

SUPERFRANCE



A Supplement for the Squadron UK RPG

Written by Olivier Legrand - Illustrated by Luigi Castellani

Published by Simon Burley Productions

SUPER-FRANCE !

A supplement for the **Squadron UK** roleplaying game

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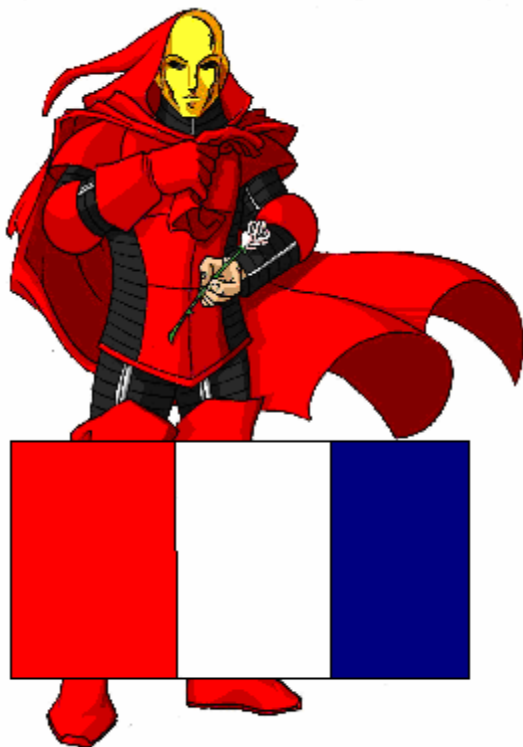


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JONGLEUR

Famous French hero and member of the French superteam l'Avant-Garde

(see p 18 for Jongleur's stats and full description)

Another Country

Because of the essentially American focus of the genre, France is rarely featured in superheroic comics – but in a distinctly British game like **Squadron UK**, France could easily have a major role to play, especially in campaigns with an international (or at least European) scope.

This e-book opens with a quick study of French stereotypes and clichés, then examines three possible uses for France in a SqUK campaign : as an occasional scenario location, as a country of origin for player-characters or NPCs and finally as Britain's main rival on the European scene – all of this seen through the colourful (and sometimes distorting) lens of superheroic reality.

Cliché is a French Word

As in the comics, presenting France in a SqUK scenario or campaign has little to do with actual facts or daily reality ; it's all about using the right *clichés* and stereotypes.

There are actually two types of clichés on France : ones that are appropriate to 21st century France in the context of a SqUK game and ones that should probably be avoided because they have been overused or are *really* outdated.

The first appropriate cliché is to consider that France does not really exist outside of Paris. Parisians actually have a single word for the whole of France outside of Paris : they call it *La Province*.

In a SqUK game, a trip to France should almost always mean a trip to Paris.

In popular literature and genre movies, Paris seems to be essentially composed of the Eiffel Tower, the Seine and the Louvre.

A superheroic vision of Paris should also probably include the very modern Quartier de la Défense, with its towering buildings of steel and glass.

Clichés often used in movies to convey a 'true' Parisian atmosphere to street scenes include cafés with people sitting at the terraces, art déco entrances to the métro (the Parisian tube), and, of course, hordes of foreign tourists.

Paris can also be portrayed as a city of sharp contrasts, with art museums, splendid *hôtels particuliers* (private mansions) and *grands boulevards* on one side and seedy nightclubs, slum areas and darkened alleys on the other.

A possible exception to this "Paris only" rule is the French Riviera; with its palace hotels, party yachts and glamorous casinos, the southern coast of France is the ideal holiday spot for a millionaire hero with the *Rich-Inherited* or *Rich-Industrialist* advantageous background.

But what about French people ? In a game which emulates a specific genre of fiction, playing with clichés is recommended – as long as these clichés do not degenerate into two-dimensional caricatures or stereotypes that are so *passé* or *outré* that they become completely irrelevant.

| English | French Translation | Actual Pronunciation |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Call the police ! | Appelez la police ! | Apleh la police ! |
| Call the cops ! | Appelez les flics ! | Apleh leh flic ! |
| Help ! | Au secours ! | Oscor ! |
| Help me ! | Aidez-moi ! | Eh-deh mwa ! |
| I don't wanna die ! | Je ne veux pas mourir ! | Juh nvuh pa moo-rir ! |
| Don't move ! | Ne bougez pas ! | Nuh boojeh pa ! |
| Stop ! | Arrêtez ! | Arreh-teh ! |
| Get down ! | Baissez-vous ! | Besseh voo ! |
| Get out ! | Sortez ! | Sorteh ! |
| Stay where you are ! | Restez où vous êtes ! | Resteh oo voo zett ! |
| Move away ! | Ecartez-vous ! | Ecarteh voo ! |
| Look ! | Regardez ! | Ruh-gardeh ! |
| What is happening ? | Qu'est-ce qui se passe ? | Kess kiss pass ? |



SOLITAIRE

Famous French heroine and member of the French superteam l'Avant-Garde

(see p 19 for Solitaire's stats and full description)

Referees should avoid clichés that really belong to another era, such as berets, curved moustaches or anything that seems reminiscent of a Judith Krantz novel. Likewise, not all French people are obsessed by haute couture, wine or romance, nor do they have to begin every sentence with « *Oh la la !* » or use French words like *monsieur* or *mademoiselle* when speaking English.

And what about names ? Stereotypical French names like André, René or Jean are in reality extremely rare, as opposed to more modern names like Marc, Luc, Eric or Philippe for men or Sylvie, Mélanie, Christine or Valérie for women.

British Heroes in France

What could incite British heroes to come to France ?

The most obvious answer is tourism. After all, even costumed crimefighters need a break – and France is one of the world's most popular destinations for tourists. Of course, while in Paris, the hero witnesses an attack, robbery or other violent crime perpetrated by rampaging villains and must intervene to save innocent lives. Obviously, this works best with *solitaire* heroes (especially those with a secret identity), unless all the members of a team take their holidays together (and why not ?).

A variant of this 'tourist scenario' is the promotional operation. If the team has a PR agent or impresario, he could organise some sort of promotional event in Paris, complete with television crews, newspaper reporters and large crowds of innocent bystanders.

Many sites in Paris make great locations for spectacular displays of superpowers : a hero with *Wallcrawling* could attempt to climb up to the top of the Eiffel Tower, for instance or flying characters could pass below the Arc de Triomphe. Of course, such events make ideal settings for a surprise showdown with a group of villains or may also irritate the most patriotically-minded French heroes, which might create all sorts of interesting incidents.

The French authorities or a group of French heroes could also contact our British crimefighters to lend them a hand against a specific enemy or group of villains – perhaps an old foe of the player-characters (« *You've fought them before, you know how they operate !* ») or, perhaps more interestingly, a villain whose superpowers can only be countered by one of the British characters (« *Monsieur Jack Frost, you are France's only hope against this Glacier madman : we've got to fight ice with ice !* »).

Depending on their success (or failure), such cooperative missions might create various interesting subplots in a campaign and many opportunities for future scenarios.

Alternatively, British heroes could come to France on their own initiative to pursue one of their enemies. After all, there is no reason why British villains should restrict their criminal activities to their

own country : this is even truer in the case of villains with no clearly-defined nationality, such as aliens, extradimensional beings and unearthly entities.

