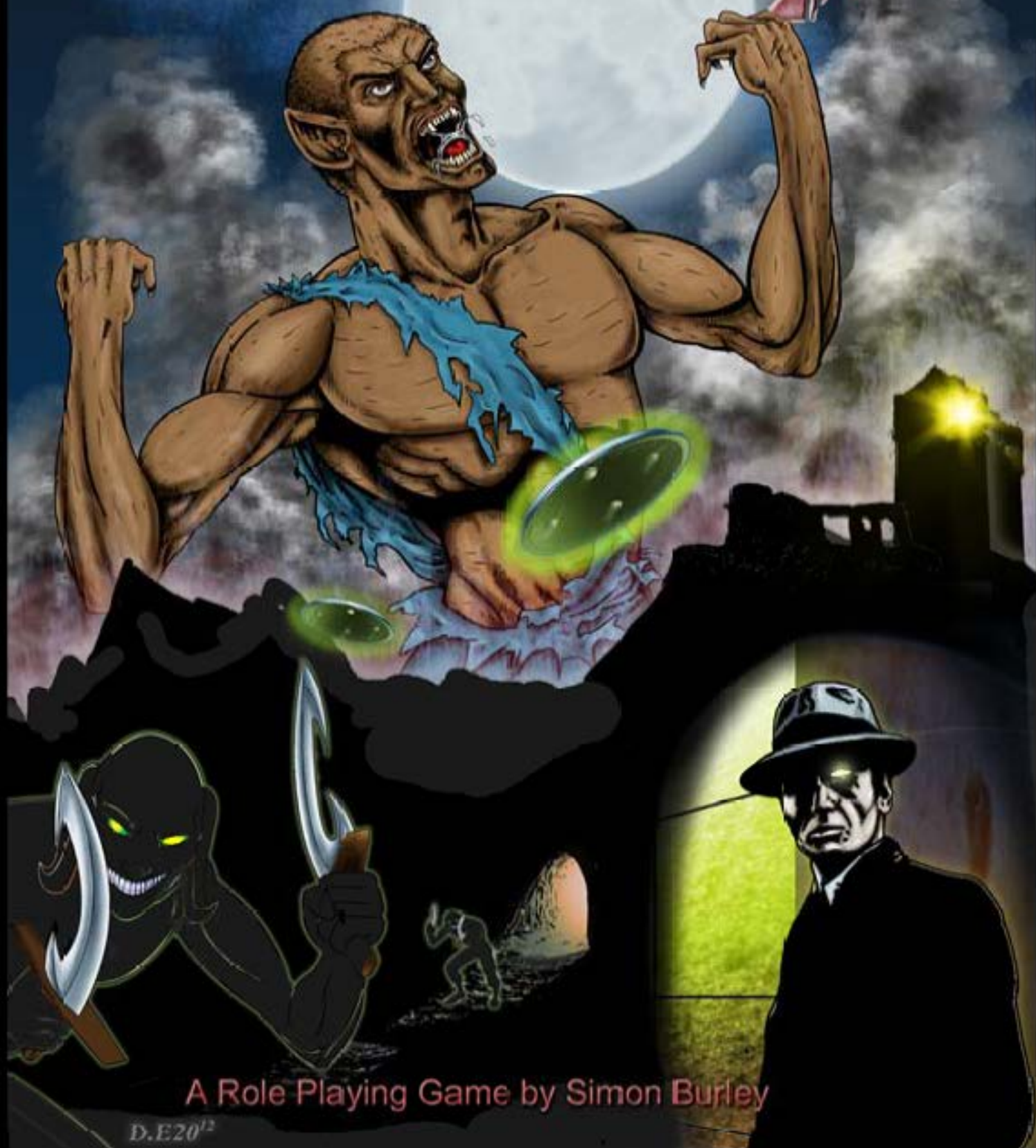


Squadron X

Defending Humanity against the Terrors from Beyond



A Role Playing Game by Simon Burley

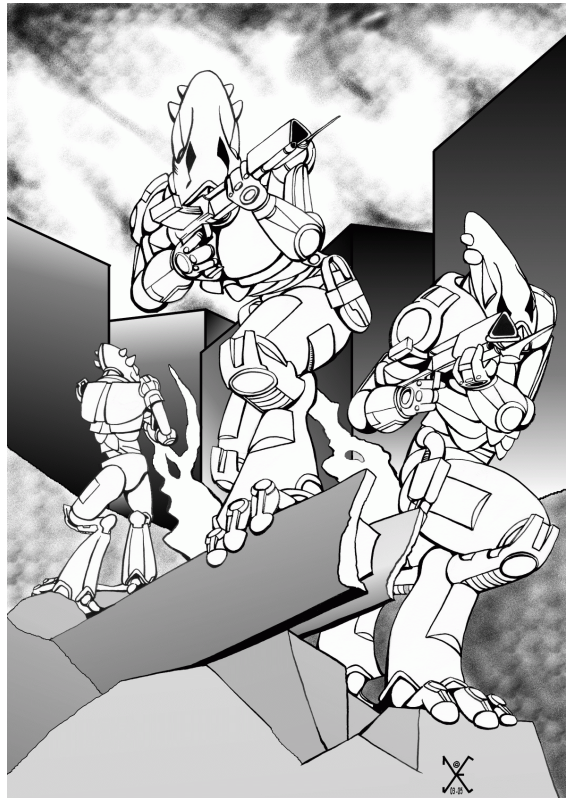
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Squadron: X

A role-playing game of Horror and Heroes

By

Simon Burley



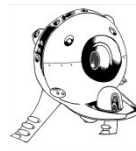
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Thanks to everyone who helped playtest this campaign. Sorry it's taken so long to appear, guys!

Welcome to the Unknown!

The air in the cave was cold. Marsters pulled his parka more closely around him but it was not enough to stop the steady puff of condensation leaving his mouth and fogging the view in front of him. Torch beams danced through the mist made by Marsters and his companions.

“The People said it was further in,” Mike Ralston said, “in a chasm, so watch your foot.” Seemingly unafraid, he headed into the natural tunnel ahead.

Marsters caught a glimpse of Sara Manners giving a bunch of heather a quick stroke, before stuffing in into her pocket but chose to say nothing. If it kept her happy, it helped the mission.

Marsters waited until everyone had started to follow Ralston and chose to take the last position in the column. Though there was no way they could have been followed, he couldn't help checking behind.

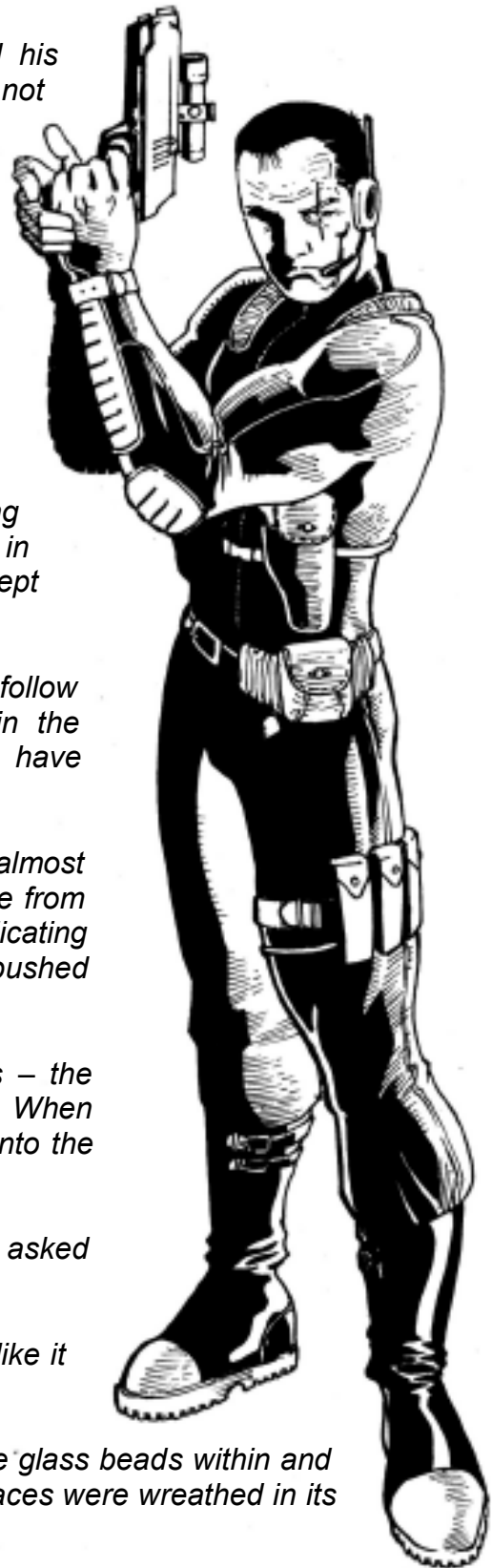
Just as the feeling of dread had built to an almost tangible force, he heard a loud whistle of surprise from ahead. He tapped Manners on the shoulder – indicating silently for her to keep watch from behind – and pushed his way towards the front of the group.

Ralston was standing on the edge of an abyss – the light of his torch just about reaching the far side. When he shone it downwards, the beam disappeared into the darkness below.

“Now does this seem natural to you, Roger?” he asked Marsters.

“Who cares?” Marsters growled in reply, “I don't like it – whatever it is.”

He pulled out a glow-stick, bending it to break the glass beads within and release the bio-luminescence. Pretty soon their faces were wreathed in its green glow.





Welcome to the Unknown

He threw it into the pit. As the green light fell, he pulled out another and activated that one as well.

He was able to throw that and take out yet a third before the first one hit bottom. As it did – as far away from them as it was – it seemed to glow a bit brighter.

“What the.....” Marsters mutters. He was interrupted by his commander.

“Reflection,” said Ralston. “It’s fallen on a reflective surface – probably metal of some kind.”

Marsters didn’t answer, but simply began to take his equipment out of his bag. This was one of the reasons Ralston had recruited him into MI:X – his mountaineering experience. Within minutes he had the first pitons in place and was belaying into the void.

The descent was performed with his usual professionalism. Nothing was rushed. It took almost half an hour to reach the floor of the canyon. Marsters adopted the zen-like concentration he used for climbs like this and – to him – the journey only seemed to last a few moments. Judging by the cursing from above, some of his team were having less luck.

When he reached the rapidly-dying glow-sticks, he found himself standing on a smooth, curved metal surface. What it was and how it got here, he couldn’t tell – though his was sure Ralston and “the Prof” would have some theories.

He drove a row of pitons in transversely to the ropes and tied himself off securely a few feet to the side of where his comrades were coming down.

Ralston was next – sure-footed as always – followed by the less-skilled Manners and the downright clumsy Daniel “the Prof” Doherty. As Doherty’s feet slammed into the curving metal surface, there was a clang – as if of some enormous bell. He stumbled and fell on his face towards the hard surface on which they were standing.

Marsters grabbed him before he could hit his face but, before he could pull him back to his feet, “the Prof” hissed, “Stop! Lower me back a bit...” Marsters gently let him drop to his knees and flicked on his torch.

With his usual luck, the eccentric scientist had found a panel of some kind.

He had wasted no time in opening the thing. Before anyone could stop him, he’d pulled the handle underneath it.

With a hiss and the release of some old, old, dust, three triangular metal sheets slid aside to create a hatchway through the skin of the thing they were standing on.

“Look!” shouted Doherty, shining his torch into the hole. “I was right! We’ve found it at last, an honest to God U.F.O. This’ll put those Yankees in their place!”

“What are those?” asked Sara Manners, shining her torch onto the greenish heaps scattered throughout the metal corridor.

“Probably the crew,” Ralston said, as he dropped through into the ship below. As he helped Manners and Doherty down, he added, “Long dead, of course. This ship’s been down here for hundreds of years.”

There was a rustling as the viridian shapes began to heave themselves upright, decomposing flesh hanging from the alien skeletal structures beneath.

“Perhaps, they don’t realise they’re dead,” observed Doherty.

“Zombies! Why is it always zombies?” muttered Marsters, readying himself to drop down and help his team-mates.

Welcome to the unknown!

What you’re holding is both a complete Role-playing game and a complete campaign pack for that game. Games rules and game setting all in one.

If you’re going be player in this game, you shouldn’t even be holding this book. Whatever your reasons are, please don’t read anything else in this chapter. It’ll spoil your fun and the fun of the Referee and your fellow players if you do. Trust me, you’ll enjoy things a lot more finding them out through play.

In fact, just by looking at the front cover and reading the adventure write-up above, you probably already know too much about the game. (You’ve got to promise me not to tell anyone about the alien zombies – OK?)

Right, am I just talking to the Referee? Good. Time for the truth.



The Squadron: X setting arises out of three things:

Firstly, I am the author of a set of Superhero Role-playing rules – Squadron UK – the full set of which is available elsewhere. You don't need those rules to play this game but, maybe, after you've enjoyed playing Squadron: X you might consider giving them a look.

Secondly, the recent fashion in the world of Superheroes is to concentrate in more detail than is traditional upon the ORIGIN of the characters. That is, their life before they became Superheroes.

This primarily arises out of the transfer of these characters from the pages of comics to Television and Cinema screens. In comics, the authors have a limited time to tell the story and get down to action. The artists find it much easier to draw hooded characters in form-fitting costumes. On screen, actors hate having their faces covered. Brightly coloured costumes are a much bigger drain on wardrobe budgets than readily available street-clothes. Add to this that very few performers have the physiques of the characters presented in comics – and those that do have to devote a lot of effort in creating and maintaining them – and you have a number of very good reasons to keep the characters in their normal identities for as long as possible.



In the past it was the Superhero that took centre stage with their “secret identities” being a mere cypher.

I've found that if you take the cinematic approach to Superheroes and allow players to have some adventures with their characters as “ordinary” people – before they get their special abilities – they form a much stronger bond with them. They treat them as fully rounded, three-dimensional individuals rather than super-powered living weapons.

Thirdly, and most importantly, this game grows out of my fascination with a particular sub-genre of television series – that of the paranormal investigator. Whether it is a homeless loner trying to convince an unbelieving world about alien invaders, FBI agents looking into mysterious unsolved cases, a college town plagued by demons or an eclectic team defending Britain from a secret base in Cardiff, examples of this sort of series fill our screens. In the run-up to the millennium they tended to be based around the possibility – or fact – of alien incursions into our terrestrial domain.

In recent years, series have tended to be more slanted towards supernatural or, even, faerie-tale in origin. There have even been a few – low level – super-powered-types appearing on our screens.

Whatever the exact set-up of the series the overall theme remains the same – the schism and contrast between the ordinary world and those forces which exist just outside the realm of normality.

My particular interest is in the eclectic nature of these series –especially those from America. When you have to fill twenty-six episodes of television, you seek inspiration where you can find it. Even if the overall idea behind the series is about aliens observing the planet and interfering with it in various nefarious ways, sooner or later a plot about werewolves or vampires is going to slip in. Very often, when the series' reach their conclusion – or produce a big-screen spin-off – these side-trips into the area of the supernatural are quietly forgotten. But what if they weren't? What if all the stories were true? What if we share the Earth with all manner of supernatural beings? What if we ARE being observed by aliens? And what would our Supernatural planet-mates do if the aliens invade our world? What would happen if a Vampire bit an Alien? And what would happen to the ordinary people caught in the midst of this struggle?

THIS is the setting for Squadron: X.



(I also have a fourth reason for writing this game. I HATE the modern trend towards domesticating Vampires. You'll find no pallid love-lorn teens in this book. My Vampires are the venal, vicious animals they were always intended to be.)

Of course, if your tastes run in different direction and you want to have a game where there are no supernatural creatures – with everything having an alien explanation – you can do it. If you want to set a game after the aliens have coned their way onto our world, fine. If you don't like Science Fiction but want a game where mankind are pitted against the forces of Hell, that's okay too. The rules and ideas given here should allow you to run any one of those games. You'll just have to skip or adapt some of the specific adventures I've designed for you and substitute ones of your own. Easily done.

If, however, your tastes run in the same direction as mine and you decide to follow the storyline of the campaign exactly as I've presented it here then you'll find the game comes in a number of distinct phases:

Phase 1: Normality

The players create and control characters who are just "ordinary people".

I'm lying. They're not exactly ordinary. They represent the best of mankind. The kind of person who makes one of the central characters of a film or TV series. The Hero. Or, if not the central Hero, someone who finds they fit into the Hero's world. You know the type – a scientist, rescued by the secret agent, who somehow seems about to outwit - and even out-shoot - the gun-wielding thugs on their tail.

This phase is like TV and film thrillers. Plots involving hijackings, hi-tech bank jobs, terrorism can all be put in here. There is no direct interaction with forces from "outside" but hints of dark powers at work will be picked up.



Phase 2: Investigation

The players will discover the truth about what is out there. They will join with, or be co-opted into, some sort of secret organisation whose job it is to investigate and- if necessary – combat these dark powers. They will make contact with both alien and supernatural races and factions. They will discover and store arcane and otherworldly artefacts. As their knowledge grows, so the danger to them and their sanity will grow. They will become aware of a direct threat to the entire world. A threat they must combat.

They will fail.



Phase 3: Invasion

The aliens will invade. (Or, if you wish, Vampires will rise to subjugate humanity.) Despite all they have learnt, the characters will be powerless to stop it.

However, during the stresses and vicissitudes of the apocalypse, the characters will suffer a variety of strange experiences. Some will be captured by the aliens and experimented upon. Others will be caught in the fall-out of alien weaponry. Others may decide to try to use strange alien or magical items they have discovered to combat the invasion. Some may be granted magical powers or sorcerous objects from their allies on the world of faerie.

However, it happens, at this stage the characters will cease to be merely human. They will become Super-powered defenders of the Earth and will start to fight back against mankind's oppressors.



Phase 4: Resistance

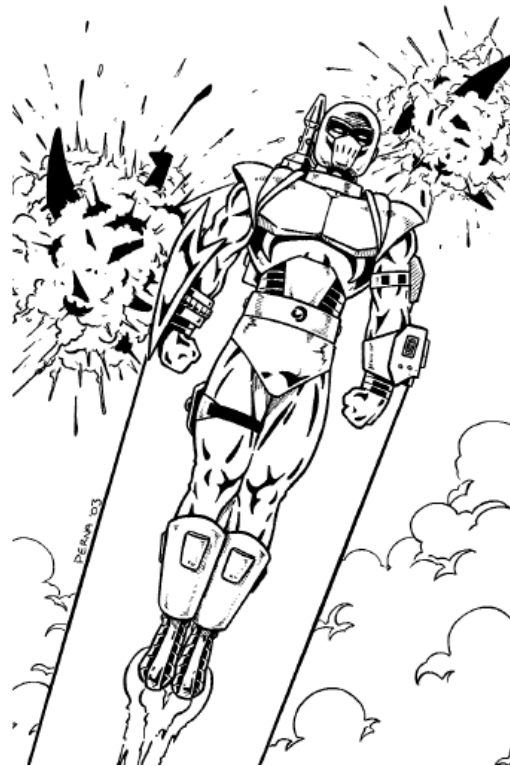
With their new-found abilities, the Heroes travel the ravaged world in search of allies against humankind's alien overlords. During this phase they will score some minor victories but the forces against them are too powerful even given their incredible powers. They must make allies, both human and non-human, build alliances, discover weaknesses and make plans.



Phase 5: Liberty

Eventually the Heroes will be in a position to strike back decisively against their otherworldly nemeses and drive them from our world. My hope is that this will involve their being able to mass the might of the demon-world against them. A mass battle between vampires (et al) and the aliens with the Heroes caught in the midst.

This should be the climax of the campaign. At this point the Referee might want to end the campaign, or "park" it for a while. If the players want to continue, perhaps a new Referee could take the reins for a while.



Phase 6: Regeneration

With the aliens gone from the Earth, the campaign will "settle down" and become more like a traditional Superhero Role-playing game. The characters will be costumed Superheroes defending the ordinary man against threats beyond the normal authorities. However, this will be in a world where Earth's major cities have been decimated. A world where alien technology lies around to be used or misused by anyone who finds it. A world where the forces of the Supernatural may play a more overt part – possibly because of treaties forced upon mankind in their hours of desperation.



Welcome to the Unknown

How quickly you go through these phases depends upon your personal taste. Referees interested in running a Superhero game can simply use this book as a new and innovative way to create their players' Heroes and rush through all the phases in a handful of game sessions. You can play through the example adventures given here one after the other without adding any further linking information. They are written to allow them to be run sequentially if that's what you want.

Others may prefer to stay in the earlier phases for as long as possible, only bringing in the alien invasion if the campaign starts to flag. In this case, you'll have to invent some additional adventures of your own – but I've given you some ideas for these.

In the campaign presented here, I've chosen to virtually skip over Phase 1. That's because I find it easier to rationalise adventures when the characters are all part of an organisation when they can be ordered out to solve mysteries rather than merely stumbling over them.

At each step, I'll lay out some possible options which you can adopt to adapt the game to suit your own tastes. I'll be very surprised if you don't come up with some of your own.

And don't forget your players. I bet their actions will take your game in directions neither you nor I anticipated. One of the great enjoyments of the game comes if you are flexible enough to take their actions on board and use them to affect the development of the overall campaign.

Example:

In a playtest of the campaign, during the INVASION phase, the Heroes had to infiltrate an alien ship to rescue a comrade who had been captured for experimentation.

Using their new-found abilities they were able to take control of the ship. Not wishing to give up such a prize they chose to hide it by ditching it in the Irish Channel.

Though I hadn't anticipated or prepared for this, I wanted them to interact with creatures of the faerie world and co-opt them against the invaders. So I had the ship destroy the hatchery of a race of mer-people.

Fortunately the players had the wit to convince the hordes surrounding and invading the ship that the genocide was the fault of the aliens. (Rather than their own poor steering).

This meant that, at the climax of the campaign, as well as the Vampires, Lycanthropes and Zombies I was hoping to unleash against the aliens I also had Mer-people, Kraken, Behemoths and Sentient Corals.

I'd love to hear what weird and wonderful ideas you and your players come up with. Feel free to drop me a line at simonburley@squadronuk.co.uk.





How do you play the game?

These rules are written as a table-top role-playing game. That is, you sit around a table with a group of friends. There would be little difficulty in adapting it to play by e-mail and I'm sure those people that use special software to run RPGs across the internet would be able to find a way to use that. However, I've written the rules from the viewpoint of playing face-to-face.

You'll need some dice. The game uses three types of die:

The traditional six-sided die or d6. These are used to roll characteristics for the characters and to roll damage for thugs or if characters make a minor attack.

Ten-sided die or d10. These are needed to roll the damage for major attacks and as percentage dice when the characters get their Superpowers.

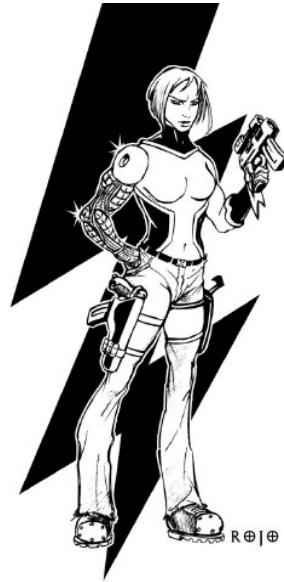
Twenty-sided die or d20. This is used whenever a character makes a SKILL ROLL – including when they are trying to hit in combat.

You'll need some paper to keep track of what happens in the game and something to write with – preferably pencils and rubbers. Some of the sheets of paper should be Character Sheets which the players use to record their Heroes' details. I've also supplied a Character Generation Sheet which will help to speed up the character creation process.

It MAY be possible to play the game out entirely verbally with the players and Referee keeping an image of event in their heads. I'll admit I haven't tried this approach myself.

More likely you'll want to have some kind of playing surface. The best sort is a blank surface, marked in squares or hexagons, upon which you can write with erasable pens. This will allow you to draw out the wide range of settings you might want to set your adventures in.

You'll also probably need some sort of token to keep track of the characters' positions on the map. You can use counters or similar, but most people prefer to use figures of some kind. Cardboard figures can be obtained (or created) fairly simply. Plastic or metal figures are more expensive. The scale doesn't matter. As long as each square on the map represents the height of a normal human figure, everything will work.



Finding figures for monsters, aliens and, even, Superheroes isn't too hard. The difficulty you'll have is in tracking down "normal" figures for your players' characters during the early phases of the campaign. There are some out there, if you trawl the internet thoroughly enough. Good Luck!

Tokens to represent object such as cars and other vehicles are also very useful.

Apart from these few things all you need is some willing and co-operative players, a keen imagination and the time to prepare and run adventures.

But first of, let's see how the story of Roger Marsters and his comrades continues. This time, however, we'll look at it from the player's viewpoint as they enjoy their weekly game of SQUADRON: X!

Example of play

There are three players. LEON controls Roger Marsters – an ex-mountaineer who no longer climbs following a traumatic encounter with Yeti.

Daniel "the Prof" Doherty is controlled by SIMON (that's me). A brilliant physicist - and creator of the first rolling video screen – he has been black-listed by scientific community due his strange theories about energy he claims to have detected from space.

The heroine of the group – Sara Manners – is controlled by DAVE.



Welcome to the Unknown

Sara is the youngest of a long line of gypsies who are gifted with "the sight". She was introduced to Faeries by her Grandmother and sworn to keep it a secret.

The fourth character – Mike Ralston – is the leader of the team and is controlled by the Referee, PETE. His job is to get the players into trouble.

The characters have had a few adventures together since meeting Ralston and being co-opted into "MI:X".

Anyway, let's see what happens when the four of them encountered the alien zombies.

Pete: Right! First round. Leon, roll for initiative.

(Leon and Pete both roll 6-sided dice to see who goes first. Leon rolls higher, so the Heroes get to act first.)

Pete: You win by two panels. Simon what is the Prof doing?

Simon: I'll shout up to Marsters to drop us a rope.

Pete: That doesn't take any time. Two panels still.

Simon: I'll draw my gun and fire it at the nearest Alien zombie.

Pete: Roll a d20.

(Simon rolls and adds The Prof's DEXTERITY MODIFIER).

Pete: 15 plus 7 is 22. A good hit! Roll d10's for damage.

(Simon rolls and the Zombie collapses!)

Dave, your turn, what's Sara up to?

Dave: Is the rope down yet?

Pete: Marsters hasn't acted yet.

Dave: Ok, I'll pull my gun whilst backing to the wall and fire at a zombie.

(He also rolls a d20 and hits. Again, enough damage is done to stop the zombie from acting.)

Pete: (Turning to Leon) Marsters? Remember the Prof has just shouted up to you.

Leon: I'll drop a rope and then move back to the rock wall and secure it to those pitons I drove in.

(This takes 2 panels. One to move to the wall and another to tie off the rope. Leon rolls a d20 just to make sure he doesn't get a critical failure tying the knots.)

Pete: Mike Ralston pulls his gun out and (rolls a d20 and some damage dice) drops a Zombie. "Get out of here!" he yells, "I'll cover your retreat."

(Now it's the bad guys' turn. Two panels, for each of the remaining zombies.)

The remaining five zombies hustle forwards – green integuments hanging from their alien skeletons. They loom over you reeking of dust, age and – somehow – rotting onions. They surround your group.

(Pete rolls some dice.)

Sara and Ralston are attacked by a zombie apiece. The rest all attack the Prof.

Simon: Why is it always me?

Pete: As they've all moved, the zombies only get one attack each.

(Dice are rolled and, four of the zombies miss. One strikes the Prof with an alien claw!)

Simon: Dodge!

(Simon rolls a 20-sided die. The roll is affected by the Prof's Agility. A "glancing" blow is scored. This halves the damage done. Dice are rolled, the results are reduced and deducted from the Prof's hit points. He is quite severely hurt.)

Pete: The Prof is struck with a surprising degree of force considering how decrepit the heap of alien substance before looks.

That's the end of the round. Start round 2.

(The battle continues. Marsters lobs a couple of smoke grenades in to cover his comrades' retreat up the rope. The Prof goes first, taking further damage, followed by Sara. Ralston's brave attempt to cover their retreat merely results in him being rendered unconscious.

He is carried away into the bowels of the alien ship.....)

Ordinary Heroes

Before starting the campaign, the players will have to create their Heroes. Ordinary folk who are then thrust into adventures beyond their comprehension.

Your job as a Referee at this stage is to read these character generation rules thoroughly. Photocopy or print copies of the Phase 1 Character Sheets and, if you want them, Character Generation Sheets.

If you're hoping to start running an adventure in the first session, you'll also have to familiarise yourself with the game system. You'll have to design an adventure or read the first example adventure – "Something Wicked" – before inviting your players around.

Ideally, you shouldn't tell your players what the genre or theme of the game is before they start playing. Just tell them that it's set in the modern world. If they push, just throw out the name of a TV series or two. Things are much more fun if they discover things as they go along.

Character Generation

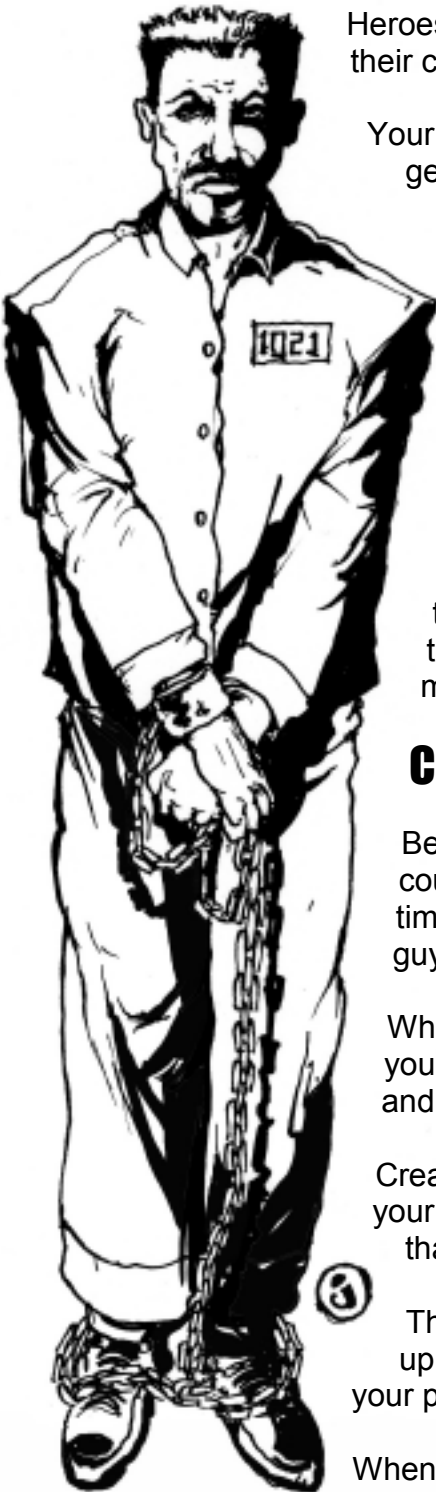
Before getting your players together, you should try creating a couple of characters of your own. This won't be a waste of time. With it a bit of thought you can easily turn them into bad guys to use in later phases of the campaign.

When you understand how the system works, you can invite your players round and give each of them a Character Sheet – and, possibly, Character Generation Sheet – and some dice.

Creating the characters for the campaign is FUN. Don't rush your players. It's important that they come up with characters that they wish to play.

The Character Generation Sheet is provided to speed things up. However, this part of the game should be savoured. Help your players and keep an eye on what each of them is doing.

When the first adventure starts, you want to be as familiar with their characters as they are.





Characters in Squadron: X are defined by Superpowers, Characteristics and Skills. In the first part of the campaign – phases 1 and 2 - characters are “normal” people and have no extraordinary Superpowers.

This rulebook gives one, highly defined, system of generating characters. You may have one or two players who find this system a bit restricting and want a bit more flexibility. It is your choice as Referee whether you restrict them to the rules given here or adapt the rules to allow them to create the characters they want.

Example

You players may not like the idea of rolling for backgrounds and may prefer to choose them. As long as they come up with a range of characters, this shouldn't cause any major issues – at least in the first part of the campaign. I prefer to retain random-rolling as it causes them to use their imagination.

Alternatively, they may feel that their characters are a bit underpowered with just a single background or ability. Good! They're meant to be underpowered in this part of the campaign.

However, you might decide to let them have a Background and an Ability - or two Abilities. If you do this, however, you should reduce their number of rolls they get in Phase 3: Invasion.

(The Squadron UK Rulebook gives a wider range of character generation systems and contains a wide-ranging discussion of how you can adapt the game to suit you and your players.)



Backgrounds

All characters start with some abilities they have acquired in their life up to this point. They will either have a Background or an Ability.

The first thing players do is to roll to see if they have a special Background and what that Background is.

They should roll 2d10, add the results to get a number from 2 to 20 and consult the Background table.

Background Table

Roll	Background
2	Roll twice*
3	Magical
4	Brilliant Chemist Choose
5	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer (Cybernetics)
6	Rich – inherited
7	Private Investigator
8	Reporter
9	Criminal
10	Nothing special - no cost
11	Nothing special - no cost
12	Nothing special - no cost
13	Authorities – Police
14	Authorities – Secret Services
15	Authorities - Government
16	Rich – Business
17	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer (Cybernetics)
18	Brilliant Biologist
19	Psionic
20	Choose**

* If the player is allowed to roll twice and, subsequently, gets two different backgrounds then they are very lucky. They get both of them without any further penalty later in the character generation process. If they are allowed to roll twice but subsequent rolls yield only one Background then that is all they get. Their “failed” roll doesn't give them an ability if they didn't roll a second background. If they roll twice and still get no background then they may choose just one ability as normal.

Players who are allowed to roll twice who subsequently are allowed to roll twice again should treat this roll as “Nothing Special”

Of course, as Referee you could allow the player to keep rolling to see how many powers they end up with! Your choice.

**The player can choose any background they want from the list (except “Roll Twice”!)



If you have the Squadron UK rulebook, you may allow them to roll on the Background Table from that rule-book if you wish.

For example

A player rolled on the background table from the full rules and discovered that their character was an Immortal Mechanical being. He decided that she was a construct created by Leonardo Da Vinci as a living embodiment of the Mona Lisa. This fact was not revealed to the other players who only slowly became aware of their comrade's strange origin as the campaign progressed.

If no Background is rolled, the player may choose an "ability" for their character. (See below). This should be done after Characteristics are rolled.

Authorities – Government

"We have a responsibility towards the people who have put us in this position."

The character is employed in some kind of Government role. Whether this is key role – Senator or Member of Parliament – or merely some kind of civil servant, they have influence and access to important information. Ask the player to specify exactly what they see their character's role as. It is up to you as Referee to decide whether this acceptable or not. A civil servant in the Foreign Office might be acceptable, whereas being the *actual* Foreign Secretary might not.

In game system terms, for as long as they are employed, they have a Legality and Contacts score of 4. However, there will be lots of other benefits which will become obvious as the campaign develops. (For example, the character could ask for a meeting with the appropriate Government Minister to find out what the authorities know about UFOs.)

Authorities – Police

"No-one and nothing breaks the law on MY manor!"

The character is a member of the Police Force. They have influence and access to important information. Ask the player to specify their exact role. They may be an actual Police Constable or just a member of the Police Office Staff. In games system terms, for as long as they are employed, they have a Legality and Contacts score of 4.

However, other benefits will become obvious as the campaign develops. (They can actually arrest people, for example.)



Authorities – Secret Services

"Somebody has to do what we do. You might not like it, but it has to be done."

The character is a member of some kind of Government force whose actions are shrouded in some kind of secrecy – be it MI5 or the FBI. They have influence and access to important information.

The player should specify the organisation they work for and their role within it. In game terms, for as long as they are employed, they have a Legality and Contacts score of 4. Other, less tangible, benefits will become obvious as the game progresses.

(If the players need a special gadget to succeed in an adventure, for example, this character may have a chance of requisitioning it from their Quartermaster.)



Ordinary Heroes

Brilliant Biologist

"Whatever this stuff came from, it didn't evolve on this planet."

The character is a world-class genius in the field of Biological research. They are a household name in academic circles and may even be the beneficiary of – or be working towards – a nobel prize. In normal play they circumvent all skill rolls with regard to biological research or information. Under stressed or difficult circumstances if a skill roll is required, it is made at +15 on the skill roll.

They make all scientifically-based skill rolls at +8 even outside their own discipline.

When choosing skills for this character, the player should assume that they already possess all the relevant Research Skills and need not choose them as trained skills.

The player should specify where the character does their research. Do they work for a University, the Government or a private company?

Brilliant Chemist

"There are allotropes in this alloy I've never seen before...."

The character is a world-class genius in the field of Chemical research. They are a household name in academic circles and may even be the beneficiary of – or be working towards – a nobel prize. In normal play they circumvent all skill rolls with regard to chemical research or information. Under stressed or difficult circumstances if a skill roll is required, it is made at +15 on the skill roll.

They make all scientifically-based skill rolls at +8 even outside their own discipline.

When choosing skills for this character, the player should assume that they already possess all the relevant Research Skills and need not choose them as trained skills.

The player should specify where the character does their research. Do they work for a University, the Government or a private company?

Brilliant Physicist/Engineer (Cybernetics)

"How do I know this wasn't made on Earth? I didn't make it, that's why."

The character is a world-class genius either in the field of Physics research or in the field of engineering. They are a household name in academic circles and may even have invented some of the devices people take for granted in their ordinary lives.

In normal play they circumvent all skill rolls with regard to engineering or electronic research or information. Under stressed or difficult circumstances if a skill roll is required, it is made at +15 on the skill roll.

They make all scientifically-based skill rolls at +8 even outside their own discipline.

When choosing skills for this character, the player should assume that they already possess all the relevant Research Skills and need not choose them as trained skills.

The player should specify where the character does their research. Do they work for a University, the Government or a private company?





Criminal

"Some things have got to be stopped because...well.. they're just bad for business."

The character has links with at least one powerful criminal organisation – whether as a family member or active or reformed major criminal. They have influence and access to important information. In game terms, for as long as they maintain these links, they have a Contacts score of 4.

In addition they must choose one specifically criminal trained skill – hot-wiring a car, picking locks, picking pockets etc. – as one of their 5 common skills (see below). This behaves in all ways as if it were a common skill.

For example

Stan Murphy has a Dexterity of 12. He chooses Picking Locks as his common criminal skill. He uses this skill at an ability level of 17 – the 12 for Dexterity plus the +5 skill bonus. This costs him no skill points. He may choose 4 other common skills and 5 trained skills as normal.

Other benefits will become obvious as the campaign progresses. If the players visit a new city, for example, the character could arrange a meeting with the local crime-lord.

Magical

"There's something wrong here, can't you feel it?"

The character is sensitive to paranormal energies and effects. They can perceive things which are invisible to other people.

They make all Sleuthing rolls with regard to magical effects with at least a +5 modifier.

They will also become a key character as the campaign develops. They will spot key clues or plot-points. Supernatural creatures and Faerie folk will be much more likely to interact positively with this character.

When they get their Super-powered abilities they may choose to roll on a special table. Whether or not they roll on that table, the effects of their super-powers will side-step most normal protections.



Example

When the aliens invade, Susie Whethers is hidden by her friends amongst the woodland folke. They give her a magic amulet which can generate energy blasts. As the blasts are magical in origin, they go straight through earthly protections such as armour.

Private Investigator

"I've seen things that no-one wanted me to see. And I've got the evidence."

The character works as some kind of private detective. They have links with a variety of sources, grassees and snouts which gives them some influence and access to important information. For as long as they maintain these links, they have a Contacts score of 4. In addition they may choose a sixth common skill during character creation as long as this skill is directly related to their role as investigator – spot, search, stealth et al.



Ordinary Heroes

Psionic

"I don't know how I know, but I've got a funny feeling that this might actually work!"

The character is sensitive to psychic forces. Though there isn't anything they can put their fingers on, for their entire life they have been remarkably intuitive. They can "size up" people extremely quickly.

When calculating their Sleuthing score, they have a "Powers" ability score of 2-4.

They have the "information" ability at ½ level.

They will become central to many storylines during the campaign. In addition, during Phase 3 the player may choose to roll on a special table to determine their super-powered abilities. Any super-powers they obtain will be psychic in nature which may give them additional advantages.

For example

Any energy blast power they get will be a mental attack which cannot be stopped by armour, parrying etc.

Reporter

"The people have a right to know – and I'm the one to tell them..."

The character works for a National Newspaper or Broadcaster. This gives them influence and access to important information. The player should specify the medium they work in and the role they play within their organisation.

For as long as they maintain their position, they have a Contacts score of 4 and an Accessibility score of at least 3.

There will also be other benefits which will become obvious during the campaign. This will be the best character to get the warning out when the alien invasion comes, for example.

Rich – Business

"There's more than one way to turn a profit!"

The character is incredibly rich and successful in the world of business.

In campaign play, assume they can afford to purchase anything they want or need.



This may have minor beneficial effects upon their derived characteristics and should be taken into account when those characteristics are calculated.

The player should define exactly what sector the character has amassed their fortune in. In addition they get the Entrepreneur skill as one of their 5 common skills (see below). This behaves in all ways as if it were a common skill.

For example

Alan Saccharine has a Psyche of 11. He gets the Entrepreneur skill as a common skill. He uses this skill at an ability level of 16 – the 12 for Psyche plus the +5 skill bonus. This costs him no skill points. He may choose 4 other common skills and 5 trained skills as normal.

Rich – inherited

"At last I've got something worth investing in!"

The character has inherited a vast fortune. In campaign play, assume they can afford to purchase anything they want or need. This may have minor beneficial effects upon their derived characteristics.

The player should define exactly how their character inherited their fortune. In addition they get the High Society skill as one of their 5 common skills (see below). This behaves in all ways as if it were a common skill.

For example

Prince Hassan gets the High Society skill as a common skill. In the first game he rolls a d20 and adds the +5 skill bonus. When his is given his Esteem characteristic he will also add the skill modifier for that characteristic. This costs him no skill points. He may choose 4 other common skills and 5 trained skills as normal.



Characteristics

Once they have found out if they have a Background or not, the players should roll dice to determine their character's Physical Characteristics.

There are four physical characteristics. To determine each of the four physical characteristics, the player should roll 4d6 and total the highest three rolls to get a score between 3 and 18.

Each characteristic should be rolled in turn, starting with Strength. However, players may choose to swap two of these rolls if they wish.

Skill Modifiers

Once the characteristics have been generated, the characters' skill modifiers can be calculated. These are the scores which are added to the roll of a d20 to determine if a skill roll succeeds or not.

Skill modifiers are equal to half the relevant characteristic, with all fractions rounded up.

For example

Demi Sutherland has a Strength score of 9. Her Strength Skill Modifier will be 5. This will be the number she adds to the roll of a 20-sided die whenever she tried to bash open a door etc.

Strength

This is useful for all Strength-based skills (e.g. Battering doors open). It also affects the amount of damage done in physical combat. Characters do +1 damage per point of Strength above 12. The subtract 1 per point of damage for each point of Strength below 9.

For example

Alan Sacharrine has a Strength of 16. He can add +4 to any damage he rolls when he hits someone or something.

Endurance

This is useful for all Health-based skills (e.g. Holding your breath underwater). It also affects the amount of damage which you can take in physical combat.

For each point of Endurance the player rolls 1d6 and totals the result. This is the amount of Kill damage the character can take. This should be written on the character sheet.

All the d6 dice are rolled again to determine the total Stun damage the character can take.

