

THE ZODIAC CONSPIRACY



Including
eight pages of
character illustrations
in full living color!

by Doug Shuler

THE ZODIAC CONSPIRACY™

AN ORGANIZATION BOOK FOR CHAMPIONS

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CREDITS

Author/ Designer: Doug Shuler

Editors: John "Bottomless precipice" Brunkhart, Rob "White noise? Hal" Bell, Chad "Most excellent, dudes!" Brinkley

Cover Art: Neal "Spyder" Hanson

Interior Art: Doug Shuler

Layouts: Steve Sullivan

Project Specific Contributions: *Series Editor:* Rob Bell; *Pagemaking:* Kevin Williams; *Layout:* Eileen Smith, Andrew Christensen, Larry Brook, Ted Dinwiddie; *Cover Graphics:* Haines Sprunt.

Dedication — *This book is dedicated to the "Nova Flight", The first and best Champions group I ever played with... way back when they said I oughtta put Zodiac in print!*

Mark "The Proton" Shuler, Roger "Excalibur"

Spendlove, Scott "Vanguard" Spendlove, Rod "Night

Tiger" Griffin, Dave "Cyber" Walsh, Myself (Doug "Sapphire" Shuler)

...And to the memory of Patrick Silvey, one of the founding members of S.W.O.R.D.D.

ICE MANAGEMENT — *Production Manager:* Terry Amthor; *Sales Manager:* Deane Begiebing; *Editing & Development Manager:* Coleman Charlton; *President:* Peter Fenlon; *CEO:* Bruce Neidinger; *Controller:* Kurt Rasmussen.

ICE STAFF — *Licensing:* Kurt Fischer; *Marketing Consultant:* John Morgan; *Print Buyer:* Bill Downs; *Production Supervisor:* Suzanne Young; *Art & Graphics Staff:* I. Haines Sprunt; Lydia Conder; *Editing & Development Staff:* Terry Amthor, Kevin Barrett, Rob Bell, Pete Fenlon, Jessica Ney, John Ruemmler; *Production Staff:* Leo LaDell, Eileen Smith, Larry Brook, Edward Dinwiddie, William Hyde, Jennifer Kleine, Andrew Christensen, Kevin Williams, *Sales & Customer Service Staff:* John Brunkhart, Heidi Hettner, Becky Pope; *Shipping Staff:* John Breckenridge, David Johnson.

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Printed in U.S.A., First Printing 1989

Produced & Distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., the exclusive manufacturer of Hero Games.

STOCK #: 406

ISBN 1-55806-082-0

INTRODUCTION



The Zodiac — astrological symbols from ancient times representing brave heroes and terrible beasts, legends of creation and tools of understanding...

Until now! Recent news reports spoken of a dozen new villains who have taken the names of the twelve major constellations. The members of the Zodiac seem to thrive on mystery, preferring to work at night and keep their opponents guessing! They choose to influence the lives of humankind covertly, much like their astrological namesakes. Theirs is a world of magic and intrigue where superior knowledge can be more important than superior firepower.

The purpose of the Zodiac is to supply a well-rounded group of villains who partake in extremely covert actions. This allows the Gamemaster to create mentally challenging adventures as well as physically challenging ones, giving the players the chance to use their detective work and intuition rather than just brute force.

Included here are the twelve members of the Zodiac, along with descriptions of their powers and personalities. Also included is their base, the Zodiakos Kyklos, their transporters, their evil plots, and several scenarios ready to thrust your heroes into the middle of *The Zodiac Conspiracy*.

WHERE THEY FIT IN

The idea of The Zodiac has been forming for nearly 3,000 years under the care and feeding of Taurus, the group's founder. Its members tend to be reclusive, pitting their enemies against each other and influencing important people from afar. This tactic suits them as it allows them to lay low, letting the blame for most of their crimes pass right by and land on someone else. Zodiac dislikes dealing with the public, and their existence is unknown to the general populace.

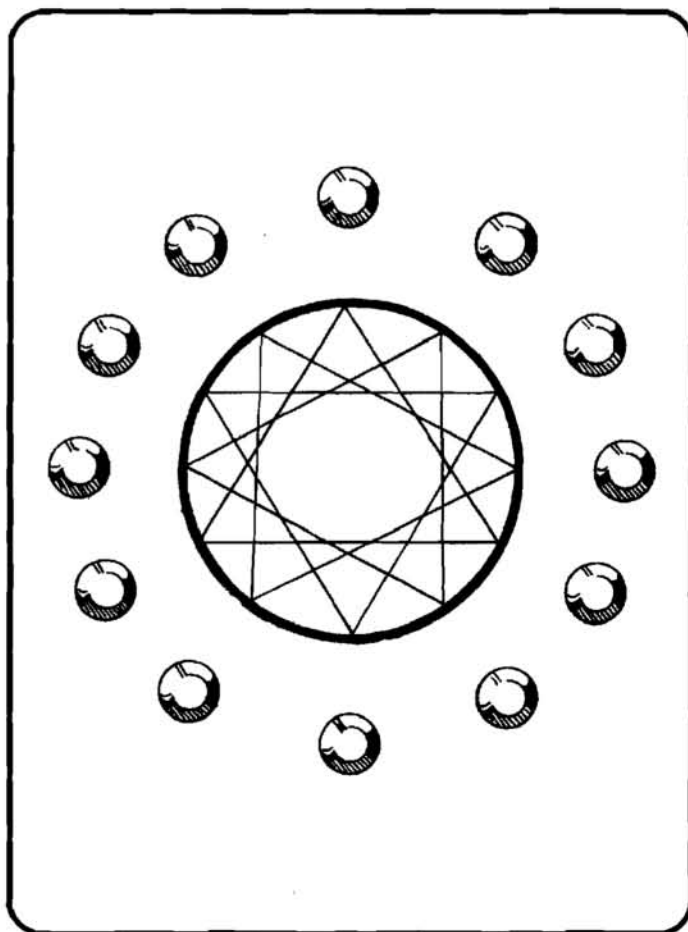
Such a reclusive background will allow any Gamemaster to work the team into his particular campaign, complete with an extensive history, without having Zodiac seem to appear out of nowhere. It also provides ample opportunity for the Gamemaster to set up several nefarious plots, allowing the players to pursue the one that they find most intriguing.

As the players become more familiar with the Zodiac and its members, the villains can become increasingly public, and their crimes can become more heinous. Eventually, if the GM so desires, Zodiac's schemes will climax with a plot to take the world. Alternately, if the GM prefers, Zodiac can remain a quieter group and leave the megalomania to Mechanon and Dr. Destroyer.

HISTORY OF THE ZODIAC

Nearly 3,000 years ago, the minotaur was born as the result of a mating between the god, Zeus and the maiden Europa. Although the offspring of a god, he was born with the size and head of a bull and shunned by the Grecian people. Viewed as a mindless monster, he was tossed into a vast labyrinth which no mortal man could solve.

But Theseus was no mortal man, he was a hero of legend. Through his ingenuity, he realized the only way to solve the labyrinth was to use a ball of yarn. Stringing the yarn out behind him, he entered the maze and eventually found the minotaur, slaying him in a dramatic battle of mind and muscle. Theseus then followed the yarn out of the labyrinth, bearing the treasure which he was sent to retrieve...



But the story doesn't end there! The minotaur was indeed defeated, but the son of a god is not so easily slain! He lay in the bottom of the labyrinth for a dozen score years, bleeding, crying, suffering; all the while plotting the demise of Theseus and imagining the sweet taste of revenge. He eventually healed, but the scars of battle had left their mark. He was missing an arm and lame in one leg, was blinded in one eye, deafened in one ear, and had one of his two horns removed by Theseus as a trophy. Previously, he was a monster led by stupidity, with little to think about beyond food and drink. But after the encounter with the hero, he was driven by rage, forced to think and react, made to have a consciousness.

In this learning period, he realized that he was. He existed. And as such, he must have a goal. Was hunting a hero enough for one of his size? His magnitude? He decided that the answer was no, and that he must think beyond Theseus. But first, to himself. He had to have a name, and what was it the hero had yelled during the attack? "And to this end do I slay thee, Minotaur!"

So he named himself Minos Taurus. He hid out in the labyrinth, allowing the world to pass him by, while he basked in the first light of consciousness. In secret, he stole scrolls from the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Greeks and Romans. He studied by himself, learning and growing all the while, basing his principles on the theories of Socrates, Plato, Euclid and Demosthenes. With the sum of their knowledge, he left the labyrinth permanently to pursue his plans of world conquest. He decided to create a group named the Zodiac. As the stars of the Zodiac resided in the sky above mankind, Taurus vowed that his group would rule over all mortals.

It was then that he met Drynnan Illar, the Satyr of legend. Minos Taurus befriended the Satyr as they were both outcasts from humanity. Moreover, Minos saw Drynnan's magical abilities a perfect compliment to his own budding technological knowledge. Together they plotted the downfall of mankind, each for their own reasons, vowing to be a team until their goal was met, Minos becoming Taurus "the bull", and Drynnan naming himself Capricorn "the goat".

Each searched the world for more candidates for their team as they trained themselves and honed their abilities. Capricorn studied magic with the mystics of the Orient and the wizards of Europe, mastering all manners of necromancy and sorcery. Meanwhile, Taurus studied the philosophy and the sciences. For centuries the two worked together, uncertain of their goals and how to meet them, until, in 1425, Capricorn heard word of a powerful witch being tried in London, England. He traveled there alone to pursue his interest in the black arts when he was unfortunately side-tracked by a young boy named Stephen Masterson.

1437: Stephen turned out to be the child of the witch and was therefore endowed with certain powers. Furthermore, royal blood coursed through his veins, increasing his natural power ten-fold. His special abilities involved weather control, in which he had total mastery. But his skills in other magics suffered, and as a result, the more versatile Capricorn was able to capture him (but not after destroying the London countryside in the resulting magical combat!). Reluctantly, Stephen agreed to join the group as Aquarius, the third member, but only if Capricorn could extend his mortal life. The Satyr prepared a spell for Stephen that would allow him to live virtually forever. Knowing that the same spell might be used by other members as well, he saved it in a pocket dimension for later recall.

1608: The trio remained in seclusion until Taurus, who was experimenting with rudimentary radio technology, accidentally made contact with an intelligent being in orbit behind the moon. He translated its language and began communicating with it, eventually striking up a deal and discovering that it was actually an artificial construct, a sentient supercomputer! The group was allowed to move into the ship which housed it, establishing it as a base and using its abilities of matter transportation to get back and forth. It was aboard the derelict starship that the three of them spent most of their time, and Taurus used the ship to repair his body with cybernetic parts. The ship became known as the Zodiakos Kyklos.



- 1872:**Taurus discovered the demonic beings Ahrgash and Lohwegg, trapped in the same body, caught in a mortal combat between themselves for control. After witnessing them split into two persons, he knew that the pair would be perfect for the position of the Gemini, "the twins". Approaching them, he found that he/they too shared the hatred of mankind that the original three did. As a being with demonic origins, Gemini proved to be immortal as well, not requiring the use of Capricorn's spell.
- 1902:**Cancer "the crab" was added to the group when Gemini went to investigate the incident in Tunguska in which an object struck the Earth, causing millions of square acres of damage. Gemini found the remnants of a starfighter, along with its pilot, and immediately teleported them to the *Zodiakos Kyklos* leaving nothing for the human scientists to find. He found that the mysterious star-traveler was created out of living crystal, and that he had already begun to regenerate (and would forever until slain). As soon as he was well, he joined the Zodiac, perceiving Taurus as his new Supreme War-Commander.
- 1938:**Pisces was asked to join after she was expelled from the undersea kingdom of Atlantis. She became the first person to refuse the Zodiac, choosing to continue her life of rebellion in the waters under the name of "Black Fin". It was not until 1945, when she was injured by a land-dwelling scientist that she accepted the proposal by Taurus, and only then if he could repair her damaged gills. Gemini was partially successful, and thus did Black Fin become Pisces "the fish", Capricorn bestowing her with immortality as well.
- 1973:**Sharron Cattell joined the group after becoming the product of an Army experiment. She was given \$15,000 to partake in genetic tests which weren't fully explained to her. The project, called S.H.I.F.T. was intended to give her small powers of shape changing, but instead made her into a powerful being able to not only alter herself, but other objects and people as well. She was angered at the lack of information provided and chose to keep her abilities secret until she was freed, at which time she became the "Transmuter", and later Libra "the balance". As far as Gemini's research has gone, she has proven immune to aging, though she rarely sits about long enough to allow him to acquire accurate readings. She was the last of the ageless beings to join, the rest of them requiring the help of Capricorn.
- 1977:**Angel Stevens surprised Taurus when she broke into a radio installation and transmitted a tight-beam signal right at the base! She was applying for membership, her detective skills letting her know that they existed and that they were still several members short. She was coming to them instead of waiting for them to come to her! Taurus was impressed by her investigative skills, and allowed her to claim the position she requested, that of Sagittarius, "the archer".

1978:Leo was approached by Taurus and Libra and told that his martial skills were both admirable and in demand. He hadn't taken them very seriously (his own musical career was in full swing), but he listened anyway. They promised him several rewards in return for joining the group, but he refused them all — and then joined anyway! Exactly why, nobody but Leo Lowe knows, and he isn't telling.

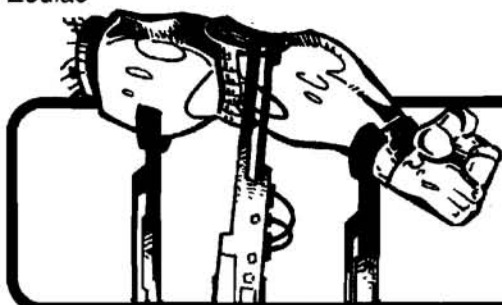
1980:Taurus and Leo heard word of an assassin making expert use of poisons, which intrigued them both greatly. They interrupted Gerald Turner-Antares during one of his assassination runs, angering him greatly. He found it necessary to attack the pair since nobody had ever seen him before during a mission, and he wasn't about to ruin a perfect reputation. Leo defeated him, humbling the assassin and binding him through the ninja code to Taurus. He joined the group, becoming Scorpio "the scorpion".

1981:Daphne Vincenne was born gifted with latent psi powers that didn't surface until she was in her early teens. At this time, she was surrendered over to PSYCHI, a psionics institute that was a front for the villainous PSI (Parapsychological Studies Institute). She learned later that her parents were killed in an auto "accident" caused by the institute, and went berserk. Escaping, she ran to Canada, where she was found cold and hungry by Capricorn. He brought her to the base where the group offered to take her in. She felt wanted, and therefore joined. She named herself Virgo "the virgin" for her mental power of "Pure Thought" (see Virgo).

1988:Karl "The Killer" Knudsen was a professional wrestler until an opponent actually succeeded in unmasking him. At that time, all the public discovered his secret — he had been born with horns! The retarded wrestler didn't know what else to do but fight, so he went on a rampage through New York. After causing millions of dollars in damage, he realized that the police couldn't hurt him; his latent powers had surfaced. Taurus and Virgo arrived on the scene just before the Champions and, after Virgo calmed him, they teleported him to the base. Here he was offered the same gifts as Virgo: a place to stay and a group of friends. Though nearly total opposites, Virgo and Aries, as it turned out, ended up joining Zodiac for the same reasons.

1989:Taurus basks in the glory of his new group, personally instructing them in team tactics and combat, small unit actions, world security, and a dozen other specialties. His dream of 3,000 years has finally manifested, and while the members train, he and Gemini begin planting bugs in high offices, mind control devices in country capitals, chemicals in the world's water, and subconscious messages into television broadcasts. Operation Huxley has been set, and is only waiting the right time to spring...

Today:The Zodiac had finally gone public, first with petty crimes to test their group skills, then with larger ones to further implement their plans, Taurus' dream come true!



CHARACTERS

TAURUS (The Bull)

Val	Char	Cost	100+	DISADVANTAGES
40	STR	30	40	2x STUN and BODY from electrical attacks
20	DEX	30		Berserk 8-, 14- when ignored
25	CON	30	5	Berserk 8-, 14- if Body taken
20	BODY	20	5	Must Pray to Zeus 1/day or 3d6
30	INT	20	20	Disdains Violence
20	EGO	20	15	Megalomania
40	PRE	30	15	Cold and Calculating
10	COM	0	15	Distinctive Looks : Minotaur with Cybernetic parts (difficult, Causes Fear)
8+	PD	0	10	Reputation (Disdains Combat) 11-
5+	ED	0	5	Reputation (intellectual) 8-
5	SPD	20	5	Watched by Gemini 8-
15	REC	4	10	Watched by Greek Gods 8-
50	END	0	5	Rivalry with Gemini
60	STUN	4	121	Villain Bonus

Cost	Powers	END
18	37 pt Multipower, OAF — Axe	
2 u	2d6 Hand to Hand Kill, 1/2 END	1 (4 w/STR)
2 u	+4d6 Hand to Hand Attack, 0 END	0 (4 w/STR)
50	25rPd/25rEd Armor, OIF — Cybernetics	
8	+12" Superleap (20" total), OIF — Cybernetics	4
11	+8" Run (14" total), OIF Cybernetics	3
2	+2 Telescopic Vision, OIF — Cybernetics	
2	Ultrasonic hearing, OIF — Cybernetics	
10	Radar Sense, OIF — Cybernetics	
7	10 pts Flash Defense, OIF — Cybernetics	
3	Simulate Death	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Converstation 17-	
3	Criminology 15-	
3	Deduction 15-	
3	Oratory 17-	
3	Survival 11-	
3	Tactics 15-	
3	KS: Philosophy (based on INT) 15-	
5	KS: History (based on INT) 17-	
1	Familiarity with Disguise 8-	
5	Fluent English (Greek Native)	
9	+3 with Axe	
10	+1 Overall Level	

OCV:7; DCV:7; ECV:7; Phases:3,5,8,10,12

COSTS:	Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base
	208	+ 168	= 376	= 276	+ 100

Vital Statistics: Over 3000 years old (Immortal), 12' tall, 900 lbs., black eyes, brown-red fur, No secret or Public identity, other than as Minos Taurus — a myth.

Background: The leader of any group must present an image of power and confidence, and Taurus is no exception. Taurus is truly divine in origin, having been the result of a mating between god and man. The son of Zeus and Europa, Taurus (then called the "Minotaur") was placed in an impossible maze to live out the rest of his life. It was here that the hero Theseus confronted the minotaur and claimed to have slain him. To the contrary, the critically wounded minotaur was the son of a god and quite immortal. He hid for centuries, beaten, hurt — effectively destroyed. However, the pain brought with it another emotion: anger. The minotaur raged against the pain, and against the man who had caused it. Slowly this rage burned through the minotaur giving him a purpose, and consciousness. He named himself Minos Taurus, and took to studying everything around him. Taurus decided that a being such as himself needed a goal greater than simple vengeance against Theseus. Indeed, his was a greater destiny. He would become ruler of the world; he would dominate mankind, the very species that condemned him to a life of misery.

As his plan grew, so did his knowledge. He left the protection of the labyrinth to scout the world. He soon located the Satyr named Drynnan Illar, with whom he became friends. The pair wandered, Minos Taurus learning about mankind and philosophy; the Satyr refining his magecraft.

Finally, Taurus decided to begin the development of the group he planned to rule the world with. Although Drynnan truly wanted to slay all of mankind for the Fantasy Lords (see Capricorn), he decided to go along with the minotaur for the time being. The two decided to name the group after the twelve signs of the zodiac, Drynnan becoming Capricorn and Minos Taurus becoming Taurus.

And thus Taurus wandered the Earth under the protective spells of Capricorn, disguised as a mortal such that he might learn about humanity from its greatest scholars. He knew Socrates, Plato, Demosthenes, Euclid, Kepler, and Copernicus. He studied with Newton, Brahms, DaVinci, Michaelangelo, Beethoven, and Einstein. Throughout his years, he came to understand humans and their motivations in a way that few mortals ever have. Taurus was also able to consolidate the latest technological achievements from all over the globe, keeping well ahead of human technology.



In 1608, Taurus stumbled upon radio technology and beamed a message into space. His call was answered from an object orbiting the moon. He opened a conversation with it, finding it to be a sentient starship that abandoned its crew and came here to escape a war. Apparently, it had been built as a space platform where peace negotiations between star-faring races could speak. When war threatened, the platform teleported all aboard to their respective planets and entered hyperspace, ending up about the Earth. It had been there for nearly one million years, hiding behind the moon, before being discovered by Taurus.

The minotaur made friends with the starship, and then asked if it could provide proper atmosphere for him. It complied by actually changing itself into another vessel, and then teleported him aboard itself! He declared the ship to be the new base for the Zodiac, calling it the Zodiakos Kyklos. The ship was also able to provide a more direct service. Intended as a peace-ship, it had extensive (and advanced) medical facilities. Using its cybernetics lab, Taurus was able to completely rebuild his still-shattered body.

With his new base and improved form, Taurus began recruiting for his team in earnest. He has since succeeded in creating a group that he is confident will enable him to conquer and control the world.

Personality: Although he dislikes killing (and often spares heroes from other Zodiac members), Taurus will not allow this to stand in the way of his goals. As a partial god, he was too human to enter Mount Olympus, yet remained divine enough to be placed above the rest of humanity. For this reason, he wishes to rule humankind, though not through blind worship as his ancestors did, but rather through the politics and minds of men. He not only wants to conquer the world, but wants humanity to accept his rule willingly.

Although Taurus was once a raging, mindless beast, almost no vestiges of his heritage remain. Indeed, Taurus has buried his anger, along with most other strong emotions, under a cultured, serene veneer. He almost never loses his temper, and always seems to be "in control" of a situation. Taurus is overwhelmingly charismatic, though somewhat frightening at the same time. His studies and wisdom have given him the ability to lead almost anyone, which he applies to the members of the Zodiac at all times. He treats them well, even though he is often strict, rewarding success differently in each case depending on the member in question, and punishing failure on a similarly individual basis. Because of his intrapersonal skills, Taurus has been able to keep the tumultuous group together through the hardest of times, as impossible as it may seem.

Over time, Taurus has become almost a father-figure for several of the members. Truly, Aries has vowed his life to the minotaur for the compassion showed him by Taurus, while Sagittarius admires his strength and relentlessness, as well as his age.

Taurus talks in a low bass voice, almost below the ability of the human ear to hear, and he is always willing to listen to reason. It is rumored that he visits the world's leaders and geniuses under the protective disguises of Capricorn's spells, often even stopping to talk to a superhero group leader, just for an intelligent conversation.

Powers/ Tactics: Taurus disdains personal combat and will gladly reason his way out of it. This is not because he is unable, quite to the contrary. He is so able in combat, he has often accidentally killed an opponent, making him regret the encounter in the first place. He has grown to prefer a more civil way to settle a dispute — talk. (Of course, Taurus is an exceptionally good arguer as well)

When he must fight, Taurus uses an Atomic Axe given to him by the ship to immobilize the opponent's leader, realizing that when the leader has fallen, the group often follows.

Additionally, Taurus was given a "gift" by his father in the form of Divine Power. Now, whenever he becomes enraged or emotionally charged, he has access to a 50 point Variable Power Pool which may be placed anywhere, though this most often goes to his Strength. It will manifest itself only for a short time, however, since Taurus wishes to refuse the old gods for their rejection, and has accordingly learned to control his anger.

Appearance: Taurus goes entirely nude, with the exception of the Zodiac Pin on his chest (all members have one). His fur is a reddish brown, and his cybernetic parts are silver.

Quote: "All through history, mortals have desired the guidance of the divine. So shall they ask, so shall they receive!"

GEMINI (The Twins)					
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Dadvantages	
25/20	STR	10	20	2x STUN from Cold attacks	
20	DEX	30	10	2x BODY from Holy attacks	
25	CON	30	10	Enraged 14-, 11- if Zodiac	
10	BODY	0		member "fouls up"	
38	INT	28	20	3d6 per turn on Holy Ground	
10	EGO	0	5	Must be all together 1/day or 3d6	
10	PRE	0	20	Schizophrenic	
10	COM	0	15	Persistent and Driven	
5+/4+	PD	0	15	Megalomania	
6+/5+	ED	0	15	Distinctive Features: Unholy	
5	SPD	20		Aura (Unconcealable, Noticed)	
15	REC	12	10	Reputation (Schizophrenic) 11-	
70	END	10	5	Watched by Taurus 8-	
40	STUN	4	10	Watched by Demon Lords 8-	
Cost		Powers			END
14	Elemental Control-Demon Powers *\$				
a-14	20rPd/20rEd Forcefield, 1/2 END (Unholy Aura)				1
b-12	10d6 Energy Blast, No Knockback (firebolt)				5
c-14	25" Teleport				5
142	Duplication				
6	5pts Density Increase, Always On, Not when duplicated, stats already figured in				
4	Mind Link with Duplicate, Only when Duplicated				
20	20 pt Variable Power Pool (gadgets)				
3	Control cost, OAF — Gadgets, Only				
	Changes in Lab, Gadgets don't duplicate				
15	Danger Sense vs all percieveable threats 11-				
15	3d6 luck				
5	Cramming				
3	Lightning Calculator				
3	Bugging 17-				
3	Climbing 13-				
3	Computer Programing 17-				
3	Interrogation 13-				
3	Electronics 17-				
3	Tactics 17-				
3	Demolitions 11-				
9	Weaponsmith (all groups) 11-				
18	Familiarity with all weapons				
3	Inventor 17-				
3	Mechanics 11-				
3	Security Systems 17-				
5	Science 14-				
2	KS: Demon Politics 11-				
2	AK: Abyss 11-				
10	+1 Overall Level				
* Powers are at 1/2 Strength when Gemini is Duplicated					
\$ Not on holy ground					
OCV:7; DCV:7; ECV:3; Phases:3,5,8,10,12					
COSTS: Char Powers Total Disadv Base					
154 + 343 = 497 = 397 + 100					

Vital Statistics: Ageless (on this plane, just over 115. Immortal), 6'0", 180 lbs., glowing yellow eyes, black hair, Identities: Ahrgash and Lohwegg, Secret Identity: Damien Connors.

