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PRIMUS and Crime



"You got anything yet, Kowalski?" Intelligence agent Marie Henderson asked, opening the car door and plopping the bag of fast food down on the seat.

Her partner looked up from the computer screen, which was connected to the surveillance devices monitoring Mongoose's apartment. "Nah, nothing. He's been on the phone with his mom for the last twenty minutes."

Henderson sighed, and sipped coffee from the Styrofoam cup. "I appreciate the help, anyway," she said.

Kowalski shrugged. "Not much was happening with Coil recently, anyway, and if we're lucky, Mon-

goose might lead us to them. Did you get fries with that?"

"I almost feel sorry for him," Agent Henderson mused, handing Kowalski the bag of fries. At his warning look, she laughed. "Oh, not like that—I'm not getting soft. He's a bank robber, plain and simple, and he'll go to jail for it. But he's done a lot to cut down on Coil activities, too."

Kowalski scowled. "More like made a bloody mess of my Coil investigation. As soon as we get a lead and are onto them, Mongoose makes a move and drives them underground again. I'll be glad to send the fruitcake to Stronghold—heck, I'll have a party."



As a branch of the Department of Justice—which can be described as the largest law firm in the nation—PRIMUS pursues dangerous criminals in order to keep the public safe. PRIMUS is limited in their jurisdiction to investigating federal crimes involving paranormals, though local law enforcement may also contact PRIMUS to assist with their investigations.

The greatest number of PRIMUS operatives are assault operatives, ready to scramble to the scene of a paranormal rampage. Each base has at least three assault teams ready to go at any given moment; larger bases have even more. Assault operatives are ubiquitous at a paranormal crime scene, with heavy blasters, armor, and grenades, but the intelligence agents conduct the bulk of PRIMUS investigations and are, in many ways, more deserving of the heroes' respect than the agents with the heavy blasters or the Iron Guard suits.

Intelligence Investigations

Superhero PCs will likely be shocked to realize that PRIMUS investigates and maintains files on not just villains, but all paranormals—including the heroes! PRIMUS considers any paranormal to be a potential risk and has numbers as well as law to back their actions. According to PRIMUS statistics, a full seventy percent of those manifesting paranormal abilities will violate federal and local laws or cause significant injury to civilians at some point in their careers. As soon as an undocumented paranormal makes an appearance in public, PRIMUS intelligence agents begin their work.

Interviewing witnesses, taking samples for genetic analysis and attempting to trace the paranormal's secret identity are the first steps, and intelligence agents may also shadow suspected paranormals. Agents do have to obtain warrants to use wiretaps or other such invasive technologies, although agents may—without the official sanction of PRIMUS, of course—secretly bug phones or residences.

Once the secret identity of the “hero” is known, the information is sealed in PRIMUS files and is inaccessible except to those with proper clearance. Intelligence agents often “specialize” in specific paranormals, devoting years to only one case. In the event the paranormal they have been studying breaks the law, these agents will be called upon to brief PRIMUS assault teams or local police forces in how best to proceed with capturing the paranormal: identifying weaknesses, favorite haunts, and so on. It is important to note that on rare occasions, the agent begins to sympathize or identify with the paranormal, something for which Intelligence agents-in-charge are always keeping a lookout.

Investigations into criminal cases proceed differently. If the secret identity of the paranormal is

known and a case is being built before an arrest can be made, PRIMUS agents maintain twenty-four hour surveillance. The special agent in charge of that paranormal acts as an advisor to the assault agent commander charged with bringing the paranormal in, and accompanies the team for the arrest.

PRIMUS Advisors To Local Police

When local law enforcement suspects that they're dealing with a crime that involves paranormals, they have the opportunity to call PRIMUS for assistance. PRIMUS Intelligence will send an expert in the field required—for example, paranormal mass murderers—who will offer every assistance possible to the local police and coordinate PRIMUS agents if necessary. While local police may initially balk at bringing in federal agents to help, PRIMUS agents make every effort to take a secondary role—as simply an advisor—in these situations. Despite this, tension between PRIMUS and police does exist in some cases, much to the PR department's chagrin.

Wanted by PRIMUS

The following are PRIMUS' ten most wanted fugitives. All fugitives should be considered armed and extremely dangerous, and rewards are offered for information leading to their capture and arrest, ranging from \$25,000 to \$3,000,000. GMs should feel free to replace any person on this list with someone from their campaign who has broken the law once too often for the federal government's tastes.