For example

Susie Whethers has an Endurance of 9. Her player, Jayne, rolls 9d6 and adds them up. Susie gets a total of 32 Kill points. Jayne then rolls the 9d6 a second time. This time she rolls lower and Susie only has a total of 29 Stun points.

Dexterity

This represents the manual legerdemain of the character. It is useful for all skills involving the use of the hands (e.g. Repair).

It is used as a default to determine the success of the majority of hand-to-hand attacks.

For example

Sam Strong has a Dexterity of 15. He halves this to find his Dexterity Skill Modifier. This is 8. He will add 8 to any die roll he makes to hit things in combat or any skill roll he makes involving his hands.

Agility

This represents the overall bodily nimbleness of the character. This is used to perform physical acts such as dodging. It also controls the order in which characters act when in a group.

For example

Sam Strong has an Agility score of 8. This is rather low. He will half his score (4) to any rolls he makes to dodge attacks and will, probably, be the last good guy to act in each round of action.





Adjusting physical characteristics

The physical characteristics should be rolled strictly in order – Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Agility. Players should be allowed to swap any two physical characteristics if they think it suits their character better.

For example

Simon has rolled a character with a Dexterity of 8 and no background. Because he intends to choose Martial Arts as the character's Ability, he chooses to swap his Dexterity roll with the higher roll of 12 he made for Strength.

As Referee you may choose to insist that players keep their rolls in strict order or to allow them to rearrange them in any way that they want. A full discussion of this – an alternative ways of generating characteristics – is given in the Squadron UK rulebook.

It is important that the original rolls are kept, noted on the character sheet even if the characteristic is adjusted later due to an Ability or Superpower roll.

For example

Rick chooses the Strength ability for his character, Billy Murphy. This puts his Strength up to 23. However, he needs to keep his original roll of 8 noted on the character sheet. It is this roll of 8 which is used to calculate Psyche and Movement. It is also the level the character's Strength may fall to if he is adversely affected by an alien virus later in the campaign.

Psyche

This is measure of the character's mental strength. It is calculated after the four Physical Characteristics have been rolled.

It is equal to 23 minus average of Physical Characteristic scores. If this generates a Psyche score which is not a whole number, then round all fractions up. (Or round down the average of the Physical Characteristics scores before subtracting from 23.)

This is one of a number of compensating factors in the rules. Players who roll well for their Physical Characteristics will have a character with a low Psyche score and vice versa. This reflects the comics, TV programmes and films. Physically able characters are rarely as effective mentally. The most powerful psychics and scientists are physically weak or, even, wheelchair-bound.

Derived characteristics

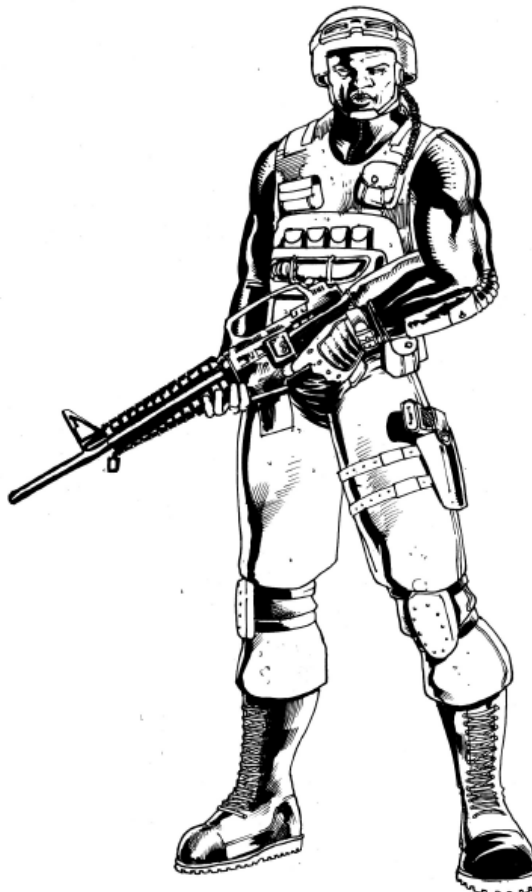
There are three derived characteristics. They are not generated when the character is first created. They are calculated from the Character's actions at the first possible opportunity - and as appropriate thereafter – usually at the end of each adventure, or story chapter.

For example

How the character is perceived by the public is represented in this game by the Esteem Characteristic. Characters who are generally polite to the public and who are seen to act in an heroic manner are more likely to be able to influence the actions of others that characters or are taciturn, rude or unhelpful.

Derived characteristics are each calculated from 5 sub-characteristics which each have a score from 0 through 4. So a derived characteristic can have any score from 0 through to 20.

Derived characteristics are not used in the characters' first adventure. They get them later in the campaign. At the beginning of the game, this part of the character sheet is left blank.





Esteem

This is a measure of overall charisma and how well the character is regarded by members of the public and how likely they are to follow the Character's instructions. It is used to calculate success in skills such as bluffing.

The five sub-characteristics which make up the Esteem score are:

Legality

This is whether the Character is seen to obey the law or not. "Official" characters are more likely to be able to influence people than those who are known criminals.

Memorability

A measure of how attractive or memorable the Character is. It is a sad fact that attractive people tend to get their way more often than the rest of us. However, it is possible to compensate for lack of looks by being easy to remember in some other way.

Heroism

This is determined by whether the Character is seen to perform any brave, selfless or heroic actions. Heroes garner more respect than cowards – no matter how sensible the latter course may be.

Relationships

This is a measure of how the Character chooses to interact with the members of the public. Do they talk them? Do they usher them to safety? Do they rush to check fallen bystanders?

Success

What level of crime or situation the Character is seen as being able to tackle on behalf of us all. If they resolve a situation of a higher level than their current score, their score rises to the new level. If they fail to stop a crime at a lower level than their current score, their score drops to that level.

Sleuthing

This is a measure of the Character's ability to notice clues, detect crimes and the like. It is used to calculate success in skills such as Searching.

The five sub-characteristics which make up the Sleuthing score are:

Abilities

This is a measure of how well the Character uses their special abilities or Superpowers to solve crime. If the character possesses an ability which is obviously useful in detective work, they will have a score from 2-4.

For example

Louis Doyle has the Supersense ability. He has an extremely acute sense of smell. He will always have an Abilities score of at least 2. If he uses his sense in any way during a game – trying to detect unusual scents at the scene of a crime for example – he will score 3. If he uses his ability well – possibly matching the scent of cologne worn by a criminal to the scent he'd detected at the crime scene – he will get a score of 4.

If the character has no obviously useful abilities, his score will be from 0-2.

For example

Billy Murphy is extremely strong. His abilities score will normally be 0. However, if he uses his strength to intimidate a thug during questioning, he can attain a score of 2.

Detection

What effort – other than using their abilities – does the Character put into searching for clues, interrogating witnesses and the like? The score in this area is determined directly from how the character is played in the game.

Characters who interrogate witnesses, fastidiously search for clues and leave no stone unturned can easily score a 4 in this area.



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Esteem Table

	Legality	Memorability	Heroism	Relationships	Success
0	Criminal	Forgettable or monster	Evil	Hates the public	None
1	Shady	Ordinary or ugly	Dodgy	Stand-offish	Stops Ordinary Crime
2	Normal	Notable normal human	Normal	Normal	Stops supercrime
3	Co-operates with the Law	Different	Hero	Likes the public	Saves the Nation
4	Designated Official	Unique	Total Hero	Loves the public	Saves the World

Sleuthing Table

	Abilities	Detection	Contacts	Exposure	Accessibility
0	No abilities used	None	None	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Speaks to no-one
1	Abilities used slightly	A bit	Media	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Hard to contact
2	Useful abilities used slightly or other ability used	Some	Ordinary people	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Can only be contacted via authorities
3	Useful abilities used	Good detection	Informed people	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Easily contact-able
4	Useful ability used effectively	Turns every stone	Total in with authorities or criminals	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Web-site/phone number

Fate Table

	Scruples	Victories	Public reaction	Extrovert	Home life
0	Guilty secret	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Silent	Life at risk
1	Dodgy	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Laconic	Unsafe/Bit nervous
2	Normal	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Normal	Normal
3	Good guy	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Expressive	Safe
4	Saint	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Total confidence	Totally secure



Contacts

This is a measure of how many people the Character knows who can give him useful information. This score should develop and increase as the campaign progresses.

Exposure

How much publicity does the Character get? The more famous they are, the less likely they are to be able to sneak around behind the scenes and discover clues. Characters with a high Esteem score run the risk of being recognised whilst they are trying to secretly investigate crimes.

Exposure is calculated by dividing the Character's Esteem score by 5, rounding to the nearest fraction, and subtracting this from 4.

Accessibility

How easily can ordinary members of the public contact the Character to give them useful information? Once the characters get known, people may wish to get in contact to volunteer information. Will they be able to?



Fate

This characteristic measures how likely the Character is to have good fortune. It is used as a catch-all when other factors don't apply and can be used whenever a random roll for success is required.

For example,

Desmond Smart knows that a terrorist has hidden a bomb in one of the safety deposit boxes in a vault. As he starts to jemmy open the boxes, his player should make a Fate-based skill roll each time to see if he has been Fate enough to stumble across the device.

The sub-characteristics for Fate are:

Scruples

This is a measure of the Character's ethics. Is there anything on their conscience? Do they care? A character with a strong moral code who has done nothing to be guilty about will have a high score. Characters who are amoral - or who have integrity are carrying guilt about things which have happened - will have a lower score.

For example,

Billy Murphy is normally a good guy and would have a scruples score of 3. However, an innocent bystander was injured during his last adventure and Billy blames himself, so his scruples score is currently 1.

Victories

This is a record of how many situations the characters have successfully resolved. Every time they succeed in stopping a crime or resolving a situation they add +1 to this score. Every time they fail, one is taken away. It never goes above 4 or below 0.

For example,

Desmond Smart has helped resolve numerous situations, such as a plane hijacking. His Victories score has been at 4 for a number of adventures. When he fails to stop a terrorist bomb going off, his score immediately falls to 3.

Public Reaction

This is a measure of how people react to the Character.

It is determined by taking their Esteem score and dividing it by 5. (Fractions are rounded to the nearest number.)



Ordinary Heroes

For example,

Louis Doyle has an Esteem score of 8. 8 divided by 5 is 1.6, so Louis has a Public Reaction score of 2.

Extrovert

How outgoing and expressive is the Character? Confident characters tend to make their own Fate. If they are loud and bombastic – if they have a catchphrase or regularly use bon mots – they get a high score.

For example,

Louis Doyle has a tendency to make poor jokes about his sense of smell. “I detect a bad odour about this”, “Something just doesn’t smell right” etc. Though not enough to gain a score of 4, he does this so often that his Expression score tends to remain at 3.

Home Life

This is a measure of how safe and secure the character’s home-life is. At the beginning of the game, it can be freely chosen by the player.

You’ll be surprised how some players take their time over this. By the time this score is determined, they usually have a very clear idea about who their character is and what sort of background they have come from.

Later in the game, this score will vary according to the events unfolding in the campaign.

Anyone who discovers a bomb placed on their car as it is parked outside their house will suffer a score of zero in this category until they find and deal with the bomber.



Abilities

If the player has not rolled a significant background, they can choose one ability for their character from the following list:

Acrobatics
Endurance
Fast recovery
Follower
Increased move
Information
Marksmanship
Martial Arts
Strength
Supersense
Weapon

Abilities are equivalent to Superpowers at first level. Higher levels will become available later in the campaign.

Players may choose to take TWO abilities if they are taken at HALF level.

To further customise their character, players may choose one “gimmick” for their ability. No gimmicks may be taken for half-level abilities.

The available abilities are described here, separate from the Superpower section. This is in case you wish to refer your players to this part of the rules without giving too much away about powers they might be acquiring later in the campaign.



Acrobatics

(Gymnastics, Agility)

The character is extremely nimble and agile and is far more likely to be able to perform acrobatic feats – such as dodging attacks – than other people.

The character gets +2 to their Dodge rolls and +5 to any Skill rolls based on Agility.

Gimmicks:

- Use one particular skill based on Agility (for example, climbing) with a further +5 bonus.
- A +5 bonus on the Agility roll when making it as part of a Combined Action. (For example, vaulting a car to kick at an opponent.)
- A further +1 dodge bonus.
- -1 modifier on opponents' dodge
- -1 modifier on opponents' parry

½ level: The Hero gets +1 on Dodge rolls and +2 on Agility Skill rolls.

Endurance

(Vigour, health, stamina, constitution)

The character is uncommonly fit and healthy.

Their Endurance score goes up to 20+d6 – with a commensurate increase in their Kill and Stun totals.

This power has no effect on the character's Knockback score which is usually based upon their original Endurance roll.

Gimmicks:

- +5 to knockback score
- +5 to recovery rolls
- Immune to one specified disease
- Needs 50% less sleep than normal people
- Undersea diving (+5 on Endurance rolls to hold their breath)
- The character heals physical damage quickly. When hospitalised, the character gets +1 on the dice rolled to determine how many Kill points they get back.
- If the character takes more negative Stun damage than their Endurance score they continue to take Stun damage. They do not start to take Kill damage.

½ level: The character has an Endurance of 20

Fast recovery

(Second wind, resistance to pain, iron will)

The character has the ability to ignore a large degree of pain and recovers Stun damage at a faster than normal rate.

The character does not need to make an Endurance roll to recover Stun damage. They recover 2 dice Stun damage every round. If they are stunned, they only suffer -2 on their skill rolls.

If they are knocked out, this ability ceases to work and normal rules apply until they wake up.

Gimmicks:

- Can attempt to “push” recovery with an Endurance roll. +1 die recovery if the roll succeeds. -1 die if the roll fails. (No difference for a minor success).
- Recover +1 Stun per round even if performing actions
- -2 stun damage per attack from a specified non-ubiquitous attack form. (Fire, for example, but not fists.)
- The character heals physical damage quickly. When hospitalised, the character gets +1 on the dice rolled to determine how many Kill points they get back.
- +1 on Kill recovery rolls

½ level: +1d6/d3 recovery per round. Endurance roll needed.





Follower

(Pet, Sidekick, Animal Control, Replication)

The character is accompanied by a companion of some kind. This follower can be human, humanoid, animal, swarm, clone, replicant or anything similar. However they appear, they all have the characteristics given below.

They are generated using 3d6 rolls for their characteristics. They have the same number of panels, as the character and have attacks equivalent to fist attacks.

They may have skills but may not have any skills which the Hero themselves does not possess.

They calculate trained skill points by subtracting the total of their Skill Modifiers from 40. They may not have any more skill points than their "master".

Gimmicks:

- The follower may have one skill not possessed by the Hero
- There is a telepathic link between the follower and the Hero
- The player may play the follower as a separate character if the Hero falls unconscious – otherwise they are controlled by the Referee.
- They can have 2 bonus specialised common skills
- They get 5 more trained skill points.

½ level: The follower has characteristics based on 2d6. They have half the number of panels each round as the character (rounded up) and have no specialist skills.



Increased move

Speed, Leaping

The character has an enhanced move of some kind. The exact form must be decided when the character is created and cannot be changed.

The character moves at double the character's normal movement rate using this chosen mode of movement.

If the character is running able to accelerate in a straight line for period of time, they can move at up to 4 times their movement. Their speed increases by one movement rate for each panel spent accelerating.

They can run at this speed for a number of panels equal to their Endurance score.

For example

Jennifer Sculley would normally move 5 squares in a panel of action. Because she has this ability she can run 10 squares in a panel and accelerate to up to 20 squares per panel. She can run at this top speed for 12 panels – which is her Endurance score.

If the character is able to attack at the end of a charge move or leap, they gain the usual charge bonuses.

Gimmicks:

- Able to perform other action whilst building up speed in a charge
- Can come to a dead stop at the end of a charge
- Can strike a blow in passing at the end of a charge without incurring any damage themselves
- +1 dodge modifier
- Running up walls (1) - +5 bonus on climbing skill rolls
- Running up walls (2) – up to 1 square of movement in a standard move can be on a non-horizontal surface
- Maneuvering – when running at more than twice normal speed, the character can make a turn of up to 30 degrees per panel without losing the bonus acceleration
- Leaping – if the character has made a full move in advance, they can leap a distance equal to a normal move without requiring a skill roll.



For example

If Jennifer Sculley ran for 10 squares in a panel, she could make a leap of up to 5 squares in the next panel.

½ level: The character gains +50% movement and can accelerate to double their normal move.

Information

The character can instantly summon up important information. They have instant access to common information (eg. Phone number) or any information that they have been privy to at any time in the past (photographic memory).

It is up to the player to rationalise how this ability works. Often this is linked to taking skills in computer usage. However, it can be an innate ability based upon, for example, an eidetic memory.

The player can choose one of the following gimmicks:

- The information can be recalled whilst moving
- +1 to dodges
- +1 to parries
- -1 to opponents' dodges
- -1 to opponents' parries
- By making an appropriate skill roll (based on Psyche) the character can change an item of common information (e.g. Telephone number)
- The character can summon up two items of information at a time
- The character can produce hard-copies of information
- The character can transmit the information found

½ level – The character needs a specific device or a short period of time to summon up common information.

In the first case, to have instant access to information they would need, for example, a highly specialised one-off lap-top computer rather than an "off the shelf" model.

In the second case they would need to make Psyche-based skill roll. A total success will produce the information in a single panel. A minor success will take two panels. Any failure other than a critical failure will take 3 panels.

Marksmanship

Accuracy, marksman, sniper

For a specified attack form (chosen when the character is created) the character can do additional damage by aiming for targets' vulnerable points.

For each uninterrupted 2 panels the character spends aiming, they gain a +1 modifier to the Dexterity roll and +1d10 damage when the attack is finally made.

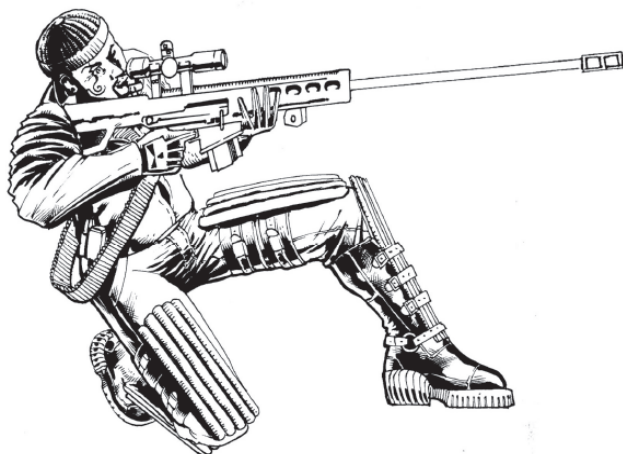
During the panels spent aiming, neither the attacker or target can move.

The attack occurs during the final frame of aiming.

Gimmicks:

- -1 to opponents' dodges
- -1 to opponents' parries
- Can bounce attacks off appropriate surfaces
- The target or firer can move up to one square without losing the bonus
- The character specialises in one specific "called shot" – such as shooting items out of target's hands
- The character can choose to reduce a target's protection by 1 for each panel spent aiming in place of the 1d damage bonus. This could represent aiming for the weak spots in armour.
- A bonus 1d Kill damage versus non-living objects

½ level: +1d6/d3 damage modifier per 2 panels spent aiming.





Martial Arts

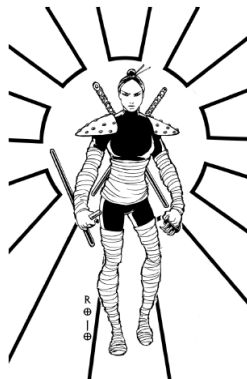
The character is trained in some form of hand to hand combat. Despite the name of this ability, this does not have to be specific training in some form of oriental martial art. It can represent, for example, brawling skills picked up on the street.

The character does not suffer a -5 Kill modifier to their fist attacks. They get a +1d damage modifier with their natural attacks which can be added to either Kill or Stun damage at their choice. They make all Dexterity rolls to hit in hand-to-hand combat with a +2 modifier.

They also get a Gimmick. Possible gimmicks include:

- Enhanced dodge (+1)
- Enhance Parry (+1)
- Judo throw - if the character makes a successful Parry or Dodge versus a hand-to-hand attack and takes no damage they may immediately make a one panel attack against their attacker. If this succeeds the attacker takes damage as usual and must make a successful Agility roll or be thrown to the floor.
- +5 Agility rolls made as part of a combined attack with Martial Arts.
- Minor enhancement (+1 to Dexterity roll) to specific, non-ubiquitous, attack (For example, a character could get a +1 to Dexterity rolls with Kick attacks but would be unable to launch a kick attack every panel).
- The ability to do a base attack of 2d Kill and 1d Coma
- Damage modifier vs. wooden boards

½ level: +1 die damage to physical attacks. No modifier to Dexterity rolls. Fist attacks are still made at -5 to Kill.



Strength

The character is uncommonly strong. They have probably undergone a large amount of physical training such as body-building.

The character's Strength is now 20 plus the roll of 1d6. This will give them a significant damage modifier.

The enhanced Strength does not affect the character's movement rate which is always calculated from their original Strength roll. It does affect the character's knock-back score as long as the character is aware of an attack so they can brace against it.

If they are attacked by surprise, knock-back is calculated using their original Strength score.

For this reason, and others, it is important that the character's original Strength roll is recorded on the character sheet (normally in brackets).

Strength gimmicks the player can choose from include:

- +5 on skill rolls to bend bars or similar – excellent for trussing up bad guys
- +5 on skill rolls to lift or throw heavy objects. This does not give any increased damage or allow them to lift items which are out of their league. It just makes it easier for them to lift and throw objects within their usual range.
- Tough, leathery, skin. This will allow them to do Kill damage using their bare hands without bruising, cuts or scrapes.
- +1 on their Memorability score due to their stunning physique.
- +5 to character's knockback
- Can use Strength to brace versus knockback even when taken by surprise
- -5 to opponent's knockback
- Slight build - does not appear strong.

½ level: The character has a Strength of 20.



Supersense

One or more of the character's senses is heightened to an exceptional degree. A single sense is heightened, which the player must specify. The character gains a +5 modifier on all Sleuthing rolls and skill rolls based on sleuthing.

The gimmick which is chosen will depend upon the exact sense selected:

- Vision – night vision rolls are made with no modifier but with no penalty.
- Hearing – the character can detect a change in someone's heartbeat and, if they make a Sleuthing roll, can detect if they are lying or not.
- Smell – the character can identify toxic substances by smell if they make the appropriate skill roll.
- Taste – the character can identify toxic substances by tasting only the tiniest –non-lethal – amount if they make the appropriate skill roll.
- Touch – the character can read using their fingers through detecting the ink impressions on a page.

½ level: Animal senses. All of the character's sense are enhanced to a slight degree. +3 to Sleuthing and related rolls.



Weapon

The character wields an exotic or special weapon of some kind. They use this weapon with great effectiveness.

The character gets a +2 Modifier to Dexterity rolls when they use this weapon in combat.

They also gain +1 die damage modifier. These modifiers only apply in one mode of combat – missile or melee.

That is the weapon can be used in hand-to-hand combat (a truncheon for example) or at range (e.g. a bow and arrow).

If a player wishes their character to use a weapon in both modes (a spear, for example) then they should take a half level in each mode (see below).

Possible gimmicks which the player can choose from include:

- The weapon can be used in an additional mode i.e. Missile and Melee
- The weapon can be used as a Shield. It adds +5 to parry rolls or an additional die damage modifier to parries only. (That is, 2 dice at first level.)
- The weapon is innate or built-in. The Character cannot be disarmed.
- Quick-draw - the weapon can be drawn and used in single panel.
- If it is a missile it returns to the firer in the following panel. (During which time the character can be performing another action.)
- The weapon is functionally indestructible
- The weapon can fold/pack away to be carried in a small, discreet, bundle
- The weapon is, effectively, indestructible

½ level: The character possesses a weapon with a +1 modifier to Dexterity rolls and a +1 point modifier to damage.



Character Sheet

The characters Background or Ability and Characteristics/Skill modifiers should be noted on the character sheet.

The player should also be able to write down their character's Stun and Kill totals.

The following scores can also be calculated and noted on the character sheet

Move

The player should add up the four original rolls for their character's physical characteristics – Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Agility – ignoring any increases due to abilities chosen.

This total should be divided by 10 and the answer rounded to the nearest whole number. This is how many squares the character can move in a single panel of action.

Knockback

The player should add their character's Strength and Endurance scores. This will be based upon the character's originally rolled Endurance score. If they have an enhanced Strength this will be based upon their enhanced Strength if they are aware of any attack and upon their original Strength if they are caught by surprise. In this case, both scores must be recorded on the character sheet.

If the character is attacked and takes more damage in a single attack than their Knockback score, they will be sent flying.

For example

Reg Tallow has an Endurance of 12 and a rolled Strength of 8. He has the Strength ability which took his Strength score up to 22.

He has a knockback score of $12 + 22 = 34$ if he is aware of attacks. If someone hits him from the front and he is able to brace against the attack, it will need to do more than 34 points of damage to knock him back. However, if he is caught by surprise, his knockback score falls to $12 + 8 = 20$. An attack from behind only needs to exceed 20 points of damage to knock him flying.

Damage Modifier

This will be +1 for every Strength point the character has above 12 and -1 for every point their Strength point is below 9.

For example

Reg Tallow has a Strength of 22 due to his previous career as a body builder. He gets a +10 bonus to apply to any physical damage he does. If, however, he were to be laid low by an alien virus which reduces his Strength to its originally rolled level of 8, he would actually suffer a damage penalty of -1 to all of his physical attacks.

Attacks

All attacks do 1d to Kill and 2d to Stun or vice versa with appropriate modifiers.

Example

A fist does 1d-5 Kill and 2d Stun. A knife will do 1d Stun and 2d Kill.

The dice used are usually d10 for Heroes/Villains and d6 for Thugs/Civilians.

If only minor successes are rolled for attacks, Heroes/Villains use d6 dice whilst Thugs/Civilian attacks are calculated as if the dice rolled were d3.

Players should refer to their ability descriptions and the combat rules (below) to determine the effects of their usual attacks and note this on their character's sheet.





Skills

Skills are abilities which anyone can learn whatever their background.

Skill modifier

How effective a character is when using a skill is reflected by their Skill Modifier with that skill.

Each characteristic has an associated Skill modifier. To calculate the skill modifiers, halve each characteristic (rounding halves up).

For example

A character with a Strength of 13 will have a Strength Skill Modifier of 7.

Skill Roll

Whenever a character tries to use a skill, the players rolls a d20 and adds the relevant skill modifier.

If they get a total of 15 or more, they succeed but in a minor fashion.

If they get a total of 18 or more they are totally successful.

Critical Success/Failure

An unmodified roll of 20 is always a success of some kind.

If the roll was otherwise impossible for the player to succeed at, then a roll of 20 is simply a success of some kind. This may not be exactly the outcome which was attempted. An ordinary person won't be able to throw a car no matter what they roll but they may be able to tear part of it off.

If there was a possibility of success without rolling a 20, then a roll of 20 is a Critical Success. Extra benefits will accrue to the Hero. These will be determined by the Referee as appropriate to the situation.

For example

Stewart Chambers is trying to hack into the Government's Defence Grid. He rolls a 20 and gets a critical success.

As well as gaining access to the Defence Grid, the details of a super-secret Government defence project also pop up on the screen.

An unmodified roll of 1 is always a failure. If the roll was otherwise impossible for the player to fail at then a roll of 1 is simply a failure.

If there was a possibility of failure without rolling a 1, then a roll of 1 is a Critical Failure. Extra consequences will afflict the Hero. These will be determined by the Referee as appropriate to the situation.

For example

Sam Tallow is trying to batter a door open. He rolls a 1. Not only does the door not open, Sam also takes 1d10 of Stun damage.

Task Difficulty

Modifiers can be applied to the skill roll to reflect how difficult the task is to complete.

Difficulty Rating	Modifier to die roll
Very Easy	+15
Easy	+10
Quite Easy	+5
Normal	0
Difficult	-5
Extremely Difficult	-10
Impossible	-15

For example

The team have managed to obtain the manual which explains how to shut down an active nuclear device. If they are able to take their time to study the manual, the task might be quite easy (+5 on skill rolls). However, if the device has been activated and they need to skim the manual and shut it down quickly, the task will be extremely difficult (-10 to skill rolls).





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Types of Skill

There are two types of skill – **Common** and **Trained**.

Common skills are skills which anyone can use at any time. For example, anyone can attempt to leap over a fence.

Trained skills are skills which can only be obtained through education and practice. No-one can demonstrate a trained skill unless they have received the appropriate instruction in it.

Common Skills

These are skills which anyone can demonstrate. For example, Computer Usage. Anyone can use a computer.

Common skills are based upon specific characteristics.

To succeed in using one of these skills, the player must roll a d20 and add the relevant skill modifier.

If the total is 15 or higher, the roll has succeeded in a minor way.

If the total is 18 or higher, the roll has succeeded completely.

For example

Susie is searching a flat for evidence of drug usage. Her player rolls a d20 and adds Susie's sleuthing skill modifier. If a total of 16 is achieved, Susie might discover some drug paraphernalia. If a total of 20 is scored, she will find some actual drugs.

When the character is first created, each player can freely select 5 common skills for their character. They use these skills should be noted on the character sheet. Whenever the character uses these skills, they get a +5 modifier on the rolls.

For example

*Sam – Strength 12, skill modifier 6 – will roll a d20 and add 6 when he tries to batter down a door.
Tony – Strength 9, skill modifier 5 but with Door Bursting as a common skill – will roll a d20 and add 5 for his Strength and another 5 for his skill in this area.*

Here is a list of some common skills and the characteristic they are based upon:

Skill	Characteristic
Business	Psyche/Esteem
Climbing	Strength/Agility
Computer Use	Psyche
Demolition/Piano Smashing	Strength
Door bursting	Strength
Etiquette	Esteem
First Aid	Psyche
Gambling	Psyche/Esteem
Impress	Esteem
Juggling	Dexterity
Jumping	Strength/Agility
Language- native	Psyche
Literacy	Psyche
Make-up	Dexterity
Negotiation	Esteem
Pot-holing	Agility
Riding	Agility
Scrounging	Esteem
Singing	Esteem
Searching	Sleuthing
Spotting/Notice	Sleuthing
Stealth	Agility
Swimming	Strength/Agility
Teamster	Esteem/ Psyche
Weightlifting	Strength

These should be treated as suggestions. Players should be encouraged to come up with ideas of their own.

If your players do come up with the ideas for common skills of their own, I'd be happy to see them. Please submit them to:

enquiry@squadronuk.co.uk.

The skills in the above table should be self-evident. In case there is any doubt, here are some outline descriptions. These are only meant the indicative. You and your players should feel to apply these skills as seems logical to you:

Business

This skill is used whenever a character is trying to engage in some sort of trade or attempt to make a profit. A minor success in this skill generally indicates that a business breaks even, a trade occurs or full price is paid for an item. A full success indicates a business which is making a good profit, a trade which works in the favour of the character or an item being purchased for a bargain price.



Climbing

This is used when the character tried to ascend a non-horizontal surface. The difficulty of the task should be adjusted according to the type of surface and whether the character has any useful equipment or not. A minor success indicates that the climb is successful but is slow and with a couple of minor slips. A full success is a swift and successful climb.

Computer Use

Whenever a character uses a computer, a minor success indicates that it takes them a significant period of time to find the information they need. They will need a full success to get the information immediately.

Demolition/Piano Smashing

This is the skill which is used whenever the character tries to destroy something with their bare hands. A minor success indicates that the item is damaged, a full success indicates that the item (or, at least, a large part of it) have been destroyed.

Door bursting

This is used whenever a character tries to smash through a door or window. A minor success means that the portal has been broken but that the character has stumbled through – for which there may be consequences. A full success means that the portal has been destroyed and the character has full control over their actions thereafter.

Etiquette

This is a skill which is used whenever the character interacts with other people and tries to encourage them to act in a manner which is beneficial towards them. A minor success will cause the other person to be well-disposed towards the character. On a full success the person will do what the character wants them to do.

First Aid

This can be used once per character per combat to give an injured character and extra recovery roll. This can be to recover Stun but, more usually, is used to allow them to recover Kill damage. A minor success allows the recipient to recover 1d6 damage. A full success allows them to recover 1d10.

Gambling

This is used whenever a character is involved in a game of chance. A minor success indicates that the player has made a slight profit. A major success means the character has won the game and received an extremely beneficial return.

Impress

This is a skill which is used whenever the character interacts with other people and tries to convince them to act in a manner which is beneficial towards them. A minor success will cause the other person to be impressed by the character. On a full success the person will do what the character wants them to do.

Juggling

Use this skill whenever a character tries to catch or throw something. On a minor success the catch/throw succeeds but the character is slightly off balance. If they do anything other than recovering in their next panel it will be at a -5 on their skill roll. A major success means the catch/throw works perfectly.





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Jumping

This skill is used whenever a character attempts to make a leap. Making a leap of one square is Easy. Two squares is normal. 3 squares is Difficult. A minor success means the character has made the leap but only just. They may be hanging from the edge of a building or standing on that edge. A full success means the leap has been made with space to spare.

Language- native

Most people can speak their native tongue without difficulty. This skill is used when trying to understand a particularly learned or erudite speaker. A minor success will get the gist of what is being said. A major success will mean the character totally understands the complexities they are faced with.

Literacy

This skill is used to read books. It isn't often needed until the character comes across a complex manual or ancient tome. A minor success will get the gist of what is being read. A major success will mean the character totally understands the complexities of the book they are reading.

Make-up

This is a minor disguise skill. It represents theatrical standard cosmetics or the skills of a beauty consultant. It can be used to hide minor blemishes or change the appearance of the character or a comrade. It can even be used to give the impression of another specific person, from a distance. It won't stand up to close inspection. A minor success will pass superficial inspection. A major success would be needed if anyone was looking closely at the character.

Negotiation

This is a skill which is used whenever the character interacts with other people and tries to convince them to act in a manner which is beneficial towards them. A minor success will cause the other person to be impressed by the character. On a full success the person will do what the character wants them to do.

Pot-holing

Known in America as spelunking, this is the sport of investigating underground caves, sometimes waterlogged. You can use this skill whenever a character is trying to find their way around in the dark or in difficult situations. A minor success will mean the character is successfully moving in the right direction. A major success means that they know exactly where they are. This skill can also be used in other situations.

Riding

The ability to ride a horse – or similar. With a minor success the character stays mounted on their horse and rides it successfully. A major success indicates they have total control over the beast and can even make it perform minor tricks or stunts.

Scrounging

This is a skill which is used whenever the character interacts with other people and tries to convince them to give them something or when they are trying to find something. A minor success will mean that something useful has been acquired. On a full success the character gets exactly what it is they were aiming for.





Singing

A minor success means that the character sings in tune. A major success is professional standard and will cause heads to turn.

Searching

This skill is used whenever the character spends time in a particular location trying to locate something. On a minor success they find something useful. A major success means they've found exactly what they are searching for.

Spotting/Notice

This is used to see if the character spots something in passing. It is often made by the Referee without the player even knowing that a roll has been made. Sometimes the Referee will ask a player to make a roll.

On a major success the character sees or hears exactly what is there. "You see him shove a pistol into his pocket". On a minor success they will see or hear something but will not be sure what it is. "You see him shove something into his pocket."

Stealth

This is used whenever the character tries to move quietly. A complete success means the character will move in total silence. With a minor success they are moving extremely quietly.

Swimming

Anyone can stay afloat. A successful swimming roll means that the character makes good progress through the water. With a major success the character can perform other actions whilst they are swimming.

Teamster

This covers all abilities in the handling of animal life. On a minor success the character handles the animal successfully. They are docile and do not bite or attack the character. They can be lead into performing minor actions. On a major success they can get the animal to perform tricks or follow instructions perfectly first time.

Weightlifting

This roll is used whenever a character tries to lift or throw an object. A minor success will allow the object to be lifted. A full success allows the object to be thrown.

Trained Skills

These are skills which can only be developed through education, training and practice. They usually represent the character's professional talents e.g. Computer programming. Whilst anyone can use a computer, it takes a lot of education to be able to create or adjust the software which makes computers work.

Each character starts with 5 trained skills and a number of Skill Points.

The number of Skill Points is calculated by adding up the skill modifiers for Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Agility and Psyche and subtracting the total from 55.

This is another compensating factor in the rules. Players who were lucky enough to roll high characteristics for their characters – which means they have good Common skills – will have fewer points to spend on their trained skills.

These must be distributed between the 5 chosen specialist skills in such a way that no score is higher than 9 or less than 2.

The skills are – again – based upon specific characteristics.

However – in this case – the skill modifier of those characteristics represent a top limit on the number of skill points which may be allocated to that skill. The number of skills points allocated must be no higher than the skill modifier for that characteristic.

Players unable to spend all their skill points must reselect their 5 skills to ensure that they can spend them all.

Trained skill rolls are made against the number of skill points which have been allocated to the skills rather than their skill modifiers.





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Here is a list of some trained skills and the characteristics they are based upon:

Skill	Characteristic
Anatomy	Psyche
Biochemistry	Psyche
Biology	Psyche
Blacksmith	Strength/Dexterity
Computer Programming	Psyche
Criminology	Psyche
Cryptography	Psyche
Design	Psyche
Diplomacy	Esteem
Disguise	Psyche/Dexterity
Driving	Psyche/Dexterity
Electronics	Psyche
Engineering	Psyche
Entrepreneur	Psyche
Environment Lore – specific	Psyche
Hacking	Psyche
High Society	Esteem
History	Psyche
Inorganic Chemistry	Psyche
Language – foreign	Psyche
Locksmith/pick	Psyche/Dexterity
Metallurgy	Psyche
Mimicry	Psyche/Esteem
Mythology	Psyche
Occult Knowledge	Psyche
Organic Chemistry	Psyche
Particle Physics	Psyche
Pharmacology	Psyche
Pilot	Psyche/Dexterity
Research	Psyche
Sea diving	Psyche/Agility
Sky diving	Psyche/Agility
Surgery	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Repair-specific	Psyche/Dexterity
Weaponsmith - specific	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Skill – specific	Dexterity

These should be treated as suggestions. Players should be encouraged to come up with ideas of their own.

If your players do come up with the ideas for common skills of their own, I'd be happy to see them. Please submit them to:

enquiry@squadronuk.co.uk.

The skills in the above table should be self-evident. In case there is any doubt, here are some outline descriptions. You should treat these as guidelines, applying the skills as you and your players see fit:

Anatomy, Biochemistry, Biology, Inorganic Chemistry, Metallurgy, Organic Chemistry, Particle Physics, Pharmacology

Any of these skills indicate that the character is experienced in that particular scientific field. They can undertake research and perform experiments. These will yield useful results on a minor success. They will yield perfect results in record time on a full success.

Blacksmith

The character can shoe horses and use traditional processes to create metal items. A minor success is all that is needed to complete a particular job. A major success will result in the production of a superior item.

Computer Programming

This is the ability to create or adapt computer programmes. A minor success will result in the creation of a program which works. A major success will produce an elegant program which works efficiently, takes up only a small amount of storage space and can easily be transferred across platforms.

Criminology

This is the ability to make deductions about criminal activities, motivations and psychology. The Referee should give the character indications about the character's likely past and future actions and their reasons for doing so. This will be vague on a minor success, but quite thorough if a major success is achieved.

Cryptography

This is the ability to decode encrypted information. It can be done thoroughly and in record time if a full success is rolled. It will take longer or only the gist of the information is gleaned on a minor success. Like hacking, it will allow the character to deduce passwords or digital entry codes.

Design

The player should specify the area of design in which the character specialises. For example, the character might specialise in high fashion. A minor success for such a character would be the creation of a high quality fashion garment, whereas a full success would produce a cutting edge item of couture.

Diplomacy

The ability to get two opposing sides to the table to make an agreement. A minor success would get the two sides talking. A major success should allow them to actually come to some sort of agreement.



Disguise

With time, and the proper resources, the character can disguise themselves and their comrades as other people. This only covers visual appearances and is not 100% perfect. It certainly wouldn't fool the target's closest friends or a family. A minor success would pass cursory inspection whereas a full success would pass a closer inspection.

Driving, Pilot

The character can drive a car or pilot a plane. This does not require a skill roll in normal circumstances. To perform unusual driving or flying stunts or when driving/flying in stressful circumstances – such as a high speed chase – a skill roll is required. On a minor success, the vehicle will be damaged or scraped. A full success is required to succeed without causing damage.

Electronics

The character can build or repair electronic devices. A minor success will result in a working device but it may not be as small, neat, elegant or rugged as when a major success is rolled.

Engineering

The character can build or repair mechanical devices. A minor success will result in a working device but it may not be as small, neat, elegant or rugged as when a major success is rolled.

Entrepreneur

The ability to set up and run new and cutting edge businesses. New ventures will prosper on a minor success roll and rocket to success if a major success is rolled.



Environment Lore – specific

The player will have to select the environment in which the character is an expert at surviving be it Artic, Jungle, Desert or whatever. Whenever they are in those environment they will complete survival tasks on as minor success roll and be able to live in comfort if a major success roll is made. They will also be able to talk about or demonstrate knowledge of that environment when in other situations.

Hacking

This is the ability to break into a corrupt computer systems or programs. It will also allow the character to deduce passwords or digital entry codes. The character will need a major success to take total control of a system but can corrupt it or interfere with it on a minor success – provided they don't have a specific outcome in mind.

High Society

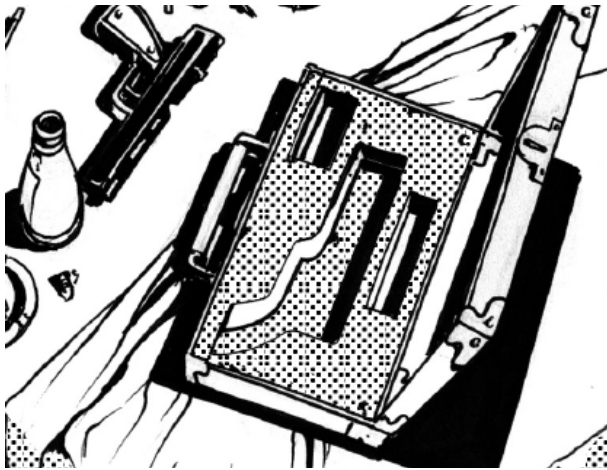
The character is experienced in passing through the upper echelons of society. With a major success they can breeze into places and events and interact with famous people without turning a head. If they get a minor success, this may need a bit of explanation.

History, Mythology, Occult Knowledge

The character is an expert on history, mythology or arcane matters. A minor success means that they'll need to do some research to uncover specific facts. A major success means that they have the relevant fact committed to memory.



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Language – foreign

The character can speak, read and write a specific foreign language. A minor success will allow them to understand and make themselves understood. A major success will allow them to understand colloquialisms and pass as a native of the country concerned.

Locksmith/pick

This is the ability to pick locks. A major success will allow the device to be side-stepped in total silence. On a minor success, the lock will be picked but there will be a noise of some kind.

Mimicry

This is the ability to impersonate another person's voice. It works particularly well over the phone. A minor success will fool people who do not know the target personally. A full success would fool even someone who knows the target extremely well.

Research

The player should specify the field in which the character is expert at researching. It will take time and resources to discover the required information if a minor success is rolled. The research will be faster and more successful if a full success is rolled.