Background: The eighth plane of hell, it is said, is ruled by the demon Mephistopheles. On this plane of existence, the world is eternally darkened by clouds of ash and rains of sulfuric acid. The ground goes on for eternity, the plane's surface broken only by the near-bottomless pits. In these dark chasms a dozen miles deep, minor demons roost, waiting for the calling of their lord and the chance to leave the abysmal hells. For a hundred millennia these demons served, unerringly, watching the passage of the deadly sun and the starless night in anticipation of an assignment.

But not all demons awaited their assignments with mindless equanimity. Two of them began to have thoughts not allowed by the rulership, and began to plan. "Ahrgash" and "Lohwegg" were their names, names not soon forgotten in the depths of the eighth plane. The first, Ahrgash, was a schemer whose and often led assaults on other planes. As a result, he knew the ways laws worked for men, and how they followed them. Brave and menacing, he always tried to strike first and laugh last. He hated the demon Lohwegg for his intelligence and persistence, but saw him a necessary tool for his plan. Lohwegg, on the other hand, was calmer and *much* more "scientifically" creative. He would build the magico-technological death machines used in Mephistopheles' campaigns of conquest and was often ordered to spy on the enemy to learn what they had built. He hated Ahrgash for his lack of subtlety, but knew the other demon's tactical abilities and grand schemes would make a good compliment for his own boundless intelligence. Each demon planned to double-cross the other once Mephistopheles was overthrown.



For yet another century these two demons plotted and schemed, planning to overthrow the lord of the eighth plane and to rule to wastes. Ahrgash would come up with the sweeping, all-encompassing plans, and then Lohwegg would create the devices necessary to carry them to completion. However, Mephistopheles has spies everywhere, and eventually heard the plan floating in the sands of the desert and echoing through the chasms. Angered, he summoned Ahrgash and Lohwegg to his palace. Upon their arrival, the demon lord had already sealed their fate for speaking against him; eternal damnation in the land of the mortals. At first, the two rejoiced, overwhelmed that he had not only spared them, but was going to send the pair to a plane not of hell. Then, they learned of the other half of the deal; they were fated to spend this damnation in the same body!

They arrived by Mephistopheles' power on Earth in 1870 and went nearly insane in the first 3 months. The being wandered about America for almost two years trying to make the best of its life. On multiple occasions, one of the demons attempted suicide in hopes of returning to the underworld in separate parts. This was indeed the plan of the demon lord, hoping the pair would realize their place. In a desperate fight, the two reasoned with themselves, using both combat and logic to win the other one over. In this show for power, they accidentally split into two separate identical entities, with the same appearance and characteristics. They came to know that their old lord's power was not absolute, and that they could separate at will. Using this power, they would take over the world of the mortals, and then the planes of hell themselves. They were inducted as members of the Zodiac mere months later as Gemini — the twins.

Personality: Gemini is a dual being, and both halves are evil, plain and simple. Ahrgash is a megalomaniacal schemer whose grandiose plans take no concern for the lives they destroy. Lohwegg is a soulless magical scientist who considers *anything* a valid subject for an experiment. The two demons have been sharing the same body for over a century and have gotten used to it. Though they still don't trust each other and scheme against each other, each demon recognizes that he needs his "other half" if he is ever to complete his goals. Gemini solves most of his problems simply by answering them himself. He devises most of the Zodiac projects by himself... or by THEMSELVES, if so be the case, consulting Taurus only rarely, and even then only to seek the approval of a finished plan. Being one of the two real leaders of Zodiac, he cares for his plots intensely, almost as if they were his own flesh and blood.

Powers/ Tactics: Gemini's primary power is the ability to Duplicate. When he does this, one half becomes all white, the other becomes all black. They will almost always fight together. Unfortunately, Gemini's defenses are less than great. Because of his weaknesses, he will prevent any tampering with his other half, assuming one has been knocked out, and he will only Duplicate if the occasion dictates such a drastic measure. He has been known, however, to split himself for pleasurable pursuits as well, such as reading "War and Peace" and "The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire" at the same time.

When Gemini designs or invents something, it is not like a simple earth invention. Gemini (Lohwegg) was a scientist in magico-technology, that is, using magical devices and magical technology. Thus his inventions will always seem magical, they may smell of brimstone or be powered by a summoned demon. Most characters probably would have nothing to do with any of them.

Appearance: Gemini is dressed entirely in an alternating black/ white outfit. As Damien Connors, a high priced mob lawyer, he has black hair and pale skin, as well as millions of dollars and a huge estate in the Colorado Rockies.

Quote: "If worlds can be made in a week, then why can't we take one in a day?!"

CANCER (The Crab)					
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages	
50	STR	30	20	2x STUN and BODY from Sonic attacks	
23	DEX	39		Emotionless Warrior	
25	CON	30	20	Never Flees Combat	
15	BODY	10	15	Loyal to Zodiac	
10	INT	0	15	Poor Understanding of Earth Culture	
11	EGO	2	15	Distinctive Features: Crystal Alien (unconcealable,strong)	
15	PRE	5		Hunted by Mete 8-	
8	COM	-1	20	Villain Bonus	
14+	PD	2			
14+	ED	7	15		
5	SPD	17	87		
15	REC	4			
50	END	0			
48	STUN	0			
Cost			Powers		END
10	Elemental Control- Rock/Crystal Powers				6
a-7	Density Increase (10 pts) Always on, Characteristics already figured in				
b-38	15rPd/17rEd Armor				
c-30	6" 6 DEF Tunneling, can fill in Tunnels				
2	+1" Running (7" total)				
5	+10 Strength, only for grabs				
20	-10" Knockback resistance				
11	2 Body Regeneration, 1 recovery/hour				
5	Mind Link with Ship				
10	Universal Translator, OAF — Translation Box				
3	Lightsleep				
7	Combat Pilot 16-				
3	Weaponsmith (Beam Weapons) 11-				
2	Familiarity with Beam Weapons				
1	Familiarity with Tactics 8-				
8	+1 with Combat				
OCV:8; DCV:8; ECV:4; Phases:3,5,8,10,12					
COSTS: Char Powers Total Disadv Base					
145 + 162 = 307 = 207 + 100					

Vital Statistics: 107 years old (not including time in suspended animation. Immortal). 5'1", 1600 lbs., Identity: Lok-480K

Background: In 1902, a strange object struck the Earth in Tunguska. Scientists theorized it to be a meteor, or perhaps a comet. Others thought it to be a loose piece of antimatter. In any case, the event did not go unnoticed by the Zodiac, in their base high above the planet. Gemini teleported to the crater left by the blast hours before the area was safe for human exploration. He found the wreckage of a starfighter of extraordinary alien design. He also found a wounded pilot lying in the rubble!

He brought all of the pieces back to the base for study, finding that the starfighter had been grown out of a rock-like material, and the pilot had nearly the same genetic code as the fighter. Indeed, the pair were linked only to operate together, making the revival of the pilot all the more vital. Recovery soon came, but not through Gemini; the creature had begun to regenerate on its own, the rock actually regrowing. The pilot's wounded pieces grew back together, and after being hooked to a universal translator, he was able to tell his story.

He said his name was Lok-480K and that he had been genetically engineered as a combat unit. He would continually regenerate until he was shut off by his leaders back in the Tressilaine Empire. He was one of over a million Lok units being used in the Battle of Donyar VIII when his fighter was shot in the stabilizers over an unimportant moon. As a single soldier, he was too unimportant to chase down. Instead, his out-of-control starfighter was allowed to hurtle through the void of space where he eventually lost all power and succumbed to the cold. He blacked out.

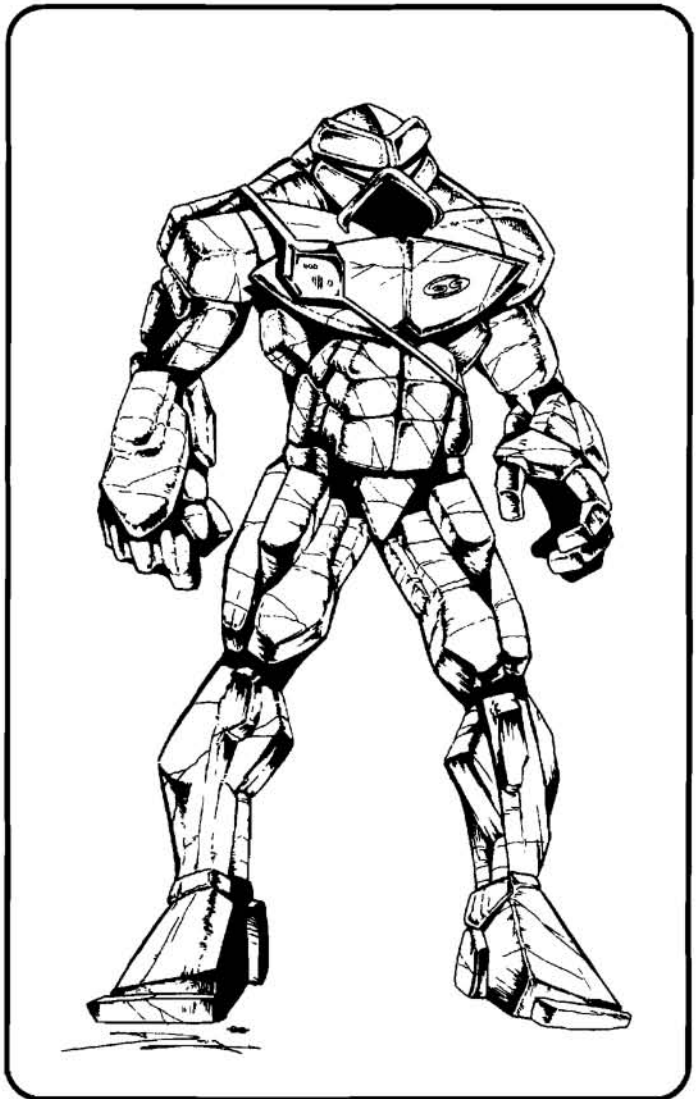
The next thing he remembers is being revived, staring up at the half/half face of Gemini. Having no current leaders (he assumes that he wandered the stars in suspended animation for eons, his old Empire having long since dissolved), he pledged his life to the Zodiac, believing a warrior must be a part of a unit or he is nothing. He became Cancer the crab soon afterwards, and has been in the position ever since.

Personality: Solid as stone, obedient as a slave, determined to kill; it is these qualities with which LOK-480K became Cancer. Being bred for combat, Cancer has only one purpose in life; to fight. Generally, he doesn't care who he is fighting against, only for whom. To abandon one's own forces during a war is tantamount to slow torture, and he will never betray the Zodiac. He rarely speaks, and only then to share information and not opinions. He has no emotions, and does not understand human jokes or sympathies. Virgo is certain that Cancer does have the ability to share emotions and she claims to have felt them from him before. He denies it, though she continually tries to instigate certain emotional outbursts in him, such as victory or regret, just to make him come out of his shell.

Powers/Tactics: Cancer has powerful grasping hands that, once gripped on something, are nearly impossible to break free of. His attacks are most often delivered at point blank range; LOK-480K was programmed to storm enemy posts as well as pilot starfighters, and was given ample armor for such an attack. He will face the enemy squarely, accepting defeat only at the cost of his own life. Otherwise, he doesn't care how he fights and has no preference of one power over another.

Appearance: Cancer has no Secret Identity and wears no clothing on his orange-tan, rock-like hide, with the exception of the translator given him by Gemini. It's a Focus for his speech, and without it he's mute.

Quote: "Death before Dishonor. Long live Emperor Taurus!"



LEO (The Lion)					
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages	
30	STR	20	10	Berserk 8-, 11- when cornered	
35	DEX	75	15	Enraged 14-,11- In combat	
23	CON	26	10	Enraged 11-,8- When blood	
15	BODY	10		(BODY) drawn	
10	INT	0	15	Hedonist/ Fun Loving	
11	EGO	2	15	Loves Combat	
20	PRE	10	20	Overconfidence	
10	COM	0	15	Reputation: Blood Thirsty 8-	
6+	PD	0	15	Reputation: Rock Star 14-	
5+	ED	0	15	Hunted by Champions 8-	
7	SPD	25	10	Hunted by Police 8-	
10	REC	6	15	Secret ID (Leo Lowe)	
60	END	7	10	Public ID (Rock Performer)	
42	STUN	0	81	Villain Bonus	
Cost	Powers			END	
22	2d6 HKA, Armor Piercing,			4 (5 w/STR)	
	OAF — sword				
20	Martial Arts (Kung Fu)				
	Maneuvers	OCV	DCV	Damage	
	* Punch	+0	+2	8d6	
	* Block	+2	+2	Block	
	* Throw	+0	+1	6d6+v/5	
	* Disarm	-1	+1	40 STR disarm	
	* Dodge	—	+5	Dodge	
	* Weapons Kata with swords				
12	+7rPd/+6rED Armor, based on DEX roll				
18	+9"Running (15" total)			3	
10	2 Body Regeneration, 11-				
15	Missile Deflection vs all physical attacks 16-				
3	Infravision				
4	+2 Enhanced Hearing				
10	Tracking Scent				
7	1/2 END cost on STR			1	
15	Danger Sense vs all perceptable threats 11-				
3	Acrobatics 16-				
3	Breakfall 16-				
3	Climbing 16-				
3	Concealment 11-				
3	Stealth 16-				
3	Seduction 13-				
3	Tracking 11-				
3	PS:Singing (based on PRE) 13-				
3	PS:Dancing (based on DEX) 16-				
OCV:12; DCV:12; ECV:4; Phases:2,4,6,7,9,11,12					
COSTS:	Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base
	183	+ 183	= 346	= 246	+ 100

Vital Statistics: 30 years old (Apparent age 27, under Capricorn's Immortality spell), 5' 9", fiery red hair (with golden streaks), tanned skin, 170 lbs., Secret Identity: Leo Lowe

Background: Not only does Leo possess the power and speed of his namesake, his innate aggression adds to the deadliness of this combination. Leo Lowe was born in Germany in 1960 as Leo Donnerstrasse. As a child, he became increasingly interested in both music and showy, in-your-face karate. By the age of 14, he had already joined a band as a member of the stage crew, setting up electrical effects and carting about the equipment. The band traveled about from bar to bar, trying to make a living off of tips and minimal wages, while Leo himself learned to be an accom-

plished guitar player. Finally, he and his roadie friends, all about 18 and just out of school, had had enough of the poor lifestyle and low income. The group was near Berlin when the leader of the band, Dirk Reubens, decided that they needed money if they were to survive. After the show was over, the support crew sneaked their way into the band's special effects truck to find the safe they knew was hidden there. In the darkness, one of the boys tripped over a hot wire which touched the side of the truck. The resulting explosion of sparks set off most of the special effects gear. Fireworks were lighted, explosive chemicals were mixed, and gasoline tanks were spilled.

The foursome was rescued and brought to a nearby hospital. After a few days, two of the boys had died due to the poisons in their bloodstreams. The third boy died a week later, again from the poisonous chemicals from the explosion. Leo, however, was more fortunate. Comatose for nearly a month, his consciousness was aware of what was happening to his body. Finally, he began to slip. As his vital signs worsened, his mind screamed silently for his body to revitalize. His karate training returned to him as he remembered himself. He had touched something within himself which activated, and he immediately began to regenerate. Within two days he was up and walking, and the third saw him out of the hospital and signing a contract with the band as its new guitarist. Since then, he has formed his own band taking his former name as its own, the "Donnerstrasse" (Thunder-Street), and has 8 number-one songs on a total of 9 albums. Donnerstrasse is one of the most popular bands on the circuit today, going on tour every other year and having several videos in play at any given time.

In 1978, before his career was in full swing, he was approached by Taurus and Libra and offered the proposition of joining Zodiac. He was reluctant at first, but after being told that his "accident" in the special effects truck wasn't just chance and that Gemini had actually seen to it that he survive through genetic altering, he decided to join. He is now one of the most fanatic members and participates in most every exploit, though his exact motivations are still a mystery. He learned that his new-found aggression was caused by the



experiment performed by Gemini while he lay on his death bed. Apparently, Gemini devised a plan to alter the genes of someone such that they were combined with those of a lion, granting the person great strength. Taurus approved the plan, but only if it was conducted on someone that was going to die, anyway. A little research turned up the name of Leo Donnerstrasse, and some engineering resulted in Leo, the Lion. Gemini has since determined that Leo is continually becoming more and more like a lion, his power growing with no end in sight.

Personality: Leo practices karate daily more as a formality than a necessity, actually preferring the dance trips he and Virgo frequently take. He has found the good life through his musical career and can now sit back and relax. He joined the group, amongst other reasons, so that he could have a place away from the continual torment of his fans and the press. Secondly, he has a unique berserker fury, and being a villain is a perfect way to fight without spoiling his fame. A third suggested motivation is the possibility that he feels some gratitude towards Gemini for saving his life and is just waiting for the perfect time to save Gemini's in return.

Leo cares little for the letter of whatever plan the group might be currently undertaking, but he insures that the orders of Taurus and Gemini are carried out. Indeed, he has become the group's field-commander, taking charge when fights are inevitable and working with the group to perfect their combat coordination.

Leo almost always agrees with Taurus and has developed a relationship of mutual admiration with the minotaur. He can often be found trying to convince Taurus to get into trouble "for the fun of it", just to get the minotaur to reveal a lighter side to his personality which Leo is certain exists. When Taurus goes anywhere to conduct business, such as during negotiations with a hero group or member, he will take Leo along for protection, as the young man's speed is a nice compliment to the minotaur's strength.

During off-hours, Leo might be found romancing one of his fans, catching up on the latest videos, practicing the electric guitar with cold pizza and warm beer, or working out in the danger room (again, half-heartedly) with his two swords. There is little special about them, except that he has developed exceptional skill with them and calls them his "claws". Gemini has offered to invent some special swords for him, though Leo continually refuses as he wishes not to become dependant on a material object in combat.

Powers/ Tactics: In combat, Leo will always prefer a straight battle to stealthy tactics and double-talk. He is thrilled when Taurus gives him the go-ahead for a fight, but is disciplined enough to know when the interests of the group are at stake. He will use his swords whenever he can, though he need not rely on them. His skill in unarmed combat is also formidable, and the hapless hero who thinks to "disarm" him by stealing his foci may be in for a nasty surprise.

Leo sometimes goes into a battle frenzy when blood is drawn, causing him to go Berserk. He comes out of this only when the fight is over. Several heroes have been sent to the hospital over this, a fact which has upset Taurus time and time again.

Appearance: Leo wears a light grey body suit, broken up here and there by black bands and silver spikes. About his right leg he wears a red scarf, matching the color of his hair.

Quote: "Missed me — again! Here, watch this (Smack!)"

VIRGO (The Virgin)				
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages
10	STR	0	15	Fun Loving and Playful
11	DEX	3	15	Rebellious teenager mentality
23	CON	26	10	Feels Guilty fighting Heroes
10	BODY	0	10	Loves using powers
23	INT	13	10	Watched by Zodiac 11-
23	EGO	26	10	Watched by Aries 14-
10	PRE	0	20	Hunted by PSI 11-
20	COM	5	15	Secret Identity (Daphne Vincennes)
2+	PD	0	79	Villain Bonus
5+	ED	0		
4	SPD	19		
10	REC	6		
60	END	7		
30	STUN	3		
Cost		Powers		END
51	90 pt Multipower, requires skill roll, gestures			6 6 6 6 5 3 2 3 <

Vital Statistics: 23 years old (apparently 20 under Capricorn's Immortality spell), 5' 7", 102 lbs., auburn hair, violet eyes, Secret Identity: Daphne Vincenne

Background: In early 1974, at the age of eight, little Daphne Vincenne was found to be gaining information that would normally be inaccessible to her. She would wake up from a night's sleep with full knowledge of a new language, or be able to do advanced mathematics otherwise unknown to an eight year old. It was realized that she had an incredible memory, but to have knowledge she had no exposure to was inexplicable. For a short while, her parents ignored the occurrences, thinking it might be a "phase" Daphne was going through. Soon their daughter was speaking languages from Russian to Hebrew, Arabic and Latin to Egyptian and Chinese. Daphne argued the laws of relativity with her teddy bears, and recited Shakespeare in her mirror.

It was only when she started to predict the stock market with 100% accuracy that her parents began to take interest. They called an American-based institution from their home in Canada. This organization was known as PSYCHI (the Psionics Superiority Central Headquarters Incorporated).

Several appointments for interviews were made and the institute soon accepted Daphne as a student. Unknown to the Vincenne family, PSYCHI was merely a front for PSI. PSYCHI would weed out potential psionic persons from the public and offer them membership without the stigma of being a villain organization.

Her family wanted to make a killing on the stock market, while PSI wished to train her in the arts of mental assassination. In either event, she would be used to someone else's ends, which upset her greatly. PSYCHI informed Daphne's parents that she was a special case and would have to stay for further observation, perhaps several months. She was formally trained in the arts of Telekinesis, Telepathy, Mind Scanning, Mental Illusions and a myriad of other disciplines. The institute realized that her parents would soon be wanting her back, a fact that was simply impermissible, and sent out mental assassins to kill them. These assassins ensured that her parents suffered a terrible auto "accident".

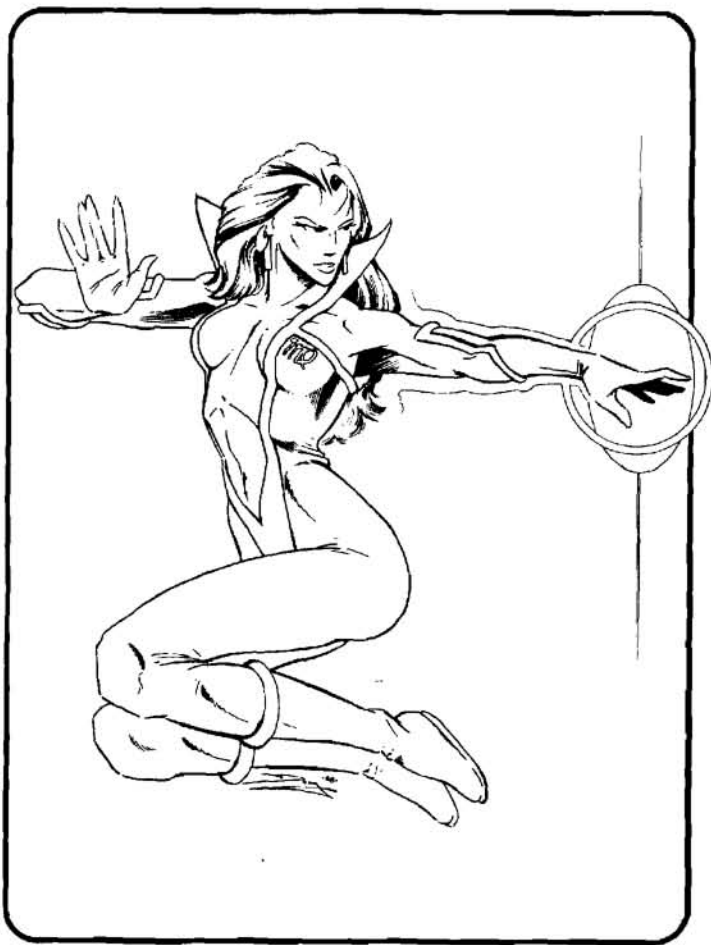
For several years, Daphne had nightmares of her parents' death, each time the details becoming more vivid. Meanwhile, she was sent on many a mission for PSI, performing admirably and gaining a reputation amongst hero groups as the "Violet Lotus" (named after a deadly flower, though she loathed the title). Daphne came to enjoy the good life to which PSYCHI gave her access, until one day in 1980, when her dreams told her the true reason her parents died... PSYCHI itself!

In a terrific battle of minds, Daphne assaulted the PSI guards, leaving them mindless idiots, then fled before more powerful PSI mentalists could arrive (For more information on PSI, see the HERO product *Mindgames*).

Having made her escape, she ran north towards her home in Canada. She knew that if PSI operatives found her, she would last only moments. Finally, she ran into a strange person who resembled a satyr. Afraid she had been found, she assaulted the creature, though her mental powers proved to be useless against the magical defenses the satyr invoked. When she was worn out, he told her he was Capricorn, and that she was safe. The pair then Teleported to the Zodiakos Kyklos.

Here she stayed for several days and recuperated until a group meeting was finally called. She was allowed to join the group as the Virgo, though she didn't understand why. Gemini explained that her powers were gained through the mutant ability of total mind control, in which she could direct 80 to 90% of her brain's power towards one activity, while most humans could only control 10% or so. This unusual amount of control allowed her to formulate ideas that were uninterrupted by stray thoughts, allowing her to concentrate completely on the task at hand. The institute had called this "Virgin Thought" and valued it highly. By 1981, she had become a full fledged member as Virgo.

Personality: Virgo's youth and vitality make her the friendliest of Zodiac's members, although she is fully capable of looking out for herself. In general, Virgo lives life to the fullest. She is bouncy and perky, never taking anything too seriously. She has become quite the symbol of youth within the Zodiac, a bright light amidst the grim gloom of the elder members. She is also the epitome of the modern teenager. She spends dizzying amounts of money on the latest fashions, an equal amount on compact discs, and loves to go dancing just about every night (escorted by Leo). Indeed, she has quite a crush on the handsome rock star, and loves being seen in public with him.



