

DREAD EXPECTATIONS



By Bruce R. Cordell

DREAD EXPECTATIONS



The PCs are the elite superhero team of New York known as the “New York Sentinels.” Their base includes accommodations, a science and computer lab, and a communications hub that monitors police and military bands for trouble.

Their helicar provides relatively quick transport around the city, having the range and maneuverability of a standard helicopter.

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BRIEF SUMMARY

The player characters battle through diversions and waves of Doctor Dread’s henchmen—the Dread Corps—to stop her from activating a giant alien battle robot to destroy New York City, though they probably end up fighting the robot in the end.

DETAILS

Doctor Dread is renowned because she manipulates the media like a master puppeteer, constantly enhancing her reputation. To make people afraid appears to be her goal, and indeed, Doctor Dread has become the most feared terrorist on the planet. But she uses that fear as a tool, expertly applying the threat of what she *might* do to extort money and influence from corporations and governments.

This means that Dread must occasionally follow through on her threats, demonstrating that she isn’t bluffing when she threatens to point a solar cannon at an east coast city or to freeze the mayor and his family by dipping them in liquid nitrogen.

In that vein, Doctor Dread has discovered a means to reactivate an alien battle robot. Thirty years ago, the alien Vreek were defeated by an earlier generation’s superhero host. The Vreek’s battle robots were destroyed, but a few remained unaccounted for. In the chaos, one fell unmarked into the New York harbor and sank. A few years ago, Doctor Dread found it. Since then, she’s attempted to reactivate it under her own control. After many false starts and partial successes, new research

revealed to Dread that the battle robot’s control module was being studied by scientists in the New York Science Institute. In their “incompetence” (to use Dread’s description), institute scientists failed to determine the module’s true significance.

The Science Institute is well guarded because the scientists employed there study all sorts of dangerous technology, much of it taken from defeated supervillains and other threats, including the occasional alien invader like the Vreek. Superheroes are quick to respond to trouble at the Science Institute for the same reason, lest anything troublesome fall into the wrong hands.

Thus, Doctor Dread executes her plan as the adventure begins. She sends a squad of her Dread Corps commandos to attack the New York Museum of Art, putatively to acquire a 3,000-year-old mummy rumored to possess magical influence. But it’s just a diversion to lure the PCs to the museum while she steals the control module from the Science Institute. By the time the superheroes foil the Dread Corps (which should prove to be fairly easy), they learn about Dread’s attack on the Science Institute too late to respond. Once she has the control module, it doesn’t take her long to learn how to power up the robot and rouse it from the deeps.

The PCs must piece together Doctor Dread’s true goals after the Institute attack, try to stop her before she activates the battle robot, and, if all else fails, fight the alien battle robot to a standstill before it can destroy too much of New York.

SALIENT POINTS:

- The PCs are the New York Sentinels, the elite superhero team operating in New York City.
- The supervillain Doctor Dread sends henchmen (the Dread Corps) to attack the Museum of Art as a diversion while she focuses on her actual target: the Science Institute.
- Dread steals an alien artifact—a control module—from the Science Institute so that she can rouse and control an inoperative alien battle robot (a “gabriel”).
- Eager for her exploits to be broadcast across the world, Doctor Dread never does anything quietly if she can accomplish her goal in a spectacular manner, ideally one that results in as many casualties as possible.
- Doctor Dread works on rousing the alien battle robot even as the PCs chase down clues to discover her true location.

STARTING POINT

The PCs receive word of an attack by the Dread Corps on the Museum of Art, only a five-minute trip from their base by helicar. The characters know that today the museum is unveiling a new exhibit: a 3,000-year-old mummy. The mummy is Na-tarth, a pharaoh of Ancient Egypt still wearing a golden crown that ancient people believed to confer magical powers that extended his reign to over two hundred years. Apparently Doctor Dread knows something about the crown that no one else does. The Dread Corps must be stopped before their commander gets her hands on it.

At the Museum of Art: Eight Dread Corps commandos, one rocketeer, and one captain assault the museum. Corps members wear red armored jackets and white masks, with Doctor Dread’s symbol on one arm. By the time the PCs arrive, the Dread Corps have infiltrated the exhibit, which features an entire floor set with a very lifelike backdrop of ancient ruins. *Reveal Show 'Em A* (page 8) to the PCs. Just out of the scene depicted, a sarcophagus sits upright inside a level 5 clear plastic containment case. The sarcophagus contains a withered corpse and a nonmagical but very fetching golden crown.

The fight at the museum is fairly straightforward. The superpowered PCs far outclass the Dread Corps, but the GM can introduce a GM intrusion or two to increase the challenge. However, keep in mind that this is really just an opportunity for the players to get used to their characters and their powers. In the end, they’re supposed to feel quite superior. In the aftermath of the fight, the PCs learn that the conflict was a diversion (see Museum Aftermath on the next page).

THE WRAP-UP

It’s unlikely that the PCs will be able to find and stop Doctor Dread before she can activate the gabriel; her diversion and months of preparation give her a significant head start. More likely, the characters finish the adventure when they take down the alien robot, but hopefully they’ve figured out how to weaken it slightly. Before that final fight, the PCs are likely to have a run-in with Doctor Dread. They *might* be able to put an end to things then and there, but given her suit’s ability to teleport her to safety as an emergency measure, the characters may have to be satisfied with stopping Dread’s robot, not the supervillain herself. Such is the nature of supervillains.