Sea diving, Sky diving

The character can perform these actions without requiring a skill roll. They only need to make the roll if they are attempting a difficult task or are performing the activity under stressful conditions. A minor success will allow the required action to be performed but with a full success it will be as if the character were performing the task under optimum conditions.

Surgery

This will allow the character to undertake operations. A skill roll is always required as are appropriate resources. A minor success will indicate that the operation worked but that the patient suffered some minor side effect, such as requiring additional blood transfusions or suffering visible scarring. A full success will work without any side effects.

Weapon Repair- specific

The character can repair a specified family of weaponry. On a full success, the weapon will be better than ever once the character has finished working on it.

Weaponsmith - specific

The character can build one specified type of weapon. They will create a working weapon on any level of success. If a major success is rolled, the weapon will be superior in some manner.

Weapon Skill – specific

This is the most misunderstood skill. It does *not* add to the existing Dexterity roll for success in combat. It does *not* combine with the **Weapon** ability.

It exists to allow the character to use weapons which they would not normally be able to use.

Characters cannot normally use exotic or unusual weapons such as swords, guns, quarter-staves etc. This skill allows them to use one specific weapon of this type in combat.





Skills and Derived Characteristics

You'll probably have spotted by now that some skills are based upon the three Derived Characteristics of Esteem, Sleuthing and Fate.

However, the characters will not have these characteristics in place for their first game.

So how does the player know to allocate skills based upon these characteristics?

Common Skills and Derived Characteristics

For Common Skills, this is quite straightforward. If a common skill based upon a derived characteristic is used during a character's first game, the player rolls a d20 without adding anything to it.

If the character has chosen to specialise in that skill, they will add +5 to the skill roll during the first game.

For example

Susie and Pete decide to search the crooks' car during their first game. Pete has "search" as one of his common skills.

Susie's player will roll a d20 when searching the car. Pete's will roll a d20 and get +5.

At the end of the game, Susie gets a sleuthing score of 12 (Skill Modifier 6.) Pete gets a Sleuthing score of 9 (Skill Modifier 5).

If they use the Search skill in future games, Susie will add 6 to any die rolls whereas Pete will add (5+5) 10 to any such rolls.

Trained Skills and Derived Characteristics

If the player chooses to take a trained skill for their character which is based upon a derived characteristic then the limit to which they can take that skill cannot be any higher than any of their other trained skill levels.

They will use their trained skill at that level for the first game.

However, if, when derived characteristics are calculated, the relevant Skill Modifier is lower than the character's level in the trained skill, they have to use the (lower) Skill Modifier in place of the skill level they had allocated.

For example

Pete's Dexterity is 16 (Skill modifier 8). He takes Lock-picking and High Society as two of his trained skills. (Raffles, anyone?) He takes them both at level 8. During his first game, his player will roll a d20 and add 8 whenever he interacts with someone in the upper echelons of society. However, at the end of the game, Pete's Esteem score is rated at 13. (Skill modifier 7.) In future he will only add 7 to all High Society rolls until his Esteem score reaches at least 15.

Equipment

Assume the characters have whatever resources the players themselves typically carry upon their person. Everyone will be wearing clothes, a watch, some kind of purse/wallet with payment cards in etc.

Everyone will have a mobile phone and you can assume these to be "smart" – have a camera etc.

However, don't assume that all the characters' phones are loaded with an incredible range of useful apps or programs.

Beyond these basic possessions, allow the players to choose up to three other items of equipment for their characters.

Ideally these will be appropriate to, or necessary for the use of, their abilities and skills:

- Scientists will have appropriate toolkits
- Computer Techs will have a lap-top
- First Aid Skills will need a First Aid Kit
- Acrobats might have a line and grapnel

Particularly useful smartphone apps should count as one of these items of equipment.

It's your choice as to whether you allow anyone to start the game carrying a gun or not. However, unless they have a skill in using it, they will find it difficult to shoot.

Allow the players to choose a name for their characters.

They may also want to agree some details about their backgrounds with you.



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In my experience, players very often want to let you know all the cool ideas they've got about their character before they start play. It's worth taking the time to listen. At the very least you can do some last-minute adaptations to your adventure ideas to make them appropriate to the characters. The best case scenario is that one of your players might come up with a really cool idea that you can develop into a major plot development for the campaign.

Team-mates

In the first phase of the campaign, it can be a bit difficult to rationalise keeping the characters together.

Wherever characters' backgrounds or skills are compatible, you should encourage the players to agree that they know each other or, even, work together.

If you can find a rationalisation that fits all your characters together before the first adventure, into a single team, so much the better.

Example of character generation

Leon is about to create a character for Squadron:
X.

He rolls 2d10 and gets a 5 and a 9, total 14.

Looking at the Background table he finds out that he works for the Secret Services.

He rolls 4d6 four times and adds the top 3 totals each time.

He gets the following results:

Strength: 13
Endurance: 11
Dexterity: 8
Agility: 11

He decides to swap his Agility and Dexterity scores.

He rolls 11d6 and totals them up to get his Kill score. This comes to 38.

He does the same again and gets a total of 37.

He totals up the four physical characteristics and gets 43.

Divided by 4 this comes to 10.75. This rounds down to 10.

Subtracting this from 23 gives him a Psyche score of 13.

So his character so far is:

	Str.	End.	Dex.	Ag.	Psy.
Characteristic	13	11	11	8	13
Skill modifier	+7	+6	+6	+4	+7

Because of his Background, he has a Legality and Contacts of 4 each. This gives him a 4 in Esteem and Sleuthing respectively. This gives a +2 skill modifier for both characteristics.

He adds his four physical attributes and gets 43. Divided by 10 is 4.3. He can move 4 squares per panel.

He adds his Strength and Endurance and gets 24. This is his Knockback score. If he takes more than 24 points in a single attack he is knocked flying.

Subtracting 12 from his Strength score gives him a +1 damage modifier which he can add whenever he hits someone.

As a Secret Agent, he chooses the following Common Skills:

Computer Use (Psyche: $7 + 5 = 12$)
First Aid (Psyche: $7 + 5 = 12$)
Negotiation (Esteem: $2 + 5 = 7$)
Searching (Sleuthing: $2 + 5 = 7$)
Spotting (Sleuthing: $2 + 5 = 7$)

He adds up his skill modifiers and gets a total of 30.

Subtracting this from 55 gives him a total of 25 skill points to split between 5 trained skills.

He chooses the following trained skills:

Driving (Psyche: 5)
Computer Programming (Psyche: 5)
Criminology (Psyche: 5)
Cryptography (Psyche: 5)
Weaponskill (pistol) (Dexterity: 5)

For his three items of starting equipment Leon chooses a Pistol, a First Aid Kit and a Car.



He calls the character, Donovan Rogers and decides that he is an Agent for MI6 assigned to investigate and neutralise threats to the nation from within the United Kingdom.

Three other characters are created for the campaign.

One of them is a Scientist, one is a Policeman and the third has no specific background but has some Technical Skills.

Leon's Referee rationalises that the Scientist and his assistant have been co-opted by the Police to assist with various investigations.

Donovan Rogers is working undercover as a Police officer and has been assigned to work alongside them.

Useful Forms

On the next three pages you'll find the following items:

- 1) An example completed character sheet for Donovan Rogers.
- 2) A blank **Character Sheet**, which you are welcome to photocopy so that you can give one to each of your players.
- 3) A **Character Generation Sheet**. Again you're allowed to photocopy one for each of your players.

If you give a Generation Sheet to each player, it really speeds up the process of creating their characters.



Example Character Sheet

Name: **Donovan Rogers**

Player: **Leon**

Strength 13 +7	Endurance 11 +6	Dexterity 11 +6	Agility 8 +4	Psyche 13 +7	Esteem 4 +2	Sleuthing 4 +2	Fate
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Common Skills	Level	Trained Skills	Level
Negotiation	+7	Driving	+5
Computer Use	+12	Computer programming	+5
First Aid	+12	Cryptography	+5
Search	+7	Criminology	+5
Spot	+7	Pistol Skill	+5

Legality	4
Memorability	
Heroism	
Relationships	
Success	

Powers	
Detection	
Contacts	4
Exposure	
Accessibility	

Scruples	
Victories	
Public Reaction	
Extrovert	
Home-life	

Move
4 sq.

Knockback
24

Damage Modifier
+1

Kill **38**

Abilities

Stun **37**

Background

Donovan Rogers is an agent of MI:6 assigned to investigate threats to the Nation from within.

He is currently working undercover as a Police Officer attached to a Scientific Enquiry unit.

Attack	Kill	Stun	Mod.	Notes
Fist	d-5	2d	+1	
Pistol	2d	1d		10 sq. Range

Equipment

First Aid Kit
Small Pistol
Small Car

Character Sheet

Name:

Player:

Strength

Endurance

Dexterity

Agility

Psyche

Esteem

Sleuthing

Fate

Common Skills

Level

Trained Skills

Level

Legality

Memor-

ability

Heroism

Relation-

ships

Success

Powers

Detection

Contacts

Exposure

Access-

ibility

Scruples

Victories

Public

Reaction

Extrovert

Home-

life

Move

Knockback

Damage
Modifier

Kill

Stun

Abilities

Background

Attack

Kill

Stun

Mod.

Notes

Equipment

Character Generation Sheet

Background

1) Roll 2d10 and add them together. Look the result on the Background Table.

Roll	Background
2	Roll twice*
3	Magical
4	Brilliant Chemist Choose
5	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer (Cybernetics)
6	Rich – inherited
7	Private Investigator
8	Reporter
9	Criminal
10	Nothing special - no cost
11	Nothing special - no cost
12	Nothing special - no cost
13	Authorities – Police
14	Authorities – Secret Services
15	Authorities - Government
16	Rich – Business
17	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer (Cybernetics)
18	Brilliant Biologist
19	Psionic
20	Choose**

2) If you did not get a background, choose one of the following abilities:

Agility
Endurance
Fast recovery
Follower
Increased move
Information
Marksmanship
Martial Arts
Strength
Supersense
Weapon

3) Write your background or ability here:

Characteristics

1) Roll 4d6 4 times.

2) Add up the highest three numbers each time to get a total from 3-18.

3) Write them here:

Strength:	Endurance:	Dexterity:	Agility:

4) You can swap TWO of these to suit your background or ability.

5) Work out the total of the four rolls and write it here:

6) Work out the average of the four rolls and write it here (rounding all fractions down):

7) Subtract the average from 23, round the result up to a whole number and write it here:

Psyche:

8) Write your Background/ability and characteristics on your character sheet.

9) Halve each characteristic and write the result in the triangle next to the main score.

These are your SKILL MODIFIERS.

Hit points

1) Roll 1d6 for each Endurance point you have.

This is your total KILL score.

2) Roll again. This is your total STUN score.

Move

Divide the total of the four physical characteristics (see above) by 10. Round to the nearest number.

This is your Move.

Knockback

Add your Strength to your Endurance. This is your Knockback Score.

Damage Modifier

This is +1 for every Strength point above 12 or -1 for every Strength point below 9..

Skills

1) Choose 5 common skills and list them on the character sheet along with their associated characteristic. (See the rules for examples.)

2) Choose 5 trained skills and write them on the character sheet.

3) Add all five of your SKILL MODIFIERS

4) Subtract the total from 55:

5) Divide these points between your trained skills.

No trained skill can have a total more its associated skill modifier.

(No more than your highest skill modifier if it is based upon Esteem, Sleuthing or Fate.)

Equipment/Name

1) Choose three items of equipment.

2) Choose a name and fill it in on your character sheet.



Playing the Game

Now that you've got your characters you'll want to know how to play the game.

First things first. Although the game is meant to simulate comics, TV programmes and films – its origins lie in the simulation of Superhero comics.

Because of this, the game is played out in PANELS.

There are three types of PANEL



Plot panels

Most of the game is played out in Plot panels. These are of variable length to suit the story-telling part of the game which occurs between combats within the characters' adventures.

Combat Panels

These are the more strictly controlled panels that keep track of actions within combat.

Montage Panels

These are panels which are used to keep track of the characters' training and development between adventures.

The Core System

This was actually explained above – when I explained about skills. The central system of the game is:

Roll a d20.

Add the skill modifier of the relevant characteristic.

A score of 15 or more is a success.

A score of 18 or more is a complete success.

An unmodified roll of 1 is a critical failure

An unmodified roll of 20 is a critical success.



For example

Gemma Stevens had discovered a dead body wreathed in a strange white substance. She uses her biochemistry skill – of 7 – to analyse the results. The Referee rules that this is a difficult task (-5 to the roll).

Gemma's player rolls a d20 and gets a 15.

15 (the roll) + 7 (the skill modifier) – 5 (the difficulty) gives a total of 17. A normal success.

Gemma discerns the organic but unearthly nature of the substance. It is analogous to but different from spider-silk.

If the total had been below 15, the roll would have been a failure. If it had been 18 or more Gemma would have been able to work out the exact DNA sequence of the creature which had secreted the webbing.

On a roll of 1, Gemma would have been accidentally poisoned by the substance. On a roll of 20 she would have been able to speculate upon the nature of the creature responsible and – even – learn enough to start to develop a toxin which would affect it.

This system is enough to handle 90% of events within the game.

Occasionally you'll need a few more rules. This is mostly evident when your players get into combat situations.

Handling combats

When your players' characters come into conflict with some of the many forces ranged against them, you'll need to use the following system(s) to resolve that combat. These are designed to cover all phases of the campaign.

Not all the rules listed here will be needed in the first phase, but it'll make things easier for you in the long run to have all these rules in one place.

It is highly unlikely that characters will be knocking each other flying at the start of the campaign, for example.

As Referee, it's up to you to decide exactly when a combat starts and when you need to switch from story-telling mode into combat mode.

Rounds and Panels

Combat is played out in rounds. In every combat round each character gets a number of "panels" in which to act.

The exact number of panels each combatant gets is determined by the initiative score. It can vary from round to round.

I want to stress that and make sure you're clear on it. Different rounds can be of different lengths through having different numbers of panels in them. The tendency in most games is to have rounds of fixed length. The concept of variable length rounds might take some getting used to.

Unless otherwise specified, all actions in combat take a single comic-book panel to execute.

Initiative

To decide who acts first and how many panels there are in a round, each side rolls 1d6.

- **The Referee rolls a d6 for the bad guys and one player rolls a d6 for the Characters.**
- **The side with the highest score acts first.**
- **The number of panels each side gets in a round is the difference between the Initiative die rolls.**

For example

The Referee rolls 3 and Leon, rolling for the Characters, rolls 6. The Characters go first and get 3 panels of action each. Then the Villains get 3 panels of action apiece.

Unless they have devoted Montage Panels to training together (see below) the characters will act in order of Agility. The character with the highest Agility on a given side will act first and the one with the lowest Agility will act last.

Players may not choose to defer their actions until after one of their team-mates has acted. They cannot reserve actions until the bad guys have acted. If they do not choose to use their panels when it is their turn, then they lose them.

If the die rolls are equal then both sides get two panels of action and act simultaneously - in strict order of Agility. The character, on either side, with the highest Agility will act first.



Responses to attacks

If a character is attacked they may choose to respond to the attack (see below). This uses panels out of their future actions. They may not use more than 5 panels in advance in this way. When they are 5 panels in arrears they may make no further actions or responses until they gain some more panels in the usual flow of combat.

For example

Let us suppose three good guys are up against one crime boss and a bunch of thugs. Susie has an Agility of 9, Ben has an Agility of 16 and Robert has an Agility of 12. The crime boss has an Agility of 15 – though the players don't know this.

The Referee hasn't bothered to determine the Agility of the thugs and just assumes that it is low.

The characters have been caught by the crooks as they searched the warehouse they'd been using to stash their loot.

In the first round, Susie's player rolls a d6 and gets a 5. The Referee gets a 4. Each side gets one panel with the players' characters acting first.

Ben (Agility 16) goes first. He dives into cover behind a pile of boxes. Robert (Agility 12) goes next and does the same. Susie (Agility 9) goes last. She chooses to charge towards the criminal boss, moving into direct combat with him.

It is now the bad guys' go. The Boss chooses to thump Susie. (A d20 is rolled and it turns out that he misses). All the thugs draw guns.

Both sides roll a d6 again. This time Ben's player rolls and gets a 1. The Referee rolls a 4. Three panels.

The Boss backs away from Susie (1 panel), draws his gun (second panel) and fires (third panel). A d20 is rolled and the shot is on target. Susie chooses to dodge aside. This costs her a future panel. A d20 is rolled and the dodge is a minor success. Susie is grazed by the bullet.

The thugs choose to fire their guns. This takes two panels because they are thugs.

All the shots miss because the characters are in cover, but the hail of gun-fire into the packing crates should encourage the characters to keep their heads down. In their third panel, the Thugs fan out and start to search for Ben and Roger.

The characters now have their 3 panels. Ben uses one panel to move behind a pile of boxes between him and some of the thugs. In his second panel he attempts to topple the pile. A d20 is rolled but the effort fails. In the third panel, he tries again. This time he manages to tip the boxes on to the hapless goons, rendering them unconscious.

Roger moves out of cover, to a position near two of the thugs. He manages to hit them both and knocks them out. This uses his three panels.

Susie has used one panel to dodge and so has two left this round. She moves in on the Boss and hits him. This time the attack succeeds and – with her Martial Arts ability – she does him a significant amount of damage.

Both sides roll again. Both roll a 5. This is a 2 panel round with people acting in strict Agility order. Ben has the highest Agility and goes first. He moves towards the fallen thugs. He uses his second panel to take the gun from one of them and hold it to the thug's head, calling upon the few left standing to drop their weapons if they want their comrade to live.

The Referee asks him to roll a d20 to make an intimidate check.

The crime boss has the next highest Agility (15). He uses his two panels to back away from the vixen attacking him and shoot her again. Susie dodges and, this time, avoids the bullet completely.

Now it is Roger's turn. He also disarms a Thug and chooses to shoot at the remaining ones, aiming over their heads. He also rolls a d20 intimidate check.

Susie has dodged, again, and only has one panel left.

She uses this to continue to pursue the retreating criminal.

The Thugs now have their turn. They do not surrender but they choose to turn and try to flee from the warehouse.



Combat Scale

Combat is played out using figures, or similar, on a surface marked in squares (or hexagons). The dimensions of each square should be roughly the height of an average figure.

This game does not have an exact scale. If you are using 25mm/20mm figures then one inch squares might be suitable. If you are using "Heroic" scale figures, 3cm/1.5 inch squares would be appropriate. Dimensions and ranges are always given in squares, but this can be taken to mean hexagons if you prefer to use those to mark out your playing surface.

Squares are a lot easier to draw.....

Rolling to Hit

Whenever a character tries to attack another character with a physical attack, the player must roll d20, add their Dexterity skill modifier and get equal to or higher than 18.

On a full success, significant characters use d10's to calculate damage. Ordinary characters use d6's.

If they score 15, 16 or 17 the attack is a success but damage is reduced.

On minor successes, player-characters use d6's to calculate damage. Ordinary characters use d3's.

The rules for automatic and critical successes and failures apply as usual.

For example

Susie has been cornered by a Zombie and has lost the initiative roll. The zombie attacks and the Referee rolls a 15. A zombie has a Dexterity Skill Modifier of zero. Even so, the zombie hits. This is a minor success. Susie attempts to Dodge. This will cost her no time as the zombie is not a major opponent (see below). However, her Dodge fails.

Because the zombie rolled a 15 this is a minor success. It rolls its damage using d3's. A fist does d3-5 Kill damage, so the Zombie does no Kill damage. It does 2d3 Stun. Susie takes 3 points of Stun damage.

When she hits the Zombie, Susie rolls a 10. To this she adds 6 – her Dexterity Skill Modifier – and a further 2 because the Zombie is unskilled in combat and yet another 1 because she is a Martial Artist. This gives a total of 18. A complete success. Susie will use d10 to determine damage.

Because she is a Martial Artist, Susie does not get a -5 modifier on Kill when using her bare hands. She did not take a gimmick which allows her to reverse the base damage (she is not a karate specialist) and so her fists do 1d10 Kill and 2d10 Stun damage. However, she gets a bonus die due to her Martial Arts which she chooses to add to the Kill damage. She does 2d10 Kill damage. The zombie takes 17 Kill damage and collapses in a heap. Zombies do not suffer Stun damage.

There are the following modifiers to the roll:

Modifiers to hit rolls	
Circumstance	Modifier
Target is static	+5
Target is unskilled in combat	+2
Striking from behind	+3
Striking from above	+3
Target is unaware of attack	+5
Target is in cover (depending upon the degree of cover)	-1 to -15
Vision obscured – e.g. by smoke	-1 to -10
Missiles at extreme range	-1 per 10% of extra range up to -10 max.





Critical Hits

An unmodified roll of 20 in combat is a critical hit. It is always best for the Referee to choose the effects of the Critical hit to be appropriate to the situation if possible. Examples of this are:

- 5 to any dodges, parries or other responses made to the attack.
- 1 to any protection/dividers applied to the attack
- Targets in precarious positions have to make Agility rolls to avoid falling off roofs etc.

If, however, there is no obvious effect to apply, the Referee can roll a d6 on the following table:

Roll	Effects
1	Target falls over and must spend a panel getting up
2	Perfect attack – all die rolls for damage are maximum
3	Target's knockback score is halved
4	Target is hit in the foot/leg and will move at half speed for their next 1d6 panels
5	Cosmetic damage to target. Bruising if the damage is mainly Stun, scarring if it is Kill
6	Target Stunned and makes their next action at -5 on skill roll.

Critical misses

An unmodified roll of 1 in combat is a critical miss. It is always best for the Referee to choose the effects of the Critical miss to be appropriate to the situation if possible. Examples of this are:

Attackers in precarious positions have to make Agility rolls to avoid falling off roofs etc. If, however, there is no obvious effect to apply, the Referee can roll a d6 on the following table:

Roll	Effects
1	Attacker falls over and must spend a panel getting up
2	Hurt hand – or similar – take 1d10 Stun damage
3	Cause property damage
4	Put bystanders/comrades at risk. Roll to attack nearby target.
5	Pull a muscle. Movement halved for next 1d6 panels.
6	Off balance. Next attack or skill roll made a -5 on skill roll.

Dodge

If an attack strikes, the target may attempt to Dodge. This must be announced and resolved in between the attack striking and the damage being rolled.

The player cannot wait to see if the damage rolled is high or low before deciding to react.

If the target is dodging an attack from a "normal" human – for example a Thug – the dodge takes no time.

If they are dodging an attack from a significant opponent, like a werewolf, this takes future panels. The target loses a panel for the dodge – whether the dodge is successful or not.

If the target has already used 5 future panels, they may not dodge any attacks – even those from normal opponents.

To dodge the target rolls a d20, adds their Agility Skill modifier and tries to get equal to or higher than 18.

If the dodge roll succeeds, the damage is avoided completely. If total of 15, 16 or 17 is achieved, the Kill and Stun damage are both halved (rounding halves down).

Example

In the warehouse, above, the first time that the Crime boss shot, he achieved a full success. This means he would use d10's to roll damage. Because he is using a Heavy Pistol, it does 2d10+5r Kill damage and 1d10+5 Stun damage.

Susie she attempted to dodge. She rolled a d20 and got a 10. To this she added her Agility Skill Modifier – 5. She also adds an extra +1 because she chose enhanced dodge as her Martial Arts gimmick. This gives a total of 16 – a minor success.

The Referee rolled 2d10 for Kill and got a total of 9. 5 is added to this to give a total of 14. As Susie's dodge was a minor success, she halves this total and takes 7 points of Kill damage.

1d10 is rolled for Stun. This comes up 6. 5 is added to get 11. This is halved and rounded down. Susie takes 5 points of Stun damage.



Parrying

If an attack strikes, the target may attempt to Parry. They use one of their usual attack forms to knock the incoming attack aside. This must be announced and resolved in between the attack striking and the damage being rolled.

The player cannot wait to see if the damage rolled is high or low before deciding to react.

If the target is parrying an attack from a “normal” human – for example a Thug – the parry takes no time.

If they are parrying an attack from a significant opponent, like an Alien Overlord, this takes a future panel whether the parry is successful or not.

If the target has already used 5 future panels, they may not parry any attacks – even those from normal opponents.

The parrying has a number of exemptions and special rules. These are all detailed below. However, the basic rule is relatively straightforward. Many Referees prefer to just use this basic rule and their own discretion.

To parry the target rolls a d20, adds their Dexterity Skill modifier and tries to get equal to or higher than 15. They are trying to hit the attack.

If the parry roll succeeds the target rolls the usual damage for their attack, adding the Stun and Kill damage together.

If the total is 15, 16, or 17 this total is calculated using d6's instead of d10's.

The total is deducted from the Incoming damage, being taken off Kill damage first.

If the damage done by the Parry exceeds the attack done by the attack any excess damage from the parry is ignored. It does not affect the attacker in any way.

For example

Thug hits Susie with as cosh, getting a total score of 19. This means that he will roll d6's for damage.

Susie chooses to parry the attack. She'll block it with her forearm. She IS a martial artist after all. She rolls and 8. Adding 6 for her Dexterity and 1 for her Martial Arts. This comes to which is a minor success. She'll be rolling d6's as well.

The thug rolls 1d6 Kill and gets 5. Then 2d6 Stun. He gets 9.

Susie rolls d6 Kill plus 2d6 Stun plus and extra d6 because of her Martial Arts. She rolls all four dice and gets a total of 16 points. This turns aside all of the 14 points done by the Thug. The extra 2 points are ignored. Susie takes no damage.





Playing the Game

Parrying Caveats, Exemptions and Special Cases

You can use a melee attack mode to parry another melee attack mode.

Some people argue that you cannot parry a knife attack, for example, with a fist attack. Parrying such an attack represents knocking the attack aside rather than interposing your hand. So a hand-to-hand attack form can be used to parry an edged weapon.

You cannot use a missile attack to parry a hand-to-hand attack.

If they're close enough to hit you, it's too close to use your gun.

You can use a missile attack to parry another missile attack.

The normal parry rules should apply. However, in certain situations the Referee might rule that the incoming missile has been deflected by the parry – even if the strength of the parry is weaker than the strength of the attack.

You can use a hand-to-hand attack form to parry a slow-moving or human-powered missile weapon attack.

It is possible to knock aside arrows, spears etc. with your bare hands.

You normally cannot use a hand-to-hand attack to parry fast moving or mechanically propelled projectiles.

No knocking aside bullets with a fist.

If a Parry does sufficient Kill damage to totally destroy incoming missile, it will be destroyed and will do no damage.

Even if the object is not destroyed it may still be possible to make a big enough hole in it so that the target takes no damage when the object lands on them.

An object can be used to Parry instead of an attack mode.

All the character has to do is to lift the object and make a successful Parry roll.

This can be done as a combined action. The target's Kill score is taken off the incoming attack rather than the character's natural damage. If a minor success is rolled, only half the object's Kill is taken from the attack.

Damage

When an attack hits, the attacker rolls damage.

All attacks do Kill and Stun damage. One of these is 1 die of damage, the other is 2 dice of damage – depending upon the type of attack.

Attacks which are intended to kill – swords, guns etc.- do 2 dice Kill damage and 1 die Stun damage.

Non-lethal attacks – fists for example – do 2 dice Stun damage and 1 die Kill damage.

Ordinary human beings use d6 to determine the damage from major attacks and d3 for minor successes. Significant or important characters use d10 for damage from successful attacks and d6 for damage from minor successes.

These dice will receive modifiers based upon Strength and any weapons and/or abilities or superpowers being used.

Strength modifier to damage

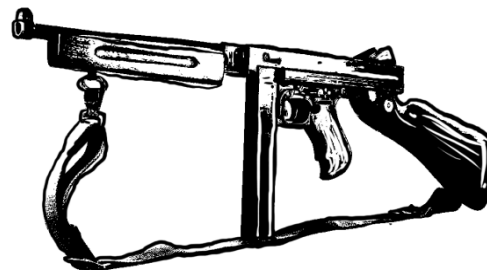
If the character has a high Strength and gains a positive modifier to damage, some or all of it can be added to the Kill damage or the Stun damage or split between them in any proportion. How this is being done has to be announced prior to the attack roll being made.

If the character has a low Strength and gains a negative modifier to damage, all of it is subtracted from the damage being done, coming off the Kill damage first. When the Kill damage is reduced to Zero, any remaining modifier comes off Stun damage.

Fists

The most common attack in this kind of game is the good old fist.

All fists suffer a -5 damage modifier to the Kill damage rolled.





Example weapons

As Referee you should adopt the basic damage rules to reflect the kind of weapons you want in your game. However, here are a few examples:

Example Weapons				
Weapon	Kill Dam.	Stun Dam.	Range	Notes
Small Pistol	2d	1d	10 sq.	Needs training to use.
Large Pistol/ Revolver	2d+3	1d+3	10 sq.	Needs training to use.
"The most powerful hand-gun in the world"	2d+5	1d+5	10 sq.	Definitely needs training to use.
Rifle	2d+5	1d+5	50 sq.	Needs training to use.
Burst of sub-machine gun fire	2d+3	1d+3	5 sq.	+1 mod. on rolls to hit. Needs training.
Cosh/club/ truncheon	1d	2d		
Cattle-prod	1d-10	2d		
Arrow/Cross-bow bolt	2d	1d	20 sq.	
Knife	1d	2d	3 sq.	
Sword	1d+5	2d		Requires training to use.

Weapons which require training to use are difficult to use if you are unfamiliar with them. This gives most people a -10 on attack rolls using those weapons.

Knock-back

If the total of the Kill and Stun damage done by an attack exceeds the sum of Endurance and Strength of the target then they are knocked flying.

For each 5 - points or fraction thereof – by which the damage exceeds their characteristic total, they are pushed back one square.

They need to roll a d20 and add their Agility Skill Modifier with a -1 modifier for every square they have been knocked back.

They need to score 15 or higher. If they succeed, they land on their feet. If they fail, they fall over and have to devote a panel to standing up at some time.

Knockback is usually calculated using the Strength and Endurance scores originally rolled for the character.

If the character is aware of the attack and can brace against it (taking no time) they may use their enhanced or superpowered Strength total instead.

Exceptionally large characters (the Growth Superpower, for example) may use their enhanced Endurance score to calculate their Knockback score.





Effects of damage

Whenever Kill or Stun is reduced to less than 10% or less of its total, the character is stunned. Their movement is halved and all actions are performed with a -5 modifier on the die roll.

For example

Susie Whethers has 32 Kill points and 29 Stun points. She hit by a tranquiliser dart which reduces her Stun to 2 before she can pull it out. She now feels a bit whoosey. Her movement is halved from 5 squares to 3 squares. If she attempts to hit someone, it will be with a -5 on her skill roll.

When the character's total Stun is less than 1, the character is unconscious. They roll a d20 at the end of each subsequent round. To this they add their Endurance Skill Modifier score. If the total is less than 15, they will remain unconscious. Once they roll equal to or more than 15, they can begin to recover. This will be at a rate of 1d6 Stun per round unless the Endurance Skill roll was 18 or more in which case they will recover 1d10 Stun per round. The player can chose to keep making Endurance rolls to try score an 18 to "convert" d6 recovery into d10 recovery.

These rolls are not made at -5 even though the character may still be below 10% Stun.

For example

A thug follows up the tranquiliser attack on Susie with a cosh to head. She falls to -7 Stun. At the end of the next round, Jayne – Susie's player – rolls a d20 and gets an 8. To this she adds Susie's Endurance modifier – 5. The total is 13. Susie remains unconscious.

Next round the roll is 12. $12 + 5 = 17$. Susie starts to recover. Jayne rolls a d6 and gets 3. Susie is now on -4 Stun points.

Next round, Jayne rolls a d20 again. She rolls a 3. This is a failure but, because Susie is already recovering, she rolls another d6. She gets a 5. Susie rises to 1 Stun and begins to regain consciousness.

In the next round, Susie could act as normal (well, with -5 to her actions) but Jayne elects to have her feign unconsciousness and make one more recovery roll.

She rolls a d20 and gets a 15. $15 + 5 = 20$.

This is a good success so this time – and in any subsequent recovery rounds - Jayne rolls a d10 for Susie's recovery. Unfortunately, she only rolls a 3. Susie rises to 4 Stun and is no longer stunned.

If the character's Stun total is reduced to a negative level which exceeds their Endurance total, they take no further Stun damage. Any further Stun damage is taken off their Kill total until such a time as their Stun total starts to recover.

For example

Susie has an Endurance of 9. if, when she was on -7 Stun a thug had kicked her in the ribs and done 10 Stun points damage, Susie would have gone down to -9 Stun. The other 8 points would have come off her Kill total.

When the character's total Kill is less than 1, they are hospitalised. They will remain unconscious and unable to act until they receive continuous high-quality medical attention. They may then roll a d20 at the end of each day. Once the total of the roll plus their Endurance Skill Modifier is equal to or more than 15, they succeed they may then roll d20 at the end of each subsequent day to recover a die of Kill damage per day until their Kill score exceeds their Endurance, at which point they can recover normally (see below).

This recovery die will be a d6 if a total of 15-17 is rolled or a d10 if the total score is 18 or more.

For example

The Thug keeps kicking Susie until her Kill score falls to -8, at which point one of Susie's comrades pulls him off. She is immediately given First Aid (see below) which only restores 2 Kill points. She is taken to hospital.

At the end of the day, Jayne – Susie's player – rolls a d20 and gets 12. $12 + 5$ (Susie's Endurance modifier) = 17. Susie recovers 1d6 damage. A 3 is rolled so Susie goes up to -3 Kill points.

She is still in a Coma.

The following day's roll is a 5, so Susie does not recover. In fact she fails to recover for the next three days.



On the fifth day, the recovery roll is a 17. $17 + 5 = 22$. This is above 18 so Susie recovers a d10 of Kill. She recovers 7 points and goes up to 4 Kill points. She is now conscious but must still make an Endurance roll at the end of each day until her Kill points exceed 9 – her Endurance score.

It might seem that she is in hospital for a long time, but she was very nearly battered to death.

If the character's Kill total is reduced to a negative level which exceeds their Endurance total, they take no further Kill damage because they are DEAD!

A character's Stun total can never be more than twice their Kill total.

Recovery

The character recovers die of Stun at the end of each round of rest – a round in which they have undertaken no actions. This will be a d10 if the character is completely relaxed and in a non-stress situation.

If they are trying to recover in a non-optimal situation – in combat for example – they will need to make an Endurance Skill roll.

A score of 18 or more is needed to recover a d10 of Stun each round, otherwise only a d6 is rolled.

"In combat" means that the fight is going on all around them.

If they are directly involved in combat – if someone is trying to hit them, for example – they cannot roll to recover.

Their Stun total may never be more than twice their Kill total.

For example

If Sam is near a faulty nuclear reactor. Unknown to him, the radiation is killing him. He takes Kill damage but might not notice this. When his Kill damage falls to 16, his Stun suddenly falls to 32, giving him a hint that something is wrong.

Characters normally recover one die of Kill damage for each hour of rest – no major actions. They will need to make an Endurance Skill roll. A score of 18 or more is needed to recover a d10 of Kill each hour, otherwise only a d6 is rolled.

If a character with a First Aid skill attends to the wounded character and makes a successful skill roll, the character may recover 1d6 or 1d10 – as appropriate – Kill or Coma immediately without an endurance roll. They can only receive this benefit once per combat and only for damage received during this combat.

Out for the count

If an opponent is reduced to less than 1 Stun, a character may deliver a knockout blow which stops them from recovering for the rest of this combat.

The TV screen goes black.

This cannot be done if the attacker is subject to any major stress or distractions.

It can be done in a combat situation, for example, but not if the attacker is currently under direct attack.





Playing the Game

Using objects in Combat

How an object behaves in combat is defined by its size.

Whenever a character tries to lift or throw an object, they must have a minimum Strength required.

To lift a washing machine, a character must have a minimum Strength of 15.

When they try to lift or throw the object, they must make a Strength skill roll or similar (e.g. Weight-lifting) and apply the modifier from the table.

If the total is 15 or more they have lifted the object.

If the total is 18 or more, they are able to throw the object.

The object can be thrown one square plus an additional square for every two points by which the character's score exceeds the minimum Strength needed to lift/throw the object.

Objects do not suffer the -5 damage modifier on Kill which fists do.

Throwing an object as an attack takes a single die roll and only takes one panel to do.

However, the roll must represent both a successful throw (when the character's Strength modifier is added) and a successful strike (when their Dexterity modifier is added).

The table also shows the HTK required to destroy an object and the maximum damage modifier which can be applied to an attack using this object before it disintegrates.

For example

Lucas West is an ex-body builder. He has a Strength of 22. He could try to lift or throw a speedboat but not a car.

He tried to throw a motorbike at an oncoming Demon. He has enough Strength to make the attempt. He rolls a d20 and gets an 8. To this he adds his Strength Modifier (+11) and the modifier from the table (-3).

$8 + 11 - 3 = 16$. Lucas can lift the bike but not throw it.

If the Demon gets to him before he has another action, Lucas can try to hit it with the bike or use the bike to Parry its attacks. If he gets another a panel of action before it reaches him, Lucas can try another roll to throw the bike. He needs a 10 or more. He can throw the bike up to 4 squares. (His Strength exceeds the 15 he needs by 7 points. This gives him 3 squares of range plus the initial 1.)

Object Table

Size	Examples	Min Strength	Skill Roll Modifier	Kill/Max. Dam. Modifier
-3	Book, Mobile Phone	0	+ 8	2
-2	Telephone, Brick	2	+ 5	5
-1	TV set, Table	5	+ 3	10
0	Cooker, Moped, (Person)	10	0	15
1	Motorbike, Washing Machine	15	-3	20
2	Speedboat, Caravan	20	-5	25
3	Small Car, Satellite	25	-8	30
4	Average Car, Light Aircraft	30	-10	35
5	Large Car, Van	35	-13	40
6	Lorry, Helicopter (Elephant)	40	-15	45
7	Fighter Plane, Bulldozer	45	-18	50
8	Passenger Jet, Railway Carriage	50	-20	55
9	Tank, Diesel Locomotive	55	-23	60
10	Bomber, Hovercraft, Ferry (Whale)	60	-25	65
11	Jumbo Jet, Small Ship	65	-28	70
12+	Double Weight per size	+5 per size	-2.5 per size	+5 per size



Actions after movement

If the character has not made their full movement then they can choose to attempt an easy action at the end of the move. An easy action is one which would not normally require a skill roll.

Actions which would normally require skill rolls, especially attacks rolls in combat, cannot be combined with movement.

Because the character has moved, the action will require a skill roll with a -1 modifier for each square the character has moved.

For example

Susie moves forward a square and picks up the amulet dropped by the witch. This will require a Dexterity roll with a -1 modifier to succeed. If she fails the roll, she can pick up the amulet without needing to make a roll in her next panel.

Combined Actions

Sometimes characters will make an action that combines two effects. Where there is a combined action that takes a single panel, players make a single die roll and use that one result in each of the two calculations necessary to achieve the differing effects.

For example

Skyborn, an acrobatic martial artist, is leaping to kick a giant robot's sensors, which are set on its head. Her player would make one roll. Adding her Agility modifier would determine if she reaches the head. Adding her Dexterity modifier to the same roll would determine if the attack hit.

(This event happens in a later part of the campaign.)

Falling/Moving Objects

Falling or moving objects (e.g. cars) do the usual 2dice/1die damage. As most objects are blunt, the 2 dice damage will usually be to Stun.

The damage modifier is equal to the Kill value of the object divided 10 for each square it has moved/fallen before making contact with its target up the maximum damage plus for that object.

This is split between Kill and Stun.

This is instead of damage from being thrown. If the object is being thrown, use the rules given above.

If you want to know how fast vehicles move then, as rough guide, halve their speed in mile per hour to get the number of squares they move in a single panel. This won't be exact but it "feels" right.

For example

A Thug drives directly at Billy Murphy. The Thug rolls a successful attack total of 16. The car will use d3's to calculate damage. He attempts to dodge aside and fails. The car moved 8 squares before hitting him. A car has a Kill score of 35. 3.5 divided by 10 is 3.5. 3.5 x 8 = 28.

Billy takes 2d3 + 14 Stun and 1d3 + 14 Kill damage.

Charging

If the character has moved in excess of 5 squares prior to making an attack, that attack can be a charge. There is no -5 "fist" modifier to Kill damage. The character also gains a +1 damage modifier for each square they have moved prior to the attack taking place.

If the target is not knocked back by the charge, the character takes an amount of damage equal to half the damage done to their opponent.

For example

Desmond Smart charges a Zombie and delivers a "clothesline" attack.

Desmond has a movement of 5 squares and has made 2 panels of movement, 10 squares, before delivering the attack. This gives him a damage bonus of +10.

He also does not suffer the usual -5 penalty to his fist attack.

His total roll for the attack is 19. This allows him to do d10 damage. He chooses to add the +10 on to Kill damage. He does 1d10+10 Kill damage which is enough to decapitate the Zombie. (He does not bother rolling the Stun damage.)

As the attack destroyed the target, Desmond does not suffer any damage himself.



Playing the Game

Ordinary humans/thugs

As noted above, ordinary humans use d6 to determine damage. If they have a minor success in attacking, the damage they do is based on halving the die rolls – normally called d3 damage.

In addition, though they have the same number of panels as the Characters, it takes them two uninterrupted panels to perform major action such as firing a gun. If they have a single panel they may only move, throw a fist or defer the panel to the next round to create enough time for an attack – assuming they are not interrupted.

They also have very low characteristics. We don't usually bother specifying them.

They typically have moves of 3 squares per panel and skill modifiers which range from 0 to +5. Thugs with a Dexterity modifier of 0 are far more common than those with modifiers of +5.

The good news for Thugs, however, is that they are trained to use the pistols and other weapons they use and don't suffer the -10 penalty for using them.

They have no Kill or Stun scores. They are automatically stunned by any attack which does more Stun than Kill and rendered immediately unconscious if it has a damage bonus of any kind. They are automatically injured by any attack which does more Kill than Stun and immediately hospitalised if it has any kind of bonus.



Phase 1: Normality

Now that you have your characters and – hopefully – understand the basics of the game system, you are ready to start the campaign.

In phase 1, the characters are effectively taking part in a thriller TV series. Everyone they encounter is a normal human being – though some of them might be evil or unstable.

The adventures they have are analogous to those that cops, detectives and secret agents might have on a weekly basis.

