

# WORLDS IN PERIL



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*The illustrations and all graphic elements in Worlds In Peril are © 2014 Kyle Simons, Adam Bosarge and Jason Faulk. The text of Worlds in Peril is licensed under the Creative Commons ShareAlike 3.0 Unported (CC BY-SA 3.0). Some of the moves and text is either based off of, or lifted straight from, Dungeon World, by Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel (the text of which is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License). Still other moves are either tweaked or lifted from Apocalypse World, by Vincent Baker, and are used with his permission. The "I'm Back from the Dead" and "My Legacy" books were conceptualized by Fred Hicks. The "Start Anew" playbook was conceptualized and written by Johnstone Metzger.*



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# INTRODUCTION

**W***orlds in Peril* is a tabletop roleplaying game designed to tell collaborative stories about superheroes taking on both the challenges faced as a superhero, with the villains and public image and fame (or perhaps infamy) that goes along with it, as well as the challenges they face in their personal lives when they take off the mask and have to deal with everyday problems and relationships like everybody else.

It is a roleplaying game, which means we invent characters to play in a shared comic book setting we collaborate on and build as we play. The rules of the game are there to make sure the story stays fun and dynamic and that they closely emulate a modern, four-color superhero setting like you'd find in many superhero comics. The rules of the game will have you playing a game that emulates your favorite comic books in no time with all the action, suspense and drama that is part of being a superhero and balancing power, responsibility, a public persona and personal life.

**Advantage:** Objects, technology or abilities that are not inherent to a character. They allow the user to do things they normally could not but can be taken away, disabled or destroyed.

**Bonds:** A mechanic in the game used to signify a relationship, the strength and nature of it by means of a numerical value along with a short descriptor. Also acts as a currency in the game to both guarantee the success of an action and to guarantee conflict for them in their personal life as well.

**Bond Points:** The numerical value attached to a Bond to show the nature of it and that it can be Burned by a player to guarantee a one-time success.

**Conditions:** The term given to the mechanic used in *Worlds in Peril* to track, describe and show damage or the reduced agency of a character in the story being told at the table.

**Condition Threshold:** The number of Conditions an enemy or threat can withstand before losing their agency in the fiction.

**Drive Book:** A set of moves with goals to show the current motivation of a character.

**EIC:** Editor-in-Chief. Many roleplaying games have a term they use for the player of the game that is responsible for moderating and taking on the larger task of describing and portraying the environment and people that the other players of the game interact with via their characters; Whether it's Dungeon Master, Master of Ceremonies or whatever other term a tabletop roleplaying game uses to distinguish this player from the rest, in *Worlds in Peril* they are called the Editor-in-Chief, as per the editorial leader of a comic book or publication house.

**The fiction:** Within the confines of this book, "the fiction" means the shared conversation and story taking place in the world of the game as it is being played.

**Character Sheet:** The term used to describe the sheets of paper where much of a character's important information is written.

**Origin Book:** A set of moves along with suggestive backstory elements to help determine why a character became a superhero.

**PC:** Player character, or a character being played and whose actions are narrated by a player at the table other than the EIC.

**Powers:** Any and all abilities and characteristics of characters that are inherent and that go beyond the normal or even peak abilities of a regular human being.

**Modifier:** The number assigned by a player to a stat to show how well and how high or often their chance of success is when carrying out a certain kind of action.



**Moves:** The term given to the mechanic in *Worlds in Peril* to signify when dice need to be rolled or when a choice needs to be made that will inform the story and how it plays out.

**NPC:** Non-player character, or a character played and whose actions are narrated most often by the Editor-in-Chief. An NPC's motivations, goals and, ultimately, actions are within the purview of the EIC despite players wielding great influence over other characters and their actions.

**Stat:** In *Worlds in Peril*, stats instead describe a certain type of action. A value attached to it, called a modifier, indicates how well or how often you succeed when going about doing a certain kind of task. The stats in *Worlds in Peril* are as follows: Smash, Influence, Maneuver, Protect, and Investigate.

**Apocalypse World Engine:** *Worlds in Peril* is based on *Dungeon World* by Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel. It also repurposes some moves from *Apocalypse World*, by Vincent Baker, the original system that *Dungeon World* uses at its core. Just as *Dungeon World* departs from *Apocalypse World* in several ways in order to make a game about dungeon-crawling, so does *Worlds in Peril* depart from *Dungeon World* to make a game about superheroes.

One of the many reasons that the *Apocalypse World* engine is so good at telling stories is that the rules are all about guiding and facilitating a good conversation, which is essentially what playing a roleplaying game is all about. For those of you who have played games in the *Apocalypse World* system, there are a few things that you will find different about *Worlds in Peril*:

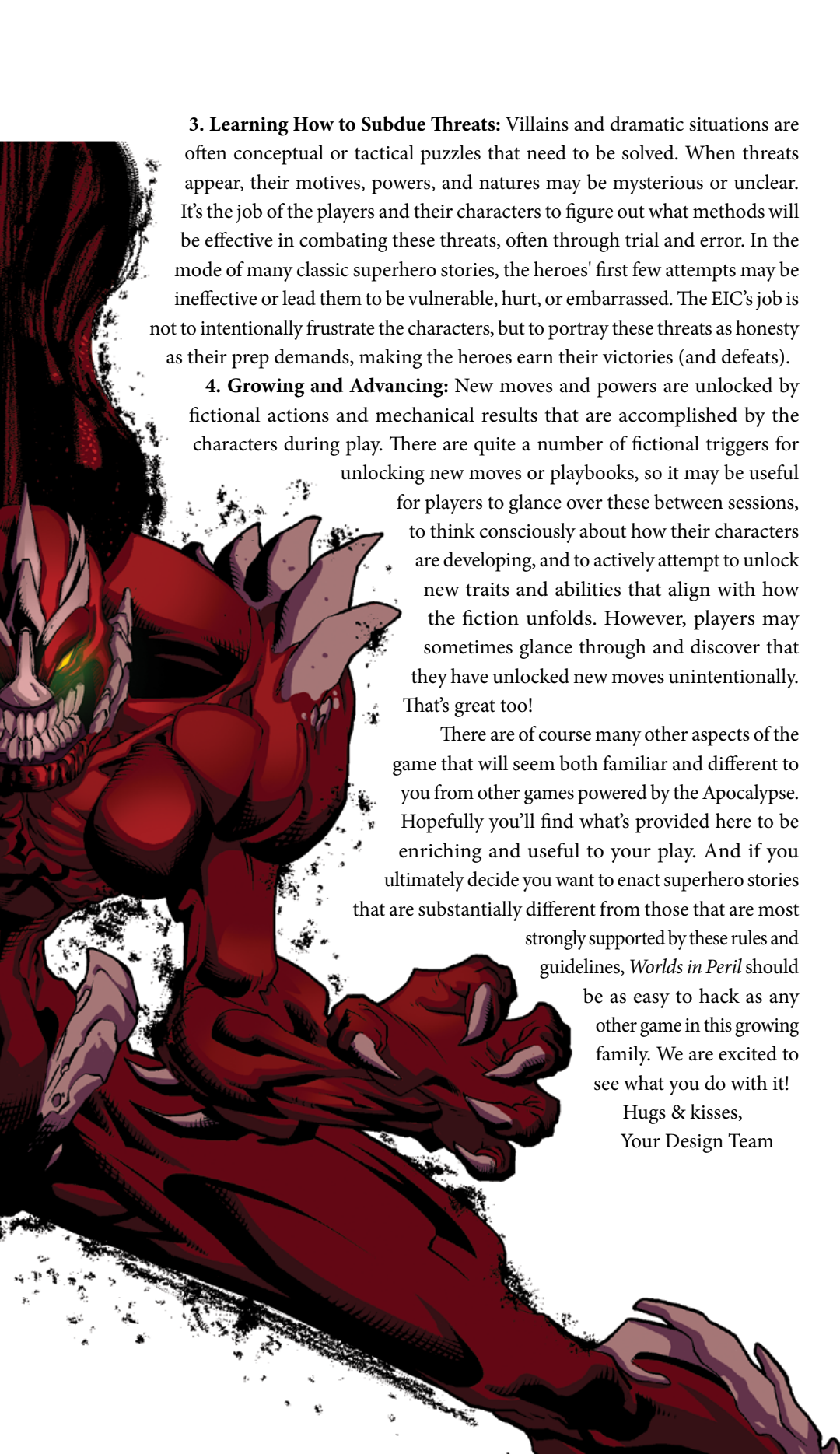


## DEAR VETERANS OF THE APOCALYPSE,

If you are already extensively familiar with one or more games that are “Powered by the Apocalypse” — *Apocalypse World*, *Monster of the Week*, *Dungeon World*, *Tremulus*, *Sagas of the Icelanders*, *Monsterhearts*, or any number of other games — you might find yourself tempted to jump right in and run a game of *Worlds in Peril* on the fly. Hopefully that’ll work out great! However, we would caution you that, like many offshoots of the *Apocalypse World* tree, *Worlds in Peril* has its own unique characteristics and idiosyncrasies. Here’s a few aspects that we suggest paying special attention to:

**1. Fighting Masterminds in the City:** While you might attempt to play other types of superhero stories with it, the default focus of *Worlds in Peril* is on battling villainous masterminds in an urban environment. There are scheming villains with plans for the city, and the characters are charged with stopping them.

**2. The Pressure’s On:** The action and narrative of the game are intended to be driven in large part by the EIC’s prep, rather than the EIC adapting on the fly based on how the characters decide to spend their time. Characters are pushed by the threats the EIC enacts to respond to various crises that are facing the city. Even downtime for the characters can often be driven by the need to remove Conditions and set up for future moves. It’s the job of the EIC to keep pressure on the players and their characters, but players can earn the right to assert more authority over the direction of the story through the results of certain moves and through other mechanics like burning Bonds.



**3. Learning How to Subdue Threats:** Villains and dramatic situations are often conceptual or tactical puzzles that need to be solved. When threats appear, their motives, powers, and natures may be mysterious or unclear. It's the job of the players and their characters to figure out what methods will be effective in combating these threats, often through trial and error. In the mode of many classic superhero stories, the heroes' first few attempts may be ineffective or lead them to be vulnerable, hurt, or embarrassed. The EIC's job is not to intentionally frustrate the characters, but to portray these threats as honesty as their prep demands, making the heroes earn their victories (and defeats).

**4. Growing and Advancing:** New moves and powers are unlocked by fictional actions and mechanical results that are accomplished by the characters during play. There are quite a number of fictional triggers for unlocking new moves or playbooks, so it may be useful for players to glance over these between sessions, to think consciously about how their characters are developing, and to actively attempt to unlock new traits and abilities that align with how the fiction unfolds. However, players may sometimes glance through and discover that they have unlocked new moves unintentionally. That's great too!

There are of course many other aspects of the game that will seem both familiar and different to you from other games powered by the Apocalypse. Hopefully you'll find what's provided here to be enriching and useful to your play. And if you ultimately decide you want to enact superhero stories that are substantially different from those that are most strongly supported by these rules and guidelines, *Worlds in Peril* should

be as easy to hack as any other game in this growing family. We are excited to see what you do with it!

Hugs & kisses,  
Your Design Team

# THE CONVERSATION & THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In a game of *Worlds in Peril* there are players and one Editor-in-Chief (EIC). Each player has a character they make and roleplay while the EIC mediates the conversation and narrates the world and characters around those characters. The EIC tells the players what is happening in the world and asks the players how they respond and react to it. When the players describe what they do or how they act, these descriptions may trigger moves—points in play where we need to roll dice to find out what happens. The dice help resolve certain situations in the game and usually informs and influences the story and what happens as well.

After rolling dice, the story continues until another moment when a move gets triggered and we need to go to the dice to see what happens. There is a continual back and forth but we always begin and end with the fiction and we only roll the dice when our descriptions of what characters are doing trigger the mechanics.

There are no rules for determining who gets to say what during the conversation or rules for whose turn it is to talk first. It is a free-flowing conversation that continues until the mechanics are engaged via moves. Moves apply a structure of guidelines and rules for the situation at hand and then unstructured, free-flowing conversation continues on again until another move is made. The Editor-in-Chief will say something and the players will respond. When the players ask questions or make statements, the EIC tells them what happens next. Sometimes, the things we say will trigger moves and the mechanics will get involved. The results will help guide the fiction and inform where it leads next.



# IN ORDER TO PLAY

To play *Worlds in Peril*, you'll need 2-7 friends to play with, though 3-5 is best. Choose one person to be the Editor-in-Chief (EIC). Everyone else will be players who will create their own characters and roleplay their heroes taking on whatever the world throws at them — these player characters are called PCs. While playing, players say what their character is saying, thinking and doing. The EIC describes everything else going on in the world.

You can play *Worlds in Peril* as a single scenario, a one-shot game session, or as a series of game sessions spanning an overarching campaign. How the EIC prepares for each kind of game session might be a bit different and is addressed further in the EIC chapter.

Either way, you will want to have:

- A few copies of the basic and special moves sheets.
- One copy of each Origin sheet and at least one of each Drive sheet.
- One copy of the EIC sheet and the EIC Moves.
- Things to write and erase with, paper or index cards for making notes and for visualizing certain aspects of the ongoing story.
- At least two six-sided dice, preferably two for each player.





## OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

The **second** chapter immediately following this one is entitled “An Overview of the Game” and goes over how the players and the EIC interacts with the story, what happens when they do and how it all comes together to tell an interesting superhero story. This includes:

**Player Moves:** The mechanics of the game previously talked about called moves may trigger when they narrate what their character does in the fiction—how they work, how they are triggered, and what happens when they are are found in this section. On page 29.

**EIC Moves:** The mechanics of the game that the EIC uses to respond to the player characters to set up story, or to otherwise introduce new elements in the game—a brief overview of EIC moves, along with when and why they are used. On page 144.

**Powers:** A brief look into the “super” part of superheroes and how *Worlds in Peril* handles all kinds of powers while remaining balanced. On page 32.

**Bonds:** A brief overview of what Bonds are and how the mechanic is used to tell a compelling modern-day superhero story. On page 33.

**Basic Moves:** A look at the moves that will come up the most often and their triggers and how the players use them to interact with the story. On page 36.

**Special Moves:** A look at moves and their triggers that come up in play, but that will not be used as often as Basic Moves. On page 63.

The **third** chapter walks players through the creation of their very own superhero to play in a game of *Worlds in Peril*. Creating a hero consists of several steps and the following sections break down each one:

**Team Profile:** Designed to help the players decide whether their characters start out as a team and, if so, all that that choice implies and entails. On page 78.

**Hero Profile:** An overview to help with the fleshing out a hero. On page 80.

**Basic Stats:** How the stats work and what their modifiers will mean for a hero. On page 82.

**Powers Summary & Profile:** Putting together a set of powers and setting boundaries on and limitations for those powers. On page 84.

**Origin Book:** A set of starting moves and backstory elements to incorporate into a character and to help determine why the character became a superhero. On page 92.

**Drive Book:** A set of moves with requirements and goals to drive story and to show a hero's current motivation and why they are still a superhero. On page 103.

**Bonds and Backstory:** How to use Bonds to build upon backstory elements and tie together existing relationships with other heroes and other important characters or agencies. On page 117.

The **fourth** chapter is an in-depth explanation for players playing a hero they create in a game of *Worlds in Peril*:

- How a character advances and the achievement system. On page 122.
- How and when to Burn Bonds and what that entails. On page 124.
- How damage is taken and the effect it has on a character. On page 127.
- How and when to recover from damage. On page 130.
- What a player should be doing and keeping in mind while playing *Worlds in Peril*. On page 131.

The **fifth** chapter delves into the specifics of being the Editor-in-Chief of a game of *Worlds in Peril* and the structure and codified rules surrounding it:

**Agendas:** your goals and what you aim to do to make a game of *Worlds in Peril* feel like a comic book. On page 138.

**Principles:** The rules an EIC follows to help create a collaborative story and to help keep everyone immersed in the game. On page 140.

**Always Say:** The rules an EIC follows to make sure they are honest to themselves, the world they depict, and the players they run the game for. On page 143.

**EIC Moves:** Ideas and things an EIC can do and have happen in a game whenever something needs to happen and the different approaches that can be taken along with when and why to use them. On page 144.

The **sixth** chapter deals with the First Issue and has advice for running the first game and all that it entails. On page 154.

The **seventh** chapter deals with everything else the EIC will need and want to do in preparation for sessions, and how to create a compelling comic book story outline loose enough to be filled in by everyone at the table:

**Ambitions:** Who or what is upset with and poised to upset the status quo and why? On page 163.

**Plans & Stages:** How are they going to go about doing that? On page 164.

**Threats & Opponents:** How will they attempt to carry out said plan? On page 171.

**Keeping Track of Your Prep:** Templates for Masterminds, villains and other threats and how to go about crafting the stages of their plan along with resolving them. On page 174.

**Creating Major Villains and Enemies:** Advice for when to actually create an enemy, steps for making enemies for heroes to tangle with and how to run them in games. On page 180.



BROWNSVILLE,  
NEW YORK CITY, 2014.

A LONE FIGURE TRAVERSES THE  
ROOFTOPS, MOVING WITH PURPOSE  
AND SPEED.

THIS GAME IS  
ALL ABOUT BEING A  
SUPERHERO.

THE OTHER  
PLAYERS WILL BE PLAYING  
HEROES TOO. FOR NOW  
THOUGH, LET'S FOCUS  
ON YOU...

THE GAME IS A  
CONVERSATION BETWEEN  
YOU, ME AND THE OTHER  
PLAYERS AND WE TAKE  
TURNS TALKING.

USUALLY,  
I'LL SAY SOMETHING  
AND THEN YOU WILL REACT  
TO IT BY DESCRIBING WHAT  
YOUR CHARACTER  
DOES.

YOU SAY  
WHAT YOU DO, AND  
YOUR CHARACTER  
DOES IT.

YOU CAN LET  
ME KNOW WHAT THEY  
DO BY SPEAKING AS YOUR  
CHARACTER, AS A NARRATOR  
WOULD TELLING A STORY,  
OR EVEN AS SOMEONE  
WATCHING YOUR  
CHARACTER.

SOMETIMES,  
THOSE DESCRIPTIONS OF  
WHAT YOU DO WILL TRIGGER A  
MOVE IN THE GAME...WHICH  
MEANS YOU ROLL DICE TO  
SEE WHAT HAPPENS  
NEXT.

FOR EXAMPLE:  
YOU STARE OUT FROM  
YOUR PERCH, LOOKING  
OUT ACROSS THE  
CITY.

SUDDENLY,  
SOMETHING CATCHES YOUR  
EYE FROM A NEARBY WINDOW...  
A FLASH OF RED!

YOU LOOK  
DOWN AT YOUR  
CHEST TO SEE A RED  
DOT HOVERING  
OVER YOUR  
CHEST!

WHAT  
DO YOU  
DO?



NO WAY AM I GETTING SHOT! I JUMP OFF THE ROOF!

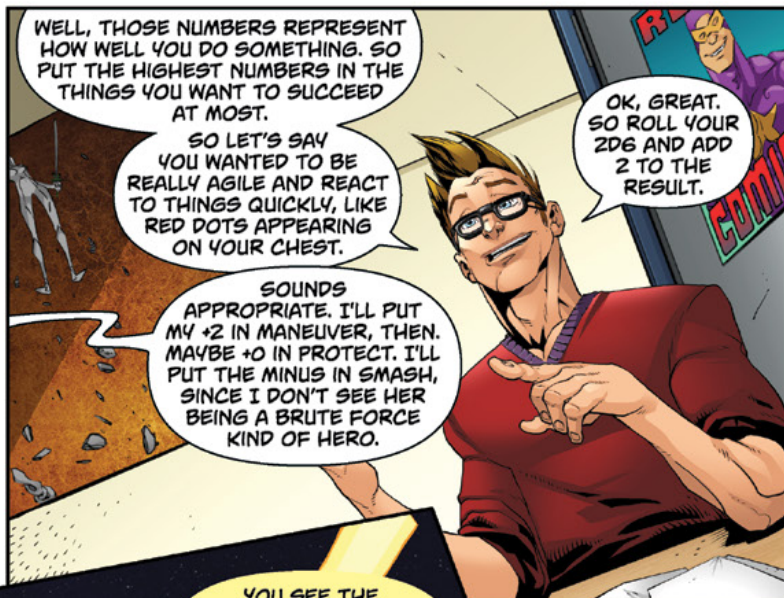
OKAY, THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE TRIGGERED THE "DEFY DANGER" MOVE, THE DANGER BEING GETTING SHOT BY THE SNIPER.

NOW YOU'LL ROLL YOUR TWO SIX SIDED DICE THERE AND THE RESULT WILL AFFECT THE STORY AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.



FIRST THOUGH, YOU NEED TO ASSIGN YOUR STATS. THERE ARE 5 STATS: SMASH, INFLUENCE, MANEUVER, PROTECT, AND INVESTIGATE. SEE BY THAT SECTION THAT LIST OF FIVE NUMBERS? THE -1, 0, +1, +1, AND +2?

DOES IT MATTER WHERE I PUT THE NUMBERS?



WELL, THOSE NUMBERS REPRESENT HOW WELL YOU DO SOMETHING. SO PUT THE HIGHEST NUMBERS IN THE THINGS YOU WANT TO SUCCEED AT MOST.

SO LET'S SAY YOU WANTED TO BE REALLY AGILE AND REACT TO THINGS QUICKLY, LIKE RED DOTS APPEARING ON YOUR CHEST.

SOUNDS APPROPRIATE. I'LL PUT MY +2 IN MANEUVER, THEN. MAYBE +0 IN PROTECT. I'LL PUT THE MINUS IN SMASH, SINCE I DON'T SEE HER BEING A BRUTE FORCE KIND OF HERO.

OK, GREAT. SO ROLL YOUR 2D6 AND ADD 2 TO THE RESULT.



SO THAT'S A 10. WHEN YOU ROLL THE DICE AND GET A 10 OR HIGHER, YOU DO WHAT YOU SET OUT TO DO WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE.

NICE!



YOU SEE THE LASER SIGHT JUST IN TIME AND BARELY DODGE OUT OF THE WAY AS THE BULLET WHISTLES PAST YOU.

ONLY THING IS...NOW YOU'RE IN FREE FALL BECAUSE YOU JUMPED OFF A BUILDING!

FOR A NORMAL PERSON, THIS WOULD BE SUICIDE, BUT YOU'RE A SUPERHERO! WHAT DO YOU DO?

WELL, IF I'M A SUPERHERO I HAVE POWERS RIGHT? WHAT ARE THEY?

SEE WHERE IT SAYS "POWERS PROFILE?" THAT'S WHERE YOU WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING YOU WANT YOUR CHARACTER TO BE ABLE TO DO. YOU MIGHT HAVE ONE SPECIFIC POWER, OR SEVERAL...

SHAPE-SHIFTING, ENERGY MANIPULATION, OR EVEN HIGH-TECH ARMOR OR GADGETS.

OK, WELL I WANT SOMETHING TO DO WITH ABSORBING HEAT AND KINETIC FORCE. ABSORBING IT MAKES ME STRONGER, AND MAYBE I CAN CHANNEL IT AND SHOOT IT OUT AS BLASTS, TOO?

SOUNDS GOOD. WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR POWERS, YOU LIST UNDER YOUR "POWERS SUMMARY." FOR NOW, WRITE IN ONE THING FOR EACH SECTION. WHAT IS SOMETHING SIMPLE, DIFFICULT, BORDERLINE, POSSIBLE AND ONE THING IMPOSSIBLE YOUR CHARACTER KNOWS THEY CAN DO?

I'LL SAY IT'S SIMPLE FOR HER TO ABSORB SMALL AMOUNTS OF ENERGY. DIFFICULT TO CHANGE ONE TYPE OF ENERGY INTO ANOTHER. BORDERLINE TO ABSORB ALL THE ENERGY IN HER IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS.

POSSIBLE TO RELEASE ALL THE ENERGY IN ONE BIG BURST ALL AT ONCE AND IMPOSSIBLE TO CHANGE HER WHOLE BODY INTO PURE ENERGY.

SO DO I HAVE TO DEFFY DANGER AGAIN NOW THAT I'M FALLING TO SEE IF I'LL GET HURT AGAIN?

WELL, YOU SAID IT'S SIMPLE TO ABSORB SMALL AMOUNTS, SO IT MUST BE DIFFICULT TO ABSORB A BUNCH LIKE THIS AT ONE TIME. SO YEAH, I THINK SO.

ADD YOUR PROTECT STAT TO THE ROLL SINCE YOU HAVE TO ENDURE AND WITHSTAND THE IMPACT.

MY PROTECT IS +0, SO I GOT AN 8!

IF THE RESULT IS WITHIN THE 7-9 RANGE, THEN YOU DO IT, BUT IT TAKES SOME DOING AND THERE'S SOME TROUBLE. SO YOU LAND AND ABSORB THE IMPACT!

YOU FEEL CHARGED AS YOU SOAK IT IN, BUT YOU CAN'T SOAK IT ALL IN AND THE EXCESS ENERGY SENDS A SHOCKWAVE SHOOTING OUTWARD!



PEOPLE ARE IN A PANIC, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! YOU LOOK UP IN THE SKY THOUGH, TO SEE CERBERUS FLYING IN, CARRYING KANNON WITH HIM.

THAT'S ADAM AND JASON, RIGHT?

YEAH, YOU HAVE A BOND WITH EACH OF THEM BY DEFAULT.

BONDS REPRESENT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ANOTHER CHARACTER IN THE GAME, ANOTHER PLAYER'S CHARACTER, THE CITY YOU FIGHT CRIME IN, OR THE POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT.

BONDS ACT AS A CURRENCY IN THE GAME TOO.

YOU CAN "BURN" BONDS AS WELL TO GUARANTEE THAT YOU SUCCEED AT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO AND THAT NO EXTRA COMPLICATIONS RESULT FROM IT...

AT THE COST OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THAT PERSON GETTING WORSE.



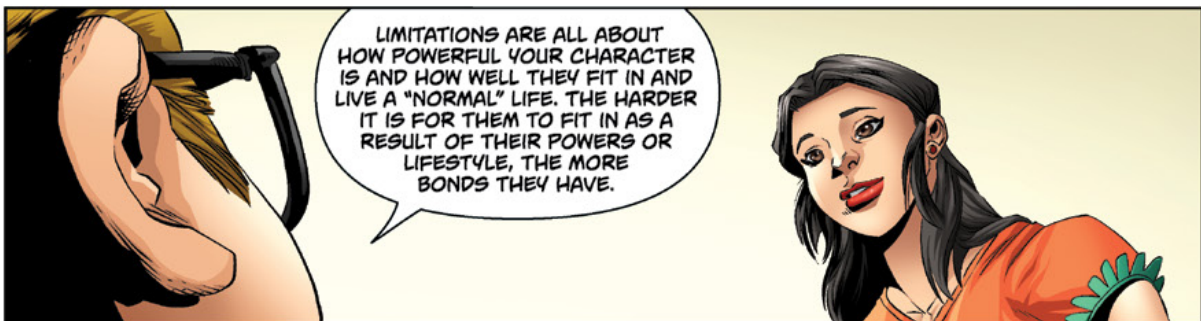
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD THING TO HAVE THOUGH! HOW DO I KNOW HOW MANY BONDS I HAVE?

THINK OF THE REALLY POWERFUL CHARACTERS IN COMICS. THE MORE POWERFUL YOU ARE, THE LESS RELATABLE AND MORE TROUBLE YOU HAVE FITTING IN, SO THE LESS BONDS YOU HAVE.



OK, WELL HOW DO I GO ABOUT LIMITING MY POWERS...?

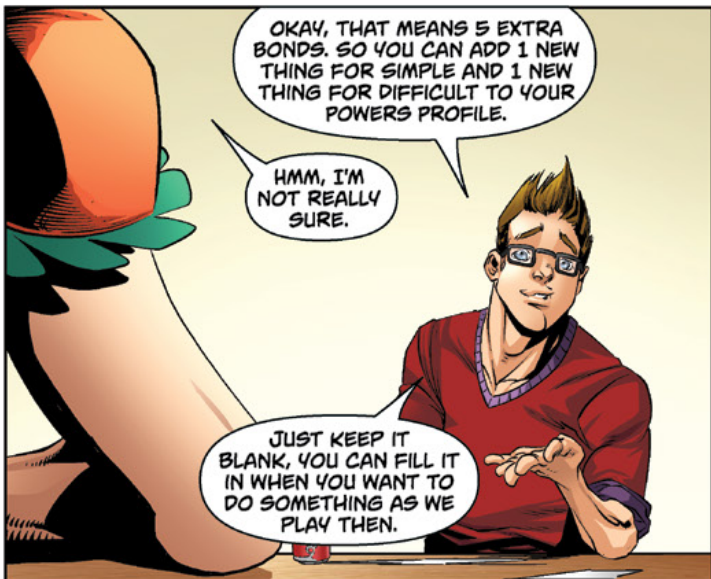




LIMITATIONS ARE ALL ABOUT HOW POWERFUL YOUR CHARACTER IS AND HOW WELL THEY FIT IN AND LIVE A "NORMAL" LIFE. THE HARDER IT IS FOR THEM TO FIT IN AS A RESULT OF THEIR POWERS OR LIFESTYLE, THE MORE BONDS THEY HAVE.



WELL, I'D SAY THAT IT'S FREQUENTLY DIFFICULT FOR HER TO FIT IN AND GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE. SHE'S ALWAYS WORRIED SHE'LL LOSE CONTROL OF HER POWERS SO KEEPS PEOPLE AT ARM'S LENGTH.



OKAY, THAT MEANS 5 EXTRA BONDS. SO YOU CAN ADD 1 NEW THING FOR SIMPLE AND 1 NEW THING FOR DIFFICULT TO YOUR POWERS PROFILE.

HMM, I'M NOT REALLY SURE.

JUST KEEP IT BLANK, YOU CAN FILL IT IN WHEN YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING AS WE PLAY THEN.



CERBERUS, HOW DID YOU AND KANNON KNOW TO SHOW UP HERE?

WE WERE ALREADY ON OUR WAY, ACTUALLY. WE'D ALL AGREED TO MEET HERE BECAUSE WE HAD LEARNED THAT THERE WAS A DISGUISED SECRET BASE IN THIS PART OF TOWN. WE'D STRATEGIZED OUR PLAN OF ATTACK THE DAY BEFORE.

HAVE YOU GUYS BEEN A TEAM FOR A LONG TIME NOW, KANNON?



NOT REALLY, NO. WE'RE ALL STILL NEW TO OUR POWERS RIGHT, MAYBE WE JOINED TOGETHER AFTER A PAST CRISIS IN NEW YORK AND HAVE MET TOGETHER A FEW TIMES SINCE THEN.



KANNON, CERBERUS DROPS YOU OFF BUT YOU SAW THE RED FLASH AND THE BULLET GOING WHIZZING BY FROM A NEARBY WINDOW. WHAT DO YOU DO?

I WANT TO FIND OUT WHO IS CATCHING US OFF GUARD AND WHO'S BEHIND THAT RED DOT!

OK, THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU ARE EXAMINING, WHAT DO YOU THINK? THE TRIGGER IS "WHEN YOU CLOSELY STUDY A SITUATION?"

YEP, MY ALIEN EYES FOLLOW THE RED BEAM BACK TO THE SOURCE! ZDG PLUS MY INVESTIGATE NETS ME A ?!

ALRIGHT, YOU GET TO ASK ONE QUESTION ABOUT THE SITUATION.

WHO IS IN CONTROL HERE?

YOU FOLLOW THE RED SIGHT BACK TO A WINDOW AND SEE A THUG.

HE'S IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION AT THE MOMENT BUT...

...HE'S PROBABLY TAKING HIS ORDERS FROM ELSEWHERE.

I POINT TO THE WINDOW AND SAY:

"OVER THERE! GO GET HIM CERBERUS, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN FLY!"

I'M WORRIED THAT I MIGHT NOT GET THERE IN TIME. IS THERE ANY MANHOLE COVERS OR ANYTHING AROUND HERE?

DEFINITELY.

I RIP A MANHOLE COVER OFF AND HURL, USING MY SUIT'S SYSTEMS TO INSTANTLY PLOT THE PATH OF TRAJECTORY. "USE ENVIRONMENT" SEEMS LIKE AN OBVIOUS CHOICE HERE, RIGHT?

YEP, YOU CAN DO IT, BUT IT'LL OBVIOUSLY BE A ONE-TIME USE.

I WHIP IT AT THE GUY! DO I NEED TO ROLL ANYTHING?

IF YOU'RE TRYING TO TAKE HIM DOWN, I'D SAY YOU'D HAVE TO ROLL FOR IT.

BUT IF YOU JUST WANT TO DISTRACT HIM, A MANHOLE COVER SMASHING THROUGH THE WINDOW WILL DO THAT.

I'M FINE WITH THAT, I JUST WANTED TO STOP HIM FROM SHOOTING!

YOU SEE HIM FALL BACK ALONG WITH THE GUN THAT WAS PERCHED ON THE SILL AS THE RED DOT SUDDENLY DISAPPEARS. BUT...

# BANG

YOU HEAR A SHOT RING OUT! IT SOUNDS LIKE IT CAME FROM DOWN IN THE STREET!

WHILE YOUR ATTENTION WAS DRAWN UPWARD, A BLAST RINGS OUT! YOU SWING AROUND TO SEE A FORCE OF GREEN ENERGY ROCKETING TOWARD YOU! WHAT DO YOU DO?

THIS IS ENERGY? I'M JUST GOING TO TRY AND ABSORB IT THEN!

OK, I'LL TELL YOU WHY IN A SECOND, BUT THIS IS NO NORMAL ENERGY! ROLL DEFY DANGER TO. SEE IF YOU CAN HANDLE ABSORBING IT AND CONVERTING IT INTO SOMETHING LESS HARMFUL.

DAMN. I GOT A 5, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IF YOU GET A 6 OR LESS, IT MEANS I HAVE TO MAKE THE STORY MORE COMPLICATED OR DANGEROUS.

YOU TAKE THE BLAST IN, BUT IT FEELS STRANGE TO YOU...

...AS IF YOUR BODY IS REJECTING THIS KIND OF ENERGY, LIKE WHITE BLOOD CELLS ATTACKING AN INFECTION.

THERE'S A PLACE ON YOUR CHARACTER SHEET FOR CONDITIONS. IN THE MINOR CONDITION BOX, I WANT YOU TO WRITE DOWN "FULL OF BAD ENERGY."

WELL THAT'S NO FUN, HOW CAN I GET RID OF THAT? DOES TAKING A CONDITION MEAN I ROLL LESS DICE OR SOMETHING?

A MINOR CONDITION JUST MEANS THAT IF YOU IGNORE THE CONDITION, IT COULD GET WORSE.

A FIGURE STEPS OUT OF THIN AIR. YOU SEE AN OLDER WOMAN WITH TANNED SKIN AND GLOWING, GREEN EYES.

SHE OOZES ARROGANCE AND HAS A BLACK HELMET AND GAUNTLETS ON.

A PURPLE CORSET ENDS IN A FLOWING BLACK DRESS THAT HAS A CAPTIVATING PATTERN ON IT.

OK, NO PROBLEM. I HAVE CONTROL OVER THE ENERGY IN MY BODY AND CAN DIRECT IT OUT AS A BLAST.

ALRIGHT, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF ENERGY THIS IS...BUT YOU KNOW IT'S NOT GOOD. YOU'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED THIS KIND OF ENERGY SO IT'S GOING TO TRIGGER THE "PUSH" MOVE. HOW DOES THAT SOUND?

GOT IT. AND CONVERTING ONE TYPE OF ENERGY TO ANOTHER IS DIFFICULT FOR ME. I GOT A 10!

AWESOME! SO YOU GATHER THE ENERGY IN YOUR HANDS, PUSHING IT DOWN AND OUT. IT BURNS AND FEELS LIKE YOU'RE DRAWING FIRE FROM YOUR VEINS BUT YOU DO IT AND YOU SEND A BLAST BACK AT THE FIGURE! GO AHEAD AND GET RID OF YOUR "FULL OF BAD ENERGY" CONDITION.

THE BLAST  
HITS HER AND  
SHE SCREAMS  
AT YOU,  
YELLING:

YOU  
CANNOT  
BE  
HERE, NOT  
NOW!

WHAT  
DO YOU DO,  
KANNON?

AS SHE WALKS  
FORWARD ALL KINDS  
OF WEIRD MISCELLANEOUS  
ITEMS MOVE WITH A LIFE  
OF THEIR OWN...

...AND BEGIN  
TO ORBIT THE  
WOMAN.

I JUMP  
DOWN INTO THE  
STREET TO  
PROVIDE COVER  
AND SAY:

GET  
BEHIND  
ME, I'LL  
CREATE AN  
OPENING!

I'M GOING  
TO GO AHEAD AND  
ROLL THE "SERVE AND  
PROTECT MOVE"  
SINCE I'M DEFENDING  
SOMEONE. HERE  
GOES...

...AND  
THAT WOULD  
BE A 4.

WOW, OK,  
THINGS DON'T  
LOOK GOOD  
FOR YOU.

WHAT  
ABOUT YOU,  
CERBERUS, WHAT  
DO YOU  
DO?

I CHANNEL  
ALL MY POWER  
TO MY  
ROCKETS...

...AND GO  
FLYING FULL  
FORCE INTO  
SAUDADE TO  
TRY AND  
TAKE HER  
OUT...

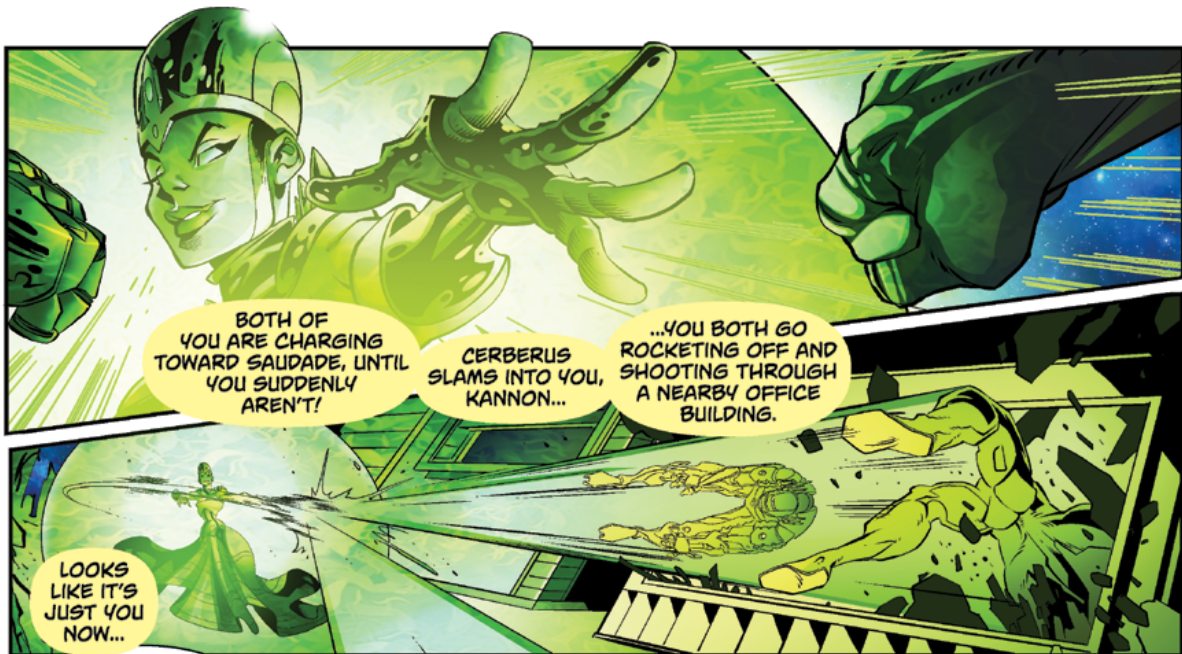
...RIGHT  
THROUGH  
THOSE WEIRD  
OBJECTS  
ORBITING  
HER.

ALRIGHT,  
YOU'RE GOING  
TO HAVE TO  
DEFY DANGER  
TO GET  
THROUGH THE  
FIELD FIRST  
THOUGH.

GO  
AHEAD AND  
ROLL, ADD  
YOUR MANEUVER  
I GUESS, SINCE  
YOU'RE TRYING  
TO GET PAST  
THEM.

YEP!  
DAMN, THAT'S  
A 6!

YOU GUYS  
AREN'T GOING  
TO LAST LONG  
WITH ROLLS  
LIKE THAT!



BOTH OF YOU ARE CHARGING TOWARD SAUDADE, UNTIL YOU SUDDENLY AREN'T!

CERBERUS SLAMS INTO YOU, KANNON...

...YOU BOTH GO ROCKETING OFF AND SHOOTING THROUGH A NEARBY OFFICE BUILDING.

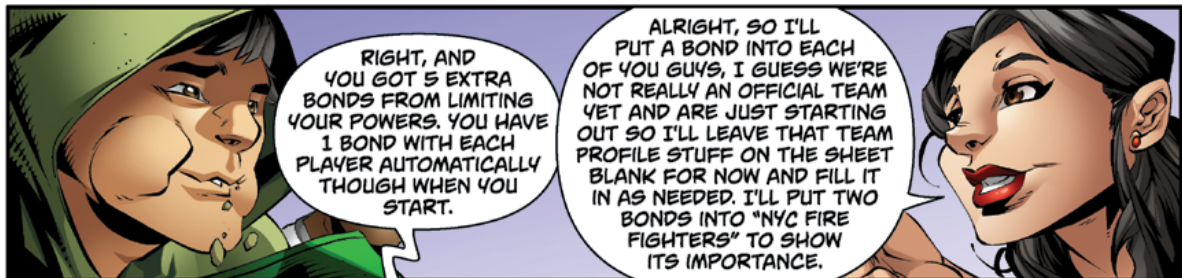
LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST YOU NOW...



WHAT IS YOUR HERO'S NAME ANYWAY? THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO GET THAT DOWN, ALONG WITH YOUR BONDS.

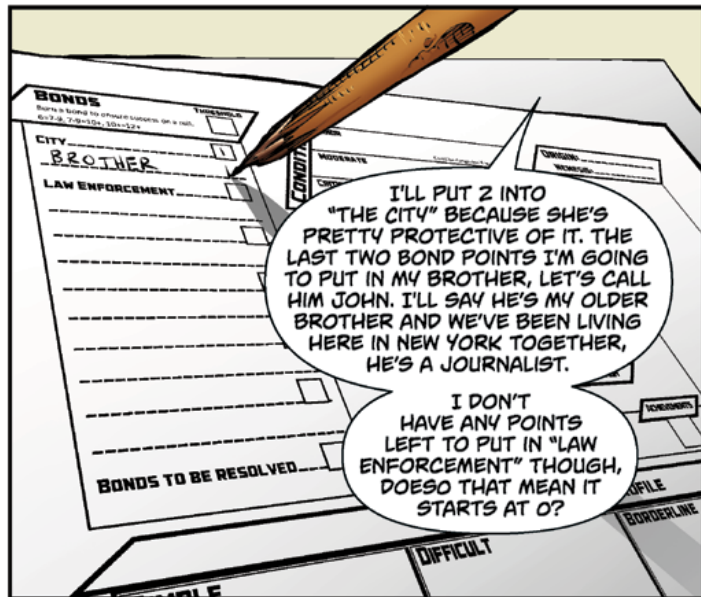
SEEING HOW THINGS ARE GOING, YOU MIGHT WANT TO BURN ONE TO MAKE SURE YOU SUCCEED!

LET'S GO WITH "QUELL". SHE WEARS A REPURPOSED FIRE-FIGHTER SUIT...YOU GUYS WOULDN'T KNOW THAT SHE'S A WOMAN YET THOUGH 'CAUSE SHE WEARS THE SUIT AND CHANGES HER VOICE TO HIDE HER IDENTITY.



RIGHT, AND YOU GOT 5 EXTRA BONDS FROM LIMITING YOUR POWERS. YOU HAVE 1 BOND WITH EACH PLAYER AUTOMATICALLY THOUGH WHEN YOU START.

ALRIGHT, SO I'LL PUT A BOND INTO EACH OF YOU GUYS, I GUESS WE'RE NOT REALLY AN OFFICIAL TEAM YET AND ARE JUST STARTING OUT SO I'LL LEAVE THAT TEAM PROFILE STUFF ON THE SHEET BLANK FOR NOW AND FILL IT IN AS NEEDED. I'LL PUT TWO BONDS INTO "NYC FIRE FIGHTERS" TO SHOW ITS IMPORTANCE.



I'LL PUT 2 INTO "THE CITY" BECAUSE SHE'S PRETTY PROTECTIVE OF IT. THE LAST TWO BOND POINTS I'M GOING TO PUT IN MY BROTHER, LET'S CALL HIM JOHN. I'LL SAY HE'S MY OLDER BROTHER AND WE'VE BEEN LIVING HERE IN NEW YORK TOGETHER, HE'S A JOURNALIST.

I DON'T HAVE ANY POINTS LEFT TO PUT IN "LAW ENFORCEMENT" THOUGH, DOESO THAT MEAN IT STARTS AT 0?



YEP. IT DOESN'T MEAN THEY HATE YOU OR ANYTHING. A ZERO JUST MEANS THEY EITHER DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU OR ARE INDIFFERENT.

SO WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO BECOME A SUPERHERO?

WHAT'S YOUR ORIGIN?

WELL, MAY OR MAY NOT BE THE REASON FOR GETTING MY POWERS, BUT I'D LIKE TO SAY THAT I BECAME A SUPERHERO WHEN MY PARENTS DIED IN A HOUSE FIRE.

I WAS ONLY IN HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME, FIRE WAS EVERYWHERE.

BUT I DIDN'T EVEN FEEL ANY HEAT.

I FELT INCREDIBLE, STRONGER THAN I'D EVER FELT BEFORE.

I KNEW I HAD TO FIND MY BROTHER SO I THREW MY BLANKET OVER MYSELF AND HIT THE WALL CONNECTING OUR ROOMS TO LET HIM KNOW I WAS COMING.

AND IT JUST FLEW APART.

I COULDN'T FIND MY PARENTS, THE POLICE ARRIVED SOON AFTER I GOT MY BROTHER OUT. TURNS OUT MY PARENTS WERE IN THE BASEMENT.

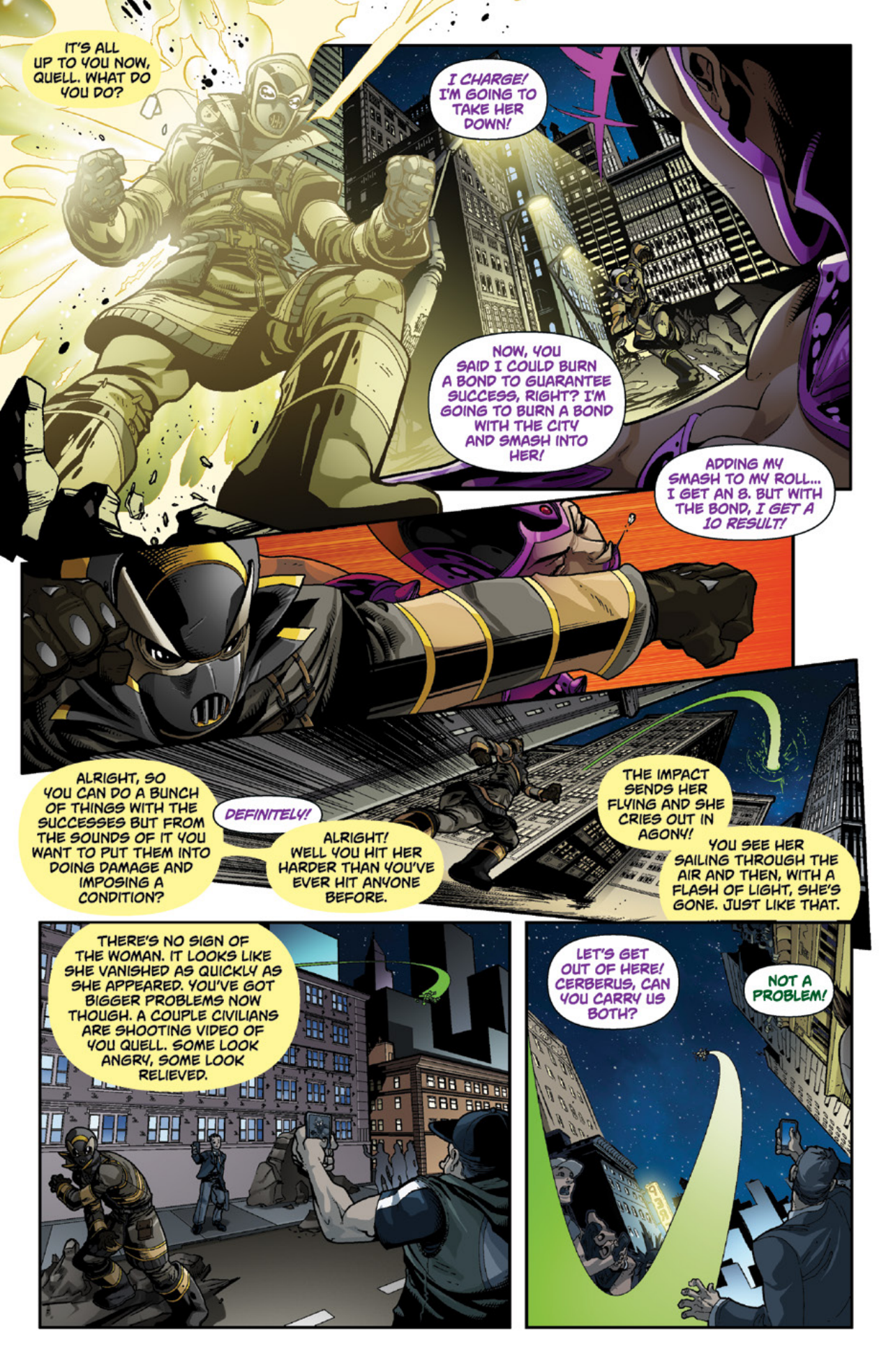
EVER SINCE THEN I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED IF IT WAS ME THAT STARTED THE FIRE. WAS IT MY POWERS?

I VOWED TO SPEND MY LIFE PUTTING OUT FIRES AND FOLLOWED IN MY FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS TO BECOME A FIREFIGHTER. WHENEVER THINGS GET BAD I IMAGINE HIM LOOKING DOWN ON ME.

OK, THAT'S DEFINITELY THE "A DEATH IN THE FAMILY" ORIGIN BOOK. WHAT ABOUT YOUR MOTIVATION AND DRIVE RIGHT NOW, AS A HERO?

THIS ONE LOOKS PERFECT. "PROTECT." THAT'S TOTALLY QUELL. AND SHE'S BEEN LIVING AND WORKING IN THE SAME AREA AND SAME FIRE HALL AS HER DAD DID.

ALRIGHT, SO LET'S BOTH KEEP THAT BOOK IN MIND SINCE IT HAS A FEW GOALS FOR YOU TO WORK TOWARD.



IT'S ALL  
UP TO YOU NOW,  
QUELL. WHAT DO  
YOU DO?

I CHARGE!  
I'M GOING TO  
TAKE HER  
DOWN!

NOW, YOU  
SAID I COULD BURN  
A BOND TO GUARANTEE  
SUCCESS, RIGHT? I'M  
GOING TO BURN A BOND  
WITH THE CITY  
AND SMASH INTO  
HER!

ADDING MY  
SMASH TO MY ROLL...  
I GET AN 8. BUT WITH  
THE BOND, I GET A  
10 RESULT!

ALRIGHT, SO  
YOU CAN DO A BUNCH  
OF THINGS WITH THE  
SUCCESSES BUT FROM  
THE SOUNDS OF IT YOU  
WANT TO PUT THEM INTO  
DOING DAMAGE AND  
IMPOSING A  
CONDITION?

DEFINITELY!

ALRIGHT!  
WELL YOU HIT HER  
HARDER THAN YOU'VE  
EVER HIT ANYONE  
BEFORE.

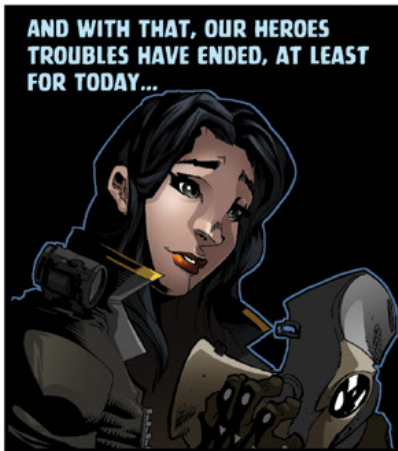
THE IMPACT  
SENDS HER  
FLYING AND SHE  
CRIES OUT IN  
AGONY!

YOU SEE HER  
SAILING THROUGH THE  
AIR AND THEN, WITH A  
FLASH OF LIGHT, SHE'S  
GONE. JUST LIKE THAT.

THERE'S NO SIGN OF  
THE WOMAN. IT LOOKS LIKE  
SHE VANISHED AS QUICKLY AS  
SHE APPEARED. YOU'VE GOT  
BIGGER PROBLEMS NOW  
THOUGH. A COUPLE CIVILIANS  
ARE SHOOTING VIDEO OF  
YOU QUELL. SOME LOOK  
ANGRY, SOME LOOK  
RELIEVED.

LET'S GET  
OUT OF HERE!  
CERBERUS, CAN  
YOU CARRY US  
BOTH?

NOT A  
PROBLEM!



