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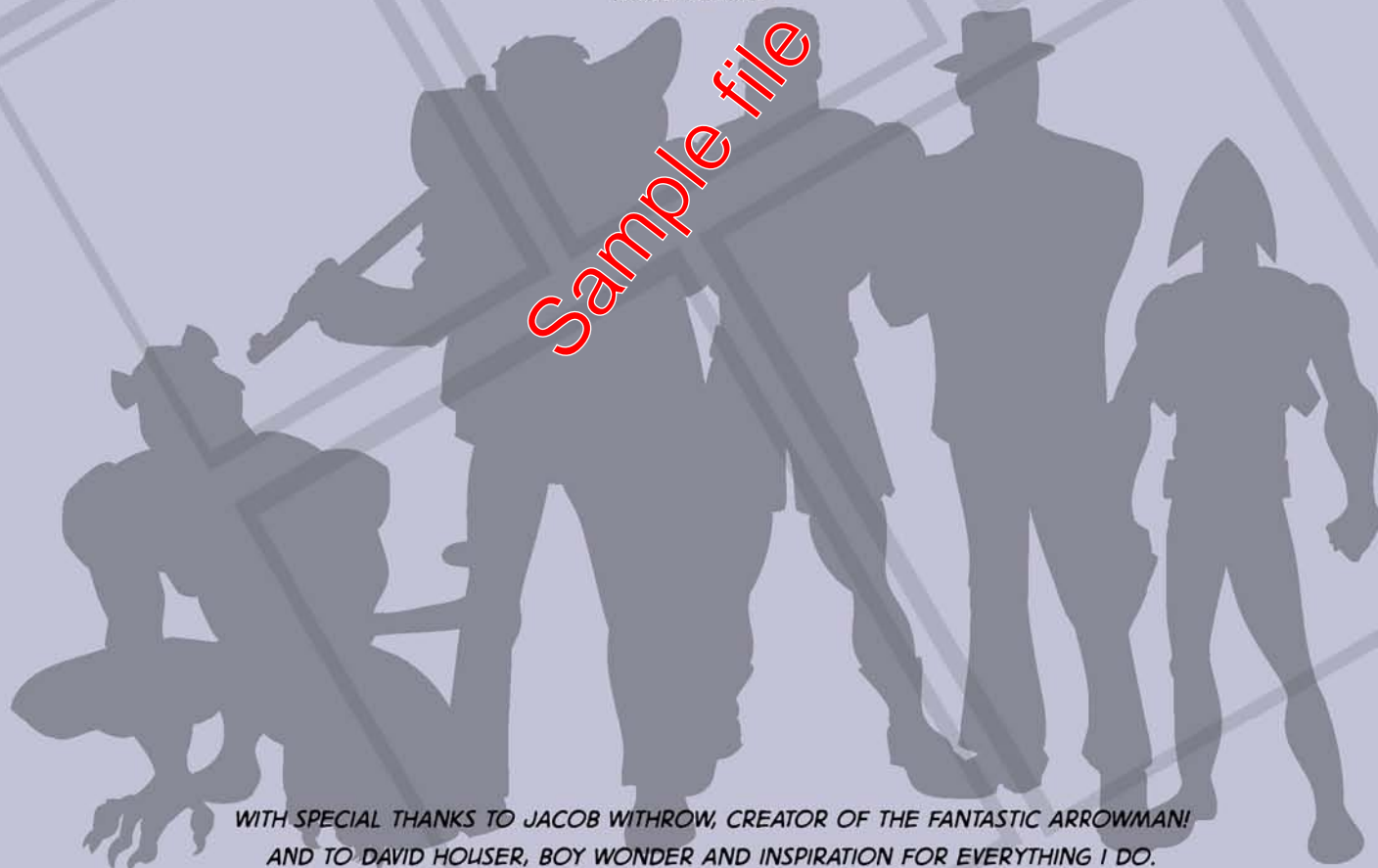
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*WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO JACOB WITHROW, CREATOR OF THE FANTASTIC ARROWMAN!
AND TO DAVID HOUSER, BOY WONDER AND INSPIRATION FOR EVERYTHING I DO.*

INTRODUCTION



O, WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL, AND MOST WONDERFUL! WONDERFUL! AND YET AGAIN WONDERFUL, AND AFTER THAT OUT OF ALL HOOPING.