KEYS

This scenario has two keys.

- ◆ Something that provides a clue to Doctor Dread’s location and/or what she’s up to.
- ▲ Something that weakens or controls the giant alien battle robot (the “gabriel”).

If an encounter has the potential to include a key but does not, it may have a few random cyphers instead, depending on the flow of the session. Overall, the entire scenario should offer the PCs approximately six to eight cyphers. If you want to save time, you can use the cyphers described under *Cyphers As Inspirations*.

Dread Corps Commando: level 2; Armor 1; long-range rifle attack inflicts 4 points of damage

Dread Corps Rocketeer: level 4; Armor 1; long-range rocket-propelled-grenade attack inflicts 7 points of damage to target and every creature and object next to target (three rockets total)

Dread Corps Captain: level 5; Armor 2; two long-range rifle attacks as a single action inflict 6 points of damage each

GM Intrusions: A Dread Corps commando takes a hostage. An attack threatens a priceless museum exhibit.

Cyphers As Inspirations, page 6

The giant alien battle robots used by the Vreek were usually called “gabriels.”

One unique aspect of instant adventures is the keys. These are not necessarily literal keys—they are elements of the adventure that can be placed in different points in the scenario, depending on where the player characters go and what they do. For example, a key might be an object found in a cabinet or in an NPC’s pocket. If the PCs never look in the cabinet but do negotiate a trade with the NPC, then the GM simply decides that the object is with the NPC. This allows the adventure to continue even if the characters miss a clue or never visit a certain location.

MUSEUM AFTERMATH

After the fight at the museum, sirens herald the appearance of police and emergency medical technicians (EMTs). The mummy's containment vessel is shattered by a rocket blast, and the sarcophagus scorched—rough treatment for an artifact the Dread Corps supposedly want to acquire.

Either via the GM intrusion or by questioning a defeated Dread Corps commando, the PCs learn that Doctor Dread attacked the Science Institute just minutes earlier; footage is all over the news. If questioned, the Dread Corps don't know what their boss wanted from the Science Institute, but they do know that the attack at the museum was intended as a diversion.

If the gabriel-weakening KEY is present, it's a physical cypher (not an inspiration) that a Dread Corps commando carries: a level 4 "alien crystal." If it is touched to a machine, that machine cannot take actions for one round.

If the Dread clue KEY is present, it's gained by interrogating the defeated commandos. However, this KEY might instead be presented as an insight.

Insight: An insight is available to the PCs: Doctor Dread has been seen more than once at two locations in New York. One is a gun shop called the Arms Depot, and the other is a condemned section of the subway beneath the city. She likely has a connection to those places. (See the Cypher System Rulebook, page 216, for additional information on insights)

GM Intrusion: A reporter rushes past the police lines and begins a breathless live interview of a character, in which she leads with, "Why are you here fighting henchmen, when Doctor Dread herself attacked the New York Science Institute?"

SCIENCE INSTITUTE

Investigating PCs find the science lab in shambles, with a hole in the ceiling through which open sky is visible. They learn from a stammering Professor Audrey Millbank (level 2, science tasks as level 6) that Doctor Dread burned through a "class 7 vault." Dread made off with an artifact recovered from the alien Vreek invasion that took place thirty years ago. The scientists had been making some progress lately on figuring it out; they think the artifact might have had some ability to control the "gabriels" (giant alien battle robots) the Vreek so infamously used.

If the gabriel-weakening KEY is present, it's a draining capacitor. When the Vreek and their gabriels were defeated by superheroes of an earlier generation, draining capacitors—devices about the size of fireplugs—were magnetically attached to the giant robots to siphon their energy. (A draining capacitor attached to a robot increases the difficulty of its tasks, attacks, and defenses by two steps.)

If the KEY providing a clue about Dread is available, Professor Millbank adds that she recalls Doctor Dread letting slip, "Once I siphon enough power from the grid, New York will be demolished!" (There are half a dozen gas-fired power stations in and around New York City; a comprehensive search would eventually reveal the Brooklyn Power Station to contain the gabriel, though discovering this would take a while.)

GM Intrusion: Doctor Dread left a surprise for the heroes: a hologram designed to draw media attention appears on the institute roof and derides their competence. If the hologram projector is investigated, it explodes, inflicting 7 points of damage on all targets in short range who fail a difficulty 5 Speed defense roll. Even those who succeed still take 2 points of damage.

ARMS DEPOT

Located on a New York City street between two small Italian restaurants, the Arms Depot sign includes the motto "Police Equipment" as well as the reminder that "We buy, sell, and trade used guns." Various target silhouettes paper the windows, hiding the interior.

Gun shop owner Ed Vitagliano (level 3, pistol attacks as level 5) runs a cluttered shop thick with firearms and related gear. He deals in much more lethal weaponry (including rocket-propelled grenade launchers used by the Dread Corps) in his secret basement. Ed is one of Doctor Dread's weapon suppliers.

If the PCs confront him, Ed doesn't want trouble, though he points out that he has lots of customers and all his deals are legal. He can't help what his customers do with weapons he supplies. (He's lying—he isn't licensed to sell rocket-propelled grenades.)

If he has the KEY that provides a clue about Dread, Ed can tell the PCs that he heard the supervillain's buyer (a Dread Corps rocketeer) mention that Dread had fished a gabriel out of New York harbor.

