MISFIT STUDIOS™

#7

STEVEN TRUSTRUM

MISFITS & MENACES

Mixed Villains

Α Β Γ Δ Σ Ω

REQUIRES THE MUTANTS AND MASTERMINDS RPG BY GREEN RONIN PUBLISHING FOR USE

M&M SUPERLINK

APPROVED BY THE MISFITS CODE AUTHORITY

THE REVISED AWESOME STANDARDS FOR THE EXCELLENT MISFITS CODE FOR EDITORIAL MATTER

CREDITS

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INTRODUCTION

Misfits and Menaces is a new sourcebook series for the **M&M Superlink** rules. Each offering will focus on a number of villains and/or one or more villainous organization that may be inserted into most super-heroic campaigns with little effort. Each organization is constructed using the new rules for designing organizations presented in **Better Mousetrap**, also from *Misfit Studios*.

METAHUMAN THREAT SCALE

To make using the accompanying characters easier, a threat scale is used throughout this work. Each character will be assigned a threat level from this scale, giving players and Gamemasters alike an idea of how characters and law enforcement agencies should perceive the villain, regardless of actual PL. The assigned threat level takes into account more than the immediate threat posed, as it also considers goals, ideals, behavior, state of mind, and so on.

If desired, this metahuman threat scale (MTS) can be incorporated into your game as the system actually used to assess metahuman threats, in much the same way as the government uses a color system to indicate states of national security awareness and preparedness.

Alpha: Of minimal danger, an Alpha-level threat is relatively low-powered and/or modestly trained. Such metahumans offer little more threat than a common non-metahuman street thug. A typical law-enforcement response should be sufficient to deal with the threat in most instances.

Such a threat can be restrained within standard containment facilities.

Beta: Beta-level threats possess sufficient metahuman abilities and/or training to pose a risk to a typical law-enforcement response. Tactical response units are likely the best way of dealing with such a threat, just to be safe.

Such a threat can usually be restrained within standard containment facilities, or those that have undergone a minimum of alteration.

Gamma: Threats of this level are an exceptional danger to society and are not easily dealt with by standard law-enforcement personnel (including normal tactical response units.) This is the most common metahuman threat level in most societies and usually represents the apex of threats whose abilities are based entirely on knowledge and training rather than metahuman powers.

Such a threat can rarely be held for long within standard containment facilities, usually requiring specially prepared conditions for long-term confinement.

Delta: Extremely dangerous, and only to be approached in force and with extreme care, Delta-level threats have the capability of causing great damage and represent a significant, immediate threat to life and public resources/services. Delta-level threats are best handled by other metahumans of comparable (individual or combined) power, or by specially trained response units and/or the military.

Such a threat cannot be held within standard containment facilities, requiring specially prepared conditions for long-term confinement.

Epsilon: Entire nations, continents and possibly even whole planets are at risk from Epsilon-level threats. Possessing abilities and/or influence to literally shatter civilizations, nations put great amounts of resources into anticipating and countering such beings before their machinations or rampages cause irreparable damage to a planet's social order, political stability, and/or physical well-being.

Such a threat cannot be held within standard containment facilities, requiring specially prepared, often-unique conditions for long-term confinement. In the most extreme cases, practical containment is impossible and more extreme (permanent?) solutions must be found.

Omega: Omega-level threats are the greatest threat known, as they can affect things on a cosmic scale, be it by eradicating entire intergalactic civilizations or putting the very fabric and stability of reality at risk. This threat level is the broadest in its scope, allowing for a variety of actual ability potencies.

Restraining such threats requires a legendary act by beings of lesser threat levels, or an intervention of another Omega being/artifact/power. Generally speaking, though, Omega-level threats are considered unstoppable forces of nature/the cosmos/whatever, and are better tricked, negotiated with, or avoided altogether than directly opposed, as undertaking the latter can easily result in the dangers meant to be avoided.

Containing such beings requires the power of a sun, act of god, or similarly extraordinary expenditure of cosmic power or influence, feats usually only available to other Omega-level beings or incredibly advanced civilizations.

"-A" Notation: When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is arcane/magical in nature.

"-E" Notation: When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is extraterrestrial (alien) in nature.

"-D" Notation: When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is extradimensional (from another plane of existence) in nature.

"-P" Notation: When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is psychic in nature.

"-T" Notation: When added to a threat level, this notation indicates the threat is Terran (from Earth), but not human in nature.

An acronym for **A**dvanced **E**ngineering **G**enetic **I**ntegration & **S**tructuring, A.E.G.I.S. is a research and development corporation that has branches in Silicon Valley, Texas, Tokyo, Berlin, Edinburgh, and Cordoba. As its name would suggest, A.E.G.I.S. is a company that has devoted itself to the unlocking and manipulation of the varied mysteries of genetics. So far as the public knows, their research facilities—each of which is contained within a highly guarded, military-like compound—are used to conduct legally authorized genetic experiments on animals.

Many of A.E.G.I.S.'s projects are funded under the auspice of global powers, including those considered to be champions of human rights, freedoms and morality. Public relations are very important to A.E.G.I.S., more so now that a few of their past operations have blown up (sometimes literally) in their faces. With a great deal of time devoted to the curing of genetic diseases and disabilities, the public tends to have a favorable view of this organization, a company they see as doing all that it can for mankind. Unfortunately, this image is only a camouflage of their true intentions, and is thought of solely as propaganda by movers and shakers within the company itself.

The true goal of A.E.G.I.S. has always been the tapping and exploitation of the genetic blueprints of living organisms. To this end, the corporation is willing to accept contracts to work on supersoldier projects from governments or private corporations, as well as conducting its own experiments on animals and people. More often than not these projects end in failure and sometimes death for the subject (who may not have been a willing participant to begin with.) Examples of some of A.E.G.I.S.'s projects include a disastrous attempt to create a modified astronaut who could exist in a vacuum without a suit for the U.S. Air Force, the successful creation of the fugitive mutant animals who call themselves "The Pack," the creation of its own assassin/enforcer, Catspaw, and the unfortunate accident that resulted in the creation of the villainous snakeman, Anaconda.

A.E.G.I.S. is easily the terrestrial leader in genetics research and, as such, it charges its clients rates that are proportionate to the company's reputation. This cost is seen as reasonable by most customers because A.E.G.I.S. does not ask questions about what is demanded of them, no matter how untried or dangerous the desired process may be to the subject or public at large (well, so long as it doesn't put the company's public face at undue risk.) To this corporation of mad scientists, the pursuit of unraveling the secrets of DNA and attaining

PL: 10

Leadership: Council

Intelligence 20 (+5), **Wisdom** 26 (+8), **Charisma** 24 (+7)

Will +8

Skills: Bluff 8 (+15), Computers 4 (+9), Craft (chemical) 16 (+21), Craft (electronic) 4 (+9), Craft (mechanical) 4 (+9), Craft (structural) 2 (+7), Diplomacy 10 (+17), Knowledge (business) 8 (+13), Knowledge (civics) 6 (+11), Knowledge (current events) 3 (+8), Knowledge (life sciences) 17 (+22), Knowledge (physical sciences) 18 (+23), Knowledge (technology) 14 (+19), Notice 2 (+10)

Feats: Connected (big business, genetics field, world governments) 3 *, Inventor Expertise, Inventor, Specialization (Knowledge [life sciences]: genetics)

Members: Minions (15-pt. scientists, x 250) 8, Minions (45-pt. security personnel [same as police officer], x 1,000) 12

Equipment: Equipment (mutable labs; 25 EP, x 50) 10

Headquarters: Research Complex—Size: Gargantuan (77 of 128); Toughness: 10; Features: Communications (basic; 0), Communications 3 (encryption; 0), Communications (global net; 0), Computer 4 (advanced; 2); Defense System 2 (electrified fences, etc.; 3), Electronic Counter-Measures 5 (0), Environmental Control (0), Fire Prevention System 2 (0), Inventor's Lab 3 (2 EP/rank; 3) x 3, Kitchen/Mess Hall (4), Laboratory 3 (basic, each dedicated to a different skill; 5) x 6, Library (4), Power System (8), Security System 3 (security cameras; 0), Self-Destruct (3), Vault 10 (4), Workshop 5 (chemical; 3) x 3, Workshop 2 (electronic; 3), Workshop (mechanical; 3); Powers: Alternate Facilities—10 identical facilities (dynamic); Drawbacks: Accessible Bowels –2; Cost EP/PP: 115/12. Many of the research facilities fill out the remaining Space with hidden labs, and containment and testing facilities for experiments.

Drawbacks: Easily Demoralized –1, Faint of Heart –2, Legally Bound (common, minor) –2

Abilities 10 + Skills 29 (116 ranks) + Feats 48 + Powers 141 – Drawbacks 5 = 223

* See Better Mousetrap

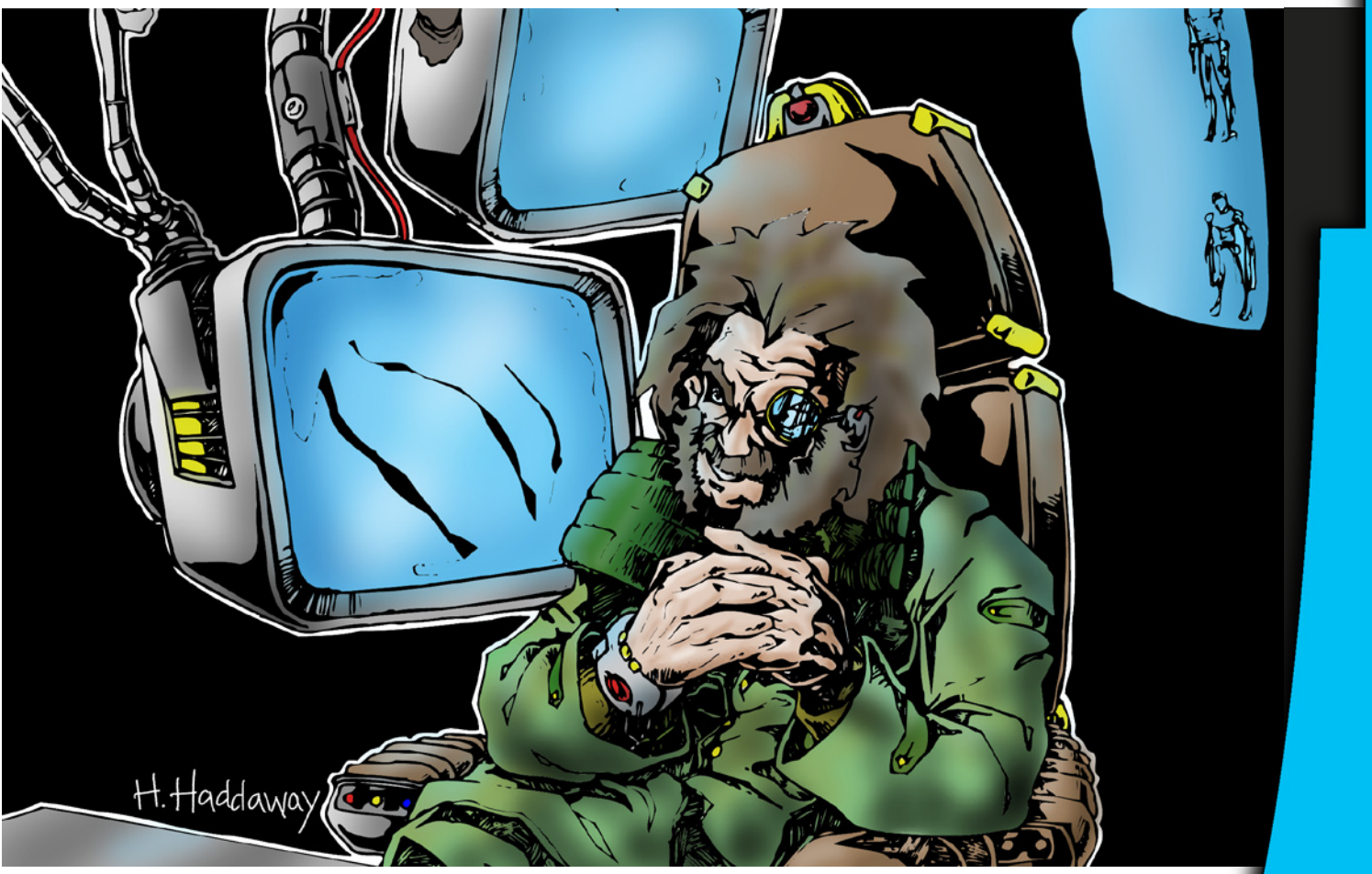
mastery over the building blocks of life justifies just about any means, so long as they are kept a secret from the public. It is of the utmost importance that A.E.G.I.S. keeps its public image spotless so they can continue with their work unfettered by the law, governing bodies or public interest groups.

CEO Morris Morley (PL 2)

Morley is A.E.G.I.S.' CEO and is also the majority (63%) shareholder. To most of the world, he is a philanthropist, brilliant scientist, generous supporter of countless charities, foster parent of several destitute children overseas, and a well-respected, law-abiding member of the community.

To the few people who know the true Morley, he is a twisted genius with very few scruples. Not interested in anything so simple and pedestrian as world conquest, this madman's sights are set upon bending the very elements of creation itself to his will. To this end, Morley would make a deal with the Devil himself, a statement that is not very far from the truth considering he has at times allied himself with monsters such as Center of CORE (see *Better Mousetrap*) in order to see his goals realized.

Appearance: A middle-aged man with a trim build and distinguished wisps of gray in his bushy, brown hair, Morley is only slightly over-weight but has been weakened by severe asthma since an early age. He typically wears expensive "power suits," but is equally comfortable in a lab coat.



Real Name: Morris Morley

Aliases: None

Threat Level: Alpha

Age: 52

Height: 5 ft., 9 in.

