GODLIKE

SUPERHERO ROLEPLAYING IN A WORLD ON FIRE, 1936-1946

Created by Dennis Detwiller
Game Mechanics by Greg Stolze

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"Godlike in their abilities, let us hope this new breed of man will carry the burden of a suffering world to our ultimate and unwavering goal—freedom for all the people of the Earth."

—From President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Godlike Address," November 10, 1941

Created by Dennis Detwiller • Game Mechanics by Greg Stolze

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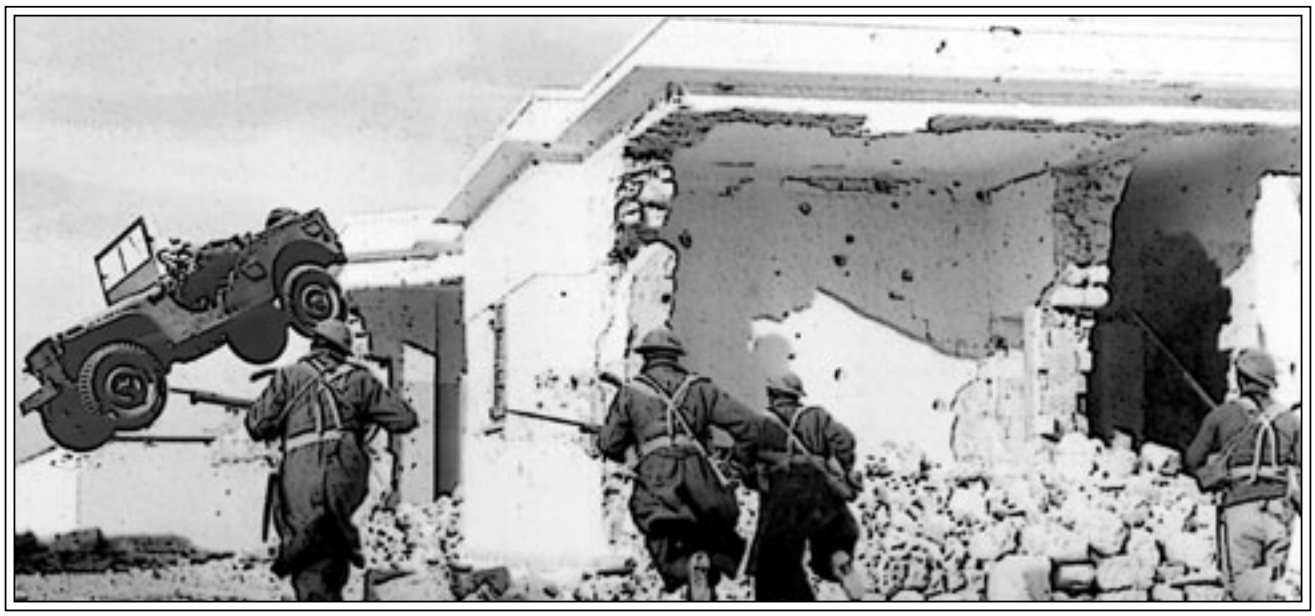
This book is dedicated to my grandfathers, who fought in the Pacific.
—Dennis Detwiller, 2001



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PART ONE

Introduction

WELL, YOU WERE THERE. You know what it looked like. It's great, you know. There's nothing like it. Well, almost nothing. I mean, you send me, kid . . . but you're not here now. God, I wish it could be different. I don't know. That day in the park near the Egyptian Needle? I think about that day all the time now. I think about what we said there.

I do, you know. Love you, I mean. That hasn't changed. Do you love me still? If you do, just say it and I'll know. Just say it now, once, if you feel it.

I need you now, Ellie.

Now I'm getting ready for something big that I can't talk about, and I'm just plain scared. We all are. All the Section Two guys are green. We go first. Wherever. Whenever. They need us, honey. They can't do the things we can do. We have to try. When I do, I'll think of you. I'll think of our life before. I'll think of America.

Why the hell did this have to happen now?

The war, it ate all of us up, everything, all our plans. Do you still remember what it was like before all this? Before the war and before...

Before I could do it?

I do.

I would give it up, you know. For you. For just being able to know I'm going to die as some old man in a bed somewhere, someday. But mostly just for you, and for a house—and maybe some kids? Maybe it's still in the future. Who knows? I mean, look what I can do now. I mean, God, back in thirty-five who would have thought it? In thirty-five, if I told my pop that some Kraut would fly like a bird in a year, I'd be chewing on some Lifebuoy.

Who would have ever thought I'd be doing something like that, too?

I'm getting real good at it now. The training helped. Remember how I couldn't control it? How it would go on or off at random? Remember how I fell that time and broke my wrist? Now I'm solid as a rock. No problems there. Like a goddamn bird.

It still makes me smile to think of the last night on leave before I embarked, the night I brought you the flowers at the penthouse, and the look on your mom's face when I just dropped in from out of the summer air.

I think about home a lot.

I think about you a lot.

Pray for me, Ellie. We go soon, and we go first and I don't think a lot of us are coming back.

Pray for us.

Pray.

—Fragments of a letter recovered on Omaha Beach after the attack by the First Talent Assault Group, June 6, 1944.

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> "Godlike in their abilities, let us hope this new breed of man will carry the burden of a suffering world to our ultimate and unwavering goal—freedom for all the people of the Earth."
>
> —President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Godlike Address," November 10, 1941

Welcome to *Godlike*

Welcome to the dawn of the Super-Age. In 1936, people begin manifesting strange powers that set them apart from the rest of humanity. These so-called paranormal "Talents" allow a chosen few to do the impossible. No one really knows why. With these powers, man first took to the air without mechanical aid, explored the depths of the sea naked without life support and touched the rim of space. To these Talents, reality is something to be shaped and molded by the power of the mind alone. Most, however, can warp reality only in small, consistent ways—each power as unique as their own personality.

In 1939, with Hitler's blitzkrieg of Poland, the war in Europe began. These few people, whose numbers are ever growing, stand poised to battle each other to the death: for their country, for their loved ones, and for the power they hope to control.

To the rank and file of humanity, these chosen few seem godlike in their capabilities. Only the Talents know the secret. The secret is this: The power that you have found by chance seems pale and pointless in the face of death. When the shells are raining down, it is just as easy to die in the air as on the ground, or in the ocean . . . but unlike others, you die alone. Separated from your comrades by a power you didn't ask for, and sometimes don't believe you deserve. To face death and not turn away is just as hard for a man who can lift a tank as it is for a normal Joe. Few realize that with new power comes a new fear, a fear beyond the common foot soldier. The fear of inadequacy despite ability, the fear of cowardice despite power, the fear of failure despite the possibility of victory. Few know the way your family, friends and enemies look at you when you do the impossible. Few understand how the power sets you apart, how it makes you more and yet somehow less. How there is so much more pain in failure in a Talent's world without limits.

This is the secret: These fears, like the power that feeds them, are godlike in their scope.

Introduction

This is Dennis Detwiller. *Godlike* is the result of a question I've been asking myself since I read my first comic book:

What would a world with super-humans *really* be like?

The more I imagined it, the more I came to believe it wouldn't be that different from our own world. The four-color world where super-humans walk supreme seems rather foolish to me, as does the world where they are hunted as freaks. The truth would probably be somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. Super-humans would be admired and feared, but their impact would not be so great as to change things altogether. They would simply be another development in history, like some type of beneficial disease. Eventually they'd become commonplace, just like things that made an initially dramatic impact on the world and then faded into the public consciousness, like the car, the television or the personal computer. Sometimes they would make world history, but they would never *control* world history . . .

Godlike is the beginning of the answer to that question. We explore it further in a game called *Wild Talents*.

This book was written in a very specific manner, to avoid pitfalls found in too many gaming books: metaplots and highly stylized text. Metaplots frankly sicken me. The idea of selling a single idea but spreading it across a dozen different books is just plain wrong. It either means the publisher is too lazy or too bent on profit to make a *comprehensive* book. They might sell books in the long run, but they also upset their customers. I mean, who wouldn't rather have all the necessary information in one place? To avoid the "splatbook syndrome," I did my best to squeeze as much in to this one book as possible. There are supplements, but you'll never find yourself forced to buy additional books just to play the game you already bought.

Stylized writing is also a serious issue in gaming. Writing in a style that reflects the mood or time period of the game was interesting years ago, but (on me at least) it has worn thin. Game books filled with pages upon pages of gaming fiction, or unclear writing styles and obscure slang inserted in otherwise straightforward text, seems an easy way to distract the reader. This was not what I was looking for when I set out to write *Godlike*. You won't find it here.

Godlike is an attempt to fill a gap in the genre of superhero role-playing. Most superhero games try to embrace the total scope of comic book culture at once, while refusing to impose inherent limits and order on character power levels. *Godlike* is an attempt to instill a "control" in the central premise of the background itself, which limits a character's impact on the world, but not their background or power levels. You can play any type of super in *Godlike*—a mage, a gadgeteer, a bruiser, an alien—you name it, it's in here. But unlike many games, there's a reason it's in here.

Godlike is an attempt to marry a solid system with a coherent and interesting setting that's loads of fun to play in. I hope you have as much fun reading and playing the game as I did writing it.

Godlike was developed with Pagan Publishing. When John Tynes asked me to produce Pagan Publishing's first role-playing game, needless to say, I didn't take the request lightly. John and Pagan had been a hallmark in the role-playing industry for years. *Godlike* represents more than five years of writing, art and game design, so I hope it lives up to the Pagan Publishing logo.

My very special thanks go out to John Tynes, Scott Glancy and the other Pagans for their help. I also owe a ton to Greg Stolze, game designer extraordinaire, the genius responsible for the game mechanics in this book. Mike Daisey was an invaluable sounding board for ideas, and brought several damn good ideas to the table himself (including the title). Thanks, Mike! Aron Anderson and the boys at his

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wonderful comic store *The Dreaming* are to be thanked for letting us use them as guinea pigs during the early stages of *Godlike* playtesting. Aron and Hsin should also get a hand for forming Hobgoblynn Press, *Godlike's* first publisher, to bring it all home. I'm sure there are other people I'm forgetting, but so it goes.

Now, I'll turn the floor over to my esteemed colleague Greg Stolze, who has a few words to say about the *Godlike* game mechanics.

Game Design Blather

Greg here. If you're interested in how games are designed, you might be interested in this aside. Otherwise, skip it.

First things first: These mechanics are not wildly new. The "stat+skill" dice pool has been around for ages—at least, ages as measured in game design. When Dennis asked me to come up with some mechanics, my goals were to make a good, interesting system that had some detail where needed, and that faded into the background the rest of the time. I saw no point in reinventing the wheel, especially since Dennis' setting is supposed to be the centerpiece of *Godlike*.

I felt that the rules for a World War II superhero game should be fast and efficient. I wanted to kill off the initiative roll and the damage roll, paring combat down to a single toss of the dice without sacrificing detail or player options. The damage system is pretty detailed because getting badly hurt is a large part of what war is all about. The skills are a little sketchy because, in a total war, the details of your ability to sing a song or fix a radio doesn't have as much dramatic weight.

To pay my dues, I'd like to thank Jonathan Tweet, who introduced me to game design. The system for evaluating funky powers owes a large debt to his superb and tragically underrated game *Everway*. (I'm sure he's delighted to see his work live on in my writing.) I'm also grateful to the huge crew at White Wolf, whose *World of Darkness* games charted a course through the dice pool minefield. (The Will mechanic may look somewhat familiar if you've played *Hunter: The Reckoning*.)

What is a Role-Playing Game?

As strange as it seems to experienced role-players, some people (even people who have purchased this role-playing book) might not be familiar with the concept of role-playing. This section is provided for their convenience. For those of you who know already, this is all just dead space. Pretend a pretty picture is here instead. . . .

A role-playing game is a cooperative storytelling game where the players take the role of "characters" that act and interact within a fictional adventure, devised and run by the Game Moderator. The GM is responsible for the consistency of the story the Player Characters (PCs) navigate through, and for the actions of other characters the PCs interact with in the game. Each Player portrays their one character, and the GM portrays everyone else. These other characters played by the GM are called Non-Player Characters (NPCs). Obviously, this places a large amount of responsibility on the GM's shoulders. The enemy agent, the character's mother, and the President of the United States, each would be played (when necessary) by the GM, while the player is only responsible for a single personality, and a lot less trouble.

The role-playing game, by nature, is rather fluid. Unlike other games, it rarely involves tedious markings and movements of pieces on a board (although this is sometimes necessary). It's much more abstract. Usually, the GM describes the situation in the adventure to the Players, explaining what the PCs see and hear. The Players tell the GM what their characters wish to do. Sometimes interaction between the PCs and the GM are resolved simply by talking; the GM decides something will happen, and it happens. Often, such decisions are made when the outcome of such an event is not in doubt (for example, a character wants to open a door, so the GM decides he does so).

However, when an outcome is in doubt, such as when a PC is attacked by an NPC, or a PC wishes to complete a difficult task, the GM may ask the player to roll dice and consult the statistics of his or her character. This adds a level of excitement and uncertainty to the game. These statistics assign a numerical value to how well a character can do something, like lifting a weight, hitting someone in the jaw or shooting a gun. A successful roll made on a statistic indicates success in that particular action in the adventure and the GM continues the story accordingly. Many such rolls may be made over the course of a single adventure.

Sometimes the PCs will try to resolve some linear "mission" within an adventure, but sometimes (unlike other games) there is no absolute goal. Like real life, the PCs act and react just like normal people, in a world of the GM's creation. Well-played PCs should be like real people, with wants, hopes, dreams and fears. Sometimes there is a short-term goal for them to accomplish, like there is in life: completing a class, delivering the newspapers, or blowing up the enemy stronghold. Ongoing role-playing games are often composed of dozens of adventures linked together to form a campaign. Campaigns cover months or even years in story time, and follow the paths of the PCs as they grow and develop.

Sometimes, however, an adventure is a one-time thing. The GM prepares and presents an adventure for the PCs that runs its course in a single night, or in a short period of time.

That, in a nutshell, is role-playing.

What You Need to Play *Godlike*

Little is needed to play *Godlike* besides the main rulebook. The most important thing is an adequate supply of ten-sided dice. While you *can* play *Godlike* with as little as one ten-sided die (and a good memory!), it's recommended that at least 20 ten-sided dice be used. This will allow (in most situations) several players to roll at once to determine the outcome of random events.

Scratch paper and pencils are also important for keeping notes, drawing maps or drawing pictures.

Players will need a photocopy of the *Godlike* character sheet provided in the back of the book (on p. 353), where they will maintain the statistics, powers and possessions of their individual character. The GM will need any information, maps or statistics he has prepared for the adventure at hand as well.

Most importantly, the players need their imaginations.

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Things You Don't Need But Which Couldn't Hurt . . .

World War II is a very complex subject. Many people know next to nothing about it except "we fought the Nazis and we won." While it is by no means necessary to know all about the war before running an adventure with *Godlike*, I recommend looking into the subject more deeply. An outline of the war (slightly altered with the actions of Allied and Axis Talents) is provided in this book in **Part Five: Background**, but much more accessible and comprehensive books exist on the subject. Four reference books spring to mind immediately:

World War II, The Encyclopedia of the War Years 1941–1945, by Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen. Random House Inc. ISBN 0-679-77039-9.
World War II, Day by Day, by Anthony Shaw. MBI Publishing Company. ISBN 0-7603-0939-6.
The Historical Atlas of World War II, by John Pimlott. Henry Holt and Company, Inc. ISBN 0-8050-3929-5.
Henry Steele Commager's The Story of the Second World War, by Henry Steele Commager. Brassey's Publishing. ISBN 1-57488-168-X.

If you're looking for a more first-person account of the war, two good autobiographies exist that I can thoroughly recommend:

If You Survive, by George Wilson. Random House Inc. ISBN 0-8041-0003-9.
Goodbye, Darkness, by William Manchester. Random House Inc. ISBN 0-4403-2907-8

If you're not the book type and want to get a good feel for the mood I attempted to capture in *Godlike,* several movies also spring to mind which I've drawn heavily upon:

Saving Private Ryan, directed by Steven Spielberg. ISBN 0-7832-3884-3.
When Trumpets Fade, directed by John Irvin. ISBN 0-7831-1275-0.
The Great Escape, directed by John Sturges. ISBN 6-3040-7187-6.
The Colditz Story, directed by Guy Hamilton. ISBN B-0000-0068-1.
The Guns of Navarone, directed by J. Lee Thompson. ISBN 6-3029-0902-3.
The Longest Day, directed by Bernhard Wicki, Andrew Marton. ISBN 6-3049-3576-5.

Glossary of Terms

The following terms appear frequently in the *Godlike* rulebook. Their definitions are provided below for your convenience.

Area: Weapons with the Area quality do extra damage when they hit, and specifically do damage to everyone within a particular area. The Area dice are added to the dice pool only after the attack succeeds. A grenade, mortar or artillery shell has an area rating.

Armor, Heavy: A number from 1–10 that reduces the Width of an attack against a target. This number reflects the amount of damage an object or person can absorb before being injured. A tank, concrete bunker or steel plate, all have Heavy Armor.

Armor, Light: A number, usually no more than 2 or 3, that reduces some damage from small arms but not all, and does no good against heavy weapons. It represents armor that a person can wear such as a helmet.

Body: This statistic measures how big, strong and tough the character is. 1 indicates a sickly man, 2 is the human average and 5 would be Charles Atlas. 5 is the maximum score for a normal human.

Base Will: A secondary statistic that is determined by adding a PC's Cool and Command statistics together. Base Will is the measure of the character's willpower, and determines how resistant his powers are to tampering by other Talents. Base Will cannot be lost or gained except by normal advancement. Base Will should not be confused with Will. Will is an up-to-the-moment measure of the PC's self-belief that changes as he's rewarded or penalized for successes or failures in the game.

Brains: This statistic measures how smart the character is. 1 indicates a dimwit, 2 is the human average and 5 would be Albert Einstein. 5 is the maximum for a normal human.

Combat Round: An arbitrary unit of time used to divide combat into individual actions. It is generally enough time to run across an open doorway, shoot at somebody, throw a grenade or dive for cover—a few seconds.

Command: This statistic measures the force of the character's charisma, charm and authority. 1 indicates a social idiot, 2 is the human average and General Patton would have a Command of 5, the maximum score for a normal human.

Cool: This statistic measures the character's ability to handle and not crack under pressure. 1 indicates a panicky individual, 2 is the human average and 5 would be Winston Churchill. 5 is the maximum score for a normal human.

Coordination: This statistic measures the character's ability to control and maneuver their body. 1 indicates a klutz, 2 is the human average and 5 would be a professional gymnast. 5 is the maximum score for a normal human.

Dice Pool: The number of ten-sided dice rolled to determine the success or failure of an action. The number of dice rolled is determined by the governing statistic, skill, Talent, Hyperstat or Hyperskill as decided by the GM. There are never more than 10 dice in any dice pool at any given time. A pool of 6 dice would be listed as "6d."

Difficulty: A number rating (1–10) as determined by the GM that is the minimum height of the number in a match necessary to succeed at a task.

Dynamic Contests: A contest of statistics, skills,

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Talents, Hyperstats or Hyperskills between two PCs, a PC and an NPC, or some other active elements in the game. The GM determines the governing statistic, and both the attacker and the defender roll the appropriate dice pools. Whoever rolls higher (see Height) wins the contest, while whoever rolls wider (see Width) finishes first. Running a race against others is a dynamic contest.

Game Moderator (GM): The Game Moderator is responsible for the upkeep of the story, the resolution of events within the game that are uncertain, and an up to the moment description of just what is happening to the PCs within the adventure. The GM is the narrator and shaper of the story that the PCs act in.

Gobbling or Gobble Dice: A way to use dice in combat while defending. They remove dice from an opposing attack set, effectively negating it. Gobble dice are rolled normally and matches are looked for. The height (see height) of the match indicates the highest number the Gobble Die can affect in the opposing set, while the width (see width) indicates the number of dice the Gobble Dice can eat out of the opposing set.

Hard Die: A special die in a dice pool that is always counted as a 10. It is never rolled. Like Wiggle Dice, Hard Dice are used to model Talent powers. Two Hard Dice would be listed as "2hd."

Height: Height is the number on the dice rolled in a matched set. For example, if you rolled 6d and got a 6, 6, 1, 10, 2 and a 4, the height would be 6 (since your match is two 6's). The higher the roll, the better your success.

Hyperskills: Skills that have been altered by Talent powers that allow them to have ratings higher than the human maximum skill rating of 5. A character with a Pistol skill of 9 would be said to have a Hyperskill.

Hyperstats: Statistics that have been altered by Talent powers that allow them to have ratings higher than the human maximum of 5. A character with a Body of 8 would be said to have a Hyperstat.

Matches: Matches are dice within a rolled dice pool whose numbers match each other. For example if you rolled 8 dice and got 8, 10, 10, 6, 2, 3, 3, 3, 10, you would have two matches—3 tens (3x10) and 3 threes (3x3). A match in a dice pool indicates some level of success.

Non-Player Character (NPC): Characters played and maintained by the GM. They represent those characters not being played by the Players. Anyone who is not a PC, is by default, an NPC, and is the responsibility of the GM.

Penetration: Penetration weapons are designed to go through Heavy Armor. If a weapon with the Penetration quality hits a target with Heavy Armor, the Heavy Armor is reduced by the Penetration rating of the weapon and the Width of the result (to a maximum of twice the original Penetration value) permanently. A "Bazooka," a *Panzerfaust,* and an 88mm cannon are examples of Penetrating weapons.

Player Character (PC): A PC is a character created and controlled by a player. The player is responsible for the actions, personality and beliefs of the PC in the game.

Sense: This statistic measures the character's ability to process information through his or her five senses. 1 indicates someone completely oblivious to their surroundings, 2 is the human average and 5 would be the equivalent of Sherlock Holmes. 5 is the maximum score for a normal human.

Set: In a dice pool, any group of two or more matching dice is a set. A set is described in a kind of shorthand giving the width and the height: With width 3 and height 6, it's a "3x6" set. Width 2 and height 7 is "2x7."

Skills: Skills are learned abilities that are rated, just like statistics, with a number from 1 to 5 designating how good the PC is at that particular skill. Each skill is governed by the statistic that suits it (i.e. Biology is a Brains skill, Dodge is a Coordination skill). When using a skill a PC adds the skill rating to its governing statistic to determine the number of dice in his dice pool. For example, Bob has Coordination of 4 and a Pistol skill of 4, when rolling against his Pistol skill to try and shoot someone Bob rolls 8d.

Slow: A weapon that is Slow is just what it sounds like. If you want to fire it, you have to spend a number of rounds equal to its Slow rating to prepare it. Many heavy weapons such as cannons, "Bazookas" and mortars are Slow.

Spray: Spray weapons are those that fire multiple times, or that have some other factor that makes it easy to aim at many targets. They were built to make extra attacks. Consequently, any multiple attacks made with a Spray weapon take no extra action dice pool penalties and the Spray rating is added to the dice pool when attacking. Submachine guns, machine guns and flamethrowers are all Spray weapons.

Squishy Rolls: An optional rule that allows a player to alter die rolls up or down any level in Height by trading Width. For example 5 eights could be changed to 4 nines or 3 tens, or to 6 sevens or 7 sixes.

Static Contests: A contest of statistics, skills, Talents, Hyperstats or Hyperskills between a PC and something to be overcome in the adventure which is not a PC or NPC or an active element in the story. The GM determines the governing statistic, and the PC then rolls the appropriate dice pool. Height determines degree of success. Width is how long it takes to complete. Knocking down a door, overcoming an illness or landing a plane are all static contests.

Statistics: Statistics are the six basic characteristics that all characters have: Body, Coordination, Brains, Cool, Sense and Command. A normal human has statistics that range from 1–5. This number represents the number of ten-sided dice rolled when testing that particular statistic in a contest. Only Talents can have statistics over 5, called Hyperstats.

Talent: Either a superpower that allows a character to perform impossible actions such as flying, turning metal to ice, or lifting tremendous weights, or a person who has such a superpower.

Tall Set: In a dice pool, a match with a Height of 6 or higher is considered a tall set.

Wide Set: In a dice pool, a match with a Width of 3 or greater is a wide set.

Width: Width is the number of dice in a rolled dice pool which match. For example, if you rolled 4d, and got a 4, 4, 3 and a 1, the roll would have a width of 2 (since you rolled two 4s). Width indicates the speed of a successful action. The wider the result, the faster the action occurs.

Wiggle Die: A special die in a dice pool that can be made to be any number between 1 and 10, chosen by the player, to make matching sets after the rest of the dice in the dice pool are rolled. Like Hard Dice, Wiggle Dice are used to model Talent powers. Two Wiggle Dice would be listed as "2wd."

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PART TWO

Game Mechanics

WE HIT THE BEACH running (well, most of us did—I was in the air) and already the Ape was on his face in the sand. The LST bogged down twenty feet out, so the other men had to wade through three feet of water to the shore. I just flew it, pulling O'Malley and Stantz with me by their web-belts. The others made do with what God had given them.

The Ape was up quick, and gone in a flash towards the cliff wall in a wake of sand. Junior threw the seven hundred pounds of rope to the base of the cliffs, and me, Ape and Stantz went straight up it—up the wall, to the top, with a cable in each hand. To where the Krauts were squatting on their machine guns like Buddhas, waiting for us.

I hovered at the top, just below the lip, out of sight, and then inverted myself to watch Stantz and the Ape climb it. Stantz just ran up the wall like he was trotting up the street on some sunny afternoon. Hell, even his gear didn't hang downwards. The Ape was a bit more base, swinging and leaping and jumping, carrying the rope in his gorilla mouth, chest heaving with effort.

Then something went wrong below.

I saw Gorvan go down—nothing but a speck, really, an ant on the beach two hundred feet below, a nasty black dimple in the sand next to him kicking up smoke. O'Malley turned to chrome instinctively—a silver ant on the sand, running with Gorvan in his arms, towards the cliff face to get away from the mortar shells being lobbed down on them. The explosions sounded flat and unforgiving, like a door slammed in anger in a house several rooms away. The other men were running off in random directions.

The three of us crested the lip together, trying to find purchase for the pitons on the end of the ropes, trying not to think about triggers or crosshairs or ranges. Then something went off next to the Ape with a cough, spitting sand up into the air, leaving him knocked flat, the rope forgotten and careening towards the edge. Stantz was distracted for a moment watching the Ape's rope slide away, and I could feel the air part near my head as the MG 42s opened up with a sound like canvas being ripped by a circus strongman.

Then Stantz was gone in a lick of flame—the whole cliff was sighted for mortars.

I dropped the rope and took off, rushing the machine gun nest closest to me at top speed. Low, but not too low. Two grenades would do the trick. The guns were too slow to track me (and they were probably fixed and sighted for the cliff face anyway). I could see little German faces turned up at me in their trench as I buzzed it at low altitude, looping around to come back for a second pass. But something was wrong. The kraut in the middle, the one without the helmet, he was smiling.

Then everything went screwy. I hit the sand dune hard and rolled over twice, smashing my arm into an old driftwood log and getting a mouthful of sand in the process. I tried to sit up and fish out my service pistol, but they were on me too quick.

"What was your mission, sergeant?" the major spat at me, backed by three other Talents. I recognized only Cesay, the Brit, who could blank out your powers by looking at you funny. I could feel that the illusion was coming from the middle one. He was a smiling redhead, and as he winked at me, the Kraut machine gun nest and the men in it vanished like paint running down a gutter—just like my gun, the grenades and everything else too dangerous to use in the mock assault. In the place of the machine gun nest was a six-by-six trench filled with scared-looking Brit and American Talents like my team.

"I —" I began, but then quickly shut my sand-filled trap.

"What was your mission?" the major shouted at me.

"To secure ropes for the Ranger assault," I said, spitting sand out of my mouth.

"Let's do it again, and thank your lucky stars this wasn't the real thing."

Ape, Stantz and I went back down the cliff to do it all over again.

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> "Battle is the most magnificent competition in which a human being can indulge. It brings out all that is best; it removes all that is base."
>
> —Lt. General George S. Patton Jr.

The Basics

The mechanics in *Godlike* are there to use when two requirements have been fulfilled. First, the outcome of an attempted character action is in doubt. Second, the action really matters to the plot of the game.

If an action is trivially easy, there's no point in rolling for it. A game in which every action—lacing your boots, making coffee, reading the paper—has to be rolled for would be ludicrously tedious. Similarly, if you try something impossible ("I'm going to shoot down the sun!") there's no point in rolling because no matter how well you roll, it still isn't going to happen.

On the other hand, there are all kinds of actions that are in doubt which just don't matter to the overall game. Maybe you want to show up one of your fellow PCs by winning a skeet-shooting bet. Sure, you could both roll a couple times to see who shoots better—but unless you're doing it as an excuse for in-character bonding, or to get used to the mechanics, what's the point? You're just going to leave the other players drumming their fingers while you posture with your shotgun.

A Note for Novices

Godlike uses ten-sided dice to determine success or failure. A ten-sided die is abbreviated "d10" or, in this game, simply "d." If you're rolling five of them, it's abbreviated 5d.

Most d10s are numbered 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Some games use that 0 as an actual zero, but for *Godlike,* it's a ten. (Or you can just buy dice that have the number 10 printed on them.)

In short, don't roll unless the GM asks you to roll. Sometimes he may not allow you to roll for something you thought you should be able to do, but just play along and trust his judgment. After all, he knows what's coming next and you don't.

Every attempt to do something is represented by a number of ten-sided dice. The more dice you roll, the better your chances of success. If you only roll one die, there is no chance of success. If you somehow rolled eleven dice or more, there would be no chance of failure. However, you can never roll more than ten dice. That's important, so I'm going to say it again:

Under no circumstances do you roll more than ten dice.

La Belle Curve

The larger your dice pool, the better your chances are of getting a match. To make this explicit, here's a rough guide to your chances of getting a match (or multiple matches) depending on how many dice you roll.

Bell Curve Table

Size of Dice Pool	Rough Odds of Getting One or More Matches
1	0%
2	10%
3	28%
4	50%
5	70%
6	85%
7	93%
8	98%
9	99.6%
10	99.9%

That's a chunky graph. A seven-die pool is quite reliable, and raising a pool from 8 to 10 isn't going to give nearly the payoff as raising one from 3 to 5. Gaining and losing dice really matters at the bottom.

Of course, these are just your chances of getting any success. If you need to get something done fast (that is, you need a wide success) a pair of ones might not do it. Similarly, difficult tasks (those that exclude certain low successes) are substantially harder.

The number of dice you roll is known as a **dice pool.** (If you've played *Vampire: The Masquerade or Legend of the Five Rings,* you're already familiar with the concept.) You usually find the number of dice in your pool by adding together a stat and a skill.

Statistics represent your inborn or developed general abilities—things like how strong you are, how well you remember things, and how well you keep your head in a crisis.

Skills are particular applications of your statistics—things you've learned how to do in the course of your life, like shoot a rifle or crack a code.

Suppose, then, that Roland is trying to punch a Nazi spy in the face. The stat governing face punching is Body, and Roland's Body is 2. The skill

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of face punching is Brawl, and Roland's Brawl skill is also 2. He has four dice in his dice pool.

When you roll, you want to rack up **matches**. You get a match when two or more dice turn up the same number. So, if Roland's player comes up with 2,2,9,8, he lands a punch on his opponent. If he rolls 1,2,4,5, he misses.

There are some tweaks and details that make the system a little more complicated, but mostly, you just roll a number of dice equal to a stat plus a skill and look for matches. Getting more matches and higher numbers is generally better.

Unless the GM says otherwise, a character gets only one try at a particular task.

Stats

There are six stats, which measure all of a character's general capabilities. They're rated from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 is dismal, 2 is adult human average, 3 is exceptional, and 5 is the human maximum. (Of course, Talents can have stats higher than 5.) There are two kinds of stats: those governing physical capabilities (Body, Coordination, and Sense) and mental capabilities (Brains, Command, and Cool).

Body

This is a measure of how big, strong and tough you are. A character with a high Body stat can lift more, take more punishment, and run faster than someone with a low score.

Body Stat Table

Rank	Tested Lift	Bonus
1	100–210 lbs.	–
2	210–250 lbs.	–
3	250–370 lbs.	+1 wound box to torso. +1 width to hand-to-hand damage.
4	370–500 lbs.	+1 wound box to torso and each arm. +1 width to hand-to-hand damage.
5	500–800 lbs.	+1 wound box to torso, arms and legs. +1 width to hand-to-hand damage.
6	800 lbs. – 1 ton	+1 wound box to torso, arms and legs. +2 width to hand-to-hand damage.
7	1–2 tons	+1 wound box to torso, arms and legs. Hand-to-hand attacks do killing damage. +1 width to hand-to-hand damage.
8	2–4 tons	+1 wound box to torso, arms and legs. Hand-to-hand attacks do killing damage. +2 width to hand-to-hand damage.
9	4–6 tons	+1 wound box to torso, arms and legs. Hand-to-hand attacks do killing damage. +3 width to hand-to-hand damage.
10	6–10 tons	+1 wound box to torso, arms and legs. Hand-to-hand attacks do killing damage. +4 width to hand-to-hand damage.

Note: The wound box bonuses are not cumulative. Odd as it seems, the Talents with extraordinary strength are not much tougher than the toughest of mere mortals.

Tested Lift is weight in a range where if you try to lift it you might fail, so it requires a successful roll. Lifting a heavier weight is generally impossible. Any weight in a lesser category can be lifted without a roll under non-combat situations. For example, someone with Body 6 has to roll to pick up something that weighs 900 pounds. He can lift 600 pounds automatically but has no chance of lifting two tons.

You can throw something that weighs two categories lower than your Tested Lift fifteen or twenty feet. (For example, if you've got Body 7, you can throw something that weighs 700 pounds fifteen or twenty feet.) Every level you drop increases the distance by twenty feet.

If you need to know how fast a character can run, assume that it's 10 yards plus twice the Body stat per round. This may be adjusted upward if conditions are good (wind's at your back or you're running unencumbered on a level road) or downward if conditions are bad (running over rubble, carrying a pack, or if they're injured). Halve the distance if a character has an injured leg. If both legs are injured, it's just the Body score. See **Movement in Combat,** p. 27.

Coordination

How well you control and maneuver your body. Someone with higher Coordination is going to be a better shot, a better darts player and a better driver.

Sense

We experience the world through our five senses—sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell. A high Sense score means keen hearing, clear vision and a better shot at noticing that funny burnt-almond odor right before eating the poisoned date. Someone with low Sense is generally more oblivious to his surroundings.

Brains

Brains measures natural intellect. Someone with a high Brains stat has a better memory, quicker math skills and a better grasp of abstract concepts than someone without.

For every point of Brains above 2, you get an extra point with which to buy skills. However, you can only spend these points on Brains skills.

Command

People with high Command scores are natural leaders. Call it what you will—charisma, personal magnetism, leadership—people who have it dominate conversations, sway

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opinions and get listened to in a crisis.

Command is not often a measure of good looks (though if you want to have a good looking character, a high Command is one way to represent that). It's more a sense of confidence and personal intensity.

Command combines with Cool to form a character's starting Will (see **Part Four: Talents—***Will* on p. 41).

Cool

Some people panic in a crisis. Some freeze, some choke . . . and some just cope with it and do what needs to be done. It's not a matter of intelligence or willpower: Some people have it, some don't. Cool is the ability to remain un-cracked under pressure, deal with unpleasant realities (combat, for example), and get the job done.

Cool combines with Command to form a character's starting Will (see **Part Four: Talents—***Will* on p. 41).

Skills

Where your stats measure your innate abilities, skills represent the payoff of a learning effort. Someone may have a great deal of innate coordination, but if he's never been behind the wheel of a car, he's probably not a safe driver. Pure talent only takes you so far: Hard work and study are also needed for success in most endeavors.

Quantifying Skills

Skills are simple concepts, and most should be easily described in one sentence. For example, the skill "Radar Operation" could be described as "The ability to operate radar equipment." Does "Radar Operation" allow its user to repair radar sets as well as operate them? That's up to the GM to decide. His say is final. However, if it's not contained in the description, then the skill probably doesn't cover it.

Maximum Skill Levels

Normal humans are limited to 5 as the maximum rating in any skill. So the maximum a human can have in any stat+skill is 10d. (Of course, this would represent someone who dedicated his entire life in study of a particular skill).

Talents are a little different. They can have skills higher than 5, but they must be bought as Hyperskills (see **Part Four: Talents—***Hyperskills* on p. 49 for details), which are super-human levels in otherwise mundane skills.

What If I Don't Have the Right Skill?

Not every character is going to have every skill. Sometimes a character may try to do something he's never done before. Your GM may allow a roll or not, depending on the circumstances and common sense. If your character doesn't have the Brawl skill, there's nothing to stop him from taking a swing at someone. In that case, you can just roll Body. After all, hitting is not a very sophisticated action.

On the other hand, if your character doesn't have a given Language skill, your GM would be well within his rights to not let you roll. It doesn't matter how smart you are; if you don't *parle français* you're not going to get it.

Do-It-Yourself Skills

It's possible that your character concept involves a skill that's not listed here because it's highly specialized or esoteric. If that's the case, you can just ask your GM to let you write it in under an appropriate stat. If, for instance, your character is a rodeo clown he presumably has a "Horseback Riding" skill, probably under Coordination.

This is not a license to try to create broad, over-arching skills that let you do everything. ("Yeah, and I should be able to roll my 'Navy Captain' skill for sailing, navigation, gun cleaning and tactics.") Your GM knows best and if he says no, deal with it.

Body Skills

Athletics: You can pick up any sport and do a passable job at it, even if you've never played it before.
Brawl: You are a bruiser, and know how to attack with your hands, feet and head, as well as clubs and rifle butts.
Endurance: You can pace yourself, hold your breath, run, or resist the ill effects of environment longer than most people.
Health: You eat well, have a strong metabolism, and are resistant to disease.
Knife-Fighting: You are trained in killing with knives and fixed bayonets.
Run: You are well versed at running, and can sprint for short distances, or run for long distances without tiring.
Swim: You are a strong swimmer, and can float on your back in the water.
Throw: You can throw hand-held objects farther than most people your size.

Coordination Skills

Anti-Tank Rocket: You can fire and maintain anti-tank rockets.
Dodge: You are adept at getting out of the way of attacks and danger.
Driving (Type): You can drive a particular type of vehicle, such as a bicycle or car.
Flamethrower: You can fire, repair, clean and maintain flamethrowers.
Grenade: You can use grenades without blowing yourself up.
Machine Gun: You can fire, repair, clean and maintain machine guns.
Parachuting: You can make a parachute jump safely.
Pilot (Type): You can pilot a particular type of airborne vehicle, such as a plane or blimp.
Pistol: You can fire, repair, clean and maintain pistols.
Rifle: You can fire, repair, clean and maintain rifles.
Sailing (Type): You can pilot a particular type of seaborne vehicle, such as a sailboat, destroyer or kayak.
Stealth: You are light on your feet and know how to remain out of sight.
Submachine Gun (SMG): You can fire, repair, clean and maintain submachine guns.

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Sense Skills

Hearing: Your hearing is more keen than the average person.
Sight: Your eyesight is more keen than the average person.
Smell: Your sense of smell is more keen than the average person.
Taste: Your sense of taste is more keen than the average person.
Touch: Your sense of touch is more keen than the average person.

Brains Skills

Cryptography: You have a working knowledge of codes, ciphers and encryption techniques.
Education: You were a bookworm in school and know all manner of basic facts about math, science, grammar and social studies.
Electronics: You can repair, use or build electronics without electrocuting yourself.
First Aid: With the proper equipment, you can treat wounds in the field—as long as they don't require surgery.
Language (Type): You can speak, read and write a particular language.
Mechanics (Type): You can repair, use or build machinery of a particular type.
Medicine: You can treat illness and wounds through surgery and drugs, if you have access to the proper equipment. ***Note:*** Your Medicine skill cannot ever be higher than your First Aid skill. Without First Aid you can't learn Medicine.
Navigation (Land): You can navigate using a map and compass or by dead reckoning on the ground.
Navigation (Sea/Air): You can navigate by map, timing and instrumentation, or by astrogation.
Tactics: You are versed in the arts of war, and know how to use terrain, manpower and equipment to its maximum effect on the battlefield.

Command Skills

Inspire: You can cause people to feel optimistic, despite any fears they might harbor.
Intimidation: You can cause a person to fear you through physical or psychological threats
Leadership: You can effectively direct those under your command, even under fire.
Perform (Type): You have an entertaining skill and the confidence to perform it in front of large groups.
Seduction: You're skilled at attracting a member of either sex.

Cool Skills

Bluff: You can bullshit your way through most situations, though any falsehood you tell will not be believed for very long.
Lie: You can contrive convincing falsehoods that are often believed until evidence to the contrary is discovered.
Mental Stability: You are not easily shocked, and have a psyche which can function even in stressful or grotesque situations.

Resolution

You know what skills are, what stats are, and what a dice pool is. Here's how you put them together and interpret the results of a given roll.

The goal of a roll is to get **matches**—that is, you want two or more of the dice to turn up the same number. If that happens, you succeed. That's the bare bones of the system. However, there are a few nuances to success. Specifically, each matching set has **Height** and **Width**.

A tall (or high) set is one that has very high numbers—a pair of 8s or a pair of 10s is a tall set. A wide set is one where a lot of the dice turned up the same number—a set of four 2s is very wide, as is a set of three 9s.

There's shorthand for results, and it's written as "Width x Height." It looks like math, but all it means is that if you rolled eight ten-sided dice (8d, remember?) and got three tens, the result would be written "3x10."

Here are some examples.

- You roll 5d and they come up 1,3,5,9,9. The result is 2x9. This is a tall result, but not a wide one.
- You roll 8d and get 1,5,6,7,8,8,8,0. The result is 3x8. This result is both tall and wide.
- You roll 7d and it turns up 1,1,1,1,2,6,8. The result is 4x1. This is a very wide result, but it's short.
- You roll 5d and get 1,1,2,6,7. The result is 2x1. This is a narrow and short result—in fact, it's the minimum success possible.

Width and Height (see p. 5) both have implications to your success. Exactly what they mean depends on what you're doing. If you're competing against another person who is consciously trying to confound or surpass you, that's a **dynamic contest**. If you're struggling against an inanimate object or situation, it's a **static contest** because the situation isn't actively changing in response to your actions.

Running a race, getting into a knife fight, interrogating someone for information or lying to someone who interrogates you—these are all dynamic contests. In a dynamic contest, you're rolling against someone else's roll.

Climbing a wall, fighting off an infection, fixing a jeep, flying a plane—these are all static contests. In these situations, you're just rolling against the circumstances.

Static Contests

In a static contest, height determines your degree of success, while width determines how quickly you get it done.

Some static contests are simple, and the question of time doesn't enter into it. If you're fighting off an infection with a Body+Health roll, for example, there really isn't a

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question of quickness: You either get sick or you don't. In that case, you can simply ignore the width of the roll. If you get even a single pair, you stay healthy.

Time

For more complicated contests, where time is a factor, your GM may simply decide what "sounds about right" for the time a task takes as determined by the width of the roll. If you want a general guideline, however, it works like this:

First, the GM decides what the time scale is, be it days, hours, minutes or combat rounds. A combat round is a very abstract term, but generally, it's a couple of seconds—about as much time as it takes you to take a shot or make a good attempt at diving for cover. For example, fixing a jeep is probably going to take hours. Decoding and interpreting a lengthy and complicated Japanese battle plan is going to take days. Stripping and repairing a machine gun is going to take minutes, while running across a courtyard takes rounds.

Once the scale is determined, you make the relevant roll—Brains+Mechanics to fix the jeep, Body+Running to bolt across the courtyard, Brains+Cryptography (and maybe Brains+Language: Japanese in addition) to figure out the battle plan. If the roll is a success, the width is subtracted from 5 to find out how many units of time it takes to complete the task. For example, if the Brains+Mechanics result was 2x3, it takes three hours to fix the Jeep—five minus the width (2) equals three. If the Body+Running result was 3x7, it takes two rounds to get across the courtyard (5-3). If the Brains+Cryptography outcome was 4x2, it only takes one day to figure out the Japanese plan.

No matter how wide you roll, however, a task always takes one unit of time. If you somehow manage to get a result six wide or wider, the job still takes one day, hour, minute or round.

Difficulty

The height element of the roll determines how well you perform the task. As with time, sometimes this doesn't matter. For instance, if you're trying to knock a door down, there are really only two possible outcomes: Either it breaks or it doesn't. It probably doesn't matter that you broke it down with grace, elegance and aplomb.

However, with some tasks it's nice to have gradients of success. If you're landing a plane in a storm and you get a really short roll on your Coordination+Pilot skill, your GM may decide that the plane is slightly damaged from the rough landing. Alternately, the height of your Cool+Seduction roll may determine whether you look suave and devastating, or whether you have to really make a fool of yourself to make an impression.

Finally, your GM may set minimum heights for certain tasks. If a door is really, really thick, for example, he may decide that a Body+Brawl match that isn't 5 or higher is insufficient to get through. If an aroma is somewhat subtle, he may decide that your match has to be at least a 2 on your Sense+Smell roll. If a task has this kind of minimum required height, that's called its difficulty. Fittingly, only particularly hard tasks should have a difficulty. A difficulty rating of 2 is for something that's just a bit trickier than usual. A difficulty of 4 is fairly complicated, while a difficulty of 7 or 8 is very difficult indeed (unless the character is going to have more than one try at it). A difficulty of 10 is almost impossible.

Dynamic Contests

The essential difference between a static contest and a dynamic contest is simply this: In a static contest, you just roll and if you get a matching set that beats the difficulty (if any) you succeed. In a dynamic contest, you aren't just rolling in a vacuum. You're rolling against the other fellow's roll. Nonetheless, dynamic contests don't have to be terribly complicated. Simply put, the highest set wins, and the widest set finishes first.

Now, which is more important depends on the nature of the contest. If it's a foot race, width (that is speed) matters. A racer who won with 4x2 and outran someone who rolled 2x10 might be gasping and spitting up at the end, while the loser has the breath to politely congratulate the winner on his victory. With similar results in a car race, the winner with the wide but short result may have damaged his car, while the loser played it slow and steady and did not (aphorisms aside) win the race.

On the other hand, if time is no object the victor may simply be the contestant with the highest roll. In a chess match, for instance, someone who rolls 2x10 beats the fellow who rolled 4x4. The 4x4 player moved more decisively, but not as wisely.

If none of the competitors rolls a match of any sort, it's up to the GM to decide what that means. It could mean that neither one of them completed the task. They may have to roll again to keep going—if it's something difficult like a race up a slippery mud hill in the rain. On the other hand, if it's a simple task, he may just award the victory to whoever got the single highest result on a die.

Finally, it's possible for dynamic contests to end in a tie. If this happens, again, the GM decides the most appropriate way to resolve

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it. Maybe he just asks for a reroll. Maybe the contest is deemed a tie. Or maybe the task is incomplete and the two have to continue competing.

> ***Example:*** Roy wants information about Lieutenant Murdoch, and tries to get it by bullying Murdoch's girlfriend, Carla. Carla decides she's going to lie to Roy about where Murdoch went. Roy rolls Command+Intimidation to scare her into giving up the goods. Carla rolls Cool+Lie to persuasively fool him.
>
> Roy's dice pool is 5d, while Carla's is 6d. He rolls 1,1,5,6,7 for a result of 2x1. She rolls 2,3,3,4,8,8 for a result of 2x8. She's got him buffaloed and he goes off into a trap believing he's hot on Murdoch's trail. In this case, the width of the rolls just doesn't matter.

> ***Example:*** Murdoch wants to persuade Admiral Wilkes to move the fleet to Mariana bay, while Roy thinks it would be safer behind Tifol Island. Time is running out. Both of them are talking at once, and both of them roll Command+Leadership.
>
> Roy's dice pool is 6d, while Murdoch's is 5d. Roy gets 1,5,5,5,6,7 for 3x5. Murdoch gets 1,3,4,7,7 for 2x7. While Murdoch's argument is better, Roy gets his point across faster. Maybe the Admiral is in such a hurry that he'll prefer Roy's slick case to Murdoch's well-reasoned argument.

Cooperation

Cooperating on static contests is pretty simple. All the characters involved just combine their dice pools, up to a maximum of 10 dice. You can also do this in dynamic contests if timing doesn't matter.

If the contest is dynamic and time matters, it gets a little more complicated, but not much. The people working together roll separately. If only one gets a set and the other has that number in his pool, he can add it. If both get sets, they use the highest number but the lowest width (because the faster guy has to wait for the slower one to catch up and help him).

Multiple Actions and Multiple Sets

Astute readers may have noticed that in some examples, the dice pools yield multiple sets. For example, if I roll 5d and get 1,1,1,0,0, then I actually have two sets—3x1 and 2x10. Which one is the right one to use?

The answer is that I can use whichever I prefer, but I can't use both. If my character is running a race, I'm going to pick 3x1. If it's something where quality is more important than speed, I'll pick the tens.

The only exception to this is when a player wants to do two things at the same time. Suppose I want to drive a car past someone and shoot him from the driver's side window? Or suppose I want to climb an exposed wall while staying out of sight?

These are difficult and unlikely stunts: Be aware that they're almost impossible to do if your character doesn't have (1) a really big dice pool or (2) Talent powers that make it easier. With that in mind, here's how you do two things at once.

Figure out the dice pools for both tasks. If I'm driving and shooting, the two pools are Coordination+Drive and Coordination+Pistol. I'll be rolling the smaller of the two pools. Furthermore, I roll one die less than I normally would (because, after all, my attention is divided). Then, if I get two sets, I can assign one set to each task.

> ***Example:*** Arnie has to get out of the compound before his bomb goes off. Unfortunately, if he's spotted heading across the courtyard, the guards will probably mow him down with machinegun fire. So he needs to run across the courtyard, fast but quietly. His Body+Running dice pool is 6, while his Coordination+Stealth pool is 8. The pool for running is the lower one, so he rolls that—with a 1 die penalty. He rolls his five dice, hoping to somehow get two matches. As it happens though, he gets 2,7,7,8,9—one pair, but no more. He decides to allocate that match to the Stealth contest. The GM decides that Arnie saw a spotlight coming and dove out of the way. He hasn't been spotted, but he didn't get a chance to cross the courtyard.
>
> If Arnie had been blessed with absurdly high dice pools—say, 9 dice in each—he would have had a much better chance. Rolling 8 dice (with the 1 die penalty, remember) he could get 4,6,6,6,7,9,0,0—giving him two sets. With 3x6 he's across the courtyard in two rounds, and with the 2x10, he does it unseen and unheard.

If your character gets an exceptionally wide single success—meaning four dice or more turn up the same—he can split that into two successes. In Arnie's case, if he'd gotten a 5x1 result, he could have made it into a 3x1 and a 2x1 to succeed (barely) at both tasks.

It's possible to try to do three things at once as well. The same mechanics apply: Figure out the lowest die pool, use that, and take a penalty. But the penalty isn't just one die: It's one die per extra task. The standard "doing two things at once" penalty is a single die because I'm trying to do one extra thing. If I try to do three things at once, that's two extra actions. My dice pool is reduced by two dice. If I am crazy enough to try to do four things at once, there is no possible way I can succeed. Even if my dice pools for all the tasks were 10 (the maximum possible), the three-die penalty would make it impossible to get four sets.

If you're using the optional rule for squishy results (see **Appendix A: Optional Rules** on p. 305), it's necessary to put another restriction on multiple tasks: The results of these rolls cannot be squished at all.

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Finally, it's impossible to do static tasks at the same time if they're done on different time scales. For example, fixing a jeep (done on the scale of hours) and field stripping a rifle (done on the scale of minutes). You can't combine them; because the most time you could need to strip the rifle (five minutes) is insignificant compared to the least time it'll take you to fix the jeep (one hour).

I know that sounds very technical and fussy. I can't think of any reason you'd want to do two static tasks with different time scales simultaneously, but I'm sure someone will. Nonetheless, the benefits of permitting a very specialized application of a rule that's already specialized are pretty limited. Doing the quick one first is much simpler.

Combat

Combat is complicated and dangerous. In World War II, combat is ubiquitous. (At least, it is happening all over the places PCs are likely to be.) Therefore, there are a few refinements to the rules that come into play specifically when people are trying very hard to hurt one another.

One issue to get out of the way is the question of time. Violence happens very, very quickly. If you've ever been in a wrestling match, you know that five minutes feels like eternity. Gunfights, being that much quicker and deadlier, are proportionately faster.

To simulate this in a way that gives you a chance to make some decisions, combat in *Godlike* is broken up into combat rounds. There is no given measurement for how long a combat round lasts: It's an abstraction. It's "however long it takes the slowest person in the fight to try one thing." Once everyone involved has tried something, the round is over and it's time to do something else.

Combat Round Breakdown

Each combat round is broken down into three phases: declaration, roll, and resolution. In order, here's what those mean.

1) Declare

Each person in the fight describes his character's action. The person with the lowest Sense score has to say what he's doing first. This is because people with higher Sense scores are more aware of what's going on in the fight and are better able to respond to what's going on around them. I personally recommend that the players sit around the table in order, from lowest Sense to highest, so that they can just go around in order with the GM interrupting when NPCs are acting. If two people have the same Sense score, the NPC declares first. If two PCs have the same Sense score, use the Sight skill as a tiebreaker. Or just roll for it.

When you're declaring what you want to do in combat, make it short and specific. This doesn't mean you can't make it dramatic. "I bayonet the guard" is the same action as "I'm going to gouge that bastard in the guts!" but one is a little more engaging. If you're doing something special—dodging, doing two things at once, making a called shot, helping someone else with what they're doing—say so now.

2) Roll

Everyone rolls the appropriate dice pool—usually Coordination+Pistol or Rifle, Coordination+Dodge or Body+Brawl.

3) Resolve

The widest result gets resolved first. If two sets are equally wide, the tallest goes first.

When an attack hits, it immediately does damage.

Anyone suffering any damage in combat loses a die out of his highest set! Why? Because being punched or shot is very, very distracting. If someone's highest set is only a pair, that action is effectively foiled by the loss of a single die (unless, of course, he's got a second set as a backup).

If you're making a Dodge roll, it only works on attacks with lower width (or the same width but lower height) than the Dodge roll. After all, if the attack is wider, it happened before you had a chance to react.

Attacks do damage, depending on several factors. Dodges avoid damage. Since both of these are important, they get their own headings. But by and large, that's all there is to a combat round. Everyone says what they're doing, they roll, the widest sets go first, and then the whole thing starts over.

Damage

So far, the system is fairly simple. You roll a bunch of dice and look for matches. If you get matches, that's good.

The damage system adds a little sophistication to this, but not too much. Damage in *Godlike* is pretty specific. When you are hit, you'll know exactly where and how much it stings.

Types of Damage

There is a world of difference between being punched in the gut and being stabbed there. A punch aches, it bruises, but unless you are severely pummeled for a long time, it's unlikely that you're going to suffer any lasting harm. Being stabbed (or worse, shot) is entirely different. Your internal organs are being rearranged and exposed to all kinds of germs, viruses and pollutants. Damage that penetrates the skin is serious.

Therefore, in *Godlike* there are two types of damage: shock damage and killing damage. Shock damage shakes

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you up and can be very dangerous in the short term, but you can shake it off fairly easily. Killing damage is just what it sounds like: Damage that can end your life.

On your character sheet, you'll see a silhouette of a human form with a bunch of boxes on its arms, legs, torso and head. Each box represents a wound box. If you get hit in the arm for two points of damage, you mark off two boxes. If those two points of damage are shock, you just put a single diagonal line through the boxes. If they're killing damage, you put two lines in an X. It's important to know what kind of damage you've taken, because killing damage is so much slower to heal and so much more dangerous.

When your head fills with shock damage, you pass out.

When your torso fills with shock damage, your Body and Coordination are both effectively reduced by 4 for the purposes of making rolls. (This effect cannot drop either stat below 1.)

When a limb is filled with shock damage, you can't use it until it recovers.

> ***Example:*** Bruce has Body 8 and Brawl 2. Normally he rolls 10d when he's trying to hit someone. When his torso is filled with shock damage, his Body becomes 4 for the purposes of rolling dice. He doesn't lose his extra wound boxes, he still does lethal damage if he hits, and he can still lift a ton without a roll. However, if he tries to hit someone or lift something in his Tested Lift range, he only rolls 6d.

It is possible for shock damage to get converted to killing damage. Once all the boxes in a limb are filled up (either with all shock damage, or with a mixture) any further shock damage to that limb becomes killing damage.

> ***Example:*** Rocco and Lance have been beating on one another. Rocco has managed to fill up all five boxes on Lance's left arm with shock damage. Lance can't use his left arm for the rest of this fight. Rocco rolls another Strength+Brawl and gets a result of 2x6—two more points of shock to the left arm. But because that arm is so bruised and weakened, those two points become killing damage. If he hits that arm again, those points will become killing damage as well.

Once a limb is filled up with killing damage, any further damage to that limb goes right into the torso, which is where things get really dangerous.

Damage Location

Given the choice between having someone stomp on my foot and having them stomp on my face, I'll pick the foot every time. The location of an injury matters. Because it matters, that poor little damage silhouette on the character sheet has numbers on each of his limbs. The number rolled on a successful attack indicates where that attack hit. Thus, if you roll a higher number, you're much closer to killing your opponent. The hit results are as follows (the numbers next to them represent how many wound boxes are located in each location on the damage silhouette):

Damage Location Table

Roll	Hit Location
1	Left leg (5)
2	Right leg (5)
3–4	Left arm (5)
5–6	Right arm (5)
7–9	Torso (10)
10	Head (4)

Once all the boxes in either a character's head or torso are filled with killing damage, that character is dead. It doesn't matter if he still has a bunch in his arms and legs; they're no good without guts and brains.

If all the boxes on a character's limb are filled with killing damage, two things happen.

1) That limb is seriously damaged and will never, ever be as good again. Depending on how merciless your GM is feeling (and what did the damage) the limb might be all the way off. Or it might just lose a wound box permanently and be a little stiff when the rain is coming.

2) Much more important—any more damage that goes to that hit location goes straight into the torso. If you want to be bloody-minded about it, you can think of your arms and legs as armor that protect your lungs, heart and spinal cord.

Location 10: Head or Vitals

For simplicity we label hit location 10 with its fragile four wound boxes as the head, but really it's best to think of it as "Head or Vitals." It could mean the spine, the liver, the heart, or even the femoral artery—any of the many parts of the body that might very quickly kill you if they're perforated even once. At the GM's option, a called shot to location 10 might affect one of those other vital areas even if the head is hidden, and bypass the protection of a helmet.

Getting Better

Damage is nasty stuff, so you're naturally wondering how you can get rid of it. If it's shock damage, it's pretty easy. After a few minutes' rest, half the shock damage taken during that particular combat to each location just evaporates. You may want to put a little mark near boxes with old damage to keep it clear which wound ones can shake it off. As an optional rule, first aid can reduce shock; see p. 353.

You can also heal shock damage with long-term rest and relaxation. Every game day after a good night's rest, you can make a Body+Health roll. If it succeeds, you shake off a number of shock damage points equal to the Width of the roll. You choose the locations.

> ***Example:*** After falling down a flight of stairs, Brian has two points of shock damage on every location. After he gets up, catches his breath and shakes himself off, he recovers one point on each. The next day he rolls his 5d Body+Health pool. He gets 2x5 as his result. This means he can erase two points of damage—just enough to get his head and torso back to normal.

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Killing damage takes considerably longer to heal. It can only be healed by a long recuperation or by medical attention. "Medical attention" means an operation in a hospital, not your buddy putting on a splint and making a Brains+First Aid roll.

Every time a character gets an operation or real medical treatment, the doctor rolls Brains+Medicine. The width of the roll determines the length of the operation, as usual. The height of the roll determines how many points of killing damage are converted to shock damage within a given limb.

> ***Example:*** Scotty has three points of killing damage in his broken left leg and five points of killing damage from shrapnel in his torso. The doctor decides the shrapnel is more dangerous and decides to go after that. He has 6d in his Brains+Medicine die pool, and his outcome is 2x5. So, after a three-hour operation, all the damage in the torso is now shock damage. However, the leg is still badly hurt, because it hasn't really been treated.

One point of killing damage is turned into a point of shock damage per week of complete rest.

Getting Worse

Some injuries slowly get better until there's nothing but a scar and a bitter memory. Others get worse until there's nothing but a dead soldier and a telegram home. The difference is often made by immediate treatment—not extensive surgery and therapy, but immediate action to control shock and staunch the flow of blood.

Injuries have a chance of becoming much more dangerous if they are not successfully treated with the First Aid skill within fifteen minutes of the injury. If the injury is to an arm or leg, any match is sufficient to keep it from worsening. Rolls to stabilize head and torso injuries are made at difficulty 3. Each medic gets just one attempt. Each attempt uses up supplies such as bandages.

A character with an unstable injury cannot make daily Body+Health rolls to recover shock damage. Furthermore, he takes an additional level of shock damage to the affected location every day. For simplicity's sake, only one injury at a time (the worst one) can be unstable.

Using this rule adds a real sense of urgency and helplessness to *Godlike*. Imagine a group of powerful Talents behind enemy lines, trying to get one of their number back to an Allied hospital as his condition slowly degenerates. . . .

Dying

Any time a character's head or torso is completely filled with killing damage, that character is dead. It might be instant or it might take a while, but the character is doomed and no Medicine or First Aid rolls can avert it. The harm is too severe. Once that final box is filled in, that's it.

Gunfire

The nasty thing about having someone shoot at you is that, once the bullet's in flight, there's not much you can do about it. Bullets are fast; people are slow. The first clue many soldiers get that they're being shot at is the sensation of high-velocity lead plowing a furrow through their flesh.

To represent this unpleasant reality, shooting a gun in *Godlike* is a static contest. The guy you're shooting at has no way to interfere with your attack once you pull the trigger. Simply make that Coordination+Rifle (or Pistol) roll. If you get a match, you hit your target.

The height of your roll determines the location of the hit. Roll a set of ones and you hit the other fellow in the leg. Roll tens and you put it in his head. The width of the roll determines how many wound boxes get checked off.

By and large, that's how it works. But there are many tactical options that change your chances and results. You must decide these actions in the declaration phase of combat. You can't roll and then decide to make it a called shot.

Aiming

This is a very common action: By taking your time and sighting carefully, you improve your chances of hitting. For every combat round you spend squinting down the barrel and muttering, "Die, you Nazi bastard," you can add one die to your pool. You cannot take any other action while aiming, and you cannot add more than two dice in this fashion.

Called Shots

The default roll assumes you're trying to hit the center of mass, that is, the torso. What happens if you want to shoot someone in the leg?

This is known as a called shot. It's trickier than an ordinary shot. You have to take one die out of your pool before you roll. Then take one of the dice that remains and set it to the number you want. If you're aiming for his right arm, set it to a five or a six. If you're headhunting, set it to ten.

> ***Example:*** Roderick can only see the face of the Italian soldier in the trench across from him, so he sights on the head. Normally his Coordination+Rifle pool is 6d, but because he's making a called shot, he reduces that to 5d. He then sets one die aside and sets it to 10 for the head. He rolls the remaining 4d and gets 1,4,6,7. No match: He misses. If one of those four dice had come up 10, however, it would have formed a match with the die he set aside, for a result of 2x10.

> *Example:* Doris the resistance fighter sees a known traitor to the cause running away from her safe house. She wants to interrogate him before killing him, so she aims for his leg. Her normal pool is 5d. She reduces this to 4d for the called shot, and sets one die to 2. She

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rolls the three remaining dice and gets all 7s, accidentally putting the bullet in the quisling's torso instead. On the plus side, he does stop running.

Multiple Shots

Sometimes you want to fire more than one shot at someone (or at more than one person.) This is simply handled by the multiple action rules (see *Multiple Actions* on p. 12). You drop a die out of your Coordination+Pistol or Rifle roll and hope to get two sets.

You cannot combine this trick with aiming or with a called shot. If you spend a turn aiming and decide to take a multiple shot the next turn, the extra die from aiming does not apply.

Cover Fire

Sometimes you just want to use your weapon to communicate something like "It's very dangerous to come any closer!" If you're just sticking your gun out of the foxhole or around a corner and firing blindly, your chances of hitting aren't very good. On the other hand, this is one way you can fire without exposing your head, and you might get lucky. In fact most wartime shooters attack this way.

When you're using cover fire, shoot off at least three bullets and roll only two dice. If they come up as a match, everyone who might get hit by the shells rolls a single die. If any of the potential targets—they all must be close together, within the space of few yards—gets the number that came up in your match, he is hit. However, the weapon only does damage as if the result was a width of 1.

> ***Example:*** Rocco lets loose with his pistol (rolling 2d) around a corner at an oncoming German patrol. He gets a 7 and a 7, a match! The seven Germans roll two 2's, a 7, an 8, 1, 4 and a 9. One of the German patrol is hit in the torso for 1 killing and 1 shock point of damage, and the others quickly take cover.

Depending on the circumstances, the GM may demand a Cool+Mental Stability roll for people who want to expose themselves by firing or charging into cover fire.

Cover fire becomes much more serious when you're firing a weapon with the Spray quality (see *Spray* on p. 21 for details). Even firing blind, you can add the weapon's Spray rating to the two cover fire dice.

> ***Example:*** This time, Rocco fires an SMG with Spray 3. He rolls 5d and gets two pairs—2x2 and 2x5. Of the seven Germans, two of them roll 2s. The SMG does Width+1 in killing and width in shock. Each soldier takes 2 killing and 1 shock to a leg.

A Word on Cover

Sometimes you'll be shooting at someone who is hiding, protected or otherwise harder to hit. The full rules for cover are on p. 18 under the heading "Cover" but here's a basic breakdown of how it works: If someone is in a ditch or standing behind a waist high wall, shots that would have hit the concealed area hit the cover instead. If someone is shooting at you from a foxhole with only their head and arms showing, your shots at them miss unless the hit location is the head or one of their arms. It's much like making any other static roll with a Difficulty rating, only in this case particular numbers are excluded.

Range

The default gunshot roll assumes medium range, and because the system is fairly grainy "medium range" covers a lot, and it differs from pistols to rifles. To determine exact ranges for weapons, consider the charts in **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263.

- Up to the limit of close range your dice pool is unaffected. (In fact, increase your dice pool by one if the enemy is no more than about 5 yards away.)
- Between close and maximum effective range, reduce your dice pool by one.
- At anything farther—never more than double the maximum effective range even outside combat—you have to make a Sense+Sight roll to even have a chance of hitting, and then reduce your attack dice pool by one.

Moving Targets

Experienced troops who can't find cover often zigzag to throw off the enemies' aim. This "serpentine" motion forces the attacker to overcome a Difficulty rating of 3 or miss. (If it hits, the GM may want to roll 1d separately for hit location so hit locations 1-2 aren't immune.) This tactic is ineffective against machine gun or submachine gun fire—with so many bullets flung downrange, a little zigzagging won't help—but it can be dandy against a rifle or pistol.

Sniper

Any time you shoot at someone who doesn't know he's being fired on, you can add one die to your dice pool in addition to any aiming bonuses you take. That's one of the big bonuses of shooting at someone who isn't screaming, dodging, running around or firing back.

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Hand-to-Hand

Rolling around in the mud with someone who wants you dead is a lot more confusing than drilling him from a hundred yards out with a gunshot. Hand-to-hand combat is, in its own way, much more dangerous than gunplay.

Mechanically, fighting hand-to-hand (armed or not) is a dynamic contest, with the vague goal being "Get the upper hand in this fight." All the fighters who have declared involvement roll dice. As with all combat, the widest set is resolved first. That person's attack goes off flawlessly. If he does damage, his opponent loses a die out of his highest set. The next widest roll goes next, and so forth. Someone who rolled low can still injure an opponent who rolled higher—as long as he didn't get hit or his set is wide enough to still be a set after losing a die due to damage. This is a bit different from the usual dynamic contest, but that's why hand-to-hand gets a section of its own.

The dynamics don't change if the person you're attacking is doing something other than fighting hand-to-hand. If he's got a gun and you're unarmed, his action is probably going to be a gunshot at you while you try to grab the gun away. In this case, you'd better hope your attack is wide enough to spoil his shot.

As with firearms, the width of the roll determines how much damage hand-to-hand attacks inflict, while the height determines location.

> *Example:* Armando and Veronica are ganging up on Guillaume. No one has a weapon. Everyone's rolling Body+Brawl. Guillaume rolls 6d, while Armando and Veronica each roll 4d. Guillaume rolls 2,4,5,6,8, 10—no set; he misses. Armando rolls 1,1,2,6 for a result of 2x1, while Veronica gets 2,5,0,0 for 2x10. Their rolls are equally wide but Veronica's was higher, so her blow to poor Guillaume's head gets resolved first. He takes two shock damage. While Guillaume is distracted, Armando closes in and stomps his foot for two shock damage.

Called Shots

A called shot—trying to hit a specific part of the body—is handled just as it is with firearms. Remove one die from your dice pool, set another one to the hit location you're hoping for, and roll the remaining dice. Thus, if your dice pool is 4d, you only actually roll two dice—one gets lost in the aiming and one gets set to your chosen location.

Knockouts

To knock someone out, try a called shot to the head. Once his head fills with shock damage, the target's unconscious. But be careful. If the head fills with killing damage, that's it, the target is dead.

Multiple Attacks

Attacking more than one person is done just like any multiple action (see *Multiple Actions* on p. 12). Reduce your Body+Brawl pool by 1 and hope you get two sets.

Strangling and Choking

Choking, smothering and drowning are all pretty much the same thing. Someone can't breathe until he passes out and (often) dies. The cause of death is lack of oxygen. If your character tries to choke someone with his bare hands, do it as a called shot to the head. If you succeed, you only do a single point of shock damage. However, you continue doing one point of shock damage to the head per round, automatically, until one of the following things happens:

- You declare that you're doing something else.
- You take damage from any source.
- The guy you're choking escapes by beating your Body+Brawl roll.

Unlike most shock damage, *all* damage from choking comes back at the end of the fight (if you survive, of course).

That's choking. Strangling is actually different. If something closes off the blood vessels to the brain with a cord or garrote, unconsciousness and death come on much quicker. It does two ranks of shock damage per round.

It's possible (with training) to strangle someone with your bare hands, but in World War II not many Westerners have the knack. Since you can get the same effect by using a scarf or a rope, not many care to learn.

Pinning

The standard hand-to-hand attack is a punch, kick, stab or slash. Many fights start out with a standing exchange of blows but end with both people on the ground wrestling.

If you want to immobilize someone, say so in your declaration phase. If you succeed, you only do a single point of shock damage to the indicated location, and the person is knocked down and loses a die out of his highest set. (After all, it's hard to deliver a strong punch when you're being knocked on your keister.) Furthermore, if you successfully take someone down, that person is pinned until he escapes.

Someone who is pinned cannot dodge or take cover, and attack anyone except the person who pinned him. Furthermore, any hand-to-hand attacks made on a pinned person are made with an extra die in the pool because of the target's reduced mobility.

The person you have pinned remains pinned until one of three things happens.

- You declare that you're doing something else.
- You get killed or are knocked out.
- The guy you're pinning beats you with a Body+Brawl roll.

While you're pinning someone, you can start choking him with any successful Body+Brawl roll—not the called shot required when standing.

Disarming

If someone's coming at you with a weapon, you're probably going to want to take the weapon away from him. Good luck. Make a called shot to the arm holding the weapon. If you succeed, you do no damage but you get the weapon away from him.

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If the weapon has an edge or sharp point, take a point of killing damage to whichever limb you're using to disarm—probably one of your arms. If that seems harsh, remember that there's nothing to grab it by but the pointy bits. Besides, the same thing will happen to the next Nazi who tries to take your bayonet.

Aiming

You cannot aim while making a hand-to-hand attack unless you are attacking a target from surprise and making a called shot. If you do this, you may make the regular called shot without any penalty in addition to gaining the bonus die or dice.

> ***Example:*** Marcus wants to strike a German guard in the head. He's sneaking up behind the guard and gains a bonus die for aiming. He has a Body+Brawl dice pool of 6d, places one die at 10, and rolls a 3, 4, 1, 2 and 10 on the remaining five. He strikes the guard in the head for 2 points of shock damage. If the guard and Marcus had been in hand-to-hand combat, he would not have had the leisure to aim, and would have had to make a standard called shot with a 1d penalty.

Dodging

Most people don't like being hit, stabbed or strangled. They might even do nothing but dodge when others try to harm them. Here's how "getting the hell out of the way" works.

There are basically two ways to get clear, though both are handled with a Coordination+Dodge roll. One is when you're trying to dive for cover in general, to protect yourself from long distance attacks. This is explained below, under *Taking Cover.* The other way is when you're trying to avoid hand-to-hand attacks such as a tackle or the blow of a club.

During the declaration phase of combat, you must indicate that you want to block, duck, dive for cover or otherwise shield yourself from perceived attacks. Roll Coordination+Dodge. Width and then height determine who goes first, as always. If an attack roll is wider than your dodge roll, you can't dodge it.

If you get a set of matching dice, they become "gobble dice." Each gobble die can take a die of equal or lesser height out of an attacking set. If the GM agrees, you can spread your gobble dice among multiple attacks and attackers. This mechanic is also used for defensive applications of certain Talent powers.

> ***Example:*** Adam and Mark are engaged in a knife fight, and Adam knows his buddy Steve is breaking down a door to come in and help him. He figures he just needs to keep Mark from gutting him until Steve arrives, and then they can double team. Accordingly, he decides he's going to Dodge while Mark attacks.

Their first combat round, Mark rolls his 6d Body+Brawl, while Adam rolls his 6d Coordination+Dodge. Mark's result is 2x5—normally a hit. Adam, however, rolls 2x6. Using one of his gobble dice, he reduces Mark's result to 1x5—a failure.

Next round, Steve bursts through the door but can't attack, and Adam is still dodging. This time Mark's result is 2x9 and Adam gets 2x3. Since their results are equal in width, the taller set goes first—Mark shanks Adam. Ouch.

Now it's Mark's turn to make a 7d Coordination+Dodge roll against Adam and Steve, both of whom have 5d Body+Brawl pools. Adam gets a 3x2 and Steve gets a 2x4, both of which should be solid hits—but Mark rolls well and gets a 3x4. With those three gobble dice, he can take one out of Steve's set (ruining it) and two out of Adam's set (ruining that.) If he'd only had a pair instead of a set, he would have still been able to ruin Steve's set, but Adam would have hit. But Adam's hit would only be two wide instead of three wide, which is still an improvement.

Taking Cover

Instead of ducking an attack, you may choose to dive for cover behind something that's tough enough to stop a bullet—something like a wall, a tank or a car engine. These objects have Heavy Armor qualities (see *Heavy Armor* on p. 19). This is usually the only option for dodging gunfire or explosives, unless you have a Talent power that allows you to see a bullet as it's coming at you, and the speed necessary to dodge it. Normal grunts just leap for cover and hope for the best.

This option doesn't do any good against hand-to-hand attacks, since a fist fighter is already in your face and able to take a swing at you. However, if you get behind cover before someone shoots at you, it can make up for an awful lot of kicks to your shins.

Here's how it works. During the declaration phase, say you're taking cover, making sure that the GM understands what you're hiding behind. Then roll Coordination+Dodge. Actions happen in normal order, according to width. The height of your roll and the quality of your cover to determine how much of your body is protected—how many hit locations. You can choose which ones.

As a general rule the GM can judge this on his own, but some guidelines follow.

Taking Cover Table: Number of Locations Hidden

Roll	Cover is tiny	Cover is okay	Cover is great
1–3	One location	Three locations	Five locations
4–7	Two locations	Four locations	Completely hidden
8–10	Three locations	Five locations	Completely hidden

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(GM: You really don't need to bother with consulting this chart in the heat of combat. It's just to give you the idea that a good roll isn't going to save you if all you have to hide behind is a skinny sapling, while even a poor roll is good if you're diving into a fortified trench.)

If you successfully take cover, you can position a number of limbs so that they can't get shot. The number depends on how well you rolled and how good the cover is. If your cover is good—like the corner of a building—and you roll 3x2 on your Coordination+Dodge roll, you can hide three of your locations. If you choose to hide your head, torso and left leg, any gunshot that would hit those areas (that is, any set that comes up x10, x7-9 or x1) hits the cover. However, a gunshot that comes up x2-6 hits a leg or arm. The contortions needed to protect the torso while leaving both arms and a leg exposed are left as an exercise for the imaginations of the player and GM.

The lovely thing about cover is that it protects you for the rest of the combat until one of three things happens:

- You break cover.
- Someone else attacks you from a different direction (and even then, the cover still protects you from the original direction).
- The cover itself is destroyed or removed.

If you spend another round hiding (that is, you declare that you're trying to get further protected) you can make another Coordination+Dodge roll. If this roll is better than your first one, you can take that result and hide more limbs. If the roll isn't as good, you can keep the original one.

Once you're covered, you can act (at a distance) from that cover. If you want to throw something or shoot you will have to reveal at least one arm and your head. (Unless you're using the cover fire rules; see *Gunfire* on p. 15.)

For more on cover, see *Heavy Armor* on p. 19.

Concealment

If the target is obscured by smoke, brush or darkness, remove 1d from the attack dice pool before rolling. It doesn't help against cover fire or hand-to-hand attacks.

Armor

There are basically two kinds of armor in World War II. There's light armor—that is, armor light enough that you can pick it up and carry it with you—and there's heavy armor. Heavy armor acts like cover, though many vehicles with heavy armor can move under their own power.

Light armor works in two stages. First, all shock damage taken from an attack is reduced to a single point. Second, killing damage equal to the Light Armor Rating (LAR) is turned into shock.

Example: Verne takes a 3x10 carbine shot to the head, doing 3 killing and 2 shock. Normally that would be death. But he's wearing a steel helmet rated at Light Armor 2. First, those three shock are reduced to 1. (It would be the same if he'd taken 2 shock to the head, or 5, or 10.) Next, two killing points are turned into shock as well. He takes 1 killing and 3 shock—enough to knock him out, but he'll come around pretty quick.

Penetrating weapons (see *Penetration* on p. 22) automatically ignore light armor if they hit.

Heavy Armor

Heavy armor is stuff like thick steel plate. For every point of Heavy Armor Rating (HAR), the width (not just damage) of a successful attack is reduced by 1. If you have Heavy Armor 2 protecting every hit location, any attack that has a width of 3 or less simply fails.

Sample Armor Ratings Table

Armor Type	Armor Rating
Infantry Helmet	2 LAR (head only)
Flak Jacket	3 LAR (torso only)
Steel Breastplate	5 LAR (torso only)
1" Wood Wall	1 LAR
6" Wood Wall	1 HAR
Sandbag	1 HAR
1" Concrete Wall	2 HAR
Type 95 Japanese Light Tank	1 to 0 HAR
SdKfz 251 Halftrack	4 to 0 HAR
PzKpfw II Light Tank	3 to 1 HAR
M3 "General Lee" Medium Tank	5 to 1 HAR
Panzer IV Medium Tank	7 to 2 HAR
M36 Jackson Medium Tank	7 to 1 HAR
Cromwell Mk VIII Medium Tank	7 to 2 HAR
T-34 Medium Tank	6 to 1 HAR
Sherman M4 Medium Tank	7 to 3 HAR
Panther V Heavy Tank	7 to 2 HAR
Churchill Mk VIII Heavy Tank	9 to 2 HAR
M4 Sherman "Jumbo"	9 to 4 HAR
J S 2, Josef Stalin Heavy Tank	9 to 6 HAR
King Tiger Heavy Tank	10 to 7 HAR

Penetrating weapons (p. 22) counteract heavy armor. They reduce the Heavy Armor Rating permanently.

Murder

All these attack rules make the reasonable assumption that the other fellow doesn't want to get hit and is doing his best to avoid it. There are some times, however, that an individual can't avoid what's coming.

If the GM is doing his job, the PCs should never

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have to face a situation where they're going to get killed and there's nothing they can do about it. After all, as the main characters it makes for a bad game if they become helpless and die.

This doesn't mean your characters have ludicrous plot immunity. If you charge a panzer division with your Boy Scout knife, don't expect the GM to put on kid gloves. Similarly, if you pull some blockhead maneuver that delivers you directly into the power of your nemesis, don't be surprised if he drills you in the skull instead of saying "Ach, Captain Torpedo. Only you vill understand ze brilliance of my plan. . . ."

On the other hand, there are going to be situations in which your character has others at his mercy. It could be that you're friends with a Talent who can paralyze people. It could be that someone surrendered to you but you have no safe way to keep him imprisoned. It could be that you got in a lucky shot and knocked the guy out with one punch. He's helpless. Do you want to kill him?

If the answer is "yes," don't bother with any combat rolls. An armed man firing into a motionless body at point blank range does not have a measurable chance of failure. Same thing for a guy with a trench knife, or even a heavy pair of boots.

If you do opt to kill someone in cold blood, however—not in the heat of battle, not as the executioner after a legal trial, but simply because you can—you'll have to make a Cool+Mental Stability check. For more on that, see **Part Four: Talents—***Battle Fatigue* on p. 94.

If the situation is somewhere in between—the target is unwaware but is awake and could respond violently or go diving for cover if you stumble—it calls for an attack roll. If you hit, it's the GM's call: either it's automatic death or it fills the hit location with killing damage (shock if the weapon does only shock). If you miss, ordinary combat begins.

Weapons

Every attack uses a weapon. Different weapons do different amounts of damage, as well as different types of damage. (That's the difference between being hit with a sap and being stabbed with a sword.) The categories of weapon are pretty broad: Each weapon lists the type of damage done (shock, killing or a mix of both) and how much.

The damage location is always based on the height of the roll.

The damage amount is always based on the width of the roll. Usually it's "width+X" where X is some number. If you're striking with a club, for example, it does width+2 damage, and the damage is shock. If you roll 3x5, it does 5 shock points (3 = the width, +2 for the bonus) to your target's right arm.

Following is a list of the standard weapons and their normal damage.

Standard Weapons Table

Attack	Damage
Fists and Feet	Width in shock
Short Truncheon, Bottle, Brass Knuckles	Width +1 in shock
Club	Width +2 in shock
Piano Wire	As strangling (see p. 17) but damage is killing
Small Knife	Width in shock + 1 killing
Trench Knife, Shovel	Width in killing
Bayonet (unfixed)	Width in killing
Bayonet (fixed)	Width +1 in killing
Axe, Spear, Saber	Width +1 in killing
Pistol	Width in killing and in shock
Carbine	Width +1 in killing, width in shock
Submachine Gun	Width in killing and in shock+Spray Dice
Long Rifle	Width +2 in killing and in shock
Machine Gun	Width +2 in killing and in shock+Spray Dice

Weapon Qualities

Some weapons have particular abilities that make them more effective against particular targets. For instance, a hand grenade explodes, making it more dangerous to multiple targets. A machine gun sprays out a stream of lead that can hit an individual many times in a single second. A bangalore torpedo is designed to penetrate armor and remove cover.

Rather than provide separate rules for each and every weapon used in WWII (although there is an extensive list on p. 263), these special abilities are abstracted into five qualities. A weapon's rating in its quality determines how effective it is. Many weapons have more than one quality, of course.

Area

Most weapons with the Area quality do extra damage when they hit, and specifically do damage to everyone within a particular area. This is represented by rolling for locations and assigning extra damage at one die per point of Area. For instance, if a weapon has the quality "Area 3" with a 10-yard radius, three extra dice are rolled once the weapon hits. Everyone within 10 yards of the impact zone takes a point of killing damage to each location rolled on the Area dice. The person at ground zero—that is, the target for the attack—takes damage as rolled on top of the hits from the Area dice.

In addition, everyone in the area of effect takes two points of shock damage to every hit location.

Cover and armor protect normally against Area weapons.

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For PCs and important NPCs you can roll the Area dice separately for each character. In an enclosed space such as a bunker, the GM might wish to double Area damage.

Example: Ron throws a grenade with Area 3 into a trench containing four enemy soldiers. He picks the soldier in the middle and rolls his Body+Grenade after aiming for a turn. He rolls five dice and gets 2x5. The grenade does width+1 in killing and shock to its primary target—3 killing and 3 shock to the target's right arm. After that, Ron's player rolls three more dice for the Area effect, getting a 1,7,8. This Area effect hits both the target and those surrounding him, they each take 1 killing point of damage to the left leg (the 1), and 2 points of killing to his torso (the 7 and the 8). On top of all that, they all take two points of shock to every hit location from the concussive force.

Burn

Fire-based weapons are common in World War II (see p. 23 for a description of flamethrowers.) The Burn quality differs from other weapons qualities in that it has no number rating associated with it. Instead, targets hit by the Burn attack are also on fire.

When a Burn weapon strikes, it does its normal damage—which is often quite low, usually a single level of killing damage. In addition to that damage, every location except the head takes a level of shock damage, and all those locations are on fire. People who are on fire must make Cool+Mental Stability rolls to avoid panicking.

Charging a Burn weapon is very intimidating. GMs may require a Cool+Mental Stability roll to do so.

Burning locations take one point of shock damage every turn until the fire is out. Most fire-based military weapons use a sticky fuel that is particularly difficult to extinguish. Typically, only full immersion or lack of oxygen will do it. See p. 26.

Weapons with both Burn and Area qualities have an unusual sort of Area effect. Normally Area attacks do a great deal of shock damage and also inflict killing damage on the rolled locations. Area burns are less instantly traumatic: Targets only take one point of shock damage to each rolled location. They take no killing damage (unless the affected limb was already full of shock) and they receive no damage at all to areas that don't get rolled. However, those areas that do come up on the Area dice are on fire.

Example: Elton's Coordination+Flamethrower pool is 5d and his weapon has Area 2. Four soldiers are charging at him, and he aims for the one in the middle. Rolling 2,3,4,5 and 10, he fails. His GM considers rolling Cool+Mental Stability for the charging Nazis, but decides it would interrupt the flow of the game. However, they do hesitate long enough to give Elton another chance next round.

This time Elton hits the middle Nazi with a pair of eights. That soldier takes a point of killing damage to his torso, and all his hit locations are on fire except his head. Elton now rolls his two Area dice. They both come up 3, indicating a hit to the arm. The other three soldiers now have one arm on fire apiece. Now they all have to make Cool+Mental Stability rolls. Only one of them makes it. That soldier is able to think clearly enough to run back towards a ditch, while the other three panic and fruitlessly scream or swat at the flames.

You Still Have To Hit

Even if a weapon has high-level Area quality, it doesn't come into play unless your attack roll is successful. You can throw a grenade at a hundred massed troops and still do no damage if you botch the roll.

This may seem a little counterintuitive at first, but there are good reasons for this rule.

- Combat is very distracting, making stupid mistakes a lot more common.
- Weapons are not infallible; every factory turns out a few duds.
- Even a grenade does nothing if you forget to pull the pin.

Second, there's play quality. This is a game. If either side has weapons that automatically do damage, regardless of operator error, it loses a lot of the fun.

Third, there's a mechanical reason. If I know I can do 3 dice of Area damage with a grenade even without a successful roll, the smartest thing I can do is make as many multi-attacks as I can with grenades every combat regardless of the penalties. If the grenade does automatic damage, I don't need matches. If there's no incentive to do it right, nothing stops me from accepting every penalty I can get, and then throwing the grenade anyway.

Spray

Spray weapons are those that fire multiple times, or that have some other factor that makes it easy to aim at many targets. They were built to make extra attacks. Consequently, any multiple attacks (see p. 16) made with a Spray weapon take no extra action dice pool penalties. Also, a number of dice equal to the weapon's Spray rating are added to the pool. The extra dice are not added if a single attack is made (that is, you opt to fire one bullet) but they are added if you make multiple attacks against a single target.

Example: Holden normally has 4 dice in his Coordination+Submachine Gun pool. Firing a submachine gun with Spray 3, he adds 3 dice, giving him a 7d pool. The weapon does Width in killing and in shock. As three enemy soldiers charge him, he decides to try to mow all of them down. He rolls seven dice, getting 2,2,2,6,7,8,8. He assigns the 3x2 to the first attacker. This does 3 killing and 3 shock to that attacker's right leg, destroying it completely. He then assigns the two 8's to the next attacker, doing 2 killing and 2 shock to that man's torso.

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Spray Definitions Table

Rounds Per Minute	Spray Rating
300 rpm	1
400 rpm	2
500 rpm	2
600 rpm	3
700 rpm	3
800 rpm	4
900 rpm	4
1000 rpm	5
1200 rpm	5
1500 rpm	6

A weapon's Spray rating can also be added when using Cover Fire (see p. 16).

Many weapons in **Part Seven: The Field Manual,** p. 263, have multiple Spray ratings, such as "2/3" or 0/2." You can choose which to use. Spray "0" using the Spray rules without adding any bonus dice.

Slow

A Slow weapon cannot be fired every round. After firing, you have to spend a number of rounds equal to its Slow rating to prepare it to fire again. If the weapon is already prepared, you can fire it in the first round. For instance, a bazooka, Slow 3, can be fired once every four rounds.

Penetration

Penetration weapons are designed to go through heavy armor (see p. 19). If a weapon with the Penetration quality hits a target with a Heavy Armor Rating, reduce the HAR by the Penetration quality of the weapon and the width of the result (to a maximum of double the original Penetration value). If any HAR remains, it reduces the width of the attack roll.

If Penetration reduces HAR to zero, the armor is destroyed and no longer protects that target. (For a large target such as a tank, that applies only to armor on one location, such as the treads or the turret.)

If a weapon has both Area and Penetration qualities, the Area damage is not applied like Penetration damage. There is no weapon in World War II that penetrates all heavily armored targets within an area of effect. Instead, the Area effect is applied after the Penetration. If the Penetration didn't get through a particular batch of Heavy Armor, the people protected by that armor aren't hit. People outside the armored enclosure, however, are still hit with the Area damage. So are people inside if the Penetration does get through.

> ***Example:*** Fritz fires a *Panzerschreck* with Penetration 5 and Area 6 at a U.S. Sherman Tank with 7 points of Heavy Armor on the front. His roll (3x7) indicates a hit. The Penetration of the weapon is added to the width of the roll for a total of 8 (which could have been up to 10, double the original Penetration value of the weapon, depending on the width), and the result is removed from the Heavy Armor, eliminating the front armor. The target of the round was the tank itself, so it took the Width damage; but with the armor gone, the crew within is exposed to the six Area dice.

Some penetrating weapons have Area qualities as well. If a Penetration weapon reduces the armor on its target to 0, the Area damage gets through to any people behind the armor.

Area/Penetration Chart

Explosive Type	Charge	Radius	Area	Penetration
Stick of dynamite	10 g	5 yds.	2	0
Volkshangranate 45	36 g	10 yds.	3	2
Pineapple grenade MK2	93 g	10 yds.	3	2
Einhandgranate 39	112 g	12 yds.	4	2
5cm *Granatwerfer*	120 g	13 yds.	4	3
Stielhandgranate 24	165 g	15 yds.	4	3
Panzerschreck round	660 g	17 yds.	6	5
Bazooka round	702 g	20 yds.	7	5
PIAT round	741 g	20 yds.	8	6
Panzerfaust round	800 g	20 yds.	8	7
Tellermine 29	4 kg	25 yds.	9	9
35 cm shell	9.24 kg	25 yds.	10	10

Special Weapons

Machine Gun

A machine gun is a weapon of mass destruction designed to stop troops from rushing forward by blanketing them with bullets. Several different models of machine guns are outlined in **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263. Most machine guns fill the air with a 500 to 1,000 rounds per minute, cutting down almost everything in their line of fire.

Machine guns are usually fixed weapons, heavy and awkward. For most, unless it's mounted on a vehicle, it's not mobile. Machine guns are Spray weapons (see *Spray* on p. 21 to see exactly what that means). Most machine guns do Width +2 points of killing and shock damage for each hit.

The number of machine gun rounds used each attack is equal to the dice pool rolled. This goes both ways: If a machine gun is low on ammo, it limits the dice pool. This can even reduce the dice pool beneath the stat+skill rating, because these weapons are usually not designed for single-shot accuracy.

> ***Example:*** Otto opens up on an American soldier, making three attacks with an MG42 machine gun. It has a Spray rating of 6d, which he adds to his 4d Coordination+Machine Gun pool for a total of 10d. He rolls 1,2,2,3,4,4,7,7,9 and 10. He has three matches, 2x2, 2x4 and 2x7. Three rounds hit the American, one in the right leg, one in the left arm and one in the torso, each for 4 killing and shock. A total of 10 rounds were fired in the attack.
>
> Next round, Otto only has eight shots left in his machine gun. That means he can't get the full benefit of the Spray 6 rating. Instead, he rolls 8d—the maximum amount allowed by the ammo. If he was down to two rounds, he could only roll two dice, even though this is beneath his Coordination+Machine Gun rating.

Submachine Gun

A submachine gun is a smaller and more portable version

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of the machine gun. Several different models of SMGs are outlined in **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263. When fired on full automatic it is not very accurate.

SMGs have Spray ratings, as described earlier. Each hit does Width in killing and shock to the hit location.

When on full automatic, the weapon fires a number of bullets equal to the number of dice in the attacker's pool. Note that some submachine guns cannot be fired at less than fully automatic fire. If your SMG is low on ammunition, it may reduce the weapon's Spray rating. (For instance, if you only have five rounds left, you can't use the Spray rating to increase your dice pool above five.) Unlike the heavier machineguns, SMGs don't suffer as much when single rounds are fired. If you're firing a single shot, just roll Coordination+Rifle or Submachine Gun. If you're firing multiple shots but don't have enough for the full stat+skill+Spray pool, the maximum limit on your die pool is either your stat+skill pool or the number of rounds left in the weapon—whichever is higher.

> ***Example:*** Ronnie's Coordination+Submachine Gun pool is 3d. He has a SMG with Spray 3. If the gun is full of bullets, he rolls 6d (Coordination + Submachine-gun + Spray). If his SMG is down to four rounds, his dice pool is down to 4d—still better than his usual die pool, but he's not getting the full Spray benefit. If there are only two rounds, he still rolls 3d—the baseline amount he gets from his stat and skill.

Flamethrower

A flamethrower is rolled like a normal weapon, except that it has a very limited range and it sets things on fire. Several different models of flamethrowers are outlined in **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263. Detailed information about being on fire is on p. 26. (Quick version: You make a Cool+Mental Stability check or panic. Each burning limb takes a level of shock damage every turn until the fire is out.)

On a successful hit, the target takes a single level of killing damage to the indicated area. In addition, every limb on the target is on fire, except for the head. (Realistically, the head should be on fire too, but in the interest of game balance the head is excluded.)

Some flamethrowers also have an Area rating because they throw a fan of flame instead of a jet. These Area dice work a little differently than the standard Area dice. They only do a single point of shock damage to each indicated hit location, but those locations catch fire on every soldier struck.

The flamethrower is an effective "terror weapon" as well. Troops facing an enemy flamethrower in combat must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll or break and run for cover.

Repeated hits from a flamethrower do not accelerate the burning process. It does an additional level of killing damage, but it's not possible to set the same location on fire twice.

There is one very big drawback to using a flamethrower. It is extremely dangerous when your fuel tank gets hit. If you're wearing a flamethrower and you take a hit to location 9—not just any torso hit, but specifically 9—your tank has been hit and blows up. If this happens, you take a point of killing damage to your torso (in addition to whatever other damage you took from the enemy hit) and every hit location is on fire, including your head. Furthermore, 3 Area dice are rolled to set people around you on fire.

It is of course possible to make called shots to flamethrower canisters.

Grenade

A grenade is an explosive anti-personnel weapon. Although there are significant cosmetic differences between Allied and Axis grenades, they are effectively the same thing—an explosive charge covered in a steel shell which becomes shrapnel when detonated.

To keep things simple, a grenade goes off one combat round after it's thrown, with the width of the roll determining the timing of the explosion in that round. When attacked by an enemy grenade, in that intervening round before it explodes you can attempt one of four things:

1) You can kick the grenade away: With a successful roll of Coordination+Grenade, you can kick a grenade away. If you succeed in beating the width of the detonation with your roll, you kick it clear and take none of the main damage or Area damage from the grenade attack. Shock damage, however, occurs normally, no matter what. In the case of a tie, or if you fail, you take the full brunt of the explosion. Notably, this move requires a large open space. In a foxhole or other tight quarters kicking a grenade will do you no good.

> ***Example:*** An *SS* man heaves a "potato masher" grenade into Orvis' vicinity with a roll of 6, 6, 1, 2, 9 and a 1. No one else sees it, so Orvis tries to give it a kick. He rolls 4d for Coordination+Grenade and gets 5, 5, 5 and a 3. Since Orvis' roll has a width of 3, and the *SS* man's attack is the width of 2, in the next round Orvis kicks the grenade away before it goes off (since a 3 beats a 2.) However, he still takes 2 points of shock damage to every hit location when the grenade detonates the next round.

2) You can pick the grenade up and throw it back: This is a multiple action. Drop a die (unless you have an appropriate Hyperstat or Hyperskill), roll Coordination+Grenade and look for two sets. Succeed at both sets and you pick the grenade up and

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throw it back at your attacker. Succeed at one and you throw it away harmlessly. If the width is smaller than or equal to the width of the attack, however, the grenade goes off while you're still fumbling with it.

Example: A U.S. soldier throws a "pineapple grenade" into Klaus' foxhole with a roll of 2x6. Klaus tries to grab it off the ground and throw it back with his Coordination+Grenade pool of 5d. He drops 1d and, luckily, rolls 10, 10, 5 and a 5. Klaus assigns the 10's to the pickup and the 5's to the throw. The 10's are higher than the 2x6 attack, so Klaus throws it away from himself; but the 5's are lower so he doesn't throw it close enough to harm the American.

3) You can catch it in mid-air and throw it back: This daring move actually happened a lot during the war. To attempt it, you must be able to clearly see the grenade as it comes in (in other words, it doesn't work at night or in other sight-obscuring conditions) and of course you must announce the attempt in the Declare phase. This is another multiple action, but if you succeed, it gains you a little time (since you don't have to fumble on the ground for the grenade), so you don't drop a die out of your set. Roll your full Coordination+Grenade pool and look for two sets. Assign one to the catch and the throw. The catch must happen first—it must have a wider Width or if Widths are tied a higher Height—or else you take all the grenade damage to your right or left arm as it goes off in your hand.

Example: A *Heer* soldier hurls a grenade at Boris with a roll of 6, 5, 5, 3, 4 and 3. Boris wants to catch it in mid-air and throw it back. Boris rolls his Coordination+Grenade pool of 5d and gets 9, 9, 9, 3 and a 3. He assigns the 3x9 to the catch and the 2x3 to the throw, so he catches the grenade in mid-air (at Width 3) and then throws it back (at Width 2) at the *Heer* soldier, where it blows up and does normal damage for Boris' Width 2 grenade attack roll.

4) You can dive on it: This is the truly heroic option. Unless you have a Talent power that will protect you from the brunt of the attack, you are pretty much doomed after a move like this. You don't even need to make a roll to do this; if you want to dive on a grenade, you do it. You can opt for this in the same round after trying to kick or throw it away. You take all the grenade damage to your torso (the 2 points of shock damage to each hit location usually caused by a grenade is focused on your torso as well, for a total of 12 points of shock). No one else present takes any damage. At the GM's discretion, this kind of nerve may require a Cool+Mental Stability roll.

Example: Paul sees a "potato masher" land amidst his men gathered in a trench with a 3x10 attack. There's nowhere to kick it, no time to throw it, so Paul leaps on it. It goes off the next round, causing 7 points of killing and 16 points of shock to Paul's torso, killing him instantly. The rest of the men in the trench, however, are saved.

The average soldier can throw an average fragmentation grenade about 30 yards. For every Body point above 2, add 20 yards to that number.

Example: Peter wants to throw a grenade as far as he can. His Body is 9d. 9d is 7 more than 2, so he can throw it an extra 140 yards. Peter can throw the grenade about 170 yards (510 feet).

Throwing Rocks or Debris

Throwing a rock or debris at someone requires a Body+Throw roll and it does width in shock damage. No big deal. However, when somebody strong enough to lift a tank throws a cinderblock at you, it suddenly becomes a lot more of a problem. To avoid a mess of calculation based on the weight of the object and its distance, *Godlike* uses a quick fix: The damage from a big missile equals either the width of the roll or half the thrower's Body (rounded down) in shock damage to the hit location rolled. Furthermore, if the thrower has Body 6+, the throw attack does width in killing and shock instead of just width in shock damage.

Other Sources of Harm

In *Godlike*, if the bullets and mines don't get you, the frostbite, car wrecks or other untoward events probably will. Various terrible things that can happen to your character are covered in detail below.

Electrocution

Electrical hazards have a dice pool representing how dangerous they are, rated on a scale of 1-10. This goes from a nine-volt battery (1 die) to a thunderbolt (10 dice). When a PC is zapped, just roll the electric pool as a static contest. If a match comes up, the PC takes shock damage equal to the width of

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the roll. However, the hit location is not determined by the height of the roll, but rather by the circumstances. If the PC is poking at wires with a stick, the shock starts in his arm. If he's hit by lightning, it either starts in his head or in the highest point of his body. (If he's lucky, he had a hand raised.)

Electric damage doesn't stay in one place, though. Specifically, it starts wherever it made contact, and then goes to the ground through the shortest route. So, if you grab both ends of a live wire with one hand, you only take damage in that one arm. But if you grab an end in each hand, the jolt travels from one hand, up the arm, through the torso, and out the other arm, doing the same damage to all three locations. If you only grab one end, the juice goes down the arm, through the torso, and out the closest leg. If you are hit by lightning, it goes straight down your head, through your torso and out one or both legs. (This is why lightning victims sometimes have their shoes blown off.)

That's what happens with a one-time shock, like a bolt of lightning or sticking your finger in a light socket to blow the circuit breaker. It does damage, you go "Ouch!" and that's it. But what if it's a steady current? That's a bit nastier. In that case, you have to make a static Body roll to let go. If the roll fails, your muscles have locked shut on the current source and you get juiced again—meaning, the GM rolls the electric die pool again. This is repeated until (1) you make your Body roll, or (2) someone knocks you free or (3) you die and there's no point rolling damage any more.

What's more, if you're soaking wet, the electric pool has one of its dice turned into a wiggle die. (See **Part Four: Talents—***Wiggle Dice* on p. 40 for details.)

> ***Example:*** Jane is running through the rain when she gets hit by lightning. The GM figures it was a 7d bolt, so he rolls 6d and keeps one as a wiggle die because Jane is drenched. He rolls 2, 4, 5, 3, 2 and 3. He's got two pair, and it doesn't really matter which he picks: He can add the wiggle die to get a result 3 wide. Jane takes 3 points of shock to her head, 3 to her torso and three to one leg.

> ***Example:*** Renard gets thrown into a mass of high voltage wires in the middle of an electrical plant. It's a 10d hazard. The first round the GM rolls and gets 1, 2, 4, 4, 6, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10—not a bad roll for ten dice, the best pair is a measly 2x6. However, because he's completely entangled, the GM decides he takes the damage to every location except his head. Renard rolls his 3 Body to try to let go and doesn't get a match. Next round, he's stuck twitching in the wires and the GM rolls again. This time it's 1, 2, 3, 3, 5, 6, 7, 7, 7 and 10—three levels of shock to every location. Lucky for him, one of his buddies knocks him out of the wires with a broom, so he gets by with just five shock to every location except his head.

Falling

Any time you fall more than five feet, there's a chance of injury. The type of damage depends on what you hit. The degree of damage depends on your height. The location of the damage depends on how well you control your fall.

You take only shock damage if you land on something forgiving—soft ground, water, or an awning. You also take shock damage if something breaks your fall on the way down. (People have survived falling out of airplanes by crashing through pine branches and landing on snow.) If you land on hard-packed earth, rocks, metal or cement, you take killing damage.

For every ten feet fallen, you take a point of damage to each relevant area, up to a maximum of 10 points.

While falling, you may make one Coordination roll. If you have a skill that relates specifically to falling, absorbing impact, or controlling your body in midair, you may add that skill. Relevant skills would be Jujitsu (virtually unknown in the West before the 1950s), Acrobatics, Parachuting, Diving and the like. If that roll succeeds, you land well and take damage only to your legs. If that roll fails, you land badly and take damage to every hit location.

> ***Example:*** Gretta jumps out a second-story window, trying to leap into an open window across the alley. She misses and falls fifteen feet to the cobblestones below. She rolls her Coordination (3d) and gets 1, 7 and 9—no match. She falls badly, taking damage to every location. Since she landed on stone, it's killing damage. But since it's a short fall—under twenty feet—it's only one point to each location. She's badly bruised, but she can get up and run away.

> ***Example:*** Ryan throws Aki off a cliff into the deep water sixty feet below. Aki, being an officer with samurai lineage, has studied Jujitsu and knows how to take a fall properly. He rolls Coordination+Jujitsu and gets a pair of 2s. He lands well, taking damage only to his legs. Landing in water is only shock damage. Still, sixty feet is a long fall—Aki takes six points of shock to each leg.

The exception to these rules is, of course, using a parachute. Parachutes are only effective on falls of 1,000 feet or farther. With a successful Coordination+Parachute roll, a paratrooper only takes a point of shock to each leg, no matter how far he fell. Even if the roll fails, the fall is treated as if it was a twenty-foot fall.

Drowning

Drowning is what happens when you run out of air underwater. A character can hold his breath for a number of minutes equal to his Body divided by 2 (rounded down.) After that grace period, the character must roll Body+Endurance each round to keep from inhaling water.

Each combat round after the first roll, the character loses a die from his Body+Endurance dice pool. When his dice pool drops to 1 or he can't make a match, he inhales water and starts dying.

Each round of drowning inflicts 1 killing point of damage to the torso and 1 point of shock to the head. When the head is filled with shock damage, the subject is unconscious, and when the head fills with killing damage, the subject is dead.

Cold

In most cases, extended exposure without any access to heat is lethal. Wetness only compounds the problem.

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You have a grace period equal to your Body in days if you're in reasonable (but cold) shelter. The grace period drops to hours if you're well dressed but out in the open. If you're not wearing cold-weather gear and in you're in subzero temperatures, the grace period drops to minutes.

After the grace period, you start taking shock damage to your arms and legs—one point per limb every five minutes. When your arms and legs are filled with shock damage, you start taking shock damage to your torso and head as well, the same amount at the same rate. Your arms and legs continue to fill with damage, but it's now killing.

Once this chill gives you two or more points of killing damage in a limb, there's a chance of gangrene. Make a Body+Health roll. If it fails, the limb has to come off eventually, or it will kill you. Make this roll every time you take another frost-based killing point to your limbs.

If the temperatures are extremely low—forty below or worse—you take this damage every minute instead of every five minutes. This accelerated rate is also used if you've gotten soaked and your clothes freeze.

Also, every night you spend in a subzero environment without the chance to heat up, you lose half your Will.

> ***Example:*** Johan is at Stalingrad in the winter of '43. He has a Body of 3, so he can spend three days in freezing conditions with cover, or three hours without cover before taking damage. When that time is up, Johan starts to freeze, and fast. Every five minutes he takes a point of shock damage to each arm and leg. He has about a half hour to get some warmth before his kimbs are filled with shock. If he can't do it, he starts taking killing damage to his limbs from frostbite—one point of it every five minutes. After ten minutes of that, he has to start making Body+Health rolls every five minutes to avoid gangrene. Meanwhile, his torso and head begin to freeze. He has twenty minutes before he passes out (five minutes times the four damage boxes in his head.) After that, it's another twenty minutes before he's dead.

Fire

A limb that catches fire takes a point of shock damage every round. Once it has filled with killing damage, the flame spreads to the torso. If it matters, once the torso fills with flame-induced killing damage, the fire spreads to every other hit location.

A burning character must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll in order to avoid panic. If you fail, you fruitlessly swat the flames, spreading them to other hit locations at the rate of one every round until you succeed at a Cool+Mental Stability roll.

If you make the Mental Stability roll, you're almost certainly going to make dousing the fire your top priority. If there's open water nearby, you don't need to roll. During the declare phase, you simply state that you're putting out the fire. If it's imperative to know the timing, make a Coordination+Dodge roll and treat it like you're diving for cover. (If the water is at the bottom of a ditch, you might get some cover, too.) If the roll fails, you can put out the fire at the end of the round.

If there's no water, you can extinguish flames by rolling on the ground. This is less certain than using water: Make a Coordination+Dodge roll. If it fails, the flames remain. If it succeeds, the fire goes out.

Regardless of which technique you use, the fire on all hit locations is doused in a single action. It doesn't matter if one arm is on fire or your whole body: Dropping and rolling puts it all out—if you succeed.

If your head catches on fire, you're in real trouble. Even if you survive, you're effectively blind for five minutes.

Flamethrowers use particularly sticky fuel, which makes their flames harder to douse. Often, if you are hit by a flamethrower, simply dumping water on it won't work. Neither will rolling on the ground, unless it's extremely muddy. Only submersion or a complete lack of oxygen can put out sticky fuel. Treat this as a difficulty rating of 4 for extinguishing the flames unless you dive fully under water.

Car Wrecks and Other Crashes

How fast were you going when you hit? This is the most important factor in determining the effect of a crash. Other things matter as well of course. Were you secured into your seat? Did you know you were going to crash and have time to brace yourself before you hit?

Wrecks are a dynamic contest between your Body +Endurance and a difficulty number. Overcome the difficulty number, and you survive the crash, more or less.

Start With a Base Difficulty number:

- **Boat Wrecks:** Base Difficulty Number 3
- **Car Wrecks:** Base Difficulty Number 3
- **Plane Wrecks:** Base Difficulty Number 5

Add 1 to the Difficulty number . . .

- For every 10 mph over 20 mph you were traveling.
- If you were on a dirt road.
- If you have no driving skill appropriate to the vehicle.
- If your vehicle was damaged in combat.
- If you had no restraining device to keep you in the vehicle.

The maximum difficulty number possible is 10. All additional modifiers past 10 are discarded.

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Subtract 1 from the Difficulty number if:

- If you have a moment to prepare for the crash.
- If you have a skill in excess of 2 for the vehicle you are crashing.
- If you are a passenger, or are secured in the back of the vehicle.

If you fail the roll, every hit location on your body is filled with shock damage. In addition, you take the difficulty number of the crash in shock damage to the hit location that matches the difficulty number.

If you make the roll, you take twice the difficulty of the crash in shock damage. You may spread this around hit locations as you wish.

Example: Claude's Spitfire is auguring in. The base difficulty number for a plane crash is 5. Claude has managed to slow down his airspeed to 150 mph, which is 130 mph more than 20 mph, giving him a 10 max difficulty number (if totals above 10 were counted, he would have had an 18, but since everything past 10 is discarded, it's just a 10.) Claude is then able to subtract 2 from that difficulty number since he has a moment to prepare and he has a skill in excess of 2 for the vehicle. So his difficulty number is 8. Claude rolls his 3d of Body and gets a 4, 4 and a 1, a 2x4. Since Claude failed to overcome the difficulty number, every hit location fills with shock. He also takes eight more points of shock to hit location 8—his torso. Since his torso is already full of shock, this becomes killing damage. Claude is bleeding, unconscious and near death: Only two more points of shock to his torso are needed to kill him.

Example: Luke is bringing his bomber in on a wing and a prayer. The base difficulty for a plane crash is 5. The bomber is traveling at 200 mph when it hits, maxing out its difficulty number at 10. But Luke has a moment to prepare for the crash (-1), and he has piloting skill in excess of 2 (-1), so his difficulty number is now 8.

Luke rolls against his Body of 3d and gets a 3, 8 and an 8, a match that beats the difficulty number! He spreads 16 points of shock damage (twice the difficulty) throughout his body, allocating 3 to each arm, 4 to each leg, and the last two to his torso. The injury isn't even bad enough to give him any killing damage.

Movement in Combat

We encourage you to play a little loose with movement rates in combat, since the length of a combat round is so flexible. The typical rule of thumb is given on p. 8 as 10 yards plus twice your Body score in a round. Most combat actions incur a –1d penalty while you're running. At the GM's discretion you can move a small amount, say your Body stat in yards, without a penalty to other actions.

To cover greater distances quickly, there's an optional rule for the Running skill on p. 355.

Character Advancement

Developing your character is half the fun of a role-playing game. Characters improve over time, getting better at skills, statistics or even Talent powers. A green recruit could develop over several game sessions into a hardened warrior.

Two things let you advance your character: experience points and Will points.

Experience Points

Experience points are rewards given at the end of a game session. They represent how well your character did at the trials and tribulations of the game.

Will Points

As detailed in **Part 4—Talents,** Will points are the fuel of Talent abilities. In addition to powering the use of Talents, they can be cashed in to improve mundane and Talent abilities.

There are sharp limits on spending Will points to improve your abilities. It represents tremendous mental effort and is possible only in the most catastrophic moments of stress. The GM may decide to make exceptions, but in general it is allowed only when a character is in a moment of true desperation or motivation.

As a rule of thumb, if a character is forced to make a Mental Stability check due to circumstances beyond his control (because he's about to be killed or is being tortured, for instance, not because he's choosing to murder someone in cold blood), that's a time when the character could spend Will to improve an ability or gain a new one. Succeeding at the Mental Stability roll isn't necessary; but of course failing it might leave too few Will points to make the improvement.

When You Can Improve

A character can improve either during a mission or in down time between missions.

You can improve during a mission only if you're in the middle of combat or some other crisis. However, during any given combat or crisis you can improve only a single score—a stat, a skill, a Talent power, or Base Will—and by only one level. (If you run into multiple crises or combats in a single mission, you could improve abilities each time if you have the experience points or Will points to spare.)

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Example: Armand has 6 experience points and he's in the middle of a firefight. His skill in Rifle is 3, and he decides it would be nice to have a Rifle skill of 4. So he spends 3 experience points and raises his Rifle to 4. He can't improve anything else in this firefight.

If your character has a few days of down time between missions, you can spend any amount of experience points on any number of stats and skills. However, you can *never* spend Will points to improve an ability in down time between missions.

Gaining Experience Points

Every time a player shows up and plays in the game, his or her character earns a single experience point.

At the end of each session, the GM can distribute one bonus experience point as he or she sees fit. Usually it's given to the player who stayed in character, had the best ideas or who otherwise supported everyone else's good time. It is, of course, also possible for the GM to give out this bonus experience to the character that seems weakest so that he can catch up with the others. Or it might go to the character who withstood the worst trials and tribulations of the game as a way of showing the value of perseverence.

Finally, after every session the players talk it over and award a third experience point to a single character by vote. Please don't "politic" for votes. ("You vote for me this session, I'll vote for you next one!") In a tie, the point is not awarded.

Gaining Will Points

Lost Will points recover with rest, one point per night up to your Base Will level. Will points are also gained in game play when Talents clash in a battle of power (see **Part Four: Talents—***When Wills Collide,* p. 95) or when a character acts heroically or with ingenuity. You can never have more than 50 Will points in the default *Godlike* setting.

Improving a Skill or Stat

You can raise a skill or a stat one level by spending experience points or Will points.

The experience point cost to raise a skill one level is 3 points. To raise a stat costs 3 experience points times the new level; so raising a stat from 2 to 3 costs 9 experience points.

The Will point cost to raise a skill is 10. To raise a stat costs 10 Will times the new level; so going from 2 to 3 costs 30 Will points.

A skill or stat can be improved beyond 4 only if you also spend a point of Base Will—and that has all the same conditions as spending Will points to improve. For that kind of mastery, experience and practice are not enough.

Learning a New Skill

In some circumstances you can even learn an entirely new skill at level 1. Simply buy that first rank of the skill, pay the appropriate cost and you're good to go.

There is one catch: Your GM has to approve it, based on his or her judgment that your character has had an opportunity to *learn* that skill. If you haven't been studying Swahili and no one's been teaching you Swahili, there's no reason you should be able to suddenly know Swahili. Some skills can be learned without teachers (fist fighting and rock climbing spring immediately to mind), so if your GM thinks you've learned enough in the school of hard knocks, he might let you buy skills like that without formal study or training.

Typically you can learn a new skill only by spending experience points in down time. But if you've been spending time practicing the new skill and you desperately need it to kick in during a crisis, you could spend Will points points to gain that first die. But the usual requirements apply for spending Will points to improve yourself—it has to be a serious crisis, usually the sort that triggers a Mental Stability check.

Improving Base Will

Unlike Will points, Base Will does not come back on its own. You can raise Base Will by one point by spending 20 Will points. It cannot be raised with experience points.

Improving a Talent Power

You can improve a Hyperskill, Hyperstat or Miracle by one level (whether that's a normal die, a Hard Die or a Wiggle Die) by spending Will points equal to the ordinary cost of the new die. So if the power costs 3/6/12 points per die and you want to add a hard die, it costs 6 Will points.

Experience points cannot improve Talent powers.

To transform regular dice in a power into Hard Dice or Wiggle Dice, see **Part Four: Talents—***Buying (and Promoting) Dice* on p. 41.

Gaining completely new Talent powers is more difficult; see *Gaining New Powers* on p. 42.

What to Raise	Experience Point Cost	Will Point Cost
Skill	3	10
Stat	3 x the new level	10 x the new level
Base Will	n/a	20
Talent power	n/a	Points per die

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PART THREE

Character Creation

"WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO when you get out?" Stantz murmured in the dark, from the top bunk.

These after-hour conversations had become standard fare since we'd been holed up in training on the coast of Falmouth. No leave, no passes. We were stuck here. All we had to do was talk and get pretend shot-at. After a while it all sounded the same, the shooting and the talk.

"What about the 'Mystery Ape'?" the Ape asked, half to himself, from the next bed over.

Stantz and I laughed low.

"I'm gonna get married, get a house in Oyster Bay and have some little Talents," I replied, a prayer in the dark. Like catechism class at Holy Trinity. But God wasn't here, at least not now. He was on our side, sure—I mean, I could fly—but why didn't he just show himself and skip all the hubbub?

"Or just 'Mr. Ape'? Is that too much? Too little?" the Ape whispered. For some reason things didn't seem too funny to me anymore.

We all came here from special training in Scotland. America's Talented elite. Men and boys from places which were now nothing but a reward—the ultimate reward in warfare. A place to return to if you made it through. A place full of people who wouldn't understand what it was like and who would pretend not to see the blood on your hands if you got back in one piece. That was the deal.

People who would pretend to love you just the same as they had before the war. Before the other things, too.

The Ape lived in New Jersey before his Talent. He won't talk about how it happened, but I think it had something to do with a carnival. He can turn into a bull gorilla whenever he wants. Just closes his eyes and poof! Gorilla. I've seen him rip a car tire in half with his hands in frustration. I've seen him lift the end of a Jeep off the ground when bored, just for something to do.

I've also seen the way he looks at people sometimes. Like they were a Jeep or a tire that needed ripping. Now he dreams about the money he's going to make when he gets home. His monthly stationery is covered in his own misspelled handwritten posters advertising "The Amazing Ape-Man" and "Mr. Ape." No one talks about why he doesn't use those letters to write home. As far as we know, he doesn't really have one.

Stantz is another matter. He's got a wife and some kids back in Seteris, Maine. A home which sounds like something out of a family-hour radio show. Like a show, the story is updated every week. He's a talker, Stantz is. He likes to hear other people's stories, but I think he likes to hear himself the best. He offers himself up in one big lump whether people are listening or not. Everyone likes him. He's the squad cut-up. He can make things reorient themselves with gravity. No one knows why.

Last week he reoriented the gravitation of my boots so they were drawn to the ceiling and I had to fly up and pull them down. Funny. He's a funny guy. Before we left New York, he was cheating on his wife with three different women. Last week he failed short arm inspection for the second time.

Funny, like I said.

"The Incredible Ape?" Ape murmured in the dark.

I tried to see Ellie in my mind and all I could picture were her hands, folded in her lap in white gloves in the park. I tried not to think about what comes after all this. I tried not to think about dying.

I tried to see a future with me in it, but all I could see was Seventh Avenue filled with a thousand faces, each empty of emotion and filled to the brim with its own secrets. In my mind, I tried to picture Ellie there, waiting for me near the IRT or in the deli, but all I could see was a telegram with my name on it being delivered by some flat-faced boy with no eyes.

"The Ape Boy?" Ape mumbled. Then the major stuck his head in and hissed at us to shut it, and I was happy he did because if he hadn't I would have said something I would've regretted later.

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"Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity . . ."

—General Dwight D. Eisenhower, June 7, 1944

Character Creation in *Godlike*

Want to make a character for *Godlike?* First, you need to have a short talk with your GM to get an idea of the campaign setting (sometimes this step is not necessary, especially if you're just making up characters for later), and then you work out the character's background. Statistics and skills come after that, and then we get to the paranormal abilities. Since Talents start as normal people and *then* develop paranormal powers, the same order is suggested for character creation. Come up with the person first and then come up with the power to match (of course, if you want to do it the other way around, there's nothing wrong with that; it's your game).

As with the rest of the game, all decisions made by the GM during character creation are final. Be reasonable with your GM and he should reasonable back. Take his suggestions to heart. After all, he's the one shaping the game you will be playing. Chances are, the GM's decision is in the best interest of the game, no matter how frustrating it may seem at the moment.

Game Moderator Involvement

When preparing a character for a new campaign it often helps to consult the GM during all the steps of character creation. Only the GM can really answer vital questions such as in what year the campaign begins, where it's based and what nationalities are permitted.

I've said it before, but I think it bears repeating: The GM is also the final arbiter of the rules, even the character creation rules. His final say on any rules question can make the creation process much more streamlined and painless in the long run. Be kind to your Game Moderator!

Background

Talents begin life as normal people. They have daily lives, histories, friends, neighbors and stories. Just like you and me, they have wants, dreams and desires. It's up to you to come up with all these little details. I know this may seem a bit daunting at first, but if you break it down step by step it's really not overwhelming.

A good way to begin developing a character is to base him on a subject from real life. This could be a friend, a relative, someone from history or a famous person. Feel free to mix and match ideas from various sources, but not so much so that the character becomes unfocused or unrealistic. Try to stay away from stereotypes (i.e., the maladjusted loner, the mad scientist, Dudley Do-Right, *etc.*).

A character should be easily described. Usually a sentence or two will do. "A high-strung, well-adjusted former football player who has no idea what war truly is" is a good example, but "a bookworm" is too vague. Try to choose several ideas to incorporate into the basic framework of your character. Don't come up with a paranormal ability yet. I know, that's the fun part, but it's still way too early.

As part of the background, choose gender. The overwhelming majority of characters fighting in the war are men, but secret services such as the SOE and the OSS put women in the field who accomplished amazing things.

Now move on to:

Nationality

This is a very important question in the game. It is, after all, a game about the greatest war of all time. Where is your character from? First find out the beginning date of the campaign from your GM and then consider the possibilities. World War II was a time of unusual mixtures of nationalities all fighting for the same cause. An Allied commando team of super-human Talents might be composed of an Ethiopian tribesman, a French partisan, a displaced Pole and a refugee Lithuanian Jew. Diversity leads to interesting game play.

Was your character's country overrun by Axis forces?

How To Make a Character

Character creation in *Godlike* is broken down into four simple steps.

1) **Talk to your GM:** First you need to talk to your GM and find out when and where the campaign or adventure is set in the world of *Godlike*, so you can make an appropriate character.
2) **Create a Background:** Develop the personality and history of your character as he was before becoming a Talent. Come up with a background, nationality, age, family, education, friends, dependants and a motivation for the character.
3) **Buy Stats and Skills:** Next, build the character, buying statistics and skills and filling out the character sheet.
4) **Add the Talents:** Creating Talent powers for your character is the final stage.

Of course, if you're familiar with creating characters for other role-playing games, you probably know what needs to be done. In that case, feel free to skip around and make it up as you go along. Just be sure to get your GM's okay on the character you create before game play.

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Vaulting the Language Barrier

What happens when a group of characters are composed of several different nationalities each speaking a different language? How do they communicate? Well, there's an easy fix. Since most of the Allied nations speak English, the GM can just give the PC's a "free" skill point in English. This effectively eliminates the language barrier and is generally fair (if a PC already speaks English, that "free" skill point can be spent on any other language just to balance things out).

If so, how did he escape? Or is the character from an Allied country? If so, which one?

A little research into your character's nationality can provide wonderful flavor to game play. Often, even the simplest facts about a foreign country gleaned from an encyclopedia will provide hours' worth of enjoyable game "information seeds" and will give you a chance to set your character apart from the rest. A harrowing story of escape from panzer divisions as they rolled over the border, the heartbreaking memory of a murdered family hauled off to a concentration camp by the *SS*, or a folk tale learned in childhood from a Gypsy grandmother can only add depth and drama to a character. Nationality is important.

Now is usually a good time to give a name to the character. Pick a name from a phone book, from a novel, or mix two names you know together to form a new one. Just make sure it matches your character's nationality.

Age

How old do you want your character to be? This is a vital question, though it may seem unimportant at first. Is he a wet-behind-the-ears new recruit, or a veteran of the Great War? Is he wise beyond his years or naive? Pick a birthday and then it's off to:

Family

Who are the character's parents? What do they do for a living? Are they still alive? Does he have sisters? Brothers? A big or a small family? Uncles, aunts or cousins? Grandparents? Did he have a good relationship with his family?

Where is the character's family from? What state, province or town? A big or small town? How did this affect the character's upbringing?

All these questions should be considered and answered. The more engaging the background is, the more interesting the character will be; you'll also have more to build on when you get to the later questions. It's good to know where and to whom the character writes home. ("Chippewa Falls salutes our brave fighting men!")

For now, list relatives, the character's hometown, state or province and then go directly to:

When Parahumans First Appeared . . .

The Super-Age began in Germany in 1936 and "outbreaks" of Talents slowly spread about the globe. By late 1942, almost every country in the world has parahumans, and that number increases every day. Here's a list of the first few known Talents and the countries they appeared in. If your character is from a country listed below, make sure his or her power did not manifest until after the date given (or be aware that you're rewriting history, which is also okay as long as your GM says so).

Germany, *Der Flieger* ("The Airman"), June 8, 1936
Czechoslovakia, *Pevnost* ("Fortress"), October 10, 1938
Eritrea/Ethiopia, *Zindel* ("Defender of Man"), October 12, 1938
Poland, *Cien* ("Shadow"), September 11, 1939
Finland, *Viljo* ("Resolute Protector"), December 19, 1939
Denmark, *Vogel* ("Bird"), April 11, 1940
Norway, *Aesgir* ("Spear of the Gods"), April 12, 1940
Holland/Netherlands, *Daegal* ("Dawn"), May 11, 1940
Belgium, *Vevel* ("Wolf"), May 12, 1940
France, *L'invocateur* ("The Summoner"), May 14, 1940
China, *Zhao Zheng* (myth name), May 22, 1940
Britain, Jumping Johnny, June 5, 1940
Lithuania, *Bellerophon* (myth name), June 21, 1940
Rumania, *Die Hexe* ("The Witch"), October 10, 1940
Yugoslavia, *Stasio* ("Stand of Glory"), April 9, 1941
Greece, Pythia (The Oracle), April 10, 1941
Soviet Union, *Baba Yaga* (myth name), June 27, 1941
United States of America, The Indestructible Man, October 31, 1941
Burma, *Chanduk* ("Spirit of the Forest"), December 11, 1941
Philippines, *Anguis* ("Dragon"), December 22, 1941
Japan, *Hoshi* ("Star"), April 19, 1942
Australia, Misfire, June 21, 1942
Canada, The Ghost of the Fourteenth, August 19, 1942
India, Lord Yama (myth name), March 12, 1943
Italy, *Immortale* ("The Immortal"), September 8, 1943

Education

What is the level of your character's education? Did he attend Harvard, or just barely escape the third grade, or not go to any school at all? Was he taught in a religious school? How did this affect the character's beliefs? Is he naturally smart, studious, or altogether uneducated?

Write down the last school your character attended and his degrees or diplomas. It's always good to have a few stories of the good old days, fraternity parties, pranks and

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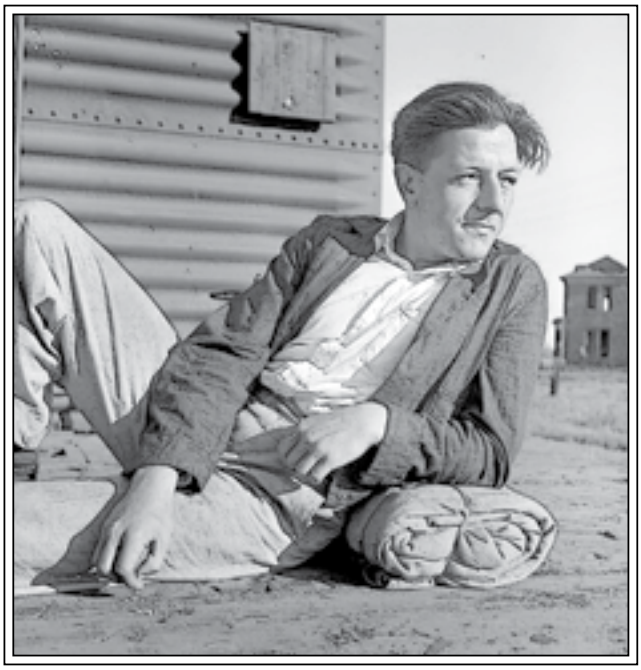
the like; something to put the war in stark perspective. Once you wrap this up, then it's off to:



Friends

Everyone has friends. Is your character gregarious or solitary? Does he have many friends or just one good friend? What is the friend's relationship to the character? Do they see each other often? What does the friend do for a living? Does the friend have skills that might prove useful to the character?

Consider these questions carefully, and work out a small list of your character's friends. It doesn't hurt to have friends who are connected, of course, whether it's a godfather on Capitol Hill or a best friend working as a supply clerk. Decide if any of his friends are friends of influence who can help the character. After that (we're almost to the statistics!) it's off to:

Dependants

Is the character married? Does he have children? Where do the character's dependants live? How does he support them?

Characters do not necessarily require dependants, but it's often good for character development. Having a wife or kids is often motivation enough for a character. The memory of those left behind drives that character forward, to do whatever's necessary to get home.

List the character's dependants (if any). Then the last step before the stats is:

Motivations

What is the character's motivation? Why is he involved in the war? Is he fighting for Jewish solidarity, American pride or British defiance? Is he fighting a war because it's the right thing to do or because he doesn't want to be considered a coward? Or is he just a show-off?

Is the character afraid but determined? Foolhardy and reckless? Why is the character in the war, besides the Talent ability he possesses?

Determine this before moving on to:

Statistics and Skills

Now we're up to the nuts and bolts of the character—the game statistics. Here you determine how strong, fast, smart and cool under pressure the character will be by spending a certain number of character points to assign numbers to the six statistics: Body, Coordination, Sense, Brains, Command, and Cool. 5 is the maximum score for human statistics and skills. Here's a breakdown of what the basic human stats mean.

Human Stat Comparisons

	Lowest (1)	Medium (2)	Highest (5)
Body	Weakling	Avg.	Charles Atlas
Brains	Pinhead	Avg.	Albert Einstein
Coordination	Klutz	Avg.	Olympic Gymnast
Cool	Shaky	Avg.	Winston Churchill
Command	Green Recruit	Avg.	General Patton
Sense	Mr. Magoo	Avg.	Sherlock Holmes

Assigning statistics and skills is simple.

1) Stats

You automatically have 1 point in each stat. You also have 6 points to assign wherever you want—except you can't start the game with a stat higher than 4 (except with Talent powers, of course, but that comes later). You can spread them out evenly and have 2 in every stat, or you can skimp on one in order to beef up another. If you don't assign any points to Cool and take the default score of 1, you could raise your Body to 3, creating the stereotypical hot-headed bruiser.

It may seem that this isn't a lot of points (especially if you're used to the stats in other games), but go back and take another look at **Part Two: Game Mechanics—***La Belle Curve* on p. 7. Once you get 4 dice in something, you've got a 50% chance of succeeding at a challenging, important task. Thus, a 4 stat is impressive by itself. And usually a stat is added to a skill number before rolling.

Add your Cool and Command stats together to determine your Base Will.

"My Brother Is the President . . ."

Some players try to get the best of a game right out of the chute, and it is up to the GM to keep their overactive imaginations in check. When choosing a character's friends, try to stay away from outrageous examples. ("My dad is General Patton, my mom is Betty Grable, and my brother is the President.") Be realistic and down-to-earth in your choices so the game is not disrupted.

The GM (as usual) has final say on whether or not your choices are "fair."

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Stats Redux

Here's a simple breakdown of what you need to do to assign your character's six stats.

1) **Grab a character sheet.** Mark 1 point in each of the six statistics: Body, Coordination, Sense, Brains, Command, and Cool. This 1 point is the default level of each stat, and it costs you nothing.
2) **Spend 6 points among the 6 stats.** You now have 6 points to spread among the six statistics. Choose carefully!
3) **Draw any extra wound boxes** on your damage silhouette indicated by your Body score (see **Part Two: Game Mechanics—***Body* on page 8 for details).
4) **Determine Base Will.** Add your Command and Cool statistics together. This determines your character's Base Will. Mark it in the appropriate box.

Once you're done here, move on to skills.

2) Skills

Next, you get to assign your skills. You have 20 points to spend on them, but there's a catch: You can't start the game with any skill higher than its governing stat. (Once the game is going, however, your skills can exceed this level.) If you skimped on Brains and left it at 1, you can't have more than 1 level in any Brains skill to begin with. Similarly, you can't buy the coveted "Pistol 3" skill unless you also have Coordination 3.

For every point your character has in the Brains statistic above 2, you automatically gain an extra point to spend on Brains skills (but only on Brains skills).

You may also gain extra skills for special training. One example is the set of skills given to the commandos of the Talent Operation Groups described in the back of the book.

There is a list of skills to peruse in **Part Two: Game Mechanics—***Skills* on p. 9.

Creating Normal Human Characters

If you're making normal human, without paranormal Talents, that's it! Skip the Talents section altogether.

Review

Now you have a solid character for *Godlike*, feel free to take some time to go over what you've created and make sure everything is to your liking. Talk with your GM and make improvements here and there as you see fit.

Now only one thing stands between the world of *Godlike* and your character: Talent powers. When you think you're ready to decide what paranormal Talent your character will possesses, head on to the next section—**Part Four: Talents.**

Skills Redux

Here's a simple breakdown of what you need to do to assign your character's skills.

1) **Determine what skills you think your character should have.** There is no set list of mandatory skills. Determine what skills you think your character should know, based on his civilian background and basic military training, and write them out. Get your GM's approval for skills you have created from scratch.
2) **Spend your points.** You have 20 points to spread around your skills now. Choose carefully. Remember no skill can start higher than its governing statistic.

2a) **Optional: Add Commando Skills.** If you are playing in the TOG Squad Campaign presented in the back, then you may add the following skills at no cost. The maximum starting value (skill level may not exceed stat level) still applies.

Brawling 1
Climb 1
Cryptography 1
Endurance 1
Explosives 1
Grenade 1
Knife-Fighting 1
Machine Gun 1
Map Reading 1
Mortar 1
Navigation (Land) 1
Parachuting 1
Pistol 1
Radio Operation 1
Rifle 1
Stealth 1
Submachine Gun 1
Survival 1
Tactics 1

Keep in mind:

1) **For every point your character has in his Brains** statistic above 2, you automatically gain a point to spend on Brains skills (but only on Brains skills). Again, the maximum skill level is the stat.
2) **Your character automatically** has his native language as a skill at the same level of his Brains statistic—at no cost.

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Creating a Character: An Example, Beginning to End

We'll walk you through the creation of a character to give you an idea of how one comes together. Darren is going to make a new Talent for *Godlike*. Let's start with him at the beginning with background:

Background

Darren decides that he wants to play a brawler. After some thought he comes up with his development sentence, which reads: "A tough guy with low self-esteem who wants to prove himself in combat."

Nationality

Darren has his development sentence, and now it's time to choose his country of origin. Darren is good at mimicking a New Jersey accent, so he decides on America as his home country, with New Jersey as his home state. He then pops open the phonebook and chooses a name at random. Darren settles on the name John Napolitano for his character.

Age

How old is John Napolitano? Darren asks the GM for the starting date of the campaign and the GM informs him that the campaign will begin in 1943. Darren decides that John is a young scrapper, so he makes him 20 years old in 1943, giving him a birth date of 1923.

Family

Darren decides John only has a father, and that his mother died when he was young. John hates his father with a passion (the beatings were regular and fierce at home) and has no contact with him. His father is his only living relative. John learned to fight early on, and the rather large chip on his shoulder came from always being the poor kid in school.

Education

Darren decides John was a poor student, lucky to stay in school until he was thirteen, when he was ejected for discipline problems. His lot didn't improve much when he joined the carnival. Far from the romantic illusion he had, the carnival was dirty and almost as violent as home. Luckily, John had learned a lot about fighting since then, and knows how to take care of himself (mostly). He holds the highly educated in contempt, and hates to admit he sometimes has trouble reading complex sentences.

Friends

John had some friends in the carnival, mostly other roustabouts like himself, interested in drinking and having a good time. Given that a number were drafted, he might meet up with them again.

Dependants

John has no real dependants to speak of (his father can rot, for all he cares). Darren decides John has no one else who is a significant draw on his resources.

Motivations

John is an angry young man. His motivation to fight in the war is in his development sentence. He hopes to prove his self-worth in combat. He wants to see if he has what it takes. John doesn't fight for obscure morals or some flag, but for himself and his squadmates.

Stats

Darren puts 1 down in all of John's 6 statistics (their automatic starting level). He now has 6 points to add to add. Darren wants John to be a fast and wily fighter, relying more on speed than sense, brawn or brains. Darren puts 1 into Body, giving John a Body of 2. He puts 2 into Coordination, giving John a Coordination of 3. After some more careful consideration, Darren puts 1 into Sense, 1 into Command, 1 into Cool and no points into Brains. When all 6 points are spent, John has a Body of 2, a Coordination of 3, a Sense score of 2, a Brains score of 1, a Command score of 2, and a Cool of 2.

Darren adds John's Command and Cool score together to determine his Base Will, which is 4.

Skills

Darren has 20 points to spend on John's skills. He decides on the following skills.

Body Skills:
- Brawling 2
- Club (Baseball Bat) 1
- Endurance 2
- Health 2
- Throw 2

Coordination Skills:
- Dodge 3
- Driving (Car) 1

Sense Skills:
- Hearing 2

Cool Skills:
- Bluff 2
- Lie 1
- Mental Stability 2

In addition, he automatically gains his native language at Brains level, so he gets Language: English at 1, at no cost.

The GM okays his choices, so Darren is done here. Now it's time for him to move onto **Part Four: Talents.**

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"CAN YOU HOVER, OR JUST FLY?" the Special Sciences Office guy asked, examining my file. Wait an hour in a field, talk to a guy who already knows the answers to what he's asking, then go to bed, get up and do it all again. Training, questioning, waiting: the holy trinity of the Army.

"Hover and fly," I replied, bored already. I had just sat down.

Behind me, in the field, something hit the ground, hard. So hard the chair I was in shook, and the card table the Special Sciences Office goon had set up rode up for a moment on one leg. The guy's pencils and a couple of papers slid off into the grass, but he didn't seem to notice. Hell, he didn't even look up.

I craned my neck around to see that first lieutenant from Third Platoon, wiping his hands on his shirt. The derelict six-by-six truck he had just thrown was still engulfed in a cloud of smoke from its impact. He had thrown it about thirty-five feet. Someone whistled. The brass gathered near him let out a small chuckle. One general looked green around the gills, like he was going to lose his lunch right there in the field, in front of a thousand Talents.

If they aren't scared of us yet, I thought, they should be. They will be.

"—headaches?" the Special Sciences Office guy continued, unfazed by the strong-man's display.

"Huh? No. No headaches."

"Top speed?"

"Huh? I don't know. Fast, I guess. Like a car." Behind me, a guy I didn't know was glowing green and fading in and out of visibility like a traffic light losing its juice. I could feel his power in my head like the buzz of the subway tracks on a rainy night. Watching him, another Special Sciences Office guy took notes, holding a stopwatch. Where did they get these questions?

"You don't know how fast you can go?" For the first time, the scientist looked up at me and really saw me. His face was filled with something I can't really get across. It was like disgust with fear mixed in. It was like he knew I could kill him, that I was more than he was; but at the same time it was like if he had the same Talent I did, he'd damn well know how fast he could go.

What was I supposed to do, tack a speedometer onto my fucking chest?

"Fast," I said for the last time, staring at him. Finally he looked away and kept writing.

As I left, I saw O'Malley in metal form getting smacked around with a sledgehammer by two MPs and laughing. I saw the Ape waiting in line, holding his tiny watch in his huge gorilla hands, squinting, trying to tell the time with his beady, stupid eyes. Gorvan was there too, his pack, rifle and gear floating behind him in invisible hands while he read a tiny "Gift of American Literature" copy of *Moby Dick*.

Stantz was talking to a small crowd of cast-offs from other squads, who were all laughing. He looked happy, but also a little scared. Maybe only so I could tell. He nodded at me as I passed.

It'll happen soon, I thought suddenly, and froze in my tracks near the edge of the field. I looked up to see if anyone had noticed, but the Talents around me just kept on chatting and showing off. Inside, I could feel it. I could feel the end of a cycle, like the seam where the new reel of a movie is attached to the old one to keep the film going.

What if the old film just sputtered out? What if there were no new film to be strung to the old to keep it going? What would happen if it were just the end? There was no answer. No voice like the one that warned me it would all happen soon. Most people wished they could just fly away from their problems. That they could just escape. I could just fly away. I could just escape.

But for how long, and what would Ellie think of me then?

Instead of going AWOL I went back to the barracks, smoked a cigarette and went to sleep.

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> "No one should be able to do what that kid can do, Charlie. Off the record, let me just say, fuck, am I ever glad he's an American. Things finally seem to be going our way."
>
> —General Nathan O'Sullivan, upon viewing the first film footage of the Indestructible Man stopping a 105 mm howitzer round with his face, November 10, 1941

What Is a Talent?

Talents are strange paranormal powers that the characters of *Godlike* possess for some unknown reason. The concept of the "origin story" (*i.e.* "I was bitten by a radioactive spider!") found in four-color comics is not recommended for characters playing in the background presented in *Godlike*. Instead, the power just . . . happens. One day the character is a regular Joe; the next he is a Talent. Sometimes a Talent manifests because of some stressful or life-threatening event; other times, by some significant life-changing event (much like in the comics). Mostly, though, it just *happens*.

Talent powers differ from person to person and are as original and complex as the individual personalities they are a part of. Dozens of Talent examples are provided in **Part Five: Background**, on p. 100.

Talent powers are subject to the same idiosyncrasies and quirks as normal, everyday habits and abilities. Most of the time their power level depends on the character's emotional state. Sometimes they don't work well unless a specific state of mind is present in the character. Sometimes they don't work at all.

The Term "Talent"

In the countries of the Allied nations during World War II, the term Talent is used to describe anyone with paranormal abilities. In other countries and cultures, parahumans are sometimes called by different names (though Talent remains a popular term, even in non-English speaking countries). French super-humans are often called *Surhomme* ("Super-men.") British super-humans are sometimes called "The Few" in reference to Winston Churchill's famous speech about the pilots of the Battle of Britain: "Rarely has so much been owed by so many to so few." Indian super-humans are called *Viddyharas* ("Learned Ones"), Jewish super-humans *Nephilim* and Russian super-humans *Severch Loodi* ("Super-Men"). In the Axis, German super-humans are *Übermenschen* (literally "Over-Men" or "Super-Men"), while the few Japanese super-humans are called *Gaki* ("Hungry Ghosts"). Italian super-humans are called *Custodes* ("Guardians").

Reporter Stephen J. Whelan introduced the term "Talent" to the public in the *New York Times* on February 14, 1940. Whelan was researching and writing about the growing population of parahumans in the world, and during his studies found a book published in 1932, called *Wild Talents*, by Charles Foy Fort. This book catalogued strange and unusual occurrences, including psychic phenomenon and unusual medical conditions. Fort speculated that what we call the "supernatural" might actually be the manifestation of some unknown "wild talent" which humanity naturally possesses. Whelan took Fort's writing to heart as he wrote the last section of his article:

> "If the powers reflected in Fort's book are called 'Wild Talents', I suppose what we are seeing now could be called 'Talents.' Perhaps this is not an example of a whole new array of human capabilities, but simply the honing of some inherent and secret human skill which is just now coming to light."

The public took to his shortening of Fort's phrase and soon the word was inextricably bound to the phenomenon itself. Still, before its introduction many phrases were used to describe the Talent condition. Early on, Talents were called super-humans, parahumans or super-men. Sometimes these old phrases are still used, but it is rare. The scientific community still tends to call them parahumans ("para" meaning "other" in Latin), and some newspapers still print headlines using the word "super" just to drum up sales. To the public, however, the amazing people who can do the impossible will always be just "Talents."

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What's Possible and What's Not

The world of *Godlike* is particular in its disallowance of certain superpowers. Of course, it's your game, and you can do with it what you wish. However, we recommend you stick to these rules if you want to play in the background provided in this book. Otherwise, unforeseen problems may arise.

Almost anything is possible, except a few small things. Besides these few "laws," any power you imagine can be constructed with the *Godlike* rules.

Definitive Precognition

The ability to see an up-to-the-minute, accurate picture of the future does not, as far as is known, exist in the world of *Godlike*. Precognitives often only see unclear or static images (or have obscure dreams or ideas which they must then interpret) that change dependent on their reaction to the vision. The more the precog talks about the vision, the more the outcome of the event changes from the vision. These visions are often just plain wrong.

Mind Control

Absolute control of another's mind does not exist. Some powers, such as Hypercommand, have equivalent effects.

Talent Absorption or Imitation

The ability for a Talent to absorb or copy another Talent's power has never been seen. Of course, it is readily sought after.

Talent Creation Powers

There has never been a Talent who could make a normal human into a Talent. However, in certain aboriginal cultures (such as the Bushmen of the Kalahari, the Kachin of Burma, and the Aborigines of Australia), Talent powers have been observed to *leap* from person to person. To these animistic peoples such powers are simply magic, and therefore teachable, but only to others within their own culture.

Talent Detection Powers

After a fashion, this power exists in every Talent. If a Talent sees another Talent, and that Talent is using his power, then the character *knows* that the other is one of the elite. But a broad detection power that can discern Talents at a distance, or if they are not using their powers, does *not* exist. See *Talent Detection* on p. 97 for more details.

Telepathy

Telepathy, as commonly portrayed in books and films, does not exist. One-way mental communication *does* exist, but the ability to read another's mind is beyond the grasp of any Talent. As far as is known, that is.

Time Travel

Time travel does exist in the world of *Godlike,* but not in any broad capacity. Talents do disappear and seemingly interact with the past. The problem is this: Whatever changes or contact with the past they make do not affect the future at all, and intelligence gained in the past is often wrong. People spoken to in the past by the Talent do not remember doing so when the Talent returns to the present. This leads analysts to believe that the power may do nothing more than generate a complex illusion of the "past." Nevertheless, it can't be denied that the Talents go somewhere when they "time travel."

True Super-Science

Talents exist who can create incredible devices that appear to be centuries ahead of the current technological level. However, despite what they may appear to be and do, these "devices" are nothing more than the manifestation of that particular Talent's power. If the device is removed from its creator's sight, it ceases to operate. Under no circumstances can real scientists replicate this Talent-driven "Goldberg Science." Most of the time, there is nothing in the "device" that actually works at all; the device is merely a prop that acts as a focus for the Talent's will.

Unlimited Healing Powers

Powers that heal humans, animals and plants do exist but are very particular in their use on humans. To be "treated" by a healing power a human must be conscious and willing. Those who do not wish to be healed, or those who are unconscious, can't be healed at all. It's that simple.

How Talents Work

No one knows how Talents work. Somehow, the people who possess them just seem able to do the impossible. Flying Talents don't require wings or even a source of propulsion to take to the air. Hyperstrong Talents don't need to be rippling with muscles to lift a truck. Bulletproof Talents don't have to have rock-hard skin for the bullets to bounce off. In fact, almost every Talent looks completely human. They have no discernible features, marks or anatomical differences that would set them apart from humanity.

This makes them very effective weapons in guerrilla warfare, espionage and insurgency campaigns. It's hard for the enemy to confiscate a weapon if it's hidden in your mind, and the mind seems to be the crux of the Talent phenomenon.

There seems to be some link between morale, self-will

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and the activation of Talent powers. Self-belief seems to fuel a Talent's paranormal abilities. Often disappointments, depression, defeats or bad news can cause Talent powers to fail. Again, no one has any real idea why.

Breaking the Law

Talents routinely break laws that no one believed could be broken by anybody or anything. Name a physical constant or law—inertia, mass, gravity, or what have you—and some Talent has already bent, twisted and broken it, and made it look easy.

There are speedsters who move 300 miles per hour on the ground at a jog and don't muss their hair.

There are strongmen who weigh 98 lbs. soaking wet but who can stop oncoming trucks with a single outstretched hand. Despite the fact that they have no leverage, and the truck has far more mass than they do, they bring the roaring vehicle to a full stop without even leaving footprints in the dirt.

There are men who fly faster than sound whose skin isn't sloughed off by the incredible wind pressure. In fact, their skin looks fine—and they seem to stay warm and breathe comfortably, despite the fact that it's -40 degrees and there's not enough pressure to breathe at 25,000 feet.

Talents alternately fascinate and disgust scientists. There is a perverse feeling of wonder and horror that only scientists can feel, watching everything they thought they knew being ripped to pieces by the existence of a man who can fly, lift a truck, or move objects with his mind.

Studies of Talent abilities hint at the mechanics behind these strange occurrences, but no definitive proof of just how the hell they are doing these things, things no one is supposed to be able to do, is ever found. All the scientists can do is document *how much* Talents warp reality with their powers.

So far, no one, not even a Talent, knows how they are doing "it."

Physics and Talent Powers

Talent powers sidestep or rewrite physical reality. They do not reflect "genetic mutations" which make the operator somehow able to control magnetic fields or to fly through the expulsion of unknown energies from their bodies on some cellular level. Instead, the Talent represents the power of the operator's mind to supersede physical reality and rewrite it at his whim. Therefore, almost nothing is "impossible" for Talent abilities to accomplish (although some powers remain forbidden by the very nature of the Talent phenomenon itself). However, the effects of Talent powers are very fickle and often very fragile. Injury or mental infirmity often causes them to fail. Exactly what happens when certain powers fail during their use, leaving the Talent in a sticky predicament (in the air, in mid-teleport or holding up a 28-ton tank), is left up to the GM to decide. Some powers are simply more dangerous to use than others.

Is a parahuman passing through a wall with an insubstantiality Talent killed when his power fails, fusing him with the wall? Or is he expelled on the other side of the wall unharmed? The effects of such a power failure remain up to the GM to adjudicate.

Delusions and the Operation of Talent Powers

Talent abilities are located on the deepest levels of human consciousness, and as such are linked inextricably with the subconscious mind. The subconscious, whether it's Freud's id or Jung's shadow, is like a mind unto itself, separate from the dominant surface consciousness. Deep-seated fears and desires, along with every other conceivable discarded observation, are stored here, and these ideas affect Talent abilities in strange and often inexplicable ways.

Some Talents can only use their abilities while singing a particular song; others only while crossing their eyes or making complex finger gestures. If they can't complete these subconscious rituals, the power doesn't work.

Some Talents' delusions are far more complex than others. There are Talents who believe they are aliens from other planets. Others believe they are the reincarnation of famous people from days past. Still others believe that they are divine entities. There are even Talents who think they are genetic mutants, magical creatures or freakish scientific mistakes, just like the superheroes of the comic books.

They aren't any of these things, of course. They're just Talents. But they believe they are, and they can do amazing things that corroborate their stories. Isn't that all that really matters?

A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words

If a Talent is projecting an image into the minds of those observing him, does he leave physical traces behind which match up with that illusory projection? Does the Talent who becomes a wolf leave behind wolf footprints or human footprints? This all depends on the Talent. Some Talents' powers are comprehensive and cover every possible contingency. For example, the Talent who can transform into a wolf could leave behind wolf hair, wolf footprints, and even wolf saliva on the people he's bitten (hell, even the bite mark would look like a wolf bite!). Such far-reaching powers often do more than simply project these images into the minds of those present; they actually change the physical realities of the world. For example, photographs taken of the Talent reflect what his power wishes them to see, not his actual hidden human form.

In some cases the power of the Talent is less perfect, and the illusion is nothing but a projection into the minds of those present to observe it. No physical after-effects exist. In this case, a Talent who transforms into a wolf would leave behind human footprints, and any photographs of him in wolf-form would show a man crouching in place of the beast.

The difference between these two types of powers is significant, and is reflected in the game under the *No Physical Change* Flaw on p. 56.

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Appearances Are Deceiving

As far as is known, despite what their powers may seem to enable them to accomplish, Talents never actually cease physically being human beings. There are Talents who appear to transform into animals, both fictional and factual; Talents who seem to become inanimate objects; there's even a Talent who may or may not be a walking house (see *Baba Yaga* on p. 152). However, as far as these abilities are understood, no actual transformation occurs outside the minds of those observing the Talent. All present see what the Talent's power wants them to see.

This ability (called "Projected Hallucination" by Allied scientists) seems to enable the Talent to implant ideas or perceptions in observer's heads to make them believe that such a transformation has taken place. In some cases, this ability even seems to work on the Talent himself, making him believe that a transformation has taken place as well. In other cases this Projected Hallucination is a conscious tool controlled by the Talent, who can place any idea, picture, smell, texture or sound in another's head.

That is not to say that some Talents do not actually alter local physical effects. Many Talents do actually change the physical world with their mind—or they *appear to*. Certain Talents may actually turn invisible, while others might make others believe they have. As you can imagine, it is very difficult to determine which is which.

But when a Talent dies, his body is *always* that of a normal human. When Talents cancel each other's power out, such illusions vanish instantly. When their power wanes, they tend to have trouble maintaining consistent illusions or transformations—even unconscious ones.

But insane Talents are another matter altogether.

The Edge of Sanity

The power of Talents is always based on the same idea: the ability to bend and warp local reality with the power of the mind. What happens when the mind that controls such changes becomes warped, too? I'll tell you: Nothing good.

Talents who slip over the edge of sanity somehow seem to be even more powerful than normal Talents. No one really knows why, but some theories exist. One is that the Talent has lost all self-image due to mental strain and no longer requires a "self" to dictate the use of his powers. The Talent's subconscious is let loose with a free rein to control the powers without being subject to any clear morals, ideas or rules. The second theory is that somehow the "control," some type of inherent floodgate built into the Talent ability, is ripped away, allowing the full power of the Talent's mind free despite any danger it might pose to the Talent or reality itself.

Such mad parahumans are extremely dangerous. The most significant example is *Baba Yaga,* the Russian monstrosity who, since his madness and powers manifested at the same time, transformed into a small walking house (recreating an image from a Russian fairy tale) and wreaked havoc all over Russia, killing Germans and Russians alike. *Baba Yaga* proved invulnerable to both normal and Talent attacks. Somehow, other Talents cannot interfere with his ability.

No one truly knows whether this makes him a Talent or something more.

A Note About Negation: The Zed Talent

Zed is a Talent power which negates the effect Talent powers have on the environment. It is the only Talent power that can affect another Talent in a destructive manner without activating a Contest of Wills. In truth, it is not affecting the targeted Talent at all. Instead of stopping the Talent effect from happening, it detects and counters what the target's power is doing to the environment—which is why it works.

Some Talents unconsciously project their Zed power, affecting all Talents within a certain range (see *Radius Table* on p. 92) while others can target specific Talents at will.

A flyer targeted by the Zed power would lose his capability to keep himself airborne (because the Zed power would push him downwards) and would probably crash with catastrophic results. A Hyperbody Talent targeted by the Zed power would be squashed like a bug underneath the tank he was up until that point lifting, which suddenly became far more difficult to lift.

Zed—from the British use of the letter "Z," the first letter of "zero"—is a very effective and relatively common power in *Godlike*. Almost every world leader and secure location in the world is looked after by a Talent possessing the Zed power.

Hitler's personal Zed Talent, *Null,* was perhaps the most powerful Zed ever. In one conflict during the last days of Nazi power in Berlin, *Null* effectively cut off and rendered thirty-five forward acting Soviet Talents powerless, whereupon they were overcome and killed by the *Volksturm*.

Talent Against Talent

In combat, Talents are quite effective against normal humans. Many powerful Talents can sweep through dozens, even hundreds of heavily armed humans before falling in combat. But when two Talents clash, things get very interesting.

First of all, **when Talents attempt to use their powers directly on other Talents they report a feeling of "resistance"** or "interference" lessening or preventing the use of their ability. Sometimes during one of these struggles, one Talent suddenly overwhelms the other. The other's power fails, almost as if strength were transferred between them by some unknown process.

The Talent power in question must be used in a direct assault on another Talent to be affected by this defensive struggle. Otherwise, it just works.

For instance, a Talent could try to prevent another Talent from shooting him with heat rays from his eyes, but could not prevent another Talent from hefting and throwing a tank at him. The heart of the matter seems to be what is affected. In one instance, the heat-rays affect the Talent himself so his inherent ability "defends" him. In the other, only the tank is affected; nothing about its deadliness comes from the attacking Talent (except its untoward

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flight through the air as a weapon).

Second, **when two Talents see each other, and one or more is using their powers, each automatically knows the other is a Talent.** Sight and the attempt to activate a power are the necessary elements here. Without both of them, a Talent can remain anonymous and invisible, even right under the nose of other Talents. If you're a Talent and you see another Talent using his power, each of you can immediately tell the other is a Talent. This is because you are using your own Talent to "detect" the other Talent. This ability is unconscious and automatic.

Third, **surprise attack negates any struggle between powers.** If you are unaware of a Talent attack, then your Will cannot work against it. An ambush with Talent powers is just as deadly to a Talent (at least initially) as it is to a normal human being. This makes combat between Talents just as deadly as combat between normal troops. Whichever Talent has the advantage of surprise can stay hidden and well prepared, and will most likely win or at least cause many casualties before being killed.

See *When Wills Collide* on p. 95 for more details.

Creating a Talent Power for Your Character

There are two ways to set up the Talent powers for your character: the **cafeteria approach** and the **gourmet approach.**

The cafeteria approach is the easiest. You look at all the powers listed in this book and you buy the ones you want, modifying them with Extras (which expand their use) or Flaws (which restrict their use), as you see fit. It's easy, it's quick, you don't argue and the stuff is all there in black and white.

The gourmet approach is more complex, but it allows you to make up any ability a Talent might have. Want to be able to remove the property of inertia from objects, or change the color of any object you can see? Talk it over with your GM, figure out a reasonable set of costs and buy it. This involves a lot of subjectivity on the part of you and your GM, so be a good sport if he won't give you everything you want. Think of it as the price you pay for creative control.

Regardless of which approach you use, you need to know how all Talent powers are modeled, how they're used and how they're paid for.

Power Mechanics

Talent powers work like everything else in the game: You roll a set number of dice and look for matches. However, given that possessing a Talent means that you have the ability to reconfigure reality more to your liking, there are two dice tricks that are used primarily for modeling Talent powers. They're called *Hard Dice* and *Wiggle Dice*.

Hard Dice: A hard die is a die in a dice pool that is always a 10. You don't roll it. It's just automatically a ten. If you have a dice pool with two or more Hard Dice, you will always succeed (and succeed dramatically) at simple tasks using that skill or stat (unless of course, you are opposed by someone who has more 10s in their dice pool). Like every other die, Hard Dice count towards the ten-die maximum.

Wiggle Dice: A wiggle die is like a wild card in poker. You can assign any number to this die *after* you've rolled the other dice in the pool. This is even better than a hard die, because any simple roll with a wiggle die succeeds, and if you have two Wiggle dice, you can choose any height for that success. Like every other die, Wiggle dice count towards the ten-die maximum.

> ***Example:*** Suppose you have four regular dice and one wiggle die in your pool. You roll 1,6,8,10. Normally that would be a failure. But you can take your wiggle die and make it a ten as well, giving you a pair of tens. On the other hand, if you later roll 1,4,4,8, you have a choice. You can either make the wiggle die an eight (giving you a higher match if you want a better success) or make it a four (giving you a quicker action with a trio instead of just a pair).

Using Hard Dice and Wiggle Dice in the Game

Since these two dice types are exceptions to the regular dice rules, they deserve careful examination. Let's have a look at Hard Dice first.

Hard Dice are always 10, so naturally if you have 2hd in anything, you will always achieve a dramatic success. But what happens when you use Hard Dice in combat? Since it's always a 10, do you always hit the target in the head? Can you make called shots with Hard Dice?

The answer is that multiple Hard Dice always hit (unless they're dodged or blocked). If you can see the target (even a hit location which is not the head), you can hit the target. However, when you hit it, **the attack is counted as an attack towards the head for the sake of damage only**. The GM might say you hit the target in the arm, or the leg or the torso, and describe the hit in that way, but the damage is still counted towards the head. So the answer is no, you cannot choose to make a called shot with Hard Dice, because even if you do, the attack is counted as a hit to the head for damage purposes. When attacking an object, consider it an attack against the weakest part of the object. Hard Dice lack finesse, but they're deadly.

There is one way around the Hard Dice hit location conundrum. If your Hard Dice are in an attack dice pool along with other regular dice, you can discard the Hard Dice and try

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to hit with the regular dice as per a normal attack.

When using Hard Dice in non-combat situations, they become much more basic. With 2hd in any skill, you will be able to *at least* match the performance of anyone with the same skill (but not the speed unless your width is better).

Wiggle Dice are much more versatile. With 2 Wiggle Dice, you can hit any hit location you choose (you must see the hit location you want to hit, however). Also, Wiggle Dice are much more "friendly" towards regular dice in the same dice pool. Since you can choose what a Wiggle Die becomes after the roll, you can match it to whatever matches you already have in your regular set. Hard Dice are much harder to use in normal dice sets, since unless a regular die in that pool comes up a 10, it's useless. Wiggle Dice are very useful as well when it comes to multiple actions. If you split your dice pool that has 2 Wiggle Dice and 3 regular dice, even with the 1d penalty, you can always succeed at those two actions.

The utility of Wiggle Dice increases in non-combat situations. In a dynamic contest, they become very useful because you declare what you want the wiggle die to be *after* all the dice are rolled. So you can look at what your opponent rolled and beat it, by any amount if you have 2wd or more in your set (unless it's a set of 10, then you could just match it). Since Wiggle Dice are much more friendly towards regular dice, you can usually choose to have a tall or wide set (sometimes both). With Hard Dice, it's usually only a tall set. In combat, the difference between a match of 2 dice and a match of 3 dice is huge. Wiggle Dice have the advantage over Hard Dice, as width and not height determines initiative.

Hard Dice are blunt, Wiggle Dice are flexible.

If you lose dice due to a penalty (such as attacking at long range or attempting multiple actions), you lose Hard Dice first, then normal dice when there are no more Hard Dice, then Wiggle Dice if they're all that's left.

Buying (and Promoting) Dice

Normal dice, using the basic d10, are used to resolve most actions, while Hard Dice and Wiggle Dice are used (usually) to resolve parahuman activities.

The dice, in order of cost (and notably, usefulness in achieving success in the game), are as follows:

Least Powerful		**Most Powerful**
Basic d10	Hard Dice	Wiggle Dice

When you purchase your character's Talents at the outset, it's pretty straightforward. You work out the cost of your powers, then simply buy the dice you want (up to your point limit). Bear in mind that you really should leave some points unspent to put into your Base Will, or you're not going to stand much of a chance when facing enemy Talents.

> ***Example:*** Let's say you want to buy 3 normal dice (3d) and 2 Hard Dice (2hd) in Invisibility for your character. The base cost of Invisibility is 4/8/16 . . . or 4 per die, 8 per hard die, and 16 per wiggle die. Assuming you have the points, all you do is spend 3x4=12 points for your 3 regular dice, then spend 2x8=16 points for your Hard Dice (If you wanted a wiggle die to go with it, just pay 16 more points and it's yours). The grand total would be 12+16=28 Will Points.

Now say you've been playing a while and you want to improve your Invisibility. Want to buy more dice? Spend the basic cost per die in Base Will and the regular dice are yours. But say you want to *promote* your Hard Dice to Wiggle Dice, or regular dice to Hard Dice. Easy. All you do is check the difference between the dice costs and pay it. To promote your two Hard Dice up to Wiggle Dice in the above example, you look at the cost for Hard Dice, 8 points, and the cost for Wiggle Dice, 16 points. So you'd have to pay eight points apiece for the two Hard Dice in your pool to become Wiggle Dice, or 16 points altogether. The same goes for promoting regular dice to Hard Dice; just pay the difference.

For more examples of Talent creation, have a look at the first ten Talents (from **Part Five: Background**) as detailed in **Appendix B: NPCs**, on p. 310.

Will: The Brief Version

The *Will* Trait is covered in depth in at the end of this section, starting on page 93. But in brief, it's a measure of the peculiar strength of personality that fuels Talent abilities.

Your character has a Base Will rating (equal to his Cool+Command) which reflects his usual confidence level. Will Points start equal to Base Will but can rise and fall as the character gains (or loses) confidence in his powers. If you have a lot of Will, your powers are more reliable, even in conflict with other Talents. If your Will is low, your abili-

Talents Redux

Here's a simple breakdown of what you need to do to create your character's Talent powers.

1) **Cook up an idea:** Either pick through the cafeteria choices or make up your own Talent. Sit down with the GM and come up with an idea for a superpower. Take your time, and ask the GM what the Theme of the game is (p. 283); then you'll know the size of the starting Will point pool. This is the number of points you have to buy Talent dice for your powers.
2) **Decide on a cost:** Modify your Talent power with Extras and Flaws (p. 52) which expand or restrict the use of the power, and determine its final point cost. Then check with your GM; he may see another way of doing it that might make your power more affordable.
3) **Adjust your Base Will:** If you have any Will points left over, you can spend them to increase your Base Will at a point per point cost. (You can only get Base Will at this special reduced rate during character creation). Having a higher Base Will makes your powers work better. If you have no points left after buying your Talent, tough luck.
4) **Turn your character sheet in to the GM:** Let the GM do a once-over of your character sheet, just so he can familiarize himself with the details and catch any possible problems. Once he okays it, that's it, you have your Talent!

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ties may fail you when you need them most.

Normal people don't have fluctuating Will points, only a Base Will statistic.

How Powers are Acquired and Paid For

Just as you're given pools of points to buy stats and skills, you start with a pool of Will points to buy Talent powers. The number of points you have to spend on powers depends on how powerful the GM wants your starting characters to be. If he wants a high-powered game, he might give you 70 points. If he's looking for mild Talents, it might be as low as 15. The default standard for starting Talents is 25. (See *Theme* in **Part Eight: The Campaign** on p. 282 for more on this).

Hyperstats, Hyperskills, and Miracles

There are three kinds of Talent powers. Of course, there are hundreds or even thousands of Talent powers, but they all fit into three general categories.

First, there are *Hyperstats*. These are simply normal human qualities like intelligence or physical strength exaggerated to super-human levels. The game mechanics cover these by simply adding levels to your normal stats, or by making dice in normal stats Hard or Wiggle Dice.

Next, there are *Hyperskills*. Like Hyperstats, these are modeled by adding extra or special dice to ordinary skills. They're just more specific (and therefore cheaper) than Hyperstats.

Finally, there are *Miracles*. These are the uncanny powers that normal people just cannot do: It's a difference of kind, not of degree. Anyone can lift some weight; someone with a Body Hyperstat can just do a lot more of it. Similarly, someone with a medicine Hyperskill is just much more reliable at surgery than someone with a normal medicine skill. However, no ordinary person can turn invisible or change metal into ice. Those are Miracles.

Which to Choose?

Choosing between Hyperstats, Hyperskills and Miracles can sometimes be difficult. For example, in order to have the power to break through armor plate, you could choose from the following Talents: a Hyperstat in Body; 3 Hard Dice in Break; or a Harm power with a Penetration Extra. All three accomplish the same thing. Which do you choose if you want a Talent who can bust through steel plate?

The answer is: It depends. Do you want a distance attack, or does your character do it with his bare hands? Like many things, it's all in the details, and those details are up to you.

Godlike's system is designed to be a guideline for you to develop the powers you want for your character. The operative words here are "guideline" and "your character." It is important you get what you want, so think carefully. Which game mechanic best models what you want your character to do? Most likely, that's the one you want, even if it's a little more expensive than the other choices.

Gaining New Powers

Can a Talent gain completely new Miracles, Hyperstats or Hyperskills? After all, your character spontaneously developed one (or more) bizarre powers. What's to stop it from happening again?

In theory, nothing. In practice, it's almost unheard of. Developing Talent powers requires a wrenching and fundamental change in how an individual perceives himself and the world around him. This rarely happens more than once in a single lifetime.

In rules terms, anybody can raise a stat or skill up to 5. But if you didn't already have a Hyperskill or Hyperstat as a starting character, you can't simply raise it past normal human limits in the course of the game. To gain a new Hyperstat or Hyperskill during play costs 30 Will in addition to the usual costs of the level itself.

Gaining new Miracle powers is even more difficult. It's possible to buy the first level in an entirely new Miracle—but doing so costs 50 Will plus the usual cost. If you're willing to build up that kind of stockpile and then deplete it utterly, you can get one die in a new Miracle. Of course, without a second die to back it up it's unlikely to be useful, but you can improve it over time.

This cost can be ameliorated somewhat if you're buying a new power that's thematically similar to an old Miracle you possess. In that case, the cost is 40 Will plus the usual cost to gain a single die.

When are powers "thematically similar"? The answer is, "When the GM thinks they are." A person who can turn invisible can probably get the ability to turn objects invisible for 40 points—but for teleportation, it's going to be the full 50. Similarly, someone with the Transform power could make a case for getting the Dead Ringer power at the reduced rate—but not Jinx. Accept your GM's decision.

The only exception to this rule is for those Talents who have gone so utterly insane that their grasp of reality is exceptionally loose. To such a damaged mind, the question of

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thematic similarity is moot. Instead, they can purchase the powers best suited to adapting the world to their dementia. When this comes into play is up to the GM.

Hyperstats

Hyperstats are a little more expensive than Hyperskills because they're more broadly applicable. They're regular statistics such as Body, Coordination or Brains exaggerated to previously unachievable levels.

To determine the total level of your Hyperstat, add the dice of your Hyperstat to the dice of the stat of the same name. If your power fails, your Hyperstat vanishes, leaving the stat at its base level.

Hyperstats Table

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	2
Each Hard Die	5
Each Wiggle Die	10

Example: Chuck has a Hyperstat of 2hd in Body, and he has a regular Body score of 4d. So, his total Body (when his Talent is working) is 4d+2hd (6d for lifting purposes). When his Talent is inactive, his Body is just 4d.

Note: Secondary abilities listed at each level of a Hyperstat are not cumulative. When you buy a Hyperstat at a certain level, you only get the secondary abilities listed at that level, not the benefits of all lower levels as well.

Body

Characters with inhuman levels of Body can lift much greater weights than normal people (obviously). This ability seems to amplify the performance of the muscles of the body through unknown means. Lungs, legs, arms, even the muscles of the mouth seem to enjoy an increased capacity which leads to some interesting and sometimes useful side effects.

This is not to say that the ability necessarily makes the person a rippling mass of muscles. Instead, some invisible force amplifies the muscles of the body, no matter how weak they are naturally. Your 98 lb. Caspar Milquetoast with Hyperbody is able to pick up cars and fling them, much to his delight. The other advantage to having a Hyperstat in Body is that it seems to boost metabolism, health, and healing.

Body 6 (Tested Lift 800 lbs to 1 Ton)

You are super-humanly strong and can perform feats beyond the abilities of the strongest human. You gain +1 wound box to your torso and each limb. In addition, you can attack materials usually far too strong to be affected by human flesh. This is not to say that you can punch through such materials, only that you can attack those materials without incurring damage while doing so.

Body 6 Secondary Abilities

- +1 wound box to your torso and each limb.
- +2 width to punch, kick and strangle damage.
- Ability to hit "strong" materials without damage.

Note: This does not grant you any immunity to attacks made with such materials.

Body 7 (Tested Lift 1 to 2 Tons)

Your fists and feet cause killing damage in attacks instead of shock. You can breach armor as if you are a weapon with a Penetration value of 3. Also, you gain +1 wound box to your torso and each limb and you gain back an extra shock point of damage back on each location after battle.

Body 7 Secondary Abilities

- +1 wound box to your torso and each limb.
- Ability to hit "strong" materials without damage.
- Fist and kicks cause killing damage instead of shock.
- +1 width to punch, kick and strangle damage.
- Your limbs have a Penetration rating of 3.
- You gain an extra shock point of damage back after each battle.

Example: Henry has a Body of 7. He wants to punch through a *PzKpfw II* with an Armor Rating of 3. On a successful attack roll, Henry can punch right through the armor, as if he were a weapon with a Penetration quality of 3, while a Talent with a Body of 6 could not.

Body 8 (Tested Lift 2 to 4 Tons)

You can use every muscle in your body in amazing ways. With Body 8, you can leap your Body distance in yards in a broad jump or half your Body stat in yards in a vertical leap. You can scream strong enough to shatter glass at more than a meter. Your limbs have Penetration 4 automatically, and you can attempt to tear open armor equal to your Body rating on a successful roll, ruining it against subsequent attacks. Also, you gain +1 Wound box to your torso and each limb and 2 extra points of shock evaporate on each location after battle.

Body 8 Secondary Abilities:

- +1 wound box to your torso and each limb.
- Ability to hit "strong" materials without damage.
- Fist and kicks cause

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killing damage instead of shock damage.
- +2 width to punch, kick and strangle damage.
- Your unarmed attacks have Penetration 4.
- On a successful roll you can breach armor equal to your Body stat.
- Two extra points of shock evaporate on each location after battle.
- You can broad jump your Body distance in yards.
- You can jump half your Body stat in a vertical leap in yards.
- You can shout loud enough to shatter glass at a yard.

