the advanced techniques in artificial intelligence, to quickly and accurately make the kind of judgment calls often needed in mining. Also, machines sometimes break down and the work has to continue somehow. Some miners are in the business in the first place because they like to “get their hands dirty,” enjoying the thrill of working directly with the product. And then there are times when using machines just isn't practical, such as on planets or asteroids with powerful electromagnetic interference.

Certainly miners in the middle of the third millennium would have tools, sensors, vehicles, and other devices beyond modern-day technology... but that would be a topic for another time.

## Analyze Soil

This Skill allows the character to recognize the content of soil without the use of chemicals or other tools. With a successful roll, the character can simply look at and handle a sample of soil and know its native climate, nutritional value for various plants, and likelihood of having come from a location near a deposit of minerals or metallic ore.

Despite its name, this Skill applies to analyzing the content of rock and stone just as well as it does to soil.

An advanced (“Super Skill”) version of this Skill is the *Mineral Evaluation* power described later in this article.

## DEMOLITIONS

This can be a very important Skill for a miner to have — not only because it can tell him where to dig or set explosives to get through quickly, but also because it can tell him where *not* to dig or set explosives lest he cause a cave-in.

As an option, the GM may divide Demolitions into two “sub-skills,” Building Demolitions and Natural Structure Demolitions. As with other “broken down” Skills, each costs 2 points, while every +1 to the Demolitions roll (applicable to either “sub-skill”) still costs an additional 2 points. A miner would tend to take Natural Structure Demolitions.

Because of its nature, Demolitions is a Required Skill for several of the “Miners’ Tricks” listed later in this article.

## NAVIGATION

Getting around in underground caves and tunnels is actually a far different skill than getting around on the surface, or in any other environment. Among other things, there are no stars underground for the character to use in telling direction. Thus, Underground Navigation should be added as a new subskill.

Unlike the above-ground forms of the Skill, Underground Navigation does not generally allow a character to find his location if he's lost. This ability usually requires some landmarks to triangulate from, and landmarks are almost never visible from underground locations. A character could get his bearings by examining the nature of the soil and rock around him, assuming he has SS: Geology and/or an appropriate Area Knowledge (the more appropriate of the two depending on whether the tunnel is natural or artificial).

However, the character could easily keep a running track of his position by noting the slope of the floor below him, the angle or curvature of the walls, and other clues. Analyze Soil and SS: Geology could easily be complementary Skills for this, as the character notes changes in such

things as soil composition, groundwater, and so forth. With this information the character would be able to find the way back to the surface, or whatever his starting point was.

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Of the many possible Professional Skills, two stand out as particularly appropriate for a miner.

### PS: Mineral Appraiser

A character with this Professional Skill can appraise the value of a piece of mineral (including metal ore, or even processed metal at -2) based on its size, shape, and quality. If he makes his roll exactly, he estimates the value within 3d6% (the GM decides whether the estimate is too low or too high). If he makes it by 1, he's within 2d6%; if by 2, within 1d6%; if by 3 or more, he knows the exact value. If he misses the roll, he wildly mis-estimates the mineral's value, to his detriment.

### PS: Miner

It would seem rather obvious that a character who is a professional miner would have Miner as a Professional Skill. This reflects his basic knowledge of mining, including efficiently digging for metals and stones, knowing the safest way through a tight tunnel, recognizing when toxic gases are present and how to respond to them, and so forth.

Sometimes a character may have training and/or experience primarily in mining just one particular product, such as PS: Amethyst Miner, PS: Coal Miner, or PS: Gold Miner. Such Professional Skills would still allow the character to know the universal basics in any mining situation, and to work in a related type of mine (such as a stone besides amethyst, or a metal besides gold) at a -2 penalty.

As an option, a character may take PS: Miner at an extremely high Roll (at least 20-, and probably much more) and perform many of the functions normally associated with other Skills, including Analyze, Demolitions, Navigation, Survival, and others. This would require use of the Extraordinary Skill rules. While the penalties for using such a broad Skill for such specific tasks would be severe, the high base roll would make success no less likely than just buying the other Skills directly.

If this option is taken, the character may change any *Requires A Skill Roll* Limitation in the Miner's Tricks abilities which follow from a normal Skill Roll to *Requires A PS: Miner Roll* (-1 per 5 Active Points; -½). This represents the character's more global ability to perform mining tasks, albeit with a greater Skill Roll penalty, for the same Limitation value.

## SCIENCE SKILLS

Mining can be as much an intellectual pursuit as a physical one — for some individuals, even more so. This is where Science Skills come in. The following are particularly appropriate for miners.

**SS: Geology**

Geology is the study of rock. This includes rock formations, the chemistry of rock and stone, and similar qualities. With a successful roll, the character can immediately identify a piece of rock by its type and composition based on color, texture, and weight. He can also know the general physical and chemical properties of any given type of stone or mineral, how it forms, and similar information.

This Science Skill can be specialized; for example, a character may have SS: Igneous Geology or SS: Ore Geology. This gives him specific knowledge of that particular type of rock, with a +2 to all rolls compared to the general Science Skill when dealing with that type but a -2 when dealing with other types.

A character with this Skill may use it as a complementary Skill to Analyze Rock or Analyze Soil.

**SS: Seismology**

Though most often associated with earthquakes, seismology is actually the study of subterranean structures. This does include earthquakes, this also includes exploration for oil, gas, ore, and other underground deposits. Thus, it can be a very important Science for a miner to be familiar with.

Under the right circumstances, SS: Seismology can be a complementary Skill to Analyze Rock or Demolitions.

**SURVIVAL**

Survival underground can be as difficult as survival on the surface, and the environment in caves is much different. For example, fungi and grub can provide nutrition, and finding underground springs to provide water is much different than finding surface water. Thus, “Underground” should be added as a two-point category for this Skill.

## Miner Package Deal

**MINER PACKAGE DEAL**

- 3 Demolitions
- 3 PS: Miner (INT Roll)
- 2 SS: Geology 11-
- 1 SS: Seismology 8-
- 6 6 points’ worth of the following Skills and Talents: Absolute Distance Sense (see below), Absolute Range Sense, Analyze Soil, Breakfall, Bump Of Direction, Bureaucratics, Climbing, Deduction, Mechanics, Navigation (Underground), Paramedics, Survival (Underground), Trading

**Package Cost: 15**

**Options:**

- 1 Membership: Galactic Miners’ Guild

## Miners’ Tricks

While many people think of the abilities listed here as “Toractan Tunneling Tricks,” this is a common nickname for what they (both the Toractans, and Guild members in general) refer to simply as “Miners’ Tricks.” The abilities taught by the Guild include a variety of digging stunts, analytical “super-skills,” and other tricks.

