

# ELDRITCH MYSTERIES

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES IS A SPECTACULARS SERIES THEMED AROUND SORCERY, THE OCCULT, AND SUPERNATURAL THREATS FROM OUR WORLD AND OTHER DIMENSIONS. THIS SERIES IS INSPIRED BY STORIES OF GHOSTS, DEMONS, ALTERNATE DIMENSIONS, AND MAGIC WIELDED BY BOTH HUMAN PRODIGIES AND ANCIENT, ELDRITCH MONSTROSITIES.

IF THIS IS THE FIRST SPECTACULARS SERIES THAT YOU AND YOUR GROUP PLAN TO PLAY THROUGH, MAKE SURE THAT ALL THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE TRUE BEFORE PROCEEDING:

- ☐ YOU AND YOUR PLAYERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE RULES.
- ☐ YOU HAVE FILLED OUT "THE BASICS" PAGES OF THE SETTING BOOK.
- ☐ YOU ARE READY TO BEGIN THE FIRST SCENARIO OF THIS SERIES, ELDRITCH MYSTERIES.

# WHEN YOU ARE READY TO PROCEED...

## HERO PLAYERS

- ☐ CREATE A TEAM OR CHOOSE AN EXISTING TEAM. THE NEXT FEW PAGES HAVE NEW TEAM ROSTERS FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM.
- ☐ EACH PLAYER SHOULD CREATE A HERO OR CHOOSE AN EXISTING HERO FOR THE TEAM. THE NEXT FEW PAGES HAVE NEW HERO ARCHETYPES FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM.

## NARRATOR

- ☐ TEAR OUT THE MALICIOUS ENTITY AND EVIL PSYCHIC VILLAIN SHEETS, AND THE ISSUE SHEET TITLED "THE POWER OF SYMBOLS." SET ASIDE THE SERIES PAD FOR NOW.
- ☐ READ OVER THE ISSUE.
- ☐ CHOOSE EITHER THE MALICIOUS ENTITY OR THE EVIL PSYCHIC VILLAIN AND FILL OUT ITS VILLAIN SHEET. USE THAT SHEET FOR THE ISSUE'S VILLAIN.
- ☐ RUN THE ISSUE!

AFTER YOU FINISH THE FIRST ISSUE, YOU CAN CONTINUE PLAYING SUBSEQUENT ISSUES, ONE AT A TIME, UNTIL YOU ENCOUNTER ANOTHER STOP PAGE. ANY TEAM, ARCHETYPE, MINION, OR VILLAIN SHEETS YOU COME ACROSS CAN BE TORN OUT OF THE PAD AND USED FROM THAT POINT FORTH. MOST WILL BE TIED DIRECTLY INTO THE SCENARIO THAT THEY PRECEDE, BUT UNLESS AN ISSUE CALLS FOR A SPECIFIC ENEMY, YOU CAN USE ANY ENEMIES (FROM THIS SERIES, OR OTHER SERIES) FOR THOSE ISSUES.

YOU CAN PLAY ISSUES FROM OTHER SERIES BETWEEN THESE ISSUES. HOWEVER, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU PLAY ANY MULTI-PART ISSUES BACK-TO-BACK UNTIL YOU HAVE REACHED THE END OF THE MULTI-PART SCENARIO.

# PACT-BOUND HEROES

## TEAM

Your team is bound together by a covenant that you share; perhaps a sacred duty passed down through the generations, or a shared mission born of each of your individual histories. Examples from popular comics include the Midnight Sons™ (Marvel), and the Demon Knights™ and the Shadowpact™ (DC).

### THE PACT

*What pact binds you all together as a team?*

- ☐ **A Common Enemy** (you all defend your world against some evil entity, organization, or lineage)
- ☐ **Guardianship** (you are all pledged to protect a people, location, sacred artifact, or realm from the forces that would corrupt or seize it)
- ☐ **Seekers** (you are all seeking the same thing: some piece of knowledge, a relic, a forgotten civilization, or some other piece of obscure, forgotten arcana)
- ☐ **Shared Inheritance** (you all inherited your power from the same source and carry it with you as a solemn responsibility even as you wield it)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### WHAT IS AT STAKE

*Should you fail to uphold your pact, what consequences could come about?*

- ☐ **Enslavement** (humankind could be enslaved by some powerful malign entity or civilization, either from this world or from another dimension)
- ☐ **Destruction** (the world will be destroyed by some terrible supernatural force)
- ☐ **Apocalypse** (civilization will crumble as it is ravaged by dark forces)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### PLACE OF POWER

*Where does your team gather when danger is on the horizon?*

- ☐ **Secret Sanctuary** (a hidden place of magic within the heart of the mundane world)
- ☐ **Sacred Site** (a place of arcane significance, such as a holy site or a crossing of ley lines)
- ☐ **Pocket Dimension** (a contained alternate reality that does not obey the laws of physics)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS:

**Team:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

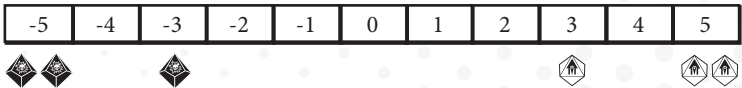
**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

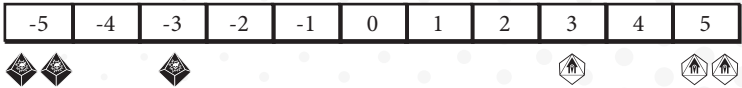
**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member   ☐ Active   ☐ Inactive   ☐ Deceased   ☐ Retired

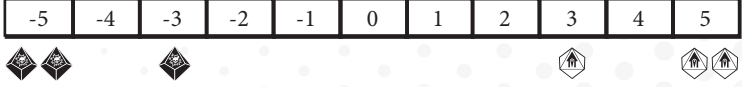
**PUBLIC REPUTATION**



**MEDIA REPUTATION**



**GOVERNMENT REPUTATION**





# MONSTER SQUAD

## TEAM

Your team's strongest connection is the fundamental monstrousness of its individual members. Your monstrous appearances (and behaviors) might make you outcasts in civilized society, but you have grown close through the shared experience of being rejected by the rest of the world. Examples from popular comics include the Legion of Monsters™ (Marvel) and the Doom Patrol® (DC).

### TEAM FORMATION

*What brought the team together originally?*

- ☐ **Shelter** (you were granted protection by some person or organization, who brought people like you together while shielding you from the outside world)
- ☐ **Shared Origin** (each of you shares the same original source of your exceptional powers)
- ☐ **Exile** (the members of your team met after fleeing underground or into the wilderness)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### SANCTUARY

*Where does your team hide out when not fighting the forces of evil?*

- ☐ **Abandoned Cathedral** (the team has taken over a once-beautiful, now decrepit church)
- ☐ **Underground** (the team has a hideout in the sewers or subway tunnels)
- ☐ **Bunker** (the team has a wealthy or powerful sponsor who built a specialized facility from which the team operates)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TORCHES & PITCHFORKS

*Who does the team fear will come for them if they reveal their existence?*

- ☐ **The Government** (the government seeks to imprison or kill the members of the team; adjust the team's Government Reputation track by - 1)
- ☐ **Zealots** (a mob of citizens whipped into a fervor, either by religious zeal or simple fear)
- ☐ **Other Monsters** (evil creatures from the Nether Realm will hunt down and destroy the team for interfering in the affairs of dark forces)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS:

**Team:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

☐ Active

☐ Inactive

☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

☐ Active

☐ Inactive

☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

☐ Active

☐ Inactive

☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

☐ Active

☐ Inactive

☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

☐ Active

☐ Inactive

☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

☐ Active

☐ Inactive

☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

**HERO NAME:**

☐ Founding Member

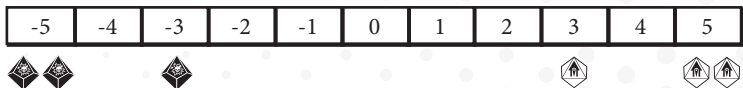
☐ Active

☐ Inactive

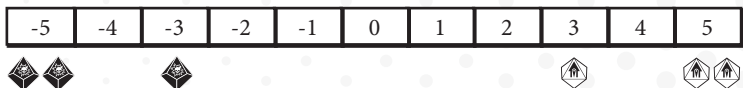
☐ Deceased

☐ Retired

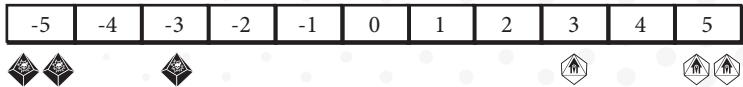
**PUBLIC REPUTATION**



**MEDIA REPUTATION**



**GOVERNMENT REPUTATION**



# SORCERER

You wield the supernatural power of sorcery, casting spells and dealing with magic in an academic, or at least controlled, fashion. Examples from popular comics include Brother Voodoo™, Doctor Strange®, and Scarlet Witch® (Marvel), and Dr. Fate™, Raven™, and Zatanna™ (DC).

## SORCEROUS TRADITION

*What is the nature of the tradition of sorcery you practice?*

- ☐ **Ancient Teachings** (an academic tradition handed down over generations)
- ☐ **Bestowed Gift** (you were gifted your sorcerous abilities by someone or something)
- ☐ **Self-Taught** (you mastered the arcane arts through exploration and creativity)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

*Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.*

- |                                       |                                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arrogant     | <input type="checkbox"/> Morbid    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charming     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sarcastic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cryptic      | <input type="checkbox"/> Somber    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandiose    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tranquil  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Haunted      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual | <input type="checkbox"/> _____     |

## VULNERABILITY

*What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?*

- ☐ **Dangerous Sorcery** (your control is tenuous and your magic can be disrupted or go wild)
- ☐ **Proximity Weakness** (you grow weak when near a rare substance)
- ☐ **Rival Magic** (a magical force exists that dispels and counters your sorcery)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

*What does resistance mean for this character?*

- ☐ **Deflection** (you deflect incoming attacks using your powers or spells)
- ☐ **Improvised Defenses** (you use cars, slabs of concrete, heavy machinery, and other objects as improvised shields)
- ☐ **Shield** (you are protected by a layer of energy that shields you from harm)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

*How does this character quickly move from one place to another?*

- ☐ **Bolt of Energy** (you zip to another place as pure energy)
- ☐ **Occult Conveyance** (you use spells or artifacts to carry you over long distances)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### SORCERY

You can use an interlude scene to study and prepare a different suite of spells. If you do, draw five cards from the Deck of Powers. You can replace any or all of your current powers, selecting from the powers you drew or from the Basic powers. You can also place powers into empty power slots.

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✧ Remove 1 time token (🕒) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✧ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🦋) in the following ways:

- ✧ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✧ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🦋) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ✧ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✧ Your minimum damage on a hit is 50.
- ✧ If you start your turn with 0 hero points, you gain 2 hero points (🦋🦋).
- ✧ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✧ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✧ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✧ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%

# OCCULTIST

You are a student of forbidden knowledge, one who knows the secrets of occult lore and uses that knowledge to fight evil. Examples from popular comics include John Constantine® (DC), Proof™ (Image), Sir Edward Grey™ (Dark Horse), and Solomon Kane® (Robert E. Howard Properties).

## THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE

*Why do you seek out the secrets of the occult?*

- ☐ **Defense** (you seek knowledge as an armor against supernatural foes)
- ☐ **Power** (you wish to grow stronger and see the occult as a means to doing so)
- ☐ **Preparation** (you sense evil on the horizon and prepare for its arrival)
- ☐ **Vengeance** (you have vowed revenge, using evil's own power against it)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

*Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.*

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caustic      | <input type="checkbox"/> Short-Tempered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cavalier     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sly            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cynical      | <input type="checkbox"/> Smarmy         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Vulgar         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gregarious   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pensive      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |

## VULNERABILITY

*What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?*

- ☐ **Addiction** (you have a self-destructive habit)
- ☐ **Dependents** (you have family or loved ones depending on you)
- ☐ **Energy Limits** (you need to recharge the source of your powers from time to time)
- ☐ **Romantic Partner** (has a girlfriend/boyfriend/spouse)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

*What does resistance mean for this character?*

- ☐ **Mobility** (you move fast and dodge out of the way of attacks)
- ☐ **Protective Spells** (you have spells and charms that ward off attacks)
- ☐ **Training** (you possess combat training that helps dodge attacks)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

*How does this character quickly move from one place to another?*

- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Occult Conveyance** (you use spells or artifacts to carry you over long distances)
- ☐ **Vehicle** (you have a custom vehicle designed to match your heroic motif/theme)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### ARCANE SCHOLAR

Once per issue, at any time you can gain one piece of information you seek about a supernatural or occult topic as though you had participated in an interlude scene to seek out that information.

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✧ Remove 1 time token (⌚) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✧ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (★) in the following ways:

- ✧ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (⬢) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✧ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (★) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (⬢⬢) to their roll.
- ✧ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (⬢⬢⬢⬢) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✧ You add 2 advantage dice (⬢⬢) to all attacks you make with powers.
- ✧ Each boon you roll counts as 2 (⬢⬢).
- ✧ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✧ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (⬢) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✧ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✧ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (⬢) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%



HERO

# SUPERNATURAL ENTITY

You are a supernatural being that has manifested in or possessed a human form. Examples from popular comics include Ghost Rider® (Marvel), and Deadman™ and Etrigan™ (DC).

## SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN

What type of supernatural entity are you?

- ☐ **Angel/Demon** (you are a foot soldier in the war between Heaven and Hell)
- ☐ **Spirit** (you are the ghost of someone deceased, or the spiritual embodiment of some supernatural force or philosophical concept)
- ☐ **Vestige of a Dead God** (you were once a powerful deity, now forgotten by modern worshipers; you are a shadow of your former power)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.

- ☐ Bitter
- ☐ Intimidating
- ☐ Black Humor
- ☐ Morose
- ☐ Creepy
- ☐ Stoic
- ☐ Eccentric
- ☐ Unfocused
- ☐ Haunted
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Ill-Tempered
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## VULNERABILITY

What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?

- ☐ **Ghastly Transformation** (you become visually frightening when manifesting powers)
- ☐ **Outsider** (you can be exorcised or banished by religious rites)
- ☐ **Proximity Weakness** (you grow weak when near a rare substance)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

What does resistance mean for this character?

- ☐ **Advanced Healing** (you regenerate wounds too quickly to see)
- ☐ **Incorporeal Form** (body made of supernatural energy repairs quickly)
- ☐ **Invulnerability** (you shrug off attacks like they are nothing)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

How does this character quickly move from one place to another?

- ☐ **Brachiation** (you swing from tall objects high overhead)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Vehicle** (you have a custom vehicle designed to match your heroic motif/theme)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### SHADOW SIGHT

You can see into a parallel plane of spirits, magic, and unknowable arcane entities at will. You can see the true nature of any magical creature that is disguised as something mundane, and such sight can pierce illusions both magical and scientific to see the truth behind them. You can also view the history and nature of objects and places by examining them in this spirit plane, which may reflect those objects and places as they once were. This also gives you the following skill:

SEE INTO THE SPIRIT REALM ..... 70%

SUPERPOWER 80%

LESSER POWER 70%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✦ Remove 1 time token (🕒) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✦ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🦋) in the following ways:

- ✦ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✦ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🦋) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ✦ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✦ When an enemy hits you, after the attack you can make 1 attack against that enemy.
- ✦ Add 100 to your current & max resistance.
- ✦ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✦ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✦ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✦ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%



HERO

# LEGENDARY WARRIOR

You are a hero of legend, one born in ancient times who has lived on in the literature and folklore of many civilizations. Examples from popular comics include Black Knight™ and Hercules™ (Marvel), and Hawkman®, Hawkgirl™, and the Shining Knight® (DC).

## LIVING OUT OF TIME

*How have you come to be in the modern world, having been born in the distant past?*

- ☐ **Immortality** (you ceased to age and cannot die of natural causes)
- ☐ **Reincarnation** (you were born in modern times but learned of your past life)
- ☐ **Resurrection** (you died in ancient times but have been brought back)
- ☐ **Stasis** (you were frozen in time and awoke from this stasis in recent days)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

*Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.*

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awkward    | <input type="checkbox"/> Humble   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brave      | <input type="checkbox"/> Reckless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Careless   | <input type="checkbox"/> Serious  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cocky      | <input type="checkbox"/> Surly    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Debauched  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gregarious | <input type="checkbox"/> _____    |

## VULNERABILITY

*What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?*

- ☐ **Goaded** (you can be easily goaded into a fight by those who know what buttons to push)
- ☐ **Proximity Weakness** (you grow weak when near a rare substance)
- ☐ **Out of Control** (you risk losing control of your powers)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

*What does resistance mean for this character?*

- ☐ **Danger Sense** (sixth sense warns of incoming attacks)
- ☐ **Invulnerability** (you shrug off attacks like they are nothing)
- ☐ **Mobility** (you move fast and dodge out of the way of attacks)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

*How does this character quickly move from one place to another?*

- ☐ **Leaping** (you leap long distances and great heights)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Steed** (you have a horse or other mount)
- ☐ **Vehicle** (you have a custom vehicle designed to match your heroic motif/theme)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### THEY WALK AMONG US

You add 2 hero points (🎲🎲) to your Hero Points per Conflict.

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✦ Remove 1 time token (⌚) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✦ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🎲) in the following ways:

- ✦ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✦ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🎲) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ✦ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✦ Teamwork maneuvers add 4 advantage dice (🎲🎲🎲🎲) to your roll.
- ✦ Add +20 to the damage of your attacks.
- ✦ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✦ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✦ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✦ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%

# AVATAR

You are the modern embodiment of some ancient deity or divine force. Some would call you a god, others simply an alien, but regardless you stand above humanity with incredible powers and the weight of a deity's responsibilities. Examples from popular comics include Ares™, Storm®, and Thor® (Marvel), and Big Barda™ and Wonder Woman® (DC).

## PANTHEON

From what ancient pantheon of deities do your powers originate?

- ☐ **Ancient Egyptian** (the gods of the ancient Nile: Ra, Anubis, and Osiris)
- ☐ **Greco-Roman** (the gods of Greece and Rome: Zeus, Poseidon, Athena, and their Roman counterparts)
- ☐ **Norse Myth** (the gods of ancient Scandinavia: Odin, Balder, and Tyr)
- ☐ **Alien** (new gods from the cosmos, unknown to Earth)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arrogant  | <input type="checkbox"/> Prideful       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold      | <input type="checkbox"/> Serious        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excitable | <input type="checkbox"/> Short-Tempered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly  | <input type="checkbox"/> Surly          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandiose | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mercurial | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |

## VULNERABILITY

What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?

- ☐ **Elemental Vulnerability** (you are severely harmed by a specific elemental force)
- ☐ **Energy Limits** (you need to recharge the source of your powers from time to time)
- ☐ **Proximity Weakness** (you grow weak when near a rare substance)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

What does resistance mean for this character?

- ☐ **Danger Sense** (sixth sense warns of incoming attacks)
- ☐ **Improvised Defenses** (you use cars, slabs of concrete, heavy machinery, and other objects as improvised shields)
- ☐ **Invulnerability** (you shrug off attacks like they are nothing)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

How does this character quickly move from one place to another?

- ☐ **Bolt of Energy** (you zip to another place as pure energy)
- ☐ **Leaping** (you leap long distances and great heights)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Running** (you run really, really fast)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### IMMORTALITY

When you are reduced to 0 resistance, you can spend 1 hero point (🎲) to not be knocked out of the scene (or die, if the attack would have otherwise killed you). If you take any damage while at 0 resistance, you can spend 1 hero point (🎲) each time to remain alive and in the scene, acting normally; otherwise, you are knocked out of the scene (or killed, if the attack would normally kill you).

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✦ Remove 1 time token (🕒) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✦ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🎲) in the following ways:

- ✦ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✦ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🎲) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ✦ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✦ Enemy attacks against you add 2 challenge dice (🎲🎲) to the roll.
- ✦ Halve all damage you would take.
- ✦ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✦ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✦ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✦ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%

HERO

# FAMILIAR

You have an unconventional form for a hero, appearing to be a beast of some kind. Many think of you as a pet or animal companion. However, you are a sentient being and a hero in your own right. Examples from popular comics include Lockheed™, Lockjaw®, and Zabu™ (Marvel) and Ch'p™, Detective Chimp™, and Gleeek™ (DC).

## PHYSICAL FORM

*What kind of creature are you?*

- ☐ **Animal** (you appear to be a normal specimen of some animal, possibly with some cosmetic difference from others of your species)
- ☐ **Fantastic Beast** (you are a dragon, faerie, or some other fantasy creature)
- ☐ **Construct** (you are a homonculus, gargoyle, animal-shaped robot, or other constructed companion)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

*Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.*

- |                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affectionate | <input type="checkbox"/> Mischievous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curious      | <input type="checkbox"/> Proud       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distrustful  | <input type="checkbox"/> Timid       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excitable    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tranquil    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lazy         | <input type="checkbox"/> _____       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loyal        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____       |

## VULNERABILITY

*What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?*

- ☐ **Outsider** (you can be exorcised or banished by religious rites)
- ☐ **Rival Magic** (a magical force exists that dispels and counters your sorcery)
- ☐ **Supernatural Weakness** (a particular supernatural element or force greatly harms you)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

*What does resistance mean for this character?*

- ☐ **Danger Sense** (sixth sense warns of incoming attacks)
- ☐ **Mobility** (you move fast and dodge out of the way of attacks)
- ☐ **Protective Spells** (you have spells and charms that ward off attacks)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

*How does this character quickly move from one place to another?*

- ☐ **Occult Conveyance** (you use spells or artifacts to carry you over long distances)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Ride** (you are small enough to perch on or cling to someone else, using their mode of transport as your own)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)



Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### NONHUMAN FORM ☐ ☐

You do not have a traditional human form, making you an unlikely target for attacks. You can check one of the boxes next to the name of this benefit to add 2 challenge dice (◆◆) to any roll made for a physical attack against you, as you use your unusual shape to throw off your attacker's aim. At the end of the issue, erase all those check marks.

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

### HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

### RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ◆ Remove 1 time token (⌚) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ◆ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (◆) in the following ways:

- ◆ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (◆) to the roll for each point spent.
- ◆ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (◆) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (▲▲) to their roll.
- ◆ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (▲▲▲▲) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ◆ Enemy attacks against you add 2 challenge dice (◆◆) to the roll.
- ◆ Halve all damage you would take.
- ◆ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ◆ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (▲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ◆ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ◆ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (◆) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%

VILLAIN

# MALICIOUS ENTITY

This villain is a supernatural force that can manifest in the physical world by possession, telekinesis, or some other nonphysical form. Examples from popular comics include Demogoblin™ and Nightmare™ (Marvel).

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

FUNDAMENTAL NATURE

What is the villain's fundamental nature?