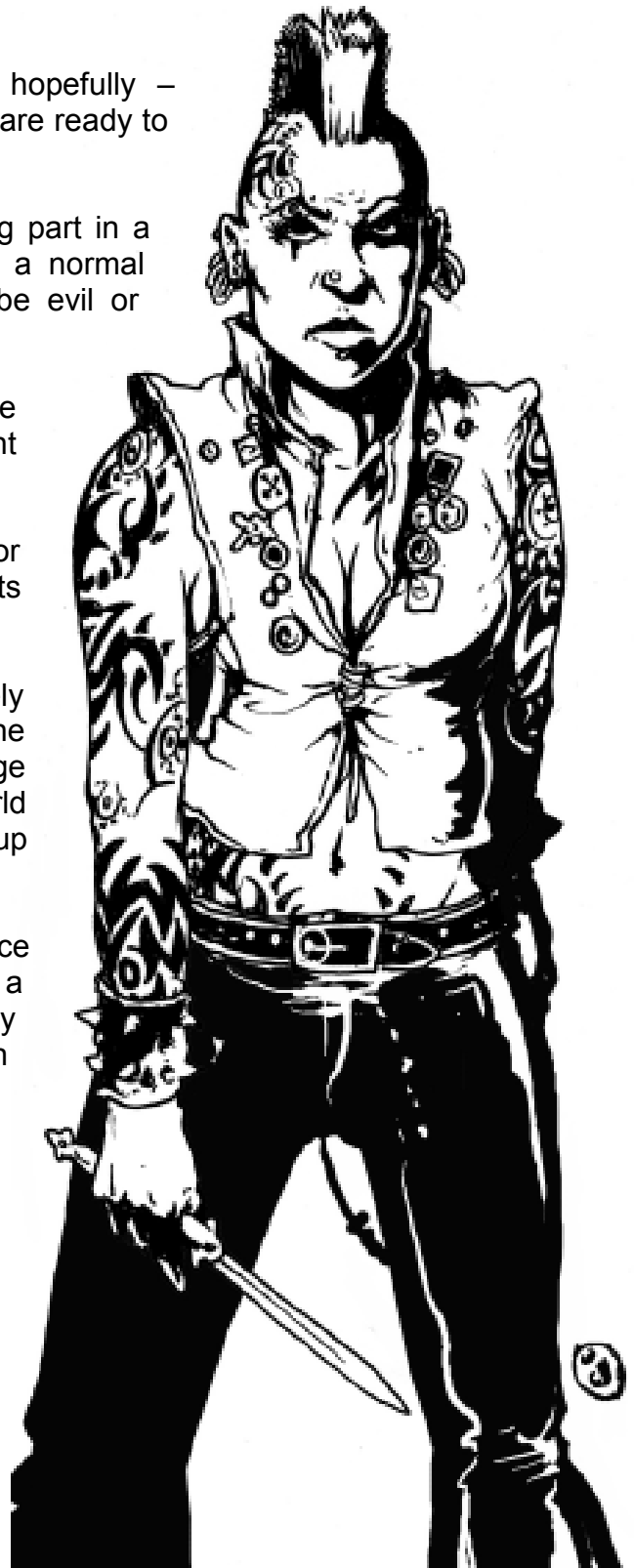
In fact, you should be able to lift ideas for adventures for your players straight from the plots of TV programmes or films.

You and I both know, however, that this is merely the precursor to the campaign proper. Though the characters don't directly encounter strange beings, devices or events, the real nature of world will underpin their adventures and they will pick up hints that things aren't as they appear.

Your job in this part of the campaign is to convince the players that they are merely taking part in a thriller/adventure/espionage game and slowly drop clues that there is more to the campaign than you originally let on.

It is totally to your taste how long you stay in this part of the campaign. In general, most Referees don't spend very long in this phase. There are three main difficulties with it:

The foes and adventures can be a bit limited. You don't want your players getting bored and opting out of the campaign before they find out the really interesting bits.





Phase 1: Normality

Also, you'll probably find yourself chomping at the bit to introduce some of the more colourful and unusual aspects of the campaign.

Finally, it may prove difficult to justify the character staying together to participate in a large number of adventures.

Personally, I like to treat this part of the campaign as a mere introduction to the first adventure. So this will probably be the shortest chapter in the whole book. Since all the opponents are "normal" people, there aren't any example opponents in it. If you want to run adventures in phase 1, most of the bad guys will be thugs – as described in the combat section in the previous chapter. The few special opponents will be characters like the player-characters and can be created using the same systems. In fact, if you made some practice characters during your preparation to run the game, this is where you can wheel them out to use them as bad guys against the players. You don't have to be familiar with the Super-power section of the rules to run adventures in this game.

The example adventure described below "Something Wicked....." is actually designed as a link between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the campaign. You can choose to use this as the players' first experience of the game – that's what I did. (I'm afraid you may have to read up on a couple of super-powers before running this adventure, sorry!)

If you want to try running some adventures in Phase 1 - before embarking on a link adventure like "Something Wicked..." - here are a few suggestions:

- The characters are travelling on a passenger jet which is hijacked by a small, well-organised, group of terrorists. Their plan is to use the hijacked jet to collide with another plane carrying a high-ranking Government official. If they talk to the terrorists they will find out that, whilst most of them think they are taking part in a typical strike against western imperialism, the guy behind the plot has been lying to them.

He is mentally unstable and thinks the person he is targeting is an alien imposter sent to prepare the world for invasion.

- During the employees' annual Christmas party, a group of robbers take over a tower block and hold everyone to ransom whilst they break into the company vault. (I told you that you could lift plots from films, didn't I?) What nobody except the robbers' leader knows is that the real reason behind the plot is to steal a strange device which is stashed in the vault.
- People are disappearing up in the hills. Footprints and remnants of bodies recovered seem to indicate a large humanoid creature is loose up there. Investigation reveals that is actually the work of an in-bred family of yokels or hill-billies. However, when they are confronted and defeated, one of them escapes.

Shortly afterwards, screaming can be heard. By the time the characters arrive, very little is left of the body.....

- There is a spate of parents and siblings attempting to murder young children. Investigation reveals a disturbed woman going around families convincing vulnerable members that their child, brother or sister is a "changeling" from the Faerie Realm.
- A serial killer turns out to be someone who believes in aliens (or faerie). He is killing people he believes are not human. After he is caught and questioned and his motives become clear – one or more of his victims' bodies go "missing" or seem to be cremated rather hurriedly. (A search for DNA samples may yield some perplexing results.)

Do you get the idea? If this sort of thing appeals to you – or there's a film or TV show which has given you a suitable idea – and you can keep your players' interest up then stay in phase 1 for as long as you want.

Eventually, however, the time will come when you and your players are ready to move on and actually encounter some of the weird and wonderful creatures which exist just out of view of most of humanity.

This is when you want to move to phase 2 of the campaign.



Something Wicked.....

This adventure is presented as a way of getting from the “normal” to the “investigation” phase of the campaign. It can be run as the characters first adventure. Alternatively, they could have experienced other adventures as suggested above.

In this adventure, the characters are drawn together and become aware that there is something strange going on in the world.

The mood of this adventure is that of an independent horror movie. You may want to watch a couple of those before running it to get yourself into the right frame of mind. You know the type of thing – the ones where the teenagers or married couple get trapped in an isolated hotel or farmhouse with “something” outside in the darkness.....

The characters

This adventure is best suited for a group of three to five player-characters. If you have different number, you may have to make some adjustments.

Most of the players will just be “driving past” in their cars when they get sucked into these events. If this is the characters’ first adventure and they haven’t met before, the Referee should refer to their backgrounds and pair them or up or group them so that they can logically be introduced into as travelling together in no more than two cars.

If proves difficult to justify fitting the character into two cars, there two ways that the Referee can introduce “spare” characters into the game:

- A criminal character could be part of the crew the other characters meet at the start of the adventure. In this case, they should be feeling guilty about their part in events and be ready to turn on their associates.
- Another spare character can replace Patsy O’toole. Assume they were driving alone and were flagged down by Susie Steward, clutching her baby, who has asked them to drive her to the nearest Police Station. The car full of thugs pulled up before they could respond.

Introduction – III Met By Moonlight

Daniel “Danny” Steward is a bad man. He is the boss of a local crime outfit and totally ruthless in the way he handles “business”.

Susie Steward is his wife. Both vain and venal she is no saint. A typical WAG. Her view on life has changed in the past few days, however.

For one thing, she has just given birth to a baby daughter, Faith, and has realised that this is one person who she would gladly die for. She also wants her daughter to grow up “clean”. To complicate matters, Danny is not the father of the child.

Fearful of the consequences for herself and Faith when Danny finds out the truth, Susie has taken her daughter, piled her jewellery collection into a valise and coaxed one of Danny’s hoods – Patsy O’toole, who adores Susie – into driving her to a new life.

Unfortunately, the housekeeper – Julie, Patsy’s ex-girlfriend – knows about the escape and called Danny. He has called in every single one of his employees – some of whom are Police Officers - to scour the area for Patsy’s car.

It is late at night on a dark country road. As the characters arrive, a car full of Danny’s thugs, headed by the brutish Ron Drako, has caught up with Patsy and driven him off the road.

Susie – with Faith in her arms – is remonstrating with Drako as he is about to “deal with” Patsy.

The situation is complicated by two things.

Firstly, Drako has ordered one of his underlings to call Danny and tell him that they have found his errant wife.

Two further cars full of thugs – one of them carrying Danny himself – will be on the scene within minutes.

Secondly, Faith’s real father has the scent of his new born daughter is also on the way.....



Phase 1: Normality

Cast:

“Danny” Steward – local crime boss. Thoroughly ruthless and more than a match for any of the player characters. He looks and sounds like he has walked straight out of a low grade TV gangster show.



Susie Steward – Danny’s errant wife. Able to defend herself verbally, she is no match physically for any of Danny’s thugs.



She has recently given birth and it is remarkable that she can even stand up.

In all other ways she would fit perfectly into a TV reality show.

Faith Steward – a new born baby girl. Completely helpless and not entirely human. She may have a destiny. Varies from crying inconsolably to being inhumanly serene.

Patsy O’toole – one of Danny’s lowest grades of thug employees. Young, Irish and naïve.

Totally under the spell of Susie Steward, he has mistakenly agreed to help her escape the clutches of her husband.

If by any chance he survives this adventure he will be totally indebted to the characters and will be a very useful contact for them later in the campaign.



Ron Drako – one of Danny’s right hand men. He is equivalent to a player character and is the boss of the car which has caught up with Susie and Patsy. Unshaven, guttural and gorilla-like.



Thomas Walker – another of Danny’s chosen inner-circle. He is in charge of the third of the criminals’ cars to appear in this scenario. In game terms exactly the same as Drako but far more dapper in mannerisms and appearance.



Thugs – if there are three or fewer player characters, each one of the criminals’ cars will contain three thugs in addition to its commander (Danny, Drako, Walker).

If there are four or more characters, each car will contain four thugs.

One thug, the driver, will remain with each car.

Though armed with guns, knives and coshes, these Thugs are low-rent bullies who are nowhere near the characters’ league on an individual basis.

They have names like Vinnie, Knuckles, Muscles, Mouse and Georgie.

Police – any Police who arrive will be well-meaning and well-trained but will be no better than Danny’s thugs.

At least one of them – officer **John Dielock** – will be in Danny’s employ.

Any others (there will be two in each car which arrives) will have names like Jimmy McCloud, Ralph Centre etc.



Scene 1 – Roadside Mystery

Each driver of a car should roll a d10. The one with the highest roll will arrive upon the scene first. Subsequent cars will arrive at appropriate intervals.

As the first car comes up to drive past, they see two cars at the side of the road. A smaller, older, car has obviously been driven off the road by a larger, more modern, sedan. Two men – one of them using a mobile phone – are watching either way down the road as a third, bigger, man is talking to someone inside the smaller car. A woman with a baby in her arms is berating this larger man.

As the characters' car pulls up, the nearest figure apparently pushes something into its pocket as he waves their car on by.

(Characters have no Sleuthing score yet, so players roll a d20 with no modifier – unless they have taken SPOT as a specialised skill. If they roll 15 they spot something being shoved out of sight. If they roll 18 or more they see that it is a pistol)

If the characters pull up, they will be “encouraged” to leave the scene. At first everyone will lie to them.

Darko will say they saw the couple broken down and they've stopped to help them. Susie will claim they are a married couple being car-jacked.

When the characters see through these lies, they will be threatened at gun-point.



There will now be some negotiation followed by – probably – a bit of conflict.

Roll initiative and use the combat system to resolve events. Despite the relatively large number of thugs, this should be a relatively easy fight for the characters. Only Drako is anywhere near their league in combat. If necessary, the you can have Patsy or Susie help out in the fight.

During the conflict it would be useful if the player characters' cars were disabled in some way.

This can be through stray bullets hitting the tyres or through misguided attempts (on either side) to use cars to ram each other.

In the aftermath it will become obvious that Danny Steward has cars out looking for Susie and Patsy.

Any attempt to use a mobile phone to call for help will fail. Patsy will explain that it is not unusual for Danny Steward to “take out” phone masts when he wants to isolate an area.

Susie reckons the odds of them making the main road without further conflict is minimal and suggests they either head off down a side road or head off across country to find somewhere to hide.

If the players seem reluctant to follow this course of action have a couple of coppers – one of whom is the corrupt PC Dielock – turn up to agree with her.

If players insist on trying to make it to the main roads, have Danny's other cars turn up and pursue them.

Should the players persist in refusing to seek shelter, then have the events of Episode 2 hit them on the roadside rather than in the farmhouse.

This episode ends with the howl of a wolf in the distance as rain begins to fall.

This is the time to give derived characteristics – possibly for the first time.



Episode 2: Wolfsiege

Whether they have headed down a side road or across country, the characters – along with Susie, Patsy and, possibly, a couple of Police Officers – will find a remote farmhouse occupied by Dennis and Daisy Potter – a farming couple in their 70's.

After initial suspicion and threats with a shotgun, the couple will eventually take the refugees in and give them shelter. The presence of Faith will what eventually turns the couple's attitude in favour of the group of refugees. There is a landline telephone in house which can be used to call for help. All the characters have to do now is sit tight and wait for the Police to arrive.

Unfortunately, PC Dielock – whether present or not – will intercept the call and Danny Steward and his men will arrive before the Police.

There will be a stand-off. Danny and his men will surround the farmhouse. One car will be in front whilst the other, commanded by Thomas Walker, will circle out back. There will be no way the characters can leave without being seen.

The players will no doubt have lots of ideas here, and it is up to you to decide how successful they are. Remember they do not need to defeat Danny and his men, just keep them busy until help arrives. The players may choose to set up some traps by the doors into the farmhouse. Or some might create a distraction whilst one of them creeps out into the barn – which contains the Potters' tractor, some diesel and several spikey items of agricultural machinery.

Danny will arrogantly stand in front of the farmhouse shouting threats. He and his men may or may not try to storm the farmhouse before the first Police car arrives. However, the odds are that negotiations will still be taking place when it turns up, sirens howling.

When it does appear, the two Police constables in the car will be killed. The Police car used to ram the farmhouse and set it ablaze. Danny and his men will be ready to grab Susie and her baby as they flee.

At this point, Faith's REAL father will arrive.

This is Leonard Aldredd. As far as Suzie is concerned he is simply a hunky young musician – bass guitar player with the Goth band "Full Moon". What she doesn't know is he is also a lycanthrope.



In werewolf form, he will begin picking off Danny's men. They will be pulled one by one into the bushes where they will die – screaming. Danny and his men will turn to face the new, unseen, threat. Thomas Walker will send a scout round from the back of the house to see what is happening. If things are not going well, he is likely to abandon Danny Steward to his fate. Loyalty only goes so far, after all! If he gets the chance, he may even try to "make sure" a Danny's demise with an appropriate shot of his own.

During this confusion the players may choose to try to stage an escape. If they are trying to escape with Faith then Aldredd will pursue them as soon as he has finished dispatching Danny and his men.

If the characters encounter the werewolf then several things may happen:

- One or more characters may be killed by the lycanthrope. In this case, they will be tainted by Faerie blood and come back as Zombies in Episode 3.
- One or more of the characters may be wounded by the lycanthrope. In this case they will slowly be affected by the Faerie blood, turning into werewolves themselves unless events intervene.
- The characters may kill the werewolf – in which case it will revert to its human form. This is highly unlikely.
- The characters may escape from the werewolf (or it will flee when more Police cars arrive) – in which case it will re-appear in Episode 3.

The ideal end to this episode is for the characters to be involved in fighting the Werewolf when, either through their own actions, or through the arrival of lots of Police cars, it is driven away.



Episode 3: Visitors from this world and The Other.

Following the events of Episode 2, all the characters will be taken to St Augustine's, a nearby country hospital, to rest and recover overnight. St Augustine's is currently under-used and there is only a skeleton Staff present overnight. The characters will be given beds on the almost empty wards and given a meal and appropriate medical assistance.

The bodies of Danny and any of his thugs will be placed in the hospital morgue – in the basement.

An extremely sceptical and irate Detective Police Inspector – Charles Downright – will cross-examine the characters. He will not believe their story of a werewolf but will believe that this has been brought on by the stress of their experiences and will leave them to recover overnight, promising to see them in the morning.

He will leave Police Officers to guard them. This won't make any difference to what happens next.

The characters may have two rolls to recover Kill points - one for medical aid administered, the other for an hour's recovery- which is all they'll get before events take over again. If they have sufficient Kill points, assume they have recovered their Stun points back to maximum.

What happens depends upon exactly what events to place in in the previous Episode:

- Any characters who were killed by the werewolf in Episode 2 will animate as Zombies and head out looking for food. Players of those characters should be informed of events and may play their characters as zombies for this Episode.
- Any gangsters killed by the lycanthrope can animate as zombies. This is an optional event which the referee can choose to include or ignore.
- If the Lycanthrope survived Episode 2 – which is highly likely – he will attack the hospital in search of his baby.
- If any of the gangsters survived Episode 2 – which is highly unlikely – they will enter the hospital in search of the Faith.
- A keen young local reporter – Sarah Rose Jones – will sneak into the hospital in search of a story and will try to get an interview with the characters.

- Kinross – a “faerie warrior” – will arrive at the hospital to tie up loose ends (see below).
- Starling (Agent Craig Starling) from MI-X will wish to speak to the characters to determine if there has been any alien involvement.

How many of these events you choose to employ is your choice.

The ideal situation is for the characters, Susie, Faith and Sarah Rose Jones to be caught between the werewolf and zombies. They will need Kinross's help to resolve the situation. Starling will turn up when dramatically appropriate.

Kinross

Kinross is Faerie-kind. That is, he is neither human nor faerie but some-where in between. He is closer to faerie than human and possesses super-natural abilities.



Basically he is a gnome – about 3 feet in height. He dresses to disguise his pointed ears and cloven feet and appears far more harmless and innocuous than he really is.

In truth he is a Faerie Warrior – chosen to go out into the human world to perform tasks for Oberon and his people.

His main task today is *changling*. He is to exchange a fully human baby for the faerie-tainted Faith. To that end he is carrying an appropriate child with him in his bag. (The child is drugged but with harmless, natural, herbs.)

He will also take the opportunity to tidy up a few loose ends:

- He will help the characters kill the werewolf by loaning them enchanted silver daggers. (He will want these back at the end).
- He will remove all evidence of the lycanthrope's presence.
- He will aid the characters against any zombies. He will use a “charm” to bring any zombie characters back to consciousness. (See below)
- He will give full warning and help to any character infected with lycanthropy.



Phase 1: Normality

- He will introduce the characters to the world of Faerie. Why? Because most of them have a destiny. He will identify all but one of the characters as important to the future of the human race. The last he will ignore and/or dismiss.

On his own terms, Kinross is a decent and honourable enough being. He believes what he is doing to be right.

He will not reveal where the fully human baby in his possession has come from – but everyone will be a lot happier if the exchange is allowed to happen.

Starling

Craig Starling was a member of MI-X.

He claims still to be a full member but is currently on a medical suspension.



Military Intelligence – X is a small offshoot of MI5/MI6. Its purpose is to protect the nation from unusual and unexpected threats, hence the X designation.

Should any particular threat be identified and significant – a mutant insurrection for example – it will be allocated a number (15 for example) and MI-X will divide into two. One branch will develop to face the threat (e.g. MI-15) whilst the other remains as MI-X.

Starling has become aware of an alien threat to the planet. In fact, he has been captured and experimented upon by the aliens. Unfortunately, he has no proof of this and his wild unsupported claims have led to his suspension on medical/psychiatric grounds.

Desperate to save the Earth, Starling is in the process of setting up his own MI-X using resources appropriated from his erstwhile employers.

This is far from his only secret. The alien experiment replaced his blood with a yellow fluid of some kind. Though Starling was able to escape before the transfer was complete, the yellow fluid consumes and replaces what remains of his own blood.

As the process proceeds, Starling feels his thoughts and feelings change. He suspects that, were the process to proceed to its conclusion, he would become totally susceptible to alien suggestion and be a willing agent in the forthcoming invasion of earth.

He, therefore, needs to regularly drain off the fluid and replace it with copious quantities of human blood.

Scarred by the scepticism with which his claims have been met, Starling will not reveal all he knows until he trusts someone completely. (This hasn't happened, yet. He doesn't trust *anybody*.)

His aim is co-opt suitable candidates into his own MI-X and prepare them for the invasion which is sure to come, whilst disguising the full picture from them.

He has three secrets, therefore, which will slowly be revealed to the characters as the campaign unfolds.

He turns up in this scenario because he makes it his duty to investigate all unusual events. He is looking for signs of alien involvement.

Unbelief

Kinross is from the world of Faerie. Starling has been kidnapped by Aliens. Each of them is aware of a sphere of existence which is unknown to most of the human race.

Most humans would laugh in the face of someone claiming to be an alien abductee. They would also vilify people who believe in the supernatural.

Kinross, like all of his people, believes talk of aliens to be a fantasy of the human mind. The Faerie folk do not believe there are worlds beyond our own.

(In the deepest, most secret, Faerie council beliefs may differ. It is possible that the Faerie themselves came to Earth from another realm millennia ago.)

In a similar vein, Starling is so wrapped up in his obsession with aliens that he simply doesn't have the time to deal with fairy tales and fantasy. He is convinced that any events which would seem to come from such sources are probably alien in origin.



Outcomes

1) Some of the characters may be zombies. In this case they have no Stun points and only suffer Kill damage. At the end of each scenario in which they take Kill damage, the player should roll a d6. This score is permanently removed from the maximum Kill total to represent slow cumulative damage.

Such characters have free will as long as they wear a spirit charm from the faerie world. If this is removed, damaged or lost, they turn into a shambling, ravaging beast.

To exist like this is not true living. The character no longer feels anything. They do not need to eat or sleep, being sustained directly by the spirit of the Earth. The character may refuse to accept this state of being. The only way to freedom would seem to be total destruction by burning or similar. If the player chooses this option for their character then they should create a new one.

You may choose to reward them in some way (10 extra skill points or characteristics generated by best 3 of 5d6 etc.)

Note: Just because the body is totally consumed in a fire there is no reason to assume that the spirit will be released. The Referee may choose to have the character's "essence" re-appear at some point later in the campaign.

2) Some characters may be slowly turning into Lycanthropes. Regular consumption of Wolfsbane will slow this process. If they fail to do this and they are subjected to stress at the time of a full moon, they may change. See the later chapters for generating the abilities of those tainted by Faerie-kind.

3) Most of the characters will have been identified as having a destiny.

4) Some or all of the characters may be bearing marks identifying them as "Friends of Faerie".

5) All the characters will be offered membership of MI-X and the opportunity to protect the world from strange and unusual threats.

Even if the players refuse to work with Agent Starling, you should encourage them to set up as freelance investigators of the strange and unusual. They are now ready to enter Phase 2 of the campaign.

Rogue's Gallery

Here, all in one place for ease of reference, are the game details of the bad guys in this Scenario:

Name: Ron Drake							
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
15	15	15	8	10	12	8	7
+8	+8	+8	+4	+5	+6	+4	+4
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Impress		+11	Driving		+2	5 sq.	
Gambling		+11	Research		+5	Kn.Bk.	
Door Bursting		+13	Inner City Environment		+5	30	
Scrounging		+11	Pistol Repair		+5	Dm.Md.	
Weightlifting		+13	Locksmith		+5	+3	
Kill: 52				Stun: 55			
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes		
Fist		1d	2d	+1d +3	+2 on roll to hit		
Pistol		2d	1d		Uses his skill roll to hit		
Background/Abilities							
Martial Arts 1 (Brawling. +1 Parry)							
Background Story							
Unshaven, guttural and gorilla-like							



Thomas Walker & Danny Steward

If you need to use Thomas Walker, just use the details as for Drake – above – but switch his Martial Arts for Weapon ability with pistol.

Danny Steward has the same details as Walker and Drake, except he has both Martial Arts and ability with the Pistol.

PC John Dielock

This bent copper is halfway between a Thug and a full character.

Characteristics	All 12
Modifiers	All +6
Move	4 squares
Attacks	d-5 Kill, 2d Stun (Fist) with a +6 on the die roll to hit 1d Kill, 2d Stun (Truncheon) with a +6 on the die roll to hit.
Knockback	24
Kill	42
Stun	42

He gets the normal number of Panels.



Phase 1: Normality

Leonard Aldredd - Lupus

Name: Leonard Aldredd				Alias: Lupus			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
24	24	16	8	12	13	9	7
+12	+12	+8	+4	+6	+7	+5	+4
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Spot		+20	Bass Guitar		+5	10 Sq.	
Stealth		+9	Fix Guitar		+5	Kn.Bk.	
Hide		+9	Pharmacology		+5	34/20	
Search		+20	Electronics		+5	Dm.Md.	
Intimidate		+17	High Society		+5	+12	
Kill: 84 /2				Stun: 84 /2			
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod		Notes	
Fist		d-5	2d	+12		Hits with +2 on the die	
Claws		2d	1d	+12		Hits with +2 on the die	
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Strength 1 (+5 on lifting rolls) Endurance 1 (needs little sleep) Martial Arts 1 (can reverse base damage) Supersense 2 (Sight and Smell - +10 on Sleuth rolls, -2 to opponent's dodges) Fast Recovery 2 (1d Kill and Stun recovered per round – unless the wound was caused by silver) Protection 1 (Divides all damage 2 – except vs. Silver. Innate.) Increased move (+1 to Dodges)							
Background Story							
Bass guitar player with the Goth band “Full Moon”. When he became a werewolf is unclear – as is the current status of his band-mates.							

Thugs and Police

All of these use the following details:

Move	4 squares
Attacks	<p>d-5 Kill, 2d Stun (Fist) with a +2 on the die roll to hit</p> <p>2d Kill, 1d Stun (Pistols – thugs only) with a +3 on the die roll to hit</p> <p>1d Kill, 2d Stun (Truncheons – Police only) with a +3 on the die roll to hit.</p>
Knockback	15
Panels	Take 2 panels to perform a major action
Kill/Stun	<p>Injured by any attack which does more Kill than Stun and Stunned by any attack which does more Stun than Kill.</p> <p>Hospitalised or Knocked out by any two attacks or any attack with a bonus of any kind.</p>

Susie Steward, Patsy O'Toole, the Potters and the Hospital Staff.

All of these are ordinary people and use the following details:

Move	4 squares
Attacks	d-5 Kill, 2d Stun
Knockback	15
Panels	Take 2 panels to perform a major action
Kill/Stun	<p>Injured by any attack which does more Kill than Stun and Stunned by any attack which does more Stun than Kill.</p> <p>Hospitalised or Knocked out by any two attacks or any attack with a bonus of any kind.</p>



Character Development

Squadron: X is a game all about change and development. The characters have a destiny. In the future their lives are going to change dramatically.

However, things don't have to stay static until then. The more they play, the more the characters will learn. They will be shaped and changed by their experiences.

There are four ways that a character can improve in this game:

1) Derived Characteristics

By now you should be familiar with these. They allow the players' actions within the game to affect the lives of their characters.

Characters who search for clues are going to be better at solving crimes, for example.

2) In game events

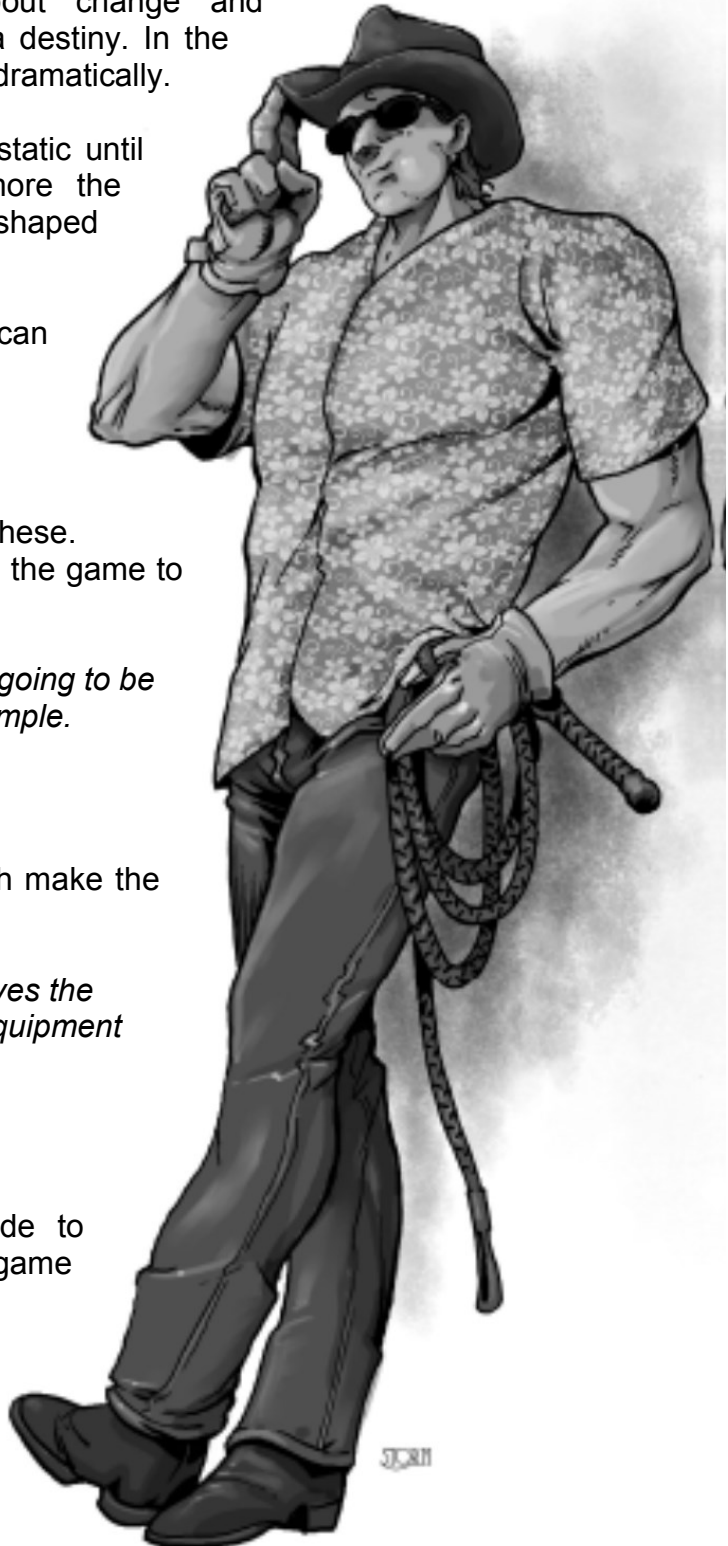
Things will happen in the game which make the Heroes more successful.

Joining Craig Starling in MI: X gives the characters access to information, equipment and esoteric devices.

3) Referee largesse

The Referee will occasionally decide to give some or all of the players an in-game reward or development.

If one of the weaker characters gets caught by Vampyres and bitten, the Referee might feel like giving them an ability from the index at the back of the book.





4) Training

This is the most common form of improvement in the Squadron: X game.

Training in Squadron UK is done through the use of MONTAGE PANELS.

Each game session you tell your players how many Montage panels their character has spare in their comic this issue. The players then tell you what their characters are seen doing in those panels.

Depending upon how they use the panels, sooner or later their abilities will improve.

Montage Panels can be spent on three things:

- Improving Skills
- Improving Characteristics
- Improving Abilities (including – later on – Superpowers.)
- Developing team-work

Awarding Montage Panels

It's normal to give 1 Montage Panels per game session in the first two phases of the campaign. So start to award them at this rate.

If the characters are taking too long to improve, increase this to 2 panels per session.

When the aliens invade, it is usual to raise the level of award to 2 panels per session in any event.

Some Referees even go as high as awarding 3 montage panels person during the white heat of the Resistance phase. However, this should be dropped to two panels per session when things return to "normal".

As with all things, this depends upon the individual tastes of the Referee and the actions of their players.

If you want a high-octane campaign – or if your players spend a significant portion of their panels on developing their characters' personalities rather than their effectiveness – then you'll want to award more panels than usual.

Improving Skills

In order to improve the level of a skill, player has to explain to you exactly how their character is training. If they can't outline an effective training regime then it will take twice as long to develop the new level of skill. You should tell the player if you think the development method they've outlined won't yield results quickly.

Common Skills

In order to improve a common skill by one level, the character has to train for a number of Montage Panels equal to the current level of the Skill.

The level of the skill is the relevant skill modifier plus any modifier possessed but ignores the effects of Abilities or Superpowers.

Donovan Rogers has a COMPUTER USE Skill of +12. (+7 from Psyche and +5 from his speciality.) If can find an expert to train him – or appropriate manuals or on-line training – he can increase this to +13 at the cost of 12 Montage Panels. If he just uses computers a lot and tries to learn from experience alone this would cost twice as many ie. 24 panels.



Character can choose to train up any Common Skill even if they are not currently specialised in it. Again this requires an appropriate method of training.

Donovan Rogers is not especially skilled in climbing, so his skill level is currently merely his Strength modifier of +7. If he undertakes an appropriate supervised course on an actual rock-face or at a climbing club, he can raise this to +8 at the cost of 7 montage panels.



Trained Skills

In order to improve a trained skill by one level, the character has to train for a number of Montage Panels equal to TWICE the current level of the Skill.

The level of the skill is the current modifier possessed, ignoring the effects of Abilities or Superpowers.

Donovan Rogers has a +5 skill in the use of his Pistol. He can raise this to +6 with appropriate training on a firing range and the expenditure of 10 Montage panels.

Characters *cannot* develop Trained Skills they do not already possess.



Improving Characteristics

In order to improve an innate characteristic (Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Agility or Psyche), a character must have professional support from an expert in the field.

If they can afford this, or acquire it in other ways, they must commit to a dedicated training regime. That is at least one Montage Panel of each group awarded must be dedicated towards maintaining this particular training.

If they pass these two requirements then their characteristic will increase by one when they have trained for a number of Montage Panels equal to TWICE the current level of the characteristic.

This is to their base characteristic as rolled generally ignores the effects of Abilities or Superpowers.

Donovan Rogers has an Agility Score of 8. It will cost him 16 Montage panels to raise this to 9. He will have to devote at least one panel from each award to this training and so could take up to 16 play sessions to complete. If he misses even one panel, he has to start the training all over again.

When his Agility goes up to 9, his skill modifier will go up from +4 to +5 and every skill based on Agility will go up by 1.

Improving Abilities or Superpowers

In the first part of the campaign, this section applies to the abilities gained by characters who did not gain a special background. MARTIAL ARTS for example.

After the Alien invasion, characters are Heroes and may possess powers such as FLIGHT.

Improving these abilities or powers is totally at the behest of you and your players. In general it is not possible to say "I am going to put my CLOAKING ability up from Level 1 to Level 2" and just spend Montage Panels to do it.

A player must specify *exactly* how their character is training to improve their ability or power. This isn't easy to do.



Phase 1: Normality

It will depend upon the exact superpowers they possess and the background story they've come up with to explain them. What works for one character will not work for another.

It is also a lot more interesting if characters start to develop unique abilities based upon the exact *combination* of powers they possess. Improvements do not have to be in the form of increased levels of an ability. They can be unique developments or uses of a power specific to that character.

Using wings to generate a wind to knock people down, for example.

If a proposed development is for colour/character development only and has no real use in combat, it only takes 5 Montage Panels.

If a development only has minor applications which are mainly defensive, it takes 10 Montage panels to develop.

If the development has some minor offensive uses it takes 15 Montage Panels to develop.

If it significantly improves the characters abilities, it takes 20 Montage panels to develop.

If it would seem to double a character's effectiveness then it takes 25 (or more) Montage Panels to develop. An increase of one level in a Superpower normally falls into this category.

In all cases, it takes TWICE the amount of Montage Panels to develop the ability if the player is unable to specify a clear and feasible method of training.



Phase 2: Investigation

In this phase of the campaign, the characters are aware that there are strange and unusual forces at work in the world.

They are not strong enough to face these forces directly. Through careful investigation they will try to find more about them to decide what is a threat and which can be made into allies or used to protect humankind.

This section of the campaign emulates TV series where FBI Agents investigate the strange and unusual or demons come through a hell-gate below a college-town. Where wild-eyed loners try to convince the world of the forthcoming alien invasion or a secret team gather arcane artefacts in their secret base to combat threats from space or the supernatural.

It is your choice as a Referee how you wish to go in this part of the campaign.

If you follow the advice and storylines given in this book, the world will be threatened both from within and without.



Ancient supernatural threats will plague mankind whilst alien ships will hover in orbit seeking an appropriate moment to invade.

Most TV series, though, are based around a single theme. You might decide to go totally with the Supernatural theme.

Your characters could be demon-hunters or vampire-slayers dedicated to protecting mankind from all kind of paranormal threats from the faerie world.



Phase 2: Investigation

On the other hand, these rules can be used to create a classic alien invasion scenario, where the supernatural doesn't get a look in.

This chapter contains some suggestions for adventures you can run in the Investigation phase of the campaign as well as details of some of the more common opponents you can throw against your players.

This section of the campaign can be run for a longer period of time that the "normal" phase which preceded it.

Two things can make this phase particularly enjoyable:

- The characters will regularly be encountering strange phenomena which should keep the players' interest up. The fact that many of the opponents are too tough to face directly and will require thought, care and planning to defeat adds an extra challenge to events.
- Events within this phase can be structured towards the apocalyptic events of phase 3. The characters will slowly become aware of the alien plot to invade the Earth and may try to find ways to foil this invasion. They may become aware of the different races and factions amongst the faerie-kind and seek to find ways to make allies amongst them.

Because of this, you may wish to run quite a few adventures for your players in this part of the campaign before hitting them with phase 3. This allows you develop a really satisfying on-going story arc into the adventures.

In general the advice is to continue running adventures in this phase until you detect the slightest sign that the players are becoming jaded with it and then hit them with Phase 3.

Whilst the protagonists in Phase 1 were normal humans, the protagonists in Phase 2 are far from it.

They fall into two main categories, **Aliens** and **Faerie**.

Other possibilities exist but they can generally be rationalised into one of these two classifications.

If you wanted to run a classic "Frankenstein" type storyline, for example, then the misguided Doctor's experiments will have been made possible by the use of Alien technology.

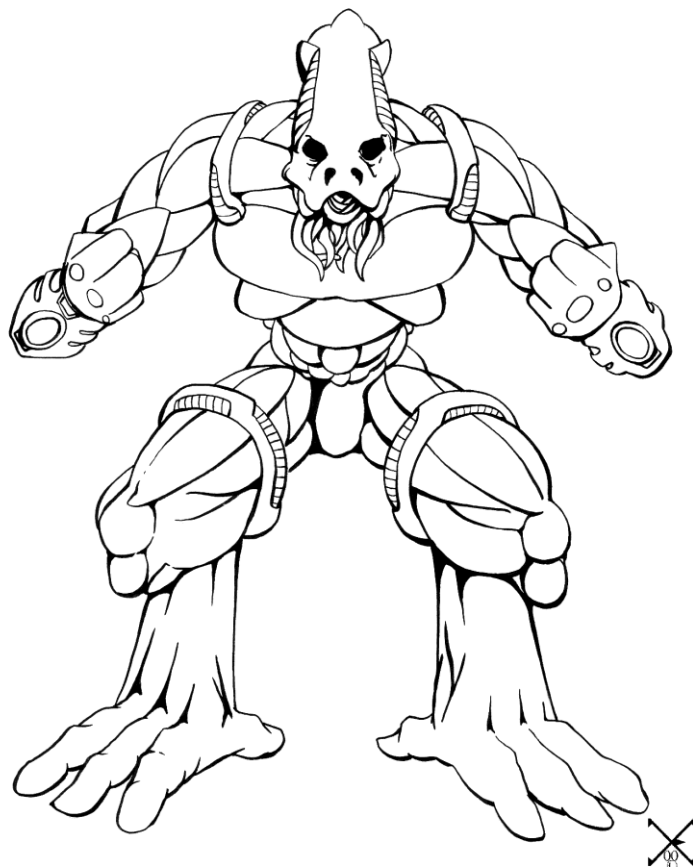
Aliens

The Earth is currently playing host to a number of advance agents of an Alien race known as the Thr'ish. Their intent is to find out as much as they can to enable their race to invade and conquer the planet.

The Thr'sih will invade the Earth in Phase 3. The details of all their different types and technologies is detailed in that section.

I've gone for a unique race of aliens to give your players something to discover. If I'd gone for a "standard" race, they might have inferred some information from TV programmes and films. If, for your campaign, you want to replace the Thr'ish with a different alien species – such as the classic "greys" – that is up to you.

During the Investigation phase, the characters will mainly encounter evidence of the existence of the Thr'ish rather than the Thr'ish themselves.





Faerie

The Faerie – or Fey - are a non-human race who share the planet with mankind. They are humanoid but are generally a lot smaller than mankind and a heck of a lot lighter. At times, they can sprout wings and fly.

Tending towards green in colouration they have slanting almond eyes. Their faces could be described as “elfin” – except that would be like describing our faces as “human”. They are incredibly long-lived.

They can manipulate energies that mankind cannot even perceive. We would call it magick.

The Faerie bear no relation whatsoever to humankind. They are the result of a totally different form of evolution. As far as possible they try to stay hidden from the eyes of Man.

Because of this, no human scholar has ever had chance to investigate how two such different creatures could come to co-exist on a single planet.

Deep within the faerie councils there is hidden knowledge which may hold the answer, but this is known to few. Possibly the Faerie came to this world from outside - millennia ago.

My personal favourite theory is that the Faerie are the true natives of this world and that is was mankind and all his associated fauna who were seeded here in the dark hidden times – to thrive and dominate the planet.

Those who have visited the faerie realm have reported creatures which seem to be analogous to the animals of the earthly plane. These seem to be few in number and protected, however.

This covers creatures such as Unicorns and Dragons.

The Faerie of Earth owe allegiance to the single authority of Oberon and his queen, Titania. There may be factions at work amongst the Faerie but no knowledge of these have, as yet, crept into the knowledge of mankind.

Because of the careful, secretive and caring nature of the faerie people, they could have happily shared this world with mankind if not for one problem – that of the Faerie-kind.



Faerie Kind

Though Man and Faerie are the product of different realms of existence, somehow their blood can co-exist. Whenever the blood of the different races meets it melds to create intermediate creatures.

Some of these are benign – the mer-people of the world's oceans for example.

Many are abominations – zombies, lycanthropes and, worst of all, the Nosferatu – Vampire.

These Faerie-kind interact equally with mankind and faerie. As such, they are a threat to both races. Even worse, however, is their potential to act as a portal between them.

Thousands upon thousands of years of stealth will be as naught if mankind finds the truth about these nightmare creatures and – through them – comes to know of the Faerie. If peaceful co-existence was likely, the Fey wouldn't have had to hide themselves for so long.

So Oberon and the Council have ordered the creation of a special clique of faerie-kind whose job it is to keep the Truth from humanity.



Phase 2: Investigation

These **Faerie Warriors** are empowered to take any action necessary to keep Humans away from the Faerie.

The situation is complicated that there are at least four ways that Faerie-kind can be created:

Pure-breeds

Faerie-kind mating with Faerie-kind will create more of the same type. Communities of these creatures exist in hidden places across the world. Most of these Faerie-kind are interested in simply staying secret and hold no ill-will towards humanity.