Body 9 (Tested Lift 4 to 6 Tons)

At level 9, you can leap your Body stat in yards vertically and double your Body stat in yards in a broad jump. You can exhale hard enough to inflate a truck tire. You can tear a half dozen sheets of tempered steel in half without breaking a sweat. You gain +1 wound box to your torso and each limb and all shock damage to each limb automatically evaporates after each battle.

Body 9 Secondary Abilities

- +1 wound box to your torso and each limb.
- Ability to hit "strong" materials without damage.
- Fist and kicks cause killing damage instead of shock damage.
- +3 width to punch, kick and strangle damage.
- Your unarmed attacks have Penetration 4.
- On a successful roll, you can breach armor equal to your Body stat.
- All shock damage to each location automatically evaporates after each battle.
- You can broad jump double your Body distance in yards.
- You can jump your Body stat in a vertical leap in yards.
- You can exhale hard enough to inflate a truck tire.

Body 10 (Tested Lift 6 to 10 Tons)

You are incredibly strong. You can shout and shatter glass within sight range. You can throw objects up to 3 tons as if they were as heavy as baseballs. Your vertical leap is twice your Body in yards and three times your Body in a broad jump. You gain +1 wound box to your torso and each limb and all shock damage to your body automatically evaporates after each battle.

Body 10 Secondary Abilities

- +1 wound box to your torso and each limb.
- Ability to hit "strong" materials without damage.
- Fist and kicks cause killing damage instead of shock damage.
- +4 width to punch, kick and strangle damage.
- Your unarmed attacks have Penetration 5.
- On a successful roll, you can breach armor equal to your Body stat.
- All shock damage to each location automatically evaporates after each battle.
- You can broad jump triple your Body distance in yards.
- You can jump twice your Body stat vertically in yards.
- You can shatter glass within sight range with a shout.

Coordination

Hypercoordinated Talents are known for their inhuman speed, stealth and accuracy. This ability amplifies the response speed and control of muscles, causing an incredible increase in motor skills.

Coordination 6

You are faster than any human, and can climb, swing, catch and throw with amazing agility. You can scale climbable objects with the ease of a chimpanzee, and tumble and roll like a champion gymnast—without any training.

Coordination 6 Secondary Abilities

- You are as agile as a chimpanzee.

Coordination 7

You can do all the above and in addition can contort into amazing configurations without injury. You are so fast that you can move your hand literally quicker than the eye, and can dodge gun attacks if you know you are about to be shot at. (This is treated as a defensive use of a power; see p. 98.)

Coordination 7 Secondary Abilities

- You are as agile as a chimpanzee.
- You can contort into any conceivable position.
- You can try to dodge perceived gun attacks.

Coordination 8

You can catch arrows in flight. You can leap, swing and climb objects so well you appear to be "sticking" to the wall. The width of any perceived, successful hand-to-hand attack against you is reduced by 1. If the roll was 2x, this means no damage is taken.

Coordination 8 Secondary Abilities

- You climb so well, you appear to "stick" to walls.
- You can try to dodge perceived gun attacks.
- You can contort into any conceivable position.

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- You can catch fast objects in flight.
- You can dodge multiple attacks without penalty.
- Perceived hand-to-hand attacks against you have their width reduced by 1.

Coordination 9

All hand-to-hand weapon attacks against you have their width reduced by 2. You may use multiple actions without penalty to dodge.

Coordination 9 Secondary Abilities

- You climb so well, you appear to "stick" to walls.
- You can try to dodge perceived gun attacks.
- You can contort into any conceivable position.
- You can catch blindingly fast objects in flight.
- You can dodge multiple attacks without penalty.
- Perceived hand-to-hand attacks against you have their width reduced by 2.

Coordination 10

You are a perfect example of physical excellence. All muscles are absolutely under your control. You can flex or unflex any muscle in your body, including those muscles in your internal organs. The width of any successful attack against you is reduced by 2—provided you're aware of the attack. This includes attacking Talents, if the attack could conceivably be dodged.

Coordination 10 Secondary Abilities

- You climb so well, you appear to "stick" to walls.
- You can control any muscle in your body.
- You can try to dodge perceived gun attacks.
- You can contort into any conceivable position.
- You can catch fast objects in flight.
- You can dodge multiple attacks without penalty.
- All perceived attacks against you have their width reduced by 2.

Sense

Characters with inhumanly high levels of Sense cannot detect things outside of the human range of perception, but can utilize those senses with a much higher level of accuracy, skill and ability. For example, with a Hyperstat in Sense, a character could differentiate between the components of a cacophony of sound. He could locate and separate every individual sound, noting each sound's direction, source and decibel level; but that same Talent could not hear ultrasonic or subsonic sounds, since the human ear is not capable of detecting them. The same goes for sight, hearing, smell and touch.

A high Sense Hyperstat grants the character an inhumanly high level of perception, utilizing all five of his senses. If you wish to have a Talent with a single sense which is super-human, simply buy that individual sense skill as a Hyperskill (see below). If you wish to see, hear or sense something normally outside of the range of human perception (see X-rays or heat, hear subsonics, *etc.)*, buy this as a separate Miracle (see *Perception* on p. 79).

Sense 6

Your senses are as sharp as an animal's. You can smell targets before you see them; you can see in the dark and hear with preternatural accuracy. Your taste is also acute, but less so than your other senses.

Sense 6 Secondary Abilities

- Your senses are as sharp as an animal's.

Sense 7

It is impossible to sneak up on you under normal circumstances. You can detect motion through hearing, sight or smell up to a quarter of a mile.

Sense 7 Secondary Abilities

- Your senses are as sharp as an animal's.
- You are impossible to ambush under normal circumstances.
- You can detect motion at a quarter mile or less through hearing, sight or smell.

Sense 8

You can see in the dark, identify targets by smell, taste individual chemicals in a mixture and locate and identify dozens of singular sounds amidst a cacophony. You can also read printed materials by touch alone.

Sense 8 Secondary Abilities

- Your senses are as sharp as an animal's.
- Under normal circumstances, it's impossible to sneak up on you.
- You can detect motion at half a mile through hearing, sight or smell.
- You can see in the dark.
- You can identify targets by smell.
- Your taste is so acute you can differentiate between chemicals in a mixture.
- You can differentiate between dozens of sounds amidst a cacophony.
- You can read printed materials by touch alone.

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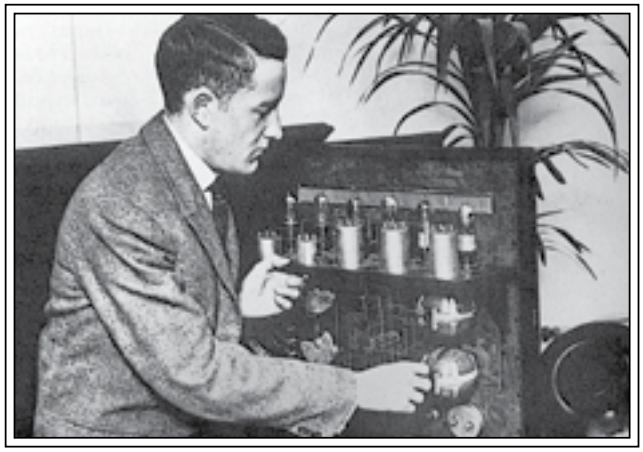
Sense 9

Your senses are almost perfect. You can see in near absolute darkness, smell targets a mile away and track by scent alone. Your hearing is so good you can attack with a firearm using sound alone as a guide at only a -1d to such attacks. Your sense of touch is so good you can detect the movement of small creatures at a distance by feeling vibrations through the ground with your hands.

Sense 9 Secondary Abilities

- Your senses are as sharp as an animal's.
- Under normal circumstances, it's impossible to ambush you.
- You can see in near absolute darkness.
- You can detect motion at more than a mile through ground vibrations.
- You can identify targets by smell at more than a mile and track by scent.
- Your taste is so acute you can differentiate between chemicals in a mixture.
- You can differentiate between dozens of sounds amidst a cacophony.
- You can aim attacks using hearing alone as a guide at -1d.
- You can read printed materials by touch alone.



Sense 10

Your senses are absolutely perfect. If there is a stimulus within the ranges of the human senses, you sense it. Nothing can sneak up on you under any circumstance. You can attack invisible Talents hand-to-hand without any penalty, and see through illusions, camouflage and other forms of obfuscation without even rolling.

Sense 10 Secondary Abilities

- Your senses are as sharp as an animal's.
- It's impossible to sneak up on you.
- You can see in near absolute darkness.
- You can attack invisible Talents without penalty.
- You see through camouflage and illusions automatically.
- You can detect motion at more than a mile through ground vibrations.
- You can identify targets by smell at more than a mile and track by scent.
- Your taste is so acute you can differentiate between chemicals in a mixture.
- You can differentiate between dozens of sounds amidst a cacophony.
- You can aim firearm attacks using hearing alone as a guide at -1d.
- You can read printed materials by touch alone.

Brains

Hyperbrainy characters are experts at memory, deduction, reasoning and learning. These Talents are often so smart their deductions are beyond the abilities of the normal man to grasp. Their leaps in logic are often too bizarre for ordinary thinking to handle, and their assumptions are what we would call "breakthrough thinking," except for the fact that they are so far out there, they might as well be gibberish.

For every two points of Brains a character has above 6, he gets an additional experience point each session, representing his increased ability to learn new things and understand the best ways to improve himself.

Furthermore, anyone with Brains 5+ has photographic memory and total recall: Any second of his life can be recalled with perfect clarity. The complex pattern of figures in a Japanese book becomes as easily remembered as a square or a circle is to less powerful intellects.

People with Brains in excess of 7 can calculate figures as fast as a modern computer.

Role-playing hyper-brains can be a lot of fun. Invariably, they seem scatter-brained to normals, as their prodigious minds are often elsewhere, wandering in some mental wonderland. But when an intellectual problem surfaces, their power goes to work and all questions about their mental competence are put to rest.

Brains 5

Brains 5 is listed because it is possible for normal humans.

Brains 5 Secondary Abilities

- You have photographic memory.

Brains 6

Your photographic memory includes sounds and smell as well as sight.

Brains 6 Secondary Abilities

- You have a photographic memory with sound and smell.

Brains 7

You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer. Every memory of every event ever experienced by you is accessible by your conscious mind.

Brains 7 Secondary Abilities

- You have a comprehensive photographic memory.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.

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"Why Don't Hyperbrains..."

. . . change the world? People with the massive intellect generated by a Hyperbrain stat put Einstein to shame, yet they have little impact on the world of *Godlike*. Why?

In the first place, not many people can understand just what the Hyperbrains are talking about. Their facts, formulae and ideas are so far beyond the norm that even an experienced research scientist is pretty much in the dark. They develop mathematics based on concepts only they understand and couldn't explain if they tried. Others without the necessary intellect just can't comprehend what the Hyperbrains are thinking or even talking about.

This would seem to point to some Hyperbrain breakthroughs in science; or if they were that smart, some sort of hyperbrain coup. Why don't the Hyperbrains create technology beyond the norm or try to rule the world?

Because the Hyperbrains don't really care to.

The world of ideas is far more interesting to the truly brilliant than the real world is. Most Hyperbrains are lost in thought all the time. They're crunching numbers, examining scenarios, or working on difficult, abstract problems that seem incomprehensible to normals.

This is backed up by non-Hyperbrains in actual history. Oppenheimer and his fellow scientists created the atomic bomb out of love for science, not war. They only really considered the implications of what they had done when the first bomb was sitting in Trinity, about to be tested. Up to that point, they were in another world of problem-solving and thought, seeking the pathways that would lead to splitting the atom.

Unlike these *almost*-Hyperbrains, true Hyperbrains possess a level of empathy never before seen by mankind, which is also responsible to no small degree for their lack of impact on scientific development. Not only can a Hyperbrain construct a weapon that could kill tens of thousands of people, he can clearly imagine the impact such a device would have on those individual people, their families, and even the world. It's difficult to kill someone, or participate in their death, if you know, to the tiniest detail, just what they're feeling.

In the world of *Godlike*, most Hyperbrains are in the employ of world governments examining numbers. Most spend the war adding up charts and figures and taxes and even neutron yields. Although some Hyperbrains do work in research fields, they fail to do much more than offer up minor changes or handle the everyday brunt of adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing really big numbers. Some participate in combat, but their numbers are very limited.

Hyperbrains pretty much only get along with other Hyperbrains. They don't care to do much else; they're too busy exploring internal vistas that ordinary people could never see.

Brains 8

All events you experience are automatically cross-referenced by your mind and can be recalled with total clarity. You can reproduce a nearly photographic line-drawing of anything you have seen, and can transpose conversations you have overheard but did not pay attention to as if they were going on right in front of you.

Brains 8 Secondary Abilities

- You have a photographic memory and can recall anything you have sensed.
- You can make a nearly photographic drawing of anything you have seen.
- +1 experience point per session.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.

Brains 9

You can consider and attempt to solve a problem with your prodigious intellect even while asleep!

Brains 9 Secondary Abilities

- You have a photographic memory and can recall anything you have sensed.
- You can consider intellectual problems even while asleep.
- You can make a nearly photographic drawing of anything you have seen.
- +1 experience point per session.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.

Brains 10

You are a thinking machine, and have a photographic memory on a level not easily understood by the common man. Every event ever experienced by you is recorded, along with every nuance of the situation down to the smallest observable detail. A facial twitch, the placement of a tablecloth on a table, the number of squares in a tile floor, all this and more is obvious to you, along with your exact emotional state during such situations. At this level, it is almost as if you were experiencing every moment of your life over and over again-simultaneously.

Brains 10 Secondary Abilities

- Your memory is flawless, and you recall everything with perfect clarity.
- You can consider intellectual problems even while asleep.
- You can make a nearly photographic drawing of anything you have seen.
- +2 experience points per session.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.

Command

This Talent power scares the brass more than anything else. Hypercommand is more than simply powerful rhetorical skills. People listening to orators with Hypercommand often have lowered heart rates, decreased blink rates and other symptoms of hypnosis. Naturally, nothing scares a normal leader more than someone with parahuman charisma, who can make the most suicidal or irrational command seem attractive. These effects rarely last, and often fade over

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time, if the Talent cannot continuously re-apply his Command Hyperstat to the target.

Unlike Hypercool, the stat levels gained from Hypercommand do not contribute to Base Will.

The primary limitation to Hypercommand is comprehension. A German Talent with Command 10 can't convince an American GI even to untie his boots if the American doesn't understand German and the German has no English. Similarly, individuals who have been deafened (by shellfire, for example) cannot be swayed with high levels of Command. (See *Thought Control* on p. 87 for more details).

Command 6

You are extremely persuasive and can change the mind of the staunchest opponent in an intellectual argument, given enough time. This is only useful in a friendly situation like a calm discussion or debate. In true arguments (an interrogator against a prisoner, for instance), the benefits of this level of hypercommand do not function. But you still get to roll all the dice in your pool, of course.

Command 6 Secondary Abilities

- You are amazingly persuasive in common conversation. People believe what you have to say.

Command 7

You can convince any one person of anything, given enough time to talk to them. You can make even the most uncomfortable proposal seem somehow appealing, and can reverse even the most indoctrinated person's views to your own, or to anything you wish.

Command 7 Secondary Abilities

- You can convince anyone of anything in a matter of days.

Command 8

You can sway crowds of people to any point of view given the proper amount of time. Even commands encouraging suicide, murder, rape or other anti-social behavior seem somehow beneficial to the targets when they are under the effect of your power. (But they might be subject to retroactive Mental Stability checks when your power wears off.)

Command 8 Secondary Abilities

- You can convince crowds of anything in a matter of hours.

Command 9

You can bark orders in a voice so commanding that a single subject reacts and performs the action before he can even consider the consequences. Your power must win a dynamic contest against the target's Cool+Command roll. These "reflex commands" must be relatively simple. "Shoot yourself!" would work, but "Make me some soup!" would not, since it would take some time to complete. (But with a few minutes to talk, of course, you could persuade the target to make soup willingly.)

Command 9 Secondary Abilities

- You can convince crowds of anything in a matter of minutes.
- You can bark orders in a voice that will cause a single subject to obey a simple command before he can consider the consequences of such an action.

Command 10

You can sway crowds so thoroughly (given enough time to do so), that they will follow you to the ends of the earth and do anything for you. At this level you can bypass any indoctrination, training or resistance with ease. If you give an individual your undivided attention, you can instill your own indoctrination with simple sentences. This brainwashing can take less than a minute. You must however, overcome your target's Cool+Command in a dynamic contest with your Command Hyperstat.

Command 10 Secondary Abilities

- You can convince crowds of anything in less than an hour.
- You can bark orders in a voice that will cause a single subject to obey a simple command before he can consider the consequences of such an action.
- You can instill your own indoctrination into targets in a few simple sentences.

Cool

Some of the subtlest Talents are those whose powers are internal, not external. Characters who are inhumanly Cool seem eerily composed in almost any circumstance. Some "Hypercools" don't even register as Talents during government tests (until another Talent senses them), because the attributes of Talent-level Cool primarily consist of self-knowledge and self-command.

For every point of Cool above 5, a character can add one level of width to all combat rolls, but only for the purpose of initiative; this increase does not affect damage.

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For every level of Cool purchased with Will points, the character gets an additional point of Base Will. (This does not hold true for Command, the other component of Base Will.)

> ***Example:*** Guido has Cool 7. He rolls 2x3 while fighting someone. That roll is considered 4x3 when it comes time to decide who struck first, but it's still only 2x3 for damage.

Cool 6

You can use your Cool in conjunction with an Endurance roll instead of your Body score. This reflects your ability to consciously overcome pain and fatigue with the power of your mind.

Cool 6 Secondary Abilities

- You can use the Cool stat with the skill Endurance instead of Body.
- +1 Base Will point.
- +1 width to all combat rolls (only for initiative).

Cool 7

At this level you never take any penalties from things such as noise, distraction, exhaustion or pain. Your mind is a machine designed to overcome the environment. Everything except what is important to your mission is discarded automatically.

Cool 7 Secondary Abilities

- You can use the Cool stat with the skill Endurance instead of Body.
- You never suffer any penalties due to distraction, noise, exhaustion or pain.
- +2 Base Will points.
- +2 width to all combat rolls (only for initiative).

Cool 8

You are immune to torture. Pain is simply a stimulus to your mind like sight or sound. It can be completely ignored. With this level of Cool, you could perform surgery on yourself.

Cool 8 Secondary Abilities

- You can use the Cool stat with the skill Endurance instead of Body.
- You never suffer any penalties due to distraction, noise, exhaustion or pain.
- You are completely immune to pain.
- +3 Base Will points.
- +3 width to all combat rolls (only for initiative).

Cool 9

Nothing shocks or dismays you. You could watch your entire family shot and feel nothing unless you wished. All empathic responses are under your conscious control. You can starve yourself and go without water without being overcome by ill effects until the last of your internal reserves run out.

Cool 9 Secondary Abilities

- You can use the Cool stat with the skill Endurance instead of Body.
- You never suffer any penalties due to distraction, noise, exhaustion or pain.
- You are completely immune to pain.
- All you feelings are under your conscious control.
- +4 Base Will points.
- +4 width to all combat rolls (only for initiative).

Cool 10

No stimulus, no matter how terrible, affects you unless you wish it to. You are completely immune to battle fatigue and never need to make Cool+Mental Stability checks. In addition, so-called "reflex" responses such as breathing, heartbeat and other autonomic systems are under your conscious control.

Cool 10 Secondary Abilities

- You can use the Cool stat with the skill Endurance instead of Body.
- You never suffer any penalties due to distraction, noise, exhaustion or pain.
- You are completely immune to pain.
- All your feelings are under your conscious control.
- Your autonomic system is under your conscious control.
- +5 Base Will points.
- +5 width to all combat rolls (only for initiative).

Hyperskills

Hyperskills are normal skills increased to inhuman levels of accuracy or speed.

Having Talent-sized levels of a given skill does not expand what you can do with the skill. It just expands how well you can use it.

There is one special case, and that's when you have a very high Hyperskill and you're using that skill twice in a given time period. (The most common example would be that you have a Hyperskill in Brawl and you're trying to hit two people instead of one. Or it could be that you've got two phone lines and you're using a Hyperskill in Leadership to give commands to two different groups in two different situations). Ordinarily, you'd lose a die out of the pool and try to make two pair. If you have the skill at 7+, you don't take the one die penalty. This only

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works when you're doing the same thing twice, or when you're combining two Talent-sized skills.

Hyperskills Table

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	1
Each Hard Die	3
Each Wiggle Die	7

Example: Ronald has Body 3, Coordination 3, Brawl 7 and Dodge 5. If he decides to attack two people in a combat round, he rolls 10 dice and tries to make two pair. (If he'd had Body 4 and Brawl 6, he would have rolled 9 dice, taking the 1 die penalty.) If he tries to attack once and then dodge, he rolls the smaller dice pool (Coordination+Dodge, 8 dice) with a 1 die penalty. If he had Dodge 7, he could attack once and dodge once rolling 10 dice, because both the skills are at 7+.

Miracles

Since there's no skill for "Shoot Fire Out Of Your Mouth," what do you do if that's your character concept?

Easy. You create a Miracle called "Shoot Fire" and buy dice in it with your Will points. Since shooting fire is really only a variation on "Harm," you could buy up the ability with the guidelines for that power.

The downside of Miracle powers is that there's no stat that governs (for instance) the ability to change into an animal. So, your dice pool is equal to your Miracle skill and that's all. It's a good idea to buy at least two dice, though some powers are useful with only a single die.

Miracles and Power Stunts

If you wish to keep complexity in your game to a minimum, you can just roll the Miracle dice pool for any use of your Talent power to determine its level of success, or you can add power stunts to your game.

Often Miracles are very general powers that can accomplish different things. For example, telekinesis is useful in many situations. With it, you might hold an attacker at bay, pry open a door, or contain an explosion. Using a power stunt, you can specialize in a particular application of a Talent. When you use your Miracle for a basic task (i.e., you try to lift something with Telekinesis), you simply roll your Miracle's dice pool. But if you want to do something specialized and you have a power stunt that covers such an action, you roll the power stunt dice in addition to your Miracle dice pool. Power stunts are like skills for paranormal abilities.

A Talent might, for example, take a power stunt governing fine Telekinetic manipulation. If that Talent simply wanted to pick up the whole telephone, he would roll his base pool. However, if he wanted to pick up the receiver and dial it, he would roll his base pool plus his power stunt. This means he would have a better chance of accomplishing the more complicated task. Why is this? Possibly, it has something to do with the mental focus of the Talent phenomenon. Imagining the task in the detail required to dial might focus the Talent's attention more firmly than the vague desire to simply lift the phone.

Example: Wyatt can project sheets of fire from his hands. He has 4d in his pool. This is dangerous since it blankets an entire area in flame. Wyatt wants to hit only a guard with his attack (not the rest of the people behind the guard) and he has the power stunt Bullseye at 2d. This allows him to focus his power in a tight jet of flame, so he rolls a total of 6d for his attack against the guard.

What is the difference between a power stunt and an Extra? Good question. A power stunt is something learned through practice with a power; an Extra is an inherent trait of the power. Also, power stunts tend to be very specific, while Extras tend to be very general. Power stunts never allow you to develop a new power; they only allow you to use your existing power in new ways through practice.

In rules terms, this means Power Stunts are bought with experience points, instead of with Will points. You can only buy power stunts with experience, so you can't start play knowing them.

Power stunt dice cost the same as skills. They can be only normal dice, never Hard or Wiggle Dice.

Like skills, power stunts are connected to an individual Hyperstat, Hyperskill or Miracle.

Example Power Stunts

A few example power stunts are provided below to get you started. Others are listed with the powers in the Miracle Cafeteria.

Fine Control

Add the Fine Control power stunt to your Miracle dice pool when you are attempting to limit the effects of your power; whether reducing damage, speed, or any other effect of that ability. If you successfully match, you can discard any amount of damage, speed or effect your power produces.

No Pressure

When using your power under friendly circumstances, free of any pressure, you add your No Pressure stunt dice to your Miracle dice pool. This reflects the joy you find using your power when your life is not on the line. Combat or stress of any type negates the possibility of using this power stunt.

Under Pressure

You've grown accustomed of pushing your power to its very limits when under stress. When in combat, add your Under Pressure stunt dice to your Miracle dice pool. However, only the adrenaline of severe stress allows you to push your power limits, and this ability cannot be used without it.

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Miracles for the Gourmet

Not all Miracle powers are created equal, of course, and there are always those who like to come up with their own ideas rather than to pick from a list. The ability to change into a wolf is clearly inferior to the ability to change into any type of animal at all. To figure out the cost of a Miracle, you need to figure how powerful, versatile and reliable it is. Thus, powers can have up four basic qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust and Useful Outside of Combat.

Powers can further be modified with Extras (which expand its usefulness and increase its cost) and Flaws, (which restrict its usefulness and reduce its cost). These details are described below, for now, let's look at the costs.

The math for powers works out like this:

To begin with, buy the basic dice for the ability:

Miracle Table: Purchase Cost

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	1
Each Hard Die	2
Each Wiggle Die	4

Then determine the qualities the power will have and add those costs to the base cost.

Miracle Table: Quality Cost

Quality	Cost/Die	Hard Die	Wiggle
Attacks?	+1	+2	+4
Defends?	+1	+2	+4
Is it Robust?	+1	+2	+4
Useful outside combat?	+1	+2	+4

Here's a breakdown of the cost of each die.

Quality Table

Qualities	per Die	per Hard Die	per Wiggle Die
Only Attacks	2	4	8
Only Defends	2	4	8
Only Robust	2	4	8
Only Useful Outside Combat	2	4	8
Attacks and Defends	3	6	12
A&D and UOC	4	8	16
A&D&UOC and Robust	5	10	20

Example: You are designing a power that Defends, is Robust, and is Useful Outside of Combat. The math looks like this: Base cost is 1/2/4 for the dice themselves; add in another 1/2/4 for Defends, another 1/2/4 for Robust, and finally 1/2/4 for Useful Outside of Combat. This all adds up to 4 points for a Regular Die, 8 points for a Hard Die, and 16 points per Wiggle Die. Got it?

Let's say you want to buy 2 regular dice (2d), 1 hard die (1hd), and 1 wiggle die (1wd) in the above power. Since the power's Base Point Cost is 4/8/16, it's easy: 2 regular dice cost a total of 8 points; 1hd costs another 8 points; and finally, 1wd costs 16 points. The final cost is: 8+8+16=32 points in all.

Qualities

Here's what those qualities mean. Individual campaigns and individual GMs are going to have different opinions about when a power needs each of the power qualities. It's often a matter of personal taste.

Attacks?

This is fairly self-explanatory. If the power, by itself, does damage or increases your ability to do damage, it's an attack power. (If the damage is a side-effect, that doesn't necessarily require the Attacks quality. Lifting someone in the air and dropping them might kill them but lifting them by itself does not do damage.)

Defends?

Again, this is pretty simple. Does the power make you better able to survive attacks, either by making you harder to kill or harder to hit in the first place? If so, it's a defense power and it allows you to use the dice pool of the power to "gobble" dice from an attacking set (for more details, see *Using Powers Defensively* on p. 98).

Robust?

A power is Robust when it's difficult for others to interfere with its operation. If there are no significant limitations to when or how you can use a power, it's Robust. A power may have many different levels of robustness, or lack thereof. Typically, each Extra bought for the power increases its robustness; each Flaw taken lessens its robustness.

Example: Edwin wants his character to be able to change into a dragon. He chooses the Alternate Form Miracle, which has the Qualities of Attacks, Defends, Robust, and Useful Outside of Combat. This gives it a Point Cost (including the base cost of the dice at 1/2/4) of 5/10/20. The dragon can Attack with claws and teeth and Defend with his thick skin; the power is Robust in that he can change whenever he wants and doesn't lose control of the power easily; and

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Useful Outside of Combat (it can carry passengers and run as fast a horse). Later, Edwin also plans to purchase powers to go with the form (using the Attached to Alternate Form Flaw), so he can have flight, fiery breath, and thicker skin that can turn a bullet. Alternate Form only allows him to change, not have any of these secondary abilities—they have to be purchased separately.

He wants these other abilities, but the GM says right now he can't afford it. Edwin purses his lips in concentration and says, "How about this? I have to raise my arms up and roar like a dragon to Transform." His GM smiles. "That works. That's the 'Nervous Habit' Flaw, and it subtracts -1/-2/-4 from the power's cost, reducing it to 4/8/16. You'll want to get it lower than that." Edwin thinks a bit more and asks if he can take the Mental Strain Flaw, which drops the Point Cost down to 2/4/8. (He mentally grins to himself, knowing he'll stay a dragon as much as he possibly can, thus minimizing the strain.) So the cost of the Alternate Form has been reduced twice: Once by making it possible to prevent Edwin from changing (just tie him or gag him), and secondly by making it problematic if he has to shift form too quickly in a short span of time. That frees up points for other powers related to the dragon form.

Useful Outside of Combat?

This is a bit of a catch-all. If it doesn't attack and doesn't defend, it probably gets a point here. Otherwise, there's not really much reason for the power to exist, is there?

Example: Levitation is Useful Outside of Combat, but unless it's very fast (which would be a different power), it confers no spectacular attack or defense abilities. Having levitation that doesn't depend on some particular activation quirk—for example, only being able to levitate while holding your breath—makes the ability Robust. Therefore, with two qualities plus the base point cost of 1/2/4, Levitation costs 3 points per die, or a Point Cost of 3/6/12.

Example: Phillip's character has the Talent of turning metal into ice—if he concentrates for at least three combat rounds. His GM scratches her head and asks if the can change a bullet in flight. Phillip says no. The GM decides that this actually has several uses outside of combat ("What do you mean, the tank melted?!?") but that it's not much of an attack or defense. Furthermore, there's a restriction on its use—he has to concentrate for a significant period of time. It's Useful Outside of Combat, with a fairly broad effect (+2 per die) but with a hard restriction (–2 per die). Therefore, it costs 2 points per die to buy this Miracle.

Extras

Extras are additions to your power that expand its usefulness. For example, making your lightning attack armor-piercing would make it more useful in combat. That's an Extra; it raises the cost per die since it expands the power's usefulness. You can have any number of Extras, provided you can afford them with the number of Will points provided during character creation.

The simplest way to handle Extras is to negotiate with your GM by sharing concepts and settling on a few ideas. Or you can determine just what the new Extra allows the ability to do and add the appropriate quality costs from the Miracle qualities table. To use the example above of an armor-piercing lightning attack, this would be like the addition of a new "Attacks" quality (since it can now affect a broader class of targets) and would add an extra +1 per die, +2 per hard die and +4 per wiggle die.

These point costs are cumulative. Generally speaking, the more Extras a power has, the more expensive it becomes.

Some sample Extras, to get you started, include the following. Others are listed in the Miracle Cafeteria.

Always On (+1/+2/+4)

Your power is on all the time. This is especially useful for defensive powers, since it means that even surprise attacks will be defended against. The major drawback is, of course, that you can't consciously shut it off, and as a consequence, your power is always visible to enemy Talents. When you suffer any killing damage, or any type of damage to the head, your power fails, and you must roll the dice pool to reactivate it.

Endless (+1/+2/+4)

The power may be used indefinitely. Once successfully activated it may remain on until such a time that you become distracted or injured. (If the power does not really require an up to the minute conscious control, such as levitation, the power can remain on even when you are asleep!) If you are invisible, you can stay invisible without any effort. If you can fly, you can stay in the air for days, weeks or even months.

No Inertia (+2/+4/+8)

This allows the power to cancel inertia on its target. For example, a Hyperbody Talent could use his great strength to stop an oncoming truck without being knocked back or even needing a grip; his touch would cancel the momentum of the truck at the instant of contact. This effect only lasts as long as the Talent is touching the object.

No Leverage (+2/+4/+8)

This Extra makes the power require no purchase or actual leverage to gain a hold on an object. This has the effect of negating considerations of bulk, size or support. A Talent with this Extra on his Hyperbody could grab the corner of a tank and flip it over without having to get a good balance and grip. This effect only lasts as long as the Talent is touching the object.

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No Upward Limit (+2/+4/+8)

The power has no upward limit. You can potentially lift, teleport, transform or otherwise affect any amount of material or number of people. Every 5 Will you spend doubles the limits on your power. However, this doubling lasts only one combat round for every 5 Will points spent.

> ***Example:*** You have a Body of 10 with a No Upward Limit Extra. You attempt to lift a tank that weighs 40 tons, but your Body score only allows 10 tons to be lifted. You spend 10 Will points—5 to double your limit to 20 tons, then another 5 to double that to 40. You can lift the tank for two rounds. If you spent 20 Will, two more doublings would let you lift 160 tons for four rounds.

In practice, since PCs can have no more than 50 Will in the default setting of *Godlike*, there is an upward limit. However, since spending 50 Will lets someone with Body 10 lift 10,240 tons, it's a very high limit.

No Weight (+2/+4/+8)

This Extra renders the subject of your power effectively weightless. (Of course, this does not reduce the effort it takes for *you* to lift it; it only helps when you're moving the lifted item.) A Talent with a Body of 8 with the Extra of No Weight could carry a car anywhere as if it weighed nothing. Nor would it have any effect on the supporting surface he was walking on! Imagine a Talent picking up a tank, then leaping onto a boat with it without sinking the boat. This effect only lasts as long as the Talent is touching the object.

Reflexive (+2/+4/+8)

Your power will react to dangerous conditions automatically given a bare minimum of stimulus. Direct observation is not necessary on your part. It is enough to know you are in danger; the power does the rest. For example, Telekinesis would automatically activate to deflect bullets because your subconscious mind hears the gun cock a split-second before it is fired.

When under surprise attack (if you have this Extra and the Defends quality), you get a free Defensive roll at -1d against that incoming attack, as long as that attack is not with a Talent power.

Unconscious (+1/+2/+4)

Your power works to protect you even if you are unconscious or asleep. You may not like what it does, but it attempts to keep you alive in situations it deems dangerous. The exact outcome of such incidents is up to the GM to decide. Of course, you can use the power normally when you want to.

Flaws

One way to cheapen your power is to restrict its use. Telekinesis is a power with four qualities (Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust), so it costs 5 points per die. Telekinesis that only works when your shadow falls on the object has a restriction: It is less Robust; it now costs only 4 Will points per die. If you limit it further—saying that the strength of the telekinesis depends on the size of the shadow—then the power is even less Robust, which can make it cheaper still.

Flaws can modify dice to a minimum cost of 1 point per die, 2 points per hard die and 4 points per wiggle die.

The simplest way to handle Flaws is to negotiate with your GM. Or, you can determine just what the new Flaw prevents the ability from doing and subtract the appropriate quality costs from the Miracle qualities table. Generally, the more flawed a power is, the cheaper it becomes. Often Flaws simply offset the qualities that make a power expensive. (If a power only works when the Talent is emotionally tranquil, that gets rid of the "Attacks" and "Defends" qualities right there). These minuses are cumulative.

Here are some sample Flaws to get you started. Many others are listed with the powers in the Miracle Cafeteria.

Attach (-1/-2/-4)

Your power is linked to another power, and cannot be used unless that other power is also being used. For example, if your Super Speed is attached to Flight, you can only use Super Speed while flying. The reason this is a significant Flaw is that if the main power fails (due to Will problems or injury), the attached power fails as well automatically.

There is one limitation to this Flaw. The main power *must* have all the Qualities found in the attached powers, or else it cannot be attached at all.

> ***Example:*** Ivan has Flight with the Qualities Defends, Robust and Useful Outside of Combat. He can't Attach a power to it which Attacks, since the main power does not have the Attacks Quality. He *can* Attach any power to it which Defends, is Robust or is Useful Outside of Combat (or all three) to Flight, since Flight has those Qualities.

Backfires (-2/-4/-8)

Every time you use the power, you take a point of killing damage to your torso.

Expensive (-1/-2/-4)

In addition to risking an initial Will point to activate the power (see *When Wills Collide* on p. 95), you have to spend a point of Will. If you fail at your activation roll, you lose 2 points of Will (the one you spent, and one for failing to activate the power).

Full Power Only (-1/-2/-4)

You can fly super fast, but drop out of the air when you attempt to slow down even a little bit. (Landing is a bitch.)

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Character Creation, an Example

Character Concept & Signature Power

Darren is playing in *Godlike's* default setting (the High Realism theme), and he's already constructed the basics of the character: Background, Statistics and Skills (see **Part Three: Character Creation** on p. 29 for details on Darren's character). Now, it's time for the parahuman powers. The GM says he has 25 Will points to spend on Talents, and he knows he wants to do something with the Alternate Form power.

He's put a lot of thought into his character's background. He's decided his character, a wiry Italian-American named John Napolitano, manifested his Talent when grabbed by a bull gorilla locked into a cage at a carnival; he can now become a gorilla himself! It's the only reason the enraged animal didn't crush him in the attack.

Looking up the Alternate Form entry, Darren sees that the power can be used to Attack and Defend, and is Robust and Useful Outside of Combat. So the Base Cost is 5/10/20. (If he wanted to remove any of these qualities, he could, but of course it would reduce the effectiveness *as well as* the cost of the power.) There's still work to be done, such as considering Extras and Flaws. As you read along, refer to the filled out character sheet on the next page.

Talent Extras

Darren likes the idea that John can stay in Ape form as long as he likes, and maybe even prefers being an ape most of the time; he buys the Endless Extra, so he can even sleep in Ape form. This adds +1/+2/+4 to his Base Cost, for a cost of 6 per regular die, 12 per hard die, and 24 per wiggle die, or as we'll write it from now on, 6/12/24 for his Alternate Gorilla Form.

Talent Flaws

Darren blanches slightly at the cost of his Talent Power so far. It's too high. He quickly scans the Flaws list so he can lower that cost to something more reasonable. He takes the following Flaw: Mental Strain (inflicts a point of shock damage to his human head every time he changes into the Ape Form, so when he changes back, he's injured), for –2/–4/–8; and Nervous Habit (he has to close his eyes and concentrate for a combat round to change) for another –1/–2/–4. After Flaws, his Final Point Cost is reduced to 3/6/12. Darren immediately sinks 12 points into the power for 2 Hard Dice, as he wants no question of failure when John changes forms.

Other Talent Powers

Darren thinks about his character so far. Alternate Form states quite clearly that the stats of the Alternate Form are the same as the character's—John's Body is 2 and Coordination is 3. He should buy some Hyperstats to reflect the gorilla's physical prowess. He chooses two Hyperstats: Body +6 and Coordination +3. He buys both with the Attached to Gorilla Form Flaw, which cuts their cost to 1 point per die. His two Hyperstats cost 9 points altogether. So far he's spent 21 points. He thinks that The Ape should be tough as well as strong and agile, and buys a single rank of Extra Tough for 3 points; the Attached to Gorilla Form Flaw applies here also. His character is done at a Final Cost of 24 points.

All these powers are kind of tough on Darren's character. Base Will equals Command + Cool + remaining Will Points. For John, this is 2+2+1; The Ape's Base Will is 5 when all is done. He'd better not get into too many Contests of Will right away, as he doesn't have a lot of Will at the beginning of the game.

What the Talent Can Do

Darren now has a complete character for *Godlike,* but what can his Talent do in combat? Well for one, it's an effective weapon. After checking Hyperbody 8 (the strength of his Alternate Form), Joe discovers his gorilla form has the following abilities:

- He can lift up to 4 tons.
- He has +1 wound box to his torso and each limb (in addition to his Extra Tough power).
- He can breach Heavy Armor 4 automatically, or Heavy Armor 8 on a successful Body roll.
- He can broad jump 8 yards or 4 yards straight up.
- He can shout so loud he can shatter glass at up to a meter.

Checking Hypercoordination 6 he learns he can tumble roll and climb with the agility of a chimpanzee (very fitting).

Since his Alternate Form power has the Defends quality, any of the Attached powers can be used to Defend against incoming attacks as Gobble Dice as well (if the situation makes sense, of course). For example, in gorilla form, either his Coordination or Body dice could be used to Gobble dice from incoming attacks—if he had time to see the attack coming, that is.

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GODLIKE SUPERHERO ROLEPLAYING IN A WORLD ON FIRE, 1936-1946

Name/Alias: John Napolitano / "The Ape"

Sex: M Nation/Ethnicity: Italian-American Ht.: 5'9" Wt.: 160 lbs

Age: 20 Date of Birth: 6-26-23 Date of Manifestation: 7-2-43

Education: Expelled at age 13 Profession: Carnival Roustabout

Motivations:

Brains	1	Body	2 (8)
Command	2	Coordination	3 (6)
Cool	2	Sense	2
Base Will	5		

XXXXX 05 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50

WOUNDS

10

5–6 3–4

7–9

2 1

SKILLS

Skill	Attribute	Dice Pool
BRAWL 2	BODY	4 (10)
CLUB 1	BODY	3 (9)
ENDURANCE 2	BODY	4 (10)
HEALTH 2	BODY	4 (10)
THROW 2	BODY	4 (10)
DODGE 3	COORD	6 (9)
DRIVE (CAR) 1	COORD	4 (7)
HEAR 2	SENSE	4
LANGUAGE (ENGLISH) 1	BRAINS	2
BLUFF 2	COOL	4
LIE 1	COOL	3
MENTAL STABILITY 2	COOL	4

TALENTS

Talent	Dice Hard Wiggle	Spent
ALTERNATE FORM: GORILLA 2 HD	5 . 10 . 20	12
EXTRA: ENDLESS	+1 . 2 . 4	
FLAW: MENTAL STRAIN	-2 . 4 . 8	
	. .	
	. .	
HYPERSTAT: BODY +6	2 . 5 . 10	6
FLAW: ATTACHED TO ALT. FORM	-1 . 2 . 4	
HYPERSTAT: COORD +3	2 . 5 . 10	3
FLAW: ATTACHED TO ALT. FORM	-1 . 2 . 4	
EXTRA TOUGH	. .	3
FLAW: ATTACHED TO ALT. FORM	-1 . 2 . 4	

WEAPONS

Weapon	Spray/Penet./Area	Cap.	Dmg.	Range Close/Max
	/ /			/
	/ /			/
	/ /			/
	/ /			/
	/ /			/

ARMOR

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You can punch through a brick wall, but you tend to rip car doors off just getting in and out of a vehicle. This Flaw only works on powers where it would be a Flaw, so no, you can't take it for powers like Heavy Armor where full power only would be an advantage. As usual, the GM has the final say.

Interfere (-2/-4/-8)
Any Talent can spend a point of Will to automatically interfere with the operation of your power on sight. They don't even have to be affected by it to interfere with it. (This is not a great one to take with Flight, by the way.) By spending this Will point, the opposing Talent automatically cancels out your power—you don't even get a chance to defend in a contest of wills.

In addition, any Talent observing you use your power automatically knows that you have the Interfere Flaw.

Mental Strain (-2/-4/-8)
Every time you use your power you take a point of shock damage to your head. If you use it too much, you're knocked unconscious. This shock damage must be healed normally; it is not "shaken off" automatically like most shock damage.

Nervous Habit (-1/-2/-4)
The power will not work unless you can perform some physical or mental ritual (i.e., wringing your hands, reciting a poem in your head). Nothing you do can change this. No ritual? No power.

No Contest (-2/-4/-8)
The power is automatically "turned off" by the proximity of other Talents. You cannot use your ability in their presence. (The distance is up to the GM, but it's near.)

No Physical Change (-1/-2/-4)
The power, despite what it appears to do, causes no physical changes in your body or the environment. If you are invisible, you are only invisible in the minds of those who might observe you. If you "turn into" a wolf, you still leave behind human footprints.

Peace of Mind (-2/-4/-8)
You must be in a certain mental state to use the power (i.e. angry, scared or happy). The GM judges your mental state. If you are not in your particular mental state, your power does not work.

Short Duration (-1/-2/-4)
The effect of the power wears off after a number of combat rounds equal to the width of the activation roll. Obviously, you can't take this with Talents that have permanent effects. If you take this with an attack power, all the damage it does vanishes after the time's up. Characters "killed" by a short-duration attack were really only unconscious.

Shy (-3/-6/-12)
The power will not work in the presence of anybody. You must be alone and unobserved to use it.

Uncontrollable (-3/-6/-12)
The power has a mind of its own. Once activated with a successful roll, the GM determines what the power does or does not do. You can shut it off, but only on another successful roll that beats the activation roll. Here's the kicker: If you have Hard Dice *you have to roll them*. Unless they come up 10's the power continues to randomly flail about. Wiggle dice work normally.

Cafeteria-Style Miracles
The following 45 powers are "cafeteria"-style Miracles, ones you can pick and choose ready-made. This is useful for those of you who don't want to construct your own powers, or who want to get some ideas on how powers are built before setting pencil to paper.

These Miracles are in their most basic form. Feel free to modify them. The examples listed with each power are by no means the only Qualities, Extras, Flaws or power stunts available with the power; please make up your own! It would also be a good idea to remember (or do it now, before you leap in) to examine the rules of how Talent Powers function in combat; see *Using Talents In the Game* on p. 97.

Aces

Qualities
Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Aces Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You are stupidly lucky. Things just tend to go your way. If you so choose, you can roll your Aces dice pool in addition to the normal dice pool for any of your actions, be it a skill, stat or power (the 10 dice maximum still applies). You may then choose the dice you wish from both pools and combine them into one matching set. Furthermore, you can decide whether to add your Aces dice *after* you see what you've already rolled.

Now for the bad part: Aces is expensive; sometimes *very* expensive. Every Aces die thrown costs 1 Will point, every Aces Hard Die thrown costs 2 Will points, and every Aces Wiggle Die thrown costs 4 Will points. No action supported by the Aces power ever yields a Will reward, no matter the circumstances. If you roll a 10 Height using your Aces dice, you don't get the usual 1 Will point reward.

You may, if you wish, roll only part of your Aces pool. For instance, if you're trying to conserve Will, you might only spend 1 Will to roll 1 die, instead of rolling all the

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Aces dice at your disposal.

> ***Example:*** Devin has Aces at 4d and Coordination+Rifle at 3d. He shoots at a German and rolls 8, 7 and 3, a miss. He then rolls his Aces dice and gets 7, 5, 1 and 1. He takes the 7 from the Aces and combines it with the 7 of his rifle roll. What was once a miss is now a hit—at the cost of 4 Will points.

Power Stunts

Focus: You can add your Focus power stunt to your Aces dice pool when you are trying to affect the outcome of a very specific event, but only if that event is taking place outside of combat. Combat precludes the concentration necessary for this ability. Each Focus die costs 1 Will to roll.

Extras

Contagious (+4/+8/+16): If you wish, friendlies within 10 feet of you roll your Aces total with their actions as well. However, the Will costs for each type of die thrown are multiplied by the number of people affected. That is, if you and your two friends each add 3 Aces dice, the total Will cost is 9 Will: 3 for your three dice, and 3 for each of the dice added to your friends. You can pick and choose who gets the bonuses and who doesn't.

Flamboyant (+1/+2/+4): Your power acts in dramatic and very noticeable ways. Your bullets miss, then ricochet off walls and hit their intended targets anyway; your grenade lands right in the open hatch of the oncoming tank after bouncing off a conveniently placed overhanging sign; your gun just seems to go off by accident at random, killing enemies in concealed locations. Keep in mind, it's obvious to anyone seeing you perform these actions that you are a Talent.

Force of Will (+2/+4/+8): You can focus your Aces power on someone else to affect the outcome of a dice pool roll. Concentrate for a round, spend 5 Will and the person or event you choose gets to pick and choose from your Aces total after rolling his or her dice pool. You must still pay normal Will costs for the Aces dice.

Insanely Lucky (+4/+8/+16): If you roll a 10 in your Aces pool (not with Hard Dice or Wiggle Dice!), you add another die to your Aces pool. As many 10s are rolled, that's how many more dice you get to roll in your Aces pool to choose from. (Ten remains the maximum number of dice for any dice pool). The extra dice gained from rolling tens don't cost extra Will points.

Flaws

Limited Height (-1/-2/-4): You can only make sets of a maximum height of 6 using your Aces. Any matches higher than 6 are discarded.

Limited Width (-1/-2/-4): You can only make sets of a maximum width of 3 using your Aces. Any matches wider than three, and the excess matches, are discarded.

Affinity

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Affinity Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You are especially at home in a certain type of environment or element not usually comfortable (or even survivable) to humans. In addition to not suffering any ill effects from such an environment or element, you actually perform better in such conditions. With a successful roll, you add another die to all actions taken in that environment. Pick one type of Affinity and buy dice in it considering the following chart to determine its cost.

Affinity Table: Type Costs

Cost Addition Die/Hard/Wiggle	Frequency	Affinity for (Pick One)
+5/+10/+20	All the Time	Changeable Affinity; automatic Affinity to any environment
+4/+8/+16	Common	Water, desert, forest
+3/+6/+12	Regular	Jungle, arctic, marsh
+2/+4/+6	Uncommon	Inside a fire, subjected to absolute zero, submerged in earth

Under normal circumstances you don't even need to roll to see if your Affinity protects you. When you're exposed to your Affinity, your Talent automatically kicks in.

When subjected to the environment or element covered by your Affinity, roll against your dice pool. On a successful match, you gain a +1d to all actions while in it. This effect lasts as long as you are subjected to your Affinity (or until your power fails). In other words, protection from harm is automatic, but you have to roll to get the increased bonuses.

Extras

Affinity Sense (+1/+2/+4): You can "sense" the presence of people or living beings within your Affinity environment while you are immersed in it. This has a range of a mile.

Your Element (+2/+4/+8): If you make a successful Affinity roll while in your element, you gain +2d to any action instead of a +1d. You may buy this Extra multiple times for another +1d each time.

Sharing is Caring (+5/+10/+20): You can grant your Affinity to a single human target with a touch. This Affinity lasts for the width of your Affinity roll in minutes.

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Flaws

Give or Take (-1/-2/-4): Your power works normally, but you must roll a success or it fails to activate, even when you are exposed to your Affinity. No success, no Affinity (and that usually means damage).

Addiction (-1/-2/-4): Not only do you *like* your Affinity, you *need* it. If you go a day without exposure to your Affinity, you must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll. If you succeed, you can wait one more day. If you fail, subtract 1d from all actions until you feed your addiction.

Alert

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Alert Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

Your power can alert you to the presence of danger. You may use it to detect the possibility of attack in a given situation by concentrating for one round and rolling you Alert dice pool. If you fail, the power cannot be used again to determine the danger level of that same situation or location for about 12 to 24 hours.

To determine the extent of the success of an Alert roll, consult the following chart:

Alert Table

Type of Roll	Result
Success	A general feeling of danger is indicated.
Roll is wide	Time remaining before the danger is indicated in general terms (seconds, minutes, hours).
Roll is tall	General power level of attack indicated in general terms (a platoon of soldiers, a tank, a sniper, *etc)*.
Roll is tall and wide	Both time and power level are indicated.
Multiple 10s	General power level, direction and time of danger is indicated.

Example: Emil has Alert at 3d and wants to determine whether his rifle company is in danger if they enter a ruined church. His character pauses for a moment and concentrates on the church, and then rolls a 4, 5, and a 1. No matches. He gets no feeling either way on the subject. There may or may not be danger in the church.

Emil cannot use Alert again in regards to anything to do with that particular church for the rest of the day. If he wanted to use it to determine if something else in the town was dangerous, however, he could.

Power Stunts

Deep Concentration: Add your rating in Deep Concentration to your Alert roll any time you spend an hour in peaceful meditation before making the roll.

Extras

Detailed (+2/+4/+8): With a successful roll your power gives you a detailed idea of the danger facing you. Although certain details elude you (the names, ranks, units and such of your enemy), other details are quite clear, such as their armament, placement and level of preparation.

Flaws

Dreams (-2/-4/-8): The power only works in your sleep, the night before an attack. You only receive a "bad feeling" the next day about some specific location, nothing more, despite the width or height of the roll.

Alternate Form

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Alternate Form Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

In addition to your normal body, you have a single alternate form you can assume when you activate your Talent power. Exactly what that form is remains up to you, but it can be almost anything: a body of stone, an animal, a paper dragon. Unlike Transform, forms assumed with this power are wholly convincing and unique.

You must design your Alternate Form along with your character during character creation. Any ability possessed by the Alternate Form (Flight, for instance) must be purchased at the normal cost with the "Attached" Flaw.

To change into your Alternate Form, simply make a successful roll with your power dice pool. You remain in

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the Alternate Form for as long as you like, until you fall asleep or unconscious, or until that form is damaged past its resiliency limit.

Attacks against the form only hurt it, not your normal human body. The form must heal separately or remain damaged. To heal, you must remain in the form until all the damage is healed normally. Otherwise, when you change the damage is still there. If your other form takes enough damage to kill it, you return to your normal shape. To change back to your Alternate Form after it has been "killed" requires you to spend 30 Will points.

Once an Alternate Form has been designed it cannot change except through normal character development. You may attach any number of Miracles, Hyperstats, Hyperskills, Flaws or Extras to an Alternate Form.

Regardless of how your form appears, its stats are your stats. It has no abilities except yours unless you Attach Hyperstats, Hyperskills or Miracles to it. It also doesn't matter how big your Form is; unless you buy extra Body or additional health boxes with Extra Tough, or armor with Heavy Armor, it's as easy to kill as a normal human. Conversely, it doesn't matter how small your Form is; it's no easier to kill. However, in no instance can your Alternate Form be smaller than a hummingbird or larger than a small elephant. (See *Transform* on p. 89 for a guide of how large or small your Alternate Form can be.) Since your Alternate Form never changes after character creation, assume that the number of dice in your pool determines how big (or small) your Form can be.

Despite its Power Qualities, the Alternate Form dice pool cannot attack or defend on its own. Instead the Qualities are there to allow you to Attach other powers that have those Qualities and Hyperstats or Hyperskills that can be used to attack and defend.

Example: Brian wants his character's Alternate Form to be solid chrome. He's playing in *Godlike's* established background, so he has 25 Will points to spend.

First, he has to buy the dice pool that allows him to change. Alternate Form's Point Cost is 5/10/20. To reduce the cost, he decides on the Flaws Expensive (-1/-2/-4), Mental Strain (-2/-4/-8), Inactive Senses (he can't smell, taste, touch or feel pain while in his alternate form; he has his GM okay it for -1/-2/-4), and Short Duration (-1/-2/-4). This lowers his Point Cost to 1/2/4. But he wants an Extra, too: Reflexive (because he doesn't want to die from ambushes), which increases the cost by +2/+4/+8 to 3/6/12.

Brian takes 2hd for his Alternate Form dice pool for 12 points, so he can always transform without worrying about a roll. Now Brian wants Heavy Armor, as much as he can get. Heavy Armor costs 7 points per level; it's expensive. He gets the Attached Flaw, but it still costs 6 points per level. Brian talks to his GM. Between the two of them, they come up with a unique and rather weird Flaw for his armor: *Severable*. A variant on the Ablative Flaw, this causes his Heavy Armor to be worn away by damage as he takes it; when the Heavy Armor is worn away on a limb, that limb is blown off. This means that O'Malley had better rejoin his limb (by spending 4 Will points) before his power's duration ends if he doesn't want to have a horrible amputation wound. His GM approves the Flaw to be worth three points; between that and the Attached to Chrome Form Flaw, Brian can buy 4 points of Heavy Armor (at 3 Will points a level) for 12 points. He's now spent 24 of his 25 Will points.

Brian stops and dumps the remaining Will point into his Base Will. He thinks briefly, and asks if he can add in a Side Effect: O'Malley's clothing changes to chrome for the duration of the power. The GM likes this, as it doesn't detract or imbalance the character (except it maybe makes him a bit more intimidating).

Bind

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Bind Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

Your power can constrict a target, limiting its mobility. Whether you create a sticky webbing or a telekinetic rope to Bind the target makes no difference; the result is the same—your target is bound. Concentrate one round, make a successful roll with your power, and you Bind a single target. (You may attempt multiple actions as usual to bind multiple targets.) With your power you can strangle, pin or disarm any target within vision range (see the strangle, pinning and disarming rules in **Part Two: Game Mechanics:** *Hand-to-hand* on p. 17). To break free, your target must make a dynamic Body roll against your Bind power. This is a little different from a standard pin. Normally, the contest is Body+Brawl. However, since you're not holding the target with your arms and legs, it's purely a matter of strength; only the target's Body die apply. You can maintain a Bind on a number of targets equal to the number of dice in your Bind dice pool.

When using Bind to take away edged or pointed weapons, you do not take damage during the disarm. For the purposes of strangling, Bind is treated like a garrote.

Example: Paul has Bind at 6d (his power creates a pink sticky substance he calls "goop"), and he sees a guard armed with a submachine gun before the guard sees him. Paul wishes to disarm the guard with his goop, so he makes a called shot against the guard's arm. Since it is a called shot, Paul drops 1d from his 6d Bind, and places another die at 6 (the hit location of the arm holding the gun). This leaves him with 4d to roll. He rolls a 1, 9, 1 and a 6. A hit on the right arm! The submachine gun is encased in goop and is useless. If the guard wishes to break the gun free of the goop, he must defeat Paul's Bind with his Body in a dynamic contest.

Example: Paul wants to strangle a guard with his goop. He makes a called shot against the guard's head, so

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he drops 1d from his pool and places another die at 10 (his target, the head of the guard). This leaves him with 4d to roll. He rolls and hits with a 2x10. The guard takes 1 point of killing damage to the head immediately, and continues to do so every round until he dies or until he wins a dynamic contest between his Body and Paul's Bind.

Power Stunts

Trip: Add your Trip total to your Bind dice pool when attempting to trip a moving target (or targets) by binding its legs.

Extras

Physical Stuff (+1/+2/+4): Your power creates a substance or object that it binds with. This material is real, and remains behind even after you release your Bind.

Unlimited (+2/+4/+8): The number of targets you can Bind is not limited by the amount of dice in your dice pool. You are still limited by the multiple actions rules, however.

Flaws

Poof (-2/-4/-8): If you look away from your targets even for a second the Bind you have on them immediately vanishes.

Block

Qualities

Defends, Robust.

Block Table: Defensive Power

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can stop a single attack with your power. It can be any type of individual attack—a machete, a bullet or a punch—but you cannot affect Area attacks such as fire or gas, or attacks composed of many smaller attacks, like grenade fragments, explosives or mines. No one can roll more than a single dice pool for Block, but how your Block works is up to you. Whether you use an invisible force, a super-strong arm or beams from your eyes to deflect the attack matters very little. You must pause in movement to attempt to Block.

You can only use Block if you know you are in danger of being attacked and if you can see the attacker. In other words, you could Block a rifle attack by a man standing and shooting at you, but not a surprise sniper shot.

Block is defensive, so it gobbles dice from the opposing attack. As usual, to Block gunfire you must have Hypercoordination or the Reflexive Extra.

Power Stunts

Exceptional Block: Your Block works much more effectively against a single type of weapon attack (bullets, knives, fists, *etc)*. When you are attacked by that particular type of weapon, add your Exceptional Block total to you Block dice pool.

Extras

Blind Block (+2/+4/+8): Your power automatically intercepts the strongest attack coming at you in any round, and even works in the dark. You may roll its dice pool separately from whatever other action you're attempting.

Flaws

Linked to a Hit Location (-1/-2/-4): Your power is linked to a single hit location such as your left arm, torso, or leg. If you can't bring that limb to bear, you can't use your ability.

Break

Qualities

Attacks, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Break Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

Using your hands or feet you can puncture or break things that should not be within the realm of human ability to break. Break is very similar in effect to high Body attacks, and to Harm with the Penetration Extra. The difference is that Break is much narrower in focus. The ability to shred armor is just one advantage of a high Body Hyperstat, and penetrating Harm is typically done at a distance.

Whenever you roll Break successfully against an armored target, you reduce that target's Heavy Armor on

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that location by a number of levels equal to your Break die pool.

> ***Example:*** Yuri has two dice in Break. He walks up to a German halftrack with 3 points of Heavy Armor. If he can roll a match, he reduces the halftrack's armor by 2 points.

Break attacks only armor; it does not do shock or killing damage. However, against soft targets like human beings, having even a single die of Break turns shock damage from hand-to-hand attacks into killing. You do not need to roll to get this effect.

Power Stunts

Bend: Through the careful use of your power (by punching an object many times at less than full ability), you can strike and bend metal instead of simply punching through it. When you are attempting to bend malleable material with your power, add your Bend total to your Break dice pool.

Extras

Control (+1/+2/+4): You can choose the level of Penetration you achieve with Break up to your dice pool.

Flaws

Picky (-1/-2/-4): The power works only against a single type of armor, such as only steel plate or only concrete.

Containment

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Containment Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

With your power, you can isolate and separate certain elements or attacks. Whether it represents an inherent control over a type of chemical or a telekinetic shield, the effect is the same: you contain something in a limited area through your willpower alone.

Containment is treated as a dynamic contest between the power and the element, object or being it is trying to contain.

With Containment, a Talent might be able to isolate an explosion in an area, protecting those outside his shield; stop an oncoming wave of water; block a fusillade of bullets (by making a shield before you are fired at); keep one soldier separate from another; or contain a cloud of poisonous gas.

The shield is a singular, uncomplicated object that cannot have more than six sides.

Containment lasts a number of minutes equal to the width of the roll. Expending Will points may extend this duration. For each Will point spent, the duration extends by one minute.

To stop or contain objects in motion, you must overcome a number of dice based on the object's size in a dynamic contest.

When dealing with non-moving objects, Containment is limited in how much weight it can affect in much the same way as Teleportation (see *Teleportation* on p. 85).

Against a living creature, Containment must overcome the Body dice pool of the target (just Body, no skill) in a dynamic contest.

Containment Table: Weight Limits

# of Die	Weight Affected
2	<210 pounds
3	210-250 pounds
4	250-370 pounds
5	370-500 pounds
6	500-800 pounds
7	800 pounds to 1 ton
8	1-2 tons
9	2-4 tons
10	4-10 tons

You can use a Flaw to limit what your Containment power can be used against and thus reduce the power's cost.

> ***Example:*** Yusef wants to contain the explosion of a grenade with his Containment power of 7d. The attacker rolls his Coordination+Grenade of 3d and gets a 6, 6, 6. Yusef rolls his 7d and gets a 7, 7, 7, 7, 10, 1 and a 2. His roll is both wider and taller than the roll of the attacker. He successfully contains the blast with an invisible shield so its Area dice do not apply. However, if Yusef had rolled only 2x7, the grenade would have gone off before his power could contain it because the attack roll was wider.

> ***Example:*** Bob wants to keep an attack dog away from him with his power. He rolls his Containment of 4d against the dog's Body of 2d. Bob rolls 9, 7, 7 and 6. The dog rolls 6 and a 5. Bob's telekinetic shield keeps the dog at bay.

> ***Example:*** Michael wants to block an oncoming boulder with his Containment of 7d. He concentrates for a turn and rolls 5,5,6,5,2, 5 and a 4. He succeeds in forming a shield against the rock with 4x5 and the rock rolls 8d (for its weight), and gets a 1, 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 1 and a 2, failing with a 3x1. The boulder weighs 1 ton and Michael can affect 1 to 2 tons with his power. It rebounds off the mental shield and rolls harmlessly away. If the boulder had beaten Michael in the dynamic contest, it would have burst through the shield and squished him flat.

Power Stunts

Shield Focus: For each combat round you have to prepare your shield in concentration, you may add 1d from your Shield Focus power stunt up to your Shield Focus total.

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Extras

Actual Physical Boundary (+2/+4/+8): Your power generates a real physical boundary such as a wall, a container or another physical object to contain materials. Once created, these containers remain behind for the number of minutes equal to the width of your roll, and then they vanish.

Flaws

No liquids or gas (-1/-2/-4): Your power cannot contain liquids or gas.

Control

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Control Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can manipulate a particular phenomenon, element or life form with your power. You can increase or decrease physical phenomena, change the states of particular elements, or dictate the action of a particular creature through the force of your will alone.

First, you must pick what you can control. Consider the following chart to determine your power's cost.

Control Table: Frequency & Control

Cost Addition Die/Hard/Wiggle	Frequency	Control of (Pick One):
+4/+8/+16	All the Time	Air pressure, temperature, humidity, gravity, light.
+3/+6/+12	Common	Electricity, a common element (iron, carbon *etc)*., animals
+2/+4/+8	Regular	Plants, a particular animal (includes humans), metabolisms
+1/+2/+4	Uncommon	Radioactive decay, chlorine gas, tritium

Phenomena are general physical effects, such as temperature, gravity, light and humidity. You can control them by concentrating one round and making a successful match. The range of such effects is up to you, as long as they are within sight range. You can affect individual objects and precise areas. The width of the roll indicates how many minutes the effect of your power lasts.

This write-up is meant to give general guidelines for what will be a specific power. In terms of the game, the ability "Control (Rats)" is very different from "Control (Atmospheric Pressure)." To keep things simple, there are some guidelines for the rules effects of Control.

Regarding control of living things: Control is not mind control; instead, it controls bodies. In the example of the rats, there is no contact with the rats' brains. They will still make rat noises and do rat things unless forced otherwise. Keep this in mind if humans are chosen; they will act as their Controller directs, but it will be clear that they are not willing, and they will express their bewilderment unless you force their mouths to stay silent!

If you use Control to make a circumstance more or less dangerous, a successful roll lets you raise or lower the damage from a single source by the width of your roll.

> ***Example:*** Rosa has Control (Heat) at 5d. When her husband's arm catches fire, she turns the heat down on it. Normally he'd take a point of shock damage every round, but if Rosa can roll successfully, he takes no damage. When an enemy catches fire, however, Rosa can turn up the heat. If she rolls a 2x match, she can cause the flames to inflict 2 more levels of the appropriate type of damage. The height of the roll does not matter in this instance.

> ***Example:*** Conrad has Control (Rats) at 6d. When he's in a battlefield where rats are common, bold and vicious, he can whistle up an army of hundreds of rats and send them into an enemy foxhole. Given the environment, he could simply roll his 6d and allocate matches as shock and killing damage using the Attacks quality. If the enemy jumps into his foxhole, Conrad can use his power defensively by ordering his rat army to protect him. He can use his Talent pool to form gobble dice as his rodent minions harass and distract the enemy soldiers.

Sometimes your ability doesn't have the potential to actually harm or protect someone; instead, it's just making things more or less convenient. In those situations, you can raise or lower a relevant stat by the width of your roll. If a stat is reduced to 0, the target can still make rolls but only with skill dice. Reducing a stat to –1 renders the subject unconscious until the effect is removed.

> ***Example:*** Rosa sees an enemy spy, but she can't blow her own cover by revealing him right now. Instead, she's just going to raise his body temperature until he can't concentrate. She gets a 2x success, and the GM decides that the spy's sudden sweating and dizziness

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reduces his Command stat by 2 for two minutes while he's trying to put one over on the Ambassador.

Example: In the same situation, Conrad's power is less subtle. There are far fewer rats at a swanky embassy party—he can probably only call up four or five. However, when they dart out and begin nibbling on the spy, it's distracting enough to lower his Command by the width of Conrad's roll. As an added bonus, a lot of women probably start screaming, distracting the Ambassador.

Example: Rosa has flipped her jeep in the middle of a Siberian winter. It's a five-hour walk back to her base, and she only has Body 2. Normally, she'd start taking damage the third hour. However, she asks if she can use her power to keep herself warm. The GM thinks about it and decides to let her roll twice an hour. If she succeeds at either roll, she can stave off frostbite for another hour.

Power Stunts

Blind Control: You can control elements, phenomenon or life forms out of your direct observation, as long as they are within a range where you could see them if they were exposed. Add your Blind Control total to your Control dice pool when you want to Control a target you cannot see, but which you know is there.

Extras

Precise Control (+1/+2/+4): Your power can Control elements, phenomenon or life forms in an extremely precise manner. For example, you could remove the oxygen from a single test tube, distort the passage of light through a lens, or cause a rat's leg to move independently of its body.

Flaws

Blanket Control (-2/-4/-8): When you use your power, you expose yourself to the same effects. (You may only take this Flaw if you control something that is harmful to human beings).

Create

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Create Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can create phenomena, elements or complex chemical forms from nothing. (If you wish to be able to affect already existing matter, elements or phenomena see the *Transmutation* or *Control* Miracles.) Living things may not be created through Talent powers; but items that once were living (such as oil, wood or fossils) can.

First, you must pick what you can create. Consider the following chart to determine your powers cost.

Create Table: Type of Creation

Cost Addition Die/Hard/Wiggle	Create Power Governs (Pick One):
+5/+10/+20	Anything non-living you wish to create.
+4/+8/+16	Complex chemical forms (foods, for example, or medicines), heavy elements, generally useful and versatile forces like gravity, light, or heat.
+3/+6/+12	Simple chemical forms (hydrogen peroxide, *etc)*.
+2/+4/+8	A single type of phenomena, element or chemical, or one simple and narrowly useful phenomenon.

Like Control, this is a general outline of what will be (in actual play) a specific power. The same guidelines apply. If you're helping or hindering someone (but not actually harming) you can raise or lower a stat by the Width of your roll. If you're doing actual damage, the rule of thumb is that it does Width in killing. (Individual GMs may, at their discretion, make this shock damage for less harmful phenomena). The effects of Create last Width in minutes.

Example: Edith has Create Gravity at 6d. When trying to pull a jeep out of ditch, she creates gravity focused on a signpost by the road. With a 2x success, she can increase her Body by 2 for the purposes of pushing the jeep. It may or may not be sufficient, depending on who she has helping her. Certainly, a lot of leaves, loose gravel and other detritus are going to be sucked up against that signpost, however.

Example: If Edith decides to hurt someone with her Talent—by banging him up against the ceiling, for example—she can make a standard attack roll. She gets 2x8. He "falls" up into the ceiling, cracking his shoulder and back for two points of killing damage. He's also stuck there for two minutes, held up by a force with the equivalent of Body 2.

The bigger your Talent pool, the more matter (or whatever) you can create. The upward limit comes either from volume or from mass, whichever is smaller. Someone with 5d in Create Matter who wanted to create some lead

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plate would be able to make 30 pounds of it, since that amount is certainly less than 20 cubic feet. If that same 5d talent wanted to create a volume of oxygen in a burning house to make it explode, he'd only be able to make 20 cubic feet, since 30 pounds of oxygen would occupy a much greater volume than that.

Create Table: Amount of Mass/Volume

Talent	Maximum Mass	Maximum Volume
1	2 pound	1 cubic foot
2	5 pounds	2 cubic feet
3	10 pounds	5 cubic feet
4	15 pounds	10 cubic feet
5	30 pounds	20 cubic feet
6	65 pounds	50 cubic feet
7	130 pounds	100 cubic feet
8	250 pounds	200 cubic feet
9	500 pounds	400 cubic feet
10	1000 pounds	800 cubic feet

By spending 10 Will you can make the created element semi-permanent. It lasts until it's used up or destroyed. However, another Talent who sees it can automatically tell it is artificial, and can, at the cost of 1 Will point, destroy it with a glance.

Power Stunts

Craftsmanship: Add your Craftsmanship dice to your Create dice pool when you are attempting to form any small object into a complex shape. For example, fashioning a created lump of steel into a replica of a handgun.

Extras

Duplicate (+2/+4/+8): Any object you touch (and which your power could create) you can automatically produce with a successful roll. The duplicate appears exact, but if it is a duplicate of a mechanical device, it does not work. Also, any Talent seeing the duplicate can "wish it away" at the cost of 1 Will point.

Flaws

Greedy (-1/-2/-4): Every time you use your power, you lose Will points equal to the width of your activation roll. When the element, phenomenon or complex chemical form disappears, the Will points lost are regained.

Dampen

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Dampen Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can dampen (or even eliminate) one type of physical phenomena with your Talent power. Gravity, sound, inertia, electricity, radioactive decay, the chemical reaction of fire, you name it; you can slow it or stop it, but it must be happening first. For example, you could not dampen cold, since cold material is technically already "damped." You could make it colder, however. Some types of Dampen can be used defensively (for example: dampening the inertia of a hail of bullets will cause the bullets to drop; dampening the chemical reaction of a flamethrower attack will render it a simple spray of jelly, *etc)*. Dampen with defense costs 4 per die, 8 per hard die and 16 per wiggle die.

Some types of Dampen can be used to attack as well (for example dampening the chemical reactions within the metabolism of an organism will kill it, dampening the electrical impulses in an organism will cause it to have a seizure, *etc)*. Dampen with Attack costs 4 per die, 8 per hard die and 16 per wiggle die. Dampen with both Attack and Defends (along with Useful Outside of Combat and Robust) costs 5 per die, 10 per hard die, and 20 per wiggle die.

How much you spend on the power determines how many different types of physical phenomena you can affect.

Dampen Table: Affected Types

Cost Addition Die/Hard/Wiggle	Dampen Power Governs (Pick One):
+4/+8/+16	Any physical reaction you wish to dampen.
+2/+4/+8	Three useful linked reactions. Gravity, inertia, electricity, *etc.*
+1/+2/+4	Two linked reactions. Sound, vibration, *etc.*
+0/+1/+2	A single type of reaction.

Physical reactions dampened are not restored to their former state once the power stops acting on it (unless that would be the normal effect). For example, if a Talent dampened heat in a room, after the power stopped, the room would return to normal temperature, but if a Talent dampened the electrical field the magnetic portions of a radio, it would not be restored after the power ceased).

Dampen only works within range of sight on a specific target, or in a general sphere or influence around you. This sphere of influence is equal to the dice pool of the power in yards.

If used to defend, the power gobbles just like any other defensive power (see *Using Powers Defensively* on p. 98). Like Create and Control, the guideline for Dampen is that the width of the roll is treated as damage if the Talent is used to attack. If it's used to help someone, the width is added to a stat. If used to impair, the width is removed from a stat.

> ***Example:*** Jeff has Dampen Electricity at 4d. He's about to jump a guard, and he decides to soften up the guard by dampening his nervous system. With 2x3 (or 2x anything), he can knock two dice out of the guard's stats. Jeff decides to decrease Body and Coordination by 1 each. Next round, he attacks the sluggish and weakened guard.

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Power Stunts

Precise Dampen: You can Dampen tiny areas with your power. When attempting to Dampen anything on a miniature scale, add your Precise Dampen total to your Dampen dice pool. Basically, this means you can affect less than one object with your power.

Extras

Contagious Dampen (+3/+6/+12): Anything or anyone touching the object you have affected with your Dampen (or anything or anyone entering your Dampen area of effect) is attacked with your Dampen dice for free, with the same effect.

> ***Example:*** Fritz goes to pick up his electrically dampened buddy who has been hit with a 6d Contagious Dampen. When Fritz touches his compatriot, he is attacked by a 6d Dampen, even though the Talent who did it is not present.

Flaws

Struggle (-2/-4/-8): You must roll each combat round to maintain your Dampen effect. Any distractions automatically cancel your Dampen attack.

Dead Ringer

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Dead Ringer Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can imitate a person perfectly in a physical sense. If you can touch the subject, even for a second, then you can change into a perfect replica of that individual, right down to the smallest unseen details (including birthmarks, moles, *etc)*. This transformation lasts as long as you wish, until one of three things happens:

1) You voluntarily deactivate the power.
2) You take damage and fail a roll to maintain the illusion.
3) Another Talent bests you in a contest of Will.

This transformation does not endow you with any memories or knowledge the target has, but as far as looks and voice are concerned, you are identical down to the smallest detail. You will pass any physical tests of your new identity with ease. Your urine, blood type and fingerprints will be identical to the target, and your voice is a perfect match. The only thing you will be missing are any infirmities the target may suffer from, although your new form will imitate such infirmities cosmetically. (Tests for such diseases will reveal nothing, however). Clothing and equipment are not imitated.

In addition, if the transformation is trans-gender, you will gain any and all new organs, which will function normally. Offspring created in such a strange union are yours, genetically speaking, not those of the target imitated. If you are carrying a fetus and must revert to your base form, and that form is not female, the fetus is lost. It must be carried to term without interruption.

You may attempt a second and simpler level of Dead Ringer if you cannot touch the subject, but can still see him. By studying an individual at a distance, or studying photographs of a subject, you may attempt a basic physical change to imitate that individual. To do this you must overcome the Difficulty number indicated by how long you have studied the subject.

Dead Ringer Table: Study Time

Difficulty Rating	How Long the Individual has Been Studied
Easy (2)	Months
Medium (5)	Weeks
Hard (8)	Days

This simpler form of imitation only reworks your face (and if you have heard the subject's voice, his or her voice as well). It only generally changes your body to match what could be seen in your observation. Organs do not change, nor your blood and urine. Fingerprints and other unseen details do not match the subject.

You can store a number of remembered forms equal to your Brains statistic. Shifting forms takes a round of concentration and a successful die roll. Memorized forms can be discarded and added as needed.

The major problem with the Dead Ringer power is that other Talents can see you, and tell you are using a power, as long as you maintain an assumed form. There is no way to hide this. When subjected to a Contest of Wills (see *When Wills Collide,* p. 95) by another Talent, you resume your normal form if you lose. This happens even if you initiated the battle.

In game terms, this power is more limited than it seems. It is only possible to duplicate humans, not animals or other organic forms. Dead Ringer is only cosmetic in nature.

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Despite physical changes in blood and body shape, your statistics do not change to match those of the target; they remain at your normal levels. Oh, and before you ask: no, you can't duplicate Talent abilities.

Power Stunts

Mix and Match: Add your Mix and Match dice to your Dead Ringer dice pool when you are attempting to only duplicate one aspect of your target's body (i.e. blood type, fingerprints, eye color). Your body remains normal otherwise. The drawback is that each imitated aspect takes up one of your "memorized form" slots.

Extras

Animal Magic (+2/+4/+8): Not only can you duplicate humans, but you can copy animals as well, but you can only shrink to half your size or grow to double it. You gain no special abilities inherent to your assumed animal form, and the change is only superficial and cosmetic.

Flaws

Absolute Duplication (-1/-2/-4): Once you change out of a form, you cannot return to it until you touch the person again. You cannot remember previous forms. This includes your own: If you wish to resume your original appearance, you must reconstruct it from photographs. Nuances like fingerprints are lost forever. This does have the upside that you can never be forced to resume your "true" form: If you take this Flaw, you don't have one. Unfortunately, of course, your power is always active.

Slow Change (-1/-2/-4): This Flaw can be taken multiple times; each time it is taken, it extends the time necessary to change by 1. In combat, this is measured in rounds; non-combat, in minutes. If someone catches you, it'll be automatically obvious to normals that you're a Talent, with your face and form visibly changing.

Vampiric (-1/-2/-4): You must taste the blood of the target you wish to duplicate. Sight-only duplication is not possible.

Detection

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Detection Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

You can detect specific objects or phenomenon at a distance. With an especially tall or wide roll, you can differentiate between specifics of the objects or phenomena to extreme levels, denoting location and orientation of the target or targets.

For example: with a successful roll against your Detection power, you could divine the number of tanks within a set range; and on a wide or tall roll, locate their exact orientation and location on a map of the area. This detection gives you only a static image of the one moment you use your power, and does not update the vision of the situation as those targets move or change position. If you are in visual range of the objects you are attempting to detect, they become plain to you despite any camouflage or obfuscation.

Talents are not detectable at all by this power.

This represents the most general form of Detection. Other, far more limited (and far less expensive) versions of detection exist which only detect very specific objects or phenomena. Consider the chart below to determine the cost of your power.

Note: Costs are subtracted from the base cost, according to what the power can perceive. See below.

Detection Table: Type of Detection

Cost Subtraction Die/Hard/Wiggle	Detection Power Covers (Pick One):
Base Cost	Anything you wish to detect
-0/-1/-2	Areas of enemy action, danger, other unspecific non-physical phenomena
-1/-2/-4	A certain type of vehicle, a certain type of element or creature, any class of object or creature.
-2/-4/-8	A single extremely specific type of object or phenomena, for example only frogs, lead, or bleach.

The number of dice in your pool determines the range of your detection power. You can use your Detection power within any range beneath your dice pool level. Consider the chart below to determine the maximum range of your Detection power.

Detection Table: Range of Detection

# of Die	Automatic Range	Tested Range
1	5 yards	50 yards
2	10 yards	100 yards
3	20 yards	200 yards
4	40 yards	400 yards
5	100 yards	1000 yards
6	200 yards	1 mile
7	400 yards	3 miles
8	1000 yards	6 miles
9	1 mile	10 miles
10	3 miles	30 miles

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You can use Detection without a roll, if you're detecting within your listed Automatic Range. If you want to look farther, you need a successful roll. The limit on rolled checks is your Tested Range. Past that, forget it.

The level of success achieved in your roll determines how well you detect your targets. Consider the following chart to determine the quality of your success.

Detection Table: Success of Detection

Type of Roll	Result
A success or automatic use	A definite knowledge that a target exists within the area.
Roll is wide	A general idea that multiple targets exist(s) in the area is indicated. Nothing else.
Roll is tall	The number of targets in the area is indicated. Nothing else.
Roll is tall and wide	Both number and location of targets is indicated.
Multiple rolled 10s	Number and location is indicated as well as general orientation of targets, or other specifics (whether it is an enemy tank, a poplar tree, or a German swan).

Example: Gus has Detection at 6d, and he can detect enemy troops at a maximum distance of 1 mile. He wants to detect if there are any troops in a building. If it's within 200 yards, he can automatically scan the building—or, at least as much of it as fits within the radius of his power. However, he must roll against his dice pool anyway, even though he automatically succeeds, to determine the level of success of his detection. He rolls a 2x7, a tall roll. His power indicates that 6 enemy soldiers are in the building, but their exact location is not indicated.

Power Stunts

Close Your Eyes and See: Close your eyes, concentrate for one round and add your Close Your Eyes and See total to your Detection dice pool.

Extras

Tracking Detection (+2/+4/+8): You can choose a single target you've successfully scanned and maintain an up to the minute track on just where that target is (until it leaves your radius of Detection of course).

Flaws

Blind Spots (-2/-4/-8): Your power does not work in certain areas. The exact nature of your limitation is up to you and your GM to decide. Perhaps you can't detect things in complete darkness, or things inside of buildings.

See It First (-3/-6/-9): You can only detect objects you have directly seen before. Photos, drawing or any other reproduction of the object will not help. You must see it to track it.

Disintegration

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Disintegration Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can destroy objects utterly; effectively erasing them from existence with the use of your power. You must touch the object in question, and you can only disintegrate whole objects. Unlike other Talent abilities that alter the local environment, disintegration is not reversible by other Talents. If something is disintegrated, it is gone… forever.

Erasing stationary objects isn't complicated. Touch it, roll a success, and it's gone. There are limits, however, to how much you can vaporize at once. The bigger your Talent pool, the more matter you can disintegrate.

Disintegration Table: Weight Affected

Talent Pool	Maximum Weight
1	10 pounds
2	30 pounds
3	100 pounds
4	300 pounds
5	500 pounds
6	1000 pounds
7	1200 pounds
8	1500 pounds
9	1 ton
10	2 tons

Destroying a moving object (including people) is considerably more difficult. You have to touch it, and you have to use the power on it. The most common way to do this in combat is with a multiple action. Use the smaller of the two relevant pools (Body+Brawl or Disintegrate), remove a die and roll for two matches.

Example: Russ has Disintegrate 6 and a 5d Body+Brawl pool. He wants to vaporize an *SS* officer who's well within his thousand pound limit. He lunges in and tries to hit him, concentrating on disintegrating him if he makes contact. He only rolls 4 dice, however—his 5d Body+Brawl pool, reduced by one because he's trying to fight and use a Talent simultaneously.

The other way to do it is to first use the *Pinning* rules on p. 17 of **Part Two: Game Mechanics.** Once the target is pinned, you can apply Disintegration at your leisure.

Example: Russ, fed up with failure, tries to pin the officer. This time he rolls his full Body+Brawl pool and gets a pair of 3s. The officer's 4d Coordination+Dodge roll fails, so he's pinned. Next turn, Russ tries to disintegrate him with his 6d, while the officer rolls his 4d Body+Brawl to escape. Both of

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them fail their rolls, so they're still stuck in the same situation. They make the same rolls a second time, and this time Russ gets a pair of 8s. See you in hell, Commandant.

Power Stunts

Power Focus: If you concentrate for 2 rounds, on the third round you can add your Power Focus total to your Disintegrate roll.

Extras

No Touch (+1/+2/+4): You do not need to touch an object to disintegrate it. You can make disintegration attacks as solo actions.

Piecemeal (+2/+4/+8): You can disintegrate select pieces of objects, a tire from a car, a turret from a tank, an arm from a human being. Ouch. Treat this as an Called Shot to the specific hit location targeted (see *Called Shots* in **Part Two: Game Mechanics**, p. 15, for more details).

Flaws

Non-organic (-2/-4/-8): You can only disintegrate non-living things. Plants, animals and people are outside your power's ability to affect.

Extra Tough

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Extra Tough Table: Cannot Defend

Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Extra Wound Box	4

This is a *very* simple defensive power. For every 4 points you spend, you gain 1 wound box on each hit location. These wound boxes take damage normally, recover shock normally and heal normally.

While this is substantial protection, you cannot roll this Talent as a defense and form gobble dice from the result. (That's why it says it "cannot defend," even though it's a defensive power). The costs listed above assume that Extra Tough includes the Always On Extra.

Just remember, like any other Talent power, that those damage boxes disappear if your Will hits zero.

Fade

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Fade Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can become transparent to the point that, if you hold still or move slowly, you may not be seen. At a distance, in darkness and in foggy conditions, or on backgrounds rich in color or patterns, you may even be nearly invisible.

Concentrate one round, roll your dice and get a match, and you (and any equipment or clothing on your body) fade into the background. When you Fade, write down the level of your success; you might need it later. It indicates how transparent you've become. When you're trying to hide or sneak past people, you roll your Coordination+Stealth as normal; anyone trying to spot you must beat your Talent level as a Difficulty on their roll. Even if you're out in the open, any roll to spot you has your Talent level as a Difficulty.

Once you are spotted, however, Fade does not let you roll gobble dice as a defense. You're still visible—just less visible. If someone has successfully spotted you, he can shoot at you without penalty. If you get behind cover, however, you might be able to sneak out of it before he notices.

You remain faded until you sleep, turn it off, or until you're forced out of it by damage or another Talent's Will.

Power Stunts

Stillness: When you're not moving, you can add your Stillness dice to your Fade roll.

Extras

Flicker (+1/+2/+4): By fading in and out of focus rapidly, you make it harder to follow your moves in combat. If you have this Extra, you can roll Fade and use the results as gobble dice—but only against hand-to-hand attacks.

No Blur (+1/+2/+4): You remain faded, and no telltale blur is visible when you move.

Flaws

Visible up close (-1/-2/-4): Your Fade power is only effective at a distance of more than 10 feet; otherwise, you're completely visible, albeit very transparent.

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Fetch

Qualities
Attacks, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Fetch Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

You can teleport objects. Concentrate one round, roll a match and poof! any object you can clearly see jumps into your hands. This power works just like teleport, but is much more limited in its applications. You cannot teleport living things, and you can only teleport things into your hands, not away from them. You cannot teleport sections of an object (for instance, you could not Fetch the trigger of a gun, only the whole gun) just complete objects. You must have a clear view of the object you wish to Fetch, and then concentrate for one round; on a successful roll, the object jumps to your hand, covering the space between instantly.

You can Fetch stuff you could normally lift as if your Fetch rating was a Body rating.

Fetch Table: Weight Affected

Fetch Rating	Tested Lift
2	210–250 pounds
3	250–370 pounds
4	370–500 pounds
5	500–800 pounds
6	800 pounds–1 ton
7	1–2 tons
8	2–4 tons
9	4–6 tons
10	6–10 tons

Power Stunts
Distort: Add this power stunt to your Fetch dice pool when you wish to teleport an object, but don't care how complete it is when it appears in your hand. Distorted objects come back twisted, broken or incomplete when you use this power stunt.

Extras
Cornucopia (+2/+4/+8): You can "tag" up to your Body limit in weight of objects that you can Fetch to your hands from any distance or locale. You must roll each time you wish to do so.

Flaws
Chain Lightning (-1/-2/-4): Whatever object you Fetch comes along with anything it is touching, up to your Body limit in weight. Fetch an enemies' gun, and his holster, strap and clothes (anything touching the gun which is not living) come along as well. You can't control this reflex. It always happens.

Flight

Qualities
Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Flight Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

Roll a match and take to the air. It's that simple. If you're trying a difficult maneuver, roll again. Your movement rate flying depends on the size of your Flight pool—see the chart below (If you want to be substantially faster, buy Super Speed and attach it to your Flight Miracle). If you want to shoot a gun at someone while you're flying, it's a multiple action (see **Part Two: Game Mechanics** - *Multiple Actions* on p. 12 for more details) requiring you to roll either your Coordination+Pistol (or Rifle) skill or your Flight pool (whichever is lower) at a one die penalty.

Flight Table: Top Speed

Level	Top Speed (Yards/Round)	Top Speed (Miles/Hour)
1	15	10
2	30	20
3	45	35
4	60	45
5	75	55
6	90	70
7	105	80
8	120	90
9	135	100
10	150	110

Power Stunts
Barnstorming: You can add your Barnstorming total when you want to swoop down tight city streets, through open windows, or otherwise fly into areas which are big enough to allow you to barely maneuver. It does not add to your speed, however.

Fast: Add your Fast dice when calculating your maximum speed, but you never actually roll them.

Reliable: You can add your Reliable dice when attempting to take off or remain in the air. It doesn't help you maneuver or speed up, though.

Extras
No Altitude Limit (+2/+4/+8): You require no air or heating equipment

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to fly at extreme altitudes (no, you can't fly into space, don't even ask).

Flaws

Running Start (-1/-2/-4): You need to take a running start of at least thirty feet before you take off.

Ghost

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Ghost Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can project a ghostly form, which acts as a vehicle for your consciousness and all of your senses. Intangible and invisible, this 'Ghost' is not perceptible by humans, but Talents can perceive it easily; destroying it (if they so wish) at the cost of 1 Will Point, instantly returning you to your physical body.

You must be in a safe, quiet location to use your power. On a successful roll, your Ghost form appears and may be used to spy on removed locales. Your form only travels as fast as you can under normal conditions; so sending it to a distant location requires a great deal of time (it cannot hitch rides on vehicles). The form can pass through physical objects with ease, but it cannot float or fly. If your physical form is disturbed while Ghosting, your Ghost form immediately dissipates, and your consciousness returns to your body.

Power Stunts

Concentration: Add your Concentration dice to your Ghost dice pool when you are in distracting (but otherwise safe) environs. You cannot be under attack, but anything else may be ignored with a successful roll.

Extras

Physical (+3/+6/+12): Your Ghost form can pick things up, manipulate objects, and fire weapons. It uses your Body and Coordination for these tasks. Physical Ghosts can be seen and attacked. Any successful attack dissipates the Ghost form.

Disturbing (+1/+2/+4): Animals can see you in your Ghost form.

Flaws

Dream walk (-1/-2/-4): Your power only works when you are sleeping (in a safe and comfortable environment). Otherwise, it operates normally.

Go First

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust.

Go First Table: Can Defend

Level	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Level	8

Characters with this Miracle react to danger more quickly than other characters. For every level of Go First, you act in combat as if each match you roll was that many levels higher.

> ***Example:*** Ian has Go First 3. In combat, Ian says he is going to shoot his gun. He gets a 2x4 result. Normally, anyone with a 3x or 4x result would go before Ian. But his Go First Miracle adds 3 to the width of his roll for purposes of initiative. Therefore, it's timed as if he'd rolled 5x4, easily acting before anyone else. When it comes to doing damage, however, his shot is still considered a 2x4.

Note that the effects of Go First "stack" with super-humanly high levels of Cool. If Curtis has Go First 2 and Cool 7, the width of his results are increased by 4 for the purposes of timing.

Go First costs 2 points per level. It does not use Hard Dice, Wiggle Dice, or Power Stunts since it's never actually rolled. It is always in effect unless something shuts it down.

Extras

Combat Precognition (+2 per Level): You go first in combat because you can "see" what your opponent is going to do a second before he does it. If you're reacting to an enemy's action (dodging a blow or grabbing an arm as he tries to draw a gun) add a die to your pool.

Flaws

One Use per Combat (-1 per Level): Your power only works in the first round per combat. After the initial adrenaline wears off, no effect. Until the next combat, anyway.

Goldberg Science

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Goldberg Science Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

Goldberg Science is the peculiar ability of some Talents to build amazing machinery, decades or even centuries ahead of the current technological norm. It is named after Rube Goldberg, a cartoonist famous for his cartoons in the 1920s

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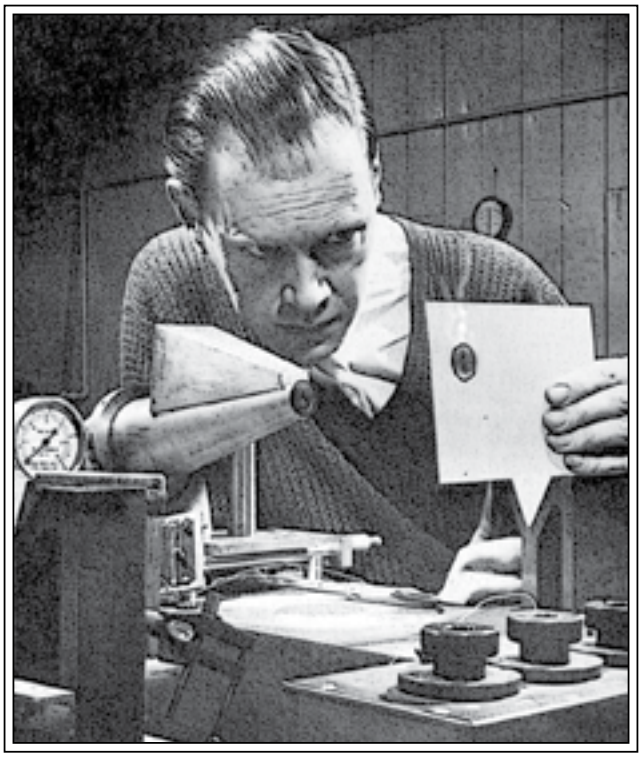
depicting the inventions of Professor Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, a man obsessed with creating technological marvels out of everyday goods. "Goldberg machines" are fantastically complicated and (most of the time) utterly useless.



Building ray guns and jetpacks in the 1940s may sound marvelous, but the super-scientists in *Godlike* are subject to significant limitations that make their powers very specific and difficult to use effectively. What are those limitations, you ask? Well, they're pretty severe. In the first place, devices created by Goldberg scientists are not actually devices. They may look like machinery, make noises and have wires, triggers, and buttons, but all they are is a focus for the creator's Talent power. The "devices" are nothing more than a psychological focus for the Talent's power that he can bend and shape in many different ways. This leads to three problems:

1) The "devices" are subject to Will attack by other Talents: Talents can affect the working of a Goldberg Scientist's "technology" with their Will as if that power was attacking them, even if it is not. If the device loses such a contest, it ceases to work for good; all the Will Points the Goldberg Scientist had imbued into it are lost.

> ***Example:*** A Talent sees a Goldberg Scientist cruising up in the air with a jetpack. They have a contest of Wills, each auctioning up a number of Will points to try to cancel out each others' powers. The Talent on the ground wins. The jetpack stops working, permanently (all Will stored in it is lost), and shortly thereafter, so does its creator.

2) The "devices" cannot be replicated: Study of these devices by real scientists fail to produce any results. It is not possible to re-create Goldberg technology, since (technically speaking) there is nothing there to reproduce. It is not the device creating the startling effects of Goldberg Science, but the power of the Talent mind which created them. This is why the U.S. Army in *Godlike* isn't traipsing around Europe armed with ray guns in 1944.

> ***Example:*** A Goldberg scientist constructs a heat ray out of a mish mash of spare parts. It works like a dream, punching holes through tanks quite handily. When opened up, all you find inside is a mess of wires and components without any rhyme or reason. Any reputable scientist seeing it would claim it was just junk.

3) The "devices" don't work when the Talent who created them cannot directly see them: This is the real kicker. If the device created by a Goldberg Scientist is removed from his direct view, it immediately ceases to work (this means eye-to-object view, television and other transmission technology will not allow an extension in range of this effect). This is because the ability of the Talent is linked to his perception, so out of sight=out of mind, no mind=no power. This is why Goldberg scientists don't just create dozens or even hundreds of devices to hand out to the armed forces. When the device comes back into the Talent's vision range, it starts working again.

> ***Example:*** A Goldberg Scientist constructs an intercontinental ballistic missile with his power. He launches it at Berlin. When it reaches the edge of his perception range, it promptly stops working, plummeting into the sea. Unless the scientist flies along with the device, there is no way to make it keep working (since any form of remote viewing is useless). Most devices that large eat up all the creator's Will, so that any Talent attack on them succeeds.

Still want to be a Goldberg scientist? Okay, read on:

With this ability, you may create devices that imitate *any* Talent ability. On a successful roll and with access to proper materials, you can build devices that have Talent powers, such as Flight, Harm, or any other parahuman ability. The maximum score for each such ability is your Goldberg Science power dice pool. You buy dice pools in your devices with Will. There are six steps to building, maintaining and disassembling a Goldberg device:

1) Conception

What kind of power do you want your device to have?

> ***Example:*** Mr. Fixit has Goldberg Science at 3 regular dice and 1 wiggle die (3d+1wd). He wants to build some sort of weapon that can disintegrate inanimate objects. The maximum score he could buy in such a weapon is 4d or 3 dice plus 1 wiggle die, since this is his Goldberg Science score.

2) Design

What does your device look like? How big and heavy is it? What is it made of? The size of the device adds a Difficulty

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rating to the construction of the device. The smaller and more portable it is, the more difficult it is to build; but the bigger it is, the longer it takes to build.

Goldberg Science Table: Device Specifications

Difficulty Rating	Example	Time to Build
Easy (2)	Room-sized device (15–20 tons)	5-width in months
Medium (4)	Vehicle-sized device (1–10 tons)	5-width in weeks
Hard (6)	Hand-held device or smaller (10 oz–50 lbs).	15-width in days

Example: Mr. Fixit decides he wants his disintegrator weapon to be hand-held, like a big pistol. Making equipment smaller assigns a specific Difficulty number to his attempt at creating the device. He must now make a set that is equal to or higher than 6, or he cannot create the device at all.

3) Purchase

How many Will points do you want to spend on the device? The point costs for device Talents are the same as when they are bought during character creation. Divide the total number of Will points spent on the device by 10 (rounding down), and this factor is added to (or becomes) the Difficulty number.

Example: Mr. Fixit has a Will of 35 and his maximum dice pool per device is 4d. He can buy regular dice easily enough, and he can buy 1 wiggle die (since there is one in his dice pool), but no hard dice (since he has none in his Goldberg Science pool). He decides to build 3d+1wd in Disintegration into his pistol. The power has a base point cost of 5/10/20, but the device has a Flaw (only works on inorganic objects), -2/-4/-8, and an Extra (No Touch), +1/+2/+4. The final cost is now 4/8/16, so the 3 regular dice cost 12 points and the wiggle die costs 16 points, for a total of 28. Since Mr. Fixit is investing 28 points into his Disintegrator, he has to add 2 (28/10=2.8, then rounded down) to the Difficulty of 6 for a final Difficulty of 8.

4) Attempt

Do you have access to the materials you need to make your device? Most Goldberg scientists require laboratories or workshops with extensive access to heavy equipment and materials (although some can build a device out of anything). If so, you may then attempt to build the device. Roll your Goldberg Science dice pool. If you succeed by meeting or exceeding your Difficulty number, you successfully build the device. In addition, your Will is now reduced by the number of points you invested into the device. Until all your devices are destroyed or disassembled, you cannot have more Will than your original Will minus the amount of Will invested in all your current devices. This is one of the major drawbacks of Goldberg Science. Once all your devices are disassembled or destroyed, you can then gain Will at the normal rate.

Things aren't all bad, though; even if the Talent himself can't gain Will, the *device* can. When the device is used, it can gain Will normally; the gained Will points are held in escrow within it—until the Goldberg scientist disassembles the device.

If the attempt to create a device fails, all the Will spent to purchase the device is lost. This reflects the disappointment associated with failing to achieve a working prototype.

Example: Mr. Fixit rolls his Goldberg Science against his Difficulty of 8, and gets a 10, 10, and a 1. He decides to make his wiggle die a 10, so he has 3x10. He beats his Difficulty number of 8, and the device is created in 13 days. He now has his "Eraser Pistol" which can disintegrate inanimate objects at the level of 3d+1wd, but his Will cannot go any higher than 7 (until the pistol is destroyed or disassembled), since the device cost 28 Will points and his original Will was 35.

5) Use

To use a Goldberg device, the creator, or anyone using it (as long as the creator is within sight range) must roll against its dice pool as per the description of the power. A success and it works, a failure and it fails. It's that simple.

Will points gained during this time by the Goldberg Scientist are stored within whichever device he is using at the time. If a Goldberg Scientist is supposed to gain Will without using a device, that Will is automatically lost.

Example: Mr. Fixit wants to disintegrate a door with his new pistol. His player checks the description of the Disintegration power, on page 67. He has to beat a 2d (for the weight of the door). Fixit rolls the Eraser Pistol's 3d and gets a 10, 7 and a 7; and he makes his wiggle die a 10, giving him a 2x10. The door rolls 2x3, failing to defend. Making a sound like a frenzy of scissors, the energy bolt from the pistol disintegrates the door. Now the pistol has 1 extra Will point in it for a total of 29, since Fixit rolled a natural 10 (and the character always gains a Will point every time a natural 10 is *rolled)*. However, until the pistol is successfully disassembled, that new Will point (along with the 28 it cost to build) is held in escrow within the device.

6) Deconstruction or Destruction

The maximum number of devices the Goldberg scientist can create is equal to the number of dice in the Goldberg Scientist's dice pool. Devices built past that point just don't work. Therefore, a Goldberg scientist with a 4d power pool could have up to 4 devices built at one time (each of which could have up to 4d in power). To build new devices past this point, he must disassemble some of his previous creations.

Disassembling Goldberg devices is easy. The Goldberg Scientist just needs to announce he is deactivating the device and he regains all Will stored in escrow within the device immediately. However, the device is now completely useless and must be rebuilt from scratch to be used again.

The destruction of a Goldberg device is a much different matter. Most Goldberg devices (except those which possess defensive powers) are readily destructible. Most can

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only take a small amount of damage before being unusable. If a Goldberg device is destroyed all Will points invested in that device are lost forever.

Power Stunts

Vehicle Focus: Add your Vehicle Focus total to your Goldberg Science dice pool when you are constructing vehicles with your ability.

Weapon Focus: As above, except you add this power stunt to your Goldberg Science dice pool when you are constructing weapons.

Extras

Fiddly Bits (+2/+4/+8): You can make your devices out of common junk found around a battlefield as long as you have access to a secure and well-lit work location.

Voila! (+5/+10/+20): You don't need any materials to make your devices at all! Simply envision what you want to create, make your roll, and it instantly appears.

Not Affected (+4/+8/+16): Your devices cannot be shut off by other Talents' Will. Your Will still remains frozen when you build them, and the Will won with the devices is still stored in escrow within them. Destruction still has the usual effects on stored Will.

Flaws

Strenuous (-2/-4/-8): Each "session" of construction or design is so fatiguing that you take your Goldberg Science dice pool in shock damage to your Torso. (Half of this is not recovered after construction is done). This reflects the exertion of the endeavor.

One of a Kind (-3/-6/-12): You can only create one type of Goldberg device, such as a ray gun, jetpack or telepathy helmet (you select which one Talent power you can imitate when you create your character). Otherwise your power operates normally.

Harm

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Harm Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

Whether it's fiery breath, death rays from the eyes or crippling bolts of electricity, there are a lot of Talents whose primary effect is this: They hurt the other guy. The easiest way to handle these attacks is to buy levels of the Harm Miracle. Harm attacks are resolved like pistol attacks, and they do width in killing and width in shock damage.

Since Harm isn't always the same kind of injury, there are some Extras you can buy for it. Once you pay for an Extra, however, any further dice you add to your Harm Miracle pool have that Extra. In other words, you don't have to pay for each die you have in the pool: Buy the Extra once and you've got it for every Harm die, forever. Of course, it bears mentioning that if you buy two different types of Harm Miracles for some reason, you'll have to buy Extras for the different Harms separately. For example, If you've got an Ice Blast and a Heat Ray, then you'd have to buy two dice pools and two sets of Extras.

Power Stunts

Bullseye: Add your Bullseye score to your Harm dice pool when making a called shot.

Extras

Area (+1/+2/+4) [Cost: 5 points per Area die]: Your attack explodes upon impact, causing normal damage and damage for Area dice. If you successfully hit, throw the Area dice in additional damage against the target. Each Area die causes 1 point of killing damage to the hit locations rolled for all targets within 10 yards. Everyone in range also takes 2 shock points of damage to every hit location.

Burn (+1/+2/+4): In addition to the normal damage caused by your attack, it also sets the target on fire, see **Part Two: Game Mechanics –** *Burn* on p. 21 for more details.

Electrocuting (+4/+8/+16): Your Harm is electrical in nature, and in addition to inflicting width in killing and shock damage, the Harm dice rolled also inflict an equivalent electrocution attack on the subject (see **Part Two: Game Mechanics—***Electrocution* on p. 24 for more details).

Penetrating (+1/+2/+4) [Cost: 3 points per rank]: Your attack penetrates armor just like anti-armor weaponry. Each level gives the attack the equivalent Penetration rating.

Splash and Spread (+2/+4/+8): Your Harm not only hits the rolled location, it hits adjacent hit locations as well and spreads at the rate of 1 shock point per round for the number of rounds equal to the width of the roll.

Spray (+1/+2/+4) [Cost: 3 points per rank]: Just like a machine gun, your Harm is dealt out in a spray of attacks. Add the Spray rating dice when attacking with your power,

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thus improving your chance of getting multiple sets to attack more than one target.

Vicious (+1/+2/+4): Your Harm does an additional level of killing damage. You can buy the Vicious Extra multiple times to add further killing levels.

Flaws

Graphic (-1/-2/-4): Your Harm destroys the target, crushing bones, spewing blood and bile and flaying flesh. Its effects are so graphic that it's difficult to watch and sometimes even difficult for you to use. While witnessing your handiwork, make a Cool+Mental Stability roll.

Jumpy (-1/-2/-4): Whenever you're startled, your power tends to go off unchecked. If something takes you by surprise—anything from a sudden loud noise to a sneak attack—make a Cool+Mental Stability roll. If it fails, you don't get Battle Fatigue, but your power goes off in a random direction. It might hit one of your buddies, it might discharge straight up into the air, it might even hit an enemy. Some GMs just determine this by deciding themselves. Some roll a single die with 1-2 meaning it hit an ally, 3-8 meaning it went into an inanimate object or the air, and 9-10 meaning it actually went towards an enemy—if there's one around. You cannot use your power in a directed fashion in the same round it goes off accidentally.

Pre-Made Harm "Kits"

Here are a few pre-made Harm Kits to make your job a little bit easier. They're here to give you some examples on just how flexible the system is.

Acid Spittle 4d

(Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust)
Base Cost: 5/10/20.
Extras: +3/+6/+12
Burn (+1/+2/+4)
Splash and Spread (+2/+4/+8)
Flaws: -3/-6/-12
Expensive (-1/-2/-4)
Graphic (-1/-2/-4)
Nervous Habit (-1/-2/-4) [has to spit]
Final Point Cost: 5/10/20.
4d x5=20 Will Points for the Acid Spittle Kit.

Fingernail Flechettes 4d

(Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust)
Base Cost: 5/10/20.
Extras: +2/+4/+8 (+6 points)
Spray 2 (+1/+2/+4; +2 Ranks=6 points)
Vicious (+1/+2/+4)
Flaws: -4/-8/-16
Graphic (-1/-2/-4)
Interfere (-2/-4/-8)
Nervous Habit (-1/-2/-4) [Must aim fingertips at target]
Final Point Cost: 3/6/12.
4d x3=12+6 points is 18 Will Points for the Fingernail Flechettes Kit.

Heat Vision 4d

(Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust)
Base Cost: 5/10/20.
Extras: +1/+2/+4 (+6 points)
Burn (+1/+2/+4)
Penetrating 2 (+1/+2/+4; +2 Ranks=6 points)
[Flaw for Penetration- only Meltable Items -1/-2/-4.]
Flaws: -2/-4/-8
Graphic (-1/-2/-4)
Jumpy (-1/-2/-4)
Final Point Cost: 4/8/16.
4d x4 = 16+6 for 22 Will Points for the Heat Vision Kit.

Healing

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Healing Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can facilitate the healing of damaged tissues in living creatures. With plants and animals, this power is simple. With a successful roll, width in killing damage and double the width in shock damage is recovered by the target.

> ***Example:*** Mortimer wants to heal an injured dog with his Healing of 5d. The dog has been shot for 3 killing and 2 shock in its torso, and is almost dead. Mortimer rolls a 1, 8, 6, 5 and a 1, for a 2x1. The dog is healed of 2 killing and 4 shock damage. Since 2 shock=1 killing point of damage, all damage in the dog is healed.

With humans, the power is much more fickle. The subject must be conscious *and* willing. Without these two things, nothing can be done to heal the subject. If the subject is conscious, on a successful roll, width-1 in killing damage and twice that in shock is healed on a single hit location.

> ***Example:*** Mortimer wants to heal a 3 killing point injury to his friend's right arm. He rolls against his 5d and gets an 8, 7, 2, 7 and a 10, for a 2x7. A total of 1 killing point and two shock points of damage are healed in the arm.

Healing has a dramatic effect on damaged tissues. This power can repair scarring, burns or other deformities, regenerating them completely. The bad news: it has no effect whatsoever on diseases.

Power Stunts

Specialized Heal: You can have a proficiency at healing a certain type of animal or plant. When you treat that particular creature, add your Specialized Heal dice to your Healing dice pool.

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Extras

Force of Will (+1/+2/+4): For every 5 Will points you put into an attempt to heal, you increase the width of the points healed by 1.

Flaws

Empathic Healing (-1/-2/-4): Any damage left over on the target after you roll your healing attempt on them is automatically inflicted upon you as well. For example, if you healed all but 2 points of shock damage on a targets' right arm, that damage would be instantly inflicted on your right arm as well. This damage cannot be shaken off, and must be recovered through normal healing.

Leaves Scars (-1/-2/-4): Your power does not regenerate damaged tissues completely. While it heals shock damage instantly without pain, there is scarring appropriate to the severity of the killing damage suffered when the healing is done.

Heavy Armor

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Heavy Armor Table: Defensive Power, Always On

Point of Heavy Armor	Point Cost to Purchase
1[1]	7

[1] Affects every hit location.

For every 7 points you spend on this Miracle, you gain a point of Heavy Armor to every hit location. All successful attacks made against you automatically have their width reduced by the amount of your Heavy Armor rating. If their width is reduced to 1 or less, the attack fails.

This power differs from most powers in that in its base form it's an unconscious ability, and automatically defends against any attack (expected or not) without having to roll.

Weapons or attacks with a Penetration rating can reduce or negate your power. When you're hit with a weapon with a Penetration rating less than your Heavy Armor rating, your Heavy Armor is reduced by that amount for that round only, but you take no damage. If you're hit by a weapon with a Penetration rating equal to your Heavy Armor rating, your power fails completely for one round, after which it rises back to full level, but you take no damage. When you're hit with a weapon whose Penetration rating is higher than your Heavy Armor rating, your power fails completely for the number of rounds equal to the difference between the Penetration and Heavy Armor rating, and you take the damage involved.

Example: Steve has Heavy Armor 6, and is attacked by a German with a *Panzerschreck*. The German

rolls a 6,6,3,3 and a 1, for a 2x6. The *Panzerschreck* has a Penetration rating of 5, and the width of the roll is 2, so the total Penetration rating hitting Steve is 7, one point higher than his Heavy Armor. Steve's Heavy Armor is down for one round (the difference between the Penetration and Heavy Armor rating) and he takes full damage from the attack.

Power Stunts

No Power Stunts are available for Heavy Armor.

Extras

Focus (+5 per Level): You can "focus" Heavy Armor points, by moving points around from hit location to hit location. For example, you could take 1 point of Heavy Armor from your arm and add it to your torso, so that you had 2 points there. Each movement takes 1 round.

Hardened (+7 per Level): Your Heavy Armor is immune to the effects of Penetrating weapons.

Flaws

Ablative (-1 per Level): Your power is permanently reduced by Penetration, Area and Spray attacks. When your Heavy Armor is gone, you may spend Will to restore it at a one to one value.

Will Drain (-1 per Level): The power eats Will at the cost of 1 point per combat round of active use.

Immunity

Qualities

Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust.

Immunity Table: Always On, Defensive Power

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

One particular peril is substantially less perilous to you. Any time you take damage of that type, you ignore all shock damage. All killing damage is taken as shock. Furthermore, the number of dice in your pool reduces the total amount of killing damage you take.

This Talent is usually not rolled when it operates, but you may need to roll to restart it after it quits working (usually after you've taken damage from another source).

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Immunity Table: Frequency & Type of Immunity

Cost Addition Die/Hard/Wiggle	Frequency	Immunity to (Pick One)
+4/+8/+16	Common	Fire, Water, Kinetic
+2/+4/+8	Regular	Cold, Earth, Starvation, Thirst, Disease
+1/+2/+4	Uncommon	Acids, Poisons, Radiation

Immunities against Talent attacks or effects do not exist; instead, this is handled by a Contest of Wills (see *When Wills Collide* on p. 95 for more details).

> ***Example:*** Uli has 3 dice and 1 wiggle die in Immunity to Kinetic Attacks. An enemy soldier opens up on him with a submachine gun, rolling 8d in four simultaneous attacks on Uli. (It's unlikely that he'll get four pair, but it could happen…and it would be a shame to only make three attacks when there's no penalty because of the Spray). The submachine gunner gets three pair: 2x1, 2x4 and 2x8. His SMG does Width in shock and Width+1 in killing. Uli should take 2 shock and 3 killing apiece to his left arm, left leg and chest—a total of 6 shock, 9 killing. However, Uli's Immunity removes all the shock damage. The 9 points of killing damage are turned into shock, and 4 of those are ignored as well. Uli walks through the hail of bullets with 2 points of shock to two locations struck and 1 to the third. His power then shuts down, as he's been injured.
>
> Next round, Uli rolls to reactivate his power, while the incredulous soldier makes the same 8d attack. Uli rolls 8,8,7 and makes his Wiggle die an 8 too. The soldier fires again, and rolls three tens. Both of them had a 3x success, but since the gunner's result is higher, he hits before Uli can reactivate his power. Taking 4 points of killing damage to the head graphically illustrates that Uli's defense was not as perfect as he thought.

Extras

Shared (+2/+4/+8): A single human target you touch is conferred your immunity as long as you remain in contact.

Unshaken (+1/+2/+4): Normally, powers shut off when any damage is taken. If you have this Extra, your power only shuts off when you take killing damage. This means that your power can never be shut off by even minor damage from its chosen source.

Flaws

Perception-Based (-2/-4/-8): Your immunity only works if you know an attack defended against by your Immunity is coming. Foreknowledge is necessary; otherwise, you take the damage.

Instant Death

Qualities

Attacks, Robust.

Instant Death Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Hard Die	6

Want to instantly kill people? Simple. Buy three Hard Dice in Harm. Three levels of shock and three levels of killing damage should do just about anyone in. Note that your power's effect doesn't necessarily need to be an attack to the head. It's just that using the mechanic (that indicates decapitation) is a good way to model any other instant kill; be it petrifaction, melting, being swallowed up by the earth or what have you. You should pick one signature form of destruction that your Instant Death attack takes when you design your power.

The difference between Instant Death and Harm is significant however. Instant Death only affects living targets, and cannot be used to blow open doors or blast objects like Harm (so it can't Defend and is not very Useful Outside of Combat). On the other hand, since it is affects living targets directly, Instant Death automatically bypasses physical armor and other cover. As long as you can see the target, you can kill the target.

If, for some reason, three levels of killing damage and three levels of shock to the head wouldn't kill a given target, it's up to the GM to decide what happens, depending on how you've described the attack. If it's melting, the target might melt a little and have the damage spread across several locations. If it's something like "vanishes into thin air," the target might take no damage at all.

Of course, buying three Hard Dice in Instant Death costs eighteen Will points (if you don't take some Flaws), which probably doesn't leave you much to sink into Base Will (see p. 93). Without a reasonably good starting Base Will, you'll have a very hard time making this work on other Talents. On the other hand, you'll go through ordinary people like shit through a sick dog.

Extras

Multiple Targets (+2/+4/+8): You can split your Instant Death dice between as many targets as you like.

Flaws

Must Beat the Targets' Body Score in a Dynamic Contest (-2/-4/-8): To damage the target your Instant Death dice pool must beat the subject's Body score in either width or height. If you don't beat it, you can't kill them. This is a bit of a "double or nothing" gamble. If you win, the guy takes the head shot. If he wins, no damage occurs.

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Insubstantiality

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Insubstantiality Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

You can become immaterial. Roll a match and slip through any object as if it wasn't there. Unfortunately, when you're out of phase with the physical world, you cannot breathe, hear, speak or act upon any normal object or person physically, since your atoms do not interact with the solid world. Also, after a number of rounds of insubstantiality equal to your Body, you begin to asphyxiate (see *Strangling* on p. 17 for rules on strangulation) from lack of air.

There are other problems associated with true insubstantiality. For one, you tend to sink into the earth just as readily as through any other object. So the only effective way to get through a wall, a door or other obstacle without sinking into the earth is to jump, turn insubstantial and then revert to solid form for your landing.

You can also turn other objects you are holding insubstantial. You can render up to half your maximum lift in pounds (see p. 8) insubstantial, for as many seconds as you can hold your breath on a successful roll. Once you release it, it immediately becomes material again.

This makes it possible, with enough Body, to attack people by turning them insubstantial and then releasing the effect. This is a nasty attack, but not an easy one. Typically, you jump through your enemy, turning insubstantial while you're phased through him. He drops into the ground, becoming physical again when you pass out of him.

This attack is a multiple action. Roll the either Body+Brawl or Insubstantial (whichever is lower) with a 1 die penalty. If you get two matches, the enemy takes killing damage equal to Width+1 to both legs. (This damage is applied to the torso if he's lying down, or the head, if you have him pinned and are strangling him).

Power Stunts

Selective Insubstantiality: Add your Selective Insubstantiality total to your Insubstantiality dice pool when you are trying to render certain objects on your person insubstantial, but keep others solid, so that they drop off you. For example, with this power stunt you could cause your jacket to drop off when you became insubstantial, or cause bullets in your wounds to drop out of your body without all that messy surgery.

Extras

Breather (+2/+4/+8): You can still breathe while insubstantial.

No Sink (+1/+2/+4): When you turn insubstantial, you don't fall through the ground.

Sectional (+1/+2/+4): You can turn a single body part insubstantial while keeping the rest of your body solid.

Flaws

Lose Possessions (-1/-2/-4): Everything you are wearing or carrying drops off you when you become insubstantial.

Invisibility

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Invisibility Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

Roll a match and you disappear from view. Anyone trying to hit an invisible target with anything other than cover fire loses two dice out of his dice pool. Hard and Wiggle Dice are removed before normal dice. Furthermore, invisible attackers cannot be dodged, except by someone who has Sense 7+ or a special Perception power which lets them see Invisible people.

There are two types of invisibility. The first, mental invisibility, is available at the above costs modified with the Flaw No Physical Change (see *No Physical Change* on p. 56). This sort of invisibility only affects the minds of those observing you, altering their perception so they can't see you. It is less exceptional than actual invisibility in that you must concentrate to remain invisible. If you're in a fight, you stay invisible for a number of rounds equal to the width of the activation roll. If you're not in a fight (and can, presumably, concentrate a little better), you're invisible for a number of minutes equal to the width of the roll. If you are injured, you immediately become visible.

The other type of invisibility is actual physical invisibility. Your power warps light so that it passes through or around your body. With a successful roll, you become invisible. You can turn the effect off whenever you want. It also falls if your Will drops to 0, and, as usual, the power may fail if you get hurt.

There are a couple problems with actual invisibility, however. The

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primary problem is that if light can't interact with your body, it can't hit the rods and cones in your eyes. Completely invisible people are blind. (If you want to be completely invisible but still see, you might be able to talk your GM into it, by buying an Extra like "See While Invisible.")

But if you want to just have a Talent who can see while invisible and your GM will allow it (since Talents can pretty much do anything), just mark it down and move on.

Power Stunts

Sidestep: This power stunt allows you to make an attacker fire at empty space. By drawing attention to yourself (becoming visible, whistling, *etc)*. and then rapidly moving away from that location, you make the attacker think you are still there. Add your Sidestep total to your Invisibility dice pool when dodging an attack in this manner.

Extras

Unshakeable (+2/+4/+8): You don't become visible unless you want to, even if you are injured.

See While Invisible (+1/+2/+4): You can see when invisible, despite the fact that your eyes are transparent to light.

Flaws

Tiring (-1/-2/-4): You gain a point of shock damage to your torso for every minute you remain invisible. This damage is not shaken off after combat, and must be recovered through regular healing rolls.

Jinx

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Jinx Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

This is the opposite of Aces. Things just tend to go your way, but only insomuch as people or threats who oppose you have dismal luck. With it, you roll your Jinx gobble dice pool and "eat" dice from any opposing dice pool.

Like Aces, Jinx is expensive. Every Jinx die thrown costs 1 Will point, every Jinx hard die thrown costs 2 Will points, and every Jinx wiggle die thrown costs 4 Will points. In addition, any action foiled by Jinx, but which helps you succeed, never yields a Will reward, no matter the circumstances. So, if you roll a 10 with your Jinx, you don't get the 1 Will point reward you would normally get for the use of almost any other power.

Jinx, like Aces, does not affect Talent powers.

Example: Schenk wants to Jinx a sniper shooting at him and his men. Every time the sniper takes a shot with his Coordination+Rifle skill of 5d, Schenk's Jinx gobble dice are rolled as well. The sniper shoots at Schenk and gets a 2x8. Normally this would be a hit. Then Schenk rolls his 4d of Jinx and gets a 10, 10, 1, and a 5. The 2x10 from the Jinx gobble two of the 8's from the sniper's set, rendering his attack ineffective-the bullet misses.

The next round the sniper fires again, this time succeeding with 3x5. Schenk gets 2x6—but he cannot Jinx this shot because, with a wider result, the sniper fires before Schenk can bring his power to bear. Similarly, if Schenk had gotten 4x4 somehow, he would not have been able to foil the shot because his four gobble dice would be smaller than the sniper's fives.

Power Stunts

Jinxing Physical Attacks: Gain these dice when using your power to affect physical attacks. You must pay Will normally for each die thrown.

Extras

Blanket Jinx (+4/+8/+16): Enemies within 20 yards all suffer from your Jinx power. But the Will costs for each type of die thrown are multiplied by the number of people affected.

Flaws

Unconscious (-1/-2/-4): The power is automatic, and cannot be turned on or off. In addition, it acts out on your subconscious impulses, inflicting its penalties on anyone you dislike or distrust like your little brother, your drill instructor or your commanding officer. Will costs remain the same.

Multiple Actions

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Multiple Actions Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Level	10

This is the power to do two things at once. It makes you

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much more effective at attempting multiple actions (see p. 12). Declare the actions as usual and roll the lowest of their dice pools. Each level of Multiple Actions offsets one penalty die for attempting multiple actions.

In addition, the Width of one set you roll (your choice) is extended by your Multiple Actions power level. You can divide the enhanced Width into multiple sets for the actions you declared—but none can be wider than the set you rolled.

For example, let's say you have Multiple Actions 3 and you attempt to punch someone and shoot in the same round, with Coordination+Shooting as the smallest dice pool at 4d. Your power offsets the –1d penalty for attempting an extra action, so you roll 4d. You get 2,3,4,4, for 2x4. You can add your 3 Multiple Action levels to that for 5x4 and split it into one 2x4 gunshot and one 2x4 punch. The extra 4 is lost because neither set can be wider than the 2x4 that you rolled.

This power also reduces the time it takes to do things outside of combat. Remember how the speed of an action is determined by subtracting the Width of the roll from 5? (That is, if you're fixing a radio and you roll 3x2, it's done in 2 hours, because 5–3 = 2) With Multiple Actions, you reduce that number.

Multiple Actions Table: Time Required

Multiple Actions Level	Time Required
0	5 minus Width
1–2	4 minus Width
3–4	3 minus Width
5–6	Next lower time category, 10 minus Width
7–8	Next lower time category, 6 minus Width
9–10	Next lower time category, 3 minus Width

When it says "Next lower time category," here's what that means: If you're doing a task that would normally be measured in days, you can do it in hours. From hours it goes to minutes, and from minutes to combat rounds. (Combat round tasks can't be compressed). As always, no task can be shortened to less than one unit of time.

Power Stunts

Switcheroo: Add your Switcheroo total to your Multiple Actions dice pool when you are performing acts that involve slight of hand.

Flaws

Blunt (-1): You can only complete tasks that don't require complex or delicate maneuvering. You can punch, dodge, or kick, but not sew, sort or write at high speed.

Perception

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Perception Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can discern stimulus outside of the range of human perception. Exactly, what kind of perception you can employ remains up to you. If you wish to just have exceptional human senses, such as super-sharp hearing, smell or taste, simply buy a Hyperstat in Sense or an appropriate Hyperskill for sight, hearing, smell, touch or taste. Perception reflects a new sense, such as the ability to see x-rays, hear ultra-sonics or to feel heat sources at a distance. Each new perception must be linked to a normal sense during character creation. For example, the ability to sense heat like a pit viper would be attached to the touch sense, while the ability to "see" x-rays would be attached to sight. To use your perception power, the dice pool of the perception is added to the sense skill and statistic it is attached to. It takes one combat round to switch between your Perception and the normal sense.

> ***Example:*** Cassie has Perception: X-Rays, at 4d, which is attached to her Sight skill. When she wishes to use it, she adds her Sense statistic of 2 to her Sight skill of 2 and her Perception power of 4d for a total of 8d. This is only when she is using her special X-Ray sight.

Pick a specific perception from the list below to determine its cost.

Perception Table: Type of Perception

Cost Addition Die/Hard/Wiggle	Perception Power Governs (Pick One)
+4/+8/+16	You are able to choose what you wish to perceive and with what sense.
+2/+4/+8	Feelings, Intent or other non-physical phenomena.
+1/+2/+4	Ultra- or Sub-sonics, Heat Sources, Certain Gases, Life-forms.
+0/+1/+2	Radio waves, Radioactivity, X-Rays, *etc.*

Perception only works within the range of the sense to which it is linked. If you wish to have a far-reaching perception that locates certain phenomena at a distance, please see the *Detection* power on p. 66 instead.

Perception is a physical phenomenon, and while it can detect certain things that we think of as "non-physical," such as feelings or intent, this just reflects the power's ability to detect subtle physiological changes in the target, not some psychic ability.

Extras

Superimposed (+1/+2/+4): Your new perception is simply a layer of perception piled on top of your old sense. If you

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have X-Ray vision, you can see through objects and see normally at the same time without penalty. You don't have to take a round to switch between them.

Flaws

Sensitive (-1/-2/-4): If your Perception power is exposed to large levels of the phenomenon it is designed to detect, it overloads and ceases to work for the number of hours equal to the width of the roll.

Precognition

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Precognition Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

You can catch glimpses of the future with your power. The future seen is by no means "permanent," and actions taken to change future events are quite effective in the world of *Godlike*. For instance, a vision of your own death in Malmedy four days from now can be sidestepped by doing your damnedest not to be in Malmedy on that day. The more you speak of your Precognitive visions to others, however, the less accurate the vision is. This reflects the change the vision has on your choices, and on the choices of others, and those choices' effects on the world.

Precogs, understandably, are often very tight-lipped about their visions.

This power can work three different ways. First, you can attempt to see the future by voluntarily entering a trance. This is a fatiguing process; it costs you 5 Will points per die thrown, 10 Will points per hard die thrown and 20 Will points per wiggle die thrown. Usually, in such a trance, a specific question or future event is the chosen subject of inquiry. Questions such as "When will the Germans attack?" or "What will happen to me at Cannes?" are perfectly appropriate.

Secondly, the power may spontaneously activate when you are in or near an area that will be important to your survival in the future. This is at the GM's discretion, but if this occurs, you lose 1 Will point per die thrown, 2 per hard die thrown and 4 per wiggle die thrown.

Thirdly, the power may activate in your dreams, warning you of some impending event. In this case, the only Will lost is any Will which would have been gained from that night of sleep when the dice are thrown. Also, this third version of the power is far less reliable than the other two; no matter how well the roll is made, the vision will always seem dreamy and indistinct.

Consider the chart to below to determine the level of success of such attempts.

Precognition Table: Type of Vision

Type of Roll	Result
Failure	A brief vision of the future which may or may not be accurate.
A Success	A brief vision of a future event.
Roll is wide	Knowledge of the amount of time before a certain event occurs.
Roll is tall	Knowledge of who is involved in a particular event.
Roll is tall and wide	A vision of an event with both time and subjects clearly shown.
Multiple Rolled 10s	An extremely clear vision of the future, as if you had lived the moment already, all senses are represented.

Power Stunts

Update: If you have successfully seen the future, you can add your Update total to your Precognition dice pool when trying to see an up to the minute update of your vision, which will reflect the changes you might have made through your actions.

Extras

Mothering (+1/+2/+4): In addition to warning you of impending danger to yourself, your power automatically "looks out" for your close friends and family as well.

Flaws

Static (-2/-4/-8): Your visions of the future consist of a single static image, and nothing more.

"X-Ray Vision"

The ability to see through objects, advertised in those "X-Ray Specs" ads, is just not physically possible. Talents being what they are, you can have such a power; they can warp reality, after all. Talents with true X-Ray perception report a much different experience than the classic idea of X-Ray vision.

Depending on the depth of focus, they can indeed see through solid walls, but the forms inside are not perceived normally. There's no sense of color, since color is a function of light—which can't penetrate walls. They can perceive shapes and densities where normal sight perceives shapes and colors. Thus, looking through someone's clothing you could see that they have papers in their pockets and a gun in a holster, but you couldn't tell if the papers were money or a laundry list or anything else.

You can perceive what people look like with their clothes off, if that's your scene, but you couldn't call it erotic. It's more like looking at a painting or a sculpture. The human brain, being designed to run these jumped-up ape bodies of ours, isn't equipped to interpret the information in anything but the most basic terms. There's nothing to hang your normal natural reactions on, as there's nothing normal or natural about what you're seeing.

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Psychic Artifact

Qualities

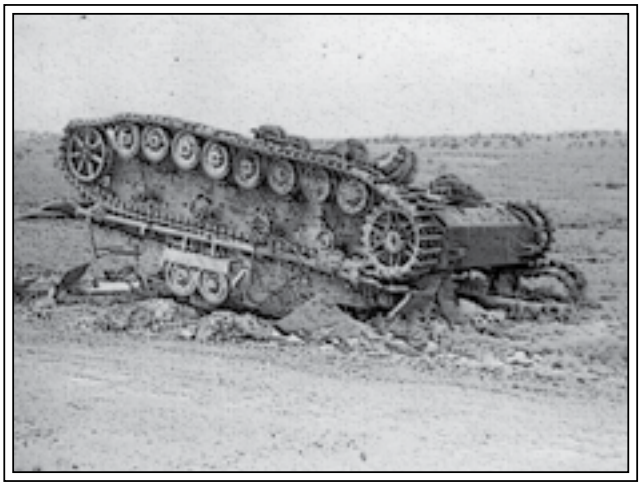
Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Psychic Artifact Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

With your Talent ability, you can create invisible psychic artifacts that mimic (at least physically), the abilities of common tools, weapons and equipment. At this most general level, the power allows you to create any sort of equipment, weapon or tool (since it has all four power qualities). For example, you could create a fully functional shovel, shield or even a pistol with the full Psychic Artifact power.

If you want to have a more limited power, such as being able to only produce one particular type of weapon or piece of equipment, reduce the cost accordingly. For example, if you wish to be able to only produce a psychic lock-pick, you could remove the attacks, defends and robust qualities right there, reducing your cost to 2 per die, 4 per hard die and 8 per wiggle die.



Psychic artifacts are limited by what their user understands. If you don't have a profound understanding of how a radio works, you can't make a psychic radio. If you don't have the know how to field-strip a rifle, you can't make a psychic rifle. Consequently, if you don't have at least two levels of skill in a relevant field (Pistol to construct a pistol, Medicine to create an autoclave) you can't make the object. Simple objects like shovels or swords don't need a relevant skill to be created.

You cannot create animals or people with this Talent, and the possible weight of the object created depends on your level of power.

Psychic Artifact Table: Mass of Item

Talent	Maximum Mass
1	2 pound
2	5 pounds
3	10 pounds
4	15 pounds
5	30 pounds
6	65 pounds
7	130 pounds
8	250 pounds
9	500 pounds
10	1000 pounds

Objects that produce light, heat or movement work normally, but usually not as well as a real object of the relevant type. If the object is a hand-to-hand weapon, it does damage per the relevant type. If the object deals damage at a distance, its damage rating can never exceed width in killing, regardless of what sort of object it is—rifle, pistol, howitzer, whatever. Replicating a weapon that has Spray, Area or Penetration requires the expenditure of 2 Will for each point in the quality (if you plan to use those, you might do the work ahead of time on cards, and show your GM).

If you use a psychic weapon to fire real bullets at another Talent, there is no contest of Wills. If you fire psychic bullets, it's resolved as an ordinary Talent against Talent attack (see page 95).

Understand: this power only replicates real objects. You cannot create some kind of chimerical hyper-weapon with Spray 3, Area 3 and Penetration 4 simply by making a psychic pistol and spending 20 Will. If you want to make a Spray weapon, you have to make a Spray weapon with which you are familiar—that is, one from **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263.

Psychic weapons never run out of ammo, and psychic vehicles never run out of gas. However, they rarely have the opportunity. The "shelf life" of a psychic artifact depends on how well you rolled. In combat, it lasts a number of rounds equal to the width of the roll. Outside of combat, it's minutes. For each Will point you spend, you can increase its duration by 1 round or minute.

You can create shields fairly easily with this power - a sheet of metal plate is not hard to envision. Generally speaking, it takes about fifteen pounds to put 1 point of Heavy Armor on one hit location. A helmet with one point of Heavy Armor is a fifteen pound helmet.

> ***Example:*** Hans wants to make a psychic metal wall big enough provide cover for all six of his hit locations, and thick enough to provide two points of Heavy Armor. That much lead would weigh 180 pounds and would require a Talent of 8 to create.

Psychic objects come into being touching your body. You cannot create a psychic boulder over someone's head forty feet away. You could, however, make one in your hands and drop it off a bridge onto someone.

These objects are invisible to normal people, but Talents can see them clearly. (This is sometimes a disadvantage: Hans can't see the soldiers on the other side of his psychic wall, but unless they're Talents, they can see him). Any Talent can destroy a psychic object by entering into a contest of Wills with its creator.

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Extras

Extended Duration (+2/+4/+8): Instead of combat turns and non-combat minutes, your Artifacts last for widthx3 rounds in combat (if combat ends, the object remains) and hours out of combat.

Levitating (+2/+4/+8): When your Psychic Artifacts manifest, they hover in the air nearby within Base Will in feet. You can operate them with your thoughts, using only your skills as normal (in other words, if you fire a levitating psychic rifle you roll only your Rifle skill, not your Coordination+Rifle). You can only control as many artifacts equal to half the dice in your pool.

Flaws

Visible (-1/-2/-4): Your Psychic Artifacts are visible to normal humans, not just Talents. They don't look quite real, instead looking like an idealized version of the object rendered in a translucent glass of any color you choose (if you don't choose a color, they're black).

Rapport

Qualities

Useful Outside of Combat.

Rapport Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	2
Each Hard Die	4
Each Wiggle Die	8

You can tag a target with your mind, and in a state of deep concentration *see* them (or it), no matter where they go. You must be able to touch a target to create a Rapport. Once made, the Rapport is not broken until you wish it, the target comes under the scrutiny of another Talent, or the subject dies. Talents may not be tagged for Rapport. In fact, the moment another Talent sees your target, he becomes aware of the link. If that Talent chooses, he can break the link by spending 1 point of Will. Once a target is lost, you must touch it once more to restore the link.

For each die you have in your Rapport dice pool, you can tag one individual.

The vision of the target is extremely vivid. You see everything they could possibly see, and in addition, you see their entire body as well. For some reason, there is no hearing possible through the rapport; sound cannot be perceived through the link.

When a person linked to you with rapport dies violently, you suffer the equivalent amount of damage in shock (but just shock, not killing) to the same body parts, even if you are currently not in a trance to observe them.

Power Stunts

Read Lips: By careful observation you can read the lips of those seen within the vision of your Rapport. Add your Read Lips total to your Rapport dice pool when trying to figure out just what people are saying on the other side of the link.

Extras

Multiple Targets (+1/+2/+4): The number of targets you can tag is doubled.

Flaws

Emotional Rapport (-1/-2/-4): You can only link to those for whom you feel an overpowering emotion. Hate or love, it doesn't matter (this is at the GM's discretion). Your power cannot affect those towards whom you feel indifferent.

Regeneration

Qualities

Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Regeneration Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

Your power can restore your body to health despite gross physical damage (but you can only heal yourself, not others). If you are conscious, you can concentrate for one combat round and make a roll against your Regeneration dice pool. On a success, for each Will point spent, you regain the width of your roll in killing points of damage to any part of your body that is injured. Alternately, a successful roll and a Will point can remove all shock damage in all limbs.

On a successful roll against your power you can even restore a permanently crippled limb to its former state at the cost of 5 Will points per limb (but it must be fully healed first to do so).

Illnesses (even potentially fatal viruses or cancers) can be instantly healed at the expenditure of 1 Will point and a successful roll. Injuries may not be healed if you are unconscious or drugged.

Severed limbs or completely destroyed organs cannot be re-grown with this power. Decapitation is a death sentence; there is no regenerating back from having your head severed.

Power Stunts

Regenerative Meditation: By meditating on your illness or injury for an hour per die thrown, you can subtract the same amount of Will points from your Regeneration cost. The minimum cost is always 1 Will point.

Extras

Automatic (+2/+4/+8): Your power will activate and heal you (if you have Will Points available), regardless of your state of wakefulness; you'll regenerate even in a coma. Drugs are no obstacle, you'll just burn them out of your system. A Side Effect of this Extra is that you'll never get drunk again (for more than mere minutes, anyway).

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Re-growth (+1/+2/+4): Like a lizard, you can re-grow severed or destroyed limbs or organs.

Flaws

Only Shock Damage (-2/-4/-8): You can only regenerate shock damage with your Regeneration power, not killing damage.

Side Step

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Side Step Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

With this ability, you can side step even the worst disaster or attack and make it look easy. This power reflects your ability to be in the right place at the right time by moving deliberately out of danger. Whether it is because you are super swift or sensitive, or can glimpse the future is no matter, the effect is the same. The explosion, sword or bullet misses you as you step past it. Of course, you must already know you are under attack to use this ability.

Side Step is a defensive power, so its dice gobble incoming attacks.

> ***Example:*** Kurt fires a MP40 at Clifford, who has Side Step at 6d. Clifford tries to Side Step the attack. Kurt rolls his SMG skill and the weapon's Spray rating, coming up with two pairs—2x9 and 2x8. Clifford rolls his Side Step and gets 2x10. The Side Step gobbles out an 8 and a 9 from the attack, rendering it ineffective. Clifford walks right through the bullets unhurt.

Anyone with Side Step can attempt to "lead" an attack towards another location—for instance, the thug's knife pass misses you and hits his accomplice instead. If you attempt this, remove one die from your Side Step pool. Wiggle and Hard Dice are removed first.

There are two big disadvantages to Side Step. First, it's an active power: If you're using it, you can't attack, unless you're taking a multiple action. Second, it cannot protect from Area effects. If someone throws a grenade at Clifford, he can avoid the brunt of the attack by sidestepping the shrapnel, but if it goes off nearby, there is simply no safe place for him to step. He doesn't take the width of the roll or the Area dice, but the shock damage is still applied.

Power Stunts

Leading: You roll additional dice when attempting to lead attacks with Side Step. Note that the one die penalty still applies. If you have the Leading stunt at 1, it just offsets the penalty. If you have Leading 3, you only add two dice when attempting to lead.

Flaws

Hand-to-Hand Only (-1/-2/-4): Your Side Step is useless against anything except hand-to-hand weapons.

Sidekick

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Sidekick Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You have a single invisible friend who follows your mental (or verbal) orders. The abilities that the Sidekick possesses are up to you. To determine stats, divide the Sidekick dice pool between the Sidekick's physical Body and Coordination (after inception, these stats remain constant); the Sidekick's other stats (Sense, Brains, Command, and Cool) are the same as yours. If the Sidekick has any other super abilities, they must be purchased separately, using the Attach Flaw.

Example: Trish has a Sidekick at 6d. She describes it as an invisible horse. Trish gives the Sidekick a Body of 4d and a Coordination of 2d. She wants her Sidekick to fly; she must buy the Flight Miracle separately, and attach it to the Sidekick Miracle.

Sidekicks are invisible (except to other Talents), and all attacks against them are at -2 dice to hit (unless the attacker has a Sense stat of 7+ or a special Perception power which allows him to see the Sidekick). Hits against Sidekicks are treated as a dynamic contest between the Sidekick power and the

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attack. If the attack succeeds, the Sidekick disappears and cannot be re-formed for one hour. In addition, you lose a point of Will. If your Sidekick has defensive powers Attached to it, those powers must be overcome as well as the Sidekick dice pool before it disappears.

> ***Example:*** Trish's equine Sidekick is hit by a machine gun, which has a total attack dice pool of 7d. The attack is at -2d because the Sidekick is invisible. The attacker rolls 8,8,8,7 and a 1, for a 3x8. The Sidekick defends with an 8, 8, 9, 5, 6 and a 10, a 2x8. The machine gun rips the Sidekick to shreds, and Trish loses 1 Will point. In one hour, Trish may make a roll to reform her Sidekick.

Extras

Second Pair of Eyes (+2/+4/+8): Not only can you create a Sidekick, you can see through its "eyes" as if they were your own. You must pause a combat round and concentrate to activate the link, and you are not able to do anything else while using it.

Mutable (+5/+10/+20): Your Sidekick's size is mutable, and it may shrink or grow as if your Sidekick dice were Transform dice (see *Transform* on p. 89 for details). While size may change, the stats of your Sidekick do not. Shifting size takes one combat round.

Visible (+1/+2/+4): Your Sidekick is visible to normals as well as Talents.

Flaws

Bad Dog (-1/-2/-4): Your Sidekick has a mind of its own. Though it will often listen to your instructions, it spends much of its time digging in the dirt, eating food and generally nosing about like an animal. To successfully command your Sidekick (if you are not in direct danger), you must make a roll against your power beating a Difficulty modifier of 4. Otherwise, it just doesn't listen.

Stun

Qualities

Attacks, Robust.

Stun Table: Cannot Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	3
Each Hard Die	6
Each Wiggle Die	12

Stun is a specialized form of Harm that only does shock damage. Attack dice purchased in Stun cause two times their width in shock damage, and only shock damage, to the hit location rolled on the attack dice. Shock damage caused by Stun does not ever become killing damage, however. Instead, when a hit location is filled, leftover Stun damage goes into an adjacent location.

> ***Example:*** Roger has 6d in Stun. He cuts loose on an enemy trooper, rolling a 3x6 result. That's six points of shock to his opponent's arm, which has four wound boxes left on it. If this was normal shock damage, the first four points would fill the boxes, the next two would become killing damage. However, since this is specialized Stun damage, the first four points numb the arm, and the next two leak into the torso.

Power Stunts

Multiple Stun: Add your Multiple Stun dice to your Stun dice pool when attacking multiple targets to defer the cost of the multiple actions penalty.

Extras

Headhunter (+3/+6/+12): Your power automatically attacks the central nervous system of a target. Any attack made with stun on a target automatically is treated as an attack on the target's head, despite the rolled hit location.

Flaws

Touch Only (-1/-2/-4): To use the power you must touch the subject. This is usually done as an extra action with a hand-to-hand attack. As a bonus, the hand-to-hand attack usually does damage too.

Super Speed

Qualities

Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Super Speed Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

This is the power to move really, really, fast - so fast that you're a blur to the normal folks watching you. You also gain the power to survive that kind of high-speed movement without blacking out from lack of oxygen or getting windburn on your face. Super Speed does not mean the ability to perform intricate tasks quicker, or to do more things in a given span of time. If that's what you're after, see *Multiple Actions* on p. 78. This is just the power to go damn fast, period. In practice, it's much like flying a plane, driving a motorcycle or using some other vehicle to cover distance rapidly. It speeds up your movement, not your reaction time.

Super Speed must be attached to an ability. If you want to be a super fast flyer, attach it to the Flight Miracle. If you want to only cover ground rapidly, attach it to the Running skill. If you want it to be a little more versatile, then attach it to Body, thus covering Running and Swimming.

When you use the attached skill (running, swimming, flying, tunneling through the earth), use the following chart to figure out your base speed, and then add twice your Body score. (If you've attached Super Speed to Body, you use these instead of the base 10 yards per round).

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Super Speed Table: Rate of Travel

Super Speed	Yards/Round	Miles/Hour
0	10	6.8
1	110	75
2	220	150
3	330	225
4	440	300
5	550	375
6	670	457[1]
7	790	540
8	920	620
9	1,030	700
10	1,150	785[2]

[1] Faster than a .38 Special [2] Mach I

Just so you know, the speed of sound in air (near sea-level) is 760 mph—and almost every bullet has an airspeed between 1,200 and 3,000 yards a round.

Power Stunts

Mach-One Punch: Add the Mach-One Punch total to your Super Speed dice pool and attack with your fists using Super Speed instead of Body+Brawling. Using your power, you strike the target hundreds of times a second with your fist, causing Width shock damage. But to do this, you must add the "Attacks" quality to the cost of your Super Speed.

Extras

No G's (+2/+4/+8): You can turn on a dime despite your super speed without any ill effects.

Flaws

Slow Braking (-2/-4/-8): You require a full round of braking to stop safely. This means you also need enough space - if you're zipping along at 900 yards/round, you need 900 yards of space to stop safely. If you don't have enough room, you wipe out and take damage. For every 100 yards/round you were moving, roll a die (up to the maximum of 10). Apply a point of shock and a point of killing damage from every die rolled to the relevant location.

> ***Example:*** Slow Braking Steve is rushing along at 700 yards a round when he realizes there's a tank directly in front of him. He tries to stop, but there's not enough space. He takes 7 dice of damage. Rolling 1,4,5,7,7,9 and 10, so he takes a point of shock and killing to his left leg (1), one to each arm (the 4 and 5), three to his torso (7,7,9) and one to his head (10).

Telekinesis

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Telekinesis Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

Telekinesis is the ability to move objects without touching them—you just look at the object and picture it moving through the air, and as if picked up by a ghostly hand, it moves - if you're strong enough to lift it.

To use telekinesis, roll and get a match. The weight limit of your TK (as it's nicknamed) depends on how many dice you have in the Miracle. The weight ratings are the same as they are for the Body stat. Someone with three dice of telekinesis can lift as much as someone with three dice of Body. (See *Body* in **Part Two: Game Mechanics** on p. 8). But you always have to make a TK roll, even if you are only trying to lift a pistol.

To attack someone, simply make a dynamic roll of your TK vs. their Body stat. It does Width in shock damage. If you want to try to choke them, use the choking rules on p. 17, but the same TK vs. Body roll applies. These attacks can't be dodged. If you use TK to pick up a weapon and use that against your target, the dynamic roll is TK vs. Body+Brawl or Coordination+Dodge (depending on what they're doing). If your TK is in excess of 7, you do killing damage instead of shock.

Telekinesis as written is expensive and not very reliable (as opposed to simply buying gobs of Body, say).

Power Stunts

Multiple Hands: Lifting multiple items with TK is a multiple action. (To pick up two objects, drop a die from your pool and try to get two matches. To lift three objects, drop two dice and try for three matches). With this stunt you can offset those penalty dice. It never actually makes your pool any bigger, it just keeps it from shrinking. If you have one point of Multiple Hands, you can lift one additional object without a penalty. (You still have to roll and make two matches, however.)

Interestingly, each "hand" can lift up to your maximum limit with a successful roll, but you cannot put two hands together to lift a larger object. If your maximum lifting weight is 300 pounds and you have Multiple Hands 3, you can lift three objects that weight 300 pounds each, but you can't lift one that weighs 400 pounds. Odd, huh?

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Extras

Touch (+1/+2/+4): Your telekinetic "hands" have a sense of touch equal to your Sense statistic or Touch skill, whichever is higher. This allows you to feel around with your power even in the dark or outside of your range of vision. Note that you don't roll Sense+Touch: You roll either Sense or Touch.

Flaws

Clumsy (-1/-2/-4): If you're trying to move an object with grace and finesse, you need to roll two sets of matches to avoid having it swoop around unpredictably or break in your telekinetic grasp. To place the object down carefully (without smashing it into the ground), or when "grabbing" a delicate object, you must beat a Difficulty number of 5. In addition, you can never learn any Power Stunts to increase your skill with your TK.

Weak (-1/-2/-4): No matter how many levels you take in TK, you are never able to lift more than 100 pounds with it.

Teleportation

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Teleportation Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

This power allows you to instantaneously move objects (including yourself) from one point in space to another in zero time, without crossing the intervening space. Some Talents with this ability can move many people at once; others can only transport themselves. There are teleporters who can cover huge distances, and some, only a few feet.

The two limits to Teleportation are distance and mass. The more powerful and experienced a teleporter is, the more distance he can cover and the more mass he can move.

Teleportation Table: Mass & Distance

Talent	Maximum Mass	Maximum Distance
1	1 pound	1,000 yards
2	5 pounds	10 miles
3	10 pounds	50 miles
4	50 pounds	100 miles
5	100 pounds	500 miles
6	500 pounds	1,000 miles
7	1,000 pounds	4,000 miles
8	2 tons	6,500 miles
9	4 tons	10,000 miles
10	6 tons	12,000 miles

An important fact about Teleportation is that you can extend your range by cutting down on your Mass. For each step down the scale you take on Mass, you can extend your Maximum Distance by a step upwards, and vice versa.

> ***Example:*** Fernando has Teleportation 5 and wants to jump himself back to his old office in Padua. Normally, that's a no-go - he weighs over 100 pounds. But he's in Venice, less than fifty miles from Padua. Since he's dropped the distance two categories, he can raise the mass two categories, to 1000 pounds. He can not only teleport himself, but several friends as well. If his target is Kiev, however, that's a different matter. It's close to a thousand miles, pushing his distance up one category. He could only send 50 pounds to Kiev - not enough to move himself, but certainly, he could teleport something useful. If he wanted to send a piece of paper with a message, (dropping the mass category to 1) he could send it anywhere familiar within 10,000 miles—pretty much anywhere in the world, except a 2,000 mile circle on the exact opposite side of the globe.

Teleporting is a difficult business. It requires a clear picture in the head of its user of his desired destination (this means that the user must have previously visited the location he wishes to teleport to). Without a clear picture, a successful transport is not possible. Also, people or objects teleported must be in direct physical contact with the teleporter. (This works fine if a bunch of people hold hands, as long as the chain is unbroken). Portions of objects may not be teleported.

When teleporters disappear, a loud crack (about as loud as a rifle shot) sounds. This is the air rushing in to fill the space the teleporter just vacated. The more Mass moved, the louder the boom.

It's fairly easy to attack with Teleportation. For instance, suppose there's a sniper in a bell tower and you can't get a good shot at him with your rifle. Instead, put your hands on a burnt-out jeep and teleport it into the air six inches above the sniper's nest. Gravity does the rest.

Since this is all done by sight, even a weak teleporter has the potential to drop giant chunks of rubble (or grenades, for that matter) on any enemy he spots.

To drop a rock, roll your Teleportation. Your opponent may make a Coordination+Dodge roll against falling rubble of this sort, if dodging is the action he declared. If your roll fails, the rock doesn't move. If it succeeds, but his Coordination+Dodge is wider or higher, he takes no damage.

Dropping a grenade is the same sort of thing. Roll your Teleportation pool to put the grenade right where you want it. If the other fellow succeeds at his Coordination+Dodge, he still takes the Area dice when it goes off, but does not take any damage based on the width of your roll. If you pull the pin and the Teleportation roll fails, it's still in your hand with the handle held down; you can try to send it again next time.

Another popular Teleportation attack is to grab an enemy and teleport him high into the air. To do this, you have to either use multiple actions (rolling the lower of Body+Brawl and Teleportation with a 1d penalty and getting two matches) or successfully pin your opponent until you can teleport him. (See *Pinning* on p. 17.) If you do send him successfully, the normal falling rules apply. (See *Falling* on p. 25.)

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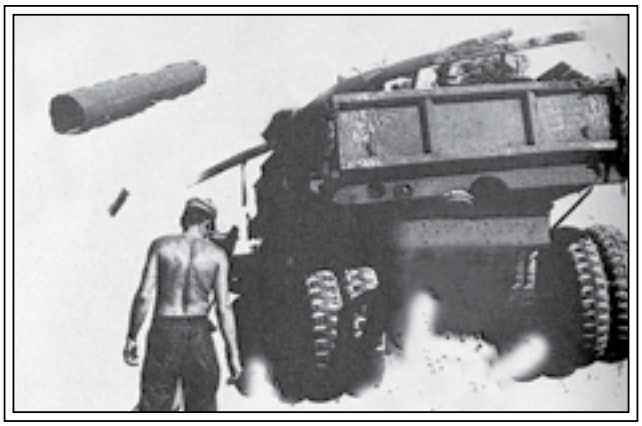
Power Stunts

Reorientation: Add your Reorientation total to your Teleportation dice pool when you are attempting to change your body's orientation, without moving from your current location. In other words, you could spin around instantly, or go from being prone to standing.



Extras

Blind Teleportation (+3/+6/+12): You can teleport to a location never seen before, randomly. When you want, your power finds a safe location and teleports you there. In this case, a "Safe Location" is defined as an area of solid ground that is not occupied by another object; it covers no other eventualities. You can only use this power if you're personally going to that place—you can't use it to send a ticking bomb somewhere unless you go along for the ride.

Global Range (+5/+10/+20): You never need to assign any of your Teleportation dice to range. You automatically have a 10d in range and never need to roll against it. You still must have previously seen the location you are traveling to, however. These Global Range dice cannot be used to increase your mass capacity.

Maximum Capacity (+5/+10/+20): You never need to assign any of your Teleportation dice to mass capacity. You automatically have a 10d in capacity and never need to roll against it. You still must touch all the objects you want to transport. These Maximum Capacity dice cannot be used to increase your Range.

Silent (+2/+4/+8): There is no tell-tale loud report when you use your power (some theorize that air is exchanged in equal volume, thereby equalizing the pressure instantly, but as with so much concerning Talents, it's hard to prove). This is very useful for those espionage missions.

Flaws

Disorientation (-1/-2/-4): Upon arrival you cannot act until you successfully make a Sense roll of Difficulty 3 or until 5 minutes pass. Furthermore, when teleporting something over someone as an attack, you must first make a successful Sense+Sight roll.

Forced Attendance (-1/-2/-4): You cannot teleport anything unless you teleport yourself along with it. Thus, you can't drop big rocks on people unless you're willing to go with the rock yourself. You cannot take this Flaw if you've already taken the Self Only Flaw.

Nothing Biological (-2/-4/-8): You cannot teleport anything biological (except yourself that is). If you attempt to move anything living, your Teleportation automatically fails.

Self Only (-2/-4/-8): You can only teleport yourself. No clothes, no glasses, no gear, no other people.

Slow (-1/-2/-4): This Flaw can be taken multiple times; each time it is taken, it extends the time necessary to teleport by 1. In combat, this is measured in rounds; non-combat, in minutes. If someone catches you, it'll be automatically obvious to normals that you're a Talent, with your body obviously fading away from this location. The good news: the side effect of your slowness is that you'll make a lot less noise. It won't be silent (and air pressure will be changing), but it'll be quieter than that crack of thunder.

Uncertain Arrival (-3/-6/-12): You can only take this Flaw if you already have the Self Only Flaw. You arrive at your destination up to 20 feet off the ground. Subtract the width x height of your teleport roll from 20 feet to determine how close to the ground you land. Any total higher than 20 means you land on the ground. Otherwise, take falling damage equivalent from a drop at that height indicated.

> ***Example:*** Ben has Uncertain Arrival on his Teleportation Miracle. He rolls a 7, 6, 6, 2 and a 1. A 2x6 roll. He subtracts 2x6=12 feet from 20 feet. Leaving 6 feet to drop. With a successful Coordination roll, he lands on his feet and takes no damage.

Thought Control

True Thought Control does not exist in the world of *Godlike*. Although certain abilities may seem very much like mind control at first glance, each has very real and very severe limitations which curb their possible uses significantly.

There are two types of powers that can directly affect another's mind:

Thought Control: Command 7+

(Cannot Defend) The effects of having Command at 7+ are described back on p. 48.

Extras

Buddy, Buddy (+1/+2/+4): No matter what you say, the target thinks you are a saint. He will go out of his way to help you, warn you or protect you from harm, even if you're trying to convince him to kill himself.

Non-verbal (+3/+6/+12): Simply by looking at the target (only the Talent need see the target) the Talent can make non-verbal assaults upon the victim's Will. If the roll is successful, then your command is placed within the target's mind. Language is not a barrier with non-verbal commands. It still takes the requisite time to wear an individual down, however.

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Flaws

Eye Contact (-1/-2/-4): You must maintain complete and unbroken eye contact with the target; otherwise, your power doesn't work.

Thought Control: Projected Hallucination

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Thought Control Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

Projected Hallucination allows you to alter the perceptions of your target. With this ability, you might be able to convince a person that they're talking to Winston Churchill, or wrestling a boa constrictor. Many Talents have this ability unconsciously, a reflex which projects a certain unconscious image. But this power represents the ability to *deliberately* control what the target sees, hears or feels. In effect, you can make the target see hear or feel anything you can imagine.

Illusions of this sort last a number of minutes equal to the width of the roll. In any event, projected hallucinations evaporate if the Talent creating them stops concentrating. It is possible to dodge, throw a grenade, or provide cover fire (see p. 16) while concentrating. One cannot aim a firearm at a particular person while maintaining an illusion. Nor can one use any other Talent that doesn't have the "Always On" Extra.

To actually convince someone a Projected Hallucination is real, roll your Talent pool as a dynamic contest against the individual's Sense+skill pool. (The skill used to resist depends on what sort of hallucination you're creating. If it's simply the illusion that you're wearing a different uniform, it's Sense+Sight. If you just want to create the smell of gas fumes in the air, it's Sense+Smell. If you want to create a realistic Tiger tank - the rumble, the tremors in the ground, the smell of the engine fumes and its actual appearance - you roll against his Sense and whichever sense-related skill is highest).

If you're merely trying to create distracting phenomena, without regard to making it realistic enough to persuade, make a static roll. If you succeed, the width of the roll serves as a Difficulty to relevant actions.

> ***Example:*** Francine has 2d and 2wd in Projected Hallucination. She and her friends are under attack by an enemy sniper. She creates the illusion of swirling blobs of brightly colored cloth between the attacker and herself. Obviously, the appearance of silent, blotchy color smears isn't going to fool him, but it has a good chance of ruining his shot. She rolls and gets a 6 and a 4. She matches her two Wiggle Dice to the 6 for a 3x6 result. The sniper must beat a Difficulty of 3 to strike her or her friends for the next three rounds, or until she stops concentrating.

It's also possible to create the illusion of agony - no visual or audio cues; it just feels like your arm (or whatever) is on fire. To do this, the Talent simply rolls Projected Hallucination as an attack. If it succeeds, the target cannot use the targeted limb until the illusion wears off. If the limb is a leg, the victim can't run on that leg. If it's an arm, he can't fire a weapon or attack with it. If it's the torso, the person loses four dice from Body or Coordination (to a minimum stat of 1) for purposes of rolled checks. (This works exactly like having one's torso filled with shock, as explained on p. 14). If it's the head, the person can't do anything until it wears off.

Power Stunts

Sense Specialization: Select a particular sense and specialize in it with this power stunt. When trying to use your Projected Hallucination to fool that sense, add your Sense Specialization total to your dice pool.

Extras

Everybody Sees It (+3/+6/+12): Anybody present experiences the illusions you project. This includes you and your allies, so be careful before doing that blanket agony attack.

Flaws

Absolute Concentration (-2/-4/-8): You must hold completely still to use this power. Any distraction will disrupt the illusion you are projecting.

Time Fugue

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Time Fugue Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can freeze time for a single object or creature with your Talent power. Everything smaller than the fugued object that is in direct contact with it is frozen as well. You must be able to see the object, and make a roll against your Time Fugue dice pool that beats the Difficulty number based on the size of the target. If you succeed, the object is frozen in time for a number of rounds equal to the width of your roll. You may extend this period at the cost of 1 Will point per round of additional Time Fugue. You remain immune to the effects of your own Time Fugue.

Objects frozen with this power will resume their former movement when the fugue ends (so frozen bullets continue along their normal path, falling people hit the ground, *etc)*. People in a fugue have no recollection of the time spent within it. Objects frozen in the fugue are unaffected by attacks, they remain frozen and untouchable (since time does not pass for them, nothing about them can change), until the fugue ends. You can fugue a number of objects equal to the number of dice

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in your Time Fugue dice pool at any given time.

The bigger and heavier an object is, the harder it is to fugue. Consider the following chart to determine the Difficulty for objects you attempt to fugue.

The Difficulty can be reduced by 1 for a point of Will. You can spend Will to lower Difficulty after you roll.

No matter how much Will you spend, you cannot use Time Fugue on something that weighs more than 10 tons, unless you have the Extra: No Upward Limit attached to this Talent.

Time Fugue Table: Weight Affected

Target Weight	Difficulty
5 pounds or less	1
6–20 pounds	2
21–100 pounds	3
101–500 pounds	4
501–1,000 pounds	5
1,001 pounds–1 ton	6
1–2 tons	7
2–4 tons	8
4–6 tons	9
6–10 tons	10

Example: Kurt has 8d in Time Fugue and he wants to freeze a truck plunging off a cliff. The GM gives the truck a Difficulty of 8, because it weighs between 2 and 4 tons. Kurt rolls his eight dice and gets 3x2 and 2x3. Normally, that would be a great roll, but given the high Difficulty, it's just not enough. If Kurt wants to spend five Will, he can drop the Difficulty to 3 and freeze the truck for two rounds. Or he could spend six Will and freeze it for three rounds.

Power Stunts

Lower: Add your Lower total to your Time Fugue dice pool when you are trying to arrest the fall of an object, and by turning your power on and off multiple times a second, lower it to the ground.

Extras

Vanish (+1/+2/+4): A fugued object or person doesn't just freeze, it disappears from reality entirely. It cannot be seen, touched, or perceived in any fashion until it reappears.

Flaws

Touch Only (-2/-4/-8): Your power only works on objects or people you can touch.

Transform

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Transform Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can transform your body into any creature or object you have seen or can envision. With this power, you could turn into an eagle, a griffin or a four-post bed. The number of dice you have in your Transform dice pool indicates the size ranges of your transformed state. For instance, with 2d, you could transform into anything from 25 pounds and three feet tall to 370 pounds and seven or eight feet tall. Th table also lists sample animals at each weight range.

In other words, the greater your power dice pool, the greater the size range of the forms you can assume, both bigger and smaller.

If you assume a smaller size, you gain a +1 die bonus to all Dodge rolls. If you assume a larger size, anyone attacking you gains a +1 die bonus to all attacking rolls.

Transform Table: Size Range

# of Dice	Smallest Size (-1d to Hit)	Biggest Size (+1d to Hit)
2	25 lbs (badger); 3 ft.	370 lbs (gorilla); 7-8 ft.
3	12 lbs (eagle); 2 ft.	500 lbs (tiger); 8 ft.
4	6 lbs (housecat); 18 in.	800 lbs (grizzly); 10 ft.
5	3 lbs (falcon); 12 in.	1,200 lbs (polar bear); 12 ft.
6	1 lb (mongoose); 6 in.	1,800 lbs (big horse); 14 ft.
7	8 oz (rat); 4 in.	1.5 tons (rhino); 15 ft.
8	3 oz (bluejay); 3 in.	2.5 tons (hippo); 16 ft.
9	1 oz (mouse); 2 in.	4 tons (small elephant); 18 ft.
10	1/4 oz (cockroach); 1 in.	6 tons (elephant); 21 ft.

Becoming an inanimate object (with no abilities) like a rock or a chair is easy. Just roll your Transform dice pool, score a success, and poof, you become that object for a number of hours equal to the width of the roll (or until you wish to change back). Note that being in one of these forms means you can't do a thing, not even hear or see… just sit and think. Any amount of damage taken during your Transformation (only when you become an inanimate object), causes you to revert to human form, though you can buy points in the Resiliency Extra; see below.

Transforming into living creature (or a living creature with the appearance of an inanimate object, such as a chair with a mouth) is a little more complicated. Expend the number of Will points equal to your dice pool needed for that creature's weight or size. (For example, turning into a housecat requires a Talent pool of at least 3, so you must spend 3 Will to turn into a cat. Turning into an elephant requires a Talent pool of 10, so you must spend 10 Will for that transformation). Roll a success with *all* your Transform dice, and you become that creature for a number of hours equal to the width of the roll, or until you wish to revert to human form.

When you Transform into a living creature, you assign your Body, Coordination and Sense stats to any of those of the new form, as long as they are consistent with the size and build of the form. For instance, if you transformed into an elephant, it would make sense to assign your stat points to Body and not Coordination (final ruling is at the GMs discretion, of course). In addition to being able to move your stats, you can also assign your Transform power dice into stat or skill pools (Hard Dice and Wiggle Dice become regular dice when assigned). The highest stat a form can

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have is equal to your power dice pool. So, at 4d, you could have a maximum score of 4 in any one stat (the maximum as always, is 10). If your new form is smaller than your normal form, you can only reduce your Body stat (to a minimum of 2d), if it is bigger, you can increase the Body stat or reduce it. Stats that are reduced decrease the cost of the form by 1 Will point per stat point. The other 2 physical stats, Sense and Coordination, can either be higher or lower. No amount of stat reduction makes it possible to gain Will by transforming. You can reduce the Will cost to zero, but not to a negative number.

Miracle-like abilities or skills in forms that are wholly physical (such as flight when wings are present, and the flying skill for a bird) may be bought (temporarily for the duration of that form only) at the GM's discretion, by assigning Transform power dice to them. Wholly supernatural powers (breathing fire, turning people to stone) are not possible (unless they are bought as a separate Miracle at character creation).

> ***Example:*** Ryuichi wants to become a dragon. He has 2hd+4d in Transform, so the maximum size that his dragon can be is 1,800 lbs. He automatically succeeds because of his Hard Dice and spends 6 Will to fuel the transformation. Ryuichi has Body 3, Coordination 2, and a Sense 3, so he has 8 stat points to assign to his dragon (plus his power dice, if he wishes). Ryuichi wants the dragon to be strong; so he places 4 points in Body, 2 in Coordination, and 2 in Sense. He can then allocate six more points with his 6 Transform dice. He can't have Body in excess of 6, so he just assigns 2 more points to each stat. Final tally: Body 6, Coordination 4, Sense 4.

> ***Example:*** Ryuichi wants to become a large bird (about 6 pounds). This would require a minimum Talent of 4, so he has to pay 4 Will to make the change. He can only decrease his Body stat, not increase it since the form is smaller than his native form. Richard makes his Body 2d (-1), his Coordination 2, and his Sense 2 (-1). So, it costs him 4 points to transform, but he gets 2 of those 4 points back due to his stat reductions. He places the 6d from his Transform dice pool into the Flight Miracle (since the form has wings), and he's ready to go.

Most forms have a free attack equal to their Body stat. At the GM's discretion, this attack can either be width in shock or width in killing *and* shock damage. Any stat reductions from Body are also subtracted from this attack.

> ***Example:*** Ryuichi in dragon form would have a bite attack equal to width of his Body roll in killing and shock damage. In bird form, he would only cause width in shock damage on a successful Body roll on an attack — and he attacks with the reduced Body of his new form.
>
> (Wing buffets or a sharp peck with a beak just can't compare with a dragon's teeth…)

Changing a form's Body can cause a gain in wound boxes, but any other increase in wound boxes or Armor has to be bought with the appropriate Miracles. If you took damage in your altered form, you may change back with the same injuries. Extra wound boxes from Body disappear at the end of a transformation, regardless of whether they're wounded or not.

> ***Example:*** Ryuichi the dragon has an extra wound box on every limb because of his increased Body stat. In dragon form, he takes one point of killing damage to his arm, leaving five unmarked boxes. When he changes back to human shape, he still has five unmarked boxes on that arm: The injured extra box went away when the increased Body did. If he took two points of killing damage to that arm, when he changed back he'd still have one point of damage to the arm.

Living forms you assume are extremely generic in their appearance. If you assume a human form other than your own, for instance, that form's appearance is bland to the point of being creepy. Everything about the form is simple and average-and it's always the same, no matter how many times you try to assume it. There are no signs of wear on the skin, no wrinkles, no distinctive features, it's almost as if the form was newly born despite its apparent age. This "generic" effect is highly noticeable to anyone looking at you. Somehow, you just look wrong.

Animal forms assumed also suffer from this effect, but it is much less noticeable to anyone not experienced with that type of animal-especially if that animal is exotic. For instance, if you assumed the form of a lion, a normal Joe might not be able to tell the difference; but an experienced Safari guide would.

Creatures wholly conjured out of the imagination (even those based on real creatures) just look plain fake, like a sculpture come to life. This doesn't make them any less deadly, however.

Power Stunts

Metamorph: Add your Metamorph dice to your Transform score when you make your roll to change shape; you may customize the generic appearance of your form with a number of features, that you determine at that moment, equal to the width of the roll. This trick costs an additional Will point on top of any others you have to expend, and don't expect to duplicate the effects of the Dead Ringer Miracle, as your customization isn't that precise.

Extras

Light Armor (+1/+2/+4) [2 points per rank]: For each rank you take, you gain a point of Light Armor for your Transformed forms. Any sort of Penetrating weapon will pierce your Light Armor completely, unfortunately.

Resiliency (+2/+4/+8) [1 point per rank]: For each rank of Resiliency you have, you can ignore 1 point of killing damage taken in a Transformed state, *for the purposes of reverting to human form only.* You still take the damage; Resiliency only means you can continue to concentrate on your form past the pain of the injury.

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Sense While Transformed (+1/+2/+4 for each sense): With this Extra, you can use your human-level senses normally, regardless of what form you've assumed. Become a rock? You can hear or see (or whatever) normally, whether or not you have sense organs.

Flaws

Limited to Animate or Inanimate Forms (-1/-2/-4): You can only transform into animate or inanimate forms, you choose which at character creation. So you can either become animate things with abilities, or inanimate objects that sit around a lot.

Limited by Species (-1/-2/-4): You can only become one species of animal; if you can only change into cats, then that's it… though you could change as easily into a tiger as a housecat.

Limited by Type (-1/-1/-4): You can only become one kind of inanimate object (when you assume those forms). So you can become any kind of furniture, any kind of rock (this includes statues!) and so on.

Transmutation

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Transmutation Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can alter the atomic structure of objects, changing one type of substance into another. This power does not allow you to change the form of the target, only the substance it is made of. The target can be transformed into only one type of substance. With this power, you could turn a gun into acid, or a tank into gelatin, or Hitler into stone.

Concentrate for one round and succeed in a dynamic contest against your target (who gets to resist based on weight and what you want to transmute the target into, see tables below), and poof, it's transmuted into that new substance.

So, you're asking, why don't Talents who have this power make lead into gold and retire? Well here's the catch: Talents automatically know when a substance has been transmuted by another Talent. They can see it plainly, and for the cost of 1 Will point, they can make it automatically revert to its former state, no roll necessary.

Note: Living targets are killed instantly when transmuted into another substance, and they remain dead when the effect of the power is removed.

Transmutation Table: Size of Target

# of Dice	Weight Affected
1d	<100–210 pounds
2d	210–250 pounds
3d	250–370 pounds
4d	370–500 pounds
5d	500–800 pounds
6d	800 pounds–1 ton
7d	1–2 tons
8d	2–4 tons
9d	4–6 tons
10d	6–10 tons

Transmutation Table: Difficulty of Target

Rating	Example
Easy (2)	Substances are related (transmute a metal into another metal)
Medium (5)	Substances are similar (transmute water into hydraulic fluid)
Hard (8)	Substances are dissimilar (transmute a person into salt)

Example: Luis wants to Transmute a Nazi into a stone statue. Luis has Transmutation at 6d. The Nazi weighs 220 lbs, so he defends at 2d. The GM decides that the Transmutation Luis is attempting is Hard (flesh into stone), so Luis has a Difficulty rating of 8. Luis rolls 9,9, 8, 8, 6, and 2. The Guard rolls a 10 and a 7. Poof! The Nazi is now a stone statue. However, if Luis had rolled 2x7, he would have failed because his Difficulty number was 8. Or, if the Guard had rolled 2x10, Luis would have failed as well because 2x10 is a higher set than 2x9.

Power Stunts

Result Specialist: Pick a specific material. When transforming other materials into that material, you can roll your Result Specialist dice. If (for instance) your special material is salt, you can add your dice when trying to turn people, tanks or water into salt.

Target Specialist: Pick one particular substance. You can add your Target Specialist dice when you're attempting to turn that material into something else. If you picked "steel" as your specialty, you'd get your dice when trying to turn steel into grape jam or into air or whatever.

Note: These two specialist types do not stack. You use the higher stunt. If a character has three dice in Target Specialist (Flesh) and two dice in Result Specialist (Gasoline), he can only add three dice when trying to turn someone's flesh into gasoline.