- ☐ **Demon** (the villain is a hateful creature from the underworld)
- ☐ **Forgotten God** (the villain is a member of a pantheon of gods that is no longer worshiped in the modern world, and their power has diminished greatly)
- ☐ **Spirit** (the villain is the manifestation of some long-dead evil)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

MANIFESTATION

How does the villain manifest in the physical world?

- ☐ **Physical** (the villain physically manifests in the world, but only for short periods of time)
- ☐ **Possession** (the villain possesses an unsuspecting human and imbues them with power)
- ☐ **Telepathic** (the villain is incorporeal, manipulating the world through telepathic projection and telekinetic interaction)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

DRIVE

What drives the villain to commit acts of evil?

- ☐ **Domination** (the villain wants to become the master of humanity, forcing humans into permanent servitude)
- ☐ **Hunger** (the villain is driven to their actions by a primal, irrepressible need)
- ☐ **Sowing Chaos** (the villain is a trickster who wants to cause chaos wherever they go)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

TRUTHS

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FIRST APPEARANCE

CURRENT STATUS:  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

When you create this villain, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be this villain's superpower. The villain can use the power to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with this power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.

**FLEEING THE SCENE** ☐ ☐

In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.

**VILLAIN PERKS**

When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked.

☐ **BEING OF CHAOS**

Add 2 advantage dice (🏠🏠) and 1 challenge die (🎲) to all rolls made by the villain.

☐ **CURSES**

Any time a hero physically touches the villain, that hero must add 1 time token (⌚) to one of their power cards that already has time tokens on it, or add 2 time tokens (⌚⌚) to a power card that does not have any time tokens on it.

☐ **FLIGHT**

This villain can fly when they move.

☐ **INCORPOREAL**

The villain is immune to damage from physical attacks and halves all other damage (except for damage from attacks made using magic or magically enhanced weapons, or from telepathy).

☐ **POSSESSION**

The villain can choose to possess a hero they defeat, vanishing into that hero's body and seizing control of the hero. While possessed, the hero uses the villain's resistance instead of their own, and takes turns whenever the villain would take turns (remove the hero's initiative card from the initiative track). That hero's player still controls the hero, but they must speak, move, and take actions only as the Narrator directs; any other decisions that hero could normally make remain under that hero's player's control. When the villain is defeated, the possession ends.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**

When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.

☐ **ARCANE VULNERABILITY:**

Choose a special supernatural material (such as cold iron, blessed oak, or true silver) as this villain's weakness, and write it in the box above. Double all damage dealt to the villain if an attack makes use of the villain's weakness.

☐ **EASILY DRIVEN OFF**

When a hero rolls any boons (👑) when making an attack against this villain, move 1 of the villain's initiative cards 1 space toward the end of the initiative track.

☐ **PHYSICALLY FRAIL**

Melee attacks made against this villain add 2 advantage dice (🏠🏠) to the roll instead of 1.

☐ **WITHERING SUN**

Add 2 challenge dice (🎲🎲) to all rolls the villain makes while in sunlight.

☐ **TACTILE POWER**

This villain cannot make ranged attacks with their superpower.



# EVIL TELEPATH

This villain is a powerful entity composed of psychic energy. Though the villain may possess a physical body, this is merely a shell to house their immense telepathic presence. Any superpower possessed by this villain is a manifestation of their psychic energy. Examples from popular comics include the Shadow King™ (Marvel).

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

EXISTENTIAL ORIGIN

How did such a powerful, malicious psychic force come into existence?

- ☐ **Transcendent Telepath** (the villain is a human with telepathic powers strong enough to transcend mortal existence)
- ☐ **Collective Unconscious** (the villain sprang spontaneously into existence as a reflection of some societal ill)
- ☐ **Disembodied Spirit** (the villain was once a mortal, but their mind remained beyond death)
  - ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

TRUTHS

SOURCE OF MALICE

What drives this villain to perform acts of cruelty?

- ☐ **Callousness** (the villain sees others as lesser beings who exist to serve the villain's whims)
- ☐ **Sadism** (the villain gets perverse pleasure from causing irreparable harm to others)
- ☐ **Vengeance** (the villain believes they have been wronged in some way and seeks revenge)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

CORPOREAL FORM

How does this villain appear in the world?

- ☐ **Manifestation** (this villain manifests a corporeal body of their choosing, perhaps a reflection of their true or original form)
- ☐ **Possession** (this villain takes over the minds of others and appears in a new body each time they are encountered)
- ☐ **Truly Incorporeal** (this villain has no physical body; choose the Incorporeal villain perk when you create this villain)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

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FIRST APPEARANCE

CURRENT STATUS:  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

*When you create this villain, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be this villain's superpower. The villain can use the power to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with this power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.*

*This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.*

**FLEEING THE SCENE ☐ ☐**

*In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.*

**VILLAIN PERKS**

*When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked. Additionally, this villain begins play with some of their perks automatically, in addition to the two you choose.*

☐ ☐ ☐ **CONFUSION**

When a hero hits this villain with a melee attack, the Narrator can choose to instead have that attack target another hero who is up close to both the villain and the attacking hero.

☐ **FLIGHT**

This villain can fly when they move.

☐ **INCORPOREAL**

The villain is immune to damage from physical attacks and halves all other damage (except for damage from attacks made using magic or magically enhanced weapons or telepathy).

☐ **I KNOW WHAT YOU WILL DO BEFORE YOU EVEN HAVE THE IDEA!**

After laying out the initiative track, you can swap 1 hero's initiative card with 1 of this villain's initiative cards.

☐ ☐ ☐ **PSYCHIC SCREAM**

As an action, the villain psychically screams, making a mental area attack and adding +20 to the damage of each hit.

☒ **TELEPATHY**

This villain can use telepathy and make mental attacks using their psychic powers with a 75% chance of success.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**

*When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.*



☐ **ARCANE VULNERABILITY:**

Choose a symbol, ornament (such as an iron ring), or talisman to be a ward against this villain, and write it in the box above. This villain adds 2 challenge dice (   ) to attack rolls made against heroes possessing such a ward.

☐ **PSYCHIC HUNGER**

This villain must use their action to make a mental attack each turn while up close to a hero.

☐ **RECKLESS RAGE**

While this villain has fewer than 100 resistance, the villain must attack the nearest hero each turn if possible, and adds 2 challenge dice (   ) to all rolls.

☐ **TACTILE POWER**

This villain cannot make ranged attacks with their superpower.

# SCENARIO

# THE POWER OF SYMBOLS

## ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #1

This issue begins when a group of average citizens, a random assortment of individuals with nothing in common between them, convene on a public park at the edge of the city's **commercial center**. This group swarms a pair of police officers, overpowering them and capturing their weapons, and then takes half a dozen people in the park hostage, herding them into a remote area with a small pond and stripping them of their personal belongings. Each of the individuals has had their will overridden by the issue's villain (use either the **Malicious Entity** or the **Evil Telepath** villain), who forced them to take hostages so that the villain can attempt to claim additional thralls. The heroes must stop the villain's minions before the villain can override the wills of the hostages.

Ask the players to describe a character who is important to them. The heroes are drawn into the opening scene when that person goes missing. When someone investigates the disappearance, the clues lead them to the park.

In the opening scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ A squad of minions (the possessed citizens) of a size equal to  $2 \times$  the number of heroes.
- ✧ A minor villain, represented by the citizen most strongly under the villain's direct control; this villain has 1 initiative card and 50 resistance for every 2 heroes in the scene, attacks with one of the police officer's sidearms with a 65% chance of success, and has a 50% chance to succeed at anything else.

The scene ends when all the enemies are defeated.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□): Six citizens have been taken hostage by the possessed group and are being held in a boathouse next to a small pond.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved*: Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** by +1.
- ◆ **Scene Details**: The discomforting background hum that seems to permeate the park, abandoned paddle boats on the nearby pond, the empty police car sitting nearby with its doors open and its lights flashing.

### ESCALATION: DEFEAT FOR THE HEROES

If all the heroes are defeated in this scene, increase the size of the squad of minions present in the final conflict scene by  $3 \times$  the number of unchecked boxes in this scene's citizen hostages complication, as the enslaved citizens brand the mark of possession on the hostages and open them up to possession by the villain.

### WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

Below are some suggestions for information you can provide to the heroes if they seek it out.

### THE POSSESSED CITIZENS

- ◆ The citizens have no memory of what happened from the time they had their minds controlled to the time they were defeated by the heroes.
- ◆ Each tells of going about their mundane days, though each also recalls feeling a sting or burn (the symbol of possession being marked on them) and catching a glimpse of someone out of the corner of their eyes just before their memories go dim.

### THE SYMBOLS OF POSSESSION

- ◆ Each of the citizens who had their will subsumed by the villain bear a mark somewhere on their bodies. Craft the nature of that mark based on the villain you are using.
- ◆ The symbol, when etched or burned onto the skin, unlocks the victim's will for control by the villain. However, even a clear projection of the symbol onto the skin using only light can be enough for the villain to gain temporary control over a victim.
- ◆ If the heroes don't make any effort to conceal their research into this matter, they are approached by a low-level member of **SE13: The Mystic Order** and offered information about the symbol. Create a minor character to serve as the heroes' contact in the Mystic Order.

### THE VIDEO

- ◆ Several employees of a local graphic design studio recently reported sudden memory loss covering almost the length of a full day; though official reports blamed a carbon monoxide leak in the building, that does not explain the marks found on each employee's skin.
- ◆ The employees of the studio discovered that, during their blackout, all of them collaborated to create a looping video clip, consisting of a dark background and a very bright white symbol (matching the description of the symbol of possession).

## THE VILLAIN'S PLAN

The villain plans to broadcast the symbol of possession on the evening news, using the projection of the symbol onto the viewer's faces as a means of controlling tens of thousands of citizens all at once.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ A squad of mind-controlled TV station employee minions of a size equal to  $2 \times$  the number of heroes.
- ✧ The villain you chose for the issue (who is present in the scene); the villain has 1 initiative card per hero in the scene.

## THE VILLAIN CAPTURES THE TV STATION □ □

Having been confronted by the heroes in the opening scene, the villain decides to put their plan into action early, forgoing their usual caution. The villain gathers a small number of mind-controlled minions and begins to slowly capture and enslave the employees of one of the city's local TV stations. The station's news broadcast becomes erratic and strange as the station staff is slowly taken over.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□): The building that houses the TV station is home to other offices, and many bystanders are in harm's way during the takeover. They need to be gotten to safety before they too become enslaved by the villain.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved*: Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** by +1.
- ◆ **Scene Details**: Office furniture haphazardly strewn about, an abandoned security guard's post, a wall of security monitors showing chaos throughout the building, the repetitive shriek of a fire alarm, the *whump-whump-whump* of the station's news helicopter waiting on the roof.

## THE BROADCAST BEGINS □ □

Once in full control of the studio, the villain begins broadcasting the video of the symbol of possession and seizes control of thousands of citizens, whom the villain commands to carve the symbol of possession first into their own flesh, then into the flesh of their families and neighbors.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□, Opposed □□□): Once the broadcast has started, the heroes need to find a way to shut it down for good, even while more people in the city tune into it. Add an Event initiative card to the initiative track. Each time this Event initiative card comes up, progress this objective once for the enemies (enemies cannot progress this objective). If the enemies complete this objective, the scene proceeds as described in "The Broadcast Enslaves the City," below. If the heroes complete the objective, the scene continues until the villain is defeated.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□): Not all of the TV station's employees have been mentally enslaved. Employees have holed up in supply closets, offices, and other tight spaces around the studio, and they need to be rescued.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved*: Adjust the team's **Media Reputation** by +1.
- ◆ **Scene Details**: The low, background drone of a TV station test pattern being broadcast, the hot overhead lights of the newsroom, bulky TV cameras connected to the production booth by thick cables, a large glass window separating the studio from the production booth, rows of video production equipment, a craft services table.

## THE BROADCAST ENSLAVES THE CITY

When enough people have viewed the broadcast and been brought under the villain's thrall, chaos breaks out in the city. The heroes' only hope of breaking the mind control is to take down the villain, allowing the hold over the citizens to be broken. The scene ends when the villain is defeated.

- ◆ **Complication** (□ □ □, Critical): Large swathes of the city's populace under mind control begin violently rampaging. Groups of citizens riot in the streets, loot stores, fight in their homes and offices, and participate in demolition derbies with their cars. Each success in this complication puts a halt to one chaotic outbreak. Each time this Complication initiative card comes up, the rioting citizens cause significant damage to some part of the city.
  - ✧ *Failure*: Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** by -1.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If any of the heroes are defeated by the villain, they are marked with a symbol of possession; add **Marked for Possession** as lasting repercussion to each such hero.
- ◆ In the aftermath of the conflict, the heroes find a strange object: a mysterious clay disc about the size of a vinyl record, which has been split into two pieces by a jagged crack. The disc, when pieced back together, has many elaborate symbols etched onto it, among them a variation of the symbol of possession. If they encountered the Mystic Order earlier in the issue, their contact in the order offers to research the nature of the object. In the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, write "Broken Seals of Binding: 1" but do not fill out the rest of this setting element sheet if you have not already done so.
- ◆ If the scene reaches "The Broadcast Enslaves the City," add the following text to the Truths section of "The Basics" section of your Setting Book: "The citizens of the city hate and fear all things magical."

VILLAIN

# POSSESSED HERO

This villain is one of the heroes, but one who has been possessed by a malign force. The hero is no longer in control of their body, though they might still have access to their senses and be an unwilling passenger in their hijacked mind.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

A TEMPORARY VILLAIN

When you create this villain, choose one hero who is not being played during this session to be the hero who is possessed, and craft this villain to match that hero's powers and abilities. If you have not created more heroes than those who are being played in this session, create a minor character (another hero who the current team has yet to encounter) first as the basis for this villain.

WHAT LIES INSIDE

Who or what has possessed this hero?

- ☐ **Primordial Force** (some ancient, primal spirit from before the dawn of man awoke and took control of the hero)
- ☐ **Disembodied Spirit** (the spirit of someone who has died persists in the world and inhabits the bodies of unwilling hosts)
- ☐ **Existing Villain** (choose a villain you have already created who has gained telepathic control over the hero)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

ACCESS GRANTED

How did this hero come to be possessed?

- ☐ **Dark Ritual** (the hero was captured and subjected to a ritual that allowed the entity in)
- ☐ **Object Prison** (the hero physically touched some object that imprisoned the entity)
- ☐ **Wrong Place, Right Time** (the hero was somewhere on unrelated business and got close enough to be possessed)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

TRUTHS

All character names are property of their respective owners, and their use does not imply an endorsement of or a relationship with Scratchpad Publishing LLC.

FIRST APPEARANCE

CURRENT STATUS:  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

## SUPERPOWER (75%):

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## LESSER POWER (65%):

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## MINOR POWER (55%):

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When you create this villain, draw five powers from the Deck of Powers and choose up to three to be this villain's powers (you may also choose from available Basic powers). The villain can use these powers to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with these powers, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.

## FLEEING THE SCENE ☐ ☐

In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.

## VILLAIN PERKS

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When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked. Additionally, this villain begins play with some of their perks automatically, in addition to the two you choose.

### ✓ EVER-CHANGING TACTICS

This villain adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to the first roll they make with each of their powers each round.

### ☐ FLIGHT

This villain can fly when they move.

### ☐ I CARE NOT FOR THIS BODY

When this villain attacks, add 1 advantage die (  ) to the roll made for the attack if the villain has taken damage since their last turn.

### ☐ MOMENTUM

For each boon (  ) this villain rolls, the villain regains 10 resistance, in addition to any other effects of that boon.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SAVAGE

When this villain hits with an attack, add +20 to the damage.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ UNRELENTING

When this villain would be reduced to 0 resistance, they are instead reduced to 1 resistance, and you move 1 of the villain's initiative cards to the space immediately following the current turn.

## VILLAIN WEAKNESS

---

When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.

### ☐ INFLEXIBLE TACTICS

Teamwork maneuvers performed on attacks against this villain also add 2 challenge dice (   ) to the villain's next roll if the attack hits.

### ☐ PSYCHIC FRAILTY

Add +40 to the damage of all attacks made against this villain using telepathy or other sources of psychic power.

### ☐ SLOW TO REACT

Each round, heroes add +30 to the damage of all their attacks against this villain before the villain has taken a turn.

### ☐ STILL RESISTING THE CONTROL

Each time this villain takes 50 or more damage from a single attack, flip 1 of the villain's initiative cards face-down.



VILLAIN

# MAGIC-MADE BRUTE

This villain gained superpowers as a result of some magical enhancement. This villain is usually very physical, imposing, and violent, a force of destruction that plows through any obstacle. Examples from popular comics include Juggernaut™ and Kurse™ (Marvel).

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## BLESSING OR CURSE

*How does the villain view their magical enhancement?*

- ☐ **Curse** (they lament their fate but use the power anyway)
- ☐ **Gift** (the villain revels in the power they have been given, seizing the opportunity for crime)
- ☐ **Rightful Due** (they feel that the power is rightfully theirs, either as payment for hard work and diligence or repayment for injuries)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PRECIOUS

*What will this villain stop at nothing to protect?*

- ☐ **Family** (the villain has a frail or vulnerable family member who they must keep safe)
- ☐ **Power** (the source of the villain's power can be taken away from them or drained in some way, so they guard it jealously)
- ☐ **Secrets** (the villain has some deep, dark secret that they fear will be revealed)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## SOURCE OF ENHANCEMENT

*How did this villain get their magical enhancements?*

- ☐ **Artifact** (they found or were given a power-bestowing artifact)
- ☐ **Magical Accident** (the villain got too close to some source of magical power and was empowered when things went wrong)
- ☐ **Marked** (they bear tattoos, brands, or other sigils of power)
- ☐ **Site of Power** (they visit a site that infuses them with magic)
- ☐ **Ritual** (they were the subject of a spell that gave them power)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

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FIRST APPEARANCE

CURRENT STATUS:  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

*When you create this villain, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be this villain's superpower. The villain can use the power to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with this power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.*

*This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.*

**FLEEING THE SCENE ☐ ☐**

*In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.*

**VILLAIN PERKS**

*When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked.*

☐ **CHARGER**

If the villain moves before making a physical melee attack on the same turn, add +20 to the damage of the hit.

☐ **FLIGHT**

This villain can fly when they move.

☐ ☐ ☐ **GET AWAY FROM ME**

As an action, the villain makes a physical melee area attack against all heroes who are up close to the villain.

☐ **TURN THE TABLES**

When a hero rolls a physical attack against the villain, after the attack is fully resolved the villain can make an attack against that hero, if possible, adding +20 to the damage if the attack is successful.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **YOU DARE TO CHALLENGE ME?**

When this villain hits a hero with a melee attack, the attack pushes that hero until the hero is far away from the villain. If there is a hero in that path, the villain makes a physical ranged attack against that hero (using the hero who is being pushed away as a weapon) with a 50% chance of success, dealing damage equal to the number rolled to both heroes.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**

*When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.*

☐ **PSYCHIC FRAILITY**

Add +40 to the damage of all attacks made against this villain using telepathy or other sources of psychic power.

☐ **OVERCONFIDENCE**

When this villain damages a hero with an attack, that hero adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to any attack they make against this villain on their next turn.

☐ **RECKLESS RAGE**

While this villain has fewer than 100 resistance, the villain must attack the nearest hero each turn if possible, and adds 2 challenge dice (   ) to all rolls.

☐ **SLUGGISH**

After the Narrator lays out the initiative track, move 2 of this villain's initiative cards 1 space toward the end of the track.



## SCENARIO

# A BRIDGE TOO FAR

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #2

The issue opens when chaos erupts on a four-lane bridge on the edge of the city, right in the middle of rush hour. A villain has attacked the bridge in the hopes of retrieving something from an armored car, causing multiple accidents that have now shut down traffic across the bridge. In the opening scene, heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ The primary villain for the issue (with initiative cards equal to the number of heroes). Either choose an existing villain, or create a new one using either the **Possessed Hero** or **Magic-Made Brute** villain sheets. When choosing or creating a villain, also choose a primary motivation for their involvement in this issue. Choose one of the following options:

- ❑ **Hired Hand.** The villain is after the contents of the armored car because they have been hired to retrieve it by mysterious benefactors.
- ❑ **Enchantment.** The villain is being compelled by some enchantment to attack the armored car and has no control over their actions.
- ✦ **Objective** (□□□, Enemy): The villain needs to stop the armored car from escaping, open the cargo compartment, and retrieve the object they seek from inside.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* Follow the instructions under "Escalation: I Have What I Came For," below.
- ✦ **Complication** (□□□□): The bridge is filled with commuters trapped in vehicles, or who are rushing to safety and threatening to trample their fellow bystanders. The heroes need to get the commuters to safety.
- ✦ **Complication** (□□□, Critical): A passenger bus slammed up against the guard rail on the side of the bridge and has punched through. Every time the bridge shakes under the weight of a superpowered attack, the bus slides closer to plunging over the side. The heroes must get all the passengers to safety.
  - ✧ *Failure:* Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by -1.
- ✦ **Scene Details:** Dozens of wrecked and overturned commuter vehicles, a light rail train that has been derailed, a news helicopter flying high overhead, bridge support wires that have snapped and lie limp on the ground, a crane truck tipped onto its side.

### ESCALATION: I HAVE WHAT I CAME FOR

If the heroes are all defeated by the villain or if the villain completes the enemy objective, the villain retrieves a tattered piece of parchment from their pocket or pouch, reads a phrase in a strange, guttural language, and then magically disappears, taking the object they retrieved from the armored car with them.

- ✦ If the villain drops below 50 resistance, their next action is to use the parchment to teleport away. If the villain is defeated before they can do so, the villain uses the parchment to teleport away from jail, or wherever they are taken after being captured.

### WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

Below are some suggestions for information you can provide to the heroes if they seek it out.

#### THE ARMORED CAR AND THE DIAMOND INSIDE

- ✦ The armored car was carrying a single item: a rare, precisely cut diamond that was being transported to a remote mining site, where it was going to be used as the focusing device for a laser drill.
- ✦ Though expensive to produce, the diamond has little black-market value, since it is used only in highly specialized mining equipment. If stolen, it would be almost impossible to fence, due to the traceable markings etched into it.
- ✦ Heroes who investigate the connection between diamonds and matters of the occult can discover that such gems are often said to be used as the focal points for elaborate rituals meant for opening portals between dimensions, especially in areas where strong warding magic prevents such portals from opening.

#### THE STRANGE PARCHMENT

- ✦ A search of the bridge reveals the parchment the villain used; it is worn, old, and covered in strange runes.
- ✦ More in-depth arcane research reveals that the parchment is a simple teleportation spell. Once used, its power fades, though the spell inscription is left behind.

