



LEGENDS WALK!

A roleplaying game of ancient and modern superheroes

Version 2.0

Silver Branch Games

Written and designed by Tim Gray

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Playtesters: Ian Charvill, Darren Coutts, Kevin Heeley, Steve Kinley, Tim Partridge, Stefan Scrivener. Thanks to Tim Partridge and Ian Charvill for comments on the first edition text. Responsibility for any errors or confusion remains, of course, with the pixies who use my computer at night.

Sparked by an original concept by Mike Hughey in the forums at RPGnet (www.rpg.net) and informed by postings there on all sorts of subjects by a whole bunch of people.

Reference to comic book titles and characters is not intended as a challenge to copyrights and trademarks of their creators or publishers.

This book is dedicated to the everyday heroes, whose mighty powers include Compassion, Determination and Integrity: saving the world one grazed knee, house-fire and placard at a time.

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Welcome to 2nd edition!

Legends Walk was the first game I published, back in 2002. It's sold slowly but steadily, and gathered some very positive feedback. Since then I've worked on several other projects, gathering more experience, and the time seemed right to bring some of that back to LW.

The biggest change is a total layout overhaul - box-outs, clipart, etc. Content is much the same, though some wording has been tightened. The rules have had a bit of a trim down, tune up and reorganise. Other main changes:

- Pool Points reworked, tying them more closely to personality traits. More rules back-up for tensions between characters' personal, heroic and legendary lives.
- More Key Powers, drawing from the rulebook and supplements. Clearer outline of power types. Some powers tweaked.
- More on using the game in other settings and styles, both mythic and conventional. Clarified different lethality settings.
- "Inspirography" of inspiration and reference sources, previously online.

I hope you enjoy it!

Tim Gray, July 2006

INTRODUCTION

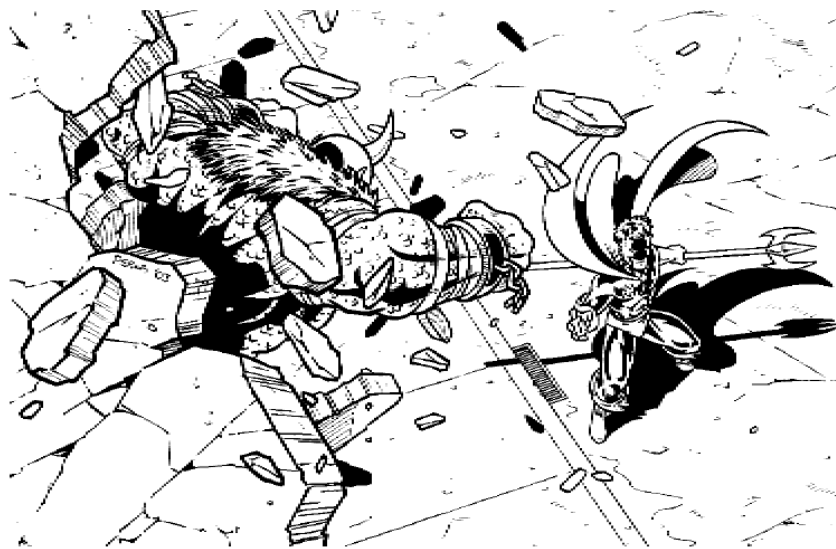
There was a rider who came across the waves with a shining sword.
There was something very fast that plucked missiles out of the air.
There was a man who hurled spears of writhing lightning, and a woman who stirred up the sea with great winds.
There was a silvery flying saucer that rained bolts of crackling energy. Eventually it crashed in the ocean, though no wreckage was ever found.
There were birds with almost-intelligible voices, hunting each other through the sky, and at least one whale picking off the smaller craft.
There was a stern-faced man walking in the air who stopped the guns from firing.

If it happened today it would probably be worse.

Hands of Wrath and Plenty: reflections on the anniversary of All Hell's Day
Sheldon J Street, *Globe Magazine*

Legends Walk! is a roleplaying game, enabling you to create exciting stories of superheroes empowered by beings from mythology. There is a set of rules, designed for simplicity, and setting information for the Legendary Earth of 2020, with notes on using it for other settings. To play, you just need pencil,

paper and about 10 six-sided dice. Oh, and a group of enthusiastic friends would help. You can focus on brave and noble heroes saving the world from the forces of evil; outcasts breaking the rules to do what's right; individuals coming to terms with changes they never asked for; or combinations of these and other elements.





LEGENDARY EARTH

It's twenty years since the turn of the millennium, when the first known metahumans appeared with abilities far beyond those of mortal men and women - and often beyond the bounds of accepted science. They are an accepted part of modern life, generally referred to as "Metas", and have brought many changes. They claim that their powers and the changes in their bodies and minds come from the gods, heroes and even monsters of mythology.

WHAT'S A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

Most role-playing games (RPGs) start with a section like this, and some of them are quite long. This one isn't. A RPG is basically a fun way for a group of people to play "let's pretend" using a particular set of rules and background/setting/game world.

The **players** (real people) each have a **character** (an imaginary person), with information about how good that character is at doing various things. The character is in a setting detailed by the **Game Master (GM)**, who describes events to the player. The player says what the character does, and the GM says what happens as a result. This often involves rolling one or more **dice** (the singular is "die"), based on information about the character, to see whether the action succeeded. As the characters interact with each other and their setting a story is woven in which the players participate through their characters.

Player characters are often referred to as **PCs**, and non-player characters (run by the GM) as **NPCs**. A **session** is a real-world measure of time, when the players get together to play, perhaps over an evening. A **scene** is a game-world measure of time when the characters pursue a set of actions at a particular location.