If a gabriel-weakening KEY is present, it's in the form of three long-range rocket-propelled grenades that inflict 7 points of damage to a target (ignores Armor).

GM Intrusion: A notorious criminal arrives to buy a special gun from Ed and misconstrues the PCs' presence as an ambush. The criminal, Mister Genocide, has a poison touch and breath (level 5; Armor 1; level 7 touch attack inflicts 5 points of Speed damage [ignores Armor]; breath attack every other round affects up to ten victims in short range, inflicting 7 points of Speed damage and rendering victim helpless for a round).



DOCTOR DREAD ATTACKS

This event occurs whenever and wherever the GM thinks is best, but preferably after the PCs investigate the gun shop and/or subway tunnel, after which the villain knows the heroes are on her tail. Doctor Dread brings along two Dread Corps rocketeers (level 4; Armor 1; long-range rocket-propelled-grenade attack inflicts 7 points of damage to target and every creature and object next to target; three rockets total) to help her take down the PCs.

Doctor Dread is tough, though all the PCs together are likely tougher. That said, she has an ace up her sleeve—her armor allows her to teleport to safety if she feels threatened. The GM should allow her to use this function to get away unless the PCs come up with an especially amazing plan to capture Dread, in which case they should be rewarded.

If Dread has the KEY controlling the robot, it is the command unit she stole from the Science Institute, which she has integrated into her armor.

If the KEY that describes her current base of operations is present, one of the Dread Corps threatens the PCs by saying, “When the gabriel finally sucks enough energy from the Brooklyn power station, New York is toast!”

Doctor Dread: level 7; resists mental attacks as level 8; health 40; Armor 4; flies a long distance per round; long-range plasma blast inflicts 7 points of damage on one target; can use her armor to get out of a predicament, such as by healing herself or teleporting away

GM Intrusion: The PCs’ attack on Doctor Dread strikes the KEY, damaging it and activating the gabriel, which goes on a rampage under no one’s control.

SUBWAY TUNNEL

The PCs’ records suggest that a closed-off subway tunnel serves as one of Doctor Dread’s bases. They can reach the tunnel by traversing the normal subway tunnels for a few miles.

Sure enough, upon investigation the target tunnel is found to be one of Dread’s bases, but it’s abandoned. All sensitive equipment and Dread Corps personnel have been removed. Wires and dust are all that remain.

If the KEY providing a clue about Dread is here, it’s the automated alarm system set off when the PCs enter. The characters see a blinking light; meanwhile, Doctor Dread gets a video feed of the intruders in her lab. She turns on a video screen in the tunnel just long enough to tell the PCs to leave her alone or they’ll be sorry. Through the feed, the PCs see that behind Doctor Dread is a giant alien battle robot lying inside what appears to be a gas-fired power station. There are half a dozen gas-fired power stations in the New York area. Apparently Doctor Dread has commandeered one of them.

If the gabriel-controlling KEY is present, it is a physical cypher (not an inspiration) that was left behind: a level 5 “alien crystal.” A gabriel will do the bidding of the crystal user for one round.

POWER STATION AND GIANT BATTLE ROBOT

Reveal Show ‘Em B (page 8) to players.

Unless the gabriel is activated prematurely during the PCs’ fight with Doctor Dread, the superheroes discover which power station Dread is using to charge up the robot (possibly by tracing unusual power draws, by process of elimination, or with a KEY). In any event, when the characters draw near, sensors pick them up and the robot activates. The gabriel rampages through the city until the PCs can stop it. (Even if they have the command module, getting it to work correctly each round is a difficulty 5 Intellect task; three successes give a PC enough direct experience to figure out how to permanently power down the gabriel with one final Intellect task.)

“Gabriel” (Giant Alien Battle Robot): level 8; health 80; Armor 8; Speed defense as level 5 due to size; 300-foot (91 m) range atomic tail attack inflicts 13 points of damage on target and 10 points of damage on all creatures and objects within immediate range of target

GM Intrusion: A building topples on the character, who is trapped until she can succeed on a difficulty 6 Might task.

MORE DETAILS

Read this section if you have time.

CYPHERS AS INSPIRATIONS

As described in the *Cypher System Rulebook*, some cyphers, called “subtle cyphers,” are not tied to objects. They are useful in a setting where the PCs are not constantly looting objects and defeated enemies, such as this adventure, in which the players are superheroes and presumably above such activities. Thus, instead of gaining cyphers, the PCs gain inspirations, which are more like the inherent abilities they already have—adding boosts to Edge, restoring points to stat Pools, enhancing damage, and so on. (Of course, a full-blown superhero setting likely does include superscience gadgets and alien crystals that would make fine cyphers; however, this scenario offers inspirations as subtle cyphers.)

As the name suggests, an inspiration is gained when a superhero is inspired to do something she’s never done before and might not be able to do again. The following cyphers (as inspirations) are ready to use to facilitate running *Dread Expectations*, alleviating prep time and cutting down on the need to reference books during a session. Use them when you are in need of a “random” cypher.

Level 5 inspiration. Immediately restores 5 points to user’s Might Pool.

Level 6 inspiration. Use as part of attack action; if the attack is successful, it inflicts 5 additional points of damage.

Level 4 inspiration. Use as part of another action; user can immediately take another action.

Level 4 inspiration. User can see in the dark for eight hours.

Level 4 inspiration. User gains +3 to Armor for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. Immediately restores 5 points to user’s Intellect Pool.