Many of these abilities require the use of digging tools, represented through an OAF. The specific tool in a particular case may be a pick, a shovel, or some other item. However, some species have natural tunneling abilities and can perform the tricks without tools; such an ability is represented by the “natural” option for these tricks.

Also, most of these abilities have the *Requires A Skill Roll* Limitation — but a variety of different Skills are used. The GM should double-check to make sure that any character with an ability with this Limitation also has the Skill needed to use it.

In *Star Hero* games taking place mostly aboard starships and space stations, many of these abilities may take an additional Limitation, *Only On A Planet*. The value of this Limitation is up to the GM, and should depend largely on how infrequent trips to a planet’s surface are.

**HUMANS WITH ALIEN POWERS?**

As noted early in this article, the Galactic Miners’ Guild is dominated by subterranean species, but includes membership by all, and none of the abilities listed here require any specific “special feature,” such as being of a particular species or possessing a particular alien power, to learn. Thus, the abilities should, at least potentially, be available to members of any species, including Humans.

However, just because they *can* be taken doesn’t mean they *should*. Conceptually, Toractans and other subterranean miners should be capable of much more than their Human counterparts. One or two Humans, Denebians, Mon’dabi, or other beings might have notable skill in these areas, but on the whole they should be limited to Toractans, Kalishari, Korundar, and other species noted as miners.

**ABSOLUTE DISTANCE SENSE****Effect:** Detect Distance Traveled**Target/Area Affected:** Self**Duration:** Constant**Range:** Self**END Cost:** 0**Description:** The character can determine the exact distance he's traveled from any given spot, without the aid of any external devices. The GM may treat this ability as a Talent — if so, the character doesn't have to make a roll to perform it; it always succeeds. (Otherwise it operates with a normal INT Roll.)**Game Information:** *Detect Distance Traveled (No Sense Group). Total cost: 3 points.***Options:**

- 1) **Relative Position:** The character can detect the exact location of any place he's been to recently, relative to his current position. Add Bump Of Direction. Total cost:  $3 + 3 = 6$  points.
- 2) **Mental Mapping:** The character keeps a mental map of every place he's ever been to. The GM should allow the player with this combination to make and keep accurate maps of all locations his character goes to. Add Bump Of Direction and Eidetic Memory. Total cost:  $3 + 3 + 5 = 11$  points.
- 3) **Limited Mental Mapping:** As above, but the Eidetic Memory has the Limitation *Only To Remember Maps And Locations* (-2).  $3 + 3 + 5 = 11$  Active Points; total cost  $3 + 3 + 2 = 8$  points.

**CAREFUL LISTENING****Effect:** Targeting for Hearing Sense Group**Target/Area Affected:** Self**Duration:** Constant**Range:** Self**END Cost:** 0**Description:** With a little concentration, the character can tell the exact location of anything he hears (well enough to make an Attack Roll at full OCV). This is an extremely handy ability in dark tunnels, especially in environments with hostile creatures or enemy invaders.**Game Information:** *Targeting for Hearing Sense Group (20 Active Points); Concentration ( $\frac{1}{2}$  DCV, must concentrate throughout;  $-\frac{1}{2}$ ). Total cost: 13 points.***Options:**

- 1) **Easy Listening:** Remove Concentration. Total cost: 20 points.

**CAUSING A CAVE-IN****Effect:** Entangle 8d6, up to 8 DEF, Area Of Effect (One Hex)**Target/Area Affected:** One Hex**Duration:** Instant**Range:** No Range**END Cost:** 4**Description:** The character strikes the ceiling in such a way that it causes a small cave-in. The earth typically comes down in a hex adjacent to him (and not in the hex he's in).

The *DEF Limited By DEF Of Source Material* Limitation means that the actual DEF of the Entangle may be no more than the DEF of the rock or other substance used in the cave-in. This in turn means that the character cannot cause a cave-in if the ceiling is made of a substance with greater than 6 DEF — it's just too tough for the job.

**Game Information:** *Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF, Area Of Effect (One Hex;  $+\frac{1}{2}$ ), Reduced Endurance ( $\frac{1}{2}$  END;  $+\frac{1}{4}$ ) (105 Active Points); Only to Form Barriers (-1), OAF (tools; -1), No Range ( $-\frac{1}{2}$ ), Earthen Or Rock Ceiling Must Be Within Reach (-1), DEF Limited By DEF Of Source Material ( $-\frac{1}{2}$ ), Gradual Effect (1 Turn; 1d6/Phase at SPD 8;  $-\frac{1}{4}$ ), Requires A Demolitions Roll ( $-\frac{1}{2}$ ). Total cost: 18 points.***Options:**

- 1) **Harder Cave-In:** Increase to Entangle 8d6, 8 DEF. 140 Active Points; total cost 24 points.
- 2) **Softer Cave-In:** Decrease to Entangle 4d6, 4 DEF. 70 Active Points; total cost 12 points.
- 3) **Larger Cave-In:** Increase Area Of Effect to (20" Line; +1). 180 Active Points; total cost 31 points. (This may be translated to any form of Area Of Effect; the character could even have a Multipower with two or more.)
- 4) **Tiring Cave-In:** Remove Reduced Endurance. 90 Active Points; total cost 16 points.
- 5) **Instant Cave-In:** Remove Gradual Effect. Total cost 19 points.
- 6) **Easy Cave-In:** Change the Active Point penalty for Requires A Demolitions Roll to -1 per 20 Active Points ( $-\frac{1}{4}$ ). Total cost 19 points.

### CAVE-IN DETECTION

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**Effect:** Precognition, Only To Predict Seismic Events

**Target/Area Affected:** Immediate Vicinity

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** No Range

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** With his knowledge of geology, seismology, and other principles of mining, the character can predict imminent cave-ins, earthquakes, and similar events in his immediate vicinity. He can generally only get a general sense of the time and severity, but his accuracy is nonetheless uncanny.

**Game Information:** *Precognitive Clairvoyance (Touch Group), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (60 Active Points); Precognition Only (-1), Time Modifiers (-1/2), Vague And Unclear (-1/2), Affected As Sight As Well As Touch Sense Group (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), Requires An Analyze Rock Roll (-1/2), Only To Predict Seismic Events (-1). Total cost: 11 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Scientific Analysis:** Replace Requires An Analyze Rock Roll with Requires A PS: Miner Roll (-1/4) or Requires An SS: Seismology Roll (-1/4). Total cost: 11 points.
- 2) **Precision Analysis:** The character can predict specific seismic events with precision. Remove Vague And Unclear (-1/2). Total cost: 12 points.