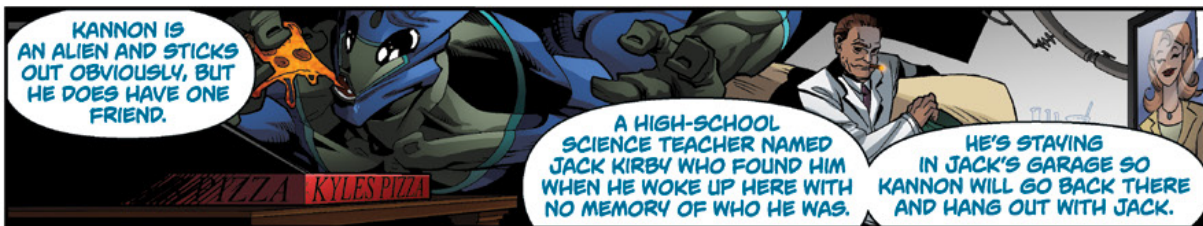
AND WITH THAT, OUR HEROES TROUBLES HAVE ENDED, AT LEAST FOR TODAY...



BUT SUCH MOMENTS OF RESPITE ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN.



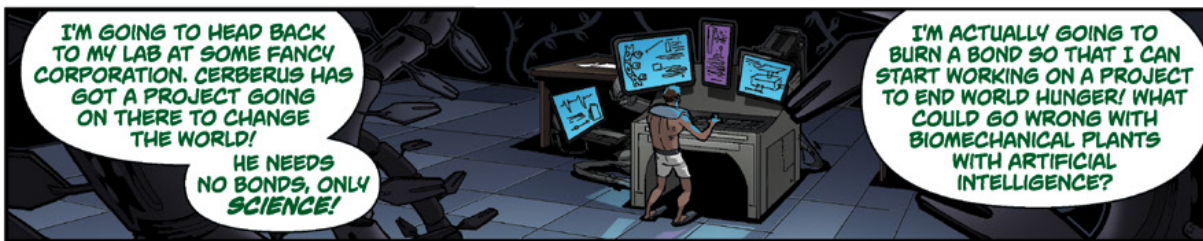
AND A HERO'S LIFE IS ANYTHING BUT NORMAL...



KANNON IS AN ALIEN AND STICKS OUT OBVIOUSLY, BUT HE DOES HAVE ONE FRIEND.

A HIGH-SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER NAMED JACK KIRBY WHO FOUND HIM WHEN HE WOKE UP HERE WITH NO MEMORY OF WHO HE WAS.

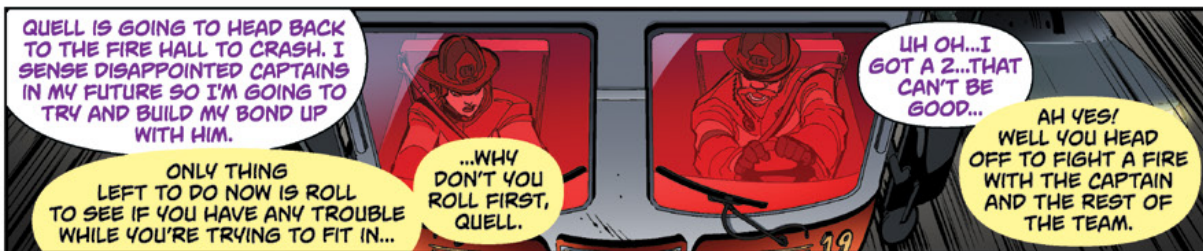
HE'S STAYING IN JACK'S GARAGE SO KANNON WILL GO BACK THERE AND HANG OUT WITH JACK.



I'M GOING TO HEAD BACK TO MY LAB AT SOME FANCY CORPORATION. CERBERUS HAS GOT A PROJECT GOING ON THERE TO CHANGE THE WORLD!

HE NEEDS NO BONDS, ONLY SCIENCE!

I'M ACTUALLY GOING TO BURN A BOND SO THAT I CAN START WORKING ON A PROJECT TO END WORLD HUNGER! WHAT COULD GO WRONG WITH BIOMECHANICAL PLANTS WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?



QUELL IS GOING TO HEAD BACK TO THE FIRE HALL TO CRASH. I SENSE DISAPPOINTED CAPTAINS IN MY FUTURE SO I'M GOING TO TRY AND BUILD MY BOND UP WITH HIM.

ONLY THING LEFT TO DO NOW IS ROLL TO SEE IF YOU HAVE ANY TROUBLE WHILE YOU'RE TRYING TO FIT IN...

...WHY DON'T YOU ROLL FIRST, QUELL.

UH OH...I GOT A 2...THAT CAN'T BE GOOD...

AH YES! WELL YOU HEAD OFF TO FIGHT A FIRE WITH THE CAPTAIN AND THE REST OF THE TEAM.



YOU GET THERE BUT THERE'S NO FIRE, NO SMOKE OR HYSTERICAL PEOPLE ABOUT.

THE CAPTAIN TELLS YOU TO CHECK IT OUT ANYWAY THOUGH, TO BE SURE.



...AND SO OFTEN FRAUGHT WITH PERIL.



## OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

**B**efore getting into the details, it is useful to know and understand the world that your hero operates in and what system you engage, as a player of the game, to have your character be the hero you want them to be. This section provides a brief overview of what it means to be a hero and the tropes and villains that go along with it before moving into describing the system itself. Short overviews of the various mechanics designed to portray and play in a comic book world follows.





# LIFE OF A SUPERHERO

The adventures of a superhero take place in all sorts of places — sometimes Earth, sometimes strange, new locations like in space on a different planet or universe, on a different plane, in a different time, or sometimes just in a major metropolitan city like New York.

## IN THE CITY

Most stories start out in the city, where many heroes live, work, patrol and otherwise try to get by doing their 9-5 jobs while keeping the world safe from constant threat. The city you play in is large and sprawling, is constantly changing and is dynamic. New York City is a great “default” city to play in because it’s iconic and well known, most people know all the landmarks and most comic book settings are either based in New York, or in a city that seems a whole lot like it. The city should be big enough to house all the superheroes and villains you need in a campaign and have various unique locales and districts to use as background flavor when trouble goes down in one of them. Many heroes also have their own patch of the city that they try to keep particularly safe, though just as many patrol larger swathes of the city in search of danger.

## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Often times, problems and investigations that start in the city will quickly turn into a trek to all kinds of wondrous places across the globe. These places can be familiar, well-known countries and locations, like Tokyo or Italy, or can be completely fictional countries and locations that are either made-up on the spot, or drawn from other sources of inspiration like Olympus or Atlantis. Places with extreme conditions like the arctic, volcanoes, deep under the sea or the rain forest are commonly seen in comics, depending on the types of adventures and comics you want to emulate. Always be ready to take the adventure outside of your comfort area and help the EIC come up with interesting new locales and explanations for them. Tribes of subterranean mutants, gods and their kingdoms straight out of mythology, aliens and people from the future, parallel or reverse realities, alternate dimensions and multiple planes, you name it and it’s probably already been done so don’t feel like you need to portray the world a specific way. You want to portray a comic book world realistically — try to break as many of the rules and assumptions we normally make as possible and get as far from the mundane as you can so that when the heroes return to their mundane lives the differences are stark and drastic.

## VILLAINS

What would a superhero be without villains to fight and protect others from?

Just like Batman has the Joker, Daredevil has the Kingpin or the Fantastic Four has Doctor Doom, the heroes and characters in the created fiction also need villains and evil to save the world from.

Villains range from two-bit bank robbers and muggers to world conquerors that aspire to gain power to assert their rule over the entire planet, multiverse or dimension! Remember that no matter how strange the things that happen are, there is usually something larger and more sinister at work. A good villain is relatable and is the foe you love to hate. They are the opponent you could almost sympathize with, that you could maybe have been friends and got along with had things taken a different turn. Creating good arch villains, a good nemesis or just two-bit villains and everyday Threats are all covered in greater detail in the EIC chapter. It is the EIC's job to create compelling villains and dastardly plans to beset the player characters with and it's the player's job to take the fiction and run with it, to fill in the gaps and make them their own.

## FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

Being a hero means being a role-model a lot of the time, especially for the people living in the same city and those affected by what happens in the fiction and the actions of your character. Most of these relationships are shown with Bonds and will be in flux both in the fiction and on your character sheet. There will be people who love you and people who hate you, people who will make it their life mission to take you out and it's one of the EIC's missions to make sure there is always tension and drama awaiting your hero in the fiction.

## THE WORLD

You are a superhero, possibly one of many in a big city, in an even bigger world. There are many forces at work — villains, aliens, time travelers, lost civilizations and dangerous creatures and beings the mind cannot fathom. The choices you make and the decision to do one thing over another affects the world. It is constantly in motion — your decision to kill, imprison or let free a criminal has consequences. Making the time to meet or protect a loved one from danger might mean a dozen, hundred or a thousand people end up in harm's way, but trying to strike that balance between saving the Earth and being a good spouse (or even a good date) is exactly the kind of interesting, tension-filled story that most compelling superhero stories are all about.

# PLAYER MOVES

Moves are at the foundation of *Worlds in Peril* and are most often used for conflict resolution by the players. Moves tell us when they are triggered in the fiction and what effect they have on the story moving forward.

## HOW TO TRIGGER A MOVE

Every move has a trigger — a sentence that tells us that it is time to consult the move to see what happens next. Most often, when a move is triggered the dice end up getting rolled and then the player who triggered the move will make a decision that tells us which way the story goes. A move looks like this:

### DEFY DANGER

*When you act despite an imminent threat or dig in to endure a danger that has befallen you*, say how you deal with it and roll. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to the roll. **On a 10+**, you do what you set out to do and the threat doesn't come to bear or you endure it. **On a 7-9**, you can do it, but to do so the EIC will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

In order for moves to be triggered in the fiction, the character has to do something in the fiction to trigger it. A character cannot take the fictional action that triggers a move without the move triggering and something happening as a result of it — usually, the dice come into play. For example, if Adam tells the EIC that his character races past the villain's henchman to attack, he makes the Defy Danger move because its trigger is “**When you act despite an imminent threat** or dig in to endure a danger that has befallen you.” Adam can't just describe his character avoiding the henchman to get some licks in on the villain without making the Defy Danger move, and he can't make the Defy Danger move without there being an imminent threat to avoid or a danger befalling his character in the fiction. The moves and the fiction always go hand-in-hand and the fiction always comes first to indicate if a move is triggered or not.

If it is ever unclear if a move was triggered, everyone should work together to clarify the fiction as moves are triggered from certain actions taken and words spoken. If a move was not triggered you do not roll dice and continue the conversation, if a move was triggered you consult the move, roll the dice if need be, and let the move inform the fiction.

## HOW TO READ AND FOLLOW A MOVE

The effects of moves are always about the fictional world the characters inhabit. A 10+ on the Take Down move does not only mean the mechanical effects as per the roll, it means your character successfully does what you have them set out to do.

Once you roll the dice and figure out what the effect of the move is, move back to the fiction and describe the results in the fiction. Some moves...

...Use the phrase “Impose (or remove) a Condition.” Conditions are the way that harm and damage are represented mechanically in the game. If you’re imposing a Condition then you are harming or otherwise hindering a target; if you take a Condition you are being affected negatively in some way. When you are removing a Condition you are resolving that Condition so that its effects no longer apply — recovering from an injury, busting out of the ice you were encased in, etc. Conditions can work in a number of ways depending on the type of Condition and are talked about in greater detail on page 128.

...Say “Take +1 forward.” To take +1 forward means you take that +1 and add it to your next roll. Sometimes it may be more or less than +1, it might even be a penalty where you take -1 to your next move roll. There might be specific conditions, where it might tell you to “take +1 forward when you act on the answers” in which case you take that +1 and add it to your next roll only when you use any information you got from asking a question, not any other move.

...Say “Take +1 ongoing.” To take +1 ongoing means to take +1 to all move rolls. The bonus could be greater than 1 or could be a penalty. There might be a Condition, such as “take +1 ongoing to Take Down.” An ongoing bonus or penalty always says what causes it to end, like “until you resolve Condition” or “until you take damage.”

...Give you “Hold.” Hold is currency that you can spend to perform certain actions or choices later on. Hold is only built up for the move that generates it and is not a universal currency that can be used for any moves that build Hold.

...Present a choice. The choice that is offered will depend on the die result and the choices you make will affect how the fiction continues forward. Sometimes you will get a certain number of choices that you can “spend” on results, similar to Hold except that it cannot be used over time.

...Give you a chance to say something about the world, an object or a character. You might say something about the world or the EIC may give you information and then ask how you knew it. You may trigger a move in the fiction if you describe the history or purpose of an object. Use the opportunity to contribute to the game and build the fiction — just don’t contradict anything that’s already been established as fact or said by another player if you don’t need to and have conversations to make sure everyone is on the same page.

## THINGS MOVES MAY ASK YOU TO DO

Every time a move is triggered they affect the fiction, no matter what the dice result is. Almost always, a result of a 6 or less means you, as a player, loses narrative control over the outcome of an action. Even then, the EIC might give your character a tough choice to make, but since that falls within the



purview of the EIC, it is the 7-9 and 10+ results that you need to pay particular attention to as a player as they allow you to exercise certain agency in the fiction.

As per the previous section on how to read a move, a move can help you carry out further actions, add to the fiction, generate Hold that can be used over time, or they can give you choices to make right away — the difference being that Hold can be spent over time, while choices are made and affect the fiction immediately. For example, a 7-9 or 10+ result on the “Take Down” move, which is triggered when a character tries to subdue an immediate threat, results in being able to choose from a list where you can Impose a Condition, take away an Advantage, force a change of location, reduce the size of a mob, or avoid taking any harm. The choice is made right away and the consequences are immediately seen in the fiction.

Working a bit differently by generating Hold, the “Serve and Protect” move is triggered when a character goes to defend someone or something. On a 7-9 or a 10+, Hold is generated and can be used anytime as long as the character is still defending what they set out to defend. A player could choose to spend all their Hold right away, or choose to spend it over time as they see fit.

Other times, when a player studies a situation or tries to assert what they know about something, they are provided with a list of questions they can ask the EIC questions in order to get more information or are given the opportunity to add their own ideas to the fiction in a more formal way.

Some moves that are used less often provide even more agency and control in the fiction. The “Gather Intel” move empowers players to find out important information quickly. When a player needs to recover from their injuries they need to trigger a move by narrating what a day in their “normal” life might look like or by introducing important characters to them. Still other moves might ask them to justify still being able to fight when any normal person would be down for the count.



# POWERS

One of the most important tools you will use to define your character and shape the way you describe their actions will be based on how you define their powers. Stats describe how good they are at certain types of actions but powers provide fictional positioning and justification for being able to do them in the first place.

Every superhero has a unique set of powers that help them carry out certain types of actions, which are reflected in their stats — whether you're using your power to Smash, Influence, Maneuver, Protect or Investigate, it's important the fiction reflects this. The good news is that this will come naturally to you; once you go through creating a hero and choosing their powers, origin and stat modifiers, you will know enough about your character that describing the things they do and the way they do them will be easy. Even if every hero in your group has a Smash modifier of +2, they are all going to have different powers and will narrate how they go about their smashing differently. Despite everyone with a +2 modifier having the same probability of success when rolling the dice, the fiction that triggers the rolls being made will be different.

This means that there are absolutely no limits placed on your character and their powers in terms of how you can describe them in your game. Of course, your modifier is a good indicator of how much impact you can have on the world in terms of ability and scale, but the way you describe your character smashing a villain will be different from the way I describe mine smashing a villain because they have different powers and we have different characters.

A character's powers are considered to be so ingrained in them that whether you describe your character using your power to do something or if you describe your character not using their power and doing it the old fashioned way, it doesn't change whether a move triggers or its effect. Your character is who they are and they are good at doing certain things regardless, whether they use powers to do them or not for the purposes of the game mechanics and the fiction.

Another important thing to note is that certain powers may allow for moves being triggered when they normally would not be. In this way, powers are also justification for doing things in the fiction that normally could not be done, and so some moves might be triggered by some players and not others depending on the situation. A normal person would not be able to fight or harm someone if they were tied up across the room from their adversary, but if your character has psychic powers or the ability to shoot laser beams from their eyes then they can trigger moves that normally could not be. Your powers tell you what you can and cannot do in the fiction and the modifiers on your stats tell you how often you succeed or how well you do them.

Whenever something is described in the fiction and you are not sure of if it triggers a move or not, it's a sign that you need to clarify what is happening in the story. If a player thinks that what they are trying to do should either not be triggering a move, or their intent was to do something else or trigger a different move, then make sure you have conversations to examine the fiction so that everyone can proceed in the fiction on the same page.

# BONDS

Bonds are descriptions of the important relationships your character has with other characters or institutions in the game. You write Bonds down about the other PCs to explain why you work together, why you're a team and either the nature of your relationship with that character or how you think of them. You also write Bonds in with characters you create for your character in the fiction, non-player characters like friends, family, or anyone else important to your character. The last thing you write Bonds in for are with the city your character lives and is active in, and with law enforcement, who polices and who your character will likely have some form of contact with frequently.

Bonds do not just describe and define a relationship, though they do that as well. When you Burn a Bond, you gain a temporary advantage — a burst of strength, the will to live, a hardened resolve. This is represented mechanically by guaranteeing success on a roll when you Burn a Bond to do it.

Whenever you Burn a Bond to guarantee success, you are lowering your Bond score with an NPC or entity in the fiction of the game world. This means that your relationship with that person or agency worsens, but how it worsens is up to you. By Burning a Bond you are committing yourself to playing out a scene where that relationship is threatened, their trust in you is shaken or is otherwise damaged. The ramifications of Burning a Bond can happen right away in the fiction and in that scene if you choose, or it can happen at any point later on as long as it's before the game session finishes.

If you Burn a Bond with "The City", then your successful action might result in a great deal of destruction of property or an innocent bystander getting hurt and, as a result, bad publicity. Burning a Bond with a teammate may mean the beginning of an unhealthy rivalry, doubt, suspicion or simply not getting along well with one another. Too many Bonds being Burned with "Law Enforcement" could end up with a hero being hunted down and being declared a public menace!

Whatever the consequences of Burning a Bond, it will help flesh out a character's personal story and, since the results need not be shown right away, it gives you time to think about how it will affect your character and what kind of scene you want to play out if it is not entirely apparent how the Bond being Burned affects the story at that moment. The mechanics behind Bonds, along with Burning them can be found on page 124.



## DAMAGE, CONDITIONS AND RECOVERY

Damage and harm is represented in *Worlds in Peril* using Conditions. Not only can they represent harm or physical damage, but they can also represent psychic or emotional wounds, environmental hindrances and any manner of other obstacles that could prevent a hero from doing what they set out to do.

Conditions are always received or imposed as per the fiction. Most often, a player will trigger a move that leads to a Condition being imposed on their opponent by using their powers to harm or hinder an enemy and, eventually, take them down altogether. Likewise, enemies are probably going to be fighting back, in some form or another, and so Conditions can be imposed on heroes as well. However, Conditions can come as a result of indirect things happening in the fiction too — a building crumbling due to an earthquake might bury a hero in rubble. A hero's weakness to a certain type of radiation may reduce their effectiveness. A sudden change of environment, a poignant statement or an unexpected action can confuse and bewilder.

A Condition has two parts, a description to show how it is influencing the fiction and hinders the character with the Condition, and then a tag to show its severity. A Condition's description is usually only a few words or a short sentence to describe what is going on with the character in the game and could be anything from "Dizzy" to "Trapped underneath a pile of rubble" to "Psychic brain worms burrowing into mindscape."

There are three different types of Conditions that a player character can impose or inflict upon an enemy — Minor, Moderate, and Critical. Player characters can also have these three different levels of severity imposed on them as well. For players, a Minor Condition is something easily dealt with but that could worsen if ignored. If a Minor Condition worsens it could become a Moderate Condition, or it could simply be something that hinders a hero until it is dealt with. Moderate Conditions impose penalties to certain actions — like being unable, or it being very difficult to use a broken arm or run really fast with a foot encased in ice. Critical Conditions are Conditions that affect any action a hero takes at any time as taking enough Critical Conditions results in death.

For enemies, Minor, Moderate and Critical Conditions have to do with the severity and staying power of Conditions. How hard they are to get rid of and to what degree it affects your enemy and their future actions. All enemies have a Condition Threshold to show how many Conditions they can withstand before they lose their agency in the fiction — they get taken down, run away, beg for mercy, are knocked out, and so on. All Conditions contribute to hitting the Condition Threshold and taking an enemy down, but Minor Conditions can be dealt with and wiped away easily, just as with heroes. Moderate ones require some doing or more time to recover from, and Critical Conditions require a lot more justification for an enemy to remove — usually a unique ability or a great deal of fictional positioning beforehand.

To recover from a Condition, the character must address them in the fiction and they are removed when they are resolved in the narrative. Some will be intuitive — if you're trapped under rubble, you dig yourself out; if your arm is frozen, you thaw it. Some will require more justification to recover from though, as most Critical Conditions will involve rest and long periods of recovery; there is no easy way to recover from getting beat on for a few hours by villains with super strength aside from taking the time to rest and recover as needed for some heroes.

## TAKING AWAY ADVANTAGES

Doing harm and damage is one thing, but sometimes there are certain objects or equipment that grant the user powers and abilities that they normally would not have. Advantages can range from energy rifles to jet packs, to utility belts, to enchanted hammers forged in the heat of a dying star and then imbued with the magic of the gods. These things are different from inherent powers and abilities in that they can be damaged, destroyed or otherwise taken away and there are times when focusing on taking away those kinds of advantages is more beneficial than trying to harm opponents directly — an enemy might even be protecting themselves from harm by means of an Advantage such as a force field, a suit of armor or some crazy gizmo from another dimension.

There are moves that deal specifically with taking away Advantages and then there are moves where it is an option that can be chosen from the list in lieu of, or in addition to, Imposing a Condition.

# BASIC MOVES

These are the moves that any player will trigger the most. They are the situations that characters will find themselves in the most often and represent the kinds of things characters will be doing in the game. The basic moves are:

- Take Down
- Seize Control
- Push
- Serve and Protect
- Use Environment
- Defy Danger
- Aid or Interfere
- Examine

## TAKE DOWN

Whenever you attempt to subdue an immediate threat, say how you do it and roll. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to the roll. **On a 10+**, choose 3. **On a 7-9**, choose 2:

- Impose a Condition (choose once for Minor, twice for Moderate, three times for Critical)
- Take away an Advantage (choose twice)
- Force a change of location (choose once and the EIC picks where they go, choose twice and you do)
- Reduce the size of a mob by 1
- Take no harm in the doing

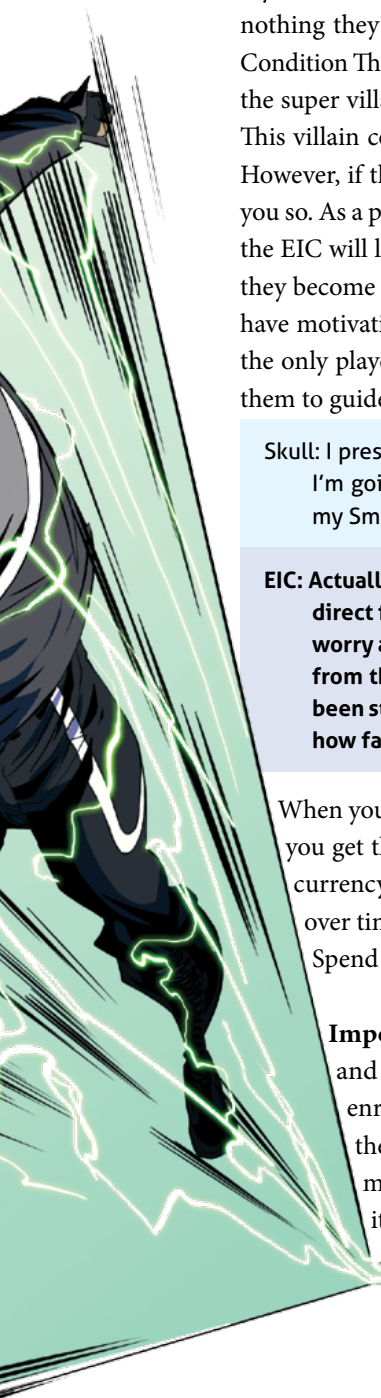
### TAKE DOWN BREAKDOWN

While the trigger for Take Down is fairly simple — anytime you want to take down or deal with an immediate threat, you trigger Take Down. You can trigger the Take Down move by using any stat, as per the fiction being told as long as you are confronting and dealing with a threat. This could mean being direct and using brute force with Smash, it could mean using Influence to try to talk down, confuse or befuddle an enemy. It could mean using Maneuver to sneak up on, trick or put an enemy in a compromising position. It could mean simply enduring what they throw at you



by using Protect and tiring them out or letting them pound on you until they use up all their energy. It could mean using Investigate to find a weak point to Disable them with, coordinate an attack, plan of attack, stratagem, or deducing an enemy's goals, motivations or finding leverage to hold against them.

To trigger Take Down, there must be an immediate threat. That means that if there's a petty thug tied to a chair, already tired from fighting, then chances are he isn't a threat. Since Imposing Conditions is about reducing another character's agency and ability to affect the fiction rather than straight up physical damage, it's safe to say that this thug, despite not being dead, has no agency and is not a threat — there's nothing they can do and they are not dangerous, and that is represented by their Condition Threshold being at zero. Contrast that with a super villain tied up in a chair; the super villain has super strength and can release poisonous gas just by exhaling. This villain could still be a threat and so the Take Down move could be triggered. However, if their Condition Threshold is at zero, they are not, and the EIC will tell you so. As a player, you might not always know if an enemy is still a threat or not, but the EIC will let you know if need be, when the time comes. Now that doesn't mean they become putty for players to do with what they will — all non-player characters have motivations and personalities that will guide the fiction, and since the EIC is the only player who knows what those motivations and personalities are, it's up to them to guide players through the situation.



Skull: I press my gun against his temple, "Tell me where they are, Lightwave!" I'm going to Take him Down. I guess I'm using direct force right, so add my Smash?

EIC: Actually, I think that'd be more Influence since you aren't actually using direct force, just the threat of it. I guess it could go either way, but don't worry about it, he isn't a threat to you at all — he's tied up, bound, beat up from the fight. He knows you're a hero though and he's a thug that has been staring down gun barrels his whole life. He doesn't look convinced, how far are you going to take this? What do you do?

When you succeed there are a number of things you can choose to do. On a 10+, you get three choices and on a 7-9 you get two. This acts like Hold in that it is currency that is spent to do things, but differs from Hold in that it is not spent over time; all choices are made right away and the fiction needs to reflect that. Spend your choices to:

**Impose a Condition:** your blow lands on your opponent, your speed and agility puts them at a disadvantage, your wise-cracks confuse and enrage — when choosing this option you can also choose the severity of the Condition. You can only ever Impose one Condition per Take Down move, so the severity of it is up to how many of your choices you spend on it (one choice for a Minor, two for a Moderate, and three for a Critical).

**Take away an Advantage:** you grab ahold of and destroy an opponent's gun; a well-timed blast destroys a radiation emitter; an explosion destroys a warehouse full of ammunition. An Advantage is anything that grants the user abilities that are not permanent and so can be damaged, destroyed or taken away. This includes things like gadgets, gizmos and tech, guns and weapons, armor and other mechanical devices. Assuming proper fictional positioning and justification, spending two of your choices on this allows you to take away an Advantage from an opponent. Whether you damage or destroy the Advantage can be proposed by you but must be accepted by the EIC and should naturally follow from the fiction.

**Force a change of location:** you hurl an enemy into an abandoned warehouse, away from innocent civilians; you force an opponent to confront you on a psychic battlefield; a strategically shot arrow forces an opponent to flinch or dodge away. When spending one choice to force a change of location you make it so that your opponent moves somewhere else, but where they go is up to the EIC. If you spend two choices on forcing a change of location, then you get to dictate where your opponent ends up as long as you have the fictional justification to do so. This could mean tricking or luring an enemy, it could mean taking them there or using brute force to send them there—how you do it has still got to make sense and follow the fiction.

**Reduce the size of a mob by 1:** you cut through hordes of mislead engineers with your psychic knives; you temper the furious rioters with a speech of queen and country; you send out a burst frequency to deactivate the surrounding drones. Mobs are large groups or swarms of enemies that usually act in unison and in great numbers. They are usually easier to take down individually, but their strength lies in their numbers. By spending a choice to reduce the size of a mob, you reduce its size by one. What that means in terms of numbers depends on how strong and how many of them there are so the EIC will let you know how many of them you take out. You can choose this option multiple times if you wish.

**Take no harm in the doing:** you are aware of your surroundings, account for all variables; you brace for impact before you launch yourself into an action, or you're just incredibly lucky. This choice means, by implication, that if you do *not* spend a choice to take no harm in the doing, then you *do* take harm. You are reckless, do not see something coming, are caught off guard, or know full well that you will take harm and do something anyway. The form the harm will come in is up to the EIC and they will tell you what happens as a result of your actions or in the doing. In particularly unique situations when you go about doing something where there is no way that you would not take harm, the EIC will let you know that this is a situation in which you a) shouldn't waste a choice on taking no harm, or b) that choosing it will reduce the severity of harm taken by at least one severity level (a Critical Condition would become a Moderate one, Moderate would become a Minor and Minor would be canceled out by making this choice).

Choices can be mixed and matched — a hero could Impose a Condition, while sending an opponent crashing into an office building (and so force a change of location), or a hero might reduce the size of a mob by using a nearby bus to block a portion of the street off, or trap a few enemies while smashing one of their jetpacks in order to take away an Advantage.

#### EXAMPLE 1

**EIC: The people are in a panic. A searing, pulsing heat emanates from the intersection below. The air itself burns and steam is shooting up through the manhole covers. From the depths of the smoke, a blast of orange fire emanates and strikes the building you sit atop, turning the windows to a molten sludge. Red eyes burn bright as the figure steps out from the fog, challenging you with its very presence. What do you do?**

Sentinel: I use my suit's computer systems to track its movement so that I know where it is despite the fog. I'm going to go ahead and fire a salvo of missiles and use gel ammo to try to incapacitate the figure.

**EIC: Alright, sounds like you're trying to Take it Down, and you're using direct force. Smash makes the most sense to me so go ahead and add that to your roll. Sound good?**

Sentinel: Definitely...I got a 9. So I've got two choices to spend. Perfect. I mostly want to get it away from the civilians and then maybe stop it from moving or hindering it to at least buy some time. I'm going to spend one choice to force a change of location – I'm hoping to send it flying down the block, away from the civilians around here. For the other choice, I'm going to use it to Impose a Minor Condition to gum it up with the gel so that it has got to deal with that before going anywhere. Let's call the Condition "All Gummed Up."



**EIC:** Great, so from your perch up top you see the people in danger and fire a salvo, one of the missiles slams into it and sends it flying into a nearby 7-11. A couple more rockets come flying in and explode to cover it in gel. Steam billows out from the shop. Its rage is palpable and you see your gel oozing out of the store, steaming like molten lava. You feel the building begin to shake! The molten blast must have damaged the foundation. It begins to teeter and your perch is compromised, you go sliding off the building and land hard, it looks like it's on the verge of total collapse. You didn't have enough choices to not take any harm, so take the Minor Condition "Busted Right Foot" from the landing. What do you do?

#### EXAMPLE 2

**EIC:** Without warning, hordes and hordes of people come surging out toward you, down from the stadiums that you thought to be empty. They have these weird symbols drawn on their masks. One of them hovers above the rest with a jetpack strapped to his back, wielding a very large, very dangerous looking cannon of some kind. All the others have energy rifles that glow eagerly in anticipation of being fired. They're everywhere, if you don't do something, you'll clearly be overtaken. What do you do?!

**Zip:** Alright, I'm guessing that guy is, at the very least, dangerous, but maybe he's the leader so I'm going to try and take him out!

**EIC:** How do you go about doing that? He's got a jetpack, Zip. He's going to be a tough target for a landlocked speedster like yourself.

**Zip:** That's what you think! The jetpack is an issue though, I don't like him having that mobility. My plan is this – I'm going spin myself around like a top and create a vortex to, at the very least, send a bunch of these guys flying out of the way, but also to draw them toward me. I'm going to grab one of them as they come flying in and then spin and release him to turn him into a speeding projectile to smash into cannon guy.

**EIC:** Alright, that's quite the plan, go ahead and add your Maneuver to your Take Down roll and let's see if you can pull it off!

**Zip:** Oh ye of little faith...adding my Maneuver, I got a 12!

**EIC:** Awesome, so how do you want to use your three choices? You just looking to do some damage and take out the guy with the jetpack?

**Zip:** Hmm...alright, he's what I want to do: I'm going to create the vortex by spinning around in place, drawing all these mooks to me, and I'm going to use one choice to reduce the size of the mob by one.

**EIC:** Alright, that means you take out 10 of them!

**Zip:** Excellent...with my other two choices, I'm going to catch one of them and then time my spin and release so that I send him flying into flyboy, smashing right into him so that I take out his jetpack. So I'll use my last two choices to take out his Advantage – the jetpack!

**EIC:** Interesting – alright, so your vortex pulls in the first and most eager of the pack, flying towards you as the gale-force winds pick up. As they approach you at the eye of the storm they scatter and go flying in all directions, landing yards away, crashing into walls, chairs in the stadium; you catch one of the poor saps and then send him crashing into the guy with the jetpack. He sees it coming though and unbuckles the jetpack just in time to slip out of it before the poor mook hits it and explodes. He lands a few feet away and strides towards you as the explosion lights up the sky and lets out a blast from the cannon that rockets you back into the wall. A woman's voice rings out from the figure, "foul ball!" Sorry Zip, take the Minor Condition "Slightly concussed" from smashing into the wall. You're going to have to take a moment to peel yourself off the wall to get back in the game.

### EXAMPLE 3

**EIC:** The space God looks down on you like you would an ant. When it speaks the city itself trembles. Car alarms go off, animals seek shelter and bystanders whimper and run. It doesn't look like your attacks are having any effect on it whatsoever. It does seem to be aware of you, though. "Who are you? You who do not seek shelter from a force such as I?"

**Manāt:** Damn, well it doesn't look like any of my attacks are having any effect, even when I put all my choices into doing a Critical. Let's try another tactic – "Take a look around! It's not just me; we protect our home, because its people are worth protecting. You used to believe that, too! We know that you used to be one of the yalma'a, that you were not always a force of destruction!

**EIC:** The being turns its head to look at you. Stars exploding in its eyes as synapses fire. It sounds like you're trying to deal with it by using what you found out about it on that base on the moon?

**Manāt:** Yeah, I want to appeal to his humanity...or his yalma'a...ity - the people of the stars.

**EIC:** Interesting way to go about it. Alright, well go ahead and add your Influence then, let's see how he takes it.

**Manāt:** I got a 10! I'll put three of my choices into Imposing a Condition on him, who knows when I'll get the chance again. Let's call it "Crisis of Identity", because it seems like he doesn't remember what he used to be. "Do you remember, Sate'a?"

**EIC:** As soon as you say his name he bears down on you. "WHAT?!" And the sound alone sends you flying backward; blood dribbles out of your ears. Take the Moderate Condition, "Shattered Senses." Your ears ring, your eyes burn, the air is knocked out of you. You can't hear a thing. You don't know if he's talking or not, but his large hand stretches out toward you. What do you do?

#### EXAMPLE 4

**EIC:** Every time you hit him it just seems to make him stronger, Sentinel, and it's obvious because he becomes more imposing physically as well. His muscles start to bulge, even his demeanor becomes more arrogant. He seems to be soaking up all the kinetic energy from your punches like a sponge, reveling in it. You're still in the shadows and unnoticed by him, Kannon. What do you want to do while you still have the advantage?

Kannon: Damn! Ok...well he was pretty scrawny before I started hitting him, and you said he kind of deflates a bit whenever he actually uses any energy and expends that force. So how about this: I'm just going to grab him. Wrap all four arms around him and bear hug him until he uses up all his energy struggling, hitting or whatever.

**EIC:** Alright, well he's unaware of you, and you're trying to Take him Down, but it sounds like you're really more just trying to smother him and endure anything he dishes out as he tries to wrestle free. So go ahead and add your Protect to your roll. Taking a villain down with endurance doesn't happen often...cool stuff.

Kannon: Nice, it works! Or at least a bit, I got an 8, so I get two choices. First off, I don't really want to take any harm in this little endeavor, so I'll spend a choice on that and then, with the other, I'll go ahead and deal him a Minor Condition, I guess something like "Bear Hugged!" would be obvious?

**EIC:** Sure, sounds good. Alright, so you jump out of the shadows and grab hold of him before he has a chance to react. You envelope him completely with your four arms and hold him tight enough so that he can't move. As he struggles more and more you do see that he starts shrinking a bit. It's only a Minor Condition though, and he's soaked up a lot, so he soon gets a hand free and starts smashing you with it. You endure all the blows and remain resolute, but he's got one hand free now and it's starting to glow bright. Looks like a blast is coming. You'll have to do something or he's going to hit you with a blast at point blank. Want to help him out, Sentinel? What are you doing?

The most important thing to understand with Imposing Conditions and severity levels of Conditions is that they not only give a mechanical weight to what is happening the fiction, but they also show how effective a character is at doing something. Normally, the Take Down move assumes a couple things when it gives you a list to choose from in regards to Conditions and severity but not all foes are vulnerable to all Conditions. If you're shooting electricity at a villain powered by electricity, even if you put all your choices into doing a Critical Condition, it may not have the intended effect; at the very least, if it does succeed it'll probably be reduced to a lower severity. That doesn't mean you can't collapse a building on them or find a weak point to exploit though.

Sometimes fighting a supervillain is going to be about finding out how to be effective first, and probably testing out a bunch of different things in the fiction. Some, or maybe even all of the things you try might trigger Take Down, but not all of your endeavors will be effective. Sometimes you won't know how to be effective and how strong you should make your Conditions and sometimes you will. This is definitely a good thing - being effective all the time is not as fun as you might think.

## SEIZE CONTROL

Whenever you and another character struggle over a contested goal or objective, say how you outsmart, overpower, outmaneuver, or otherwise try to overcome them. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to your roll. **On a 10+**, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one:

- You seize control over what was contested
- You prevent yourself from ending up at a disadvantage or in harm's way
- You put your opponent at a disadvantage

### SEIZE CONTROL BREAKDOWN

The Seize Control move is all about gaining, or regaining, control over something that someone, or something else also wants to gain control over. It is also triggered when a character is trying to seize control of something and the host resists the attempt. It could be two characters diving for a precious artifact or an innocent civilian; it could be a character with psychic powers trying to burrow into someone's mind, or could even be used to simulate a chess match or duel of wits between two world-class scientists.

The key to the Seize Control move is being absolutely clear on what the goal or objective is and that its possession is contested. Is it a person's mind, a race to get to the top of a building the fastest, an arm wrestling match, or trying to power through a burning building to try and get to a cat named Sparkles before Feline claims her and assimilates her into her horde of cats poised to take over — first the internet, then the world!

It's important to know that Seize Control is only triggered when a) you and another character both want and are trying to take control of the same thing or b) when you try to take control of something not in your possession and the target both wants to push back and to not relinquish control, assuming they have the ability to do so. This means it could trigger when someone tries to take something from you as well.



Seizing control can be interpreted broadly, but will always be one of those two conditions. For example, you, the player, want to get the villain out of a specific area — let's say a convenience store is being robbed. You say that you want to Seize Control of the convenience store. That way, if you win, the story will spin to show that you regain control of the store and that, as a result, the robber must end up outside of it, or within your control in some way. The problem is that the villain doesn't care about the store, right? The robber just wants money and to get out of there, he has no desires on turning the place into his fortress, so Seizing Control wouldn't have the effect you're looking for — you'd have control of the area, but not of the robber. Now, if the robber dives over the counter and takes the clerk hostage, and you're a speedster who wants to zip over to grab and rescue the hostage before the robber Seizes Control of him, the move would trigger. If you decide to Seize Control of the robber's shotgun before he has a chance to shoot, and the robber is unwilling to relinquish control of the gun and has the ability to resist, then the move would trigger.

The Seize Control move also uses choices rather than Hold, so it is something that happens immediately and not over time. On a 7-9 result you can choose one thing to have happen, and on a 10+, you get to choose two:

**You seize control over what was contested:** the brain you were trying to burrow into or the person that was trying to burrow into yours? Under your control now. The artifact you were both diving for? Now yours. The race to the finish? You crossed the finish line first. The duel of wits? You proved yourself the victor, had the last word or outmaneuvered your opponent.

**You prevent yourself from ending up at a disadvantage or in harm's way:** this means that when you choose to seize control and win the contested action, you don't end up compromised by the end of it. *Not* choosing this can lead to interesting, and all too common, situations like two characters diving to get the object about to fall off the roof, one of them seizing it, but ending up dangling from the roof edge, or even ending up in free fall after grabbing it. It might mean winning the argument, but looking bad doing so, or being misunderstood by others.

**You put your opponent at a disadvantage:** spending a choice on this is the difference between a) you and an opponent diving for a gun and your opponent, seeing that you will get the gun first, dives away behind cover and b) you and your opponent dive for the gun, land right beside one another, but you grab the gun and point it at them before they do the same to you. It could be humiliating or opening an opponent up to criticism or having to explain themselves after a debate or challenge. It could mean grabbing the object falling off the building and then your opponent being thrown off balance upon having missed the object so that they end up hanging off the building or in free-fall instead of you.

## EXAMPLE 1

**EIC:** The city is tearing itself apart, the citizens turn on one another like rabid wolves as the Big Bad Wolf's aura of fear spreads across the city; looking over the plans on the table, it looks like the effect is to be accelerated soon by the gas that Conundrum designed. Even as you learn this, you see a computer terminal turn on in front of you and code begin to run down it. A command prompt boots up, commands get punched in and pages of script begin scrolling past at an alarming rate. You know about this stuff, right? It looks like someone is logged in remotely and using the computer to initiate a countdown, probably to release the gas, what do you do?!

Manāt: I sit down at the computer and try to stop the countdown of course!

**EIC:** The screen goes blank when you touch it and the code coalesces to form the face of Conundrum! "Nuh uh uh, you didn't say the magic word," it says, and then the screen locks, asking for a password.

Manāt: Damn damn damn. Alright, I'm going to hack into it and try to stop the countdown before it goes off.

**EIC:** Alright, looks like you're trying to Seize Control as Conundrum is obviously not going to let you hack in so easily. Roll it up for me, go ahead and add your Investigate. It looks like the password is, of course, the answer to a riddle! The screen says, "Two bodies have I, though both joined in one. The stiller I stand, the faster I run."

Manāt: Oh man, I have no idea what the means but I got a 7, thank god. I use my one choice to seize control of the computer and then stop the countdown!

**EIC:** Nice! Alright you succeed! So as you ponder the riddle, you check where the focal point of the bomb that will release the gas is coming from. Of course, it comes from Hell's Kitchen, his old stomping grounds. It looks like it's the place he used to own before it was taken over. Funny thing – the name of the place is the Hourglass Tavern. And then it hits you! You punch in the password in the computer H-O-U-R-G-L-A-S-S. You login, cancel the countdown and the face on the screen freezes, and then you hear an explosion go off and the ground shakes. What do you do?

Manāt: I get the heck out of there, running as fast as I can!

## EXAMPLE 2

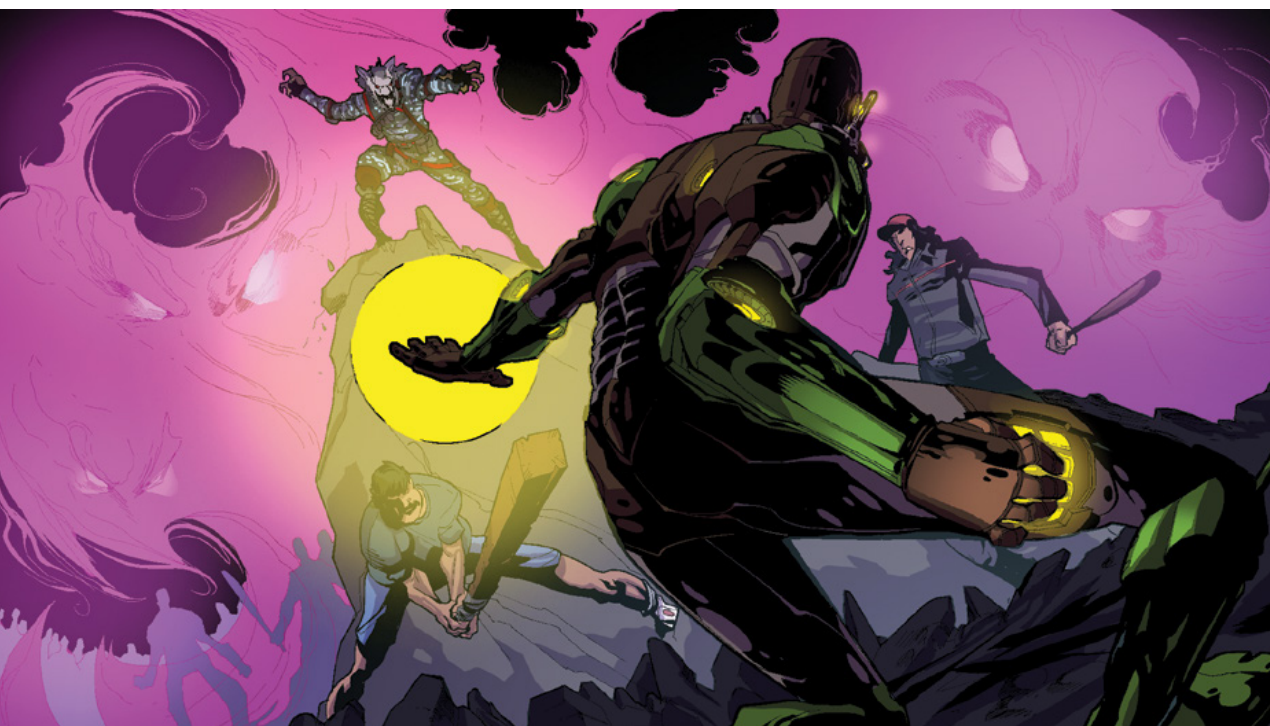
**EIC:** The Big Bad Wolf stands atop a heap of rubble, with the mob of New Yorkers surrounding him. His control over them seems absolute as he orders them to fight the police for him. You don't know how he's doing it, but even you feel the weight of his words gaining purchase and weighing down on you. It's so hard to stay focused, to not bend to his will. What do you do?

Sentinel: I call out to the mob, "people of New York, stop and look at what you are doing! You're fighting against the people trying to protect you, and protecting a man who just finished attacking this very city!" As I do this, I'm scanning for the frequency he's using in his suit. I'm guessing he's sending out some kind of signal on a certain wave-length. Maybe that artifact he has is augmenting it, but I want to pry his hold off the people even if it means he focuses more on me!

**EIC:** Alright, well he is definitely going to want to keep control over the people so let's see if your suspicions are correct about the frequency thing. Go ahead and add Investigate to the roll here since the key component seems like it's more about diagnostics and analysis more than actually swaying them with your words.

Sentinel: Okay, sounds good. Nice, I got a 10! So obviously I'm going to choose to Seize Control of the crowd, and then I'm going to choose to put him at a disadvantage as well. Makes sense that they would turn on him once they figured out what was going on. I'm going to isolate the frequency and then send out a counter-signal to get rid of it.

**EIC:** Alright, sounds good. You two both start out yelling at the mob, you trying to force them to snap out of it while he continues to try to assert his authority. As you fight he starts edging nearer and nearer to you. You can see that he's fiddling with his suit too, probably reacting to what you're doing and then, suddenly, the mob just slumps over for a second. It's like they faint, but then they immediately rise back up. They don't look confused though. In a single motion, the crowd turns to look at you as if seeking guidance. I think it's safe to say that The Big Bad Wolf is at a significant disadvantage now. What do you do?



## PUSH

When you push your powers and concentrate to do something that is not on your Powers Profile sheet, first determine if the power falls under Simple, Difficult or Borderline, then roll. **On a 10+**, you do it and can add it to your powers profile if it's not there already. **On a 7-9**, you can do it, but the EIC will offer you an ugly choice or hard bargain in order to do so; you also take a Minor Condition if it was Simple, a Moderate Condition if it was Difficult, or a Critical Condition if it was Borderline and you cannot add it to your Powers Profile sheet. **On a 6-**, you take a Condition as per a 7-9 and the EIC also makes a move.

### **PUSH BREAKDOWN**

The Push move is all about doing something that is not on your Powers Profile yet — if it is already on there, then there is no need to make the move. You just do it, as long as you have the fictional justification to do so. If it is not on your Powers Profile yet then you will first need to determine if you can do it at all (does it fit with your Powers Summary? Does it make sense given what's happening in the fiction right now?). If you can do it, then you need to figure out if it's Simple, Difficult or Borderline to do, using your existing actions in your Powers Profile, along with your concept of what your hero can do and how powerful they are, to say that it's either a) something they can do easily and without much effort, they have just never done it before, b) they can do it with some difficulty — maybe it requires some time, or a lot of effort, or c) it's pushing the boundaries of what they can do, it's going to be really hard and they will be feeling it for days to come, but they can do it. It is not only important to figure out whether it is Simple, Difficult or Borderline so that you can justify doing it in the fiction, but also because a roll that results in a number less than ten means your character will take either a Minor (Simple thing being done), Moderate (Difficult thing being done) or Critical Condition (Borderline thing being done).

If you use the Push move to do something with your powers that should Impose a Condition on someone else, ask the EIC what you should do. Succeeding on a Push roll means that you do it, so the result of the die roll on the Push move can be applied to the subsequent action as well, if any. For example, if a hero was Pushing to shoot a fire ball so that they could hit and damage a villain, and they rolled a 10+, then they should enjoy the full effects of a 10+ on the subsequent Take Down move as well.

You do not add anything, no modifier, to your roll for Push — pushing your character's powers beyond their comfort level is never going to be an easy thing to do (it might even be a good time to Burn a Bond depending on the stakes and how important success is to you).

**On a 10+**, not only do you do what you sought out to do with your powers, but you get to add it to your Powers Profile as well. This means that in the future if you want to do whatever you just did with your powers again you won't have to Push again — your character learned how to do it, now has control over that aspect of their powers, and is sufficiently comfortable with doing it again.

**On a 7-9**, you do it, but things do not go as planned. Maybe you lose control over the power, it is weaker or more powerful, and there are unintended side-effects or consequences. This means that you cannot add it to your Powers Profile — your character still needs practice and it is difficult to use their powers in the intended way, under control. Not only does something go wrong and you end up having to make an ugly choice or a hard bargain (that means there is a “you can do it, but...” or “if you want to do it...”) and your character will also take a Condition as dependent on how hard it was for your character to do, as established before rolling to see if it was Simple (Minor Condition), Difficult (Moderate Condition), or Borderline (Critical Condition).

**On a 6-**, what happens is up to the EIC. They will tell you what happens as a result *and* your character will take a Condition as per the difficulty established. Whether you actually succeed and do something with your powers or go out of control or backfire, or whatever else might happen is up to the EIC.

**EIC: Ok, Kannon, you're trapped under the rubble, it's dark but there are streams of light piercing through places so you know you aren't too far down. It's really heavy though, it feels like the whole building is bearing down on you and the weight is immense. You know that if you don't do something soon you're going to end up smothering the very innocent you just saved, the poor guy already can't breathe the pressure is so great! What do you do?**

Kannon: Well, I'm going to try and splay my body outward, pushing the rocks back. I want to actually change a portion of my form so that I can leverage my weight and strength and exert force over the entire area so that I push all the debris back and off us at once.

**EIC: Have you done that before? I mean, I know you can move your limbs around your body at will and everything, but can you actually change your shape?**

Kannon: Not yet I can't, it's something I've been working on doing though. It's well within my powers, probably Difficult I'd say, especially since I've never done it before. I'd actually like to do it in the future too and learn it right here hopefully, so I'm going to Burn a Bond...with my people, the Nonnites I guess. No idea how that will play out but I'll think of something by the time we get some downtime.

**EIC: Sounds good, roll it!**

Kannon: Perfect! I got a 7, but Burning a Bond will bump that up to a 10+ result, so I do it and I get to write it down too. So, yeah, like I said. I project two of my extra arms backward and splay them out like a canopy above us and then I heave backward to push everything off of us, I'm going to go ahead and add that to my Powers Profile under Difficult.

## SERVE AND PROTECT

When you stand in defense of someone or something when an imminent threat or danger befalls them, roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. As long as you continue to defend, spend Hold to ...

- Redirect an attack to yourself
- Reduce the effectiveness of an attack or Condition (Reduce the level of severity for every Hold spent)
- Open up the attacker to an ally, giving that ally a bonus to take forward against the attacker (+1 for every Hold spent)
- Create or advance a Bond with the person you are protecting by one

### SERVE AND PROTECT BREAKDOWN

The Serve and Protect move is all about standing in defense of someone or something other than yourself, almost certainly at the expense of your own person. When doing so, and depending on how well you roll, you get Hold to spend. Hold can be spent right away or over time but only as long as you are standing in defense of that person, place, or thing. It's different from Defy Danger in that Defy Danger is about danger that befalls you or acting in spite of danger. In short, Defy Danger is great for getting yourself out of trouble, but does no good for helping others — in fact, the Defy Danger move could end up putting others in danger depending on the die result and the EIC.

