

# EMERALD CITY KNIGHTS



## CHAPTER 5: RISE OF THE MASTERMINDS

**MUTANTS &  
MASTERMINDS**

THIRD EDITION

# RISE OF THE MASTERMINDS

**Rise of the Masterminds** is the fifth chapter in the *Heroes' Journey* campaign for *Mutants & Masterminds, Third Edition*. This adventure is designed for 3-5 PL10 heroes but can easily be adjusted for varying numbers of heroes and power levels.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the previous chapters, the heroes have dealt with the aftermath of the Silver Storm and the impact it's had on Emerald City. By this point, the heroes should have established themselves as the resident superteam, funded by supervillain-turned-entrepreneur Maximilian Mars. They've also just stopped a team of stormers from recovering the mysterious technology behind the Silver Storm from a scientific research station while also dealing with the Brande Management forces that were protecting it.

It turned out that there was something beneath the oil rig, something that Brande Management didn't know about. A spacecraft rose from the depths, collapsing the station in the process. It broadcast a message about humans interfering in events that they could not comprehend and that it had a mission to fulfill. The spacecraft then disappeared.

### TRACKING TELLEX THE REDEEMER

Tellax teleported away at the end of the previous adventure and is not due to be confronted until **Chapter 6: Out of the Frying Pan...** That said, some heroes, particularly those with useful tracking powers, may attempt to find the spaceship. This is highly improbable but it may happen. If it does, tell the heroes their attempt fails and give them a hero point. The story isn't going there right now.

### WHAT IF MY HERO IS A STORMER?

If one of the heroes is a stormer and was mind-controlled to attack Point Phorcys, then he recalls none of this once freed from the mind control. Like the other stormers, the hero's last clear memory is from before being taken over (since the combat took place in **Chapter 4**, you've likely already determined when this happened). After that, the hero remembers the same bits and pieces that the other stormers do.

Even if the stormer hero wasn't controlled by the Commander, his or her status as a stormer can certainly come into play during **Scene 2** and **Scene 3** of this chapter. In **Scene 2** the hero could be the volunteer for experimentation and thus the conduit for the Commander's communication, while in **Scene 3** the hero could be controlled by Tellax to attack his friends (if you use this option, you should allow the player of the controlled hero to keep playing that character while mind-controlled so that he or she can participate in the final scene).

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This chapter starts in the immediate aftermath of the science research station battle. Brande Management reinforcements arrive to sweep up the mess, leaving any captured stormers in the custody of the heroes. Brande Management can't offer any information as to the nature of its employer.

The heroes do, however, have the captured stormers who are obviously under some form of mind control. The heroes discover that the stormers are taking orders from someone called "the Commander."

Utilizing their resources, the heroes use the nanite technology to trace the source, either through sending a feedback signal to get the Commander's attention or by tracing the signal back to the Commander's base. In either case, the Commander communicates with them. After some convincing, she tells them that she was able to tap into the alien technology that exists inside the stormers to control them. She also knew that there was a huge reserve of the technology at Point Phorcys.

At this point, Maximilian Mars reveals that he knows that the nanite technology behind the mind control because it's similar to the technology he used when he was the first Commander! He reveals that he discovered some of that technology years ago and used it to fuel his career as the Commander and is still using it as the basis of his company today. He's clearly worried about where the nanites are coming from and offers to show the heroes his alien technology in the hopes that they can work together to jam the mind control and trace the new source.

Mars takes the heroes to his secret underground bunker and together they begin work on jamming the mind control signal. Unfortunately, just as they are on the verge of completion the alien spacecraft attacks. Hovering in orbit, the spacecraft uses a tractor beam to pull its missing piece out of the bunker. This puts the people in the building above at risk as Tellax carelessly rips the building from the ground and tosses it aside. In addition, Tellax sends another group of mind-controlled stormers to the MarsTech complex to battle the heroes and kidnap Mars.

Fortunately, the heroes win the day. Unfortunately, just as victory is in the heroes' grasp Tellax teleports them and Mars to an alien landscape, which leads to **Chapter 6: Out of the Frying Pan...**

## PROLOGUE

At the end of **Chapter 4: Sea Change** the heroes just ended a fight with Brande Management and a group of stormers when the science research station is destroyed and a space ship emerges from below.

The read-aloud passage here presumes that the heroes fought the Brande security forces and the stormers and are





still standing. They may have even lent a hand to the security team as their station collapsed. If events occurred differently when you ran the previous chapter, then you'll want to modify the read-aloud text accordingly.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*You'd intercepted a stormer team attempting to break into an aquatic science research station named Point Phorcys and found yourselves engaged against them as well as the Brande Management security forces guarding it. You managed to hold your own and subdue the stormers when the research station was suddenly destroyed by what appeared to be a spacecraft that had been submerged beneath it.*

*A voice from the spacecraft warned you not to interfere in events that you don't understand and that whoever or whatever was in the spacecraft had a mission to fulfill. It then blinked away. You are now hovering over disturbed waters along with the stormers and the security forces.*

At this point, the heroes only have a round or two before the start of **Scene 1**. They could be occupied with fishing a drowning Brande security guard or stormer out of the water. If any of them are still standing on the collapsing station then they'll also need rescuing as the station sinks.

All stormer stat blocks can be referenced in the previous adventure, **Chapter 4: Sea Change**.

## SCENE 1: AFTER THE BATTLE

**Scene Type:** Roleplaying (possibly Combat)

The adventure begins with the heroes hovering over the water where the science research station once stood. Brande security forces are also here, utilizing emergency lifeboats to stay afloat. Captured stormers are in the hands of the heroes or being fished out of the water by Brande, while any free stormers are trying to flee in a coordinated manner, still controlled by the Commander. If the heroes insist on pursuing in an attempt to capture them, allow the villains to escape and give the heroes a hero point for it. The story can move forward without all the stormers being captured.

The Brande Special Ops team is on the way and arrives shortly. Heroes with Remote Sensing or various Senses effects may sense the helicopters before they arrive.

Regardless of whether they are spotted, the helicopters arrive in moments. Read the following:

*As you stare at the empty space where a spacecraft once hovered, you hear the muted sounds of two helicopters arriving at the site. They have the colors and markings of Brande Management. A calm, firm, female voice calls out over the loudspeakers, "This is Agent Blazer of Brande Management. We are here to rescue our people. Please stand down."*

## POINT PHORCYS (DESTROYED)



There are six Special Ops agents in each helicopter. Agent Blazer is also in one of the helicopters and directs her team from there. If a fight breaks out with the stormers (or the heroes), the Special Ops team is perfectly willing to engage, but their first concern is rescuing their brothers in arms. They do not pursue the stormers (or heroes) if they leave the fight. Agent Blazer's orders are to secure the science research station (now a lost cause) and support the Brande security forces guarding it.

If the heroes stand down (whether at the start or after a cease-fire) then Agent Blazer invites the heroes aboard to talk, while Agent Mariner coordinates rescue activities. She's already been apprised of the situation by on-site reports, but she wants to hear the heroes' story. So long as the two stories match Blazer is satisfied. She tells them that Brande Management won't be pressing charges as the heroes were actually protecting the science station. She also asks the heroes if they can help raise the science research station or at least search it for possible survivors.

As for any captured stormers, Agent Blazer has no real interest in taking them into custody. It's an extra hassle for her and she's more than willing to leave that to the heroes. She can provide reinforced handcuffs and other restraints if the heroes need them. Unfortunately, Agent Blazer can't shed any light on why the stormers were attacking the station; she doesn't know who owns the station or anything about the work being done there.

Interrogating the stormers at the site reveals little information. See **Roleplaying the Stormers** below for more information.

## ROLEPLAYING THE STORMERS

All captured stormers begin this scene confused; the Commander has realized the mission objective has teleported away and the heroes are in danger of discovering her. Thus, she frees all the captured stormers from her control.

The stormers all revert to their normal personalities, which makes each of them respond uniquely to the situation. All of them are likely to feel as if they were goaded into a trap and perceive the heroes and Brande Management as potential perpetrators. A heroic stormer may be willing to give the heroes the benefit of the doubt or determine that a villainous stormer was responsible. Both a heroic and a villainous stormer would be shocked to hear they were working together only moments before.

It is obvious the stormers remember little of their ordeal. They can only remember things clearly up to the point when the Commander took control of the nanites in their systems. They recall bits and pieces, flashes of abruptly stopping what they were doing, leaving the city for the ocean, and bits of the combat. Unfortunately, even these are simply jumbles of disjointed bits of memory that are meaningless gibberish to them.

Fortunately, Chain, Kid Singularity, or Tenfold (or another stormer you've introduced or prefer, see *Emerald City Knights* **Chapter 4: Sea Change** for the stormers mentioned) is willing to be taken and analyzed by the heroes should they ask. The chosen stormer wants to understand what's going on and hopefully put an end to being a puppet for the Commander or anyone else that can figure out how to manipulate stormers.

## SEARCHING THE STATION

Savvy heroes may wonder if there are clues in the sinking science research station and dive into the water to explore it. Heroes that attempt this find many dangerous challenges along the way. While particular powers may negate some of the dangers, heroes swimming through a sinking building have to worry about breathing and getting stuck, especially given that the water pressure and failing infrastructure is shifting things around. You can add some tension to this scene by actually having a Brande security officer or two (or even a stormer, if one happened to get inside during the battle) stuck inside the sinking station and in need of rescue.

Still, heroes that get inside the central operations center can make an Investigation check (DC 10) to discover a computer with an independent power source. A Technology check (DC 15) reveals that the operating system, while unfamiliar, is still using its factory settings. No one has added anything to the computer yet. A hero that made the Technology check with at least two degrees of success also notes that the operating system is just a “skin” over an unfamiliar and possibly alien code. That’s all the hero can learn before the station is crushed by water pressure.

## KEY POINTS

In this scene, the heroes recover from their combat against the stormers and Brande Management only to face more Brande Management forces. They may also have to aid in recovery efforts. Of most importance is that they enlist the aid of a stormer on which to conduct experiments. Before this scene is over, you should cover the following points.