Virgo's apparent lack of wisdom and self-control is primarily escapism, she prefers the innocence of youth to the experience of adulthood. Because of her tendencies for dancing in the hallways of the Zodiakos Kyklos, putting her feet on the table at meetings, and taking off to nightclubs every evening, she has begun to get on the nerves of some of the members. Libra simply looks down her nose at the younger female, acting as a cat might to a kitten. Aquarius lectures her on proper conduct, and Sagittarius has grown so upset that she refuses to talk about or otherwise acknowledge Virgo's rebellious displays. On the other hand, Aries is quite affectionate, because Virgo has all the qualities he lacks: youth, frailty, beauty and love of life. Virgo knows this, and although she doesn't necessarily feed the fire, she does keep it alive since Aries is her prime guardian. Gemini looks on coldly at her playful acts, almost wincing at her occasional hugs, but Taurus smiles at her vitality, seeing it as one of the few redeeming values of humankind.

Virgo is often in mental contact with the other members, unknown to most of them, and had become aware of most of their psychological profiles. While she keeps secret about most things, if a problem should arise, she will report to Taurus immediately.

Powers/ Tactics: Virgo is still new in the hero/ villain business, despite her years under the control of PSI, and feels very uncomfortable in combat. Leo has been working with her, but is having some trouble as psionics are foreign to him. Virgo feels guilty attacking heroes if they haven't directly hurt her. Once a hero injures or even attacks her, however, memories of her parents and how the institute

treated her begin to haunt her, overwhelming any feelings of pity. In combat, Virgo is aware of the limits of her defenses and makes use of the fact that her attacks have no range modifiers. For these reasons she will stay out of the direct assault, standing Invisible on a nearby building and providing support. She prefers to defeat an opponent through the use of intelligence. As a basic rule of thumb, she will hit an opponent with a power that won't injure them, but will keep them out of the combat (Force Wall is a good one).

She will always remember who has hurt her in the past, as she has a flawless memory, and although she normally doesn't want to fight at first, she will have little problems attacking any hero who has ever done her harm. Also, she has the limitation of having to direct her Pure Thought by pointing at her target. If she is ever tied up or her hands are restrained she will be rendered powerless.

Appearance: Virgo wears a violet costume that has yellow and white trim. She has chosen violet as it matches both her eyes and the color of her special effects. Her hair is auburn and her skin is fair.

Quote: "If you gotta do something, you might as well have fun at it."

LIBRA (The Balance)					
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages	
10	STR	0	10	2x Effect from Transformation attacks	
23	DEX	39			
30	CON	40	15	Cynical	
10	BODY	0	20	Overconfidence	
10	INT	0	15	Hates Heroes	
10	EGO	0	10	Reputation: Hates Heroes 8-	
10	PRE	0	10	Watched: Aquarius 11-	
20	COM	5	15	Hunted by Champions 8-	
15	PD	13	10	2d6 Unluck	
15	ED	9	10	Public ID	
5	SPD	17	122	Villain Bonus	
12	REC	8			
60	END	0			
30	STUN	0			
Cost			Powers		END
75	75 pt Multipower				
5 u	Shapeshift into anything, 1/2 END				2
6 m	Growth (30 pts) (+5 STR, +1 Body, +1 Stun, -1"KNB, per 5 pts)				3
6 m	Shrinking (30 pts) (-2 PER, +2 CV, +3" KNB per 10 pts)				3
7 u	2d6 major Transformation, variable, cumulative				7
10	Power Defense (10 pts)				
5	Mental Defense (7 pts)				
20	10rPd/10rEd Armor, 14-				
30	Find Weakness with all attacks 11-				
12	+4 Perception				
3	Concealment 11-				
9	Disguise 14-				
3	Acting 11-				
3	Mimicry 11-				
3	Streetwise 11-				
1	Familiarity with seduction 8-				
1	Familiarity with mode0ling 8-				
OCV:8; DCV:8; ECV:3; Phases: 3,5,8,10,12					
COSTS:	Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base
	131	+	206	=	337
				=	237
					+ 100

Vital Statistics: 35 years old (Immortal), 5' 9" (variable), 118 lbs. (variable), green eyes (variable), ashen hair (variable), Secret Identity: Sharron Cattell.

Background: Sharron Cattell was born in 1953 in New York city. At the age of eight, her parents were killed as bystanders in a hero-villain clash. She began to hate the hero, "Sunwarrior", for causing the accident and not seeing that she was well taken care of. Having no living relatives, Sharron was forced to live on the streets of New York, stealing what she could for food and money. Her hate towards Sunwarrior grew until it encompassed all superheroes. On several occasions, someone tried to put her in an orphanage, though that never worked out. She became mixed up in smuggling by the age of 12, and at 14 was "hired" by a child pornographer. Forced to grow up early, she had a truly misplaced childhood — she was a girl with a vacant stare and a reason to kill.

When she was 16, she heard that the government was looking for "willing recipients" for a series of tests, and that a large amount of money was being offered. She left New York to take the job, hoping for a chance to pull herself "out of the slime where Sunwarrior had put her. Arriving at the research facility in Tucson, Arizona, she learned that the experiment was named S.H.I.F.T. (Super Human Infantry Field Trooper) and consisted of some simple exposure to radiation. She was elated at the possibility of gaining super powers. If she was lucky she might even be able to avenge herself on Sunwarrior!

She underwent the treatments and was paid her \$15,000. It was then that the government showed her the fine print on her contract; she had to stay at the base for further observation. For three years she was watched, but no development became apparent (at least to the researchers...Sharon was fully aware of the abilities she had acquired!). She learned that the experiments were designed to turn humans into living protoplasm, able to change shape at will.. Familiar with being controlled and cheated by others, she devised a plan. She stayed for the full duration of the experiment, practicing her abilities and improving her skills in secret, while at the same time hiding the changes from the scientists. She learned that not only could she change her shape and appearance, but could also alter her mass, size, and coloration as well. Lastly, she learned how to change the forms of everything about her at the slightest whim into whatever she wanted.

Finally, the day came in which the scientists allowed her to leave, the experiment a failure. She laughed as she left, but not before erasing all records of what had been done to her in an attempt to keep her secret (ever since, SHIFT has been progressing, but on inanimate objects only). She then hunted down the hero, Sunwarrior, and killed him in cold blood. It was only then that the Zodiac learned of her existence, and it wasn't until 1973 that they approached her with the proposition of joining them. She dropped her temporary identity of the "Transmuter" and became a permanent member of the Zodiac as Libra the balance.

Personality: Libra was forced to grow up at the age of eight. She has been mistreated her entire life by both the government and the underworld, and has accordingly developed a nearly impenetrable shell against any future mistreating. She is as cold as ice, and as hard as diamond. She has a very bad outlook on life, always seeing the worst of any plan. She doesn't allow anyone to become emotionally close to

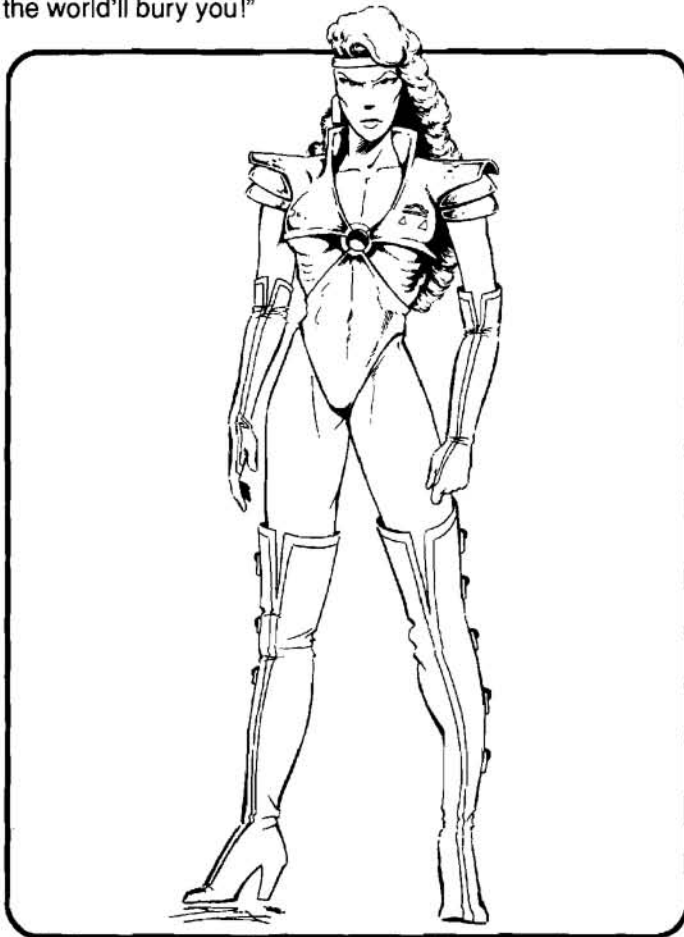
her and she will rarely if ever talk to anyone about anything other than business. This grimness hasn't gone unnoticed, and she has the sympathy of the other members (at least of those capable of feeling sympathetic, Gemini could care less.). She *hates* their "pity", and will often storm out of a room if she begins to feel patronized. Even though she is "going with" with Aquarius, it is very much a one-way commitment; Libra refuses to allow herself to grow close to anyone. Aquarius continues to try to break her shell — he is quite smitten.

Gemini feels a deep admiration, as does Aquarius, for the control Libra has over her powers. Leo often puts her in a position of responsibility during combat, though Taurus' relation with her goes much deeper. He feels sympathy and admiration for her because of his similar mistreatment by the human race, and although she will not discuss it, Libra almost likes the huge minotaur. As a pessimist, Libra looks down on Virgo's youth and jovial attitudes, spurning her love of life and hating that the same vitality is absent in herself.

Powers/ Tactics: Libra uses her Power Transfer to take the Egos of those with little willpower and place it within her own Endurance. Secondly, a Transformation Attack used intelligently can eventually bring down most any hero.

Appearance: Libra's appearance shifts all the time, although her costume is often known to be combinations of silver and black, with red trim. As Sharron Cattell, she likes darker skin and ashen hair, though this is far from being the rule!

Quote: "You gotta make something happen, sweetheart, or the world'll bury you!"



SCORPIO (The Scorpion)

Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages
30	STR	20	10	2x STUN from light attacks
26	DEX	48	10	Avoids Direct confrontations
23	CON	26	20	Emotionless/Hollow
10	BODY	0	20	Casual Killer
10	INT	0	15	Reputation (Deadly Assassin, never been seen) 11-
10	EGO	0	15	Hunted by Ninja Order 11-
10	PRE	0	15	Hunted by UNTIL 8-
23	PD	17	15	Secret ID (Gerald Turner-Antares)
20	ED	15		Villain Bonus
5	SPD	14	137	
11	REC	4		
50	END	2		
40	STUN	2		

Cost	Powers	END
16	2d6 NND vs Immune to poison or hardened defenses, continuous, uncontrolled, no range, OIF — Tail, 3 clips of 2 charges lasting 1 turn each.	
3	Extra Limb, OIF — Tail	
13	4" Stretching, Only on Extra Limb, Linked to NND	
11	Damage Resistance (11 Pd and 11 Ed)	
10	Elemental Control — Ninja Mysticism	
a-13	Invisibility to all visions, Only at night or in darkness	3
b-10	Full Missile Deflection 14-	
c-30	Desolidification, not vs light	4
20	+10" Running (16" total)	3
23	Martial Arts (Ninjitsu)	
	OCV DCV Damage	
	* Strike +0 +2 10d6	
	* Back Kick +1 +3 8d6	
	* Nerve Pinch -1 +0 21/2d6 NND	
	* Escape +0 +0 55 STR vs Grabs	
	* Chop -2 +0 1d6+1 Kill	
	* Fam with common melee	
8	+2 Damage Classes	
5,5	Combat sense 12-, Defense Manuver	
3,3	Lightsleep, Breakfall 14-	
3,3	Lockpicking 14-, Climbing 14-	
3,3	Security Systems 11-, Concealment 11-	
3,3	Shadowing 11-, Stealth 14-	
3,3	Contortionist 14-, Disguise 11-	
3,3	Tactics 11-, Sleight of Hand 11-	
3,6	Tracking 11-, KS:Business 15-	
10	+2 with Hand to Hand Combat	
OCV:9 DCV:9 ECV:3 Phases:3,5,8,10,12		
COSTS:	Char Powers Total Disadv Base	
	145 + 212 = 357 = 257 + 100	

Vital Statistics: 36 years old (Apparent age, 28 under Capricorn's Immortality spell), 6' 0", 171 lbs., no hair, dark skin, brown eyes, Secret Identity: Gerald Nathan Turner-Antares.

Background: Gerald Turner was born in the early '50's in Tokyo, Japan, to an American black family well placed in the scientific community. At his birth, his elder brother was already 19 and a promising scholar in the field of bio-physics. As Gerald grew older, he watched the advances of his elder brother and began to feel guilty at his own lack of achievement. Having no gift for sciences or other disciplines, he

began to dislike his brother, and the attention he received from their parents. When Gerald was 12 years old, he ran away from home as a senseless gesture to gain their attention. He only planned to be away from home a day or so, but during his wanderings through Tokyo, he stumbled upon an interesting temple.

He wandered inside and found the monks within practicing a strange form of karate, something he had previously thought the monks didn't approve of. He saw how good the monks looked and asked if he could stay and learn how to fight. They accepted him immediately, which overjoyed him as he would have a new way to compete with his brother. He was forced to promise that he never tell anyone what he was doing until they said it was acceptable, and after making this promise, he returned home. He didn't tell anyone while his training continued. For nearly ten years he lived a double-life, learning the fighting arts while concealing this from his parents. His brother continued to make him look bad unintentionally with discovery after discovery, though Gerald controlled his emotions with the thought that one day his fighting skills would allow him to outshine his elder sibling.

When he was 18, he was told by the Grandmaster that the temple was a front for a ninja order, and that he was to be immediately inducted. He was instructed to find a weapon of his choice with which he was to kill a man. Because of his training, Gerald had no trouble choosing the naginata, a long spear with a slight curve. The real weapon, however, was the slight amount of poison on the tip; the naginata was meant only as a distraction and method of delivery. The choice of target was a little more difficult; despite the pressure from his Grandmaster, Gerald had no real desire to kill anyone. But after his brother won a Nobel prize, Gerald's hatred boiled over. He assassinated his brother, but lost his soul in the process. Having killed once, Gerald lost all self will and goals—he lived only to kill, at the grandmaster's orders. The Grandmaster named him Antares, the star which represents the eye of the constellation of Scorpio.

During his return from an assassination, while stalking atop a skyscraper, Antares encountered Leo and Taurus. He believed them to be Japanese spirits at first and immediately attacked. He was impressed when Leo actually defeated him in combat, but before Antares could commit suicide, Taurus grabbed him and proposed admission into the Zodiac as the Scorpio. Initially reluctant, Antares eventually agreed to join those which he still believed to be spirits. Gemini and Antares developed the scorpion tail that he now wields, perfecting his rapid-strike system to satisfaction. After seeing the tail, and everything else the group had to offer, he decided to take a new master, and became Scorpio the scorpion.

Personality: Scorpio is a remorseless creature of the night; utilizing silent, poisonous attacks and the ability to phase through walls. Scorpio is calm and quiet, never losing his temper and always meticulously preparing for any action. He views every member of the Zodiac equally as soldiers of a cohesive military unit, although he will obey the orders of Taurus above all else. Scorpio is positive that there are powerful spirits within each one, and is pleased that he has been asked to work amongst them; the highest honor paid to

a ninja. Because of his calm attitude and unswerving commitment, he remains undaunted by the outbursts of Sagittarius, the playfulness of Virgo, or the stupidity of Aries. He actually enjoys the company of Leo in the danger room, finding his dizzying speed a good match for his own abilities.

Personally, he is still a mystery to the group. It is believed that he still has ties with his old ninja order, although he is constantly plagued by their assassins. It is almost as if the leader likes him and is pleased with his success, but is also angered that he joined another group and must send out assassins as a formality.

Powers/ Tactics: Scorpio uses typical ninja tactics, including stealth, solo missions, and working at night. He has learned some mastery of ninja magics and utilizes them whenever possible, such as the ability to move through walls (Desolidify) the power of not being seen (Invisibility), and the skills of summoning the night (Darkness). His major attack is to either place his opponent in darkness or resolidify behind them, followed by a strike with a Continuous NND attack of poison.

Appearance: Scorpio wears a costume made entirely of black material, with the exception of light grey boots, gloves and trim. His scorpion tail is silvery in color, though it's rarely in one place long enough to be obvious.

Quote: "As the master wishes..."



SAGITTARIUS (The Archer)				
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages
15	STR	5	10	Enraged 11-, 11- if insulted
30	DEX	60	5	Enraged 8-, 11- if she doesn't get
15	CON	10		her way
10	BODY	0	15	Arrogant
15	INT	5	20	Overconfident
10	EGO	0	15	Likes to toy with targets
30	PRE	20	10	Distinctive Looks: Beauty
35	COM	12		(concealable, major)
3+	PD	0	15	Hunted: Police 11- (Less Power-
3+	ED	0		ful, NCI)
6	SPD	20	10	Reputation: Cold-Blooded
8	REC	4		Killer 8-
30	END	0	61	Villain Bonus
30	STUN	4		
Cost			Powers	
			END	
30	60 pt Multipower, OAF — Bow			
3 u	12d6 Energy blast, 4 charges			
3 u	8d6 Energy blast, explosion, 4 charges			
3 u	3d6 Flash vs Vision Group, 4" Radius, 4 charges			
3 u	6d6 Entangle, 4 charges			
3 u	2d6 Ranged Kill, Invisible to Hearing group, 4 charges			
3 u	4d6 Gas attack NND, 4" Radius*, 4 charges			
5	Missile Deflection vs. Thrown and projectile Weapons, OAF — Crossbow			
7	+6 rPD/+5 rED Armor, OIF — Outfit, 14-			
2	IR vision, IAF — Mask			
2	UV Vision, IAF — Mask			
3	Flash defense (5 points), IAF — Mask			
4	+3 Enhanced Vision, IAF — Mask			
20	Find Weakness with Crossbow 11-			
3	Fast Draw with Crossbow			
10	+2 with Ranged Combat			
3	Concealment 12-			
3	Seduction 12-			
3	Stealth 16-			
3	Weaponsmith (Bow Weapons) 11-			
2	Familiarity with Bows and Crossbows			
3	PS: Modeling (based on PRE) 16-			
OCV:10; DCV:10; ECV:3; Phases:2,4,6,8,10,12				
COSTS: Char Powers Total Disadv Base				
140 + 121 = 261 = 161 + 100				

Vital Statistics: 37 years old (Apparent age, 32 under Capricorn's Immortality spell), 5' 8", 122 lbs., white hair, tanned skin, Secret Identity: Angel Stevens.

Background: Angel Stephens was an aspiring model who had one big problem — her temper. Although they loved the fire in her eyes, directors and fashions designers hated her tantrums, and fits of pique. One by one, they began to request other models instead of Angel. Desperate to save her career, Angel asked the advice of her Uncle William, an exceptionally even-tempered man. William, who lived in

Ireland, explained that he found release on the archery range; he was a world-class marksman with the crossbow. Angel reluctantly took up the crossbow, but soon discovered that she had a special knack for it. She took to the crossbow immediately, surpassing her uncle's ability within two years. Moving back to the United States when she was 21, she became an instant hit. Angel began to appear on posters, calendars, fashion and glamor commercials, as well as magazine covers. She was on Broadway for two years in the musical "A Chorus Line", and had a dancing role on "Solid Gold".

Eventually, she had earned enough money to fund her own fashion and modeling agency, which gave her the chance to settle down. She fell in love with a man named Kirk Miller, who was planning to join the New York Police Department. To this she objected violently, and their fiery relationship came to a sudden halt. The pair parted, Angel continuing her practice with the crossbow and feeling rejected. She didn't like not getting what she wanted and her hate eventually grew until she hated all policemen. A driven woman, she researched police methods and practices. But all this came to an end when her modeling agency was found to be working with organized crime networks. It was Officer Miller who brought Angel to the law.

In a massacre of 12 police officers, who didn't suspect such a ferocious fight from a former fashion model, Angel escaped and ran free. Running to a nearby nightclub, she ran into a one time acquaintance, Leo Lowe, a rock star. Angel was furious and frightened, and asked Leo to take her away from the police. Leo did much better, and took her to Zodiakos Kyklos. Initially Angel was furious, but soon realized that she could never return to a normal life. She was signed on as Sagittarius the Archer.

Personality: She still goes by the name of Angel Stevens and is still a successful model, although her attentions have been more towards the Zodiac than restarting her agency. She has little reason to begin again as the Zodiac gives her all the money she needs, and she gets plenty of chances to spoil policemen's days. She is a wild card in Zodiac, always unpredictable and uncontrollable. As the group mustang, she tends to be her own boss (unless overruled by Taurus), doing as she feels will bring her the most personal gain. Despite this trait, however, she has always come through for the group, changing the plan to fit her needs, yet arriving at the same ends... often with superior results. It is because of her success ratio that she is allowed to remain a member, although on more than one occasion she has come closer than she knew to being expelled by Taurus.

She attends the Zodiac group meetings grudgingly, not willing to admit that anyone has power over her. She can become more disruptive than constructive as she speaks her mind, expressing her opinion on every little flaw that a growing plan might have. She finds the smallest reasons to get irritated, and is arrogant, self-centered, quick to temper, and a non-conformist, the only thing surpassing her archery skills being her exquisite beauty.

Powers/ Tactics: Sagittarius likes to work alone. As a result, she has developed a skill in locating an opponent's weakness and enjoys toying with them. She will always attack at a range due to her low defenses, and finds working at night most efficient.

She has a pair of pistol-crossbows (designed with Gemini's help) that are easier to wield than a large bow and afford her a greater rate of fire. They have the ability to rotate shots within their chambers so that she may fire any of her multiple bolts at any time, regardless of loading-order.

Lastly, she will often use her beauty in a Presence Attack that makes most people stop and gape at her for a few seconds. She then exploits their delay in a quick attack that will hopefully either let her learn their weakness or give her the drop on them.

Appearance: Angel wears a body suit that alternates colors between dark and silvery-blue, and has spare crossbow bolts strapped to her thigh.

Quote: "Dammit! If we'd done it my way, we wouldn't have had this problem! Now what're we going to do?"



CAPRICORN (The Goat)

Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages
15	STR	5	10	1 1/2x STUN and BODY from
20	DEX	30		iron based attacks
40	CON	60	15	Megalomania
11	BODY	2	15	Fun Loving and Flirtatious
15	INT	5	20	Will Not Hurt Females
20	EGO	30	5	Legs of a Goat (clumsy)
18	PRE	8	5	Reputation (Flirtatious) 8-
20	COM	5	5	Reputation (Will Not Hurt
3+	PD	0		Women) 8-
8+	ED	0	10	Distinctive Features: Satyr
4	SPD	10	10	2d6 Unluck
11	REC	0	129	Villain Bonus
80	END	0		
39	STUN	0		

Cost	Powers	END
100	100 Pt Variable Power Pool	Var
20	Control Cost, OAF — Pipes,	
	Incantations (must play pipes to use pool)	
6	+3" Running (9" total)	2
21	Pipe Playing (control skill,	
	-1 per 10 active points) 22-	
3	Perfect Pitch	
3	Conversation 12-	
3	Mimicry 11-	
3	Oratory 13-	
3	Persuasion 13-	
3	Seduction 13-	
2	KS: Sorcery 11-	
2	KS: History 11-	
2	KS: Music 11-	
2	KS: Poetry 11-	
3	Fluent English (Satyr Native)	
3	Fluent Greek	
	SAMPLE POOL SELECTION-	
	(OAF — pipes, Incantations)	
A	10d6 Mind Control with Communication,	
	Explosion, One Command (Dance), Only vs	
	targets who can hear the pipes. (100 Active pts,	
	31 Real pts)	10
B	12d6 Mental Illusions, 0 Endurance,	
	Only to make opponent witness his worst	
	fears (90 active pts, 30 Real pts)	0
C	15 rPd/15rEd Forcefield, 0 END	
	(45 active pts, 18 real pts)	4
D	+28 Presence (28 active pts, 11 real pts)	
	[31+30+18+11=100 pts]	

OCV:7; DCV:7; ECV:7; Phases:3,6,9,12					
COSTS:	Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base
	145	+ 179	= 324	= 224	+ 100

Vital Statistics: 5'7", 2000+ years (Immortal), 170 lbs., auburn hair, sparkling green eyes, Secret Identities : Drynnan Illar/ Sean Quinlan

Background: Capricorn is a Satyr straight out of Greek mythology who, through his knowledge of magic, music, and nature, can weave mystical spells of immense power. He was born as Drynnan Illar in a place known as the time of

legends. In this alternate plane, Satyrs, Unicorns, Faeries and Dragons abound and thrive. The Satyrs were known for their light attitudes towards the state of the world, caring only for their magic and music. They didn't notice during their frolicking that the world had begun to deteriorate and that Dragons had begun to disappear. The Lords of Legends gathered to talk about the state of things, inviting all manner of diminishing peoples: Pixies, Elves, Dwarves, Giants, and Satyrs (grudgingly). The Lords decided to send one representative from each of the fantasy races to other worlds and planes, each to find a new world suitable for population of the Time of Legends. The council chose each member based on their skills and magical abilities and sent them through portals. The adventurers were also told that they were unable to return until they found a world for the Lords, so Drynnan prepared for a long trip.

Drynnan stepped into Earth in the early Greek period, approximately 1200 B.C. From here, he practiced the magic generated by the playing of his pipes and came to know and love Greek culture. He met Taurus early in his stay and quickly shared his plans to dominate the world with the son of Zeus. Although Taurus wanted to lead Mankind, and Drynnan wanted to destroy them in preference of Legendary creatures, their plans were similar enough to warrant mutual aid.