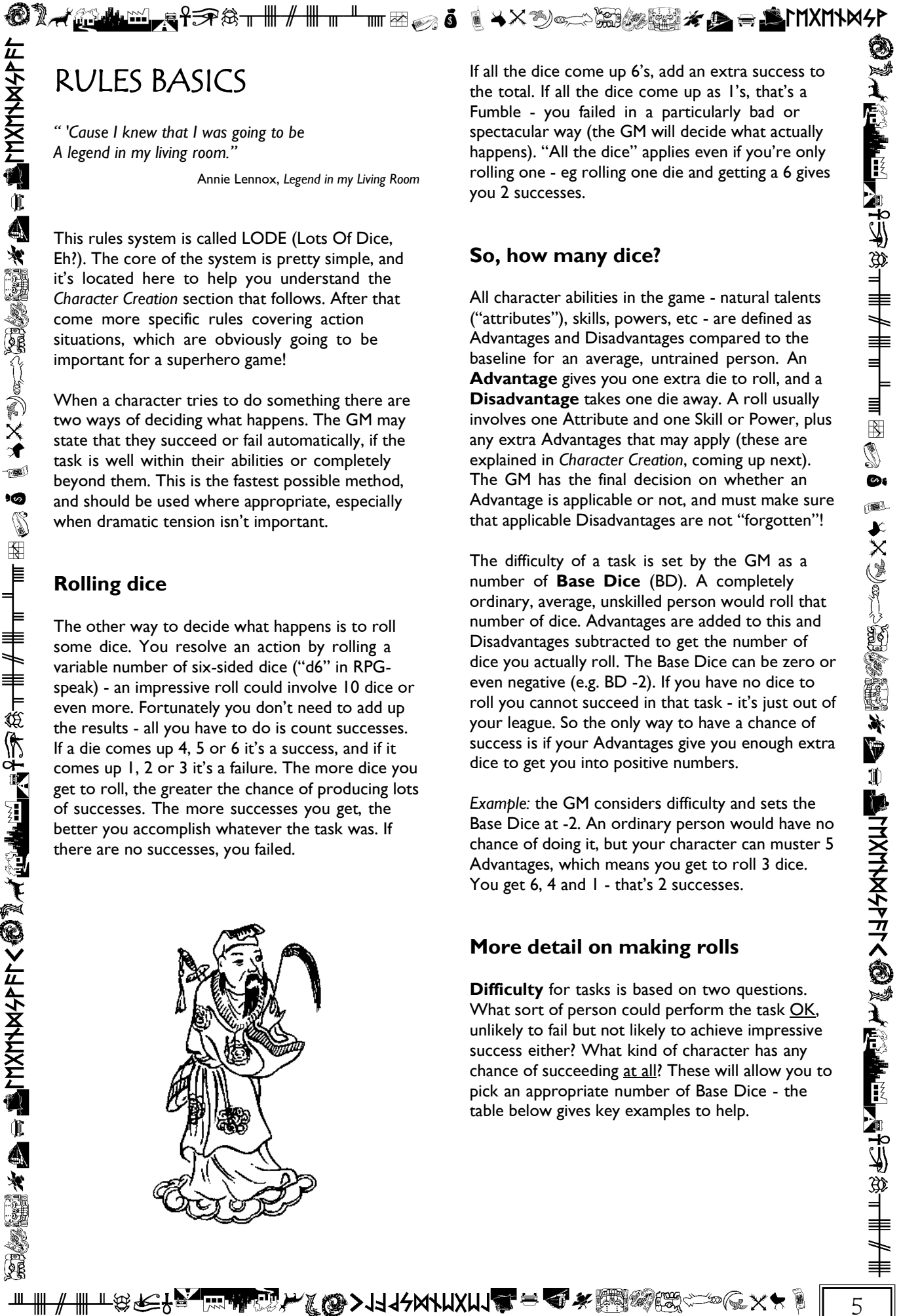
WAYS TO PLAY

The "standard" way to play *Legends Walk* is with super-characters who are granted the powers of mythic entities, in a near-future world that has been altered by their presence. However, there are lots of other possibilities. You can play different time periods within that same setting. You can also use the *LW* rules to play non-mythic supers in a present-day setting - or even as a quick and simple way to model your favourite comic heroes and have adventures in their world. There's more on this in the *Alternate Settings* section later on.

Some of them hide their identities with gaudy costumes and codenames; others take less fanciful precautions and stay in the shadows, and some operate openly. Some of them work to protect and advance humanity, others seem hostile to it and many pursue agendas of their own. Some just want to have ordinary lives, but find that fate has other ideas. Their conflicts are on a legendary scale - meanwhile "Normals" just hope to survive the crossfire.

There's roughly one Meta per million population, giving an estimated 7000 worldwide, though some countries have many more Metas per head than others. Their appearance has had a huge effect on the structure and development of society. They suddenly found themselves with the power to change the world in very direct ways, from addressing social and environmental issues to getting revenge on the school bully. Things are probably better as a result, but often they have made things worse or solved one problem only to create another. Metas have taken over the running of some countries; in other places Normals force Metas to register their powers or serve in the army or police. New nations have formed and alliances have changed. The USA holds on to the title of "superpower", but shares it with India. Technology is basically what we can see around the corner now, available to those who can pay for it, though some talented individuals push the edges of accepted physical laws. There's a city on the Moon, and several under the sea.





RULES BASICS

“'Cause I knew that I was going to be
A legend in my living room.”

Annie Lennox, *Legend in my Living Room*

This rules system is called LODE (Lots Of Dice, Eh?). The core of the system is pretty simple, and it's located here to help you understand the *Character Creation* section that follows. After that come more specific rules covering action situations, which are obviously going to be important for a superhero game!

When a character tries to do something there are two ways of deciding what happens. The GM may state that they succeed or fail automatically, if the task is well within their abilities or completely beyond them. This is the fastest possible method, and should be used where appropriate, especially when dramatic tension isn't important.

Rolling dice

The other way to decide what happens is to roll some dice. You resolve an action by rolling a variable number of six-sided dice (“d6” in RPG-speak) - an impressive roll could involve 10 dice or even more. Fortunately you don't need to add up the results - all you have to do is count successes. If a die comes up 4, 5 or 6 it's a success, and if it comes up 1, 2 or 3 it's a failure. The more dice you get to roll, the greater the chance of producing lots of successes. The more successes you get, the better you accomplish whatever the task was. If there are no successes, you failed.



If all the dice come up 6's, add an extra success to the total. If all the dice come up as 1's, that's a Fumble - you failed in a particularly bad or spectacular way (the GM will decide what actually happens). “All the dice” applies even if you're only rolling one - eg rolling one die and getting a 6 gives you 2 successes.

So, how many dice?

All character abilities in the game - natural talents (“attributes”), skills, powers, etc - are defined as Advantages and Disadvantages compared to the baseline for an average, untrained person. An **Advantage** gives you one extra die to roll, and a **Disadvantage** takes one die away. A roll usually involves one Attribute and one Skill or Power, plus any extra Advantages that may apply (these are explained in *Character Creation*, coming up next). The GM has the final decision on whether an Advantage is applicable or not, and must make sure that applicable Disadvantages are not “forgotten”!

The difficulty of a task is set by the GM as a number of **Base Dice** (BD). A completely ordinary, average, unskilled person would roll that number of dice. Advantages are added to this and Disadvantages subtracted to get the number of dice you actually roll. The Base Dice can be zero or even negative (e.g. BD -2). If you have no dice to roll you cannot succeed in that task - it's just out of your league. So the only way to have a chance of success is if your Advantages give you enough extra dice to get you into positive numbers.

Example: the GM considers difficulty and sets the Base Dice at -2. An ordinary person would have no chance of doing it, but your character can muster 5 Advantages, which means you get to roll 3 dice. You get 6, 4 and 1 - that's 2 successes.

More detail on making rolls

Difficulty for tasks is based on two questions. What sort of person could perform the task **OK**, unlikely to fail but not likely to achieve impressive success either? What kind of character has any chance of succeeding **at all**? These will allow you to pick an appropriate number of Base Dice - the table below gives key examples to help.