#### TRACKING DOWN THE VILLAIN

- ✦ The heroes can locate the villain's hideout through many means, such as searching through security camera footage to track them back to their safe house, using spells and rituals to scry on the villain, or summoning an otherworldly creature to sniff out the villain's trail. Any reasonable plan should have a chance to work.

- ◆ Additionally, the heroes might learn about the villain's destination by researching strange events in the news. Recently, an oil rig was abandoned after workers complained of seeing "monsters" and "demons," so the rig was shut down as investigators try to find whatever gas leak is causing the hallucinations.

## THE VILLAIN'S PLAN

The villain's primary goal is to smuggle the diamond out of the city, taking it to the agreed-upon rendezvous point: an abandoned oil-drilling platform just off the coast. If the villain did not retrieve the diamond, their goal is simply to flee the city and rendezvous with their mysterious employer/enchanter.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ The issue's villain, who has 1 initiative card per hero in the scene.
- ✧ When the primary villain drops below 100 resistance, several batlike demons materialize from portals to support the villain. These are minions in a squad of a size equal to  $2 \times$  the number of heroes. These minions have a 50% chance of success on attacks with their claws and fangs, dealing damage equal to the number rolled (up to a maximum of the squad's current size  $\times 10$ ).

The scene ends when the heroes have either defeated the villain or recovered the diamond (even if the villain escapes).

- ◆ **Objective** (□□): The heroes may seek to recover the diamond, if they did not prevent its theft in the issue's opening scene. Doing so means wresting the diamond away from the villain, who has it tightly secured in a pack worn on their person. This objective can be progressed by making successful attacks against the villain that deal no damage and are instead meant to retrieve the diamond.
- ✧ *Fully Resolved*: The heroes recover the stolen diamond from the villain.

## RECUPERATE AT A SAFE HOUSE □□

After the conflict with the heroes in the opening scene, the villain retreats to a safe house (an unassuming apartment in a middle-class neighborhood on the city's outskirts) to recuperate.

## TRAVEL TO THE COAST (OPTIONAL) □

If the city that the campaign takes place in is land-locked, the villain first travels (via stolen car or helicopter) to a coastal area where they can reach open water by boat.

## MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE MARINA, THEN OUT TO THE RIG □□

The villain needs a boat to reach the oil rig, and stealing one is the fastest way to do so. The villain heads to a local marina and steals a small pleasure yacht, then races out to the oil rig.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□, Enemy): The villain tries to steer the stolen yacht toward the rig.
- ✧ *Fully Resolved*: Just as the yacht nears the rig, a massive black cloud forms and swallows it up, leaving behind only the smell of brimstone. The villain escapes, transported to parts unknown, and the cloud dissipates.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□): The villain takes a pair of hostages from the marina, an insurance policy against the heroes' interference. The hostages need to be freed from the villain's grasp, then gotten to safety.

## RENDEZVOUS WITH SOMEONE ON THE RIG

The villain was supposed to rendezvous with someone on the oil rig. However, with the heroes in pursuit, their benefactor/controller decides that retrieving the villain is the best option, creating an escape route for the villain on the abandoned rig.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□, Enemy): At the top of the rig, a black cloud forms. The cloud seems to writhe and form into strange shapes, as though it is something alive. The villain attempts to reach this cloud, since it is their escape route.
- ✧ *Fully Resolved*: The villain escapes, transported to parts unknown, and the cloud dissipates.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ The villain does not know who hired/compelled them to retrieve the diamond. All instructions and the strange parchment were left in obvious places where they would be found (mailbox, car, or tucked under a door) by mysterious hands. Any interrogation after their confrontation with the heroes is largely fruitless. However, any hero who takes the time to examine these communications recognizes the telltale signs of cult activity.
- ◆ If the heroes recover the stolen diamond, grant each of the heroes one additional check mark on their story progress tracks.
- ◆ A few days after the events on the bridge, **NC02: The Celebrity Bigot** makes a big show, in their usual way, of spreading conspiracy theories about the heroes. They claim that the heroes were in on the armored car robbery the whole time, and that the whole fight was staged to make it look like they weren't helping the villain steal the diamond. If the team's **Media Reputation** is at  $-3$  or lower, the bigot's assertions fill the new cycle for days. If any hero on the team has the **Most Wanted** lasting repercussion, adjust the team's **Public Reputation** by  $-1$ .

# CULTISTS

These minions are all members of a cult who band together in secret to accomplish some vile goal. They dabble in dark powers and have no limits to the depravities they will engage in to achieve their shadowy calling.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

## DARK MISSION

*To what dark mission have these cultists pledged themselves?*

- ☐ **Ascendancy** (this cult's members want to ascend to a higher plane of existence)
- ☐ **Doomsday** (this cult is attempting to induce an apocalyptic event)
- ☐ **Servitude to a Dark Master** (this cult serves a powerful magical being, doing its bidding)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## INFILTRATION OF SOCIETY

*How deeply has this cult infiltrated civilized society?*

- ☐ **Anyone Could Be a Cultist** (the cultists live undetected among ordinary citizens)
- ☐ **Fringe Outsiders** (the cultists are found only among those who are already outcasts)
- ☐ **Totally Underground** (the cultists lead no life except that of the cult)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## FREEDOM OF WILL

*How free is the will of these minions?*

- ☐ **Completely Free** (the cultists know what they are doing and are in full control)
- ☐ **Blinded by Zeal** (the cultists have full control, but their perspectives are skewed by the cult)
- ☐ **Their Will is not Their Own** (the cultists are mentally enslaved)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRAPPINGS

*What are the cult's trappings and aesthetics?*

- ☐ **Traditional Cabal** (dark robes with hoods, sandals, and bladed weapons are standard)
- ☐ **Beastly Aesthetic** (the cult fashions their clothing and weapons after some animal)
- ☐ **Minor Icons** (members of the cult dress normally, but they have some mark or token that identifies them as members of the cult)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

**TRUTHS**

## PRIMARY ATTACK MODE

When you create these minions, choose one of the primary attack modes below and describe the nature of the attack in the box.

### ☐ STANDARD ATTACK (50% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)

Melee or ranged attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  10).

### ☐ ACCURATE ATTACK (65% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)

Melee or ranged attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  5).

### ☐ POWERFUL ATTACK (40% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)

Melee attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled + 20 (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  10 + 20).

Use this box to describe the minions' primary attack mode.

## MINION PERK

When you first create this type of minion, choose one of the perks below.

### ☐ ANYONE COULD BE ONE

Once during a scene that includes both these minions and bystanders that the heroes need to rescue, after a hero uses an action to rescue a bystander the Narrator can reveal that the rescued bystander is also a cultist. Increase the size of one squad of these minions by 1, and move that squad's initiative card to the space immediately after the current turn. If that squad's initiative card is face-down, also turn it face-up.

### ☐ DEATH BLOW

Whenever a hero hits a squad of these minions with a melee attack, the squad also deals 10 damage to that hero.

### ☐ OUR NUMBERS ARE ENDLESS

Add 3 to the size of any squad of these minions at the start of the scene.



### ☐ STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

While the squad's size is 2 or greater, melee attacks against these minions add 2 challenge dice (



) to the roll.

### ☐ WE HAVE EYES EVERYWHERE

At the start of a conflict scene including these minions, reveal that one of the minions was a minor or background character in a previous interlude scene involving one of the heroes. These minions add 2 advantage dice (   ) to attack rolls made against that hero due to insider knowledge the revealed cultist brought to them.

## MINION WEAKNESS

When you first create this type of minion, choose one of the weaknesses below.

### ☐ BLIND DEVOTION

Melee attacks against these minions add 2 advantage dice (   ) to the roll instead of 1.

### ☐ FODDER

Any time a hero hits a squad of these minions with an attack, reduce the squad's size by 1 more.

### ☐ POOR TEAMWORK

For each squad of these minions that would be added to a scene, instead add 2 squads of these minions, each of which is half the size of the squad that was supposed to be added.

### ☐ UNCOORDINATED

For each drawback this squad rolls, reduce the squad's size by 1.

# THE DEMIGOD

This villain is an all-powerful deity, a force beyond the ken of mortals that only dabbles in corporeal matters for some inscrutable, malign purpose. Examples from popular comics include Dormammu™ and Surtur™ (Marvel), and Darkseid™ and Gog™ (DC).

## NAME:

### INSCRUTABLE GOAL

*What does this villain want to accomplish in the long run?*

- ☐ **Destruction** (the villain seeks to destroy everything that is outside their domain)
- ☐ **Domination** (they want to rule over every world and plane)
- ☐ **Transformation** (the villain wants to reshape all worlds and planes to match their malicious vision for the cosmos)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### RULER OF THE REALM

*How does this powerful being rule over their chosen realm?*

- ☐ **In Absentia** (they rule by proxy, passing down commands through a priesthood or their chosen lieutenants)
- ☐ **Neglectfully** (they take no active hand in ruling their realm)
- ☐ **Tyrannically** (they oppress the inhabitants of the realm, forcing all who live there to obey their dark, mercurial whims)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### CORPOREAL FORM

*In what form does this villain appear when interacting with mortals?*

- ☐ **Gigantic Humanoid** (they are a monstrosly huge, twisted humanoid, a recognizable shape marred by terrifying features)
- ☐ **Enormous Monster** (they are a huge monster from myth, such as a dragon, hellhound, hydra, kraken, or serpent)
- ☐ **Reflective Form** (the villain appears in a form drawn from the subconscious thoughts of the mortals they are interacting with)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TRUTHS

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## FIRST APPEARANCE

**CURRENT STATUS:**  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

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**LESSER POWER (65%):**

---

**MINOR POWER (55%):**

---

*When you create this villain, draw five powers from the Deck of Powers and choose up to three to be this villain's powers (you may also choose from available Basic powers). The villain can use these powers to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with these powers, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.*

*This villain has 200 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.*

*When this villain is defeated, they are never captured or killed. Instead, the villain retreats to a place of safety, you check one of the boxes of the Eternal Nemesis perk, and all heroes in the scene gain the lasting repercussion "Vengeance of [this villain's name]."*

**VILLAIN PERKS**





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*When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked. Additionally, this villain begins play with some of their perks automatically, in addition to the two you choose.*

☒ **DIVINITY**

This villain cannot be damaged by attacks and does not have a permanent body; they can change shape, grow/shrink, become invisible, incorporeal, or anything in between at will.

☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **ETERNAL NEMESIS**

This villain adds 4 advantage dice (     ) to an attack they make against a character with the lasting repercussion **"Vengeance of [this villain's name]."**

☐ **EVER-CHANGING TACTICS**

This villain adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to the first roll they make with each of their powers each round.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **PRECOGNITION**

After the Narrator lays out the initiative track, move up to 3 of this villain's initiative cards 2 spaces forward.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **SWEEP THE BOARD CLEAN**

The villain makes a melee area attack and pushes any target hit by the attack through the air in a straight line to a place far away from the villain.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**

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*When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below, in addition to the one already chosen.*

☒ **DIMINISHING PRESENCE**

For every 200 damage the villain takes, remove 1 of the villain's initiative cards from the initiative track for the rest of the scene.

☐ **GLUTTONY**

When this villain damages a hero, their next action must be an attack against that hero or, if they cannot attack the hero, to move into a position from which they can.

☐ **PRIDE**

When this villain attacks a hero and deals no damage, this villain takes 30 damage.

☐ **WRATH**

Each time this enemy takes damage, add 2 challenge dice (   ) to their next roll.



# THE LORD OF HELL

This villain is the master of a dark plane of existence that haunts the nightmares of humanity. Yet despite their immense power, they still behave in a very humanlike fashion, a divine power with mortal foibles. Examples from popular comics include Hela™ and Mephisto™ (Marvel), and Trigon™ (DC).

## NAME:

### STRONGEST DESIRE

What does the villain desire above all else, to the point of distraction?

- ☐ **Dominion** (the villain seeks to rule over the mortal realm)
- ☐ **Power** (the villain desires power, not in the abstract but in the form of tangible magical potency and limitless sorcerous energy)
- ☐ **Souls** (the villain collects the souls of the dead, transforming them into the villain's spectral prisoners, trophies, or retinue)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### APPEARANCE

What does this villain look like?

- ☐ **Indistinguishable from Human** (the villain looks like an ordinary human in almost every way)
- ☐ **Infernal** (they look human but with infernal traits, such as horns, burning eyes, odd-colored skin, or talons for fingernails)
- ☐ **Titan** (the villain looks like a giant humanoid, standing twice against as tall as the average human)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### DOMINANT TRAIT

What is this villain's most outstanding trait?

- ☐ **Reality Alteration** (reality bends to their subconscious will, warping in response to their most casual needs)
- ☐ **Silky Charm** (the villain is a smooth-talker, and even the most staunchly opposed hero finds it difficult to avoid being swayed)
- ☐ **Terrible Visage** (they are terrible to behold, with an inhuman appearance or a beauty so powerful that it causes physical pain)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TRUTHS

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## FIRST APPEARANCE

### CURRENT STATUS:



At Large



Incarcerated



Deceased



Reformed



Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

---

**LESSER POWER (65%):**

---

**MINOR POWER (55%):**

---

*When you create this villain, draw five powers from the Deck of Powers and choose up to three to be this villain's powers (you may also choose from available Basic powers). The villain can use these powers to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with these powers, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.*

*This villain has 200 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.*

*When this villain is defeated, they are never captured or killed. Instead, the villain retreats to a place of safety, you check one of the boxes of the Eternal Nemesis perk, and all heroes in the scene gain the lasting repercussion "Vengeance of [this villain's name]."*

**VILLAIN PERKS**





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*When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked. Additionally, this villain begins play with some of their perks automatically, in addition to the two you choose.*

☒ **DIVINITY**

This villain cannot be damaged by attacks.

☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **ETERNAL NEMESIS**

This villain adds 4 advantage dice (     ) to an attack they make against a character with the lasting repercussion "**Vengeance of [this villain's name].**"

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **BANISHMENT**

As an action, the villain chooses one hero and banishes them, removing them from the scene. Remove the hero's initiative card from the initiative track; at the start of the next round, return the hero's initiative card to the initiative deck. The hero returns to the scene at the start of their turn that round, at the place from which they were banished.

☐ **EVER-CHANGING TACTICS**

This villain adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to the first roll they make with each of their powers each round.

☐ **FLIGHT**

This villain can fly when they move.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **ILLUSION**

When a hero in the scene makes an attack, this villain reveals that their target was an illusion covering one of their allies; the attack targets a different hero instead of the villain.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**

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*When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below, in addition to the one already chosen.*

☒ **DIMINISHING PRESENCE**

For every 200 damage the villain takes, remove 1 of the villain's initiative cards from the initiative track for the rest of the scene.

☐ **ENVY**

When a hero in the scene hits with any attack, the hero gains 1 hero point (  ).

☐ **GREED**

Attempts to distract the villain using greed add 2 advantage dice (   ) to the roll.

☐ **SLOTH**

This villain can either move or attack on their turn, but never both.



## SCENARIO

# THE NETHER REALM, PART I

## ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #3

This issue begins with a call for help delivered to the team's headquarters, which comes from **SE13: The Mystic Order**. A series of mysterious kidnappings throughout the city has raised suspicions that an organized cabal might be at work. Signs of sorcery appear at the site of each kidnapping. The person delivering the information (a minor character you create for this issue) believes that they have identified the next kidnapping victim, a bookseller from the **old part of town** named Calvin Toren. Toren's bookshop is near the center of the disappearances, and he recently gave a report to the police about seeing strange people spying on him from across the street.

When the heroes eventually arrive at Toren's bookshop (this scene takes place near midnight), they find that the kidnapping attempt is already underway. Though the bookshop is closed, strange flickering lights come from within. Cultists are inside, performing a ritual to open a small portal through which they plan to shove Toren.

In the opening scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✦ A squad of **Cultists** minions, with a size equal to  $2 \times$  the number of heroes in the scene.
- ✦ One cult leader, a minor villain with 100 resistance and 1 initiative card, who has an attack similar to the cultists' attack with a 65% chance of success, dealing damage equal to the number rolled.
- ◆ **Objective** (□□□, Opposed □□□): The cultists are in the middle of a portal-opening ritual, having shoved aside several bookshelves to make room for the ritual circle. The heroes can progress the objective by damaging various ritual components: the salt circle on the floor, candles, and censers full of incense. If the heroes complete the objective, the ritual fails and the cultists flee. The enemies progress the objective by performing the ritual; if it is completed, a rip opens in the air, and cultists attempt to shove Toren through. If he is shoved through, or if all the cultists are defeated, the rip closes. A hero who attempts to go through is pushed back by an invisible force.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□): The cultists' ritual causes bolts of magical energy to erupt outward from the ritual circle, causing structural damage to the bookshop and the neighboring buildings. With each bolt, the structure wobbles on the edge of collapsing. The building needs to be shored up and protected from the damaging energy.
  - ✦ **Failure**: Once the heroes are safely outside, the building completely collapses.
- ◆ **Scene Details**: Heavy, old bookshelves shoved haphazardly aside, a wrought-iron spiral staircase leading to the apartment above the bookshop, the musty smell of old books, rusted cars parked on the street outside, arcane energy crackling in the air, a mannequin wearing a full suit of medieval armor, inhuman chanting.
- ◆ After the scene, the heroes discover a strange artifact: a broken, runed clay disc, similar to the one discovered at the end of issue #1. In the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, increase the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry by 1, but do not fill out the rest of this setting element sheet if you have not already done so.

## WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

Below are some suggestions for information you can provide to the heroes if they seek it out. If they seek aid from the Mystic Order, they are introduced to that group's leader, the **NC05: The Mystic Sage**, who can provide them with information about the clay discs, the cult, and the Nether Realm.

## THE MYSTERIOUS CLAY DISCS

- ◆ Each of the discs are (or rather, were) magical seals that kept the world safe from invasion by powerful magical forces from **SE06: The Nether Realm**. They are known as the Seven Seals of Binding.
- ◆ Each of the seals shields Earth from a different kind of influence from other dimensions. The seal from issue #1 shielded against mind control magic; the seal from Toren's shop shielded against summoning creatures.
- ◆ With two seals broken, the barriers between the real world and the realms of magic is greatly thinned. Though the Earth is still protected by five other seals (assuming none of them are broken), powerful magic can pierce the barrier, opening up gateways between Earth and other realms.
- ◆ The master of the Nether Realm cannot pass through any portal to Earth; the remaining five seals see to that.

## THE CULT

- ◆ The heroes can learn that the cult has been operating under orders from some powerful being in the Nether Realm, either the **Demigod** or the **Lord of Hell** major villain, which you can choose at this time.
- ◆ The cult has been preparing to take over the top floors of the **tallest building in the city** through a number of means: casting hypnotic spells on the building's security guards, stealing blueprints from the Office of City Planning, and placing wards on the base of the building to drive away casual passers-by.

## THE KIDNAPPINGS

- ◆ Each of the kidnapping victims has some connection to the occult, and specifically to the Nether Realm. Of note are a librarian whose collection includes books of tales about people who traveled to another plane; a brain surgeon who studies people who died on the operating table and were revived, only to claim that they saw a glimpse of the afterlife; an astrophysicist who attempts to create artificial wormholes that link to other planes of existence; and the chief custodian of the **tallest building in the city**.

## CALVIN TOREN AND HIS AREA OF EXPERTISE

- ◆ Toren specializes in 19th and 20th century religious panics, which led him to a unique theory that has yet to catch on in academia: that many of the people accused of witchcraft were individuals with superpowers they didn't understand.
- ◆ The clay disc in Toren's collection was a relic from an occult order from World War II, or so Toren claims. It was unbroken before the kidnapping attempt; the cult leader smashed it before beginning the ritual to kidnap Toren.

## THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The cult plans to open a portal to the Nether Realm on the rooftop of the **tallest building in the city**, and eventually the heroes' investigations should lead them there. The following sequence of events describes the actions the cult takes to open that portal, and what state the location is in when the heroes finally intervene. This final scene ends only when all the cultists have been defeated, or if the cultists escape into the Nether Realm.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ A squad of **Cultists** minions, with a size equal to  $3 \times$  the number of heroes in the scene.
- ✧ One villain, who has 2 initiative cards. This can be a villain from a previous issue, or a new one you create.

The heroes also must deal with the following complication:

- ✧ **Complication** (□□□□□): The cultists have taken hostages from among the building's workers. They need to be gotten to safety before they can be taken to the Nether Realm by the cultists.
- ✧ **Failure**: Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by -1.

## SECURE THE RITUAL SITE □

The cult has worked diligently to prepare for this ritual in advance, so many people have already been diverted away from the building's upper floors. The cultists capture the people still there, then herd them to the rooftop.

- ◆ **Reputation**: If the team as a **Media Reputation** of 3 or higher, they receive a call from an anonymous employee of a radio station in the building after this point, alerting them to the cultists' actions.

## OPEN THE PORTAL □ □

The cultists set up the accouterments of the ritual around the rooftop: magic circles drawn in salt, huge ritual candles whose flames burn black, censers of incense the size of a cauldron, and so on.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□, Enemy): The cultists perform a ritual intended to transform the entire roof of the building into the opening site of a massive portal. If the enemies complete this objective before they are all defeated, move on to "Escape into the Nether Realm."

When your players first see the open portal, you should (if you have not already) fill out the "What is the Nether Realm like?" question for the **SE06: The Nether Realm** so you can describe what they see. When the players eventually pass through the portal to the other side, you can fill out the rest of that page.

## ESCAPE INTO THE NETHER REALM

The portal has opened on the roof of the building, and the passage between our world and the Nether Realm is open. The cultists try to drag their hostages through the portal.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□□□, Enemy): This objective replaces the complication described for this scene; if the heroes have already progressed that complication, mark off that many progress dots on this objective. Each time the villains drag one of their hostages through the portal, they advance the objective (minions can advance this objective). If the enemies complete the objective, the rest flee through the portal.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ As the heroes quickly discover, the other kidnapping victims are not present at the ritual site; they have already been taken into the Nether Realm and need to be rescued.
- ◆ The portal stays open after the enemies are all defeated, though it seems to flicker as though it wants to close. This may be the only chance the heroes have to rescue the kidnapped civilians (which someone else present in the scene will point out, if none of the heroes come to that conclusion on their own).
- ◆ If the heroes decide not to go through the portal, skip issues 4 and 5 of this series and adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by -3.
- ◆ The story continues in *Eldritch Mysteries* #4.

# NETHER REALM LIEUTENANTS

This group of minor villains serves as the direct underlings of the master of the **SE06: The Nether Realm**. Though clearly more powerful than the demons that inhabit the plane, they still work in servitude of the realm's master and act as that master's agents across the plane and even into other dimensions.

