

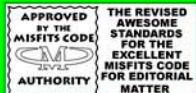


#4

STEVEN
TRISTRUM

METAHUMAN MYSTICS & SUPERNATURAL SUPERS

2



REQUIRES THE MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS
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M&M
SUPERLINK

METAHUMAN MYSTICS & SUPERNATURAL SUPERS 2

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INTRODUCTION

This work introduces a number of new character archetypes for use in the second edition of **M&M**. Each shares the common thread of having a mystical or supernatural nature.

NEW CHARACTER OPTIONS

This section includes new traits. Some are already employed by the included archetypes while others are here because they will likely be useful to such characters.

SKILLS

KNOWLEDGE (STAGE MAGIC) INT, SPECIALTY, TRAINED ONLY

Card tricks, stage illusion, prestidigitation uses, and all sorts of chicanery are yours to know, although carrying them out may require other skills.

POWERS

CONFESSION BURN

Effect: Skills

Action: Standard

Range: Ranged

Duration: Instant

Saving Throw: Will

Cost: 3 points per rank

You can inflict injuries on others comparable to their misdeeds in the form of an energy burst that envelopes the target, damaging them to a degree related to how foul their past is. The save DC is Base Damage + ranks. Base Damage is at the Gamemaster's discretion, but a guideline would be the following:

LEVEL OF EVIL	BASE DAMAGE
No evil deeds (newborn)	0; save is automatically successful
Occasional misdeed (typical adult)	5
Regular misdeeds (professional criminal)	10
Willfully evil (willing murderer)	15
Downright vile (serial killer)	20

Adjust the Base Damage to suit conditions such as the actual deeds (if known), the person using the power, situational context, and the campaign's overall moral tone. The power's user is not aware of the base damage caused, as that would give away the target's moral impurity, which should normally require an appropriate additional power to do so.

Despite appearing as flames, this power's damaging effect isn't (normally) actually fire and a more suitable descriptor should be chosen (although fire may be applied if desired.)

Alternatively, damage can be based upon the target's degrees of the moral purity—Innocence Burn rather than Confession Burn. This choice, however, must be declared when the power is taken. Determine the base damage by flipping the base damage table—'downright evil' targets suffer a base damage of 0 whereas 'no evil deeds' has a base damage of 20, for example.

POWER FEATS

- **Alternate Powers:** Innocence Burn (or Confession Burn) may be selected as an alternate power, allowing the character to choose from one attack to the next whether they wish to target morality or immorality.
- **Evaluate Misdeeds:** You know the Base Damage inflicted on any target you score at least a bruised result against with this power.

ENHANCED (SKILL)

Effect: Skills

Action: Reaction

Range: Personal

Duration: Continuous

Cost: 1 point per rank

One of your skills is enhanced (see **M&M Chapter 3**); each rank in Enhanced Skill gives you +4 ranks in the skill, just as though you had purchased skill ranks normally. Enhancing another skill requires purchasing this power separately. An Enhanced Skill can be nullified, unlike a normal skill, but may gain additional benefits from *extra effort*,

as with any other power. The Gamemaster approves any extra effort use in conjunction with your Enhanced Skill. An Enhanced Skill may also have appropriate descriptors applied to it, differentiating it from a normal skill, although Enhanced Skill ranks still count towards the maximum skill ranks of the your power level (PL + 5.) You can freely mix normal and enhanced skills.

POWER FEATS

- **Adroit:** Every time Adroit is applied to the Enhanced Skill, the skill's maximum number of ranks for your power level increases by 1.
- **Alternate Ability:** Instead of the skill's usual key ability, you select another that will apply. Gamemasters have final say on allowing this as a means to ensure the switch makes sense with regards to how the power works and is conceptualized.

EXTRAS

- **Critical Skill (+1/step):** If you roll a natural 20 on a check for this skill, you are allowed to roll another 20 and add the two totals together. Each additional step of this extra allows yet another roll per natural 20 rolled. For example, adding Critical Skill +2 to an Enhanced Skill would allow two additional d20 rolls if the first two resulted in natural 20s, but if the third was a natural 20 no new roll would be allowed.
- **Take 10 (+1):** When applied to a skill that normally doesn't allow for taking 10, this extra allows it to be done. The usual restrictions for taking 10 (cannot be distracted or under pressure) still apply.
- **Take 20 (+1):** When applied to a skill that normally doesn't allow for taking 20, this extra allows it to be done. The skill must allow for you to take 10 in order to apply this extra, either normally or by also applying the Take 10 extra. The usual restrictions for taking 10 (cannot be distracted or under pressure) still apply.

MAXIMUM SKILL RANKS AND EXTRA EFFORT OPTION

As an aspect of extra effort, as it applies to an Enhanced Skill, the Gamemaster may allow extra effort to permit more skill ranks be used than the power level would normally allow. Such a need is most likely to come up in the case of Devices that provide Enhanced Skills, such as a sensor granting Notice ranks or an advanced tool granting ranks of Craft. Extra effort will allow you to surpass your power level's normal skill rank maximum when using the Enhanced Skill, but doing so first requires a power check with a DC that is increased by +2 per rank used above the normal maximum.

FLAWS

- **Limited—restricted conditions (–1 or –2):** The skill can only be used under certain conditions, towards a specific purpose, etc. If these conditions are only uncommon enough to be somewhat annoying and mildly inconvenient in their denial of full use of the Enhanced Skill, this flaw is only worth –1. If the required conditions are very specific, to the point of severely cutting down the Enhanced Skill's utility, this flaw is worth –2.

TAKE 10/20 EXTRAS: A CAVEAT

Gamemasters should be careful about allowing characters with Quickness or Super-Speed to take a number of Enhanced Skill powers with the Take 20 extra just to boost their skill aptitude. Ensure that any such instance fits the character's concept and isn't merely a case of min/max'ing the character's PP returns.

SUBSTITUTE (SAVE)

Effect: Defense

Action: Reaction

Range: Personal

Duration: Continuous

Cost: 6 points per rank

When called upon to perform a specified type of saving throw, you may instead use the saving throw associated with this power. For every rank you may substitute the power's save for another save type; being able to substituting the power's save type for a Toughness save requires 2 ranks. For example, Substitute Will 2 (Toughness) would allow a character to use Will saves to resist physical damage instead of Toughness while Substitute Fortitude 4 (Toughness, Will, Reflex) would allow a character to use a Fortitude save in place of Toughness, Will or Reflex saves.

Substituting another save for a Toughness save means the new type of saving throw is limited by the PL's usual maximum Toughness modifier, but only for the purpose of said substitution. For example, a PL 10 character with Substitute Reflex (Toughness) and a Reflex saving throw modifier of +14 would only have a +10 bonus when substituting his Reflex save for his normal Toughness save.

POWER FEATS

- **Tougher:** Every application of this power feat increases the PL's maximum Toughness modifier solely for the purpose of how much of a substituted save can apply. For instance, a PL 10 character with Substitute Reflex (Toughness) and a Reflex save bonus of +15 who takes Tougher twice can substitute +12 of his Reflex bonus for

Toughness instead of being limited by the latter's usual +10 maximum.

EXTRAS

- **Critical Save (+2/step):** If you roll a natural 20 on a check for the power's save, you are allowed to roll another 20 and add the two totals together. Each additional step of this extra allows yet another roll per natural 20 rolled. For example, adding Critical Save +4 to a Substitute Save power would allow two additional d20 rolls if the first two resulted in natural 20s, but if the third was a natural 20 no new roll would be allowed.

FLAWS

- **Limited Uses (–1):** You may only substitute saves as many times per day as the modifier associated with the power's save type, with a minimum of once per day. For example, a character with Wisdom 14 (+2 modifier) and Substitute Will 1 (Fortitude) with this flaw could only substitute his Will save for a Fort save twice per day. This time frame may be shortened using the Progression power feat.
- **One At A Time (–1):** If this power applies to more than one save type you can only substitute the power's saving throw type for one other type of save at a time. Changing the save type requires a standard action.
- **Penalized (–1/Step):** When substituting saves, a –1 penalty is applied to the saving throw type belonging to this power per step of the flaw.

SUBSTITUTE WITH CARE

Gamemasters should take care with this power so that players don't use it as a cheap way to compensate for a low Toughness save or the like. To avoid a min-max scenario, Gamemasters should require great thought and planning when devising the concept behind the power's implementation and take care that it is adhered to.

FLAWS

LETHAL ONLY (–1 MODIFIER)

The attack this is applied to is only capable of inflicting lethal damage.

NONLETHAL ONLY (–1 MODIFIER)

The attack this is applied to is only capable of inflicting nonlethal damage.

NEW COMPLICATIONS

AMNESIA

The character has lost some or all of her memory. Maybe it's just recent memories that are gone, or the character's entire identity. The degree of amnesia determines how often the complication is rewarded for getting in the way.

ONE OF US

The character does (or did) belong to a group that stresses loyalty a great deal. Once you are in the group it becomes very intrusive and is a major element in your life, making it difficult to walk away without repercussions. In exchange for whatever benefits there may be for membership, you are at the group's whim and must make the organization's priorities your own, no matter how bad it may mess up other aspects of your life. Failing to comply with the utmost speed and ability often means dire consequences.

NEW DRAWBACKS

CURSED

Something or someone has cursed the character directly or perhaps his entire bloodline. Either way, the curse gets in the character's way and makes his life miserable by causing something to happen all the time or perhaps only under specified conditions. The more detrimental the curse is, the more it will be worth.

Discuss the nature, origins, and limitations of the curse with the Gamemaster to ensure it suits the character and to devise the curse's game mechanics. An imaginative player will work the curse into his powers, especially flaws.

A curse that is not designed into terms of game mechanics or that doesn't have enough of an affect on game play should instead be employed as a complication.

SEPARATE PERSONALITY

Two or more identities exist within one body, although it need not be simultaneously. Only one identity can be in control at a time with the "primary" identity being the natural one. This drawback can be used for everything from split personalities to an alien or god-like consciousness trapped within a mortal shell. On the surface, this looks much like a combination of the Involuntary Transformation and Normal Identity drawbacks, but it covers far more situations and allows for greater adaptability, along with handling a true split of identities. Build the personalities independent of each other but note there is a penalty applied to any action taken

by the controlling personality as it changes into another.

The value of Separate Personality depends on several factors, ranging from what brings about the change between personalities to how each personality is built. Effectively, you must figure out this drawback twice: once for the primary personality and how it changes into the secondary personality and once for the secondary personality and how it changes back to the primary personality. Apply each instance to their respective personalities once this has been done. It is also possible for a personality to have more than one change condition, such as a secondary identity that will change back to the primary personality if it calms down or if trapped within a silver chain.

If the change conditions for both personalities are voluntary, the currently subdued personality can initiate a mental grapple (see **M&M** in the *Combat* chapter) against the personality in control with success allowing it to assume control and become the dominant personality. A personality that loses control because of a lost mental grapple may in turn attempt to initiate its own to regain dominance once the previous change to the other personality has completed. A good rule of thumb is that this second mental grapple cannot be initiated for as many hours as its initial mental grapple roll failed by due to exhaustion caused by its loss. So, losing a mental grapple contest by 5 points means the personality cannot try to reassert itself for at least 5 hours.

Separate personalities do not normally share memories or thoughts. Once a personality assumes control, it entirely suppresses all other personalities unless altered by adjusting the drawback's value (see following.)

WHAT IF I NEVER USE IT?

A character that takes Separate Personality but never uses it, having simply built one to acquire points with no intention of every employing it, should have those points repealed by the Gamemaster. How this is done is up to the Gamemaster, although having them come from points gained at the next PL is the most likely method, while having the secondary personality disappear entirely ("hurray, you've been cured!") is another, more drastic option.

Gamemasters should never allow players to benefit from taking a drawback if the player does not allow it to play an active part in the game.