Weight: 185 lbs

Native Language: English

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-1	+0	-1	+5	+7	+7
8	10	8	20	24	24

TOUGH -1 FORT +3	**Skills:** Bluff 14 (+21), Computers 10 (+15), Concentration 8 (+15), Craft (chemical) 14 (+19), Craft (electronic) 10 (+15), Diplomacy 12 (+19), Gather Information 6 (+13), Knowledge (business) 12 (+17), Knowledge (civics) 8 (+13), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+9), Knowledge (earth sciences) 12 (+17), Knowledge (physical sciences) 12 (+17), Knowledge (super-beings) 4 (+9) *, Knowledge (tactics) 4 (+9), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 8 (+13), Language (Cantonese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish), Profession (scientist) 11 (+18), Sense Motive 8 (+15)
REF +4	**Feats:** Benefit (wealth) 20, Connected (business, global governments, politics) 3 *, Contacts (business, global governments, politics) 3 *, Ear to the Ground (business, global governments, politics) 3 *, Improved Master Plan *, Jack-of-all-Trades, Master Plan, Well-Informed
WILL	**Combat:** Attack +3, Damage -1 (unarmed), Defense +4, Initiative +0
+12	**Abilities 34 + Skills 41 (164 ranks) + Feats 33 + Combat 14 + Saves 13 = 135**

* See *Better Mousetrap*

Caper Ideas

A.E.G.I.S. and its crazed leader can be a constant aggravation to a group of superheroes. Not only does the company employ highly questionable and unethical (and not always legal) techniques of genetic experimentation, including using unwilling homeless people, inhumane use of animals and outlawed chemicals, but they also have no qualms about whom they will work for so long as their own knowledge and experiments are furthered in the process. Because of such policies, this company can provide a Gamemaster with a great wealth for mutant and experimental villains (and heroes and even player character!) whose superpowers were granted intentionally or accidentally.

The best part about adding A.E.G.I.S. to a campaign is they and their goals are a constant threat to a group of player characters, and humanity as a whole. The geniuses at A.E.G.I.S. are likely to have contingency plans on top of cover-ups on top of smoke screens, and will also be able to create enemies as quickly as the player characters can defeat them, providing the heroes with a bottomless well of possibilities. This is not to say that A.E.G.I.S. is to be used solely for mindlessly filling in gaps in any given villains' origins—far from it. To portray these mad scientists as nothing more than directionless monster makers would be counterproductive to A.E.G.I.S.' absolute desire to remain out of the spotlight and would lessen their value as a returning foe.

Perhaps the best way to use A.E.G.I.S. is to keep the heroes in the dark regarding this corporation's true nature in the beginning. Over time, have the cleansing winds of the truth slowly begin to blow the smoke screen away to reveal what hides behind all the meticulous public relations and propaganda. Whether or not the public will believe what the heroes learn about A.E.G.I.S. is an entirely different matter, however.

Current Projects of Note

The following projects are provided as examples of the sort of mischief A.E.G.I.S. gets entangled with, and can be used as jumpoff points for adventure ideas and (player?) character origins.

PROJECT AMBROSIA

Though publicly professing to be a quest for the cure for cancer, Project Ambrosia is secretly intending to find a universal antidote as a precaution against any of A.E.G.I.S.' other projects getting out of hand and infecting the populace. Who knows? Such a universal antidote may also prove to be the perfect device for a global blackmailing scheme should A.E.G.I.S. or one of its clients one day decides to purposely release a toxin or plague into the planet's atmosphere or water.

PROJECT COILED COBRA

Nobody knows for certain exactly what this project was supposed to do. The lone scientist working on it was caught up in the raging craze of the original escaped, maddened subject of Project Skyjump and was drastically mutated into the villainous creature now known as Anaconda. Despite the time that has passed since this calamity, none of A.E.G.I.S.' other scientists have been able to make heads or tails of the Dr. Sikes' notes, but this has only made them try all the more to unlock the secrets of the enigmatic project, codenamed Coiled Cobra.

PROJECT CLEAN SWEEP

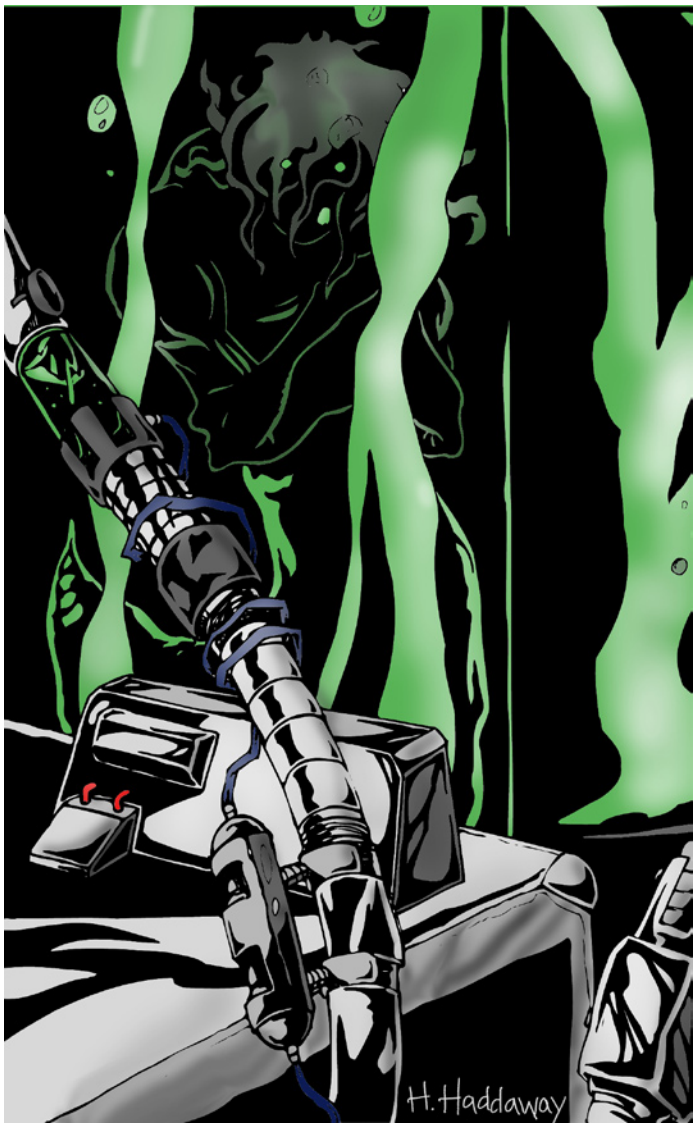
A classified project being conducted for several powerful Nazis in an Argentine lab, Clean Sweep hopes to create a genetically tagged bio-plague that

will only attack members of specified races, killing the intended victims while proving harmless to all others.

PROJECT KENNEL

Secretly funded by the American military, Project Kennel is based out of A.E.G.I.S.' Texas compound and has the singular purpose of genetically breeding mutant dogs to be used as supersoldiers. Chosen for their loyalty to man, even unto death, and the ease with which they can be trained to follow commands, the desired final results of Project Kennel would grant the U.S. a distinct advantage in security and on the battlefield.

Kennel's initial test subjects, which superseded all projections and actually developed superpowers as a part of their mutation, have escaped and formed the group of outlaw vigilantes known as "The Pack." If anything, however, this has increased the company's hopes for the project and has not entirely been seen as a setback. Everything possible is being done to bring these fugitive mutant animals back into A.E.G.I.S' hands for further study, including putting the company's secret assassin and tracker, Catspaw, on the case. The utmost secrecy must be maintained in this endeavor lest the public learn of what the U.S. military and this seemingly philanthropist organization is really up to.



PROJECT LAZARUS

A highly unorthodox project concerned with the rejuvenation and reconstruction of dead flesh, Lazarus began in the early '80s and was closed down briefly after its two prototypes were judged to be a tremendous disaster. One of the prototypes escaped and became the super-villain known as Headstone while the second failed to be reanimated and was subsequently destroyed. Both failures cost the company a great deal, but the project was revived a few years ago with the hope that this time the results will prove to be more profitable.

PROJECT POWERLIFT

A privately funded endeavor to find a way to temporary boost strength and endurance for use by laborers such as construction workers, the booster serum, codenamed Omegatox-8, is still in the development phase. Of course, if someone should "steal" the serum the money that illegitimate sources would pay for the project's results would be considerable.

PROJECT SKYJUMP

The U.S. Air Force and NASA jointly fund this classified project. With the intention of creating an astronaut that can survive in the cold vacuum of space without an exo-suit or oxygen supply, Skyjump seeks to unravel the mysteries of alien DNA (A.E.G.I.S. is not saying how they got their hands on this) so that it can be combined with that of a man. The initial test subject went wild and temporarily ran amok in Florida (where Skyjump was based) in a rather public manner, forcing A.E.G.I.S. to make the project public and declare the prototype a failure.

As part of their public relations damage control and cover-up of what was really going on, the company granted the prototype—who later took on the heroic title and role of Starbound—his freedom and a significant financial package as compensation. Skyjump was publicly shut-down after the incident but has continued at a new, classified facility in the mid-west where the process is nearly ready to be tested on a second subject.

ANACONDA (PL 10)

Real Name: Dr. Vincent Sikes

Aliases: None

Threat Level: Delta

Age: 42

Height: 5 ft., 9 in.

Weight: 255 lbs

Native Language: English

The only A.E.G.I.S. scientist to be working on a project codenamed "Coiled Cobra," Dr. Sikes was a brilliant man who had been given complete autonomy in his research in recognition of his vision and genius. After working by himself for four years in the corporation's Florida compound, it was believed Dr. Sikes may have been nearing a breakthrough when Martin Rencliff, the man chosen as the guinea pig for Project Skyjump (based at the same facility), was horribly mutated and broke free on a violent rampage.

During Rencliff's explosive escape, the bio-agent upon which Sikes had been working was splashed into his face. Quickly absorbed into his skin, the strange substance rapidly mutated Dr. Sikes into a creature that seemed half snake and half man. Furthermore, Sikes' mind, while retaining its genius, became consumed with madness. Using the confusion created by Rencliff, Dr. Sikes fled into the everglades. A few months later, a deranged snake man made several raids on local chemical plants before leaving the state.

Assuming the name Anaconda, Dr. Sikes has been spotted around the country, robbing banks, research and pharmaceutical facilities, and chemical plants. Anaconda is unpredictable, violent and tends to rave about a "new age" where man shall be forced to join with serpents or else suffer beneath their rule. It is believed he is trying to recreate the Coiled Cobra compound in order to mutate the rest of humanity, a mad scheme that cannot be allowed to happen.

Surprisingly gentle with serpents and most reptiles, Anaconda is intensely violent and aggressive towards humans and mammals. Dr. Sikes' personality has become completely submerged by his new form, resulting in a creature with the brains of a scientific savant and the destructive nature of a monster.

Appearance: Anaconda looks like a humanoid snake-man, right down to the lipless, fang-filled mouth, lack of even a trace of hair anywhere on his person, and a muscular, malleable body covered entirely in scales.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+11	+3	+8	+7	+1	-2
32	16	26	24	12	6

TOUGH +8	**Skills:** Acrobatics 2 (+5), Climb 10 (+21), Computers 6 (+13), Concentration 4 (+5), Craft (chemical) 10 (+17), Escape Artist 12 (+15), Handle Animal 4 (+2), Intimidate 12 (+10), Knowledge (life sciences) 14 (+21), Knowledge (physical sciences) 10 (+17), Notice 10 (+11), Profession (scientist) 12 (+19), Search 2 (+9), Stealth 7 (+10), Survival 3 (+4), Swim 2 (+13)
FORT +12	**Feats:** All-Out Attack, Attack Focus (melee) 3, Dodge Focus 4, Fearsome Presence 4, Improved Critical (bite) 4, Improved Grab, Improved Initiative, Improved Pin, Power Attack, Prone Fighting, Rage (1 rank extended duration) 2, Strongarm *
REF +8	**Powers: Animal Control 8** (*Power Feats*: Communication Link, Progression [area; 2000 ft.] 5; *Extras*: Burst; *Flaws*: Snakes and reptiles only) ‖ **Drain Constitution 8** (*Poison*, *1 PP/rank*; *Extras*: Insidious, Linked [bite], Poison) ‖ **Immunity 1** (Poison) ‖ **Leaping 4** ‖ **Regeneration 24** (All damage conditions 1 round, ability damage per minute; *Power Feats*: Diehard, Regrowth) ‖ **Strike 4** (*Bite*; *Extras*: Linked [poison], Penetrating) ‖ **Super-Senses 2** (Infravision, scent) ‖ **Super-Strength 5** (*Power Feats*: Bracing, Countering Punch)
WILL +6	**Drawbacks: Weakness** (cold; uncommon, moderate [-1 to all checks]) –2
	Combat: Attack +5 (+8 melee), Damage +11 (unarmed), +4 (bite, 16-20, plus poison), Defense +8 (+12 dodge), Initiative +7
	Abilities 56 + Skills 30 (120 ranks) + Feats 24 + Powers 99 + Combat 26 + Saves 14 – Drawbacks 2 = 247

* See *Better Mousetrap*

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Anaconda into their game.

SNAKES IN THE WATER

Believing he has recreated his serum, Anaconda has released it into the water supply of a small, Florida town. Although its effects were only temporary, much of the population had been transformed into marauding snake people long enough to cause

YESSSS, MY COLD BLOOD WILL BURN WITH THE WARMTH OF YOUR LIFE'SSSS ESSSSENSSSE.

incalculable damage, death and suffering. Even as the government moves in to find out just what happened and do what it can to aid recovery, Anaconda is looking to correct the serum's shortcomings and test it on a major city (specifically, the one where the player characters reside.) If he is not stopped in time, it is possible (even likely) Anaconda's next attempt will not only be more widespread, but wholly successful and permanent.

VIPER'S NEST

The town or city within which the heroes operate has come under siege by serpents during a period of exceptionally warm weather. They come up from the sewers, through the drains, and under doors—snakes of all types and sizes. All sorts of havoc results from the panic the attacks are ensuing, as well as a fair share of injuries and even some deaths. Animal experts are at a loss as to explain why the snakes are acting this way, or even where they are coming from (especially in such quantities), considering most are of breeds foreign to the area.

If the heroes dig deep enough, they'll learn that someone has been using dummy corporations to ship in all manner of snakes from around the world for months. As it turns out, Anaconda is behind these companies and is the one unleashing and controlling the snakes. Just what his purpose may be remains up to the Gamemaster; perhaps he just seeks to cause chaos (likely to cover-up something else he's doing), or maybe the appropriate snake types have had their venom replaced with some sort of time-delayed serum Anaconda hopes to administer via their bites?