Taurus and Capricorn together developed the idea of the Zodiac, Taurus' philosophical mind and charisma providing the leadership necessary, while Capricorn gave magic through his instrument. Capricorn still intends to turn Earth into a magical place, but has found it difficult if not impossible. However, he would willingly destroy Zodiac if he saw a chance to establish the Lords of Legend.

Personality: Capricorn is optimistic in comparison with the other members of the Zodiac, coming from a world in which leisure was the only required activity. He leads a hedonistic life, often dancing with Virgo or jamming with Leo. He likes the other members equally, joking around with the males and romancing the females. Occasionally, he gets a little too close to the hardened Libra or the more sensitive Pisces, but Virgo loves the advances. She does not take the Satyr seriously, however — much to his frustration.

Capricorn has learned that to live in modern-day society as a Satyr is impossible, and has accordingly perfected a spell that enables him to change into human form with no effort. In his human identity as Sean Quinlan, he has become quite a collector of antiques, a classical flutist, and a well known author of fantasy novels, drawing from his own experiences. His most popular series of books are about a Satyr plane-traveler named Drynnan.

Unfortunately, Capricorn has a very strong weakness; he is fond of women. So much so that he will rarely if ever attack a female hero! His soliloquies are long and involved, often drawing from Shakespeare in his romancing, and tend to distract him from the mission at hand. This could easily be played upon by a clever hero, and should a true relationship arise...

Powers/Tactics: In combat, Capricorn summons incredible amounts of power by playing the most complex of songs on his pipes. Any time he's using them, all characters within thirty hexes automatically hear his beautiful music (even the deaf). Possessing a Variable Power Pool, Capricorn can duplicate most any power at will, making him a perfect backup fighter. He has two favorite tactics; one is to create a powerful Mind Control song and enchant all those around him, the other is to summon the very fears and weaknesses a particular hero possesses. This is left to the GM to develop as only they know their players, but if a hero has a weakness, Capricorn will exploit it. Vulnerabilities are good targets, as are illusions of their DNPCs.

Appearance: Capricorn is a Satyr in the classical sense, complete with goat's hind legs and a flute to play on. His outfit is a light blue color, with darker blue piping along the trim. Metal plates appear here and there, adding a silvery element to his costume. He is fond of high black boots (altered to fit him) because of their swashbuckler feel.

As Sean Quinlan, he owns a large house in the woods of North Dakota, where he does much of his studying. Sean seems an ordinary man with slight build, blonde hair and glasses. He always wears green sweaters, the color of his eyes.

Quote: "You're such a pretty thing — you wouldn't hurt me, would you?"



AQUARIUS (The Water Bearer)						
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages		
10	STR	0	10	2x STUN from magic attacks		
10	DEX	0	10	Enraged 11-, 8- when Witch		
30	CON	60		Trials Mentioned		
10	BODY	0	15	Arrogant		
18	INT	8	20	Overconfidence		
10	EGO	0	15	Cares for Libra		
30	PRE	20	10	Distinctive Features: Scar		
14	COM	2		(Noticed, concealable)		
2+	PD	0	15	Extreme Reputation (Storm		
6+	ED	0		Master, Destroys towns) 11-		
4	SPD	20				
12	REC	8				
80	END	10				
40	STUN	10				
Cost			Powers		END	
93	Change Environment, Variable, 63536 Hex Area, 0 END *				0	
10	Element Control — Weather powers, Linked to Change Environment *					
a-20	12d6 EB, 1/2 END (Lightning)				3	
b-20	30 STR 1, Explosion, 1/2 END (Wind)				3	
c-20	5" Radius Darkness to all visions (Fog)				3	
d-20	4d6 Suppression vs Fire Powers, Explosion, 1/2 END (Rain)				3	
e-10	Missile Deflection vs. all physical attacks, uncontrolled, continuous, Area Affect (Wind)					
f-20	25rPD/25rED Forcefield, 0 END (Wind Shield)				0	
g-20	30" Flight, 1/2 END (Wind Riding)				3	
20	2d6 Flash, Radius, 0 END, Linked to EB				0	
3	High Society 15-					
5	KS:History 11-					
2	AK:England 11-					
1	Familiarity with meteorology 8-					
1	Familiarity with Sorcery 8-					
25	+5 Levels with Ranged Combat					
* Gestures, Incantations, IAF — Gold Mask						
OCV:3; DCV:3; ECV:3; Phases: 3,6,9,12						
COS:	S:	Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base
		118	+	284	=	402
					=	302
					+	100

and poured into his mind, filling it with strange and arcane knowledge. Driven to madness, Stephen fled in terror into the woods. For a week he wandered, contemplating what he had read and attempting to sort out his thoughts.

He eventually returned, only to find that his mother was standing trial for witchcraft. He attacked the townsfolk, in his rage unleashing the elements on the little town, though he didn't act in time to save his mother. In the chaos, a loose arrow caught young Stephen on the face, scarring him. After destroying the village, Stephen sat in the middle of the destruction, vowing to avenge himself on the world. It was at this time that Capricorn arrived to talk to young Stephen. The boy thought him a demon come to take his soul, and proceeded to attack the Satyr as well.

After a short magical war, Capricorn found it necessary to retreat and attack again at a later date, for the boy had such mastery over the weather as to be capable of defeating even him. And return he did, with a full complement of offensive spells to use on the, confused boy. Capricorn defeated Stephen by attacking out of surprise, binding the boy and taking him to Taurus. Capricorn and Taurus kept him for several months, interrogating the boy to learn his motives. Eventually, they found that he hated all of mankind for what they had done to his mother and his face; his hate fuelling his power, his power fuelling his hate!

After several divinations were cast upon Stephen by Capricorn, it was found that the boy grew in power and control when near the element of gold. To test this, Capricorn planted a coin on the boy, and then purposely offended him. Stephen, angered at the foul remarks, caused a wind to whip up and break the bonds around him. He was free, but before he attacked, Capricorn was able to tell him about the gold and work a deal with him; Capricorn would get him more gold if he wouldn't attack. He agreed, with their friendship eventually outgrowing the simple bribe.

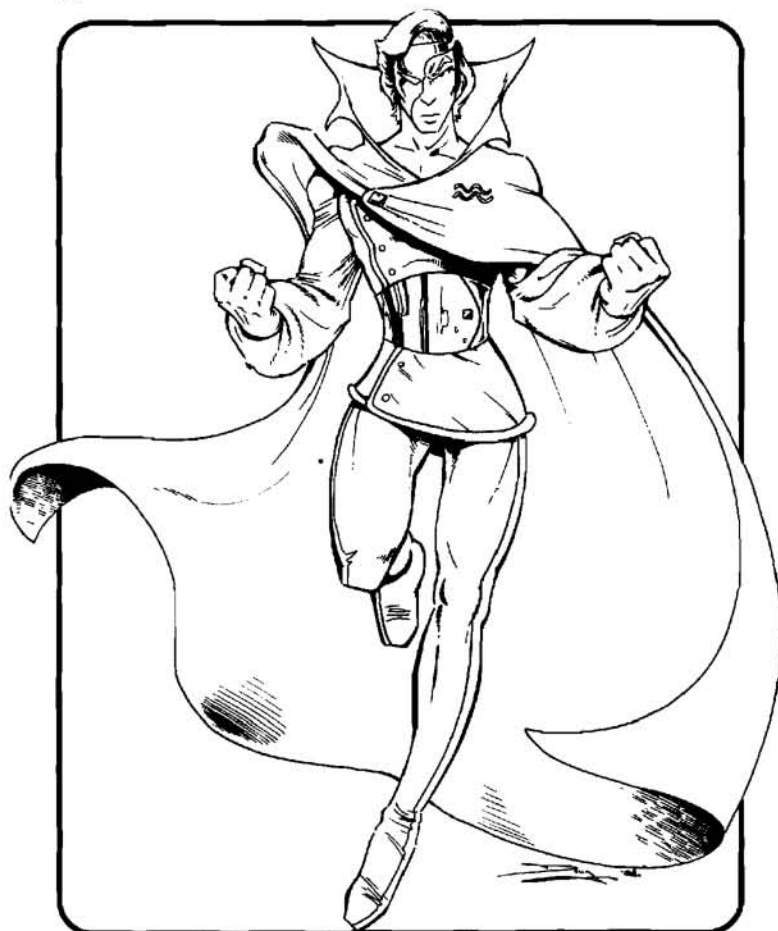
Practicing, Stephen eventually learned to control the abilities that had been impressed upon his brain, although he had no understanding of how he did it. Within 5 years, he had learned to control the weather with flawless perfection, calming violent storms and bringing rain to drought-plagued lands. The fire for more power, more magic grew greater and greater, causing him to pursue forbidden magics. Thus, he became the Aquarius in 1437, joining the Zodiac as their third member.

Eventually, he learned that he could learn no other magic, at least until he had gained more experience in his current art. As a result, he has vowed to become the master of the Earth's rains and snows, to become the very source of the world's weather. He therefore asked Capricorn for a longevity spell, the first of many used by the group.

Personality: Because of his background, Stephen tends to carry himself as a noble, strutting about and acting arrogant. Tall and proud, he still feels resentment for the death of his mother and is sensitive on the subject of witches and their trials. He feels he should never have to explain himself, or speak loudly for that matter, as everyone should listen to him the first time. He is easily insulted, but does not fly off the handle; instead he becomes bitingly sarcastic and cold.

Vital Statistics: 585 Years old (apparent age, 37. Immortality spell by Capricorn), 6'2", 182 lbs., brown hair, gold eyes, Secret Identity: Stephen Masterson.

Background: Stephen Masterson was born in 1402 just outside of London England. His mother was a witch and possessed minor powers of divination and necromancy, though because of her inability to read, she could not decipher the few magical tomes she had accumulated. She taught young Stephen her powers and also told him that his father was the King of England. Although Stephen couldn't tell anyone about his heritage, he considered himself head and shoulders above the other poor waifs. He also sneaked into his mother's room to poke around through her tomes and librams. One day he opened a book titled *Elemental Mastorium*. As he opened it, the contents leapt off the pages



Aquarius is currently one of the most powerful of the Zodiac members, and he likes it that way. He also respects the power and control exhibited by Libra and is currently involved in a relationship with her, though he wishes she would treat him better. Together, they enjoy leaving the group unannounced for several days at a time and roughing up lesser heroes. Aquarius has no proper Secret Identity, being rather pleased that the entire world will soon know just who he is. Having no reason to live amongst the peoples of Earth, he delights in the practice of his abilities and living a life of private luxury in any of his several mansions about the world. He tends to cause weather extremes for the sheer pleasure of it, not caring what his tornadoes, hurricanes, or droughts do to the local population.

Powers/ Tactics: Aquarius has the ability to control the weather on a large scale, approximately 100 square miles! Although he has little direct control over this effect, his presence in a town is often heralded by fog or rain. If he is angered, the storm becomes more violent, with lightning and thunder appearing. As he calms, the storm might clear, although rain is definitely his favorite weather. This ability can be controlled by him consciously every so often, usually when he hasn't fought for a long time, enabling him to change the temperature as well. If he really felt like it, he could create snow in the summer or at the equator, and heat-waves in the winter!

In combat, he likes to overwhelm his opponent with flashy spells and effects. He can summon lightning bolts (Energy Blast), Winds (Force Fields or Missile Deflection), or over-cast clouds (Darkness).

Appearance: Physically, Aquarius is quite a handsome man and keeps himself well groomed. He keeps up with modern styles and fashions despite his actual age, though he tends to have a 15th century look about him. His accent is one belonging to an English professor and is quite eloquent. His costume fades from white near the neck and chest to a stormy blue at the feet and hands. It is trimmed with lightning yellow. His faceplate is made of pure gold, his hair a dark brown.

Quote: "You will pay for that, worm!"

PISCES (The Fish)					
Val	Char	Cost	100+	Disadvantages	
25	STR	15	10	1 1/2 x STUN and BODY from heat attacks	
20	DEX	30	25	Dependence on suit 1/turn or 3d6	
23	CON	26	20	Disdain and contempt for normal people	
12	BODY	4	20	Cold, Aloof and Untouchable	
10	INT	0	15	Hates Humanity and Atlanteans	
15	EGO	10	10	Vengeful	
14	PRE	4	10	No Fine Work in Suit (clumsy gloves)	
14	COM	2	15	Distinctive Features: Environmental suit (concealable, noticed)	
5	PD	0	10	Reputation 11- (Violent Criminal Blackfin)	
5	ED	0	15	Hunted by Champions 8-	
4	SPD	10	50	Villainess Bonus	
10	REC	0			
50	END	2			
40	STUN	3			
Cost			Powers		
12	Elemental Control — Sea Powers				END
a-6	4d6 Telepathy, 1/2 END, Only with Aquatics				1
b-6	4d6 Mind Control, 1/2 END, Only with Aquatics				1
c-13	Shapeshift into any Aquatic form, 1/2 END				1
d-13	+20" Swimming, 1/2 END				1
e-9	+20" Superleap, 1/2 END, Must start in water				1
3	Immune to High Pressure				
9	No need to Breathe, Immune to High Heat/Cold *				
15	Active Sonar				
7	360 degree vision *				
2	UV vision *				
3	5 Flash Defense *				
40	+20 rPD/+20 rED Armor *				
22	45 pt Multipower (OAF — trident-speargun)				
2 u	2d6 HKA, 0 END				0
2 u	3d6 RKA, 8 charges				
	Skills				
3	High Society 12-				
3	Concealment 11-				
3	Stealth 13-				
3	Demolitions 11-				
2	KS: Marine Life 11-				
2	KS: Atlantean Culture 11-				
2	AK: Atlantic Ocean 11-				
3	+1 with weapons				
* Environmental Suit					
OCV:7; DCV:7; ECV:5; Phases:3,6,9,12					
COSTS:					
Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base	
111	+	189	=	300	=
			=	200	+
				100	

Vital Statistics: 5'10", 84 years old (apparent age, 28. Immortality spell by Capricorn), green hair, green skin, 122 lbs.

Background: With the subtle beauty possessed only by those of the sea, Pisces is still one of the single most dangerous creatures in the ocean. Claiming to have been born in the city-state of Atlantis, this aquatic creature first appeared during the early '40's. Unknown to the general public, Atlantis does exist somewhere under the Atlantic ocean. Pisces was a princess in line for the throne.

But Pisces was not able to take the throne so easily. All Atlanteans had witnessed the democratic advances of the air-breathers, and began to feel dissatisfied with their absolute monarchy. Her father, a true worshipper of the Sea-god, thought the sea was no place for a democracy. Pisces drew the first sword in the revolt which lasted nearly 6 years. By 1946, the revolt had ended, and Pisces (then the villain "Black Fin") was banished. For 4 years she swam the oceans, her hate growing for both the lands above and below the waters.

Not being able to survive in the harsh atmosphere of the land-dwellers, Pisces had a special suit constructed by Dr. Van Lansing, an oceanographer from Germany. It acted in the reverse of the SCUBA suit, allowing her to leave the ocean. It pumped and filtrated water constantly, but had to be replenished often.

She opted to attempt to grow accustomed to the land by having a serum injected that would allow her to breath oxygen without the use of gills. Dr. Van Lansing's experiment failed catastrophically and her gills were severely damaged. Pisces is now limited to a special protein-water mixture that only she and Gemini know, and she can never breathe air or water again.

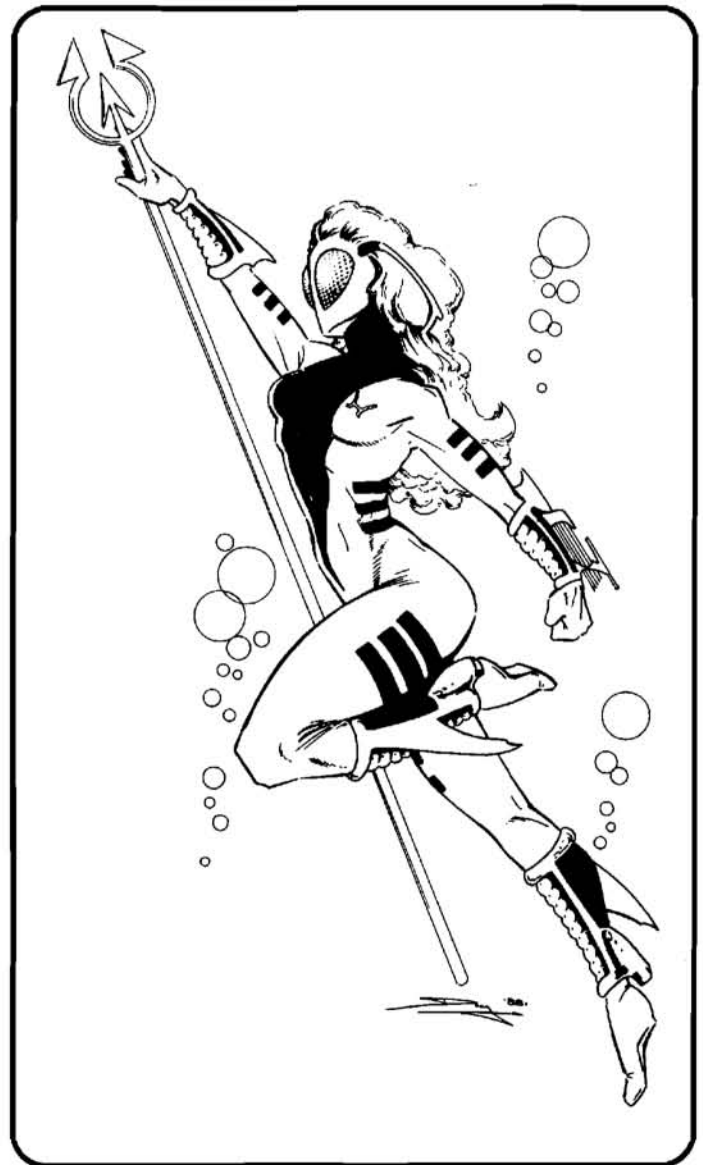
Banished by the Atlanteans, chronically injured by the humans, Pisces vowed the downfall of both, beginning with the rightful taking of her deserved throne... the Seat of Atlantis! By 1960, she had become a member of the Zodiac, her hundreds of exploits as the Black Fin having been watched and studied by Taurus. With her new membership, she not only had allies, but also access to the technology of Taurus and the genius of Gemini, who has promised to eventually heal her injuries, should he discover how..

Personality: Pisces has not removed her helmet in public for over 30 years, and only the Gemini knows what she looks like and the extent of her damage. She tends to stay to herself, preferring to work alone, for fear of becoming too close to another member and being asked about her true appearance. She is thus very cold and aloof. Moreover, as an Atlantean she tends to be highly eccentric; she often makes mistakes like eating raw fish, etc. Her room on the base is an environment tank that supplies the fluid she needs, so she spends most of her time out of uniform and swimming there, alone. She doesn't understand the difficulty of some tasks, and questions the ease with which others are accomplished. She talks in short sentences, keeping her thoughts to herself.

Powers/ Tactics: Pisces has two weapons with which she may attack, her trident in close quarters and her harpoon gun at a range. She is very aggressive and forward in her attacks, letting her anger drive her almost to excess. She is very efficient in her hunting, having no problems about killing quickly and effectively. If there is a possibility of damage to her suit, however, she will sense the danger and retreat, using her sonic attack defensively to ward off her opponents.

Appearance: Pisces is average height for an Atlantean female, although by human standards she is slightly on the taller side. She is well muscled from her years of swimming, and moves with grace creating quite an elegant image. She prefers to wear darker greens and blacks as she feels these will better hide her in the sea.

Quote: "I'll be fine — by myself. That's how I prefer it."



ARIES (The Ram)					
Val	Char	Cost	100+	DISADVANTAGES	
50*	STR	20	15	Enraged 14-, 11- in combat	
20	DEX	30	20	Child Like	
40	CON	60	15	Uncultured	
15*	BODY	2	15	Protective of Friends	
6	INT	-4	20	Simple Minded	
10	EGO	0	20	Distinctive Features (Horns, Ugly Features, and Large Size)	
15	PRE	5		Reputation (simple minded Berserker) 8-	
4	COM	-3	10	Watched by Zodiac 8-	
30+	PD	24	15	Hunted by Champions 8-	
25+	ED	17	10	DNPC: Virgo	
4	SPD	10	15	Public ID (Linda Shane)	
20	REC	12	10		
80	END	0	15		
62*	STUN	10			
*Effects from growth already figured in					
Cost	Powers			END	
27	Growth (20 pts), Always on (+20 STR, +4 Body and Stun, -4" KNB)			1	
10	Density Increase (10pts) (+10 STR, +2 Pd and Ed, -2" KNB) Effects not figured in				
27	Damage Resistance (30 Pd and 25 Ed)			4	
30	+15" Running (21" total)				
2	+9rPD Armor, 8- activation (Armor for head from horns)				
5	Mental Defense (7 pts)				
2	KS: Professional Wrestling 11-				
6	+3 OCV with Move through				
OCV:7; DCV:7; ECV:3; Phases:3,6,9,12					
COSTS:	Char	Powers	Total	Disadv	Base
	183	+ 104	= 287	= 187	+ 100

Vital Statistics: 38 years old (Apparent age, 30. Immortality spell by Capricorn), grey skin, brown eyes, tan hair, 12'0" tall, 800 lbs (18'0" tall, 3200 lbs. when Growth is activated), Public Identity: Karl "The Killer" Knudsen.

Background: Karl Knudsen was born into a poor family in New York city. He only had one parent, his mother, who couldn't afford the special schooling it would take to teach the rather slow-witted young Karl basic skills. As a result, he was abandoned at the age of three.

He was taken in by an orphanage, although his slow learning capabilities and ugly appearance made him unpopular. He fought often, having to defend himself over his appearance and disabilities. When he was 16, he left the care of the orphanage in an attempt to "make it" in the world. He was unsuccessful, which angered him. He threw tantrums that caused severe damage as he struck buildings, cars, anything.

As his temper grew, so did his horns. He never left his apartment unless necessary, and even then only in full disguise. Unemployed, a social outcast, he had little to do but watch television. It was here that he saw World Class Wrestling, a place where large men could make money in strange costumes doing the one thing Karl excelled at — fighting.

Karl "The Killer" Knudsen began as a World Class Wrestling star in 1983. In one short year, he earned a record of 263-0 before expulsion from the organization due to a fatal

accident. When "Raunchy Randy Renolds" unmasked him on national television, revealing that Karl's horns were not a costume but rather a strange mutation, Karl went berserk. He broke Randy's neck and went on a rampage through New York that took 214 lives and caused many millions of dollars in damage.

A true outlaw, the overgrown wrestler hid out in sewer tunnels and abandoned buildings. His rampage was noticed by the Zodiac and Karl was immediately traced by Gemini. Once found, Taurus approached him with a proposition to join the group, offering plenty of fighting and large rewards. Karl took the position immediately, finding that he filled the role of Aries the ram perfectly. Because Taurus was the one to invite the giant into the group, Aries now feels a certain attachment to the Minotaur, treating him as the father he never had.

Personality: Aries is the physical embodiment of strength, driven by years of hate and anger. The least intelligent of the Zodiac, Aries' sole purpose in the group is muscle, which he provides most diligently. He constantly tries to intimidate his opponents by scaring them first with his Presence, then with his hands.

Aries does have a soft spot that most of the Zodiac have hit upon at one time or another. His angry facade melts away when someone is kind to him... making him like them all the more. Heroes that treat him in a pleasant manner, such as not attacking, insulting, or looking down upon him stand a good chance of developing a friendship. Virgo has gotten so close to Aries that she can sometimes control his temper, although even she cannot influence him all the time. He worships her from afar, admiring everything in her that he lacks.

Powers/ Tactics: Aries' tactics are simple; hit them harder than they hit you! His best attack is to simply run over his opponents with his Running and bulldoze them with his horns. He has extra Armor on his head so that he takes no damage from such a charge. As he charges, he lets out a loud howl that manifests as a Presence attack in hopes of unnerving the target.

Appearance: A huge person, Aries' skin has greyed over the years. His eyes are tan, as is his hair, which grows only in a line down the back of his head. He wears a deep red outfit, similar to his wrestling costume of earlier days.

Quote: "I'm gonna bust you up, little man!"





THE TEAM

ORGANIZATION AND CHAIN OF COMMAND

There are only three official leaders in the Zodiac, and although individuals like Sagittarius often try to bypass the chain-of-command, Taurus keeps very strict control. He has enough power and presence to put anyone in their place should they begin to get out of line.

As the leader, he has the authority to command any of the members at any time. His word is absolute law within the organization, and although he often asks the advice of his fellows or tries to take occasional votes, his decisions are final. He must approve every plan devised by the group before it is acted upon, and all group-related business goes through him. Capricorn has allowed Taurus to be in this position because the minotaur is a much stronger leader than the satyr. Given his secret plan to install the Lords of Legend, Capricorn rarely disagrees publicly with the minotaur. Like the rest of the group, Capricorn realizes that Taurus is Zodiac; the other members can stay or leave, but if they want to be a part of the team, they will have to follow the minotaur's lead.

Taurus has assigned Gemini the position of Second, an assignment the demon performs with great satisfaction and efficiency. From here, he is able to command the other ten members of the group and often leads the team when away from the Zodiakos Kyklos. He spends most of his time dreaming up nefarious plots and creating devices of incredible complexity and power. His inventions are tested by the other members in the danger room, and once approved, they go before Taurus for the final check. Assuming that a plan or invention should pass the testing, it is then used in the next Zodiac exploit.

The third and final officially-approved command position within the group is that of Combat General, held by Leo. Even though he personally finds practice boring, he sees that all the members practice in the danger room for at least two hours per day. On the field, he's the one that takes over the commanding when the team enters combat. He may shout out orders and instruct the others, but when combat stops the command reverts back to either Taurus or Gemini, depending on who is present.