### CAVE VISION

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**Effect:** Nightvision

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** The character's eyes have grown accustomed to life in the dark environment of caves and tunnels.

**Game Information:** *Nightvision. Total cost: 5 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Slow Cave Vision:** The character's eyes need a minute to adjust to the dark. Add Extra Time (1 Minute, only to activate; -3/4). Total cost: 3 points.
- 2) **Cave-Only Vision:** Add Only Underground (-1). Total cost: 2 points.

### CLUTTERBUG

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**Effect:** Environmental Movement (no penalties in cramped or cluttered spaces)

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Persistent

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** Given that the tunnels of many mines, especially those dug by hand, are quite cramped, many experienced miners learn to move about in them just as well as they could in open spaces. This Talent represents that ability.

**Game Information:** *Environmental Movement (no penalties in cramped or cluttered spaces). Total cost: 2 points.*

### DITCHING AWAY

---

**Effect:** Teleportation 12", Only To Escape Cave-Ins, Explosions, And Similar Events

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Instant

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 2

**Description:** When a cave-in, explosion, or other catastrophic event takes place, the character is able to quickly get out of the way and to a safe position.

In a way, this can be thought of as a "super-skilled" Dive For Cover maneuver, and in many ways should be treated as such.

The distance shown is for an average Human; the actual distance for any given character should be limited to that character's noncombat Running (or whatever his fastest mode of movement may be).

**Game Information:** *Teleportation 12" (24 Active Points); Must Pass Through Intervening Space (-1/4), Extra Time (Full Phase; -1/2), Only to Escape Cave-Ins, Explosions, And Similar Events (-1), no Noncombat Movement (-1/4). Total cost: 8 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Tiring Ditch:** Add Increased Endurance Cost (×3 END; -1). Total cost: 6 points.
- 2) **Lucky Ditch:** Add Requires A Luck Roll (two levels; -1 1/2). Total cost: 5 points.

**DUST FLASH****Effect:** 4d6 Flash**Target/Area Affected:** One target**Duration:** Instant**Range:** No Range**END Cost:** 3**Description:** The character flicks some dust, sand, or other substance into his opponent's face, either by throwing it or kicking it up from the ground. It's only effective against targets very close by (that is, in adjacent hexes).**Game Information:** *Sight Group Flash 4d6, NND (defense is solid coverings protecting the eyes; +½) (30 Active Points); No Range (-½), OIF (substance of opportunity; -½). Total cost: 15 points.***Options:**

- 1) **More Dust:** Increase to Sight Group Flash 6d6. 45 Active Points; total cost 22 points.
- 2) **Less Dust:** Decrease to Sight Group Flash 3d6. 22 Active Points; total cost 11 points.
- 3) **Smelly Dust:** Add Smell/Taste Sense Group. 40 Active Points; total cost 20 points.
- 4) **Good Throw:** Change No Range (-½) to Limited Range (30"; -¼). Total cost: 17 points.

**ECHO DISCERNMENT****Effect:** +3 to Hearing PER, Only To Determine Source Of Echos**Target/Area Affected:** Self**Duration:** Persistent**Range:** Self**END Cost:** 0**Description:** The character has gotten so used to the echo-filled environment of underground tunnels and caves that he can tell the source of an echo as easily as he can tell the source of a sound heard directly.**Game Information:** *+3 to Hearing PER (6 Active Points); Only to Determine Source Of Echos (-2). Total cost: 2 points.***EXPERT CLIMBING****Effect:** Clinging**Target/Area Affected:** Self**Duration:** Constant**Range:** Self**END Cost:** 1**Description:** The character is such an expert at climbing rock and earthen walls that he can hold on with much less effort.**Game Information:** *Clinging (normal STR) (10 Active Points); Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼), Costs Endurance (-½), Requires A Climbing Roll (-½), Cannot Cling To Ceilings Or Surfaces Of More Than 120° Angle (-¼). Total cost: 4 points.***Options:**

- 1) **Strong Fingers:** Increase Clinging STR to normal STR + 15. 15 Active Points; total cost 6 points.
- 2) **Effortless Climb:** Remove Costs Endurance. Total cost: 5 points.

**GROUND LOCK****Effect:** Knockback Resistance -5"**Target/Area Affected:** Self**Duration:** Constant**Range:** Self**END Cost:** 1**Description:** The character digs his heels into the ground, making him harder to knock over.**Game Information:** *Knockback Resistance -5" (10 Active Points); Costs END (-½), Must Be Aware Of Attack (-1). Total cost: 4 points.***Options:**

- 1) **Stronger Lock:** Increase to Knockback Resistance -8". 16 Active Points; total cost 6 points.
- 2) **Weaker Lock:** Decrease to Knockback Resistance -3". 6 Active Points; total cost 2 points.
- 3) **General Lock:** Remove Must Be Aware Of Attack (-1). Total cost: 7 points.

## DIGITAL HERO #33

### HIDING IN SHADOWS

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**Effect:** Invisibility, Only In Shadows

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** The character is so adept at making himself unseen in the dark shadows of caves and tunnels that he can become practically invisible.

**Game Information:** *Invisibility to Sight Group, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2) (30 Active Points); Requires A Stealth Roll (-1/2), Only Works In Shadows Or Darkness (-1/2). Total cost: 15 points.*

**Options:**

1) **Superior Skill:** Add No Fringe. 45 Active Points; total cost 22 points.

2) **Chameleon Hiding:** Add Chameleon (-1/2). Total cost: 12 points.

3) **Easier Effort:** Change the Active Point penalty for Requires A Stealth Roll to -1 per 20 Active Points (-1/4). Total cost: 17 points.

### MINERAL EVALUATION

---

**Effect:** Detect Mineral Content

**Target/Area Affected:** One soil sample

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** No Range

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** By closely examining the soil and rock of an area, the character can tell whether there are mine-worthy metals or other minerals nearby. If the soil or rock is actually a part of the mine, the character can tell what minerals are available here, and in what quantity and quality.

**Game Information:** *Detect Mineral Content (INT Roll) (Sight Sense Group), Discriminatory (10 Active Points); Requires An Analyze Soil Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 7 points.*

**Options:**

1) **Analytical Evaluation:** Add Analyze. 15 Active Points; total cost 10 points.

2) **Locative Evaluation:** Add Tracking. 15 Active Points; total cost 10 points.

3) **Speedy Evaluation:** Add Rapid (×10). 13 Active Points; total cost 9 points.

### PRODIGIOUS TUNNELING

---

**Effect:** Tunneling 2" through DEF 6 material

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** No Range

**END Cost:** 10

**Description:** This is the basic tunneling ability. The character can dig through earth and rock at a rate most others would consider prodigious, and using much less energy than an untrained digger would use in the same period of time (full STR every phase for an hour, minus REC at post-segment 12).