Another question to consider is how the local authorities and French people in general (bystanders etc) will react toward British heroes – especially when those heroes end up fighting villains and wreaking havoc in the streets of Paris.

The wonderful SqUK campaign ratings system provides a quick and easy answer to this question. A character's relations with the public and the authorities are reflected by his Public Status. When operating on foreign soil, a character's Public Status remains the same, but not the multiplier used to determine the percentile chance of cooperation, friendly reactions etc. This multiplier is normally equal to 3 in standard circumstances and should be reduced to 2 for British heroes operating in France.

Note that this system could easily be applied to any other country, with a multiplier reflecting the overall disposition of the local authorities and populace toward Britain : 2 for friendly countries, 1 for neutral ones and 0 for hostile nations.

Playing French Characters

The integration of a French player-character in a predominantly British group might create interesting roleplaying opportunities as well as various story hooks for the referee. But how can a French hero be made 'distinctly French' in roleplaying terms ?

First of all, remember we are talking about clichés here. If the stereotypical British mindset leans toward practicality and stability, then the corresponding French stereotype should be one of romanticism and liberty. The same reasoning can be applied to heroism : if the proverbial British virtues are fortitude and self-control, then the French counterparts should be *panache* and passion. While the British vision of courage is to remain unflappable and self-collected in the face of danger or hardship, its French vision has more to do with audacity and reckless valour.

An easy linguistic trick which may be used when playing French characters is to have them speak English, but with an inordinate amount of words and expressions of French origin, such as : *agent provocateur*, *carte blanche*, *coup de grâce* (easy to use in combat !), *crème de la crème*, *déjà vu*, *force majeure*, *nom de guerre* (a perfect term for a hero's costumed identity), *protégé*, *touché* (another term easy to use in combat), *flair*, *panache* and, of course, *je-ne-sais-quoi*.

So, instead of saying : « *This is a case of maximum emergency, sir ! You have to let us handle the situation by our own means !* », a French hero could say : « *This is a case of force majeure, sir ! You have to give us carte blanche on this !* ». This will work better than speaking with a silly Inspector Clouseau accent.



LE ROC

Famous French hero and member of the French superteam l'Avant-Garde

(see p 20 for Le Roc's stats and full description)

Friends, Foes or What ?

France and Britain (or more properly here, England) have a long history of feud and rivalry. Sure, the two World Wars made them allies and reinforced the bonds between the two nations - but from the Hundred Years War to the age of colonial expansion (not to mention the French Revolution and the ensuing Napoleon episode), France and England have more often been enemies than friends.

Even today, France and Britain are often perceived (rightfully or not) as economic and political rivals on the grand international stage. In a SqUK campaign involving French characters or organisations, this old rivalry can be handled in three different ways.

The first possibility is to treat the Franco-British rivalry as a thing of the past, which really has no place in the new 'heroic age' of superpowered characters. If this option is chosen, the player-characters could act as harbingers of this 'new millennium' spirit, collaborating with their French counterparts and even laying the foundations of a future European League of Heroes.

The second possibility is to treat the rivalry as a form of friendly competition between the costumed adventurers of the two nations, with French heroes appearing not as foes or enemies, but as challengers and competitors, always trying to best their British counterparts in terms of spectacular action and public attention. Note that this approach can easily be combined with one of the other two possibilities, making for a more complex situation.

The third possibility is to portray France as Britain's eternal rival and even as its secret enemy, at least as far as superpowered characters and ultra-advanced scientific projects are concerned. In this case, French secret agencies would regularly conspire against British heroes and interests, try to steal (or even sabotage) advanced British technology and threaten Britain's influence on the international level. Of course, the fact that the two nations are officially allies make things all the more complicated - and all the more interesting in terms of story hooks and consequences.

French Super-Society

Now that we've covered the basics, let's get a bit more specific : How does SqUK France differ from its real-life counterpart ?

Aside from its obvious consequences, the existence of superpowered individuals necessarily alters the reality of a country - at least on the judicial level - and France is no exception to this rule.

Like most major nations of the *Squadron UK* world, France has its own governmental agency whose duty is to monitor the activities of superpowered individuals on its national soil.

This organisation is known as **le Bureau Delta** and is officially attached to the *Ministère de l'Intérieur*, France's equivalent of the Home Office.

The Bureau's attitudes toward British heroes operating on French national soil should reflect the nature of Franco-British relationships in your campaign (see above) and could range from friendly cooperation to hostile intervention. Like all other similar organisations, the Delta Bureau has access to ultra-advanced technology (possibly provided by the ARES corporation - see below).

The Delta Bureau is divided into three branches : Intelligence (which monitors the surveillance of superpowered individuals and the investigation of suspected superhuman menaces), Intervention (SWAT-like units equipped with high-technology weaponry) and Liaison (which handles the 'public relations' of the organisation as well as its complex relationships with other governmental agencies and secret services). Since each department is led by its own commanding officer, agents of the Bureau often refer to their central command as "the triumvirate".

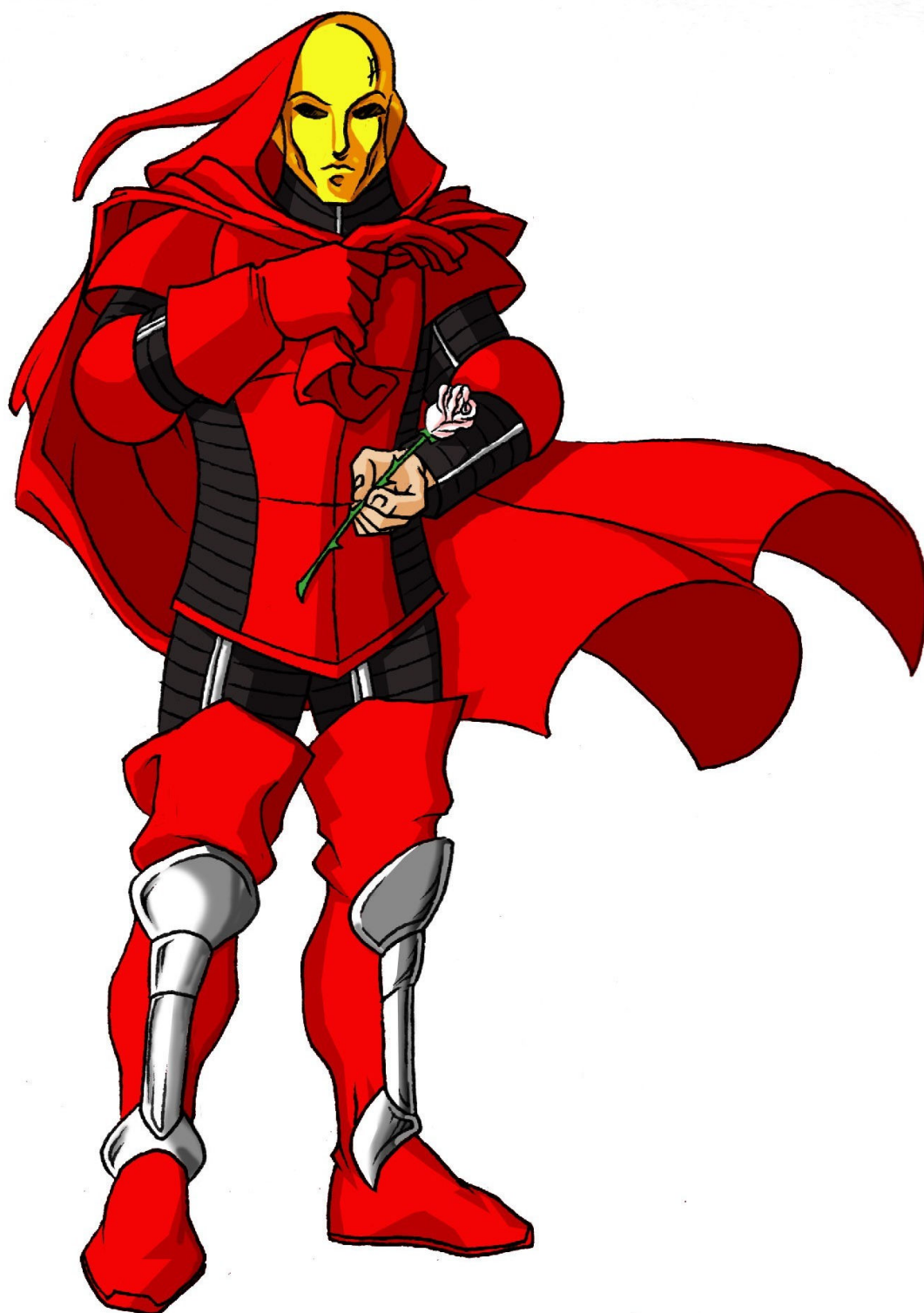
Another important organisation in Super-France is the **ARES** mega-corporation. Named after the Greek god of war, this gigantic industrial consortium is one of Europe's leading firms in a variety of high-technology fields such as aeronautics, military weapons and equipment, communication devices, space tech, security systems and cybernetics.