Talent refers to inborn abilities like strength, agility, intelligence or perceptiveness (measured as “attributes”). In Legends Walk! these can go outside the normal human range into Meta levels 1, 2 and 3. Skill refers to learned abilities like swordfighting or working in metal, and the normal progression is Basic, Professional, Expert, Master. The way characters are defined will be explained shortly, giving you a better handle on this.

Ability level	Base Dice
OK for untrained, average person	3
OK with any skill or talent	2
OK for a professional or someone with great talent	1
OK for an expert, or a Meta 1 talent; possible with any skill or talent	0
OK for a master or highly talented professional; possible for a professional or great talent	-1
OK for a talented master or a Meta 3 talent; possible for an Expert, or a Meta 1 talent	-2
OK for a master with great talent; possible for a master, or a Meta 2 talent	-3
OK for a master with Meta talent; possible for a master with talent, or a Meta 3 talent	-4
OK for a master with high Meta talent; possible for a master with great talent (normal human limit)	-5

If you're having trouble setting a difficulty, see if the commonest ones apply:

- BD 2 reflects an everyday but not routine task - anyone can try, and those with some talent or training can do it pretty well;
- BD 0 reflects something within the normal human range, but quite difficult - an average person simply can't do it, and even those who are qualified find it a challenge;
- BD -2 reflects something requiring unusual ability, which an average person wouldn't even think of trying, eg parrying bullets with a sword.

Here's how to interpret the number of **successes**:

- 1 Marginal - barely succeeded, sloppy performance, often only achieve part of your goal
- 2 Adequate - OK, but nothing to write home about
- 3 Solid - can't fault it
- 4 Impressive - congratulations are in order
- 5 Exceptional - people sit up and take notice - you're obviously a cut above the average
- 6+ Astonishing - tell your friends they can close their mouths now

Fluke Die

A roll of a single die is sometimes referred to as a Fluke Die because the result is determined more by luck than skill and there's a significant chance of things going horribly wrong. The possible results, 1-6, are: fumble, fail, fail, 1 success, 1 success, 2 successes. The GM can use this to judge the effects of sheer chance, or as a Base Dice when things could go either way.

Opposed rolls

If you're competing directly against another character's ability rather than the difficulty of a task, both make a roll and the one that gets more successes wins. The difference between the two results tells you how decisive the result is. Usually both rolls are made at BD 2, but the GM may give modifiers for circumstances.

For instance, a PC trying to charm their way past a suspicious guard might roll Subterfuge + Presence, BD 2 against the guard's Investigation + Wisdom, BD 2. The PC gets 4 successes, the guard gets 1, and the obstacle is overcome.



CHARACTER CREATION

*"You never know
If I push at this wall my hand could pass through"*

Joe Jackson, *Only the Future*

This section is about creating your character - defining what they're good at, what they're not so good at, and what abilities they have beyond those of mortal men. The blank character sheet reflects a completely average person with no skills apart from basic schooling (reading, arithmetic, etc). It's up to you to describe how your character differs from this boring, unformed state.



Process

- 1 Come up with a **concept** - the basic idea for your character. Concept includes who the character was and what they did before getting their powers, and what sort of powers they got. It might change as you go through character creation, but if you have something to aim for the GM can suggest choices to help you achieve it.
- 2 Create your character as a **Normal**, ie before they were imbued with their powers. You have points with which to "buy" Advantages, and you'll also gain at least one Disadvantage.
- 3 Choose **Meta** powers. Your concept will have given you a **power programme** which acts as a shopping list: you have a pool of points to spend on options with variable costs.
- 4 Now you have the character's abilities you **finish off** by using them to work out a few key ratings and writing down some information about the character's personality.

Concept

The first step in character creation is to get a general idea of the character. What did they spend their time doing before they got their powers? What sort of person were they? What sort of powers have they got, and how will they use them?

In this game there isn't a single long list of superpowers from which you choose freely. You have free choice of **Source** - the mythological god, hero or monster that provides your character's powers - from the lists that appear later. The GM might not want to make all of these available, so check first - in particular, it's unusual for a PC (player character) to have a monster as their Source. Each Source has a **programme** of powers, like a shopping list, and you'll have a certain number of points with which to buy powers from that list. (The programmes are listed quite a bit later on, after the action rules which will help you to understand some of the powers.)

Probably the best approach is to decide what kind of character and powers you're interested in, then ask the GM to suggest power programmes to look at - they're more likely to have read them all through! The character is chosen by the Source as someone it thinks will advance its values, so there should be some connection between the character's Normal life and Meta powers, even if the character is going to end up ignoring most of the Source's impulses.

SPANDEX, LEATHER, TRENCHCOAT...

Perhaps the most important thing to bear in mind when creating a superhero character is to make them **iconic**. That is, they must be capable of being a larger than life figure with a distinctive, recognisable appearance. If you like traditional comics fare, have a gaudy, tight-fitting costume - but if the idea of running round in tights puts you off, there are plenty of other well-established options. Just make sure your group will be close enough style-wise to work together.



- **Curse** - you hate the powers, and may actively seek to get rid of them - similar to “unwanted”, but you may feel that using them actually makes you a worse person or that people will automatically regard you as a freak or monster

(A character’s attitude can change over time - this should be discussed between the player and GM, roleplayed out, and cost at least 1 Destiny Point per point moved on the scale. Temporary mind control doesn’t count.)

Boundary

This reflects how far you'll go in pursuit of your Goals. A character might have Goals that seem noble, like bringing order and stability to the world, but be regarded as a villain because of the means they’re prepared to use to achieve them, like mind control drugs in the water supply or meeting dissent with lethal force. Conversely, someone with clearly villainous Goals might follow a code of honour that is dearer to them than life itself.

So, what guides and limits your character’s behaviour? Circle one on the sheet.

- **The Law** - the codes and systems set up by society to protect its members are there for a reason, and apply to you as much as anyone else.
- **The Greater Good** - helping people and serving justice are paramount, and that sometimes justifies operating above the law.
- **Personal Code** - you have your own rules for proper conduct, usually involving versions of honour, fairness and excellence.
- **Social Acceptability** - you wouldn’t harm anyone directly, but you’ll take opportunities to get ahead as long as “they” won’t find out (most people fall into this category, eg taking stationery from the office, being creative with information on application forms).
- **Calculation** - if the advantage to you personally outweighs the effort and risk, you’ll do it (“risk” could include losing people’s trust, for instance, which might be valuable in future).
- **Gratification** - essentially unbound, you follow your impulses without regard for the consequences - these are the people who may kill and torture for pleasure.

CHARACTER CREATION EXAMPLE

Here’s a character created from start to finish to help explain the process. Martin Egilsson is a professional baseball player in America. He becomes imbued with the power of a god most people are familiar with: Thor, the Norse god of thunder.