**Game Information:** *Tunneling 2" through DEF 7 material (25 Active Points); Limited Medium (earth/stone; -1/2), OAF (tools; -1), Increased Endurance Cost (×5 END; -2), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Limited By Power Of Available Tools (-1/2), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-1/2). Total cost: 3 points.*

**Options:**

1) **Faster Tunneling:** Increase to Tunneling 3" through DEF 8 material. 30 Active Points; total cost 4 points.

2) **Slower Tunneling:** Decrease to Tunneling 1" through DEF 6 material. 20 Active Points; total cost 2 points.

### QUICK PREPARATION

---

**Effect:** Fast Draw (Common Melee Weapons)

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Instant

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** The character is so adept at using his tools that he can whip them out in an instant. This works primarily with a miner's digging tools, but usually translates into an equal level of skill with most other common melee weapons.

**Game Information:** *Fast Draw (Common Melee Weapons) (DEX Roll). Total cost: 3 points.*

**Options:**

1) **Quicker Preparation:** Increase to Fast Draw (DEX Roll +2). Total cost: 7 points.



**REDUCED BREATHING**

**Effect:** Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per Minute)

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 1 per Minute

**Description:** In the event of a cave-in or other disaster, the character can reduce his breathing rate to conserve oxygen.

**Game Information:** *Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per Minute) (4 Active Points); Concentration (0 DCV, must concentrate throughout; -1). Total cost: 2 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Lesser Burden:** Decrease Concentration to (½ DCV, must concentrate throughout; -½). Total cost: 3 points.

**SHARD PROJECTION**

**Effect:** RKA 1½d6

**Target/Area Affected:** One target

**Duration:** Instant

**Range:** 125"

**END Cost:** 2

**Description:** Using his tools, the character strikes the ground in such a way that a shard of rock or chunk of dirt flies toward his target.

**Game Information:** *RKA 1½d6 (25 Active Points); OAF (tools; -1), Requires An Analyze Rock Roll (-½). Total cost: 10 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Bigger Shard:** Increase to RKA 2d6. 30 Active Points; total cost 12 points.
- 2) **Smaller Shard:** Decrease to RKA 1d6+1. 20 Active Points; total cost 8 points.
- 3) **Sharper Shard:** Add Armor Piercing (+½). 37 Active Points; total cost 15 points.
- 4) **Rock Projection:** Change to Energy Blast 5d6. 25 Active Points; total cost 11 points. (All other options can be converted to this by simply changing the RKA to an Energy Blast of equal Damage Class.)
- 5) **Natural Shard:** Remove OAF (-1). Total cost: 20 points.
- 6) **Demolition Shard:** Change Requires An Analyze Rock Roll to Requires A Demolitions Roll.

**SKILLFUL DIGGING**

**Effect:** Find Weakness 11-, Earth/Stone Only

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Persistent

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** By closely examining the ground before him, the character can find the best place to strike the ground in order to dig efficiently.

For purposes of this ability, "digging attacks" includes the *Prodigious Tunneling* ability above. However, the character must make his Find Weakness roll separately for each application of that ability, since each hour of digging changes the ground he's "attacking."

**Game Information:** *Find Weakness 11- with all digging attacks (20 Active Points); No Range (-½), Earth Or Stone Only (-1). Total cost: 8 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Improved Skill:** Increase to Find Weakness 13-. 30 Active Points; total cost 12 points.
- 2) **Excellent Skill:** Increase to Find Weakness 15-. 40 Active Points; total cost 16 points.
- 3) **Limited Skill:** Add Requires An Analyze Rock Roll (-½). Total cost: 7 points.

**TOUGH HIDE**

**Effect:** Damage Reduction, 50%

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Persistent

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** The character is unusually resistant to blows, such as those one might get from a falling rock, from bumping into an unnoticed wall, or the like.

**Game Information:** *Physical Damage Reduction, 50% (20 Active Points); STUN Only (-½). Total cost: 13 points.*

**Options:**

- 1) **Conscious Toughness:** Add Must Be Aware Of Attack (-¼). Total cost: 11 points.
- 2) **Super-Toughness:** Remove STUN Only. Total cost: 20 points.

## DIGITAL HERO #33

### TRACKING OVER STONE

---

**Effect:** Tracking for Sight Sense Group

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** Self

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** The character is highly adept at following the traces a person leaves behind, even over normally “track-proof” surfaces such as stone.

**Game Information:** *Tracking for Sight Sense Group (10 Active Points); Requires A Tracking Roll (-½), Only On Earth Or Stone (-½). Total cost: 5 points.*

**Options:**

1) **Easy Tracking:** Change the Active Point penalty for Requires A Tracking Roll to -1 per 20 points (-¼). Total cost: 6 points.

2) **Challenged Tracking:** The target is allowed a Skill Roll (usually Stealth) to oppose the character’s Tracking roll. Add Subject To Skill vs. Skill to Requires A Tracking Roll (-¾). Total cost: 4 points.

### VIBRATION SENSE

---

**Effect:** Detect Ground Vibrations

**Target/Area Affected:** Self

**Duration:** Constant

**Range:** Sense

**END Cost:** 0

**Description:** The character can feel the vibrations in the ground and tell when someone or something is approaching or otherwise moving along the ground.

**Game Information:** *Detect Ground Vibrations (INT Roll) (Touch Group), Range (15 Active Points); Only When In Contact With The Ground (-¼), Requires An Analyze Rock Roll (-½). Total cost: 8 points.*

### WEAKENED GROUND

---

**Effect:** Tunneling 2" through DEF 8, Trigger, Trigger, Usable As Attack

**Target/Area Affected:** One Hex

**Duration:** Instant

**Range:** No Range

**END Cost:** 7

**Description:** Using his tools, the character carefully weakens an area of ground so that the next person to step on the spot falls into a shallow pit. It takes about an hour to set up, but it does become a very effective trap.

**Game Information:** *Tunneling 2" through DEF 7, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Trigger (when someone steps on the affected area; +¼), Usable As Attack (+1) (69 Active Points); Limited Medium (only through soil and stone; -½), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), OAF (tools; -1), Instant (-½), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½). Total cost: 11 points.*

**Options:**

1) **Deep Pit:** Increase to Tunneling 3" through DEF 8. 82 Active Points; total cost 13 points.

2) **Shallow Pit:** Decrease to Tunneling 1" through DEF 6. 55 Active Points; total cost 8 points.

3) **Hidden Pit:** Add Invisible to Sight Group (+½). 81 Active Points; total cost 12 points.