The ARES corporation is so powerful that it can be considered as an autonomous power. Depending on the style and tone of your campaign, it could act as a friendly provider of advanced technology, as a corrupt corporate empire or even as a power behind the (presidential) throne of France...

The main seat of the company (nicknamed "the Fortress") is located at the centre of an ARES-owned high-tech complex near Paris, in a very impressive tower of black glass surrounded by maximum security installations.

The ARES corporation is present all around the world and maintains a heavy presence in a number of Third World countries (most of them former French colonies) with rich natural resources. In recent years, this has caused ARES interests in some of these nations to become the targets of attacks by terrorists and rebels - a situation which has resulted in ARES becoming more and more aggressive in its foreign policies, to the point of hiring superpowered mercenaries and other 'operatives' as private enforcers.

It has even been rumoured (but never proven) that ARES was actively trying to build up its own private "super-army", using members of its own security personnel as prototype "house heroes". Whatever the truth is, ARES certainly employs some of France's most brilliant engineers and its security guards are equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and communication devices.



LE FANTÔME

Immortal Master of Evil

(see p 26 for Le Fantôme's stats and full description)

L'Avant-Garde

The one-and-only team of French superpowered heroes is called l'Avant-Garde (which means "the vanguard" in French). It has three active members :

Jongleur, a mutant with amazing agility, precision and the ability to throw balls of energy.

Solitaire, an elegant heroin with strange powers of probability manipulation.

Le Roc, a super-tough brick with a grey rocky body and a bad temper.

Unlike most other superteams, l'Avant-Garde does not have a clearly-appointed leader on the field but operates under the tutelage of the retired hero and brilliant scientist Luc Armand (formerly known as **Orion**), who also acts as the group's mentor, supervisor and mediator with the Delta Bureau, the French governmental agency in charge of monitoring the activities of superpowered beings.

The headquarters of l'Avant-Garde are located in the Polaris Tower, a high-tech building in the Parisian district of La Défense.

See the end of this supplement for detailed profiles of the members of l'Avant-Garde.

French Villains

This supplement details five of the most notorious French villains :

Le Fantôme, France's foremost evil mastermind.

Absinthe, a mentally unstable juvenile delinquent girl with green hair and frightening psychic powers.

Aramis, a mercenary weapon master posing as a flamboyant swashbuckler.

Fugue, an alluring cat burglar with the power to turn herself intangible.

Quasimodo, a misshapen and dim-witted brute – and Le Fantôme's most trusted servant.

Until recently, Absinthe, Aramis and Fugue operated as solo criminals, each with his own motives and activities but Le Fantôme has managed to bring them all under his leadership, hiring Aramis and Fugue and taking the highly chaotic but easily manipulated Absinthe as his personal protégé.

See the end of this supplement for detailed profiles of Le Fantôme and his partners in crime.

Heroes of Times Past

Here is a short description of the three most famous heroes of French super-history :

The Count of Saint-Germain, an apparently immortal adept of the arcane arts, first appeared in the 1760s and spent more than two centuries chasing and fighting his arch-nemesis, the mysterious and sinister villain Le Fantôme. A very mysterious figure himself, the Count has not been heard from since World War II. The most common theory is that he was captured and killed by his eternal enemy Le Fantôme. Who knows ?

See page 15 for more details about the origin and the disappearance of Saint-Germain.

Le Masque was France's most famous costumed crimefighter before the present era. Named Henri-Laurent du Plessy, he began his crimefighting career in the 1920s – the "mad years" as they were called in France.

Le Masque had no real superpowers but was a master of disguise, an accomplished gymnast, an escape artist and a sleuth extraordinaire – as well as an expert practitioner of savate, the traditional French martial art.

During World War II, he joined the Résistance, operating as one of its elite agents. After the war, Le Masque resumed his crimefighting career and eventually retired in the late 50s, after being made *commandeur* of the *légion d'honneur*.

Henri-Laurent du Plessy died a few years ago in his family *hôtel particulier* near the Louvre, surrounded by memorabilia from his heroic days.

Rempart was France's premier superpowered hero before and during World War II. Blessed with the ability to create telekinetic force fields, he was known in the late 1930s as "l'homme-citadelle" ("the one-man-citadel").

Shortly after the German invasion of France, Rempart managed to rally London with other French patriots and joined the Freedom Squad, a Britain-based force of exiled heroes from German-occupied countries who valiantly fought against agents of the Reich throughout Europe.

In January 1944, Rempart was killed in action with other members of the Freedom Squad during a high-risk raid on a Nazi secret base located in the Atlantic Ocean. His body could not be recovered but a life-size bronze statue of *l'homme-citadelle* still stands near the Arc de Triomphe, not far from the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



ABSINTHE

Damsel of Distress

(see p 22 for Absinthe's stats and full description)

Immortal Secrets...

During his long career as a master-villain, Le Fantôme (whose powers and characteristics are detailed at the end of this book) operated under a variety of guises and aliases – including that of the notorious Phantom of the Opera in the second half of the 19th century... for le Fantôme is an immortal, just like his personal nemesis, the enigmatic Count of Saint-Germain (see p 15 for more details).

