

# ***DARK SECRETS***

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## ***AFTERMATH***

HEROES  
BORN INTO  
A WORLD OF  
FEAR

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## THE DARK SECRETS SETTING

In this version of Dark Secrets, we'll be using the Necessary Evil superpowers rules, as well as some (but not necessarily all) of the new Edges and Hindrances contained within that setting. In order to accomodate some of the new (and really fun) options available within this system, the backstory and current situation will change in qualitative, but not quantitative, ways.

Sometimes people make mistakes; everyone has a few skeletons in their closet. In this campaign setting players must come up with some terrible event in their past which, at least from their point of view, would make them a pariah in civilized society. Of course, the fact that you have super powers in a world that has been laid waste by evil mutants only makes things more interesting.

Anyways, enough chitchat, it's time to get on with the show.

Welcome to **DARK SECRETS: AFTERMATH.**

## HUBRIS

The first *Dark Secrets* storyline takes place during World War II, in a history rather different from our own. The United States, preoccupied with its war against Japan, never entered the European front. Rather, Hitler and his Nazi's avoided conflict with the USSR and consolidated their power first on the mainland, and then in Britain, which finally fell in 1944. Rather than openly challenge the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich, whose morale was higher than ever thanks to an apparently complete victory in Europe, the US opted to resume diplomatic relations, at least on the surface. However, between the years of 1944 and 1953, a secret war of espionage and sabotage raged, focused around the top-secret super soldier projects in the US, Germany, and Russia. These projects focused around 3 main areas: the cultivation and training of various "Supers," or humans with extraordinary abilities, the development of advanced weaponry and robotic soldiers, and the study of the Occult.

During this seven year period of "Cold War" diplomatic relations worldwide went from bad to worse, culminating in the use of nuclear weaponry in 1953 for only the third time in the history of the Earth (following the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki).

A renegade from the German secret project Herrschaft (Ascendancy) calling himself the *Urbemensch*, working in conjunction with some other German supers, coordinated the theft of the launch codes for the entire Nazi arsenal. Despite frantic efforts by the SS and regular military, his plan was executed perfectly. Within 6 hours of the theft, missiles carrying everything the Nazi's had, from fission and fusion bombs to anthrax and small pox to curses of unholy power, had been targeted and launched. As soon as their spies reported the frantic activity and sudden attack, both the USSR and the US retaliated. Over the course of the next 12 hours, nearly 600 million people perished in explosions both nuclear and chemical across every continent except Antarctica. Over the next few days, weeks, and months, nearly 1 billion more would die horrific deaths from disease, radiation sickness and starvation.

Looking back on the war, it is certain that the Nazi leadership died during this brief “World War III”, although whether from bombs or betrayal no one is certain. However, the fate of The Ubermensch and his cohorts remains unknown...for now.

## AFTERMATH

It's been 10 years since Armageddon. The collapse of all major governments has since thrown the world into a state of temporary anarchy and chaos. However, the forces of order are already working to rebuild civilization. It will be a long and difficult process, and this rebuilding period has been further complicated by the widespread emergence of super-powered individuals, as well as the scattering of survivors from the various secret projects. While they remain approximately half a percent of the remaining world-wide population (around 1 billion total humans, meaning about 5,000,000 supers etc.), their numbers are still far larger than ever before in history, and more supers are “born” every day. This presents a serious problem because Germany, in the few hours before the bombs landed, announced the truth of the war to the entire world: the supers had betrayed them with the goal of building a superior race. Rather ironic, if you think about it. This announcement greatly exacerbated the natural distrust most normals already bore towards supers to the point of outright hate in many places. A lone super would do well to guard his identity closely.

## SUPER POWERS

This was a pretty extensive section in the homebrew, but not so here. Just check out the character creation section of Necessary Evil, but keep in mind the following: all characters must be human, at least originally. If you want an altered or alien form (as per the Hindrances), be prepared to explain it in a reasonably detailed background.

## GAINING AN EDGE ON THE COMPETITION

Once again, check out the new edges from Necessary Evil. Also:

Veteran of the Long War (Background)

**Requirements:** Novice

You gain 20 experience points (four advances) at character creation.

Whether you were a super-powered spy or spy hunter, or just doing your duty to God and country in the Second Great War, you took part in many of the events that led up to World War III, and undoubtedly saw some action whether covert or official. Of course, you never did anything to regret; you're a *hero* after all...

Regardless of what you did during the war, it left you changed. Draw a card at random from your GM's deck and check the Veteran Table below to see if those wounds were physical or psychological.

