

You're from the future, and you know how things turn out. You came back with a mission - to make sure that history changes for the better.

But things are scrambled. Your memories, not quite right. You're not sure how this present becomes your future. So until you can figure it out, you might as well do what good you can, where you can, all the while trying to connect the dots between your world and this one.



# THE HARBINGER

HERO NAME

REAL NAME (IF APPLICABLE)

## LOOK

- ambiguous, man, shifting, transgressing, woman
- Asian or South Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, White
- haunted face, optimistic face, ordinary face, “hyper-evolved human” face
- streamlined clothing, “fashion-forward” clothing, simple clothing, casual clothing
- high-tech costume, impossible costume, sleek costume, dramatic costume

## ABILITIES

You're from the future, and that has its benefits, like future knowledge (even though your memories are scrambled). Plus, your powers may have had something to do with how you got back to the past—er, the present day, that is. “Now,” as the locals call it. Choose one option from the list below.

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> super speed       | <input type="checkbox"/> telepathy & telekinesis | <input type="checkbox"/> futuristic gadgets & implants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> optimized biology | <input type="checkbox"/> teleportation & portals | <input type="checkbox"/> energy absorption/redirection |



## **/LABELS**

(at character creation, add +1 wherever you choose)

DANGER	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
FREAK	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
SAVIOR	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
SUPERIOR	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
MUNDANE	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

## **/CONDITIONS**

- ☐ **Afraid** (-2 to directly engage a threat)
- ☐ **Angry** (-2 to comfort or support or pierce the mask)
- ☐ **Guilty** (-2 to provoke someone or assess the situation)
- ☐ **Hopeless** (-2 to unleash your powers)
- ☐ **Insecure** (-2 to defend someone or reject others' influence)

## **/BACKSTORY**

- How did you travel from the future to the present day?
- What keeps you from returning to the future?
- Why are your memories and knowledge of the future scrambled?
- What is the most important part of your future that you want to avert?
- Why must you join this team specifically to achieve your mission's goals?

Once you've finished your backstory, introduce your character to the other players, and then determine what happened when your team first came together, the relationships between you and your teammates, and who has Influence over you.

## **/WHEN OUR TEAM FIRST CAME TOGETHER...**

We averted a disaster from the future's history books. What was the disaster? What effect do we hope it had on the timeline?

## **/RELATIONSHIPS**

\_\_\_\_\_ turns away from the hero's path, according to your history books. You have to prevent that from happening.

You've always idolized \_\_\_\_\_, but it's too awkward to admit it to them now that you've met them in real life. Keep it cool, keep it cool.

## **/INFLUENCE**

Every member of your team has the power to change the future—your future. Give everyone influence over you.



# HARBINGER MOVES

(Choose two)

- ☐ **Stick to the mission:** When you **defend someone** or something critically important to the future (tell us why), you may mark a condition to shift down one Label and shift up Savior before the roll. If you do, you cannot choose the option ‘clear a condition’ for the **defend** move.
- ☐ **Tomorrow’s golden promise:** When you **comfort or support someone** with tales of what you think their future will be, you may roll + Savior instead of + Mundane. Mark a condition unless you are confident the stories are true.
- ☐ **Applied history:** When you **pierce the mask** of someone you believe will shape the future, roll + Savior instead of + Mundane.
- ☐ **You haven’t learned you can do that yet:** When you tell a teammate about a new, never-before-performed trick that they’ve never considered, spend a Team from the pool to allow them to **unleash their powers, directly engage a threat, or defend someone** using your Superior as if it was their Label. Any costs or complications from their move affect you, as well.
- ☐ **I learned the solution in grade school:** When you **unleash your powers** to extend your senses or overcome an intellectual obstacle, you may roll + Superior instead of + Freak.
- ☐ **21st century studies:** When you **assess the situation**, you may always ask “what does the future know about this moment?”, even on a miss. You take +1 ongoing to act on the answers.

# CONNECTING THE DOTS

You’re from the future, but your knowledge of the past is spotty, intermittent, confused, jumbled. You’re doing your best to put together the clues and your broken memories, though, so you can figure out how this world and its people become the ones you know.

**When you push yourself to remember the version of someone that exists in your future**, mark a condition and roll + Memories. On a hit, you connect who they are now to who they are in the future; choose the role that they fulfill in the future, and the GM will tell you about their future self. On a 10+, ask a follow-up question. On a miss, they’re not at all who you thought they would be; the GM will choose their role, or tell you that as far as you know, they don’t exist in the future.

Monster: _____	Martyr: _____
Traitor: _____	Architect: _____
Corruptor: _____	Leader: _____

Your Memories score starts at -1, and goes up by 1 (to a maximum of +3) for each name above.

**When you write a name above**, they gain Influence over you if they did not already have it.

**At the start of each session or when time passes**, roll + Savior to find out how your investigations into the timeline have been going. On a hit, choose one figure noted above or one aspect of the future world you can remember. You’ve found a lead to follow to learn more about how the present version of that figure or aspect became the future version. On a 10+, the lead is particularly strong; right now, you can ask the GM one question about the figure or aspect, and they will answer honestly. On a miss, you’re lost in the present; the GM will tell you how things are so different here, and shift your Labels according to how it makes you feel.



## MOMENT OF TRUTH

Everything you do could affect the future. For all you know, saving that one guy means that now the future is full of pterodactyls. The ripples are always so hard to track, and you're not sure if you've helped or hurt—not really. Until now. In this moment, it's all clear. You can see the course of events laid out before you like a river, and you know exactly what you have to do to ensure the future outcome you want. Of course, after this, you've changed enough of the timeline to invalidate your prior research—reset all the names in your “Connecting the dots” section.