- The stormers were mind-controlled to attack the station
- Brande Management is unaware of the station’s alien nature

The heroes should bring at least one of the stormers back to Emerald City (see the **I Need A Stormer** sidebar if this doesn’t happen).

## TACTICS

If Agent Blazer feels the need to attack then she immediately orders the helicopters to open fire with the tangle nets. She authorizes the use of laser cannons only for enemies that look strong enough to survive direct hits. After the first round of the helicopter barrage she orders the Special Ops team to fly out on jet packs and engage the enemy with the helicopters still providing support fire.

Blazer sends out her teams in three-person squads (each helicopter holds two squads). Each squad fights as a unit against a single enemy. If a squad gets overwhelmed then they fall back until they can join another squad. Agent Blazer leads from the helicopter, offering assistance where necessary and coordinating the support fire from the helicopters. Ideally Blazer would like to send one squad to the station and offer assistance to anyone that needs it.

Agent Blazer’s goal is to secure Brande Management personnel, not harm anyone. If someone’s in danger of drowning or some other mishap, she tries to send a squad to assist them. She won’t, however, sacrifice the lives of her team. If the heroes are giving her too much trouble then she’ll regrettably muster all of her forces against them.

Throughout the entire combat, Blazer tries to negotiate a cease-fire. Failing that, she retreats if her forces are performing badly.

## I NEED A STORMER!

Depending on how the scene plays out, it’s possible that the heroes may not have taken any stormers into custody (either willing or unwilling) and don’t have a stormer hero among them. This is potentially problematic, as **Scene 2** depends upon the heroes returning to Emerald Tower with a stormer for experimentation. Without seeming too heavy-handed, here are two ways to rectify this.

First, you can have a stormer ask the heroes for help. While most of the stormers want to get back to their lives, at least one immediately sees the potential for future hijackings of his will by the Commander, or others. If any of the heroes shows a capacity for gadget-teering the stormer naturally asks him or her for help. Note that you don’t have to have the stormer ask during this scene; a villainous stormer may come to this conclusion after fleeing and contact the heroes after they’ve returned to Emerald City.

Second, you can have a stormer contact Maximilian Mars. As MarsTech, Inc. is well-known for its technological innovations, the stormer believes that Mars can help. Mars becomes very interested when he discovers that the stormers have the same alien technology inside of them that Mars has used throughout both his careers. Mars immediately drafts the heroes to help him with his experiments. You can then use **Scene 2** with just a few small tweaks.

As for the stormers, they don’t follow any predictable plan. Any stormers still under the Commander’s control try to flee. Those no longer under the Commander’s control react as is appropriate given their personalities; they are confused about their circumstances and suspect both the heroes and Brande Management of being the cause. Most of them merely have a desire to escape rather than fight, but if there are any heroic stormers amongst them, they may join the heroes in whatever action they take. They may also choose to rescue anyone in danger of drowning.

## IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The Brande Management Operatives, helicopters, as well as Agents Blazer and Mariner are detailed at the end of this chapter in the **Heroes & Villains** section.



## OUTCOME

The heroes should leave this scene having made peace with Brande Management and return home with at least one stormer on which to conduct experiments. The rest of the stormers return to their previous lives.

## REWARDS

After Point Phorcys collapses, heroes who help stormers or Brande Management Operatives who are in danger of drowning earn an additional hero point.

## SCENE 2: INVESTIGATING THE COMMANDER

*Scene Type: Challenge*

After the events on the research station the heroes are likely to return to the Emerald Tower with at least one stormer in tow. Presuming that the stormer is willing, the heroes first need to determine how the stormers are being controlled. This scene takes place in appropriate rooms within the heroes' base within the Emerald Tower.

If the heroes wish to involve Maximilian Mars, he'll be rather enthusiastic in aiding them if they mention the alien craft that emerged from the ocean. While he isn't informing the heroes just yet, Mars suspects there may be a connection between his alien technology and the spaceship that the heroes saw.

How the heroes perform their initial diagnoses depends on their powers. Heroes with the Mind Reading or Senses (Postcognition) effects see the stormer going through a normal day, then suddenly freeze up and move off to meet up with an armored woman surrounded by other stormers (the ones that went to Point Phorcys) in a similar zombie-like state. While with the woman, she spent time concentrating on each stormer, using his or her powers until she felt confident with them, then moving to the next stormer to do the same. Mind Reading also reveals the stormer briefly "heard" a distorted, indistinct, but female voice in his or her thoughts when contact was first established, then nothing after that until being released from control.

Players may choose to make any of the checks below as routine checks, they have plenty of time to work with the stormer and are not under stress. Each check requires a few hours of time and if there are multiple heroes with the appropriate skills, they can work simultaneously to save time, otherwise each check requires about four hours of time.

- **Treatment (DC 15)** allows a hero to analyze the stormer's bloodstream and determine the presence of something foreign and artificial. Heroes should receive a +2 circumstance bonus for using their laboratory.

- **Expertise: Science or Technology (DC 20)** checks can substitute for the Treatment check above and reveals the same information. This approach also risks shocking the stormers system (see **Shocking the Stormer's System** later in this section).
- *Two Degrees of Success:* Allows heroes to determine that the stormer's powers are caused by alien nanites. This also informs the hero that, while the technology is alien, it should be possible to agitate the nanites and create feedback that should get the Commander's attention.

## SHOCKING THE STORMER'S SYSTEM

Two degrees of success on the Expertise: Science or Technology checks also activates the nanites defense mechanisms. This causes the stormer to suffer a shock of painful, debilitating pain that automatically inflicts damage as if the stormer failed a resistance check by two degrees (Dazed and a -1 to additional resistance checks). It also gives the stormer a brief flash of awareness of a link that still exists with the Commander.

Once knowledge of this link is known—of if the heroes independently theorize they may be able to contact the Commander using the nanites—the heroes can build a device which will generate feedback and hopefully draw the Commander's attention. Building the device requires a laboratory (which the Emerald Tower has). A hero with the Inventor advantage can create the feedback device by making a design check (DC 16) and a construction check (DC 16). If none of your heroes have the Inventor advantage, Maximilian Mars can do the work for them, or they can attempt the same checks with a -5 circumstance penalty. Once the device has been constructed the heroes need only turn it on to make it work and get the Commander's attention.

Turning on the feedback device inflicts automatic damage on the stormer, this time the stormer suffers damage at a lower level than before, but takes damage as if the stormer failed a resistance check by one degree (-1 to additional resistance checks) each minute for five minutes, then it increases to the next degree of failure of a resistance check (Dazed and -1 to future resistance checks) each minute for five minutes, then increases to the third degree of failure for a resistance check (Staggered and -1 to future resistance checks) each minute for two minutes. At the end of 12 minutes the stormer passes out from the pain. Fortunately for the stormer, the Commander is aware of the feedback immediately and takes over the stormer to find out what's going on only a minute or two later. This leads directly into **Scene 3: The Commander Speaks!** Once the Commander begins speaking, the heroes can turn off the feedback device.

## ROLEPLAYING THE STORMER

The nanites don't like being probed. The process is painful to the affected stormer, but he or she's just as curious as everyone else and bears the burden. The stormer doesn't conceal how painful it is, but insists on moving forward with the experiments.

## HEROIC PROBLEM-SOLVING

Solving a mystery can be one of the most rewarding events for a player. The satisfaction one gets from putting clues together and solving a particular problem is second to none, whether it is figuring out how to outwit a more powerful villain, deducing who the mastermind is behind the latest rash of robberies, or, in this case, determining what is going on with the stormers.

Such satisfaction is muted when problem-solving devolves into a series of skill checks or hero point expenditures. While these certainly have their place (why else is there an Investigation skill?), don't be so quick to call for them. Instead, allow the players to try and figure things out on their own and let them ask for their own skill checks when they feel it necessary. This keeps the tools in the hands of the players rather than seeming like you are spoon-feeding them.

That said, by all means call for a skill check or hero point expenditure if the players are spinning their wheels and obviously stuck. While players derive satisfaction from figuring out a problem on their own, they also tend to get very frustrated when floundering. That's when it's time for you to throw them the lifeline.

If the stormer is run by a player, then the hero is free to react to the pain however the player wishes. This makes for some interesting roleplaying amongst the heroes.

## ROLEPLAYING MAXIMILIAN MARS

Assuming that the heroes contact Maximilian Mars, he's very keen to help, especially if they tell him about the strange vessel. Mars not only correctly assumes that this is a space ship, but also that it may be connected to the alien technology that he has been using for years.

While on the verge of sharing his secret, Mars isn't quite ready to share his history as the Commander nor what he knows about the technology (that happens in **Scene 4: Mars' Secret Revealed!**). Heroes that ask to make an Insight check against Mars (opposed by his Deception skill) realize he's hiding something. If pressed, Mars admits that the technology is familiar to him and he shares all he knows once the experiments are over. If a hero continues to press him, then you can skip over to **Scene 4** and have Mars share his secret. He won't give the heroes the grand tour until after **Scene 3**.

If the heroes don't contact Mars he arrives soon anyway in order to ask how things are going, what sort of progress they've made, and to see if they need his help with any technical matters. In truth, he's curious as to what's going on and wants to get involved.

## KEY POINTS

This scene is designed to enable the heroes to discover that the stormers can be controlled through the nanites inside them; the nanites are also responsible for their powers. Maximilian Mars is also likely to get involved, either through the heroes asking him for assistance or his own curiosity. The heroes should cover the following key points before moving on to **Scene 3**.

- The heroes should determine that the stormer's powers are caused by nanites.
- Maximilian Mars is very interested in the nanites.

The heroes can create a feedback device to cause havoc with the Commander's connection to the stormers.

## OUTCOME

By the end of this scene the heroes should create a feedback loop that gets the Commander's attention. This leads directly into the next scene, **Scene 3: The Commander Speaks!**

## REWARDS

If the stormer who volunteers to be the guinea pig for the feedback device is a hero, that character should earn a hero point for their actions (and the pain they have to endure).