When deciding whether to Serve and Protect or to Take Down you're making a choice about what you're doing at that moment in time. Are you using your body to protect and be defensive, or are you using it to try and take out an opponent? Serve and Protect does not help resolve a threat in any way, you have to Take Down an enemy to do that. Yet, if you go for the Take Down, you're no longer protecting anyone from danger (except in the sense that you're trying to resolve that danger) so anything could end up happening to those you do not protect. Sometimes, you might be able to Serve and Protect and then immediately follow it up with trying to Take Down an enemy. It'll depend on the fiction and your EIC. If you're part of a team you might need to coordinate to have some people protect while others act to resolve, and then switch back and forth. Sometimes you'll be on your own and the choice will be all the more difficult to make. You can spend any Hold while Serving and Protecting to:

**Redirect an attack to yourself:** spending one Hold on this means that the person or thing you protect is no longer the focus of an attack or that the full force and brunt of the attack is now on you and you will face the full consequences of it.

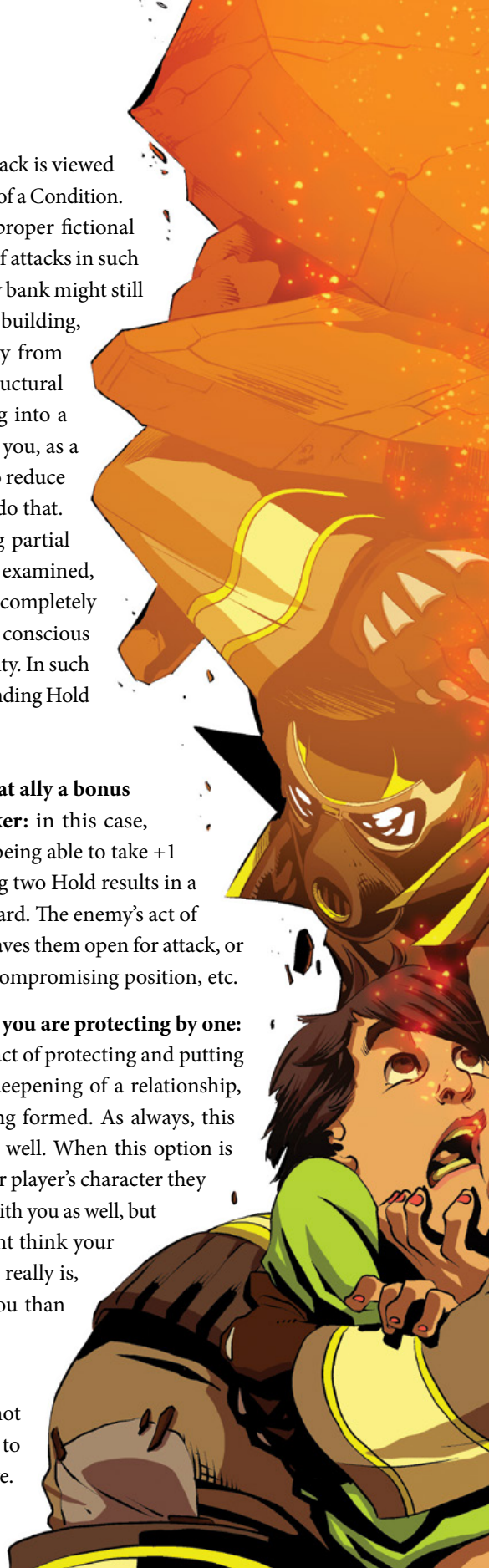
**Reduce the effectiveness of an attack or Condition:** for every Hold spent reducing the effectiveness of an attack, the less severe or drastic the consequences become. If the attack would have Imposed a Critical Condition, spending one Hold means that it only Imposes a Moderate one instead. Likewise a Moderate Condition would be reduced to a Minor Condition and a Minor Condition would be reduced such that no Condition would be Imposed at all. If you ask, the EIC will tell you how much Hold you need to spend in order to completely negate the attack, if at all possible.

There are times, however, when an attack is viewed from a different lens, not that of the severity of a Condition. Spending Hold in these situations, with proper fictional justification, can reduce the effectiveness of attacks in such cases as well. A missile headed for a nearby bank might still end up destroying a good portion of the building, but you might be able to redirect it away from some civilians, or reduce the amount of structural damage it does. If a psychic is burrowing into a friend's mind to find out information and you, as a psychic, want to throw up barriers or try to reduce the damage done, you can spend Hold to do that. It might result in the psychic only getting partial information, or only pictures that must be examined, it might be the difference between being completely taken over by an alien mind or still being conscious and being able to fight back against the entity. In such cases you can ask the EIC how effective spending Hold will be before spending it.

**Open up an attacker to an ally, giving that ally a bonus to take forward against the attacker:** in this case, spending one Hold results in an ally being able to take +1 forward against the attacker. Spending two Hold results in a +2 forward, and three grants +3 forward. The enemy's act of attacking or committing to moving leaves them open for attack, or you surprise them, lead them into a compromising position, etc.

**Create or advance a Bond with someone you are protecting by one:** when you spend Hold to do this, the act of protecting and putting yourself in harm's way leads to the deepening of a relationship, or a new Bond and relationship being formed. As always, this requires justification in the fiction as well. When this option is chosen and you are protecting another player's character they have the option of raising their Bond with you as well, but it is their choice (your character might think your Bond with another is stronger than it really is, or that the gesture means more to you than to them, for example).

Hold acquired from one move does not transfer to others — it can only be spent to do things as per the Serve and Protect move.



**EIC: The half-man, half-cyborg lurches forward, gears and motors humming to life. In horror, you realize that it looks like he's aiming right for Sentinel, who is busy helping the cutest, most adorable orphans you have ever seen pouring forth from the structure, some of them may have equally adorable kittens with them. He moves surprisingly fast for what must be at least 300 pounds of solid muscle, even without the cybernetics. What do you do, Quell?**

Quell: Oh man, Sentinel is never going to see that coming, I'm going to dive in front to protect him!

**EIC: Alright, definitely sounds like you're Serving and Protecting to me, sound about right?**

Quell: Yep...excellent, 10 on the money. So...what's the deal – I'm guessing it's going to be a pretty rough blow if it lands, would two Hold cover that if I wanted to negate it?

**EIC: Actually, he hasn't even started swinging yet, if you jump in there early I'll say you only have to use one Hold to negate or absorb his attack.**

Quell: Awesome! Alright, well then I'm going to use one Hold to form a Bond with Sentinel if he's cool with th-

Sentinel: Ch-ching! I'll take that!

Quell: And then I'll use the last Hold to open him up to Sentinel so that he can actually do something cool once he's done putting videos of kittens up on Utube.

Sentinel: I resent that – as if uploading Utube videos would make me busy! I'm trying to save all these orphans!

**EIC: Alright, let's see if I get it right then: So the cyborg goes charging forward, gears and whatnot whirring to life. You notice him charging and immediately stand in the way before he can build up momentum – he still slams into you with the force that could knock down a building and the ground around you cracks as some of the excess energy is released, but you absorb the impact. Sentinel finally notices when the blow crashes into you and the cracks in the pavement radiate outward. You look back at him, Quell, to see if he's ok and you see sweat pouring off his brow through his transparent HUD. He knows he owes you one; you see his Utube channel is, in fact, pulled up though. You take advantage of the cyborg's surprise and smash his hands upward into the air, leaving his body wide open... did that sound about right?**

Quell: Yep!

**EIC: Great. Sentinel, got anything you want to do? He's wide open.**

## USE ENVIRONMENT

When you use something from the environment to suit your purposes, the EIC will tell you one or more things about it:

- It'll break quickly; use it while you can
- It's dangerous; the EIC will say how
- It's particularly effective; the EIC will say how
- You can use it, but there will be a side effect; the EIC will tell you what it is

### USE ENVIRONMENT BREAKDOWN

The Use Environment move is all about using the world around you to do with what you will. You might be ripping up roads, hurling cars, or using lamp posts as baseball bats. You might use cement mixers at construction sites to trap an enemy, use steel girders or cables to tie them up, or tap into the electricity grid to power a device or a fire hydrant to take down a mob after you. The Use Environment move is unique in that it is not something you have to roll for — you can just do it as long as you have the proper justification to do so in the fiction (being super strong, fast, clever, a special power, whatever). When you do use the environment to set about doing what you want to do, the EIC will choose one of the following things to tell you about the piece of the environment you are using and possibly what happens as a result of doing so.

**It will break quickly, use it while you can:** a piece of asphalt, brick or other things made up of certain materials will probably be a one-time use thing. Other resources like electricity or water might start becoming less effective the moment you seek to use them (water pressure rapidly decreasing, electricity grids dropping out, cement beginning to harden right away, and so on.)

**It is dangerous:** this could be anything, again, even electricity or water could be dangerous if you are trying to control or absorb it. What you do might result in harm to yourself or others, structural damage or any number of things.

**It is particularly effective:** this could be either a good or bad thing for you, as a player. Maybe you have come up with a particularly interesting plan or have solved a riddle or way of taking out an enemy and an Advantage they have. In such cases maybe enemies or their technology are especially weak against certain things available to you, like electricity, water, radiation ... or steel girders. This could also mean that it might be more effective than you were hoping for; it might kill or destroy an enemy or entire building rather than a more surgical, precise or weaker attack might. Alternatively, it could be exactly what you need and simply be a great idea and thing to use!

**You can use it but there will be a side effect:** this is for the times when an action results in something unexpected. Ripping out a column to hurl at an enemy might begin the collapse of the entire building. Tapping into the electricity grid might cause a cascading blackout across the city. Taking a door off its hinges and using it to smash an enemy might expose the family that was hiding behind it.

**EIC:** Okay, Phyla. You stand up after having been smashed into a steel girder, now bent and twisted over from the impact. The construction workers are cheeing it the heck out of there, leaving their equipment, vehicles and all that behind. A bunch of goons come chasing after you, heading into the construction site and picking up nail guns. A couple nails go shooting out and you flinch in surprise as they lodge themselves beside your head. They grin menacingly at you, what do you do?

**Phyla:** I'm going to bust open this truck full of cement so that it washes over all of them – I'll fly up out of the way after busting it open though.

**EIC:** Sounds good, that should be pretty easy for you, I'm going to say that you can do it, but it'll still take a couple minutes to harden. In that time they're still going to be able to take a couple of shots at you as they try to trudge through the hardening gray sea engulfing them.

**Phyla:** No problem, I mostly just wanted to slow them down while I get back to where the real fight is!



## DEFY DANGER

When you act despite an imminent threat or dig in to endure a danger that has befallen you, say how you deal with it and roll. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to the roll. **On a 10+**, you do what you set out to do and the threat doesn't come to bear or you endure it. **On a 7-9**, you can do it, but to do so the EIC will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

### DEFY DANGER BREAKDOWN

Defy Danger is a catch-all move triggered whenever you end up in danger. Note that this is different from the Serve and Protect move because it is about protecting or avoiding danger that befalls your own person whereas Serve and Protect is about putting yourself in danger, or taking on the danger of another, in order to protect someone other than yourself. Serve and Protect is about someone else and protecting them from a danger befalling *them* and Defy Danger is about dealing with a danger befalling *you*. The most important thing to do before making a Defy Danger roll is to clarify and understand exactly what danger, what threat is being defied. You do not roll to Defy Danger if something *might* happen and is a possibility, but when there is a real, already established explicit and specific danger that is imminent.

There are times when the EIC might call for you to make the Defy Danger move if you ignore a Minor Condition in order to do something as well, in which case failing will probably mean it progressing to a Moderate Condition. There might be times when Defy Danger is called for in order to do something, or avoid something dangerous in order to do something else as well—like in order to rush past a couple henchman to attack the villain they are guarding you might have to Defy Danger to make sure you get past them ok in order to actually be able to trigger Take Down and Impose a Condition on the villain behind them.

An imminent threat can constitute anything from a rickety structure that must be traversed, to a villain sending a blast of cosmic radiation your way, to a chance that a secret you keep is revealed. How you go about avoiding, acting despite it, or enduring and dealing with an impending doom or imminent threat is up to you. How you frame your character overcoming, escaping or avoiding a danger will determine



what stat the EIC calls for when you roll. If the stat the EIC suggests is unexpected or does not fit what you have in mind, work together to clarify the fiction, what your character is doing and what your expectations are.

- **On a 10+**, your character does what you say they do to defy the danger.
- **On a 7-9**, you are successful, but there's a cost in the form of a worse outcome, hard bargain or ugly choice. A worse outcome means taking less damage than you normally would have, or that the results of your efforts to avoid or negate a danger are not as effective as you'd hoped. A hard bargain is a deal or choice put to you that you can choose not to take (in which case the danger would not be defied), whereas an ugly choice is picking a single result from two or more offered to you by the EIC.

That means that **on a 7-9**, the danger could still manifest, but to a lesser degree, that something bad happens as a result, or that you do it, but in so doing you end up in a tight spot. It could mean you do it, but in order to do so, something bad is going to happen. It could simply mean that you do it, and then the EIC makes a soft move (soft moves are explained on page 145). What happens always follows the fiction and is a result of the already-clearly-established imminent danger.

#### EXAMPLE 1

**EIC: Ok, Manāt, do you want to keep exchanging blows with the Red Star? You're both in pretty rough shape at this point, but you've got that Minor Condition on your main, good arm after he landed a good hit. What do you want to do?**

Manāt: You know what? I'm going to build up the charge in my gauntlets and smoke him anyway.

**EIC: You sure? You're going to have to Defy Danger, the danger being that you break your arm from the force of the impact if it lands poorly. Let's see if you can do it first though, roll it up. Add Protect to it since you're basically just enduring and pushing through the pain in order to do it.**

Manāt: No problem. Well, I'm going to Burn a Bond here anyway since I want to make sure I succeed and am not a huge fan of broken arms. And it makes sense, since I'm fighting the man who taught me, so I'm going to Burn a Bond with him. Nice, I got a 9, so with the Bond, that'll put me at the 10+ result. Want me to roll to Take him Down now too?

**EIC: Nah, you Burned a Bond so why don't you just go ahead and tell me what happens, I'll Impose a Moderate Condition on him, if that sounds ok to you?**

Manāt: Of course, that's great! Alright, so my teacher gets too confident, knowing that I can't use my right arm without hurting myself, so he draws in near and keeps jabbing me. I let him think he's got me on the ropes, cradling my right arm 'cause it's still in bad shape, then I turn suddenly and swing my hips left as I bring my right hand up and out to cream him. He doesn't see it coming!

**EIC:** Awesome, I'm going to give him the Condition, "Rattled and Shown Up," after you show him who's boss. You can bet he's going to be way more guarded now so it gives you a chance to catch your breath. He didn't expect that and you surprised him with your ferocity, it feels like he maybe even pulled away from you emotionally at the same time, maybe realizing in that moment that you had surpassed him.

#### EXAMPLE 2

**EIC:** Saudade's attention is now focused completely on you, Kannon. The debris field that spins around her is full of random objects from the street it looks like, and they begin to rotate faster and faster. Suddenly, several objects go flying towards you at breakneck speeds – its moving fast, but one of them looks like a pieces of a motorcycle, another is sizable piece of debris! What do you do?

**Kannon:** I can't imagine it would feel good to get hit by any of that. I'm going to charge forward, step into it and smash them apart before they can hit me!

**EIC:** Alright, Defy Danger for sure, go ahead and add Smash to your roll then.

**Kannon:** Dang, only an 8. What happens?

**EIC:** Alright, so you can totally smash some of the things apart and reduce some of the damage you would have taken, but not everything. So you smash this huge chunk of a Harley out of the way, but in so doing a garbage dumpster smokes you and sends you flying into a wall, where it also pins you. That indestructible skin comes in handy though - no road rash and only the Minor Condition "Between a dumpster and a hard place" to show for it.

**Kannon:** Ha! Better than ending up as paste across the side walk!



## AID OR INTERFERE

When you help or hinder someone you have a Bond with, roll+Bond. **On a 10+**, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one, but there's an obstacle to overcome first. You also expose yourself to danger, retribution, or the EIC will offer you an ugly choice. Choose one:

- You make an untenable position or course secure
- You avoid taking harm in the doing
- They take a +1 or -2 forward, your choice

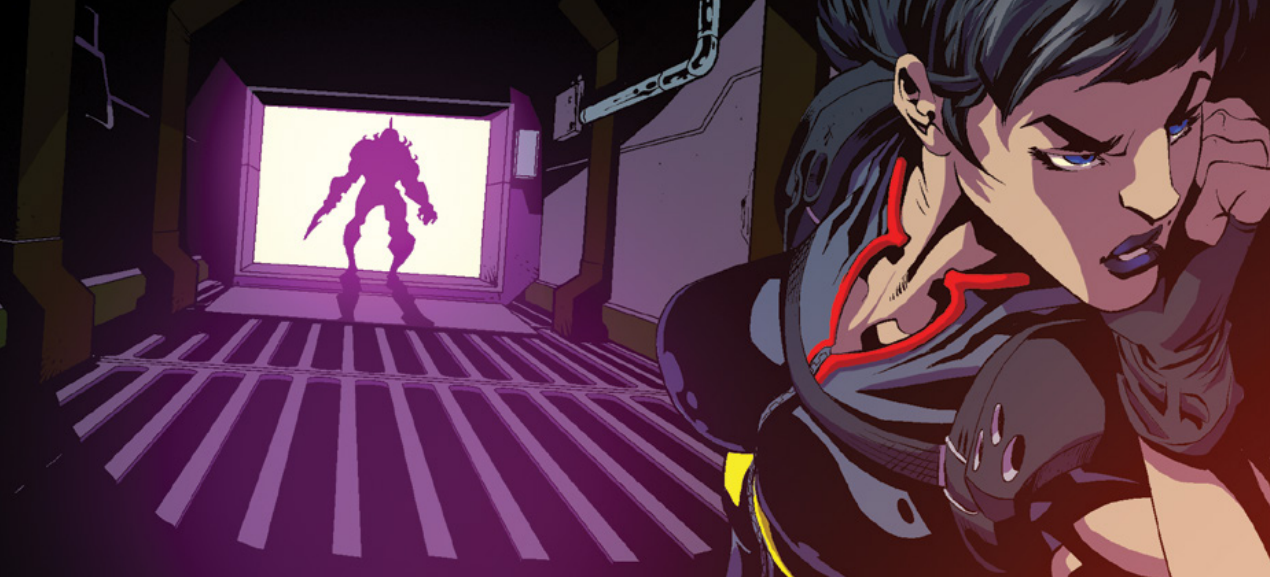
### AID OR INTERFERE BREAKDOWN

Aid or Interfere is triggered when you go to try to help and facilitate, or prevent and hinder, a different character's action. You're either trying to make it so that they have less trouble doing what they want to do, or trying to make it harder or stop them from doing it at all. When you get a 10+ you can choose to do one thing from the list that follows. When you get a 7-9 you still choose something you can do but in so doing you end up exposed to danger and harm, or the EIC will offer you two or more unpleasant choices that you must choose between in order to carry out the desired action. The things you can use Aid or Interfere to do are:

**Make an untenable position or course secure for them:** meaning you can now make secure and safe a location, place or position that was previously dangerous. This could mean sending out an EMP pulse to temporarily take out all electronics or mines in a given location so that someone else can run through it. It could simply mean distracting or drawing the fire of what previously made the action dangerous to begin with.

**You avoid taking harm in the doing:** is chosen when you want to ensure that you take no harm from attacks or anything else that may befall you while aiding or interfering with your target. This could mean avoiding any attacks, it could mean setting up a distraction first or drawing fire away from you, or could just mean being lucky.

**They take +1 or -2 forward:** encompasses either the helping or hindering portion of the move. On any action that results in a move being made, they add +1 to their roll as a result of your help, or a -2 penalty to their roll due to your actions hindering them. This is an easy catch-all that encompasses the result of most action in the fiction.



**EIC:** Looking out, you see that there's a group of soldiers huddled behind an overturned tank. Explosions keep going off around the area, pinning them down. Kannon is with them, knocking any mortars out of the air that come too close but it doesn't look good for them, no way they'll be able to get to you without risking life and limb. Then again, you hear the sound of the guards you knocked unconscious beginning to stir and come to behind you, so you're not all that safe either.

**Manāt:** Alright, I radio over to Kannon, "See that manhole cover? Go down! I'll pull up the blueprints and direct you to safety with the troops, go, go, go!"

**EIC:** Sounds like you're trying to Aid them? What's your Bond with Kannon?

**Manāt:** It's only 1 unfortunately, but better than nothing! Nice, I got an 8, not too shabby.

**EIC:** And you want to bring them back to the base to shelter right, so clear the way for them? If you do, you're going to end up getting hurt and having to deal with something to bring them back home, you okay with that? Like the guards I mentioned, for example, and they do have radios.

**Manāt:** Yep.

**EIC:** Alright, you start relaying instructions to Kannon as he smashes down into the sewers and follows your directions back home. But suddenly, the radio starts to crackle until you can't hear anything except for Kannon yelling at you for directions...his voice crackling in and out as reception goes wonky. Suddenly the world goes black and you tumble forward and almost lose consciousness from being struck in the back of the neck. Whirling around, you see Toska, in his crimson armor behind you, there's a flashing light on his helmet so he must be using that to cut communications. Thought he was down and out, eh?!

**Manāt:** Sheesh, don't go too easy on me or anything.

## EXAMINE

When you closely study a situation or person, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, ask the EIC three questions from the list below. **On a 7-9**, ask one. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What danger should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or important?
- Who's really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

### EXAMINE BREAKDOWN

Whenever you want to find out more information about someone or something and take steps to go about doing that by studying a situation or person, you trigger the Examine move. Studying a situation or person could mean consulting what you know about the area or a group, organization, alien species, or whatever, but usually means having to interact with and devote your attention and a certain amount of time to doing so.

As most of the questions suggest, Examine can be used to figure out relevant, important, big-picture information or it can be used just to figure out some interesting facts or as a tool to build up some more information about the topic at hand if it has not yet been addressed in the fiction (alien races and their technology, new and distinct organizations, etc.). All questions asked by the player are responded to with honesty and candor by the EIC. However, the EIC is perfectly free to turn the question back on the player and to ask them what they are thinking, expecting or hoping for in order to clarify the context and maybe even use the answers, or parts of them, in their own answer.

Examine can be used to figure out Advantages or any weaknesses an enemy might have, to determine if what they are seeing is real, to see if their instincts are right and if there is an ambush on the way or if someone else is pulling the strings. It is possible that there might not be anything in particular going on — no conspiracy at work, no enemy lying in wait, nothing that is out of sorts, in which case the EIC will be honest and tell you so. That said, if a player is asking, it's probably because they have a cool idea, or they're hoping for something interesting to be connected to what they're examining. The EIC is encouraged to turn the question back on the player and ask what they're hoping for so they can build an interesting scenario together, or ask themselves what could be going down and if it might fit into any other parts of the setting or information.

## EXAMPLE 1

**EIC:** The surface of the moon is still and quiet. Cresting the next hill you see what looks to be some kind of bunker or structure, and a high-tech device that clearly looks to be a cannon or weapon of some kind. There are some scorch marks, but it's hard to tell how old they are. You've seen this kind of tech before...it looks pretty familiar, like that race of aliens that invaded awhile back, some of Kannon's race, if you recall, were carrying similar weapons that were smaller.

Phyla: What the heck? What would this be doing here? That thing makes me feel uneasy...

**EIC:** Do you want to try and find some answers to that or are you just thinking out loud?

Phyla: Hmm...yeah, ok, I'll go over and check out the cannon and see what I can parse. Can I roll to Examine to get some information?

**EIC:** Definitely, roll it up for me.

Phyla: Well, I got a 7, at least that's good for one question. Okay..."What happened here recently?"

**EIC:** Stands to reason that this would be more powerful. Not only that, but it looks like the cannon was fired...and that it had locked onto a target almost 40 years ago. But that's the most recent thing that looks to have happened here.

## EXAMPLE 2

**EIC:** Entering the lab, you see all kinds of old equipment strewn about, as if the occupants had to escape in a hurry. What would have been state-of-the-art tech maybe 50 years ago like computers and diagnostic equipment are present, along with a thick coating of dust. A strange capsule-like piece of equipment, looking to hold a large man, is at the center of the room.

Manāt: I want to take some time and examine the room, the capsule in particular, but also the equipment. Let me roll for it first here...that's a 6! Darn, so I guess I don't learn anything?

**EIC:** I'm more interested in learning what you were expecting, seems like you had some ideas there. Why don't you go ahead and ask me a question and then I'll make my move.

Manāt: Alright, well I was thinking this might be the place where my father, or Blue Steel to others, worked or had experiments done on him. Maybe even the place where he got his powers. So, I guess I would've asked, "What here is useful or important to me?"

**EIC:** You've got good instincts! You find some old footage of the process and your father entering the chamber to be bombarded with electrified interstellar rays. However – the video footage is particularly important to you because it reveals an unwelcome truth! You catch William Wilson – the billionaire who developed the technology to intensify the process, and the man who raised you once your father ended up becoming a superhero, but who lost his consciousness to become a part of and the guardian of the cosmos, imputing some final commands into the computer after distracting an assistant. You can't quite make it out, but your familiarity with programming allows you to see that the code is malicious and that it may have even caused the disaster that led to the state your father left the project in. I'm going to give you the Condition, "Shaken to the Core" from the revelation, if that's in keeping with your character until you find out just what happened or deal with it in some other way.

**Manāt:** Makes sense to me, I'm definitely shaken by the revelation. Next stop: Wilson Towers.



## SPECIAL MOVES

Special Moves are moves that are only special in that they aren't used as often as the basic ones. They are more specific and focused. They are mainly used during downtime, after the adventure and fights have finished and the heroes have to deal with the consequences of their actions and need to get back to their regular lives.

### BURNOUT

When the situation is desperate and you put all you have into one last attempt to save another when they are about to die and let your powers loose because of it, roll+Bond with that person. **On a 10+**, you do something you've never done, but that is possible with your powers; tell the table what it is and add it to your Powers Profile. After doing so, you're hanging on by a thread and can do nothing but move and mumble a few words until you rest and recover (you now have 3 Critical Conditions); you may raise your Bond with them by 1 (if you Bond with them was negative, you may reset it to zero). **On a 7-9**, as a 10+, but make the Last Chance move upon completion. **On a 6-**, you do it, but you're Dead for Now (make the Dead for Now move).

#### BURNOUT BREAKDOWN

Burnout is a move that only gets triggered in a last resort, all-or-nothing, the-person-I-love-is-about-to-die type of situation. When Burnout gets triggered there are drastic consequences, but it also the only time that you can do something that is only "Possible" with your powers and that you've never attempted (or that you have done maybe once before), but that is not Impossible. No matter what, you will end up with three Critical Conditions after making the Burnout move, regardless of how many Conditions you had before making the move.

**On a 10+**, you get to add it to your Powers Profile and you also get to raise your Bond with the person you try to save. If your Bond with that person was negative before making the move, no matter how negative it was, you can reset the Bond to zero and start over with them.

**On a 7-9**, you still get to do all that, but you might be dead, make the Last Chance move to find out!

**On a 6**, you still get to do all that, but you are definitely dead, make the Dead for Now move.

**EIC: The shrapnel is flying out all across Time's Square entire! A billboard is tumbling, debris is falling. Basically, nobody is not in danger – including your teammates. You only have an instant to act before consequences are felt, but as you perceive time differently than everyone else, a lot can be done in instant for you, Zip. So what do you do?**

Zip: I want to save everyone.

**EIC: I know an instant is long for you, but like I said, there is shrapnel flying everywhere, glass and billboards tumbling down, debris breaking off of buildings as they lose their form and structure – there's no way you'd be able to save everyone. Even saving one person will be tough, what do you want to do?**

Zip: I want to flip a switch, I want to Push myself past anything I've ever done before. I want to unleash the stored potential energy in my body so that time effectively stops for me, so that light barely moves. I memorize where everyone is, what I need to do. I look at each of my friends, my teammates that could die if I don't save them, and all the civilians that surely will if I don't, and then I flip the switch.

**EIC: Ok, you've definitely never done that before, but I see that it's within your limits, though it's getting pretty close to your Impossible of "move faster than the speed of light" so it's definitely Borderline. Roll it up, this isn't a move you get to add anything to so just 2d6.**

Zip: Yeah...well it's worth it. Oh man, I should have Burned a Bond, I got a 5.

**EIC: Alright, well tell us what happens since you still get to do it. Keep in mind that it kills you though, we'll roll Dead for Now after that to see if you're coming back.**

Zip: Okay, no worries, this'll be cool even if I don't come back from it. So time basically stops, I memorize where everyone is and what I have to do and as time stops even light particles slow to a crawl and the world goes dark. I feel better than ever, like my whole body is charged up and that I need to let it out or I'll burst. I go flying from place to place, problem to problem. Clearing shrapnel, moving innocents out of danger, clearing billboards and debris from the air by swirling my hands and making gusts of really strong winds to send them back into the air and so that they land in safe areas. When I think I have everything arranged perfectly I let time start speeding up again to make sure trajectories of wind do their thing and I don't miss anyone. Once I'm confident and time starts to speed up I feel like a battery that has lost its charge, all the potential energy stored in my body and its cells have been expended.

Zip: Feeling my body begin to creak and erode, I go to Diana and tell her that I love her and that I'm sorry. I collapse on the street as everything suddenly happens in an instant for everyone else, even what I say is incomprehensible. When everyone gets their bearings, they look down on what looks like an 80 year old man, wasted away, super thin with no muscle, in a costume far too big for him...

## GATHER INTEL

When your leads dry up, take to whatever avenues are open to you and roll. If you do it ...

- ... by shaking people down, roughing people up or with direct force, roll+Smash
- ... by going places you shouldn't be, gaining access or being stealthy, roll+Maneuver
- ... by doing research, gathering your thoughts, debate or analysis, roll+Investigate
- ... by using your charm and social grace, roll+Influence ... by calling in favors and relying on Bonds, roll+Bond

**On a 10+**, ask one. **On a 7-9**, your first-choice method comes up dry, you must enlist the aid of another PC or choose a different method. **On a 6-**, you don't find trouble, trouble finds you. The EIC will ask you questions about what you were up to and then tell you what trouble arises.

- 🔓 *Who can tell me what I want to know?*
- 🔓 *Where can I find...?*
- 🔓 *What are the rumors about...?*
- 🔓 *Who is the most upset about...?*
- 🔓 *Who stands the most to gain from...?*

## GATHER INTEL BREAKDOWN

The Gather Intel move is a move you make when you need to find out or glean specific information about a specific problem, person, place or organization. There are any number of ways you can go about getting new information and it will depend on the character — whether they want to go find someone to interrogate or hang off a rooftop, analyze and organize the information at hand, break into a facility where the information is, charm your way in and subtly trick the information out of someone, or call in favors from people you know.

**On a 10+**, you can ask the EIC a question from the list. This means that no matter what, you've got a next step; it could be the last stop or it could be one of many depending on how big a conspiracy it is or how difficult the intel is to get. Also, the results of a 10+ are justified by the EIC, how you end up getting the information is up to them. It could be as simple as roughing someone up and making some thugs tell you where to go, or it could be finding a key on them that leads to a safe with the info, or finding some information on their phone. A success on this move is not meant to incite mind control or change characters and their motivations, it just means somehow, someway you get the intel, and the EIC will tell you how.

The key thing to remember here is that this is only for finding out the answer to a specific question you have. If you do not get a 7-9 then it means you are going to have to get another teammate in on it and ask for help and work together as a team to find out what you're looking for or go about getting the information in a totally different way.

**On a 6-**, the EIC will ask you how you go about getting the information and then they'll jump in with the trouble that arises because of it. Depending on the EIC, this could mean that you still get the intel you want, it just turns out to be a more dangerous proposition, or it could mean you don't get the intel and danger befalls you. This is totally up to the EIC.

**EIC: Okay, Manāt, you finally get up to the rooftop but the mysterious bandanna-wearing ninja is nowhere to be found. But he is a ninja and you still have his bandanna. Anyway, that'll move things into downtime – what do you guys want to do? Manāt?**

Manāt: Oh no you don't! No way I'm letting this guy off the hook. I'm going after him! I'm going to bring the bandanna to the Mouth clan to call in a favor, they should know what clan that weasel is from.

**EIC: What? So there's a Hand, Foot, AND Mouth clan....and never mind, I think I get it. Alright, well what about the rest of you guys? Everyone else as obsessed about finding this guy as Manāt?**

Everyone Else: I'm going home!

Manāt: I'll sleep when I'm dead! This guy nicked one of my gloves. I want to find out where he's hiding out. I'm going to call in a favor with Ippo.

**EIC: Okay, well sounds like you're trying to Gather Intel, add your Bond with Ippo to the roll.**

Manāt: I got a 10! Nice, "Who can tell me what I want to know?"

**EIC: Alright, so you go to Ippo, right? And he tells you he's never seen such a bandanna before and you argue for a bit because you don't believe him. But on your way out, you pretend to leave and listen in for a little bit. Sure enough, he makes a call. You can tell from the dial tones on the phone he pushes what the number is but when you try to trace it, it says it's a number that doesn't exist.**

Manāt: Sooo...Sentinel. Want to help me out? I know you've got the brains to help me and the tech to back it up, what do you say?

Sentinel: Alright...I guess so, but you owe me one. I'll help her track down where the phone number goes to.

**EIC: How do you go about doing that?**

Sentinel: Computers of course. And SCIENCE.

**EIC: A bit more specific, if you please. Doesn't have to make a ton of sense, but give me something here.**

Sentinel: Alright, alright. So I'm going to clone Ippo's landline and THEN try to dial only using that number.

**EIC: Nice! That's what I had in mind too. The phone rings and then it clicks as someone answers. A voice that sounds familiar comes across the line..."What now?!"**



## FIT IN

Whenever you have downtime and try to get back to your “normal” life in order to mend or create one a Bond, decide which Bond you want to focus on and roll+Bond. **On a 10+**, remove a number of Conditions equal to your Bond with that person and then raise your Bond with them by 1 after doing so. **On a 7-9**, as a 10+ result but you have to deal with a danger threatening your mundane life with the Bond involved. Begin framing and playing out the scene as usual, the EIC will jump in and add danger when they so choose.

### ***FIT IN BREAKDOWN***

The Fit In move is the only move you can make in order to recover from Conditions or injuries that require rest and recovery over a period of time. In order to do so you have to give the table a brief narration of what your normal life looks like, what you do and who you focus on raising your Bond with and how that looks in the fiction. This can be as in-depth or as brief a scene as you want to make it. You can simply narrate to the table what is going on, or you can frame a scene and ask the other players or the EIC to participate in it as some of the characters in the scene. It doesn't matter if the Condition is Minor, Moderate, or Critical, you can deal with it as long as you provide some justification within your narration for removing them. For example, if you have the Condition, “Infected by Cosmic Rays”, then you're not going to be able to clear the Condition off if you justify it by saying you take a really long, nice nap. You're going to have to go to specialists and brainiacs, get testing and experimented on, etc. However, if you have a Condition like “buried alive” then it's something that's going to probably get resolved before downtime regardless. You clear away Conditions like that by taking care of them — time to call for help, crawl to the surface, and so on.

The Fit In moves assumes that you are first able to Fit In in order to do so. Until you do, the only way to recover from Conditions is by resolving them — some of which are possible to do without the move (buried under rubble, distracted, temporarily blinded, and so on.) and some will need the Fit In move to be cleared out (usually anything Critical and that requires rest and recuperation or a long period of time, like broken bones, a crisis of identity, lacerations and blood loss, that kind of stuff.

**On a 10+**, there are no additional details that need to be added in, but **on a 7-9** the EIC will jump in at some point during, or perhaps after, your narration to introduce a danger or complication to your mundane life that you will have to deal with.



**EIC:** Let it be said that I am a benevolent EIC. What do you want to do for in your downtime? Phyla?

Phyla: Whew, finally. Boy am I beat up. Alright, well I need to get back to the museum. I'm already in deep with the board for not getting the exhibit set-up on time when I Burned a Bond the last time. I'm going to go in there and set up the best exhibit ever and try to regain that Bond. Annd I got a 7.

**EIC:** Excellent. So let me know what you do to set up the exhibit and I'll jump in with some danger.

Phyla: Great. Alright, well I talk to the board and apologize...say I'm going to make it up to them with the best exhibit ever.... I spend the night putting all the bones on display to arrange the coolest displays the world has ever seen...

**EIC:** And in the morning everything looks amazing, the exhibit opens and kids freak out on the exhibits with their parents. The board comes in to see and they are super impressed.

Phyla: Really? That doesn't seem so dangerous?

**EIC:** And then you hear a scream, as one of the kids runs up to their mom. He looks REALLY happy and says "mommy mommy, come see the live T-Rex show with me. It's moving around and everything!"

Phyla: Annd there it is. I'm guessing it's not just a T-Rex?

**EIC:** Clever girl.

## LAST CHANCE

When you try to keep on going despite taking a fourth Critical Condition, roll. **On a 10+**, you do it, you're in a bad spot but you're still alive and conscious with three Critical Conditions. **On a 7-9**, you do it, but you can only get up if you can keep your enemy talking (you must get them to reveal an answer to one question from the list) or if someone close to you is in peril. **On 6-**, your fate is sealed and you have no control over what your enemies do to you and those you failed to protect. The EIC will tell you what happens as the darkness takes you ... you are Dead For Now.

- 🗨️ *What started them on their road to becoming a villain, what is their defining trauma?*
- 🗨️ *How is their world view distorted and different from the norm?*
- 🗨️ *Why are they upset with the status quo?*
- 🗨️ *What will the status quo look like after they succeed, in their mind?*
- 🗨️ *What connection do they have to you or any of the heroes?*

## LAST CHANCE BREAKDOWN

When you take a fourth Condition, it means you should be dead (and could well be), so when you roll a 10+ and get up after taking one, it means you are extremely badass and should be proud of yourself (and your character too). Even after a 10+ you're still sitting at 3 Critical Conditions and taking at least -3 on all rolls (maybe more if you're doing things that interfere with any Moderate Conditions too). **On a 7-9**, you can still be extremely badass, but only if either someone close to you is in peril, (so someone you have a Bond with is about to die or something of similar seriousness) or if you can get your opponent talking for a certain amount of time and can get them to reveal some information. If you can get them to do so, congratulations — you are still almost dead, but your fate is not entirely sealed and you are sitting at 3 Critical Conditions.

Technically, you could make this move several times, but only if there were still some unknown answers; there has to still be backstory or plans to be revealed and in keeping with the character. More than that though, the EIC would have to be very generous, as how many times a villain will fall for it is up to them and it has to fit with the trappings of the character and the villain; if it's not fitting with the villain, the only way to stay up is if someone close to you is in peril. That means that you probably only have one shot after a 7-9 result on this move, so don't blow it!

**EIC: Blow after blow, the crater around you expands wider and wider. Debris goes flying up and blood trickles out of your nose. Everyone is gazing at the scene in horror, wondering how anyone, superhero or not, could take that kind of punishment. Why don't you go ahead and roll to see if you actually can or not, Zip?**

Zip: Ah damn, well at least I'm not dead. I got a 7. However! Diana is here, being a reporter and all, and she always follows me to catch the latest scoop.

**EIC: Sheesh, poor Diana! How many times has she got to see you come crawling back from the abyss, man?**

Zip: Okay, okay. I'll say that I warned her not to come this time, I can keep him talking. I spit the blood out of mouth and onto the concrete and say, "You don't deserve to rule this country, Red Star. You can't even lead your own men. What gives you the right?"

**EIC: Okay, so looks like you're probably pushing the "How is their world view distorted and different from the norm?"**

Zip: Yep! Once he's done talking I'm going to take him down so, so hard.

**EIC: "What gives me the right? The right? That's exactly what I'm talking about. You Americans believe in God, yes? Well your God made me this way. He made me this strong. Your God gave me the strength to live my life and to take what I want."**

Zip: "God didn't make you this way! Look at you! You're nothing but circuits, gears and gadgets. You're nothing without your armor! Why don't you face me like a man! Why don't you face me like your father would have faced me?"

**EIC: "You think I need this suit? This is nothing to me, all it does it weigh me down!"**

Zip: Nice! That's enough right? I'm going to wait until he peels off the armor and then I'm going to smoke him.

**EIC: Okay, remember though, you're still at 3 Critical Conditions, it's going to be hard for you to do much of anything!**

## DEAD FOR NOW

When you take a fourth Permanent Condition and die, roll. **On a 10+**, you will return next Issue, having survived or been brought back somehow; **on a 7-9**, you will return a few Issues later, but choose a complication from the list below. On a miss, you are dead until the EIC chooses to bring you back, with complications of their choosing. A complication might be something like:

- You've brought trouble with you
- You've lost all your powers
- Your powers are rather different than before
- Your powers have grown stronger or weaker
- You manifest a previously unknown power
- You're not who you thought you were
- The secrets you've been keeping are revealed
- Your history or origin is retconned, choose a new Origin book.
- You're from an alternate timeline or reality
- You are brought back for a reason, a mission
- You don't remember anything
- You are indebted to someone you hate
- Your body has permanent modifications made to it
- Everyone you know has moved on without you (reset all Bonds)
- You have trouble controlling your powers and emotions



## DEAD FOR NOW BREAKDOWN

The Dead for Now move is for when you actually take a fourth Critical Condition (or possibly fifth if you've used Achievements to advance and are now able to take an additional Critical Condition before going down for the count). **On a 10+**, don't worry, (if you want to) you will be brought back, somehow, someday. Most likely it won't be until next game session, but it could be sooner if the EIC is feeling particularly generous and there is fictional justification for doing so. **On a 7-9**, you will return, but the EIC gets to mess around with your character a bit.

The Dead for Now move assumes that you actually want your character to come back. If you don't then you can say that they die. If you do want your character to come back, then you'll want to talk to your EIC about how and in what way, and if you have any ideas as there are any number of choices that the EIC may choose. How soon you return and in what way should be clear between you and the EIC.

An Issue is not a particular measurement of game time in any way. Mostly, it just means once the appropriate amount of time has been spent on it or has past, and the appropriate amount of gravitas has been given it, you'll come back. That doesn't mean it has to be grave and a few sessions must go by, just that it should fit the mood, story and style of the game being played. It's up to the EIC, but they are encouraged to consult with the PC to come up with an interesting way and time to bring them back, if only so they know when and how they'll be jumping back in and how to play it.

**EIC: And that's what happens when you get cocky with a Russian.**

Zip: We will never speak of this again.

**EIC: You can't expect to win every Last Chance roll, you were lucky.**

Zip: Alright, well let's see if I'm Dead for Now...I got a 6. Perfect. And so passes Zip Blindsight.

**EIC: Don't worry, I'll bring you back way cooler. Anything in mind? Maybe he takes you back home and the Russians fix you up and brainwash you.**

Zip: Could be worse, would I have to speak in a Russian accent?

**EIC: No way, I wouldn't inflict that on everyone else. We'll come up with something cool though.**







# CREATING HEROES

**T**his chapter walks you through the creation of a superhero and the character you will play in the game. Creating a character in *Worlds in Peril* is a process that might start with you forming an idea of what your hero might look like, what their name might be and what kinds of powers they might have and use. All the sheets you will use to create your character are printable aids that can be found in the back of the book. When you go about creating your hero you will:

- 1) Fill in your team profile, giving you and the other players some idea of any past history, or a reason why you're together at present.
- 2) Detail what your powers are and what you can and cannot do with them.
- 3) Choose your character's Origin, which details why your character became a superhero, and helps you detail the story of how your character became a superhero.
- 4) Choose your character's Drive, which details your character's current goals and motivations.
- 5) Detail the important relationships your character has with the people around them, along with the city and law enforcement by setting up Bonds with them.

Make sure you have the character sheets in front of you. Familiarize yourself with it and follow along step by step, starting with your Hero and Team Profile.

CODENAME

MANEUVER

INVESTIGATE

PROTECT

INFLUENCE

SMASH

CONDITIONS

MINOR

Could be dangerous if ignored

MODERATE

Take a -1 if I do anything involving this

CRITICAL

Take a -1 to everything (Maximum -4)

BONDS

CITY

LAW ENFORCEMENT

BONDS TO BE RESOLVED

10+ : 12+

7-9 : 10+

6 : 7-9

7-9

WORKING TOWARDS

ACHIEVEMENTS

ORIGIN

NEMESIS

POWER PROFILE

SIMPLE

DIFFICULT

BORDERLINE

POSSIBLE

IMPOSSIBLE

HERO PROFILE

TEAM PROFILE

POWERS

LIMITATIONS

ADVANTAGES

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE

DRIVE 1

DRIVE 2

Burn a bond to ensure success on a roll.

CREATING HEROES 77

# TEAM PROFILE

The first thing you are going to start with is the Team Profile. *Worlds in Peril* is all about playing a team of superheroes — the key word being team. Unless you plan on playing the game one-on-one with just one player and the EIC, you are going to want to want to go through character creation as a group to get the best results and so that everyone is on the same page.

Of course, it may be that you and the other players want to start the game out as new heroes or as heroes that have yet to pull together to form a team, if they ever do. It is usually a lot more fun to work as a team in *Worlds in Peril* because it means a lot less work for the EIC and a lot less time jumping from player to player spotlighting what they are doing. If everyone is present and working towards a common goal, or at least is in the same area, everyone is engaged and involved. That said, there is definitely fun to be had playing solo characters that live lives that occasionally intersect or stories that are more personal and engaging among smaller groups of players.

Before individual heroes are created for each player, go through the team profile together and ask one another what kind of set-up you want to have going in. The character sheet has a space to be filled in under the Team Profile to put stuff like:

**Former Name:** Has the team broken up before, changed their name or roster?

**First Appearance:** How long has the team been together?

**Mission:** What is the goal or common purpose that the team is united in accomplishing?

**Location:** In what city does the team operate?

**Headquarters:** Does the team have a common meeting ground? What does it look like and where is it?

**Resources:** Does the team have access to special transportation, funding or anything else that might help them complete their missions?

**Former members:** Has anyone left or been kicked off the team?

The answers to these questions can drastically change the set-up for the heroes and frame the kinds of stories that will be told at the table. For the purposes of character creation and just starting out, *Worlds in Peril* assumes that the heroes are new heroes. They do not know much about their powers and what they can do with them. Their relationship with the city, law enforcement and the other players are still uncertain. They have a lot to figure out and a lot to work towards. That means that a lot of these will remain blank until they are filled in during play as necessary. Maybe you want to play as an informal team, or an impromptu team where you and the other heroes are recruited to take care of a specific problem, or have common goals that happen to align. You can simply start play in one such scenario, with one hero having recruited the others, or with a common threat needing to be taken down.



While this is the default assumption, and the steps you walk through in character creation reflect that, talk to one another and make suggestions along the way if you want to start out as a solidified team, as veterans, a family, or whatever other concepts you and your group decide to cook up.

I talk it over with the rest of the players and we decide that we're going to be a team just starting out, no headquarters yet, no resources yet besides the ones at our personal disposal. It'll be more fun building all that stuff up together anyway. We can argue over the name during the first session, throwing out our pitches. We met last time when we all banded together after the Times Square alien invasion incident.

EXAMPLE

# HERO PROFILE

Once everyone is on the same page and you know what the team, and therefore the game and story, is going to be about it is time to delve into creating individual heroes. Just like the Team Profile section, each area can be filled in as needed. In particular, Origin and Drive books are chosen later, and there are some suggestions for foes for each Origin Book.

**Codename:** What is your alias or the codename you go by if no one knows your true identity?

**Real Name:** What is your character's name on their birth certificate and ID?

**Playbook:** What are your Origin and Drive books? How did you get your powers and what are you working toward?

**Nemesis:** Every Origin book also has suggestions for a foe and enemy, they are just suggestions but having a foe or nemesis always makes for an interesting backstory and more things to incorporate into the story for the EIC is always nice. That said, just like any other category, there is no reason it can't be filled in during play as the story progresses.

**Current Costume:** If you look at the sheet where you can put in your Origin and Drive books, there is a space for you to draw what your hero looks like as well.

## EXAMPLE

I've been watching a lot of Arrow recently, so I decide I want play a similar hero. Pretty low-tech but still peak-physical condition and pretty cool despite not being able to fly and stuff. Let's call him Arrow...head. Sure, why not. Arrowhead. He's just starting out so doesn't have any former codenames, his real name is...Scott Starkings...no idea about his greatest foe, costume or Origin or Drive yet, I'll have to come back to that to fill it in once I get to it.

You may find it hard to come up with a codename or to sketch out a costume if you don't have a set of powers or abilities in mind for your hero. Feel free to continue on to the next section for stats, which will help you determine what your hero is good at doing, or even to powers if you already have an idea of what kinds of things you want your hero to be able to do.

If you're having trouble coming up with a superhero, here are some common tropes seen among heroes that might be fun to play with, turn on their head, or to just be aware of. There is nothing wrong with sticking to the tropes and common elements of a hero, of course, but here are some things to think about if you want to go a different direction with your character and the stories told about them:

**Religion or political affiliation:** Most superheroes in comics tend to not follow or praise a particular religion or have any political ambitions or affiliations so as to not alienate readers, but you're under no such obligation when playing *Worlds in Peril*. Just make sure the material you want to handle is good with the whole group.

**First and last names start with the same letter:** While not exactly something that needs to be examined, it might help with thinking of a name!

**Looking good:** Most super heroes have perfect bodies and are attractive, does that need to be the case? How does that change their world view and how the world views them?

**Learning you want to be a hero quickly:** In most comics, heroes figure out they want to be a hero pretty quickly — sometimes right after getting their super powers. How long was it before you became a superhero? What happened to make you become one? Are you still reluctant?

**Getting good at fighting crime easily and quickly:** A lot of heroes are really good at what they do, they have super powers of course, but certain skills like acrobatics, athletics and fighting, are generally not so easily learned. Maybe your hero makes mistakes sometimes? Maybe it's ok if failure includes making mistakes and they're still in the process of getting good at something.

**Powers that come with difficulties or inconveniences:** A lot of the time a hero's powers do not really have any bad side to them. Super strength could be inconvenient at times, but what about powers that change how other people see you, or make everyday life difficult, or interrupt your routine and force you to change and adapt?

**Interaction with parents:** In a lot of comics, heroes rarely, if ever, interact with their parents, except for a touching death scene or maybe a flashback. Maybe your parents are still a big part of your life and you're a big part of theirs?

**Inheriting money rather than making it:** Maybe your hero is not already rich, but is working hard to work their way to the top. How bad is taking advantage of your powers for financial gain?

**Wealthier than the population as a whole:** Maybe your hero is more in line with the rest of the population in that they are not very wealthy. Maybe they come from a not-so-well-off family or neighborhood.

**Minority groups:** While more heroes of various backgrounds are getting more representation in comics, this is your chance to play a hero that doesn't enjoy as much notoriety in comics if you so choose.

## BASIC STATS

There are five stats in *Worlds in Peril* and when creating a hero you are tasked with assigning a number, or modifier, to each of these stats. Your hero's powers will tell you what you can do in the game, but your stats and their modifiers will tell you how well, or how often you succeed at doing certain things:

The **Smash** stat is used whenever your character performs a forceful, direct action or a feat of strength — whether it be to smash through the walls of a villain's base, bend bars to rescue a friend, or smash through the henchmen that get in your way.

The **Influence** stat is used whenever your character performs an action to sway another character's opinion or to get what you want from another person — whether it is to talk down a criminal, have another character join your cause, or convince the guard to let you past.

The **Maneuver** stat is used whenever your character performs a stealthy, speedy or otherwise agile action — whether it is to slip past the guards and into the ventilation system, to rush past all the henchmen to attack the leader, or to simply be at the place you need to be when you need to be there.

The **Protect** stat is used whenever your character performs defensive actions — whether it is to guard your thoughts from an enemy's psychic attack, protect an innocent bystander from falling debris, brace yourself against an oncoming assault, or simply endure whatever is being thrown at you.

The **Investigate** stat is used whenever your character performs an action that requires reasoning, deduction, or leaps of logic and knowledge — whether it is to learn more information about a giving area or object, to put together the tools necessary to do a job, or to connect all the pieces of a mystery together.

There is a set list of modifiers, one for each stat, which you assign to show how well your hero does certain actions. The modifier beside each stat will range anywhere from -1 to +2. Whenever you say something and your character does something to trigger a move, you use the modifier of the stat that the move calls for. If your character has a either a lower, or negative, modifier next to a stat it does not have to necessarily mean that they are bad at or can't do certain actions — it could mean that when they do the things associated with that stat, things tend to go awry or they get into trouble more often. It's up to you how you depict your character and their actions.

The numbers you need to assign to a modifier are: -1, 0, +1, +1, +2.

Look at the stats to choose from (Smash, Influence, Maneuver, Protect, and Investigate) and decide what actions your character is particularly good at doing, which they're just ok at doing, at which they are not so great at. To generalize, Smash is often used for fighting, feats of strength or using direct force. Influence is used in social situations, Maneuver when you need to be fast or stealthy, Protect is used for defensive actions and Investigate is used for reasoning and other intellectual tasks. Also consider that how well someone does something might mean that they act a certain way as well; a higher stat might also provide some insight into a character's personality. If I assign my highest modifier to the Smash stat, then my hero might be

a direct, blunt, brutally honest or forceful person in a lot of their actions as well. If I assign my highest modifier to the Maneuver stat, then maybe I was a trained ninja or a cat burglar turned hero. Stats can be good jumping off points to getting a handle on a character's personality or backstory — obviously this is not always the case, but it can be useful if you are struggling with creating your hero.

It's worth noting what stat modifiers are used for the basic moves as well, since those are the times that you're going to be rolling the dice and adding in your stat's modifier most of the time. The stats in the basic moves are as follows:

- Take Down (any stat, but Smash is most likely)
- Seize Control (any stat, but Smash or Maneuver is most likely)
- Push (no stat)
- Serve and Protect (Protect)
- Use Environment (no stat)
- Defy Danger (any stat, but Maneuver slightly more likely)
- Aid/Interfere (Bond)
- Examine (Investigate)

Of course, just going from the list may be misleading; the thing you want to remember about stats and modifiers is this: In *Worlds in Peril*, there are going to be challenges presented in the form of enemies and opponents, puzzles, and other things and heroes approach and deal with these challenges differently. That's where the stats come in — they represent the different approaches to taking down and resolving these challenges.

