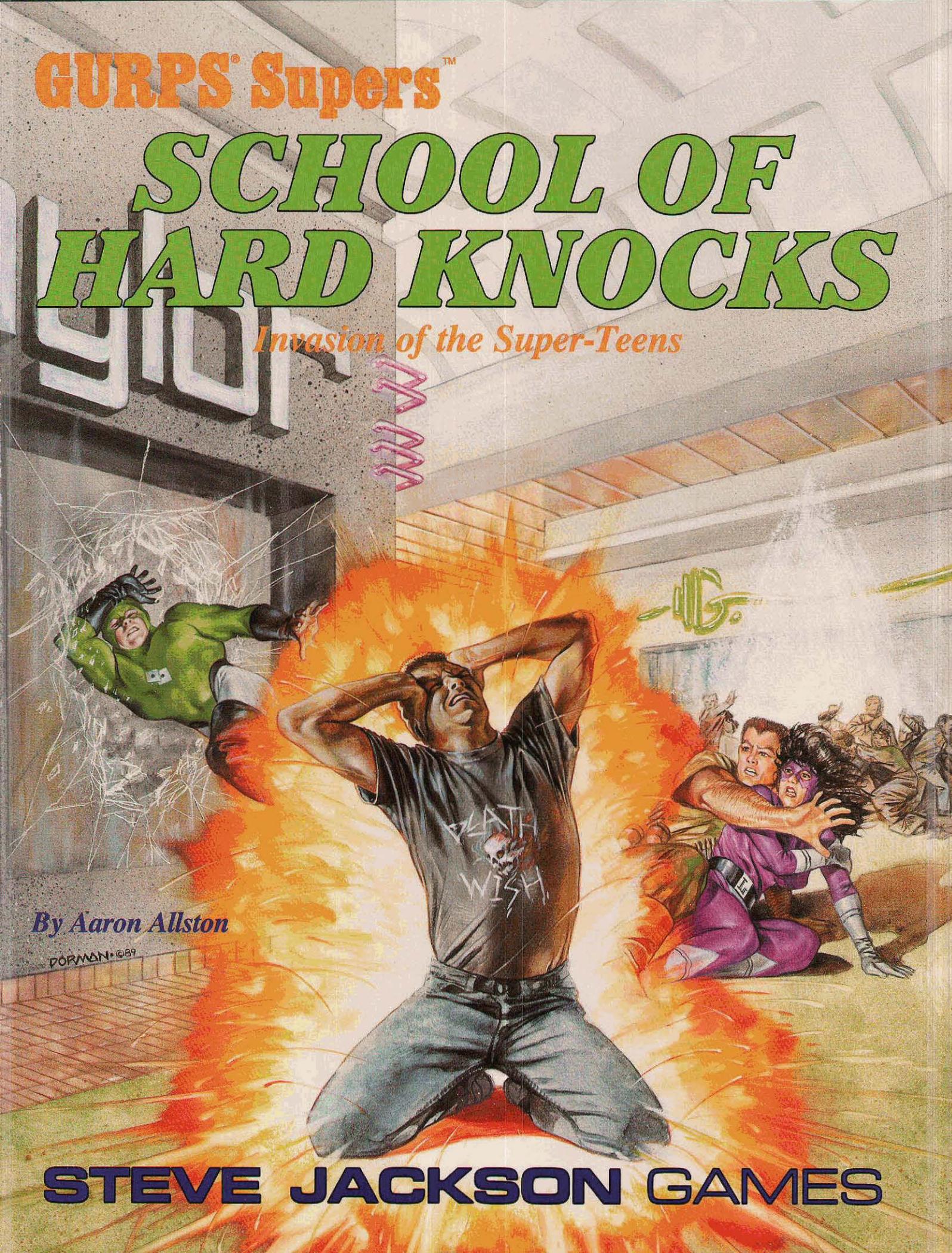


GURPS[®] Supers[™]

SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

Invasion of the Super-Teens



By Aaron Allston

DORMAN • 689

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK!