Dissimilar breeds of Faerie-kind may cross-breed but the outcomes of this are unpredictable. Such matings are strictly forbidden by order of Oberon himself.

Any such abominations are to be hunted down and destroyed.



Cross-breeds

If a Human mates with a Faerie-kind the offspring will be of Faerie-kind itself.

If the mother is Faerie-kind then the child will be born into the faerie community. This raises few issues.

If, however, the mother is human, the child may be born into the human world. Its arcane nature would soon assert itself and become obvious. This would be a major problem.

The Faerie-warriors have set up communities of pure-humans devoted entirely to the best interests of faerie – people who willingly give up their pure-born children to be exchanged for faerie-kind children born in the normal world. The truth of changlings is the opposite of legends. Fully human babies are left in place of elf-kind.

Whether these happy, contented faerie-led secret communities of pureblood humans are recipients of a great gift or represent “farmed” humanity is a question left for people better than I to debate.

Infection

Any pure human infected with Faerie-blood will slowly mutate into Faerie-kind, normally the same kind as the creature which has infected them. This is a fact. It is only that most Faerie-kind are peaceful, or use technology to distance themselves from dirtying themselves through human contact, that people think it is only the brutal types – such as lycanthropes - that are infectious. Back an unarmed Gnome into corner and force him to use his teeth and claws to defend himself and you'll find yourself turning into a Gnome.

Any apparent immunity to Faerie-blood is through the recipient already being infected. Some Faerie-kind appear completely human. They are not human, however, and given the right stress their true nature may assert itself.

Characters with a “Magic” background may, unbeknownst to them - or their player – fit into this category. The stress of Earth being invaded may trigger their metamorphosis.

People recently infected with Faerie-blood may take treatments which delay or temporarily suspend the change. The Faerie-Warriors know of these cures. Herbs such as wolfsbane are key ingredients. Anyone infected by Faerie-blood must eventually join the faerie community – or be destroyed.



However, they may be allowed a few years with their old-kind before they must cross over. Provided they take the cure and keep their developing nature secret.

Undead

The most terrifying aspect of faerie-blood infection is its effect upon recently dead human-kind. It has the ability to re-animate these creatures as semi-sentient shadows of their former selves.



The most common type of animated corpse is the zombie. This is a shambling, decaying mockery of life which thinks it needs to breathe and eat as it always did when alive. Desperate to assuage their unreal hunger they exist only to destroy and consume

A slightly more advanced version of a zombie is the Vampyre. These creatures have delusions of intellect and believe themselves to be truly sentient. This is not so. There are under the same delusion as the rest of the undead. They just *believe* they need to consume human blood in order to maintain their intellect.

Faerie-warriors are dedicated to destroying Undead in all their forms.

I've gone for a common origin for the world's supernatural creatures. I find this campaign big and sprawling enough as it is without introducing lots of different kinds and origins of the world's paranormal creatures. If you want to assume the mystical denizens of your campaign world have a more tradition range of origins, feel free.

Opponents

This section details some of the opponents the characters might encounter in this phase of the campaign. These are mainly faerie-kind.

Many of these opponents have special abilities – or “super-powers” – so, as Referee, you'll have to read these and familiarise yourself with them as they arise. This should help you for when your players have to do this and the end of phase 3.

The players may – and should – have as many alien encounters as they do supernatural ones. The alien encounters will vary more according to the plot details than the specific opponents encountered, however. Most of the Th'rish encountered will be agents and will have similar or identical descriptions.

In fact, if I were you, I'd just use the details of G'rang from the Starspawn scenario (below) for all the Th'rish encountered in this phase. Just change the name and add or delete abilities based upon the requirements of the plot.

The characters will encounter a wider range of Th'rish when the Earth is invaded.

The Faerie-kind encounters can cover anything from any horror story or fantasy plot-line you've ever watched or written. Here are a few standard types:

Gnomes

Also known as Dwarves and Satyrs, this kind of Pure Breed Faerie kind is one of the most common.

In general, they are shorter than humans. Apart from the pointed ears so common amongst Faerie-kind, their most distinctive features are their legs. Though perfectly normal for their kind – their knees are set in the reverse position to humans. This leads many humans to believe that they are half human and half animal.



(They may even have given rise to the patently ridiculous myth of Centaurs.)



Phase 2: Investigation

Because of this misconception, they tend to dress to disguise their nether regions whenever they need to interact with mankind.

Gnomes and humans are pretty much equivalent in most ways. In game terms, Gnomes can be created using the same system as human characters. Most of them will be mere civilians without any detailed statistics. Some of them (especially those selected to be Faerie-Warriors) will have characteristics equivalent to those of the player characters.

Because of their mystical origins, many of these more able Gnomes may have a number of special abilities. If you are creating a Gnome character for the players to encounter, feel free to select or roll some powers from the **Faerie Blood** table given in **Phase 3: Rebirth**.

A good example of a typical Gnome is - Kinross who the players encountered in Phase 1.

Gnomes are the "step and fetch" characters of the Faerie world. They are just different enough for the characters to realise that they're from a different realm but human enough to make interactions easy.

Generally, you should use them to move the plot along. They're not there to come into direct conflict with the characters – though they may help or hinder them if they have a conflicting agenda. They're easy Faerie-kind to slip in, for example, whenever you want to give the players some information or kill someone off in order to foreshadow and impending threat.

In fact, if you want, the short life span of a gnome who comes into contact with the characters could become an interesting running joke within your particular campaign...

Lycanthropes

Sometimes the mixture of human and faerie blood gives rise to creatures who bear the hallmarks more of beasts than either man or fey.



Depending upon the degree of dominance of the human blood, sometimes these beings have the ability to take on the faux appearance of a human. These are often referred to as "Werewolves" – though they don't actually change into wolves. They retain a basically humanoid form.

Other lycanthropes lack – or have lost – the ability to appear as human. It is these that give rise to the legends of Bigfoot, Sasquatch and the Yeti.

Though there are some weaker ones, most Lycanthropes who appear in the game are full characters. Whilst their characteristics can be rolled – or just decided – in the normal way they almost always have a selection of the following abilities:

Acrobatics
Change form*
Cloaking
Endurance
Fast recovery**
Growth
Increased move
Marksmanship
Martial Arts
Mutation
Protection**
Regeneration**
Shrink
Strength
Supersense
Survival

These are all described later in this book.

*It is the "Change form" ability which separates the Werewolf from the Yeti.

** Fast Recovery, Protection and Regeneration do not work against damage done by certain, specific metals – of which Silver is the most common.

Lycanthrope blood is particularly virulent – second only to that of the Nosferatu in the speed it works upon mere mortals. Anyone bitten by a lycanthrope needs rapid treatment to delay the onset of their change.



A good example of a Lycanthrope is Lupus - who the players encountered in Phase 1.

Lycanthropes are baaaad, but are essentially self-serving. They make great one-off opponents but are disorganised, mercenary creatures who are unlikely to form essential allies in the conflict to come.

Personally I use them in Phase 2 when I need a tough Supernatural opponent which won't mess up any on-going plotline development. They're always good when you need a scrap.



Zombies

These are the most common form of undead.

As has been documented over and over again, sometimes zombies can get just too common.



Upon more than one occasion, for instance, the slaughter of a faerie-kind has led to the contamination of the local water table. Subterranean fluids have seeped into local graveyards, re-animating generations of corpses into a mockery of the life they once possessed.

Zombies have just enough awareness to realise that something is wrong. Somehow things are different from how they should be. They feel strange. Hungry. They feel that if they were to EAT things would just get back to normal. So they shamle around – barely managing to get their decaying forms to move – attacking, killing and trying to consume any living creature they come across – including their fellow man. The problem is anyone killed by a zombie and not fully consumed will become a zombie themselves.

In game terms, Zombies are pretty much like Thugs and Civilians:

- It takes them two panels to make an attack.
- Their attacks can be dodged or parried for free as long as character has panels available.

They differ in minor ways:

- Their attacks do 1d Kill and 2d Stun.
- They move 2 squares per panel.
- They are immune to Stun damage but will be rendered hors de combat by any attack which does Kill damage.

Because of their slow speed, characters can usually easily outdistance them. However, there are usually hundreds of the buggers coming at you from every direction!



Phase 2: Investigation

Zombie Options

After the third or fourth mass zombie attack, they can become a bit boring as opponents.

You can mix things up a bit by throwing in a couple of simple variants:

- You can make things more challenging by giving some Zombies actual Kill points. Even Zombies with a mere 5 Kill points each can prove difficult to defeat – especially to someone doing a normal fist which does d-5 Kill damage.

The rationalisation for this is that these zombies are only recently deceased and their bodies haven't had time to decay yet.

- Some larger Zombies can have a damage modifier.
- Some zombies – often called “rage” zombies – can move as fast as normal humans or, even, faster. These often aren't actually dead but have been infected by a disease which simulates death.

Of course there's nothing to stop you mixing these up to create bespoke threats to challenge your characters.

Don't do this, however, until you've made them suffer through at least one zombie horde mass attack from the weakest, crumbliest zombies you can come up with.

Everybody should experience at least one of these!



Vampyres

Also known as Vampires or Nosferatu, Vampyres are the undead with delusions of grandeur.

They differ from Zombies in three ways:

- For some reason, their bodies don't seem to decay at the same rate. The faerie blood seems to have enabled their normal healing system to work beyond death.
- They retain a higher degree of sentience than Zombies. This may be linked to their healing – above. Their brains don't decay after death in the same way as Zombies.
- Though they don't need sustenance – being kept animated by the faerie blood itself – they still feel the same craving as Zombies.

However, vampyres believe it is specifically through the consumption of human blood that they are kept active. This is as deluded as the Zombies' craving for flesh.

The traditional ways of killing or controlling a vampyre come from the following misconceptions:

- A vampyre can be killed by driving a stake through its heart. All this does is to stop the creature's circulatory system from working which suspends all of its “life” processes. The stake doesn't have to be wood – any substance will work. If the stake is removed, the vampire will re-animate. However, whilst it is paralysed, it can be attacked and destroyed in a number of ways.
- A vampyre is destroyed by exposure to sun-light. This is actually true for all undead. Their bodies no longer regenerate from the damage done by Ultra-violet rays. However, this is far from instantaneous. Leave a zombie out in the sunlight for a few days and its skin will blacken and burn. The reason vampyres seem so sensitive is that they actually feel the pain of the burning.
- Vampyres are repulsed by Holy Objects. This is psycho-somatic on their part.



At their core vampyres despise what they have become and feel that they are tainted, evil and unworthy. They expect to be punished by God and avoid anything Holy for that reason.

Similar rationales exist for other legends attached to the vampire.



There are many different levels of vampire. Some are little more than Thugs, equivalent to Zombies – especially if they were weak or unimportant in their former lives, have only recently been “turned” and/or are under the direct control of a more powerful Master.

Some Vampyres who appear in the game are full characters. Whilst their characteristics can be rolled – or just decided – in the normal way they almost always have a selection of the following abilities:

Change form*
Cloaking
Endurance
Enhancement
Fast recovery**
Follower
Increased move
Information
Martial Arts
Mind control
Protection**
Regeneration**
State change*
Strength
Supersense
Survival

These are all described later in this book.

* Personally I prefer not to have Vampyres who can morph into bats, wolves or clouds of smoke – preferring these to be legends based upon cautious use of their other abilities. However, some Referees may wish to give their vampyres these traditional abilities.

** Fast Recovery, Protection and Regeneration do not work against damage done by certain, specific metals – of which Silver is the most common.

Finally, there will almost certainly be at least one “Master” vampire with high characteristics and most – if not all – of the above abilities. He (or she) would prove a challenge for the entire team of player-characters even after they’ve been upgraded following the alien invasion.

Other Faerie-kind

Of course, there are many other creatures of legend which the players’ characters could encounter during this phase. Some of these are merely variants or alternative interpretations of those given here.

Satyrs, dwarves, even centaurs, are all based upon human-kind’s encounters with Gnomes, for example.

Others can be invented as necessary.

See the Ghouls in the next adventure for an example of this.

Exactly which creatures emerge from the mists of legend to trouble your campaign world can depend upon the actions of your characters. Sometimes it’s fun to let the characters investigate a **mystery without any idea in your head as to what’s** behind it. Then you listen to the theories your players come up with and choose to have one of those as the explanation – even if it means introducing a whole new faerie-kind into your campaign.





Adventures

Apart from the example adventure given below, here are some ideas for games you might want to run during this phase of the game.

Hopefully the characters will have signed up with Craig Starling and MI:X. In this case, he can simply direct them to these investigations:

- Bodies are being found drained of blood – each with two distinctive puncture marks in its neck. This will be a vampire at loose in the city. Faerie-warriors will be at work, ensuring that the victims do not raise as vampires themselves. They will be tracking the vampire themselves and the characters' investigation will interfere with their own. It will have to be stopped or sidelined.
- An old colleague of Starling's contacts him. He is concerned that details of the country's nuclear weapons codes have been stolen from a number of bases. The Government is covering this up. The country's nuclear weapons technology is now so old that no-one living knows how to change the codes. The characters will have to discern a pattern in the thefts, predict the next attack and ambush the Thr'ish agent undertaking them. They may be forced to release him if he threatens to set off one of the country's nuclear warheads.
- A dangerous middle-eastern dictatorship has apparently captured both an alien space-ship and its pilot. The characters must determine the truth of these rumours. If true, that country cannot be allowed to make any scientific breakthroughs from its discovery. It turns out that this is merely a ruse, intended to give the country bargaining power at the United Nations. The Thr'ish don't know this, however, and have sent an agent of their own to investigate.

Key facilities and ships are falling victim to sabotage. When the characters investigate they find totally loyal individuals suborned to an external force. Every one of them has had their blood replaced with a strange yellow fluid.

- An entire town has fallen victim to a strange plague. When the characters investigate they find it is a Government experiment gone wrong. The plague was cultured on a strange, unidentified, sample. The resultant virus is as threatening to the Thr'ish as to humans and – as such – the Thr'ish intend to eliminate all evidence of its existence.
- The capital city falls victim to a plague of zombies and has to be sealed off.
- The characters are approached by Kinross. An actual Faerie has been captured by a multi-national bio-weapons manufacturer. He needs their help to rescue it. This brings the characters into direct conflict with that company's bio-weapons and drug-enhanced soldiery.
- A faerie or alien creature brought back to base for investigation isn't as dead as the characters thought. It will come back to life and attack MI:X from within.
- The creature in the woods is back and – this time – he's brought his family.





Key themes

Throughout this phase there are two things you need to achieve.

Firstly, the characters need to become aware of the Thr'ish and the fact that they have plans which are not in humanity's best interests.

They can find out as much or as little as you want. Which do you prefer – the moment when they sneak upon the alien mothership and discover that it is just one of forty thousand poised to invade or do you want the invasion to come as a shock?

My favourite is to have the characters' attempts to foil the invasion precipitate the very invasion they're trying to foil.

Maybe they reveal the existence of the aliens to the world. Though the invasion still succeeds, the warning allows Earth to shoot down a number of the Thr'ish ships whilst the bulk of humanity flee the cities and hide – including military personnel and resources.

Secondly, the characters need to find out all about the various supernatural factions on the planet.

Though they may have made enemies of some of them – vampires and lycanthropes – they should have befriended others.

It would be useful if at least one character was seen as a friend by the Faerie.

It wouldn't hurt if one or two were infected with faerie-blood.





Starspawn

This is an example of a typical Phase 2 adventure. In this adventure the characters have the existence of the alien threat Starling is always going on about confirmed – disturbingly so.

This mood of this adventure is that of the various television series' upon which the game is based.

The characters are part of an official, unofficial or freelance organisation investigating unusual events. Their attention is attracted by strange reports in the media. As their investigations continue, the otherworldly nature of the cause of those events slowly becomes clear and the characters are plunged into a life-threatening situation.

Introduction: Movements beneath the Earth

There are at least two non-human factions the characters will encounter in this adventure:

Th'rish

As the invasion plans of the villainous Th'rish fall into place, our planet is surrounded by a fleet of shrouded starships, with a further fleet concealed behind the moon and yet a third orbiting the planet Mars.

Even these ships are not enough to conquer a world of ten billion souls, however. The population must be corrupted so that a significant number of earthlings stand aside for, or actually aid, the invasion.

Whilst this seduction phase advances, any discovery of the shrouded ships could lead to their destruction. Mankind possesses enough ordnance to damage or – even – totally dispatch this fleet, putting back the plans of the Th'rish for decades.

So when one of their vessels develops a fault and crashes to Earth, it falls to one of the Th'rish's finest agents to recover its remains before the humans do.

Ghouls

The modern world has been good to the ghoul.

This particular product of the corruption of human form by faerie infection was despised in ancient days when it was forced to survive by infesting graveyards to feast upon the dead.

Today they inhabit the deepest sewers of our sprawling cities. They don't merely survive there, they actually thrive. And they form an integral part of our urban recycling system – a secret known to only a few.

The story so far

The Th'rish ship burned up in the atmosphere. Its crew were incinerated. The bulk of the vessel vaporised. Most of what survived to fall to earth were molten nuggets of strangely dense metal.

Only a few components survived intact. Most of these have now been recovered by G'rang – the agent sent by the Th'rish to clean up their mess.

Only one small part has evaded him. That is because it has found its way deep into the city's sewers, shielded from the rays of his detector ring. Unfortunately, this one component is part of the ship's regeneration system. It is using whatever it can to try and rebuild itself as a new ship.

The first thing it found was a ghoul – Khash - and it has merged with him – subsuming his mind to its own. Hiding deep in the shadows, this merged being has ambushed creature after creature – ghouls, alligators and worse – bringing them one by one into the web of the regenerating ship. These corrupted beings are being sent to the surface world to bring back components which are being used - not to recreate the fallen alien vessel – but something smaller which can be used to escape back into space where the true regeneration will take place.

Of course, the launch of the alien ship will destroy an entire neighbourhood of the city and kill hundreds of thousands of innocent souls – revealing the alien presence to all on Earth. The ship – StarKhash – doesn't care.



Cast:



Khash

A ghoulish creature who was living happily in the sewers of the city, surviving on the waste and carrion of its citizens. An amoral creature it bears no particular ill-will towards mankind. It has now been taken over by

the will of an alien artificial intelligence system. If the soul of the original Khash can be contacted somehow, it will rebel against its imprisonment.

StarKhash

The fusion of the ghoulish Khash, with the remnants of a Th'rish starship's regeneration system. It has now grown into a new, smaller, vessel with the original Star-Khash at its heart. It is nearly ready to launch.



G'rang

A Th'rish agent sent to Earth to recover the remnants of the fallen ship. Wily and dangerous – possessed of skills and technology beyond those available to the player characters.

Zhrek

The leader of the ghouls is in the sewers. He has been responsible for keeping his people in check for many years – observing an unwritten truce with the people of the surface, a truce he feels the surface dwellers have now broken.



Sarah Rose Jones



A reporter who is investigating the same strange events as the player characters, with far less experience, equipment or training.

Her cameraman, Sam, may well have a limited life expectancy....



Dr Terry Albright

Dr Albright is an optional extra. He is investigating the disruption in mobile phone and satellite TV signals for a couple of national corporations. They are losing significant revenue though low call volume and failures in pay-per-view TV.

He can be co-opted as a technical adviser should the player characters not include a suitable scientist or possess the appropriate technical skills.



Episode 1: What can eat a street?

The characters' attention is drawn to a series of strange events in one of the country's main cities:

- A sudden and marked increase in the number of robberies of computer shops and similar high-tech stores
- An explosion at a petrochemical facility which may or may not have been the cover for – or side effect of – a robbery of some kind
- Not one but two streets where the inhabitants have woken up to find their cars – and in some cases their dustbins – gone. No trace left except for the odd wheel, bolt or car seat cushion.
- An increase in the interference to mobile telephone signals, broadband, radio and television. This has led to deterioration in the response times of the emergency services leading to increases in crime, property damage, injuries and deaths.

The players will travel to the city to investigate. There are two different ways you may choose to role-play this investigation:

The first method

Respond to the players' investigations using the following information:

- If they investigate the computer shop break-ins, they will find that they all happened at night. Almost everything was stripped from the shops including fittings and – in more than one case – the roller shutter from the shop front. The two strange features are that the robbery seemed clumsy and brutal whilst the security systems were deactivated seamlessly.

(The robberies were conducted by wired ghouls but the system was deactivated by StarKhash acting through their circuits.)

Also, shops hit tended to be small ones on main streets rather than larger mega-stores on trading parks or stores in shipping precincts.

(Easy access to the sewers through standard manhole covers. Access on the other sites tends to be more thoroughly secured.)

- The petrochemical company produced a wide range of chemicals including liquid gases of all kinds, plastics and a few specialised industrial alloys. (StarKhash needed the components for rocket fuel). A brilliant chemist can scan/test the remains to detect the absence of the substances the ghouls stole before igniting the premises. Given care, they can also track the movement of some of the missing chemicals towards a nearby sewer entrance through the tracking of trace elements. Close inspection will reveal the sewer gate to have been recently forced.
- Interviewing the inhabitants of the stripped streets will reveal that most of them were in bed. One child will tell an outrageous story about looking out of window to see monsters and alligators coming out of the sewers to strip the cars and pass the pieces down into the ground. A local tramp – “Binman Ken” hasn't been seen for a few days. He has moved to another area. If located, his story supports that of the insomniac child. Each street is one which has one more than the average number of manhole covers in it.
- Brilliant scientists can track the interference in the signals as coming from beneath the earth. Failing that, the characters can bump into Dr Albright – who is coming to the same conclusions.

All investigations point to the sewers.

The second method

This can be used along with or instead of the above information. This is to listen the players' ideas and suggestions.

Whatever their first idea is will not succeed but their second suggestion will.

For example, if the players choose to threaten staff at the petrochemical plant and/or computer shops it will fail because there were no “inside men”.

However, if they then decide to stake-out an unrobbed shop, they will observe some wired ghouls and alligators stripping it.



On the other hand, if they first decide to stake out some shops, it will be a waste of time. They will not choose the right one(s). If they then threaten the staff, one of them will tell a tale of how a fearsome creature (ghoul) threatened his family unless he let them into the shop.

However the referee handles things, sooner or later the characters will need to head down into the city's sewer system.

An aside: Trackers

Unless they have been extremely subtle (unlikely) the characters' investigations will have been noticed. They have attracted the attention of Sarah Rose Jones, G'rang and (if they need him but haven't met him yet) Dr Terry Albright. All three of these will either be following the Heroes into the sewers or – more likely – preempting their actions.

Episode 2: A Ghoul by any other name

The characters should equip themselves, acquire any specialist support they need and head into the sewers.

The Referee should role-play this accordingly. If they have co-opted a sewer worker, then things should go quite smoothly and quickly without the characters getting lost or constantly slipping into the sewage. (One agility roll from each player for the whole descent.)

Characters who headed down without proper planning should waste time finding their bearings and be subject to rather more Agility rolls.

Nothing special should happen in the higher levels of the sewers, though appropriate Sleuthing rolls may reveal that the characters have been preceded by someone (Sarah Rose). REALLY good sleuthing rolls may reveal that they are being followed (by G'rang).

Eventually, as they hit the lower levels, they will hear a scream. Rushing to help they will find a ghoul crouching over the fallen body of a cameraman and threatening a young reporter. If the characters lose the battle with the ghoul (possible) it will drag one body away to consume. This will probably be Sam the cameraman's. (As always, anyone seriously injured by the ghoul may find themselves turning into one.)

If they win the battle (unlikely), they may question the ghoul or bring it to the surface for investigation.

If they draw (likely), the ghoul will run away into the darkness. If the characters choose to pursue a few agility rolls should see them losing the trail as they slip and slide in the sewage.

G'rang may or may not interfere with this battle at the Referee's choice. Most likely he will try to take the ghoul hostage himself for questioning.

At this point, the characters should return to the surface to check in with their leaders or do some research. If their research is successful, they will discover all about the ghouls and their secret symbiotic relationship with mankind. Recent events do not seem to fit readily with the role of the ghoul in human society.

If the characters think to talk to Sarah Rose or check the camera, they'll find that Sarah and Sam (poor Sam) had spotted a strange figure in the distance and were following it when the ghoul attacked.

If they can get the film enhanced, it will show that the figure they were following was another ghoul. However, whilst one ghoul seemed unafraid and happy to attack Sarah Rose and Sam, the other seemed to want to remain hidden. Enhancement and careful study will show something on the fleeing ghoul's face, something that looks like a network of circuitry.

If they have managed to bring the ghoul up for questioning, or spoke to it in the sewers, they will find out:

- Its name is Gahrkrk.
- It attacked Sam and Sarah Rose to stop them bringing evidence of ghoul-kind to the surface
- It was especially concerned that they have acquired evidence of the "changed ones". This is a great shame on the ghoul race.
- Some ghouls have been disappearing from the clan. When and if they are seen again, they are wearing a web of "man-stuff" on their faces. They no longer respond to their clans' demands and have been interfering with surface-life.

This is an anathema for true ghouls.



Phase 2: Investigation

- If Gahrkrk did any Kill damage to anyone he will welcome his future brother or sister to the clan.
- The ghouls are ruled by a parliament headed by the great Zhrek.
- Gahrkrk didn't mean to harm anyone but – if he did kill Sam – well...waste not want not?

The characters should now return to the sewers to try and find out more. If they can find appropriate carrion, they can take it as a present for ghouls to show their good intentions.

Episode 3: A parliament of ghouls

The characters now know all about the ghouls in the sewers. They suspect the ghouls aren't responsible for recent events but they might have useful information. They may know something about ghouls being "wired".

So the players may head back into the sewers to make friendly contact with our carrion eating friends.

The good news is that – armed with knowledge about ghouls – the characters should be able to bring some particularly tasty tit-bits to appease any they encounter.

This should avoid immediate conflict with any they encounter and get them into a meeting with their leader – Zhrek.

As they head into the heart of the ghouls' lair, more and more will follow them as they detect the scent of the offerings.

It is also good news that Zhrek is old and wise and supports the unspoken concord between human and ghoul.

The bad news is that Zhrek has lost a lot of his people recently and doesn't know why. (They have been co-opted by StarKhash).

Even worse, the ghoul the characters last encountered has been found in an upper gallery – so horrifically dismembered that even the ghouls wince to think of it. (Courtesy of G'rang's interrogation).

So the Heroes have some explaining and negotiating to do.

Hopefully they will succeed in this and won't be torn limb from limb by the hordes of ravening faerie-kind. Give the players appropriate bonuses to their Esteem rolls for clever arguments. If the players still fail all their Esteem rolls, give any other tactics they employ – such as taking Zhrek hostage – a more than even chance of succeeding.

If the Heroes do have some way to track where his people have been taken to, Zhrek will allow them passage and assign them a guide. (The guide's job is to abandon them and report back as soon as they have found their target.)

He may decide to keep a hostage.

Episode 4: The sewage hits the fan

Following Dr Terry Albright's detector (or one they've made themselves) and accompanied by a ghoul guide, the characters head into the heart of the mystery.

Deep beneath the earth they find one those huge chambers they always show buried at the bottom of the sewer systems shown on television. They can find a sewer-pipe opening overlooking the chamber from which can they observe events.

In the chamber are another horde of ghouls – this lot with wires all over their faces. There are also some wired alligators and a few wired human beings. All are part of the mind of StarKhash.

In the centre of the chamber is something which can only be a spaceship of some kind. Careful study will reveal its origins. (Parts of a shop-front shutter are visible). It is smoking and seems close to launch.

Looking at the roof, the characters can see it's covered with gas canisters. The plan is obviously to blow these up as the ship launches. Presumably there are similar arrangements on the higher levels.



It doesn't take a genius to work out that, if the ship launches, it will take out a large part of the city. Tens of thousands, possible hundreds of thousands, of people will die.

At this point the characters will realise that the ghoul guiding them has gone.

What to do?

- Going back to the surface to report and warn the city. By the time they get back, it may be too late – especially as they no longer have a guide.
- Go back and get the ghouls to come and attack the chamber. Again, the lack of a guide doesn't help here.
- An all-out attack to stop the ship launching. Not likely to succeed.
- Create a distraction to allow someone to sneak in and disable the ship. Probably a suicide mission.
- Blow up the gas canisters prematurely and individually to scupper the launch plan – with gun shots presumably. This is extremely difficult and as soon as they start shooting all the ghouls will doubtless attack them. So some of the characters will be holding off a ghoulish assault whilst the sharpshooters are trying to hit their targets.
- Head up to the higher levels to sabotage the explosives/canisters on those levels. A good idea but the lack of a guide doesn't help.

Diplomacy?

G'rang has been grappling with a similar dilemma ever since he arrived hours ago. He is hidden – in humanoid disguise – and listening to the characters' plans.

He may choose to reveal himself. In this case he will at first claim to be an agent like themselves but from a different organisation. If this doesn't work he will reveal himself as an alien but will maintain the pretence of both being humanoid and humane.

However, if he is forced to do this, he will have to ensure that he kills all of the characters before returning to his people.

Even if G'rang does not reveal himself, he will support the characters' chosen actions in secret ways. He will try to stay hidden but he will do his best to help them to succeed.

Consequences

Whatever plan the characters choose, however, will be totally disrupted. After his agent reported back, Zhrek decided to lead his people to rescue their lost comrades. The chamber will erupt into chaos as a horde of wired ghouls and wired alligators are assaulted by a horde of free-willed ghoul accompanied by.....

Something. Something big, And dark. And smelling of carrion. Something from the depths of the Earth. Something humans were never meant to see.

This is just for atmosphere. The characters aren't meant to fight this...thing. They're not even meant to look at it directly. It's just...there.

As the battle rages the characters could just leave or choose to take no part. In this case StarKhash will launch. All in the chamber will be killed and so will hundreds of thousands in the city above.

Hopefully the characters will try to pick their way through the conflict to the ship itself and enter it. Suspend normal initiative here, unless the players particularly want to battle their way through.

If they are trying to dodge through the combat use the following system:

- 1) Each character needs to cover 20 squares of movement. This will normally be four moves.
- 2) For each move, make an Agility roll to avoid conflict.
 - A natural 20 on any of these rolls means the character reaches the ship without having to make any further rolls.
 - An 18 or more is a complete success and the character avoids any attacks in that move.
 - A 15 or more is a partial success. The character is not attacked but is impeded and needs to make an additional Agility roll.



Phase 2: Investigation

- If their total score is less than 15 the character suffers a random attack in that panel. They may dodge or parry the attack and this costs them no time in future panels.
- A natural 1 means the character has stumbled, is attacked and may make no response to that attack.

To determine the attack the character suffers, roll a d10:

Roll	Attack
1-3	A wired Ghoul
4-5	A wired alligator
6-7	A normal Ghoul
8	A normal Alligator
9	The "thing" from the bowels of the Earth*
10	A blast of energy from the ship (see Starkhash's energy blast for details).

* If this option comes up, just make up some appropriate damage. A +20 damage modifier (or more) might be appropriate.

When the characters reach the ship, the entrance ramp will go up via the air-lock into the hold/storage chamber. From here the characters can go up the control room (and Starkhash) or down into the engine room.

They have the following options:

- Set the ship to explode. This can be done with any kind of successful science roll but is a difficult task (-10). Repeated rolls are possible. This can be done from the engine room or the control room. A full success will allow a delay to be set.

A minor success will need someone to remain in the ship to set off the explosion. The explosion will kill everyone in the chamber but – hey – they're just ghouls. It will cause an earthquake on the surface, however, which may kill a few people.

- Set the ship to take off without blasting the chamber roof. This can be done with any kind of successful science roll and is a normal task. Repeated rolls are possible. This can be done from the engine room or the control room. A full success will allow a countdown to be set.

A minor success will need someone to remain in the ship to activate lift-off. The lift-off and collision with the roof will do 10d10 kill everyone in the chamber but – hey – they're just ghouls. It will cause an minor tremors on the surface.

- Kill Khash. Starkhash will cease to exist as an entity and all the wired creatures will be released. The characters will have to be careful, though, the regeneration circuitry is still active and may seek a new host.
- Free Khash from his bondage. This has the same effects as above but now he will be alive and grateful.

(See the description of Khash for full details of these last two options.)

Whatever the characters decide to do, G'rang will interfere and try to follow his own agenda. His preferred option is to destroy the ship and all witnesses – as long as he can set a timed delay to escape himself. A minor earthquake on the surface is a small price to pay.

What G'rang has to prevent is allowing the characters to access the ship's information bank. If they manage that then they will find out all about the fleet of ten thousand shrouded ships enveloping the Earth. With more digging they'll find the ten thousand ships hidden behind the moon. With even more they'll find the twenty thousand waiting in Mars orbit for a summons.

Should the Heroes gain access to this information, G'rang will need to stop them getting to the surface with it. Should they manage to escape with the information, G'rang will have to warn the fleet and they will have to invade immediately.





Rogue's Gallery

Here, all in one place for ease of reference, are the game details of the bad guys in this Scenario:

Name:		Gahrkrk (or any ghoul)						
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa	
18	14	8	8	8	10	12	4	
+9	+7	+4	+4	+4	+5	+6	+2	
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move		
Intimidate		+10	Anatomy		+5	5 sq.		
Spot		+11	Low Society		+5	Kn.Bk.		
Stealth		+9	Sewer Environment		+7	32		
Scavenging		+9	Rat raising		+5	Dm.Md.		
Weightlifting		+14	Butchery		+5	+5		
Kill: 50				Stun: 50				
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes			
Fist		1d-5	2d	+5				
Claw		2d	1d	+5				
Background/Abilities								
Regeneration Survival (Immune to poisons and disease)								
Background Story								
Degenerated humanoids who live underground upon the waste of the surface world.								

Wired Ghouls

Ghouls who are electronically in thrall to Star Khash have the above attributes except for their Kill and Stun scores. Because they are ill fed but can ignore pain, their scores are:

Kill: 40
Stun: 60

Wired Alligators

These have 30 Stun and Kill. However, they divide all Stun damage by 2 and Kill Damage by 3.

Their jaws do 1d Stun and 2d + 10 kill damage.

They have a Knockback score of 20 and only move 3 squares per panel.

The "Thing" from below.

Consider this to have infinite Stun and Kill points. It can move at 5 squares per round and has a +20 damage bonus.

Consider it to have a knockback score of 100.

Name: G'rang				Alias: Thr'ish Agent 72112			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
(15)	(10)	12	15	12	8	12	12
25	20						
(+8)	(+5)	+6	+8	+6	+4	+6	+6
+13	+10						
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Spot		+21	Electronics		+6	6 Sq.	
First Aid		+11	Equipment Repair		+6	Kn.Bk.	
Stealth		+13	Comp. Prog.		+5	(40) 50	
Comp. Use		+11	Pilot Shuttle		+5	Dm.Md.	
Search		+21	Cryptography		+5	+13	
Kill: (35) 70 /3				Stun: (35) 70 /3			
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod		Notes	
Fist		d-5	2d	+1d +12		Hits with +2 on the die	
Blaster		1-6 x d	1-6 x d	-		8 dice per 2 rnd. 14 Square range.	
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Strength 1 (+5 on knockback)							
Endurance 1 (+5 on recovery rolls)							
Martial Arts 1 (Judo Throw)							
Supersense 2 (Radar - +10 on Sleuth rolls, -2 to opponent's dodges)							
Protection 2 (Immune to bullets/knives/meteteorites, +1 Agility rolls.)							
Energy Blast 2 (8 dice per 2 rounds – single target, enhanced range)							
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Khash/Star Khash

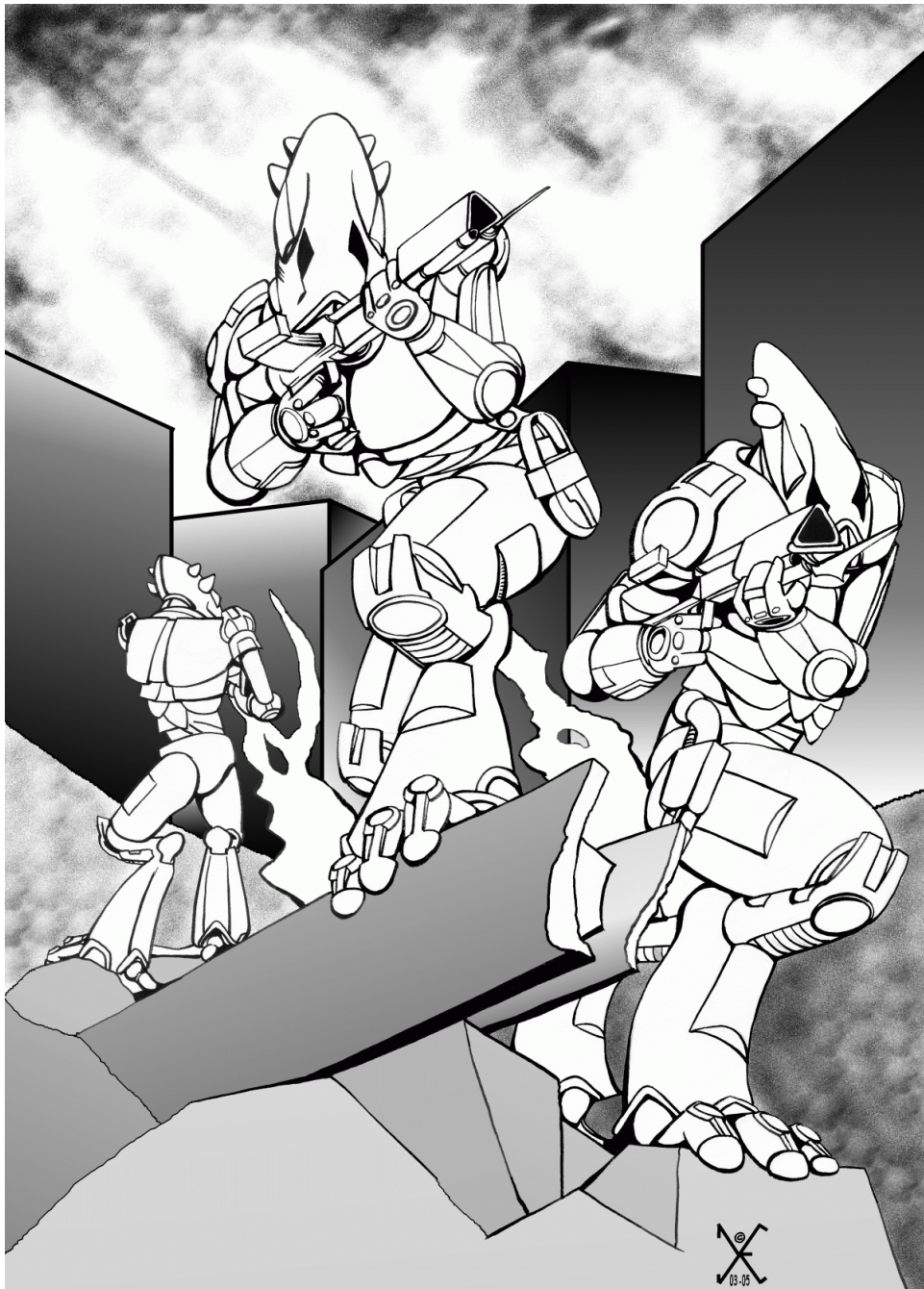
These have whatever abilities are dramatically appropriate to the Heroes who manage to reach the ship.

Sarah-Rose Jones, Terry Albright

All of these are ordinary people and use the following details:

Move	4 squares
Attacks	d-5 Kill, 2d Stun
Knockback	15
Panels	Take 2 panels to perform a major action
Kill/Stun	Injured by any attack which does more Kill than Stun and Stunned by any attack which does more Stun than Kill. Hospitalised or Knocked out by any two attacks or any attack with a bonus of any kind.

Phase 3: Invasion!



By now the characters will know that there are forces at work on our world which are beyond the ken of mortal man.

Firstly there are the Supernatural forces of the planet itself. Manifesting itself through the Faerie folk, their blood has mingled with and tainted the descendance of Man creating beings and creatures both marvellous and horrific.

For the most part, the Faerie world just wants to be left alone – though some elements – the Vampyres for example – regularly come into conflict with the human race.

Secondly, our planet is the site of visitors from other worlds. A few are beneficent, many are mere observers. Others are inimical to our race.

Chief amongst these are the Th'rish who have been amongst us for years, sowing discord and corrupting both our society and our very DNA. Tens of thousands of Th'rish ships lie in nearby space ready to invade our planet and make it their own.



The Thr'ish are a parasite species. They travel from system to system, civilisation to civilisation, throughout space, stripping entire systems of all they find and then moving on. They destroy, consume, reproduce and move on.

Many thousands of years ago the Thr'ish developed a biological and technological template which they found good and they have adhered to this ever since. It is rare for them to find another species which has developed any science which is worth adopting into the Thr'ish prototype. The Thr'ish do not record their history. If they did, it would record only three occasions in the last 50,000 years of an innovation being taken on board by their race.

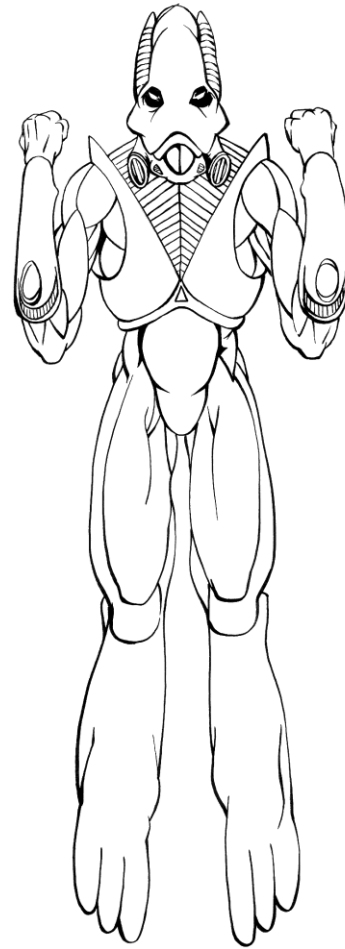
The Thr'ish are univores. They can consume anything. The irony is that they do not need to conquer worlds and destroy civilisations to survive. They can exist in the depths of space, subsisting on asteroids and stellar dust. A single gas giant could keep their entire race alive for centuries. However, they prefer to absorb the energies of living or once-living creatures and particularly prize sentient food. It is also a lot easier if some other race has already refined the materials which they use to build and repair their ships.

And now the Thr'ish have come to Earth. Or come back to Earth. There's a theory that they consumed and destroyed a Martian civilisation millennia ago and seeded the Earth at that time. Now they're back to harvest the crop.

Mankind, however, is vast. Billions of beings spread across a globe too small to accommodate them.

How they have managed this is a mystery. They have a world-wide technology of breath-taking breadth and depth. Superficially it would seem that there is no way they could challenge a Thr'ish visitation. However, just to be sure, the Thr'ish leaders have decreed that agents travel the planet ensuring that humans really do not have any secrets which could be used to foil a conquering force.

At the same time – for added security – the fleet has been divided. Only a small part of it is in orbit of the Earth. More ships still are secreted behind the Earth's satellite, whilst the bulk of the Thr'ish forces are resting on and around the planet of Mars.



Thr'ish are roughly humanoid but in no way human. Thick rubbery green skin enfolds a form based upon an obviously inhuman frame.

There are three castes of Thr'ish. The lower caste does all the menial work – cleaning, carrying, eating. It is they who, on Mars, consume the red surface dust. The higher two castes survive through eating the flesh of this lower caste. The caste has no name, their existence being implied in language through context. At most, they are referred to as “them”.