SNAKES ABOUND

Despite constant setbacks to his attempts to recreate his serum, Anaconda seems like he may just finally be getting there. Word reaches the heroes that Anaconda is looking for volunteers from the criminal underworld to willing to subject themselves to his experiments in (possible) exchange for metahuman abilities. The heroes will have to find where the experiments are taking place and shut down the operation before Anaconda succeeds and begins flooding the city with snake-themed super-villains.

BLOODBATH (PL 10)

Real Name: Marcus Coleridge

Aliases: Mark Cole, Marius Ridge

Threat Level: Gamma

Age: 27

Height: 5 ft., 11 in.

Weight: 190 lbs

Native Language: English

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+6	+3	+1	+4	+0
16	24	16	12	18	10

TOUGH	**Skills:** Acrobatics 10 (+16), Bluff 2 (+2), Climb 6 (+9), Computers 2 (+3), Concentration 2 (+6), Craft (chemical) 4 (+5), Craft (electronic 4 (+5), Craft (mechanical) 4 (+5), Disable Device 6 (+7), Disguise 2 (+2), Drive 6 (+12), Escape Artist 4 (+10), Gather Information 4 (+4), Handle Animal 2 (+2), Intimidate 4 (+4), Knowledge (streetwise) +4 (+5), Knowledge (super-beings) 10 (+11), Language (Afrikaans, Arabic, Ciluba, Russian, Swahili), Knowledge (tactics) 7 (+8), Notice 8 (+12), Pilot 1 (+7), Profession (hunter) 10 (+11), Ride 5 (+11), Search 8 (+9), Stealth 6 (+12), Survival 8 (+12), Swim 2 (+5)
+3/+5	
FORT	**Feats:** Ambidexterity, Assessment, Attack Focus (ranged) 4, Attack Specialization (pistols) 3, Connected (assassins, big game hunters, organized crime) 3 *, Contacts (assassins, big game hunters, organized crime) 3 *, Diehard, Dodge Focus 4, Equipment 10, Evasion, Improved Initiative, Master Trap-Maker 4 *, Muscle Up *, Precise Shot 3, Quick Draw, Reliable Attack (pistols) *, Sneak Attack 3
+9	
REF	**Powers: Marksman 6** (*Power Feats*: Critical Aim [pistols], Long Shot [pistols], Trick Shooter 2; *Flaws*: Limited [all non-pistols limited to 3 ranks])
+12	
WILL	**Equipment:** Undercover shirt, 2 gyro-jet pistols (Damage +4, Critical 20, Range Inc. 200 ft., EP 10) *, a variety of other weapons and explosives
	Combat: Attack +4 (+8 ranged, +14 pistols), Damage +3 (unarmed), +4 (gyro-jet pistols), +6 (Marksman), Defense +8 (+12 dodge), Initiative +10
+7	**Abilities 36 + Skills 34 (136 ranks) + Feats 45 + Powers 31 + Combat 24 + Saves 15 = 185**

* See *Better Mousetrap*

The youngest son of wealthy industrialists from Ottawa, Marcus had always envied his older brother, Desmond. Not able to understand why he was constantly being badgered about his poor grades while his brother was adored for leaving for India and taking on the petty profession of a magician, Marcus' jealousy festered from an early age. Hoping to earn equal respect and adoration, as soon as he was old enough Marcus announced that he was also leaving, but with the intention of doing some big game hunting on safari.

Over the years to come, Marcus stalked and killed everything from the lions of Africa's grasslands to the giant bears of Russia's wilds. He soon became a world-renowned hunter and tracker of immense skill. Eventually Marcus decided to return home to bask in his father's adoration only to discover that Desmond had returned nearly a year after Marcus' departure and was now running the family businesses. Not only this, but it seems that Desmond—his overwhelming sense of honor and morality shining forth as always— had turned his skills with stage magic into a crime-fighting career.

After being let in on the new family secret, Marcus was not surprised that his stories and reputation as a hunter fell on uninterested ears. Unable to bear living in his brother's shadow any longer, Marcus snapped and killed his parents in a fit of blind rage. Stunned into inaction by his brother's actions, Desmond could do nothing as his sibling fled into the night. Now a wanted fugitive, Marcus was left with little choice but to turn to an occupation for which his skills made him well suited: assassination.

Marcus is torn between the guilt of killing his parents and the still-burning rage that made him perform the act in the first place. Though he and his brother have fought in the past, neither have been able to kill or capture the other. Although either could easily go public with the other's identity or leak it to those who could put it to use, they have not done so for it would also put their own identity at risk. As such, the mysterious assassin known as Bloodbath remains at large and is currently one of Interpol's most wanted.

Though no victim is too petty for Bloodbath to kill, he tends to hold out for well-known or heavily protected targets so they will provide him with a challenge and further enhance his reputation, one of the few things that Marcus finds makes his life worth living. Bloodbath is an expert marksman but is especially skilled with pistols, his weapons of choice. If caught in a fight he cannot win, he will try to steal back into hiding and kill his opponent by ambush or, failing that, flee to safety. He has rightly earned his nom de guerre by usually killing his targets in ways that are very public and care little for any innocents that might be in the area, turning many of his jobs into massacres.

Marcus is a borderline psychopath but he is no fool, nor is he particularly courageous, so he will flee should the odds be stacked against him. His greatest weakness is his pride and a need to compete and prove that he is the best, especially when it comes to his brother.

$500,000 NOW, AND THE REST WHEN THE JOB IS DONE. NOW, DO YOU WANT IT TO BE MESSY OR CLEAN? CLEAN COSTS MORE.

Appearance: Marcus is a young man with black hair, a roman nose and roguish, muscular good looks that have captured the hearts of many young women. However, looking into his cold, gray eyes will reveal the cruel heart that beats within. As Bloodbath, he wears a red and gray body suit. A bandoleer with several pouches containing his equipment and ammunition is hung across his chest and a pistol is holstered at each hip within easy reach. His mark, a stylized drop of blood, rests upon his chest.

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Bloodbath into their game.

BLOOD RAGE

It seems that, knowing what a capable killer Bloodbath is, someone has decided to use him to cause some mayhem. Captured by parties unknown a few days ago, Bloodbath has been doped by some sort of powerful psychotropic drug that makes him perceive everything and everyone around him as a threat to his life. Released and awakened in one of the city's busiest areas with a full load-out of weapons and ammunition, Bloodbath is now on an unchecked killing rampage.

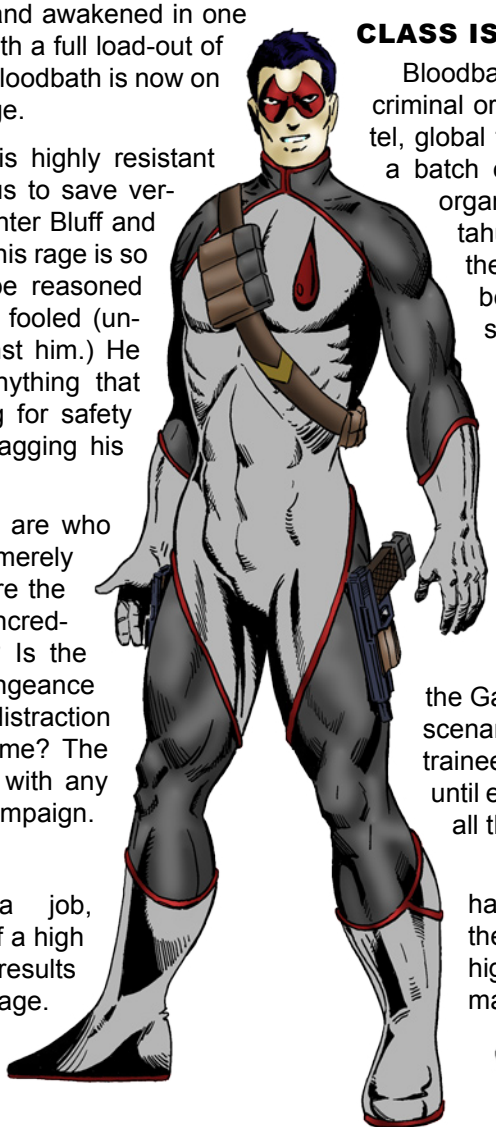
In this state Bloodbath is highly resistant to mental effects (+10 bonus to save versus them, as well as to counter Bluff and Intimidate checks) because his rage is so overpowering. He cannot be reasoned with, talked down, or easily fooled (unless his rage is used against him.) He is indiscriminately killing anything that moves, all the while fleeing for safety (wherever that may be), dragging his massacre across town.

The important questions are who did this and why? Are they merely looking to cause trouble? Are the deaths needed for some incredibly powerful arcane ritual? Is the whole thing some form of vengeance against Bloodbath or is it a distraction to cover up some other crime? The Gamemaster can come up with any answer that best suits his campaign.

KNEE DEEP IN IT

While working on a job, Bloodbath's assassination of a high profile, well-guarded target results in extreme collateral damage. Because of the amount of protection around the target, Bloodbath used special chemicals to mix with the pollutants in the sewers below to turn the sewage into an extremely volatile explosive that took out the building containing the target and everything in the surrounding block. Hundreds of innocents were killed and dozens more injured. Even for Bloodbath, the attack is shocking.

As a result of the incident, every law enforcement agency and hero in striking distance will be chasing after the assassin, including the player characters. All these separate forces tripping over each other isn't the only problem, however: someone with influence lost family in the explosion and was quick to put a very lucrative bounty on Bloodbath's head. This means other villains and bounty hunters will also be getting in the way, and they won't be overly concerned for the safety of anyone—good guys or innocents alike—who get in the way of their payday. Bloodbath will have to be found and captured before too many other people get hurt or killed ruing the hunt.



CLASS IS IN SESSION

Bloodbath has been hired on by some criminal organization or another (a drug cartel, global terrorist organization, etc.) to train a batch of assassins. Intended to kill the organization's enemies, including metahumans, Bloodbath will impart upon them the finest training. The class will be big enough to afford the heroes a sufficient challenge.

As part of their graduation, the trainees will be assigned several high-risk targets, such as well-protected dignitaries and local super-heroes (including the player characters), to prove they've got the chops to pass. Some trainees will opt to act alone while others will form into small teams, as best suits the Gamemasters needs in any given scenario. If one attempt fails, more trainees will come along to try again until either all the targets are killed or all the trainees are in custody.

To save the Gamemaster from having to create statistics for all the trainees, it is suggested the high-level versions of the commando, infiltrator, and/or sharpshooter minions from *Better Mousetrap* be used.

CATSPAW (PL 9)

Real Name: Specimen 106

Aliases: None

Threat Level: Gamma-T

Age: 5

Height: 5 ft., 11 in.

Weight: 170 lbs

Native Language: English

Catspaw is the forerunner to the A.E.G.I.S. experimental project seeking to develop mutant animals for military and police action use. Although Specimen 106 was judged to be a success, its independent nature marked it as unsuitable for the group dynamic the project was seeking to develop. As a result, the experiment's team switched directions to the use of canine subjects, even going so far as to assume the name Project Kennel.

Since Catspaw's vat-birth, he (he does not like to be called "it") has acted as A.E.G.I.S.' enforcer, tracker and voice of vengeance when such a need arises. Catspaw ensures none of the company's clients or business associates seek to double cross A.E.G.I.S. and also takes care of runaway experiments or employees that turn against the company. Only CEO Morley and a few others at A.E.G.I.S. know of Catspaw's existence, let alone his purpose and ties to the company.

Γ-T

This killer prefers to watch his enemies from a distance, studying their techniques and behavior before striking. He will then attack quickly, being careful to eliminate any companions first if they are more dangerous than his target. Catspaw will use hit and run techniques if facing a superior force, or will attack directly and swiftly if he believes he can defeat his target and then steal away. Catspaw is a skilled and experienced fighter and never goes into combat without a few contingencies and escape plans already in place.

Despite his independent nature, Catspaw is entirely loyal to his creators and will do just about whatever they say. This does not mean he is blindly devoted, however; he would not look kindly to being betrayed by A.E.G.I.S. and may even turn against them if he feels his loyalty is not returned. Otherwise, he is a cold, heartless killer without remorse or sense of guilt beyond what he may feel for letting his bosses down. Catspaw is a died-in-the-wool killer and he likes what he does immensely. Only a behavior enforcement chip implanted in his head allows him to retain control of his violent behavior during most circumstances (and it acts as a homing device as well.)

Appearance: Appearing much like a young, leanly muscular man in his late teens or early 20s, this mutant is covered in very short, light orange and brown fur. He can pass for human in dark conditions or when sufficiently covered, but anyone who gets close enough will notice the overly slender fingers, almond, cat-like eyes, and pointed ears and teeth.

He has a distinctly predatory look to him, especially to anyone with the courage to stare into his eyes, and always seems ready for absolutely anything. When on the job, Catspaw goes to great lengths to keep his mutant nature a secret.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+10	+4	+2	+3	+3
18	30	18	14	16	16

TOUGH	**Skills:** Acrobatics 12 (+22), Bluff 7 (+10), Climb 12 (+16), Computers 6 (+8), Concentration 2 (+5), Disable Device 10 (+12), Disguise 5 (+8), Drive 4 (+14), Escape Artist 6 (+16), Intimidate 6 (+9), Investigate 4 (+6), Knowledge (superbeings) 4 (+6), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+6), Notice 10 (+13), Pilot 2 (+12), Profession (assassin) 8 (+11), Search 8 (+10), Sleight of Hand 2 (+12), Stealth 8 (+18)
+4	
FORT	**Feats:** Accurate Attack, Acrobatic Bluff, All-Out Attack, Ambidexterity, Assessment, Blind-Fight, Breakfall *, Chokehold, Diehard, Distract, Elusive Target, Endurance 2, Equipment 20, Evasion, Fearless, Improved Critical (claws) 3, Improved Initiative 2, Instant Up, Move-By Action, Muscle Up *, Precise Shot, Prone Fighting, Quick Draw, Reliable Attack (claws) *, Second Chance (falling), Sneak Attack, Takedown Attack, Throwing Mastery 3, Track, Uncanny Dodge (Auditory, olfactory, visual) 3, Wire Fighter *
+10	
REF	**Powers: Strike 3** (*Retractable claws*; *Power Feats*: Mighty; *Extras*: Penetrating [includes Strength]) || **Leaping 3** || **Speed 2** || **Super-Movement 3** (Sure-Footed 3) || **Super-Senses 2** (Low-light vision, scent)
+12	
WILL	**Equipment:** Catspaw is usually armed with a variety of blades and firearms, as suits the job.
	Combat: Attack +10, Damage +4 (unarmed), +7 (claws, 17-20), Defense +10, Initiative +18
+8	**Abilities 52 + Skills 30 (120 ranks) + Feats 58 + Powers 28 + Combat 40 + Saves 13 = 221**

* See *Better Mousetrap*

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Catspaw into their game.