Level 6 inspiration. Use as part of another non-attack action; the difficulty of a task attempted during the corresponding action is reduced by one step.

Level 8 inspiration. Use as part of another action that attempts to detect a lie or trick; the difficulty of the attempt is reduced by two steps.

VREEK INVASION

The characters can successfully conclude the adventure without knowing anything else about the alien Vreek invasion other than the fact that they left behind a few giant battle robots. However, if you have the time and inclination to reveal more history to the PCs, feel free to work the following details into the scenario.

Vreek are humanoid aliens with bright yellow skin that have periodically attempted to conquer the Earth, all the way back into prehistory. Although they control deadly weapons of mass destruction (such as giant alien battle robots), have the ability to travel between worlds, and have a murderous desire to spread their own kind across all existence, entities on Earth have always been up to the challenge of pushing them off. In the current era, protection from the Vreek falls to superheroes.

In addition to a handful of unpowered gabriels lying about Earth, the Vreek have established a couple of secret bases, which are essentially large spacecraft buried in the crust of the planet, waiting for another opportunity to attempt conquest. Within these bases, **Vreek warriors** lie in frozen cryosleep. If the PCs fail to stop the rampaging robot in this scenario, it’s possible that at least one ship full of sleeping Vreek wakes and decides that this is their chance to press their claim on Earth.

THE INVESTIGATION

The PCs might follow up on apparent leads that are not covered in this scenario. Such leads yield nothing of value unless you decide on the fly to fit them in as one of the KEYS. Though dead ends are part of any investigation and help pace the adventure, it’s usually a good idea to provide some

Vreek warrior: level 6;
Armor 4; flies a long
distance each round; long-
range disruptor rifle attack
inflicts 8 points of damage

kind of reward to players because too many dead ends risk the PCs getting bogged down.

USING THIS IN A CAMPAIGN

Read this section only if you're using the scenario in a campaign (and thus less likely to be under time pressure).

Using *Dread Expectations* in a campaign means that you're going to develop a superhero setting using the *Cypher System Rulebook*. Thus, instead of using this scenario to introduce your players to the concept of playing superheroes with the Cypher System rules, you might have the luxury of insinuating the PCs into the situation slowly and more organically. In this case, the characters have previously heard of Doctor Dread, the Vreek (for instance, maybe one of the PC's parents fought the aliens), and Mister Genocide.

Perhaps the PCs are attending a charity function at the museum in their civilian secret identities when the attack by the Dread Corps occurs, maybe because the characters heard that Doctor Dread had an interest in the "mummy's magic crown."

Finally, when Doctor Dread almost inevitably gets away, it provides the PCs with motivation to track her down in a future adventure and bring her to justice.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Read this section after the session is over.

The PCs should earn 2 experience points (XP) for defeating or driving off Doctor Dread and another 2 XP for defeating or powering down the gabriel.

If play continues after the wrap-up of the main plot, the PCs might begin to hear reports of Vreek activity around the globe—one or two ships woke up after they sensed the activation of the battle robot, thinking it was a sign. If enough Vreek wake, they might send a signal to their homeworld, requesting a battle task group. This outcome is the *opposite* of what Doctor Dread wants, and she may be driven to

request an alliance with the superheroes to stave off an invasion of aliens trying to take over the world that she views as hers.

While Dread is an ally of the PCs, she should act in such a way as to gain their trust by putting herself in harm's way to save a character's life, engaging in acts of camaraderie, and so on. That way, when she inevitably betrays the heroes, it'll prove all the harder for them to bear.



A



B



Dark Ronin

NAME

IS A Mysterious

DESCRIPTOR

crimefighter
(explorer)

TYPE

WHO

Solves Mysteries

FOCUS

1

TIER

1

EFFORT

XP

MIGHT

SPEED

INTELLECT

16

POOL

1

EDGE

9

POOL

1

EDGE

9

POOL

EDGE

RECOVERY ROLLS

1d6+1

1 ACTION

1 HOUR

10 MINS

10 HOURS

DAMAGE TRACK

IMPAIRED

+1 Effort per level
Ignore minor and major
effect results on rolls
Combat roll of 17-20
deals only +1 damage

DEBILITATED

Can move only an
immediate distance
Cannot move if Speed
Pool is 0

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES +4 points into stat Pools

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION +1 to the Edge of your choice

EXTRA EFFORT +1 into Effort

SKILL TRAINING Train in a skill or specialize in a trained skill

OTHER Refer to the Cypher System Rulebook

SKILLS • MIGHT

T = trained, S = specialized, I = inability

Acrobatics (reduce difficulty by one step)

Initiative (reduce difficulty by one step)

Might defense (reduce difficulty by one step)

T S I

SKILLS • SPEED

Movement (reduce difficulty by one step)

Perception

Speed defense (reduce difficulty by two steps)

Stealth

T S I

X

X

SKILLS • INTELLECT

Resist interrogation & tricks

T S I

X

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Decipher (1 Intellect point)

Investigator

Opportunist

Confounding

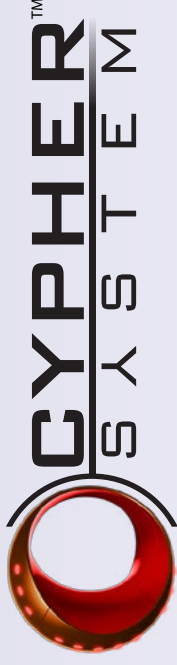
Extra Edge (already figured into Pools)

Practiced With Light and Medium Weapons (already figured into attacks)

Sleuth (already figured into skills)

Stealth Skills (already figured into skills; from stealth flavor)

Inability: The difficulty of any task involving getting people to believe or trust you is increased by one step.