## TEAM NAME:

### ORIGINS

*How similar are these villains to each other, with regards to their species and place of origin?*

- ☐ **Identical** (all are from the same place, time, and species)
- ☐ **Fragmented** (they come from different worlds or different eras)
- ☐ **Transformed** (they came from different backgrounds, but they have since been molded to appear more homogeneous)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### RELATIONSHIP TO THE MASTER

*What is the relationship between these villains and the master of the Nether Realm?*

- ☐ **Family** (they are the children or siblings of the master)
- ☐ **Concubines** (the villains are part of a harem)
- ☐ **Prisoners** (they are enslaved, fighting for their freedom)
- ☐ **Servants** (the villains are willing servants of their master, including advisors and loyal military officers)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### COHESION

*How do these villains behave when acting as a group?*

- ☐ **Infighting** (these villains constantly squabble among themselves and engage in competition with one another)
- ☐ **Lone Wolves in a Pack** (each member operates independently, but when together they have little friction)
- ☐ **Well-Oiled Machine** (these villains fight as one, clearly aligned both tactically and motivationally)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TRUTHS

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## FIRST APPEARANCE

**CURRENT STATUS:**  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

When you create these villains, draw seven powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be each villain's superpower (you may also choose from available Basic powers). These villains can use their powers to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villains attack with a power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

**FLEEING THE SCENE**

In every scene, each of these villains has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes. Each minor villain in this group has progress tracking boxes for this objective next to their type.

**LEADER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></div>	

**LIEUTENANT** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></div>	

**HARRIER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></div>	

**SKULKER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></div>	

**BRUISER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></div>	

**SNIPER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></div>	

# DEMONS

These minions are the demonic inhabitants of the **SE06: The Nether Realm**. They serve at the whims of the dimension's ruler and are hostile to outsiders who stray into their realm. They are vile, bloodthirsty, and so utterly inhuman that their motivations are impossible for mortals to comprehend. They range from tricksome to psychopathic in nature.

## NAME:

### APPEARANCE

*What do these minions look like?*

- ☐ **Horri-fying Specters** (the minions appear ghostly, their forms distorted and terrifying)
- ☐ **Hulking Monsters** (the minions are large, strong-looking hulks covered in scales or spikes)
- ☐ **Not-Quite-Human** (the minions look human but have oddly colored skin, hair, or some other feature that clearly separates them from humanity)
- ☐ **Surrealist Nightmares** (the minions have no consistent form, but each one looks like a monster distorted in a funhouse mirror)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### DEMEANOR

*How do these creatures behave when confronted with someone from outside their realm?*

- ☐ **Bestial Rage** (these minions become frothing, enraged beasts who cannot be reasoned with)
- ☐ **Dismissive Coldness** (these minions regard outsiders as being inferior, barely worth notice)
- ☐ **Mad Cackling** (these minions seem insane and cannot stop giggling and laughing)
- ☐ **Sadistic Taunting** (these minions take sick pleasure in telling their future victims the sadistic plans they have in store)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### OVERT MAGIC

*What supernatural phenomena accompanies the presence of these minions?*

- ☐ **Crackling Energy** (these minions are wreathed in flames, sparking with lightning, or otherwise constantly surrounded by some energy or force)
- ☐ **Hellish Accouterments** (these minions perpetually reek of brimstone, exude heat so strong that it distorts the air, and the faint sound of tormented screams echoes in their voices)
- ☐ **Long Shadows** (shadows twist and writhe in the presence of these minions, seeming to have lives of their own)
- ☐ **None** (these minions appear, other than their strange physiology, to be perfectly normal)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## PRIMARY ATTACK MODE

*When you create these minions, choose one of the primary attack modes below and describe the nature of the attack in the box.*

### ☐ **STANDARD ATTACK (50% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)**

Melee or ranged attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  10).

### ☐ **ACCURATE ATTACK (65% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)**

Melee or ranged attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  5).

### ☐ **POWERFUL ATTACK (40% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)**

Melee attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled + 20 (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  10 + 20).

*Use this box to describe the minions' primary attack mode.*

## MINION PERK

*When you first create this type of minion, choose one of the perks below.*

### ☐ **CUNNING**

Heroes who make attacks against these minions while up close to them add 2 challenge dice (   ) to the roll.

### ☐ **INHUMAN SPEED**

After the Narrator has laid out the initiative track but before the first turn of the round begins, move these minions' initiative card 1 space toward the front of the initiative track.

### ☐ **OUR NUMBERS ARE ENDLESS**

Add 3 to the size of any squad of these minions at the start of the scene.

### ☐ **RAVENOUS**

When a squad of these minions damages a hero with an attack, if the squad's initiative card is not already at the end of the initiative track, move the squad's initiative card to the end of the initiative track, leaving it face-up. These minions can take another turn when the squad's initiative card is next on the track.

### ☐ **SAVAGE**

Add +10 to the damage of all attacks made by these minions.

## MINION WEAKNESS

*When you first create this type of minion, choose one of the weaknesses below.*

### ☐ **EASILY ENRAGED**

While a squad of these minions is smaller than its original size at the start of the scene, add 1 challenge die (  ) to attack rolls made by these minions as they are enraged by the defeat of one of their kind.

### ☐ **MELEE-FOCUSED**

Ranged attacks against these minions add 1 advantage die (  ) to the roll.

### ☐ **NOT VERY BRIGHT**

When a hero performs a maneuver with a hero who is attacking these minions, add 3 advantage dice (    ) to the roll instead of 2.

### ☐ **SHAMBLING**

These minions cannot move and take an action on the same turn.



## SCENARIO

# THE NETHER REALM, PART 2

## ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #4

This issue begins as the heroes travel through the portal to the **SE06: The Nether Realm** at the conclusion of the previous issue. They emerge in a staging area, a place where the cultists bring kidnapped civilians before moving them to a secure prison. Some cultists have already come through to this side, and they were met by the demons that inhabit the plane and serve the plane's dark master. When this scene begins, the heroes have mere moments to realize that the area is occupied by their enemies before the conflict begins.

In the opening scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ A squad of **Cultists** minions of a size equal to the number of heroes.
- ✧ A squad of **Demons** minions of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times$  2.
- ✧ If the villain used in the final scene of the previous issue escaped into the Nether Realm, that villain is also in this scene and has 1 initiative card.

◆ **Complication** (□□□□□, Critical): There are ten civilians here, victims of the kidnappings. These civilians were brought to this place and held, awaiting the arrival of the cultists with Calvin Toren in tow, at which point all the prisoners were to be taken to the Forsaken Keep. If there are any minor Narrator-controlled characters from your campaign who the players have not interacted with in a while, feel free to include them among these prisoners. These civilians are bound to posts atop barbaric-looking wagons, which the demons set on fire at the start of the scene; under order of their overlord, the demons are not to let any of their prisoners escape alive. The civilians need to be rescued from the burning wagons and gotten out of harm's way.

- ✧ **Failure:** Any civilians not rescued by the time the villains are defeated perish in flame. Choose one hero (one who would be particularly hard-hit by the civilians' deaths, or one at random) to gain the lasting repercussion **Scarred by [the name of your Nether Realm]**.

◆ **Scene Details:** The screams of the prisoners, the crackling fire and radiating heat coming off of the burning carts, several monstrous beasts of burden who cry out in anger and terror; pepper the scene with additional details based upon the way it is defined on the Nether Realm page of your Setting Book.

### ESCALATION: DEFEATED

If the heroes are defeated, all the kidnapped civilians perish. The heroes are left for dead as the cultists flee across the dangerous landscape, headed to the Forsaken Keep. When the heroes wake, they find the staging area abandoned and tracks pointing toward the river Nazgath, which should be enough to lead them to the Forsaken Keep. Even with no civilians in tow, the heroes must traverse the obstacles listed below.

### QUESTIONING THE KIDNAPPED CIVILIANS

Surviving civilians willingly answer questions asked by the heroes.

- ◆ The civilians brought through portals to the Nether Realm by the cultists have no idea why they were taken. The heroes should know from the previous issue that each of the civilians has some knowledge or talent relevant to the Nether Realm in some way.
- ◆ The civilians overheard the cultists and demons talking about taking them to the Forsaken Keep, where the master of this realm resides. The demons mentioned that "other captives" were being kept in the dungeons there.
- ◆ One of the kidnapped civilians recalls hearing one of the cultists expressing happiness that they would no longer have to go all the way to the Forsaken Keep to travel back and forth between the Nether Realm and the mortal world. This should indicate to the heroes that there is some means of returning back to their world in the Forsaken Keep, likely under the control of the master of the realm.
- ◆ **Reputation:** If the team's **Public Reputation** is 3 or higher, one of the civilians steps forward and offers to help lead and watch out for the others as the group traverses the dangerous terrain. Their assistance grants the heroes 1 advantage die (🎲) on all rolls made to progress objectives during the journey to the Forsaken Keep.

### THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Unlike other issues, the sequence of events in this issue does not advance based on the heroes creating interlude scenes. When the heroes set out to reach the Forsaken Keep, they begin with the "Crossing the River Nazgath" scene and must complete objectives to make their way to their target; each completed objective advances the heroes to the next scene in the sequence of events.

The first time a hero fails a roll to progress one of these objectives, the issue's villains launch a surprise attack on the

heroes and the civilians in their charge. At that point, the scene becomes a conflict scene, and you should immediately create an initiative track for turn order. If the heroes continue to advance the scenes' objectives, they continue to progress through the sequence of events, changing the scene to match the next step's description and introducing the new objective. If all the enemies are defeated, the scene stops being a conflict scene, though the heroes must still complete all the objectives to reach the Forsaken Keep.

Whenever the heroes are attacked by the villains, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ A number of **Nether Realm Lieutenants** equal to the number of heroes, who have been sent by their dark master to capture the heroes and the civilians that they rescued in the opening scene of the issue. Each of the lieutenants has 1 initiative card.
- ✧ A squad of **Demons** minions, whose size is equal to  $2 \times$  the number of heroes.

Additionally, the heroes must keep the civilians with them out of danger. Each time a hero fails in an attempt to progress one of these scenes' objectives, one of the civilians is removed from the scene in a way you describe (dies, is captured and carried off, or vanishes). Additionally, when the above enemies finally attack the heroes, include the following objective:

- ◆ **Objective** (□□, Enemy): The enemies have orders to kidnap or otherwise eliminate any of the civilians who were kidnapped by the cult. Only one villain can be working on this objective at a time; each time the objective is completed, one civilian is removed from the scene in a way you describe. If any civilians remain, erase all progress and restart this objective.

## CROSSING THE RIVER NAZGATH

The first obstacle the heroes face in reaching the Forsaken Keep is a black river of sludge that reeks of death and stretches half a mile wide. The sludge flows like liquid, periodically forming into tendrils that lash out at incredible lengths, attempting to snatch anyone that gets too close and drag them under the murky surface.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□): The heroes must navigate the crossing of the river, making sure that the civilians with them also make it safely to the other side.

## DOWN THE OBSIDIAN CLIFFS

Beyond the river the land begins to drop off slowly, before ending in a very steep cliff face that seems to be made of jagged, shining obsidian. The cliff is at least a thousand feet down to the valley below and is extremely treacherous, including long stretches with nowhere to grip.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□): The heroes must navigate the descent down the cliffs, making sure that the civilians with them also make it safely to the valley below.

## THROUGH THE VALLEY OF TORMENT

The valley leading up to the Forsaken Keep is a terrifying place. It rumbles with earthquakes, vents of burning steam jet up through cracks that suddenly open in the ground, and giant, hulking predatory monsters roam the landscape, hunting any smaller creatures (such as the heroes and their civilian charges) who are not careful to sneak by them.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□): The heroes must navigate the crossing of the valley, making sure that the civilians with them also make it safely to the gates of the Forsaken Keep.

## THE GATES OF THE FORSAKEN KEEP

The Forsaken Keep is a foreboding sight. The castle reflects the nature of the landscape surrounding it, and it sits on a rocky plateau that rises out from the Valley of Torment. A mile-long bridge connects the keep to a rise in the valley, leading up to a pair of gates that stand slightly ajar. Describe the keep in a way that fits in with the Nether Realm as you have defined it for your setting.

If the heroes reach this point without having encountered the villains sent to hunt them down, the conflict described above occurs when they reach the gates.

## ESCALATION: CAPTURED!

If all the heroes are defeated, they are captured by the Nether Realm Lieutenants and taken to the jail cells beneath the Forsaken Keep, where many other kidnapping victims are currently imprisoned. This will be accounted for at the start of the following issue.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the heroes fully resolved the complication in the opening scene (meaning no kidnapped civilians died in the fires) and any heroes were defeated in the conflict scene with the Nether Realm Lieutenants, choose one of those heroes to gain the lasting repercussion **Scarred by [the name of your Nether Realm]**.
- ◆ This issue's story arc concludes in *Eldritch Mysteries* #5.

The heroes have reached the Forsaken Keep and now stand before the daunting structure. Somewhere inside are the prisoners snatched from Earth that they came to rescue, and their means for getting back to their home dimension. Also lurking within: the master of the Nether Realm, either the **Demigod** or **Lord of Hell** major villain (if you did not already create one of these villains, do so now).

## EXPLORING THE FORSAKEN KEEP

The interior of the Forsaken Keep is largely empty of inhabitants. It is a lonely place, with only the occasional pack of demons crawling through the corridors. The dark hallways and musty stale air might lead heroes to think the place entirely abandoned. If at any time the heroes do something so reckless and blatant that it could not help but attract attention, you can introduce a short conflict scene (with a squad of **Demons** minions of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times$  2) as the scattered inhabitants of the Keep react to the heroes' actions.

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

As the heroes explore the Forsaken Keep, they come across several locations of interest. Each of these locations is an opportunity for the heroes to take action or learn something more about the Keep, the Nether Realm, its master, or other matters relevant to the team. Start with a scene at the Entrance, and then allow the heroes to explain how they want to explore the keep. Since there is no set map of the keep (and the magical nature of your Nether Realm might mean that its physical layout changes from moment to moment), choose locations that make sense based upon the heroes' actions. At some point, the heroes should visit the Tree of Imprisonment to rescue the hostages from Earth (see below). Once the heroes have visited all these locations and had a chance to rescue the prisoners, proceed to "Escaping the Nether Realm."

- ◆ **The Entrance:** Huge stone doors open into the Forsaken Keep, with the light from outside providing the only illumination as it streams through the doors. The chamber beyond those stone doors is a sweeping foyer that could grace the grandest palaces on Earth, yet twisted somehow to reflect the nature of the Nether Realm. A massive half-shattered chandelier hangs precariously above; in the shards of glass remaining in the chandelier, the heroes can see nightmarish visions of their loved ones being tormented.
- ◆ **The Library:** This unlit library is filled with dusty tomes, untouched for eons, written in languages completely unknown to the heroes. Many are bound in flesh, and some seem to twitch and writhe as the heroes approach. Hundreds, if not thousands of books lie uneasily here, each one large and heavy enough to require two hands to carry. No one guards these tomes, yet they give off a sense of foreboding and evil.
- ◆ **The Guest Chambers:** This series of chambers were clearly once opulently laid out for the comfort of guests, but the rooms have now rotted and decayed. In the back, the bedchamber stands open. Inside, among other accouterments, is a four-post bed, its curtains now in tatters. A skeleton lies on the bed, still wearing full plate armor, pinned into the bed by a greatsword (at least twice as large as one that could be wielded by a human) impaling the body. On the bed to either side of the skeleton are two halves of a clay seal, which appears to have been split in twain when the armored figure tried to use it to block the sword that impaled him. In the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, increase the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry by 1.

## THE TREE OF IMPRISONMENT

When the heroes find the prison in which the kidnapped victims from Earth are kept, it appears as a massive domed chamber in which an enormous iron tree, its twisting branches wrought with exquisite detail, stands on an island amid a lake of roiling acid. From the branches of the tree hang several gibbets, dangling like macabre fruit off of the tree's limbs, inside of which the prisoners are kept.

In this conflict scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✦ A squad of **Demons** minions, whose size is equal to  $3 \times$  the number of heroes.
- ✦ Two hulking demon guards, who are minor villains with 100 resistance and a 65% chance of success with an attack, similar to that of the demon minions that deals damage equal to the number rolled on a hit. These minor villains have 1 initiative card each.

The scene ends when all the enemies are defeated and the objective is complete. If the heroes are defeated, they are dragged up to the throne room and presented to the Nether Realm's master. They begin the final conflict scene (which kicks off when they come to in the throne room) with half of their total resistance.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□□, Critical): The prisoners are ensconced in four cages hanging from the iron tree. Each cage holds three prisoners, all of whom need to be freed so they can return to Earth. Each time prisoners are removed from one of the cages, the delicate balancing mechanism that suspends the cages shifts, with the cages still holding prisoners slowly sinking down toward the acid. Do not add this Complication initiative card to the initiative track until the heroes have progressed this complication once, then add it face-down. Whenever this Complication initiative card comes up, one of the cages sinks into the acid, and the prisoners inside die. Each time a hero takes some action to keep cages from out of the acid, flip the Complication card face-down.

✧ **Failure:** If two or more cages sink into the acid, all the heroes in the scene gain the lasting repercussion **Scarred by [the name of your Nether Realm]**.

- ◆ **Complication** (□): Suspended over the apex of the tree is a fifth cage, containing a pitiful-looking humanoid that, while not obviously from Earth, looks to be at most half-demon and begs to be freed.

## ESCAPING THE NETHER REALM

The heroes know that the means for opening a portal to Earth lies somewhere in the Keep, and they have searched everywhere but the throne room where the master of the Nether Realm waits. The master knows that the heroes must come there eventually, for only the villain's power can punch a hole through to Earth's dimension. Hovering crystals form a constellation of false stars within the chamber, motes of raw evil magic that are vestiges of the villain's ability to warp reality. The heroes are barely worth notice to the villain, though their ability to interfere with future plans makes them worth eliminating. The villain taunts, threatens, or tempts the heroes, as fits the villain's nature and demeanor.

Choose one of the following items to be the dominant feature in the chamber, as fits your major villain:

- **Orrery:** A massive, slowly rotating orrery depicting alternate dimensions dominates the center of the chamber.
- **Stone Arch:** A massive stone arch stretches from one side of the chamber to the other, its apex about halfway up to the domed ceiling. The portal to Earth will appear inside this arch.
- **Throne:** Atop a dais sits a massive throne (with details that match the villain's motifs) upon which the villain waits.

In this conflict scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

✧ The master of the Nether Realm, the major villain who has initiative cards equal to the number of heroes.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□□□): To open the portal, the heroes need to align five crystals so they are in the correct position to open the portal to Earth. Anyone with any knowledge of magic can quickly evaluate the alignment of the crystals and recognize that they are in a position to form a number of constellations depending on which ones are activated; a hero who can make an appropriate skill check for such arcane knowledge can identify a constellation that corresponds to one visible in the sky above Earth. Once a crystal is activated, it projects a beam of energy. When that energy beam is pointed at another crystal that has been activated, the beam creates a pulse of harmonized energy. Once the five correct crystals have been activated and aligned, the portal to Earth opens, and the heroes must escape through the portal to end the issue.
- ◆ **Using the Crystals to Attack:** The crystals mentioned in the objective above are fragile and can be destroyed with sufficient force. A successful physical attack against one of the crystals causes it to explode, and the magical energies released from the crystal make the issue's major villain vulnerable to normal damage until the start of the major villain's next turn. There are a total number of crystals equal to 7 + the number of heroes.
- ◆ **Scene Details:** Thousands of motes of light that drift aimlessly around the room, jagged spikes and hooks that protrude downward from the domed ceiling, massive crumbling statues of humans in various stages of torture, soaring columns made of jagged obsidian, large round basins containing pools of oily black liquid.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the heroes are defeated in the final scene, allow them to choose one of their number to be the sole survivor who tumbles, badly wounded, out of a portal back on Earth. The remaining heroes gain the following lasting repercussion: **Trapped in the Nether Realm**. They cannot be chosen for play in future issues until they no longer have that lasting repercussion.
- ◆ If the heroes rescue the nonhuman prisoner from the Tree of Imprisonment, that prisoner can serve as the basis for a new hero, using the **Dimensional Refugee** archetype on the following pages.
- ◆ If any of the heroes stole anything from the library in the Forsaken Keep, they gain the following lasting repercussion: **Tempted by Dark Magic**.
- ◆ When the heroes return to Earth, they receive a visit from **NC05: The Mystic Sage**, who sensed their passage between the worlds. The sage requests that the heroes recount the tale of their travels to the Nether Realm, and then confides a secret: the sage is stripped of all powers while within the Nether Realm, bound by a curse placed on the sage by the Nether Realm's master during a previous confrontation. If they recount their tale, each of the heroes gains the following lasting repercussion: **Trusted by [NC05: The Mystic Sage]**.

HERO

# DIMENSIONAL REFUGEE

You are a native of another dimension, where demons and other evils dwell. You are no longer one of those evils; perhaps you never were, or perhaps you have forsaken your heritage to join the ranks of the heroes of Earth.

## FUNDAMENTAL NATURE

What kind of creature are you?

- ☐ **Demon** (you are one of the demons that dwells in the Nether Realm)
- ☐ **Human** (you are a human who was born or raised in the Nether Realm; you escaped and returned to the home plane of your people)
- ☐ **Other Native** (you are neither human nor demon, but another creature of a fundamentally supernatural nature)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.

- |                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arrogant | <input type="checkbox"/> Moody |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curious  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stoic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cynical  | <input type="checkbox"/> Suave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Wary  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Haunted  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humble   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

## VULNERABILITY

What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?

- ☐ **Dangerous Sorcery** (your control is tenuous and your magic can be disrupted or go wild)
- ☐ **Rival Magic** (an opposing magical force dispels and counters your own sorcery)
- ☐ **Supernatural Weakness** (a particular supernatural element or force greatly harms you)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

What does resistance mean for this character?

- ☐ **Danger Sense** (sixth sense warns of incoming attacks)
- ☐ **Invulnerability** (you shrug off attacks like they are nothing)
- ☐ **Protective Spells** (you have spells and charms that ward off attacks)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

How does this character quickly move from one place to another?

- ☐ **Leaping** (you leap long distances and great heights)
- ☐ **Occult Conveyance** (you use spells or artifacts to carry you over long distances)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Running** (you run really, really fast)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)



Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### INSTINCTIVE MAGIC

Magic and sorcery are second nature to you, as easy as speaking a native language. When you use any of your powers, you can add 2 time tokens (🕒🕒) to that card to make the roll with a 90% chance of success. You may choose to do this after you roll the dice, but before the roll is resolved.