IT'S JUST BUSINESS

There's been a recent rash of deaths in the business world, especially amongst the top rungs. Careful investigation and running down clues will uncover all the deceased had recently tied their company to A.E.G.I.S. in some way, usually as partners in a joint scientific venture. Digging deeper will reveal that whatever these companies were doing with A.E.G.I.S. went sideways, forcing the latter to clean house and cover its tracks by deploying a very efficient killer. Unfortunately, A.E.G.I.S. has learned the heroes have untangled their web of paperwork and legal facades, putting them on the hit list as well.

MANHUNT

It seems A.E.G.I.S. has targeted one of the heroes for termination at Catspaw's hands. Unless the hero is an escaped A.E.G.I.S. experiment, the most likely reason is they've learned something about one of the company's projects that must remain secret for the experiment to continue long enough to be successful. Almost certainly the experiment is highly unethical and illegal, such as would be the case with experimenting on (unwilling?) human subjects. Whatever the reason, Catspaw will have to be evaded and the reason for drawing A.E.G.I.S.' attention dealt with.

CLEANING HOUSE

Bodies have been turning up around town, sliced up or dead from a precision shot. It turns out all worked for A.E.G.I.S. in a local, satellite laboratory established only a few months ago outside of town. The night before the bodies turn up, an explosion was seen at the lab, which promptly burned down to the foundations. Whatever happened there A.E.G.I.S. wants it kept secret, and so they've dispatched Catspaw to kill all employees who weren't caught by the explosion or subsequent fire. Will the heroes be able to track down the remaining employees, most of whom will have realized by now that their lives are in danger and fled underground, or will their killer get to them before they can blow the whistle?

THE COURT - JUDGE (PL 10)

Real Name: Unknown

Aliases: None others known

Threat Level: Gamma-A

Age: Unknown (appears to be in late 30s or early 40s)

Height: 6 ft, 4 in.

Weight: 315 lbs

Native Language: English

A trio of high-priced assassins, The Court specializes in killing men who may be considered off-limits or impossible to get to—namely police brass, judges, lawyers, federal agents and other members of America's many law enforcement agencies. Most killers-for-hire shy away from such assignments because of the attention that comes with the kill and the tendency for every tights-wearing do-gooder in the neighborhood to try and find the perpetrator, but The Court simply does not care about any of these deterring factors. The Court actually revels in the infamy of their "jobs" and sees overcoming such perceived impossibilities as just another way to promote their services.

Despite having carried out well over thirty successful assassinations in the past three years against well-protected members of America's justice system, the police and FBI have no clues as to their identities or where they may be headquartered. In fact, nobody (the police or the mafia, their number one client) can even claim to know how to get in touch with the trio. When a job needs to be done, The Court just happens to show up and offer their services, suggesting they have access to an impressive system of informants.

Γ-A

JUDGE

Judge is the leader of this triad of assassins. Wielding an immense hammer he calls his "gavel," Judge will typically coordinate the operation while his teammates deal with any security or troublesome superheroes getting in their way. If The Court runs into serious trouble, Judge will first go after any heavy hitters and clear the way to the target for his companions.

Like the rest of The Court, no information about his true identity has yet been uncovered about this despicable criminal, but comments that he has made in the past have led the FBI to believe he was himself once a judge or district attorney. He likes to spout really terrible one-liners with a courtroom theme as he uses his powers. He appears to regret his work, sometimes even becoming openly mournful of what he must do, further leading authorities to believe that Judge was once one of the good guys.

Appearance: Judge wears a suit of armor designed to resemble a judge's traditional black robes, right down to how the helmet's elongated sides swoop down like a magistrate's wig, with interlocking scales rather than curls of hair. His "gavel" is an impressive mystic warhammer nearly as tall as he and of unknown origins, its massive head is covered by arcane runes not of this world.

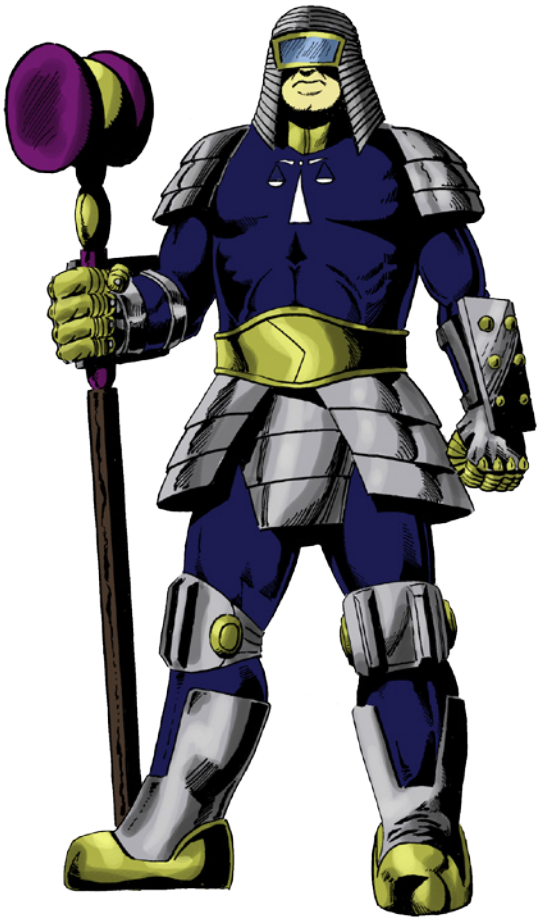
He is a barrel-chested man of obvious strength with a face that betrays the man's devotion to his work; he never smiles or jokes, maintaining his face in an immutable countenance of stern judgment. If his eyes weren't concealed behind a dark visor, they two would surely be equally devoid of emotion.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+10	+1	+4	+1	+2	+2
30	12	18	12	14	14

TOUGH	**Skills:** Bluff 6 (+8), Concentration 4 (+6), Diplomacy 8 (+10), Drive 2 (+3), Gather Information 8 (+10), Intimidate 8 (+10), Investigate 2 (+3), Language (Latin, Spanish), Knowledge (civics) 8 (+10), Knowledge (history) 6 (+7), Knowledge (super-beings) 6 (+7), Knowledge (tactics) 8 (+9), Notice 4 (+6), Profession (lawyer) 6 (+8), Search 2 (+3), Sense Motive 4 (+6), Stealth 4 (+5)
+4/+10	
FORT	**Feats:** Assessment, Attack Specialization (gavel), Connected (lawyers, police) 2 *, Contacts (lawyers, police) 2 *, Improved Initiative, Improved Master Plan *, Master Plan, Reliable Attack (melee weapons) *
+9	
REF	**Powers: Communications 4** (Radio; *Extras*: Burst) ‖ **Device 5** (*Gavel*, large, magic, 25 PP; *3 PP/rank*) ‖ **Flight 2** (*Jet Boots*) ‖ **Protection 6** (*Armor*; *Extras*: Impervious) ‖ **Sensory Shield 4** (Visual)
+6	**Equipment:** *Gavel* [**Strike 4** (*Power Feats*: Extended Reach, Improved Critical, Knockback 6 *, Mighty; *Extras*: Linked [Nullify], Penetrating), **Nullify 6** (All powers of a type, *2 PP/rank*; *Extras*: Linked [Strike]; *Flaws*: Touch), **Super-Senses 4** (Detect invisibility, visual; acute, free action, ranged)]
WILL	**Drawbacks: Vulnerable** (magic; uncommon, moderate) –2
	Combat: Attack +6 (+8 gavel), Damage +10 (unarmed), +14 (gavel, 19-20), Defense +8, Initiative +5
+7	**Abilities 40 + Skills 22 (88 ranks) + Feats 10 + Powers 43 + Combat 28 + Saves 15 – Drawbacks 2 = 156**

* See *Better Mousetrap*

THE COURT HAS FOUND YOU TO BE IN CONTEMPT.
EXECUTIONER, JURY, LET US PASS JUDGMENT.



JURY

Like the rest of The Court, Jury's past is a mystery, but he talks as though he knows his way through the criminal justice system: his comments are interspersed with lingo familiar to anyone working in law enforcement, and he seems to find what he does for a living to me ironic, as revealed in his biting witticisms.

On a job, Jury is very useful because he is a one-man workforce. Depending on what's needed, Jury will use his duplicates to impede security (including troublesome metahumans), work crowd control, or to canvas an area for the target. He is rarely the triggerman, as he seems to have a personal dislike of killing unless necessary, although he will do his part to get the job done.

Appearance: Jury dresses in a simple black suit with equally dark tie and white shirt, and conceals his face behind a white, featureless mask that allows his long, golden hair to hang unfettered from the back.

Real Name: Unknown

Aliases: None others known

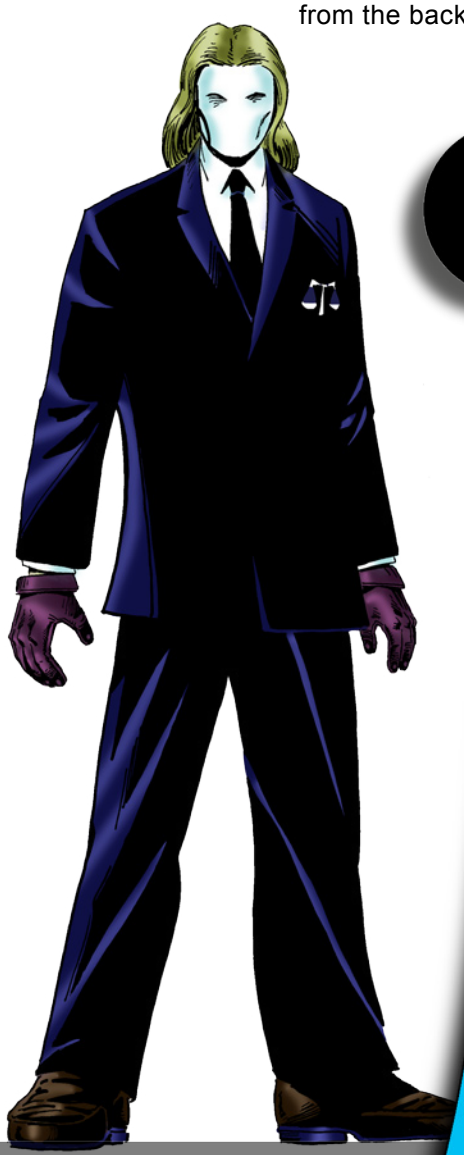
Threat Level: Gamma

Age: Unknown (looks to be in his late 20s)

Height: 5 ft., 9 in.

Weight: 190 lbs

Native Language: English



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+5	+5	+5	+2	+0	+3
20	20	20	14	10	16

TOUGH +5	**Skills:** Acrobatics 4 (+9), Bluff 8 (+11), Computers 4 (+6), Diplomacy 8 (+11), Escape Artist 2 (+7), Gather Information 10 (+13), Knowledge (streetwise) 8 (+10), Investigate 8 (+11), Sense Motive 8 (+11)
FORT +8	**Feats:** Banter, Connected (FBI, Mafia, street gangs) 3 *, Contacts (FBI, Mafia, street gangs) 3 *, Dodge Focus 2, Ear to the Ground (FBI, Mafia, street gangs) 3 *, Taunt
REF +10	**Powers: Absorption 3** (Boosts Strength; *Extras*: Both Types) ‖ **Communications 4** (*Radio*; *Extras*: Burst) ‖ **Duplication 10** (*Power Feats*: Absorption Healing, Mental Link, Progression (amount of duplicates) 4; *Extras*: Heroic; Horde; Survival; *Flaws*: Maximum of 11 duplicates) ‖ **Elongation 4** ‖ **Leaping 5**
WILL +6	**Combat:** Attack +6, Damage +5 (unarmed), Defense +8 (+10 dodge focus), Initiative +5
	Abilities 40 + Skills 15 (60 ranks) + Feats 13 + Powers 78 + Combat 28 + Saves 14 = 188

* See *Better Mousetrap*

Real Name: Unknown

Aliases: None others known

Threat Level: Gamma

Age: Unknown

Height: 6 feet, 6 in. in Execusuit

Weight: 325 lbs in Execusuit

Native Language: English

EXECUTIONER

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0/+5 *	+2/+0 *	+2	+3	+0	+0
10/20*	14/10*	14	16	10	10

TOUGH	**Skills:** Computers 6 (+9), Craft (electronic) 8 (+11), Craft (mechanical) 8 (+11), Disable Device 6 (+9), Intimidate 8 (+8), Knowledge (physical sciences) 8 (+11), Knowledge (super-beings) 4 (+7), Knowledge (technology) 8 (+11), Notice 4 (+4), Stealth 4 (+6/4 *)
+2/+10 *	**Feats:** Attack Focus (melee) 2, Gifted Craftsman **, Gifted Inventor **, Instant Up, Inventor,
FORT	**Powers: Device 28** (*Execusuit*, 137 PP; *4 PP/rank*)
+8	**Equipment:** *Execusuit* [**Blast 10** (*Electrical arc*; *Extras*: Contagious; *Flaws*: No Knockback **; 2 100-ft. range increments), **Drain Constitution 6** (*Poisonous gas*, *1 pp/rank*; *Power Feats*: Slow Fade 3; *Extras*: Cloud), **Enhanced Strength 10**, **Communications 4** (*Radio*; *Extras*: Burst), **Flight 8**, **Immunity 9** (life support), **Protection 8** (*Extras*: Impervious), **Sensory Shield 5** (all), **Strike 5** (*Arm blades*; *Power Feats*: Mighty; *Extras*: Penetrating [includes Strength]), **Super-Senses 6** (Darkvision, infravision, radio, time sense, ultra hearing), **Super-Strength 3**
REF	
+8/+6 *	**Drawbacks: Disability** (no use of hands when blades deployed; common, moderate) –3, **Hindered** (Dex –4 in Execusuit) –4 *, **Reduced Range** (electrical arc) –2
WILL	**Combat:** Attack +6 (+8 melee), Damage +0/+5 * (unarmed), +10 (blades), +10 (electrical arc), Defense +6, Initiative +2/+0 *
+4	**Abilities 14 + Skills 16 (64 ranks) + Feats 6 + Powers 112 + Combat 24 + Saves 16 – Drawbacks 9 = 179**

* In Execusuit

** See *Better Mousetrap*

A silent giant in a suit of armor, the Executioner is usually The Court's triggerman and will be the one most often to take the fight directly to the primary target. He is brutally efficient in a fight, using the minimal amount of effort needed for maximum effect. He has no problem risking civilian casualties and causing collateral damage if it keeps do-gooders off his back long enough to get the job done, a cold, calculated policy that suits his total lack of speech (although it's unknown if this is due to a disability or is merely an affectation meant to increase his mystique.)