-- SHAKESPEARE, AS YOU LIKE IT, ACT III SCENE II

WELCOME BACK TO THE **FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES** AND TO THE **WORLDS OF WONDER** SETTING. THIS BOOK CONTINUES WHERE THE FIRST VOLUME LEFT OFF: TEN MORE SUPERHERO ARCHETYPES THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENT IN COMICS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE, OR EVEN BEFORE! EACH OF THE ARCHETYPES IS EXPLAINED IN DETAIL:

- FIRST, A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE ARCHETYPE TOUCHING ON SOME OF ITS MOST RECOGNIZABLE CHARACTERISTICS.
- WE GIVE SOME EXAMPLES FROM COMICS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY THE SORT OF CHARACTERS THAT ARCHETYPE INCLUDES.
- ARCHETYPES ARE NOT HARD AND FAST CATEGORIES; MANY HEROES DRIFT IN AND OUT OF THEIR ARCHETYPE. RELATED ARCHETYPES ARE GIVEN NEXT.
- THE REST OF THE ARCHETYPE DISCUSSION IS HERE TO HELP WITH CHARACTER CREATION. MAYBE THE IDEA OF A HERO WHO IS AN EX-CON APPEALS TO YOU, BUT YOU'RE NOT REALLY SURE HOW TO PUT THAT INTO PRACTICE. WHAT DO EX-CONS IN ICONS HAVE IN COMMON? **QUALITIES & CHALLENGES** IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THIS. THIS SECTION WILL GIVE YOU SPECIFIC IDEAS FOR THINGS LIKE **CONNECTIONS**, **MOTIVATION**, OR EVEN **CATCHPHRASES**. LIKELY **ENEMIES**, **PERSONAL** AND **SOCIAL** PROBLEMS, AND **WEAKNESSES** OF THESE KINDS OF HEROES ARE EXPLAINED. ALL OF THIS WILL HELP YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO TAG IN PLAY, AND WHAT THE GM WILL BE ABLE TO COMPEL!

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

- ARCHETYPE OFTEN HAS INFLUENCE OVER A CHARACTER'S **ABILITIES**, ESPECIALLY SCORES THAT ARE ACTUALLY SUPER-POWERS OF THEIR OWN. THAT COMES NEXT.
- OF COURSE, NO DISCUSSION OF ARCHETYPE WOULD BE COMPLETE UNLESS IT INCLUDES A DISCUSSION OF **POWERS**. THAT BEING SAID, THE EMPHASIS IN THIS BOOK REMAINS ON THE CHARACTER'S ORIGIN AND MOTIVATION RATHER THAN HIS OR HER SPECIFIC POWERS. A CHARACTER LIKE THE DESCENDANT IS RECOGNIZED BECAUSE HE OR SHE IS INHERITING THE NAME OF ANOTHER SUPERHERO WHO HAS DIED OR RETIRED; THAT SAME CHARACTER COULD HAVE ANY **POWER** IMAGINABLE, FROM LIGHT CONTROL TO SUPER-SPEED OR ARCHERY.
- **SPECIALTIES** ARE OFTEN THE FINAL SECTION IN THE ARCHETYPE DISCUSSION. IT TOUCHES ON ALL THE **SKILLS** AND **TALENTS** THAT A GIVEN ARCHETYPE IS LIKELY TO DISPLAY.
- OTHER SUBJECTS, SUCH AS STUNTS* OR THE CHARACTER'S ROLE IN A TEAM OF HEROES, MAY FOLLOW.