Back in the 1760s, under the reign of king Louis XV, one of Europe's greatest alchemists lived in Paris : only known as Magnus, he was a very old man, who had devoted his whole life to the study of his arcane science. Magnus had two pupils and protégés, two equally-brilliant young men he had carefully chosen to be his students and successors : one was named Philippe and the other Etienne.

Although they had spent their youth together under the tutelage of Magnus, Philippe and Etienne had very different personalities : whereas Philippe was a calm and patient individual, Etienne was rash and full of passion. Somehow, Magnus felt that their conflicting personalities completed each other on some subtle alchemical level, which would enable them to help him achieve the supreme objective of all alchemical science : discover the secret of the Elixir of Eternal Life.

Etienne and Philippe had very different ideas of what they would do if they ever managed to produce the fabled Elixir : where Philippe saw the Elixir as a way to acquire the wisdom of several human lives, Etienne only saw power.

One stormy night of 1770, Magnus the alchemist finally succeeded in producing an Elixir, which had the power to completely stop the aging process and endow the subject with extraordinary vitality, effectively making him ageless and immortal, at least as far as natural causes were concerned. The quantity of Elixir Magnus had managed to distillate was only good for two persons; of course, he intended to produce more, but first he needed to be sure that he had *really* succeeded.

The old alchemist decided to give these first two doses to his two apprentices as soon as they would arrive to join him for a new day of arduous work. Philippe arrived first and drank his dose of Elixir... Etienne showed up a few minutes later, finding Magnus and Philippe engaged in a fascinated conversation about the implications of the wondrous discovery. Etienne wrongly interpreted what he heard : so there were only two doses of the Elixir and Philippe had just drunk one of them... To Etienne's selfish and greedy mind, this could only mean one thing : the other dose was for Magnus himself and there was none for him !

Flying into a mad rage, Etienne attacked the two men, managed to knock them down and drank the remaining Elixir. Rising to his feet, Philippe rushed to Magnus, only to find that his master was already dead, killed by a fatal blow to the head.

As Philippe and Etienne fought in the laboratory, phials containing dangerous chemicals were crushed and the whole place was soon engulfed by flames. Once again, Etienne managed to knock down Philippe : as he was closing in to give him the coup de grâce, the roof between them collapsed, trapping him into the fire... Only half-conscious, Philippe managed to escape from certain death by jumping through a window. But he was not the sole survivor. Using a secret passage Magnus had shown them, Etienne managed to crawl out of the raging inferno into the Parisian sewers, but his face and hands had suffered terrible burns.

Disfigured, crying in agony (but alive !), the man who would later become known as Le Fantôme retreated into the subterranean maze beneath the streets of Paris... There he lost the last remnants of his sanity, trapped in delusions of absolute power.

During the French Revolution, he used the ongoing chaos and turmoil to become the master of the Parisian underworld – in every sense of the word. All the thieves and cutthroats of the city soon answered to the orders of the mysterious Fantôme – a terrifying figure clad in a scarlet robe, wearing a mask of gold... not a mortal man, rumours said, but a supernatural being (ghost ? demon ? sorcerer ?) of immense power. Etienne's master plan was to cause the fall of the fledgling Republic to establish his own reign as the eternal monarch of France – but this plan was eventually foiled by his former friend Philippe, under his new identity as the elusive Count of Saint-Germain.

During the many years that followed, Le Fantôme and the Count fought each other on numerous occasions, playing a life-long (or rather *lives-long*) of cat and mouse in Paris and throughout Europe. Le Fantôme always managed to escape the Count – who never abandoned the hunt. Le Fantôme has also fought a number of other opponents, such as the famous criminal-turned-policeman Vidocq (who ran the French Sûreté in the early 19th century), the Parisian master-sleuth Auguste Dupin and the costumed crimefighter Le Masque.

Le Fantôme was nearly killed in the explosion that apparently caused Saint-Germain's death back in 1943 and spent the following 60 years in a coma, buried under tons of rubble in an abandoned section of the Paris sewers, his vital functions miraculously sustained by the effects of the Elixir. He awoke just a few years ago, ready to establish his dominion over France once again...



ARAMIS

Rogue Weapon master

(see p 23 for Aramis' stats and full description)

Saint-Germain

The Count of Saint-Germain's immortality has the same alchemical origin as that of his arch-enemy Le Fantôme : a lost Elixir of Eternal Life, discovered by the great alchemist Magnus in the 18th century (see *Immortal Secrets* on page 12 for the complete story).

While he was alive (but is he really dead ?) Saint-Germain was driven by the certainty that Fate had given him the responsibility to protect humanity against the mad plans of the other immortal. Le Fantôme and the Count were more than sworn enemies : they were each other's nemesis, locked together in a secret struggle and obsessed with each other's final defeat...

This struggle came to an abrupt end on a fateful night in 1943... At the climax of a dramatic confrontation, the two immortals were fighting in the Parisian sewers during an aerial bombing raid by the RAF. Soon, an explosion buried them under tons of debris as the buildings over them collapsed. Saint-Germain was never seen nor heard from again. ..Yet, even to this day, the possibility that his old enemy might have survived still haunts Le Fantôme...

After the tragic death of Magnus the alchemist (see *Immortal Secrets*), the secret of the Elixir of Eternal Life was never discovered again – despite their tremendous knowledge, neither Le Fantôme nor the Count really tried to reproduce Magnus' fabled formula. Even if he was able to do so, Le Fantôme would certainly never share the precious gift of immortality with anybody else – indeed, the existence of "the other immortal" was enough to obsess him for more than two centuries...

The Count himself saw the tragic death of Magnus as a lesson from the forces of destiny. Saint-Germain viewed his own immortality more as a curse than as a blessing; following the alchemical teachings of his master, he saw himself as a necessary agent of cosmic balance, whose immortality had only one purpose : to protect humanity against the machinations of his "dark brother"... But now that the Count of Saint-Germain is dead (but is he ?), who will rise to foil Le Fantôme's next diabolical plans ?

Scenario Seeds

These six scenario outlines make use of the characters, organisations and other background elements described in this book.

The Girl Who Walked Through Walls

While visiting the Louvre museum in their non-costumed identity, the characters witness a daring, daylight art robbery conducted by Fugue – who will probably manage to evade them but will be *"looking forward to meeting you again, guys ! T'was fun !"*.

This will be the first of a series of apparently random encounters with the elusive intangible burglar – who will also enter the life of one of the heroes under the false (but very charming) identity of a young Parisian woman (a carefree and reckless debutante, an aspiring model or actress, an art school major from a wealthy family or any other stereotype from a romantic comedy). These games will last until the lady is unmasked – at which point she will escape again, but not before she has had the opportunity to kiss her British love interest goodbye...

Of course, all this will be made all the more interesting if (or when) the heroes meet Fugue again – this time not as a solo art thief but as an intrusion expert working for Le Fantôme...

The Horns of ARES

The ARES corporation has put together a small covert strike force of super-operatives, equipped with power armour, flight jetpacks and various cybernetic power simulators.

This small commando, known as Force One, could well become the first building block of a private super-army – but before this, the inceptors of the whole project must provide the ARES board of directors with a real-life demonstration of what their pet super-soldiers can really accomplish against superpowered opponents.