CONDITION/CIRCUMSTANCE	VALUE
TIME TO CHANGE PERSONALITIES	
... Free action	-4
... Standard action	-2
... Full-round	+0
... Longer than a full-round	+ (Time and Value Progression table rank -2)
Voluntary Change	-3
INVOLUNTARY CHANGE WILL SAVE DC TO RESIST	
... DC 5	-1
... DC 10	+0
... DC 15	+1
... etc. (per +5 beyond DC 15)	+1
No save allowed	+4
INVOLUNTARY CHANGE CONDITION	
... Condition is uncommon	+2
... Condition is common	+1
... Condition is very common	+0
PP ALLOCATION (PER PERSONALITY) *	
... 25%	+2
... 50%	+1
... 75%	+0
... 100%	-2
PENALTY DURING CHANGE PERIOD	
... Cannot move or act at all	+3
... -8	+2
... -6	+1
... -4	+0
... -2	-1
... +0	-3
Primary and Other Personality Share Memories **	-1/rank

* Rounded down. The percentage represents how many of the starting PP for the character's PL each personality may use for their design. The combined total of PP allocated between all personalities needs to equal 100% or more of the PL's normally available amount, but no single personality can have more than 100% on its own.

** Once the identities shift, the current identity remembers what the previous identity did; this does not give one identity access to the other's skills, feats or powers. This value increases, as per the value on the **Time and Value Progression** table, as to how many other personalities share in the memories of the others. For instance, at 1 rank (-1) only the primary and one other identity share

memories. At 4 ranks (-4), up to 10 additional personalities share memories. If the memory sharing is only one way (the primary identity remembers what the other did but the other identity can't access the primary identity's memories, or vice versa) reduce the modifier by half (rounded down to a minimum value of -1.) By doubling this value the different identities may actually converse inside their shared mind rather than merely access memories after the fact.

If the value is equal to or less than 0, this drawback is considered a complication instead.

CROWD CONTROL

If you want more than just one additional personality, you must apply this drawback again for each instance, determining their values individually. Before you go overboard on the amount of personalities, keep in mind you also have to build each one. Other personalities cannot take this drawback on their own except in relation to the primary personality. If the Gamemaster doesn't want to operate on the player's good faith and thinks a short rope needs to be available to keep characters from using multiple personalities as a way to get every character type under the sun into a single package, try the following option (or a similar variation):

Adding a third personality incurs a -1 modifier to the drawback, increasing the value on the **Time and Value Progression** table with each additional personality beyond that. Apply the total for this modifier to **all** of the personalities. So, while it would be possible to add many personalities to a single character, the conditions under which they operate would get more severe with each one beyond the second just so that drawback points are still gained from the personalities rather than having to pay for them as though they were a power. If this option is used, ignore the previous statement regarding this drawback becoming a complication at a value of 0 or less and instead actually charge PP to take the personalities, as though it were a beneficial trait.

As the character gains additional PP through adventuring, the player must distribute the points amongst the various personalities as he wishes. The personalities' PP totals do not increase automatically in relation to the initial PP percentage purchased for this drawback. Gamemasters may want to limit how such PP is distributed to reflect each personality's contribution to the points' acquisition—personalities that contributed far more than others should receive at least twice that of any other personality, for instance.

SLOW LEARNER

For some reason the character has a hard time improving in a certain area of character development. Choose what the area of slow improvement shall be from among the following; the cost varies by what the character is slow to learn:

- **Ability:** Select one of the six abilities. Improving

this ability now costs 2 PP per point of ability increase. This is a Moderate drawback for abilities important to the character's concept and is Minor for those that are not. Only allow a Major drawback for abilities that are leaps and bounds more important to the character than all others.

- **Feats:** They now cost 2 PP. This is a Moderate drawback if the character has a typical number of feats for the game and only Minor if he has very few feats or none at all. Characters that are very feat-oriented would consider it a Major drawback.
- **Skills:** Pick any of the six abilities and any skill related to that ability is much more difficult for the character to learn—all skills of that key ability now require purchasing 2 ranks per each actual rank gained (in other words, 4 ranks of skill now cost 2 PP or you may alternatively rule that 1 PP spent on skills only gains 2 ranks in stead of 4.) This is a Moderate drawback for abilities with skills important to the character's concept and Minor for those that are not. Only allow a Major drawback for abilities with skills that are leaps and bounds more important to the character than all others.
- **Power:** Select a power effect type (e.g., alternation, attack, mental) to apply this drawback to. The power's *base* cost (meaning before applying power modifiers) is doubled and power feats for this power now cost 2 PP. Extras increase the cost per rank by double their normal modifier but flaws remain unaffected. This is a Major drawback for a power central to the character's concept, and will be either a Moderate or a Minor drawback for less important powers. Normally you cannot take this for a power effect type your character does not possess any powers for, although the Gamemaster may allow this as a Minor drawback if such powers will likely be a choice for the character's future improvement.

Like any other drawback, the Gamemaster has final say over appropriateness. Allowing this drawback is not simply a matter of where the player decides to spend PP during character creation, but is also gambling on what the character may or may not need in the future.

Adjust the drawback's value if it only applies to certain abilities, skills, types of feats, specific powers, etc. If the trait has multiple aspects, such as a skill that may have this caveat applied in some instances and not in others, adjust the trait's value up or down accordingly to suit the situation. For example, if applying Slow Learner (Int and Dex Skills; advanced technology only), a skill of Drive 8 would be 8 ranks when operating primitive vehicles such as horse-drawn wagons, but would be considered 4 if used to operate a car. Be creative in how this is applied.

TECHNOLOGY REPELLANT

Characters with this weakness are nearly incapable of using any type of advanced technology. They suffer a penalty on all Computers, Craft*, Disable Device*, Drive*, Knowledge (technology), Pilot* and otherwise technology-related skill checks. Any Devices, equipment or the like of

a high-tech nature will break and become inoperable if any check to use, modify or in any way interact with them fails by 5 or more. These broken items require some time and an appropriate repair check to fix.

- **Minor:** –1 penalty on tech-related skill checks, and broken items require a standard action and a DC 10 Craft repair check to fix.
- **Moderate:** –3 penalty on tech-related skill checks, and broken items require a full round and a DC 15 Craft repair check to fix.
- **Major:** –5 penalty on tech-related skill checks, and broken items require 1D4+1 full rounds and a DC 20 Craft repair check to fix.

* Only with regards to checks involving advanced technology.

Bound Entity (Mortal)				PL 10 (PL 5)	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
10 *	10 *	10 *	10 *	10 *	10 *
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 2 (+2), Bluff 2 (+2), Climb 4 (+4), Craft (Choose one) 4 (+4), Diplomacy 4 (+4), Drive 4 (+4), Knowledge (Choose one) 4 (+4), Notice 4 (+4), Profession (Choose one) 4 (+4), Search 4 (+4), Sense Motive 4 (+4), Stealth 4 (+4), Swim 4 (+4)				
+0					
FORT	Feats: Beginner's Luck, Connected, Dodge Focus 2, Equipment 4, Luck 4, Second Chance (Toughness Save)				
+4	Powers: Immunity 3 (Spiritual/Undead Possession, Exorcism descriptor; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate), Mind Shield 10 (Paranormal; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate), Super-Senses 6 (Guilt Awareness [radius], Magical Awareness [radius], Paranormal Awareness [radius])				
REF					
+4	Combat: Attack +2, Damage +0 (unarmed), Defense +2, Initiative +0				
WILL	Drawbacks: Cursed (Possessed by bonded entity and compelled to "punish the guilty"; -2 PP), Separate Personality (Full-round; Involuntary to secondary [DC 20] when extreme guilt detected; -2 Change Penalty; -2 PP)				
+4	Abilities 6 + Skills 12 (44 ranks) + Feats 13 + Powers 21 + Combat 8 + Saves 12 - Drawbacks 4 = 68				

* Distribute 6 PP amongst your abilities as you see fit

CONCEPT

Hell is full of evil souls begging for a chance to redeem themselves while others just want a way out—*any* way out. In the cosmic balance, there are those beings of Higher Power who recognize that even the worst, most corrupt of souls deserve a second chance. Or perhaps allowing the damned to believe redemption is a viable goal is merely how the Higher Powers amuse themselves. Either way, from time to time Hell spits forth an entity into the mortal world in search of wronging past evil.

Because the Higher Powers do not want to make things too easy, or perhaps because the nature of the entity is such that it needs flesh to act, the entity must be bound to a mortal host in order to complete the mission with which it is charged. Typically the bound entity is further handicapped by having a great deal concerning its situation kept secret from it. Just what it must do and to what extent is often unknown—after all, how real can redemption be if it is nothing more than a finish line drawn in the proverbial sand? The quest for redemption must be a constant bat-

Bound Entity (Entity)				PL 10 (PL 10)	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+2	+0	+0	+5	+1
18	14	10	10	20	12
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+10), Climb 4 (+8), Concentration 4 (+9), Intimidate 12 (+13), Notice 4 (+9), Search 4 (+4), Sense Motive 8 (+13), Stealth 8 (+10)				
+0/+10	Feats: All-Out Attack, Blind-Fight, Diehard, Fearless, Fearsome Presence 4, Improved Initiative				
FORT	Powers: <i>Core Power</i> (Select one of the listed core powers or make your own, as befitting the bound entity's purpose and/or curse; 20 PP), Immunity 17 (Life Support, Aging, Need for Sleep, Starvation/Thirst, Fatigue), Secondary Powers (Select two of the listed secondary powers or make your own, as befitting the bound entity's purpose and/or curse; 10 PP ea.), Substitute Save Will 2 (Toughness; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate), Super-Senses 2 (Tracking; <i>Flaws:</i> Only versus the guilty), Super-Senses 4 (Danger Sense, Darkvision, Detect Guilt)				
+4					
REF					
+5	Combat: Attack +5, Damage +4 (unarmed), Defense +5, Initiative +4				
WILL	Drawbacks: Cursed (Bound to mortal host and compelled to "punish the guilty"; -2 PP), Separate Personality (Full-round; Involuntary to primary [DC 10] when punishment meted out; Involuntary change to primary [no save] when unconscious; -2 Change Penalty; -1 PP)				
+10	Abilities 24 + Skills 13 (52 ranks) + Feats 9 + Powers 75 + Combat 20 + Saves 12 - Drawbacks 3 = 150				

tle, fought in the dark with blinders on, otherwise the goal and sincerity of the acts made along the way become lost. Uncovering the truth behind these mysteries is as much a part of the character as is the quest for redemption.

Each bound entity is assigned a specific mission because "stop evil" because evil abounds in the world of men, so seeking it out and preventing it would be all too simple for a creature with the bound entity's powers. Climbing out of Hell and back into the light can't be a gift—it must always be a long, arduous fight so that, at the end, the entity will know *why* redemption was worth seeking and not just *how* it was attained. To this end, the bound entity will be set upon a far more focused path.

Perhaps the entity will be tasked with finding child molesters and bringing them to justice, or maybe its mission

will be as grandiose as saving all humanity from the millenia-spanning conspiracy of a supernatural brotherhood that has twisted mankind's design since the dawn of history. The Gamemaster may opt to make the character's mission more general than the latter (such as is the case with the Hangman's rather broad parameters of punishing the "guilty"), but even then care should be employed in qualifying who fits these parameters by instituting degrees of eligibility. Using the Hangman as an example, a shoplifter may be worthy of a scare from the entity and a stern warning not to slip farther into darkness, but a stone-cold killer would definitely warrant more drastic attention. The player and Gamemaster should work together to decide where the line is drawn, although the Gamemaster may want to alter this as the game progresses to suit the changing nature of the entity's existence as new information about their past and mission are learned.

ORIGINS

The bound entity is usually one that has previously run up a rather impressive tally of sin and evil, whether as a mortal or a supernatural being. Spirits are often facing punishment for their deeds in the traditional sense: they are in Hell and looking for a way out, forcing them to strike a deal with a Higher Power to earn their redemption or are otherwise stuck in a position where the binding seems a better deal. A supernatural entity, on the other hand, is far more open as to why the binding occurred. Like a damned spirit, the most likely reason is the creature is being offered a chance at redemption or being granted the chance to achieve something beneficial for "time served" bound to the mortal.