Permanent Transmutation

By the very nature of the Talent phenomenon, the permanent Transmutation of materials is not possible. An Extra that allows a material to become permanent and immune to the Will effects of other Talents cannot be purchased.

It is strongly recommended that this rule be strictly adhered to; otherwise, a smart Talent with this power will just make a ton of gold, and get the hell out of the war, permanently.

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Extras

Selective Transmutation (+2/+4/+8): You can transmute less than one object with this Extra. Want to turn the tires of a truck to ash without affecting the truck itself? No problem. (Usually the GM will set a Difficulty number to "hit" the targeted zone).

Flaws

King Midas (-2/-4/-8): You can only transmute objects into one type of material, be it hydrogen peroxide, sand or even plastic. Instead of reducing the cost of the power, this Flaw removes the Difficulty rating. You still must roll against the target's size, however.

Limited Target (-2/-4/-8): You can only transmute objects of one type—for instance, you can change steel into gold or gasoline, but you can't change any other substance. Instead of reducing the cost of the power, this Flaw removes the Difficulty rating. You still must roll against the target's size, however. If you already have the King Midas Flaw, this does reduce the dice cost of Transmutation by (-1/-2/-4).

Zed

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust.

Zed Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	4
Each Hard Die	8
Each Wiggle Die	16

Your power is a peculiar one. It seeks out other Talent powers and cancels their effect on the environment out by counteracting them. It does not stop the power from happening; instead, it detects what the power is doing to the environment (the flight power propelling you through the air, the Body Hyperstat allowing you to lift a truck, *etc)*. and counters that effect, so that the Talent power is cancelled out. The Talent's power is still working; the Zed force simply cancels it out without invoking a Contest of Wills.

(Zed is the British pronunciation of "z," the first letter of "zero," as in "zero Talent power.")

Psychic, non-physical, non-visible, and self-affecting powers are not affected by Zed, so mental illusions and other effects remain even when Zed is in use. All physical effects of Talents are counteracted to a lesser or greater degree, depending on the success of the roll.

After the first time you see a Talent use his powers, you can attempt to "Zed" him. Roll your Zed dice pool, and gobble the number of dice from the Talent's power set. Cancel out enough of his matches so he doesn't have a success, and you cancel out his power.

> ***Example:*** Klaus wants to stop a Teleporter whom he has seen teleport before, with his Zed ability of 6d. The Teleporter has a power of 6d, and rolls a 4, 4, 7, 2, 6 and a 2. Klaus rolls a 6, 5, 6, 4, 6 and a 4. He can gobble 3 dice of 6 or less from the teleporter's set. He gobbles a 4 and a 2, negating all matches and the use of the teleporter's power.

Power Stunts

Specific Power: You are particularly gifted in canceling out a specific power (you pick). When you come up against a Talent employing the Specific Power, add your dice to your Zed pool for canceling that power.

Extra

Radius (+3/+6/+12) [3 points per rank]: The power's effect radiates outwards from you (and only you), affecting its targets within the radius established.

Radius Table: Maximum Distance

Rank	Maximum Distance
1	1 yard
2	5 yards
3	10 yards
4	50 yards
5	100 yards
6	250 yards
7	500 yards
8	1,000 yards
9	1 mile
10	10 miles

Flaws

No Go (-1/-2/-4): There are certain powers your Zed just won't work against. You don't know why. You can take this Flaw multiple times. (You can only choose general powers for No Go, such as Harm or suchlike. You can't choose *extremely* specific Talents, such as "Transmuters who turn people to Stone." As usual, consult with your GM).

Cafeteria Power Sets

These pre-made sets of powers (all geared for 25 Will point characters) are presented here to give you an idea of the flexibility of the *Godlike* system. If you need, it can even give you a jump-start in making a quick character, just in case something uh . . . untoward happens to your old one.

The Blaster (25 points)

This is the classic super-human blaster set. With his energy blast, he can fry even the most resilient human, leaving behind only a smoking stain on the carpet.

Harm: Energy Blast (Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 5/10/20).

3hd (Flaws: Graphic -1/-2/-4, Nervous Habit [Must Point at Target] -1/-2/-4, Expensive -1/-2/-4; Side Effect: Target dies from burns, not from head-hit; 12 points).

Damage: 3 killing and 3 shock to hit location 10.

13 Extra Points of Base Will.

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The Brain (25 points)

This is the classic super-human brainiac set with a little bit of super-science ability thrown in on the side. He can build things that break physical laws and shouldn't really work, but . . . uh . . . just don't ask him to explain why they work, or you could be there awhile.

Hyperstat

Brains (2/5/10)
4d (8 points).
Note: Add this to your base Brains score.
Goldberg Science (Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 5/10/20)
2hd (Flaw: Strenuous -2/-4/-8; 12 points).
Maximum Number of Simultaneous Devices: 2
5 Extra Points of Base Will.

The Bruiser (25 points)

Urgh, smash! In close combat, he's more likely to throw staff cars around than hand grenades. But look out; he doesn't know his own strength . . .

Hyperstat

Body (2/5/10)
7d+1hd (19 points).
Note: Add this to your base Body score.
Maximum Lift: (depends on total).
6 Extra Points of Base Will.

The Flyer (25 points)

This is the classic super-human flyer set.
Flight (Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 4/8/16)
5d (20 points)
5 Extra Points of Base Will.

The Sneak (25 points)

This is the classic super-human sneak set. Skulking around in the shadows, his Fade power keeps him unobserved, and his Dead Ringer power lets him get into the most secure locations.
Dead Ringer (Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 3/6/12)
2hd (Flaw: Slow Change 1, -1/-2/-4; 8 points).
Fade (Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 3/6/12)
2hd (12 points).
5 Extra Points of Base Will.

The Traveler (25 points)

This is the classic super-human traveler set. It's hard to keep tabs on him since he's popping in and out all over the place, and boy, is he ever hard to hit!
Teleportation (Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 5/10/20)
5d (25 points).
Base Teleport Range: 100 miles
Base Teleport Capacity: 50 lbs.

Will

The powers exhibited by Talents are all variations of the same power: The power to impose your beliefs on the physical world. It's a combination of belief and hope that allows Talents to use their abilities; to model this, we have the Will stat.

Unlike your other stats, Will goes up and down all the time. Depending on circumstances, your character's ability to believe in his powers may be strong or weak, and the rise and fall of Will reflects that. Generally speaking, the better he does, the stronger he becomes. Defeats and setbacks weaken his Will and, consequently, his powers.

You start out with a Base Will score equal to Command + Cool. (Will depends, after all, on your perceived ability to control your surroundings and your ability to control yourself). Normal humans only have a Base Will statistic; they do not have, like Talents, a Will stat that fluctuates up or down—Talents have both.

When you design your Talent character, you can turn leftover Will points into Base Will at a one-for-one exchange rate. (During play, the cost to raise Base Will gets a lot higher). Base Will is fairly stable, and does not generally change during the course of play. Base Will is your default Will when you're not swollen with self-confidence or crushed by loss. If you lose all your Will, it will gradually rise back up to the Base Will levels, provided you are not under constant adverse conditions (Unfortunately, war can have a lot of those).

The general Will trait is more important and less stable. You'll see a track on your character sheet for following its rise and fall. (In my games, the players use pennies; this may not be feasible with higher-powered settings than the ***Godlike*** default). Will is used in two ways: You can risk it, or you can spend it. If you spend it, it's gone - Spend 3 Will,

Alternate Sources of Will

If you wish, during character generation you may tie your Will to a particular skill or stat, rather than your Talent powers. If you choose to do this, you can't change it, ever, and you do not gain Will from naturally rolled 10s while using Talent powers. However, every time you naturally roll Height 10 while successfully using that skill or stat, your Will increases by 1.

This is a nice (and important) option for Talents whose Miracles are all Hard Dice or and who (consequently) never have a chance to gain more Will by rolling natural 10s. But other players may opt to tie Will to a skill or stat for character reasons. For example, a character that sees himself as a tough survivor might choose to gain Will from natural 10s on successful Mental Stability rolls. Another who sees himself as a real leader might gain Will from natural 10s on Leadership rolls. Understand that stats are rolled much more frequently than skills: From a strictly mechanical viewpoint, you're better off associating it with a stat. But if you opt to put it on a skill, feel free.

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your Will rating (the points, not your Base Will) drops by 3. If you risk it, it means there's a chance you could lose it; or a chance you could keep it - or, for that matter, a chance you could increase it.

What Will is Good For

- You can't use any of your Talent powers—Hyperstats, Hyperskills, or Miracles - if you have no Will points.
- You can spend a point of Will to defend yourself if another Talent is trying to attack you directly with his power (and you know that he's there). He can in turn spend a point of Will to buy off the Will you just spent. This turns into an auction pretty quickly; see *When Wills Collide* below for more details.
- Whenever you use any Talent ability, you must risk a point of Will (See *Gaining Will* and *Losing Will*, below). If you succeed at activating the power, you do not lose that Will point; if you fail, that Will point is lost.
- You can use Will for character advancement (see **Part Two: Game Mechanics**, *Character Advancement* on p. 27).

Gaining Will

Your Will rating increases by 1 point whenever one of the following occurs.

- You roll Height 10 while successfully using one of your Talent powers. Hard and Wiggle Dice do not count for this: It must be a naturally rolled 10 (this may seem unfair to those with hard or Wiggle Dice, but since they succeed so much more often when they attempt an action, they tend to make Will points back in other ways).
- You defeat another Talent in a Contest of Wills (see *When Wills Collide*, below). You'll almost certainly have a net Will loss even if you win, but it's still a victory.
- You wake up after a good night's sleep and your current Will is less than your Base Will.
- You successfully take a significant military position, prisoner, enemy intelligence or the like (in other words, achieve a significant success, or contribute to one).
- At the GM's discretion, you may get a point of Will when you do something particularly spectacular and gratifying (if all the players cheer, you've probably made this one), or when you do something that really boosts your character's self-image or one of your character's motivations.

Your Will rating increases by multiple Will points whenever one of the following events occur:

- You subdue or kill another Talent in combat. If you do this, you gain his Command stat in Will points (Note that killing is not necessary for the reward; it's the breaking of the enemy's Will to fight that matters).
- Your power saves a person's life directly. If you do this, you gain that person's Command stat in Will points (Your GM may choose to double this reward in the event that you save a civilian un-involved in the combat).

Remember: your Will can never exceed 50 points (Unless your GM says so. See **Appendix A: Optional Rules** on p. 305 for details on raising Will point totals).

Losing Will

In addition to spending it, your Will rating decreases whenever one of the following things occurs.

- If you fail a Cool+Mental Stability roll, you lose half your Will.
- If a personal tragedy occurs in your life (i.e. a "Dear John" letter from your fiancé , a notice that your mother has died, or a buddy gets killed in combat), you lose half your Will.
- If you fail to activate a Talent power, you lose a point of Will.
- If you attempt and fail to save someone with your power, you lose their Command score in Will points.
- If you are subdued in combat by another Talent or enemy, you lose half your Will.

Battle Fatigue

When do you roll a test of Cool+Mental Stability for a character? Good question. You roll Cool+Mental Stability whenever a character is:

- A witness to a terrible event.
- Under attack by a tank, flamethrower or other heavy weapon.
- In imminent danger of death.
- Under a large amount of personal stress.

Otherwise, it remains up to the GM to decide just what constitutes the necessity of a Cool+Mental Stability roll.

What happens when you fail a Cool + Mental Stability roll, anyhow? A number of things—none of them pleasant.

Immediate Result

First off, there's the immediate result of a failed Cool+Mental Stability roll: Your character loses control.

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You, as the player, have three choices here:

1) The character can immediately flee the scene at top speed using every means at his disposal, losing half his Will (and he can't fight anyone who tries to stop him).
2) He can curl up in a ball, losing half his Will, (rendering him incapable of offensive action).
3) Or he can hold his ground and fight on, losing *all* his Will (and the use of his Talent powers).

When you fail, it's up to you whether your character flees, curls up on the ground bawling, or holds his ground but loses his mental stability.

Regardless of which response you pick for your character, it either lasts fifteen minutes, or until the maddening stimulus is removed. (Or until your character dies, of course).

Long-Term Effects

The long-term effects of a single distressing incident depend on your current mental state, which can be represented by a whole lot of different character elements. The foremost of these is Will. Since Talents are those people who can (for whatever reason) mold reality with just the force of their belief, Will can serve as a sort of buffer between them and madness. (After all, the denial of a man who can convince himself—and gravity—that he can fly is a lot stronger than the denial of a normal person). Thus, if you have any Will at all, the only effect is that you lose half of it (rounding up).

If you have no Will, you're really in the crapper. You're going to lose something, but what you lose is up to you. You must pick one of the following:

- Lose two experience points.
- Change any special die in a power to a normal die (i.e. a wiggle or hard die becomes a regular die). Or lose a die from a power (if you have no wiggle or Hard Dice in it).
- Lose two points of Base Will.
- Lose a point of Cool.
- Lose a point of Mental Stability.
- Pick out a permanent mental illness.

Losing Cool or Mental Stability is obviously bad, because that puts you on a slippery slope down to lost Will and pure madness. On the other hand, losing Base Will makes it a lot harder to recover from fights with other Talents. Permanent mental illnesses are no picnic though. But at least you get to choose, right?

Those same unhappy effects apply to a non-Talent—an ordinary person who has no Will points—in cases where a Talent would lose all his Will points, such as fighting on despite a Mental Stability failure.

Permanent Mental Illnesses

Catatonia

Catatonia happens when the world just becomes too much to bear. Inside your own mind, you're happy, and that's where you're going to stay, because the outside world scares you to death. While in this inner void, your character is incapable of action (sometimes even the most basic actions like eating and urination are beyond you), and cannot be communicated with.

When and if your character comes out of this fugue, remains up to the GM to decide.

Depression

Periodically, your character gets tired. Very, very, tired. He could sleep twelve hours a day and still feel groggy, disconnected and out of touch. If your GM decides you've been overdoing it a bit (like, say, fighting a war or something), he may ask you for a special Cool + Mental Stability roll, even without a concrete triggering event. If you fail it, you don't have the freeze/flee and sacrifice results detailed above, but you do become depressed for several days. During that time, your Will drops to your Base Will level and can never rise above that level.

Insomnia

Insomniacs have trouble sleeping. Sometimes they have nightmares that jerk them awake before they can truly rest. Sometimes they just can't sleep at all, no matter how tired they are, as their mind runs in circles, unable to slow down. Regardless, any time your character is not in a completely soothing environment, a Cool+Mental Stability roll must be made to get sleep. (Remember that a good night's sleep is a prerequisite for regaining Will and for healing damage). If you fail to sleep, guess what? That's right, you don't gain any Will points back and you don't heal.

Manic-Depressive Disorder

Your character alternates from upbeat recklessness, to a sad sack low mood on a regular cycle. When he's manic, he takes risks he shouldn't, and endangers his buddies (any experience earned while he's manic is halved), and when he's depressed, he loses a die out of all dice pools. He can make a Cool+Mental Stability roll (if he's got any of the latter left) to pull out of his mania or deep funk for width in combat rounds (or out of combat, minutes).

Phobia

Your character is petrified with fright by something, probably something that was present when he failed the roll. (Rifles? Fire? Loud noises? Blood?) Whenever he's around that special something, he has trouble concentrating and, consequently, loses a die out of every dice pool. (Hard dice and Wiggle Dice are removed first).

Schizophrenia

This does not mean multiple personalities, as is commonly believed; (that's a different disorder entirely) instead, it represents a disconnection from the outside world that your character begins to feel. Usually this disconnection grows over time, and is punctuated by vivid fantasies of persecution and the hearing of phantom voices that goad and threaten you. Sometimes, even visions are seen. This disease is usually chemical in nature (though very little of this was understood in the 1940s) but sometimes, it's just a curable mental illness. Whether or not you recover from

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schizophrenia is a matter up to the GM to decide.

When this disconnection is complete, you are a raving lunatic, incapable of coherent communication with anybody, and if you have a Talent power, this complete disconnection makes your powers grow, and become invulnerable to the interference of other Talents. While this might sound great at first, keep in mind that as a schizophrenic you have no clear conception of the outside world . . . (In other words, hand over your character sheet to your GM. You can't cooperate with others, much less communicate with them, when you're stark raving mad).

Shell Shock

You just can't handle combat anymore. A door slamming is enough to send you into hysterics, and you will do anything, anything to stay away from the front line. Being there, among the dead and the dying, with the bullets whipping by and the shells crashing down is enough to drain you of all your Will, day after day, no matter how much you gain. It's either that, or hightail it out of there and probably face a court martial.

When Wills Collide

Talents can use their Will to interfere with the use of enemy Talent powers. This is by no means a general ability however. Talent powers can be countered with Will under only three circumstances.

1) If the Talent knows the power is being directly used to cause mental or bodily harm to him.
2) The power being used has the "Interfere" Flaw (see *Interfere* on p. 53).
3) If a Talent is trying to affect a device created by a Goldberg Scientist (see *Goldberg Science* on p. 70) or an object created or altered by a Talent power (see *Create* on p. 63, or *Transmutation* on p. 90).

The second and third situations are straightforward, but that first one deserves a little more explanation. Any time someone else's Talent is going to affect you, make some deleterious change to your surroundings or otherwise directly interfere with your actions, you can spend Will to fight it. Examples follow.

An invisible man tries to hit you.
You cannot spend Will to make him visible. It's his action in hitting you that's the trouble, and that's not a Talent. By making himself invisible, he's only affecting himself.

A guy attacks you with his heat vision.
You can spend Will to interfere with his power.

An impossibly strong Talent tries to crush you in a bear hug.
You can spend Will to interfere with his strength - but if you succeed, he can still make his attack. He just doesn't use the extra dice, Hard Dice or Wiggle Dice given by his Hyperstat.

A really strong Talent throws a jeep at you.
You cannot interfere. His Talent affected the jeep, not you or your surroundings. Once he lets go of it, it's a physics problem—for you.

A Talent with inhuman coordination fires at you with a rifle.
You can spend Will to reduce his coordination to human levels as long as you know he's attacking you. It's maybe a little counterintuitive, but what his extreme coordination lets him do is aim at you exceptionally well, and it is that aiming that you resist. (Plus, if you couldn't spend Will to resist this, hyper-snipers would make this a very quick game indeed).

A Hypercoordinated Talent tries to dodge your punch.
You can't counter this, because his speed is (in this instance) affecting him and not you. If he tries to hit you, you *can* counter that use of it.

A Talent uses mind control on you.
You can counter this.

A Talent uses Hypercommand to force a Cool+Mental Stability check on you.
Hell yes, you can counter this.

Now that you know what and when you can counter, it's time to learn how: During the declaration phase of combat, if you want to counter a Talent ability (and are able to), you simply spend a point of Will. The Will that the other Talent is gambling gets lost: You're both down one point. However, the other Talent can spend another point of Will to counter your counter (thus starting over). You can then counter that again, and so on. If you choose to withdraw from the contest, you're out a point and he's out two points (but he gets one back because he defeated you in the contest). Basically, it's an auction (or maybe more like a game of chicken -who's going to cave in first?)

If the auction goes to the person using the Talent, he still has to make a roll. It's perfectly possible to spend a lot of Will on an attack, win the auction, and screw up when rolling the dice.

This does put Talents into a rather ugly position. Using Will to counter the Will of an attacker leaves less fuel for their own abilities. On the other hand, being hit is no picnic either, unless you have some sort of defensive power.

Hoarding great stores of Will so that you can simply outspend an enemy is a valid tactic. The only problem is that if you're hoarding it, you can't use it for self-improvement; then there's always the risk of losing half of it due to some unforeseen traumatic event.

Is there a simple way around this conundrum that allows you to have a lot of Will and rapidly improve your powers? I sure as hell hope not, because those hard decisions are supposed to be part of the game.

Oh, and I almost forgot, there's a catch to this whole Talent Will bidding system. The catch is this: a surprise attack made with a Talent ability, even if it is affecting a targeted Talent directly, *cannot* be countered by a Contest of Wills. It just happens; no Will defense by the subject of the attack can be made. This is why so many Talents die in the war.

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Will Points in Game Play

How many Will points does an average Talent have? Depending on the power level of your campaign, the Will points of an average Talent may vary from as low as 5 to as many as 100 or more. The maximum Will points a Talent can possess in the default setting for *Godlike is* 50 Will points, but you can alter this as you please. The power-level remains, for the most part, up to you and the kind of game you want to play.

The amount of Will points an average Talent has hinges on the amount of action, penalty and reward the PCs are exposed to, a variable that relates directly to the theme of the campaign (see *Themes* on p. 283). In a high-powered campaign the PCs likely have high Will point totals and in a realistic campaign they likely have low Will point totals.

High Will point totals will lead to soaring risks when Wills collide. Feinting tactics will often be used, leaving one party crushed and the other victorious very quickly. It will also lead much less often to the loss of Talent powers (due to the comparative rarity of 0 Will points occurring).

Low Will point totals will lead to conservative risks, with more bluffing (risking all but the last Will point or two in an attempt to make the other Talent withdraw). Loss of Talent powers will occur often due to 0 Will point totals coming up all the time.

Why Will?

If you just want to play a straight superhero game and discard the concept of the contest of wills, feel free. The Will concept in *Godlike* is there to keep the well, "godlike" powers of Talents from getting out of control and rewriting history completely.

Keep in mind that changing Will as a dynamic statistic to something as simple as fuel for paranormal powers will allow the players a huge leeway in the use of their abilities against one another, and will make wild, possibly world affecting combats much more likely (but of course, if this is what you're looking for, then no problem right?)

Also, since Base Will is not an important consideration with this game modification, it will give the players more points to spend on their abilities during character creation.

Using Talents in the Game

Using Talent abilities is as easy as concentrating for a moment. In game terms, to activate a Talent, a character must pause, concentrate one combat round, and make a successful roll on his power dice pool. On a match, the power manifests, on a failure, nothing happens and they lose 1 Will point.

Some powers are always active, and require no such roll to activate. Defensive abilities such as Heavy Armor and others are simply always on, to protect the operator from harm. Bear in mind that any power that normally requires an activation roll can be made automatic, simply by purchasing the Always On Extra for it.

Other powers are fickle, and are activated only by the operator's subconscious. In this case, the power is activated and deactivated at the whim of the GM.

Miracle Power Ranges

Most Miracle powers listed (unless otherwise noted) work within sight range of the operator. Anything that can be seen can be affected by the power, unless that some sort of Flaw limits the power, or the object affected is too large for the power to overcome. Other Talents (such as transportation powers or other self-affecting powers such as Heavy Armor or passive psychic abilities) work only on or directly around the operator.

Hyperskills and Hyperstats only work on the operator, of course (unless they are modified with some sort of Extra).

Some Talent powers have no limit to range. If a Talent ability has an effective range beyond sight range, it is usually listed under the description of the power and costs more Will points.

Talents, Concentration, and Damage

It's difficult to concentrate while bullets rip through your flesh, and most Talent powers require concentration to work. Since Talents seem to be shot so much, it's important to cover this eventuality.

First off, someone who's rolling to activate a Talent loses a die out of a match if he is hit in combat. This is the combat standard rule—get hit, lose a die out of your highest match (wiggle and Hard Dice are removed first).

If a power is always active, it still may fail if the Talent is injured. If a Talent is using a power that doesn't require a roll and he is hit, he does have to roll the relevant pool. If the roll fails, the Talent shuts down until a successful roll is made.

> ***Example:*** Skip is flying along with his Flight Miracle of 5d when he is hit by a machine gun burst from a tank on the ground. He rolls his pool to try to stay aloft, but with 1,5,6,8 and 9, he gets no matches and begins to fall. The GM rules that there's another round before he impacts, but that the attacker gets another shot at him. Both Skip and his attacker roll. This time Skip gets a 2x2 match, but the gunner gets a 3x5 hit. Not only is this sufficient to blow off Skip's right arm, it also knocks a die out of his match, making his Flight power fail. He plummets.

Talent Side Effects

Some Talent powers just naturally have side effects which may not directly affect game play, but which are very noticeable to those witnessing their use. For example, a Talent who flies may project a beam of light from his legs as he jets through the air, or a Talent who hurls balls of fire may have hands that burn while he is preparing to attack. These are not really significant enough to add cost to the Will point total of the power, though they may prove useful under certain limited circumstances. Some Talents have no side effects to their powers at all.

The Talent with flaming hands may be able to light a fire with his fingers, or the flying Talent may be able to illuminate an area with his contrail. Imaginative players may come up with dozens of ways to use their side effects in a productive manner, but the GM can come up with even more ways to make those side effects deadly. Flying with a

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glowing contrail at night is guaranteed to bring on an anti-aircraft gun attack, and walking around with burning hands in a building may just set off the fire alarm . . .

Choose your side effects carefully; they're free and they may be useful, but they might just come back to haunt you in the end.

Talent Detection

All Talents possess the ability to detect other Talents whose powers are active. This knowledge is two-way, since the Talent noticing the "signature" of a power is using a Talent ability to do so. Both the user and the detector immediately *know* the other is a Talent, but only if one activates a power first in plain sight. If both Talents have no powers active at the moment they see each other, or if one Talent is using a power to obscure himself, they remain anonymous and invisible to one another.

Some Talent powers are active all the time, and are therefore visible all the time. Others can be switched on and off, or can be hidden. Generally speaking, Hyperstats and defensive Miracles (such as Heavy Armor) are always on, and therefore always visible; Hyperskills and Miracles are not (such as a Hyperskill in Archery, or the ability to breathe fire), and are only visible when used.

Transformation powers such as Alternate Form, Dead Ringer, and Transform are like beacons for Talent sight. No matter the form assumed, Talents in the area can automatically tell the subject is a Talent. A Goldberg Scientist's devices, and items transmuted or created by Talents, are also clearly visible as such to all Talents present.

On the other hand, obfuscation powers such as Fade, Invisibility and Projected Hallucination can obscure Talent sight. Once the Talent is seen clearly (or if they are seen as they activate their powers) their signature can be sensed by any Talent present. It's not enough to target, but the Talents will be aware that someone unseen is present. This is often enough to keep a power active and handy, just in case.

Some Talents describe this "signature" as a visible aura around the target, others as a low tone in the back of their skull. Like describing a smell, a definitive definition for Talent sight is not easy.

In game terms, no roll is required to spot another Talent whose power is active, it just happens.

Talent Targeting

This is the foreknowledge that all Talents have when they are being directly targeted by another Talent's power. The major limitation to this ability is that it does not work against surprise attacks, but otherwise, if the target of a power is the Talent, he or she knows a split-second before that a paranormal attack is coming. Most Talents describe it like a high-pitched whining in their mind. What does this foreknowledge mean in game terms?

During the declaration phase of combat, if a Talent is being targeted by another Talent's power (and he knows he's under attack), he can choose to counter that attack with a Contest of Wills before that attack is rolled; or he can take his chances and let the attack through his mental defenses. A Contest of Wills does not require the Talents in question to stop in their actions. Both participants can fight and move normally; until one of them gets fried, that is.

Defensive Powers In Talent vs. Talent Combat

What happens if another Talent attacks you, you lose the contest of wills, but you have some sort of Talent ability that protects you against harm like Heavy Armor? Does your defensive power stop the Talent attack?

In a Talent against Talent clash, defensive powers *do* work against other Talent abilities, as long as the attack fits within the defense's parameters. For example, if you had a shield power against ice attacks, and an enemy Talent fried you with lightning bolts, your power would obviously not defend against it.

Keep in mind though that in Will against Will contests, one Talent is often left without enough Will to fuel his or her powers at all. When your Will=0, none of your Talent powers work, not even armor and other defensive powers.

Also, keep in mind that unless the defense has the Always On Extra, surprise attacks cause normal damage and cannot be defended against.

Using Powers Defensively

Sometimes even powers that aren't usually used to defend, such as Harm or Invisibility can be used defensively. To be able to use a power this way, it must have the "Defends" quality; without it, no defense is possible with that particular power.

When a power is used in this way, the dice rolled in the power's dice pool are read a little differently, with a dice mechanic called "gobbling." This is not a new dice type, such as Wiggle or Hard Dice, but a different way of working out the outcome of a dynamic contest between a defending power and an incoming attack.

A Talent power can be used in a defensive manner if the following circumstances are met:

1) You know you are under attack: Your power may not be used to defend against attacks you don't know are coming,

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unless that power is a defensive power with the Always On Extra.

> ***Example:*** Chuck, a telekinetic, is skulking around when he is shot in the back by a sentry. He cannot use his telekinetic power to defend against this attack, since he didn't know it was coming.

2) You can see the Attacker: The defense is no good if you don't know the exact distance and direction of your attacker, unless that power is a defensive power with the Always On Extra.

> ***Example:*** Chuck's squad is under assault by an enemy sniper in a distant bell tower. Try as he might Chuck cannot see the sniper, so he cannot defend against this attack with his power.

3) You are not defending against another Talent power: Direct assault by Talent powers may not be defended against by other non-defensive Talent powers, instead a Contest of Wills between the two Talents must be resolved (see *When Wills Collide* on p. 95). Indirect assault can be defended against, however. For example, if a Talent bruiser threw a truck at you, you could defend against the truck itself. If someone shot you with their death beams, that would be a Contest of Wills situation.

The exception to this rule is defensive Talent powers such as Heavy Armor or Immunity. These defensive powers *can* and *do* block relevant Talent attacks normally.

> ***Example:*** Chuck is under attack by an enemy Talent. The Talent tries to fry Chuck with lightning bolts from his hands. Chuck cannot defend against this attack with his power; instead, he may defend against this attack with a Contest of Wills.
>
> If however, the enemy Talent had used the lightning bolts to ignite gasoline drums near him, Chuck could have used his power to contain the explosion.

4) The weapon which is being used to attack you does not have a Penetration rating higher than your total power dice pool: Your power cannot defend against weapons with a higher Penetration rating than your power dice pool. If a weapon with a higher Penetration rating than your dice pool is fired at you, your defense automatically fails.

> ***Example:*** Chuck sees an enemy trooper with a *Panzerfaust* aiming at him and his men. Chuck braces and attempts to defend with his TK power. His TK power dice pool is 5d, and the Penetration rating of the *Panzerfaust* is 7. Since 7 is greater than 5 (the total number of dice in Chuck's TK pool) the *Panzerfaust* will automatically breach any defense Chuck tries to raise.

If the above conditions can be met and the power can be used defensively, you can use your power dice pool to gobble up dice from the opposing attacker's set, hopefully negating the attack. This works just like dodging. See **Part Two: Game Mechanics**, *Dodging* on p. 18 for more details.

> ***Example:*** Chuck has 5d in Telekinesis and a Nazi with a rifle attacks him. He wants to defend against the incoming bullet. The attacker rolls 4d and gets a 2x5 hit. Chuck rolls his Telekinesis in a defensive capacity and gets a 2x6 success. This means he can remove 2 dice from his attacker's dice pool (the width of his roll) and that those dice he removes can be of no number higher than 6 (the height of his roll). Chuck removes the two 5s from his attacker's set, foiling his attack and effectively stopping or deflecting the bullets in flight with his TK.

Hard Dice and Wiggle Dice are used normally in gobbling.

> ***Example:*** Marcus has 2d+1hd+1wd in Energy Blast and a Nazi with a machine gun attacks him. The attacker rolls 5d (his skill) + 5d (for the machine gun's Spray value) and gets two sets, a 3x8 and a 4x7. Marcus wants to vaporize the bullets in the air with his energy blast, so he rolls his normal dice pool and gets a 7 and a 2. His hard die does not match, but he can make his wiggle die match it, giving him 2x10.
>
> Unfortunately, it doesn't matter. Since the attacker's sets are wider than Marcus', he is hit by both the 3x8 set and the 4x7.

The biggest advantage to defensive gobbling is its utility against multiple opponents or multiple attacks.

> ***Example:*** Margot is jumped by two Luger-wielding assassins and decides to use her inhuman speed to dodge the bullets. Both attackers rolled successes—a 2x5 and a 2x7 respectively. Margot rolls her defensive pool and gets a 2x8. All the moves are of equal width, so height serves as a timing tiebreaker. Margo has two dice to gobble with, so she can counteract one 5 out of the first pair and one 7 out of the second. Both sets are ruined and neither attacker hits.

Hyperstats and Hyperskills can defend as gobble dice in the same manner, if the situation seems appropriate. For instance, trying to defend with a Hyperstat in Sense against a bullet attack is foolish (you may see the bullet quicker, but you can't move quicker), while trying to defend with a Hyperstat in Coordination for the same attack makes sense (you are super-humanly swift and can maybe sidestep the shot, if you know it's coming).

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"WHAT WENT WRONG?" the Captain asked me and all I could do was look at him, and over his shoulder, to the beach.

D-Day+1 was a beautiful sight, for those who lived to see it. The beach had been policed of the dead and the bizarre by Talent teams just hours after it had been secured, so that when the second wave of normals hit it, they wouldn't get all screwy. They were out there now, normal troops gathered in clots, moving equipment up the beachhead, looking pale and scared. On other beaches, I knew, they had fought well; but here, the Talents had towed the line—at least the first few feet of it.

The mess that had been cleared off the beach was a mess only Talents could make. Four landing craft had been folded like paper sculptures, with their crews still in them, by some unknown German Talent. Sixteen men from G Company were buried alive in a crashing wave of sand on the beach. One poor guy was turned to glass. Others were disintegrated, transformed into gold, flattened like cardboard cutouts and shot into the sea like sling stones.

There were dogfights between fliers, telephone poles thrown like javelins, and tellermines flung like tiddlywinks. At one point, a wall of green flame swept past and engulfed a dozen men right next to me, leaving behind only a dry, hot wind of ashes.

Usually we could've defended ourselves against tricks like that. But we couldn't see most of them, and they controlled the beach. Those that waded out to meet us had covering fire from their compatriots. They had cover and we didn't. Those that were hidden could see us; we couldn't see them. They could do to us whatever they wanted, and they did.

Until our teleporters and fliers got to them.

Seventy-three *Übermenschen* were killed in the landing, along with innumerable regular *Wehrmacht* men. We took it quick, but it cost us. It wasn't even our beach to take. We came in all wrong, but we did what we did. We had no choice.

Of the three Talent companies that hit this portion of the beach, two hundred and eighty-nine men, twenty-six are accounted for. For some reason I can't determine, I was one of them.

The Captain looked at me again and repeated his question.

"We landed on the wrong beach." I said, my voice cracking. I didn't know what happened to the Ranger assault we were supposed to lead. I couldn't look him in the face. He knew the answer, I thought. Why did he even bother asking? I shook my head and then looked at my boots.

"Where's your gear?" he coughed, turning away.

"In the Channel," I said. He didn't want the details. Not facts like these—like how something huge, green, and slithery had dragged our landing craft down into the waves, along with half my squad. How O'Malley and Stantz had died within seconds, only three steps up the beach, gone in a rippling wave of blue light. That the Ape was cut in half by some invisible thing and died convulsing in his own blood, his innards spilled out of him like some colorful prize. That no one I knew except the Captain was still alive and standing on the beach. That the other Talents wandering the beach looked lost, shocked, stunned.

That I knew anything I touched from now on would have the stain of this event on it, forever.

I looked at the Talent Operations Group flag planted on the hill just above the place where the Ape died. It somehow seemed to fit the scene. It was shoved into a stack of sandbags and tilted to one side, marking the Company's CP, just above the heads of three German *Wehrmacht* soldiers who looked like they had been carefully sculpted out of immense charcoal briquettes. The flag's legend, the same one that sat on my shoulder, read: "WE GO FIRST." It flapped in the air, mocking the emptiness of the TOG command post.

I understand that legend now.

We go first because we're the best. We go first because we're different.

But most of all, we go first so a lot of us won't come back.

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> "There can be no doubt now, that the evil which has found a foothold in Nazi Germany has grown ripe, and spawned yet another monster."
>
> —Winston Spencer Churchill, upon hearing the news of the Nazi "Super-Man," June 8, 1936

A Note About the Background

The following background is meant to provide a vibrant campaign for your players to adventure in, and to remove the burden of creation from the GM's overloaded shoulders. It's not a textbook study of World War II. Instead, it's a look at the general battles, troop dispositions, and political alliances that rose and fell during the war, along with the impact parahuman Talents had on it.

The ideas provided may be used, abused, or completely ignored; this is up to the GM to decide. Be sure not to show this timeline to your players (although a brief history up to the point that game play begins may be prepared).

Many role-playing games focus on system, not setting. *Godlike* has been designed to provide an engaging setting, as well as a new and interesting system for role-playing superheroes. If you want a history lesson, read a history book. If you want to have fun, read this book.

Events marked with a bullet hole (○) are fictional, or are actual events modified because of the actions of parahumans.

The Major Players

The following organizations were formed during the war on both sides of the conflict to study, catalog and train parahuman Talents. They are listed below, but further details on their activities may be found in the timeline. They appear beneath along with a brief description, listed in order of appearance.

○ Nazi Germany: *RuSHA Sonderabteilung A*

RuSHA SA, or *Rasse und Siedlungs Hauptamt Sonderabteilung A* ("Race and Settlement Office, Special Department A"), handled all aspects of racial doctrine within the Third Reich. In 1936, with the arrival of *Der Flieger* (the first known parahuman), *Reichsführer* Heinrich Himmler, eager to produce as many super-men as possible, set about starting a special division within the *RuSHA* to find and train those with parahuman powers. Himmler was sure *Der Flieger* was the forerunner of the true Aryan bloodline, buried in the morass of mixed blood in Germany.

Special Department A began in Berlin in 1936, and grew rapidly, gaining budget and personnel as parahumans appeared throughout Germany. It handled all aspects of the Nazi parahuman program, and performed exhaustive examinations, tests and studies on them (these files were lost to the Soviets in 1945), cataloging nearly 11,000 cases of parahuman ability between 1936 and 1945.

These parahumans were permitted to impregnate hundreds of women in a desperate attempt to produce new parahumans as the war wore on. Of the nearly 2,500 pregnancies produced over a period of five years by this project, only one of these children ever developed parahuman abilities.

○ Great Britain: The Special Sciences Office (SSO)

Formed by the British High Command in great secrecy when the world learned of the Nazi Super-man, this small committee of top physical scientists and doctors were assembled to unravel the mystery of *Der Flieger's* abilities. Based in Hedge Manor at Essex, outside of London, this small group worked diligently during the war years to understand parahuman abilities; and later, to catalog and test their limits.

With the discovery of the first Allied Talent, (*Pevnost* in 1938) the SSO gained new funding and was able to test a parahuman directly, for the first time. From that point on, the SSO staff headed studies of parahuman actions, abilities or motivations for Military Intelligence.

Bodies of dead parahumans were especially sought after for autopsy, to uncover any biological secrets they might hold. All parahumans killed in action (if possible) were remanded to the SSO. The first autopsy of a parahuman, the Ethiopian *Zindel* (whose body was smuggled out of his home country under great secrecy), was a disappointment when no physical anomalies could be found. Later, physical testing was abandoned when it was determined "Talents" were no different (as far as science could determine) than regular humans. Instead, psychological testing became the focus of the SSO.

In 1941, the SSO shared its findings and files with the newly formed American organization Section Two, and thereafter a total exchange of information was forged between the two agencies.

During the war, the SSO located and trained more than 12,500 British Commonwealth Talents.

By the end of the war, the SSO was common knowledge among the populace of the Allied powers and became synonymous with the Talent phenomenon.

○ Soviet Union: Special Directive One

Formed in the summer of 1940 at the request of Stalin, this secret research project was to acquire parahuman test subjects through any means possible. At first, discreet searches were made in the Soviet Union for people who exhibited miraculous powers. As things became more pressing (and no test subjects were forthcoming), the project shifted to more experimental methods to achieve results. Lavrenti Beria, the leader of the project (as well as the leader of the NKVD, the Soviet secret police) set

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about methodically torturing political prisoners, hoping to "produce measurable parapsychological results."

Eventually, Beria perfected a sequence of torture and brainwashing (called "biological reeducation") that succeeded in producing parahumans reliably, but it proved flawed.

Their first success (and greatest failure), the parahuman nightmare called *Baba Yaga,* haunted the Soviets for years afterwards. Biological Reeducation worked, after a fashion. Unfortunately, those who *did* manifest powers often suffered from severe psychological disturbances. At the project's height, only about one thousand such parahumans were produced; but few were useful, as madmen are notoriously poor at following orders. After the beginning of the war with Nazi Germany, thousands of parahumans manifested on their own in the Soviet Union; consequently, the project was abandoned. Estimates by British Intelligence placed the Talent population of the Soviet Union at more than 75,000 at the height of the conflict, but these numbers were never confirmed.

Due to Stalin's madness and paranoia, many parahumans were purged to prevent their ascension to his supreme position. The smartest and best of the parahumans in the Soviet Union remained hidden; those that revealed their abilities soon found themselves on the front lines, in a gulag, or rotting in a lime pit.

United States of America: Section Two

Formed by President Roosevelt as a secret division of the Office of Scientific Research and Development in 1941, Section Two was to gather information on the Talent phenomenon with the aim of producing American parahumans. The most important secret project in America's scientific arsenal, Section One, was focused on producing the world's first atomic bomb. This gives a sense of Section Two's relative importance in the scheme of things.

Section Two enjoyed an extremely close relationship with the British Special Sciences Office, and had access to the British findings on the subject nearly from its inception. This allowed the program to come up to speed rapidly, despite America's lack of parahumans. With the advent of the first American parahumans in late 1941, Section Two set about constructing a program to locate and test likely candidates for parahuman abilities.

From the beginning, Section Two was concerned more with the psychological aspects of the parahuman condition than the physical. American scientists were sure that due to the bizarre nature of most Talents (and their strange immunity to physical laws), they were dealing with some sort of "mind over matter" situation.

By 1943, the SSO and Section Two were nearly indistinguishable, sharing all manner of personnel, files and Talents. This cooperation led to a significant advancement in the "how" of parahuman abilities, and gave the Allies an advantage over the Axis.

During the war, Section Two located and trained 15,600 parahumans in America, and honed its search of the ranks of the military for Talents down to an exacting science.

By the end of the war, despite its supposed secrecy, Section Two was a household name in America. Detractors of the program (including such significant players as Generals Patton and MacArthur) often referred to it as "Section Eight," the military designation for dismissal due to mental illness, because of the eccentricities evident in many parahumans.

The Empire of Japan: Unit 731

Unlike the other war powers, Japan never had a significant parahuman population; less than one hundred Japanese parahumans were discovered during the war. Unit 731, Japan's biological weapons division (headquartered in Harbin, Manchuria), developed and tested all types of methods to produce parahumans. It failed across the board, achieving no significant results. Japan seemed to create parahumans only by invading other countries or torturing foreigners; this was worse than useless, as the Talents thus made were uniformly hostile and unwilling to serve the Empire.

Burma, the Philippines, China, and Borneo all produced significant parahuman populations, the majority choosing to fight the Japanese occupation.

Near the height of their power, Japan did have a few significant Talent manifestations. Most died in the last months of the war, either defending the home islands or at their own hands.

Unit 731 was never really a significant threat to the Allied powers. Due to the shroud of extreme secrecy that surrounded it, the true extent of its activities was never clearly discerned by the Allies until after the war.

The Dawn of the Super-Age

The so-called "Super-Age" began in 1936, with the appearance of the first recognized parahuman in Nazi Germany. Where this age ends, or if it does at all, is up to you and your players. Note that the following section only

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notes the actions of Talents within the backdrop of a slightly altered World War II. See **Part Six: Now and Then** for more details on life in the 1940s in the world of *Godlike*.

June 8, 1936

The Coming of the *Übermensch*

The first reports of the *Übermensch* ("Super-man") began to leak out of Nazi Germany on the eve of the 1936 summer Olympics in Berlin. Rumors of a strange figure seen flying over the capital without the aid of an aircraft and thunderous booms heard in the air were first dismissed as mass hysteria. At the opening of the Berlin games however, the world was shocked to find this mysterious flying man was absolutely real.

The mysterious *Der Flieger* ("The Airman") opened the 1936 Olympics. After circling the stadium three times, floating in the air as easily as a bird, the Super-man landed and lit the torch, beginning the 1936 Olympic games- and the era of parahumanity.

Hitler, who refused to comment on the rumors, was unusually retiring when interviewed about the mysterious figure before the games. Later, he even seemed to take the victory of American Jesse Owens (who won four gold medals in track and field events) with good humor; it was obvious his mind was elsewhere.

Der Flieger wore a simple black flying suit emblazoned with a large swastika on his right breast and *SS* insignia on his collar. He stood imperiously next to Hitler during his opening speech for the games. The chancellor had this to say of the parahuman:

"So it has come to pass. Germany has shown the world that only through purity of blood, strength of deed and fortitude of spirit can man strive to become one with the gods."

Hitler referred to the mysterious man only as the *Der Flieger* and claimed the super-man's appearance foretold the coming fruit of an ongoing Nazi racial purity project. The chancellor predicted that soon a new race of *Übermenschen* ("Super-Men") would rise across Germany, assuring its might as a growing world power.

After exchanging several solemn words with his leader at the end of the speech and flashing a stiff Nazi salute to roaring crowds, *Der Flieger* floated up to the apex of the stadium. He then flew off swiftly to the southwest with a sharp clap of thunder. Charles Lindbergh, sitting in the stands, estimated his speed at over 700 miles an hour by how many seconds it took the parahuman to cross the stadium. It was theorized by scientists that he had somehow breached the so-called "sound barrier," and this was the cause of the mysterious thunder heard in the night skies over Germany in the weeks before the games.

There was no way to deny it. The news circled the world, dwarfing the Olympics and the civil war in Spain. The Nazis had a flying man and the rest of the world was in awe.

July 7, 1937

Dai Nippon Stirs

Although the Japanese *Kwangtung* Army had occupied northern China, which they called Manchukuo, for six

Why Was the First Parahuman a Nazi?

Why was *Der Flieger* the first recorded parahuman? This question haunted Allied analysts throughout the war, although the media rarely brought it up. The fact is, *Der Flieger* gained his abilities from the beliefs that were indoctrinated into him during his early years by Hitler's propaganda machine. *Der Flieger* could fly because he thought he was an Aryan. Deep down he believed that he was an example of the perfect being that the Hitler Youth hammered into his head: part god and part man.

Belief alone made the first human fly without the aid of a machine, and even though the beliefs that did so were composed of some of the most insidious evils of our age . . . he flew anyway.

World Reaction to the Super-Man

The headline read almost the same all around the world, from the *New York Times* blaring "NAZI SUPER-MAN!" to the more reserved and understated *London Times* "Flying German Stuns Olympic Crowd," banner. The world was aghast, that much was clear in the countless editorials. Front page examinations and news items written about the world's first flying man showed that everyone in the world but the Germans were shocked and frightened by *Der Flieger*, and at the apparent advancement of the Nazis eugenics program, which is what the world immediately assumed was responsible for such a startling development. Still others clung to the fading hope that *Der Flieger* was some sort of desperate propaganda hoax.

Limited newsreel footage was available of Rahn. Only the shots of him in Olympic stadium, and several early propaganda films were available to the countries of the west. The Germans kept any solid information about him highly classified.

Then ambassador to Great Britain, Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. made his stand plain when he testified before a senate committee opposing the 1940 "Lend-Lease" program: "A war is coming in Europe, and now, we certainly all know who is going to win it. They have a flying man for god's sake." Many Americans felt the same.

Other famous pro-Nazi Americans took the appearance of the Super-man as a complete vindication of Nazi ideals. Charles Lindbergh, the first man to cross the Atlantic non-stop, and America's greatest hero, became rabidly pro-Nazi: "I have met *Der Flieger*, and he congratulated me on my 1926 roundabout. I told him I believed that his crossing four hundred yards of stadium in the air without a plane was more impressive to me, and indeed to mankind itself, than any other event in recorded history."

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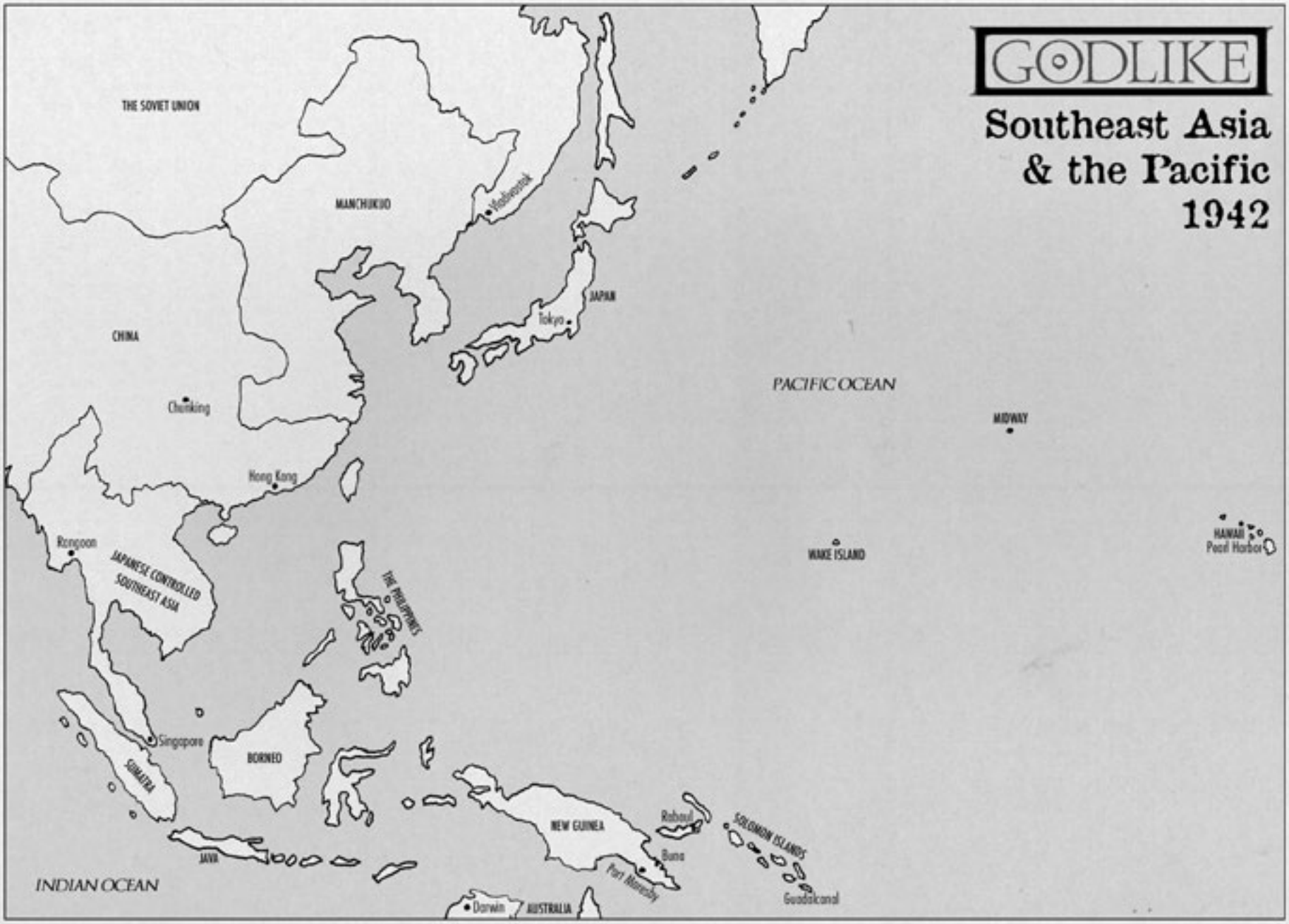

○ *Der Flieger* "The Airman"

Name: Konrad Rahn **AKA** *Der Flieger* ("The Airman"), *Piorun* ("Thunderbolt"), and Mr. Messerschmitt.
Nationality: German.
Political Affiliation: Nazi (National Socialist).
Education: Gymnasium at Hamburg. Officer schooling at Bad Tölz.
Rank: *Obersturmbannführer (SS)*. Honorary member of the *Luftwaffe*.
Decorations: Knight's Cross to the Iron Cross with Golden Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds. *SS* Honor Ring. *SS* Honor Sword. Pilot Badge in Gold with Diamonds. General Assault Badge.
DOB: 6/1/16 Hamburg, Germany.
DOD: 8/21/44 London, England (killed by anti-aircraft fire).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Rahn, the first known parahuman, could fly at speeds exceeding 800 miles per hour and was the first human to break the sound barrier. He was known to utilize his sonic boom to knock Allied aircraft out of the air with its devastating shockwave.

Despite the torturous forces generated by flying at such speeds, Rahn suffered no ill effects; he could also fly at any altitude without suffering from lack of air or heat (though he could not achieve orbit, and rarely flew above 10,000 feet).

History: Rahn was born in Hamburg in the midst of Germany's great depression, near the end the Great War. In 1923, Rahn's father, Johann Rahn, a veteran of the war and later a National Socialist, was killed during the failed "Beer Hall Putsch" masterminded by Hitler and Göring. Konrad Rahn followed his sainted father's example. When Hitler came to power in 1933 as Chancellor, Rahn joined the Hitler youth movement with a fanatical fervor.

On April 30, 1936, Rahn discovered his flight ability. After demonstrating his power to German military authorities, he quickly became a favorite of Hitler. Rahn lit the torch at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, after demonstrating his flight ability to the public for the first time. He later participated in the invasion of Poland, frightening cavalry troops with his sonic booms and nearly single-handedly knocking the outclassed Polish air force out of the sky.

During the Blitz of London, Rahn was responsible for downing more than thirty-five Allied fighters, and in defense of German airspace destroyed fifteen British bombers during the night-raids of Berlin. He gained the name "Mr. Messerschmitt" from a terrified British populace.

Rahn was a constant symbol of Nazi superiority and was often seen at Hitler's side. He appeared in numerous recruiting films and newsreels and often worked spreading German propaganda in recently occupied countries (he did so to great effect in Holland, Denmark and Norway). *Der Flieger* twice confronted Allied Talents in the war, and was once defeated.

In late 1944, Rahn was killed over London by the newly developed proximity fuse of the American Army. Rahn had previously proven too fast for anti-aircraft guns to track, but these new rounds exploded when they detected an object moving within their explosive range. Rahn was blown to pieces over London, during a fly-over while dumping propaganda leaflets on the ruined House of Commons. Pieces of his body were recovered by British authorities and preserved for science.

After the liberation of Europe, all files on Rahn were lost to the occupying Soviet forces. Few records exist on early Nazi experiments testing the limits of his capabilities.

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years, no one expected them to make a bold grab for further territory.

What started one evening as a small skirmish between border patrols led to a full-fledged Japanese invasion of southern China. Major-General Kenji Doihara, commander of the *Kwangtung* Army, rapidly reinforced his troops with modern weaponry and aircraft from Japan, and relentlessly pushed south, killing thousands Chinese conscripts and volunteers.

One after another, Chinese cities fell, and the leader of the Chinese Army, General Chiang Kai-Shek seemed powerless to stop the Nipponese war machine as it swept towards Southeast Asia.

October 10, 1938

The Legal Annexation of Czechoslovakia; Another Talent Appears

After forcing the ailing Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia to sign the Munich Pact (which turned that nation over to Nazi rule), Adolf Hitler continued to prepare for all-out war. While assuring the Allies that Czechoslovakia marked the beginning and the end of German expansionism, the Nazi war-machine was building up; Hitler's eyes were on the small countries that bordered the Reich. Czechoslovakia was the first stepping-stone in a grab for all of Europe.

On October 1, 1938, German troops were rolling through Czechoslovakia and the swastika flag was flying over Prague.

However, with this ruthless action Hitler inadvertently stirred hope for the world.

On October 10, 1938, a scruffy looking Czechoslovakian youth turned up on the front steps of the Ministry of Defense in London. He claimed he was "blessed of god" and that he had just escaped from Prague through a "passageway," seconds ahead of agents of the *Gestapo*.

No one knew what to make of him. He stated he was a member of the Czechoslovakian Socialist movement, wanted by the *Gestapo*. Despite his story, the youth was ejected from the building into the streets of London several times. Somehow, he kept turning up within the building, despite the security measures taken by the staff. Finally, British authorities determined that his story was true; he actually was "blessed" somehow. Briety Krizova, the confused young Czechoslovakian, could warp space with the power of his mind.

The Press Discovers *Pevnost*, Sort Of

Although no photographs were available to the public, and the *London Times* story was composed of complete hearsay, the rumor of a Czechoslovakian Super-man in Britain quickly spread throughout the world. Hourly radio reports were made from 10 Downing Street for a week, based on the hope that Prime Minister Chamberlain would comment on the rumor. However, the government had little to say on the subject. At least, it seemed that they did.

To those in the know, it became evident that the government itself was responsible for the press leak in the first place. To keep the Germans guessing however, the identity and the nature of the man's powers remained a tightly guarded secret.

It would be some months yet before the public was properly introduced to *Pevnost*.

Any doorway Briety passed through could, through his power, be linked to any other doorway he had previously passed through. Briety simply walked from his den in Prague, to a W.C. door in Trafalgar square he had once used… crossing the almost seven hundred miles between the two cities instantaneously. He could bring anyone he liked along with him on his "jaunts" and could even carry large amounts of equipment through as long as the link between locations lasted, which was sometimes as long as ten minutes.

Briety became the backbone of a huge British-backed anti-Nazi underground movement in Czechoslovakia. He was known as *Pevnost* or "Fortress" in his native tongue and created a complex series of safe houses linked only by his power, where men and equipment could be stored for the resistance. His ability allowed the Czechs to launch huge sneak attacks on German soldiers and German sympathizers from behind their own lines. Hitler himself inadvertently helped the Czech parahuman's cause, by obstinately refusing to admit that any parahuman existed besides *Der Flieger*. Hitler's High Command soon learned not to speak of the Czech, unless they wished to face Hitler's wrath.

After the war escalated, the British took every opportunity to exploit *Pevnost*, using him for propaganda purposes to control the free world's fear of the Nazi super-man, as well

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○ *Pevnost* "Fortress"

Name: Briety Alta Krizova **AKA** *Pevnost* ("Fortress").
Nationality: Czechoslovakian.
Political Affiliation: Czech Socialist.
Education: Gymnasium at Prague, two years at the University of Linz in Austria.
Rank: None.
Decorations: OBE, Britain, Victoria Cross.
DOB: 1/14/20 Pribram, Czechoslovakia.
DOD: 7/12/87 London, England (natural causes).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Krizova could link any two doorways he had previously passed through with the power of his mind. This link acted as an instant gateway between two points in space. Others could travel through as well, as long as Krizova passed through the portal with them, one at a time. The connected doorways had to be of similar design and size. For some reason, Krizova's powers did not work on doorways bigger than 2.7m x 1.1m.

Krizova's maximum range was estimated to be 2.5 thousand nautical miles near the time of his death, and seemed to grow with age. His power fluctuated from time to time for unknown reasons. Linking doorways together across space was a fatiguing process for Krizova, and if pushed to its limits, could cause brain damage or even kill him.

History: Krizova was born in 1920 to farmers in the small village of Pribram, Czechoslovakia. He left for schooling at Prague in 1925, living with a favorite uncle in the city, and later spent a short stint at University at Linz (vacationing in both Britain and Spain in the summers). Krizova became embroiled in politics at Linz, and returned to Prague during the final days of Czechoslovakia's autonomy. Unfortunately, he was quite vocal about his anti-German sentiments.

He discovered his parahuman abilities while fleeing agents of the *Gestapo* who arrived for him just days after the occupation of Prague. Instead of his den on the other side of the door, Krizova found himself suddenly in London (a place he'd been a year before), 644 miles away. Krizova rapidly discovered his jaunt was more than a one-time thing, as he was repeatedly ejected from the British Ministry of Defense, only to return, repeatedly, from doors on the inside.

He convinced the British of his abilities, and went on to lead a huge underground resistance in Czechoslovakia with British assistance. Krizova gained the name *Pevnost* or "Fortress" in his native language and became a national hero, fighting the Axis until the end of the war alongside Russian and Czech partisan troops.

Krizova fled Czechoslovakia with his wife and small child in 1948 when the Communists took power, but not before ushering out more than two hundred families and friends whose politics were "questionable" by Communist standards. He lived the rest of his life in London, an honored member of the Order of the British Empire; he was almost considered an unofficial head of state. Many Czechs felt betrayed by his actions after the war, but Krizova only had this to say: "My life has always been war. It is now time for peace. All men deserve a little peace."

Krizova wrote four books about his life during the war, and was hailed as a talented author. He traveled the world, a guest of dozens of governments and enjoyed the company of four American Presidents and three British Prime Ministers. He died peacefully at the age of 67 in London. The entire world mourned.

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as supporting his partisans in Czechoslovakia with weaponry and personnel.

October 12, 1938

Rumors from Ethiopia

In Italian occupied Ethiopia, rumors of a supernatural killer spread terror throughout the already badly demoralized Italian Army. In a period of a month, over a hundred Italian soldiers were killed by the "Demon of the Badlands," a mysterious killer who left behind only salt effigies of his victims. No one survived the initial attacks, so no one could say just what happened. The salt effigies, however, spoke volumes.

At first, the story was considered a hoax, although the faces of the effigies were actually recognizable to those who had known them in life.

Two of the salt corpses were shipped to Rome under direct order of Benito Mussolini, who hoped to gain a super-man of his own. The scientists assigned to the task were baffled. The soldiers had been completely converted to salt. Their weapons, equipment, and even internal organs had been transformed.

Rumors of the parahuman rapidly spread throughout the populace of Ethiopia. Along with the rumor came a name: *Zindel*, an ancient word meaning "Protector of Man."

Within just a few months, the natives began to fight back with more fervor and ability against the Italian forces. Soon it was clear that the mysterious parahuman had taken on the aspect of a deity to them. Men fought to the last breath for the legend, although none claimed to have seen him directly.

No photographs or other evidence of the parahuman made it to the west, and his reality, or lack thereof, remained a matter of speculation.

News in the Western World About "Zindel"

The western press was skeptical about the existence of *Zindel*. The consensus between the press magnates of London and New York was that *Zindel* was a product of runaway imaginations. Who those imaginations belonged to didn't really matter. Ethiopia was not important enough to make the front page. Either the Ethiopians were looking for a mythical figure to support their cause, or the demoralized Italian forces were looking for an excuse not to fight. Little information bled out of Italian-occupied Ethiopia about the mystery.

Almost nothing appeared in the press to indicate that the rumors might be true. The world had yet to grasp that the parahuman phenomenon was an exponentially growing one. Most felt that the two parahumans that had appeared, one for the Nazis, and one for the Allies, represented the beginning and the end of the matter.

May 22, 1939

The Rome-Berlin Axis Pact is Signed

With great fanfare in Berlin, Hitler and Mussolini signed the "Pact of Steel," a mutual defense treaty between the two fascist powers of Europe.

Although the pact was seen as a significant step towards the solidification of fascist powers in Europe, the German High Command considered it of little use—the Italian armed forces were, in their opinion, "sub-standard."

August 23, 1939

The Pact Which Shook the World

Russia, the sleeping giant of the east, watched the growing conflict in Europe with fear. They were not ready for war, and the prospect of a Nazi super-man terrified Josef Stalin. At his command, Vyacheslav Molotov made political overtures to the Foreign Minister of Germany, Joachim von Ribbentropp.

Soon the two superpowers hammered into reality an unthinkable agreement. No one expected cooperation between such diametrically opposed ideologies. Despite their political differences, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany became peaceful neighbors. Russia had thrown her weight behind the power of central Europe, leaving the tiny countries of the east to fend for themselves. Nevertheless, that peace was not to last.

Hitler now saw his chance to enact *Case White*, the long-planned invasion of Poland.

September 1, 1939

The Invasion of Poland

Hitler knew he had pushed the world too far diplomatically. Having seized all the territory he could through peaceful channels, it was now time for war. Enacting the secret operation code-named *Canned Goods*, twelve Polish concentration camp prisoners were dressed in Polish military gear, poisoned, and left in the city of Gleiwitz on the night of August 31, 1939. These corpses were shot and laid out in a field as evidence of non-existent Polish advances into German territory.

Another Pole was taken to the Gleiwitz radio station where he was shot. An *SS* man fluent in Polish then transmitted a short message in that language indicating an imminent (and again non-existent) Polish invasion.

Hitler had the flimsy backdrop he needed to begin his plans of world conquest. The German *Luftwaffe* ("Air

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force") and *Heer* ("Army") roared across the border to Poland on the morning of September 1, 1939.

September 3, 1939

A Declaration of War

In a radio address on September 3, 1939, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announced that a state of war existed between the Allied Nations and Germany, due to its unprovoked invasion of Poland. In response, German forces in the Atlantic declared Allied shipping open targets, and within hours of the announcement, Nazi U-boats sank the British liner *Athenia*.

A large confrontation was coming between the Germans and Allies, but where? And when?

The British Expeditionary Force moved four army divisions into France in anticipation of an attack that, as the silence on the border of Germany continued, it seemed would never come.

September 4, 1939

Der Flieger Crushes the Polish Air Force

By direct order of Hitler, the Nazi parahuman *Der Flieger* had open rights on the Polish air force. Although *Reichsmarschall* Göring and his *Luftwaffe* were involved in ground assaults on aircraft, troops and tanks, and engaged many of the enemy in the air, *Der Flieger* downed more than eighty aircraft on his own. In just under four days, the *Luftwaffe* and *Der Flieger* sent more than 400 Polish pilots and 500 planes hurtling to their doom.

Der Flieger knocked fifty-two PZL P.11c fighters out of the air with his sonic booms, and destroyed nineteen PZL 37 B Los bombers as they were being moved to an auxiliary airbase away from the invaders. With a total to his name of eighty-three Polish aircraft destroyed, *Der Flieger* was the highest scoring ace to date.

The Airman went on to act in a ground support role, sonic-booming Polish positions and routing entire regiments of mounted cavalry. To the terrified ground forces of Poland, he gained the name *Piorun* or "Thunderbolt." As the news of this incredible rout circled the globe, the world was finally convinced of the power of the Nazi super-man.

Reports from the Front

Almost the instant the Germans rolled over the border into Poland, the Nazi propaganda machine went into high gear along with the *Wehrmacht* ("Armed Forces"), capturing photographs of the super-man in action and sending them around the world. Those Poles who escaped the Nazis and the terrible reign of *Piorun* to tell the tale silenced the vocal minority who felt that the super-man could not be of use in modern warfare.

After the bloodletting in Poland, few could simply shrug away the concept of the Nazi super-man, or that an army composed of them was a terrifying prospect.

September 11, 1939

From the Darkness of War-Torn Poland, a Darkness to Match

On September 11, 1939, a single Polish Army officer took on a platoon of the Fourteenth Division of the *Heer* in the ruined streets of Krakow, and won. Poland discovered its first parahuman in the midst of its darkest hour: Piotr Ciowiski, a field officer in the rapidly disintegrating Polish Army, possessed the power to move objects with his mind—but only those objects which his shadow fell upon.

The engagement between the Germans and the Poles on the streets of Krakow took place on a clear day at dusk, and Ciowiski's shadow was extremely long. He watched as the Germans killed his comrades one by one, until something in him snapped. With the sun at his back, his immense shadow hurled tanks and men, almost instantly forcing the Germans into a full retreat. Ciowiski claimed 153 lives, destroyed four Panzer light tanks, and gained the name *Cien* ("Shadow").

Seeing the inevitability of Polish defeat, Ciowiski led his beleaguered men to the border of Romania and slipped over the frontier amidst the confusion on September 29, 1939 as Poland blazed behind him.

Three weeks later, Ciowiski was in London, and threw his hat into the ring behind Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz, head of the Polish government in exile. The Allies now had the advantage; two parahumans to the Reich's one.

September 17, 1939

The Soviet Union Invades Poland

Russia did not wait for Germany to overrun the entire country of Poland and reach their border. Instead, the Russian Army crossed the eastern Polish border and occupied Poland's Bellorussian provinces, as was secretly agreed upon months before by German and Russian officials. Photographs of smiling German and Russian troops meeting at the new borders of Russia and Germany were on the cover of every newspaper in the world.

Although Hitler was loath to grant territory to Russia,

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Cien "Shadow"

Name: Piotr Ciowiski **AKA** *Cien* ("Shadow").
Nationality: Polish.
Political Affiliation: No known political affiliations.
Education: Schooling at Krakow, two years officer schooling in Lodz, British Special Operations Executive training.
Rank: Colonel (Polish), brigadier colonel (British, Free Polish Forces).
Decorations: Victoria Cross (posthumous).
DOB: 12/11/04 Modlin, Poland.
DOD: 9/20/44 Arnhem, the Netherlands (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Ciowiski could telekinetically manipulate objects touched by his shadow. By miming movements of grabbing or striking, parahuman forces were exerted on those targets, as long as the shadow could reach them, despite the intervening distance. The strength of his shadow form depended on how large his shadow was at the time. At his prime, Ciowiski lifted a 43-ton Panther tank and threw it forty-five meters, killing its entire crew and thirty German troops with one attack.
History: Ciowiski was a colonel in the few fragmented remains of the Polish Army that held select streets in Krakow when his power manifested itself. After inflicting heavy losses on the Germans at Krakow with his power, Ciowiski fled to London and joined forces with Britain's famed Polish First Airborne Brigade.

A veteran commando who worked closely with the British Special Operations Executive, he was known to associate with other Allied Talents such as *Pevnost* and the Indestructible Man.

He confronted *Der Flieger* on D-Day at the French town of Banville while on an operation with the British Sixth Airborne Division. The German parahuman made the mistake of buzzing the British troops too low, and Ciowiski managed to take a telekinetic swipe at the "Airman," knocking him out of the air. A picture of *Der Flieger* recovering in the mud of the French road after Ciowiski's attack was one of the most famous photographs of the war. Shaken and injured, *Der Flieger* fled the confrontation.

Ciowiski later served in the doomed operation *Market Garden* in the Netherlands, commanding the Polish First Independent Parachute Brigade. Somehow, the German command rapidly determined that an Allied parahuman was present. Within four hours, Ciowiski was facing fourteen Nazi parahumans. The Nazi *Übermensch Krieg* killed Ciowiski, but not before the Pole took two of his attackers with him. *Cien* crushed the German super-man *Der Ziegel* ("The Brick") in his shadow hands by cleverly using one of the Nazi air defense klieg lights to light himself, and dropped a two-ton portion of bridge on yet another parahuman, *Siegfried*. After this dramatic turn, a German *Heer* officer, later decorated with the Iron Cross for bravery, shot out Ciowiski's light.

Ciowiski was posthumously decorated with the Victoria Cross for his decisive actions at Arnhem.

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The Floodgates Open

After the announcement by the British government of the second Allied Super-man, *Cien*, a huge swell in stories, articles and public inquiries into the phenomenon began all over the world. Hundreds of people turned up at their local hospitals, churches and government facilities in almost every country, claiming to be parahuman. *Cien* and *Pevnost* were photographed alongside Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and several short newsreels were made for circulation demonstrating their amazing abilities for the world to see. The limits of those abilities remained a carefully guarded secret, however.

The world press exploded with stories about parahumanity. Books began to be released in record numbers like *Jesus Was the First Super-man, The Secrets of the Egyptian Pyramids* and *How To Unlock Your Supernatural Powers*.

The Pope made a statement indicating that "… the matter must be looked into with greater clarity by the Church before a ruling can be made."

Howard Hughes, the American multi-millionaire, offered a $25,000 reward for the first American to demonstrate a supernatural ability.

In the winter of 1939, the phenomenon was all the public could talk about.

he knew his forces were not yet ready for all-out war in the east. First, all of Europe would fall before the Reich; there would be time for Russia later.

October, 1939

The U.S. Fleet is Moved to Pearl Harbor

Under a direct order from President Roosevelt, the U.S. Pacific fleet was moved from its traditional home in San Diego to Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii. This defensive gesture was made to deter Japanese aggression in the central Pacific.

October 14, 1939

The *HMS Royal Oak* Is Sunk at the Scapa Flow

In the early morning of October 14, 1939, the commander of U-Boat 47, *Leutnant* Guenther Prien, led his crew on an audacious attack of the British Fleet in its home port of Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands. The attack sank the battleship *Royal Oak*. With the expenditure of two torpedoes, 833 crewmen were killed.

Two days later, the announcement was made by the German *Kriegsmarine* ("Navy") that *any* ship flying the flag of the Allies was subject to unannounced attack on the high seas.

November 30, 1939

The Soviet Union Invades Finland

Following a series of so-called peace talks between Stalin and the leaders of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the Soviets established several navy and army bases in these tiny countries, slowly spreading their influence in the area of the Baltic Sea. Next they invaded Finland, striking suddenly, in a poorly executed imitation of Hitler's *blitzkrieg* ("lightning war") that the German Army had demonstrated during the invasion of Poland.

Most of the world was stunned by Stalin's rash actions, but the invasion had been featured in his plans for some time. The Finns refused the diplomatic coercion that had worked so readily on their neighbors, and chose instead to fight.

Like Hitler, Stalin provided a thin cover story for the invasion, blaming the Finns for the deaths of five Red Army soldiers in a shelling incident on the Karelian Isthmus. Based on this "provocational shelling," the Red Army roared over the Finnish border, but the hearty Finns would not be taken without a valiant fight.

December 19, 1939

Viljo, Death Lives in the Wilds

Although the 300,000 soldiers defending Finland were outnumbered three to one by the Red Army, they managed to stall the Russians in the midst of the terrible Finnish winter. Despite their dogged defense, however, land was continuously lost, and eventually Finn troops took to the wilderness to live and fight on.

One of these reluctant soldiers, Joseef Seppanen, a civilian who became embroiled in the fight against the Soviets near a tiny village called Idel, fled with four other men. They were the subjects of a hunt conducted by nearly an entire Soviet division. The Soviet commander took the group's attack on four Soviet light tanks with the ironically named "Molotov cocktail" as a personal affront.

Seppanen and the others hid in a freezing cave in the middle of the worst winter any of them could recall, without the ability to light a fire due to Soviet patrols. Slowly the men froze to death, but somehow Seppanen survived. In fact, after the deaths of his colleagues, and despite the freezing temperature, he began to feel warm in the arctic conditions.

Seppanen was the world's fourth known parahuman. He could disappear into snow in a heartbeat, felt no ill effects from cold, could track animals and people like a wolf and was deadly and superhumanly swift in combat.

Known as *Viljo* ("Resolute Protector") by the locals, the Finnish parahuman fought on despite the cessation of

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Viljo "Resolute Protector"

Name: Joseef Seppanen **AKA** *Viljo* ("Resolute Protector"), *Bielaja Smert* ("White Death").
Nationality: Finnish.
Political Affiliation: Unknown.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 1/9/01 Idel, Finland.
DOD: 3/21/41 Idel, Finland (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Seppanen was completely at home in arctic conditions and felt no ill effects from temperature extremes in excess of –60 degrees. He could vanish in snow, disappearing instantly into drifts with parahuman swiftness, and was once seen to dodge machine gun bullets after they had been fired. With his speed and stealth, Seppanen fought only with a knife, which he used to great effect on the Soviets.
History: Seppannen's family raised reindeer since anyone near the tiny village of Idel could remember. He lived his entire life there, never wanting anything from the outside world. When the Soviets invaded in November of 1939, Seppanen found that suddenly the outside world had forced itself upon him.

He fought the first week of the war with a small group of Finnish soldiers who avoided Russian patrols by hiding at his farm. His knowledge of the terrain helped them cut off a small Soviet tank platoon. Soon an entire Red Army division was searching for them.

Seppanen discovered his parahuman abilities in the wilds, and soon began to carve a path through the Red forces in the area. Despite the cessation of hostilities in March of 1940, He continued killing Soviet soldiers until he drew the attention of Stalin himself. The Dictator decreed the Finnish super-man was to be eliminated, despite any human cost.

A trap was set for *Viljo*, who was led to believe that his younger brother was held in a Soviet stockade at Idel along with 100 political prisoners. *Viljo,* coming to free his brother (who was not even there), was killed by an intense barrage of Soviet artillery unleashed on the camp. This attack killed both *Viljo* and the decoy Soviets who held the camp. Nothing of the dead parahuman was ever found, but he never appeared in the wilds again.

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A British Reporter Behind the Lines

The west heard first of the mysterious *Viljo* through the writings of *London Times* reporter Peter Viipuri, who grew up in Finland. Viipuri remained behind during the Soviet invasion, sending headline after headline back to London during the siege of the tiny country.

Viipuri spent almost two months with the Finnish forces during the "winter war." When the first reports of the super-human began to bleed back from the front, he chose to risk his life in the hopes of catching a glimpse of the legend. His risk paid off.

Viipuri was the first to find the remains of a Soviet patrol near *Viljo's* territory on January 11, 1939, and shortly thereafter snapped the first and only known photograph of Joseef Seppanen after the manifestation of his power. The snow-washed photo showed a naked and scarecrow-thin man standing in a drift, with a single huge knife in his hand.

Shortly thereafter, Viipuri was captured by the Soviets. After some confusion, he was turned over to the British consulate in Leningrad. His camera was confiscated but not his film, as the Soviets had yet to realize its importance.

Viipuri's photograph was reproduced on the cover of magazines around the world.

hostilities between the Soviets and the Finns in 1940. He was the terror of the Red Army in the area, killing entire platoons in the forests and leaving piles of corpses in his wake. He would be seen from time to time by the locals, naked in the snow, carrying only a knife.

When Soviet *Podpolkovnik* Sergei Chapakev asked a local commander why a tank division could not pass through a region, the man replied, "Because he lives there." "Who's this?" Chapakev asked. *"Bielaja Smert"* ("White Death"), the commander explained.

December 17, 1939

The *Graf Spee* Is Scuttled

The German Pocket Battleship *Admiral Graf Spee* began the war quietly patrolling the waters of the South Atlantic; but when the order of unrestricted attack on Allied vessels was announced, the craft wasted no time in making its presence known. In response, the British stepped up naval operations off the eastern coast of South America.

On the morning of December 13, 1939, the *Graf Spee* attacked three badly outgunned British cruisers, the *Ajax, Achilles* and *Exeter.* The *Spee* forced the *Exeter* to break off its counter-attack, due to heavy casualties and severe structural damage, but the other two cruisers valiantly stayed in the fight, which lasted more than an hour and a half.

In the end, the British broke off their attack due to heavy casualties and damage, but the *Graf Spee* was damaged as well. *Kapitän* Hans Langsdorff had foolishly opened fire on the British, against direct orders from Berlin. The British proved more tenacious in their response than he expected.

Langsdorff piloted his damaged ship to the neutral port of Montevideo, Uruguay, where he hoped to repair the damage and return to patrol. The two damaged British cruisers waited for him at the opening of the river plate, however, seeking a rematch. Diplomatic pressure on the Uruguayan government by the Allies forced Langsdorff to scuttle the *Spee.* They would not allow Langsdorff to dock for repairs, and a brief message from Berlin informed him he was not to be taken alive. On the morning of December 17, Langsdorff and a minimal crew ran the *Spee* aground on the river plate, destroying it with an immense explosion. Fearing internment by the Uruguayan authorities, Langsdorff committed suicide before he could be captured.

This was a shocking defeat to the *Kriegsmarine* and the Nazi war machine.

January 9, 1940

Fall Gelb ("Case Yellow") Falls Into the Allies' Hands

A major German blunder occurred in early January, just one month before the implementation of the ultra-secret *Fall Gelb* or "Case Yellow." This plan outlined the invasion of Holland, France and Belgium by the Axis. Unknown to the Allies, the German military was in its final stages of preparation for the invasion of France and the Low Countries-at least this fact was unknown by the Allies until January 9, 1940.

Two German officers, *Major* Helmut Reinberger and *Major* Erich Hoenmanns, were en route to Cologne from Munster when their small Messerschmitt *Taifun* scout-plane crashed on the wrong side of the Meuse river, in Belgium. Among the contents of the plane was a complete copy of the invasion, set to begin in less than a month. Realizing their predicament, Reinberger tried to destroy the documents, but both officers were swiftly captured by Belgian authorities and sent to Mechelen-sur-Meuse for questioning. The Belgians were equally swift in judging the plan. They knew it was important, but the commander in charge of the study would not allow Allied intelligence officials access to it. He dismissed the plans out of hand due to his accidental possession of them. Of course, the Germans would not utilize such a plan now that it had fallen into enemy hands. Instead of allowing the Allies to see "Case Yellow," a brief synopsis was circulated. Neutral Belgium and Luxemburg would not risk their

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neutrality in any way, and thought it best to keep quiet.

It had been almost nine months since the German's rapid defeat of the Poles, and the countries bordering the Reich waited anxiously to see what Hitler would do next. As far as the Allies were concerned, Western Europe had stabilized. The French mobilized four and a half million men along the fabled *Maginot* line, and the Royal Navy was squeezing Germany's imports on the high seas. The Allies reasoned that if Hitler were to try for France, Belgium or Holland, he would have done so before these mobilizations had taken place. It was the prevailing opinion at the Allied High Command that the worst was over, at least in Western Europe.

They would soon be proven very wrong.

February 14, 1940

The Term "Talent" Is Coined

Science editor for the *New York Times* Stephen J. Whelan released the last in a series of articles on the parahuman phenomenon in the Sunday edition of the famed newspaper. His previous articles examined everything from the known "super-men," to the possibility of super-men existing in the distant past. Citing several obscure books for his articles, Whelan struck upon the term that became synonymous with the parahuman condition.

The book he cited was Charles Foy Fort's 1932, *Wild Talents,* a study of unusual phenomena. Fort linked bizarre events that occurred from time to time throughout recorded history with the unknown abilities of the human mind. Whelan captured the imagination of the world with the following paragraph:

> "If the powers reflected in Fort's book are called 'Wild Talents', I suppose what we are seeing now could be called 'Talents'. Perhaps this is not an example of a new array of human capability, but simply the honing of some inherent and previously secret human skill which is just now coming to light."

Soon this term was used all over the world to describe parahumanity.

March 12, 1940

End of the Soviet-Finnish War

After the breaking of the Finnish Mannerheim line in early March, the war began to turn to the Russians' favor, and Finnish resistance dwindled. The Russo-Finnish pact was signed on March 12 in Moscow, granting Russia a large portion of Finland, comprising more than 12% of its population of four million souls.

The Allied nations were shocked by the swift disintegration of the Finnish Army who had fought so long despite hardship and limited supplies. The Allied High Command hoped to land three brigades at Narvik to fight a decisive war on Finnish soil against the Soviets and Nazis, but those plans were laid waste by the unexpected defeat.

The Finnish parahuman, *Viljo*, who had now gained international fame, fought on in the wilds along with small groups of resistance fighters throughout the annexed portion of Finland. The Finns had been beaten, but many had not given up.

April 8, 1940

Allies Mine the North Sea and Land Troops in Norway

Violating international law, British cruisers began mining Norwegian waters on April 8, 1940, to prevent the shipping of iron-ore from the neutral Norwegians to the Third Reich. The next day the Germans pounced, invading the tiny country. A day before the fateful attack, the Allies marshaled a large expeditionary force to enter Norway and occupy the country to protect it from the Nazis. As it turned out, however, by the time the forces landed the Germans already had begun their attack. The once-neutral Norwegians were more than happy to fight alongside the British and French.

April 9, 1940

Germany Invades Norway and Denmark

Beginning at dawn on April 9, 1940, Germany invaded the countries of Norway and Denmark. Within hours of invasion, Denmark capitulated, but Norway continued to resist.

For the first time in warfare, airborne troops were utilized in the Germans' attack on Norway. These crack glider teams captured forward airfields so the *Luftwaffe* could gain mastery over the air of the North Sea, and northern Britain. The Norwegians fought heartily, with the aid of the French and British forces, but the Allies had not planned an engagement this early, only a preventive occupation. Prepared to overcome such resistance, the Germans were soon winning.

When the Allies realized Norway had been lost, those forces that could be recalled to

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Britain and France were evacuated.

No one suspected that in just under a month, France would be next.

April 11, 1940

Vogel Appears, a Talent Among Talents

Out of the capitulation of the tiny country of Denmark rose one of the most visible and flashy parahumans of the war, Jan Dinesen, better known to the world as *Vogel* ("Bird"). Infuriated with his country's capitulation, Dinesen decided he would fight on, but was captured on the first night of the invasion by *Heer* troops, while removing weapons from an armory in Copenhagen.

Gathered with a small group of rag-tag resistors by the *Gestapo*, Dinesen was to be shot by firing squad on the morning of April 11 for his crime as a spy. Instead of death, he found his parahuman ability in the hail of bullets. When the first fusillade dropped every man but Dinesen, the Germans took aim, and missed again. Filled with a growing surety that he was somehow making the bullets miss him, Dinesen continued to stand at the wall. Finally, an *Oberstleutnant* stepped forward with his pistol to dispatch the young Dane at point blank range. He missed. After two more pistol shots from less than a foot failed to hit, Dinesen disarmed the stunned German, and killed the officer with his own pistol. Then he calmly watched as the firing squad fired at him again and missed.

The story of the "almost-execution" was told by Dinesen many times, and was even corroborated by one of the German soldiers of the firing squad after the war. The story goes that after the sixth set of shots, Dinesen looked at the squad for a long time and said, in passing German, "Your aim is terrible."

He walked out into the streets of Copenhagen, killing two Germans and miraculously sidestepping several bullets with his name on them.

April 12, 1940

Aesgir Appears, and Then Disappears

In war-ravaged Norway, a young Talent rose from the conflict, fighting Nazi tanks while wielding only a flimsy stage-prop spear. Christian Hansen was only fifteen when his home and family were destroyed in a skirmish between the Fifth Norwegian Army Corps and the Nazi *Wehrmacht* Group II; yet he somehow survived the rain of artillery shells, and became the world's seventh known Talent. He left a wake of destroyed Panzer tanks and dead Germans in his path.

Hansen claimed his powers came from a stage-prop spear he discovered in the ruins of a theatre that gave him shelter during the Nazi attack.

The spear (which he claimed called itself *Aesgir)* made him nearly invulnerable to injury while he held it, could split the thickest steel, hit targets with startling accuracy, and would instantly leap back to his hand after being thrown. The spear would also speak to him, warning him of danger; and finally, could open a passageway to another world separate from the Earth, which Christian called Valhalla.

When *Aesgir* fled the Norwegian conflict, he opened a conduit to this other world, which seemed to be a planet all to itself, composed only of rolling tundra and snow storms. He took those he could with him, and they traveled for over a week through the snow. When he opened the portal back to Earth once more, the group found themselves on the northernmost shores of Scotland.

Aesgir threw himself behind the Norwegian government in exile, and soon was front-page news all over the world. The Allies now had the Nazi Super-man outnumbered three to one.

A Famous Broadcast

All of Britain gathered around their radio sets on the night of June 12, 1940 to hear the voice of an Allied Talent for the first time, even if it was in a language that most could not understand. After his escape to Britain, *Vogel* implored his people to fight on as best they could under the heel of Nazi tyranny. Britain and France were behind them, he said in Danish, and soon others would join their cause. The Allies would not rest until all of Europe was set free.

"Those who see this and do nothing, those who wait and watch with wide eyes and do not act, are worse than those who commit these crimes. Hitler and his armies are set to march as far and as wide as any will let them. Now is the time to stand and fight. The coming battle will be the measure of us all."

Vogel soon returned to Nazi-occupied Denmark to fight with the resistance against the Nazi invaders.

May 2, 1940

The Allies Retreat from Norway

Since the tide of war had shifted to the Germans' favor in

The "War Widows" React

When the first photograph of the recently escaped Norwegian Talent *Aesgir* appeared in the *London Times* in June 1940, many were shocked. Instead of some pitiless aged warrior fresh from the front in Norway, they saw a baby-faced youth clutching a flimsy stage-prop.

Many groups condemned his induction into the British military. The "Widows of Foreign Wars" was the most vocal group, accusing the recently appointed Prime Minister Winston Churchill of "Starting a children's crusade against the Hun."

Churchill wisely did not comment on the matter, and refused to debate the subject (besides he had more important things to do, as France, Belgium and Norway had just been invaded). The stern man only chided the national press and made it clear in private, that all information about Talents would have to be cleared with British Army Intelligence before they found their way to the front page, or there would be hell to pay.

Soon enough, with new headlines and new invasions, the furor over the matter faded.

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Vogel "Bird"

Name: Jan Dinesen **AKA** *Vogel* ("Bird").
Nationality: Danish.
Political Affiliation: Denmark Socialist.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: Captain (Free Dane Forces).
Decorations: None.
DOB: 2/2/20, Copenhagen, Denmark.
DOD: 7/10/63 Los Angeles, U.S.A (car accident).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Dinesen could alter the path of objects telekinetically, deflecting them by minute amounts so they missed his body. As long as Dinesen was conscious of a threat, his mind would automatically affect any incoming missiles, though the power remained an unconscious reflex throughout his entire life-if he knew he was under attack, it just activated. Attacks he was not aware of, hand-to-hand attacks, or accidents were not deflected by this power, so Dinesen was far from invulnerable.
History: Dinesen was born in Copenhagen to a moderately wealthy family in February 1920, and was to continue his father's business as an enamellist, but found the work tedious. Dinesen was the family disappointment, and grew up in his younger brother's shadow after his sibling showed an affinity for the family trade at a young age. In his teens, Dinesen was somewhat of a dilettante.

Shocked at the invasion of Denmark in the spring of 1940, Dinesen was resolute in his belief that he could make a difference. He attempted to liberate weapons from a Copenhagen armory before the Nazis had a chance to secure them, but was caught. In front of a *Heer* firing squad Dinesen discovered his parahuman abilities.

He led the Danish resistance with first British and later American aid, and was able to cause considerable trouble for the Pro-Nazi government and the Nazis themselves in Denmark, especially after the occupied country was completely absorbed into the Third Reich in 1942.

Dinesen was involved in several Allied group operations in Denmark, and grew to be good friends with the Polish Talent *Cien,* who operated in the country from time to time. Nevertheless, he arrived too late to help *Cien* in Operation: Market Garden in the Netherlands (he was occupied on the far side of the bridge at Arnhem). He was heard on more than one occasion to blame himself for *Cien's* death.

Later in the war, Dinesen and the Indestructible Man confronted the Nazi parahuman *Krieg* in the ruins of Leipzig—and the murderer of *Cien* did not survive the encounter. A British commander on the scene charged the Indestructible Man with murder, claiming the Talent shot *Krieg* point blank with a Bazooka *after* the German had surrendered. Dinesen defended the American Talent vehemently, and testified on his behalf. Because of his testimony, a military court found the Indestructible Man not guilty.

Dinesen went on after the war to become a high-profile Talent, one of the few veteran parahumans to do so. He moved to Hollywood, California, to act in movies, due to his good looks, charm and inherent fame. He died in a car wreck (under questionable circumstances) on Cahuenga Boulevard in the summer of 1963.

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○ *Aesgir* "The Spear of the Gods"

Name: Christian Fasal Hansen **AKA** *Aesgir* ("Spear of the Gods").
Nationality: Norwegian.
Political Affiliation: No known political leanings.
Education: Schooling at Eivaan. British Special Operations Executive training.
Rank: Colonel (Britain's Free Norwegian Forces).
Decorations: Victoria Cross (posthumous).
DOB: 12/04/27 Eivaan, Norway.
DOD: 7/18/44 Caen, France (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Hansen believed that his abilities were derived from his possession of a flimsy stage-prop spear. Later examination of the spear revealed it was nothing more than common wood and low-quality steel.

In Hansen's possession, however, this spear could pierce almost any substance, and once penetrated 100 mm of tank steel in a single thrust. Hansen could throw the spear with great accuracy, and sometimes it redirected itself in flight, altering its course to hit a target. When the spear was in his hands, Hansen was nearly invulnerable to kinetic damage, once deflecting a German 88 mm shell with his open hand.

Hansen claimed the spear spoke to him and warned him of approaching danger. It apparently would also offer advice on upcoming events. It is unclear whether he could predict the future with it.

With the spear, Hansen could open a portal to a pocket dimension he called Valhalla. At his prime, he moved eighty fully-armed commandos through such a portal. By traveling on foot through this dimension, Hansen could cover an equal amount of distance in the real world. Traveling through the wintry stretches of Valhalla was taxing and dangerous, however.

History: Hansen manifested his abilities during the siege of his city Eivaan, Norway in April 1940. He used his spear to great effect for three weeks in his country before fleeing to Britain to join the free Norwegian forces.

Although there were some complaints about his young age, the mitigating circumstances of his ability allowed him to be inducted in the British Free Norwegian forces. He trained with the British Special Operations Executive and was soon leading commando teams across the tundra of Valhalla to the interior of Axis-occupied Europe.

On July 18, 1944, Hansen was killed during an assault on what was thought to be a German gun emplacement near the beleaguered Canadian divisions at Caen, but was actually the Twelfth *SS* Panzer Division. *Aesgir* refused to abandon the Canadian troops but could not successfully open a portal back during the German attack. Hansen died trying to protect them with his power. Fourteen of his men made it back to the Allied lines within the city to tell the tale.

The remnants of his spear were recovered by the *SS* and moved under heavy guard to Berlin. It is rumored that after a cursory examination by the *RuSHA SA*, Himmler had it mounted and hung on the wall in the *Hauptamt SS*.

Hansen was posthumously decorated with the Victoria Cross for his bravery. A statue of a split spear marks the spot in Vimont, France, an outlying suburb of Caen, where he died.

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the Norwegian campaign, the Allies marshaled their forces and retreated from the port at Narvik. This debacle led to a shakeup in the British government, culminating in the resignation of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain on May 8, 1940.

May 8, 1940

Winston Churchill Is Appointed Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Winston Churchill had served Britain since 1908, in numerous and varied positions within the British government. He had been demanding that the British military do something about Hitler since 1933, and was finally appointed Prime Minister of the United Kingdom following the resignation of Neville Chamberlain.

A keen observer of world politics (and a former military man himself), Churchill knew Britain had no chance of stopping the German juggernaut on its own. With his newfound power, he immediately set about asking the United States for aid. Churchill had been corresponding with President Roosevelt since September 1939, when Churchill was First Lord of the Admiralty, asking the American president to assist Britain in any way possible.

On the heels of Churchill's confirmation as the new British Prime Minister, the Nazis made a bold grab for France and the Low Countries, while the world watched in awe of the *blitzkrieg*.

May 10, 1940

The Invasion of France

The stunning attack on France began with assaults on Anglo-French airfields by the *Luftwaffe* in the early hours of the morning. At the same time, large elements of German Army Group B swept through the so-called "Low Countries," pushing through Belgium and then southwest into France, just as the Allied planners had predicted—what came next however, was quite unexpected. What the British Expeditionary Force and French Forces did not know was that this move was an extraordinary feint by the German Army, to draw the Allies away from the supposedly impassable Ardennes forest.

German Army Group A swept through the Ardennes forest without difficulty, pushing back the weakened Allies to the river Meuse in less than three days. This *blitzkrieg* stunned the Allies, who had the opinion that the capture of Norway, Denmark, Poland and Czechoslovakia would somehow sate Hitler. Instead, the German Army relentlessly pushed the Allies to the sea.

By May 21, the mass of the British Expeditionary Forces and the remnants of the French and Belgian Armies were surrounded at Dunkirk (other smaller pockets of resistance existed, but none of significant size), and the battle for France was already lost. In less than eleven days, Britain was the last country in Europe that defied the will of the Third Reich.

The "Winoga Wonder"

Still fresh from the official announcement of the existence of Allied Talents, the world press jumped at the story of little Mary Steiner, an 11-year-old girl from Winoga, Wisconsin, who claimed to possess a supernatural Talent of her own.

Mary claimed she could move things with her mind, causing mysterious rappings, disturbances and the breaking of random objects in her parents' household. The phenomenon had been going on for some time, according to Mary's family.

Investigation into the affair by the American Psychical Research Society uncovered a complex attempt at fraud perpetrated by the entire Steiner family, who hoped to collect Howard Hughes' reward of $25,000.

The case was the first attempt by a normal person to fake possession of a genuine supernatural Talent.

May 11, 1940

As the Nazi Night Falls Across Europe, A New Dawn

In the occupied Netherlands, during a bold attack by Dutch partisans, a new and powerful Talent made himself known to the world. Called *Daegal* ("Dawn"), this parahuman could create, project and control light. He could blind people with brilliant displays of light and cause absolute darkness with a wave of his hand. *Daegal* seemed to posses a level of control of his power never before seen. He could simultaneously attack multiple targets, and proved to be extremely dangerous to the Nazis.

Outside The Hague, two *Heer* groups were cut

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○ *Daegal* "Dawn"

Name: Jos Keller **AKA** *Daegal* ("Dawn").
Nationality: Dutch.
Political Affiliation: No known political leanings.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 1/23/21, The Hague, Netherlands.
DOD: 9/20/44 Eerde, Netherlands (Killed in Action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Keller could control the intensity of light with the power of his mind. He could cause blinding flashes or absolute darkness within a large radius about the size of a city block. He was immune to his own ability, and could see through his power's effects without difficulty. In addition, he could affect multiple targets simultaneously at great ranges, and could cause lasting effects that would persist even in his absence.
History: Keller was born in The Hague and spent much of his youth working with his father, as a chimney sweep. That all changed when the Nazis invaded; Keller's response was to immediately flee to the country. As he prepared his departure from The Hague, Keller and his father had a falling out. The elder Keller counseled caution and patience in the light of the occupation, but his son would not listen. It turned out young Keller was right to fear the Nazis. As a dedicated socialist, his father was gathered in one of the *Gestapo's* sweeps and died in Natzweiler concentration camp in 1942.

Keller fought with a small resistance cell and discovered his power during a raid on a German emplacement near Deelen, while disoriented in a sewer tunnel. Wishing he had more light to set fuses by-he suddenly did. Through the utilization of his power, Keller organized several disparate resistance cells into a single unit and wrought havoc all over the Netherlands.

The British tried to draw Keller from the country, to properly train and utilize his abilities, but Keller refused to be corralled and never actively cooperated with the Allies, save on his own terms.

He did throw his hat into the ring during Operation: Market Garden however, and fought alongside Allied Talents during that doomed mission, it was in his own country after all.

Keller was killed by the German parahuman *Der Tragheit* ("The Inertia") during a skirmish in Eerde while trying to make his way to Nijmegen to assist British and Polish troops there. Robbed of inertial motion, Keller's body was flung into the sky and disintegrated in a ball of fire.

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A Surprise for the Nazi Invaders

Through various channels in late May, the news of the Dutch Talent reached the British command. By the end of summer 1940, the whole world knew of *Daegal*. Working with various resistance groups, the parahuman wrought havoc on the newly formed German infrastructure in the Netherlands, killing German troops, derailing trains, and kidnapping and executing Nazi sympathizers. *Daegal* made the fight against the Nazis look easy.

The German command in The Hague would say little of the parahuman, and official edicts from Berlin refused even to mention the matter. Unable to be classified as a threat, or even mentioned in reports to the Reich, *Daegal* remained in a bureaucratic gray area. Hitler still refused to believe that parahumans could exist beyond the borders of Germany, and his toadies, afraid to push the matter, chose to say nothing.

This political invisibility served *Daegal's* cause well.

Rumors From Belgium

By the time Belgium and France were invaded, reporters were expecting the appearance of Talents in the war torn areas of Europe. Rumors abounded in the newly occupied Low Countries about various supernatural beings who defied the Nazi onslaught. Few, if any, were ever verified. Certainly some were true. Many of the newly "born" super-humans never survived long enough to be discovered by the world at large.

One rumor did persist from Belgium, however, and its source was unusual: an edict from the *Gestapo* itself. The document described a young Belgian Communist named Jean Neuman. Neuman was, the pamphlet claimed "Armed and exceptionally dangerous, do not approach. Report any sighting to the office of the *Gauleiter.*" All areas of occupied territory were flooded with posters looking for the youth, which in itself was highly unusual.

When British Intelligence discovered that *RuSHA SA* was behind the flyers, it was a short hop to the cover of the *London Times* just four days later: "Belgian Talent Hunted by *Gestapo!*"

off, blinded with *Daegal's* ability, and then executed by a well-prepared team of partisans. The assault cost over one hundred Germans and forty Dutch collaborators their lives, and gave a much-needed boost to the morale of the newborn Dutch resistance.

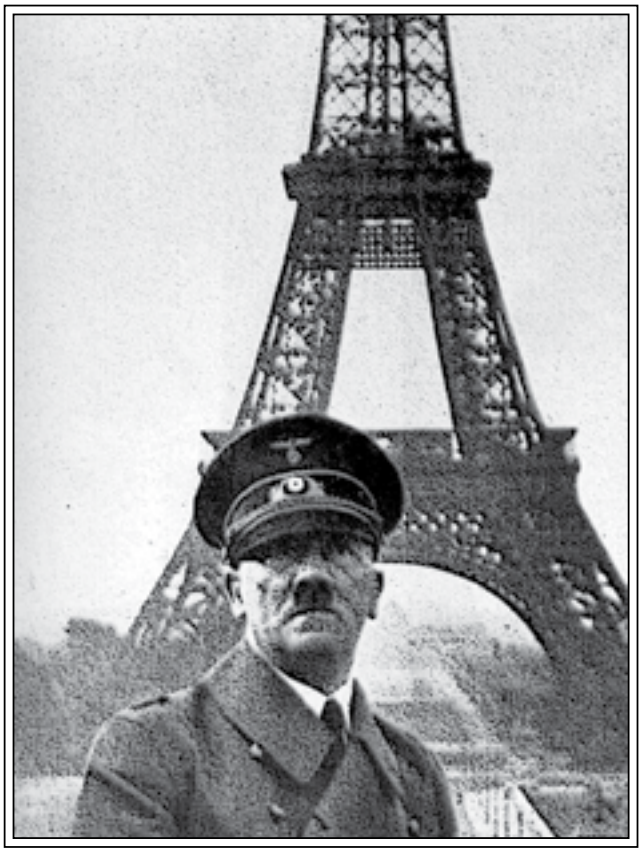
May 12, 1940

Blood In the Streets of Hasselt; the Wolf Is Set Loose

As the Nazi juggernaut rolled through Belgium, many able-bodied Belgian men did their best to slow the advancing tide of tanks and soldiers. Jean Neuman was no different, or so it seemed at first. The little town of Hasselt sat in the crosshairs of the most powerful mechanized Army on Earth, and the men there did not flinch. With weapons gathered from old closets, unused for years, the 200 or so would-be rebels did their best to put a thorn in the side of the German Sixth Army as it rolled through their village on its way to Brussels, the center of the country.

On May 12, the engagement began and ended in the streets of Hasselt, and a new Talent was born. Jean Neuman decimated two infantry units all by himself. When his shotgun was empty, he used his hunting knife; when his knife bent and broke, he used his hands. With parahuman speed and strength he cut his way through men armed with submachine guns and grenades and came away victorious and untouched.

When he was through, forty-seven German troops lay dead at his feet. There was just one thing wrong: He couldn't remember a thing. To Neuman, he had only blinked and found himself surrounded by carnage he could not remember making.



May 14, 1940

L'Invocateur

As the Germans swept aside the Allied forces, and life on the edge of occupied France stabilized, Germans began billeting in the small towns on the border. Most of these towns were under martial law, with curfew enforced by rifle butts and machine guns. Few dared to risk antagonizing their new masters.

Within a week of the invasion, German officers began turning up dead with startling frequency in these towns. In six days, nine were found murdered, most with their throats slit, some marked with

Hugues BOHERS (order #4218034)

○ *Vevel* "The Wolf"

Name: Jean Neuman **AKA** *Vevel* ("Wolf").
Nationality: Belgian.
Political Affiliation: Communist.
Education: Schooling at Hasselt, University at Brussels.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 11/11/21, Hasselt, Belgium.
DOD: 10/9/75, Brussels, Belgium (lung cancer).
Known Parahuman Abilities: When under attack, Neuman automatically entered a parahuman fugue where all threats were eliminated with extreme prejudice. His body unconsciously reacted to perceived threats with no quarter given. In this heightened state, Neuman possessed both parahuman strength and speed. Outside of this fugue, he was completely human and therefore vulnerable.
History: Jean Neuman was a political radical who was rabidly pro-Soviet. He was ejected from the University of Brussels in 1939 for instigating communist riots and openly supporting the Soviet invasion of Finland.

Neuman returned home to Hasselt, Belgium and worked as a baker, watching the events to the east with a growing concern. Like all true communists, Neuman did not trust the Nazis, despite their non-aggression pact with Russia. He spent what little money he had on weapons and canned food in preparation. In March 1940, Neuman set up a hideout in the hills surrounding Hasselt. With other communists, he established a loose system of communication between communist cells in Belgium. Few believed his paranoia, but unlike others, he was not surprised when the first reports of the Nazi attack began to filter back to his hometown. Neuman joined the angry band of men of Hasselt to defend the town. All knew that the road running through Hasselt was the largest in the area, and ran straight to Brussels.

The skirmish was over quickly, and it nearly leveled Hasselt. The men of the town stood no real chance against the Sixth German Army. The Panzers rolled through Hasselt untouched, leaving behind a detail of men to police the few partisans there who remained alive.

Neuman was the last to be discovered, scared and nearly out of ammunition in the ruins of a destroyed church. That is the last Neuman recalled of the situation. When he "woke," over 40 dead German bodies surrounded him, some ripped open, others beheaded. Covered in blood and gristle, with his hands raw, Neuman was otherwise untouched. His shotgun had been shoved completely through a German officer and his knife was bent in half in the ribs of a *Heer* radioman.

Neuman escaped to the hills to continue the fight.

Although he remained aloof to the Allies, *Vevel* cooperated with Allied efforts in his country. He was often consulted by Allied intelligence groups for information on the area. Twice he worked with Allied Talents during raids in the interior of Axis-occupied Belgium.

Vevel killed over 700 Germans during the war and was a national hero. Leading the largest resistance group in the country, he drew many to the cause of communism. After the war, Neuman lost his fervor for communism, as Stalin's atrocities became known in the West. In the later years of his life he was rabidly anti-communist, and protested in marches all over the world against the Chinese and Soviet governments.

He died in Brussels of lung cancer at the age of 53, and was buried as a national hero, despite his lack of ties with the government.

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○ *L'Invocateur* "The Summoner"

Name: Luc Besont **AKA** *L'Invocateur* ("The Summoner").
Nationality: French.
Political Affiliation: No known political leanings.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 3/19/21, Trélon, France.
DOD: 11/30/61, East Berlin, Germany (killed by East German police).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Besont could become invisible (along with his clothing and anything he carried) for indefinite periods of time by closing his eyes. The power was conscious; he could stop it from happening, but he could not disappear without his eyes completely closed. Over the years, he became adept at blind fighting and moving without the aid of his eyesight.
History: Besont was a farm hand that worked for a family outside the small French town of Trélon, a town where the Germans chose to billet. He watched as the Germans first took everything of value in the house, had their way with the two young girls who lived there, and retired to sleep. The family was ejected from the house, and forced to sleep in the barn with the animals.

Infuriated, Besont snuck into the house with his work knife to do away with the German officer. Expecting the Nazi to come to the room alone, the young Frenchman was startled to discover seven Germans entering the room. Frantic, Besont simply froze and closed his eyes, resigned to his fate. For two hours, the men conversed in German within three feet of him. Afraid to cause some sort of reaction in the Germans or to break the spell, Besont kept his eyes tightly shut.

The Frenchman had heard about the miraculous powers of the so-called Talents of the West, and was coming to the realization that he was one of them, when the men left, and the officer prepared for bed. Besont slit the man's throat and left the way he entered.

Returning to the barn, Besont spoke at length with the father of the family and discovered, through trial and error, that he could turn invisible when he closed his eyes. Although the family begged Besont to stay and help them, he refused, and made his way to western France, to cut a swath through the command of the German invaders.

Besont was the terror of the German Army in occupied France. In four years of combat, he claimed the lives of sixty-three officers and thirty-five enlisted men with his knife. Refusing to throw his substantial power behind any of the *Maquis* groups, Besont worked alone. Allied intelligence agencies did their best to try to recruit him, as did General de Gaulle for the Free French Forces of the Interior, but each failed; The Summoner worked alone, always.

After the war, Besont moved to America and was rumored to be employed by the Central Intelligence Agency. East German police shot him in March 1961 as he attempted to cross a border checkpoint while using his power.

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L'Invocateur In France

Unlike many of his Talent counterparts, *L'Invocateur* burst onto the international press scene just scant days after the first murder in occupied France. The fighting in France and the fluidity of the front allowed news of this Talent to escape the country with relative ease. Both his true name and the extent of his powers remained unknown, however.

Even a photograph taken for the Reich Central Security Office of the first murder scene was published in many newspapers around the world.

The thought of an inhuman killer plucking victims from the German Army in France was a test of morale for that (up to that point) unstoppable army. Though little news of the Talent appeared in Nazi-controlled French papers, reports of *L'Invocateur* were widespread in the West. Intelligence bulletins within the *Gestapo* were plain: A killer was hunting German officers in France, and that killer was not quite human.

ritualistic symbols, others disfigured so severely that they were difficult to recognize. The first report of the culprit, a French Talent, was made only because he made a mistake.

L'Invocateur ("The Summoner") was discovered in a locked room with the body of a German *Oberstleutnant*, clutching a knife covered in the man's blood. He was clearly seen, and just as rapidly vanished before the eyes of the men who held him at gunpoint. It was not the last time he was seen. More often than not, he was not seen . . . until it was too late.

May 19, 1940

The Second Nazi Parahuman Appears: *Feuerzauber*

During the retreat of French forces from southeast France, and the advance of the *Heer* into the heartland of that nation, a new German *Übermensch* was discovered. Called *Feuerzauber* ("Fire Magic") by the German press, this parahuman unconsciously converted kinetic attacks into heat. When struck by a force, the kinetic energy would disperse in the air around him as a wave of intense heat proportional to the attack's severity, leaving him nearly invulnerable to modern weaponry.

Feuerzauber was rushed back to Berlin at the behest of Hitler, who, along with *Der Flieger,* anxiously awaited the coming of the new age

Talent Against Skill

RuSHA SA tested the extent of Ernst Karsten's power under the auspices of the *Heer* in June 1940. The *Heer* was very interested in utilizing him as a "one-man shock troop" to pave the way in the face of difficult enemy opposition. To this end, a mock battlefield was set up outside the political prisoner camp at Hurn, which at the time contained about 200 Polish soldiers.

A detachment of these soldiers was instructed to prepare a perimeter. If they could defend it with machine guns and kill the opposing force, they would be freed at the border to Switzerland (in truth no such transfer would have taken place, even if they had won). The soldiers set up and prepared for the assault.

Karsten rushed the position with a submachine gun, but was soon naked and unarmed as the terrified Poles poured hundreds of rounds into him with no effect. Finally, a grenade volley from the Poles managed to knock Karsten down, but the ensuing flash of flame from his body killed all the Poles, making the test a significant success.

of the Aryan race. Soon enough, they believed, every birth in Germany would be as miraculous as their own.

May 22, 1940

The Ghost of Yungping

A Chinese boy scheduled for execution by the Japanese puppet empire of Manchukuo escaped the beheader's blade in a strange way, becoming China's first Talent. Chu Tso-Tsin, up for execution for refusing to bow to a passing group of Japanese officers, went to execution with defiance in his eyes, regretful only that he could not continue to resist the invaders.

In front of a group of 500 Chinese, Chu Tso-Tsin was almost beheaded. The blade swept through his neck with perfect accuracy, but did nothing except come out the other side, leaving his skin untouched. Hacked and shot to no effect, the boy left for the country, as the Japanese did their best to contain the rumors of *Zhao Zheng*, the ghost of Yungping city.

May 25, 1940

The Miracle at Dunkirk

On the brink of victory, with the rout of the British Expe-

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○ *Feuerzauber* "Fire Magic"

Name: Ernst Karsten **AKA** *Feuerzauber* ("Fire Magic").
Nationality: German.
Political Affiliation: Nazi (National Socialist).
Education: Gymnasium at Essen, *Heer* training.
Rank: *Leutnant (Heer). Obersturmbannführer (SS).*
Decorations: Knight's Cross to the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords. Close Combat Badge. *SS* Honor Ring. *SS* Honor Sword.
DOB: 5/17/10, Essen, Germany.
DOD: 1/28/43, Stalingrad, Russia (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Karsten unconsciously dispersed kinetic attacks from his body as a wave of heat. When he was struck by a projectile or force, a sheet of flame would erupt from his body proportional to the severity of the attack. Karsten was immune to this heat, and to natural sources of flame as well.
History: Karsten was a veteran of both the invasions of Poland and Norway, serving in the Eleventh Infantry Corps. A respected soldier, he soon gained the rank of *leutnant* and was marked for even further advancement due to his classic Aryan features and fanatical Nazi ideals.

In May 1940, Karsten was transferred to a command position in the Twelfth Infantry, and acted to coordinate infantry support for tank units. On May 19, his unit came under fire during one of General Charles de Gaulle's brief counterattacks near Laon. Out of his thirty-five men, only Karsten survived the initial engagement.

Bruised and nearly naked, Karsten made his way back to German lines while being continuously shelled by Allied mortars. Witnesses on both sides of the conflict watched as direct hits by the mortar rounds knocked him down in an erupting sheet of flame that exploded from his body in all directions. Four explosions later, Karsten was back behind Axis lines, naked but unscathed.

Karsten was another Nazi *Übermensch*, and he was rushed back to Berlin to enjoy a short stint as a darling of Hitler before being assigned to various trouble spots of the war. Karsten and Konrad Rahn *(Der Flieger)* grew to be close companions, and were used to great effect by the Nazi propaganda machine as a recruitment tool.

On January 28, 1943, Karsten was killed in Stalingrad during an advance towards an oil storage facility on the Volga river. Although the Soviets' shells failed to injure him, the firestorm that erupted in the facility rapidly depleted the oxygen in the area, causing him and his men to die by asphyxiation.

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○ *Zhao Zheng* "The Ghost"

Name: Chu Tso-Tsin **AKA** *Gaki* ("Hungry Ghost"), *Zhao Zheng,* the Ghost of Yungping.
Nationality: Chinese.
Political Affiliation: No known political leanings.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 1/9/25, Yungping, China.
DOD: 10/12/60, Yungping, China (suicide).
Known Parahuman Abilities: From the moment of his Talent manifestation, *Zhao Zheng* was completely immaterial. Several strange anomalies persisted from his physical life, however. *Zhao Zheng* could still lift objects at will (doing so would make them immaterial like himself), although he could not do this to another person. He ate, drank and breathed by somehow converting such items to insubstantiality.
History: Like most Chinese, Chu Tso-Tsin was the son of a farmer, and he worked on his family's farm outside the small city of Yungping. Chu Tso-Tsin refused to kow-tow to Japanese tyranny and became increasingly vocal and demonstrative as he entered adolescence. The horrors of the Japanese puppet state Manchukuo intensified: His grandparents were tortured and killed when he was fourteen, simply for hanging banners celebrating the Chinese New Year that included English characters.

In the spring of 1940, while delivering vegetables to the market at Yungping, Chu Tso-Tsin refused to bow before a procession of Japanese officers who were demonstrating to a visiting dignitary how subservient and quiet the Chinese were. He was dragged off to a public execution for his crime.

When the sword of the Japanese officer failed to kill him because of his Talent power, Chu Tso-Tsin fled the city. Of course, the Japanese were intensely interested in the youth's condition, and soon brought the situation under control.

Japanese soldiers rounded up Chu Tso-Tsin's remaining family members and threats were passed down the grapevine. The Chinese Talent turned himself in to Japanese authorities and cooperated with them. In exchange his family was spared execution and granted special privileges.

Chu Tso-Tsin acted as a spy for the Japanese during the later days of the Pacific War, stealing military documents and scouting occupied islands, immune to all attacks.

In the end, the Japanese executed his family anyway as the Allies approached their home islands.

Chu Tso-Tsin was pardoned for war crimes against the Allies in 1946. MacArthur even testified on the haunted young man's behalf. Chu Tso-Tsin returned to his home in 1951 and lived in peace there for a time, working his family's farm.

He was found dead in his home in 1960, a victim of suicide. He took his own life with a Japanese katana from the war, a gift from MacArthur himself.

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The Ghost . . .

Although rumors did make it out of the tightly controlled Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo of a Chinese Talent, ethnocentrism played a large part in the story's press coverage in the West. Few stories appeared about *Zhao Zheng* until Japan declared war on the United States the following year.

Before the attack at Pearl Harbor, the story of the insubstantial boy in China was filler; afterwards it was front-page news, until the U.S. realized the Japanese had converted the Chinese Talent to their service.

ditionary Force and the remaining French forces in his grasp, Hitler inexplicably had his advancing armies halt outside of the town of Dunkirk. A pocket of a half a million Allied men waited for the Panzers to roll through their ragged lines as their backs were pinned against the sea, but none came.

In Britain, frantic preparations were made for one of the most dramatic escapes in the history of warfare, the evacuation from Dunkirk. In eight days, over 300,000 were moved across the Channel to England by any seaworthy craft that could be found. This number included over 120,000 French and Belgians and small numbers of the Dutch Army who had escaped their country.

The Czech Talent *Pevnost* single handedly transported over 5,000 men across the Channel with his ability before collapsing from exhaustion. Hospitalized for three weeks under great secrecy, it was not clear whether he would survive the strain. Within a month of the retreat from Dunkirk however, he was released, fully recovered.

May 28, 1940

Belgium Surrenders

Finally capitulating, King Leopold III of Belgium regretfully signed the papers of surrender for his country. Overrun in eighteen days, the Belgian Army was crushed, and the King hoped to ease the suffering of his populace by appeasing the invaders.

Although the King's Cabinet fled to Britain, successfully retaining control of their territory in the African Congo, King Leopold III remained behind to mediate some sort of truce. He considered himself like his population, a prisoner of war.

June 5, 1940

The First Man to Jump the English Channel

While Nazi dive-bombers raked the beaches of Dunkirk, and the last remnants of the British Expeditionary Force and French armies limped across the English Channel, a small group of able-bodied men remained behind to hold the fragile beachhead. Many did so even though it meant they would likely never see Britain again.

Captain Jonathan Lear was one of those men. When the perimeter fell and the Germans approached the beaches, Lear fell back to the water's edge, tempted for a moment to try to swim for Dover, twenty-five miles distant.

Instead, for some reason, he jumped.

John Lear shot up three miles in a shallow arc, and landed a minute later on the beaches of Dover. In one jump, he covered twenty-seven miles and became the world's twelfth Talent: Jumping Johnny.

Ecstatic crowds of British citizens carried him into the streets of Dover as a hero.

June 10, 1940

Italy Enters the Fray

Although his forces were insignificant compared to the Nazis, Benito Mussolini declared war against Britain and France, and tried to move troops over the Alps into southern France. This was more of a gesture of goodwill towards Berlin, as opposed to a significant military maneuver. The outnumbered French defenders in the mountains roughly repulsed the Italian forces, humiliating *Il Duce*.

Few (except the British High Command) even noticed the declaration amidst the chaos of the conflict in Europe.

June 21, 1940

A Legend Come to Life, Briefly

Bellerophon, the hero of Greek legend who slew the Chimera and tamed Pegasus rose again in Altyus, Lithuania on the morning of June 21, 1940. Salet Miceweski, striking out against the Soviet soldiers who occupied his town, managed with the help of rioting locals to wrest control of the town from the Soviets for four days.

The Lithuanian Talent was parahumanly adept with any bladed weapon; he could find the weakness of any object, splitting tank steel with nothing but a hunting knife. He was also adept at killing men instantly with a touch, or

A Hero to Call Their Own

The people of Britain and America were ecstatic at the appearance of Jumping Johnny, the first Talent from an English-speaking country. News about the Talent couldn't travel quickly enough. Reporters and press from all over the world descended on his family's home. Under orders from Prime Minister Churchill a detachment of the Home Guard was sent to guard the Lear house from spontaneous looting by his new found following. People wanted to know everything about him: his likes and dislikes, his favorite food, what sort of trousers he wore.

Lear was quickly paraded before the press under controlled conditions. Newsreels of his power were sent all over the world (including a stunning film made by Lear himself as he jumped) and were shown repeatedly to packed houses of moviegoers. Jumping Johnny quickly became a symbol of hope for the free countries of the world.

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Jumping Johnny

Name: Jonathan Lear **AKA** Jumping Johnny, Springheel Jack.
Nationality: British.
Political Affiliation: Tory.
Education: Monmouth School; British Army Training.
Rank: First lieutenant (British Army).
Decorations: OBE, Britain, Victoria Cross (posthumous).
DOB: 10/12/17, Blackpool, England.
DOD: 12/20/44, Stadtkyll, Germany (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Lear could leap parahumanly high, covering huge distances in a single bound. Unfortunately, his leaping ability only worked in twenty-seven-mile increments. The distance and height of his jumps could not be controlled. He remained immune to the destructive effects of his landings, but only at the moment of impact; otherwise he was as vulnerable as a normal human.

Lear's impacts were very destructive. These explosions of energy often killed targets on the ground. When descending, he sounded like a shell crashing to earth.

History: Lear was born in Blackpool, England, to a well-to-do and politically significant family. His father and uncle were both members of Parliament, and his brother served in the High Command during the war.

Since childhood, Lear was obsessed with all things military, and joined His Majesty's Army straight from the plush Monmouth School. He rapidly worked his way through the ranks, enjoying good favor due to his natural talent for leadership and a flair for tactical thinking.

In 1940, Lear was sent to France along with nearly 200,000 British soldiers to protect the country from the threat of Nazi invasion. Poor planning and underestimation of the Germans led to the rapid decimation of the British Expeditionary Force. After the brief struggle for France, what remained of the BEF was bottled up at Dunkirk.

Lear sent his men ahead during the evacuation, refusing to go himself, leaving spaces open for the wounded or fatigued. He and several hundred men chose to remain behind to hold the front line against the Panzers as the last boats filled with men.

When the Germans broke through, Lear leapt the English Channel and landed near Dover, twenty-seven miles distant, nearly killing a group of men gathered on the beach watching the evacuation. Within a day, Lear was a national hero. As the first British Talent, he was a favorite of the Royal Family and world press.

During the war, Jumping Johnny was used as a long-range scout, and could leap for hours, covering hundreds of miles in a single mission. He became adept at map-making and was a valuable asset during the Allied defense of North Africa as well as the push into Germany.

Lear was killed when he accidentally landed in a *Waffen-SS* ammunition storage depot outside of Stadtkyll, Germany, in 1944. His impact ignited the depot and killed a hundred people with a blast that was heard for over 200 miles.

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Bellerophon

Name: Salet Miceweski **AKA** *Bellerophon* (myth name).
Nationality: Lithuanian.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 3/25/20, Bucharest, Romania.
DOD: 6/21/40, Altyus, Lithuania (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: *Bellerophon* possessed the ability to see the flaw in any object, allowing him to maximize the effects of any attack. He could split stone walls with a punch, cause cracks in tank armor with a knife, or kill with a single blow. In addition, he was hyperstrong, swift and parahumanly resistant to damage. Unfortunately, none of these abilities were effective against a rolling artillery barrage.
History: Salet Miceweski was born in Bucharest, Romania and moved with his family to Lithuania as a child. His father worked in a slaughterhouse and Salet worked just as hard at home, maintaining the house for his sick mother. A native of Greece who suffered from lupus, Salet's mother was nevertheless a bright and happy woman, who taught him several languages before his seventh birthday. Salet especially enjoyed the Greek myths and stories his mother would tell him at bedtime.

When the Soviets came to Lithuania in 1940 to occupy his small city, Salet Miceweski was furious at the lack of resistance to the invaders. His mother and father cautioned against overt action, since the Russians had already killed many men in Altyus. Instead, Miceweski took his anger out on inert objects. He punched sides of beef in his father's slaughterhouse for hours to reduce his anger. Soon his powers became apparent.

In 1940, Miceweski found he could punch straight through a full side of frozen beef. Later, he tried his hand at harder objects; when he struck a steel freezer door and split it down the middle, he began to believe perhaps he was one of the Talents the BBC had been talking about so much.

A fistfight with two Soviet soldiers in the spring of 1940 led Miceweski to believe he could make a difference in the war. The two men did not take Miceweski's insults lightly and dragged him off at gunpoint. The young Lithuanian killed them both before either could get off a shot.

In June, he organized a small riot in Altyus that grew until it engulfed the whole city. Taken unawares, the Soviets were easily defeated by the mob. No resistance had been expected.

Four days later however, after a relentless artillery barrage, the Soviet Eighth Army retook Altyus, killing nearly everyone in it, including the short-lived "savior" of the Lithuanian people.

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leveling buildings with a kick.

Bellerophon declared himself the savior of the Lithuanian people, and in a bold statement in a radio message broadcast around the world he predicted, "Soon the Soviet invaders will be routed like dogs."

June 22, 1940

France Capitulates

Bowing before the force of the German Army, the French government capitulated. With its leaders forced to sign a humiliating treaty in same rail car that saw Germany's surrender to the Allies in 1918, France became yet another country occupied by the Reich.

France was divided into two sections. The northern portion of the country was occupied by the Nazis, while the southern portion, technically unoccupied, was run by the pro-fascist Vichy regime. In addition, a small area that had been conceded to France in the agreement that ended World War I, Alsace-Lorraine, was restored as German territory.

France, one of the world's most powerful military forces, had been routed in less than forty-three days.

June 25, 1940

Altyus Recaptured by the Soviet Union

A division of the Soviet Eighth Army raided and crushed the Lithuanian uprising in Altyus. Light tanks and infantry headed by Soviet shock troops leveled the town in a skirmish that also cost the life of the Lithuanian Talent *Bellerophon*, just days after he made his power public knowledge.

Hundreds died on both sides of the battle and the city itself remained abandoned for some time afterwards, littered with bodies, ruined tanks and shattered buildings.

British Maneuverings

By now the Special Sciences Office had developed several contingency plans utilizing Talent powers to help the British war effort. When the news came that the Soviets had been ousted from Altyus, the War Office met to discuss plans to supply equipment to the Talent-led insurgent army.

Britain did not want a war with the Soviet Union; but all the same, it seemed like something should be done. At the time, the Soviets were seen at best to be an indifferent force in the region; one that would make no warlike move against the Nazis. Unless evidence was forthcoming that the Reich planned to violate the treaty between the two powers, the Soviets would continue along their present course.

To this end, Plan J was devised. In it, *Pevnost* would parachute into Altyus and secure a passageway back to Britain. Over a ton of captured Nazi equipment (machine guns, pistols and ammunition) would be moved through the portal to arm the rebels, causing a rift between the two countries, and bringing the Soviet Union in on the side of the Allies.

In the end, the plan was discarded due to its risks. Prime Minister Churchill was loath to risk *Pevnost* in such a manner, and the Special Sciences Office was sent back to the drawing board.

Altyus and *Bellerophon* fell just a few days later.

June 30, 1940

Soviet Special Directive One

By secret order of Stalin, the NKVD (the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) was assigned the task of searching Soviet territories for parahuman manifestations. A divisional headquarters was created in Minsk but was later removed to the interior of the Soviet Union as the Nazis approached. This super-secret division was watched over by the leader of the NKVD, Lavrenti Beria, who was most eager to please Stalin by producing parahumans through any means necessary. It was best to avoid the great leader's displeasure; second chances were never given.

When simple medical and psychological interrogations failed, more drastic steps were taken by the Soviet secret police. Systematic torture and beatings, combined with repetitive indoctrination, were applied to test subjects. Most of these were culled from forced labor camps and prisons, with the hope that this "biological re-education" would spontaneously cause some supernatural manifestation. Over 3,000 innocents were beaten and tortured to death over the course of a year before the first, albeit flawed, success occurred.

July 3, 1940

Naval Confrontation at Mers el-Kébir

Concerned that the considerable French Naval fleet would be brought into the war on the side of the Axis, Prime Minister Churchill ordered the British Mediterranean fleet to cordon them in the port of Mers el-Kébir, North Africa, with the choices: Sail for Britain against the Axis, scuttle the ships, or face a confrontation with the British fleet.

Although hesitant to engage the British, the French tried to fight their way out. Several French ships, including the new battleship *Richelieu,* were severely damaged by a British carrier air strike in the skirmish. However, several other French ships managed to escape the engagement, limping their way to Toulon, the southernmost Vichy French port. Overall, the attack was an extreme victory for the British.

July 10, 1940

The Battle of Britain Begins

To prepare for the coming German invasion of Britain, codenamed "Sea Lion," Hitler first required air supremacy over his intended target. *Reichsmarschall* Göring assured the *Führer* that the peerless *Luftwaffe* would crush the shoestring British air force in a matter of days.

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Under orders from Hitler, *Der Flieger* took to the air to defend JU-88 bombers as they attacked Falmouth and Swansea. In three days, fifteen British pilots lost their lives to the terrifying power of the *Übermensch*. The British were not so easily shaken, however. One Spitfire pilot, Flight Captain Timothy S. Gooden, who survived a sonic-boom assault from *Der Flieger* and still managed to down two JU-88s in the same day, had this to say about the parahuman:

"He's just a man, no matter what they say. One day, something we put up will be fast enough to catch him, and then it will be my chance to take him for a turn."

August 30, 1940

The Month of the *Übermensch*

With great fanfare, *RuSHA SA* announced the discovery of twenty-six separate *Übermenschen* in the month of August alone. At huge rallies across Germany, the *Übermenschen* were hailed as the first of a coming wave of the reborn Aryan race. Allied planners, who believed the battle of Talents was going well, were terrified to learn that the Germans seemed to be producing them with unusual speed, almost as if they could *cause* Talent manifestations.

August 30 was made a special holiday in the Reich in celebration: *Übermenschtag*, or "The Day of the Super-man."

September 3, 1940

The Brits Spring Back

During sortie after sortie of Germans bomber strikes on London and other British cities, eleven new Talents were discovered. More "births" were to come in the following months, and soon Britain would possess more Talents than any other country in the world except Germany.

September 7, 1940

London Blitzed

Beginning on the night of the seventh and lasting the month of September, German bombers pounded the British capital into ruin. By the end of the month over 5,000 people had been killed, 10,000 badly injured, and much of central London was reduced to rubble.

Der Flieger dropped leaflets after each attack encouraging the natives of the city: "If you love your children and family, stop this needless war." Again, Hitler discovered he had misjudged the British people severely.

"Needless war?" one London native quipped after reading one of the flyers. "Did we win already?"

September 13, 1940

Italy Invades Egypt

After a stunning series of accidents and blunders, (including the death of the leader of Italian forces in North Africa, Marshall Balbo, by his own countrymen's anti-aircraft fire), fourteen Italian Army Divisions mounted an attack on the woefully undermanned British holdings in Egypt. They rolled over the border unchecked and made straight for their goal, Alexandria.

Under the command of General Sir Archibald Wavell, the British retreated, gathering what men they could to hold the line further into Egypt. Some 35,000 thousand British soldiers were all that stood between 200,000 Italians and the most valuable piece of property in the Middle East, the Suez Canal.

September 27, 1940

The World Axis Forms

The three great fascist powers of the world—Germany, Italy, and Japan—signed a mutual alliance agreement in Berlin, thereby forming the *World Axis*. Although Germany and Italy had already signed the so-called Pact of Steel some years before, adding Japan to the agreement was seen as an effective and necessary deterrent to keep America from becoming involved in the war. It would be, Mussolini predicted, "The Axis around which the world turned."

It became evident however, that Japan joined the World Axis mostly to place pressure on European holdings in Southeast Asia for further fuel resources.

With this agreement, the world descended further into the morass of ever-growing conflict.

In the Air With the Super-Man

Der Flieger was the nightmare of the pilots of the Royal Air Force. Not only could he fly more than 500 mph faster than Britain's fastest fighter, he could make breathtaking right angle turns, defying the laws of physics.

In combat, *Der Flieger* sonic-boomed his opponents, flying within mere meters of enemy aircraft. The shockwave generated was enough to shatter canopies and deafen pilots; often the turbulence sent the targeted aircraft into a plummeting nosedive, or ripped control surfaces right off.

In total, *Der Flieger* downed twenty-seven British fighters over British airspace during the blitz.

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October 7, 1940

German Troops Enter Romania

To end a dispute between Hungary and Romania over the borderland of Transylvania, both countries agreed to allow the Axis to arbitrate the matter. Generals from Italy and Germany considered the dilemma, and allotted a large amount of territory to Hungary in a complete reversal of the previous agreement.

The Romanians were incensed by the decision. First, a portion of their territory had been annexed by the Soviet Union; now Hungary was taking more! At the request of Romanian Premier General Antonescu, the Third Reich entered Romania, sending the Thirteenth German Motorized Division to Bucharest. This was the beginning of a long-term occupation of Romania by the Nazis. It was a clear message to Hungary.

This "Silent Invasion" sent Mussolini into a fit of rage, because Hitler had not informed him of it. The Italian Dictator struck upon a plan that would infuriate Hitler just as much as it would eventually frustrate Italy itself: the poorly conceived invasion of Greece.

October 10, 1940

The First Female Talent

The supporters of Antonescu's Romanian regime began rounding up those who opposed the ideology of fascism, beating, looting, raping and shooting the outspoken minority who resisted the government's new alliance.

One of these dissidents was a young woman named Antonina Ilescu, who watched as five Iron Guard soldiers beat her father to death in the streets of Bucharest. The elder Ilescu was an outspoken opponent of Hitler, so he was made an example.

Antonina Ilescu screamed in terror as the soldier's rifles smashed her father's head. When her screams rose, the Iron Guardsmen smiled; but when those shrieks rose still higher, all the windows on the street shattered and their ears began to bleed, they knew something was wrong.

Ilescu leveled a block of buildings with her shrieking, killing forty people with a concussive wall of sound, innocent and guilty alike. In the end, only she was left standing, alone at the apex of a cone of destruction.

She fled to the country immediately, before the Iron Guard discovered her.

October 28, 1940

Italy Invades Greece, Greece Invades Italy

In a poorly realized plan to draw the British away from positions in Egypt (the British and Greeks had a mutual assistance treaty), Mussolini launched an invasion of Greece without consulting his Axis partners, causing consternation in the group.

Italian troops, under equipped and in poor morale, were repulsed by the highly motivated Greek Army who managed to sweep the invaders back into Italian-occupied Albania, a portion of which they then occupied themselves. The Greek campaign was a terrible blow to the already flagging Italian war machine, and a humiliating slap in the face of the so-called "Iron Duke."

November 5, 1940

President Roosevelt Is Reelected

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was reelected President of the United States for an unprecedented third term on November 5, 1940. Although the United States was still technically a neutral power, the President was rapidly getting the country ready for war. It took little insight to see the menace coming. Roosevelt formed several government projects to help the enemies of aggressive

Knowledge of *Die Hexe*

Few knew of *Die Hexe* outside of Nazi-occupied Romania. Only *RuSHA SA* had extensive details on *Die Hexe's* identity and abilities, gleaned from their Romanian allies. There was an understanding between the Nazi High Command and Romanian Iron Guard; if captured, *Die Hexe* would be handed over to German authorities for study. This "request" was verbal, placed by agents of *RuSHA SA,* who hoped to keep the matter out of the eye of the German High Command, knowing Hitler's temper regarding the subject.

RuSHA SA scientists had never seen an *Überfrau* ("Super-Woman") before, and hoped that a forced mating between an *Übermensch* and *Überfrau* would produce offspring who possessed paranormal abilities. Many still (wrongly) believed that the mating of such exceptional breeding stock would produce a superior offspring, far more strong, fit and powerful than its parents.

Conflicting commands led to *Die Hexe's* death in 1943. On one hand, the forces in Romania were hoping to capture her, and on the other German soldiers were given orders to shoot any female partisan members sighted. Hitler's obstinance led to two different orders issued on the same subject to the same forces; this led in turn to the premature death of Ilescu.

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○ *Die Hexe* "The Witch"

Name: Antonina Ilescu **AKA** *Die Hexe* ("The Witch")
Nationality: Romanian.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 10/23/22, Bucharest, Romania.
DOD: 1/19/43, Outside Walchev, Romania (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Ilescu could emit screams in the highest ranges of sound, liquefying flesh, cracking stone and splitting metal. This power was very difficult for Ilescu to control, and at its maximum level killed all within several hundred yards.
History: Antonina Ilescu developed her ability spontaneously while her father was beaten to death before her eyes. No witnesses of her first shriek survived the incident.

Fearing capture, she fled to the wilderness to hide. On her fifth week in the forest, she stumbled into a partisan camp, and was taken in, despite her lack of experience. Mostly she cleaned and cooked, but sometimes she fought alongside the men. She never mentioned her ability, and did her best to fit in.

During an ambush in 1942, Ilescu shrieked to disrupt a *Heer* patrol, killing twenty-two soldiers with her voice (deafening three of her companions in the process). The partisans escaped and Ilescu was seen as a much more useful member of the group.

For almost a year, Ilescu used her abilities to kill Germans, and gained the name *Die Hexe* ("The Witch") from those few who survived her attacks. Iron Guard leader Ion Antonescu offered a bounty for her capture, and special detachments of the *SS* were dispatched into the wilderness to "recover" her for *RuSHA SA*.

On January 19, 1943 near Walchev, Romania, a German sniper (who had orders to shoot any female partisan members sighted) shot Ilescu from a distance. She died three days later at the age of 21.

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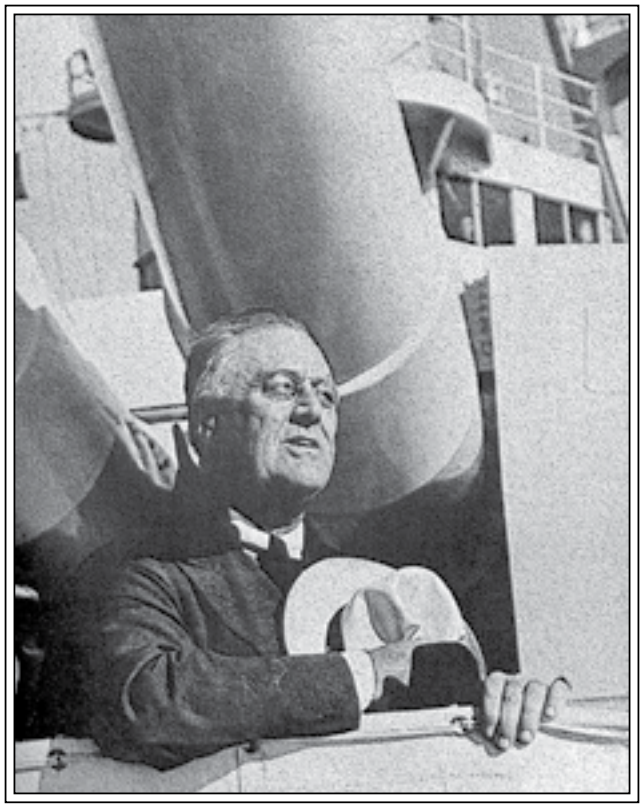
countries all over the world defend themselves. This so-called Arsenal of Democracy was controversial at first, but as invasion followed invasion around the world, public support was increasingly forthcoming. However, some still did not see the darkness coming, or even its source.

Vocal opponents to the President did exist. One of them was Charles Lindbergh, the first man to cross the Atlantic non-stop in an aircraft. Lindbergh led an isolationist group called the America First Committee that was rabidly pro-Nazi. Hitler wooed him in the 1930s when he spent time as a guest of the Nazi government after the kidnapping and murder of his son in 1933, but his true fervor for Nazi ideals began after the appearance of *Der Flieger*.



Lindbergh made it plain in a September 1940 speech at an AFC meeting in New York City: "If Roosevelt is reelected this November, there will be war. I cannot support my country in such an endeavor. Despite my intense love of America, I must go with my heart. When war comes, I will be on the side of truth."

Lindbergh made true his promise in November 1940 by moving to Germany and becoming a citizen of the Reich. His expatriation from the U.S. was a shocking blow to American morale and a victory for Nazi minister of propaganda Josef Goebbels, who used it to great effect in newsreels seen around the world.

November 10, 1940

The Growing Hordes of *Übermenschen*

On this date according to *RuSHA SA* records, the population of Nazi *Übermenschen* broke 400, with more appearing every day. Due to the glory associated with such ability, few kept themselves secret. Almost all voluntarily entered government service.

In addition, the *SS* had become aware of several Jewish, Gypsy and other "enemies of the state" who possessed parahuman abilities. By this time, three of these parahumans had been dealt with, and the reality of their existence expunged from official records. In his tunnel-vision world, Hitler still refused to accept the possibility of parahumans from other countries or races, and branded the Allied footage of their growing pool of Talents as war propaganda.

November 11, 1940

The British Attack Taranto

A surprise attack on the Italian Navy at anchor in Taranto, Italy by twenty-one British Swordfish torpedo bombers left three of *Il Duce's* battleships severely damaged. Only two aircraft were lost in the attack. The British High Command was elated.

Once again, the Italians had proved less than capable in the arts of war.

November 14, 1940

The Blitz of Coventry

For over three nights, beginning on November 14, the British industrial city of

Charles Lindbergh, the Benedict Arnold of the Modern Age

After Lindbergh's dramatic exit from the world of democracy to the world of fascism, a public furor arose over the matter in the United States. One of America's greatest heroes had fled to the side of what many believed to be the worst enemy mankind had ever known. His outspokenness on the subject of the fictional "worldwide Jewish conspiracy" during his AFC meetings alienated many early on, but his departure for Nazi Germany set the stage for the rallies and hatred that followed.

Anti-Lindbergh rallies and the destruction of memorabilia celebrating his 1926 Atlantic crossing culminated in the destruction, by parties unknown, of the *Spirit of St. Louis* on December 5, 1940. With this final brash act, America wiped its hands of Charles Lindbergh, a man who was once the ideal of the American hero.

In Germany, Lindbergh took a figurehead position in the *Luftwaffe*, until America's entry into the World War in 1941, whereupon he refused to participate in the Nazi war effort. He and his wife retired to the open city of Dresden to wait out the conflict. Lindbergh was killed in the firebombing of Dresden on February 13, 1945.

Few in America mourned his loss.

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Coventry was bombed by 500 German bombers dropping over 500 tons of high explosives. Although casualties were low, the Germans did manage to level 50,749 buildings, including St. Michael's Cathedral. Coventry was reduced to rubble.

Out of the attack, thirty-one new British Talents were born, including *Cormorant*, who would become one of the most popular Talents of the war.

November 20, 1940

Hungary Joins the Axis

Seeing the way the wind was blowing in central Europe, Hungary signed the Tripartite Act, joining Italy, Germany and Japan in the growing world Axis. So far, the Hungarians had benefited greatly by siding with the Germans. They had received a large portion of their neighbor's territory when the Axis settled the border dispute with Romania, and gained territory again when Hitler annexed Czechoslovakia in 1938. The brightest future, it seemed, was on the side of the Axis.

They would later regret this choice.

The Legion of Five Thousand

Since Talent activation was often linked to deadly experiences, it is no surprise that in Europe and the Ukraine, the population to manifest paranormal abilities most often were the Jews. Ironically, the Nazis' murderous policies against the Jews led directly to their supremacy as a Talent superpower in the post-war political world.

The gassing, starvation, hanging and mass shooting of Jews created a huge amount of Talent manifestations among their number, far out of proportion with other Talent populations. Although the unofficial policy of Nazi Germany was that no *Übermenschen* existed outside of the pureblooded German population, the *Gestapo* and *SS* had secret programs to hunt down and eliminate the Jewish parahumans, who were seen as a very real threat to the security of the Reich.

Both Himmler and Goebbels knew of the existence of an underground of Jewish parahumans, a fact kept from Hitler until the last days of the war. Himmler had a secret study on the phenomenon written in 1943 by *RuSHA SA* scientists called *Die Rückbildung* ("The Backwards Shape") that examined the "Mixing of Aryan bloodlines and powers with the lower races."

By late 1944, the Jewish underground in the areas surrounding Germany were filled with parahuman *Nephilim* who led a spirited resistance against Nazi forces in the last months of the war. Although there was little solidarity among their numbers at first, the Allied propaganda machine dubbed them the "Legion of Five Thousand" to intimidate the remaining Nazi resistance.

Thanks to this propaganda, the Legion became a reality. *Nephilim* leaders began recruiting Jewish Talents from displaced persons camps. By 1945, their force numbered well over 6,000 Talents—second in Europe only to the Talent Shock Armies of the Soviet Union.

November 23, 1940

Romania Joins the Axis

Not to be outdone by its neighbor, Romania also signed the Tripartite act on this date, joining the ever growing world Axis and becoming allies with its former enemy, Hungary. The Romanian Iron Guard, led by the Prime Minister Ion Antonescu soon imposed a mini-Nazi state in Romania, executing rebels and outspoken citizens with impunity.

December 9, 1940

The Italians Are Routed In Egypt

After careful consideration, General Sir Archibald Wavell detected a gap in the Italian positions in the huge infantry emplacements at the Sidi Barrani, and launched an assault that took the Italian forces there completely by surprise.

Although outnumbered three to one, by December 12 the British had almost 140,000 prisoners of war and were awash with enemy supplies and equipment. In the first significant wartime use of Allied Talents, Jumping Johnny and three other British parahumans were employed in the attacks. Their demoralizing effect on Italian troops was enormous. Hundreds of Italians surrendered after witnessing the destruction the parahumans inflicted on fortified positions.

What began as a simple raid developed into a huge campaign that managed to push the enemy back into Libya. Over the next three months, Wavell pushed further; into the interior of Italian-occupied Libya, taking position after position, until the remaining Italian forces had their back to Beda Fomm on the Gulf of Sirte. By February 7, the Italians had lost more than 600 miles of territory and the British held a huge portion of North Africa.

January 19, 1941

The British Invade Eritrea

British forces began their East African campaign by pushing south into the Italian occupied country of Eritrea. The demoralized Italian forces offered sporadic resistance, but were steadily driven back towards Ethiopia.

Allied Talents, including *Cien* and The Human Bullet carried out concise assaults on Italian strong points, crushing what little resistance the Italians could offer. It soon became obvious that the plight of the Italian Army in Eritrea was dire indeed.

January 29, 1941

Americans, British Meet In Washington

The military staffs of America and Britain met for the first time in Washington D.C. to discuss the blossoming world conflict. These talks, codenamed ABC-1 (American British Conference 1), were held to work out the logistics of a joint

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Cormorant

Name: Michael Foreman **AKA** *Cormorant*, The Dragon Keeper, Eyeball.
Nationality: British.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: University at Kings College. Royal Air Force training. British Special Operations Executive training.
Rank: Flight captain (RAF). Captain (British Army).
Decorations: None.
DOB: 2/2/08, Paris, France.
DOD: 6/7/44, Banville, France (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Foreman's Talent manifested as an invisible dragon that he called "Mr. Mitts," an invisible friend from childhood. Mitts was as big as a horse, could fly, breathed fire, and was overly protective of Foreman, even when the Talent was unconscious or asleep. Despite his invisibility, Mitts left behind huge footprints, made a considerable amount of noise and often went off on his own (though he would usually take commands from Foreman). However, Mitts often had ideas of "his" own, making Foreman's control of him a bit tenuous at times. The dragon would often take matters into his own hands and act out against the subjects of Foreman's subconscious anger or distaste, though the imaginary beast would never kill those who were not out to harm Foreman first.
History: Michael Foreman was an accomplished postal pilot in the Royal Air Force, making runs between his town of Coventry and several outlying coastal cities. In 1933, he set the point-to-point record on the London-Coventry-Edinburgh run in a Tiger Moth biplane.

When war broke out, Foreman volunteered for the Royal Air Force. He was one of the first Hawker Hurricane pilots in Coventry to engage and down an enemy aircraft (an ME 110), and he went on to become an ace. His outstanding record made him the pride of Twelfth Fighter Command, garnering him the nickname "Eyeball" from one of its American volunteers.

On the night of November 15, 1941, Foreman and his squadron attempted to engage the enemy during the "Blitz of Coventry," the second night of relentless bombing by the *Luftwaffe* of the industrial heart of Britain. Of his flight group, only he returned to base—without his aircraft. His life would never be the same.

Foreman's Hurricane had collided in the dark with a Heinkel 111 bomber, crippling both planes. Unable to maintain altitude, Foreman bailed out of the aircraft when fire broke out. Inverting the plane, Foreman cut his safety harness as the flames consumed it. Unfortunately, his parachute caught fire as well. Foreman plummeted from 8,500 feet, screaming.

Suddenly his fall was arrested. Only Foreman could see the creature that saved him: Mr. Mitts, the imaginary dragon that had been his best friend during a lonely childhood. Foreman returned to the Twelfth Fighter Command with quite a story to tell. Luckily, Mr. Mitts stuck around, blowing down doors by accident and knocking the group captain over with a swish of his invisible tail.

Foreman was immediately scooped up by the Special Sciences Office and reassigned to British Special Operations Executive training. He was given the code-name *Cormorant* by the BSOE, but his association with the group did not last. Although Foreman remained quite sure that his invisible friend was nothing more than a Talent manifestation, this did not stop Mr. Mitts from asserting his often-mischievous personality. Mitts remained quite independent, destroying the commanding officer's barracks after the CO made Foreman run extra laps for failing to fall in on time.

Foreman was discharged from the BSOE and termed "unfit for combat duty" by the SSO. He attempted to re-enlist in the RAF and was rejected. Instead, he was assigned to the British Army and detached to diplomatic service. Foreman journeyed with Prime Minister Churchill to the Newfoundland conference, where he demonstrated his Talent abilities to the U.S. president. Roosevelt was quite taken with "Mr. Mitts" and Mitts in turn was quite taken with the president—although Foreman's power made the military police *very* nervous.

Foreman refused to stay in the diplomatic service. In 1942, he signed over to active duty in the British Special Service Brigade after numerous pleas to Prime Minister Churchill and even President Roosevelt. Under the tutelage of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Robert Keyes, who took to the man and felt his special abilities could be quite useful, Foreman became an adept commando. In the following years, Foreman was a significant force in coastal raids leading up to Operation *Overlord*.

Foreman commanded Number 3 Commando team and completed nine successful raids on the French coast, gaining a reputation as a man (and a "creature") who got the job done. In June 1944, Foreman landed in the first wave on Juno beach, fighting his way inland with the rest of the SSO Special Service Squads. He was killed in action by a shell in the town of Banville on D-Day+1.

Rumor has it that Mr. Mitts still haunts the town to this day—a legend that locals believe whole-heartedly. June 7 is still *Le Jour du Dragon* or "The Day of the Dragon" in Banville.

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war effort against the Axis (just in case it came to pass) and to discuss the Lend-Lease bill which was still being considered by Congress.

Although America remained neutral, many in the military saw war as the only possible outcome of the expansionist policies of the Axis.

In a secret communication conducted during the talks, Roosevelt requested of Churchill a sharing of knowledge on the parahuman phenomenon as a show of good faith from the British.

February 8, 1941

Bulgaria Signs a Pact With Turkey

At German urging, the pro-Nazi government of Bulgaria signed a friendship pact with the neighboring nation of Turkey. This was done to prevent that country's involvement in future German military endeavors in the area. German troops intended to use Bulgaria as a corridor through which their forces could attack both Greece and Yugoslavia simultaneously.

February 12, 1941

Rommel Arrives In Tunisia

To save the routed Italian Army, Hitler dispatched *Generalleutnant* Erwin Rommel, leader of the newly formed *Afrika Korps* to reinforce the flagging Italian line in North Africa. Over the next two years, Rommel would reverse the tide of the African war, inflicting heavy losses on the Allies and pushing eastward until the Suez Canal and Alexandria were almost in his grasp.

Arriving in Tunisia along with him were fourteen highly trained *Übermenschen* to support the Axis war effort.

Between a Rock . . .

Desperate for aid from the United States, Britain had little choice but to comply with President Roosevelt's request for information on the Talent phenomenon. Prime Minister Churchill fought valiantly with the British military to guarantee a cooperative effort between the Special Sciences Office and the fledgling American scientific effort in the field.

Churchill hoped to win the American President over with candor, along with some very vital secrets that only the British and the Nazis then possessed. In pressing for Britain's secrets, Roosevelt did what he had to do. By combining forces with the Special Sciences Office, he guaranteed a strong future for the American Talents program.

March 1, 1941

British and Australian Troops Move to Greece

In defensive preparation for what was seen as the next logical step for an Axis invasion, the British High Command moved a large number of Australian and British soldiers across the Mediterranean from North Africa to reinforce the already strong Metaxas line, a series of Greek forts which separated Bulgaria from Greece.

March 2, 1941

Bulgaria Joins the Axis

Bulgaria, already rabidly pro-Nazi, signed the Tripartite act in Vienna, joining the world Axis. Soon after, a large detachment of both *Heer* and *Luftwaffe* forces were moved into Bulgaria from bordering Romania. Hitler was one step closer to uniting Europe under the banner of fascism.

March 5, 1941

The Death of *Jäeger*, the First Parahuman Casualty of the War Between Britain and Germany

Two Hawker Hurricanes shot the German *Übermensch Jäeger* ("Hunter") out of the air over the Libyan Plateau on this date. The parahuman was scouting locations in the western desert for the *Afrika Korps* when he was detected by ground observers and pursued for 200 miles in a daring daylight chase. Although swift and maneuverable, *Jäeger* could not outdistance the aircraft or find cover to hide below.

Flight Lieutenant Jeffrey Rotman, whose face made newspaper covers all over the world, finally blew the *Übermensch* to bits after an hour-long aerial chase. Elated, Churchill declared Rotman the first "Uber-Ace" of the war.

Jäeger was the first parahuman to die in the war between Britain and Germany, and was given a hero's funeral in Berlin, despite the lack of remains.

March 9, 1941

Churchill Dispatches Eleven Talents to Alexandria Command

Under the direct command of General Sir Wavell, eleven British Talents, first of a group trained for military service from the moment of their Talent's manifestation, were moved

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to Alexandria Command. Their orders were to "provide special assistance to British and Commonwealth troops as needed." Although it was not known at the time, this move was to directly counteract the Nazis movement of *Übermenschen* into Tunisia under the command of Rommel.

Churchill was far more concerned about the *Übermenschen* in North Africa than he could ever admit to the public.

March 11, 1941

Lend-Lease Bill Signed Into Law

This law, originally entitled "An Act to Promote the Defense of the United States," allowed the president to lend, lease, or entitle defense materiel to countries that, in his opinion, were defending ideals similar to those of the United States.

The law allowed the country to side step the 1935 Neutrality Act that limited the sale of resources to countries involved in foreign conflicts. President Roosevelt didn't wait long to use it; just days later, a large detachment of American naval ships and ordnance was sent to Britain, the first of many such shipments.

Prime Minister Churchill was ecstatic, and called the law "Hitler's death warrant."

March 16, 1941

British East African Forces Push Into Ethiopia

British troops swept through Eritrea and into the northern portion of Ethiopia, crushing Italian resistance with relative ease. Further assaults into the interior of Ethiopia proved easier thanks to the ceaseless work of the Ethiopian resistance groups, most of which were led by the Ethiopian Talent *Zindel*.

Zindel presented himself and his gun to the leader of the liberating British forces as they crossed the border into his country. Cutting a swath north to meet their liberators, *Zindel* had killed over 1,000 Italians by supernatural and more mundane means. He was soon a favorite of the British command, and his knowledge of Italian positions and the countryside proved almost as valuable as his Talent power.

March 17, 1941

German Defeat In the North Sea

In a dramatic battle, Allied convoy ships (led by the experienced British Captain Donald Macintyre) scored a significant win against the Axis: they removed two of the top German U-boat aces from the war. In a heated exchange between the five Allied destroyers and two corvettes against two outgunned U-boats, the Germans emerged the losers.

The highest-scoring U-boat captain of any war, *Fregattenkapitän* Otto Kretschner, was captured when his U-boat (U-99) was damaged by depth charges. It rapidly took on water and sank, leaving its hapless captain to be ignominiously collected by the Allies.

Even more dramatically, U-100 (under command of *Fregattenkapitän* Joachim Schepke) was cut in two by the British destroyer *Vanoc* and sunk with all hands aboard. All crewmembers of the craft were assumed lost. Later, it was found this was not the case; a single *Kriegsmarine* crewman onboard survived beneath the waves by manifesting *Übermensch* abilities.

Der Seefahrer ("The Seafarer") would take some time to return to Germany; he lived in the North Atlantic for almost a month before finding a U-boat and a way home.

March 21, 1941

Viljo Is Killed

The Finnish parahuman *Viljo*, who haunted the occupying Soviets in his tiny country for almost two years, was killed

Jäeger and the State Funeral

Held at the center of the "Greater German Reich," the funeral of Bernhard Siegling, better known as *Jäeger*, drew more than 100,000 people to the main boulevard of Berlin. Himmler, Goebbels and Hess gave speeches, but Hitler failed to show due to his "extreme grief." Films of the parahuman in flight and several stunning monolithic statues were displayed to the public during the eulogy, and his crypt, a stunning white marble masterpiece created by famed sculptor Josef Thorak, was unveiled.

Der Flieger, *Feuerzauber* and several other *Übermenschen* were present as well. *Der Flieger* proclaimed to the roaring crowds: "When we are done with them, they will wish they had surrendered."

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○ *Zindel* "Protector of Man"

Name: Amina Salasee AKA *Zindel* ("Protector of Man").
Nationality: Ethiopian.
Political Affiliation: Ethiopian monarchist.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 3/23/01 Dangila, Ethiopia.
DOD: 5/13/41 Nonna, Ethiopia (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Salasee could instantaneously transform enemies into salt. This power even changed the victim's equipment and clothing to salt. It sometimes automatically reacted to threats, even those he had no direct knowledge of. The usual range of this power was about 200 yards, but with conscious effort it could be sent much farther distances, as long as the target was within the range of sight.

Use of this power fatigued Salasee, and he often went hours or days in combat without activating it at all.

History: Salasee was born in the tiny Ethiopian village of Dangila to a family of Ethiopian Jews, and worked the land for many years without conflict. When the Italians entered his country in 1936, this all changed. Like many of his countrymen, Salasee took to the hinterlands to fight the invaders. Soon, the Ethiopian resistance was well armed with Italian rifles and equipment.

He remained devoutly religious and often read from the Torah, particularly enjoying its stories of revenge and death, and he outlined a concept of the "justice" of the God of the Old Testament. Salasee began to associate the decadent occupying Italians with the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah, and left religious graffiti on destroyed vehicles and dead bodies as a warning of their flawed ways.

His power manifested one night, unconsciously, as his group moved through a valley. When they came upon the figure of a man pointing a rifle at them at the valley's lip, they blew the man to bits—bits of gray and white salt. The figure, an Italian Army regular who had been waiting in ambush, had been transformed to salt, as was his squad of eight men.

Salasee took it as a sign from God.

Soon he learned to direct "God's will" and set about terrorizing the invaders of his country, killing more than 3,500 men. At the time of his death Salasee was the undisputed leader of the biggest cell of resistance in Ethiopia, although he remained loyal to the monarch of Ethiopia, who lived in exile in the Sudan.

Salasee was killed when he stepped on an enemy mine in May 1941. His body was smuggled to Britain by the Special Sciences Office for an extensive autopsy. The disappointed scientists found no biological mechanism for his ability.

Hugues BOHERS (order #4218034)

○ *Der Seefahrer* "The Seafarer"

Name: Georg Klingen **AKA** *Der Seefahrer* ("The Seafarer"), Hitler's Pet Frog.
Nationality: German.
Political Affiliation: Nazi (National Socialist, after *Übermenschen* transformation).
Education: *Kriegsmarine* training at Wilhelmshaven, *Wasserfall* training in Berlin and Hamburg.
Rank: *Oberleutnant zur Zee (Kriegsmarine). Sturmbannführer (SS).*
Decorations: Iron Cross.
DOB: 11/10/10 Hamburg, Germany.
DOD: 12/1/43 Albany, U.S.A. (lethal injection).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Klingen required no air to breathe when submerged in water. Other substances remained deadly for Klingen to inhale, but somehow water was harmless to him. He could also move through the water like a dolphin, reaching speeds up to 40 miles per hour, and survive indefinitely in the ocean without food. Klingen was immune to the effects of water pressure, but was unable to see in the lightless depths of the ocean.
History: Georg Klingen was a career Navy man who joined the *Kriegsmarine* in the early 1930s to avoid the horrors of the German Depression and his home life. His family had split up violently, with his mother in a sanitarium for the last fatal stages of spinal meningitis and his father in prison for assault. Klingen did his best to make his new job his new life—he had no other option.

Much to his surprise, Klingen found the job to his liking. He worked his way up the chain of command, becoming a favorite of several well-placed *Kriegsmarine* officials. His efficiency and zeal were well received by the German war machine.

In 1940, Klingen was assigned to U-100 as a helmsman under the command of the legendary Joachim Schepke, a U-boat ace who had sunk several hundred thousand tons of Allied equipment. Klingen was an ideal sailor, well suited for submarine work. He gave his all every moment onboard U-100; and while on leave he concocted wild plans for gaining the commander's attention.

Such a moment arrived in 1941 when U-100 surfaced in the middle of an Allied convoy while avoiding a depth charge attack. He directly countermanded an order by Schepke, who saw no choice but to surrender. Klingen tried to use what little charge remained in the batteries to sidestep the destroyer and dive. Instead, the destroyer cut the U-boat in two and it sank with all hands.

Klingen and the rest of the crew attempted to scramble free of the wreckage as it plummeted, but none made it clear. In the dark, as water filled his lungs and the U-boat descended madly to the bottom, Klingen discovered he had become one of Germany's *Übermenschen*. His abilities did nothing to control his mounting fear, however. In the dark at the bottom of the ocean, surrounded by the slowly bloating bodies of his dead shipmates, Klingen lost his mind for a time. Finally recovering some semblance of sense, Klingen began to struggle free from the wreckage.

Extracting himself from the ruins of the sub in the dark two miles down proved difficult, and it took him more than a day of disorienting, terrifying trial and error. Once free, he surfaced like a bullet and took to the ocean like a fish, fully utilizing his powers for the first time.

Klingen boarded U-78 when it surfaced to recharge its batteries on April 19, 1941. Welcomed back in Wilhelmshaven as a hero of the Third Reich, he said nothing of the last moments of U-100.

Soon, Klingen was training with the *Abwehr* project *Wasserfall* as a special agent. The Reich hoped to use Klingen as a long-range scout to spy on British and later American shorelines, a spy who could flee the country any time he wished—if he was near the ocean.

On October 15, 1942, on Shelter Island, New York, Klingen was discovered by a Coast Guard patrol while retrieving buried German sabotage supplies. Klingen was surprised, and when he tried to flee the scene he was shot. His wound was not serious, but his predicament was.

After a very short and public trial, Klingen was convicted as a spy and was sentenced to death by American military authorities. He was executed by lethal injection in Albany, New York in December 1943. His body was remanded to the scientists of Section Two for study.

During his prison stay and trial, Klingen was given the nickname "Hitler's Pet Frog" by the national press. Upon hearing the news of the *Übermensch's* execution Churchill quipped, "I once had a frog as a boy. It died as well."

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The Public Campaign to Detect Enemy Talents

At the height of the war in the United States, nearly 16,000 Talents were discovered and trained. Section Two thought it was likely that many more "undiscovered Talents" existed in the general population; those who had either extremely subtle abilities (such as psychic flashes) or who always possessed an exceptional skill or ability (like Hyperstats or Hyperskills).

Under orders of the president, a public campaign began to alert these possible "Undiscovereds" to their inherent Talent detection ability. It was hoped that they could help detect and capture infiltrating Axis *Übermenschen* like *Der Seefahrer*.

Hundreds of posters and ads ran in American papers beginning in the winter of 1942, with artwork depicting a smiling faced man with no eyes, and the following legend:

"Got a strange feeling about someone? He could be an Enemy Talent!"

on this date by a well-planned Soviet artillery barrage. The few remnants of the Talent's body were recovered and flown under great secrecy to Minsk for study by the Special Directive One group.

March 25, 1941

Yugoslavia Joins the World Axis, Almost

Although members in power of Yugoslavia did sign the Tripartite Pact, the country as a whole remained divided on the matter. Serb Army officers were infuriated with the accord, and prepared to oppose the decision, while King Peter II turned down German "requests" for his collaboration.

This was too much trouble for Germany. Due to the problems evident in occupying an unfriendly Yugoslavia, Hitler decided to invade instead.

March 26, 1941

Heydrich Forms the *Einsatzgruppen*

Under orders from *SS* leader Heinrich Himmler, the chief of the Reich central security office, Reinhard Heydrich, formed the *Einsatzgruppen* ("Action Groups.") These special groups were formed to eliminate Jews and Bolsheviks in territories occupied by the Reich in mass executions.

By 1943, these special units of the *SS* had murdered over 1,000,000 Jews and Bolsheviks.

March 29, 1941

The Blue Accord

In exchange for an extensive commitment of war materials and technologies, the British Government agreed to share their knowledge about the Talent phenomenon with the United States. This super-secret accord, code-named "Blue" was made between Churchill and Roosevelt, and kept at the highest levels of government. The first "payment" of the agreement was the allotment of two new U.S. produced destroyers and a large amount of raw material to re-supply the depleted British war effort.

The British SSO, which had been working on the "how" and the "why" of Talents, opened their files for American advisors, and sent four British Talents to America for study.

March 30, 1941

Talents Clash for the First Time, but Not the Last

With *Generalleutnant* Rommel's push east towards the British lines, the first face-to-face meeting of parahumans in combat occurred on the border of British-occupied Libya. During a tank skirmish between a unit of the *Afrika Korps* and General Sir Wavell's forward defenses, two German *Übermenschen* surprised and attacked seven Allied Talents attempting to turn the German's flank.

Der Tragheit ("The Inertia") and *Dunkelheit* ("Darkness") worked with practiced ease, killing two British Talents while the German cannons wounded two others. In the engagement, *Dunkelheit* blinded opponents, who were then robbed of their inertial motion by the touch of *Der Tragheit*, instantly flinging their rapidly disintegrating bodies off into the atmosphere. When the Allies regrouped and attacked, the British Talent Scythe pulled all the oxygen from around *Dunkelheit*, killing the *Übermensch* instantly, while John Tom flung tanks and other heavy equipment at *Der Tragheit*. After *Der Tragheit* made his escape, a well-planned artillery strike by the Panzer force injured the two other Talents present. A tank shell crippled John Tom, and Scythe was partially blinded in the blast. Both returned to Britain as national heroes.

Puppeteer and Golgotha, the two Talents who died, were awarded with the Victoria Cross posthumously and given heroes' burials in Britain.

Both sides claimed victory in the combat. Britain played up the total German losses, while Germany commented only on the deaths of the British Talents. In reality, it seemed that the combat was more of a draw than anything else.

This first, face-to-face combat between Talents proved to be the harbinger of things to come. To their consternation, all the Talents

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involved in the prolonged combat found their powers not working as easily as they once had. They found it especially fatiguing and difficult to utilize a power when attacking another Talent. It seemed that without the element of surprise, a Talent could protect himself from another Talent's powers. Like in all other forms of warfare, surprise proved to be the most likely method for one Talent to kill another.

This drastically changed the tactics Talents would utilize in the war.

April 3, 1941

RuSHA SA is Expanded

Due to the growing number of *Übermenschen*, Hitler expanded the powers and funding of the *RuSHA SA*, hoping to hone the raw power of the parahumans into an effective fighting force. Although Germany had already lost two parahumans in combat, reports arrived daily from all over the Reich of freshly "born" *Übermenschen*. Training of the *Übermenschen* was moved to a camp specifically built for them in central Germany, run by Professor Albrecht Gebhart, an *SS* "specialist" in race studies.

The most common powers were (by percentage):

- Super strength 35%
- Telekinesis 25%
- Flight 15%
- Various attack powers 15%
- Various other unique abilities 10%

RuSHA SA projected that in less than two years the Nazi parahuman population would top 5,000 (and this was a conservative estimate). Hitler and Himmler envisioned an entire army composed of unstoppable super-humans laying waste first to Britain, and then, perhaps, America.

April 4, 1941

Rommel Pushes Forward

Attacking British positions in El Agheila with the Fifth Light Division, *Generalleutnant* Rommel dislodged the Commonwealth forces stationed there, forcing them to retreat to the Marsa Brega. The Brega was an extremely good position for defense, and the British prepared to repulse the next German attack. Surprisingly, Rommel did not wait. Instead, he attacked the disorganized British forces just a few days later, before they could mount a solid defense.

The *Afrika Korps*, who took and held Benghazi and Mechili, pursued the British forces, now in full retreat, across the desert. With this shift, the Germans secured the Agedabia area of Libya almost two months earlier than anyone had imagined, and Rommel had stolen the spotlight.

The Italian commander in North Africa, *General* Gariboldi, stepped down, retiring in disgrace. In less than a month of reorganization, Rommel had turned the tide in North Africa.

April 6, 1941

Yugoslavia is Invaded by the Reich

German forces poured over the border on the morning of April 6, focusing their might on Serbian positions in Yugoslavia. The Croatians, moved by Nazi propaganda, were assured that an independent state would be established for them when the Nazis won the war. Few of them resisted the invasion.

Young King Peter II fled with his cabinet before he could be captured, forming a Yugoslavian government in exile in London.

Although Belgrade was declared an open city, relentless *Luftwaffe* bombing killed at least 17,000 people. This was a direct message from Hitler himself, who was displeased with the Yugoslavians' resistance to the might of the Axis. Nevertheless, while Yugoslavia remained an almost assured victory, the chancellor's eye was elsewhere on that same date: Greece.

April 6, 1941

Germany Invades Greece

Rolling through Axis Bulgaria, a strong German force pierced the initial border defenses of Greece, only to be stopped short by a series of defensive positions known as the Metaxas line. Although the Greeks and Allies fought valiantly, nothing could stop their flank from being turned as another powerful German force crossed the border from occupied Yugoslavia, and yet another fell from the air in the first and last large German parachute assault of the war on April 21. Soon, all of the Allied forces were in full retreat, or surrounded. A few strong divisions fought the advancing tide of the Axis along with their Allied colleagues, but the outnumbered and under equipped troops proved to be no match for the Germans, and had to fall back or surrender.

The Allied troops were swept towards the sea on the Peloponnesus peninsula and evacuated the country under intense ariel bombardment by the *Luftwaffe*. Thousands did not escape however, and were captured both on the peninsula and on the neighboring island of Crete, where they were surrounded by German airborne troops.

By May 14, after only about five weeks of fighting, yet another country was under the heel of the Nazis.

April 7, 1941

Rommel Takes Derna

Rommel's forces continued their race across the desert towards the British garrison at Tobruk, capturing Al Badya, Cyrene, Barce and Derna along the way. The British abandoned a plan to hold Rommel at Derna, and retreated to the port city of Tobruk. When the Axis failed to halt at Derna, the British Eighth Army continued its retreat to Egypt, leaving the garrison at Tobruk to fend for itself.

Soon the forces of the Axis stood on the doorstep of the last major obstacle between them and Egypt; the port of Tobruk.

April 9, 1941

A Stand of Glory

On the morning of April 9, the XL Panzer Corps encountered a significant threat on the road to Sarajevo in the

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○ *Der Tragheit* "The Inertia"

Name: Oltho Gerbrecht **AKA** *Der Tragheit* ("The Inertia").
Nationality: German.
Political Affiliation: Nazi (National Socialist).
Education: University at Berlin (physics), *Heer* and *Wasserfall* training.
Rank: *Obergruppenführer (SS)*.
Decorations: Knight's Cross to the Iron Cross with Golden Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds. *SS* Honour Ring. *SS* Honour Sword. General Assault Badge. Close Combat Badge.
DOB: 1/29/03, Bremerhaven, Germany.
DOD: 4/30/45, Berlin, Germany (suicide).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Gerbrecht could remove inertia from any object by touch. This would cause the object to be hurled into the atmosphere by forcing it out of synchronicity with the Earth's rotation. The object would usually burst into flames and disintegrate as it flew off into space, due to atmospheric friction.

This power could be turned on and off at will by Gerbrecht.

History: Gerbrecht was a gifted physics professor who enjoyed a brief tenure at the University of Berlin before joining the National Socialist party. Through connections in the party, he began work for the *Luftwaffe* at the *Luftfahrtforschungsanstalt Hermann Göring* ("The Hermann Göring Aerial Weapons Establishment"), looking for ways to reduce friction and drag on long-range bomber aircraft.

His will to succeed led to the manifestation of his Talent in July 1940. For a moment, Gerbrecht thought he had made a breakthrough in the understanding of mass and inertia, but later realized he was causing the unusual effects.

Gerbrecht became one of the first *Übermenschen* to receive training almost from the moment of his power's manifestation. While on his first mission in the service of Rommel in the *Afrika Korps,* he scored the first Talent-against-Talent kill of the war. Later he claimed the lives of several other Talents including *Daegal,* Quagmire and Pulse.

For a short time, Gerbrecht fought on the Russian front before being recalled to Berlin for scientific purposes, making possible the 1944 *Blitzen* satellite launch devised by Werner Von Braun. *Blitzen* was the first object sent into space by any world power.

Gerbrecht found himself increasingly involved in combat as the situation of the Third Reich worsened. In a last-ditch effort to turn the war around, Gerbrecht fought during the ill-fated Battle of the Bulge and caused considerable casualties among Talents and Allied troops alike. He was one of the few *Übermenschen* to escape when the offensive folded.

Gerbrecht died in the *Führerbunker* hours after Hitler and Eva Braun on April 30, 1945. Rumor has it that Gerbrecht disposed of Hitler's body with his power, though the Soviet Union claimed to have recovered the corpse.

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Yugoslavian town Neretva-a new Yugoslavian Talent. Called *Stasio* by the locals, this one man rendered an entire *Heer* Corps inert with his mind-bending illusions. Several German soldiers subjected to this mental attack never recovered, and spent the rest of the war in asylums, others recovered hours or days later, shaken but none the worse for wear.

Neretva remained in Yugoslavian hands for several more hours before the Panzer Corps regrouped and advanced again.

This victory was short lived, as a team of German *Übermenschen* was moved into the area the following day. As a member of the Communist guerrillas in occupied Yugoslavia, *Stasio* was no fool, and fled before the German reinforcements could arrive. A large bounty was offered for his capture or death, and teams of German *Übermenschen* combed the countryside searching for his hiding place.