## SCENE 3: THE COMMANDER SPEAKS!

*Scene Type: Roleplaying (possibly with a short combat)*

Now that the heroes are using the feedback device, they've managed to get the Commander's attention. While she deals with the discomfort caused by the feedback, she also puts the affected stormer back under her control in a bid to get the heroes to stop their actions.

Read or paraphrase the following.

*After a few minutes of watching the stormer wince from the shocks, you notice a change come over the stormer's face and a change in posture. Rather than scrunched in pain, the stormer seems angry as silver eyes narrow and glare at each of you. Just as the stormer is about to say something, another shock strikes. Once the pain subsides, the stormer hisses a command.*

*"I am the Commander. Are you going to stop whatever it is you're doing... or do you want your stormer to die first?"*

While the heroes may initially interpret it as such, the Commander's warning is not a threat. The heroes' feed-



back loop has been hurting the Commander and she knows that the stormer relaying the signal must be experiencing much worse.

It's important to note that the exchange between the heroes and the Commander isn't determined by skill checks or other die rolls. That's because the heroes need this information to keep the story moving. You can ask for checks from the players, but use that only as a smoke-screen; they'll get all the information regardless of what they roll, but if you wish, you can present the information in such a way that the heroes have reason to doubt it. The Commander isn't happy the heroes have found a way to contact her and use her powers against her, but she's not in a position to oppose them just now. So, the Commander shares information in order to keep the heroes busy while she looks for a solution to her problem.

The text below is presented in question (in bold) and answer (in italics) format. The Commander answers questions mostly honestly, but she's not going to reveal her real name, location, or any other piece of information she regards as important to her safety. The paragraphs are organized so that you can split them apart so the conversation flows more naturally. In addition, you can hold back certain paragraphs until the heroes ask the appropriate questions.

**Who are you?**

*I'm the Commander... I've come back to take over the world with a new super-powered army!*

**We know you're not the original Commander. He was a man and you're a woman. Who are you really?**

*I'm the new Commander. I was given my powers by the Silver Storm to instill order in the world! My order!*

**So you weren't behind the Silver Storm?**

*Ha, no! The Storm was otherworldly. Impossibly advanced. Only someone with an intelligence as great as mine could begin to comprehend the technology involved!*

**What do you know about the stormers and the nanites that gave them their powers?**

*I do not know what caused the Silver Storm nor do I fully understand how the nanites operate, at least not yet! I believe they are of alien origin. I am certain that the nanites are the source of the stormers' powers and I suspect that their secondary purpose is to allow some outside force to control anyone with active nanites in their system. I discovered a back door in the nanites to control the stormers myself.*

**How did you gain control of the stormers?**

*I discovered a way to use the nanites to control them and I built a device to enable me to override*



*their original programming. Don't bother trying to duplicate my invention; I've designed it to be uniquely compatible with my advanced brain.*

**So the “code” for taking over the stormers was already built into the nanites?**

*Yes, it was already there, just waiting for someone like me to find it and use it! That's how I am able to take over the stormers. My device doesn't work on others.*

**So someone could turn you into a zombie, too?**

*Don't you think I would have considered that? I have taken precautions that make me immune to such control.*

**Would you share that secret with us? It will probably be important to keep the stormers from being taken over by Tellax or whatever might try to control them in the future.**

*No. I'd be a fool to share that technology with you. The stormers are mine to control!*

**Why did you send the stormers to Point Phorcys and do you know what that spaceship was or who Tellax is?**

*I sensed a large cache of nanites in the ocean, beneath the station. I “recruited” a stormer team to find and retrieve them so I could create an even larger army of stormers. While that plan no longer seems possible, I still have access to plenty of stormers. Even so, I am endeavoring to find the alien craft. As for the alien itself, I have no idea who or what it was. Nor do I know its purpose.*

**Have you had any luck finding the spaceship?**

*So far, I haven't, but with my intellect, it's only a matter of time.*

**That's all we wanted to know.**

*Well then, be gone and don't attempt to contact me again! I've given you all the information I'm willing to share!*

While any stormer heroes would be happy to have it, the Commander won't share her schematics on how to inhibit external control over the nanites. What the stormer heroes do receive, however, is the satisfaction that such a device can be created (well, assuming that the Commander isn't lying).

## ROLEPLAYING THE COMMANDER

Portray the Commander as needing to be persuaded to share her story. She knows that she has to share in order to give the heroes something to do and keep them from coming after her, but by feigning reluctance she hopes to convince them she's doing them a favor. Also,

she doesn't want to risk their ire by causing permanent damage should she need to regain control of the stormer as a show of power. Doing so would only encourage the heroes to hunt her down.

## KEY POINTS

This is primarily a roleplaying scene between the heroes and the new Commander. While the Commander offers a great deal of information, you should ensure that the heroes receive the following relevant information.

- **Most important:** There is a way to protect a stormer from being controlled.
- The Silver Storm is likely of alien origin.
- A new Commander is responsible for controlling the stormers.
- The new Commander is not responsible for the Silver Storm and isn't an alien or working with Tellax.
- This Commander is not connected to the original Commander from Emerald City's past.
- This Commander has little knowledge of the alien spacecraft.

## ACTION

Depending on how the conversation goes, the Commander may punctuate her last statement by overriding the stormer and forcing him to attack, putting emphasis on destroying the feedback equipment. She's acting out of spite and only controls the stormer for a couple of rounds, not long enough to do any permanent damage to the stormer or the heroes.

## OUTCOME

By the end of this scene the heroes should establish that the nanites were created by an alien, probably within the craft they saw at the end of **Chapter 4: Sea Change**. They've also likely recruited the aid of Maximilian Mars, who is now ready to reveal what he knows.

## REWARDS

If the heroes manage to drastically harm their relationship with the new Commander, give the heroes responsible a hero point. This guarantees the Commander will be back to cause problems for those heroes. You should only award this hero point if you decide you'd like to use the Commander again in your series.

If, through excellent roleplaying and some good Persuasion rolls, the heroes manage to convince the Commander to help them deal with Tellax's threat, that's worth a hero point as well—although they'd have to be some pretty impressive rolls to convince the Commander to work against her own interests by giving away the secret to protecting stormers from mind control!

## SCENE 4: MARS' SECRET REVEALED!

**Scene Type:** Roleplaying

Maximilian Mars comes clean about his history as the original Commander and the source of his supervillain technology. This scene is split into two parts; the first is Mars revealing information about his past while the second is a tour of his underground facilities, which is where the heroes are at the start of the final scene, **Invasion from Beyond!**

Once the exchange with the new Commander is over, Mars asks the heroes to accompany him back to his office. Initially he plays this as needing security in case the Commander comes after him, but he's actually ready to reveal his secrets to the heroes. If pressed, Mars says that there's something he wants to share with them once they get to his office.

Once they are in his office, Mars invites them to sit and offers them a drink from his office bar. He then sits back in his desk chair and takes a long drink before offering the following information.

*"While you've discovered this on your own, I can undeniably confirm that this new 'Commander' is not the original. It would be impossible, in fact, as I am the original Commander." He looks at the wall to his right. "Display."*

*A panel on the wall to the right shimmers and disappears, revealing an alcove with the latest version of the Commander battlesuit standing there.*

*"Don't be alarmed," he says. "My villainous past is behind me and I've been pardoned for my crimes. But you deserve an explanation and full disclosure. I hope I don't disappoint."*

*"I used to work for Harrison Electronics, a big name in the Defense industry. When I discovered that the CEO, Tony Harrison, was stealing my work and developing it on his own, he accused me of stealing company secrets and fired me."*

*"I also discovered that he put out a contract on me. With the local police bought to look the other way, I fled to the mountains to escape a hit squad. I stumbled across the wreck of an alien vessel. I went inside seeking shelter and, for some unknown reason, it decided to protect me. The hit squad never stood a chance."*

*He finishes his drink and pours another. "It took me weeks to understand even the basics of the technology, but it was enough for me to adapt and use. I wanted vengeance on Harrison and, more than that, I wanted to test the limits of this technology."*

*I created a villainous persona, the Commander, to get superheroes to challenge me. I always chose targets that would hurt Harrison Electronics in some way."*

*"My plan worked well. While I ruffled a few feathers within the Chamber, I succeeded in hurting Harrison. He didn't know what hit him when I bought the company out from under him after its stocks fell. MarsTech took its place and soon grew by leaps and bounds, using what I'd learned from the spacecraft."*

*"Unfortunately, I could not guide MarsTech to its fullest potential and be the Commander at the same time. When I saw my opportunity for a fresh start, I took it. I've devoted my life to running this company full-time. In a way, your presence is the culmination of my efforts over the last two decades. I've been trying to bring respectability to Emerald City and I understand heroes like you need to be a part of that."*

*Mars stands and finishes his second drink, placing the glass back on the bar.*

*"But I didn't bring you here just to tell you a story. I want to take you to my vault where the remnants of the alien technology sit. I think by working together, we may be able to come up with a device like the one created by this new Commander, so we can protect the stormers from being mind controlled by her as well as whatever else might be out there."*

Assuming that the heroes are amenable, Mars walks over to a black and white photo of Emerald City circa 1936 and utters "open." The picture and the wall behind it shimmers and disappears, revealing an elevator door (if any of the heroes had earlier scanned the room, they'd find the door if they can detect it through a 5-point Illusion power). The elevator car comfortably holds all of the heroes and Mars.

There is a panel with twenty buttons, all unmarked. Without looking Mars selects one and the elevator makes a slight hissing sound (the buttons are a security measure. If you press the wrong button an alarm sounds and the car fills with knockout gas (a rank 12 Affliction (Resisted by Fortitude; Fatigued, Exhausted, Asleep)) and the doors magnetize shut (Toughness 25). The proper button changes daily or whenever Mars feels like changing it.