How the binding happened is also important. Did the mortal find something and unwittingly set in motion events that caused the entity to be bound to him? Is the mortal predestined to contain the entity, perhaps as the latest in a long line of such living prisons, or did someone else (perhaps a parent or guardian?) strike a deal that sacrificed the host's freedom in exchange for power or an otherwise unattainable favor? In short, was the binding a matter of fate or was it blind luck? These are answers that will only come during the quest to separate the two.

POWERS

A bound entity's powers are almost entirely centered upon their purpose. For instance, the example (admittedly broad) purpose provided in the archetype is "punishing the guilty," so the character would choose powers that build upon that theme.

CORE POWER EXAMPLES (ALL ARE SUPERNATURAL; 20 PP)

Electrocution: Electrical Control 8 (*Power Feats:* Alternate Power—Confuse, Dazzle [auditory], Strike, Stun)

Essence of the Innocent: Cosmic Energy Control 8 (*Power Feats:* Alternate Power—Animate Objects, Boost, Create Object, Teleport)

Fear of the Damned: Emotion Control 10 (*Fear;* *Extras:* Cone [100 ft.], Selective Attack; *Flaws:* Fear only, Sense-Dependent [eye contact])

Hellfire: Hellfire Control 9 (*Power Feats:* Split Attack, Alternate Power—Strike)

Stare of the Damned: Confession Burn 9 (*Power Feats:* Affects Insubstantial, Evaluate Misdeeds; *Flaws:* Sense-Dependent [eye contact])

SECONDARY POWER EXAMPLES (ALL ARE SUPERNATURAL; 10 PP)

Blinding Justice: Dazzle 5 (Visual)

Enhanced Ability 10 (Select one or more ability and divide this power amongst them)

Enhanced Core Power 10 (Select 10 Alternate Powers for your core power)

Justice's Long Reach: Snare 4 (*Power Feats:* Reversible, Tether; *Extras:* Regenerating; *Flaws:* Feedback)

Justice's Watchman: Strike 8 (*Power Feats:* Subtle, Triggered [commit a "sufficiently immoral" deed])

HEY, WHY NO FAVORED OPPONENT (GUILTY) FEAT?

Yes, taking Favored Opponent (guilty) seems like a natural step for this archetype, but using "guilty" as a creature type is **way** too general and wide a brush to be painting with as a default addition. If a player wants to fiddle with how the points are spent and add this feat (with the Gamemaster's permission), that's all well and good, but the writer did not want to suggest that such a broad category should be the norm for an archetype, something that is designed to set a baseline for the particular character concept across standard campaign types.

IMPROVEMENT

Perhaps the most obvious way to improve the character is to buy off its drawbacks, especially Cursed and Separate Personality. This is not without consequences, however, because if you take away these drawbacks the character's concept largely falls apart. While getting rid of his unwanted guest will likely be the mortal host's ultimate goal, this is not something that should be a mere matter of saving up the requisite amount of PP. Although there are several imaginative ways to get rid of these drawbacks and not have the character lose his powers entirely, if forethought is not taken to prepare and set-up such a major character event,

To ensure the character continues, and to maintain both plot and character continuity, the events leading up to getting rid of the bonded entity's curse should be planned well in advance and slowly introduced into the game so that it is something that can co-exist alongside the game's overall goals, ensuring none of the other players feel their characters are overshadowed by the needs of this character. The events leading up to undoing the curse should play out as a quest, especially for answers and knowledge that unravels the mysteries surrounding the curse and the entity. Once these answers have been found, everything is primed for the climactic removal of the curse.

VARIATIONS

ALTERNATE PURPOSE

AMNESIAC

Who is the entity? **What** is the entity? The host undergoes an event that causes him to be bound to the entity, but neither knows why, nor do they know what the entity's identity truly is. All that is known is there is a purpose involved; the entity feels compelled to do something (the default being the punishing of the guilty), but doesn't know why. The first step to separating the entity from the host will be finding out the entity's identity and why it can't remember who or what it is.

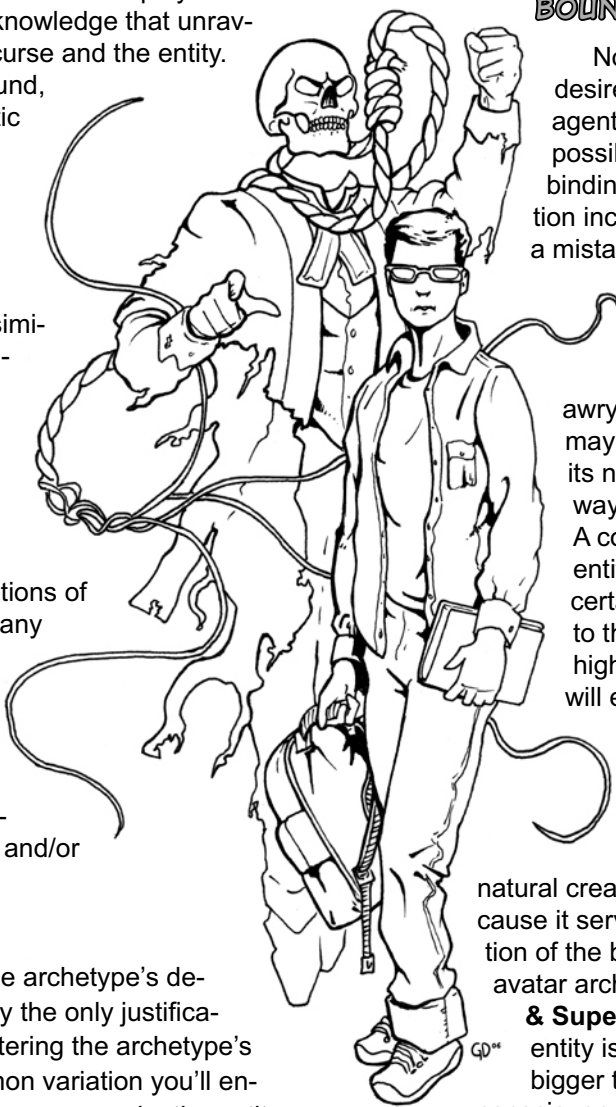
BOUND BY EVIL

Not all bindings are born from a desire to create an (often unwilling) agent for justice. Indeed, it's entirely possible an evil creature conducted the binding. Likely scenarios for this variation include the bound entity having made a mistake or similarly failing while trying to escape into the mortal realm, trapping them in their host, or an attempt by an evil power to create an agent that similarly went awry. In such cases, the bound entity may ironically have to act contrary to its nature and purpose as the only way to eventually attain its freedom. A constant battle of wills between the entity and host personalities is almost certain and adds a level of role-playing to the game that can be great fun and highly amusing (after all, the player will essentially be playing out a battle with himself.)

BORN TO THE CAUSE

Instead of the entity being a damned spirit or hellish, supernatural creature, it is a manifestation of the cause it serves. In many ways, such a variation of the bound entity will resemble the avatar archetype (see **Metahuman Mystics & Supernatural Supers #1**) because the entity is an aspect of something much bigger than either mortal or supernatural consciousness—it is part of a cause or moral mission, such as the pursuit of justice or revenge.

Such entities will likely be incredibly passionate, raw and emotionally unstable because they do not have any mortal experience to buoy them. They are an elemental personality confined within a fragile, mortal form they don't truly understand how to interact through. Social skills? What are they? Personal relationships? Say what? The mission is all consuming. The cause is the entity's reason for existence.



MORTAL PUNISHMENT

In a turn of events, for this variation it is the mortal who is being punished. Whether bound with an entity of benevolent or malicious intent, the mortal host is forced upon a path he would certainly like to avoid but cannot due to the curse. As punishment for his misdeeds or as a repercussion of meddling with supernatural forces beyond his ability to control, the mortal must share his body with the entity, an entity that can serve either good or evil purposes (as best suit's the game and the character concept), but will be an inconvenience (to understate the matter) either way.

PRISONER

There is no deal to be had, no mission to be followed and no redemption to be found in the entity's binding to the host. The arrangement is purely one of restricting, restraining and punishing the entity. The mortal's shell is nothing more than a prison to prevent the entity from acting upon its own will and power freely. This means both the entity and host will be looking for a way to split from the other, although their goals and means will almost certainly clash.

A mortal of conscience won't want to unleash the entity he's bonded to if it means letting it loose to wreak its evil upon the world, while a malicious entity won't care what harm its quest for freedom brings to the host, his loved ones, or the world at large. This adds an entirely new depth to the archetype's quest because the mortal won't just be looking for a way to free himself, but also a way to do so while imprisoning his unwanted hitchhiker somewhere else, meanwhile the bound creature will likely want to deliver some last bit of revenge upon its host before freeing itself as a measure of payback for interfering with its plans.

Of course, things will play out entirely different if the imprisoned entity is not malicious at all but is instead a servant or aspect of good and righteousness. Who imprisoned the entity and why are perhaps the most important questions. It could have been an evil enemy looking to get a foe out of the way without upsetting some sort of balance by outright destroying the entity, or perhaps the entity bent some rule about non-interference in the mortal world and has been sentenced to suffer an ironic punishment by its bosses. The mortal and entity will likely get along well (or not, if the host is evil or not interested in joining the fight against evil), but will probably want to get their separate lives back. Of course, there's always the chance the mortal and entity will realize they are stronger together than they are apart and find a way to turn the intended punishment to their mutual benefit.

VOLUNTARY REPENTING

As a change of pace, the evil entity bound to the host has done so of his own accord out of a genuine desire to repent past sins—penance isn't merely a ticket to freedom but is a path to peace of mind and spirit. Something has caused this supernatural, once-agent-for-evil to change its

ways and if the only (or most suitable) way to do so is by binding itself to a mortal, then so be it. This doesn't necessarily mean the host was willing, however, possibly creating the conundrum of how far the entity can truly repent if it may only attempt to do so by effectively raping the soul of a living, sentient being? In such cases, part of the game should be spent developing the relationship between entity and mortal as the former attempts to convince the latter to stop fighting its attempts to redeem itself and become a willing participant in the war against evil. In this case, the Cursed drawback will likely be removed, otherwise the concept behind it will have to be altered to better suit the circumstances.

"While I may personally admire your ingenuity with a knife and the tenacity needed to achieve such an impressive body count, I'm afraid justice demands your soul be rendered until Hell's burning pits."

Darren Sampson was a typical high-school freshman—well, except that he was incredibly smart, not very athletic, and seemed to be the target of every jock and bully on campus. It didn't matter that he had a very big heart and all he ever wanted to do was help people. Bullies didn't care how many homes Darren helped build for the poor, jocks thought it funny Darren spent so many hours helping in soup kitchens, and the ladies actually thought it was funny "Choir Boy" wore outdated and raggedy clothes because he gave most of his money to charity. It is a testament of his goodwill that he never thought of revenge, only a desire to make such people realize there are more important things to life than cars, sex, booze and parties.

One night, while coming back from a cold night of walking the streets to hand out blankets to the homeless, Darren saw the glow of a building fire several blocks away. It was an old church he knew many street people used as a shelter during the cold winter. Without a thought for himself, he rushed in and began ushering people out. Then he heard a shout from down in the basement. A shout that paradoxically sounded ... BLISSFUL!