April 10, 1941

The Oracle Returns

Stories spread in war-ravaged Greece that the *Pythia*, the Oracles of Apollo who once gave counsel at Delphi, had returned. At first, these tales were nothing more than vague rumors among the Greek people; soon, it became clear that the girls who spoke the word of Apollo were once again more than myth. They gave counsel on the slopes of mount Olympus near the city of Katherine, speaking to any who came and made an offering to their God.

Thousands flocked into the war zone, still occupied by the British Force W, to see the miracle at Olympus. The British were powerless to stop the flow of refugees into the area. "I've never before seen civilians head *towards* a war," said British commander Major General Fryeburg when alerted to the problem. In the face of a huge Nazi offensive, the British retreated south, abandoning the civilians and the Oracle both.

By April 23, the Germans arrived at Olympus. At first, they were baffled by the spectacle of the thousands of civilians gathered there, but they quickly secured the scene, and the Commander-in-charge spoke with the *Pythia*.

He was impressed with their knowledge of his personal life, and with the predictions they intimated.

Word was sent back to the Reich that the Oracle had returned.

April 13, 1941

German Troops Occupy Belgrade

German troops entered and occupied the Yugoslavian capital of Belgrade, consolidating their already significant power in the newly acquired Axis territory.

However, the hinterlands of the country were a different matter. Overrun by the Soviet-backed Communists and the Serb Royalists (backed by the British), these guerilla forces would be a threat to the Axis for some time to come.

April 13, 1941

The Soviets Conclude a Second Peace Accord

The Soviet Union signed a peace accord with the Empire of the Japan, securing (so it would seem) five years of peace between the neighbors. The two countries had maintained a strained relationship for some time, after several conflicts on the border of Manchuria ended disastrously for the Russians.

A new uneasy peace secured the borders of the Soviet Union, as Stalin prepared for the worst. He knew it was coming; Nazism and Communism could not exist side by side for long without war. All sides knew conflict was on its way.

No one save Hitler knew how soon.

April 14, 1941

The Australians Hold the Line

Surrounded by the Axis on all sides, the Ninth Australian Infantry Division held the Libyan port city of Tobruk, refusing to surrender it to the Germans. Reinforced only by the sea, the men of Tobruk suffered endless air and artillery

A Debt Repaid

Winston Churchill was such a supporter of Josef "Tito" Brozovich that he airdropped tons of equipment to support the communist guerrillas in their battle against Nazi and Italian forces. In fact, he even dropped his British Commando son, Major Randolph Churchill, into occupied Yugoslavia.

In 1944, Randolph was injured during a raid by German *Übermenschen*. When it became apparent that Randolph actually put himself in the path of a bullet meant for the Talent, the Yugoslavian swore he would do all he could to help British efforts in his country.

When Randolph's condition worsened, he was transported by the British teleporter Jot back to Britain, with the promise from *Stasio* that he would cooperate with the British. He fulfilled this promise with a fervor rarely seen, even by the most enthusiastic British soldier.

Over the next year, he cooperated with the BSOE on seven missions in Yugoslavia and Greece, killing traitors, double agents and Nazi officials, and helping to exfiltrate British agents from the country.

In 1944, with vicious battles erupting all over Yugoslavia, Sajovesek and his partisans, along with a large force of British Commandos fought their way into the town of Banja Luka, hoping to cut off the German retreat, so the Russians could clean them up when they arrived. It is widely believed that Sajovesek leapt in front of a British Lieutenant as a German machine gunner opened fire, effectively taking a bullet to the head meant for the Lieutenant.

Despite intense lobbying after the war by the British Lieutenant and Major Churchill, Sajovesek was not awarded a Victoria Cross, no doubt due to the souring relations between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, who was allied with Yugoslavia.

In 1989, when the Cold War finally thawed, Queen Elizabeth presented the Victoria Cross "For Valour" to Misha Sajovesek, the granddaughter of the famous Yugoslavian Talent.

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Stasio "Stand of Glory"

Name: Janes Sajovesek **AKA** *Stasio* ("Stand of Glory").
Nationality: Yugoslavian.
Political Affiliation: Communist.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 2/11/08, Mostar, Yugoslavia.
DOD: 10/10/44, Banja Luka, Yugoslavia (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Sajovesek could project horrible visions into the minds of his enemies, often causing severe mental illness or seizures. The subject matter of his "projections" was limited to horrible ideas, pictures or sounds. Targets of this attack were overwhelmed, with the real world blotted out for minutes at a time, often causing them to accidentally injure themselves. When his power was active, these visions automatically affected enemies within a quarter mile of Sajovesek while somehow ignoring his allies.
History: Sajovesek was raised in Mostar, Yugoslavia and worked with his father as a metalsmith before the German invasion. Like many young men, he joined the communist guerrillas under Josef Brozovich "Tito," and fled to the mountains when the Germans rolled across the border. Sajovesek discovered his Talent abilities during a raid on a German convoy near Neretva on April 8, 1941. The next day the extent of his power was fully demonstrated as he repelled the XL Panzer Corps with his illusions, covering the retreat of his severely outnumbered force. Momentarily stunned, the Germans pulled back to regroup, and launched a second strike the next day, only to discover that Sajovesek had retreated into the mountains with his compatriots to join Tito's partisans.

Sajovesek fought for three years directly under the command of Tito, using his power to disrupt convoys, troop trains and other vital needs of the Reich that moved through the country. Three times he avoided traps set for him by the Germans, even killing two *Übermenschen* sent to neutralize him. He also cooperated with the British Special Operations Executive in several operations, once working with the British Talent Flip to assassinate a Royalist traitor who in fact worked for the Germans.

During the liberation of Yugoslavia, fighting alongside a group of British Commandos, Sajovesek was struck in the head by a bullet near Banja Luka. He never recovered consciousness and died, in Tito's words, "A hero of the highest order."

A statue of Sajovesek helping an injured Yugoslavian soldier to his feet stands in Sarajevo in Mosa Square today.

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The Mystery of the Pythia

It is almost universally believed that the *Pythia* were nothing more than an unusual manifestation of Talent ability. Talents observing the *Pythia* during their precognitive trances concurred that a Talent power was in use. Unlike other Talent abilities, the *Pythia's* oracular power seemed to belong to no one person; instead, it jumped from person to person, rather like the tribal magic of Talents from aboriginal cultures. The first four *Pythia* were sisters, but over the years, hundreds of *Pythia* have been drawn to Mount Olympus from all over the world. As older *Pythia* drifted out of the Trance and return to normal life, new ones were drawn in.

The ability struck a girl like an illness just before puberty. Similar to autism, it caused an otherwise normal youth to lapse into a stupor from which she only occasionally emerged. During these brief, lucid periods, the youth conversed in "The Voice of Apollo," a deep, beautiful male baritone, speaking the questioner's language like a native. The *Pythia* answered questions about the future for those who make an offering to the god Apollo. The answers, convoluted and strange, usually proved accurate.

It is known that Hitler, a great fan of ancient culture, consulted the *Pythia* before Operation Barbarossa for counsel. Their answer was subtle: "If Germany invades Russia, the name of Hitler will stay on the lips of loyal followers until the dawn of the next century; while Stalin will be forgotten, like a nightmare upon waking."

In this prediction, misleading as it may seem, the *Pythia* were precisely right.

attacks, while Rommel prepared to break their lines. The British Eighth Army, their nearest allies, was located some 200 miles to the east in Egypt.

Rommel launched several large attacks against the Australians, but due to mounting losses, was forced to call off his assault on May 4.

April 17, 1941

Yugoslavia Submits to Nazi Rule

The forces of Yugoslavia could no longer maintain the brutal combat necessary to fight the invading forces of the Reich. A document of formal surrender was signed in Belgrade by the newly appointed puppet regime, installed by Hitler himself.

High in the mountains, the guerrillas prepared for a long hard fight.

April 19, 1941

German Aircraft Blitz London

In the worst aerial attack yet on London, the *Luftwaffe* dropped 35,000 pounds of high explosives on the central area, killing hundreds of people.

Thirty-six new Talents were "born" in the assault.

April 21, 1941

Greece Surrenders

After a valiant fight, the Greek government capitulated to the Third Reich, signing an armistice to stop the war that raged in all corners of the country. The remaining Allied forces on the island of Crete fled; though few ships made it past the endless *Luftwaffe* and Italian naval patrols.

Europe was now firmly within the grasp of the Third Reich. Never truly sated, Hitler turned his eyes to the east and the long delayed invasion of the Soviet Union, code-named Operation: *Barbarossa*.

May 6, 1941

The First USO Broadcast

Bob Hope and a dizzying array of Hollywood stars led the first United Service Organization broadcast for U.S. servicemen from March Field, California on internationally broadcast radio.

Hope opened with a joke about the new world obsession—Talents: "How about those British Talents? I have no doubt Hollywood'll develop Talents of their own shortly. Me, I'd just like to be strong enough to lift my own ego one day. . . ."

May 10, 1941

Deputy Führer Rudolph Hess Bails Out Over Scotland

Hoping to somehow end the conflict with Britain, the Number Three man in the Reich, Rudolph Hess, piloted an unarmed ME-110 fighter to Britain from Ausberg, Germany. At the 1936 Olympic games Hess made the acquaintance of a British aristocrat, the Duke of Hamilton, with whom he hoped to work out an accord. However, the Deputy *Führer* apparently became disoriented during the flight and went off course. He was forced to bail out over Scotland when his fuel supply became too low.

Baffled that the British would not deal with him, Hess was imprisoned in the Tower of London, awaiting the end of the war and a proper trial.

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Impostor, Talent, or Madman?

The reasons behind Rudolph Hess' defection remain an impenetrable mystery. Hess was once Hitler's most trusted confidant and servant, and his flight to Britain confused both the Axis and the Allies. At least, so it appeared to the public.

After his bizarre parachute jump to Scotland and his conviction on war crime charges at the Nuremberg trials, Hess was imprisoned for decades in Spandau Prison in Berlin. For over two decades, after Albert Speer (Hitler's architect) was released, Hess was the prison's only inmate.

Former compatriots of Hess claimed that the man tried at Nuremberg was in fact not Hess at all. Many maintained that some elaborate ruse had been perpetrated, where Hess was replaced by a look-alike. After most of his former associates were executed for war crimes, such assertions came up much less often. But the rumor persisted.

The British maintained such rumors were nonsense and that Hess was mentally ill. When he died in 1987 at age 93, German authorities on site cremated his body and destroyed his personal effects. No one would say why.

Two books released in the early 1990s claimed that Hess was not Hess at all, but an unidentified German Talent. Explanations for his mission to Britain, as well as the reasons for his silence and imprisonment in Spandau, differed in each book. However, both asserted that the only Allied Talent present in the room at the Nuremberg war trials in 1945, Lt. Harmon L. Jackson (sometimes known as "Bubblegum Jackson"), sensed Hess' Talent power.

Jackson died suddenly in 1973, taking the story with him to the grave—without confirming or denying it.

Those who knew who or what the Rudolph Hess who lived and died at Spandau Prison really was—genuine or fake—have likewise taken that secret to their graves.

Infuriated, Hitler eliminated all traces of Hess (once his most loyal servant) and replaced him with Martin Bormann.

Twice, during radio broadcasts about the incident, Churchill implied that Hess had been the subject of an unknown, powerful Talent who could control minds, and that the Deputy *Führer* was only the first target of such an attack.

May 10, 1941

London Is Bombed, Yet Again

In the most severe attack on London yet, incendiary and high explosive bombs dropped by Nazi bombers killed more than 1,200 people.

Ninety-four Talents were "born" during the attack.

British fighter command reported fourteen Nazi aircraft downed by Talents, Spitfires, Hurricanes and antiaircraft guns.

May 10, 1941

British Troops Land in Iceland

Strategically important to power in the North Atlantic, the little country of Iceland struggled to remain neutral during the growing conflict. Once aligned with Denmark, Iceland kept its distance politically since the fall of its sovereign government. It had yet to recognize the new Nazi puppet regime in Denmark or secede from it.

The British made the decision for them. On May 10, 60,000 British troops arrived at Reykjavik, to secure the vital link to America and the Lend-Lease program.

May 13, 1941

Zindel Is Killed in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Talent *Zindel* was killed on this date by stepping on an enemy mine near Nonna, Ethiopia while trying to destroy the last pockets of Italian resistance in his country. His body was laid in a stone crypt by his loyal followers, which was later violated by members of the British Special Operations Executive under secret orders from Prime Minister Churchill.

The body was smuggled back to Britain under great secrecy and remanded to the custody of the SSO for study on June 29, 1941.

May 15, 1941

Operation Brevity

In a series of poorly coordinated attacks by the British Eighth Army, British forces attempted to cut into the German defenses at Bardia and Fort Cappuzo. Instead, they found themselves almost surrounded by Axis forces that swept around their right flank.

In a last-minute feint, twenty-one British Talents managed to disrupt the southern Axis forces long enough for most of the soldiers involved in Brevity to escape. Operation Brevity was a narrowly aborted disaster that could have led to another of Rommel's famous blitzes.

May 16, 1941

Iceland Secedes from Occupied Denmark

With urging from London and support from Washington, the government of Iceland officially seceded from the sovereignty of Denmark. The island was the most vital point on the Convoy route between Britain and America, and a way station for men and equipment on their way to war.

May 21, 1941

The *Robin Moor* Is Sunk

Attacked by the U-boat U-69, the American Freighter *Robin Moor* was sunk on its way to supply British forces in North Africa. This act infuriated the American public, who were already strongly behind President Roosevelt's commitment to support Britain.

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Roosevelt and the national press used this tragedy to great effect as a springboard to further spur America's interest in the war effort.

May 24, 1941

The *HMS Hood* Is Sunk

The largest ship in existence at the beginning of the war, the British battleship *Hood* was sunk in a brief but violent engagement with the German battleship *Bismarck* in the Denmark Strait. Also involved in the engagement were the *Prince Eugen* and the HMS *Prince of Wales*.

Although damaged, the *Bismarck* managed to lob a 15-inch shell into the *Hood's* magazine, causing a fantastic explosion that sunk the 850-foot craft in minutes. The destruction of the ship was so complete that only three men survived from a crew of more than 1200.

Uncontested, the German craft continued into the North Atlantic to disrupt British shipping.

May 27, 1941

The Battleship *Bismarck* Is Sunk

Located through radio direction finding, the damaged battleship *Bismarck* was set upon on the evening of May 26, by Swordfish torpedo bombers launched from the British aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*. Multiple torpedo hits crippled the *Bismarck*, leaving it only able to steam in circles, vulnerable to the British surface fleet.

A day later on May 27, the battleship *King George V* and the battle cruiser *Rodney* fired on the *Bismarck*, igniting a huge blaze. Finally, she was torpedoed and rapidly sank. Only 110 crewmen survived from more than 1,900.

Operation Rascal

This last-minute ploy to disrupt the southern flank of Axis forces on the Libyan plateau in Operation Battleaxe was commanded by First Lt. Reginald "Gabriel" Green, a recently discovered British Talent. Twenty-one British Talents volunteered for the operation, including Jumping Johnny. It seemed like a suicide mission; the Axis forces were hardened veterans, and they had the British dead to rights.

The British Talents waded into the Axis forces on the night of May 15 and did not look back. Working in three-man squads, the Talents destroyed tanks, disrupted communications and sent troops scattering. Two British Talents, Labyrinth and Iron Pete, were killed in action, but the disruption to the German's southern flank was complete. The British forces managed to exploit the gaps in the line and escape back to Egypt.

Gabriel himself had four confirmed tank kills with his sound power. He was later permitted to wear four gold tank emblems on his chest, a gift from Prime Minister Churchill, and was promoted to captain for Rascal's success.

May 27, 1941

An Unlimited National Emergency Is Declared in the U.S.

Concerned with the turn of events in Europe and the North Atlantic, President Roosevelt declared an unlimited national emergency in the United States. "It would be suicide to wait until they are in our yard," he proclaimed, placing the military on full alert; taking yet one more step towards full war.

Also, he pleaded with the public, "those who find themselves in possession of Talents, please report to your nearest government official. Your country, and the world need you. Never has the plight of democracy been more dire . . ."

May 1941

The End of the Battle of Britain

After losing 700 aircraft of various types in a fruitless attempt to crush the spirit of the British people, Hermann Göring officially called off the air war over Britain. Hitler's eyes turned towards the Soviet Union, and preparations began to achieve air superiority over the outdated Soviet air force.

June, 1941

The Office of Scientific Research and Development Is Formed

The pre-war agency known as the National Defense Research Council was re-designated the Office of Scientific Research and Development and given a higher level of security, along with an extensively extended budget.

Led by Dr. Vannevar Bush, this group was responsible for most of the significant breakthroughs of the war, including the Atomic Bomb, the Proximity Fuse and Penicillin.

The Atom Bomb project was given the classification S-1, or Section One-the most important project in development. At Roosevelt's' urging, with the advent of the Blue Accord, the American Talents program (still without any Talents of its own), was given the designation S-2 or Section Two.

By the end of the war, Section Two would be a name synonymous with American Talents.

June 9, 1941

A Surprise at the Berlin Air Show

Thousands gathered in Germany at the Berlin aerodrome to watch a state-sanctioned air show on this date. Cutting edge *Luftwaffe* fighter aircraft filled the air, as Himmler, Göring and Goebbels looked on (the *Führer* was busy elsewhere planning the invasion of the Soviet Union and could not attend). Dozens of bombers, transports and fighter aircraft

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flew in formation over the fascinated crowds as announcers rattled off the names of German aces and the number of confirmed kills achieved in Germany's push to "unite Europe."

At midday, a break in the show signaled a special presentation. A man wearing a bulky silver backpack mounted a pavilion and to the surprise of the crowd, lifted off in a blast of jet exhaust. It was announced this prototype *Düsenpack* or "jetpack" was the creation of an unidentified German scientist in the employ of the Heinkel Corporation. For seven minutes, the jetpack worked marvelously as the test pilot swooped and dove over the crowd, but as it passed out of view of the crowd for a moment, something went horribly wrong.

The test pilot was killed instantly when the jetpack failed, smashing into the ground at over 100 miles an hour. Amidst a mad rush by authorities to determine just what went wrong, the air show was closed and several misleading statements about the accident were released on the national news. Nothing further was ever said about the *Düsenpack* project to the German public.

No one, not even Goebbels or Göring, knew just what had gone wrong.

June 15, 1941

British Talents Arrive in America

Four British Talents arrived in America on this date, to demonstrate their abilities to the Office of Scientific Research and Development in a series of secret experiments, and to participate in a public relations tour promoting the Lend-Lease act.

Recently discovered by the SSO, the Talents were a huge smash with the American public, and their names and faces filled the headlines for weeks. This tour also brought a groundswell of popular support for the President's stance on the war in Europe. At first hesitant to reveal what the SSO had learned, Churchill was very pleased with the outcome of the tour. Three other tours followed.

The four Talents were:

Arthur M. Smith, a projecting pyrokinetic who could control the temperatures of objects.

Templeton Ruperelia ("Bolt,") who could fly, but only in straight lines.

Grant Kearney ("Pop,") who could distort the air pressure in objects, causing explosions or decompressions.

Lloyd Feit ("Bulldog,") a super-strong 98 lb ectomorph.

The Birth of "Talent Technology"

Gunter Koen, the creator of the *Düsenpack* was the first example of a specialized Talent power that would later be known in the Allied countries as "Goldberg Science." Koen could design and build devices decades or centuries more advanced that his contemporaries, but in reality, his "inventions" were nothing more than a focus for a very versatile but fragile Talent ability. Even Koen himself was unaware of his power until shortly after the crash, and believed he was simply a very gifted scientist. In actuality, the *Düsenpack* that Koen constructed worked only because Koen's Talent power to warp reality *made* it work.

Several early test flights of the pack (in which Koen himself was the test-pilot) were wildly successful, so much so that Hitler was informed and permission was granted to demonstrate the device at the Berlin air show. The doomed propaganda flight, flown by test pilot *Oberstleutnant* Björn Kafsack, was the first and last public demonstration of Talent technology in Germany.

Shortly after the debacle it was determined that Koen was a Talent (exposed to other *Übermenschen*, Koen's ability was easily detected) and that his *Düsenpack* failed to operate when not under his direct observation, which caused the catastrophic failure.

After an extensive examination by *RuSHA SA* and several tests, it was determined that Koen's devices could neither be replicated or work outside of his observation. He was considered from that point on as close to useless as an *Übermensch* could be in Nazi Germany. In 1944, after being drafted into a regular army unit, Koen was killed near Salonika in combat with the Russians.

The "plans" for his *Düsenpack* remain on display at the Berlin Museum of Science and Technology to this day.

June 15, 1941

Operation Battleaxe

Under the direction of Field Marshall Sir Percival Wavell, reinforced British forces in North Africa launched a spirited attack against the Axis lines at the Halfaya Pass on the border of Egypt. This disastrous move was meant to draw Rommel out into a full-blown battle at Gabr Saleh; but Rommel was wise, and waited. German forces enjoyed superior equipment, and their tanks were deadly effective in combat, able to fire at and penetrate British tanks at almost double the range of the Allied tanks.

The Eighth Panzer Regiment, Fifth Motorized Panzer Division fought the British to a standstill with major engagements at Fort Cappuzo, Sidi Suleiman and Point 208.

In two days of combat, the British lost ninety-one tanks and a thousand men. The offensive failed, and Wavell, its architect, was removed from command of British forces in North Africa.

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The Second Great Wave of American Parapsychology

The study of parapsychology, (the science of the occult and supernatural), which enjoyed a stint in the late 19th and early 20th century as a popular American pastime, saw a dramatic revival in the wake of the arrival of the British Talents. Newspaper articles, magazines and films delving into the subject became a commonplace sight in American cities, and the average American polled was reported to believe in almost anything: ghosts, aliens, past-lives, and, of course, "super-men."

Even "reputable" learning institutions took to the study of Talent phenomenon (which most agreed was linked to some so-called "psychic ability.") In September 1941, Princeton University formed its own school to study Talents, even though information about it was very limited at the time. The Princeton University School of Psychology, Parapsychology and Physics (called by its attendees "the 4P") would grow dramatically in funding and scope over the next six decades, and became the world center for the public study of Talents.

June 19, 1941

SS Überkommandogruppen Is Formed

By decree of Hitler and placed under the control of *SS* Commander Heinrich Himmler, *SS Überkommandogruppen* ("Super Commando Groups") was formed on June 19. This force of elite, highly trained *Übermenschen* would grow continuously during the war. Within a year it would top 500 members. Himmler successfully lobbied to automatically gain control over any new *Übermenschen* "born" within the Reich, thereby consolidating a considerable amount of power. At the time, the *Übermenschen* were divided between various military jurisdictions, depending on previous military membership, what portion of Germany they were "born" in, or if they were already members of the Nazi party.

Hitler wanted the power of the *Übermenschen* within the *SS,* his personal protection force, so he made *SS* membership mandatory for all new *Übermenschen.* German parahumans already trained and placed within the German command structure remained as is, unless they desired to be reassigned to the SS. Not surprisingly, many did.

Überkommandogruppen was concerned with specialized assaults, rescues or behind the lines attacks. They also were heavily trained in assassination techniques, although this was a carefully kept military secret.

Only truly unique *Übermenschen* were accepted within the ranks of *Überkommando,* whose tests were tremendously brutal. Himmler stressed comradery and faith in Nazi doctrine within the group, taking his fanatical racial beliefs to new and frightening levels. They were portrayed to the German public as the epitome of the Aryan ideal.

A second, more general division of *Überkommandogruppen* was formed as a *Waffen-SS* division for those who could not pass the brutal testing. Called the *SS-Heinrich Himmler*, this division did not reach full strength until the last months of the war, and only saw combat once, during an attempt to push the Allies back to the sea in the Battle of the Bulge.

A secret division within the German *Abwehr* (the German spy agency) was formed as well, called simply *Wasserfall* ("Waterfall.") This group trained *Übermenschen* for spying, sabotage and assassination duties around the world.

June 22, 1941

Bulldog "Keeps Whatever He Can Lift"

In a famous demonstration of his abilities during a well-staged publicity stunt, the British Talent Bulldog was allowed to "keep whatever he can lift" in Albany New York's National Guard Armory. Several rich American patrons (including Howard Hughes) offered to purchase for Lend-Lease whatever the Talent could lift in a one-hour period.

Bulldog lifted 152 tons of vehicles and equipment in 60 minutes, once pausing to bend down and retrieve a machine gun from the ground while holding an 8.5-ton half-track over his head in one hand. This photograph made the cover of *Life* magazine, along with the headline:

"The Talented Elite Who Fight Tyranny."

June 22, 1941

Operation *Barbarossa*

Hoping to disrupt the unprepared Soviet Army, the *Heer* and *Luftwaffe* employed a deadly series of coordinated strikes against Soviet Forces at their shared border, rapidly bypassing strong points in a swift push for the heart of Russia.

These border areas were rich with farmland and oilfields, but Hitler was also interested in the Soviet Union's nearly unlimited pool of human resources- slave labor to power his war machine.

The assault force fielded by the Germans was the largest ever seen in warfare; almost 3,050,000 men totaling 149 divisions leapt across the border on the morning of the June 22. Supported by artillery and aircraft, German tanks and men smashed any defenses the Soviets could muster, and enormous inroads were made by the *Heer* divisions as early as the first week of fighting.

At first Stalin refused to believe that an attack was under way, although various intelligence sources warned him of the immense build-up evident on the border for some time. The paranoid leader believed the warnings were an Allied ploy to make him move against the Nazis prematurely.

Wave after wave of Soviet divisions fell and as the Panzers rolled closer to Moscow, it seemed that the age of Stalin (and Communism) had reached an end.

June 22, 1941

Baba Yaga Is Born

After almost a year of experimentation at Minsk by the scientists of Soviet Special Directive One, the first significant success at "biologically re-educating" a parahuman was achieved. Subject 3009, a male recovered from a forced

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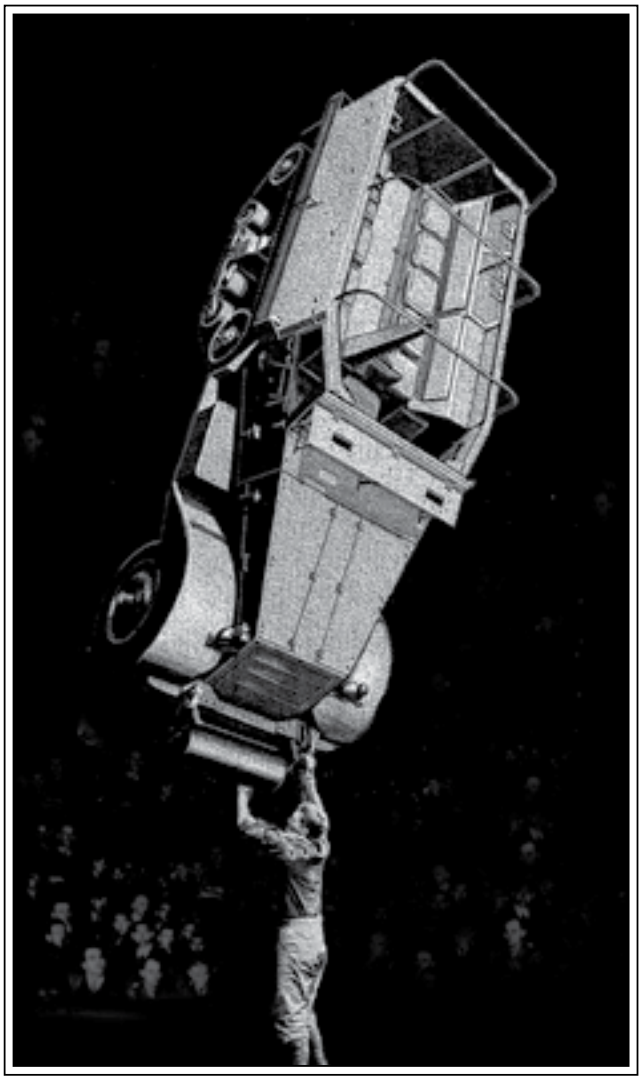
labor camp, displayed an impressive array of telekinetic abilities, but only after he was subjected to a regime of torture and indoctrination which, in the past, had killed even the strongest subjects. Somehow, Subject 3009 managed to survive; despite his emaciation and the fact he was suffering from both dysentery and bronchitis.

Subject 3009 began unconsciously defending himself with his telekinetic powers. During the first major manifestation of his abilities, two scientists taking a blood sample from him were killed, ripped to shreds by 3009's mind. It was about this time that the Directive scientists realized that the man was suffering from the early stages of paranoid schizophrenia. Stalin was alerted to 3009's presence, and was advised by the Directive to abort the experiment. The scientists felt they could learn much more from dissecting his corpse than experimenting with his powers any further.

Stalin refused. His mind was elsewhere. The news had just arrived that the Germans had crossed the border in a dozen places from the Black Sea to the Arctic Circle. He ordered them to continue. More terrified of Stalin than their test subject, the Directive complied.

Seven other scientists died in reflexive responses of 3009's power over the next week. Stalin and Beria waited for a definitive limit to the man's power to be determined, hoping he could aid the war effort. A demonstrative example was shortly forthcoming.



June 27, 1941

Baba Yaga Escapes

In the early morning hours of June 27, just a day before German forces took the city of Minsk, Subject 3009 began screaming incoherently about "the witch and the house." This was followed shortly thereafter by spontaneous poltergeist activity throughout the compound. Two handlers sent in to sedate 3009 exploded in bloody sprays of organs and gristle. Heavily armed guards were placed outside the holding section and chemical weapons were brought in. At 04:00, the walls in 3009's holding cell began to split from the relentless bulldozer-like assault from the madman's mind.

"*Baba Yaga, Baba Yaga, Baba Yaga . . .*" was all 3009 would say. Stalin finally authorized the use of Sarin nerve gas at 04:14, and the Army pumped the facility full of it, killing hundreds of test subjects as they remained locked in the lower levels of the facility.

As the gas seeped into 3009's cell, silence reigned… but only briefly. Then *something* broke free.

Descriptions varied, but all agreed what they had seen was some sort of house: a small ornate and brightly colored wooden shack, perched on top of many pale long crustacean-like legs. The thing left a trail of carnage in its path from which few escaped, reducing the Directive Installation to corpse-laden rubble in a matter of minutes. One hundred fifty-four people died in the conflagration, and the House escaped into the Pripet marshes to the northwest of Minsk, walking away on its ponderous legs before reinforcements could arrive.

In the aftermath, Stalin ordered an exhaustive search of the area surrounding the German lines. The enormous thing wasn't found.

But it would not be the last time it was seen.

July 12, 1941

Vichy Forces Surrender in Syria

Held by Vichy French forces since the fall of France in the summer of 1940, this country became a vital base for the Germans in North Africa. From it, missions were flown against the British forces in Iraq and elsewhere. Fearing a German build-up, the British decided to invade.

A force composed of Indians, Australians, British and Free-French troops crossed the border from Palestine and Iraq, and made a beeline for Damascus. On July 12, after some furious fighting, the Vichy forces in Syria surrendered to the British, and a Free-French government was set up in its stead.

July 19, 1941

The SSO is Stumped

After two weeks of careful dissection, the British Special Sciences Office completed its extensive autopsy on the Ethiopian parahuman *Zindel*. Nothing unique about the body was found by the vast array of doctors and specialists

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○ Baba Yaga

Name: Real Name Unknown, Subject #3009 **AKA** *Baba Yaga* (myth name), *Das Spukhaus* (The Haunted House).
Nationality: Russian?
Political Affiliation: Unknown.
Education: Unknown.
Rank: Unknown.
Decorations: Unknown.
DOB: 6/22/41 Minsk, Russia (date of talent manifestation; true DOB unknown).
DOD: Unknown.
Known Parahuman Abilities: It remains unclear whether the man who was *Baba Yaga* actually transformed into a small house on spider-like legs or projected an image of one. The shack appeared to be a 16th-century Russian cabin measuring about 3m x 5m x 5m, perched on a cluster of legs measuring about 7.9m tall, ending in huge serrated pincers. The form was was incredibly strong. It once lifted a 76.8-ton Panzer tank with its pincers, turned it over in three limbs, and dropped it, apparently bored with its quarry.

Baba Yaga was able to disappear into a miasmic fog at will, and vanish from sight in an instant; whether this indicated great speed or some kind of invisibility (or even teleportation) was also unknown.
History: Due to the unforeseen destruction of the Special Directive One facility in Minsk, including the files of this parahuman's history, not even the Russians know anything about Baba Yaga's true past.

Once free from the facility, *Baba Yaga* was seen on several occasions in remote locales, wandering the countryside. The NKVD took an active interest in tracking down the parahuman, but could only find a trail of disappearances, sightings and deaths linked to the creature's escape.

When the Germans pushed further into Russia and broke through the Soviet lines near Kiev, *Baba Yaga's* appearances became far more frequent. Fields of dead soldiers were often discovered in isolated locales after they had been reported missing for days. The monstrosity killed both German and Russian soldiers alike, holding no political affiliation save to destruction itself.

At the heights of the Russian winter, the house-thing was seen haunting the endless plains of snow near battlefields and ruined cities. It seemed to be drawn to misery, fear and death, often picking through corpses left behind after combat.

Thirteen Russian T-34 tanks once attacked it simultaneously in the only organized attempt made to kill it. In answer to this barrage, which would have leveled a city block, the house-thing stood up slowly and began walking *toward* its attackers.

With the end of the war, the sightings of the house-thing dwindled. The last confirmed sighting was in 1951, on the plains of ice near Archangel. Since then, only spotty reports exist to indicate this parahuman is still alive at all. Perhaps it still exists, awaiting another great conflict.

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rushed in to perform the first Allied autopsy of a parahuman cadaver. Two American scientists from Section Two were allowed to observe the proceedings, but had little to add.

The brain of the subject was examined at length, but nothing in its structure was found to account for *Zindel's* Talent abilities. The prime minister's hopes that the SSO could develop some sort of test capable of identifying parahumans were dashed; but Churchill did not give up on the SSO, and expanded their discretionary budget for further studies.

August 4, 1941

The Prague Riots or the "August Uprising"

On August 4, 1941 the Czech parahuman *Pevnost* launched a well-planned, heavily armed assault on several high-security Nazi facilities within the city of Prague. Luckily, *Pevnost* had had access to doors within several buildings that the *Gestapo* and *SS* were using as headquarters; one of them had actually been the equivalent of his grade school! Using his Talent ability, *Pevnost* linked a passage from London to Prague. Through it, British commandos and partisans struck, taking almost all of their targets by surprise. Within hours, the "August Uprising" was news around the world.

The Czech partisans and commandos held the city for four days, convening impromptu trials and prosecuting ten high-ranking Nazi and Czech Nazi officials, including the acting president of the Nazi puppet state Slovakia, Father Josef Tiso, and *SS Reichsprotektor* Reinhard Heydrich. Sentenced to death, the prisoners were shot in front of roaring crowds of Czechs on the morning of August 6. Partisan and BBC radio broadcast hourly reports on the status of the Free Czech troops.

When news that the *Prince Eugen SS* Panzer division was being moved towards the city reached *Pevnost,* the Talent began to remove his forces from the country in the same way he brought them in. Out of the estimated 2,500 partisans who participated in the uprising, only 209 (eleven of whom were British) were killed in the retreat from Prague, thanks to the tireless efforts of *Pevnost*.

August 9, 1941

Churchill and Roosevelt Meet in Newfoundland

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill met for a top-secret conference at an undisclosed location (said to be "somewhere in the North Atlantic") to discuss a number of issues. The Invasion of the Soviet Union, the expansionism of Japan, the plight of the British forces in North Africa, and the concept of the Atlantic Charter were among the topics laid out on the table.

Roosevelt arrived on the U.S. Navy Cruiser *Augusta;* while Churchill arrived by more paranormal means, to avoid the Nazi U-boat wolf packs that prowled the north Atlantic. The nearly exhausted Talent *Pevnost* brought the Prime Minister through a doorway in the British battleship *Prince of Wales* only *after* the ship arrived safely at Placentia Bay. *Pevnost*, Bulldog, *Cormorant,* Basilisk and Flip (among other Talents) were present to demonstrate their abilities to the American President, who had yet to meet a Talent in person. (It was politely not mentioned that in event of an attack, the Talents could act as bodyguards for both Churchill and Roosevelt).

Roosevelt was impressed by the abilities of the British Talents and congratulated *Pevnost* on the brief uprising in Czechoslovakia. Moved by the plight of *Pevnost's* people Roosevelt promised "steel, oil, ammunition and weapons . . ." for the Czechoslovakian government in exile, "to help them reclaim what is rightfully theirs . . ."

Under special orders of Prime Minister Churchill, Bulldog was detached to American service. He was, in the words of the Prime Minister to "watch over the President, and if necessary, give your life for him, for in his hands is the fate of all you hold dear, boy." Although the U.S. military was livid that an outsider was given such an important assignment, Roosevelt was pleased that such a well-known symbol of British power would never be far from his side.

Bulldog remained Roosevelt's adjutant throughout the war, an unofficial bodyguard with a very public image, who never strayed more than a few feet from the fragile President if he could help it.

August 14, 1941

The Atlantic Charter

Composed during the Placentia Bay meeting, the Atlantic Charter was a document formalizing an agreement between the powers opposed to Axis expansionism. Drafted by Roosevelt and Churchill, the agreement guaranteed self-government for all nations, access to material and trade to all countries (victor or vanquished), and that the Allies would not sue the enemy for a separate peace. Germany had been forced into economic ruin by the Allies at the end of World War I, causing a state of political upheaval where fascism could rise to power; the Atlantic Charter was created to prevent such a situation from happening again.

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Bulldog

Name: Lloyd Arthur Feit **AKA** Bulldog.
Nationality: British.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Grade school.
Rank: Major (British Army).
Decorations: Distinguished Service Medal (U.S). OBE (Britain).
DOB: 9/22/12, Coventry, England.
DOD: 11/11/99, Coventry, England (natural causes).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Feit was superhumanly strong. At his "physical" peak, he dry-lifted a 64-ton crane and held it over his head for nine minutes. His power circumvented basic physical laws. For instance, Feit needed no leverage to lift weights and could affect objects with much greater mass than himself. He once stopped an oncoming 10-ton halftrack moving at 40 miles an hour with an outstretched hand, and his feet did not even dig into the dirt!

In addition, Feit was superhumanly resistant to damage, but this power was far less reliable than his Hyperstrength. As far as SSO scientists could determine (they were not willing to risk injuring him by truly pushing the limits of his power), Feit was nearly invulnerable to damage when frightened or particularly motivated, but this invulnerability soon faded.

History: Lloyd Feit was the fifth son of Nathaniel Feit, a well-known boxer, and later, a well-known beer brewer from Coventry, England. Unlike his brothers, Lloyd did not inherit his father's physique, and was always small and sickly.

Lloyd was also not much in school, but his endless determination and stick-to-it-iveness impressed both his father and brothers, who called him "Bulldog" as a nickname. Many scraps at school were prevented by his brothers coming to their "little one's" aid, but Lloyd never backed down, no matter the danger.

When conscription began in the late 1930s the Feit boys joined up, or tried to . . . and all but Lloyd were accepted for military service. He stayed in Coventry working at his father's brewery, continuously re-applying for entry into the armed forces. Rejected three more times, he finally began working on improving his physique, a task with which his father was quite familiar.

The elder Feit tried to help get his son into some semblance of physical fitness and as always, Lloyd gave his all, but little changed. He remained the classic 98-pound weakling.

The elder Feit tried to gently discourage the boy, but that proved impossible. They had a screaming match in March 1941 that ended with Lloyd lifting a 200-pound weight in one hand and throwing it through a wall in anger.

At his father's urging, Lloyd returned to the local recruiting office. This time, after Feit lifted the recruiting officer over his head in one hand, the military reconsidered their decision.

After a brief stint at Hedge Manor for study, Feit was signed over (much to his own consternation) to diplomatic missions for the British Army. The SSO classified his Talent as "unreliable," and he was recommended for non-combat duty. His trip to the United States (along with three other Talents) proved to be a huge boost to the British war effort.

At the direct request of Prime Minister Churchill, Feit was signed over as a bodyguard for President Roosevelt in August 1941. He remained loyally by the side of the president until Roosevelt's death on April 12, 1945.

Feit lost two of his four brothers in the war, and in 1945 lost his father to brain cancer. "You've no idea what it is like to lose a father twice," Feit told the *New York Times,* referring to his close relationship with President Roosevelt. Feit volunteered for service in the Far East to continue the war against the Japanese, but by the time the paperwork was filed the war had ended.

Feit returned to Britain in 1947 and ran the family business happily until the late 1960s, when he retired. In 1988, he sold the lucrative "Bulldog Beer" license to a consortium for a huge amount of money.

Feit died at the age of 87 in Coventry, England, father of four, grandfather of nine, and hero of the British Crown.

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Roosevelt and Churchill made their agreement implicit and publicly announced their intentions towards the Axis. It seemed obvious now that America would eventually enter the war, but where and when still remained a mystery.

August 15, 1941

The Section Two Report

After more than a month of careful study, Section Two submitted a secret report on the anatomical and psychological testing of the British Talents to President Roosevelt. The report documented "anomalies" evident in the manifestation of Talents, and clearly documented eleven instances where Talents violated physical laws while using their abilities.

Bulldog, for example, was monitored while lifting an 11-ton weight on a pile of sand, on top of a large scale. When the Talent lifted the weight, the scale remained at 169 pounds (measuring both the Talent and the sand). Somehow, Bulldog's Talent made the 11-tons "invisible" to the scale. Also odd was the fact that Bulldog easily lifted and handled the weight, despite the fact that he was of insufficient mass to move it and lacked the proper leverage. Bulldog not only moved it with ease, his feet *did not sink into the sand* while he was lifting it.

The American scientists were certain that Talents represented some sort of "mind over matter" power that was newly developed in mankind. Unlike the Nazis and the British, (who also would shortly arrive at the same conclusion), it was their initial recommendation that the American Talent program be more concerned with psychology than with physics or anatomy.

August 21, 1941

Hitler Takes His Revenge

Between August 21 and August 30, 200 Czech citizens were rounded up from two towns, Lidice and Levzacky, and shot. All structures within the towns were dynamited and bulldozed. German radio boasted that Lidice had been "completely erased" from the face of the Earth.

Pevnost took notice, and the fate of those townsfolk prevented him and his organization from taking any further blatant action against the central powers in Slovakia. From then on, the Free Czech forces limited their attacks to military positions, and stayed away from the command structure of the Nazis in Czechoslovakia.

September 19, 1941

German Troops Occupy Kiev

German troops pushed the disorganized Soviet forces back, rolling into Kiev, the center of the Ukrainian heartland less than three months after the beginning of Barbarossa. Eight days after the Nazis arrived in Kiev, they crushed organized resistance in the city and instated martial law.

The capture of the capital of the Ukraine proved not as significant as first believed by the German High Command. When he heard that the Swastika was flying over Kiev, Hitler declared, "The enemy is broken and will never be in a position to rise again." He would soon find he had misjudged the Russians just as he had the British.

September 22, 1941

The Fire of Kiev

As German forces began the dangerous process of weeding out the remaining Soviet forces in Kiev, an incident occurred which, for a moment, put the certainty of German power in the area in doubt.

A unit from the German Ninth Division was clearing houses on the west side of the river when communication with them was lost. A series of explosions prompted the German commander to dispatch troops to repulse what he believed at first to be a Soviet sneak attack. Reports were sporadic, but as the clouds of smoke grew, and the first reports came back, it became clear that a fire was spreading throughout the western sector of the town.

Within the hour, the flames were rising more than sixty feet in the air, leveling buildings and causing a roaring wind to rush through the streets. German troops were forced to pull back, but not before a strange figure was sighted amidst the flames. A naked man was seen by German officers walking without concern in the midst of the huge conflagration, apparently untouched by the blaze.

The western area of Kiev was shelled for more than an hour, after which, the fire died down. As snow began to fall on the morning of September 23, over a quarter of Kiev had been leveled by fire and shelling, although the remains of the mysterious "fireman" were never found.

A report of the incident was filed with *RuSHA SA* and promptly covered up. It was a well-known fact that Hitler did not believe that parahumans existed outside of the Reich. With a soaring budget and explosion in the *Übermenschen* population, *RuSHA SA* wanted nothing to do with the situation.

September 23, 1941

General de Gaulle Forms the Free French Government in Exile

General Charles de Gaulle formed the Free French National Liberation Committee on this date in London to promote the eventual emancipation of France. De Gaulle, a clever statesman and politico, maneuvered himself into positions of power in both Free French Africa, and the Free French Government in Exile in London (as well as being the unofficial, but widely accepted leader of much of the French Resistance in occupied France). In an attempt to consolidate his power, de Gaulle tried to contact the French parahuman *L'Invocateur* in occupied France, without success. Even de Gaulle could not sway *L'Invocateur* to a united cause.

An egoist of mythic proportions, de Gaulle was seen as a thorn in the side of the Allies. Despite many detractors, de Gaulle remained the premiere French military icon, and his power lasted long after the end of the war.

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September 29, 1941

The U.S. and Britain Send Advisors to Moscow

To determine the needs of Soviet forces in their war against the Nazis, both America and Britain dispatched advisors to consider the problem from the front line. At first, Churchill considered sending Talents as an indication of British commitment; his distrust of Stalin made him reconsider. Churchill secretly feared that Stalin would hold the Talents "hostage" or keep them for medical study. At the time, Britain had no knowledge of the Soviet Special Directive One's attempts to create parahumans of their own.

Instead, several British and American military officers were sent.

October 17, 1941

Hideki Tojo Becomes Prime Minister of Japan

The fragile peace between the United States and Japan took a turn towards the worse when the moderate government of Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe was removed and the military man Hideki Tojo took his position.

This move directly linked the Army of Japan with the ruling Imperial Diet, removing all those who could possibly oppose outright war from the governmental process. The government was now filled with those calling for war against the U.S.

Tojo made a name as a Military Policeman and later Chief of Staff of the *Kwangtung* Army occupying Manchuria, and was well known as an Anti-Western hardliner.

Peace in the Pacific seemed to be an unlikely outcome of such a governmental shake-up.

October 20, 1941

Operation Typhoon Falters

This huge offensive against the Soviet capital of Moscow, launched at the beginning of October, enjoyed early success with the Germans capturing almost 700,000 prisoners of war and coming within sixty miles of the city, but there it stopped. Moscow, the ultimate goal of Operation: *Barbarossa*, was seen as the ideological capital of the Soviet Union. With it occupied or destroyed, Hitler believed the Soviet Union would be his.

Due to Nazi successes, preparations were made by the Soviets to set up a new capital 500 miles away on the Volga River, at Kubishyev. Many government officials had already evacuated to continue the fight if Moscow fell, but Stalin and his staff remained in the bunkers beneath the Kremlin, directing the war from the front-line itself. The city was relentlessly bombed by *Luftwaffe* raids which flew overhead unopposed, as the Soviet air force had been almost completely annihilated just weeks into the conflict. The situation was dire.

Almost all of the Ukraine was under Nazi control, but when the rains of the fall began, Operation: Typhoon stalled. Wheeled vehicles sunk into the mud and even animals and men had difficulty moving through it. The same thing happened to Napoleon, and then the vicious Russian winter put paid to his up-to-that-point unstoppable army.

Madly stubborn, Hitler refused to retreat in the face of the terrible Soviet winter. Instead, the German forces hunkered down, surrounding the Soviet capital, as Stalin waited for his ultimate weapon to be unleashed: the relentless Russian snow.

October 31, 1941

The DD 245 *Reuben James* Is Sunk, and America Gets Its First Talent

While escorting a convoy of supply vessels to Britain on the morning of October 31, the American destroyer *Reuben James* was torpedoed by the German U-boat U-562. The well-placed shot struck the ship in its magazine, causing an immense explosion that split the craft down the middle. In less than a minute, its flaming wreck raced to the bottom. This first devastating attack by the Nazis against American military forces claimed 114 lives, many of which died in the water during the ensuing depth-charge battle.

Ensign Lawrence Moreland, an American sailor, survived the blast, even though he was sitting on top of the magazine when it exploded. During his early morning watch, Moreland and another Ensign spotted the torpedo in the water as it rushed towards the *James*, but it was too late for the dated ship to react in time. Moreland hunkered down and prepared for the blast.

When the explosion occurred, Moreland was flung into the air in gout of flame, which did nothing but burn off his clothes. After arcing more than 300 feet in the air, he landed in the

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water a quarter of a minute later, 2,000 yards from the rapidly sinking remains of the *Reuben James*. After a few minutes in the water, the British transport vessel *Victory* picked him up.

Moreland was completely untouched by the explosion (except for the lack of clothing), and instantly concluded he had become America's first Talent. Moreland was nearly incoherent as he was pulled aboard. The British crew attempted to restrain the crazed, naked American, but Moreland broke free and leapt three stories from the bridge of the transport to the main deck, headfirst, confident that his Talent would save him.

It did.

Instead of breaking his neck, Moreland crashed to the deck; immediately sprang to his feet shouting, "I'm indestructible!" The Brits radioed other American ships in the taskforce with the startling news. It was on his way off the *Victory* that Moreland learned his new invulnerability had limits. While Moreland was preparing to get into the launch, a mate aboard the *Victory* struck him in the back . . . whether as a joke or to test his Talent, no one knows. Moreland was knocked flat by the surprise attack, so badly injured that he urinated blood for three days. His Talent only prevented attacks or injuries Moreland knew were coming. Surprise attacks remained as surprising, and deadly, as ever.

He was transferred to the American Destroyer *Eustis* and rushed back to the United States under great secrecy. This did not stop the incredibly well informed Prime Minister Churchill from congratulating President Roosevelt the next day in a private communiqué.

"If there was a more fitting way for good to rise out of an evil so great, I could not think of it. America's 'Indestructible Man' shall be quite a potent weapon indeed. This is nothing less than yet another nail in Mr. Hitler's coffin."

November 6, 1941

The U.S. Commits to the Soviet Union's Plight

Backed by an almost unanimous vote from Congress, President Roosevelt promised the Soviet Union over one billion dollars to support their war against the German invasion. Few in America were optimistic about the Soviet Union's future. The Nazis had made enormous inroads in their initial attack and their previous successes in France and the Low Countries made their defeat seem all but impossible. Nevertheless, Churchill and Roosevelt agreed, absolute commitment against Nazi tyranny was a necessity.

This act, and its implications were felt at all levels of government in every major power then involved in the war.

In secret, the solidarity of these world powers was far from solid. Churchill and Roosevelt both agreed that their research into the secrets of Talents was too important to risk giving to Josef Stalin. Inquiries by the Soviet Union into the SSO and Section Two programs were flatly denied.

November 10, 1941

President Roosevelt's "Godlike" Address

In an address to the nation, President Roosevelt announced both the sinking of the *Reuben James* and the discovery of America's first Talent, Lawrence Moreland, the Indestructible Man. This speech sent shockwaves through the media and the public. For more than a week, little else appeared in the newspaper besides stories of Moreland and his abilities. Even the war in Europe seemed to pale beneath the story, at least in the U.S.

Roosevelt's famous "Godlike" speech would become one of the most significant pieces of literature written about the nature of Talents. It ends with the following statement:

"Now we have our own Talent. A son of these United States, who is invulnerable to all weapons turned against him. Never before has the power of creation been so directly placed within the hands of humanity. Godlike in their abilities, let us hope this new breed of man will carry the burden of a suffering world to our ultimate and unwavering goal—freedom for all the people of the Earth."

November 10, 1941

Churchill Rattles His Saber

In an announcement, Prime Minister Churchill made plain that any attack on the United States by the adventurous and unpredictable military government of the Empire of Japan would immediately cause a state of war to exist between Japan and Britain.

This saber rattling did little to convince the Japanese Imperial Diet one way or another. Britain was seen as an interloper in the Pacific, and little feared; most of their might was half a world away.

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The Indestructible Man

Name: Lawrence Clyde Moreland **AKA** The Indestructible Man, The World's Smartest Bomb.
Nationality: American.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Some grade school.
Rank: Ensign (U.S. Navy). Captain (U.S. Army).
Decorations: Purple Heart, Silver Star, Distinguished Service Medal (U.S.); OBE (Britain).
DOB: 4/13/11, Booth, U.S.A.
DOD: 2/14/77, Lynhaven Roads, U.S.A. (cirrhosis).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Moreland was immune to the effects of *any* damage inflicted on his body, as long as he knew it was coming. This immunity encompassed radiation, cold, heat, friction, acid and every other force that would usually damage the human body. Equipment and clothing in Moreland's possession were not protected. He was completely normal otherwise, subject to damage and death just as a normal human, provided he had no indication damage was forthcoming.
History: Moreland was born in Booth, Virginia to a poor coal-mining family. At thirteen, Lawrence (Clyde to his friends) was forced to work in the mines to support his ailing father. Because of this, Moreland learned quickly to despise his family, who he believed stole his childhood. His obligation to his siblings and mother kept him around, at least for a time.

When his father died of "black lung" in 1933 and jobs in the area began to dry up, Moreland left Booth and joined the U.S. Navy to avoid the growing effects of the Great Depression. He worked for four years onboard smaller ships in the Lynhaven Roads yards. The work pleased him, and he stayed on for another term of service. Soon, it was the only thing he could imagine doing.

In 1941 with the growing hostilities in the Atlantic, Moreland was itching to get into the thick of real combat. He was assigned to DD 245, the *Reuben James,* in January 1941, and rode on three convoy runs to Britain and North Africa before the *James* was sunk.

After his Talent manifestation, Moreland was reassigned to the Department of the Army under the direct orders of President Roosevelt. Endless propaganda reels demonstrating his invulnerability were made for public consumption. As America's first parahuman he was a hero, superstar and role model. Endless books, comic books, novelizations and movies came out during the next five years fictionalizing his (up to that point) rather boring life.

In late 1942, Moreland began training with the fledgling commando school at Achnacarry Castle. As The leader of Talent Operation Group 1, he served on eleven missions into occupied countries. In addition, he was on the first wave of the Section Two First Talent Assault Group sent in on the Overlord invasion to soften up the enemy on D-Day.

Moreland was friendly with many Talents, who knew him as a down-to-earth, capable warrior. A small hub of international parahumans operating out of Britain became fast friends later in the war; among their number were *Cien*, *Vogel*, *Aesgir*, Jumping Johnny and, of course, the Indestructible Man.

Moreland was infuriated by the death of *Cien* during Operation Market Garden in late 1944, and swore to hunt down the *Übermensch* responsible for it, *Krieg*. He was also officially reprimanded in 1945 for making public statements against Field Marshal Montgomery, the British General who devised the ill-fated airborne operation.

In 1945, Moreland's wish came true as he and *Vogel* confronted *Krieg* in the ruins of Leipzig. Moreland executed the German (who was attempting to surrender) with a direct bazooka shot to the head. *Vogel*'s testimony on his behalf during the court-martial hearings that followed saved Moreland's career and reputation. Without it, he might have served prison time.

After the war, Moreland was a popular figure in the news. In 1955, he survived a ten-megaton explosion at the TRINITY testing grounds, walking away from the blast with only his hair messed up. This feat has yet to be topped by any other Talent. Three movies were even made, based on his highly modified fictional life.

This popularity ended in 1958, however, with the release of a book called *Prodigal Son.* Written by his youngest brother Stuart Moreland (who Lawrence Moreland had not seen in years), the book detailed Lawrence's foul temper, drinking and racism, as well as the abandonment of his family in the midst of the Great Depression. Always eager to participate in the fall of a star, the public ate it up. With this scandal, more stories on Moreland's life (both true and fictional) were printed.

Moreland's star declined further in the 1960s, with stories popping up from time to time of his reprehensible conduct during the war towards Jewish POWs and blacks. However, these stories appeared with less and less frequency as the world slowly forgot about him.

In 1977, in Lynhaven Roads Virginia, Lawrence Moreland was found dead in his tiny apartment, a victim of liver failure due to excessive drinking. He was 66 years old.

America's Indestructible Man had finally self-destructed.

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November 14, 1941

The *Ark Royal* Is Sunk

U-81 sank the British aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*, less than fifty miles from its destination, while it was attempting to deliver a group of Hurricane fighters to Gibraltar.

In under three years the *Ark Royal* had hunted U-boats in the Atlantic, patrolled the Norwegian sea, hunted the pocket battleship *Graf Spee*, fired on the German Army during their invasion of Norway, sunk the light cruiser *Königsberg*, attacked the French fleet in port at Mers-el-Kébir and opposed the Italian and German navies in the Mediterranean.

Though severely damaged by the attack, the *Royal* was able to evacuate most of her crew and make its way towards Gibraltar at quarter speed. A minimal crew guided the crippled craft towards Gibraltar in the hopes of getting it to port. Unfortunately, when it lost power just twenty-five miles from Gibraltar the ship had to be abandoned. Only one crewman was lost in the attack.

November 16, 1941

German Troops Surround Sevastopol

When Soviet resistance in the Crimea collapsed, the defenders that remained retreated to the fortress port of Sevastopol to hold out for as long as possible. The port was surrounded by minefields, defended by a huge array of mortars and machine guns and continuously restored with fresh Soviet troops by sea. The German Army settled in around the fortress to capture the city through siege.

A special unit of *Überkommandogruppe* called *Sektion Blau* ("Blue Section") was rushed to the front to perform behind the lines attacks, but they did not arrive soon enough.

Commander of the German-Romanian Eleventh Army, *General* Gerd von Runstedt barely sidestepped a devastating bomb attack made, it was rumored, by unknown Soviet Talents. When a bomb detonated in a command tent far behind the front line, four of von Runstedt's staff were killed.

Knowing of Hitler's mercurial temper on the subject, von Runstedt did not let word of the attack go far. British intelligence found out about it, however, and soon after, the United States as well.

The two Allied powers considered for the first time bringing the vast human resources of the Soviet Union into the Talent equation. SSO and Section Two believed it was possible that the Soviet Union could have the largest population of parahumans to date; and not even realize it.

November 21, 1941

The March of Time Newsreel of "The Indestructible Man" Premieres in New York and Los Angeles

With lines stretching city blocks, thousands swarmed movie houses to watch a special *March of Time* newsreel of the American Talent, the Indestructible Man demonstrating his parahuman abilities.

In the film, the Talent was shot, stabbed, blown up and set ablaze by flamethrowers, without any discernable effect. Moviegoers could not get enough. People drove nine hours to wait in line for twelve hours to see a 30-minute newsreel, and left smiling. Those who waited in line for days sat through the film in awe and then promptly got back in line to do it all over again.

"It's the most amazing thing I've ever seen," New York's Mayor LaGuardia was quoted as saying after viewing a special screening of the film, "this is history." Over the next few weeks, more newsreels of the American Talent were released across America, and the world was once again left speechless by the powers of the Talents.

November 24, 1941

Forces From the U.S. Marines Occupy Surinam, Dutch West Indies

The United States sent an occupying force to the Dutch West Indies to prevent Japanese adventurism in the Pacific. Invited to occupy the island by the reigning government, the Marines were to defend the islands in case of Japanese attack.

Few in the command structure of the Marines believed such an attack to be imminent. In this, as in so many other assumptions, American forces would be proven wrong.

November 25, 1941

The *Barnham* Is Sunk

U-331 launched four torpedoes at the HMS *Barnham* as it sailed in the Mediterranean Sea, sending her to a watery grave. Three torpedoes struck the *Barnham* broadside, making her the first Battleship sunk by submarine attack during the war while under way. The ship listed and sank rapidly killing 861 crewmen.

It was later discovered that one man survived the attack by teleporting back to Britain. This man, Yardley Smythe, later known as "Rook," would play a significant role in the British Talent war effort.

November 18, 1941

Auchinleck's Offensive

This huge Allied offensive in North Africa reversed the position of the war in just a few months. General Auchinleck gave the order for the British Eighth Army to move forward on the morning of the November 18. Despite bad weather, the Allied forces made early gains, sweeping aside the Italian forces near Sollum and pushing back the ill-prepared Axis defenders on the border of Egypt. Rommel's troops were located almost 100 miles from the action, surrounding Tobruk, the target of Auchinleck's advance.

Initially, Rommel did not react to the attack. Instead, he placed both his Panzer divisions at Sidi Rezegh and waited. When the British engaged the Panzer force, the battle became too chaotic to properly manage, with small forces fighting one another without direction or clear orders.

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○ Rook

Name: Yardley Smythe **AKA** Rook.
Nationality: British.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Two years university, London College. British naval training. British Special Operations Executive training.
Rank: Lieutenant commander (Royal Navy). Captain (British Army).
Decorations: OBE (U.K.); Distinguished Service Medal (U.S).
DOB: 2/2/16, Earle, England.
DOD: —
Known Parahuman Abilities: Smythe could teleport himself any distance on the planet, to any location, whether he had seen it before or not. In this displacement, Smythe would switch places with an equivalent amount of mass from the destination. This "target mass" could be anything provided it was the same weight as Smythe. However, it had to come from one whole target.

Smythe could even "switch" places with a human target, provided it weighed the same as him (often clothes or other inert substances on the body of the subject were left behind to even out the transfer). He could consciously choose between a living or inert target for this switch.

Smythe's power was not fatiguing. He could "Rook" his way from point to point, covering hundreds of miles in a matter of seconds, leaving a wake of transported materials or confused people in his wake. Unfortunately, the power sometimes took minutes or even hours to "lock on" to a proper mass to "rook," depending on the distance.
History: Smythe was born on the coast of Cornwall in Britain and grew up sailing. As a young man, he took to fishing with his two brothers, running a small but successful fishing business. In 1937, with growing tensions in Europe, Smythe joined the Royal Navy, as did one of his brothers. He soon found himself promoted to an officer's rank in the thinly stretched organization.

Smythe enjoyed good favor among his colleagues and was marked early for advancement. In 1939 he transferred to the *Barnham*, serving onboard until its sinking in November 1941. During the firestorm, Smythe's Talent manifested itself for the first time and he suddenly found himself back in Cornwall, several hundred miles from the sinking wreck, having switched places with most of a small tree. Covered in soot and soaking wet in his Royal Navy uniform, Smythe turned himself in to the local authorities, but it took some time before London command sorted everything out.

Smythe was studied by the SSO, who determined that his Talent was of significant use to the Allied war effort and assigned him to British Special Operations Executive training. Smythe performed sabotage and insurgent campaigns for the BSOE for several years, inserting himself into France and even Germany with his power.

In 1944, the British Army recruited Smythe for an operation codenamed "Blitz." Conceived by an SSO analyst, this plan hoped to slim Smythe down to the exact weight of a very special German, no less than *Führer* Adolf Hitler himself. Smythe could then switch places with the dictator, putting Hitler into Allied hands. Apparently, the information leaked out of Germany by British spies was inaccurate, or Smythe failed to match *Der Führer's* exact weight. Either way the plan failed and Smythe was on a miserable diet for seven months to no effect.

After the war, Smythe worked for British intelligence, using his abilities to get information out of the newly formed so-called republics of the Soviet Union. Apparently, this work did not agree with him.

Smythe moved to the United States in 1983 and toured the country. He soon became something of a society figure in New York and Los Angeles, popping up in the strangest places—in biographies, movies and even music videos.

Well into his eighties as of this writing, Smythe is one of the last Talents of the war to survive into the modern era—and he shows no signs of stopping.

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Here Rommel made an uncharacteristic mistake. Thinking the British had committed their entire force to the offensive, Rommel ordered one hundred of his tanks to disengage from the defense of Sidi Rezegh and race for the Egyptian border, hoping he could capture Alexandria or even Cairo while it remained undefended.

By the time Rommel realized his mistake on December 1, it was too late. Auchinleck's offensive had reached and relieved the garrison at Tobruk. Access to this port made the British a major threat in Libya once again.

Rommel had no choice but to retreat to El Agheila, surrendering all the land gained since his arrival in North Africa. It seemed that the Axis grab for North Africa was lost. However, Rommel had some fight left in him yet.

November 27, 1941

Section Two Completes Its Tests

Lawrence Moreland was studied at length by the Section Two Talent Studies Team in Washington D.C. after his return from the North Atlantic. The limits of his power were tested through traditional scientific means after an extensive psychological examination.

Film footage of Moreland flattening 20 mm cannon shells with his chest and shrugging off a Howitzer round after it struck him in the face were made to show the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A briefing was prepared for the Department of the Army, who were given jurisdiction over Moreland and his abilities by direct order of the President.

It was rapidly determined that Moreland's invulnerability was linked to foreknowledge. Only those attacks he knew were coming were negated by his power. At the time, this was one of the most significant military secrets in the United States of America.

December 1, 1941

Rear Admiral Kidd Orders the *Arizona's* Forward Magazines Cleared

In Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, commanding officer of the battleship USS *Arizona*, woke on the morning of December 1 with a sudden urge to have the huge cannon rounds stored in the forward belly hold of the *Arizona* removed.

Kidd would not say why, and was the subject of many questioning glances and unusual communiqués during the next few days. Pearl Harbor naval command thought the act strange, but not strange enough to elicit an official inquiry. His men worked twenty-six hours straight, moving the vast array of explosives out of the hold of the *Arizona* to the dry dock facilities on land.

December 2, 1941

Hitler Moves *Fliegerkorps II* to the Mediterranean

In a move to threaten British shipping to North Africa from Gibraltar, Hitler ordered *Fliegerkorps II*, consisting of 325 *Luftwaffe* aircraft from the eastern front in Sicily, to patrol the Mediterranean Sea.

Four flying *Übermenschen* were detached to *Fliegerkorps II* command by *RuSHA SA,* to fly support and reconnaissance roles. *Der Flieger* remained in France, to continue his push for the invasion of Britain. His support of Operation: Sea Lion kept the plan in the eye of both the *Führer* and by default, the general staff. It would be some time yet before the preparations for the invasion, as underscored and useless as they were, would be completely abandoned.

December 7, 1941

"A Date Which Will Live In Infamy"

The Japanese launched a coordinated air strike against the U.S. Pacific fleet as it lay in port at Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii just before 8 A.M. on the morning of Sunday, December 7. Ironically, the fleet had been moved there only months before to deter such Japanese adventurism in the Pacific.

The Japanese task-force commander, Vice Admiral Chiuchi Nagumo, and the architect of the attack plan, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, hoped that the 394 Japanese aircraft launched against the American fleet would achieve a decisive victory. In an unforeseen stroke of luck, all of the American aircraft carriers were out of port at the time. These carriers were the prime targets of the assault; their absence made the victory achieved at Pearl Harbor much less decisive. If they had been present and destroyed, the Japanese would have assured their absolute control of the Pacific for some time.

About the BB 39 *Arizona* and the *Oklahoma* Memorial

In the world of *Godlike,* the BB 39 *Arizona* survived the Japanese sneak attack at Pearl Harbor due to the "strange dream" that Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd had several nights before the surprise assault. Though few said it at the time, Kidd's precognitive dream was most likely the product of a subtle Talent manifestation. If this was so, the ability never surfaced again. Without the front magazine, the *Arizona* survived the attack. The ship was still severely damaged by two Japanese bombs and required six months of repair before she was sea-worthy again.

The *Arizona* and Kidd went on to fight in the Battle of the Philippine Sea in Task Force 58, and served in the Pacific island-hopping campaign. Kidd was promoted to Vice Admiral of the Navy in 1951, and died at his home peacefully in 1960. The *Arizona* was destroyed in the Atomic Test "Able" in the Bikini islands in July 1946.

Today, Pearl Harbor is one of the most popular tourist spots in the Hawaiian Islands. People gather daily in crowds on a floating glass-bottomed platform, to see the wreck of the *Oklahoma* as it sits on the seafloor in its watery grave.

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Still, the American losses caused by the attack were enormous. Of the eight battleships on "battleship row," four were lost and the other four were heavily damaged. Multiple bomb and torpedo assaults on the U.S.S. *Oklahoma* sent it and its 1,200 men crew to the bottom in minutes, along with many other ships. Hundreds of U.S. aircraft were destroyed on the ground at Wheeler Field and Hickham Field by precise Japanese attacks.

For two hours, the Japanese ruled the air over Pearl Harbor, destroying boat, aircraft and buildings without fear of significant counter attack; even civilians were strafed in nearby towns.

Despite a serious 1,750 lb. bomb hit to its forward deck, the U.S.S. *Arizona* downed fourteen enemy aircraft during the fray. Unlike the other ships in the harbor, which were preparing to raise the U.S. flag at ten minutes to eight, the *Arizona's* crew was at battle stations from 7 A.M. onward, almost as if they expected an attack. Other American gun crews downed twenty-nine aircraft, totaling forty-three Japanese aircraft lost. Five Japanese midget submarines that snuck into the harbor were also destroyed by various American attacks before they could attack any craft.

With the attack, the Japanese scored a significant victory; crippling most of the U.S. Pacific fleet and eliminating 75% of American combat aircraft on Oahu at the cost of a few dozen aircraft and a half a dozen midget submarines. Even as the assault on Pearl Harbor was taking place, their huge Army and Navy were moving decisively 4,000 miles away. Japanese aircraft and ships bombed Wake Island, the Philippines, Midway Island and Guam. Their Marines landed at Malaya and Thailand and their Army seized Shanghai in a single bold stroke.

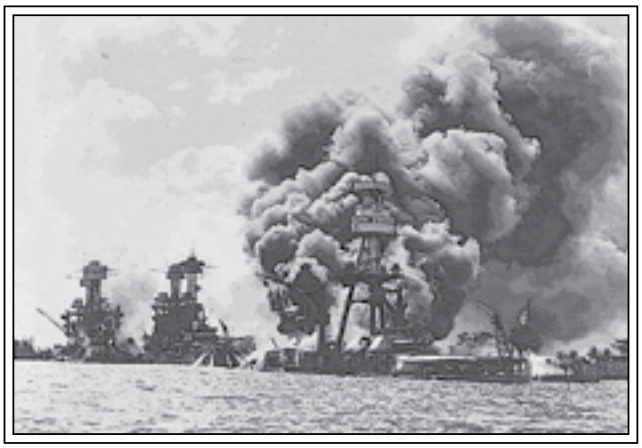
The Japanese grab for control of the Pacific had begun.

December 8, 1941

The United States Declares War on Japan

At noon, President Roosevelt addressed a huge radio audience of stunned listeners still recovering from the news of the terrible attack on Pearl Harbor. His speech was short and to the point:

> "Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.
>
> The United States was at peace with that nation, and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its Emperor looking towards maintenance of peace in the Pacific . . .
>
> The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.
>
> Yesterday the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya.
>
> Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.
>
> Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.
>
> Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippines Islands.
>
> Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.
>
> This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.
>
> Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very safety and life of their nation.
>
> I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.
>
> Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.
>
> With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbounded determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph. So help us God.
>
> I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."



Both Britain and America declared war on the Empire of Japan within the hour. The Second World War had begun.

December 9, 1941

China Declares War on Japan, Italy and Germany

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, leader of the Chinese forces, who had battled the Japanese Army since 1931, suddenly declared war on the Axis just days after the attack on the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor. He had a very specific reason for doing so: by siding with the western Allies, Chiang Kai-Shek guaranteed strong support for his rebel army from the West. Although his country was eligible for "Lend-Lease" from the U.S. for almost a year, this move permanently cemented Chiang's alliance with the Allies. With much of the U.S. Pacific fleet in shambles, and many British holdings threatened by Japanese advances, both countries needed all the allies in the Pacific they could get.

To make sure his commitment was taken seriously, Chiang Kai-Shek moved three reserve armies over the border into Burma, to assist the Allies in the area.

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December 10, 1941

The *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* Are Sunk Off the Coast of Malaya

In a humiliating defeat, two British warships, the battleship *Prince of Wales* and the cruiser *Repulse* were sunk by Japanese bomber aircraft from air bases in northern Malaya. Just eight months before, the *Prince of Wales* hunted the German battleship *Bismarck* and ferried Prime Minister Churchill to the Placentia Bay conference (or the doorway he would travel through, at least).

The two ships were cruising off the coast of Malaya to hunt Japanese landing craft during the early stages of the Japanese invasion of Malaya, when they fell prey to eighty Kate and Nell naval bombers. Without air cover, the ships were easy targets and were sunk in minutes.

December 10, 1941

American Marines Surrender at Guam

Just minutes after the attack at Pearl Harbor, Japanese aircraft bombed the American Marine base at Guam, largest of the Mariana Islands. Three days later a significant Japanese force landed on Guam, and the Marines, numbering only about 500, had no choice but to surrender.

December 11, 1941

The Axis Acts

Already committed to a two-front war in Europe and Asia, Hitler declared war on the United States on this date, furthering his already overextended commitments to the Axis. In turn, Italy also declared war on the U.S.

With the growing might of Japan, Britain biding its time and America weakened, the Axis felt that they could not lose. Hitler added a completely new level to the conflict with his foolish overconfidence, not realizing the implications of drawing America into the war in Europe.

December 11, 1941

Chanduk, The Spirit of the Forest

When Japanese forces landed unopposed at Victoria point and bombed Rangoon, the British forces of the crown colony of Burma retreated and regrouped to prevent a Japanese push inland. Unfortunately, the British had to contend with both the Japanese invasion and the Burmese nationalists who yearned for their independence from Britain.

One of these Burmese men, a Karen tribesman named Kata, discovered his Talent abilities (which he believed were tribal magic) just days after the Japanese landings at Victoria point and used them to disrupt the British retreat from Prome. The 151st Indian Mountain Regiment (a British division) was lost on its trek from Prome to points north. Their bones were found nine months later, embedded in trees and undergrowth, picked clean by the jungle.

For the rest of the war *Chanduk* (or "The Spirit of the Forest") claimed hundreds (possibly even thousands) of lives. Both the British and (after he realized their true intentions) the Japanese suffered severe losses at the hands of this reclusive Talent.

December 13, 1941

The Battle of El Agheila

On the morning of December 13, the *Afrika Korps*, holding positions around the besieged city of El Agheila (following their retreat from Tobruk) engaged the forward elements of British Eighth Army's Seventh Armored Division. Leading the Seventh were twenty-six British Talents who acted as a combination scout and shock troop unit, sweeping out enemy positions before the Armored divisions behind them advanced.

That afternoon the British Talent group ("Larsen's Folly") confronted a much larger force of German *Übermenschen,* numbering almost 280 individuals of varying power levels. Upon seeing the Axis Talents arrayed against him, Lieutenant-Colonel Anthony Larsen (a defensive telekinetic) paled. Fearing the Germans would sweep through and destroy the Seventh Armored Division behind him, Larsen decided to engage the German forces while the Seventh withdrew. For over two hours, the first large-scale battle between Talents raged-as Larsen's Folly held the line against *Überkommandogruppe* 2 (Super-Commando Group 2).

The British Talents dug in near El Agheila and fought off thirteen attacks in the night by the German *Übermenschen*. Nine British Talents were killed in the battle, including Pop (one of the first four British Talents to travel to America). Larsen had several advantages over his

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Chanduk

Name: Kata Nawng **AKA** *Chanduk* or "The Spirit of the Forest."
Nationality: Karen tribesman.
Political Affiliation: Burmese nationalist.
Education: None.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: Unknown.
DOD: ?
Known Parahuman Abilities: Nawng was capable of controlling plants and animals in the forests of Burma, causing dramatic and sudden shifts in the layout of trees, plants and (through their manipulation) the surrounding environment. These effects were lasting and sometimes very deadly.

In addition, Nawng was able to pass through the dense underbrush of the Burmese highlands silently without the use of a machete.

History: Little is known of Nawng, except that he was a Karen tribesman born about the turn of the century. An insular people, the Karens long hoped for their own homeland and strongly resented British crown rule. Nawng discovered his powers just days before the Japanese landed in Burma, and used them early on to aid what he saw as a liberating force.

Later, when it became apparent that the Japanese were worse than the British, Nawng used his abilities to kill Japanese as well. His victims were found dead in large groups in the jungle, often months or even years after they were reported missing. Nawng would stalk a single group at a time, using his power to disrupt attempts at navigation, until they expired from lack of food and clean water.

The only known survivor of an attack by Nawng, Lieutenant Nelson Till, an American Talent with Stillwell's forces known as "Cupboard-Guts" (he did not need to eat or drink), was the only person known to have seen Nawng after his Talent manifestation. Till reported that after his group died, a small native tribesman came and silently shared his camp for a night. Inquiries by Till were met with nods and smiles, but nothing more. In the morning, a clear path brought Till out of the woods he had spent three weeks wandering in a matter of minutes.

Rumors persist that *Chanduk* still wanders the jungle highlands of Burma (now Myanmar). The Talent magicians of the Kachin people of Gamgaw report that *Chanduk* occasionally approaches their border, as if he was observing them, though no reliable reports of an actual sighting have been filed for more than sixty years.

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opposition: firstly, the men of Larsen's Folly had far more combat experience, having fought in the desert war for more then six months; secondly, Larsen's group relied heavily on normal combat arms and tactics; while the *Übermenschen* focused primarily on their paranormal abilities, which the Allied Talents countered as a matter of course. The Axis forces' own overconfidence in their parahuman abilities were their downfall; they failed to think tactically, thinking their power would answer all problems. In one instance, seven German *Übermenschen* were killed when Larsen and his men feigned a collapse in their line, then closed in on those Germans foolish enough to push through the gap.

When the sun fell from the sky, the struggle had ended in a bitter stalemate. Larsen and his men killed twenty-nine German *Übermenschen* and allowed the Seventh Armored to withdraw safely.

When the reinforced Seventh Armored Division, the New Zealand Twentieth Infantry Corps and the Fourth Armored Division attacked the German line the next morning, resistance from the German *Übermenschen* collapsed. One hundred and twelve Germans escaped, nine were captured or surrendered, and the rest were dead. Larsen was decorated with the Victoria Cross for his valiant act.

Larsen's Folly had successfully held off a German *Übermenschen* force which outnumbered it almost eight to one; and Britain had its revenge for the deaths of Golgotha and Puppeteer.

December 18, 1941

The Japanese Invade Hong Kong

Japanese Naval forces blocked the port of Hong Kong and commenced shelling the British and Chinese military positions on the outskirts of the city on December 8. Despite being surrounded on all sides, (with no chance of reinforcement), the British garrison steadfastly refused to surrender the city. The British and Chinese forces held on for five more days, facing a force which outnumbered them by the tens of thousands.

When the Japanese politely pointed out to the Allies the hopelessness of their position, the British still obdurately refused to give in. In response, the Japanese bombed the city so extensively that all the water mains ruptured. With no clean water, the garrison could not fight and had no choice but to surrender. They yielded to Japanese demands on December 18, 1941.

Soon the flag of the Empire of Japan was flying over Hong Kong, Britain's jewel of the east.

December 19, 1941

Hitler Assumes Control of the German Army

Woefully out of his depth, Hitler assumed command of the German Army in an attempt to crush the tenacious Soviets. Frustrated with the halt to the German offensive

Tribal Magic

The aborigines of Australia, the Kachins and Karens of Burma, the Ainu of Japan, and the bushmen of Africa, among other supposedly "backwards" cultures, possess the ability to learn and teach Talent powers to one another.

To these cultures, such "powers" are nothing more than ritual magic. What we see as a Talent power is, to them, simply a "spell." Because of this, healers, witch doctors and shamans from these cultures possess very real powers, making them a significant force in the world.

Unlike other Talent powers, "tribal magic" in the world of *Godlike* is neither static nor isolated to one person. It can be passed from tribesman to tribesman, and by mixing and matching spells, new effects can be discovered. Many of these cultures have a class of shaman who can shift the course of rivers, heal the sick and kill enemies with a glance with their powers.

Westerners and people acclimatized to western culture cannot learn these spells, no matter how long they work at it; it is nothing less than a paradigm that is absorbed over the course of a lifetime, not something that can be learned in days, months, or even years.

The Honored Dead

Erected in 1946 by the British government at El Agheila, Libya, a simple steel stele marks the names of the nine Talents who died there, holding the line.

Beginning in 1947, the six remaining members of Larsen's Folly gathered to remember their lost comrades and leader (Larsen was killed at Anzio in 1944) on the anniversary of the battle of El Agheila-December 13. This ritual continued without interruption for decades.

The stele was removed by Momar Khaddafi's regime in 1980. The ceremony itself did not resume until 1996, when the Talent War Memorial was erected in Washington D.C.

Two of Larsen's Folly still gather there, every year, to remember that night in Libya and the friends they left behind in the sand.

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in the east since the coming of winter, the *Führer* hoped his amateur armchair tactics would overcome the spirited resistance of the Russians. While ground operations were still directed by the Army's general staff in many different areas, the final authority now lay with Adolf Hitler, who took to personally managing matters on the eastern front.

This decision, like so many others, would prove to be misguided.

December 20, 1941

The AVG and America Gain a Potent Weapon

The American Volunteer Group (AVG), better known to the world as the "Flying Tigers," flew defensive roles for Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist Army for four months before their first large engagement over the Chinese city of Kunming on December 20.

With less than 100 outdated P-40 "Tomahawk" fighters, the Tigers ripped into a much larger force of Japanese bombers, causing them to abort their bomb run. During the engagement, machinegun rounds from a Nell G3M medium bomber struck an AVG aircraft, causing its engines to stall. Its pilot, Robert M. Young decided to bail out of the crippled aircraft.

Young's chute failed to open properly, but he survived the fall anyway, by slowing his descent with his mind. Young landed on the ground as light as a feather, becoming America's second Talent.

More Rumors

Unsubstantiated reports that sixteen *Gaki* (the Japanese term for Talent) had been discovered in Japanese-held territories since the beginning of hostilities with China were widely believed by western sources. Most of these *Gaki* were Chinese, Mongolian or Burmese, and fought the Japanese occupation vigorously.

Three were apparently "born" during one incident—the invasion of Hong Kong. Two escaped to fight in the resistance; the last, a woman who could cause seizures in any living creature, was shot and killed on December 21. Her head was impaled on a pole and hung from the British consulate building in Hong Kong as a warning for the local populace.

Spurred by these rumors, U.S. advisors were rushed to China to assess the growth of the Chinese Talent population and to help in their training and deployment.

December 22, 1941

Churchill Arrives in Washington D.C.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill arrived in Washington D.C. to meet with President Roosevelt to work out the logistics of a joint war effort. To avoid the U-Boat menace, Churchill arrived with the aid of Jot, a powerful teleporting Talent who transported him from London to Washington D.C. in the blink of an eye. Churchill's Talent bodyguard consisted of twelve highly trained parahumans whose loyalty was beyond question. The Prime Minister detached two of these British Talents to American service in the Far East, in exchange for American concessions in the war against Nazi Europe. These Talents, Boxer and Mole, were moved to Pearl Harbor Command for later reassignment in the Far East theater.

Despite the ever increasing threat of the Japanese in the Pacific, Churchill and Roosevelt managed to work out the beginnings of an invasion plan of North Africa, which would eventually become known to the world as Operation: Torch.

December 22, 1941

The Dragon Stirs

Confronted on the shores of Luzon by Japanese Marines, a member of the Filipino Army, Santiago Corzon, led a single-handed assault on the enemy's growing beachhead. A shell killed his commanding officer, a U.S. Army Captain, along with the eleven other Filipino Army members as they defended the road inland, despite being at the center of the blast; Corzon was left without a mark on him.

Enraged, the tiny Filipino charged the Japanese lines and *transformed*. The twenty-six foot dragon, its reptilian form invulnerable to small arms fire, tore its way tooth and claw through an entire battalion of Japanese Marines, setting vehicles aflame with its fiery breath. The Japanese sent wave upon wave of Marines after the creature until Corzon's power failed, and he retreated. Corzon joined up with the *Hukbalahap*, the Filipino communist guerrillas at Manila, and took to the hinterlands of the country to continue the fight.

December 27, 1941

General MacArthur Withdraws to Bataan

Overwhelmed by the Japanese forces in their relentless invasion of the Philippines, General MacArthur ordered his men

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○ F-SAM

Name: Robert Matthew Young **AKA** "F-SAM" or "Fesam" for "Fold, Spindle And Mutilate."
Nationality: American.
Political Affiliation: Democrat.
Education: High school, Manchester, Connecticut. One year postal pilot training, Darby, Massachusetts.
Rank: First lieutenant (U.S. Army Air Corps).
Decorations: Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal.
DOB: 3/6/09, Manchester, Connecticut, U.S.A.
DOD: —
Known Parahuman Abilities: Young could control gravity. His power affected one object at a time, and increased or decreased that object's effective mass seventy to ninety times its standard weight. Objects (which retained their inertia) remained affected for a variable period that ranged from ten to thirty-five minutes. Young's personal record for a gravitic alteration was thirty-seven minutes and nine seconds. He could cause this gravity alteration on anything he could see.
History: Young was always interested in flight. Everything before his eighteenth year was simply a prelude to jumping into a cockpit. He collected model kits of airplanes, followed the aces of the Great War in the newspapers, and even had Orville Wright sign his wrist cast in 1919. (Young broke it jumping off the roof with a makeshift pair of tin-shingle wings in an attempt to be the first man-powered aircraft.)

In 1927, Young obtained a job at Finkel's Aircraft, a small airfield that maintained dusters, mail aircraft and other small planes. Young learned the tricks of the trade over the next five years, culminating in his acceptance as a federal mail pilot in Darby, Massachusetts in 1937; but was kicked out due to his outrageous flying style. The next year he took up flying in "Winter's Air Rodeo" as a stunt pilot.

It was there in late 1940 that Young heard about the call for pilots to fly in China. Although he had no combat experience, he was accepted into the AVG program due to his experience in the air.

In the summer of 1941, after a bit of air-to-air combat training in southern China, Young was moved to Kunming to defend the city from air attack. On December 20, 1941, Young discovered his Talent ability to control gravity, using it to save himself when his parachute failed to deploy.

Young became famous around the world, returning to the United States in March 1941, to meet with President Roosevelt for a press conference to showcase America's growing pool of Talents. Section Two studied Young's abilities for three weeks and extensive films of his power were made (some were later released in newsreels for public consumption). Surprisingly, Young was sent back to the AVG to serve with the "Flying Tigers" in China. At the time, Roosevelt hoped to signal to Japan that he meant business, as well as impress the Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-Shek at his commitment.

Young flew sixty-seven combat missions with the AVG and downed sixty-three Japanese aircraft (mostly with the use of his power), making him the highest scoring American ace in World War II. (Though most pilots, including Young himself, agree that Major Richard I. "Dick" Bong, with forty normal kills, was America's real top ace.) Young's power was ideal for destroying enemy aircraft—the sudden weight increase caused wing struts to buckle and break, canopies to spider, and engines to fail, sending planes plummeting down from the sky like shattered birds. It was his Talent's effect on enemy aircraft that gained Young his nickname of "Fold, Spindle and Mutilate," a throwback to his postal days.

Young returned to America in 1946 with the rank of first lieutenant in the newly minted U.S. Air Force. He served two more years in the states, teaching pilots the ins and outs of fighter-to-fighter combat (which was even then a rapidly dying art).

Young flew for a year and a half in Korea's "Mig Alley," fighting the Chinese he had fought so hard to defend. In the jet-age, Young's abilities and power proved even more devastating to enemy aircraft, which would shatter and explode dramatically when pushed past their normal weight limits. Young was responsible for the destruction of fourteen Migs before he returned home.

In 1954, Young retired from the Air Force at the age of 45. He bought a home in Manchester, Connecticut with the revenues generated by his AVG and Air Force days, and sold the use of his ability to the highest bidder. Mostly he worked on construction projects, knocking buildings down or helping build them.

Young Talent Services Incorporated grew into a large, multi-state business that employed various Talents with construction-useful abilities.

At the age of 91 as of this writing, Young still appears in TV commercials for Young Talent Services Incorporated (now run by his son Emil) and his company is now estimated to be worth in excess of $80 million.

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back to the Bataan peninsula. A mountainous area of the Philippines riddled with caves and other hiding places, MacArthur hoped he could use these natural defenses to hold the Japanese off.

Unfortunately, his force consisted of rag-tag American servicemen and Filipino resistance fighters, many of who lacked equipment and proper military training. Their defensive hold of the Bataan was valiant, but ultimately futile. The Japanese, under General Homma, sealed the Americans off in their lair; then proceeded to launch spirited attacks against the Americans, utilizing *banzai* suicide charges and other unconventional tactics.

The Philippine islands, which MacArthur believed he could hold from Japanese attack indefinitely, were slipping rapidly from his grasp.

December 29, 1941

The British Talent Population Tops 750

The Special Sciences Office submitted a report to Prime Minister Churchill listing the names and abilities of 756 British born Talents on December 29. The government drive for the registration and enlistment of Talents had grown to the point where the Special Sciences Office could no longer carefully study each case. They pared down their examination period to just three days, to speed up the process.

Churchill was confident that the British would be able to field over 1,000 Talents on all fronts of the British war effort before the beginning of spring.

Dragon Point

In modern-day Tarlac (an otherwise inhospitable area in the mountains of Luzon), a popular tourist spot for Talentophiles is the Bayombong Talent Museum, which is open six months of the year at Dragon Point. The Talent museum is a series of shanties that contain various bits of Talent memorabilia collected (or fabricated) from around the world. It also houses the only collection of signed wartime Talent photographs numbering in the thousands. Even a signed photo from *Der Flieger* hangs on the wall at Bayombong.

Admission is $7 American. Talents (with a demonstration of their power) enter for free.

December 30, 1941

Sheol Emerges

With Jews starved, gassed and shot by the thousands in Nazi occupied Europe and Russia, rumors of a powerful *Nephilim* (the Jewish term for Talent) began to circulate among the Jewish underground. By this time, the *SS Einsatzgruppen* was tearing its way through the Ukraine, killing hundreds of thousands of Jews, Gypsies and intellectuals. The first stages of the mass murder of Jews and other undesirables were underway at the newly constructed death camps in Poland and Germany.

This *Nephilim* was a girl who could absorb the minds of those she touched. Jewish partisans jealously guarded her; when possible, she would emerge from hiding to copy into herself the memories and personality of those taken away to the camps.

By the age of 18, she had already absorbed over 3,000 personalities, losing her own personality beneath the thousands of others she had possessed over the years. For three years, the *Gestapo* hunted her relentlessly as she was shuffled from safe house to safe house in an attempt to preserve the minds of a people Hitler vowed to wipe from the face of the earth.

MacArthur's New Tactics

Without adequate weaponry, manpower, food or supplies, General MacArthur held off a huge force of Japanese soldiers using innovative combat tactics.

Conventional tactics failed the Japanese, because MacArthur was not thinking in conventional terms. Frontal assaults, *banzai* charges, and attacks against multiple flanks all failed; MacArthur rolled with each and countered by looking at combat in a completely new way. When the Japanese launched a full assault against his left flank, MacArthur did not put all his manpower there to counter the attack; instead, he attacked the Japanese on the right, causing a collapse in their defenses.

Despite his limitations, MacArthur managed to launch several offensives against General Homma, who was completely humiliated. For ten weeks MacArthur held on, hoping against hope that America would be able to send reinforcements—but they never came.

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○ Anguis "Dragon"

Name: Santiago Corzon **AKA** *Anguis* ("Dragon").
Nationality: Filipino.
Political Affiliation: Communist.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 4/30/19 Baguio, Philippines.
DOD: 2/11/45 Manila, Philippines (killed in action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: When enraged, Corzon seemingly transformed into a dragon; a twenty-six-foot-long, 3.5-ton creature with fiery breath, which could rip through quarter-inch-thick armor with its teeth and claws. While in dragon form, Corzon was nearly invulnerable to small arms fire, and had a limited resistance to explosives. His transformation was of limited duration, lasting from one to three hours; with effort, Corzon could extend the duration (during the Liberation of the Philippines, he once remained in his dragon form for twenty-seven hours straight).

After reverting back to human form, Corzon was invariably left exhausted and without the use of his power for several days.

History: Corzon was abandoned at birth in Baguio, a small town north of Manila on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. He was raised at Our Lady of Perpetual Sorrow, a British nunnery that doubled as an orphanage. It was there Corzon learned to read and write English.

When he left the orphanage at age 16, Corzon found a job with the American Army forces in Manila, translating Filipino requisition forms into English. At 19, he joined the Filipino Army, mostly under the command of the American Army at the time. He was part of a dramatic build-up of defense forces in the Philippines—a direct reaction to Japanese expansionism in the area.

Placed along with one other Filipino regiment (barely half of what was needed to properly protect the area) at the Lingayen Gulf, his position was the focus of a large Japanese landing on the morning of December 22, 1941. Corzon survived the assault because of his Talent manifestation, inflicting heavy losses to the Japanese Marines before retreating to the interior of Luzon.

There he joined and fought alongside the *Hukbalahap*, or the *Huks*: the communist guerrillas who held so much territory on the Philippines, even while it was supposedly under Japanese "control," that they traded their own printed currency.

Corzon was a fearful sight for any Japanese unit smaller than a battalion, and he waged a personal war against the invaders for more than three years without rest. During the street-to-street fighting in the liberation of Manila, Corzon's power failed, reverting him to his weakened human form, while he was facing remnants of General Homma's army. A shell from a light tank killed him. It was suspected by the *Huks* that a Japanese Talent on Luzon defeated Corzon's abilities.

Corzon's human body was buried at Tarlac Point in the mountains.

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January 1, 1942

The *Paukenschlag* Plot

Representatives from twenty-six Allied countries gathered in Washington D.C. on this date to sign the Atlantic Charter, ratifying the declaration of the United Nations and uniting the free world in a war against the Axis forces. Prime Minister Churchill, President Roosevelt and various heads of state gathered under extreme security at the capital to reinforce their cause against Axis tyranny. Thirty-seven Allied Talents of varying nationalities guarded the scene, on the lookout for spies and saboteurs.

Fourteen minutes before Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt met in the Oval Office, an incident occurred at the west gate of the White House. The British Talents Bulldog and the Shade uncovered a German *Übermensch* in parahuman disguise, attempting to gain access to the White House grounds. Using a power to mask his appearance, the German was easily detected by the British Talents. A tense standoff ensued when the German agent activated a large bomb. The Shade surprised the German agent from behind, and using his Talent ability to save those nearby, pulled both the agent and the bomb out of phase with the physical world.

The explosion went off at ten minutes to seven in the morning in complete silence. The Shade and the German agent were killed instantly by the blast. Thanks to the young Talent's sacrifice, everyone else at ground zero was unharmed.

The meeting was not postponed. Defiant to the will of the Axis, Roosevelt and Churchill held a moment of silence for the young Talent who had given his life so that they could live-and went on with the signing of the Atlantic Charter anyway. Over the next eleven days, the delegates formed the beginnings of the United Nations.

After the war, it was discovered that the plot was a German attempt on the lives of the leaders of the free world, organized by their *Wasserfall* division of the *Abwehr*. Codenamed *Paukenschlag* or "Drumbeat," it was hoped the explosion would eliminate both Churchill and Roosevelt.

Poor German intelligence led the *Abwehr* to believe that few Allied Talents would be present at the signing. Their premier *Übermensch* spy, known as *Doppelgänger* ("The Double"), was lost in the operation.

True Evil Never Dies . . .

The meticulous records of the Nazis indicate that the *SS* rushed *Sheol* to the *Führerbunker* just fifteen days before Adolf Hitler's suicide in 1945 on a special mission called *Valhalla*. Besides the fact that the mission involved the transfer of *Sheol* and that it was called *Valhalla,* little else about it is known. What is known is that she was captured by a six member *Übermensch* team called *Sektion Gelb* ("Yellow Section") in 1944, and that thirteen Jewish Talents perished during the assault on her hiding place, trying to protect her.

Sheol was rushed back to Berlin under great secrecy using every means at the Nazis' disposal, and was held there for almost a year.

The files that described the purpose of *Valhalla* were destroyed moments before the Russians captured them, so no one knows for sure what went on in the bunker for the six days *Sheol* remained there.

There are some clues, however. At times, strange personalities were seen in *Sheol's* manifestations after the war. Once, in front of a group of terrified Israeli schoolchildren and their teacher, the voice of Adolf Hitler rose up from her lips, repeating the phrase "I live! I live!" in German.

The Israeli media suppressed the incident, and a detachment of heavily armed guards was ordered to watch *Sheol* morning, noon and night. To this day, this story is widely denied by Israeli authorities, despite the fact that several witnesses have come forward to confirm it.

January 2, 1942

The Japanese Take Manila

Japanese forces under General Homma entered and secured the capital city of Manila in the Philippines, forcing a small contingent of guerrilla fighters and American soldiers into the wilderness. Several small units of resistance remained in the town (despite General MacArthur's declaration of Manila as an open city), hoping to confound the Japanese advance.

The Filipino Talent *Anguis* destroyed three light tanks and killed sixty-four Japanese Marines during his retreat from the capital to points north.

January 3, 1942

General Wavell Is Told to Hold the Line

General Wavell, the Allied forces commander in Southeast Asia (primarily the American, Australian, British, and Dutch), was ordered to hold the Malay line by any means possible, to stop the southern advance of the Japanese forces. To secure his rapidly diminishing routes of communication, Prime Minister Churchill assigned the powerful British teleport Jot to Wavell's command, to keep a line of communication open with London and Washington.

January 10, 1942

The *Saratoga* Is Torpedoed

Off the coast of Hawaii, a Japanese submarine caused extensive damage to the engineering sections of the huge American aircraft carrier the CV3 *Saratoga*, killing five crewmembers.

One crewmember involved in the blast was found in the center of the conflagration, untouched by the tremendous explosion. Ensign Walter "Ironclad" Kelly, whose skin had somehow become far stronger than any metal, was returned to Hawaii command for reassignment with Section Two. The Saratoga remained in port five months before its return to service.

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Sheol

Name: *Sheol* (Hebrew myth term); real name unknown.
Nationality: Unknown. Possibly German or Eastern European.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Unknown.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: ?
DOD: 6/30/2001 Tel Aviv, Israel.
Known Parahuman Abilities: *Sheol* copied the personality and memories of anyone she touched flesh-to-flesh. This transfer rendered both *Sheol* and the subject unconscious. When she regained consciousness (usually in a matter of minutes), an exact copy of the subject's mind would be contained within her. When the personality surfaced, *Sheol* spoke in that person's voice and used his or her mannerisms, knowing exactly what that person knew.

Sheol did not have a "master" personality that anyone could detect, but would switch between personalities at random. While under stress, sometimes she would become a blur of personalities, frequently engaging in four and five way conversations with herself. It was possible to evoke particular personalities within *Sheol*, but only with memory cues from the target personality's life. For example, if *Sheol* met the wife of a man whose mind she contained, that man's personality would surface for a short time. No personality could ever gain a permanent hold on *Sheol's* flesh, however. The effect was always transient, never lasting more than fifteen minutes at the most, to mere seconds at the least.
History: *Sheol's* origins are clouded in mystery. What is known is that she was a Jewish girl between the age of 15 and 20 when her Talent expressed itself. The Jewish underground in Poland (what little of it was left at the time) recognized her gift, and worked to hide her from the *Gestapo* and *Einsatzgruppe* sweeps. *Sheol* herself seemed to have a sense of self-preservation, often copying the personalities of German officers and soldiers and using their knowledge to guide herself safely through the deadly territories of Poland.

When rumors spread among the Jewish underground that a *Nephilim* who saved Jews from death camps existed, *Sheol* became a legend. Many yearned for this rumor to be true, but none suspected that the truth was far stranger than they could imagine.

Sheol's touch was a questionable salvation. Most personalities experienced extreme terror when they lost their grip on *Sheol's* body and became just another voice whirling in the maelstrom within her mind.

There was no known way to track or account for how many Jews slated for death were collected by *Sheol* during the war, but Israeli scholars estimate that somewhere between 800,000 to over a million rested within her mind at the end of the war.

The *SS* captured her in 1944, just moments before the Russians liberated the portion of Poland she was hiding in. Shockingly, the Germans released her to Russian forces on the day of Hitler's death, who in turn handed her over to the Allies (in a deal brokered by Eisenhower himself). The fledgling Legion of Five Thousand (the Jewish Talent Army of Israel), took *Sheol* as their spiritual leader; the irreplaceable history she represented making her a living symbol of the horrors of the Holocaust.

After the formation of Israel, a house was created for *Sheol* that every Israeli youth was required to visit. Unofficially, rumors circulated that *Sheol* would pick certain people for copying from time to time, though the Israeli government strenuously denied this. She died in 2001, age unknown, and her small home remains a national treasure to the memories she saved for a time from the furnaces.

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Talent Security

By the middle of the war, any Talent (even one with less-than-useful abilities, which were sometimes called "Duds") was employed for the most basic Talent power—the ability to detect and stop enemy Talents from using their powers. In almost every country, trusted Talents were assigned to bodyguard details which swept areas before leaders were brought in; just to make sure a chair was actually a chair, or that trusted personnel were not enemy Talents in parahuman disguise. The use of Talents as a defensive force increased exponentially after the near miss of the *Paukenschlag* plot of January 1, 1942.

The only successful assassination attempt during the war happened in 1943, when the German agent *Feuermann* incinerated a look-alike replacement of General Montgomery in London. The real General Montgomery was miles away, safely planning the invasion of Europe in a secret location, while his double was making public relations appearances. The non-Talent man killed, First Lieutenant Bernard F. Law, bore a nearly perfect resemblance to General Montgomery. He was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously for gallantry.

The Ghost of the West Gate

A special plaque was erected at the west gate of the White House following the *Paukenschlag* plot at the request of the President and Mrs. Roosevelt to commemorate the sacrifice of the British Talent the Shade.

It reads:

"For Captain Emil Broaden of the British Army, known as 'the Shade', whose decisive action on January 1, 1942 caused the world to stop for a moment in admiration, respect and awe at heroism not often seen in one so young."

To this day, secret service agents at the west gate report a silent explosion at ten to seven in morning every year on January first. Talents present at these "ghost explosions" feel a brief twinge as if an invisible Talent activated a powerful ability in their presence, but the culprit can never be found. It has become standard procedure to have the president elsewhere on New Year's Day—just in case.

Both scientists and Talents have no explanation for this recurring "illusion."

January 19, 1942

The Japanese Empire Expands

Japanese forces, moving in a half a dozen different offensives in Southeast Asia, captured and conquered significant amounts of territory in a short period, with few losses in manpower and equipment. By this date, most resistance had ceased in the Philippines (the rebels had retreated to the wilderness and MacArthur was hard pressed on Bataan) and the Japanese began their real push into Burma. Elsewhere, Japanese Marines and soldiers landed on North Borneo and were poised to spread the influence of the Empire even further.

Like the summer of 1940 for Germany, it seemed that in the winter of 1942 the Japanese Army could not be stopped.

January 20, 1942

The *Wannsee* Conference

This meeting was called by the direct order of Adolf Hitler, though he did not attend. Instead, his lackeys Herman Göring, Heinrich Himmler and Adolf Eichmann conceived the "final solution" to the "Jewish problem" in Nazi Europe.

Though the Nazis had been killing Jews, the mentally infirm, Poles and Russians by the tens of thousands already, Hitler felt that the rampant killing was unorganized and inefficient; he hoped *Wannsee* would streamline the process.

Himmler, Göring and Eichmann adopted a systematic process for the elimination of Jews and other unwanted races based on notes created by *SS Reichsprotektor* Reinhard Heydrich (killed the previous year during the Prague riots). Heydrich's concept utilized a technology already developed in the Reich: the gas chamber, wherein poison gas (usually cyanide-based) would be pumped into a sealed room, slaying a large number of people simultaneously. This and other less direct methods would be used to efficiently eliminate the enemies of the Reich. The undesirables would be gathered together, sorted by sex and infirmity; then either killed outright, or forced to work until they died from lack of food or rest.

The Subtext of the *Wannsee* Conference

At the conference, Göring spoke of the rumors of *Nephilim* and other Talent manifestations in the populations the Reich had targeted for destruction. He hoped to capture and re-educate these "wayward Aryans" so they became devout followers of Hitler. Himmler was concerned that such "monsters" existed in the world, and wanted only their complete destruction. The leader of the *SS* said only this: "They are throwbacks to the time of race mingling and mongrelism. They must be eliminated."

Eichmann didn't care about the parahumans; he was simply concerned with the sheer number of people he had to "deal with." By the end of the conference, no policy towards *Nephilim* and other *Üntermenschen* was ever really decided upon. By default, they were treated just as any other Jew, Pole or Russian; dependent on their usefulness, they were sent to their deaths as rapidly and expeditiously as possible.

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In the end, their methods would claim more than 5,820,960 Jews and other innocents, though no written order from the *Führer* ever existed to prove that such a command was issued from the highest office in Germany.

January 21, 1942

The Germans Counter-Attack in Libya

Led by a group of German *Übermenschen*, Rommel's troops swept forward in Libya, clashing with the British line, trying to breach it in a rush north towards Benghazi. What the *Übermenschen* did not know was this: they were simply a distraction, and the main force behind them headed off in a different direction to confuse the British.

Caught up in their own propaganda as an "undefeatable army" three German *Übermenschen* were captured when their offensive folded and they were left behind.

January 22, 1942

The Evacuation of Leningrad

Over the course of fifty days, 440,000 citizens were evacuated from the city of Leningrad to points east. Relentless shelling and bombing by the Germans had taken a terrible toll on the populace. All rail lines into the city had been cut by bomb attacks; nor were there adequate supplies of food to support the city any longer.

The first five Soviet Talents to reveal themselves in public (besides the monstrosity *Baba Yaga)* assisted in the evacuation, defending against attacks by German aircraft with their parahuman abilities.

January 26, 1942

Section Two Takes a Step Towards Propaganda

In a report submitted to President Roosevelt, Section Two indicated that since the discovery of the Indestructible Man, and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor no less than seventy Talents had been discovered in America.

It was the recommendation of Section Two that inflated numbers of Talent manifestations be given to the press. They believed this would actually increase the number of future manifestations.

January 26, 1942

The First American Troops Arrive in Britain

The first ship carrying American servicemen to Britain arrived on this date, after maneuvering through the treacherous waters of the North Atlantic.

Seventeen American Talents (including the Indestructible Man) were onboard.

January 27, 1942

Zyklon B and C

At the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, Nazi experiments with the poisonous Zyklon-B gas began on large numbers of test subjects for the first time. Over 4,000 Jews were sent to their deaths in early tests of the gas, designed to speed Himmler's "Final Solution" along. Earlier gas chambers utilizing carbon-dioxide gas proved to be, in the monstrous eyes of the *SS*, "too inefficient."

Zyklon-B was quick, quiet and effective. However, a new problem cropped up: during the second series of gassings, a Jewish boy manifested Talent abilities and killed five *SS* men and *Obersturmbannführer* Rudolph Höss (the creator of Zyklon-B) before he could be stopped. Nazi scientists were disturbed by the possibility of Jews manifesting Talents whenever they employed the gas. Nothing could be said of the incident to Hitler; but Himmler had other ideas.

Zyklon-C was developed in March 1942 under the auspices of the *SS*. Like its predecessor, it killed with potassium cyanide; but eight to ten minutes after the initial release (when all normals in the chamber were dead), C also released a blinding agent and a secondary poison to kill

The Imprisonment of *Der Schildkröte*

The most powerful of the three *Übermenschen* captured in Libya was an *Oberstleutnant* nicknamed *Der Schildkröte* ("The Turtle.") While the other two *Übermenschen* could be dealt with as normal prisoners of war, *Der Schildkröte* was extremely powerful. He could project invisible shields with his mind and use them as a devastating destructive force. For example, he could form a shield in a target's lung, and rapidly expand it, ripping the target in half.

It was decided when *Der Schildkröte* arrived in Britain, he would not be allowed the usual rights of a prisoner of war. "What would you do with a tank commander who could not be separated from his tank?" Winston Churchill asked the parliament during proceedings to decide the fate of *Der Schildkröte*.

The Special Sciences Office decided upon a method of psychological coercion.

Der Schildkröte was informed that if he did not "behave," he would be kept under sedation and turned over to the Russians. It was a well-known fact the Russians had no mercy when it came to German POWs. To make the point stick the British showed him some films of German officers captured during action around Stalingrad.

Der Schildkröte was a model prisoner, and at the end of the war he returned home to Germany.

The British and Americans settled on this policy for dealing with powerful but rational enemy Talents. Those beyond the scope of reason were kept so drugged their abilities failed to work, were lobotomized, or were put to death.

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The Public and the Private

Josef Stalin made his love for the hundreds of Russian Talents who sprang up in the first year of the war between the Soviet Union and Germany plain during radio addresses, speeches and other public pronouncements. In reality, Stalin was (as always) extremely paranoid. His stance towards Talents was two-faced. To the public, his love for them was clear; behind closed doors, they were a threat to his supreme power. They were a tool to him, and nothing more. Once they outlived their usefulness, they were eliminated.

Talents known to the Soviet State often "died in battle" or went "missing during combat." While some of them actually did perish in battle, many of them were eliminated by the NKVD or sent on missions that they would never return from.

The most successful Talents in Russia remained secret, and fought the Germans on their own terms; or wholeheartedly served Stalin and risked the danger of his purges. Some operated in the regular Army and others outside the chain of command altogether. Many of the Soviet Talents who survived the war fled the Soviet Union for the countries of the west.

Those who stayed behind had little hope of a happy or long life.

anyone who might have survived the initial gassing.

Talents who manifested powers because of the gas were blinded, then poisoned all over again with a different compound. The *SS* were confident their twisted countermeasures would take care of any further problems.

January 28, 1942

Rommel Takes Benghazi

Rommel's forces pushed back the British in the western desert of Libya in a series of bold maneuvers designed to throw them into disarray. The ill-organized British Eighth Army had little time to recover from Rommel's earlier pushes, and scattered across the desert when the *Afrika Korps* swept forward again.

The superior firepower of Rommel's tanks and his tactical brilliance gave him an edge that the British could not easily overcome. In an amazing feint with his forces, Rommel split his tanks, moving most up a road to Benghazi, while sending a small force to draw the British away to the east. The British pulled back to the Gazala line, fearful of a full attack, which allowed Rommel unrestricted access to Benghazi.

Lacking fuel and supplies, Rommel waited in the Libyan capital, biding his time.

Total Commitment

The Indestructible Man made a huge splash upon his arrival in Britain. He met with King George IV and Princess Elizabeth on his first day, and the brash young American's presence in Britain made a clear statement to the British people—America was now fully behind them.

The Talent spent three weeks touring for public relations purposes, demonstrating his abilities while the media machine of the Allies released dozens of pamphlets, booklets and films about his visit.

February 1, 1942

The Appointment and Death of Quisling

Adolf Hitler made the Nazi collaborator Vidkun Quisling prime minister of occupied Norway on this date, but his time as the Nazi's puppet would be short.

On the morning of February 2, 1942, Quisling was discovered in bed, the victim of an apparent Talent attack. His skin had hardened to the consistency of stone; all his internal fluids had congealed. No one had any idea who had killed him. Hitler, nonplussed, appointed a German *SS* officer, *Obergruppenführer* Franz Jeckeln, as *Reichsprotektor* of Norway. No real effort was put into the investigation of Quisling's death.

February 11, 1942

The Channel Dash

In a daring move, the Germans rushed a naval force consisting of the battle cruisers *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau* and the heavy cruiser *Prinz Eugen,* along with a screen of destroyers and air cover, from Brest through the English Channel, into the North Sea.

The British launched dozens of RAF and naval aircraft sorties to sink the ships, but due to poor intelligence and communications, all the attacks failed. Fifty British aircraft were lost in the engagement.

It was later discovered that the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* had suffered serious damage from Allied mines in the channel. Even so, the "Channel Dash" was seen as a humiliating defeat for the British in their own home waters.

February 13, 1942

The Last "Sea Lion" Conference

Despite heavy lobbying from Hitler's favorite, *Der Flieger*,

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the chancellor decided on this date to abandon the long-planned cross-Channel invasion of Britain, codenamed Operation Sea Lion: "We must crush the Bolsheviks in the east, and then we will turn our attentions back to England."

Conversation on the subject was closed after Hitler's temper rose. *Der Flieger* was shortly thereafter transferred to the French coast to fly coastal sorties against the Allies.

This move clearly indicated Hitler's displeasure with the young parahuman.

February 18, 1942

The Japanese Invade Singapore

Chasing the retreating British Commonwealth forces across the Johore causeway on one side, the Japanese landed an additional two Marine divisions on the northwest side of the island, effectively cutting the British off. Making concise air and land attacks, the Japanese split and disorganized defenders of the island in half.

The Japanese lost fewer than 10,000 troops in the siege, while the British Commonwealth lost more than 138,000 men to disease, attacks and lack of clean water.

Fourteen British Talents were "born" in the nightmare conditions on Singapore Island. Ten were captured and put to death by the Japanese, two managed to live on in the wilderness, and two managed to make it to Australia to rejoin British forces.

February 18, 1942

The Battle of the Sittang Bridge

Pursued by the Japanese, British forces in Burma retreated across the Sittang river, the only real obstacle between the Japanese and Rangoon, the capital. The British destroyed the bridge, but lost a large amount of equipment and men in the operation.

The Japanese forces waited for reinforcements at the river while the badly demoralized British Commonwealth forces attempted to solidify some sort of defense against the invaders.

The Truth Comes Out

In 1954, information was leaked from British intelligence that the mission to kill Vidkun Quisling, codenamed Operation Tumult, was carried out by a six-man Talent commando team trained by the BSOE. *Aesgir* carried the group into Norway with his power, where, helped by Norwegian resistance members, they gained access to the prime minister's mansion.

The British Talent "Quagmire" killed Quisling with his ability to solidify liquids, and the team escaped back to Britain. The attack demoralized the pro-Nazi sentiment that had been growing exponentially in Norway (the Norwegians were one of the few races that the Nazis considered equal to them racially).

Since Quisling was the greatest traitor Norway had ever known, few Norwegians had anything negative to say about the news.

February 19, 1942

General Dwight D. Eisenhower Is Appointed the Head of the U.S. Army General War Plans Division

In his new position, Eisenhower moved to immediately intensify American presence in Britain, and began the huge undertaking of planning what was then known as Operation Sledgehammer—the cross-Channel invasion of Europe.

He also called for an intelligence estimate to be drafted by the department of the Army on the tactical uses of Allied Talents in the European war effort. The fruit of this study, called the "Eisenhower Plan," would become the central policy for the use of Talents in the U.S. Army.

February 19, 1942

The Bombing of Port Darwin

A Japanese attack on the northern Australian port city of Darwin by land-based and carrier aircraft claimed 172 lives and destroyed or damaged sixteen ships in the harbor. This surprise attack sent the Australian populace into a panic. Most believed an invasion of northern Australia was imminent.

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Over the next four weeks, Prime Minister Churchill transported sixty-seven British Talents to Darwin, Sydney and Canberra to relieve the fears of the Australian people.

February 27, 1942

An Engagement at the Java Sea

A pitched naval battle involving five Allied cruisers and nine destroyers, versus four Japanese cruisers and fifteen destroyers, ended in a severe defeat for the Allies.

Using their superior torpedoes, the Japanese sunk five cruisers and five destroyers, claiming the lives of Allied commander Rear Admiral Karel Doorman and several hundred sailors.

February 28, 1942

The Radar Station at Bruneval

A parachute drop of sixteen British Commandos, along with the Polish Talent *Cien* and the British Talent *Cormorant,* led to a successful assault on a German radar position at Bruneval, on the French coast near Le Havre.

Cien and *Cormorant* kept the Germans busy while a Royal Marine disassembled the radar transmitter. Elsewhere, the commandos rigged German emplacements for demolition.

The group made good its escape to Britain in captured boats before German forces could catch them. British scientists studied the captured German radar set, which was determined to be surprisingly inferior to Allied technology in many aspects.

This mission allowed Allied scientists to devise effective countermeasures against German radar.

March 7, 1942

A Tight Escape

General Sir Harold Alexander and his forces abandoned Rangoon in Burma, after realizing holding the line there was a practical impossibility. Rangoon was the sole sea port of entry for British equipment, men and supplies into Burma, but Alexander had no choice. He and his men barely escaped moments before the Japanese arrived in the city.

The British retreated north to Prome and Taung Gyi, leaving tons of equipment behind, trying to find a pause to regroup and fight back.

March 9, 1942

The Dutch East Indies Surrender

The Allied forces in the Dutch East Indies surrendered to the Japanese, due to lack of supplies and equipment. This chain of islands featured centrally in the Japanese plans in Southeast Asia due to its rich oil fields, and they were prepared to expend any means within their arsenal to secure them.

The Japanese were lucky; many of the defending forces in the Indies were transferred to Malaya and Java weeks before the invasion.

Mr. Nowhere

This British parahuman was "born" in the second Japanese push to the interior of Singapore Island at Bukit Timah. Private Edgar L. Norweir was one of a thousand men overrun by a Japanese *banzai* charge on the evening of February 22, 1942. During the attack, the Japanese surged around him, ignoring him as if he wasn't there. To the Japanese, Edgar L. Norweir had disappeared.

Norweir was invisible to anyone of Japanese descent; they couldn't even hear the noises he made. His power was constant and even worked while he slept.

Norweir remained behind in occupied Southeast Asia for the rest of the war, invisible to an enemy that was all around him, reporting endless intelligence tidbits to Australia and the U.S. through short-wave radio. Though he was often seen by non-Japanese, many chose to say nothing; and those that did were chastised and punished for lying.

Called "Mr. Nowhere" by the press, Norweir was an intelligence coup in the Far East, and even traveled on a Japanese transport ship to Tokyo in 1943. There he took pictures of the city that had been closed to most of the West for years.

He was not used for assassination. No one knew what would happen if Mr. Nowhere were to attack an individual "blind" to his presence, and British intelligence didn't want to risk such a valuable asset. Instead Nowhere was used as an intelligence-gathering tool. He was under strict orders to not interfere, just watch.

Mr. Nowhere assisted in the liberation of the Philippines, Malaya, Java and Sumatra, reporting troop movements and transmitting vital reports about enemy disposition and troop morale from the enemy camps themselves. He returned home to Britain in 1945 with a field commission to the rank of major general.

"Once I wished no one could see me, and my wish came true. Now I wish everyone to see me, and that too has come true. I am a very lucky man," Norweir told the press upon his return home. Not surprisingly, he was a very popular guest on Japanese talk shows after the war due to the odd nature of his Talent.

The resisting forces left behind, composed mostly of Dutch regular Army, had no choice but to surrender.

March 11, 1942

MacArthur Leaves Bataan

Reluctantly, General MacArthur surrendered command of the isolated and demoralized American and Filipino forces on Bataan in the Philippines. Under direct orders from the president, he made his escape to become commander of U.S. forces in Australia.

Before his exit, he made the famous statement: "I shall return!"

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March 11, 1942

Stilwell Prepares for the Worst

U.S. General Joseph Stilwell, in command of the Chinese Fifth and Sixth armies in Burma, prepared for the Japanese assault on their positions in the north. His aim was to protect the fragile lifeline of the Burma Road, which ferried men and equipment from India through to China. The AVG "Flying Tigers" moved one wing of aircraft into the area to help Stilwell, led by the now famous Robert Matthew Young, America's second Talent.

March 12, 1942

Roosevelt Forms the TOC

To prevent disputes over the allocations of Talents within the armed forces of the U.S., President Roosevelt formed the Talent Operations Command on this date. The TOC was composed of high-ranking members from all the U.S. armed forces who reported only to the office of the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. While Section Two catalogued and tested American born Talents, TOC assigned them to individual services through voting committees. These committees considered the best use of each individual Talent power in the war, and what service would best be complimented by their abilities.

For the first time in the U.S., Talents were not allowed to choose the armed service they would join; instead, this choice was made for them by the TOC.

March 13, 1942

Alexander Draws the Line

Lieutenant General Sir Harold Alexander set his forces at the Salween River (just north of Prome) to hold the Japanese out of northern Burma, but strong Japanese attacks forced some of his units even further back. Chinese forces at Toungoo held the Japanese back for a time, but it was all too obvious that it would be just a matter of time before they broke through.

March 22, 1942

TOG Teams Begin Training

In Scotland, the newly minted American Talent Operation Groups began their training at Achnacarry British Commando School on March 22. These groups were composed of nine Talents each, used as behind-the-line scouts, shock troops and a defense against enemy Talents.

The first TOG unit, TOG 1 was made up of nine recently discovered American Talents, including the Indestructible Man. Over the next year, 500 TOG commandos would graduate from the program at Achnacarry.

March 28, 1942

The Failure of the St. Nazaire Commando Assault

This British commando operation to destroy the only dry-dock in France large enough to resupply and support the German battleship *Tirpitz* failed for many reasons, not the least of which was the involvement of *Übermenschen*.

The German *Übermensch*, *Der Auge* ("the Eye") foresaw the attack with his precognition and managed to illegally muster a force of sixty-five *Übermenschen* to St. Nazaire on the night of the attack. None of the men knew why they had been called, but most went, some even defying orders to do so, because they knew *Der Auge* was rarely wrong in his visions.

Out of the Allied force of 611 men, nearly 400 hundred died on the ground and victorious German super-humans captured many of the rest. The event was a fiasco for Commando operations and a heavy blow to the British spirit.

April 2, 1942

The Japanese Attack Ceylon

The Japanese First Air fleet launched a large-scale attack against British sea- and air-bases in Ceylon, causing considerable damage but failing to locate and cripple the main British sea task force. Roving Japanese air patrols did locate and sink several large ships, including the British aircraft carrier *Hermes* and an Australian destroyer.

British counterattacks against the Japanese continued to prove ineffective.

April 9, 1942

The Last Days of the Battle of Bataan

Following intense aerial and artillery bombardments, General Homma's army surged forward, pushing what remained of MacArthur's forces (now under the command of Major General Jonathan Wainright) back on the Bataan peninsula.

Unable to mount a significant counter-attack, Wainright and 2,000 men fled to Corregidor Island, leaving behind almost 100,000 soldiers who were captured by the Japanese. Few of these prisoners survived to see the end of the war.

April 10, 1942

The Japanese Offensive in Burma Continues

After gathering significant reinforcements, Lieutenant General Shojiro Iida launched a continued offensive to force the British further north out of Prome and Toungoo

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in Burma. The huge Japanese force easily pushed the British out, effectively cutting the country in half.

Although both Chinese and American forces in northern Burma joined the British to fight the invaders, little could be done to hold them back. All the Allied forces in the area were poorly equipped, having little in the way of support. The jungle, disease and lack of adequate food killed thousands before they ever saw battle.

The Japanese captured the valuable Yenangyaung oilfields in this thrust, and only had one goal left in the Burmese theater, to capture and cut the Burma Road. If they could do this, it would isolate China and Burma would become a staging ground for the eventual invasion of India.

April 18, 1942

The Doolittle Raid

In a daring daylight raid, Lieutenant James Doolittle led twenty-six B-25 bombers in an attack against the Japanese cities of Tokyo, Kobe, Nagoya and Yokohoma. Launched from the aircraft carrier *Hornet* 800 miles from Tokyo, the bombers just barely completed the mission due to fuel limitations. To make things worse, they were not designed to take off from carriers; their crews had to train for months on the ground before attempting the real thing. Not even Doolittle was sure the plan could work.

However, the attack had the desired effect. Despite minimal damage in Tokyo and other cities, the bombing had a huge impact on American and Japanese morale.

The Japanese leadership was alarmed by the apparent ease with which the Americans bombed their supposedly untouchable capital, and the American leadership was invigorated by an attack as dynamic as the one made against them months before at Pearl Harbor.

The cost of the assault was very high, however. Out of 130 men, only sixty-four made it back to China (one plane landed in Russia and was interred there until the end of the war).

Doolittle was among the few B-25 crews that made it safely to China.

Precognition and Warfare

The Talent ability of precognition is a tricky one. American Lieutenant Andrew "Lucky" O'Donnell had this to say about it to *Yank* magazine:

"It's like finding a tightrope in the dark with your foot, when you don't know how high up you are, or that a rope was even there at all. You can follow the rope, but only along the path it already takes, or you can jump for it. If you tell anyone about the rope, it shifts, sometimes up, sometimes down, but either way it no longer leads to where it used to."

The St. Nazaire Commando raid was the first large-scale successful use of the precognition ability in warfare. Most uses of this ability were by individuals on the battlefield. It was quickly learned by both Allied and Axis scientists that precognition was of little use in large scale intelligence situations, due to its shifting, elusive nature.

April 19, 1942

The Japanese Gain Their First Talent

During a rough squall, a Japanese airman lost control of his aircraft and smashed into the deck of the light aircraft carrier *Shoho*. Instead of perishing in the crash, the pilot, First Lieutenant Hoshi Katamura was instantaneously teleported to his quarters onboard ship, a split second before impact. Hoshi had become Japan's first parahuman Talent.

Unit 731, the Japanese biological weapons division, rushed him back to Tokyo for study. It would be years yet before the Allies learned of his existence.

April 24, 1942

The Bombing of Exeter

In direct retaliation for the RAF bombing of the German city of Lübeck, Hitler ordered the *Luftwaffe* to launch attacks against all significant British cities listed in the famous Baedeker guidebooks.

Exeter, the first city targeted, suffered serious damage after a severe pounding by a large force of German bombers.

April 29, 1942

The Burma Road Is Cut

Japanese forces seized the town of Lashio on this date, effectively severing the vital Burma Road-the link between India and China. By now, the Chinese Nationalist forces fighting the Japanese in China were almost wholly dependent on airdrops for resupply since the *Kwangtung* Army had taken their ports.

The Japanese troops in the area, continuously reinforced through Rangoon, pressed onward to drive the British American and Chinese forces out of north Burma. Most Allied forces were caught in the Mandalay area between two columns of the Japanese Army, who hoped to encircle and cut them off. Without any real organization, the Allies made a run for the Indian and Chinese border. Thousands died in the forced marches out of the jungle highlands.

Just hours after Japanese soldiers captured Lashio, the British Talent Jot (keeping the British Command abreast of the situation in the Far East) teleported back to London and uttered the famous words: "We've lost Burma, Sir."

May 1, 1942

"A Mad Dash"

Now in full retreat, the Allied armies in Burma split into two separate forces and made for the borders of China and India. They hoped to avoid capture by the Japanese, though there was little organization in the escape.

The Chinese Sixth Army made for the Chinese border province of Yunnan, while "Vinegar" Joe Stilwell led a small force on a 400-mile trip to the Indian border town of Imphal, through some of the most difficult terrain on earth.

Content with their victories and the seizure of Burma, the

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○ Hoshi

Name: Hoshi Katamura **AKA** Hoshi ("Star") or the Kamikaze Kid.
Nationality: Japanese.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: First Lieutenant (Japanese Navy).
Decorations: None.
DOB: 1/1/20 Tokyo, Japan.
DOD: 5/15/81 Kyoto, Japan (emphysema).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Hoshi Katamura's Talent was a form of defensive teleportation. Whenever endangered, he was immediately transported to the last place he slept. Only his naked body would make the jump, leaving his clothes and other belongings behind. The range of this defensive teleport was global. It was ideally suited to his role as a *kamikaze* pilot, allowing him to complete nearly 130 "suicide" missions in the last days of the war.
History: "The Kamikaze Kid," a name earned in the Allied press, was born Hoshi Katamura, and was an unexceptional pilot in the Imperial Japanese Navy. His career was marked only by two factors—his brother's dominance as a much better pilot and officer, and Katamura's Talent.

His Talent manifested in the spring of 1941, when he teleported to his quarters onboard ship from the burning wreck of his "Kate" dive-bomber, just as his craft smashed into the deck of the carrier and exploded.

The Imperial Diet was most interested in Katamura's miraculous survival and had the youth rushed under great secrecy to Tokyo for a medical examination. Unit 731, the division charged with the development of biological weapons, studied Katamura for some time, forcing his defensive power to trigger repeatedly, until the exact extent of his ability was fully understood.

Katamura remained a closely guarded secret until almost the end of the war. He was considered a national military asset, on the par of the atom bomb in the United States or the V-1 and V-2 rockets in Nazi Germany. The Imperial Navy hoped to deploy Katamura as a reusable human bomb that could be brought to bear against any target in the Japanese zone of influence. A specially modified, long-range "Zero," overloaded with explosives, was designed for him to pilot.

In 1942, Katamura began training for a mission that would utilize a new technology Japan hoped would cause a dramatic shift of power in the Pacific: the submarine aircraft carrier. This huge submarine could carry four fighter-bomber aircraft underwater for enormous distances, allowing strikes against targets out of the range of influence of regular aircraft. Katamura relentlessly trained on models of his target, the western locks of the Panama Canal, constructed on the coast of the Kuril Islands. With the locks destroyed, America would be forced to move ships around the tip of South America to bring new forces into the Pacific. After the battle of the Coral Sea and the Allied push on the Japanese home islands, plans for the attack were scrapped.

Instead, Katamura was re-enlisted into the regular units of Japanese Naval aviators. He made 130 highly propagandized *kamikaze* attacks on American naval vessels during the last days of the war, though he failed to achieve any significant hits.

Katamura surrendered along with Emperor Hirohito and a myriad of Japanese generals onboard the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. The rest of his life was spent in self-induced obscurity in the city of Kyoto, where he died of emphysema in 1981 at the age of 61.

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Japanese failed to locate or destroy either group.

May 2, 1942

The Japanese Launch a Large Carrier Force In the Coral Sea

To force a decisive sea engagement between the Japanese and American fleet, the Japanese launched a large carrier task force in the Coral Sea. This force was the backbone of a Japanese assault on the Solomon Islands (their main objective was to seize Port Moresby on New Guinea), but the less apparent goal was to end American naval presence in the Pacific altogether. The Japanese command believed that a confrontation between the superior Japanese Navy and the American fleet could only end in defeat for America.

Unbeknownst to the Japanese, U.S. cryptographers had managed to unravel the Japanese naval code some time before. This knowledge gave Admiral Charles Nimitz time to plan his counter-stroke. Nimitz withdrew from the Solomon Islands before the Japanese task force arrived, leaving only a single aircraft carrier group in the area.

May 3, 1942

Task Force 17

Under the command of Rear Admiral Frank J. Fletcher, Task Force 17 (consisting of the aircraft carriers *Lexington* and the *Yorktown* along with a picket force of destroyers and cruisers) set off to locate and sink the Japanese carriers at Coral Sea.

Unfortunately, all they located were several enemy minesweepers, destroyers and landing craft off the coast of Tulagi Island. Planes from Task Force 17 managed to sink or severely damage three minesweepers, a destroyer and several smaller craft. Allied naval planes also downed five Japanese aircraft in the engagement.

The Americans once again proved more resourceful than the Japanese believed.

May 4, 1942

The Last Boat from Corregidor

The island fortress of Corregidor, the last American position in the Philippines, had endured constant bombardment by Japanese forces since December. Its plight was well known, and became the rallying point for the free world. Nevertheless, by May, defeat was coming to Corregidor.

With less than 2,000 American and Filipino soldiers all told, Corregidor was a nightmare existence for the troops, composed of tunnels and constant shelling. Food and water were scarce, and the men had no illusions about their chances.

On April 29, the Japanese invaded the island on two sides after a brutal bombardment by coastal guns and aircraft. Despite the odds, the Allied forces under General Wainright resisted, and held the Japanese off.

On this date the U.S. submarine *Spearfish* spirited away thirteen nurses and twelve officers to Australia. It was the last boat to leave Corregidor before the final Japanese push. The next day, Corregidor fell and the Japanese took Wainright and his men prisoner.

May 5, 1942

The British Invasion of Madagascar

A large British invasion force sailing from Freetown, South Africa invaded the *Vichy* French-held island nation of Madagascar, to prevent its government from assisting Japanese naval operations in the Indian Ocean. The Allies feared Madagascar would become a base for Japanese attacks off the southern tip of Africa.

The *Vichy* French forces on the island offered limited resistance. After a short barrage of naval bombardment from the British ships, they surrendered.

The British Special Sciences Office established the "First Long Range Special Reconnaissance Group" which trained in Britain to fly missions from Madagascar or South Africa. Composed of seventeen Talent flyers, it was a scouting force, to locate and direct anti-naval operations covering a sphere of influence over 1,000 miles square. Over the next three years, they would wreak havoc on Axis ships and subs traveling off the southern tip of Africa.

May 7, 1942

Victory and Death at Coral Sea

The Japanese carrier task force in the Coral Sea searched endlessly for the ships of the U.S. Navy. Each force sent flight after flight of observation aircraft to find the other. For several days, the two groups circled each other without anything but occasional radio contact.

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Teleportation and Warfare

The power of teleportation did have a significant effect on the war in the world of *Godlike,* but its impact was more tactical than strategic.

For instance the British Talent Jot (like many teleporters), caused sonic booms whenever he teleported, both on departure and arrival, usually shattering windows for over a quarter mile. Infiltration using his teleportation power was obviously not an option, and he was incapable of carrying more than 100 pounds on his "jots." This limited capacity was also a common problem found among teleporters.

Other teleporters could not carry equipment at all or take multiple "jaunts," making their power a very risky and uncertain thing- only to be used in the direst emergencies.

Overall, few teleporters existed who could both carry cargo, cover large distances and remain unfatigued after doing so. Those that fit into all three of these categories were invariably used for the most secure and safe information transmission system in the world. In the Allied forces, the Secure Information Service (SIS) Division trained and utilized over 500 Talent teleporters to transport important data and personnel from theatre to theatre without the risk of enemy interception.

Those who could transport cargo were especially valued to fuel long range offensives, effectively eliminating (for a time) overstretched lines of supply, or were used to move important personnel or VIPs from place to place.

This is not to say that teleportation was useless in combat. Short-range teleports were often successfully employed. Their value as shock troops was made most evident during the D-Day invasion, when four American teleporters managed to overpower a machinegun nest on Omaha beach and mount an offensive against German *Übermenschen*, firing into the enemy's backs. They fought for seventeen minutes from the captured bunker, besieged on all sides by Germans, and made their escape at the last possible moment. The value of such tactics are obvious for anyone to see, though their use in combat was often overshadowed by larger events.

On May 7, nineteen American attack aircraft roared off to locate two Japanese aircraft carriers, identified in a garbled Japanese radio broadcast. Instead, they found the light aircraft carrier *Shoho* and several escort craft. In less than 15 minutes, the *Shoho* was a flaming wreck and Lt. Commander Robert E. Dixon radioed back the legendary message, "Scratch one flattop!"

The Japanese force sent to retaliate for the attack on the *Shoho* experienced bad luck from the beginning. Their planes encountered weather bad enough to make them jettison their bombs and head back. During their return, Allied fighter aircraft intercepted them. American pilots picked the Japanese planes out the air, until it became too dark to fight. Later a disoriented force of Japanese aircraft mistook the American carrier *Yorktown* for one of their own, and after several were shot down trying to land, the rest of the planes veered away.

The next day Japanese aircraft located the *Lexington* and *Yorktown*. In a dramatic battle, both carriers were severely damaged by Japanese bombers and torpedo planes. Four hours later, the fires that engulfed the *Lexington* crippled it. Dead in the water, she was abandoned by her crew and torpedoed by a U.S. destroyer.

At the same time, aircraft from the *Yorktown* sighted two of the Japanese carriers and made a series of bomb and torpedo runs. Unfortunately, nothing but one bomb struck the *Shokaku,* causing minimal damage.

The Japanese seemed the winners of the engagement, but the destruction of Japanese aircraft, pilots and ships combined was too much for them. At the cost of one carrier and several dozen aircraft, the Americans foiled the Japanese assault on Port Moresby, and from there, Japanese dreams of the invasion of Australia.

The Battle of the Coral Sea was a much-needed victory for the American Navy.

May 12, 1942

The Debacle at Kharkov

After the long Russian winter, Soviet forces prepared to launch their first true offensive against German forces in the Ukraine. Under General Timoshenko, the Soviet Sixth, Ninth and Fifty-seventh Armies pushed forward towards Kharkov (a city with valuable coal and iron mines), hoping to encircle and destroy a large pocket of Germans.

Although the Russians managed to encircle the enemy, they quickly found themselves surrounded by an even larger Nazi force. Soon 200,000 Russian soldiers were prisoners of war, and 70,000 others died trying to hold back an enemy attacking from both sides.

The collapse of this force opened a gap in the Soviet defenses and gave Hitler a chance to push on to his next objective, the oil-rich Caucasus.

May 20, 1942

The Japanese Complete the Conquest of Burma

In pursuit of fleeing Allied forces, Japanese troops reached the border of India on this date, completing their conquest of Burma.

Several small Allied Commando forces remained behind in Burma however, to continue the fight against the Japanese.

May 21, 1942

Molotov Begs for a Second Front

Vyacheslav Molotov, foreign minister for the Soviet Union, arrived in Britain on May 21, to plead with Prime Minister Churchill for a second front in Europe. It was believed by the Soviet General staff that an invasion of Europe by Allied forces could pull as many as forty German divisions away

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from the Russian front.

Nine days later, Molotov arrived in Washington D.C. and asked the same thing of President Roosevelt.

Unfortunately for Molotov, both Allied leaders had previously agreed that an invasion of Europe could not occur before 1943 or 1944. Their focus was on pushing the Germans out of Africa and defending the Suez Canal. There would be time for Europe later.

May 27, 1942

The Desert Fox Begins His Dance

Generalleutnant Rommel launched a huge offensive in Libya on this date. Side-stepping the British forces manning the Gazala line in central Libya, Rommel swept south while Italian forces engaged the British in the north. Rommel's eyes were on Bir Hacheim-the southern anchor of the British line.

Rommel failed to dislodge the British from the town, and soon was on the defensive. His forces were boxed in an area called "The Cauldron," with their backs to a huge minefield. It seemed Rommel's time was up.

In Germany, *RuSHA SA* prepared an *Überkommandogruppe* to remove Rommel from Africa before his capture, but the *General* had other ideas.

Rommel managed to hold off poorly planned attacks by the disorganized British Eighth Army as his engineers cleared the minefield at his back. Sporadic behind-the-lines attacks by *Übermenschen* kept the British on their guard, while flying patrols located weaknesses in the line to exploit.

By June 1, Rommel's forces slipped away through the minefield and regrouped, attacking and destroying the British 150th Brigade. By June 10, Bir Hacheim was in Axis hands after a prolonged battle between the Italian Trieste and 90th Light Divisions and the Free French forces. Just days after it seemed the end had come for *Afrika Korps*; the Germans were racing towards Tobruk, once again in pursuit of the retreating Allies.

By June 19, Rommel's forces began their assault on the garrison at Tobruk. Just two days later the port, manned mostly by South African and Indian forces, fell into Axis hands. The British were stunned.

The commander of British forces in Africa, General Auchinleck, ordered his troops back to El Alamein, a town in Egypt just 150 miles from Cairo, to form a new defensive line. All previous Allied gains in the war in North Africa were lost.

The Battle of Izyum

On the night of May 14, sixty-three Soviet Talents attempted to make their way through the Kharkov encirclement back to Soviet lines. Most of them were unknown and kept their abilities secret from their commanders, though most knew the Soviet ranks were filled with parahumans.

This group moved to push back the Germans near Izyum hoping they could escape through the breach. But a huge engagement occurred near Izyum between Soviet Talents and *Überkommandogruppe* 6, who were alerted to the presence of the Soviet strike-force by the German Seventeenth Army. While the Soviets enjoyed little opposition early on, coming face to face with the German *Übermenschen* ground their offensive to a brisk halt.

Eleven Russian Talents made it back to Soviet lines to tell the tale of the battle of Izyum, while the Germans suffered minimal casualties. Nine Soviet Talents were captured by German forces and paraded through the streets of Berlin in a drugged stupor. The *SS* later executed them for crimes against the Reich.

Many damaged buildings in Izyum were kept as the Talent against Talent combat left them. An entire tank, transformed by an unknown Talent into pure crystal, still lies in town square as a memorial for the Soviet Talents who died there.

June 1, 1942

Lend-Lease to the Soviet Union Begins

The first shipment of materiel to the Soviet Union from the United States Lend-Lease program began on this date. Several hundred tons of equipment, weapons and supplies were moved through Alaska and Iran, to feed the Soviet war effort.

June 5, 1942

The Battle of Midway

Attacking the tiny American held island for the third time, the Japanese found themselves in the middle of the greatest sea battle of all time (although all of it was fought by carrier based aircraft). The Japanese hoped to capture Midway and the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, creating a defensive perimeter to prevent attacks like the Doolittle raid from reoccurring.

Admiral Yamamoto wished to destroy the American Navy before it could rebuild itself and commit more hit and run attacks against the Japanese islands. He guessed that an attack on Midway might draw the Americans to its defense. To this end, Yamamoto assembled a huge task force built around eight aircraft carriers in preparation for the assault.

Unfortunately for the Empire, once again American

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code-breakers had broken the Japanese code and decrypted several suggestive messages indicating a taskforce was on its way to Midway. America was prepared for the attack long before it came.

The last three aircraft carriers under the command of Admiral Nimitz were dispatched to Midway.

After a brief assault on Midway on the third, the Japanese prepared torpedo planes on deck to destroy any American ships sighted. After a significant wait with no targets in range, the order was given to unload the torpedoes and prepare the aircraft for another assault on Midway.

At that same moment Rear Admiral Frank E. Fletcher, onboard the *Yorktown* (still badly damaged from the battle of the Coral Sea) was informed that two Japanese carriers were in range. Already in the air, thirty-five dive-bombers from the *Hornet* were sent to search for the enemy vessels. Within the hour, fifty-two aircraft of varying types were launched from the American carrier *Enterprise*. Two hours later, the *Yorktown* launched twenty-eight more aircraft to join in the search.

This huge aerial force searched for the Japanese, while the Japanese were rushing to get their aircraft refitted and off the deck to look for the American forces, which they just realized were within attack range.

American Devastator torpedo attack aircraft located and made runs on the Japanese carriers, without scoring any hits. Defending Japanese Zeroes and anti-aircraft fire picked the Devastators out of the air. The American pilots' sacrifice was not in vain, as their torpedo runs drew the picket of Japanese fighters down to a lower altitude, allowing the second wave of American attack aircraft to come in at a higher altitude unopposed.

Dive Bombers drew beads on the *Akagi, Kaga, Soryu* and direct hits with bombs set them aflame. Overloaded with fully fueled aircraft, torpedoes and bombs, their decks proved to be a fantastic target for the American bombs. Soon all three were on fire.

American aircraft destroyed the *Hiryu* as well, but not before it managed to get several torpedo bombers off its deck. Three of these Japanese planes located and bombed the *Yorktown*. It was finally abandoned after three torpedoes and four more bombs struck her. Other ships in the American task force saved most of the crew, but the ship itself could not be salvaged.

In the end, the Japanese lost four aircraft carriers, 250 planes, two cruisers, two destroyers, and about 3,500 men. The battle was, as Admiral Yamamoto imagined, decisive; but not in the way he hoped.

It was the first decisive victory for American forces in the Pacific and it marked a turning point in the war against Japan.

June 7, 1942

The Japanese Invade the Aleutian Islands

Japanese forces landed on the westernmost islands in the Aleutian chain, Attu, Agattu and Kiska on this date. These islands were seen by the Japanese command as a way to secure their northern flank from enemy attack.

About 10,000 troops were garrisoned on the islands during the next few years to hold them from possible counterattack.

June 13, 1942

Operation Pastorius

In the dead of night, four German agents buried their sabotage gear at their landing site, near Amagansett Bay on Long Island. Trained to destroy vital supply and production facilities in the U.S., they prepared to head into New York City, only to be interrupted by a Coastguardsman on patrol. Rather than kill him (and risk drawing attention to themselves), one of the German agents, George Dasch, bribed the young man to "forget he ever saw them." The Coast Guardsman pretended to accept the bribe, but then reported the suspicious men to his superior, who in turn notified the FBI.

The next day, none other than George Dasch himself called the FBI. Hoping to surrender peacefully, he was instead dismissed as a crank caller. Later, after finally convincing American authorities that he was a German agent, he was taken in by the feds. He informed on his cohorts; and revealed the presence of a second team of saboteurs, who had landed on the coast of Florida that same night.

All four men in New York were rapidly captured, but the saboteurs in Florida proved more difficult to track down. In the following week, after some convoluted chases, the FBI captured all but one of them. Finally, the last saboteur, Werner Theil, was tracked down to the small seaside community of Bridgeport, Georgia.

A tense standoff with Theil ended in the deaths of four FBI agents and two local policemen. Until Theil made a break for it, no one was aware of his *Übermensch* abilities, not even his fellow agents. He burst from the doorway and destroyed two cars with bolts of energy, before a well-placed sniper shot to the forehead eliminated him. A train ticket to Washington D.C. and an outdated tourist map of the area surrounding the White House were found in his pockets.

All but two of the Germans were sentenced to death by military authorities, though the sentences of George Dasch and Ernest Burger (another cooperative saboteur) were commuted to thirty years and life imprisonment respectively.

The second landing of German *Übermenschen* in the U.S. had ended in failure.

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June 13, 1942

The OSS Is Born

President Roosevelt established the Office of Strategic Services on this date. Under the direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and led by Brigadier-General (later General) William "Wild Bill" Donovan, the OSS grew in influence and ability over the years of the war, until it was a significant player in the field of international espionage. Despite secret maneuverings by U.S. Army Intelligence and J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI to prevent such a department from being created, Donovan's long history in the fields of espionage and politics secured the backing of a forceful and determined ally: the president himself.

Donovan formerly headed the Office of the Coordinator of Information, an intelligence-collecting agency that reported to the president about the activities of the fascist powers of Europe, before America's involvement in the war. In this position, Donovan traveled the world visiting countries under the threat of Nazi attack. He even visited one of the Axis powers itself with a trip to Italy in the early 1940s. His wit and charm were outdone only by the intelligence that produced them. When Mussolini refused to allow Donovan access to Italian military sites, Donovan turned to an aide and said, "You see, I told you they have nothing." Shortly thereafter, he was allowed unrestricted access to Italian military bases.

The FBI Pulls Some Ineffective Strings

With the debacle at Bridgeport, J. Edgar Hoover realized that the FBI needed Talents, at least from a public relations standpoint. Just as he had threatened, cajoled and forced his way into the proceedings of the war before, Hoover managed to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on July 11, 1942. Stating that if "something big were to happen due to an enemy Talent in the U.S., I will not be held responsible," he insinuated he would make his plight a matter of public record if his hand were forced. This thinly veiled threat was reported to the president.

The president complied, in a manner of speaking. "Hoover's Dozen" as they would be known, were reassigned from TOC to the FBI on August 1, 1942. All twelve Talents possessed "Dud" powers (that is, Talents which were useless in any conventional sense). One of Hoover's Dozen could read books without opening them, another could change the color of his skin, and a third could float an inch off the ground—if he closed his eyes.

Furious but without any real recourse, Hoover gave up.

Surprisingly, the Dozen were actually quite useful. Their ability to detect and counter other Talent abilities was used to investigate possible enemy agent Talents in the U.S. and South America.

The OSS Donovan created was composed of the most brilliant and often most egotistical minds he could draw from America's elite. He mimicked the wildly successful British Special Operations Executive, which proved that with a little ingenuity, some luck and some careful planning, great things could be accomplished in warfare while risking only a few men.

Despite a rocky start, the OSS would prove vital in the war against the Axis.

June 18, 1942

America Turns Its Back on the Constitution

Violating America's founding principles, under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority (WRA), the military began detaining Japanese Americans on the west coast of the United States to prevent "insurgency, sabotage and assistance to the enemy."

Despite the fact that no act of espionage or sabotage was *ever* attributed to a person of Japanese descent, about 120,000 men, women and children were rounded up and interred in "Relocation Centers" in California, Utah, Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho and Wyoming. In many cases, their property was either confiscated or the "evacuees" sold it at a steep loss.

Here they were kept in concentration camps surrounded by armed guard and cut off from the outside world. A few fought against the internment process, taking the government to court over the matter. A first-generation American citizen, Gordon Hirabayashi, took the matter to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that the threat of a Japanese invasion allowed the U.S. Army to violate the civil rights of Japanese-Americans.

An apology by the federal government for this racist and un-American act would take more than fifty years.

June 21, 1942

Rommel Takes Tobruk, and the Australians Get Their First Talent

Topping off a masterful strike against the disorganized British forces in Libya, Rommel secured the fortress port of Tobruk on this date, capturing it and more than 20,000 British Commonwealth troops who held the city. He was promoted to *Generalfeldmarschall* for this amazing reversal of Axis fortunes in Africa.

One Australian gave this sweet victory a sour taste however. Leading an attack at a portion of Rommel's forces south of Tobruk just as the town was being overrun, the Australian's Talent ability allowed him and seventy men to escape and eventually reunite with British forces in Egypt.

June 28, 1942

The Black Gold of the Caucasus

Having removed General Timoshenko and the Soviet Sixth, Ninth and Fifty-Seventh Armies from the equation the

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month before, German forces hoped to continue southeast into the Caucasus. Hitler saw the oil-rich area as the key to maintaining the war. Without a strong source of oil, the German fronts would eventually seize up. This German offensive aimed at capturing the city Voronehz on the river Don, which the Soviets believed represented a German grab for the southern reaches of Moscow.

June 29, 1942

Mussolini Prepares for Non-Existent Victory

Flying in to Derna, Libya, the Italian Dictator Benito Mussolini prepared himself to march into Cairo, at the head of the victorious *Afrika Korps*. Reports of Rommel's advances had given him the idea that North Africa would soon be in the hands of the Axis.

Unfortunately, the dictator's dreams of victory were far from an accurate representation of the situation. Rommel's forces were spread thin and short on supplies, and already the British had solidified a line at El Alamein. Numerous attacks failed, and the German advances in the area were met with a new and bloody resolve. El Alamein was Britain's final stand in North Africa.

Disheartened, Mussolini returned to Italy on July 20, while Rommel and *Afrika Korps* struggled to maintain their supremacy.

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team

In early 1943, interred Japanese Americans were allowed to volunteer for combat. Amazingly, more than 18,500 volunteered for the war effort, despite their shoddy treatment by the U.S. government. This all-Japanese-American force would become the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and would distinguish itself in combat as the most highly decorated armed force in U.S. history. This one unit won over 4,500 decorations.

It also distinguished itself in other ways. In its two and a half years of combat, the 442nd had the largest number of Talent manifestations per capita of any American force in the war. Almost every third member of the 442nd developed a Talent power during combat (due to their race, the force was not broken up and reassigned by Talent Operations Command).

Analyst examinations pointed out that it was almost as if the 442nd was developing powers because the population of Japan was not. At the end of the war, nearly every surviving member of the unit possessed a Talent ability.

July 2, 1942

Sevastopol Falls

The German-Romanian Army under *Generaloberst* Erich von Manstein broke through the Soviet lines holding this fortress city on July 3, 1942. His forces encircled and captured 60,000 Soviet prisoners, and effectively put an end to organized Soviet resistance in the area.

For this victory, Hitler promoted Manstein to *Generalfeldmarschall*.

July 9, 1942

Dead Man's Hand

In occupied France, the bodies of four *SS* officers were discovered in a private room at the *Petit Casino* club in Paris. Each had been fatally stabbed, with bizarre occult symbols carved into their foreheads, cheeks and chest.

Carefully laid out on the table was the famous "Dead Man's Hand" of "Wild Bill" Hickock. No one was seen coming or going from the room, but local authorities were already quite familiar with the perpetrator, the elusive French *Surhomme* called *L'Invocateur*.

July 13, 1942

Hitler Foolishly Splits His Forces

Commanding the German forces in Russia, Hitler called for a push on both Stalingrad and the Caucasus, an enormous undertaking far beyond the capabilities of the German Army. This caused a huge gap between the Armies that everyone knew the Russians would exploit. To make matters worse, Hitler transferred the Fourth Panzer Army to Army Group A in the south, effectively slowing the Germans' advance to a halt as the groups reorganized.

Once Hitler realized his mistake, he countermanded the order, making the situation infinitely worse. By the time the German forces regrouped yet again and made for Stalingrad (now their prime objective), the momentum of the push was lost, and the Soviets gathered a strong force to oppose them. Once again, Hitler proved that the victories he had achieved were simply a matter of luck.

July 22, 1942

The Clearing of the Warsaw Ghetto

Under orders of *Reichsführer* Himmler, the removal of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto began. Over the next three months, 300,000 were transported to the recently constructed Treblinka extermination camp, where they were killed by starvation or gassing.

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○ Misfire

Name: Peter Fitzgerald **AKA** Misfire.
Nationality: Australian.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Home schooling, officer training.
Rank: Captain (Australian Army).
Decorations: None.
DOB: 1/01/19 Port Hedland, Australia.
DOD: 6/12/81 Sydney, Australia (natural causes).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Fitzgerald unconsciously turned enemy explosives to sand. The power somehow differentiated between "friendly" and "enemy" targets, and worked automatically in a 1,000-yard radius. This power transformed enemy gunpowder into silt, so that guns, grenades and shells could not detonate.
History: Fitzgerald joined the Australian Army on his eighteenth birthday just as hostilities in Europe were coming to a head. He first served in the British Expeditionary Force in France and was one of the thousands of men evacuated at Dunkirk. Later, he was transferred briefly to North Africa before being ferried to Greece, where he fought along the Metaxas line, and in the failed defense of Crete. He was finally moved to North Africa in June 1941 after gaining a commission.

He distinguished himself there, single handedly capturing two German *Übermenschen* in Rommel's ill-fated push into Libya in January 1942. For this valiant act, he was promoted to captain and given command of a company in the recently arrived Ninth Australian Infantry Division at Tobruk.

Until June 21, 1942, Fitzgerald had no idea he was a Talent. When his strong-point south of Tobruk was overrun by Axis forces, Fitzgerald waited for the ax to fall, but was confused when several Panzers surrounding him failed to fire upon his position. German infantry was brought up and Fitzgerald prepared for a full-scale attack, but the German infantry retreated without firing a shot. Only a few grenades were thrown, all of which failed to detonate.

Fitzgerald suspected he was the cause of the unusual tactics when the Germans brought up three *Übermenschen* to take the position. Fitzgerald could "see" a strange aura around one of the German *Übermenschen*. He then guessed, correctly, that he had become a Talent.

Wasting no time, Fitzgerald launched a full attack on the German force. With his power, Fitzgerald and seventy of his men pushed through the short German lines to the south of Tobruk and broke through into the desert. Using captured vehicles, Fitzgerald made it east to the Halfaya pass, back to Allied lines.

Fitzgerald fought throughout the war and was assigned to the British X corps, fighting in the invasion of Salerno and up the "boot." Later, he fought in Operation Market Garden, and in the battle which claimed the life of *Krieg*.

He retired to Sydney in 1946, a hero of the Australian people. Cashing in on his name, Fitzgerald signed a deal with a local real-estate magnate, opening his first hotel in Sydney in 1961. By 1981, at the time of his death, Fitzgerald owned over twenty hotels spread across Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia and was worth well over $500 million.

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July 22, 1942

The Japanese Land at Buna, New Guinea

In a daring move, Japanese forces under the command of Major-General Tomitaro Horii landed at Buna on the southern tip of New Guinea. This move was a last ditch effort to secure the island of New Guinea, which would then be used as a stepping-stone for a Japanese invasion of Australia.

Many of the Australian troops that once garrisoned New Guinea were fighting in North Africa with the British Commonwealth forces. Those who remained at Port Moresby on the southern coast knew they had to hold the city; otherwise, the Japanese could bomb Australia and cut it off from American support.

Horii's plan was ingenious and risky. The Owen Stanley Mountains that stood between Buna and Port Moresby were thought nearly impassable. These razor sharps peaks rose to over 3,000 meters above sea level, and the path to them from Buna was little more than a muddy track. It was Horii's intention to move his troops through the Owen Stanleys and attack the Australians at Port Moresby.

July 31, 1942

Wisconsin v. Taft

The Wisconsin Supreme Court made the first decision on the use of Talent powers in the U.S. on this date. For three weeks, the case of *Wisconsin v. Louis Taft* was heard. Taft, a recently discovered Talent, argued that his power was protected by the Constitution of the United States, while the Wisconsin state attorney argued that Taft's power caused a public spectacle which disturbed the peace.

On the morning of May 11, 1942, Taft levitated to work through downtown Milwaukee, causing numerous accidents. When asked to stop by a police officer, Taft refused, and was arrested.

After four days of deliberation, the decision was handed down. The use of Talent powers in public without special dispensation from local, state or federal governments was illegal. In private, or in life-or-death situations, their use was, of course, not prohibited.

Over the next two years, similar laws were enacted in all 48 states.

The Trap to Catch *L'Invocateur*

The *Gestapo* did not just let *L'Invocateur* cut a swath through officers in occupied France. Although the "official" policy of Germany was that only Germans possessed paranormal abilities, on the lower administrative levels of the *Gestapo,* a very real effort to capture or kill enemy Talents was underway. In occupied countries, projects to capture Talents (both native and alien) were underway since as early as the summer of 1941.

Several *Übermenschen* were relocated to France in late 1942 as bait in a trap to capture *L'Invocateur*. Parading around Paris dressed as normal German Officers; the *Übermenschen* did their best to draw the Talent's attention. By beating and intimidating locals, meeting with well-known turncoats, and flashing money around, they made themselves targets for *L'Invocateur's* blade.

However, the Frenchman proved himself wilier than the *Gestapo*. When three of the *Übermenschen* turned up dead, the project was cancelled before Berlin became involved.

When asked after the war how he accomplished this task, *L'Invocateur* said, "The invisibility is luck; my true Talent is with the knife."

August 7, 1942

Guadalcanal and Tulagi

The first U.S. Marine Division landed on Tulagi and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. Their mission: to prevent a Japanese island-hopping advance towards New Zealand. U.S. commanders believed the much larger Marine force would overwhelm and defeat the Japanese garrison easily, effectively eliminating Axis presence on the island. A small Marine force also landed on Tulagi, the island opposite Guadalcanal, to prevent it from being used as an artillery position to pound the First Division as they landed.

The fighting on Guadalcanal and Tulagi was fierce. The airfield, just three miles inland, was not surrendered until the Japanese lost more than 800 men defending its approaches. On August 21, the Americans captured and renamed the airfield "Henderson Field," after Major Lofton Henderson, a hero of the battle of Midway.

Unfortunately, night landings were reinforcing Japanese forces on Guadalcanal. This so-called "Tokyo Express" allowed the Japanese to pour wave after wave of soldiers on the isolated American Marines. Meanwhile American ships were taking a pounding in "Iron Bottom Sound" just off Guadalcanal, while attempting to deliver equipment and ammunition to the surrounded Marines.

In a small perimeter surrounded by a growing force of Japanese soldiers, the first U.S. Marine Division held the line.

August 9, 1942

The Battle of Savo Island

A force of Australian and American cruisers were attacked off the coast of Guadalcanal by a Japanese cruiser squadron on the night of the ninth, destroying four American cruisers and damaging the Australian cruiser *Canberra* beyond repair.

This attack turned away what remained of the American naval force in the area, and left the Marines on Guadalcanal and Tulagi without adequate supplies.

One sailor from the destroyed cruiser USS *Barton* managed to survive the conflagration when his Talent power manifested itself. This survivor, Franklin Wolensky, made his way to the first Marine Division at Henderson field—through Japanese-held territory.

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August 12, 1942

Stalin and Churchill Meet for the First Time

Escorted by four British Talents, Prime Minister Churchill arrived in Moscow to meet with the Russian dictator for the first time. The meeting, which dealt mostly with the delay of a second front in Europe, did not go well. Stalin's forceful attitude and Churchill's obstinacy caused a disagreement between the two to escalate into an argument.

Furthermore, Churchill was informed by his Talent bodyguards that Stalin's new "adjutant," a meek and homely looking man, was a Talent of unknown ability and power. This Talent did not leave Stalin's side during the Prime Minister's visit. The British Talents were nervous, fearing for Churchill's safety. Discreet questions placed about the Talent's ability were met with smiles, but no clear answers. The British cut the conference short and returned to Britain on the 20th.

August 12, 1942

General Montgomery Takes Command

General Bernard Montgomery took command of the British Eighth Army, replacing General Neil Ritchie as commander in North Africa on this date. Churchill felt Ritchie lacked the tactical vision necessary to finish off Rommel, and saw Montgomery as an ideal replacement.

Montgomery was the polar opposite of Ritchie, and relied upon careful planning and numerical supremacy to assure success in his attacks. As the Eighth Army dug in at El Alamein, only sixty miles from Alexandria, it needed all the help it could get.

August 13, 1942

TOG 1's Premiere

On the night of August 13, Talent Operation Group 1, composed of nine American Talents, including the Indestructible Man, crept ashore at Zeebrugge, Belgium. Their targets were an oil-processing plant, two dry-docks and a rail line.

TOG 1 split into two groups. The first, led by First Lieutenant Roger "Crazy Eight" Yelt, infiltrated and destroyed the dry docks and a rail line, easily defeating the small party of guards they encountered. During this firefight nine German soldiers were captured by Corporal Michael "Shell-Game"Messner, who teleported them to a stockade in Falmouth.

Led by the Indestructible Man, Team 2 assaulted the oil-processing plant. Resistance there was much more severe. An unknown German *Übermensch* scored the first American Talent casualty of the war by killing Sergeant Kevin "Max" Harris while he attempted to gain access to the plant with his powers. The team was surrounded inside the plant by experienced troops, and pinned down.

At 2:15 A.M., the main oil tank at the Zeebrugge oil processing plant ignited with an explosion heard as far away as the Albert Canal. A sheet of flame 200 feet high lit the night sky. Flaming debris and gouts of burning oil rapidly ignited nearby structures. Soon, three blocks of houses surrounding the plant were aflame.

Just before the landing craft left for Britain, the Indestructible Man and the rest of Team 2 arrived, shaken but

Stalin's Cobaka

The enigmatic Soviet Talent known as *Cobaka* ("Dog") discovered by Special Directive One in early 1942, was never far from Stalin's side. Unlike other members of the Soviet general staff, Stalin trusted the Talent (or seemed to), and often confided in him. It was never officially stated what he could do, but his dimpled face and serene smile put fear into even the greatest Soviet commanders, who had heard various stories about his exploits. Some believed he could disintegrate people with a thought; others that he could project force fields; still others that he could control minds.

Britain's Special Sciences Office even drafted a classified study that insinuated *Cobaka* was the real leader of the Soviet Union and Stalin was nothing more than his puppet.

After the end of the Cold War, when the files of the Soviet Talents program were opened to the West, it was discovered why Stalin valued the Talent so much. *Cobaka* could tell with absolute certainty whether a fact was true or false. He could not predict future events, but knew when something said or written was true or false with 100% accuracy. This did not apply to speculative statements such as "I believe the Germans will push towards Izbuzery," but only towards statements that the person writing or speaking knew were true or false. This power led to various intelligence coups during the war.

Stalin valued the Talent for many reasons. With him, the dictator could determine the true intentions of his Allies—and keep *Cobaka* in line since the Talent knew Stalin's threats against him were true as well. However, this did not keep Stalin from having *Cobaka* regularly tortured and beaten just to be sure.

In the summer of 1949, all Soviet records on *Cobaka* end. In one recorded meeting of the Inner Party he was there; in the next, gone. No one knows what became of Stalin's "Dog."

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Super Swabby

Name: Franklin Wolensky **AKA** Super Swabby, Pinball.
Nationality: American.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Grade school.
Rank: Captain, U.S. Navy.
Decorations: Distinguished Service Medal (U.S. Marines).
DOB: 7/31/16 Baltimore, U.S.A.
DOD: 10/10/71 Minneapolis, U.S.A. (heart disease).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Wolensky could project an invisible sphere of force around himself or others. He could create these impervious "Bubbles" (as he called them) anywhere in sight range, but only one at a time. Anyone inside a Wolensky Bubble was protected from virtually all damage. Large explosions would send the Bubble flying off at high speed, caroming off any hard surfaces, earning Wolensky his other nickname "Pinball." There was no known upper limit to the strength of Wolensky's force fields.
History: Wolensky was just a regular Navy man serving on the USS *Barton* out of San Diego when his ship was fatally hit in a Japanese attack north of Guadalcanal.

Blown clear of the ship when an ammunition container next to him exploded, Wolensky landed in the water in one of his force spheres, bruised and in pain but otherwise unharmed. He "walked" his sphere to shore (it floated) and made his way to U.S. lines near Henderson field. He was fired upon by Japanese patrols twice, but by dawn he arrived at the Marine lines.

The Americans shot at him as he approached their perimeter as well. In a famous exchange, a Marine machine gunner challenged Wolensky with the password:

"Hershey bar!"

"Yes, please!" Wolensky replied.

The Marines were surprised to see him. Wolensky refused to evacuate from Guadalcanal when a PBY aircraft arrived the next week, and stayed to fight with the Marines. When he received orders from Vice Admiral Ghormley to evacuate the island, he wrote back: "I have to stay. God gave me this, and I've got to make it right. Court-martial me if you want. Thanks, Ensign Wolensky."

The Marine commander at Guadalcanal, Major General Vandegrift, wrote in his journal: "He's the only damn swabby I could ever stand. If that boy goes to jail for this I know a thousand Marines who will gladly take his place."

The Marines gave Wolensky his nickname early on. As "Super Swabby" (swabby being a derogatory name for a sailor) Wolensky fought alongside the Marines, putting himself in harm's way more than once. As the Marines began to gain their own Talents on Guadalcanal, Wolensky became the "old hand" of the group and was their unofficial leader.

Wolensky was injured during a *banzai* charge on Bloody Ridge when he sacrificed his own shield to save two Marines in a forward machine gun post. Struck by two bullets in the left arm, he was immediately evacuated to Pearl Harbor command on the next flight out. Instead of a court martial, he was promoted to captain in the Navy and decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal by the Marine Corps.

He fought on in the war after his recovery, participating (from the Naval end) in the Philippines campaign, as well as Iwo Jima. He married a widow in San Diego in 1946 and moved to her family home in Minnesota, where he died of heart disease twenty-five years later at the age of 55.

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otherwise unharmed. Hearing the firefight at the Processing plant, Team 1 arrived just in time to get them out.

TOG 1 lost one man, and destroyed over 1 million dollars worth of equipment that would take more than three years to replace.

Their premiere had been an unqualified success.

August 14, 1942

Eisenhower is Named Anglo-American Commander for Operation: Torch

Hand-picked for his intelligence, persistence and obedience, General Dwight Eisenhower was chosen by the Allies to lead the British/American invasion of *Vichy* French-controlled Africa. Eisenhower was a man of high moral standards who insisted on cooperation between Allied forces above all other things, and this sentiment gained him a great deal of respect from all the Allied powers involved in the war.

Eisenhower's plan was simple; land 110,000 troops in Morocco and Algeria to crush Rommel between the forces of Operation: Torch and the British Eighth Army.

August 17, 1942

The Raid on Makin Island

This daring U.S. Marine raid on Japanese held Makin Island in the Gilbert Islands was meant to distract the Japanese command in the South Pacific, and possibly divert Japanese reinforcements from Guadalcanal to ease the situation of the First Marine Division there.

The Marine force which landed, known as "Carlson's Raiders," was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Evans Carlson, and composed of 222 Marines (including Major James Roosevelt, the son of the President). They were ferried to the island onboard two U.S. submarines-the *Nautilus* and *Argonaut*.

The landing went smoothly until a Marine accidentally discharged his rifle on the beach, alerting the enemy. A huge firefight ensued, causing about 100 Marines to withdraw. Carlson and the other 100 men remained behind for another day, destroying an ammunition and fuel dump, and capturing vital Japanese intelligence.

That night Carlson and most of his men made it back to the submarines to escape. With only thirty casualties, the mission was considered a success.

August 19, 1942

The Push to Stalingrad

General Friedrich von Paulus, commanding the German Sixth Army, finally managed to burst through the Soviet lines that had held the Axis from the gates of Stalingrad, the city named after Stalin himself. Exhausted and out of supplies, the Army paused there, unable to move forward in the face of a huge Soviet defense erected to keep them out.

When supplies arrived from the Reich however, von Paulus pushed forward again. By August 23, German troops were fighting within the city limits of Stalingrad itself.

August 19, 1942

The Raid at Dieppe and the Ghost of the Fourteenth

To test the effectiveness of a full-scale invasion of Europe, a large Allied assault force landed at the French port of Dieppe on the English Channel, with disastrous results. Composed of 5,000 Canadians who were itching for combat, 1,000 British Commandos and sixty U.S. Army Rangers, its objective was to rush in under cover of darkness and secure the port so vital intelligence on the Germans could be collected. No Talents were used on the raid because it was believed their presence would be most likely met with *Übermenschen* mobilization.

The plan went horribly wrong from the start. At 3:47 A.M., five armed German ships discovered the main force as they were preparing to land the first wave. Alerted to their presence, the Germans on the beach let loose a deadly barrage of machine gun and coastal gunfire. Serious casualties began to eat away at the Allies before they even landed.

Many of the men who landed never left the beach. Only a few "Churchill" tanks made it ashore; most were lost in the waves, or knocked out before they could disembark. The Germans never relented in their attacks on the nearly-hopeless beachhead. Thousands died in the withering fire without a chance for escape.

Just before dawn, the British commander decided to withdraw. By then, Berlin Command had been alerted and responded by sending in seven *Übermenschen*. The parahumans ripped into the Allied forces on the beach; tearing through tanks like tissue paper, shredding squads of men along with their equipment, and relentlessly searching for officers to capture. The few that could escape, did. The rest that were laden with the wounded, struggled on and did their best to stay alive.

Canadians remaining from the Fourteenth Canadian Tank Battalion gathered around their fatally wounded commander as the German super-men waded in. Major Graham Tunney had been shot six times, and was slowly expiring from a wound through his chest, but his men refused to surrender him. The German *Übermensch Tristan* threw Tunney's men aside to get at him, killing nine members of the Fourteenth as they tried to keep the *Übermensch* back.

When *Tristan* reached Tunney and grabbed the dying man by the collar, something happened. *Tristan* died instantly

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Gruppe Weiss

This special detachment of *Übermenschen* was transferred to *General* von Paulus' command on August 26, 1942 with the express order to take Stalingrad at all costs. Among their number was the second *Übermensch* discovered, *Feuerzauber.*

"White Group" was composed of 200 highly trained and motivated *Übermenschen* who were the greatest warriors Nazi Germany had ever known. Hitler believed that they alone would determine the fate of Nazi forces in Stalingrad. The group was reinforced twelve times over the next year. Four hundred and fifty three *Übermenschen* were poured into the battle that raged around Stalingrad.

By the end of the war in the Soviet Union in 1944, the group had suffered 226% casualties. Only two of *Gruppe Weiss* survived the war that ravaged the eastern front—by deserting.

with a look of terror on his face, and Tunney *stood up*.

Canada's first Talent, the Ghost of the Fourteenth, had been born.

August 23, 1942

A Brief Moment of Glory for Italy

In the last truly successful cavalry charge against modern troops, 600 horse mounted Italian soldiers from the Eighth Italian Army attacked and routed the Third Soviet Division near Izbushenzky north of Stalingrad.

This brief moment of glory would mark one of the only successful uses of Italian forces in Russia.

August 23, 1942

The Battle of the Eastern Solomons

Concerned with American successes in the Solomon Islands, the Japanese Navy mobilized a large task force to secure the sea-lanes in the area. Consisting of twenty-two destroyers, three aircraft carriers, seven heavy cruisers, three light cruisers and five transports (each carrying 1,500 Marines each), the force was enormous; outgunning the three American carriers in the area by a considerable degree.

The Japanese planned to use the light aircraft carrier *Ryujo* as a decoy to draw the Americans out into a large-scale engagement in the Coral Sea. Unfortunately, the Japanese force was spotted 100 miles out, and American aircraft struck first. Naval bombers and torpedo planes sank the *Ryujo,* while the Americans managed to fight off the Japanese counter-attack. Over the next two days the battle continued.

The Japanese lost a light carrier, a destroyer, a transport and sixty-one aircraft, while the Americans only suffered heavy damage to the carrier *Enterprise*. The Japanese withdrew the rest of their force after night-landing the remaining Japanese Marines on Guadalcanal.

Yet another blow had been dealt the "invincible" Japanese Navy.

August 23, 1942

Stalingrad is Bombed

Over 600 *Luftwaffe* bombers were dispatched to bomb the Russian city of Stalingrad, to "soften up the enemy" in preparation for the coming assault. It was believed this attack would give *General* von Paulus' Army the advantage and drive the remaining Soviet forces out of the city for good.

Although thousands died in the attack, it was a catalyst for resistance on a level never before seen. Despite the carnage, the Russians slipped back into the gutted city and prepared to repulse the enemy at any cost.

August 30, 1942

The Desert Fox is Repelled

Running low on tanks, fuel and equipment, *Generalfeldmarschall* Rommel made a desperate grab for the Alam Halfa Ridge, twelve miles past the British Eighth Army's front lines in Egypt.

This "surprise attack" went just as General Montgomery planned. Rommel's forces swept in on the night of August 30, and found their progress hindered by minefields and endless barrages of heavy artillery. Those forces that managed to break free found themselves under the guns of the Forty-fourth Division and the XIII Corps.

With mounting losses in an already haggard force, Rommel withdrew.

September 2, 1942

The Golem of Warsaw

400,000 Jewish residents of Warsaw had been rounded up and sealed within a 3.5 square mile area known as the Ghetto since the Nazi invasion of Poland, and the penalty for a Jew caught outside the enclosure was death.

Since July, 340,000 Jews had been taken from the ghetto to Treblinka, where they were gassed, shot or worked to death. The remaining 60,000 Jews in the ghetto slowly starved to death.

On September 2, a "creature" killed *SS Hauptscharführer* Alfred Meier as he ate dinner. Known as a brutal sadist who enjoyed murdering women and children, Meier was in charge of Jewish deportations from the ghetto, and shot two weeping women who refused to board a truck that morning.

The attack took place as Meier and several comrades were dining in a local tavern. A "beast" burst into the room, knocking the door from its hinges. Descriptions of the creature varied. Most could only say that it was man-sized, made of dirt or clay, and had a symbol carved into its head. It ripped Meier in half, and left the way it had come, ignoring all attacks made against it.