Of course, attacking the Avant-Garde is out of question, since it could generate very bad press for the company if its involvement was ever proven... but British heroes on vacation are an entirely different matter. The people behind Force One will try to lure our heroes in a suitably remote and empty location (by feeding them false information about an old enemy's secret headquarters etc) and will have the whole fight filmed by miniature flying drones.

Britain to the Rescue !

The three members of L'Avant Garde have all mysteriously disappeared and France is left unprotected against an unexpected, grand-scale super-menace - something along the lines of an alien invasion or perhaps the return of some cosmic-level megavillain.

In this darkest hour, the French authorities (in the person of Luc Armand and the Delta Bureau) ask the British heroes to come to their help.

Later, it will be discovered that Jongleur, Solitaire and Le Roc were trapped in an alternate dimension (or perhaps even backward in time !) as the result of a spectacular freak backlash of Solitaire's dimension-warping teleportation powers. The French heroes could return to their home reality to act as last-minute reinforcements for their valiant British counterparts – or perhaps they could come back when everything is over or remain stranded in the other dimension, in which case searching for them could be our heroes' next mission...



QUASIMODO

Le Fantôme's Grotesque Servant

(see p 24 for Quasimodo's stats and full description)

The Lost Count

The mysterious Count of Saint-Germain is alive ! He suddenly resurfaces in London as an unidentified homeless vagrant suffering from complete amnesia...

After hospitalising him, doctors discover that his blood cells are utterly abnormal (as a result of the immortality elixir) and warn the competent authorities, who then ask the heroes to investigate – this will be especially appropriate if one of them is a doctor, brilliant chemist, master hypnotist etc.

But before Saint-Germain's true identity can be established, Le Fantôme discovers the existence of the mysterious patient (*"This can't be ! Yet it must be him ! Him !"*) and decide to launch a major raid on the hospital to try to capture his old nemesis...

United We Stand

The members of l'Avant-Garde come to Britain to track down a group of very dangerous French villains and ask the British heroes to assist them in their manhunt (and subsequent battle).

Of course, the French villains have come to London for serious business reasons – they intend to associate with a group of British or international villains who happen to be old enemies of the player-characters (perhaps the European Union from the *Cause and Effect* scenario included in SqUK book 2) for a single high-risk operation which might well endanger British national security.

The French and British heroes will have to join forces against this coalition of villains and battle them in the streets of London. This heroic cooperation could be an excellent opportunity to develop a friendship (or a rivalry) with members of L'Avant-Garde... and to meet villains like Aramis or

Absinthe for the first time. This scenario could also easily lead to a final confrontation with the mastermind who was behind the plot all along – possibly Le Fantôme or an old (British) enemy of the player-characters.

Divided We Fall

The ARES board of directors has decided to cause a series of major diplomatic incidents between France and Britain – including the attack of the British (or French, depending on where you intend to run this scenario) ambassador by a group of supervillains posing as "nationalist terrorists" – in order to stir up hostility (and even an all-out war) between the two countries.

Such a crisis would undoubtedly spell the doom of Europe as a united entity, which is exactly what ARES is looking for, since the EU is becoming less and less lenient about ARES' aggressive policies and secret operations. The ultimate goal of this mad plot is to establish a "New Europe", with ARES as its supreme power behind-the-throne...

How will the British and French heroes react to the threat of war ? Will they take sides, acting as their nation's super-powered champions or will they try to unite together in order to stop this nightmare ?

Instead of being used as a single scenario, this situation could be used as a back-story for several episodes, culminating in a major showdown in the Eurostar tunnel, on top of Big Ben or in some other appropriately dramatic (and symbolic) location.

Of course, things could be made yet more interesting if the ARES warmongers were only puppets in a master plan of European domination weaved by Le Fantôme... perhaps working hand in hand with a British arch-villain as the future monarchs of their respective countries.



FUGUE

Elusive Adventuress

(see p 25 for Fugue's stats and full description)

JONGLEUR

Alias : Hugo Marzal

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| EGO 12 | STRENGTH 11 | DEXTERITY 21 | VIGOUR 12 |
| HTK 45 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / hr | Hospitalised 4 |
| HTC 47 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / rd | Stag / Stun 9 / 4 |
| Move 7 m | Defence Class 6 | Dodge +5 | Damage - |
| Frames 4 | Strike +6 | Pushback 20 | Energy 25d6 |

Advantageous Backgrounds

Previous Training 2 (+4 Dexterity)

Superpowers

AGILITY 1

ENERGY ATTACK 2 (Dual Blast and Area Effects 2 & 4)

PRECISION 1

REACTIONS 2

Jongleur's Energy Attack consists of balls of a mysterious bluish energy he can generate with his hands. These missiles are approximately the size of juggling balls and represents 1d6 damage; thus, if Jongleur generates 7 dice of damage in one attack, this attack will take the form of seven balls of luminescent bluish energy. His Precision power applies to his Energy Attack power.

Origins : Jongleur is a mutant – all his superpowers are innate and come from an unexplainable alteration of his genetic heritage. He was born into the Marzal clan, a famous family of circus acrobats. His phenomenal innate agility, combined with an intensive training, soon made him a child prodigy in France's most famous circus. One day, while practicing with his brothers, Hugo discovered he had the power to generate highly kinetic balls of energy from his hands. As he grew older, he learned to control his power, using the energy balls as 'special effects' in his acrobatic performances, making him the star attraction of the circus. He then came to the attention of the retired hero Orion, who was assembling a group of French superpowered crimefighters under the aegis of the Delta Bureau. Orion easily convinced the young acrobat that his powers could be used for a more important purpose than showmanship. Hugo, who always had a reckless and adventurous temper, quickly accepted the offer and became Orion's new superpowered trainee.

Roleplaying Notes : Before, during and after combat, Jongleur loves to taunt his opponents with ironic comments and witty repartees ("Mmh, interesting attempt at marksmanship, here !", "Oh sorry I didn't realise THAT was your attack !"). His mix of genuine bravery and sarcastic showmanship have made him very popular with the French public and with the medias.

Options: for a more powerful version of this character select from the following upgrades:

Agility 2
Energy Attack 3 (30 dice with improved Weapon Class)
Precision 2
Martial Arts
Vigour 15, HTK: 55, HTC: 60

SOLITAIRE

Alias : Marianne Rochand

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| EGO 16 | STRENGTH 8 | DEXTERITY 13 | VIGOUR 14 |
| HTK 50 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / hr | Hospitalised 5 |
| HTC 52 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / rd | Stag / Stun 10 / 5 |
| Move 6 m | Defence Class 6 | Dodge +1 | Damage - |
| Frames 4 | Strike 0 | Pushback 20 | Energy 15d6 |

Superpowers

PROBABILITY MANIPULATION 2 (Conscious and Unconscious; Luck = 32%)

INTUITION

TELEPORTATION 2

WEATHER CONTROL 2

FIELD MANIPULATION 1 (quantum fields, 2d6 HTC damage, ignores dividers, no strike roll required)

Solitaire's mysterious powers come from an innate link with the quantum mechanics of reality itself. Her Intuition shows her ability to perceive these quantic patterns, while her Probability Manipulation shows her ability to influence them, either consciously or unconsciously. Her Weather Control and Teleport powers have the same origin, reflecting her most spectacular forms of 'pattern-warping'. She needs to summon a sotrm before she can use her Energy Attack.