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✦ Remove 1 time token (🕒) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✦ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🦋) in the following ways:

- ✦ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✦ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🦋) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ✦ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✦ You add 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to all attacks you make with powers.
- ✦ Each boon you roll counts as 2 (👑👑).
- ✦ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✦ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✦ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✦ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%



# MONSTER OF MYTH

This villain is a monster out of legend, a creature that features in stories but no one thinks is real. This could be a creature from the myths of the ancient world, or it could be from more contemporary literature. Alternatively, this villain could be a modern urban legend, more real than most storytellers would believe. Examples from popular comics include Mr. Hyde™ and Wendigo™ (Marvel), and Medusa™ (DC).

## NAME:

### ORIGINS OF STORIES

*When did the stories of this monster originate?*

- ☐ **Ancient Myth** (they hail from the mythology of an ancient culture, such as Greek myth, Egyptian religion, or Norse tales)
- ☐ **Literature** (they first appeared in post-Renaissance literature)
- ☐ **Urban Legend** (they are a modern creation, born of stories told by civilized people since the dawn of the 20th century)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### THE TRUTH BEHIND THE FICTION

*How did this creature come to be real?*

- ☐ **Always Real** (this creature always existed in the shadows; no one knew the stories were true)
- ☐ **Manifested** (a spell, ritual, or other magical effect created this creature from the ideas in mankind's collective unconscious)
- ☐ **Adopted** (this villain is not truly the creature of myth, but adopted its persona when they became a villain)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### MODERN SURVIVAL

*How does this creature survive in the modern world?*

- ☐ **Hiding** (they remain in hiding almost all the time, only emerging when they need to feed or advance their evil plans)
- ☐ **Normal Identity** (they have a civilian identity, just like heroes do, that makes them indistinguishable from normal humans)
- ☐ **In Plain Sight** (they neither hide nor disguise themselves, accepting the consequences of frightening those they meet)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TRUTHS

All character names are property of their respective owners, and their use does not imply an endorsement of or a relationship with Scratchpad Publishing LLC.

## FIRST APPEARANCE

**CURRENT STATUS:**  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

When you create this villain, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be this villain's superpower. The villain can use the power to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with this power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.

**FLEEING THE SCENE** ☐ ☐

In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.

**VILLAIN PERKS**

When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **BLOODTHIRSTY**

When the villain deals damage to a hero, the villain immediately makes an attack against a different hero.

☐ **FLIGHT**

This villain can fly when they move.

☐ **CORNERED ANIMAL**

If at least two heroes are up close to the villain, the villain adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to attack rolls.

☐ **OVERSIZED**

The villain can make melee attacks against enemies that they are near or up close to.

☐ **TERRIFYING**

Heroes who are up close to this villain add 2 challenge dice (   ) to any rolls they make.

☐ ☐ ☐ **UNRELENTING**

When this villain would be reduced to 0 resistance, they are instead reduced to 1 resistance, and you move 1 of the villain's initiative cards to the space immediately following the current turn.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**

When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.

☐ **ARCANE VULNERABILITY:**

Choose a symbol, ornament (such as an iron ring), or talisman to be a ward against this villain, and write it in the box above. This villain adds 2 challenge dice (   ) to attack rolls made against heroes possessing such a ward.

☐ **SUBHUMAN INTELLECT**

Attempts to distract the villain using trickery add 2 advantage dice (   ) to the roll.

☐ **RECKLESS RAGE**

While this villain has fewer than 100 resistance, the villain must attack the nearest hero each turn if possible, and adds 2 challenge dice (   ) to all rolls.

☐ **TACTILE POWER**

This villain cannot make ranged attacks with their superpower.

# FALLEN SORCERER

This villain was once a sorcerer who sought knowledge and enlightenment, but fell into evil due to temptation, dark secrets, or the corrupting influence of outside forces. Now this sorcerer is the antithesis of heroic magicians, using their arcane powers for villainy. Examples from popular comics include Baron Mordo™, the Goblin Queen™, and Morgan Le Fay™ (Marvel), and Enchantress™, Felix Faust™, and Mordru™ (DC).

## NAME:

### FALL FROM GRACE

*Why did this villain turn away from enlightenment for a life of evil?*

- ☐ **Bargain for Power** (in exchange for personal power, the villain made a pact with a corrupting force)
- ☐ **Dark Epiphany** (the villain suffered a traumatic event that changed their outlook on the world for the worse)
- ☐ **Scorned** (the villain turned to evil after a rejection)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### DARK POWER SOURCE

*From what or where does the villain draw the power for their dark magics?*

- ☐ **Forbidden Lore** (the villain has access to black magic and other knowledge deemed too dangerous for the world)
- ☐ **Patron** (they draw energy from an allied demon or evil god)
- ☐ **Other Dimension** (they tap into another plane of existence, drawing their dark power from that plane's natural energy)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### AESTHETIC

*What best describes the villain's appearance and demeanor?*

- ☐ **Ancient Wizard** (they wear robes and carry the trappings of a medieval sage, with the personality of an evil wizard)
- ☐ **Monk** (the villain acts like a disciplined master who studied in a monastery or temple before turning to evil)
- ☐ **Tempter** (the villain is charming, attractive, and dresses to make themselves irresistibly tempting)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TRUTHS

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## FIRST APPEARANCE

**CURRENT STATUS:**  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

**SUPERPOWER (75%):**

---

**LESSER POWER (65%):**

---

**MINOR POWER (55%):**

---

When you create this villain, draw five powers from the Deck of Powers and choose up to three to be this villain's powers (you may also choose from available Basic powers). The villain can use these powers to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with these powers, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

*This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.*

**FLEEING THE SCENE** ☐ ☐

In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.

**VILLAIN PERKS**

---

When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked. Additionally, this villain begins play with some of their perks automatically, in addition to the two you choose.

☒ **EVER-CHANGING TACTICS**

This villain adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to the first roll they make with each of their powers each round.

☐ **CURSES**

Any time a hero physically touches the villain, that hero must add 1 time token (  ) to one of their power cards that already has time tokens on it, or add 2 time tokens (   ) to a power card that does not have any time tokens on it.

☐ **DEATH SPIRAL**

If at least one hero has been defeated in the scene, the villain adds +20 damage to attacks they make.

☐ **FLIGHT**

This villain can fly when they move.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **ILLUSION**

When a hero in the scene makes an attack, this villain reveals that their target was an illusion covering one of their allies; the attack targets a different hero instead of the villain.

☐ ☐ ☐ **SURGE OF CONFIDENCE**

When the villain rolls 2 or more boons (   ), flip 1 of their face-down initiative cards face-up.

**VILLAIN WEAKNESS**


---

When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.

☐ **BLINDED BY HATRED**

Each time this villain attacks a hero but does not defeat them, move 1 of this villain's initiative cards to the end of the initiative track.

☐ **OVERCONFIDENCE**

When this villain damages a hero with an attack, that hero adds 2 advantage dice (   ) to any attack they make against this villain on their next turn.

☐ **OVEREXTENSION**

After this villain takes two turns in a row, flip 1 of their face-up initiative cards face-down.

☐ **PRIDE**

When this villain attacks a hero and deals no damage, this villain takes 30 damage.

HERO

# MONSTER HUNTER

You seek out the monsters that lurk in the shadows of the world and capture or slay them. Though many heroes fight villains, you are a scholar when it comes to your prey and have learned to hunt monsters that most people never suspect exist. Examples from popular comics include Blade™ (Marvel) and Hellboy™ (Dark Horse).

## CHOSEN PREY

*Under what label have you proven yourself to be a champion?*

- ☐ **Beasts** (you hunt mindless beasts like chimeras, hellhounds, or werewolves)
- ☐ **Demons** (you hunt monsters from hellish realms that invade our world)
- ☐ **Ghosts** (you dispel evil spirits and send haunts to their eternal rest)
- ☐ **Vampires** (you seek immortal creatures of the night that prey on humans)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

*Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.*

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cynical        | <input type="checkbox"/> Passionate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dashing        | <input type="checkbox"/> Relentless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gruff          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sarcastic  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Haunted        | <input type="checkbox"/> Stoic      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-Suffering | <input type="checkbox"/> _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maudlin        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____      |

## VULNERABILITY

*What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?*

- ☐ **Dependents** (you have family or loved ones depending on you)
- ☐ **Goaded** (you can be easily goaded into a fight by those who know what buttons to push)
- ☐ **Supernatural Weakness** (a particular supernatural element or force greatly harms you)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

*What does resistance mean for this character?*

- ☐ **Danger Sense** (a sixth sense warns you of incoming attacks)
- ☐ **Mobility** (you move fast and dodge out of the way of attacks)
- ☐ **Training** (you possess combat training that helps you avoid attacks)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

*How does this character quickly move from one place to another?*

- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Occult Conveyance** (you use spells or artifacts to carry you over long distances)
- ☐ **Vehicle** (you have a custom vehicle designed to match your heroic motif/theme)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### SLAYER

Each time you or any other heroes on your team defeats a villain or a squad of minions while you are on the scene, you gain 1 hero point (🎲).

SUPERPOWER 80%

TEAM ROLE

HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

RESISTANCE

/ 100

LESSER POWER 70%

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ✦ Remove 1 time token (🕒) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ✦ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🎲) in the following ways:

- ✦ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ✦ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🎲) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ✦ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ✦ You regain 20 resistance every time you perform a teamwork maneuver.
- ✦ You gain 5 hero points (🎲🎲🎲🎲🎲).
- ✦ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ✦ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ✦ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ✦ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%



## SCENARIO

# THE HUNTER IS HUNTED

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #6

This issue's main story begins during the aspiration and turmoil scenes that your heroes create at the start of the session. Have each player whose hero has appeared in at least one issue create their aspiration or turmoil scenes and play them out as normal. However, before the conclusion of each scene featuring only one hero, that hero is suddenly attacked by an unforeseen assailant, transforming the scene into a conflict scene.

These attacks should come as a surprise and with a certain degree of suspense associated with their settings. Describe the attacks as taking place in darkened alleys, the heroes' shadowy apartments lit only by a television screen, or in empty parking lots. Move each scene's setting to somewhere that is dark, free of bystanders and witnesses, and remote when possible. The goal is to have each attack evoke a sense of being stalked by something dark and dangerous, with a tone associated with the suspense of a horror film. Once the fight begins, do your best to conceal the identity of the assailant. Describe them as always in the shadows (having them snuff out light sources when necessary), and keep them perpetually moving through the shadows.

In these scenes, each hero faces the following opposition:

- ✧ The villain of the issue. Create either the **Monster of Myth** or **Fallen Sorcerer** villain, or use an existing villain who works well as a stalker in the shadows. The villain has 2 initiative cards for the scene. When the villain has fewer than half of their resistance remaining, they attempt to flee the scene.

The scene ends when either the hero or the villain is defeated. When a hero is defeated, simply end the scene, leaving what happens to the hero as a mystery. In the unlikely event that the villain is defeated, try to avoid letting the villain be captured. If the capture is inevitable, you may need to adjust the latter part of this issue, using a different villain for the rest of the issue and describing the captured villain as doing the other villain's bidding for some reason.

Choose one of the following options that best describes why your villain would be hunting down the heroes:

- ☐ **Primal Urge.** The villain is compelled to hunt the heroes, out of hunger or some other uncontrollable drive, such as a supernatural compulsion or a curse laid upon them. It drags heroes off to its lair, where it will take its time satiating its hunger.
- ☐ **Targeted Elimination.** The villain knows that the heroes are a threat to them and seeks to take the heroes out of the picture to advance their goals. The villain imprisons the heroes to keep them out of the way while they prepare their next move.
- ☐ **Distracting the Team.** The villain is staging attacks on the heroes as a distraction. Some other party (perhaps the cultists from issue #3, or a member of **SE25: The Secret Society**) hired the villain to draw the heroes' attention away from other matters. The villain places the captured heroes somewhere they can be found, drawing the heroes' attention to a rescue mission.

## WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

After all the heroes who wish to create aspiration or turmoil scenes have done so and dealt with the attacks from the issue's villain, any heroes who were not defeated can begin hunting down their missing comrades and investigating their attacker. For any heroes who were defeated, allow their players to either choose another existing hero to play for the rest of the session (brought in to help track down the villain by either the surviving members of the team or by **SE13: The Mystic Order** if all the heroes are captured), or create a new hero to play for this issue, such as the **Monster Hunter**. You can allow players who are creating new heroes to do so while the other heroes are taking part in interlude scenes. For this issue, there is no time pressure on the search; allow the heroes the time they need to track down their kidnapped comrades.

## INVESTIGATING THE SITES OF THE ATTACKS

- ◆ Examination of the sites of the attacks (both those where a powered hero was attacked, and those where other victims were taken) reveals ample forensic evidence of both the attacker and the victim: tufts of fur, talons or claws, scraps of clothing from the villain's outfit, and other physical traces appropriate to the villain's nature. Heroes who investigate these sites for evidence of a supernatural presence similarly find clues to the villain's nature: residue of dark magic, ripples in the fabric of reality where the villain stepped between dimensions, or mirrors that show images of a different place and time. If a hero uses an interlude scene to collect this evidence, they can use a second interlude scene to analyze it, which should reveal the villain's nature (if not specific details of their identity or whereabouts). This enables them to research the villain (see below).
- ◆ If the heroes chart the attacks on a map, they see no rhyme or reason to the pattern of locations where the attacks took place. This indicates that the heroes were being targeted by the villain, not selected at random or due to proximity to the villain's lair.

## THE OTHER VICTIMS

- ◆ If the heroes look into similar incidents, they learn that there have been three other victims:
  - ◇ A Professor of Theology from the local university, who was taken while walking back to their car late at night.
  - ◇ A police officer on a nighttime patrol in the **old part of town**.
  - ◇ A palm-and-Tarot-reading psychic, who was kidnapped out of their parlor after closing one night.
- ◆ The heroes can identify that two of those three victims (the professor and the psychic) are at least tangentially related to the occult and the arcane; the police officer seems more like a victim of opportunity. This should lead the heroes to suspect that the villain is based out of the **old part of town**. Once the heroes know which part of town to look in, they can use whatever methods best fit to pinpoint the exact location of the lair, such as by interviewing inhabitants for signs of strange goings-on or engaging in urban tracking.
- ◆ **Reputation:** If the team's **Media Reputation** track is 3 or higher, they receive a tip from a friend in the media that other disappearances are being linked to the same person or creature that took the other heroes.

## PIERCING THE VEIL

- ◆ Any attempts to use magic or divination techniques to locate the missing heroes fails instantly. A cloud of dark magic lies like a haze around the missing heroes.
- ◆ Scholarly heroes might wish to research methods for piercing the veil of dark magic to locate the heroes. The only thing that can penetrate the cloud that shields the captured heroes from divination is greater dark magic, such as that used by the ruler of **SE06: The Nether Realm**.
- ◆ A hero who specifically seeks out dark magic to pierce the shadow that lies over the captured heroes can use interlude scenes to do so. Once they have access to this dark magic, the hero must spend a second interlude scene to use that magic, at which point they instantly learn the location of the captured heroes.

## THE BIGOT'S RALLY

At some point during the heroes' investigation (perhaps while they are on their way to a particular location for an interlude scene), they come across a massive rally, orchestrated by **NC02: The Celebrity Bigot**. The conspiracy-minded bigot is up on the stage, working their followers into a frenzy with a speech proclaiming that the recent disappearances (referring to the other victims the villain has taken) are clearly the work of criminals dabbling in dark forces better left undisturbed. The bigot even calls out some of the heroes (anyone who is relatively high-profile) by name, and calls for violence against that hero echo from the crowd.

The heroes can choose to ignore the rally or intervene. Here are some suggestions for how to handle the heroes' decision:

- ◆ If the heroes do nothing, the bigot spreads hateful propaganda; adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by -1. If the Truths box in "The Basics" section of the Setting Book has "The citizens of the city hate and fear all things magical" written in it, instead adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by -3.
- ◆ If the heroes intervene overtly, any argument between the rally attendees and the heroes draws significant media attention. If the heroes disarm the situation peacefully, adjust the team's **Media Reputation** track by +1; if their intervention ends in violence, adjust the team's **Public** and **Media Reputation** tracks by -1.
- ◆ If they intervene subtly to break up the rally, the rally-goers disperse, but nothing else of consequence happens.

## RESCUING THE CAPTURED HEROES

The villain has taken the captured heroes and civilians to a lair in the **old part of town**, deep inside a mausoleum in a large, old cemetery. The cemetery sprawls out over rolling hills and is filled with monuments, tombs, and headstones.

Inside the mausoleum, the villain has transformed the burial place into a makeshift home. The captive heroes and citizens are imprisoned here in a fashion that fits the villain: bound in chains etched with arcane symbols, sealed in coffins taken from elsewhere, cocooned in webbing or chitin, or dangling unconscious from a frozen ceiling.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ◇ The issue's villain, who has a number of initiative cards equal to the number of heroes.

The scene ends when the villain is defeated.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□): In addition to the captured heroes, three other individuals were captured by the issue's villain and are imprisoned in a similar fashion to the heroes. These individuals need to be gotten to safety.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the heroes are defeated in the final confrontation, the villain uses the opportunity to make their escape, realizing that they have drawn too much attention to themselves. One of the civilians takes the story of the fight to the media; adjust the team's **Media Reputation** track by -1.
- ◆ If any of the heroes used dark magic to locate the missing heroes, they each gain the following lasting repercussion: **Tempted by Dark Magic**.

# SCENARIO

## VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

### ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #7

This issue opens with an invitation. A representative from **SE13: The Mystic Order** approaches the heroes and extends a request to them from **NC05: The Mystic Sage**. The sage has recently received some troubling information and believes that only the heroes can act upon it. The sage invites them to **SE30: The Sacred Site**, a place guarded by the Mystic Order, where the information that has disturbed the sage will be revealed to the team. The member of the Mystic Order who comes to them warns the heroes that they may be away from their home city for some time, and that they should make arrangements accordingly.

In light of the sage's concerns, the Mystic Order has warded the Sacred Site, making magical travel there impossible. The Mystic Order arranged for air transportation at a private hangar at the city's airport. When the heroes arrive they see a somewhat decrepit-looking Douglas DC-3 cargo plane named the *Homing Pigeon* waiting for them. The pilot, who looks to be somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 years old, hobbles around the exterior of the plane, performing preflight checks and fueling up the plane at a snail's pace.

Other mechanics are moving around in the hangar, going about their normal duties. While the heroes wait on their pilot, the most observant hero (at the Narrator's discretion) notices that one of the other mechanics has been getting a little too close to the *Homing Pigeon*. If the heroes investigate further, they find that the mechanic was not sabotaging the plane but was installing a small radio transmitter inside the plane's bulkhead. If confronted, the mechanic attempts to flee, triggering a conflict scene.

In this conflict scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ One agent in disguise minor villain, the mechanic attempting to clandestinely place the tracking device on the plane. This villain has 1 initiative card, 50 resistance, and a submachine gun attack with a 65% chance of success (damage equal to the number rolled), with a 50% chance for anything else.
- ✧ A squad of Secret Society goon minions, of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times 2$ . They have pistols that they use to cover their comrade's escape and have a 50% chance of success on all rolls, with maximum damage equal to the size of the squad  $\times 10$ . These minions are not in the scene at first; see the objective below for more information.

The scene ends when the enemies accomplish their objective or are all defeated.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□□, Enemy): The agent in disguise wants to escape from the heroes. The first success on this objective gets the villain outside the hangar and onto the tarmac. Once the villain is on the tarmac, the minions come racing onto the scene, spilling out of luxury cars that come squealing to a stop on one of the runways.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□□, Critical): As a distraction, the minions open fire on some oil barrels near the hangar. A few barrels explode, creating a spreading fire that begins burning its way toward the three parked fuel trucks used for refueling planes in the private hangars. The heroes need to deal with the fire before it spreads to the trucks and destroys them.
  - ✧ **Failure**: Massive explosions rip through the area, knocking everyone nearby to the ground and damaging several private jets. Every character in the scene takes 20 damage from the concussion of the blast; the squad of minions' size is reduced by 2.
- ◆ **Hazard**: Private planes are attempting to land on the runways near the hangar where the conflict begins. Each time the Hazard initiative card comes up, a plane has chance to have a near-miss with one of the characters in the scene, as determined by the Narrator. Such a near-miss counts as a physical melee attack with a 50% chance of success, dealing damage equal to the number rolled. If such a near-miss defeats a hero or enemy, it also damages the plane, creating a new complication:
  - ✧ **Complication** (□□□, Critical): The damaged airplane tries to climb to a safe altitude, but the collision caused too much structural damage and the plane begins to jerkily arc toward the ground.
    - ✧ **Failure**: The plane crashes. If the heroes progressed this complication zero times, everyone on the plane is killed. The evening news is filled with sensational claims that the heroes were somehow involved in causing the crash, reducing the team's **Media Reputation** track by -2 and their **Public Reputation** track by -1. If the plane crashes but the complication was progressed at least once, the media reports that the heroes attempted to help but were ultimately too incompetent to do so, reducing the team's **Media Reputation** track by -1.
- ◆ **Scene Details**: Baggage carts and mobile staircases zipping around on the tarmac, a private jet with a half-disassembled engine waiting for repairs, jumbo passenger jets taxiing to the runways, flatbed cargo haulers loading freight onto a shipping company jet.

## CAPTURING THE AGENT OR THE GOONS

- ◆ Any enemies from the opening conflict scene who are captured immediately bite down on cyanide capsules, preventing them from being interrogated.
- ◆ However, each bears a tattoo or carries some identifying badge that marks them as members of **SE25: The Secret Society**. Their reasons for their actions remain unknown.
- ◆ The messenger from the Mystic Order tells the heroes that the Secret Society has been seeking the location of the Sacred Site for many years. This is not the first time the messenger encountered agents from the Secret Society on this trip, as they previously tried to waylay the messenger upon arrival in the city.

## THE TRIP TO THE SACRED SITE

The journey to the Sacred Site should instill the feeling of setting off on a grand adventure to a remote part of the world. Describe some or all of the following short vignettes and give the heroes a chance to describe their heroes' reactions briefly before moving on to the next one. These need not be full scenes, just enough to give the players a sense of the tone of the journey.

- ◆ The elderly pilot of the *Homing Pigeon* drifts off to sleep, snoring loudly as the plane drifts off course.
- ◆ One of the heroes finds the plane's flight log; before this trip, its last flight was from London to Zanzibar...in 1947.
- ◆ After landing, the heroes transfer to jeeps bearing markings from the US Army dating back to World War II, and they journey over rough terrain for several hours. The drivers are surly and do not speak the heroes' language.
- ◆ The drivers try to rob the heroes; after they are dealt with or driven off, the heroes are stranded in a muddy swamp in the foothills of a mountain range.
- ◆ The heroes traverse a dangerous, snow-covered mountain pass, climbing through a blizzard to the peak.