Card	Effect
Ace	<i>Heartless:</i> During your service you came to understand that no one life is more important than achieving final victory.
Deuce	<i>Bad Eyes:</i> Someone once tossed a flash bomb that went off a little too close to your face.
Three	<i>Lame:</i> That old leg wound never quite healed up properly.
Four	<i>One Arm:</i> Lesson learned: be careful with grenades.
Five	<i>One Eye:</i> Lesson learned: diving face-first through glass windows is not a good idea.
Six	<i>One Leg:</i> Lesson learned: always double check when crossing minefields.
Seven	<i>Anemic:</i> You never had a terribly good immune system, and all those plagues sure didn't help.
Eight	<i>Mean:</i> Your experiences during the war have left you bitter and cynical.
Nine	<i>Experimental Volunteer:</i> As a conscriptee into the American Project Patriot, you embraced the cause and volunteered to undergo certain tests designed to increase the military's understanding of super powers. As a consequence of your selflessness, you have been forever marked as unique among the human race. You have

	the Distinctive Appearance Hindrance.
Ten	<i>Traitor</i> : There were a lot of double agents during the Cold War, and you should know! Unfortunately, you double-crossed the wrong person, and, in an unlucky turn of fate, they survived Armageddon and still want vengeance. You have the Enemy Minor Hindrance.
Jack	<i>Bloodthirsty</i> : You acquired a taste for death during the war, and it has never left you.
Queen	<i>Pill Popper</i> : You spent a lot of time in a field hospital during WW II, and pick up the Habit (Opiate Addiction) Hindrance.
King	<i>Experimental Subject</i> : During a covert operation behind German lines, you were captured and used as an experimental subject in Project Rebirth. The horrific experiments have left you alive, but changed behind recognition into some kind of alien. You have the Alien Form Hindrance.
Red Joker	<i>Borrowed Time</i> : One of the terrible plague bombs dropped has left you living on borrowed time. You gain the Terminally Ill and Anemic Hindrances.
Black Joker	<i>Damaged Goods</i> : During an undercover mission, you were exposed to an unknown radiation which altered your cellular structure somehow, and left you vulnerable to a common condition or substance. You have the Allergy Major Hindrance, and you and your GM can decide what exactly that pesky condition or substance is based on your background.

Sucker Punch (Combat)

**Requirements:** Novice, Agility d6+, Fighting d8+, Intimidation or Taunt d6+, First Strike

The character doesn't know the meaning of the words "fair fight." If he succeeds in a Test of Will against an adjacent opponent, the character receives a free Fighting attack. This attack does not incur a multi-action penalty.

Brave (Combat)

**Requirements:** Novice, Spirit d8+  
You have a +2 on all Guts checks.

Dirty Fighter (Combat)

**Requirements:** Novice, Fighting d6+, Agility d6+, Smarts d6+  
You gain a +2 on all Smarts and Agility Tricks during melee combat.

Really Dirty Fighter (Combat)

### **Requirements:** Dirty Fighter

You may spend a Benny to automatically get the drop on any one target in melee.

### GOING PROFESSIONAL

#### Super Hero (Professional)

##### **Requirements:** Novice; Arcane Background (Superpowers)

The Super Hero gains +2 Charisma with any character who has witnessed him/her performing a heroic deed (at the GM's discretion). This bonus increases to +4 if the heroic deed directly benefited that character.

#### Mutant Hunter (Professional)

##### **Requirements:** Novice, only available with training from certain governments

The Mutant Hunter is fighting to save humanity—by destroying all those dangerous mutants and so-called “Super Heroes.” He/she gains the benefits of the Arcane Resistance Edge from Savage Worlds; if he/she already has this edge, tough luck, it doesn't stack. In addition, when in the presence of a normal-looking super, the Mutant Hunter may make a Notice roll at -4 to guess that the character has superpowers. This penalty is reduced to -2 if the Hunter engages in direct conversation or observation of the Super. While Mutant Hunters may sometimes have super abilities of their own, they are often in denial about them.

### THESE HINDRANCES ARE SUCH A DRAG

Just like with Edges, check out those new Hindrances from Necessary Evil.

#### Slow (Major)

During Initiative, discard and redraw any card higher than a 9, unless you get a Joker (in which case, lucky you). A Slow character may not also have the Quick Background Edge.

#### Timid (Major)

You never really learned how to talk back, and have trouble holding your own in most conversations, especially with strangers. Take a -2 when rolling in a Test of Wills.

### GEARING UP

Below is a chart of common weapons from the era. German-made weapons are



marked with an asterisk, and are much more difficult to find in game.