High school — a time for proms, football and homework. But at Knox High, it's also time for some of the students to try out their new super abilities! They're powerful, confused and misunderstood. They create destruction and chaos wherever they go. They're hunted by the authorities . . . and by dark powers.

In *School of Hard Knocks*, your *GURPS Supers* heroes must track down the city's brand new meta-humans, discover what they want . . . find out who wants them . . . and decide how to deal with them!

School of Hard Knocks is a four-color adventure for supers of 500 points or greater. It is also a sourcebook for *GURPS Supers*, with characters, settings, story ideas and a continuing campaign plot that can be used after the adventure is done.

School of Hard Knocks requires the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition and *GURPS Supers*. Ideas are included for the GM who wishes to translate the adventure to another genre, such as espionage or outer space. The adventure can fit into an ongoing campaign — or it can be used as an introductory scenario for a brand new set of supers! Plenty of GM advice is also included, to smooth the path if things go wrong. So buckle down, it's time to get an education . . . from the *School of Hard Knocks!*

School of Hard Knocks includes:

The Hell-Raisers — a team of maniacal villains led by a hell-spawned demon.

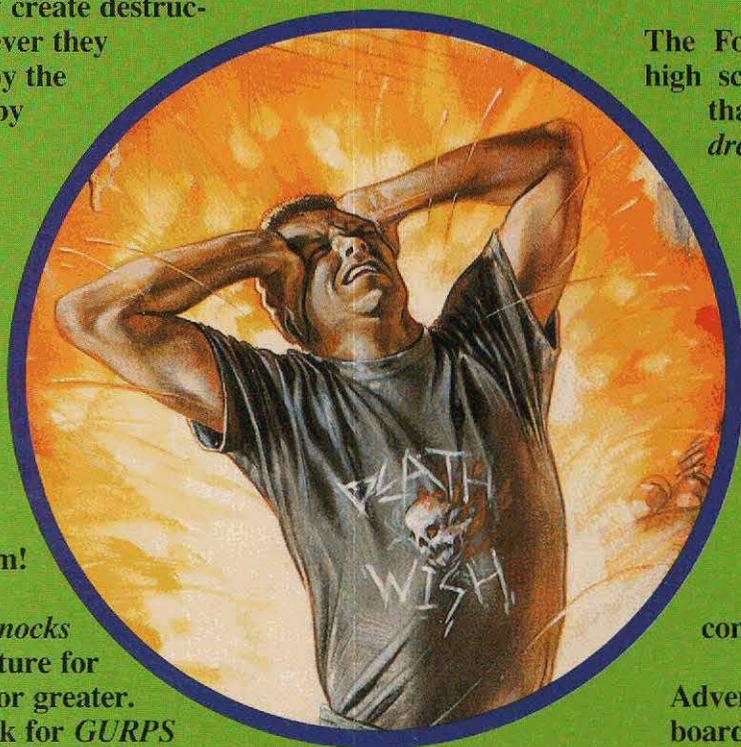
The Forty Thieves — a team of high school supers with problems that ordinary teens never dream of.

Maps for two super-battlegrounds: Knox High School and Ridgecrest Mall.

Game stats for school buses, book and gym lockers, water fountains, vending machines, and many other things to smash, crush and toss around in super-combat.

Adventure Seeds — springboards to further adventure, providing the GM with ideas to keep players busy for months.

And much, much more . . .