Normal creation

First we need to create Marty as a Normal. We already know his Occupation: baseball player. This could include Basic levels of Athletics (eg sprinting) and Medicine (first aid for dealing with injuries) Skills. We can be generous and say that his skill with bat and ball would give an Advantage for using either in combat. (Sports use is really quite different from combat use, but the Occupation is somewhat limited in the Skills it provides so he deserves a break.)

He has to take at least one pair of Quirks. For an Advantage we’ll pick Attractive Appearance - he’s handsome and rugged, and women like to watch his games. For a Disadvantage let’s pick something more unusual - he has claustrophobia, a fear of enclosed spaces. He’s a bit ashamed of this, and doesn’t like it to be known.

Now we have 7 points to spend on Attributes, Skills and Advantage Quirks. (We can get more by taking extra Disadvantages or Poor Attributes, but



LEGENDS WALK!

Character Name
Martin Egilsson
"Thunder Eagle"

Player Name

Goals

- Protect ordinary hardworking people from criminals
- Get recognition for abilities

Attitude:
 Blessing • Tool • Responsibility • Unwanted • Curse

Boundary:
 The Law • The Greater Good • Personal Code • Social Acceptability • Calculation • Gratification

ATTRIBUTES

	Poor	Average	Talented	Exceptional	Meta 1	Meta 2	Meta 3
Strength			N	M	M		
Agility			N				
Endurance			M				
Wisdom							
Ingenuity							
Presence							
Awareness							

SKILLS

Name	Occupation	Normal	Meta	TOTAL
Athletics	1	1		2
Medicine	1			1
Drive Motorbike		1		1
Fighting (Unarmed)			1	1
Fighting (Club)	1		1	2

Presence Pool
(2)

Destiny
1

Favour
0

Run **50ft**
 Base Lift **1 tonne**
 Base Jump **2ft / 6ft**

Hardness
4

Initiative **(+3)**

NORMAL ABILITIES

Nationality: American
 Occupation: Baseball player

Advantages:
 Attractive Appearance
 Iron Will (+1 Presence Pool)

Disadvantages:
 Phobia - enclosed spaces

META ABILITIES

Source: Thor
 Domain: Scandinavia, Germany, England
 Aegis: Thunder (extreme weather/no weather)

Powers:
 Baseball -
 Switch: Returns when Thrown

Baseball Bat -
 Switch: Effectiveness

Motorbike -
 Add: Flight (2)

Disadvantages:
 Pride

Weather Signs (lightning eyes and sound of thunder when stressed)

Combat moves	Roll	Base Damage
Unarmed	4	3
Bat	7	5
Ball	4	4

Resistance	Roll	Auto	Meta
Physical	3	0	1
Mental	2	0	0

Signature Moves

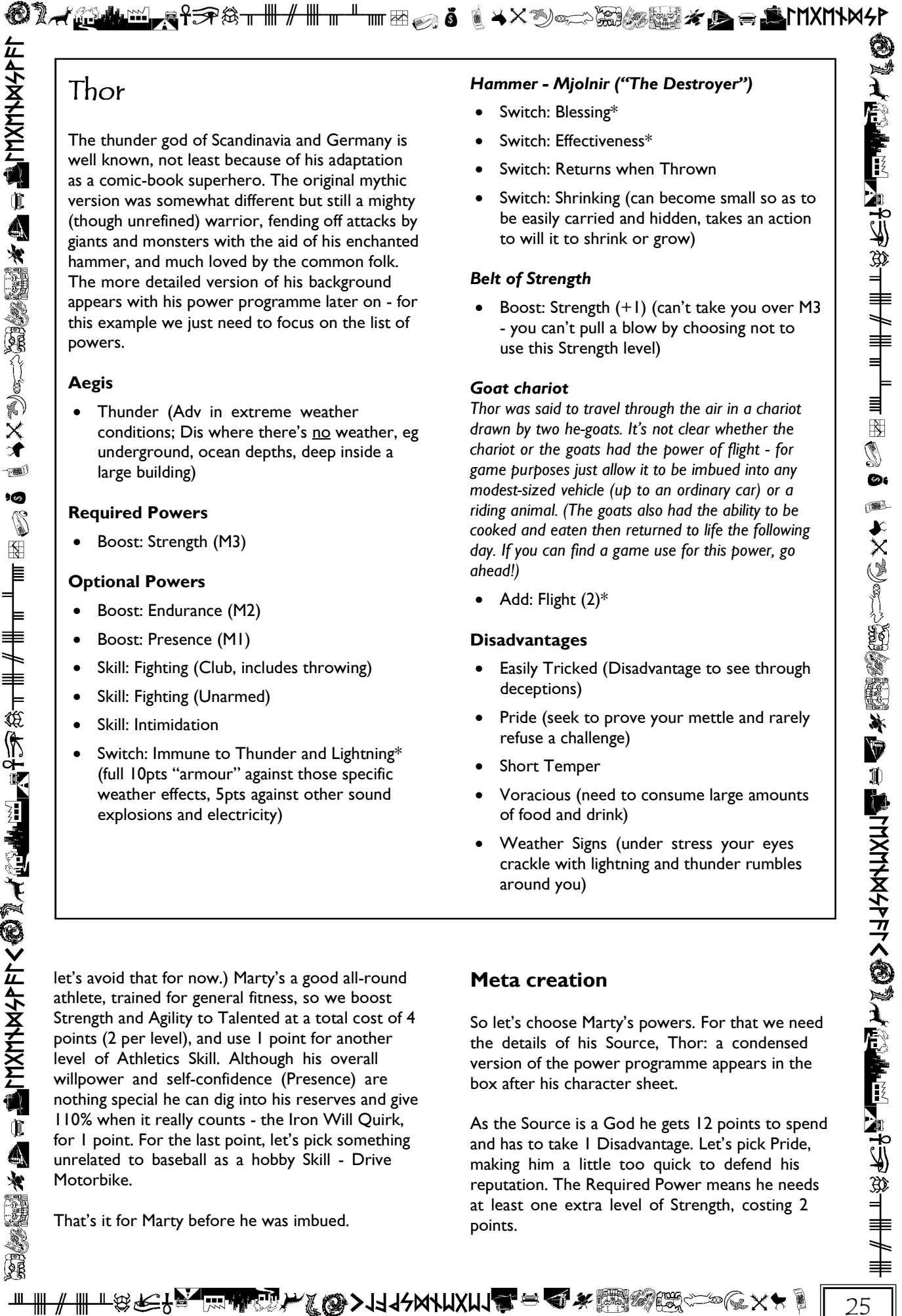
Hurts **Physical, Mental**

Injuries **Physical, Mental**

Healing limit: 2

Creation costs per level: Attribute 2, Skill 1, Advantage 1. Poor Attribute gives 2 extra points, Disadvantage 1 extra.