So, at first glance it might look like Smash isn't really all that useful of a stat to put a high modifier in, since you can use any stat to Take Down an enemy, Seize Control, or Defy Danger, and Use Environment doesn't even require a roll. However, don't forget that while other stats *can* be used to do certain things, you always need to have fictional positioning established in order to actually *do* those things — it has to make sense in the game. It's going to be harder to justify doing things with certain stats; using Protect to Take Down an enemy is going to be more difficult than using Smash, because with Smash all you have to say is that you punch them in the face and, most of the time, that's a pretty viable option. Smash is probably the easiest stat to establish and justify using in the fiction because all it requires is the use of brute force. Conversely, you're probably going to have a really hard time justifying taking out mobs of enemies using the Protect stat, since there are very few times where enduring or protecting oneself or another is going to wipe out mobs of enemies.

The modifier you place next to a stat indicates how often you will succeed at resolving challenges in that way, but you still have to say what you're doing in the fiction to trigger a move.

I want Arrowhead to be really agile and quick, so I'll put my highest stat, +2, into Maneuver. I want him to be kind of charming and sociable too, so put the two +1s into Influence and maybe Investigate so he can track stuff down, do research and all that. He's more of a lone wolf kind of guy, a vigilante, so a -1 in Protect makes sense. The 0 can go into Smash.

# POWERS

Now for detailing what makes your superhero so super! What makes them unique, what can they do that others cannot? One of the most exciting things about *Worlds in Peril* is that it allows any range of powers you can think of.

Your hero can have multiple types of powers and the default assumption is that they do not even know just what they are capable of yet! Coming up with your powers begins with a broad and general description, understanding, and summary of what a hero can do and then gradually becomes more and more specific as you continue on. In your Powers Summary, you detail your hero's powers in very general terms (Shape-Shifting, Super Strength, and the like) and then, in your Powers Profile, you detail specific things they have learned to do with those powers and how hard they are to do for your character by setting up some boundaries between what is easy or difficult to do, and what is impossible.

Your powers summary is the answer to the question, "Can you character do that?"

## POWERS SUMMARY

Your hero's Power Summary is where you will want to write what your hero is capable of doing in broad terms. List absolutely everything you will want them to be able to do in the future. Starting out, they will not be able to do everything, but your Powers Summary is where you look to see if you have the justification to do something in the fiction or not. Super strength, control over all things metal, flying or enhanced reflexes, all that stuff. Try to be as broad as you can and speak to abilities rather than specific actions. Anything that goes beyond the abilities of a normal human being should go here. Here are some ideas of some of the powers your hero might have:

- Animal Mimicry, such as: gaining the strength of a bear, the flight of a peregrine falcon, the eyes of hawk, etc.
- Augmentation of existing super powers, such as: bestowal or boosting a superpower, mimicking or negating someone else's superpower, etc.
- Body manipulation of some kind, such as: phasing through objects and people, density manipulation, elasticity, enhanced senses, healing, strength, agility, durability, immortality, invulnerability, special types of vision (X-Ray, radar, sonar, etc.).
- Inventing, interfacing or talking with things other than people, such as: technology and machines, plants, insects, etc.
- Psychic abilities such as: telepathy, empathy, precognition, mind control or manipulation, possession. Psionic bolts, astral projection or telekinesis.
- Shapeshifting and changing physically into something like: an animal, another human, something monstrous or alien, etc.
- The manipulation, conversion or absorption of energy or forces such as: light, the elements, magnetism, mass, microwaves, molecules, probability, radiation, sound, time, gravity, sound, or luck.
- A special power related to movement, such as: super speed, teleportation, portals, time travel, dimensional travel, propulsion or flight.

If you are having trouble thinking of some specific things you want your hero to be able to do, try starting with the source of their powers and answering the following questions. It might be helpful in determining their powers — and who knows, maybe even their backstory!

- Source or theme of powers — Does your power have or use an energy source?
- Do you draw it out of yourself, manipulate your chi or use magic, spells or rituals?
- Do you have a mutation that changes and gives you power or are you inhuman by nature and from a different world, time or species?
- Do you use your mind or psychic force to power yourself and your abilities?
- Do you rely on technology, equipment or gadgets to do things any normal person cannot?

An important thing to note is that even if you want to create a hero that has no actual “super” powers in terms of heat vision, super strength or super speed and reflexes, you still use this section to detail what they can do above and beyond a normal human being. If a hero does not have super powers to enhance them or make them better than normal, they might use Advantages to give them the leg up they need or help them save the planet from imminent doom.

Powers are inherent abilities that cannot be taken away, damaged or destroyed. They may have certain limitations though, your hero might have a weakness or they might require storing up energy before being able to blast it out of them. Even with limitations though, the powers are a part of the hero and are always available to them.

Powers that are Advantages are abilities that allow the hero to be able to do certain things or have certain abilities but are not permanent and a part of them. Utility belts and arrows, suits of armor, gadgets and technology are all Advantages because they can be damaged, destroyed, or taken away. So anything that a hero can do with just their body alone and without anything else should go under the Powers Summary and anything they can do with the help of something else, like gadgets and technology, for example, should go under “Powers that are Advantages” immediately below in the Powers Summary.

Once you are satisfied with everything in your Powers Summary, it is time to move on to your Powers Profile, where you will detail what specific things your hero can actually do with those powers — or at least, what they can do so far. Remember that your Powers Summary represents anything and everything you have the capability of doing. It’s where you look if the EiC asks you, “Can you do that?”

Alright, so I want Arrowhead to still be useful and good at stuff of course, even though he doesn’t actually have actual “powers”. He can do stuff with trick arrows and maybe some gadgets. I want him to be at peak physical condition, so I’ll put “Olympic-level athletics” and I want him to be able to hit anything with pinpoint accuracy, so I’ll put down “Pinpoint Accuracy.”

EXAMPLE

## POWERS PROFILE

Your Powers Profile is the section where you detail what your hero can actually *do* with their powers and how easy it is for them to do it. For now, fill in one thing they can do in each category. What is really easy for them to do? You may want to include things about athletic feats like jumping across rooftops, or something about having amazing accuracy even — like hitting a target from 200 meters away as it may not all be about the flashy super powers. The things you write here are what they can do without you having to roll the dice to Push. While you can only fill in one thing for each category to start, you will be building your hero's Powers Profile as you play the game. Everything you write down should be specific actions and uses for your powers.

Once it's been established that you *can* do something, your Powers Profile is the answer to the question, "How hard is it for you to do that?"

- **Simple** — what can you do with ease and so most often use your powers to do?
- **Difficult** — what is something that you are capable of and often use your powers to do, but requires concentration and control?
- **Borderline** — what are some things that you have used your powers to do in the past, during times where you feared for your life or were pushed beyond your limit?
- **Possible** — what are some things that you could probably do, or at least haven't ruled out being able to do, in the future considering what you've already been able to do with your powers?
- **Impossible** — what are some things that you definitely would never be able to do, just beyond the limits of what you can do with your power no matter what?
- **Lost** — is there anything you used to be able to do, but no longer can? This would not be the default for every character, but could make for some interesting background if you want to add it to your character sheet.

This section, as well as the limitations section that comes afterward, still apply to heroes that do not actually have any special "super" powers. Whether their powers are inherent, a result of a mutation, or comes from technology and things they build, the Power Summary should detail the kinds of things they can do, and do often — whether they use solar beams or arrows, heat vision or a utility belt to do what they do. For exactly this purpose, there is a section on the character sheet for "Powers" and then "Powers that are Advantages."

I want Arrowhead to be able to use his arrows to do all kinds of stuff, I'll keep that open so I can do stuff as I want to and as it becomes necessary. Obviously, he can't do everything from the get-go, so let's start with some stealthy stuff:

**POWERS SUMMARY:** *Olympic-level athletics, pinpoint accuracy.*

**Powers that are Advantages:** quiver of trick arrows - something for everything.

**Simple:** bypass simple security or electronics.

**Difficult:** take out far away targets.

**Borderline:** take out a whole room (hit multiple targets at once) with a trick arrow.

**Possible:** use anything as a deadly projectile.

**Impossible:** hit someone from more than two blocks away.

When a hero wants to do something outside the range of things they have written in their Powers Summary, the Push move is triggered. Whether a hero uses inherent superpowers or uses Advantages to do what they do best, whenever they need to expand their repertoire or perform certain actions that are not yet listed on their Powers Profile, the Push move is the way to do it. In this way, you can break out of your character's wheel house and not be limited by what you start out listing on your Powers Profile.

The advantage to having powers already defined is that whenever the proper consideration is taken in the game world and fiction, your character will be able to do those things without having to Push for it — they've done it before and they know how to do it again. If you want to have your character branch out to try to do something they have not yet tried with their powers, they have to make the 'Push' or, possibly, the 'Burnout' move in the Special Moves section. Either move deal with possible consequences that could hold serious repercussions for the character trying to expand their powers. However, even when the character can do it and knows how (and so does not have to use the Push move to do it), that does not mean that everything is easy to do. Only simple things are require little justification in the fiction to pull off. Difficult, borderline or possible actions all require that the fiction reflects the appropriate level of time and difficulty going into doing certain actions, which might not always be so easy!

Your Powers Profile acts as the guideline to determine future actions in addition to what you can do and how difficult it is to do it. If you want to do something in the future, you will decide and gauge if that action is simple, difficult, borderline, possible or impossible for you to do. It is very important to have this rough outline and ceiling set for yourself to help gauge the difficulty of certain actions later on. The easiest way to envision the scale of difficulty is to choose one type of action and then just scale it upward. For example, a simple action could be "hit with enough force to knock out a normal man," the difficult one could be, "hit with enough force to punch through brick or concrete," the borderline could be "hit with enough force to punch through steel." This is helpful because it establishes some clear guidelines for strength, but is limiting if you have more than one power and plan on doing more than punch things inanimate objects the whole game. Spread the various types of actions you want to do across the difficulties. Think about what you want to be doing the most right out of the gate.

## WORKING WITH POWERS

As the EIC, there are a number of options and moves to make when a character needs to Defy Danger or to inject conflict into the story. Dealing out actual harm of some kind is just one tool in the toolbox, but it should be a tool you know how to use and is one you have the option of using when the time comes. If you aren't sure that's a possibility when looking over the heroes' powers then ask for clarification from the player. "Can you do that?" is a good question to ask to see if a character can do something based on what they wrote in their Powers Summary. "Have you done that before?" is a good question to ask to see if an action is on a hero's Powers Profile. "How hard is that for you to do?" is a good question to ask to determine the consequences of having to Push, or just to determine what they have to do in the fiction to justify pulling off the action and whether it maybe requires Defying Danger first to do so.

If you put down "Organic Steel for Skin" under your Powers Summary then you have the justification to maybe have bullets bounce off you, fists break on impact, or maybe even missiles crash into you without being too worse for wear. It being under your Powers Profile is the justification for being able to do something. What you put in your Powers Profile are the specific things that your character knows they can do, has experienced, and can reproduce the results of.

If you put down "Impervious to Bullets" in your Powers Profile under Simple, then that means that shrugging off bullets is second nature and not difficult to do. However, if a missile heads your way, and you want to see if you can absorb the impact of it like you would bullets, then you'd have to Push to see if you can. It's not on your Powers Profile yet, despite you having the justification to be able to try in the first place due to it being part of your Powers Summary with "Organic Steel for Skin."

Now, that doesn't mean that you'll be invincible if you decide to play a character like Superman — you will still want to have a concept of just how strong you are and just how much you can take. The EIC is going to ask you questions to help define your limitations as situations arise in play by throwing various types of opponents and challenges at you to overcome.

Whether you choose to put powers you can use to overcome challenges on your Powers Profile, or powers you can use to withstand what opponents come at you with is your call and will depend on the type of character you're playing along with what their powers are. In general, you will want to put down things that you see your character doing often in your Powers Profile first, as it's what they'll be doing often and what they're most accustomed to doing — whether it be blasting enemies with cosmic rays, traveling at the speed of sound, lifting objects five times their weight, or creating force fields to protect themselves and others from is totally up to you.

Keep in mind that the game always needs to have tension and danger, risk and reward, and the mechanics of the game support that with Conditions. While a Superman-type character won't take any Conditions that will have them deal with a bullet lodged in their gut, they still might take other Conditions from being shot. Getting shot by a loved one could Impose the Condition "Shocked" or "Devastated", even "Drained" if it requires an expenditure of power or energy, or maybe it makes them "Distracted" and "Off-guard". It's the EIC's job to find ways to put the heroes in danger and a big part of that is knowing and understanding the heroes' powers, but,

as a player, it also means rolling with the situation and being willing to let your hero get hurt and be affected by the fiction. If the EIC does not know how to put your hero in danger on a regular basis then you may need to rethink your character concept or help your EIC out with finding ways to do so.

## FURTHER DEFINING AND LIMITING POWERS

If you want to have a lot of control over the fiction, to have the power to succeed on the rolls that are important to you, then you will want to take some limitations for your power so that you will have more Bonds to Burn when the time comes for those important rolls.

All powers have drawbacks and ways that they limit a hero. Sometimes, these limitations will make it harder for them to fight under certain conditions or to take down villains and opponents, but the most important limitation for a hero has to do with how it affects how easily they can interact with others. A hero's powers, or the life they lead, might mean:

Having to keep the rest of the world at arm's length, like superheroes with super strength, razor-sharp skin, or the ability to absorb another's energy.

Simply not having the time and energy to pursue a career, family, or a normal life; having to exercise for, and recover from, fights with villains all the time can take a toll!

Not being able to trust others with their secrets, or fearing for their lives if they do unburden themselves with them is burdensome.

Needing or being dependent on, or particularly vulnerable to, something like alcohol, the sun's radiation, the ocean's depths, or pieces of their home world is a common way to make an ultra-powerful character more manageable.

Take some time to detail limitations and drawbacks to the powers your character has and how it affects their life. The more powerful a character is, the more powers you can add to your Powers Profile. However, it means it will be more difficult for them to fit in, and the less Bonds they have so they won't have as many Bonds as others. Consult the table below to see the dynamic between the two. Being able to fit in and lead a relatively normal life means more Bonds, but less powers, while not being able to be a part of society means less Bonds, but more power.

<b>Ease of Fitting In (interacting with others):</b>	<b>Extra Bond Points Received</b>	<b>Extra Powers Defined (above and beyond the ones already written):</b>
Occasionally difficult	6	1 extra simple
Frequently difficult	5	1 extra simple, 1 extra difficult
Almost Impossible to form long-relationships	3	2 extra simple, 2 extra difficult
Actively ostracized by most	1	2 extra simple, 2 extra difficult, 1 extra borderline

The number of Bonds Points you get will also affect the last section in this chapter on hero creation but for now, check to see if you get to be able to add anything more to your Powers Profile. If you do, write them in now before moving on to choose your Origin book.

Looking at limitations and drawbacks for Arrowhead, he's really just a normal guy. He doesn't look different and his powers don't really ask all that much from him except for keeping in shape, and occasionally having to sacrifice family or work when out being a vigilante. He probably falls best in line with "occasionally difficult," which means I'll get an extra 6 Bonds and that I'll be able to succeed pretty often due to having lots of Bonds to Burn. I also get to write in an extra simple action.

**POWERS SUMMARY:** *Olympic-level athletics, pinpoint accuracy.*

**Powers that are Advantages:** quiver of trick arrows - something for everything.

**Simple:** bypass simple security or electronics, take out regular guys with ease using martial arts.

**Difficult:** take out far away targets.

**Borderline:** take out a whole room (hit multiple targets at once) with a trick arrow.

**Possible:** use anything as a deadly projectile.

**Impossible:** hit someone from more than two blocks away.

Keep your character's powers in mind as it will influence the fiction; how you narrate your character doing things and responding to situations (whether it triggers a move or not) will be different for each player depending on their character's personality and powers. Just remember that whenever you want to do something in the fiction, never look to your moves to try and decide what you can and cannot do. Use the guidelines you have set for your powers via the Powers Summary and Powers Profile to determine what is feasible or not in the fiction of the game world for your character. Simply keep narrating what your character does and says in the fiction. Your powers are justification for doing and triggering moves that other players and their characters may not be able to do. Sometimes what you say will trigger moves, sometimes they won't. Tell the table about how you use your powers, what they look like and how your character uses them to accomplish the things they want to do and listen for any moves being triggered.

The powers are purposefully broad — you can do anything with them but you are just better, as a hero and person, at doing certain things than others (and you show this by where you place your higher and lower modifiers next to each stat). Keep your powers broad and define them further and further as you play and use them. A hero's powers rarely ever remain static, and even when they do heroes are always using them in new and interesting ways.

Powers are fictional considerations and they affect how and what you narrate in regard to what your character does and how they do the things they do in the fiction. The powers your hero wields will also affect how the EIC narrates the fiction. If your hero has a healing factor or has skin that turns to steel, the EIC takes that into consideration and knows that it takes more to hurt you and so depicts that in the fiction. In order to make life exciting, dramatic and interesting, the EIC will throw appropriate challenges your way and narrate the fiction with proper respect to the powers a hero wields. Getting punched through three buildings and then getting up to dust yourself off with the EIC telling you to take a Minor Condition is not something that is likely to happen without certain fictional considerations, like having a healing power or a piece of tech to soak up kinetic force, being taken into account.

The main thing you're looking to do with your Powers Profile is to set boundaries for yourself. When you want to do something later in the game and it's not on your Powers Profile, you'll need to place it on the scale of Simple-Difficult-Borderline-Possible so you know what your character can and cannot do. The Impossible section is there to set a ceiling and to help define where your character cannot go.

More than that though, they have no real mechanical meaning beyond them showing you how easy or hard it is for your character to do something. However, just knowing the difficulty doesn't mean that you'll be able to do anything on your Powers Profile in the Simple, Difficult or Borderline categories though—you'll still need to justify doing it in the fiction, as always. What simple, difficult and borderline mean will certainly be different for each character, but something difficult will usually require concentration, time, energy, effort or preparation compared to something simple, which can probably be done without thought or too much effort—it might even be an automatic reaction. Borderline is for things that heroes can only do by pushing against the boundaries of what they've learned and know about their powers, whereas the possible category is for things that they've only done once or twice, or that is theoretically possible, judging from what they know of their powers—they are pushing themselves past what they know to be their limitations. To do it, do it—just remember to justify and honestly portray those varying levels of difficulty in the fiction.

If it's on your Powers Profile, all you need to do is justify it in the fiction. If it's not on your Powers Profile then you'll probably be triggering the Push move and the Push move has consequences built into it depending on how hard you're pushing. To do something really extreme, things will probably have to be pretty dire, because you could end up dead at the end of a Burnout.



## CHOOSE AN ORIGIN BOOK

When you choose an Origin for your character you are essentially choosing the reason they became a superhero. It may also happen to coincide with when the character got their powers but the Origin book is all about the motivation behind the character and why they do what they do. When reading the title of any Origin book, you'll want to start off by reading "I became a Superhero because of..." and finish the sentence with the title of the Origin book. Since an Origin book is meant to say something about your background and motivation, it also lists some ideas for possible foes or enemies you have already made that you can further detail. When you choose a single Origin book as your Origin you also get all the moves associated with that book. If you choose to combine two Origins to make your own book, you may do so but you may only have a total of three moves. This means you will have to choose which moves from which books you want to keep and which to discard. There are a number of Origins that represent most of the common tropes and archetypes in comic books in *Worlds in Peril*. All of the Origin books are an answer to the question "I became a superhero because of..." and the Origins are as follows:

*I became a Superhero because of...*

- **A Death in the Family**—the loss of someone close to you set you down a new path.
- **The Accident**—a mistake, freak accident or experiment turned you into something different and still influences you and the answers you seek.
- **I'm a Freak**—you were either born different or changed at some point in your life. You no longer fit in or identify with other humans.
- **I'm Back From the Dead**—you've been to the other side and came back not quite whole. How you got there and what you lost play a large part in your life.
- **The Beast Inside Me**—sometimes there's something inside of you that takes over and that has a mind of its own.
- **The Deal**—you gave up a part of yourself for favor and power and now your life revolves around it.
- **The Future**—you're from the future and have come back to the current timeline, how you got here and why are your reasons for being a hero.
- **The Wake-up Call**—you used to live a life of crime, were a villain, or were otherwise involved in the underworld of the city until you got your wakeup call. What it was and what you're working toward doing now as a hero has to do with your past.
- **My Alien Heritage**—you're either from another planet or a place on Earth that is secret, guarded or completely unknown to everyone else in the world. Where you come from and what you're on Earth to do is why you're a hero right now.
- **My Legacy**—you aren't the first and you might not be the last; the mantle was passed on to you by a friend, mentor, family member or by means of rite or ritual. Dealing with your legacy while also trying to be your own person is a big part of who you are as a hero.
- **My Mission**—you're a hero because you have to be; you've got a handler or someone else pulling the strings behind the scenes. Working within or pushing out of your boundaries is a big part of who you are.
- **What I Carry**—you've got something special on your person or in you that makes you a target and that informs your daily life and what kind of hero you can be.
- **What I Know**—you're privy to knowledge and power that also makes you beholden to another, or that awakens you to a whole new world of responsibility such that not being a hero could be disastrous for the world.

## A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

**Haunted:** In your past you were heavily influenced by the loss of a person that defines the core of why you became the hero you are today. You now live by a set of tenets and ideals that can be almost impossible to live by at times. Write down a sentence or two describing these ideals you live by. When you are pushed to your limit and are faced with a difficult decision, think of the person you lost. Have a conversation with them (what form or background it takes place in is up to you) and ignore the effects of all Conditions until you succeed at a single action.

**Evil Never Sleeps:** When you feel like you can't stop and go back to your normal, mundane life because of the weight of the burden you feel, Gather Intel instead of trying to Fit In and recover from one Condition after any trouble is resolved.

**Cracks in the Same Places:** When someone shares their own tragedy or deeply personal experience with you, or you share yours with them, you may increase your Bond with that person by one if you so choose and they may do the same.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Killer:** Is there a person or organization behind the death of your loved one? Who are they? What are their abilities? Are they still at large or have they been brought to justice?

**The Other Side of the Coin:** Is there someone out there that represents everything you fight against? Who are they? What are their abilities? Why do they do the things they do?

## THE ACCIDENT

**Changes:** You got your powers as a result of a mistake, freak accident or experiment on yourself you hadn't seen coming. It was a traumatic experience and your memories of it are confusing and disorienting. Your powers might change or your body itself might change over time as a result of the incident. Write down how the experiment changed you, how it still might change you in the future and who else was affected by it.

- *The accident changed me by...*
- *The future effects on my body is still unknown but what could happen is...*
- *An enemy I made because of the accident is...*

**Looking for Answers:** When you look for answers to the questions you have about that fateful day in order to learn more about what happened or your feelings about it, ask a question about it and roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, the EIC will give you a clear and detailed answer to your question and you take +1 forward to acting on the information. **On a 7-9**, the EIC will answer your question but the information may be confusing, alarming or suggest a hard choice.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Grudge:** Is there someone that was affected by the accident and who holds you accountable for it? What happened to them and what do they plan on doing about it?

**The Mastermind:** Is there someone who was pulling the strings behind the scenes the whole time? What was your first clue that not all was as it appeared to be?

## I'M A FREAK

**Feared:** People hate and fear that which they don't understand and, unfortunately for you, you fall into that category. People know you are different just by looking at you, write down what makes you noticeably different from others such that it produces a negative reaction most places you go.

- *I am feared and feel like I don't belong because...*
- *My everyday, mundane life consists of...*

**That's right, I'm a Monster:** When you use their fear and hatred of you to intimidate and get something you want from someone, use your differences to strike fear in their hearts and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you scare them and get what you want, if they have it. **On a 7-9**, you scare them and get what you want but there's fallout (that maybe justifies their fear of you), the EIC will tell you what it is.

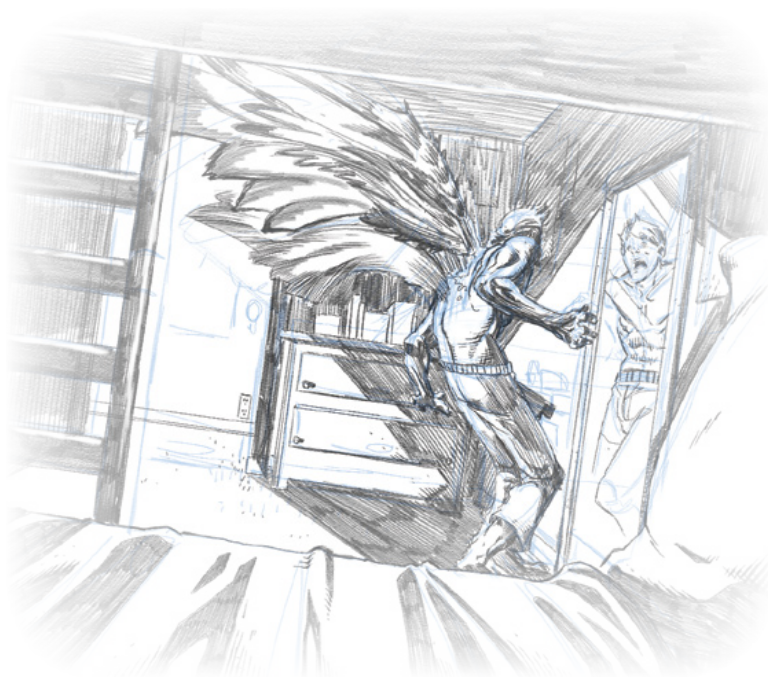
**Takes One to Know One:** When you engage in conversation with someone who is like you, you may ask them a question from the list below. If you want them to answer it truthfully, then they get to ask you a question as well in return. If they suspect you or catch you in a lie, you cannot use this move on them ever again.

- 👁 *How are you most vulnerable?*
- 👁 *What are your present intentions?*
- 👁 *What do you want me to know?*
- 👁 *What do you want from me?*
- 👁 *What secret pain do you carry with you?*

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Haters:** Is there a person, group or organization that hates and fears you and your kind? What is their agenda and how do you view and deal with them? What have been your experiences with them so far?

**The Obsessed:** Is there a person, group or organization that can't get enough of you? What do they think they can get from you and how will it better them?



## I'M BACK FROM THE DEAD

You died. You've been to the Other Side, and you didn't come back whole. Or maybe you never quite came back at all. You've always got at least one foot in the grave. Your special relationship with Death gives you insights and capabilities beyond those of normal women and men but when you came back you left a part of yourself behind. It could be something like a memory or a hole in your mind you crave to fill. It could be an emotion or a piece of what you think made you human. It could be that something you had or used to strive for that is now unattainable.

► *I lost... after coming back from the other side so I to cope with it. If I can't cope with it, I lose control of myself by...*

**Been There, Done That:** Whenever you head straight into danger without hedging your bets and end up having to make the Last Chance move as a result, roll 3d6 instead of 2d6 and discard the lowest die result.

**From Beyond The Grave:** Whenever your loss hinders or prevents you from accomplishing a task that brings you closer to getting back what you lost, cope with it right away. If you cannot, roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, you control the manner in which you lose control, say what happens. **On a 7-9**, you control the manner in which you lose control but the EiC will give you a complication to deal with as a result of it.

**Seeing a ghost:** Whenever you use your experience with death and the beyond to learn more about or intimidate someone for the first time, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, ask 1. **On a 7-9**, ask 1, but you must tell them your answer to the question first to make them tell you theirs.

☞ *What is your greatest fear?*

☞ *What is your greatest regret?*

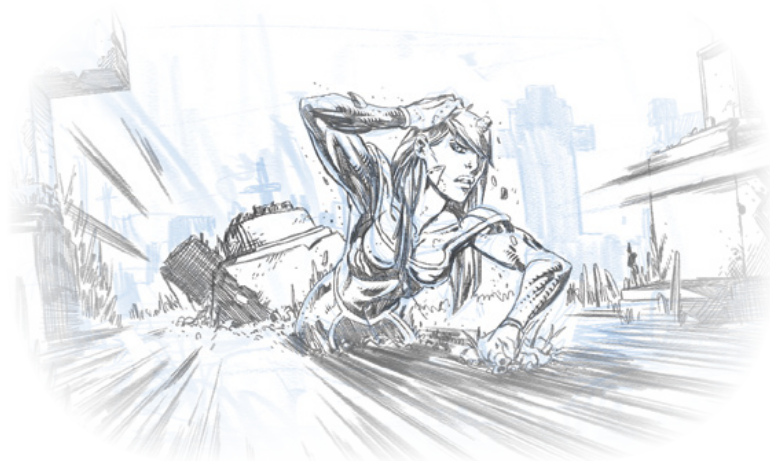
☞ *What is your weakness?*

☞ *What is a secret you would never tell anyone else?*

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Believer:** Someone out there knows that you've cheated Death, and it has shaken them. They need to restore the natural order—an order that doesn't include a thing like you.

**The Desperate One:** Someone wants you to help them reach beyond life and death to get something from the other side. They can't do it themselves—Death's a one-way trip for everyone else, after all—but you might just be the Orpheus they need to send into Hell. And they'll do anything to you, and to those you care about, to get you to cooperate.



## THE BEAST INSIDE ME

You have a beast living inside of you that takes over whenever an emotional state is triggered. Define what triggers your beast taking over and how you change when it does. Your beast also has goals that do not match your own and when your beast is unleashed, they pursue those goals until the conditions or state that unleashed your beast are done away with.

- *My beast takes over when...*
- *The goals or instincts of my beast are to...*

**I Am Not a Monster:** Whenever you struggle to prevent the beast from taking over, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you wrest control away from the beast and your fate is in your own hands. **On a 7-9**, you gain control, but only after sating the beast by acting on or advancing one of its goals in some way.

**Soft on the Inside:** When you open up and share a secret about your past about your beast and the burden it is in order to ask for help and the listener is receptive, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one:

- *Remove a Condition (from yourself or the listener).*
- *Take +1 forward to helping yourself.*
- *The listener takes +1 forward to helping you.*

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Reflection:** Is there one like you that has completely given in to their beast? Who are they? How close were you? Do they hunt you? Do you hunt them? Are you scared of becoming like them?

**The Wronged:** Is there someone or some organization that thinks you don't deserve to live? Who are they? How powerful are they? Why do they want to kill you? Do you deserve it?

## THE DEAL

**Deal with the Devil:** You traded something extremely important away to someone who requires something from you for your powers.

- *I traded... for...*
- *I can only get it back by...*

**Need More, Give More:** You can push your powers harder by giving up more. Explain what you are sacrificing and how in order to do something you haven't done yet with your powers. How much you have to give up depends on if it's Simple, Difficult or Borderline to do; the more powerful or difficult to do, the more you have to give up. Proposition the EIC.

**Confession:** Confide in someone by confessing your sins to someone. Increase a Bond with them by 1, but know that the knowledge you are imparting to them will put them in harm's way. When you Burn this Bond double its effects.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Benefactor:** Do you now fight against the one who gave you power? How powerful are they? Do they have minions? What do they want? Are you scared you might end up like them?

**The Demon Hunter:** Is there a person or organization out there that seeks to kill people like you? Who are they? Why do they hunt you? Are they reasonable? Do you hope they succeed?

## THE FUTURE

You're back from the future, but why? What does the future you come from look like and how was it that you were able to come back?

- *I came back from the future to...*
- *The future I come from is...*

**Grim Portents:** When you tell someone what the future is like take 1 Hold. When you see something that reminds you of events in the future that you've already spoken about, spend your Hold to take +1 forward to either resisting or bringing about said future events.

**Call It:** Once per session you may claim an event or item to be of relevance to the future. State what that element foreshadows about the future and the EIC will do their best to incorporate your foreshadowing into the game, at a point of their choosing. When it does come up, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose one. **On a 7-9**, choose one, but predicting and affecting the future has consequences, the EIC will tell you what they are at a time of their choosing.

- *Impose -2 on another.*
- *Burn a Bond for free on a relevant action*
- *Increase a Bond with someone you shared your foreshadowing with.*

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Terminator:** Is there someone that followed you back in time to try and stop you? How much do they know about you and what is their mission?

**The Successor:** Is there someone who has everything to gain in the future and knows it? What is it they stand to gain? How did they learn of their future and how far will they go to protect the vision of the future they believe to be real?

## THE WAKE-UP CALL

**Not That Person Anymore:** You used to operate in a world that any do-gooder would not care to be associated with. State what your life was like and what turned you around.

- *I was previously involved in...*
- *I changed my ways because...*

**Courage Under Fire:** When you receive hostility in return for trying to genuinely do what you think is right, and you mitigate it without the use of force, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, both. **On a 7-9**, choose one.

- *You sway those that witness your heroism, the EIC will offer you a chance to write in or increase a Bond.*
- *You receive aid, the EIC will tell you in what form it arrives.*

**Double Take:** When you try to gain someone's trust, you may choose to Burn a Bond with a teammate and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you gain their trust and confidence, you may write a Bond in with the new person. **On a 7-9**, they still have suspicions or doubt and will require assurances at some time or another, the EIC will tell you when.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Owed:** Is there a person or organization from your criminal past that feels you owe them something? Who are they? What do you owe them? How powerful are they? What do they know about you?

**The Betrayed:** Did you have a partner in your criminal days? Do they feel you betrayed them? Do you feel you betrayed them? Who are they? What are their abilities? Are they still at large?

## MY ALIEN HERITAGE

**One of a Kind:** You are different from the people of Earth, answer the questions to set some guidelines about how different you are from humans. Whenever you get yourself into trouble owing to your differences with normal people (whether it be personality, appearance, genetic or base instincts), you may recover from one Condition when you consult a team member about the difficulties and differences you experienced.

- 👉 *Do you thrive in an environment that a human cannot survive in?*
- 👉 *Do you dream?*
- 👉 *What is your purpose?*
- 👉 *What do you need in order to survive?*

Take a moment to draw or write down what you look like on your character sheet.

**Alien Mind:** Whenever someone tries to invade your mind or harm you mentally, roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, you push them out and their attempted invasion disorients them.

**On a 7-9**, choose one; you push them out and:

- *You Impose any Condition on the invader you wish, but you take the same severity as well.*
- *You glean something useful from them, but they learn something personal about you as well.*

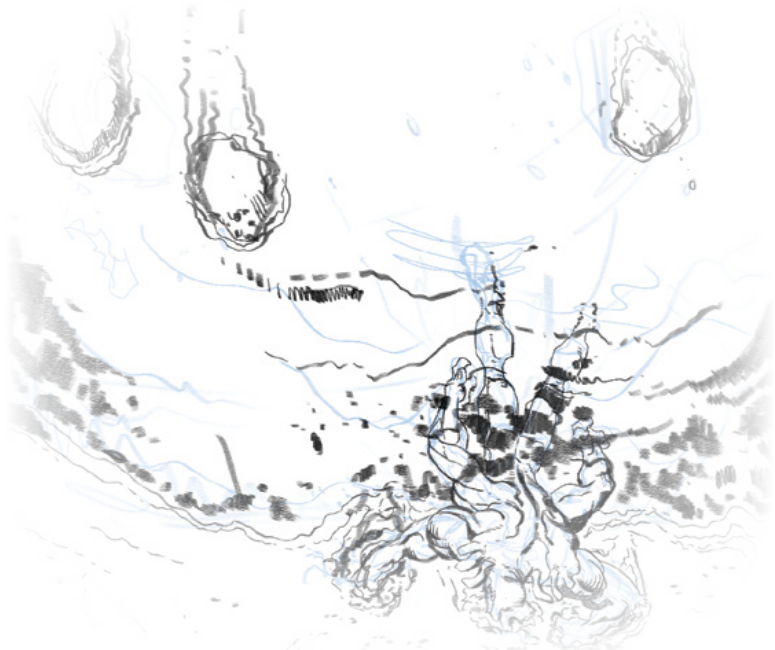
**Weight of the World:** Whenever you use your alien heritage or appearance to influence someone who is not familiar with you, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, Hold 2. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to:

- *Use your words or presence to make someone hesitate and listen.*
- *Unite a group in a common action.*

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Xenophobe:** Is there a person or organization that feels you or your people should stay out of human affairs and off the planet? Who are they? How powerful are they? Why do they hate you? Do your people deserve to be feared?

**The Purist:** Is there someone from your home that doesn't think you should be associating with the people of Earth? Who are they? What are their abilities? What do they have against Earth?



## MY LEGACY

You're not the first hero to use this name. Perhaps you're the inheritor of a sacred cause, or the best available candidate to receive a powerful artifact after the previous owner died. Or maybe you're the previous heroine's sidekick, ready to bust out on her own now that the old gal is ready to retire the cape. No matter the story, one thing remains true: your name, your powers, your mission...they come with a history. Take a Bond with "The Past" and define what your history and legacy is and what symbol that past represents. You may spend time establishing and fleshing the Bond out if you so choose but your Bond with "The Past" may never go above 4, which is what it starts out at, and will lower every time you use the move "Like No Other". Since it's a public persona, the Bond can also be affected by what you do and what takes place in the fiction.

- *I took up the mantle of...*
- *Because they...*

**Roots Run Deep:** Whenever a person, place or thing comes up in play for the first time and it feels familiar to you, tell the EIC the connection you think it has to your legacy and roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, the EIC will tell you something useful about the subject, and may ask for more detail about how you learned of said connection. **On a 7-9**, the EIC will tell you something interesting about the subject, it's on you to make it useful. The EIC may ask for more detail about it and what role you think it plays in your past.

**Sins of the Father:** Whenever you face a foe or challenge your predecessor had to deal with before, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, Hold 2. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to recount something from your past or predecessors in order to:

- *Take away an Advantage or find a weak point.*
- *Recover from a Minor or Moderate Condition.*
- *Take +1 forward.*

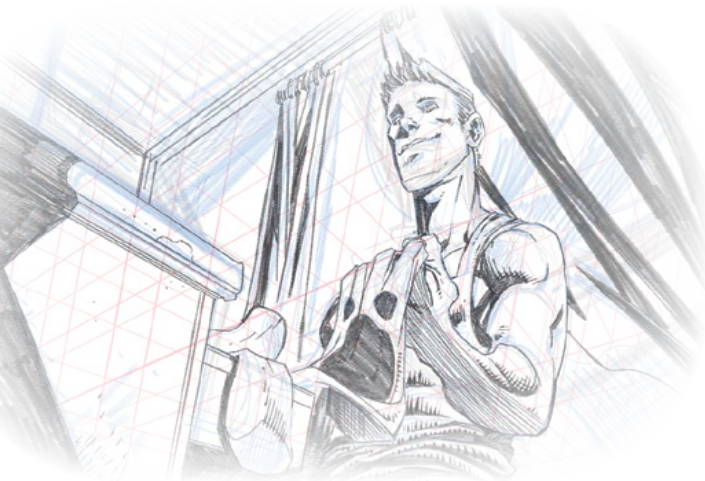
**Like No Other:** When you do something to distinguish yourself from your predecessor that no one saw coming, say what you do and how it's different. Then, choose one:

- *Gain the benefit of surprise, throw them off guard, or draw attention to yourself to take +2 forward*
- *Burn a Bond with the past to place 2 Bond Points elsewhere*
- *Burn a Bond with the past in order to initiate an immediate effect from the Dead for Now move to retcon your character, and be born anew.*

### SUGGESTED FOES

**Dark Legacy:** Heroes aren't the only ones to inherit their powers from those who came before. An old enemy resurfaces with an upgrade and a new agenda. And you're the number one hero on his blacklist.

**The Pretender:** Someone else was in line to be the next hero, and it wasn't you. Far as they're concerned, you stole their birthright, and they aim to get it back.



## MY MISSION

**Directive:** Write down at least one mission directive assigned to you along with who or what is doing the directing (or don't and leave it open) and answer the following:

- *My current mission directive is...*
- *If I try to disobey my directive...*
- *The agency I believe to be behind the directive is...*
- *I can get out from under them by...*

**Benefactor:** When you invoke the agency setting your directives in order to gain access to a specific piece of information, item or location, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you gain both access and authority. **On a 7-9**, you gain a degree of access, but there is an obstacle that presents itself before you can acquire your target, the EIC will tell you what it is.

**Rage Against the Machine:** When you go against your directive and lie, misdirect or otherwise cover up your indiscretions, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you cover it up and are believed or deflect attention for now. If you risked going against your directive to help someone else, you may raise your Bond with them by 1. **On a 7-9**, you cover it up, but have to confide in or end up beholden to someone you don't know you can trust in order to do so. Say who it is, and write a Bond in with them at zero.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Rival:** Do you have a rival from inside your organization or from another organization? Why do they hate you? Do you hate them back? How far will they go to make you look bad? How powerful are they?

**The Defector:** Is there someone who used to be part of your organization that has defected? Who are they? Were you close to them? Why did they defect? Do you worry that they were right?

## WHAT I CARRY

**Wanted:** Whatever you've got, everybody else wants it. Whether you did it to yourself or had it done to you, whatever gave you your powers is something that can, or at least could be theoretically, replicated again. There are a number of agencies, organizations or people after you so they can do just that.

- *The thing I've got that everybody else wants is...*
- *To the best of my knowledge, the people that want it are...*

**Evade, Outwit, Outmaneuver:** Whenever you are hunted, or are cornered with no way out and are alone, describe how you evade capture. On 10+, you slip out of their clutches, say how. **On a 7-9**, you do it but leave some sort of clue or connection that puts you or someone close to you in danger. Tell the EIC what you leave behind.

**Don't Kid a Kidder:** Whenever you think someone is trying to pull something over on you say how you judge their honesty and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, The EIC will tell you if you are right. If you are, you see through their deception; if you aren't, you're slick enough that there is no fallout. On 7-9, the EIC will tell you if you're right. However, if you're right, they know you know; if you are wrong, there is fallout; the EIC will tell you what it is.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Hunter:** Is there a specific person or organization hunting you? Do they work for themselves or have they been hired by someone else? Who are they? How powerful are they? What do they know about you?

**The Twin:** Is there another with your abilities? Who are they? Do you know them? Do they know you well?

## WHAT I KNOW

**A Dedicated Life:** Through years of study and dedication you have acquired secret knowledge known only to a few. This knowledge grants you power but is also your responsibility as it means you are one of the few that can protect and guard the world against a specific threat known to you only through your knowledge. What do you know? How did you learn it? Who else knows and what is the threat you guard against?

- *The powers my knowledge grants me are...*
- *The burden of my powers is to guard against...*

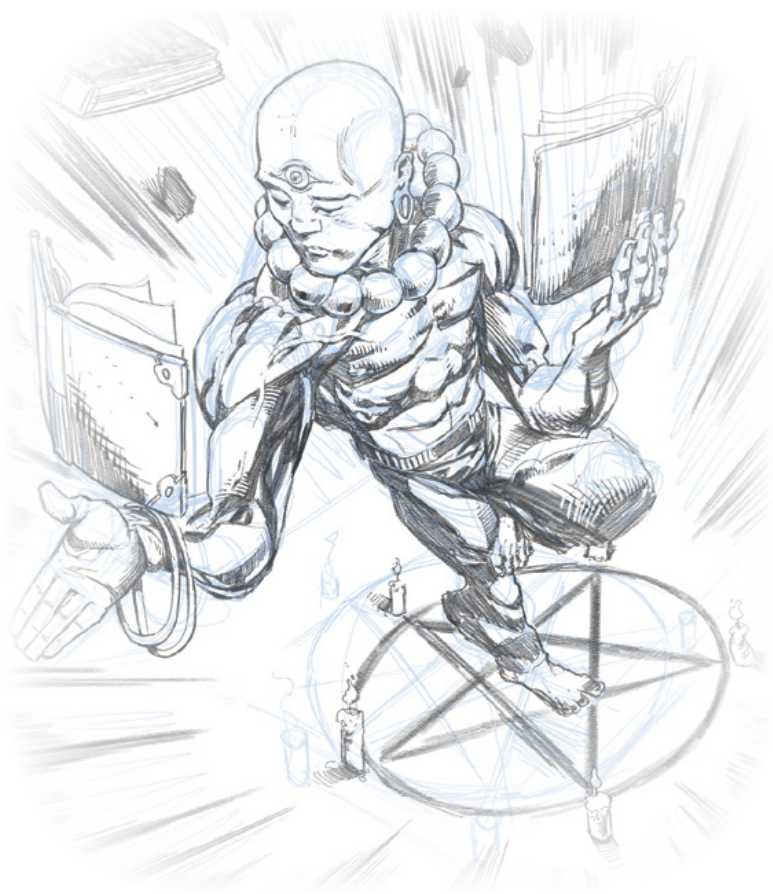
**Expert in the Field:** When you first encounter an important creature, location, or item (your call) tied to your secret knowledge, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, tell the group what it is, the EIC will tell you something interesting and relevant about it. **On a 7-9**, the EIC will tell you something interesting about it, but it's up to you to make it relevant.

**Do, Teach:** When you impart your knowledge to another character, play out a scene of you teaching or training a specific technique to them. The next time they recall what you taught them and put it into practice for the first time, they may turn a 6- result into a 7-9.

### SUGGESTED FOES

**The Adversary:** Are the threats you guard against living (or undead) beings? Do they have shape and form? Can they be killed? Do they have an avatar? How powerful are they?

**The Fallen:** Is there one who used to possess your knowledge and position but has now fallen from grace? Who are they? How did they fall? Do they hate you? Do they want their position back?



## CHOOSE A DRIVE BOOK



The Drive book you choose shows your character's goals and driving force for where they are going and why they do what they do. When reading the title of any Drive book, you'll want to start off by reading "It is my goal and drive to..." and finish the sentence with the title of the Drive book. Advancement in the game is handled mostly by means of opening up new Drive books. Every Drive book has requirements built into it that must be met in order for that Drive book to be opened. Each move inside the book also has a requirement that must be fulfilled before it becomes available for use by the player. All requirements are things that must be done or portrayed by the character in the fiction. Once all the requirements are met, the Drive is opened and a player can start working towards the moves within the book itself. The current Drive book you're working toward is the answer to the question, "It is my goal and drive to..." and the Drives you can work toward in *Worlds in Peril* are as follows:

*It is my goal and drive to...*

**Adapt to a Changing World**—you have trouble adapting to a more modern age and probably prefer the good old days.

**Become an Icon**—you want to make your name synonymous with the city you live in.

**Create**—you want to make stuff that changes the world and that helps you change it.

**Die Trying**—you’ve got a vice that is slowly killing you but that also might make you a useful agent of change at times.

**Do What Others Cannot**—you’re willing to be more aggressive and let yourself loose on your enemies.

**Inspire**—you want others to look to you as a source of hope and as a role model.

**Figure Out Who I am**—you have no idea who you are and what you want anymore, but finding out is important to you.

**Keep the Past at Bay**—you’ve been through a lot and it’s left some scars and a past that comes back to haunt you.

**Lead**—you want to be in the front leading the charge and making others be all they can be.

**Observe and Learn**—you have a source of inspiration and a role model, or just want to learn as much as you can about a person or world different from the one you’re used to.

**Protect**—you’ve had enough of people getting hurt and killed and your main concern is making sure people are safe, at any cost to yourself.

**Prove Myself**—you want to show others that you’re worth following and that you’re someone to rally behind and trust.

**Push the Boundaries of Science**—you want to change the world and push all preconceptions out the window to affect real change.

**Rebel**—you’ve come up against the status quo enough times to know it’s not only not worth defending, but that it needs changing—you’re willing to stand up, say so, and work towards changing it.

**Reconcile My Past**—you’ve got some scars and trauma from past events that you need to take a look at before you can move on with your life.

**Redeem Myself**—you’ve made mistakes and everyone knows you’ve done something really bad; now you’re working towards gaining back trust and fixing what was messed up.

**See Justice Done**—someone has done something wrong and the justice system has let them slip away; you’re the only one that can do anything about it—and you’re willing to do a whole lot.

**Start Anew**—you have found a new community and place to call home and you’re ready to fight to protect it.

**Understand**—you want to understand concepts and learn everything you can about your surroundings and what you encounter.

## ADAPT TO A CHANGING WORLD

Book available to open when: Your inability to cope with an aspect of modern society gets you into trouble.

**Another Day, Another Armageddon:** When things look dire, tell the group about a time when things were really bad and how you made it through (feel free to exaggerate) and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, consult the list below; you may raise your Bond with one person of your choosing by 1 and they can choose to do so as well. **On a 7-9**, consult the list.

- *If they stay silent, they may remove one Minor or Moderate Condition.*
- *If they laugh or snort or show disbelief they may remove one Critical Condition.*
- *If they get excited, pumped up or inspired, they may remove one of each Condition.*

Move available to open when: You prove to someone that doing something the old-fashioned way gets better or quicker results.

**Whiskey and Cigarettes:** When you try to deal with your injuries in the heat of battle, justify the removal of a Condition with unorthodox methods or materials and roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, remove the Condition. **On a 7-9**, remove the Condition but choose one:

- *If the Condition was Critical or Moderate then it is still a Minor Condition called "In Bad Shape" that could get worse with any strenuous movement.*
- *You do what you can but they'll have a wicked, noticeable scar or other cosmetic damage (ask the player what it looks like)*

Move available to open when: You either flashback to, or experience a time when you were unable, or failed, to help a comrade in the heat of battle.

## BECOME AN ICON

Book available to open when: Your name, and what you represent, becomes important and sparks discussion in the city you live in.

**Eye For Danger:** When your gut says you're in danger, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, ask 2 questions. **On a 7-9**, ask 1. The EiC will answer truthfully.

- *Where is the danger going to come from?*
- *Who is in the most danger?*
- *How long before the danger manifests? If the answer is "RIGHT NOW", then you've got just enough time to prepare an action.*

Move available to open when: You are the victim of an ambush or surprise and you establish it affects you on a personal level.

**I am the Law:** When you give a citizen of the city an order or ask a favor, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose one. **On a 7-9**, choose one, but they may lack enthusiasm, caution, or skill—the EiC will let you know. They:

- *Do what you say.*
- *Back away cautiously.*
- *Flee.*
- *Attack you.*

Move available to open when: You save the city from certain peril and the majority of people recognize your efforts.

## CREATE

Book available to open when: You build or repurpose a space to work in and acquire the three types of components your workspace needs to get started.

**Workspace:** Choose which of the following your workspace includes. Choose 3: portal to another dimension, biology lab, a junkyard of raw materials, hi-tech vehicles, weird electronics, machining tools, transmitters & receivers, a proving range, relics of the golden age, booby traps, hi-tech machinery and parts, cosmic artifacts, unknown relics or unknown technology.

When you go into your workspace and dedicate yourself to making a thing, or to getting to the bottom of something, decide what you're trying to make and tell the EIC. The EIC will tell you "sure, no problem, but..." and then 1 to 4 of the following:

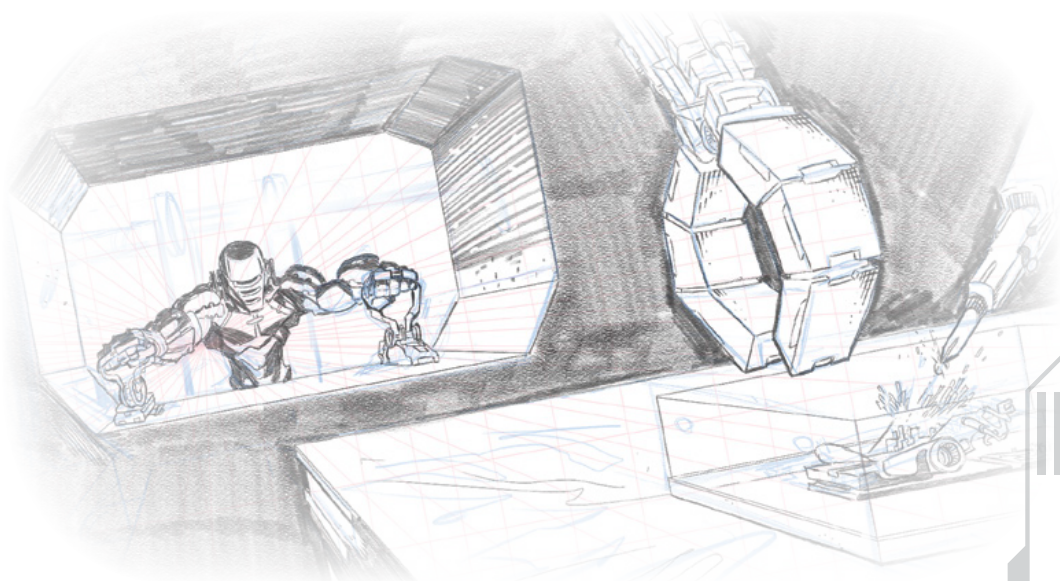
- *It's going to take hours/days/weeks/months of work;*
- *First you'll have to get/build/fix/figure out...;*
- *You're going to need someone to help you with it;*
- *The best you'll be able to do is an inferior version, weak and unreliable;*
- *It's going to mean exposing yourself (plus colleagues) to serious danger;*
- *You're going to have to add to your workspace first;*
- *It's going to take several/dozens/hundreds of tries;*
- *You're going to have to take something else apart to do it.*

The EIC might connect them all with "and," or might throw in a merciful "or." Once you've accomplished the necessities, you can go ahead and accomplish the thing itself. Work together with the EIC to come up with what it does and how it works.

Move available to open when: You acquire a component that seems innocuous to your character, but that foreshadows future danger or causes tension with someone you care about. Tell the EIC what you have in mind.