CYPHERS

(as non-physical inspirations)

Level 5 inspiration. Gain +5 to damage from all attacks for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. Fade into the background and become essentially invisible for up to ten minutes or until after you make an attack. First attack following invisibility inflicts 5 additional points of damage.

2

LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Superhero costume (adds +1 to Armor, includes smartphone functionality in the visor, already figured into Armor)

Utility belt (includes flashlight, pen, utility knife, and so on)

Power Shifts

(already figured into skills, attacks, etc.)

Resilience x1

Dexterity x2

Single Attack x2

2

ARMOR

MONEY

BACKGROUND

Your father was a high-ranking criminal in New York, which is a secret you've kept to this day. It shames you that many of your advantages in life, including the incredible mental and physical training you received, is partly due to illicit funds your father generated.

You rescued Iron Tower from a torture cell where your father had imprisoned the hero. Though you made a friend, your father disowned you and has been your enemy ever since.

NOTES

Initial Link to Starting Adventure

A month ago, you were invited to join New York's elite team of superheroes, the New York Sentinels, after the members of the previous team of the same name were lost in an interdimensional warp.

Abilities Described

Decipher (1 Intellect point): If you spend one minute examining a piece of writing or code in a language you do not understand, you can make an Intellect roll of difficulty 3 (or higher, based on the complexity of the language or code) to get the gist of the message. Action to initiate.

Investigator: To really shine as an investigator, you must engage your mind and body in your deductions. You can spend points from your Might Pool, Speed Pool, or Intellect Pool to apply levels of Effort to any Intellect-based task. Enabler.

Opportunist: You have an asset on any attack roll you make against a creature that has already been attacked at some point during the round and is within immediate range. Enabler. (From stealth flavor.)

Confounding: You pull talents and abilities seemingly out of nowhere. You can attempt one task in which you have no training as if you were trained. This ability refreshes every time you make a recovery roll, but the uses never accumulate.

PORTRAIT

Dimensionar

NAME

IS A **Mystical** **warlock** **WHO**

DESCRIPTOR TYPE

Exists Partially Out of Phase

FOCUS

1 TIER **1** EFFORT XP

| MIGHT | SPEED | INTELLECT |
|--------|---------|-----------|
| 7 POOL | 10 POOL | 19 POOL |
| EDGE | EDGE | EDGE |
| | | 1 |

RECOVERY ROLLS **1d6+1**

1 ACTION 1 HOUR

10 MINS 10 HOURS

DAMAGE TRACK

IMPAIRED DEBILITATED

Can move only an immediate distance
Cannot move if Speed Pool is 0

ignore minor and major effect results on rolls
Combat roll of 17-20 deals only +1 damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Erase Memories (3 Intellect points)

Phasing Blast (1 Intellect point)

Premonition (2 Intellect points)

Sense Magic

Smart (already figured in Pools)

Spell: Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point)

Walk Through Walls (2 Intellect points)

Ward (already figured into Armor)

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES +4 points into stat Pools

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION +1 to the Edge of your choice

EXTRA EFFORT +1 into Effort

SKILL TRAINING Train in a skill or specialize in a trained skill

OTHER Refer to the *Cypher System Rulebook*

SKILLS • MIGHT

T = trained, S = specialized, I = inability

Might defense roll (reduce difficulty by one step)

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SKILLS • SPEED

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SKILLS • INTELLECT

Crafting (reduce difficulty by two steps)

Identifying or understanding the supernatural X

Intellect defense roll (reduce difficulty by two steps)

Knowledge (reduce difficulty by two steps)

Science (reduce difficulty by two steps)

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ATTACKS

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| Phasing blast (ignores Armor) | -2 8 |
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CYPHERS
(as non-physical inspirations)

Level 5 inspiration. Gain +5 to Armor for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. Reduce difficulty of all stealth tasks by two steps for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. Reduce difficulty of all attacks by one step for one hour.

3 LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Superhero costume (adds +1 to Armor, includes smartphone functionality in the visor, already figured into Armor)

Utility belt (includes flashlight, pen, utility knife, and so on)

Power Shifts
(already figured into skills, attacks, etc.)

Intelligence x2

Single Attack x2

Resilience x1

2 ARMOR

MONEY

BACKGROUND

While you were secretly studying to be an adept, you worked as an assistant for a bank, which is where you made friends with Speedburst, whose parents owned the bank. The first time you cast your newly learned Premonition spell, you learned that Speedburst and his parents are descended from ancient alien invaders called Vreek but don't know it. Given the bad reputation of the Vreek, you decided not to let your friend know what you'd discovered.

NOTES

Initial Link to Starting Adventure

A month ago, you were invited to join New York's elite team of superheroes, the New York Sentinels, after the members of the previous team of the same name were lost in an interdimensional warp.

Abilities Described

Erase Memories (3 Intellect points): You reach into the mind of a creature within immediate range and make an Intellect roll. On a success, you erase up to the last five minutes of its memory. Action.