## AT THE SACRED SITE

Under the guidance of the messenger from the Mystic Order, the heroes pass through the barrier or other means by which the Sacred Site remains hidden from the rest of the world, emerging on the paths among the buildings of the Sacred Site. Their guide leads them to the place where the Sacred Site's great object of power is kept, nodding and murmuring greetings to the other members of the Mystic Order that they pass along the way. Eventually, they come face to face with the Mystic Sage, who greets the heroes and thanks them for coming.

The Mystic Sage recently had a disturbing vision of the future, one that is partially relevant to the mysteries the heroes have been chasing for some time now. Rather than try to explain it all to the heroes, the sage offers to show it to them by sharing the vision with them. Should the heroes agree, the sage and other members of the Mystic Order prepare a ritual involving a multitude of candles, incense, and theatrics. At the center of the ritual, the heroes find their minds clouding, and then they awaken.

## THE VISION

The heroes stand in the middle of their home city, not in their own time, but instead in **SE28: The Dystopian Future**. To help define this setting element, give each hero player a chance to create a single interlude scene, describing their hero exploring some aspect of this future. As this is merely a vision, do not create obstacles for the heroes to deal with during these scenes; they are an opportunity for the hero players to show their heroes reacting to the dire warning the vision offers of the world's future state.

Once all the heroes have had a chance to explore the vision, the true reason for the sage's concern becomes apparent. The heroes are whisked away from their city and brought to the future version of the Sacred Site, now abandoned and decaying, clearly having been despoiled at some time during the world's collapse. The site's object of power is destroyed or gone, and the ground where it was kept ripped up, with only a gaping, ten-foot-deep pit remaining. At the bottom of the pit, the heroes see a familiar sight: one of the Seven Seals of Binding, cracked neatly in half, resting half-submerged in muddy water.

The vision then ends, and the heroes find themselves back at the Sacred Site. With a grim expression, the Mystic Sage holds up their hands, revealing one of the Seven Seals of Binding, fully intact. The sage explains that after the vision, the sage used sorcery to draw the seal out of the soil. The sage does not know if the Dystopian Future is a direct result of the seals breaking, but they do know that, at some point in the future, someone intends to desecrate the Sacred Site to reach the seal and destroy it.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If any hero on the team has the lasting repercussion **Trusted by [the Mystic Sage]**, the sage offers to leave the unbroken seal in their hands, reasoning that clearly the Sacred Site is no longer a safe place to store it. If they refuse and leave the seal with the sage, any hero who does not already have that lasting repercussion gains it.

# THE TRICKSTER

This villain is mischievous and often malicious. They use deceit, treachery, and misdirection to keep the heroes off-balance. While some tricksters are merely interested in playing elaborate jokes, others use deception to hide their evil plots. Examples from popular comics include Loki<sup>®</sup> and Mysterio<sup>™</sup> (Marvel), and Mr. Mxyzptlk<sup>™</sup> and Neron<sup>™</sup> (DC).

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## TRUE FORM

*What is this villain truly like, behind all the deception?*

- ☐ **Powered Human** (they use their powers in a tricksome way)
- ☐ **Supernatural Being** (they are a god, demon, or creature supposedly from myth with a reputation for trickery)
- ☐ **Cosmic Force** (they are an alien or extradimensional being with cosmic powers so vast that they appear to be magic)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## REASON FOR DECEPTION

*Why does the villain lean on misdirection?*

- ☐ **Nature** (the villain's fundamental nature will not allow them to be anything other than deceitful)
- ☐ **Protection** (they use trickery to keep heroes from tracking them down and putting a stop to their villainy)
- ☐ **Entertainment** (they simply enjoy causing mischief)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## ATTITUDES

*How does the villain act when engaging in trickery?*

- ☐ **Capricious** (they laugh as though their actions were all in good fun, regardless of who gets hurt by their unthinking tricks)
- ☐ **Subtle** (they act cautiously, couch their actions in excuses, and are always trying to maneuver themselves into an advantage)
- ☐ **Sinister** (they have malice in their hearts and aren't afraid to let it show, preferring to toy with their prey before killing it)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

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FIRST APPEARANCE

CURRENT STATUS:



At Large



Incarcerated



Deceased



Reformed



Exiled



## SUPERPOWER (75%):

When you create this villain, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be this villain's superpower. The villain can use the power to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with this power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.

## FLEEING THE SCENE ☐ ☐

In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.

## VILLAIN PERKS

When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked.

### ☐ BEING OF CHAOS

Add 2 advantage dice (   ) and 1 challenge die (  ) to all rolls made by the villain.

### ☐ CUNNING

After the Narrator lays out the initiative track, swap 1 of this villain's initiative cards with a hero's initiative card.

### ☐ FLIGHT

This villain can fly when they move.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ILLUSION

When a hero in the scene makes an attack, this villain reveals that their target was an illusion covering one of their allies; the attack targets a different hero instead of the villain.

### ☐ MASTER OF DECEPTION

Add 2 challenge dice (   ) to any attack made against the villain.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ TEMPORARY MIND CONTROL

As an action, the villain chooses another they are up close to and touches them, compelling that character to take an action of the villain's choosing.


## VILLAIN WEAKNESS

When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.

### ☐ BLINDED BY ARROGANCE

When this villain deals 30 or more damage in a single attack to a hero whose initiative card is face-down, move that hero's initiative card to the end of the initiative track and turn it face-up. That hero can take another turn when their initiative card comes up again.

### ☐ CANNOT RESIST TOYING WITH THE HEROES

When the villain would reduce a hero to 0 resistance, the hero is instead reduced to 1 resistance unless the villain rolled at least 1 boon (  ).

### ☐ DEEP COWARDICE

When this villain has fewer than 50 resistance, they must use their action to attempt to flee the scene.

### ☐ PHYSICALLY FRAIL

Melee attacks made against this villain add 2 advantage dice (   ) to the roll instead of 1.



VILLAIN

# THE DEVOURER

This villain has an endless hunger, aching for something that they need to consume but can never get enough of. They have incredible powers at their disposal and use them to satiate their need to devour. Examples from popular comics include Baron Blood™, Morbius®, Satana Hellstrom®, and Selene™ (Marvel), and Black Hand™ and Parasite™ (DC).

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## THAT WHICH IS DEVoured

*What does this villain devour?*

- ☐ **Blood/Flesh** (the villain consumes the blood or flesh of victims)
- ☐ **Life Force** (the villain drains the abstract life force or soul from their victims)
- ☐ **Power** (the villain drains their victims' powers or the source of their powers, and targets only powered individuals)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## DRIVE

*What pushes this villain to devour?*

- ☐ **Hunger** (the villain needs to consume to live)
- ☐ **Pleasure** (the villain finds the act of feeding pleasurable)
- ☐ **Power** (the villain consumes because in doing so they fuel their own power)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## HUNTING METHOD

*How does this villain usually hunt their prey?*

- ☐ **Stalking** (the villain stealthily stalks their prey, falling upon them in darkened alleys under the cover of night)
- ☐ **Seduction** (the villain draws their prey into a trap through temptation and allure, the prey approaching willingly)
- ☐ **Battle** (the villain engages their prey in combat and takes what they need through the course of the conflict)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

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FIRST APPEARANCE

CURRENT STATUS:  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

## SUPERPOWER (75%):

When you create this villain, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be this villain's superpower. The villain can use the power to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villain attacks with this power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

This villain has 100 resistance per initiative card. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.




## FLEEING THE SCENE ☐ ☐

In every scene, the villain has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes.

## VILLAIN PERKS

When you first create this villain, choose two of the perks below. After every appearance, choose one more. If a perk has multiple check boxes, you can choose it more than once; the villain gains its benefit a number of times per scene equal to the number of boxes checked.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ DRAINING ATTACK

When the villain damages a hero, that hero must add 1 time token () to one of their power cards that already has time tokens on it, or add 2 time tokens ( ) to a power card that does not have any time tokens on it.

### ☐ FLIGHT

This villain can fly when they move.

### ☐ MOMENTUM

For each boon () this villain rolls, the villain regains 10 resistance, in addition to any other effects of that boon.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ UNRELENTING

When this villain would be reduced to 0 resistance, they are instead reduced to 1 resistance, and you move 1 of the villain's initiative cards to the space immediately following the current turn.

### ☐ ☐ ☐ VIGOR TRANSFER

When this villain deals 30 or more damage to an enemy in a single hit, flip 1 of the villain's face-down initiative cards face-up.


## VILLAIN WEAKNESS

When you first create this villain, choose one of the weaknesses below.

### ☐ ARCANES VULNERABILITY:

Choose a symbol, ornament (such as an iron ring), or talisman to be a ward against this villain, and write it in the box above. This villain adds 2 challenge dice ( ) to attack rolls made against heroes possessing such a ward.

### ☐ EASILY DRIVEN OFF

When a hero rolls any boons () when making an attack against this villain, move 1 of the villain's initiative cards 1 space toward the end of the initiative track.

### ☐ UNSHAKABLE HUNGER

This villain must use their action to make a physical attack each turn while up close to a hero and cannot willingly move away from a hero.

### ☐ WITHERING SUN

Add 2 challenge dice ( ) to all rolls the villain makes while in sunlight.

# SCENARIO

# FRAGMENTS OF HISTORY

## ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #8

Following their visit to **SE30: The Sacred Site** in the previous issue, the heroes are returning to their home city aboard the *Homing Pigeon*. During this flight, the issue's villain strikes without warning. Create either the **Trickster** or the **Devourer** as the main villain for this issue; alternatively, you can choose an existing villain, though it should be someone who has some magical means of stripping the heroes of their powers.

The rickety plane lurches as the subtle magic that had been holding it together (put in place by **SE13: The Mystic Order** to bring the heroes to the Sacred Site) suddenly fails. The villain not only drains the plane of its magic, but also strips away the heroes' powers as well. Describe this removal of their powers as fits the villain; a magic-using villain like the Trickster might simply cast a spell from a distance, where a more physical villain like the Devourer might break into the fuselage to quickly drain the heroes' powers. This attack was planned well in advance, so the method of stripping the heroes of their powers is thorough and instantaneous.

Each hero flips their power cards face-down, indicating that the powers have been taken. At your discretion, you can allow them to leave specific powers face-up; for example, powers that represent unpowered objects, such as Natural Weapons. Even powers based on technology fail, drained of their energy and unable to be recharged.

In the opening scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ The issue's villain, who has 1 initiative card per hero in the scene. The villain's only goal is to flee the scene.

The scene ends when the objective is fully progressed, either by the heroes or by the Event card.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□): The *Homing Pigeon*'s elderly pilot is strapped tightly into the pilot's chair and needs to be both freed and secured with a parachute of his own.

- ✧ *Fully Resolved*: The pilot survives the crash and accompanies the heroes for the rest of the issue.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□□□□, Opposed □□□□): The *Homing Pigeon* is coming apart, even as it spirals toward the ground. The heroes need to secure parachutes and bail out of the airplane before it crashes. Add 1 Event initiative card to the initiative track. Each time it comes up, progress the Opposed side once as the plane comes apart.

- ✧ *Failure*: The plane disintegrates. The heroes are hurled away and come down scattered throughout the wilderness. Progress "The Villain's Plan" once for the time it takes the heroes to gather themselves; additionally, the heroes must spend an interlude scene traveling to reach the Forgotten City (see below).

## DESCENT TO THE FORGOTTEN CITY

The heroes drift on their parachutes down toward **SE12: The Forgotten City** (and can land directly in the city if they choose). As they make their descent, they catch a glimpse of the issue's villain, soaring under their own power toward the city. The villain clutches a brightly glowing orb under one arm; the heroes can feel an instant connection to the orb. Each of them is certain, without knowing exactly how, that the orb contains their stolen powers.

## WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

Below are some suggestions for information you can provide to the heroes if they seek it out.

### SEARCHING THE CITY

- ◆ If the heroes decide to explore the city, they can learn more about its history and nature. Use such scenes as an opportunity to flesh out **SE12: The Forgotten City**, adding major details you create to its Truths box. Wandering through the city won't get them any closer to the villain, but it will let them learn more about its builders.
- ◆ Such explorations should always come with the risk of encountering the danger lurking in the city. You can represent this danger with obstacles that need to be overcome or squads of minions.
- ◆ At some point, the heroes come across an urn that has spilled out of a rotting crate, one that looks to have been left here by looters. The urn bears markings similar to those associated with the master of **SE06: The Nether Realm**. Around the lip of the urn, the heroes see streaks of dried blood. Any hero who spills their own blood into the urn feels a surge of magical energy and can flip one of their face-down powers face up.

### HUNTING FOR SIGNS OF THE VILLAIN

- ◆ The villain is making no attempt to hide their trail; they fear little from the depowered heroes. Given the abandoned nature of the city, anyone moving through its streets leaves behind a very obvious trail.
- ◆ A single success during an interlude scene intended to hunt for signs of the villain allows the heroes to find signs of the villain's trail. A second successful interlude scene spent pursuing the villain allows the heroes to catch up.

## THE VILLAIN'S PLAN

Somewhere in the city lies the Temple of Seven Doors, a place reputed to contain vast knowledge that could allow one to reshape the nature of many different dimensions. The villain stole the heroes' powers and stored them in a crystal ball because the Chamber of Seven Doors inside the temple requires a massive amount of power to open, more than the villain can wield alone. Choose one of the following options for the nature of the Temple of Seven Doors:

- ❑ **Resplendent Landmark.** The temple dominates the skyline of the city and was clearly a place of great reverence in its heyday.
- ❑ **Abandoned Ruin.** The temple had clearly fallen into ruin long before the city was abandoned.
- ❑ **Hidden Shrine.** The temple is hidden, indicating that those who built the temple may have been seen as heretics.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ The issue's main villain, who has 1 initiative card per hero in the scene.

The scene ends when the villain is defeated.

- ◆ **Objective** (❑❑): The heroes can restore their powers by taking the glowing orb from the villain and destroying it. To progress this objective for the first time, a hero must make a successful physical melee attack against the villain; instead of dealing damage, they wrestle the orb away from the villain.

- ✧ *Fully Resolved:* The heroes immediately regain their powers, flipping their power cards face-up.

## SEEKING OUT THE TEMPLE ❑❑❑

Following a map they found in an old book, the villain navigates the city toward the temple. Along the way, they run afoul of the danger that lurks within the city. If the heroes encounter the villain at this point, they become entangled with both the villain and the city's danger simultaneously (add a squad of minions or an appropriate hazard or complication to the scene to represent the city's danger).

## ENTERING AND NAVIGATING THE TEMPLE INTERIOR ❑❑

The interior of the temple is labyrinthine and full of dead-ends and twisting hallways. The doorway leading into the Chamber of Seven Doors is a massive archway, with stone double doors set into it. At the center of the line where the doors meet, a large amethyst is embedded in the stone. Originally, only the sorcerers who used the temple could open it with their magic. The door opens in response to the villain pressing the orb against it, or opens if the heroes direct all their powers against it (once they have reclaimed them).

## INSIDE THE CHAMBER OF SEVEN DOORS

The Chamber of Seven Doors is a massive, round chamber with a domed ceiling stretching over 100 feet overhead. Around the outer ring are the seven doors the room is named for. The walls are decorated with murals and encrusted with jewels and gold filigree. Once, the doors in this room could be used to travel to other worlds and dimensions; one door's frame is decorated with designs that evoke **SE06: The Nether Realm**, while another contains strange writing that is recognizable only to heroes who have visited **SE22: The Distant World** (do not fill out this setting element yet, if you have not already). The magic that powered this chamber is long since gone, and the doors are inert. The villain is frustrated and enraged, lashing out at the heroes in anger.

If the heroes catch up to the villain before they reach the Chamber of Seven Doors, the heroes feel drawn here, as though the chamber was trying to draw upon their powers. If the villain reaches the chamber before the heroes catch up to them, the heroes feel that same draw, bringing them to the temple.

- ◆ **Hazard:** The latent magic in this chamber makes using magical powers here dangerous. Add 2 Hazard initiative cards to the initiative track. When a Hazard initiative card comes up, the chamber causes the last magic power used in the chamber to go haywire and reflect back upon its creator, making an attack (50% chance of success, damage equal to the number rolled) against the character that used that power.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ Inside the Chamber of Seven Doors, murals depict the forging of the Seven Seals of Binding inside that chamber, sealing away **SE06: The Nether Realm** and its dark master and sheltering the Earth from its malign influence. Other murals depict the abandonment of the city, including entrusting the seals to keepers who scattered to the four corners of the Earth. One of those keepers is clearly an early member of **SE13: The Mystic Order**, explaining the seal that was found buried at **SE30: The Sacred Site**. Another is the knightlike figure whose remains the heroes discovered in the Forsaken Keep in issue #5. Though most of the other figures are mysterious in nature, one stands out: a lone knight wearing the colors of France and bearing the standard of Philip II, the king who ordered the construction of the Louvre Palace, a clue to the location of another one of the seals.
- ◆ If the pilot of the *Homing Pigeon* survives both the crash of the plane and the journey through the city, grant each hero one additional check mark on their story progress tracks.
- ◆ Any hero who spilled blood into the urn to regain their powers gains the following lasting repercussion: **Tempted by Dark Magic**.

# HERETIC HUNTERS

This villainous group is dedicated to hunting down and exterminating anything they see as unworthy, heretical, blasphemous, or evil. Unfortunately, their definition of what fits those categories often includes powered heroes. Examples from popular comics include the Purifiers™ (Marvel).

## TEAM NAME:

### INCARNATION

*What is the fundamental nature of these villainous servants?*

- ☐ **Chosen** (the villains were mortals chosen to serve their master and bestowed with their powers by that master)
- ☐ **Immortals** (like their master, these villains are immortals who originated in the past and have lived into the present)
- ☐ **Inheritors** (they are the latest in a bloodline or sacred order)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### POWERS

*What do these villains' powers represent?*

- ☐ **Weapons** (these villains carry potent weapons)
- ☐ **Holy Magic** (these villains are blessed with holy magics that create powerful effects)
- ☐ **Innate Powers** (these villains have powers just like any other powered hero or villain, though they may be in denial about it)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### COHESION

*How do these villains behave when acting as a group?*

- ☐ **Infighting** (these villains constantly squabble among themselves and may engage in competition with one another)
- ☐ **Lone Wolves in a Pack** (each member operates independently, but when together they have little friction)
- ☐ **Well-Oiled Machine** (these villains fight as one, clearly aligned both tactically and motivationally)
- ☐ **Other** (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

### TRUTHS

All character names are property of their respective owners, and their use does not imply an endorsement of or a relationship with Scratchpad Publishing LLC.

## FIRST APPEARANCE

**CURRENT STATUS:**  At Large  Incarcerated  Deceased  Reformed  Exiled

When you create these villains, draw seven powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be each villain's superpower (you may also choose from available Basic powers). These villains can use their powers to make checks and attacks, but cannot use any of the benefits listed on the card. When the villains attack with a power, on a hit the villain deals damage equal to the number rolled.

**FLEEING THE SCENE**

In every scene, each of these villains has a permanent enemy objective to get away without being caught or killed. When the villain has progressed this objective once, any hero can use their action to attempt to stop the villain from escaping in some way; if they succeed, erase that progress. When the villain has progressed the objective twice, they exit the scene safely, escaping from the heroes. Each minor villain in this group has progress tracking boxes for this objective next to their type.

**LEADER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><p><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></p></div>	

**LIEUTENANT** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><p><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></p></div>	

**HARRIER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><p><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></p></div>	

**SKULKER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><p><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></p></div>	

**BRUISER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><p><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></p></div>	

**SNIPER** ☐ ☐

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>SUPERPOWER (75%):</b>
<div><p><i>This villain starts each conflict scene with 100 resistance. Use this box to track the villain's current resistance.</i></p></div>	



# MINDLESS HORDES

These minions are a shambling, mindless group of monstrous creatures that have no will of their own. Instead, they follow the commands of a master or obey some primal drive instilled in them by their nature.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## FUNDAMENTAL NATURE

What are the mindless creatures that make up this horde?

- ☐ **Zombies** (they are shambling, undead humans, reanimated and driven to consume the flesh of the living)
- ☐ **Mind-Controlled Humans** (they are humans who have fallen under the thrall of an enchantment and cannot resist following the orders they are given)
- ☐ **Golems** (they are constructs, either specifically fashioned or animated statues, that mindlessly obey their creator)
- ☐ **Spirits** (they are ghosts or spirits of elemental forces, summoned into the corporeal world to do their master's bidding)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PRIMARY DRIVE

What core, primal drive compels these creatures?

- ☐ **Destruction** (these minions are driven to destroy, with a primal urge to tear down all life and civilization)
- ☐ **Hunger** (they seek to consume, driven by an insatiable hunger for nourishment that cannot be satisfied)
- ☐ **Hunting** (these minions can be given simple instructions to find an individual or group and secure them, and the minions attempt to do so until they are freed or destroyed)
- ☐ **Subjugation** (these minions are the tools of a conqueror, and they ruthlessly suppress anyone that stands against them)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## DANGER OF USE

What makes these minions dangerous for a villain to use?

- ☐ **Self-Replicating** (they can create more of themselves, either by transforming their victims or by replicating the process that originally created or summoned them)
- ☐ **Losing Control** (they are prone to slipping the yoke of their masters and completely disregarding the original purpose for which they were summoned or created)
- ☐ **Indiscriminate** (they do as they are commanded but are prone to causing large amounts of collateral damage and accidentally harming people they were not intended to harm)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

TRUTHS

## PRIMARY ATTACK MODE

When you create these minions, choose one of the primary attack modes below and describe the nature of the attack in the box.

### ☐ STANDARD ATTACK (50% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)

Melee or ranged attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  10).

### ☐ ACCURATE ATTACK (65% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)

Melee or ranged attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  5).

### ☐ POWERFUL ATTACK (40% CHANCE OF SUCCESS)

Melee attack. On a hit, deal damage equal to the number rolled + 20 (maximum damage equal to the squad's current size  $\times$  10 + 20).

Use this box to describe the minions' primary attack mode.

## MINION PERK

When you first create this type of minion, choose one of the perks below.

### ☐ INTANGIBLE

Boons on rolls for physical attacks made against these minions may not be used to further reduce the squad's size.

### ☐ QUICK

After the Narrator has laid out the initiative track but before the first turn is taken in the round, move these minions' initiative card 2 spaces forward toward the start of the track.