**Deep Pockets:** When you need something either relatively common or not too hi-tech (proposition the EIC), roll+Investigate. It has to be something small enough to be on your person. **On a 10+**, you happen to have just the thing, or close enough. **On a 7-9**, you happen to have something pretty close but there's a catch, the EIC will tell you what it is. **On a 6-**, you used to have just the thing, but it looks like an enemy stole it from you or perhaps you lost it somewhere, the EIC will tell you where you last saw it.

Move available to open when: The creation you value the most is taken from you.



## DIE TRYING

Book available to open when: You reveal and indulge in a serious, self-destructive vice. Write down what your self-destructive vice is.

**Reputation:** When you meet someone important (your call), roll+Influence. On a 7+, they've heard of you and you say what they've heard, the EIC will have them respond accordingly. **On a 10+**, take +1 forward on the next action that involves them as well. **On a 6-**, they've heard of you, but the EIC will decide what they've heard.

Move available to open when: Your fame or vice put all those close to you in danger because of your neglect of those around you and your indulgence in your vice.

**The In:** When you indulge in your self-destructive vice, there will be consequences and someone will probably get leverage over you, but for now, you may Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to:

- *Acquire an asset.*
- *Gain access to someone or some place.*
- *Get attention.*
- *Get leverage over someone.*
- *Take +1 forward.*

Move available to open when: You reveal the reason for your self-destructive nature and what it is you have to prove to someone you have a terrible relationship with.

## DO WHAT OTHERS CANNOT

Book available to open when: You hit rock bottom and compromise your morals.

**Not to be Trifled With:** When you try to intimidate someone by doing something scary or shocking, roll+Smash. **On a 10+**, choose 1. **On a 7-9**, choose one, but the EIC might have you Burn a Bond depending on your actions.

- *They spill their guts to you, ask them a question and they will answer truthfully.*
- *They live in terror of you, take +1 forward next time you make a move involving them.*
- *They carry out a single task you send them on, within reason.*

Move available to open when: Your actions get you in trouble with law enforcement, other superheroes, or both.

**Marked:** Whenever you come off of a 12+ result on an attack, turn to your next opponent, let them know what's coming and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one:

- *The enemy sees you in a new light and makes all possible efforts to avoid you for as long as they can.*
- *The enemy now sees you as the main threat.*
- *Take +1 forward against them.*

If they run they may tell others about what they saw you do and a reputation may begin to form.

Move available to open when: You bring up and seriously discuss the idea of using lethal force with another character you have a strong Bond with.

## INSPIRE

Book available to open when: Someone looks to you for hope and support and you give up something personal and important to be the voice of change.

**Read a Person:** When you read a person in a charged interaction, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. While you're interacting with them, spend 1 Hold to ask the EIC, or the player of the character, 1 question:

- 🔗 *Is your character telling the truth?*
- 🔗 *What's your character really feeling?*
- 🔗 *What does your character intend to do?*
- 🔗 *What does your character wish I'd do?*
- 🔗 *How could I get your character to...?*
- 🔗 *What does your character need right now?*

Move available to open when: You are betrayed by someone close to you and it changes how you look at people.

**Voice of Reason:** When you speak the truth to a mob, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to make the mob:

- *Carry out a single action according to your wishes, within reason.*
- *Unite and fight for you.*
- *Go quietly back to their lives.*

Move available to open when: You recall a time where someone was an inspiration to you and the words they said that helped shape an inspire you to become what you are.

**Often right:** When you give another advice, whether they ask for it or not, tell them what you honestly think the best course is. If they act on your advice, they take +1 to any rolls they make in the doing.

Move available to open when: Your advice is ignored and something bad happens as a result.



## FIGURE OUT WHO I AM

Book available to open when: You have a crisis of identity or have an experience that transforms you. Fill in the following blanks as they are revealed in play, blanks can be filled in multiple times or erased and rewritten when necessary.

- *Something I had no idea about the world I live in is...*
- *I am not comfortable with...*
- *I draw the line at...*
- *I am most afraid of becoming...*
- *I aspire to become...*
- *The values I care most about are...*
- *A flaw that is holding me back is...*

**Hero's Journey:** When you learn something new about yourself and fill in a blank in a moment that defines you, you may roll 3d6 and drop the lowest result on your next roll when you back up your new-found revelation with action.

Move available to open when: You make a drastic change in your life that shakes up either the relationships in your life and the place you live, or how you view the world and your approach to dealing with people and problems.

**Dare to be Different:** Whenever your perception of who you are doesn't jive with something being asked of you, and you care about what that person thinks of you, put a Bond on the line and tell them why you can't do what's being asked of you, and what you can do instead. If they are understanding and accepting, take +1 forward in the doing. If they are not, Burn a Bond with them. If you make up with them later and they respect you for who you are, increase your Bond with them by 2.

Move available to open when: You do something asked of you, even though it does not sit well with you and makes you want to change.

**Transformation:** When you are in need and hear rumors of a way to get help, special training or insight, tell the EiC what the rumors are and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose one. **On a 7-9**, choose one but there will be a price to pay upon completion, the EiC will tell you what it is. They offer you special training so that you can:

- *Resolve a special Condition or problem that is facing you.*
- *Glean the special insight or knowledge you seek.*
- *Add something to your Powers Summary, move one thing you can do in your Powers Profile one step easier (as long as it's not Impossible), move a power from Lost to where it originally was.*

Move available to open when: a failed undertaking leaves you broken and even more unsure of who you are.

## KEEP THE PAST AT BAY

Book available to open when: Elements of your past or backstory begin rearing their ugly head and disrupt your life for the worse.

**But He Deserved It:** Whenever another character is trying to talk or be civil with someone and you interrupt them with an attack, take +1 forward.

Move available to open when: Your love of violence and drive to fight makes an enemy of a friend.

**Checked Past:** When you encounter an enemy for the first time, you may detail the last time you saw them and the grudge between you. If you do, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose one and say how you know what you know. **On a 7-9**, choose one, and the EIC chooses one for them as well. The EIC will ask you how they know what they know.

- *You remember a weakness or Advantage they have.*
- *You remember the way or method they usually fight.*
- *You remember what they care about or their motivation.*

Move available to open when: Part of your everyday routine changes to looking for trouble, picking or fishing for fights.

## LEAD

Book available to open when: You find a cause to fight for. Write down your mission statement about what change you want to see realized in the world.

**Boy Scout:** Whenever you engage in reason or try to appeal to a villain, try to show them the error of their ways and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to ask the villain a question from the list or to point out a contradiction in their answer or logic; the villain must respond as long as you do not show them violence; spend an additional Hold to force them to hesitate or pause mid-action.

- 🦋 *What set you down this path?*
- 🦋 *What do you hope to accomplish with your plan?*
- 🦋 *How can you justify doing this?*
- 🦋 *What do you care about, besides yourself?*

Move available to open when: You encounter a villain you sympathize with and want to learn more about.

**Take Stock:** When you read a charged situation, roll+Investigate. On a 7+, you can ask the EIC questions. Whenever you act on one of the EIC's answers, take +1 forward. **On a 10+**, ask 2. **On a 7-9**, ask 1:

- 🦋 *Where's my best escape route / way in / way past?*
- 🦋 *Which enemy is most vulnerable to me?*
- 🦋 *Which enemy is the biggest threat?*
- 🦋 *What's my enemy's true position?*
- 🦋 *If I had to make a stand here, where would be best?*
- 🦋 *How can I gain the undivided attention of all those present?*

Move available to open when: You lead a group of people you feel responsible for on a mission to accomplish a specific goal.

## OBSERVE AND LEARN

Book available to open when: You become a part of at least two different worlds, with one of them being Earth, and are in a position to cast judgment on one or both for their failings. Take a Bond with Humanity; whenever you judge the merits and flaws of the human race, consult your Bond score. If an act shows you the merits of the human race, raise the Bond by 1. If a moment makes you doubt, question or showcases its flaws, lower the Bond by 1. Bond Points with Humanity cannot be spent and does not affect your Bond Threshold, but if the Bond is raised above 10, you may shrug off a single Condition when humanity is threatened for every point above 10 you have. If it drops below -5, take a permanent Moderate Condition where you take a -1 anytime you wish to protect or save a human or humanity. If it falls below -10 you must spend time away from human beings, retreat to your fortress of solitude, or go back to your people until you can be convinced to come back or until you witness something to renew your faith in humanity.

**Fortress of Solitude:** You have one. Tell the EIC where it is—it must be far away and hidden from civilization. Whoever remains in the fortress for a reasonable time (EIC's call) can rid themselves of one Condition for every question they ask (and you answer) about your past, alien heritage, outlook on humanity and life, or anything else that sets you apart from humanity (maximum 2).

Move available to open when: You establish your Fortress of Solitude—where it is, why you need it. Also, after at least one Bond is Burned because of your fortress.

**Role Model:** When you learn or are inspired by watching and learning about how someone or a group of people conduct themselves, write down one quality you wish to emulate. Once per session you may Burn a Bond for free when you strive to be better and emulate your role model.

Move available to open when: You find or choose a mentor and role model to look up to and learn from.

## PROTECT

Book available to open when: You establish that you grew up, are accepted or know a particular area or community of the city very well.

**Back of my Hand:** When you need to be somewhere, right now, in your city, say how you get there in an unorthodox way or via a route only known to you and roll+Maneuver. **On a 10+**, you get there just in time. **On a 7-9**, you can get there, but there's an obstacle to get past first, and it's wasting your precious time; the EIC will tell you what it is.

Move available to open when: You spend your time looking for, or resources making a unique mode or method of transportation in your city.

**Hold The Line!:** Whenever you draw a figurative line in the sand, roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. As long as you are keeping the enemy from advancing past your position, spend 1 Hold to:

- *Inflict a Minor Condition on an enemy as a toll for crossing the line; say how.*
- *Keep an enemy from advancing past; say how.*

Move available to open when: You are the only one left standing or that can help and protect innocents from being harmed.

**Foxhole:** Whenever another character shares something private about themselves with you in the heat of battle that makes you want to fight for and protect them, roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, reduce the severity of the next Condition you take, and increase a Bond with the person you shared a moment with. **On a 7-9**, increase a Bond with the person you shared a moment with.

Move available to open when: You recall a time you tried to protect someone important to you but failed.

## PROVE MYSELF

Book available to open when: Another character goes out on a limb for you, knowing all the while they'll suffer fallout because of it.

**We Will Hold:** When you face overwhelming odds, make an inspirational speech to motivate your team and lead the charge. Anyone that charges with you may shrug off the first Condition they take.

Move available to open when: You fight and win despite impossible odds.

**Leading Strike:** When you are the first to hit an enemy at the beginning of an encounter, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one.

- *The next person to attack the same target takes +1 forward.*
- *You take away an Advantage.*
- *You demand all of their attention so that they focus on you.*
- *You deal a Minor Condition.*

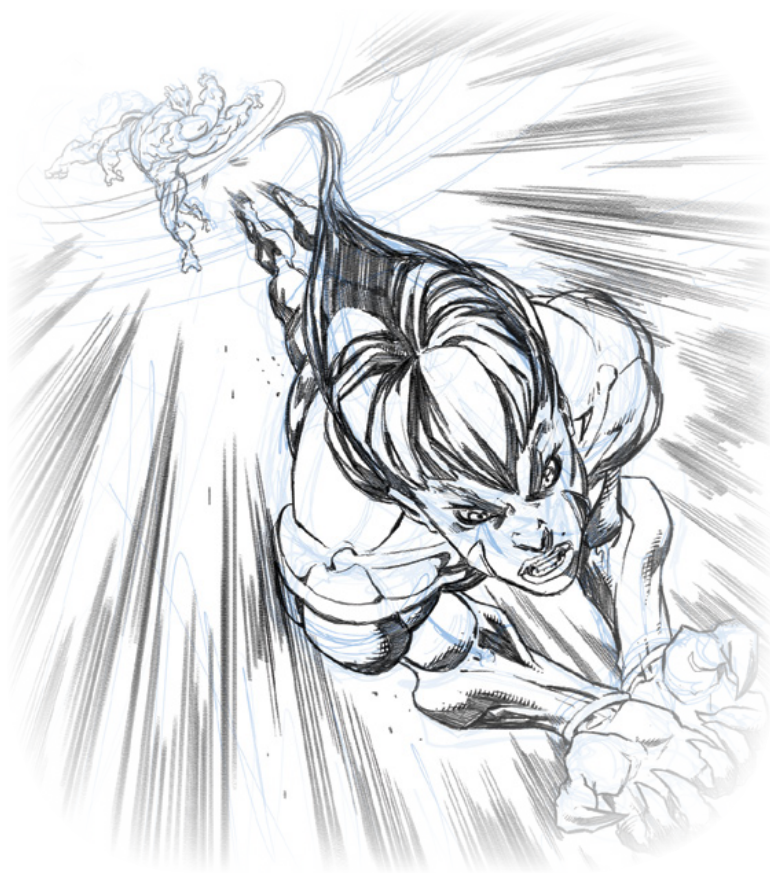
Move available to open when: You fall in battle as a result of protecting a teammate.

**Coordinate:** When your team needs to be organized and get somewhere in the heat of battle, roll+Maneuver. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Over the course of the fight, spend 1 Hold to have your team:

- *Make an advance on a position.*
- *Stand strong against an advance.*
- *Make an organized retreat.*

On a miss your orders put someone in danger.

Move available to open when: You stand up to and butt heads with another, more powerful or influential leader than yourself.



## PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF SCIENCE

Book available to open when: You begin work on a project to change the world. Discuss it with the EIC first and then write it down and take a Bond with Science. Bonds with science cannot be Burned and do not affect your Bond Threshold. For every Bond you Burn due to being lost in the project's creation, raise your Bond with Science by 2. When your Bond with Science exceeds all of your other Bonds combined, your machine or technology is completed.

**Not on My Watch:** Whenever someone suffers an injury and you throw together a crazy scheme of science to deal with it, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, you pull it off and your patient may remove one Condition. **On a 7-9**, there is a complication or obstacle that must be dealt with first in order for it to succeed and for a Condition to be removed, the EIC will tell you what it is.

Move available to open when: You speak of a time when, despite all your intelligence and wit, you felt powerless and could not help or save someone.

**Overload:** When you push an item you have at your disposal to go beyond its limits, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, choose one. **On a 7-9**, you can do it and may choose one, but there's something you need to do or get first, ask the EIC what it is.

- *You use it to apply a Condition to everyone around you (Minor, Moderate or Critical—you choose).*
- *You use it to apply a Condition to both your enemy and yourself. (Minor, Moderate or Critical—you choose).*
- *You use it to defy the laws of time, space or other sciency laws for enough time for you or someone you coach to perform a single action.*

Move available to open when: Your desire to learn about something endangers your physical or mental health or your identity.

## REBEL

Book available to open when: You realize or establish a belief or doctrine that goes against the social norms and popular opinion. Write down what your belief or doctrine is, how it differs from the norm and how it gets you into trouble.

**Dissent:** Whenever you go against or stand up to someone and are stubborn enough not to listen to anyone else's opinion, tell them what you think of them and take +1 forward on your next roll when you do something about it.

Move available to open when: Your views gets you and those associated with you in hot water with an organization that has a great deal of power and influence.

**Eye on the Door:** Name your escape route and roll+Maneuver. **On a 10+**, you're gone. **On a 7-9**, you can go or stay, but if you go it costs you: leave something behind, or take something with you, the EIC will tell you what. On a miss, you're caught vulnerable, half in and half out.

Move available to open when: You leave someone feeling betrayed or you recall a time when you were.

**I Know a Guy:** When you need something hard to find, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you know someone you can get it from. On a 7-9 you know a guy but...

- *Your relationship with them is not on good terms; explain why.*
- *You owe them a favor; explain what.*
- *Talking to them could put them in danger; explain how.*

This move can be used in lieu of, or in chain with, the Gather Intel move.

Move available to open when: When you compromise your morals or doctrine in order to help someone important to you.

## RECONCILE MY PAST

Book available to open when: Something happens that changes who you are and haunts you or you detail what already happened that haunts you.

**Coping Mechanism:** Whenever you berate or heckle your opponent to hide your true feelings, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, choose one. **On a 7-9**, the EIC chooses one.

- *They stumble, hesitate or flinch.*
- *They reveal something about their backstory.*
- *They reveal a portion of their diabolical plan.*
- *You earn their full attention and ire.*

Move available to open when: You give the table a glimpse of the vulnerability you cover up with violence, wise cracks, or both.

**Painful Catharsis:** When an enemy does something to you to trigger a memory in your past (your call), tell the table the memory and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to:

- *Ignore your Conditions for a single move.*
- *Take +1 forward.*

Move available to open when: You do something to place yourself or the group in danger by acting irrationally because of something that happened in your past.

## REDEEM MYSELF

Book available to open when: Your actions, or an outside force, destroys a Bond you hold dear and you blame yourself for it. What happened to your reputation? What do people think of you and what do you think of yourself? If you do not have a negative Bond associated with your reputation, be sure to write one in to have it represented on your sheet.

**A New Light:** When you prove yourself to someone who had doubts and thought poorly of you, or to a teammate you have a Bond score of 1 or less with, roll+Bond. **On a 10+**, strengthen your Bond with them by 2 and recover from an additional Condition when you make the Fit In move. **On a 7-9**, strengthen your Bond with them by 1.

Move available to open when: Your desire to prove yourself results in you taking a Critical Condition.

**Against the Current:** When you contradict the popular opinion with strong words and actions, say how you try to change that opinion and roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you win the majority who hear your words over and may raise a Bond score by 1, or write in a new one—the EIC will tell you which. **On a 7-9**, you change the opinion of a few, but doing so puts you in harm's way.

Move available to open when: You stumble, hesitate or flinch in the face of hatred or fierce opposition to a course of action that would be welcomed by any other hero.

## SEE JUSTICE DONE

Book available to open when: You take on or reveal the trauma that makes you believe that evil can only be truly dealt with by stepping outside the law.

**Hunter:** You have a guilty target that has escaped the lax justice system in place, detail who they are, what they did, and what the next step in your plan is to take them out (update your plan as you progress). You may not use the Fit In move until you've brought your target to justice (what that looks like is up to you), but when you do, you recover from any and all Conditions.

Move available to open when: You decide the ends justify the means and you cross the line by depriving someone of their due process.

**A Way to Live:** Whenever you forgo making the Fit In move and the chance to raise a Bond in favor of hunting your prey you may recover from one Condition if you feel you are closer to finding them by the end of your downtime. Recover from two Conditions if you take the law into your own hands while doing so and there are consequences for it.

Move available to open when: You Burn a Bond with a friend or teammate in order to see justice done instead.

## START ANEW

Book available to open when: You build, discover, or occupy a new location worth fighting for.

**Home Turf:** When you face an opponent in an environment that no one knows better than you, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, both. **On a 7-9**, choose 1:

- *Name one of your opponent's advantages that can't be used against you here, and say why.*
- *You ignore penalties from Conditions you suffer here, until either of you leave.*

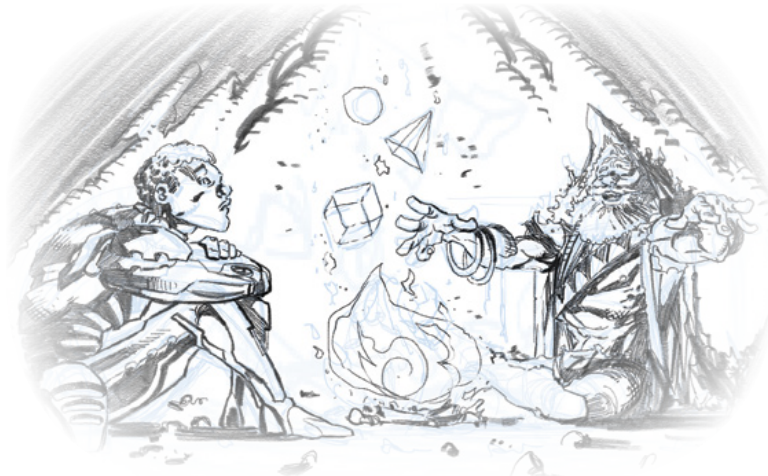
On a miss, neither, and your enemy has found a weakness that can be used against you!

Move available to open when: You defend a place worth fighting for and taste defeat.

**One of Us:** When you participate in daily life of your people, helping out and giving back, roll+Influence. **On a 10+**, you glean insight into a problem you are having, or find a safe place to hide out, plan, or recover (your choice). **On a 7-9**, however, also choose one:

- *They require a demonstration of your obedience to, and reverence for, the community's traditions.*
- *You put them in danger, after you receive their help.*

Move available to open when: The people accept you as one of their own and you feel and think of the place as your true home.



## UNDERSTAND

Book available to open when: Your greatest failure and what allowed you to get past it comes up in play.

**Technobabble:** When you explain a process or concept that deals with the sciences or an area of your expertise in such a way that it goes way over the heads' of those around you (it doesn't have to actually make sense), roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, you may use a piece of technology to do something it would normally have no business doing. **On a 7-9**, you do it, but it will also produce an unintended result (the EIC will tell you what).

- *If you can restate your technobabble again so that it is very simple (analogy recommended), take +1 forward on the roll.*

Move available to open when: Doing something to a piece of technology recklessly results in an entire city, at the very least, being put in danger.

**Hypothesize:** Whenever you handle or examine an interesting object (your call), roll+Investigate. On a hit, you can ask the EIC questions. **On a 10+**, ask 3. **On a 7-9**, ask 1:

- *Who handled this last before me?*
- *Who made this?*
- *What has been done most recently with this, or to this?*
- *How might I fix or break this?*
- *What was this made to do?*

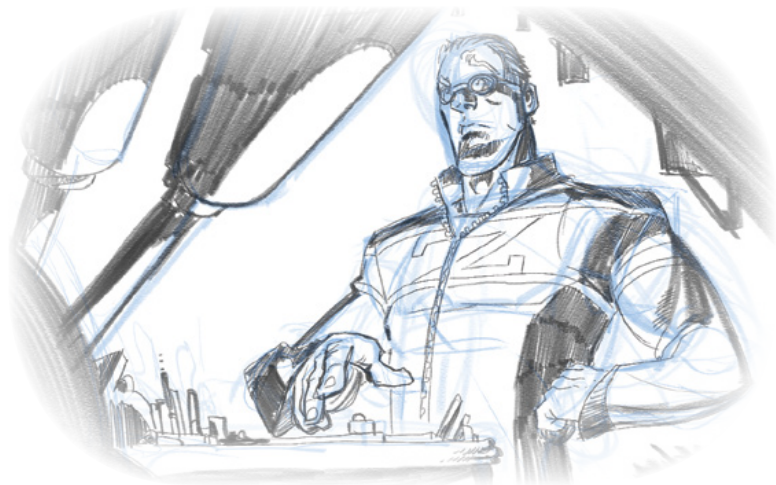
Move available to open when: You regain your sanity after you snap and go mad learning of something no regular human has the capacity to understand.

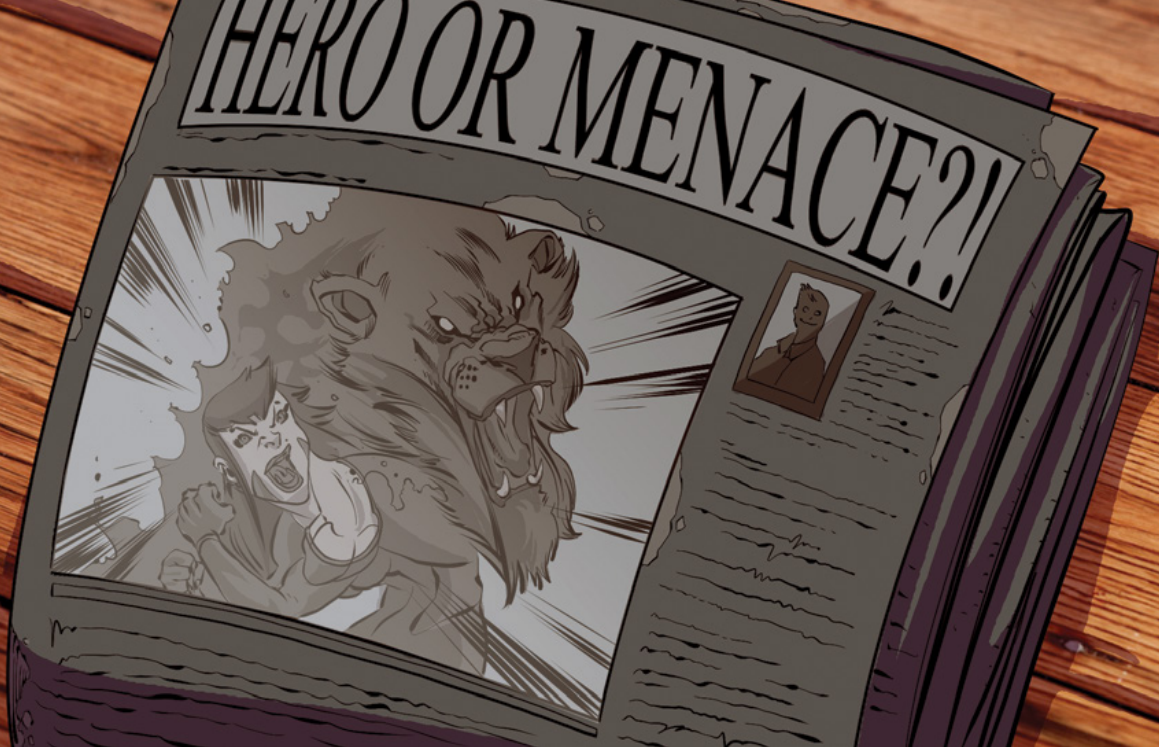
**Fascinating:** Whenever you pick an opponent apart or prattle on incessantly about your fascination with them (from a scientific point of view), roll+Investigate. On 10+, Hold 3.

**On a 7-9**, Hold 1. Spend 1 Hold to:

- *Make them stumble, hesitate or flinch.*
- *Redirect an attack meant for an ally to yourself.*
- *Have them give up a piece of their back story.*
- *Have them reveal a part of their diabolical plan.*

Move available to open when: Someone uses the same strategy on you and analyzes you and all your weaknesses to great effect.





## BONDS & BACKSTORY

Now that you have an idea of the team of superheroes that you will be playing with in the fiction, take the time to fill in the space for Bonds on your character sheet. This is also when you get to spend your Bond Points, so make sure you know how many you have to spend. Bonds represent who and what is important to your character, have a brief description to define the current state of the relationship, and have a value next to them to show the nature of the relationship.

On your character sheet there is an area you can use to fill in the number of Bonds you have with a person, the city, or law enforcement. Use this area to detail relationships with other player characters as well. In addition, you automatically take a Bond with “Law Enforcement” and “The City”, respectively. After that, don't forget to fill in any personal relationships your character has.

The number of Bonds you have is equal to the number of PCs playing at the time of character creation other than you. Then, consult the chart on page 89 and add the number of Bond Points you get depending on how well your character fits in. After adding those two numbers together, that number is both the number of Bonds you start with, and also the maximum number of Bonds you can have in total and is called your Bond Threshold. Mark how many Bonds you have total in the space for ‘Bond Threshold’ on your character sheet.

Distribute your Bonds between the player characters, any important NPCs, ‘The City’ and ‘Law Enforcement’. At least one Bond Point must be put into each player character (leaving only the number of Bonds you got depending on how your character fits in with those around them). Write a sentence to describe the relationship you have with them. If you have remaining Bond Points you may assign them anywhere you like.

Bonds are descriptions of the important relationships your character has with other characters or institutions in the game. First, write down your Bonds with the other PCs to explain why you work together, why you're a team and either the nature of your relationship with that character or how you think of them. Each Bond you have with another PC has a number next to it, which you will determine at character creation. Write a sentence to describe your bond or relationship with that person or agency in the space provided. After that, you can put any remaining Bonds into the city you live in, the law enforcement that operates within it, or you can create and put Bonds into any non-player characters that are important to your character.

Since your character has a Bond with the city you serve and protect in, which signifies how the people and local government perceive and think of you, and one with law enforcement, they are the easiest place to put Bonds if your character is more of a lone wolf. More often though, you'll want to put your Bond Points into new Bonds with non-player characters as well, to show who your character cares about in the fiction — their romantic interest, family, or friends. The higher the number is next to a character, the city or law enforcement, the more positive a relationship is. A Bond score of zero means the relationship is not yet defined and a negative Bond score means that relationship is toxic, dangerous or otherwise uncomfortable or unhealthy for your character.

## EXAMPLE

Alright, so the Origin that makes the most sense for Arrowhead is probably A Death in the Family. He gets stuck on an island and his father sacrifices himself after giving him a list of people to bring to justice. His father gives him the responsibility of having to undo the wrongs he did. When he sacrifices himself to save Arrowhead it changes who he is and forces him to grow up and become someone who thinks about more than just himself.

So his Drive is, of course, See Justice Done. He wants to hunt and bring all the people on his father's list to justice. Now that he's back in the city, it's time to start.

For my Bonds, I'm playing with 2 other players with heroes, so that's 2 more Bonds, but I have to put 1 into each of them anyway. I got 6 extra because of how normal I am and how easily I fit in though, so how should I distribute that? Well, 'The City' is what's more important to me right now – even more than my family, I want to carry out the mission my father gave me. So I'm going to put 3 points into it to make it fairly positive. People know who I am and welcome me back, thinking that I had died out on that island like my dad. As for the other 3, I'm going to put 2 into my ex-girlfriend who I always loved but left behind. We're starting over again now that I'm back, I hope. I'm not sure how that'll play out, but I'll come up with something when we start. The other one I'll put into my best friend back before I left. I'll be trying to regain my footing with them now that I'm back. So for my single-sentence description of each Bond I'll put down "The prodigal son returns" for The City. For my ex-girlfriend, I'll put down, "An initial honeymoon phase when I returned but now she's starting to get suspicious since I keep disappearing at night." For my best friend, I've got some ideas for future conflict in case I need to Burn some Bonds, so I'm going to put down, "Best bros before but something is not right between us these days...".





# IMPORTANT RULES FOR PLAYERS

This section is for going into detail and examining all the mechanics of the game you will be using and interacting with to tell the story with the other players and your EIC at the table. Not only that, but as you play more *Worlds in Peril* you will want to start implementing rules for advancement and showing change and progression; this chapter is going to start with rules for advancement, move into detailed explanations of the mechanics at work in the game and that you will use as a player, and then finish up with some advice for what you want to keep in mind while playing a game of *Worlds in Peril*.



While superheroes can largely stay the same, at least in terms of power level and abilities, over the span of comics many of them will not. In particular, heroes that are just starting out learn how to fight crime, deal with situations and just get better at what they do in general so the system has rules to reflect those kinds of changes. Getting stronger and tougher through experience and training is represented mechanically by being able to take more Conditions before getting taken down.

Other things, like secondary powers manifesting, new ways to use them or expansions of existing powers are things that often happen in comics, but usually have a reason for doing so. Therefore it is important that whenever a character decides to advance that it be plausible in the fiction and that it works at the table. Secondary mutations manifest, psychic blocks get destroyed, further exposure to radiation or cosmic rays happen, experimentation and gene manipulation comes into play, puberty or mid-life crisis transform characters — who knows what could trigger such drastic changes! When a player spends Achievements to advance, the advancements only take place when it follows from the fiction and there are explanations given for said advancements.



## ADVANCEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

When you chose your Drive book you probably noticed how there were requirements to “open” the book and requirements for when a move was “available to open.” A Drive Book is all about showing the current motivation of your hero, so you need to show your character working towards specific goals, as per the Drive book you choose for your hero. Once you open up a Drive book, which is usually not too difficult a thing to do, you can start working towards opening up moves within that Drive book. Each move has a specific requirement and once you fulfil that requirement in the fiction you have unlocked that move. At the same time, whenever you “unlock” the Drive book itself, or a move within it, you also earn an Achievement.

Advancing and changing your character in *Worlds in Peril* is all done via a currency called Achievements. Upon receiving and accumulating Achievements you can work towards, and eventually buy, certain things for your character. The things you can do with Achievements are as follows:

- 1) You can spend Achievements to raise the modifier on a stat as per the following chart. A stat modifier can never be raised above 3.

STAT MODIFIER	NUMBER OF ACHIEVEMENTS REQUIRED TO RAISE
-1 to 0	3
0 to 1	2
1 to 2	3
2 to 3	4

- 2) You can raise your Bond Threshold by 1 at any time by spending 2 Achievements, explaining how your Bond Threshold has changed and for what reason by justifying it in the fiction of the game world.
- 3) You can write in a new thing you can do on your Powers Profile by spending Achievements, explaining how your powers have changed and for what reason by justifying it in the fiction of the game world as per the following chart:

POWERS PROFILE	NUMBER OF ACHIEVEMENTS NEEDED TO ADD ONE THING TO YOUR POWERS PROFILE
Simple	2
Difficult	3
Borderline	4
Possible	5

- 4) You can raise the number of Critical Conditions you take before making the Last Chance move by 1, adding another step to your Condition track, by spending 3 Achievements and explaining why and what is happening to your character in the game world to justify this change. The regular Condition track is shown in the detailed rules section for Damage and Taking Conditions on page 127, but after this advancement a character's new Condition track would change to look like:

CIRITICAL CONDITIONS (MAX 5):
1) Debility (-1 to a stat)
2) -1 ongoing to all moves
3) -2 ongoing to all moves
4) -3 ongoing to all moves
5) Make the Last Chance move. (If you fail you may die)

- 5) You can remove one of the limitations you placed on your powers by spending 3 Achievements. This requires lowering your Bond threshold by 1 and showing how more power leads to your character having a harder time passing themselves off as normal and fitting in as well as justification in the fiction.

Not only do you show your character changing and working towards specific goals in the fiction in order to open up Drive books and unlock moves, but when you do you also get Achievements which you can use to advance your character even further should you so choose, so they're something you'll want to keep track of and be working towards getting.



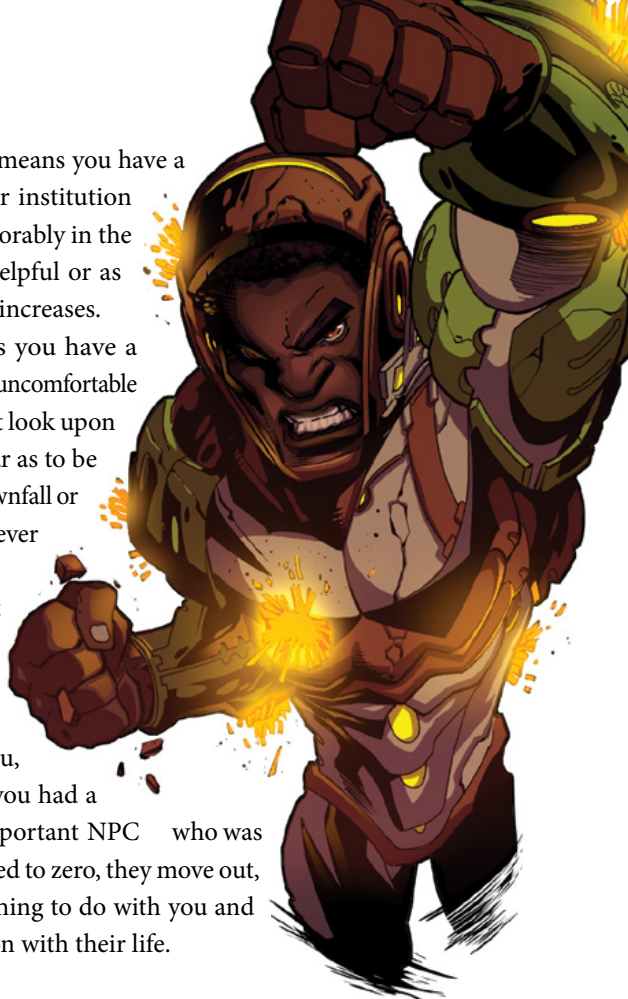
## DETAILED RULES FOR BONDS (AND BURNING THEM)

When you Burn a Bond you're guaranteeing you succeed on a roll and your character does what they set out to do. You can choose to Burn a Bond with any of the characters or institutions on your sheet, including the city or law enforcement, but the trade-off is that your Bond with them changes for the worse and you lower that Bond by 1. They are a great tool to seize opportunities for your character to shine and achieve the goals you want them to. Likewise, they're a great way to bring personal struggle into your character's life as you have to show the table how that Bond worsens — either right away when you Burn the Bond, or later when you have downtime.

If a Bond is Burned, the Bond Threshold does not go down. Instead, when a Bond is Burned the number of Bonds is lowered by one with whatever, or whomever, the Bond was Burned with and the new total reflects whether the Bond is now neutral, positive, or negative and a new description is written in to reflect that if need be.

Bonds with other player characters all start at one and can be Burned if the character so desires. When Bonds are Burned with other PCs, it is up to the players to talk about what either happens in that moment in the fiction, or to come up with a scene or panel later on to show the discord or the relationship weakening. The same goes for when PCs choose to strengthen Bonds with their fellow heroes, if anything changes on the character sheet, it should be reflected in the fiction and vice versa.

- If a Bond number is positive, it means you have a relationship with that person or institution in which they look upon you favorably in the fiction. They are friendly and helpful or as loyal and devout as the number increases.
- If a Bond is negative, it means you have a relationship with that person that is uncomfortable or dangerous to you. They do not look upon you favorably and could go so far as to be actually actively pursuing your downfall or making life difficult for you whenever the chance arises.
- If you have a zero Bond score, it means your relationship is either not yet defined, you are not on that person or institution's radar, they are too busy to deal with you, or are actively avoiding you. If you had a positive Bond score with an important NPC who was your lover and the Bond is reduced to zero, they move out, stop taking your calls, want nothing to do with you and ignore you, or just try to move on with their life.



While the total number of Bonds you can have are set when you create your character and is represented by your Bond Threshold, your Bonds will go up and down depending on the what happens in the fiction and whether you Burn Bonds or not. Some moves will tell you to take a Bond and some will tell you to Burn a Bond, and so reduce it by 1. Bonds do not just describe and define a relationship (though they do that as well), when you Burn a Bond you gain a temporary advantage — a burst of strength, the will to live, a hardened resolve. This is represented mechanically by guaranteeing success on a roll. If you Burn a Bond and roll a 6-, the roll is treated as a 7-9. If a 7-9 is rolled it is treated as a 10+, and if a 10+ is rolled it is treated as a 12+, even if very few moves have results for a 12+.

You can only Burn one Bond per action. Bonds can only be Burned before making a roll, and must be declared to the table and to the EIC. When you Burn a Bond you can either show the result of that Bond being Burned right away, if it makes sense in the fiction, or at a later time of your choosing once your character gains the opportunity to in the fiction. This is usually after the action dies down and you have some downtime to work with.

Some moves allow you to increase or write in new Bonds with other characters — if the Bond is with another player, then they can also choose whether they want to raise their Bond with you as well to reflect the relationship strengthening. It is not something they have to do though, and might not make sense depending on what is going on in the fiction. It might end up meaning that another player thinks the relationship

is stronger than it is, or that the nature of it is different from their perspective. Likewise, when Bonds are Burned with another player character it would probably be appropriate for the other player to lower their Bond by one as well, depending on the situation. If you are unsure in what way the relationship might be affected then wait until after you play out the scene to get an indication of how and why the relationship has changed, then write in the new Bond.

Bonds are not purely about guaranteeing success though, they are not just benefits — they have consequences associated with their use! Whenever you Burn Bonds, you need to justify and show the relationship worsening — either at that moment in the fiction or later on, when you have to frame and narrate your own scene after the action is over or during an opportune moment when you try and repair that Bond or form another in the fiction. Rather than looking at it like a penalty though, look at it like two benefits wrapped in one! Not only do you succeed at your action, but you get to talk about and showcase the personal life of your character as well.

Heroes are all the more compelling as characters when we are allowed a glimpse into their everyday lives to see the challenges they face. What responsibilities do they shirk in their own life to save the world? How much can Mary Jane put up with before she finally leaves Spider-Man? How many times will she be stood up, how many times will an enemy wanting to get at Spidey go after her and how will he make it up to her? Why can't Tony Stark hold down and commit to a serious relationship? He must be Burning Bonds all the time, he can count the number of personal friends he has on one hand!

Sometimes it may seem counter intuitive — if you Burn a Bond with the city in order to save the city, why the heck should it go down? Yet how many times have you read a comic book where everyday people get fed up or angry with heroes based on the damage they cause to the city or the dangers that follow them around? That said, the EIC has the power to bestow (or take away) Bonds as they see fit in the fiction. So if a camera crew catches your daring maneuver to save the old man trapped in the burning building, chances are you will get a Bond. The EIC might offer you a Bond with the person you save (if you want to bring them into your personal narrative) or they might give you the option of adding one to the city, if it made the news, hits social media, or otherwise influences the fiction.

So do not be shy about using Bonds — they will only enrich the story. A big part of being a hero is putting others in harm's way and trying to deal with the fallout of being a hero as it creeps in and takes over the time you would have spent with loved ones or on everyday responsibilities. What you do puts those closest to you in harm's way, being a public figure and perception of your actions will not always be presented in a favorable light. This is all part of superhero stories and you will gain and lose Bonds as well, depending on the fiction, and you never know what might happen to make you lose a Bond anyway so you might as well spend them, gain their benefits and tell your story!



## DETAILED RULES FOR DAMAGE AND TAKING CONDITIONS

When Imposing Conditions and trying to deal with a threat or enemy, you will usually end up making the Take Down move, which, in turn, can result in some confusion.

When Imposing a Condition on an enemy it can be easy to default into thinking that you will always be effective, especially when you roll dice to determine damage and severity as a player. Unfortunately for heroes, not all villains work the same way and are at the same level of difficulty. Enemies are diverse and dangerous and have their own powers and bag of tricks to deal with heroes and avoid harm. So when you make a move that should Impose a Condition via your choices, it does not always mean that you actually will, depending on what your character is doing in the fiction. For example, if a villain is made of fire and you shoot bolts of fire at it — even if you roll and the move says you Impose a Condition, the EIC has an idea and system in place for certain enemies that lets them know what is or what is not particularly effective against them. Fire with a fire elemental is at the very least going to reduce the severity of a Condition and probably even negate it.

It is up to you and the other players to be smart with enemies to figure out the best ways to take them down or pacify them. Sometimes the most effective move to take out enemies is to Impose Conditions that affect them mentally or socially by trying to talk them down, distract or enrage them. There are moves for finding out more information about them and some enemies are going to require trial and error tactics in order to finally take them out. Do not expect your character to always be effective — what might work on a common criminal might not work on a villainous mastermind!

Damage is represented mechanically in the game as Conditions, which you can think of as fictional considerations that have mechanical weight behind them. There are three different kinds of Conditions: **Minor**, which represent situations in the fiction where the character has to first deal with that Condition or face more dire consequences. **Moderate**, which make it harder for a character to perform certain actions, whether it is because of already sustained injuries or other factors at work in the fiction. Finally, there are **Critical** Conditions, which show serious harm being done to the character, making it harder for the character to succeed at anything at all and will eventually kill a player character.



**Minor Conditions** are used to show a hard choice being put to the character. The character must first deal with the Condition or the Condition could worsen. You either have to deal with it right now (whatever actions or moves that requires) or you can Defy Danger to try to ignore the Condition and do what you want to do. If the Condition still applies when you embark on a new course of action, you may have to Defy Danger again. The EIC will set the stakes for what happens if the Defy Danger move is unsuccessful and will clarify what danger the character is trying to defy. Failing the Defy Danger move might mean a Moderate or Critical Condition or something else entirely that suits the fiction, with or without the mechanical weight of a Condition to back it up.

**Moderate Conditions** impose -1 ongoing to certain actions until they are dealt with. If my character has the Moderate Condition “dislocated shoulder”, it would not hinder their ability to shoot laser beams from their eyes, so they would not have a penalty to do that. However, if they wanted to smash someone in the face, they would definitely be taking a -1 in the doing.

#### **Critical Conditions** (max 4):

- 1) -1 to a stat
- 2) -1 ongoing to all moves
- 3) -2 ongoing to all moves
- 4) Make the Last Chance move. (If you fail you may die)

Conditions are imposed when the EIC informs a player that their character has taken one or when characters perform moves that lead to one being Imposed. They are always a result of something happening in the fiction, like a villain blasting you into a skyscraper, a particularly nasty spat with your significant other, an alien death-ray sending out radiation from space — you get the idea. A Condition can represent anything negatively affecting a character, whether it is Minor, Moderate or Critical. The first Critical Condition sustained imposes a -1 to a certain stat, as fits the fiction. If another Critical Condition is sustained the PC takes -1 to a stat and -1 ongoing to all moves, if another is sustained, then they take -1 to all ongoing moves. If the move uses the stat that has a Critical Condition applied to it, then it would cumulate in a -2 penalty. If yet another Critical Condition is sustained then they take -2 to all ongoing moves, with a possible -3 if the move draws on the injured stat. Finally, if another Critical Condition is sustained, they must make the Last Chance move.

EXAMPLE CONDITIONS		
Minor:	Moderate:	Critical:
dazed	discombobulated	without hope
angry	seeing red	berserk
tired	exhausted	running on fumes
irradiated	diseased	deathly ill
sprained ankle	torn tendons	useless leg
dislocated shoulder	broken arm	shattered bones
frozen in place	heart broken	doomed
pinned down	temporarily blind	concussed
between a girder and a hard place	sealed off	sapped

This list is by no means the only Conditions that can be Imposed — it could be anything under the sun, especially since *Worlds in Peril* is a game about superheroes. Conditions can be anything from emotions like “angry”, or “cold and unfeeling” to physical states like “bruised, bloody and broken.” They are circumstances imposed on a character in the fiction that have a mechanical weight behind them when they are brought up and can be used against a character. As the EIC, when something happens in the fiction that should affect a character negatively in some way, all you need to do is come up with a word or two to represent that and decide what kind of Condition it should be. Many times a Condition could easily fall into any category, but Critical Conditions are used only for appropriate moments in the fiction, explained more in the EIC section on page 147.

Unfortunately, death, or at least the threat of death, is something that most heroes come face to face with at some point. A character that takes four Critical Conditions must then make the Last Chance move upon taking a fourth Critical Condition. Depending on the roll, they may end up making the Dead For Now move after that. If a character stabilizes, they stay at the three Critical Condition stage but are alive and unconscious. If they are able to recover as suits the fiction they regain consciousness and can take action. If they take another Critical Condition, they must make the Last Chance move again.

All Conditions taken by players will have descriptors attached to them just like Conditions dealt to the opposition by players. It is up to the EIC to let a player know when his character has sustained a Condition, the severity of it, and the descriptor attached, just as it is the player’s responsibility to do so for any Conditions they dish out.

All Conditions and any modifiers that come with them stack, to a maximum penalty of -3. Sometimes a Moderate Condition will stack with a Critical one if it comes up in play, whereas a Critical Condition will affect a character constantly, until it is dealt with.

## DETAILED RULES FOR HEALING AND RECOVERY

There are many ways to recover from injuries and other Conditions that might keep you out of a fight in your comic book universe. While the world you are playing in together and the fiction should be established and created together, most comic books share a similar suspension of disbelief when it comes to recovery from wounds. Often times, it only takes a transition panel or two before the character is up on their feet and ready to do battle. Other times, they may still be a bit bruised or broken but still be able to fight.

The most common way for characters to recover from their injuries is by making the Fit In move. Whenever the character has enough time to take off the cape and play out a couple of scenes showcasing their everyday life and make an effort to build, or perhaps rebuild, relationships after Burning Bonds with the people important to them, they get to recover from their injuries (granted, there is a chance of some interruptions and danger befalling heroes, but sometimes duty calls!).

There are also other moves from various playbooks that can facilitate healing. Conditions always last until they are dealt with in the fiction. If a character has the Moderate Condition “dislocated shoulder” and another player describes their character helping them out by popping the shoulder back into the socket, even if they do not have a move that treats an injury, it is reasonable to say that the Condition is resolved. Then again, depending on the situation, you might say that they need to have previous training — it all depends on what is going on in the fiction, how it is described and the tone and feel of the game you are all playing in together and aiming to create.

Another thing that you might wonder about is if a hero has a healing factor or access to healing facilities — there are no moves that allow for recovery or healing from Conditions during a battle except from certain Drives, and even then it must be justified in the fiction. There are no extra mechanical benefits to taking certain powers, including healing aside from the fictional positioning that comes with any ability. Your character will still be tough, hard to put down and be able to do things other heroes without a healing factor wouldn't be able to do but the danger still scales with you, as per the fiction. To get rid of Conditions, all you have to do is justify getting rid of them like any other hero, and a healing factor may be a reason to recover from a Condition, but it is not an excuse to have no tension or conflict in a story and to never be in any true danger. Moderate and Critical Conditions in particular will need more justification than simply stating that a hero's healing factor is at work — especially if you are in the heat of combat. Just like any other hero, the way you're going to recover from any serious Condition is in downtime with the Fit In move and you will still need to dedicate time in the fiction to dealing with any Condition before they can be removed. Not only will a character with a healing factor be able to take more damage, but they might also be able to justify getting rid of a certain Conditions or doing certain things in the fiction that other character's that don't have a healing factor won't be able to do, just like a character with super strength is going to have certain allowances in the fiction that others without such powers won't have.

# WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING?

When you play *Worlds in Peril* there is not a whole bunch you will need to worry about at any given time. Just like most superheroes, you will mostly be reacting to the things the EIC is telling you and having your character respond accordingly — you've got it pretty easy! Still, you will want to keep a few things in mind:

- 1) The EIC has orders to always throw something at you if you are not reacting to anything or you are not sure of what to do. It could be a bad guy, a new opponent, trouble in the city or even personal problems. Since the moments you have to pursue your own personal agenda for your character and their story may not come as often as you like, grasp onto these moments for dear life and take the initiative. If you need to take another character under your wing to unlock that Achievement, get that move you want or open up that Drive Book then use any downtime to work towards your goals. If you look to the EIC for something to happen, they have their own rules that tell them to throw something at you and to keep the story interesting!
- 2) Bonds are your friends, they will help you succeed at the things you want to do. Not only that, by Burning them you get to frame, act out or narrate things that go on in your character's personal life and backstory to make the game and story all the more rich and engrossing for you and everyone else.
- 3) If the EIC narrates something happening in the game you can be pretty sure it will only get worse if you do not react to it. Try to be quick on your feet — even doing something rash and reckless is probably going to be better than the consequences of hesitating or waiting to see what happens next — danger quickly leads to peril!
- 4) The things you do will not always fit neatly into the description of, and therefore will not always trigger, a move. Be clear with what your character is doing in the fiction so you know whether a move, if any, is triggered. If no move is triggered then your character still does what you narrate, so remember: to do something — DO IT. You may end up Imposing a Condition or helping out allies without even needing to pick up the dice (it could go the other way too, but such is the life of a superhero!).
- 5) The game is a conversation between you, the other players, and the EIC. Just like a conversation, only one person can be talking at once and when one person stops talking, another can start. The EIC is responsible for keeping the game flowing and will ask you and other characters what you are doing at certain times. If there is any lull in or outside of combat, seize the opportunity to pursue your character's agenda and goals you wrote down and want to work toward to unlock a new Drive book or moves within them.







## BEING THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Comics have been around for a long time and the stories they tell are incredibly diverse. This book focuses mainly on running a game set in a modern-day Marvel or DC comics universe, especially geared towards Marvel (but we try to get our hands on as much good reading material as possible from various sources). The setting is the same Earth and New York we know and love, but while adventures start out in sprawling cities like New York, the known can quickly be left behind as alternate dimensions or realities, different planets, or just interesting new, but familiar, locales come up in play.



As the EIC for the game, you have rules to follow, as do the players. Most of the time you'll be asking questions to clarify or build on the fiction. The following is a framework for building, describing and adjudicating in the world you choose to play in. To get the feel of different styles or eras of comic books in your game, you really only need to make sure everyone is on the same page and describe and build the fiction together in a similar image to what you want to play. The rules for prepping adventures and enemies or playing in certain environments and locations can just as easily be used for most other comic book superhero settings or in different comic book eras.

In *Worlds in Peril*, it's your job as the EIC to keep the player characters under constant pressure and having to make hard choices between being a superhero and their real-life responsibilities. The players can resist this and create more space for their own characters to drive towards their goals and dreams by Burning Bonds and pushing their agendas when the opportunity arises and when there is downtime between dealing with pressing concerns. The world is, after all, in constant peril, and disasters don't wait around until it becomes convenient to deal with them.



## OVERVIEW OF THE EIC'S ROLE

As the EIC, you have a framework to run the game with. This framework is composed of an **agenda**, **principles** and **moves**. The agenda is what you set out to do when you sit down to play a game of *Worlds in Peril*. It is based on your, and the players', expectations of the type of game you're sitting down to play. The principles are the guidelines that help you create that world you've all agreed to play in and the moves are the individual panels of the comic strip, highlighting important parts of the story and moving the story along. The agenda, principles and moves are rules to help you get the most out of *Worlds in Peril*.

When you come to the table to play *Worlds in Peril*, you do these things:

- Describe the situation
- Follow the Rules
- Make Moves
- Draw on your Prep

While the players focus on their own characters and what they say and do in the fiction, you have the job of filling in the rest of the fiction. How the world and the characters that are not player characters respond is up to you.

You **describe the immediate situation around the players at all times**. This is how you start a game session and how you get the game going again after a break or joke: Describe what the current situation is in the fiction in concrete terms. Often you do this by asking the players questions.

**EIC: What are you doing right now, Sentinel?**

Sentinel: I'm in the lab trying to figure out what this strange material is.