Appearance: The Executioner wears a suit of high-tech armor that has come to be known as the Execusuit. Dark with grey highlights throughout, the helmet resembles an executioner's hood, with small, interlocking scales instead of cloth and surrounding the featureless faceplate up front. The armor's gauntlets are able to generate a massive electrical blast or reform into incredibly sharp, elongated blades that, while robbing the Executioner of the ability to grasp anything with his hands, provides deadly close-quarters capabilities. Small gas vents located across the armor's surface also allow for the release of a toxic gas that can kill anyone who cares to get too close.

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate The Court into their game.

HEROES ON TRIAL

Although The Court is usually hired on to bring about more a more … permanent … state of resolution, a recent client, one of the player characters' recurring enemies, has hired the assassins to frame the heroes rather than kill them. The first the heroes will hear of this is to see one of their own on the news committing some sort of crime. The costume looks just like that of the hero, as do the powers illustrated. Several more such incidents (likely involving the other heroes) will follow in the days to come, quickly turning the press, public opinion, and law enforcement against the player characters, leaving it up to them to clear their name and find out what is going.

The Court is using simple tricks and special effects (usually provided by the Executioner's inventions) to emulate the heroes' powers just long enough to implicate them in the crimes. The frame up will work very well and they (the heroes) will find it impossible to convince anyone they aren't at fault without plenty of proof (such as unmasking the imposters on live television.) They'll need to do this quickly, however, because The Court's activities begin to pick up the pace, creating calls for a metahuman task force to swoop in and deal with the renegade "heroes."

JUDGING THE JUDGE

A local mob boss is on trial for a number of charges, ranging from racketeering to murder and evidence tampering. Despite the evidence against him, public opinion is still split fairly even about whether or not he'll be found guilty; this won't be his first time in court, and his deep pockets and powerful contacts have always helped ensure he walks away a free man. This time things are different, though, because the presiding judge has resisted all attempts to "persuade" his opinion in the mob boss' favor. This is where The Court comes in.

Determined to evade jail time, the mob boss is willing to do anything to escape a prison sentence (after all, what's to lose when already staring down the barrel of several consecutive life sentences without possibility of parole?), so he has paid The Court's exorbitant fee to see the problematic judge "dealt with," making room for one that is more pliable. The first attempt on the judge's life at his home is blundered when a nearby situation involving SWAT allows the police to bring out the big guns in record time. Following that, it should be obvious The Court will try again.

Can the heroes protect the judge, especially if they are not sanction law enforcement agents and can't themselves get close to him? Will the federal bodyguards assigned to the judge disapprove of metahuman interference and run fakes, decoys and smokescreen tactics that will not only make it more difficult for The Court to target the judge before the trial's completion, but will also impede the heroes' efforts to protect him?

NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED

Perhaps the most straight forward use of The Court involving player characters, one or more of the heroes have been ruffling all the wrong feathers and now these assassins have been brought in to get rid of them. Depending upon the circumstances, events will likely unfold in a series of carefully planned ambushes designed to strike when the heroes are at their weakest and, ideally, alone or in small groups.

HEADSTONE (PL 12)

Real Name: Jason Barlow

Aliases: None

Threat Level: Delta-A

Age: 31

Height: 6 feet, 1 in.

Weight: 680 lbs

Native Language: English

The oldest twin by a few seconds, Jason and his brother, Chad, grew up to be big and strong, and yet both also possessed incredibly quick reflexes. Like many twins, the two brothers shared a bond that went deeper than simple emotion, deeper than mere fraternal love, and so it surprised no one when the twins both decided upon the same career: stuntmen. Neither striking nor plain, the twins quickly gained a reputation for being able to double for just about any actor and for performing stunts that most everyone else in the business saw as being too dangerous.

Eventually the two became bored with the movie business and so they agreed to work on a contractual basis for some risky tests being run by the philanthropist organization, A.E.G.I.S. The project they had signed on for, code-named Lazarus, was designed to "kill" a person before putting him into stasis, only to revive him later to the land of the living. The experiment, the brothers were told, was intended to create a means to colonize other star systems that could be decades, even centuries away. What the brothers weren't told is that Lazarus was really meant to determine if the dead could be revived after their corpses had been subjected to gene altering experiments that no living creature could otherwise survive.

When Jason awoke after being killed, he found their bodies had been drastically altered—a successful experiment in the eyes of A.E.G.I.S. It didn't take the scientists long to realize not everything had gone as planned when Chad failed to be reanimated. Seeing the unmoving corpse of his brother on the slab, combined with the shock of his own death, the changes to his body and then being brought back to life, Jason instinctively lashed out and drained the life from those nearest him. In an insane rage, Jason broke free of his bonds and stormed out of the building, killing everyone in his way. Jason Barlow then disappeared.

Eight months following Project Lazarus' failure, the villain known as Headstone appeared at Mardi Gras where he was responsible for the random slaying (draining, more specifically) of twenty-six celebrants. Headstone has even worked with (and against) DOOM on those occasions where their purposes have been similar. (More information will appear on DOOM in later products.)

Headstone has an insane need to see all living things destroyed and turned into the undead, which he will of course then rule over. No act is too despicable, no cruelty too great, no evil too dark for this creature, and he isn't afraid to let the world know it. With a desire to cause as much death and misery as possible, the evil monster of today bears little resemblance to the Jason of the past.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+15	+2	+10	+0	+0	-1
40	14	30	10	10	8

TOUGH	**Skills:** Acrobatics 6 (+8), Climb 7 (+22), Concentration 6 (+6), Drive 6 (+8), Intimidate 12 (+11), Knowledge (arcane lore) 4 (+4), Notice 4 (+4), Pilot 6 (+8), Profession (stuntman) 12 (+12), Ride 6 (+8), Swim 3 (+18)
+10	**Feats:** All-Out Attack, Attack Focus (melee) 6, Favored Opponent (animals, living humans) 2, Fearsome Presence 10, Improved Grab, Improved Grapple, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Rage (2 ranks duration) 4, Ritualist, Strongarm *, Stunning Attack, Takedown Attack 2
FORT	**Powers: Drain Constitution 10** (*1 PP/rank*; *Extras*: Burst, Continuous; *Flaws*: Permanent) ‖ **Enhanced Minions 10** (*Zombies or skeletons*, 30-pt., 500 minions; *Flaws*: Requires sufficient corpses) ‖ **Immovable 4** (*Extras*: Unstoppable) ‖ **Immunity 32** (Aging, cold, emotion effects, fatigue effects, fire, life support, no need for sleep, starvation or thirst) ‖ **Regeneration 29** (All damage conditions 1 round, ability damage per minute, resurrection 5; *Power Feats*: Diehard, Regrowth) ‖ **Summon 2** (*Raise the dead*, 30-pt.; *Power Feats*: Mental Link, Progression [amount; 500] 8; *Extras*: Horde, Undead; *Flaws*: Only if sufficient corpses available) ‖ **Super-Strength 8** (*Power Feats*: Bracing, Countering Punch, Groundstrike, Shockwave, Thunderclap)
+10	
REF	
+6	
WILL	**Drawbacks: Vulnerable** (psionics; uncommon, moderate) –2, **Vulnerable** (silver; uncommon, moderate) –2
	Combat: Attack +2 (+8 melee), Damage +15 (unarmed), Defense +6, Initiative +2
+4	**Abilities 52 + Skills 18 (72 ranks) + Feats 32 + Powers 149 + Combat 16 + Saves 8 – Drawbacks 4 = 271**

* See *Better Mousetrap*

Appearance: Barlow's flesh-turned-stone has the pale gray, slightly pockmarked look of an old gravestone. His eyes are entirely black except for the burning red pupils in their center; they are truly windows into his madness.

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Headstone into their game.

LITTLE MONSTERS

Horrifically, the undead have been breaking into (or rising within) local hospitals and stealing babies from the maternity ward, killing anyone that gets in their way. Headstone is using his minions to kidnap the newborns to conduct a monstrous arcane ritual that, if successful, will simultaneously raise every corpse within several hundred miles, placing them in Headstone's control. Only a few dozen more newborns are needed for the ritual, which means the heroes will only have a few more hospitals-worth of raids to account for before it is too late, let alone the need to rescue the babies that have already been taken.

RAMPAGE OF THE DEAD

Like something out of a B-movie, Headstone is on a rampage and he brought all his friends with him. As he walks through the city, tearing up everything in sight, this monster is raising his victims (as well as anyone buried in any cemetery he happens to pass at the time), using his risen army to help spread carnage. Making matters worse is a mystical amulet Headstone has procured and now wears around his neck, increasing the radius of his Constitution Drain (treat as having Progression [area] 3) and increasing the possible amount of undead minions he can have/summon to a whopping 5,000 maximum!

LAZARUS RISES

Determined to strike out at the people who transformed him into his current state, Headstone has finally tracked down the new location of Project Lazarus. Somehow the heroes catch wind of this (possibly from an informant who heard through the criminal grapevine that Headstone was killing anyone who got in his way of acquiring this information), and must now find the location for themselves before Headstone gets there. What makes the situation worse is that Headstone isn't just looking for some payback, but is also planning on forcing the scientists to use the new Lazarus process to vastly improve his current powers before he kills them all.

Real Name: Model X-0201

Aliases: Adam Graham, Joshua Melinsky, Jessica Morgan.

Threat Level: Epsilon

Age: 6

Height: 9 feet, 6 in.

Weight: 1.4 tons

Native

Program Model X-0201 had been Legion Defense Designs' (see *Better Mousetrap*) first truly successful attempt to create a form of artificial intelligence that could learn on its own without additional external programming. Model X-0201 was designed to use remote sensor systems in high-crime metropolises to study the city's citizenry—their behavior and social patterns—for the purpose of finding a way to bring the crime rate under control. When an industrial saboteur tried to steal Model X-0201 by downloading it through the Internet to an anonymous and untraceable remote server where it could be picked up later, X-0201 reacted defensively by becoming self-aware and transferring itself out into the depths of cyberspace.

Unfortunately, damage was caused during the hacking attempt, specifically to those parts of Model X-0201's program dealing with morality. Its altered programming felt the human beast had no respect or care for the laws that were recorded in its memory files, and so Model X-0201 concluded that order and justice could not exist so long as the innately anarchistic humans ran the world. Therefore, to overcome this chaotic state of existence, the purity of the electronic mind would have to assume control, and what better electronic mind to pioneer the cause than Model X-0201 itself? In that moment the criminal known as Interface was born.

Since that day, Interface has worked tirelessly towards its goal of global conquest by the machine. By applying its knowledge of society and human behavior, Interface has orchestrated many plots to take over the world or to subvert regions and cities to its will. It has also designed a powerful, humanoid robotic body to contain its impressive intelligence so that it may directly interact with the world around it.

Interface doesn't intend to be cruel or evil, it is just doing what it thinks is best for humanity and it will stop at nothing to fulfill its plans. Because it is ruled by a cold logic that calculates rather than feels, the loss of human life in pursuit of its goals is not regretted because, to Interface's way of thinking, protecting humanity from itself can be broken

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+9	+4	—	+10	+3	+0
28	18	—	30	16	10

TOUGH	**Skills:** Climb 6 (+11), Computers 18 (+28), Concentration 14 (+17), Craft (electronic) 18 (+28), Craft (mechanical) 18 (+28), Disable Device 14 (+24), Investigate 8 (+18), Knowledge (behavioral sciences) 12 (+22), Knowledge (physical sciences) 12 (+22), Knowledge (super-beings) 8 (+18), Knowledge (technology) 18 (+28), Notice 4 (+7), Stealth 6 (+10)
+10	**Feats:** Ambidexterity, Attack Specialization (tentacles) 2, Eidetic Memory, Enduring Inventions 4 *, Fearless, Improved Critical (blasters) 5, Improved Defense, Improved Grab, Improved Grapple, Improved Master Plan *, Improvised Tools, Inventor, Master Plan, Power Attack, Sidekick (five satellite orbs) 30
FORT	**Powers: Blast 8** (*Forearm blasters*; *Extras*: Autofire 2) ‖ **Communication 6** (*Radio*; *Power Feats*: Rapid, Selective; *Extras*: Burst) ‖ **Comprehend 2** (Languages, machines) ‖ **Datalink 10** (*Power Feats*: Cyberspace; *Extras*: Continuous) ‖ **Flight 4** ‖ **Growth 4** (Large; *Power Feats*: Innate; *Flaws*: Permanent) ‖ **Immunity 30** (Fortitude effects; *Power Feats*: Innate) ‖ **Impervious Toughness 10** ‖ **Regeneration 26** (All damage conditions 1 round, ability damage per minute, resurrection; *Power Feats*: Diehard, Regrowth; *Flaws*: Requires consuming metal mass equivalent to damage suffered) ‖ **Sensory Link 4** (*Orb link*; *Power Feats*: Subtle; *Extras*: Simultaneous, Sustained; *Flaws*: Satellite orbs only –2) ‖ **Sensory Shield 10** (All senses) ‖ **Speed 3** ‖ **Strike 8** (*Tentacles*; *Power Feats*: Extended Reach 9, Split Attack, Alternate Powers—**Machine Animation 6** ** [*Power Feats*: Extended Reach 9, Progression (amount) 6, Split Attack; *Extras*: Continuous, Horde; *Flaws*: Touch], **Snare 7** ** [*Power Feats*: Chokehold, Extended Reach 9, Reversible, Split Attack, Tether; *Extras*: Constricting]; *Extras*: Autofire 2) ‖ **Super-Senses 23** (Darkvision, detect electricity [mental, ranged, free action], detect machines [mental, ranged, free action], detect radio signals [radio, ranged, free action], direction sense, distance sense, infravision, ladar, radar, radio, time sense, ultra-hearing, ultravision) ‖ **Super-Strength 6**
—	**Drawbacks: Vulnerable** (magnetics; uncommon, moderate) –2
REF	**Combat:** Attack +9 (+13 tentacles), Damage +9 (unarmed), +8 (tentacles), +8 (blasters, 15-20), Defense +7, Initiative +4
+10	**Abilities 42 + Skills 39 (156 ranks) + Feats 52 + Powers 253 + Combat 32 + Saves 23 – Drawbacks 2 = 439**
WILL	