4) **Speedy Pit:** Change Extra Time to 5 Minutes (-2). Total cost: 13 points.

## Guild Abilities in Other Genres and Settings

The subterranean abilities listed here, along with others like them, can be used in genres other than *Star Hero*.

### CHAMPIONS

Many of the abilities described here were inspired by, if not directly adapted from, powers in the *UNTIL Superpowers Database*, primarily the Earth And Stone Powers chapter (pages 68-75). The reverse would also be quite possible — the abilities here could be translated back into a superhero “feel,” expanding the list of possibilities for a superhero (or supervillain) with earth-based powers.

For an existing character, some of the abilities shown here — particularly those not appearing in the original edition of the Database — could be used to provide new “nuances” to his abilities. The new ability could have the *Requires A Power Skill Roll* Limitation added to what’s already shown here, or replacing an existing *Requires A Skill Roll* Limitation; the new *Power Skill* could have a name like *Tunneling Tricks* or *Earth Powers Tricks*.

Naturally, since *Champions* powers tend to be much more powerful than those in *Star Hero* and other Heroic settings, the power levels for many abilities would have to be increased somewhat. This is especially true in the *Galactic Champions* sub-genre; a Toractan super-tunneler (for example) would definitely need abilities powerful enough to be competitive with NPC villains.

Currently, the Champions Universe only has Temblor (*Conquerors, Killers, and Crooks*, pages 62-64) among published characters with earth-based powers.

### DARK CHAMPIONS

Most of the Miners’ Tricks listed here are essentially an extension of the “Super-Skills” listed in the *Dark Champions* genre book (pages 106-149) — some, in fact, were directly inspired by entries in that section. As such, they could logically be available in any *Dark Champions* game that uses Super-Skills.

However, because of their highly thematic and specialized nature, these abilities should probably be limited to just one or two characters. They’re most appropriate to the “Vigilante Crimefighting” or “Animated Series” styles of play, where heroes and villains alike tend to work within “themes” in their *modus operandi*, though the “Monster Hunters” and “Weird Conspiracy” styles would work as well as in *Horror Hero* (see below).

The sample character Gravedigger is an example of a mining-based NPC for *Dark Champions* — *The Animated Series*.

### PULP HERO

While it would be very rare for a *Pulp Hero* PC to have any but the most basic tunneling-based abilities, subterranean species (usually “mole-men”) are a staple of the genre (or at least several subgenres, most notably “Lost World” settings). Such beings often have abilities beyond the abilities of normal human beings; this is what makes fighting them such a challenge.

### FANTASY HERO

Fantasy settings are famous for their subterranean Dwarves, and the abilities here could easily be used to give Dwarves unique and surprising abilities. The background for the Dwarven Mining Guild could even closely match that of the Galactic Mining Guild as described early in this article.

Other subterranean races (such as the mole-men mentioned above), though not nearly as ubiquitous in fantasy, could also exist in a fantasy setting and have any of the abilities from this article.

### OTHER GENRES

These abilities are generally inappropriate for *Western Hero* or any other genre with a strong basis in reality (such as most *Dark Champions* settings — though see the notes on that genre above). A few of the most rudimentary and logical may be available with the GM’s permission, but most of the powers listed here are beyond what a normal human can do and thus should not be allowed. This is not to say that even the more fantastic abilities could never appear in *Western Hero*; if the campaign is rather fantastic (in the mold of *Wild Wild West* or *The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.*) an outstanding prospector could certainly have several of these abilities.

Whether the powers are allowed in other genres is subject to the GM’s preference. Some *Horror Hero* creatures, for example, might have tunneling powers to keep the PCs off balance, though as usual these abilities should be kept out of the PCs’ hands. There’s some potential for these abilities in *Ninja Hero*, *Cyber Hero*, and similar settings; while underground abilities are hardly standard fare in those genres, the GM could introduce something along those lines for a change of pace.

Tevri Makaika



Tom 05

## TEVRI MAKAIKA PLOT SEEDS

At the last few worlds Tevri's visited, a suspicious trail of dead bodies has followed. Tevri himself has a perfect alibi for at least half of the murders: they happened after he'd left. Still, it does seem as though some member of his entourage, or some force following him around, is killing people... and now he's visiting the PCs' planet.

While Tevri is visiting the PCs' area to help with a union contract negotiation, the local managing foreman accuses him of connections to organized crime. Tevri files a sizeable lawsuit, but before it can come to trial the foreman is found murdered. Tevri's alibi is the lawsuit; not only will he be unable to collect any damages, he'll also be unable to clear his name of the "false" accusation. Or will he?

Elections for Guild-wide offices are under way, and Tevri has his name in for Vice President. In most areas the voting is as clean as usual... but in some areas, particularly those where the Vice Presidential race is close, there have been complaints of threats and other tampering. The PCs, who happen

## Tevri Makaika

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	22	13-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-/19-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
5/8	PD	2		Total: 5/8 PD (2/5 rPD)
5/6	ED	1		Total: 5/6 ED (2/3 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
7	REC	0		
46	END	8		
31	STUN	0		

### Total Characteristic Cost: 85

<b>Movement:</b>	Running:	4"/8"
	Leaping:	3"/6"
	Swimming:	2"/4"
	Tunneling:	3"/6" (per Hour)

Cost	Powers	END
2	<i>Toractan Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED)	
3	<i>Toractan Armor:</i> Armor (3 PD/1 ED); Activation Roll 11- (-1)	
6	<i>Toractan Hearing:</i> +3 PER with Hearing Group	
3	<i>Toractan Hearing:</i> Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)	
20	<i>Careful Listening:</i> Targeting with Hearing Group	
3	<i>Cave Vision:</i> Nightvision; Extra Time (1 Minute, Only to Activate, -¾)	
2	<i>Clutterbug:</i> Environmental Movement (no penalties in cramped spaces)	
2	<i>Echo Discernment:</i> +3 PER with Hearing Group; Only To Determine Source Of Echos (-2)	
4	<i>Expert Climbing:</i> Clinging (normal STR); Costs Endurance (-½), Requires A Climbing Roll (-½), Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼), Cannot Cling To Ceilings Or Surfaces Of More Than 120 Degree Angle (-¼)	1
18	<i>Hiding In Shadows:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Only Works In Shadows Or Darkness (-½), Requires A Stealth Roll (-½), Chameleon (-½)	
12	<i>Mineral Evaluation:</i> Detect Mineral Content A Class Of Things 13- (Sight Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Rapid (×10); Requires An Analyze Soil Roll (-½)	