**EIC: Awesome. What does your lab look like?**

Sentinel: It's in a basement underneath a well-known university. Clean and sterile, if a bit rundown since I'm kind of "borrowing" the place.

**EIC: Cool. Yeah, so you've got this sample of the material underneath this giant spectrometer, and suddenly it starts phasing in and out of reality. What do you do?**

Use details and the senses to draw players into the world. Describe how certain areas smell, taste, sound and feel. A lack of details in an environment can be used to great effect — a lack of a certain sense in a well-known environment can be just as troubling as a well-described one. Always give them something to react to, something to do. When you describe a situation there is always something that needs to be done, something to act on. You don't have to play time out in a game linearly — if there's nothing to do then skip to a new scene, a new panel in the comic, and describe the situation there, give them something to do somewhere else. When you describe the situation, always end with, "What do you do?"

Make sure you are familiar with the rules and with all the basic moves enough so that you can **follow all the rules**. Know what powers and what Bonds the characters have. Know when a move should be triggered in the fiction and if the fiction isn't clear enough, or if a player was trying to do something else or trigger a different move, ask questions until everyone sees the fiction clearly and is on the same page. It may take a game or two before you learn and can pick-up on all the triggers for the moves, and that's ok. You can draw on your EIC agendas, principles and moves without the game breaking or coming to a standstill. Still, it is something you and the other players will want to learn to get the most out of the system.

Part of following the rules is **making moves**. Your EIC moves are different than those of the players and are described after talking about the agenda and principles. EIC moves are there to build on and change the flow of the game and fiction.

When doing any and all of these things, **draw on your prep**. At any given time you'll probably know a bunch of things the players don't know yet. You can use that knowledge to help you make moves — to allude to or set up things that might happen in the fiction later on.

## AGENDAS

When you are the EIC of *Worlds in Peril* there are a few things that you will always want to keep in mind. Those things are:

- Portray a comic book world
- Fill the characters' lives with action and adventure
- Play to find out what happens
- Push the players to tell their stories too

Everything you say and do at the table exists to accomplish these four goals and no others. Things that are not on the list are not your goals. You're not here to tell everyone a well-planned story, or to try and kill the player characters or to test their ability to solve a mystery.

Your first agenda is to **portray a comic book world**. *Worlds in Peril* is all about being a hero, weighing the needs and costs of doing certain things against others. It's about being a hero and all that it entails — the bravery and heroism and butt-kicking and everything else that's important to you, but it's also about taking care of your personal life and goals and balancing that with the needs of the world and those that could benefit from your help. It's your job as the EIC to make sure that happens by giving the players situations to shine in and to present tough obstacles that force tough decisions. Certain challenges should be daunting and difficult to surmount, so much so that they have to decide how badly they want to succeed and how much they need to give up to see that success. Without the player characters the world will surely fall into chaos and destruction — it even might with the player characters fighting for it. Show the players the wonders of the world they are playing in and make them want to succeed, to answer their calling and to make the challenges difficult enough that they need to balance all of their responsibilities. The players will help you do this — whenever a player wants to succeed at a cost, they will Burn a Bond, and when they do they create trouble in their character's life, immediate or future. They shirk other responsibilities or let down their loved ones and other responsibilities in order to save the many, to save the world. All you need to do is present them with challenges they want to surmount, to succeed badly enough to Burn those Bonds and deal with the ensuing chaos in their lives after they deal with the chaos threatening the world.

**Filling the characters' lives with adventure** means working with the players to create a world that's engaging and dynamic. Superheroes are always caught up in schemes and plots that would see the world being taken over or destroyed so encourage and foster that kind of action in the game.

Adventures and master plans that come about in *Worlds in Peril* never presume a character's actions because the setting is always in motion. The world is alive and changing, huge cities and vast locales with all kinds of heroes and villains pursuing their various goals. As the heroes engage with other characters that have their own goals and motivations, conflict and action is inevitable and it's your job as the EIC to honestly portray how those actions and conflicts play out as the conversation of the fiction unfolds.



This is how you **play to find out what happens**; Don't plan out adventures, just populate the world with people with differing motivations, goals and purposes than the heroes and they will naturally come into conflict. The rules of the game are designed to take the fiction in new directions at any given time, so having a pre-planned story will not work out well.

When you **push the players to tell their stories too**, it means giving them the opportunities to Burn Bonds (by pushing them hard so they consider doing so) or remembering to give periods of downtime in which players can use special moves to Fit In and recover from Conditions or build Bonds. Let them frame their own scenes revolving around Bonds and the personal stories that surround their characters and enable that by offering to play any roles that need playing in their scenes and facilitating the process by assigning roles if the player does not do so themselves and asks for help with the process. Every session should include at least one period of downtime in which players can do their thing and frame a scene or two showing the personal life of their character.

## PRINCIPLES

- Address the characters, not the players.
- Embrace the weird, outlandish, alien and fantastic.
- Make a move that follows from and makes sense for the fiction.
- Never speak the name of your move.
- Give every enemy life.
- Name every person.
- Ask questions and use the answers.
- Be a fan of the characters.
- Think like a villain.
- Begin and end with the fiction.
- Think off-screen, too.
- Give the characters hard choices to make.
- Know your villain's motivations.

**Address the characters, not the players** means that you don't say, "Hey, Adam, what are you going to do to stop Darklight?" Instead you say, "Hey, Sentinel, what are you going to do to stop Darklight?" This rule is to keep everyone in the fiction and it's important to the rules of the game, too. Talking to players instead of characters can mean missing or passing key details in the fiction and it might take the player out of the game. Moves are always happening based on the actions of the character in the fiction so you need to think about what's happening in terms of those characters—not the players portraying them.

**Embrace the weird, outlandish, alien and fantastic** because a comic book world pretty much throws everything in the fiction but the kitchen sink. Science fiction adventures are common place, all kinds of aliens on or off Earth exist as well as mutated monsters or genetically altered humans and aliens; creatures make their homes beneath the sea, under the bedrock of the city or in habitats not suitable for humans; gods and their servants watch over and meddle in the affairs of man as legends and mythology come to life; unknowable beings from the stars make their presence known or assert their will. Think about all the strange and crazy things that don't happen in real life and that do happen in comics. Keep your default setting at 10, crank all the elements you want to see in the fiction all the way up when that's the feel you want. If someone asks you if such and such is true or exists in the setting your default answer should be "I don't see why not, how do you see that fitting into the fiction?"

**Make a move that follows from and makes sense for the fiction**, always. Your moves should always be based on what is happening in the fiction. What makes sense to have happen here, at this moment in the story? How can I build on this or hint at things that are coming down the pike? Ask yourself these questions when making a move as the EIC. Sometimes the result of a player move will ask the GM to make something up and it often means bad news for the heroes. The best way to handle this is to examine the fiction and find the really obvious bad thing that was about to

happen and just make that happen. It sometimes feels really clever and tempting to make up something new and unexpected out of the blue, but that means that it may not follow directly from what's already happening in the fiction. However, if you have some appropriate things in your prep that the players haven't encountered yet, sometimes this can be a good opportunity to reveal or activate those threats.

**Never speak the name of your move** when you do choose the response to something in the fiction. Your EIC moves are only prompts for you on what to do and how to react to certain things going on in the fiction, but you never tell the players what move you're making. You know the reason that a piece of a crumbling skyscraper is about to crush a group of innocent bystanders right in front of a hero because you chose the move "put someone in a spot" but the players don't need to know that. You show it to the players as a straightforward outcome of their actions, or as a logical progression in the story since that is exactly what it should be if your move follows from the fiction.

**Give every enemy life**, make them believable, have a personality and be unique. Creatures from the elemental chaos shouldn't look or act like a mob of angry civilians. Villains in particular need to be well characterized if you want them to be compelling. The only thing that separates the two-bit villain that nobody really knows much about and is more of a routine mop-up for a hero with an arch nemesis is more characterization and screen time. Two-bit villains have their place of course, but don't be afraid to do what many comics do and give them more character or change them up so that they suddenly become an entirely new and dangerous threat as time goes by and they learn more about the world they live in and the heroes they face. Same with everyday civilians and mobs — no matter how heroic you are, you may still end up shot in the back on your way to a court hearing by a regular ol' mook, who knows?

**Name every person.** Anyone that the players speak with has a name. They also have a personality, and some goals and motivations of their own as well but that can come later. Start with a name to ground them in fiction and the rest will flow from there.

**Ask questions and use the answers.** Part of playing to find out what happens is not knowing everything, being curious and wanting to build on, and find out about, the fiction with the rest of the players. The easiest question to use is "What do you do?" which you say after making your move, but you should ask other questions too. Whenever something is not yet defined in the world keep it open and only detail it as much as you need for that scene so you can build on it and ask questions about it later.

**Be a fan of the characters.** Think of the player characters as heroes in a comic book, on a TV show or in a movie. Cheer for their victories, lament their defeats. Talk with them and come up with compelling stories and ways for them to unlock their Drive books and get Achievements or retire their character.

**Think like a villain** or an evil overlord — anything and everything can be put in danger in the fiction. Nothing you create can ever be protected. Think up schemes to topple and destroy the things you've built in the fiction. What plots would put these elements in danger and what new things can be created so that they can be put at risk in the future? The world is constantly changing, without the player character's involvement in the world, it changes for the worse.

**Begin and end with the fiction.** Everything you and the players do comes from and leads back to the fiction. When players make a move, it's because something happened in the fiction to trigger it, they then apply the rules of the move to get a fictional effect that brings us back to the fiction. When you make a move as the EIC it always comes from the fiction.

**Think off-screen, too.** Everything that happens in the fiction doesn't always happen right in front of the characters. Sometimes your move is having something happen elsewhere — in a different city, planet or locale. Have something happen elsewhere and show the effect when it comes up in play later. Cut to a new scene and narrate a situation that progresses or showcases impending doom to create dramatic irony.

**Give the characters hard choices to make.** Making hard choices is what being a hero is all about, weighing consequences of one action over another. If you make challenges difficult enough, this will happen naturally because players will want to Burn Bonds to succeed but your moves can force tough choices on characters during specific scenes and many of the EIC moves reflect that, so use them!

**Know your villain's motivations.** Most of the time, a villain will be at the center of everything and, because the world is constantly changing, you don't want to pre-plan everything that is going to happen. Consider that just knowing a villain's motivations and their goals is enough to predict what a villain would do in certain circumstances and riff off that when you need moves and actions the villains might take in the fiction.



## ALWAYS SAY

- What the principles demand.
- What the rules demand.
- What your prep demands.
- What honesty demands.

When playing a game of *Worlds in Peril*, the responsibilities of the conversation are shared between everyone at the table. Players are responsible for saying what their character say, do, think, feel and remember. Sometimes they are asked to do more by certain moves. Your job as the EIC is to do everything else — everything about the world and how it reacts to the players, every character in it except for the player characters.

Be as forthcoming and generous with the truth as you can be — though there are a lot of things you won't, and shouldn't, know the answer to. However, what is happening to the player characters and going on around them is important information to know and is completely under your control. Play with integrity and grant the players all the benefits of their moves, even when they allow for drastic changes or big reveals in the fiction. You are on the players' side and you are telling a story together. Do not play as their adversary or take on an adversarial mindset. Every story needs tension, conflict and struggle and you are there to provide that, but you are also rooting for the players and their characters to come out on the other side of everything. You want to see how their characters change and what the challenges you throw at them do to them, how they react to them, how much they can take.

Being honest and consistent is also important to the players in a game where you have a great deal of control over how effective they are against their enemies. Take care and remember that your ability to create villains with powers and abilities that require the heroes to take different approaches in their defeat needs to be represented fairly and consistently so that the story is more about challenging the players, rather than forcing the story you want to tell on the players.

Whenever the players look to you to see what happens, choose one of these moves. Each move is something that happens in the fiction — they aren't code words or special terms. "Separate them" literally means to split the characters apart so they are physically apart from one another, for example.

- Use an enemy move
- Reveal an unwelcome truth
- Show signs of an approaching threat, advance a Plan
- Inflict an Appropriate Condition (Minor, Moderate or Critical Conditions)
- Use up their resources, take away their stuff
- Reveal or restore an Advantage.
- Turn their move back on them
- Separate them
- Show a downside to their character, appearance, equipment or power
- Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost
- Put someone in a spot
- Tell them the requirements or consequences and ask.
- Threaten a Bond
- Take advantage of a Limitation
- Threaten a secret
- Encourage creative use of powers, showcase an Advantage
- Take advantage of a Condition
- Change the environment
- Point to a looming threat
- Introduce a new faction or type of enemy
- Use a threat from an existing faction or enemy type
- Make them backtrack
- Present a challenge to one of the players

Remember to never speak the name of your move; make it a real thing that happens to them in the fiction: "As you all scramble to get away from the collapsing skyscraper, the ground shakes and the air is filled with dust and debris. You can't see or hear anyone around you, Kannon, it looks like you're all alone. All you can see is a few rays of light coming from various places in the ceiling. What do you do?" No matter what move you make, always follow up with, "what do you do?"

Your moves are a way of fulfilling your agenda — part of which is to fill the character's lives with adventure. Your moves force action and if action is not taken, you bring consequences to bear as a result of that inaction in the fiction. Characters need to always be doing something, or they suffer the consequences of their inaction.

## WHEN TO MAKE A MOVE

You make a move:

- When everyone looks at you to find out what happens
- When the players give you a golden opportunity in the fiction
- When they roll a 6 or less

Generally, when the players are just looking at you to find out what happens and there is nothing to snowball off of, you make a soft move. Otherwise, you make a hard move.

A soft move is one without immediate, irrevocable consequences. It's a move that sets something up to happen later on in the fiction — it sets the characters up for future danger. The most common soft moves are ones that *show signs of an approaching threat*, that *threaten a safe place*, or ones that just generally give the players something to do and react to right now. It can be something as simple as “the ground around you begins to shake, the readings your suit is receiving seems to indicate seismic activity in the ground beneath you.”

A soft move ignored becomes a golden opportunity for a hard move. If the players don't respond and their characters either do nothing or do not address the issue, then the opportunity to make a hard move and have the ground or buildings around them collapse is hard to pass up! Inflicting Conditions and other serious consequences are reserved for hard moves, whereas soft moves are there to build on the fiction and set up future hard moves.

There are no clear-cut rules for when to use a hard move and when to use a soft move but if you've given fair warning in the fiction, a hard move is reasonable. If a soft move fits better with the fiction though, the fiction is always the best indicator of what to have happen and what move to make.

A soft move might be telling a player: Your girlfriend Joanna has been acting kind of weird the past week, asking why you're so hard to get in touch with and whether you can make firm plans to hang out this weekend.

Then, if they don't deal with that situation, the hard move might be: she leaves you a text message breaking up with you. The first part was the threat and foreshadowing, the second part was the follow-through.

And sometimes you skip straight to the hard move: she breaks up with you, without any real warning. Though the player can still try to ask for an explanation after the fact.

EXAMPLE

Remember that hard moves that snowball off of soft moves are not retribution or punishment; the severity of a hard move should match the fiction. A hard move does not have to be damage or a Condition and, if you choose to deal damage, it could be a Minor, Moderate or Critical Condition. A hard move just means that there's no chance for it not to happen or for it be avoided, whereas a soft moves always allows for, and is designed to, elicit a response and reaction from the players.

## CHOOSING A MOVE

To choose a move, think of the obvious consequences of the action that triggered it in the fiction. If you've already got an idea for something to happen, roll with it as long as it fits with your agenda and principles for the game. Let your moves snowball and build off one another like when warning the use of a hard move by first making a soft one. Build on the success or failure of the characters' moves and your own previous ones.

If your first instinct is that it won't hurt them now, but it'll come back to bite them later, great! That's part of your principles (think off-screen, too). Make a note of it and reveal it when the time is right.

## MAKING YOUR MOVE

When making a move, keep your principles in mind — never speak the name of the move, and address the characters, not the players.

Remember to cater the fiction to each move, each scene to each character — play to their strengths and weaknesses and keep the unique qualities they have in mind at all times. It's important to know who the characters are and what powers that have because it all affects the fiction — you know it'll take a lot more to knock down a hero with a healing factor compared to a hero with no protection or defense.

After every move you make, always ask “What do you do?”

## USE AN ENEMY MOVE

Every enemy the heroes encounter throughout the course of their adventures probably has at least one move they can make depending on how many you make for them. An enemy move is just a description of what that enemy can do to the player characters, like “endanger an innocent” for a two-bit villain or “summon aid from the subterranean depths” for a cultist or monster that is part of a horde.

## REVEAL AN UNWELCOME TRUTH

An unwelcome truth is a fact that the player's would wish was not true — that it looks like the lair of the super villain has been booby trapped or that a helpful NPC is really an imposter, spy or shape-shifter, for example.

## SHOW SIGNS OF AN APPROACHING THREAT, ADVANCE THE PLAN

This move is for showing the characters something that's going to happen unless they do something about it. A threat can be any sort of danger or bad thing that's waiting in the wings or on its way as per the Plan you come up with. Showcase action going on off-screen to progress the Stages of the Plan, by means of the Threats and opponents prepared for each Stage. We'll talk more about Plans and Threats in following sections.

## INFLICT AN APPROPRIATE CONDITION

Note that any move may inflict and include damage as part of it, not just the “Inflict an Appropriate Condition” move. Whenever it seems like damage should be dealt out in the fiction, it’s your job as the EIC to do so. Use the fiction to first determine if damage should be inflicted and, if so, determine what kind of damage is most suitable among Minor, Moderate, and Critical Conditions (this may be different for different characters — if one of the characters’ powers is having a healing factor you might tell that person that they take damage, but their healing factor kicks in and they’re soon back in the fray, whereas another character might take a Minor Condition if they were put under the same circumstances).

When you deal damage, choose one source of damage that is fictionally threatening a character and apply it. If locked in hand-to-hand combat with a villain, he smashes you to the ground. If you’re rushing the boss in his home base you may trigger a trap you didn’t know was there and are caught in a radiation field that’s bombarding you with nuclear radiation. Any physical or mental harm can be represented with Conditions, but only if they are enough to put the hero at risk. A hero can be confused, or they can have the Minor Condition “confused” Imposed on them. One is just fictional coloring and the other is an imposition on the character — if they try to do something without addressing it, it could worsen. It makes it important and so that time and energy must be spent on it in the fiction.

A Condition is Imposed whenever it needs to be, by you, because of the fiction. It can definitely be a hard move, but it is also your responsibility to back up anything that warrants it with a Condition. When and what kind of Condition is up to you, what’s going on in the game, and who the character is. Does the character have a healing factor, metal skin or the power to create force shields? It would probably take more justification in the fiction to Impose a Condition on them than someone who is a regular guy with a bow and arrow. Is it early on in the story and what’s going on doesn’t really need any mechanical weight attached to it? Just narrate what happens and move on. Are the heroes locked in a life-and-death struggle with a villain? Did a building just drop on them? Did someone just make them question their sanity or make them question what it means to be a hero? These are probably all great times to Impose a Condition.

- **A Minor Condition** is just enough that it requires attention, time and energy. It only needs to be addressed in the game for it to go away — it could be physical, like being trapped under rubble, a sprained ankle or a dislocated bone that needs to be set. It could be emotional too — it could represent being distracted, confused or surprised. If left unchecked, a Minor Condition might progress to a Moderate one, but it doesn’t have to. It should make sense in the fiction, but simply making a Defy Danger move to ignore a Minor Condition can often be enough since a move can result in more complications regardless.
- **A Moderate Condition** is more serious, it affects anything they do, but in a more limited capacity in that it only affects a certain kind of action. A sprain or dislocation could progress into a break or just a penalty to doing anything

with that limb until it gets checked out. A distracted, confused or surprised hero might end up taking damage of a completely different form. Moderate Conditions only impose penalties on doing certain things — using a broken arm to climb, or trying to put a plan together through a migraine, for example.

- **A Critical Condition** is serious and imposes a constant penalty to absolutely everything a hero does. Four Critical Conditions will kill a hero. They can represent the accumulation of damage over time or a one-time, earth-shattering blow. They can represent a hero losing faith in themselves or humanity. They can represent grief and the death of a loved one. They can represent an invading body, an alien disease or a psychic maelstrom rending a mind apart.

Along with the fictional considerations of what threat is the most apparent when choosing the source of damage, you also want to keep in mind what kind of damage you're dealing. This might also seem obvious in the fiction as well, but dealing damage does not always have to mean Imposing a Condition. If there's a lone civilian in the face of one of the heroes, threatening them, they may seem like an obvious source of danger (and danger can be occasionally mixed up and come from mundane sources every now and then, if that's the game you want to play), but it doesn't mean that the civilian has to deal a Condition to be threatening or dangerous. How you express danger and how the heroes need to react to an opponent is left in your able hands.

Whether you Impose a Condition or not should depend on three things:

- 1) It makes sense and flows from the fiction.
- 2) It is consistent with how you've represented damage in the past.
- 3) It takes into account both a character's powers and abilities, and the threat's.

### ***USE UP THEIR RESOURCES OR TAKE AWAY THEIR STUFF***

Has the villain been thwarted by do-gooders before? Does he know the source of their powers and what their tactics are? It makes sense that they might prepare to encounter them when next they meet then, right? Taking away their stuff or using up resources can be shown in the fiction in various ways. If a hero has a special weapon they use, (like an enchanted hammer, an unbreakable shield or a bunch of cool tech gadgets, for example) see what they do when they can't rely on them. The boss sends out an EMP that overloads and shuts down some of their cool gadgets. A hero that wears a suit of armor or has a power with a set number of charges or shoots projectiles can always run out of steam. When locked in combat, an enemy disarms them and sends their mystical weapon hurling off into the distance! Resources or objects don't have to be taken away or used up permanently. In fact, doing so should be seriously considered as it rarely happens for long in comics.

### **REVEAL OR RESTORE AN ADVANTAGE**

An Advantage is something that gives the enemy a leg-up or maybe protects or diverts harm away from an enemy — particularly a mastermind or villain most likely. Heroes have the ability to take these out in play, so sometimes enemies will need to repair or restore an existing, damaged or not-yet-finished Advantage in order to continue challenging the heroes. It could also be that an Advantage is not yet in use, whether it be a means of inflicting harm like a gun or grenade, a way to get away, like a jetpack or dimensional portal, or any number of other possibilities. Advantages are a great way to keep heroes on their toes.

### **TURN THEIR MOVE BACK ON THEM**

Take the mechanical benefits that a move grants the player making the move, and treat it as if the opposition or target had made the move on the player character instead. If a player's move has them ask questions to find information out, then let the opposition find out information about the player. If the player is trying to hurt, confuse, or otherwise inhibit an enemy, then have the enemy do that to the PC either instead of them, or have them reciprocate in turn.

### **SEPARATE THEM**

If you want to make a fight all that more perilous or a decision all that more difficult, separate the hero from their friends or loved ones and put multiple characters in danger. Or take the chance to throw similar dangers at the heroes and see how differently one acts from another to solve certain types of problems.

### **GIVE AN OPPORTUNITY THAT FITS A CHARACTER'S ABILITIES**

Characters that have moves for creating and making things are good at world building and coming up with gadgets, others will be good at getting to places they need to be, reading situations and people and getting what they want, etc. Each character has something they are particularly good at — present them with an opportunity to shine.

### **SHOW A DOWNSIDE TO THEIR CHARACTER, APPEARANCE, EQUIPMENT OR POWER**

A character focused on protecting feels responsible for pretty much everyone, outsiders have trouble understanding the ways of humans and normal people, etc. Most heroes probably look different or unique enough that people know they are a superhero, or at the very least, that they are different. All heroes have a power or set of abilities that make them good at something, whether the source of their powers is cosmic energy or tech built at home in the garage. Being recognized or misunderstood, being alien and unknown, or even having a cool power like control over electricity can have a downside — have the people they need to save be up against a villain with water-based abilities, have the people you're supposed to be saving freak out when it's an alien whipping them out of harm's way.

### **OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY, WITH OR WITHOUT A COST**

Show them something they want: acceptance, power, alien technology, whatever. It could be the chance to form or advance a Bond with someone or even just the chance to recuperate and recover but, if they take the opportunity, there might be a cost involved — like ignoring something else that's going on or having a tougher fight in the future, for example. Alternatively, it could simply be presenting an opportunity with either a cost implied or stated up front. This opportunity could be something you know they want and are working towards — if they are trying to become popular and influential in the city, they might welcome the people of the city putting their name down on the ballot for mayor, but there would obviously be some costs involved in going for it. It could be giving them something they want in that particular moment — if they are trying to impress a guy on a date, you can say how he keeps talking up their alter-ego, saying how cool, badass and sexy Electric Girl is, and then ask them if they want to reveal their identity. They would definitely get what they want in that moment, but there would be some obvious ramifications to doing so.

### **PUT SOMEONE IN A SPOT**

When you put a character in a spot, you give them a tough choice they'd rather not make — the harder the choice, the tougher the spot.

### **TELL THEM THE REQUIREMENTS OR CONSEQUENCES AND ASK**

Whenever a player wants to do something and it's either not covered or they've already tried and failed at what they wanted to do, tell them that they can do it but offer consequences for success. Tell them what they first need to accomplish if they want to succeed at their task and ask them if they're still game.

### **THREATEN A BOND**

Characters have Bonds with other NPCs in the fiction as well as Bonds with the city or law enforcement. Throw a situation at them where they have to act quickly or make a choice in order to keep that Bond from getting Burned. Maybe a camera crew shows up right when the heroes are not cast in such a favorable light, or the government or a law enforcement agency asks the characters for help at an inconvenient time.

### **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A LIMITATION**

Limitations are on the character sheet to remind players of what they can't do with their powers and how you can put them in danger. Most limitations are easy to take advantage of, especially if some of their powers come from gadgets or equipment. However, some Origin and Drive books have some negative aspects implied or built in as well, like the “Die Trying” Drive book deals with being addicted to something and can be taken advantage of or used to put a player in a tough spot. Be creative and remind players that taking limitations means that you get to play with them and use them to make their lives more dangerous and exciting.

### **THREATEN A SECRET**

Secrets are something that all characters have — there are things they can't tell other people to protect themselves, their loved ones or maybe they just consider it personal information. Secret identities are the big ones of course, but any detail can be threatened in play. Maybe a nosy reporter or fan follows the hero back home, or their costume or mask is ripped apart in a battle or an envelope with surveillance photos or a dossier of their secret past shows up on their doorstep.

### **ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF POWERS, SHOWCASE AN ADVANTAGE**

Knowing and understanding the powers the heroes wield are crucial so that you can set up situations where they have to be inventive with them to solve problems or take down their enemies. A good way to get players to think creatively is to give their enemies certain Advantages like shields or gadgets that help them fight, run away or accomplish their goals. When you showcase an Advantage an enemy has, players will naturally try to start thinking of a way to take it away so just be careful what you throw out there!

### **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A CONDITION**

When heroes take damage, a common thing they will receive because of it is a Condition. If an enemy sees that a hero is limping or is clearly wounded or unable to do something, they are probably going to take advantage of it.

### **CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT**

A change in the environment can be as drastic as the city itself changing, to a change in the immediate space occurring. If you are aiming to go big and mess with the city in a big way then you will want to divide it up into areas, with each area of it having its own feel and look to it. What these areas look like should be based on the expectations of everyone at the table, but can be shaken up in true comic book style fashion. Maybe a part of the city is suddenly overgrown with vegetation and wildlife, rifts or portals are open from other dimensions and it affects the surrounding areas, earthquakes or other natural disasters might occur or alien environs with no explanation are suddenly taking over that part of the city. The reasons for these things can either be part of your Plan in the form of dangers and threats or they can be a thing you make up on the fly and come up with explanations for later, as the players help expand on the fiction by figuring out and investigating, or kicking the butts of, anyone involved.

More commonly though, this move is going to be used for changing up the immediate environment to keep things dynamic and on a smaller scale that follows the fiction, whether they involve the a villain or a master plan or not. A villain will create an obstacle or shield to block off or hinder heroes and law enforcement. PCs get punched so hard they go flying into a building or into a park. A villain's lair collapses as they make a last-ditch effort to crush the heroes. Dimensional portals open up around the city and heroes knocked unconscious might wake up in a totally new location.

### ***POINT TO A LOOMING THREAT***

You should have some dangers and threats ready to go, so this is a move you can use to hint at or give clues to the dangers that could follow. An alien invasion might be prefaced by spies being found or alien tech striking the earth in the form of meteors or probes. You can advance and pull from your prep, or there might be obvious, immediate things that can happen. You might tell a PC that the “civilian” they just saved seemed strangely familiar, or that the crystal ball they looked into is all they can think about as they lay awake at night. It could be a damaged bridge, building or machine starts showing signs of bad things to come — sparks fly off, columns topple, cables snap!

### ***INTRODUCE A NEW FACTION OR TYPE OF ENEMY***

A type of enemy is a broad, general term; it could be a mob, a gang, a new villain, an alien, a mutant, a new kind species or any other kind of threatening being or creature that gets in the way of the characters. A faction is a group of enemies united under a common goal, like a street gang or a group of evil villains bound together for their hatred of the heroes. Once introduced, you can start having them make trouble for your heroes. This move can easily snowball into a combat, an ambush, or just set up the faction for future use.

### ***USE A THREAT FROM AN EXISTING FACTION OR ENEMY TYPE***

Once you’ve introduced the faction or new type of enemy, it’s time to start having them make life difficult for the players.

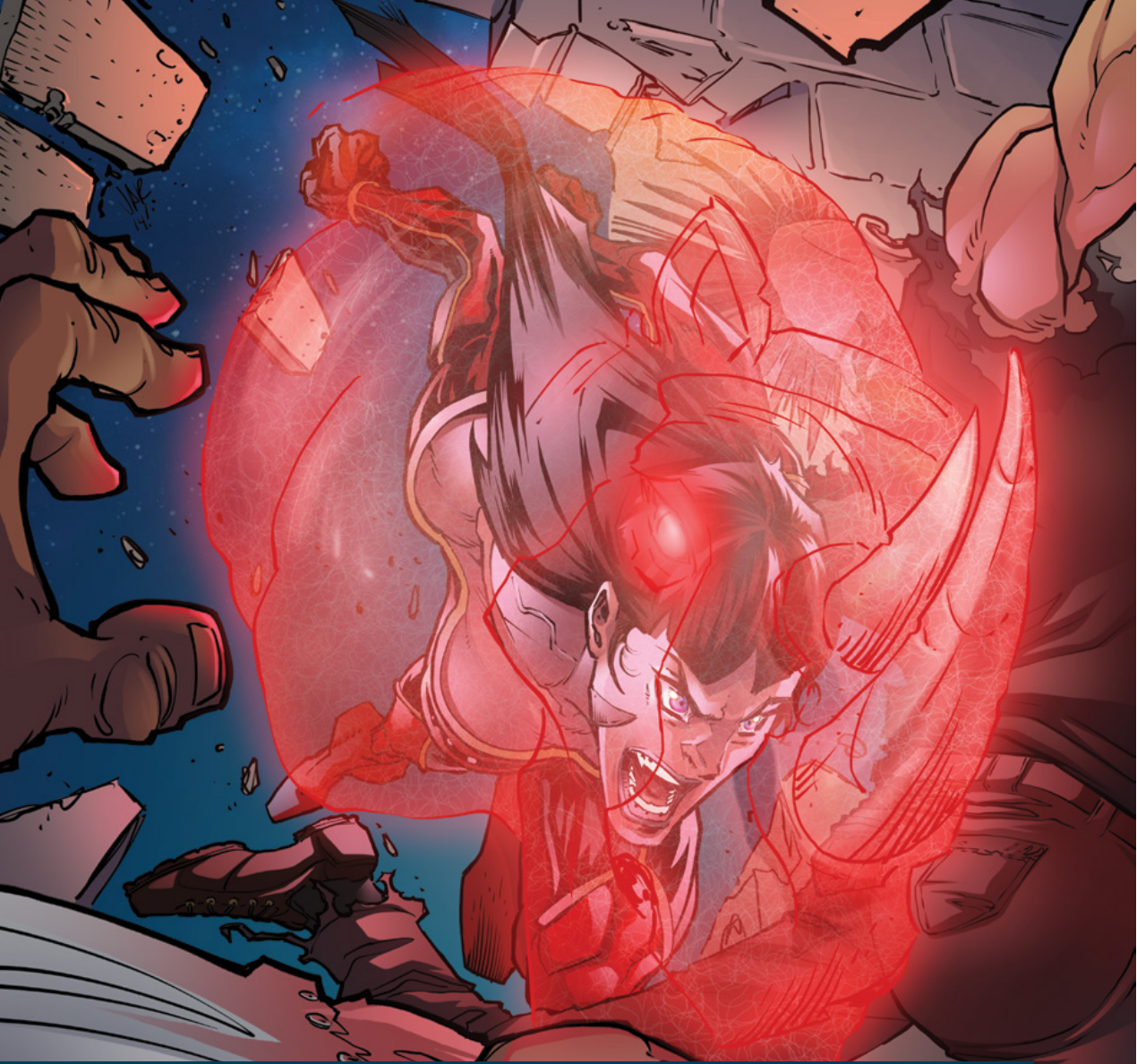
### ***MAKE THEM BACKTRACK***

When finding clues or learning new information, it’s likely that heroes will end up going all over the city and visiting places multiple times. When they visit areas they’ve been to before, show how it’s changed because of the heroes’ actions. Maybe a scene of a big battle is under construction or still in disrepair or maybe a neighborhood is thriving after the heroes worked to take a gang off the streets. Maybe someone they met earlier that seemed innocent or inconspicuous has more going on with them than meets the eye.

### ***PRESENT A CHALLENGE TO ONE OF THE PLAYERS***

Look at what the player is good at, what their powers are, where they’ve assigned their higher modifiers to and which kind of character they are, and then present them with a challenge that plays to their strengths. Alternatively, present them with the challenge of solving something without their superpowers or doing something they’re not normally good at. Remember to keep the spotlight moving and to give everyone a chance to shine with this move from scene to scene.





## THE FIRST ISSUE

The first game session, or Issue, should begin with character creation and everyone talking about their expectations for the game world as they fill in Bonds, create their powers and maybe sketch in or draw what their character might look like. The first Issue is particularly important for establishing and doing certain things for the first time. As the EIC, this section is for you and details what you should be doing and trying to accomplish during your first game session.



- A few copies of the basic and special moves sheet
- One copy of each Origin and Drive sheet
- The EIC sheet

Read some comics, watch some superhero movies and get your head in that space. Talk to the players a bit beforehand to see what kind of comic book style they want to play and get familiar with some of the source material. How much you prepare for the first Issue is up to you but you should at least have some ideas for cool stuff you'd like to see happen — or you might want to prepare a little more and come up with a villain, an evil plot and some danger to throw the characters' way. If you do think of some evil plots to have happen, make sure you don't detail them very much; have them be things that are happening in the world but follow the players' leads on what they want to do with it and always be listening for cool ideas to incorporate from everyone at the table.

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## GETTING STARTED

When you're about to sit down for your first Issue make sure that everyone is familiar with the game system and that they know what to listen for in the fiction in regards to when moves get triggered. Set expectations for everyone, talk about what kind of game and tone everyone is looking for at the table so they can make their characters accordingly. There are also some questions you'll want to ask and have the players answer to facilitate character creation. Take notes as the players make their characters — what their Origins are, what powers they wield, and what their Bonds are in particular. Some questions you'll want to ask and answer together are:

*Are the characters friends?* Do all of them meet for the first time, united by a common threat in the first Issue or have they worked together before? Are they already a team with common goals? If they want some of these questions to be answered in play, that's fine, but if the characters aren't together from the beginning it means you'll have to go around the table often, keeping track of the characters and bringing them together. At the very least, by the end of the first Issue all the characters should be aware of one another, if not a team. That's not to say that you can't play a game in which the characters are often doing their own thing, but it's going to be a bit trickier to mediate and keep engaging. When you play this way Bonds might need to be filled in as the characters meet and fight alongside one another. It can be a fun way to play but make sure those expectations are set before you take a game there.

*Are there other Superheroes?* Well you have superpowers, the other characters have them and some villains definitely do, but just how many are there? Is there a public perception of them already or is it a new thing? Was there a recent event or a sudden change that lead to super powered heroes popping up across the globe or in a localized area? These questions will help the players fill in their Bonds with the city and law enforcement. As they do, and as they write their Bonds with other characters that are important to their heroes, include them in your notes for future use. Everything the players give you during character creation are elements you can use in future adventures.

When players ask questions pay attention. If the questions are about the rules and the game system then answer them. If the questions are about the setting, tone and feel of the world and the agencies in them turn the question around and put it to the players. Make sure this is the world they want to play in — have them create the details they need before getting started. Collaborate with the players, if you have ideas in mind for future important characters like the mayor of the city, government officials, an agency that polices heroes or the chief of police then maybe talk about it and ask them what they think of these characters. Be careful not to get too detailed though — if anyone asks whether there is or isn't something in the setting and fiction, think hard before saying no. Instead, "Not yet" is a great answer; a comic book world is never static and you never know when you might need a new element to play with. Better yet, ask them what they think and how it might fit into the fiction!

Once everyone has finished making their heroes, look over the notes you took and any prep you may or may not have done and get ready to start playing!

# THINGS TO FOCUS ON

The first Issue is all about introducing the players to the world and maybe even the characters to one another. The goal of the session might be to bring them together but it is always going to be about introducing new factions and enemies to the players. Allude to upcoming dangers and Threats that may resurface or come to be in future Issues. Start the adventure with either all of the heroes in a tense situation that demands action or each hero in one of their own, designed to bring them together as quickly as possible. A bank robbery, strange things crashing into the city, the ground shaking and splitting apart as hordes of strange creatures crawl out into the city. Start asking questions about the situation. Why are the characters there? What were they doing before they were interrupted with this? Ask questions about the Threats that make them react to the situation right away.

As the players start describing what their characters do and how they react the fiction and conversation starts rolling along and moves start being triggered. This may not be completely intuitive at first as you might all be new to the system, so you, as the EIC, should pay specific attention to what is being said and done in the fiction. Help the players along and get everyone used to the way the conversation works. Whenever you hear them say something that sounds like the trigger to a move, clarify it with them by saying something like, “it sounds like you’re trying to...” and then walk them through the move. If they agree with you, roll the dice to see what happens in the fiction. If they don’t, clarify the fiction and ask their intentions and what they’re trying to do. If players look at their character sheet or at the moves for guidance on what to do, make sure you ask them questions about what they’re actually doing in the fiction. If a player says “I use Take Down!” or “I Defy Danger!” be quick to ask the player how they’re doing that. What happens in the fiction to trigger Take Down? What are you actually doing? How are you doing it? What are you using to do that? And so on.

For the first session, you have a few specific goals:

- Establish details, describe
- Use what they give you
- Ask questions
- Leave blanks
- Look for interesting facts
- Help the players understand moves
- Get to know the player characters’ powers
- Know the player characters’ drives
- Give each character a chance to shine
- Have the world react to the players, too
- Introduce NPCs
- Keep in mind that villains are not pushovers



## ESTABLISH DETAILS, DESCRIBE

The first Issue is all about describing and establishing how the world looks and how it works. What does it take to damage a character, how they use their powers, how the city responds to the heroes, who's in charge and what the immediate area looks like. Describe these things but keep them brief and open for expanding on later. Use details or prep some descriptions of places the heroes might end up or fight in beforehand so you have some strong, evocative details to give them when the time comes.

## USE WHAT THEY GIVE YOU

Keep your notes with you of the questions and answers that were asked during characters creation, the characters' Bonds, Drive, and powers. It's your job to build up an exciting world to play in with the help of the players so use and incorporate all the elements they give you — they're already there and are compelling to the characters.

## ASK QUESTIONS

What the players give you isn't enough. You're going to need a lot more as new situations and adventures spring up. Don't be afraid to ask questions; you want to make sure that everyone is playing in the same space you are. An idea you have or a question you pose can lead to all kinds of developments, try to get something from each player. When stuff happens in the fiction, prod and poke the characters about it. Ask them what their characters think about what just happened. Questions can really enhance a game and imparts some trust and power to the players. A world you create together will be far more compelling than one you describe yourself and that only you can see.

## LEAVE BLANKS

If you've got a map of a city, perhaps split it up into districts, indicate certain areas on the map where things might happen but leave them blank. Every blank is something cool waiting to happen and if you're ever at a loss in the game and the characters are in the city, think of something cool that might be going on over there or ask a player what they think. You may not even have a real idea of what to have happen but you can tell the players that they're getting strange energy signatures from over that way, or crowds are gathering, or the sky is darkened, or a localized event is occurring in that area. When they get there, ask them what it is, what's going on? Why are all the people there?

## LOOK FOR INTERESTING FACTS

There are going to be a lot of ideas being thrown around at the table, especially if you ask a lot of questions — which you should do often. Sometimes a player will say something like “wouldn’t it be cool if...” those are good things to jot down or keep in mind for later. A lot of the time, their ideas are going to be better than yours, so do not hesitate to incorporate or change up the plot on the fly when you hear juicy bits to use.

## HELP THE PLAYERS UNDERSTAND THE MOVES

You’ve read the game, but the players may not have, so it’s up to you to guide play and to lead them. Tell them the best practices and what they should be doing in keeping with the spirit of the game. If they feel overwhelmed just tell them that all they need to do is describe what their character is doing and saying, the rules take care of the rest. Remembering when certain moves trigger might take some getting used to so listen out for them and give yourself time to learn.

## GET TO KNOW THE PLAYER CHARACTERS’ POWERS

Every hero in *Worlds in Peril* is different and their ability to do certain things and justify what they do in the fiction is done through their Powers Summary and Powers Profile. Some of the biggest indications of the kind of game the player wants to play and the stories and scenes they’d like to be a part of is all in their Powers Profile. Especially for defensive powers, you’ll really want to familiarize yourself with what a player’s expectations are for their character. If they’ve got a healing factor, steel skin, ability to create constructs, shields or other defensive things, then you’ll want to remember to portray that in the fiction. When a character Defies Danger, try to make it look different for each character. When you Impose a Minor, Moderate, or Critical Condition as well, try to make it look different for each character in terms of what they can take and how Conditions are Imposed — the fiction should adhere to the requirement of taking into consideration the player’s character, their powers and their expectations. That means everyone has to be on the same page.

A character with a healing factor or who has a constant energy field around them that produces and absorbs kinetic energy will be able to take a lot more punishment than a normal guy with a bow and arrow, and you have to keep that in mind. The fiction needs to be exciting and dangerous for everyone and should not always depend on what powers and abilities a character has, but they should always be taken into consideration. This will take some time to learn, so don’t feel sheepish about asking the players about their characters and what they can do when necessary.

That said, especially in the beginning, you’re probably going to have to ask a lot of questions, make sure that a player gets their input and that everyone’s expectations are set. If you’re not sure how much damage they can take then ask them, if you’re not sure if what they’re doing is Simple, Difficult, Borderline, or even Impossible for a character then ask them — make sure everyone is on the same page and learn your player characters’ powers.

## GET TO KNOW THE PLAYER CHARACTERS DRIVES

Knowing the characters in the story isn't just about knowing their powers and narrating a story that takes that into consideration. It's not just about being compelling, interesting and dangerous, but knowing what a character wants, is driving towards, working at unlocking, or trying to achieve. Some of the requirements the players are working towards are going to require your time and attention so that you can work them into the game and create opportunities for them. Their origins are a great source to draw from as well. Ask them questions about their Origin and Drive to help with coming up with past threats, greatest foes and a core concept of what type of character they're aiming for.

## GIVE EACH CHARACTER A CHANCE TO SHINE

You are a fan of the heroes so give each of them a chance to do what they do best. Make sure the Threats and problems you throw at the players have multiple solutions so that players can approach it in different ways. Every now and then you can even tailor a specific challenge to a hero's talents and abilities to give them a chance to show off and do their thing.

## HAVE THE WORLD REACT TO THE PLAYERS, TOO

Bonds are a big deal in *Worlds in Peril*. They are a currency that players will want to hold on to and your job is to make the situations that they end up in compelling and dangerous enough that they need to Burn those Bonds to succeed in doing the things that matter to them. Since Bonds are important to players you may think that it's not something you should have a huge part in, but it's just the opposite. Having players adjust their Bonds according to what happens in the game is part of your principles — to portray a comic book world that feels real and alive and that reacts to what happens in the game and what the players do.

It may not always feel fair to players to have Bonds taken away (and of course your job isn't to punish or penalize, you are rooting for the players, after all) but the world doesn't always react the way heroes want it to — to them or to what they do. Storylines you come up with or that naturally come about will probably affect Bonds — and they should! If a hero is framed for murder and everyone in the city and the police are after them because they're now seen as a violent, masked vigilante then you should reflect that in their Bonds with Law Enforcement and The City as well. Most of the time the players will do a good enough job by themselves of Burning Bonds with characters that are more personal to them, but they still live in the city, right? The big ones you want to pay attention and reflect on is The City and Law Enforcement because they're a great way to show the world reacting to the things that are happening and to what the heroes do. To simplify greatly: when they do good things and they are perceived as doing so, reflect that by giving out Bonds; when they do bad things and they are perceived as doing so, reflect that by taking some away.

## INTRODUCE NPCS

Non-player characters bring the world to life — they're the people the heroes care about and who they want to save. They're the faces of government agencies, law enforcement and the city. They're a character's loved ones. Give them a name, a personality, an agenda and make sure the characters care about them. Some players might latch on to certain characters so when they do try to make them have bigger parts to play in the story. Come back to characters every few Issues and see how they've changed and what they're doing if they don't come up in the story often.

## VILLAINS ARE NOT PUSH OVERS

Remember that, at least in some cases, a lot of the battles can be about figuring out how to even be effective against a villain or Threat. Just because a move says they get to Impose a Condition doesn't always make it so, because what they do and how they go about Imposing a Condition is just as important. The Imposition of a Condition by a player's character and the severity level is to show how effective what they do is, but if what they did should not Impose a Condition regardless, then one should not be Imposed. Make a fight interesting and fun. That could mean situations in which villains especially well-suited to being taken down by certain characters (like when you give them a chance to shine) are taken out by a hero, or it could mean needing to retreat to come up with a way to actually be effective against a villain they encounter for the first time. It could mean that they need to take out a bunch of Advantages or cut through defenses — don't feel bad about making the heroes work for it!

At the same time, you want to make sure that there is actually a way, and that the heroes find out a way, to be effective against a villain. Challenging is one thing, and impossible has its place in games at certain times, but you're still a fan of the players and their characters — you present these challenges to tell a good story, not to the story you have in mind or prepped for. All you have to worry about is keeping your agendas and principles in mind and to be upfront and generous with the truth; players have a wealth of options to find out information, weaknesses, and can test their theories and ideas on how to resolve any particular challenge in all kinds of ways, so make sure they're aware of them.

## AFTER THE FIRST ISSUE

Once you finish the first Issue take some time to reflect on the session. What elements did you introduce that can be used later? What things did characters say that would be fun to incorporate later on? What is important to the characters and how can you use that in the future? Prepping for the second Issue will take you a bit of time, around an hour, though maybe less if you've got some ideas already about where you want to go with it. You'll create Threats, maybe some new enemies for the heroes to face off against, or some custom moves for locations or dangers so as to get a general feel for what's going on in the city and what dangers await it.



## EIC PREP

**B**ehind most nefarious plots and evil happenings in the world of superheroes is at least one mastermind, orchestrating or taking advantage of the Threats going on in the world to advance their own agenda for nefarious or selfish reasons. When sitting down to plan out some of the things that are going to be going on in the world that the player character will have to react to, the first thing you will want to do is come up with is the mastermind or key opposition's motivations and what they are trying to change. After that, you will go through and detail an overarching plan for them to carry out to illustrate how they go about affecting that change. Finally, you'll put set down the "how" of the plan, its possible realization, and what that will look like to the players in terms of threats and opponents.

## WHO IS UPSET WITH THE STATUS QUO?

When creating the key opposition your heroes will face, you will first need to decide on who, or what, they are and what they want. You should always know what the motivation for the key opposition is, even if the motivation is as simple as wreaking havoc and the opposition is a force of nature. The EIC sheet at the back of the book lays out an approach but this chapter will walk you through it.

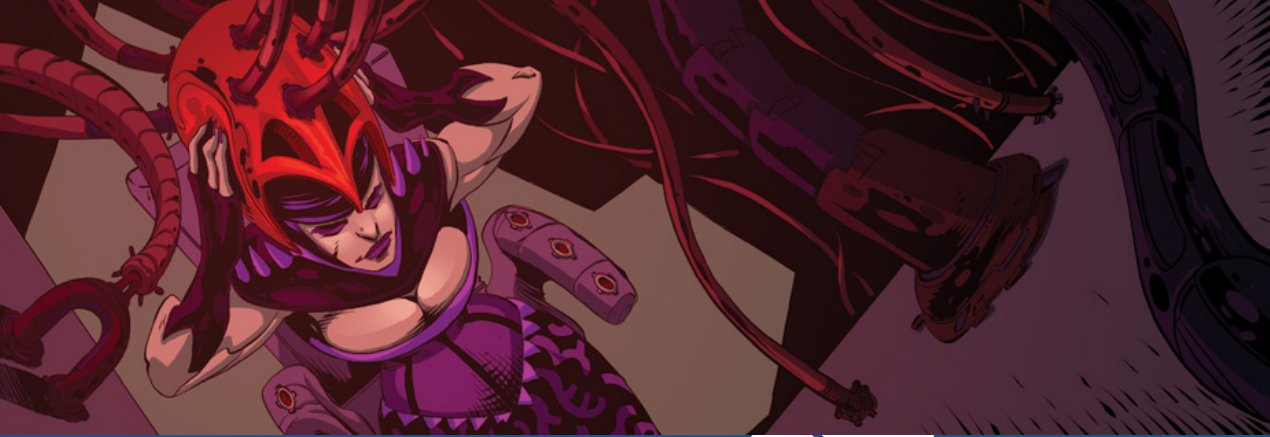
Take a moment to answer this very important question — what is their ambition? What do they not like about their lot in life and with the status quo? What do they want? They could be a villain trying to get revenge on the world, or maybe just the player characters for a perceived slight, injustice or humiliation. It could be unknowable horrors whose motivations no mere mortal mind could hope to grasp, but who have come to destroy nonetheless. It could even be planar forces seeking new dominion or resources or that wish to escape from their own plane. It could be mythological forces or old gods grown weary or embittered from lack of worship. It could be hordes of creatures from the subterranean depths, no longer content to play out their existence fighting for the scraps thrown down and left for them by mankind.

To get an idea of a villain's motivations you might start with just an emotion or two that defines them — greed, revenge, hatred, jealousy or insecurity, for example. Emotions are a good place to start because it gives an indication of how they will act and maybe even provides the source of their ambition and motivation. From there you can work backward to build a past about why they are this way. What happened to them and what experience would make them turn out the way they did?

Once you establish a basis for their emotions in the past you can extrapolate to come up with what their experiences and world view might lead them to do in the future. What do they want to do to change the status quo and on what scale is the goal? If they want the change to be far-reaching or long-lasting, they may need to take steps to achieve power and control before being able to affect the change they want.

While ambitions are subject to change, they are going to be the most stable over time and will determine their motivation and how they act when going about realizing their ambitions.

NOTE



## PLANS & STAGES

### WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT?

Once you have chosen the opposition and their ambition, map out what their Plan is in a few concise steps. Working backward from the end goal of their Plan, or from the beginning if you like, map out a few steps that a Plan might need to take in order to affect the change in status quo they want. Depending on how long and epic you want the story to be, you will need more, or less, steps to see them achieve their Plan. These key points in a plan are referred to as Stages.

The Plan takes into account all the steps that the villain must go through in order to bring about the change they want, though they may acquire the power they need to affect change off-screen via a MacGuffin or as part of their backstory. Ask yourself some questions — do they have only one plan? Multiple plans that converge? Is there a fail-safe or contingency or is it all-or-nothing?

Next, each Stage should have at least one, but perhaps a series of, obstacles that the villain must overcome. Obviously, the heroes are going to be an obstacle at one point or another, but it could be other people of influence, components or parts to make something, or the forming of allies and alliances. This also touches on how the villain goes about affecting change — do they do it themselves? Is it in the political arena and through bureaucracy or by fighting or via a coup? Stages of a Plan will often be about mustering resources until they can bring about the change they seek in the final Stage.

Each of these Stages should include a general idea of what might happen at each Stage should that specific stage, or even the plan in its entirety, succeed or fail.

So say you choose something simple for your first Plan — your mastermind is The Nuke, and he is the genius leader of a horde of grotesque mutant creatures living well beneath the earth's surface who took the name after reading the first magazine that he found swept into the depths, without rhyme or reason, and managed to glean that it was a thing to be feared. His genius is such that it lends him control over the will of all those around him, especially those he has been in extended contact with. He is not even aware of his power but believes he is simply charismatic and his followers are unaware of the effect, thinking themselves free.

The Nuke is a villain and his motive would be to take the surface world for his people. He might think himself charismatic due to his mind powers but could crumble quickly upon learning that his people may not actually be truly following him.

Having chosen your mastermind, you determine what his Plan is. It is your first story as EIC so you choose to keep it simple — The Nuke's plan is to take over the surface world and carve out a place for his people to live in the light. In order to do that he must:

- 1) Scout — send scouts to see where the best location is to come up, remain hidden, blend in, send messages, etc.
- 2) Preparation — make it easier to actually climb up and out of the depths with some natural disasters — unnatural volcanic eruptions and earthquakes set up by machines made by The Nuke and planted by his minions.
- 3) Attack — send forces to take various locations in the city, some for strategic value (the bridges leading into Manhattan), some because they are closer to the depths (subways, sewers), or ones that look cool or lower morale and usually get beat up on (Statue of Liberty, Central Park).
- 4) Softening — send envoys in secret to parley or assassinate any leaders, if the scouts succeeded before then maybe they reveal themselves and try to take over.
- 5) Grand Finale — The Nuke shows up with his minions threatening to obliterate the city unless control of it is relinquished to him.