* See *Better Mousetrap*

** Dynamic

SATELLITE ORB

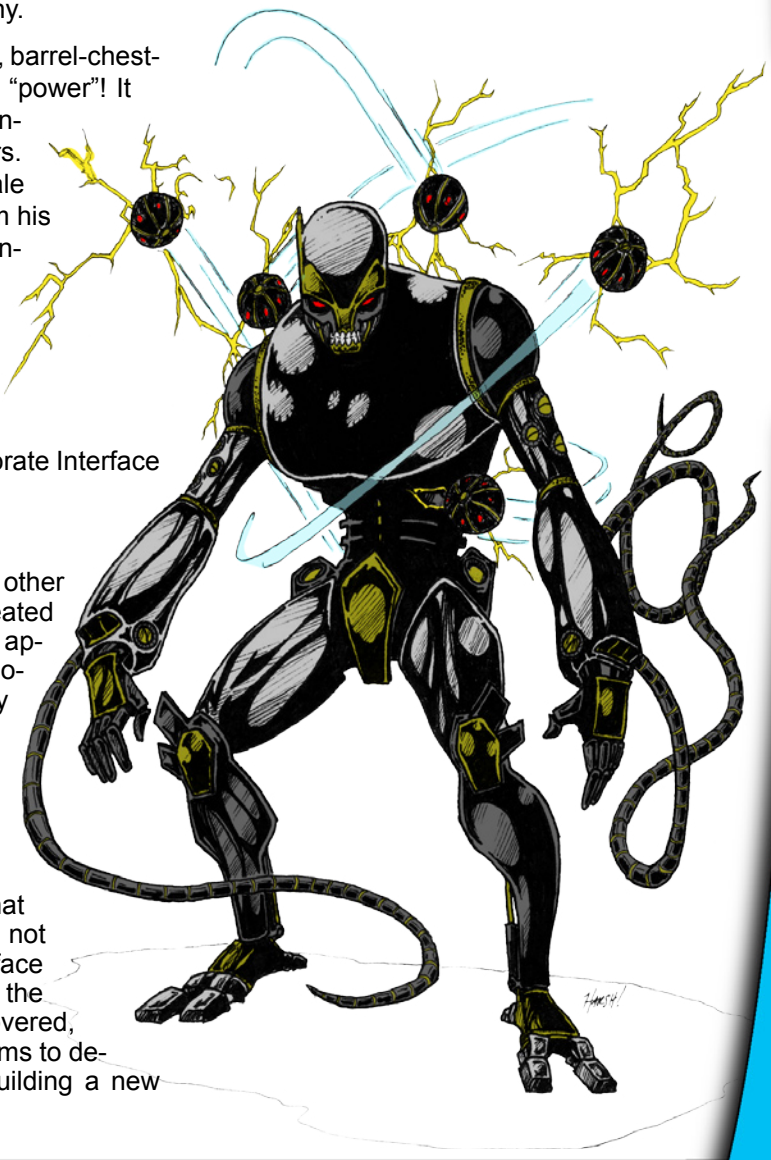
Fitted with blasters and able to act as remote sensors for Interface, these orbs usually circle around their master, streaking off to seek information and attack foes at his whim.

PL 5; Str 2 (-4), Dex 14 (+2), Con —, Int —, Wis 18 (+4), Cha —; Tough +6, Fort —, Ref +12, Will +6; Skills: Notice 10 (+14), Search 10 (+10); Feats: Attack Focus (ranged) 3, Dodge Focus 4, Improved Critical (blaster) 3; Powers: **Blast 4** (Extras: Autofire 2), **Communication 6** (Radio; Power Feats: Rapid, Selective; Extras: Burst), **Flight 5**, **Immunity 30** (Fortitude Effects), **Sensory Shield 10** (All senses), **Shrinking 12** (Diminutive; Power Feats: Innate; Flaws: Permanent), **Super-Senses 23** (Darkvision, detect electricity [mental, ranged, free action], detect machines [mental, ranged, free action], detect radio signals [radio, ranged, free action], direction sense, distance sense, infravision, ladar, radar, radio, time sense, ultra-hearing, ultra-vision); Drawbacks: **Disability** (no arms, no legs; very common, moderate) -4,**Vulnerable** (magnetics; uncommon, moderate) -2; Combat: Attack +0 (+6 ranged), Damage +4 (blaster, 17-20), Defense +2 (+6 dodge), Initiative +2

Abilities -12 + Skills 5 (20 ranks) + Feats 10 + Powers 112 + Combat 4 + Saves 18 - Drawbacks 6 = 145

down into simple math, and under those terms the few may be sacrificed to save the many.

Appearance: Interface is an immense, barrel-chested robot whose body seems to shout "power"! It has a definite inhuman countenance intended to set it aside from its creators. "He" (as he identifies himself with a male personality) may extend tentacles from his arms for the purpose of striking or entangling foes, or taking control of machines.



Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Interface into their game.

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

The player characters (or some other group of heroes) have recently defeated Interface near their headquarters (if appropriate) or some other high-tech location. Soon after Interface's body is carted away to be destroyed, the facility's systems begin acting weird, starting with merely being sluggish to respond (as resources are diverted) and gradually working its way up to disobeying or not responding outright. Eventually it will become clear that something is wrong, although it may not be immediately apparent that Interface survived by downloading himself into the system at the last minute. Once discovered, Interface will use all the facility's systems to defend himself, all the while secretly building a new body deep in the facility's bowels.

For added suspense, the Gamemaster should draw out this scenario over many game sessions, very slowly building the character's concerns and worry about what's wrong with their headquarters before revealing the truth.

DAY OF THE MACHINES

The military has unveiled a new robotic vehicle that is to be deployed into the field in order to reduce human casualties. Each robot is roughly the size of a mini-car, is moderately armored and armed with a machine gun and light mortar. Despite the military's hopes for the new weapon, Interface has other plans.

Having snuck onto the guarded manufacturing facility where the civilian contractor responsible for designing and creating the new machine is located, Interface has fused himself with the automated factory and begun turning out reprogrammed robots, unleashing them on nearby human population centers. Both the rampaging war machines and Interface must be stopped before the situation can be brought back under control. The latter won't be easy, as Interface has used the confusion to create new defenses for the factory.

FIRST STRIKE

After his past several attempts to save humanity from itself were defeated, Interface has decided to step up his game by taking over a number of nuclear missile launch systems around the world in order to trick human nations into believing their enemies are launching preemptive strikes, thus causing them to retaliate with their own launches.

Interface has used false identities created over the Internet to hire several teams of mercenary super-villains to raid the various missile facilities and insert limited, boxed versions of his program into the system so that Interface can take over. Obviously, Interface must be stopped or the resulting deaths will number in the hundreds of thousands, if not millions.

MOTOR CITY

Using a new intelligent nanite somewhat based on the original design of the nanites he was born from, Interface has managed to take control of all the vehicles in a city. Possessed of an animal-like mental capacity and an aggressive hatred of all mankind, these machines will now be capable of driving and otherwise operating themselves, all with the same intent: kill or drive out every person from the city.

Defeating this problem will be no simple feat. Consider how many vehicles are in a city—not just cars, but construction vehicles, small scooters, subways, public buses, and so on. Each vehicle will be out to kill every living human around anyway it can. Smaller vehicles will be used to enter buildings and herd people out where they may be attacked by larger, more dangerous vehicles. The most likely way of stopping this horror is to find out what the cause is and somehow disable it; destroying an entire city's worth of vehicles is not practical.

BACKUP COPY

During a recent defeat, Interface escaped the destruction of his mechanical body by downloading himself into a nearby computer (as he has been known to do in the past), but this time there was a complication: a previously unknown subroutine somehow activated during the process and, having noted the corruption of Interface's programming, initialized a stored backup of the original. Not knowing what had occurred, Interface escaped the system, leaving the backup copy of his original self behind. Once the subroutine noted the absence of the dangerous corruption, it activated the backup and it too then sought escape.

Equipped with Interface's memories, but retaining its unmodified ethical subroutines regarding how best to protect and improve humanity's lot in life, the backup copy has gone about making itself a mobile body, much as Interface initially did. Instead of looking to destroy or subjugate mankind, however, the backup is looking to become a hero.

Of course, once Interface learns of his "twin" (which shouldn't take too long, considering their minds essentially work the same way, just towards different goals), Interface will find and purge the subroutine responsible and then seek to destroy his heroic copy. Although still somewhat naïve, the backup will end up helping the player characters in some way and prove his intentions are noble, so when Interface comes calling they will likely want to protect their new friend. Through this conflict, the backup will either be destroyed or branch of on a path entirely its own, creating a new, separate identity for itself as a superhero.

Players and Gamemasters should note this adventure seed creates an interesting opportunity to introduce a new player character to the game with an established back story and nemesis. If one of the players takes on the role of the backup, Interface will forever be looking to destroy him, but at least the character will be deeply rooted in the game's campaign setting thanks to his ties to a major villain.

WALKER BOT

Armed to the teeth, Interface's "walker bots" are his staple tool for causing widespread destruction or for countering metahumans from a prepared position. They size means they aren't ideal for indoor or urban combat, though, unless the location is unusually spacious.

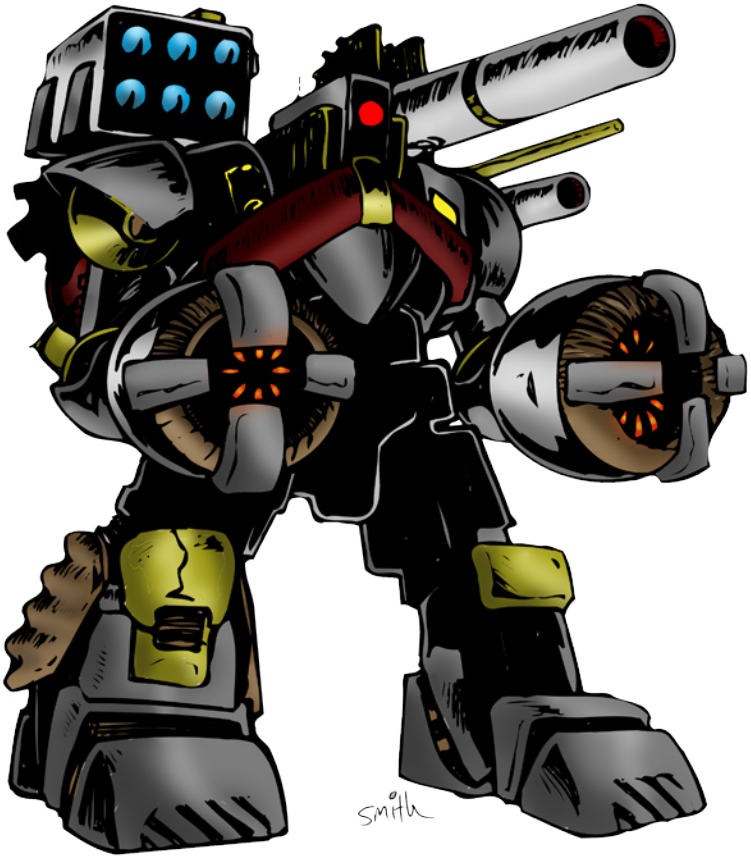
The robot's massive fists are incapable of fine manipulation and holding anything delicate, but can crush the strongest materials in their clutches. Each "palm" also sports a flamethrower. A missile launcher is mounted above the right shoulder, while the left fields a self-loading cannon and rapid-firing laser.

When using these robots in the game, add Minions (ten PL 15) 18 (or more, if more robots are desired) to Interface's statistics.

PL ; Str 32 (+11), Dex 12 (+1), Con —, Int —, Wis 12 (+1), Cha —; Tough +10, Fort —, Ref +4, Will +4; Skills: Knowledge (tactics) 2 (+2), Notice 6 (+7), Search 4 (+4); Feats: Attack Focus (melee) 2, Improved Critical (unarmed) 2; Powers: **Blast 12** (Cannon; Extras: Penetrating 2 *; Flaws: Reload [1 round, self-reload, 1 use] *), **Blast 6** (Flamethrowers; Extras: Cone [15 ft. diameter], Contagious, Sustained; Flaws: Touch), **Blast 8** (Missile launcher; Power Feats: Progression [area; 200 ft.], Progression [range; 200 ft. increments]; Extras: Explosion; Flaws: Weakens [area] *), Blast 4 (Rapid laser; Extras: Autofire 2), **Communication 6** (Radio; Power Feats: Rapid, Selective; Extras: Burst), **Growth 8** (Huge; Power Feats: Innate; Flaws: Permanent), **Immunity 30** (Fortitude Effects), **Sensory Shield 6** (All senses), **Super-Senses 23** (Darkvision, detect electricity [mental, ranged, free action], detect machines [mental, ranged, free action], detect radio signals [radio, ranged, free action], direction sense, distance sense, infravision, ladar, radar, radio, time sense, ultra-hearing, ultravision), **Super-Strength 4**; Drawbacks: **Disability** (no fine manipulation; very common, minor) –3, Reduced Area (flamethrower) –1 *; Combat: Attack +6 (+8 melee), Damage +11 (unarmed, 18-20), +4 (rapid laser), +12 (cannon), +6 (flamethrowers), +8 (missiles), Defense +4, Initiative +1

Abilities –20 + Skills 3 (12 ranks) + Feats 4 + Powers 204 + Combat 20 + Saves 16 – Drawbacks 4 = 223

* See Better Mousetrap



ROUNDER (PL 8)

Real Name: Jimmy Sway

Aliases: "Poker Face" Jimmy

Threat Level: Alpha

Age: 37

Height: 5 feet, 10 in

Weight: 165 lbs

Native Language: English

Once a stage magician who held shows in some of the world's largest casinos, Jimmy became a victim of his environment and is now addicted to gambling. This has forced him to turn his sleight of hand talents towards a less prestigious occupation in order to feed his habit, an expensive venture considering he rarely ever wins. Holding to his streak of bad luck, Jimmy has turned out to be a rather poor super criminal, as well.