The story made it back to the Warsaw ghetto the next day. Every Jew who heard it recognized the Golem of Jewish myth, but fearing retaliation, remained silent on the matter.

Reports of the attack were discreetly made to *RuSHA SA,* who dispatched two investigators to quietly look into the crime. None of the Germans had any idea what the thing might have been.

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The Ghost of the Fourteenth

Name: Graham Tunney **AKA** The Ghost of the Fourteenth, *Loki.*
Nationality: Canadian.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: College at Burton, Prince Edward Island; officer training, Vancouver.
Rank: Major (Canadian Army).
Decorations: None.
DOB: 4/09/1889 Chiliwack, Canada.
DOD: ?
Known Parahuman Abilities: The extent of Tunney's abilities after his "death" were never fully understood. He was immune to almost all attacks leveled at him (including Talent powers); could teleport an unknown distance at will; was able to pass through walls, and remained alive despite missing half of his face and having a three-quarter inch wide hole straight through his chest. His touch was fatal to any Talent or normal.

Tunney was the first Western "mad" Talent, like the Soviet monster Baba Yaga. He never spoke a word after Dieppe, and refused to obey commands, but he constantly "fell in" whenever and wherever the remnants of the Fourteenth Canadian Tank Battalion fought, often appearing in their greatest moments of need.
History: Tunney was a career military man. In 1914, he was called to active service and fought in the Great War. After returning from France, he spent much of his time in Britain, learning the new arts of tank tactics and coordinated artillery and infantry attacks.

In 1940, Tunney was called back to service. In the British Expeditionary Force he fought in France, and later, after evacuation, briefly in Norway before returning to Britain.

Assigned commander of the freshly minted Fourteenth Canadian Tank Battalion, he spent 1941 in training with his men in Scotland. By 1942, his men were itching for a fight and Tunney was no different. When the news of a large raid on German occupied France came down the grapevine, Tunney did everything he could to get his group involved.

He never made it to the beach in one piece. Six 7.92 mm rounds from a German machine gun struck him before his feet even touched the sand. His men did their best to defend him, but the German parahumans put an end to their dreams of rescue.

At the instant Tunney's touch killed Tristan, he became Canada's first Talent. Chasing the remaining German *Übermenschen* off the beach, he assisted the Allied forces in their escape, destroying two coastal guns and four machine gun nests, momentarily distracting the German forces from the invasion force.

British intelligence, particularly interested in Tunney's "immunity" to the German Talents' powers, eagerly received the varying reports of his resurrection. Unfortunately, he never appeared in Britain again.

Later, Allied analysts realized Tunney was something more than just a Talent. His "death" on the beach warped his mind, and his power warped along with it. No longer subject to the laws of men or Talents, like Baba Yaga, he was something more.

Tunney would appear from time to time in Europe, fighting in random battles, assisting the Fourteenth Canadian Tank Battalion whenever it needed him, a ghoulish and mute reminder of the slaughter on the beach at Dieppe. Tunney's sporadic "appearances" had a purpose, and were not random as the Allied analysts believed. Tunney was hunting down the remaining six *Übermenschen* from the beach at Dieppe.

After the death of the last living Talent who fought on the beach at Dieppe, *Obersturmbannführer* Franz *"Rot"* Gille in 1945, Tunney was never seen again.

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The Coastwatchers

Besides having cracked much of the Japanese Naval code, America and her Allies in the Pacific also had the benefit of an organization of unique individuals monitoring Japanese movements in the waters around the Solomon and Bismarck Islands.

The Australian and New Zealand volunteer Coastwatchers reported the movements of Japanese ships, planes and men to the Allied command by radio. This organization (formed before the war) was composed of solitary individuals, living in the wilds of the South Pacific, either on their own or with natives. They did not engage the enemy, just watched them and reported vital information about their numbers and movements. Some were soldiers, others natives, farmers and even priests.

Their contribution to the war effort was critical to Allied victories in the Pacific.

What Happened to the Golem

It is widely accepted that the attack on *Hauptscharführer* Meier was caused by the manifestation of a Talent. Why the Golem never re-appeared remains a mystery. Some believe that Meier manifested a power out of guilt, which he used to destroy himself, but a more likely proposition exists: a Jew in the Warsaw Ghetto unconsciously created the Golem, and was later deported and killed at Treblinka or Auschwitz.

September 13, 1942

The Battle of Bloody Ridge

A huge force of Japanese Marines rushed the American Marine lines just south of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal on the morning of September 13. The 164th Marine Battalion and General Vandergrift's Fifth Marine Division repulsed the much larger force, inflicting almost 700 casualties on the fanatical Japanese. Seven Marine Talents assisted in the defense of the field, including the American Talent Franklin "Super Swabby" Wolensky.

During the combat, Wolensky was wounded, and two of the Marine Talents were killed. Despite protests from the wounded Talent, Wolensky was evacuated the following day to Pearl Harbor command for medical treatment.

September 16, 1942

A Push on Port Moresby

Major-General Horii's forces ascended to the top of the Kokoda trail up the Owen Stanley mountains, and descended the treacherous "Golden Staircase" to the plains below, in an attempt to surprise Allied troops at Port Moresby.

The Seventh Australian Infantry Division repeatedly repulsed the Japanese attacks, preventing a breakthrough to Port Moresby. Casualties due to jungle rot, fever and malnutrition consumed more soldiers from both sides than combat wounds, and each force was pushed to its limits. The Australians did not back down, and the Japanese would not give up.

On September 21, the Australian garrison was cheered by the manifestation of the first Australian Talent on New Guinea. Private Marcus "Typhoon" Gladden fought on the Kokoda Trail behind Japanese lines, using his power to pelt the enemy with heavy winds, hail stones and rain.

The Australians knew that reinforcements would arrive soon, and then the real fight would begin.

September 26, 1942

The Japanese Are Surrounded

The U.S. Thirty-Second Infantry and the Australian Ninth Infantry Division landed at Penguin and Lae on New Guinea, taking the Japanese by surprise. Their landing threatened the Japanese from the rear, and if they secured Buna, could cut off any route of retreat for Horii's men from the lines at Port Moresby. The Japanese pulled back to the Kokoda trail, in the hopes of beating the Allies back to Buna, but the Seventh Australian Infantry Division had different ideas.

Horii's forces were attacked relentlessly as they withdrew, with major battles occurring at Templeton's Crossing, Oivi and Gorari. The Australian Talent "Typhoon" killed seventy-four Japanese troops near Imita ridge as they half-heartedly tried to mount a defense against Allied attacks.

October 23, 1942

The Battle of El Alamein

Beginning with a radio blackout in western Egypt caused by the British Talent "Damper," Allied forces swept past Axis lines, pushing Rommel's tanks back at every point. Seven Talent teams attacked behind the lines at 9 P.M. Four teams hit the El Taka Plateau, Kidney Ridge, Sidi Abdel Rahman, and Tell El Akkakir, capturing or killing commanders to disrupt the chain of command. The three remaining teams assaulted *Afrika Korps* itself, causing heavy losses and capturing

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General Georg Stumme, the commander in charge while *Generalfeldmarschall* Rommel was on leave. This left the Axis forces in North Africa without a leader for the moment.

Casualties on both sides were high, but the British had the advantage of plenty of fuel, equipment and men. When Rommel arrived back from Germany, the situation was grim. The British had already broken the Axis line and swept into Libya. Ending the numerous feints and behind the lines attacks by November 2, Montgomery gathered his forces into a single push on the Axis codenamed Operation: Supercharge.

Rommel withdrew west into Libya with Montgomery on his heels. Under the guns of the British, the Germans lost nearly half their tanks and half their men in less than two weeks. Attempts to hold the Allies at Tobruk, El Agheila and Buerat failed. On November 8, with the knowledge of the American-British landings in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, Rommel pulled backed to Tunis.

The end of the Axis in North Africa had begun.

October 26, 1942

The Battle of Santa Cruz

The Japanese dispatched a Naval task force (that included four aircraft carriers) to draw the American Navy away from Guadalcanal. These ships waited north of the island, trying to cut off American reinforcements from the sea, while Admiral Thomas Kinkaid brought two U.S. aircraft carrier groups to match them.

The groups engaged each other at the Santa Cruz Islands in a huge battle. Naval guns and air attacks eliminated two Japanese destroyers and the U.S. carrier *Hornet*. Several other ships were damaged including two Japanese destroyers, carriers and cruisers.

Having lost so much, the Japanese retreated.

November 8, 1942

Operation Torch

The plan was simple and blunt. U.S. and British forces would take the *Vichy* French North African territories of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia by landing 110,000 men by boat, aircraft and parachute. This would place Rommel's *Afrika Korps* between the British Eighth Army and the forces of Operation: Torch, effectively boxing the Desert Fox in.

Since Britain maintained such poor relations with France after its fall in the summer of 1940, the landing force for Torch would be primarily American (the British officers involved in the landing wore American uniforms).

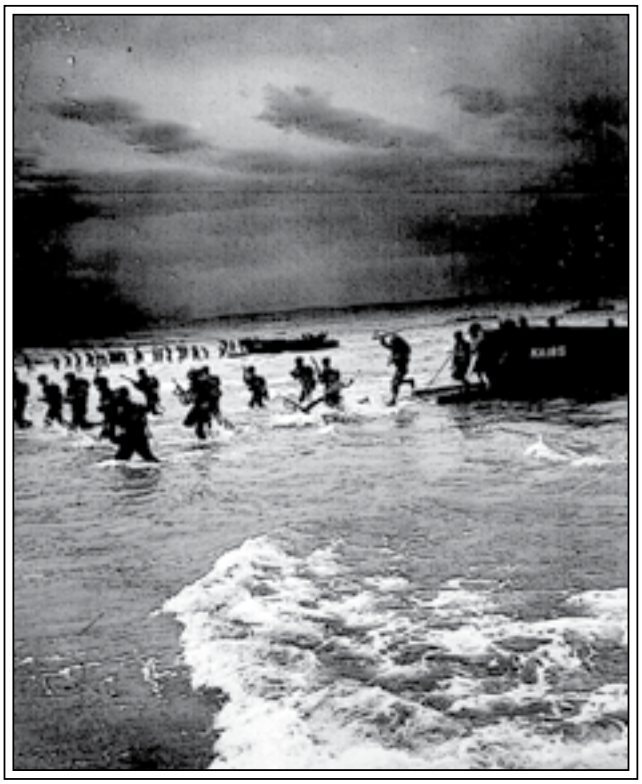
Led by the outspoken Major General George S. Patton, the Western task force composed of 25,000 American soldiers landed at Safi, Casablanca and Larache in Morocco on the morning of November 8. It was hoped the French commander in North Africa, *Admiral* Jean Darlan would not oppose the landings, but Darlan's men fought violently. The Americans were attacked from the start, even before their landings, when the French Battleship *Jean Bart* fired on their convoy. On the beaches, inexperienced American troops faced stiff opposition, but slowly made their way to encircle Casablanca, cutting it off from reinforcement.

At the same time, Major General Lloyd Fredendall's Central task force of 39,000 men attempted to secure the harbor at Oran in western Algeria, and failed, suffering heavy casualties. After several days of hard fighting, Oran, Relizane and El Asnam were in Allied hands, and a clear road through Algeria and Morocco to the lines at Casablanca was secured, so vehicles, men and equipment could be ferried straight through almost all the way to Tunisia.

The Eastern task force landed at two points in Algeria, in an attempt to capture the *Vichy* French capital of North Africa-Algiers. Under the command of Major General Charles Ryder, it faced uneven resistance, finding beaches where *Vichy* forces claimed they were not to resist the landings, and others where the French fought back aggressively.

By the afternoon of the eighth, *Admiral* Darlan was sure that the French position in North Africa was hopeless. After communicating his situation to the *Vichy* French government across the Mediterranean, Darlan declared a ceasefire in Algiers. Elsewhere, sporadic resistance continued.

American General Mark Clark arrived on the ninth to meet with Darlan in Algiers, and a general cease-fire was agreed upon the following day. The *Vichy* government in North Africa was no more.



With minimal losses, in less than eight days, American and British troops secured territory stretching from Casablanca in the west to Souk El Abra in the east, just eighty miles from Tunis, and Rommel himself.

November 11, 1942

The End of Vichy France

Fearful of an Allied invasion from the territories of Algeria and Morocco, the Axis invaded *Vichy* France. Southern France had enjoyed a limited autonomy for two years since the German invasion, but had no standing army to stop the Nazis.

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The *Vichy* French fleet in harbor at Toulon had been disabled in the summer of 1940 as part of the armistice between France and Germany, but to prevent their use by Germany, they were scuttled on November 27, before German troops could secure them.

The entirety of France was now under the direct control of Adolf Hitler.

November 12, 1942

The U.S. Congress Expands the Draft

The U.S. Congress voted unanimously to expand the Selective Service to include the registration of eighteen- and nineteen-year old men. Talks also began on the floor for a mandatory draft for American-born Talents, but the House remained divided on the matter.

November 13, 1942

The Allies Re-take Tobruk

The British Eighth Army chased Rommel's forces west across the desert, forcing them to abandon positions at Tobruk, due to lack of supplies and reinforcements. The port city was vitally important to the war effort in North Africa. Rommel knew that without it, Africa was lost.

The German commander turned a rout into a skillful retreat. Under his direction, the *Afrika Korps* constructed line after line of folding defenses, first at Tobruk, then El Agheila, Buerat, Homes and finally in Tunisia at Gabes. The British pursued them clear to the border.

At the Mareth line, the Germans held their ground. With the British on one side and the Americans on the other, there was little to be done but to wait and pray for reinforcements.

November 19, 1942

The Soviet Offensive at Stalingrad

The Sixty-sixth and Sixty-second Soviet Army mounted a huge operation, code-named Uranus, on the morning of November 19. The Russians burst through the Fourth Romanian Army to encircle von Paulus' Sixth German Army at Stalingrad. The Soviet Armies met less than a week later, completely encircling the Germans.

250,000 Germans were trapped in the Stalingrad pocket, cut off from reinforcements and resupply from the ground. Hitler refused von Paulus' request to attempt a breakout, instead *Reichsmarschall* Göring offered to resupply the Sixth Army from the air, a task that his *Luftwaffe* could not possibly hope to accomplish.

Von Paulus, suspecting the ruins of Stalingrad would be the last sight he would ever see, settled in to endure the Soviet winter. The death of the German Sixth Army had begun.

The Annihilation of TOG 3

Talent Operation Group 3 parachuted into southern Tunisia at 1:30 A.M. on November 8, 1942 as a forward element of Operation: Torch.

Their mission was to secure the southern half of a rail-line at Bône, which ran straight to Tunis itself. TOG 3 expected no more than 200 Germans and some light armored vehicles in the town, but Allied intelligence was dated. Instead of a few hundred Germans, elements of *Überkommandogruppe* 12 and a portion of the German Twenty-first Armored Division were waiting for them.

Before sunrise, all nine members of TOG 3 were dead.

December 2, 1942

The Chicago Pile

Working at the University of Chicago under the direction of Italian physicist Enrico Fermi, a small team of physicists finished building the first Atomic reactor "pile." Constructed under the squash courts at Stagg Field on the south side of Chicago, this stack of graphite rods impregnated with Uranium was designed to create and control an atomic chain reaction. No one except the government, and a handful of physicists knew that such a project was underway.

At 3:49 P.M. Fermi ordered the control rod removed from the chamber, and the first nuclear reactor reached critical mass. This self-sustaining nuclear reaction was the first true step towards the production of the Atomic bomb.

December 9, 1942

Relief at Guadalcanal

Major General Alexander Patch, leader of the U.S. Army Americal Division, landed at Guadalcanal to relieve the exhausted first U.S. Marine Division there.

The Marines had endured four months of relentless attacks, losing more than 1,000 men. In that time, they inflicted over 20,000 casualties on the Japanese, and not once surrendered Henderson Field.

December 24, 1942

Admiral Jean Darlan is Assassinated

A young French assassin shot and killed *Admiral* Jean Darlan, leader of the recently freed Free-French territories of Morocco and Algeria, as he walked down the street in Algiers.

General Henri-Honoré Giraud, Darlan's successor, rapidly sentenced and executed the assassin, Bonnier de la Chappelle, for his crime. Confusion over Chappelle's motive was widespread, but it was later discovered he was a supporter of de Gaulle, and may have eliminated Darlan to prevent a power struggle between the two leaders.

December 31, 1942

The Japanese Ordered to Withdraw

Emperor Hirohito gave the order to withdraw from Guadalcanal on December 31, 1942. The Japanese attempts to

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recapture the island had been disastrous, and cost the Imperial Marines and Navy thousands of men and dozens of ships.

Due to Allied successes, evacuation of the island would not begin for more than two months however.

January 2, 1943

The Capture of Buna

Under the command of General MacArthur, an American/Australian force finally put an end to Japanese resistance at Buna, New Guinea. This fallback position was important to the Japanese, in that it was the southernmost port of the Empire. The fighting was fierce, and the Japanese lost almost their entire garrison in the 32-day battle. Less than forty Japanese soldiers survived to surrender.

January 10, 1943

The End of the Japanese on Guadalcanal

Under the cover of darkness, the remaining Japanese forces on Guadalcanal withdrew from the island. This operation was completed under such secrecy that few American Marines knew they had left until almost a month later, when patrols realized that there had not been any enemy contact in weeks.

Flyovers of the northwest coast of the island by Marine Talents confirmed what the Marines suspected; the Japanese had abandoned Guadalcanal. Admiral Halsey put it best: "We've got the bastards licked!"

January 12, 1943

The Japanese Lose the Kokoda, the Australians Lose Typhoon

In a series of fierce engagements, the Seventh Australian Infantry Division pushed General Horii's forces off the Kokoda trail. Thanks to the Australian Talent Typhoon, 600 Japanese soldiers were lost in a single attack. The Talent produced a localized storm that pinned the Japanese troops down, while his compatriots peppered their lines with mortar rounds and machine gun fire; until nothing remained but piles of corpses.

Parahumanity Explodes

Almost every country involved in the World War had a vibrant, growing population of Talents by 1943. Britain and Germany had well over 2,000 Talents each, and America broke the 1,000 mark at the turn of the year. New Talents appeared daily all over the world.

By the end of 1943, manifestations were no longer events of global importance. By 1944, seeing or meeting a Talent wasn't a big deal. By 1945, you couldn't go 400 yards in Europe without seeing evidence of Talent powers.

Tragedy struck when a Japanese soldier "playing dead" sat up and shot Typhoon in the back as he passed by, killing the young Australian. For the next two weeks, the island was pelted by unusual storms and high winds. The Australian flag hung at half-mast in Port Moresby and Canberra for the next month.

At the end of the campaign, Imita Ridge was renamed Typhoon Ridge in his honor.

January 12, 1943

Misha, the First Hyperbrain

On the Kalenin front near Rhzev, just forty miles from Moscow, a young boy was discovered who displayed intelligence far beyond the most exceptional minds of the world. It was realized later that he was the world's first Hyperbrain Talent.

Misha served as an assistant to a *Starshy Leitenant* under the command of *General-Polkovnik* Konev, commander of the Northern salient of the Moscow front. Misha was first used to keep detailed lists of equipment and supplies for the Thirty-First Soviet Army Group in exchange for food. Later, he disposed of lists altogether and kept everything in his head. When he corrected field commanders in their loose calculations on troop strengths, *General-Polkovnik* Konev became interested in utilizing his abilities on a larger scale. Misha could extrapolate probable casualties by taking hundreds of variables into account in his calculations, and his predictions came true with startling accuracy.

Special Directive One moved him under great secrecy to the Ural Mountains for training. There Misha managed to absorb the entire bureaucracy of the war-torn Soviet Union in less than three weeks (in addition to learning how to read, write and speak English, German, Japanese and Italian).

At one point, he was the central filing system for the entire eastern Soviet Union, monitoring every piece of ammunition, rifle, man, tank and all the supplies required to maintain each; while studying the classic works of literature, learning modern physics and working on the definitive history of Russia (all in his head).

In light of all these achievements, it was understandable that everyone forgot that, for all of his vast intellectual power, Misha was still a twelve-year old boy. He began suffering emotional problems, no doubt aggravated by the harsh realities of the war, which he knew *everything* about (at least in Russia).

Misha began having irregular manic-depressive episodes of increasing intensity, brought on when information would come together in synergistic networks within his labyrinthine mind. At times, he would enter manic phases of intense productivity. The downside would be immense depressions, like the one brought on when he had a flash of insight and realized there was a 55% probability that more than 21 million Russians would die before the end of the war. The more he knew, the worse he got, and the worse he got, the more his superiors realized that when he eventually self-destructed, he would take the entire organizational structure of the Russian Defense with him. Worried about their protégé, Special Directive One began a desperate search for other Hyperbrains, who were then trained to relieve Misha of the Atlas-like burden on his young shoulders.

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With the load spread out on a force of five young Hyperbrains, Misha returned to more or less normal function; though his ability to produce as large and wide-sweeping effects decreased considerably as Special Directive One restricted his intake of information about the war.

January 12, 1943

The Russians Move, Again

Consolidating gains made during the spring and summer offensives, the Red Army strengthened its line between the German Sixth Army and the other Axis forces to the west, to prevent a breakthrough.

By this point, the German soldiers who once imagined themselves the conquerors of Stalingrad were now little more than skeletons in rags. Those that could fight, knew there was no point; and those that could not, froze, starved or were killed in the relentless Red Army attacks.

The German force required 600 tons worth of airdropped goods to survive *per day*, and the *Luftwaffe* was supplying 100 tons at the maximum, when it flew at all. Weapons, ammunition and other vital goods were in sparse supply, and the winter was growing worse. Attempts by German *Übermenschen* to move supplies through teleportation and other powers failed. Too much had to be moved, and the casualty rate was too high… and the Russian Talents (whether known by Stalin or not) too vigilant. By the time the last-ditch effort by *RuSHA SA* to resupply the Sixth was under way, every street in Stalingrad was overrun with snipers and Russian positions.

Nothing could save the 100,000 Germans locked in the Stalingrad pocket. To most, surrender or death seemed the only options.

January 14, 1943

A Meeting of the Victors in North Africa

Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt met secretly in Casablanca to discuss the progress of the war. Fearful of an Axis *Übermensch* attack (such as the *Paukenschlag* plot of the previous year), the conference was a tightly held military secret, not announced until the principals had departed. Thirty-six Allied Talents prepared the meeting area, while newspaper articles in Britain and America gave the impression that it was taking place somewhere in Washington D.C.

General Charles de Gaulle and *General* Henri-Honoré Giraud, representing Free France, also attended the meeting, along with the first Free French *Surhomme, Le Mur* ("The Wall"). Stalin declined an invitation, but sent along two Talent advisors of undisclosed ability in his stead.

The meeting focused on future plans against the Axis. Churchill believed the attack on Europe should begin from Sicily, followed later by a cross-Channel assault on the European mainland; Roosevelt concurred.

The leaders made their demand public on January 27; the Allies would accept nothing less than total surrender from Japan, Germany and Italy. It was either that or total war, until those countries were reduced to ashes.

Hyperbrains in Warfare

Paranormally intelligent Talents *did* have significant impacts on the war, but not in any obvious capacity. In many respects, their greatest contributions were on the actual structure, storage and dissemination of information within individual armed forces.

While some Hyperbrains did participate in research projects and other scientific endeavors, most found these projects too small for their immense minds to consider, or too violent to research while maintaining a clear-Hyperconscience. Hyperbrains suffered (or were blessed) with near perfect empathy. Their huge minds could not only build a bomb that could level a city, it could imagine all the individual personalities such a bomb would claim as well as the impact on culture, economy and every other imaginable variable born of such a project. Not surprisingly, almost all Hyperbrains were complete pacifists.

The only real non-violent challenge most could find involved the staggering numbers involved in mobilizing an entire country to war; something that would occur anyway.

Hyperbrains tallied lists of variables necessary to mount a successful war, and cross-referenced them in a way never before seen. Like today's computers, Hyperbrains collated and processed huge amounts of information, allowing, for the first time, up-to-the-minute answers for logistical questions. More importantly, they allowed all aspects of an individual plan to be examined at length before it was implemented. They were not always right, but then again, most were contending with Hyperbrains working for the other side as well.

The only noticeable difference Hyperbrains brought to the world of *Godlike* were improvements in front line resupply and troop deployment, along with minor changes individual country's economies after the war.

To those not involved in these fields, their impact is difficult to see.

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January 15, 1943

Tripoli is Taken

Victorious, the British Eighth Army roared into the streets of Tripoli, the capital of Libya. The German forces fled just days before to regroup at the Mareth line in Tunisia, filled with the knowledge that there was little hope for the future of *Afrika Korps*.

Montgomery meticulously gathered forces at Tripoli, building up for the final strike against the Desert Fox.

January 18, 1943

The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto

After a brief visit by Himmler, the *SS* was ordered to remove the remaining 60,000 Jews from the Ghetto at Warsaw and demolish the area. These Jews barely subsisted; living on smuggled food and rotten rations the Nazis delivered to them sporadically.

The *SS* did not expect resistance from the usually docile populace of the Ghetto, but rumors of the actual destination of relocated Jews had made its way back to Warsaw. Faced with death by gassing or starvation, or death in combat, many chose to fight.

The first attack by the Jews, made with makeshift weapons, claimed the lives of more than forty Germans. Counter-attacks by the *SS* killed over 1,000 in retaliation, but the Nazis were forced to withdraw from the Ghetto due to sniper attacks. Street-to-street fighting dragged on for weeks, with the Germans inflicting heavy casualties on the Jews, who (having nothing to lose) continued the doomed offensive. The Ghetto became a fortress guarded by more than twenty groups resisting the *SS*.

German *Übermenschen* were brought in to demoralize the resisters, but this move did not have the desired effect. The *Übermensch Der Panzer,* a veteran of the war in North Africa, was set upon and killed by eleven *Nephilim* as he patrolled the streets of the Ghetto on January 28. Up until that point, the Jewish parahumans had kept their presence a secret.

Fearing a further push by the Germans, the *Nephilim* assaulted the main German fortified position, inflicting heavy casualties. Unfortunately, they were forced to retreat-losing most of their number in the assault. While this attack was ongoing, more than 300 Jewish men and women managed to escape the encirclement of the Ghetto into the city. Only fifty of these initial escapees lived to see the end of the war, but it caused a huge boost in morale within the Ghetto.

Stunned with the turn of events, the *SS* fell back and prepared for a second assault on the Ghetto.

January 19, 1943

Die Hexe is Killed

A German *Heer* sniper shot and killed Antonia Ilescu near Walchev, Romania on the morning of January 19. Better known as *Die Hexe* to the Germans, Ilescu was the first female Talent. Using her ability for the past three years to aid the partisan groups in Romania, she claimed more than seventy German and Romanian soldiers' lives and destroyed tens of thousands of dollars worth of equipment and vehicles.

The Germans had no way of knowing they had killed the dreaded "Witch" however, and the hunt for her continued.

January 22, 1943

The End for the Japanese on New Guinea

Allied forces swept north on New Guinea, forcing the Japanese from Sanananda, Salamaua and Lae, and severing their hold of the Bulldog track, the last secure trail across the Owen Stanleys. Without hope of reinforcement, the Japanese dug in and prepared to fight to the last man.

Japanese soldiers dying of dysentery and jungle rot manned pillboxes built out of coconut logs reinforced with corpses. Despite their condition, they fought tenaciously, holding off the Allies for two months. Finally, with tank support, the pillboxes were cleared, until all that remained were corpses and a few stunned survivors. Victory had come to New Guinea, but not without a terrible cost.

January 28, 1943

Feuerzauber Is Killed in Action

The German *Übermensch Feuerzauber* and his entire battalion were killed while moving towards an oil storage area on the Volga river held by the Soviet Sixty Second Army under *General* Yeremenko. Intense shelling caused the nearby Chykov Oil Refinery to explode, generating a huge fireball that engulfed the area and burned for hours.

Feuerzauber was immune to the harmful effects of the flames, but the fire also consumed all the oxygen in the area, asphyxiating him along with 221 German soldiers.

February 2, 1943

The Siege of Stalingrad Ends

Despite his last minute promotion to *Generalfeldmarschall,* Friedrich von Paulus surrendered to the Soviets, finally ending the siege of the German Sixth Army in Stalingrad. What had once been a pocket of more than 300,000 soldiers was whittled down by disease, starvation, cold and attacks to just over 93,000. Few of these hardened survivors would live through Russian imprisonment to see their families again.

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Four German *Übermenschen* from *Gruppe Weiss* surrendered along with von Paulus, and were hung to cheering crowds of Red Army soldiers on the Volga the following morning. Later, their bodies were remanded to Special Directive One scientists for study.

February 8, 1943

The Soviets Take Back Kursk

After two years of German occupation, there was little left of the city of Kursk for the Soviets to retake. Most of the population had been murdered by *Einsatzgruppen* or shipped west as slave labor for the Reich. Many of the buildings, destroyed by the Soviets when they withdrew in 1941, remained in ruins.

The Red Army settled in the ruins of a once-beautiful city and waited. The Germans had not been routed yet.

February 10, 1943

Zed

An unusual Talent power was seen for the first time during a demonstration of Talent abilities for Allied VIPs at Hedge Manor on February 10, 1943. While volunteering as a test-subject for a Polish teleporter, Major Peter Cesay, a British intelligence officer, manifested his (then) unique Talent.

Cesay's Talent prevented the Pole's power from working at all. The Talents present could tell that Cesay was a Talent, but the usual feeling of "resistance" did not occur when Cesay caused their powers to stop working; instead, they just failed. This went against everything understood about the Talent phenomenon up to that point and the SSO and Section Two were stumped.

The incident was covered up, and the SSO set about studying the fascinating new power. British Intelligence gave Cesay the codename Zed, or Z.

February 14, 1943

Attack From the Mareth Line

Generalfeldmarschall Rommel launched a bold attack against the Allied forces to the northwest of the Mareth line in Tunisia. Although the *Afrika Korps* were low on fuel and supplies, they managed to throw the inexperienced U.S. forces into disarray. At the battle of Kasserine Pass, they smashed through the U.S. II Corps, causing a complete rout of the Americans. The British First Army, busy reequipping and reorganizing was unprepared for the assault-they held the line, but could do nothing more.

10,000 Americans were captured or killed by this bold, but ultimately futile move. Rommel lacked the fuel, equipment and men to move further to the port of Bône. The *Afrika Korps* still had teeth, it seemed, but lacked the endurance for anything more than a half-hearted swipe at the enemy.

As the lines stabilized, Patton and Montgomery considered their next move.

The Twenty-Six

A young man named Meyer Rosen gained his *Nephilim* ability in the summer of 1942 at the age of sixteen, while imprisoned in the Ghetto. Rosen could randomly teleport great distances, but his sense of duty to the others in the Ghetto kept him from leaving. He avoided the *SS* sweeps by teleporting outside the Ghetto to safe locations, and ferried what food he could steal or find back into the enclosure.

Rosen promised he would care for his three siblings before his father's "relocation," and he did, teleporting them along with himself during the collection sweeps. His power was very fatiguing however, causing terrible headaches, and without the proper food and clean water, would not operate at all.

During the uprising, Rosen was instructed by the *Nephilim Hashomer* to evacuate the few remaining children in the Ghetto (most hidden from the Nazis) to anywhere outside of Warsaw. One by one, Rosen flung himself and a child through the void to random locations outside of the city. All twenty-six children survived, some turning up in Neutral Turkey, others in Spain. A child was even discovered as far away as Casablanca.

He finally teleported his three siblings to Bern, Switzerland just days before the destruction of the Ghetto; but the strain of the previous weeks proved too much for him. He died four days later from a brain hemorrhage.

Stalin's Treatments

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the oddities of Stalin's medical obsessions were revealed to the world. The aging leader was in his sixties at the beginning of the conflict with Germany, and the strain of the war took a serious toll on his health. During and after the war, Stalin received "Invigorative Extracts," as many of twenty times a month, up until his death in 1953. Few in the inner circle knew what these injections were, only that they occurred. The official records note only "Vitamin Injections," but the oddities in the files point towards something other than vitamins in the syringes.

Why would the NKVD, the Soviet Secret Police, collect the "Vitamins" for Stalin's injections? Moreover, why would two of the doctors involved in Soviet Special Directive One administer them? In 1990 it was discovered that Stalin had the remains of Talents, both Soviet and German, *liquefied* and injected into him for more than seven years, hoping their abilities would somehow be transferred to him.

Just like the *Yezhovshchina* ("The Great Purge") of the 1930s where Stalin's madness claimed tens of thousands of Russian lives, a Talent purge continued through the late 40s and early 50s. In this secret purge, an unknown number of Talents perished to fulfill a madman's fantasy of immortality.

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February 15, 1943

Kharkov is Liberated

The Red Army knew if they could seize Kharkov, they could cut the German forces further in the Ukraine off.

Hitler too, noticed the danger, and detached the elite II *SS Korps,* along with *Überkommandogruppe* 4 to defend Kharkov, "at all human cost." As the Sixth Soviet Army approached the outskirts of Kharkov, the leader of the II *SS Korps* began to have second thoughts. *Leutnant General* Paul Hausser ordered his men to withdraw. The situation at Kharkov was hopeless and he saw no point in wasting his men needlessly when they could be used to defend Germany. Unfortunately, the *Übermenschen* present had different ideas.

For "defying a direct order of the *Führer*" Hausser and twelve of his officers were executed by the leader of the *Übermenschen Obersturmbannführer* Felix *"Scorpion"* Höttl. The remaining *SS* men were folded into the command of the *Überkommandogruppe* 4 and frantic preparations were made for the defense of Kharkov.

Two days later, the Sixth Soviet Army annihilated the entire group, *Übermenschen* and all.

February 16, 1943

Blood and a White Rose

Though non-military resistance to the Nazi regime was rare in occupied Europe, it did exist, even in Germany itself. The "White Rose" group that sprung up at the University of Munich was composed of disillusioned soldiers and intellectuals opposed to Hitler's policies. They met secretly, printing anti-Hitler leaflets, slowly spreading among the few at the University who would listen.

In their most brash act, the leaders of the movement, Hans Scholl and his sister Sophie, dropped anti-Nazi leaflets from a building at the University urging the youth of Germany to depose Hitler and destroy the Nazi regime. The siblings were reported to the *Gestapo,* arrested, beaten and sentenced to death. More than 100 others were rounded up along with them.

On February 16, Hans and Sophie Scholl were beheaded for their crimes against the *Führer.*

The Zed Talent

The Zed power proved less important than the initial SSO intelligence estimate made it out to be. This was for many reasons. First of all, Cesay was soon followed by a large Zed population that sprang up in both Axis and Allied countries (many of whom thought *they* possessed the only Zed). Secondly, the Zed Talent did not affect certain "mental" powers at all. Thirdly, almost all world powers saved their Zeds for special duty, usually as bodyguards for important leaders or forward elements of defense.

In the end, the Zed Talent, though important, changed little in the way Talent warfare was waged.

February 18, 1943

The Chindits

Composed of Gurkha, Indian and British troops, the long-range assault force known as the Chindits entered the jungles of Burma to wreak havoc with the Japanese infrastructure in the uncivilized highlands. Composed of 3,000 men and about 1,000 pack animals, the Seventy-Seventh Indian Division, demolished rail-lines and bridges, ambushed troops on the move, and spied on the Japanese command.

Churchill, patron of British Commando operations, was an avid supporter of the Chindits, and authorized their leader, Brigadier Orde C. Wingate to form two larger units for future attacks against the Japanese.

February 18, 1943

Crisis for the Red Army

Generalfeldmarschall Erich von Manstein, stunned by the loss of the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad, mounted one of the last successful German offensives in the Soviet Union, hoping to stall the front for the winter. In a sweeping counter-thrust, Manstein attacked the over-extended Soviet forces and caught the advancing Soviet Sixth Army completely by surprise, cutting off 9,000 men and killing more than 25,000, including seventy-seven Soviet Talents who tried to stop Manstein's LVII Panzer Corps from taking the southern reaches of Kharkov.

Manstein's forces rolled back into Kharkov for the third time, and managed to push the Soviets back further, to Belgorod.

February 21, 1943

Operation: Cartwheel

Fresh from successes on New Guinea and the Solomons, General Douglas MacArthur prepared to "island hop" his way from New Guinea to Japan itself. MacArthur's campaign, codenamed "Cartwheel" would isolate specific Japanese held islands, without engaging the enemy there. Instead, they would be surrounded, cut off, and allowed to "wither on the vine." Offers by the Army, Navy and Marines for the assignment of Talents to MacArthur's command were summarily dismissed. "This is the Army," MacArthur said, "and no one man is better than the Army, no matter what he can do."

"Cartwheel" began with the invasion of the Russell Islands, a small island group in the Solomon Islands. These islands in turn would be used as springboards for the invasion of Peleliu and Okinawa, and then, Japan itself.

February 26, 1943

The "Professor" Is Discovered

Wendell Greene, an amateur scientist from Tacoma, Washington became an overnight sensation when he revealed he was a Talent who could build machines previously only seen in science fiction stories and comic books.

At a government-staged media event, Greene demonstrated a rifle-sized device that could generate hurricane

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Zed

Name: Peter Cesay **AKA** Zed.
Nationality: British.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Officer training at Brixton.
Rank: Major (British Army).
Decorations: None.
DOB: 3/3/10, Coventry, England.
DOD: 1/27/44, Anzio, Italy (Killed in Action).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Cesay projected a force that countered other Talent's power. For instance, Cesay could cause a Talent flyer to fall out of the air by pressing him down with the power of his mind, or prevent a hyperstrong Talent from lifting a tank by making that tank much, much heavier. It could affect physical Talent powers only, and usually only powers with noticeable physical effects (such as flight, fire-projection or teleportation).
History: Cesay was a run-of-the-mill intelligence officer tasked with coordinating photographic intelligence and radio traffic to work out where vehicles, troops and equipment would be for a coming invasion. In the summer of 1942 he was given a new task: tracking the movement of known enemy Talents. (After Dieppe, the High Command realized that a little foreknowledge went a long way.)

Cesay coordinated the reports of spies, Nazi radio propaganda and newspapers in an attempt to discover just where German Talents trained and lived. He was the first to draw up the approximate structure of the *SS Überkommandogruppen,* which accurately showed its nearly exponential growth. With the help of some Allied Talents who tussled with *Übermenschen* in occupied Europe, Cesay worked out a list of German Talent commanders, their powers and areas of operation. His report made it to the desk of Winston Churchill himself, who was quite impressed with it.

As a reward, Cesay was made liaison between the War Office at Whitechapel and Hedge Manor, the home of the Special Sciences Office. His work on the martial matters of the Talent phenomenon was seen as far more "realistic" than the lofty estimates of the scientists at the SSO, and his opinion was often preferred to those of SSO analysts, at least by the High Command.

After Cesay discovered his own ability in the winter of 1943, he was subjected to five months of intensive testing at Hedge Manor. He then trained TOG and British Special Operations Executive Talent teams for the coming invasion of Europe. Cesay was able to whip the men into a highly organized fighting force by causing their powers to fail randomly during exercises so they weren't relied upon too much.

Though Cesay requested assignment to the Special Service Squad's assault on Normandy, he was transferred to an Anglo-American Talent force that landed at Anzio in Churchill's assault on "the soft underbelly of Nazi Germany."

He came as a surprise to the German *Übermenschen* guarding the beaches there. In the first known military application of the Zed power in the war, Cesay disabled fifteen German Talents, and single handedly captured two, including a powerful teleport known as *Der Springer* ("The Jumper").

Less than a day later, Cesay was killed during shelling of the beachhead by Kesselring's forces.

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winds strong enough to topple a parked car, which he dubbed a "Pneumo-ray."

At first, Greene was misidentified as America's first Hyperbrain (like the Soviet Misha), but it was later determined that Greene's devices were nothing more than a focus for his Talent power; the machines themselves were junk. He was no more intelligent than an average man, but his Talent power allowed him to create bizarre "devices."

Within the week, he volunteered for the Army, and his file was given to TOC for reassignment.

February 28, 1943

The Heavy Water Plant at Norsk

Led by the Talent *Aesgir,* nine Norwegian commandos traveled through Valhalla to arrive at Norsk, Norway, a Nazi facility on the Norwegian Sea. This isolated hydroelectric power station was used to collect heavy water, a vital component in the development of an Atomic Bomb. Germany's atom bomb program was years behind the Allies, and Norsk was the only source of heavy water in Europe.

Aesgir and the men killed ten guards and destroyed the station without incident, ending the already slim hope of a Nazi atom bomb. Through *Aesgir's* power, twelve days later, the commandos turned up on the shores of Scotland, mission accomplished.

March 2, 1943

The Battle of the Bismarck Sea

Australian and U.S. ships and aircraft destroyed eight Japanese destroyers and transports on their way to Lae, New Guinea on this date. This was the last Japanese attempt to reinforce what little was left of their forces on New Guinea. More than 3,000 Japanese were killed in the attack.

March 5, 1943

The RAF Hits Back

The Royal Air Force launched a huge bomber offensive against the Ruhr industrial area of Germany to paralyze German industry. Utilizing 4,000 pound "Blockbuster" bombs, 369 RAF aircraft devastated the city of Essen, destroying much of the 800 acre Krupp Steel Works, bringing production there to a halt, for the time being.

March 6, 1943

One Last Gasp

Hoping to disrupt British and American preparations for a final push into Tunisia, *Generalfeldmarschall* Rommel threw *Afrika Korps* back into battle. It was a last ditch effort; the Axis forces were spread too thin to penetrate the Allied lines.

After heavy losses, the attack was cancelled and a few days later, Rommel was recalled to Germany. All in North Africa knew the war there was over, one way or another; it was just a matter of time.

March 13, 1943

Der Auge Sees All

Late one night, *Der Auge* (the German precog who foresaw the St. Nazaire Commando raid), awoke in Berlin. Vivid in his mind was an utterly clear dream of an attempt on the life of the *Führer*. Thirty minutes later, fourteen high-ranking members of the *Heer* were arrested by the SS, and sentenced to death. Three days later, they were hung with piano wire after a brief public "trial."

A twelve-pound bomb was discovered aboard the very transport aircraft Hitler was due to fly in that very afternoon, wired to detonate when the plane rose above 1,000 feet.

Der Auge was awarded the Iron Cross for his "vision."

March 12, 1943

Yama, The God of Death

The first Indian Talent manifested at Kanglatongbi, India, near the border of Burma on March 12, 1943. A young traveler fleeing the volatile border and heading west towards Cox's Bazaar, was overcome by fever and collapsed in the street. Due to lack of food in eastern India, the young man was overlooked in the corpse-filled streets.

Nine days later, when locals began clearing bodies for a pyre, the change that had overcome the young man was

Goldberg Science

Robert Graves coined the phrase "Goldberg Science" in the *New York Times* on March 15, 1943. His editorial entitled "Why Talent Scientists Won't Change the Way We Fight," examined the implications, and limits of Greene's power.

"This is why this 'Rube Goldberg' science will do little to change the way war is fought," Graves finished. His phrase, slightly shortened, was parroted in papers around the world.

Within the next two years, "Goldberg Scientists" would be common among the ranks of Talents in every country in the war. Despite their amazing abilities, and the "devices" they could produce, Goldberg Scientists had little effect on the outcome of the war.

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The Professor

Name: Wendell Greene **AKA** The Professor.
Nationality: American.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: High school. Army Air Corps Training, Seattle, Washington.
Rank: Captain (U.S. Army Air Corps).
Decorations: Air Service Medal.
DOB: 2/23/23, Spokane, U.S.A.
DOD: 9/5/99, New York, New York, U.S.A. (colon cancer).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Greene could create "Goldberg machines" that violated physical laws and appeared to be hundreds of years in advance of modern science. In truth, these devices were nothing more than a focus for his Talent power. The machines themselves were just junk; without the power of Greene's mind, they did not work at all.
History: Greene was obsessed with science and science fiction in his youth. Twice he was seriously injured in his "pursuit of science" during his early years. Once he burned down his uncle's barn working on a "heat ray" (nothing more than an egg lamp with some modifications). Another time, his "one-man balloon" failed while he was fifty feet up, breaking his left leg.

By the time Greene was done with high school, he was sure his future lay in science. When he was accepted to the University of Washington in 1941, his parents (who had saved for more than ten years) were prepared to pay his way. However, the attack at Pearl Harbor shifted his obsessions.

Greene quit school and returned home, taking to his room for weeks at a time, working on "weapons for the Army." His once sunny disposition changed into sullen withdrawal. He rarely left his parents' farm, except to buy equipment and tools, which he paid for with his remaining college money. After two years of failure, Greene struck upon his first successful design, the "pneumo-ray," a rifle which could project winds up to 200 miles an hour. Ecstatic, Greene and his parents demonstrated the device to officers at Boeing field, in Seattle.

Greene was confirmed as a Talent when Section Two sent agents out to study him. Talents noticed that Greene's ability was active both when he was creating devices and when using them. Later it was determined that his devices did not work at all when he was not present. All attempts to extend the "range" of his power failed. Section Two classified his power as "Talent science," later dubbed "Goldberg Science" by the press. Greene's file was considered by the TOC, and after being assigned to the Army Air Corps he attended flight school in Seattle.

Greene became an accomplished combat pilot and flew dozens of sorties over Europe between 1944 and 1945, downing more than twenty enemy aircraft. His heavily modified plane, a P-47 Thunderbolt named "Nemo" (after Captain Nemo from *20,000 Leagues Beneath the Sea),* was armed with Greene's incredible weaponry and defenses. Today, the plane hangs in the Seattle Museum of Science and Technology. (The devices left installed, notably, no longer work.)

Near the end of the war, Greene created a device that would keep him in the public eye until the turn of the century—the P-Engine, an *almost* perpetual motion machine. Unlike his previous devices, P-Engines continued to work even if Greene was not present. They would eventually break down, but the basic limitation of Greene's ability had been lifted for the first time.

Due to this fact, Greene became obsessed with his P-Engines. After the war, he set up a lab in Tacoma and spent nine years "perfecting the design" of the P-Engine. In 1954, he unveiled his Mark II P-Engine. It could run at a steady rate indefinitely, with or without Greene's presence.

Over the next twenty years, Greene constructed P-Engines for the U.S. Government and private companies. Because only he could build P-Engines, Greene remained the CEO and sole employee of Greene Power Industries. No one knew until his death that Greene's power had been limited to the point where he could *only* build P-Engines. His obsession with the P-Engine focused his power into a one very specific use, which in turn increased the ability in a very narrow range.

By 1982, GPI had produced 149 P-Engines for such facilities as NORAD command, the White House and numerous American military bases around the world. When Greene died of colon cancer in 1999 he was estimated to be worth more than 1 billion dollars—and every P-Engine he ever constructed stopped working.

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noticed for the first time. While other corpses bloated and began to rot, the young man appeared fine, as if he was sleeping, but his skin had paled to a strange sky blue.

When it was discovered he was breathing, water was brought. With the first drop on his lips, the man awoke and smiled. His eyes were milky white; his voice was deep and perfect. The village gathered around him.

"I am returned. Lord *Yama,* God of Death. Do you not recognize your own father?"

March 14, 1943

Manstein Saves Operation: Barbarossa (For a Brief Time)

Pushing to the Donets river, German forces encircled and destroyed the Third Soviet Tank Army, killing more than 23,000 men and capturing 9,000. This complex movement of forces took the Soviets by surprise, and Manstein's brilliant encirclement secured more than 9,600 kilometers of vital territory for Germany.

Von Manstein's offensive prevented the complete collapse of Axis forces in Russia… for the moment.

March 15, 1943

The Germans Hit Back, Hard

Invigorated by the success of Manstein's offensive, German troops pushed the Russians back to the far side of the Donets river. However, his plan to crush the Soviet defenses in the area of Kursk, codenamed "Citadel," was put on hold because of the spring thaw. The thick Soviet mud prevented German vehicles and men from moving, and shut down most supply lines through the Ukraine.

This seemingly insignificant turn of events gave the Russians time enough to move 500,000 more soldiers and 215 Talents to defend Kursk.

The definitive battle of Russia was about to begin.

The Fate of Der Auge

After the incident in Berlin, the *Gestapo* "questioned" *Der Auge*. For ten days, the *Übermensch* was beaten, electrocuted and tortured. The *Gestapo* was sure that the *Übermensch* had something to do with the bomb plot, and was hoping to gain favor in the eyes of the *Führer* by turning on his accomplices.

The *Übermensch* was released and returned to normal *SS* service, but his loyalty and fervor for the Reich was never the same.

On July 17, 1944 that old fervor returned, *Der Auge* gathered together twenty-seven of his friends and told them "On the twentieth of July, something important is going to happen, something which will change Germany forever… " What it was, he would not say.

When the bomb-plot of *Oberst* von Stauffenberg failed to kill Hitler on July 20, *Der Auge* returned to his home in Berlin, and after burning his *SS* uniform and Iron Cross, shot himself.

March 20, 1943

The Mareth Line Crumbles

The Fifteenth Panzer Division managed to counterattack at Matmata in Tunisia, scoring some successes before being flanked by the New Zealand Division. But before the New Zealanders could overtake them, they withdrew to Wadi Akarit.

On March 21, a huge rainstorm halted the progress of the Eighth Army and the New Zealand Division-by reducing much of the area of Wadi Zigzou to impassable mud. Hoping to prevent an Axis breakthrough, Montgomery pinned the enemy down by calling in air strikes and artillery support. His men then traveled around the storms to attack from the side and the rear. By the beginning of April, the Mareth line was but a fading memory; the Axis forces occupying only a thin strip of Tunisia around Tunis, surrounded on all sides.

March 26, 1943

The Battle of the Kommandorskiye Islands

Just before dawn on March 26, during a routine patrol, an American taskforce (consisting of the heavy cruiser *Salt Lake City,* the light cruiser *Richmond,* and four destroyers) accidentally intercepted eleven Japanese ships off the Kamchatka peninsula.

On their way to Attu and Kiska in the Aleutian Islands, the Japanese transport ships were to reinforce the garrisons there with more than 5,000 Marines, with only a small escort consisting of a heavy cruiser and a destroyer accompanying them.

The running battle began with the Americans hurriedly opening fire on the Japanese, then making a hasty exit under the cover of a smoke screen. The Japanese returned fire, with a barrage crippling the *Salt Lake City,* and damaging the *Richmond*. However, lucky hits from the Americans severely damaged both the Japanese heavy cruiser and destroyer.

Aborting their mission, the Japanese withdrew before they could close in on the *Salt Lake City* and make a kill. Within the day, the *Salt Lake City* was repaired and under way again.

March 27, 1943

Call Me Alias

A brief investigation by the Reich Internal Security Office ended in the arrest of four agents of the *Gestapo* for crimes against Germany. Accused of distributing classified security files to various members of the French Resistance, the men were hung for their crimes. The descriptions of the female agents of the *Maquis* who infiltrated the *Gestapo* were circulated to every office in France. What German intelligence did not know was that the four men were all dealing with the same agent: France's new and potent Talent, Alias.

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Lord Yama

Name: Real Name Unknown **AKA** Lord Yama, God of Death.
Nationality: Indian.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Unknown.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: Unknown.
DOD: Unknown (possibly immortal).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Yama could kill with a glance and make the most willful individual obey his commands. In addition, he was parahumanly strong, swift and resistant to damage. Since his "birth" in 1943, *Yama* has not aged, and has healed grievous damage both to himself and his loyal followers. He is apparently immortal.
History: Nothing is known of Yama's existence before his appearance at Kanglantongbi. Within months of his manifestation he drew a huge following to his keep at Kanglantongbi, which became a point of pilgrimage for his loyal worshippers to come pay homage.

Early attempts by Indian and British colonial authorities to destroy the rapidly forming cult of Yama failed miserably. In late 1943, the Ninth Indian Division was repulsed by a huge mass of Yama's followers, who faced modern weapons with little more than sticks and rocks. Yama kept a jovial attitude during the clashes: "Many will travel my path to the land of the dead today, but only my followers will find their way back." Blessed by Yama in mass prayer meetings, his followers felt no pain and gleefully entered battle with no regard for their personal safety.

In early 1944, a deal was struck between the British viceroy in India, Field Marshall Lord Wavell, and Lord Yama himself. Yama's followers would fight against the Japanese and the independence of his "realm" would be recognized at the end of the conflict.

Yama immediately dispatched 65,000 followers to the Arakan pass, to reinforce Indian and British positions there, while the rest of his subjects remained in Kanglantongbi.

In March 1944, during the brief invasion of India, the Japanese Fifteenth Infantry Division made the mistake of trying to pass through Kanglantongbi to assault Indian positions to the south. *None* of the Japanese soldiers survived the battle. Yama's followers continued into combat smeared with blood, wearing necklaces made of Japanese ears, fingers and teeth, fighting until the end of hostilities in 1945. They fought primarily with machetes, swords or knives, though some employed modern weaponry, decimating all Japanese who crossed their path.

Yama's followers killed more than 25,000 Japanese during the war, fulfilling their end of the bargain handily. The United States and Britain recognized his country of Assam in 1946, and Yama's realm continued to grow, enjoying peace and prosperity, interspersed occasionally with periods of brutal violence. Giving daily blessings to huge crowds of followers at Kanglantongbi, Yama bestows on them "the peace of death." This Hypercommand made the subjects immune to any pain or discomfort, allowing them to go to their death without fear.

Yama and Assam have remained aloof from the world of international politics. All he says of religious persecution, strife, or politics is, "All men are the same in my Kingdom." Yama dismissed forays by the Soviet Union in the 1960 for military aid against the Indian government, who initially did not recognize the sovereignty of Assam. The Soviet ambassador was expelled from Assam after he admitted he did not believe in God. "But *I* am a god," Yama replied.

Mediated by President Kennedy, the 1962 Treaty of Kanglantongbi quieted the hostile border between Assam and India. For the first time, the two countries exchanged ambassadors and goods. Assam joined NATO in 1969; and though no nuclear weapons were installed in the country, American air bases were built in Karom and Kohima.

Assam is unique in the world, in that it is open to any who wishes to enter its borders. Yama has worked out clever deals with multinational manufacturers; since the subjects of Assam work only for the glory of their Lord, the income of the nation is immense. Critics call Assam the "world's largest cult," while those who live there call it paradise. They are well fed, cared for, and feel no pain. "Assam is the land of pleasure," Prime Minister Jagadis Naral announced at the United Nations in 1965, "and all who seek it, may come."

Since 1965, over 1,000,000 people have immigrated to Assam. Many of these immigrants are terminally ill. All who hear the benediction of Yama echo his words: "Pain is an illusion. Only death makes men whole."

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Over the next year no less than twenty high-ranking Nazi officials in France would be turned with the use of Talent powers, to the side of the Allies.

April 10, 1943

Just Outside of Tunis

The city of Sfax was captured by elements of the British Eighth Army on this date. This port city was vital to the Allied effort in Tunisia, and reduced supply lines by more than 600 miles. Now fresh troops, equipment and supplies could be shipped into Sfax just miles from the front line, instead of all the way from Tripoli.

Axis forces retreated to their last line of defense, an extremely narrow strip of land at the tip of Tunisia. Low on fuel and morale, they grimly held off the Allies, to stall the eventual invasion of Sicily.

British Colonial Possessions in the World of *Godlike*

Due to the presence of Talents, the British Crown Colonies of India and Burma enjoyed very different histories in the world of *Godlike*. "Tribal magic" and the return of "gods" led to the formation of new countries and religions after the war.

The Kachin homeland of Gamgaw in Burma, and Lord Yama's country of Assam in northeast India are sovereign nations, independent of outside rule, protected by the powers of the Talents that rule them—or the fanaticism of their followers. The Kachin *Arvat* priests wield powerful "magic" that protects their country from invasion, so they have no need for modern weaponry; while Lord Yama commands an army of 200,000 fanatical followers who would die for him with a single word.

During the height of the war, the British made promises of independence to many of the Crown Colonies that assisted Britain. These promises were far from formal, and some were outright lies; all to make the colony in question more productive. Few British politicians ever imagined that such deals would actually occur. However, as the parahuman strength of these "colonial" powers grew, the ability of the British government to control them dwindled.

Even as India was being granted its independence in 1946, Lord Yama and his followers, who repulsed the Japanese in 1944, demanded their independence as well. After a tense standoff between Yama's army of fanatics and the Seventh Indian Division near Imphal, Britain recognized Yama's realm of Assam (it was either that or start another war in Asia). However, it would be some years yet before India itself would recognize Yama's country.

Early attempts to mediate a colonial understanding between the Kachins and the British government in 1946 ended with a threat by the Kachin *Arvat;* Gamgaw would be granted independence, or every child under five in London would die of fever.

What would have been a ridiculous threat in our world was deadly serious in the world of *Godlike*. The British ambassador recognized Gamgaw as an independent nation that same day.

April 17, 1943

The Glorious Eighth

A huge bombing raid by B-17s of the American Eighth Air Force devastated the already ruined port city of Bremen, Germany. Bremen was the industrial center for the production and maintenance of U-boats, and had several large motor and steel production facilities. Over 100 bombers participated in the raid; only sixteen were lost.

Two German *Übermenschen* destroyed the B-17 *Green River* as it made its bomb run, making it the first American aircraft lost to enemy Talent action.

April 19, 1943

The Battle At Warsaw

Afraid of losing favor with Hitler, Himmler dispatched the Twenty-first Panzer Division to finally eliminate the residents of the Warsaw Ghetto. With the help of *Nephilim* and other anti-Nazi Talents, the Jews held off the Germans for more than three months, killing over 400 *SS* men and twelve *Übermenschen*. The Germans believed they could not hold out much longer; what they did not know was that the Jews were being reinforced from afar.

The Panzer division got more than they bargained for when they rolled into the Ghetto on April 19. British and American Talents had been reinforcing the Jewish holdings in the Ghetto for more than a month by the time the attack began. Weapons, equipment and several Talents along with 400 members of the Jewish *Hagganah* (a non-Talent Jewish defense force) were brought into the country using various powers.

After four hours of brutal combat, the Twenty-first Panzer limped away in retreat from the Ghetto. Over 750 men and nineteen tanks were lost in the battle. That evening, amidst the burned out tanks and corpses, a flag bearing the Star of David flew over the Warsaw Ghetto.

April 21, 1943

The Plague of Rangoon

Word traveled through Brigadier Wingate to British command that the Kachin tribe of Burma planned to "attack Rangoon" on April 21. As far as the High Command could determine, the Kachins lacked sufficient equipment and manpower to launch an offensive against the capital of Japanese-controlled Burma, but due to their tenacity and honesty, attention was paid to the Kachin promise.

Intercepted radio traffic indicated *something* happened on the appointed date. The Japanese medical corps rushed to several portions of Rangoon to "treat an unknown

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Alias

Name: Isabelle Compegne **AKA** Alias.
Nationality: French.
Political Affiliation: Communist.
Education: Private schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 12/1/22, Algiers, Algeria.
DOD: 1/29/86, New York, U.S.A. (lung cancer).
Known Parahuman Abilities: Alias was a changeling who projected a different appearance to everyone within sight range (though she could focus and project a single image if she wished). To men, she always appeared as a beautiful young woman; women saw various forms of both sexes. Her voice, fingerprints, weight and height, despite what she appeared to be, remained the same; while photographs showed the illusion she projected, not her actual form. Without her conscious control, the power would cycle through hundreds or even thousands of different appearances.

Men subjected to her power also found her requests (no matter how outrageous), very difficult to resist. Talents and women remained immune to this effect.

History: Born in Algiers, Isabelle enjoyed a privileged childhood. Her father was the director of the largest French import/export company in Africa, and exploited the financial benefits of Africa to turn a huge profit in native art.

In 1938, her "involvements" with local men prompted her parents to take steps to control her wild behavior; Isabelle was sent to Paris to attend a private Catholic finishing school. Under the watchful eye of the Catholic nuns, Isabelle became a quiet, studious youth.

Due to the growing conflict in North Africa, her family returned to France just in time to experience the unexpected German invasion there. The *Gestapo* took Isabelle's mother away in December 1941 for her ties to a communist organization; her father was imprisoned in May 1941 for unspecified "crimes against the Reich."

Isabelle remained at the Catholic school, terrified and unsure of her next move. The nuns were left to their own devices (several high-ranking *SS* men attended mass at the school), and the sisters there used this "immunity" to save several individuals from the *Gestapo*. Isabelle spent a year isolated at the school, fearful of capture or imprisonment, doing little more than cleaning and cooking.

In 1942, after a bold attack on the local constabulary, seven members of the resistance spent the night at the school, hiding from *Gestapo* sweeps. Isabelle fell in love with the leader of the cell, Charles Pettigny, and the two were soon inseparable. She left the school and quickly became involved in the machinations of the resistance, helping to plan and execute terrorist attacks on German occupation forces.

In late 1942, the *Gestapo* caught up with Pettigny and Isabelle in Paris. Pettigny was captured without a fight and later executed, but after a brisk chase, Isabelle escaped. Looking for a place to go to ground, she returned to the school, but was turned away. "We do not know you, young woman!" said the nun, who had worked with Isabelle for over a year, and slammed the door in her face. A quick glance at her reflection in a shop window confirmed the nun's story. Isabelle's face had changed, and as she looked intently at it, it shifted yet again.

It was not long before she discovered the extent of her Talent power.

Over the next year, she wrought havoc on the internal structure of Nazi-occupied France, turning loyal Nazis into puppets that she could exploit for the good of the resistance. Dozens served her and died for her, while supplying information vital for the coming invasion.

After the war, Isabelle reunited with her father, and lived for a time in Paris, enjoying the fame associated with being a Talent hero. In 1951, her starring role in the Gene Kelly film *An American in Paris* was an enormous success. Invited to the 1951 Academy Awards, Isabelle made a huge splash on the American media. To each photographer she was a different person, and in each picture a different face. America was enchanted with France's "woman without a face."

Through the '60s and '70s, Isabelle modeled for various agencies and acted in several movies. The illusions projected by her power kept her young and beautiful, despite her advancing age, and her career stretched on and on as her looks shifted to stay in synch with the style of the time.

She died at Sloan Kettering hospital in New York at the age of 64. Even in death she was in demand, and a controversial photograph of her corpse, that showed her actual face for the first time in more than forty years, made the cover of the *New York Daily News* and the *National Enquirer* the morning after.

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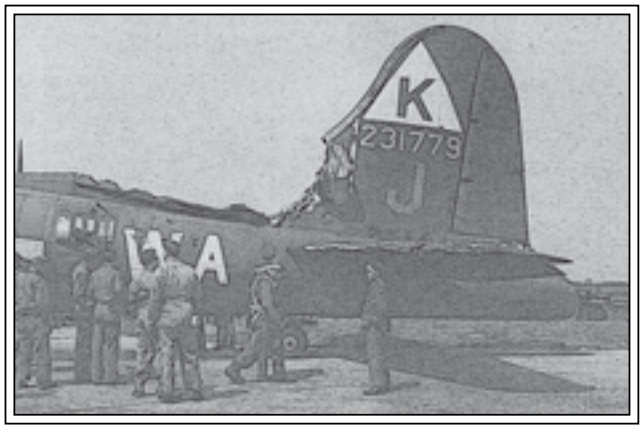
illness." Through intelligence sources, it was discovered that 2,500 Japanese died from the "Red Fever," a disease that caused the body to bloat, capillaries to burst, and death due to blood clots.

When Wingate met with *Arvat* Sittuang and his council of magicians, he was quite taken with their methods. A "spell" was demonstrated on a captured Japanese soldier. Four Kachins chanted for a minute and the soldier burst into flame, dying moments later. After this amazing turn of events, the British and American intelligence analysts had to completely reassess the situation in Burma.



April 21, 1943

Yamamoto's Ignominious End

Mistaking MacArthur's "island hopping" campaign as the stabilization of a defensive line in the South Pacific, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto began to tour forward positions in an attempt to raise morale, and solidify defenses in the area.

American cryptographers managed to decode Yamamoto's itinerary. With the authorization of Admiral Nimitz, eighteen P-38 fighters were launched from Guadalcanal to intercept Yamamoto's plane over Ballale Island.

Major Thomas G. Lamphier shot the G4M "Betty" bomber carrying Yamamoto out of the air as it passed over the island, just minutes after the itinerary predicted. The admiral was killed when the crippled aircraft smashed into the jungle on Ballale.

The reluctant architect of the attack on Pearl Harbor was dead at 59.

April 30, 1943

Target: Montgomery

Twelve German *Überkommandos* assaulted Montgomery's headquarters at Qairwan in the early hours of the last day of April. Brought in by the German teleport *Der Springer,* the *Übermenschen* wrought havoc, killing more than forty British and Americans before they called off their attack due to mounting losses. Unfortunately for the Germans, General Montgomery was 100 miles away at Le Kef, meeting with General Patton.

A Canadian Talent, Flare, managed to capture two of the German Talents. Seven others were killed; and three, including *Der Springer,* escaped.

May 7, 1943

Tunis and Bizerta Fall

The British Eleventh Hussars rolled into Tunis after a day of heavy fighting, in a push from Béja against *Afrika Korps*. The remaining German forces retreated to Cape Bon, a tiny peninsula to the northeast of Tunis. American forces under General Bradley took Bizerta later that same day, trapping about 800 Germans and twenty tanks between British and American lines. The rest of the Axis forces were swept into a corner-the last emplacement of Axis forces in North Africa.

Surrounded on all sides, *Generaloberst* von Arnim and his remaining troops prepared to fight on. Despite their lack of men, vehicles and supplies, they hoped to forestall the Allied invasion of Sicily.

May 10, 1943

Eli "The Brain" Watson, Number Cruncher

Section Two scientists in Brooklyn New York discovered the first American Hyperbrain, Eli Watson during a recruitment drive for Talents in New York. Barely eighteen years old, Watson could multiply, divide, add or subtract thirty digit numbers in his head, and was working on calculating Pi to the 6,000th place… just for fun.

After a "crummy school career," Eli suddenly became a genius overnight in his third year of high school in 1942. In less than four months, he graduated from Queens College with a degree in Mathematics and had his eyes on the University of Chicago's Physics program. He turned up at the recruitment office only after his mother correctly guessed he might be a Talent when she saw an ad for the drive in the newspaper. "To be honest, it never even occurred to me," Watson commented to the press, as he answered insanely complicated math questions while simultaneously speed-reading and translating huge sections of complicated Latin text.

"I may mess up," Watson confessed during his demonstration, "I only learned Latin last night."

May 12, 1943

U.S. Forces Retake Attu

Two hundred American scouts landed before dawn on Japanese occupied Attu in the Aleutian Island chain. Five hours later the U.S. Seventh Infantry Division landed, attacking Japanese positions all over the island. After eighteen days of fierce fighting, the Japanese were boxed in at Chichagof Harbor. Only thirty out of 2,400 survived to surrender when the island was secured on May 31.

Japanese forces on Kiska in the island chain withdrew over the next two months. Japanese presence in the Aleutians was over.

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May 13, 1943

The End of the Axis in North Africa

Generaloberst Hans-Jürgen von Arnim surrendered the remains of *Afrika Korps* to Montgomery and Patton at Tunis on May 13, 1943, ending the war in North Africa. Over 200,000 Axis men were taken prisoner, along with 200 tanks and thousands of vehicles and weapons. Allied analysts were disturbed to find that no *Übermenschen* were among the prisoners. Most had escaped to Sicily or southern Africa with the use of their powers to fight another day.

The end for *Afrika Korps,* which had once controlled almost all of northeast Africa, had finally arrived.

May 16, 1943

The Fall of the *Nephilim*

Reinforced since March by a consolidated effort of Allied Talents, the Ghetto at Warsaw faced a huge force of German men and *Übermenschen* called in by order of Hitler himself. When the second Panzer Army swept into the Ghetto, they initially faced stiff resistance, which was soon overcome. The Germans were stunned to find only 250 Jews behind the barricades, armed to the teeth with American and British equipment. The rest were gone, or dead.

14,000 Jews and 3,500 Germans had been killed during the uprising.

When the leader of the *Nephilim, Hashomer,* was hanged at Warsaw the following day he spoke these words: "I die today dreaming of Israel."

May 22, 1943

Doenitz Suspends North Atlantic Patrols

Allied efforts to destroy the U-boats' iron grip on the Atlantic finally succeeded, and Admiral Karl Doenitz called off the U-boat patrols in the North Atlantic. Over 100 U-boats were lost between late 1942 and early 1943, along with the most experienced sub crews and commanders. Allied convoys, improved radar and sonar, along with increased air patrols of coastal waters devastated the German U-boat system.

Although a new fleet of U-boats would be launched in the next year, German control of the North Atlantic would never recover.

May 26, 1943

Battle At Montenegro

An Axis force numbering over 120,000 men attacked 16,000 Communist partisans at Montenegro, Yugoslavia, in the hopes of capturing or killing Josef Tito, the leader of the Yugoslavian resistance. The Germans gained a potent partner by converting another resistance group, the Chetniks, to their service, and their numerical advantage over Tito's forces was immense. It seemed they could not lose.

However, with British training and backing, Tito's soldiers had become an incredible fighting force. After three weeks of intense combat, Axis forces withdrew from the Montenegro area, suffering 3,500 casualties. Tito and his Talent bodyguard *Stasio* came away from the attack unscathed. With this dramatic victory, the number of Slavs drawn to the cause of the resistance grew.

May 27, 1943

Eli Watson is Moved to Los Alamos

Eli Watson (America's first Hyperbrain) was moved to Los Alamos, New Mexico under great secrecy to assist in the manufacture of "the gadget," the world's first atomic bomb. Like all others at the site, he was paid $16 a month for his duties, and his only connection to the outside world was an anonymous post office box in Santa Fe.

Watson's vast intellect was of great use to Oppenheimer, Fermi and Teller in the construction of the device. He mostly served as a calculator capable of instantly producing results for even the biggest equations, but also assisted in the engineering specifics of the two bombs.

May 29, 1943

Der Archiv

RuSHA SA discovered the first German Hyperbrain, Walter Zingel, during an officer's exam for *SS* candidates on this date. Zingel listed numerous professions on his application including engineer, doctor, lawyer and linguist. Skeptical officers soon discovered Zingel was not lettered in any profession, but could still practice what he preached. He spoke nine languages, could recite entire novels from memory, was a master of math and physics, and was fully versed in the advances of modern medicine.

Zingel was "self-taught." He discovered his encyclopedic memory working his night-job at the Diebitsch Library in Berlin. While sorting books, he realized he could "see" in his mind where the books were on the shelves just by remembering their catalog number. However, his ability did not end there; anything he glanced at, even for a moment, could be recalled with perfect clarity. After two months of "study" in the library, (during which he read 3,521 volumes) Zingel decided he would put his intellect to best use for Germany and join the *SS*.

Immediately classified, Zingel was given the codename *Der Archiv* ("The Archive") and sent through *SS* training. Later, he was assigned to *Hauptamt SS* command, to work on the logistics of the German war effort.

June 1, 1943

Propaganda Backfires

Allied bombs pelted Pantelleria Island, touted by the Italian fascists as an unbreakable citadel, for eleven days straight to prevent it from hampering the Allied invasion of Sicily. The Allies believed a large garrison on Pantelleria could threaten shipping in the area. Unfortunately for the natives of Pantelleria, the island was nearly defenseless, and the boast of the fascists was nothing more than an empty bluff.

On June 11, what was left of the tiny fascist garrison on the island surrendered to Allied forces without a fight.

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June 5, 1943

Montgomery Is Incinerated, Almost

While appearing at a public rally in London in support of the Russian war effort, General Montgomery was incinerated by an enemy *Übermensch, Der Feuermann* ("The Fireman.") Sixteen were injured and three killed during the incident, but the German Talent managed to escape.

A day later, it was announced that "Montgomery," was not Montgomery at all, but a body double, First Lieutenant Bernard Law, who bore a nearly perfect resemblance to the General. Ten days later, King George presented the Victoria Cross to Law's widow in honor of his sacrifice.

June 10, 1943

Set Europe Ablaze

To prepare for the cross-Channel invasion of Europe, the RAF and American Eighth Air Force launched Operation Pointblank, an attempt by joint bomber command to cripple the German *Luftwaffe*, thus crushing the Germans' will to fight. Endless day and night sorties were flown, utilizing both precision and saturation bombing to complete the mission. Air bases, aircraft production factories and industrial cities suffered an incredible pounding for more than a year.

For the first time, British crews employed the new "Bullseye" system to mark ground targets for range and accuracy. This involved utilizing Talent teleporters and fliers to mark the objectives with flares; but during the first three months of Pointblank, over fifty-four Talents were lost on these missions. Aghast at the losses, the SSO cancelled Bullseye, citing unacceptable losses of valuable personnel.

June 21, 1943

An Offensive at New Georgia and America's Mad Talent

A small American Marine force crept ashore New Georgia in the Solomon Islands, to take out a 76 mm coastal gun that overlooked the sea-lanes to the south, in preparation for the coming invasion. After a quick fight, the Marines secured the gun but quickly had to hunker down in the face of continuous assaults by the Japanese garrison. The 750 Marines held off a force of more than 3,000 Japanese for nine days, while the main American invasion force sailed as fast as it could from Guadalcanal.

During the terrible fighting, America gained its first Mad Talent: Harry "Super-Man" O'Malley. Much like Baba Yaga of the Soviet Union, O'Malley manifested incredible Talent powers under extreme duress. On the morning of June 24, he suddenly demonstrated the following Talent abilities: Hyperstrength, speed, immunity to damage, great endurance, flight and even heat vision.

He single-handedly halted the attack, routing the Japanese forces and capturing the Japanese commander on New Georgia. All in all, "Super-Man" O'Malley made the main invasion force's landing on the June 30 an anticlimax. When they arrived, he clearly had the entire situation under control, making the huge invasion force feel superfluous. One Talent effectively removed the Japanese threat from New Georgia, and then he *really* lost his mind.

July 1, 1943

Null

RuSHA SA discovered Hartmann Landers, the first German Zed Talent, during a recruitment drive on this date. Landers

Hitler's Disfavor

Der Archiv had difficulty from day one within the *Hauptamt SS*. He could not ignore the cause of the problems he saw within the logistics of the Reich. Every major mistake and blunder could be followed (even without Talent power) all the way to its ultimate source-Hitler. *Der Archiv's* intelligence prevented him from looking away.

Der Archiv struggled to change the way things were run in the Reich without drawing the attention of Hitler. While he managed to persuade several inner members of the party (including Albert Speer) to disperse German industry in an attempt to save it from Allied bombing in the last months of the war, he otherwise made little impact. Subtle suggestions to remove German troops from the Ukraine to defend Germany in late 1943 ended with one of Hitler's tantrums; as a result, *Der Archiv* was demoted and sent away from the Himmler's personal service.

If it was not for the interdiction and pull of Albert Speer, Hitler's architect, *Der Archiv* might have been sent to the eastern front. Instead, he remained as a personal adjutant to Speer, and survived the war. Like Speer, *Der Archiv* could very clearly see the madness around him; often hiding the "insights" his amazing mind uncovered. For example, personal notes made by *Der Archiv* in 1943 after examining the *Abwehr's* activities in Britain mentions nonchalantly: "…it is obvious that the entirety of our spy operations in England have been compromised." In actuality, the British *had* turned almost every German agent in Britain to their control, through their "Double Cross" system.

He hid this discovery and many others from Hitler, hoping to shorten the war.

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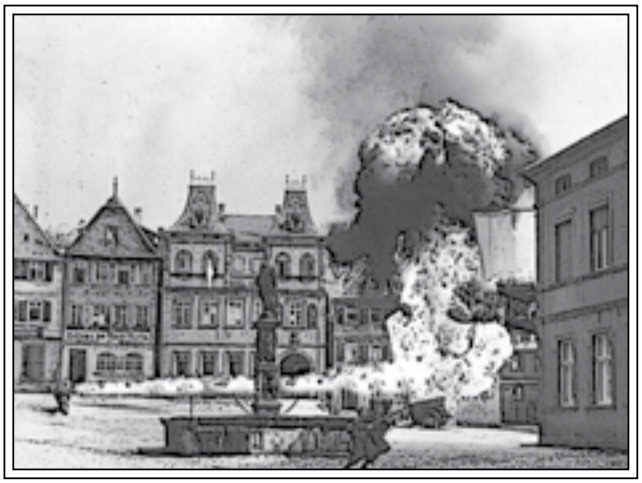
could affect dozens of Talents at once with his negation power, and was given the codename *Null*. Seeing the value of his power, Himmler rushed him through *SS* training to serve as a personal bodyguard for Hitler himself.



July 4, 1943

Kursk

German forces launched the long delayed Operation: Citadel, a huge assault by 900,000 men and almost 3,000 tanks on the Soviets at Kursk. The Russians were well prepared, however. They noticed the German build-up almost a month before, and gathered 1.3 million men on the salient to defend against the attack. Two hundred and fifteen Soviet Talents were drawn from all other areas of the war and placed in forward positions, to act as behind-the-line shock troops.

Initial German advances were bogged down by crippling air raids, and a nearly impenetrable defense of hundreds of thousands of Soviet soldiers. Soviet Talents crept behind the lines, forcing the Germans to halt their offensive and reorganize before attacking again. No definitive combat had taken place, but German losses were already enormous.

Hitler refused to call off the doomed offensive (despite von Manstein's insistence), and reinforcements were brought up in preparation for another push towards Kursk.

July 9, 1943

SS Überkommandogruppe

Loses 212 In One Day

A hastily gathered team of German *Übermenschen* was thrown at the southern flank of Kursk, in the hopes of drawing Soviet Talents away from the Ninth Army. It failed miserably. After a brief gain in territory by the parahumans, Soviet artillery opened up—killing more than 200 *Übermenschen* in less than an hour. The remaining parahumans barely made it back to German lines before their hastily dug positions were overrun.

Furious, Hitler ordered another 200 *Übermenschen* to the eastern front to reinforce Operation: Citadel.

July 9, 1943

The Invasion of Sicily

Codenamed "Husky," this Allied invasion force involved over 2,500 ships and 180,000 men of the American Seventh and British Eighth Armies sailing from North Africa, under the command of Lieutenant General Patton and General Montgomery. The attack opened with glider and paratroop landings at Gela, Vittoria, Cantania and Syracuse on the eastern edge of Sicily. Early problems were encountered, however: high winds scattered the British gliders, sending them well outside their drop zones (two even crashed in the sea). American paratroopers experienced similar problems, finding themselves nowhere near their expected landing sites.

Losses in these groups were severe, but when the sea-borne landings began the next morning, the tables quickly turned on the 315,000 Italian and 50,000 German troops garrisoned on the island. Beach landings from Syracuse to Licata overwhelmed the Axis defenders, while heavy air support kept the superior Axis armor from engaging landing forces on the beaches.

Other troops landed through more paranormal means. Four TOG teams and three SSO teams captured

"All This Killing, It's Wrong"

Sergeant Harry O'Malley lost his mind when a Japanese grenade struck him in the chest and rebounded into a huddled group of four men before detonating. The men died in the explosion, while O'Malley was left untouched. He then, in the words of one witness, "ripped off his shirt and screamed 'I'm SUPER-MAN!'" Amazingly, he suddenly had the Talent muscle to back up his one-man charge on the Japanese positions, and within hours, he secured the enemy garrison of more than 3,000 men.

Later that same week, while the last of the Japanese resistance on New Georgia was mopped up, O'Malley killed a Marine captain for "murder." The captain was returning fire at an isolated Japanese spider-hole when O'Malley decapitated him with a punch from behind.

"All these guns, all this killing, it's wrong," O'Malley informed General Darrenovsky, the commander on New Georgia. By then O'Malley had completely lost his identity and refused to answer to anything but Super-Man. "I'm going to end this war, starting now," he announced to the Marines on New Georgia, and then proceeded to disable boats, tanks and weapons with his strength and heat vision. Fearing a Talent coup, General Darrenovsky radioed Guadalcanal for backup.

Days later, four Marine Talents subdued "Super-Man" O'Malley as he built "houses for all the good people to live in," and shipped him back to Pearl Harbor command. To prevent another "Talent outburst," O'Malley was lobotomized in August 1943 and confined to the Petaluma Sanitarium for the rest of his life.

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the bridge at Pointe Grande, south of Syracuse, inflicting huge losses on the Italian Sixth Infantry Division. This force of eighty-four Talents held off 3,000 Italians for two days until the British Fiftieth Infantry Division relieved them on July 11.

The Allies' attack on "the soft underbelly of the Axis" had begun.

July 11, 1943

The Hermann Göring Division Clashes With Patton

Heavily armed German troops of the *Hermann Göring* Division attacked American forces under General Patton at Gela on the morning of July 11, trying to push them back to the sea. Equipped with Tiger tanks and the twenty-four member *Überkommandogruppe* 19, the Germans hit the Americans hard, almost reaching the beachhead before Patton called in airborne reinforcements from Pantelleria. It was the first time Patton saw the effects of Talents in combat up close, and their psychological impact on morale was enormous.

Fearing a rout, Patton rushed his tanks forward from the beach to engage the Tigers and *Übermenschen* inland, while his airborne troops attacked from the rear. The Allies suffered heavy losses, but managed to encircle a portion of the German force and drive back the tanks.

The *Hermann Göring* Division withdrew on the morning of July 12 towards the Strait of Messina to evacuate Sicily for the Italian mainland.

Hitler's Growing Madness

By the summer of 1943, Hitler had become paranoid to the point of near incapacitation. Food tasters tested his every meal for poison, multiple routes and vehicles were used when he traveled; and he was never without his *SS Überkommando* guards, loyal unto death for their *Führer*.

After the near miss of the April 13 bomb plot, Hitler began to feel paranoid even of his *Übermensch* bodyguards. Himmler was directed to find a "perfect defense against super-humans." Already indoctrinated in the Hitler Youth, *Null* fit the role of *Führerprotektor* perfectly.

By September 1943, *Null* was never more than 100 feet from Hitler, 24 hours a day.

July 13, 1943

Tanks and Talents Clash at Prokhorovka

Soviet forces dramatically counterattacked the Germans at Prokhorovka, forcing *Generalfeldmarschall* von Manstein's hand before he could reorganize his armies in a renewed offensive against Kursk. 600 German tanks and 111 *Übermenschen* faced off against 850 Soviet tanks and 105 Talents in the largest battle of tanks and Talents ever seen in warfare.

Soviet tanks, aircraft and Talents decimated the German forces, and only forty-one German tanks and twelve *Übermenschen* survived the deadly engagement.

Germany lost more than 600 tanks and 500,000 men in the nine days of Operation: Citadel, dramatically shifting power on the eastern front. With no other recourse, Hitler ordered cancellation of the offensive.

With his carefully orchestrated reversals completely undone, von Manstein prepared to hold off the Soviet juggernaut with little more than a shadow of his former force.

July 15, 1943

Towards Palermo

The American Seventh Army, under Lieutenant General Patton, swept up the southwest coast of Sicily, pushing towards its capital Palermo, while the Axis forces on Sicily carefully withdrew to the Strait of Messina to evacuate the island. Meanwhile, British forces under General Montgomery moved up the eastern coast, towards Mount Etna and the Strait of Messina, trying to stop the Axis retreat.

Heavy fighting in the British sector held up Montgomery's advance, while Patton's forces experienced little resistance in their push towards the capital.

July 17, 1943

The Soviet Push

Soviet Forces from the Voronezh and Steppe front surged forward on disorganized German positions, forcing a clumsy retreat from the area around Kursk. Crushed in the engagement, the Germans had little armor and almost no air support, while the Soviets had nearly limitless supplies of manpower, aircraft and tanks.

Von Manstein had no time to organize a retreat, and the German Ninth and Second Army reeled under the huge attack by Soviet Forces. Those that could withdraw, made

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their way towards German lines in the west, those that could not stayed behind to try to hold off the Russians.

July 18, 1943

British Eighth Army Moves In

Striking at the Axis stronghold at Cantania, the British Eighth Army came face to face with the retreating *Hermann Göring* Division and *Überkommandogruppe* 19 on the plains east of Mount Etna. After fierce resistance, the British tried to flank the Germans by moving the first Canadian division around the mountain, but *Übermenschen* reconnaissance gave the Germans time to react. After a pitched battle on the western edge of the mountain, the British forces were repulsed.

July 19, 1943

Rome is Bombed

Rome was bombed for the first time in the war, by a force of 270 Allied bombers flying from North Africa and recently constructed airbases on Sicily. Hours before the attack, the city's population was warned by radio broadcasts and leaflet propaganda to prevent heavy casualties from occurring. In addition, the bombers avoided archaeological sites and other famous landmarks, to prevent serious collateral damage.

Patton and Talents

Lieutenant General Patton was less than enthusiastic about Talents in the U.S. Army. His enormous ego and drive to fill the headlines with American advances (and his name) prevented him from employing Talent teams in either North Africa or the assault on Sicily. Nevertheless, TOG teams were used in both circumstances despite Patton's protests, but their command came from higher headquarters. Eisenhower was very aware of the public's obsession with Talents.

Patton's opinion of Talents in warfare changed when he witnessed an attack by *Überkommandogruppe* 19 at Gela first hand. Four German *Übermenschen* threw an entire tank company into disarray before being stopped.

"Damn, I'd like to get me a few of those," Patton commented, inspecting the ruined husk of a M-3 Medium Tank that had been thrown twenty yards by one of the Germans.

In August 1943, twenty-six American Talents were assigned to Patton's headquarters. Known as the "Good Time Boys," and led by First Lieutenant John "Muscles" Meyer, this group cut a swath through Axis forces in France and Germany. Patton often stole the team's thunder, taking credit for many of their victories, but the Talents didn't seem to mind.

Meyer had this to say of the General: "He was like a father to me. Every victory, every success was due, in the most part, to him. I owe him everything."

July 19, 1943

Il Duce Meets *Der Führer* for the Last Time

Hitler met with his lackey Benito Mussolini in Fletre, Italy for the last time. Their purpose: to discuss the invasion of Sicily and Italy's role in the coming battle for Europe. At the time, Mussolini failed to inform *Der Führer* that his political position in Italy had become tenuous at best; rumors of his dismissal by the Fascist High Council (and Italy's surrender to the Allies) were the talk of Rome.

Il Duce encouraged Hitler to seize control of Italy so that the war against the Allies (and coincidentally, Mussolini's position of power) could continue. Hitler refused.

July 23, 1943

Patton Takes Palermo

The U.S. Seventh Army secured the ports of Marsala, Trappani and the capital of Sicily, Palermo on this date, claiming more than three quarters of the island of Sicily for the Allies. Axis forces had all but retreated from the area, in their rush for evacuation to the Italian mainland at Messina in the east.

Patton entered the town at the head of a huge tank force to roaring crowds of Italians, while Montgomery and the British Eighth faced stiff resistance near Mount Etna. Never one to miss a fight, Patton committed his force to advance east into the British sector, violating his orders from Allied command. Both he and Montgomery now shared the same target: Messina.

July 24, 1943

WINDOW

British bomber command devised a brilliantly simple scheme to neutralize German radar during bomber assaults on Europe. Codenamed WINDOW, this breakthrough was nothing more than thin sheets of aluminum dropped from bomb bays of attacking bombers. Radar waves were diffused and scattered by the sheets of metal, confounding night-fighters and tracking stations.

On July 24, 746 British bombers pelted Hamburg while its night defenses were neutralized with WINDOW. Over the next week, Hamburg was visited two more times by British bombers, killing 30,000 people and reducing 75% of the city to rubble.

Eleven *Übermenschen* perished in the bombing, and Allied aircraft shot down three more.

July 25, 1943

The King of Italy

The Fascist High Council of Italy convened for the first time since 1939 and returned control of the country to King Emmanuel. Confidence in Mussolini had eroded since the failure of Italian armed forces in East Africa, North Africa and Sicily,

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while the recent bombings of Rome demoralized the Italian people, who wanted nothing more to do with the conflict.

Mussolini was arrested by Marshal Pietro Badoglio, chief of the Italian general staff, and placed in custody. Badoglio declared martial law, formed a cabinet, and went through the motions of creating an interim government. In reality, he was stalling for time, dealing with the Allies behind the back of Hitler, hoping to extricate Italy from the war with as little bloodshed as possible. Political overtures to Allied contacts indicated that Italy might still escape from its dangerous alliance with Hitler.

Badoglio's men imprisoned Mussolini in the Grand Sassos Mountains north of Abruzzi, to await trial.

July 26, 1943

The Growing Rout in Russia

The German High Command finally ordered forces at Orel in the Ukraine to withdraw to the established Hagen line, east of Bryansk. Lack of supplies, low morale and relentless Russian attacks had eaten away at the Germans. Few had any illusions left about their chances.

The hastily prepared Hagen line lacked sufficient equipment, manpower and ammunition to stop the Russians, but Hitler refused to commit any more forces to the eastern front. The cross-Channel invasion, he was sure, would soon begin.

August 1, 1943

Assault on Ploesti

One hundred and seventy eight American B-24D bombers attacked seven facilities in the Romanian oil fields at Ploesti, a major German resource that produced more than half of Germany's oil. After completing a 1,900-mile flight from Libya, the bombers swooped in at less than 500 feet, dropping 354 tons of bombs on their targets. Fifty-four planes were lost, mostly due to pilot confusion (several planes became disoriented during their approach and were picked out of the air when they circled back); others were damaged and landed in neutral Turkey, where their crews were interned for the duration of the war.

Damage to the facilities was considerable, but within two months, oil production was once again up to normal levels.

August 2, 1943

Manstein Is Ordered to Do the Impossible

Despite the likelihood of another Soviet summer offensive, *Generalfeldmarschall* von Manstein was ordered to hold the Soviets at Kharkov at all costs. Hitler refused to allow an orderly withdrawal of forces from the Ukraine to more defendable positions closer to the Reich with shorter supply lines.

Lacking men, fuel, tanks and nearly everything else in significant numbers to stop the Soviets, von Manstein prepared what defense he could, and waited for the end of the German Army in Russia.

August 3, 1943

The Retreat from Sicily

After fighting a holding action at Cantania for more than a month, Axis forces began their retreat in earnest across the Strait of Messina to Italy. Relentless British and American attacks had demoralized the Italian garrison, while the Germans hoped only to take the combat to the Italian mainland where their manpower and defenses were far more considerable.

Holding actions slowed the British and Americans, but did not stop their advance towards Messina. Behind-the-lines landings disrupted Axis defenses, while Allied aircraft flew over most of Sicily unopposed.

Resistance in the air near Italy and the Strait of Messina was another matter, however. German *Übermenschen* and ME-109s flew relentless patrols, covering Axis ships as they ferried men and material across the channel to the Italian mainland.

August 5, 1943

The Soviet Push

Soviet forces on three fronts launched a huge offensive against the German forces near Orel, Bryansk and Belgorod in the central Ukraine. The attacks flung the Germans back in two bulges, surrounding them at Kharkov.

Generalfeldmarschall von Manstein stemmed off attacks by madly shifting his Panzers from trouble spot to trouble spot. After a small collapse in the line near the outskirts of Kharkov, and the destruction of thirty-five Panzers in a single pitched battle holding the line, von Manstein sent word to Berlin. Kharkov would be lost; it was just a matter of time.

August 5, 1943

Cantania

Relentless shelling and bombing of Axis positions in Cantania, Sicily caused the Axis forces to pull out of the town for points east. The town surrendered to the British Eighth Army on the fifth, ending a long and costly siege. A secondary Axis line was established near Randazo and Falcone to hold the Allies as the remaining forces were evacuated. It was obvious that Sicily would be secured.

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August 6, 1943

The Germans Move in Italy

Concerned with the Allied advances in Sicily, and the vacillations of Marshal Badoglio's fledgling government, Hitler ordered German troops to seize power in portions of Italy. He hoped to fight a definitive war on Italian soil, and ordered the establishment of several new defensive lines in preparation for the coming Allied invasion. This haphazard seizure threw much of Italy into complete disarray, with some territories pro-Badoglio and others, pro-Hitler.

Der Führer also ordered the organization of a team to rescue Benito Mussolini from captivity, but these plans were cancelled when it was discovered the dictator had been killed in a botched capture attempt by the Allies.

August 7, 1943

The Death of a Dictator

Marshal Badoglio's negotiations with American diplomats for the surrender of Italy were carried out under extreme secrecy, to prevent the Germans from discovering the duplicity of the new Italian government. The Allies demands remained firm: the absolute surrender of Italy, and for good measure, Benito Mussolini himself. Hoping to mediate a better truce, Badoglio requested more time to decide.

Captain Peter "Fastball" Tucker, an American teleporter, moved the negotiators in and out of Italy. Besides Tucker, four other Talents traveled along with the diplomatic team, though the Italians never knew it. The team of American and British Talents, led by Major Michael "Camo" Carter (a Talent who could project invisibility), remained behind in Rome after the diplomats left, to spy on Badoglio's new and fragile regime.

Over the next two weeks, the team uncovered the location of Mussolini and radioed it back to Sicily command.

On August 7, a team of nine Allied Talents and sixty commandos assaulted the hotel in Abruzzi where Mussolini was held. After a half an hour of fierce fighting, the facility was secured. When the first commandos burst into the room, they found the dictator hanging from a beam.

"He looked at me, looked at my beret," said the first Commando through the door, Captain Thomas "Goliath" Levin, "smiled, and jumped."

For the first time in many years, luck was with the dictator. He died instantly when the noose broke his neck.

August 10, 1943

Push to Messina

U.S. and British forces finally made progress in the push towards Messina after more than a month of intense fighting near Cantania and Mount Etna. Sea and paratrooper landings behind Axis lines inflicted a heavy toll on German forces attempting to cover the evacuation of the island.

Both Montgomery and Patton were bent on being the first to secure Messina, and neither would admit that the race to beat the Axis had become simply a race between their egos.

August 15, 1943

Kiska, Abandoned

A raid by Canadian and American troops on Kiska in the Aleutian Islands revealed that the Japanese garrison there had been secretly withdrawn. The recapture of Attu and the disruption of the supply chain from Japan in the battle of the Kommandorskiye Islands had soured the Japanese on the Aleutians.

The only American territory captured by the Japanese was finally re-secured.

August 17, 1943

Victory in Sicily

Lieutenant General Patton reached the steps of the town hall of Messina almost two hours before General Montgomery and the British Seventh Army; the race for the capture of Sicily was over. No Axis forces were there when the Americans arrived; almost all of them had retreated across the Strait of Messina to Italy.

With just over 30,000 casualties, the stepping-stone to Italy and the Reich had been secured.

August 22, 1943

The First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group

The U.S. Army Air Corps assembled a team of twenty-one "flying bricks" (Talents who could both fly and were resistant to damage) to escort bombers into Europe for the Eighth Air Force. This was in direct reaction to airmen's growing concerns over *Übermenschen* attacks on Allied bombers.

The first Talent escort of aircraft in the war took place on August 22, when the First escorted 276 B-17s on their daylight raid of Schweinfurt, downing nine ME-109s, two FW-190s and one *Übermensch*. Two members of the First were lost to anti-aircraft fire over the target.

August 23, 1943

Retreat from Kharkov

Fearing a complete collapse in their lines, German forces withdrew from Kharkov for the third and final time. Almost surrounded, General Ernhard Raus' II Corps held off the Russian onslaught of Kharkov for two weeks, hoping for relief or the call for withdrawal.

On August 22, Hitler gave the order for the II Corps to withdraw from Kharkov. Russian forces rolled into the ruins of the city the next day.

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August 25, 1943

The Eighteenth Soviet Army Attacks Baba Yaga

The Eighteenth Soviet Army attacked the monstrosity Baba Yaga as it picked its way through the remains of the battlefield near Kharkov. Thirteen T-34 tanks fired en masse on the creature at less than 1,000 yards, and failed to harm it in the slightest. Instead, the Mad Talent rushed the Soviet lines, killing 2,000 men and destroying sixty tanks and vehicles.

In the face of Baba Yaga's nearly limitless power, the Soviet force withdrew.

September 3, 1943

Italy Surrenders, the Invasion Begins

Marshal Badoglio announced the suicide of Benito Mussolini and Italy's unconditional surrender to the Allies, to a stunned public over nationwide radio. He stated for the first time: "Fascism is over forever in Italy." Many Italians were incredibly happy with the announcement, others frightened by it. German forces in Italy were considerable, and most of northern Italy was garrisoned by German troops.

For several hours, it remained unclear whether Italy would be a battleground or a staging ground for the Allied invasion of Germany. Then the Axis moved in. Troops under *Generalfeldmarschall* Rommel disarmed Italian divisions and seized power in northern Italy hours after the announcement, while *Generalfeldmarschall* Albrecht Kesselring occupied Naples and prepared a defensive line at Nicastro on the Calabrian peninsula.

At 4:30 A.M. on September 3, the British Eighth Army surged across the Strait of Messina. The invasion of mainland Europe had begun.

The "Flying Bricks"

The impact of comic books on the Talent phenomenon was realized for the first time in 1943, when Section Two noticed similarities in Talent manifestations, and its link to the subject's age, place of birth, and education level.

Professor Daniel L. Talbot of Section Two was the first to recognize the strange preponderance of young men manifesting a particular set of powers including: flight, paranormal strength, speed, invulnerability and heat vision or even so-called "x-ray" vision. Talbot was not familiar with the characters of the comics, but his son was. After it was brought to his attention, Talbot realized that the young men were all manifesting the powers of their favorite comic book character.

Comic books soon became a common sight in the hands of American servicemen.

September 8, 1943

Immortale, the Immortal

Dionisio Valenti became the first Italian *Custos* (the Italian term for Talent, meaning "Keeper") while attempting to resist German soldiers in his hometown of Orvieto after the announcement of Italy's surrender to the Allies. The fighting in Orvieto was violent, as the Italian forces tried to overcome the better armed and more experienced German troops. When the smoke cleared, the Germans looted the town, raped the women, and burned several buildings to the ground. Their numbers grew as retreating Nazi troops from southern Italy prepared to defend the northern portion of the country. To the Germans, almost every Italian was a traitor and a target.

Valenti resisted when the Germans came to loot his family home, and paid the price. He was beaten, stabbed, finally doused with kerosene and left in a room with a grenade.

Blown to pieces by the explosion, and incinerated in the fire, somehow he *came back*.

September 9, 1943

Landings at Salerno and Taranto

Hoping to secure as much of the Italian mainland as possible before the Germans could seize total control, two large Allied forces (one sailing and the other flying from Sicily) landed at Salerno and Taranto.

Lieutenant General Mark Clark was in command of the Anglo-American force at Salerno. Early on, they faced stiff resistance from General Heinrich von Vietghoff's Tenth Army, and were pinned down on narrow beaches. After two attacks on Clark's headquarters by German *Übermenschen*, TOG 6 and 10 were attached to his command. Despite this boost, American and British footholds at Amalfi, Vietri and Paestrum were tenuous at best. German artillery and readily accessible reinforcements inflicted terrible casualties on the Allies, but they somehow held on.

Meanwhile at Taranto, the British First Airborne Division landed after an intense offshore bombardment of coastal defenses by the Royal Navy. British Talents successfully seized Montecorvino airfield for a day and a half, but were forced to withdraw when the Germans counterattacked. Otherwise, the British fared well, rapidly slicing the heel of the Italian boot in half with a bold push to Brindisi.

September 10, 1943

The Germans Seize Rome

Under *Generalleutnant* Kurt Maelzer, German troops seized the city of Rome from confused and outnumbered Italian forces. Maelzer fashioned himself into a mini-dictator in Rome, enforcing strict rules with bullets and torture. Overnight, almost any offense became punishable by death.

Situated behind a huge wall of German defenses, it seemed that Rome might never be freed from the influence of the Axis. On the other hand, even if it were, there might be nothing left of the eternal city to liberate.

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September 11, 1943

A Remnant of the Italian Fleet Surrenders at Malta

The Italian Fleet (consisting of five destroyers, three battleships, six cruisers, and several transport craft) had been ordered to Malta to be turned over to Allied command, under the surrender terms of September 3.

While under way in the Mediterranean, the fleet was attacked by German air and *Übermenschen* forces from northern Italy. In the first use of a guided missile in warfare, the Germans employed the *Fritz-X* glide bomb in their attack on the Italian battleship *Roma*, sending it and 1,200 crewmembers to the bottom in minutes.

While the battleship *Italia* fared better, it was damaged so severely by the *Übermenschen Tyr* and *Sonnerad,* that it remained in port for eighteen months before it was once again seaworthy.

September 13, 1943

Airdrop at Salerno

To reinforce the thinly stretched Allied forces at the Salerno beachhead, 1,200 paratroopers were dropped into the beleaguered town. In an amazing stroke of luck, no men or aircraft were lost in the operation. Just a day later, a huge German offensive pushed back the Allies until they held less than two miles of land.

Naval and air attacks by the Allies staved the German offensive off until these reinforcements arrived, narrowly averting a complete disintegration of the beachhead.

September 16, 1943

The *Warspite*

German air attacks against the Allied fleet off the coast of Italy grew more persistent, skilled, and deadly. In the second major use of the *Fritz-X* glide bomb, the British battleship *Warspite* was hit and terribly damaged.

With many crewmembers dead or injured, and severe structural damage, the craft was out of action for the remainder of the war.

September 23, 1943

Northern Italy Is Absorbed Into the Reich

Hitler established control over a portion of Italy stretching from Naples to the border of Germany in the north, designated *Reichskommisariat Norditalien* ("Protectorate North Italy.") Northern Italy was now a direct part of the Third Reich, ruled under Hitler by *Generalfeldmarschall* Rommel.

It was seen by the German command as little more than a battlefield in the making; a final buffer between Germany and the Allies.

October 1, 1943

The British Enter Naples, the Fifth Breaks Through

Reinforced by the advance of General Montgomery's Eighth Army from Calabria in the south, and various reinforcements brought in through the beachhead at Salerno, Lieutenant General Mark Clark's U.S. Fifth Army broke through the German Tenth Army's defenses at Naples, forcing the Germans to retreat to the Victor Line across the Volturno river.

British troops entered Naples only hours after the last German troops abandoned it, greeted by roaring crowds of Italian civilians.

October 13, 1943

Italy Declares War on Germany

Marshal Pietro Badoglio's government, which still held power in portions of southern Italy, declared war on Germany, officially joining the Allies in their efforts to depose the Nazi regime. Due to the scattering and disorganization of loyal Italian troops, this announcement amounted to little more than a promise of future action.

Nearly ruined, Italy was in no shape to take on the Axis without extensive Allied assistance, and many pro-fascist Italians fought on with their Axis partners in the north.

October 14, 1943

Second Raid on Schweinfurt

A second raid by the U.S. Eighth Air force on the Schweinfurt ball bearing complex was incredibly successful. The combination of long-range fighter and Talent escort (by the First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group), proved devastating to the German air defenses. Twelve ME-109s and four FW-190s, along with four *Übermenschen* were shot down, and the ball bearing factory was leveled.

Twenty-five B-17s, two P-47s and one Talent were lost during the raid.

October 30, 1943

The Russians Seal Off the Crimea

In a bold push, Soviet Army Group South under General Tolbukhin and Army Group North Caucasus under General Petrov swept into the Crimea from the north and south, trapping the German Seventeenth Army on the peninsula. This drove the remaining German troops north of the peninsula back to the river Dneiper. The Soviet line now stretched from the Sea of Azov in the south to Smolensk in the north.

While the Germans still held territory on the peninsula, millions of Soviet soldiers and thousands of tanks were prepared now for the final push—the invasion of the greater German Reich itself.

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Immortale

Name: Dionisio Valenti **AKA** *Immortale* ("The Immortal").
Nationality: Italian.
Political Affiliation: None.
Education: Home schooling.
Rank: None.
Decorations: None.
DOB: 12/24/27, Orvieto, Italy.
DOD: Immortal.
Known Parahuman Abilities: Valenti was in every sense of the word, immortal. Shot, stabbed, poisoned, burned and even blown to bits without any lasting effect, Valenti was also immune to aging, disease, starvation, thirst and could even cease to breathe when he wished. Once a concern, the pain of serious injury no longer affects him.

His amazing regenerative powers worked rapidly when his brain was left intact from damage (e.g., he wasn't blown to bits or shot through the head). Simple puncture wounds healed almost before the attack that made them was complete, bullets and fragmentation damage took a few seconds to knit, while burning and explosive damage took minutes or even hours to heal properly.

When his brain was damaged (or even destroyed) by an attack, his power took much more time to heal, creating an entire new body from scratch. Once, when an 88 mm shell incinerated his entire body, it took Valenti almost three days to reform.

History: Valenti was 16 when the Germans took out their aggressions against the people of his hometown. His family did their best to hide their prized possessions (including his little sister Francesca), but Valenti refused to leave the family home. Armed with only an antiquated shotgun and resolve, he tried to take on a unit of German soldiers. Not surprisingly, he lost.

After the manifestation of his Talent, Valenti joined the Italian communists and fought behind German lines, disrupting the Nazi chain of command. His favorite tactic involved a backpack full of explosives and a hand-activated detonator. Valenti would rush enemy positions, often attacking from behind, fight until cornered, then detonate himself, usually taking dozens of Germans and Italian fascists with him. Days later, he would wake, unharmed, only to start all over again.

During the last months of 1944, Valenti gathered a small group of Italian *Custodes* ("Keepers"), who wrought havoc on Gustav line and German positions in the mountains. Twice they tangled with the Italian fascist Talent group, *Legionari della Patria* ("Legionnaires of the Fatherland"), and twice they were victorious. This group of Italian fascist Talents served under the command of the Twenty-Ninth *Waffen Grenadier Der SS,* and was a major threat to Valenti's forces until their elimination in late 1945.

Valenti testified in German war crime hearings after the war, and at the age of 25 was elected to the Italian parliament. With the Cold War developing in Europe, Valenti lost his taste for communism (as did many in the communist underground) and became a staunch supporter of Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi.

In the mid-Sixties Valenti, disgusted with government corruption, left Italy to travel the world. He was a popular guest at parties in New York, becoming a fixture in Andy Warhol's "Factory" where he was romantically linked to Niko, a member of the *Velvet Underground.* Valenti acted in several of Warhol's films, even consenting to be actually decapitated for a scene in Warhol's flop *Dracula.*

Valenti's good looks and charm led him to Hollywood, where he was a fixture on the action scene, hanging out with such popular leading men as Steve McQueen and Lee Marvin. In 1976, Valenti sank his personal fortune into a movie of his life called *Immortal.* After six years in production and more than twenty million dollars spent, the movie was released, and closed within a week. Universally panned, it is often found on the "10 worst films of all time" list.

Valenti never tried his hand at filmmaking again, and retired to the Hollywood hills, supplementing his income by performing deadly stunts for movies from time to time.

Forever trapped in the body of a 16 year old, Valenti now spends his time with his wife and seven children, three of whom appear twice the age of their father.

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November 1, 1943

Invasion: Bougainville

After several diversionary landings at Choseul and Mono by the Third New Zealand Division designed to draw the Japanese's attention, American forces invaded Bougainville, the largest of the Solomon Islands. Bougainville was important to the Allies for its proximity to Rabaul, the heavily defended Japanese base on New Britain Island. From Bougainville, American aircraft could bomb Rabaul into submission.

On November 1, the I Marine Amphibious Corps under General Vandergrift landed at Torokina. More than 14,000 Marines and forty Talents swept inland through difficult terrain, slowly forcing the Japanese back, despite stiff resistance. Seabee construction crews began building airbases almost immediately after suitable areas were secured by the Marines, even though behind-the-line *banzai* attacks and booby-traps were commonplace.

The Japanese garrison at Bougainville was far from defeated; they consolidated their positions on the island, and prepared to hold out to the last man.

November 3, 1943

The Eighth Takes On Wilhelmshaven

In the largest air assault ever mounted by the American Army Air Corps, the Eighth Air Force launched 500 B-17 bombers in a raid against the German port city of Wilhelmshaven. Escorted by long-range fighters and seven flying Talents, the force suffered heavy losses; but destroyed a large number of port facilities, including submarine slips and repair equipment for the *Kriegsmarine*.

November 20, 1943

Makin and Tarawa

Japanese forces on the atolls of Makin and Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands remained unscathed and in high morale, despite intense naval and air bombardment by the American Navy in preparation for invasion. When the Second Marine Division landed on November 20, few believed they would face any resistance at all, but extensive tunnel and cave complexes on the tiny islands protected the Japanese from the bombardment.

The Twenty-seventh Infantry Division secured Makin atoll without difficulty, but the Marine assault on Tarawa proved far more difficult.

When the Marines landed at Betio (the southernmost portion of Tarawa), the Japanese forces pinned them down on the beaches in a deadly crossfire. The fire was so intense than the Marines found they could not advance past the beach. Additional landings on November 21 and 22 failed to significantly improve the American position on the island. Somehow, after four days of brutal combat, American Marines secured the entirety of the Tarawa atoll.

Almost 5,000 Japanese were killed at the cost of 1,500 American lives. It was the bloodiest battle in U.S. Marine history—but not for long.

November 28, 1943

The Big Three and the Tehran Riots

In the first face-to-face meeting between the three leaders of the Allies, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met at Tehran, Iran to discuss the ongoing war and the planned cross Channel invasion of Europe. The conference was held in Tehran because of its proximity to the Soviet Union, its separation from the war, and its apparent lack of Talents. Security was still tight, with eighty Soviet, American and British Talents in attendance to ensure the leaders' safety.

Although the situation in Iran had somewhat stabilized since its "acquisition" by the Allies in 1941, a large militant force in the north called the *Tudeh* ("Masses") threatened the young Shah, Mohammed Reza. Even worse, Stalin openly supported the *Tudeh,* while Roosevelt and Churchill supported the Shah.

The leaders had not even settled in when the *Tudeh* riots began. During the four-day conference, much of north Tehran burned, and almost every Allied Talent present (except the Russians) was dispatched to assist the Shah's forces in suppressing the uprising. Over 2,000 civilians were killed, along with 509 of the Shah's soldiers. Allied Talent reports from the conflict noted that several "unknown *Tudeh* Talents" were detected during the riots, but none were captured.

Despite these distractions, the "Big Three" managed to come to terms on several secret matters, including Stalin's promise to fight Japan after Germany's defeat, an agreement to declare war on Bulgaria if it invaded neutral Turkey, and the date, time and size of the Anglo-American invasion of Europe.

December 1, 1943

Der Seefahrer Is Put to Death

At New York State Prison in Albany, New York, German *Übermensch* agent Georg Klingen (better known as *Der Seefahrer),* was put to death by lethal injection for espionage. After languishing in prison for over a year, Klingen was given a brief military trial that ended in his conviction.

At eleven minutes past 12 A.M., Klingen was pronounced dead. His body was remanded to Section Two for study.

December 10, 1943

Airbase: Bougainville

After bitter combat, American Marines managed to push the Japanese forces into a controlled perimeter on Bougainville, allowing Seabee construction crews to complete a large runway suitable for Allied aircraft.

Within days, Allied fighter and bomber raids began on the Japanese stronghold at Rabaul on New Britain, softening it up for invasion.

December 13, 1943

The Glorious P-51

Perhaps the greatest single-seat propeller driven fighter ever created, the P-51 "Mustang," had its debut in com-

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bat, flying an escort for a B-17 attack on Kiel, Germany. Nearly unmatched by similar aircraft in speed, range and maneuverability, the Mustang proved to be a devastating weapon in the hands of the Allies.

By the end of the war, all but one Allied fighter wing in Europe would employ the P-51 as its main attack aircraft.

December 14, 1943

The Winter Offensive

Despite German hopes that the winter would keep the eastern front static, the Soviets launched a huge assault on the Germans in the southern Ukraine. Five Soviet Armored Divisions and nine Armies swept forward towards Kiev, encircling or destroying almost every German position in their path. Attempted German counterattacks met stiff resistance, and lack of supplies, ammunition and manpower prevented them from effectively stemming the Soviet tide. Soon the Russians stood at the border of Poland.

The monstrosity Baba Yaga attacked various Russian and German forces during their advances, north of Kiev near the Pripet marshes. Attempts by Soviet forces to discourage the entity failed, and both Germans and Russians retreated from the area. Luckily, the creature seemed content with picking through the fields of ruined equipment and corpses, and mostly ignored the ongoing conflict.

December 26, 1943

Invasion at New Britain

Landing at Cape Gloucester, the First U.S. Marine Division invaded New Britain, the largest island in the Bismarck Archipelago, intending to cut off the Japanese stronghold of Rabaul. The Japanese airbase and garrison was already in poor condition, having been subjected to constant bombing from American aircraft launched from Bougainville.

Due to seasonal monsoons, the Marines faced little resistance on the beaches, and later Japanese attempts to repel the attack failed. In four days, the Marines captured their main objective, the airfield at Cape Gloucester and established a perimeter cutting the eastern half of the island off. In keeping with MacArthur's Operation Cartwheel, Rabaul would be bypassed. Instead of wasting American lives in an invasion, he would starve and bomb the Japanese at Rabaul into submission.

January 3, 1944

The Russians Enter Poland

The First Soviet Army swept past German defenses near Berdichev, entering Poland, from positions at Zhitomir, Mozyr and Korsten. Although Soviet forces captured only a tiny portion of mountainous territory, it represented the first area of the Soviet Union fully liberated from German control.

The Polish government-in-exile cautiously examined the coming invasion of Poland by Soviet forces. Stalin had yet to recognize the Polish government-in-exile, and it remained unclear what the supreme leader's ideas on the subject of Polish autonomy were.

Inquiries by Polish Talent *Cien* to Russian Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov about the matter were ignored. Many Poles, fearful of the Soviet Union (who had invaded Poland in 1939 along with Germany) were unsure if they were being liberated, or enslaved all over again.

January 4, 1944

Operation: Carpetbagger

A huge airborne and Talent operation codenamed "Carpetbagger" was enacted to supply resistance groups within occupied countries with the weapons and equipment necessary to fight the Axis in preparation for D-Day.

Large groups of partisans in the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium, Poland, France and Yugoslavia were supplied by airdrop and teleporters with over 50,000 tons of equipment, weapons and medical supplies. The flights and Talent transport would continue for fourteen months, reaching the point where field artillery pieces and even small vehicles were dropped by aircraft to the rebels.

January 12, 1944

Crossing the Rapido

Under *General* Alphonse Juin, men of the French expeditionary force crossed the Rapido river just south of German positions at the Gustav line.

Despite bad weather, low morale, and limited supplies, this advance restored the Allies' faith, and renewed the push in Italy.

January 15, 1944

Leningrad Finally Relieved

The old capital of Russia, Leningrad, surrounded and under siege by German forces since August 1941, was finally liberated by a huge force of Soviet troops including the Second Shock Army containing more than 160 Talents.

The Germans, under *Generalfeldmarschall* Georg von Kuechler were attacked on three sides by Soviet forces, and within days, were pushed fifty miles from the city they had surrounded for more than 900 days. The Hero City of Leningrad was once again in Russian hands.

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January 17, 1944

Monte Cassino

The small town of Cassino on the Rapido river in central Italy became the focus of the entire Italian campaign, when Anglo-American forces reached it in a push from Naples. The town was not disputed, but the Ausoni Mountains surrounding it were brimming with German defenses. This fabled "Gustav Line" was described as "impenetrable" by German propaganda, and it lived up to its reputation as it rained down relentless attacks from the heights on Allied troops.

Overlooking the town from 1,700 feet above was Monte Cassino; a Benedictine abbey built in 529 A.D., still occupied by an order of monks. Brutally accurate attacks from the mountains around the monastery led Allied commanders to believe that Germans were using the abbey as a spotter position, despite German protests to the negative.

TOG 6 was dispatched to "make sure the field was fair," so the team of nine Talents took up behind the line positions on the mountain. After three days of "recon" in and around the monastery, under the noses of both the Germans and the monks, Lieutenant General Mark Clark was informed that the Germans *were not* occupying the monastery at all. Plans for an air strike on the abbey were called off.

Instead, the British X Corps rushed the German line in a frontal attack across the Garigliano river, pushing towards the Liri valley around the German line. What the Germans did not know was that in just a matter of days, the Allies would be landing at their rear as well.

January 20, 1944

The Armor Moves Up

American troops of the U.S. II Corps crossed the Rapido river to clear a path for Allied armor to advance, but suffered severe losses in the face of withering German fire. TOG 10 was dispatched to disrupt enemy communications and capabilities, while Talent service troops rapidly constructed bridges to replace the ones the Germans had destroyed.

After ten days of hard fighting, the U.S. II Corps secured positions on the far side of the Rapido, and TOG 10 had killed or injured more than 500 German soldiers. Several hundred tanks and heavy vehicles crossed the river during this disruption and dug in to assault the "impenetrable Gustav line."

January 22, 1944

Anzio

To support attacks on the Gustav line and to open the path to Rome, the Allied VI Corps landed at Anzio, Italy, behind German lines. A specially assembled team of American and British Talents hit the beach defenses one hour before the main landings in Operation Shingle, expecting limited resistance. Instead, they faced forty-five *Übermenschen* on leave from the front, along with an entire battalion of *Waffen SS*.

After a huge battle, the Anglo-American Talents were victorious, mostly thanks to the effort of Zed, who disabled many of the German *Übermenschen* with his power. When the VI Corps landed, the sight on the beaches stunned Allied commander General John Lucas, "It looked like something out of that Spanish painter's head. I can't describe it." Twenty-two of the sixty-three Allied Talents who landed during "Shingle" died in the first hour.

Resistance on the beachhead from that point on was sporadic. In one of the costliest mistakes of the Italian campaign, Lucas ordered his men to form a perimeter and dig in, instead of proceeding towards Rome. The Allies settled in and waited for the counter attack.

January 23, 1944

Major Randolph Churchill Parachutes into Yugoslavia

In support of Josef Brozovich "Tito," leader of the Yugoslav Communist guerrillas, Major Randolph Churchill (son of the Prime Minister) parachuted into occupied Yugoslavia to help organize efforts between the Allies and the guerrillas, and to report on the condition of Tito's army.

He found it hard going immediately, as the area he landed in came under attack by Chetniks and German troops the same day. With Tito and the Yugoslav Talent *Stasio,* Churchill and about 9,000 troops escaped into the mountains before they could be encircled and captured.

January 27, 1944

Zed Killed in Action

Attacks on the Anzio bridgehead increased when Allied forces failed to reach Cisterna, a small town to the north of the Gustav line, and the Germans brought in two Divisions from the line to repel the assault. Surrounded on all sides except the sea, the Allies were continuously shelled by the enemy from the surrounding heights, until the beachhead was nothing more than a sea of craters.

One of the early casualties of the conflict was Major Peter Cesay, the first Zed Talent, who was killed by an 88 mm shell near Borgo Grappa on the morning of the 27th.

January 30, 1944

Operation: Flintlock

After an intense bombardment by Task Force 58, the U.S. Seventh Infantry Division landed on Kwajalein Atoll and the Fourth Marine Division landed at Roi and Namur in the Marshall Islands. The Japanese put up a spirited resistance, but could not stop the American advance. By the fourth, all three atolls had been secured, including the valuable airbase at Roi. Over 11,000 Japanese died in the defense of the atolls.

From Roi, the Americans could launch air attacks against Eniwetok and the Caroline Islands. The Japanese had yet to effectively react to MacArthur's strategy. While Rabaul wasted away, MacArthur planned to bypass the next Japanese stronghold at Truk. Admiral Nimitz agreed; the next target would be Eniwetok, and then, the Mariana Islands.

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February 18, 1944

Eniwetok

After intense sea and air bombardment, a force of U.S. Marines and Army Soldiers invaded the Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Distinguishing himself, the U.S. Marine Talent Captain Peter "Whippet" Murphy (a veteran of Guadalcanal) captured the Japanese command post on Engbei and nearly single-handedly secured the air base there. He received the Medal of Honor for his actions.

After four days of hard fighting, the island was secured. Nearly 4,000 Japanese were killed at the cost of only 400 American lives. Eniwetok was the first Japanese pre-war possession to fall into the hands of the Allies.

February 19, 1944

"Big Week"

In an effort to destroy the German aircraft industry, the U.S. Eighth Air Force and the RAF launched day and nighttime raids on various German production facilities in over a dozen cities. Despite incredible successes (thanks to the use of escort fighter aircraft and Talents), the dispersal of German industry at the recommendation by the *Übermenschen Der Archiv* prevented the Allies from crippling the Germans.

The First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group, now containing more than sixty-five American Talents, flew twelve escort missions into Germany during "Big Week," claiming twenty German aircraft and three *Übermenschen*.

February 20, 1944

Bloody Anzio

Backed by dozens of artillery positions in the high ground surrounding the beachhead at Anzio, ten German Divisions suddenly surged forward to push the Allies back into the sea. 69,000 besieged American and British soldiers resisted them, suffering massive losses, trying to maintain their slight hold on the valuable ground behind the Gustav line. Before reinforcements could be brought into the central sector, the British and Americans forces were cut in two.

Without hesitation, General John Lucas ordered the TOG and British Talent teams to break through to one another, restoring a single unbroken beachhead. Their attack inflicted heavy casualties on the LXXVI Panzer Division. Lucas exploited the fact that the Germans lacked Talents in the area. (Their *Übermenschen* had taken a pounding during "Shingle.") This diversion distracted the Germans long enough that air strikes could be called in from southern Italy, but the toll on Talents was high. Of the 135 Talents under Lucas, fewer than twenty survived to see the morning. Those that died there would later be called the "Bloody 100."

Due to heavy casualties from the air and Talent strikes, the Germans called off their attack and retreated to a defensive perimeter around the beachhead.

February 20, 1944

The End of Rabaul

After relentless air and sea attacks, Japanese forces permanently abandoned the airfields at Rabaul, effectively eliminating the base as a threat to Allied interests in the area. Cut off, the 91,000 Japanese were pounded by carrier and ground based aircraft, flying more than 29,000 sorties over the island.

Despite these hardships, the tenacious Japanese would hang on for more than a year before surrendering.

February 26, 1944

The World Population of Talents Tops 150,000

A paper published by Michael "Specs" Lovetz, a Hyperbrain in the employ of the U.S. Army, reported an accurate projection of the growing world population of Talents for the first time. Lovetz's study, commissioned by the Department of the Army, was based on numbers gleaned from the Special Sciences Office and Section Two reports (along with some sources in military intelligence), and gave a five-year projection of population growth by country for both the Axis and Allies.

Though controversial, and not widely accepted, it would later be proven accurate, with less than a 2% margin of error. By Lovetz's projections, the world population of Talents at the beginning of 1944 was 155,500 with more than 60% of that population undiscovered or unknown. Lovetz predicted that by 1945 that population would increase to over 200,000, and that by the year 2000, there would be over 1,200,000 Talents worldwide.

March 4, 1944

A Disastrous Raid on Berlin

A huge Army Air Force raid on Berlin by 600 B-17 bombers ended in disaster for the American Eighth Air Force. Less than thirty of the planes reached their intended target; the rest were either destroyed, or too damaged to continue the mission. Diverting to Allied landing strips in Italy, Sicily or Britain (two even landed in neutral Spain), some of the planes were so damaged, and their crews so traumatized, that in the words of an Army reporter, "Some of these boys were flying in planes that looked like fire-gutted houses with propellers. It's amazing anyone made it back at all."

Unusual Talent activity in the air over central Germany claimed more than forty aircraft. "Some sort of searchlight from the ground" destroyed four planes in a blinding flash of light, and a huge creature described as a "Chinese dragon" incinerated four P-51s and two B-17s before being eliminated by Allied Talents and fighters. Two B-17s simply stopped working without being hit and plummeted like rocks, smashing into the suburbs around the capital.

Nevertheless, the Eighth managed to drop 1,600 tons of high explosives on Germany. Sixty aircraft were destroyed, along with nine Talents from the First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group.

The Allies insisted the flights would continue.

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March 7, 1944

Operation U-Go

Concerned with Allied advances into Burma, the Japanese launched "U-Go," an attempt to sever the road between Imphal and Kohima and seize territory in India. The Thirty-third Japanese Division engaged the Seventeenth Indian Division near Tiddim, trying to draw British forces away from the defense of Imphal. Two other Japanese divisions, the Thirty-First and Fifteenth, crossed the border at the same time, one moving towards Imphal, and the others towards Sangshak to sever the Imphal-Kohima road.

Unfortunately for the Fifteenth Division, they crossed into Kanglantongbi—the home of Lord Yama. The Japanese found out the hard way what it is like to defy the will of a living god. His fanatical followers flung themselves at the Japanese without pause, dying by the score with smiles on their faces as they decimated the invaders. By March 29, two days after their entry to the town, the Fifteenth Japanese Division was no more. Not a single member survived.

After eight months of combat and more than 75,000 casualties, what was left of the Japanese forces in India retreated back to Burma.

March 20, 1944

The Occupation of Hungary

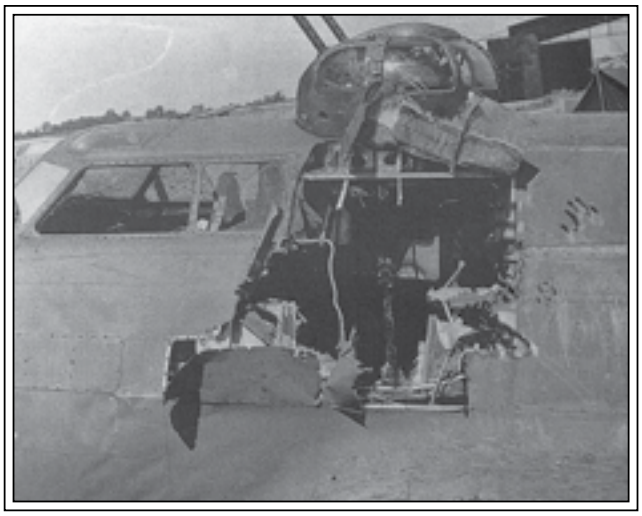
Fearing Hungary would be swayed by Allied propaganda (not to mention the disastrous turn of events for their forces on the eastern front), Hitler quietly invaded the country in preparation to stem the oncoming Soviet tide. Guerrilla attacks against Axis and pro-Axis troops in the country had increased exponentially since the initiation of Operation: Carpetbagger and the Allied invasion of Italy.

The regent of Hungary, Admiral Miklós Horthy, remained in power (along with a new Pro-Nazi Prime Minister), due to his support of Hitler's policies; but all true power in Hungary now lay in the demented grasp of one man-Adolf Hitler.

March 30, 1944

In the Air Over Nuremberg

An RAF raid on the German city of Nuremberg on the night of March 30 failed to achieve significant results. Nearly 100 bombers out of a force of 800 were lost in action over the target. Poor visibility and heavy anti-aircraft fire prevented the bombers from hitting any of their primary targets, and most returned to base after dropping their bombs randomly in heavy fog.



April 3, 1944

Budapest Burns

Launched from bases in Italy and North Africa, a force of 400 B-24s and B-17s bombed Budapest, Hungary, causing light damage. By this time, most of Hungary's population was thoroughly fed up with their Nazi allies. With huge losses on the eastern front, the haphazard economy of the Reich, and the recent German occupation, many Hungarians were wishing they had never heard of Hitler.

This attack was one more indication that the bitterest battle between the Axis and the Allies would be fought not in their respective homelands, but in the small countries surrounding them. Hungary was beginning to see itself for what it was: a buffer between the Red Army and Germany, a battleground to be wrecked by the two contestants before the final battle began.

April 8, 1944

The Crimea Push

Soviet forces under General Tolbukhin assaulted the remaining German forces on the Crimean peninsula, to prevent them from escaping by sea. Behind-the-line attacks by Soviet Talents disrupted the frontal defense of the German Seventeenth Army, causing a complete collapse in their line. Before the tide could be stemmed, the Soviets pushed the 200,000 Germans into a pocket at Sevastopol, and split the Germans into three small groups with their backs to the sea.

Stalin himself promoted Tolbukhin to *General-Polkovnik* for this dramatic advance.

April 10, 1944

Odessa Captured

General Malinovsky and the forces of the Soviet Third Ukrainian Front lunged down the southern coast of the Ukraine, pushing back the Third Romanian Army and the Sixth German Army under the command of General Ferdinand Schörner. The Germans were outgunned and outnumbered, but Hitler's madness prevented an orderly retreat to a fortified line.

The Soviets rolled into Odessa after destroying several German divisions near Kherson, and killing or capturing twenty-two *Übermenschen*.

Unwilling to lose the valuable port city of Odessa, Schörner launched several poorly planned counter-attacks, which culminated in the loss of more than 5,000 men trapped in a pocket near Nikolayev.

Schörner was killed by an unknown Soviet Talent three days later when his *Storch* transport plane was ripped to

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shreds in mid-air by a "giant hand." The Talent responsible for the attack never came forward.

April 12, 1944

Target: Japan

The Army Command activated the U.S. Twentieth Air Force on this date. Split between the Mariana Islands and China, this force was to carry out strategic bombing missions against mainland Japan.

Two flying Army Talents, "Zip" and "Loop-de-Loop," were detached to the Twentieth to fly reconnaissance and photographic intelligence missions in preparation for the destruction of the Japanese islands.

April 15, 1944

Kilroy Was Here

An American Talent discovered his power on the morning of April 15, when he awoke in the *Reichchancellory* in Berlin, after falling asleep in Boston, almost 3800 miles away. It took him about a minute to figure out where he was, but before he could act, he was instantly back in Boston again.

Ship Inspector James J. Kilroy was an unconscious teleport who had no control over his power. It randomly transported him in his sleep to restricted locations; then instantly back to his starting point before he could be discovered. His lack of control made him of little use as an intelligence gatherer or assassin, since only his body and a few small items were affected by his power (weapons, for some reason, were never transported by his power, no matter how small they were).

Kilroy had already established a minor reputation when his graffiti had been seen on unfinished ships sent overseas; he decided to make his "legend" come true in earnest. He voluntarily alerted his superiors to his new Talent; after a brief evaluation, Section Two assigned him to U.S. Army Intelligence's propaganda arm, putting his power to good use.

Over the next year, his famous Kilroy graffiti (showing a small face poking over the top of a wall with the slogan "Kilroy Was Here") was found marked on the walls of the most restricted areas of the Reich, or, for that matter, in Russia. The already paranoid Hitler discovered it in his isolated "Wolf's Lair" and Stalin found it in his most private of bathrooms, just days after it was constructed.

In the closing months of the war, the white letters "Kilroy Was Here" became almost as common a sight as the "V" in occupied Europe.

April 20, 1944

Sevastopol Captured

After a dramatic crumbling of the German lines in the Crimea, the Soviet forces on the Fourth Ukrainian Front swept through to the port of Sevastopol, liberating it. *General-Polkovnik* Tolbukhin arrived in the destroyed city at the head of a huge Soviet force just one day after the remaining 115,000 Axis troops on the peninsula surrendered.

Three days later, Soviet sea forces intercepted several Axis transports carrying more than 15,000 men as they attempted to cross the gulf of Karkintski. The Crimea was secure and the German Seventeenth Army was no more.

May 11, 1944

Push to Rome

After pelting the area around the Liri valley with relentless air and artillery attacks, the Allies advanced towards the beachhead at Anzio. Frontal attacks on the Gustav line by British Commonwealth troops met deadly resistance, inflicting heavy casualties on both sides.

While this bloody battle went on at the river Gargiliano, French troops swept around Mount Ausoni and threatened to turn the flank of the Gustav line. By the eighteenth, the Germans began an orderly retreat towards Rome.

May 18, 1944

The Monastery Is Secured

After five days of close combat in the mountains surrounding the Monastery at Cassino, the Polish Fifth Division arrived at the front door of the abbey, having completely broken the German defenses there.

After a brief discussion with the leader of the Benedictine monks and a short blessing, soldiers raised the Polish flag on the peak of Monte Cassino alongside the cross.

May 23, 1944

Anzio Breakout

The U.S. Army VI Corps, reacting to the destruction of the Gustav line, began an offensive of their own, pushing to link up with the French forces approaching from the southeast.

On May 26, the forces met near Sezze, Italy as the Germans continued to retreat north. The southern Allied force and the Anzio force had become one, and the road to Rome was now open. Over 45,000 men had perished on both sides in eight months of combat, but finally, the capture of an Axis capital was in sight.

June 3, 1944

A Careful Retreat

Finally given permission by Hitler to abandon the defense of Rome, *Generalfeldmarschall* Albert Kesselring's German Fourteenth Army completed a coordinated retreat across the Tiber river north of Rome to the carefully prepared Gothic line. Allied attempts to cut off the German retreat failed because of skilled holding actions by the IV Parachute Corps and the Allies' lack of a coherent chase.

General Mark Clark, concerned with the growing cries from the press, shifted his focus to Rome, instead of an all-out pursuit of the retreating German forces. All but one Allied division focused on the Italian capital, and after several days of relatively light combat, a breakthrough was achieved at Velletri. By May 30 the French, British Com-

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monwealth and American forces stood at the doorstep of Rome, the eternal city.

June 4, 1944

One Up, Two to Go

Fearing a confrontation might level Rome, both the Axis and Allies moved carefully. *Generalfeldmarschall* Kesselring went to great lengths to avoid a battle in the city proper, and just moments before the Allies arrived, declared it an open city at the behest of the Pope. Most of the Germans fled days before the arrival of the Fifth Army, and those that remained offered little resistance.

Two German *Übermenschen* surrendered along with over 1,000 soldiers of the rear guard, hiding among the normals as their units withdrew to the Gothic. Both proved to be intelligence coups for the Allies. The *Übermensch Der Nebel* ("The Fog") a high-ranking member of *SS Überkommandogruppe* 51, gave detailed information on the disposition and methods of the German Talent program. Both were shipped to London for questioning.

American General Mark Clark arrived at the head of the victorious Fifth Army at Rome on June 4, 1944. The U.S. flag which hung over Washington D.C. on the day of the attack on Pearl Harbor was flown in the center of the city.

June 5, 1944

Premiere of the Superfortress

The B-29 Superfortress, America's first pressurized long-range bomber, had its premiere in a raid on Bangkok on this date. This new type of aircraft could fly higher, farther and faster than any American bomber before it.

Seventy-seven of the cutting-edge aircraft lifted off from India; but due to technical problems and glitches in the new planes, only seventy-two returned to Imphal after the successful bombing run.

June 6, 1944

D-Day

The command to launch the invasion of France, codenamed "Overlord," was given by the Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower on the morning of June 5. The landing had been delayed for two days due to high winds and waves on the Channel; but Eisenhower assumed full responsibility, and gave permission to proceed despite warnings of future squalls. Eisenhower felt the troops gathered in southern England, and the world, had waited long enough for the liberation of Europe.

50,000 men mobilized on the southern coast of England in 4,000 landing craft, escorted by over 2,000 warships. This force would assault the coast of Normandy, only hours after the first parachute and glider troops landed to seize key German positions behind the line.

It was the greatest amphibious invasion force ever assembled in the history of the world.

June 6, 1944

The Caen Canal and Orne River Bridges

British forces under Major John Howard landed in six gliders along the Caen Canal near Caen, France at 12:16 A.M., to seize the bridge there for the coming invasion. In an amazing turn of luck, three gliders landed within fifty yards of the bridge. Within minutes, Howard's men had seized the bridge at the cost of only one casualty.

At the same time, three other British gliders with the task of securing the Orne river bridge were scattered by the wind. One landed in the flooded Dives valley, miles away; while another landed too far from the bridge to make a difference. The last glider's twenty-six men assaulted their target anyway, despite the odds.

Luckily, the Germans believed the small group was the spearhead for a larger force, and abandoned their posts.

June 6, 1944

The Banville Battery

In a daring plan to destroy a suspected Axis 150 mm cannon battery at Banville, the British Sixth Airborne Division was parachuted into France at 1:00 A.M. on June 6. The plan called for a concise raid on the emplacement, but instead of landing in their drop-zone, the force was scattered over a fifty-mile corridor due to high winds. Out of 700 men and several tons of equipment, force commander Lieutenant Colonel Terence Otway could only muster 150 men and less than 600 pounds of equipment.

Even worse, a second force set to land *inside* the battery's perimeter did so on schedule, before Otway's men could fully muster. Despite his trepidations, Otway ordered his limited force into combat.

Half the British who entered the Banville battery complex died there—but the guns, which could have threatened Allied ships, were silenced.

June 6, 1944

The Americans Drop In

A fleet of 822 C-47 transport aircraft carrying the American Eighty-Second and 101st Airborne, comprising nearly 18,000 men, crossed the Channel at midnight. Unfortunately, due to cloud cover and heavy anti-aircraft fire, the troops were spread over a large area surrounding their target: Carentan, France. This turn of events had an unexpected benefit; it confused the German forces, many of who were still convinced the true attack would be at the Pas-de-Calais (the closest point between France and England). Lacking direction, the Germans often waited for orders until it was too late.

Landing along with the 101st Airborne was a force of 115 American Talents, sent primarily to provide anti-tank support until the real armor could get ashore. Unfortunately, the force was spread out in three man teams; with the disruption of the landing, few teams linked up successfully. With Talent aid the airborne seized Vierville and St.-Côme-du-Monte, and secured the bridge across the Taute river.

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June 6, 1944

Ste.-Mère-Eglise

Two groups of the Eighty-Second Airborne, disastrously off target, landed in the middle of the French village of Ste.-Mère-Eglise. The town was awake to greet them, due to a fire caused by a stray incendiary bomb. While fire crews frantically tried to extinguish the blaze, the German garrison heard the drone of aircraft overhead.

Few of the U.S. paratroopers survived the bloodbath that followed. German soldiers picked them out of the air with rifle and machine gun fire as they floated to the earth. After the carnage, amazingly, the German garrison retired to bed!

Later, ninety-one American paratroopers of the Third Battalion (including four Talents), landed outside the village. Assembled under commander Lt. Col. Edward Krause, they assaulted Ste.-Mère-Eglise. Within two hours, the town was in American hands, and Krause ran a battered American flag up the village flagpole.

June 6, 1944

Pevnost Fuels Operation Rascal

The Czech Talent *Pevnost* was dropped by parachute within fifty yards of the Orne river bridge just an hour after British forces captured it. Using his power, an instant link between a doorway on the bridge and a mustering point in southern England was formed. This allowed 140 heavily armed commandos of Commando 3 and 150 Talents of various powers (including *Cien)* to arrive instantly in France. More were brought through later, but the Czech was ordered to limit his "transports" to 500 at a time.

These mixed British and American teams of Talents (called "Rascals") spread out, to "cause trouble in the way only Talents can." Allied Command hoped these teams would draw *Übermenschen* away from the coastal defenses, since it was likely that the Germans would respond to Talent attacks with *Überkommando* teams.

Before the first men hit the beaches of Normandy, these "Rascal" teams had spread as far south as Flers and as far west as Carentan, leaving a trail of destruction in their path. There were many outstanding accomplishments by the Rascals, but a few stand out.

Colonel Eli "Invincible" Brown, picked his way through an entire tank battalion of the Twenty-first Panzer Division at Caen, before leading them and *Überkommandogruppe* 13 on a wild goose chase away from the shore. By the time the bulk of the Panzer force returned to its post near Caen, the British Second Army was already ashore. Major Timothy "Tag" Montgomery teleported twelve *PzKpfw* VI tanks into the Atlantic Ocean from a repair depot at Hermanville-sur-Mer before being captured. Captain Douglas "Wrongway" Mertz convinced the entire German garrison at St. Laurent-sur-Mer that it was under attack by Allied bombers. When they were done, they had fired their anti-aircraft guns for more than an hour; only to discover their command facilities had been stripped clean of important codebooks and orders.

By the end of the operation on June 8, 1944, a total of 350 Talents were operating in occupied France, wreaking havoc on the German command.

(This was the second Operation Rascal of the war. The first, in 1941, disrupted the German flank and allowed British forces to escape a disastrous battle. Each Operation Rascal was a rousing success.)

June 6, 1944

The Bombardment Begins

At 5:30 A.M., nearly 2,000 Allied warships began to pound the French coastline to "soften up" the beaches in preparation for landing. By now, the Germans on the shore knew something was dreadfully wrong. The entire horizon was covered in warships, and the air was filled with nearly 10,000 Allied aircraft. Every German stationed on that shore knew that the invasion had really begun. Over 100,000 members of the French resistance along with "Rascal" teams had carefully severed communications from the coast; it would be an hour or more before the news reached Berlin.

June 6, 1944

Pointe du Hoc

The Second Ranger Battalion, under the command of Lieutenant James E. Rudder, assaulted the hundred-foot cliff at Pointe du Hoc, in order to eliminate the 155 mm cannons at the top. TOG 41 was assigned to secure the ropes and carry equipment for the Ranger assault, but most of the nine man team was eliminated after reaching the top; a hidden machine gun nest and three quick thinking *Heer* men mowed the Talents down in seconds.

The Rangers utilized rocket propelled grappling hooks to scale the cliff face, and within five minutes, secured the gun blockhouse at the top. Ironically, the blockhouse was empty. The six 155 mm cannons had been moved inland two days before.

Rudder and his men formed a tight perimeter around the cliff face and prepared for counterattack.

June 6, 1944

Utah Beach

Under the command of Major General Raymond Barton, the U.S. Fourth Infantry Division was to hit a 2,200-yard portion of Normandy codenamed "Utah." Strong offshore currents and mines prevented the initial wave of amphibious tanks from coming ashore at the proper location; the landing force was instead swept 2,000 yards south of the

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landing zone. Instead of landing near the Bancs du Grande Vey, they arrived near La Grand Dune; an area much more lightly defended than the intended target.

Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, son of former President Teddy Roosevelt, made a vital decision minutes into the landing. He ordered the reinforcements due to arrive in eighty minutes to land on the new beach, and then ordered his men forward. "We're going to start the war here," he said. He was later awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism.

The Fourth Infantry moved rapidly inland, defeating the limited German resistance without difficulty. The Second Talent Assault Group (assembled from more than thirty-two TOG teams and spread out among the force), assigned to Roosevelt's command, eliminated two tanks and four gun emplacements, but luckily, they were needed for little else. By evening, the Fourth linked up with the 502nd Parachute Infantry west of Vierville, and the Ninetieth Infantry Division had successfully come ashore. Utah beach was in Allied hands.

June 6, 1944

Bloody Omaha and the "Ten Minutes of Hell"

Landing craft containing men of the U.S. First Infantry Division hit the portion of beach codenamed "Omaha" at 7 A.M. From the moment they arrived, it was a massacre. The force's amphibious tanks were scattered or sunk by high seas, and only three managed to make it to shore in one piece. Those crews that survived found themselves the target of machine gunners as they swam to shore. Without these tanks, taking the beach became a *truly* deadly task.

Enemy Talent action and mortar rounds destroyed fourteen of the landing craft before they could come ashore, dragging their crews to the bottom. Troops landed in the wrong sectors due to rough seas clumping them together; this left other areas nearly devoid of men and equipment. Those infantry that made it out of the landing craft, were pinned down by intense fire from the heavily fortified German positions. One section of a single company lost seventeen of its thirty-one men, mowed down in seconds before they could reach cover. Ordered to assault Fox Green Sector, Company E lost 105 men in the tidal flat as their landing craft were raked by barrages of machine gun fire, even before their ramps dropped.

Heroism was commonplace amidst the destruction. Captain Laurence A. Madill (before succumbing to a mortal wound to the chest) shouted out: "Senior noncom, take the men off the beach!" Colonel George A. Taylor, commander of the Sixteenth Infantry made an announcement at 8:00 A.M., "Two kinds of people are staying on this beach, those who are dead, and those who are about to die- now let's get the hell out of here." It was because of men like this that Omaha was not a disaster but a triumph for the U.S. Army. Soldiers pushed forward to the "shingle," a slight dip in sand that marked the high tide line, which offered limited cover from the German fire. It was from here that the breakout began.

Unfortunately, 110 *Übermenschen* made their presence known even before the assault really began, backing the German 352nd Infantry Division defending the beach. Talent-caused casualties among regular American troops were staggeringly high… until the American Talents waded into combat.

The First Talent Assault Group (assembled from more than thirty-two TOG teams spread out among the force), engaged the *Übermenschen* in what was later called by survivors the "Ten Minutes of Hell." While the regulars offered cover fire, teleporters and fliers assaulted the pillboxes. Hidden *Übermenschen* sniped at the Allied forces on the beach, causing heavy Talent casualties in the first few seconds. Nevertheless, teleporters allowed flanking maneuvers that threw the enemy into disarray. Heroism was commonplace here as well.

The Indestructible Man was teleported into a 75 mm gun blockhouse and set off a grenade in the ammunition storeroom-blowing the gun and its entire crew to pieces; while Captain John "Iron Man" Kelley hurled half-ton logs like javelins at the German bunkers. Entire squads of men were converted to ashes; portions of the beach (and the men on them) were teleported into the sea; and at one point, something like an enormous Boa Constrictor attacked an engineering crew near the tidal flat. Casualties on both sides of the super-human forces were high. Hand-to-hand fighting claimed seventeen of the world's strongest men, while two of the fastest fliers were blown out of the air. *Übermenschen* killed many Allied Talents, but the relentless machine gun fire of the beach's defenders killed many more.

When the smoke cleared, only twenty-four of the 289 American Talents who assaulted the beach were left standing. By 10:00 A.M., the First U.S. Division captured a tenuous hold on the beachhead and prepared to push inland towards St. Laurent and Colleville through weaknesses in the German line. But the First Talent Assault Group could offer no further assistance; it had literally destroyed itself in its debut.

June 6, 1944

Sword Beach

Three miles southwest of the mouth of the Orne river, British forces landed on the beach code named "Sword" at 7:30 A.M. Supported by heavy tank cover, the attack was a rapid success; and shore defenses on the beach were eliminated within the hour.

British Talents of the First Special Service Squad captured a gun position at Ouistreham-Riva-Bella. This allowed the Second Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment to surge forward and link up with British glider troops at the Caen Canal and Orne River bridges, securing them.

Despite their successes, the force stopped short of its

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last objective: the city of Caen, thought to be held by the Twenty-First Panzer Division. In actuality, the Panzers were just returning to the town, breaking off their pursuit of Rascal teams when the coastal bombardment began.

Instead of pushing forward, the British forces dug in and waited for the coming counter-attack. This hesitation would cost many lives.

June 6, 1944

Juno Beach

Along a five mile stretch of beach to the west of Sword, the Third Canadian Division charged up "Juno" beach, just as the tide changed. Covered by fire support from the battleships *Warspite* and *Ramilles,* the Canadians successfully pushed inland, despite their lack of tanks. The Regina Rifles and Royal Winnipeg Rifles broke through the German defenses at Courseulles-sur-Mer and pushed towards Caen. At Thaon, the Queen's Own Rifles engaged and killed all but one member of *Überkommandogruppe* 16 without any Talent support of their own.

By nightfall, the Canadians linked up with the Fiftieth British Division arriving from Gold beach, just in time to repel an attack by the Twelfth *SS* Panzers. By midnight, the Third Canadian Division had secured a perimeter to the north west of Caen, and held the line.

June 6, 1944

Gold Beach

At "Gold" beach to the west of Juno, the Fiftieth British Division landed on schedule, ten minutes after the First Dorset Armored Battalion at 7:30 A.M., which eliminated the heavy German defenses at La Riviére and Crépon.

Heavy guns fired at the Allied fleet from casemates at Longues, before being silenced by naval fire from the cruiser *Ajax*. Minesweeping tanks known as "Crabs" pushed their way up the beach at Le Hamel, allowing the infantry to exit the beach and advance on Bayeux.

To the west, the Forty-Seventh Royal Marine Commando captured Arromanches, and linked up at Port-en-Bessin with the American forces, thanks to the efforts of four American Talents—remainders of the First Talent Assault Group.

The beachhead at Normandy was now a single unbroken line. At the cost of 2,700 lives, the Allies had a toehold in Europe.

June 6, 1944

Cien vs. Der Flieger

The Polish Talent *Cien* and a portion of the British Sixth Airborne Division, in an attempt to link up with incoming Canadian forces on Juno Beach, pushed south from the Orne River to Banville, a small town just past the beachhead at 7:22 A.M. on June 6. There, they met the world's first Talent: *Der Flieger.*

Based on the French coast at Fécamp, *Der Flieger* was alerted to the invasion in the middle of the night. By dawn, the *Übermensch* downed nine fighters and two transport aircraft, and seeing the invasion fleet gathered to the south, headed along the coast to assist German forces in the defense of Normandy.

Der Flieger "sonic-boomed" Allied troops at Sword Beach, and seeing a furtive group of soldiers securing the small shoreline town of Banville, swept in low to identify them.

He flew too low. Hearing the *Übermensch's* approach, *Cien* took a blind swipe at him with his power, knocking *Der Flieger* from the air with his telekinetic shadow hand. The *Übermensch* skidded to a halt in the mud, with his leg broken and two of his ribs shattered. An Allied combat photographer snapped a shot of the *Übermensch* in the mud, his face unconsciously contorted in disgust and pain. The photograph made the cover of *Time* with the legend "The Super-Man in Defeat," and became one of the most famous photographs ever taken.

Despite *Cien's* best efforts, *Der Flieger* fled the scene before he could be captured, flying unsteadily off to the east. *Der Flieger* was done with Normandy.

June 7, 1944

Cormorant is Killed

Captain Michael Foreman (better known as the Talent *Cormorant)* was killed along with nine members of his Commando team by a German shell in the small seaside town of Banville. Banville became a staging area for Special Forces after *Cien* and the British Sixth Airborne secured it on June 6. *Cormorant* had just arrived to coordinate his actions with Sixth Airborne Talent Command, when a German counter-attack began. A fragment of the German 716th Infantry Division pelted the town with an intense artillery barrage before recapturing it briefly on June 8. *Cormorant* was not reported killed until four days later, when a member of his team who survived the engagement regained consciousness on a hospital ship.

June 9, 1944

The Russians Attack Finland

After months of secret negotiations between the Finns and Soviets to reach a separate peace, the Soviets threw the Seventh Army and the Thirty-Second Army Group against the Karelian front, destroying much of the Finnish II Corps in a series of bloody engagements. For the first time since the liberation of Leningrad, the Finns were isolated from their Nazi allies; and Stalin was keen to conquer the country that resisted him in the winter of 1940. Even better, the country was now an enemy of the Allies.

Despite enormous successes, the assault seized up at Salla, when an entire Soviet Tank Battalion was destroyed by an unknown group of Finnish Talents, and a counterattack by the remains of the II Corps captured 2,000 Soviet soldiers and forty tanks.

While the center of the Karelian Front froze, sea landings at Kirkenes and Petsamo in the north forced the Twentieth Mountain Army to form a defensive line near Nautsi. The Soviets now had the Finns boxed in on two fronts. Stalin ordered 450 Soviet Talents to the Karelian front, sent

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up from the First and Second Baltic Front.

"Bring me the head of Mannerheim," the Dictator supposedly told the Talents' commander.

June 10, 1944

Oradour-sur-Glane

After days of attacks by the French resistance upon the Second *SS* Panzer Division as it moved from Toulouse to Normandy to defend the beachhead, the *SS* struck back. They rounded up 642 town folk in the small French town of Oradour-sur-Glane, locked them in a church and set it on fire. Those who attempted to escape were gunned down. Eleven townsfolk survived by feigning death, while one young man, Michael Périers, survived by manifesting a Talent power.

June 11, 1944

The *Arizona* Hits Back

In preparation for invasion and to sever the Japanese forces remaining in the South Pacific from their homeland, American Task Force 58 opened up on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Rota and Pagan. Among the ships in Task Force 58 was the recently restored battleship *Arizona*—a survivor of the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. The *Arizona's* twelve 14-inch guns pounded Japanese positions on Tinian while the Japanese troops garrisoned there huddled in caves, preparing for the inevitable invasion.

June 13, 1944

Wittmann's Wild Ride

Leutnant Michael Wittmann, commander of the *SS* 501st Heavy Tank Battalion, launched a single-handed attack on the British Fourth County of London Yeomanry at Villers-Bocage, France. Wittmann cut a swath through twenty-five British vehicles (most of which were being refueled and were unmanned) before being stopped by the British Talent Captain Daniel "Gremlin" O'Connor. Wittmann surrendered readily when his Mark VI Tiger tank was rendered inert by the Talent's power, jovially congratulating his opponents on a well-fought battle. Wittmann spent almost two years in a British POW camp before returning to Germany in 1946.

June 13, 1944

The "Buzz" Bomb

Four V-1 "Buzz" bombs or "Doodlebugs," the world's first pilotless guided missile, were launched against London one week after the beginning of the Allied invasion. These simple yet innovative devices, kept on course by gyroscopes and set to plummet to earth after flying a set distance, traveled at more than 400 mph to their target, making them difficult to shoot down. Their distinctive sound, like the buzzing of an insect, gave them their name.

Of the four initially launched at London, only one landed on target, in the Bethnal Green area, killing six people with its 1,000 pound warhead. Despite the best efforts of the First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group (who destroyed twenty-six V-1s in the air over the Channel and Britain), thousands of these missiles pelted the London area over the next six months, killing hundreds of innocents.

June 15, 1944

The Landings Begin

After five days of bombardment by Task Force 58, the Second and Fourth U.S. Marine Divisions landed on the beaches of Saipan on the morning of June 15. The Japanese garrison there, 32,000 strong and under the command of Lieutenant-General Yoshitsugu Saito, dug in and fought viciously. Casualties on both sides were high.

Within three days, Marine Talents had seized the airstrip at Aslito, and cut the island in half. While the two Marine forces struggled to maintain perimeters to contain the enemy, reinforcements were landed behind the lines to further confound the Japanese defenses.

Discouraged but not defeated, the Japanese retreated to fortified positions in the mountains, to carry on the fight.

June 15, 1944

Raid on Japan!

In the first truly successful bombing of a Japanese facility by American forces, the iron and steel works at Yahata was destroyed by B-29s of the Twentieth Air Force, operating from mainland China. The Japanese lacked effective countermeasures to prevent the attack, and all but one plane returned successfully to base.

June 16, 1944

Stilwell Strikes

The Twenty-second Division, under the command of U.S. General Joseph "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell, assaulted and took Kamaing, Burma from Japanese forces. Stilwell's offensives in northern Burma gained momentum after the arrival of 3,000 American soldiers from "Merrill's Marauders," along with fourteen American Talents from Imphal.

The Chindits, the Sixteenth Long Range Penetration group, and the Kachin wizards drew Japanese rein-

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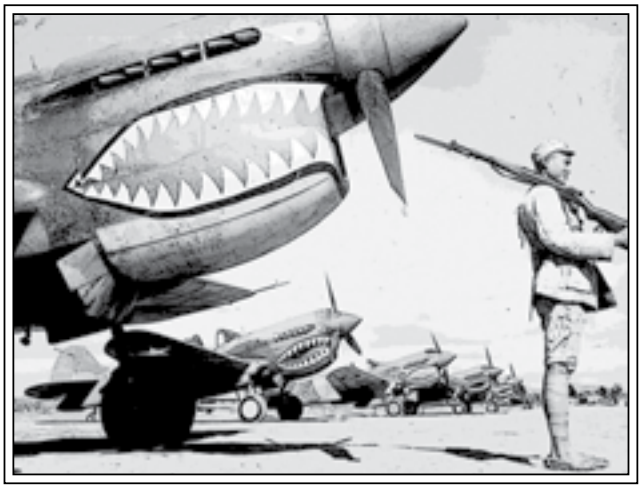
forcements away from the combat, through various hit-and-run assaults, aiding the attack on Kamaing.

The Japanese in Burma were spread too thin, and suffered too many casualties from disease and combat to mount an effective counter offensive, at least for the moment.



June 18, 1944

Cherbourg Cut Off

The First U.S. Army under General Bradley managed to push southwest across the Cotentin peninsula, arriving at Barneville on the coast on June 18. This move completely cut off the German garrison at Cherbourg, and secured a large piece of France for the Allies. While German forces remained in the area, Allied Talent and air attacks kept most of them off the roads, and therefore, unable to mount an offensive.

Hitler ordered the garrison (and especially the *Übermenschen)* at Cherbourg to fight to the last man, but many of the Talents had other ideas. Twenty-one German Talents surrendered to the One-hundred and first Airborne near Sainteny just days after Bradley's successful sweep of the peninsula. As the battle in France continued, many more German Talents, disillusioned with the war and Hitler, surrendered to the Allies.

June 19, 1944

The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot

The Japanese, hoping yet again to force an engagement between the American and Japanese fleets launched Operation A-Go. The A-Go force, composed of nine aircraft carriers, five battleships, eleven cruisers, two destroyers and thirty other smaller ships under the command of Vice Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa, sailed to intercept Task Force 58 at the Marianas islands.

Unfortunately for the Japanese, Vice-Admiral Marc A. Mitscher was well aware of A-Go due to American code-breaking efforts, and mustered his fleet (fifteen aircraft carriers, seven battleships, eight cruisers, thirteen destroyers and seventy other ships) off Guam to wait for them.

The battle began when scout aircraft from the Japanese fleet located Task Force 58; Ozawa immediately ordered a huge air attack on the Americans, but Mitscher was ready and waiting. Within hours, the Japanese lost 240 aircraft over the American fleet, in what Navy pilots called the "Great Marianas' Turkey Shoot." In addition, American subs wreaked havoc with Ozawa's command. The Japanese flagship *Taiho* was damaged and later, after being abandoned by Ozawa himself, exploded and sunk; while the carrier *Shokaku* was heavily damaged by torpedo attack. That night the two forces circled each other in the dark, waiting for further contact.

The next day, eager for the kill, Mitscher ordered his planes off the decks at 4:15 P.M. to coordinates provided by scout aircraft, where the Japanese A-Go fleet had been spotted in the Philippine Sea. Although the Japanese ships were at the maximum range of the American aircraft, and steaming away, several hundred planes eagerly lifted off into the dusk to engage the enemy.

At 6:15 P.M., they found their targets. After repeated attacks, they damaged the carriers *Chiyoda, Zuikaku, Ryuho and Junyo,* the battleship *Haruna,* the heavy cruiser *Maya,* and sunk the carrier *Hiyo*. While 102 American aircraft were lost in the engagement (most due to lack of fuel), the Japanese forces were decimated.

Japan lost 426 irreplaceable naval pilots, along with several vital ships. Once again, the engagement had been decisive, but not in the way the Japanese imagined.

June 20, 1944

The Germans Hold the Albert Line

Attacks by the British XXX Corps on the Albert Line, a German rearguard position south of the Gothic in Italy, were met with brutal resistance. Attacks by fanatical German *Übermenschen* destroyed twenty-two tanks, thirty-one heavy guns and 500 men; nearly allowing a breakout, so the Germans could escape to the north.

Only with the utmost effort did the British hold the line, and after a week of destruction, the front quieted again.

June 22, 1944

Joachim von Ribbentropp Avoids Death, Barely

Two Soviet Talents attacked the transport aircraft carrying Germany's Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentropp as it crossed the Gulf of Finland towards Helsinki on this date. Ribbentropp was dispatched by Hitler to consolidate ties between Germany and the Finns, so they would continue to fight on the side of the Axis.

The aircraft was severely damaged in the attack, but managed to limp its way back to Tallinn in Estonia before it crashed. Shaken, the Foreign Minister returned to Berlin to inform Hitler of his mission's failure.

Despite the obvious truth of his story, Ribbentropp was subjected to one of Hitler's rages when he spoke of "Russian super-men." Dismissed, Ribbentropp was heard to say, "I only hope the next time it happens, *he* is in the plane as well."

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June 22, 1944

Imphal Relieved

The British Second Division reached the besieged Fifth Indian Division at Imphal, which had been under attack for two months by the Japanese. After a week of combat, the Japanese were pushed south to Bishepur.

To prevent a second attack, portions of Lord Yama's army of fanatics reinforced the line while shock troops relentlessly assaulted Japanese positions. The Japanese forces at Bishepur folded within the week. With this defeat, all hope for the Japanese Army in India ended.

June 22, 1944

Mogaung Captured

The Seventy-Seventh Chindits Brigade attacked Mogaung, Burma in an attempt to push the Japanese back to the White City. Allied attacks had picked up in the last year, preying on Japanese patrols and lightly defended outposts.

Though the combat was bloody, the Chindits managed to eject the Japanese forces from Mogaung, and by June 28, the city was in Allied hands.

June 23, 1944

Attack on Army Group Center

1.2 million Soviet soldiers of the First Baltic and the First, Second and Third Bellorussian Fronts launched a huge offensive called "*Bagration*" against the Germans across a 300-mile line in the center of the Ukraine. Forward acting Soviet Talents seized the headquarters of German *General* Busch at Minsk (the General was elsewhere at the time), and disrupted communication along the front, allowing dramatic gains by the Red Army.

Outnumbered in almost all resources at a four to one ratio, the Germans reeled under the enormous strain, but Hitler's irrational command continued to be, "Hold the line."

June 23, 1944

Ploesti, Again

Seven hundred and sixty-one aircraft of the American Fifteenth Air Force lifted off from bases in Italy and North Africa to bomb the oil production facilities at Ploesti, Romania, which produced almost half of Germany's oil. Though the facility was damaged in over a dozen previous attacks, these assaults failed to halt production, and only served to increase defenses in the area.

By the time the June bombings began, Ploesti was the third most heavily defended target in Europe (after Berlin and Vienna). Under direct orders of Hitler, 126 flying *Übermenschen* were transferred to Ploesti to defend it against Allied attack just weeks before the June raid. However, Allied intelligence on the subject was limited, and the raid was green-lighted without Talent support.

Axis fighters and Talents cut the American planes to pieces as they bombed the oil fields. Out of the 761 aircraft, only 367 made it successfully back to base; fifty-one more crashed into the sea on the return home, twelve were reported "missing," forty crashed on landing, eighty-seven made it to neutral Turkey or Soviet territory; and an incredible 204 were destroyed over the target.

This enormous loss of life was the single greatest in the history of the American Army Air Corps, and led to a huge public backlash. Just two weeks later, General Henry "Hap" Arnold, commander of the Army Air Forces, publicly apologized for the incident. Though many expected his dismissal, it never came. The furor over the matter died with Roosevelt's announcement of the "a Talent for every plane" policy on July 1. Although Roosevelt's policy was never carried out (there were not enough flying Talents to go around), it quieted the public unrest.

The American Air Force would never bomb the oil facilities at Ploesti again.

June 26, 1944

Operation Epsom

British forces under General Montgomery activated Operation Epsom, an effort to swing around the southwest of Caen (still heavily defended by the Germans), into the Odon river valley, exploiting a gap in the German lines at the river Aure. If a breakthrough could be achieved, the Germans in Caen could be cut off.

British Talents seized high ground near Fleury-sur-Orne on the morning of June 26, and artillery attacks pushed the Germans back into the city limits. With heavy Allied air support, the Germans could do little except defend their positions. It seemed the offensive could not fail, but then the problems started.

An unseasonable storm began to congeal directly over Caen on the evening of June 26. For 48 hours, heavy rains and winds in excess of 50 mph pelted the town, preventing Allied aircraft from taking to the air. Exploiting this momentary advantage, the Germans took back Fleury-sur-Orne, and captured over 500 men from the Second Canadian Division.

"Epsom" was cancelled when military intelligence informed Montgomery's command that a huge group of enemy reinforcements was on its way from southern France. One of the casualties of the battle of Fleury-sur-Orne was Arthur M. Smith, one of the first four British Talents to visit America in the summer of 1941.

A photograph of President Roosevelt consoling Lloyd "Bulldog" Feit, made the cover of the *New York Post* the next day along with the headline "One of the Four Killed

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at Normandy; the Country Mourns."

June 29, 1944

Cherbourg Surrenders

After an advance by the American VII Corps on the isolated German held port of Cherbourg, Nazi resistance in the town suddenly crumbled. The victory was made hollow however, by the fact that German *Übermenschen* thoroughly demolished the port facilities of the town before the Americans could arrive.

Six of the *Übermenschen* responsible, who attempted to escape back to German lines, were captured near Carentan, after they turned themselves in at a checkpoint to a lone American sentry.

July 2, 1944

The Albert Line Is Broken

Reinforced, the British XIII Corps crushed German resistance at Trasimeno, Italy, killing more than forty *Übermenschen* in a pitched three-day battle that broke the Albert line. Within a week, all resistance along the line crumbled.

Eighty-six *Übermenschen* were captured or killed during the ensuing cleanup operation.

July 3, 1944

Hedgerows

Advances into the hilly countryside of France brought the Allies into the *Bocage*. These *Bocage* (thick hedges that divided property lines), provided a natural, effective cover for troop and tank movements. These hedgerows stretched for miles, and made advancing with tank support difficult. A furtive war of stealth and close combat developed for the control of the territory.

The Germans exploited this advantage to the greatest possible degree, easily eliminating Allied tanks with their deadly anti-tank weapons. For the moment, the front stalled, with small gains and losses in ground being reported each day.

July 5, 1944

Minsk Is Captured

Russian forces of the First Bellorussian Front and the First Baltic Front completed a huge encirclement of German forces at Minsk, trapping a large portion of the German Fourth and Ninth Army in the town. 70,000 Germans were killed and 40,000 captured.

Soviet Talents, who held off more than two weeks of counter-attacks by German forces, were liberated along with what remained of the native population, but Minsk itself was severely damaged in the nearly four years of combat it had seen.

The Soviet Army was now poised to push towards Warsaw.

July 7, 1944

Caen Is Bombed, the Canadians Move In

To break the German imposed stalemate at Caen, General Montgomery called in bombers to dislodge enemy troops from north of the city. 460 planes dropped 2,300 tons of high explosives on the town, causing tremendous damage to the already ruined city; but inflicting little damage to the German troops, who were hiding elsewhere.

The next day, with the help of the French resistance, the Third Canadian Division moved into the ruined city, to force the Germans out.

July 15, 1944

Defense in Finland

Despite early gains, Soviet forces in Finland were unable to achieve a decisive victory in the attempt to seize the Karelian Isthmus. Soviet Talent attacks on Finnish Army positions proved less than effective, as new Finnish Talents appeared each day to join the fight. Even worse, *Marshal* Karl von Mannerheim, the architect of the defense of Finland in the 1940 "Winter War," assumed control of the government and cut the country's ties to Nazi Germany.

Soviet forces were ordered to prepare defensive positions, in the light of increasing Finnish gains on this date. Disappointed but not discouraged, Stalin instead turned his attentions towards the "liberation" of Poland.

July 17, 1944

Rommel Is Injured

Generalfeldmarschall Erwin Rommel, called in from *Reichskommisariat Norditalien* to take command of German Army Group B at the Normandy front, was injured when his staff car was strafed by an Allied fighter patrol near Paris on this date.

Although his injuries were not life threatening, Rommel was put out of action for several days while he recovered. Meanwhile, the front continued to move inland.

July 18, 1944

Aesgir Is Killed in Action

The Norwegian Talent *Aesgir* was killed in action outside of Caen on this date. Using his power to transport 150 Ca-

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nadian soldiers to an area behind German lines, this small force attempted to take out two heavy cannons firing at Allied positions near Vimont. Expecting light resistance, the group was stunned to find themselves in the middle of the Twelfth *SS* Panzer Division. After more than a day of heavy fighting, *Aesgir* was killed during a push on an 88 mm cannon. Only fourteen of the Canadians made it back to Allied lines. *RuSHA SA* rushed the remnants of the Talent's "Spear of the Gods" back to Berlin for study.

July 18, 1944

St. Lô

The American Twenty-ninth Infantry Division fought tooth and nail to secure the French town of St. Lô , destroying much of the city in the process. The fanatical German 352nd Division along with *Überkommandogruppe* 65 made the battle a house-to-house affair, inflicting heavy casualties on the Americans as they slowly spread throughout the town.

TOG teams 91, 51 and 54 were brought in from the Cherbourg area to counter the German *Übermenschen's* presence. After several days of deadly combat, *Überkommandogruppe* 65 was no more, and only a handful of the 352nd Division survived to surrender the town.

At 9:00 A.M on July 18, after a week of heavy fighting, the TOG flag was raised above the St. Croix church in the center of town.

July 20, 1944

The Bomb Plot

Members of the German government attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler. The conspirators (several high-ranking politicians, officers of the *Heer,* and members of the *Abwehr)* saw the truth of Germany's situation in the war. Without their mad leader in the picture, most believed that a peace could be made with the Allies. Careful steps were taken to remove the *Führer* from power, permanently.

Led by retired *General* Ludwig von Beck, the conspirators planned to seize control of Berlin with the Home Army after the deed was done. Once the fact of Hitler's death was known, they could form an interim government to mediate a truce with Britain and America, saving Germany from the Red menace.

The key to the whole plot was *Oberst* Claus Schenk, Count von Stauffenberg, an officer held in high esteem by the general staff. Disfigured by a shell blast in Tunisia, Stauffenberg was above suspicion; and was one of the few with access to the Wolf's Lair, Hitler's retreat in Rastenburg. Stauffenberg despised Hitler; masking his true loyalties to the *Heer* old guard behind a façade of loyal servitude.

On July 20, summoned to the Wolf's Lair, Stauffenberg brought a bomb amidst the papers in his leather valise.

Once inside the large map room with Hitler, Stauffenberg was confronted with unforeseen problems. Hitler's usual *Übermensch* bodyguard *Null* was not present (he was ill with food poisoning). In his stead, an unknown super-man stood watch. While the *Führer* pored over maps and lectured generals, Stauffenberg made a decision—the bomb would have to be as close to Hitler as possible if the plan was to work.

After a short word with a co-conspirator who was then dismissed, Stauffenberg prepared to make his final sacrifice for Germany.

The bomb blast rocked the building in the middle of the afternoon, instantly killing two and mortally wounding six others. Stauffenberg and the German *Übermensch Sturmbannführer* Otto Foertsch were killed instantly when the device detonated; though Hitler was saved by a last-minute move around the immense map table, which bore the brunt of the explosion. With nerve damage and hearing loss, Hitler was shaken but able to immediately return to command.

Unfortunately, assuming Hitler had been killed in the blast, the conspiracy put their plan into action. By that evening, when the news of Hitler's narrow escape reached Berlin, most of the conspirators had already been rounded up by the *SS*.

Within weeks, after several one-sided trials, all members of the conspiracy were dead, and Hitler was still in power.

July 21, 1944

The U.S. Hits Guam

The First Provisional Marine Brigade and the Third Marine Division hit the beaches of Guam, largest of the Marianas Islands, on the morning of July 21. The Japanese defenders, some 18,500 strong, offered little resistance at first, letting the Americans come ashore.

When the Marines moved inland however, they found themselves surrounded by hundreds of dug-in Japanese positions spread throughout the rough jungle terrain of the island. The mountainous territory was ideal for the Japanese defense, and fighting often degenerated into hand-to-hand engagements to secure tiny areas of land.

Banzai charges were commonplace. On the night of July 26, 5,000 Japanese soldiers (most drunk on sake) rushed the Third Marine Division on a suicide charge. Most of the time, these charges were disastrous for the Japanese-more often than not they were mowed down by machine gun fire as they ran towards Marine lines.

By August 10, most of the island was secured. 1,044 Americans had been killed in action, twenty-seven developed Talents, and almost the entire Japanese garrison was wiped out.

July 23, 1944

The 34th Enters Pisa

After months of hard fighting, the U.S. Thirty-fourth Division entered the Italian town of Pisa on the edge of the Apennines. Just days before, American forces had secured the Italian port of Livorno, making the resupply of front line troops in northern Italy a much easier task.

Reichskommisariat Norditalien was now nothing more than a cluster of troops in the mountains of north Italy, while the Allies held most areas to the south. The end for the Axis in Italy had come.

July 25, 1944

Operation Cobra

Under General J. Lawton Collins, the U.S. VIII Corps

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launched Operation Cobra, a push south from the Cotentin peninsula to turn the German's western flank. An immense aerial and artillery bombardment decimated German front-line units, while TOG teams destroyed German communications and transportation behind the lines. This was followed by a huge armor-backed push towards Avranches.

After four days of combat, tanks and troops near Marginy achieved a breakout, successfully turning the German's western flank.

August 1, 1944

The Warsaw Uprising

Backed by Britain and America, 38,000 members of the Polish Home Army (loyal to the Polish government in exile in London) seized key points in Warsaw, plunging the Nazi-held city into chaos. Combat was fierce; and with Allied Talent support, (thanks to *Pevnost* and *Cien),* heavy losses were inflicted on the Germans holding the town. *Cien* destroyed eleven tanks *on his own*, while more than a dozen Polish Talents cut a swath through the German positions in the city, killing roughly 8,000 Germans in two weeks.

The Home Army hoped to liberate Warsaw, to give the Polish government-in-exile a bargaining chip for the coming Soviet invasion; but no one knew just what Stalin's plans for the country were.

August 1, 1944

Death on Tinian

After a pitched battle between the 6,000 Japanese soldiers and 40,000 U.S. Marines on the tiny island of Tinian, less than twenty-five Japanese soldiers survived to surrender to American forces.

Just hours after the island was secured, the Seabees began constructing an airstrip large enough to accommodate a B-29 Superfortress. Soon, bomb attacks on the Japanese islands (some 1,500 miles distant) became commonplace.

August 2, 1944

Across the Vistula

Russian forces of the First Bellorussian front crossed the Vistula river into Poland, securing a solid bridgehead on the far side, allowing nearly 50,000 men and 2,000 tanks to move up. It seemed Warsaw, just a few miles distant, would be liberated by the Soviets in a matter of days, but Stalin had other ideas.

At the far side of the Vistula, the Soviet juggernaut just stopped. While bitter fighting continued in Warsaw, the Soviet troops rested due to "lack of supplies." It was obvious to all what was really going on. Stalin would let the Germans deal with the anti-communist Polish Home Army; then, when the battle was done, pick up the pieces.

In light of this development, *Cien* and *Pevnost* were recalled (despite their protests) to Britain for reassignment.

August 3, 1944

Escape From Myitkyina

Cut off from southern Burma by British and American forces for more than three months, the Japanese Fifty-third Infantry Regiment made their escape from Myitkyina into the jungle highlands, abandoning the town. Word had come back that the Chinese and American forces were converging on the area, and the Japanese did not have enough manpower and equipment to mount an effective defense.