The elevator smoothly moves downward. The elevator is definitely descending, although the elevator also seems to move from side to side and back and forth on occasion. After several minutes, the door opens into a darkened room.

As Mars steps out of the elevator, the overhead lights come on, revealing a corridor 50 feet long and 6 feet wide. Two security robots unlike anything you've seen on MarsTech property before stand at the other end of the corridor, holding large, alien-looking rifles. They are





standing in front of a set of double doors but they step aside as Mars and the heroes approach. The double doors open to reveal a large warehouse-sized room with vents but no windows.

Read or paraphrase the following.

*The doors open into a large underground warehouse. The room is roughly a hundred yards long and wide with a 40 foot ceiling. Used, but well-organized workstations and testing sites cover the floor, all surrounding a large object that looks like a metallic icicle resting on its side. A couple of robotic technicians are examining different sections of the artifact, and cables run from it to computer stations. Bits and pieces of similar alien technology are strewn throughout the room, being analyzed and experimented on.*

*"Welcome to the Vault," Max says as he leads you into the room. "For decades this has been the core of MarsTech. This Vault sits underground in a secure location. Ten feet of concrete separate the ceiling from the subbasement above. The only living soul who's seen this room in decades is me... and now you."*

Heroes that have seen Tellax' ship at the end of **Chapter 4** recognize similarities between that ship and the much smaller piece here. It's entirely possible that the pieces in this warehouse came from that vessel.

With Mars' assistance, the heroes scrounge together enough alien parts to construct a mind control jammer. Unfortunately, before the heroes can finish the device Tellax attacks.

## ROLEPLAYING MAXIMILIAN MARS

Normally, Maximilian Mars is cool and calm. Since he's learned about the nanites and their connection to "his" technology he's become very eager to learn more about them as well as their connection to the alien ship the heroes saw. He knows things are coming to a head and he wants to help the heroes protect his city from whatever threat Tellax and the stormers represent. Now that he knows there's a way to protect the stormers from being mind controlled, he won't rest until he figures it out.

## KEY POINTS

The purpose of this scene is to reveal that Mars has a long history with Tellax's technology and is probably the most knowledgeable person in the world when it comes to its abilities. In addition, this scene should reveal that Mars is a changed man. Whatever he was like in the days before the Silver Storm, he cares about Emerald City and wants to see its people protected.

- Mars seems genuinely interested in helping the heroes find a way to keep the stormers from being mind controlled—as well as in protecting the city and the people in it.

- The heroes find out Mars has had access to alien technology for years and all of his technological advances are based off it.
- The heroes begin work on a jammer to keep the stormers from being mind controlled.

## OUTCOME

By this point the heroes should have learned Mars' secret and been taken to see the remains of the alien ship. They also have the design of a mind control jamming device although the actual construction is interrupted. The interruption is covered in the next and final scene of this adventure.

## SCENE 5: INVASION FROM BEYOND!

**Scene Type:** *Combat, Conclusion*

Tellax has decided to eliminate his influence on Earth once and for all by reclaiming the alien technology Mars appropriated decades ago. To do this, Tellax takes control of several stormers and tasks them with incapacitating the heroes while securing Mars. He also sends a tractor beam to MarsTech to rip an office building away to reveal the long-missing piece of his vessel.

The heroes should be on the verge of creating their mind control jamming device when Tellax attacks. Read or paraphrase the following:

*You're hard at work on the jamming device, deep underground when the entire Vault starts shaking. At first, it's just a few quick jolts, but they grow in intensity until the room is vibrating violently. Tables tip over, computers fall, and robots stumble as they try to secure loose objects. Before you have a chance to act, you hear several large cracks as the entire ceiling rips away. Something has ripped the roof of the Vault off along with all of the dirt and the building above from its very foundations!*

*Just as this registers, you see a group of silver-eyed stormers charge into the Vault to attack!*

After reading this to the players, give them all a hero point. This surprise attack by an apparently overwhelming force and the threats to the safety of innocent bystanders certainly qualifies as a serious complication for the heroes.

The frontline stormers leap into the Vault and engage the heroes while Electron and Precious attack them from afar. Mars' security robots lay cover fire as they shield Maximilian Mars and escort him into a secure room. It takes Tellax 3 rounds to remove the building, drop it, and begin pulling the craft fragment towards it.

## PLAYING THE STORMERS

Seven stormers are provided in this adventure. Only use all of the stormers if you're running **Rise of the Masterminds** for a large group. While these are PL 9 villains, some of them have power point totals closer to PL 10. Use three stormers for every two heroes, selecting stormers that would provide the most interesting challenges for the heroes.

All of these stormers have been active for only a short time. A hero with an appropriate Expertise (such as Expertise: Criminal or Expertise: Pop Culture), or who has the Will-informed advantage, can make a skill check (DC 20) to see if he or she knows anything about a stormer of their choice. Any hero who succeeds has heard at least a little bit about their chosen stormer and has a general sense of his or her powers. A separate check can be made for each stormer if the heroes wish; each check after the first requires a move action.

In addition to the personal notes below, all stormers have a mission to grab Maximilian Mars. They won't hurt him, even if Mars attacks them (such as with a blaster rifle). The stormers try to incapacitate Mars and ready him to be beamed aboard Tellax's ship.

While under Tellax's control, the stormers don't utilize their usual tactics. Instead, they take a "brute force" approach, charging toward the heroes if they are able or descending into the pit that was formerly a basement.

Precious is a special case. While she is moving into position just like the others, her appearance likely keeps her from being spotted until she launches her first attack (you can play this up by having a hero notice that one of the villains, perhaps Doughboy, looks like he is about to step on a poor cat that wandered into the hole).

Justicar is conflicted. Even under Tellax's control, there is something inside of him screaming that his current actions are wrong. While he presses his attack like the other Stormers, he refuses to use his pistols unless necessary. Instead, he relies on his fear aura to dissuade the heroes and, failing that, he defaults to his fists.

## PLAYING MAXIMILIAN MARS

Maximilian Mars is not used to being defenseless. Without his battlesuit he needs to rely on his security forces and the heroes. His security forces immediately move to secure him, escorting him deeper into the Vault where he's protected by reinforced walls with a Toughness of 16.

Mars uses his intercom system to warn the heroes that the alien beam is after the source of his technology and begs them to secure it. If Tellax succeeds, then MarsTech loses its position as innovation leader. In spite of his security robots' best efforts, Mars grabs a blaster rifle, and joins the fray.



## PLAYING TELLAX

Tellax is interested in removing its influence on Earth. This requires two steps. First, Maximilian Mars must be brought to the ship in order to ascertain how far he's spread the alien technology. Second, the source of such technology needs to be removed. This requires beaming the lost part of Tellax's ship back to the vessel. Tellax is currently controlling the stormers to aid his plan.

With part of his ship already in human hands, Tellax doesn't risk putting his own ship in danger. He fires his tractor beam from orbit while using mind-controlled stormers to engage the heroes and retrieve Mars.

## KEY POINTS

The heroes are caught by surprise in this scene. While the key points are obvious, this scene is crucial to advance into the next and final chapter. Before ending this adventure, you should cover the following key points.

- The heroes should *not* have completed the mind control jammer before the attack.
- Tellax is capable of controlling the stormers—and able to do so more completely than the Commander.
- The heroes need to prevent the Tellax and the stormers from taking Maximilian Mars and his alien artifact.
- When the heroes manage to stymie Tellax, he transports them and Maximilian Mars to an alien world.

## SETUP

The heroes start on the floor of the Vault. The ceiling of the room was 30 feet high; there is now a 20 foot hole above it that leads to ground level with the building hovering about 10 feet higher than that and rising.

The stormers attack in the first round. Flying stormers swoop in while grounded stormers stand on the edge of the newly-formed pit. Security robots immediately move to protect Mars.