The medial or “normal” caste contains the technicians and warriors.

A higher caste consists of the jealous, venal and greedy rulers of the different Thr'ish ships. These individuals benefit from the best food and technological support the Thr'ish race can offer. They are larger and stronger than the rest and typically have a range of exceptional abilities – though these abilities vary radically from one to the other.



Phase 3: Invasion!

During the Investigation phase, the characters will mainly encounter evidence of the existence of the Thr'ish rather than the Thr'ish themselves. If they did encounter a Thr'ish it was one of the medial caste.

In this section of the campaign, the Thr'ish become the main opponents.

Lower Caste

Lower Caste caste Thr'ish have no specific details, just like all other civilians and thugs.

They are a bit tougher – and more rubbery – than normal humans. In general it will take two attacks with Level 1 superpowers attacks or 1 attack with a level Superpower to put one down.

Medial Caste

Often, these are equivalent to the player-characters. The range from those who have no special abilities, through agents who have armoured suits or equipment which make them extremely difficult to defeat.

For an example of a Thr'sih Agent, see G'rang in the previous section.

The lowest form of medial Thr'ish are their stormtroopers. These have 10, 15 or 20 Kill and Stun points. They wear armour which divides all damage they take by 2. They have blasters which do 1d Kill/3d Stun or vice versa.

Thr'ish Ordance

In addition to their agents and Stormtroopers, the Thrish have a variety of additional equipment they can bring to bear:

Mass drivers/Photon cannon

Huge ship borne weapons which can be turned upon a planetary surface. Brilliant for levelling cities, not as good for picking out individual targets. They can do from 10 to 20 dice of damage to both Kill and Stun depending upon the requirements of the Scenario.

Laser Sleds

Superfast – 10 Squares counting as Flight 2 – craft carrying two Thr'ish apiece. Normally one is flying the sled whilst the other uses the on-board - level 2 4dice per round – Energy Cannon. Perfect for Heroes to hijack.

Robots

These come in all sizes from small rodent-like devices for infiltrating Human defences, to walkers the size of Skyscrapers. Again, whatever an individual, scenario requires.

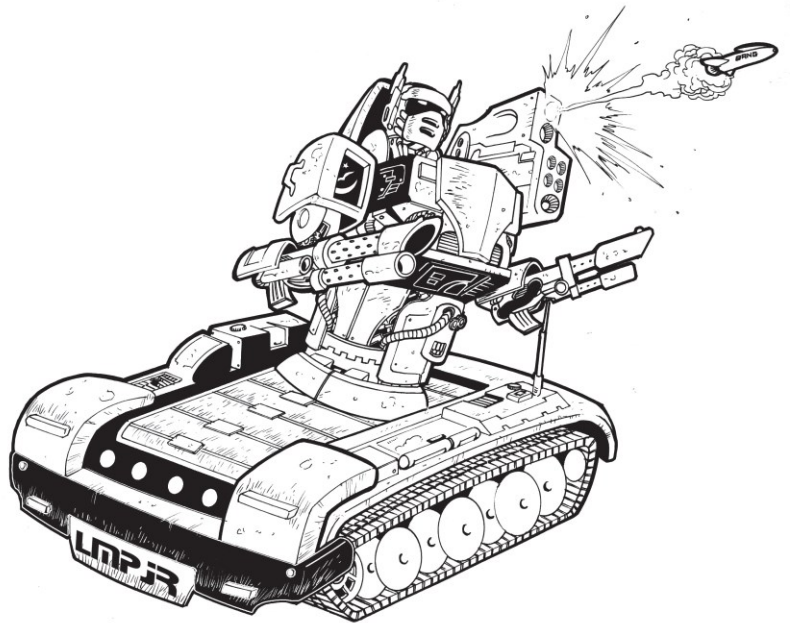
The only rule is that any Robot you introduce must have a specific scene in which it is defeated in the final phase of the campaign.

Higher Caste

There is one of these per Mother Ship. They always have:

- The Growth ability at least at level 1 – however, as they are permanently large, this counts as level 2.
- Tough Skin giving them a Protection of at least level 1.
- Genius level intellect in some are of Science or Military strategy.

They can have any other Superpowers and are generally created using at least 20 power rolls – that's 17 plus the 3 abilities listed above. Some abilities will be innate whilst others will be from equipment and devices.





Lord Ish'n'shtar

Here is an example of a typical Higher Caste Th'rish.

Name: Ish'n'shtar				Alias: Lord of Planetship 12			
St (18) 54 (+9) +27	En (10) 23 (+5) (+12)	Dx 9 +5	Ag 11 +6	Ps 15 +8	Es 18 +9	SI 12 +6	Fa 12 +6
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Impress		+18	Pilot Starship		+8	10 sq.	
Comp. Use.		+15	Leadership		+9	Kn.Bk	
Spot		+15	Comp. Prog.		+8	87	
Stealth		+10	Linguist		+8	Dm.Md.	
Jumping		+35	Electronics		+8	+42	
Kill: 90 /3				Stun: 90 /3 (/6)			
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes		
Fist/Tentacle		1d-5	2d	+27	16sq. range		
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Brilliant Scientist (Biochemical)							
Growth 2 (Permanent) (Costume changes, Intermediate form)							
Protection 2 (Innate, +1 Agility)							
Strength 3 (Always brace, +10 Knockback)							
Flight 1 (Dead Stop at end of charge)							
Change Form 4 (Change shape and size, Stretch up to 16 squares, Costume changes colour, +3 stun divider if dodging/parrying)							
Cloaking 3 (Invisible and can envelope a target rendering it invisible too – appear/disappear whilst moving)							
Notes							
Ish'n'shtar has given himself the ability to change form and colour.							
His favourite form is a giant tentacled creature which he uses to spy upon his minions and keep them under control.							
He can drop, invisibly, upon a target and render them invisible too, taking them away for whatever he deems fit – even if it is his intention to reward them for good service.							





Invasion Day

Hopefully the Referee and players have enjoyed the challenges of the campaign up to this point. The terrors and trials of worlds both within and without our own have almost overwhelmed the player characters on more than one occasion, requiring guile and wit rather than force of arms to defeat.

Today is the day that everything changes.

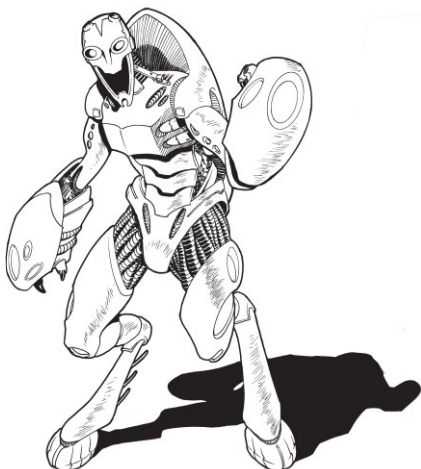
Today the characters face a challenge that they cannot overcome.

Today the Thr'ish invade.

Most role-playing campaigns develop and grow organically. Squadron: X isn't such a campaign. From the very beginning it has been building towards a terrible and traumatic event. The characters' adventures should have foreshadowed this event and they may even have managed to delay or derail some elements of it. Their actions may, unwittingly, have brought the cataclysm down on Mankind

This adventure should have the feel of a Hollywood blockbuster – part of a franchise where the characters can heroically fail to save the day because we know they'll be back in a sequel.

At the very least, it should feel like the cliff-hanger at the end of a TV series when plot hooks are explained – but not resolved - and the producers throw all their remaining budget onto the screen – possibly at the expense of a rational storyline.



Introduction: Enemies from above and within

What exactly triggers the Thr'ish and where the characters are when it happens is up to you. It is possible that the invasion was triggered by the events of "Star-spawn" or a similar adventure.

Remember, if the characters were able to warn the authorities then some of the worst excesses of the invasion could be mitigated:

- Earth may have managed to launch space-craft to challenge the Thr'ish forces in space.

Okay, so maybe an aging space-shuttle isn't much up against a Thr'ish battle-saucer. But it can always ram it or deliver a nuclear payload or shuttle a squadron of marines in an attempt to board it. This might destroy or damage a couple of the invaders' craft – forcing them to land, at the very least.

- The authorities may have had the chance to launch their nuclear deterrents, and actually brought down several of the invaders.
- The warning will have allowed humanity to flee the cities and hide in the wilderness. It will take the Thr'ish far longer to hunt them all down.
- Military forces will have had time to organise armed resistance to the invaders, slowing their conquest and actually killing many of them. When they are defeated – as they will be – many of these forces will be able to stage retreats and many will remain hidden from the Thr'ish. They will lie in wait until they have a chance to strike back.
- The world's leaders will have an opportunity to move to safe, hidden facilities from where they can organise humanity's response to the invasion.
- One or more of the Thr'ish plots (see below) might have been foiled, making their invasion a bit less of a walk-over



In order to take over the planet with a mere forty thousand ships, the Thr'ish have been busy co-opting members of the human race. Whether through technology (microchips in the brain stem), biochemistry (corrupted blood) or propaganda (bribery, fear) they have ensured that key members of the human race will turn against their people or - merely - step aside at the key moment.

Population masses will be laid low with bio-weapons - disease and toxins - spread through a variety of agents. Presumably the characters have discovered and stopped some of these plots.

Not enough. Far from enough.

The day will begin as the Shrouds fall from the ten thousand ships in near Earth orbit. Mass drivers bombard our major cities from orbit and the response of the planet is anarchy. People across the planet commit suicide. Others fall upon their friends and family in killing frenzies. Many fall ill from unidentified causes. Barely a family is untouched - especially in the developed world - and the result is panic.

Corrupted officials delay the launch of missiles and shuttles to assault the attacking ships and far too few are destroyed. Before the world can co-ordinate any kind of response ten thousand more ships sweep into orbit from behind the moon. The rocks of the mass drivers are replaced with ten thousand pulse bombs. The world-wide communications web which has worked so well in spreading panic is silenced - as are all but the most heavily shielded computer systems.

Ten thousand ships launch hundreds of thousands of shuttles filled with millions of armoured Thr'ish warriors to slaughter or subdue the populations of the world's most developed nations. Though, in theory, outnumbered a thousand to one, the brutality of their attack and the terrible events which preceded it lead to a swift victory. By the end of the day, the planet is under the heel of our Thr'ish overlords.

Twenty thousand more ships sweep across space from their position orbiting Mars, filled with the equipment and population to turn Earth into a Thr'ish world.

Up until now, the characters have had a fair chance.

In phase 1, their opponents were merely human. In phase 2, they were able to gang up on solo threats or were able to co-opt assistance against the terrors they faced.

This phase of the campaign is totally unfair. As the Thr'ish sweep across the Earth, they unleash forces which humankind simply cannot resist. Any battle in this phase should be completely impossible for the characters to win. If they try to stand toe-to-toe with any of the forces they encounter they should lose and will be captured, killed or left for dead. The most they should be able to do is to survive and escape.

If you set up a battle with the Thr'ish and misjudge the level of opposition so that the characters win, I'll forgive you - once. After all, you don't want to kill them all off first go.

So if you err on the side of caution *once* it's understandable.

Next time, though, double the number of opponents. If the characters just about manage to defeat half a dozen Thr'ish then as soon as they see a dozen coming their way they'll know they're overmatched. If the characters insist on resisting then the Thr'ish will have no hesitation in levelling an entire city if its denizens prove more trouble than they are worth.

The opponents in this phase are usually the invading aliens - the Thr'ish. All sorts of Thr'ish.

However, don't forget the faerie-kind. These can still pop up at the most opportune or inopportune times. When the characters are surrounded with their backs to the wall, a lycanthrope could pop up the rear into the invaders. On the other hand, the characters could come across a family of Brownies trapped in a ruined city who need guiding to safety.

How the characters interact with the events is up to their players and depends upon the events in the campaign to date. This is a fast, brutal and apocalyptic phase.

I don't expect you'll want to run too many adventures in this environment. Players don't want to play too many games where they can't win - where they'll probably lose one or more of their number. You may want to just run the adventure I give below.



Phase 3: Invasion!

However, if you and they enjoy this kind of high-octane challenge, here are some suggestions:

Come together

The invasion hits when the characters are scattered across the city or, even, the country.

With communications failing they have to manoeuvre their way through the cataclysm to meet up and plan their response.

Bring down a saucer (1)

The characters sneak into a nuclear facility and use its missiles (or reactor) to destroy one of the Thr'ish battle-saucers.

Bring down a saucer (2)

The characters sneak aboard a battle-saucer and attempt to destroy it from within.

If they have acquired a spacecraft during their adventures or have access to one of Earth's space agencies, they may decide to launch a direct attack against one or more of the Thr'ish spacecraft. This may involve seizing one of the prototype craft being developed for space tourism. If they take this approach then they will find that they have to help patriots at whichever base stores the craft versus corrupted security officials. When they've managed to secure and launch the craft they still have to take over an alien ship. This will be another stiff battle. (They could, of course, merely send the craft as a missile to bring down a ship.) Even if the players play well and their characters are heroic, you should run the adventures so that they have a less than fair chance of succeeding. Force of numbers will overwhelm them and the ship they are on – be it from Earth or of alien design – will be destroyed or captured. Ideally one or more of the characters should be captured. Others could escape and either use a make-shift or unfamiliar escape pod to return to Earth or hide in the bowels of the alien vessel, awaiting their chance to rescue their captured comrades. We don't want it to be too easy to bring down a Thr'ish ship.

Rescue the President

The characters have to escort an important leader to safety.

Kidnap

The characters try to isolate a Thr'ish and bring it in for interrogation and experimentation.

Brothers in arms

The characters try to find the faerie-kind and enlist their aid in resisting the invasion. Ultimately this is the solution (see later). However, merely finding the Faerie folk in all this confusion is hard and the players' characters are likely to face assault from the Thr'ish, or their corrupted human followers, before they find any supernatural beings. Most likely the characters will become separated.

When they finally find the Faerie, things will not bode well. In the short term the Faerie lord, Oberon, will order his people to stay out of the conflict. The Faerie owe no particular loyalty to Mankind. Mankind or Thr'ish – it makes no difference who *thinks* they own the world. In truth the planet belongs to the Faerie folk and always will. They will refuse to help, aiming to seek a similar accommodation with the Thr'ish as they always have with humankind.

However, if the characters have developed friends amongst the Faerie, then these may offer what help they can. Spells and charms will be cast. Ancient artifacts will be unearthed and offered to characters. Maybe now is the time that one of them can be revealed to be a descendent of King Arthur and presented with the long lost Excalibur, for example.

The enemy of my enemy

In extreme cases, characters may deliberately seek out some of the more inimical cross-breeds – Vampyres, Lycanthropes – and allow themselves to be “turned” in the hope of using their enhanced abilities against the Thr'ish. Characters infected with Faerie blood may choose to stop taking the agents that have been ameliorating its effects. Maybe the Thr'ish can defeat a mere human but how would they fare against a werewolf?

Enemy within

If they are still working with Craig Starling, the alien fluid coursing through his veins will finally overwhelm him. He will go berserk. Without warning he will shoot one or more of the characters before rampaging through their headquarters using his superior knowledge of its facilities to cause as much damage as possible. He will have to be subdued or – even – killed before the characters can take any further actions.



Flee!

The characters have to get out of the city, bringing as many people as they can with them, before a meteor, brought down by a Thr'ish Mass-Driver, flattens it.

I've seen this film.....

They may decide to use their superior scientific skill to engineer a neat solution to the invasion – viruses both electronic or real to kill the invaders or their technology, for example. There simply isn't enough time to engineer such a solution quickly. The Thr'ish have been preparing for decades.

Do and die

The characters can simply choose to go out and fight for their planet. They will fight bravely and well but – eventually – will fall to superior numbers or superior technology or be felled by alien power beams, toxins or disease. They may be captured or left for dead.

Organise a rebellion

By contacting various groups across the country – Army, Air Force, Secret Agencies – they can arrange a rendezvous at a secure location well away from the invaded population centres where they can pool their resources.

Getting to rendezvous will prove difficult. The characters will be attacked and may be captured or suffer the effects of alien armaments or bio-weaponry.

When they get to the rendezvous, they will be betrayed by one of the alien cohorts and – again – may be captured. One or more of the attendees may have brought useful ordnance or devices which may fall into a character's possession and allow them to escape. "Quick, in the truck, it's an experimental jet pack we've been developing. I'm done for with this arm but you might just be able to use it to escape. Give me your gun and I'll buy you the time you need."

Homespun Heroes

The players will probably come up with some wild and wacky plans of their own for repelling an overwhelming alien invasion and you should try to let them try these. In general the rule is that these should work in the short term and on a small scale. However, eventually the Thr'ish will overcome anything mere humans can throw against them.

Many of the plot elements in the adventures outlined above are used in the single adventure I've given below. It is up to you whether you want one single mega-event which brings them all together or whether you'd prefer to split them across adventures of your own design.

Metamorphosis

Eventually, however, the sheer scale of the attack will be too much and, eventually, the characters will fail and the Thr'ish will walk, unchallenged, across the land. However brave or clever they are, mere humans don't stand a chance against the Thr'ish invasion forces. Some will be captured, some will be blasted by strange alien forces, some will be forced into extreme measures. Those beloved of the faerie-kind may be given protections by their allies. If they have faerie-blood in their veins, or have the potential for magic or psychic abilities, they may find the inhuman stresses of the invasion trigger unexpected changes.

Each and every character will be changed by the events of the invasion and will emerge changed.

This phase of the campaign will end with the characters morphing into super-powered Heroes capable of defending the Earth. This is the day that MI:X ceases to exist and Squadron: X is born.

But first, they have to survive the invasion.





The Fall of MI:X

This is a possible Phase 3 adventure. In this adventure the characters make a last ditch defence of their headquarters against the alien invaders.

This mood of this adventure is that of a cliff-hanger at the end of a television series. All action – little plot. The aim is to get all the characters into a position where they can change into the Heroes, that Earth so desperately needs, in phase 4.

Introduction: “We’re all going to die”

As the invasion plans of the villainous Th’rish descend across the planet, the members of MI:X decide to make their last stand in their headquarters.

From this base, they are able to:

- Suborn the launch codes of some of Earth’s defences and launch nuclear counter-strikes against the descending ships. Have the players make a sequence of skill rolls based on their scientific or computer skills, culminating in the destruction of one of the Thr’ish saucers.
- Monitor the invasion and co-ordinate defences. Military units they come into contact with will be surprised to receive this tactical support. They will not have heard of MI:X or – if they have – the players certainly don’t have the current communication codes. However, they will be extremely grateful for the information. “I don’t know who the hell you guys are but thanks for the warning!”
- Try to come up with some “global” way to bring down the alien ships – a computer virus for example. This won’t work – see above.
- Try to get some captured alien – or faerie – technology working to help use against the invaders.

Also, in this phase, the players should finally become aware of Craig Starling’s secrets.

They may have gleaned a few of these in previous adventures but now they’ll all come tumbling out.

If they don’t emerge naturally, have the players stumble across an appropriate computer file, such as Starling’s diary:

- Despite his great skills, he is physically too weak to take direct part in any missions.
- He is stealing vast quantities of human blood.
- He is giving himself regular and massive transfusions of human blood.
- The fluid in his veins is a yellow substance which he drains off before his transfusions.
- His own blood was removed and replaced by the yellow fluid when he was captured by aliens. He escaped before the process was complete.
- The yellow fluid is consuming and replacing his own blood.
- If the yellow fluid ever entirely replaces his own blood, Starling will become a puppet of the aliens.
- His superiors think he is mentally unbalanced
- He is on medical suspension
- He isn’t working for the Government
- The characters aren’t working for the Government
- All their equipment and resources have been stolen from the Government.

Some of these they may already know. Some will creep out during the introduction or episode 1.

Everything should be revealed before the end of episode 2.

I wonder how your players will respond to all this? Probably there won’t be any time for recriminations and they’ll have to agree to “settle things later”.



Episode 1: Getting ready to throw a party

The characters know that – sooner or later – the Thr'ish are going to find out who's been co-ordinating the response to their invasion and move to take over the MI:X installation. I haven't supplied a map of the base. Hopefully you'll have co-designed one with the players before this point.

Whilst the technical characters are helping co-ordinate the nation's defense against the invaders, the more "hands on" characters should be preparing for a more personal invasion.

Whatever plans the players come up with to protect the base from the Thr'ish shock troops should have a more than reasonable chance of succeeding. Starling's plan is "scorched Earth". Given a choice he would mine every level of the base with explosives and retreat down through the levels, destroying everything he leaves behind.

He then plans to reveal a secret level, that he has been hiding, to the players, destroy that level and retreat through his auxiliary escape tunnel.

Hopefully your players will come up with some more imaginative ideas, possibly involving creatures and artefacts seized earlier in the campaign.

For example

If they captured a vampire, all they need do is tie a piece of string to the stake through its heart, leave the vampire where the aliens can find it and then give a tug on the string.....

There is no direct conflict in this episode, just lots of planning and long-range skill checks. This might be a good time to have the characters stumble over Starling's secrets. They may even discover his secret level.

Episode 2: The enemy within

What with all the stress of the invasion, Starling will have forgotten to take his usual "top up" blood transfusions. He will be taken over by the yellow fluid coursing through his veins.

He will turn on the characters and use his knowledge of them, his superior knowledge of their headquarters and access to captured alien technology to try and destroy them all.

He can attempt to perform some – or all – of the following actions:

- Set off one or more of the traps intended for the Thr'ish prematurely and try to trap some of the characters in it.
- Seal and lock the doors in the base to stop the players moving around and helping each other so he can pick them off one-by-one. (Any reasonable attempt to circumvent this should work. Technical characters can open the doors with appropriate skill rolls. The sealed doors can be blasted open with explosives. Small characters can crawl through the air vents.....)
- Send out a signal to summon the Thr'ish.
- Disable the base's computers, communications and/or defences.
- Free any captives and turn them upon the players.
- Attack the players with an alien energy blaster. (Level 2 Energy Blast. 10 dice over 4 rounds. Area effects – 9 squares in a line and an 8 square by 2 square rectangle with a single square at its base. The gimmicks are Reduce Protection and Can be set to Stun only. In his current state Starling won't use this last gimmick.)
- Activate the base's self-destruct system. Any successful skill roll following any plan the players come up with should work to stop the self-destruct. A roll of 15 will pause the countdown, a roll of 18 will de-activate it permanently.

Ideally the battle should end up in Starling's secret level where the players may finally discover all the secrets he's been hiding. You should arrange things so that he dies.

The ideal resolution is for the characters to enable him to temporarily recover his humanity. He will then give them access to his secret files before the guilt causes him to take his own life in as spectacular a manner as possible.



Phase 3: Invasion!

(If he has the opportunity to grab some explosives and strap on a dangerously unstable alien teleportation device, great. He'll take one of the alien saucers with him.)

Episode 3: Last stand

Just as they're resolving the Starling situation, the Thr'ish will arrive at the base.

In this episode, the Thr'ish will fight their way through the base. They will suffer terrible losses as the characters' plans and preparations work.

But their advance will continue.

During this episode, you should try to split the characters up. They could be:

- Retreating
- Going to get help
- Making a last ditch stand
- Surrendering
- Getting trapped behind fallen masonry
- Getting rescued by Faerie-kind
- Getting rescued by contacts
- Given instructions by Starling
- Trying something "clever"

However it happens, each character should experience a traumatic event of some kind during the defence of the base.

Ideally they should face it alone – though some of the possibilities given below can be "doubled-up" if the players insist on keeping their characters together.

This is where the second phase of character generation comes into play.

Here are some situations the characters could find themselves in:

Captured

The character is defeated by the Thr'ish and is captured. Even if the character is killed, the Thr'ish will use their advanced science to bring them back to life.

They will be taken to one of the Thr'ish attack saucers where they will be questioned, tortured and/or experimented upon, with unexpected side-effects.

Mutation

The character is caught in the crossfire of alien power beams in one of the rooms they use to store captured alien technology or items of faerie construction.

The interplay of these forces will cause a huge explosion which will destroy the Thr'ish and cause strange changes in the player.

Latent abilities

The stress of events may trigger latent abilities within the character.

If they have the Magic or Psychic backgrounds, these will now come to the fore.

If they have faerie blood in their veins, it will overwhelm them and they will mutate into some kind of mystic creature.

I wonder if...

They may choose to use some of the strange devices or technology stored in their headquarters.

Though Starling himself is dead or interned, he might have recorded messages detailing his investigations and research.

"I've been working on adapting a set of alien power armour which came into my possession a few years ago. I've managed to adjust it to human dimensions but I don't know what would happen to the person who puts it on..."

"One of the serums I developed to try and stabilise my blood didn't work. However, it seemed to give experimental rats increased speed and strength. I wonder what effect it would have on a human system."

Alternatively the players and characters could already be aware of some of the items stored in the vaults. They may have even acquired them themselves during earlier adventures. This is a much more satisfying option than having Starling "present" them with something on a plate.

The item, drug or potion that the character tries – whether on Starling's recommendation or on their own initiative - can be of alien or arcane origin.



A Summoning

Kinross – or a similar faerie-kind known to the character – will appear and guide the character through a mystic portal to a faerie dell.

Though Oberon has decreed that the Faerie take no direct action against the invaders, some of the faerie-kind wish to help their human friend.

They will push an ancient item into their hands.....

These don't cover all eventualities. Some characters may refuse to be split up. In this case they can stay together and have a common origin story. Other characters may manage to escape from the base. These may stumble across a fallen Thr'ish and choose to don it's armour or come across a squad of fallen human soldiers who had been trying to use an experimental weapon against the invaders.

However, it happens, the key thing here is that the characters are given an opportunity to develop or gain special abilities.

As you trap each character in their individual traumatic event, you should suspend play for that player. As soon as the story has paused for everyone, you can move on to the second part of the character generation system.

If you have any recalcitrant players who refuse to co-operate, then feel free to impose an origin on them:

"You've successfully escaped from the base but the Thr'ish are everywhere. You try to hide by donning a set of alien power armour you've come across...."

If they continue to argue then let them remain an ordinary human when all their comrades have changed....



Rebirth!

The events surrounding the invasion of Earth will have affected the characters in different ways.

Hopefully, you will have been able to arrange matters so that the characters have become separated.

Ideally some will be with the Th'rish – either captured or hiding out in one of their ships or earth-based facilities.

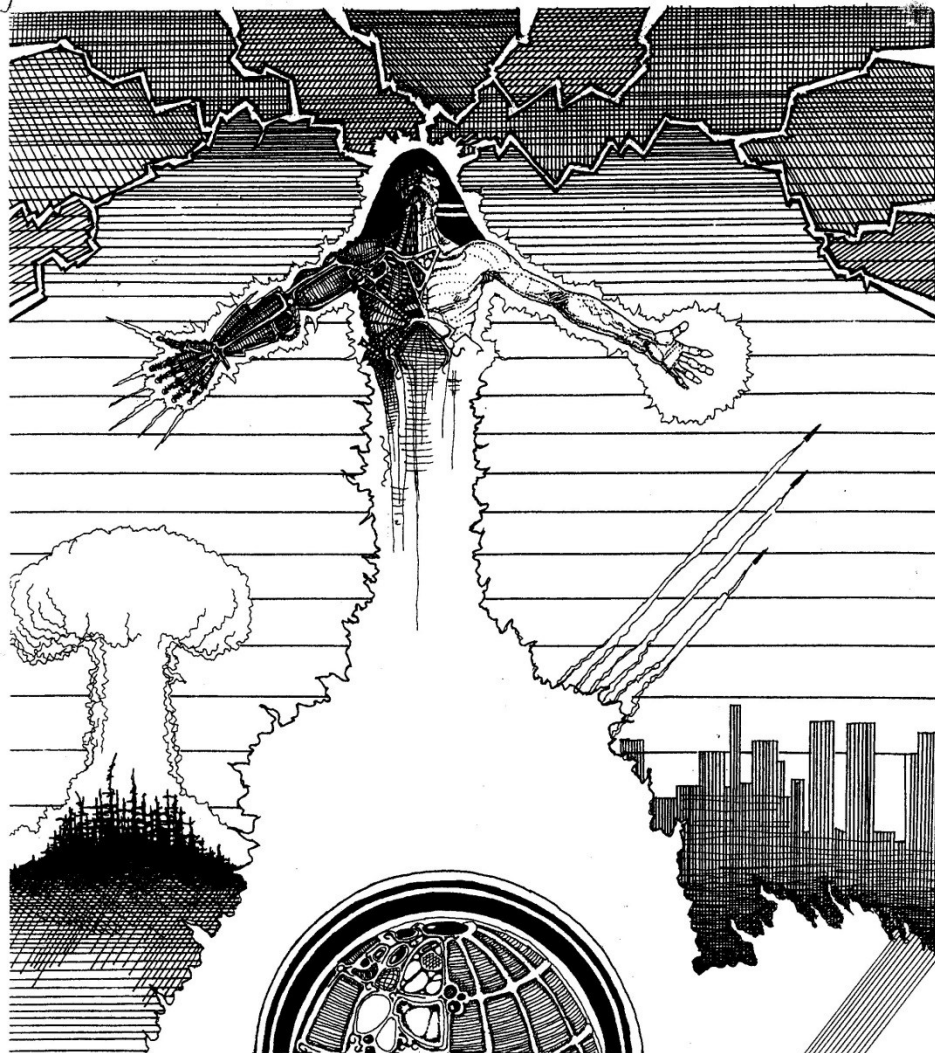
Others will be with the Faerie – either through seeking them out, being summoned or by being found and rescued from whatever battle or crashed space-pod they were left for dead in.

Some will be using experimental serums or devices or faerie or alien artifacts in a desperate attempt to gain some kind of advantage over the alien invaders.

On top of this, some will already have faerie blood in their veins.

Out of all of these events, the characters will emerge forever changed.

The events of the campaign and their actions on this – Earth's darkest day – have already proved them to be Heroes. Today they become Superheroes.





Give your players a complete character sheet and let them copy their existing details onto it.

The players will now complete their characters – and turn them into Superheroes – by finding out what special abilities they've developed as a result of the terrible events affecting them.

Superpowers

The players now get a number of “power rolls” which they can use to find out what extraordinary abilities fate has gifted to their character.

These can be used to roll percentage dice to gain new abilities randomly or to upgrade existing powers and abilities to a higher level.

Ideally they should make a few power rolls randomly and then stop to use their remaining rolls to gain higher levels in the powers already possessed.

You can control the level of the future campaign by choosing the number of Superpowers the characters can gain.

- If you want to maintain the mood of a TV series, 5 or fewer power rolls should be given to the players.
- To create a feel closer to comics or films, the players should be given more rolls. 7 is a typical number.

This is a key decision. Choosing the number of power rolls is crucial.

(I normally use 7 power rolls.)

The best way for you to make it is to take some time to create a number of practice characters of their own using different numbers of power rolls. You can then see what feels right for you.

(These example characters should be kept so they can be used as Heroes or Villains later on in the campaign.)

For each character, you should choose an appropriate Superpower table based upon the events that they've been caught up in.

The player should then roll percentage dice and look up the rolls on the specific table which applies to them.

Higher power levels

All powers have a range of levels. If a power is rolled twice, it automatically goes up to level 2.

At any appropriate time, the player may stop rolling for Superpowers and choose to increase the level of any power already rolled.

To increase a power by one level costs a number of unused power rolls equal to the level *currently possessed*.

To go from level 1 to level 2 costs one power roll.

To go from level 2 to level 3 costs 2 power rolls.

And so on.....

Half-level powers

Most powers can be taken at half level. When the powers are first rolled the player may choose to take two powers at half level each. This is to allow players to “free up” an extra roll should they need it to roll again or increase the level of an existing power.

There are no half levels above level 1. ie. No powers can be taken at 1½ levels.

Backgrounds

If the character has a Magic or Psychic Background, this will now come into its own. This

However the character acquires their powers, and whatever they are, they will now be driven by the character's innate Magic or Psychic powers.

Attacks will be based upon Psyche rather than Dexterity and normal defences will not work against them. They will bypass protections such as Armour or Parrying.

Dodges may or may not still work. Generally they work against Magical attacks but not against Psychic ones. However, targets may attempt to use their Psyche to “dodge” Psychic attacks using the power of their mind.

Depending upon the situation the characters find themselves in, you can choose to ask the player to roll on the Magic/Psychic power table below rather than a situation specific one.



Origins

You and your players should work together to co-author an explanation for the way the character's new Superpowers work.

This should be compatible with the character's history in the campaign so far, the powers rolled and the manner in which they've been gained.

Existing Abilities

Some characters will already have abilities which are equivalent to Superpowers.

These are, normally, the characters who failed to roll a significant background at the start.

Their players may wish to raise those abilities to a higher level as part of this process. It is up to you to decide how appropriate this is.

In general, players should only be allowed to raise an existing ability to level 2 unless they roll it on one of the tables below.

Common sense should be used here. Obviously players shouldn't just be allowed to increase the level of their existing abilities. They should take some rolls on the power tables given, at least.

However, if they have taken some random rolls and it would be better to increase the level of their "natural" ability then you should allow this – even if it means taking it up to level 3.

Someone who has Martial Arts skills who fails to roll an attacking Superpower, for example.

½ level powers

If the character already has two ½ level abilities, they may both be turned into a level 1 Superpower for the cost of a single power roll.

If they possess one ½ level power – for example someone with a Psychic Background has the Information Ability at ½ level – this may be turned into a level 1 Superpower and the character can take of their rolled powers at half-level.



Superpower tables

The powers should be rolled using percentage dice on the most appropriate of the following tables.

Magic

If the character has a Magic background then the stress of their current situation will have triggered latent abilities. The character immediately gains the "Magic" ability and their player may use this table for and all rolls regardless of the situation they finds themselves in.

Some characters may gain the Magic ability through rolling on another table. As soon as they do this, they may start rolling using this table instead – if they wish.

Acrobatics	1	-	2
Change form	3	-	8
Cloaking	9	-	13
Energy Blast	14	-	22
Endurance	23	-	25
Existing Ability	26	-	29
Enhancement	30	-	37
Fast recovery			38
Flight	39	-	41
Follower	42	-	43
Force field	44	-	46
Growth	47	-	48
Image	49	-	52
Impossible	53	-	56
Increased			57
Information	58	-	64
Marksmanship	65	-	67
Martial Arts	68	-	74
Mind control			75
Mutation			76
Protection	77	-	79
Regeneration			80
Shrink	81	-	82
State change	83	-	85
Strength	86	-	87
Supersense	88	-	91
Survival			92
Weapon	93	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



Psychic

If the character has a Psychic background then the stress of their current situation will have triggered latent abilities. The character gains the "Psychic" ability immediately and their player may use this table for any and all rolls regardless of the situation they finds themselves in.



Some characters may gain the Psychic ability through rolling on another table. As soon as they do this, they may start rolling using this table instead – if they wish.

Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	10
Cloaking	11	-	16
Energy Blast	17	-	26
Endurance	27	-	28
Existing Ability	29	-	33
Enhancement	34	-	41
Fast recovery	42	-	43
Flight	44	-	47
Follower	48		
Force field	49	-	50
Image generation	51	-	56
Impossible events	57	-	59
Increased move	60		
Information	61	-	67
Marksmanship	68	-	69
Martial Arts	70	-	71
Mind control	72	-	81
Protection	82	-	83
Regeneration	84		
Strength	85	-	86
Supersense	87	-	90
Survival	91		
Weapon	92	-	94
Choose	95	-	100

Armour

Use this table if the character has come across a suit of experimental armour – possibly created by Craig Starling.

The character automatically has the **Protection** superpower at level 1 and this costs one of their power rolls. They may take the protection up to higher levels but it will always be a suit of armour – never natural or innate protective skin.

All the abilities are built into the armour.

Acrobatics	1		
Change form	2		
Cloaking	3	-	8
Energy Blast	9	-	18
Endurance	19	-	21
Existing Ability	22	-	23
Enhancement	24	-	30
Fast recovery	31		
Flight	32	-	41
Follower	42		
Force field	43	-	48
Growth	49	-	50
Image generation	51	-	55
Impossible events	56		
Increased move	57	-	60
Information	61	-	64
Marksmanship	65		
Martial Arts	66	-	69
Mind control	70	-	71
Mutation	72		
Regeneration	73		
State change	74		
Strength	75	-	84
Supersense	85	-	88
Survival	89	-	92
Weapon	93	-	95
Choose	96	-	100





Rebirth!

Alien Experimentation/Mutation

Use this table if the character has been captured and experimented upon by the Th'rish.

It can also be used if the character has fallen victim to an alien disease, toxin or experimental death-ray or injected themselves with one of Craig Starling's potions.



Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	8
Cloaking	9		
Energy Blast	10	-	14
Endurance	15	-	17
Existing Ability	18	-	23
Enhancement	24	-	28
Fast recovery	29	-	30
Flight	31	-	35
Follower	36		
Force field	37	-	41
Growth	42	-	44
Image generation	45		
Impossible events	46		
Increased move	47	-	51
Information	52	-	53
Marksmanship	54	-	55
Martial Arts	56	-	64
Mind control	65	-	66
Mutation	67	-	71
Regeneration	72	-	76
State change	77	-	80
Strength	81	-	82
Supersense	83	-	84
Survival	85	-	87
Weapon	88	-	95
Choose	96	-	100

* If Protection is kept at level 1, it represents Armour permanently grafted onto the character which cannot be removed.

** If the character is infected with Faerie blood the Psychic ability may be replaced by the Magic ability instead.

Magical Artifact

Use this table if the character has been presented with an artefact by the Faerie race. (Or has found one, or stolen one.) All the abilities come from the artefact.

Normally the exact form of the artefact should not be chosen until after the abilities have been rolled.

If they roll Protection, the item may be a suit of armour. If they roll Weapon, the item will be the weapon.

Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	6
Cloaking	7	-	10
Energy Blast	11	-	18
Endurance	19	-	20
Existing Ability	21	-	25
Enhancement	26	-	30
Fast recovery	31	-	32
Flight	33	-	37
Follower	38	-	38
Force field	39	-	42
Growth	43	-	44
Image generation	45	-	45
Impossible events	46	-	46
Increased move	47	-	50
Information	51	-	52
Magic	53	-	57
Marksmanship	58	-	58
Martial Arts	59	-	64
Mind control	65	-	66
Mutation	67	-	67
Protection	68	-	71
Psychic	72	-	72
Regeneration	73	-	74
Shrink	75	-	75
State change	76	-	77
Strength	78	-	84
Supersense	85	-	88
Survival	89	-	89
Weapon	90	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



Alien Device

Use this table if the character is attempting to activate an item of alien origin they have found or stolen.

All of the abilities rolled come from the device.

The exact form of the device need not be chosen until after its abilities are rolled.

Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	6
Cloaking	7	-	10
Energy Blast	11	-	18
Endurance	19	-	20
Existing Ability	21	-	25
Enhancement	26	-	30
Fast recovery	31	-	32
Flight	33	-	37
Follower	38	-	38
Force field	39	-	42
Growth	43	-	44
Image generation	45	-	45
Impossible events	46	-	46
Increased move	47	-	50
Information	51	-	52
Marksmanship	53	-	53
Martial Arts	54	-	59
Mind control	60	-	61
Mutation	62	-	62
Protection	63	-	66
Psychic	67	-	71
Regeneration	72	-	73
Shrink	74	-	74
State change	75	-	76
Strength	77	-	83
Supersense	84	-	87
Survival	88	-	89
Weapon	90	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



Faerie Blood

Use this table if the character is already infected with Faerie Blood.

In an ideal world, the player will be able to rationalise the powers into a being of the same type as the creature which originally infected the character. This is not absolutely essential, though. They have been through enough strange experiences for the blood within their system to have mutated. And we don't want the player hamstrung in their Hero's future adventures by being held back by the weaknesses of the archetype which infected their character. Player characters infected by vampires, for example, will be alive. They will be able to go out into the sunlight and can be killed by normal attacks.

Any characters who have become undead prior to this adventure will, miraculously, be brought back to life at this stage.

Acrobatics	1	-	10
Change form	11	-	19
Cloaking	20	-	20
Endurance	21	-	24
Enhancement	25	-	28
Existing Ability	29	-	32
Fast recovery	33	-	36
Flight	37	-	40
Follower	41	-	44
Growth	45	-	45
Image generation	46	-	46
Impossible events	47	-	47
Increased move	48	-	51
Information	52	-	55
Marksmanship	56	-	56
Martial Arts	57	-	65
Mind control	66	-	70
Mutation	71	-	71
Protection	72	-	75
Regeneration	76	-	79
Shrink	80	-	80
State change	81	-	81
Strength	82	-	91
Supersense	92	-	95
Survival	96	-	96
Choose	97	-	100



Final Details

There a number of other decisions the players need to make now.

Superpowers

The details of individual Superpowers and what they do is listed in the appendix at the back of this book.

As well as the specifics of the effects of the higher LEVELS of each power, the appendix also details a number of GIMMICKS which can be chosen to further customise the character's abilities. They gain one gimmick for each level of Superpower they possess.

The appendix also details all other required details of the powers – range, duration, area of effect etc.

Costumes

From now on the players should be encouraged to have their characters appear in more dynamic outfits. In some cases this will have been forced upon them.

However, other characters could, in theory, continue adventuring in their normal clothes. Whatever the origin of their powers, you really should try to get them into something more memorable at this point.

There as basically two types of costume – Heavy and Light.

Heavy costumes represent leather, chainmail, Kevlar, scaly or leathery skin etc. A player may choose to have this as part of his origin - even if they haven't rolled the protection Superpower – as long as it is appropriate.

Anyone who rolls on the mutation/ experimentation or Faerie Blood tables could take scaly or leathery skin as built in. A character in armour can choose to have it as Heavy armour.

Heavy costumes add one to the character's divider against Kill.

If they don't have the PROTECTION Superpower, this means that they get a divider of 2. They divide all Kill damage by 2.

If they have the Protection power, then their Kill divider – only – goes up by 1.

Dan Smith has donned an abandoned set of Th'rish battle-armour, and now calls himself RETRIBUTION. The armour gives him Protection level 2 – which normally divides all damage he takes by 3.

His player chooses to have a Heavy costume, so the armour now divides all Kill damage by 4. Stun damage is still only divided by 3.

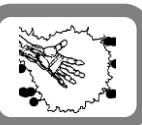
The alternative to a Heavy Costume is a Light Costume. Light costumes add +1 to a character's score whenever they try to Dodge attacks in combat.

Equipment

As the equipment each character carries is based upon their skills, they will probably want to continue carrying it.

However, you may choose to allow them to add some extra items at this stage to complement their new abilities.





Example of character generation (2)

You remember Leon made a character for Squadron: X.

He called the character, Donovan Rogers and decided that he was an Agent for MI6 assigned to investigate and neutralise threats to the nation from within the United Kingdom.

For his three items of starting equipment Leon chose a Pistol, a First Aid Kit and a Car.

So his characteristics are:

	Str.	End.	Dex.	Ag.	Psy.
Characteristic	13	11	11	8	13
Skill modifier	+7	+6	+6	+4	+7

He has the following Common Skills:

Computer Use (12)
First Aid (14)
Negotiation (14)
Searching (14)
Spotting (14)

And these trained skills:

Driving (Psyche: 7)
Computer Programming (Psyche: 5)
Criminology (Psyche: 5)
Cryptography (Psyche: 5)
Weaponskill (pistol) (Dexterity: 6)

(You'll notice some of these are a bit higher now due to training and the high Esteem and Sleuthing scores he has attained.)