Taurus and Gemini may assign temporary command to another member, though usually on a short term basis only. This is done whenever the leaders might be required elsewhere or have been incapacitated, so that another member may take over immediately and the group isn't left leaderless. The tentative chain of command is in the order of how the members joined, with the first being the highest in rank.

In a small group, the members are all aware of the hierarchy because Taurus has drummed it into them. As a result, the loss of a commander in combat and the switching of responsibility to another will go so smoothly as to cause absolutely no delay.

Sagittarius, Aquarius and Libra have all been in command at various times, though Taurus isn't particularly fond of this as each of them are strong-willed and may take the group off into danger. Scorpio and Capricorn have no desire to lead and will default the responsibility to someone else. Aries is too stupid and out of control to be given command, Cancer cannot lead due to his programming, and Pisces simply doesn't understand the air-breather mentality enough to lead efficiently.

Therefore, the official leaders consist of Taurus, Gemini and Leo (in that order), with the unofficial chain reading: Aquarius, Libra, Sagittarius and lastly Virgo. If a group happens to be so poorly organized as to consist of only Aries and Pisces, or combat should reduce the group to one of the non-leaders, they are ordered to call whoever they can from the Zodiac to join them, or pick up fallen comrades and return to the base.



FIGHTING MANEUVERS

Only recently has the Zodiac had to actually use their strategies in more than a danger-room exercise, yet Leo has provided these strategies most expertly. He has broken down over a dozen different tactics into words or single phrases for several reasons, one being that they are easier and quicker to use in combat, another being that Aries often cannot fathom complex plans without hours of memorization.

To make things easier for the less-skilled members of the team, Leo has categorized the basic twelve maneuvers to be general tactics, followed by the Special Tactics to follow. He named them after the twelve Zodiac members, so if he was to yell out "Plan Gemini White, Overlord!", the team would know to follow the Gemini tactic in general, and Overlord in specific. Leo may instruct a particular member to lead the attack. Their name follows the first two directives, so if Leo wanted Cancer to lead the attack, it might sound like "Plan Gemini White, Overlord, Cancer, Emperor!", which literally is telling the group to surround the enemy from the top, while Cancer is to attack the leader.

COMBAT PLANS

PLAN CAPRICORN

This plan refers to an all-out magical attack. When Leo calls this, all non-magicians are to drop back, allowing the magical members to spearhead the assault. This is a rare tactic as most opponents are affected by both magical and physical attacks. Plan Capricorn includes Capricorn, Aquarius, Gemini and, to some extent Libra, mostly because her attacks are so unusual as to still be effective.

PLAN AQUARIUS

Plan Aquarius indicates that flashy attacks and actions may be more effective than direct damage. This is a good tactic when dealing with normals, since a well-done Presence Attack could scare and impress hundreds, while a regular attack will only affect a few, and lead to bad press. When ordered, the members of the Zodiac all muster their most impressive and visually stunning powers. This attack is a favorite of most of the members since this is the only time they get to truly flex their muscles and dazzle the masses. Virgo has a particular preference for Plan Aquarius as she has never enjoyed hurting innocents.

PLAN PISCES

Plan Pisces is a defensive strategy used in unusual circumstances. When Leo calls this out, he is telling the group to be on the alert for anything unexpected... more so than usual. It instructs the group to be aware of their own weaknesses, and to be prepared to protect these weaknesses when entering combat. This is called when heroes are locating weaknesses, or specifically attacking different members of the Zodiac depending on their special effects.

This directive is unusual in that it doesn't override a previously ordered directive. It is merely a statement telling the group to be prepared without letting the opponent understand what's on Leo's mind.

PLAN ARIES

Plan Aries is the simplest of the directives. Simply put, it tells the group that a straight-forward physical attack is best. When this is ordered, they comply by rolling up their sleeves and bulldozing their opponents. Aries loves this one because it has his name on it and makes him feel like he's leading the group... which he often is! Libra also brightens to Plan Aries, as does Aquarius, since the two of them delight in proving their power over the unsuspecting.

Plan Aries shows up in most combats against heroes. While Leo occasionally opts to fight at a range, or finds that physical combat would be ineffectual, few heroes can withstand a full Zodiac assault.

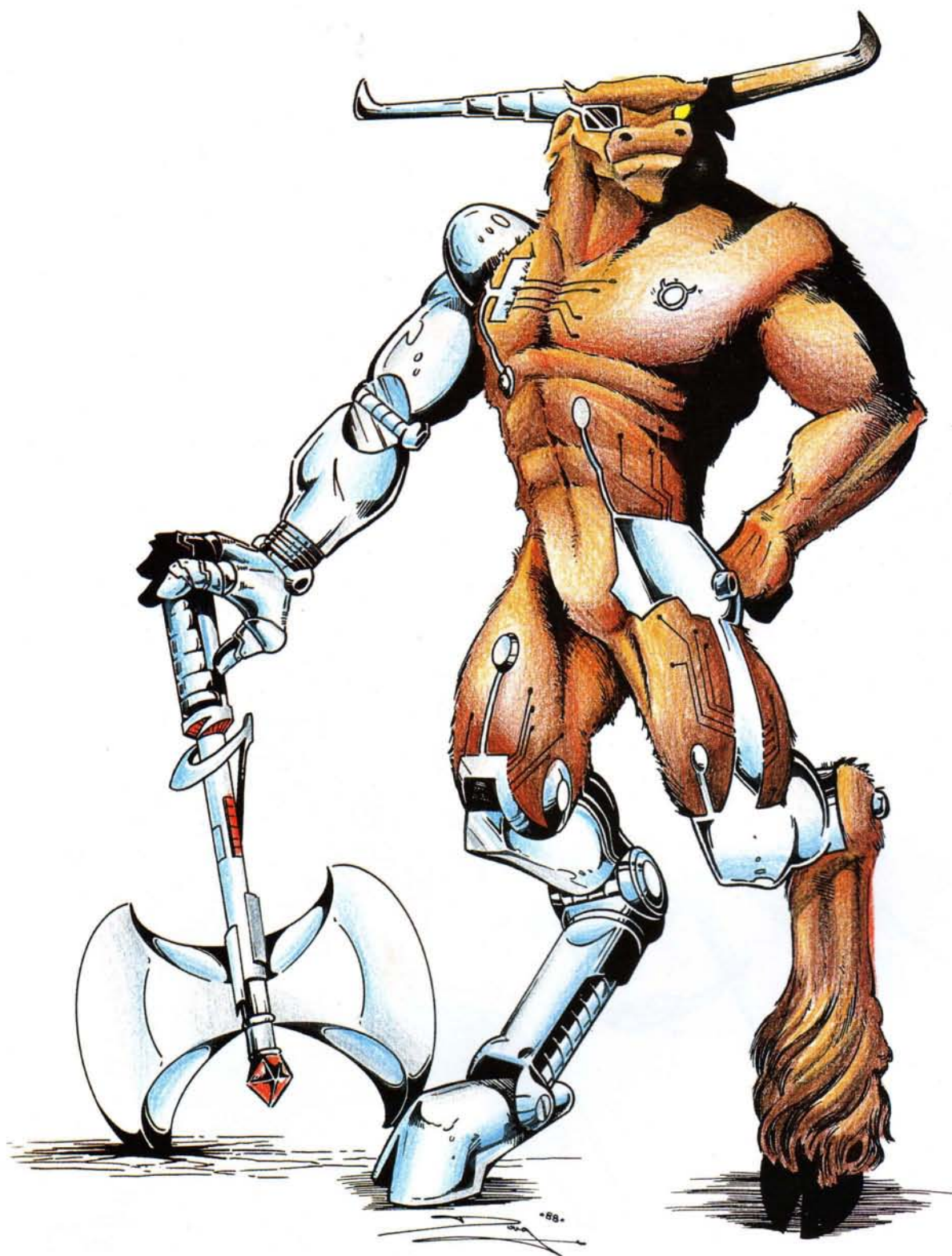


PLAN TAURUS

A most unusual directive, Plan Taurus indicates that the team should try to talk their way out of a situation. Leo has yet to call this plan of his own accord, although Taurus has used it to stop combat on more than one occasion. The team is slow to react on this plan, as well. Once in the heat of combat, stopping them is next to impossible, and as long as the heroes fight, so will the Zodiac.

Taurus has been most displeased by the lack of response-time when enacting this plan, and has seen it fit that they drill endlessly until they have stopped combat before the order has left Leo's mouth. While still imperfect, this plan's execution has continued to improve...

TRUPLUS



LEO



SCORPIO

PISCES



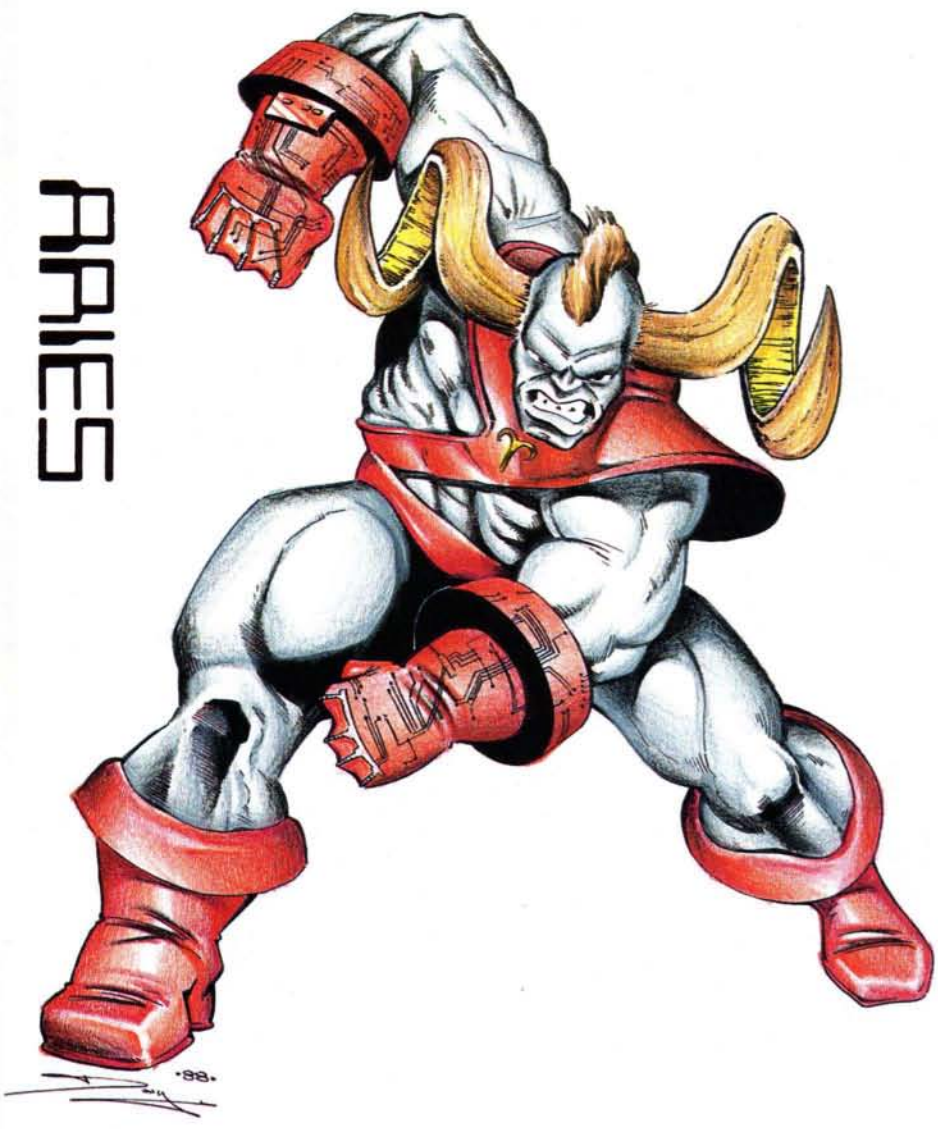
САРРАЦИОРАН



SAGITTARIUS



APRILS



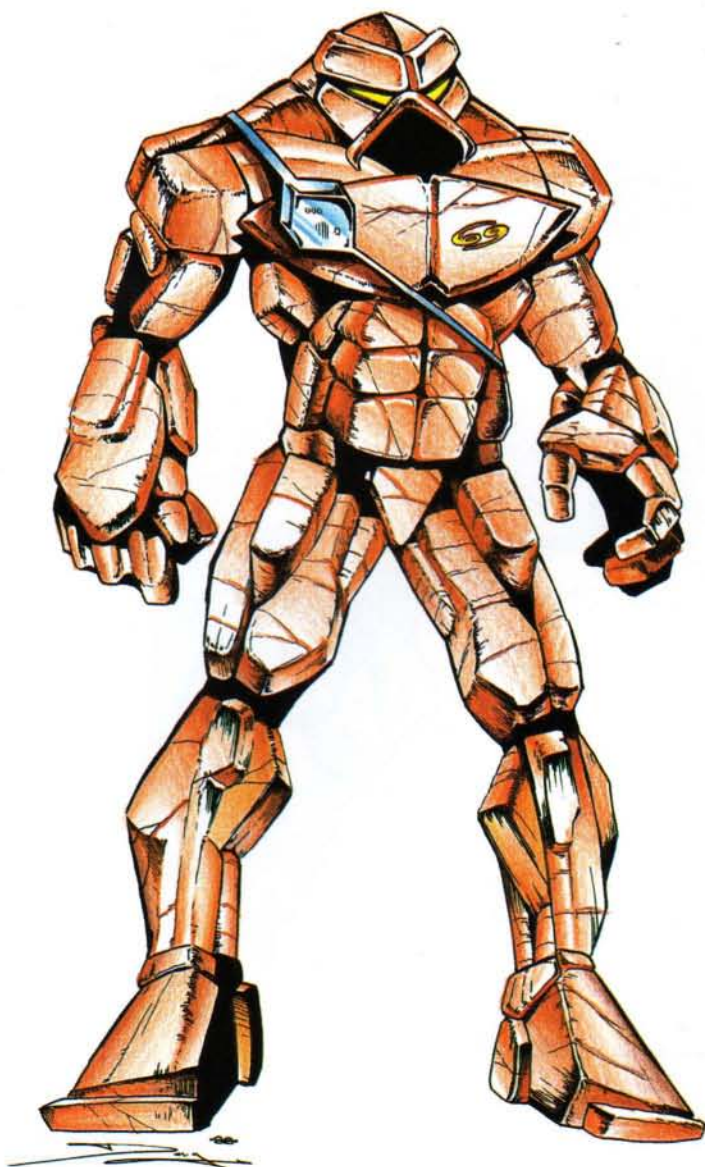
VIRGO



GEMINI



CANCER



LIBRA



AQUARIUS



PLAN GEMINI

This tells the group to either divide and conquer the opponent, or to surround them, depending on which color of the Gemini Leo calls upon.

Plan Gemini Black: This order is to divide and conquer. The team is instructed to attack the opponent right in the middle of their forces in an attempt to split them into two distinct groups. Once the enemy has been separated, Leo usually calls for Plan Aries.

Plan Gemini White: This tells the Zodiac to surround the enemy and attack from all sides in an attempt to confuse them. As above, they are to enact Plan Aries as soon as they have completed this stage of the maneuver, again to bring down the heroes as fast as possible.

PLAN CANCER

Under Plan Cancer, the group is to stop all chatter and soliloquies, and follow Leo's every word. This is called only when split-second timing is imperative or the danger is so great that failure might cost a life. Examples are when one member is playing a decoy so that a hero might be captured. It is important for the decoy to know just when to duck out of the hero's onrushing attack... and having the commands reduced to one or two words greatly increases the efficiency of the team.

PLAN LEO

Plan Leo tells the group that speed is of the essence and that only the faster members should continue the fight. Occasionally, a hero with fast flight or a high DEX will be able to out-dance the Zodiac, so Leo has to order the slower members out of the way to allow he, Scorpio, Sagittarius and perhaps Virgo (high OCV heroes often have low ECVs!) to engage the enemy uninterrupted.

The other members do not leave the combat, however! They merely back off to use their ranged attacks, moving themselves to a safer place in the battle and allowing the faster ones free range of the field.

PLAN VIRGO

Plan Virgo informs the group that the best tactic would be to attack at a range, and that all members are ordered to get back to optimum distance to prepare their range attacks. This is often used when the heroes possess Damage Shields or other close-in defenses, or in large areas of battle, such as the middle of the desert, when the team can make best use of the larger area. Plan Virgo puts several members at a disadvantage and is rarely called for this reason. The Zodiac members that prefer ranged attacks tend to use them anyway, while the close combat fighters can often take the damage.

Occasionally, however, Plan Virgo becomes a must, and the Zodiac are always prepared with their ranged powers just in case.

PLAN LIBRA

Plan Libra tells the group that their attacks are being defended against and that the current tactic isn't working. It instructs the group to try to hit the opponent in their weak spots, if possible, having those that can Find Weakness to do

so and to exploit what they find. It also instructs the members with variable special effects (such as Capricorn's Variable Power Pools) to create a hero's obvious vulnerability, such as a water attack on a fire wielder.

This tactic is often the last one tried before a retreat because, if the group is still unable to affect the enemy, then nothing else will work without further study.

PLAN SCORPIO

Plan Scorpio informs the group that the enemy has gone Desolid, or has assumed some other mode of defense that enables them to evade damage. Those that can go Desolid (Scorpio and Libra, usually) are instructed to do so, while the other members are to merely be on the lookout for a material enemy. They often regroup and form a circle, waiting for word from the desolidified members and a time that they might attack. It is during this time that they most often hold Phases, waiting for the proper time to strike.

PLAN SAGITTARIUS

This directive tells the group that silence is a must and that no one is to speak. They all enact their best Stealth skills, often stopping and waiting until Leo has ascertained the true situation. When absolute Stealth is required, the most skilled members will be called in to cover for their louder, clumsier teammates. This plan is preferred by Sagittarius, Scorpio and Leo, and whenever they can, these three will do reconnaissance as they are the hardest to detect.



SPECIAL TACTICS

Overlord: The Overlord tactic tells the group to strike from above if possible. Although not all the villains can comply, those that are able to fly immediately lift off and hit from the top.

Underling: Underling tells the Zodiac to hit from the bottom. Often, certain vehicles will have more armor in one place than another, or a hero would be surprised by a ground assault. If this is the case, Leo adds on the order to hit from below for maximum effect.

Emperor: Emperor tells a particular member or the team in general to hit the enemy's leader, hoping that that will make the rest of the opponents fall. This is most often true when a wizard has summoned spells that dissipate when he goes unconscious, or when a mastermind is commanding large numbers of robots that fall senseless when his commands stop coming.

Chariot: Chariot tells the group to either take the battle elsewhere or to simply retreat. If combat is taking place over water, for instance, half the members would be unable to help because they can't fly or swim. This directive tells those engaged to bring the fight nearer so that the rest of the group may help.

If all members present are already engaged in combat and Leo still calls out Chariot, it is to tell the group to retreat before any others fall. On the way out, they are to pick up the bodies of their fallen comrades so that no prisoners are taken.

Gladiator: Gladiator tells the group to double-team if possible. Even if some enemies are not engaged directly, this is intended to knock out the greatest numbers of opponents in the quickest time possible. Often, this is a prologue to retreat, because if it doesn't work, very little else will.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT TEAMS

Taurus has further organized the group into Special Assignment Teams (SATs). If Gemini or Taurus has a specific need or act that must be performed, they choose one of the SATs to go abroad. The members within the same Assignment Team train together in special scenarios. When acting together, they have preference in combat over the Gladiator tactic (double-teaming), and instinctively form into units.

Leo has also seen it fit to separate those that have slight personality conflicts. This heightens the team's efficiency, although it heightens individual confrontations when they actually occur.

TEAM ALPHA — Alpha consists of the four greatest combatants in the Zodiac; Aries, Libra, Aquarius and Cancer. Aries is the strength of the group and enjoys being in the combat team, although he secretly wishes he was with Virgo so that he might protect her. Libra has the controlling ability that allows her to overpower the enemy. Aquarius is the team's leader with his magical powers, giving him the advantage of range. Lastly is Cancer who was built for nothing but fighting. He serves admirably as a soldier and has never failed to follow an order.

TEAM BETA — Beta is where Leo has placed those with the greatest Stealth. The team includes himself, Scorpio, Sagittarius and Pisces. Pisces is the oddball in the team and the hardest to work with, but Leo has found her powers of Stealth adequate and her controls over water most welcomed in the heat of battle. When in water, she can be the most powerful of the team... so accommodations are often made for her unusual abilities. The other three fit together like pieces of a well-oiled machine (indeed, they are), each sharing a mutual admiration and respect that might be the deepest of the three teams.

TEAM GAMMA — Gamma includes those with the greatest wealth of noncombat skills; Capricorn, Gemini, Virgo and Taurus. Capricorn's skills in the arts of magic are coupled nicely with his knowledge of arcane lore. Gemini understands technical matters and things of religious significance. Virgo is skilled in the ways of the mind and human psychology, and Taurus, as the team leader, has the wisdom of the ages.

This team is the one that goes on scientific missions or missions of diplomacy, since the only true combatant in the group is Gemini and he's satisfied with intellectual exploits. Occasionally, this team will take other Zodiac members, such as Leo or Cancer, for self defense should a combat be possible. Otherwise, they prefer to stay on the base and conduct business from afar.



Of special note is Virgo. She is on the team as the group's expert on the mind, although her youth and lack of experience often keep her from helping very much. Therefore, she will occasionally accompany another team into combat, being more use there than helping Team Gamma in research.

CURRENT GOALS OF THE ZODIAC

The Zodiac was formed by Taurus centuries ago because of what mankind had done to him, and although he was driven by hate at first, he redirected that emotion into the formation of the group. He named them on a whim, taking the idea from the zodiacal signs. He saw the stars as something he could not reach at the time, yet were always within view. He also enjoyed the analogy that the zodiac was constant and something he could count on; something he knew would always be there. The zodiacal signs rested in the sky, above mankind, always watching the activity of Earth. Lastly, the stars would outlive humanity.

And thus the group was formed. As he searched for other members, he looked for individuals with attributes similar to his own, especially superhuman powers and a contempt for mankind. Although the latter is not necessarily true for all members, they do share a misfit quality that makes them outsiders from the human norm. Taurus had found, during his search of the world, nearly a hundred other persons who qualified for membership, though he chose the current eleven for their specific relation to the signs of the zodiac.

In general, Taurus hopes to lead the Zodiac to world domination. He hopes that through the slow and calculated control of mankind, he will eventually ascend to the throne. His plan is different from that of the usual megalomaniac, however. He intends to convince humanity that he is the most qualified to lead — he will take a thousand years if need be. He has therefore been placing secret documents into government files, throwing elections in favor of a specific candidate, or blaming innocent individuals with theft or murder to further his means. For five hundred years he has subtly been altering history, and for five hundred more he will work with his group until his plans reach fruition.

Taurus realized that he needed help, and that he had to tell others of his plan. He built the Zodiac to do his deeds for him, letting them know from the very beginning that he was the leader and that he would not look kindly upon failure or deceit! He also realizes that each member is an individual, with individual needs and wants. He knows that the humans can easily get distracted from a long-term goal. For this reason, he allows them to pursue minor personal goals, utilizing the group as a resource, as long as their plans do not interfere with his own. Whenever he needs them, they are expected to drop what they are doing in preference for the group.

In return, he sees that they get ample freedom of action and are well provided for. As soon as a member passes through the first few years of probation, security checks, mind scans and so forth, they are given almost unlimited credit lines. Capricorn provides an Immortality spell for all

mortal members, letting them remain at the age they prefer. Room and board is provided aboard the base, as well as provisions for Secret Identities on Earth.

To fit in with the greater plan of Taurus and to ensure they are not forgotten upon his ascendancy to world control, each member has been promised a station in the New World upon its completion. They will be made into a council consisting of all twelve members, and although not everyone can or wants to lead, they will be totally immune to the laws created. Since they all believe in the Zodiac's eventual success, their membership in the group is almost like insurance for the future.

HIDDEN ASPIRATIONS...

Each member of the group has outside interests that they pursue for pleasure, material gain, revenge, or whatever. Some are more driven than others, several only wandering into other activities as hobbies. Nonetheless, each uses the group for outside pursuits, as explained below.

Capricorn spends his time as a freelance writer, and he's done very well. He writes about a satyr in a fantasy world that is merely a glorified version of himself. When not with the Zodiac, he is often located in his penthouse on the Canadian border, typing the long hours of the night away, lost in a private world that is more real than any of his readers would believe. His *Drynnan Illar* series is so fantastic in its form that it borders on the insane, and although he has a large following, critics have become increasingly dissatisfied with Capricorn's chaotic world of magic and mystery. The series has 13 books in it so far.

This is one of Capricorn's biggest flaws! Any hero who happens to learn that Capricorn's name is Drynnan Illar may just be clever enough to look in the back of the book and read the part about the author. Here, they will discover that the book series was penned by one Sean Quinlan... and could even end up tracing a path straight through his agent to his penthouse in Canada! The fortunate PC would be in for a surprise when they find that Sean/Drynnan has a house that is bigger on the inside than the outside, and is filled with pixies and sprites that are constantly tidying up the place! In just such an encounter, the heroes could learn of the Zodiac by rifling through papers, or even set up an ambush for Capricorn, striking the first blow against the villains.

Of course, Capricorn has an even more important secret. Unlike the other members of Zodiac, he has no desire to rule the world or obey Taurus' orders. Instead, Capricorn plans to use the Zodiac to make the world a place filled with fantasy creatures and magic! To this end, he will occasionally perform rituals at key spots on the globe to loosen the fabric of space. Magic then seeps into this world, making it even more chaotic than before and leaving small deposits for future use. These pockets equate themselves to Variable Power Pools that randomly change. Unfortunately, they dissipate within a few months, allowing their random magics to float free. Gemini has hypothesized that these "random, unexplained" occurrences of magic have actually aided in the creation of various other super-beings... perhaps causing the 'freak accidents' prevalent in so many super-origin stories.