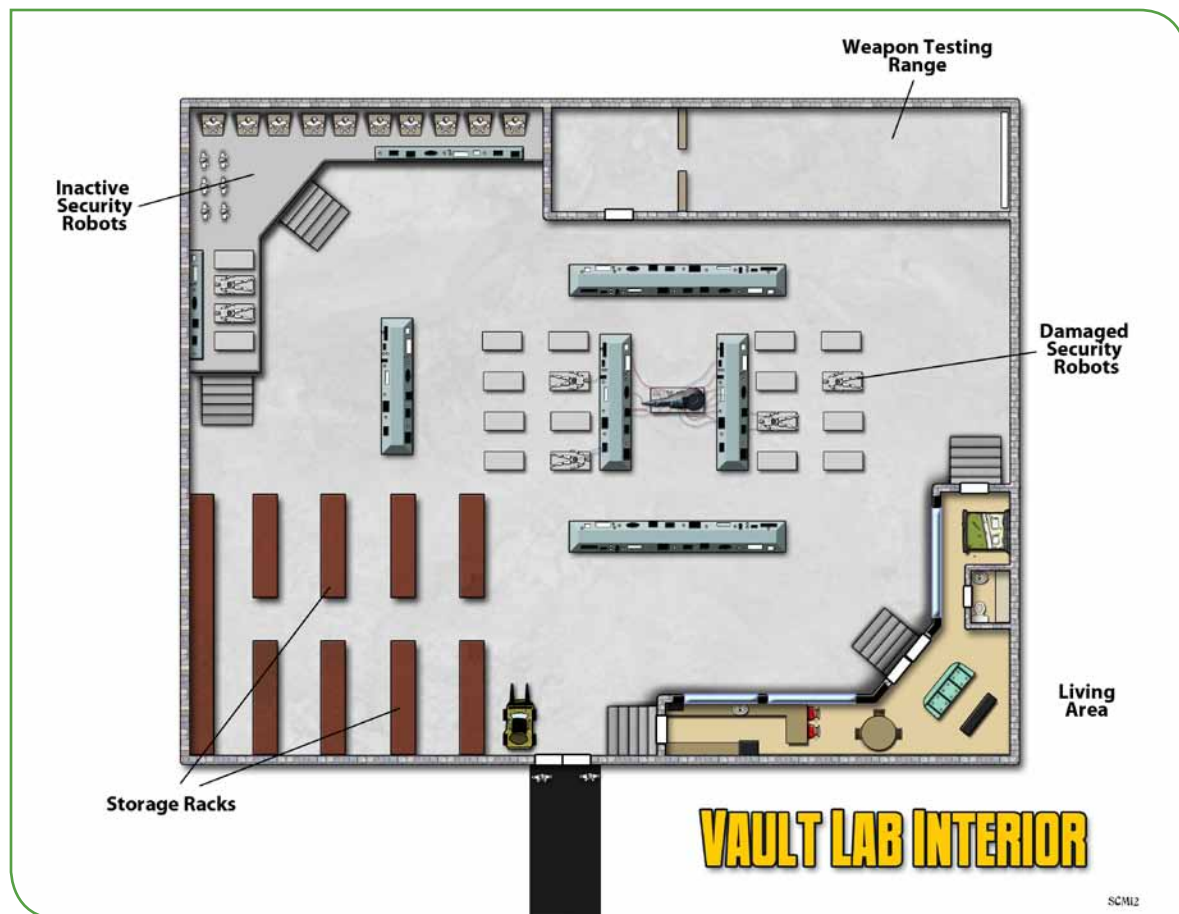
## TACTICS

Tellax wants to occupy the heroes while it kidnaps Max Mars and retrieves its missing technology. Thus, all of the stormers are initially ordered to attack the heroes by rushing into the pit and engaging them. Tellax does its best to match stormers to heroes in order to gain the best advantage (Tellax is not aware of anything it hasn't observed, so it may inadvertently match a stormer against hero that he or she is ill-equipped to face when the hero uses his full suite of powers).

Tellax responds to events as they unfold. Should the heroes attempt to stop the building from being moved then it'll instruct the stormers to stop them. It also sends stormers to stop any heroes that tries to protect Mars or interfere with the tractor beam.



FLOREN + JUAN '12 CRUZ



Tellax takes three rounds moving the building away from the Vault. He then drops the building (which falls 20 feet before hitting the ground) and locks the tractor beam on Mars' piece of his vessel.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

The most immediate environmental feature facing the heroes is falling debris from the bottom of the building. So long as the heroes are below the building, they run the risk of getting hit. Each round, any character that is beneath the building must make a Dodge save at DC 15. Those that fail are hit by falling concrete and steel for Damage 5. Those that fail by two or more degrees are also pinned to the ground. They are immobile and impaired, and they must make an Athletics check against Difficulty 20 to break free. The concrete and steel has a Toughness of 9 if someone wants to destroy it.

MarsTech has several thousand employees and the parking lots (each about 500 feet in diameter) in the area are full of cars. Doughboy and Justicar may hurl these at the heroes (cars do their Toughness in damage (usually 8). Persephone and Precious may use a full lot to hide from the heroes and attack from cover. Several employees are also in the parking lot frantically trying to escape the carnage. They can be used as human shields or hostages to get heroes to surrender.

The ripping up of a building near city streets can cause ripple effects that tear apart the roads and shake nearby foundations. A hero caught in a ripple effect needs to make an Athletics skill at DC 20 or be knocked to the ground. A hero missing this roll by 2 or more degrees falls into a sinkhole, causing no damage but putting him 10 + 1d20 feet underground. At best this may cause some car accidents or pedestrians threatened by cracks or falling chunks of building (again, requiring a Dodge save at DC 15 or taking Damage 5. There is also the same chance of being pinned as above). At worst it could cause a bus to teeter on the edge of a sink hole or cause a nearby building to collapse. In fact, the trajectory of Tellax's beam virtually ensures that the MarsTech building it is removing is bound to hit another tall building, perhaps causing a domino effect.

The stormers may use other MarsTech buildings for cover or attack heroes entering the pulled building while they are rescuing office workers. Internal walls have a Toughness of 8 while external walls have a Toughness of 10. The outer glass windows are reinforced with a Toughness of 4 but many still shattered when the building was wrenched from the ground.

Although the office building snatching caught the employees unawares, MarsTech has actually run training exercises on what to do if a villain or monster rips the building from the ground (a byproduct of living in a city full of villains). Most MarsTech employees immediately ran to the "safe rooms" in the center of the building





which are specially reinforced to withstand impact. They also fill the room with spongy foam to protect the employees.

Unfortunately, not every employee follows the protocol. Some employees simply panic, while others are blocked by structural buckling or fallen/wedged file cabinets and furniture. Still others may be trapped or stuck. Trapped employees require an Athletics check against DC 20 to free; the Toughness save varies by the object pinning the employee (a large filled file cabinet has a Toughness of 4, whereas an oak desk has a Toughness of 3).. A few employees may even fall out of the building, whether being shaken out of the building or jumping of their own volition. Such characters need saving by the heroes.

Eventually, the heroes need to deal with the building. Tellax doesn't care where it lands and drops it on the ground several yards away in three rounds. Heroes can attempt to pull the building free, but the beam has a Strength of 20. Unless one of the heroes is a true powerhouse, they'll have to wait until the beam is released before securing the building. The dropped building is unstable and could topple into other buildings or across a street, putting a few lives in danger. The heroes need to find a way to secure the building and rescue anyone affected by Tellax's harsh treatment.

Mars does not want Tellax to get the alien technology. Tellax needs to move the building first, giving the heroes

time to secure the building and attack the stormers. Due to the delicate nature of the technology Tellax uses a weaker tractor beam which only has a Strength of 10. Powerhouse heroes, perhaps with a little aid, could wrench the alien remains free from the beam. This requires a Strength challenge sequence. A hero or heroes must win 3 challenges in order to pull the alien craft out of the beam.

## IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The important characters in this scene are the stormers, now under the control of Tellax rather than the Commander. The stat blocks for the stormers can be found in the **Heroes & Villains** section of this adventure.

## OUTCOME

Despite the bleak situation that the heroes started with they should win this battle. The stormers are individually less powerful than the heroes and Tellax remains in orbit, focused solely on capturing Mars rather than aiding the stormers. Once it is clear the stormers aren't going to defeat the heroes, kidnap Mars, or recover the piece of the ship, then Tellax uses his ace in the hole.

Paraphrase the following or read it aloud to the players. You'll need to revise the information below to reflect how things went in your game:

*The tide of battle appears to be going in your favor. The stormers are no match for your coordinated onslaught and you've managed to keep hold of both Mars and his alien artifact. Just as you realize that there's a sudden flash of blinding light and you feel your stomach lurch and a cool wind wash over you.*

*When your senses clear and take a look around, you realize you're no longer on Earth.*

## REWARDS

In addition to the hero point all the heroes get at the start of this combat (when Tellax rips the top off the Vault and sends his stormers to attack), you can introduce any number of complications for the heroes to earn more. There are buildings full of MarsTech employees nearby, traffic on the streets and roads on the MarsTech campus, and the possibility of fires breaking out due to exposed gas and electrical lines. Heroes who spend time dealing with these problems, in the form of rescuing bystanders from harm, putting out fires, or similar issues earn themselves a hero point.

If Tellax manages to get away with either Mars or the alien artifact, each of those are worth a hero point as well because it puts Tellax closer to achieving its goals.

## EPILOGUE

The final scene leads directly into the next and final chapter of *Emerald City Knights*, **Chapter 6: Out of the Frying Pan....**

## YOU WANT MORE?!

With only one dedicated combat scene, this adventure is designed for a single session of play. That said you can easily expand this adventure by adding a few optional scenes. Below are a few common ways to add an extra session or two to this adventure.

### "RESCUING" THE STORMER

**Rise of the Masterminds** presumes that the heroes escort a willing stormer from Point Phorcys to Emerald Tower unmolested. Using this option, the Commander, worried that the heroes might be able to trace the stormer back to her, sends another stormer team to free the stormer working with the heroes. She also reactivates the captured stormer to aid in his own rescue.

This combat scene takes place over the ocean, in the city, or even inside the heroes' headquarters. You can make a new set of stormers, use stormers from earlier chapters, or use the archetypes in the *Mutants & Masterminds Hero's Handbook*. Their goal is not to defeat the heroes but simply to set the "captive" stormer free—and not get caught themselves!

## THE COMMANDER ATTACKS

In **Scene 3: The Commander Speaks!**, there is the possibility that the Commander puts the stormer through which she's speaking to the heroes back under her control and attacks the heroes. This is only for a couple of rounds, as the Commander merely wants to give the heroes a show of power.

Under this option, the Commander manipulates the stormer to cause more permanent damage. The stormer's first objective is to destroy the heroes' feedback device so that she can remotely control the stormer without interference. In addition, she sends several other stormers to help (again, you can create a new team of stormers using the guidelines offered in the previous section). Their mission is to destroy the heroes.

## FOLLOWING THE TRAIL TO THE COMMANDER

For a longer game you could have the heroes trace the signals from the new Commander back to its source, her base beneath the city. The Commander makes her headquarters in an old forgotten bomb shelter that was designed in the 1950s to house the city government in case of a nuclear attack. An unscrupulous contractor pocketed the money that was supposed to fill the shelter during a city expansion project in the 1980s.

For security purposes the shelter was placed away from City Hall and now sits beneath Yellow Brick Row, a large open-air shopping mall. The only entrance to the Commander's headquarters is a secret trapdoor inside a boarded up beauty shop called "Janus Boutique." The shop is boarded up for renovations that aren't taking place. Discovering the trapdoor requires an Investigation check (DC 25). The trapdoor opens into a second hatch that has an elaborate security code. This requires a Technology check (DC 30) to crack. The other option is to somehow pass through or tear down the door itself, which has a Toughness of 12.