* - STUNTS ARE DESCRIBED IN VOLUME 1 OF THE *FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES*.

USING THIS BOOK

ONCE THE ARCHETYPE IS DISCUSSED, YOU GET A FULLY DEVELOPED SAMPLE HERO WHO FILLS THAT ROLE. THESE CHARACTERS ARE ALL PART OF THE WORLDS OF WONDER SETTING WHICH WAS INTRODUCED IN THE FIRST VOLUME. YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE THESE INTO PLAYER CHARACTERS TO GET A USE OUT OF THEM; EACH CHARACTER COMES WITH MULTIPLE STORIES THAT BRING A GROUP OF ORIGINAL PCS INTO THAT CHARACTER'S UNIQUE STORY.

AFTER ALL TEN ARCHETYPES ARE COVERED, THERE IS SOME ADDITIONAL MATERIAL ON THE **WORLDS OF WONDER** SETTING, DWELLING ESPECIALLY ON ASPECTS OF LIFE THAT ARE LIKELY TO IMPACT PLAYER CHARACTERS. A **WONDER'S** RIGHT TO WEAR A MASK AND KEEP HIS IDENTITY A SECRET IS PROTECTED BY A LONG TRADITION OF SO-CALLED "MASKING LAWS," BUT THE UNITED STATES ALSO HAS A VOLUNTARY PROGRAM OF **WONDER** REGISTRATION KNOWN AS **NARWAL**.

THIS PROGRAM ENCOURAGES HEROES TO REGISTER THROUGH THE USE OF HEALTH CARE, FINANCIAL SUBSIDIES, AND OTHER INCENTIVES, WHILE CRIMINALS ARE AUTOMATICALLY REGISTERED. ALIEN HEROES AND THOSE WHO ADVENTURE IN THE DEPTHS OF SPACE WILL KNOW OF THE **PARLIAMENT OF STARS**, THE DOMINANT POLITICAL ENTITY IN THE MILKY WAY GALAXY.

MEANWHILE, BACK ON EARTH, HEROES AND VILLAINS ALIKE WONDER ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE MYTHICAL "TOMORROW MAN" AND ORDER THEIR UNIFORMS, UTILITY BELTS, AND CREDIT CARDS THROUGH THE **WONDERWEAR** WEBSITE.

WE HOPE YOU CONTINUE TO ENJOY THIS SECOND VOLUME OF THE *FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES*. AS ALWAYS, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THE ARCHETYPES, HEROES, VILLAINS AND CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS PRESENTED HERE AS A TOOLBOX FOR YOUR OWN CAMPAIGN, A TOOLBOX WHICH YOU CAN DIP INTO AND MODIFY AS YOU THINK BEST.

YOUR COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, AND FEEDBACK ARE ALWAYS WELCOME! YOU CAN VISIT CHARLES RICE AT RPGDESIGN.BLOGSPOT.COM, MIKE LAFFERTY, DAN HOUSER AND THE VIGILANCE PRESS PODCAST AT MIKELAFFPODBEAN.COM, AND JASON TONDRO AT DOCTORCOMICS.BLOGSPOT.COM.

ARCHETYPES

THE TEN ARCHETYPES COVERED IN THIS, THE SECOND VOLUME OF *THE FIELD GUIDE TO SUPERHEROES*, ARE:

THE **DESCENDANT** IS A HERO WHO HAS INHERITED HIS TITLE FROM AN OLDER HERO WHO HAS DIED, LOST HIS POWERS, TURNED TO EVIL OR RETIRED. THIS GIVES THE NEW VERSION A HISTORY, BUT ALSO BIG SHOES TO FILL. HE MAY HAVE STARTED OFF AS A SIDEKICK.

THE **DIVINE HERO** IS A CHARACTER WHOSE POWERS STEM DIRECTLY FROM A LIVING RELIGION LIKE CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM, OR JUDAISM.