Written by Aaron Allston
Edited by Loyd Blankenship
Cover art by David Dorman
Interior art by Doug Shuler



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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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GURPS System Design by Steve Jackson

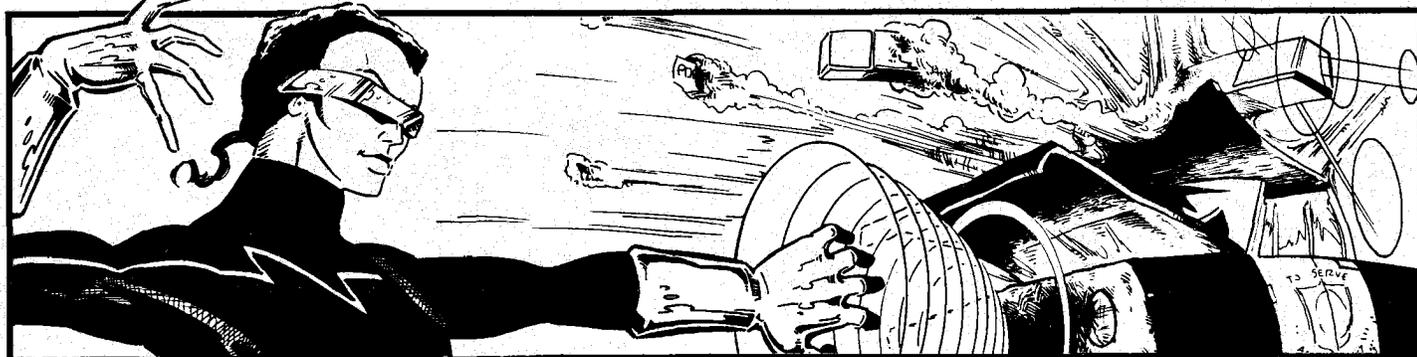
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INTRODUCTION

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

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New supplements and adventures. We're always working on new material, and we'll be happy to let you know what's available. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us — but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

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BBS. For those of you who have home computers, SJ Games operates a BBS with discussion areas for several games, including *GURPS*. Much of the playtest feedback for new products comes from the BBS. It's up 24 hours per day at 512-447-4449, at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud. Give us a call!

Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any reference that begins with a SU refers to *GURPS Supers*.

About The Author

Aaron Allston, a resident of Austin, Texas, is a long-time gamer, gamemaster, and professional freelance writer/game designer. His *GURPS* credits include *GURPS Autoduel* and *Harkwood*. He has also written several supplements for *Car Wars*, and is the (in)famous creator of the *Strike Force* book for the *Champions* game. His current projects include *The Complete Fighter* and *The Complete Priest* for TSR's *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, 2nd Edition.

School of Hard Knocks is a sourcebook and adventure for *GURPS Supers*. The adventure is written for GMs and players who are new to *GURPS Supers* — there's a lot of troubleshooting advice included. The adventure is designed to be played during one to three playing sessions — dependent on how much investigating the heroes do, how many combats they get into, and how many optional events they explore.

School of Hard Knocks is a four-color, comic-book type of adventure, with super-crimefighters and villains who are card-carrying megalomaniacs. Player characters should be built with 500 points each.

School of Hard Knocks doesn't require any specific origin or background for characters. It is designed either to be integrated smoothly into any existing campaign, or to provide a base for a new campaign.

Players: Stop Reading Here!



GM's Introduction

School of Hard Knocks is arranged as follows:

The Adventure: This section describes the course of the entire adventure from start to probable end.

Ifs, Ands or Buts: These are sidebars scattered throughout the adventure, and are used for troubleshooting. They describe ways to fix matters when the players do the unexpected, and the adventure goes off on a mad course that has nothing to do with what's printed in these pages.

The Villains: Character writeups and statistics for all the adventure's NPCs.

Optional Combat Rules

If the campaign is using the optional combat rule of Stun Damage (p. SU86), all damage and attacks will be non-lethal with the following exceptions: Denier will attack to kill unless there is a *very good* reason not to (the victim is a high-ranking government official, or anyone else that would result in a massive, nationwide manhunt if killed), as will Tai. Titan and Drill-Bit *normally* don't attack to kill, but neither of them is the most stable of people. Any time either takes damage in combat they must roll versus IQ. A failed roll means the next attack will be a shoot-to-kill.

Conceivably, there are circumstances where others might begin to make killing attacks — if the PCs indulge in wholesale slaughter, the villains will pull out all the stops in retaliation. These situations are up to the GM to decide.