Beneath the hatch is a ladder that leads to the headquarters 50 feet below. The Commander is quite surprised at the intrusion and attempts to bargain her way out of the situation (offering the same information that she gives in **Scene 3**). She may also give them her mind control device, but this has been broken by the feedback they used to contact her. Essentially, this puts them in the same position that they'd be in at the start of **Scene 5**. At this point, you can have Tellax attack MarsTech and force the heroes to choose whether to keep hounding the Commander or to let her go free in order to take care of the more immediate threat.

## OTHER PIECES OF SPACESHIP

Maximilian Mars, AKA the original Commander, derived his powers from alien technology that fell from Tellax's vessel as it plunged through the atmosphere into the sea. It's entirely possible, and likely probable, that other pieces fell as well. Not only does this offer an origin story for other heroes or villains but the piece could also be buried in a place where its retrieval would threaten lives (such as an under a park or busy beach).

# HEROES & VILLAINS

This section contains the stat blocks and personal information of the major personalities in **Rise of the Masterminds**.

## BRANDE MANAGEMENT FORCES

The following are the forces Brand Management sends to deal with problems at their platform, which may include the heroes.

### AGENT MARINER

Anthony Gibbs is a former member of a US Navy-backed program to create aquatic super-soldiers. Mariner was one of the only successful test subjects and the project was scrapped due to excessive cost. Resigning his commission, he joined Brande and has been working security at various facilities for the past three years. He is no-nonsense but with a dry sarcastic sense of humor. He expects total loyalty from those under his command and delivers the same in return. He has no aversion to working with superheroes if necessary, though he views most as

#### BRANDE MANAGEMENT OPERATIVES

PL5 • MR6

STR 1 STA 1 AGL 1 DEX 2 FGT 6 INT 0 AWE 1 PRE 0

**Equipment:** **Body Armor** (Feature 2: Comm & Datalink, Impervious Protection 3, Senses 1 (Low-light Vision)), **Brande Blaster** (Ranged Damage 5), **Vibro-Bayonet** (Strength-based Damage 2, Penetrating 2, Improved Critical)

**Advantages** Equipment 5, Ranged Attack 3, Teamwork

**Skills** Athletics 4 (+5), Close Combat: Blades 1 (+7), Expertise: Military 4 (+4), Expertise: Tactics 4 (+4), Intimidation 3 (+3), Perception 3 (+4), Stealth 3 (+4), Vehicles 2 (+4)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Blaster +5 (Ranged, Damage 5), Unarmed +6 (Close, Damage 1), Vibro-Bayonet +7 (Close, Damage 3, Penetrating 2, Crit. 19-20)

**Defense** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude 5, Toughness 4, Will 5

**Totals** Abilities 24 + Powers 0 + Advantages 7 + Skills 12 + Defenses 13 = 56

**Options:** To represent specialized training, apply one of these packages (raises cost by 4 points):

- **Sky-Jumpers:** Flight 5 (Jet-packs; 60 MPH; Easily Fouled (counts as the Wings flaw), Removable)
- **Anti-Superhuman Phalanx (ASP):** Add Favored Foe (Superhumans), Set-Up, and Expertise: Superhumans 4 (+4)
- **Close Assault (PL6):** Add Close Attack 2, Quick Draw, and Improved Disarm
- **Covert Operations:** Add Skill Mastery (Stealth), Deception 4 (+4), and increase Stealth to 5 (+6).
- **Environmental Operations:** Add Favored Environment (Choose One), add Equipment 1 to apply Immunity 2 (Environmental Condition: Choose One, Suffocation: Choose One Condition), Movement 1 (Environmental Adaptation) to standard armor. Add Expertise: Survival 4 (+4)
- **Technical Operations:** Increase Intellect to 1, add Technology 3 (+4) and Treatment 1 (+2)

### AGENT MARINER

PL9 • 135 POINTS

STR 7 STA 7 AGL 3 DEX 2 FGT 8 INT 1 AWE 1 PRE 1

**Powers:** **Aquatic** (Immunity 3 (Cold, High Pressure, Suffocation (Drowning)), Senses 1 (Low-light Vision), Swimming 8 (120 MPH)); **Hardened Skin** (Impervious Toughness 4)

**Equipment:** Brande Blaster (Ranged Damage 7), Commlink

**Advantages:** All-out Attack, Chokehold, Defensive Roll, Favored Environment (Aquatic), Equipment 3, Improved Hold, Improved Trip, Move-by Action, Power Attack, Ranged Attack 5, Startle

**Skills:** Acrobatics 3 (+6), Athletics 5 (+12), Close Combat: Unarmed 3 (+11), Expertise: Military 5 (+6), Expertise: Tactics 5 (+6), Insight 4 (+5), Intimidation 7 (+8), Perception 6 (+7), Ranged Combat: Guns 3 (+5), Stealth 3 (+6), Vehicles 4 (+6)

**Offense:** Initiative +3, Blaster +11 (Ranged, Damage 7), Unarmed +11 (Close, Damage 7)

**Defense:** Dodge 10, Parry 10, Fortitude 10, Toughness 8/7\*, Will 7 \*Without Defensive Roll

**Totals:** Abilities 60 + Powers 16 + Advantages 17 + Skills 24 + Defenses 18 = 135

**Complications:** **No-Nonsense:** Agent Mariner isn't humorless, but he has little time for unprofessionalism, needless frivolity, and insubordination. **Motivation—Professional Pride:** Agent Mariner takes great pride in his work. He respects those who make his job easier and has no consideration or warm feelings for those who don't.

### AGENT BLAZER

PL9 • 132 POINTS

STR 1 STA 2 AGL 3 DEX 5 FGT 6 INT 1 AWE 1 PRE 2

**Powers** **Fireproof** (Immunity 10 (Fire), Limited—Must be aware of attack, Reflect); **Flame Generation** (Array (18 points) **Flame Blast:** Ranged Damage 9; **AE: Fire Breath:** Area Cone Damage 6, Secondary Effect; **AE: Firefist:** Damage 7, Secondary Effect, Feature 1 (Counts as Unarmed))

**Equipment** Commlink, Uniform (Protection 2)

**Advantages:** All-out Attack, Attractive, Connected, Defensive Roll 2, Equipment, Fascinate (Deception), Improved Trip, Languages 2 (Arabic, Russian), Precise Attack (Ranged; Cover),

**Skills:** Acrobatics 4 (+7), Athletics 2 (+3), Close Combat: Unarmed 5 (+11), Deception 5 (+7), Expertise: Intelligence 5 (+6), Insight 2 (+3), Intimidation 4 (+6), Investigation 2 (+3), Perception 4 (+5), Persuasion 4 (+6), Sleight of Hand 2 (+7), Stealth 5 (+8), Vehicles 2 (+7)

**Offense:** Initiative +3, Fire Breath (Close, Cone Area Damage 6), Firefist +11 (Close, Damage 7, Secondary Effect), Flame Blast +9 (Ranged, Damage 9), Unarmed +11 (Close, Damage 1)

**Defense:** Dodge 12, Parry 12, Fortitude 7, Toughness 6/4\*, Will 9 \*Without Defensive Roll.

**Totals:** Abilities 42 + Powers 30 + Advantages 11 + Skills 23 + Defenses 29 = 135

**Complications:** **Mysterious Past:** Most of Agent Blazer's covert operations are still classified and she won't talk about them, her reasons for leaving government service, or her childhood. **Motivation—Loyalty:** Agent Blazer repays loyalty with service. She pays her debts and as long as Brande treats her well she'll remain a good company girl.



untrained amateurs. Agent Mariner is a very fit man in his late 30s with blonde hair just starting to go gray. His Brande uniform is a black and silver combat wetsuit decorated with a wave pattern that helps with underwater camouflage (optional: +2 circumstance bonus for underwater Stealth rolls).

## AGENT BLAZER

Abigail David is a mutant recruited and trained as an intelligence operative. She served faithfully for five years until a botched mission shook her faith in the chain of command. Joining Brande Management just last year, she became Agent Blazer. In her short time with company she has proven herself an excellent team player and likeable if somewhat secretive and guarded member. Blazer is a beautiful dark-skinned woman with short cropped black hair and dragon tattoo on her back and neck whose origin she refuses to discuss. Her uniform is a skintight combat jumpsuit in black with flame-like striping in red and yellow on the sleeves and pants. She is a remarkably well-trained infiltration expert, marksman, and hand-to-hand fighter.

## BRANDE MANAGEMENT OPERATIVES

Brande Management Operatives are sent to execute and support operations. While none of the operatives except for Agent Blazer have innate powers, they are all highly trained and don't blink when facing superpowered adversaries.

The default assumption is that all of the Brande operative are minions, meaning the primary threat they pose to the heroes is one of superior number, tactics, and equipment. Overcoming individual operatives should not be too diffi-

cult for the heroes, but they should pose a fair challenge as a group, particularly if they utilize team attack maneuvers to overwhelm the heroes' defenses.

## STORMERS

The following stormers are under the Commander's control for most of this adventure, acting as her pawns. You can easily include or swap out other Emerald City stormers from earlier chapters of this adventure, if any are still at-large, or (if you have not yet run earlier chapters) include some of these stormers in those earlier encounters so the heroes are already acquainted with them.

## BLOWFISH

Sergei Ulfson was a shattered man when he was engulfed by the Silver Storm. He'd come to America looking for a better life, but bad decisions and a bad choice of associations left him a shattered, drug and alcohol-addled husk wandering the alleys of Emerald City. With stringy white hair, sunken eyes, and an emaciated, wrinkled face, Sergei looked easily two decades older than his thirty-four years.

When he was engulfed by the Storm, Sergei's first urge was to run. When he did, he felt the need to suck in a large amount of air. His body expanded a bit and he began to float on a smoky gas that he was excreting. Sergei later discovered that not only was this gas dangerous to others, but that he could control it. Sergei also developed prickly spines all over his skin. With his newfound powers, the Blowfish now takes whatever he needs.

Blowfish likes to lull his opponents into a false sense of security. He wears a hooded cloak and exposes most of his face and body, presenting himself as a physical melee combatant. Once a hero closes in, Blowfish releases his lethal gas.