Like Taurus, Aquarius also feels that he is eventually destined to lead the Zodiac to supremacy. He sees himself as one of the three original leaders, and believing highly in the power of numbers, he sees that the third is always the most powerful. His ego has both vaulted himself to the top of the command chain in his own mind, and clouded his perceptions enough that he often contends for Taurus' position. On many different occasions, Aquarius has contested the leadership of the group, with Taurus' overwhelmingly divine power defeating the magician each time. This satiates Aquarius' ego for a few decades before tensions again build to a climax.

Because of these historic disagreements, Aquarius has gained both a deep hatred for the minotaur, and a great respect. Indeed, Taurus is the only being who has repeatedly defeated Aquarius. As a result, Aquarius feels he has lost a great amount of face. He spends most of his time in the pursuits of the group and aiding in their unity, though there are moody times when he takes off to cause a major storm over a minor country. Since he has only rarely been allowed to lead the group, he is uncertain what he would do with it if given the chance. Although a competent leader, he is too much a threat to the makeup of the group to be placed in an official position.

Gemini also uses the group, but for magico-technological advances. He performs experiments that seem bizarre to the casual onlooker, but are actually quite ingenious. Since he has copies of every member's entire genetic code, he can predict the effects of the experiments and (hopefully) avoid disasters. Thus far, he has been successful, although there has been the rare case where his tamperings have created dangerous results, or have been less than successful. Zodiac is still repairing the damage from the time he increased Aries power twelve-fold, and then sent him on a berserker fury through the Zodiakos Kyklos.

Leo's uses for the group are a little more self-centered than the rest. He has found the good life through the group, allowing his career as a rock star to take off. He can use the base's audio labs to modify his latest song, fly from concert to concert, or jam the air waves to transmit his stage shows. This he does more for the fun of it than anything else, although it also has the nice benefit of adding to his reputation as a rocker. As Leo Lowe, he has been climbing to the top of the charts since day one and is still going. Unfortunately for the group, he fully intends to leave the Zodiac some day to pursue his musical career. Taurus fears this greatly, as he could give out some of the touchiest secrets available. If necessary, Taurus would be willing to kill Leo to prevent him from talking.

Libra has become one of the group enforcers and fully plans to see that no one deserts in the heat of battle. She, like Aries, Pisces, Virgo and Scorpio, has little desire to pursue outside interests, and wants to see Taurus' plans succeed.

The last one to have any great desires outside the group is Sagittarius. She is always sniping at team plans, and never wants to follow through with the team. She feels the Zodiac is more a bunch of incompetents than anything else. She understands that they have muscle on their side, however, and is willing to put up with them for now. By doing so, she hopes that they'll become more of an organization which she won't be embarrassed to be seen with.

One thing to remember is that the Zodiac members are villains, but they're real people too. Most of them have Secret Identities and real lives to pursue, although money and other mundane responsibilities have been lifted. As a Gamemaster, they'll reflect the most personality if you have them act as if they are concerned about the world to some degree. Have them mention current movies, get angry, laugh and cry. Treat them as if they weren't just silly people in silly suits, but rather as real people who have real emotions and dreams.

DEUS EX MACHINA

Gemini has cleverly designed devices for the team members to wear in case they get into trouble. The pins on their chests might seem to be only costume-wear or decoration, but are actually warning beacons. When touched, they transmit a coded ultrasonic signal to the other pins and to the base. The code warns the other members that one of their teammates is in trouble — and to prepare for the worst. The Zodiac members have been trained to touch these devices only if they are going down in combat, signifying that they might be captured or killed. The rest of the team treat this as a Priority One distress call, and any other activities are supposed to be immediately dropped until the endangered member is saved. This applies to even those members on leave, since the future of the group as a whole is in trouble.

The operating plan is to report back to the base via a communicator that has a direct line into the computer. From here, the officer in charge will operate the transporter and "beam" the member up to the base. Once enough of the team has assembled, they will then read in the coordinates from the distress signal and teleport down to the aid of their companion.

In game terms, this means that any time a Zodiac member is about to go down, he or she will subtly touch their beacon. Moments later, just as the heroes are mopping up and cleaning their wounds, the rest of Zodiac will pop in. They are not supposed to do anything but search and rescue, although the more belligerent members will often stick around for a dust-up.

Because of this Deus Ex Machina, the Zodiac has become one of the most difficult groups to detain. Indeed, the Stronghold complexes have been unable to keep any of them for more than a day, and hero groups are constantly under pressure to trap them. Setting up traps and catching a Zodiac villain could be the basis for an entire adventure! Play with it.

Note to the Gamemaster: This should not be used as a combat teleport! Although the system is fast, no one should be able to abuse the powers of the Zodiakos Kyklos! After all, nobody paid any points for it, and a combat-teleport application is not what it was meant for. It should only be used to allow the villains to 'live to fight another day'!

THE ENEMY WITHIN

Although the Zodiac is a well-conditioned, paramilitary team, they have some major faults... mostly stemming from personality conflicts. Coordinating a dozen dangerous paranormals is nearly impossible, even for the son of a god. Taurus is usually able to maintain his grip on the group through words or encouragement. However, he is not above using threats of physical violence, especially in crisis situations. He also holds a trump card — if things get too bad, he can always convince Virgo to Mind Control the difficult member (though this would doubtless cause problems later). The many problems that Taurus must deal with as leader are as follows:

SAGITTARIUS

To begin with, Sagittarius is extremely arrogant. She refuses to listen to other members until she has had her chance to speak. Moreover, she is constantly criticizing the light attitude of Virgo and claims that her lack of seriousness jeopardizes their every action. This show of anger is understood by the telepathic Virgo, although the hulking and less intelligent Aries often misunderstands Sagittarius' anger for hate. He will interpose his body and prepare to do battle with the archer. This, in turn, gets the rest of the team on edge as their two most volatile members lock horns.



LIBRA

Libra often agrees with Sagittarius when it comes to Virgo's light attitude, although she has been through enough to know when to keep her mouth shut. Instead, she holds her thoughts to herself and vents her anger in the Danger Room or against heroes. She spurns those that listen to rock music (Leo and Virgo), those quick to anger (Sagittarius), or those that possess berserker tendencies (Aries and Leo). She therefore remains somewhat aloof from the rest of the group and is always taking off for weeks at a time. Her one-sided relationship with Aquarius might well cause problems in the future as well.

AQUARIUS

Aquarius is in love with Libra so intensely that he cannot act rationally whenever she is in danger. He will always take her side in an argument and will come to her immediate aid in combat should she be having difficulties. This means that many plans will fall apart at critical times because Aquarius fears for Libra — which endangers the rest of the group! Libra knows of his fanaticism and will try desperately not to go down in combat in order to preserve the team.

VIRGO

Virgo is the youngest member of the Zodiac and acts with a vitality unseen in the elder members. She constantly wants to do things on the spur-of-the-moment. She is also a bit of a rebel and will purposely offend some of the more crusty members. She secretly delights in needling the snide Libra and Sagittarius, and acts even more naive when around them. This makes for difficult times when the three of them are working together, and some insist that she is simply too undisciplined to be in the Zodiac. To this Virgo agrees... at least to some extent. She is able to work with the team when it all hits the fan, but between encounters with trouble, she reverts back to her defiant activities of dancing on the meeting table, playing her music at full volume, and putting lipstick-kisses on the restroom mirrors.

Fortunately for Virgo, she has several friends in the business. Leo is her dance partner should they get a night away from the base, and Aries enjoys learning basic skills from her, such as reading.

LEO

Leo often acts as the group's mediator. Since he has little stake in the goals of the Zodiac, he finds it easy to agree with several opposing views at the same time. His strength and speed give him the edge in combat should a meeting break down or a member go haywire. Unfortunately he has a devil-may-care attitude, meaning that he will yawn at meetings, take off with Virgo to go dancing, and put his feet on the table. The pair of them will simply dance the night away, enjoying the company of someone a little more human than the rest... which gives the others the feeling that both Leo and Virgo disapprove of their hard work. Such feelings run deep, and some of the older members are dissatisfied with the younger villains' lack of commitment. For this reason, it is difficult to convince Libra, Sagittarius and Aquarius to work with Leo or Virgo.

ARIES

The problem with Aries is that he worships the fair Virgo. Aries is jealous of the more attractive Leo and envies the fact that the lion may dress in normal clothing and pass amongst the humans. This makes Aries painfully aware of his own mutations and breeds resentment towards the combat-leader, as well as against anyone who might badmouth Virgo. Although Virgo is aware of this, she is uncertain how to handle the situation. Because she is his tutor and educator, he is always hoping that there is something between them. He admires her gentleness and will throw his body in the way of any attack that might damage her. This might well be the strongest bond in the group!

GEMINI

Gemini is truly inhuman, and has almost nothing to do with the other members of the group. He is constantly scheming by himself, running computer simulations and scenarios to test his nefarious plots. This means that when another member is hurt, the first questions he asks include duration required for the injured to heal, and who will take their place in the chain of command? He is cold and calculating to the degree that he has offended most of the others at some point in time with his dry, evil cynicism. He shares an occasional laugh with the group, but his laugh is hollow, and no one knows why he really thought the joke was funny.

Because of his coldness towards the others, he gets little sympathy from them. He is respected as a genius and technological wizard, but the caring stops there. When he goes down in combat, he is one of the last ones to be dragged off the field. He is undaunted by their lack of caring because it is all he experienced in Hell.

CAPRICORN

Capricorn has the problem of being a severe womanizer. Simply put; he loves **all** women! This means that in combat, he will be easily seduced, or at least a little distracted. He is constantly harassing the women of the team (Pisces, Libra, Virgo and Sagittarius), to no avail. They have all said 'no' to his romantic suggestions, with Sagittarius threatening bodily harm! While Capricorn doesn't believe her threats, he respects her enough to restrict his interest to looks and comments only. Libra will put up with his suggestions with an upturned nose, taking them for what they're worth — nothing. Virgo is flattered by the comments, though

she knows exactly what his interest is — and she wants nothing of it! Pisces has refused to allow Capricorn to get anywhere near her, although he keeps trying.

A deeper problem involves Capricorn's secret goal. Unlike the other members of Zodiac, Capricorn has no desire to rule humanity — instead he wants to destroy all humanity and install the Lords of Legend. While helping Zodiac is currently in Capricorn's best interests, he might well change his mind if Zodiac becomes too powerful. Indeed, if it began to look as if Taurus were going to conquer the world, Capricorn might even switch sides!

OTHER MEMBERS

Pisces, Scorpio and Cancer are all somewhat immune to inter-group politics because of their extreme disinterest in such affairs. Cancer effectively "turns off" when not needed; he has no life aside from obeying Taurus' orders. Pisces is cold and stand-offish, her bizarre personal habits and aloof attitude serve to isolate her from the group. Scorpio is a quiet, remorseless, soulless assassin. Although he does nothing to set himself off from the group, he also makes no effort to socialize, and thus often ends up observing, rather than participating.

TAURUS HIMSELF

Which leaves Taurus, the group's leader. He treats everyone respectfully, simply because they are members of his group. He knows them to be skilled, trained warriors and a team that is becoming the well-oiled machine he needs for his plans. He also has a soft spot for Aries, probably because of his total ignorance to those things which Taurus himself loses sleep over. He greatly admires Leo because of the lion's ability to coordinate people and to move in combat with grace and civility.

Sagittarius angers him occasionally with her outbursts, though he tries to let them pass. If Taurus actually expresses his anger at her, she will swallow her ego and cower. Taurus also doesn't like the fact that Libra takes such long absences.



CONCLUSION

In general, the Zodiac members will have few problems acting as a team when the chips are on the table. It is when they're alone, talking to heroes, or doing less important tasks that their dissent will surface. They are not unhappy with being in the Zodiac; quite to the contrary! They all realize full well that they're in the best position they are ever likely to be!



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Zodiac has laid low for some time, allowing the team to gather data about the world and witness events. During this period of secrecy, Taurus and Gemini have been scheming and planning. Such things take time, and thanks to Capricorn's Immortality Spell, time is one of many things they have plenty of. This means that Taurus doesn't mind if the members pursue individual goals, so long as these goals don't interfere with his master plan.

To have the full sanction and approval of Taurus, and therefore nearly unlimited funds, the smaller exploits need only have some slight benefit on future plans. This means that if capturing a hero or revealing his secret identity will be fueled out of hatred and revenge, it will be approved by Taurus anyway because the hero will no longer be around to foil Zodiac's designs. Through this type of justification, the lesser members of the Zodiac have had all sorts of plans sanctioned by the minotaur. Of course, Taurus doesn't approve of every little scheme. First of all, Taurus is strictly against theft and other petty monetary gain. After all, he has access to millions of dollars of revenue through stocks, gold and other riches, and simple crimes only serve to endanger the secrecy of the Zodiac. Secondly, high-profile plots such as an assassination of a major governmental figure are strictly regulated, again to help preserve secrecy and security.

However, if it fits your campaign, this can all change! Remember that until now, the Zodiac has been in hiding only for the sake of gathering more information on world developments. Now that Taurus is ready to make his move, they'll appear to the world with such a fury that they may become Public Enemy Number One! They have been laying low and working undercover for so long that the more combative members are getting restless — they want to bust some heads. This serves well for a basic introductory adventure in which a couple members of the group are sent to perform a minor theft in which the real goal isn't the jewels at all! The Zodiac could be merely testing the powers of the other superbeings or just stretching their combat muscles.

So where does this leave the group? Now that a few of the Zodiac members have fought the heroes once (and probably lost), they have established themselves as a force to be reckoned with and have hopefully given soliloquies that the heroes won't soon forget. Assuming that the *Deus Ex Machina* was effective, the bad-guys got away, and the heroes will begin to ask about the rest of the Zodiac since there are (obviously) twelve of them. Knowledge of their names might even give some clues as to their powers, with some players beginning to wonder about their own signs and when they'll meet them.

Conversely, the Zodiac will know about the PCs' abilities and will begin to learn their tactics. This will lead to bigger and better encounters in other adventures, and can generate a lot of mutual dislikes amongst the hero and villain groups, as well as present growing, living villains to be dealt with in more ways than one.

Zodiac eventually hopes to take care of their smaller necessities and move on to larger things. They don't like other paranormals getting in the way, and intend to be the only super-group within a decade. They will eventually resort to killing other supers, placing them in prison, or exiling them. In any event, the Zodiac has high hopes.

As a rule of thumb when designing an adventure using the Zodiac, remember that every plan should be worked into the greater scheme, and even if the players (or even you) don't know why, there should be connections between their plots. This adds an element of consistency that might eventually give the heroes clues to the Zodiac's next move!



THE ZODIAKOS KYKLOS



The Zodiac's base of operations is a large, silver, saucer-shaped object surrounded by twelve smaller spheres about the perimeter. Each sphere serves as personal quarters for a different member, with the Danger room, the meeting halls, and other shared spaces all having been placed in the center section. The base itself has been placed in orbit about the Earth just behind the moon so that it is constantly shadowed from radar or other conventional means of detection. From here, Taurus is able to observe the politics of Earth in his control room (which contains almost 200 television sets). Gemini has access to major computer systems via modem link, and the other members are provided with a place to literally get away from it all.

What makes the base truly unique is that it's not actually a base, at all. Rather, it's a giant, living, space-faring creature of such size that it dwarfs most asteroids! This creature is able to alter its shape over the course of several months, so whenever a change is desired, the base may react accordingly. It is intelligent, and although only capable of rudimentary communications and basic decision-making, it has a store of knowledge from a hundred civilizations and a million worlds.

As a base, it provides everything that a super-group would need, from a danger room to recreation rooms to external armor and armaments! It even has a transporter pad for easy access to and from the planet. Everything on the base is voiceprint-activated for security purposes and programmed to respond only to the Zodiac, although occasional guests are given limited access to some areas.

The last major difference between the Zodiakos Kyklos (Latin for 'Zodiacal Circle') and other, more conventional bases is that it possesses an Energy Dampening Field which drains the powers of super-beings when within the walls of the base. This allows Taurus to freely accept super-heroes aboard as guests since he can rest assured that they cannot get into secured areas, or even try to pick a fight. The field works indiscriminately, catching all within the area with equal effectiveness. This means that even the Zodiac is virtually powerless when aboard their own base, with the exception of the area of the danger room, which allows full use of powers.

HISTORY OF THE BASE

The Zodiakos Kyklos was built nearly five hundred million years ago by a major star-faring race during the height of their civilization. It was constructed from a living creature, and was to serve as a peace-platform during times of war,

where diplomats of opposing forces could come together in a dampened field which prevented overt hostilities. Here, great empires signed treaties together; the base enforced peace not through combat strength, but rather through the promise of safe negotiation. So successful was the base at it's assigned task that several of them were constructed and released, made to spread throughout the warring empires of the galaxy and bring peace. For eons, the Zodiakos Kyklos wandered about the stars under the control of the Peacemakers, helping civilizations through the hardest years of their development. Unfortunately, not everyone wanted peace.

When the Zodiakos Kyklos entered the Orion arm of the galaxy, it neared one of the last sectors in its assigned route and was ready to return back to Homeworld. When it arrived, it performed all of the standard procedures and offered aid to the two empires. They both accepted, though one of the ambassadors suspected trickery. He had his entire fleet poised to attack should the other make even the slightest move. His warships were overzealous and attacked anyway, perhaps because of a ambitious subcommander, perhaps because the talks lasted too long. The base tried desperately to defend itself and lashed out with what defenses it had.

Actually experiencing terror for the first time, the Zodiakos Kyklos inadvertently destroyed both forces utterly. This was, of course, the opposite of what it had been constructed, and instructed, to do. The ship knew that the wrath of its builders would be terrible. The ship purged itself of much of its original programming, and then fled.

The base drifted and wandered, it's original purpose lost along with the data revealing the location of Homeworld. It learned what it could, watching, waiting. Finally, it heard a message over one of the lesser-used communication frequencies, of the AM band. It tried to communicate, but knew little of the new language being spoken over the airwaves. Slowly, as each conversant learned the other's speech, the base found it's way to Earth and established full communication with Minos Taurus. He told the base of his world, and the base told Minos Taurus what it remembered of it's own. Taurus desired the knowledge of the Zodiakos Kyklos so greatly that he proposed a deal. Should the base allow him to board and use it's computer, he would give it a purpose.

The base agreed, and immediately transported Taurus up into orbit. He agreed to help out the base as long as he could. The entire time, he recognized the base for what it was and tried merely to coax it into staying near the Earth for as long as possible. Since then, the two of them became such close associates that the base may never leave!

RATIONALE AND SELF-MOTIVATION

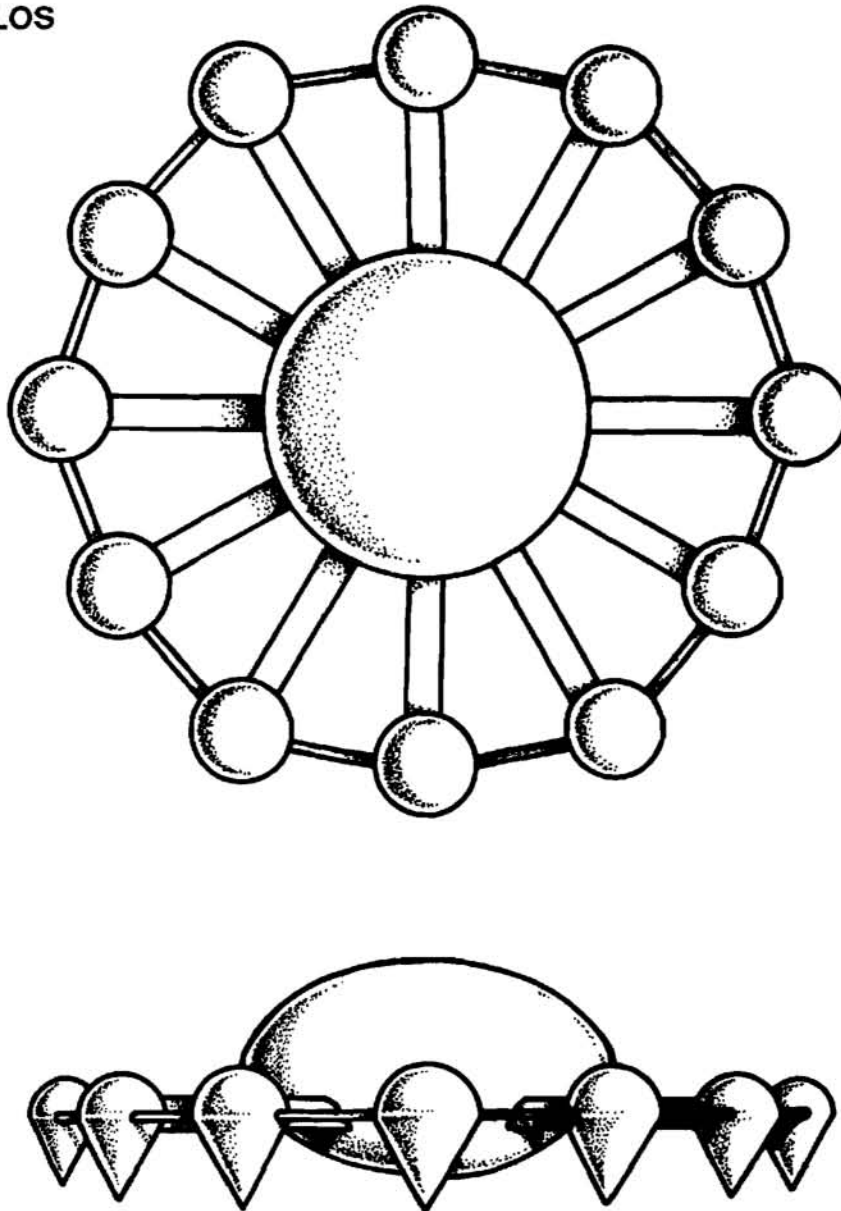
The base is a sentient entity, and can be detected as a living being even though some inorganic components were grown into place. It is essentially cybernetic and requires both medicinal and technical skills to repair. It is self-motivated and can fly about at will, although it hasn't moved for nearly 400 years. Occasionally, Taurus has taken the base on a hyperspace journey to satiate his curiosity of the unknown. He has never told any of the other members about this ability, since having Zodiac fly about the galaxy would do

nothing to advance his plan. Nonetheless, Gemini has discovered the ability, and Virgo has guessed that Taurus is hiding something.

For the most part, the base is content with its current location. Taurus has persuaded it that he is fighting for the greater good of humanity. This is true from a certain point of view, though he has artfully left out the part about taking the world over through force. Should the base learn this, it would certainly leave Taurus, although Taurus expects to be well on the way toward ruling the earth by that time.

As long as there is the promise of peace, the base believes it to be fulfilling its prime function. It will stay and aid Taurus as much as it can, although it will not attack anyone except in self-defense. Should the Zodiakos Kyklos be damaged, it might have to leave orbit to effect repairs for a short time.

ZODIAKOS KYKLOS



DESCRIPTION OF ABILITIES

Computer: The base has accumulated billions of pieces of information from its travels throughout space and its contact with alien races. It has seen things humans can only dream of and will probably never understand. Having never been "programmed" with curiosity, the Zodiakos Kyklos stores its information within tiny cells which make up its structure with absolutely no care as to their fate. To retrieve this information requires a little time and a lot of patience. In layman's terms, any character trying to get information from the base must be at a terminal to do so, and must make a Computer Programming roll, and this only after at least an hour of work.

Walls: The walls of the base have a silvery color, made to reflect the sun's energy into collectors which fuel the base. It may call upon all of its stored reserves of energy at any time.

Power: The primary purpose of the Zodiakos Kyklos when it was first constructed was one of peace. It has been given massive powers that enable it to keep peace aboard itself... though these might also endanger those aboard if mistreated. Its own powers can never be used in any offensive manner. The base will simply refuse to activate that particular power within itself and continue on as if nothing happened. Moreover, while aboard, all warlike activities are illegal and will result in either immediate expulsion into space, or Teleportation back to Earth (whichever is safer). This last rule may be broken in the danger room, where anything goes!

Note that all of these rules apply to any being within the confines of the base, hero or villain alike. The Zodiakos Kyklos is not programmed to make the distinction between good and evil, and will only act in the interest of self-preservation.

Regenerate: The base has the ability to rebuild itself within the limits of its own knowledge. It can repair damage in about a month's time, more or less, depending on the severity.

Shapeshift: Given a half-year, the base can actually change its structure to accomodate most forms of life. This is important for diplomatic purposes, allowing a visiting alien to feel at home as quickly as possible. Generally, the ship remains the same because the ship likes its own shape.

FTL: The base can travel at FTL speeds as if it had placed 26 points in the power, allowing it to move approximately 250 Light Years per year, or about 1 Light Year per day. The only problem is, no one except Taurus has ever talked the base into going anywhere, and even he hasn't been able to get it to leave the solar system! It almost seems as if it's afraid in its present state to go back to where it came from, and will require more repairs before leaving the system again.

Mental Defense: Because of its alien structure and unique makeup, the Zodiakos Kyklos has a Mental Defense of 45 points. It is so difficult to penetrate mentally that even Virgo has given up (though she can speak with it through Telepathy, there is little that she cares to talk about).

Teleport: This ability is usable only on others and acts as a transporter pad. It can reach anywhere on the planet earth with little difficulty, and is activated only by verbal

command (directed at the base). Should a hero try to beam aboard, he will be taken as readily as the next guy. For this reason, the Zodiac is very secret about their means of transport!