Rushing down the smoldering stairs, Darren saw a wizened man, wrapped in tattered rags. The fire was intense, apparently having started in the church's ancient coal basin where it seemed the old man had been burning wood to keep warm. That's when Darren noticed the noose around the man's neck. It looked like it had torn while the man had been trying to hang himself, probably snapping and caus-

Darren “Choir Boy” Sampson (Mortal)				PL 10 (PL 5)	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+0	+0	+3	+1	+0
10	10	10	16	12	10
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 2 (+2), Bluff 2 (+2), Climb 4 (+4), Computers 8 (+11), Craft (electronic) 8 (+11), Diplomacy 4 (+4) Drive 4 (+4), Knowledge (physical sciences) 8 (+11), Notice 4 (+5), Profession (short order cook) 4 (+5), Search 4 (+7), Sense Motive 4 (+5), Stealth 4 (+4), Swim 4 (+4)				
+0					
FORT	Feats: Beginner’s Luck, Connected, Dodge Focus 2, Equipment 4, Luck 4, Second Chance (Toughness Save)				
+4	Powers: Immunity 3 (Spiritual/Undead Possession, Exorcism descriptor; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate), Mind Shield 10 (Paranormal; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate), Super-Senses 6 (Guilt Awareness [radius], Magical Awareness [radius], Paranormal Awareness [radius])				
REF	Combat: Attack +2, Damage +0 (unarmed), Defense +2, Initiative +0				
+4	Drawbacks: Cursed (Possessed by bonded entity and compelled to “punish the guilty”; –2 PP), Separate Personality (Full-round; 50% PP; Involuntary to secondary [DC 20] when extreme guilt detected; –2 Change Penalty; –2 PP)				
WILL					
+5	Abilities 8 + Skills 16 (60 ranks) + Feats 13 + Powers 21 + Combat 8 + Saves 12 – Drawbacks 4 = 74				

ing him to hit the coal bin and spill some of the flame onto dirty rags or the like, starting the fire. Darren failed to notice there was no other sign of any rope having been attached to the ceiling’s rafters—he was too busy rushing through the rising flames to save the aged gent.

As his savior drew close, the man turned and gave Darren a smile that would stick with the boy for the rest of his years. Even as the dirty rags the man wore began to burn and his greasy hair started smoking from the heat, the smile never left his face. “Free!” he said with complete happiness. “At long last, I’m free!”

And that’s when he took the noose from around his neck and placed it around Darren’s before he could be stopped. Darren didn’t remember anything after that except darkness.

Jamethon Godard was happy. Having been granted a judgeship by the new powers, he now found himself in a

Then Hangman (Entity)				PL 13 (PL 13)	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4/+8	+2/+5	+0	+0	+5	+1
18/22	14/20	10	10	20	12
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+10/+13), Climb 4 (+8/+10), Concentration 4 (+9), Intimidate 12 (+13), Notice 8 (+13), Search 4 (+4), Sense Motive 8 (+13), Stealth 8 (+10/+13)				
+0/+13	Feats: All-Out Attack, Attack Specialization (ropes) 2, Blind-Fight, Chokehold, Diehard, Fearless, Fearsome Presence 4, Improved Initiative, Move-By Action, Takedown Attack				
FORT	Powers: Confession Burn 9 (Stare of the Damned; <i>Power Feats:</i> Affects Insubstantial, Evaluate Misdeeds; <i>Flaws:</i> Sense-Dependent [eye contact]), Enhanced Dexterity 6 , Enhanced Strength 4 , Immunity 17 (Life Support, Aging, Need for Sleep, Starvation/Thirst, Fatigue), Knowledge of the				
+6	Condemned 4 (Variable power—skills only, one at a time [4 PP/rank base]; <i>Flaws:</i> Only skills possessed by those who have suffered damage from his Stare of the Damned in the past week and is limited to the maximum of that person’s ranks) (see <i>Ronin Arts’</i> Superline #4 for information on Variable Power), Leaping 2 , Snare 6 (Hangman’s Ropes; <i>Power Feats:</i> Reversible, Tether; <i>Extras:</i> Regenerating), Substitute Save Will 2 (Toughness; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate), Super-Movement 1 (Swinging), Super-Senses 2 (Tracking; <i>Flaws:</i> Only versus the guilty), Super-Senses 4 (Danger Sense, Darkvision, Detect Guilt)				
REF					
+5	Combat: Attack +7/+11 (ropes), Damage +4/+6 (unarmed), Defense +7, Initiative +4				
WILL	Drawbacks: Cursed (Bound to mortal host and compelled to “punish the guilty”; –2 PP), Separate Personality (Full-round; 100% PP; Involuntary to primary [DC 10] when punishment meted out; Involuntary change to primary [no save] when unconscious; –2 Change Penalty; –1 PP)				
+14	Abilities 24 + Skills 14 (56 ranks) + Feats 14 + Powers 101 + Combat 28 + Saves 17 – Drawbacks 3 = 195				

position to strike back against all the nobles and landowners that had ever looked down upon him as though he were something to wipe off their feet. With the Revolution had come a shift in power, and some of that power was now in his hands: the power of life and death.

In France’s heated fury, it wasn’t too picky over who

went to visit Madame Guillotine, so long as they were told the death was revenge for everything they'd endured and they'd be better off afterward. If a noblewoman wanted to save her husband, she would show him her gratitude (and even then Godard would often still kill the man, just for a lark), and if a landowner wanted to escape Godard's district he'd better pay in gold. Life was good, even if it was built on the death of others. Even amongst a time of such horrors, Jamethon Godard stood out as a corrupt, masochistic brute whose reputation for the love of a neck snapping from a hangman's noose rather than a quick pop under the dropping blade was well-known.

But even the best of times must come to an end.

After blackmailing and bedding a particularly beautiful and tenacious noblewoman and killing her husband anyway, his comeuppance came in the form of a dagger between the shoulder blades. One moment Jamethon Godard thought himself living all the joys life had to offer and the next he was falling into an abyss of dark rock and blazing fire where his soul was hung from a burning tree to twist in a fiery wind for nearly two centuries.

During a day like any other (as near as time can be told in Hell)—his breath struggling to come and simultaneously burning in his lungs with sulfurous smoke—a flashing blade suddenly soared above his head, cutting the rope. Even as he choked to inhale the air that had been denied him so long, a raspy voice whispered in his ear from behind. "You've been given a second chance, Jamethon. A second chance to be a deliverer of justice. Take my words to heart: you don't want to disappoint me this time around."

And with that, Jamethon Godard found himself flung up and out of the abyss.

When the darkness finally receded, Darren found himself slumped in an alley, garbage strewn about him and a harsh smell filling the night. It smelled familiar, like burned steak only ... not. Then Darren noticed the bodies in the garbage around him. Obviously gang members of some sort (from what he could tell by the remains of their uniformly colored clothing), each of the men was scorched and quite clearly dead.

Not knowing how and not knowing why, Darren *did* know he was somehow responsible for their deaths. He could feel it, deep in his big, benevolent heart and deeper yet in his soul. As he took the rope from around his neck, he could tell it would be no simple thing getting rid of it. It would be not be easy cleansing himself of the darkness. Even though he didn't yet know the questions, Darren decided there and then to do whatever it would take to find the answers.

Crusader				PL 10	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+1	+2	+3	+3	+1
12	12	14	16	16	12
TOUGH	Skills: Bluff 8 (+9), Concentration 8 (+11), Craft (mechanical) 4 (+7), Diplomacy 8 (+9), Escape Artist 4 (+5), Gather Information 8 (+9), Intimidate 2 (+3), Investigate 6 (+9), Knowledge (arcane lore) 10 (+13), Knowledge (streetwise) 6 (+9), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 8 (+11), Language (Latin, choose 3 more), Notice 8 (+11), Profession (choose one) 4 (+7), Search 8 (+11), Sense Motive 10 (+13), Sleight of Hand 2 (+3)				
+2	Feats: Artificer, Connected, Contacts, Diehard, Evasion 2, Luck 4, Master Plan, Ritualist, Well-Informed				
FORT	Powers: Device 4 (Choose a "trademark devices" built for 3 PP/rank), Luck Control 3 (<i>Power Feats:</i> Innate; <i>Extras:</i> Burst [15 ft.], Selective Attack; <i>Flaws:</i> Unreliable), Quickness 4 (x25; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate; <i>Flaws:</i> Only for Artificer and Ritualist), Sensory Shield 6 (Mental), Super-Senses 15 (Magical awareness, mental awareness, supernatural awareness, detect demons, detect magic, detect psionics, detect spirits [all detect senses as free action and ranged]), Spell Knowledge 3 (Variable power—magic descriptor only, one trait at a time [4 PP/rank base]; <i>Power Feats:</i> Accurate, Affects Insubstantial, Dimensional; <i>Extras:</i> Move action; <i>Flaws:</i> Requires a Knowledge [arcane lore] Check, Tiring) (see <i>Ronin Arts'</i> Superline #4 for information on Variable Power)				
+7	Combat: Attack +3, Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +4, Initiative +1				
REF	Drawbacks: Power Loss (Variable Power; when unable to speak and gesture to cast spells; -1 PP)				
+5	Complications: Choose one. Addiction, Enemy, Hatred, Obsession, Responsibility and Secret are perhaps the most obvious choices.				
WILL	Abilities 22 + Skills 27 (108 ranks) + Feats 13 + Powers 61 + Combat 14 + Saves 14 - Drawbacks 1 = 150				
+8					

CONCEPT

Part badass, part hardcase, part detective, part arcanist, and all very, very mortal, a crusader would otherwise be like any other Average Joe off the street if events hadn't

conspired to sweep her up in something way out of her league. Usually, the waters of circumstance are so far over a crusader's head she has to doggy paddle well past the point of exhaustion just to keep from drowning, let alone make any headway. And yet the crusader perseveres—she pushes forward and continues to fight the good fight despite her many limitations (especially when compared to most other hero archetypes that are designed to perform better in a stand-up fight.) That is what sets her apart more than anything else.

Crusaders aren't your typical face-to-face, balls-to-the-wall combat types. They aren't overflowing with power (mystical or otherwise), and are almost always trying to catch up to events while constantly stuck in the role of the underdog. She must make the most of what resources she has, and that means careful planning and quick thinking, not to mention developing a network of people who share a similar interest in the occult and can provide information and tips (even if only at a cost.) In fact, a crusader's greatest weapons are often her varied contacts, wits and stoic will, all of which are needed to face the overwhelming odds and fearsome existence that is her daily lot. It doesn't hurt that luck also seems to be on her side more often than not.

Using what skills she has, the crusader is devoted to fighting the supernatural and dark mystical arts, be the danger human or otherworldly in nature. She doesn't have much in the way of *real* power at her beck and call—certainly nothing comparable to most of her foes—but still finds a way to get the job done. She is a flawed hero and, indeed, is an ideal character type to add complications so as to better underscore just how mortal and flawed she is.

ORIGINS

The character's story will vary depending on how she got involved with fighting the supernatural. Did she join up willingly out of a simple and pure need to do good and protect others from things humanity at large refuses to admit exist, or was she coerced by some greater power (mortal or otherwise) as a way to purchase redemption, peace of mind or salvation? Perhaps she was born to the role as the latest generation of a familial legacy or maybe it was just dumb, blind fate that forced her hand. It's also possible the whole thing was just one big mistake or misunderstanding.

And how did the character come by her powers? Was she pursuing the occult when something she uncovered (forcibly or voluntarily) brought her into the war between Light and Darkness, or did she begin delving into arcane

mysteries following a life-altering experience with the supernatural? Do her powers come relatively easy (as far as this character concept allows) or are they so alien to her they are an extreme effort to use (in which case worsen the flaws and drawbacks), making their operation more a matter of luck and surviving the incredible strain as it is of skill or ability? Either way, why exactly is it so?

The driving theme behind the crusader is that of a mortal biting off more than she can chew, and that goes as much for how her powers work, her goals are set, and the enemies she ends up facing as it does for the way she conducts herself.

POWERS

Most of a crusader's abilities come from knowledge she's scavenged here and there during her many battles against the Darkness. A ritual learned here from an arcane text taken as a spoil of war, a demon bone taken from there to ward off evil, and so on. She often finds using this knowledge as much a struggle as fighting the supernatural because the crusader's training (if any) is incomplete or haphazard, or because her resources harness magics no mortal was meant to wield. As such, a crusader's magic will be hamstrung in some way; you'll notice the archetype's Variable Power requires a Knowledge (arcane lore) check in addition to the power check, and is also Tiring. Combined, these two flaws illustrate the crusader's ineptitude at performing non-ritualized magic—sure, she can usually pull it off, but not without a good deal of effort. Such limitations are the crusader's hallmark.