Creation costs per level: Boost 2, Skill 1, Switch 2, Add 3; item Boost or Switch 1, item Add 2; Disadvantage gives 2 extra points.



Thor

The thunder god of Scandinavia and Germany is well known, not least because of his adaptation as a comic-book superhero. The original mythic version was somewhat different but still a mighty (though unrefined) warrior, fending off attacks by giants and monsters with the aid of his enchanted hammer, and much loved by the common folk. The more detailed version of his background appears with his power programme later on - for this example we just need to focus on the list of powers.

Aegis

- Thunder (Adv in extreme weather conditions; Dis where there's no weather, eg underground, ocean depths, deep inside a large building)

Required Powers

- Boost: Strength (M3)

Optional Powers

- Boost: Endurance (M2)
- Boost: Presence (M1)
- Skill: Fighting (Club, includes throwing)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Intimidation
- Switch: Immune to Thunder and Lightning* (full 10pts "armour" against those specific weather effects, 5pts against other sound explosions and electricity)

Hammer - Mjolnir ("The Destroyer")

- Switch: Blessing*
- Switch: Effectiveness*
- Switch: Returns when Thrown
- Switch: Shrinking (can become small so as to be easily carried and hidden, takes an action to will it to shrink or grow)

Belt of Strength

- Boost: Strength (+1) (can't take you over M3 - you can't pull a blow by choosing not to use this Strength level)

Goat chariot

Thor was said to travel through the air in a chariot drawn by two he-goats. It's not clear whether the chariot or the goats had the power of flight - for game purposes just allow it to be imbued into any modest-sized vehicle (up to an ordinary car) or a riding animal. (The goats also had the ability to be cooked and eaten then returned to life the following day. If you can find a game use for this power, go ahead!)

- Add: Flight (2)*

Disadvantages

- Easily Tricked (Disadvantage to see through deceptions)
- Pride (seek to prove your mettle and rarely refuse a challenge)
- Short Temper
- Voracious (need to consume large amounts of food and drink)
- Weather Signs (under stress your eyes crackle with lightning and thunder rumbles around you)

let's avoid that for now.) Marty's a good all-round athlete, trained for general fitness, so we boost Strength and Agility to Talented at a total cost of 4 points (2 per level), and use 1 point for another level of Athletics Skill. Although his overall willpower and self-confidence (Presence) are nothing special he can dig into his reserves and give 110% when it really counts - the Iron Will Quirk, for 1 point. For the last point, let's pick something unrelated to baseball as a hobby Skill - Drive Motorbike.

That's it for Marty before he was imbued.

Meta creation

So let's choose Marty's powers. For that we need the details of his Source, Thor: a condensed version of the power programme appears in the box after his character sheet.

As the Source is a God he gets 12 points to spend and has to take 1 Disadvantage. Let's pick Pride, making him a little too quick to defend his reputation. The Required Power means he needs at least one extra level of Strength, costing 2 points.



We might come back to that, but some of those Items look interesting. Let's go for a baseball imbued with Returning (Item Switch, cost 1), a bat imbued with Effectiveness (cost 1), and a Harley Davidson motorbike that can fly - we want it to be fast, so it's Flight (2) (Item Add, 2 levels, cost 4). That's just 4 points left. He hasn't got any Endurance Advantages yet, so let's have a level of that (cost 2). We can expand his combat Skills with levels of Fighting (Unarmed) (cost 1) and Fighting (Club) (cost 1).

All the points are spent, but we've missed out on some of those Attribute Boosts. Without his gear, Marty's not that powerful. We'll take a second Disadvantage - Flashing Eyes - for another 2 points and buy an extra level of Strength, taking it up to Meta 1.

Finally, in a pun on his surname, Marty decides to call himself Thunder Eagle. He adapts a leather jacket and some sports gear into a costume of sorts and goes out to make the world a better place.

Finishing off

For **Initiative**, the only Attribute that contributes to the bonus is Talented Agility (1), added to his highest combat Skill which is bat/club (2) for a total of +3. This isn't great - he won't be acting more than once per round - but it's still a useful edge.

His **Presence** is Average, so the Pool would just be 1, but the Iron Will Quirk bumps it up to 2. **Destiny** starts at 1, **Favour** at 0.

From later rules we see that he doesn't quite manage to increase his all-out **Run** above the basic 50ft. His Strength, though, gives a **Base Lift** of 1 tonne (1000kg) - he can manage this easily, and more with effort. **Base Jump** also benefits from Strength: 2ft per success high, 6ft long.

For **Hardness**, his Size is normal so no points there, but he gets 3 from his Strength Advantages contribute 3 points. This will allow people to punch or throw him through wooden panels, plasterboard and such, but not stonework.

As an example of an entry in the **combat summary box**, let's look at his bat attack. His Advantages for combat rolls include 1 from Agility, 2 from Skill and 2 for the bat's Effectiveness,

totalling 5. So at the usual Base Dice of 2, he'll be rolling 7 dice to hit. Base Damage hasn't been explained yet - it's under *Basic Combat* - but he'll get 2 for the bat and 3 for his Strength Advantages, totalling 5. For perspective, that means a decent hit could kill an ordinary person fairly easily. He'll have to be careful fighting Normals.

For **Physical Resistance** his Talented Endurance gives him 3 dice to roll. He doesn't have anything to give an Auto success, but because that Endurance Adv is Source-granted he gets 1 in the Meta column. **Mental Resistance** goes off Presence, and as he has nothing special there it's just the basic 2 dice.

For the **Personality** elements I've picked fairly standard hero stuff. He got his powers when some criminals were causing problems with his team - perhaps extortion, drugs or bribing them to throw games. Marty's first "mission" was to put a stop to it, so his powers were a useful tool, and now he's seen what he can do he feels a responsibility to help more people. He still has that urge for spotlights and adulation once in a while, though.

That's our first hero finished!

Comments

Character creation involves a certain amount of juggling - once you see what you end up with you often want to go back and change things. In this case I could go back to Marty's Normal stage and buy another level of Endurance with a negative Quirk and some juggling, as that's out of step with his Strength.

Investing heavily in Items has hurt his abilities in other areas. Taking some extra Presence, for example, would have been a good thing. His player will probably look to improve his combat skills over time. Nevertheless, he's a pretty hard hitter and could be interesting to play. How will he deal with media interest, especially if he "goes public"? Will he be able to combine playing baseball and fighting crime, or will continued absences get him thrown off the team? He'll probably get thrown off anyway if his unfair advantages are discovered, or maybe he'll make that decision for himself. If he was serious about a secret identity he could start coaching in some small town - or he might go into the hero business full-time.



FLYING BODIES, FRAGILE STREETS

The superhero genre is full of characters knocking each other flying and causing massive property damage. This section gives you the rules to put that in your game.