August 8, 1944

Eight of the Conspirators Die

Eight of the conspirators of the July 20 bomb plot were hanged at Plötzensee Prison, Berlin on this date for their crimes against the *Führer*. Ranging in rank from *Oberleutnant* to *Generalfeldmarschall,* the conspirators refused to beg for their lives, and went to their deaths with dignity, despite the fact that they were hanged with piano wire. *Gestapo* and *SS* investigations throughout the Nazi party and the citizenry of the Reich continued however. The witch-hunt was not over.

Due to his paranoia, Hitler refused to attend the function, but had the executions filmed to be played over and over again for his amusement.

August 15, 1944

Stalin Looks to the Future

In a brief announcement, Josef Stalin made plain his stance on the future of Poland; only the communist organization, the Polish Committee of National Liberation was recognized by the Soviet Union; Stalin no longer considered the Polish government in exile "relevant." Any non-communist organization opposing the Germans in Poland was not necessarily a Russian ally.

Despite public outcry from Talents including *Cien,* little was done by the Allies about the statement.

August 15, 1944

Operation Dragoon

Intended to turn the Germans' war from two fronts into three, this second Allied landing in France took place on the southern coast between Montpellier and Nice on August 15. The night before, Free French and British commandos performed disorienting lightning raids; the next morning, 94,000 men and 11,000 vehicles landed, rapidly moving inland towards Lyons.

The Germans were ill-prepared for such an assault. After several heated engagements, the German forces began to withdraw towards the center of France, performing desperate holding actions at Montélimar and Sault. By August 28, Toulon and Marseilles were in Allied hands. Just weeks into the mission, Dragoon was within miles of linking up with the Overlord invasion force in the center of France.

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August 20, 1944

The Falaise Pocket

Surrounded on three sides by the Allies, the German Fifth Panzer Army and the Seventh Army found itself without any recourse save retreat. For four days, almost 20,000 men took whatever they could carry and crossed the Seine river to regroup with German forces to the east. On August 20, Canadian and American troops closed the open neck of the Falaise "pocket," sealing the remaining Germans in.

Nearly 60,000 men were trapped in a fifteen-by-ten mile area surrounded on all sides by the enemy. Relentless air and artillery attacks whittled the force down to about 50,000 men. Less than a week later (despite their orders from Berlin), the entrapped *Heer* finally surrendered.

August 21, 1944

Der Flieger Is Killed in Action

After the crushing defeat of the Falaise Pocket in France, Hitler needed to restore his bruised ego. As a show of power to prove that Germany still ruled the skies, *Der Flieger* and fourteen flying *Übermenschen* were dispatched on a propaganda mission. Taking off from near the front line, the group flew for an hour to London, dodging Allied fighters along the way.

For thirty minutes, the group buzzed the capital, dropping propaganda leaflets on Buckingham Palace and the House of Commons, but doing no real damage. The First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group, ordered to stay on the ground, could do little but watch as the "Flying Krauts" cruised over the town.

As the Germans gathered to fly back to Europe, anti-aircraft guns employing the new "proximity fuse" developed by the Office of Scientific Research and Development, opened up on them. Within minutes, all but two of the *Übermenschen* were blown out of the sky—and not even *Der Flieger* proved fast enough to escape the new weapon.

Der Flieger, the world's first known Talent, was dead at 28. The next week, a lavish state funeral was held in crater-riddled Berlin; Hitler, in his growing paranoia, refused to attend.

August 23, 1944

King Michael

Facing a bleak future, the country of Romania remained trapped between two enormous warring powers, with little hope of escape. Prime Minister Ion Antonescu, an irrational tyrant who was little more than a puppet of Hitler, refused to consider an armistice with the Allies.

King Michael, the monarch of Romania, began to search for a way out of the darkness. After negotiating terms for an armistice with British and American advisors in neutral Turkey, the Romanian King's emissaries were sent to Moscow, and forced to sign an armistice with the Soviet Union. Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin had already secretly decided the disposition of post-war Europe; and Romania was firmly within Stalin's portion of the map. This armistice, combined with the reality of a half a million Soviet soldiers poised at the border, made Romania little more than a future prize of the Soviet Union.

Just a day later, the King announced the imprisonment of the Fascist pro-Nazi dictator Ion Antonescu, and Romania's shift in allegiance. Within the week, Romania declared war on the Axis and joined the Russians, Americans and British in their fight against the Germans.

They had little choice in the matter.

August 25, 1944

The Liberation of Paris

Defying Allied orders to bypass Paris after crossing the Seine, the Second Free French Armored Division entered the city on August 25 to assist the *Maquis* uprising which began just days after the landings at Normandy. The Americans were forced to follow. After a brief struggle for power, the German garrison commander General Dietrich von Choltitz surrendered the city to the French Second Armored Division. Though he had been ordered to level the city if the Allies attempted to take it, Choltitz had lost his taste for war; he refused to be responsible for such an atrocity.

Paris was not let off the hook so easily, however. Fourteen *Übermenschen* had not surrendered when the garrison folded; assuming Choltitz captured or killed, they went into hiding, to carry out their mission without his direction. Their orders were to destroy key landmarks and do as much general damage as possible, so the Allies would find "nothing but a heap of rubble and ashes" when they arrived. Over the next week, they caused considerable trouble, leaving their refuges for brief sorties of brutality and vandalism, flushed with the fervor of their dying cause. They meant to make the French pay the ultimate cultural price for defying the Reich.

On August 26, an attack by *Übermenschen* on the Hôtel Meurice killed fourteen, leveling a third of the building. Four American Officers were murdered under questionable circumstances the next evening. In another incident, a single *Übermensch, Der Schreck,* held the entire Gare Montparnasse train station hostage with his Talent ability. Unbeknownst to the Allies, the final horror had begun before they arrived: the *Übermensch Die Resonanz* was building a destructive resonance wave that had begun to cause nosebleeds and shatter windows all over the city; allowed to proceed to its logical conclusion, the wave would have caused all of Paris' stone buildings to collapse.

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Under orders from General Eisenhower, 230 American Talents were drawn from the front line on August 27 to assist in the identification and capture of the *Übermenschen*.

Members of TOG 33 killed two *Übermenschen* on the Eiffel Tower on August 29, moments before they detonated an explosive charge large enough to cut the structure in two; nine more were captured at a checkpoint dressed in U.S. uniforms the next evening, and later shot as spies. The final three were tracked down by a TOG squad deep in the sewers under the city; after a short bloody conflict, were killed at the cost of two Allied Talents. This ended the *Übermenschen's* reign of terror.

Thanks to the cooperation of Choltitz and quick thinking on the part of the Allied Talents, Paris survived the combat relatively unscathed.

August 26, 1944

Bulgaria Withdraws

Cut off from its Axis partners by the shift in allegiances of Romania, the partisans of Yugoslavia and the surrender of Italy, Bulgaria looked for a way out of the coming combat. The young King of Bulgaria, Simon II, made a public announcement decreeing Bulgaria's withdrawal from the conflict as Soviet forces gathered at the eastern frontier.

Bulgaria never declared war on Russia, so it was hoped that Russia, in turn would not invade Bulgaria. In this hope, like their previous hope of an Axis victory in Europe, they were severely mistaken.

August 28, 1944

The Death of a Home Army

After weeks of combat in the streets of Warsaw, the Polish Home Army was nearly decimated by German air, tank and artillery support. Those that remained alive, continued to fight, but took to living in the sewers to avoid German patrols. Only six of the twelve Polish Talents brought through from Britain survived to see September. To make things worse, special teams of *Übermenschen* called *Hunds* ("Hounds") were brought in to Warsaw to flush the PHA out.

Without aid from the Russian Army camped at the Vistula, it seemed unlikely that the force would survive to see the liberation of Warsaw, as one by one they were picked off by German forces.

August 30, 1944

Ploesti Falls

Soviet troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian Front under *Generals* Malinovsky and Tolbukhin reached the city of Ploesti on this date, easily eliminating the German garrison there. With the help of Romanian troops, the force freed nearly 1,000 Allied airmen captured during the air raids on the oil facilities surrounding the city.

Of the 120 or so *Übermenschen* stationed there, only twenty-five chose to remain at their posts and die there; the rest flew back to Axis territory.

September 2, 1944

The Allies Enter Belgium

The Overlord and Dragoon forces had made spectacular gains over the summer, nearly liberating the entirety of France in a single pitched battle. But once the Allies entered Belgium, things began to bog down considerably; the forward pace slowed to a crawl. Confident in the Allies' position in Europe, General Eisenhower took personal command of ground forces on September 1, with his eye turned Belgium and the Low Countries. They were the key to the Reich; they led to the Ruhr Valley, the industrial heart of Germany.

British and American forces burst into the tiny country of Belgium facing a disorganized enemy; but by the time Brussels and Antwerp were liberated on September 4, the German defenses were hardening at the border of the Netherlands. To make matters worse, various isolated pockets of enemy resistance remained, slowing the advance even more as they were cleaned out.

With the help of the Talent *Vevel* and his partisan forces, the Third Canadian Division captured the last major city in Belgium, the port of Zeebrugge, on October 1. *Vevel* and his agents (busy terrorizing the Nazis in Belgium for years) destroyed dozens of defensive positions around the city, forcing the Nazis into thin corridors where they were easily captured or killed. More than 50,000 German soldiers still resisted the Allies, but were contained within isolated areas of the tiny country.

By the end of October, both Belgium and France were nearly completely in Allied hands.

September 4, 1944

An Armistice in Finland

Thanks to the skilled defense of the country contrived by *Marshal* Mannerheim, the Soviets sought to end the conflict in Finland. Since its exit from the Axis, Finland's growing population of Talents and renewed self-interest made a war against the Finns a sticky and expensive proposition. Stalin believed his forces in the country could best be used elsewhere; there would be time for Finland later.

On September 4, the Russians and Finns agreed to end hostilities. Karl von Mannerheim had defeated Stalin yet again. Finland essentially gave Stalin back exactly what he had gained in the hard fought war of 1940: the Karelian Isthmus.

September 5, 1944

The Soviets Invade Bulgaria

On the verge of total chaos, the ruling government of Bulgaria resigned. Just hours later, communist partisans rose up and seized vital government installations as the Red Army crossed the border. For nine days, sporadic fighting tore through the country; but by September 14, a new pro-Soviet government was firmly in place, backed by the Fiftieth Soviet Shock Army (composed of nearly 1,000 Soviet Talents).

Stalin had his thumb on Bulgaria, and with it firmly under control, turned his men towards Yugoslavia and

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Hungary. Yet another member of the Axis had chosen complicity over combat.

September 8, 1944

The Deadly V-2

The first V-2 Missiles were launched against London on this date. Unlike their V-1 cousins, these huge rockets were truly invulnerable to interception; they flew in high 60 mile arcs, dropping from the sky to silently deliver 2,000 pound warheads to their targets.

Thousands of the V-2s were mass-produced by slave labor in secret underground bunkers spread throughout the Reich, and with their mobile launchers, were nearly impossible to stop on the ground. Over the next few months, thousands of these missiles rained down from the skies on Allied positions in France, Belgium and Britain, killing thousands and terrifying the free world.

September 11, 1944

The "Good Time Boys" Skirt Bitburg

The Talent team assigned to General Patton's third U.S. Army, the "Good Time Boys," crossed into Germany on this date, scouting forward positions on the border of Luxembourg for the coming push into Germany.

After several brief engagements with the Seventh German Army, they crossed back into Luxembourg. "Well, that sure was a hell of a lot of Germans," quipped First Lieutenant John "Muscles" Meyer upon his safe return to American lines "it looked like two Nurembergs and a *Barbarossa* put together."

September 12, 1944

Overlord and Dragoon Meet

The Allied northern and southern invasion forces met just south of Dijon in central France on the morning of September 12, uniting the Allied units into a single huge front that stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the English Channel.

September 15, 1944

Tito's Partisans Link Up With the Soviets

Soviet Forces under *General* Tolbukhin, along with their new Bulgarian allies, launched into Yugoslavia, decimating what little resistance remained in the southeastern portion of the country. Communist Partisan leader Josef "Tito" Brozovich had already liberated much of the country from Axis control; when he met the Soviet troops near Kragujevac, the two turned their attentions to the northwest. There, the Second Panzer Army and the Sixth German Army were gathered to block their advance.

Stalin welcomed the resistance leader into the Allies with renewed support; and, amazingly enough agreed that the Red Army in Yugoslavia was a "temporary measure to destroy Germany." While Tito was an admirer of Stalin and a follower of communism, he did not bow to the will of the great leader, and planned to take control of the country himself after the war. While war still touched Yugoslavian soil however, Tito was more than willing to say anything necessary to gain assistance from the Soviet Union.

September 15, 1944

The Soviet First Polish Army

Following the surrender of the last ruined units of the Polish Home Army, the Russian-formed Polish First Army crossed the Vistula river, and after hard fighting, established bridgeheads within the city limits of Warsaw.

Stalin's refusal to aid the Polish Home Army paved the way for a clean slate on which the "Great Leader" could scribble whatever future for Poland he liked.

September 17, 1944

Operation Market Garden

Conceived by Field Marshal Montgomery, this bold plan called for airborne forces to seize several key bridges in Holland, behind German lines. Once these bridges were secured, Allied tanks could drive north into Holland and threaten the industrial heart of Germany, the Ruhr Valley to the east.

On the evening of September 17, the U.S. Eighty-Second and 101st Airborne were dropped on Eindoven, Grave and Nijmegen, Holland to seize key bridges across the Wilhelmina Canal. Early on, the plan seemed to work well, and the Americans faced little resistance as they captured the bridges, encountering only one significant counter-attack near Nijmegen.

At the same time, the British First Airborne Division landed at Arnhem to seize bridges across the lower Rhine. Arnhem, the northernmost town and key to the entire operation (since the armor had to roll through Arnhem to reach the Rhine) proved much harder to take. British forces there faced strong opposition, and only one British unit under Colonel John Frost made it to the bridge, where it was quickly cut off. Frost's men held on, refusing with sheer bloody-mindedness to abandon their prize.

At dawn on the September 17, the British XXX Corps began its movement into Holland from Belgium, encountering fierce resistance from German units. As XXX Corps' advance slowed and the American and British units in Holland faced growing resistance, it became obvious (at least to forces on the ground) that "Market Garden" was in danger of collapsing completely.

September 20, 1944

Talents Converge on Holland

Due to a variety of circumstances, a large amount of Axis and Allied Talents converged on the combat erupting in central Holland in the wake of Operation: Market Garden. Over forty Talents (including *Cien,* Invincible and Misfire) parachuted in with the Allies, while 106 *Übermenschen* rapidly moved into Holland to prevent an Allied breakout. Independent Talents such as *Vogel* and *Daegal* threw their hats into

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the ring as well, trying to link up with the Allies to give the operation a small boost.

Less than eighteen Allied Talents would return from the battlefields of Market Garden.

September 20, 1944

Cien Is Killed in Action

Fighting with the Polish First Independent Parachute Brigade, the Polish Talent *Cien* and 350 of his men pushed north towards Arnhem to assist Colonel Frost's men near the Arnhem Bridge. After a four-hour battle with the Twelfth *SS* Panzer Division, the force broke through, but never reached the bridge.

Fourteen *Übermenschen* backed by elements of the Twelfth *SS* attacked *Cien's* men as they crossed the IJssel river. Outnumbered and cut off, they fought for two more hours; *Cien* killed two *Übermenschen* with his power (*Siegfried* and *Der Ziegel),* before succumbing to a mortal wound from the *Übermensch Krieg*. From there, his force was quickly cut off and eliminated.

September 20, 1944

Daegal Is Killed in Action

The Dutch parahuman *Daegal*, hoping to aid the Allied effort in his country, fought his way to Eerde along with fifteen Dutch Talents where he confronted the German *Übermensch Der Tragheit* and *Überkommandogruppe* 99. *Daegal* was killed when the *Übermensch,* pretending to be awed by his power, surrendered. *Der Tragheit's* touch instantly killed him, flinging his body into the atmosphere to be burned into scattered ashes.

The ensuing battle between *Überkommandogruppe* 99 and the Dutch Talents was brief and deadly. In the end, only one of the Dutch Talents escaped, managing to teleport to Allied territory before falling unconscious.

September 26, 1944

Market Garden Collapses

After nine days of vicious combat, Allied forces at Arnhem began to evacuate. Finally arriving at Arnhem, XXX Corps failed to break through the German defenses and capture the bridge. Instead, the tank force attempted to hold back German assaults as the remaining men of Market Garden beat a hasty retreat south.

The Allied line solidified on the southern bank of the lower Rhine river. 3,000 men had died, and more than 7,000 had been captured, in a plan Allied analysts later deemed "a bridge too far."

October 1, 1944

Aachen

Although the German commander of the city of Aachen was told to hold at all costs, as the American forces approached the border of Germany he withdrew to the east. Unfortunately, the Americans were not aware of this development, and concentrated their attacks on the German defenses south instead of rolling directly through the town.

By the time the Americans realized the mistake, the Germans had poured reinforcements into the town. Ready to fight to the last man, the Germans prepared to make Aachen another St. Lô .

October 10, 1944

Stasio Is Killed in Action

The Yugoslavian Talent *Stasio* was shot in the head while attempting to seize a German gun emplacement in the mountains along with a team of BSOE Commandos near Banja Luka. He died two days later.

October 14, 1944

Rommel Is Given a Choice

Recalled to Berlin at the request of Hitler, *Generalfeldmarschall* Erwin Rommel was given a choice: execution in disgrace, or suicide and a state funeral. Implicated in the July 20 Bomb Plot, Rommel chose suicide.

After visiting his family for the last time, Rommel committed suicide by poison, and was given a lavish state funeral. It was reported (but not widely believed) that Rommel died from war wounds suffered several months before when his staff car was strafed by Allied aircraft.

October 14, 1944

British and Greek Troops Occupy Athens

After the evacuation of Axis forces from the country of Greece, British and Greek forces occupied Athens to prevent the Red Army from exploiting the country's weakness. Thanks to antipathy between the British and Greek communist guerrillas, much of the country found itself in the middle of a rapidly developing civil conflict.

Even though the Axis was gone, it seemed it would be some years yet before peace would truly come to Greece.

October 18, 1944

The Soviets Enter Czechoslovakia

Launching an attack through their new ally, Romania, the

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Soviet Union leapt into Czechoslovakia at the Carpathian border. As the news of this advance spread, so did unrest in the country. Partisans of various beliefs wrought havoc on Axis communications, isolating German and pro-Nazi Czech troops while the Soviets pounded them with air and artillery attacks.

With the assistance of *Pevnost,* a large contingent of men loyal to the Czech President-in-exile Eduard Benés were moved into the country from London, there to spread the influence of a free Czech republic before Stalin could absorb the country into his growing sphere of influence.

October 20, 1944

Belgrade Falls to the Soviets

In a combined attack by Soviet and guerrilla forces under Josef Tito, the Yugoslavian capital of Belgrade was seized and the remaining Axis forces in the country forced into the mountains. The end to the war in Yugoslavia was in sight.

Josef Tito, hero of the Yugoslavian people, began to consolidate power in Belgrade immediately, and within hours, posters of his face hung on every available wall of the liberated capital. Tito, leader of the most significant resistance force in occupied Europe had become, at least in the minds of his people, the new leader of Yugoslavia.

October 20, 1944

Aachen Falls to the U.S. Army

After twenty days of bloody combat, the U.S. First Army finally captured what remained of the German city of Aachen. The Germans holding the city leveled it in a series of incredibly deadly engagements, refusing to surrender even an inch of German territory to the advancing Allies.

The city was so damaged, that when a U.S. General ferried into the town asked his driver "When do we get to Aachen?" the driver replied, "This *is* Aachen."

○ October 23, 1944

De Gaulle's Victory

On this date, the Allies recognized General Charles de Gaulle's provisional government of France for the first time.

Flanked by his *Surhomme* bodyguards *Le Teinte* ("The Shade") and *Le Mur* ("The Wall,") De Gaulle led a parade celebrating the victory up the Champ Elysees, surrounded by crowds of roaring supporters.

October 23, 1944

The Battle of Leyte Gulf

After capturing the island of Morotai, less than 400 miles from his command post at the beginning of the Pacific conflict, MacArthur planned his return to the Philippines. On October 23, American soldiers under the command of Lieutenant General Walter Kreuger landed on Leyte, a small island in the Philippine chain southwest of Luzon. Instead of confronting the soldiers on the beach, the Japanese withdrew to positions further inland.

Unknown to the Americans, the Japanese had prepared extensively for a Philippine invasion. Called Sho-1, the plan involved an enormous Japanese fleet of ships split into four groups. One force would draw away the American task force from the landing area, while another attacked and destroyed the landing craft and support ships.

The plan went wrong from the start. Two Japanese cruisers were spotted and sunk by American submarines in the Palawan passage, north of the islands; worst of all, Admiral Halsey's command was alerted to their presence. The next day American carrier aircraft struck, damaging the battleships *Musashi* and *Yamato*. However, the American Navy was not aware of the other Japanese ships in the area.

Under orders from Halsey, the U.S. ships of the Third Fleet sailed north to engage the remaining Japanese ships, chasing the *Yamato, Musashi* and *Nagato,* scoring devastating hits with torpedo attacks from carrier aircraft. After hours of bomb runs the *Musashi* sank with 2,399 men onboard.

Believing they had successfully drawn the Americans away from Leyte, the Japanese sent Force C through the Surigao Strait to intercept the landing fleet on the night of October 25. The American Seventh Fleet was waiting for them. The Strait was covered in American ships, including a screen of PT torpedo boats, eleven destroyers, eight cruisers and six battleships. As the Japanese ships came through the strait, American attacks destroyed them in the last naval broadside in the history of warfare. After suffering crippling losses, the Japanese withdrew back through the strait.

The next day the Seventh Fleet's spotter aircraft located the fourth Japanese force near Cape Engano, and carrier aircraft were launched to intercept them. The American pilots sank three aircraft carriers and a destroyer in several successive attacks. Japanese ships continued to steam away as the attacks continued.

Elsewhere, trouble was brewing for the Americans. The First Japanese Diversion Force, centered on the damaged but still operational *Yamato* suddenly came upon the American landing forces at Leyte while skirting around the San Bernardino Strait. The enormous Japanese ships immediately engaged the medium and small American destroyers and carriers, which turned and fled, leaving behind a screen of destroyers to cover their escape. These American destroyers fought gallantly, suffering huge losses while attempting to hold off the Japanese juggernauts.

Alerted to the chase, Halsey disengaged from the fight at Engano, and rushed back to the landing force. The commander of the First Japanese Diversion Force, Vice-Admiral Kurita, sensed a trap closing around him, and left the way he came, through the strait of San Bernardino, ending the battle of Leyte Gulf.

This final, crippling blow to the Japanese Navy claimed four aircraft carriers, ten cruisers, eleven destroyers and three battleships, along with over 500 aircraft. America's losses were much less severe, at 200 aircraft, two destroyers, two escort carriers and one light carrier.

○ October 25, 1944

Hoshi Strikes

The Japanese Talent *Hoshi* was rushed to the Japanese 201st Air Group on Leyte, just moments after word arrived

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in Tokyo of the American landings. Leading a group of twenty-four heavily laden Zero aircraft, *Hoshi's* squadron attacked a force of American escort carriers, already damaged by surface ships. In the first *Kamikaze* ("Divine Wind") attack of the war, *Hoshi* and his compatriots crashed into the American ships, causing severe damage.

The "Jeep" carrier *St. Lô* was the first victim, sinking after two *Kamikaze* hits ignited fuel below deck. It sunk within the hour, taking 100 sailors with it. *Hoshi* led two more waves after this assault, as his power snatched him back from the cockpit of his doomed aircraft again and again.

November 8, 1944

The Clean-Up Ends in Belgium

After two months of fighting, the last of the German forces in Belgium surrendered to the Canadian First Army, effectively ending the war there. Nearly 41,000 Germans, holed up for a month in the Scheldt estuary, surrendered after suffering crippling losses in men and equipment from Allied air attacks. Sixty-five *Übermenschen* were killed in the eight weeks of fighting, and twelve more surrendered with the last of the German forces.

After a brief celebration, *Vevel* and his communist partisans reported to the command of the Canadian Third Army and offered their services. General Eisenhower flatly turned down the offer.

November 9, 1944

Patton Steps Up

The American Third Army under General George Patton, comprising more than 500 tanks and 500,000 men, crossed the Moselle river after certain strong-points on the far side were eliminated by the "Good Time Boys." With engineers hard at work to restore the destroyed bridges across the river, Patton's force squeezed across two intact bridges in record time. "Waiting is what loses wars, " Patton told a reporter from *Stars and Stripes* after crossing the river.

It seemed nothing could stop him from driving directly into the heart of the Third Reich, but concentrated *Übermensch* attacks near the front stalled the advance of the southern portion of Patton's force, causing the General to halt and regroup.

November 12, 1944

The Sinking of the *Tirpitz*

After attacks by British midget submarines severely damaged but failed to sink the immense German battleship *Tirpitz* in port at Altenfjord, Norway, the British Command decided to step up operations against the craft. British aircraft flew half a dozen bomb sorties on the *Tirpitz* from Soviet airbases in the Baltic, with mixed results.

The last attack on November 12, made by thirty-two Lancaster bombers equipped with the immense "Tall Boy" bombs (each containing more than 5,000 pounds of explosives), managed to score two direct hits on the battleship. Minutes after the attack it rolled over and sank, killing more than 1,000 crewmen in less than five minutes.

December 3, 1944

Across the Siegfried Line

After fierce fighting, American forces penetrated the Siegfried line, near the town of Saarlautern. The Allies seemed poised to deliver the final blow against Germany, but Hitler had one last ace up his sleeve.

December 4, 1944

The Beginning of the End in Burma

The British Fourteenth Army began the final offensive against the Japanese in Burma, hitting airfields in the north at Yeu and Shwebo, and cutting off rail lines and resupply routes with Chindit and Kachin patrols.

Nearly obliterated in the battle for Imphal, the remaining Japanese forces of the Fifteenth Army retreated to defensive positions in the jungle highlands. Disorganized and without any clear plans for the future, the Japanese prepared to fight to the last man.

December 9, 1944

Blitzen

Scientist Werner von Braun, architect of the V-2 Missile, hatched a plan to shock the world in the closing months of 1944. Exploiting Hitler's love of grandstanding, von Braun pitched the *Blitzen* ("Lightning") Project as a "first in the history of man which could never be undone." In brief, *Blitzen* was a radio transmitter launched into space by the *Übermensch's Der Tragheit's* power- where it would become, briefly, the world's first artificial satellite.

After Hitler gave permission to proceed, the 2-ton satellite was constructed at *Luftfahrtforschungsanstalt Hermann Göring* in October and November 1944. It was launched by *Der Tragheit* from Peenemünde on December 9, 1944. For twelve hours, the radio transmitter "beeped" from the void of space before it disappeared forever. *Blitzen* was the first man-made object to enter space, and after the Allied scientific community confirmed it, it did indeed shock the world.

The Germans were tight lipped on just how the *Blitzen* made it into orbit, and neglected to mention the use of parahuman powers in its launch at all. Most in the Allied command assumed that the Germans had a "Super V-2" in reserve. A committee of physical scientists from Britain and America was rapidly formed to look into the matter.

December 16, 1944

The Battle of the Bulge

Hitler's last great offensive was unleashed on the quiet front near the Schnee Eifel region of Germany. There the madman gathered an enormous force, preparing for the biggest battle in the history of the Western front. Under *Generalfeldmarschall* von Runstedt, the force of 205,000 men (composed of the Sixth *SS* Panzer Army, the Fifth Panzer Army, the Seventh Army and the *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler*) prepared to launch themselves into battle at the front's weak-

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est point: the green U.S. VII Corps sector in the Ardennes. Through this gap, Hitler hoped to split the British and American forces in two in a drive to the port of Antwerp. From there, the Germans would cause as much damage as possible. Hitler believed that he could break the spirit of the Allied armies if he inflicted a terrible enough blow to their forces.

Poor weather prevented Allied aircraft and Talents from flying, so the build-up in the Eifel went unnoticed. In Allied sectors, the war had slowed to a snail's pace. As the stalemate set in, many thought it would only be a matter of time before the Germans simply gave in, or were overrun by the Russians; but the Ardennes offensive put an end to such hopes.

Surprise was nearly total when the 3,000 members of *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler*, the world's first "Super-Army," smashed through the lines at St. Vith, decimating the U.S. VII Corps. The Sixth Panzer Army followed through the gap, sweeping northwest for Antwerp while the main contingent of forces forced its way west, ripping through American held areas with ease. The American forces reeled, suffering immense losses, but in certain places continued to hold on. At St. Vith, the VII Corps was continuously attacked for five days straight before retreating from the town. After being bypassed by *SS Heinrich Himmler*, they fought off three separate assaults by Panzer forces, losing 15,000 of 22,000 men.

German troops encircled American forces in the town of Bastogne, overran the 106th American Infantry at Schnee Eifel, and decimated the Twenty-eighth American Infantry at "Skyline Drive." *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler* led the way towards Antwerp, sweeping aside the U.S. VII Corps and the XVII Airborne near Werbomont.

Under the direction of *Generalmajor* Otto Skorzeny, specially trained English-speaking German Commandos dressed in U.S. uniforms wrought havoc with American communications, cutting phone lines, redirecting traffic and giving confusing orders to lone command posts. This operation, code named *Greif* ("Access,") threw the Allies into further disarray.

It seemed nothing could stop the advance of German forces and without air cover, the Allied cause in northern France seemed in danger of crumbling.

December 20, 1944

Jumping Johnny Is Killed in Action

Scouting enemy positions behind German lines for bombing attacks, the British Talent Jumping Johnny landed on an *SS* ammunition dump, igniting it. The blast was heard for over fifty miles away, and killed the British Talent instantly.

Two days later, after some confusion, the news of his death made the cover of the *London Times*.

December 22, 1944

"The Twilight of the Gods"

Concerned with the *Überkommandogruppe* push towards Antwerp, General Eisenhower set about constructing a defense. He saw a weakness in Hitler's plan. The *Überkommando* Army operated on its own, clearing a path for the Armies that followed it, traveling far ahead of the regular force. If it could be cut off, the push would stall. Secondarily, Eisenhower had more than 20,000 Talents under his command, scattered across the front in British, TOG and Service teams. Nearly 1,000 were in the Antwerp area alone. By December 21, under a blanket order calling any Talent to the front, 3,571 American and British Talents gathered at Spa, forming the impromptu First Talent Army under the command of Lieutenant General Courtney Hodges. "Courtney, you've got to box them in," Eisenhower told the commander, "if you don't we'll be fighting this war from the beaches all over again."

On the dawn of December 22, the First Talent Army and the *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler* collided near Spa in a bloody engagement, while the U.S. V Corps swung around the rear, cutting them off from the German LXVI Corps, and any hope of reinforcement. Overconfident, the *Übermenschen* foolishly chose to engage the First Talent Army instead of turning back for their own lines.

The battle that ensued raged for days, leveling Spa, and destroying much of the surrounding area in the first clash of Talent armies in the history of the world. Though the Allied Talents were trained to work in small units, this proved to be an advantage in the defense of the city. When the battle reached the streets of Spa on December 23, they inflicted heavy casualties on the *Übermenschen*. British, American, Polish and French Talents mangled the unwieldy units of *SS Heinrich Himmler* in the ruins of Spa. The Germans were trained in combat to rely heavily on their powers; while the Americans and British had been taught to kill with conventional weapons first, with Talent powers coming second.

Übermenschen attacked Lieutenant General Hodges

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at his headquarters at Spa on nine separate occasions. Once, while Hodges was on the radio to General Eisenhower's command, an *SS* teleporter appeared in the middle of headquarters. "Wait," Hodges muttered into the radio, and after coolly shooting the *Übermensch* in the head, continued, "Go ahead."

On December 26, as the weather cleared and American and British forces began their counter-attack on the "Bulge" of German forces in the Ardennes, Hodges mounted his own offensive against the *Übermenschen's* line to the south of the city. Allied Talents withdrew to the north, and artillery and aircraft began to relentlessly pound the *Übermenschen* positions. Two days later, the last fragmented remnants of *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler* surrendered to Hodges' command.

In six days of combat 2,592 *Übermenschen* and 1,554 Talents lost their lives. The world press dubbed it "The Twilight of the Gods."

December 22, 1944

"Nuts!"

The U.S. 101st Airborne and other stragglers reeling from the German attack huddled in the French town of Bastogne, surrounded by the enemy. After the Americans repulsed several early probes, the Germans offered Brigadier General Anthony C. McAullife a chance to surrender the town.

McAullife's reply was one word: "Nuts!"

German attacks ate away at the American defenders, who lacked food, supplies and ammunition, but somehow they held the German tide back. Despite these hardships and the endless snow, McAullife's men fought on, waiting for the weather to clear.

On December 25, 1944, the Talent team the "Good Time Boys" arrived hours before Patton's Third Army. The siege ended a day later when the Germans withdrew. "It was the best Christmas gift I ever got," McAullife told the Allied press upon the Third Army's arrival.

December 26, 1944

The Bulge Is Squeezed

The German offensive in the Ardennes ground to a halt when the First and Third American Armies moved down from the north and south through Belgium, cutting the enemy in half. By January 15, the Fifth Panzer Army was trapped in a pocket.

The German forces suffered more than 125,000 casualties in the month of fighting, including the loss of *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler* and the destruction of hundreds of irreplaceable vehicles. Hitler was furious. The thrust into the Ardennes had weakened the western front irreparably; and now, made it obvious that Germany's cause was lost in the west as well as the east.

December 31, 1944

Hungary Turns

After the Russian invasion and encirclement of Budapest, a new Hungarian provisional government was established at Debrecen, which made peaceful overtures to Moscow. The pro-Nazi leader, Ferenc Szákasi, who maintained a reign of terror since Miklós Horthy's resignation in August, was captured in an uprising on the December 25.

Within the week, the armistice was signed between the provisional government and the Soviets. A month later Hungary declared war on the Axis.

January 1, 1945

Attack on Army Group Center

After a sustained attack by Soviet Talent Shock Troops, the

Generalmajor Otto Skorzeny

Skorzeny, a loyal toady of Adolf Hitler, was nonetheless a brash and daring man who completed many seemingly impossible assignments for his leader. Though his planned rescue of Mussolini never occurred, Skorzeny proved himself a most effective tool for Hitler in other ways. When the July 20 bomb attack on Hitler's life disrupted life in the Reich, Skorzeny secured the Ministry of War in Berlin with a detachment of *SS* and waited for orders.

In September 1944, Skorzeny was dispatched on Operation Mickey Mouse, forcing the duplicitous leader of Hungary, Admiral Miklós Horthy, to resign. Horthy's secret negotiations with the Soviet Union were cut short when he suddenly left office. Only then did Skorzeny release Horthy's son, who the *SS* had been holding hostage.

Skorzeny's most brash act was Operation *Greif*. It failed to achieve the results he hoped for, but *Greif* shook up the American command in the Ardennes during one of the most vital moments of the war.

After the war, Skorzeny was accused by a wartime tribunal of illegal warfare tactics in *Greif*, but was acquitted. Before German civil authorities could arrest him in 1946 for other charges, Skorzeny disappeared. It was rumored that he escaped from the country by teleport to South America. Reports that Skorzeny formed the underground organization *Die Spinne* ("The Spider") were never proven. This organization, part of the ODESSA secret society, supposedly ferried former *SS* men to the safety of third world countries where the law could not or would not reach them.

In his later years, amazingly, Skorzeny returned to public life. He purchased houses in Ireland and Spain and ran a successful import/export business from offices in Madrid. In September 1975, when Talents from Israel's *Mossad* tried to snatch him from his home in Madrid, Skorzeny proved he had not lost his edge. With the assistance of two unidentified Talents (likely former *SS Übermenschen)* Skorzeny killed three members of the Israeli team. The rest fled before they could be captured by Spanish authorities.

Skorzeny died in 1976 in Madrid of natural causes.

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Soviet Fourth and Second Ukrainian Fronts pushed through the German border fortifications into Czechoslovakia. German Army Group Center, composed of some 550,000 men, reeled under the Red tide.

Enjoying superiority in Talent, air and tank forces, the Russians overwhelmed the Germans, smashing through the last vestiges of defense in the German satellite in just a matter of weeks.

January 5, 1945

Kamikaze!

The Japanese Talent *Hoshi* led wave after wave of Japanese *Kamikaze* aircraft in suicide runs on the U.S. Seventh fleet in the Lingayen Gulf during the week of January 5. These suicide planes sunk twenty-six combat ships, and severely damaged about four hundred others.

With *Hoshi* as a rallying force, the Japanese managed to launch over 4,000 *Kamikaze* planes between October 1944 and January 1945 in an effort to crush the Allies.

January 5, 1945

The Death of the *Luftwaffe*

To support the rapidly dying Ardennes offensive, the *Luftwaffe* launched Operation: *Bodenplatte* ("Base plate,") an attempt to gain control of the air over Belgium. Over 1,000 aircraft and 300 flying *Übermenschen* assaulted Allied airfields in Holland and Belgium, with only limited success.

Losing more than 400 of their planes and 150 *Übermenschen* to the superior Allied air forces in less than a week, the *Luftwaffe* was effectively hamstrung, leaving it with a preponderance of aircraft, but almost no experienced pilots to fly them.

January 9, 1945

Luzon

With many of the southern islands already secured by American and Australian forces, the Americans set their sights on Luzon-the largest of the Philippine Islands. In preparation for the landings, the U.S. Seventh fleet began pounding Japanese coastal positions near Lingayen and Dagupan, while Allied aircraft attacked Japanese emplacements all over the island. The Filipino resistance rose up the moment the invasion fleet was spotted, bringing all semblance of normalcy in Manila to an end. Thousands of the various resistance forces successfully seized two airfields and several ammunition depots, immeasurably aiding the Allied effort.

On January 9,200 men of the U.S. Sixth Army came ashore at Lingayen Gulf, unopposed. Expecting such a landing, the Japanese retreated to prepared positions in the mountains. American forces pushed along the coast towards Manila and up into the mountains, moving step-by-step in bitter, slow-moving combat. By the end of January, the Americans linked up with the largest contingent of freedom fighters on the island, the *Hukbalahap*, led by *Anguis,* the Filipino Talent, at the gates of Manila.

It was hoped the Japanese would surrender the city, but when the Allies crossed the Pasig River into Manila, it was obvious they were intent on making Manila the main battlefield of the conflict. The Japanese on Luzon would not go easily.

January 10, 1945

Pevnost Fuels the Fire

In a huge attack, nearly 150,000 partisans all over Czechoslovakia rose up on January 10, completely upsetting German attempts to hold the Red Army back. The key architect behind this plan was the Czech Talent *Pevnost*. He ferried over thirty tons of weapons and equipment into the country in the space of a month, to feed the fire. The well-armed partisans disrupted communications, destroyed equipment and assassinated key personnel. By January 12, the German position in Czechoslovakia, already untenable, was infinitely worse.

The Tenth Soviet Shock Army, composed of nearly 3,000 Talents, smashed through German defenses to the southeast of Prague. There, they would link up with a force of nearly 12,000 Czech communists who seized an airfield near Dubuzy. In the face of the onslaught to come, those Germans who could flee the advancing Red Tide withdrew towards Austria; those who could not, found themselves boxed in, surrounded on all sides by the Soviets.

January 12, 1945

The Vistula Oder Campaign

A huge force of nearly two million Soviet soldiers poured across the Vistula river in a broad front pushing across Poland. By the February 20, the Soviets rolled clear across the country, crushing all German resistance in their path. Poised on the border of Silesia and Pomerania, less than 200 miles from Berlin itself, the Soviets were on the verge of total victory.

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January 15, 1945

Counterattack!

After the Ardennes offensive lost momentum and seized, Allied planners began considering their next move. Eisenhower envisioned a broad sweep through the Siegfried Line, to the Rhine-where the second stage, a two-pronged assault to encircle the Ruhr Valley, would begin.

Field Marshal Montgomery's Twenty-First Army Group led the way in the north, launching Operations Veritable and Grenade. When they entered the ill-omened Reichswald ("Empire Wood"), a heavily wooded area teeming with German troops, their offensive slowed down considerably. Later, heavy flooding paralyzed all troop movements in the area, and halted all attempts at advance. Montgomery was stymied.

To the south, forces under General Omar Bradley made good progress, breaking the Siegfried Line and pushing towards Koblenz and Mannerheim. Patton's "Good Time Boys" led the way, capturing bridges to allow the tanks to pass; and eliminating four *Überkommando* teams in the process.

The German forces were without the men or equipment necessary to resist any longer. The Third Reich squirmed in its death throes, while it was consumed by the Allies on nearly all sides.

January 17, 1945

North Burma Is Cleared

After weeks of brutal combat, Chinese forces seized Namhkan from the Japanese, completely eradicating the Japanese forces in north Burma. The Burma Road, stretching from India to China, was finally restored.

February 10, 1945

Yalta

The Big Three met again at Yalta, on the shores of the Black Sea, to plan the disposition of the post-war world. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed to the meeting despite warnings from their bodyguards when Stalin refused to meet in Cairo, due to "health problems." In actuality, he wanted to dictate terms from territory liberated by the Soviet Army, to flaunt his power on the world stage. To the world at large, Yalta was another conference of the united Allied powers; but in truth, the Big Three were neither united nor cooperative. Each had their own ideas as to what the world should be like after the conflict ended.

Roosevelt, frail but full of fire, backed Churchill when the leaders met in private to work out the post-war map; only the two working in tandem could check Stalin's obstinacy. Stalin was full of his usual demands, but with the secret agreement granting him dominion over Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Romania already in place, was just grandstanding to appease his huge ego. In exchange, Stalin agreed to affirm the Atlantic Charter in a Declaration of Liberated Europe released to the world on February 12, and to fight Japan once the war in Europe ended.

Poland had a special place in the mediations. After hours of negotiations, it was decided Poland would be ruled by a coalition of members of the Polish government-in-exile, and the communist leaders already in Poland. In other words, Poland had a fifty-fifty chance of going communist or democratic once the war ended.

On the February 10, 1944, the Big Three, flanked by Talents and Generals, posed for the last picture ever taken of them together.

February 11, 1945

Anguis Is Killed in Action

Facing the remnants of General Homma's forces in the Philippines, the Filipino Talent *Anguis* was killed when his power failed on the streets of Manila, reverting him to his human form. A Japanese light tank firing on members of the *Hukbalahap* killed both *Anguis* and fourteen of his men as they attempted to push the Japanese forces from the capital.

February 14, 1945

The Resurrection of Dresden

At 10:04 P.M. on this day, 873 RAF bombers rained down thousands of tons of high explosive bombs and incendiaries on the German city of Dresden, igniting a firestorm that burned for two days. Even though many made it to bomb shelters, the incendiaries caused such intense heat (in excess of 1,000° Fahrenheit) that air was literally sucked from the city, asphyxiating hundreds. Over the next two days, American planes bombed the flaming wreck of the city as well, keeping the fires going. The attack was planned to both disrupt the rail lines through the city and crush German morale. It did that and more.

In the end, three quarters of the city was destroyed, and 200,000 people were dead, including American ex-patriot Charles Lindbergh. Those that survived, found almost nothing remained of their home, while others surfaced into a new world, spiritually . . .

A day after the raids ended, over 3,000 natives of the city had the same dream. This new group's impromptu leader, a former priest named Matthias Kniep, began preaching about the "dream of a new Dresden." In 1946, they released their manifesto *Die Wiederauferstehung Dresdens* ("The Resurrection of Dresden,") a surprisingly architectural text dealing with the Dresden "not yet built." Kniep's followers, called *Die Erbauer* ("The Builders") trained themselves in art, architecture, design and other skills necessary to complete "the great work." However, few of them were hired, due to their unusual beliefs.

Kniep preached "a world of symmetry and beauty where nothing is destroyed except destruction itself." By the end of the war in Europe, he had over 5,000 followers, ready to build a new Dresden seen only in a dream.

February 19, 1945

Iwo Jima

After three days of Naval bombardment, U.S. troops invaded Iwo Jima, a tiny island just 660 miles from Japan itself. Initially it was believed the bombardment had cleared the island of the enemy; but as Marines moved inland, they met fierce resistance from concealed Japanese positions. Though they inflicted heavy

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casualties, the Japanese could not hope to stave off the Marines-not when nearly 30,000 landed in the first wave.

The Japanese retreated to fortified positions in the central mountainous area of the island, crisscrossed with hundreds of pillboxes and spider-holes. In preparation for the invasion, the entire island was burrowed into: forming a complex maze of rooms, command positions and bomb shelters that allowed the Japanese to survive the bombardment and hide from attack. Fighting on Iwo Jima was the fiercest ever experienced by the U.S. Marines, and advances were often measured only in yards. Nevertheless, after days of deadly combat, the Japanese were slowly boxed in on Mount Suribachi, the volcanic mountain in the center of the island. The Marines fought tooth and nail to the top of the peak where on February 23, a large American flag was raised. Three of the six flag raisers would later die in combat securing the rest of the island.

Nearly 7,000 Marines lost their lives on Iwo Jima, and almost every single member of the Japanese garrison. Almost 21,000 persons were killed during the capture of the island.

February 21, 1945

Across the Irrawaddy

General William Slim's British Fourteenth Army crossed the Irrawaddy river in central Burma, devastating the remaining Japanese troops attempting to hold the bridgehead there. The Allied forces pushed relentlessly south towards Mandalay and Meiktila, forcing the Japanese into the jungles and mountains.

The offensive to clear central Burma had begun.

February 26, 1945

1,200 Bombers Over Berlin

In the second attack on the German city in less than a month, 1,200 aircraft of the American Eighth Air Force dropped thousands of tons of bombs on the German capital. Losses on the American craft were light, due to the *Luftwaffe's* final crushing defeat the previous month; but anti-aircraft guns did manage to down twenty-four bombers.

Expecting heavy *Übermenschen* resistance, the First Non-Mechanized Long Range Flight Group (flying escort duty) found the skies startlingly empty.

March 3, 1945

The "Good Time Boys" Tangle With *Überkommando 101*

The Talent team the "Good Time Boys" were confronted by *Überkommandogruppe* 101 while spearheading a drive by Patton's Third Army across the Kyll river in Germany. Four members of Patton's Talents died in the combat, but *Überkommando* 101 was destroyed in a battle that leveled three city blocks.

The Germans destroyed the bridge across the Kyll before the "Good Time Boys" could disarm the explosives on it, momentarily causing Patton to pause in his push across the Rhine.

March 7, 1945

Cologne Is Captured

After days of fighting, the German forces abandoned Cologne for defensive positions further into the Reich. Secured by the First U.S. Army, Cologne (Germany's third largest city) was a significant victory for the Allies. Poised on the edge of the Rhine, the Allies prepared to deal the final blow to the forces defending Germany.

Over 200 *Übermenschen* surrendered to the First Army as it took the town, eager to avoid the fighting to the east.

March 20, 1945

Across the Rhine

Allied forces surged across the Rhine river, after pushing through the supposedly impregnable Siegfried Line, lunging into the Ruhr, central Germany and south towards Bavaria. The British led the way with vicious artillery and air strikes against German positions in the Ruhr, sweeping towards Bremen, and liberating much of the Netherlands in the process. In central Germany Patton's forces swept through Frankfurt, pushing towards Leipzig in a meandering line. The U.S. Seventh Army in the south pushed back the German Nineteenth Army, forcing them into Bavaria.

The German forces were in chaos, ripped to shreds by Allied Talent, air and artillery attacks. The few counter-attacks attempted by the Germans ended in disaster, destroying irreplaceable guns, *Übermenschen* and experienced soldiers.

By April 18, the Allies had secured a line of territory that stretched, in some places, almost 150 miles into Germany.

March 30, 1945

The Soviets Enter Austria

Soviet forces of the Third Ukrainian Front under *General-Polkovnik* Tolbukhin crossed the border of Hungary into Austria, the birthplace of Hitler. Capturing Wiener Neustadt, they then encircled the Sixth *SS* Panzer Division before it could retreat to Vienna. Disastrous German counter-

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attacks ended with huge losses of men and equipment near Lake Balaton, and Vác. Six *Überkommando* teams died in behind-the-lines actions, trying to disrupt Soviet defenses during these offensives. The Talents succeeded in their missions, but were slaughtered when the follow-up attack by German and Austrian forces never came.

The Germans held the border in areas, but the overwhelming numbers of Soviet troops made this stand only a waiting game. Tolbukhin had his eyes on the capital city of Vienna, now just miles from the front line.

April 1, 1945

Okinawa

This island, the largest in the Ryukyu chain, was the final stepping-stone to the Japanese Home Islands. Seen by the Allied command as a testing ground for "Majestic," the planned invasion of Japan, Okinawa was just as vital to the Japanese, who saw it as the last chance to defend their homeland from direct Allied assault.

The immense Allied fleet of more than 1,500 vessels anchored off the west coast of the island, and landed their troops at 8:30 A.M. on April 1, after five days of bombardment and suffering more than two weeks of *Kamikaze* attacks. U.S. Marine and Army groups rapidly moved inland, seizing Kadena and Yontan airfields with minimal resistance. The next day the Americans cut Okinawa in two by pushing to Heanna on the east coast of the island. After a few days of consolidation, American forces turned north and south.

The Japanese retreated to the heavily fortified *Shuri* line, and on April 4, the American forces came face to face with the defenses the enemy had prepared. For nine days, Army and Marine troops battled to capture cave complexes riddled with Japanese command posts and machine gun nests. Artillery was brought up to pound the *Shuri* line, and hundreds of mortars, riflemen and even naval cannons picked at the Japanese defenders. By May 29, their defense was failing. On July 2, the fighting on the island ended, with nearly every Japanese soldier on the island dead (only a handful of survivors surrendered).

More than 107,000 Japanese and 8,000 Americans died on Okinawa, one of the most brutal battles ever waged in the history of warfare. America now had the perfect staging ground to mount the invasion of Japan.

April 2, 1945

The Death of Army Group B

The U.S. Ninth Army under General Simpson met up with the U.S. First Army under General Hodges at Lippstadt, successfully encircling over 350,000 Germans belonging to Army Group B, effectively destroying it as a fighting force. Its commander, *Generalfeldmarschall* Walter Model, committed suicide on April 21, when he realized that there was little hope of escape. Just a day later, the remnants of Army Group B surrendered to American forces.

A Carpenter's Son

Private John McGrath from Albany New York hit the beaches of Iwo Jima with the rest of the Fourth Marine Division on February 19 as a "Green Marine," just out of training. Then he landed in the middle of the horror that was Iwo Jima. His mind snapped somewhere on the eastern slopes of Mount Suribachi.

McGrath manifested an unusual Talent on February 21, when he resurrected a dead Marine near Minami with his touch. "Lazarus, go forth," McGrath shouted, and the Marine rose up, completely healed from his fatal wounds. From there, it only grew worse. McGrath refused to carry a gun, follow orders or even answer to his name. He called himself "Jesus," and began to gain a large following on the eastern side of the island. Over 200 Christian Marines deserted, and took to following McGrath at the East Boat Basin; there, he performed miracles. McGrath turned canteen water into wine, transformed field rations into fish, and walked on the water. Even unbelievers could feel the pull of his charisma; it was clear that he would disrupt the war against the Empire even further if he were allowed to continue.

Military authorities arrested him with the assistance of the man he had resurrected, Private Micah Williams. As McGrath saw the lead MP approach, he kissed the private and said, "I forgive you, Judas."

McGrath was imprisoned at Leavenworth Prison, where he remains "suffering for the sins of man." He maintains a huge following of people who believe he is the Second Coming of Christ, though all official Christian organizations (including the Vatican) dispute this claim.

Interestingly enough, McGrath was also the son of a carpenter.

April 7, 1945

Sink the *Yamato*

The huge battleship *Yamato,* dispatched on a suicide mission to destroy the U.S. invasion fleet at Okinawa, was engaged and sunk by U.S. warplanes on this date. Ten torpedoes and five bombs struck the ship, causing it to list, roll and sink, taking 2,500 men to the bottom in minutes.

April 9, 1945

The Soviets Push Through Vienna

Led by 3,000 Talents, Soviet forces pushed into the city of Vienna, battling a small force of Austrian soldiers left to defend the town. After a day of bitter fighting, the Soviets secured the city. Thanks to this rapid seizure, ten Soviet Divisions rushed through the town to points north, towards Prague and the border of Germany itself.

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April 10, 1945

The Final Offensive in Italy

Due to the harsh winter, nearly all combat in Italy ceased between December 1944 and April 1945. On April 10, 1944, the Allies prepared for the final push. After lunging towards the Argenta gap and seizing Bologna, the Allies sidestepped the Axis, sweeping around their west flank in an attempt at encirclement. Attacks by the *Legionari Della Patria* were repulsed at Ostiglia and Modena, forcing the Italian Talents to retreat past the Po Line where they had no choice but to disperse into the mountains.

Attacks from the Germans' rear, made by Italian guerrillas led by the Free-Italian Talent *Immortale* tied up vital German resources; while American forces raced towards Brescia. To close the noose, British forces swept towards Venice; effectively isolating the Axis in a pocket with their backs to the Alps. *Reichskommisariat Norditalien* was no more; all that remained was the huddled remnants of a broken Army, surrounded on all sides by the enemy.

Despite orders from Berlin to stand fast, on May 2, *General* Heinrich von Vietinghoff surrendered to Field Marshall Sir Harold Alexander at Caserta. The Germans were done in Italy- but a tiny force of fascist Italian Talents, refusing to surrender, fought on in the mountains.

April 12, 1945

President Roosevelt Dies

President Roosevelt, in poor health for months and suffering from a severe lack of rest, took to his cottage in Warm Springs, Georgia for a short vacation. Attempts to arrest his deteriorating health with Talent powers failed (the British Talent "Nightingale" was even brought into the country in May, with little effect).

The Death of Sixth *SS* Panzer

Led by *SS General* "Sepp" Dietrich, a favorite of Hitler, this Army was encircled during its attempt to withdraw from Hungary. Pulling back towards Lake Balaton after the Soviet push on Budapest, the force was spotted by Russian Talents and encircled by artillery and tank units of the Third and Second Ukrainian Front before it could establish a defensive line.

Relentlessly pounded by Talent, air and artillery attacks, the final battle for Sixth Panzer began on April 12, when Soviet tanks and Infantry moved in. Three days later, nearly a third of the Sixth Panzer were dead. Soviet Talents captured Dietrich in the final push on his headquarters on April 18 before he could commit suicide. Up until the last moment, Dietrich believed some sort of rescue would come.

After being extensively tortured, Dietrich was hanged for Stalin's amusement for "crimes against the people of the Soviet Union."

Even on vacation, the President remained in constant contact with Washington, but tried, at his wife's request, to take some time for himself. At 8:49 P.M., Roosevelt's personal adjutant Major Lloyd Feit (better known to the world as the British Talent Bulldog), went to fetch the President some aspirin for a "headache." When he returned, he found the President dead of a massive cerebral hemorrhage.

Vice President Harry Truman was sworn in as President immediately. The news spread around the globe, reaching even the front lines in just a matter of hours, and the world paused for a moment. One of the guiding forces of the Allies, a man who held the Presidency of the United States longer than any other person, was dead at 63, just weeks before victory was achieved in Europe.

April 17, 1945

Revenge in Leipzig

Three *Übermenschen,* boxed in by American forces of the First Army in the ruins of Leipzig, were attacked by a mixed team of Allied Talents on this date, after negotiations for their surrender failed. The Indestructible Man, *Vogel,* Smasher, and Misfire engaged the *Übermenschen Krieg, Tyr* and *Nacht* at 8:46 A.M. in a battle that lasted six hours.

Smasher and *Tyr* tangled in a hand-to-hand fight where burned-out tanks were thrown around like toys; ending when a sniper shot by Misfire instantly killed the *Übermensch*. Moments later, *Krieg* killed Smasher with a flamethrower attack that also injured Misfire (causing him to withdraw from the battle). The fight paused for a few moments before *Vogel* and the Indestructible Man charged the *Übermenschen's* position, refusing to wait for Talent reinforcements.

Only Talents near the combat could see the struggle through *Nacht's* darkeness, and reports varied. The official report filed by *Vogel* and the Indestructible Man claims the following occurred: *Vogel* rushed *Krieg,* with *Krieg's* superhumanly placed shots having no effect on the Dane. *Nacht* hurled an incendiary grenade at *Vogel*, hoping that the flames would work on the bullet-immune Talent. Before it could detonate, the Indestructible Man leapt on it, snuffing it out with his body, harmlessly.

Krieg then leapt on the Indestructible Man with his knife drawn. After shouting a warning, *Vogel* hurled a grenade in the dark, knowing it could not hurt himself or his companion, blowing *Nacht* to pieces. The darkness receeded.

From this point on, with dozens of witnesses, reports took on a new level of confusion. Some claimed *Krieg* lunged at the Indestructible Man, others that the two Talents murdered the German in cold blood. The highest ranking British officer to witness the combat claimed the following: *Krieg* surrendered to his attackers, expecting to be taken into custody. The Indestructible Man had other ideas, however: shouldering a Bazooka and aiming it directly at *Krieg's* face. "This is for Piotr," Moreland reportedly said before firing the weapon. *Krieg* was decapitated by the blast; the Indestructible Man, protected by his power, was blown clear. Victorious, the two Allied Talents walked from the ruins burned and drained, holding three ruined Iron Crosses.

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The Indestructible Man was acquitted of any wrongdoing, despite the charges of murder leveled against him. "He got what he deserved," was all *Vogel* would say to the public about the matter after the brief military trial.

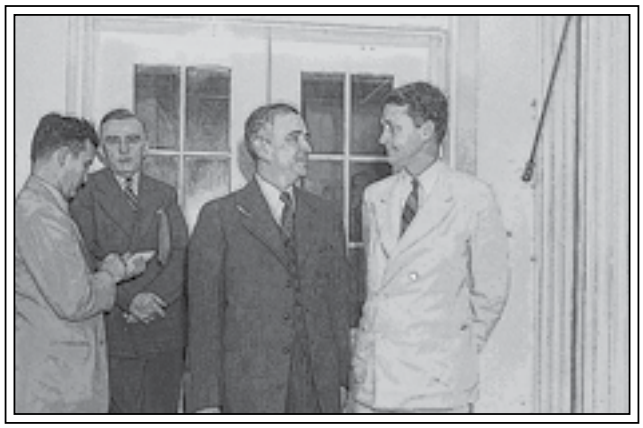
April 29, 1945

Dachau Is Liberated

Men of the U.S. Seventh Army arrived at the Dachau Concentration Camp on the morning of April 29, to find a sea of emaciated dead bodies, and scattered, starved, blank-faced survivors still watched over by the *SS*. This was one of the first glimpses for the U.S. Army into the world of the Nazis' "Final Solution," and few men, even men who had seen (and sown) death across Western Europe could take it; their horror was absolute. Many of the *SS* guards tried to surrender as if the camp was just a normal side-effect of war, but U.S. commanders looked the other way while their men took matters into their own hands. Reports varied, but a few implied that the soldiers eagerly assisted some survivors in the execution of *SS* Death's Head guards.

The American Talent Captain Rudolph "Concrete" Reisenberg turned the deputy camp commander *Sturmbannführer* Adam Grünewald to stone for shooting an inmate who was screaming at him during the negotiations for the camp's surrender. Twenty-six other personnel died in "incidents" during the camp's liberation. Not surprisingly, charges were never filed.

Despite the Allies' best efforts, 27,000 of the 46,000 inmates from the camp died within weeks of their liberation, succumbing to dysentery and other fatal diseases.



April 23, 1945

Berlin

A huge Soviet force comprising the First Bellorussian and First Ukrainian Fronts descended on Berlin, the capital city of Germany, reaching its outskirts on April 23. The German forces defending the city were weak (many were members of the *Volksturm* or "People's Army," just inexperienced civilians used as a last ditch defense), but knowledge of the Russians' presence at the eastern frontier gave the combatants an edge. Even if they surrendered, they believed they would die; so many fought to the death. Over 1,500 *Übermenschen* were scattered throughout the bombed-out ruins of the city as well, set to repulse the Russians.

The Soviets attempted to move into the city in force immediately, but casualties were high and progress was slow. Random *Übermenschen* attacks caused Marshal Zhukov to move in the Fourth Soviet Shock Army on April 25. For three days, the Fourth Shock Army engaged the scattered *Übermenschen* resistance around the city, causing inestimable damage. Both the Lehter Station and the Hall of Congress were completely demolished in the fierce Talent combat, while an earthquake on April 27 destroyed the Imperial Theater, and the already damaged Reichstag. A counterattack on April 28 led by the German *Null* claimed the lives of thirty-five Soviet Talents, but there was nowhere for the German forces to go and the attack quickly folded. By April 29, Soviet Talent forces reached the outskirts of the *Führerbunker,* and the First Bellorussian and First Ukrainian Front linked up at the Brandenburg gate surrounding Hitler's final sanctum.

Nearly 200,000 Germans and Russians died battling over the ruins of the capital.

April 30, 1945

Hitler and His Lackeys Commit Suicide

Refusing to leave Berlin as the Allies approached it, Hitler remained hidden in the *Führerbunker;* a complex of incredibly secure bombproof rooms beneath Berlin. There, he spent his last moments collecting his final thoughts on paper, examining pointless architectural plans, and reminiscing about the past. "The end of Germany has come, and I too must end with it," the madman announced to Martin Bormann on April 29, after issuing instructions about the future of the Reich. Both aircraft and *Übermenschen* were present and prepared to rush the leader away from the capital, including Germany's greatest teleport *Der Reisende* ("The Traveler") but to no avail; Hitler refused to be swayed from his delusions. *Grossadmiral* Dönitz was left in command of what remained of the country as the new *Führer,* while Göring and Himmler were sentenced to death after word reached the bunker that both were trying to work out terms for Germany's surrender to the Allies. (Later, both Himmler and Göring committed suicide after being captured by Allied forces).

As the Soviets approached the bunker (one Soviet Talent even made it as far as the *SS* guards at the main entrance before being killed on the morning of April 29), Hitler prepared his final statement, married his long-time companion Eva Braun, shot her, then committed suicide by shooting himself. His body was supposedly destroyed by the *Übermensch Der Tragheit,* by launching into the atmosphere with his power, instantly incinerating it (though Soviet troops claimed to have recovered his remains on the next day).

Sixty-five *Übermenschen* stationed to defend the bunker, including *Der Tragheit, Null* and *Herkules* committed suicide after their leader was gone. More than 100 high ranking Nazi officials and *Übermenschen,* who were thought to be in Berlin at the time of the final Soviet push (including *Der Reisende*) were never found.

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May 6, 1945

Germany Surrenders

After weeks of sporadic fighting and various maneuverings by the remnants of the German High Command, Germany finally agreed to unconditional surrender to the Allies. More than a day of fruitless negotiation to reach a separate peace with the British and Americans was wasted before *Generaloberst* Alfred Jodl signed the surrender document in Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force in Reims France. Jodl, representative of Dönitz, new *Führer* of the ruined Reich, surrendered to the Soviet, American and British forces at 2:14 A.M. on May 7.

Twenty-seven high-ranking officials (including the *Übermensch Der Archiv)* surrendered to the Americans at Reims as well, ending the war in Europe. Germany would be divided among the victors, and the "Thousand Year Reich" was no more.

June 28, 1945

Peace in the Philippines

General MacArthur's command announced the surrender of all organized Japanese forces on the islands of the Philippines; bringing, for the most part, the battle for the islands to an end. Clean up operations of Japanese emplacements, would continue for more than two years, and the last lone survivor of a Japanese infantry outfit would emerge from the jungle as late as 1972.

July 15, 1945

Mass Defection

Near Wismar, Germany, nearly 2,000 Soviet Talents of the Sixteenth Shock Army surrendered to the Second British Army as "political refugees." The Talents (many of whom were of Jewish, Polish or Ukrainian descent) claimed that the NKVD and its murderous policies against Talents in the Soviet Union precluded their safe return home. Tensions mounted as the British commander accepted, at least for the time being, the Talents' plea, refusing a Russian officer passage into the British sector.

Prime Minister Churchill, already incensed with Stalin's stubborn lack of cooperation and respect for the West, accepted the Talents' plea for asylum. This acceptance caused a mass defection in the Soviet Talent population in Western Europe. Between July 15 and August 1, nearly 5,000 Soviet Talents fled to American or British sectors to escape the NKVD.

Stalin was furious. Huge turnovers in the ranks of the Red Army occurred, spurred on by NKVD purges. Soviet Talents were suddenly recognized for heroism and promoted, or publicly executed for treason. After a few bloody weeks dubbed "Red July" by the press, the defections stopped.

Ever insistent, Stalin demanded the return of his Talents, but both Truman and Churchill refused. Just months after the end of conflict in Europe, new lines were already being drawn.

July 16, 1945

Potsdam

President Harry Truman was thrust into the world of international politics at one of the most significant conferences of the war—the Potsdam conference. Potsdam, a ruined suburb of Berlin, became the meeting place for the men who would determine the fate of post-war Germany and inadvertently the fate of the world. They were an unexpected lot. Truman replaced President Roosevelt after his sudden death; and Prime Minister Clement Attlee had ousted Churchill in the British elections. Only one from the Big Three remained: Josef Stalin.

To make matters worse, several thousand Soviet Talents had defected to the west a day before, causing tension on the borders of the American, British, French and Russian occupation zones. Truman and Attlee met on July 16 and conferred while waiting for Stalin to arrive. They agreed that Stalin had to be checked before he could absorb Greece, and that the Russian Talents would not be returned.

On July 17, Truman received word that the first test of the American atomic bomb had been an unqualified success. Confidant that he held all the cards, Truman settled in to discuss the disposition of post-war Europe with Attlee and Stalin. The conversation did not go well.

Stalin demanded the return of his Talents, and made vague threats insinuating another war in Europe was just beginning. Hoping to cajole the leader with threats of his own, Truman informed Stalin of the bomb, expecting some sort of reaction, but he got none. Stalin's web of spies informed him of the weapon months before.

For six days the talks centered around the possession of the refugees, and not the reconstruction of Europe. Finally, on July 22, Stalin agreed to the disposition of Europe as worked out at the Yalta conference, bid farewell to the two leaders and promptly left. The Potsdam conference was at an end. Soviet troops took up heightened watch on their borders in the occupation zone and began randomly harassing foreign travelers in their territory. All cooperation with outside forces ended abruptly, although the Soviets allowed the British, French and American troops to enter and occupy the agreed-upon sectors in Berlin.

A brief note from the Kremlin informed Washington on August 2 that the Soviets would *not* be participating in the war against Japan.

August 6, 1945

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Two atomic weapons, developed under great secrecy by the United States government at Los Alamos New Mexico,

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The Secrets of *Der Archiv*

Under Albert Speer, the last director of armament production for the Reich, *Der Archiv* gained access to some of the most secret papers of Nazi Germany, in an attempt to, in Speer's words, "preserve what good can be found amidst the awfulness." In the last months of 1945, *Der Archiv* memorized over a million pages of material, including rocket designs, Swiss bank account numbers containing Nazi gold, and the *entirety* of *RuSHA SA's* files.

When he turned himself over to the Allies at the surrender proceedings, a brief talk with an adjutant of General Eisenhower brought him to the attention of military intelligence. His name was swiftly stricken from the records, and he was smuggled back to the United States under great secrecy, a prize of the European war on the par of the V-2 and Wernher von Braun. Although the Russians captured Berlin and most of the Nazis' files with it, the Americans luckily found themselves in possession of a single mind that held some of the Nazis' greatest secrets.

were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki three days apart, decimating them. In an attempt to break the fanatical fighting spirit of the Japanese people, and prevent the necessity of an Allied invasion of the home islands, President Truman authorized the use of the two weapons- "Fat Man" and "Little Boy."

Detonating with a combined total of about 34,000 tons of TNT, the bombs killed nearly 210,000 people (most of whom were civilians).

Over 3,500 Japanese spontaneously developed Talents during the attacks, finally elevating the Japanese Talent population to normal levels.

September 2, 1945

Japan Surrenders

After months of relentless bombings, and the terrible toll of the atomic bomb detonations at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese Diet and the Emperor accepted the surrender agreement offered by the Allies. Little choice was left for the Japanese.

On August 15, Emperor Hirohito spoke to his subjects for the first time over state radio, announcing the surrender of the Japanese forces.

On September 2, on the deck of the battleship *Missouri* Emperor Hirohito signed the document of surrender in front of General MacArthur and hundreds of American servicemen. Days later Japanese forces in China and Korea surrendered to the Allies.

Victory in the Pacific had finally been achieved.

September 6, 1945

The Legion of Five Thousand and Israel

Gathering near a displaced persons camp at Cologne, the Legion of Five Thousand, a huge force of Jewish Talents (incidentally numbering well over 6,000 by now) made the proclamation: the Jewish homeland of Israel would be recognized by the United Nations, or "Europe would burn again." Stalin offered his "assistance in dealing with the upstart Jews," but the British and Americans were loath to let the Red Army any further into Germany, or to allow the event to spiral out of control. Already angered about the Talent defections, Stalin was just looking for an excuse to attack.

Hoping to avert disaster, President Truman turned to Prime Minister Attlee, who, though reluctant to comply, withdrew British troops to a partition in Palestine, effectively splitting it in two. The Hagganah Jewish defense force (already in position waiting to act) seized the territory as the British surrendered it. Over the next five months, the Legion was moved to their new homeland, effectively defusing the situation in Europe. Israel, with a population of just over 780,000 Jews, had the world's largest per capita population of Talents of any country in the world. Nearly 5% of their population possessed Talent powers.

On May 14, 1946, Israel was recognized by both the United States and Britain as a sovereign nation.

January 1, 1946

The Cold War Begins

It began when two railroad cars containing supplies for the American sector of Berlin were turned back at the border of East Germany by Russian forces, and it slowly escalated from there. Two days later the announcement was made that all traffic across the West German border was forbidden. The American, British and French occupation zones of Berlin were cut off, surrounded on all sides by Soviet territory. Heavily armed Soviet troops surrounded the town, but made no move to enter.

The Cold War had begun.

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PART SIX

Now and Then

"Don't tell them anything they don't need to know. When it's over, tell them who won."

—Admiral Ernest J. King on what the U.S. public should be told about the war.

This section covers a broad variety of subjects useful for anyone running a *Godlike* campaign. It contains an overview of the time *Godlike* is set in. Not the disposition of troops, or the movements of borders (see **Part Five: Background** for more details on that kind of stuff), but the mores and customs of a different and much less complicated time—the 1940s of *Godlike*, especially in the U.S. What was the common parlance for a grenade, a woman or an enemy soldier in the 1940s? What was life like for most in the U.S.? You'll find these questions answered below.

Now and Then also deals with the military, but in the social as well as martial sense. What was life like in the Army outside of combat? The basics of life in boot camp and beyond are covered in detail below for the benefit of GM and players. (For further details on such matters see **Part Eight: The Campaign** on p. 282.)

This section also covers the concept of Talents in the grand sense—the public perception of them, how they are portrayed by the press, what the life of a common Talent is like before and after they join the military, their use in warfare and more.

The United States of America

While the United States is not the focus of this game, due to space restrictions it is the focus of the **Now and Then** section. It's just impossible to fit in everything required to make this section comprehensive. This is not a condemnation or snub of any other country involved in the war; it's just a reality of graphic design and economics. No book can be 100% comprehensive. As an American, I'm writing this section with America in mind. Future books may deal with other countries in the same manner.

Foreign sentiment over America's involvement in the war is often mixed. No one will deny that American soldiers risked themselves gallantly, nor that many made the ultimate sacrifice for people and places that previously were nothing more to them than names in textbooks. But it's easy for Americans to see the war from only one angle—theirs.

Fact and Fiction

Now and Then is written to give the GM and players a good idea of what the 1940s in the world of *Godlike* are like. It incorporates fictional material from **Part Five: Background** and factual information to construct a clear picture of a 1940s slightly different than our own, altered by the presence of parahumanity.

Much of what's written here is fact, but some elements are fiction; such as the expatriation of Charles Lindbergh, the Taft Laws and other smaller matters. In any case, this section (or for that matter this book) should not be taken as a factual account of the war years.

A large amount of work went into checking facts, and constructing a believable deviant timeline; but this does not mean that the information presented should be taken as 100% genuine truth. If you are looking for definitive information, read a real history book (check the included bibliography), not a game.

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It's easy for Americans to forget that except for small skirmishes, this war was fought entirely outside our own country, while it consumed large percentages of other countries' populations. Many other countries risked more, lost more, and suffered more than America ever did.

Just to put the human costs of the war into perspective, here's a breakdown of the total number of dead per country, listed in order of total losses.

Country	Military Personnel	Military Losses	Civilian Losses	Total Losses
USSR	~20m	~7.7m	~13.5m	~21.2m
Poland	~ 1m	320,000	~6.2m	~6.5m
Germany	~10.8m	~3.6m	~2.4m	~6m
Czechoslovakia	~180,000	~6,683	~3.1m	~3.2m
Japan	~6m	~1.3m	953,000	~2.2m
China	~5m	~1m	Unknown	>2m
Yugoslavia	~3.7m	305,000	~1.3m	~1.6m
Hungary	~350,000	~147,435	~280,000	~427,000
France	~5m	~ 205,707	~173,260	~ 378,967
UK	~4.6m	~306,213	~62,000	~368,213
United States	~16m	~297,793	Unknown	~300,000
Italy	~4.5m	~279,820	~93,000	~288,300
Netherlands	~500,000	~13,700	~236,300	~250,000
Greece	~150,000	~16,357	~155,300	~171,657
Belgium	~800,000	~9,561	~75,000	~85,000
Canada	~780,000	~39,319	Unknown	~40,000
India	~2.3m	~36,092	Unknown	~36,092
Australia	~680,000	~29,395	Unknown	~30,000
New Zealand	~157,000	~12,000	Unknown	~12,000
South Africa	~140,000	~9,000	Unknown	~9,000
Denmark	~15,000	~4,339	Unknown	~5,000

United States Public Sentiment in the Early War Years

In the late 1930s, much of the United States was rising out of a decade-long depression that left millions unemployed and many without a place to live. President Roosevelt and the New Deal restructured the American economy in less than five years, and for the most part, put things back in working order; or at least back on track to economic stability. People were just happy to have jobs and life was once again about finding a career, a wife or husband, having children and settling down. Nazi tanks rolling over Poland seemed unimportant and as far away as the moon to those in the U.S. (unless they were of Polish extraction, of course). Americans were fascinated by the Nazi super-man who led the assault, btu few newspapers wasted much space on the invasion. It was news, but it was happening far, far away.

Then the war in Europe exploded. The American isolationist sentiment that enjoyed widespread support (due mostly to the carnage of the Great War) began to wane. American reporters transmitted from the ruined streets of London and the cliffs of Dover, bringing the German air-war over Britain to millions of U.S. citizens. Rumors circulated of Hitler's deadly policies against the Jews and other minorities in his ever-growing domain. Charles Lindbergh, formerly America's hero, left the country for what many viewed as the epitome of absolute evil. In fact, Charles Lindbergh's transfer of citizenship from the United States to Germany brought the news of the war closer to the average man on the street than ever before. The attention lavished on Lindbergh's emigration drew many Americans into following the conflict. France, Norway, Belgium and Denmark were crushed as the *Wehrmacht* and *Luftwaffe* pushed the British Expeditionary Force and other Allied armies back to the sea, until Britain was alone.

Led by the stoic Winston Churchill, Britain fought on. The invasion of the British Isles seemed imminent. Churchill regarded a Nazi invasion as inevitable, saying, "You can always take one with you." This pessimism remained despite Britain's growing core of super-human Talents.

By July 1941, American sentiment shifted away from isolationism. Part of this had to do with the public's obsession with Talents, and the first British Talent Tour of the east coast in the summer of 1941. The nightly broadcasts of Edward R. Murrow from the beleaguered British Isles on the CBS radio network also had a huge impact on the American people. The mother of our upstart country was weeks or maybe days from total annihilation. Few could listen without feeling something for the valiant British people.

Roosevelt was responsible for some of the shift in the American psyche as well. His endless discussions with Winston Churchill led the president to believe that Britain would never capitulate or surrender-no matter the cost, and if they did fall, what did that leave? A strengthened Germany and the expanding Japanese Empire poised for further conquest. Roosevelt waded into the public anti-war sentiment like a master, manipulating public opinion in ever-widening arguments with his weekly radio "fireside chats," until nearly everyone could see that the Nazis would not quietly pack up someday and go home. If Britain could not stop them, neither would the Atlantic Ocean.

To most, Britain was seen as the lone hero standing in the way of an indefatigable army infected with a madness that, unchecked, could consume the entire world. By late

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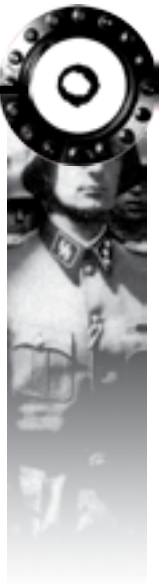


A Note About Public Opinion

American public opinion changed from neutrality to a war footing more sharply in the world of *Godlike* than it did in our world. This is for many reasons. First, a large number of American citizens who could have cared about the problems overseas were drawn in through curiosity about the battling super-humans. Joe Blow on the street could care less which consonant-riddled country was being trounced by the Nazis; but hell, if there were photos of the Flying Man in the story, you could bet it was read cover-to-cover. Many people who would have simply gone on with their merry lives were drawn into the harsh reality of the war by the super-humans fighting in it. Once people began paying attention, the evils of the Nazi regime were not hard to perceive.

In the alternate reality of *Godlike,* one of the few who could not see the insidious evil of the Nazi movement was America's greatest hero, Charles Lindbergh, the *wunderkind* who flew non-stop across the Atlantic in 1926. Lindbergh's "America First" party was a group that whole-heartedly supported the Nazi cause, under a thin disguise of American neutrality. Notably, in the real world, Lindbergh actually *was* a member of the pro-Nazi "America First" party, and a staunch supporter of Hitler before the war. When war came, he did nothing; but in the world of *Godlike,* the existence of *Der Flieger* was enough to convince Lindbergh (and many others) that the Nazis were right all along.

When Lindbergh left the U.S. to become a citizen of the Reich in 1940, the furor was enormous, and not in the way Lindbergh had hoped. The hatred of Lindbergh became something of a national pastime and the bonfire burnings of memorabilia of his cross-ocean flight culminated in the destruction of *The Spirit of St. Louis,* the aircraft he made his historic journey in. Lindbergh's betrayal was significant enough to shift public opinion squarely into an even race between neutrality and involvement.

Public opinion in the U.S. took its final shift towards support of the British cause with the arrival of the British Talents from the Special Sciences Office in the summer of 1941. Their fundraising tour of the east coast was perhaps the most significant news story since the beginning of the new century. Endless books, pamphlets and news articles observed every detail of their lives, hopes and dreams. The British Talents—and their attendant spectacle—won many Americans over to the British cause.

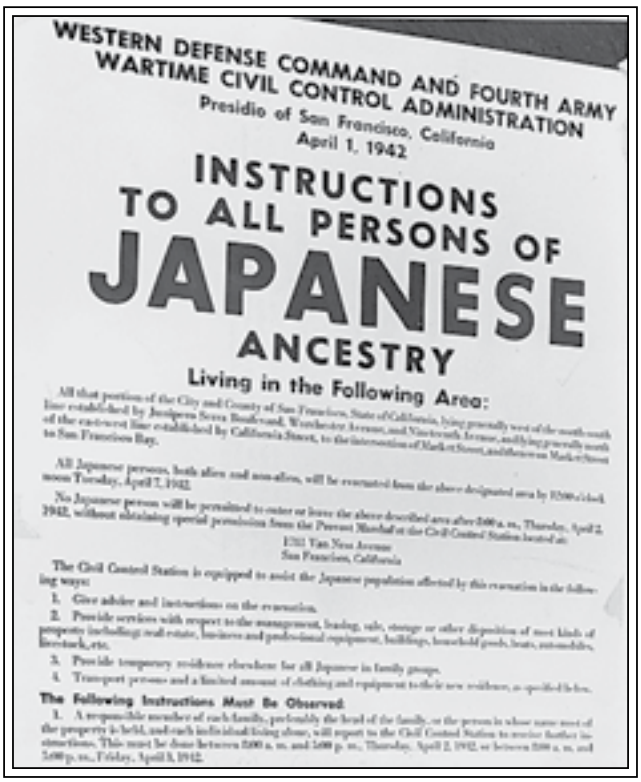
Hitler hoped that his *Übermenschen* would cement his hold on a world Axis. Instead, they indirectly helped bring the United States into the war.

1941, America's anti-war sentiment had almost completely eroded. Most Americans felt that it was their duty to do what they could to help, even if it meant going to war.

Life in the U.S. of A. in the 1940s

Life in the U.S. in the early 1940s was a period of restoration. The Great Depression had ravaged the established financial order of the country, and it took years of effort to put it back on track. People were relatively secure in their government and economy, and that confidence showed. New businesses were flourishing and jobs were becoming more abundant.

The consumer culture derailed by the stock market crash was back, spinning up to speed in an insanely short period. People wanted to buy things with their recently restored wealth. Many people were the first in their family to own a home radio, telephone, refrigerator or clothes washer. Cars were a boom industry again. Credit and layaway plans were new favorite national pastimes.



WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
Presidio of San Francisco, California
April 1, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY
Living in the Following Area:

All that portion of the City and County of San Francisco, State of California, lying generally west of the north-south line established by Jefferson Street Boulevard, Westchester Avenue, and Ninth-ninth Avenue, and lying generally north of the east-west line established by California Street, to the intersection of Mark-et Street, and thence on Mark-et Street to San Francisco Bay.

All Japanese persons, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above designated area by 12:00 o'clock noon Tuesday, April 7, 1942.

No Japanese person will be permitted to enter or leave the above described area after 8:00 a. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the Provost Marshal at the Civil Control Station located at:

1701 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property (including: real estate, business and professional equipment, buildings, household goods, boats, automobiles, livestock, etc.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residences, as specified below.

The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 a. m. and 5:00 p. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, or between 8:00 a. m. and 5:00 p. m., Friday, April 3, 1942.

While every culture has its outcasts, criminals and agitators, the United States of the 1940s was a surprisingly peaceful place. By the 1940s, the huge crime syndicates of the 1930s were searching for new markets (now that liquor was legal) and were just as rapidly trying to get interests in legitimate businesses. Federal pressure had successfully pushed them so far underground that few ventured from their well-established and well-controlled haunts. To the common Joe on the street, crime only happened "in the wrong neighborhood."

The communist and anarchist movements that exploded in the 1920s faded a bit into the background, like bad dreams pacified by cash. Prosperity was salve for the nation's wounds, and without strife, the agitators had little fodder for their pulpits' fires. Communism remained

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A Note about Racism and Sexism in the 1940s

Racism, sexism and religious prejudice were rampant in the U.S. in the 1940s. To disregard their existence with a wave of the hand is to miss just how far we have come. To pretend it never happened is to disrespect the hard work and bloodshed of those who made it better. As the author, I wish to say that I believe the following sentiments are, if you'll excuse my language, just plain bullshit. However, pretending it didn't happen won't make it any better . . .

In the 1940s, women of all races were considered inferior, and were protected, mollycoddled and kept away from any "real" labor. Certain jobs, such as nursing or teaching, were considered acceptable; but only until that woman married. It was commonly accepted that a woman's true function was having and raising children. Women who pursued careers in other fields were subject to open ridicule, discrimination and blackballing, and there was nothing they could do about it. Above all, except in special circumstances (like in the Office of Strategic Services) women never fought, at least not in the United States… though China, the Soviet Union and various resistance groups utilized women troops to great effect. Women in the western world may have worked as nurses at aid stations and "manned" coastal guns at ports which never saw action, but they were never permitted near the real thick of it. They were prizes, things to be protected. Above all, to most men, they were not and could not be trusted with tasks of any great importance.

Racism was far more rampant and all-encompassing than we can possibly imagine now. Despite the fact that Judaism is a religion that has followers from every ethnic background, Jews were classified as a race (just as Hitler incorrectly believed them to be) even in the U.S.; and were lumped in with anyone who was not precisely white, as were the Asians, Latinos, and Gypsies. Blacks suffered under what was seen as fair "separate but equal" laws (which proved to be anything but) and not allowed to fight for their country until very late in the war, despite a huge number of African Americans volunteering for the armed forces. Late in the war, the all black Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron was allowed to prove itself in actual combat. "The Lonely Eagles" as they were known, were the only squadron to fly over Europe and never lose a bomber to enemy aircraft.

In the panic following Pearl Harbor, people of Japanese descent were rounded up on the west coast and moved to internment camps all over the U.S. to prevent "insurgency," despite the fact that nothing of the sort ever happened. In fact, a group of Japanese American volunteers (the 442nd Regimental Combat team) fought in Europe and went on to be the highest decorated unit in U.S. Army history. These acts of bravery and patriotism by "second class citizens" were almost completely overlooked by the citizenry of the U.S., and for good reason-the government never mentioned them.

Blacks were called Negroes or worse terms in more rural areas, Japanese were called Nips, Slopes or Yellow Bastards. Jews were called Yids, Kikes or Shimmies. The list of inanities and ignorance goes on and on. Nevertheless, it happened.

If you wish to avoid these stereotypes and prejudices in your *Godlike* campaign, I understand the sentiment. If you choose to confront and explore why these prejudices existed and how they can break down in the face of war, I understand that as well, and admire it.

behind the scenes, less dynamic and less confrontational than before, while anarchism waned nearly altogether.

For many, it was a happy (if not ideal) life.

It was a time of social order. Sons obeyed fathers, wives stayed home to raise the children, fathers brought home the bacon and daughters stayed in on Friday nights. This social order did have a very real dark side, which was as accepted in most quarters as attending church was on Sunday mornings. To most American citizens in the 1940s, Black people, people of Jewish descent and noticeable foreigners were, at best, second class citizens and at worst, less than human. This was not even thought an insult by the rank-and-file world. In many places, it was just "the way of things." Not many people questioned it, and crossing these well-established lines was never done without huge repercussions.

Ethnicities didn't mix as readily in the 1940s as they do today (except in certain poor urban centers), and it was common in all areas of the nation for ethnic groups to cluster together in certain regions. These neighborhoods had their own infrastructure of shops and a completely internalized social life.

There were clearly delineated rules that were not broken by anyone. Those who transgressed were shunned by co-workers and neighbors. Such a homogenous social order is completely unlike anything today, and is difficult for our generation to grasp.

Nevertheless the public not only accepted this order, they expected it. For the most part, no one knew there was any other way to be.

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The Sleeping Giant

Once the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor energized the American war machine into action, nothing could stop it. The U.S. Army went from 170,000 active members in late 1939 to 1,400,000 men in under two years. The armed forces continued to grow steadily until the end of the war, when the U.S. Army (including the Army Air Corps) totaled over 8,300,000 men.

The government played on the paranoia of the citizenry of the western United States, making the war in the Pacific seem minutes, not thousands of miles away. Sometimes this paranoia proved too much, and early on local authorities had to deal with mass evacuations of coastal towns due to misheard rumors or mistaken sightings of enemy ships. For the most, the attack on Pearl Harbor was enough to drive even the strongest American pacifists towards war. "When we are done," Admiral Halsey said, "the only place you will hear the Japanese language spoken will be in hell." Most of America shared his sentiment. Overnight very public propaganda about the Japanese sprouted up. They were portrayed as small, nearsighted, unintelligent, deadly loyal and, if not properly fought, lethal. The Emperor was depicted as a false god and their religions and customs as a sham used to induce a fanatical fighting spirit in the entire population of Japan.

In truth, the Japanese decisive attack on Pearl Harbor scared the American military hierarchy as much as it did the American public. Everyone in Washington knew the Japanese were far from unintelligent. After such a daring assault, few in the Army or Navy could laugh off the idea of a Japanese invasion of Los Angeles, or Portland, or Seattle. The government was rapidly building its forces to fight the war in Europe first and it needed time to safely conduct such affairs without concern for fighting on its own soil. The U.S. government made by the people, for the people, turned to the people.

Almost every able-bodied person volunteered for the war effort. Coast watchers, civil air patrols and air raid wardens did their part to make America safe for her citizens, while its fighting men were away. The Coast Guard was attached to the Department of the Navy and ran patrols on every major port coastline of the U.S. Antiaircraft guns were set up in the major city centers of southern California, and on the east coast in Washington D.C., New York and Boston.

Rubber, scrap metal, cooking oil and tin cans were collected in great numbers to make weapons, vehicles and explosives. Rationing began in May 1942 and continued throughout the war, to control the use of certain vital materials by limiting the amount a consumer could buy. Ration books were distributed through schools and post offices, dictating how much gasoline, sugar or meat could be bought. Sugar was heavily rationed and often not easy to come by, as were gasoline and rubber. A large U.S. black market exploited the ration book system, and many criminals made a tidy profit selling stolen or counterfeit ration books.

Taking resources saved by government rationing, the automotive industry shifted gears, so to speak, to produce tanks, airplanes and heavy weapons almost overnight. From 1941 to 1945 U.S. plants produced an unprecedented 500,000 tanks, 300,000 planes, 79,000 landing craft, 3.3 million rifles, 2.6 million machine guns and more than 41 billion rounds of ammunition.

This amazing spike in production, accomplished by the establishment or the War Production Board by President Roosevelt, was in part responsible for the Allies' eventual victory. Already a master at manipulating the economy (with the help of a dozen professors, the "think tank" who conceived the New Deal) Roosevelt established all that was needed for companies to find war production easy, and even extremely profitable.

Women took to the factories for the first time, and learned to rivet, weld and work heavy equipment in record numbers. They filled positions vacated by men who were fighting abroad, making "Rosie the Riveter" a reality. The nation transformed in mere months from a peaceful nation to Roosevelt's "Arsenal of Democracy."

According to one writer, after the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto wrote, "I fear that we have awakened a sleeping giant, and filled it with a terrible purpose."

If it's true, his prediction was startling in its accuracy.

The U.S. Army

Winston Churchill described the United States Army as "a prodigy of organization." This armed force went from an ill-organized scattering of administrative posts and camps across the U.S. with fewer than 170,000 active members to a huge, world-spanning force numbering over 8,000,000 men—all in less than six years. The Army grew exponentially because it was needed on a level never seen before in armed conflict, but its growth began before America was even involved in the Second World War.

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Selective Service

Early in the European conflict, the eyes of American government watched with growing alarm as the Germans swept across the continent. Unfortunately, the public didn't become concerned about it until much later.

In response to public outcry and governmental urgings, Congress authorized a huge expansion of the armed forces. On September 16, 1940, President Roosevelt signed the Selective Service Act into law. Under this new law, men between the ages of 21 and 35 were required to register with the government to be called upon in the event of war. By July 1941, 17,000,000 eligible men had registered.

Pearl Harbor

By the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Army was already eight times its former size. Though its armaments, vehicles and equipment were still far from "modern," the manpower it could draw upon was impressive. This lack of modernization was a weak link in an otherwise growing chain of strength. To those in the Army, the shortcomings were obvious.

Practice drills for armored corps were made with trucks marked "Tank." Machine gunners practiced with broomsticks instead of weapons. Grenadiers lobbed potatoes instead of hand grenades. The increase in manpower subdued the public outcry for defense, but did little else.

The bombing at Pearl Harbor forced America out of its isolation into a world on fire. For the first time in two decades, American men would leave home to fight for freedom.

Training

America was ill-prepared to train the huge numbers of men required to fight a global war. For example, in 1940 only General and Special Service schools were in place to train a small number of soldiers for specialized tasks, such as artillery maintenance, switchboard operations and the like. The field training of newly enlisted soldiers was left to individual units scattered around bases all over the U.S.

After the sneak attack, this method proved too slow and cumbersome to maintain when a huge number of citizens volunteered for duty. Since early 1940, "Replacement Training Centers" were developed to teach massive numbers of recruits in a swift and efficient fashion. At the time it was seen as a step towards war footing for a war maybe years in the future. Later it was seen as as a happy coincidence that proved useful when need pressed. Large numbers of volunteers were sent to these RTC camps instead of the standard unit training for the first time in December 1941.

Basic Training

At the beginning of the war with Japan, twelve ground force training centers were in place to train newly inducted soldiers in the U.S. Army. Over the next three years, another thirty-two training areas were created to teach the huge amount of soldiers necessary to fight in a war on two fronts.

Early on, training did not adequately prepare American soldiers for the war. Many techniques taught were obsolete or completely useless, based on outdated notions from the Great War. Soldiers were trained with inadequate or antique equipment (sometimes without any equipment at all), and were taught to fight either a static-front war (like the trench warfare of the Great War), or in a dim and poorly realized imitation of the German *blitzkrieg*. The implications of the Germans' "lightning war" were still not fully understood by American commanders at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack.

By the later half of 1942, a wave of modernization swept the American armed forces, and basic training became a much more efficient and effective process.

Dozens of highly specialized skills were taught to soldiers during basic training, including: how to use and maintain equipment in the field, map reading, marking and artillery sighting, hygiene in the field, aircraft recognition, radio protocol, concealment, first aid, and dealing with POWs, booby traps, civilians and more.

In seventeen weeks, citizens were converted to effective and competent soldiers.

OCS and Service Schools

Officer Candidate Schools were facilities to train enlisted soldiers to meet the requirements needed to fulfill the role of an officer in the Army. Training usually lasted fifteen to seventeen weeks, and covered hundreds of detailed and difficult concepts. At the end of this time, candidates were either recommended for a commission or returned to normal enlisted status.

Service Schools were specialty schools that taught complex skills such as artillery maintenance, tank destroyer combat tactics, parachute school or anti-aircraft artillery usage. Both enlisted men and officers attended Service Schools.

Talents in the U.S. Army

In the U.S. Army, Talents, for the most part, were members of special commando units called Talent Operation Groups or TOGs. For more information on TOG training, equipment and skills see **Part Nine: TOG Commando Squads** on p. 296.

Life in the U.S. Army

Boot camp for the U.S. Army was a series of strictly regimented phases of training. Personal time was limited to a few minutes before and after lights out; past that it was work, work, work. After boot camp, things often shifted to the opposite end of the spectrum.

Troops waiting for deployment or assignment often had nothing but personal time. Commanders did their best to keep the troops occupied by calling impromptu marching drills, random work details and other pointless activities, but often it just degenerated into a waiting game.

Once deployed, life in the U.S. Army truly began for the common foot soldier. While many soldiers in the Army never lived in the field, those that did soon discovered a completely new way of living. Most nights were spent in foxholes or other handmade contrivances to avoid the weather and enemy fire. When nature called, it was answered in slit trenches or latrines. Food was ferried to the front on foot along with ammunition and any news to be had.

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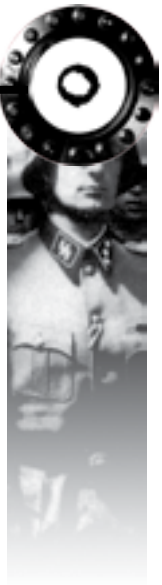

Food in the field was a mixed lot. Sometimes hot food was found in rear areas, but often all that was available were field rations. Since building a fire in a forward location was a sure way of drawing enemy fire, cold meals were often the norm on the line.

When possible (and feasible) troops were billeted in civilian houses within disputed towns. Officers laid claim to the ritzy and most comfortable accommodations to be found, while the enlisted men were just happy to be out of the rain—anything with a roof would do.

Looting was commonplace. Anything small and valuable was especially coveted, since it could be easily carried, and just as easily snuck back to the U.S. As usual, officers had their pick of the booty before enlisted men, although many officers refused to tolerate brazen looting—and punishments were sometimes quite severe.

A much more accepted and public practice was the recovery of enemy equipment and weapons. The trading and collection of enemy gear was common, and rare enemy items were used as barter in rear areas for food, equipment or weapons. Every soldier, if they could, took something to show the folks at home.

All in all, life in the U.S. Army in the field was a brutal, eye-opening experience that made men appreciate what they left behind—and in turn made them fight that much harder.

The Media

In World War II, for the first time, the media had a definite impact on the war—not just the other way around. Propaganda, used to great effect near the end of World War I, was made a central and important new method of warfare. For the first time, the United States concentrated on destroying an enemy's will to fight, not just its ability.

The media on both sides of the conflict tried to shape and mold their individual cultures towards victory with songs, movies and literature on a scale never before seen. Artists in the Third Reich erected 90-foot statues of the Aryan man and painted portraits of serene blue-eyed warriors, while in the U.S. Mickey Mouse and Popeye went to war against the Axis, with Bugs Bunny personally unleashing anarchy on the Reich. Nothing, not even elements central to the identity of a culture were exempt from this "artistic draft."

Arguably, the fascist powers had the strongest and most pervasive propaganda resources. They hoped to whip their masses into a frenzy that no outside power could crush. In the end, propaganda alone was not enough.

The Media and the War

In the 1940s, the media in all its forms played a huge role in the war on both sides of the conflict. Newsmen, photographers, radiomen, animators, and motion picture directors did as they were instructed to by their government, and not just in the fascist countries. Personal gain and vision were discarded, or shaped so that they coincided with the war effort. Everyone understood the world was at stake.

In the United States, certain unspoken rules existed on what was presented on the radio, in the newspapers or the movies. The national media reflected the social mores of the time. Nothing directly derogatory was ever printed or said about the President, except in certain right wing, underground papers. His illness (polio) was rarely, if ever, mentioned. Photographers snapped still shots of the President seated or standing (held in place by stiff metal braces). In some of the more rural areas of the United States, many people had no idea Roosevelt couldn't even walk.

Once the war was on, that was that. The American media machine was behind it all the way. An entire division of Warner Brothers studios was incorporated into the U.S. Army, and set about making all manner of propaganda, public safety and military training films. Movie superstars joined the armed forces in large numbers. Jimmy Stewart signed up for the Army Air Corps and went on to fly twenty combat missions over Europe. Clark Gable flew along on bombing missions into occupied Europe as well, filming documentaries for the folks back home. Stars-to-be, such as Lee Marvin, Eddie Albert and Charles Bronson also fought, along with three Presidents-to-be; John F. Kennedy, Gerald Ford and George Bush.

The stars who stayed behind in the states collected for war bonds, played United Service Organization (USO) events at home and abroad, acted in, wrote and produced films for the government, and kept the morale of the troops high.

Radio brought the war home every night to the American listener. Edward R. Murrow, transmitting on the CBS network, reported from the air-siege of London in the summer of 1940, to the riotously happy crowds of Trafalgar Square on Victory Europe day in April 1945.

Newsreels—short films reporting events from around the world—brought the realities of war home to the common American. Many were propaganda, showing only what the government wanted shown, and the national media was more than willing to follow the government's lead. News stories that would have sold millions of papers were discarded due to their delicate military significance. Scandalous information (such as the well-known fact that Stalin ran his country much the same way Hitler did) was overlooked and not reported. Everything in the U.S. pointed towards the Allies as the relentless white knight, freeing an enslaved humanity from tyranny.

In Britain, the newsreel was used to best effect. In a land where enemy bombers threatened every moment, the British film industry was able to invigorate and restore the public's morale after relentless attacks by Hitler's *Luftwaffe*. RAF pilots became media sensations, their faces printed on

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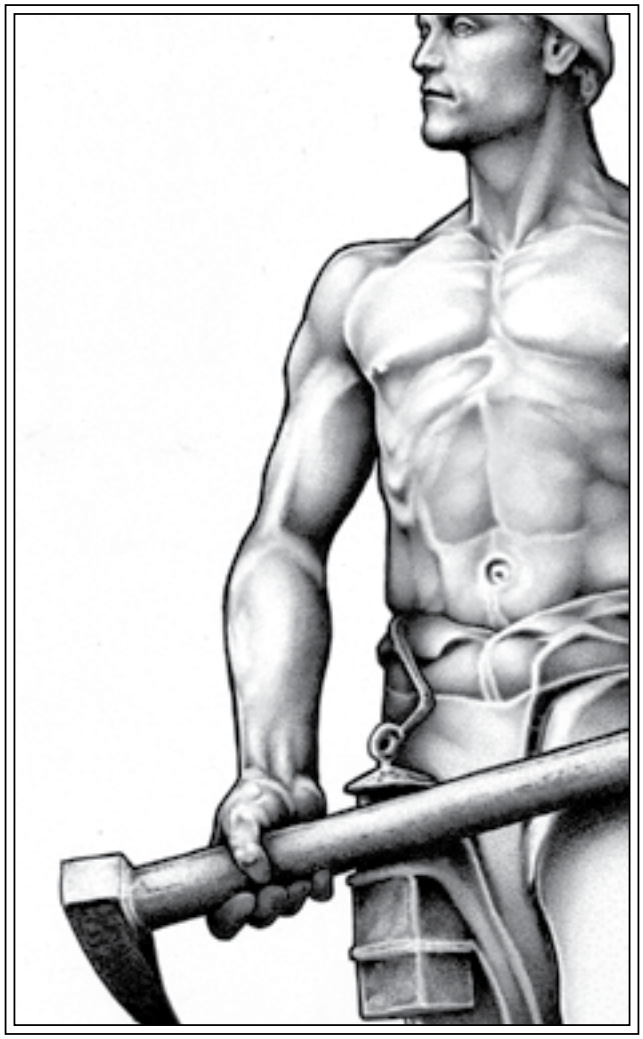
playing cards for the children of Britain to collect and trade. Newspapers printed daily kill totals for German aircraft (often exaggerated), and whipped the public into a combative frenzy unseen elsewhere—except for war-torn Russia. Soon the public was both ready for a fight on its own shores and prepared to go elsewhere to quash tyranny. A can-do attitude pervaded the starved, strained, besieged British Isles, and one man embodied it: Winston Churchill.

Winston Churchill's endless radio addresses to his nation brought out the pride and resentment in every free man, and won America over to his cause. When mainland Europe fell, only he saw hope; and without his brave, steady and cautious attitude, the British people wouldn't have had a rallying point, a national marker of pride and resistance. His smug bulldog grin and cigar were known the world over, for good reason. It was felt that if Britain resisted the advances of the Nazi regime, perhaps there was hope for the smaller countries as yet untouched by the war.

In Germany, film propaganda was put to great use. Leni Reifestahl's *Triumph of the Will* was a powerful piece of military propaganda. It portrayed Nazi Germany as it hoped to be, a relentless army of like-minded race warriors, bent on the destruction of all in their path. Its seas of swastika flags and silent, torch-bearing crowds were hypnotizing to watch. Hitler's mastery of the pulpit was given lavish attention by Reifestahl's groundbreaking camera work. Hitler took full advantage of the advent of film propaganda, and his iron grip on the German psyche soon became a mania. Minister of Propaganda Dr. Josef Goebbels oversaw film, radio and print production for the greater German Reich, filling German minds with the adoration of the *Führer* above all else. Children were raised singing songs of love for their leader, young women were impregnated out of wedlock to produce future race-warriors, and droves of young men joined the German armed forces to protect the world from racial degeneration and the worldwide Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy. So great was the hold of this web of lies that many refused to live after they learned of their leader's death.

"Propaganda, propaganda, propaganda," Hitler once said, when asked what was needed for a better Germany. It is ironic that his propaganda mill, one of the best in the war, was partially responsible for blinding the German public to the impending threat of invasion. In just this one instance, Allied analysts were quite happy with the efficiency of Hitler's lie machine.



Popular Entertainment

The most popular and pervasive entertainment medium of the war years was radio. By the 1940s, only twenty years into radio's rise, thousands of shows and news programs covered every possible wavelength. At any hour of the day or night, something was on.

Radio began its rise to glory in the U.S. in 1920 with the transmission of election returns from station KDKA in Pittsburgh. From there, it skyrocketed in popularity, in less than a year twenty stations were broadcasting in the United States. By the end of the decade hundreds of stations existed with the number increasing daily.

In the early days, the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) with its Red and Blue networks, the Columbia Broadcast Network (CBS) and the Mutual radio network dominated the airwaves. Hundreds of smaller affiliates and independents existed in rural areas, but, for the most part, these three giants owned the medium.

Soap operas, educational programs, news programs, music, sports and even religious programming could be found on every station. Radio programming varied from station to station. Popular shows of the 1930s and 1940s included *Your Hit Parade, The Will Rogers Show, What's the Name of that Song?, Walter Winchell, Truth or Consequences, Superman, The Shadow, The Quiz Kids, The Red Skelton Show, The Milton Berle Show, The Lone Ranger, Little Orphan Annie, The Jack Benny Program, The Green Hornet, Flash Gordon, Fibber McGee and Molly, The Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy Program, Death Valley Days, Captain Midnight, The Buster Brown Gang, Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* and *The Bob Hope Show.*

Movies remained a strong draw on the entertainment dollar, just as they had in the darkest depths of the depression. People wanted distraction from the war and its hardships. Stars like Orson Welles, Humphrey Bogart, Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant drew in crowd after crowd to some of the most memorable movies ever made: *Casablanca, Citizen Kane, High Sierra, The Maltese Falcon, The Magnificent Ambersons* and *Spellbound.*

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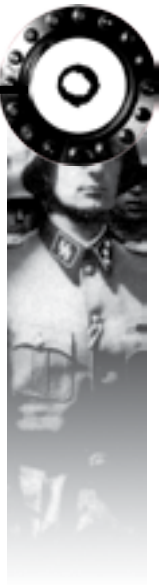

People also went to the movies to see the news of the world in the newsreels, *The March of Time* being the most famous. Every week, carefully planned stories kept the American public informed of the ongoing war in packed movie houses across the nation. For many, this was their only chance to see what was going on in the world.

Talents

Talents are the real force that drives the world of *Godlike*. Though their powers are limited, and they effect few major changes in the war, their importance is not to be underestimated. During the war years, nearly everything dealt with Talents in one way or another. They represented the best and the worst mankind had to offer.

Talents and the Public Imagination in the War Years

Beginning with the appearance of *Der Flieger* in 1936, the entire world became fascinated with the Talent phenomenon. The Flying Man dominated world news for months, and was the focus of numerous books, pamphlets, newsletters, films and even comic books. Before Nazi Germany began to antagonize its neighbors, *Der Flieger* was seen as one of the greatest men in the world, more popular than both President Roosevelt and Charles Lindbergh combined. He was as good-looking as a movie star and he could *fly*. Women swooned when they saw him, reporters followed his every move, and he was the subject of discussion of every major government of the world.

However, that was when he was the only one.

With the advent of war, and the increasing population of Talents, the public found itself with a second bevy of "stars" to fawn over, and a new pantheon of enemies to hate. The Nazi *Übermenschen* were portrayed as almost comically evil, while Allied Talents could do no wrong (or if they did, the Allied press said nothing about it).

The British Talents were the first Allied Talents to gain public notoriety on a global scale.

The real public frenzy began in 1941, with the Lend-Lease publicity Talent tour of the "British Four." These four individuals became some of the most famous people in the U.S. overnight, because they could do the impossible. By the end of their tour, they were hobnobbing with Howard Hughes and the elite of the nation.

When America gained its first Talent in the winter of 1941, the world knew that more were on the way. Soon, hundreds of Talents existed; then thousands, and the public found them satisfying in a way Hollywood fame could never supply. Anyone could become a Talent; anyone could dream.

Early on, there was Hollywood and there were the Talents, and sometimes, these two worlds overlapped. Minor Talents were often used in Armed Forces training films and other small productions. As their population increased, Hollywood and the Talent phenomenon became enmeshed inextricably. The Indestructible Man was linked romantically with Lana Turner, The Flat Man appeared in numerous comedies, and the American Talent Kilroy became a fixture in dozens of films, culminating in an appearance with Jimmy Stewart in *It's a Wonderful Life* in 1946. Orson Welles, F.W. Murnow and Walt Disney all employed Talents in their productions during and after the war.

The war was the focus of the Talent phenomenon, of course. Clashes of Talents in war-torn areas of Europe or Africa were the headlines, painting the general disposition of war in broad terms everybody could follow. The governments of the world used these parahuman clashes as propaganda, and endless newsreels of Talents using their abilities in combat were shown to packed movie houses, to reassure the public the war effort was going their way.

The world changed overnight.

Arthur M. Pinell of the Princeton School of Psychology, Parapsychology and Physics summed it up in his book *There Were Giants in Those Days:* "Once upon a time, the world was understood, and things did not deviate from a set of rules called science which man had painstakingly constructed since the beginning of recorded history. There were rules that no one could breach. Rules like inertia, gravity and time.

"Then the giants returned and re-wrote the rules with the power of their will.

"Nothing has been the same since that summer in 1936, and nothing will ever be the same again. If I concentrate I can remember what the world felt like before, when I was a child. But the event that changed it all looms in my mind like an immense chasm. A gap between the world as it should be and the world as it is today."

Developing the Use of Talents in Combat

When only a handful of Talents existed, they were little more than a propaganda tool for world governments. Many were useful in combat, but only in a very limited capacity. Some Talents (such as *Der Flieger*) were effective in large-scale battles, others (such as The Indestructible Man) were of limited use on the battlefield, and many were seen as too valuable to risk.

As the phenomenon began to blossom and Talents became less unique, the utilization of Talent powers in combat grew. When significant numbers of Talents existed, most governments began using them as Commandos and spies. By their very nature, Talents were extremely useful as behind the line combatants. The British Special Operations Executive trained and utilized hundreds of Talents during the war, as did the German *Abwehr*. These missions usually involved sabotage, intelligence gathering or assassination.

By late 1941, when Talent numbers increased even more, the Germans and British pioneered the use of Talents in large-scale combat. Utilizing small "shock troop" teams of Talents to turn flanks or encircle enemy positions, or to transport normal troops far beyond enemy lines, the British and Germans changed the face of warfare. Such Talent-led attacks enjoyed incredible success, and, when feasible, became the preferred method of combat. However, unknown Talents on the battlefield remained a significant threat. Men who could suddenly fight on par with an entire battalion distorted the natural balance of warfare, and led to an uncertainty in combat that had never really been seen before. No operation was an absolute certain success any longer.

Military analysts solved the problem by early 1942. With the ever-growing population of Talents, it was determined that it would be best to spread as many Talents

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around in front line units as possible. Since only Talents could detect other Talents, and they had the best chance of stopping other Talents, they would be put in the front line to take the brunt of such attacks. Small smatterings of Talents were placed in front line scout and shock troop units, to offset any advantage the enemy might have in Talent capability.

When the Talent population of the world reached its projected peak (as determined by Allied analysts), many Talents were already being utilized as service troops, using their abilities to teleport, lift or otherwise move material, equipment or men to the front line, to fuel the war effort.

When a surplus of Talents was reached in most countries, many were gathered in acting squads or divisions that operated like normal forces, with the added benefit of their paranormal abilities. They were basically, super-armies.

By the end of the war, Talents were used in all of these different capacities simultaneously, on all fronts of the war.

Talents and the Law

In Milwaukee Wisconsin in1942, Louis Taft Jr. argued he was free to use his Talent ability anywhere he wished, as long as he did not destroy property or harm anybody. The government argued he caused such a spectacle with his levitation power that it disturbed the public peace. The government won the case handily, and the Taft laws soon began to spring up state to state. In some areas, they were overlooked (I mean who doesn't want to see a man fly?), in others; they were enforced to the letter. Either way, the laws never became Federal legislation.

The use of Talent powers in the armed forces were a different matter altogether, and was handled by military justice, independent of the U.S. Constitution. A general rule for Talents in most armed forces in Allied countries was "don't use 'em until you have to." Military Talents knew they were prime targets for snipers and other enemy Talents if they used their powers in a provocative or pointless way. In rear areas however, Talent "roughhousing" sometimes reached destructive levels, such as the Caen July riot of 1945. This problem was so severe that in 1945, a special section of the Military Police was formed: the Talent Military Police, to handle the troublemaking minority.

Talent looters and thieves were dealt with harshly. In one 1945 case, an Army Captain who could teleport prodigious distances was convicted of attempting to smuggle 200 pounds of Nazi gold from occupied Germany. Despite the value of his ability, he was sent to Leavenworth for fifty years and kept on a steady diet of sedatives (and he was considered lucky!)

Incarceration of criminal Talents was an apparently difficult task that was surprisingly easy to overcome. Non-violent Talents were given a chance to demonstrate their good behavior; failing that, they were drugged to a point where they could not use their powers (or kept under constant supervision by Zed Talents). Extremely violent or escape-prone Talents were sometimes subjected to lobotomies to prevent the use of their powers. (This type of brain surgery was just coming into vogue in the 1940s; "Super-Man" O'Malley was the most famous case.) Most Talents who crossed the law learned quickly that the government didn't fool around when it came to crime and Talent powers.

As President Roosevelt put it, "The responsibility inherently tied to such a power precludes abuse. Or the government's acceptance of such abuse."

The Taft Laws of the United States

The Taft laws set clear precedent in American law. Beginning with *Wisconsin vs. Taft* in 1942, hundreds of laws were passed governing the use and abuse (and punishment for said abuse) of Talent powers in the states. However, the problems evident in such laws were obvious from the start.

Since Talents could sidestep physical laws, they could also sidestep the normal judicial process. The government was, for a time, at a loss. How could a crime where a man could teleport a body into space or disintegrate it with his mind be prosecuted?

It turned out that such prosecutions would not be difficult at all.

The earliest prosecution for a Talent-accomplished murder was in 1951, in the famous *New York vs. Tagliano "The Eraser"* case. Enzo Tagliano, a Talent (and former Ranger), known as "The Eraser," assassinated a person with his power for the Genovese crime syndicate in front of several eyewitnesses.

Although there was no body and the Prosecution's case looked thin, Tagliano made the mistake of refusing to demonstrate his Talent ability to the court, on the grounds that it was self-incriminating. The judge ruled that this was the equivalent of refusing to provide a fingerprint or blood sample, but let the case continue. With this tiny shred of evidence in their favor, the prosecutors made the case not about the murder, but about Tagliano's honesty. Tagliano was convicted by the jury and given life in prison for his crime.

Taft crimes were rare however. Most Talents who survived the war found a productive (and often lucrative) way to use their powers.

The Drafting of Talents

During the war years, many countries had mandatory enlistment policies for those with parahuman powers. Great Britain, Russia, Germany, Australia, Japan, Canada and India all had a mandatory draft for parahumans. America, however, did not. These policies rarely came up, however. Patriotism played a large part in enlistment and service of citizens in the military. Few refused the "request" of their respective governments, even when they had a choice.

Nearly every active Talent from every country in the world served in the war, one way or another.

The Military Hierarchy and Talents

Talents were not pampered in most military organizations. In fact, some governments treated their parahumans much more harshly than regular recruits. The U.S. Marines for example, had a separate "Talent Boot Camp" (aka "Hell's Motel") on Paris Island. Those who survived this training without suffering heat stroke, or much more serious maladies, were afforded a special "Pitchfork"

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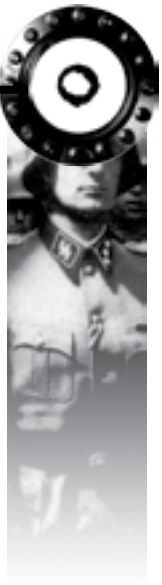

patch.

Despite this extensive (and often quite dangerous) extra training, animosity often existed between regular troops and Talents, who were seen as "privileged." This perception was not entirely inaccurate; in most armed forces, Talents got the best supplies, food, equipment and uniforms to boost their morale and in turn to boost the performance of their abilities.

Talents often rose rapidly through the ranks. In Germany and the United States, many Talents were often given officers' training from day one. Though few Talents survived long enough to rise very far on either side of the conflict, a select few made it to ranks where they were no longer required to use their powers in combat.

Talent Prisoners of War

The British pioneered the handling and incarceration of enemy Talent prisoners of war. A psychological method of coercion was decided upon. For example, German Talents were informed they would be turned over to Russian forces for a "military trial," or that RAF command would drop a few stray bombs on their family's house during dinnertime. The British intelligence machine, second to none at the time, had many different levers to call upon to move Talents towards good behavior. Most world governments (except the Japanese and the Germans) settled upon this psychological method to control Talent POWs.

Escape attempts did occur, the most famous being the escape of *Der Habicht* ("The Hawk") from a Boston transitory camp for prisoners captured during the Battle of the Bulge. For four days, the entire city of Boston was on the lookout for the German youth. With no real conception of the geography or the sheer size of the United States, he finally surrendered in Layeville, North Carolina after flying more than seven hundred miles. From that point on, he was kept sedated for the rest of his internment to prevent the use of his flight power.

On the other hand, the Germans and Japanese did not see enemy Talents as humans at all. Consequently, they considered Talents exempt from the protections afforded POWs by the Geneva Convention. Both the Germans and the Japanese performed horrible experiments upon their captives, testing the use and extent of Talent POWs' abilities.

The Japanese in particular performed inhuman experiments and torture on American and British Talents captured in the Far East Theater. In one case, the Australian parahuman Corporal Garrison "Gravedigger" Graves had all four limbs amputated four times without anesthesia. Unit 731 hoped to discover by repeated observation just how his regeneration power worked to restore his limbs, by cutting them off over and over again.

Many Allied Talents caught behind enemy lines opted to commit suicide instead of facing an uncertain and most likely torture-filled future in an Axis death camp.

Slang

The language of the 1940s was rich with slang and colloquialisms not used today, many of which were military terms. They may sound strange to the modern ear, but they were once an important part of life. Encouraging the players in your group to use slang appropriate to the time can add a new level of enjoyment to a *Godlike* campaign.

Slang marked with a bullet hole (○) denotes terms used to describe Talent abilities.

A

○ **A Direct Line to God, he has:** Any Talent who is immune to damage.
Amscray: "Pig-Latin" for scram, meaning to get out, or leave.
Ack Ack: Anti-aircraft fire.
Archies or Archy: Anti-aircraft guns.
Applesauce, Bushwah: Garbage, baloney, bullshit.
AWOL: Absent WithOut Leave.

B

Battery Acid, Blackout, Blackstrap, Paint Remover: Army coffee.
To Bat One's Gums: To talk, converse or speak.
Blitz: An all out attack.
The Brush Off: To ignore or overlook someone.
○ **Bulldozer:** A super-strong Talent.
Bughouse: An insane asylum.
The Business: A beating or attack.
Brass Hat, Butch, The Man: An officer.

C

Camp Happy: Crazed.
Can: Toilet or latrine.
Cat Stabber, Cheese Toaster: A bayonet.
C.B.: Confined to Barracks.
Chairborne: Officers or soldiers who work behind the lines at desks.
Charity Girl: An easy woman. A sexually active woman.
Cheesecake: Pictures or pin-ups of attractive women.
Chew Out: To yell at or scold.
Chow, Grub: Food.
C.O.: Commanding Officer.
Combat Fatigue, Shell Shock, the Shakes, the Heebie Jeebees: A nervous condition brought on by combat. What would now be known as posttraumatic stress disorder.
Croot, Rookie, Greenie: Recruit.
Cut a Rug: To dance.
Cutting Out Paper Dolls: Crazy, insane.

D

Dame: A woman.
Digger, Aussie: An Australian.

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Dog-Tag: The identification tag worn by soldiers.
○ **Dud:** A bomb or explosive which fails to detonate, or a useless Talent power.
Dummy Up: To shut up.

F

Fall In: To assemble in formation.
Fella: Fellow, guy, man.
Flak: Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
Four F: The designation for those who failed the physical examination to join the U.S. Armed forces.
Foxhole: A ditch or pit dug to hide in, and to protect a trooper from enemy fire.
FUBAR: "Fucked Up Beyond All Recognition."

G

G.I.: General Issue or Government Issue. A term used in reference to American servicemen.
G.I. Jesus: An army priest.
G.I. Joe: A term for a common U.S. soldier, from "Government Issue" and "Joe Blow."
○ **German Yellow Fowl:** Derogatory term referring to *Der Flieger* or any other flying German Talent.
Goldbrick: To loaf or goof off.
Grunt: A soldier.

H

Hotbox, Can, Widow Maker: A Tank.
○ **Hotfoot, to give one the:** To use a fire-based Talent power.
HQ: Headquarters.

I

In Like Flynn: A term meaning success in sexual endeavors. After the actor Errol Flynn.

J

Jack: Money.
Jumping Jesus: An Army priest in a paratrooper unit.
Jap, Nip, Slant, Slope, Yellow Bastard: A Japanese soldier.

K

Kraut, One of the Kaiser's Boys, Nazi, Jerry: A German soldier.
Knucklehead: An idiot.
KP Duty: Kitchen Patrol or Kitchen Police, punishment for soldiers.

L

Lead Injection, Lead Poisoning: Death or injury by gunfire.
○ **Leadproof:** A bullet proof Talent.
Leatherneck: A U.S. Marine.
Louie, Loogie: Lieutenant.
Limey, Brit, Tommy: A British soldier.

M

Mae West: A life jacket.
Meatball: An idiot.
Meat Wagon: An ambulance.
Mopping Up: Clearing out remaining enemy forces after a victory.
○ **Muscles:** A super-strong Talent.
○ **My Invisible Friend:** A euphemism for telekinesis.

N

Non-Com: Non-commissioned officer.
Nookie: Sex.
Now You're Cooking With Gas: Modern, up to date, good.

P

Palooka: An idiot.
Pecker Checker, Penis Machinist: An Army doctor.
Pill Roller, Pill Pusher: Medical corps soldier, field medic.
Pineapple: A nickname for the M2A1 Hand Grenade.
Pin Up: A publicity shot of a beautiful woman, usually a movie star.
○ **Poof:** To teleport.
○ **Popper:** A teleporter.
POW: Prisoner of War.
Pull Rank: To force someone of lower rank to follow orders.
Pull a Jap: To surprise or startle.
Prop Jockey: Pilot.
○ **Propless Wonder:** A Talent who can fly.
PX: Post Exchange, an army mercantile store.

R

Red, One of Uncle Joe's Boys: A Russian soldier.
○ **Raines, to pull a Claude:** To use a Talent power to disappear. After Claude Raines, the actor, who played the Invisible Man.
R&R: Rest and relaxation or rest and recuperation.

S

Sad Sack: An unpopular or unproductive person.
○ **Steel Straightjacket, He needs a:** In reference to a Talent with a mental illness.
Sap: A foolish person.
Skirt: A woman.
SNAFU: "Situation Normal, All Fucked Up."
Swell: Good, nice, okay.
Sore: Pissed off, mad.

T

○ **Talent:** A person possessing parahuman powers, or a parahuman power itself.

U

○ ***Überkraut:*** Derogatory term for any German Talent.

V

V-Girl: A sexually promiscuous woman who will sleep with soldiers.

W

○ **We Die First:** Bastardization of the Talent Operations Group shoulder patch "We Go First."

Z

○ **Zed:** A Talent power which cancels out other physical Talent powers. From British slang for "z," the first letter of "zero."

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"The devastating accuracy of this gunfire was the most beautiful sight I have ever witnessed."

—U.S. Naval observer at Surigao Strait

A Note On Firearms

Definitive information on firearms is difficult to come by. The following statistics were uncovered poring through volumes of material (often filled with contradictory information). There are bound to be mistakes. These errors are mine, not those of my sources. I hope any mistakes will be small enough to be easily overlooked and not hinder game play. If something doesn't seem to make sense, or suit your game, feel free to change it.

Listed Ranges

Despite great efforts to locate a list of "true" ranges for weapons of World War II, no definitive source could be found, only incidental reports of "effective ranges" from combat memoirs and such.

The ranges listed are supposed to reflect "effective range in combat." That is, the range listed is that of the weapon being fired under less than ideal conditions (i.e., while under enemy fire.) Outside combat, the ranges listed on rifles and pistols are doubled.

If you feel a range listed is not accurate, please feel free to cross it out and write your own in.

Penetration Listings

Penetration listings for weapons are added the width of the attack roll before reducing armor, but only to a maximum of *double* the Penetration value. Damage bonuses *are not* counted towards this total.

Example: Butch fires his Bazooka (Penetration value of 5) at a Panther V tank (HAR of 7). His Coordination+Bazooka is 6d, and he rolls a 5, 5, 6, 1, 5, and a 7, for a 3x5 match. The Bazooka's listed Penetration value is 5, but since Butch made a width 3 match, 3 is added to the Penetration value. So, Butch's Bazooka round hits the Panther tank with a Penetration value of 8, punching through its front armor.

If Butch had somehow rolled at 6x match, the Penetration of the Bazooka round would only have a Penetration of 10, since, at a maximum, extra width can only double the Penetration value of a weapon.

Penetration ratings listed with particular firearms are considered to be from "close" range only. Depending how complicated you want your *Godlike* game to be, you can simply make such Penetration ratings work the same regardless of range, or modify them for distance. Otherwise, assume penetrating weapons are half as effective at twice the same range (round down.)

Of course, the effectiveness of explosives such as anti-tank grenades and armor piercing rockets do not decrease at distance; the penetrating effect is carried along with the rocket or grenade, not in the actual launching of the weapon itself. As long as the weapon is within its listed range of attack, its Penetration ratings remains the same.

Example: Klaus fires a MG42 loaded with 7.92 SmK (H) rounds at a half-track at 400 yards. Usually the rounds have Penetration 2. But 400 yards is long range so they only have a Penetration rating of 1.

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Reloading Times

How long does it take to reload a particular weapon? The default answer for infantry weapons (rifles, submachine guns, machineguns and pistols) is "one combat round." If a weapon has a Slow rating associated with it, then add its Slow rating in rounds to that.

Base Damage of Weapons

Depending how complicated you want combat to be, you can either use modifiers for different ammunition types (so a 7.92 SmK round is more damaging than a 7.92 Mauser round), or use damage for each weapon type (so every machine gun is as damaging as any other machine gun, despite the ammunition type used).

Additional damage, Penetration and Area affects of ammunition are listed at the beginning of each weapons section. To determine what kind of performance an individual weapon has with a different ammunition type, simply add the round's modifiers to the base damage rating of the weapon.

> ***Example:*** Shotzy wants to fire a MG42 loaded with 7.92 SmK (H) ammunition, instead of standard 7.92 mm ammunition. With the new ammunition type, the weapon inflicts width+3 in shock and killing damage to a human target per hit instead of width+2. In addition, it has Penetration 2 at close range.

Base Damage Rating Tabl

Weapon Type	Base Damage Rating
Pistol	Width in killing and in shock.
Carbine	Width +1 in killing, width shock.
Long rifle	Width +2 in killing and shock.
Submachine gun	Width in killing and shock.
Machine gun	Width+2 in killing and shock.
Grenade	Width+1 in killing and shock+Area dice. All targets in 10 yards take 2 shock to each hit location.
Anti-personnel mine	See rules on this page.
Anti-tank rocket	Width+1 in killing and shock+Area dice.
Mortar	Width+2 in killing and shock damage+Area dice. All targets in 10 yards take 2 shock to each hit location.
Cannon	Width+3 in killing and shock damage+Area dice. All targets in 20 yards take 2 shock to each hit location.
Flamethrower	1 killing+Area dice+Burn (each hit location is on fire except the head).

Note: Area dice are only rolled if the target is hit. Otherwise the shot goes wide and they are ignored. It's usually simplest to use one Area roll for all targets in the blast radius, but you can roll for each separately for variety. If a blast is concentrated on a single target or in a tight space, double the Area damage.

For a direct hit with a rocket, mortar or cannon, if it penetrates armor the target takes all Area dice in the indicated hit location, and Area damage applies to all targets both inside and outside the armor. If it fails to penetrate, Area damage applies only to targets outside the armor.

It's a Game, People

The statistics presented in this section are part of a *game*. Games are supposed to be *fun*. In *Godlike,* this means that the listings for weapons and vehicles are simplified for ease of reference and use. If you want to flip through hundreds of tables, charts and pages to locate the damage, range, recoil, weight, color and year of manufacture for each and every weapon in World War II, sorry, you won't find it here. Books on pistols for the period sometimes top 900 pages; did you really think you'd find it all in this chapter?

Keep in mind that it's a game. If you don't like what you see or don't agree with a statistic, change it and get back to having fun.

> ***Example:*** Ivan throws a grenade at a German in a foxhole who's feeding ammunition to his two compatriots. Ivan's Coordination+Grenade is 6, and he rolls 6, 4, 9, 5, 7 and 7. A 2x7 hit. *Only then* are the 3d Area dice of the grenade thrown, for a 1, 5 and a 5. So the main target takes 3 killing and 3 shock points damage to his torso (the initial 2x7 hit+1 for grenade damage,) 2 points of shock to all hit locations, 1 point of killing to the left leg (the 1) and 2 points of killing to his right arm (the 5s)
>
> His compatriots take 2 shock points to all hit locations, 1 point of killing to their left legs and 2 points of killing to their right arms from the Area dice.

A Note On Mines

Mines attack only when a target passes over them, so a high level of finesse on the part of the operator is not necessary (all that's needed is a skill in mine-laying; without that, even setting up a mine becomes a dangerous task). A mine is triggered automatically when a stray step or significant weight is placed upon it. Unlike a typical Area explosion, the blast focuses upward into the victim or vehicle that triggered it.

A standard anti-personnel mine does 1 point of killing to each hit location rolled on the Area dice. In addition, each odd Area die does 2 killing to the victim's left leg and each even Area die does 2 killing to the victim's right leg. Finally, the victim takes 4 shock to every hit location.

A standard anti-tank mine does all its Area damage to the vehicle's hit location that activated the mine, usually a front wheel or tread. See p. 307 for optional details.

In addition, each person within 5 yards of any mine's blast takes 2 shock to each hit location and 1 killing to each location indicated by the Area dice.

A mine always uses its base Penetration rating, not modified by the width of an attack roll.

> ***Example:*** Captain Rickoff steps on a land mine. The mine's 5 Area dice against him roll 4,8,5,4,10. Rickoff takes 2 killing to his left arm (the 4s) and 1 each to his right arm (5), torso (8) and head (10). Next he takes 8 killing to his right leg (the 4s, 8 and 10) and 2 killing to his left leg (the 5). Finally he takes 4 Shock to every location. It's a bad day for Captain Rickoff.

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Axis Weapons

For much of the war the Axis enjoyed an arsenal of weaponry superior to the Allies. German tanks were nearly invulnerable to Allied anti-tank methods early in the war, while the Japanese Mitsubishi "Zero" was the fastest and most maneuverable aircraft flying during the first years of the conflict in the Pacific.

These innovations came at great cost. Because of these innovations, the Axis failed to keep up with the production of the far more productive Allies, who stuck to several tried and true designs for all their weaponry. Axis weaponry was often over-complicated and ill conceived for use in the field. When it did work, it worked marvelously; when it didn't, designers often went back to the drawing board. Valuable production time was consumed building replacement parts or re-tooling flawed products.

In the end, Axis technology defeated itself.

Weaponry of the Third Reich

For much of the Second World War, the Third Reich had access to some of the most advanced weapons technology on the planet. Jet aircraft, guided missiles, assault rifles and night vision goggles were all created by the scientists of Nazi Germany to aid the Axis war machine. But these significant advancements failed to make a major impact on the war. The double snafu of political bureaucracy and poor deployment eliminated any edge these (often breakthrough) technologies had on the battlefield.

Arguably, the most significant advancement in warfare, the man-portable anti-tank rocket, was created by Germany as well. Its use among all the armed forces of the world effectively ended (or at least lessened) the reign of the tank over the infantryman.

Cartridge Types

Several different cartridges were used by the German military during the war, each with its own special characteristics. To determine the Penetration or other special qualities of an individual weapon please consider the following chart, and compare it to the type of ammunition used by the weapon in question. Add the modifiers to the base damage of the weapon.

For ease of reference, tank and artillery rounds are included here as well.

German Cartridge & Shell Ratings Table

Cartridge	Extra Damage*/Penetration†/Area Rating
7.92 mm	0/0/0
7.92 mm *Mauser*	0/0/0
7.92 sS	+1/1/0
(sS: *Schweres Spitzgeschoss,* "Heavy Pointed Bullet")	
7.92 SmK	+1/1/0
(SmK: *Spitzgeschoss mit Kern,* "Pointed bullet with core")	
7.92 mm MkP	0/0/0
(MkP: *Maschinenkarabiner-Patrone,* "Machine carbine round")	
7.92 SmK (H)	+1/2/0
(*Hartkern,* "Hardened core")	
9mm Short	0/0/0
9mm	+1/0/0
9mm Parabellum	+1/0/0
13 mm PbG	+1/2/+Burn
(PbG: *Panzerbrandgranaten-Patrone,* "Armor piercing incendiary round")	
13mm Sg	+1/0/1+Burn
(Sg: *Sprenggranaten-Patrone,* "Explosive round—cartridge")	
15mm Pp	+2/2/0
(Pp: *Panzergranaten-Patrone*)	
20 mm Pp	+2/2/0
(Pp: *Panzergranaten-Patrone*)	
37 mm	+2/4/3
47 mm APCNR	+2/7/3
50 mm APCR	+3/8/4+Burn
75 mm APCR	+4/8/6+Burn
76 mm	+4/7/5+Burn
88 mm APCR	+8/8/8+Burn
105 mm (4.134 Inch)	+8/8/8+Burn
149 mm (5.87 Inch)	+10/9/10+Burn
175.2 mm (6.79 Inch)	+12/9/10+Burn
210.9 mm (8.3 Inch)	+14/10/10+Burn
238 mm (9.37 Inch)	+17/10/10+Burn
35.5 cm (14 Inch)	+20/10/10+Burn

* This extra damage is killing damage, applied to living targets only.

† Penetration ratings listed are for "close" range of each particular weapon against steel plate.

German Pistols

Several pistols were employed by Nazi forces in World War II, ranging form models as old as the P08 Luger (produced first in 1908) to as cutting edge as the P38 Walther. In early 1942, the P08 Luger was phased out of production and the P38 Walther became the pistol of choice for the *Heer*, although both models were found on German troops throughout the war.

German Pistol Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
P08 Luger	9mm Para	8	2.5	16/32
P38 Walther	9mm Para	8	4.5	16/32
Walther PP	9mm Short	8	1.5	14/30
Walther PPK	9mm Short	7	1.25	13/29

German Carbines

A carbine is a short rifle, used due to its lightweight and ease of manufacture. The Germans employed only one real carbine in the war; there were several other guns designated *Karabiner* but they were actually rifles.

German Carbine Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Karabiner 98K	7.92mm Mauser	7	8.58 lbs	100/400

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German Rifles

German rifles were weapons with good reputations, their design had only slightly changed since their inception in the years before World War I. Unfortunately, they were all bolt action, requiring the manual ejection of the shell after firing. This relatively slow rate of fire put them at a decided disadvantage against American and British rifles.

German Rifle Table

Carbine	Slow	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Gewehr 98	1	7.92mm	5	9.26	120/1000
Gewehr 41	1	7.92mm	10	11.5	120/1000
Gewehr 43	1	7.92mm	10	9.7	120/1000

German Assault Rifles

Germany was the first country to develop the assault rifle: an accurate rifle that could switch between single and fully automatic fire. The StGw 44 was the predecessor of the AK-47 and other heavy duty, accurate, semi- or fully automatic repeating rifles. Despite its outstanding record, Hitler's displeasure with the project put it on the shelf too long for it to make a difference in the war.

German Assault Rifle Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
StGw 44	0/2	7.92mm MkP	30	11.5	120/600 or 25/115

German Submachine Guns

The Germans used submachine guns in infantry support roles early in the conflict, changing the way war was waged. The amount of rounds fired by these potent weapons and their portability made them powerful tools for the infantry.

German Submachine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
MP 18	2	9mm	32	9.2	22/104
MP 34	2	9mm	32	11	22/104
MP 35	3	9mm	32	10.4	23/106
MP 38	1	9mm	32	8.75	25/110
MP 40	2	9mm	32	9.2	20/100

German Machine Guns

German machineguns were marvels of their time. Despite their cantankerous nature, they remained some of the best machine guns of the war—when they worked. Most of the weapons below can take any 7.92 mm round without difficulty. Many of these weapons were anti-aircraft guns converted to ground use, or weapons of foreign countries converted to the Reich's uses (those weapons followed by a "t" are of Czechoslovakian manufacture.)

German Machine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
MP 18	2	9mm	32	9.2	22/104
MG 34	4	7.92mm	50/75*	25.4	200/2000
MG 42	6	7.92mm	50*	25.4	200/2000
MG 26(t)	2	7.92mm	20	19.8	200/1550
MG 30 (t)	2	7.92mm	20	21.3	200/2000
MG 37 (t)	2/3	7.92mm Mauser	100 /200*	80.3	200/2500
MG 15	5	7.92mm Mauser	75†	32.5	200/2500
MG 81	6	7.92mm Mauser	50/75*	16.6	180/1500
MG 131	4	13mm PbG	250*	45.1	250/2750
MG 151	3	15mm Pp	250*	84.4	300/3000
MG 151/20	3	20mm Pp	250*	85.5	300/3000

* Capacity is by belt.
† Capacity is by magazine.

German Anti-Tank Weapons

The Germans were one of the first armed forces of the world to use anti-tank rocket technology. Before the advent of the *Panzerfaust* and *Panzerschreck*, anti-tank rifles, mines and explosives were used to eliminate tanks, with a limited degree of success. The anti-tank rocket placed infantry in a much more defensible situation against tanks on the battlefield.

German One-Use Anti-Tank Rockets

The *Panzerfaust* was a weapon of such innovative and simple design that its use during the war had a dramatic effect on tank tactics. Unfortunately for the Germans, many captured *Panzerfaust* rounds were used on German tanks by Allied forces.

Although there were attempts late in the war to develop the *Panzerfaust* into a reusable weapon, it was for the most part, a one-time use disposable weapon.

German One-Use Anti-Tank Rocket Table

Weapon	Penetration/Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Panzerfaust "Tank Fist" 30	7/8	4.75	16/32
Panzerfaust "Tank Fist" 60	7/8	4.75	30/60
Panzerfaust "Tank Fist" 100	7/8	4.75	50/100

German Reusable Anti-Tank Rockets

The *Raketenpanzerbüchse* was a German copy of the American "Bazooka," samples of which were captured in North Africa early in the war. Unlike the *Panzerfaust*, the *Panzerschreck* and *Raketenpanzerbüchse* were reusable weapons, and could be fired many times before replacement.

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German Reusable Anti-Tank Rocket Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Panzerschreck "Tank Terror"	2/5/6	32	90/180
Raketenpanzerbüchse 43	2/6/7	24.25	90/160

German Grenades

German forces developed dozens of grenades ranging from anti-tank explosives to anti-personnel grenades. The following is a list of the most basic types.

German Grenade Table

Weapon	Penetration/ Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Panzerwurfmine ("Tank Throw Mine")	6/8	4.4	10/25
Panzerhandmine ("Tank Hand Mine")	6/8	4.4	Hand Placed
Panzerhandgranate ("Tank Hand Grenade")	3/5	41.2kg	10/25
Hafthohlladung 3 ("Attach Hollow Charge")	6/6	6.6	Hand Placed
Brandflasche ("Incendiary Bottle")	Width in Killing+Burn	1	15/30
Brandhandgranate 48 ("Incendiary Hand Grenade")	Width in Killing+Burn	1.1	22/34
Stielhandgranate 24 ("Stick Hand Grenade")	3/4	480g	35/55
Handgranate 43 ("Hand Grenade Model 43")	3/4	165g	15/30
Einhandgranate 39 ("Egg Hand Grenade")	2/4	230g	25/50
Geballte Ladung ("Big Charge")	6/8	1470g	7/14

German Mortars

During World War II, the German armed forces utilized several different mortar types. The most common type, the *Granatwerfer 34*, or the 8 cm, was widely feared by Allied forces due to its portability, accuracy and effective range.

German Mortar Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
5 cm Granatwerfer 36	1/4/3	30.8	150/569
8 cm Granatwerfer 34	1/5/6	125	500/2,625
7.5 cm Infantriegeschütz 18	2/6/7	*	750/3.882
15 cm Infantriegeschütz 33	2/9/9	*	1000/5,140

* carriage

German Artillery

Many different types of German artillery were developed during Hitler's secret build up of weaponry in the late 1930s. They were versatile weapons, and few were used for one task only. The 8.8 cm Flak 18, known to the Allies as the dreaded "eighty eight," was an antiaircraft gun converted to an anti-tank ground attack role, for which it proved to be marvelously suited.

German Artillery Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./ Area Rating	Ammo	Range (yds.) Close/Max
3.7 cm Pak 35/36	3/4/3+Burn	37mm	550/7,665
5 cm Pak 38	3/8/4+Burn	50mm	250/2,900
7.5 cm Pak 40*	3/8/6+Burn	75mm	600/8,500
7.5 cm Pak 411	3/8/4+Burn	75mm	500/1,000
FK 16 nA	3/8/6+Burn	75mm	1,400/14,080
8.8 cm Flak 18	3/8/8+Burn	88mm	1,000/8,080
10.5 cm LeFH 18	4/8/8+Burn	105mm	1,500/13,478
10.5 cm K 18	4/8/8+Burn	105mm	2,000/20,880
15 cm schwere Fh18	4/9/10+Burn	149mm	1,300/14,570
15 cm Kanone 39	4/9/10+Burn	149mm	3,000/27,000
21 cm Mrs 18	5/10/10+Burn	210.9mm	1,600 /18,237
24 cm Kanone 3	5/10/10+Burn	238mm	10,000/41,000
35.5 cm Haubitze M.1	6/10/10+Burn	35.5cm	2,200/22,000

* The 7.5 cm Pak 41 is a tapering bore weapon. The round emerges from the barrel at about 55 mm.

German Mines

Mines were employed to great effect after the Allied invasion of France to slow the advance of the Allied forces. Many large German anti-tank mines were deadly and could stop even the strongest Allied tanks.

German Mine Table

Weapon	Penetration/Area Rating	Weight (kg)	Designation
Spring Mine	1/2	.5	Anti-Personnel Mine
Tellermine 29 ("Dish Mine")	9/9	6	Anti-Tank Mine
Tellermine 35	9/9	9.6	Anti-Tank Mine
Schwere Panzermine ("Heavy Tank Mine")	10/10	13	Anti-Tank Mine

German Flamethrowers

Flamethrowers are some of the most terrifying weapons ever created for warfare. See **Part Two: Game Mechanics—*Flamethrower,*** p. 23.

German Flamethrower Table

Weapon	Area Rating	Shots	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Flammenwerfer 34	4+Burn	6*	79.2	19/33
Flammenwerfer 40	5+Burn	4*	47.9	20/35
Flammenwerfer 41	5+Burn	10*	48.4	20/35
Einstossflammenwerfer 46	3+Burn	1†	6.1	25/30

* one-round bursts
† one use, disposable

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German Tanks

Early in the war, German tanks were the terror of the battlefield. The *blitzkrieg* of Hitler's war machine relied on the light tank to complete its daring maneuvers. Later in the war, the power of the German tank increased, culminating in arguably the most powerful tank of World War II, the Tiger VI II Heavy Tank or "King Tiger." However, the field of anti-tank weaponry rose to prominence along with the technology of the tank, rendering each improved model less and less effective against troops.

PzKpfw II Light Tank

Armor Ranges: 3.5 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 3 to 1
Guns: 20mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 1, Penetration 2,) and one MG34 (Width +2, Spray 4).
Maximum Speed: 25 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 10 tons.

PzKpfw III Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 6 cm to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 1
Guns: 50mm cannon (Width+6 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 8) and one MG34 (Width +2, Spray 4).
Maximum Speed: 25 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 25 tons.

PzKpfw IV Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 8 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 75mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration8,) and two MG34s (Width +2, Spray 4).
Maximum Speed: 24 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 27.5 tons.

Panther V Heavy Tank (PzKpfw V)

Armor Ranges: 11 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 75mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 8) and two MG34s (Width +2, Spray 4.)
Maximum Speed: 29 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 50 tons.

Tiger VI II Heavy Tank

("King Tiger" PzKpfw Tiger VI II)

Armor Ranges: 18.5 to 8 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 10 to 7
Guns: 88mm cannon (Width+11 Killing, Area 8+Burn, Penetration 8) and two MG34s (Width +2, Spray 4).
Maximum Speed: 24 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 76.8 tons.

German Tank Destroyers

Tank destroyers were a potent weapon developed solely to eliminate enemy tanks. Their main advantages were smaller profile, size and increased maneuverability (and sometimes speed.) Few tank destroyers had significant armor to defend against tanks or anti-tank weapons.

Panzerjäeger I ("Tank Hunter I")

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 0
Guns: 47mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 7) and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 24.8 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 6.6 tons.

Marder II (PzKpfw II)

Armor Ranges: 3.5 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 3 to 0
Guns: 75mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 8) and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 24.8 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 6.6 tons.

Marder III (PzKpfw III)

Armor Ranges: 1.5 to .6 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 1 to 1
Guns: 76mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7) and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 26 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 12.1 tons.

Hetzer ("Baiter")

Armor Ranges: 6 to .8 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 1
Guns: 75mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 8) and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 24.2 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 16 tons.

Jagdpanzer IV (PzKpfw II)

Armor Ranges: 6 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 2
Guns: 75mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 8) and two MG42s (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 24.8 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 29.4 tons.

Jagdpanther ("Hunting Panther")

Armor Ranges: 8 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 4
Guns: 88mm cannon (Width+11 Killing, Area 8+Burn, Penetration 8) and two MG42s (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 24 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 50.7 tons.

German Armored Cars and Half-tracks

Armored cars and half-tracks were used to great effect by Germany, and were central in the plans of such armor pioneers as Hans Guderian and Erwin Rommel. It was their hope that troops would one day ride, fight and win the war-all without leaving the safety of an armored transport.

SdKfz 10 Artillery Tractor

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 0
Guns: 3.7 cm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 4) or the 5 cm PAK cannon (Width+6 Killing, Area 4+Burn, Penetration 8).

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Maximum Speed: 40 mph **# of Crew:** 8.
Weight: 5.4 tons.

Maultier Half-track Transport
Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 0
Guns: None.
Maximum Speed: 30 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Passengers: 20 troops.
Weight: 7.83 tons.

SdKfz 222 Armored Car
Armor Ranges: 1.5 cm to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 1 to 0
Guns: 20 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 1, Penetration 2) and one MG34 (Width +2, Spray 4.)
Maximum Speed: 50 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 4.8 tons.

SdKfz 231 Armored Car
Armor Ranges: 8 to 6 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 6
Guns: 20 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 1, Penetration 2) and one MG34 (Width +2, Spray 4).
Maximum Speed: 40 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Passengers: 1 troop (cramped).
Weight: 8.6 tons

SdKfz 250 Half-track
Armor Ranges: 1.4 cm to .6 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 1 to 0
Guns: 8.1 cm Mortar and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6) or a 3.7 cm PAK cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 4) and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 37 mph **# of Crew:** 6.
Passengers: 3 troops.
Weight: 5.93 tons.

SdKfz 251 Half-track
Armor Ranges: 1.5cm to .6 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 1to 0
Guns: 7.5 cm PAK cannon (Width+9 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 8) and one MG42 (Width +2, Spray 6).
Maximum Speed: 40 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Passengers: 12 troops.
Weight: 5.4 tons.

German Light Vehicles
These small vehicles ferried officers and special equipment in and out of war zones. Their light construction and lack of cover made them less than ideal defense in the face of an attack.

Kraftfahrzeug 2
No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 50 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 4 troops.
Weight: 2 tons.

Volkswagen Kübel
No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 45 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 3 troops.
Weight: 1,450 lbs.

Kraftfahrzeug 11 (Horch Type 830)
No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 45 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 4 troops.
Weight: 1 ton.

Kraftfahrzeug 15
No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 4 troops.
Weight: 2.65 tons.

Daimler-Benz G5
No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 3 Troops.
Weight: 3 tons.

Weaponry of the Empire of Japan
Many Japanese weapons were based on German, British and American designs of the previous century. Much of their arsenal was outdated during the war, and Japanese researchers made few innovative developments in infantry weapons.

Several original bolt-action rifles and machine guns were successful, though the lack of a strong manufacturing base in Japan limited the production of truly innovative designs. Those designs that attempted to mimic the advanced designs of the west often failed on many levels due to these and other problems. For example, the Shiki Kenju 94 automatic pistol was patently unsafe under any circumstance, and fires when struck upon its side. It is considered one of the worst automatic pistol designs ever created but more than 70,000 of them were produced during the war.

Cartridge Types
Several different cartridges were used by the Japanese military during the war, each with its own special characteristics. To determine the Penetration or other special qualities of an individual weapon please consider the following chart, compare it to the type of ammunition used by the weapon in question, and add the modifiers to the base damage of the weapon.

For ease of reference, tank and artillery rounds are included here as well.

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Japanese Cartridge & Shell Ratings Table

Cartridge	Extra Damage*/Penetration†/Area Rating
6.5mm Ball (.256 Inch)	0/0/0
7.7mm Rimless (.303 Inch)	0/0/0
8mm (.315 Inch)	0/0/0
9mm Ball (.354 Inch)	+1/0/0
13.2mm Ball (.52 Inch)	+1/1/0
13.2mm Armor Piercing (.52 Inch)	+1/2/0
20mm (.79 Inch)	+2/2/0
37mm (1.46 Inch)	+2/4/2
47mm (1.85 Inch)	+2/6/3+Burn
57 mm (2.23 Inch)	+3/5/3+Burn
70mm (2.76 Inch)	+3/7/5+Burn
75mm (2.95 Inch)	+3/7/6+Burn

*This extra damage is killing, applied to human targets only.
† Penetration ratings listed are for "close" range of each particular weapon against steel plate.

Japanese Pistols

The Japanese based many of their handguns on European designs (for example the Model 26 revolver is a duplicate of the break-open Smith and Wesson revolver.) Their attempts to modernize designs led to one of the worst weapons ever produced, the 94 Shiki Kenju automatic pistol.

Japanese Pistol Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
94 Shiki Kenju	8 mm	6	1.52	11/27
Nambu Pistol	8 mm	8	1.72	13/30
Nambu Model 14	8 mm	8	1.75	15/35
Model 26 Revolver	9 mm	6	2.14	16/35

Japanese Rifles

Japanese rifles of the *Arisaka* type were based on European Mauser and Mannlicher designs, developed originally in 1905 as a general combat arm for the Imperial Army. These weapons were unwieldy and quite long (some almost 50 inches long.) Few innovations were instituted to make these weapons better as the war wore on.

The "Carbine" Type 38 was a shortened version of the Rifle Type 38, but in all other conventional aspects, it was not a carbine at all, but a rifle.

Japanese Rifle Table

Carbine	Slow	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Rifle Type 38	1	6.55mm	5	9.25	220/900
Carbine Type 38	1	6.55mm	5	7.25	50/150
Rifle Type 972	1	6.55mm	5	9.25	250/1000
Rifle Type 99	1	7.7mm	5	9.25	220/900
Parachutists Rifle*	1	7.7mm	5	6.75	250/1000

*This is the sniper rifle version of the Carbine type 38, and was equipped with a sniper's sight.

Japanese Submachine Guns

The Japanese developed the Type 100 submachine gun only after years of requests from their military on all fronts of the war. It was not a particularly effective design.

Japanese Submachine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Type 100	4	8mm	30	9.70	20/105

Japanese Machine Guns

Japanese machineguns were seen as inferior in many aspects to those of Allied nations. Their small and unusual caliber had little stopping power. When new models were introduced with a higher 7.7 caliber, they were plagued with mechanical problems and bad reports from the field.

Japanese Machinegun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Type 11Nambu	2	6.5 mm	30	22.5	140/1,200
Type 96	3	6.5 mm	30	20	200/2,000
Model 99	4	7.7 mm	30	20	210/2,000
Model 92	3	7.7 mm	47/97	39	200/1,700
Model 93	2	13.2 mm	30	87	200/3,600

Japanese Anti-Tank Weapons

The Japanese employed an anti-tank rifle that was relatively useless against anything other than light tanks and armored vehicles. Their anti-tank grenade however, was a copy of the very effective German anti-tank grenade, the *Gewehr Panzergranate*.

Japanese Anti-Tank Rifle Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Ammo	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Anti-Tank Rifle 97	2/3/0	20mm	114.1	50/250

Japanese Anti-Tank Grenade Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Type 2 Anti-Tank Grenade	2/7/6	1.60	25/100*

* This grenade could be fired from any of the *Arisaka* bolt-action rifles, specially fitted with a firing rig.

Japanese Anti-Tank Suicide Mine Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Backpack "Human Mine"*	2/9/9	19.8	User must be under target

* A backpack mine worn by a soldier who committed suicide by detonating it under an enemy tank.

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Japanese Grenades

Japanese grenades were simple designs, and were known to suffer from unreliable fusing.

Japanese Grenade Table

Weapon	Penetration/Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Model 91	3/2	1.75	15/30
Model 97	2/2	1	15/30
Model 23	2/2	1	15/30
Incendiary Stick Hand Grenade	1/3+Burn	1.5	15/30

Japanese Mortars

The Japanese employed a special light mortar, the Type 10 (little more than a glorified grenade launcher), that was easily transportable by a single man. Larger Japanese mortars were also startlingly maneuverable (due mostly to Japanese ingenuity and fortitude) and many were fitted with special handles and even wheels for ease of transportation.

Japanese Mortar Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
50 mm Light Mortar Type 10	1/2/3	9.5	20/175
50 mm Mortar Type 98	1/6/6	48	40/350
50 mm Light Mortar Type 89	1/3/3	10.9	75/711
70 mm Mortar Model 11	2/3/3	133.8	100/1,000
70 mm Battalion Gun Type 92	2/7/5+Burn	468	500/2,000
81 mm Model 97 Light Trench Mortar	2/4/5+Burn	145	100/3,100
81 mm Model 99	2/4/4+Burn	52	220/2,200
90 mm Model 94	2/8/9+Burn	340	350, 4,150
150 mm Model 93	3/9/9+Burn	220	250/2,400

Japanese Artillery

The Type 98 20 mm machine cannon was an example of an ultra-modern weapon that had all the aspects of its Allied counterparts. Most larger Japanese artillery however, could not be produced in sufficient numbers to be of any use and much of it was obsolete even at the beginning of the war.

Japanese Artillery Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Ammo	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Type 98 20mm Machine Cannon	–/2/0 (Spray 2)	20mm	100/3,990
47mm Anti-Tank Gun Type 1	2/6/3+Burn	47mm	200/1,900
75mm Field Gun Type 38	3/7/6+Burn	75mm	500/13,080
Type 88 75mm Anti-Aircraft Gun	3/7/6+Burn	75mm	350/7,928

Japanese Mines

The Japanese often left behind "booby-traps" of many different types, consisting of pre-made mines, or specially rigged hand grenades. Walking brashly off into a jungle recently inhabited by Japanese forces was a foolish if not completely deadly act for any GI.

Japanese Mine Table

Weapon	Penetration/ Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Designation
Model 93 Mine	3/3	2	Anti-Personnel Mine
Model 96 Mine	10/10	10.5	Anti-Tank Mine
Model 99 Mine	4/4	2	Anti-Tank Mine
Bangalore Torpedo	10/10	10	Anti-Tank /Anti-Structure Mine

Japanese Flamethrowers

Japanese flamethrowers were rudimentary in design, and known to be difficult to use and maintain.

Japanese Flamethrower Table

Carbine	Area Rating	Shots	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Portable Flamethrower 93	2+Burn	6*	61	10/25 yards
Portable Flamethrower 100	3+Burn	10*	55	25/30 yards

* one-round bursts

Japanese Tanks

Japanese tanks were effective in their campaign in China, simply because the Chinese had no tanks, and no anti-tank technology to counter them. Otherwise, they were nothing but lightly shielded motorized cannons, and none of them could go toe to toe with any of the Allied tanks. What the Japanese called a medium tank, the Germans and Americans called an "armored car."

Type 95 Light Tank

Armor Ranges: 1.5 to .2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 1 to 0
Guns: 37 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 4) and two Model 99 machine guns (Width +2, Spray 4.)
Maximum Speed: 28 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 17.98 tons.

Type 97 Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 2.5 to .9 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 0
Guns: 57 mm cannon (Width+6 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 5) and one Model 99 machine gun (Width +2, Spray 4.)
Maximum Speed: 24 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 36.45 tons.

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Allied Weapons

What the Allies lacked in technological innovation, they made up for in production. The Allies produced huge amounts of weaponry and ammunition during the war. Later, as the war wore on, the Allies experienced a renaissance in weapons design, and many innovative designs that put the Axis to shame were produced.

Weaponry of the United States

America utilized fewer weapon types than many other countries in the war. This was because America had a centralized production base, and hoped to produce as many weapons in as short a time as possible. Several preferred designs were settled upon, and produced in vast quantities. (Certain specialized weapons, like the UD M42 submachine gun, were produced only in limited runs however.) America also manufactured huge amounts of weaponry for Britain and the Soviet Union. Almost every type of American weapon was likely to be found in use by those armies as well-all over the world.

Cartridge Types

Several different cartridges were used by the United States military during the war, each with its own special characteristics. To determine the Penetration or other special qualities of an individual weapon please consider the following chart and compare it to the type of ammunition used by the weapon in question. Add the modifiers to the base damage of the weapon.

For ease of reference, tank and artillery rounds are included here as well.

American Cartridge & Shell Ratings Table

Cartridge	Extra Damage*/Penetration†/Area Rating
.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	+1/0/0
9mm	+1/0/0
.380 SAA Ball (9.65 mm)	+1/0/0
.45 Ball M1911 (11.43 mm)	+1/0/0
.45 Inch (11.43 mm)	+1/0/0
.50 Inch AP (12.7 mm)	+2/1/0
37 mm (1.456 Inch)	+2/4/3
57 mm (2.23 Inch)	+3/5/3+Burn
75 mm (2.95 Inch)	+4/7/4+Burn
76 mm (2.99 Inch)	+4/7/5+Burn
76.2 mm (3 Inch)	+6/7/5+Burn
90 mm (3.54 Inch)	+7/7/6+Burn
105 mm (4.134 Inch)	+8/7/8+Burn
6.1 Inch (155 mm)	+9/9/9+Burn
8 Inch (203 mm)	+10/10/10+Burn
9.45 Inch (240 mm)	+10/10/10+Burn

* Extra damage is killing damage vs. human targets only.

† Penetration ratings listed are for "close" range.

American Pistols

There were only a few American pistols produced and used during the war (though American servicemen often adopted the select weapons of the enemy.) Two of the most famous pistols, the Colt 1911 .45 and the Smith and Wesson .38 Revolver were found almost anywhere in the world by the war's end.

American Pistol Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
.45 M1911A Automatic Pistol	.45 Ball	7	2.5	18/34
Smith and Wesson Revolver	.380 SAA Ball	6	2.5	19/36
Liberator M1942*	.45 Ball	1†	1	5/20

* The Liberator was a single shot "drop pistol," dropped in mass quantities behind enemy lines to arm resistance fighters and guerrillas. It was also called a "Woolworth gun," and was described as a "great gun to get another gun with".

† The Liberator had 5 additional rounds stored in the handle for manual reloading.

American Carbines

A carbine is a shortened rifle, preferred due to its light weight and ease of manufacture. Carbines were used to great effect by the U.S. army. The M1 Carbine was perhaps the most popular and effective combat arm of World War II- despite its limited range.

American Carbine Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Carbine M1	.30 (7.62 mm) 15*	5.2	50/110	18/34

* or 30-round box

American Rifles

Often preferred by U.S. troops over the far more common M1 Carbine, the Springfield and Garand were wildly effective weapons, with huge ranges and high marks for reliability. They were far more accurate than the shorter barreled M1 Carbine.

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American Rifle Table

Carbine	Slow	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
M1903A1 "Springfield"	1	.30 (7.62 mm)	5	9	600/3000
.30 Cal M1 "Garand"	—	.30 (7.62 mm)	8	9	400/3000

American Submachine Guns

America's premier submachine gun, the finely made Thompson or "Tommy Gun," was deadly accurate in its fire and could pepper an area with fifty rounds at a moments notice. Its inferior cousin, the M3 Grease Gun was a rattletrap made of stamped steel parts that was hard to maintain, reload and fire properly.

When troops couldn't get their hands on a Thompson, they settled for the M3 or UD M42.

American Submachine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
M3 Grease Gun	2	.45 or 9mm	30	10.4	12/100
M1 Thompson	1/3	.45	20/30/50	12.1	25/100
UD M42	0/3	9mm	20	10	15/100

American Machine Guns

American machine guns varied in size from the man-portable Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) to the devastating .50 inch tripod mounted Browning machine gun. Their uses in warfare ranged from infantry support to anti-aircraft and even anti-light armor roles.

American Machine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
BAR	0/2/3	.30 (7.62 mm)	20	21.5	109/875
Browning .30 M4	0/1/2	.30 (7.62 mm)	250	23	250/875
Browning .50 M2	1/3	.50 AP (12.7 mm)	110	84	500/2,400

American Anti-Tank Rockets

America's development of the "Bazooka," a reusable anti-tank weapon, was innovative for its time (so innovative that captured bazookas were studied by the Nazis and were used as the blueprint for the design of the *Raketenpanzerbüchse*.) Besides the Bazooka, American troops often employed captured *Panzerfausts* or *Panzerschrecks* for use against German armor.

American Anti-Tank Rocket Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./ Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
"Bazooka" M1	3/5/7	13.5	50/100
"Bazooka" M1A1	3/6/7	15	90/180

American Grenades

American grenades were simple in design and use. This ease of use often led to accidents on the line, and the fuse often proved to be either shorter or longer than needed. Many GIs considered German grenades more effective in combat.

American Grenade Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
M2A1 "Pineapple" Hand Grenade	–/2/3	1.5	15/30
M3A Hand Grenade	–/2/2	.84	15/30
M9A1 Antitank Rifle Grenade*	2/5/6	1.31	25/100

* This grenade is fired by a specially fitted M1 Garand Rifle.

American Mortars

The most common mortars employed by American forces ranged from the M2 man portable mortar to the enormous 4.2 inch Chemical mortar, which was initially developed to fire smoke charges, but was often used to lob large high explosive rounds up to 4,000 yards downrange.

American Mortar Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
60mm Mortar M2	1/2/3	42	100/1,985
81mm Mortar M1	2/6/8	136	100/3,290
4.2 Inch Mortar	3/8/8	149.7	150/4,400

American Artillery

American artillery was praised by General Patton in an off the cuff remark to a *Stars and Stripes* reporter; "You don't have to ask who won the war, we all know our artillery did."

American Artillery Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./ Area Rating	Ammo	Range (yds.) Close/Max
3 Inch Antiaircraft Gun M3	1/7/5+Burn	76.2mm (3 Inch)	200/10,400
90 mm Gun M1	2/7/6+Burn	90mm (3.54 Inch)	200/10,600
105 mm Howitzer M2A1	1/7/8+Burn	105mm (4.134 Inch)	300/12,500
155 mm Gun M1	2/9/9+Burn	6.1 Inch (155mm)	200/25,900
8 Inch Howitzer M1	3/10/10+Burn	8 Inch (203mm)	500/18,500

American Flamethrowers

American flamethrowers were used to great effect in the Pacific theater. It proved perfect for eliminating hidden Japanese emplacements and "spider-holes."

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American Flamethrower Table

Carbine	Area Rating	Shots	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Flamethrower M1	3+Burn	8*	61	15/30
Flamethrower M1A1	4+Burn	10*	70	20/50
Flamethrower M2-2	5+Burn	8*	72	15/40

* one-round bursts

American Tanks

American tanks were seen as inferior cousins to the German Panzers. They were often referred to as "widow makers" or "rolling coffins," for their armor offered little protection against the devastating German 88 mm or *Panzerfaust* round. Later in the war, as armor thickness improved and gun sizes increased, American tanks were finally able to go toe to toe with their German counterparts.

M3 "General Lee" Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 5 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 5 to 1
Guns: 37mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 4), four Browning .30s (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2).
Maximum Speed: 26 mph **# of Crew:** 6.
Weight: 27.24 tons.

M4 "Sherman" Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 9 to 3 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 3
Guns: 75mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 4+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 29 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 32 tons.

M4 (105) "Sherman"

Armor Ranges: 10 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 4
Guns: 105 mm cannon (Width+11 Killing, Area 8+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 26 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 39 tons.

M4 A1 (76) W "Sherman"

Armor Ranges: 10 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 4
Guns: 76 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 29 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 35 tons.

M4 A3 (76) W "Easy Eight Sherman"

Armor Ranges: 10 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 4
Guns: 76 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 29 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 39 tons.

M26 "Pershing" Heavy Tank

Armor Ranges: 10.2 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 90mm cannon (Width+10 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3) and two Browning .30's (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2).
Maximum Speed: 30 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 41.73 tons.

M4 "Sherman Jumbo"

Armor Ranges: 16 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 9 to 4
Guns: 105 mm cannon (Width+11 Killing, Area 8+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 25 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 40 tons.

American Tank Destroyers

American tank destroyers enjoyed a fine record on the battlefield. Their enormous numerical superiority and ample supply of fuel offset the early advantages of German armor.

3 Inch Gun Motor Carriage M10 "Wolverine"

Armor Ranges: 6 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 0
Guns: 76.2 mm cannon (Width+9 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 32 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 33 tons.

3 Inch Gun Motor Carriage M18 "Hellcat"

Armor Ranges: 6 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 0
Guns: 76.2 mm cannon (Width+9 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 17.7 tons.

3 Inch Gun Motor Carriage M36 "Jackson"

Armor Ranges: 10 to 1.5 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 1
Guns: 90 mm cannon (Width+10 Killing, Area 6+Burn, Penetration 7) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 45 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 27.7 tons.

American Armored Cars and Half-Tracks

Americans utilized several armored car and half-track designs during the war, relying on them mostly for scouting and support roles.

Light Armored Car M8

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 0
Guns: 37 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 4), one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3) and one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2).

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Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 7.94 tons.

Light Armored Car T17E1 Staghound

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 0
Guns: Two Browning .50s (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 13.92 tons.

Half-Track Personnel Carrier M3

Armor Ranges: 1 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 1 to 0
Guns: One Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3) and one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2).
Maximum Speed: 40 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Passengers: 10 troops.
Weight: 10 tons.

American Light Vehicles

America utilized light vehicles as scout cars, transports and gun carriages in ways other armed forces did not. Their roles varied endlessly, from ambulance to scout vehicle to weapons platform. There was no limit what they could be converted to.

The quintessential jeep was America's ultimate design. Once described by General Patton as a "holy instrument of warfare," it was America's premier light vehicle.

Wily General Purpose Vehicle "GP" or "Jeep"

No Armor or Guns (sometimes it carries a mounted machine gun)
Maximum Speed: 50 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 4 troops.
Weight: 2 tons.

Weaponry of the United Kingdom

Britain and its commonwealth of countries (India, Australia, South Africa and Canada) were hard pressed at the beginning of the war to meet the needs of the growing conflict with the Axis. Many of their weapons were out of date, or soon would be, and in all but air and sea power, it seemed Britain was lagging behind its enemies.

With the boost of the Lend-Lease program, Britain enjoyed an increase in production and modernization. Their contribution to the war effort was marked with innovative designs in everything from submachine guns and carbines to tanks and aircraft.

Cartridge Types

Several different cartridges were used by the British military during the war, each with its own special characteristics. To determine the Penetration or other special qualities of an individual weapon please consider the following chart, and compare it to the type of ammunition used by the weapon in question, then simply add the modifiers to the base damage of the weapon as listed.

For ease of reference, tank and artillery rounds are included here as well.

British Cartridge & Shell Ratings Table

Cartridge	Extra Damage*/Penetration†/Area Rating
.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	+1/0/0
7.7 mm (.303)	0/0/0
9mm	+1/0/0
.380 SAA Ball (9.65 mm)	+1/0/0
.45 inch(11.43 mm)	+1/0/0
.50 Inch AP (12.7 mm)	+2/1/0
15mm (.59 Inch)	+2/1/0
40 mm (1.58 Inch)	+2/3/3
57 mm (2.23 Inch)	+3/5/3+Burn
75 mm (2.95 Inch)	+4/7/4+Burn
76 mm (2.99 Inch)	+5/7/5+Burn
3.45 Inch (87.6mm)	+6/7/5+Burn
90 mm (3.54 Inch)	+7/7/6+Burn
3.7 Inch (94 mm)	+7/7/7+Burn
105 mm (4.134 Inch)	+8/7/8+Burn
113 mm (4.5 Inch)	+9/9/9+Burn
6.1 Inch (155 mm)	+9/10/9+Burn
7.2 Inch (183mm)	+9/10/9+Burn

*This extra damage is killing damage vs. human targets only.
† Penetration ratings listed are for "close" range.

British Pistols

The British relied on revolvers for most of the war, due to their ruggedness and ease of maintenance in the field. Many commonwealth soldiers employed American automatic pistols as well.

British Pistol Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Enfield #2 Mk 1 Revolver	.380 SAA Ball	6	1.7	19/36
Webley Mk 4 Revolver	.380 SAA Ball	6	1.7	19/36
Smith and Wesson Revolver	.380 SAA Ball	6	2.5	19/36

British Carbines

The De Lisle was one of the most unique and exemplary designs of World War II. Its integral silencer and flash suppressor, as well as its accuracy was renown.

British Carbine Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
De Lisle Carbine*	.45 inch (11.43 mm)	7	8.25	50/200

* The De Lisle Carbine has an integral silencer and flash suppressor that disguises the sound of firing and eliminates most of the muzzle flash. All Sense rolls to spot or hear a De Lisle fire are difficulty 4.

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British Rifles

British rifles were behind the times when the war began. Both of Britain's major designs were bolt-action, and suffered from many other problems as well. The No. 5 Mk 1 rifle for example, had a sight that tended to "wander," a terrible recoil, and was hard to maintain. A great number of British troops utilized American rifles due to the cantankerous nature of the British bolt-action guns.

British Rifle Table

Carbine	Slow	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
No. 1 Lee-Enfield	1	7.7 mm (.303)	10*	8.5	350/2000
Rifle No. 5 Mk 1	1	7.7mm (.303)	10*	7.15	220/900

British Submachine Guns

British submachine guns were among the best produced in the war. They were easy to maintain and fire, and their accuracy and rate of fire were impressive.

British Submachine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Sten Submachine Gun	3	9 mm	32	8.16	15/100
Lancaster Submachine Gun	3	9 mm	50	9.57	15/100
Owen Gun*	3	9 mm	33	10.6	20/100

* The Owen Gun was a British Commonwealth weapon produced by Australia.

British Machine Guns

British machine guns were of varying effectiveness and reliability. They ranged from the woefully out-of-date (like the Vickers water-cooled Mk 1) to the cutting edge (like the Vickers "Gas Operated" Gun.)

British Machine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Vickers Mk 1	0/2	7.7mm	250	80.5	109/875
Vickers Mk 4	0/2	.50 AP	200	81.75	109/890
Vickers-Berthier	2/3	7.7mm	30	24.4	100/700
Vickers G.O. Gun	0/5	7.7mm	96	21	110/800
Bren Gun	0/2/3	7.7 mm	30	22.8	200/1850

British Anti-Tank Rockets

The British PIAT (Projector Infantry Anti-Tank) is unique among anti-tank weapons. While it did employ both a rocket and shaped charge like the *Panzerschreck*, it also used a huge coiled steel spring to launch the rocket up to speed before its propellant ignited.

The PIAT was a notoriously unstable weapon though, and often led to operator injury. Anyone with a PIAT skill of 1 or less who fires the weapon and fails to beat a Difficulty of 3 takes 2 killing and 2 shock to the right or left arm.

British Anti-Tank Rocket Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./ Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
PIAT	4/6/8	35	100/300

British Mortars

British mortars were known for their effectiveness in the field. Germans particularly feared the 4.2 inch mortar for its accuracy and destructive power.

British Mortar Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./ Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Ordnance ML 2 Inch Mortar	1/3/3	9	50/100
Ordnance ML 3 Inch Mortar	2/6/6	126	100/2750
Ordnance SB 4.2 Inch Mortar	3/10/10	1,320	200/4210
95 mm Infantry Howitzer Mk II	4/10/10	2,105	500/6000

British Artillery

British field guns and heavy artillery enjoyed a good reputation for their resilience, accuracy and rate of fire.

British Artillery Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./ Area Rating	Ammo	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Ordnance QF 25-pdr	1/7/5+Burn	3.45 Inch (87.6mm)	300/13,500
Ordnance QF 3 in 20 cwt	1/7/5+Burn	76 mm (2.99 Inch)	150/10,200
Ordnance QF 3.7 Inch	1/8/7+Burn	3.7 Inch (94 mm)	200/11,100
Ordnance QF 4.5 Inch MK II	2/10/9+Burn	113 mm (4.5 Inch)	350/14,300
7.2 Inch Howitzer Mk 1	3/10/9+Burn	7.2 Inch (183mm)	500/16,900

British Flamethrowers

The British flamethrower No. 2 Mk 1 "Lifebuoy" was unique among flamethrower designs in that it utilized a rubber backpack to carry the propellant and fuel for the weapon.

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British Flamethrower Table

Carbine	Area Rating	Shots	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
No 2 Mk 1 "Lifebuoy"	2+Burn	10*	64	15/40

* one-round bursts

British Tanks

For a large portion of the war, British tanks were inferior to the German panzers. In combat, British tank victories were only achieved through superior numbers, the use of anti-tank guns or by firing at the enemy's flanks. Later in the war, British tanks such as the Challenger and the Crocodile proved more effective in combat, and could defeat even the best German tanks.

Vickers Light Tank Mk V

Armor Ranges: 2 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 1
Guns: One Vickers Mk 4 machine gun (Width+4, Spray 0/2) and one Vickers-Berthier machine gun (Width+2, Spray 2/3).
Maximum Speed: 32 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 5.37 tons.

Light Tank Mk VII Tetrarch

Armor Ranges: 1 to 0 cm
Heavy Armor Rating: 1 to 0 **Guns:** 40 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 3) and one Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 40 mph
# of Crew: 3.
Weight: 8.4 tons.

Cruiser Tank Mk VI Crusader

Armor Ranges: 4 to 1 cm
Heavy Armor Rating: 4 to 1
Guns: 40 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 3) and two Vickers Mk 1 machine guns (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 27 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 22.12 tons.

Cruiser Tank Mk VIII Cromwell

Armor Ranges: 9 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 57 mm cannon (Width+6 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 5) or a 75 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 4+Burn, Penetration 7).
Maximum Speed: 38 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 30.8 tons.