AN **EMBODIMENT** PERSONIFIES A UNIVERSAL FORCE, SUCH AS JUSTICE, THE EARTH, OR SPEED. HE OR SHE IS VERY POWERFUL BUT ALSO HAS TO ANSWER TO AN EVEN MORE POWERFUL BOSS.

THE **EX-CON** IS A FORMER VILLAIN OR PETTY CRIMINAL WHO NOW FIGHTS CRIME. HE MAY BE A GOOD GUY WHO GOT MIXED UP WITH THE WRONG CROWD OR A REAL SCOUNDREL WHO IS WORKING FOR JUSTICE ONLY UNDER DURESS.

THE **FEMME FELINE** IS AN ESPECIALLY POPULAR SORT OF ANIMAL HERO. A WOMAN WITH A CAT MOTIF, SHE IS MORALLY AMBIGUOUS AND FLIRTY.

THE **FERAL HERO** IS A JECKYLL & HYDE CHARACTER THAT TRIES TO DO GOOD BUT STRUGGLES WITH A DARK, ANIMAL NATURE, WHICH LEADS HIM TO KILL.

THE **FOCUSED HERO** IS A NORMAL PERSON WITH ONE SUPER-POWER -- SUCH AS FLIGHT, INVISIBILITY OR GREAT STRENGTH -- WHICH HE HAS LEARNED TO MASTER.

A **GADGET GUY** OR **GADGET GIRL** IS USUALLY A SCIENTIST WITH A COLLECTION OF WEAPONS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING A VEHICLE.

THE **HANDICAPPED HERO** OVERCOMES A SERIOUS DISABILITY THROUGH ADVANCED TRAINING, SUPERPOWERS, OR JUST RAW GUTS.

THE **JUNGLE HERO** IS A CARETAKER OF A HIDDEN LAND AND WHO OFTEN HAS ANIMAL-RELATED POWERS.

DESCENDANT

WHEN AN AGING HERO DIES OR RETIRES, THEY PASS THEIR NAME, WEAPONS, OR POWERS ON TO A WORTHY YOUNG HEIR. THE CHILD OF A FORMER HERO, NATURAL OR ADOPTED, THE DESCENDANT HAS TO QUICKLY LEARN THE TRICKS OF HIS TRADE OR PERISH-- BECAUSE HE'S ALSO INHERITED A LONG LIST OF ENEMIES.

EXAMPLES: WALLY WEST, THE FLASH; KYLE RAYNER, THE GREEN LANTERN; RICK TYLER, HOURMAN; DAN DRIEBERG, NITE OWL; THE PHANTOM; JACK KNIGHT, STARMAN

RELATED ARCHETYPES: SIDEKICK, YOUNG HERO

QUALITIES AND CHALLENGES:

THE DESCENDANT HAS BIG SHOES TO FILL; LIVING UP TO THE REPUTATION OF THE MAN WHO CAME BEFORE IS THE FIRST OBSTACLE THAT ANY DESCENDANT MUST OVERCOME. HE INHERITS THE RESPONSIBILITY ASSOCIATED WITH HIS NAME, WHICH INCLUDES A PARTICULAR TURF TO DEFEND AND PATROL. A FAMOUS NAME MEANS QUICK RECOGNITION BY THE PUBLIC, AUTHORITY FIGURES, AND OTHER HEROES, WHO WILL BE SKEPTICAL UNTIL HE PROVES HIMSELF.

SOMETIMES A DESCENDANT HAD A FORMER COSTUMED IDENTITY OF HIS OWN, WHICH HE HAS NOW ABANDONED. IT CAN BE HARD FOR A DESCENDANT TO BALANCE THESE TWO WORLDS: THE OLDER GENERATION OF HIS NEW NAME AND THE YOUNG GENERATION HE GREW UP WITH.