NAME	ROF	RANGE	LOAD	DAMAGE	NOTES	COST	TYPE
PA Shotgun, .410 Shot	1	10/20/40	6	2-4d6		\$60	SG
PA Shotgun, .410 Slug	1	20/40/80	6	2d10	AP 1	\$60	SG
DB Shotgun, 16 gauge 00 Buck	1-2	10/20/40	2	2-4d6	AP 1	\$50	SG
DB Shotgun, .410 Slug	1-2	20/40/80	2	2d10	AP 1	\$50	SG
Karabiner 98k*	1	40/80/160	5	2d8+1	AP 2	\$85 BM	Rifle
Lee-Enfield	1	30/60/120	5	2d8+1	AP 2, Str d8	\$75	Rifle
M1 Carbine	3	24/48/96	15	2d8	AP 1, Auto	\$100	Rifle
M1 Garand	2	18/55/110	8	2d8+1	AP 3, Str. d8, Auto	\$80	Rifle
Sturmgewehr 44*	6	30/60/120	30	2d8+1	AP 1, Auto	\$150 BM	AR
Bren	6	30/60/120	30	2d8+1	AP 2, Str. d8 Snapfire, Auto	\$200 Military only	MG
MG34*	6	30/60/120	50	2d8+1	AP 2, Str. d8 Snapfire, Auto	\$250 Black market only	MG
MP40*	3RB	12/14/48	30	2d6	AP2	\$90 BM	SMG
Sten	3	12/24/48	20	2d6	AP 2, Auto only, jams on a 1	\$50	SMG
Thompson M1	3	24/48/96	100	2d8	AP 1, Auto only	\$100	SMG

Colt M1911	1	15/30/60	6	2d6	AP 1	\$35	Pistol
Luger P-08*	1	12/24/48	8	2d6	AP 1	\$60 BM	Pistol
Bazooka	1	15/30/60	1	4d8+4	AP 15, HW, MBTt, Str. 10, Snapfire	\$200 Military /Black Market only	RPG
Grenade	N/A	5/10/20	N/A	3d6	Medium Burst, HW	\$25 Military /BM only	HE

While firearms have made armor largely meaningless on the battlefield, certain technologies developed during the Cold War have made some protection possible.

Below is a list of armor which is likely to be encountered.

NAME	ARMOR	WEIGHT	COST	NOTES
Flak Jacket	+2	12	\$500	Torso and arms only. Provides +2 armor against bullets.
Leather Armor	+1	15	\$30	Torso, arms, legs.
Steel Pot Helmet	+4	5	\$50	50% chance of protecting against a headshot.

In addition to standard wartime technologies, a variety of other weapons were developed during the Cold War for specialized purposes. Also, in the aftermath of the war, resurgence in the use of archaic weaponry (found listed in the SW core book; ask your GM if a weapon is available) has occurred due to the shortage of firearms and factories capable of producing them.

NAME	RANGE	DAMAGE	COST	NOTES
Net Gun	5/10/20	Special	\$300	See Necessary Evil
Taser	2/4/8	2d6	\$30	Electric; Vigor Roll at -4 or shaken for 1d4 rounds
Tranquilizer Gun	10/20/40	Special	\$50	Poison; Vigor Roll at -2 or paralyzed for 10 minutes
Electro-lance	Melee	Str+2d6	\$45	Reach 1, 2-hands, Parry +1, Electric

Of course, weapons aren't everything; there a few other items which can come in handy in or out of a fight. These special items are detailed in the chart below.

NAME	DESCRIPTION
Scope	+2 to shooting rolls beyond Medium if you don't move. \$5
Starlight Scope	As Scope, but with Lowlight Vision. \$50
Camo Fatigues	+1 Stealth in appropriate environment. \$15
Nightvision Goggles	Lowlight Vision. Sudden bright lights may cause temporary blindness; the wearer is shaken if he fails a Vigor Roll at -4. \$100
Autograpnel	Special; see Necessary Evil. \$175
Rocket Pack	Allows the user to fly with an acceleration of 6 and a max speed of 24, using the Pilot skill to operate it. \$1500-Military, \$3000-Civilian
Artificial Gill	Allows breathing underwater indefinitely. \$100
Combat Stim	Increases Agility, Strength, and Vigor by 1 step each, and gives the user the Fearless superpower. These boosts last for 1 hour, and additional doses beyond the first increase Vigor and Strength by 1 step each and duration by 30 minutes. Regular use (at least once a day for a week or more; GM's discretion) results in the user gaining the Habit (Addicted to Combat Stims) Hindrance. Long term addiction may result in a weakened immune system, organ failure, and death (GM's discretion). \$15 – Military or Black Market only
Brain Stim	Gives the user the Gifted, Heightened Senses, and Telepathy superpowers, as well as increasing Smarts by 1 step. These boosts last for 1 hour, and additional doses beyond the first increase Smarts by 2 steps and duration by 30 minutes. Regular use (at least once a day