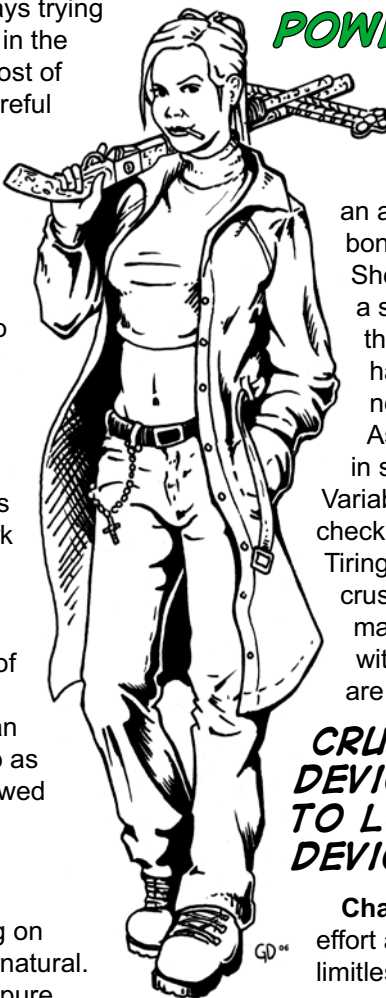
CRUSADER TRADEMARK DEVICE EXAMPLES (EASY TO LOSE; BUILT AS A 20 PP DEVICE)

Chalice of Belmoze: Healing 10 (Magic); Extra effort applies to the user. Drinking of the chalice's limitless water heals.

Redigore's Cloak: Protection 10 (Magic; *Extras*: Impervious; *Flaws*: Ablative), **Mind Shield 10** (Magic); Extra effort applies to the user. Protects the wearer's body and mind.

Sword of the Grand Master: Strike 9 (Magic; *Power Feats*: Affects Insubstantial, Mighty; *Extras*: Penetrating); Extra effort applies to the user.

Zodiac Ring: Shapeshift 3 (Magic; *Power Feats*: Alternate Powers—Mimic, Morph; *Flaws*: Limited to Zodiac-theme, Standard Action); Extra effort applies to the device. Allows the wearer to assume shapes and powers related to the Zodiac.



CRUSADER RITUAL EXAMPLES (BUILT USING THE RITUALIST FEAT)

Banish: Nullify 10 (Versus Summon [magic descriptor]; *Extras*: Nullifying Field [50 ft.], Selective Attack; *Flaws*: Requires Knowledge [arcane lore] check to first identify subject; 10 PP)

Exorcism: Nullify 10 (Versus Possession [magic descriptor]; *Extras*: Nullifying Field [50 ft.], Selective Attack; *Flaws*: Tiring; 10 PP)

Hell Walk: Super-Movement 1 (Dimensional Movement [Hell]; 2 PP)

Protection Circle: Protection 10 (*Extras*: Burst [up to 50 ft.], Impervious; *Flaws*: Immobile, Only versus summoned beings; 10 PP); a circle of salt protecting those within.

Reveal the Hidden: Nullify 10 (Magic; Affects all magic simultaneously; *Extras*: Nullifying Field [+0, 50 ft.]; *Flaws*: Only nullifies Invisibility and Shapeshift; 10 PP)

Spirit Walk: Astral Form 5 (Magic; *Flaws*: Tiring; 20 PP)

CRUSADER CHARM AND RELIC EXAMPLES (BUILT USING THE ARTIFICER FEAT OR ADDED AS A DEVICE)

Angel Tears (Device 2; 6 PP): Strike 9 (Magic; *Power Feats*: Incurable; *Extras*: Poison; *Flaws*: Only versus demons, undead and like creatures of supernatural darkness; 10 PP); normally found in a glass vial, this is a far more potent version of holy water because it doesn't require the target have a weakness.

Cerebus' Tooth (Device 3; 9 PP): Nauseate 5 (Magic; pain; *Extras*: Alternate Save [Will], Burst [25 ft.]; *Flaws*: Only versus demons; 15 PP); causes demons discomfort and pain.

Demon Fire (Device 2; 6PP): Hellfire Control 5 (Magic; 10 PP); kept in a lead-lined container, it bursts out when the container is opened. Glass containers with lead coatings within are often used.

Holy Water (Device 2; 6 PP): Strike 9 (Magic; *Power Feats*: Incurable; *Extras*: Poison; *Flaws*: Only versus creatures with a weakness for holy water; 10 PP); normally found in a vial.

Judas' Coin (Device 2; 6 PP): Environmental Control 10 (Magic; Distraction DC 10; *Flaws*: Only when willingly taken); whoever accepts the coin is constantly distracted by their greed.

IMPROVEMENT

A crusader survives by her wits and luck as much as by anything else, and so adding feats that directly improve her

chance of survival or allow her a better chance of overcoming great odds, such as Second Chance, Ultimate Effort and Uncanny Dodge (not to mention some additional Luck), are a good idea. If the Gamemaster and player both agree the story can accommodate such a thing, it may also be a good idea to take on a sidekick. This is usually some wannabe hanger-on or apprentice who will act as a foil for the crusader and her quirky plans. Taking Fearless wouldn't hurt, either.

So far as abilities go, improving Intelligence and Wisdom are important considering the skills that are central to this character's concept, while buying some more Charisma would also help if the crusader is being played as a shyster as much as (or more than) a hero. Dexterity is also important for keeping the character alive, but too much Constitution or Strength will make the character seem less an arcane champion and detective, and so purchasing some protective powers to boost the crusader's Defense and Toughness would also be a good idea.

Buying off flaws is another option, but one that should be carefully considered. The character's concept hinges on her human weaknesses and ineptitudes, and removing those will remove much of the crusader's charm and identity. A crusader who tosses magic about as safely and competently as she sneezes becomes just another variation on the mystic archetype rather than a character with a concept and design all its own. Allowing crusaders to overcome just one of their powers' flaws should be granted as a great reward and should not be a matter of merely having enough PP to do so.

VARIATIONS

The following are possible variations of the crusader archetype. Other likely ways to change the archetype include being more specific with its magical abilities, focusing on a particular spell or series of rituals, rather than keeping the Spell Knowledge Variable Pool. Tinkering with the skills and feats is yet another way to fine tune the character to suit your needs, especially for some of the more divergent variations to follow.

HOLY WARRIOR

You have been summoned to do battle with the Forces of Darkness by a calling from on high. Whether born to the fight, trained by the Church, or having picked up the banner of your own will, you are a Soldier of God (or some similar divine force for good) whose devotion is as much a weapon as the blessed rites and relics you wield. Holy warriors are totally devoted to their cause and will not use the Enemy's weapons and tools, even against the Darkness, and would rather die than do so. Their cause is just and if God feels their time has come, they must meet their maker with a clear conscience. For this reason, all a holy warrior's magics will be divine in nature rather than truly arcane (unless the Church has its own form of magic that it keeps secret so as not to be confused with "witchcraft.")

PROFITEER

Although she fights the good fight against supernatural evil and all manner of forces from Beyond, the profiteer does not necessarily do so out of a desire to help her fellows. Instead of fighting out of a sense of magnanimous grace, the profiteer looks to come into some manner of personal gain for their efforts, be it actual cash by charging clients to fight evil on their behalf or acquiring all sorts of arcane knowledge and relics to hoard or sell.

RELUCTANT HERO

You never asked to get dragged into a shadow war against supernatural evils, but that's where you find yourself. Whether you're beholden to someone, desperately need to redeem yourself, or are otherwise forced to use your magic and wits against the Forces of Darkness, you do so with the same grudging and grumbling dedication as unwilling conscripts have done for millennia. The difference here is you're not fighting other men such as yourself—you fight creatures born before Time, before light, before such a thing as good knew what it was not to be evil. Nobody said you had to like it but every day you have to shoulder the proverbial rifle and march to war.

SECRET SOCIETY

These crusaders belong to a secret society (often one that is incredibly old and deeply rooted in history, even if the world at large doesn't know it) that seeks to fight the supernatural. Most will have groomed warriors to suit their needs from long association with loyal families while others will supplement their troops by bringing worthy, fresh blood into the fold. The most effective secret societies are usually those that have carefully cultivated financial and arcane resources through the centuries to aid in their battle, although this need not be so; some operate more like a network of agents sharing information and fighting each battle as it comes rather than spending what little money they have on forming vast webs that feed them intelligence from all corners of the globe.

Not all fight the good fight out of altruistic intent, however, but rather serve purposes of their own that do not have humanity's best interests at heart. In such cases, it is likely the character won't yet be of sufficient authority within the organization to know its true goals; as a foot soldier fighting on the front lines, the crusader will be told just enough to make her think she's fighting the good fight and anything that could possibly compromise her masters' true purpose will be kept out of reach.

The complication, One of Us, is pretty much a necessity for this variation of the crusader.

"Switch on to this, ya demon wanker. We can do this one o' two ways: the easy way or the 'ard way. The 'ard way will end up hurtin' the both o' us, so bin it before it gets nasty."

Eva Cross				PL 13	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+2	+3	+5	+5	+2
14	14	16	20	20	15
TOUGH	Skills: Bluff 8 (+10), Concentration 12 (+17), Craft (mechanical) 4 (+9), Diplomacy 8 (+10), Escape Artist 4 (+6), Gather Information 12 (+14), Intimidate 6 (+8), Investigate 14 (+19), Knowledge (arcane lore) 18 (+23), Knowledge (streetwise) 10 (+15), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 16 (+21), Language (Latin, choose 7 more), Notice 12 (+17), Profession (choose one) 4 (+9), Search 12 (+17), Sense Motive 14 (+19), Sleight of Hand 10 (+14)				
+3					
FORT	Feats: Artificer, Connected, Contacts, Diehard, Evasion 2, Fearless, Luck 4, Master Plan, Ritualist, Second Chance (mind control), Uncanny Dodge, Ultimate Save (Toughness), Well-Informed				
+9	Powers: Device 4 (Blessed Gun), Luck Control 3 (Power Feats: Innate; Extras: Burst [15 ft.], Selective Attack; Flaws: Unreliable), Quickness 4 (x25; Power Feats: Innate; Flaws: Only for Artificer and Ritualist), Sensory Shield 6 (Mental), Super-Senses 15 (Magical awareness, mental awareness, supernatural awareness, detect demons, detect magic, detect psionics, detect spirits [all detect senses as free action and ranged]), Spell Knowledge 3 (Variable power—magic descriptor only, one trait at a time [4 PP/rank base]; Power Feats: Accurate, Affects Insubstantial, Dimensional; Extras: Move action; Flaws: Requires a Knowledge [arcane lore] check, Tiring) (see <i>Ronin Arts</i> ' Superline #4 for information on Variable Power)				
REF					
+8					
WILL	Combat: Attack +3, Damage +2 (unarmed), Defense +5, Initiative +1 Drawbacks: Power Loss (Variable Power; when unable to speak and gesture to cast spells; -1 PP)				
+13	Complications: Addiction (cigarettes and alcohol), Reputation (con man and charlatan) Abilities 39 + Skills 43 (172 ranks) + Feats 17 + Powers 61 + Combat 16 + Saves 20 - Drawbacks 1 = 195				

Born to a Dublin priest and a devout mother, Eva's left calf bears a crucifix-like birthmark both parents heralded as a sign of great and holy things to come. Little did they know how truly prophetic, if twisted, their belief was. The birth-

mark had branded Eva as a fated warrior in the ceaseless battle against the powers of Darkness and evil, whether she wanted to undertake the fight or not.

Even as a young child, Eva always felt there was something else—something sinister—around every corner and behind every door, and this sense of foreboding and doom only became more malicious and tangible as she got older. She had as much of a knack for bad, inexplicable things to befall her as she had a knack for getting out of such situations. Her nerves could only take so much, driving her to smoke and drink as a young teen. She got into endless trouble, much to her parents' mortification, a shame that ended for them when all three were in an accident that killed the old priest and his wife. The accident and the near-death experience it gave her also peeled back the final veil for Eva, revealing to her a world of dark magics, angels and demons when she saw the Dark Powers come for her parents' souls and she failed to fend them off.