Most of these things on the list are pretty progressive in terms of time, so it probably means The Nuke's Plan will be going from step 1 to 5 one at a time rather than in various or simultaneous steps — except maybe envoys and scouts could be sent at the same time. There are five steps, so that means the Nuke's Plan has five Stages that will go off as bad things need to have happen. The first Stage might be what you lead off with for the first session or you might have some lead in before you get to it, but the last Stage should be something big that leads to a world changing event. It is the culmination of the Plan, and whether it is fully realized or not, there should be serious repercussions if the heroes can't put a stop to it. If the heroes cannot put a stop to a certain Stage, it will probably trigger the following Stage, or it might spin off to a completely new Stage or Plan that you may or may not need to write up. For example, if the heroes find the scouts and find out where they come from or who they are working for, they might decide to travel into the depths to try and find who sent them, which means they may not be on the surface to protect or push back some of the Stages taking place there. Then, when they do find The Nuke down there (or not), the surface may already be completely overrun or the Nuke might capture or parley with them. Nothing should be set in stone besides a mastermind's motivation; the rest is a fluid, ever-changing plot to see the mastermind realize their goal.

Plans often change based on success, failure, or changing conditions. There are branches that lead off of the first couple Stages of the Plan to both remind you that failure is an option at any stage and to give you a place to put down how the Plan changes if things do end in failure.

## COMMON STORIES AND TROPES IN SUPERHERO COMICS

Comics have been around for a long, long time and in that time a lot of common tropes and types of stories have developed. Some of these are unique to, or more prevalent in, comics. Some of these are easily found in other types of media as well. These can work as great spring boards when sitting down to come up with a new Plan. This way you start with a mastermind or key opponent and then choose a trope to work with, or maybe adapt to, a plan they might concoct. When starting with a trope first though, rather than from a mastermind or key opponent and then planning out a natural plan progression as per their motivation, you will want to make sure that the opposition has suitable ambitions and motivations to match the trope and the plan that you come up with when riffing off of common story elements.

**Enemy of the Week:** Unique and interesting villain shows up, usually with a simple and singular purpose. Scales with difficulty but often times there is a specific method of dealing with them that needs to be figured out first to be effective. Maybe just for introducing a new villain or organization so that they can be used in later plots.

**Fixing Continuity Errors:** The world is different and changing. Maybe only certain people are affected. Who can remember how it's different? Who's behind it? Should you fix it? How? Does it have to do with time travel, mind control, or what? Do they have to go to the past to fix it or the future? Does someone come to warn or help them? Are they good or bad?

**Against the Status Quo:** Someone is responsible for championing and swaying the hearts and minds of the populace in a very bad way; maybe events take place that make it clear that the existing system is corrupt or is not working. How do you stop and deal with an entire country, its people, its legislature, politics and government?

**Identity gets out:** The secret is out! Or did they get it wrong? Do they own up to it, or deny it? Who let it out and why? How does it affect their life?

**Building the MacGuffin:** A villain has a nefarious plot that they need realized! They must gather, steal or otherwise manipulate their way into getting all the pieces of the puzzle to assemble their MacGuffin!

**The Connection:** Someone is taking down people in what seems like a random fashion. What is the connection between them? Are they heroes? What is the motivation behind it?

**Growing Up:** The heroes have just learned or gotten their powers and something goes wrong — maybe their powers go haywire. They must learn to control their powers as obstacles especially suited to their powers are thrown at them, at varying levels of difficulty.

**To Be a Hero:** What happens when a hero loses his powers? What makes a hero a hero and can they live up to it despite being normal?

**The Gift:** A hero, or the heroes, receive a mysterious and possibly dangerous gift. What is it? What is it for and what does it do? Who sent it and why?

**Haunted by the Past:** Previous actions in the past lead to a new villain being born. Suddenly, the consequences of past actions are felt, casting the heroes in doubt, or at least making the villain sympathetic and dangerous to their reputation. What did they do in the past that could come back to hurt them? (Common ones: Destroying other peoples' property, failing to protect someone, ignoring someone.)

**Request for Help:** Someone the heroes know and respect is in trouble or comes to them as a third party requesting help. What do they request of the heroes? Why would they be obliged to say yes?

**The Escort Mission:** The heroes are tasked with protecting and bringing a person or object from one place to another for reasons — usually because a favor is called in, it's too dangerous for anyone else, requires unique talents or is under protection and is particularly valuable. Why is it valuable and to who? What is the danger?

**Unstable:** Something or someone only the heroes can get under control is threatening the lives of others or maybe even only themselves. Perhaps a future villain, but maybe just a random individual getting new powers they don't know how to control. What was it like for the heroes when they got their powers? What did they learn from their experience that could be applied here? Maybe it's not a person, but something alien or technological in nature.

**Disappearance:** Someone important to one or more of the heroes disappears. Who disappeared and why? Why do the heroes care?

**Double Take:** Someone you trusted, knew, or who is in a position of power is not who you thought they were. This can include shape-shifters, being mindcontrolled or a puppeteer in the background. Usually it is hard to expose the villain. Who are they? Why did they pretend to be this person? For how long? To what end?

**The Frame Job:** Someone the hero knows or even the heroes themselves are framed for a crime and the people want justice. Did they really do it? Is it an exaggeration or an outright lie? Will they stand trial and if convicted, will they stay in prison? What will it take to get them out?

**The Sympathetic Villain:** The enemy or villain is doing bad things but for an understandable and sympathetic reason. Maybe they are a Robin Hood type of character. Maybe they want revenge for a very real, personal and true slight or wrong done against them. Maybe they turn villain because of a very real problem we can all identify with (banks taking homes, health care, and bureaucratic issues are common). Many times these villains are true at heart and will fall apart when they realize they're harming another individual rather than an institution or not affecting change like they thought. What are they after and what makes them sympathetic?

**The Victim:** A victim of a crime or who is otherwise helpless comes to or otherwise petitions the heroes so that they can mete out justice. Try to avoid damsels in distress!

**Enemy of my Enemy:** The heroes end up having to work with someone they hate, despise or who is otherwise villainous as an ends to a means. Why do they hate or despise the villain? Do they have any redeeming qualities and was misunderstood? Did the heroes have preconceptions? What could be so big that the heroes would consider working with a foe?

**Betrayed:** A long-time mentor, boss, fellow teammate or someone important to the heroes betray them. Why would they do such a thing and is it legit or due to coercion? What could they do to make the heroes hate them, seek revenge, or question everything they know?

**Conscription:** The country, the world, their people need the help of the heroes to help fight against their enemy. What obligation do the heroes have to their people or country? Is the fight justified and does it matter in the end? Who are they fighting and why?

**Civil War:** A hot issue divides the country. Longtime friends and heroes are now pitted against one another. What is the issue, who stands on either side and who represents those issues? Is the government, other institutions involved?

**Scale:** When crimes and events that can only be solved by the heroes start taking place in other places what do they do? How do they get there? How far does a hero's responsibility reach: their neighborhood? The entire city? The nation, continent or the entire planet?

**The Apocalypse:** A threat to the entire world is on its way. How much time is left? What is the danger and what is their motivation in the destruction of the earth? Is it even a villain? Is it something that can be reasoned with? (It could be zombies, disease, a force of nature, maybe a villain is an embodiment of a force of nature).

**Heroes as Villains:** The heroes become or are seen as villains due to certain events. What could have happened to make it so? Who spins the heroes' actions, or was it something the heroes did? Who is the advocate and how can they prove themselves to be heroes once again?

**New Sheriff in Town:** A new hero, or group of heroes, comes to town to assert their control or extend their protection to the city. What happens when the heroes clash with them? Where did they come from and why did they come? What are their intentions and motives? Is the city big enough for the both of them?

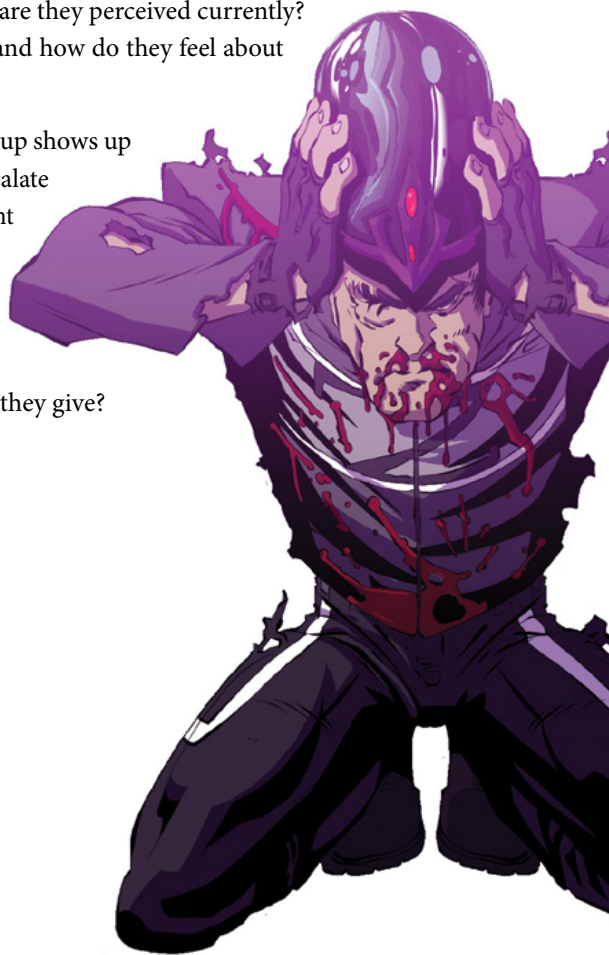
**Origin Story:** Every hero has a skeleton in their closet. Recent events have made it so that a hero's past must be explored to solve problems in the present or to deal with their issues before they can. How is the exploring done? (psychically, going to actual places, etc.). What is the current problem that they have to deal with or why does the past suddenly need to be explored? What can the other heroes be doing while this takes place?

**End of Era:** It is time for the heroes to pass the torch. Who will they pass it to and are they ready? Will they have to train, help or come back? What signifies and lets the heroes know that their time has finished and how long can they stay retired?

**Vengeance:** The justice system, other heroes or everyone in general are blind or let the guilty off despite their wrongs against a hero or the team. What can be done about it? How far will they go to bring them to justice?

**Redemption:** Someone screwed up in the past, one hero or many. How can they make it up to people and how are they perceived currently? How can they change their image and how do they feel about what they did?

**Crossing the Line:** Another hero or group shows up that are heroes but that gradually escalate in severity and in terms of punishment doled out. How much is too much? When does a hero cross the line? Why does the new team continue to escalate? How far will the heroes let them go, how much leeway will they give?



**The Deadly Sins:** Villains that are representative of the sins of man come to town. Do they have the right to punish us? Are the seven sins really sins at all? Are they men or forces of nature? Do they serve or are they beholden to someone, like Death?

**Above the Law:** Villains that are not part of the human race and who do not see themselves as being subject to human laws appear. Do only humans have a claim on the world? Are they subject to our laws? What do these beings do to push the heroes to make choices and answer questions? What if Earth was theirs to begin with and they're just now coming back?

**Terror Attack:** The heroes must face a new kind of danger, hysteria, panic and attacks designed to incite terror. Who is behind the attacks and what are their motives? How do you deal with and combat fear?

**Security vs. Privacy:** How many secrets are the government allowed to keep from the population? If aliens are here do the people deserve to know? Should heroes be allowed to hide their identities? Do heroes get to cast a vote in the issue of security vs. privacy?

**Conspiracy Theories:** It turns out some old stories might be true. Explore conspiracy theories like the JFK assassination, Roswell, New World Order, etc. Cast new light on them by tying them to new villains or new organizations that were behind them and that who are still working in the shadows to bring about change. Who is in the shadows pulling the strings? Why were their motives and how were they behind said conspiracy? Why do the heroes care and how does it affect what is going on with them right now?

**The Heist:** Someone the heroes need is under lock and key, impossible to get and is covered by all the things that can counter the heroes. How will they get in? How will they get it? What is it and why do they need it?

**Torn Between Two Worlds:** The heroes end up on some form of a deserted island with no way to get back — an alternate dimension, a planet, a different timeline, etc. How do they get back and do they want to? What is their responsibility to the new place and what about the old one?

**The MacGuffin:** The heroes need a MacGuffin to deal with a threat or to deal with a problem they have, whether it be external or internal. In this case the MacGuffin could be training or knowledge. It could be a doomsday device or special technology that can cure a disease or shield the world from an incoming threat. What do they have to deal with and what are the steps they have to take to get it? What must they sacrifice?

**The Impossible Choice:** The heroes end up in the position of having to make an impossible choice or face a moral conundrum. What puts them there and why? How will the choice affect them and what happens when they make it?



## THREATS & OPPONENTS

### HOW WILL THEY ATTEMPT TO CARRY OUT THEIR PLAN?

A mastermind or key opposition also has Threats and opponents that they use to serve their purposes, whether the threats know they are carrying out the mastermind's dirty work or serving their own ends is up to you and your mastermind. The key opposition could be an organization, something completely unknown from beyond reality and dreams, a planar force, a mythological force, a horde of creatures or an evil villain. Just like a mastermind or key opposition, the Threats and opponents the heroes encounter could be any of those things as well. Sometimes even these Threats, opponents or minions will be working towards their own goals and motivations the entire time as well — how much, and for how long, they align with the key opposition or mastermind is something to keep in mind.

Threats and opponents change all the time, session to session or scene to scene. Some opponents might try similar tactics over and over, but they would not be masterminds if they did. The Threats and opponents that the heroes encounter and have to deal with are probably going to be representative of certain Stage or part of the plan; what methods will the villain use to carry out and see their ambitions realized the next time around?

NOTE

A Stage being successful is usually a result of the Threats and opponents doing what they were supposed to and carrying out their part of the plan — whether the heroes try to stop them or not. There is always the chance of a Stage not being completed entirely successfully, or even at all. If The Nuke sends scouts to the surface and the players figure out a way to send a message back to the Nuke saying that he should not attack, or the area is inhospitable, then maybe the first Stage is not successful at all or is delayed. Still, maybe The Nuke sent more than one group of scouts and they found an area to come up at, just not at the one the heroes specified. It is up to you to figure out how it will influence the overarching Plan and the Threats involved in it.

In The Nuke's Plan, Threats and opponents might go something like this:

- 1) Scouting — (a) Send scouts to figure out and learn as much as they can. Maybe people with their minds sucked dry start showing up around town in places like subways or sewers. (b) Send some of the mutants with shape-shifting abilities or mind-control abilities to impersonate or puppet key public, religious and government figures — maybe a popular deacon, the mayor, a superhero or two to challenge the heroes, maybe they even find out information on the heroes too in terms of who they care about and their pressure points.
- 2) Preparation — (c) Earthquakes followed by a tsunami and another natural disaster or two; search and rescue scenarios to see how the heroes prioritize the people in their lives and their responsibility to the city. (Chance for a character's Bonds to be endangered).
- 3) Attack — Regardless, (d) Bridge attack to close off Manhattan, (e) attacks on the Statue of Liberty to demoralize the city by taking away an important symbol in a show of power.
- 4) Softening — (f) Public broadcast of TV anchor urging citizens to stay in their home and put up no resistance — maybe try to turn them against the heroes saying it was their fault. (g) March out and protest the heroes with the church deacon perhaps. (Bonds with The City, Law Enforcement affected?)
- 5) Grand Finale — (h) The Nuke shows up and fights, (i) doesn't reveal the plan until he realizes he can't beat the heroes or until he knows he's outgunned (National Guard, Army, etc.) that he has a bomb and that he'll blow it if Manhattan is not given to him as a home for him and his people.

At each step, there are opponents and Threats to be dealt with. If Threats are not stopped they lead to Stages being completed successfully and if Stages are not stopped they advance the Plan and the mastermind is closer to success. Some Threats might only be capable of being stopped partially or perhaps they are only meant to slow down or soften; so if the heroes manage to beat it back or recharge and regain their energy, or cheer up the inhabitants it could be seen as stopping a Stage of the Plan. Probably, it would not stop an attack from going off unless a show of power makes The Nuke think twice. It is always up to you as the EIC to come up with how everything is affecting the story, the Threats and the mastermind behind the scenes. You may even choose to have multiple masterminds unraveling their own Plans.

One mastermind's minions and threats used might have other motivations of their own, and probably should. The scale and scope of the plan itself and all the parts in it are yours to decide. If a mastermind's plans keep getting foiled by the PCs but the mastermind themselves is not captured or permanently stopped, how are their plans likely to change or escalate?

If a mastermind fails they're sure to continue to concoct plans. Their motivations and their ambitions don't die with their first attempt at carrying out a plan, at least not most of the time. Here are some suggestions for what might happen if a mastermind is defeated:

**Allies:** They seek out allies to help them. Team-up with other villains that have had similarly tasted defeat. Buy the best, or treat new minions differently in order to secure their loyalty.

**Personal:** Now things are personal. Whatever plans they had before go on hold until they can deal with the heroes and pursue their other ambitions.

**Plan:** They disappear for months, years, putting together the perfect plan. Studying every facet, every detail of it. The heroes, the city, their routines, their weaknesses, before finally striking again.

**Resources:** They build up money or other resources they can use to exert pressure on the heroes, develop their own projects, gain a foothold in other areas that could help them like the government, the mafia, or other powerful agencies.

**Training:** They realize that they are not yet powerful enough to take on the heroes so they seek out the power they need. Deals with the devil or other dark forces, training and tutelage, and so on. Seeking out an artifact, weapon, technology or energy that they hope to bend to their will might be just what they need.





# KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR PREP

Next, you will want to make sure you have a list of the Threats and a description of everyone involved in the Plan and the Stages that make it up. Keeping it simple, you may choose to have all the threats be mutant creatures from the depths, but they should still be of varying strength and difficulty, with their own particularities. Scouts will not act the same as warriors and some might have shape-shifting powers, others might have mind control and still others might have elemental or stealth powers. Perhaps each Stage has its own lieutenant to oversee it, and to keep watch while relaying information back to their boss. These individual threats could complicate the story even further depending on the motivations and goals you give them.

You do not need to have absolutely every character ready but some Threats of vary difficulties will probably be necessary in case you need something to throw at the players. A lot of the basic mooks and grunts will be similar but the lieutenants or stronger opponents should have some interesting abilities so they can put up a bit more of a fight and to make the story interesting. Since making villains is such an integral and major step of the process, it has its own chapter ([on to page 180](#)), but you can figure out the outlines here before detailing the individual threats, including the mastermind, by following the following steps. Each Type of Threat has some example motives you can draw inspiration from if you need ideas coming up with a storyline and so you know how they'll act in certain situations.

Another thing to keep in mind is how much to plan and how far in advance to prep. Ideally, you are only going to want to plan one or two Stages in advance. The reason for this is that the more you prep, the more work you do that might never see the table. Not only that, but the more prep you do, the more it might influence you and the fiction. If you have plans and opponents prepped four Stages in advance, but the players try to do something that will divert and force a change to the plan at Stage two, it might make you less receptive to that change and more willing to direct the players toward what you have already prepped out. Do not plan too far in advance, and use the EIC sheet to outline what happens at each stage in case of success or failure. Be open to the players affecting the fiction, because it will happen a lot and it both makes your life easier as the EIC (not having to prep as much), and more fun for the players (seeing how their actions directly affect the fiction). Here are some examples of Types of Threats that you can use to spark some ideas for your mastermind and the other threats and opposition involved in their ambitions.

## CHOOSE THE TYPE OF THREAT:

- Ambitious Organizations
- Unknowns
- Planar Forces
- Mythological Forces
- Hordes
- Villains

## AMBITIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

- Misguided good (*Motive: do what is right no matter the cost*)
- Gang (*Motive: to control a territory or service*)
- Secret Faction (*Motive: to take by subterfuge*)
- Cult (*Motive: to infect from within*)
- Religious Organization (*Motive: to establish and follow a doctrine, to convert*)
- Corrupt Government (*Motive: to maintain the status quo*)
- Cabal (*Motive: to grow in power and remake the world as we see fit*)
- Secret Society or Clan (*Motive: Protect our secrets and spread*)
- Government Organizations (*Motive: Control, exploit, experiment on those with powers, get rid of those we can't*)

### EXAMPLE EIC MOVES FOR AMBITIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

- Turn those close to you against you (give important people different morals, ideals)
- Attack someone directly (as a gang)
- Attack someone by stealthy means (kidnapping, poisoning, etc.)
- Influence a powerful institution or a large group of people (change a law, manipulate doctrine)
- Claim territory or resources
- Negotiate a deal
- Observe a potential foe in detail

## UNKNOWNNS

- Unknowable aliens (*Motive: probe and study*)
- Aliens with a purpose (*Motive: take over, enslave, learn as much as possible, etc.*)
- Enemies from another dimension (*Motive: make this world our own*)
- Enemies from an alternate reality (*Motive: the horror must not come to pass*)
- Stranger from another time (*Motive: find my place in the world*)
- Disease (*Motive: multiply and spread*)

### EXAMPLE EIC MOVES FOR UNKNOWNNS

- Keep pushing demands until they snap
- Begin takeover of major cities
- Take out key officials and people in power
- State something dear must be sacrificed for a better tomorrow
- Help or hinder the stranger or the government, law enforcement seeking to study, do harm, and restrict their freedoms.



## PLANAR FORCES

- Gods (*Motive: gather worshippers*)
- Demon Prince (*Motive: to open the gates of hell*)
- Exiled Deity (*Motive: to access the world of the living*)
- Elemental Lord (*Motive: tear creation down to its component parts*)
- Force of Chaos (*Motive: destroy all semblance of order*)
- Construct of Law (*Motive: pass judgment and restore a proper semblance of law and order*)

### EXAMPLE MOVES FOR PLANAR FORCES

- Turn an organization (corrupt, infiltrate, influence)
- Give dreams of prophecy
- Lay a curse
- Begin to crawl through the dreams of the living
- Extract a promise in exchange for a boon
- Attack indirectly, through intermediaries
- Attack directly, under certain special conditions
- Foster rivalries with other powers
- Expose someone to a Truth, wanted or otherwise

## MYTHOLOGICAL FORCES

- Warrior gods (*Motive: test mettle in battle and conquer*)
- Atlanteans (*Motive: visit vengeance upon those that pollute and destroy our land*)
- Forces of Avalon (*Motive: return the world to the days of old*)
- Forgotten Deity (*Motive: restore long forgotten knowledge and culture*)

### EXAMPLE MOVES FOR MYTHOLOGICAL FORCES

- Challenge those most powerful
- Create a realm on Earth
- Escape to Earth and blend in
- Create natural disasters to plunge the world into the oceans they poison everyday
- Slowly, and progressively faster, begin to regress time
- Kill all remaining believers so that they may finally rest, die and be forgotten



## HORDES

- Subterranean creatures (*Motive: to defend our home, to get to the light, to be accepted*)
- Undead Plague (*Motive: to spread*)
- Hero Haters (*Motive: to drive out or kill all heroes*)

### EXAMPLE MOVES

- Assault the city or bastion of civilization
- Flee and bring a larger threat
- Show dominance
- Reach out to change public opinion
- Hold rallies to grow in number, attack heroes
- Appoint a champion
- Eat all brains, infect the living

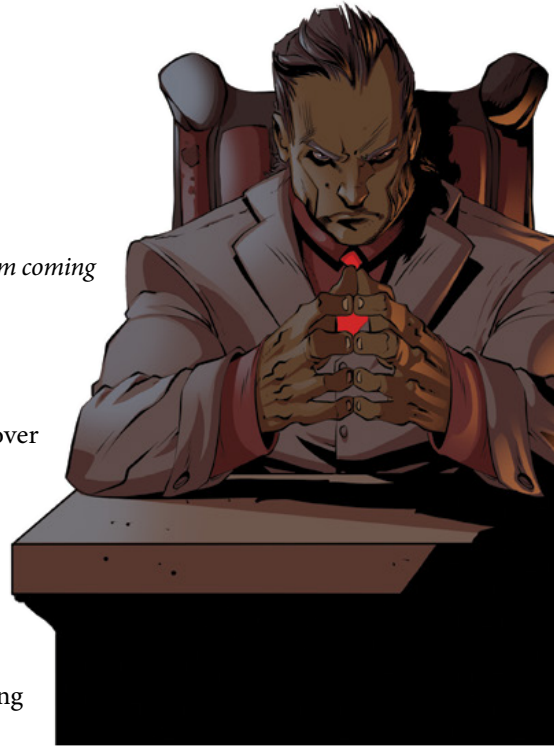


## VILLAINS

- *Motive: To take over the world*
- *Motive: To enslave the world*
- *Motive: To get justice for a wrong done*
- *Motive: To grow in power*
- *Motive: To grow in knowledge*
- *Motive: To get rich*
- *Motive: To prove myself!*
- *Motive: Toy with and manipulate*
- *Motive: Be free of this immense power*
- *Motive: Change or Prevent the Future from coming to Pass*
- *Motive: Destroy all those with powers*

### EXAMPLE MOVES FOR VILLAINS

- Invent and place machines to take over peoples' minds
- Capture and hold hostage key officials, travel to the future and come back with technology suitable for global conquest
- Hunt down and kill those responsible one by one
- Get in touch with an omnipotent being or force
- Make a pact with a force in exchange for a deed done
- Rob banks, get as much money as possible
- Challenge and best all those that have beaten me before, prepare so that this time I'll win!



## DESCRIPTION AND CAST

Make some notes of the characters that would be major players in the Threats taking place and what kind of threat they are and why. What their motivations are, their end game, what resources they have and what resources they need. If there are key players remember to name them as well and add a detail or two. Leave yourself space to build and create details with the players as the story progresses and don't be afraid to ask questions and get the players involved in coming up with information about Threats in play or to use their answers to change or modify the ideas you had in mind.

## CREATING CUSTOM MOVES (IF NEEDED)

Sometimes a Threat will suggest or beg to have a move made for it that isn't covered by any existing ones — in fact, this will probably be the case most of the time. Write custom moves for any Threats that need them so that they fit into the story exactly how you want them to do. Since you, as the EIC, make a move whenever the players look at you to see what happens, when players do not respond or successfully resolve or deal with something happening in the fiction, or when a 6- is rolled, enemy moves are a great option for things to have happen. More on enemy moves are discussed later on as they do not need to be made all the time and are generally very specific to a special kind of villain or enemy.

## RESOLVING PARTS OF YOUR PREP

Threats should and will get resolved. Every story should not change into an apocalyptic or earth shattering event by the mastermind achieving their goals and their Plan succeeding. When all the Threats that were meant to be dealt with over several game session are resolved and the Plan gets wrapped up, it is time to write up a new mastermind with a Plan. Write down some ideas and define the new Plan and then break up the things that need to happen to get to that end. What world-changing event could happen by the end of the of it? Create Threats and Stages to get the world from sunshine and rainbows to the end of the world.

Remember that when Threats or Stages are resolved there should be also be intermittent breaks as needed for the players and their characters to rest, recuperate or pursue some of their own goals or requirements they are working to achieve. How often these come up are up to you as the EIC and the life of a superhero is perilous, no doubt about that, but the possibility for success should always be there.

## MAPPING YOUR PREP

A good way for you to keep track of your Threats is to keep them on index cards in front of you on the table. On the side facing down, that is hidden against the table, write down which Stage of the Plan the Threats are linked to and what their motivations are so that you can reference it throughout. As the players learn more about certain Stages of the Plan, who is involved in it and other important information, write down the relevant facts on the top of the card for all to see. This can also be done for Threats that are not immediately obvious or as they gain more

information as to how certain things are culminating and the Plan is realized, or not. As the characters glean more knowledge about the Threats involved, or who are pulling their strings, you can have a player make an index card for each Threat that has what they know about it on it and keep it up to date.

Another fun way to show what has been going on to the players or what they have learned about so far is to place the cards and information on or around the areas on a map. A map of New York could have cards on it where certain Threats are going down or incidents the heroes are investigating—like a body sucked dry and missing a brain when the scouts came up, or The Statue of Liberty when an attack hits, and so on.

**CREATING THREATS AND TYING THEM TO STAGES AND THE PLAN**

Choose your mastermind or key opposition and their ambitions and motive and then map out their Plan and determine how many steps it might have.

Each step is called a Stage. The first Stage usually starts off the game but it does not have to. The last one is the big finale and should pose an appropriately serious threat and consequence.

For the first couple Stages of the Plan, what happens if it succeeds or fails, but only in broad strokes as the Plan is going to change the moment the players get involved.

Choose two or three Types of Threats, define their motives and how they are, knowingly or not, advancing the key opposition’s Plan.

Make some Threats and Opponents that the key opposition or mastermind will use to carry out the Stages of their Plan.

Describe the general cast involved in the Plan and each of their motives so you know how they will react to successes and failures.

Make some custom moves for your mastermind or any Threats that need them after reading the following section on Creating Major Villains and Enemies.

detail

The diagram shows a villain's plan card with the following sections:

- EDITOR IN CHIEF**
  - MASTERMIND
- ORGANIZATIONS**
  - 1 INSTINCT
  - 2 INSTINCT
  - 3 INSTINCT
  - 4 INSTINCT
- MASTER PLAN END GOAL**
- STEP 1**
  - SUCCESS
  - FAILURE
- STEP 2**
  - SUCCESS
  - FAILURE
- MOB 1**
  - INSTINCT
  - SIZE
  - MOTIVATIONS/TIES
  - MOVES/POWERS:
- MOB 2**
  - INSTINCT
  - SIZE
  - MOTIVATIONS/TIES
  - MOVES/POWERS:
- PUNCHING BAG**
  - INSTINCT
  - CONDITION THRESHOLD
  - MOTIVATIONS/TIES
  - MOVES/POWERS:
- HEAVY HITTER**
  - INSTINCT
  - CONDITION THRESHOLD
  - MOTIVATIONS/TIES
  - MOVES/POWERS:



## CREATING MAJOR VILLAINS AND ENEMIES

A villain is anyone that stands in the heroes' way, or anyone whose way the heroes will want to stand in the way of. How you use villains to confront players follows from your agenda and principles, just like any Threat — portray a comic book world. The way you describe the villains and enemies that you match the heroes up against makes all the difference. Make them vivid and compelling. You will want to make sure everyone else is in the same headspace so make some villains cheesy and predictable and others diabolical and all-knowing as suits the players at the table. Whether they are the mastermind of the session or doing their dirty work knowingly or not, they should also have some definition and motivation in the story to make them compelling and fun to confront. Everything and any obstacle that the player characters must face in order to succeed can be a villain or enemy.

Enemies are in the fiction to make the world more adventurous and to give the characters a purpose — something to fight against. You want to make most fights with enemies challenging and cinematic because there isn't any tension in a fight easily won. On the other hand, you do not want to be rooting for the villains to take the heroes out. Dealing Minor, Moderate and Critical Conditions are great tools to set expectations in the fiction in regards to what characters can and cannot do or what they are up against. Be consistent but throw some surprises their way too — especially if they start getting too comfortable. The two-bit, easily-put-down, cheesy villain has come back stronger than ever to take revenge on unsuspecting, cocky heroes only too often. Fights do not always have to be fair (in that they are winnable from the onset), even heroes have to retreat to collect themselves and to form a plan of action every now and then. Give them a real threat and see what they do with it.

## ELEMENTS OF AN ENEMY / MAKING ENEMIES

When coming up with enemies, start with the description. Form an idea of what the enemy looks like, what they want and how they get what they want. Decide if the enemy needs to be mechanically defined at all or if you can get away with just having a general idea of what they can do and how long they should last. If you decide you need to define it with more than just the general idea, then you can use the following template to help you detail your enemy.

<b>NAME</b>		<b>TYPE</b>
<b>MOTIVE</b>	(or Size Rating if mob)	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>		
<b>CONDITION THRESHOLD</b>		
<b>POWERS</b>		

Every enemy has moves that describe how they act and what they do. You use these moves whenever the players look at you expectantly, whenever there's an opportunity given to you by the players or when the players get a 6- on a roll. Enemy moves are just extra choices to add to your EIC moves that you can use until the enemy is no longer a factor in the fiction.

An enemy's **Type** indicates how strong or how much of a threat an enemy is to the heroes. Is the enemy a mob or a hindrance? A dangerous threat or a world-changing villain the heroes could not hope to face without preparing and learning more about the foe they face? Villain types are discussed more in the next section.

A **Name** is what the enemy is called and would be the place to put if they have a secret identity or not and if they are known by different names to different people.

Just like all Threats, enemies have Motives to give you an idea of how they act. What's their motivation and how do they go about getting what they want? Start with what their goal is and their motivation and you should be able to use it as the core concept for the character and their personality. If a henchman's only in it because he is getting paid, he might sooner take off than one who believes in a vision and plan for the future.

The **Appearance** is what the enemy looks like. How they are identifiable as what they are. Ask yourself, what does this villain look like? Do they wear a costume? Are they deformed, monstrous otherworldly, or charismatic? Do they have a theme? Are they the master of electricity, a lord of darkness, a murderous mime? Do they carry weapons? Do they keep their identity hidden? Make sure to give your villain a look that makes them unique if it's important to their concept.

The **Conditions Threshold** an enemy has is how much damage, or how many Conditions, they can take before they are knocked out of the fight or are no longer a threat. It is always assumed that a hero is trying to subdue an enemy (they are heroes right?) but if they state otherwise that is something you can make a note of and respond to in the fiction accordingly — Bonds might get Burned with other characters and probably other heroes. The city and law enforcement or other agencies would probably respond, and so on.

Some enemies also have **Special Powers** to challenge the heroes with, or **Advantages** like gadgets that let them fly or teleport away if they don't have powers.

An enemy might have a **tag** that describes if something is an Advantage (and therefore can be taken away, rendered useless, etc.) or if it can help an enemy by soaking up Conditions and damage for them (like a force field or high-tech armor, for example).

What follows are some things you may want to think about when creating a villain and some of the common tropes for villains in super hero comics, whether they work for you or they are something you would like to challenge by coming up with your own, unique and interesting villains and stories, is up to you. In fact, I would urge you to consider breaking some of these tropes whenever possible, especially among this list to inject some new ideas and freshness into your game. In particular, the trope of alien races being represented one-dimensionally, and especially as being entirely nefarious or evil (or even entirely good) is a trope that needs to be done away with.

**The villain is connected to one of the heroes:** Usually, a common and compelling villain is something the hero identifies with. They could be a reflection of the hero, they could be the complete opposite, or the connection could simply be thematic, like they have the same source or one similar to the hero. Maybe they have a shared personal history, connection or story.

**Gaining wealth:** Using powers to gain wealth (by force or not) is usually a common trope for villains. Same goes for political power and influence.

**Intentionally seek power:** Intentionally seeking out and trying to imbue or get ahold of power (whether it be super powers or any other form of power) is usually something a villain tries to do.

**Non-lethal:** Depending on the comic and time period, villains do not often actually kill in terms of civilian casualties (though environment destruction is usually not a problem). Playing with this scale drastically changes the tone of a story and modern comics definitely play with this dial to great effect.

**Violence is the ideal solution:** Violence is the ideal solution — villains usually use violence to solve most problems in a lot of comic books. This is often because it is the easiest way to engage the heroes in the fiction and show some action, and the same holds true in stories at the table, but it's always fun to come up with other stuff and mix it up.

**Villains and alien races:** Sometimes, an alien race is portrayed on one side of an extreme between a utopia and being benevolent, or being completely nefarious and evil. If not that, they are usually the same as humans, but better at doing certain things. It's pretty easy to be lazy and go this route, and it's ok to do so as long as you consider that any society is going to be complex and multi-dimensional.

CHOOSE VILLAIN TYPE

There are four tags and each one represents a type of enemy that is typically encountered by heroes in comic books. Those four tags are: **Mob**, **Punching Bag**, **Heavy Hitter** and **Mastermind**. Since villains are going to be Threats that pop up the most in a game the names are modeled more after that context but these tags can be applied to other enemies as well like beasts and creatures or aliens and everything else.

Under the villain templates there is a section for their moves, which are just things they can do whenever you need to make an EIC move. Powers show what they can do, just like a Powers Summary for heroes, but is more condensed and are shown in red. Specific moves they might make with those powers are listed below and work kind of like a player character's Powers Profile. Whenever you need to make a move with an enemy, just choose something from their moves or have them do something that takes into account their powers and capabilities.

If the enemy is a **Mob** then they usually serve as cannon fodder for the heroes and appear in large groups. They should be used to impede the heroes' progress and threaten progression as they are not usually a huge threat to heroes. Of course, nothing is stopping them from getting lucky once in a while though! Mobs work differently from all other enemy tags because they signify a large collective of enemies all moving with a singular purpose. When you create a mob, you give it a Size Rating and factor depending on how hard you want them to be to take down. If a mob has a Size Rating of 1 and a factor of 10, then there is a total of 10 enemies and anytime a character uses the Take Down move to reduce the size of a mob by 1, they are taking out 10 enemies — the entire mob would be taken out in one attack. If the mob was given a Size Rating of 2 (how many hits they can take) at a factor of 50 (how many enemies they take out per hit) then with each maneuver that reduced the size of the mob by 1, they would be taking out 50 enemies. When the mob's size rating gets to 0, it is no longer a mob or a threat and are dispersed. Here's an example Mob:

SINGULARITY NOW GOONS

MOTIVE	Take out anyone who gets close to the boss
APPEARANCE	The Big Bad Wolf's crew, completely loyal. An oval symbol with a jagged arrow cutting through it on their masks.
SIZE RATING	5 at a factor of 10. (50 enemies)
POWERS	No inherent powers, some tech.

MOB

ENERGY RIFLES [A]

- Cut through obstacles or barriers.
- Shoot down heroes.
- Create Chaos
- Endanger the innocent.
- Hinder
- Swarm and Engulf.



If the enemy is a **Punching Bag** then they are usually a minor player with average powers. They should have a generic power or two or a special ability. A Punching Bag's purpose is exactly what the name implies: to give the players something to hit that is resilient. Punching bags should be tough and able to dish out damage, but not too much of a challenge for a hero. Punching bags work well in teams, especially a team commanded by a Heavy Hitter. Here's an example Heavy Hitter:

**BUTCH**

MOTIVE	Protect the boss, get paid
APPEARANCE	An unstoppable juggernaut, half man, half cyborg with the technology grafts noticeably covering a portion of his face and one eye, and a lot of his upper body is covered in metal.
CONDITION THRESHOLD	1 x [number of heroes]
POWERS	

**POWER SOURCE:**  
**CYBERNETICS, INHERENT POWERS.**

- Low level Invulnerability.
- Super Strength, partly augmented by cybernetics [A]
- Grab and squeeze.
- Hurl nearby objects.

**BERSERKER**  
Endanger innocents.  
Grow stronger with every Condition taken.

PUNCHING BAG



If the enemy is a **Heavy Hitter** then they are a major player with substantial powers. Heavy Hitters usually have unique powers that should challenge and be made for opposing the heroes or doling out heavy destruction to keep them on their toes. They are tough to put down and maybe even have an immunity or two. A Heavy Hitter should pose a major threat to the heroes and be able to hold their own against a group. They should be memorable and recurring. Here's an example Heavy Hitter:

**HIJACK**

MOTIVE	Second in Command, Set off the Singularity, blanket DC and the White House with mind-controlling nanobots
APPEARANCE	Wears a mirror mask and keeps his nanobots close—crawling all over his body close. His costume is white.
CONDITION THRESHOLD	2 x [number of heroes]
POWERS	

**TECH, SOLAR, ABILITY.**

- Predictive Shielding. [A] [2]
- Control Machines.
- Take control of a machine.
- EMP blackout.

**SOLAR ENERGY**

- Absorb and redirect.
- Absorb all nearby light, making it pitch black.



If the enemy is an **Arch Villain** they are usually going to be the driving character behind a Stage or Plan. They should have a unique set of powers and possibly even the ability to level heroes or cities with ease. Beating an Arch Villain should be difficult to near impossible and require cunning, ingenuity, and teamwork. Direct confrontations with Arch Villains should be epic and should be something to avoid if the heroes are not on their home turf. Here's an example Arch Villain:

**SAUDADE**

<b>MOTIVE</b>	Reset humanity, the world by augmenting powers with black magic.
<b>APPEARANCE</b>	Wears a black and purple helmet with a series red jewels that amplifies her powers set in it. A purple corset that ends in a black and purple, full-length skirt.
<b>CONDITION THRESHOLD</b>	3 x [number of heroes]
<b>POWERS</b>	Psionic.

ARCH VILLAIN

**VISIONS OF THE FUTURE.**

Force or implant visions in a mind.

**MIND CONTROL**

Mind-meld.

Create illusions.

Force confrontation on the psychic plane.  
[3]

Telepathy.

Floating debris field [3]

Hurl shrapnel.

Destroy environment (to refill debris field)



**PSIONIC FORCE.**

**ADVANTAGES, POWERS**

A few things to remember to use that you can attach to any enemy to make them more unique are Advantage or Special Powers. When creating a villain, tags are sometimes used to remind oneself of certain abilities or Advantages they have. An “A” in brackets is a tag to show that it is an Advantage that can be taken away and looks like this: [A]. A number in brackets is a tag to show a number of Conditions that that power, ability or piece of knowledge may add to the Condition Threshold of an enemy if it comes up in play. For example, if there's a [3] next to an ability for Fire Resistance then it means that if fire is used or comes up in play and would normally damage them, first take the Conditions away from the number in brackets before subtracting the number of Conditions they have.

Advantages grant an ability to an enemy to do something despite not having a power, or in addition to the powers they already have. One Advantage usually grants one capability — like flight, or armor piercing bullets, and so on. Advantages are there to give capabilities to enemies beyond or outside the scope of powers they do not

have. You might think of it like Iron Man or Batman just having a really long list of Advantages by means of gadgets to use at their disposal — it makes them versatile and dangerous but any one of them can be taken away as they are not inherent abilities. These are represented with [A] to show that they are Advantages and that they can be taken away.

On the other hand, Special Powers are inherent abilities that cannot be taken away. If they have super powers, like having impenetrable skin, then they are probably harder to take down. If they have enhanced senses then they will probably know when the heroes show up, and so on. If they are always going to be a factor in play then adjust the Condition Threshold of the villain to reflect that. If they will only come up in play depending on what happens in the fiction, show how many Conditions they can absorb before they are rendered useless by putting a number with brackets around it. If they come up in play, tick their “uses” off as needed. These are represented by a number in bracket you can see we used for the example villains, but you can represent it however you like.

Finally, Advantages can also have uses to be ticked off — namely for reducing or negating damage and Conditions that would normally be Imposed. So sometimes you might have an [A] alongside [X] where X is the number of Conditions that it can soak up before being rendered useless or needing to recharge.

## ENEMY MOVES

When making up moves for enemies, you don’t have to follow the same format as moves that are player-facing. Rather than writing long enemy moves with triggers, a simple list of the things they might do for when you need to make a move is fine. When you need to make a move with the enemy, choose something off the list or look at their powers for inspiration. A move for a bunch of goons might be something as simple as “swarm” or “engulf and overpower”. A move for a Punching Bag might be “retreat, only to come back stronger” or even a move similar to one that players use like “Use Environment”. All they are is a few words to describe the things they can do that perhaps link up to their instincts to give you an idea of what they might do. More importantly, they’re interesting, descriptive things you can pull out whenever you need to make a move. They can be as powerful or weak as you need them to be and as suits the enemy you are defining. An Arch Villain or Heavy Hitting psychic might have a move like “plant a thought or suggestion in someone’s mind” or a god might have the move “banish”. Moves are only limited by the fiction you want to portray and your imagination.

Another way to make an enemy all that more difficult is to give them moves that allow them to shrug off Minor, Moderate or Critical Conditions — a Mob might have one that replenishes their numbers so that the size of the mob grows, or they might dissipate if the leader is taken out so they might have a move to nominate a new leader. A Punching Bag might have a move that allows them to shrug off a Minor Condition every turn when they take a hostage to catch their breath. A Heavy Hitter might have a move or Special Power that makes them stronger, or that unlock certain powers as they have Conditions Imposed on them. An Arch Villain might have a

move that allows them to wipe away all Minor and Moderate Conditions when they reveal their diabolical plan and use a secret weapon to heal or change into their true form. A Critical Condition should almost never be erased unless there is something going on in the fiction that would completely or significantly heal them. Imposing a Critical Condition is no simple task so it should not be something that is taken away from a player or discounted without reason.

## ESPECIALLY POTENT ENEMIES

Some enemies are so far beyond even a superhero's powers to affect that they don't even need to have a Condition Threshold listed. A god, celestial being, or something else equally powerful, for example. Other enemies might be really, really easy for a hero to put out of commission and might just not be dangerous to superheroes most of the time. That does not mean that a superhero absolutely would not be able to face off against something really powerful, it just means that a lot would have to happen in the fiction first or they would have to find a way with quick thinking and cleverness instead of brute force attacks.

Even if an enemy does not have a Condition Threshold, they can and should still have a motive and reason for being there, at the very least. They are still present in the fiction, affecting it in some way, they are just a certain kind of challenge or obstacle different from most enemies the characters will face.

## CHECKLIST FOR CREATING ENEMIES

Here are some questions to ask yourself to help you when creating some enemies.

### **What is their main offensive power?**

In what manner do they go about harming an adversary? Do they get up close and personal and start swinging? Put others in danger? Find their weak spot first? Do they have power beams or super strength, mind control or control over the elements?

### **What is their main defensive power?**

In what manner do they defend themselves when put in harm's way? Do they have a shield or impervious skin? Minions to jump in the way, teleportation or enhanced reflexes?

### **Are they immune to something?**

Then a Condition cannot be Imposed on them in that manner. (If they are immune to fire, then if a character tries to impose a Condition by blasting them with a fireball, the Condition does not get Imposed).

### **Are they resistant to something?**

Then any Condition Imposed is lowered by one level of Severity. (If a player chooses to impose a Critical Condition, a Moderate one is Imposed instead. If a Minor Condition were to be Imposed, no Condition at all is Imposed instead.) Otherwise, if it's a weak resistance you could always treat it as a tag and write it in with a number next to it to show how much it might soak up in case it comes up in the fiction.

**Do they get stronger the more punishment they take?**

Reflect that by upping the severity of the Conditions they Impose, or the scale on which they do damage. (Maybe they Impose Conditions on multiple people with an area attack.)

**Do their powers/immunities/resistances come from technology?**

If so, they are probably Advantages, so keep in mind they can be taken away.

**Do they have powers that protect themselves or hinder others?**

If so, they are probably Advantages. Force shields, power armor, etc. How long do they last? How many Conditions can they absorb before they go down? Are they connected to the villain or do they have a will or power supply of their own?

**What is their state of mind and do they have a weakness?**

Are they afraid of something, prone to rages or tantrums? A good way to throw a player a bone is to allow for Conditions to be Imposed, even if they are not intentionally Imposed. For example, if a character blasts a villain with Fire, even though they are immune to it (and hence would take no Condition), they still might take a Condition like “Such Power!” because they are surprised or shocked that the hero they are fighting was even capable of wielding such awesome force, or that the power affects their behavior or mental health in some way.

**How do they fight?**

Do they do the dirty work or surround themselves with minions? Is the main obstacle of a fight just getting to the enemy, or is it putting them down once you finally get to them (or both)? Maybe the players need to find ways in order to take away their minions or to draw them out in order to succeed.

**What is their motivation?**

Not only what do they want, but what about their motivation makes them adversarial? Is the enemy a threat to the city, a country, the world, the universe? How does their motivation affect their personality or vice versa? Are they cold and calculating? Are they just psychotic, misunderstood, or arrogant?

**At what scale do they operate?**

What do they have permission to do in the fiction? If they are a cosmic being that has the power to destroy the world, they are going to be able to do a lot more things, on a bigger scale than an enemy who robs banks and has no powers.

**Where are they set up and based?**

When they are forced to retreat where do they go? When they plan their diabolical plans, from where do they do it? Where do they get their minions and what are they

doing when off-screen?

### **How much to do the characters know about them?**

Do the characters know the enemy's backstory? What makes them tick? Do any of them know their weaknesses? What kind of dynamic and history do any of the characters have and how will that affect the story and their actions?

### **What do they look like?**

While the level of detail you will need to go into for each enemy will vary a great deal, a few words, a sentence or two will go a long way establishing the enemy in both your mind and the minds' of the players.

## **HOW CAN THE PCS BE EFFECTIVE AGAINST THEM?**

This is a question you will want to keep in mind when both creating a villain and setting them against the heroes. It is here to remind you to strike a balance and aim for the middle ground between challenging and impossible for most villains. You want to make the heroes work for their successes, but you also want them to be effective—if not from the beginning, at least at some point. Guide them there and know how your villain is going to react to the heroes and what they try to do. Maybe an attack from a hero isn't effective physically, but it rattles and shakes up the villain so they take a Condition that affects them mentally. Maybe when a hero lunges for the villain and they strike a barrier in front of them the shield generator on their belt flashes as it goes into overdrive. At the very least, allow the players to ask questions (especially via moves), but sometimes you might want to help them out and give out hints for how they can be effective as well. Wanting to challenge the players is one thing, but you also want them to have fun; it can be a tricky area to occupy as an EIC so when in doubt, opt for fun and remember to shed any preconceived plots or strategies you think the players must or should follow when introducing villains and story. Play to find out what happens.

NOTE

# PLAYING ENEMIES

Since *Worlds in Peril* is going to mostly be about fighting villains, here are some powers to associate with various enemy tags and how you can use Special Powers to great effect.

- Generic Powers are powers that are typical in the superhero world. Enhanced strength, fighting abilities, energy blasts, flight, increased durability, force fields, increased speed, and superior reflexes are good examples. A typical Punching Bag might be strong and tough or have above average fighting abilities and reflexes.
- Unique powers are powers that are rarely seen or are completely original. They help make your Heavy Hitters and Arch Villains memorable. They should have moves associated with them. For example, a powerful psychic might have a move to mind control players or a master of darkness might be able to summon minions from the shadows. Remember, the more original a unique power, the more memorable the villain.

Special Powers or Advantages are used to put limitations on what the players can do, how they can deal with a threat. Powers and Advantages are great ways of encouraging the players and their characters to be creative and to deal with certain challenges in non-traditional ways. An Advantage that makes an enemy invulnerable will get the players thinking about how to take out that Advantage. A super power that allows a villain to absorb any kinetic energy means that punching and direct attacks go out the window and that they have got to try something else. Do not be afraid to impose these kinds of restrictions — everything does not need to have a Condition Threshold so that it can be dealt with by brute force. It is also a very easy way to show the strength of an opponent or enemy; if what the characters are doing does not even affect their adversary it immediately refocuses the enemy and situation in their minds and tells them that this is not their everyday opponent. Just remember that you are also a fan of the players, and that you're portraying a comic book world. The players have tools to find out how to be effective, how to get around or take out that Advantage, what that villain's weakness is, or whatever else they're trying to figure out. More than anything, you want everyone to be having fun, so if you need to give hints or nudge players to check a situation out, or to call attention to the Advantage protecting the villain, a weakness they just exhibited, that is what you should do.

You will want your villains to have a mix of both offensive and defensive powers or powers that are versatile enough to do both.

For example, Bishop Black's crosses are constructed of "white" light. They are able to cut through the strongest armor and pierce the thickest skin. If they cut you it is going to hurt. Therefore, Bishop Black's light constructs can "Shred to Pieces". Bishop Black also uses his powers to form light prisons. These light prisons can withstand taking one Condition before dissipating [1]. Bishop Black is also possessed by a spirit. If he touches you, you are forced to recall your sins.

EXAMPLE

Defensive powers are powers that keep the villain from taking damage or reduce the damage taken — a Critical Condition might be reduced to a Moderate one, for example. These powers will primarily manifest themselves as shields of some kind. They may also have special abilities that mean bad things for a character under certain circumstances — if they touched it directly it might explode, for example.

Shields are anything that separates the villain from harm and must be brought down by repeated attacks. This can be a force field, a sphere of metal, or a rotating wall of crosses. Shields or similar obstacles usually have their own tag with a number in brackets to show how much they might soak up if they come up in play. They may even regenerate depending on what you want to simulate in the fiction. Shields might even only stop certain attacks or have weaknesses; they are as fragile or all powerful as you make them. Remember that the number is there for when and if they apply to the fiction and story being told.

For example, Newcastle's Device 42 constantly generates a force field around him. It can absorb one Condition, [1], before it fails. If given enough time, Device 42 can recharge and regenerate the force field.