- 49 *Demolitions Abilities:* Multipower, 122-point reserve; all slots OAF (tools; -1), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½)
- 2u 1) *Causing A Cave-In:* Entangle 6d6, 8 DEF, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½); Only To Form Barriers (-1), Earthen Or Rock Ceiling Must Be Within Reach (-1), OAF (tools; -1), DEF Limited By DEF Of Source Material (-½), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½), Gradual Effect (1 Turn (as SPD 8); -¼) 5
- 1u 2) *Prodigious Tunneling:* Tunneling 3" through 8 DEF material; Extra Time (1 Hour, -3), Increased Endurance Cost (×5 END; -2), OAF (tools; -1), Limited Medium Limited (Earth/Stone; -½), Limited By Power Of Available Tools (-½), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½) 15
- 2u 3) *Rock Projection:* Energy Blast 6d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Armor Piercing (+½); OAF (tools; -1), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½) 2
- 2u 4) *Shard Projection:* RKA 2d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Armor Piercing (+½); OAF (tools; -1), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½) 2
- 1u 5) *Weakened Ground:* Tunneling 3" through 8 DEF material, Trigger (when someone steps on the affected area; +¼), Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Usable As Attack (+1); Extra Time (1 Hour, -3), OAF (tools; -1), Limited Medium Limited (stone or soil; -½), Instant (-½), Requires A Demolitions Roll (-½) 8

### Perks

- 12 *Contact:* Karbaresh Group (Contact has useful Skills or resources, Good relationship with Contact), Organization Contact (×3) 11-
- 25 *Entourage:* Followers
- 2 *Fringe Benefit:* Membership: GMG Senior Membership Coordinator
- 2 *Fringe Benefit:* Membership: Karbaresh Group
- 5 *Money:* Well Off

### Talents

- 3 *Absolute Distance Sense*
- 3 *Absolute Range Sense*
- 3 *Bump Of Direction*
- 2 *Eidetic Memory* (5 Active Points); Only To Remember Maps And Locations (-2)

**Skills**

- 16 +2 with All Non-Combat Skills
- 20 +4 with All Mining-Related Skills
- 3 Acting 13-
- 3 Analyze Rock 13-
- 3 Analyze Soil 13-
- 3 Breakfall 12-
- 3 Bribery 13-
- 3 Bureaucracies 13-
- 3 Climbing 12-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Deduction 13-
- 3 Demolitions 13-
- 4 Gambling (Card Games, Sports Betting) 13-
- 3 Hoist 13-
- 2 Navigation (Underground) 13-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 2 PS: Appraise 11-
- 2 PS: Miner 11-
- 3 Shadowing 13-
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 12-
- 2 SS: Geology 11-
- 2 SS: Seismology 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 2 Survival (Underground) 13-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 3 Trading 13-
- 4 WF: Toractan Small Arms, Axes, Maces, Hammers, and Picks, Homemade Weapons

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 302****Total Cost: 387****75+ Disadvantages**

- 25 Dependent NPC: Family 8- (Normal; Unaware of character's adventuring career; Group DNPC: ×4 DNPCs)
- 5 Enraged: when humiliated (Uncommon), go 8-, recover 14-
- 15 Hunted: TSS 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 5 Physical Limitation: Toractan Eyes (color blind and extremely nearsighted; -2 Sight PER in appropriate situations when corrective lenses/medications not used) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Devious and Deceitful (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (Frequently, Severe)
- 237 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 387****Tevri Makaika**

**Background/History:** Tevri Makaika grew up on Toracta, amid the squalid streets of C'avarik, one of the planet's major trading centers. In his teen years he fell into working for Karbaresh Group, one of the most extensive of Toractan organized crime groups. He showed his worth to the gang early on, and gained the attention of its top man, Reng Jerkoqi. When Reng died and his son, Kilothe Jerkoqi, took over, Tevri was still young. Kilothe had a special mission for him.

Tevri was to apprentice himself as a miner, and work himself into the leadership of the Galactic Miners' Guild. He'd already shown his loyalty and dedication to the Karbaresh Group; no work was too vicious or too demeaning for him. With him in a position of leadership — as President of the Guild, if possible — the Karbaresh Group would be able to control not only the Guild's coffers, but those of every mining company in the galaxy as well.

Twenty years have passed since then, and Tevri has become one of the most noteworthy miners in the galaxy. He's a lead worker at any site he works, and the Guild has made him a Senior Membership Coordinator — the highest Guild rank he can hold while still working in the field. He has also married and had three children — a son and two daughters — and they often travel with him.

And in all that time, the Terran Security Service has gotten no more than a general suspicion that something is crooked about him. They're watching him, and monitoring his activities, but so far haven't been able to act against him.

**Personality/Motivation:** Tevri's main motivations are threefold: greed for money and power, the safety of his family, and loyalty to the Karbaresh Group, in approximately that order. He has no scruples about doing anything to serve any of those desires, though he's smart enough to cover his tracks when he does something particularly vicious.

Tevri also happens to be a very good actor. He can greet a potential adversary with a warm and friendly smile, even as his thoughts are forming a murder plot. He can personally destroy a rival's reputation, while seeming appropriately angry at "the person in my organization who stooped to such dirty tricks." He's even allowed some of his natural temper to show at times, just to keep his character from seeming "too good to be true."

**Quote:** "That is a decision you will soon regret — I intend to guarantee that."

to be in one of those areas, are called upon to investigate.

**Powers/Tactics:** Tevri's many years of experience at mining has given him an extensive list of skills and abilities which serve him well in the field. He has considerable expertise in both the physical and the intellectual aspects of the job.

Though he could easily send hired thugs to do his bidding, Tevri isn't afraid to get his hands dirty. He won't demand of his people tasks he's unwilling to do himself, and this includes fighting and killing.

His skill with "Tunneling Tricks" is enough to make a deliberate act of violence to appear to be an accident, or a highly skilled attack to seem like a clumsy but lucky shot — from his early days with the Karbaresh Group, he's learned numerous tricks to divert the authorities' attention away from himself and, when possible, to someone else. One of his favorites is to "deal with a problem" (or get revenge) twice — once through legitimate means, and then again through violent means.

On more than one occasion he's set up a pit as a trap for an enemy to fall into, and then covered up the pit with a cave-in. He's done this at least two dozen times, and on no occasion has his victims' bodies ever been found.

He uses his position as Senior Membership Coordinator to travel from world to world, locking down the Guild's influence in the most delicate mining operations and making himself popular with the membership for his eventual election as its President. In the course of this, he takes most of his general direction through coded messages from Kiloth Jerkoqi.

He does have a regular entourage of six to eight individuals, serving as his pilot, secretary, bodyguards, and other jobs. While such an entourage isn't unusual for a person in his position with the Guild, in his case every person in the entourage is also a member of the Karbaresh Group. All are skilled at not only their area of expertise, but also larceny and murder.