Since that first loss against evil, Eva has thrown herself into the war with a vigor matched only by her fiery temper, caustic manners and taste for the grape. A shattered, battered warrior of Light, Eva now marches across the world, undoing Darkness' work wherever she finds it, secretly hoping to one day redeem her parents' lost souls, or at least avenge them.

Eva's trademark magical item is the **Blessed Gun: Hellfire Control 6** (Holy fire; *Power Feats*: Affects Insubstantial, Dimensional; *Extras*: Alternate Save [Will]); Extra effort applies to the device. This weapon looks somewhat like a gilded, crucifix-shaped pump shotgun engraved with everything from prayers to angelic scripture, and fires flames drawn down from Heaven.

Magician				PL 10	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+4	+1	+4	+2	+4
12	18	12	18	14	18
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+12), Bluff 11 (+15), Disable Device 11 (+15), Escape Artist 10 (+14), Knowledge (physical sciences) 6 (+10), Knowledge (popular culture) 6 (+10), Knowledge (stage magic) (see pg. 1) 11 (+15), Notice 12 (+14), Perform (stage magic) 11 (+15), Search 12 (+16), Sleight of Hand 11 (+15), Stealth 11 (+15)				
+1					
FORT	Feats: Ambidexterity, Connected, Defensive Roll 3, Distract, Dodge Focus 2, Elusive Target, Fascinate 2, Equipment 10, Hide In Plain Sight, Improved Initiative, Inventor, Jack-of-all-Trades, Master Plan, Quick Draw, Throwing Mastery 2, Uncanny Dodge				
+4					
REF	Powers: Enhanced Skill 6 (Bluff +4, Disable Device +4, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge [stage magic] +4, Perform [stage magic] +4, Sleight of Hand +4; <i>Power Feats</i> : Innate; <i>Extras</i> : Critical Skill), Stage Magic 4 (Variable power—any combination of same descriptor [7 PP/rank base]; <i>Flaws</i> : Full Action, Requires Perform [stage magic] Check) (see <i>Ronin Arts</i> ' Superline #4 for information on Variable Power)				
+7					
WILL	Combat: Attack +3 (+5 Thrown), Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +5, Initiative +8				
+5	Abilities 32 + Skills 30 (120 ranks) + Feats 30 + Powers 33 + Combat 16 + Saves 9 = 150				

CONCEPT

Not all magic needs to call upon the cosmic ether and alter reality to fit the caster's will. Instead, a magician uses trickery, charm, misdirection and sleight of hand to carry out the illusion of magic—the reflexes and wits needed to conjure a coin from behind an amazed child's ear can be just as useful against a supervillain if the right tools are on hand and the magician has both the necessary smarts and courage. Still, lacking true magic and limited by the extent of her imagination and ability to fund the proper tools of her trade, the magician definitely isn't meant to stand toe-to-toe with heavy hitters.

ORIGINS

There are any number of reasons why the character turned towards stage magic, and from that into a superhero. She could be the latest in a long line of magicians,

or maybe she took it on as a lark or a way to make a quick buck at birthday parties. The character may be self-taught, although apprenticing to a master is far more common, especially when it comes to learning the really big tricks, like making Hoover Dam disappear or conjuring an elephant. If the character did not come by their skills through training with a master, the player will definitely have to define a solid explanation as to how the character gained such specialized skills as are needed to perform stage magic.

A stage magician certainly isn't the most likely person to decide that tossing their bottomless top hat into the ring of metahuman affairs and events is the proper course of action, so why do they do it? Was the decision a simple matter of desiring to do what one could for society, or is it a matter of revenge (and if so, for what and why does the response require such a sweeping response instead of only targeting those directly responsible?) or obligation to someone else, such as a master's dying wish? The world of stage magic is so far removed from the world of superheroes and evil masterminds, the reason will have to be several steps beyond the genre's norm if it is to be plausible.

POWERS

This character has no real powers to speak of, at least not in the superheroic sense. All of the magician's abilities come from hard training in the rare knowledge of sleight of hand and stage magic. All the character's powers need to be very logical and mortal in nature. In other words, they can't be supernatural or mystical, but rather designed in a realistic manner that allows them to seemingly work the unreal. This requires a lot of common sense and, likely, feedback and approval from the Gamemaster to ensure your magician can't fly into space or use an energy blast that will stop a tank.

Flaws play a big part in designing the magician's powers, especially Limited and Requires Skill Check (see **MM&SS 1** for details.) Requiring a Sleight of Hand check is common for powers that involve making things seem to appear or disappear just as Perform (stage magic) checks are used for other real-time tricks. Requiring a Knowledge (stage magic) check is useful for tricks that require preparation. Bluff is also useful when it comes to diverting the subject's attention or convincing them they saw or otherwise sensed something, while Perform (stage magic) can be used as a catchall for those abilities that don't quite seem to fit elsewhere.

SAMPLE STAGE MAGIC TRICKS

The following are examples of using the magician's Stage Magic Variable Power (20 PP total maximum.)

Body Sectioning: Anatomic Separation 5 (*Extras:* Variable Split; *Flaws:* Requires Knowledge [stage magic]

Check; 10 PP)

Disappearing Magician: Concealment 4 (*Flaws:* Passive, Requires Stealth Check; 2 PP)

Fiery Breath: Strike 6 (Fire; *Power Feats:* Extended Reach 2 [+10 ft.]; *Extras:* Linked to Dazzle [+0]; 8 PP), **Dazzle 5** (Bright flame; all visual, Reflex save; *Power Feats:* Extended Reach 2 [+10 ft.]; *Extras:* Linked to Strike [+0]; *Flaws:* Touch; 12 PP); 20 PP

Hypnotism: Mind Control 5 (*Power Feats:* Subtle; *Extras:* Conscious, Sustained [Lasting]; *Flaws:* Requires Charisma Check, Sight or Sound Dependent; 11 PP)

Levitation: Flight 2 (*Flaws:* Levitation, Requires Perform [stage magic] Check; 1 PP)

Walking on Blades: Protection 8 (*Flaws:* Only versus edged weapons; 2 PP)

SAMPLE MAGICIAN'S GEAR

The following are examples of gear and equipment used by the magician.

Blinding Dust (Device 1; 3 PP): Dazzle 10 (Visual, Reflex save; *Flaws:* Touch); 5 PP

Bottomless Suitcase (Device 1; 3 PP): Dimensional Pocket 1 (*Extras:* Instant [Continuous]); 3 PP

Cane Sword (Device 1; 3 PP): Strike 3 (*Power Feats:* Critical 19-20, Mighty); 5 PP

Cloak/Vest of False Pockets (Device 1; 3 PP): Dimensional Pocket 1 (*Extras:* Instant [Continuous]; *Flaws:* Cannot trap beings; Requires Sleight of Hand Check), **Protection 3**; 4 PP

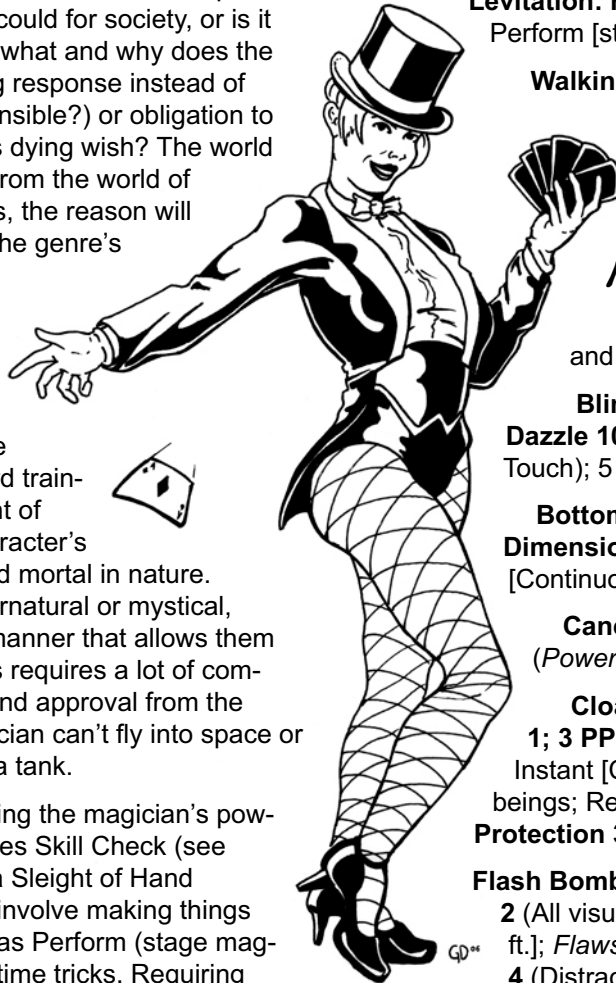
Flash Bombs/Paper (Device 2; 6 PP): Dazzle 2 (All visual, Reflex save; *Extras:* Burst [10 ft.]; *Flaws:* Touch); **Environmental Control 4** (Distraction; DC 10; *Extras:* Burst [10 ft.]; *Flaws:* Touch); 10 PP

Smoke Bombs (Device 1; 3 PP): Obscure 5 (All visual; *Flaws:* Touch); 5 PP

Sneezing Dust (Device 1; 3 PP): Dazzle 6 (Smell, Reflex save; *Flaws:* Touch); **Environmental Control 4** (Distraction; DC 10; *Flaws:* Touch); 5 PP

IMPROVEMENT

A magician's strength isn't necessarily in how powerful any given ability is (in other words, how many ranks it has), but rather in the broadness of the character's reper-



toire—her ability to pull a trick for any occasion out of her hat. After all, if the magician finds herself in the sort of situation where raw power or brute force is needed and trickery or misdirection won't help, she's likely up a certain creek without the required paddle anyway and a few extra ranks here or there likely won't save her. This means a magician's purposes are likely best served by devising new tricks and coming up with new ways to implement them, entailing new feats and skills, or expanding upon their Stage Magic Variable Power to allow for more or grander tricks.

Because a magician certainly isn't a heavy hitter, taking feats that allow them a better chance of survival, coupled with an impressive Reflex save, is also a good way to progress. Feats such as Second Chance, Ultimate Effort, and Uncanny Dodge are all smart investments for a magician, and getting creative with feats like Improved Initiative, Instant Up, Luck and Seize Initiative is a good way to get your tricks in first before someone decides to smooch your character.

Also consider adding new approaches to stage magic or magician related shticks as the character's PL increases. Put a spin on something one would normally associate with stage magic and make it a part of the general repertoire or focus on it to become a trademark power. For example, look at the trick cards provided with the magician's sample character, Presto. Her trick cards have been added as a Device, allowing her to stock up on cards before heading out on an adventure (with sample cards provided), adding an entirely new level of ability to the archetype.

VARIATIONS

The following are possible variations of the magician archetype.

GIMMICKIST

Although some magicians prefer using time-proven sleight of hand tricks, the gimmickist opts for cutting edge technology in the form of the Equipment feat and Device power to work his "magic." No simple smoke and mirrors will suffice—laser holograms, monofilament wires, and the like are all in the gimmickist's repertoire. The gimmickist likely won't be as skilled at the old-school techniques, such as Sleight of Hand, as most other magicians, but will compensate with plenty of Craft and Knowledge (technology) ranks which are often used instead of the former to meet the needs of Requires Skill Check flaws.

MACHINATOR

A machinator relies upon "setting the stage" properly, entailing plenty of preparation. Hidden springboards and trap doors, mirrors to use for disappearing, concealed rope and pulley systems are all staples of the machinator. In game terms, this means powers will often have the Limited flaw to impose restrictions such as "Only in prepared area" or employing the Action flaw to draw out the time needed to activate a power coupled with the Triggered power feat as

a way to represent that preparation. Requiring Knowledge (stage magic) checks is another flaw incredibly common to the sort of tricks these magicians employ.

MASTER OF ILLUSION

"Nothing is what it seems" is the guiding light of the master of illusion. By 'illusion,' we aren't necessarily talking about the Illusion power (although it can certainly be an aspect of this character's abilities.) These magicians operate using distraction and confusion to make their subjects think what they are meant to and see what they are supposed to rather than perceiving the truth of things. A master of illusion is a balance between the standard magician archetype and the machinator, but with a greater leaning towards the latter the grander the illusions used.