Origins : From her earliest age, Marianne Rochand was *different*. She exhibited a disturbing form of subconscious awareness and strange coincidences regularly happened in her presence. Her parents felt there was 'something wrong' with her and consulted a myriad of doctors, psychologists and specialists of child development – with no real results. Her teachers and the other children at school considered her either as a *surdoué*, a child prodigy or as an half-autistic, half-schizophrenic freak. As Marianne grew up, her strange abilities became more and more spectacular in their manifestations (Weather Control), and more disturbing for the 'normal' people, no matter how hard she tried to repress them.... As a result, Marianne became more and more isolated, to the point she could no longer hope to lead a normal life. Eventually, she attracted the attention of the Delta Bureau, which submitted her case to Orion. Under the tuition of the retired hero, Marianne learned to use her powers and develop her self-control. As Solitaire, she was l'Avant-Garde's first recruit and is still considered by Orion as his most brilliant pupil and personal protégé.

Roleplaying Notes : Most of the time, Marianne is a calm and collected person, who prefers to keep her emotions below the surface... but these emotions sometimes erupt like a sudden whirlwind and Solitaire's angers can be spectacular ("You have **NO** idea of **WHAT** I can do... and believe me, you don't **WANT** to find out."). When fighting superpowered opponents, she will generally rely on her Teleportation and Unconscious Probability Manipulation for defence and use her Conscious Probability Manipulation and Weather Control powers for attack

Options: To upgrade Solitaire, choose from:

- Intangibility
- Teleportation 3
- Weather Control 3
- Flight 1 (Wind-riding)

LE ROC

Alias : Simon Lebret

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| EGO 11 | STRENGTH 15 (40) | DEXTERITY 10 | VIGOUR 17 (42) |
| HTK 172 | Divider 5 | Recover 1d6+6 / hr | Hospitalised 17 |
| HTC 178 | Divider 4 | Recover 1d6+6 / rd | Stag / Stun 34 / 17 |
| Move 7 m | Defence Class 3 | Dodge n/a | Damage +25 |
| Frames 4 | Strike 0 | Pushback 25 (30) | Energy - |

Superpowers

LARGER 1 (larger)

STRENGTH 1

SOLIDIFY

TOUGH SKIN 2

VIGOUR 2

HEALTH 1 (immunity to disease, toxins and radiation)

Le Roc's powers are all 'natural' functions of his rock-hard skin and unusual physique.

Origins : Simon Lebret was not born that way. Before he became Le Roc, he was an expert in geology for the French Space Institute, specialised in the study of meteorites. When a large meteorite crashed in the French Pyrénées, he was sent to investigate the site with other scientists and technicians. Simon was the first to manipulate fragments of the meteorite. A few hours later, he began to experience alarming symptoms and was quickly evacuated to a nearby military base, but it was too late. Through a process that has remained a mystery to this day, Simon's DNA was somehow recombined by an invisible energy emanating from the stone, transforming his body into its current state in only a few hours, Simon was soon handed over to the authorities of the Delta Bureau, who kept him in custody for several months in a secret facility to study his case. Meanwhile, Simon's family (and his fiancée) believed that he had died in a freak accident – he was now a man with no identity, trapped in the grotesque body of a stone golem. Orion eventually learned of Simon's existence through his Delta Bureau connections and tried to convince him to join l'Avant-Garde – which he initially refused... but when he learned that his fiancée, who still believed him dead, had married another man, his frail hopes of getting his life back were crushed. Simon Lebret decided to 'stay dead'... and Le Roc entered the scene.

Roleplaying Notes : Le Roc is a quiet and taciturn individual, with a very limited social (or even personal) life. He sees l'Avant-Garde as his one and only family and has had a strong influence on the cohesive spirit of the team, acting as a moderating influence between Jongleur's reckless temper and Solitaire's complex personality (*"But we're supposed to be a team, aren't we ?"*). In combat, Le Roc is a practical fighter, who likes to 'get the job done' as quickly and efficiently as possible (*"Okay, guys, let's straighten this out NOW !"*)

Options: To toughen up Le Roc choose from

Strength 2

Tough Skin 3

Health (Regeneration and/or fast recovery)

LUC ARMAND

Formerly known as Orion

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| EGO 17 | STRENGTH 8 | DEXTERITY 12 | VIGOUR 10 |
| HTK 30 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / hr | Hospitalised 3 |
| HTC 33 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / rd | Stag / Stun 6 / 3 |
| Move 5 m | Defence Class 7 | Dodge +1 | Damage - |
| Frames 3 | Strike 0 | Pushback 20 | Energy - |

Superpowers

All Orion's powers came from his 'power drug', which accelerated and boosted various functions of his metabolism and have disappeared since he stopped taking it. Back in his active crimefighting days, he had the following superpowers : SPEED 2, HEALTH 1 (fast recovery), VIGOR 1, REACTIONS 1.

Advantageous Backgrounds

BRILLIANT SCIENTIST - CHEMICAL

CONTACTS – GOVERNMENT (through the Delta Bureau)

Notes : Luc Armand was born in the early 1950s and began his crimefighting career in the early 1970s under the name of Orion, acting as one of France's most valorous heroes for more than two decades. Then, a few years ago, he suffered a nearly fatal heart attack after a final and spectacular showdown with his old nemesis Dominus. After a period of recovery, Luc discovered that his 'power drug' (see below) was beginning to have critical side-effects on his aging organism and had caused his cardiac arrest. Realising he could no longer fight the good fight, Orion retired from 'field duty' but decided to act as a mentor and tutor for the next generation of French heroes, under the tutelage of the Delta Bureau, with which he had cooperated on numerous occasions.

Origins : Back in the early 1970s, Luc Armand was a young promising chemist working on cutting-edge biochemical engineering techniques – most notably the "Orion serum", a drug that was supposed to spectacularly accelerate the healing process of the human body. Testing the Orion serum on himself, Luc soon found out that it has unforeseen and amazing 'side-effects' – it actually made his whole metabolism more resistant but also gave him incredible superspeed and reflexes. But this was the Cold War and Luc realised his extraordinary discovery could also be turned into a terrible weapon if it fell into the wrong hands : indeed, as he was destroying all the samples of the Orion serum, his laboratory was attacked by a strike team of black-uniformed masked commandos who tried to seize the formula for the master – the villain Dominus, who planned on using the serum on his own operatives and sell it to the highest bidder... To save his co-workers from certain liquidation, Luc took the drug and managed to neutralise the commandos on his own. This was Orion's very first experience as a superpowered crimefighter... and the birth of a modern legend.

ABSINTHE

Alias : Unknown.