HE CAN TAKE A SEAT ON A TEAM MADE UP OF FELLOW DESCENDANTS (*THE JUNIOR VARSITY*), OR ELSE FILL HIS PREDECESSOR'S SEAT ON A MORE PROMINENT TEAM (*THE VARSITY*). THE DESCENDANT MAY INHERIT A TROPHY ROOM OR LAIR, INCLUDING CRYPTIC NOTES OR JOURNALS, WHICH MAKE NO SENSE UNTIL IT IS ALMOST TOO LATE.

ABILITIES:

THE DESCENDANT WILL HAVE THE SAME HIGH ABILITIES AS HIS PREDECESSOR, BUT WILL USUALLY BE EITHER CLEARLY SUPERIOR OR OBVIOUSLY INFERIOR. IN THE FIRST CASE, HE REPRESENTS A NEWER, BETTER, STRONGER GENERATION OF HEROES, BUT IN THE SECOND CASE HE IS A ROOKIE PLAYING CATCH-UP.

POWERS:

AGAIN, THE DESCENDANT WILL USUALLY HAVE THE SAME POWERS AS HIS PREDECESSOR, BUT HE MIGHT CHANGE THEM FOR MORE EFFECTIVE OR MODERN VERSIONS. A DESCENDANT IS ONE OF THE BEST CASES FOR A HERO WHO GROWS RAPIDLY IN POWER AND ABILITY, UNLIKE OTHER HEROES WHO TEND TO STAY MORE OR LESS THE SAME.



METRO II

DESCENDANT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

THE DESCENDANT MAY NOT START OFF AS GOOD AS HIS NAMESAKE, BUT OVER THE COURSE OF HIS FIRST FEW ADVENTURES HE TRADES HIS **DETERMINATION** IN FOR MORE **POWERS**, BETTER **ABILITIES**, AND **STUNTS** WHICH ALLOW HIM TO FINALLY LIVE UP TO THE LEGEND THAT IS HIS NAME.

SPECIALTIES: MODERN DESCENDANTS SHOW THEIR AGE BY EXCHANGING OLD-FASHIONED CRIME FIGHTING SKILLS FOR HIGH TECH SCIENCE AND CRIMINOLOGY. THEY INCREASE TO *EXPERT* AND *MASTER* LEVEL WITH SIGNATURE **SPECIALTIES** THAT THEIR NAMESAKE POSSESSED.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT? :

ONE HELPFUL APPROACH WHEN MAKING A DESCENDANT IS TO ASK YOURSELF, "WHAT'S DIFFERENT?" DESCENDANTS HAVE MANY CHARACTERISTICS IN COMMON WITH THEIR PREDECESSORS --SUCH AS POWERS, ENEMIES, OR COSTUME--BUT IT IS THE DIFFERENCES IN THE TWO HEROES THAT WILL SET THEM APART. IN ADDITION TO BEING YOUNGER THAN HIS NAMESAKE, THE DESCENDANT IS OFTEN FROM A MORE MODEST SOCIAL CLASS, GROWING UP ON THE STREETS OR STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET INSTEAD OF LANGUISHING IN SOME RICH PENTHOUSE.

YOUR HERO MAY BE A DIFFERENT RACE OR ETHNICITY, AND THERE WAS A TREND IN COMICS FOR A WHILE OF MAKING ALL DESCENDANTS WOMEN IN CONTRAST TO A MALE NAMESAKE. ALL THESE CHANGES --RACE, SOCIAL CLASS AND GENDER--ARE BASICALLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE ORIGINAL VERSIONS OF OUR FAVORITE HEROES WERE ALMOST ALL RICH WHITE MEN. CURRENT CREATORS ARE LOOKING FOR MORE DIVERSITY BUT THEY WANT TO USE RECOGNIZABLE NAMES. YOU CAN MAKE THIS TREND WORK FOR YOU; KEEP QUALITIES FROM THE ORIGINAL HERO THAT YOU LIKE AND CHANGE THE ONES YOU DON'T IN ORDER TO MAKE A HERO WHOSE STORY YOU WANT TO TELL.