**Campaign Use:** Tevri is roughly analogous to the union-controlling crime boss of the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century. He pretends to be looking out for the common worker, but his real motivation is the money and power he gets from his position.

At first, Tevri should seem to be a good guy, though one who admits to something of a temper problem. He will show considerable concern over the plight of miners, and may even be the individual calling for the PCs' help in some cases. Only after two or three meetings with him should the PCs even begin to suspect that there's more to him than just a Galactic Miners' Guild official looking out for the members' best interests.

As time goes on, he could become a complication in nearly any mining scenario taking place within the Terran Empire or its allies. He could even rally the miners against the PCs, and his Acting and Persuasion could make it seem like he's actually trying to support them. Naturally, if they catch on to his tricks or even learn of his connections with organized crime, it's likely that he'll have them "removed from the picture" (though he could let the story leak out as an "unsubstantiated rumor" started by his enemies).

A vengeful individual, Tevri will readily Hunt anyone who repeatedly foils his plans, or who does so with an attitude he considers flippant or disrespectful. He has other things to attend to, so he rarely if ever Hunts on a higher roll than 8 or less. (One thing that might do the trick would be to harm or threaten his family.) If initial attempts to assassinate his target fail, he'll change his goal — he might assassinate his target's reputation, go after the target's loved ones (DNPCs), or cause other problems.

He could also act as an agent for the Karbaresh Group, for individuals Hunted by that organization.

**Appearance:** Unusually large for a Toractan, Tevri Makaika stands four feet tall and weighs 95 pounds. He's densely muscled, and may be one of the physically strongest Toractans in the galaxy, at least outside the sports arena and without artificial help. His skin is a rich terra cotta shade. His clothing follows the typical style of a Toractan miner.



Gravedigger



## GRAVEDIGGER PLOT SEEDS

The PCs are hot on the trail of a mob boss who's gone to ground. Their best lead is an elusive hit man who used to work for the boss. They track down the hit man but Gravedigger arrives just minutes ahead of them and kidnaps him. Can the PCs track them down and get the information from the hit man before she kills him?

One of the PCs is tried for murder and acquitted. This naturally gets Gravedigger's attention; she targets him for execution. If she succeeds in at least kidnapping the PC, this can become especially interesting if the PC actually committed the murder in question.

A group of Stewart County surveyors are examining some (officially) unexplored parts of the tunnels and come across Gravedigger's main cache of graves. For homicide detectives and non-lethal vigilantes alike, this is the proverbial mother lode for evidence against her — not only for the bodies left behind (most of which may still be identified via DNA), but also for forensic evidence Gravedigger left behind thinking the spot would never be discovered.



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## Gravedigger

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 HTH [1]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
16	BODY	12	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll: 13-/16-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	

3/14 PD 0 Total: 3/14 PD (0/11 rPD)

3/14 ED 0 Total: 3/14 ED (0/11 rED)

3	SPD	2	Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0	
30	END	0	
32	STUN	0	

### Total Characteristic Cost: 84

<b>Movement:</b>	Running:	4"/8"
	Leaping:	3"/6"
	Swimming:	2"/4"
	Teleport:	18"/18"

### Cost Powers END

- 45 *Combat Actions:* Multipower, 45-point reserve
- 1u 1) *Ditching Away:* Teleportation 18"; Only To Escape Cave-Ins, Explosions, And Similar Events (-1), Extra Time (Full Phase, -1/2), Must Pass Through Intervening Space (-1/4), no Noncombat movement (-1/4)
- 2u 2) *Dusty Flash:* Sight and Smell/Taste Groups Flash 5d6, No Normal Defense (solid defense covering the eyes; +1/2) (45 Active Points); OIF (Substance Of Opportunity; -1/2), No Range (-1/2) 4
- 2u 3) *Shard Projection:* RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+1/2) (45 Active Points); OAF (-1), Requires An Analyze Rock Roll (-1/2) 4
- 25 *Pick:* HKA 1 1/2d6 (2d6+1 w/STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), Armor Piercing (+1/2); OAF (-1)
- 25 *Shovel:* HKA 1 1/2d6 (2d6+1 w/STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2), +2 Increased STUN Multiplier (+1/2); OAF (-1)
- 12 *Armored Costume:* Armor (5 PD/5 ED); IIF (-1/4)
- 6 *Kevlar Vest/Hard Hat:* Armor (6 PD/6 ED); Activation Roll 9- (-1/2), IIF (-1/4)
- 7 *Gas Mask:* Life Support (Self-Contained Breathing); OIF (-1/2)
- 6 *Strong Leaper:* Leaping +1" (4" forward, 2" upward) (Accurate) 1

- 6 *Fast Runner:* Running +3" (9" total) 1
- 3 *Cave Vision:* Nightvision; Extra Time (1 Turn, Only to Activate, -3/4)
- 2 *Echo Discernment:* +3 PER with Hearing Group; Only To Determine Source Of Echos (-2)
- 8 *Vibration Sense:* Detect Ground Vibrations 13- (Touch Group), Range; Requires An Analyze Rock Roll (-1/2), Only When In Contact With The Ground (-1/4)
- 4 *Tracking Over Stone:* Tracking with Sight Group; Requires A Tracking Roll (RSR Skill is subject to Skill vs. Skill contests; -3/4), Only On Earth Or Stone (-1/2)
- 20 *Hiding In Shadows:* Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Only Works In Shadows Or Darkness (-1/2), Chameleon (-1/2), Requires A Stealth Roll (Active Point penalty to Skill Roll is -1 per 20 Active Points; -1/4)

### Talents

- 3 Absolute Distance Sense
- 3 Bump Of Direction
- 2 Eidetic Memory (5 Active Points); Only to Remember Maps And Locations (-2)
- 2 Clutterbug: Environmental Movement (no penalties in cramped spaces)

### Skills

Martial Arts: Kung Fu (Wu Shu)

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 Disarm	-1	+1	35 STR Disarm
4 Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Abort
5 Flying Kick	+1	-2	9d6 Strike
5 Kick	-2	+1	9d6 Strike
4 Knife Hand	-2	+0	HKA 2d6
4 Punch	+0	+2	7d6 Strike
3 Throw	+0	+1	5d6+v/5, Target Falls
8	+2		Damage Classes (already added in)
4			Use Art with Axes, Maces, Hammers, and Picks, Clubs, Karate Weapons, Staffs
3			Analyze: Rock 13-
3			Breakfall 13-
3			Climbing 13-
3			Concealment 13-
3			Deduction 13-
3			Demolitions 13-
3			Interrogation 12-
2			KS: Kung Fu 11-
2			Navigation (Underground) 13-
3			Shadowing 13-
3			Sleight Of Hand 13-
7			SS: Geology 16-
3			Stealth 13-
2			Survival (Underground) 13-

## DIGITAL HERO #33

- 3 Tracking 13-
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Karate Weapons, Staffs

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 279**

**Total Cost: 363**

### 150+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: Hudson City Police Department 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Hunted: Various Organized Crime Groups 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Superiority Complex (Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Vigilante Mentality (Common, Strong)
- 15 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Reputation: Murderous Vigilante, 8- (Extreme)
- 113 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 363**

**Background/History:** Diana Papaconstantinou grew up as the oldest daughter of Andreas “Papa” Papaconstantinou, owner of Papa’s Market, the second largest non-chain grocery store in Hudson City. The family was financially comfortable; she was able to attend the college of her choice, pursuing the career path of her choice — geology. Eventually she earned her doctorate, and an assistant professorship at Hudson City University.