## TEAM MOVES

When you **confess to a teammate the difference between what you thought they would be and what they really are**, add a Team to the pool, and ask them if you represent a future they'd want. If they say yes, mark potential. If they say no, mark a condition.

When you **share a tale of future loss with someone**, ask them if they think you have the ability to avert that loss. If they believe you do, mark potential and give them Influence over you. If they don't, mark Guilty and shift one Label up and one Label down (your choice). If Guilty is already marked mark another condition, GM's choice.

## POTENTIAL



Every time you roll a miss on a move, mark potential.

## ADVANCEMENT

When you fill your potential track, you advance. Choose from the list below.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take another move from your playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Rearrange your Labels as you choose, and add +1 to a Label      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take another move from your playbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Unlock your Moment of Truth                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook    | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone permanently loses Influence over you; add +1 to a Label |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a move from another playbook    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rearrange your Labels as you choose, and add +1 to a Label      |

When you've taken five advances from the top list, you can take advances from the list below.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unlock your Moment of Truth after you've used it once | <input type="checkbox"/> Lock a Label and add +1 to a Label of your choice   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change playbooks                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Return to the future and accept its new form, or jump to a different point in the past to begin your mission anew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take an adult move                                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take an adult move                                    |  |

## OTHER MOVES



# THE HARBINGER

## PLAYING THE HARBINGER

Fixated, skeptical, searching, damaged. The Harbinger is from the future, and has come back in time to change that future—but the transition has scrambled their memories and their knowledge. Now they have to try to piece together what they came here to fix by remembering who in the present became what in the future.

The Harbinger makes time travel an important element of the game—but does not actually travel through time during the game. They're not bopping around, and are in fact stuck in this time period. Only their memories will let them get some insight on what is coming. For that reason, "Connecting the dots" is crucial for the Harbinger. You need to fill in a few names in that area of your playbook to have some people to investigate, so go for it immediately, even though you're rolling at a -1. If you find an NPC you think is interesting, then connect the dots on them!

Your primary tension is that of the young person driven to make the world better, but not entirely sure how to do it. Most of the other PCs want to do good and make the world better, but they either take situations as they happen, or they have guidance from an external force. The Harbinger, however, can actually begin to fill in a picture of what is going to happen, and then take steps to circumvent that outcome. So be proactive! Pursue your attempt to change the future, especially when it conflicts with more immediate threats or goals!

## NOTES ON YOUR MOVES AND EXTRAS

For **Stick to the mission**, whether or not someone is "critically important to the future" is in some ways down to your character's beliefs more than any statement of fact. But you must be able to explain why it is that you think the character in question is critically important. The same idea applies to **Applied history**.

For **You haven't learned you can do that yet**, you are telling your teammate about something you've seen or heard them do in the future. Have fun with it! Come up with crazy maneuvers. But you share in the costs and complications of the moves, including marking conditions or being affected by Influence.

For **21st century studies**, you can always ask what the future knows about this moment, but the answer might very well be "Nothing." You can still take a +1 ongoing to act on such an answer if you can make it relevant to your actions.

When you push yourself to remember for **Connecting the dots**, the roles are fairly open to interpretation. But once a name is filled in, you can't erase it (except for the Moment of Truth). For the start of session move, on a hit, you have a lead to follow, while on a 10+, you get some information immediately.

When you use your Moment of Truth, clear all the names in the **Connecting the dots** section—allowing you to start remembering a new future.



## INSPIRATIONS FOR THE HARBINGER

Bishop, **X-MEN**

Deathlok, **ASTONISHING TALES**

Iron Lad, **YOUNG AVENGERS**

Booster Gold, **JUSTICE LEAGUE**

Impulse, **YOUNG JUSTICE**

Rachel Summers, **X-MEN**

## GM ADVICE

- Center a plot around their “remembered” characters
- Undermine what they think they know
- Reveal clear future paths
- Evoke the pleasures of the present
- Show the timeline ripples of their actions

The Harbinger makes “the future” a tangible thing in your game. As GM, you are responsible for juggling the idea of causality changes, predestination paradoxes, and multiple timelines. Essentially, you must account for the time-travel nonsense the Harbinger brings to the game so as to amp up the drama and difficult choices. They’re not in charge of making sure the timelines make sense (or at least, comic-book sense); you are, and your goal in doing so is to ensure the different timelines and ripple effects and future selves contribute to interesting and cool stories without being too confusing.

This playbook needs major figures who play roles in both the present and the future to function, and its **Connect the dots** section is designed to foster just that. The player is responsible for trying to fill those names in by triggering the attached move. When a player does trigger the move, they’re signaling that they are interested in this character, so keep that in mind when deciding your portion of the move. Deciding on a miss that the future has no record of the character could write them off in some cases...but it could raise interesting questions in others. Why wouldn’t the future have any records of Champion, one of the greatest heroes of Halcyon City?

Because of the way that move works, at the beginning of the game, you are most likely to have significant say over the role those characters play in the future. As time goes on, the player will have more and more say, but fewer and fewer roles to choose from along with a clearer picture of the future. But ultimate responsibility for making sure that everything fits together into a coherent picture of the future lies with you. And for the most part, all the choices and the information you reveal need to build on each other—until the Harbinger uses their Moment of Truth, and resets everything.