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| EGO 14 | STRENGTH 9 | DEXTERITY 11 | VIGOUR 11 |
| HTK 40 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / hr | Hospitalised 4 |
| HTC 42 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / rd | Stag / Stun 8 / 4 |
| Move 6 m | Defence Class 6 | Dodge +1 | Damage - |
| Frames 4 | Strike 0 | Pushback 20 | Psi 30 |

Superpowers

HEIGHTENED SENSES 1 (Sense Psi)

PSI POWERS 3 (Hallucinations*, Telempathy*, Control, Mind War)

REPLICATION**

** indicates the character's specialty powers*

Origins : Absinthe knows she has always been – and always will be – a freak. After all, she was born with green hair. And when she was 15, she discovered she had psychic powers – especially the ability to make persons see things that were not there, which could make them really afraid or even drive them crazy. Tons of pure fun ! Of course, when the ex-hero Orion tried to recruit her into his fledgling Avant-Garde and turn her into some nice, clean psi-girl, she said yes – just to see the look on his face when he would realise how wrong he had been. That would teach the patronising old codger a lesson about free will and rebellion. Now, Absinthe has found her vocation in life – she's always wanted to be super-villainess, anyway. Spreading chaos and madness when you feel like it, wreaking havoc on other people's lives, watching their helpless expression when you treat them like the puppets they really are... It's just too cool to be true !

**** Absinthe's "Replication"** is the ability to produce up to 5 Hallucinations of herself. These images can do no damage and are revealed as fake when attacks (etc.) pass through them. However, they cost her nothing to produce as long as she has any PSI points left. (When her PSI points fall below 5, she can only maintain one image for each remaining PSI point.)

Roleplaying Notes : Absinthe is the *enfant terrible* of French supervillains : a highly-strung youth, who hides her true self behind the façade of a psychotic manipulator and psychic abuser. (*"Hello ! I'm the girl of your dreams – your very, very bad dreams..."*) Perhaps she could be cured and be persuaded to fight the good fight... but for now, she's having too much fun playing her "queen of chaos" part (*"Hey, hero ! How about a little dance with madness ?"*) and could well turn into a full-fledged homicidal maniac when her own personal madness eventually swallows her psyche. And that's precisely what Le Fantôme has in mind for her...

Options: To upgrade Absinthe try:

Vigour 16, HTK/HTC: 56 with +1 on recovery rolls.
35 PSI points.
Ego: 16
Chameleon Ability

ARAMIS

Alias : Antoine d'Herblay

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| EGO 13 | STRENGTH 13 | DEXTERITY 19 | VIGOUR 14 |
| HTK 50 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / hr | Hospitalised 5 |
| HTC 54 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / rd | Stag / Stun 10 / 5 |
| Move 8 m | Defence Class 6 | Dodge +3 | Damage +5 with sword |
| Frames 4 | Strike +4 | Pushback 20 | Energy - |

Advantageous Backgrounds

PREVIOUS TRAINING 2 (+4 Dexterity)

Superpowers

PRECISION 1 (sword)

WEAPON SKILL 3 (sword – rapier, one handed penetrative weapon)

REACTIONS 2

ENERGY REFLECTION 1 (light) *

All of Aramis superpowers reflect his superior training as a master swordsman.

** This is actually a property of Aramis' sword blade, which is made of a highly reflective and indestructible alloy and reduces all Damage Dividers by -2.*

Origins : Aramis is the last descendant of a long family line of masked swordsmen who served the kings of France under the same alias, acting as secret agents of the crown from the early 17th century to the last days of the French monarchy in the 1840s. Indeed, the exploits of his ancestors may well have inspired the adventures of illustrious fictional heroes such as the Three Musketeers and the Scarlet Pimpernel. But times have changed. While he is certainly as skilled with a blade as his ancestors, the current-day Aramis is far from being a hero : he is an opportunist and a mercenary, ready to sell his sword to anyone who is willing to pay his services (which are quite costly, since he has a very expensive life-style to maintain). Although he likes to portray himself as a true aristocrat, a flamboyant swashbuckler and a romantic rogue, Aramis is just an arrogant assassin with a mask and a sword, with absolutely no sense of honour and whose only loyalty goes to himself.

Roleplaying Notes : In a fight, Aramis likes to show off, using fancy swordplay and taunting his opponents in the grand tradition of swashbuckling movies (*"Come on, monsieur ! I expected a bit more panache – or at least some technique !"*). This is only a façade, though, and Aramis will never hesitate to use dishonourable tactics (striking from behind etc) if given the chance to do so. For all his flamboyant poses, Aramis is actually quite a coward and will always try to flee as soon as he is reduced to half his HTK or HTC. In this case, he will generally try to make his hasty retreat look like a suitably dramatic escape (*"Ah, monsieur, we shall meet again – for the last time !"*).

Options: Make Aramis even more of a threat by adding

Previous Training 3 (+6 Dexterity)
Precision 2 (or more)
Agility

QUASIMODO

Alias : Unknown

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| EGO 7 | STRENGTH 16 (35) | DEXTERITY 16 | VIGOUR 16 (30) |
| HTK 110 | Divider - | Recover 1d6+3 / half-hr | Hospitalised 11 |
| HTC 120 | Divider - | Recover 1d6+3 / action | Stag / Stun 24 / 12 |
| Move 8 m | Defence Class 6 | Dodge +3 | Damage +20 |
| Frames 4 | Strike +1 | Pushback 25 (30) | Energy - |

Superpowers

AGILITY 1

STRENGTH 1

LARGER 1 (larger)

LEAPING 1

VIGOUR 1

HEALTH 2 (immunity to disease & toxins, fast recovery)

Origins : Quasimodo's story is a sad one. He was born this way : huge, deformed, ugly, slow-witted... and amazingly strong. Nicknamed "Quasimodo" by his own brothers, he never had a chance to lead a normal life. Later, it was found that his mother, while pregnant, had been accidentally and unexplainably exposed to enormous amounts of radioactive energy – but the source of these radiations remain a mystery to this day. After years of harassment and humiliation in a small country village, Quasimodo decided to leave for Paris, the "most beautiful city in the world". But first he destroyed most of the village with his bare hands, killing most of its inhabitants, including the members of his own family. Haunted by guilt and visions of doom, he took refuge in the cathedral of Notre-Dame... where he was soon surrounded by the police. After a narrow (and acrobatic) escape, he eventually took refuge in the Parisian sewers, living like a beast in the depths of the city for many months. There he was found by Le Fantôme, who had recently awakened from a 60-years coma and was actively looking for superpowered minions... For the first time in his life, Quasimodo met somebody who actually seemed to care about him. Since that day, he has shown fanatical loyalty to his newfound master : his devotion is such that he would probably refuse to believe even the most blatant proof that Le Fantôme actually views him as little more than a stupid but very useful animal.