The Zodiakos Kyklos has found that matter transportation is one of the best defenses it has. If anything should attack, it will try to 'lock on' to it with a targeting beam by aiming at the hex (it's OCV of 7 against the hex's 3, no range modifiers). On a roll of 15 or less, it has locked on and can Teleport the offender to the other side of the planet. It should take at least a little time for them to return, and the base does no damage to them in the process!

Extra-Dimensional Transport: This is possible through the base, though the Zodiakos Kyklos understands the problems caused by time-loops and will avoid them at all costs. It will send people into other dimensions if they really want to go, but refuses to go itself. Once there, those transported have to find a way back themselves!

Suppress: The last and most potent of the Base's abilities is that of power suppression. It was given this to tame the war-might of the Great Emperors so that conversation would actually be possible. It acts at 20d6 suppression towards ALL offensive powers, but cannot seem to effect the last 10 Active points in a power. In other words, all beings aboard have total defenses at all times, but only 10 points in offense. If a passive power is used offensively, the base will correct its error and 'remove' the offender into space (or the nearest safe location on Earth). Though this Suppression is meant to effect all aboard, it has its limits, which explains why it was so badly damaged millennia ago!

MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS

OVERALL

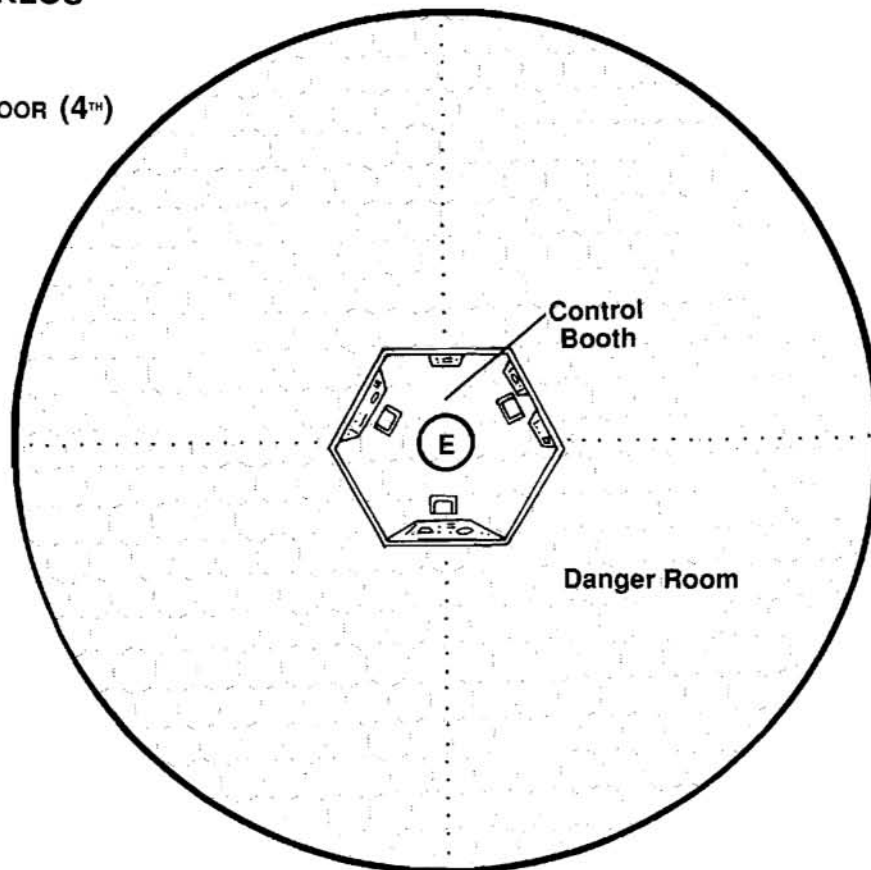
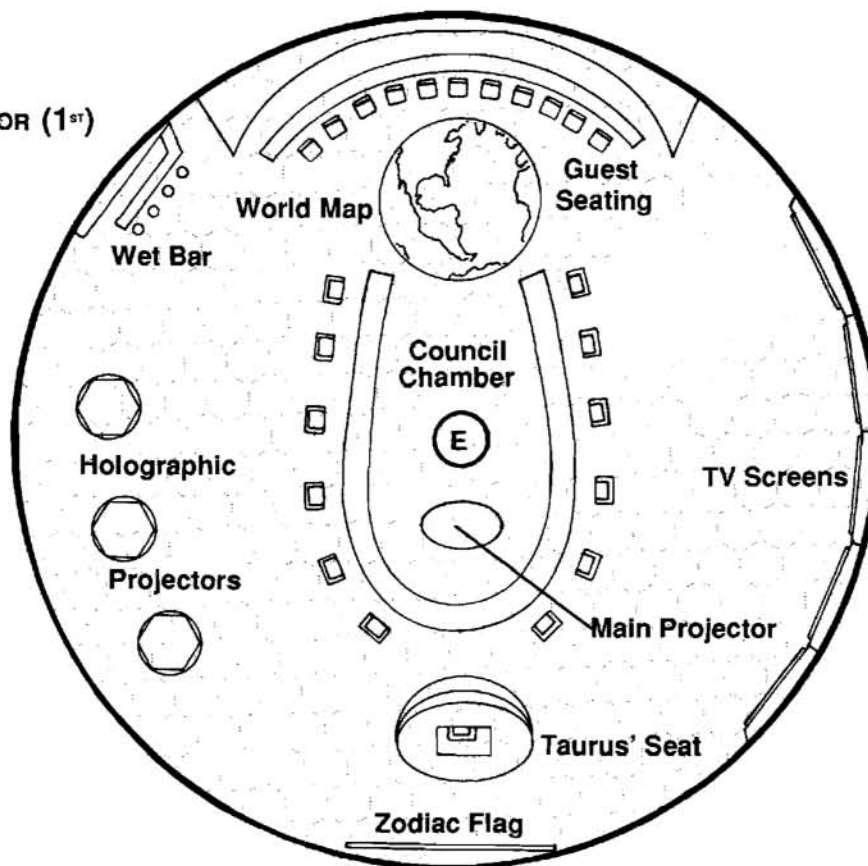
The entire base is carpeted in light grey. The walls are also grey and have black trim. The walls inside the base have a Defense/Body rating of 20/15 inside, though anyone attacking will be instantly Teleported away. Occasional plants are placed in the halls to add an element of life, and food processors are located in every room for easy access. Windows line the outer walls to provide a view of space, though these can be covered over when necessary.

Everything in the base can be controlled through verbal command.

TOP FLOOR

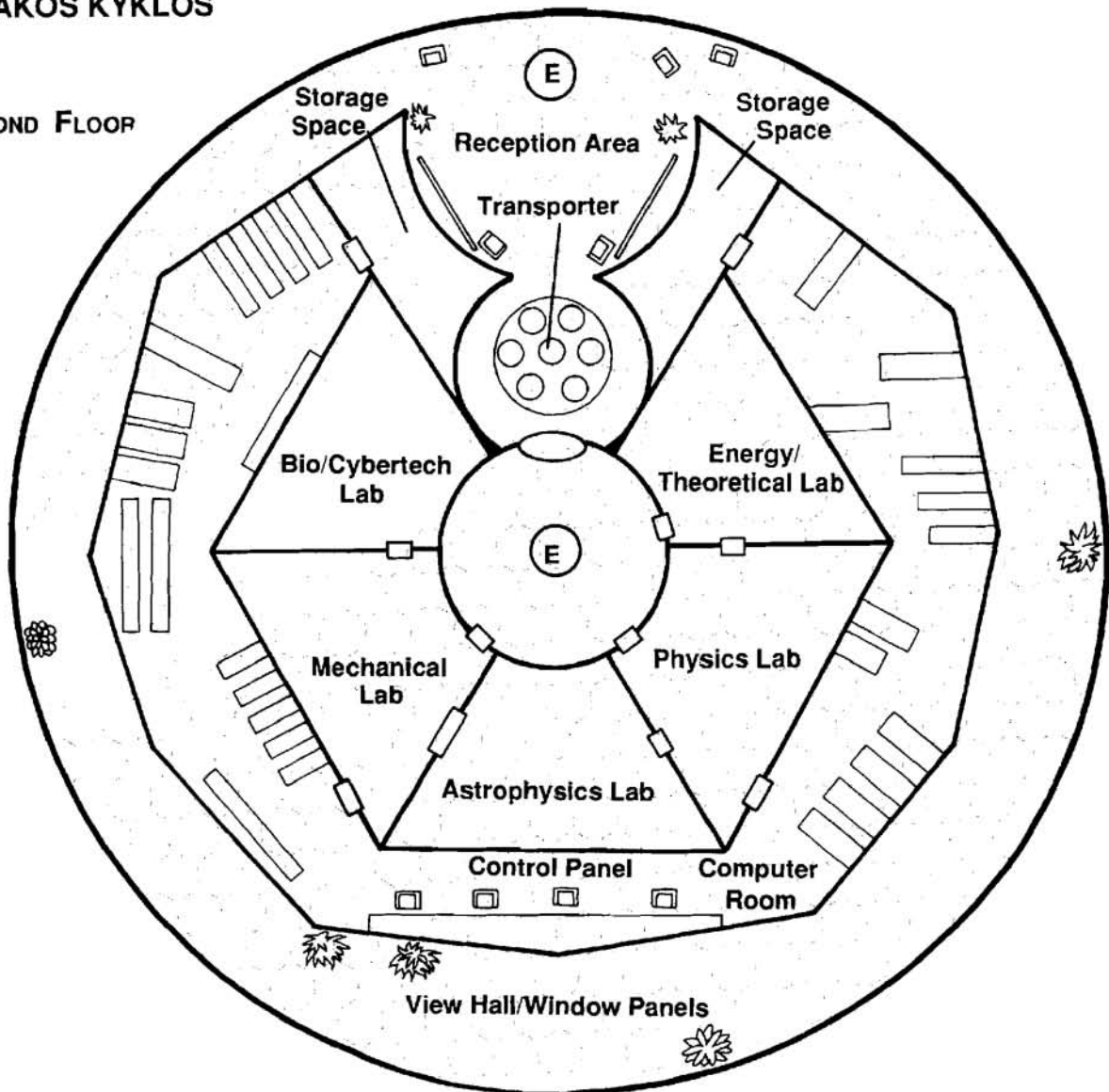
The top floor of the base is the Conference Hall, where the group has spent long hours discussing their plans and the fate of the Earth. The room is built for comfort and can pipe in music, visual representations, food, or any other luxury the Zodiac might need.

A) T.V. Screens: A bank of television screens have been placed in the walls, allowing full viewing of any station on Earth. From here, Taurus gathers most of his information by watching the news broadcasts and private channels of the major countries. The monitors can be controlled verbally from anywhere in the room, including volume, brightness, and so forth.

ZODIAKOS KYKLOS**BOTTOM FLOOR (4TH)****TOP FLOOR (1ST)**

ZODIAKOS KYKLOS

SECOND FLOOR



B) Holographic Projectors: Gemini has installed Holographic capabilities in the base for his multimedia-style presentations in the effort of making his plans of world-conquest as easy to understand as possible. All three may be working at any given time, and have several 'default' modes, in which they present graphics of the Earth when otherwise unneeded.

C) Zodiac Flags: A giant flag hangs directly behind Taurus' seat, prominently displaying the symbol of the Zodiac. The flag is jet black in color, the trim and symbol is made from gold thread.

D) Guest Seating: From time to time, the group may want to include guests to oversee the proceedings. A remnant of the councils held by the Great Emperors, these seats have never really been used. Perhaps if the heroes become invited guests, the chairs would again come into use.

E) Elevator: The elevator is actually just a platform that can raise and lower on command. It fits flush with the floor and becomes a part of the structure when not in use.

F) Main Projector: Gemini can upload his holographic projections from the other three locations to this one, putting it in the center of everyone's attention. This enables all members of the group to see the projection equally, and makes for simpler discussions on tactics.

G) Taurus' Seat: Taurus has erected a 'throne' where he resides, placing him above the group and in a position of authority. He is directly opposite the guest chairs, where he can observe the visitors while the Zodiac distracts them with petty talk.

H) Council Table: About this table is twelve seats. Note that if Taurus sits in the throne, one will remain unoccupied. It is possible that Gemini could split into two beings to carry on two conversations at once, but this would total thirteen beings and would set off Aquarius' triskadekaphobia (fear of the number 13). He has requested, therefore, that one seat remain empty.

I) Wet Bar: A fully stocked bar is located along the wall. Here, anyone can get food or drinks should they become hungry.

J) World Map: To satiate Gemini's overactive megalomania, a map of the world has been placed on the floor, complete with lights and diagrams charting military movement, political boundaries, and governmental 'hot-spots'.

SECOND FLOOR

The second floor serves two purposes; as the base's laboratories and the reception area. The labs and computers have been separated from the rest of the floor through trick doorways and hidden crawlspaces. Secondly, the outer wall has been made transparent, allowing a full view of space and distracting any visitors from the center of the base.

1-5) Laboratories: The five different labs have been loosely organized into five sections; Energy and Theoretical Sciences, Physics, Astrophysics, Mechanical Engineering, and Biotech/Cybertech. They are connected by glass walls so that each might be visible from the next. This allows Gemini to see where everyone is at all times. Because of his mad obsession with his work, the labs have become his second home and everyone else has allowed him to arrange them to fit his needs.

E) Elevators: The elevators on this floor are just like the one above; floating platforms that move up and down upon command.

6) Transporter: The transporter pad is located here, right where Gemini doesn't want it! He feels it's too close to his precious work and that anyone could pry at any time. Therefore, Taurus has ordered the base to rearrange itself so that walls separate the labs from the reception area. Now, only the Zodiac members know of the secret wall that leads to the main elevator. The guests are taken out through the open space and into the lobby, so that they are (hopefully) fooled about the existence of the computers and laboratories altogether.

7) Reception Area: This is the lobby of the base, where people are made to wait until they can get clearance from Taurus.

8) Computer Room: This is where the main banks are located. Most of the basic information is stored within the walls themselves, but the computation work goes on in these processors.

9) Control Panel: The primary place where someone might want to interface with the computer, it is here that Gemini can monitor the safety of the base, observing anywhere he wants at will. He may also communicate directly with the computer from here, making his research faster and easier overall.

10) View Hall: It is from here that the guests may get their first real view into space.

11) Storage: Gemini has set up these two areas for storage of his equipment. All manner of technical gear is lined up against the wall, categorized for easy access.

THIRD FLOOR

This is the 'playpen' of the Zodiac, where they may partake of all kinds of physical and mental entertainment. The purposes of the various rooms change from time to time, although there are some things which remain the same, such as the location of the pool (to save Aries the trouble of re-learning it's location!).

1) Swimming Pool: Pisces has made this her second home, although her requests to put fish in it have been repeatedly refused.

2) Weight room: The weights in this room are all tied down and connected to hydraulic power cables in the floor which provide the resistance required for the individual. Therefore, Aries may lift weights here and get as much benefit from them as, say, Sagittarius. Secondly, this feature keeps them from being dropped and prevents the need for a 'spotter'.

3) Film/ Video room: This room is filled with all manner of audio/ visual equipment, from radio, stereo, and videotapes, to holographic projectors, video games, and direct sensory jacks. Virgo has become the 'official' keeper of the videotapes and gets a little touchy when someone else enters 'her' room.

4) Raquetball Court: This court can be used for different purposes such as Raquetball, handball, and squash, but can also be rigged to detain troublesome heroes. As a makeshift cell, all the jailer has to do is order the base not to let them go (i.e. lock the door), and they are held under the same Suppressor field as everyone else. This is pretty ineffective against a Teleporter-type.

5) Viewing area: From here, spectators may watch the events in the Raquetball court through a clear, plasteel wall.

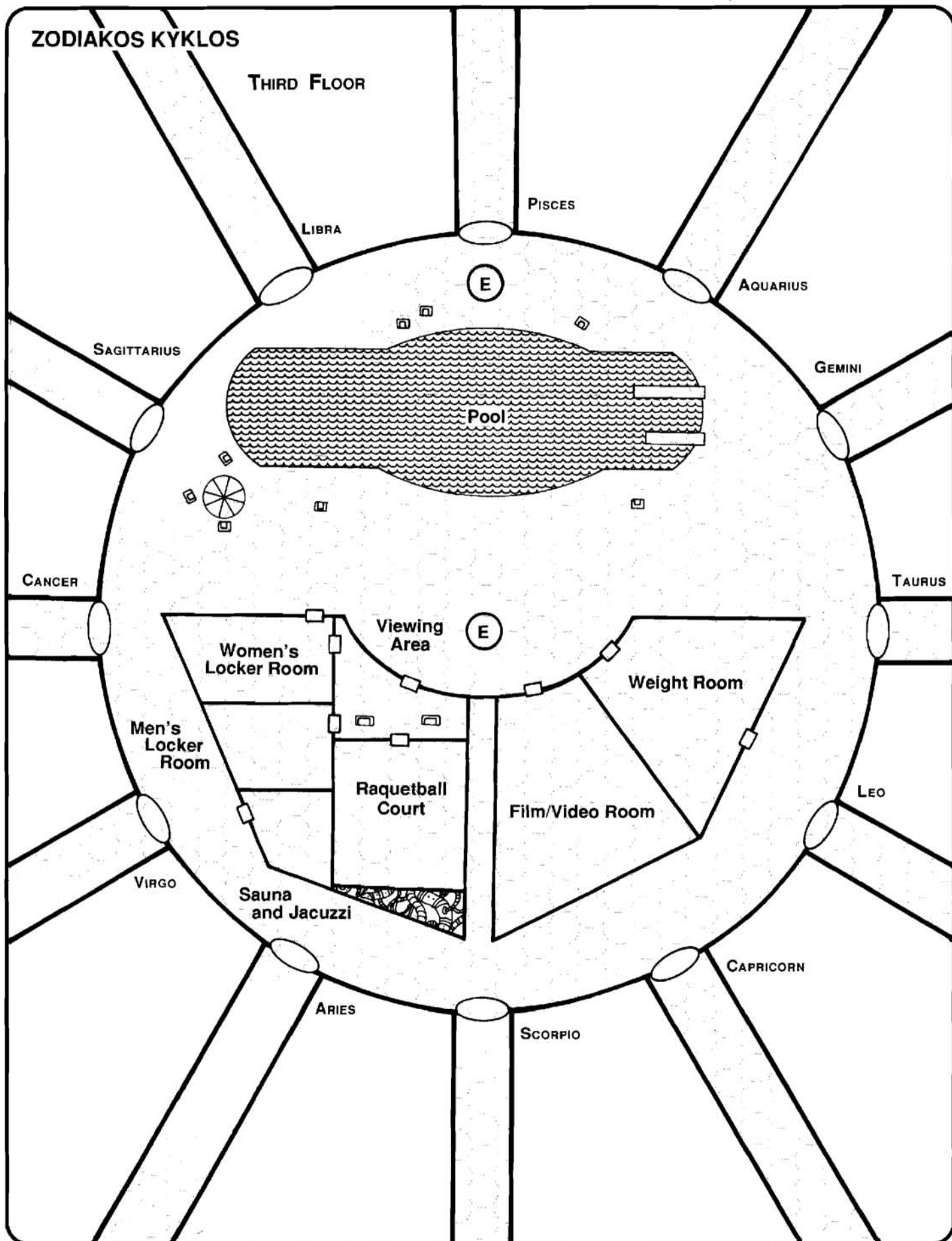
6) Women's Lockers: This area contains lockers, showers, and changing facilities for the women in the group, including sinks and toilets.

7) Men's Lockers: Just as in the women's locker, but labeled for men.

8) Sauna and Jacuzzi: This area contains the climate control devices for the level and can readily change the temperature from freezing to nearly 150 degrees Fahrenheit. The room itself has a sauna pool and a jacuzzi in it, where the temperature controls were meant to be used.

E) Elevator: As before, this is the 'floating platform' elevator.





FOURTH FLOOR

The fourth floor is nothing but a large Danger Room, where heroes and villains alike may vent their aggressions on mechanical constructs. From the control chamber, other members may both observe and control the activities inside the room, giving the room the advantage of human interaction. The base's natural ability of Suppression has been deactivated here, allowing for full use of every power in a character's arsenal. Occasionally, Leo or Libra will bring a hero here just to rough them up a little... and then have Virgo erase the entire occurrence from their mind!

PODS

These are the twelve living pods that surround the center of the base. Each one is slightly different, depending on the whims of it's owner. Cancer's, for instance, is nothing but a rock-filled planetscape, filled with boiling acid, flowing lava, and a methane/ sulfur atmosphere. Pisces has had hers built to resemble the bottom of the ocean, complete with sharks and fish. Taurus' pod is decorated in a classical greek style, showing the excellent craftsmanship in the pillars and columns. Virgo's is decked out with neon and black light, with a stereo that never shuts off. Sagittarius' is covered in plush felts, silks, and satins, making hers seem like an arabian palace. The rest are pretty much standard, with only minor flairs such as Scorpio's preference for oriental decorations and Capricorn's taste for ancient artifacts.

Observation Deck: This raised deck has a beautiful view of the outer world, letting anyone here admire the wonders of space in total comfort. Stairs lead up to this deck and may be retracted for isolation.

Floor Level: The floor level may be made up however the Zodiac member desires, though they must realize that there will be people coming to see them from time to time. It should be generic enough that other members can survive here.

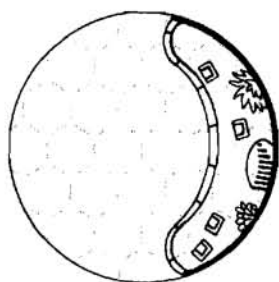
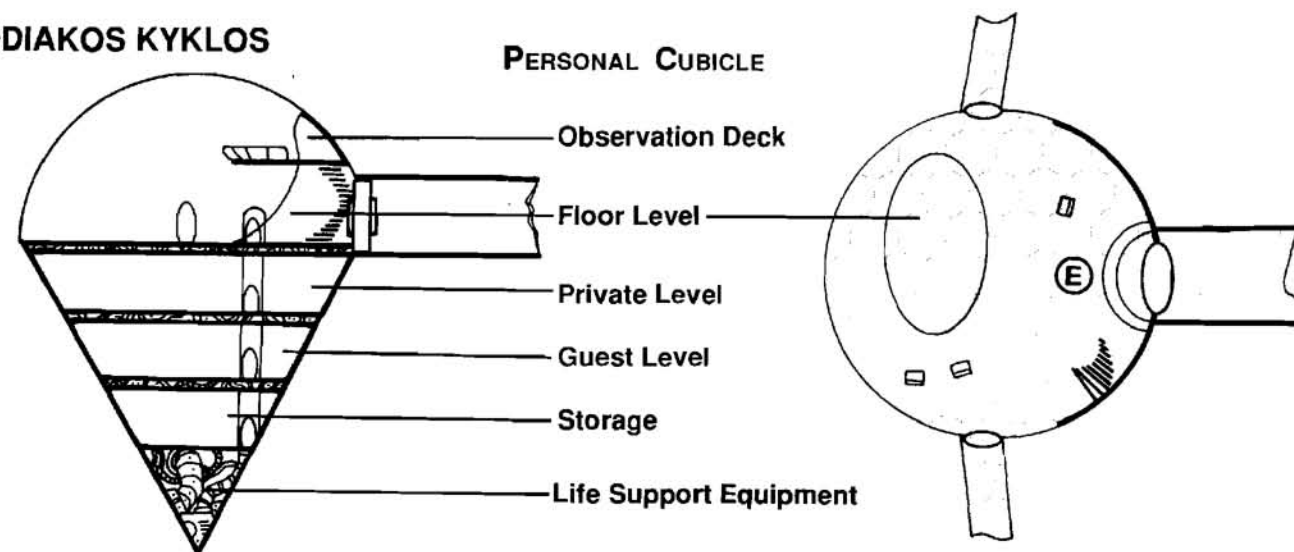
Private Level: This is the private level of the pods, allowing each member to have a place to eat, sleep, and live in comfort. Commonly, there will be televisions and game tables here for social activities. Also present is a bed and closet space for personal effects.

Guest Level: This is the guest chamber, where any members may allow their personal guest to stay. This might include family, boy- or girlfriends, or other villains who need to hide-out for a while. It is made up for living, though several members have converted their guest chambers into additional storage.

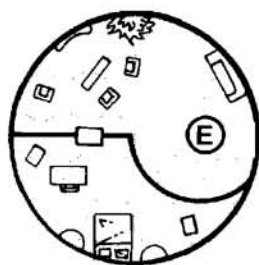
Storage: The last and bottom level before the life support equipment is that of storage. Here, the group's members may put anything they want for safekeeping, and only they know their given access code to enter.

ZODIAKOS KYKLOS

PERSONAL CUBICLE



Observation Deck



Private Level

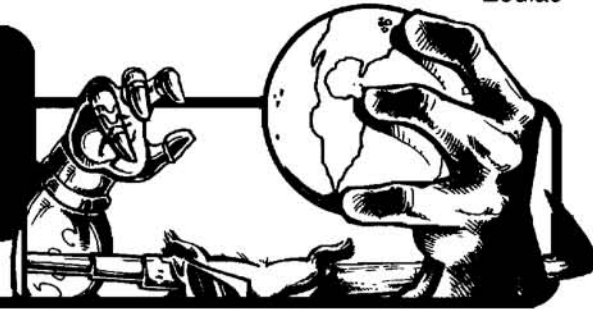


Guest Level



Storage

SCENARIOS



...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

THE SITUATION

The Zodiac, following one of the many strange schemes concocted by Gemini, have found a way to gather a sort of 'galactic power' from the upper atmosphere. They have secretly set up shop in the middle of the night atop the head of the Statue of Liberty (or any other large edifice/geographical feature that could serve as a conduit for power) and are placing all sorts of rods and wires here and there to begin the process. With computers and gadgetry set about the top, antennae reaching in twelve different directions, the stage is set for the action! Unfortunately, the operation will require almost two hours to complete, and will have the disadvantage of disrupting the power grid of nearby population centers. Therefore, several of the more combat-oriented members have been placed about to guard, such as Leo and Sagittarius. As a side note, this is a good adventure for introducing the Zodiac because they will be expecting the heroes and can give a good fight. Secondly, some of the weaker members can be present in the darkness somewhere and never be met. This enables you to pull in as many as you want, or leave some in hiding for later.