Cruiser Tank Mk VIII Centaur

Armor Ranges: 8 to 2 cm
Heavy Armor Rating: 7 to 2
Guns: 75 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 4+Burn, Penetration 7).
Maximum Speed: 27 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 30.9 tons.

Cruiser Tank Challenger

Armor Ranges: 10 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 76 mm cannon (Width+8 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7) and one Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 32 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 36.4 tons.

Mk 1 Matilda

Armor Ranges: 8 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 40 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 3) and one Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 15 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 29.6 tons.

Infantry Tank Mk III Valentine

Armor Ranges: 6.5 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 1
Guns: 75 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 4+Burn, Penetration 7) and one Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 15 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 19.5 tons.

Infantry Tank Mk IV Churchill

Armor Ranges: 15 to 2 cm
Heavy Armor Rating: 9 to 2 **Guns:** 75 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 4+Burn, Penetration 7) and one Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2) or 95 mm Infantry Howitzer* (Width+2 Killing, Area 10+Burn, Penetration 10).
Maximum Speed: 12.5 mph
# of Crew: 5.
Weight: 44.8 tons.

* A variant design, the Churchill "Crocodile," carried a flamethrower instead of cannon, capable of projecting Area 7+Burn at more than 80 yards.

Cruiser Tank Sentinel AC1 (Australian Design)

Armor Ranges: 6 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 2
Guns: 40 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 3) and two Vickers G.O. Guns (Width+2, Spray 0/5).
Maximum Speed: 30 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 31.2 tons.

Cruiser Tank Ram Mk 1 (Canadian Design)

Armor Ranges: 8 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 57 mm cannon (Width+6 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 5) and one Vickers-Berthier machine gun (Width+2, Spray 2/3).
Maximum Speed: 25 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 32.5 tons.

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Sherman Firefly, M4 A1 (76) W

Armor Ranges: 10 to 4 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 4
Guns: 76 mm cannon (Width+7 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7), one Browning .30 (Width+3, Spray 0/1/2) and one Browning .50 (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 1/3).
Maximum Speed: 29 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 35 tons.

British Tank Destroyers

The British built "Archer" tank destroyer was a modification of the Valentine Infantry Tank, altered to carry the 17 pound 76 mm cannon. This gun was mounted facing the rear so the vehicle could rapidly retreat from ambush situations. Due to its low silhouette, the Archer enjoyed a successful and effective service career.

Archer

Armor Ranges: 6.5 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 1
Guns: 76mm cannon (Width+8 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7), Vickers-Berthier machine gun (Width+2, Spray 2/3).
Maximum Speed: 20 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 17.9 tons.

British Armored Cars

The British used armored cars to great effect in the war in North Africa. Roving teams of lightly armed armored cars scouted ahead of emplacements across the endless plains of Libya, outrunning anything big enough to destroy them and killing anything smaller.

Armoured Car, Humber Mk I

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2to 0
Guns: Vickers Mk 4 machine gun (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 45 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 6.4 tons.

Armoured Car, Daimler Mk I

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2to 0
Guns: 40 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Pen. 3).
Maximum Speed: 50 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 7.4 tons.

Scout Car, Daimler Mk I

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2to 0
Guns: Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 2.
Weight: 3 tons.

Armoured Car, AEC Mk I

Armor Ranges: 2 to 0 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2to 0
Guns: 57 mm cannon (Width+6 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 5), Vickers Mk 1 machine gun (Width+2, Spray 0/2).
Maximum Speed: 36 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 11 tons.

British Light Vehicles

The British produced several successful light vehicle designs, but later they mostly relied on American-produced vehicles for transport and supply roles in the war.

Heavy Utility Car 4x2 Ford ADF

No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 50 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 5 troops.
Weight: 2 tons.

Lorry, 4x2 FFW Humber

No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 55 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 8 troops.
Weight: 2.25 tons.

Heavy Utility Car 4x4 Humber

No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 50 mph **# of Crew:** 1.
Passengers: 3 troops.
Weight: 2.6 tons.

Truck 4x2 Bedford

No Armor or Guns.
Maximum Speed: 45 mph **# of Crew:** 1
Passengers: 7 troops.
Weight: 2.35 tons.

Weaponry of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union was a place of extremes, economically, socially and environmentally. This harsh environment led to extremely resilient weapon designs that operated exceptionally well under less than optimal conditions.

Simplicity and effectiveness were the hallmarks of Soviet designs. Anything overly complicated or less than effective in combat was rapidly taken out of production or modified to improve performance.

Cartridge Types

Several different cartridges were used by the military of the Soviet Union during the war, each with its own special characteristics. To determine the Penetration or other special qualities of an individual weapon please consider the following chart and compare it to the type of ammunition used by the weapon in question. Add the modifiers to the base damage of the weapon.

For ease of reference, tank and artillery rounds are included here as well.

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Soviet Cartridge & Shell Ratings Table

Cartridge	Extra Damage*/Penetration†/Area Rating
.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	+1/0/0
.05 Inch AP (12.7 mm)	+2/1/0
14.5 mm (0.57 Inch) AP	+2/2/1
20 mm	+2/2/1
37 mm (1.456 Inch)	+2/4/3
45 mm (1.77 Inch)	+2/6/3+Burn
76.2 mm (3 Inch)	+6/7/5+Burn
100 mm (3.93 Inch)	+7/7/8+Burn
122 mm (4.8 Inch)	+8/8/7+Burn
152 mm (6 Inch)	+9/10/9+Burn
203 mm (8 Inch)	+14/10/10+Burn

* Extra damage is killing damage vs. human targets only.
† Penetration ratings listed are for "close" range.

Soviet Pistols

Soviet pistols were of robust design based on western pistol technology. The *Tokarev-33* for instance was a simplified version of the Browning Automatic Pistol and the *Nagant* revolver was a near perfect copy of the Webley revolver. The Soviets stuck with what worked.

Soviet Pistol Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Tokarev TT-33	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	8	1.8	20/40
Nagant Revolver	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	6	2	18/36

Soviet Carbines

The Soviet Union produced carbines in large numbers for mounted cavalry troops. Though seemingly outmoded in warfare, the mounted cavalry proved very effective in a scout/shock troop role, and their primary weapon, the *Mosin Nagant* Model 1938 was considered a deadly and effective weapon.

Soviet Carbine Table

Weapon	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Mosin Nagant Model 1938	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	5	7.6	100/500

Soviet Rifles

Like Soviet pistols, Soviet rifles were of robust design and effective in all weather conditions. Where German rifles froze and failed, Soviet rifles prospered.

Soviet Rifle Table

Weapon	Slow	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
M N 1891/30	1	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	5	8.8	220/900
Tokarev SVT38	1	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	10	8.58	300/950

Soviet Submachine Guns

Soviet submachine guns were some of the most resilient and deadly weapons ever devised. They were so prized that Germans often scavenged them due to their ease of maintenance and highly effective rate of fire.

Soviet Submachine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
PPD 1934/38	4	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	71	12.54	23/106
PPSh-41	4	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	71	11.90	25/110

Soviet Machine Guns

Often too large to be truly mobile, Soviet machine guns eventually were reduced in size to become portable by one or two troops. Many models still utilized a rolling carriage system for transport.

Soviet Machine Gun Table

Weapon	Spray Rating	Ammo	Cap.	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Degetyerev 28	2	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	100	15.5	100/750
SG 43	2/3	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	50	30.4	250/1050
SGM	3	.30 Inch (7.62 mm)	50	30.5	300/1100
DShK 1938	3	.05 Inch AP (12.7 mm)	50	73.5	500/2,400

Soviet Anti-Tank Weapons

The Soviets lacked a reliable method for eliminating German tanks. Their anti-tank rifles often failed to even penetrate enemy tank armor, and their anti-tank grenades were unwieldy and difficult to use.

The most common and sought-after anti-tank weapon was the *Panzerfaust* or *Panzerschreck*. With huge numbers of these weapons captured by Soviet forces, they were used against the Germans to great effect.

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Soviet Anti-Tank Rifle Table

Weapon	Pen./Area Rating	Ammo	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
PTRD-41	2/1	14.5 mm AP (0.57 Inch)	38.1	50/547
PTRS-41	2/1	14.5 mm AP (0.57 Inch)	38.1	50/547

Soviet Anti-Tank Grenade Table

Weapon	Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
RPG 1940*	5/7	4.4	10/25
VPGS 1940*	5/5	5	25/100

* Fired from specially modified rifles.

Soviet Anti-Tank Mine Table

Weapon	Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
Soviet Dog Mine	9/8	9.60 (charge)	Variable*

* A bomb strapped to the back of a dog trained to run under tanks. It rarely worked properly, as the Soviet dogs had trouble recognizing German tanks and often ran under Soviet tanks instead.

Soviet Mortars

Soviet mortars were made in great numbers, and unlike other Soviet weapons were made in a wide variety of styles and models. They also tended to be much heavier than mortars of other countries, but their effectiveness in combat was not lessened by this fact.

Soviet Mortar Table

Weapon	Slow/Pen./Area Rating	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
50 PM 40 Light Mortar	1/4/5	20.5	50/875
82-PM 41 Light Mortar	2/8/8	99.2	100/3,390
120-HM 38 Heavy Mortar	2/10/10	617	300/6,562

Soviet Flamethrowers

Flamethrowers were rarely used by Soviet troops, and the *ROKS* line of flamethrower models was exceptional only in its cosmetic appearance. It had been noted in the battlefield that troops carrying flamethrowers were targeted first by the enemy. The *ROKS* was designed to look like a normal rifle, with a low-profile backpack that could be easily overlooked by enemy snipers until it was too late.

Soviet Flamethrower Table

Carbine	Area Rating	Shots	Weight (lbs.)	Range (yds.) Close/Max
ROKS-2	2+Burn	8*	50	15/50

* one-round bursts

Soviet Tanks

Soviet tank technology rose exponentially throughout the war, culminating in the design of the IS-2 Heavy Tank, the "Josef Stalin," a match for the most powerful German tank ever produced, the Tiger VI II.

T-40 Light Tank

Armor Ranges: 2 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 1
Guns: DShK 1938 machine gun (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 3).
Maximum Speed: 27 mph **# of Crew:** 2.
Weight: 5.9 tons.

T-60 Light Tank

Armor Ranges: 2 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 1
Guns: 20 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 1, Penetration 2) and one DShK 1938 machine gun (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 3).
Maximum Speed: 28 mph **# of Crew:** 2.
Weight: 6.4 tons.

T-70 Light Tank

Armor Ranges: 4 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 4 to 1
Guns: 45 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 6) and one DShK 1938 machine gun (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 3).
Maximum Speed: 28 mph **# of Crew:** 2.
Weight: 9.2 tons.

T-26 Light Infantry Tank

Armor Ranges: 2 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 1
Guns: 45 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 6).
Maximum Speed: 17 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 9.4 tons.

T-28 Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 8 to 2 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 2
Guns: 76.2 mm cannon (Width+9 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7) and three Degetyerev 28 machine guns (Width+3, Spray 2).
Maximum Speed: 23 mph **# of Crew:** 6.
Weight: 28 tons.

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BT-7 Fast Tank

Armor Ranges: 2 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2 to 1
Guns: 45 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 6) two SG 43 machine guns (Width+3, Spray 2/3).
Maximum Speed: 53 mph **# of Crew:** 3.
Weight: 14 tons.

T-34 Medium Tank

Armor Ranges: 6 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 6 to 1
Guns: 76.2 mm cannon (Width+9 Killing, Area 5+Burn, Penetration 7), two SGM machine guns (Width+3, Spray 3).
Maximum Speed: 34 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 26 tons.

T-35 Heavy Tank

Armor Ranges: 3 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 3 to 1 **Guns:** Two 45 mm cannons (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 6) and one Degetyerev 28 machine gun (Width+3, Spray 2).
Maximum Speed: 18 mph **# of Crew:** 11.
Weight: 45 tons.

KV-1 Heavy Tank

Armor Ranges: 10 to 3 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 7 to 1
Guns: 152 mm cannon (Width+12 Killing, Area 9+Burn, Penetration 10), two SG 43 machine guns (Width+3, Spray 2/3).
Maximum Speed: 20 mph **# of Crew:** 5.
Weight: 43 tons

IS-2 "Josef Stalin" Heavy Tank

Armor Ranges: 16 to 6 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 9 to 6
Guns: 122 mm cannon (Width+11 Killing, Area 9+Burn, Penetration 8), one SG 43 machine gun (Width+3, Spray 2/3) and one DShK 1938 machine gun (Penetration 1, Width+4, Spray 3).
Maximum Speed: 23 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 46 tons.

Soviet Armored Cars

The Soviet BA-10 was the most common Soviet armored car, but large numbers of the vehicle were destroyed during the first few months of the war with Germany. Later in the war they were produced again in great numbers with varying designs to move officers to and from the front, scout enemy positions and patrol disputed territory.

BA-10

Armor Ranges: 2 to 1 cm **Heavy Armor Rating:** 2to 1
Guns: 37 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3, Penetration 4) or 45 mm cannon (Width+5 Killing, Area 3+Burn, Penetration 6), and one Degetyerev 28 machine gun (Width+3, Spray 2).
Maximum Speed: 54 mph **# of Crew:** 4.
Weight: 8 tons.

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PART EIGHT

The Campaign

"I believe that if we think clearly enough, plan carefully enough, and work tirelessly enough, we can both save freedom and secure peace."

—General Dwight D. Eisenhower

Cam•paign \ (,) kam-pane\ n1: A connected series of military operations forming a distinct phase of a war.
—*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition.*

Godlike is perhaps unusual among role-playing games because the players portray characters actually involved in a campaign. In role-playing games, a campaign is an ongoing series of adventures, utilizing the same characters and backgrounds. In *Godlike,* a campaign is literally a series of military operations meant to move a war forward. It is an ongoing series of adventures with reoccurring characters as well, but it's much more rooted in the military term. The characters fight to survive and to win minor victories that they hope will slowly accrue into total victory. It's either that, get injured and sent home, or die on the battlefield.

In the default campaign setting for *Godlike*, character involvement in the war is on the lowest level possible—individual members of a commando squad. Many different styles, themes, and premises are possible, however, and remain up to the individual GM and players to decide. Several suggestions are offered here to help you construct your own *Godlike* campaign.

The Basics

The basic elements required to construct a *Godlike* campaign are *theme, style, a campaign premise* and *a theater of operations.* After that, it's on to building some non-player characters for the players to interact with, and designing missions for them to go on.

The four elements are described in detail here.

A Note About Future Supplements

Due to space restrictions, only the organization of Talents in the U.S. Army is covered in detail in this book. The campaign presented is one in which the players are members of a Talent Operation Group commando squad, a nine-Talent unit in the U.S. Army (see **Part Nine: TOG Commando Squads** on p. 296 for details). With a little research, however, you can easily run a campaign where players take the role of furtive Russian Talents, French resistance Talents, or any other campaign you can imagine.

Godlike supplements and campaign books detail other organizations, such as the Canadian-American First Special Service Force in *Black Devils Brigade* and the "Devil's Own" of the U.S. Marine Corps in *Talent Operations Command Intelligence Bulletin No. 3*. But there will be no ongoing story arcs beyond the background presented in this book.

The campaign background presented here is just one possibility. Feel free to make up any campaign background you like. It is your game, after all.

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Campaign Theme

A *theme* is the general feeling portrayed by the flavor of game play. Can characters perform amazing and heroic actions on par with Batman or Doc Savage? If so, then you are playing a "Four-Color" theme. Do characters die often, as easily as they would in the real world under similar conditions? If so, then you are playing a "High Realism" theme. Is your game somewhere in the middle? Then you are playing a "Cinematic Adventure" theme.

Which is the "correct" theme? The answer is simple: none of them. *Godlike* is your game, and you can play it any way you wish. There is only one rule for themes: once you establish one, don't change it in the middle of a game. Switching from a cinematic adventure to a high realism theme in the middle of a campaign will lead to an untold amount of player character deaths, and a general feeling of frustration all around the game table. Frustration is the one feeling the GM doesn't want the players feeling too often.

If you wish to change the theme then start a new campaign or game. Take it from me, switching themes mid-game, no matter how gradually it is done, just does not work.

High Realism (*Godlike* Default)

In this theme, the characters live and die like normal people. Except for their paranormal abilities, the Talents of *Godlike* are just like you and me, and their powers don't help as much as you might think. In this theme, the characters are nothing more than expendable units of the U.S. Army. Death is not only a possibility; in certain areas, it's a probability. This is our world, with a few modifications. A good idea of what this theme is like can be found in movies like *Saving Private Ryan*, *A Bridge Too Far*, or *When Trumpets Fade* or the HBO series *Band of Brothers*.

To play a *Godlike* game of this type, the GM should use the Troop Play rule (see *Troop Play* on p. 284 for more details) because of the high probability of character mortality. Talents should be built with between 15 and 25 Will points. This will put characters on even footing with characters from realistic movies, with the added edge of a super-power or two.

The reason this is the default theme of *Godlike* is very simple: This theme fits the background of the game. In the background presented, Talents have little large-scale effect on the outcome of the war, despite the amazing powers they possess. They are mortal, and very effectively cancel one another out.

There is another more subtle reason for this being the default theme, and it's this: With the background as presented, you can readily research World War II at your local library or the internet to incorporate new information into your game. For the most part (with a few small exceptions) significant events in the world of *Godlike* have not changed at all.

This is a hard theme to run properly. Balancing risk and mortality against very few tangible rewards is a tricky thing, and requires a resourceful and attentive GM. Players can easily become upset by the loss of characters, losing hope (and interest!) in the face of relentless gloom. On the up side, when run correctly, such a game can almost feel like a novel, leading to an in-depth, fun and constructive role-playing experience which feels almost real and their heroism and sacrifice are all the more meaningful.

Cinematic Adventure

In this theme, the characters are larger than life but are neither immortal or invulnerable. In this world, they are exceptional and stand out from the rank and file, but mistakes and character death are still very real possibilities. This is the world of many common Hollywood war movie, such as *The Longest Day* or *Where Eagles Dare*.

To play a *Godlike* game of this type, the GM should use the optional *Squishy Rolls* and *Die Hard* rules in **Appendix A: Optional Rules** on p. 305 to a limited degree. This will extend the characters' in-game survivability by a moderate degree. Also, each player should play only one Talent character (see *One for One* on p. 284), since they won't be dying as readily as characters in a realistic theme. For a true cinematic campaign, Talents should be built with 30 to 45 Will points, putting the characters on even footing with the larger-than-life heroes of the silver screen.

This is a middle of the road theme; good for a beginning GM. It offers the thrills of high-adventure, with the negative reinforcement of dramatic repercussions for foolish actions. With a little effort, the characters can be kept from affecting the outcome of large world-spanning events, and still have a measurable effect on their part of the war.

Four-Color Adventure

In this type of theme, characters can dodge bullets, fire machine guns endlessly without reloading, and count on their arch-nemesis to lecture them on his extensive plans for world domination before leaving them to die in a complex death-trap (readily escapable, of course). This is the world of four-color comic book heroes such as Captain America, Spider-Man or Superman.

In this four-colored world, the good guys eventually win (despite minor setbacks), the bad guys lose or die, and everyone who counts lives happily ever after to fight another day.

To play a *Godlike* game of this type, the GM should use the optional *Squishy rolls* and *Die Hard* rules in **Appendix A: Optional Rules** on p. 305. This will extend characterss in-game survivability by a considerable amount. GMs can also increase the number of Will points allotted to players to buy powers with, to make them *really* super-human. For a true four-color campaign Talents can be built with as few as 50 or as many as 100 Will points, putting them on even footing with the heroes of the comics.

If you use this theme, it's recommended that each players only play one Talent character, and not utilize the Troop Play rules (see *One for One* on p. 284 below).

The only significant drawback of this theme is that the characters will easily have an effect on world-spanning events. With this level of super-heroic adventure, it won't be long before the PCs are executing Hitler (while downing the *Luftwaffe* single-handedly), incinerating Himmler with their power beams and finishing up with teleporting Emperor Hirohito to Washington, D.C. for a war crimes trial.

For GMs who don't mind thinking on their toes and rolling with whatever anachronistic punches the PCs hurl their way, this type of theme can be a lot of fun.

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Styles of *Godlike* Game Play

There are several different ways to set up a *Godlike* game group. Because the default setting for *Godlike* is as deadly as the real world, the *Troop Play* game is recommended. With this, character replacement is easily accomplished, and supplemental characters are available to play while the player makes up a new Talent for the next game session. This lessens the feeling of loss the players may have for their characters and gives them a character to play while they wait for a replacement.

Playing a single character is recommended only if the GM decides to run a cinematic or four-color campaign where character mortality is rare.

One for One

This style of game play is recommended for cinematic or four-color campaigns where character death is rare, and characters have a chance to directly affect the outcome of the war. In this game type, the players generate and run only a single Talent character (since death is rare, no back-up characters are really necessary).

This is how most role-playing games are run. But in the default setting of *Godlike*, characters will have a hard time staying alive. If you do run a One for One game, it is strongly suggested that you use the optional rules on *Squishy Rolls* in **Appendix A: Optional Rules** on p. 305 to improve the likelihood of character survival. Otherwise, your players could be creating new characters every couple of hours, and that quickly leads to unhappy players—a situation no GM wants.

Troop Play

Those familiar with the role-playing game *Ars Magica* will recognize this style of play, slightly altered from *Troupe Play* for a military flavor. In *Troop Play* each player runs multiple characters, jumping back and forth between them as desired.

For example, a single player might run a favorite Talent as a main character, along with several other Talents under his command as secondary characters. Since character death is common in the default setting, this type of play is highly recommended, because it gives the players many fallback characters to use if the main character is killed or crippled in action.

There are new responsibilities for players in a Troop Play game, and new dangers. Since players are responsible for secondary characters, a main character should lose Will points for any secondary character killed while under his command. A Talent PC loses Will equal to the Command statistic of any man killed under his command, and double that if the man is killed trying to complete a direct order.

In other words, throwing secondary characters in like lemmings to block threats to your main Talent character might work; but afterwards that character's Talent power won't, thanks to the horrors the character has witnessed. Such is the burden of command.

Campaign Premise

A premise answers the vital "why" question in a campaign. Why are the characters where they are in the game, and what are they are they doing? A pre-made campaign premise is outlined in **Part Nine: TOG Commando Squads** on p. 296, but if it does not appeal to you feel free to make up your own.

A strong campaign premise is one that *practically* requires the characters to follow it without *forcing* them to. A weak premise is one that lacks direction or clear goals, and leaves the characters looking for something to do. A strong premise is usually completely invisible. It is so ingrained in the game that things just move forward smoothly.

Godlike's premise is naturally strong, as the characters are involved in a war, one way or another. However, to work, a premise must be a little more specific than simply *the characters are fighting in a war.* We know they fight in a war, but where, for whom and why?

There are as many campaign premises as there are ideas, but right off the bat they may be a bit difficult to come up with, especially for a rookie GM. The war is immense, and so are the possibilities.

The campaign provided in this book has the following premise: *The characters are Allied Talents who fight in small nine-man commando squads in the U.S. Army as front-line scout units.*

With a little practice, good premises are easy to come up with. Here are a few campaign premises to help you along.

The characters are . . .

- . . . Allied Talents living behind Axis lines, working as spies, saboteurs and messengers.
- . . . Allied Talents attempting to hunt down and destroy an Axis spy-ring in an Allied or neutral country.
- . . . a small squad of powerful Talents used as shock troops or distractions for real troop movements for the Allies.
- . . . resistance Talents in an occupied country, causing havoc with their powers and working with Allied command to aid the coming invasion.
- . . . an Allied commando team sent into Axis territories to make clandestine strikes against vital targets.
- . . . Talents who work with Section Two, the Special Sciences Office or Special Directive One in testing and classifying Talent powers.

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Theater of Operations

Choosing a theater of operations is vital, and often adds a lot to your premise. Where will your campaign begin and what is its ultimate goal? Will the characters land at Normandy to make their way into Germany? Or are they committing hit-and-run attacks in central Burma with Stilwell to oust the Japanese forces? Are they trying to survive the beachhead at Anzio to move up the boot? Or kicking off America's involvement with the landings in North Africa in Operation Torch to drive Rommel out of Tunisia?

These are the keys to a campaign: a sense of location, and the gain (or loss) of territory through combat. By the time a campaign is through (if it is run in the *Godlike* default theme) many main and secondary characters will have been injured or killed, but those veterans who survive will remember a rich tapestry of events.

If you are playing a more cinematic or four-color campaign, then the theater of operations can be a highly mobile thing. Your characters can jump from the European theater of operations (ETO) to the Pacific theater of operations (PTO) in a matter of weeks, fighting anywhere in one shot adventures. Since PCs in four-color and cinematic campaigns are more powerful than those of the default setting (and more liable to affect the outcome of world-spanning events,) they are also much more likely to be needed all over the world.

See *Location* on p. 288 for more details on the theater of operations.

Constructing a Campaign

Choosing to be a GM is choosing to take on a load of responsibility out of proportion to all others in the game. You are responsible for describing the environment, contriving the adventures, portraying the adversaries, and filling in all the details of the world of *Godlike* that the characters adventure in. In effect, you are a one-man show, who must get the point across with very limited resources, mostly just your voice, your facial expressions and some props. The players pick one or a small group of characters to portray, but you run every other character they encounter and describe everything they experience to boot. It's no easy task, but when done right, it is infinitely rewarding. No creative endeavor is quite like it.

Constructing a campaign is easy; getting one off the ground is hard. Pick the four elements—theme, style, premise and theater of operations—and you've got the basics for a good campaign. Many details remain to be filled in, so skip to *The Ongoing Game* on p. 286 to fill them in, or read on to learn some more details about running a good game.

A campaign is helped by preparation, but no matter how much work you put in before the group convenes that first time, there's always the chance it will fail to gain the players' interest. Players can be a fickle lot. What entertains one way on one day will someday no longer entertain. A game moderator must be aware of what his players want, and why, and that those desires differ from person to person as well as change over time.

Preparation

Once the four elements of a campaign are chosen, it is now up to the GM to populate his campaign with Non Player Characters-characters that are played by the GM. Who's the character's commanding officer? Who are the members of their rifle squad or platoon? Are there enemy Talents in the area?

Anyone the characters might interact with should be at least considered by the GM. Not every NPC has to be created using the character creation rules; some characters never really interact "physically" with the PCs, so their statistics and skills are not needed. For friendly NPCs who never really come into direct conflict with the players, name, rank and general idea of their disposition are all that's really required (see *Non-Player Characters* on p. 288 for more details).

Next, notes about the PC's base of operations, the basic positioning of the enemy in the area, and other significant facts should be considered by the GM. Significant enemy NPCs (including enemy Talents) should be generated in game statistics by the GM.

Finally, the GM must prepare a "mission" for the player characters to complete. A mission can be a task that the characters are ordered to complete by their superior officer or just a series of challenges in day-to-day life in the armed forces. It can be as simple as "dig a latrine ditch," as difficult as "capture a German officer over the rank of *Obersturmbannführer* for questioning" or as loose as "go into Paris on a 24-hour pass and have fun." If it's not a combat mission, the GM must make it compelling, such as exploring the frequent conflicts and rivalries between allies.

For more details on NPCs, the enemy, and missions see *The Ongoing Game* on p. 286.

Playing the Game

Playing the game itself is the fun part. This is the point where the GM runs the mission, dice are rolled, characters interact with NPCs, they kill or are killed, and in general act out the motivations of their characters in the fictional world of *Godlike*.

When the session is over rewards are given out, and players spend experience points and Will points to improve their characters. The GM prepares another mission (if there is another,) and next time it starts all over again.

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Broken Rules, Broken Game Moderator or Broken Players?

Many games repeat the rule that the "Game Moderator is always right" without examining why such a rule is important for the stability of the game. The reason is this: Without the GM's central control and the backing of clear game mechanics, the game will soon degenerate into an "I did that," "no you didn't" mentality. The rules are there to mark a boundary past which certain actions within the game are not possible, nothing more. It's the player's duty to push these boundaries to their limit, just as it's the GM's duty to hold that line without being unfair.

By definition, the rules are the guidelines of the game. They mark what you can and can't do. They are there to keep the players in their roles and to keep the action fair, fast and accurate. However no rules-set is perfect. The simpler the rules-set, the easier it is to circumvent; but the more complicated the rules-set, the longer it takes to resolve actions. A balance between how accurate and how complicated you want the rules to be must be struck. *Godlike* is somewhere in the center.

What happens when, in the opinion of the game group, a rule is broken and fails to accurately represent "game reality"? It's up to the GM to adjudicate such situations. This is done by repairing the rules, and then not wavering from that decision in the future. The players and GM work in tandem here: The players push the rules to their limit (and sometimes beyond) and the GM hopes to keep the players within the framework of the rules by maintaining strict ruling on what is and is not possible.

However, this pushing can only go so far. Once "rules lawyering" starts to interfere with game play, it has to stop. Have you found a loophole in the rules? Ask yourself what would be more fun and more productive: Pointing out the flaw to the GM so he can make a ruling on it and fix it, or abusing that rule until no one can stand to play the game with you anymore? The latter answer is the hallmark of a broken player. Chances are, you already know someone like this: someone who plays the game to inflict his superiority on others through obscure mathematics bent to his advantage. The best way to deal with this type of player is to be firm. When they begin abusing the system or cheating, take them aside and talk to them privately. Ask, "Do you really want to play the game?" and be sure to point out why you think that might not be the case. Let them come back and try again; after all, everyone makes mistakes. If they continue to cheat, refuse to let them play anymore. Most likely, the other players will thank you.

What if the GM isn't being fair? What happens when he contradicts himself, bends the rules in favor of the bad guys or just plain screws up and refuses to admit it. Well, questioning the decisions of the GM (if more than one player feels a decision is unjust) is just as natural as pushing the boundaries of the game system for the players. If multiple players are asking why you bent such a rule or let something not in the rules happen, chances are you screwed up. The best thing to do is say, "I screwed up, let's do that over," and move on. If you refuse to do so, even though you're obviously in the wrong, chances are the players will become bored and quit, effectively killing the game.

A broken GM quickly equals no game. Simple.

One-Shot Adventures

Campaign play is not the only way to play a game of *Godlike*. If you wish to just run a single mission and then call it a day at that mission's end, retiring both the characters and the story line, this is called a *one-shot adventure*.

The advantages of one shot adventures are numerous. One-shots are easy to throw together and the players are unlikely to become too attached to their characters in just a single adventure (this makes a big difference in case their characters are killed). Also, seriousness can be thrown to the wind and any type of game can be played. After all, if you don't like it, nothing much is riding on it. If you discard the adventure and the characters, it's no big deal. In addition, the characters can affect huge events in the game world without fear of interfering with future history, since after the one shot game is over, it's over.

The disadvantage is that the players will not have sufficient time to get to be comfortable in the role of their characters.

Otherwise, one-shots are a good way for a beginning GM and players to get into the groove of a *Godlike* game, before undertaking the creation of an ongoing campaign.

The Ongoing Game

When you GM multiple *Godlike* adventures in a single ongoing series, this is a campaign. Campaigns feature recurring characters and locations, and a consistent and updated description of such locations and characters as game time moves forward. Just as the development of individual characters remains up to individual players, the development of the game world and the NPCs that populate it is up to the GM. For example, a cowardly NPC might develop into a competent battlefield commander during a series of ongoing games, or a war-scarred town might eventually become a place grunts go for rest and relaxation as the enemy is pushed out of it.

The responsibility of supporting the brunt of the ongoing game is placed squarely on the shoulders of the GM. It is up to him to make the game world live.

Continuity

If you plan to run a *Godlike* campaign, continuity is key. If in one mission you tell the players that they are facing the Twenty-Third Panzer Division in the town of Somme, and the next time you tell them they are facing the Twenty-First Panzer Division in the town of Seine, problems will arise. Consistency is vital and is directly linked to the player's

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consistency in their characterizations.

Since the players only have your descriptions with which to devise their actions or reactions to events in the game world, continuity is vital. Change a fact and the player is left out in the cold, and they will soon bring others in the group there. An inconsistent GM leads to inconsistent players.

In addition, continuity gives the game a much-needed sense of familiarity. Is one NPC captain always yelling at the characters? Does a PC's rifle jam every third shot despite all attempts to clean it? If these facts are repeated from game session to game session, soon the players will learn to *expect* them, and will find comfort in them. Any sense of familiarity in the game world leads to an increase in the "range of action" of the PC's. If they know more, they can do more.

Player Expectations

Working with the players to make the game an enjoyable experience is the hallmark of any good GM. Knowing what the players want out of the game is only possible if the GM is attentive and open to suggestions. While the GM's word is final, this doesn't mean a well-run game isn't open to interpretation. The players may have different ideas on just what is expected of them. Talk to them and make sure you're all on the same page when a dispute rears its ugly head. After all, maybe it's just a misunderstanding.

Listen to what the players have to add. If you don't like it, you don't have to use it. But most of the time, just listening and explaining your decision is all that's needed for a problem to be resolved, and that's always better than fighting over a *game*.

Dealing with Know-It-Alls

How do you deal with a player who continuously spouts facts about the war that you, as GM, don't really know? Good question. *Godlike* is just a game, and while it does strive to be historically "accurate," it's no doubt filled with factual errors. In turn, unless you're an expert on the war years, your game will be filled with "flaws" too (which know-it-alls just love to point out). No amount of preparation will prevent mistakes from cropping up-there are just too many facts to be known to always be right. So what to do?

Take the know-it-all player aside and explain to them your concerns about their gripes. Constant bickering over facts detracts from the game. Interruptions over whether there was a Twelfth Motorized Mountain Division in Germany in 1944 in the middle of a session only serves to hold up game play and destroy any sense of mood the players might have developed up until that point. Be sure to hear their complaints. This is not a condemnation of such complaints, only of such complaints *during* a game session.

More to the point, honestly listen to what they have to say. Most of the time, they're just trying to help. Even if you disagree with what they have to say, never block a player out (though remind him that after or before-session advice is the best way to go about voicing such concerns).

Setting the Mood

Godlike is a game set in one of the most violent, bloody and dark eras of recorded history. Try to mimic that feeling in the area you play your game in. Dim the rest of the lights so that the table seems to be the center of attention in the room (making sure the table is still illuminated so everyone can see their character sheets and dice clearly, of course). When PCs separate from the group, move that player away from the others and keep them split up. Don't allow communication between two players when it would be impossible for their characters to do so in the game. Isolation, uncertainty, and constant danger: try to get these feelings across in the way you speak, in how you describe the world, and how you set up the play area.

Feel free to change the lighting as conditions in the game change. Dim the lights even more on a night mission in the Ardennes, or set up bright lamps to simulate the bloated sun of Tripoli.

Playing music in the background is an effective way to set the mood as well, though using a soundtrack appropriate to the time is a good idea. Sound effect loops are sometimes good for setting the mood. The repetitive sounds of shells crashing to earth and machine guns chattering away can help even the most staunch opponent of role-playing feel some sort of connection to their character's predicament.

In short, do everything you can to get the players into their characters' heads.

Changing the War

Depending on the power level of your PCs, their effect on the outcome of the war may be minimal or extreme. In one campaign, the characters might fight day in and day out just to take one hill in central Italy, while in another the characters might plot the assassination of Hitler himself.

In the first example, little needs to be changed in the timeline of the war presented in **Part Five: Background**, whether the PCs take the hill or not. The PCs live, fight and die below the level of global scrutiny; they are just another Talent, one of a quarter million fighting on all sides of the conflict. No big deal.

In the second example, the attempt to assassinate Hitler, the PCs are heroes who may change the entire outcome of the war with a single use of their power. Of course, the timeline presented in this book would suddenly derail if

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Hitler were disintegrated by a Talent in mid-1942. With Hitler gone, how would the war go? This is an important consideration for all GMs who run high-powered games. Feel free to improvise, but once a large deviation occurs in the timeline, all events after it are affected in one way or another. Many cease to become relevant, while others suddenly become completely inaccurate.

This is not to say that you should not play high-powered games, or that you should not change the way the background as it is presented. On the contrary, do with the game what you like—only be consistent in your choice and prepared to make it up as you go along!

Non-Player Characters

NPCs are the most important game tool a GM possesses. These are characters in the game portrayed by the GM. With them, a good GM can give the players clues, drive the game forward through combat, or simply let the PCs use them as emotional foils, to explore their character's beliefs and feelings.

There are several different types of NPCs, each different in their role in the game and in the detail in which the GM portrays them. Some NPCs are so important they can order the PCs around, and some are nothing more than targets to be shot at (and who shoot back). A break down of the six different NPC types is given below.

Stars

These NPCs are of great importance to the campaign, interacting with the PCs often. They are solid recurring characters that have a detailed history, something beyond a name, rank and serial number. A PC's commanding officer, a buddy or an orphaned French child who follows the PCs around are good examples of Stars.

In general, Stars are as detailed in their history and personality as the PCs are, and they should have an entire set of statistics, skills and Talent powers created by the GM (if they have any Talent powers at all, of course).

Villains

Villains are NPCs in direct opposition with the PCs and are at least as powerful as them. Whether the villain is a German general or a Japanese Talent makes no difference. If the NPC is as powerful as the PCs and is in direct opposition to them, he or she is a villain. "Power" need not be measured in game statistics, if the NPC has access to significant military or political power, he can still be counted as a villain.

In general, Villains are as detailed in their history and personality as the PCs are, and should have an entire set of statistics, skills and Talent powers (if any) created for them.

Co-Stars

Co-Stars are the filler of the campaign. They're the people the PCs run into as they move around in the war—the truck driver, the displaced priest, the wounded German soldier. They're considered Co-Stars only if they occur more than once, or if they require anything more detailed than a name, rank and basic physical description. Grunts or the Enemy can develop into Co-Stars if they become popular enough. It is often not necessary to generate a set of statistics and skills for a Co-Star unless they reoccur often or have some mechanical purpose in the game (like the Co-Star who fixes the PC's jeep, or the doctor who sews the PC up).

Grunts

Grunts are nameless soldiers who fight alongside the PCs from time to time. A set of statistics is given for generic Allied soldiers that may be used over and over again in **Appendix B: NPCs** on p. 310. If a Grunt character becomes more detailed than a nameless soldier who passes the PCs on a road, or offers covering fire, he may, if the GM wishes to detail him further, develop into a Co-Star or even a Star.

Grunts are usually expendable nameless men who are under someone else's command, and therefore are not the PCs' responsibility.

The Enemy

The Enemy are grunts who work for the other side. Statistics are given for generic Axis soldiers that may be used over and over again in **Appendix B: NPCs** on p. 310. The Enemy are usually nothing more than a list of equipment, a number of men with a simple set of statistics, and a desire to kill the PCs.

Sometimes the Enemy will become Co-Stars for a bit (if, for example an enemy soldier was captured and interrogated) or, if one proves truly exceptional he or she may even develop into a Villain.

Secondary Characters

Secondary characters are unusual for NPCs in that they are sometimes controlled by the GM and sometimes controlled by the players. The secondary characters are NPCs who may be played by the PCs if a main character is killed during game play, or if the GM allows the player to switch characters in the game.

Secondary characters should be as detailed as the PCs, and can either be generated by the GM or the players.

Location

The GM must decide the specifics of the PCs' beginning location, command and general opposition before con-

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Why All the Categories?

The six different named categories of NPCs are presented here to make the GM's job a little bit easier. In many other games, NPCs are all treated with equal importance, despite their differing importance in game play.

In *Godlike* NPCs are divided into the six categories so the GM can keep a careful record of the development of important NPCs (Stars, Villains, Secondary characters,) and not sweat the details of the lesser, unimportant NPCs (Co-stars, Grunts, the Enemy.) A GM's time is limited at best, and any time gained is precious.

sidering individual missions. Where are the PCs fighting? France? Burma? China? Finding a detailed map of the area you want to set your campaign is a good idea, depending on what you want your campaign to be like (if your campaign has a mobile theater of operation, such a detailed breakdown of a single area may be unnecessary).

Something as simple as an atlas of Europe can be helpful (or, if you like, make it up and draw your own). For those who want more detail, the author suggests *The Historical Atlas of World War II,* by John Pimlott, which shows the movement of front lines throughout the whole war, so you can tell which army was where, when.

Find an area that seems interesting, and divide the map into Axis territory and Allied territory. From there, it's a piece of cake. No matter the premise, the PCs' job usually is to push the enemy back.

Enemy Forces

The GM should have a basic idea of the disposition of enemy troops in the area of the PCs. Each town or strongpoint should be marked with the significant forces in the area. For example, a town might be marked "640 troops, 2 light tanks, 1 heavy tank, some heavy weapons." Just what heavy weapons or tanks are there are up to the GM to decide if the PCs ever come across that location. Absolute details are often unnecessary, since the PCs will only be fighting in skirmishes that they are a very small component of. Even a single tank appearing in firefight that the PCs are involved in will be cause for great alarm.

Detailed descriptions of troop dispositions are useful, of course, but can be very time consuming. Most of the time the basic stats and skills of generic enemy grunt and the general idea of what kind of heavy weapons are in a town or position are all that are necessary in the preparation phase. Once the players arrive there, the GM can come up with the necessary details on the fly.

Enemy Special Forces, Leaders or Talents

The GM should know where enemy special forces, leaders or Talents are on the battlefield and how powerful they are. These forces should be detailed more than common enemy troops since they are much more powerful and important, as well as much more likely to interact with PCs than standard troops.

"We Shall Fight on the Beaches . . ."

A great beginning mission for a *Godlike* campaign is where the players take the roles of an assault team during an amphibious landing, such as the landings which took place on Sicily on July 10, 1943 or the D-Day invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

For the players, it marks a clear start to the war for their characters *and* gives them a common beginning goal that is much more specific than most missions: Take the beach or die. Also it gives the GM a chance to show the horrors of war, and demonstrate early on what will or won't get you killed under enemy fire. (Some vital lessons provided here by the GM couldn't hurt.)

This introductory adventure works so well because the players, just like many of the grunts who landed on those beaches, are completely without combat experience. In effect, the players will be just as green as the men who actually landed on those beaches, and will have little idea what to do.

It is up to the GM to make such a mission not so deadly that it will eliminate the whole cadre of PCs (though those who attempt extremely stupid actions should not be spared.) Killing off many co-stars, grunts or even secondary characters will give the PCs a good idea of just how deadly war can be and will teach them to be more careful in the future.

Those who survive such a mission will remember it for a long, long time.

Leaders are significant because they command the enemy troops in the field. If they are eliminated, the enemy will be disrupted and will most likely retreat to reform. Normally enemy leaders are situated behind the lines and are not subject to direct attack unless overrun in a push. However, Talent powers make them far more vulnerable to Allied attack. Consequently, enemy leaders on the line should be created as Villain NPCs with full stats and skills, as it's quite possible the PCs might pop up in their headquarters unexpectedly.

Special forces (such as *Waffen SS* or other experienced combat troops) should be noted on the map, with details of their armaments and strength. These units will often be at the forefront of an enemy advance on the line. It's much more likely the PCs will encounter them during patrols or an all-out offensive. Stats for such troops should be significantly more powerful than the common enemy grunts due to better training, experience and armament (see **Appendix B: NPCs** on p. 310 for some examples of enemy troops).

Enemy Talents in the area should be thoroughly designed with stats, skills and Talent powers as NPC Villains, since they will be commonly thrown against any Allied Talents. Remember that a strong Allied Talent presence on the line will lead to a powerful enemy Talent presence on the line to counteract it, for the most effective weapon against a Talent is another Talent.

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Missions

Missions are the meat and potatoes of any *Godlike* game. If a campaign premise is why the characters are there, then missions are what the characters do while they are there. Missions can be combat or non-combat in nature. For instance, scouting an enemy position in Huertgen forest or trying to locate a little nookie on leave in Cherbourg are both (as far as the game is concerned) missions. A mission, in short, is a single session of *Godlike* game play.

The GM is responsible for creating and arbitrating the outcome of missions. All the little details and occurrences remain up to you to create. The characters' objectives, access to equipment, the placement of the enemy, all the NPCs involved-these facts and figures remain up to you to devise.

Creating missions is not as daunting a task as it might sound however. Read on, and don't worry, we'll walk you through it.

Mission Types

There are several types of missions in *Godlike*. The two most obvious (and common) types are combat missions and leave.

Combat missions are missions where the PCs may see combat. Securing a town, patrolling a line, or attempting to capture a prisoner are all good examples of combat missions. Characters do not necessarily have to see combat for it to be considered a combat mission—only the possibility of combat need exist. The risk is what's important.

Leave is a mission when the characters have been granted a limited time off the line to recuperate. This is a vacation for a soldier (usually given for good behavior or as a reward for the flat out endurance of terrible conditions). Usually these leaves are granted in 48-hour or 24-hour 'passes' that allow a soldier to be absent for that amount of time. Sometimes something as little as a 3-hour pass or as much as a 72-hour leave may be granted, depending on circumstances. Soldiers on leave often flock to the nearest town to look for a good time. Drinking and debauchery are commonplace on such R&R passes, and when there aren't enough women or drinks to go around, things often turn ugly. Add in Talent powers and you have an explosive mixture.

There are other types of missions, which are more rarely seen.

Public relations missions are uncommon, but do happen. In them, Talent PCs are encouraged to show off their powers in front of the film and photo crews for the folks back home. Often, they are encouraged to pitch-in to help the civilian population. Newsreels, photographers and reporters sometimes follow Talents on the line, to give the average American (and local civilian) the idea that America's Talents are being put to good use.

Rotation missions are uncommon, but a very real possibility for Talent PCs; especially if they have an unusual ability. This is when the characters are moved to a facility in a secure area to be studied by the Special Sciences Office, or Section Two, who wish to either utilize their powers in an upcoming mission, or get a good idea just what a normal Talent grunt on the line can do.

AWOL missions are missions in which the PCs are "Absent Without Leave" for some reason. Usually characters are spurred on to go AWOL if things on the line become untenable or the combat is just too much for them. But sometimes, the characters have very specific reasons for skipping out. This type of mission is seen so rarely because there are very few ways out of a court martial, if the PCs are captured or return to duty.

The first step in creating a mission is figuring out what type of mission you want it to be. If you come up with something other than one of these five types, don't worry. Determine the mission type or the general gist of what you want it to be like, and then move on to objectives.

Campaign Preparation, an Example

The GM decides to set his *Godlike* campaign in the French town of Sainteny just one day after the D-Day invasion. Sainteny is located between Cherbourg and Caen on the Normandy peninsula, and is a significant location in the war since a single undamaged stone bridge allows free access for Allied tanks across the Carentan river. The PCs are members of the 101st American Airborne Division, the "Screaming Eagles," a forward element dropped in the night of June 6, to hold the bridge until other Allied forces arrive to reinforce them from the beaches to the north.

The German 265th Infantry Division is to the west, the Seventeenth *Waffen SS* Armored Division is to the east, the Seventy-seventh German Infantry Division is to the north, and the German Seventh Army to the south, surround the PC's force. It is easy to see they are significantly outnumbered, and that they will be able to hold out only for so long.

The 101st Airborne Division (with about 8,500 men) does have a slight advantage: Over 160 Talents are in their force, with varying levels of power, while the Germans only have about fifty Talents (though more are most certainly being rushed to the area.) The GM creates a couple of Allied Talents, just in case the PCs need reinforcements, and makes several Star and Co-Star NPCs who the PCs might interact with, along with the Secondary Characters the PCs will command or play, depending on the circumstances.

The GM prepares stats and skills for *Waffen SS* grunts, and carefully marks their location on the map; also, he creates stats for several German Talents and General Dollman, the commander of the German Seventh Army, and marks their locations just in case the PCs are sent in against either of them.

Now, with the playing field set up, the GM can turn his attention to individual missions.

Mission Objectives

What is the mission's objective? Take a hill, patrol some woods, or disarm a mine? Does the mission have no set objective, like when the characters are on leave? If the latter, that's easy; the characters' objective(s) on leave is usually to have fun, find a little company, or get drunk. No problem.

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However, combat missions are different. They need a set objective. Reading books or watching movies on the war is a good way for a GM to come up with ideas for mission objectives. During one sitting of *Godlike* game play, many mission objectives may come up, or the characters might just stick to one over a series of game sessions.

Usually combat missions can be summed up in a few short sentences, like: *Patrol the south bank of the river. Locate and mark the locations of enemy emplacements on the far side of the river. Do not engage the enemy if possible.*

Come up with a simple idea. Something as basic as "Try and draw the enemy out at the river" is enough of an objective to start with. Then move on to the map.

The Map

This may be the most important part of a combat mission. Soldiers live and die because of the accuracy of their maps. Having one to hand out to the players is not required, but will help to give everyone a clear idea of where they're going and what they're doing. Now that you know what the objective of the mission you're creating is, make a map showing it in relation to the characters starting location.

Keep in mind you need not give the players an accurate map. Many maps during the war were woefully inaccurate, especially maps made of enemy held territory. This can lead to some interesting role-playing as the characters get lost following a flawed map that command insists is exact down to the smallest detail.

Ideally, there should be two maps: the GM's map that shows the location of the enemy, and the objective in exacting detail, and the player's map which only generally shows the location of the objective and maybe a loose idea of where some of the enemy might be. When you have a clear idea of where the characters are supposed to go, and where their objective is, and you have a map, move on to the enemy.

The Enemy

Figuring out what kind of enemy resistance the characters may face on a combat mission is one of the most significant decisions a GM must make while designing a combat mission. Ideally, enemy strong-points should be marked on the GM's map, along with any relevant information, such as which other units in the area they are in contact with, and what kind of weaponry they have.

Statistics for individual enemy troopers are not necessary. Generally, a single set of statistics for each troop type (*Waffen SS, Heer, etc)*. and a general number, is all that's needed. This isn't to say the occasional trooper might stand out as an exceptional shot, skilled sneak or big brain, only that such distinctions need not consume hours of time to create, since it's rare for them to come up in combat. Most likely, the only interaction the PCs will have with the enemy is shooting at or being shot at by them.

Determining how many enemy troopers there will be is often a difficult decision. Typically, the characters will be operating in a squad of less than a dozen men. How many enemy do you create to match them? Chances are, if they characters are on a patrol behind enemy lines, there will be a hell of a lot more enemy than good guys. Feel free to create a large enemy force dug in to oppose the PCs, even if it means there will probably be some casualties. This is war after all. People are injured and die.

Enemy equipment should be considered carefully. Please refer to **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263, for more detail on equipment and armaments. A good GM knows how much equipment is just enough to deter a blatant advance from the PCs, but little enough that the PCs have a fighting chance.

Enemy Talents should be created in detail, since they will almost certainly directly oppose the PCs. Since Talents often cancel out other Talents power however, many PCs might actually prefer facing an enemy Talent as opposed to a Tiger Tank or a *Heer* rifle squad. Then again, most Talents often carry normal weapons, making them a double threat.

Life on the Line

The front line is where the war is won, or lost. It is where most of the casualties of war occur and where the fighting is always the fiercest. Living in the field under front line conditions is almost as draining as actually being in combat. Constant exposure to the elements with little or no shelter, exposure to enemy fire, the inability to clean or relieve oneself without the fear of enemy attack, the relentless shelling and sniping, the lack of good hot food, the lack of rest and relaxation, these all add up to exhaust even the strongest willed individual.

The skills that keep a soldier alive on the front line are many, but few were actually taught in boot camp. Instead, they were usually learned on the fly, or through the instruction of experienced veterans on the line.

Some locations, duties and dangers of a common foot soldier's life on the line are covered in detail below.

Cover

The soldier's life is repetition, interspersed with moments of deadly uncertainty. Most of a trooper's time is spent in several different types of hideouts, dugouts or command locations to keep clear of enemy fire and observation.

Types of cover that are commonly used or created by the foot soldier are explained in detail below.

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The Trench

Most of a normal foot soldier's life is consumed with "digging in," hand-digging a trench to conceal himself from enemy fire. The trench is the ultimate burden and respite for the foot soldier when better cover is not available. Digging a trench is often a backbreaking process (lent extra gravity when the digger is exposed to enemy fire) and can take minutes or hours depending on the weather and condition of the soil. Some soldiers came up with ingenious (and often quite dangerous) processes to quickly dig trenches in frozen soil while under fire, like emptying eight shots from their rifle into the frozen dirt, and then placing a hand grenade in the loosened soil. Presto, instant start on your trench—not to mention unwanted attention from enemy troops in the area!

The huge trenches of World War I were replaced in the Second World War for the most part with small one-man or two-man trenches. Larger tunnels and trench complexes did exist, but they were far more rare than their quick and dirty cousins. While their predecessors in the last war were elaborate rat warrens, the trenches of the Second World War were often used only for a short periods, and abandoned when the front line advanced. GIs were frequently required to advance, leaving ditches and trenches behind.

"Dugouts" were trenches covered with logs or wood to prevent shrapnel from shells from penetrating the trench top. Often, these dugouts were covered in loose foliage and other debris to hide them from enemy observation.

Trenches are a necessary evil for all soldiers in the field. Without them, life on the line is brief at best.

The Command Post

The CP is the intelligence and information gathering center of any front line unit. In the wilderness, CPs are usually set up in large trenches or behind other cover, in towns and cities, they are usually set up in a easily defended building with a good view of the battlefield. Either way, they're usually placed a short distance from the actual front line. When combat is fierce and the line is unstable, CPs are often moved from place to place to keep them secure.

CPs are where the officers gather to consider options, issue orders, look at maps, and contact higher headquarters for orders. The CP is usually linked to the front line through radio, runner or wire telephone.

Strong Points

Strong points are trenches or other covered locations where heavy weapons or a large amount of armed men are set up to repel attacks on the line. In towns, strong points are often in multiple locations with interlocking fields of fire. In the wilderness, strong points are created in trenches, on hills or other naturally defensible locations that would be difficult for the enemy to overcome without heavy losses.

Strong points are often set up along roads and bridges to prevent vehicles or troops from moving along them unopposed. Sometimes tanks or vehicle-mounted weapons are used as mobile strong points to deter enemy adventurism.

"Against Insurmountable Odds . . ."

Sometimes a good start to a campaign is one where an enemy *push* (see p. 293) has overrun the PCs' position. Finding themselves behind enemy lines, the PCs must fight their way back to friendly territory or face capture or death by an enemy which surrounds them on all sides. Skulking about by night, slowly gathering food, intelligence and direction, a small group of characters might live to see the safety of their own Command Post once more, but only if they are very, very careful.

The immediacy of this life-threatening situation often gives the players a needed sense of urgency (which beginning players often lack), one that will cause an emotional attachment to form between player and character (and between the group's characters, as well!).

Characters who survive will be ready to take on much bigger challenges in the future, and will be looked at with respect and admiration by the new men on the line.

The Rear

The Rear is a gathering and sorting area some distance from the front where supplies are received, sorted and prepared for movement to troops on the line. It's also where the wounded and dead are transported to, where food is prepared, and where war materiel (fuel, ammunition and other supplies) is stored.

When an army is preparing to move the front line forward in an advance, these rear areas are often overstuffed with freshly fed and clothed troops, vehicles and heavy weapons.

Duties

Several different duties are required of soldiers on the line. Most duties don't fall on the same individual repeatedly; by random chance or by direct order, the duty is transferred from person to person.

Even everyday duties on the line are risky.

Guard Duty

Guard duty is either boring beyond words or a mortal danger, depending on your proximity to the front line. Usually guards are on watch 24-hours a day, keeping an eye out for enemy action from a trench or secure location. In the rear, guards often stand out in the open, and care little who comes and goes, unless they're wearing the wrong uniform.

Guards at the front challenge all those coming from the wrong side of the line with a password; if the proper reply is not forthcoming, and the unknown subject does not surrender, the guard is supposed to shoot to kill.

Forward guard locations are common in disputed areas with lots of cover. These locations are often in a hidden area with a good view of the battlefield. One or two men are left

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here with a small radio or a wire telephone connected to the unit Command Post to alert it if an enemy attack is coming their way. Usually, forward locations are the first to be lost in pushes, and this duty is often seen as a punishment for bad behavior.

Guards sometimes operate in shifts, with one half of a team sleeping, and the other person watching, switching on and off, so both can get some shut-eye. However, it is common for exhausted foot soldiers on the front line to fall asleep on duty, leaving their post effectively unmanned. Such a lax in discipline is severely frowned upon.

The Patrol

This dreaded duty takes place in an area between enemy holdings and friendly territory. This no man's land is often devoid of any troops (except the injured or the dying,) as after an engagement both forces work to quickly stabilize the line by retreating to a safe distance and setting up strong points.

At night, or in poor weather conditions, small teams (usually less than a squad of men) are sent to see if the enemy is moving men into the area of dispute. This is the patrol. Such patrols are sent in to find and map new enemy strong points, or to kill or capture enemy patrols or forward locations.

Different commanders choose those who are to patrol with different methods; sometimes men are sent on patrol as punishment, or because they chose the low card on a draw, or simply because they are ordered to go.

Any way you are chosen, the patrol is seen as one of the most dangerous aspects of life on the line.

Scouting

Scouting is an *extremely* dangerous task. Unless it's a desperate situation, it is left to those with the skills (and the experience) to successfully accomplish it. Scouting is simply a patrol into unknown enemy territory, behind enemy lines, where everyone you may run into you is against you, and without nearby allies to come to your aid.

It is much, much more dangerous than a simple patrol. A scout is required to be part sneak, part mapmaker, and part woodsman, in addition to being a decent combat soldier. In *Godlike,* many of the scouts sent into enemy territory are Talents. There are two reasons for this. For one, they can detect and possibly eliminate enemy Talents before they engage frontline troops. Also, their powers make the possibility of a successful scouting more likely. The campaign presented in **Part Nine: TOG Commando Squads** on p. 296, is one in which the players take the role of a scout/commando team.

Scouting is no good if the scout never returns from his mission with a report or a map of enemy locations.

The Runner

The position of the runner is never a coveted one. When contact is lost between locations on the line, a runner is sent to restore contact between the two parties. Sometimes a snagged phone line, radio interference, or even bad weather conditions cause this lack of contact. Other times the reasons may be much more sinister. Enemy troops may sever phone lines or jam radio communications, or even overrun the position secretly.

Running is a difficult and dangerous job. You literally run from point A to point B, exposed to enemy fire and observation, to deliver a message to a location either out of direct contact, or separated from the main force. Sometimes runners move food up to front line locations as well as information, especially if the front is very active.

Runners are prime targets for snipers, as they remain exposed for some period as they rush to their destination. For this reason (and many others) running is seen as a thankless and dangerous job.

The Push

A push is a coordinated advance on the line. Sometimes it's a quiet affair, with men silently crossing the established front line, waiting for the first shot to be fired by the enemy. Sometimes it's a mad rush, with men screaming, running and dying in an attempt to push the enemy back from their positions as they are fired upon.

The push, in general, is seen like most jobs as an occasional, dreaded activity. However, it's a necessity of warfare; without it, the front grinds to a halt.

Supplies

Supplies are always the biggest concern of any Army. Without supplies, any possibility of fighting a war vanishes. The U.S. Army, in order of importance, broke down supplies into five classes. They are:

Class 1: Materials that are used up at a standard rate. Mostly food.

Class 2: Clothing, weapons and equipment.

Class 3: Petrol, oil or lubricants. Often called simply "POL."

Class 4: A miscellaneous category that anything else not categorized falls into.

Class 5: Explosives, ammunition or chemical agents.

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Food

Food in the Army during the war is a matter of opinion. Some love it, some don't. Nevertheless, all can agree on several things, there's never enough of it, and it's never hot enough. Even those who hate it, eat it. There's nothing else to eat on the line.

Runners bring food to individuals or small groups on the line. Barring this, the troops themselves have to hoof it back to the CP and get the food themselves when relieved. Food was ranked by desirability, beginning with the coveted cook-made hot meal. A list of the common U.S. Army ration types is listed below.

Field Ration A

Composed of about 60% to 70% fresh foods, this type of meal is almost the same as the normal meal of garrisoned or soldiers in training. After a cook-made hot meal, this is the most coveted meal type.

Field Ration B

Fresh foods were replaced in these meals with canned and dehydrated foods. Often called a "10 in 1," this meal had enough food to feed 10 men for one day. It included a small chemical stove (called a 'chemical fire') to heat up to two meals at a time.

Field Ration C

This compact ration consisted of ten small cans of various mixtures of meat and vegetables. It also included jam, crackers, powdered drinks, sugar and cereal.

Field Ration D

This chocolate bar was packed with nutrients (the equivalent of about 600 calories) and used only in emergencies. It was often traded with locals for real food.

Field Ration K

Originally designed for paratroops, this small cardboard box contained either a breakfast, lunch or dinner meal. This usually consisted of a small canned meal and some amenities. Later, this ration was used often on the front line with normal troops as well.

Weapons

The American Army relied on several tried and true designs in the war. Most weaponry was assigned to specific types of units, or to a trained individual in a unit. Automatic weapons, for instance, were often only given to officers, or specially trained enlisted men. The statistics for individual Army weapons can be found in **Part Seven: The Field Manual** on p. 263.

Specialty weapons such as hand grenades, rifle grenades and anti-tank rockets were handed out as needed by those in charge of supply. Ammunition was often collected at "ammo dumps" where it was readily accessible to soldiers behind the line.

Equipment

Personal equipment was issued as needed in the field. What you were given, you were entrusted to take care of. Finding replacements for certain items not damaged in battle (such as shoes, shelter halves or haversacks) could sometimes take days (or even months!) in the field.

Trading and barter were commonplace, and almost any supply sergeant could be "persuaded" into finding almost anything, for the right fee.

Protocol

In rear areas military protocol was taken seriously; officers were saluted, orders followed to the letter, and things were done by the book. At the front line, however, conditions differed greatly.

At the front, officers were rarely (if ever) saluted as this tended to draw enemy sniper fire. Some officers even refused to wear appropriate rank insignia, in the fear that such markings would mark them as a target. In addition, the chain of command was taken much less seriously on the front line. It was followed by most but out of free will, not fear of consequences.

Court-martials were rare, and few punishments the military hierarchy could offer were worse than living and fighting on the line. Officers had very few credible threats to level at enlisted men if they refused to comply with an order. To some, federal prison sounded preferable to one more night on the line.

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Rank

Rank in the U.S. Army is the basis of military protocol. The chain of command is based on rank, that is, the higher rank commands any lower rank (depending on specific circumstances). Here is a list of U.S. Army ranks.

Rank	Markings
General of the Army	Four or Five Silver Stars
General	Four Silver Stars
Lieutenant General	Three Silver Stars
Major General	Two Silver Stars
Brigadier General	One Silver Star
Colonel	Silver Eagle
Lieutenant Colonel	Silver Oak Leaf
Major	Gold Oak Leaf
Captain	Two Silver Bars
1st Lieutenant	One Silver Bar
2nd Lieutenant	One Gold Bar
Master Sergeant	Badge: 3 Bands Up, 3 Bands Down
First Sergeant	Badge: 3 Bands Up, 3 Bands Down, 1 Star
Technical Sergeant	Badge: 3 Bands Up, 2 Bands Down
Staff Sergeant	Badge: 3 Bands Up, 1 Band Down
Technician 3rd Grade	Badge: 3 Bands Up, 1 Band Down, 1 "T"
Sergeant	Badge: 3 Bands Up
Technician 4th Grade	Badge: 3 Bands Up, 1 "T"
Corporal	Badge: 2 Bands Up
Technician 5th Grade	Badge: 2 Bands Up, 1 "T"
Private First Class	Badge: 1 Band Up
Private	1 Stripe

Tactics

Tactics changed drastically between World War I and World War II. The static war, where the front line changed very little from day to day, was replaced with a mobile war, where the front line might advance as many as 200 miles in a single day. Troops needed to work together in greater cooperation and efficiency than ever before.

Covering Fire

Early in the war American infantry tactics relied upon the principle of covering fire, that is, the movement of men towards enemy positions while the enemy was pinned and under fire by select members of that same group. Typically a machine gun pinned the enemy while riflemen flanked the enemy to destroy him.

This squad-level tactic, developed in the later half of World War I, sometimes proved inefficient and disruptive to the small units who used it in the modern and fluid battlefield of World War II. For one, it utilized only a small portion of the total firepower of any squad (only a few of the men fired while the others moved up). Secondly, it was often difficult for officers to direct fire while under fire themselves as they were usually insufficiently covered by the group's limited weaponry. Thirdly, this lack of control often led the group to become easily disorganized.

Tactics were modified to deal with the changing face of war. Most crucially, different types of forces such as artillery, tanks and infantry were used together in close concert for the first time. This partnership between the different forces led to dramatic advances on the line. Where lines once stabilized and froze for months or years at a time in the previous war, dramatic advances on the lines were commonplace occurrences in World War II.

The classic technique of pinning and flanking the enemy remained crucial at the small-unit level, but the greatest gains were made by footsoldiers calling on armor and artillery for support.

Tank Advances

Tanks were used to remove strong points, other tanks and sometimes even enemy-made obstacles. As the war developed it became commonplace for infantry to advance along with tanks. This was for two reasons, firstly, the tanks could cover the infantry, and secondly the infantry could weed out enemy anti-tank teams before they could fire on the tanks from behind.

Sometimes the infantry advanced first, under the covering fire of the tanks, sometimes the infantry rode on the tanks themselves, and sometimes the tanks advanced first. Tanks could also call in artillery and airstrikes through smoke rounds and radio, making the infantry-backed advance a potent weapon.

Marching Fire Offensives

Patton's army favored this method of advance. The entire infantry advanced, including heavy machine guns, and continuously fired upon enemy strong points as they went. This often led to high casualty rates, and could, if the enemy fire was intense enough, disrupt the organization of the entire infantry.

When it worked, it worked well. When it failed, it failed dramatically. Either way it was a disconcerting sight for the enemy.

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PART NINE

TOG Commando Squads

"We Go First."

—The Shoulder Patch of the TOG Commando Squads

Talent Operations Command

President Roosevelt created the Talent Operations Command on March 12, 1942. Like the Joint Chiefs of Staff, it includes high-ranking members from all the American armed forces. Unlike the JCS, it is concerned with only one aspect of the war: the proper use of American Talents. The TOC reports only to the office of the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Section Two remains the premiere agency in the U.S. for the detection and cataloging of Talents; but where their job ends, the TOC's begins. Once a Talent is evaluated by Section Two, they are sent to TOC for reassignment. At TOC, their files are sorted and presented to voting committees that choose which arm of the U.S. Armed Forces the Talent would be most useful in. Often this takes months, depending on the level of power of the Talent involved, as lobbyists from each armed force fight for custody of the parahuman.

Once a Talent is assigned to a branch of the Armed Forces, they enter service in that particular armed force, and their training and assignments remain up to that individual service to provide.

Talents in the U.S. Army

As early as 1942, it was decided that most Talents in the U.S. Army would have a special role in combat. Like Colonel Lucian K. Truscott's U.S. Army Rangers, Talents would form a unit separate from the regular Army, assigned special tasks suited to their special abilities. Hit and run strikes, behind the lines operations, and other commando-like duties would be left to these paranormal units.

Other Talents in the Army would be service troops, tasked with the transportation of soldiers and equipment. The division between these two types of Army Talents would be plain. The Service troops were regular Army; the commandos were a unit onto themselves. Exactly what that unit would be, no one knew, until the Army Board of Estimates released "The Eisenhower Plan."

The Eisenhower Plan

In February 1942, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, recently appointed Chief of the U.S. Army–General War Plans, called for the drafting of an intelligence estimate on the use of American Talents in combat. The fruit of this study was the so-called "Eisenhower Plan." In short, the study indicated that the most benefit would be gained by spreading U.S. Talents along the front line, where they could intercept and destroy enemy Talent forces and demoralize the enemy.

This new unit, called the Talent Operation Group, would be split into hundreds of nine-man commando squads. Their mission is simple: operate ahead of the main army force to locate

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and destroy enemy Talents before they engage the regular troops; failing that, they are to notify command of the enemy Talent's presence. Of course, while behind enemy lines, the squads would wreak whatever havoc possible.

Since Eisenhower is a strong proponent of cooperation between the Allies, and America lacked a sufficient school for unconventional warfare techniques, it was decided to train the TOG teams in Britain—where the modern commando was born.

The TOG Program

Beginning March 22, 1942, U.S. TOG commando teams are trained at the Commando Basic Training Center at Achnacarry Castle, Scotland. Classes focus on survival, Talent-against-Talent combat, insurgency, and other unconventional warfare tactics. Instructors include British Talents, Special Operations Executive commandos and other battle-hardened veterans.

Because some of the Talents recruited for TOG have no basic training experience (many discover their power before their induction into the Army), a special "early class" exists at Achnacarry for green recruits, to get them up to speed before the real course begins. The standard seventeen-week U.S. Army basic training is accelerated to a grueling four-week course run by regular Army drill instructors. After that, it is time for the *real* training.

For twelve weeks TOG recruits are herded through mud on forced marches, run through treacherous obstacle courses, fired at with live ammunition, and forced to survive on their own in the wilds of Scotland. This course is enough to make any former military training seem like a pleasant dream. Even Talents, with their super-human advantages, find Achnacarry a challenge like no other.

The Birth of the Commando

"Commando" is an Afrikaans word meaning "military unit." During the Boer war in South Africa, the Boer commandos proved very effective in disrupting the infrastructure of the British Army in the Transvaal valley. Their small-unit hit-and-run techniques baffled British tacticians, who during the conflict, failed to mount a sufficient defense against it.

The birth of the British commando program came in the dark days of the summer of 1940, as the remnants British Expeditionary Force recovered from their stunning defeat in France at the hands of the Third Reich. Britain braced for the final, inevitable cross-Channel invasion by the Nazis. The High Command was in disarray, with no clear plans for the future. No offensive could be mounted, and it would be months before the Army could be reorganized.

A staff officer with the Whitehall War Office, Lieutenant Colonel Dudley Clark, struck upon an idea on the evening of June 4, 1940; attacks based on commando principles might be just what Britain needed. Clark himself had seen the effectiveness of small, surprise attacks on British forces in Palestine in 1936. The experience convinced him that a force of highly trained British commandos could terrorize the occupied French, Dutch and Norwegian coasts. With little cost in manpower and equipment, but with great impact, the commandos could disrupt communication, destroy defenses and capture enemy intelligence.

Prime Minister Winton Churchill was immediately won over by the idea, and Clark was given permission to go ahead with his plan. Early results were disastrous, however. During one raid, three commando groups splashed ashore in France, found no one, and returned to Britain . . . only to be arrested as deserters.

Later, when the need for specialized training was realized, a general call for volunteers was put out among the services. Clark was looking for men (in his own words) with "a dash of Elizabethan pirate, Chicago gangster and frontier tribesman." The response from demoralized Allied forces was overwhelming.

Clark set up the commandos as no other military organization before it. They were allowed to live as they pleased, and were not required to live on base or in barracks. They were paid a salary and given extensive, specialized training. This elite status was poorly received by most others in the military.

In July 1940, Sir Robert Keyes was made the first Director of Combined Operations, an organization designed to coordinate the armed services during commando missions. However, Keyes had no idea the level of resentment the concept of the commando had aroused in the military. He found the War Office distant and uncooperative. He got nowhere, so Churchill stepped in again, throwing his considerable political weight around. Soon enough, the War Office began to reluctantly assist Keyes' commandos.

Training began at a handful of camps in the Scottish highlands, with a rag-tag group of instructors selected for a cross-section of valuable skills. Later it was centralized at Achnacarry Castle and experienced commandos returned to instruct new recruits. After several difficult raids, and a decrease in morale among the commandos, Sir Robert Keyes was replaced with Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten.

Mountbatten was a striking figure, admired by most, feared by some, who escaped death in the Mediterranean when his destroyer was sunk by Axis attack. A favorite of the royals, he held ranks in the Navy, Army and Royal Air Force, and Churchill hoped that Mountbatten's clout would cut through any political problems encountered with the War Office. It did.

By 1942, the commandos were a potent force in the British arsenal, and had admirers in all arms of the British military. After half a dozen successful assaults on Axis positions, they were feared far and wide. Citing British successes, America became enamored with the idea of the commando as well, as had Australia and New Zealand.

The age of the modern commando had begun.

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The Commando School at Achnacarry Castle

Located in the Scottish highlands, Achnacarry castle is the ancestral home of the Scottish Cameron clan. Beginning in 1939, the Lord of the manor Sir Donald Cameron rented the castle and the surrounding land to the British government to use as a training center.

In early 1942, Chief Lord Louis Mountbatten was directed by the High Command to set up a special training camp to produce battle-ready Commandos. Accomplishments early in the war by British Commando teams led to an increased interest in their use in warfare. Both Churchill and Roosevelt are strong proponents of Commando warfare. With their support, Achnacarry has rapidly become a state-of-the-art facility.

British Lieutenant Colonel Charles Vaughan was chosen to direct the school. Vaughan is an experienced Commando and served as deputy commander of #4 Commando for over a year. He's known as a no-nonsense rules oriented over-achiever. It is rumored Winston Churchill himself once said, "I'm scared to death of Vaughan. Any man with half a mind should be."

Training

Training at Achnacarry is extremely hazardous. By late 1942, ten candidates have already been killed in live-fire exercises and other accidents. Despite the dangers, the waiting list to get in is enormous. Only Talents are given special consideration when applying to Achnacarry. Their powers are seen as too great an advantage to ignore. Still, not even Talents always successfully graduate. Nothing is guaranteed at Achnacarry.

Daily drills begin at 5 A.M. but can be called at any hour. Randomness and inconsistency are the hallmarks of the program. Those who cannot learn to adjust to the rapid changes often "washout" of the course early.

The Achnacarry assault course is legendary. Candidates are goaded through muddy obstacle courses by instructors who carry stopwatches, timing their progress. Recruits cross seven-foot-deep pits filled with barbed wire on muddy logs while fully loaded with equipment, climb thirty-foot ladders to leap into mud pits, after which their weapons are checked to see if they are ready to fire. Candidates navigate smoke-filled houses, and leap rooftop to rooftop while fully burdened with explosives, all while remaining ready to deal with "Achnacarry Surprises," the notorious teaching method made famous by the commando school instructors. The surprise is this: The course is heightened from time to time, changed to suit the skills of those assaulting it—to keep the recruits on their toes. It is often never the same twice. Talents have the hardest time of all, as the British instructors are not averse to taking a few shots at them with live ammunition as they work their way through the course, just for a laugh.

Weapons training begins with hand-to-hand combat the first week. Knife fighting is especially favored. Candidates learn how to kill silently and swiftly, and are taught the basics of physiology, so they can exploit the anatomical weaknesses of the human body. Later, training is switched to firearms and explosives. In four weeks, candidates work their way up from rifles to machine guns and mortars. Weapons training continues throughout the twelve weeks, both in camp and in the field. By the end of the course, candidates are firing and being fired at with live ammunition.

Talents are given a special course in Talent-against-Talent combat, intermixed with regular training. Experienced British Talents from the conflict in North Africa help candidates learn new ways to use their powers. This special "extra attention" is randomly inserted amidst normal commando training. At any moment, a live-fire exercise might become an instructive course in how to avoid being teleported, or on how to deal with an invisible hand-to-hand attacker.

Survival training is a main focus of the course. Commandos do not carry tents or other unnecessary equipment into the field, so candidates are taught to utilize the land for food, shelter and tactical advantage against the enemy. Butchers train recruits how to properly butcher animals and keep meat. Hunters train them how to set snares or to kill animals easily, without making noise. Commandos train the recruits how to make small fires and to disperse smoke and conceal their flame so they aren't spotted. Exercises in field survival are slowly built to a final "week of hell" in the wilderness of Scotland. Recruits are sent off with a knife, a rain poncho, and little else. For one week, they live completely off the land. A task more difficult than it sounds in the Scottish highlands.

Cross-country movement is an important part of the program. Several times a week recruits are sent on "speed marches" where they cover up to twenty miles at more than seven miles an hour, after which they are sometimes expected to complete a mock assault, just for good measure. Climbing and river fording are also focused on. Recruits are trained to construct rope bridges, rope ladders, and zip-lines. Before graduation, candidates have to slide down the Achnacarry "Death Ride," a sloping fifty-foot zip-line that hangs forty feet above a freezing river.

The "final exam" at Achnacarry is the assault on the beaches of nearby lake Spean. During this exercise, instructors fire on the candidates with live ammunition, and hidden explosives are detonated by radio control as they land and attempt to rush the beach. Shots sometimes come so close to the candidates that paddles in their hands splinter. The instructors are not above letting Talent instructors have

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Skill Additions

Graduates from the Achnacarry Commando School gain the following skills at no cost during character creation:

Brawling 1
Climb 1
Cryptography 1
Endurance 1
Explosives 1
Grenade 1
Knife Fighting 1
Machine Gun 1
Map Reading 1
Mortar 1
Navigation (Land) 1
Parachuting 1
Pistol 1
Radio Operation 1
Rifle 1
Running 1
Stealth 1
Submachine Gun 1
Survival 1
Tactics 1

a go at the fledgling commandos as well, just to make them stay on their toes.

In the end, those TOG recruits who survive the Achnacarry course are awarded the fabled "Green Beret" of the commando, a Fairbairn-Sykes dagger, and the legendary shoulder patch of the TOG, emblazoned with the logo "We Go First."

TOG Deployment

Multiple TOG commando teams are assigned to individual U.S. Infantry Divisions (a unit ranging from 14,253 to 15,500 men). Like normal units, their orders are issued from the command staff of that particular division (or higher headquarters, depending on circumstances). Sometimes, special TOG units are detached for "shock troop" service and other odd duties, but most operate as front-line commando scout units. They pave the way for armor and infantry through unknown enemy territory.

TOG 141: "Miller's Hellions"

This nine-man TOG squad graduated from Achnacarry Commando School on May 22, 1944. Led by First Lieutenant Alan Miller and First Sergeant Harvey Braden, they were mobilized and moved to Falmouth, England, just days after its training was complete.

Numbers

TOG 141 is composed of seven enlisted men, an officer and a sergeant. All nine are described in detail below. Feel free to insert other PCs into the lineup as needed, keeping the other secondary characters presented here as "replacements" in case something untoward happens.

It is strongly recommended that you use the *Troop Play* rules presented on p. 284 in **Part Eight: The Campaign** to keep the players in the game if their PC is killed in combat. If one "buys the farm," hand the player one of "Miller's Hellions" to play until the player creates a new one.

Officers and Men of TOG 141

The chain of command in a nine-man group is a short one. The lieutenant is in direct command of the sergeant (non-commissioned officer) who is in charge of the men, with responsibilities passed down the line.

First Lieutenant Alan Miller runs TOG 141, backed up by First Sergeant Harvey Braden. There are seven other men in TOG 141, each with a unique Talent power.

Interaction between the members of TOG 141 is very informal, and the men are encouraged to voice any concern they might have over a mission, idea or objective—but these concerns are always taken up privately. In front of outsiders, the group falls back into military protocol.

"But I Want . . ."

This detailed squad is here to make the GM's job easier and to ease new players into the game. For this reason the leaders of TOG 141 are recommended to be NPCs. Through them, the GM can convey important information which will keep the PCs alive, move the action forward through issued orders, or, if necessary plunge the PCs into a command position if the officers are killed.

If you want to make up your own TOG squad that features the PCs as the commanding officers, or shift the 141 around so the PCs are in control, please feel free. This background is only presented as a foundation for you to build on.

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First Lieutenant Alan Miller

Age 31, **Ht** 5'9 **Wt** 159.
Nationality American.
Education High school, OCS.
Dependants Two daughters, one mother.
Motivations To return home to his family in one piece, and to not get his men killed.
Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 1
Brains 2 **Command** 3 **Cool** 2
Skills Bazooka 1, Bluff 2, Brawling 1, Climb 1, Cryptography 2, Endurance 1, Explosives 2, Grenade 2, Inspire 3, Knife Fighting 2, Languages (English 2). Leadership 3, Machine Gun 1, Map Reading 2, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 2, Parachuting 1, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 2, Stealth 2, Submachine Gun 2, Survival 2, Tactics 2.
Base Will 18

Talent Powers (Cost: 25 points)

Inhale Objects (Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat 4/8/16)
3hd (Flaw: Variable Duration [See Below], -2/-4/-8; 12 points).
Power Description: Miller can "inhale" objects. By inhaling, Miller can cause an object to vanish for a limited amount of time. Depending on the size of the object, Miller can "store" it within him for a period of time ranging from a few seconds up to several days. The larger the object, the shorter the amount of time he can hold it. Miller can "inhale" people, living things or inanimate objects (living targets simply "black out" while contained within Miller; they have no recollection of being inside him). He must be within touch range of an object to inhale it. The largest object he can inhale is about 250 pounds, which he can "store" for only about twenty seconds; objects smaller than one-pound Miller can keep inside him for up to almost three days.
Background: Miller was born and raised in Tacoma, Washington, and worked most of his life as a logger in the Cascades. He married his childhood sweetheart Emiline, who died in 1940 during the birth of their second daughter. Since that time Miller has lived with his mother, who took to raising the two children as her own.

Miller was drafted in February 1943, and discovered his Talent ability while in training at Camp Roberts in California. He was then transferred to a Section Two facility in Arizona for study. After two weeks of intensive testing, Miller was sent to Achnacarry Commando School in February 1944, and trained there for some time. He was recommended for a commission in April 1944.

Miller has been in command of TOG 141 for only a month now and has yet to see any action. Secretly, Miller fears he'll lose the air of confidence he projects when subjected to combat conditions, and that his men will abandon him.

Weapons
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(1) .45 M1911A semi-automatic pistol (Capacity 7, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock).
(4) M2A1 "pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

First Sergeant Harvey Philip Braden

Age 26, **Ht** 6'1 **Wt** 220.
Nationality American.
Education One year of college at Purdue.
Dependants One little brother fighting in the Pacific.
Motivations To prove himself in combat and to make it home alive, in that order.
Body 3 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 2
Skills Brawling 3, Climb 1, Cryptography 1, Endurance 1, Explosives 2, Grenade 1, Inspire 1, Knife Fighting 3, Leadership 1, Language (English 2), Machine Gun 2, Map Reading 2, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 1, Parachuting 1, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 2, Rifle 2, Running 3, Stealth 1, Swimming 3, Submachine gun 2, Survival 2, Tactics 2.
Base Will 12

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Run Up Walls (Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat; 3/6/12)
2hd+4d (Flaw: Must Maintain Top Speed Running or Power Fails, -1/-2/-4; 16 points).
Power Description: Braden can run up any wall as if it were normal level ground. He can even cross ceilings in this manner, but must get a running start to do so. He must keep at his top speed or his power fails.
Background: Braden discovered his power at home in Red Bank, New Jersey, before he was drafted. While playing catch with his little brother, Braden ran up a twelve-foot wooden fence, caught the ball, and ran down the far side. With a little experimentation, he discovered he could run up almost any vertical surface, and even across ceilings, as long as he didn't slow down.

Braden volunteered for military service, and after a brief stint at Section Two in Washington, was assigned to Achnacarry Commando School for TOG training. Shortly thereafter his brother was drafted into the Marines.

Braden was recommended for officer's training, and given a commission as a First Sergeant in May 1944. He now serves gladly under First Lieutenant Miller, who has become somewhat of a father figure to him.

Braden, just like Miller, fears how he will perform in actual combat.

Weapons
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(1) .45 M1911A semi-automatic pistol (Capacity 7, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock).
(4) M2A1 "pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

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Private Anthony "The Stripper" Colombadas

Age 22, **Ht** 5'11 **Wt** 190.
Nationality American.
Education Junior high school.
Dependants Four sisters and a mother.
Motivations To do his best for his country.
Body 2 **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2
Brains 1 **Command** 1 **Cool** 3
Skills Bazooka 3, Brawling 1, Climb 1, Cryptography 1, Endurance 1, Explosives 1, Grenade 2, Knife Fighting 2, Languages (English 1, Italian 1). Lie 3, Machine gun 3, Map Reading 1, Mechanic (Cars) 1, Mental Stability 3, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 1, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 3, Stealth 1, Sight 2, Submachine Gun 1, Survival 1, Taste 2.
Base Will 21

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Teleport Clothes (Robust, Useful Outside of Combat; 3/6/12).
2hd (Flaws: Cannot teleport anything else -1/-2/-4; 8 points).
Power Description: Colombadas can make any piece of clothing he can see teleport to his location. This only includes clothes and other lightweight items, not weapons or other equipment, which are left behind. Paper and other documents (including ID, maps and such) *are* teleported along with the power, making it a useful intelligence-gathering tool. Bandoliers and ammo belts are not clothes for purposes of this power.

When an enemy soldier realizes he's stark naked on a battlefield, he has to make a Cool+Mental Stability roll to keep from losing it and streaking away to cover.
Background: Colombadas grew up in Long Island City and spent his first few years out of school as a street tough, trying to support his large, fatherless family through petty theft. The war came as a surprise. In the fervor of the American war effort, Colombadas volunteered for service just four weeks after the American landings in Africa.

At Camp Croft, Colombadas discovered his Talent ability when he teleported the clothes off a visiting colonel busy humiliating him in front of his squad. After being punished by the embarrassed colonel, Colombadas was sent to a Section Two facility in Georgia. Though few could see any use for his Talent, he was then sent on to Achnacarry Commando School for TOG training. Luckily, he proved to be a resilient and effective commando.

Colombadas is a favorite among the men, and both the officers and the normal enlisted men appreciate his wry sense of humor.

He has the utmost confidence in himself, his abilities, and those of his direct superiors. He hopes to see his family's ancestral home at Portaferrio, Italy before the war is through.
Weapons
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(1) "Bazooka" M1 (Slow/Penetration/Area: 3/5/7).
(2) M2A1 "pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage Width in Shock+1 Killing).

Private Lucas Devers

Age 29, **Ht** 6'1" **Wt** 199.
Nationality American.
Education Junior high school.
Dependants Wife and two children.
Motivations To destroy Nazi Germany.
Body 3 (10) **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 2
Skills Climb 1, Endurance 1, Explosives 2, First Aid 2, Grenade 3, Horseback Riding 1, Knife Fighting 3, Language (English 2, Spanish 1). Lie 2, Machine Gun 3, Map Reading 2, Navigation (Land) 2, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 2, Rifle 3, Stealth 3, Submachine Gun 1, Survival 2, Throw 2.
Base Will 21

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Hyperstat: Body (2/5/10)
+7d (Flaw: Only for Throwing -1/-2/-4; 7points).
Power Description: Devers can throw objects up to 1 ton in weight without difficulty. He can't lift them; just throw them by gaining a grip and hurling them up in the air. Objects thrown cause on average (dependent on size) 5 points of killing and shock damage on a successful hit.
Background: Devers was born on a Texas farm and raised as a country boy. His family's farm was lost in the Great Depression, and soon after Devers and his family took to the road to find work. They settled in Arbachter, Illinois, where his father got work in a Ford factory.

In 1936, Devers married the daughter of a local preacher, and they settled down to raise a family in southwestern Illinois. He went back to farming, and soon had a thriving business in cattle and corn. Although frightened by events overseas, Devers never pictured himself as a soldier.

He discovered his power while replacing a brake cable on his tractor in late 1942. When the jack gave way, Devers hurled the 1-ton tractor away before it could crush him, destroying it. Like any good American, he reported to the local draft office to inform them of his discovery and was immediately sent to Pennsylvania for study by Section Two.

Devers spent some time at the facility. Due to the tenacity of his power, they were very interested in him. Various tests were run where other powerful Talents attempted to deactivate Devers' power, and failed. He was then transferred to Achnacarry Commando School for training, and assigned to TOG 141.

Devers is a quiet, no-nonsense individual who does as he is told. He has become quite skilled in the use of his power, and can hurl hand grenades enormous distances. Although he is affable, few in the squad know much about him. His prize possession is a photograph of his wife and two infant sons, which he keeps in his breast pocket at all times. Devers hopes to return home, buy the old family farm in Texas and start all over again—but not until "that paper-hanging sonofabitch in Berlin eats a bullet."

If Devers can help it, he will fire that bullet himself.
Weapons
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(2) M2A1 "Pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

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Private Eric Kilchess

Age 20, **Ht** 5'9 **Wt** 200.
Nationality American.
Education High school.
Dependants One brother, two sisters, a mother and father.
Motivations To get home alive.
Body 3 **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 1
Skills Brawling 2, Cryptography 1, Climb 1, Dodge 3, Education 2, Endurance 1, Explosives 1, Grenade 3, Knife Fighting 3, Languages (English 2, Hebrew 1), Machine Gun 3, Map Reading 1, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 1, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 3, Sight 3, Stealth 3, Submachine Gun 1, Survival 1.
Base Will 7

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Detonation Sight (Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 5/10/20)
5d (Flaw: Must give target "the finger" -1/-2/-4; 20 points).
Power Description: Kilchess can cause any single explosive to detonate within his sight range, as long as he can see it clearly. Damage is caused normally as per the weapon targeted. Kilchess can detonate individual bullets, grenades or any other type of weapon which contains explosives, but he must "give the finger" to each individual target or his power will not work. To do this, he must have a clear view of the target, often placing him in the line of fire.
Background: Kilchess grew up in Chicago in a devout Jewish family, a fact that he hides from his compatriots. Blessed with an exceptional physique and fast reflexes, he became a star of the local basketball scene in northern Illinois, and shortly thereafter transferred to a Catholic school to play for them. Since then Kilchess has pretended to be Catholic. Even his dog-tags corroborate his story.

Kilchess discovered his power at Camp Curtis while practicing on the grenade range. When the third grenade thrown failed to detonate (U.S. training munitions were often leftovers from World War I), Kilchess became furious and gave the errant munitions the Finger. Gratified by the result, Kilchess brazenly gave the rest of the failed grenades the same treatment. One by one, they detonated.

After some experimentation, he was sent to a Section Two facility in Pennsylvania for study, and then to Achnacarry Commando School for TOG training.

Kilchess is a know-it-all who doesn't get along with anyone in the squad. The months spent in Falmouth have done nothing for his demeanor, and he mostly sulks, looking for an easy way to make money, which he grudgingly sends home to his family. He is considered a bully by the rest of the men, and has a taunting mock-serious attitude when dealing with the lieutenant.

Weapons
(1) BAR (Spray 0/2/3, Capacity 20, Damage: Width+3 killing, Width+2 shock)
or
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(2) M2A1 "pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

Private Vincent Manahan

Age 25, **Ht** 5'9" **Wt** 169.
Nationality American.
Education Junior high school, OCS.
Dependants Three sisters, three brothers, mother and a father.
Motivations To make something of himself.
Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 1
Brains 2 **Command** 2 **Cool** 3
Skills Bluff 3, Brawling 2, Climb 1, Cryptography 1, Driving 2, Endurance 1, Explosives 2, First Aid 2, Grenade 2, Knife Fighting 2, Languages (English 2, Gaelic 1), Machine gun 2, Map Reading 2, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 1, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 2, Rifle 2, Stealth 2, Submachine Gun 1, Survival 2, Swimming 2.
Base Will 12

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Freeze Objects (Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 4/8/16)
3hd (Flaw: Usable only on objects not touching the ground -1/-2/-4; 18 points).
Power Description: Manahan can cause objects within sight range to freeze in the midst of motion, as long as they are off the ground when he triggers his power. Objects remain in this "interim" state for the number of seconds equal to the width of the activation roll, and then continue along their regular path. He can only do this to one object at a time. When frozen, time does not pass for that object (or person) and nothing on earth except another Talent can move or affect the frozen object (by spending 1 point of Will, Talents can automatically remove the effect on the object by touching it).
Background: Manahan is the first son of Irish immigrants who arrived in Boston in 1924. He spent his childhood in various jobs, working hard to put whatever he could into his growing family's meager funds. In 1943, Manahan joined the Army (a fact which made his family very proud despite the financial hardships such a change presented).

During his last week at Camp Croft, he saved a man from being crushed by a 500 lb. bale of telephone cable that fell from a roof. Manahan froze the object in space, and helped the man out of his predicament, several seconds later the bale smashed into the ground, restored to its former motion.

He was transferred to Achnacarry Commando School for TOG training a week later. Manahan was recommended in the "early course" for OCS training but denied a commission, a fact that does not bother him much. Folded back into a regular TOG unit, with his added OCS training Manahan was placed in charge of communications for TOG 141.

Manahan is a genuinely good man with a sensible, honest head on his shoulders, a fact that has not been lost on the lieutenant. He is affable with all the men (and is even tolerated by Kilchess).

Weapons
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(4) M2A1 "Pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) M9A1 antitank rifle grenades (Penetration/Area: 5/6).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

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Private John Miceweski

Age 20, **Ht** 5'10" **Wt** 180.
Nationality American.
Education High school.
Dependants None.
Motivations To help his friends.
Body 1 **Coordination** 4 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 2
Skills Bluff 3, Brawling 2, Climb 1, Cryptography 1, Driving 2, Explosives 2, First Aid 2, Grenade 2, Knife Fighting 2, Mortar 1, Endurance 1, Language (English 2), Machine gun 2, Map Reading 2, Navigation (Land) 1, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 2, Rifle 2, Stealth 2, Submachine Gun 1, Survival 2, Swimming 2.
Base Will 12

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Flight (Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat; 4/8/16) **2hd** (Extra: Can hover +1/+2/+4; Flaw: Can't fly over 40' off the ground -1/-2/-4; 16 points).
Power Description: Miceweski can fly, but not more than forty feet off the ground due to a severe fear of heights. He can hover in place and control his momentum in all directions. While hovering in place he can use skills without combining them with Flight in a multiple action.
Background: Miceweski was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and orphaned at age two when his family perished in a fire (the baby, on the porch, was saved by an attentive neighbor). Miceweski was raised in a Catholic orphanage, and released on his eighteenth birthday after a long and relatively boring childhood. Like most children at the time, Miceweski was obsessed with *Der Flieger*, the flying German Talent, and spent almost all his childhood from age 12 collecting books, pamphlets and literature on the parahuman.

He later burned his *Der Flieger* memorabilia.

Upon his release, Miceweski began working in foundries in the Milwaukee area. Two years after Pearl Harbor, he was drafted into the Army and began training at Fort McLellan. He discovered his parahuman abilities on maneuvers during a climbing exercise, when he simply floated to the top of a steep incline while his fellow soldiers trudged up it. Due to a severe phobia of heights however, Miceweski could not fly higher than forty feet.

He was transferred to Section Two for study and then to TOG training at Achnacarry Commando School.

Miceweski is a happy, friendly fellow who unconsciously looks at his squad mates like family. His work ethic and strong sense of squad commitment make him a favorite of the lieutenant.

Weapons
(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(5) M2A1 "Pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

Private Peter "The Professor" Moss

Age 22, **Ht** 6' **Wt** 155
Nationality American.
Education 3 years at Queens College.
Dependants Father and sister.
Motivations To get out of the Army in one piece.
Body 1 **Coordination** 1 **Sense** 3
Brains 3 **Command** 1 **Cool** 3
Skills Brawling 2, Climb 1, Cryptography 1, Education 3, Endurance 1, Explosives 2, First Aid 1, Grenade 1, Knife Fighting 1, Languages (English 3, German 2, French 2). Map Reading 3, Machine gun 1, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 2, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 3, Rifle 1, Stealth 1, Submachine Gun 1, Survival 3.
Base Will 17

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Gun Scan (Useful Outside of Combat, Robust; 3/6/12) **2hd** (Extra: Always On +1/+2/+4; Flaw: Expensive -1/-2/-4; 12 points).
Power Description: Moss can "see" guns through objects as if the intervening obstacles (including buildings, dirt, *etc.)* were transparent. He cannot see who's holding them, only the weapon itself. He must "turn his power on" however, at the cost of 1 Will point; this effect lasts until Moss sleeps, whereupon the power deactivates. Unfortunately, when using his power, Moss is like a Talent beacon, advertising his presence for all other Talents in the area to see.
Background: Moss is a bookworm from Westchester, New York who spent most of his youth lost in literature. His unusual height and light weight gained him nicknames such as "stork" or "willow" early on, and he retreated into the world of books as school became more and more dangerous. He attended Queens college on scholarship and was just weeks from graduating with a degree in literature when he was drafted to active service.

Moss is deathly afraid of firearms, a fact which was not lost on his instructors at boot camp. Moss was punished repeatedly for not properly maintaining his M1 rifle and on one occasion was forced to strip and clean the entire platoon's weapons three times in one day. That night after lights out, Moss realized he could see his instructor's pistol through the wall, glowing a ghostly-green.

Moss was transferred to Section Two for testing. He was recommended for Army sniper training, but washed out of the course, and finally was transferred to Achnacarry Commando School for training with TOG, where he reluctantly trained as a sniper once again.

In the months spent at Achnacarry, Moss has taken to trying to learn both French and German, in the hopes it will come in handy in Europe. He says very little, but what he has to say is held in high esteem by both the first lieutenant and the first sergeant. In fact, everyone but Kilchess has grown to like the "Professor."

Weapons
(1) M1903 Springfield rifle (Capacity 5, Damage: Width+3 killing, Width+2 shock)
(2) M2A1 "Pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(2) M9A1 antitank rifle grenades (Penetration/Area: 5/6).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

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Private Daniel "Crystal Ball" Newman

Age 24, **Ht** 5'7" **Wt** 165.
Nationality American.
Education High school.
Dependants None.
Motivations To realize the full potential of his Talent.
Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 3 **Command** 1 **Cool** 2
Skills Climb 2, Endurance 2, Explosives 3, First Aid 1, Gambling 2, Grenade 2, Knife Fighting 2, Language (English 3). Machine Gun 2, Map Reading 2, Navigation (Land) 2, Parachuting 1, Radio Operation 3, Rifle 1, Sailing 1, Submachine Gun 2, Sight 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3.
Base Will 20

Talent Power (Cost: 25 points)

Precognition (Robust, Useful Outside of Combat; 3/6/12).
2hd (Flaw: Visions never involve himself, -1/-2/-4; can't read letters seen, -1/-2/-4; 8 points).
Power Description: Newman can see the future by voluntarily entering a trance. His visions are extremely detailed, but never directly involve himself, only his companions. The only other limitation to his visions is that he cannot read lettering in them; on the other hand, numbers remain clearly visible.

The biggest limitation on his power is its psychic toll. Each hard die thrown to deliberately see the future costs him 10 Will points, so unless he gains extra Will in play, using his power drains Newman to zero Will and leaves him an emotional wreck. Sometimes his power activates spontaneously or in dreams and is not as draining; see p. 80.

Background Newman grew up in New York City, and spent most of his young adult life winning and losing money at the track. In the summer of 1943, Newman had the streak of a lifetime, picking seven winning horses in a row, including a forty-to-one odds breaker. By this time, the local mob had gotten wise to the rising population of Talents… and even had a few of their own. One day, at a mob gambling establishment, Newman was picked up by men from the Genovese family, and beaten severely. One of the men, Max "Knuckles" Derisito, a Talent himself, witnessed Newman use his power while placing a bet on a baseball game. Unfortunately, this is how Newman found out he was a Talent.

Fearful for his life, Newman joined the Army, reporting his power to the recruiting officer the next day.

He was sent to Achnacarry castle for training, where he quietly muddled through the commando program. He remains a quiet, thoughtful member of the squad. His whispered comments to the Lieutenant are rarely questioned, and often followed, since Newman has successfully predicted the outcome of impromptu baseball games, and even 40 rolls of a single die in a row.

Weapons

(1) Thompson submachine gun (Spray 1/3, Capacity 30, Damage: Width+1 killing, Width shock.
(5) M2A1 "Pineapple" hand grenades (Penetration/Area: 2/3, Damage: Width+1 killing and shock).
(1) Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife (Damage: Width in Shock+1 Killing).

Common Equipment

Other equipment of the common TOG consists of the following:

- A M1 steel helmet (LAR 2 for the head).
- An olive drab "beanie" hat.
- A thigh length M1943 field jacket or the hip length M1941 field jacket.
- A 10 pocket cartridge hip web-belt (each pouch carries one clip). that also carries a canteen and a first aid pouch (along with an optional pistol holster).
- A waterproof map case.
- 1 pair of boots. Either with separate leather gaiters, or with them incorporated.
- A bayonet which can be attached to a rifle (causes Width+1 in killing damage when fixed).
- 1 ammunition bandolier, which can carry up to 12 clips.
- A haversack (called a "musette"), a folding pack which can carry up to 12 lbs comfortably.
- A pack with a blanket and raincoat in it.
- 9 days field rations.
- A compass.

Headquarters

The headquarters that issues commands to TOG 141 is under the command of Captain (acting major) Paul Richards of the Twenty-Ninth U.S. Infantry Division. The captain is in charge of an entire battalion of riflemen (about 300 men), of which TOG 141 is a small part. His concerns lie with the regular foot soldier; he could care less about the Talents.

The group is the only TOG in the battalion and as such will see a lot more action than is usual for TOG squads. Richards will use them at every opportunity as distractions, commandos and even assassins, if he can. Commands will be issued directly from Richards to First Lieutenant Miller, and from there to the squad.

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APPENDIX A

Optional Rules

During development, dozens of rules were created for *Godlike* which were good, but not good enough to find their way into the main rules-set. We hoped to keep the official rules to a minimum, so these "spare parts" have found their way here, collected together for your amusement and use.

Pick and choose those you like, fiddle with them, or ignore them all.

Squishy Rolls or Gritty Rolls

The standard system for *Godlike* assumes that what you roll is what you roll, period. (The exception is Wiggle Dice, but they're a special case.) Rolls are gritty—each die is its particular self and they don't change. It is possible, however, to adjust this rules-set and change the results rather dramatically. You do this by making outcomes squishy.

If a roll is squishy, it means that you can raise an outcome's height by lowering its width, and vice versa. For example, if you had a squishy 4x4, you could make it a 3x5 or a 2x6—as long as the total of the width and height are the same, it's kosher. You could also make that same 4x4 into a 5x3, a 6x2 or a 7x1.

In static contests, squishy rolls give the player the option of taking longer at a task to do it better or, conversely, of sacrificing quality when time is of the essence. In dynamic contests, it allows players to sacrifice timing for effect, and vice versa. (This can have a particularly important effect in combat.)

In no event can the width of a roll be squished beneath 2. If that happens, the roll is no longer a success. It also cannot be squished above 10. Finally, once you start to squish a roll, the other dice in the pool are thrown out.

> ***Example:*** Dan rolls 1,3,8,8,9,9. His result is 2x9. He can make that a 3x8 or a 4x7 if he wants—but if he squishes it down to 3x8, he cannot then add it to the naturally rolled 8s in his pool. If he could do that, then he could take that 4x8 and turn it into 2x10. Once you do that, you might as well just add all the dice together and give it to the highest total.

Squishy rolls change the tone of the game, because they put much more control over the degree and type of success into the hands of the players. The game tilts a little more to the "heroic action" side of the scale and away from the "violent realism" end. It becomes more like ***Raiders of the Lost Ark*** and less like *Saving Private Ryan*.

For a four-color comic flavored game, simply allow every character to squish rolls at will.

For a somewhat cinematic game in which the characters are special and larger than life, allow PCs and Talents to squish rolls, but don't let anyone else do it.

For a somewhat realistic game, allow squishing, but only by a single step upward or downward - 3x3 could become 2x4 or 4x2, but not 5x1.

For a very realistic game, (the *Godlike* default) don't allow any squishing at all. This is also the simplest option.

Getting Really Nasty

In most role-playing games characters routinely get shot up, torn up, burned up, drowned, dragged and beaten and then leap right back up for more—that is, until their hit points run out. Although *Godlike* is a bit more specific in its damage system then most games, this is pretty much still the case.

However, if you wish to make players think twice about leaping into combat, you can use the following "Getting Really Nasty" rules.

No role-playing game can fully simulate reality and still be quick and fun enough to sit through, but the following optional rules are offered to make your *Godlike* game a

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little bit less cinematic and a little bit more realistic.

- Every time a victim is hit by a bullet or fragmentation attack in excess of 2 killing points, they must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll or fall to the ground and be stunned for the number of combat rounds equal to the amount of damage they suffered. During this time, they are unable to act or react.
- Single shot hits to the torso in excess of 5 killing points of damage knock the victim unconscious if the victim fails a Body roll.
- Bullet or stab wounds in excess of 2 killing points "bleed out." If the wound is not treated and the bleeding is not stopped, the victim takes 1 shock point of damage per combat round to the torso, until dead.
- Injuries from fragmentation wounds to the torso in excess of 2 killing points "bleed out" internally. These superficial wounds are often mistaken for minor injuries. The subject suffers 1 shock point in damage to the torso per minute in secret, during which time he is fully able to act and is unaware of his internal injuries, until his torso fills with shock damage, whereupon he becomes aware of the damage to his torso. If surgery is not undertaken to stop the bleeding, the victim dies as he continues to take shock damage to his torso at 1 point per minute.
- 2 points of killing damage to a limb are enough to break it, badly. If a limb is broken, it cannot be used in any way.
- When a limb is fully filled with killing damage and takes additional injury points, not only are those points relocated to the torso, but the boxes hit are then circled. Each circle indicates a portion of the body that is destroyed, and may never be repaired by surgery or medical attention. At best, the limb can be amputated. In addition, such destroyed limbs "bleed out" until treated as a rate of 2 shock points to the torso per round until death or treatment.
- 3 points of killing damage to the head blinds, deafens or otherwise affects the senses of the victim, either permanently or temporarily, GM's discretion.

Note that even if you decide to tack on some of these optional rules, you don't have to use all of them. *Godlike* is pretty tough just at its base level, but some people really want to take their chances. If these rules don't stop your players from being cavalier about combat, nothing will.

Die Hard

Game Masters who want to extend the shelf lives of characters a bit, without going all the way to the excesses of squishing rolls (see p. 305) have characters recover from shock damage at the height of the roll instead of the width. It's a small thing, but it sheds those unwanted shock marks a bit faster.

There are other ways to increase the viability of characters. If you like, you can increase the number of damage boxes per hit location, or instead of 2 shock points equaling 1 killing point of damage, you can change it to a 3 to 1 ratio. Simply mark a vertical line through the damage box for 1 shock point, a diagonal slash for 2 and finish the X for 3. This change will keep your characters' kicking a bit longer.

Dud and Faulty Grenades

Grenades are extremely dangerous—both to properly use and to be hit with. Many grenades have faulty fuses that fail to detonate, or that detonate too soon.

To reflect this, anyone who rolls a 2x1 on their Grenade skill should throw another die. If it comes up 1 or 10, he has pulled the pin on a faulty grenade. It detonates while still in their hand, inflicting all its damage to the right or left arm.

On the other hand (so to speak), anyone who rolls a 2x10 on their Grenade skill should throw another die. If it comes up 1 or 10, he has thrown a dud, which fails to detonate upon impact.

Misfires, Jams, Accidental Discharge and Gun Cleaning

How are misfires, jams, accidental discharges and gun cleaning handled in *Godlike?* Read on, all is explained below.

Misfires

Misfires occur when firing substandard ammunition, or when the firing pin fails to strike the bullet correctly (or at all). Guns that commonly misfire (such as the P08 under field conditions) always have a chance to misfire in combat. If a shooter rolls 2x1 and all the other dice in the pool are 5 or lower, a single 1d is thrown—if a 10 or a 1 is rolled, the gun misfires, and a full combat round must be taken to clear the action before it can be fired again.

Jams

Jams occur when a round becomes caught in the action in an improper manner, preventing the gun from firing—and sometimes stops the action from being properly worked at all. If the operator rolls a 2x1 and all other dice are 5 or lower, 2d are thrown. On a match, the gun jams. A successful skill roll must be made to clear the action. Subtract the width of the roll from 5 to determine how many combat rounds it takes to clear the action and fire the gun again.

Accidental Discharge

A gun may fire randomly when dropped. If a character drops a gun on to a hard surface, roll two dice—on a match of 7 or higher, the gun goes off. Who or what it hits remains up to the GM to decide.

Gun Cleaning

Many guns require extensive cleaning under field conditions to remain in working order. All a character needs to do to clean a weapon is a) have time to do so, and b) make a successful skill roll. Most weapons need to be cleaned (dependant on conditions) every one or two days under combat conditions—at the GM's discretion. For every day after this grace period, the operator of the gun gains a difficulty rating to properly fire the gun. For example, on the third day without cleaning to properly fire the weapon (without a jam), the character must make a minimum match of 2x2

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(on the fourth at 2x3, on the fifth a 2x4, etc.). Roll under the difficulty, and the gun jams, above, and it fires normally.

Vehicle Hit Locations

Attacking vehicles with weapons is much like attacking people—you can either fire, hoping only to hit the vehicle, or you can aim for a specific hit location. Just like normal attacks, the height of the roll determines the hit location and aiming and called shots are treated normally. Most vehicles have a Heavy Armor rating that measures their resistance to attack, but some areas on a vehicle are more vulnerable than others. When attacking a specific point on a vehicle, the HAR of that vehicle is reduced according to the vulnerability of that spot (rounded down).

What mechanical effects an attack might have on a vehicle location are up to the GM to devise.

Vehicle Location Table

Roll	Hit Location
1	Left Side Bottom (1/2 HAR)
2	Right Side Bottom (1/2 HAR)
3-4	Left Side Top (3/4 HAR)
5-6	Right Side Top (3/4 HAR)
7-9	Crew Compartment (Full HAR)
10	Crew or Rear (Lowest HAR Rating)

Example: John is firing a Bazooka at the rear of a Tiger VI II Heavy Tank. He has a Bazooka dice pool of 7d. He places one die at 10, drops a die because he's making a called shot, and rolls the remaining 5 dice, getting a 10, 9, 6, 6 and a 1. He hits with a 2x10 against hit location 10 (the rear of the vehicle). The Tiger VI II Heavy Tank has an HAR rating of 10 to 7—since the rear has the lowest HAR rating of the vehicle, John's Bazooka blast hits HAR 7. With his 2x10 and the Bazooka's Penetration of 5, John's total weapon Penetration is 7. The Bazooka round pierces the armor and detonates within the vehicle.

"Burning" Experience Points

Is your character on his last legs, while he has experience points to spare? If the GM allows this optional rule, experience points can be used in several different ways to extricate your character from tricky situations.

You can "burn" experience points to:

Alter die rolls: At the cost of 1 experience point, you can increase the height of a single rolled die by 1.

Example: Roderick attacks a guard with a machete and rolls a 6, 4, 10, 9, 5 and a 1. Usually this would be a complete miss, but he "burns" an experience point and changes the 9 in his set to a 10, which makes his attack a 2x10 and a pretty dramatic hit.

Extend life: At the cost of 1 experience point, you can convert 1 point of killing damage to shock damage.

Example: Kurt takes a shot to the head for a total of 4 points of killing damage. He burns a single experience point to convert one of those killing points to a point of shock instead. He's still knocked unconscious by the attack, but at least he's not dead...

The downside: whatever experience points you "burn" in a game, you owe the GM. You must earn back that total before you can get any more.

Example: Steve "burned" 4 experience points during an adventure to stay among the living. The next 4 experience points he is awarded are automatically forfeit. Only after these 4 points are paid off, does he begin to gain experience again.

Talents: Optional Rules

A Greater Will to Power: Nietzsche, *Godlike* Style

This optional rule is quite simple: characters can store greater numbers of Will Points, depending on the Theme of the game they're in. As you might guess, Highly Realistic (The *Godlike* Default) characters can store up to a maximum of 50 points at one time. Cinematic Characters can store 75; Four-Color characters can store up to a 100.

We suggest you only use the track on your character sheet to record Will at the end of a game session; during the game, you should either use pennies or glass beads, or even 3x5 note-cards.

"Burning" Base Will Points

Sometimes Will Points can be a bitch to come by. In the heat of combat during a battle of Wills, the anteing can become fast and furious and if you lose such a battle, most likely, your character does not have long to live. What do you do when your stores of Will are running out and it doesn't look like the other guy is even breaking a sweat?

You can "burn" Base Will points. Basically, this means you sacrifice 1 Base Will point, or "burn" it. In exchange for sacrificing this 1 Base Will point you receive 10 regular Will points. You can burn any number of Base Will points at once, as long as your Base Will total remains at 1 or more.

But this exchange rate has several big downsides: Any Will points gained in this manner are forfeit at the end of the game session if they are not spent, and they cannot be used to increase any skill, stat, Hyperskill, Hyperstat or Miracle (while Base Will itself can be increased with these points, this is obviously a losing proposition). The other big pain is that to recover those Base Will points, you must pay however many Will points you gained from burning them in addition to the normal cost of advancing your Base Will.

Scaling Power Levels

Do you want your Talent powers to be *extremely* powerful while avoiding the No Upward Limit Extra? The solution is simple: Pay twice as much for the Hyperstat or Miracle,

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and it's twice as powerful. Pay three times as much and it's three times as powerful. Get it? (Hyperskills, since they are so limited, don't really require this modification.)

The only limitation is the entire Hyperstat and Miracle must be purchased this way. In other words, you can't buy just one or two dice in this manner, and the rest at regular cost. The whole power has to be purchased this way (Hard Dice, Wiggle Dice and all). In addition, although the power *can* have Flaws, they can only reduce the cost of the power by a maximum of -1/-2/-4.

> ***Example:*** Buying 8d in Hyperbody at 4 Will points per die (instead of the usual 2 Will points per die), *doubles* the effectiveness of the Hyperstat. In other words, with this 8d (at double the cost) the tested lift is 4 to 8 tons (as opposed to 2 to 4 tons for a normal 8d). In addition, the character gains +2 wound boxes per hit location (instead of +1), and 4 extra points of shock are shaken off after each combat (instead of 2). He can also automatically breach Heavy Armor equal to his Body stat (instead of half his Body stat), broad jump Body x 2 in yards (instead of just Body in yards), and leap his Body stat in yards vertically (instead of half that).

> ***Example:*** Buying 2hd in Goldberg Science at 20 points apiece (instead of the usual 10 points per hard die), doubles the effectiveness of the power. With it, the character can build up to 4 devices at one time (instead of the usual 2). This doubling also cuts the production time of devices in half (since its twice as effective). It also cuts the Difficulty ratings in half as well.

> ***Example:*** Buying 6d in Harm at 15 points per die (instead of 5 per die), *triples* the effectiveness of the power. It now causes Width x 3 in killing and in shock damage, instead of just With in killing and shock.

> ***Example:*** Buying 3d in Teleportation at 20 Will points per die (four times the regular cost), makes it four times as effective. The teleporter's Maximum Mass is now 40 pounds and Maximum Distance, 200 miles.

Or, if you don't find this scaling to your liking, you can just buy more than 10 dice.

Buying More Than 10 Dice

This optional rule is presented for those who like to play *really* powerful Talents. So you want Superman-level fights where buildings are thrown about, tanks are used as shields and entire city blocks are leveled by just two combatants? No problem.

You'll remember the strictest rule in *Godlike* is you can never roll more than 10d at any time. This doesn't mean you can't buy **more** than 10 dice. What's the use of buying more than 10 dice if they're never going to be rolled? Good question.

Dice above 10 increase your ability with Hyperstats, Miracles and Hyperskills. For example, someone with 12d in Body is stronger than someone with a 10d in Body. To find out the increase in range, size or strength, simply multiply the variable by the extra dice above 10.

> ***Example:*** Harper has Teleportation at 12d. This means he can teleport a maximum of 12 tons 24,000 miles. The extra 2d above 10 doubles Harper's maximum range and mass.

The important question is: How do you represent this difference if you never roll the dice? Easy: You never roll more than 10d, but each die above 10 offsets any penalties you may incur.

> ***Example:*** Tristan has a Hyperskill in Brawl of 14d. He wants to attack four different targets in one round with his Talent. No one ever rolls more than 10d, but Tristan's 4d extra offsets the -4d penalty for his multiple attacks. He gets to roll 10d and look for 4 sets.

Gaining New Powers (Adjusted by Theme)

In **Part Four: Talents** (on p. 35) the topic of gaining entirely new Talent powers was discussed. In this section, we will devote some attention to the Theme dictating how many points needed to gain new powers.

In the Highly Realistic Default setting, it costs 50 Will Points and a Base Will Point to buy a single die of an entirely new power. For *Godlike's* background material as presented, this works.

While Talents will improve their powers, they're unlikely to pick up entirely new ones; and if they do, it'll probably be thematically similar powers, for that lower price of 40 points and 1 Base Will.

What if you're playing a Cinematic Game? Your GM might use the following adjustments (or make up their own). For a Cinematic Game (rather more free-wheeling), an entirely new power might cost 35 points and a point of Base Will. Thematically similar powers are still a lot more affordable, perhaps costing only 20 points and point of Base Will.

What if you want to get wild and really cut loose with a Four Color Game? Nothing simpler: 25 points and 1 Base Will for an entirely new power makes sense. A power thematically similar to one you have already? 10 Will and 1 Base Will Point makes sense. Furthermore, only in the Four Color Theme is the possibility of *two* dice being bought in a single flash of Power (Don't forget it'll cost you two Base Will to pull it off, though!)

Please note, like in Part Four, you still only get a single die in the new power you've just gained. The ability to gain a new power at functional levels instantly is only possible in the Four Color Theme as detailed above, and it's unlikely to be a totally new power, at that.

High Body Stats and Machine Guns

Anyone with a Body stat of 4 or more can carry any machine gun under 32 lbs as if it was a submachine gun (note that any belt fed gun needs a second man to feed it, making this ploy ineffective). Those with a Body Stat of 5 to 6 may

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carry *any* machine gun as if it were a submachine gun. With a Body stat of 7 to 10, the character may carry a machine gun in *each hand* (though the multiple actions rule still applies to attacking with two weapons at once).

Similarly, to characters who have a Body Hyperstat of 6 or more, weapons such as mortars, machine guns and other heavy weapons are treated as if they were submachine guns in weight (but not in bulk).

Rolling Will

This is a slight alteration of the Will against Will bid system. It's here for those of you who like a bit of randomness in your games. If you want a situation where a great roll will save the day despite shitty circumstances, these rules are for you.

During the declaration phase of combat, if you want to counter a Talent ability aimed at you (and are able to), you can choose to risk between 0 and 10 Will points in defense. You must of course have enough Will points to risk the amount, for without any Will points, you're out of luck; no defense is possible. The enemy in turn risks Will points in the same manner, picking a number from 0 to 10, trying to force his attack through your defenses. You can defend only when you are being "targeted" by a Talent power. You can't keep a defense when you are not under attack.

Now here's the kicker: It's a blind bid. When you're asked to make your bid for defense or attack with your Will, just grab a die out of sight and place it at your desired number (or if you pick zero, just say zero when it's time).

Then, at the same time, the attacker and defender reveal what they risked.

The number of Will points risked are then rolled in a dynamic contest against each other as regular dice. The one with the highest and widest result (in that order) wins. If it's the attacker, the power gets through and is rolled normally, if it's the defender the attacker's power doesn't work. The winner gains back the width of his roll in Will points, the loser loses all the Will points he risked. If the rolls tie, both parties lose the Will points they risked and nothing happens. Either way, all Will spent in this manner is lost.

Just like the bidding system, surprise attacks negate the possibility of a battle of Wills.

> ***Example:*** Timothy (Will 19) has targeted Hans (Will 23) with his 6d lightning attack Miracle in the declaration phase of combat. Hans is a Talent, and since it is a direct attack on him, he can defend with his Will. Hans secretly risks 7 Will points to prevent Tim from using his power on him.
>
> Tim, wanting his attack to get through, secretly chooses to risk 10 of his Will points. Hans is now left with 16 Will points in reserve and Tim, only 9.
>
> Both reveal what they bid, and then those points are rolled in a dynamic contest against each other-10d against 7d. When they are rolled, all the Will points risked are lost.
>
> Hans rolls 7d (because he risked 7 Will) and gets 7, 8, 2, 2, 5, 1 and a 2, a 3x2 success. Timothy rolls 10d (because he risked 10 Will) and gets 3, 7, 7, 8, 8, 1, 1, 6, 10 and a 3, a 2x8 success. Since Tim's success is higher than Hans' he wins, he can attack Hans with his lightning power, and he gains back 2 Will points (from the width of the roll). Hans loses the 7 Will points he risked and he's an open target for Tim's power.
>
> Now Tim can roll his lightning attack normally.
>
> If Tim had attacked Hans sniper-style however, Hans would not have been allowed to defend against the Talent attack, since surprise negates the possibility of a battle of Wills altogether.

Two Against One

If you want to add a new level of vulnerability to your *Godlike* game, you can use the two against one rule. This allows two Talents to team up against another Talent in a battle of Wills, using their Wills in tandem to crush the third Talent's power. The battle of Wills is treated the same, except the two Talents get to pool their Will in their contest against their target.

This two against one Will attack has an added benefit as well: with it, the two attacking Talents can affect a third Talent's power *even if that Talent is not trying to affect them with his power.*

> ***Example:*** Grady and Winston team up their Wills to assault Vaughn, who is using his Hyperstat in Body to lift a tank. Even though Vaughn is not using his powers to attack Grady or Winston, they can still affect him because, two is better than one.
>
> Grady and Winston put together a pool of 10 Will points. Vaughn can only risk 8 Will points. Grady and Winston win and Vaughn's power kicks out. Shortly thereafter the tank drops on him. Squish.

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APPENDIX B

NPCs

The First Ten

These first ten Talents were exceptional creatures and possessed powers far beyond the norm for their kind. Most of the NPCs below were built with between 60 and 150 Will points. Despite their exceptional nature, very few survived the war.

Note: Powers are always calculated starting with a base 1/2/4, and another 1/2/4 is added for each Quality the power possesses. Hence, *Der Flieger's* Flight Power is 1/2/4 plus four more 1/2/4s for a Point Cost of 5/10/20.

Der Flieger

Konrad Rahn (Circa 1944)

Age 28, **Ht** 6'1" **Wt** 205.
Nationality German.
Education Gymnasium at Hamburg. Officer schooling at Bad Tölz.
Dependants None.
Motivations To crush Bolshevism and serve the *Führer*.
Body 3 **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 3 **Cool** 4
Skills Athletics 2, Brawling 2, Driving 1, Endurance 2, Flight 3, Grenade 3, Health 1, Inspire 3, Intimidate 3, Knife Fighting 2, Languages (German 2, English 1), Leadership 3, Machine Gun 3, Mental Stability 3, Navigation (Air) 3, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 3, Sight 2, Submachine Gun 3, Survival 1, Swimming 2.
Base Will 31

Talent Powers (Cost: 150 Will Points)

Flight (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. 5/10/20). **2hd** (Extras: No Altitude Limit +2/+4/+8; No G's +2/+4/+8; 36 points). **Power Stunt For Flight:** Barnstorming 3d.

Super Speed (Qualities: Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. 4/8/16). **10d** (Flaw: Attached to Flight, -1/-2/-4 for a Final Cost of 3/6/12; 30 points). **Top Speed:** 805 MPH.

Harm: Shockwave Attack (Qualities: Attacks. 2/4/8) **10d** (Extra: Area 10, +1/+2/+4; 5 points per rank, for 50 points. Flaws: Attached to Flight -1/-2/-4; Must Fly at Full Speed -1/-2/-4; 60 points).

Pevnost

Briety Krizova (Circa 1943)

Age 23, **Ht** 5'2" **Wt** 129.
Nationality Czechoslovakian.
Education Gymnasium at Prague, two years at the University of Linz in Austria.
Dependants None.
Motivations To free Czechoslovakia from Nazi rule.
Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 3 **Command** 2 **Cool** 3
Skills Bluff 2, Dodge 3, Driving (Car) 3, Education 3, First Aid 3, Grenade 4, Languages (Czech 3, English 2, Russian 2, German 1), Machine Gun 3, Mental Stability 2, Pistol 3, Rifle 2, Run 1, Stealth 4, Submachine Gun 3, Tactics 2.
Base Will 20

Talent Power (Cost: 30 Will Points)

Teleport (Qualities: Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. 3/6/12). **10d** (Extra: Maximum Capacity +5/+10/+20. Flaws: Only works on doorways previously traveled through -2/-4/-8; Forced Attendance -1/-2/-4; Slow 2 per passenger -2/-4/-8; 30 points).

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Zindel

Amina Salasee (Circa 1941)

Age 40, **Ht** 5' **Wt** 105.
Nationality Ethiopian.
Education Home schooling.
Dependants None.
Motivations To free Ethiopia.
Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 3
Brains 2 **Command** 2 **Cool** 4
Skills Farming 2, First Aid 3, Grenade 2, Inspire 4, Languages (Ethiopian 2, Hebrew 2, English 1, Italian 1), Machine Gun 1, Mental Stability 4, Pistol 3, Rifle 4, Stealth 3, Submachine Gun 1, Tactics 3.
Base Will 10

Talent Power (Cost: 104 Will Points)

Transmute Enemies to Salt (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust. 4/8/16). **10hd** (Extra: Reflexive +2/+4/+8; Radius 6 [250 yards], +3/+6/+8,6 Ranks for 18 points. Flaws: King Midas [to salt only] -2/-4/-8; Limited Target [Enemies Only] -2/-4/-8; 100 points).

Cien

Piotr Ciowiski (Circa 1943)

Age 39, **Ht** 5'11" **Wt** 161.
Nationality Polish.
Education Schooling at Krakow, two years officer schooling in Lodz, British Special Operations Executive training.
Dependants None.
Motivations To free Poland from Nazi rule.
Body 3 **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 3 **Cool** 4
Skills Anti-Tank Rocket 3, Brawling 2, Climb 2, Dodge 3, Driving (Car) 3, Endurance 2, Grenade 2, Languages (Polish 3, English 2, German 1), Intimidation 3, Machine Gun 2, Mental Stability 3, Leadership 3, Pistol 2, Shadow Positioning (Coordination) 4, Rifle 4, Stealth 2, Submachine Gun 3, Swim 3, Tactics 3.
Base Will 32

Talent Power (Cost: 85 Will Points)

Telekinesis (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat. 4/8/16) **10d** (Extra: No Upward Limit +2/+4/+8; No Weight +2/+4/+8; No Inertia +2/+4/+8. Flaws: Can only affect objects touched by his shadow -2/-4/-8; Strength Limited by size of shadow [height of "Shadow Positioning" skill roll equals the amount of Telekinesis dice *Cien* can throw that round, width indicates the timing of that TK action, not the TK roll.] -2/-4/-8; 60 points).

Viljo

Joseef Seppanen (Circa 1940)

Age 39, **Ht** 6'2" **Wt** 189.
Nationality Finnish.
Education Home Schooling.
Dependants One brother, mother and father.
Motivations To free Finland from Russian occupation.
Body 3 **Coordination** 3 (10) **Sense** 3 (7)
Brains 2 **Command** 3 **Cool** 5
Skills Brawling 1, Climb 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 4, Grenade 2, Knife Fighting 5 (7), Languages (Finnish 2, Russian 1), Navigation (Land) 3, Ride (Horse) 3, Rifle 3, Stealth 5, Swim 3, Throw 2.
Base Will 11

Talent Powers (Cost: 60 Will Points)

Hyperskill: Knife Fighting +2d (1/3/7) (2 points).
Hyperstat: Coordination +7d (2/5/10) (14 points).
Hyperstat : Sense +4d (2/5/10) (8 points).
Affinity: Arctic Conditions (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. 5/10/20). **2hd** (Regular Type Conditions [Arctic] +3/+6/+12; 32 points). +1d to all actions in Arctic conditions.

Vogel

Jan Dinesen (Circa 1945)

Age 25, **Ht** 6'0" **Wt** 169.
Nationality Danish.
Education Home Schooling.
Dependants 1 brother, mother and father.
Motivations To free Denmark from Nazi rule.
Body 2 **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2
Brains 3 **Command** 2 **Cool** 3
Skills Anti-Tank Rocket 3, Driving (Car) 3, Education 2, Grenade 2, Hearing 3, Languages (Danish 3, German 3, English 2), Lie 4, Machine Gun 2, Mental Stability 2, Navigation (Land) 2, Pistol 3, Rifle 3, Sight 2, Stealth 3, Submachine Gun 4, Tactics 3.
Base Will 35

Talent Power (Cost: 90 Will Points)

Heavy Armor (Qualities: Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. 7 per Rank). **10** (Flaw: Only against incoming missiles -1/rank; 60 points. Side Effect: Missiles just fail to hit him).

Aesgir

Christian Hansen (Circa 1944)

Age 17, **Ht** 5'9" **Wt** 133.
Nationality Norwegian.
Education Schooling at Eivaan. British Special Operations Executive training.
Dependants None.
Motivations To destroy the Nazis.
Body 1 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 3
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 2
Skills Antitank Rocket 3, Driving (Car) 3, Education 2, Grenade 2, Hearing 3, Languages (Danish 3, German 2, English 2), Lie 4, Machine Gun 2, Mental Stability 2, Pistol 3, Rifle 3, Sight 2, Spear 2(+2hd), Stealth 3, Submachine Gun 4, Tactics 3.
Base Will 29

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Talent Powers (Cost: 150 Will Points)

Heavy Armor (Qualities: Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. 7 per Rank). **10** (Flaw: Only when holding "Aesgir" -2/rank; 50 points).

Hyperskill: Spear (1/3/7) **2hd** (Flaw: Only with "Aesgir" -1/-2/-4; Final Point Cost is 1/1/3; 2 points).

Teleport (Qualities: Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. Point Cost: 3/6/12). **10d** (Extra: Maximum Capacity +5/+10/+20. Flaw: Must travel the equivalent distance on foot through "Valhalla" -1/-2/-4; Only when holding "Aesgir" -2/-4/-8; Side Effect: "Teleport" is accomplished by traveling through a pocket dimension on foot; 50 points).

Break (Qualities: Attacks, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. 4/8/16). **10d** (Flaw: Only when holding "Aesgir" -2/-4/-8; 20 points).

Fetch (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. Point Cost: 4/8/16). **2hd** (Flaw: Can only Fetch "Aesgir" -4/-8/-16; 2 points).

Daegal

Jos Keller (Circa 1943)

Age 22, **Ht** 5'4" **Wt** 120.
Nationality Dutch.
Education Home schooling.
Dependants None.
Motivations To free the Netherlands.
Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 2 **Cool** 3
Skills Bluff 4, Brawling 3, Driving (Car) 1, Explosives 3, First Aid 3, Grenade 3, Inspire 2, Languages (Dutch 2, English 1, German 1), Lie 1, Machine Gun 1, Mental Stability 3, Pistol 2, Rifle 1, Stealth 1, Submachine Gun 2, Sight 3, Tactics 1.
Base Will 15

Talent Powers (Cost: 113 Will Points)

Control: Light (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. 5/10/20) **7d+1wd** (Frequent Phenomena [Light]; +4/+8/+16; 99 points).

Perception (Quality: Robust. 2/4/8). **2hd** (Flaw: Can only see through his own Light-based Illusions; 4 points).

Vevel

Jean Neuman (Circa 1943)

Age 22, **Ht** 5'1" **Wt** 109.
Nationality Belgian.
Education Schooling at Hasselt; university at Brussels.
Dependants None.
Motivations To unite the world through communism.
Body 1(10) **Coordination** 1(10) **Sense** 2
Brains 3 **Command** 2 **Cool** 2
Skills Bluff 2, Brawling 3, Driving (Car) 1, Explosives 2, First Aid 3, Grenade 3, Inspire 2, Languages (Dutch 2, English 1, German 1), Lie 1, Machine Gun 1, Mental Stability 3, Pistol 2, Rifle 1, Submachine Gun 2, Tactics 1.
Base Will 18

Talent Powers (Cost: 100 Will Points)

Combat Fugue (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust. Point Cost: 4/8/16) **2hd** (Flaw: Automatically activates when in danger, -1/-2/-4. Side Effect: No recollection of actions while in Fugue. 12 points).

Go First 6 (Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust; 8 points per level; Attached to Combat Fugue, -1 per level; 42 points).

Hyperstat: Body +9d (2/5/10) (Flaw: Attached to Combat Fugue, -1/-2/-4; 9 points).

Hyperstat: Coordination +9d (2/5/10) (Point Cost: 2/5/10. Flaw: Attached to Combat Fugue, -1/-2/-4; 9 points).

Instant Death (Qualities: Attacks, Robust. 3/6/12) **3hd** (Flaws: Attached to Combat Fugue, -1/-2/-4. Must touch subject -1/-2/-4; 6 points).

Side Step (Qualities: Defends, Robust. 3/6/12) **2hd** (Flaw: Attached to Combat Fugue, -1/-2/-4. Final Cost: 2/4/8; 8 points).

L'Invocateur

Luc Besont (Circa 1945)

Age 24, **Ht** 5'5" **Wt** 129.
Nationality French.
Education Home schooling.
Dependants None.
Motivations To kill Germans.
Body 2 **Coordination** 4 **Sense** 3
Brains 3 **Command** 2 **Cool** 5
Skills Blind Fighting 3, Brawling 2, Driving (Car) 2, Explosive 3, Grenade 4, Knife 4, Languages (French 3, German 3, English 2), Machine Gun 1, Mental Stability 4, Pistol 4, Rifle 2, Stealth 5, Submachine Gun 4, Tactics 2.
Base Will 16

Talent Power (Cost: 25 Will Points)

Invisibility (Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. 4/8/16) **2hd** (Extra: Unshakable +2/+4/+8. Flaw: Must have eyes closed at all times -2/-4/-8; 16 points).

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Generic Troops

The following statistics can be used repeatedly to represent "standard" troops.

Average *Heer Offizier* or *SS Führer*

Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 1
Brains 2 **Command** 2 **Cool** 3
Skills Brawling 1, Cryptography 2, Endurance 2, Explosives 2, Grenade 2, Language (German 2), Leadership 2, Machine Gun 2, Mental Stability 3, Mortar 2, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 2, Running 2, Stealth 1, Submachine gun 2, Tactics 2.
Base Will 5

Common Weapons (Choose One Plus Grenades)

P38 Walther Pistol (Capacity 8)
Damage: Width in killing and shock.
MP 40 Submachine Gun (Spray 2, Capacity 32)
Damage: Width+1 in killing, Width in shock.
Stielhandgranate 24 "Stick Hand Grenade" (Penetration/Area: 3/4)
Damage: Width+1 in killing and shock + Area.

Average *Heer Soldat*

Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 3
Skills Brawling 2, Endurance 2, Explosives 1, Grenade 3, Knife Fighting 2, Language (German 2), Machine Gun 3, Mental Stability 2, Mortar 2, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 3, Running 2, Stealth 2.
Base Will 3

Common Weapons (Choose One Plus Grenades)

Gewehr 41 Rifle (Capacity 10)
Damage: Width+2 in killing and shock.
PO8 Luger (Capacity 8)
Damage: Width in killing and shock.
Panzerfaust 30 (Penetration/Area: 7/8).
Damage: Width+2 in killing and shock + Area.
Einhandgranate 39 (Penetration/Area: 2/4).
Damage: Width+1 in killing and shock.

Average Allied Officer

Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Cool** 2 **Command** 3
Skills Brawling 1, Climb 1, Cryptography 2, Endurance 1, Explosives 2, Grenade 2, Knife Fighting 2, Language (Native 2, English 2), Leadership 3, Machine Gun 1, Map Reading 2, Mortar 1, Navigation (Land) 2, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 2, Stealth 2, Submachine Gun 2, Survival 2, Tactics 2.
Base Will 5

Common Weapons (Choose One Plus Grenades)

.45 M1911A Semi-Automatic Pistol (Capacity 7)
Damage: Width+1 in killing, Width in shock.
Thompson Submachine Gun (Spray 3/0, Capacity 30)
Damage: Width+1 in killing, Width in shock.
Sten Submachine Gun (Spray 3, Capacity 32)
Damage: Width+1 in killing, Width in shock.
PPSh-41 Submachine Gun (Spray 4, Capacity 71)
Damage: Width+1 in killing, Width in shock.
M2A1 "Pineapple" Hand Grenade (Penetration/Area: 2/3)
Damage: Width+1 in killing and shock + Area.

Average Allied Infantryman

Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2
Brains 2 **Command** 2 **Cool** 2
Skills Brawling 2, Cryptography 1, Endurance 2, Explosives 1, Grenade 2, Language (Native 2), Leadership 2, Machine Gun 2, Mental Stability 1, Mortar 2, Pistol 2, Radio Operation 1, Rifle 2, Running 2, Stealth 1, Submachine Gun 2, Tactics 2.
Base Will 4

Common Weapons (Choose One Plus Grenades)

No. 1 Lee Enfield Rifle (Capacity 10, Slow 1)
Damage: Width+2 in killing and shock.
Tokarev SVT38 Rifle (Capacity 10, Slow 1)
Damage: Width+3 in killing, Width+2 in shock.
Carbine M1 (Capacity 15)
Damage: Width +2 in killing, Width+1 in shock.
M1903 A1 "Springfield" Rifle (Capacity 5, Slow 1)
Damage: Width+3 in killing, Width+2 in shock.
.45 M1911A Semi-Automatic Pistol (Capacity 7)
Damage: Width+1 in killing, Width in shock.
M2A1 "Pineapple" Hand Grenade (Penetration/Area: 2/3)
Damage: Width+1 in killing and shock + Area.

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APPENDIX C

Open Source Superhero Rules

Special Note

The text of this entire appendix (pp. 314–343) is considered Open Gaming Content and is hereby released under the Open Gaming License. Nothing in this book except for the text of this appendix is Open Gaming Content. See the relevant legal notices on p. *iv*.

Open Source Rules

The following rules are designed using the same basic task resolution system used by the world's most popular fantasy role-playing game. They're meant for use by people who like the idea of playing superhero games like the one presented in this book, but don't want to learn new rules. As such, we've tried to make them as complete as possible. However, in some cases where we didn't make any conversions (such as the power creation rules) we simply refer to the main text of the rules presented elsewhere in this book.

Another point that bears mentioning is that at times the phrasing and references in this section may appear a bit vague or strange. Remember that the entire concept of open-source gaming is still relatively new and there are many legal questions that we had to struggle with in producing these rules.

Basic Task Resolution

The open source rules, unlike the core rules presented in this book, do not use a bell curve. Instead, the roll of a single, twenty-sided die determines every action. If the die roll is greater than or equal to a Difficulty Class (DC) chosen by the GM, the action succeeds. If not, it fails. To reflect a character's training or the influence of the environment on an action, such as trying to light a fire in a driving rainstorm, we add or subtract modifiers from the roll. Positive modifiers increase the chance for success, while negative ones decrease it.

If two characters work against each other, then their players both roll a d20, add any appropriate modifiers, and compare the results. The character with the higher roll succeeds, while the character with the low roll fails. This is called an opposed roll. An opposed roll is typically described as an opposed roll between two stats or two skills. In the case of a tie, the two opponents should re-roll until their results are not equal.

Level of Difficulty	DC
Trivially easy	0
Simple	5
Easy	10
Average	15
Difficult	20
Very difficult	25
Extremely difficult	30

A Note for Experienced Gamers

The following rules are based on the core engine that drives the world's most popular alliteratively titled fantasy role-playing game (heretofore referred to as *That Game)*. The rules are meant to be fully compatible between the two games. In general, the rules presented here have much less detail than the rules your familiar with. However, you can easily incorporate the skills, feats, and detailed rules that you like from *That Game* without writing over anything we've provided here for you.

In general, if the rules are already out there in *That Game*'s main book, we tried to provide them in condensed form. In addition, you have to read the core superhero rules in this book, primarily those relating to super powers, in order to fully understand the rules presented here. Again, we did not want to needlessly duplicate rules that are already presented in this book.

A Note for Newbies

If you have no idea what we mean when we refer to *That Game*, you should start with the main rules presented in this book and wait until you actually play *That Game* to deal with these rules.

Wink-Wink, Nudge-Nudge

The open source rules presented here are completely playable in their current form. However, this set of rules is aimed squarely at people who play *That Game* and want to use the same rules engine for superhero gaming. We count ourselves amongst that target audience, and tried to craft a set of rules that spent more time

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giving you options and tools for running your own games rather than needlessly regurgitating rules that you already know or that are included in *That Game's* main handbook. Things like rules for freezing to death, starvation, poison, diseases, and so on aren't covered here. The beauty of the open gaming movement for designers is that we don't need to re-invent the wheel at every turn. The great thing for gamers is that you only have to learn the rules once, and if we do our job right you only end up paying for new rules, not rehashes of stuff cut and pasted from previous works.

Obviously, we had to include basic rules on combat and character creation for complete newbies. Veteran gamers should read over the sections on the Cool statistic, our take on free form skills, feats, and experience, and, of course, the powers section.

Feel free to migrate rules from other open source games or games that use similar engines. We've tried to provide you with a toolbox rather than authoritative rules. With a little work, you can model almost any sort of comic book with these rules.

Character Creation

Characters are defined by the statistics, which represent in-born talents and traits, skills, which represent training and knowledge gained over time, and feats, special knacks and abilities that represent capabilities unique to a particular character. In addition, superheroes also possess Powers, Hyperskills, and Hyperstats to reflect their super-human abilities. Finally, starting characters begin at 1st level. As characters gain experience, their level increases.

1st-level characters are neophytes, recruits fresh out of training or heroes who only recently gained their powers. 10th-level characters are hardened veterans or highly trained experts. 20th-level characters are elite, world-class heroes or experts recognized as innovators and trendsetters in their field of study.

Statistics

A character's statistics describe his basic mental, physical, and social aptitudes. Think of statistics as the abilities that a person is born with. Some people are just naturally stronger than others, just like some people have an outgoing and engaging personality and others are blessed with excellent memories and finely tuned cognitive skills. On the other hand, some people are cursed with weak muscles, poor health, or bad eyesight. These open source superhero rules keep track of seven different character statistics: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and Cool. Most humans have statistic values that range from 3 to 18, with 3 representing an exceptionally weak stat and an 18 the pinnacle of natural human ability. A stat score of 10 or 11 represents the human average. Scores above 11 give a character a bonus when attempting an action related to the stat, while those below 10 give a penalty.

Heroes start out as relatively average people with 10 in each stat. You then have 2 points to add to your stats however you wish, adding one point to two stats or both points to a single stat. You may then subtract points from some of your stats and redistribute them amongst your other stats. Statistics are covered in more depth later on in this chapter.

Skills

A character's skills describe the knowledge and training he has picked up during the course of his lifetime. As a character masters a skill, he gains more ranks in it. A beginner may have four ranks in a skill, while a master may have over twenty. Starting characters begin the game with 40 ranks to distribute amongst their skills. A beginning character cannot have more than 4 ranks in any one skill. In addition, you must spend four skill ranks to gain one rank in a weapon or combat skill. Beginning characters may not have more than one rank in any weapon skill.

Skills are covered in much more depth later on in this chapter.

Feats

Feats are unique abilities that a character possesses. They serve as wild cards that let you focus on a few core abilities that are important to your character concept and as tools to help make your character unique. Power Stunts are feats related to specific super-human powers. Beginning characters start with two feats.

Feats are described in their own section later on in this chapter. Power Stunts are described under Powers.

Secondary Statistics: Armor Class, Hit Points, Saving Throws

Armor Class (AC) measures how well your character can avoid attacks, including gunfire, kicks, and punches. A character's AC is equal to 10 + the character's Dexterity modifier. Modifiers are discussed in the Statistics section, while Armor Class is more fully detailed under Combat.

Hit points measure how much physical damage a character can absorb before falling unconscious and dying. A character's starting hit points equal his Constitution score.

Saving Throws represent luck, instincts, and personal fortitude. There are three types of saving throws:

- Fortitude (Fort) saves represent a character's physical endurance. Characters add their Constitution modifier to their base Fortitude save.
- Reflex (Ref) saves represent a character's reflexes, luck, and speed. Characters add their Dexterity modifier to their base Reflex save.
- Will saves represent a characters mental resolve, confidence, and inner-strength. Characters add their Wisdom modifier to their base Will save.

Beginning characters start with three points to distribute amongst their saves as they see fit.

Powers and Will

Finally, choose the superpowers that make your character a gifted hero capable of super-human feats. Beginning characters start with 40 Power Points to spend on powers, Hyperstats, and Hyperskills. See the Power Mechanics section for details on how to buy powers and create new ones.

In addition, every superhero starts out with a Base Will stat and a Will score (which are separate from the Will save). A character starts out with a Base Will score equal to his Cool modifier + his Charisma modifier + 2. Your Base Will has a minimum starting value of 1. Your Will score equals your Base Will at the start of play.

Normal humans only have a Base Will statistic. They do not have, like superheroes, a Will stat that fluctuates up or down. This special Will regulates the use of super-human abilities.

Inside the System: Character Generation

Characters in this game are meant to begin play as relatively normal people blessed (or cursed, depending on your point of view) with super-human powers. Thus, their stats tend to stay near the human average. Veterans of games that use a similar engine will notice that characters start play with quite a few skill ranks. However, these rules break down combat skills to a much finer degree than most open source games and require the use of separate skills for each firearm or weapon type. Consequently, combat intensive characters have few general-purpose skills.

If you wish to increase the power level of characters in the open source superhero rules, the following table provides some

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guidelines for starting Stat, Skill, and Power Points. Through these rules, we use the 5 power levels listed below as benchmarks for you to refer to in creating your own particular adaptation of the open source superhero rules.

Mood	Stats	Skills (Max)	Feats	Saves	Power Points
Gritty	2	10 (4/1)	2	3	40
Low-powered	2	10 (4/1)	2	3	20
Moderate-power	12	20 (8/4)	3	6	60
High-powered	20	30 (12/6)	4	10	80
Super-powered	40	40 (16/16)	6	20	140

Mood: A brief description of the intended feel of your game.
Stats: Bonus points a player may add to his character's stats, with all stats starting at 10 before adding any points.
Skills: Insert this number into the following formula to determine a character's starting skills: Skills + Intelligence modifier X 4. The values listed under Max are the maximum number of ranks that a character may begin the game with in a particular skill. The first number is the maximum rank in non-combat skills, while the second one is the maximum ranks in combat skills.
Feats: The number of feats a character can choose to start out with.
Saves: Number of points to allocate to the three saving throws.
Power Points: Points available for Base Will, Hyperskills, Hyperstats, and Powers.

Statistics

There are seven statistics in the open source superhero rules: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and Cool. Each stat is rated from 3 to 18; with 3 the lowest possible score for a human and 18 the highest. In addition, each statistic also has a modifier that is derived from its score. To determine a stat's modifier, subtract 10 from the stat and divide by 2. If the result is positive, round it down. If it is negative, round down to the lower negative number. Be sure to note whether the modifier is positive or negative. A negative modifier subtracts from a die roll, reflecting your character's below average ability score. A positive one adds to the roll, reflecting an above average ability.

> ***Example:*** Jim's character has Strength of 9. To determine his Strength modifier, he subtracts 10 from 9 for a result of –1. Dividing this by 2 yields –0.5. Since this value is below zero, we round to the lowest number, -1. If Jim's character's Strength was 13, his modifier would be +1. 13 minus 10 is 3, divided by 2 is 1.5. Since the result is above 0, we round down to +1. Of course, we round down in both cases, but rounding down can be a bit confusing when looking at both positive and negative numbers.

Strength (abbreviated Str) represents a character's physical power. It can modify rolls made for swimming, athletics, and hand to hand combat.
Dexterity (Dex) is a character's agility and reflexes. It can modify a roll made to catch a thrown object, to hit a target with a rifle, or to walk across a tightrope.
Constitution (Con) covers a character's toughness and endurance. The higher a character's Constitution, the tougher he is to kill.
Intelligence (Int) describes a character's analytical, critical thinking, and memory abilities. Intelligence can modify a roll made to decipher a code, solve a mathematical problem, or remember the details of someone's face.
Wisdom (Wis) covers a character's awareness, perception, and common sense. It can modify rolls made to determine if someone is lying, to notice a sniper hiding in a tree, or to hear the sounds of someone trying to sneak past.
Charisma (Cha) represents a character's force of personality and magnetism. Charisma modifies rolls made to convincingly lie, to debate a point, or to intimidate someone.
Cool (Col) represents a character's mental stability and reliability. Cool modifies rolls made to determine if a character can maintain his composure in stressful situations.

Generating Statistics

Characters in the basic version of these rules are meant to be run-of-the-mill people who happen to develop super-human powers that set them apart from the rest of humanity. Since 10 is the average human statistic, every character starts with a 10 in each stat. You have 2 points that you may add to your stats however you wish. In addition, for each point that you reduce one of your stats, you may increase a different stat by 1 point. No stat may go below 3, and no stat may go above 18.

> ***Example:*** Jim decides that he wants to play a strong, dumb ox of a street fighter. He notes that he starts with 10s in each stat. He decides to split his 2 free points between Strength and Constitution, raising each of them to 11. He then drops his Intelligence from 10 to 8 and allocates 1 point to Strength and 1 point to Constitution, bringing both those scores to 12. He then decides to drop his Wisdom by 2 and pumps both points into Strength, giving him a total of 14. His final stats are:
>
> Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 10, Col 10
>
> His stat modifiers are:
>
> Str +2, Dex +0, Con +1, Int –1, Wis –1, Cha +0, Col +0

Using Statistics

Throughout these rules, when you are instructed to make an ability check or to modify a roll with a stat, always add the stat's modifier. Never add the ability score to a die roll. Instead, add its modifier.

Inside the System: Stats

Veterans of games that use the same core system as these rules will notice that we use the standard ability scores largely unchanged and have added a new one: Cool. While most of the core stats in the rules presented elsewhere in this book map rather well to the open source system, Cool didn't fit in to any one ability. Furthermore, the grim and gritty nature of these rules makes

Cool a rather important stat. As such, we decided to include it as a core statistic.

Skills

Over time, everyone picks up knowledge and talents either through their own experiences or through formal schooling and training. Skills represent knowledge that a character has picked up over time. Skills operate much like stat modifiers. When your character tries to do something that he is trained to do, his skill allows him to add a bonus to his die roll. A character who is a trained marksman is much more likely to hit a target than someone who has absolutely no training.

All skills are tied to a specific ability score. Typically, when you use a skill, you roll a d20, add your rating in the skill, and then add your modifier for the stat that is linked to that skill. If the result is greater than or equal to the Difficulty Class chosen by the GM, you successfully use the skill. Sometimes, two characters may use skills against each other. For example, one character might use the Hide skill to attempt to conceal himself in a bush while another character tries to use a Spot skill to notice him. In this case, both characters roll a d20 and add their skill bonus and appropriate stat

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modifier. The character with the higher roll succeeds. In the above example, if the character who tried to hide rolls higher, he manages to stay out of sight. If the character using the Spot skill rolled higher, he notices the character lurking in the bush. In the case of a tie, the two characters should each roll a d20 without adding any modifiers. The high roller succeeds at the skill check. If this roll is tied, too, keep rolling until the tie is broken.

Skills are rated by a rank, which functions much like a stat modifier. A skill rank measures your mastery over a skill. The higher your rank in a skill, the more adept you are with it. With experience and training, you may increase your ranks in a skill.

In addition, each skill is tied to a specific statistic. For example, a Mathematics skill would be tied to Intelligence. While anyone can, with enough practice and work, master high-level math, characters with a higher Intelligence have a natural advantage at it. When you use a skill, you roll a D20, add the ranks in the skill, and add the modifier for the ability score tied to that skill.

Optional Rule: Roving Stat Modifiers

Sometimes, it makes sense to use a different statistic with a skill than the one normally tied to it. For example, while Climbing is a Strength based skill, there may be times when it makes sense to modify a Climb check with a different stat. An expert mountaineer who wants to estimate the difficulty of a given slope might use a Climb check modified by Wisdom rather than Strength to get an eyeballed estimate.

Shifting the links between a stat and a skill can lead to more believable results. However, it does put more pressure on the GM to make rulings on the fly, and it can cause disagreements over which stat-skill combo is the best option in a given situation. This optional rule is best suited for experienced GMs who don't mind make judgment calls such as this rather often. The added flexibility is often worth it if you can handle it. In fact, with the Cool stat we've already "hard coded" a roving stat modifier into the rules, though we tried to keep things rather simple and clear as to its interaction with skills.

Skill Descriptions

The following skills are arranged by the stat they are linked to. For example, since Climb is listed under Strength, add your Strength modifier to the die roll whenever you use your Climb skill.

Strength Skills

Armed Combat#: Use this skill when fighting with a bayonet, knife, club, or other hand weapon.
Brawl#: Use this skill to attack someone with your bare hands.
Climb: Use this skill to climb any vertical surface, such as a tree or cliff face.
Jump: Use this skill to vault over a pit or jump over an obstacle.
Swim: Use this skill to swim across any body of water.

Dexterity Skills

Drive Vehicle*: If you take this skill, choose tank, car, or motorcycle. You are trained in driving that particular type of vehicle. You may take this skill more than once in order to drive more than one type of vehicle.
Heavy Weapons#: Use this skill to fire machine guns, bazookas, and other squad support weapons.
Gunnery#: Use this skill to use vehicle-mounted weapons, such as a tank's main gun or the cannons and machine guns on a fighter plane.
Hide: Use this skill to conceal yourself in cover out of the sight of others.
Pilot*: Use this skill to pilot an airplane.
Shoot#: Use this skill to hit a target with small arms, such as pistols, rifles, and submachine guns.
Sneak: Use this skill to move quietly.

Constitution Skills

Concentration: This skill allows you to resist pain and continue unimpeded despite any wounds you may have sustained. It also allows you to maintain your mental acuity despite physical exhaustion.
Endurance: This skill allows you to run long distances, work hours after others would have dropped from exhaustion, or go without food or water.

Intelligence Skills

Knowledge*: This skill represents highly detailed training on a specific subject, such as tactics or history. When you take this skill, name the particular specialization that it covers. You can use this skill to recall facts about that specialty. You may take this skill more than once to represent training in multiple areas.
Language*: This skill represents linguistic training. Each time you take this skill, pick a particular language that it represents. Everyone is assumed to begin the game completely fluent in their native language. An American character, for example, does not need to purchase this skill for English.
Spotter#: Use this skill to calculate targeting coordinates for long-range artillery barrages and other heavy weapons.

Wisdom Skills

Detect Lie: You may use this skill to determine if someone is lying to you. Typically, Detect Lie is opposed by a Bluff skill check.
Listen: Use this skill to hear quiet sounds that might normally go unheard. For example, you do not need the Listen skill to hear a gun shot in the room next door. However, you may need to make one to hear two people whispering one another in a nearby room.
Spot: Use this skill to pick out a hidden detail or to notice a hidden item. This skill is most often used when searching a room or other area for hidden items.

Charisma Skills

Bluff: This skill covers the fine art of telling believable lies.
Diplomacy: This skill covers persuasive speech and attempts to forge friendly relationships with others. If you want to convince someone to do something for you, use the Diplomacy skill.
Disguise: This skill covers the ability to pass yourself off as someone else. Part of this skill covers creating a convincing look, but much of it represents your ability to properly act the part that you are trying to portray.

Cool Skills

Unlike the other statistics, Cool has no skills associated with it. However, during combat or any other stressful situation as determined by the GM, you use your Cool in conjunction with skill checks normally modified by Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma.

Cool represents your mental stability and capacity for grace under pressure. Characters with a high Cool might not perform as well as other characters in relaxed, pressure-free environments. While under fire or feeling intense pressure to perform, characters with high scores in Cool perform best. The rules covering this use of the Cool stat are detailed under Combat.

Trained vs. Untrained Skills

Anyone can attempt to talk their way past a guard, though obviously some people are more adept liars than others. On the other hand, not everyone can attempt to pick a lock or translate a note written in a foreign language. Some skills can be used by anyone, even if they posses no ranks in that skill. These skills are called

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untrained skilled. You do not need any particular training in order to use untrained skills. In contrast, some tasks require at least a basic knowledge or training. For example, if you have not studied history, you cannot use the Knowledge (history) skill. These skills are called trained skills. Characters with no ranks in a trained skill cannot attempt to use that skill. Since they lack the basic training needed to use the skill, they have no chance of successfully using the skill. If your character has never studied medicine, he has no chance to successfully operate on someone.

In the list of sample skills, each skill marked with a * is a trained skill. Those not so marked are untrained skills.

Combat Skills

The skills in the above list marked with a # are combat skills. They are most often used to determine if your character successfully hits a target in combat. Combat skills work much like any other skill. The most important difference between combat skills and regular skills is that it is much harder to gain ranks in combat skills. Characters often start the game with fewer ranks in combat skills than in non-combat ones. Simply put, there's no replacement for combat experience.

Note that all combat skills are considered untrained. If you attempt fight using a weapon with which you have no skill ranks, you simply receive no skill bonus with that weapon. See the Combat section for more information.

Creating New Skills

The list presented here is by no means comprehensive. Instead, think of it is a jumping off point to creating new skills that fit what you want your character to do. Look over the skill list and use the short description for each skill as a template for creating your own. Once you've created a new skill, ask your GM to approve it. The GM always has the final say in determining whether or not a particular skill is too powerful.

In general, try to keep skills focused to one particular field or specialty. College Education is too broad an area to be covered in a single skill, but English Literature or Ancient History are both perfectly valid skill options. As a rule of thumb, try to model skills after either fields of study (zoology, nuclear physics) or vocational skills (locksmithing, carpentry). Such fields are usually narrow enough without being overly restrictive. Simply think of something that you want your character to do, write a small description of it, and submit the new skill to the GM for his approval.

Starting Skills

Beginning characters determine the number of skill ranks they have to spread out amongst their skills according to the following formula:

10 + Intelligence modifier x 4 = starting skill points

Characters may spend up to 4 ranks in a skill when they are starting out at level 1. Combat skills work a little different from standard skills. A character may cash in 4 skill ranks for 1 rank in a combat skill. In addition, starting characters may not have more than 1 rank in any given combat skill.

When a character gains a level (see *Experience and Improvement*, below) he gains more skill ranks to spend and the maximum number of ranks he may have in a skill increases:

10 + Intelligence modifier = skill points gained/level
X + 3 = Maximum ranks possible in a non-combat skill at level X.
X = Maximum ranks in a combat skill possible at level X.

Inside the System: Skills

Skills in these open source rules are meant to be the backbone of a character concept. Skills don't just cover what a character can do, they cover what he has done and where he wants to go. The basic skill structure is meant to be flexible and simple. If you've played other games that use this rules engine, you'll notice that the skills here are presented in much less detail. This is intentional.

Rather than use skills that require exact definitions and individual rules, skills here are meant to be more descriptive in nature. While they lack the hard and fast rules of a more detailed set, skill creation is very straight forward, allowing you to build custom skills and generate exactly the sort of character that you want.

Obviously, some people might feel lost without more concrete guidelines. In that case, we suggest that you use the skills presented in products that use the same basic rule system as these rules.

Feats

Everyone has a special, unique talent or aptitude. While a character's stats and skills provide a basis for building a unique character, there isn't that much difference between two characters with an18 Strength or 4 ranks in Auto Repair. Feats help make characters more unique and help support rules for quirks and abilities that are part of a character concept but that do not fit into either a stat or skill.

Feats come in several different flavors, below are a list of sample feats and some guidelines for creating your own.

Sample Feats

Alertness: Gain a +2 bonus to all Listen and Spot checks.
Dodge: Gain a +1 AC bonus versus a single opponent that you choose during your action.
Endurance: Gain a +4 bonus to any rolls made to engage in physical activity over an extended period of time.
Great Fortitude: Gain a +2 bonus to all Fortitude saves.
Improved Initiative: Gain a +4 bonus to initiative rolls.
Iron Will: +2 bonus to Will saves.
Lightning Reflexes: +2 bonus to Reflex saves.
Precise Shot: You do not suffer the –4 penalty for firing into melee.
Quick Draw: You can draw a weapon as a free action instead of as a move-equivalent one.
Rapid Shot: You're very skilled at firing bursts. Your first extra shot incurs only a –1 penalty. All others still cause a –2 penalty to hit.
Skill Focus: You gain a +2 bonus when using a skill. You must choose the skill when you take this feat, and you cannot change it to a different skill. You may take this feat more than once to gain skill focus with more than one feat.
Toughness: You gain +3 hit points. You may take this feat more than once to gain more bonus hit points.
Weapon Focus: Chose a particular weapon, such as knife or rifle. When using that weapon, you gain a +1 bonus to hit.
Power Stunt: This is not an individual feat, but rather a class of feat related to Powers. Power Stunts are particular tricks that make superpowers more effective in certain situations. They are described in detail under the Power Mechanics section. Power Stunts are for all intents and purposes merely feats that work with powers.

Custom Feats

The list above covers the basics of what feats can and cannot do. The general guidelines of what a feat can do are:

- If the feat is meant to work with a skill or any other die roll that can come up multiple times in a game session, it can provide no more than a +2 bonus.
- A feat can nullify a penalty of up to –4. However, a

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feat should not completely eliminate a penalty that a character can willingly take to increase his chances of dealing extra damage.

- Feats that work with combat skills can never provide more than a +1 bonus.
- You cannot take a feat that provides a bonus to a roll more than once.
- You can take a feat more than once that provides a one-time bonus to a character or that applies to only one given skill or ability.
- A feat can provide a +4 bonus if it does so only for a single, strictly defined die roll type or a particular situation that a skill or stat check is called for.
- Feats are always subject to GM approval and may be retroactively rescinded at any time if, in the GM's judgment, the feat is too powerful.

To create a feat, design the feat's mechanics using the above guidelines, describe how the feat works in real world terms, and then describe it in terms of how and why your character acquired it. Feats are meant to help make your character an individual, and should be chosen to flesh a PC out, not simply give him the most advantageous bonuses possible.

Gaining Feats

First level characters begin the game with 2 feats. After that, a character gains a new feat when he chooses to spend experience points to learn a new one.

Power Mechanics

Superhero powers work like skill or ability checks. Roll a d20, add your ranks in the power, and compare the result to a Difficulty Class chosen by the GM or dictated in the power's description. If the result is greater than or equal to the DC, the power works. If not, the power did not activate.

Hyperstats

(TOTAL COST: 3 points per rank.)

The open source rules for Hyperstats work a little different than the ones presented in the standard rules. The open source rules use a slightly different set of statistics: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and Cool. Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma match the main rules' Body, Coordination, Brains, Sense, and Command, respectively. Subtract 5 from a core Hyperstats value to determine the equivalent ranks in the corresponding open source stat. Obviously, to convert from an open source stat to a core one add 5 to the open source Hyperstat's ranks.

Cool translates directly over to the open source rules, while Constitution has no analog. When converting a character, simply cash out the points spent in Hyperconstitution and put them towards Hyperbody or some other appropriate power. When converting from the core rules to the open source rules, spend points on Hyper levels of Constitution if your character has Hyperbody, to simulate his level of superior toughness.

> ***Note:*** Secondary abilities listed at each level of a Hyperstat are *not* cumulative. When you buy a Hyperstat at a certain level, you only get the secondary abilities listed at that level, not the benefits of all lower levels as well.

Hyperstats do not replace or directly enhance a character's existing stats. Instead, they offer additional capabilities and bonuses that apply in certain situations. For example, while a character's Strength bonus is normally applied to both melee attacks and damage, Hyperstrength only gives a bonus to damage. Hyperstats and regular stat bonuses DO NOT stack. Thus, a character with an 18 Strength and Hyperstrength rank 3 does not get +16 damage in melee or a +16 bonus when using Strength-based skills. Instead, he only receives the higher of the two bonuses, +12 for the Hyperstrength in this case.

Under several of the Hyperstat ranks, the descriptions note that you have an effective stat of 18 or higher. So long as you have a single Will point remaining, your statistic has that value for all rules purposes. Simply replace your regular stat with the provided Hyperstat when computing your ability modifier for skill checks, attack rolls, and all other situations.

Inside the System: Hyperstats

Keep in mind that the Hyperstats were intentionally designed to deviate from the standard stat progression presented here and in other games that use similar engines. Simply scaling Hyperstats as extremely high regular statistics would, in the case of Strength or Dexterity, lead to extremely overpowered characters. Furthermore, we wanted the Hyperstats to give characters cool extra abilities, not just really high stats.

Hyperstrength

Hyperstrength allows a character to smash through walls with his bare hands, kill a man with a single blow, or perform incredible athletic feats.

Lifting Heavy Loads with Hyperstrength: Hyperstrength allows a character to left tremendous weights over his head with little effort. Each rank of Hyperstrength gives the weight a hero with this Hyperstat could lift at DC 15. To compute the DC for weights below this range, consult the following table:

Weight	1 DC	2 DC	3 DC	4 DC	5 DC
400 – 800 lbs.	5	0	0	0	0
800 lbs. – 1 ton	15	5	0	0	0
1 – 2 tons	25	15	5	0	0
2 – 4 tons	35	25	15	5	0
4 – 8 tons	45	35	25	15	5
8 – 12 tons	55	45	35	25	15
12 – 24 tons	65	55	45	35	25

Add +10 to each DC for further doubling of the maximum weight

Obviously, many of these weights are far beyond the capabilities of most heroes. However, keep in mind that when make a Hyperstrength check to lift something, the hero may add his Hyperstrength bonus.

Rank 1 (DC 15 Lift 800lbs to 1 Ton)

- You do not take damage when punching concrete, metal, or other hard objects.
- You deal +4 damage when attacking with your bare hands or a melee weapon.
- You gain a +4 bonus to all Strength checks and checks made for Strength-based skills.

Rank 2 (DC 15 Lift 1 to 2 Tons)

- You do not take damage when punching concrete, metal, or other hard objects.
- Your punches and kicks cause killing damage instead of subdual damage.
- You deal +8 damage when attacking with your bare hands or a melee weapon.
- You gain a +8 bonus to all Strength checks and checks made for Strength-based skills.

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Rank 3 (DC 15 Lift 2 to 4 Tons)

- You do not take damage when punching concrete, metal, or other hard objects.
- Your punches and kicks cause killing damage instead of subdual damage.
- You deal +12 damage when attacking with your bare hands or a melee weapon.
- You gain a +12 bonus to all Strength checks and checks made for Strength-based skills.

Rank 4 (DC 15 Lift 4 to 6 Tons)

- You do not take damage when punching concrete, metal, or other hard objects.
- Your punches and kicks cause killing damage instead of subdual damage.
- You deal +16 damage when attacking with your bare hands or a melee weapon.
- You gain a +16 bonus to all Strength checks and checks made for Strength-based skills.

Rank 5 (DC 15 Lift 6 to 10 Tons)

- You do not take damage when punching concrete, metal, or other hard objects.
- Your punches and kicks cause killing damage instead of subdual damage.
- You deal +20 damage when attacking with your bare hands or a melee weapon.
- You gain a +20 bonus to all Strength checks and checks made for Strength-based skills.

Hyperdexterity

Hyperdexteritous heroes are known for their inhuman speed, stealth and accuracy. This ability amplifies the response speed and control of muscles, causing an incredible increase in motor skills. This increase in response time of the muscles, does not, however, mean an increase in the response time of the *senses*. The first step in avoiding an attack is to see it coming; so being hyper-swift is often not enough...

Rank 1

- You gain a +4 dodge bonus to your AC. Note that if you are caught flat-footed, you lose this bonus.
- You gain a +4 bonus to hit when firing a projectile weapon.
- Your base move is 35 ft. per round.

Rank 2

- You gain a +8 dodge bonus to your AC. Note that if you are caught flat-footed, you lose this bonus.
- You gain a +8 bonus to hit when firing a projectile weapon.
- Your base move is 40 ft. per round.

Rank 3

- You gain a +12 dodge bonus to your AC. Note that if you are caught flat-footed, you lose this bonus.
- You gain a +12 bonus to hit when firing a projectile weapon.
- Your base move is 45 ft. per round.

Rank 4

- You gain a +16 dodge bonus to your AC. Note that if you are caught flat-footed, you lose this bonus.
- You gain a +16 bonus to hit when firing a projectile weapon.
- Your base move is 50 ft. per round.

Rank 5

- You gain a +20 dodge bonus to your AC. Note that if you are caught flat-footed, you lose this bonus.
- You gain a +20 bonus to hit when firing a projectile weapon.
- Your base move is 55 ft. per round.

Hyperconstitution

Characters with Hyperconstitution can endure conditions that would kill a normal human. Intense pain, extreme cold, and starvation all do little to faze a hero with this Hyperstat.

Rank 1

- You have an effective Constitution of 18.
- You need only 4 hours of sleep each night.

Rank 2

- You have an effective Constitution of 26.
- You need only 2 hours of sleep each night.
- You are immune to all diseases.

Rank 3

- You have an effective Constitution of 34.
- You need only 8 hours of sleep each week.
- You are immune to all diseases.
- You are immune to all noxious gases.

Rank 4

- You have an effective Constitution of 42.
- You need only 4 hours of sleep each week.
- You are immune to all diseases.
- You are immune to all noxious gases.
- You are immune to all poisons.

Rank 5

- You have an effective Constitution of 50.
- You need only 4 hours of sleep each month.
- You are immune to all diseases.
- You are immune to all noxious gases.
- You are immune to all poisons.
- You are not harmed by radioactivity.

Hyperintelligence

Characters with Hyperintelligence have a tremendous capacity for absorbing experiences and knowledge with perfect recall. Bonuses to skill points gained from Hyperintelligence stack with a character's bonus skill points gained from the Intelligence stat.

Rank 1

- You have photographic memory that includes sounds and smell as well as sight.
- You gain +8 skill points at first level.
- You gain +2 skill points per level.
- You gain a +2 competence bonus to all skills based on Intelligence.
- You may purchase the All Knowledge skill, described below.

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- There is no limit to the number of ranks you may purchase in Intelligence-based skills.

Rank 2

- You have photographic memory that includes sounds and smell as well as sight.
- You gain +16 skill points at first level.
- You gain +4 skill points per level.
- You gain a +4 competence bonus to all skills based on Intelligence.
- You may purchase the All Knowledge skill, described below.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.
- Every memory of every event ever experienced by you is accessible by your conscious mind.
- There is no limit to the number of ranks you may purchase in Intelligence-based skills.

Rank 3

- You have photographic memory that includes sounds and smell as well as sight.
- You gain +24 skill points at first level.
- You gain +6 skill points per level.
- You gain a +6 competence bonus to all skills based on Intelligence.
- You may purchase the All Knowledge skill, described below.
- You have a photographic memory and can recall *anything* you have sensed.
- You can make a nearly photographic drawing of anything you have seen.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.
- There is no limit to the number of ranks you may purchase in Intelligence-based skills.

Rank 4

- You have photographic memory that includes sounds and smell as well as sight.
- You gain +32 skill points at first level.
- You gain +8 skill points per level.
- You gain a +8 competence bonus to all skills based on Intelligence.
- You may purchase the All Knowledge skill, described below.
- You have a photographic memory and can recall *anything* you have sensed.
- You can make a nearly photographic drawing of anything you have seen.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.
- There is no limit to the number of ranks you may purchase in Intelligence-based skills.
- You can consider intellectual problems even while asleep. You may use Intelligence-based skills while sleeping.

Rank 5

- You have photographic memory that includes sounds and smell as well as sight.
- You gain +40 skill points at first level.
- You gain +10 skill points per level.
- You gain a +10 competence bonus to all skills based on Intelligence.
- You may purchase the All Knowledge skill, described below.
- You have a photographic memory and can recall *anything* you have sensed.
- You can make a nearly photographic drawing of anything you have seen.
- You can calculate figures as fast as a supercomputer.
- There is no limit to the number of ranks you may purchase in Intelligence-based skills.
- You can consider intellectual problems even while asleep. You may use Intelligence-based skills while sleeping, opting to take 10 or 20 as appropriate.

The 'All Knowledge' Skill

With your incredibly precise powers of memory and recall, you literally have memorized entire libraries. You may use any and all Intelligence-based skills as if you were trained in them. However, you may only add your base Intelligence bonus, not your Hyperintelligence bonus, to the roll (in this case, it's more a matter of dumb luck that you've managed to read a book on the relevant subject or not).

However, if you have explicitly stated that your character has read a set of books that cover a particular field of knowledge, you may use the All Knowledge skill with your Hyperintelligence bonus.

Hyperwisdom

Characters with Hyperwisdom cannot necessarily detect things outside of the human range of perception, but can utilize those senses with a much higher level of accuracy, skill and ability.

Rank 1

- Your sense of smell is so sharp that you may track people by their scent. You gain 4 ranks in the Scent skill. Scent is a Wisdom-based skill. You may spend skill ranks to improve your Scent skill.
- Your vision and hearing are extremely acute. You gain 4 bonus ranks in Listen and Spot. These bonus ranks may stack with ranks purchase during character creation and can take your ranks in the relevant skills above the maximum normally allowed for your level. However, you may still only purchase as many ranks in the skills as allowed by your level.
- You have an effective Wisdom score of 18 for all purposes.

Rank 2

- Your sense of smell is so sharp that you may track people by their scent. You gain 6 ranks in the Scent skill. Scent is a Wisdom-based skill. You may spend skill ranks to improve your Scent skill.
- Your vision and hearing are extremely acute. You gain 6 bonus ranks in Listen and Spot. These bonus ranks may stack with ranks purchase during character creation and can take your ranks in the relevant skills above the maximum normally allowed for your level. However, you may still only purchase as many ranks in the skills as allowed by your level.
- You have an effective Wisdom score of 26 for all purposes.

Rank 3

- Your sense of smell is so sharp that you may track people by their scent. You gain 8 ranks in the Scent skill. Scent is a Wisdom-based skill. You may spend skill ranks to improve your Scent skill.
- Your vision and hearing are extremely acute. You gain 8 bonus ranks in Listen and Spot. These bonus ranks may stack with ranks purchase during character creation and can take your ranks in the relevant skills above the maximum normally allowed for your level. However, you may still only purchase as many ranks in the skills as allowed by your level.
- You have an effective Wisdom score of 34 for all purposes.
- You can read printed materials by touch alone.
- You can hear individual heartbeats from 20 feet away.

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Rank 4

- Your sense of smell is so sharp that you may track people by their scent. You gain 10 ranks in the Scent skill. Scent is a Wisdom-based skill. You may spend skill ranks to improve your Scent skill.
- Your vision and hearing are extremely acute. You gain 10 bonus ranks in Listen and Spot. These bonus ranks may stack with ranks purchase during character creation and can take your ranks in the relevant skills above the maximum normally allowed for your level. However, you may still only purchase as many ranks in the skills as allowed by your level.
- You have an effective Wisdom score of 42 for all purposes.
- You can read printed materials by touch alone.
- You can hear individual heartbeats from 60 feet away.
- You are never caught flatfooted.