Premonition (2 Intellect points): You learn one random fact about a creature or location that is pertinent to a topic you designate. Alternatively, you can choose to learn a creature's level; however, if you do so, you cannot learn anything else about it later with this ability. Action.

Phasing Blast (1 Intellect point): You attack a foe within short range using energies that attempt to disperse its molecules; difficulty of attack is reduced by two steps; 8 points of damage (ignores Armor). Action. (Modified from Onslaught and two Single Attack power shifts.)

Walk Through Walls (2 Intellect points): You can slowly pass through physical barriers at a rate of 1 inch (3 cm) per round (minimum of one round to pass through any barrier). You can't act (other than moving) or perceive anything until you pass entirely through the barrier. You can't pass through energy barriers. Action.

Spell: Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point): You can perform small tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, clean a small area, mend a broken object, prepare (but not create) food, and so on. You can't use hedge magic to harm another creature or object. Action.

Sense Magic: You can sense whether the supernatural is active in situations where its presence is not obvious. You must study an object or location closely for a minute to get a feel for whether a mystical touch is at work. Enabler.

Ward: You have a shield of fiery energy around you at all times that helps deflect attacks. You gain +1 to Armor (already figured into Armor). Enabler.

PORTRAIT

Firebrand

NAME

IS A **Brash** **projector** **WHO**

DESCRIPTOR TYPE

Bears a Halo of Fire

FOCUS

1 TIER **1** EFFORT **XP**

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| MIGHT | SPEED | INTELLECT |
| 8 POOL | 12 POOL | 16 POOL |
| EDGE | EDGE | EDGE |
| | | 1 |

RECOVERY ROLLS **1d6+1**

1 ACTION 1 HOUR

10 MINS 10 HOURS

DAMAGE TRACK

IMPAIRED DEBILITATED

+1 Effort per level Can move only an immediate distance

Ignore minor and major effect results on rolls Cannot move if Speed Pool is 0

Combat roll of 17-20 deals only +1 damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fireblast (1 Intellect point)

Firebomb (2 Intellect points)

Shroud of Flame (1 Intellect point)

Practiced in Armor (from combat flavor; already figured into Armor)

Ward (already figured into Armor)

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES +4 points into stat Pools

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION +1 to the Edge of your choice

EXTRA EFFORT +1 into Effort

SKILL TRAINING Train in a skill or specialize in a trained skill

OTHER Refer to the *Cypher System Rulebook*

SKILLS • MIGHT

Might defense (reduce difficulty by one step)

Movement and acrobatics (reduce difficulty by one step)

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SKILLS • SPEED

Speed defense (reduce difficulty by one step)

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SKILLS • INTELLECT

Ignoring or overcoming fear and intimidation

Initiative (reduce difficulty by one step)

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| | | X | |
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ATTACKS

Fireblast (fire damage)

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|--|-----|-----|
| | MOD | DAM |
| | -3 | 13 |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |



CYPHERS

(as non-physical inspirations)

Level 4 inspiration. Gain asset to Speed defense for ten minutes.

Level 5 inspiration. Gain +5 to Armor for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. Regain 5 points to any Pool.

3

LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Superhero costume (adds +1 to Armor, includes smartphone functionality in the visor, already figured into Armor)

Utility belt (includes flashlight, pen, utility knife, and so on)

Power Shifts

(already figured into skills, attacks, etc.)

Dexterity x1

Resilience x1

Single Attack x3

3

ARMOR

MONEY

BACKGROUND

Back before you became superheroes and had normal names, you and your friend King Brick grew up together in the Bronx. You both got in a fair amount of trouble. You're fairly certain King Brick did a few things back then that you don't really want to know about.

One day in your youth, you, King Brick, and your friend Alicia Palmer were joyriding in a stolen car and smashed into the back of a truck hauling toxic waste. You and King Brick emerged from the incident with your fledgling superpowers, but Alicia is in a coma to this day.

NOTES

Initial Link to Starting Adventure

A month ago, you were invited to join New York's elite team of superheroes, the New York Sentinels, after the members of the previous team of the same name were lost in an interdimensional warp.

Abilities Described

Fireblast (1 Intellect point): You attack a foe within short range with a blast of fire; the difficulty of the attack is reduced by three steps; 13 points of fire damage. Action. (Modified from Onslaught and three Single Attack power shifts.)

Firebomb (2 Intellect points): You cause an object you can see within long range to detonate with fire. The object must be a small, mundane item composed of homogeneous matter (such as a clay cup, an iron ingot, a stone, and so on). The object explodes in an immediate radius, dealing 1 point of damage to all creatures and objects in the area. Because this is an area attack, adding Effort to increase your damage works differently than it does for single-target attacks: for each level of Effort applied in this way, the explosion deals 2 additional points of damage to each target, and even if you fail your attack roll, all targets in the area still take 1 point of damage. Action. (Modified from Shatter.)

Shroud of Flame (1 Intellect point): At your command, your entire body becomes shrouded in flames that last up to ten minutes. The fire doesn't burn you, but it automatically inflicts 2 points of damage to anyone who tries to touch you or strike you with a melee attack. Flames from another source can still hurt you. While the shroud is active, you gain +2 to Armor only against damage from fire (and plasma) from another source. Enabler.