Three other characters were created for the campaign.

One of was a Scientist, a Policeman and the third had no specific background but had some Technical Skills.

Initially Leon's Referee rationalised that the Scientist and his assistant had been co-opted by the Police to assist with various investigations.

Donovan Rogers was working undercover as a Police officer and had been assigned to work alongside them.

After a couple of strange encounters, they've been inducted into the super-secret MI:X and Donovan has risen to be second in command of the local team.

Over the last few months, they've come across Werewolves, Zombies, Ghouls and, even, an honest to god Vampire. To make things worse, they've uncovered evidence that some kind of alien influence is affecting key Government figures.

The discovery of the world of faerie has not gone down well with Donovan. Though some of his team seem enamoured with the Gnomes and Elves, he thinks the world belongs to humankind and would happily see every faerie wiped out. He thinks they're distraction from the true threat – the imminent alien invasion.

When the Th'rish invasion came and Craig Starling went mad, Donovan Rogers took command and was the last man standing in the MI:X base. As his team-mates fell, were captured, escaped using experimental devices or were rescued by their faerie friends, he remained behind. When he was nearly overwhelmed by the innumerable aliens, he detonated a captured Th'rish power pod, setting off every explosive in the base – collapsing it around him and killing every single invader.

This is a truly heroic death and Leon's Referee is tempted to allow Donovan Rogers to die and ask Leon to create a new character. However, given Roger's key role in the campaign, he decides upon a dramatic resurrection.

The interplay of the alien forces with magical energies released by the faerie artefacts destroyed in the blast work terrible changes upon Roger's body.

The Referee turns to the Alien Experimentation/Mutation table. Taking my advice, he gives Leon 7 power rolls.

Leon rolls percentage dice.

76% Regeneration

(THAT'S how he survived the explosion!)

69% Mutation

19% Existing Ability



Rebirth!

Leon could continue rolling, but he has a defensive ability (Regeneration), a useful one (Mutation) and the potential to get an offensive power (Existing ability). So chooses to stop rolling.

He has used 3 rolls and has 4 left. He elects to enhance his Weaponskill with pistol into the Superpower WEAPON, level 1. He uses one of his 4 remaining rolls to upgrade from level 1 to level 2 and a further 2 to upgrade from level 2 to level 3.

So he now has Weapon – level 3 but it has cost him 3 of his remaining 4 power rolls.

He elects to use his last roll to upgrade his regeneration to level 2.

Leon rationalises that the radiation in the explosion mutated his cells to allow them to recover and regrow from damage at a much accelerated rate. He chooses the higher level ability to recover two dice per round of rest. His first regeneration gimmick is the ability to recover from twice negative endurance.

His Kill score can fall to -22 and he still doesn't die!

As he recovers at twice the normal rate, he asks if he can take a Fast Recovery gimmick. He will recover 1 Kill point per round even when performing actions.

The problem is that, in the explosion, fragments of the Th'rish DNA got muddled up with his mangled form before he began to regenerate. He is now partially Th'rish. This has given him slightly enhanced senses – not enough to be a Superpower, but enough to give him improved skill with a pistol. This gives him +6 to hit (for a total of +12) and 3 bonus dice of damage on the attacks.

He takes the Quick-draw and the enhanced parry gimmicks. Due to his rationale he selects a gimmick from the Supersense power. Opponents get a -1 on dodge rolls versus his pistol shots.

The mutation is an extra limb. This looks like a Th'rish appendage. He creates a new gimmick for this. He says that it gives him the ability to use DNA-encoded Th'rish equipment, pass security checks and the like.

He chooses a Heavy costume which he rationalises as being a roughening and toughening of his skin due to the Th'rish influence. It also has a greenish cast. He now divides all Kill damage he takes by 2.

Because Leon has developed a rationale that will cause him some problems – many humans will distrust him and suspect him of being an alien spy – his Referee decides that he will benefit in other minor ways that will benefit the campaign. He will find that he understands snippets of the Th'rish and language for example.

Leon decides that – when Donovan Rogers crawls out of the ruins of the base and joins forces with Earth's fledgling resistance movement, he will be given the codename MONGREL.





Donovan Rogers' team-mates have had wildly different experiences during the invasion.

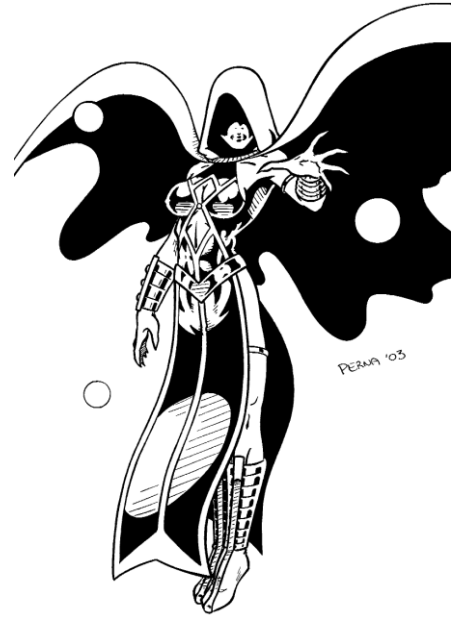
We already know what happened to the ex-policeman Dan Smith. Unable to get out of the base before Rogers blew it up, he pulled a fallen Thr'ish out of its battle armour and crawled in himself – hoping it would give him enough protection to survive the blast.

He was thrown clear but the blast sealed the armour trapping him inside. He was forced to work out how to use it. It gives him great Strength and allows him to fly. He calls himself **RETRIBUTION**.

When he was re-united with the Scientist of the team – Michaela Wright – she was able to get him out of the suit. By that time, though, he was totally familiar with its systems – so he continues to use it to battle for the freedom of Humanity.



Michaela Wright herself was rescued from the embattled MI:X Headquarters by Kinross. Unlike Donovan Rogers, she had developed a good relationship with Faerie-kind. They were grateful for her creating a cure to a plague unleashed upon those of their blood by a renegade Human scientist. Wright has been given a magic cloak which allows her to perform mystic spells (The Impossible Events power at level 3!) She is now known as **SHROUD**.



The fourth member of the team, the technically gifted Steve Curtis, had spent the majority of the campaign battling with an infection of Faerie Blood acquired during his first adventure. Having turned into a werewolf and received treatment to put it into remittance, he has always been only a step away from mutation.

When he was hit by an alien enemy bolt, instead of being consumed he mutated into a leathery-skinned bat-winged monstrosity with a Sonic energy blast. No longer human himself, he fights for his former species' freedom as the hero called **NOCTURNE**.



Example Character Sheet

Name: **Donovan Rogers**

Player: **Leon**

Strength 13 +7	Endurance 11 +6	Dexterity 11 +6	Agility 8 +4	Psyche 13 +7	Esteem 12 +6	Sleuthing 13 +7	Fate 9 +5
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Common Skills	Level	Trained Skills	Level
Negotiation	+12	Driving	+7
Computer Use	+14	Computer programming	+5
First Aid	+14	Cryptography	+5
Search	+14	Criminology	+5
Spot	+14	Pistol Skill	+6

Legality	4
Memorability	1
Heroism	2
Relationships	2
Success	3

Powers	1
Detection	4
Contacts	4
Exposure	1
Accessibility	3

Scruples	1
Victories	3
Public Reaction	3
Extrovert	1
Home-life	1

Move	Knockback	Damage Modifier
4 sq.	24	+1

Kill **38**

Abilities

Background (Authorities - Secret Services)

Mutation 1 (Extra Arm - 1 bonus panel per round, can use Thr'ish artefacts)

Regeneration 2 (2 dice Kill per round of rest, can recover from -22 Kill points, Recovers 1 pt every round even whilst acting)

Weapon 3 (+6 to hit, +3 dice damage, Fast Draw, Bonus to Parries, -1 to opponents' dodges)

Stun **37**

Background

Donovan Rogers was an agent of MI:6 assigned to investigate threats to the Nation from within. He was co-opted into under-cover work as a Police Officer attached to a Scientific Enquiry unit and, thence, MI: X.

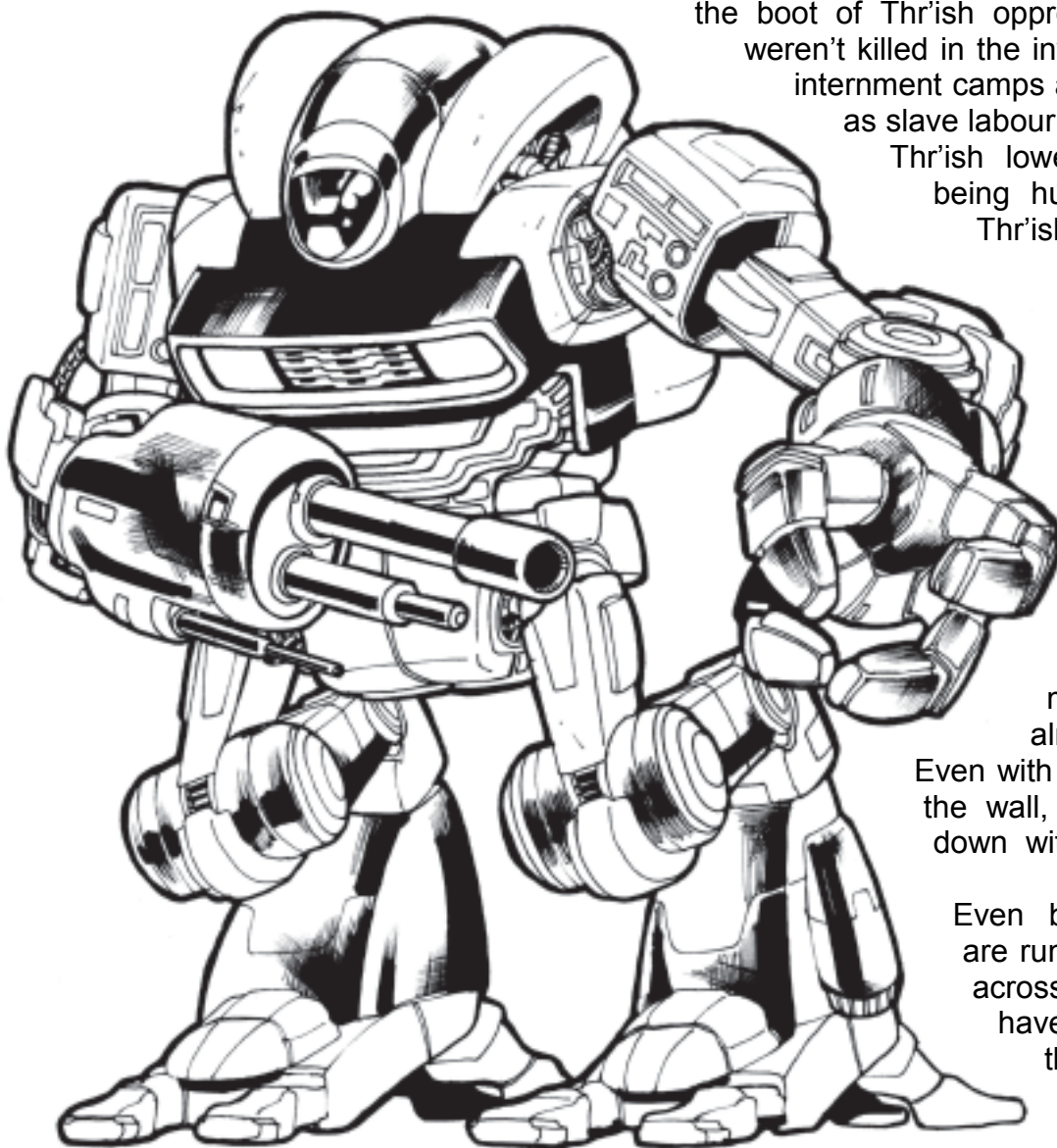
When the Thr'ish invaded he was caught in a nuclear explosion which gave his cells the ability to regenerate. Contamination with Thr'ish DNA has enhanced his ability with his pistol and caused him to grow an additional alien limb.

Attack	Kill	Stun	Mod.	Notes
Fist	d-5	2d	+1	
Pistol	2d	1d	+3 dice	+6 to hit, 13 sq. Range
Pistol shot (Parry)	2d	1d	+4 dice	+11 to hit

Equipment

First Aid Kit
Small Pistol
Small Car

Phase 4: Resistance



The bad news is, the Earth is conquered, and suffering under the boot of Thr'ish oppression. Those that weren't killed in the invasion are either in internment camps awaiting their fate – as slave labour or as fodder for the Thr'ish lower caste – or are being hunted by packs of Thr'ish warriors.

Man's cities lie in ruins and his civilisation has suffered a blow from which it may never recover.

The good news is that a fledgling resistance movement is already springing up. Even with their backs against the wall, Mankind won't go down without a fight.

Even better news, there are rumours of individuals across the planet who have not only survived the invasion, they've come out of it with incredible abilities. Some these use

stolen alien technology whilst others have received beneficial mutations from a variety of sources. These Heroes, no, these Superheroes, could tip the balance and allow Man to fight back against his alien oppressor and – even – allow them to drive the Thr'ish from our planet.

Events have now evolved into a crucible in which the characters' destinies will be forged. Will they be consumed in the white heat of battle or will they step forth to become Heroes whose names will become legends – celebrated in eons to come?



Phase 4: Resistance

The characters will now be tough enough to engage their alien foes in battle and stand a fair chance of winning.

Ideally, they should be able to defeat individual Thr'ish with ease and a battle-squad with some difficulty. The sheer number of their opponents means that the characters probably won't be able to defeat the entire Thr'ish invasion force on their own but they should be able to rack up a few victories.

The opponents faced by the Heroes in this phase of the campaign are exactly the same ones they've faced up until now. However, their recent power boost means their interactions with them will be thrown into a totally new light.

Key features of this phase include:

- The characters will need to gather together again after their individual origins. This will often necessitate a raid upon an alien saucer to rescue a comrade who has been captured for alien experimentation.
- The players can enjoy going toe-to-toe with their old foes and, rather than struggling to survive, trouncing them. A pack of werewolves terrorising a group of human survivors, a Thr'ish battle squad, zombies, vampires. All can now be faced with confidence.
- There needs to be at least one decisive battle which shows the players that their characters aren't invincible. One Thr'ish battle-squad is manageable – several of them backed up by one or more Thr'ish warlord – should cause the Heroes to flee.
- The Heroes will need to save any surviving members of the human race and help to build the fledgling resistance. Their special abilities will mean that they will be called upon first for special missions – rescue key figures, kidnap important aliens, recover necessary technology, act as decoys whilst everyone else escapes etc.

You should also draw upon the characters' Superhero origins to give you hooks for adventures.

Leon's Referee could use the following plotlines, for example.

MONGREL

Donovan Rogers' alien components will make ordinary people suspicious of him. There has to be at least one traitor within the resistance and Mongrel will be falsely accused. He will have to unmask the traitor to prove his innocence.

Ironically, he will find himself slowly becoming more and more alien. He will begin to understand snippets of Thr'ish spoken and written language and hear alien voices whispering in his head. He is plugged into the Thr'ish bio-communication network.

He may unwittingly betray key information to the enemy or – even – suffer an episode where he turns against his colleagues and needs to be caught and subdued. (Players love the odd battle amongst themselves to see who is the toughest!)

If I was Leon, I'd take out RETRIBUTION and SHROUD whilst they were out of their Armour and Cloak before going toe-to-toe with Nocturne.

As potentially damaging as this is, knowledge of MONGREL's link with the Thr'ish could prove immensely useful in the final battle.

RETRIBUTION

Radiation from the armour could be slowly killing Dan Smith. What's Leukemia when you've got a world to save? Still, a side adventure to liberate some anti-cancer drugs might be in order.

Similarly to MONGREL, Dan's armour could contain a tracking device or secretly transmit key information back to the Thr'ish or – even – have its key control systems over-ridden allowing the aliens to control it remotely.

NOCTURNE

Legends amongst the Vampyres speak of the arrival of a Prince of Darkness who will arrive to liberate them. Steve Curtis' new form bears a distressing similarity to this creature of legend.

As one faction of the Vampyre race seek to worship him and co-opt him as their leader, the current Nosferatu Supreme will seek to destroy this threat to his leadership.

Or he may just find himself developing a taste for human blood.....



SHROUD

Michaela Wright's cloak was – unbeknownst to her – promised the Faerie Princess Ellura. Ellura will appear to Michaela at awkward times, taunting her and trying to get her to hand back what she considers as *her* property.

She will seek to set SHROUD a series of tests to prove that she is worthy to wear the Cloak of Ages she has been given.

Ellura has little experience of the human world and walks through it with an arrogance which may get her into trouble – especially when she fails to recognise the Thrish as any kind of threat to herself.

Endings

As always it's up to you and your players how long you spend in this part of the campaign.

However, it's best to try and set some end goals to stop it drifting on aimlessly.

It shouldn't take long for the players to formulate a scheme to liberate the Earth. This phase should end when they've put all the elements into place to implement this grand design.

One good climax for this phase is an assault upon an alien saucer, not to rescue someone this time, but to actually capture it.





Phase 4: Resistance

Guts and Saucer

This is a possible Phase 4 adventure. In this adventure the characters launch their first serious assault against the alien invaders. The mood of this adventure is that of a Hollywood thriller. There is a slow tense build to the implementation of the Heroes' plot. Will it succeed or not?

Sooner or later, it's going to explode into all-out action. The aim is to show the players how their characters can succeed against the Thr'ish and set the stage for the grand scheme in Phase 5.

To demonstrate a possible scenario, I've had to have non-player characters suggest a possible scheme to take over one of the Thr'ish saucers. Hopefully, in your campaign, the players will be the ones coming up with all the wild ideas.

Introduction: "We've had an idea..."

The Heroes are invited to a summit of resistance leaders. Following the introductions – where the Heroes actions to date will be noted and lauded (and they discover that other sections of the resistance have experienced similar successes) – they will be invited to share intelligence.

Anything the Heroes haven't discovered about the Thr'ish will be revealed at this stage. There will also be some people present who have experience of the Faerie world – though no-one, as yet, has managed to convince them to aid Humankind against the Alien.

Most people around the table will treat this information about the Earth's supernatural creatures with a degree of scepticism.

It will become obvious at the meeting that the resistance simply doesn't have the ability to defeat the Thr'ish – even given the capture of a lot of Thr'ish weaponry and the presence of Superhumans on the world.

The only way to gain complete knowledge of their enemy's capabilities would be to capture a Thr'ish saucer. The saucer's systems will contain complete information about Thr'ish technology and the opportunity to question a Thr'ish warlord should yield even more intelligence. It would also be a blow to the aliens' morale and a boost to that of humankind across the planet.

Fully laden, each Thr'ish saucer is home to 20,000 Thr'ish – 18,000 lower caste, 2,000 medial caste and a single Warlord.

Due to the invasion, 1,000 Medial caste will be upon the Earth with over 5,000 lower caste to support them – as both servants and food supply.

The saucers allocated to conquering the United Kingdom are under the control of the Warlord *Windshear*. Comparing notes with resistance groups across the world, *Windshear* seems to be particularly brutal. This, plus the actions of the Heroes, has caused him to extend himself further than some of his peers. His personal saucer currently has fewer than 500 Medial Caste Thr'ish aboard – the rest are abroad in Britain, seeking to subdue this rebellious Nation.

Windshear has also shown an interest in Faerie-kind. He is rumoured to have gnomes, werewolves, vampyres and even, possibly, a pure-breed faerie or two upon his saucer upon whom his scientists are experimenting.

These two facts make his saucer a prime target for seizure. Apart from the (relatively) low number of Medial Thr'ish aboard, the Faerie captives should make ready allies if released. And – if any are rescued – it should stand the resistance in good stead with their kin.

So the plan – the resistance intend to conceal a strike-force amongst the next food shipment to the saucer. By food shipment, we're talking about tens of thousands of human corpses. By now all those killed in the invasion will have been consumed. These corpses will be fresh from the Thr'ish internment camps.

As small force of volunteers will seize one of the deliveries of corpses before it can be delivered to the shuttles going up to the saucer. Some of the corpses will be replaced with the strikeforce tasked with the seizure of the saucer.

The Thr'ish will, of course, not allow mere humans to liberate even part of their food supply. They'll doubtless send an overwhelming force to take it back. That is, of course, what the resistance is counting on. However, the only way to fool the Thr'ish is if the small squad tasked with seizing the corpses were to defend the shipment with their lives. It's a suicide mission.



Even given this sacrifice, the ploy will only be sufficient to get few score of the resistance's best fighters aboard the saucer. Once aboard, they'll be outnumbered and have to fight like devils to take the ship.

Of course the players' Heroes will be expected to volunteer.

If only there was some way to get more reinforcements aboard the ship?

Hopefully the players will put two and two together. A shipment of thousands of human corpses and extra cannon fodder needed against the Thr'ish. The idea may be distasteful but.....

Zombies!

Which is the worst fate? Being consumed by the Thr'ish lower caste or being raised as Undead to fight for their world?

What the resistance needs is some Faerie Blood.

Episode 1: Blood Seekers

Not all Faerie blood is the same. One of the Heroes may already be infected. However, experiments will show that their life fluids are unable to animate corpses.

The players will be tasked with seeking advice from their Faerie-friends – such as Kinross.

Finding the Faerie will prove difficult enough. Despite their assertion that the invasion is nothing to do with them and it affects them in no way – they have fled their more usual haunts and retreated deeper into the enchanted hills of our land. The Heroes will find their previous rendezvous deserted.

They'll either have to find a chatty half-blood still living in the human world or use a summoning, portal or information spell to find where Oberon and his people have retreated to.

There there'll be the tiresome debate about why the Faerie world should care what happens to the human race or which physical species thinks it has custodianship over the planet.

Even when they get the co-operation of the Faerie Lords, matters will remain opaque.



It seems that ordinary Faerie Blood will not animate undead. It needs to be blood already tainted with that particular curse. The Heroes need to talk to the Nosferatu rather than the Faerie.

Oberon will set up a meeting with the local Vampyre Lord – Elonard. He will, however, issue dire warnings. The wide-scale massacre of Mankind by the Thr'ish has left Elonard's people short of food.

And it seems that some of the Heroes are now blessed with unique vintages of vital fluid. A double-cross seems inevitable.

So now the Heroes must work out how to lure out the vampyres, foil their ambush and – somehow – escape with the infected blood that they need.

There will be as many major vampyres – including Elonard – at the meeting as there are Heroes in the group.

You should create these vampyres yourself to make sure they are appropriate opponents for your particular group of Heroes.



Phase 4: Resistance

They should be generated using the same system as the players but with two differences:

- Their abilities are rolled on the Vampyre table given in phase 2.
- Elonard has one more roll – in total – than the players' Heroes (including their initial Backgrounds Roll or Ability) and his followers get one fewer.

You should give all of these vampyres individual names.

In addition there will be a number of minor vampyres present. There will be roughly the same number as any back-up troops brought by the Heroes. These vampyres are equivalent to Thugs but are immune to any attacks which do only Stun damage.

If the Heroes don't bring any back-up, replace one of the major vampyres with a dozen minor ones.

For Example

Mongrel, Shroud, Nocturne and Retribution bring a squad of 6 Resistance fighters with them to the meeting. These Heroes were created using 8 power rolls in total.

Leon's Referee creates a version of Elonard using 9 power rolls, 3 followers with 7 power rolls and throws in 8 low-power Vampyre followers.

Ideally, this meeting will be more about planning, negotiation and double-cross rather than an all-out battle. The choice of meeting venue will be key. Elonard will want a dark and shrouded location, below ground, away from sunlight. The players may agree to this but select one where they know the supports are damaged and a few well-placed explosive charges will remove the roof, allowing sunlight to flood in.....

Ideally all or most of the Vampyres will escape. The Heroes can succeed if:

- They capture one or more Vampyres
- There's plenty of Vampyre blood splattered around to collect
- One of them or one of their followers has been bitten and is beginning to "turn"

Episode 2: Zombie Kings

Now the Heroes need to put their plan into action. Hopefully, first of all the scientists amongst their team will insist on a bit of experimentation:

- Will the vampire blood create Zombies?
- How long after exposure to the Zombies animate?
- How diluted can the blood be and still work?
- What is the most effective delivery system?

If they don't do this then they may have problems when it comes to implementing their plan as they have too few zombies or zombies who animate too early or too late.

The Heroes should then help out with the hijacking of the convoy of dead bodies being delivered to the shuttles up to the Thr'ish saucer. This shouldn't prove much of a challenge. They can then conceal themselves and their squad of resistance fighters amongst the lorry-loads of corpses – leaving a skeleton force to pretend to drive them away.

Shortly after hiding themselves, the lorries will start to move. Shortly after that, the inevitable backlash will occur and the hidden characters will hear the terrible sounds of true heroes being slaughtered.

Eventually, the cargo will be loaded onto the shuttles and flown up to the Thr'ish mothership. If being buried amongst piles of fresh human cadavers weren't sufficiently horrific – the mockery of life that occurs when they enter a zone of zero-gravity and their movements around and against the characters will be almost too much to bear.





Episode 3: Assault on a Sky Citadel

The players will have to choose just the right moment to spray the diluted Faerie ichor onto their dead travelling companions to get them animate just as they arrive of the alien saucer.

Even given their undead allies, this assault is doomed to failure. Make sure the Thr'ish are tough enough to take whatever the Heroes throw at them.

In order to succeed, the Heroes are going to have to:

- Hit and Run
- Run away
- Hide

- Animate their fallen comrades as Zombies
- Animate fallen Thr'ish as Zombies
- Blow holes in the skin of the ship
- Cause explosions in key areas of the ship
- Release any captives – especially Faerie, Faerie blood and any humans experimented upon by the Thr'ish scientists

If they manage all of these then they may just be able to stumble – battered and bruised – into a final conflict with Windshear himself and a cohort of his chosen Lieutenants. You should create these using the rules given in Phase 3. They should be tough enough to defeat the battle-weary Heroes who should only survive by cheating or by the arrival of cavalry in the form of liberated faerie-kind.



Phase 5: Liberty

Earth triumphant - the climax of the campaign

Hopefully, the climax to the campaign will arise out of events which occur during play and/or your players' verdant imaginations.

As I have mentioned before, during one playtest a hijacked Thr'ish mothership was hidden in the waters of the Irish Sea. A botched landing caused the destruction of the hatchery of the previously unknown mer-people. With a bit of creative negotiation - lying, basically - this brought them and their undersea allies into the war. It turned out there were a LOT of faerie in Earth's oceans.



Be prepared to be flexible. It's much more satisfying for players if the Earth is saved through their own efforts rather than some referee imposed deus ex machina.

The entire thrust of this campaign is that humanity alone cannot defeat the invading alien. Only an alliance between human and faerie can hope to succeed. So, hopefully, your players' solutions will be along those lines.



This doesn't mean you should give them an easy ride, however.

People who rely upon solutions from films or books shouldn't succeed, for example. The Thr'ish will not succumb to Earth's bacteria. Trying to introduce a computer virus into their systems will meet superior, alien firewalls. I mean, come on guys, try to encourage your players to be more creative than that!

Hopefully, your players will manage to come up with something draw-droppingly clever that neither you nor I have thought of and your problems will be solved.

No matter how clever their plans are, however, you should still resist the urge to roll over and give the campaign away to your players.

It is a standard trope in these situations that the players' first plan - however clever - should fail whilst their second attempt should succeed.

(If you want them to go through two or more failures first, it's up to you. Don't dishearten them though.)

Whatever plan they come up with first, just imagine some reasonable reasons why it might not succeed and put them in place. Don't just arbitrarily "crock" their plan.

If, through good play, they manage to surmount the obstacles you put in their way, then of course they deserve their first plan to work triumphantly.

I'd love to hear about the many weird and wonderful ways people come up with to round off their Squadron: X campaigns. Drop me a line through the Squadron UK web-site. I'd love to share them either through the web-site or the Eagles Nest fan forum.

Sneaky players might take a peek, however, so I might have to reserve publication for the second edition of this book. I still want to hear what happened in your game, though.

Heroic sacrifice

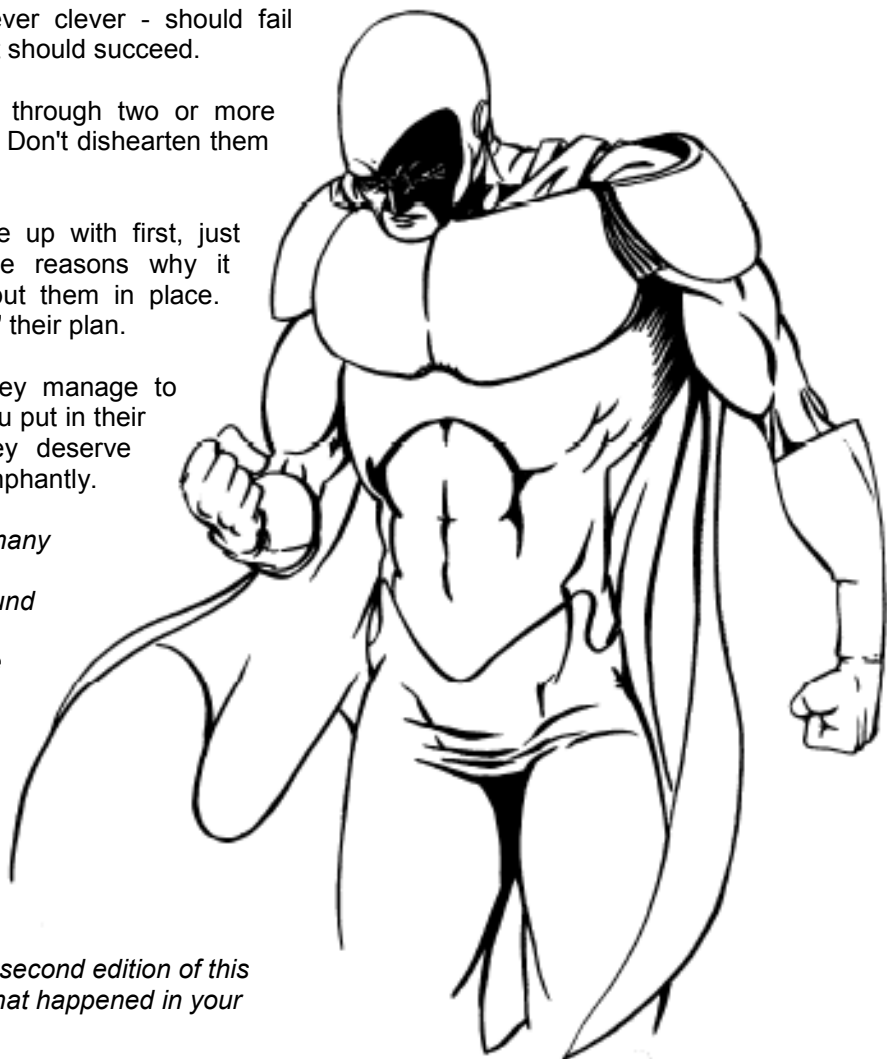
The climax to the campaign is much more satisfying if one or more of the Heroes ultimately gives their life saving the planet they love.

Remember, this phase is the climax of the campaign.

It doesn't matter if one - or even all - of the Heroes die at this stage as long as Earth is freed.

My personal preference is for at least one Hero to die heroically and at least one to survive. Anything in between this is negotiable.

Just go through all your favourite films and make a list of all the Heroic deaths you remember from them. Whatever climax you and your players come up with, put in opportunities for each and every one of them. Your players should pick up on one or more of them.



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Phase 5: Liberty



The strange mixture of Alien blood with Faerie Infection can yield outcomes no-one can predict and results which no scientist could even conceive – let alone create – in a thousand years of experimentation.

If you've got some clever players, they may see the way this is going and arrange for a "meeting" between their two greatest enemies. If not, you'll just have to arrange it yourself.

Personally, I set things up so that the Heroes – tough as they are – can still be overwhelmed in battle by a large force of Vampyres or Thr'ish. And they know it. At the climax of the campaign I have them finally defeated and captured by the Thr'ish and taken aboard a saucer for experimentation and dissection. They are totally defeated and I torture them to let them know that.

The players may come up with a clever escape plan or I may arrange give them help from other captives, the resistance or the Thr'ish "5th columnists" to allow them to escape by the skin of their teeth – preferably battered and injured.

Resolutions

It is by far the best solution if you and your players come up with a resolution to the Thr'ish invasion which grows naturally out of the events in your own version of the Squadron: X campaign.

Ideally, though, this resolution will involve both Alien and Faerie. What's the point of having them both in the campaign world otherwise?

As has been mentioned numerous times throughout this book, the Faerie have a "hands off" approach to the mundane world which they extend to the Thr'ish and their whole invasion. Factions within the Faerie realm realise that this event is on a different scale from anything else which has happened in recorded history, but the Faerie rulers are more conservative and – initially at least – refuse to participate in events.

So up until this point, humanity has had to fight alone. Any help from the Faerie has been given grudgingly by renegades such as Kinross or bought after much negotiation and countless concessions.

It is when the Faerie enter the war that the tide turns.

My favourite resolution to the whole campaign is to have matters come to a head the first time a Vampire sinks its teeth into the flesh of a Thr'ish.

Their shuttle will crash to Earth in eastern Europe. As they stagger, defeated, into the nearest habitation – a large castle – they find themselves in the midst of a nest of vampyres.

For the second time in the adventure I torture them with their total defeat, maybe even having one or more of them bitten by their mortal foes.

Just as they launch their second great escape within a matter of hours, I throw the Thr'ish in again.





The escape from the Saucer was all a trick. The Heroes have been implanted with bio-trackers with the expectation that they'd lead the Thr'ish straight to the human resistance. Instead, they're with Vampyres.

The sensible thing to do would be to let the humans go free again. But the natural arrogance of Vampyre and Thr'ish will lead them into battle with each other.

If you can manage it, have the Vampyre and Thr'ish agreeing to a mutual non-aggression pact and try to get your players to disrupt it – setting their enemies at each other's throats.

What happens if a vampyre bites an alien?

The possibilities here are endless. There are myriad things that could happen to a Thr'ish when it's bitten. There are also myriad things that could happen to the Vampyre. And they don't have to be the same thing.

Some possibilities are listed below.

How brave are you as a Referee? To what extent are you happy to allow the dice to control events? If you're really brave you'll put these possibilities into a probability table and roll the dice. Whatever the outcomes that's how your Squadron: X campaign will end.

If you're not quite so brave, then feel free to pick a couple of outcomes from this list which suit your tastes and build the last phase of your campaign around them.

I am a die roller by taste. I'll use power tables to roll characters, villains, Thr'ish, Faerie.

When the characters pull random wires on a nuclear bomb, I'll roll dice to see what happens.

But even I bottle at the thought of rolling randomly at this stage, after putting so much thought and effort into the campaign.

I'll let you know the solution I tend to pick after you've read the lists and chosen your own.

Effects on a Thr'ish

- Nothing happens. The Thr'ish are totally immune to the effects of Faerie blood.
- The Thr'ish is infected in the same way as humans. They will turn into a Vampyre creature.
- The Thr'ish is infected but not in same way as humans. They gain a boost to their natural abilities, strength etc. determined by the Referee.
- The Thr'ish is infected but not in same way as humans. They gain a boost to their natural abilities, strength etc. through rolling on a Superpower table.
- The Vampyre blood is poisonous to the Thr'ish and they die.
- The Vampyre blood is poisonous to the Thr'ish and they become physically weaker.
- The Thr'ish find the process of being bitten pleasurable. They become addicted to being bitten and will seek out Vampyres to do it.
- The Thr'ish become unable to metabolise the meat of the Thr'ish lower caste and start to starve to death.
- The Thr'ish develop a craving for human blood. Whether or not they can metabolise it, they come to believe that is the only food source they can survive upon.
- The Thr'ish become infected with a disease which is fatal to all Thr'ish.
- The Thr'ish begin to mutate into human form.
- The Thr'ish begin to mutate into a completely new form.
- The Thr'ish turn into a puddle of jelly on the floor.
- Two or more of the above effects happen. One of these may be delayed.



Phase 5: Liberty

Effects on a Vampyre

- Nothing happens. The Vampyre think they are totally unable to metabolise Thr'ish blood.
- Nothing happens, but the Vampyre think they are able to metabolise Thr'ish blood.
- The Vampyre gain a boost to their natural abilities, strength etc. determined by the Referee.
- The Vampyre gain a boost to their natural abilities, strength etc. through rolling on a Superpower table.
- The Thr'ish blood is poisonous to the Vampyre and they die.
- The Thr'ish blood is poisonous to the Vampyre and they become physically weaker.
- The Vampyre become addicted to Thr'ish blood. They will seek out Thr'ish to drain to the exclusion of all else.
- The Vampyre metabolism fails and they start to decay.
- The Vampyre become infected with a disease which is fatal to all Vampyres.
- The Vampyre become infected with a disease which is fatal to all Faerie-kind.
- The Vampyre begin to mutate into Thr'ish form.
- The Vampyre are cured and become human again.
- The Vampyre are cured and become pure-blood faerie.
- The Vampyre begin to mutate into a new form which is neither Human, Faerie or Thr'ish.
- The Vampyre turn into a puddle of jelly on the floor.
- Two or more of the above effects happen. One of these may be delayed.

So what did I choose?

The Vampyres were easy. I kept them the same as they ever were but made them believe they could metabolise Thr'ish blood and made them addicted to it. This, of course, made them allies of the resistance – the people who could show them where the Thr'ish were and help them to get there.

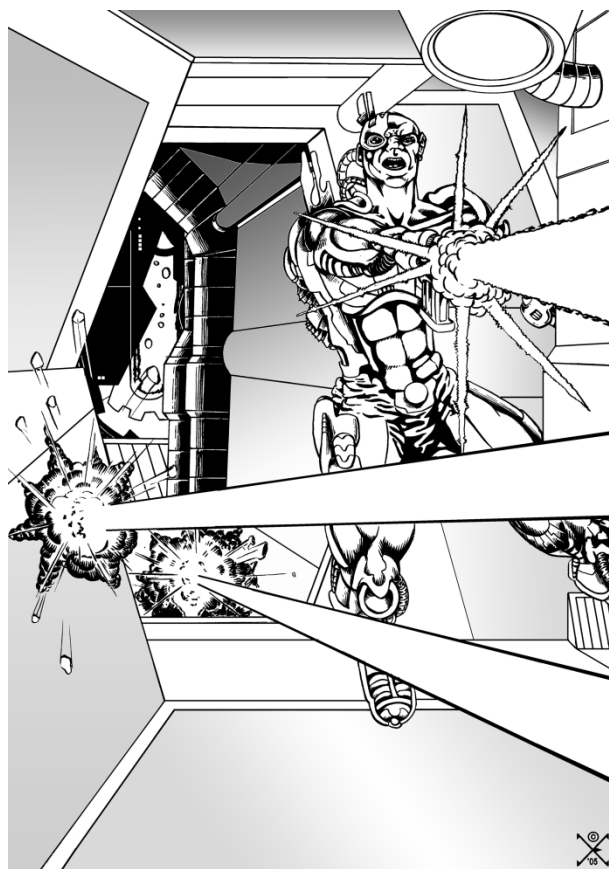
The Thr'ish I has turning into a puddle of goo which was poisonous the Thr'ish as a whole.

Thinking back, this was probably a bit of overkill but I had be refereeing the campaign for a while and was keen to see it come to a conclusion.

The Big Climax

Hopefully by now some or all of the Faerie have agreed to throw their lot in with Humankind. In addition, the resistance will have one or more weapons to throw against the Thr'ish – whether Vampyres addicted to Thr'ish blood, an anti-Thr'ish pathogen or something else.

Now all the Heroes need to do is to co-ordinate a world-wide assault against the Thr'ish.





Allow your players full rein in their planning and – for once – allow all their good ideas to work.

Whichever plan they decide to implement, you should play out one battle, featuring the Heroes, and assume that the outcome is replicated by similar groups across the world. Try your best to make it do or die. As I said above, if you kill one or more of them in the process then it's fine.

Anti-climax

That's it then, the campaign is over. The Heroes have saved the whole damn planet.

If they've got anything about them, your players will throw you a party or get you some kind of memento. I wouldn't count on it though!

So I thoroughly recommend you play out the scene where they get knighted by whichever member of the Royal Family survived the holocaust.

Those who gave their lives in the struggle will be awarded their posthumous Victoria Crosses.

Craig Starling should get a posthumous honour as well. And representatives of the Faerie world should be present at the awards ceremony.

Make speeches, get the players to make speeches and address any and all unresolved plotlines.

For example

If Lupus – from the character's very first adventure – is still around, he should be present with his new wife, Susie, and their daughter, Faith – who will now be a few years old. Lupus will be receiving an award for his heroic actions during the resistance against the Thr'ish but he'll take time out to apologise to the Heroes.

Thank your players and give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back.



Phase 6: Regeneration

Well that's it. The Thr'ish are gone. The Earth is free. The campaign is over.

Seriously, the campaign is over.

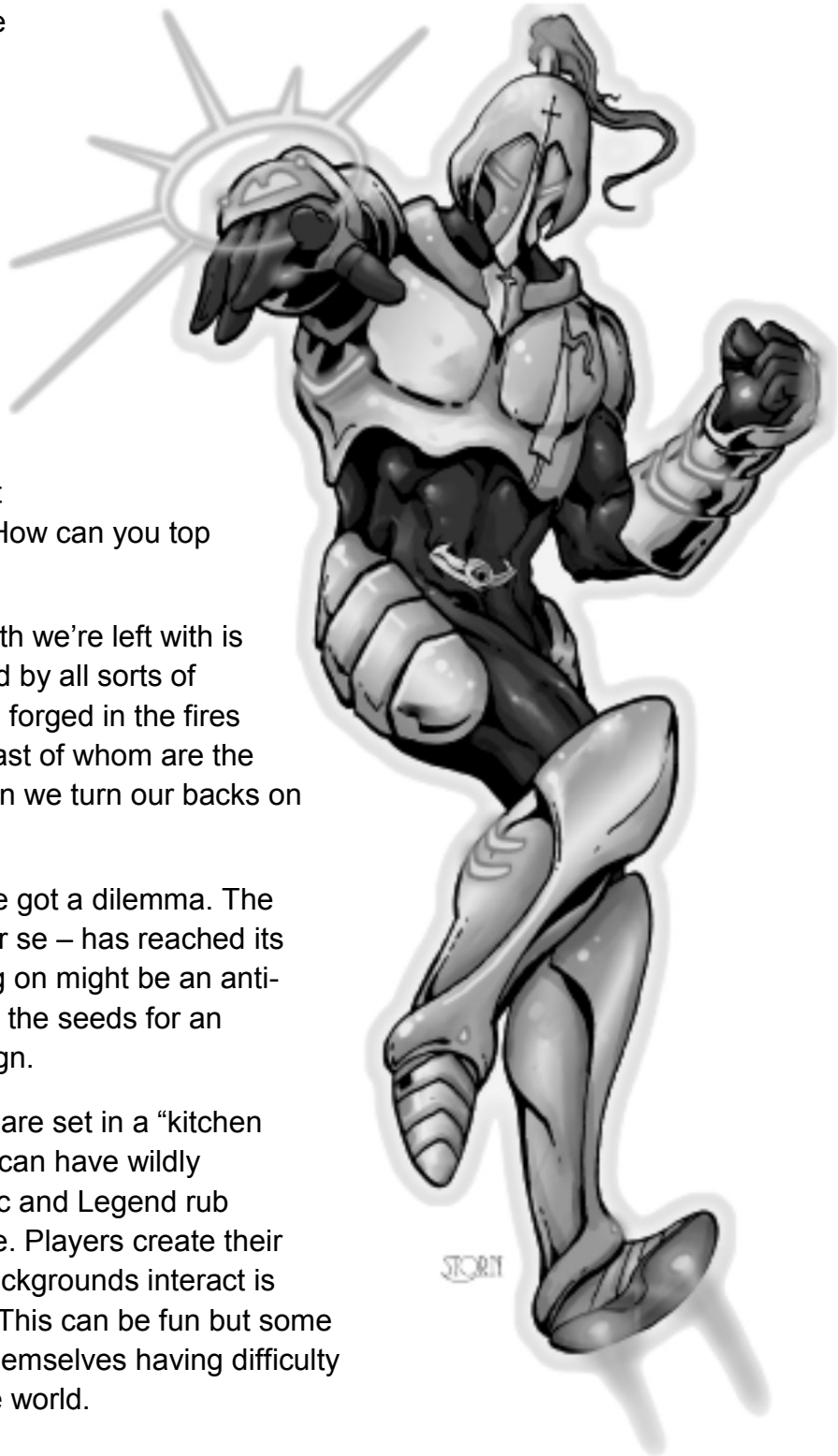
Well, that's what I'D do. It's what I've always done whenever I've run this campaign.