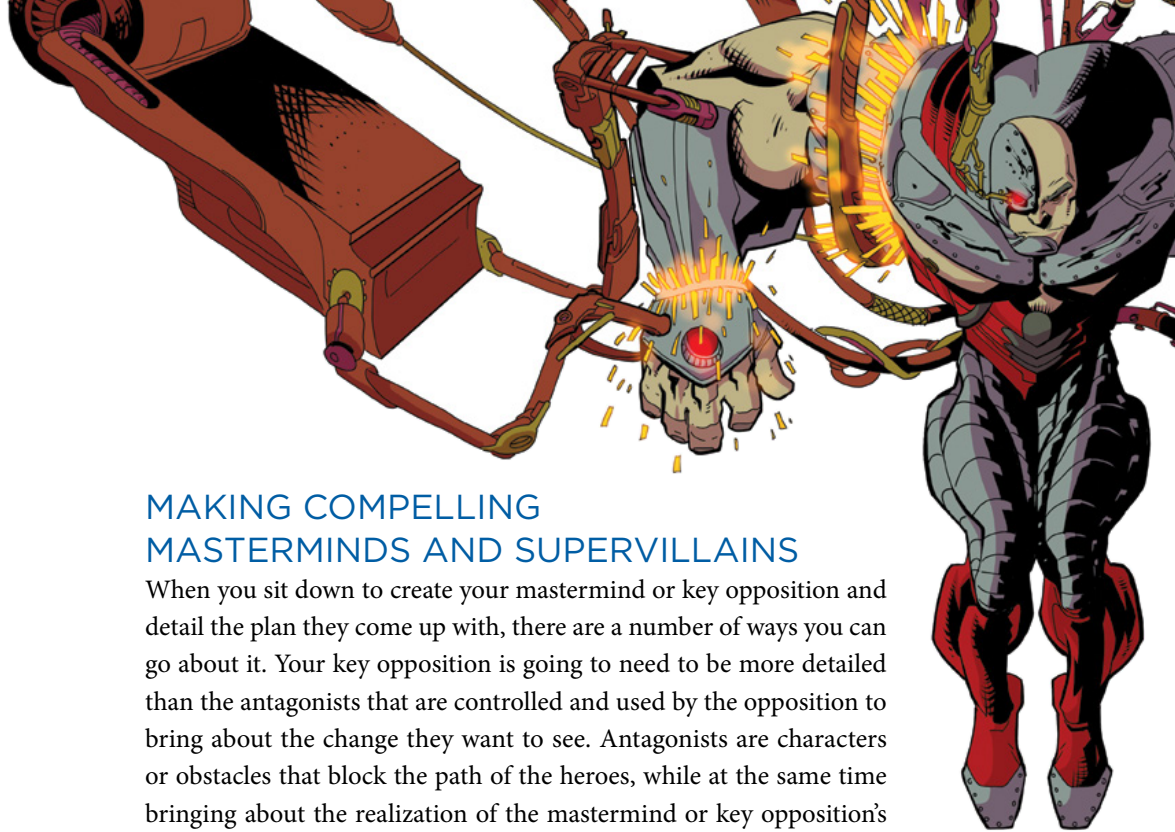
EXAMPLE

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Powers are what you use to limit the ways the characters can beat or be effective against an opponent. If a hero has the ability to shoot fire, then making an enemy immune to fire is going to immediately make the hero think twice about the situation. Powers are your way of telling the players, and their characters, what does and does not work against their opponent and how they can defeat them.

Advantages can be used in the same manner as powers—to make a fight more difficult or to force creativity. However, since they are not permanent and can be taken out, you can justify making them do more powerful things, like plasma cannons or rays that can flash-freeze an entire block. They can also be used to give a sudden advantage to an opponent as their last resort or an ace in the hole. A graviton grenade, a gun that uses the welders life-force to do devastating damage, jetpacks or rocket boots to help enemies make hasty exits can all be used to add a new dynamic to a conflict or spruce up a lowly Mob or two.

NOTE



## MAKING COMPELLING MASTERMINDS AND SUPERVILLAINS

When you sit down to create your mastermind or key opposition and detail the plan they come up with, there are a number of ways you can go about it. Your key opposition is going to need to be more detailed than the antagonists that are controlled and used by the opposition to bring about the change they want to see. Antagonists are characters or obstacles that block the path of the heroes, while at the same time bringing about the realization of the mastermind or key opposition's plan. How much you want to detail your villain is up to you, but the more time and thought you put into it, the more rich and deep their motivation and personality will be and the more memorable they will be to you and your players.

To bring about a deeper story that affects the players at the table and their characters, you may consider making a Plan that goes about directly interfering with what they are working towards and who they think they are. Framing the Plan and villain in this light, means all Threats and opponents are antagonists as they are there to be obstacles to the heroes. They have an agenda that opposes the heroes and are themselves agents of change, with the mastermind or key opposition moving in the background. Simply by having opposing agendas, they are going to eventually meet, and the first hint of a mastermind is probably going to be at a superficial level with their minions and other antagonists running around, doing their thing.

By this approach, the Plan not only needs to further the mastermind's goals, but it also needs to stand in the way of the desires and goals of the heroes, and, ideally, force them to change or examine how they see themselves. You don't have to get too deep with it, all you need to do is throw up obstacles in order for this to happen. In the face of obstacles, the heroes will either overcome these obstacles, be changed by them, or possibly end up stuck in a state of conflict because of them. You want these obstacles to reveal as much about the heroes as possible (how they deal with adversity reveals their strengths and weaknesses and forces them into new emotional or physical areas of their character). These obstacles should be incorporated into situations and obstacles that make up the various Stages of the larger Plan. The harder an obstacle is to overcome and the more harrowing the battle the easier it will be to have the players confront their characters and make them think about who they really are.

In the beginning of the plan you will probably only want to hint at and foreshadow the key opposition and their capabilities — the more capable, powerful, ruthless and further they are willing to go to achieve their goals, the sooner you should start foreshadowing it. You can start showing it in the minor confrontations in the beginning, or you can show it off-screen when you get the chance with moves.

To make an evil villain, mastermind or arch nemesis you want to show that they are evil via their actions or reactions on screen. First, start with the nature of evil: evil creates, emphasizes or makes a victim feel vulnerable. Evil comes from acts that oppress, harm, manipulate or torment. It harms both physically and mentally and leaves behind scars and trauma. Evil is in the intent to do harm, which means that your villains are lacking in humanity and goodness to some degree.

Evil villains probably want to use power to induce fear and terrorize, to control or manipulate other people and their emotions or to cause physical pain. They want to distort reality and shape it to their world view — they will blame others, distort the truth and lie. They prey on or exert control over the vulnerable. They want the power to destroy to some degree or another — they want to, and perhaps enjoy or need to take away another's happiness, confidence or sense of safety. Evil hates good and always wants to dominate. Because of this, a villain's presence, unmasked, should cause fear and apprehension.

There could be some proximity or closeness to a villain to make them real or scary — the connection could be personal with one of the heroes, or it could just mean making a villain out of something close to home like a family member, a powerful leader, a neighbor, a preacher, and so on.

While a compelling villain can often be sympathetic, their goals are always immoral, they are consistently bad and it's a choice they made at some point in their life. They usually have a defining trauma or situation in their backstory, whether it be during their childhood, adolescence, or otherwise, that sets them down a path that leads them to villainy.

A villain does not usually perceive themselves as evil, they simply have poor moral codes and come up with all kinds of justifications for the crimes they commit — law of the jungle, survival of the fittest, twisted ideas about rights, honor or justice that may even only apply to certain groups of people. They can easily ignore another's humanity and scapegoat or sacrifice others to achieve their goals when necessary and find ways to justify hurting others. Sometimes they even show kindness and generosity to keep people guessing. They are all about playing head games and they play them like no other.

A villain, especially a mastermind, usually has secrets they conceal and do not want found out. They are not afraid of confrontation, are highly intelligent, capable, logical, effective, charming and highly unpredictable. More than anything, they should have the capability to destroy the heroes and, at some point in their Plan, they should be out to truly destroy them. Villains commit the worst acts of villainy in order to get the most possible gain. They take extreme risks and obsess over strategy and plans of attack and how to cover their tracks.

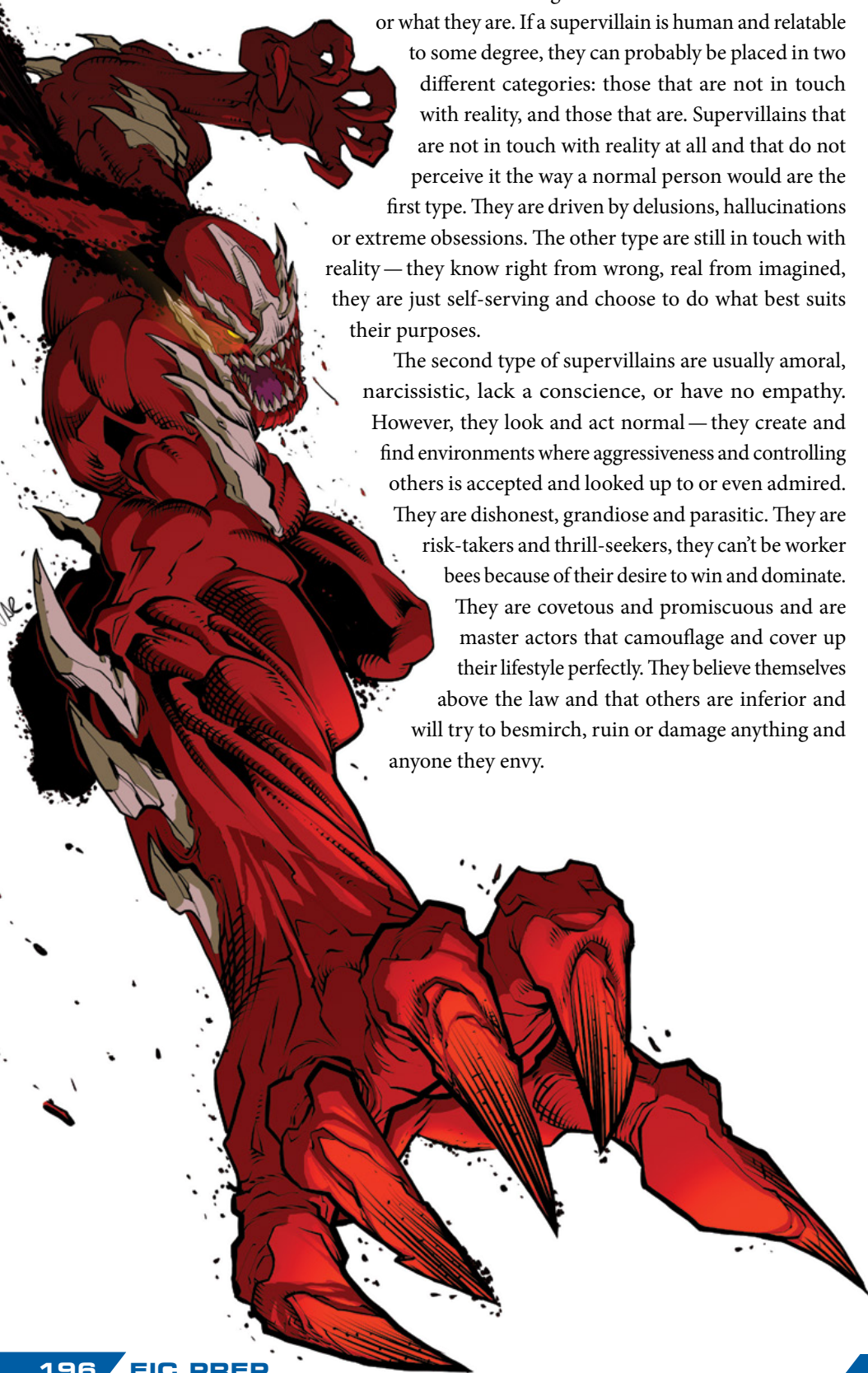


A compelling villain should have a compelling physical feature, a distinctive way of thinking and way of talking, they should have realistic behavior and complicated motivations. They might have a unique philosophy, religion, experience or outlook on life. They should have goals that oppose those of the heroes. They should be logical and beholden to their own world view so that you can show how they think through their words and actions, whether they're on screen or not. Where do they live? What does their lair look like? What can they do that is unique, special, and allows them to be more than capable of taking out the heroes?

Your villain should have traits and depth. To imagine a villain's backstory and their traits and mannerisms, start by writing down the traits and mannerisms of people who you know and find annoying. Next, write down the traits and mannerisms of people that frighten you. Lastly, write down the traits and mannerisms of some people who you do not know, but that frighten you and who are powerful — world leaders, politicians, killers, sociopaths, characters in media, whatever you like. Now choose one or two traits from each list and plot a course for your villain showing how they could go from being relatively normal, to frightening and then finally to being powerful. When did their deviancy start? What happened to them and what was their trauma, their choice? Did they come from a broken home? Did they become part of organized crime in adolescence? Was their trauma more recent and forced a crisis of identity?

Now imagine how they treat their underlings and minions, their henchman. How do they keep their loyalty — money, charisma? Do the underlings seek favor, money, power? Villains often represent the best and the worst of humanity — often times they are looked up to and are in positions of power. They make you think “wow, think of what they could do if they put all that into a good cause!”

If the villain has a lair then it should be a reflection of who they are and reveal some of their personality. It could be something important to them from their past or a meaningful area. It could be a blank canvas or full of high-tech equipment. It could be gleaming and sterile or be a den taken over by the land. Give it something edgy to hint at evil or abnormality and remember that when the villain is here they always have the advantage. When others come in, especially the heroes, their vulnerabilities increase dramatically.

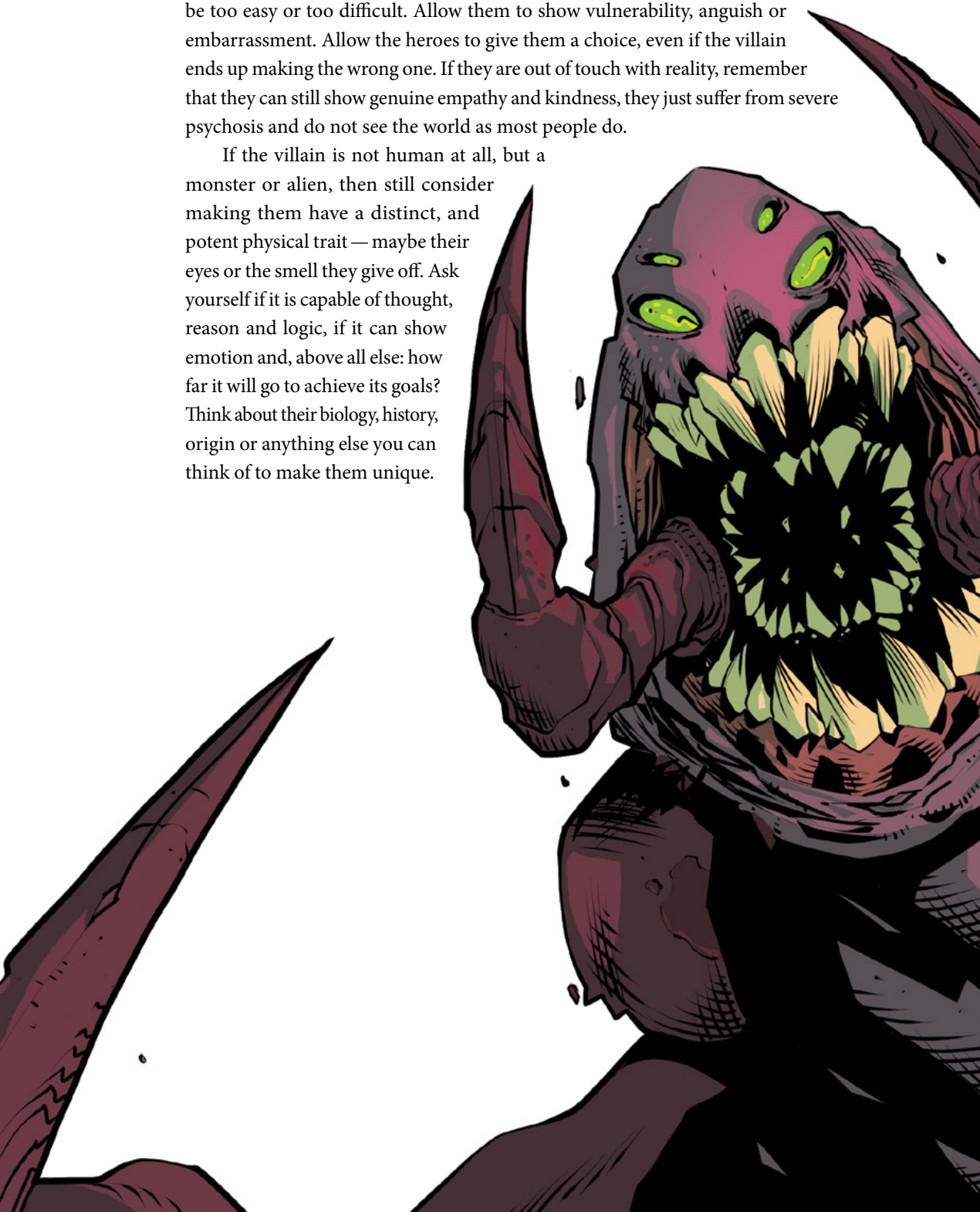


Villains usually have something that is driving them and that is deluding them and their world view. They don't see themselves as evil or misguided and are in denial about who or what they are. If a supervillain is human and relatable to some degree, they can probably be placed in two different categories: those that are not in touch with reality, and those that are. Supervillains that are not in touch with reality at all and that do not perceive it the way a normal person would are the first type. They are driven by delusions, hallucinations or extreme obsessions. The other type are still in touch with reality—they know right from wrong, real from imagined, they are just self-serving and choose to do what best suits their purposes.

The second type of supervillains are usually amoral, narcissistic, lack a conscience, or have no empathy. However, they look and act normal—they create and find environments where aggressiveness and controlling others is accepted and looked up to or even admired. They are dishonest, grandiose and parasitic. They are risk-takers and thrill-seekers, they can't be worker bees because of their desire to win and dominate. They are covetous and promiscuous and are master actors that camouflage and cover up their lifestyle perfectly. They believe themselves above the law and that others are inferior and will try to besmirch, ruin or damage anything and anyone they envy.

Whichever type of villain you choose, if you want to make them relatable in some way, or sympathetic, you might consider avoiding any truly horrific or over the top backstories. Villains are compelling when they are born of their own choices, at least to some degree. Allow them to struggle with the heroes — it shouldn't be too easy or too difficult. Allow them to show vulnerability, anguish or embarrassment. Allow the heroes to give them a choice, even if the villain ends up making the wrong one. If they are out of touch with reality, remember that they can still show genuine empathy and kindness, they just suffer from severe psychosis and do not see the world as most people do.

If the villain is not human at all, but a monster or alien, then still consider making them have a distinct, and potent physical trait — maybe their eyes or the smell they give off. Ask yourself if it is capable of thought, reason and logic, if it can show emotion and, above all else: how far it will go to achieve its goals? Think about their biology, history, origin or anything else you can think of to make them unique.









# KICKSTARTER BACKERS

## INNOCENT BYSTANDERS

Robert Daines  
Hayden Faulk  
Ben Dutter  
Richard Scott

Niko Bates  
Xander Crews  
Walter F. Croft  
Emily Pizzetta

w5748  
David "subQuark" Miller  
Brad Elliott  
Ben R Williams

## THE CHOSEN

David R West  
Dan Gerke  
Soirgriffe  
Paul engle  
Jeffrey Collyer  
Dan "Nevenall" Behlings  
Alex "Ansob" Norris  
Dan Gerold  
Sören Kohlmeyer  
FelTK  
Daniel Wildschut  
Luca Beltrami  
Antonio Miguel Martorell Ferriol  
Rich Palij  
AlexH  
Rick Jones  
Eloy Lasanta  
Lee Langston  
Riley Adamson

Sean Patrick Fannon  
Andrea "Ander" Ungaro  
Ewen Cluney  
Seth Harris  
Dennettlander  
The Fifth Wanderer  
Al Billings  
Julianna B.  
Casey McKenzie  
Thomas William Edward Swingler  
Rob Wieland  
Judd M. Goswick  
Zed Lopez  
Bob Richardson  
Professor Todd  
Eric G  
Barac Wiley  
Andrés Acevedo  
Oh SeungHan

James "Longshot" Gibson  
J.O. "Volsung" Ferrer  
Tom Miskey  
Joe Banner  
Brian Rock  
Richard "Ich" Robertson  
Steve Moore  
Steve Jakubovitch  
Chad Stevens  
Judson Wright  
Miguel Angel Rodriguez  
George Alexander  
J.T. Mahany  
Lester Ward  
Mark Francis  
Eduardo H. S.  
Ed Pegg Jr  
Rob Townsend  
PhosphorX

Jake Kuska	Joe DaSilva	Pieta
Shaun Keates	Matthew Scott Young	Jenn Mitchell
Artpatient	Darken	Jon Bristow
Magnesium Brsdr	Alan Twigg	Oliver Vulliamy
Dustin Gullede	Craig Hatler	Dokkalfar
Tom Van de Sande	Lukas Myhan	Steven D Warble
Tim Franzke	Michael Bowman	Darth Butternutz
Simone Spinozzi	Joe Stroup	Carey Williams
Ari Julku	Chris Gardiner	Rich "The Flying Kakapo" Swanson
Iain McAllister	Christina Lea	Scot Drew
Dr. Marco Garcia Valdez of Power	Dan C	Kauê Bittencourt de Carvalho
For Good	Bret Gillan	Alisson Vitória - O Mestre das
Scott Dockery	Guns_n_Droids	Antigas
Raoni Cananeaia Monteiro	Geldhof Christophe	phobologic
Brian R. Bergdall	Rose Bailey	Stephan Szabo
Jason Martinez	Codename "Lydon"	Countercheck
Josh Street	Ivan Vaghi	Riley Ridgeback
Charon MacDonald	Walt Robillard	Will and Jenny Seegers
William Gerke	Kleedrac	Matt Kay
Ray Mitchell	Wyldstar	Porter Williams
Curt Meyer	Brian Wilson	Darren Watts
Ken Widmer	Rosa Corts	Phillip Heaton
Alexandre Tessier	Michael Kailus	Gornul
John Rogers	The Perspicacious Professor	Chase Jones
Warren Merrifield	Prometheus	Steve Lord
Yoki Erdtman	danielSTAR	Tony "El Tigre" Hirt
Jonathan Korman	Josh Sommerfeld	Andrew Cain
H. Rasmussen	Raymond Nagle	Sean "Garg" McAlister
Andrea "fealoro" Mognon	Christopher D. Meid	Andrea Luigi Zoppi
Steve-0	Marc Tetlow	Guy Sodin
The Miscavish Family	Oscar Ulloa	Graypaw
Ryan Perrin	John Poole	Fred Lott
Erich Vereen	Troy "Excalibur" Stubblefield	Travis Eneix
David Bent	Adam Benedict Canning	Drocus T.
Adrian Sprysak	Sean Demory	Beamhit
Brian Shourd	Hsieh	Michael Feldhusen
Xenominal	Seth Halbeisen	Cole Warburton
Justin Schmid	Patrice Hédé	David Larkins
John Bogart	failtech	Dwayne Carnachan
Tim Eagon	Jake Alper	David Terhune
David Bowers	GreenXLantern - Marko	Paolo "Rodrigo" Cecchetto
Ariel Pereira	Joris Van der Vorst	Jordan Raymond
Dave Hunt	Christopher Grau	ogasnor
Will	Alex Baldwin	Jim DelRosso
Calum Morton	Mike "Super C" Conway	Joshua D. Haney
Alex Hunter	Joshua Owen	J "Gutterfly" Rainey
Sophia Brandt	Parke Hultman	James Close
Bryant Durrell	Volvox Globator	Julian A.G. Stanley
Joseph Moore aka the Octo-Mammoth	The unspeakable purplntncl (alias	Andrew Medeiros
Ryan Lee	Frank)	Matiukas
Benjamin the CommAntder	The Galactic Pretty Boy	Richard 'Telek' Evans
Paul Hayes	andrea wolf	Ardon Low
Michael Hill	Robert Van Natter	Derek "Pineapple Steak" Swoyer
Christopher Mitchell	William Taylor Cook	The Vigilant Cavalier of Hammersmith
Gwathdring	Kirill S.	Julius Müller
Kyle Porter	Rob Donoghue	Antoine BERTIER
Bay Chang	Erekibeon Barbagrís	Echidna Boy
Nick Hofbauer	Mike Bentley	Silvio Herrera Gea
Robert Rae Mohr III	Will Johnstone	Matt Blackwell
J Barnsley	Jim Ryan	Josh T Jordan
Billy Wood	Joshua Matic	Joe O'Toole

JenMon  
 Myles Corcoran  
 Peter Gates  
 Harley Morse  
 Colin Matter  
 Paul Echeverri  
 Daniel Skrivaneck  
 Tony Love  
 Larry Lade  
 David M.  
 Menachem Cohen  
 Glen Wood  
 Richard “HardwareJedi” Frost  
 kraufen  
 Daniel McSorley

M. P. O’Sullivan  
 Caoimhe Ora Snow  
 Akrono  
 Andrew Byers  
 Atlictoatl  
 Rafay Khan  
 Mark Cox-Palmer  
 James Stuart  
 Xander  
 Nessa  
 Aaron Mouritsen  
 Rachael Hixon  
 Aiko Hikari  
 Daniel Scribner  
 Cheryl Trooskin-Zoller

Adam Flynn  
 Larlana  
 Connor Crispens  
 greatkithain  
 Saverio Iacono  
 Benjamin “The Benj” Davis  
 Jeremy Collins  
 Tommy Brownell  
 Joe Beason  
 The Hope Family  
 Shawn Kavanagh  
 William Vaughn Wright  
 Trevor Crosse  
 Kristopher Volter  
 Dennis Stewart

## SIDEKICKS

Bonisol (Luca Bonisoli): Born as an ordinary human, Bonisol unlocked the power of his mind thanks to the teachings of his mysterious mentor.

Nat “wood elf” Barmore: Fell into a tub of Lego, and came out with new modular, geometric powers!

Jack Frost: Fate struck Jack Allen when against all odds a large comet landed on his house, Jack happened to be in the trajectory of the foreign body, instead of being pulverized, he emerged with the ability to manipulate the weather down to sub-zero temperatures.

Matt Boeck AKA Bearcat: A sophisticated exoskeleton transformed a broken man into a champion of justice.

John “Hex-Man” Desmarais: Trained in the mysterious of the hex grid.

Viveka Nylund: Built herself a suit of power armour.

Jeremiah Keys: Redacted - (as in blacked out if possible, otherwise nothing) Cheers. ;].

Lo: Alien from the unknown. Seriously, he doesn’t even know where he is from.

Eyal “Pocket Change Man” Teler: Was forced fed a genetically engineered piggy bank.

Obskurator: João Mariano was an English Teacher from Portugal who, after puzzling out the Divine Joke, secretly became the Obskurator, the super-hero with the power to confound his foes with comedic wild correlations.

Volcano Roll: Foolishly challenged a Japanese ghost to a spicy sushi eating contest.

Woodrow Jarvis Hill: An accident of birth, a strange elixir unknown to science, a meteor filled with strange radiation...

Cobie: Bitten by a radioactive web designer.

Mark “Flux” Plemmons: Flux gained his teleportation powers after an incident with a radioactive cup of noodles.

Analogue: As a teenager, Rick Mettle wanted to be in a band. After discovering he had the ability to control sound waves, he used the band as a front for his alter ego: Analogue!

PrimeLoki: Part of the first wave of advanced humans who traveled back in time and were once worshiped as gods.

Quack Attack: Quacked at by a radioactive mallard, Dominic Quack

gained the awesome powers of the duck, and fights crime as the winged guardian, Quack Attack!

Stras “Exodus” Acimovic: An artifact of traveling through numerous dimensions.

The Knack: A physics experiment gone wrong gave him access to the skills and knowledge of all his alternate dimensional selves.

Dr. Bloodbath: Uses science to solve problems, usually by violence.

Robert Carnel: The unholy child of anger, mystical lightning and self-help books.

Vincent “digiconda” Arebalo: Mine is a digitized existence; I am cyberspace.

Bryan Lee Hitchcock: Forged from a nearly lethal combination of Heavy Metal and D&D.

Omar Amador: Time control abilities were bestowed to him by the spirits of Finland, after a freak breakdancing accident.

Jonathan Finke: Forged in the fires of the Sun.

James Husum: I was raised by a secret society of wombat Monks who taught me to teleport but only 20 feet at a time.

## HOMEGROWN HEROES

Cody Tornow  
 Sangjun Park  
 Runeslinger  
 Ian Porell

## FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Maiki: Wielder of the Magnolia of Love and the Clover of Awesome.

Tekrod, the stony faced, stony mouthed golem of the temple at Ardis.

Grecia emerged from the ruins of a fallen civilization on the back of a mighty battle panda.

The Black Mollusc: Invested with the ancient and mystical power of Arion ater, the famed Black Slug

of Albion.

The Panda: Experimental mutagenic transformed him in a beast.

Blackdere: Returned from the death as a vengeance angel.

Beliagal: A magician instructed by Merlin's spirit.

Janus: Lab accident gave him the power of self-duplication.

Karl "Thrillseeker" Maurer: Alien Abduction, no, really!

Dr Arcane: Years of training and experience.

Oni: I get knocked out, but I get up again, you're never going to keep me down.

Truck: Mutant born with amazing strength. ron.bianco@sbcglobal.net

## GOLDEN AGE HERO

Robert J. Finamore

Phil Ames.

Terry Wilcox

Chris Bekofske

Keith Preston

Anibal J. Delgado

Zane Dempsey

Michael Tree

Jason Dettman

In memory of Compound

David "Dork\_Rage" Benson

Bruce Curd

Tim Keating

Eric Coates

Christian "Photon" A.

Clifford Horowitz

Timothy Walsh

Evil Hat Productions

Felix "Le Maire" Castonguay

Jon Leitheusser

Ghost DM

Daniele Di Rubbo

Robby Anderson

Misha Polonsky

Sean M. Dunstan

Jack Norris

Matthew McFarland

Jayna Pavlin

Gunnar Bangsmoen

Wade Geer

Neal Tanner

Yann Abaziou

Luke Mc

Eric Mersmann

Francis Helie

wraith808

Sean M Smith

Rachelle Shelkey

Tommy "Night Eye" Rayburn

Antoine Pempie

John "Dead Parrot" Davis

Jeremy Strandberg

Benjamin "Black Lotos" Welke

John Marron

Anders Gabrielsson

Jason Cordova

Christopher M Sniezak

Edward Lynch

Mark Miller

Seth Clayton

Martin Ralya

Phill Winters

Viktor Haag

Michael Lawrence

Jim Sensenbrenner

Michael W. Mattei

Joshua Ramsey

Владимир Владимирович

Renee Knipe

Morgan Weeks

Simon Ward

S. Adam Surber

PK Sullivan

Epidiah Ravachol

Luke Martinez

H. M. 'Dain' Lybarger

N. Phillip Cole

Livia von Sucro

Jack Gulick

Ben Neilsen

Vivian Paul

Martin Greening

M. Sean Molley

Joseph Kogin

Julian Kuleck

Mendel Schmiedekamp

Felix Girke

Andrew Lloyd

Doyle Clemence

Mike Norris

Nimbral Montes

Daniel Muck

Daniel Steadman

John Mehrholz

Burt Silva

Dan Luxenberg

Markku Tuovinen

Steve Dodge

Joseph Le May

Adam Rajski

Julia Sheffler

Ryan Percival

John Gaskell

Dorian Knight "Defender of the Multiverse"

C & K Moore

Blane A. Elferdink

Drynyn

William Hensley

Rain Donaldson

Cameron Verkaik

Michael S. Miller

Scott Underwood

Momentum

Matthew K Gray

Xpanding Universe

Alexis Hoarau

Trolls Pendragon

Karl Barbosa

Achim Oppelt

Chris Czerniak

Alistair M

Paul Ueltschi

Zach Brown

Fredrik Lyngfalk

Viktor Christiansen

Richard 'Vidiian' Greene

Tobias Niemitz

Ana "HeatBurn" Silva

Patrick Henry Downs

Nate

Fran Thomson

Warzou

Tim Jensen & Willow Palecek

Jim Matt

The Goddamn Redcap!

Guillaume Boutigny

Paul Mansfield

xiangh

Charles Paradis

Kevin Scott

Jonathan "Buddha" Davis

Andy Kitkowski

Patrice Mermoud

Thomas Maund

Antero  
K J Miller  
Steven Robert  
Rick Harrelson  
Rowdy Scarlett

Nathan Riddell  
Matan 'Zukaos' Sapir  
"Holdup"  
Rene John Kerkdyk  
Blake LeBlanc

Paul Michalik  
Fabrice Breau  
Eliza & Alex D.  
Amy Waller  
Frank "Zornhau" Falkenberg

## HEROES

Michele Gelli  
Brad Osborne  
Everett Downing  
Matthew Broome  
James "Dregg" Carpio  
Brian Kreuzinger  
Randall Wright  
Alexandre "Magnamagister" Joly  
Philip "xipehuz" Espi  
D. Rogers  
Glazius  
Oscar Iglesias  
Samuel Graves  
Phubar  
Phillip Bailey  
Johannes Kåre Rasmussen  
Justin Vander Schaaf  
Guillaume "Nocker"  
Brian Vander Veen  
Andrew Spacewolf McDonough  
Emelyn Woodbruy-Carroll  
Sterling Brucks  
Matthew Edwards  
Etienne Olieu  
Paolo Ramello  
C.S. Partridge  
Ryan Williams  
Shervyn  
Anne-Sylvie Betsch  
Jonathan Abbott  
Jacob "Gnome" Randolph  
Gary Anastasio  
Lakas - The Flash!  
Euan Smith  
Josh Rensch  
John M. Campbell  
Niclas "Doctor Flamingo" Berg  
Drew Wendorf  
Craig Schwalenberg  
Jonathan Lee  
Lukar - Lucas Millan  
Jim Myers  
Aviv Manoach  
Brandon Metcalf  
Stephen Joseph Ellis  
Kevin Flynn  
Teddy Fuller  
Ryan Howse-Meister  
Tomi Sarkkinen  
Drew Morton  
Nicola "Khaaaaan!" Santagostino  
Andy Leighton  
Matthew Nielsen  
Adams Tower

NPC Chris  
Brendan Conway  
Alessandro 'Comranas' Rossi  
Todd Dziobak  
Dan "Zoidberg" Massey  
Kate Kirby  
Bruce Harlick  
Tim Carroll  
Derek Grimm  
Dennis Haacker  
Petri Leinonen  
Gothhog  
Richard Percy  
Filthy Monkey  
Tim Czarnecki  
Neil Thompson  
Philature  
Christian R Leonhard  
D.Vincent Baker  
Mikel L Matthews Jr  
P-A Beaulieu  
Adam Koebel  
Rick Neal  
brian allred  
Syzmil  
James Dawsey of Vigilance Press  
Joaquim Ball-lloera  
Ingo Beyer | obskures.de  
Kirt Dankmyer  
Magus  
Daniele Ruggeri  
Jeremy Kostiew  
Geek2theRight  
Gary Hoggatt  
Blake Hutchins  
Alex Goodman  
Robert Corr  
William E. Karnesky  
Gabriele Falcon  
Kris Vanhoyland  
Svend Andersen  
John Bain  
Craig Mason  
Narayan Bajpe  
Zach Cullimore  
Meg McG  
A.E. Pietz  
Roberto Nieves  
Nick Mathewson  
Ruben L Z Tan  
Ryan Denison  
Haggai Elkayam  
Declan Feeney  
Mark Argent

Marshall Miller  
Ground Zero  
Ed Ritsch  
Mark S  
Jeremy P. Bushnell  
John Hunton  
Alessio Serini  
Marc Young  
David "Tsu" Reichgeld  
Derrick Dodson  
Gerry Saracco  
César Luz David  
Jérôme Larré  
Marcello Maestri  
brian peters  
Phil Vecchione  
Jenevieve "Tasha" DeFer  
Jean ALAHEL Fridrici  
Chris Allison  
Eric Swiersz  
Matt Aaron  
Kurt Zdanio  
Dane Ralston-Bryce  
Skeiphes  
Paul Drussel  
J. Brandon Massengill  
David Wetzell  
Chris Tulach  
Adam Everman  
Remy Handler  
Ignatius Montenegro  
Paul Reed  
Danohead  
Lowell Francis  
MFeeney  
Jonas Karlsson  
M. Musteric  
The Mind Wizard  
C. Kettering  
Anima  
Erica Stevenson  
Craig Hargraves  
Adam Caverly  
Jesse R. Davis  
Seth Hartley  
Simon Brunning  
Justin Wightbred  
Donogh "Dr No" McCarthy  
Markus Viklund  
Scott Krok  
David Lucardie  
Mark "buzz" Delsing  
Charles A. Cameron  
Ted Lee

Chad Six Bale  
Edouard Contesse  
Samuel Munilla  
Steve Cibarich  
Jason Lutes  
Fit/Ness  
Christopher Pound  
Keith Davies  
Richard "Scyllid" Comfort  
Jason Paul McCartan

J. Walton  
J. Quincy Sperber  
Chris Nienhuis  
Matthew Clarke  
Stephen "Rockjaw" Reid  
Neal Dalton  
Frost Holliman  
Edoardo Baruzzo  
Adrian J George III  
Franco Frare

Tarl "Bo" Johnson  
Nick Townsend  
Heath White  
Mike Loftus  
Mike Durange  
Ruza  
Paul Vidro  
Jonathan R Nicol  
Jason A. Childs  
Johnny Huynh

## VETERANS

Crimson Arc: A paraplegic young man undergoes an experimental surgery. Through mishap, chemicals, and an undiscovered gene Crimson Arc was born. Harnessing cosmic and solar energy to defend the innocent.

Jondro: Pacifist Government's secret defense android.

Realm Master K: While on a field trip to a Nuclear Energy Plant, the young man who would become Realm Master K, noticed a green glowing dodecahedron in one of the off limits areas. Noticing that it was the same shape as one of his gaming dice, he left the group and picked it up. Even as he raised it to his eyes to peer at it, the changes that led to his powers were already taking place.

Diskhotep: Earth's most powerful sorcerer was cursed by a long-forgotten pharaoh to be the eternal hero, never resting until mankind is truly safe. At least, that's what he tells his neighbors.

Daniel Scott: Flesh puppet to his recognizant subconscious.

Bit Girl: Got sucked into her computer while coding late at night.

furbalicious810 was trained by paintball ninjas.

Totenjaeger: Genetically modified by the government in an attempt to make a super soldier.

The Cockney: Dropped into mystical vat of jellied eels.

Dr. Schadenfreude: Driven insane by decades of explaining computers to fools and ignoramuses.

Octave: Gained sonic powers while playing guitar and got electrocuted by jealous bandmate..

Jake Baker: Stared into the abyss too long.

Rush'n Max: Found a shard of the Tunguska meteorite.

Dragonstar : Offspring of two alien heritages.

Union Labor: Blessed with the powers of heavy machinery!

Gabriel Midnight: Dying so you don't have to.

Jet-Stream: Was born with mutant abilities.

Dr. Levi Aggett: Transformed by Occult magic

Christian Taylor : The cartoon character brought to life by Alchemy

Otherside: Swallowed by a rip in Space-Time into the Hyper Dimension.

Krios: Sold his soul at near death while on a call as a policeman.

Van Tuan "Exabyte" Tran : Prototypes of radioactive microchips melted with his brain

Oliver Peltier: Heir to the Pendragon Bloodline and heir to Merlin is the Spanglemaker

Vault: The unknowing vessel for a fragment of the binary shard.

Big John W: A melding of Man and Bear!

The Pink Pony: From an alternate dimension of colorful, talking equines.

Corporal Corpus: The undying "doughboy" is a revenant born of the myriad horrors of the Marne trenches; he remains kitted out in gas mask, helmet, bayonet, and the rest of his battle gear.

The Scrivener, aka Jeremy DM Baldwin: Imagines worlds into being after being bitten by a radioactive misspent childhood.

Space Parasite, brain-eater from another world.

GremlinLegions: Demonic powers split him into a mass of terrible creatures.

Hsile Amune: Born in a Stellar collision.

Jason D. Smith: Translated a memetic virus.

The Quiet Monk: Became the guardian of the world tree with all the powers of the legendary Taoist Masters when he stumbled into the grove of the world tree in the jungles of southeast Asia.

Dave Blewer: Rewrote reality with one of the papyrus of creation.

Alexander Gräfe: Bathed in cosmic radiation.

Sébastien Allard: None

The Agent: an Intelligence Agency pawn turned veritable acting force by a military R&D freak accident.

## WORLD PROTECTOR

The Good Padre

Mad Jay

David Andrews

## SENTINELS OF LIBERTY

Dynamic: Altered by a cosmic event to control energy.

Bastion: Able to alter his own mass after being caught in an explosion while experimenting with Darkmatter.

Caliber: A man whose consciousness is transferred into a living machine after a tragic accident takes his life.

Oracle: After decades of meditation within an ancient temple he unlocks the mysteries of the mind.

Art Diva developed her powers as an invalid after a gruesome accident.

Mr. Brainhead got hit on the bulbous part of his forehead.

Captain Cop found a mystic badge.

Ruby Cheeks Red Pants swallowed 3 L of Red dye #5.

Heatwave: An accident when trying to start a fusion Generator.

Altitude: A plane crash left him with the ability of Flight.

E.V.A.C: Stole a Russian Military Prototype Powered Suit, with the ability to Teleport.

The Saracen: Expelled for his Mystic order, this Assassin now turned hero, has the ability to control the Shadows.

Vigilance: A Canadian soldier was shot with an experimental weapon in the line of duty. Instead of breaking down his DNA it was altered into the ultra aware super hero we know today.

Shadowman: An accident at the dawn of the creation of nuclear power fused a human with his own shadow, now he is able to walk from one shadow to another, hide in another persons shadow and melt into darkness.

Hack: When a cute gamer girl's house gets hit with a power surge while she's playing on her computer, her mind is shocked into discovering she can manipulate technology in ways no one thought possible.

Ambiturner: When a really really ridiculously good looking person dies in a freak gasoline fight accident, he awakes to find he can now turn left, into another dimension.

Armsman: Created through project SOFTRAIN

Cock of Justice: Pecked by a radioactive rooster.

Matthew Lee: Fell into a vat of liquid nitrogen.

Parley Man: Given powers of peace by a kind god.

## PLAYBOY BILLIONAIRE

Gregory Israel

Ryun Rhee

## HEADQUARTERS

Gamescape San Francisco

Sphärenmeisters Spiele

## COSMIC GUARDIAN

Jason Thunderhorse Andrews

## BEACON OF HOPE

The Sentry Box

CODENAME

MANEUVER

INVESTIGATE

PROTECT

INFLUENCE

SMASH

WORKING TOWARDS

ACHIEVEMENTS

ORIGIN

NEMESIS

CONDITIONS

**MINOR**

Could be dangerous if ignored

**MODERATE**

Take a -1 if I do anything involving this

**CRITICAL**

Take a -1 to everything (Maximum -4)

POWER PROFILE

**SIMPLE**

**DIFFICULT**

BONDS

THRESHOLD

CITY

LAW ENFORCEMENT

BONDS TO BE RESOLVED

**BORDERLINE**

**POSSIBLE**

**IMPOSSIBLE**

## HERO PROFILE

## TEAM PROFILE

## POWERS

## LIMITATIONS

## ADVANTAGES

## PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE

### DRIVE 1

### DRIVE 2

**EDITOR IN CHIEF**

**MASTERMIND**

**ORGANIZATIONS**

- 1INSTINCT
- 2INSTINCT
- 3INSTINCT
- 4INSTINCT

**MASTER PLAN END GOAL**

STEP 1

FAILURE

SUCCESS

STEP 2

FAILURE

**MOB 1**

INSTINCT

SIZE

MOTIVATIONS/TIES

MOVES/POWERS:

**MOB 2**

INSTINCT

SIZE

MOTIVATIONS/TIES

MOVES/POWERS:

**PUNCHING BAG**

INSTINCT

CONDITION THRESHOLD

MOTIVATIONS/TIES

MOVES/POWERS:

**HEAVY HITTER**

INSTINCT

CONDITION THRESHOLD

MOTIVATIONS/TIES

MOVES/POWERS:

# BASIC MOVES



**T**hese are the moves that any player will trigger the most. They are the situations that characters will find themselves in the most often and represent the kinds of things characters will be doing in the game.

## TAKE DOWN

Whenever you attempt to subdue an immediate threat, say how you do it and roll. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to the roll. **On a 10+**, choose 3. **On a 7-9**, choose 2:

- Impose a Condition (choose once for Minor, twice for Moderate, three times for Critical)
- Take away an Advantage (choose twice)
- Force a change of location (choose once and the EIC picks where they go, choose twice and you do)
- Reduce the size of a mob by 1
- Take no harm in the doing

## SEIZE CONTROL

Whenever you and another character struggle over a contested goal or objective, say how you outsmart, overpower, outmaneuver, or otherwise try to overcome them. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to your roll. **On a 10+**, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one:

- You seize control over what was contested
- You prevent yourself from ending up at a disadvantage or in harm's way
- You put your opponent at a disadvantage

## PUSH

When you push your powers and concentrate to do something that is not on your Powers Profile sheet, first determine if the power falls under Simple, Difficult or Borderline, then roll. **On a 10+**, you do it and can add it to your powers profile if it's not there already. **On a 7-9**, you can do it, but the EIC will offer you an ugly choice or hard bargain in order to do so; you also take a Minor Condition if it was Simple, a Moderate Condition if it was Difficult, or a Critical Condition if it was Borderline; and you cannot add it to your Powers Profile sheet. **On a 6-**, you take a Condition as per a 7-9 and the EIC also makes a move.

## SERVE AND PROTECT

When you stand in defense of someone or something when an imminent threat or danger befalls them, roll+Protect. **On a 10+**, Hold 3. **On a 7-9**, Hold 1. As long as you continue to defend, spend Hold to ...

- Redirect an attack to yourself
- Reduce the effectiveness of an attack or Condition (Reduce the level of severity for every Hold spent)
- Open up the attacker to an ally, giving that ally a bonus to take forward against the attacker (+1 for every Hold spent)
- Create or advance a Bond with the person you are protecting by one

## USE ENVIRONMENT

When you use something from the environment to suit your purposes, the EIC will tell you one or more:

- It'll break quickly; use it while you can
- It's dangerous; the EIC will say how
- It's particularly effective; the EIC will say how
- You can use it, but there will be a side effect; the EIC will tell you what it is.

## DEFY DANGER

When you act despite an imminent threat or dig in to endure a danger that has befallen you, say how you deal with it and roll. The EIC will tell you which stat to add to the roll. **On a 10+**, you do what you set out to do and the threat doesn't come to bear or you endure it. **On a 7-9**, you can do it, but to do so the EIC will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

## AID OR INTERFERE

When you help or hinder someone you have a Bond with, roll+Bond. **On a 10+**, choose two. **On a 7-9**, choose one, but there's an obstacle to overcome first. You also expose yourself to danger, retribution, or the EIC will offer you an ugly choice. Choose one:

- You make an untenable position or course secure
- You avoid taking harm in the doing
- They take a +1 or 2 forward, your choice

## EXAMINE

When you closely study a situation or person, roll+Investigate. **On a 10+**, ask the EIC three questions from the list below. **On a 7-9**, ask one. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What danger should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or important?
- Who's really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

# SPECIAL MOVES

**S**pecial Moves are moves that are only special in that they aren't used as often as the basic ones. They are more specific and focused. They are mainly used during downtime, after the adventure and fights have finished and the heroes have to deal with the consequences and get back to their regular lives.

## BURNOUT

When the situation is desperate and you put all you have into one last attempt to save another when they are about to die and let your powers loose because of it, roll+Bond with that person. **On a 10+**, you do something you've never done, but possible with your powers, tell the table what it is and add it to your Powers Profile. After doing so, you're hanging on by a thread and can do nothing but rest and recover (and now have 3 Critical Conditions); you may raise your Bond with them by 1 (if you Bond with them was negative, you may reset it to zero). **On a 7-9**, as a 10+, but make the Last Chance move upon completion. **On a 6-**, you do it, but you're Dead for Now (make the Dead for Now move).

## GATHER INTEL

When your leads dry up, take to whatever avenues are open to you and roll. If you do it ...

- ... by shaking people down, roughing people up or with direct force, roll+Smash
- ... by going places you shouldn't be, gaining access or being stealthy, roll+Maneuver
- ... by doing research, gathering your thoughts, debate or analysis, roll+Investigate
- ... by using your charm and social grace, roll+Influence ... by calling in favors and relying on Bonds, roll+Bond

**On a 10+**, ask one. **On a 7-9**, your first-choice method comes up dry, you must enlist the aid of another PC or choose a different method. **On a 6-**, you don't find trouble, trouble finds you. The EIC will ask you questions about what you were up to and then tell you what trouble arises.

- 🔦 *Who can tell me what I want to know?*
- 🔦 *Where can I find ?*
- 🔦 *What are the rumors about ?*
- 🔦 *Who is the most upset about...?*
- 🔦 *Who stands the most to gain from...?*

## FIT IN

Whenever you have downtime and try to get back to your "normal" life in order to mend or create one of your Bonds, decide which Bond you want to focus on and roll+Bond. **On a 10+**, remove a number of Conditions equal to your Bond with that person and then raise your Bond with them by 1 after doing so. **On a 7-9**, as a 10+ result but you have to deal with a danger threatening your mundane life with the Bond involved. Begin framing and playing out the scene as usual, the EIC will jump in and add danger when they so choose.

## LAST CHANCE

When you try to keep on going despite taking a fourth Critical Condition and someone close to you is in peril, roll. **On a 10+**, you do it, you're in a bad spot but you're still alive and conscious with three Critical Conditions. **On a 7-9**, you do it, but you can only get up if you can keep your enemy talking (you must get them to reveal an answer to one question from the list) or if someone close to you is in peril. **On 6-**, your fate is sealed and you have no control over what your enemies do to you and those you failed to protect. The EIC will tell you what happens as the darkness takes you ... you are Dead For Now.

- 🔦 *What started them on their road to becoming a villain, what is their defining trauma?*
- 🔦 *How is their world view distorted and different from the norm?*
- 🔦 *Why are they upset with the status quo?*
- 🔦 *What will the status quo look like after they succeed, in their mind?*
- 🔦 *What connection do they have to you or any of the heroes?*



## DEAD FOR NOW

When you take a fourth Permanent Condition and die, roll. **On a 10+**, you will return next issue, having survived or been brought back somehow; **on a 7-9**, you will return a few issues later, but choose a complication from the list below. On a miss, you are dead until the EIC chooses to bring you back, with complications of their choosing. A complication might be something like:

- You've brought trouble with you
- You've lost all your powers
- Your powers are rather different than before
- Your powers have grown stronger or weaker
- You manifest a previously unknown power
- You're not who you thought you were
- The secrets you've been keeping are revealed
- Your history or origin is retconned, choose a new Origin book.
- You're from an alternate timeline or reality
- You are brought back for a reason, a mission
- You don't remember anything
- You are indebted to someone you hate
- Your body has permanent modifications made to it
- Everyone you know has moved on without you (reset all Bonds)
- You have trouble controlling your powers and emotions



### PRINCIPLES

- Address the characters, not the players.
- Embrace the weird, outlandish, alien and fantastic.
- Make a move that follows from and makes sense for the fiction.
- Never speak the name of your move.
- Give every enemy life.
- Name every person.
- Ask questions and use the answers.
- Be a fan of the characters.
- Think like a villain.
- Begin and end with the fiction.
- Think offscreen, too.
- Give the characters hard choices to make.
- Know your villain's motivations.

### WHEN TO MAKE A MOVE

You make a move:

- When everyone looks at you to find out what happens
- When the players give you a golden opportunity in the fiction
- When they roll a 6

### CHOOSING A MOVE

To choose a move, think of the obvious consequences of the action that triggered it in the fiction. If you've already got an idea for something to happen, roll with it as long as it fits with your agenda and principles for the game. Let your moves snowball and build off one another like when warning the use of a hard move by first making a soft one. Build on the success or failure of the characters' moves and your own previous ones.

If your first instinct is that it won't hurt them now, but it'll come back to bite them later, great! That's part of your principals (think off-screen, too). Make a note of it and reveal it when the time is right.

### MAKING YOUR MOVE

When making a move, keep your principals in mind—never speak the name of the move and address the characters, not the players.

Remember to cater the fiction and each move, each panel to each character—play to their strengths and weaknesses and keep the unique qualities they have in mind at all times. It's important to know who the characters are and what powers that have because it all affects the fiction—you know it'll take a lot more to knock down a hero with a healing factor compared to a hero with no protection or defense.

After every move you make, always ask "What do you do?"

### USE AN ENEMY MOVE

Every enemy the heroes encounter throughout the course of their adventures has at least one move they make, and so might some locations. An enemy or location move is just a description of what that location or enemy does, like "keep anyone from getting to the boss" for a minion or "summon aide from the subterranean depths" for a cultist or monster that is part of a horde.

- Reveal an unwelcome truth
- Show signs of an approaching threat, advance the Plan
- Inflict an Appropriate Condition
- Use up their resources or take away their stuff
- Reveal or Restore an Advantage
- Turn their move back on them
- Separate them
- Give an opportunity that fits a character's abilities
- Show a downside to their character, appearance, equipment or power
- Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost

- Put someone in a spot
- Tell them the requirements or consequences and ask
- Threaten a Bond
- Take advantage of a Limitations
- Threaten a secret
- Encourage creative use of powers, showcase an Advantage
- Take advantage of a Condition
- Change the environment
- Point to a looming threat
- Introduce a new faction or type of enemy
- Use a threat from an existing faction or enemy type
- Make them backtrack
- Present a challenge to one of the players

### CHECKLIST FOR CREATING ENEMIES

Here are some questions to ask yourself to help you when creating some enemies.

- What is their main offensive power?
- What is their main defensive power?
- Are they immune to something?
- Are they resistant to something?
- Do they get stronger the more punishment they take?
- Do their powers/immunities/resistances come from technology?
- Do they have powers that protect themselves or hinder others?
- What is their state of mind and do they have a weakness?
- How do they fight?
- What is their motivation?
- At what scale do they operate?
- Where are they set up and based?
- How much do the characters know about them?
- What do they look like?

## ELEMENTS OF AN ENEMY

NAME	
MOTIVE	TYPE
APPEARANCE	
CONDITION THRESHOLD (or Size Rating if mob)	
POWERS	