Powers that alter perception and reactions, such as Illusion, Environmental Control, Obscure and Dazzle are the master of illusion's bread and butter, although more creative effects can be derived from other powers. Requires Sleight of Hand check is pretty much a necessity for this character's powers, reflecting their dependence upon trickery and distraction. Using the Linked extra is also a good way to emulate this aspect of the character's concept, using powers such as Obscure and Environmental Control (distraction) as the basis for the power linked to.

"Nothing up my sleeve and nothing in the hat. But wait, then where did this sledgehammer come from?"

Jane Hallsey loved watching her father, the Great Gusto, work his magic for captivated audiences. The best thing about her father's performances, she thought, was that he'd put on his act for a single child with the same enthusiasm as he would when performing at the White House. The Great Gusto's generosity and compassion was matched only by his ability with stage magic, and that made him a legend in the magic community. But that only made his death all the more tragic.

While leaving a particularly successful show in Las Vegas, the Great Gusto was robbed by a pair of petty thugs who weren't satisfied with taking the aging man's night's pay but also thought it would be fun to beat upon him for a while. Sadly, the Great Gusto did not survive the encounter. Since that night, Jane has not been content merely to watch magic and has taken up where her father left off. Unlike the Great Gusto, however, Jane has donned the name "Presto" and now seeks to use what she knows to bring justice to victims who, like her father's soul, scream out for revenge.

PRESTO'S THROWING CARDS

Presto wields a selection of tricked-out throwing cards purchased as a Device pool, each of which has a different effect. She may carry up to 45 PP worth of various cards at a

Presto				PL 14	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+5	+1	+4	+3	+4
12	20	12	18	16	18
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+13), Bluff 11 (+15), Disable Device 11 (+15), Escape Artist 10 (+15), Knowledge (physical sciences) 6 (+10), Knowledge (popular culture) 6 (+10), Knowledge (stage magic) (see pg. 1) 13 (+17), Notice 12 (+15), Perform (stage magic) 13 (+17), Search 12 (+16), Sleight of Hand 13 (+18), Stealth 13 (+18)				
+1					
FORT	Feats: Ambidexterity, Connected, Defensive Roll 4, Distract 3, Dodge Focus 2, Elusive Target, Fascinate 2, Equipment 10, Hide In Plain Sight, Improved Initiative, Instant Up, Inventor, Jack-of-all-Trades, Master Plan, Quick Draw, Throwing Mastery 5, Uncanny Dodge				
+4					
REF	Powers: Device Pool (Throwing cards; 45 PP worth), Enhanced Skill 6 (Bluff +4, Disable Device +4, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge [stage magic] +4, Perform [stage magic] +4, Sleight of Hand +4; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate; <i>Extras:</i> Critical Skill), Stage Magic 4 (Variable power—any combination of same descriptor [7 PP/rank base]; <i>Flaws:</i> Full Action, Requires Perform [stage magic] Check) (see <i>Ronin Arts'</i> Superline #4 for information on Variable Power)				
+9					
WILL	Combat: Attack +3 (+8 Thrown), Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +5, Initiative +8				
+7	Abilities 36 + Skills 32 (128 ranks) + Feats 37 + Powers 78 + Combat 16 + Saves 11 = 210				

Primal Theurgist				PL 10	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+3	+2	+1	+4	+2
14	16	14	12	18	14
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 6 (+9), Climb 6 (+8), Concentration 8 (+12), Craft (artistic) 8 (+9), Handle Animal 6 (+8), Knowledge (arcane lore) 8 (+9), Knowledge (history) 8 (+9), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 10 (+11), Language (Native [no cost], English), Medicine 7 (+11), Notice 8 (+12), Perform (choose one) 8 (+10), Sense Motive 4 (+8), Stealth 4 (+7), Survival 4 (+8)				
+2					
FORT	Feats: Animal Empathy, Benefit (Status: holy man) 2, Defensive Roll 4, Endurance 3, Fascinate 3, Favored Environment (choose one) 3, Hide In Plain Sight, Inspire 3, Leadership, Ritualist, Track, Trance, Ultimate Skill (Knowledge [arcane lore])				
+8					
REF	Powers: Absorption 2 (Energy; <i>Flaws:</i> Magic only), Environmental Control 5 (Distraction [DC 10], Hamper Movement [one-quarter], 100-foot radius, 4 PP/rank; <i>Flaws:</i> Native Environment Only, Requires Perform Check), Spirit Aspect (Select one of the listed Spirit Aspects; 12 PP), Quickness 4 (x25; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate; <i>Flaws:</i> Only for Ritualist), Totem (Select one of the listed core powers, as befitting the character's concept; 10 PP),				
+8					
WILL	Combat: Attack +6, Damage +2 (unarmed), Defense +6, Initiative +3				
+9	Drawbacks: Slow Learner (Int and Dex Skills [advanced tech-related only]; -4 PP), Technology Repellant (Major, Common; -4 PP)				
+9	Abilities 28 + Skills 24 (96 ranks) + Feats 25 + Powers 41 + Combat 24 + Saves 16 - Drawbacks 8 = 150				

time. Following are some examples of Presto's trick cards.

Bludgeon Card (Device 1; 3 PP): Strike 6 (Bludgeoning; *Power Feats:* Mighty, Thrown; *Flaws:* Nonlethal Only); 5 PP

Glue Card (Device 1; 3 PP): Snare 4 (*Power Feats:* Thrown; *Flaws:* Touch); 5 PP

KO Card (Device 3; 9 PP): Stun 7 (*Power Feats:* Thrown; *Extras:* Cloud; *Flaws:* Fades); 15 PP

Razor Card (Device 2; 6 PP): Strike 4 (Slashing; *Power Feats:* Critical 18-20, Mighty, Thrown); 8 PP

Shock Card (Device 3; 9 PP): Paralyze 4 (*Power Feats:* Thrown; *Extras:* Fortitude Save); 13 PP

Smoke Card (Device 1; 3 PP): Obscure 2 (All visual; *Power Feats:* Thrown; *Flaws:* Touch); 3 PP

CONCEPT

Civilization has come a long way throughout history and spans most of the globe, and yet there are pockets of humanity we, in our ignorance or pride, would refer to as primitive. Such societies remain true to their comparatively simple heritage or, having largely adapted to modern ways, look back longingly at what has been lost. The Native American desire to keep their ancestors' ways strong despite being surrounded by the white man's world, the Sentineli of the Andaman Islands, the bushmen of Africa's Kalahari desert and the problems they face from encroach-

ing neighbors and ranchers, the aborigines of Australia and the children they are losing to the cities, and the ceaseless resistance of New Zealand's Maori against colonialism are all examples of such cultures.

A primal theurgist may be known by many names, depending upon the culture he comes from: medicine man, shaman, wise man, witch doctor and soothsayer are all typical. Whatever their name, the primal theurgist is a champion of his people and of nature, drawing on both for inspiration and strength. As such, the spirit of his people will grant him a special aspect with which to carry on his cause while nature will bestow a totem upon him so he may draw from its characteristics and become more than a mere man.

The character's responsibilities and duties will vary from culture to culture, so some research may be in order. Likely questions include not only the rudimentary facts of the ancient culture the primal theurgist represents, but also the history surrounding their decline/acclimation/subjugation. Once such facts are known, the character's goals and duties should be more apparent, although characters with a leaning more towards avenging what's been lost will certainly differ from those intent on protecting what culture remains.

ORIGINS

A typical primal theurgist is one of the last stalwarts in favor of subscribing to their peoples' ancient and nearly lost heritage. To those looking to adapt their culture to modern times, the character will be a pariah—a man living life backwards and hopelessly looking to the past for answers most of his people have forgotten the questions to. To other traditionalists, however, the primal theurgist is a champion for the true ways of their people's culture and life path.

Some people are born to the role as part of a long familial tradition whereas others find it thrust upon them by circumstance or fate. The former are usually prepared for their duties since birth, although some may have initially turned their back on their destiny only to later be brought back around to the way of things through necessity or circumstances. The latter will lack such preparation and will likely find themselves having to learn the way of things as they go, having

not had a mentor to train them on the use of their powers or their responsibilities to their people or the spirits they serve. In such instances, Gamemasters may wish to incorporate this into their game by having the character go through the process of discovering their powers rather than having them explained and detailed from the start.

POWERS

The primal theurgist's powers will be deeply rooted in the culture they represent. Typically, this includes rituals that are hundreds (if not thousands) of years old, healing skills, and paths to wisdom and solving problems. Wisdom is perhaps the primal theurgist's greatest tool and weapon. It is what drives the character to act on his people's behalf and tempers his powers with the understanding of responsibility. If desired, the character's powers can be more intrinsically tied to Wisdom by such means as introducing the Requires Wisdom Check flaw.

RITUAL EXAMPLES (BUILT USING THE RITUALIST FEAT)

Some of the rituals are built with specific totems or similar restrictions in mind to illustrate enhancing the character's theme. Many of these details may be changed to suit other totems not provided in this work, however, so long as the player and Gamemaster both agree the alteration is justified and makes sense with regards to the character's concept.

Sense Wilds: ESP 5 (All senses, 5 miles; *Flaws*: Requires Failed Save versus Hallucinogenic, Tiring; 10 PP)

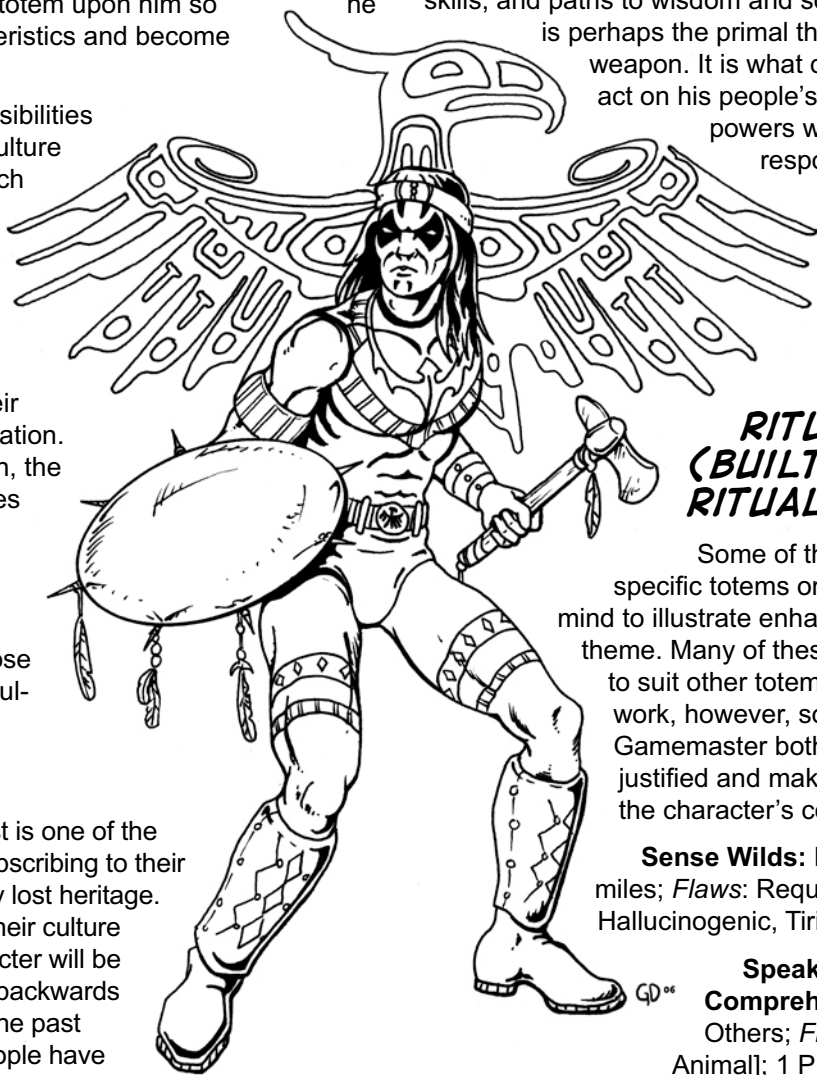
Speak With Totem:
Comprehend 1 (*Extras*: Affect Others; *Flaws*: Narrow Type [Totem Animal]; 1 PP)

Summon Rain: Weather Control 10 (Distraction [precipitation], 5,000 ft.; *Flaws*: Requires Perform Check; 10 PP)

Vision Quest: Super-Senses 4 (Precognition; *Flaws*: Requires Failed Save versus Hallucinogenic; 2 PP)

SPIRIT ASPECT (12 PP)

A primal theurgist is bestowed with a mystical or supernatural trait aspect empowered by some manner of spirit,



be it that of dead ancestors, nature, the character's totem, etc. These are often built as devices, but sometimes it is the primal theurgist himself who is transformed by the aspect, instead granting additional special abilities that must be called upon and should suffer flaws that restrict their use, such as limited durations or specific conditions under which they can operate.