Emotionally, Papa was distant by temperament. While he loved all his children dearly, he had difficulty expressing it. They knew on an intellectual level that he cared for them, but it didn’t sink in on an emotional level, and all grew up with their own emotional issues.

This status quo could have remained if not for a robbery of the store. Five armed men charged into the store early one morning, locked everyone into the manager’s office, and took all the cash in the registers — about three thousand dollars — plus about a hundred dollars’ worth of food. They also shot and killed a young mother as she entered the store halfway through their crime. Five suspects were eventually arrested and tried, and the case seemed like a clear and easy conviction, but much to Diana’s consternation the trial ended in acquittal.

Even that would have been the end, except that the robbers decided to take revenge on Papa. Two mornings after the trial, the same quintet burst into the store and opened fire on anyone who happened to be there, including the owner. They were later convicted of this act, and sentenced to death for seven counts of first-degree murder — but that wouldn’t bring back any of the victims.

Each of the Papaconstantinou children reacted in his or her own way. The oldest, Atlas, took over the store and buried himself in its management. Diana’s younger brother, Jason, turned to religion and became an Orthodox priest. The middle sister, Ophelia, turned to a lifestyle of sex and drugs. The youngest, Aphrodite, committed suicide.

Diana determined to avenge her father’s death in the only way she knew how. The men who killed him were on death row, but she could at least make sure that any other killers would see justice. She put every skill at her disposal to become the source of ultimate justice for criminals — especially murderers — who beat the justice system.

Thus did Hudson City gain one of its most elusive vigilantes: Gravedigger.

### Personality/Motivation: Diana

Papaconstantinou has a severe “superiority complex” — she believes that she is without fault or blame, and this gives her the right and authority to pass judgment on others and carry out her own judgment. When cornered on the morality of her actions, she defends herself by comparing herself with the criminals to whom she dispenses justice — she’s not as bad as they are because she only targets people who kill and get away with it, so that means she’s good.

Her “superiority complex” also dictates that she must *always* be right. Even if presented with absolute proof of her target’s innocence, she’ll just walk away humiliated rather than admit outright that she was mistaken. At best, she’ll try to accuse the person presenting the new evidence of manufacturing the original evidence just to make her look bad.

Besides all that, she reasons, these killers have gone through the legal system and walked away scot free. If she doesn’t do something about them, who will? The Harbinger of Justice has his hands more than full with organized crime and career criminals, and most of the murderers she targets are liable to slip between the cracks of other vigilantes’ agendas. If the system’s already failed and she can’t rely on other vigilantes to handle the problem, she’s just going to have to take matters into her own hands.

**Quote:** “I didn’t dig your grave. You dug it yourself, with the lives you’ve destroyed.”

**Powers/Tactics:** Partly from a genetic predisposition, partly from an expert-level education in geology, and partly from years of experience at spelunking, Diana has an unusually strong affinity with soil, dirt, stone, and minerals.

Her method of operation is simple and straightforward. She lures her prey to some isolated location, where she buries him alive.

She prefers a particular area of the natural tunnel complex near Hudson City: its distance from the entrance makes it hard to find by accident, its soft earthen floor allows her to bury her victims in appropriately deep graves, and its level just two feet above the normal high-tide mark means sea water seeping in through the ground will help the bodies decompose quickly. Slightly over half of her targets are buried there. Other locations she's used include construction sites, remote wooded areas, and many others.

Since most of her targets put up a struggle, she's also an adept fighter. After her father's death, she went into her kung fu training with renewed fervor. Her instructors and family have assumed that this is in itself her method of coping, burying herself into the mental disciplines of martial arts. She's even gone into weapons training, which she uses to good effect with the shovel and pickaxe she carries as Gravedigger.

As Gravedigger, her targets only extend to killers who have "beaten the rap," and who are likely to kill again. She watches the news for anyone in Hudson City or the surrounding areas who fits those criteria.

As desperately as the authorities in Hudson City would like to rein her in, some Assistant District Attorneys have taken to using her spree as a tool, reminding killers that if they're found not guilty they could be left to the tender mercies of Gravedigger. Though often effective, this has backfired at least as often, with the incarceration of many innocent people.

**Campaign Use:** Gravedigger is designed as a "problem vigilante" for a *Dark Champions* — *The Animated Series* campaign. She's a killer who takes the law into her own hands, acting as judge, jury, and executioner — and what makes her particularly dangerous is that her conclusions aren't always right.

She could just as easily be an NPC vigilante in a Vigilante Crimefighting style of *Dark Champions* campaign. Given her expertise with stealth, she could also be an NPC for a street-level *Champions* game; while she'd never be able to go toe-to-toe with a single 350-point superhero, let alone an entire team of them, but they'd have to catch up with her to capture her — and that could be a serious challenge.

For similar reasons, Gravedigger can make a deadly Hunted. Anyone whom she considers to have "gotten away with murder" could become a target. Killers of deadly criminals are generally immune from her wrath, but anyone who is "obviously guilty" of killing one or more innocent victims but has either been acquitted in court or never come to trial could be Hunted by her. Generally she'll only Hunt on a normal level of determination (8 or less), though she'll pursue

a multiple murderer such as a mob boss or assassin more fervently (11 or less) and may drop everything to Hunt a serial killer or terrorist (14 or less).

**Appearance:** Diana Papaconstantinou stands 5'7" tall, and weighs a lean, fit 130 pounds. In her everyday life, she wears bold clothing in bright, solid colors, with her wavy black hair pulled back in a professional-looking ponytail. Her aquiline features and prominent nose clearly belie her nearly pure Greek heritage.

As Gravedigger, she wears brown overalls, a tan work shirt, leather work gloves, a miner's hard hat, and a firefighter's oxygen mask.