### MARS SECURITY ROBOTS

PL6 • 60 POINTS

**STR** 5 **STA** — **AGL** 1 **DEX** 1 **FGT** 4 **INT** — **AWE** 1 **PRE** —

**Powers** **Armored Shell** (Impervious Protection 6); **Unliving** (Immunity 30 (Fortitude effects)); **Blast** (Ranged Damage 6)

**Skills** Close Combat: Unarmed 3 (+7), Perception 2 (+3), Ranged Combat: Blaster 5 (+6)

**Offense** Initiative +1, Unarmed +7 (Close, Damage 5), Blast +6 (Ranged, Damage 6)

**Defense** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 6, Will Immune

**Totals** Abilities -6 + Powers 54 + Advantages 0 + Skills 5 + Defenses 7 = 60

**Totals:** Abilities 50 + Powers 33 + Advantages 10 + Skills 22 + Defenses 27 = 142

### BRANDE SPECIAL OPS HELICOPTER

62 POINTS

**Size** Huge; **Str** 8, **Speed** 7 (Flight), **Def** 8, **Tou** 12, **Features:** Loudspeaker, Navigation System, Stealth Mode (Concealment 2 (Auditory), Passive), Laser Cannon (Ranged Multiattack Damage 8, AE: Tangle Net (Ranged Cumulative Affliction 8 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immovable), Alternate Resistance (Dodge), Extra Condition, Limited Degree)), Impervious Toughness 12

### BLOWFISH

PL9 • 145 POINTS

**STR** 1 **STA** 4 **AGL** 4 **DEX** 3 **FGT** 2 **INT** 1 **AWE** 2 **PRE** 2

**Powers:** **Gas Burst** (Ranged Cloud Area Damage 9, Alternate Resistance: Fortitude); **Floating** (Flight 5 (60 MPH), Platform); **Spines** (Strength-based Reaction Damage 6); Immunity 1 (Own powers)

**Advantages:** Defensive Roll 6, Improved Critical (Spines), Languages 2 (English, German, Norwegian is native)

**Skills:** Close Combat: Spines 9 (+11), Intimidation 8 (+10), Perception 6 (+8), Stealth 5 (+9)

**Offense:** Initiative +4, Spines +11 (Close, Reaction Damage 7, Crit. 19-20), Gas Burst — (Ranged, Cloud Area Damage 9, Resisted by Fortitude, DC 19)

**Defense:** Dodge 10, Parry 8, Fortitude 8, Toughness 8/2\*, Will 6

\*Without Defensive Roll.

**Totals:** Abilities 38 + Powers 66 + Advantages 7 + Skills 14 + Defenses 22 = 145

**Complications:** **Addiction:** Blowfish is addicted to cocaine and will do anything to get his next fix. **Motivation—Greed:** Blowfish needs money to feed his drug habit and not live in squalor. He will do anything to get the money he needs.

Given his moderate defensive abilities, Blowfish doesn't like to attack heroes directly if he doesn't have to. Instead, he seeks out heroes that are already engaged with an ally and hits them with his gas from surprise. If forced to face a hero one-on-one, Blowfish takes to the air and relies on his gas to take his opponent down.

## DOUGHBOY

Kevin Yost was just an average kid, if by average you meant plain-looking, overweight, and socially awkward. Bullies had a field day with him at school and he came home to his computer and video games every night. He barely made it through community college and afterward landed a job at a call center. Unfortunately for Kevin, the bullying didn't stop after leaving school and his colleagues often shared laughs at his expense.

Things changed when he was touched by the Silver Storm. He managed to make it to the office, thinking he'd escaped any illeffects from the strange storm, but when one of his colleagues called him "doughboy" Kevin extended his arm into the next cubicle and casually snapped his neck. The new villain then took vengeance on a few more of his co-workers before bounding out of the office and into a life of crime.

Doughboy feels invincible in his pliable body and charges straight into combat. He often stretches his arms to engage melee fighters before they can get close enough to hit him. Doughboy loves beating up on heroes and uses his leaping and insubstantial powers to isolate a hero and attack without interference. Because of his nigh-invulnerability, Doughboy panics when a hero is able to injure him.

The only thing that frightens Doughboy is a hero who displays mental powers. He generally assumes that leaner heroes may exhibit them and leaves such heroes to other allies. Doughboy only takes a shot at a mentalist hero if he believes he can incapacitate the hero in one round or if he has no other choice.

## ELECTRON

Mindy Chin was an under-appreciated office manager who'd run out to use the nearby ATM machine when the Silver Storm hit. While chaos reigned around her, Mindy discovered that she could manipulate the machine to give her wads of cash. When a security guard attempted to stop her, Mindy hurled a ball of electricity at him. He died instantly but Mindy was able to use the confusion of the Storm to cover both her crimes.

Dubbing herself Electron, Mindy decided that taking money was easier and more lucrative than earning it. She started with ATMs and graduated to more serious crimes. She uses her ability to speak with computers to break through security walls and make illegal monetary transfers. While quite capable in a fight, Mindy prefers to steal from afar.

Electron prefers to fight from the air, hurling bolts of electricity at her enemies. She targets any hero who relies

## DOUGHBOY

PL9 • 160 POINTS

**STR** 10 **STA** 4 **AGL** 2 **DEX** 2 **FGT** 8 **INT** 0 **AWE** 2 **PRE** 0

**Powers** Elongation 2 (30 feet); Immunity 40 (Toughness effects, Limited to Physical effects); Insubstantial 1 (Fluid); Leaping 4 (120 feet); Movement 3 (Safe Fall, Sure-Footed, Swinging); Protection 5

**Advantages:** Diehard, Improved Disarm, Improved Grab, Improved Hold, Improved Smash, Improved Trip, Instant Up, Power Attack, Prone Fighting, Weapon Bind, Weapon Break

**Skills:** Acrobatics 10 (+12), Athletics 3 (+13), Intimidation 10 (+10), Perception 6 (+8), Stealth 7 (+9)

**Offense:** Initiative +2, Unarmed +8 (Close, Damage 10)

**Defense:** Dodge 6, Parry 8, Fortitude 10, Toughness Immune/9\*, Will 5 \*Immune to Physical effects, 9 Toughness vs. Energy effects.

**Totals:** Abilities 56 + Powers 62 + Advantages 11 + Skills 18 + Defenses 13 = 160

**Complications:** **Motivation—Thrills:** Doughboy enjoys his new powers and loves mixing it up with others. **Temper:** In spite of his powerful new form, Doughboy is still very sensitive to fat jokes and attacks anyone who taunts him.

## ELECTRON

PL9 • 152 POINTS

**STR** 0 **STA** 2 **AGL** 4 **DEX** 4 **FGT** 2 **INT** 1 **AWE** 2 **PRE** 2

**Powers:** **Arc Riding** (Flight 5 (60 MPH)); **Electric Sheath** (Reaction Damage 4); **Electric Field** (Sustained Impervious Protection 7); **Electrical Control** (Array (20 points), **Electrical Blast** (Ranged Damage 10); **AE: Electrical Pulse** (Burst Area Nullify Electronics 5, Broad, Simultaneous )); **Electrical Resistance** (Immunity 10 (Electricity effects)); **Interface** (Comprehend 2 (Machines/Electronics))

**Advantages:** Evasion, Improved Initiative, Languages (Chinese (Mandarin), English is native), Skill Mastery (Technology), Ultimate Effort (Technology)

**Skills:** Acrobatics 4 (+8), Close Combat: Electric Sheath 6 (+8), Deception 4 (+6), Insight 4 (+6), Perception 4 (+6), Persuasion 6 (+8), Ranged Combat: Electrical Blast 4 (+8), Technology 9 (+10)

**Offense:** Initiative +8, Electric Sheath +8 (Close, Reaction Damage 4), Electrical Control +8 (Ranged, Damage 10)

**Defense:** Dodge 9, Parry 6, Fortitude 6, Toughness 9, Will 6

**Totals:** Abilities 34 + Powers 75 + Advantages 5 + Skills 21 + Defenses 17 = 152

**Complications:** **Motivation—Greed:** Electron always wanted to rich and successful. With her new powers, she can have everything her former bosses denied her and more. **Killer:** Electron is not squeamish about electrocuting people and often kills when incapacitation would do.

on technology, using her Electrical Pulse to damage battlesuits or devices. She often uses her environment to occupy the heroes. If, for example, she can draw a hero into a busy intersection, she turns off the traffic lights or shuts down the electronics in passing vehicles to create havoc.

## JUSTICAR

Cody Reese is a young man who works in the forensics lab of the Emerald City Police Department. While an excellent analyst, Cody is rather shy and introverted. He is also increasingly fed up with finding airtight evidence, only to

## JUSTICAR

PL9 • 169 POINTS

STR 8 STA 4 AGL 3 DEX 4 FGT 7 INT 2 AWE 4 PRE 3

**Powers:** **Aura of Fear** (Cone Area Selective Affliction 9 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Immobile, Incapacitated))**Equipment:** Bulletproof Vest (Protection 4), Camo Clothing (Stealth +5 in urban environment), Smartphone, Gas Mask, Handcuffs, Two Heavy Pistols (Ranged Damage 4), Multi-tool, Night Vision Goggles, Toolkit**VEHICLE: JUSTI-CAR • 13 POINTS****Size:** Large; **Str** 5, **Speed** 6, **Def** 8, **Tou** 8, **Features:** Alarm 3 (DC 30), Navigation System**Advantages:** Close Attack 3, Daze (Intimidation), Defensive Roll, Equipment 8, Fascinate (Intimidation), Fearless, Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Aim, Improved Critical (Heavy Pistol), Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Ranged Attack 5, Takedown, Well-informed**Skills:** Acrobatics 7 (+10), Athletics 2 (+10), Deception 3 (+6), Expertise: Criminology 6 (+8), Insight 2 (+6), Intimidation 7 (+10), Investigation 10 (+12), Perception 6 (+10), Persuasion 7 (+10), Ranged Combat: Guns 3 (+7), Stealth 5 (+8), Technology 6 (+8), Vehicles 2 (+6)**Offense:** Initiative +7, Unarmed +10 (Close, Damage 8), Heavy Pistol +12 (Ranged, Damage 4, Crit. 19-20)**Defense:** Dodge 7, Parry 9, Fortitude 6, Toughness 9/8\*, Will 8 \*Without Defensive Roll.**Totals:** Abilities 70 + Powers 27 + Advantages 27 + Skills 33 + Defenses 12 = 169**Complications:** **Motivation—Justice:** Justicar wants to instill justice where the government has failed. **Black and White Morality:** Justicar sees things in black and white. His hard-line view of right and wrong makes him difficult to reason with.

see criminals go free on plea deals. The few times Cody spoke up he was dismissed as being too idealistic.