Hardness

An object or material's Hardness is basically its resistance to damage. Look for the example closest to the object in question. If the object's thinner or flimsier than the standard example you can lower the Hardness by 1, and if it's thicker or sturdier raise it by 1.

- 2 Misc: water and other fluids
- 1 Misc: jelly-like materials, soft snow
- 0 Misc: ordinary glass (eg house window), corrugated cardboard box, light plastic, thin ice crust, ordinary clothing
- 1 Wood: light board (eg interior door, light furniture, partition wall)
Misc: electronic circuitry, most domestic goods of rigid plastic, soil, heavy fabric
- 2 Wood: heavy board (eg wall, floorboards, exterior door, heavier furniture, crate), small tree (up to about 3 inches diameter)
Misc: toughened glass (eg car windscreen), thick rubber, goods of flexible or solid plastic, ice sheet (up to about an inch thick)
- 3 Wood: tree trunk (up to 1½ft across), telegraph pole
Metal: thin light metals (eg aluminium or thin steel, car bodywork), light chain, sword
Stone: crumbly rock (eg sandstone, chalk), mortared brick wall, road surface
Misc: medium rope, reinforced plastic (eg boat hull), ice wall (up to about 1ft thick)
- 4 Wood: large tree trunk (up to 10ft across)
Metal: strong metal sheet or tube (eg lamp-post, security door, metal shipping container), firearms, medium chain
Stone: ordinary rock (eg limestone), concrete wall
Misc: bulletproof glass



- 5 Metal: cast iron or steel (eg fire hydrant, car engine block), heavy chain, thin special alloys
Stone: hard rock (eg granite), reinforced concrete wall
- 6 Metal: armoured steel (armoured car, tank, bank vault door), special alloy plate
- 7-8 Exotic alloys, diamond (breakable by only the very strongest Metas)

Imbued objects take their normal Hardness or effectively have unlimited Hardness, depending on the situation. The common factor is that they can't be broken. So if (by some strange chance) there was an imbued brick wall, characters colliding with it would take the same damage as if it were any other brick wall but would never break through it. Similarly, imbued objects are capable of breaking through materials that would normally be too Hard, if thrown or swung with enough force.

Motion Force

Sometimes an object or person has energy that makes it travel through the air, eg if it's thrown or hit really hard. That's **Motion Force** (MF), measured as a number of points. If the object flies in an unobstructed path it will travel up to this number of points in distance levels, then fall to the ground (however far that is). If it hits something on the way that's a Collision - see below. Motion Force reduces over distance until it's used up. So if something with MF 5 travels 25 feet (distance level 2) and then hits a wall, its MF at the time of collision is 3.

KEY POWERS

This is a non-exhaustive list of powers, collected together here because they crop up frequently and/or require longer write-ups. (Programmes contain many other powers explained on the spot.) Key powers are marked with a “*” in Sources’ programmes so you know to refer back here.

All-Knowing

This Switch can be used once per scene. The character meditates for a Full action, drawing on universal knowledge, and can ask the GM one question which must be answered “yes”, “no” or “maybe” (the latter is used for occasions when it’s impossible to give a definitive reply within the terms of the question).

The GM can opt to make more detailed information available, perhaps in return for a Destiny Point - but obviously they need to make sure the plot isn’t short-circuited, so the availability of this option will be variable.

Alter Properties

This is a powerful Add, giving very wide scope for rewriting reality. It can alter the properties of an object or being - making metal railings brittle, making fire burn without heat, rendering explosives inert, making a weak person strong or a fierce animal docile, or even conferring new abilities. It doesn’t change the target’s shape or transform it into a different substance. (The railings, for instance, would still be iron - just weird iron.) The balance to this power is that its effects only last a short while before ordinary reality reasserts itself.

The roll is Add + Presence, BD 2, modified for range, number of targets, etc as usual. The base level works on a Small (2) target, and extra Size levels give Disadvantages. The first success gives 1 Intensity for 1 round; extra successes can be spent for extra intensity or extra rounds. (In many cases you won’t need to apply both.) A single level of intensity will add or subtract a property from a neutral position, though multiple levels may be needed to quantify the change if there’s resistance to overcome. To turn a property into its opposite takes 2 intensity levels. For instance, the GM could rule that a road surface is known for being hard and unyielding, so a character would need 2 intensity to make it a nice cushion for a fall.

Power	Type	Page
All-Knowing	Sw	64
Alter Properties	Add	64
Animal Connection (specify)	Sw	65
Armour	Sw	65
Beauty	Sw	65
Blessing	Sw	65
Breach the Wall of Death	Sw	66
Claws, Fangs, Horns, etc	Sw	66
Control (specify)	Add	66
Control Disease	Add	67
Craft Wonders	Add	68
Creation	Add	69
Curse	Sw	65
Effectiveness	Sw	69
Eloquence	Sw	69
Fast Heal	Add	69
Fertility	Sw	69
Flight	Add	70
Fury	Sw	70
Healing	Add	71
Immortal	Sw	71
Immunity (specify)	Sw	71
Intelligence	Sw	71
Knowledge of the Dead	Sw	71
Languages	Sw	71
Leaping	Sw	72
Lightning Reactions	Sw	72
Magic	Add	72
Master of (specify)	Sw	72
Master of Skills	Add	72
Master of the Gate	Add	72
Night Vision	Sw	73
Raven’s Fare	Sw	73
Reincarnation	Sw	73
Run Like a Horse	Sw	73
See Future	Add	73
See Righteousness	Sw	74
Sense Death’s Presence	Sw	74
Shapeshift	Add/Sw	74
Size	Add/Sw	75
Speed	Add	75
Summon Minions	Add	76
Swim Like a Fish	Sw	77
Time Distort	Add	77
Time Sense	Sw	77
Underworld Sense	Sw	77
Universal Energy	Sw	77
Warding	Sw	78
Wild Luck	Sw	78

LIST OF SOURCES

The Greek Pantheon

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Gods

Aphrodite - love, lust and beauty	86
Apollo - light, healing and prophecy	87
Ares - war, rage and destruction	88
Artemis - hunting, wilderness, animals	89
Athena - wisdom, crafts and war	89
Dionysus - wine, ecstasy and plants	91
Hades - death and the underworld	92
Hephaistos - metalworking and fire	93
Hermes - travel, speed, commerce	93
Hestia - home, hearth, protection	94
Poseidon - water and earthquakes	95
Zeus - sky, weather, rulership	96

Heroes

Achilles - fierce, super-resilient warrior	97
Hercules - super-strong hero	97
Odysseus - capable, cunning voyager	98

Monsters

Gorgon - petrifying reptile-woman	99
Harpy - pestilent, ravenous bird-women	99
Hydra - regenerating many-headed reptile	100