Roleplaying Notes : When fighting, Quasimodo often enters a mad berserker rage : this will automatically occur if Le Fantôme appears to be in danger. Quasimodo is really willing to die for his master ("*Nobody... hurts... master !*"). He is also quite dumb and easy to trick, lure or trap. Play him as a bulldozer with the brain of a not-too-bright 8-years old. ("*I'm going to break you ! BREAK YOU !*")

Options: If you need a tougher version of Quasimodo try one or more of:

- Wallcrawling
- Energy Immunity (Sonic)
- Strength 2
- Tough Skin 1

FUGUE

Alias : Unknown

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| EGO 13 | STRENGTH 9 | DEXTERITY 16 | VIGOUR 12 |
| HTK 42 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / hr | Hospitalised 4 |
| HTC 45 | Divider - | Recover 1d6 / rd | Stag / Stun 9 / 4 |
| Move 6 m | Defence Class 6 | Dodge +2 | Damage - |
| Frames 4 | Strike +1 | Pushback 20 | Energy - |

Advantageous Backgrounds

CRIMINAL CONTACTS (fences, fixers, forgers etc)

Superpowers

CYBERNETICS 1 (Power Simulator : Infrared Vision goggles)

INTANGIBILITY 2

REACTIONS 1

SKILLS 3 (Burglary, Computer, Disguise, Escapology, Stealth)

Origins : This audacious (and bodacious) young woman is an expert burglar with the very precious power of making herself intangible at will – an ability which actually made her embrace her larcenous career. Fugue is specialised in art and jewel thefts, preferably from well-protected museums and high-security mansions. (The amount of mass she can make intangible apart from herself is extremely limited.) Note: she has to become tangible and take items before making both them and herself intangible.

Fugue is as elusive as her nom-de-guerre implies. She often disappears for many months, reappearing under a new cover identity shortly before committing another daring, spectacular burglary. Her true identity and the origins of her power seem to be a complete mystery, except to the Delta Bureau, which apparently knows a great deal about her but refuses to disclose any information to anyone. Most French heroes and journalists speculate that she might be a former super-operative gone rogue, which would explain her various special skills, which seem to reflect some form of advanced training as a spy or infiltrator... Whatever the truth, the Bureau seems to be very eager to capture her – but has had absolutely no success so far.

Roleplaying Notes : Although she is a thief, Fugue does not view herself as a criminal, but as a true “adventuress”, a modern-day successor to the famous fictitious master-burglar Arsène Lupin (France’s equivalent of Raffles the amateur cracksman). She dislikes violence but loves danger : she is, above all, a thrill-seeker (“*Wow ! That’s FUN !*”). She also has a strong romantic streak and could easily be attracted by any good-looking costumed hero – with all the complications that may ensue... but she also tends to get bored quite quickly. For Fugue, life is just a game. When faced with the threat of combat, Fugue will always try to get out of harm’s way as quickly as possible, using her intangibility and skills to flee in safety... but not before she has been noticed (especially by attractive male crimefighters). (“*Come on, lads ! Catch me if you can !*”)

Options: In the unlikely event you need a tougher version of Fugue, choose from:

Skills: Gymnastics (or Agility)
Cybernetics simulator: Wallcrawling
Cybernetics: Glider Device
Cybernetics: Hypnosis Device
Sidekick: Brilliant Scientist (Mechanical)

LE FANTOME

Alias : Etienne (*last name unknown*)

| | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| EGO 18 | STRENGTH 10 (25) | DEXTERITY 13 | VIGOUR 13 (25) |
| HTK 85 | Divider 4 | Recover 1d6+2 / half-hr | Hospitalised 8 |
| HTC 85 | Divider 3 | Recover 1d6+2 / action | Stag / Stun 17 / 8 |
| Move 6 m | Defence Class 5 | Dodge 0 | Damage +15 |
| Frames 3+**** | Strike 0 | Pushback 20 (25) | Psi 30 |

Advantageous Backgrounds

BRILLIANT SCIENTIST – BIO-CHEMICAL

IMMORTAL

CONTACTS 2– UNDERWORLD & GOVERNMENT

FILTHY RICH – ILL-GOTTEN GAINS & INVESTMENTS

Superpowers

PSI POWERS 3 (Control**, Mind War, Psi Blast, Telepathy)

STRENGTH 1

VIGOUR 1

HEALTH 2 (immunity to disease & toxins, fast recovery)

ARMOUR 1

SKILLS Z (Hide in Shadows, Vocal Skills and Disguise***)

** indicates the character's specialty power and a development (see below).*

Le Fantôme's Vigour and Health powers reflect the effects of the alchemical elixir of immortality. He believes his Psi Powers to be the sole consequence of his constant and rigorous studies in the "hidden sciences of the mind" – but he certainly had some psionic affinity to begin with. His superhuman Strength is the direct result of an alchemical potion he developed over the years. He "acquired" his Armour from a Nazi scientist.

***Le Fantôme has bred a vile strain of rose in the depths of the sewers. Anyone pricked by one of these roses has an EGO: 10 Psionic attack made against them. If this succeeds they fall under his control. It costs him nothing to maintain control over any of his minions who wear such roses as long as their skin remains pierced by one of the thorns.*

**** Le Fantôme's disguise skills does not work in person due to the extent of his disfigurement. Rather it reflects the fact that all pictures and photographs are retouched to disguise his injuries. Video transmissions are doctored with his face electronically replaced by a more appealing image. He will always speak through a pane of glass. This – and all the mirrors in his lair – are in fact complicated electronic devices designed to replace his real image. If these devices are somehow de-activated, he will appear as he really is and will lose his next few frames in shock as he reaches for his mask.*

*****Le Fantôme is a mega-villain. He ignores initiative and gets 3 Frames per round plus one for each opponent he is facing (subtract one for each ally he has in a fight as long as this does not reduce his frames to less than 4). No more than 4 Frames can be used for movement in a single Round.*

















LE FANTÔME (cont.)











Over the centuries, Le Fantôme has acquired an unparalleled knowledge of the underground world that stretches below Paris- a mazelike network of sewers, catacombs, tunnels, caverns etc, which Le Fantôme usually refers to as his own "subterranean kingdom". He maintains several well-concealed hideouts below Paris, including his own personal Mansion, a very gothic, palace-like and supposedly impregnable underground abode where he keeps his secret alchemical laboratory.

Roleplaying Notes : Le Fantôme is the archetypal arch-villain, devoid of humanity and driven by obsessions of domination, dreams of revenge and delusions of grandeur. He is also a master manipulator and natural leader, who excels at guessing other people's hidden motives, fears and desires - and using them at his own advantage. Deep inside, Le Fantôme sees himself as a Doomed One, a tragic Melmoth-like immortal who has long forsaken all hopes of redemption. Indeed, this evil genius is prone to periods of dark brooding, during which he contemplates what he calls the horrors of his own Destiny – but he has always found scheming, plotting and trouble-brewing to be the best remedy against his own brand of self-complacent melancholy... Le Fantôme also loves to make his public appearances as dramatic as possible, in the grand tradition of villainous gloating. (*"Ah ! I see how the weak falter before my undaunted might !", "Greetings, mortals – and welcome to your doom." "But before I end your pathetic lives in a gesture of tragic mercy, you shall hear my prophecy of woe and destruction !", "Ah ah ! You think you can defy the Sovereign of Shadows ? What fools these mortals be !"*)

Options: If you NEED to upgrade this character, choose from:-

- Armour 2 (or better)
- Brilliant Scientist – Mechanical
- Psi Powers 4 (or higher)
- Strength 2
- Vigour 2
- Magic

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jongleur | Solitaire | Le Fantôme | Absinthe 1 | Absinthe 2 | Absinthe 3 | Aramis | Fugue |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Le Roc | Quasimodo | Absinthe 4 | Absinthe 5 | Absinthe 6 |