1. **Fiacho (*Classic Enemies*)**

The leader of Eurostar has been implicated in dozens of terrorist actions within the United States and against American nationals abroad; Fiacho's involvement in the killing of Golden Avenger Kaufman cemented his position on this list. Fiacho has been also implicated in a bombing that killed two American Congressmen aboard a flight to London, which also killed 241 additional passengers. Fiacho is wanted for the following crimes: conspiracy to Destroy a Civil Aircraft of the United States, Conspiracy to Destroy a Vehicle Used in Foreign Commerce by Means of an Explosive; Destroying a Civil Aircraft; Destroying a Vehicle Used in Foreign Commerce by Means of an Explosive; Killing Nationals of the United States; Aiding and Abetting.



filled in for the Commander and tried to fulfill his own duties. Ernie had done incredibly well given the circumstances, but there wasn't a box to check covering that contingency. DJ set the file aside—he'd write a personal report later—to do after the others.

Frank Hartigan's file was just as bad. "The problem with these reports," DJ thought, "is that I'm friends with nearly everyone I have to evaluate—I can't be objective. Relying on reports of the base commanders helps, but so many of them feel threatened by Avengers it's difficult to determine what's real and what isn't. I haven't had enough time for proper visits in months—I don't think I've even seen Frank Hartigan since the budget committee meeting and I missed two Avenger games in a row—how can I possibly tell how he's doing down in Atlanta?"

The Golden Avenger sighed. "I'm just going to have to make more time to visit bases," he thought, "even when I'm swamped here in Washington—no excuses next year at evaluation time."

In the majority of PRIMUS campaigns, the most important personnel PCs will encounter on a regular basis will be their agent commander, Silver Avenger, and base commander. The Golden Avenger and the PRIME Team should be distant figures, only rarely appearing in most PRIMUS campaigns.

When PRIMUS is used in a superhero game, PCs will likely interact with Avengers or the PRIME Team more often. Familiarity can breed contempt, however, and GMs should use the most powerful members of PRIMUS sparingly. It's far more likely that PRIMUS will assign an intelligence operative to handle the PC team exclusively, and this character will be the one determining the PCs' relationship with PRIMUS.

Avengers

Members of the Avenger Corps are the best of the best in PRIMUS. Older Avengers—those who were recruited in the 1980s—were all male, and all military. After the creation of the sixteen original Silver Avengers in 1984, the only new Avengers to join the ranks have done so through the death or defection of the original Avengers. The Cyberline process which alters Avengers is a hundred times more costly than the simplified process agents undergo, and for this reason, PRIMUS has been unable to receive additional funding for more Avengers, despite hard lobbying by General Hawkins and the current director, Colonel Peter Glenn.

Women's and minority rights groups criticized the Avenger Corps during the eighties for its homogenous membership, and Avengers who have been promoted since have all been female or mi-

norities, something that *conservatives* have criticized in recent years.

Avengers possess a variety of martial arts styles; though all trained with the commando maneuvers at the Academy, most prefer to utilize their unique styles in combat. Avengers wear a blue and gray uniform with silver piping (for Silver Avengers) or gold piping (the Golden Avenger). Their uniform is a tight-fitting gabardine/spandex material, with a large gold eagle emblazoned on a red-and-white shield on the front of the tunic. Avengers are also issued black leather jackets and boots (the Golden Avenger's are brown). Avengers typically wear some sort of additional body armor over their costume (either the standard or reinforced assault armor) and a helmet in combat.

The Golden Avenger

Background: The younger of identical twin sons born to Commander Alexander Johnson and his wife Samantha in 1960, Daniel James Johnson always wanted to follow in his father's footsteps. He and Alex Jr. were Eagle Scouts, honor students, and athletes. The seventeen-year-old twins were accepted into the Naval Academy, where DJ played football and Alex ran track, and from which they graduated four years later, DJ with a degree in mathematics, Alex with a degree in physics. Like their father, Alex and DJ became fighter pilots after graduation. However, while on night maneuvers several years after graduation, Lt. Alexander Johnson's F-14 disappeared from radar and was assumed lost, never to be recovered.

DJ was devastated by the loss of his twin. Unbeknownst to him, PRIMUS was actively recruiting for members of the Avenger Corps at this time, and had been testing blood samples of military personnel. Both Johnson twins had been prime candidates, but while DJ was on leave following the funeral, he was approached about joining.

DJ decided that he would give up his Navy career, and join the fledgling PRIMUS. After being tested for compatibility with Cyberline, he was admitted to the ranks of the Avengers. He was able to change his active duty status to reserve status, however, which he has maintained to this day.

His father, now a Rear Admiral, was not pleased by his son's decision and disowned him. Having lost his brother, and now his father, the new Silver Avenger threw himself into his work, and became highly decorated. He rarely visited home, not forgetting his father's slight. In 1988, however, he met Kim Emori while on vacation.