The Norse Pantheon

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Gods

Balder - beautiful invulnerable youth	103
Frey - fertility and peace	103
Freyja - passion, fertility and battle	105
Heimdall - watchman of the gods	106
Loki - cunning trickster and shapeshifter	107
Odin - wisdom, battle and rulership	108
Thor - thunder; mighty warrior	110
Tyr - war, justice and oaths	111

Heroes

Norns - guardians of fate and luck	112
Valkyries - warrior choosers of the slain	112

Monsters

Dwarfs - clever subterranean smiths	113
Fenrir - giant, ferocious wolf	113
Giants - powerful elemental enemies	114
Jormungand - colossal serpent	115

The Celtic Pantheon

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Gods

Aonghus mac Óg - youth, beauty, time	117
Bran - giant king and protector	117
Brigid - poetry, healing and smithcraft	118
Cernunnos - horned master of animals	119
The Dagda - multi-talented father god	120
Epona - horses, animals, fertility	121
Goibhniu - smithing and craftwork	122
Lugh - shining master of all skills	123
Manannan - wise sea-lord and sorcerer	124
The Morrigan - battle, fury, fear, death	125
Nuada - silver-armed king	126
Ogma - orator and champion	127

Heroes

Arthur - legendary king	128
Cúchulainn - furious warrior	129
Fionn mac Cumhail - canny adventurer	129
Merlin - famed magician and seer	130
Robin Hood - virtuous outlaw	131

Monsters

Brownie - small, rustic domestic faery	132
Fachan - misshapen thug	132
Fomor - brutish pirates	133
Redcap - vicious little goblins	133
Spriggan - ugly, shapeshifting faery thieves	134
Water Horse - shapeshifting predator	134

Angels

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Gabriel - messenger and communicator	135
Michael - righteous warrior	136
Raphael - wise healer and protector	137
Uriel - watcher over hidden knowledge	137

GMs, you might find it useful to make this page available to players to help with choosing a Source during character creation.

(Other Sources appear in supplements.)

You may copy this page for personal use.

can travel through pipes at speed of normal water, seep under doors, etc or stay in humanoid shape - changing takes a Full Action and a Ingenuity roll, BD 2, fumble traps you in current form for the scene - your Base Damage uses (Presence - 1) instead of Strength - 6pts armour against most unarmed and weapon attacks, damage is mostly fatigue from pulling your body back together - Dis to Resist heat and cold - an attack causing Motion Force will disperse the water form, flowing back together again takes Full Actions rolling Control Water + Presence, BD 2, until you accumulate successes equal to the MF)

Trident

- Switch: Earth Splitting (+3 Base Damage against natural rock, +1 against refined minerals like metal or concrete)

Disadvantages

- Needs Water (take Need Hurts until you have immersed yourself in water)
- Vengeful (if wronged or slighted you will go to unusual lengths to get revenge - may need wisdom roll to let it go)
- Water Signs (taken once, your body oozes water under emotional stress; taken twice, it does it all the time)

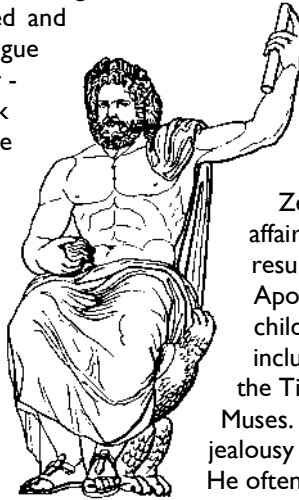
Zeus

Zeus was the god of the sky and everything in it - wind, clouds, rain and thunder. He lived in the upper air and on mountain-tops. He became the supreme god, protector of all Greece, all-knowing and all-powerful. He was kind and compassionate to mortals, punishing the wicked but protecting the weak and those in danger. He was usually depicted as a mature man with a robust body, grave face with deeply set eyes, thick waving hair and finely curled beard, wearing a long mantle. His emblems were the oak and the eagle. His weapon was the thunderbolt.

Zeus was the youngest son of the Titans Cronus and Rhea. For fear of losing his throne to them, Cronus swallowed each of his children as soon as they were born. When Zeus arrived Rhea wrapped a stone in swaddling clothes to give to her husband

and had the baby raised in secret. When grown he arranged for his father to be given a draught which made him vomit up the other gods. They overthrew Cronus, casting him to the depths of the universe. The other Titans tried to take back

their kingdom, but after ten years of battle that shook all of creation they were chained in the depths of the earth. After defeating other primal monsters Zeus imposed his order on the world.



Zeus had several wives and numerous affairs with other goddesses and mortals, resulting in many children including Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Ares and Hephaistos. The children of his second wife, Themis (Law), included the Seasons, Justice and Peace. With the Titaness Mnemosyne he produced the nine Muses. Finally he ended up with Hera, whose jealousy was a continual threat to his conquests. He often approached these women in a shape other than his own, to deceive, impress or carry them off. He also sometimes changed them into other forms to shield them from the wrath of other deities. His Roman counterpart was Jupiter.

Aegis

- Sky (Adv in high places, Dis below ground level)

Required Powers

- Add: Control Weather (all) (2)*

Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Endurance (+1)
- Boost: Wisdom (M1)
- Boost: Presence (M3)
- Skill: Leadership
- Switch: Shapeshift (Eagle)*
- Add: Shapeshift (2)*

Disadvantages

- Authoritarian (you tend to order people about, and expect them to obey)
- Distracted by the Opposite Sex (Dis against supernatural or mundane influence based on appearance or attraction - may sometimes need Wisdom roll to refrain from pursuing)
- Weather Signs (minor weather changes happen around you when under emotional stress)

SETTING: LEGENDARY EARTH

"As I have learned since, I was not the first anomaly to exist... but on that day of my freedom in 1939, this world had its first confrontation with the fantastic. The golden age of miracles would begin, and in the years to come, the world would know the presence of the unnatural and extraordinary as part of reality."

The original Human Torch, *Marvels*
Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross, Marvel Comics



THE WAY OF THE WORLD

Legendary Earth is the "default" setting for Legends Walk. Its inhabitants don't know it by that name, of course. It is a world much the same as our own - perhaps strange occurrences and abilities have always been a more definite part of its history, but the main divergence point is the public appearance of metahumans in the year 2000. Rolling forward to the setting's present of 2020, some things have changed while some have stayed stubbornly the same. Humans who can lift trucks and melt steel are still humans.

Changing the world

There is, in general, less human misery and ecological devastation. For instance, logging and burning in the Amazon rainforest has been forcibly stopped except for acceptable quotas (which remain a topic of heated debate); drought-stricken areas now have oases of green; international financiers take decisions very carefully, company directors treat their workers more fairly, and bureaucrats remember the people they serve

Designer's note

While I was working on *Legends Walk*, the more I thought about it the more the timescale and the presence of Metas affected the world - and so *Legendary Earth* was born. You might prefer to set your games in a present-day world essentially the same as our own instead, to give a more normal, familiar background so that the Metas will stand out even more. In that case you'll obviously have to juggle a few things, but many of the ideas here could still be used in some form. Notes on other possible settings follow the "standard" setting write-up.