Rank 5

- Your sense of smell is so sharp that you may track people by their scent. You gain 12 ranks in the Scent skill. Scent is a Wisdom-based skill. You may spend skill ranks to improve your Scent skill.
- Your vision and hearing are extremely acute. You gain a +12 bonus ranks in Listen and Spot. These bonus ranks may stack with ranks purchase during character creation and can take your ranks in the relevant skills above the maximum normally allowed for your level. However, you may still only purchase as many ranks in the skills as allowed by your level.
- You have an effective Wisdom score of 50 for all purposes.
- You can read printed materials by touch alone.
- You can hear individual heartbeats from 100 feet away.
- You are never caught flatfooted.
- Your senses are so keen that you can operate in the dark is if it were full daylight.

Hypercharisma

This is the power that scares governments more than anything else. Hypercharisma is more than simply powerful rhetorical skills. People listening to orators with Hypercharisma often have lowered heart rates, decreased blink rates and other symptoms of hypnosis. Naturally, nothing scares a normal leader more than someone with parahuman charisma, who can make the most suicidal or irrational command seem attractive. These effects rarely last, and often fade over time, if the hero cannot continuously re-apply his Charisma Hyperstat attacks to the target.

Unlike Hypercool, the stat levels gained from Hypercharisma do not provide additional Will.

The primary limitation to Hypercharisma is comprehension. A human superhero with Hypercharisma can't convince a visiting extraterrestrial to do anything if the alien doesn't understand English. Similarly, individuals who have been deafened (by an explosion, for example) cannot be swayed with Hypercharisma.

Rank 1

- Your effective Charisma is 18.
- You may take 20 when using a Charisma-based skill with a single person friendly towards you. You may not take 20 against those who are hostile towards or afraid of you.

Rank 2

- Your effective Charisma is 26.

Rank 3

- Your effective Charisma is 34.
- When using Charisma-based skills against anyone, even someone who is afraid of or hostile towards you, you may take 20. However, taking 20 now only consumes 1 minute when using your Hypercharisma stat.
- You may use Charisma-based skill such as Diplomacy or bluff against crowds of 100 or fewer people.

Rank 4

- Your effective Charisma is 42.
- When using Charisma-based skills against anyone, even someone who is afraid of or hostile towards you, you may take 20. However, taking 20 now only consumes 1 minute when using your Hypercharisma stat.
- You may use Charisma-based skill such as Diplomacy or bluff against crowds of 250 or fewer people.
- You may issue one word commands against a single person who is friendly towards you. That person must make a Will save (DC 15). If the target fails, he immediately obeys your one word command.

Rank 5

- Your effective Charisma is 50.
- When using Charisma-based skills against anyone, even someone who is afraid of or hostile towards you, you may take 20. However, taking 20 now only consumes 1 minute when using your Hypercharisma stat.
- You may use Charisma-based skill such as Diplomacy or bluff against crowds of 250 or fewer people.
- You may issue one word commands against a single person who is friendly towards you. That person must make a Will save (DC 20). If the target fails, he immediately obeys your one word command.
- You may issue one word commands against a single person who is hostile or neutral towards you. That person must make a Will save (DC 15). If the target fails, he immediately obeys your one word command.

Hypercool

Some of the subtlest heroes are those whose powers are internal, not external. Characters who are inhumanly Cool seem eerily composed in almost any circumstance. Some "Hypercools" don't even register as super-humans during mundane government tests, because the attributes of hero-level Cool primarily consist of self-knowledge and self-command.

Much like the Cool stat, the Hypercool power functions a little differently than the other Hyperstats. At each rank of Hypercool, you gain a Cool modifier that replaces your Cool stat modifier in all situations. Remember, the effects under each rank do not stack. If you advance your Hypercool rating from rank 2 to rank 3, the abilities listed under rank 3 *replace* those listed under rank 2. You do not add any modifiers or stack any bonuses that the two ranks give you.

Rank 1

- Your Cool modifier is +4.
- You can use your Cool modifier in place of your Constitution modifier when making any skill checks or other rolls. You can literally ignore pain and other discomfort.
- +1 Base Will points.

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- You gain a +2 bonus when rolling initiative.

Rank 2

- Your Cool modifier is +8.
- You can use your Cool modifier in place of your Constitution modifier when making any skill checks or other rolls. You can literally ignore pain and other discomfort.
- +2 Base Will points.
- You gain a +4 bonus when rolling initiative.

Rank 3

- Your Cool modifier is +12.
- You can use your Cool modifier in place of your Constitution modifier when making any skill checks or other rolls. You can literally ignore pain and other discomfort.
- +3 Base Will points.
- You gain a +6 bonus when rolling initiative.

Rank 4

- Your Cool modifier is +16.
- You can use your Cool modifier in place of your Constitution modifier when making any skill checks or other rolls. You can literally ignore pain and other discomfort.
- +4 Base Will points.
- You gain a +8 bonus when rolling initiative.

Rank 5

- No stimulus, no matter how terrible affects you unless you wish it to. You are completely immune to Mental Fatigue.
- Your Cool modifier is +20
- You can use your Cool modifier in place of your Constitution modifier when making any skill checks or other rolls. You can literally ignore pain and other discomfort.
- +5 Base Will points.
- You gain a +10 bonus when rolling initiative.

Hyperskills

(TOTAL COSTS: 1 point per rank.)

Having super-human-sized levels of a given skill does not expand what you can do with it. It just expands how well you can use it. A character with a Hyperskill in Rifle might be a phenomenally good shot, but he can't hit a target hiding behind a wall. A character with Hyperskill in Bluff might be able to convince someone that the world really is flat, but he cannot mentally control his target and force him to do his bidding.

Normally, heroes cannot have skills higher than three plus their current level. Hyperskills allow you to circumvent that restriction. A Hyperskill's rating *does not* count towards the maximum ranks you are allowed to have in a skill. In addition, when you gain a level you may purchase ranks in a skill while also spending Power Points to boost your Hyperskill rating. When using a Hyperskill, roll a d20 as normal, add your skill ranks, and then add your Hyperskill rating.

The GM has final say on whether a character can attempt an action with his Hyperskill.

> ***Example:*** Henry "Ace" Darlington is a first level hero with the Auto Repair Hyperskill. Henry has four ranks in the Auto Repair skill, the maximum normally allowed for first level characters. In addition, he has eight ranks in the Auto Repair Hyperskill. When Henry tries to fix a jeep, he gets to add 12 to his d20 roll (+4 for his skill ranks, +8 for his Hyperskill). At second level, Henry can invest a skill point in Auto Repair to bring it up to +5, the maximum normally allowed for second level characters. In addition, he could spend more Power Points to further boost his Auto Repair Hyperskill. Even though Henry might have the Auto Repair Hyperskill, he still can't fix a jeep if he doesn't have any tools or spare parts, or if the jeep is a shattered, burning pile of wreckage, unless the GM rules otherwise.

Powers (aka Miracles)

On a concept level, powers work the same in the open source rules as they do in the core rules. You may either purchase a power from the provided list, or you may create one from scratch.

Optional Rule: Powers and Power Stunts

Power Stunts are a specific type of feat. They serve to give you a bonus in particular situations for which you have honed the use of a power or to reflect the specific nature of your abilities. All Power Stunts follow the same structure: They give you a +2 bonus when using a power under specific circumstances.

Example Power Stunts

Here are the open-source adaptations of the example Power Stunts in the main rules. In addition, the sample powers include Power Stunts specifically designed to work with them. Feel free to use those as templates for new Power Stunts and ones designed to work with new powers.

The more general the conditions under which the Power Stunt works, the more powerful the Power Stunt. To balance this, your power should either receive a –2 penalty in conditions equally common and important as the conditions under which the Power Stunt operates.

Each Power Stunt only works with one power. You may purchase more than one Power Stunt per power, and you may purchase the same Power Stunt for more than one power. Power Stunt bonuses *do not* stack.

No Pressure: When using your power under friendly circumstances, free of any pressure, you add a +2 bonus to your power check. This reflects the joy you find using your power when your life is not on the line. Combat or stress of any type negates the possibility of using this Power Stunt.

Under Pressure: You've grown accustomed of pushing your power to its very limits when under stress. When in combat add a +2 bonus to your power check. However, only the adrenaline of severe stress allows you to push your power limits, and this ability cannot be used without it.

Solar Powered: When under the light of the sun, you receive a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your power check. This bonus is reduced to +0 during dusk or early morning, and becomes a –2 penalty at night. While your power is not actually driven by sunlight, your confidence and faith in your power is shaken at night.

Powers for the Gourmet

To create a new power, simply use the standard rules presented earlier in this book—building with the power qualities Attacks, Defends, Robust, and Useful Outside of Combat—with the following modifications:

- The open-source rules have no equivalent to hard and wiggle dice. Instead, the cost per rank in a power equals the cost for a regular die. Thus, a power that costs 5 points per die in the standard rules costs 5 points per rank in the open-source ones.

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- Some powers, such as Dead Ringer listed below, are always in effect or require a single use the results of which may be sufficient in one situation but not up to the task in another one. For example, Dead Ringer allows a hero to assume the likeness of another person. Once the hero has used the ability, he doesn't need to keep checking against it maintain his disguise. For powers that activate once and last an extended period of time or that are in continual operations (such as a power that allows a hero to breathe underwater) you must pay a flat cost to purchase the power rather than investing points to purchase ranks in it. To determine the cost of a flat cost power, compute the cost needed to buy one regular die and one wiggle die for your power. This is the flat purchase cost of that power in the open-source rules. Since a regular die plus a wiggle die guarantees success in the rules presented earlier, they are used as the equivalent cost of a continuously operating power in the open-source ones.
- Always check with your GM when designing a new power. In addition, your GM has the right to modify a power should it prove to be unbalancing. Try to use the sample powers listed below as guidelines when designing your own.

Cafeteria-Style Powers

The following powers are "buffet" style powers, ones you can pick and choose ready-made, for those of you who don't want to construct your own powers, or who want to get some ideas before setting pencil to paper.

As presented these powers are in their most basic form. Feel free to modify them with Extras, Flaws or Power Stunts as you see fit. The examples listed with each power are by no means the *only* Qualities, Extras, Flaws or Power Stunts available with the power.

Aces

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank).

You are stupidly lucky. Things just tend to go your way. If you choose you can add up to your total ranks in Aces to the normal d20 roll for any of your actions, be it an attack roll, or skill or stat check. Aces may also be used to modify a critical threat check. You can decide whether to add your Aces ranks *after* you see what you've already rolled.

Now for the bad part, Aces is expensive, sometimes *very* expensive. Every Aces rank used costs 1 Will point; this point is not risked but must be spent from the character's pool of Will points. In addition any action that is made to succeed by Aces never yields a Will reward, no matter the circumstances. So, if you roll a 20 with your Aces, you don't get the 1 Will point reward you would normally get for the use of almost any other power.

When used in combat, Aces, unlike other modifiers, may be used to cause a critical threat. Thus, if a character with Aces rolls a 16, he may use a +4 Aces bonus to bump the die roll to 20 and a critical threat.

> ***Example:*** Johan has five ranks in Aces. When Johan decides to use his Aces power, he can opt to receive a bonus ranging from +1 to +5 on his skill check. If Johan opts to use his +5 bonus to bump a Hide skill check from 13 to 18, he must immediately spend 5 Will points.

Power Stunts for Aces:

Focus: You can add you're a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Aces dice pool when you are trying to affect the outcome of a very specific event, but only if that event is taking place *outside of combat.* Combat precludes the concentration necessary for this ability. Will costs remain the same.

Extras for Aces:

Contagious (+4 points per rank): If you wish friendlies within 10 feet of you gain your Aces bonus with their actions as well. However, the Will costs for each Aces rank used is multiplied by the number of people affected.

Flamboyant (1 Power Point): Your power acts in dramatic and very noticeable ways. Your bullets miss, then ricochet off walls and hit their intended targets anyway, your grenade lands right in the open hatch of the oncoming tank after bouncing off a conveniently placed overhanging sign, your gun just seems to go off by accident at random, killing enemies in concealed locations.

Force of Will (+4 points per rank): You can focus your Aces power on someone else to affect the outcome of a die roll. Concentrate for a round; spend 5 Will, and the person or event you choose gets your Aces bonus. You must still pay normal Will costs as per the Aces power above.

Alert

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

Your power can alert you to the presence of specific danger. You may use it to detect the possibility of attack in a certain situation by concentrating for one round and rolling a power check. If you fail to beat the DC of the power check, Alert cannot be used again to determine the danger level of that same situation or location for about 12-24 hours.

To determine the DC of an Alert power check, consult the following chart:

DC	Result
DC 10	A general feeling of danger is indicated.
DC 15	Time remaining before the danger is indicated in general terms (seconds, minutes, hours).
DC 20	General power level of attack indicated in general terms (a platoon of soldiers, a tank, a sniper etc...).
DC 25	Both time and power level are indicated.
DC 30	General power level, direction and time of danger is indicated.

Power Stunts for Alert:

Deep Concentration: You can add a +2 Power Stunt bonus your Alert power check any time you spend an hour in peaceful meditation before making the roll.

Extras for Alert:

Detailed (+2 points per rank): With a successful roll your power gives you a detailed idea of the danger facing you. Although certain details elude you, (the names, ranks, units and such of your enemy), other details are quite clear, such as their armament, placement and level of preparation.

Flaws for Alert:

Dreams (-2 points per rank): The power only works in your sleep, the night before an attack. You only receive a "bad feeling" the next day about some specific location, nothing more, despite the result of your power check.

Bind

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

Your power can constrict a target, limiting its mobility. Whether you create a sticky webbing or a telekinetic rope to Bind the target makes

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no difference, the result is the same-your target is bound. In order to use this power against a target, make a power check opposed by either a Dexterity or Strength check (target's choice). Success indicates that you have successfully grabbed and bound your target. Bound targets lose their Dexterity bonus to AC and may not move. Make a power check opposed by the target's Dexterity or Strength check each round to maintain your grip on him. Maintaining your grip on someone with the Bind power is a full round action. If you choose to take any other actions, you immediately release anyone held captive with this power.

You may choose to use the Bind power to grab an item from your opponent's hand. To do so, make a Bind power check opposed by a Strength check. Success indicates that you've grabbed the item out of your target's hand.

Bind may also be used to inflict damage on a target. Grabbing a target with the Bind power with the intent to do damage is somewhat more difficult than simply grabbing him and holding him still, however. Your Bind power check suffers a –2 circumstance penalty in any round in which you choose to inflict damage on a target. The Bind power inflicts a base 1d6 points of damage.

You can attempt to use Bind on more than one target per round. Simply divide your ranks in Bind amongst each target you wish to affect and make your opposed power versus Strength or Dexterity check as normal. You may change how you have allocated your Bind ranks to each target every round you use it against multiple targets.

Finally, Bind may be used to make grapple or trip attacks. Simple substitute your ranks in Bind for both your base attack bonus and your Strength or Dexterity modifiers. The victims of a Bind trip attack do not get an automatic trip attack against you if you fail to trip him.

> ***Example:*** Paul has Bind at +6 and he sees a guard armed with a submachine gun before the guard sees him. Paul wishes to disarm the guard with his goop, so he decides to grab the SMG out of the guard's hand. Paul makes a power check and rolls a 12, resulting in a total result of 18. The guard's strength is 12. He rolls a 7, for a total result of 8. Paul's power grabs the gun and tears it from the guard's hands.
>
> ***Example:*** Paul wants to strangle a guard with his power. He rolls a 10 for his power check, +6 for his power ranks, and –2 circumstance penalty, for a total result of 14. The guard rolls 15 and adds +1 for his Strength modifier, resulting in a 16. The guard breaks away from Paul's attack before he inflicts any damage.
>
> ***Example:*** Paul wants to pin two guards with his power. The GM described one of the guards as a hulking brute, and the other as a puny wimp. Paul has 6 ranks in Bind, so he decides to break up his ranks against the two targets like this: +4 versus the big guard and +2 against the small one. He rolls a 12 for his power check against the bigger guard, for a total of 16, and an 8 against the smaller one, for a total of 10 against him. The big guard's Strength check totals 11, while the smaller one's Dexterity check (since the smaller guard had a Strength penalty by a Dexterity bonus, the GM decided to resist Paul's Bind power with the smaller guard's Dexterity) comes up a total of 9. Both guards are caught helpless in Paul's Bind power. On the next round, Paul can decide to allocate a +3 bonus to each of his power checks against the guards, break it up as +1 and +5, or any other combination of +6, so long as both modifiers are positive numbers.

Power Stunts for Bind:

Trip: Add you're a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Bind power check when attempting to trip a moving target by binding its legs. Make this as a normal trip attack, except that the target cannot attempt to trip you.

Extras for Bind:

Physical Stuff (+1 point per rank): Your power creates a substance or object that it binds with. This material is real, and remains behind even after you release your bind.

Flaws for Bind:

Poof (-2 points per rank): Look away from your targets even for a second and the Bind you have on them immediately vanishes.

Block

Qualities: Defends, Robust. (3 points per rank.)

You can stop a single attack with your power. This attack must be against you; you cannot block attacks directed at others. It can be any type of individual attack, a machete, a bullet or a punch, but your power cannot affect Area attacks such as fire or gas, or attacks composed of many smaller attacks, like grenade fragments, explosives or mines. You cannot stop more than one attack per round, but how your Block works is up to you. Whether you use Telekinesis, a super-strong arm or beams from your eyes to deflect the attack matters very little, the result is the same: The attack is blocked. You cannot move in the round in which you attempt to Block.

You can only use your Block if you know you are in danger of being attacked *and* if you can see the attacker. In other words, you could Block a rifle attack by a man standing and shooting at you, but not a sniper shot.

To Block an attack, make a power check opposed by your opponent's attack roll. In essence, you are rolling a new Armor Class for the attack. Note that even if your Block power roll doesn't beat your opponent's attack, he still doesn't hit if his roll doesn't beat the target's AC.

Power Stunts for Block:

Exceptional Block: Your Block works much more effectively against a single type of weapon attack (bullets, knives, fists, etc...). When you are attacked by that particular type of weapon, add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to you Block power roll.

Extras for Block:

Blind Block (+2 points per rank): Your power automatically intercepts the strongest attack coming at you in any round, and even works in the dark.

Containment

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. (5 per rank.)

With your power, you can isolate and separate certain elements or attacks. Whether it represents an inherent control over a type of chemical or a telekinetic shield is no matter, the effect is the same: you contain something in a limited area through your willpower alone.

Containment differs from Block in that it cannot stop sudden incoming attacks such as bullets or knives. If given sufficient time to react however, it could stop such attacks. Think of it as a mental shield that is built through concentration, while Block is a defensive reflex. Containment is treated as a dynamic contest between the power and the element, object or being it is trying to contain.

With Containment a hero might be able to isolate an explosion in an area, protecting those outside his shield, stop an oncoming wave of water, block a fusillade of bullets (by making a shield *before* being fired at), keep one soldier separate from another, or contain a cloud of poisonous gas. The shield is a singular uncom-

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plicated two-dimensional object, and cannot have more than six sides. Containment lasts a number of minutes equal to your ranks in this power. Expending Will points in a 1 Will point to 1 minute of Containment ratio may extend this duration.

Containment may be used to cover one medium-sized creature or object. In order to cover a larger sized object, impose a –2 circumstance penalty on the power check for each size step above medium. You do not receive any bonus for Containing objects or creatures smaller than medium size.

To stop or contain objects that are in motion, you must overcome the object's weight according to the DC table below:

DC	Weight/Size Affected
5	<100-210 pounds
10	210-250 pounds
15	250-370 pounds
20	370-500 pounds
25	500-800 pounds
30	800 pounds-1 ton
35	1-2 tons
40	2-4 tons
45	4-10 tons

When used to deflect attacks, you can generate a shield with a total number of hit points equal to the result of your power check. You may create a new shield every round, thus replenishing it against enemy attacks. Such a shield can cover a five foot tall by five foot wide area, plus five feet for every –2 penalty you take on the Containment power check.

Power Stunts for Containment:

Shield Focus: You may add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your power check if you spend a round taking no action other than gathering your will and preparing your shield before activating your Containment power.

Extras for Containment:

Actual Physical Boundary (+2 points per rank): Your power generates a real physical boundary, such as a wall, a container or another real object to contain materials within. Once created, these containers remain behind for the number of minutes equal to your ranks in Containment, and then they vanish.

Flaws for Containment:

No liquids or gas (-1 per rank): Your power cannot contain liquids or gas.

Control

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

You can manipulate a particular phenomena, element or life form with your power. You can increase or decrease physical phenomena, change the states of particular elements, or dictate the action of a particular creature through the force of your will alone.

First, you must pick *what* you can control. Consider the following chart to determine your powers cost.

Cost Addition /Rank	Frequency	Control of (Pick One):
+4	All the Time	Air Pressure, Temperature, Humidity, Gravity, Light.
+3	Common	Electricity, Common elements (iron, carbon etc...), Animals
+2	Regular	Plants, Particular Animals, Metabolisms
+1	Uncommon	Radioactive Decay, Chlorine Gas, Tritium

Phenomena are general physical effects, such as temperature, gravity, light and humidity. You can control them by concentrating one round and making a successful power check. The range of such effects are up to you, as long as the effects are within sight range. You can affect individual objects and precise areas. The effect of your power lasts for up to a number of rounds equal to your ranks in Control, and you may increase or decrease the phenomenon's intensity with a successful power check (DC +5 per 50%, see table below). Once you have rolled you can discard any amount of change, in effect lessening your ability if you want (pulling your punch, so to speak). As a rule of thumb, each 100% increase in a phenomenon such as gravity deals 1d2 points of damage to targets in the affected area. Targets in an area affected by Control take this damage on the hero's initiative count.

Damage from this power ignores hardness. Once this power is activated, the hero may not "move" the effect around. If a target gets out of the affected area, the hero must stop his previous use of this power and re-activate it on the area where his target now stands.

A hero using Control may take no other actions except maintain his concentration while the power is in effect. If the hero's concentration is broken, the Control power immediately ceases to work.

DC	Area of Effect
5	1 foot radius
10	5 foot radius
15	10 foot radius
20	15 foot radius
25	20 foot radius
30	25 foot radius
+5	+5 foot radius

Example: Dan has Control Gravity at +6, and he attacks a bank robber with it. Dan only wants the robber to suffer the ill effects as he increases his gravity, so he decides to crank up the gravity by 100% in a 5 foot radius. Consulting the table above, Dan must beat a DC of 20 with his power check (DC 10, +10 for the 100% increase) and he rolls a 17 + 6 for a total of 23, good enough to activate his power. Dan can increase the gravity of the robber by 200% for 6 minutes, dealing 1d2 points of damage per round.

Elements are base properties such as iron, carbon, nitrogen, oxygen or helium. You can control them by concentrating one round and making a successful power check. The DC of this check is determined in a manner similar to the phenomenon version of control. Determine how large an area you want to affect using the table above. If you want to cause a state change in the affected element, consult the table below for the appropriate DC modifier. The range of such effects are up to you, as long as they are within sight range. You may maintain this power for a number of rounds equal to your ranks in Control. If the lack or increase of that element in the area would be deleterious to humans in such quantities, they suffer 1d8 points of damage from the attack for each round that they are within the effected area.

You may also use this power to create an element. The element always initially appears in the natural form that would occur as within the environment created. Water created in a room temperature environment appears as a liquid, while water created in the arctic appears as ice. To determine the DC needed to create a given amount of an element, double the DC given to affect an element in a given radius.

DC	Area of Effect
+15	room temperature solid to liquid
+20	room temperature solid to gas
+5	room temperature liquid to solid
+10	room temperature liquid to gas

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+10	room temperature gas to liquid
+15	room temperature gas to solid

Example: Gavin has Control Oxygen at +7 and he wants to concentrate the oxygen in a 5' radius area at the top of a guard tower into a ball of liquid oxygen. The DC for affected an area of that size is 10, while converting oxygen (which is a gas at room temperature) into liquid raises that DC by 10 to 20. He rolls a 13, plus his 7 ranks yields a 20, just enough to do the job.

The guard in the guard tower will suffer 1d8 damage each round he remains in that area, as he asphyxiates. When Gavin stops concentrating on the effect or 7 rounds pass, the air will return to normal in the area.

Life forms are living entities such as plants or animals (humans *may not* be controlled in this fashion, see *Thought Control* on p. 338 for other options). You can control life forms by concentrating one round and making a successful power check. If the animal is within sight range (though not necessarily out in the open), the power will affect it. The range of such effects are up to you, as long as they are within sight range. With a control power over a life form, you can cause the creature or plant to do anything it is normally capable of accomplishing, with the added direction of your intelligence (for example you could control a chimp to open a door, but not a rat). Once out of sight range however, your hold over the creature fails immediately.

This effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to your ranks in this power. To activate this power, you must make a power check opposed by the target's Will save. Animals without a listed Will save make their saving throws at +0.

Plants make their Will saves at +0, unless otherwise listed. Plants may be commanded to attack through use of this power, using the hero's ranks in control as their base attack bonus. Thorny plants deal 1d4 points of damage on a successful hit. Small or medium plants may not deal damage (either normal or subdual), but they may take all other combat actions, such as aid another, grapple, or trip. Large plants may deal 1d6 points of bashing damage with a successful attack. Since plants are effectively mindless, a character that wishes to control plants must maintain his concentration to keep the plants under his control. If the character loses his concentration, the plants immediately stop moving.

A character with the life form Control power may attempt to control multiple plants or animals at once. Each target beyond the first grants a +2 situation bonus to all the creatures' Will saving throws. A character attempting to control multiple life forms makes one power check that is compared to all of his target's saving throws.

Example: Drew has Control Rats at +6 and wants to call a group up to swarm into a manhole. He focuses on several rats scuttling through a nearby alley and decides he wants to control four of them. The rats each receive a +6 bonus to their saving throws, since Drew is trying to control 3 rats beyond the first one and each one gives a +2 save bonus to all the targets of the Control ability. Drew rolls once to activate the ability and gets a 7, for a total of 13. The rats have a +1 Will save, for a total of +7 with the bonus for Drew's attempt to control multiple rats. The GM rolls a d20 for each, with totals of 17, 22, 9, and 12 for the four rats. Two rats move towards Drew, ready to obey his commands for the next 6 minutes.

Extras for Control:

Blind Control (+2 points per rank): You can control elements, phenomenon or life forms out of your direct observation, as long as they are within a range where you could see them if they were exposed.

Flaws for Control:

Blanket Control (-2 points per rank): If you Control something that is deleterious to humans, you may take this Flaw, otherwise it is not available. When you use your power, the effect is always centered on you, exposing yourself to the same effects.

Dead Ringer

Qualities: Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (15 points flat cost.)

You can imitate a *person* perfectly, in a physical sense. If you can touch the subject, even for a second, then you can duplicate them down to the smallest unseen detail. This transformation lasts for as long as you wish, or until you are knocked unconscious or killed.

This transformation does not endow you with any memories or knowledge the target has, but as far as looks are concerned, you are identical down to the smallest iota. You will pass any physical tests of your new identity with ease. Your urine, blood type and fingerprints will be identical to the targets', also; your voice will match the targets' perfectly. The only thing you will be missing are any infirmities the target may suffer from, although your new form will *imitate* such infirmities cosmetically (however tests for such diseases will reveal nothing). Clothing and equipment are *not* imitated.

In addition, if the transformation is trans-gender, you will gain any and all new organs, which will function normally. Offspring created in such a strange union are your children, genetically speaking, and not those of the target imitated. If you are carrying a fetus and must revert to your base form, and that form is not female, the fetus is lost. It must be carried to term without interruption.

If you cannot touch the subject, but only see him, you may attempt a second and simpler level of Dead Ringer if you if you wish. By studying an individual at a distance, or studying photographs of a subject, you may attempt a basic physical change to imitate that individual. To do this you must make an Intelligence check with a DC indicated by how long you have studied the subject. If you have access to movie footage of the subject, add a +2 circumstance bonus to your check.

DC	How Long the Individual has Been Studied
5	1 Month
10	1 Week
15	1 Day

This simpler form of imitation only reworks your face (and if you have heard the subject's voice, his or her voice as well). It only generally changes your body to match what could be seen in your observation. Organs do not change, nor your blood and urine. Fingerprints and other unseen details *do not* match the subject.

You can store a number of remembered forms equal to your Intelligence bonus +1, to a minimum of 1. Transformation takes a minute of concentration. You may discard and hold on to forms in your memory as you wish, so long as the total in you repertoire does not exceed your maximum. Once you have discarded a form, you must study or touch the target again. If you choose to study him, you gain a +5 competence bonus to your Intelligence check to duplicate him or her.

In game terms, the power is more limited than it seems. It is only possible to duplicate humans, not animals or other organic forms. Dead Ringer is only cosmetic in nature. Despite physical changes in blood and body shape, your statistics *do not* change to match those of the target; they remain at your normal levels. Oh, and no, of course, you can't duplicate super-human abilities.

Extras for Dead Ringer:

Animal Magic (+10 points): Not only can you duplicate humans, but you can copy animals as well, but you can only shrink to half your size or grow to double it. You gain no special abilities inherent

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to your assumed animal form, and the change is only superficial and cosmetic.

Flaws for Dead Ringer:

Vampiric (-5 points): You must taste the blood of the target you wish to duplicate. Sight-only duplication is not possible.

Detection

Qualities: Attacks, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

You can detect specific objects or phenomenon at a distance. With an especially high roll, you can differentiate between specifics of the objects or phenomena to extreme levels, denoting location and orientation of the target or targets.

For example with a successful roll against your detect power you could divine the number of tanks within a set range, and on an extremely successful roll locate their exact orientation and location on a map of the area. This detection gives you only a static image of the one moment you use your power, and does not update the vision of the situation as those targets move or change position. If you are in visual range of the objects you are attempting to detect, they become plain to you despite any camouflage or obfuscation.

This represents the most general form of Detection. Other, far more limited (and far less expensive) versions of detection exist which only detect very specific objects or phenomena. Consider the chart below to determine the cost of your power

> ***Note:*** Costs are *subtracted* from the base cost, determined on what the Detection power can perceive. See below.

Cost Detection Power Covers (Pick One):

Base Cost	Areas of enemy action, danger, other unspecific non-physical phenomena
-1 per rank	A certain type of vehicle, a certain type of element or creature, any class of object or creature.
-2 per rank	A single extremely specific type of object or phenomena, for example only frogs, lead, or bleach.

You can attempt to detect at any range, as long as you can beat the Difficulty Class assigned below.

Range of Detection

DC	Range_
5	10 yards
10	50 yards
15	1250 yards
20	1.4 miles
25	2.8 miles
30	56 miles
35	224 miles
40	896 miles
45	7168 miles

In order to determine any particular information about the object that you can detect, you must increase the DC listed above according to the following table:

DC Modifier	Result
+0	A definite knowledge that a target exists within the area.
+2	A general idea that multiple targets exist(s) in the area is indicated. Nothing else.
+5	The number of targets in the area is indicated. Nothing else.
+10	Both number and location of targets is indicated.
+15	Number and location is indicated as well as general orientation of targets, or other specifics (whether it is an enemy tank, a poplar tree or a German swan . . .).

If you wish to learn such information as the number or of targets or their location, you must announce this before making your roll. You cannot "trade down" the range you've successfully detected for more specific information after making your roll. In essence, a character using this ability must decide before hand whether he wants to make a general sweep of any area or scan a small area in detail. However, there's nothing stopping you from making a power check without any DC modifiers to see if anything is out there, then trying again with a higher DC to learn more info if your first attempt detects something.

Power Stunts for Detection:

Close Your Eyes and See: Close your eyes, concentrate for one round. If you succeed at your roll, you gain an *extremely* clear picture of the targets of your scan. You can read words or discern individual faces seen in the vision, or otherwise describe the targets in extreme detail, when normally they would just be a fuzzy idea in your head.

Extras for Detection:

Tracking Detection (+2 points per rank): You can choose a *single* target successfully scanned by you and maintain an up to the minute track on just where that target is.

Flaws for Detection:

See It First (-3 points per rank): You can only detect objects you have directly *seen* before. Photos, drawing or any other reproduction of the object will not help. You must see it, to track it.

Blind Spots (-2 points per rank): Your power does not work in certain areas. These gray areas come and go at the GM's discretion.

Disintegration

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (8 points per rank.)

You can destroy objects utterly, effectively erasing them from existence with the use of your power. You must be able to clearly see the object in question, and you can only disintegrate whole objects. If something is disintegrated, it's gone forever.

Against living targets, concentrate for one full round. On your turn in the next round, make a ranged touch attack using your Disintegration ranks as your base attack bonus (and not modifying your attack with your Dexterity bonus or penalty), to hit your target with this power. If you hit, the target gets a Fortitude save (DC 10+ your Disintegration ranks). If the target saves, it immediately loses half of its current hit points. If it fails its save, the creature is immediately disintegrated.

As long as you hit your target with your ranged touch attack, you're considered to have successfully used this power, whether or not a living target makes its saving throw.

When dealing with non-living items, you may attempt to disintegrate 10 cubic feet of material. For every cubic foot beyond the first 10, increase the DC of your power check by 2. To determine your base DC, add 5 to the hardness rating of the material you wish to affect.

Power Stunts for Disintegrate:

Power Focus: If you concentrate for 2 rounds, on the third round you can add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Disintegrate roll.

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Extras for Disintegrate:

Piecemeal (+1 point per rank): You can disintegrate select pieces of objects, a tire from a car, a turret from a tank, an arm from a human being. Ouch.

Flaws for Disintegrate:

Non-organic (-3 points per rank): You can only disintegrate non-living things. Plants, animals and people are outside your power's ability to affect.

Fade

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

You can become transparent to the point that, if you hold still or move slowly, you may not be seen. At a distance, in darkness and in foggy conditions, or on backgrounds rich in color or patterns, you may even be nearly invisible.

Concentrate one round, make a power check, and you, and any equipment or clothing on your body fades into the background. When you Fade, look up the level of your success on the table below. It indicates how transparent you've become. Whenever you come into someone's field of vision, make a Hide skill check opposed by his Spot skill. If your result is lower, the table below gives the percentage chance that even though your opponent got a higher result, he does not actually see you. In combat, any attack that hits you has a percent chance equal to your concealment percentage to actually be a miss.

Once detected, Fade confers little in the way of defense. Fade never lets you become truly invisible. Subtle highlights of light and shadow can be seen for those who know how to look, tracing the contours of your body. If you move, you create a visible blur to those near you. If people are looking for you, it won't be long until they find you, but until then, you have a good chance of remaining hidden through the use of your power.

DC	Result
10	10% concealment.
15	20% concealment.
20	30% concealment.
25	40% concealment.
30	50% concealment.

Power Stunts for Fade:

Flicker: When in hand-to-hand combat and using Fade, add a +2 bonus to all of you attacks and your AC. This Power Stunt represents your ability to move in an unpredictable manner while rapidly turning your power on and off.

Flaws for Fade:

Visible up close (-1 per rank): Your Fade power is only effective at a distance of more than 10 feet; otherwise, you're completely visible, albeit very transparent.

Fetch

Qualities: Attacks, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

You can teleport objects. Concentrate one round; roll your power check and poof! any object you can clearly see jumps into your hands. This power works just like teleport, but is much more limited in its applications. You cannot teleport living things, and you can only teleport things *into* your hands, not away from them. You cannot teleport sections of an object (for instance, you could not Fetch the trigger of a gun, only the whole gun) just complete objects. You must have a clear view of the object you wish to Fetch, and then concentrate for one round, on a successful roll, the object jumps to your hand, covering the space in-between instantly.

You can Fetch stuff you could normally lift as if your Fetch rating was your Strength score. You cannot Fetch items heavier than what you could lift over your head if your Fetch rating was your Strength score.

DC	Range
10	30 feet
15	60 feet
20	120 feet
25	240 feet
30	480 feet
+5	Double previous DC's range

Power Stunts for Fetch:

Distort: Add a +2 Power Stunt to your Fetch dice pool when you wish to teleport an object, but don't care how complete it is when it appears in your hand. *Distorted* objects come back twisted, broken or incomplete when you use this Power Stunt.

Extras for Fetch:

Cornucopia (+2 points per rank): You can "tag" up to the maximum weight of objects you can Fetch so that you can Fetch to your hands from any distance or locale. You must roll each time you wish to do so however (DC 10).

Flaws for Fetch:

Chain Lightning (-1 points per rank): Whatever object you Fetch comes along with anything it is touching, up to your Fetch limit in weight. Fetch an enemies' gun, and his holster, strap and clothes (anything touching the gun which is not living) comes along as well. You can't control this reflex. It always happens. Essentially, you always Fetch the maximum amount of weight that you can teleport.

Flight

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

Roll your power check and take to the air. It's that simple. If you're trying a difficult maneuver, roll again and consult the chart below for the DC you need to meet or beat. Your movement rate flying depends on your ranks in Flight - there's a chart below. (If you want to be substantially faster, buy Super Speed and attach it to your Flight power.) If you want to fire a gun while flying, there's a –2 penalty to the attack roll because you are unable to properly brace yourself to fire.

To make a tricky maneuver, look up what you want to do on the Flight Maneuverability table. Cross-reference the maneuverability type with the DC listed for that type of maneuver. If you fail to meet the listed DC, look up the maneuverability that you were able to achieve and assume that you achieved that level of success, which may or may not spell problems for you.

> ***Example:*** Stan is flying after a speeding car through the streets of London. The car makes a sudden 90º right turn down an alley, and Stan decides to follow rather than spend time gaining altitude and flying above the city buildings. Consulting the table below, Stan sees that a 90º turn is an average (DC 15) maneuver. If he blows his roll and ends up with a 12, that means that he was only able to make a 45º turn, which most likely sends him head first into a building.

Crashing: Slamming into a big, hard object while flying is essentially the same as falling. In the event of a crash, assume that the flier fell a dis-

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tance equal to his current speed in feet. For example, a character moving 30 yards per round, or 90 feet, takes damage as if he fell 90 feet.

Ranks	Top Speed (Yards/Round)	Top Speed (Miles/Hour)
1	15	10
2	30	20
3	45	35
4	60	45
5	75	55
6	90	70
7	105	80
8	120	90
9	135	100
10	150	110
+1	+15	+10

DC	Result
5	Clumsy
10	Poor
15	Average
20	Good
25	Perfect

Table: Flight Maneuverability

Type	Perfect	Good	Average	Poor	Clumsy
Min. Speed	None	None	Half	Half	Half
Hover	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Fly Backward	Yes	No	No	No	No
Maximum Turn	Any	Any	90°	45°	22.5°
Up Angle	Any	Any	60°	45°	45°
Up Speed	Full	Half	Half	Half	Half
Down Angle	Any	Any	Any	45°	45°
Down Speed	Double	Double	Double	Double	Double
Between Down and Up	0	0	5 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.

Power Stunts for Flight:

Barnstorming: You can add a +2 Power Stunt bonus when you want to swoop down tight city streets, through open windows, or otherwise fly into areas that are big enough to allow you to barely maneuver. It does not add to your speed, however.

Fast: Add +2 to your ranks in Flight when calculating your speed (but nothing else).

Extras for Flight:

No Altitude Limit (+3 per rank): You require no air or heating equipment to fly at extreme altitudes (no, you can't fly into space, don't even ask).

Flaws for Flight:

Running Start (-1 per rank): You need to take a running start of at least thirty feet before you take off.

Go First

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Robust. (8 points per rank.)

Characters with this power react to danger more quickly than other characters. For every rank of Go First, you may add 1 point to your initiative rolls.

Extras for Go First:

Combat Precognition (+2 per rank): You go first in combat because you can "see" what your opponent is going to do a second before he does it. If you're using the hold action, you do not lose your original initiative roll and automatically go first on the initiative count on which you act, regardless of your dexterity score. If you characters with this extra attempt to act at the same time, the one with the higher Dexterity score goes first.

Harm

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

Whether it's fiery breath, death rays from the eyes or crippling bolts of electricity, there are a lot of super-humans whose primary power is this: They hurt the other guy. The easiest way to handle these is to buy ranks of the Harm power. Harm attacks are resolved as ranged weapon attacks, with your ranks in Harm acting as your base attack bonus. Do not add your Dexterity bonus or penalty to this attack, but do add other situation modifiers.

As a default, the Harm power does 1d6 points of damage and has a base range of 30 feet.

Extras for Harm:

Area (+5 per rank): Your attack explodes upon impact causing normal damage over a 30-foot radius centered on the point where you targeted your attack. Everyone in the area of effect is allowed a Reflex save against your power check to take half damage from your Harm attack.

Penetrating (+1 per rank): Your attack penetrates Armor much like anti-armor weaponry. Halve the hardness rating of any materials that you strike with your power.

Spray (+3 per rank): Just like a machine gun your harm is dealt out in a spray of attacks. Reduce the burst penalty for attacking multiple targets by 1 for each level of Spray you have (this can only reduce the penalty to 0, not give you a bonus).

Vicious (+2 per rank): Your Harm does more damage than normal. Add 1d6 to your damage roll. You can buy the vicious Extra multiple times to add further dice.

Long Range (+1 per rank): Increase the base range of your Harm ability by 30 feet. You may take this Extra more than once, adding 30 feet to your base range each time.

Flaws for Harm:

Graphic (-1 per rank): Your Harm destroys the target, crushing bones, spewing blood and bile and flaying flesh. Its effects are so graphic that it's difficult to watch and sometimes, even difficult for you to use. While witnessing your handiwork, make a Mental Fatigue check.

Jumpy (-1 per rank): Whenever you're startled, your power tends to go off unchecked. If something takes you by surprise - anything from a sudden loud noise to a sneak attack - make a Mental Fatigue roll. If it fails, you don't lose Will points, but your power goes off in a random direction. It might hit one of your buddies, it might discharge straight up into the air, or it might even hit an attacker. Some GMs just determine this by deciding themselves. Some roll a single die with 1-2 meaning it hit an ally, 3-8 meaning it went into an inanimate object or the air, and 9-10 meaning it actually went towards an enemy - if there's one around. You cannot use your power in a directed fashion in the same round it goes off accidentally.

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Healing

Qualities: Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. (3 points per rank.)

You can facilitate the healing of damaged tissues in living creatures. With plants and animals, this power is simple. Make a power check and consult the table below to determine how many hit points of damage you heal.

DC	Result
5	1 hp
10	1d4 hp
15	1d6 hp
20	1d8 hp
25	1d10 hp
30	1d12 hp

The subject must be conscious and must be *willing*. Without these two things, nothing can be done to heal the subject.

This healing affects a dramatic change in damaged tissues, and can repair scarring, burns or other deformities, but it does not affect diseases or counter poisons.

Extras for Healing:

Force of Will (+1 point per rank): For every 5 Will points you put into an attempt to heal, you increase the result of your power check by 5.

Flaws for Healing:

Empathic Healing (-1 point per rank): Any damage left over on the target after you roll your healing attempt on them is automatically inflicted upon you as well. For example, if you healed all but 2 points of damage on a target, that damage would be instantly inflicted on you as well.

Heavy Armor

Qualities: Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. Always On. (7 points per 1 point of Heavy Armor.)

For every 7 points you spend on this power, you can gain a point of damage reduction against all forms of attack. All attacks made against you automatically subtract your Heavy Armor rating from their damage.

This power differs from other powers in that it is an *unconscious* ability and automatically defends against any attack, expected or not. (Unless that attack is from another hero, then it is a battle of Wills.)

Flaws for Heavy Armor:

Specific Damage Source (-4 per rank): Choose one effect from the following list: Fire, water, radiation, acid, bullets, cold. Your Heavy Armor power works only against that one type of damage. You may purchase the Heavy Armor power with this flaw more than once to gain resistance to multiple sources of damage.

Will Drain (-1 per rank): The power eats Will at the cost of 1 point per combat round of active use.

Ghost

Qualities: Robust, Useful Outside of Combat. (3 points per rank.)

You can project your senses outside of your body in a ghostly form. This form is not visible to humans.

The GM makes a power check for you in secret and consults the table below to determine how long you may project your ghost form. You may choose to end he effects of this power at any time before the end of its duration.

You must be in a safe, quiet location to use your power. On a successful roll, your Ghost form appears and may be used to spy on removed locales. Your form only travels as fast as you can under normal conditions, so sending it to a distant location requires a great deal of time. The form can pass through physical objects with ease, but it cannot float or fly. If your physical form is disturbed while Ghosting, make a Concentration check or your Ghost form immediately dissipates, and your consciousness returns to your body.

DC	Duration
5	15 minutes
10	30 minutes
15	1 hour
20	2 hours
25	4 hours
30	8 hours
+5	Double time

Extras for Ghost:

Disturb (+1 per rank): Animals can see you in your Ghost form.

Flaws for Ghost:

Dreamwalk (-1 per rank): Your power only works when you are sleeping (in a safe and comfortable environment). Otherwise, it operates normally.

Insubstantiality

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

You can become immaterial. Roll a power check and slip through any object as if it wasn't there. Unfortunately, when you're out of phase with the physical world, you cannot breathe, hear, speak or interact with any normal object or person physically, since your atoms do not intersect with the solid world. In addition, after a number of minutes equal to your ranks in Insubstantiality, you begin to asphyxiate from lack of air. Better not stay insubstantial too long...

While insubstantial, you may move at half your movement rate. If you try to move through a solid object, find the DC you need to beat with a power check. You may move a quarter of your movement rate while passing through solid objects. Make your power check before attempting to move through the object. If you fail, you simply bounce off it as if you were still solid.

You may not be harmed by any physical means while you are insubstantial. However, you cannot use any means, including powers, to affect any material object, including other people.

There are other problems associated with true insubstantiality, for one, you tend to sink into the earth just as readily as through any other object. So the only effective way to get through a wall, a door or other obstacle without sinking into the earth is to jump, turn insubstantial, and then revert to solid form for your landing.

You can also turn other objects you are holding insubstantial along with yourself. You can render up to half your maximum lift in pounds insubstantial, for as many seconds as you can hold your

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breath. Once you release it, it immediately becomes material again.

DC	Material Type
10	Loose earth or dirt
15	Rock or living material (plant or animal)
20	Concrete
25	Steel, iron, and most other metals
30	Lead

Power Stunts for Insubstantiality:

Selective Insubstantiality: Add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Insubstantiality ranks when you are trying to render certain objects on your person insubstantial, but keep others solid, so that they drop off you. For example, with this Power Stunt you could cause your jacket to drop off when you became insubstantial, or cause bullets in your wounds to drop out of your body.

Extras for Insubstantiality:

No Sink (+2 points per rank): When you turn insubstantial, you remain level with whatever ground you are already standing on.

Sectional (+2 points per rank): You can turn a single body part insubstantial while keeping the rest of your body solid.

Flaws for Insubstantiality:

Lose Possessions (-2 points per rank): Everything you are wearing or carrying drops off you the minute you become insubstantial.

Invisibility

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

The Invisibility power allows you to turn invisible for a limited amount of time. To use this power, make a power check. The result of that check is the number of minutes that you remain invisible. At the end of that time period, you must make another power check to further extend the length of your invisibility. When you activate this power, you must spend 1 Will point for each rank of Invisibility that you wish to use for your power check.

Anyone attempting to attack an invisible hero must first somehow ascertain the hero's general location by making a Spot check (DC 20). Once detected, an invisible super-human may be attacked using his standard AC. However, any attack that hits him has a 50% chance of actually being a miss. Invisible super-humans gain a +2 situational modifier to all of their attacks, and their targets lose any Dexterity bonus to their AC they may have.

There are two types of invisibility. The first, mental invisibility is available at the above costs modified with the Flaw *No Physical Change*. This sort of invisibility only affects the minds of those observing you, altering their perception so they can't see you. It is less exceptional than actual invisibility in that you must maintain a low level of concentration to remain invisible. You may act as normal, but every time you are injured, you must make a Concentration check to remain invisible. If you fail the check, you immediately become Invisible and must re-activate this power to turn invisible again.

The other type of invisibility is actual physical invisibility. Your power warps light so that it passes through or around your body. With a successful roll, you become invisible and remain so indefinitely, it's that simple. You remain invisible until you choose to become visible or if you fail a Concentration check after taking damage.

There are a couple problems with actual invisibility, however. The most obvious one is that light has no effect on your body. The less obvious corollary to that is that completely invisible people are blind. If the light isn't striking your eyes, how, exactly, are you supposed to see out of them? (If you want to be completely invisible but still see, you might be able to talk your GM into it by buying an Invisibility Extra like "See while invisible" for +1 point per rank. But only if he's not too picky about physics.)

Power Stunts for Invisibility:

Sidestep: This Power Stunt allows you to make an attacker fire at empty space. By drawing attention to yourself (becoming visible, whistling etc.) and then rapidly moving away from that location, you make the attacker think you are still there. Make a Bluff check against your opponent's Spot skill. If you beat his skill result, he wastes his action that round firing off into space. If your opponent rolls higher, he has the option of firing at you without rolling a miss chance for your Invisibility, though the attack has a –2 penalty. Dodging an attack in this manner does not require an Invisibility power check or the expenditure of Will points if you are already invisible when you use this Power Stunt.

Extras for Invisibility:

Unshakeable (+2 points per rank): You don't become visible unless you want to, even if you are injured.

Flaws for Invisibility:

Tiring (-1 point per rank): You take a point of subdual damage for every minute you remain invisible.

Jinx

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

This is the opposite of Aces. Things just tend to go your way, but insomuch as people or threats that oppose you fail at whatever they attempt to do to you. With it, you can force a penalty up to your ranks in Jinx on any opponent's die roll.

Like Aces, Jinx is expensive. Every Jinx rank used costs1 Will point. In addition any action which is caused to fail by Jinx, but which helps you succeed, never yields a Will reward, no matter the circumstances. So, if you roll a 20 in an opposed test against someone on whom you used your Jinx, you don't get the 1 Will point reward you would normally get for the use of almost any other power.

Power Stunts for Jinx:

Jinxing Physical Attacks: Gain +2 Power Stunt bonus (which translates into an additional –2 penalty on your opponent) when you use your Jinx to affect physical attacks. You must pay Will normally for each rank in Jinx used.

Extras for Jinx:

Blanket Jinx (+4 per rank): Enemies within 20 yards *all* suffer from your Jinx power. The Will necessary to use this power is multiplied by the number of people affected.

Stun

Qualities: Attacks, Robust. (3 points per rank.)

Stun is a specialized form of Harm. With it you can Stun any target within range. Make a power check opposed by your target's Will save. If you succeed, you Stun your target for 1d4 rounds. You may attempt to affect multiple targets by splitting your ranks in Stun amongst them. Roll separately against each target.

Power Stunts for Stun:

Multiple Stun: Add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Stun check when attacking multiple targets.

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Flaws for Stun:

Touch Only (-1/-2/-4): To use the power you must touch the subject. Obviously, this makes it rather difficult to affect more than one target.

Multiple Actions

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

This power allows you to take extra actions during a round. To activate this power, make a power check and consult the table below:

DC	Effect
15	Gain a partial action for the round.
25	Gain an extra full round action or two partial actions.
35	Gain three partial actions or one full round and one partial action.
+10	+1 partial action

Power Stunts for Multiple Actions:

Switcheroo: Add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Multiple Actions check when you are performing acts that involve slight of hand.

Flaws for Multiple Actions:

Blunt (-1 points per rank): You can only complete tasks that don't require complex or delicate maneuvering. You can punch, dodge, or kick, but not sew, sort or write at high speed.

Perception

Qualities: Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (3 points per rank.)

You can discern stimulus outside of the range of human perception. Exactly, what stimulus you see, hear, feel, taste or smell remains up to you. If you wish to just have exceptional *human* senses, such as super-sharp hearing, smell or taste, you can simply buy a Hyperstat in Wisdom or an appropriate Hyperskill for sight, hearing, smell, touch or taste, Perception reflects a *new* sense, such as the ability to see x-ray's, hear ultrasonics or to feel heat sources at a distance.

Each new perception must be attached to a normal sense. For example, the ability to sense heat like a pit viper would be attached to the touch sense, while the ability to "see" x-rays would be attached to sight. To use your perception power, add the ranks of the perception to the sense skill ranks and statistic modifier it is attached to.

Pick a specific perception from the list below to determine its cost.

Cost Addition Per Rank	Perception Power Covers (Pick One):
+4	You are able to choose what you wish to perceive and with what sense.
+2	Feelings, Intent or other non-physical phenomena.
+1	Ultra or Sub Sonics, Heat Sources, Certain Gases, Life forms.
+0	X-Rays, Radioactivity etc...

Perception generally only works within the range of the sense it is attached to. If you wish to have a far-reaching perception that locates certain phenomena at a distance, please see the *Detection* power on p. 328 instead.

Perception is a physical phenomenon, and while it can detect certain things that we think of as "non-physical," such as feelings or intent, this just reflects the powers ability to detect subtle physiological changes in the target, not some psychic ability.

Extras for Perception:

Superimposed (+1 per rank): Your new perception is simply a layer of perception piled on top of your old sense. If you have x-ray vision, you can see through objects *and* see normally at the same time without penalty.

Flaws for Perception:

Sensitive (-1 per rank): If your Perception power is exposed to large levels of the phenomenon it is designed to detect, it overloads and ceases to work for 1d6 hours.

Precognition

Qualities: Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (3 points per rank.)

You can catch glimpses of the future with your power. The future seen is by no means "permanent," and actions taken to change future events are quite effective. For instance, a vision of your own death in Nashville four days from now can be sidestepped by doing your damnedest not to be in Nashville on that day.

This power can work three different ways. First, you can attempt to see the future by voluntarily entering a trance. This is a fatiguing process, and costs you 2 Will points per Precognition rank used. Usually, in such a trance, a specific question or future event is the chosen subject of inquiry. Such as "When will Monstro attack?" or "What will happen to me tonight?"

Secondly, the power may spontaneously activate when you are in or near an area that will be important to your survival in the future. This is at the GM's discretion, but if this occurs, you lose 1 Will point per rank used.

Thirdly, the power may activate in your dreams warning of some impending event. In this case, the only Will lost is any Will which would have been gained from that night of sleep when the power check is made. Also, this third version of the power is far less reliable than the other two, in that no matter how well the roll is made; the vision will always seem dreamy and indistinct. Subtract 5 from the result of a power check made in this fashion.

Consider the chart to below to determine the level of success of such attempts.

Type of Roll	Result
DC 5	A vision of the future which may or may not, be accurate
DC 10	A brief vision of a future event.
DC 15	Knowledge of the amount of time before a certain event occurs.
DC 20	Knowledge of who is involved in a particular event.
DC 25	A vision of an event with both time and subjects clearly shown.
DC 30	An extremely clear vision of the future, as if you had lived the moment already, all senses are represented.

Power Stunts for Precognition:

Update: If you have successfully seen the future, you can add +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Precognition check when trying to see an up to the minute update of your vision, which will reflect the changes you might have made through your actions.

Extras for Precognition:

Mothering (+1 per rank): In addition to warning you of impending danger to yourself, your power automatically "looks out" for your close friends and family as well.

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Flaws for Precognition:

Static (-2 per rank): Your visions of the future consist of a single static image, and nothing more.

Projected Hallucination

Qualities: Defends, Attacks, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

Projected Hallucination allows you to alter the perception of his target. With this ability, you might be able to convince a person that they're talking to Abraham Lincoln, or wrestling a boa constrictor. Many heroes have this ability unconsciously, a reflex which projects a certain unconscious image. However, this power represents the ability to control *what* the target sees, hears or feels. In effect, you can make the target see and hear anything you can imagine.

To use this power, make a power check opposed by the target's Will save. If the hallucination is rather unbelievable, give the target a +2 bonus. If the hallucination fits in with the current situation or environment (a hallucinatory sniper on a battlefield) then the target suffers a –2 penalty to his Will save.

You may only affect one person at a time with this power.

Power Stunts for Projected Hallucination:

Sense Specialization: Select a particular sense and specialize in it with this Power Stunt. When trying to use your Projected Hallucination to fool that sense, add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your power check.

Extras for Projection:

Everybody Sees It (+3 per rank): Anybody present sees the illusions you project.

Flaws for Projection:

Absolute Concentration (-2 per rank): You must hold completely still to use this power. *Any* distraction may disrupt the illusion you are projecting. Make a Concentration skill check if you are injured or otherwise distracted while using this power.

Psychic Artifact

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

With your hero ability, you can create invisible psychic artifacts that mimic, at least physically, the abilities of common tools, weapons and equipment. At this most general level, the power allows you to create any sort of equipment, weapon or tool (since it has all four power qualities). For example, you could create a fully functional shovel, shield or even a pistol with the full Psychic Artifact power.

If you want to have a more limited power, such as being able to only produce one particular type of weapon or piece of equipment, reduce the cost accordingly. For example, if you wish to be able to only produce a psychic lock-pick, you could remove the attacks, defends and robust qualities right there, reducing your cost to 2 per rank.

To create an artifact you must concentrate for one round and make a successful roll against the DC set by the complexity of the item, and the amount of damage it causes (if any). On a successful roll, the artifact is created, and lasts for the number of minutes equal to your ranks in Psychic Artifact, or until you "wish it away." You can only create one artifact at a time.

The artifact is invisible to everyone except you. Otherwise, it behaves exactly like a normal physical version of the object. When attacking or using your Psychic Artifact, you utilize the skill a normal version of the artifact would have utilized, not your power ranks (for an extra level of Robust however, you can attack with your power ranks instead of the relevant skill). Weapons made in such a manner have an infinite amount of ammunition.

If your power can only create a single type of Psychic Artifact, you don't even need to consider this chart, any successful roll with your power will cause it to appear.

To determine the difficulty number of the Psychic Artifact you wish to create consider the following chart. You can "buy down" the difficulty number at the cost of 1 Will point per point of DC (to a minimum of 1).

DC	Size	Damage	Complexity
+0	Tiny (a ring)	1d4	Simple (a block of wood)
+5	Small (a book)	1d8	Plain (a grappling hook)
+10	Medium (a sword)	1d12	Clockwork (a watch)
+15	Large (a car)	1d20	Complex (a pistol)

To create a Psychic Artifact that defends against attack, such as a shield or a suit of armor, the DC is equal to twice the AC bonus the artifact provides.

Rapport

Qualities: Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (15 point flat cost.)

You can "tag" a target with your mind, and in a state of deep concentration "see" it, no matter where it goes. You must be able to touch a target to make a rapport with it and once made, the rapport is not broken until you wish it or the subject dies. Once a target is lost, you must touch it once more to restore the link.

The vision of the target is extremely vivid. You see everything it could possibly see, and in addition, you see its entire body as well. There is no sound associated with rapport, and sounds cannot be perceived through the link.

When a person linked to you with rapport dies violently, you suffer subdual damage equal to the damage dealt by the attack that killed him.

Power Stunts for Rapport:

Read Lips: By careful observation you can read the lips of those seen within the vision of your Rapport. Add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your skill or Intelligence check when trying to figure out just what people are saying on the other side of the link.

Extras for Rapport:

Multiple Targets (+5 points): You can tag one extra person for each time you pay for this Extra.

Flaws for Rapport:

Emotional Rapport (-10 points): You can only link to those for whom you feel an overpowering emotion, hate or love, it doesn't matter (this is at the GM's discretion). Those you feel indifferent towards, your power cannot affect.

Regeneration

Qualities: Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (3 points per rank.)

Your power can restore your body to health, despite gross physical damage (but you can only heal yourself, not others). If you are conscious and concentrate for one combat round, spend a number of Will points up to your rank in Regeneration, and make a Regeneration power check. Consult the table below to determine the extent of your injuries you were able to heal. Injuries may not be healed if you are unconscious or drugged. Severed limbs or completely destroyed organs cannot be re-grown with this power.

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Like other powers that require a round of concentration, you must make a successful Concentration skill check to successfully use this power if you are injured or otherwise disrupted while trying to use it.

DC	Result
10	Heal 1d4 damage per Will point spent.
15	Heal 1d8 damage per Will point spent.
20	Heal 1d12 damage per Will point spent.
25	Heal 1d20 damage per Will point spent.
30	Heal all damage OR restore a crippled limb OR cure one disease. You may select one of these options per Will point spent, and may choose one option more than once.

Power Stunts for Regeneration:

Regenerative Meditation: By meditating on your illness or injury for an hour per rank, you can subtract one Will point per hour spent meditating from your Regeneration cost, or you may add the number of hours spent in meditation to your power check. The minimum cost is always 1 Will point.

Extras for Regeneration:

Regrowth (+2 per rank): Like a lizard, you can re-grow severed or destroyed limbs or organs on a successful power check (DC 30).

Sidekick

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank/see below.)

You have a single invisible friend who follows your mental or verbal orders. The abilities that the Sidekick possesses are up to you. Determine the total number of points spent on this ability and divide this pool between the Sidekick's physical stats: Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution (from inception, these stats remain constant). The Sidekick's other stats (Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma) are the same as yours. If the Sidekick has any other super abilities, they must be purchased separately and attached to the Sidekick.

Sidekicks are invisible. Attacks against Sidekicks are treated as a dynamic contest between the Sidekick power and the attack. First, the attack must hit the Sidekick's AC, which is computed as normal for a human-sized target with the Dexterity score you assigned to it. If the attack hits, there is a 50% chance that such a hit actually misses, because the Sidekick is an invisible target. Third, the attack must overcome any defensive powers you have invested in the Sidekick. Finally, you are allowed to make an opposed power check against the attack roll. If your power check comes out higher, the attack fails. Otherwise, if the attack inflicts one or more hit points of damage, the Sidekick disappears and cannot be re-formed for one hour. In addition, you lose a point of Will. Reforming a Sidekick requires a successful power check (DC 15). In addition, you must spend one point of Will.

Side Step

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

With this ability, you can Side Step even the worst disaster or attack and make it look easy. This power reflects your ability to be in the right place at the right time by moving deliberately out of danger. Whether it is because you are super swift or sensitive, or can glimpse the future is no matter, the effect is the same. The explosion, sword or bullet misses you as you step past it. Of course, you must already know you are under attack to use this ability.

Whenever you must make a Reflex save to avoid damage or someone attacks you, you may attempt to use this power. Make a Side Step power check opposed by the DC of the Reflex save or your opponent's attack roll. If you roll higher, you take no damage from the attack. In the case of an area of effect attack, such as a grenade, you immediately move outside of the attack's radius. If this would be physically impossible, the attack affects you as normal. If you fail to beat the DC or the attack roll, you take damage from the attack as normal. In the case of a Reflex save, you take damage as if you missed the saving throw.

Anyone with Side Step can attempt to "lead" an attack towards another location – for instance, the thug's knife pass misses you and hits his accomplice instead. If you attempt this, subtract five from your power check. If you succeed, the attack is resolved as if it originally targeted the person you lead it into. Compare the result of the attack to the new target's AC. Attacks the require Reflex saves to avoid cannot be lead in this manner.

You may use this power only once per combat round.

Power Stunts for Side Step:

Leading: You gain a +2 Power Stunt bonus when attempting to lead attacks with Side Step.

Extras for Side Step:

Side Step Multiple Attacks (+2 per rank): You can Side Step multiple attacks at once. For each time you buy this Extra you may Side Step 1 extra attack per round.

Flaws for Side Step:

Hand to Hand Only (-1 per rank): Your Side Step is useless against anything except hand-to-hand weapons.

Super Speed

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

This is the power to move really, really, fast - so fast that you're a blur to the normal folks watching you. You also gain the power to survive that kind of high-speed movement without blacking out from lack of oxygen or getting a terminal windburn on your face. Super speed does not mean the ability to perform intricate tasks quicker, or to do more things in a given span of time. If that's what you're after, see *Multiple Actions* on p. 333. This is just the power to go damn fast: In practice, it's much like flying a plane, driving a motorcycle or using some other vehicle to cover distance rapidly. It speeds up your movement, not your reaction time.

Super speed must be attached to a skill, a stat or a power. If you want to be a super fast flyer, attach it to the Flight power. If you want to only cover ground rapidly, attach it to a Running skill. If you want it to be a little more versatile and cover running and swimming, attach it to Strength.

When you use the attached skill (running, swimming, flying, tunneling through the earth - whatever), you use the following chart to figure out your base speed based on the result of your power check. For each point of Will you spend on the check, add 5 to the check result. You may spend these Will points after you roll.

Super Speed DC	Yards/Round	Miles/Hour	Notes
0	10	6.8	
5	110	75	
10	220	150	
15	330	225	
20	440	300	
25	550	375	
30	670	457	Faster than a .38 Special
35	790	540	
40	920	620	

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45	1030	700	
50	1150	785	Mach I

Just so you know, the speed of sound in air is 760 mph (near sea level) - and almost every bullet has an airspeed between 1200 and 3000 yards/round.

If you wish to turn or make any fancy maneuvers while using Super Speed, consult the maneuver table under the Flight power to determine the DC of the action.

Power Stunts for Super Speed:

Mach One Punch: This Power Stunt allows you to attack with your fists using Super Speed instead of your relevant combat skill. Using your power, you strike the target hundreds of times a second with your fist, causing 1d8 points of subdual damage.

Extras for Super Speed:

No G's (+3 points per rank): You can turn on a dime despite your super speed without any ill effects (no DC check necessary, no matter how extreme the maneuver attempted).

Flaws for Super Speed:

Slow Braking (-2 per rank): You require a full round of braking to stop safely. This means you also need enough space - if you're zipping along at 900 yards/round, you need 900 yards of space to stop safely. If you don't have enough room, you wipe out and take damage. For every 100 yards/round you were moving, you suffer 1d6 points of damage.

Telekinesis

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

Telekinesis (also called TK) is the ability to move objects without touching them - you just look at the object and picture it moving through the air and, as if picked up by a ghostly arm, it moves - if you're strong enough to lift it.

To use Telekinesis, make a power check. For the purposes of lifting objects, treat your ranks in Telekinesis as if they were a Strength score. Someone with six ranks of Telekinesis can lift as much as someone with a 6 Strength.

To attack someone with TK, simply make an attack roll with your TK as your base attack bonus vs. the target's AC. You deal 1d3 subdual damage. In addition, treat your ranks in TK as if they were a Strength score to determine the bonus or penalty to your damage when using TK to attack. Unlike most damage penalties, if your TK is low enough that your damage is reduced to 0 or less, you do no damage with the attack. If you use TK to pick up a weapon and use that against your target, make an attack roll treating your TK as either your Dexterity or Strength score if you are using a ranged or melee weapon, respectively.

Power Stunts for Telekinesis:

Multiple Hands: You can normally lift only one object with Telekinesis. With this Power Stunt, you can lift two objects at once whose total weight does not exceed your total TK carrying capacity.

Extras for Telekinesis:

Touch (+1 per rank): Your telekinetic "hands" have a sense of touch. This allows you to feel around with your power in the dark or outside of your range of vision.

Flaws for Telekinesis:

Weak (-1 per rank): No matter how many levels you take in TK, you are never able to lift more than 200 pounds with it. You still gain the bonus ranks for making attacks however.

Clumsy (-1 per rank): If you're trying to move an object with grace and finesse, you must make a TK power check (DC 20) to avoid accidentally breaking the object or causing it to swerve about unpredictably as you move it.

Teleportation

Qualities: Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (4 points per rank.)

This power allows you to instantaneously travel from one point in space to another, in zero time, without crossing the intervening space in between. Some heroes with this ability can move many people at once, and some can only transport themselves, some can cover huge distances and some only a few feet.

To successfully teleport yourself, you must consider two factors in order to determine the power check's DC: how far you wish to teleport, and how much weight you wish to transport with you. Consult the tables below to determine the DC for your power check.

Teleporting is a tricky business. It requires a clear picture in the head of its user of his desired destination (this means that the user must have previously visited the location he wishes to teleport to). Without a clear picture, a successful transport is not possible. Also, people or objects teleported must be in direct physical contact with the teleporter. (This works fine if a bunch of people hold hands, as long as the chain is unbroken.) Portions of objects may not be teleported.

When teleporters disappears, a loud crack (about as loud as a rifle shot) sounds. This is the air rushing in to fill the space the teleporter just vacated. The more moved, the louder the boom.

Teleporting also tends to be strenuous on the teleporter. The teleporter must spend 4 Will points to activate this power.

Range Modifier

DC	Range
5	10 yards
10	50 yards
15	1250 yards
20	1.4 miles
25	2.8 miles
30	56 miles
35	224 miles
40	896 miles
+5	+100 miles

Size Modifier

DC	Weight Teleported
+0	hero's weight + up to 20 pounds
+5	+100 additional pounds for each +5 DC

Power Stunts for Teleportation:

Reorientation: With this Power Stunt, you can teleport in place, allowing you to instantly change the direction you're facing, move from standing to prone, or otherwise reposition yourself as a free action. This Power Stunt requires only 1 Will point and is activated automatically on your turn during the round.

Extras for Teleportation:

Blind Teleportation (+3 per rank): You can teleport to a location never seen before, randomly. When you want, your power "finds" a safe location and teleports you there. "Safe location" only means an area of solid ground that is not occupied by another object, it covers no other eventualities.

Global Range (+5 per rank): You can automatically teleport to any

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point on earth. However, to carry additional weight you must still compute the DC as normal, including the base DC for distance. You still must have previously seen the location you are traveling to however.

Maximum Capacity (+5 per rank): You can carry up to 500 pounds in items with you while teleporting without raising the DC of your power check. Each 100 pounds beyond 500 increases the DC by 5. You still must touch all the objects your want to transport.
Half Will Cost (+2 per rank): You suffer half the normal Will penalty for teleporting. Otherwise the cost is determined normally.

No Will Cost (+3 per rank): You suffer no Will cost for teleporting.

Flaws for Teleportation:

Disorientation (-2 per rank): Upon arrival you cannot act until you successfully make a Wisdom check (DC 15).

Nothing Biological (-2 per rank): You cannot teleport anything biological (except yourself that is). If you attempt to move anything living, it suffers your 3d10 points of damage. You must make a successful grapple attack to teleport someone who is actively resisting the attempt.

Time Fugue

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

You can freeze time for a single object or creature with your power. Everything smaller than the fugued object that is in direct contact with it is frozen as well. You must be able to see the object, and make Time Fugue power check that beats the DC based on the size of the target. If you succeed, the object is frozen in time for 1d4+1 seconds. You may extend this period at the cost of 1 Will point per second of fugue.

Objects frozen with this power will resume their former movement when the fugue ends (so frozen bullets will suddenly continue along their normal path, falling people will hit the ground etc…) People in a fugue have no recollection of the time spent within the fugue. You can fugue a number of objects equal to your ranks in Time Fugue at any given time.

The bigger and heavier an object is, the harder it is to fugue. Consider the following chart to determine the opposing dice pool for objects you attempt to fugue.

DC	Weight Affected
10	<100-210 pounds
15	210-250 pounds
20	250-370 pounds
25	370-500 pounds
30	500-800 pounds
35	800 pounds-1 ton
40	1-2 tons
45	2-4 tons
50	4-6 tons
55	6-10 tons

Power Stunts for Time Fugue:

Lower: Add a +2 Power Stunt bonus to your Time Fugue power check when you are trying to arrest the fall of an object, and by turning your power on and off multiple times a second, lower it to the ground.

Extras for Time Fugue:

Slow (+3 per rank): You can choose to freeze or slow time down for objects or people.

Flaws for Time Fugue:

Touch only (-2 per rank): Your power only works on objects or people you can touch.

Thought Control

There are only two types of powers that can directly affect another's mind, the Hypercharisma power and Projected Hallucination. Hypercharisma is covered under the Hyperstats section. Projected Hallucination is covered as its own power.

Transform

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

You can transform your body into anything you can imagine while retaining your intelligence (other than a human being). Any creature, substance or object you have seen or can envision, you can become. With this power, you could turn into an eagle, a griffin, a cloud of gas, or a four-post bed. Concentrate one round, succeed in power check against the DC indicated for your transformed state's weight and resiliency, beat the Transformation difficulty number and poof, you become that new thing. This lasts for a number of hours equal to the width of the roll, or whenever you wish to revert back.

DC	Weight Affected
10	<100-210 pounds
15	210-250 pounds
20	250-370 pounds
25	370-500 pounds
30	500-800 pounds
35	800 pounds-1 ton
40	1-2 tons
45	2-4 tons
50	4-6 tons
55	6-10 tons

DC Modifier	Example
Easy (+2)	Substances are related (Transform a person into another animal.)
Medium (+5)	Substances are similar (Transform from an animal into an inanimate object.)
Hard (+10)	Substances are dissimilar (Transform from a person into a fictional object or animal.)

In your new state, you may use any abilities that form possesses (with fictional creatures, only non-super-human abilities can be imitated). As an eagle, you may fly and attack with claws, as a bear you can bite and claw, etc. When you transform you must divide your Transform ranks between any of these special abilities (or any abilities you formerly possessed in your human form, including super-abilities). Any skill or stat bonus possessed by this new form is limited to a maximum score equal to the Transformation ranks. If you invest zero ranks such abilities, you look cosmetically like the animal or form you have assumed, but you lack them.

On the other hand, you are also limited by that form's limitations. So as a four-post bed, you could not see, hear, smell or touch, or as an eagle you could not speak. You gain your new form's hardness and AC, but you keep your original pool of hit points. Transforming from one shape to another does not change your current hit point level. If you are reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, you immediately return to your normal form.

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Transmutation

Qualities: Attacks, Defends, Useful Outside of Combat, Robust. (5 points per rank.)

You can alter the atomic structure of objects, changing one type of substance into another. This power *does not* allow you to change the form of the target, only the substance it is made of. The target can be transformed into only one type of substance. With this power, you could turn a gun into acid, or a tank into gelatin. Concentrate one round, succeed in a dynamic contest against the DC indicated for your targets' weight *and* the Transmutation DC modifier and poof, it's transformed into that new substance.

> ***Note:*** Living targets are killed instantly when transmuted into another substance *and* they remain dead when the effect of the power is removed.

DC	Weight Affected
10	<100-210 pounds
15	210-250 pounds
20	250-370 pounds
25	370-500 pounds
30	500-800 pounds
35	800 pounds-1 ton
40	1-2 tons
45	2-4 tons
50	4-6 tons
55	6-10 tons

DC Modifier	Example
Easy (+2)	Substances are related (Transmute a metal into another metal.)
Medium (+5)	Substances are similar (Transmute water into hydraulic fluid.)
Hard (+10)	Substances are dissimilar (Transmute water into steel.)
Extremely Difficult (+20)	Transform a living creature

Power Stunts for Transmutation:

Target Specialist: Pick one particular substance. You gain a +2 Power Stunt bonus when you attempt to turn that material into something else. For example, if you picked steel as your specialty, you'd get your dice when trying to turn steel into grape jam or into air or whatever.

Result Specialist: Pick a specific material. When transforming other materials into that material, you gain a +2 Power Stunt bonus. If (for instance) your special material is salt, you can add this bonus when trying to turn people, tanks or water into salt.

> ***Note:*** These two specialist types stack. If a character has Target Specialist (Flesh) and Result Specialist (Gasoline), he receives a +4 bonus when trying to turn someone's flesh into gasoline.

Flaws for Transmutation:

King Midas (-2 per rank): You can only transmute objects into one type of material, be it carbon peroxide, sand or even plastic.

Using Powers

Using super-human abilities is as easy as concentrating for a moment. In game terms, most of the time, to activate a power, a character must pause, concentrate one turn, and make a successful roll against the set DC of the power.

Some powers are always active, and require no such roll to activate. Some defensive abilities such as Heavy Armor are simply always on, to protect the operator from harm.

Other powers are fickle, and activate based on the whims of the operator's subconscious. In this case the power is activated and deactivated at the whim of the GM.

Power Range

Most power powers listed (unless otherwise noted) work within sight range of the operator. Anything that can be seen, can be affected by the power, unless that power is limited, or if the object affected is too large for the power to overcome. Other powers (such as transportation powers or other "self-affecting" powers such as heavy armor or passive psychic abilities), work only on or directly around the operator.

Hyperskills and Hyperstats only work on the operator, of course (unless they are modified with an Extra).

Some super-human powers have no limit to range. If a super-human ability has an effective range beyond sight range, it is usually listed under the description of the power and costs more Power Points.

Powers and Concentration

It's difficult to concentrate while bullets rip through your flesh, and most super-human powers require concentration to work. Since heroes seem to get shot so much, it's important to cover this eventuality.

First off, someone who's rolling to activate a power must make a Constitution check with a DC equal to the amount of damage taken.

If a power is always active, it still may fail if the hero is injured. If a hero is using a power that doesn't require a roll and he gets hit, he must make a Constitution check with a DC equal to the damage taken minus 10. If the DC is 0 or less, the hero does not need to bother to roll the check, it succeeds automatically. If the roll fails, the power shuts down until a successful Constitution check (DC 10) is made.

Power Side Effects

Some hero powers just naturally have side effects which may not directly affect game play, but which are very noticeable to those witnessing their use. For example, a hero who flies may project a beam of light from his legs as he jets through the air, or a hero who hurls balls of fire may have hands that burn while he is preparing to attack. These are not really significant enough to add cost to the Power Point total of the power, though they may prove useful. Some heroes have no side effects to their powers at all.

The hero with flaming hands may be able to light a fire with his fingers, or the flying hero may be able to illuminate an area with his contrail. Imaginative players may come up with dozens of ways to use their side effects in a productive manner, but the GM can come up with a million more ways to make those side effects deadly. Flying with a glowing contrail at night is guaranteed to bring on an anti-aircraft gun attack, and walking around with burning hands in a building may just set off the fire alarm...

Choose your side effects carefully, they're free and they may be useful, but they might just come back to haunt you in the end.

Using Powers Defensively

Sometimes even powers that aren't usually used to defend, such as Harm or Invisibility, can be used defensively. To be able to use a power this way, it must have the "Defends" quality. Without it, no

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defense is possible with that particular power.

When a power is used in this way, make an opposed check between the defensive power and the attack roll. If the defender scores higher, he negates the attack. Otherwise, the attack takes effect as normal. A hero must decide to use his power defensively before the attacker makes his roll. The attacker must still meet or beat the target's AC in order to score a hit. Thus, if the attack roll is higher than the defensive power roll but lower than the target's AC, the attack is still a miss.

A hero power can be used in a defensive manner if the following circumstances are met:

1) **You know you are under attack:** Your power may not be used to defend against attacks you don't know are coming, unless that power is a defensive power with the "Always On" Extra.
2) **You can see the Attacker:** The defense is no good if you don't know the exact distance and direction of your attacker, unless that power is a defensive power with the "Always On" Extra.

Inside the System: Powers

The rules for Hyperstats, Hyperskills, and Powers assume that you want to play a relatively gritty, down-to-earth superhero game. Not everyone wants that, however. In order to support a more epic, four-color comic feel, try the following variations on these rules:

- Use one of the optional, high power levels presented in the Character Creation section. Doing so gives characters more powers and better stats at the beginning of the game.
- Use the optional rules giving characters more hit points from the combat chapter. Characters in comic books often wade into battle, absorbing bullets, explosions, and colossal amounts of damage without batting an eye.
- For abilities that require a character to spend Will points in order to use them (such as Aces), a character must spend 50 xp per point of Will needed to fuel the power.

Using these optional rules results in a much different game, but one that can better model the freewheeling heroism of classic comic book heroes. Of course, these rules were designed first to work with the gritty, realistic tone of the rules presented earlier in this book. Luckily for you, these rules are completely open source. Bend, fold, and mutilate them to your heart's content. We won't mind. In fact, that's what we hope some of you choose to do. We can't wait to see what you come up with.

Will

The powers exhibited by heroes are basically variations of the same power: the power to impose your beliefs on the physical world around you. To model this with rules mechanics, there's the Will stat. If you want to find out more about Will, and how to use it in a dynamic sense, refer to the rules earlier in the book. In the open source superhero rules, however, Will is little more than fuel for super-powers.

Unlike your other stats, Will goes up and down all the time. Depending on circumstances, your character's ability to believe in his powers may be strong or weak, and the rise and fall of Will reflects that. Generally speaking, the better he does, the stronger he becomes. Defeats and setbacks weaken his Will and, consequently, his powers.

Base Will: You start out with a Base Will score equal to your Cool modifier + Charisma modifier + 2, with a minimum starting value of 1. Normal humans only have a Base Will statistic; they do not have, like super-humans, a Will stat that fluctuates up or down.

When you design your character, you can increase your Base Will score at a cost of 1 Power Point per Will point. The resulting Will score goes on your character sheet as your Base Will. Your Base Will is fairly stable: It's your default Will when you're not swollen with self-confidence or crushed by loss. If you lose all your Will, it will gradually rise back up to the Base Will levels, provided you are not under constant adverse conditions.

The general Will trait is more important and less stable. Will is used in two ways: You can risk it, or you can spend it. If you spend it, it's gone: Spend 3 Will, your Will rating drops by 3 (not, however, your Base Will rating). If you risk it, it means there's a chance you could lose it, or a chance you could keep it - or, for that matter, a chance you could increase it.

Will Points, Base Will, Will Save

You may have noticed that we use the term Will in relation to three different numbers: Will points, Base Will, and Will save. A Will save represents a character's ability to see through lies, deception, or to exercise raw willpower to resist an effect. Base Will is a measure of a character's normal level of self-confidence. Will points represent the current status of a character's confidence. Base Will and the Will save generally only change when a character gains a level, while Will points can change often during the course of a game session.

In general, when we refer to spending Will or using Will, we're talking about Will points. When the rules refer to Base Will or a Will save, they explicitly state this.

What Will is Good For

- You can't use any of your paranormal abilities - Powers, Hyperskills or Hyperstats - if you have 0 Will.
- Whenever you use any super-human ability, you must risk a point of Will (See *Gaining Will* and *Losing Will* below). If you succeed at activating the power, you do not lose that Will point, if you fail, that Will point is lost.

Gaining Will

Your Will rating increases by 1 point whenever one of the following things occurs.

- You roll a natural 20 while successfully using one of your hero powers in a meaningful, stressful situation. You cannot simply walk around using your powers constantly, banking on that 1 in 20 roll that nets you a Will point. The GM has final say on whether a power was used under stressful enough situations to warrant a Will point if you roll a natural 20.
- You wake up after a good night's sleep and your current Will is less than your Base Will.
- You successfully achieve an important objective.
- At the GM's discretion, you may get a point of Will when you do something particularly spectacular and gratifying, or when you do something that really seems to boost your character's self-image.

Your Will rating increases by multiple Will points whenever one of the following things occurs.

- You subdue or kill another super-human in combat. If you do this, you gain his level in points. Thus, a 5th-level hero is worth 5 Will points if defeated in combat. If multiple heroes work together to defeat one or more enemy heroes, divide the total Will reward amongst all the heroes who were on the winning side. If this division leaves someone with a fraction of a Will point as a reward, round up that character's reward to one. Round down in all other situations.
- Your power saves a person's life directly. If you do this, you gain 2 Will points.

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Losing Will

In addition to spending it, your Will rating decreases whenever one of the following things occurs.

- If you fail a mental fatigue roll (see below) you lose half your Will.
- If a personal tragedy occurs in your life (i.e. a breakup with your fiancée, a notice that your mother has died, or a buddy gets killed), you lose half your Will.
- If you fail to activate a power, you lose a point of Will.
- If you attempt and fail to save someone with your power, you lose 1 Will point.
- If you are subdued in combat by another super-human you lose half your Will.

Mental Fatigue

Mental Fatigue represents the mental damage meted out by the horrors of violence. When confronted by extreme violence and danger, some people buckle under the mental strain and develop mental illnesses.

When confronted with a particularly stressful situation, each character must make a check using his Cool modifier plus his Charisma modifier, plus his level. The following table illustrates the DCs of several different events that can cause Mental Fatigue:

DC	Description
10	Witness a close friend killed
15	Witness a gruesome death
20	Witness a close friend killed in a gruesome manner

Immediate Result

First off, if you fail a mental fatigue check your character loses control. You, as the player, have three choices.

- The character can immediately flee the scene at top speed using every means at his disposal (except he can't fight anyone who tries to stop him) and lose half his remaining Will.
- He can curl up in a ball (whereupon you are also incapable of offensive action) and lose half his remaining Will.
- Or he can hold his ground, keep fighting, lose all his remaining Will and suffer a long-term effect.

It's up to you whether he flees, curls up on the ground bawling, or holds his ground but loses his Will.

Regardless of which response you pick for your character, it either lasts fifteen minutes or until the maddening stimulus is removed. (Or until your character dies, of course.)

Long-Term Effects

The long-term effects of a single distressing incident depend on your current mental state, which can be represented by a whole lot of different character elements. The foremost of these is Will. Since super-humans are those people who can (for whatever reason) mold reality with just the force of their belief, Will can serve as a sort of buffer between them and madness. Thus, if you have any Will at all, you stave off long-term effects from the trauma.

If you have no Will, you're really in the shit. You're going to lose something, but what you lose is up to you. You must, however, pick one of the following:

- Permanently lose a point of Cool.
- Permanently lose a point of Wisdom.
- Lose two points of Base Will.
- Permanently gain a mental illness such as shell-shock, depression or alcoholism.

Losing Cool or Wisdom are obviously bad, because that puts you on a slippery slope down to lost Will and pure madness. On the other hand, losing Base Will makes it a lot harder to recover from fights with other super-humans. Permanent mental illnesses though, are no picnic. But at least you get to choose, right?

We don't really have room for detailed mental illness rules, but look to the main rules for details. In general, the illness is your brain's way of coping with the unacceptable trauma of combat.

As a rule of thumb, when the mental illness fully takes over, you're at a –4 penalty to all rolls due to the shakes or your brain trying to shut down. (Or if you drown it all out with booze, make it a –2 penalty to everything but the penalty stays with you for hours after the crisis is over while the booze is still in your system.) In fact you can treat it sort of like having a new feat, except it's a horribly deblitating one that's twice as bad as a normal feat is good.

Mental illness is likely to come to the fore, whatever shape it takes, under the stress of a crisis. Going into combat again or suffering some other severe crisis triggers an immediate Mental Fatigue check at DC 10. If it fails, the mental illness takes over and you suffer the usual results of a failed Mental Fatigue check.

It's possible to develop multiple mental illnesses in response to repeated mental traumas. That's bad news. If that happens, going into combat or some other severe crisis triggers a Mental Fatigue check once for each mental illness. If you want your character to become one of those poor souls shaking and weeping in the psych ward, this is how it happens.

Will Points in Game Play

How many Will points does an average hero have? Depending on the power level of your campaign, the Will points of an average hero may vary from as low as 5 to as many as 100 or more. The amount of Will points an average hero has hinges on the amount of action, penalty and reward the PCs are exposed to, which directly relates to the theme of the campaign. In a high-powered campaign the PCs will most likely have high Will point totals and in a "realistic" campaign, they will most likely have low Will point totals.

High Will point totals will allow heroes to use their powers all the time, with little chance of ever reaching 0 Will points.

Low Will point totals will lead to careful combats, and the hoarding of abilities. Loss of hero powers will occur often due to 0 Will point totals coming up all the time–especially in the heat of combat.

Saving Throws

When a character is confronted with such dangers as poison, explosives, disease, or other dangers, a saving throw determines whether he avoid the full effect of the danger. There are three types of saving throws, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will.

Fortitude Save

Use Fortitude saves to determine if poison gas effects a character, how quickly starvation begins to affect a character, and similar cases where endurance and toughness are important in determining if a character can resist an effect. Add a character's Constitution modifiers to all Fortitude save checks.

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Reflex Save

Use Reflex saves to determine if a character's speed and agility allow him to avoid the effects of an explosion, a booby trap, or anything else that can be dodged. Add a character's Dexterity modifier to all Reflex checks.

Will Save

A character's Will save represents his mental fortitude and resolve. Add a character's Wisdom modifier to his Will save checks.

Saving throws are made to oppose skill checks or power checks. You may also use them to cover any dangerous situation that does not involve a direct attack from another character. Refer to the DC table at the start of this section to determine an appropriate DC for a saving throw.

Combat

Combat in the open source rules works much like a regular skill check. Roll a D20, add you skill ranks, add the appropriate stat modifier, and then compare the result to a DC. In combat, however, the DC is always the target's Armor Class, the skill is a weapon skill, and the stat modifier is either Strength, for hand-to-hand combat, or Dexterity, for ranged combat.

The Combat Round

Fights are broken down into rounds. How long a round lasts varies from round to round based on what happens, but they average out to six seconds each. During a round, a character may:

- Sprint 120 feet
- Move 30 feet and attack
- Move 30 feet and load a firearm or draw a weapon
- Move 30 feet and (with a Climb roll) climb over a low wall or (with a Jump roll) jump over a trench
- Load a firearm or draw a weapon and attack
- Attack twice (but see below)
- Conduct Burst Fire once (see p. 341)

Generally speaking, a character can move 30 feet and also do a single, simple action. Each of those things is called a partial action. A character can do two of those in a single round.

If a character wishes to do something more complicated, such as pick a lock, repair a radio, or give or receive a complex set of orders, he cannot move. That's called a full-round action. It's the only thing a character can do in a single round.

Obviously, it is impossible to catalog all of the possible actions a character may take. The best bet for the GM is to simply estimate how much a character can get done in a few seconds. Rounds are meant primarily to help keep combat organized, not to rigidly define what a character can and cannot do.

There are some specific restrictions on attacking twice in a round:

- If the weapon has a Slow rating (see the weapon descriptions in the main rules), the character must take time to load a new round of ammo just as he would to draw a weapon. (With a Slow rating higher than 1, it takes that many partial actions.)
- If the character attacks more than one target in a round, each attack beyond the first is at a cumulative –2 penalty in addition to all other modifiers.

Initiative

At the beginning of combat, each participant in the fight rolls a d20 and adds his Dexterity modifier. Each player then declares and resolves his action, starting with the highest roller and moving on down to the lowest. If there is a tie, the character with the highest Dexterity goes first. If there is still a tie, the characters must make opposed Cool checks. The winner of this test goes before the loser. If multiple characters with equal Dexterity tie their initiative rolls, all make Cool checks and go in order from high roll to lowest. Any tied Cool checks are re-rolled until no ties remain.

Making an Attack

Hitting someone involves simply making a weapon skill check with the target's AC as the Difficulty Class. If the attack rolls greater than or equal to the AC, he hits. If a character does not possess any skill ranks in the weapon he uses, apply a –2 penalty to his attack roll.

Ranged weapon skills are all based on the Dexterity attribute. Melee skills are all based on the Strength attribute.

A character caught unaware by an attack loses the Dexterity bonus to his AC.

Damage

A successful attack obviously hurts the target. Each character has a number of hit points equal to his Constitution score. Firearms and melee weapons each have a damage rating expressed as a number of dice and a modifier. When you hit in combat, roll the appropriate dice and subtract the result from the target's hit points.

Once a character's hit points reach 0 or lower, the character falls unconscious. If a character's hit points drop to –10, he dies immediately. A character with between 0 and –9 hit points loses one hit point per round until he reaches –10, at which point he dies. Characters losing hit points in this manner need immediate medical attention. A successful medical skill check (DC 10) stabilizes the character and prevents him from losing any more hit points. If someone tries to move the character without a stretcher, he must make a Dex check (DC 10) to avoid causing 1 hp of damage to the incapacitated character per minute of movement. If this drives a character down to –10 hit points, the character dies.

Subdual Damage

Not every attack deals lethal damage. Punches and kicks, for example, have little chance to kill a character but may render him unconscious. Keep track of subdual damage separately from regular damage. A character that takes more than his total hit points in subdual damage is knocked unconscious for 3d20 minutes.

Weapon Damage

The following table summarizes the damage dealt by firearms and a representative sample of melee weapons. Refer to the main rules for more details on particular weapons, such as ranges and ammunition capacity. The damage listed here are meant to cover generic weapon types. GMs who wish to create charts with greater detail are encouraged to use the following values as guidelines. Refer to the main rules to determine how particular weapons deviate from the generic norms given in here. The damage here is based on the generic weapon table from the main rules.

Weapon Type	Base Damage Rating
Pistol	2d4
Carbine	2d6
Long Rifle	2d8
Submachine Gun	2d4

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Machine Gun	2d8
Grenade	3d6 to all targets in 10 yard radius*
Mortar	3d8 to all targets in 10-yard radius*
Cannon	3d10 to all targets in 10-yard radius*
Flamethrower	2d6 damage per round until fire extinguished. DC 15 Dex check for others to extinguish, DC 20 Cool check for target to extinguish himself.
Knife	1d4
Club	1d6
Sword	1d8
Unarmed	1d3**

* Successful Reflex save (DC 15) to take only half damage from the attack. In addition, if the target is in a foxhole and is not at ground zero of the attack, he takes only half damage. In addition, if the weapon detonates in a pit or foxhole, characters outside of the hole but within 10 feet take only half damage. With a successful save, a character in a foxhole takes only 1/4 damage.
** Deals subdual damage.

All melee weapons add the attacker's Strength modifier to their damage rolls. Barehanded attacks and kicks deal subdual damage.

Keeping Your Cool

Whenever a character is hit and wounded by gunfire, make a Cool check (DC 15). On a failed roll, the character spends the next 1d4 rounds paralyzed with pain, shock or fear and can take no actions. In addition, while under fire from enemy units a character must make a Cool check (DC 15) or use his Cool modifier in place of his Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma modifiers for the duration of the battle.

Combat Modifiers

Listed below are a set of common combat conditions and the effect they have on attack rolls. Generally speaking, a situation that gives the attacker an advantage confers a +2 bonus to hit. A situation that hurts the attacker's chance to hit causes a –2 penalty to hit. Obviously, it is impossible to describe every possible combat condition, but here are a few common ones:

Circumstance	Melee	Ranged
Attacker untrained with weapon	-2*	-2*
Attacker on higher ground	+1	+0
Attacker prone	-4	**
Defender sitting or kneeling	+2	-2
Defender prone	+4	-4
Defender running	+0***	-2***
Defender has cover	——— See Cover ———	

*This penalty does not apply to barehanded attacks, only to attacks made with weapons.
**The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.
***Roll randomly to see which grappling combatant a combatant strikes. That defender loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

Cover

Given the damage ratings for firearms listed above, and given that the average human has around 10 hit points, cover and staying the hell out of harm's way are the best methods to live through a fight involving firearms. If a character hides behind something capable of stopping a bullet, figure out what percentage of the character's body is visible to anyone firing a gun at him.

If the attacker rolls a hit on his attack roll, there is a percent chance equal to the percent of the character's body behind cover that the bullet harmlessly strikes the cover, doing no damage to the target.

Burst Fire

When firing an automatic weapon, you may choose to fire a burst rather than a single shot. You may choose to make up to 4 attacks with a single burst. You must fire 3 bullets for each attack. You suffer a cumulative –2 penalty to hit for each attack beyond the first.

Healing

A character heals damage at a rate determined by his Constitution score. Characters with minor wounds merely need rest and basic medical care in order to recover. Under proper medical care and with complete bed rest, a character heals 1d3 + his Constitution modifier per week. Proper medical care is defined as a DC 10 medical skill check.

A character reduced to less than 0 hit points requires much more intensive care. The character is incapable of any arduous physical activity for 1d4 weeks. During this time, he heals 1 hit point per week. After this period, he heals 1d3 + Con modifier per week until fully healed.

Subdual damage heals much quicker than standard damage. A character who receives medical attention and bed rest heals 1d6 + Con modifier per day.

If a character does not receive proper medical care, he halves the hit points he should have healed over a given time span. If the character does not receive 12 hours of bed rest and avoid all strenuous physical activity, he heals at half the normal rate. If a character receives neither medical care or bed rest, he heals at a quarter of the normal rate.

Armored Vehicles

Heavily armored tanks and other vehicles take damage only from mortars, artillery, cannons, and other heavy weapons. In addition, a character with 2 or more ranks of Hyperstrength can damage armored vehicles with their fists. To determine how many hit points of damage a tank can take, multiply its heavy armor rating from the main rules by 10. A vehicle with a heavy armor rating of 0 has 5 hit points. A vehicle reduced to 0 hit points is immediately disabled. In addition, each crewman must make a Fortitude save (DC equal to damage taken) or immediately drop to 0 hit points.

Whenever an explosive device hits a vehicle, each crewman must make a Reflex save or take half the damage dealt by the attack. Fire attacks deal full damage to each crewman on every successful attack, though there is no chance for the crewmen to catch fire.

Inside the System: Combat

As you can see from the weapon damages and wound recovery times, characters pay a heavy price for taking even a burst of machine gun fire. The easiest way to make characters more survivable is to give them some multiple of their Con in hit points. In addition, you can increase healing rates by the same multiple and perhaps even cut them in half or by a quarter to further reduce the penalty for dropping below 0 hit points.

Mood	Hit Point Multiplier
Gritty	x1
Low-powered	x1
Moderate-power	x2
High-powered	x3
Super-powered	x5

In addition, feel free to drop the Keeping Your Cool rules if you want your game to have a less gritty, more comic book feel to it. If you want your superheroes to shrug off machine gun bursts and charge valiantly forward into enemy fire, the Keeping Your Cool rules only get in the way of a good time. On the other hand, they make combat much deadlier and emphasize the terror of actual combat.

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Experience

As characters complete missions, defeat enemies, and undergo training, their skills and abilities increase over time. To measure how much a character has learned form a particular event, the GM awards experience points (xp). Characters may spend xp to gain skill ranks, increase their statistics, improve their powers, or acquire feats.

Benefit	Cost
1 skill rank	100 xp
1 saving throw point	150 xp
1 stat point	400 xp
1 Power Point	200 xp
1 new feat	500 xp

For every 1000 xp a character gains, he gains a level. Characters may accumulate experience points without spending them in order to wait to increase their skills when they gain a level. A character's level determines the maximum number of ranks he may have in a skill, and the total feats he may have.

Name	Maximum
Skill ranks	Current level + 3
Total feats	Current level + 1

Awarding Experience

XP awards are largely left up to the GM's judgment. If you want characters to quickly advance in levels, hand out more xp. If not, keep a tight control over the xp that's handed out. In general, a 4 – 6 hour gaming sessions should yield a 500 – 1000 xp award for characters.

Gaining Levels

A character does not spend xp to gain a level. Instead, keep a running total of the xp a character has gained. Divide this total by 1000, round down, and add 1 to determine a character's level. Essentially, whenever a character gains a full 1000 xp, whether he spends them on skills and other benefits or not, he gains a level. The total xp a character has saved up and spent on improvements are added together to determine a character's level.

Inside the System: Experience

The experience rules presented here are meant to be very freeform. Levels are now only an indicator of a character's total experience rather than milestones that herald a new set of skills and powers for a character. If you wish to maintain the "leveling up" feel of games that use rules similar to these open source rules, you may restrict characters to spending xp only when they gain a level.

Depending on the feel of your superhero games, you may want to modify the xp cost of certain bonuses and to change or eliminate skill and feat caps based on character level. The following tables illustrate how you can change the xp costs of certain advancements in order to help model particular feels.

For example, in a super-powered game Power Points are cheap, making it easy to create and advance characters who rely on enormously powerful abilities. On the other hand, low-powered heroes must pay 8 times as much to get a single Power Point, forcing them to rely more on skills as they gain levels rather than superpowers.

Mood	Stats	Skills	Feats	Saves	Powers
Gritty	400 xp	100 xp	500 xp	150 xp	200 xp
Low-powered	600 xp	100 xp	750 xp	200 xp	400 xp
Moderate-power	400 xp	100 xp	300 xp	100 xp	100 xp
High-powered	400 xp	100 xp	250 xp	100 xp	50 xp
Super-powered	250 xp	50 xp	200 xp	50 xp	25 xp

Mood	Max Feats	Max Skill Ranks
Gritty	1 + level	3 + level
Low-powered	1 + level	3 + level
Moderate-power	2 + level	5 + level
High-powered	(level + 1) * 2	No max
Super-powered	No max	No max

End of Open Gaming Content section.

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APPENDIX D

More Rules Options

In the years since *Godlike* was first published, we have come up with a lot of new optional rules to answer players' demands. Here are our favorites.

Game Mechanics

Most of this section is combat rules that have turned out to be indispensible for long-term *Godlike* campaigns. "Squad Combat" is by Shane Ivey, from the *Godlike* adventure *Donar's Hammer*. "Bombardment," "Minefields," "One-Roll Patrols" and "FUBAR" are by Allan Goodall, from the campaign book *Black Devils Brigade*.

Squad Combat

The *Godlike* combat system is excellent for lightning-fast resolution of small-scale combats, but with more than a few combatants it can get unwieldy. These rules streamline the process by replacing NPC individual dice pools with a single roll for each group and simplifying NPC injuries.

The rules are meant for the typical infantry units faced by players—usually two or three squads of riflemen supporting a small machine gun team. With fewer than three NPCs in a group, handle them individually. With more than fifteen, handle them with two or more dice pools.

The Dice Pool

An NPC squad's dice pool gets one die per NPC. A squad has a cap of 15 dice in its pool rather than the 10d limit of individual characters. With three NPCs it's 3d; with a dozen NPCs it's 12d; with 15 or more it's 15d. That's far fewer dice than they'd get if you added up their individual dice pools, but most NPCs spend a lot of time taking cover, waiting for orders, clearing jammed weapons, etc.

With a squad you don't have to declare their actions in detail in the Declare phase. Just add up how many NPCs are acting, what weapons they're using, and figure out how many dice to roll. In the Roll phase, roll 'em.

In the Resolve phase, assign each set that comes up to a single action by a single NPC however you like. This is almost always going to be attack rolls, but you can assign sets to non-attack actions like diving for cover or trying to rally their fellows with the Inspire skill. But common sense must apply. If a squad has nine rifles but seven are out of ammo, don't assign more than two sets to rifle shots.

For a squad attack, no set can be higher than Width 3. If it's Width 4 or more, divide the Width between two separate actions.

The Old Way

When these rules first appeared in *Donar's Hammer,* we calculated the squad's dice pool by taking the highest single dice pool of a member of the squad and adding 1d per additional member. This version is easier and plays better. Recalculate squad write-ups in adventures as needed.

Weapons

The weapons that the NPCs use affect their dice pool.

Slow: Weapons with Slow ratings don't fire as often as others. If the squad is firing Slow weapons, it takes a number of NPCs equal to the Slow rating plus one to add 1d to the dice pool. If nine Heer are firing Kar-98 rifles (Slow 1), it takes two of them to add 1d; they have a total pool of 4d.

Spray: Add the Spray rating of the NPCs' weapons to their dice pool. Each of the widest matching sets in the roll (or the tallest if Widths are tied) must be assigned to an attack by each Spray weapon.

Hard Dice and Wiggle Dice

It's usually best to play each Talent individually and leave the squad rules for NPCs without superpowers. If a character in the squad has Hard Dice or Wiggle Dice, replace that

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character's 1d contribution to the dice pool with those Hard Dice or Wiggle Dice. Obviously the Hard Die or Wiggle Die can only be used in a set or sets assigned to that character.

Elite Units

Each character who has an attack dice pool of 6d or more before adding Spray adds one extra die to the squad's pool.

Squad Attacks

By default, a squad attacks with cover fire, not deliberately aimed fire. Even if it's all riflemen with Slow bolt-action weapons, they use cover fire to force as many enemies as possible to keep their heads down—often triggering Cool+Mental Stability rolls in targets who brave the fire to shoot back; see p. 16—rather than targeting individuals.

The exceptions are things like hand-to-hand attacks and grenades, which don't involve putting bullets downrange, and zeroing in on enemies who are bunched together. And if you have a sniper, of course he or she is going after specific individuals—but treat a sniper as an individual character, not a squad.

Squad Condition

Instead of damage silhouettes, every NPC in a squad has two damage tracks of exactly one "wound box" each: Health and Morale. You can keep track of them on the squad data sheet at the end of this chapter.

Health

If an NPC is hit by an attack with either Height 10 or Width 3 or more, the NPC is incapacitated or killed. Mark an "X" in the Health box. Otherwise mark a slash ("/") through the Health box to indicate that the character is wounded but still active.

Special cases may apply, and the GM can work out the details if they do.

Unarmed attacks: If an attack is unarmed it takes both Height 10 and Width 3 or more to incapacitate a target.

Rifle or machine gun wounds: If an attack is with a rifle or machine gun or anything heavier, any hit incapacitates an NPC squad member, not just Width 3 or Height 10.

Helmets: If the target is wearing a helmet, write "Helmet" in the "Notes" line on the squad data sheet. The first Height 10 attack that the NPC suffers is only a wound unless it's also Width 3 or more. But any later Height 10 attack means incpacitation, regardless of the helmet. Scratch out the helmet on the data sheet so you remember not to apply it next time.

Area Attacks: If an Area attack hits a character in the squad, the targeted character is automatically killed or incapacitated. Now roll the Area dice as a pool. If it's a match, the Height is the number of characters within 10 yards who are wounded. The Width is the additional number who are killed or incapacitated. If the Area roll is not a match, or if it the squad has good cover and the Area roll is Height 5 or less, it does no further damage.

Buying the Farm: You may want to figure out afterward how many of the "incapacitated or killed" NPCs survive. As a rule of thumb, half live and half die. If you want to roll for it, give each one a Body+Health roll with +1d if the NPC has buddies trying to keep him alive and another +1d if the buddies have first aid kids. If a medic or nurse is trying to save them, he or she can make a Brains+First Aid roll to save a dying NPC; but each Brains+First Aid roll after the first is at –1d as time runs out and supplies run low.

Morale

Any time one of the following events happens to an NPC, the NPC is suppressed:

- The NPC takes a wound.
- The NPC must roll to see if he is hit by cover fire (whether it actually hits him or not).
- The NPC is attacked by a Talent power or by a flamethrower (whether it hits or not).
- The NPC is nearly hit by direct fire (the attack was a match but cover saved the NPC).
- The NPC is in the blast radius of an Area attack but survives.

When an NPC is suppressed, mark a slash ("/") through the Morale box.

A suppressed NPC can't contribute any dice to the squad's dice pool. A suppressed NPC must move to the best possible cover that's within one round's movement; if none is available, the NPC will go prone. The NPC must stay behind cover or prone as long as he is suppressed.

If a suppressed NPC spends one combat round behind cover without being suppressed again (being prone in the open doesn't count), erase the suppressed mark on his morale box at the end of the round.

If a suppressed NPC is suppressed again, he or she becomes demoralized. Change the "/" in the Morale box to an "X". The same rules apply, but a demoralized NPC can't recover without leadership. A character who attempts to rally demoralized NPCs must make a Command+Inspire or Command+Leadership roll. Height in NPCs lose their demoralized status.

If the enemy comes within three rounds' movement (usually about 30 yards), a demoralized character will either surrender or flee (GM's option).

Squad Movement

A squad in rough battlefield terrain can run about 10 yards per round and still retain unit cohesion. Adjust upwards, up to double the rate, for suppressed or demoralized individuals or for especially easy terrain.

A Squad Example

A machine gun squad of the Hermann Göring Division is attacking. The squad has one gunner with an MG42 machine gun (Spray 6), one loader (the GM decides the loader is necessary for the gunner to use his full Spray rating every round, so he doesn't add a die to the squad pool), and two riflemen with Gewehr 41 rifles (Slow 1).

When the squad attacks, its dice pool includes 1d for the machine gunner, 6d for the machine gun's Spray rating, and 1d for the two riflemen with their Slow rifles. That's a total of 8d. If an attack succeeds, the widest set must be assigned to the machine gun. Others can be used as needed—for rifle hits, other machine gun hits, for rallying demoralized men, for spotting a stealthy commando, etc.

If the squad attacks with grenades or hand-to-hand weapons instead, they roll 1d per man, or 4d total.

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Bombardment

Throughout World War II, shelling brought random, indiscriminate maiming and death. While cover mitigated damage, and the probability of dying in any single barrage was relatively small, the sheer number of barrages made artillery the king of the battlefield.

Unfortunately, the random, indiscriminate maiming and death of a player character sucks. It might be historically accurate, but is it fun?

Artillery and mortar fire in *Godlike* is incredibly deadly, particularly if a character is at ground zero and out in the open when a large shell hits. This represents single shots aimed specifically at a Talent.

The following rules simulate a different kind of artillery damage: that which can occur when an area is bombarded by artillery barrages of varying intensity and duration. In this kind of barrage most soldiers huddle under the best cover they can find and feel sorry for the ones who are ordered to go out and seize objectives despite the shelling.

Intensity

Determine the intensity of the attack. This is a rating from 2 to 10, with 2 representing sporadic pot shots and 10 representing concentrated fire for a long time (several hours, or more).

Light bombardment is anything from a single gun or mortar tube up to a battery of guns.

Medium bombardment is several batteries.

Heavy bombardment is a divisional level bombardment or greater.

Intensity	Description
2	Sporadic, rare shots; a few shots every hour or so
3	Sporadic shots, a few shots every 15 minutes.
4	Light bombardment lasting 15 minutes to half an hour or so
5	Light bombardment lasting a 1/2 hour to two hours
6	Medium bombardment lasting 15 minutes to half an hour. Light bombardment lasting several hours.
7	Medium bombardment lasting an hour or two
8	Heavy bombardment lasting 15 minutes to half an hour. Medium bombardment lasting several hours.
9	Heavy bombardment lasting an hour or two
10	Heavy bombardment lasting several hours, even days

Taking Cover

The artillery dice pool equals the bombardment's Intensity. Roll the dice, looking for matching sets. As normal, the Width of the set indicates the damage, the Height is the damaged hit location.

Each character in the location being bombarded rolls Coordination+Dodge, unless they are out in the open and the GM decides they were surprised, or unless they were already under cover.

Match the height of the Coordination+Dodge roll against the Taking Cover Table on p. 18. This indicates the hit locations protected from the shelling. If the characters are in prepared positions, the position itself determines the amount of protection they receive, but they still roll the dice. A successful Coordination+Dodge roll means the character ducked down in time to avoid most of the damage.

Each character takes damage from every matching set. If a hit location is protected by cover, that location is not damaged (though there might still be Shock damage, see below). A failed roll means the character was caught out in the open and all hit locations are vulnerable.

Damage

If a character fails the Dodge roll, or succeeds but the location that was hit was not protected by cover, apply the following damage:

Mortar attacks: Width in Killing and Shock.
Cannon attacks: Width + 1 in Killing and Shock.

In addition each character, even if safely under cover, receives the following damage:

Mortar attacks: Width – 1 in Shock to the head.
Cannon attacks: Width in Shock to the head.

This assumes the character is not in a barrage-proof bunker. If he or she is, there's still one Shock point to the head but no other damage.

A character who botches the cover roll—no matching sets and all dice come up 5 or less—takes damage for being within the burst radius of an artillery attack (see **Part Seven: The Field Manual).** In other words, the shot landed right next to the character. Oops.

Each character must also make a Cool+Mental Stability test for coming under prolonged artillery fire if the Intensity is 4 or higher.

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Minefields

Minefields were a common danger to troops during World War II.

Minefields came in three broad categories: anti-personnel, anti-tank (anti-vehicle), and mixed. These categories overly simplify the deployment of mines, as each minefield was unique, determined by the tactical needs of the defender and the local terrain.

An anti-personnel minefield was seeded with mines designed to kill or maim soldiers on foot. These weapons did little to moderate damage against "soft skinned" vehicles (trucks, jeeps, etc.), and tanks were virtually immune to them.

Anti-vehicle or anti-tank minefields were designed specifically to destroy or disable vehicles, particularly tanks.

Mixed minefields contained both anti-tank and anti-personnel mines.

Minefields were usually sown in a specific pattern in order to produce a field of a specific density and to make them easier for friendly troops to pass through. That pattern was not immediately obvious to enemy troops that might happen to wander into one.

Every major nation produced mines and laid thousands and thousands of mines throughout Europe and the Pacific. The simplest mine is a hand grenade tied to a stake with a tripwire attached to the arming pin. Some improvised underground mines were not much more sophisticated than that, consisting of an explosive and some means of detonating it when it was disturbed. Manufactured mines were typically explosives (i.e. TNT) encased in metal, sometimes filled with shrapnel-producing material (like ball bearings), rigged to a central detonator. This is essentially the design of the German Tellermines, a family of anti-tank mine with a "round plate" look.

The most insidious mine of the war was the German S-mine *(Schrapnellmine,* given the nicknames "Bouncing Betty," "Bouncing Bitch," "Jumping Jack" and "Castrator" by the Allies). It consisted of a metal cylinder with explosives in the center, a launching charge at the base, and ball bearings surrounding the core. Several types of fuses could be attached to the top. A pull fuse (triggered when a trip wire was tugged), a three-prong pressure fuse (triggered when stepped on with at least 7.5 lbs of pressure), a pull-release fuse (pulled to tension and set in place, triggered when the tension was released), a Y-adapter with two pull fuses, or a three-way adapter with two pull fuses and a pressure fuse. When triggered, the bottom charge exploded, propelling the mine into the air. Half a second later, it detonated anywhere from chest to groin height. Even when the mine didn't kill, the wounds it produced were hideous.

Regular troops were trained to detect, identify, and remove mines. This usually consisted of crawling through a suspected minefield slowly probing the ground with a bayonet. Engineers were equipped with metal detectors, which could pick up the casing of a buried mine. Removing a mine was a dangerous procedure, especially when mines were modified to make them harder to remove. For instance, a variant of the Tellermine had a pull cord as a secondary trigger. A stake was driven into the ground beside the mine and the trigger attached to the stake. If an engineer didn't check for the trigger, pulling the mine out of the ground would tug on the trigger, detonating the mine.

The Allies developed a number of techniques and devices for clearing mines. One of the most successful was the Flail tank. This was a motorized metal drum with weighted chains welded to it, and then mounted on the front of a tank (such as a Sherman, or a British Churchill). The drum would spin around, and the weights, the flails, would strike the earth in front of the tank, detonating mines. It was an effective method of mine clearing. Early in the Eastern Front, the Soviets had a low tech, if appalling, method of clearing mines. They would send penal battalions—units made up of soldiers convicted of one crime or another, often times political—to run into a minefield in order to deliberately set them off.

Minefields in *Godlike*

Minefields are rated by Penetration, Area, and density. See **Part Seven: The Field Manual;** additional mines are given below.

Density is measured in dice and represents the chance of an individual detonating a mine. Whenever the players enter an area with a minefield, and for every combat round they travel through the minefield, roll a number of dice equal to the minefield's density. This is the Density Roll. Minefield densities are rated from 2 to 6.

Add 1d to the roll if the players are moving about carelessly, such as when moving through friendly controlled areas or running while being pursued or giving chase. If players are sneaking through an area, deduct 1d from the Density dice pool.

If the players are specifically looking for mines, roll Sense+Explosives. The player receives gobble dice equal to the width of the matching set, which can be used to gobble dice from the Density Roll's result.

A matching set means a mine went off. See p. 264.

Density	Description
2	One or two mines set up as booby traps, or an improperly cleared mine.
3	Sparse mixed type minefield.
4	Medium density mixed use minefield, or sparse minefield of one type (anti-personnel or anti-tank)
5	Thick mixed use minefield, or medium density minefield of one type
6	Thick minefield of one type

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One-Roll Patrols

Much of the fighting experienced by World War II troops took place during patrols. A patrol is where a unit is sent out from the main body of troops to gather intelligence, disrupt intelligence gathering by the enemy, or to engage the enemy in combat. The unit is sometimes as large as a platoon or even a battalion. More commonly the unit is no larger than a squad, and quite often as small as two or three men.

There are essentially two types of patrols: reconnaissance patrols and combat patrols (what the British called "fighting patrols").

Reconnaissance patrols gather information about the enemy or about the security of your own perimeter. Reconnaissance patrols are usually told not to engage the enemy. Their primary mission is to get the intelligence back to their headquarters.

Combat patrols, on the other hand, are sent out with the specific goal of engaging the enemy. This can take the form of raids on enemy units, demolition of strategic structures, or missions to capture prisoners. Most patrols are at night, as visibility is greatly reduced once the sun goes down.

The One-Roll Patrols generator allows the GM to put detailed patrol missions together very quickly. Just fill in a few details according to the players' current situation and the nearby enemies and you're ready to play.

Using the Generator

You need 11 dice. One of the dice has to be different than the others, either a different color or a different size, or you can roll it separately. This is the Terrain Die.

Roll the dice and look up the matches on the One-Roll Patrol table on p. 310. For each matching set, the Height generates the type of patrol and the Width describes what happens on those patrols. The remaining dice generate complications. The Terrain Die describes a major piece of terrain featured during the patrol.

Sets with Height 1 through 3 are reconnaissance patrols. Reconnaissance patrols are expected to avoid a confrontation; the patrol has orders not to engage the enemy unless they have no choice.

Sets with Height 4 and 5 represent contact patrols, patrols tasked with contacting friendly units or positions. Engaging the enemy is discretionary, depending on the exact situation.

Sets with Height 6 through 10 generate combat patrols, where the players are expected to engage the enemy, though with the primary mission in mind.

The matching sets can be used for all potential participants, including enemy patrols that might encounter the players. You might get, for instance, a set with a Height of 3 (point reconnaissance) and a set with a Height of 7 (counter-intelligence patrol). This could represent a patrol sent to inspect a bridge only to encounter a German patrol moving into an intercept potion; or you could flip the sets around with the Germans trying to reconnoiter an Allied-controlled bridge.

Likewise, the terrain and complications can apply to any of the participants.

The generator is designed to inspire scenarios. Feel free to drop, or change, results that don't make sense, or don't produce an engaging scenario. If you have one or more unused sets, rather than throwing them out you can use the Height as a second terrain die. The generator is biased toward creating a scenario where something happens. Skip over the nights when the patrol was uneventful, or throw the players a curveball every now and again with a patrol where they never see the enemy.

Patrol Generator Examples

Example 1: It's Farmland. We roll 11d and get 1, 4, 4, 4, 5, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8, 10. This gives us a 3x4: a Visiting Patrol where the outpost is under attack from the enemy; a 2x5: a Contact Patrol where a friendly unit is contacted; and 2x8: set up an ambush in good terrain against an unsuspecting enemy. Looking at the remainder, our Complication Dice, we have 1: barbed wire or an obstruction; 6: unexpected casualties; 7: reinforcements; and 10: a reversal of fortune. The Terrain Die was the 7: a stream.

How do we tie this together? The key is in the Complication Dice, in particular the reversal of fortune, the unexpected casualties, and the reinforcements. How about this: The players are given a mission to contact a neighboring unit (2x5), an American regiment in III Corps. The approach route takes the players to a deep stream (Terrain Die), which slows them down as they look for a better route (1). As the players approach the closest outpost (3x4), they and the outpost are ambushed by a German patrol (2x8). Perhaps the Germans are dug in along the stream? The Allies take casualties from the ambush (6). But things don't all go the Germans' way: reinforcements (7) from the neighboring unit show up and attack the Germans (10).

So, the players' mission seems easy at first—contact a friendly outpost—but they're delayed by a stream, and things go pear shaped when they're hit by a German ambush. Can they turn the tables on the Germans? If they can't, reinforcements are on the way to bail them out.

Example 2: It's Mountain terrain. We roll 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 5, 7, 7, 8, 9, 9. The matched sets are an area reconnaissance where enemy activity is detected (2x2), a point reconnaissance against a target in enemy hands (2x3), a counter-intelligence patrol to defend a static position (2x7), and a front-line raid against an enemy outpost (2x9). The complications are 1: an obstruction or barbed wire; 5: outnumbered; and 8: artillery, a tank, or an armored vehicle. The Terrain Die was the 5: thin woods.

Here it is. Last night's patrol discovered an enemy listening post (2x3) set up in a cave (5). The players are given the task of taking out the listening post (2x9). Unknown to the Allies, the Germans detected last night's patrol (2x2), and they're planning to send out a counter-intelligence patrol to protect their outpost. The players head to the enemy position, encountering an obstruction (1) along the way: we'll make it a minefield (even though "minefield" wasn't rolled up; the players see the "Achtung, Minen!" signs and it becomes another obstruction). As the players prepare to infiltrate the cave, two German squads on their counter-intelligence patrol shows up. The players are outnumbered (5). Fortunately, they have an ace up their sleeve: they can call in support from the company mortar section (8).

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Patrol Types

x1: Establish an Outpost/Listening Post
Set up a new outpost or listening post, or relieve the men manning an existing outpost. Report back enemy activity.
2x Set up an outpost in good terrain.
3x Set up an outpost in exposed terrain.
4x Meeting engagement; both sides contest the outpost location.
5x Outpost overrun by the enemy.

x2: Area Reconnaissance
Reconnoiter a wide area and report back enemy activity.
2x Detect enemy activity in the patrol area.
3x Meeting engagement on the patrol's outbound leg.
4x Meeting engagement on the patrol's inbound leg.
5x Enemy move into the area in strength.

x3: Point Reconnaissance
Reconnoiter a specific target or terrain feature, and report back enemy activity.
2x Target is in friendly hands.
3x Target is in enemy hands.
4x Target is being attacked/assaulted by the enemy.
5x Target was destroyed/captured/moved by the enemy.

x4: Visiting Patrol
Check on one or more friendly outposts or listening posts in a patrol area.
2x Visited outpost reports nearby enemy activity.
3x Visiting outpost under attack by the enemy.
4x Outpost in the path of a major enemy attack/raid.
5x Outpost destroyed, with all the soldiers captured/killed.

x5: Contact Patrol
Contact neighboring unit and patrol the intervening area.
2x Friendly unit contacted.
3x Friendly unit moved/in unexpected position.
4x Friendly unit under attack by the enemy.
5x Friendly unit wiped out/captured/routed.

x6: Intelligence Gathering
Head into enemy controlled territory to gather information.
2x Capture prisoners from any enemy unit encountered.
3x Capture prisoners from a specific enemy unit.
4x Capture documents or other source of intelligence.
5x Capture specific materiel/device/vehicle.

x7: Counter-Intelligence
Screen an area against enemy intelligence-gathering.
2x Defend a specific static position.
3x Seek and destroy an enemy unit in the patrol area.
4x Retake a position that fell to the enemy.
5x Retake multiple positions that fell to the enemy.

x8: Ambush
Set up a covert position to ambush an enemy unit.
2x Set up an ambush: good terrain; unsuspecting enemy.
3x Set up an ambush: poor terrain; unsuspecting enemy.
4x Set up an ambush: good terrain; alert enemy.
5x Set up an ambush: poor terrain; alert enemy.

x9: Raid Against a Frontline Target
Harass or destroy an enemy frontline unit or target.
2x Attack an enemy outpost.
3x Attack an enemy machine gun nest or squad in a foxhole.
4x Attack/destroy a key enemy controlled terrain feature.
5x Attack/destroy an enemy pillbox or bunker.

x10: Raid Against a Rear Area Target
Attack and destroy a unit or target in the enemy's zone of control (i.e. not right on the front line).
2x Attack/destroy a key enemy controlled terrain feature.
3x Destroy an enemy supply or ammo dump.
4x Attack an enemy artillery position.
5x Attack an enemy command post or headquarters.

Complication Dice

1 Barbed wire or obstruction
2 Minefield
3 Change in weather or visibility
4 Sniper
5 Outnumbered
6 Unexpected casualties
7 Reinforcements
8 Artillery/tank/armored fighting vehicle
9 Talents/*Übermenschen*
10 Reversal of fortune

Terrain Dice

By Allan Goodall and Mike Montesa.

City
1 Apartment complex
2 Cathedral/church
3 Commercial buildings/stores/warehouses
4 Factory
5 Government building
6 Hospital
7 Railroad station/railroad track/sidings
8 Residential homes/Townhouses
9 River/bridge
10 Rubble pile/pillbox/defensive structure

Village
1 Town square
2 Church
3 Small businesses/stores
4 Town hall
5 Townhouses
6 Individual homes
7 Farm house/barn
8 Animal enclosure/sheep paddock
9 Stream/foot bridge
10 Thin woods (on outskirts)

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Farmland
1 Farm house/barn/other manmade structure
2 Cultivated field
3 Orchard/olive grove
4 Hedgerow/stone wall
5 Irrigation ditch/culvert
6 River/stream
7 Thin woods
8 Brush/light vegitation
9 Small hill
10 Pillbox or other defensive structure

Forest
1 Thick woods with thin undergrowth
2 Thick woods with heavy undergrowth
3 Thin woods
4 Forrest trail/logging road
5 Ridge/hill with thin woods
6 Ridge/hill with thick woods
7 Thick brush/thick vegetation
8 Clearing with/without manmade structure
9 River/stream with bridge
10 Deadfall/barricade/other road obstruction

Bocage
1 Animal pasture
2 Manor house
3 Crossroads
4 Sunken road
5 Farmhouse/barn
6 Cultivated field (open or planted)
7 Orchard/vineyard
8 Light woods
9 Stream/pond
10 Footpath/animal track

Jungle
1 Marsh/swamp
2 River/stream
3 Thick rain forest with heavy undergrowth
4 Thick vegetation waist high or taller
5 Ridge/hill with thick vegetation
6 Clearing with heavy undergrowth
7 Bamboo grove
8 Natural obstacles (vines)/manmade obstacles (panji)
9 Rice paddy
10 Wooden buildings/huts

River
1 Dike/berm/levee along river's edge
2 Hedge row
3 Stone/metal road bridge
4 Metal railway bridge
5 Lift lock/dam/reservoir
6 House/farm house/barn
7 Mill/stone tollhouse/other manmade structure
8 Stone wall
9 Thin woods
10 Pillbox/other defensive structure

Beach
1 Soft sand
2 Rocky/coral shingle
3 Seawall
4 Beach obstacles
5 Beach house/hut
6 Dunes
7 High/low tide
8 Rubble pile/pillbox/defensive structure
9 River/stream mouth
10 Pier/dock

Hills
1 Valley with stream/river
2 Ridge line overlooking a shorter, parallel ridge
3 Gentle slope with little cover
4 Steep slope with loose earth/tree trunks
5 Barren hilltop
6 Thick brush consisting of thorn bushes/ivy/brambles
7 Sparse vegetation among field of scattered boulders
8 Thin forest with little undergrowth
9 Dense forest with deadfall/vines/loose earth
10 Isolated cabin/other manmade structure

Mountain
1 Cold mountain stream
2 Cliff side
3 Road with steep drop off on one side
4 Cave/rock field
5 Thin woods
6 Scrub/brush
7 Valley
8 Ridge line/series of ridges
9 Ice sheet/snow cap
10 Chalet/cable car house/other manmade structures

Desert
1 Sand dune
2 Hill with sparse/no vegetation
3 Wadi (dry riverbed or valley)
4 Hammada (hard packed barren plateau)
5 Small mesa
6 Cliff/steep wadi slope
7 Oasis/spring with light vegetation/olive grove/palm trees
8 Scrub
9 Sangar (improvised defensive position)/pillbox
10 Railroad station/ruined stone fort/other manmade structures

Steppe
1 Marsh/bog
2 Stream/river
3 Grassland (up to waist high)
4 Scrub/thick brush
5 Thin woods
6 Ridge with sparse vegetation
7 Short, wide hill or ridge
8 Tall hill with commanding view
9 Farm house/barn/other manmade structures
10 Pillbox/other defensive structure

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FUBAR!

Bad things happen randomly in war, particularly in combat. Ammunition gets wet and won't function properly. A stray shot strikes a weapon. Artillery shells fall short and land on friendly units. A grenade is dropped just after the pin is pulled.

A FUBAR "incident" is triggered when a player rolls a dice pool and one of these two conditions applies:

- No matching sets and all dice are 5 or less.
- No matching sets and all dice are less than or equal to the Difficulty of the roll.

Example: A player tries to fire his weapon. He rolls 4 dice. They come up 2, 3, 4, 5. Something's FUBAR!

Example: A player throws a grenade at a pillbox. The GM declares that in order to get the grenade into the pillbox, he has to make a Difficulty 7 roll. The player rolls 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 on a 6d dice pool. All dice are less than or equal to 7. FUBAR!

FUBAR Roll

You need 11 dice. One of the dice has to be different than the others, either a different color or a different size, or you can roll it separately. This is the Tie-Breaker Die.

Roll the dice and look up the matches on the FUBAR Generator. For each matching set, the Height determines the type of problem that occurred, and the Width describes the specific in-game results.

If two or more sets are rolled, the GM can pick the most appropriate set or use the Tie-Breaker Die: Use the set with the Height closest to the Tie-Breaker die. In the case where two or more sets are equally distant from the Tie-Breaker die, choose the set with the lower Height.

Example: 2, 2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5, 7, 9, 9, 9 are rolled. The Tie-Breaker Die was the die that came up 7. There are 3 possible sets: 3x2, 2x5, and 3x9. 7 is closest to the Height 5 result and the Height 9 result (7–2 = 5; 7–5 = 2; 9–7 = 2). Since 7 is equal distance between 5 and 9, you use the set with the lower Height, so 2 x 5 wins.

The dice that are not part of a matching set are important. They determine the number of Will points the GM receives for a special Contest of Wills. For each die that is not part of a set (even an unused set) the GM receives 1 Will. In the example above, the 3, 4, and 7 dice were not part of any set, so the GM receives 3 Will.

Applying the Result

Consult the FUBAR Generator. The GM indicates the player who is the target of the result (usually the player who triggered the FUBAR roll, but not necessarily). The player, without knowing what the result is or when it will apply, now has the opportunity to stop the bad luck by spending Will in a special Contest of Wills.

If the player chooses to eliminate the bad luck, he spends 1 Will. If the GM has no Will points from the FUBAR Roll, the FUBAR roll is negated.

If the GM has Will points, he must spend 1. The result of the FUBAR roll will apply. The player now has the option of spending another Will. This continues, with the player and GM spending Will, until either the player decides not spend any more Will points, or the GM runs out of Will points.

If the GM won this special Contest of Wills, the result of the FUBAR roll applies. The result can apply to the current combat round (the one that caused the FUBAR roll), the next combat round, or a later combat round.

For instance, a jammed weapon applies immediately (the same round that resulted in the FUBAR roll), allowing the player to clear the jam next combat round. A dropped grenade applies in this round, though the player can try to scoop up the grenade or dodge out of the way next round. By contrast, a distraction might not apply for several rounds (it waits until the player attempts another dice roll).

FUBAR Generator

x1 Distractions
The next time the player rolls the dice, they are distracted by something happening nearby. A grenade goes off near them. Something darts into their peripheral vision. Someone behind them screams, or yells, "Duck!" The target is momentarily distracted.

2x Minor Annoyance. Apply a -1d penalty to the next dice roll.

3x Major Annoyance. Apply a +2 Difficulty to the next dice roll.

4x Minor Distraction. Apply 1 Gobble die to the next dice roll.

5x Major Distraction. Apply 2 Gobble dice to the next dice roll.

x2: Explosive Malfunction
The player's explosive weapon malfunctions. This typically applies immediately if the FUBAR roll occurs as a result of an explosives or grenade roll.

2x Dud: Fails to detonate. No damage from the explosive.

3x Short Fuse: Detonates early. Apply Area dice to target and units nearby. Does not harm the enemy.

4x Fumbled Explosive: Explosive drops at the player's feet. Roll Coordination+Skill to scoop it up next round and throw, or Coordination+Dodge to escape.

5x Badly Fumbled Explosive: Explosive drops at the player's feet and is close to detonation. Roll Coordination+Skill or Coordination+Dodge at Difficulty 5.

x3: Firearm Malfunction
The player's firearm malfunctions. This typically applies immediately if the FUBAR roll occurs as a result of a firearms roll.

2x Jam. Roll Coordination+Firearms to clear, taking 5-Width combat rounds.

3x Underpowered Cartridges. Apply -1d penalty for the rest of the ammunition in the magazine, clip or belt. Spending a combat round changing ammunition negates this penalty.

4x Spoiled ammunition. Treat as a jam, then apply the Underpowered Cartridges result to the rest of the magazine, clip, or belt.

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5x Weapon Struck. The weapon is struck by a bullet or shell fragment. It can no longer be used.

x4 Targeting Problems
Apply this result to all direct attacks—including Talent attacks—against the enemy. Something unexpected happens down range.

2x Target Flinches: The target shifts just as the player attacks. Apply -1d on next attack roll.

3x Target Ducks: The target ducks out of the way just as the player attacks. Apply 1 Gobble Die to the player's next attack.

4x Bad Timing: A friendly pops into the line of fire just as the player attacks. The player attacks the friendly instead of the enemy, but with 1 Gobble Die applied. Roll Cool+Mental Stability or lose 1 Will for wounding or 2 Will for killing the friendly.

5x Really Bad Timing: A friendly pops into the line of fire just as the player attacks. The player attacks the friendly. Roll Cool+Mental Stability or lose 1 Will for wounding or 2 Will for killing the friendly.

x5 Environment
The player comes across something unexpected in the local environment. This could be a terrain obstruction, or something like a smoke screen slips into the area.

2x Obstruction: The player comes across barbed wire, mud, a stream, or some other obstructing terrain they didn't know was there.

3x Obscuration: Smoke, heavy rain, or something else that obscures visibility rolls over the player's position. Make a Luck Roll (see Luck Roll, below) and apply a -2d penalty for 5-Width rounds.

4x Booby Trap: The player triggers a booby trap or steps on an undetected mine. Treat as a Density 4 minefield with 1 mine.

5x Mine: The player triggers a big booby trap or steps on an undetected mine. Treat as a Density 6 minefield with 1 mine.

x6 Reinforcements
Enemy reinforcements appear (over and above those indicated by a specific scene).

2x Rifle Section: An enemy rifle detachment of 4 men with rifles appears.

3x Machine Gun Team: An enemy machine gun team of 3 men (gunner, loader, assistant rifleman) appears.

4x Squad: An enemy squad of 8 men (squad leader with SMG, machine gunner, loader, and 5 riflemen) appears.

5x Platoon: An enemy platoon (3 squads) appears. Alternatively, replace one squad with a vehicle (halftrack or truck), or replace all three squads with a tank.

x7 Sniper
An undetected sniper fires on the player.

2x Regular: A sniper with a 4d dice pool fires at the player.

3x Veteran: A sniper with a 5d dice pool fires at the player.

4x Expert: A sniper with a 6d dice pool fires at the player.

5x Master: A sniper with a 7d dice pool fires at the player.

x8 Enemy Artillery
An unexpected enemy artillery barrage hits the player's position. Note that other players might be affected if they are in close proximity of the player triggering this result.

2x Short Mortar Barrage. An Intensity 4 mortar barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 1 combat round.

3x Short Artillery Barrage. An Intensity 5 artillery barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 1 combat round.

4x Longer Mortar Barrage. An Intensity 6 mortar barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 3 combat rounds.

5x Longer Artillery Barrage. An Intensity 7 artillery barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 3 combat rounds.

x9 Friendly Artillery
An unexpected friendly artillery barrage hits the player's position. Note that other players might be affected if they are in close proximity of the player triggering this result.

2x Short Mortar Barrage. An Intensity 4 mortar barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 1 combat round. Rolll Cool+Mental Stability or lose 1 Will.

3x Short Artillery Barrage. An Intensity 5 artillery barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 1 combat round. Rolll Cool+Mental Stability or lose 1 Will.

4x Longer Mortar Barrage. An Intensity 6 mortar barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 3 combat rounds. Rolll Cool+Mental Stability or lose 1 Will.

5x Longer Artillery Barrage. An Intensity 7 artillery barrage hits, centered on the player, lasting 3 combat rounds. Rolll Cool+Mental Stability or lose 1 Will.

x10 Horror of War
The player is confronted with the horrors of war as a friendly (or, if no friendlies about, enemy) combatant is killed in a particularly gruesome fashion near the player. The player is likely to be sprayed with the combatant's blood and guts. The player must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll, with the usual results applying.

2x Head Shot: The victim is shot through the head. Roll Cool+Mental Stability.

3x Disemboweled: The victim is disemboweled. He lies screaming in fear and pain as he dies. Roll Cool+Mental Stability at Difficulty 3.

4x Decapitated: The victim is decapitated. Roll Cool+Mental Stability at Difficulty 5.

5x Dismembered: The victim is destroyed by artillery, leaving behind dismembered body parts. Roll Cool+Mental Stability at Difficulty 7.

Luck Roll

Related to the FUBAR Roll is the Luck Roll. The Luck Roll allows the GM to determine, randomly, which player is affected by some random happenstance on the battlefield.

The GM can use the Luck Roll to determine the player affected by a FUBAR Roll, in the case where it either doesn't make sense to apply the FUBAR Roll to the player whose roll triggered it, or in order to spread the bad luck around.

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Usually, though, the Luck Roll is used to determine the player affected by the enemy in the normal course of a scene. The Talents walk into a minefield and a mine detonates. Who stepped on it? An *Übermensch* has a choice of three Talents to shoot. Which one does he choose? The Luck Roll offers a random method of determining who is the recipient of bad luck (or, who escapes unscathed due to good luck).

Each player rolls his or her character's Base Will as a dice pool, to a maximum of 10d. They are looking for matching sets, as normal. The "loser" is the player with the lowest Height. If the player failed to make a set, their height is zero. When Height is tied, the Wider set wins (the narrowest set loses). If the Height and Width still match, and you still need to break the tie, look at the highest "garbage die" (the highest die rolled that isn't part of a set). The player who's highest garbage die is the lowest loses. If there's *still* a tie, continue to look through the garbage dice, highest to lowest. Use the garbage dice to break ties among players who didn't roll a matching set.

Fortunately for Talents, they are usually "luckier" than normal troops due to their high Base Will scores. The players should consider this when building characters.

Example: On the way back across the Mussolini Canal, the characters blunder into a minefield on the far bank of the canal. The GM rolls for the minefield's Density, and gets a 3x8 result. A German S-mine detonates. Which character stepped on the mine?

Each player rolls Base Will as a dice pool. Gavin rolls 2x8, Dustin rolls 3x6, Dennis rolls 2x1, and Alana and Mark each fail to roll a matching set. Alana's highest garbage die is 9, Mark's is 7. Mark detonates the mine.

Option: The FUBAR Token

At the beginning of each game session, the GM has a FUBAR Token. This could be anything small and distinctive: an old shell casing, a World War II-era coin, a vintage ration book receipt, a photo of your grandfather from the war, whatever you want. Youn need only one FUBAR Token. During play it will get passed back and forth between the GM and the players.

If the GM has the FUBAR Token and a player suffers a FUBAR result, the FUBAR results apply normally. The GM then gives the players the FUBAR Token.

If the players have the FUBAR Token, any player can give it back to the GM. That has one of two effects, player's choice:

- A FUBAR result applies to an NPC instead of a player character. This must be done before the GM rolls the FUBAR result.
- The player handing it back changes a single injury to his or her character into a flesh wound that does only 1 Shock. This must be done immediately when the injury occurs; it can't be done later. The near brush with death or maiming triggers an automatic Cool+Mental Stability roll by that character, with the full penalties if it fails.

Which NPC is affected by a transferred FUBAR result? It ought to be an NPC who was directly attacking or being attacked by the character who just rolled FUBAR. If no NPC fits that description, it's up to the GM. If the NPC is a Talent, it triggers a Contest of Wills between the FUBAR Will total and the NPC. Don't spend time playing this out; simply compare the FUBAR Will total with half the NPC's Will total. If the FUBAR total is higher, the FUBAR applies and the NPC loses half his Will. Otherwise it does not.

If at the end of the game session the players hold the FUBAR Token, then the one player character who in the eyes of the players suffered the worse FUBAR results of the session gets one bonus experience point.

Skill Additions

Most of these rules detailing the use of several crucial skills first appeared in *Talent Operations Command Intelligence Bulletin No. 2: Talent Operations in the European Theater,* by Dennis Detwiller. The Intimidation and Parachuting rules first appeared in the adventure *Donar's Hammer* by Shane Ivey. The Skiing rules first appeared in *Black Devils Brigade* by Allan Goodall.

(Brains) Explosives

You are familiar with explosive devices and can use (and disarm) them in the field. Preparing an explosive for detonation is always a difficult task, and the results of an Explosives roll are very particular—if there are time constraints, failing a roll may result in a mistimed detonation or failure to detonate altogether. If you have plenty of time and good materials, you still need to roll, but any match is considered a success.

Circumstances	Difficulty
Must set up charge in less than a minute	+2
Raw explosive, no primer	+2
Constructing a booby trap	+2
Enemy materials	+1
Under fire	+3
Familiar with explosives/good materials	–2
Leisurely setup (measured in hours)	–5

Roll	Result
No matches, all dice are low	Charge detonates as you set it up
No matches	Charge does not detonate
Roll under difficulty (odd)	Charge detonates late
Roll under difficulty (even)	Charge detonates early
Roll difficulty or higher	Charge detonates properly

(Brains) First Aid

First aid can be used to treat wounds that are not serious enough to require surgery but still pose a threat to the individual. You can heal Shock damage on a successful roll. Killing damage cannot be reduced with First Aid.

First, choose which hit location to treat. Roll

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Brains+First Aid, using the amount of Shock damage in that location as the difficulty. Add modifiers from the chart below. Success removes the width of the roll in Shock points from that location. Each treatment takes 5 – Width rounds. You can successfully treat each hit location only once.

Treating curable diseases (such as dysentery, the rot, and malaria) or other unhygienic conditions (like lice, tics, and fungal infestations) requires a successful Brains+First Aid roll at a fixed difficulty of 3.

Effective first aid is often limited by your supplies. The standard-issue first aid kit contains very little equipment and can generally be used only once. A medic's pouch is much larger. It usually contains:

- 6 gauze bandages.
- 1 book of "triage" tags and a pencil.
- 4 small bottles of Tincture of Iodine
- 1 large bottle of ammonia.
- 5 tourniquets.
- Forcep case with scalpel, scisscors, clamps, pins.
- 1 bone knife.
- Adhesive plaster and wire for splints.
- Morphine (8 treatments), atabrine, atropine, aspirin, cocaine hydrochlorate, sulfa, vitamin C pills.

One of the most useful tools for the medic is morphine. It relieves pain and calms the wounded man (particularly one who has failed a Mental Stability check), and can keep him from drawing fire or hurting himself further. A succesful application of morphine offsets the penalty for treating a patient who has failed a Mental Stability check.

Circumstances	Difficulty
No supplies	+2
First aid kit only	+1
Medic's pouch	+0
Field hospital	–1
Under fire	+2
Patient failed a Mental Stability check	+1

(Brains) Forward Observer

You can evaluate the location of a target and communicate that location to a gun battery or command post. Forward Observer can never be higher than your Map Reading skill.

It takes 5 – Width minutes to conduct. The GM might require a Brains+Radio Operation roll to report the coordinates quickly under fire.

Depending on your army's artillery techniques, the height of your roll may reduce the difficulty of the battery's initial attack. See the chart below. Note that Soviet guns generally had their fire preplotted hours or days in advance. They changed targets based on a forward observer's call so infrequently or slowly that we don't bother with rules for it.

Once the shelling begins, you can correct its fire with another successful Brains+Forward Observer roll; reduce the artillery's difficulty by the Width of your roll. The gun battery takes 5 – Width minutes to adjust its fire.

The exact response and composition of the battery are up to the GM. Most fire in groups of 2 to 8 guns.

Army	Response Time	Artillery Difficulty
American	5 – Width minutes	10 – F.O. roll's Height
British	5 – Width minutes	10
German	30 minutes	10 – F.O. roll's Height
Japanese	5 – Width minutes	10 – F.O. roll's Height
Soviet	n/a	n/a

(Command) Intimidation

In addition to frightening people and making them back down, Intimidation can be used to interrogate an unwilling subject. It is an unpleasant, time-consuming process. There is no room here for a detailed discussion of the dynamics at work. Suffice to say that it is ultimately a contest of personalities and will. Unlike the purely mental Contest of Wills between Talents, however, individual decisions and skill play a large part.

Browbeating or the mere threat of torture might be enough to make a captive talk. Roll a dynamic contest of the interrogator's Command+Intimidation against the captive's Cool+Mental Stability. If the interrogator wins, the captive talks (and loses half his Will). It takes about 30 minutes per attempt.

Torture

If "softball" interrogation is not enough, the players may resort to torture. Remind them that torturing another human being enough to break his spirit is a brutal thing, and it is likely to sap the torturer's spirit and rob him of Will.

If they continue, no skill roll is required; simply roll Cool+Mental Stability for the victim. If it succeeds, he doesn't break. If it fails, he loses half his Will and tells the players what they want to know. Note that we didn't say he tells the players the truth. He says anything that he thinks will make the pain stop. Usually that's a mix of truth, desperate lies, and the imaginings of a tormented mind.

Either way, now the torturer must roll Cool+Mental Stability with the Height of the victim's roll as Difficulty. If it fails, the torturer loses half his Will and is too shaken up to do anything useful for the next 15 minutes.

A torture attempt takes 10 minutes per die in the victim's Cool+Mental Stability pool.

Deadly Threats

Holding a gun to a captive's head and threatening to shoot (or a knife to the throat, etc.) triggers a Cool+Mental Stability check for the target.

If it succeeds, he doesn't talk. If the interrogator shoots a resisting captive in order to impress the next subject, the killer must make a Cool+Mental Stability check as well, with results as described under Torture, above—but the next captive will hold out only if his Cool+Mental Stability check has Height at least the size of the interrogator's Command+Intimidate pool (i.e., a Command+Intimidate pool of 6d means a Difficulty of 6).

The "Killing Disposition"

Torture, like cold-blooded murder, is easier for characters who have become inured to violence and death. If you use the "Killing Disposition" rules from the supplement *Will to*

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Power, you may opt to not even require a Mental Stability check for a torturer with a Killing Disposition pool of 6 dice or more; the same factors that make individuals willing to kill—training, temperament, cultural and social distance, authoritative demand, group absolution—make one more ready to inflict pain for a purpose. Captives of Japanese *Gaki* or SS *Übermenschen* may learn this the hard way.

(Command) Leadership

You are trained in the principles of leading men in combat. With a successful Command+Leadership roll, you can motivate a number of men equal to the Height of your roll to overcome the shock of failed Mental Stability checks and continue to move or attack. Leadership may also be used proactively to motivate troops to brave particuarly dangerous enemy fire in the first place. It takes 5 – Width rounds.

(Brains) Mortar

You can fire and maintain mortars, and you can direct mortar fire by correcting the angle of fire by eyesight or with forward observers. Designate a particular target point and check the result below for the results. Anyone in the open facing a mortar barrage must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll or immediately retreat for suitable cover.

Target Disposition	Difficulty
Indirect (cannot see the target)	+2
No exact map location given	+2
Moving target	+2
Target is very close (half of close range)	+2
Target is marked with smoke	–1
Heavy weather (rain, wind, snow, fog)	+1 to +3

Roll	Result	Difficulty Next Round
No matches, all dice are low	Lands among allies	+2
No matches	Lands wild	+1
Roll under difficulty (odd)	Lands long	+0
Roll under difficulty (even)	Lands wide	+0
Roll difficulty or higher	Lands within 10 yards	–1
Roll twice the difficulty or higher	Lands exactly on target	–2

(Coordination) Parachute

World War II parachutes had only rudimentary controls. Parachutists landed at speeds around 30 mph. Injuries, particularly broken legs, were not uncommon.

When a character parachutes out of an aircraft, roll Coordination+Parachuting on landing to see if the character injures himself. If the roll succeeds, the character takes 1 point of Shock to both leg locations. If the character fails to make a success, he takes 2 points of Shock to all hit locations. If the character botches (no matches, and all dice rolled 5 or less), the character landed on bad terrain. Roll 10d. Each die rolled indicates a hit location that takes 2 points in Killing.

(Brains) Radio Operation

You can use military crystal radio sets. Most man-portable sets have a range of less than 8 miles, while fixed sets sometimes have a radius of hundreds of miles. Under stressful circumstances, each transmission requires a successful Brains+Radio Operation roll beating the difficulty number. If you get a match but fail to beat the difficulty, the transmission is received but garbled.

Radio Situation	Difficulty
Mountainous country	+2
Under fire	+2
Enemy is jamming the frequency	+3
Transmitting from a high point	–2

(Body) Running

You can ordinarily run up to 10 yards per round plus twice your Body stat without having to make a roll. If you need to cover more ground than that—up to five times as much—roll Body+Running. Uneven or wet terrain increases the difficulty of the roll. If the roll succeeds, you cover the necessary ground in 5 – Width rounds. If it fails, you take the full amount of time at normal running speed. If it fails and all the dice are below 6, you lose your footing, trip over a root or brick, run into an unseen obstruction, or otherwise get left in the lurch and probably in the open.

Note that aimed fire is impossible while running full-speed unless you conduct a successful multiple action—otherwise, use the rules for cover fire.

(Coordination) Skiing

The Skiing skill covers the ability to move and conduct combat operations on cross-country skis. It's impossible to run in deep snow (unless you have a Talent, of course); therefore the Running skill is not available in deep snow. If a character has skis, use the Skiing skill. The Skiing skill is also used to determine a safe descent down a mountain slope, and to survive an avalanche.

(Body) Swimming

You can stay afloat and pull yourself through the water without difficulty. Under particularly stressful circumstances, you must make a successful Body+Swimming roll. The GM decides the number of rolls needed (based on distance) and the difficulty (based on encumbrance and other conditions). If you fail, you sink. Roll again to resurface and keep swimming. Fail this second roll and you begin to drown (see p. 25). A successful roll allows you to resurface.

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(Brains) Tactics

You are trained in the theory and application of military tactics. Common applications of the Tactics skill include setting up a defensible position, setting up an ambush, and breaking an enemy line.

Setting up a defensible position requires a successful Tactics roll to make the most of your surroundings and resources. It takes 5 – Width hours. It can be done in minutes or even rounds, but each reduction in time adds +2 difficulty to the roll.

The enemy commander must beat the height of your roll with a Tactics roll of his own. If he fails, your troops obtain surprise attacks for a number of rounds equal to the amount that his roll failed by. During this period the enemy can only run, dodge, dive for cover, or conduct cover fire.

If the enemy commander beats your difficulty, he overcomes your defenses and hits you where you least expect it. Your troops can only offer up cover fire, dodge, run, or dive for cover for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which he succeeded.

Setting up an ambush works as above, except that if the enemy fails to beat your Tactics roll, his troops must make Mental Stability rolls or run for cover for each round that they are surprised.

Breaking an enemy line works just like setting up a defensive position—you must overcome the enemy commander's Tactics roll as a difficulty number.

The following modifiers apply to the height of a successful Brains+Tactics roll. They apply only to setting up an ambush or defensive line. If the opponent has similar forces or weapons, the modifier is lost. These defenses are considered in the abstract; you get only one bonus for each defense no matter how many tanks or trenches or guns you actually have. It takes 5 – Width minutes to direct a large number of men, array tanks, string wire, or assemble machine guns.

Type of Defense	Height Modifier
60 or more men	+4
Tank(s)	+3
Barbed wire and/or trenches	+2
Machine guns	+2
15 or more men	+1
Night	–1
Enemy territory	–2
Surrounded	–3
4 or fewer men	–4

(Brains) Telephony

You can use and repair military voice, crank, and battery operated telephone sets. You know how to run and connect wire, as well as conceal it from enemy eyes, and can cross-wire sets to ring and answer at multiple locations simultaneously. You can detect tampering on a line with a Brains+Telephony roll at difficulty 3; beat a difficulty of 6 and you can locate which portion of the line is being tampered with.

Character Creation

One of the first questions fans asked when *Godlike* first appeared was how to create non-TOG characters. Here are guidelines, including some examples, by Dennis Detwiller, Allan Goodall, and Shane Ivey.

Custom Characters

To recap from **Part Three: Character Creation,** a standard TOG commando player character gets six points to add to statistics (each stat starts at 1), 19 free commando skills, 20 elective skill points, and 25 Will points to spend on powers or to add to Base Will. Each character also gets his or her native language at a level equal to Brains, and characters with high Brains get a few bonus Brains skills. No skill can start with a level higher than its associated stat.

For a customized character, all stats start at 1 and you have 6 points to improve them (none higher than 4). You get 20 elective skills. You get your native language equal to Brains and the usual bonus Brains skills for having a high Brains score.

You also have a budget of 65 character points.

You can spend character points to improve stats or skills, or to gain a starting Will point budget.

The number of stat dice you can add with character points is restricted by the theme of your campaign. In the default Gritty mode of *Godlike* play, no character can add more than 3 points to stats by spending character points. In the Heroic mode the limit is 6 points. In the Four-Color mode it's 9 points.

No stat can start higher than 4 in the Gritty game mode. In Heroic and Four-Color games stats can go up to 5.

No skill can start higher than its associated stat.

If you don't spend any character points on Will points, you're playing a normal person with no Talent abilities.

Improvement	Character Point Cost
+1 in a stat	5
+1 in a skill	2
+1 starting Will point	1

Custom Character Templates

The GM is encouraged to come up with new sets of 'Basic Training' skills for different character types, which amount to mandatory skills and maybe even mandatory stats if the character types are truly exceptional. Reduce the character point budget accordingly.

Here are two examples. The first, the Special Instruction School of the U.S. Marine Corps (the "Devil's Own") is detailed in *Talent Operations Command Intelligence Bulletin No. 3: Talent Operations in the Pacific Theater*. The skill lists here are slightly different from the write-ups in that booklet, adapted for these custom character template rules.

The second, the joint U.S.-Canadian First Special Service Force, recruited lumberjacks, woodsmen, hunters, mountain climbers and park rangers and gave them intense training for mountain assaults, airborne drops, and com-

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mando raids. The Force specialized in difficult terrain and deadly stealth. Like the SIS, the Force was one of a small handful of U.S. outfits to keep its Talents in-house rather than having them sent off to TOG Teams.

USMC Special Instruction School

All Talent graduates of the Marine Corps' brutal Special Instruction School on Parris Island (the "Devil's Own") gain the following skills.

Marine Corps SIS Skills	Dice
Antitank Rocket	1
Brawling	1
Endurance	1
Grenade	1
Knife-Fighting	1
Machine Gun	1
Map Reading	1
Navigation (Land/Sea)	1
Pistol	1
Rifle	1
Run	1
Stealth	1
Swim	1
Survival (Jungle)	1
Tactics	1

In addition, each graduate picks one of the following options:

- **Typical SIS graduate:** +1 to Body; 25 Will points for powers and Base Will.
- **Specialist:** choose a specialty and its listed bonuses; 20 Will points for powers and Base Will.

As usual, no stat can start higher than 4 and no skill can start higher than its associated stat.

SIS Specialist Skills—Corpsman	Dice
First Aid	2
Medicine	1
Mental Stability	1
Run	1

SIS Specialist Skills—Engineer	Dice
Engineering	1
Explosives	2
Flamethrower	1
Mortar	1

SIS Specialist Skills—Radioman	Dice
Electronics	1
Hearing	1
Radio Operation	2
Telephony	1

SIS Specialist Skills—Sniper	Dice
Rifle	1
Sight	1
Stealth	2
Survival (Jungle)	1

First Special Service Force

Talents in the FSSF add +1 each to Body, Coordination, and Cool (though none can start higher than 4), and they gain the following skills in training. They also get 20 points in elective skill and 10 Will points for powers. (That's for consistency with these rules; the campaign book *Black Devils Brigade* starts them with 20 Will.)

FSSF Skills	Dice
Antitank Rocket	1
Brawling	1
Climb	1
Endurance	1
Explosives	1
Grenade	1
Knife-Fighting	1
Machine Gun	1
Map Reading	1
Mortar	1
Navigation (Land)	1
Parachuting	1
Pistol	1
Radio Operation	1
Rifle	1
Skiing	1
Stealth	1
Submachine Gun	1
Survival	1
Tactics	1

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Talents

These new Talent powers, extras and flaws by Dennis Detwiller appeared in the *Godlike* sourcebook *Will to Power.*

New Miracles

These new powers cover some of the areas missed in the first printing of the rulebook.

Plasticine Touch

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Plasticine Touch Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You have the ability to modify the state of objects and people by manipulating their molecular structure. This means you can make bricks as soft as taffy, cause a regular wood wall to be as hard as armor plate, cause guns to wilt like dying flowers, or render an opponent harmless by converting his bones to the consistency of liquid. You must touch the target to transform it and this effect is purely temporary, it ends when you cease concentrating on the target. You can plasticise up to your lift in pounds (see page xx) with your power—the power can affect portions of targets at no penalty.

The difficulty of the alteration depends on the hardness of the material.

Hardness Table

Hardness	Substance
0	Liquid
1	Goo, Jell-O
2	Rubber, human flesh
3	Glass, wood
4	Copper, tin (LAR 1)
5	Iron (LAR 2)
6	Knife blade (LAR 3)
7	Hardened steel file (HAR 2)
8	Armor plate (HAR 4)
9	Corundum (HAR 8)
10	Diamond (HAR 10)

The Width of a successful roll indicates the amount of shift possible on the Hardness Table. You may increase the Width after the roll by spending Will points at a 1 to 1 ratio. Causing objects to become more malleable (such as changing gun barrels to the consistency of rubber) works the same way, but in reverse. Note that most weapons won't fire if changed in such a manner—the firing pin would be as rubbery as the rest of the gun!

> **Example:** Craig has Plasticine Touch at 4d+1wd. He throws his dice and scores three 2s, and with his 1 Wiggle Die, makes it four 2s. He can shift anything of the hardness of Iron (Hardness 5) up to four steps on the Hardness table in either direction. So he could take something with the hardness of rubber (Hardness 2) and make it as resistant to damage as a knife blade (Hardness 6). Or, he could take something like a gun (Hardness 7) and make it as fragile as glass (Hardness 3) by shifting it down 4 steps.

Changed items appear the same, except for a change in their structural state (so a gun changed to rubber would look like metal, but would bend like rubber). Shifting objects up in density increases their resistance to damage, and shifting down in density increases their susceptibility to damage. Objects over Hardness rating 6 have Heavy Armor ratings, while objects between 4 and 6 have Light Armor ratings—anything beneath 3 had no armor rating at all. Check the chart to determine the level of Armor granted (or subtracted) from a changed target. (Round Armor numbers up to the nearest possible number.)

> **Example:** Craig wants to change his jeep windshield to the consistency of armor plate to block a volley of bullets. He rolls a 10, 10, 6 and a 2, and he makes his Wiggle Die a 10. So he has 3x10, and he spends 2 Will, so he can shift the hardness of the windshield up or down 5 levels. Craig transforms the glass of the windshield (Hardness 3) to the consistency of armor plate (Hardness 8.) The windshield looks normal, but now has a Heavy Armor rating 4.

> **Example:** Craig wants to make a tank vulnerable by reducing its armor's resistance to damage. The tank has a Heavy Armor rating of 6 (rounded up to Hardness 9 since that's the listing for HAR 8, and you round up.) Craig rolls a 7, 7, 5 and a 2, and makes his Wiggle Die a 7, giving him a 3x7 roll. He reduces the armor of the tank to Hardness 6, making the once strong HAR 8, into a measly Light Armor Rating of 3. Once immune to small arms fire, the tank is now a target!

Using this power on living targets is a bit different. This attack is a multiple action. Roll the either Body+Brawl or Plasticine Touch (whichever is lower) with a 1 die penalty. If you get two matches, the enemy is subject to your power.

Once you hit the target, the shift works the same, but its effect is a little unusual. When you target a living being with this power and shift them up or down in Hardness, all their stats, skills and powers decrease by that amount. If the target's Body stat hits 0 or lower due to the shift, the target takes 1 Shock point of damage to the head and torso per round until the attack stops. This represents either the target suffocating because it's difficult to breathe when your lungs are the consistency of metal, or the target's suffocating because his body has the consistency of Jell-O, and lungs need ribs to work.

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Example: Craig sneaks up behind a guard and nails him with his power, rolling a 3x6. Craig decides he'll shift the guard up to the consistency of Iron (Hardness 5) on the table. The guard is frozen in place, unable to move or act, since the 3 width has reduced all his stats and skills to 0. He also suffers 1 Shock point of damage to his head and torso until the power wears off. On the up side, his skin now has a LAR of 2, but it doesn't really matter, because in eight rounds, the guard will be dead. Due to his new "state" he'll remain standing for some time.

Extras

Multiple Targets (+2/+4/+8): You can split your Plasticine Touch dice between as many targets as you like.

No Touch (+1/+2/+4): You do not need to touch an object to plasticise it. You can make such attacks as solo actions.

Flaws

Only Harder/Softer (-2/-4/-8): You can only move objects in one direction on the Hardness Table, either up or down, pick one.

Size Shift

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Size Shift Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You can cause yourself or any object you can touch to grow or shrink—including people. Touch the target, get a success, and the object grows or shrinks. This shift costs 1 Will point per die thrown, 2 per Hard Die and 4 per Wiggle Die (you can always choose to throw fewer dice). Objects and people remain in their new size state for Width in minutes, but only one object per touch is allowed to change. (This means if you shrink a soldier, only his body shrinks—not his gun, clothes or helmet.) You must touch the specific target you wish to shift.

Enlarged people add the Width of the Size Shift roll to their Body score (to a maximum of 10), and lose that amount from their Coordination (to a minimum of 1), for as long as the shift remains. In addition, they gain the equivalent amount of Extra Damage boxes to every hit location for as long as the shift lasts. When the effect vanishes, these damage boxes vanish as well, along with any damage contained in those extra boxes.

People and objects shifted upward in size grow in multiples of the Width of the roll. (Optionally, if you want extra "realism" you can multiply height by the width and weight by the width cubed, to reflect the fact that volume changes on a different scale than height; see the Size Tables.) All qualities of the object (Damage, Penetration, Heavy Armor, etc.) are multiplied by the Width of the success to determine their new rating.

Example: Tiny Tom throws his Size Shift of 7d to make himself grow, and gets a 10, 10, 10, 3, 4, 1,1, 5, 6 for a 3x10. He spends 7 Will, gains 3 points of Body (making his Body score 6d), loses 3d from his Coordination (making it 1d), and gains 3 extra hit boxes to each hit location.

Tom is usually 6' tall and 180 lbs, but his Size Shift has made him grow 3 times his normal size (equal to the Width of the roll). Tom is now 18' tall, weighs 4,860 lbs, can lift up to 1 ton and can cause Killing damage with his hands, for 3 minutes. Oh, and he's naked.

Example: Tiny Tom throws his 7d Size Shift dice to make a tank grow to monstrous size. He gets a 2x10, spends 7 points and the tank grows. It is now 2 times its size—growing from 20 feet long and 10 tons to 40 feet long and 80 tons! Its Heavy Armor Rating of 6 is now 8 and it causes twice the amount of damage it usually would—if someone was big enough to operate it, that is....

Minimized people are treated the same as enlarged people, except they lose the Width of the success from Body and Coordination, and from all physical skills except Stealth. Anyone reduced to 1/8 size or smaller treats all attacks against them as if they hit all hit locations simultaneously, because they are so small. In addition, Shock damage is automatically counted as Killing damage. This damage remains when the target reverts to normal size. Divide the height of minimized objects by the Width of the Size Shift roll and reduce weight accordingly. Divide all qualities of the object by the width of the activation roll to determine their new rating.

On the plus side, objects that are very small can be hard to hit and hard to spot. Add the Width of Size Shift to the shrunken object's Coordination+Stealth dice pools and apply it as a Difficulty for all attacks against him.

Example: Tom throws his Size Shift of 7d to shrink an SS Mann to doll size. He gets a 4x6, spends 7 Will, and the SS Mann loses 4d from his Body and Coordination, reducing both to 1. The SS Mann, usually 5'9" and 160 lbs, is now about 10 inches tall and 2.5 pounds. The next round Tom stomps on the SS Mann, rolling his Body+Brawl of 7d for a 2x10. Because of his tiny size, the SS-Mann suffers 2 Killing points of damage to every hit location instead of only 2 Shock to his head.

Extras

Bumping (+2/+4/+8): For every 2 extra Will points you dump into your activation roll, you bump your Width up one level (this extra Width does not add to the cost of the activation roll). You must choose how much you spend before your roll however. On a failure Will point risked in such a manner are lost.

Everything at Once (+2/+4/+8): Your power affects an entire object—if you target a person, you can Size Shift him,

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clothes and all, without individually targeting each item. This includes yourself.

Flaws

One or the Other (-2/-4/-8): You can only Size Shift in one direction, up or down, your pick.

Self Only (-2/-4/-8): You can only Size Shift yourself—not your clothes or equipment or weapons, just your body. Or as a -1/-2/-4 variant, you can shift yourself and your clothes and weapons, but nothing that you're not carrying or wearing.

Optional Size Table: Enlarged

Width	Height	Weight
2	x2	x8
3	x3	x27
4	x4	x64
5	x5	x125
6	x6	x216
7	x7	x343
8	x8	x512
9	x9	x729
10	x10	x1,000

Optional Size Table: Minimized

Width	Height	Weight
2	1/2	1/8
3	1/3	1/27
4	1/4	1/64
5	1/5	1/125
6	1/6	1/216
7	1/7	1/343
8	1/8	1/512
9	1/9	1/729
10	1/10	1/1,000

Unconventional Move

Qualities

Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat.

Unconventional Move Table: Can Defend

Die Type	Point Cost to Purchase
Each Die	5
Each Hard Die	10
Each Wiggle Die	20

You have the power to move in an unconventional and very specific manner. For example, if your character dug through the ground like a giant mole, swung on webs like a spider, or rode on a sled made of ice, he would choose Unconventional Move as a power, and modify it to fit his needs.

If you want to move super-fast with this ability, buy and attach Super Speed to it, otherwise consult the following table to determine your speed when using your ability.

Unconventional Move Table: Top Speed

Dice	Top Speed (Miles/Hour)	Top Speed (Yards/Round)
1	7	5
2	15	10
3	22	17
4	30	22
5	37	27
6	45	35
7	52	40
8	60	45
9	67	50
10	75	55

The default cost includes all four qualities, and allows you to:

1) Use your power to gobble dice in Defense (by moving out of the way of an attack).
2) Carry a single passenger along with you when you move (this is counted as an attack).
3) Use your power in any location (this is the Robust quality).
4) Use your power for things other than movement. For example, with webs, you might be able to construct a trap; by digging, you might be able to build an aqueduct, etc. (This is the Useful Outside of Combat quality.)

If you wish to modify the score so it's cheaper, you can remove qualities. Some guidelines for building your own version are presented below.

Unconventional movement powers that carry the user in the air or under the ground must be bought with the Defends quality (since it's much more difficult to hit someone underground or above your head). Similarly, any power that can move yourself and others must have the Attacks quality (since you can snatch up other people with your power.) Unconventional Movement powers that can be used under any condition must have the Robust quality, and powers that can do things other than move you must have the Useful Outside of Combat quality.

Example: Butch has the ability to ride a wave of dirt like a surfer. His power has all the qualities and is rated 6d. This means he can move at about 35 MPH, block incoming attacks (by making the wave deflect them) and carry up to one extra person along with him on the ride, whether they like it or not (this is the Attacks quality.) His power is usable under any conditions (Robust) and can be used to loosen dirt or collapse tunnels (the Useful Outside of Combat quality).

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Extras

Destructive (+2/+4/+8): Anyone in your power's wake suffers the width of your activation roll in Shock and Killing damage. You can also aim to "hit" a target with your power with a successful roll.

Multiple Passengers (+1/+2/+4) (+5 Per Passenger): You can snatch up multiple passengers in your movement power.

Flaws

Clear Trail (-1/-2/-4): Your power leaves behind a very clear trail, easily followed by your enemies. What that trail is, is left up to you to determine, but it must be clearly visible to incur the reduction in cost.

Set Distance (-1/-2/-4): You can only travel in set increments of distance. Your power cannot travel less than that distance. In other words, if you start your power, you will travel a minimum of that distance, no matter what you do.

Straight Line (-1/-2/-4): You can only move in a straight line, when you stop, you must pause 1 turn and then roll again to move in another direction.

New Extras

These new Extras expand the usefulness of nearly any Talent power.

Area Aura (+4/+8/+16)

Your Talent aura covers an area equal to your dice pool x 4. If other people are within that range, Talents attempting to detect you will not be able to tell whether you or they are the Talent, until you do something which gives you away that is…

Doubler (+3/+6/+12)

When activated, this Extra doubles your power's effects without doubling the Will costs (if there are any), the downside is, you take a point of Shock damage to the head each round you use it. This Shock damage must be healed with bed rest—it does not get 'shaken off' at the end of combat.

If you fill your head with Shock damage, you fall unconscious and lose all your Will points.

Engulf (+5/+10/+20)

Your attack power inflicts its damage on all the hit locations on a target, when you successfully hit the target that is.

Friendly Fire (+2/+4/+8)

This Extra is a godsend in close combat. Your power will affect only your enemies, not friendlies or neutral parties on the battlefield. Whether this means your attack will zig-zag around a good-guy and then hit the enemy, or pass straight through a friendly without any effect, remains up to you.

Locked On (+4/+8/+16)

Your attack power "locks" onto any target you can see with a single successful attack roll. From that point on, unless you choose to roll again, you may hit that target over and over again in the same place for the same amount of damage as your initial roll—as long as you can see it.

Obscured (+2/+4/+8)

Your Talent power is difficult to look at—to other Talents that is. When you use your ability, all attack rolls against you by other Talents must be a difficulty of 4 or more to successfully hit you, due to the blinding Talent aura around you. This aura only exists when you are actively using your powers, however.

Rev-It-Up (+3/+6/+12)

You can covertly build your power up without really activating it. You can roll your power as many times as you like, until you get a match. This means with Flight for instance, you can lift off at your top-speed without making a roll the round you use your power (as long as you made a successful one earlier), or with Containment you can roll over and over again, picking your best roll to use when the power is activated. Talents watching you will not notice this "build-up" until you actually activate your power…

Safety (+2/+4/+8)

Your power looks out for you. If it fails under less than perfect circumstances (such as say, your Flight power failing at 2,000 feet), it will do the minimum necessary to get you to safety before cutting out. This Safety works for all transport powers.

Seeking (+2/+4/+8)

Your attack power will "hunt down" the target of your attack, if you miss them with your first attack roll that is. Your attack will loop around and swing back towards their target. Treat this as a "free" second attack roll for each individual attack—you don't have to pay attention to it, it just happens…

New Flaws

These Flaws restrict the use of nearly any Talent power, and scrape up a few more Will points for character creation.

Beacon (-4/-8/-16)

Your Talent power is like a beacon when activated. Other Talents can sense it at more than 200 yards, whether they can see you or not. You can only take this Flaw once, and if you have a power that is "Always On," you must take it for that power (so that your "Beacon" is Always On as well).

Can't Hurt People (-2/-4/-8)

Your power can't target people at all—Talents are included in this restriction.

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Can't Interfere (-2/-4/-8)

You can't spend Will points to interfere with the Interfere Flaw, Goldberg Scientists machines, Transmuted items or other Talent effects. You can only take this Flaw once, and if you have a power that is "Always On," you must take it for that power (so that your "Can't Interfere" is Always On as well).

Direct Feed (-2/-4/-8)

Whatever the Width of your power's activation roll is, you lose from your Will point total. The better you roll, the more you lose.

Glow (-1/-2/-4)

When you use your powers, your body glows for the Width of the activation roll in rounds (in combat) or minutes (outside of combat). While you're asking yourself why this is a Flaw, consider the following question: Who would you shoot at first, the regular grunt or the glowing guy?

Go Last (-2/-4/-8)

Your power, no matter what you roll, always goes last in combat.

Loopy (-2/-4/-8)

After you activate your power, you can't take another action until you make a successful Cool+Mental Stability roll. Your power disorients and confuses you—without this successful roll, you wander around in a stupor. You can try again every five minutes or every round if someone is actively trying to shake you out of it.

Loud (-1/-2/-4)

Your power makes an incredible and quite distinctive racket, audible for many hundreds of yards.

Shocking! (-2/-4/-8)

Whatever damage your power causes, you take it as Shock damage to your body (on whatever hit location the attack emerges from). If you hit a target for 3 Shock and 3 Killing points of damage with a burst of energy from your arms, you would suffer 6 Shock points of damage to your arms.

Uneven (-2/-4/-8)

Your power sometimes becomes weak for no discernable reason, at the GMs discretion. It doesn't fail, just loses matches out of its set to a minimum success.

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GODLIKE SUPERHERO ROLEPLAYING IN A WORLD ON FIRE, 1936-1946

Squad Name or Number: _____

NPC #	Rank	Name	Weapon/Damage	Slow	Spray	Area	Health	Morale	Notes

GODLIKE SUPERHERO ROLEPLAYING IN A WORLD ON FIRE, 1936-1946

Squad Name or Number: _____

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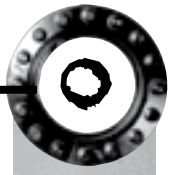

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GODLIKE SUPERHERO ROLEPLAYING IN A WORLD ON FIRE, 1936-1946

Name/Alias: _____

Sex: _____ Nation/Ethnicity: _____ Ht.: _____ Wt.: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Date of Manifestation: _____

Education: _____ Profession: _____

Motivations: _____

WOUNDS

10

5–6 3–4

7–9

2 1

Brains		Body	
Command		Coordination	
Cool		Sense	
Base Will			

05 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50

SKILLS

Skill	Attribute	Dice Pool

TALENTS

Talent	Dice	Hard	Wiggle	Spent

WEAPONS

Weapon	Spray/Penet./Area	Cap.	Dmg.	Range Close/Max
	/ /			/
	/ /			/
	/ /			/
	/ /			/
	/ /			/

ARMOR

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APPEARANCE AND PERSONALITY

PORTRAIT

NOTES

EQUIPMENT

ASSETS

MORE WEAPONS

	Spray/Penet./Area	Cap.	Dmg.	Range Close/Max
	___/___/___	___	___	___/___
	___/___/___	___	___	___/___
	___/___/___	___	___	___/___
	___/___/___	___	___	___/___
	___/___/___	___	___	___/___

MORE SKILLS

	Attribute	Dice Pool
		/
		/
		/
		/
		/

MORE TALENTS

	Dice Hard Wiggle	Spent
	___•___•___	/
	___•___•___	/
	___•___•___	/
	___•___•___	/
	___•___•___	/

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