Everything changed when Cody was affected by the Silver Storm. Somehow, the nanites tapped into his inner desires. Overnight the nanites gave him the physique of a bodybuilder and the ability to make people fear him with a thought. He decided that, if the justice system failed to protect the city, he would. Cody now moonlights as “the Justicar,” a pulp-inspired hero with a gothic veneer. He wears a black hat and leather trenchcoat as well as white face paint highlighted by black lipstick and eye makeup. He strikes terror in his enemies and, when that doesn’t work, settles for using his fists or his twin .44 Desert Eagles.

## PERSEPHONE

While Rachel Cross possessed a good heart and a desire to help others, she was her own worst enemy. She was always shy and never had any confidence in herself. Whereas she could have been an excellent doctor, lawyer, or politician, Rachel settled for entry-level work in a local museum.

Rachel was sharing a meal with her co-workers when the Silver Storm hit. It left her dazed and confused, so much so she wandered off without another thought. She gathered her wits about her a few minutes later, just in time to see some kind of monster rushing towards her—only

## PERSEPHONE

PL10 • 122 POINTS

STR 0 STA 2 AGL 3 DEX 3 FGT 2 INT 2 AWE 3 PRE 0

**Powers:** **Nullifying Aura** (Burst Area Continuous Nullify Mutations 8, Broad, Simultaneous, Resisted by Fortitude) Linked to Burst Area Continuous Weaken Stamina 8 (Resisted by Fortitude); **Power Nullifying Field** (Impervious Protection 10, Limited—Only vs. Opponents with Mutant Powers)**Advantages:** Attractive**Skills:** Deception 5 (+5), Insight 4 (+7), Perception 3 (+6), Stealth 4 (+7)**Offense:** Initiative +3, Unarmed +2 (Close, Damage 0), Nullifying Aura — (Close Burst Area Nullify Mutations 8 Linked to Close Burst Area Weaken Stamina 8, both Fortitude DC 18)**Defense:** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude 9, Toughness 12/2\*, Will 9 \*When attacked by non-mutants.**Totals:** Abilities 30 + Powers 106 + Advantages 1 + Skills 8 + Defenses 20 = 165**Complications:** **Motivation—Normalcy:** Persephone does her best to ignore her powers, only using them when absolutely necessary. **Lack of Confidence:** Persephone always underestimates herself and feels that any success she has is due to her attractiveness rather than her ability.

to turn into a scrawny young man when he came close to her. Rachel saw he was also gasping for breath and realized in that moment that she was the cause; her power not only nullified other powers, but it also interfered with life functions. Rachel couldn’t figure out a really effective way to use her powers, so she decided she would only use them in dire circumstances. Nothing had changed really, she still wanted a normal life.

Persephone likes to downplay abilities to the point that she doesn’t wear a costume. She dresses stylishly but in a manner that lets her blend into a crowd. When working with other villains she may even pretend to be a victim. This deception is merely to allow an unsuspecting hero to get close so she can hit them with her Nullify power. She usually teams up with more physically intimidating villains and relies on them for protection.

## PRECIOUS

As far as anyone can tell, including Precious, she was an average mixed breed housecat before the Silver Storm. She doesn’t really remember anything before the Storm “woke her up,” just flashes of memories. It’s possible she was some kind of feline mutant and this somehow confused the nanites into affecting her... or maybe she used to be a human and was turned into a cat by the Silver Storm—a thought that repulses her. Whatever the reason, Precious became an intelligent cat with psychic powers.

Ironically, in spite of her new intelligence and abilities, Precious strives to be nothing more than a cat. She uses her powers to make life a little easier, but that’s about it. She lives with a family that “owns” her, but Precious has not revealed her secret to them (she has, however, mind controlled them on occasion). She still spends most of her days sleeping. Still, she enjoys playing with her powers while hidden in back alleys or on rooftops. Precious knows that, in spite of her mental prowess, she is a fragile animal



## PRECIOUS

PL9 • 136 POINTS

STR -2\* STA 2 AGL 4 DEX 4 FGT 2 INT 2 AWE 4 PRE 0

**Powers:** **Cat** (Shrinking 8, Permanent, Innate; Movement 2 (Safe Fall, Sure-footed); Mental Powers (Array (32 points), **Mind Control** (Perception Range Cumulative Affliction 8 (Resisted by Will; Entranced, Compelled, Controlled), **AE: Mental Blast** (Perception Range Damage 8, Resisted by Will), **AE: Mind Probe** (Cumulative Mind Reading 10), **AE: Telekinesis** (Damaging Move Object 10)); **Mind Sense** (Senses 1 (Mental Awareness)); **Telekinetic Field** (Sustained Impervious Protection 8); **Telekinetic Flight** (Flight 6 (120 MPH))

**Advantages:** Evasion, Hide in Plain Sight, Instant Up

**Skills:** Acrobatics 4 (+8), Athletics 2 (+0), Close Combat: Unarmed 4 (+6), Intimidate 0 (-4), Perception 4 (+8), Ranged Combat: Telekinesis 4 (+8), Stealth 2 (+14\*)

**Offense:** Initiative +4, Unarmed +6 (Close, Damage -2), Telekinesis +8 (Ranged, Damage 10), Mental Blast — (Perception Range, Damage 8, Resisted by Will)

**Defense:** Dodge 8\*, Parry 6\*, Fortitude 5, Toughness 10, Will 11  
\*Includes Shrinking Modifiers.

**Totals:** Abilities 36 + Powers 77 + Advantages 3 + Skills 10 + Defenses 10 = 136

**Complications:** **Motivation—Thrills:** Precious enjoys inflicting her powers on others, treating humans as pets for a change. **Lazy:** Precious spends most of her time sleeping and its difficult for her to get motivated to do anything beyond the bare minimum for survival.

and doesn't want to open herself to attack by curious researchers or worse.

Precious is a sneaky villain. No one suspects a cat unless the cat teams up with a magically-themed villain like the Silver Sorcerer, so Precious usually finds herself a good place to perch and then uses her mental powers with abandon. She sometimes stands near an innocent bystander or even a villain to make it appear that it is they, not her, who is using Precious' powers. Once she is discovered Precious becomes a fierce opponent, hissing at a hero as she launches mental attacks and telekinetic bolts.

## SILVER SORCERER

Dante Marcel was a young street magician that specialized in hustling and prestidigitation. He entertained pedestrians walking from the bus stops to the skyscrapers. His life changed when the Silver Storm washed over him and Dante discovered that he could create objects out of thin air and transform existing objects into other matter.

## SILVER SORCERER

PL9 • 142 POINTS

STR 2\* STA 3 AGL 4 DEX 5 FGT 2 INT 2 AWE 4 PRE 5

**Powers:** **Flight** 6 (120 MPH); **Magical Shield** (Sustained Impervious Protection 9); **Magical Spells** (Array (20 points), **Transforming Touch** (Transform 4, Anything to Anything), **AE: Conjunction** (Create 9), **AE: Magic Blast** (Ranged Damage 9))

**Equipment:** Sword (Strength-based Damage 3, Improved Critical)

**Advantages:** Equipment, Fascinate (Deception), Fascinate (Persuasion)

**Skills:** Acrobatics 2 (+6), Close Combat: Sword 8 (+10), Deception 3 (+8), Insight 2 (+6), Intimidation 1 (+6), Perception 4 (+8), Persuasion 4 (+9), Ranged Combat: Magic Blast 4 (+9), Sleight of Hand 6 (+11), Stealth 2 (+6)

**Offense:** Initiative +4, Sword +10 (Close, Damage 5, Crit. 19-20), Blast +9 (Ranged, Damage 9)

**Defense:** Dodge 6, Parry 6, Fortitude 6, Toughness 12, Will 10

**Totals:** Abilities 54 + Powers 52 + Advantages 3 + Skills 18 + Defenses 15 = 142

**Complications:** **Motivation—Greed:** The Silver Sorcerer enjoys the finer things in life and uses his "magic" to acquire them. **Delusional:** The Silver Sorcerer believes that his powers are magical in origin and passionately resists any suggestion otherwise.

At first, Dante used his new powers to enhance his street performing, but he couldn't resist using them to make himself richer, first by shaking down the local thugs that had been fleecing him for protection money and then by lightening the load of white collar workers that had always snubbed him before on their way to work. When the police started closing in Dante designed a new costume and he now styles himself the "Silver Sorcerer."

Silver Sorcerer enjoys making flashing grand entrances and using his Transform power to neutralize any devices or armor that a hero may have. Failing that, he creates a box around a flying hero or causes his costume to dissolve (modesty aside, this could be a big complication (worth a hero point) for a hero with a secret identity). As a well-rounded villain, Silver Sorcerer isn't afraid to go toe-to-toe with a hero.

Silver Sorcerer's main weakness on his insistence that he is a magician. He takes any suggestion to the contrary as a great insult and tries to prove that he's a magician. This works to the heroes' advantage as Silver Sorcerer stops pressing an attack in order to convert concrete to glass or some other display of "magical" prowess. He'd be very angry to learn his powers come from a technological source.



# EMERALD CITY KNIGHTS - CHAPTER 5: RISE OF THE MASTERMINDS

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