	for a week or more; GM's discretion) results in the user gaining the Habit (Addicted to Brain Stims) Hindrance. Long term addiction may result in brain damage, amnesia, and insanity (GM's discretion). \$25 – Military or Black Market only
Nullifier Shackles	The Nullifier Shackles generate a unique field of energy which prevents the use of any activated Superpower by the wearer, although passive “always-on” powers are unaffected. They are Toughness 14. \$100 – Government or Black Market only
ESP Ward	A small energy field generator which may be worn as an earpiece, on a necklace, or attached to a helmet or hat. It prevents the wearer's mind from being entered or affected by telepaths, mind readers, and mind control. \$200 – Government or Black Market only
Metopon	An opiate painkiller developed to replace Morphine and Codeine which is far less addictive, while remaining effective. A single dose grants the user the Nerves of Steel Edge for 1 hour. A double dose grants the user Improved Nerves of Steel instead. Larger dosages cannot be metabolized fast enough and provide no additional bonus. Regular use (average of one daily for 2 weeks or more; GM's discretion) may still result in the user gaining the Habit (Opiate addiction) Hindrance. Long term addiction may have a variety of debilitating effects (GM's discretion). If you already have Nerves of Steel Metopon just gives you the improved version. If you have Improved Nerves of Steel, Metopon allows you to ignore one additional point of wound penalties. \$5/10

While there are a great many other mundane items which players may want, I see no reason to list them all here. Such a list would almost certainly be incomplete, and similar lists already exist elsewhere (for example, in the SW core rulebook). If there's anything not listed here that you want, just ask your GM.

Prices for all items above are listed in terms of UCS New Dollars. The exchange rate at the game's opening is explained below based on the New Dollar.

New Dollar	1
<b>NAME</b>	<b># of New \$ to equal 1</b>
USMA Dollar	.75
Great Lakes Dollar	.5
Illini	.1
Star	2

## FROM THE ASHES OF *CIVILIZATION*...

The survivors of WW3 have emerged from hiding and begun to try and rebuild the world they once knew. New population centers have begun to form in Central Asia, Africa, South and Central America, and, surprisingly, in the US Midwest. It is on this last that we will focus for now, because it is in the former United States that the largest caches of remaining super weapons remain hidden—buried somewhere in the devastated wastes. It is also here that modern infrastructure remains either partially intact, or at least reparable. Of course, not everyone agrees on exactly *how* civilization ought to be rebuilt.

In the former US, the following groups vie for power:

### The United States Military Authority

A remnant of the United States Army originally based in Area 51 in Nevada, the group calling itself the US Military Authority has been trying to expand its territory in hopes of finding more hospitable areas. Much of the country around their primary base pays tribute to them in the form of supplies and scouting information. Part of their success is linked with the fact that they claim to know the whereabouts of several top-secret nuclear and biological weapons developed by the US government during the Cold War.

Leader: General of the Army William T. Bradley

Restrictions: The US Military Authority is convinced that the Super Soldier programs worldwide are directly responsible for the events of WWII. All genetic deviants are to be detained and held captive for study until they can be properly controlled.

\*Allows *Mutant Hunter* Professional Edge

Weapons Policy: Civilians are not allowed to bear arms beyond a pistol for self-defense. Medieval weapons are unrestricted.

Currency: USMA Dollar

### The Republic of the United Central States

Centered around a partially rebuilt Kansas City, the UCS promises equal treatment and justice for all; supers and normals alike. However, there are some elements, both in the government and among the public which simply don't trust the supers.

The UCS has an organized militia and a large civilian population. It is modeled on the original US Constitution, with a similar division of powers. Approximately 55% of its citizens work on farms in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Iowa.

Leader: President Jeffrey Taylor.

Restrictions: None. The UCS is open to all, although the stranger one is, the more prejudice one is likely to meet.

Weapons Policy: Most weapons are available for general possession. Military grade

(i.e. restricted) weapons include: Sturmgewehr 44, Bazooka, Thompson M1, MG 34, Bren.

