

## **MIASMA**

Miranda Mason

### **AS PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED**

Concept: drug/gas powers, reformed supervillain, sincere but capable of delivering non-idealistic insights or get-real speeches

*Clarification: I initially conceived her and have retained the concept that she is using both the super-name and costume that she used as a super-villain.*

Disadvantages: Cynical (15), Code vs. Killing (20), Enemy: former supervillain partners 8- (25), Enemy ex-husband and his support group (20), Vulnerable 2x Mental Illusions (10), Unusual Looks 14- (ex-supervillain reputation) (15), Enrage when attacked on the basis of her past 11- recover 14- (15), Competent DNPC 14- (15), Incompetent DNPC 8- (15)

Total points in Disadvantages = 150

### **STORY: SKETCHY**

Miranda was a bored young housewife until she gained her super-powers. She joined a supervillain group and battled law enforcement and heroes with them. She was the generally most sane among them, especially after the leader went dotty. In one op, they defeated a mighty and well-loved superhero, and Miasma would not let the others kill him, ultimately switching sides and aiding the heroes' allies to defeat her teammates. Afterwards, she publicly stated her change of heart and joined the hero team, with the ex-hero, who'd lost his powers, as her sponsor [he's the competent DNPC]. Her ex-teammates seek lethal revenge on her. Her ex-husband, who'd profited from her criminal career, has ginned up a sob story and a support group to help smear her still-risky reputation.

*In one of the games for which I was GM, this wouldn't be enough for me. There's a bit of meaningful relationship stuff, but no names are given for anyone, let alone regions, specific attitudes, or other social context. The other DNPC is left bare, a sign that he or she was thrown in for the points. [note: this is true actually]*

*I distrust "how I got my powers" origin stories for role-playing super-characters. Most of the time it works better to explain the current crisis points for the character as laid out in the Disadvantages, and to let the origin story be composed after the player has a real feel for the character in action. Of course, if the origin is right there in those crisis points, then that's fine, but it usually isn't.*

### **STORY: PERSONAL AND PLACED**

Miranda was a bored young housewife on Chicago's North Shore, married to an unscrupulous white-collar executive, Donald. When she gained her super-powers, she joined the Wild Side supervillain group and battled law enforcement and heroes with them. She was the generally most sane among them, especially after the leader went dotty. In one op, they defeated the mighty and well-loved Polar Star, and Miasma would not let the others kill him, ultimately switching sides and aiding the heroes' allies to defeat her teammates. Afterwards, she publicly stated her change of heart and joined the hero team [this would be the player-character hero team name], with the ex-hero, who'd lost his powers, as her sponsor. Her ex-teammates seek lethal revenge on her. Donald, who'd profited from her criminal career, has ginned up a sob story and a support group to help smear her still-risky reputation.

*This is about what I'd encourage in Champions write-ups, either initially or filled-in after a player felt the character had started well in play. Proper names are very effective, as usual. In practice, people tended to over-do it, with too much scripted "then one day in math class" fic and fixating on the properties of made-up radiation. Myself very definitely included.*

*For Miasma, I could have been more extreme with my ethnic and economic choices, but I'm wary of gone-straight characters embedded in Hollywood signaling.*

## **STORY: GROUNDED**

As above, but tie it all to the 2008 crash and how life with just-married Donald had deteriorated as all those For Sale signs appeared along Sheridan Avenue. The Wild Side become a gone-nuts activist group formerly associated with Occupy, with only one original member and the leader either stifled or deranged.

*This is where GURPS: Supers would have put the character in the first place through point-expenditure definition: along with her and the other characters' current status and income, more immediate and regional history, and relevant implications. The point is to heighten the tensions she brings to the world around her, not only internally or why she's in danger from someone. I turned more and more to this sort of thing while playing Champions, partly due to the composition of our first group and later due to the influence of GURPS: Supers.*

## **NUMBERS AND GAME SPECS**

Here's the build I'd prefer to start playing the character. It also demonstrates that when you build a *Champions* character, you better use him or her quick or you'll be messing with the numbers again before too long, as I've tweaked a couple of things from the prior versions. I also bit the bullet and realized I didn't want an incompetent DNPC, points or no points, and went with the Public Identity.

Rules: *Champions* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1985) by George MacDonald and Steve Peterson; also *Champions II* (1984) and *Champions III* (1985).

Disadvantages: Cynical (15), Code vs. Killing (20), Action junkie (10, half value at 5), Public Identity (10), Enemy: the Wild Side 8- (25), Enemy Donald and his support group (20), Vulnerable 2x Mental Illusions (10), Unusual Looks 14- (ex-Wild Side reputation) (15), Enrage when attacked on the basis of her past 11- recover 14- (15), Competent DNPC Eric Quincas the former Polar Star 14- (15)

Total points in Disadvantages = 150

Strength 10, Dexterity 23, Constitution 25, Body 10, Intelligence 10, Ego 20 **Limited: full value only after recovering from Enrage (+1 Limitation)**, Presence 15, Comeliness 16, Physical Defense 10, Energy Defense 10, Speed 5, Recovery 9, Endurance 50, Stun 28

Cost = 119

Skills: Find Weakness, Stealth. Cost: 15

Presence Defense 10, Knockback Resistance -4". Cost: 17

Elemental Control: Hallucinatory Gas, 20 points, **Endurance Battery x4 132 END (+1/2 Limitation) = 13**

- Desolidification: Full Vapor Form, 40 = 20 **END Battery (+1/2 Limitation) = 13**

- Energy Blast: Gas Jet 8d6, **Increased Knockback x2 (+1/2 Advantage)** 60 = 40 **END Battery (+1/2 Limitation)** = 26
- Mental Illusions: Hallucination Dose 10d6, **Area Effect 1 hex (+1/2 Advantage)** 75 = 55 **Limited: no control over content (+1 Limitation) END Battery (+1/2 Limitation)** = 22
- Force Field: Semi-Vapor Form +25 PD +15 ED, 40 = 20 **four Continuing Charges (+1 Limitation) END Battery (+1/2 Limitation)** = 8
- Teleportation: Puff of Smoke 15" allows half-move + attack 40 = 20 **END Battery (+1/2 Limitation)** = 13

Cost = 95, 4 points to spare

Couple notes about this build: I racked up the effectiveness of her offensive powers, choosing for more knock'em-over with her Gas Jet. The Hallucination Dose is nastier too, in part because I retained the very weak offensive roll if she hasn't been Enraged and recovered – that renders the power pretty much window dressing until such a time as this happens.