PORTRAIT

Iron Tower

NAME

IS A **Strong** warrior **warrior** TYPE **WH0**

Grows to Towering Heights

FOCUS

1 TIER **1** EFFORT **XP**

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| MIGHT | SPEED | INTELLECT |
| 20 POOL | 10 POOL | 8 POOL |
| EDGE | EDGE | EDGE |

RECOVERY ROLLS **1d6+1**

1 ACTION 1 HOUR

10 MINS 10 HOURS

DAMAGE TRACK

IMPAIRED DEBILITATED

Can move only an immediate distance

Ignore minor and major effect results on rolls

Combat roll of 17-20 deals only +1 damage

Cannot move if Speed Pool is 0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Control the Field (1 Might point)

Enlarge (1+ Might point)

Enlarge Attack (2 Might points, when Enlarged)

Freakishly Large (already figured into Skills)

Iron Skin (already figured into Armor)

No Need for Weapons (already figured into Attacks)

Practiced With All Weapons (already figured into Attacks)

Very Powerful (already figured into Pools)

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES +4 points into stat Pools

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION +1 to the Edge of your choice

EXTRA EFFORT +1 into Effort

SKILL TRAINING Train in a skill or specialize in a trained skill

OTHER Refer to the Cypher System Rulebook

SKILLS • MIGHT

T = trained, S = specialized, I = inability

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Breaking inanimate objects | T | S | I |
| Intimidation (reduce difficulty by one step when Enlarged) | X | | |
| Jumping (reduce difficulty by one step) | | | |
| Might defense roll (reduce difficulty by one step) | | | |

SKILLS • SPEED

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SKILLS • INTELLECT

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ATTACKS

| | MOD | DAM |
|---|-----|-----|
| Fist | -1 | 7 |
| Nearby medium object used as weapon or thrown (short range) | -3 | 16 |
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CYPHERS

(as non-physical inspirations)

Level 5 inspiration. Increase the number of levels of Effort you can apply by 2 for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. When you use Enlarge, you can choose to grow up to 12 feet (4 m) in height, and you add a total of 7 temporary points to your Might Pool (instead of 4). Enabler.

2

LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Superhero costume (adds +1 to Armor, includes smartphone functionality in the visor, already figured into Armor; grows with Iron Tower)

Utility belt (includes flashlight, pen, utility knife, and so on; grows with Iron Tower)

Power Shifts

(already figured into skills, attacks, etc.)

Resilience x1

Single Attack x3

Strength x1

3

ARMOR

MONEY

BACKGROUND

You were the only member of the previous roster of the New York Sentinels not to go missing in an interdimensional warp caused by a supervillain known as Galaxar. That's because you were imprisoned at the time in a torture cell by a powerful criminal.

Thankfully, Dark Ronin found and released you, though for some reason he refused you when you asked Dark Ronin to bring to justice the criminal who'd wrongly imprisoned you.

NOTES

Initial Link to Starting Adventure

As the only member of the original Sentinels still extant, you began recruiting other likely up-and-coming superheroes active in New York, beginning with Dark Ronin.

Abilities Described

Control the Field (1 Might point): This melee attack inflicts 1 less point of damage than normal, but regardless of whether you hit the target, you maneuver it into a position you desire within immediate range. Action.

Enlarge (1+ Might point). You trigger the enzymatic reaction that draws additional mass from another dimension, and you (and your clothing or suit) grow larger. You achieve a height of 9 feet (3 m) and stay that way for about a minute. During that time, you add 4 points to your Might Pool, add +1 to Armor, and add +2 to your Might Edge. While you are larger than normal, the difficulty of your Speed defense rolls is increased by one step, and you are practiced in using your fists as heavy weapons.

When the effects of Enlarge end, your Armor and Might Edge return to normal, and you subtract a number of points from your Might Pool equal to the number you gained (if this brings the Pool to 0, subtract the overflow first from your Speed Pool and then, if necessary, from your Intellect Pool). Each additional time you use Enlarge before your next ten-hour recovery roll, you must apply an additional level of Effort. Thus, the second time you use Enlarge, you must apply one level of Effort; the third time you use Enlarge, two levels of Effort; and so on. Action to initiate.

Enlarged Attack (2 Might points, when Enlarged) : Strike two foes with a single melee attack. Make separate attack rolls for each foe, but both attacks count as a single action in a single round. You remain limited by the amount of Effort you can apply on one action. Anything that modifies your attack or damage applies to both of these attacks. Action.

PORTRAIT

King Brick

NAME

ISA Tough

DESCRIPTOR

warrior

TYPE

WH0

Performs Feats of Strength

FOCUS

1

TIER

1

EFFORT

XP

MIGHT

SPEED

INTELLECT

16

POOL

2

EDGE

10

POOL

1

EDGE

8

POOL

EDGE

RECOVERY ROLLS 1d6+ 2

1 ACTION

1 HOUR

10 MINS

10 HOURS

DAMAGE TRACK

IMPAIRED

+1 Effort per level
Ignore minor and major
effect results on rolls
Combat roll of 17-20
deals only +1 damage

DEBILITATED

Can move only an
immediate distance
Cannot move if Speed
Pool is 0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bash (1 Might point)

Smash (1 Might point)

Practiced With All Weapons (already figured into attacks)

Athlete (already figured into skills)

Extra Edge (already figured into Pools)

Healthy (already figured into recovery rolls)

Practiced in Armor (already figured in Armor)

Resilient (already figured in Armor)

Strong (already figured into Pools)

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES +4 points into stat Pools

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION +1 to the Edge of your choice

EXTRA EFFORT +1 into Effort

SKILL TRAINING Train in a skill or specialize in a trained skill

OTHER Refer to the Cypher System Rulebook

SKILLS • MIGHT

T = trained, S = specialized, I = inability

| | T | S | I |
|--|---|---|---|
| Carrying | X | | |
| Climbing | X | | |
| Jumping | X | | |
| Might defense (reduce difficulty by three steps) | X | | |
| Smashing | X | | |

SKILLS • SPEED

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SKILLS • INTELLECT

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ATTACKS

| | MOD | DAM |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| Sledgehammer | -2 | 12 |
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CYPHERS

(as non-physical inspirations)

Level 5 inspiration. Gain +5 to Armor for one hour.