COMPLICATIONS

The heroes will probably get warning of the situation when the lights in their base begin to flicker on and off, or when the lights of the city begin to systematically wink out. They'll get a little suspicious before finally receiving multiple calls from witnesses and scared civilians!

As the heroes rush out to the center of the power-outages, they'll notice lights at the top of the Zodiac's chosen "power receiver". Should any of them happen to be looking for Dematerialized objects, they'll notice a faint beam of power going straight up and disappearing into the clouds. Should they get any closer, they're likely to encounter the first line of defenses; Sagittarius' arrows and Virgo's mind attacks. The fun will begin almost immediately, though the heroes won't be laughing!

The power generators are carefully regulated and safety checked by computers and, probably, Gemini himself. Should any damage happen to find it's way to the generator, everyone around is in a lot of trouble. Basically, the power collectors have enough raw energy built up to cause a 10d6 Energy Blast Explosion. Each turn, they gather yet another 1d6 and add it to the power batteries for storage, this effect building until either 50d6 have been gathered, or the place goes up like a nuclear detonation! Each member of the Zodiac has had it drilled into them NOT to fire towards the

head of the generators! This might even be noticed by the heroes should they be particularly observant. Gemini should be near the generators monitoring the power's increase, and if any hero is about to fire at him, he will spill the evil plan and explain the danger in million-dollar words. He doesn't want to be blown up any more than the next guy, so in the interest of self-preservation, he might even abandon the generators if they seem to be losing control.

THE SETTING

From the original encounter location, the setting becomes more and more vague as the heroes try in vain to search out the location of the now-escaped villains (see the chapter Deux Ex Machina). If they are to become part of a larger campaign and you plan to use them multiple times, this is a good opportunity to have little clues fall into place as the heroes go about their regular business. It's possible that the Zodiac can virtually disappear while they assimilate their gathered data on the heroes, and while they make good use of the energy they harvested (perhaps unsuccessfully).



If this is the case, then the personalities of the Zodiac should be stressed more than the fight, perhaps with phone calls, meetings in neutral places, or accidental encounters during daily life. Whatever the case may be, the power gathering was not just a simple plot.

As a suggestion, it might be a good idea for one of the Zodiac to actually get captured. This would allow the heroes the chance to gain some real information, and would force the Zodiac to come to them rather than having the heroes go to the bad guys!

What Gemini has in mind next is to use the energy to build massively powerful crystal capacitors that will be worn by each member of the group. These crystals will be constructed using a mix of technology and magic and cannot be done on the Zodiakos Kyklos due to the power dampening field. Therefore, prior to the actual stealing of the power, he had set up shop in an abandoned farmhouse outside of the city's limits. Here, he will work for days on end, trying to make the crystals. If made, the crystals will work as a Variable Power Pool of 30 points apiece that can only be used in conjunction with powers already possessed. This means that a normal could not make use of these, and would find them nothing more than a trinket. Unfortunately, they deteriorate with time. To represent this, each time a crystal is used for ANYTHING, it will lose three points permanently. Therefore, ten good shots apiece and they go dry.

Should the heroes enter the barn, they'll find it filled with strange technological devices. Reminiscent of an overdone science fiction movie, the lasers, computer screens and flashing lights will all set up an eerie contrast to the rural barn they're set in. Here, the heroes will again find Gemini working away, probably with the assistance of Taurus or Aries (for lifting). A fight will most likely break out, with any damage to the computer systems rendering the entire complex useless. Gemini is a fast worker, however, and had completed 1d6 of the crystals. Therefore, when the heroes intrude, what few Zodiac members that are present will scramble for the finished crystals. Optimally, there should be just enough completed for the Zodiac to get half and the heroes half. This will leave two or three high-powered supers on either side to stir thing up and drain the crystals into nothing before their real purpose is discovered.

OPTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

There are several options available to the hero group. First of all, the Zodiac will most likely escape from the first encounter with little effort. Whether or not their plans are foiled, however, will dictate the rest of the adventure. Should they succeed in stealing at least a little power from the collectors, then the rest of the plan to build the crystals will go off as described above. If they DIDN'T succeed (for instance, if the heroes destroyed the collector), then they might try to get their power elsewhere... such as a nuclear power plant or a fusion reactor. This will give the heroes the ability to learn a little more about the bad guys before the final conflict. As a suggestion, what better place for a villain to get some incredible power than from a hero's base (snicker, snicker!)?

Should the crystals be utilized by the Zodiac in the barn, they will stop at nothing to get rid of the heroes. Their den has been discovered and they're playing for keeps! As a complication, have the crystals be weak because they were incomplete, rolling on an 11 or less to blow up each time they're

used. If this occurs, the wielder should take the remaining points as stun damage. Or if that's not enough, how about a Flash or NND?

A hero that gets a crystal could probably keep it for a while, but because of the deterioration, will be unable to use it for too long. Perhaps a few days at best. Too bad the equipment to build them was destroyed!

Regardless, the Zodiac has found themselves bested (probably), and will retreat for a short time. Turn the page and read the next scenario!

THE LOK-1000 INVASION

THE SITUATION

The Galactic Empire of Mohk'sahr has discovered the Zodiakos Kyklos in orbit about the Earth. They perceive this to mean that the humans are fully capable of star travel, and that they are a threat to the continuation of the Empire itself. They have therefore decided to strike first and ask questions later. Placing their ships in the asteroid belt while on the other side of the sun, they have made their way undetected so close to the Earth that they are certain of success... or so they think. Because the Earth is so small, the fleet has only been given a small force to invade with; 1000 Lok units. These are the exact duplicates of Cancer, and even originate from the same Empire! Cancer's people have arrived!

COMPLICATIONS

From the very first moment, Taurus has been monitoring the approach of the aliens and is fully aware of their locations within the asteroids. He has attempted to establish contact, but was so unsuccessful at first that the group prepared for war. Finally, Cancer happened to hear the speech of the incoming invasion and was overjoyed to hear that his people had come. When they said that they were going to take over the Earth, he explained Taurus' similar plan and the forces were united.

Because of Taurus' knowledge of the Earth (and his immense power), he has convinced the alien commanders to work for him for a while. The short of it all is that Taurus now has 1000 Lok units under his command and is ready to make his move. At first, he won't let the world know that they're his, so the heroes will assume that the Zodiac are out of view for a while. However, if the heroes have ever encountered Cancer before, the aliens WILL be recognized as Cancer-look-alikes. This will bring down the secrecy thing from the very start, and Taurus might as well be at the head of the invasion force.

Possible complications could include having each of the Lok units possessing slightly different powers than Cancer. This could become confusing for a GM, however, and it might be simpler to make them all alike. Also, with only 100 total units (a number soon cut short by the heroes), it is a bit optimistic to be invading the world. A more likely possibility would be having the Loks invade a particular part of the world, such as a favorite city or high-tech company. Silicon Valley would fall quickly before an army, and would provide a good return for the effort! Also, the invasion could be a short-lived series of small, well placed encounters, perhaps while gathering equipment for a later plotline.

However it's handled, a key thing to remember is that the new Loks (Cancer is the exception) are lacking the ability to regenerate. This is very important! It keeps them from being an infinite supply of Cancer-wanna-be's from running around everywhere, and it will make it possible for the heroes to feel as if they're doing some good, actually keeping track of how many Loks they kill.

THE SETTING

The setting behind this one is rather hard to define and will revolve around your particular campaign. An interesting suggestion is to have the city from which the heroes operate taken over and placed under martial law by the Loks while the Zodiac takes whatever they need for their nefarious schemes. The heroes could end up battling from dawn to dusk for the safety of their precious homes, actually putting a strain on their Endurance Batteries and Limited Uses. To further this idea, perhaps they have been forced out of their base and are living under the city with the rats, sneaking about just to get some food and a good plan. If they needed to, it would be possible to raise a small army of rebellious citizens, and leading an underground revolt would provide enough of a distraction that the heroes would be free to attack the Zodiac head on.

This would be a fine time to introduce high-tech gadgetry and science fiction gear from the 'Gadgets' book to challenge your heroes with new obstacles. After all, what invading space-army wouldn't be armed with a plasma-rifle or an ion cannon?



OPTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The obvious answer to repulsing the alien army would be either killing all of their commanders, killing all of the Loks (fat chance), finding the location of the Zodiac hideout and breaking them up, or even convincing the enemy commanders that invading the Earth is not such a hot idea for whatever reason. Any of these will be difficult and should prove challenging even for characters with some experience.

This scenario has some pretty powerful side effects, as well. It lets the peoples of Earth know full well that there are other races in the universe, and could inadvertently redirect their attentions skyward. This increases the danger to the Zodiac as their base is up there near the moon. It is entirely possible that this could change the fabric of a campaign. If you do not wish to deal with something so large, make the alien force the 'Lok-500 invasion', or the 'Lok-30 invasion'... whatever fits your needs. As loose as this one is, it will take some special attention to run.

An interesting option for the heroes is to set up an ambush for one of the alien ships. After ridding the vessel of its crew, it is possible after some study for the heroes to learn to use the ship on their own. Should this be the case, you'll need to design a small and interesting warship for them to get, perhaps capable of only limited starflight... or possessing only enough of the special 'Krellite' fuel that they can just barely reach the orbiting ship. If they plan to take the fight to the home-base of the invasion force, they could very likely end up in the asteroid belt aboard a vessel made of rock. Here, a little sneaking about and a few combats would leave them face to face with the commander of the base and two or three members of the Zodiac. The Zodiac will leave as soon as they're threatened, and if the commander is incapacitated the aliens will fight as if they no longer had any leadership. Loosing morale, the Lok units will flee back to the stars as their base explodes (from damage incurred from the fight or as a self-defense measure), the heroes barely escaping in the last life pod available.

THIRD AND GOAL

THE SITUATION

Sagittarius has recently been seeing someone who works for a professional football team. As a suggestion, make it a team that your players might know something about or be familiar with, such as the Denver Broncos, the Washington Redskins, or the Los Angeles Rams. If this is done, you might even be able to make use of maps from the stadium in question. Again, this brings a certain sense of familiarity into the scenario, and will give the players something more to identify with. Regardless, the archer of the Zodiac had found an interest in one of the star players, until recently, when a fight broke them apart and left her feeling rejected.

Ever since, she has been plotting to get revenge on the player in the way she knows best; archery. She will stop at no expense to make him look bad, preferably on public television!

COMPLICATIONS

First of all, Marcus Miller (the star player) is the best quarterback on the team. This means that he is one of the better cared-for players they have. Secondly, he will be watched at all times by the fans because he has such a high profile. They care for him, and will be concerned if he seems to be having a problem. Fortunately for him, he has several very close friends who are also on the team. Each one of them is a Competent Normal, and they all look out for each other's care. This means that if she were to try to exact revenge, she would have to attack all of them at once. She doesn't want to do that, and although she hates Marcus and his gang, she would rather treat them each on an individual basis.

All the while, it is important to remember that Marcus is unaware that his ex-girlfriend, Angel Stevens, is actually Sagittarius. This will make things more difficult once the heroes have some leads and are asking around.

THE ADVENTURE

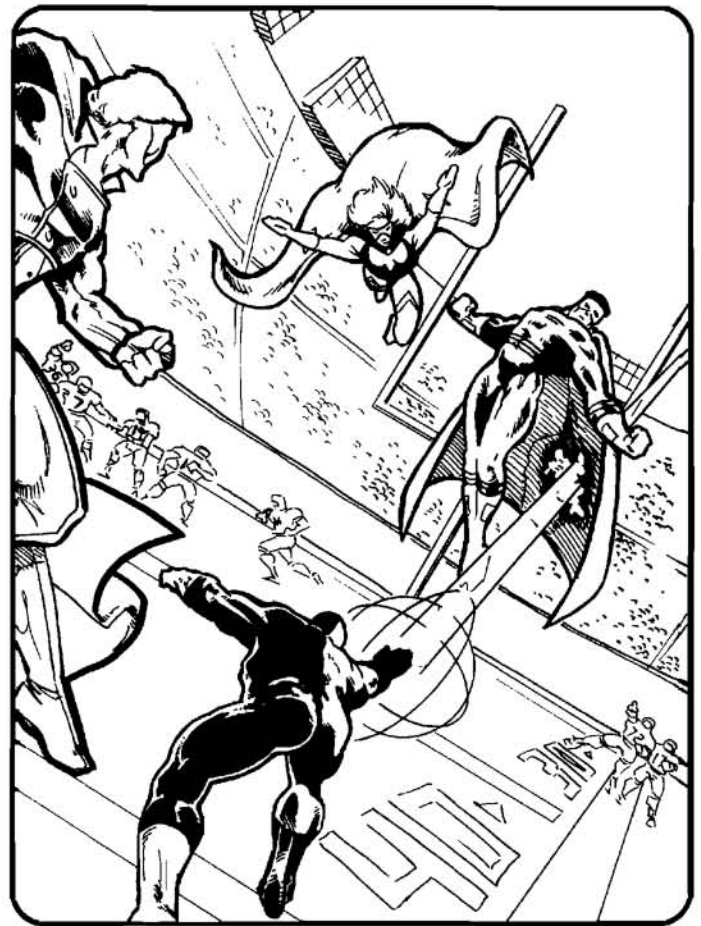
The first step of her plan is to remove, one by one, each of Marcus' closer friends. In this way, she hopes to drive fear into him as he sits idly by and watches his team suffer. She will attack one of them at random, waiting until he is alone. This should go exactly as planned, with the result being that he ends up in the hospital with some pretty major injuries. Needless to say, he is off the field for the season!

Marcus and his two remaining buddies have no idea who beat up their friend, but after asking him what little he knows, they decide it's important to find some protection. After all, it's not every night that a huge football player is attacked by a woman half his size and put in the hospital. All the while, the injured player adds in whispers to an already unbelievable story, the lady was saying something about Marcus and how he mistreated her. Marcus stays quiet about his relationship with Angel/ Sagittarius, but knows it's time to go beyond the usual means and hire professionals.

This is where the heroes enter the scene. Marcus has become very afraid for his life, what with the Super Bowl coming up and all, and is offering the heroes 50, 000 dollars or more to be his bodyguards. They may refuse the money being the superheroes that they are (or they might ask for more), but they will probably take the job anyway. They can begin to investigate, interviewing the first victim about what he saw. He'll remember that she had white hair and mentioned Marcus by name. Also, he will tell them that he found a note in his coat pocket this morning that said only "First and Ten".

When asked, Marcus will finally mention that he had recently broken up with Angel Stevens, but that he really doubted that she could do a thing like this. The mere mention of the name should make the heroes' skin crawl should they have ever encountered her before... assuming they knew her true identity in the first place!

As this is going on in the hospital room, a nurse will enter and tell Marcus that a friend of his just arrived in an ambulance and is asking for him. When the group goes to the second patient (again, one of the football players), he will mutter something about the Super Bowl and then pass out. In his hand is a message reading "Second Down". So the Super Bowl it is, and only two days away!



Logically, the heroes will predict the attack on the third friend and, once they decide to protect him, will find him difficult to locate. Marcus knows that he hangs out at a local dance club with some women-friends of his, but this close to a game, it seems unlikely that he would go there. As it is their only lead, they should check it out, anyway. They arrive at the dance hall long before the third friend. Here, unrecognized by the heroes, is Leo and Virgo in their secret identities. They dance at the "Tres Nouveau" on their free time anyway, and this just happens to be the best spot in town. It's a multi-layered place with two complete bars, four dance floors, and a sound system that can be heard a block away. Because of the noise pollution, coordinating will be difficult and heroes with sonic powers may be all but useless. It is here that Sagittarius makes her third attack, but not until Marcus' friend arrives will she remove her black wig and silly outfit. At that point, she will begin bombing the dance floor with explosive shells to stir things up before attacking the friend. Should she notice Marcus, she will ignore him and act as if she doesn't know who he is. She will then attack her target as planned, and if the heroes get in the way, Scorpio (who was hiding as well under the command of Sagittarius) will come out to help. If there are just too many heroes, let Leo and Virgo in on the action, giving a hand to their teammates and trying to make good their escape. Regardless of the outcome, the friend should get hit by a lucky blast and a note reading "Third and Goal" will be found on his person.

The final assault will take place as the heroes predicted; right in the middle of the Super Bowl. This time, however, the Zodiac has brought several other members along just in case. Basically, this gives you, as GM, free reign to pull in whoever you want to balance the sides. Since all twelve of the Zodiac together would be a bit too many, pick your favorites. Or better yet, come up with a plan and choose whomever is most qualified. For example, if the Zodiac intends to attack using secrecy and stealth, use Sagittarius (who should be there, anyway), Leo, Scorpio and Libra. If Taurus has decided to make good use of the media coverage, have showiness be the order of the day and bring in Aquarius, Aries, Capricorn and Virgo. For a power-assault, try using Libra, Aries, Taurus and Gemini. Whatever the case, between three and six members will be available for the fun... all of them trying to get rid of Marcus and to protect Sagittarius' now-endangered secret identity. Action, lights, a large field to trash; all surrounded by thousands of normals and two dozen cameras! I want a seat on the 50 yard line!

OPERATION HUXLEY

THE SITUATION

The Zodiac has finally conceived a plan that will bring peace to the world, all under their guidance and control (named 'Operation Huxley' after the man who wrote "Brave New World"). As a note to the GM, this adventure is specifically written to take place over the span of several sessions. It will change your campaign regardless of the length and outcome, so look VERY carefully at what is happening while you read this!

Basically, the Zodiac has been planting small devices into the back of the necks of all of the world leaders. These small devices make them particularly susceptible to suggestions, but ONLY when coming from a specific person. In this case, each world leader has been affected by a different Zodiac member, the entire group being led by Taurus. Slowly, the heroes may notice that the world is calming down. Perhaps a total-disarmament treaty could be signed between the Soviet Union and the United States, or the Soviets could announce that they're going to tear down the Berlin Wall once and for all. Other less drastic events could be taking place, with a touch of realism coming from current affairs.

After the devices were planted in the target's minds, Gemini began planting the suggestions. For years now, he has been cultivating the rulers of the world with ideals about a united planet, all of which can only be accomplished by listening to the Zodiac. Then, he assigned the different members of the group each to infiltrate into the legal systems of the world's major governments, either under the protection of their secret identities, or straight out in the case of Cancer, Pisces and Aries. Each one should be on hand at all times to allow the leaders of the world to get used to the idea that they're taking suggestion and advice from supers. It might be possible that the leaders can't even see the Zodiac for what they are and that the mental control has them believing their advisors are normal people.

The point is, with little effort the Zodiac has accomplished a great feat. They have worked their way into the governmental systems, gained the confidence of the leaders, and begun calming the wars of the world with absolutely NO combat. Far fetched? This is a comic-book, after all!

COMPLICATIONS

The complications begin when the heroes start to doubt the sincerity of the Zodiac. As villains, they have to have ulterior motives or else they would not be spending their time in such a "noble" pursuit! From past experience, the heroes can probably smell the plot forming from the very beginning. Their primary problem is that the Zodiac is now practically worshipped by over four billion people and pulping the bringers of peace is too dumb to consider.

Another plan must be conceived. Here is where the heroes do the legwork, asking questions and searching out the right people. As soon as they begin this, however, they learn that their base is to be closed down, and any use of ANY super-power in public is expressly forbidden. Should they resist the law, they will be arrested and detained by Stronghold. In other words, the heroes will begin to feel totally helpless as things progressively get worse. Once they've asked a few too many questions, martial law is placed on anything remotely super-powered, with the exception of the Zodiac, of course! Most of the countries comply, leaving every last super-being in your campaign with little chance but to either be in secret identity all the time, or to live in the sewers and alleys of the major cities. They are forming an underground network of communication, heroes and villains alike surviving off what little they can find, all of them finally united with the sole goal of vanquishing their foes and getting their corrupt world back!

THE SETTING

This adventure could happen anywhere due to its open-ended nature. Some interesting scenes could include dozens of strange-looking people in trenchcoats waiting about the airport for planes just after martial law is imposed, including bat wings, antennae, and blue skinned women. A second scene might have your already-established heroes and villains gathered in an underground basement or abandoned subway tunnel as they make plans against the Zodiac. It could be here that someone meets up with their archenemy and, in the face of greater danger, temporarily forgets their mutual hatred.

Something that is likely to occur is the heroes searching out the members of the Zodiac at each individual capital. It is not unlikely that they would be seen on the world news, so finding their locations should be pretty simple. If, for instance, the group decides to bag Taurus in Moscow, you might want to have a map of the Kremlin handy, or at least a few pictures to build mood and atmosphere. Fights will most likely break out, and in this particular scenario, the Zodiac will call for help immediately to be beamed to safety, leaving the heroes fighting a bunch of agents.

The scenario is inherently world-spanning and could take the heroes anywhere on the globe. Therefore, a good map of the world would also be handy. In this manner, they could trace the Zodiac to various locales, perhaps by actually charting their progress with flags and pins in a map. The point here is teamwork, be it between heroes and their enemies, or within the team itself.

THE ADVENTURE

As the adventure progresses, the heroes will begin to learn a few things about their enemy. First of all, they keep disappearing when attacked. Where are they going? How? Perhaps you can use this as the time to introduce their rather unusual base. As a suggestion, Taurus might invite the heroes into the Zodiakos Kyklos for a seven-course dinner to 'talk' about upcoming events. He could simply tell them to stay out of the Zodiac's way and beam them away right then. He also might invite them to stay for a few days. With the heroes on the base, at least he knows they're not on Earth causing troubles.

A second idea could allow the heroes to overwhelm a member of the Zodiac before his or her friends arrive to save them. With the little transmitter pin, the heroes could crack the code and have themselves beamed into the base. Although they would find themselves pretty useless because of the dampening field, they would get a chance to look around. Here, they might even discover the control panels to the mind devices (behind impenetrable glass, of course!)

OPTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The formulation of a successful plan can really only occur AFTER the heroes have discovered something about the mind devices. With some experimentation, they might even find a way to jam the effects for a short time while they themselves try to grab the leaders. This would catch the Zodiac off guard, mostly because they are so spread out that mistakes are going to happen. Another idea has them disguising themselves as the unaffected leaders and playing along with the scheme while the Zodiac goes about their business. The nice thing about this solution is that the heroes are doing more than punching out a bad guy to save the day; they are actually using their more secretive skills to avoid a bad situation.

Somehow, the Zodiac will be defeated (though not for a long while) and the world will begin to see the villains for what they really are. If so, the Zodiac will become so unpopular as their control fades that the Zodiakos Kyklos will be the only safe place for them. They will fight for their control, but should the mind devices be defeated, they will be too disorganized to put up a good challenge. They will curse the heroes as they fly into the sunset, promising to someday return!

And the good guys? National heroes the world over. Holidays and parties are thrown, and everyone sees the heroes for what they are; not the illegal super-beings of the Zodiac's world, but the symbols they've all come to know and love.

IMPLICATIONS

The implications of Operation Huxley are pretty astounding. Here, you have the opportunity to take control of the world out of the hands of the heroes and put it in the bad guys' pocket. The players will have to worry about such mundane things as where to get their next meal and a good night's sleep. They will be treated as villains, while the Zodiac becomes the heroes. An interesting change of pace, though not without consequences.

Such an event would alter the system of control handled by most governments. They might go to a triarchy system in which three leaders ruled together, or place so much security about the cities that the country in question becomes a military zone. The world would change, and whether or not you want to express this is up to you. If you would like everything to revert back to normal, that's fine. Remember, though, that people would be better prepared for this kind of thing to occur again, making it more difficult for future villains to try to take over.

THE FINAL TOAST

'The Final Toast' is more of a farewell adventure than a combat one. It builds role-playing and respect between heroes and villains, and pushes the idea that the characters being played are more than silly people in silly outfits.

The Zodiac is not without its flaws (obviously), and accidents do occur. In the event of a death in the group, a replacement would be found, though probably not immediately. Gemini and Taurus would begin to sort through their files of candidates to choose the next person to fill the ranks of the Zodiac. The super must have powers somewhat related to the position, must have been born in the month of the sign, and must have never served for a super-hero group in the past. From there, they would be tested and drilled to check their qualifications, while Sagittarius searches through police files and FBI computers to verify their record. Once okayed by the group, the qualifying member would be sworn in, and the replacement would be complete.

This is an excellent way for you, as GM, to work in your own ideas about the group. Perhaps you feel one of the members has run his course in your campaign, or is simply too powerful or weak to be of use. If you have an idea for a better replacement, try running this adventure...

In 'The Final Toast', the Zodiac tries something totally outrageous, along the lines of breaking into a nuclear plant to steal the core or fighting off an alien spore-creature as it beats up the heroes. However it happens, one of the members sees a hero in danger and actually tries to save them. After all, fighting is one thing, while killing is something else. Somehow, after saving the hero, the villain sustains serious damage and begins to loose Body at an incredible rate. The fighting stops as the Zodiac tries to retreat, gathering their wounded member and going back to the Zodiakos Kyklos.

Later, the heroes are called by Taurus, who has obviously wept at the loss of his ally, and invites the heroes to the funeral of their benefactor. If all goes well, this could be a heart-rending experience in which the players realize that even super-beings die. There should be no fighting here, everyone will be dressed in black, with the truce lasting a good week or more before any action stirs things up again.

Then again, the fallen member could just be baiting the heroes in for one good punch...!

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