Comicbooks usually allow superheroes to make routine use of teleporters and spacecraft and spawn new doohickeys by the hatful without having the slightest effect on the lives of ordinary people. (Comic worlds also have time passing at multiple rates at once, allowing historical events to have limited effects on characters who don't age. Try not to think about it.) There's a screen of plot and suspenders between the two. Players, however, being inquisitive creatures that get into everything, may ponder these issues. You might enjoy a speculative, "what if?" game - or you might prefer to concentrate on conflicts between characters with the minimum of distractions.

because they've been told they're being watched. Meta abilities can be used quickly and directly to make a difference.

If only things were that simple. Altering the weather in one place has consequences that may stretch to the global scale, and there may be many Metas messing around with it at any time. This has led to freakish storms called Maelstroms, and other conditions in places that wouldn't normally get them, including some chilling "natural" disasters. There are now a number of Metas with weather control abilities who see it as an important part of their role to limit the activities of their fellows. There are even some environmentalists (disillusioned or otherwise) who actively campaign against Metas. Forcing changes on businesses or governments can lead to people losing their



Mexico

At the millennium the United Mexican States had the world's largest Spanish-speaking population and the capital, Mexico City, was the world's largest city by population. In 2003 a group of Metas apparently imbued by Aztec and Mayan deities took over Mexico City (site of the former Aztec capital Tenochtitlan), declaring it the centre of a new "Empire of the Sun". It was not a bloodless coup, and once accomplished they celebrated by sacrificing 100 people including the Mexican president and several military commanders. A USA military mission to take them out, supported by the international community, was cancelled after another hundred were killed with the threat to repeat this each day. The Empire agreed that future sacrifice would be limited to criminals and volunteers. They quickly took control of all of Mexico, and have established "protectorates" elsewhere in central America.

Through cunning and foresight, and occasional displays of power, they have endured the hostile opinions of nations and idealistic Metas. Their government is not recognised by the United Nations, but they don't much care. In mid-2005 they agreed to supply the USA with oil in spite of the UN embargo - this is kept low-profile, limited in quantity, and surrounded by diplomatic protocols from the US side, but commentators still dubbed it "the deal with the devil". It buys the Empire a degree of acceptance from its larger neighbour.

The Empire leaders have clearly been infected by their Sources' idea of needing blood and hearts to keep the universe going, but this is tempered by modern sentiments. They genuinely care about the welfare of the people as a whole, though they curtail individual liberties. The laws require strict standards of behaviour, but don't regulate morality in the same way as those of other countries - for instance, public arena fights are acceptable, including bouts between Metas. On the surface, Mexico City has improved a lot over the last two decades. Relatively few major crimes are committed - but this is mainly because being found guilty of one will get your heart cut out on live TV. People are not officially permitted to leave. From time to time some do get away. Those who are found by US authorities are sent back.

Citizens can also volunteer for sacrifice, getting a year of luxury in return, with the final ceremony

televised (tastefully, of course). This is popular among those stricken by poverty, who sometimes elect for immediate death with the benefits transferred to their family.

Africa

The Organisation of African Unity (formed in 1963) became the African Union in 2001, with the general goals of increasing co-operation between countries to achieve a better life for the people of Africa, working in a broadly similar way to the European Union. Africa had many problems: the HIV/AIDS pandemic, international debt, trade restrictions by more developed countries, lack of universal health needs like water and sanitation, lack of transportation and communication infrastructure, and a bewildering diversity of cultures and languages. Individual African nations were seen as lacking financial and military power, leading to their concerns being sidelined at international meetings, but the Union started to overcome that, using Africa's vast mineral wealth as a lever. There has been a renewed drive to get what's best for Africa rather than what other bodies feel like handing down.



Resources ploughed into renewable energy development, particularly solar generation, have created autonomous power points in villages without requiring power distribution systems or polluting fossil fuel plant. New buildings in towns and cities often include energy efficient technologies too, made easier by not having to convert old systems. Africa also has a lot of land which can be used for wind turbines. The Union is looking into the possibilities of energy export. Well implemented low-tech solutions have equal footing, and are often the most appropriate for a rugged environment without nearby technical support.

The Greystone-Walker Company, an Anglo-American family business with long-standing interests in Africa, has assisted with many of these. Its Afrikomp range of computers were designed to stand up to sand, forest and temperature extremes, with minimal power requirements and using low-cost components and software. Basically, they get the job done without unnecessary frills and allow available resources to get technology out



ALTERNATE SETTINGS

The default setting outlined in this book is a near future in a world significantly altered by the presence of metahumans. But perhaps you fancy something a bit different. Here are some suggestions.

For all of these the GM can fine-tune the power level. If you want to make it high-powered, which should give Metas a big effect on the setting, stick with the normal points. For subtler superhumans who are less able to overpower facets of the setting, reduce points. The lower end should be like those for First Century characters and Scions, based around 4 points and a possible Disadvantage for an extra 2.

HERE AND NOW

Most superhero comics and games are set in something closely resembling the real world of the present day. Characters swing across the skyline of New York, or of a fictional city closely resembling those we know. The timeline tends to assume that the first superheroes appeared around the 1940s (there might, perhaps, have been a few earlier ones, but they weren't public) and were involved somehow in the Second World War, with their numbers growing up to the present day.

The central principle, really, is that things don't change. Metahumans don't take over countries, dismantle nuclear arsenals or end world hunger; personal teleporters don't become consumer items. Having said that, a lot of interesting series have looked at these ideas: for instance, what happens when the super-people get fed up of being reactive and start tackling problems at the root? In general the message has been that it goes wrong for them, because humanity has to tackle its problems as a species, in its own time. So the mainstream, at least, says that although costumed demigods have been among us for decades it hasn't made that much of a difference. That in itself seems a bit implausible, but one can see that in the comic world their presence is what has allowed things to be the same: if they hadn't been there we'd have been enslaved by parallel Earths or digested by giant aliens or smashed by asteroids.

Mythic supers

If you want to use the *Legends Walk* idea of mythically powered heroes but in a Here And Now setting, it should be pretty easy. The rules side will work just the same. You simply drop the *Legendary Earth* section as a description of the way things are. However, you'll probably find it useful as a source for ideas to drop into your setting. Maybe someone's developed a floating island like the ones in Telenesia. Maybe a major opponent is a powerful organisation with an alterant creation programme. In particular, think about the idea of legacy: when did supers first appear? Were they different back then? How have the public regarded Metas over the years?

Non-mythic supers

But maybe you don't fancy all this mythology stuff and just want to use *Legends Walk* as a framework for a more traditional supers game. That's cool too.

The basic system will work fine for this. Obviously you'll have to throw away some specifically mythic bits, like Gate Modifiers and Favour. The limiting