Level 5 inspiration. Deal 3 additional points of damage for ten minutes.

2

LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Superhero costume (adds +1 to Armor, includes smartphone functionality in the visor, already figured into Armor)

Utility belt (includes flashlight, pen, utility knife, and so on)

Power Shifts

(already figured into skills, attacks, etc.)

Resilience x3

Single Attack x2

5

ARMOR

MONEY



BACKGROUND

Back before you became superheroes and had normal names, you and your friend Firebrand grew up together in the Bronx. You both got in a fair amount of trouble. You're fairly certain Firebrand did a few things back then that you don't really want to know about.

One day in your youth, you, Firebrand, and your friend Alicia Palmer were joyriding in a stolen car and smashed into the back of a truck hauling toxic waste. You and Firebrand emerged from the incident with your fledgling superpowers, but Alicia is in a coma to this day.

NOTES

Initial Link to Starting Adventure

A month ago, you were invited to join New York's elite team of superheroes, the New York Sentinels, after the members of the previous team of the same name were lost in an interdimensional warp.

Abilities Described

Bash (1 Might point): This is a pummeling melee attack. Your attack inflicts 1 less point of damage than normal, but dazes your target for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment. Action.

Smash (1 Might point): This is a pummeling melee attack. You make an attack and inflict 1 additional point of damage if your weapon has a broad impact surface. Action.

PORTRAIT

Speedburst

NAME _____

IS A **Fast** (explorer) **crimefighter** (explorer) **WHO**

DESCRIPTOR TYPE

Moves Like the Wind

FOCUS

1 TIER 1 EFFORT XP

| | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|
| MIGHT | SPEED | INTELLECT |
| 10 POOL | 22 POOL | 9 POOL |
| EDGE | EDGE | EDGE |

RECOVERY ROLLS 1d6+1

1 ACTION 1 HOUR

10 MINS 10 HOURS

DAMAGE TRACK

IMPAIRED DEBILITATED

+1 Effort per level
Ignore minor and major effect results on rolls
Combat roll of 17-20 deals only +1 damage

Can move only an immediate distance
Cannot move if Speed Pool is 0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Block (3 Speed points)
 Energetic (already figured into Pools)
 Recover and Go (1 Might point)
 Running Speed

No Need for Weapons (already figured into attacks)
 Practiced With Light and Medium Weapons (already figured into attacks)
 Trained Without Armor (already figured into skills)

ADVANCEMENT

INCREASE CAPABILITIES +4 points into stat Pools

MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION +1 to the Edge of your choice

EXTRA EFFORT +1 into Effort

SKILL TRAINING Train in a skill or specialize in a trained skill

OTHER Refer to the *Cypher System Rulebook*

SKILLS • MIGHT

T = trained, S = specialized, I = inability

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SKILLS • SPEED

Acrobatics (reduce difficulty by three steps)
 Initiative (reduce difficulty by three steps)
 Running and movement (reduce difficulty by three steps)
 Speed defense (reduce difficulty by three steps)

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SKILLS • INTELLECT

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ATTACKS

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|
| | MOD | DAM |
| Flurry of punches | -3 | 10 |
| | | |
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CYPHERS

(as non-physical inspirations)

Level 5 inspiration. Use as part of any action in which you use Running Speed, and triple all ranges indicated.

Level 5 inspiration. Use as part of another action; you can immediately take a second action.

2

LIMIT

EQUIPMENT

Superhero costume (includes smartphone functionality in the visor)

Utility belt (includes flashlight, pen, utility knife, and so on)

Power Shifts

(already figured into skills, attacks, etc.)

Dexterity x3

Single Attack x2

0

ARMOR

MONEY

BACKGROUND

For as long as you can remember, you were faster than other kids. When you grew older, your burgeoning speed helped you foil a bank robbery in the bank your parents owned. You met Dimensionar when you both took apprenticeships there.

Dimensionar keeps a secret, but you're not sure about what. You've asked, but Dimensionar always changes the subject.

NOTES

Initial Link to Starting Adventure

A month ago, you were invited to join New York's elite team of superheroes, the New York Sentinels, after the members of the previous team of the same name were lost in an interdimensional warp.

Abilities Described

Block (3 Speed points): You automatically block the next melee attack made against you within the next minute. Action to initiate.

Recover and Go (1 Might point): When you use an action to make your first recovery roll of the day, you immediately gain another action. Enabler. (Renamed Surging Confidence.)

Running Speed. You move much farther than normal in a round. This means that as a part of another action, you can move up to a short distance. As an action, you can move a long distance, or up to 200 feet (61 m) as a Speed-based task with a difficulty of 4. Enabler.

PORTRAIT