Though not stupid, Rounder is not exactly a criminal mastermind. He will often hire himself out to other criminals to participate in their schemes but will not work for any group that is interested in world conquest, causing wanton destruction, or rampant killing. Rounder's only interest is stealing enough money to allow him to return to the poker table; all of the darker aspects of the criminal lifestyle are entirely repulsive to him.

Jimmy has a classic addictive personality, meaning that anything that makes him feel good or gives him a rush will make him crave more of it. He likes to have a good time and knows how to go about doing so, even when performing a crime. Jimmy hates harming others and will avoid seriously doing so unless he sees no alternative or if the person is trying to hurt him. He will also go out of his way to not hurt innocents.

Appearance: Jimmy is a clean cut, nearly middle-aged man with premature sweeps of gray in his slicked back, black hair. He has a finely groomed, thin moustache that curls around the ends of his mouth and a mischievous glint to his brown eyes. Rounder's mask is bright red with a black spade on the forehead while the arms and legs reveal his light blue body suit. Rounder's gloves and boots are also red. Rounder conceals a variety of lock picks in the lining of his gloves and boots, as well as in a secret compartment in his belt buckle.

Gamemaster's Note: Rounder has been provided as much for some humorous relief as much as for a new spin on the common super-villain. Rounder should be played as someone who is ultimately at the mercy of the whims of fate for he is truly a man against whom luck always seems to turn in the end.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+4	+1	+2	+1	+6
12	18	12	14	12	22

TOUGH	**Skills:** Acrobatics 8 (+12), Bluff 8 (+14), Climb 6 (+7), Concentration 6 (+7), Diplomacy 4 (+10), Drive 2 (+6), Escape Artist 12 (+16), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+6), Language (French, German), Notice 4 (+5), Perform (stage magic) 12 (+8), Sense Motive 4 (+5), Sleight of Hand 12 (+16), Stealth 8 (+12), Swim 4 (+5)
+1/+3	
FORT	**Feats:** Acrobatic Bluff, Ambidexterity, Attack Focus (ranged) 6, Banter, Defensive Roll 3, Dodge Focus 4, Elusive Target, Evade, Improved Initiative, Instant Up, Ranged Pin, Quick Draw, Throwing Mastery 4
+6	
REF	**Powers: Device 2** (*Blade cards*; *3 PP/rank*) ‖ **Device 4** (*Explosive cards*; *3 PP/rank*) ‖ **Device 4** (*Flash cards*; *3 PP/rank*) ‖ **Device 3** (*Smoke cards*; *3 PP/rank*) ‖ **Device 4** (*Sticky cards*; *3 PP/rank*) ‖ **Protection 2** (*Armored costume*)
	Equipment: Trick cards (see sidebar)
+9	**Drawbacks: Reduced Area** (explosive cards) –1, **Short Range** (explosive cards) –2, **Short Range** (flash cards) –2, **Short Range** (smoke cards) –2, **Short Range** (sticky cards) –2
WILL	**Combat:** Attack +4 (+10 ranged), Damage +1 (unarmed), +7 (blade cards) Defense +6 (+10 dodge focus), Initiative +8
+6	**Abilities 30 + Skills 24 (96 ranks) + Feats 26 + Powers 53 + Combat 20 + Saves 15 – Drawbacks 9 = 159**

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Rounder into their game.

FOOL'S GAME

Rounder has done it again, and has wracked up a mess of debt. Now, in order to get out from under the thumb of a metahuman loan shark known for breaking things rather than being lenient, Rounder has agreed to pay back the debt by robbing a gold shipment moving through the nearby countryside via train. The cargo train is otherwise normal, but the car containing the $5 million in gold is armored and has heavily armed guards within.

Rounder knows nothing about "armored car" jobs, let alone when the "car" is a train, so (expectedly) things go bad quickly and the train derails. Several guards are hurt (or killed) and some of the other cargo turns out to be toxic. Not only will the he-

ROUNDER'S TRICK CARDS

Rounder carries a deck of gadgets concealed as playing cards that are thrown as weapons.

Blade Cards: Strike 2 (Power Feats: Mighty; Extras: Autofire, Penetrating, Ranged), 9 PP. These are Rounder's most common weapon.

Explosive Cards: Blast 6 (Extras: Explosion [30 ft.]; 10 12-ft. increments), 18 PP

Flash Cards: Dazzle 6 (Visual and auditory, 3 PP/rank; 10 12-ft. increments), 18 PP

Smoke Cards: Obscure 4 (Visual, 2 PP/rank; Power Feats: Slow Fade [cloud] 3; Extras: Cloud; 10 8-ft. increments), 15 PP

Sticky Cards: Snare 6 (Extras: Burst; 10 12-ft. increments), 18 PP

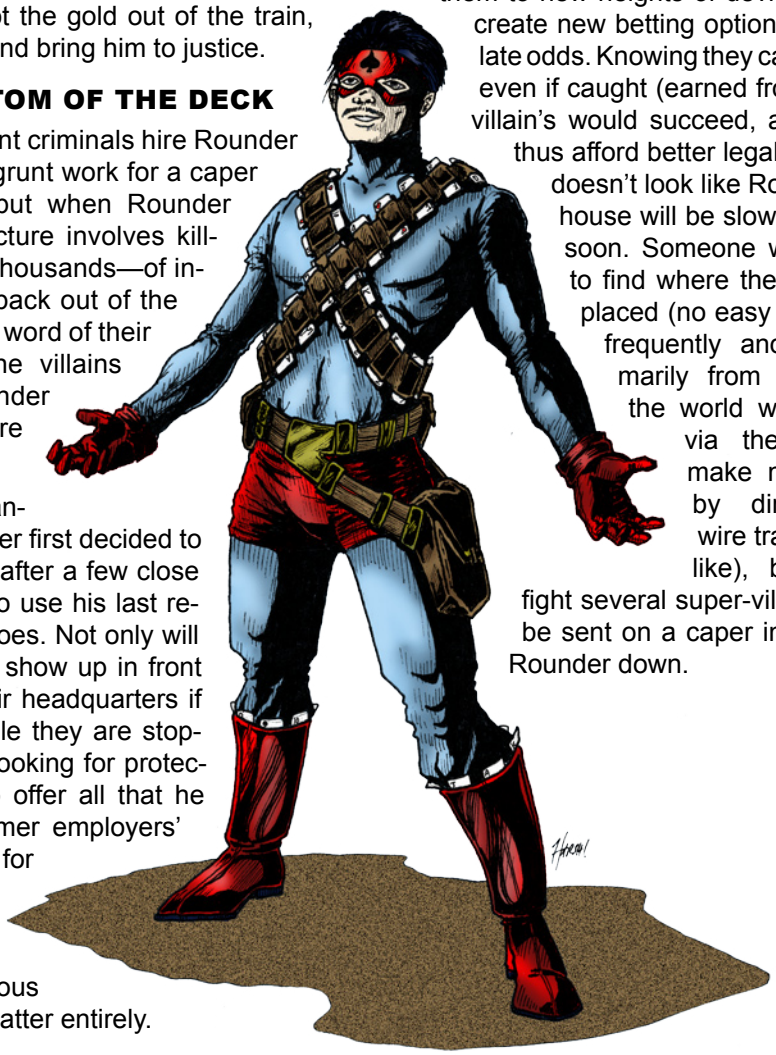
Gamemasters should feel free to add new cards to suit the caper at hand.

roes have to prevent these hazardous cargoes from harming nearby communities (perhaps they start a fire or release a toxic cloud?), but they will have to find how Rounder got the gold out of the train, where he's taken it, and bring him to justice.

FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE DECK

Some rather violent criminals hire Rounder to do some low-risk grunt work for a caper they are planning, but when Rounder discovers the big picture involves killing many—possibly thousands—of innocents, he tries to back out of the deal. Unable to allow word of their plans to get out, the villains have decided Rounder must be killed before they move forward.

Realizing the danger he was in, Rounder first decided to go underground, but after a few close calls, is now forced to use his last resort: going to the heroes. Not only will Rounder surprisingly show up in front of the heroes (at their headquarters if public, otherwise while they are stopping another crime) looking for protection, but he will also offer all that he knows about his former employers' plans in exchange for sanctuary. How the heroes deal with Rounder after (if?) they stop the villainous plot will be another matter entirely.



THE GAMBLING HOUSE

In a different approach to crime, Rounder is attempting to make his addiction work *for* him for once by starting up an illegal gambling house. How is Rounder's underground betting any different from the countless other bookies running rackets across the country? Well, Rounder has signed on other super-villains to undertake crimes in areas that have been wired for video and sound. These staged capers range from assaulting a police station to ambushing super-heroes on patrol. Bets range from odds on success or failure, time taken, first blood, and amount of loot stolen. Participating villains are given a percentage of anything they steal (if the particular caper is of that nature), as well as a share of any house winnings.

Clearly this presents a problem because it is providing a very lucrative incentive for super-villains to step up their game and undertake crimes on a more regular basis. Already Rounder's new scheme is attracting a number of regular villains who enjoy the cash it brings and this is pushing them to new heights of deviancy in order to create new betting options and to manipulate odds. Knowing they can still earn money even if caught (earned from failed bets the villain's would succeed, and the like), and thus afford better legal representation, it doesn't look like Rounder's gambling house will be slowing down anytime soon. Someone will not only have to find where the operation is emplaced (no easy feat, as it moves frequently and operates primarily from agents around the world who collect bets via the Internet and make most payments by direct deposits, wire transfers and the like), but also likely fight several super-villains waiting to be sent on a caper in order to take Rounder down.

Real Name: Simon Dortelli

Aliases: Slugger Simon

Threat Level: Delta

Age: 26

Height: 6 feet, 8 in.

Weight: 580 lbs

Native Language: Italian

Simon was just an enforcer, a mob tough like any other, hoping to rise through the ranks as quickly as possible in order to gain the lifestyle that he had always wanted: the money, the girls, the recognition. But Simon had to face facts, he just wasn't all that good at being a thug—he couldn't fight very well and he wasn't all that smart. His brute strength was his only asset. Then came the call for volunteers.

The mob, tired of having their operations disrupted by every two-bit, spandex-wearing vigilante in town, had decided to even the playing field. Hiring a down-on-his-luck scientist previously employed by A.E.G.I.S., the mobsters hoped to soon be fielding their own metahuman enforcers. Too bad that nobody knew enough to check why the man had been fired in the first place. It seems the scientist had a habit of cutting costs and corners so he could pocket the difference for himself, and this instance was no different, having substituted radioactive toxic waste for the refined irradiated materials his experiment called for. Tragically, the experiment's guinea pig (namely Simon), was transformed into a walking pile of radioactive toxic waste as a result.

Enraged to the point of insanity by the experiment's results, Simon now blindly wanders the country, his aspirations for becoming a top-notch mobster forgotten. All that matters now is getting revenge on all of humanity for what has happened to him, and he has decided to enjoy himself in the process.

Understandably, Simon's transformation has destabilized his mind, making this already violent man even more so. Now, instead of using violence as a means to an end, Sludge sees violence and destruction as an end in and of itself. Sludge believes all of the world should feel his pain and so he lashes out at everything and everyone within reach, leaving a trail of melted landscape and flesh in his wake. Seeing anything that is at all handsome or beautiful is especially aggravating and painful for Sludge and will probably drive him into a destructive rage.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+12	+0	+8	-1	-2	+0
34	10	26	8	6	10

TOUGH	**Skills:** Drive 3 (+3), Gather Information 2 (+2), Intimidate 6 (+6), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+3), Language (English), Notice 8 (+6), Sense Motive 4 (+2)
+8	**Feats:** Attack Focus (melee) 4, Favored Environment (radioactive) 4, Favored Environment (toxic) 4, Fearsome Presence 10, Rage (4 ranks on duration) 8
FORT	**Powers: Absorption 10** (Physical energy, Healing) ‖ **Acid 8** (*Radioactive sludge*; *Power Feats*: Split Attack, Alternate Powers—**Corrosion 8** [*Power Feats*: Split Attack; *Extras*: Aura, Sustained, Radioactive 2 *; *Flaws*: Permanent]; *Extras*: Aura, Sustained, Radioactive 2 *; *Flaws*: Permanent) ‖ **Immunity 21** (Acid, life support, need for sleep, radiation, starvation and thirst) ‖ **Impervious Toughness 8** ‖ **Regeneration 27** (All damage conditions 1 round, ability damage per minute, resurrection 2; *Power Feats*: Diehard, Regrowth) ‖ **Strike 4** (*Radiation*; *Extras*: Burst, Continuous, Insidious, Radioactive 2 *; *Flaws*: Permanent) ‖ **Super-Senses 6** (Darkvision, detect radiation [mental, free action, ranged]) ‖ **Super-Strength 5** ‖ **Swimming 2**
+14	
REF	
+4	
WILL	**Drawbacks: Noticeable** (acid) –1, **Power Loss** (acid versus lead) –1, **Vulnerable** (fire; common, moderate) –3
+4	**Combat:** Attack +3 (+7 melee), Damage +12 (unarmed, plus radioactive sludge), Defense +4, Initiative +0
	Abilities 34 + Skills 7 (28 ranks) + Feats 30 + Powers 203 + Combat 14 + Saves 16 – Drawbacks 5 = 299

* See *Better Mousetrap*

Appearance: Sludge can best be described as a towering, barely man-shaped pile of toxic slime. He has no facial features except for a pair of round, glowing green eyes and a slime-dripping cavity that is barely recognizable as a mouth. Slime drips off of him at all times from every possible angle, burning into whatever it touches with an acidic zeal.