Saving the EARTH!
That's got to be the highlight of any Superhero's career. How can you top THAT?

Let's face it, though, the Earth we're left with is a fascinating place, occupied by all sorts of weird and wonderful people, forged in the fires of incredible events – not least of whom are the Heroes themselves. How can we turn our backs on all that?

Basically, at this point you've got a dilemma. The Squadron: X campaign – per se – has reached its natural conclusion. Carrying on might be an anti-climax. However, you've got the seeds for an amazing Superhero campaign.

Most Superhero campaigns are set in a “kitchen sink” Universe. The Heroes can have wildly different backgrounds. Magic and Legend rub shoulders with Superscience. Players create their Heroes and the way their backgrounds interact is rationalised after the event. This can be fun but some players and Referees find themselves having difficulty with the “logic” of their game world.





Some Referees overcome this by creating a background for their campaign first. They then require every character to be created to fit into that background.

Every power is caused by an alien virus unleashed upon the Earth. All powers are mystical in origin – being granted by ancient “Gods”. All powers come from training or devices, for example.

Some players find this kind of background to be a strait-jacket on their imaginations. Some people enjoy the challenge of applying their imagination within set limits, seeking to subvert and overcome them. Others prefer to be able to let their imagination run free.

In any case, whatever the “ground zero” event which gave rise to Superheroes in the world, it is something which has already happened when the players create their Heroes – imposed by the Referee. The players have no emotional connection with it.

By the end of the Squadron: X campaign, the Referee and players will be left with a game world which could be described as a “typical” Superhero setting. However, it is unique in that the Heroes have actually lived through the events which have created it. In the same way that the characters started out as normal humans and have been shaped by extraordinary events into Superheroes – so they have seen their world turn from the humdrum into the astonishing.

A world like no other

The post-campaign world of Squadron: X will be unique in a number of ways:

- The Earth's population will have been decimated. Billions will have died.
- Civilisation will have been ravaged. There need to be massive programmes of rebuilding – giving employment and worth to every surviving member of the human race.
- Fragments of a superior technology will have survived which can be reverse-engineered for the benefit of mankind.
- The nations of the world will have learnt to work together to repulse the Thr'ish invasion.

- Given the reduced population there will be a reduced pressure on resources so there will be less reason for nations to compete.
- The many and varied Superpowered beings arising out of the Thr'ish invasion can benefit mankind in ways it is impossible to predict or quantify.

For all of the above reasons, Mankind has the opportunity to live in peace and Earth could be a paradise.

Of course it isn't all hunky dory:

- What about the Faerie? Now that they're revealed how will they interact with humans? Even if relations are peaceful, there's likely to be a rise in the number of cross-breeds created. How will this be viewed by the races concerned? Even if the general response is towards tolerance, there are likely to be fundamentalist factions amongst both Human and Faerie who will take action to limit this intermingling. Should they have seats at the New United Nations? Who actually OWNS the British Isles?
- What about all these Superhumans? Grateful as everyone is that they've saved the world, history has shown that this gratitude has limits. A racial inferiority complex and suspicions about future intentions will cause many to ask their saviours to hand in their alien and magical devices and seek “cures” for their “afflictions”. Would you want your son to marry a girl afflicted with a Thr'ish mutation? And what's to say that some “Superheroes” *don't* think that they're better suited to govern mankind than mere mortals?
- We're suddenly part of a bigger universe. Sure, the Thr'ish are gone but what other threats are out there? Will the world turn into a Dictatorship devoted only to arming the world against further invaders?

These only scratch the surface. I'm sure you and your players can come up with many more ideas with very little thought.

In fact, some Referees will rush through the Squadron: X campaign.



Phase 6: Regeneration

It is possible to complete it in a handful of game sessions if that's what you want.

Whilst most people will see the Squadron: X campaign itself as the main focus and the reason for playing, some people see it more as an interesting way to create characters and establish a game world. For them to aim is to create an interesting setting populated with unusual characters and it's only now that the REAL campaign starts.

Even if that wasn't your reason for buying this book and running this campaign, you've still got an interesting world that it seems and shame to just throw away.



Keeping things going

On the other hand, you have to make sure that the new adventures live up to the campaign so far. As I said at the start of the chapter, how can you follow **Saving The World?**

If you and your players want to keep things going, here are a few suggestions:

Take a rest

Even if you want to carry on with the campaign, stop and take a break at the end of Phase 5. Give yourself a few sessions off. At the very least it'll give you time to reflect on what's happened and plan for the future.

Play in or Referee a different game for a few sessions, even if it's only a few games of "classic" Superhero adventures using the Squadron: UK rules.

A change is as good as a rest. Recharge your batteries.

New blood

Retire the campaign heroes and allow your players to create new ones. Keep the world you've created but have a few new faces to tackle its challenges.

This is especially useful if some of the characters died heroic deaths at the end of the invasion. If some of your players have to make new characters, they all might as well do it.

On the other hand, a campaign where new characters are mentored by Living Legends of the Invasion has its attractions.....

New Boss

By this stage, you deserve an award. You've been running an epic, immersive, campaign – possibly for months. You deserve a rest.

However, you're not the only one familiar with this game world. By now all of the players know as much about it as you do.

If not, why not? What's the point of keeping secrets from the players at this stage? The campaign's finished. There's no reason for keeping secrets at this stage.

So let them have a go at running things. You should make a character of your own.

At last you get the fun of doing it. It feels different from creating the bad guys somehow.

Then let one of your players design and run an adventure. They may have an idea for an extended storyline. If so, let them keep Refereeing.

If not you can take the reins back after they've finished their adventure. Alternatively, you can offer each of your players the opportunity to Referee adventures on a rotating basis.

If you can convince them to do this, you'll get to see a range of viewpoints on the campaign world which you'll all find absolutely fascinating.

Ideally at least one of your players will step forward to take charge of the Refereeing duties for a while.



Let them handle things for a while and enjoy sitting back and just playing a Hero. Revel in the world that YOU created. You never know, you might not want to take the reins back.

New Frontier

Despite the (many) trips between Earth and the Thr'ish saucers, Squadron: X has been an earth-bound campaign.

Another way to change things up and keep the campaign going is to put the Heroes into new locations. The most obvious of these is space. Maybe they've got their hands on a Thr'ish saucer.

The players could set off on a quest across the galaxy to hunt down the last of the alien scourge.

Alternatively, you may decide that the Faerie world exists on a different plane than our own mundane one. Having simultaneously earned the respect of the Faerie and put themselves into their debt, the Heroes may find themselves summoned to their world to assist against evil wizards, dragons or giants.

Or, even, just a visit to another country. Maybe one that's suffered more during the invasion or is under the heel of a dictatorship – possibly superpowered.



Appendix: Superpower Notes

This appendix contains a listing of all the Superpowers listed on the tables in Phase 3 and elsewhere in the rules.

They are listed in alphabetical order.

Levels

All powers have higher levels (see Phase 3). Many higher levels have a choice of options. Each option counts as a higher level in its own right. Only one option can be taken for each higher level. The player must pick one option when then character is created and this cannot be changed later.

For example

A character with CLOAKING level 2 may either choose to be completely invisible without concentration or to touch someone else and make them difficult to see.

When Jayne Walters is given an ancient artefact by the Faerie, Joan, her player, opts for it to be an Invisibility ring which only affects her, rather than a Cloak of Blending which could be wrapped around others. She can't decide later in the campaign to have the ring affect her comrades.

All powers have half levels. These allow the player to take two half-level powers instead of one first level power, when the Hero first gains their powers. Once done, these may not be taken to higher levels as part of the Character Creation process. They remain at half-level.



For example

Jayne Walters was a WPC in the Birmingham Metropolitan Force. When the Thrish invaded, she was rescued by her Faerie-friends and offered item(s) to help her survive and fight back against her alien enemies.

Her player, Joan, was given 7 power rolls. She rolled:

*Increased Move
Cloaking
Enhancement
Strength*

A further roll shows that one of the temporary enhancement powers is Energy Blast.

This leaves her with 3 rolls left. She takes the cloaking up to level 2. This leaves her with 2 power rolls. She wants to take her Strength up to Level 3 but this would take 3 power rolls.

Joan chooses to take Jayne's Increased Move and Enhancement at half level. This means she now has the 3 power rolls left she needs to take her Strength up to Level 3.

Her powers are:

*Background: Police
Cloaking 2
Increased Move ½
Enhancement (Energy Blast) ½
Strength 3*

Players may not choose any gimmicks for their characters' half-level powers.

The only way a player could enhance these abilities would be through the expenditure of Montage Panels later in the campaign.

Gimmicks

In addition to enhancements and/or options which are given at higher levels, superpowers also come with gimmicks. The player may select one gimmick at each level of the power. These are minor customisations of the superpowers which allow the player to further tailor their Hero's unique abilities.

Where appropriate, players may select the same gimmick more than once if the Hero has more than one level in the power.

Appendix: Superpower Notes

If a character has a half-level power, they do not choose any gimmicks for that power.

For example

Jayne's gimmicks are:

Background: Police, Increased Move ½, Enhancement (Energy Blast) ½ (all have no gimmicks)

Cloaking 2 (costume turns invisible, can change turn invisible whilst moving)

Strength 3 (slight build, +10 to knockback score – this is the +5 to knockback score taken twice)

Rationalisation

The player should come up with an explanation for how their powers work, based upon the events they have been caught up with during the Thr'ish invasion.

The exact levels taken in each power, the options taken and gimmick taken at each level should all be consistent with this explanation.

As Referee, you must agree with the player's explanation before he can finalise the details of his Hero.

For Example

*Jayne Walters has been given the **Ring of the Elements**.*

The EARTH component gives her the Strength of rock. Apart from making her very strong and anchoring her to the ground (+10 Knockback) he improved Strength allows her to leap long distances (Increased Move).

The AIR and WATER components allow her to fold atmosphere or fluid around herself rendering her invisible – even underwater.

The FIRE component allows her to fire Energy blasts but this is power rapidly depleted.

Using Superpowers

All Superpowers take a panel to use unless otherwise specified.

Some Superpowers may be used at any time without time penalty.

Others require concentration. The character cannot move or perform other actions whilst using the power.

Other powers may be time-limited. This means that they can only be used for a number of panels equal to the character's Psyche SCORE. After this time the power will automatically fail and will require a panel to re-activate.

If the character wishes to re-activate the power earlier than this point, they must use a panel to deactivate it first. The power cannot be used continually.

Other powers may be used at a range. Unless otherwise specified, the range is equal to the character's Psyche MODIFIER.

For example

Jayne Walters - aka ELEMENTRA – is always Strong as long as she is wearing the ring. She can remain invisible without concentration. It takes a panel to turn invisible or become visible but she can do this as part of a move.'

The description of Enhancement starts that it can only be used for a number of panels equal to her Psyche SCORE – which is 11. The range of her Energy Blast is also 11. However, it takes a panel to activate or deactivate this power.

Her Referee requires that she becomes visible to use the Energy Blast but allows this to happen during the activation panel.

Her team-mate – MESMER – has the Mind Control power. He can attempt to hypnotise anyone within 6 squares – which is equal to his Psyche MODIFIER.



Acrobatics

(Gymnastics, Agility)

The character is extremely nimble and agile and is far more likely to be able to perform acrobatic feats – such as dodging attacks – than other people.

For each level of this power possessed, the character gets +2 per level to their Dodge rolls and +5 per level to any Skill rolls based on Agility.

Gimmicks:

- Use one particular skill based on Agility (for example, climbing) with a further +5 bonus.
- A +5 bonus on the Agility roll when making it as part of a Combined Action. (For example, vaulting a car to kick at an opponent.)
- A further +1 dodge bonus.
- -1 modifier on opponents' dodge
- -1 modifier on opponents' parry

½ level: The Hero gets +1 on Dodge rolls and +2 on Agility Skill rolls.



Change form

(Disguise, Shapechange, Doppelganger, Stretch, Deform)

The character has control over their physical form and can make it change its appearance and (at higher levels) shape.

Level 1: The character can change themselves into any humanoid form. Basically, they can disguise themselves as other people, appropriate animals (simians, ursine) or humanoid aliens.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- change into a non-humanoid shape (of the same size)
- change size (plus or minus one size category per level, see the Object Table in the Combat Section).
- can stretch or deform shape though staying basically humanoid in form. Maximum Stretch is equal to Psyche Skill Modifier in squares.
- The ability to change colour (-4 to sleuthing rolls made to spot the character if they are trying to merge into the background.)

In addition to these specific higher level upgrades, the character gets on additional gimmick per level

- +1 to stun divider if it is used as a response to combat (dodge or parry).
- Has a costume which changes shape with the character
- Has a costume which changes colour with the character
- Mimmickry - skill (at basic level, no modifiers).

½ level: It takes time and equipment to disguise themselves.

Cloaking

(Invisibility, Chameleon Ability)

The character has the ability to make themselves difficult to see.

Level 1 – The character can choose from either:

- Chameleon ability (-5 sleuthing rolls to perceive them) without concentration and with full movement.

Or

- Totally invisibility (-10 Sleuthing rolls) but with concentration - cannot move.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- Can be invisible without concentration
- Can pass effect onto other objects/targets - requires touch at first level taken.
- Can pass effect onto other objects/targets - at range equal to Psyche Modifier (higher levels)
- In each case the effect is time-limited (Psyche score in panels) at the first level taken.

Gimmicks

- Can appear/disappear as part of a combined action whilst moving
- If an effect requires concentration – is able to talk whilst maintaining it.
- Has a costume which changes with them
- +2 squares increase in range of transmitted effects.

½ level – Chameleon ability but with full concentration - cannot move.



Endurance

(Vigour, health, stamina, constitution)

The character is uncommonly fit and healthy.

Level 1: Their Endurance score goes up to 20+d6 – with a commensurate increase in their Kill and Stun totals

Higher levels: Endurance increases by another 5+d6 per level.

This power has no effect on the character's Knockback score which is usually based upon their original Endurance roll.

Gimmicks:

- +5 to knockback score
- +5 to recovery rolls
- Immune to one specified disease
- Needs 50% less sleep than normal people

½ level: The character has an Endurance of 20

Energy Blast

(Zap, Energy Attack, Flame-thrower, Disruption etc. etc.)

The character has the ability to discharge energy in a way that is harmful to targets. Or similar powers with the same effect. (Hail of metal, for example.)

The exact type of energy or attack must be specified when the character is created. The individual details of the attack (see below) must be selected to be compatible with this form of energy.

I can give you a list of possible energy types if you want (Heat, Cold, Light, Sound, Electrical, Plasma, Cosmic, Radiation, Nuclear etc. etc.) but it's much better to make your players choose the type they want.

Level 1: The attack does the usual 1d and 2d damage (which can be either mainly on Kill or Stun at a player's choice).

The character has bonus dice to add to this attack. Unless they add at least one die they cannot use the Energy Blast.

The smallest Energy Blast, therefore, is 4 dice – the 3 “base” dice plus the additional one put in by the character.

These Bonus Dice are normally called the character's *Dice Pool*.

The number of dice in this Dice Pool is determined by the number of rounds it takes the character to recover their energy. Characters with large Dice Pools take longer to recharge their Energy.

For each round it takes the character to recover their dice, they have 2 dice in their dice pool which can be allocated in any way they want.

Characters may not have a recovery period of more than 5 rounds.

Their dice pool may never exceed the maximum. Unused dice do not “carry over”.

At least one extra die must be allocated to every attack. A character who has used all their bonus dice cannot use their Energy to attack until they have recovered them.

There can never be more than two dice difference between the total rolled for Kill damage and the total rolled for Stun damage.

(Hence the smallest attack will be with one added die will be. eg. 1d Kill and 3d Stun.)

The energy affects all targets within a specific area. This area must be detailed by the player when the character is first created and may not be varied.

The area covers 9 squares.

Typical arrangements are:

- a 3 by 3 arrangement to simulate a burst pattern or cloud
- 9 squares in a straight line away from the character to represent a ray or beam
- A triangle fanning away from the character
- 9 squares in a straight line transverse to the character to represent a “wall” of energy

The range of the blast is equal to the character's Psyche SCORE. The last square of the area must be within this range, in squares, of the character otherwise the attack is at extreme range and suffers negative penalties in the strike roll as detailed in combat.

The area of effect should be chosen with this in mind. Characters with a Psyche score of less than 9 may not choose the “beam” area effect.

The last square of the area can never be more than double Psyche in squares away from the character even at extreme range. (Unless the additional range gimmick is taken.)



Appendix: Superpower Notes

Higher levels:

Choose one of these options:

Either:

If the character has a recovery period of more than one round, reduce the recovery period by one round.

Or:

If the character has a recovery period of one round, add 2 to their pool of bonus dice.

In addition to the above boost, the character also gets one extra area of 9 squares.

Gimmicks

In addition to the above, the attack has one gimmick.

Typical gimmicks are:

- Extended range (+2 squares)
- The ability to reduce target's protection by 1 level to both Kill and Stun. For example – armour which normally divides damage by 3 will only divide the damage from this attack by 2.
- The attack can be created from different sources e.g. Hands and Eyes.
- Larger area of effect (+2 squares)
- Bouncing the attack off surfaces
- Bending the attack around corners
- The ability to ignore either the Kill or Stun damage (to simulate Radiation or Stunner attacks).

Dice are still expended as normal, but their effects are ignored.

- Manifestations (eg. Ice walls, sky-writing)
- The ability to focus the attack on a single target if desired

FIREWALL has a Flame Energy Blast at level 2. He chose 2 dice recovered over 1 round at level 1 so - at level 2 - he has 4 dice which he recovers every round.

He can create a Fireball (3 square by 3 square effect) and a Fire Wall (9 squares in a line transversely in front of him).

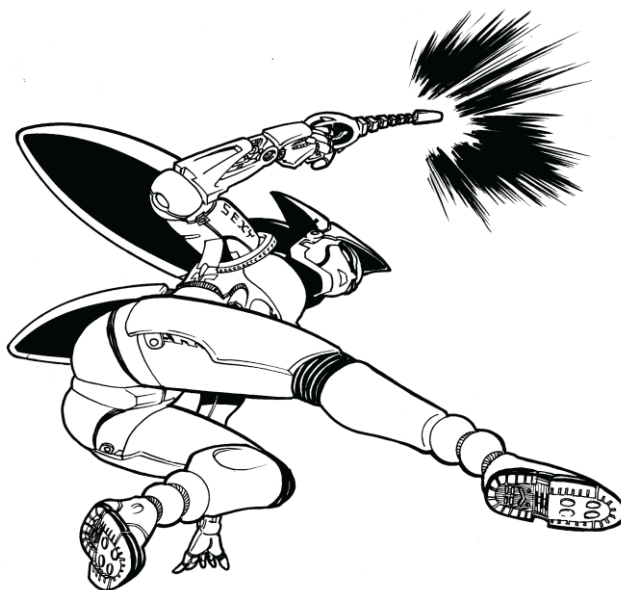
He chooses gimmicks which increase the area he can affect (his Fire Wall is now 11 squares long) and which reduce the effect of armour against his attack. (-1 on both Kill and Stun dividers).

"Crescendo" has a Sonic Energy Blast. He chose 10 dice recovered over 5 rounds at level 1 so - at level 2 - he has 10 dice which he recovers every 4 rounds. He choose two triangular areas of effect which simulate a cone of sound in front of him.

He chooses gimmicks: target an attack on a single target and to only do Stun damage.

If he does a 5 dice attack against a Supervillain team, he would do 3 dice to Kill and 5 dice to Stun. He can choose to ignore the 3 Kill dice if he wishes but it still costs him 5 dice to make the attack.

½ level: The character gets an Energy Attack as above but against a single target – no area of effect - within 10 squares. They get no special effect. They get bonus dice as above but the base attack is 1d on either Kill or Stun.



Energy Sense

(Energy manipulation, cantrips, telepathy)

The character can detect and – to a limited degree – manipulate one specified type of energy.

Types of energy include the usual heat, cold, electricity etc. but can also include mental energies, life-force, occult forces if appropriate to the character.

Level 1: With concentration and within a range equal to their Psyche SCORE - in squares - the character can detect their chosen form of energy.

If they want to detect specific information – the flow of wiring in a house, read surface thoughts etc. it will require a skill roll based on Psyche.

If they have a focus of some kind near a target (eg. Cigarette lighter, knowledge of a target's phobia) they can attempt to cause damage.

This will require a skill roll and will do 2 dice damage to which no response can be made on the part of the target. This damage will be split between Kill and Stun based upon the rationalisation of the power.

Higher levels

Choose from:

- Detect/affect more forms of energy (one per level)
- Cause damage without focus
- Longer range (+Psyche Score per level)
- More damage (+2 dice but one must be on Kill and one on Stun)

Gimmicks

- Attack has an area effect of two squares
- The ability to reduce target's protection by 1 level on both Kill and Stun. For example – armour which normally divides damage by 3 will only divide the damage from this attack by 2.
- The ability to ignore either the Kill or Stun damage (to simulate Radiation or Stunner attacks). Dice are still expended as normal, but their effects are ignored.
- Can make the energy visible to others (with concentration)

1/2 level: Detection only. Requires touch.

Enhancement

(Absorption, Chameleon Ability, Weather Control, Elemental Control, Magic)

The character can temporarily demonstrate abilities which they do not normally possess.

Level 1: The character can temporarily use two Superpowers with span limited by their Psyche score in panels. These powers must be specified when the character is first created and must have a reasonable rationale. At least one of them is usually rolled randomly. They are both at level 1.

It takes a panel to activate/de-activate a power. This panel is not included in the usage limit. If the Psyche score limit is reached the power will automatically de-activate, taking no time.

Once a psyche limit has been reached, the character cannot re-use that power for a period of time equal to their psyche score in panels or for the length of time it was used.

Option: If the powers come from a specific, non-ubiquitous source, the character may demonstrate 3 or more such powers.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- The character can exhibit a wider range of powers (2 per level)
- The powers can be exhibited at a higher level
- The powers can last longer (double duration per level)
- The powers can be transferred to others – by touch at the first level taken – at range (equal to Psyche in squares) at higher levels.

Gimmicks:

- The two powers can be exhibited simultaneously.
- A power can de-activated and the second activated within a single panel
- Select a gimmick from one of the Superpowers possessed. Only one gimmick per level even though two powers are being exhibited.
- Select an appropriate gimmick from any Superpower.
- As per the individual Superpowers.

½ level: The character can temporarily exhibit one additional power.

Fast recovery

(Second wind, resistance to pain, iron will)

The character has the ability to ignore a large degree of pain and recovers Stun damage at a faster than normal rate.

Level 1: The character does not need to make an Endurance roll to recover Stun damage. They recover 2 dice Stun damage every round. If they are stunned, they only suffer -2 on their skill rolls.

If they are knocked out, this ability ceases to work and normal rules apply until they wake up.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- +1 die recovery per round
- The character can pass the recovery on to others. This is via touch to a single target at the first level taken. It can be to multiple targets and/or at range (equal to Psyche Modifier in squares) at higher levels.

Gimmicks:

- Can attempt to “push” recovery with an Endurance roll. +1 die recovery if the roll succeed. -1 die if the roll fails. (No difference for a minor success).
- Recover +1 Stun per round even if performing actions
- -2 stun damage per attack from a specified non-ubiquitous attack form. (Fire, for example, but not fists.)

½ level: +1d6/d3 recovery per round. Endurance roll needed.



Flight

(Gliding, Wings, Jet pack, Levitation)

The character can ignore the effects of gravity and move freely without needing to be in contact with the ground.

Level 1: The character flies at their normal ground-based movement rate.

Higher levels: At one additional movement rate per panel for each level in a combat situation.

If the character is able to accelerate in a straight line for period of time, they can move at the CUBE of the movement increase.

They can add an additional movement rate for each panel they fly in a straight line.

At level 3 the character moves at 3 times their normal move in combat but can accelerate to up to 27 times their normal move in a straight line.

If the character is able to attack at the end of a move, they gain the usual charge bonuses.

Gimmicks:

- No visible means of flight
- Able to perform other action whilst building up speed in a charge
- Can come to a dead stop at the end of a charge
- Can strike a blow in passing at the end of a charge without incurring any damage themselves
- Can accelerate at double the usual rate
- Can recover whilst falling.

½ level: Choose one of:

- The character can ignore gravity and float at their normal move with full concentration. They may take no other actions whilst floating.

Or

- They may move and act freely as long as they are in contact with a surface (wallcrawling).

Follower

(Pet, Sidekick, Animal Control, Replication)

The character is accompanied by a companion of some kind. This follower can be human, humanoid, animal, swarm, clone, replicant or anything similar.

However they appear, they all have the characteristics given below.

Level 1: The character has one unpowered associate. They are generated using 3d6 rolls for their characteristics. They have the same number of panels, as the character and have attacks equivalent to fist attacks.

They may have skills but may not have any skills which the Hero themselves does not possess.

The calculate trained skill points by subtracting the total of their Skill Modifiers from 40. They may not have any more skill points than their “master”.

Second level: Either:

- The character has a second associate as above

Or

- A single follower is generated using the best 3 of 4d6. In this second case one more of their Superpowers can transferred to or replicated in the associate.

Higher levels: One additional “3d6” follower for each level or “4d6” follower for each 2 levels.

Gimmicks:

- The follower may have one skill not possessed by the Hero
- There is a telepathic link between the follower and the Hero
- The player may play the follower as a separate character if the Hero falls unconscious – otherwise they are controlled by the Referee.

½ level: The follower has characteristics based on 2d6. They have half the number of panels each round as the character (rounded up) and have no specialist skills.

Force field

Energy field, Force shield, Power wall

The character is surrounded by a field of energy of some kind which subtracts damage from all attacks. The player should choose an appropriate type of force field.

Level 1: This can either be fixed, random or variable, at the players choice:

Fixed: The field has 15 points

Random: The field has 3d6+5 points, rolled once when the character is first created.

Variable: The field varies in strength. The field has 4d6 points rolled for each and every attack.

These points come off the Kill damage done first and then from the Stun damage.

Once the type of field has been selected, it cannot be changed later. It remains the same type at higher levels.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- Increased protection per level (+5 if fixed, d6+2 if random, d6 if variable)
- Field is solid – it absorbs ALL Stun damage. It remains in place until it takes Kill damage equal to its total at which point it is totally disrupted and will take hours (36-Psyche score) to regenerate
- Can be used at range to protect other targets or (if solid) to perform other actions such as restraining, lifting etc. Range is equal to the Hero's Psyche Modifier in squares.

Gimmicks:

- The Hero can use one specified attack through the Force Field. (This doesn't mean opponents can use that type of attack against the Hero, however).
- The Hero can raise or lower the force field whilst moving
- The force field is invisible

½ level: Protective field of 5 points – fixed, d6+2 points – random or d6+1 variable.

Growth

(Giant, Larger, Taller)

Level 1: The character grows to a large size, roughly 50% bigger in all dimensions.

They gain +1d10 to their Strength and Endurance characteristics, when they are larger.

For each additional Endurance point they gain, they roll an extra d6 roll and add these to the amount of Kill and Stun points they can take.

However, these only apply when the character is enlarged.

They also gain 50% on their ground-based movement.

Higher levels: 50% increase in size per level. +1d10 Strength and Endurance and add 50% of Original movement rate per level.

Option: If the character is permanently large, they gain one extra level for free.

The enhanced characteristics gained through this power are used to calculate whether the hero is knocked back in combat.

(If they are attacked by surprise, they only use the enhanced Endurance plus their original Strength roll.)

Gimmicks:

- A costume which grows and shrinks with the character
- The character can grow/shrink whilst moving
- Growing/shrinking into combat counts as a Charge with a +5 damage modifier per level of Growth.
- Can choose to grow to any intermediate level e.g. A level 1 character can choose to grow to level 1 or stop at ½ level.

½ level: The character grow 25% and gets +1d6 Strength and Endurance and +25% move.

Image generation

Illusions, hallucinations, hologram projection

The character has the ability to produce illusions of some kind. They appear within a number of squares equal to the character's Psyche score.

Level 1: The character has the following options. They can generate an illusion of:

- Up to a size 1 object which can be perceived by a single sense, without concentration
- Up to a size 2 object which can be perceived by a single sense with concentration
- Up to a size 1 object which can be perceived by 2 senses, with concentration

They can use any of these options during play.

Higher levels. Choose from:

- for each level add an additional size or sense which can be generated both, with and without concentration
- The illusions can cause damage. This will requires a skill roll based on Psyche. Only Stun damage will be done and will be appropriate to the size of object created. It can be dodged or parried as usual. (A successful parry will reveal the illusion for what it is).
- The illusions can be used to inhibit vision.

Gimmicks:

- The illusions can Dodge attacks
- Illusions can be maintained whilst moving
- The Hero can talk whilst maintaining an illusion

½ level: The Hero can make an illusion of up to a size 1 object which can be perceived by a single sense, with concentration.



Impossible events

Luck, Probability Manipulation, Transmutation

The character can cause things to happen. Unlikely things become likely, impossible changes can occur. The cause of these effects must be clearly defined when the player is first created.

Effects will be instant and/or will last for a number of panels equal to the hero's Psyche Modifier.

Level 1: Roll d20 plus half of Psyche to try and exceed 15. -5 on roll for each:

- Change of state OR level of impossibility
- Change of size
- Size rating affected
- Whatever is determined by the Referee.

Change of state: The range of states are:

- Nothing/Vacuum
- Plasma
- Gas/Vapour
- Liquid
- Viscous
- Soft Solid
- Hard Solid
- Superhard solid

Level of impossibility: The range is:

- Likely
- Possible
- Unlikely
- Extremely Unlikely
- Impossible

Change of size: rate this from the objects table in the combat section.

Size rating affected: Again rate this from the objects table in the combat section.

Higher levels: +5 on Psyche rolls per level.

Gimmicks:

- Effect can be made whilst moving
- Hero can talk whilst creating effect
- Critical successes are permanent
- The effect lasts for an additional number of panels equal to the Hero's Psyche modifier
- The Hero can cancel any effect in place at any time

½ level: As above but with -5 on Psyche roll.

Increased move

Speed, Superspeed, Leaping, Teleporting

The character has an enhanced move of some kind. This can be achieved in one of three ways:

- Running
- Leaping – if the character possesses other appropriate powers
- Teleporting – at the cost of 1d10 stun damage per normal movement rate teleported.

The exact form must be decided when the character is created and cannot be changed.

Level 1: Double the character's normal movement rate using their chosen mode of movement.

If the character is running able to accelerate in a straight line for period of time, they can move at the CUBE of the movement increase. Their speed increases by one movement rate for each panel spent accelerating.

If the character is able to attack at the end of a charge move or leap, they gain the usual charge bonuses.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- Enhance their move by an amount equal to their original movement score
- Add 1 to the number of squares that can be teleported for each d10 of Stun
- Allow a movement panel to be split either side of action panels

Gimmicks:

- Able to perform other action whilst building up speed in a charge
- Can come to a dead stop at the end of a charge
- Can strike a blow in passing at the end of a charge without incurring any damage themselves
- +1 dodge modifier
- Can teleport another person (at double cost to teleporter and normal cost to passenger).

½ level: +50% movement – running or leaping only.

Information

Scrying, precognition, computer brain

The character can instantly summon up important information.

Level 1 – At level 1 the character has instant access to common information (e.g. Phone number) or any information that they have been privy to at any time in the past (photographic memory).

Level 2 – The character has instant access to any information which could theoretically be deduced from common information.

Level 3 – The character has instant access to rare information.

Gimmicks:

- The information can be recalled whilst moving
- +1 to dodges
- +1 to parries
- -1 to opponents' dodges
- -1 to opponents' parries

(The latter 4 gimmicks are from the ability to analyse and predict an opponents' actions).

½ level – The character needs a device and/or a short period of time to summon up common information.

Marksmanship

Accuracy, marksman, sniper

For a specified attack form (chosen when the character is created) the character can do additional damage by aiming for targets' vulnerable points.

Level 1: For each uninterrupted 2 panels the character spends aiming, they gain a +1 modifier to the Dexterity roll and +1d10 damage when the attack is finally made.

During the panels spent aiming, neither the attacker or target can move.

Higher levels: Choose from:

- An additional +1 to Dexterity roll and plus 1d10 damage modifier per level per 2 panels
- Some movement on the part of the target or attacker is allowed. As long as one of them remains static and the other has made less than a full move, the shot can still be taken.

Gimmicks:

- The attacker can choose to add bonuses across single panels (level 2 and above only)
- -1 to opponents' dodges
- -1 to opponents' parries
- Can bounce attacks off appropriate surfaces

½ level: +1d6/1d3 damage modifier per 2 panels spent aiming.



Martial Arts

Karate, Judo, Pugilism, Kung Fu, Brawling, Hand-to-hand combat

The character is trained in some form of hand to hand combat.

Level 1: The character does not suffer a -5 Kill modifier but actually gets a +1 die damage modifier with their natural attacks.

They make all Dexterity rolls to hit in hand-to-hand combat with a +2 modifier.

Higher levels: +1 die damage, +2 to Dexterity rolls at each level.

Gimmicks:

- Enhanced dodge (+1)
- Enhance Parry (+1)
- Judo throw - if the character makes a successful Parry or Dodge versus a hand-to-hand attack and takes no damage they may immediately make a one panel attack against their attacker. If this succeeds the attacker takes damage as usual and must make a successful Agility roll or be thrown to the floor.
- +5 Agility rolls made as part of a combined attack with Martial Arts.
- Minor enhancement (+1 to Dexterity roll) to specific, non-ubiquitous, attack (eg. Kick)
- The ability to do a base attack of 2d Kill and 1d Coma

½ level: +1 die damage to physical attacks. No modifier to Dexterity rolls. Fist attacks are still made at -5 to Kill.

Mind control

Hypnotism, Control, Brainwashing

The character can take temporary control of the actions of another being. They must be able to make physical or eye-contact to do so.

This is played out as a typical combat situation except that all rolls use Psyche rather than Dexterity/Agility. The attacker rolls using Psyche to control the target, the target – if they wish – rolls using Psyche to resist the attack. As always Criticals apply and rolls must succeed by more than 3 to be a total success.

Control runs for a number of panels equal to the character's Psyche score before it needs renewing.

Level 1 – The character may hypnotise a single willing target in stressed situation or a single unwilling target in unstressed situation.

Higher levels:

- The character can affect multiple targets (one per Psyche modifier)
- They can try to affect unwilling targets in stress situations.
- Double the number of panels the effect covers
- The attack can take place whilst either party is in motion

Gimmicks

- -1 to targets' resistance rolls
- Attack can be done using voice and visual focus
- Telepathic link created with those controlled

½ level – The character can try to affect a single willing target in unstressed situation.



Protection

Armour, Tough skin, Scaly hide, Invulnerability

The character is protected from damage by their costume or naturally tough skin.

Level 1 – The protection comes from a suit of Armour. All damage done to the character is divided by 2. The character suffers a -3 modifier to all agility rolls.

Level 2 – Armour with +1 to divider (divide all damage by 3). -6 to all agility rolls

Level 3 – Armour which divides all damage by 4. -9 to Agility rolls.

Higher levels: Increase the damage dividing effect by +1 per level. At a -3 modifier to Agility rolls per level.

Gimmicks

- Protection is innate (tough skin) – but still noticeable (scales, rocks etc.)
- Protection is imperceptible – but not innate.
- Quick change – donning/doffing armour takes only one panel
- Automatic change – other actions – including movement – may be undertaken whilst doffing/donning armour
- +1 to Agility rolls made in the armour
- Totally immune to Kill damage from Bullets or Knives.

½ level: Some kind of summoned or temporary protection. Damage is divided by 2 but needs full concentration – no other actions may be taken. Only lasts for a number of Panels equal to the character's Psyche.

★

Regeneration

Fast healing, Restoration

The character recovers/heals from physical damage at a remarkable rate.

Level 1: The character recovers Kill damage as fast as they recover Stun damage.

Higher levels: Choose from these options:

- +1 die recovery per level.
- can pass the recovery on to others (healing) – by touch at first but at range at higher levels

Gimmicks:

- Character ages at much reduced rate
- Character can recover from double minus Endurance score
- Character appears young
- If the character can pass healing on to others, they can also pass on minor cosmetic improvements.

½ level: If they make an appropriate Endurance roll, the character can recover 1d6 Kill per round.

★

Shrink

Reduction, Minimisation, Shivel

The character can become smaller in size.

Level 1: The character can shrink to Half normal size. This will allow them to fit in small areas etc. but they move at half their normal rate. They get a Dodge modifier of +3 but their knockback score is halved.

Level 2:

The character can shrink to the size of an insect. They can move a maximum of square per panel unless they have other powers which help out.

People striking them have a -5 modifier on their strike roll and they gain a +5 Dodge modifier.

They have knockback score of zero and sent flying by any successful attack.

Level 3: The character is microscopic in size. Ordinary combat rules cease to apply.

Level 4: The character shrinks to the Atomic level. We're now Quantum. All normal rules cease to apply.

Gimmicks:

- Costume which shrinks/grows with them
- The ability to shrink/grow whilst moving
- Gains a charge bonus of +5 damage per level if growing into an attack.

½ level: The character is permanently smaller – as per level 1.

State change

Gaseous form, spirit form, intangibility, solidity

The character can change their physical state to become super-solid or spirit-like and gaseous.

Level 1: Either:

- The character can become ghostlike – but visible - without concentration

Or

- The character can become super-solid - and impervious to damage - with concentration.

The player must pick ONE of these for their character.

In either case the effect last for a number of panels equal to the character's Psyche Score – maximum. For every panel they spend in the changed state, they must spend one panel recovering when out of it before they can change state again.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- Can exhibit both effects
- Super-solid without concentration
- Ghostly and invisible
- For each additional level, they can have one effect which works upon the physical world when they are in the changed state. However, that effect can also be used from the normal world upon them.

Gimmicks:

- Costume which changes state with the Hero
- Changing start whilst moving
- Recovery time reduced by one panel

½ level: They can turn ghost-like but this requires full with concentration

*

Strength

'nuff said

The character is uncommonly, inhumanly, strong

Level 1: The characters Strength is now 20 plus the roll of 1d6. This will give them a significant damage modifier.

Higher levels: Add 1d6+5 Strength per each additional level.

Gimmicks:

- +5 to character's knockback
- Can use Strength to brace vs knockback even when taken by surprise
- +5 on lifting/throwing rolls (weightlifting)
- -5 to opponent's knockback
- Slight build - does not appear strong.

NB: The enhanced Strength does not affect the character's movement rate which is always calculated from their original Strength roll. It does affect the character's knock-back score as long as the character is aware of an attack so they can brace against it.

If they are attacked by surprise, knock-back is calculated using their original Strength score.

½ level: The character has a Strength of 20.

*

Supersense

Hypervision, Supersmell, Eagle-eyes, Superhearing

One or more of the character's senses is heightened to an exceptional degree.

Level 1: A single sense is heightened. The character gains a +5 modifier on all Sleuthing rolls and skill rolls based on sleuthing.

Higher levels: For each level, the character gains +5 on sleuthing rolls.

This may be done by choosing to add an additional sense to their selection or by heightening their existing Supersense to a higher level.

Gimmicks:

- May operate in darkness without a negative modifier
- Can detect things which would be otherwise impossible.
- -1 to opponent's Dodges
- -1 to opponent's Parries
- +5 to one specific skill roll related to this sense.

½ level: Animal senses. +3 to Sleuthing and related rolls.

Appendix: Superpower Notes

Survival

Environment suit, Adaptation, Water-breathing

The character can survive in situations unsuited to normal human beings.

Level 1: The player should specify two things which the character can survive without (eg. air) or which they are resistant to (pressure, decompression, radiation, disease, poison etc.)

Higher levels: The character can survive without or resist two additional items per level.

Gimmicks:

- The power is innate and does not need equipment or a costume to use.
- The power is unnoticeable and not obvious from looking at the character.
- Can survive without one additional specified item for a limited period of time. The duration will be related to Psyche and dependent upon the item. e.g. a character could survive without food for a number of weeks equal to their Psyche score.
- Can resist one additional specified thing. They will still suffer from that item but will either take half damage or take twice as long to show effects.

½ level: The character can resist/live without one specified factor.

Weapon

Claws, Hammer, Weaponskill

The character wields a weapon. Either through great skill or training - or through the weapons' own powers and abilities - the character uses this weapon with great effectiveness.

Level 1: The character gets a +2 Modifier to Dexterity rolls when they use this weapon in combat. They also gain +1 die damage modifier.

Higher levels: The character gets an additional +2 Dexterity modifier, +1 die damage.

Gimmicks:

- The weapon can be used in an additional mode i.e. Missile and Melee
- The weapon can be used as a Shield. It adds +5 to parry rolls or an additional die damage modifier to parries only. (That is, 2 dice at first level.)
- The weapon is innate or built-in. The Character cannot be disarmed.
- Quick-draw - the weapon can be drawn and used in single panel.
- If it is a missile it returns to the firer in the following panel. (During which time the character can be performing another action.)
- The weapon is functionally indestructible.

½ level: The character possesses a weapon with a +1 modifier to Dexterity rolls and a +1d6/d3 modifier to damage.





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What's so special about it?

* Addictive character generation - the perfect blend of random rolling and design. Players start off as ordinary people sucked into extraordinary events. As the campaign progresses they become Special Agents and - eventually - Superheroes battling to save the planet from it's Alien conquerors.

* Fast and furious combat and innovative campaign rules - that make you feel like you're IN the TV series. Which one? ALL of them!

What's in this book?

* The complete Squaron UK Basic game system with special character creation systems to allow the Heroes to develop and change as the campaign progresses.

* Detailed scenarios which take you through an extended storyline of monsters and aliens.

* Advice and material to allow you to expand the campaign beyond the scenarios given to create months - even years - of adventure for your players.



In Earth's darkest hour, humanity's best ally could be our oldest foe

Behind the shadows, something is waiting