### ☐ RAVENOUS

When a squad of these minions damages a hero with an attack, if the squad's initiative card is not already at the end of the initiative track, move the squad's initiative card to the end of the initiative track, leaving it face-up. These minions can take another turn when the squad's initiative card is next on the track.

### ☐ SAVAGE

Add +10 to the damage of all attacks made by these minions.

### ☐ THEY JUST KEEP COMING!

After the Narrator lays out the initiative track but before the first turn of the round begins, roll 4 advantage dice (     ). For each boon you roll, add that number to the size of any squads of minions of this type. The squad's size cannot exceed its initial size.

## MINION WEAKNESS

When you first create this type of minion, choose one of the weaknesses below.

### ☐ VULNERABILITY:

Choose a common element, material, form of energy, or force as these minions' weakness and record it in the box above. If an attack against these minions makes use of that vulnerability, on a hit reduce the size of the squad by an additional 2 minions.

### ☐ FODDER

Any time a hero hits a squad of these minions with an attack, reduce the squad's size by 1 more.

### ☐ INSTINCT-DRIVEN

These minions must always attack the hero who is physically closest to them.

### ☐ SHAMBLING

These minions cannot move and take an action on the same turn.

## SHADOWS OF THE PAST

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #9

At the conclusion of issue #8, the heroes are stranded in a remote location after their airplane was destroyed. Before the heroes do their aspiration and turmoil interlude scenes, invite each player to contribute some (mis)adventure that befalls the heroes on their journey home from **SE12: The Forgotten City**; this should be just a few short descriptions of things that happen, like a travel montage that ends with the heroes back home.

At the conclusion of the previous issue, the heroes gained a big clue about the whereabouts of another one of the Seven Seals of Binding, with signs pointing to the Louvre Palace in Paris. The obvious course of action is to determine whether the seal is in the Louvre. Allow the heroes an opportunity to discover this for themselves; any reasonable method for doing so should work. The seal is not in the Louvre and hasn't been for some decades. Museum records indicate that the seal was a part of the museum's collection of artifacts of unknown origin in August of 1939, when it and many other priceless works of art were packed up and shipped away from Paris as the shadow of Axis occupation loomed over France. Wartime records are spotty, and between when the seal was shipped out in 1939 and when the works of art were returned to the Louvre in 1945, the seal vanished without a trace.

**NC05: The Mystic Sage** offers up a solution: the heroes can travel back to Paris in August of 1939 and acquire the seal for themselves. The Mystic Sage offers to use magic to project the heroes back in time to the very first days of **SE29: The Golden Age**. The sage warns them that the magic that sends them to 1939 will last only for four days, after which time they will be forcibly returned to the present. Once the heroes set their affairs in order, the Mystic Sage performs the ritual and transports the heroes back in time.

Of course, things don't go according to plan, and when the heroes arrive in 1939 they find other factions actively working against them. Choose one of the following options:

- ☐ **Hunted in the Past.** As the heroes search for the seal in 1939, they draw the attention of a group of minor villains, the **Heretic Hunters**. They try to stop the heroes from retrieving the seal, believing that the heroes will use it for some occult purpose. The heroes are unaware that the hunters' organization persists into the present day.
- ☐ **Chased from the Future.** A villain whom the heroes have clashed with before learns about the heroes' trip to the past from a spy in the Mystic Order (choose an existing villain who has access to powerful magic). Using the same magic, they travel back in time and summon **Mindless Hordes** minions to try to kill the heroes while they are away from the protection of the Mystic Sage.

### PARIS: AUGUST 1939 | DAY 1 ☐☐☐ | DAY 2 ☐☐☐ | DAY 3 ☐☐☐ | DAY 4 ☐☐☐

Once the heroes arrive in 1939, allow the heroes to create interlude scenes to accomplish their goals as normal. Instead of tracking time passing on a sequence of events, you can simply track time passing over the course of several days, using the time marks above. Additionally, these scenes should serve as a way for you to flesh out the world during the Golden Age; however, since the heroes are arriving right at that era's dawn, most of the details you create foreshadow the state of the world in a few years, once World War II is in full swing.

### BLENDING IN

- ◆ The heroes have a few options for blending in while they are in 1939:
  - ✦ They can obtain period-appropriate clothing and lie to anyone they encounter.
  - ✦ They can avoid disguises and interacting with Parisians entirely, opting to move around only at night.
  - ✦ The heroes might claim to be foreign heroes who came to France to bolster its defense against invaders.

### ENLISTING LOCAL ASSISTANCE

- ◆ The local populace is concerned about looming war and occupation. Soliciting help from locals requires the heroes to convince people that the heroes are not spies or invaders.
- ◆ Employees at the Louvre know that most of the valuable artworks are being packed to ship off for safekeeping. They do not know to where; it is a tightly held secret known only to the museum curator, who is spending the week at the Palace at Versailles and overseeing similar "renovations" there.

### VISITING THE LOUVRE

- ◆ In the Louvre, the packing process has already begun. The museum is closed under the cover of "renovations," and security guards deter anyone who gets too close.
- ◆ A locked filing cabinet in the museum curator's private office contains paperwork noting the destination of the art shipments: Château de Chambord.
- ◆ One section of the museum, the repository of relics of unknown origin, has already been packed and shipped out.

## BESEECHING OBERON FOR AID

- ◆ Heroes with knowledge of the supernatural may also know that much of France is the domain of Oberon, a powerful fey king of ancient age and great magical power. If any supernatural creature in France would be aware of the presence of an artifact as important as one of the Seven Seals of Binding, it is him.
- ◆ Oberon is a capricious, vain, and dangerous elflike creature, powerful in stature and beautiful to behold. He oscillates between hedonism, malice, scheming, and benevolent rulership over his fey court with stunning speed.
- ◆ Oberon's court can be reached from the dense forests outside Paris by heroes capable of wielding magic. Beseeching the fairy king for aid is a risky proposition that may require great sacrifice, but if the heroes convince Oberon to help them he could provide the heroes with a means of tracking down the seal.
- ◆ **Lasting Repercussions:** Any hero with the **Marked for Possession** lasting repercussion adds 4 challenge dice (◆◆◆◆) to rolls made in Oberon's presence; the fey king's magic worms its way into their minds with ease.

## A BRUSH WITH THEIR ENEMIES

Early during the heroes' time in 1939 they have a brush with their enemies, introducing them to their opposition.

- ◆ If you chose **Hunted in the Past**, the heroes come across one of the **Heretic Hunters**, accompanied by a half-dozen zealot followers and harassing a Parisian bookstore owner, accusing the owner of harboring occultists. The Heretic Hunter claims that a number of heretics (the same as the number of heroes) have recently entered the city.
- ◆ If you chose **Chased from the Future**, they spot a glimpse of the villain on the streets of Paris. The villain seems to be searching for something or someone and does not notice the heroes.
- ◆ If the heroes choose to confront their enemies, create a conflict scene to determine what happens. However, Paris is a crowded city, and any supernatural conflict draws eyes. On the second round of the conflict, three squads of gendarmes (military law enforcement), each of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times 3$ , arrives to make arrests. The villains attempt to flee at this point, not wanting to be caught, and the heroes may do so as well.

## CHÂTEAU DE CHAMBORD

Eventually, the trail leads the heroes to Château de Chambord, a fortified manor house that resembles a palace 200 kilometers south of Paris. The château, once resplendent, fell into disrepair after the conclusion of World War I. The massive lawn is overgrown, the moat brackish and green, and the building seems to have gone untended for decades. Work crews have been patching up the broken windows, and many rooms are being cleared in anticipation of the arrival of priceless works of art from the Louvre. The first shipment from the collection of unknown relics has already arrived and been placed in storage. The shipment was stacked haphazardly, and it will take at least a day to dig through the crates to see if the seal is among them.

That night, as the heroes are digging through the crates by lamplight, the château falls under attack.

If you chose the **Hunted in the Past** option for this issue's conflict, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ The **Heretic Hunters** minor villains, in number equal to the number of heroes. Each minor villain has 1 initiative card.
- ✧ Two squads of zealot minions, of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times 2$ . They carry submachine guns and have a 50% chance of success on all rolls, with maximum damage equal to the size of the squad  $\times 10$ .

If you chose the **Chased from the Future** option for this issue's conflict, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ Two squads of **Mindless Hordes** minions, each of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times 2$ .
- ✧ The issue's villain, who has a number of initiative cards equal to the number of heroes.

The scene ends when either the heroes or the villains are defeated.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□): Some of the workers who have been preparing the château for the arrival of art from the Louvre were sleeping on-site and are awakened by the conflict. They need to be gotten to safety.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□□□□, Critical): As the conflict goes on, collateral damage threatens to bring large portions of the building on top of the heroes. Each time this Complication initiative card comes up, more of the temporary supports splinter and collapse.
  - ✧ **Failure:** The roof of the château collapses in above the conflict. Make an physical ranged attack against each hero, villain, and squad of minions inside the château, representing the collapsing building, with a 65% chance of success. On a hit, the attack deals damage equal to the number of negative marks on the complication  $\times 10$ .

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the heroes are defeated in the conflict scene at Château de Chambord, before the villains can kill or interrogate the heroes the Mystic Sage's magic fades, yanking the heroes unceremoniously back to the present empty-handed. In the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, increase the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry by 1.
- ◆ If the heroes defeat the villains in the conflict scene at Château de Chambord, they can recover the seal and bring it with them back to the present.

## SCENARIO

# ANY BODY WILL DO

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #10

This issue begins with an anonymous message, which arrives at the heroes' headquarters by mysterious means (a note slipped under the door, mysterious writing appearing on the wall, or a voice in the static of the television). The message claims that one of the Seven Seals of Binding is located in a storeroom in a museum of anthropology in the heroes' city, and that members of the cult (from issue #3) are already seeking it out.

When the heroes arrive at the museum and eventually make their way to the storeroom, they see no signs of a seal. As the heroes realize they've been misled, the issue's villain launches a surprise attack, taking two turns before the issue's opening conflict scene begins.

In the opening scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✦ The main villain of the issue. Choose either the **Fallen Sorcerer** or the **Trickster**, or another villain capable of mischief and malicious transformation. The villain has a number of initiative cards equal to the number of heroes. Additionally, as an action the villain can cast a transformation spell on a hero; this is a mental ranged attack with an 80% chance of success. If the attack hits, the hero is transformed into an alternate form (see below). The villain's goal in the scene is to transform all the heroes in this way.

The scene ends when all the heroes have been transformed and the villain flees the scene, or the villain is defeated. If the heroes defeat the villain, as a final counterattack the villain transforms any heroes who have not yet been transformed. The more likely result is that all the heroes will be transformed by the villain, who then attempts to flee the scene.

- ◆ **Scene Details:** Tall metal racks holding priceless artifacts, marble statues, a Viking longboat suspended from the ceiling, a stack of heavy wooden crates for transporting art pieces.
- ◆ When the villain hits a hero with a transformation attack, the hero is transmuted into a small animal that strangely has markings and even tiny clothing matching the hero's appearance. While in this form, the hero's diminutive size makes them no real threat to the villain; divide any damage the hero deals to the issue's villain by 10, rounded down. The hero also finds it difficult to use their powers in this form and must spend 1 hero point each time they wish to use a power (the heroes can spend any hero points they have remaining after the end of the opening conflict scene during interlude scenes for this issue). The hero can still use skills, but those skills are limited by their current form. Roll percentile dice to determine what kind of creature the hero is transformed into, and what additional skills they gain.
  - ✦ **01-25: Frog.** While in this form, the heroes gain the following alternate skills: Jump (80%), Swim (70%), Snag Something with Your Tongue (60%).
  - ✦ **26-50: Rabbit.** While in this form, the heroes gain the following alternate skills: Scamper (80%), Dig (70%), Appear Adorable (60%).
  - ✦ **51-75: Rat.** While in this form, the heroes gain the following alternate skills: Sneak Around (80%), Climb (70%), Chew Through Something (60%).
  - ✦ **76-00: Snake.** While in this form, the heroes gain the following alternate skills: Slither Around (80%), Squeeze Through a Tight Space (70%), Sneak Around (60%).
- ◆ If the villain flees the scene, they call back to the heroes, "See you at home!"

## THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The heroes have the means of reverting back to their normal forms at their headquarters, so the challenge is making it back there before the villain can get inside. The villain's goal is to get into their headquarters after dealing with its magical defenses, and then smash any of the unbroken Seals of Binding that they are keeping there. The villain has either joined the cult from issue #3 or has some reason to want the master of **SE06: The Nether Realm** to enter the mortal world. Below are the most common challenges the heroes will face in the race home; unless the heroes come up with some exceptionally clever way of getting home, these scenes occur in sequence until the heroes reach their headquarters. For each of the obstacles the heroes need to overcome in a given scene, a single successful check (using a skill or a power) should be enough to overcome that obstacle.

## GETTING OUT OF THE MUSEUM

The first challenge in getting home involves exiting the museum. The heroes need to find ways to:

- ◆ Get out of the now-locked storeroom
- ◆ Get out of the museum's basement, when the only egress points are a stairwell (with a heavy, locked door) and an elevator



## CROSSING A BUSY STREET

Once outside the museum, the heroes need to cross a four-lane road to reach the opposite block, where they can access a storm drain leading down into the sewers for safer travel. It's just after rush hour, so there are many cars on the road and traffic is moving at a regular pace. The heroes need to find ways to:

- ◆ Navigate the rapid flow of traffic without getting flattened
- ◆ Avoid the crush of a mob of pedestrians at the grate leading to the storm drain, located at the end of a crosswalk

## NAVIGATING THE SEWERS

Once the heroes get down into the sewers, they can move quickly underneath the city without having to worry about cars or pedestrians. The sewers are very dark, though light occasionally shines down through grates at street level, providing sporadic illumination in the dank, shadowed subterranean corridors. The heroes need to find ways to:

- ◆ Get all the heroes across a flowing river of sludge
- ◆ Get through a rusted mesh grate blocking access to the rest of the tunnel
- ◆ Cross a mass transit corridor (such as subway tracks or an underground bus tunnel) without getting crushed or electrocuted
- ◆ Push a manhole cover off at the top of a ladder so they can emerge at street level once more

## GETTING THROUGH A RESTAURANT

The shortest path home leads through a busy fine dining restaurant, The Apogee. By cutting through the restaurant, the heroes can save themselves an hour of travel at their current reduced speed. The restaurant, one of the nicest in the city, is packed with patrons. The heroes need to find ways to:

- ◆ Avoid the crush of waiters, busboys, cooks, hosts, and patrons bustling through the restaurant
- ◆ Avoid causing a panic, since their presence would cause disgust and alarm among the patrons

## A PACK OF ALLEY CATS

Only a narrow alleyway separates the heroes from the back of the restaurant to a clear, straight-shot run at their hideout. When they emerge into the alley, they find a small pack of feral alley cats scrounging through the restaurant's discarded food scraps. The heroes need to find ways to:

- ◆ Get past the alley cats; if the heroes fail to sneak past or take a more headlong approach, this becomes a short conflict scene featuring the following opposition:
  - ✧ Feral alley cat minor villains, equal in number to the number of heroes. Each has 1 initiative card, 50 resistance, and a claw attack with a 65% chance of success (damage equal to the number rolled), with a 50% chance for anything else. Against these enemies, heroes deal damage as normal.

## BACK AT THE HIDEOUT

Unless the heroes defeated the villain in the opening scene, the heroes arrive at their base of operations just as the villain is starting to dig through their possessions. Believing that the heroes are otherwise indisposed, the villain is not expecting the heroes. Give them an opportunity to sneak past the villain and access their means of transforming back into their normal forms. Allow the players to describe the nature of this restoration, such as reading from a book of incantations or drinking a restorative potion kept on hand for emergencies.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ The issue's villain, who has 1 initiative card per hero in the scene.

The scene ends when the villain is defeated.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□, Critical): The first thing the villain does is turn loose a destructive spell, a whirlwind of fire that spirals through the heroes' hideout. The heroes need to stop the spell from causing serious damage.
  - ✧ **Failure:** Critical books, scrolls, or artifacts are destroyed beyond recovery. The member of the team most likely to be despondent over the loss gains the following lasting repercussion, reflecting the desperation they feel after the loss: **Tempted by Dark Magic**.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□□): The villain attempts to move the conflict out onto the street, knowing that the heroes have home field advantage in their hideout. If they do so, innocent bystanders out on the street are now in the line of fire and need to be gotten to safety.
  - ✧ **Fully Resolved:** Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by +1.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the villain defeats the heroes in the final scene, or if the heroes never make it back to their headquarters, the villain succeeds in ransacking their base of operations. If the heroes keep at least one of the Seven Seals of Binding there, the villain finds one and breaks it (if there are two or more there, the villain does not find the other ones). In the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, increase the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry by 1.



# DUAL-FORM

You are a hero who has two physical forms, and you periodically undergo a transformation that drastically alters your physical characteristics. This transformation is the core of your heroic abilities. Examples from popular comics include Werewolf by Night® (Marvel), He-Man® (Mattel), Prime® (Malibu), and Shazam® (DC).

## SEVERITY OF TRANSFORMATION

*How much does the transformation alter your physical form?*

- ☐ **Cosmetic** (your appearance noticeably changes, but your size and bulk don't)
- ☐ **Significant** (your physical shape changes, becoming taller or more muscular, sprouting fur or scales, growing claws or horns, and so forth)
- ☐ **Drastic** (your two forms are almost unrelated, such as a child who becomes a full-grown adult or a human who transforms into an animal)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

*Choose two of the following personality traits that best describe your hero.*

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boastful   | <input type="checkbox"/> Kind          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brave      | <input type="checkbox"/> Paranoid      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cautious   | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Centered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tortured      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gregarious | <input type="checkbox"/> _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____         |

## VULNERABILITY

*What weakness or obligation can your enemies exploit?*

- ☐ **Energy Limits** (you need to recharge the source of your powers from time to time)
- ☐ **Out of Control** (you risk losing control of your powers)
- ☐ **Supernatural Weakness** (a particular supernatural element or force greatly harms you)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## TRUTHS

## RESISTANCE

*What does resistance mean for this character?*

- ☐ **Advanced Healing** (you regenerate wounds too quickly to see)
- ☐ **Danger Sense** (sixth sense warns of incoming attacks)
- ☐ **Invulnerability** (you shrug off attacks like they are nothing)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

## GETTING AROUND

*How does this character quickly move from one place to another?*

- ☐ **Brachiation** (you swing from tall objects high overhead)
- ☐ **Powers** (one of your powers allows you to travel long distances)
- ☐ **Steed** (you have a horse or other mount)
- ☐ Other (fill in your answer in the Truths box)

Hero Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS

IDENTITY

### ALTERNATE FORM

You have two forms: your normal human form, and your alternate form. Your alternate form completely subsumes your normal form's appearance, and people who do not know about your ability to transform might not recognize you in a particular form. You choose which form you are in at the start of a scene. You can change forms in a conflict scene as your action on your turn. When you do, place 2 time tokens (🕒🕒) on this space, removing them as you would if they were on a power. You can transform only when there are no time tokens on this space. When you are defeated, you revert to your human form.

In your human form, you cannot use any of your powers or take the spotlight.

When you change to your alternate form, you regain all your resistance.

SUPERPOWER 80%

LESSER POWER 70%

TEAM ROLE

### HERO POINTS PER CONFLICT

### RESISTANCE

/ 100

### ON YOUR TURN

When it is your turn, you do the following:

- ❖ Remove 1 time token (🕒) from each of your power cards that has one. (You cannot make attacks or checks with a power that has any time tokens on it.)
- ❖ Move and take one action, in any order.

### SPENDING HERO POINTS

You can spend hero points (🦋) in the following ways:

- ❖ **Heroic Effort:** After you roll dice, you can spend any number of hero points; increase your chance of success on that roll by 10 and add 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll for each point spent.
- ❖ **Teamwork Maneuver:** You can spend 1 hero point (🦋) to perform a teamwork maneuver you describe with another hero, adding 2 advantage dice (🎲🎲) to their roll.
- ❖ **Team Role:** Use your team role's benefit.

### TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT

When you roll 4 boons (👑👑👑👑) on a single roll during a conflict scene, you can take the spotlight to gain the following benefits until the end of the scene:

- ❖ When an enemy hits you, after the attack you can make 1 attack against that enemy.
- ❖ Add 100 to your current & max resistance.
- ❖ You add the Spotlight initiative card to the initiative track and act on its turns.

### DISTANCES

There are three distances between things in a scene:

- ❖ **Up Close:** You can make melee and ranged attacks against enemies you are up close to. Add 1 advantage die (🎲) to all melee attack rolls.
- ❖ **Near:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies that you are near to.
- ❖ **Far Away:** You can make ranged attacks against enemies you are far away from, adding 1 challenge die (🎲) to the roll.

MINOR POWER 60%

## SCENARIO

# ARMAGEDDON, PART I

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #11

This issue begins with both creation and destruction. Secretly, the cult the heroes have been opposing since issue #3 has finally gotten their hands on another of the Seven Seals of Binding and broken it. In the Truths box of **SE06:**

**The Nether Realm**, increase the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry by 1.

With this seal broken, the barrier between dimensions weakens. The magical realm begins to bleed into the real world, suffusing it with supernatural phenomena. The heroes become aware of this when a person staggers into their headquarters, seeking help; if there is a minor character who does not normally have powers, it could be that person. This minor character was going about their day when reality warped as the Nether Realm start seeping into the real world. This character was caught half in the warped reality, half out, bestowing powers upon them. Give any player the chance to create a new hero using the **Dual-Form** archetype, representing this character. Otherwise, draw three powers from the Deck of Powers and choose one to be the power this character gained.

The heroes see news broadcasts that give them an idea of the full scope of the chaos starting to grip the city. The scenes play out quickly on the news: streets and neighborhoods transforming to look like the Nether Realm, crowds of people shoving and trampling each other to get away from monsters, one of the city's bridges warping to the point where it threatens to collapse, animals rampaging as they escape from the city's zoo, and an organized mob being whipped into a frenzy by **NC02: The Celebrity Bigot**. Each of these vignettes represents a situation that the heroes can go out into the city and help with; they should be calls to action for the team.

As such, this issue does not have an opening conflict scene. Having laid out the challenges facing the city, the heroes can create interlude scenes to deal with them. While they are doing so, however, agents of the Nether Realm's master come to Earth, piercing the weakened barrier between worlds.

### WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

While the heroes are dealing with these challenges, reinforce through your descriptions of the environment the idea that the Nether Realm is bleeding over into the real world, transforming things Earth-side as the two dimensions begin to merge. Whenever the heroes successfully deal with one of these challenges, award the hero who took the most initiative in the scene 1 hero point (🎲). You can also seed hints about what the villains are doing throughout these challenges.

### URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Entire neighborhoods twist and warp to look like they belong in the Nether Realm. These transformations leave citizens trapped inside buildings that no longer resemble their original form, some in rooms now completely sealed off. The heroes need to free these trapped citizens without bringing the twisted buildings down on them. Any hero who has the **Scarred by [the Nether Realm]** lasting repercussion suffers flashbacks to the horrors they witnessed in the Nether Realm and adds 2 challenge dice (🎲🎲) to any roll they make in this scene.

### PANIC IN THE STREETS

In the city's **commercial center**, a large crowd of citizens has been trying to push its way out of a public square. People are getting crushed in the press, under the threat of being trampled. A fiery car accident blocks the only other obvious exit from the square. The heroes need to find a way to disperse the crowd safely. If "The citizens of the city hate and fear all things magical" is written in the Truths box of "The Basics" section of your Setting Book, using overt magic causes the crowd to panic even more; if this happens and the heroes fail to safely disperse the crowd, adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by -1.

### WARPING REALITY, TOPPLING BRIDGES

As the Nether Realm bleeds into Earth, some structures are more vulnerable to warping than others. One of the city's bridges transforms so badly that the bridge starts to tear apart at its center. The heroes need to find a way to keep the bridge from twisting in half while also keeping cars from sliding off the side of the bridge.

### ZOO RAMPAGE

When the reality-warping effect hit the city zoo, it caught many animals in its effects. Dozens of the zoo's most dangerous animals were transformed into supernaturally enhanced, fiendishly twisted versions of themselves. These animals are rampaging through the city near the zoo, forcing people to cower in cars and buildings nearby. The heroes need to find a way to round up all the rampaging creatures and secure them away from innocent civilians.

## THE WRONG WITCH HUNT

In the **old part of town, NC02: The Celebrity Bigot** has attracted a large, hostile crowd intent on blaming someone for the collision between the two dimensions. The bigot is whipping the people in the crowd into a froth, and they have pulled an innocent civilian (Calvin Toren, from issue #3) to the front of the mob, blaming him for being part of a conspiracy to corrupt our world. The heroes need to disperse the crowd and save Toren from misguided mob justice. If "The citizens of the city hate and fear all things magical" is written in the Truths box of "The Basics" section of your Setting Book, the heroes add 2 challenge dice (◆◆) to any roll they make to disperse the crowd peacefully.

## THE VILLAIN'S PLAN

With the breaking of another seal, the barrier between Earth and the Nether Realm is thin enough that agents from that dimension have come through to establish a beachhead and begin the takeover of Earth. To do so, the Nether Realm's agents plan to seize the **iconic skyline feature**, demolish the buildings surrounding it, and create a fortified staging point for further invasion. The master of the Nether Realm sent a few lieutenants through as muscle, to command the cultists in the city awaiting this moment.

Whenever the heroes confront the villain, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ Three squads of **Cultists** minions, each of a size equal to the number of heroes × 2.
- ✧ One of the **Nether Realm Lieutenants** minor villains for every 2 heroes in the scene. If none of the previous lieutenants survived their clash with the heroes in issue #5, create new lieutenants to replace them.

The scene ends when all the enemies are defeated.

## CAPTURE THE CENTRAL BUILDING □□

The villains' first move is to secure the building. Since it is a common site for tourists and locals, it is full of people when the reality warping begins. Once panic sets in, cultists wait until most people have fled the building, then cut all communications lines to the building and begin going floor to floor driving other people out. In the meantime, the Nether Realm Lieutenants deal with any security guards and then keep the police response at bay.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□□): Dozens of civilians have not yet escaped the building and are trapped in various semidangerous locations: on an observation deck high above the city, in a crowded elevator stuck between floors, on a half-collapsed sky bridge to an adjacent building, and in a glass-ceilinged atrium.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by +1.

## DEMOLISH THE ADJACENT BUILDINGS □□□□

Once the central building is secured, the villains start demolishing the smaller buildings surrounding it. No matter how powerful the villains are, bringing down a building requires a lot of effort, and there are four to be demolished.

- ◆ **Complication** (□□□□□, Critical): Structural damage to the building the heroes are protecting has caused it to start collapsing, even without further damage. The heroes need to shore it up before it collapses completely.
  - ✧ *Failure:* The building collapses; check off one of the progress boxes next to this step's header. If this is the fourth box checked, the last building collapses, and the plan advances to the next step mid-scene.
- ◆ **Reputation:** If the team's **Government Reputation** track is at 5 or higher, someone in law enforcement (either **NC06: The Agency Chief** or **NC07: The Police Representative**) contacts the heroes and requests assistance after the first building has been demolished (i.e. after the first check box of this step is checked).

## CREATE THE WARDING CIRCLES □□

Bringing down the surrounding buildings allows the villains to inscribe magic circles on the ground for their magical defenses. While cultists clear the rubble of the demolished buildings, the villains set about inscribing the runes. When all four have been inscribed, they create a protective field around the building, warding it such that no one can pass the barrier except the villains, cultists, and creatures from the Nether Realm.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□□, Enemy): The villains are trying to create magic circles in the debris of the destroyed buildings.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* The four warding circles activate, raising a barrier around the enemies' beachhead. The conflict continues with the heroes on the inside of the barrier, but the villains have completed their plan.

## ESTABLISH THE BEACHHEAD

Once the protective barrier is up, the central building of the beachhead undergoes a radical transformation; while it retains its same general shape, its architecture and decorative work changes to mirror that of the Forsaken Keep in the Nether Realm, reflecting the nature of the Nether Realm itself.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the villains succeed in their plan, raising the magical barrier around the **iconic skyline feature**, in the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm** write "Directly connected to [the iconic skyline feature]."
- ◆ The story continues in *Eldritch Mysteries* #12.

## SCENARIO

# ARMAGEDDON, PART 2

ELDRITCH MYSTERIES #12

At the start of this issue, the heroes receive a visit from **NC05: The Mystic Sage**, who arrives at their headquarters with vital new information. The sage tells them that **SE13: The Mystic Order** continued to investigate what happened to the Seven Seals of Binding after they were sent away from **SE12: The Forgotten City** centuries ago, leading them to Alastair Toren, an aficionado of relics from lost civilizations. At one point his collection included three of the Seven Seals of Binding. Toren lived a large portion of his life in the city the heroes call home.

The sage believes that two of those seals have already passed through the heroes' hands: the broken seal they recovered in issue #1, and the shattered seal recovered from Calvin Toren's bookshop in issue #3. This leaves one of Toren's seals unaccounted for. The sage also believes that the catastrophic events plaguing the city are the results of cultists breaking a seal that was previously in the possession of **SE25: The Secret Society**; one of the members of that society must secretly be a cultist. This leaves Alastair Toren's missing seal as the only as-yet-unaccounted-for of the Seven Seals of Binding. The sage believes that the heroes, being natives of the city in which Toren lived and died, would be best suited for tracking it down.

As the sage and the heroes finish their discussion, they are interrupted by an ambush: a band of cultists, who tracked the Mystic Sage to this meeting.

In the opening scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✦ Two squads of **Cultists** minions, of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times$  2. These cultists are blessed by their master with a gift of power. Increase the damage dealt by the squads' attacks by an amount equal to  $5 \times$  the number of broken seals (as described in the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, in the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry). Each one has been transformed in a way that reflects the nature of the Nether Realm.

The scene ends when all the cultist minions are defeated.

- ◆ **Ally:** Add a single Ally initiative card for the Mystic Sage. The sage helps the heroes, has 100 resistance, and has a 50% chance to succeed at any action. On the sage's first turn, reveal to the heroes the grim twist to the sage's presence: with the thinning of the barrier between Earth and the Nether Realm, the sage has lost all their powers, an extension of the curse previously placed upon them by the master of the Nether Realm.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□□, Critical): One of the cultists throws a Molotov cocktail at some flammables, starting a fast-spreading fire. The heroes need to put it out before it causes serious damage to their base of operations.
  - ✦ **Failure:** The loss of valuable papers or artifacts is demoralizing to the heroes; each hero loses 1 hero point (🔪).
- ◆ If the heroes are defeated, the cultists drag the Mystic Sage to the site of the final conflict of *Eldritch Mysteries Annual* #1, the next issue; write "Captured by cultists" in the Truth's box of the sage's Setting Book page. The heroes are rescued from death by first responders (or members of the Mystic Order). Their headquarters is destroyed. Change the answer marked on the team roster sheet's question about the heroes' headquarters to "Other" and in the team roster's Truths box write, "No base of operations." Each hero permanently reduces their "Hero Points per Conflict" number by 1 and gains two check marks on their story progress tracks.

## WHAT THE HEROES CAN LEARN OR DO

Below are some suggestions for information you can provide to the heroes if they seek it out.

### RESEARCHING ALASTAIR TOREN

- ◆ Toren came to the city in the late 19th Century, already a wealthy man. Over the course of several decades, however, he slowly fell into financial ruin. When he died in the early 20th century, he died a pauper.
- ◆ Toren was an avid collector of antiques and generously funded archaeological expeditions that might turn up new artifacts. He was also one of the earliest members of **SE25: The Secret Society**. The seal that was in the society's possession until recently was originally a part of Toren's collection. This also explains the society's interest in finding **SE30: The Sacred Site**, especially if one of its members is a cultist.
- ◆ Toren ran afoul of the **Heretic Hunters**. They targeted Toren and labeled him a heretic for his interest in the occult. They attacked him financially with lawsuits, targeted projects Toren funded with terrorism, and ruined his good name in the city. The Heretic Hunters exist to this day, descendants of those who ruined Toren.
- ◆ Calvin Toren, who the heroes may have encountered in issue #3, is Alastair Toren's descendant.
- ◆ One of Toren's only remaining legacies is a cathedral he paid to have built in **SE04: The Bad Neighborhood**. Even though that neighborhood has fallen into poverty, the cathedral still stands—a lasting legacy for Toren, albeit a decrepit and decaying one. If the last seal is still in the city, it is most likely hidden here.



## EVACUATING THE BAD NEIGHBORHOOD

- ◆ The citizens who live in the Bad Neighborhood don't know that demons are about to start flooding into their part of the city. If the heroes recognize the danger, they can try to clear out as much of that neighborhood as possible.
- ◆ **Reputation:** If the team's **Government Reputation** track is at 3 or higher, the heroes can enlist the aid of the city's police force, allowing them to automatically succeed at this task.
- ◆ If "The citizens of the city hate and fear all things magical" is in the Truths box of "The Basics" section of your Setting Book, the heroes add 2 challenge dice (🎲🎲) to any roll they make to interact with citizens of the neighborhood.
- ◆ If the heroes succeed, remove the complication involving getting members of the community to safety from the final conflict scene. Give the heroes 2 hero points (👤👤) to distribute among themselves as they see fit. Erase the "The citizens of the city hate and fear all things magical" entry from the Truths box in "The Basics" section of your Setting Book if it is written there.

## THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The heroes aren't the only ones after Toren's secrets. Angered by the betrayal of one of their number, the Secret Society reaches out to the Heretic Hunters and passes their knowledge of Alastair Toren's legacy on, hoping to stymie the cult's efforts. The Heretic Hunters secure Toren's cathedral, while demons pushing through the thinned barrier between dimensions flock toward the seal.

Whenever the heroes approach the cathedral, they face the following opposition:

- ✧ The **Heretic Hunters** minor villains, in number equal to the number of heroes. Each minor villain has 1 initiative card. These are the modern incarnation of the Heretic Hunters. You can rename and/or choose new powers for these minor villains, since the original Heretic Hunters are likely dead, or at least very, very elderly.
- ✧ Three squads of **Demons** minions, each of a size equal to the number of heroes x 2. Do not include these enemies if the heroes reach the cathedral before the "The Demons Attack" step in the sequence.

The scene ends when all the enemies have been defeated or otherwise neutralized.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□): The heroes need to search the cathedral for signs of where the seal could be hidden. Successes allow the heroes to find the secret stairs under the altar, search the mysterious basement, and rip out chunks of the concrete wall to find the seal hidden in a compartment inside.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□): The cathedral, though decaying, is still frequented by the devout members of the community, and several worshipers are put in harm's way by the conflict. The heroes need to get the people to safety.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by +1.
- ◆ **Lasting Repercussion:** Heretic Hunters focus on heroes with the **Tempted by Dark Magic** lasting repercussion.

## HERETIC HUNTERS SECURE THE CATHEDRAL □□□

The Heretic Hunters move into the Bad Neighborhood and take over the cathedral. They fortify it as they search for the final seal, erroneously believing that it draws demons into this world rather than keeping the Nether Realm at bay.

## THE DEMONS ATTACK □□

Drawn by the last Seal of Binding, demons begin flooding into the Bad Neighborhood and attacking anyone in the cathedral. The conflict is a three-way battle between the heroes, the Heretic Hunters, and the demons.

- ◆ **Objective** (□□□): Do not make the heroes aware of this objective in advance. The heroes can attempt to convince the Heretic Hunters that they will more easily fight off the demons if they work together.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* The remaining Heretic Hunters stop fighting against the heroes and attack only the demons for the rest of the scene. At the end of the scene, the Heretic Hunters retreat.

## THE HERETIC HUNTERS ARE OVERWHELMED □

The Heretic Hunters are overwhelmed by the demons. Their defenses collapse, and demons begin to overrun the cathedral. If the heroes approach the cathedral at this point, half (rounded down) of the Heretic Hunters are dead, and the rest have lost half of their resistance. Furthermore, there is a fourth squad of demons attacking the cathedral.

- ◆ Include the objective from the "The Demons Attack" step.

## DEMONS OVERRUN THE CATHEDRAL

The demons overrun the cathedral and begin tearing it to flinders, seeking the final seal. If the heroes approach the cathedral at this point, all the Heretic Hunters are dead. Furthermore, there are five squads of demons attacking the cathedral instead of three. The heroes' only hope is to stop the demons from finding and smashing the seal.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the heroes are defeated in the final scene, the demons find the seal and destroy it. In the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**, increase the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry by 1.
  - ◆ The series concludes in the next issue, *Eldritch Mysteries Annual #1*.



Enough of the Seven Seals of Binding have broken to cause the barrier between dimensions to begin to fail. By the time the heroes reach this issue, the last of the seven seals has been found and is either destroyed or in the heroes' hands. Demons and servants of the dark master of **SE06: The Nether Realm** have already invaded Earth, seeking to destroy the final seals and fully merge the two realities, with their master as supreme ruler above all.

If the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm** contains "Directly connected to [the iconic skyline feature]" then the climactic scene of the series takes place at the city's **iconic skyline feature**, which is now serving as a beachhead for the agents of the Nether Realm's master. Otherwise, choose another location in the city where the confrontation can occur, such as the **tallest building in the city** or near the heroes' headquarters (assuming it was not destroyed in the previous issue). Choose a location that has meaning to the heroes, if possible.

If the heroes recovered the final seal in the previous issue and **NC05: The Mystic Sage** was not captured by cultists, the sage tells the heroes that they have a plan to end the invasion. Otherwise, heroes can be drawn to the conflict by other means, such as a sighting of a villain headed to this site, ominous atmospheric effects (like swirling clouds, raining blood, or green lightning), or news reports of ongoing clashes between the police and demons.

At the start of this scene, the heroes face the following opposition:

- ✧ Two squads of **Demons** minions, each of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times$  2.

Also choose either:

- ✧ Some number of the **Nether Realm Lieutenants** minor villains; choose 1 of these minor villains for every 2 heroes in the scene. Each such minor villain has 1 initiative card.

OR

- ✧ A villain who has previously faced off against the hero and who is tied to the cult or the Nether Realm's master, such as the **Fallen Sorcerer**. This villain has 1 initiative card for every 2 heroes in the scene.

- ◆ **Ally:** Add a single Ally initiative card for the **Mystic Sage**. The sage helps the heroes, has 100 resistance, and has a 50% chance to succeed at any action.
- ◆ If **NC05: The Mystic Sage** has "Captured by cultists" in their Truths box, instead of adding the sage as an ally, the heroes must complete the following objective; they cannot progress to "Breaking the Remaining Seals" until the sage is freed.
- ◆ **Objective** (□□): The cultists have bound the sage to a large, iron wheel at the center of a ritual circle, preparing the sage as a sacrifice for their master. The heroes need to free the sage.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* Add the Mystic Sage as an ally to the scene, as described under the Ally entry above.
- ◆ **Objective** (□□□, Enemy): Rips in reality allow more demons to come through from the Nether Realm. The enemies attempt to widen one of the tears to the point where demons can flow through at will. Both the villains and minions can advance this objective, and do so to the exclusion of all other actions.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* The scene progresses as described under "Breaking the Remaining Seals" below.
- ◆ **Complication** (□□□□□□): Incorporeal monsters (such as ghosts, intangible demons, or nightmares made real) begin to manifest in the area. These manifestations terrorize the populace, causing many to rush into dangerous situation (such as the battle between the heroes and demons) while others lash out recklessly. Dozens of citizens need to be saved from these haunting creatures.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* Adjust the team's **Public Reputation** track by +2.

## BREAKING THE REMAINING SEALS

Realizing that it is only a matter of time before the Nether Realm's agents break the remaining Seals of Binding and invade Earth, the sage proposes a new plan: to shatter the remaining seals and then forge a new seal to bind the Nether Realm away forever. In the unlikely event that all seven of the seals have already been broken at this point, the sage still offers up this solution, but skip the below objective and move on to the next stage of the scene.

Additionally, add the following enemies to the scene:

- ✧ One more squad of **Demons** minions of a size equal to the number of heroes  $\times$  2.
- ◆ **Objective** (□□□□□□□): Before starting this objective, check off a number of boxes equal to the number written next to the "Broken Seals of Binding" entry in the Truths box of **SE06: The Nether Realm**. At the sage's direction, the heroes need to break the still-intact Seals of Binding.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* The scene progresses as described under "The Living Seal of Binding" below.

## THE LIVING SEAL OF BINDING

Once the seals are broken, reality ripples and the two dimensions are now nearly one. In a terrifying display, the master of the Nether Realm breaks through into the world. Add the following enemies to the scene:

- ✧ The master of the Nether Realm (as chosen for issue #5), with initiative cards equal to the number of heroes.
- ✧ One more squad of **Demons** minions of a size equal to the number of heroes × 2.

The Mystic Sage plans to create a living Seal of Binding. The sage offers to act as a sacrifice and asks the heroes to help perform the ritual that will transform them into an immortal ward against the Nether Realm's incursion.

- ◆ **Lasting Repercussion:** Any hero who has the lasting repercussion **Trusted by the Mystic Sage** can offer to become the new Living Seal, and the sage will agree to this modification of the plan.
- ◆ **Ally:** The breaking of the seals weakens the sage's curse. The sage's current and maximum resistance increases by 100; add a second Ally initiative card for the sage to the initiative track. The sage cannot damage any of the enemies due to the curse. As an action, the sage can roll for a Healing power, with a 70% chance of success; one hero the sage touches regains resistance equal to the number rolled on a success. If this power is used on a defeated hero, they immediately re-enter the scene. The sage has a 50% chance to do anything else.
- ◆ **Objective (□□□□□□):** The person who is to be the new Living Seal needs to have the runes that were previously on the Seven Seals of Binding inscribed onto their flesh to complete the ritual.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* The scene progresses as described under "Banishing the Master of the Nether Realm" below.

## BANISHING THE MASTER OF THE NETHER REALM

The ritual is complete, and a new Living Seal of Binding has been created. The barrier between worlds is fortified by the creation of the Living Seal. Remove all enemies from the scene except the master of the Nether Realm, and that villain loses their Divinity villain perk. As a part of the ritual, a portal has opened to the Nether Realm, representing the last connection between dimensions and the heroes' last opportunity to drive the villain back the other side.

- ◆ **Objective (□□□□):** The heroes must send the villain back to the Nether Realm. This objective can be advanced by making attacks against the villain that deal no damage but instead move the villain toward the portal.
  - ✧ *Fully Resolved:* Once the villain has been both driven through the portal and defeated they are banished from Earth for good. With a flash of light and a thunderous crash, the portal collapses. When the heroes' vision returns, the villain is gone, and the city shows no signs of intrusion by the Nether Realm.
  - ✧ **Lasting Repercussion:** If any hero has the **Marked for Possession** lasting repercussion, they can automatically complete this objective by leaping through the portal into the Nether Realm and offering themselves up as a vessel into which the villain can be banished. When the villain is defeated, the villain's spirit becomes trapped inside the hero, and the portal closes with the hero in the Nether Realm.

## WRAPPING UP

- ◆ If the heroes and the Mystic Sage are all defeated, the incursion of the Nether Realm into Earth solidifies. One district becomes permanently warped by the Nether Realm, its inhabitants transformed into demons. **SE13: The Mystic Order** erects a magical barrier around the district, sealing it off in an opaque dome of force that becomes a dominant feature in the city. From time to time, the master of the Nether Realm can exert their will to reach through the barrier or allow demons to pass through, but still cannot act freely on Earth.
- ◆ Write "Living Seal of Binding" in the Truths box of whoever became the Living Seal.
- ◆ If a hero became the vessel for the master of the Nether Realm's banishment, replace the **Marked for Possession** lasting repercussion on that hero with **Banished to the Nether Realm**.
  - ✧ If that hero also is the Living Seal of Binding, they become the new master of the Nether Realm, with the original master still trapped inside them. They gain the **Master of the Nether Realm** lasting repercussion, and can remove the **Trapped in the Nether Realm** lasting repercussion from any hero, returning them to Earth.
  - ✧ If that hero is not the Living Seal of Binding, the villain eventually escapes captivity in that hero's body.
  - ✧ If that hero also has the **Tempted by Dark Magic** lasting repercussion, they become a new villain.
- ◆ If the team's **Public Reputation** track is at -5 or lower, in "The Basics" section of the Setting Book, change the answer of the question "How Does the General Public Feel About Powered Heroes?" to "These So-Called Heroes are a Menace." In the Truths box of **NC02: The Celebrity Bigot**, write "Extremely influential of mainstream public opinion and government policy."
- ◆ If the heroes are defeated in this conflict, if you have not already filled out the setting element for **SE27: The Catastrophe**, do so now, using this issue's events as the catastrophe in question.
- ◆ If the heroes' **Government Reputation** track is at -5 or less and **NC03: The Hateful Authority** has "Promoted government intervention in powered heroes" in their Truths box, in the wake of the danger to the city the Hateful Authority convinces the government to enact **SE26: The Superhuman Edict**. Otherwise, the Hateful Authority gives a speech before the government decrying the heroes; write "Promoted government intervention in powered heroes" in the Hateful Authority's Truths box if it is not already there.