Kim, a law student of Japanese descent, filled the void that DJ had felt since his brother had died. After graduating from law school, she found work in the San Francisco District Attorney's office, moving to San Francisco, where Johnson was posted. They had just begun to discuss marriage plans in



Power Level & PCs

This adventure is designed for a team of four to seven PRIMUS assault and intelligence agents utilizing standard equipment. Fewer—or more—agents can be used, though the tone of the adventure will be different. The storyline can easily be adapted for a team of superheroes working alongside PRIMUS, if the power variation guidelines are followed. The situation surrounding the adventure is dire, and extraordinary measures are needed. While the adventure is set in Hudson City, any campaign city may be substituted.

If the PCs are PRIMUS agents, it would be helpful if at least one has had experience with the occult. If the PCs are superheroes, the addition of one magic user would enable the PCs to pick up on more plot nuances, and prevent them from having to rely on NPCs as a crutch for information.

This adventure should take one or two gaming sessions to complete, depending on the number of complications the GM uses. This can become a major adventure with little effort, however, as the PCs themselves can take the place of the investigating agent and begin to research the thefts themselves. The fallout from the adventure, however, should take a long time to clear up. The adventure is designed to establish the organization known as the Wild Geese as a serious threat to the PCs.

Plot Overview

A series of bizarre museum robberies has local law enforcement baffled and the FBI convinced paranormals are involved. The first, a robbery at the de Young museum in San Francisco, netted only two modern paintings and a necklace worn by a tragic debutante—given that the de Young had been housing an exhibit of Faberge eggs at the time, the robbery was somewhat surprising. Two months later, a New York private collector's residence was burglarized, and while expensive Dutch masters remained untouched, Iron Age Celtic relics were taken.

Federal and local investigators would not have linked the two events together, had the MO of the robberies not been exactly the same. Witnesses at the scene of the crime possessed no memories of the events whatsoever. No drugs were found in their system, and the involvement of a mentalist (or mentalists) was concluded. The burglars did not show up on any monitors, though the effect of their actions—the safe opening, paintings removed from the wall—did. PRIMUS was called in, and Agent Melissa Croft began investigating the crimes.

After another bizarre burglary in Seattle and one quickly following at the Smithsonian in Washington, in which three people were killed, the talented PRIMUS intelligence agent successfully predicted the next target, and three days ago, a Hudson City

(or campaign city) residence was burglarized and artifacts taken. But now the stakes have been raised, for Agent Melissa Croft was seriously injured during the attack on the Armitage penthouse. PRIMUS has been dealing with massive VIPER assaults and preparing for crucial upcoming peace talks for Northern Ireland—and they're spread far to thin. The PCs are an ad hoc investigative team called in to deal with the situation.

The Mission Briefing

"The reason you're here," Silver Avenger Richardson says, tapping a fountain pen against the side of his mahogany desk, "Is to get the people responsible for the attack which injured Agent Croft." The Silver Avenger looks tired, and shifts position in his chair, and angry green and purple bruising is visible when he pushes back his sleeves.

VIPER has been relentless of late, robbing banks, running drugs, and causing general mayhem. An overt attack by the Serpent Syndicate has left PRIMUS in dire straights, with global concerns about the upcoming peace talks. The media was quick to link VIPER's newest, persistent attacks to the upcoming talks between British Prime Minister Tony Blairson and Sinn Fein leader Jerome Addamson, set to take place in Hudson City. VIPER had a reliable client in Northern Ireland, and to let the strife there end would be bad for business. At the talks, the President and Secretary of State would also be on hand, directing the talks. With only a half-week to go and intelligence reports stating the worst was yet to come from VIPER, no one has gotten much sleep around the base. Twenty percent of the PRIMUS agents had been injured in the last attack, and though reinforcements have arrived from New York, the atmosphere at the base is tense.

"Unfortunately, we don't have the reserves to properly investigate this. Nearly all of our intelligence people are working to discover where VIPER's going to make their next move. The FBI," Richardson continues, "Haven't been much help, either, because they're busy preparing for the conference. Agent Croft had been directing our end of the art thefts, but she's in a coma and not talking." For a moment he glances over at a chess table, a game half-completed, and for the chess-savvy, headed towards stalemate.

Richardson continues. "Agent Peterson will brief you on the evidence. We don't believe these robberies are related to VIPER, but of course, you can read that for yourself. Agent Croft believed DEMON or a splinter group was responsible—while the MO is wrong in all but one case, the items stolen were right up their alley."

"This investigation is of the utmost importance to me," Richardson says. "I would be conducting it myself were I not ordered elsewhere. As it is, I will