Sturdiness: Enhanced Constitution 12

Might: Enhanced Strength 12

Agility: Enhanced Dexterity 12

Claws (Device 4): Strike 19 (*Power Feats*: Mighty; *Extras*: Penetrating; *Flaws*: Lethal Only; 12 PP); a claw-like leather gauntlet with blades extending from the fingers.

Phoenix's Sling (Device 4): Blast 10 (Fire; 20 PP); a sling that tosses small fireballs.

Sword of the Mountain (Device 4): Strike 10 (*Flaws*: Lethal Only; 10 PP), **Immovable 10** (10 PP); an incredibly dangerous sword that, when held, makes the character very difficult to move.

Thunderbird's Tomahawk (Device 4): Strike 7 (*Power Feats*: Accurate, Mighty, Thrown; 10 PP), **Dazzle 5** (Auditory; *Extras*: Explosion, Linked [Strike may be used separately]; *Flaws*: Touch; 10 PP)

TOTEM (10 PP)

A primal theurgist gains minor powers from a spirit they acquire through much soul-searching, a quest or the like. This totem is typically an animal and associates with the character because the two share key characteristics or there is otherwise an important reason for the spirit to do so.

Traits gained from a totem should be improved upon and/or added to with experience.

Alligator: Protection 3 (3 PP), **Regeneration** (Con checks +2, recovery rate 1 [20 min.], ability damage 2 [hour]; 5 PP), **Super-Strength 1** (2 PP)

Lion: Enhanced Strength 4 (4 PP), **Fortitude Saving Throw +4** (4 PP), **Reflex Saving Throw +2** (2 PP)

Owl: Eidetic Memory (1 PP), **Enhanced Wisdom 4** (4 PP), **Leadership** (1 PP), **Mind Shield 3** (3 PP), **Second Chance** (Will Saves; 1 PP)

Phoenix: Regeneration (Con checks +4, recovery rate 1 [20 min.], ability damage 2 [hour], resurrection [1/week]; *Power Feats*: Persistent, Regrowth; 10 PP)

Snake: Elongation 1 (1 PP), **Healing 2** (4 PP), **Reflex Saving Throw +3** (3 PP), **Super-Movement 1** (Slithering; 2 PP)

Spider: Artificer (1 PP), **Enhanced Climb 2** (+8; *Power Feats*: Alternate Ability [Dex]; *Extras*: Critical Skill; 5

PP), **Super-Movement 2** (Swinging, Sure-Footed; 4 PP)

Thunderbird: Enhanced Dexterity 4 (4 PP), **Immunity 5** (Electricity; 5 PP), **Sensory Shield 1** (Auditory; 1 PP)

Weasel: Mind Shield 4 (4 PP), **Quickness 2** (2 PP), **Will Saving Throw +4** (4 PP),

IMPROVEMENT

When first made, a primal theurgist's magic comes from rituals and items (or abilities) passed on as a matter of the character's station within the traditional culture of his people. As the character improves, however, it is likely he will begin to tap into greater power and may acquire new magics in the form of new traits independent of the Ritualist feat. These can be purchased as entirely new magical devices or powers, depending upon the character's concept and the unraveling story.

It's also possible that whatever Powers-That-Be worshipped by the character's people will grant a loyal and competent servant with new powers as a matter of their sponsorship. This will likely manifest in an enhanced bond with the primal theurgist's totem, meaning new traits associated with that totem will appear or existing traits will be enhanced. Another option would be to build a Sidekick—a semi-intelligent animal of the character's totem that accompanies the primal theurgist and is more a friend than anything else.

VARIATIONS

The following are possible variations of the primal theurgist archetype.

AVENGER

The character sees himself as an instrument of revenge against all people and societies that have harmed or exploited his own people and culture. The avenger primal theurgist sees the situation as having passed well beyond guardianship and protection and now all that is left is trying to even the score. Some avengers may retain perspective and narrow their focus against those who are actually involved in inflicting such harm whereas others will strike broadly against the general representation of what they consider to be the enemy. The latter sort of avenger is at best an anti-hero and, at worst, will be considered a villain.

CHILD OF TODAY

Instead of opting to protect the old ways, the character is an advocate of adapting to the modern world. The character doesn't advocate giving up the old ways entirely, though—he believes in integrating the ancient traditions with the world of today. This means giving up both the Slow Learner and Technology Repellant drawbacks and altering the character's Spirit Aspect and Totem to something more suitable.

PRIMAL AVATAR

The character resembles the avatar archetype (see **Metahuman Mystics and Supernatural Supers #1**) except instead of representing a primordial Force of the cosmos, the character is a mortal manifestation of everything his people represent. The primal theurgist exemplifies everything that is good and bad in his culture and people, drawing strength from the spirit of their existence and beliefs.

An interesting alteration to make for such a character is adding new powers, or boosting existing powers, based on the proximity of his people. The more of his people that are in the vicinity or the closer the character is to his people's lands, the more strength and power the character gains.

TOTEM AVATAR

Muck like a primal avatar variation, this character is the mortal personification of something else, in this case the totem animal. Powers should be adjusted to more accurately represent this, possibly doing away with the Spirit Aspect to purchase traits more in line with being an aspect of an animal spirit. The power to summon and control animals of the totem type, along with the ability to wholly or partially change into the animal, are examples of such abilities.

UNTESTED NEOPHYTE

Rather than being a primal theurgist in the full bloom of his power, you are still learning about your powers and your people. Your life is one of constantly unraveling all the stereotypes you thought to be true and getting to the truth of your own heritage. In their past, such characters will likely have turned their back on the past to look to the future and, for one reason or another, have now had the role of the primal theurgist thrust upon them, possibly against their will. As such, they will fight to reconcile their heritage with everything they thought was true of their culture before gaining their powers.

"For the evils you've brought down upon my people, you must face the thunderbird's claws!"

Born upon Arizona's White Mountain reservation, Reggie Four-Feathers' parents were both employed at the local, Native-run resort/casino. He grew up knowing little more than the modern ways of gambling and greed despite his paternal grandfather's constant attempts to succeed with Reggie where he had failed with Reggie's father by teaching his grandson about his Apache heritage. Reggie would have none of it. All he cared about was turning 18 so he could also work in the casino.

When Reggie's grandfather, Barry, suddenly became inexplicably ill, the youth finally understood why the old ways were so important to his grandfather. Barry revealed to his grandson that he [Barry] was dying of no normal disease, nor of old age—he was dying from a curse laid upon him long ago by an old enemy. As if the fact that his grandfather had enemies wasn't enough of a shock, to blame it on a

Tomahawk				PL 14	
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+4/+6	+4	+1	+5	+4
16	18/22	18	12	20	18
TOUGH	Skills: Acrobatics 10 (+14/+16), Climb 6 (+9), Concentration 8 (+13), Craft (artistic) 12 (+13), Handle Animal 6 (+10), Knowledge (arcane lore) 12 (+13), Knowledge (history) 12 (+13), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 10 (+11), Language (Native [no cost], English), Medicine 7 (+12), Notice 12 (+17), Perform (dance) 12 (+16), Perform (singing) 12 (+16), Sense Motive 8 (+13), Stealth 8 (+12/+14), Survival 8 (+13)				
+4					
FORT	Feats: Ambidexterity, Animal Empathy, Artificer, Attack Specialization (tomahawk), Benefit (Status: holy man) 3, Defensive Attack, Defensive Roll 4, Endurance 3, Fascinate 3, Favored Environment (forest) 3, Hide In Plain Sight, Inspire 3, Leadership, Ritualist, Track, Trance, Ultimate Skill (Knowledge [arcane lore])				
+10	Powers: Absorption 4 (Energy; <i>Flaws:</i> Magic only), Device 2 (Shield 9 [<i>Power Feats:</i> Affects Insubstantial]), Environmental Control 5 (Distraction [DC 10], Hamper Movement [one-quarter], 100-foot radius, 4 <i>PP/rank</i> ; <i>Flaws:</i> Native Environment Only, Requires Perform Check), Thunderbird's Tomahawk (Device 5: [Strike 10 (<i>Power Feats:</i> Accurate, Mighty, Thrown; 13 <i>PP</i>), Dazzle 6 (Auditory; <i>Extras:</i> Explosion, Linked [Strike may be used separately]; <i>Flaws:</i> Touch; 12 <i>PP</i>); 25 <i>PP total</i>], Quickness 4 (x25; <i>Power Feats:</i> Innate; <i>Flaws:</i> Only for Ritualist), Thunderbird Totem [Enhanced Dexterity +4, Immunity 5 (Electricity), Sensory Shield 1 (Auditory])				
REF					
+9/+11					
WILL	Combat: Attack +8, +10 tomahawk, Damage +3 (unarmed), +13 (tomahawk), Defense +10, Initiative +4/+6				
Drawbacks: Slow Learner (Int and Dex Skills [advanced tech-related only]; -4 <i>PP</i>), Technology Repellant (Major, Common; -4 <i>PP</i>)					
+12	Abilities 42 + Skills 36 (144 ranks) + Feats 30 + Powers 56 + Combat 36 + Saves 18 - Drawbacks 8 = 210				

curse was too much to believe. Reggie initially rejected the tale as the fevered ramblings of an elder on his deathbed. That was when Barry called upon the Thunderbird to come from the sky and take Reggie to the mountains. In the cold of

the mountains, Thunderbird tore away Reggie's clothing just as he tore away all the lies the youth had grown up knowing. His body and sole bare to the elements, Reggie heard from Thunderbird of the fight his grandfather had carried out—for far too long, as it turned out, due to the refusal of Reggie's father to take up the mantle—against the ancient evils that stalked the Apache and, indeed, all humanity.

Thunderbird told Reggie of the totems. He spoke of the spirits that looked over the Apache and would grant them great power, if only the Apache would allow themselves to hear. Thunderbird told of his own promise to the Creator to keep the Darkness from returning and how it was the servants of Darkness that had finally slain Reggie's grandfather, the most recent in an honored and empowered bloodline stretching back to the First People. This bloodline, spoke Thunderbird, had been selected to carry Thunderbird's power to fight the Darkness. Now it was Reggie's turn.

Unable to defeat the truth before his eyes, Reggie

returned with Thunderbird, only to learn he had spent nearly six months in a stupor of spiritual ecstasy and study. His grandfather had long since passed on to be with his ancestors. With Barry's death, all that remained was for Thunderbird to pass on to Reggie his grandfather's weapons and train the youth as the shaman that was his heritage. Having already accepted Thunderbird's gift of totem power, the newly knighted Tomahawk would become the weapon by which the Apache's eventual salvation from cultural oppression and the Darkness alike would be earned—if not by Reggie, then by one to follow.

Now nearly ten years have passed and Tomahawk is once more recognized as a great hero that has defeated evil, selfishness and greed time and again. And yet Tomahawk continues to learn more about himself and his people. He still quests for a greater rapport with Thunderbird through which to better fight the Darkness. And he still seeks to free his people from the invisible chains that weigh them down.

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