Currency: New Dollar

### The Army of the Cursed

More of a roving war-band similar to Genghis Khan's Golden Horde than a modern day polity, the Army of the Cursed moves about the Midwest, conquering and pillaging where it will. With around 10,000 supers and perhaps 35,000 normals, word of the Army's approach is never taken lightly. The Army is currently camped in South Dakota, near the Missouri River.

Leader: Lord Steel aka Gregory Price

Restrictions: Normals cannot hold high-level command posts in the Army, although the supers welcome their help and numbers elsewhere.

Weapons Policy: Finders keepers.

Currency: Barter system.

### The Great Lakes Kingdoms

A number of rich or powerful individuals set themselves up as kings and queens in the Great Lakes area. While former large cities and state capitals are generally avoided due to radiation and disease concerns, some are relatively clean, and they



certainly add to the prestige. While many of these kingdoms suffer considerable unrest, a few are noteworthy for their stability and size.

### Marquette

Centered around the city of the same name, the Kingdom of Marquette claims dominion over most of the northern half of Michigan and Lakes Superior and Michigan. While direct control over such a large area can be difficult to maintain without a large standing army, the semi-feudal system which has arisen simplifies some of these problems. The current king is Sir Robert Du Bois, an accomplished Mentalist.

Restrictions: Marquette welcomes individuals of all abilities.

Weapons Policy: Only those of noble rank (the lowest being knights) may carry weapons.

Currency: Great Lakes Dollar.

### New Milwaukee

The Kingdom of New Milwaukee is centered around the real world city Stevens' Point, which is actually in central Wisconsin. It has a much higher population density than nearby Marquette, but this is partially due to the relatively small area of land which it claims influence over. Although it does have an organized army, it is not large and would have to be supplemented with civilian militia should the kingdom ever fall under attack. It is currently

ruled over by Queen Mary Andersen.

Restrictions: New Milwaukee is generally distrustful of outsiders, especially those with superpowers. However, some few have attained recognition for their good deeds.

Weapons Policy: Open.

Currency: Great Lakes Dollar.

### Peoria\*

Another kingdom centered around a city of the same name, Peoria is similar in many ways to Marquette. However, there is one large difference. In Peoria, having any kind of Superpowers is punishable by death. It is the stated mission of the current king, Marcus Webster, to fight to ensure the safety of mankind by eradicating all those who endanger it.

Restrictions: As one might guess, only normals are allowed in Peoria.

Weapons Policy: All citizens are expected to contribute to the common defense by being proficient in the use of a firearm and a medieval weapon.

Currency: Illini

\*Allows Mutant Hunter Professional Edge.

### The Texas Baronies

Down south in the great empty space of Texas, thousands of people have survived and congregated, forming new communities and doing what they believe they must

to continue to survive the wrath that God has poured out on the Earth. The Texas Baronies are a group of loosely allied and affiliated townships and territories. The internal politics are often confusing and muddled to an outside point of view, and the number of individual baronies varies between 11 and 13 depending on the waxing and waning inter-community feuds. They all hold the same general religious and cultural values, however, which is the primary reason they are treated as a single entity by other polities.

Leader: The most influential figure within the baronies at this time is the Rev. William Marrion Branham, a moving and charismatic speaker for the True Church of the Almighty Sun.

Restrictions: All citizens of the Texas Baronies are members of the True Church of the Almighty Sun.

Weapons Policy: A man is not a man without a gun close to hand.

Currency: Stars.

### *New Age Religions*

Two important new religions have risen up in the aftermath of WWII and the rise of the Supers. They are detailed as follows.

### *The Chosen of Gaia*

The Chosen of Gaia think of the Earth as the living mother of all life. They blame WWII, and the holocaust which followed, on the sins of modern humanity. In order

to rectify these sins, they believe that Gaia has chosen them to defend the planet from future abominations. Specific doctrines tend to vary from group to group, and even from person to person, but they all agree: humanity must learn from its mistakes or perish.

### The True Church of the Almighty Sun

Although it has only gained a foothold so far, this movement is beginning to grow. Dismissed by critics as a lot of pseudo-scientific mumbo jumbo mixed with fundamentalist Christianity, its claims nonetheless draw in more people every day, particularly from the mutant/super population. Although many of the exact tenets remain secret, it is common knowledge that adherents pray to the sun as the God of the Bible, and its missionaries proclaim openly that the Supreme Leader, a man called Rising Sun, is the reincarnation of Jesus Christ as the King of Kings. They say he was at Hiroshima when it was destroyed, and that he emerged completely unscathed. They believe fervently that no mortal foe can harm him. And they claim he is coming to take his rightful kingdom. But what they don't say is when.