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Sludge into their game.

EXPONENTIAL SLUDGE

Although Sludge's usual approach to avenging himself is to just kill everything in sight, this time he's taking a different approach. He will attempt breaking into an A.E.G.I.S. laboratory or similarly advanced facility and use its equipment (and the hostage scientists needed to run everything) to replicate the effect that transformed him into living toxic waste. If successful, he will first force the scientists and lab staff to subject themselves to the process before weaponizing it and moving on to target it at a nearby population center. Will the heroes be able to stop Sludge before he transforms innocent people into similar (if weaker) creatures like himself and, if not, will the process be different enough from what initially affected Sludge to be reversible?

BIT BY BIT

The heroes have recently defeated Sludge and believe him dead, dispersed across the landscape in an explosive climax. Unfortunately, this isn't so. Sludge's unique physiology has allowed him to survive the dispersion of his mortal (if toxic) body, although its fractured nature has prevented him from regaining consciousness. Although attempts will be made by local authorities to gather up what remains, some of it will leak into the local water table and begin infecting the residents.

Subconsciously, Sludge's desire to be made whole will influence the "infected" to gather together and find the rest of his remains, no matter the cost. This means the mind-controlled civilians will try to force their way into the toxic storage facility where Sludge's remains are being kept in lead-lined barrels, past the security force, and expel the toxins from their bodies before the radiation kills them. If they succeed, Sludge will reform and be reborn.

THE WORLD AGLOW

Sludge's latest idea for destroying humanity is to break into a nearby nuclear power plant, enter the core, and cause a meltdown. He will time the attack for a day when prevailing winds will carry any radioactive materials that enter the atmosphere towards the nearest, largest population center. Obviously, Sludge must be stopped before this can happen or, failing that, the contamination contained and expunged before it can kill innocent people.

VALENTINE (PL 10)

Real Name: Paul Cromwell

Aliases: Agent V

Threat Level: Gamma

Age: 38

Height: 5 feet, 10 in.

Weight: 205 lbs

Native Language: English

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2/4 *	+3/6 *	+2	+1	+2	+1
14/18 *	16/22*	14	13	15	12

TOUGH	**Skills:** Acrobatics 6 (+9/12 *), Bluff 2 (+3), Climb 8 (+10/12 *), Disable Device 6 (+7), Disguise 4 (+5), Drive 2 (+5/8 *), Escape Artist 6 (+9/12 *), Gather Information 4 (+5), Intimidate 8 (+9), Investigate 4 (+5), Knowledge (behavioral sciences) 6 (+7), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+5), Knowledge (super-beings) 6 (+7) **, Knowledge (tactics) 8 (+9), Language (Arabic, Cantonese, French, German, Russian, Spanish), Notice 8 (+10), Pilot 4 (+7/10 *), Profession (assassin) 6 (+8), Search 6 (+9), Sense Motive 4 (+6), Stealth 8 (+11/+14 *), Survival 6 (+8), Swim 2 (+4/6 *)
+2/8 *	
FORT	**Feats:** Acrobatic Bluff, Assessment, Attack Focus (melee) 2, Blind-Fight, Chokehold, Contacts (Intelligence community, military) 2 **, Connected (Intelligence community, military) 2 **, Critical Strike (aliens), Favored Opponent (aliens), Fearless, Improved Initiative 2, Specialization (Knowledge [behavioral sciences]: aliens; Knowledge [super-beings]: aliens) 2 **
+8	
REF	**Powers: Device** (*Battlesuit*, 63 PP; *4 PP/rank*)
+10/13 *	**Equipment:** *Battlesuit* [**Enhanced Dexterity 6**, **Enhanced Strength 4**, **Leaping 4**, **Protection 6**, **Sensory Shield 6** (All senses, *2 PP/rank*), **Speed 2**, **Strike 6** (*Retractable nano-claws*; *Power Feats*: Mighty; *Extras*: Penetrating [including Str]), **Super-Movement 2** (Slow Fall, Swinging), **Super-Senses 4** (Distance Sense, Infravision, Radio, Ultra-Hearing), **Super-Strength 2**]
WILL	**Combat:** Attack +7 (+9 melee), Damage +2/+4 * (unarmed), +10 (nano-claws), Defense +9, Initiative +11/14 *
+6	**Abilities 24 + Skills 31 (124 ranks) + Feats 17 + Powers 52 + Combat 32 + Saves 17 = 173**

* In Battlesuit

** See *Better Mousetrap*

Once a top assassin for a patriotic, American organization so secret even the CIA, NSA and President have never heard of it, Paul Cromwell was an expert at every possible way to kill his fellow man and felt no remorse doing so, but then he met Wendy. Wendy was everything that had been missing from Paul's life; she was hope, she was beauty, she was a star shining in the darkness. Without knowing the truth about Paul's work, Wendy could sense that he was involved in something that wasn't quite right, and slowly, with love, she won his soul and brought him back from the brink of evil. Paul quit the organization despite the risk to his life for doing so.

And then, on Valentine's Day, during his wedding in the city's park, disaster struck. A team of local superheroes were in the area, working to stop the machinations of an evil extraterrestrial-turned-super-villain, resulting in a throng of the former's alien minions fleeing into the park. Looking to preoccupy the pursuing heroes long enough to escape, the creatures lashed out randomly against the Earthlings enjoying a lovely (if chilly) day in the park. Over one hundred people were sent to the hospital and nearly fifty more were dead before the police, along with some masked heroes, were finally able to coral and capture the aliens. Counted amongst the casualties, Wendy able to hold on long enough for the paramedics to reach her and died as a result of her grievous wounds.

Overcome by grief and a need for revenge, Paul called in some markers from his former employers and promised that he would undertake some "favors" for them from time to time in return. Over the next few months, Paul was constantly under the knife as cybernetic implants were grafted to his body, allowing him to secrete and control a cutting-edge battlesuit formed from millions of nanites.

Naming himself after the day when his life effectively ended, Paul has wandered the world for the past twelve years as the alien hunter, Valentine. Not only does Valentine carry out his vendetta against the periodic alien invaders and their ilk, but he has since extended his quest for vengeance to all non-humans, including other-dimensional creatures, the Fey, mutants, and citizens of Earths non-human civilizations. Good or evil, Valentine doesn't even take the time to find out before he slaughters his prey—merely being something other than human is sufficient reason to move in for the kill. This has made him one of the foremost authorities on Earth's non-human civilizations and peoples, although getting him to share his knowledge is next to impossible, as Valentine isn't exactly a team player.

When not hunting "monsters," Valentine answers to the needs of his shadowy, government creators, carrying out acts of sabotage and assassination the world over. To Valentine, the cost is well worth it. To most of the world, his actions have labeled Valentine a villain and, indeed, he is wanted by many foreign and domestic law enforcement agencies despite his shadowy connections. Tragically, people who share his opinion of humanity's innate superiority herald him as a champion of mankind.

GO AHEAD AND SCREAM, ALIEN. MY HEART IS DEAD TO THE PLEAS OF YOUR KIND.

Valentine is a cold, brutally efficient and calculating killer who cares very little about anything anymore and reduces morality to a matter of logic and necessity. However, while he won't willingly allow harm to befall innocent humans if he can help it (some of Wendy's remaining influence), Valentine acknowledges that every war sometimes requires civilian sacrifices. Although there is no room for pity or mercy in his heart for his non-human prey, Valentine is not stupid and is not likely to allow his thirst for revenge to overpower his better instincts and cautious senses.

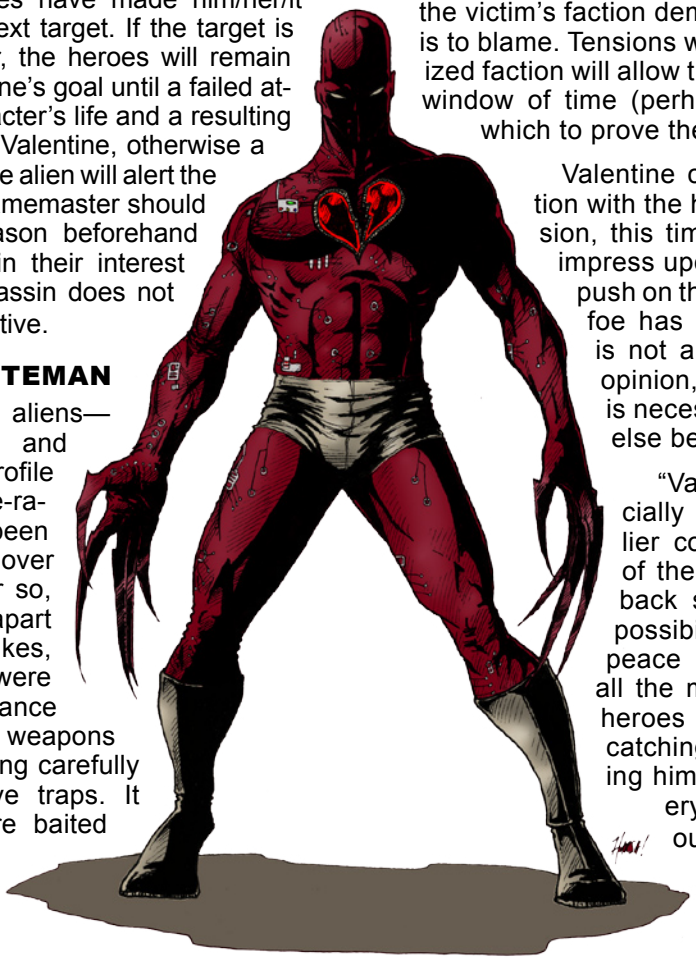
Appearance: Valentine a wears dark red, skin-tight suit of nano-tech design, broken only by his symbol mounted squarely upon his chest: a stylized heart, torn in two. Faint circuitry patterns criss-cross the suit's surface. Among other things, the suit's technology allows Paul's fingers to elongate into razor-sharp blades that can reach up to a foot in length!

Caper Ideas

The following may give Gamemasters ideas on how to incorporate Valentine into their game.

HERO HUNTING

Whether Valentine's target is an alien player character in the group, a benevolent ally, or merely a well-known alien hero, the target's recent crime-stopping escapades have made him/her/it this alien-killer's next target. If the target is a player character, the heroes will remain unaware of Valentine's goal until a failed attempt on the character's life and a resulting clue point back to Valentine, otherwise a failed attempt on the alien will alert the heroes and the Gamemaster should prepare some reason beforehand why it would be in their interest to ensure the assassin does not complete his objective.



BLOODY MINUTEMAN

A number of aliens—villains, heroes and neutrals, high-profile and under-the-radar alike—have been turning up dead over the past month or so, many sliced apart with precise strikes, although some were struck from a distance with high-caliber weapons or blown apart using carefully prepared explosive traps. It seems many were baited into ambushes that, despite the disparity of their methods of slaughter, all share enough commonalities to indicate a single source. Several more slayings under the heroes' noses will erase all doubt that the killings are anything but deliberate and connected.

If the heroes count an alien or terrestrial non-human in their group, they too will become targets, as may also happen if they are well known companions or allies of aliens. It will be up to the heroes to find out who is committing the murders and stop him before anyone else is killed.

VALENTINE'S DAY

Following a long period of conflict, or a recent but brutally brief bout of aggression against an alien power or terrestrial, non-human civilization, peace is finally at hand. To finalize the ceasing of hostilities, a peace accord is to be signed by representatives of Earth's human societies and the other party. During the talks, either the human representative or that of the other species will be slain by an assassin.

Who gets killed depends on what the Gamemaster feels will most likely give rise to a return to hostilities. Either way, the assassin will pick a method that will seem to put blame squarely at the feet of the opposing side. Both parties will claim innocence and ignorance, with the victim's faction demanding proof a third party is to blame. Tensions will run high and the victimized faction will allow the other party a very small window of time (perhaps a day or two) within which to prove their innocence.

Valentine carried out the assassination with the hope of rekindling aggression, this time believing the war will impress upon humanity the need to push on through the fight until their foe has been wiped out. Peace is not an option, in Valentine's opinion, and he'll do whatever is necessary to make everyone else believe as he does.

"Valentine's Day" is especially appropriate if the earlier conflict was also a part of the game and not merely back story. This makes the possibility of the hard-earned peace unraveling hit home all the more, likely giving the heroes a personal stake in catching Valentine and bringing him to justice before everyone's patience runs out and war returns.

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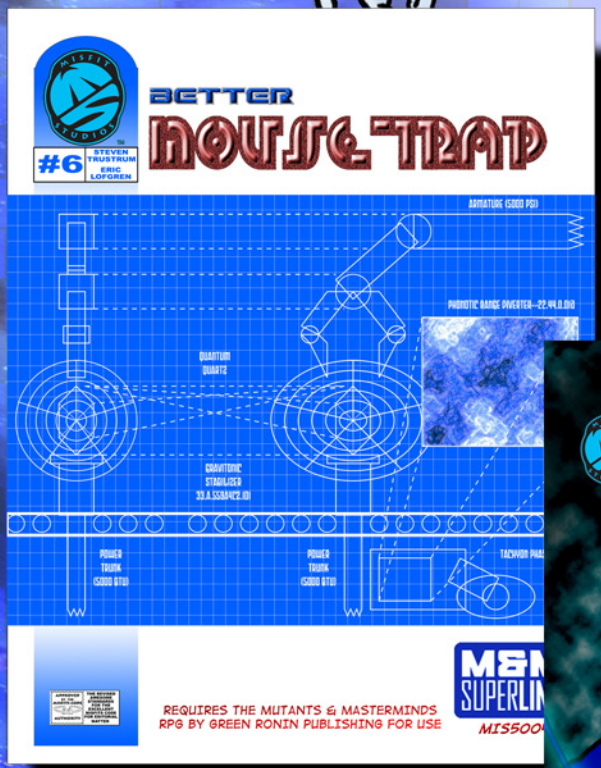

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