With all that out of the way, it's time to get your education . . . from the *School of Hard Knocks*.

THE ADVENTURE

School of Hard Knocks can take place just about anywhere the GM wants it to. It presumes that the campaign is set in North America, but a little work on the part of the GM will allow it to be set elsewhere. Throughout this book, the city where the adventure takes place is referred to as the "campaign city."

History

About twenty years ago the Jensik Medical Institute, a major biomedical concern, set up a plant in the campaign city. Jensik hires the best to do its research — dedicated doctors, biologists, pharmacologists, and other experts. The conglomerate, however, has always been run by businessmen to whom profit is the only concern.

Cell 13, the secret "dirty tricks" division of Jensik, uses the corporation's facilities to invent, process and distribute illegal drugs. It dumps medical waste and sabotages competing firms. It researches illegal and unethical drugs and treatments such as genetic engineering, human cloning, chemicals to enhance physical characteristics, pain- and thought-suppressing drugs for the military and other similar projects. Each of Jensik's research facilities has a branch of Cell 13, which the legitimate employees know nothing about (although some long-time employees have noticed occasional unusual events).

The Cell 13 branch in the campaign city spent several years on the *Chrysalis Project*, which was intended to create a nerve gas for purchase by Third World armies. Although initially promising, the project ended in failure. During this time, waste chemicals used in the project were dumped into the river feeding the water supply of the campaign city.

Over the years since *Chrysalis*, many people in the area contracted cancer. Cell 13 never tried to cover these incidents up — they just fabricated evidence which framed other chemical suppliers in the same area. Research went on.

In a very few cases, exposure to these toxins had some decidedly odd effects — especially when pregnant women were exposed. The infant mortality rate in

The World's First Supers

Most campaigns are set in worlds where costumed supers have been running amok for years, and the origins of the characters in this adventure are based on such an arrangement.

Other GMs, however, like to have their players' characters be the very first supers to appear on the gameworld. There's a lot to be said for that approach . . . but if it's chosen, there needs to be some modifications to the characters found here.

The GM will also need to rationalize why *so many* of the world's first supers appear in your campaign city. Just saying "Well . . . it's *New York!*" isn't quite enough. There ought to be a reason.

In *School of Hard Knocks*, the same rationale that led to the creation of most of the adventure's teen supers can be used: The Jensik Medical Institute's dumping toxins into the water supply. It could be that an earlier, similar dumping in another city led to the creation of the PCs . . . and now, ominously, they see the signs of a similar event in the campaign city.

It is even possible that the PCs are classmates of the Forty Thieves at Knox High School! If this is the case, The Denier and the Hell-Raisers might be pursuing the characters as well!

If the above rationale is followed, some modifications made be needed to this adventure's villains. If there are no supernatural elements in the campaign world, for instance, characters such as The Denier and Tai are not actually supernatural — they just look as though they are, and either think they are or like to pretend they are.



THINGS TO SMASH

On the chart below is a convenient listing of typical damage resistance and hit points of various inanimate objects from the battle scenes. When running the combat, the GM should make sure that there are plenty of walls being smashed, objects being thrown, and other general mayhem. This will increase the players' enjoyment of the battles, and make them more "comic-y."

At the Warehouse:

<i>Object</i>	<i>DR</i>	<i>Hit Points</i>	<i>Weapon to Use</i>
Exterior Wall	4	20	Not impaling
Interior Wall	2	10	Any
Big Door	3	25	Not impaling
Small Door	3	15	Not impaling
Typical Crate	4	30	Not impaling
Police Car	10	75	Not impaling

At Knox High School:

<i>Object</i>	<i>DR</i>	<i>Hit Points</i>	<i>Weapon to Use</i>
Exterior Wall	6	60	Not impaling
Interior Wall	6	40	Not impaling
Exterior Door	7	40	Not impaling
Interior Door	4	20	Not impaling
Plexiglass Panel	1	5	Any
Drinking Fountains	12	20	Not impaling
Toilet	15	15	Any
School Bus	17	150	Any
Teacher's Desk	6	45	Not impaling
Student's Desk	3	10	Not impaling
Bookshelf	2	20	Any
Bank of Lockers	4	20	Not impaling
Filing Cabinet	4	20	Not impaling
Computer	2	5	Any
Typewriter	4	10	Any
Vending Machine	4	20	Not impaling
Cafeteria Table	4	20	Not impaling
Cafeteria Chair	1	5	Any

At The Sultan's Palace and Ridgecrest Mall:

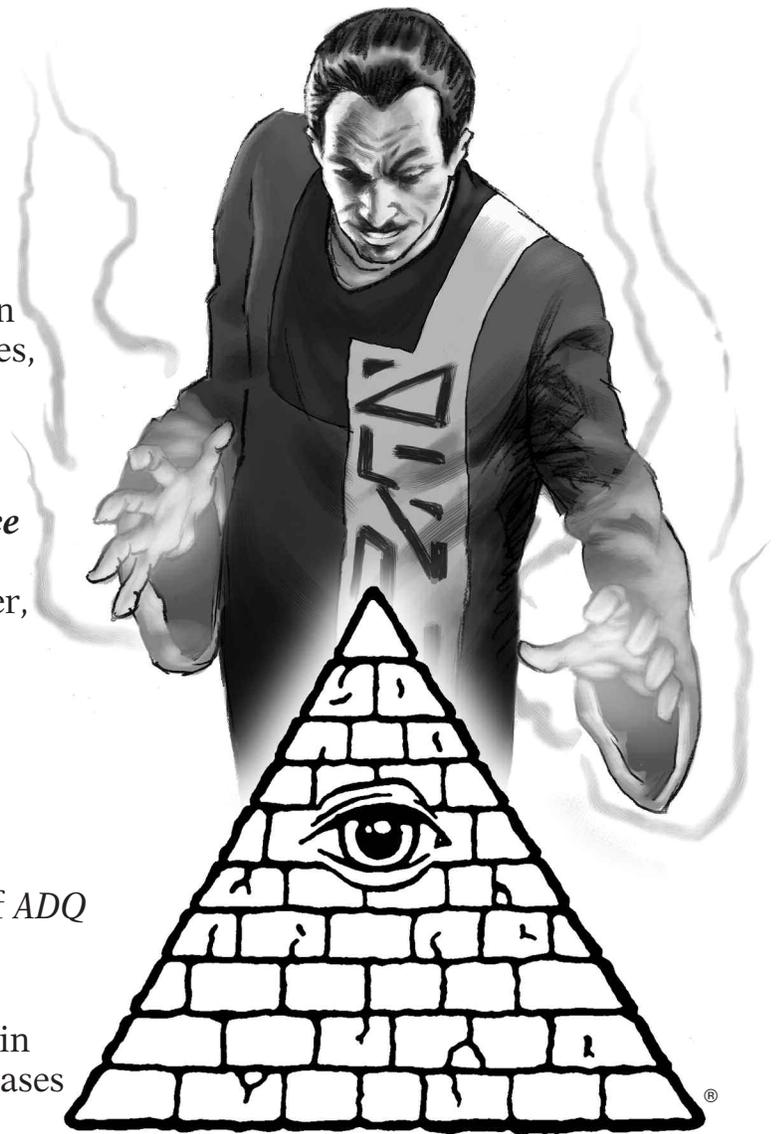
<i>Object</i>	<i>DR</i>	<i>Hit Points</i>	<i>Weapon to Use</i>
Mall Exterior Wall	4	60	Not impaling
Mall Interior Wall	3	30	Not impaling
Mall Exterior Door	6	30	Not impaling
Mall Interior Door	4	20	Not impaling
Glass Display Window	3	1	Any
Video Game Machine	3	10	Any
Shop Display Case	1	5	Any
Large Furniture	3	15	Not impaling
Small Furniture	3	5	Any
Slab of Floor	4	30	Not impaling



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