

VORTEX

REAL NAME: Matthew “Matt” McDonald

OCCUPATION: Musician, unemployed

BASE: Emerald City

Matthew McDonald has always been lucky. Even when his parents were killed in a car accident when he was in high school (which wasn't so lucky, really), he came away with a nice little trust fund he's still living off and got to move from the middle-of-nowhere Iowa to one of the up-and-coming cities on the West Coast, Emerald City. He's spent most of his life coasting from one thing to the next with no thought to making a plan for the future. When he got into trouble, he always managed to find a way out of it.

In college, pursuing a degree in Marketing, or Political Science, or Philosophy, or whatever he told people when they asked, he landed a work-study position as, what amounted to, a night watchman for one of the physics labs. He spend most of his time sitting behind a desk reading, doing homework, listening to music, and watching YouTube, until one night when he heard noises from one of the labs.

Upon investigating, Matt found an apparently deserted lab lit by a glow coming from a mirror-like disk of energy held inside a circular frame. Then he heard words coming from the disk in a low, rumbling voice, “We’re losing synchronicity, Professor. If we’re to do this, it has to be now! Professor?” Matt, more than a little surprised, managed a, “Hello?” and the voice on the other side growled, “Ah, there you are. Beginning transmission!” At that, Matt remembers a stream of energy coming from the silvery disk, a shadowy, inhuman shape, and after that, nothing.

He awoke moments later with a raging headache, feeling as if he'd been literally put through a wringer. Above him was

one of the professors who worked at the lab. He seemed upset. The man, Professor Zediker, known as “Professor Zed” to the staff, explained that Matt had accidentally been exposed to dangerous energies that might be fatal and that it was very important that Matt do exactly what he said if he wanted to live. Matt felt like he had little choice and agreed.

Matt took a moment to collect his thoughts, trying to will the buzzing in his head to go away, and as he did so he realized it was something he could tap into. With a little push he opened his first vortex in front of his right hand and mistakenly obliterated the device that had previously held the glowing disk. The professor went from upset to furious, but Matt didn't notice, he was exploring the power he could feel suffusing his body. The more he concentrated, the more he understood what he could do, like moving an arm he'd just remembered he had. Within minutes he was teleporting across the room and he knew he could do so much more.

Then the professor was back at his side, telling him not to use the power frivolously, that it was dangerous and there was no way to know how it was affecting him. Zediker went on to explain that Matt would need to get some equipment that could mean the difference between life and death for him. Over the course of the next few weeks, Vortex made his debut... as Emerald City's newest super-powered thief.

At first, Matt didn't question his activities; he was doing what he had to in order to save his life, but after news of his thefts hit the news, he started to have doubts. While still struggling with his actions, he ran into Ultramarine and Xenon, who'd figured out where he was likely to strike next. After trading a few panicked shots with the heroes, Vortex threw up his hands and asked for help.

The heroes accompanied him back to Professor Zed's lab to find it in ruins and the professor missing. And at the center of all the destruction were the ruins of another portal device....

Since then, Vortex has been working with the Sentinels—who managed to make Vortex's legal problems go away by promising to watch over the young man. His private life is a bit of a mess and he's dropped out of college until he can get things straightened out. In the meantime he's living off the stipend from his trust fund and doing the whole singer/songwriter thing at the bars around town. At least the commute is easy!



USING VORTEX AS A VILLAIN

As opposed to being basically a good person, the villainous Vortex was a scofflaw and troublemaker from day one. When he lucked into his powers, his partnership with Professor Zed led to a truly impressive string of thefts that never let up. Vortex continues to use his powers to take what he wants and get away scot-free. That included ducking out on his erstwhile “partner,” who is looking to even the score.

VORTEX

PL10

STR	STA	AGL	DEX	FGT	INT	AWE	PRE
0	3	3	4	0	2	2	0

POWERS

Quick Change: Feature 1 (Quick Change) • 1 point

Shunting Field: Enhanced Defenses 22 (Dodge 11, Parry 11) Linked to Protection 3, Sustained • 25 points

Summoning Vortices: Array (26 points)

- **Projection Vortex:** Blast 12, Variable Descriptor (Any environmental descriptor) • 26 points
- **Wide-Angle Vortex:** Cone Area Damage 10, Variable Descriptor (Any environmental descriptor) • 1 point
- **Wind-Tunnel Vortex:** Close Range Cone Area Move Object 6, Limited Direction: Straight Away, Linked to Cumulative Cone Area Sustained Affliction 6 (Resisted by Fortitude; Hindered, Prone), Instant Recovery, Limited Degree • 1 point

Travel Vortices: Array (27 points)

- **Personal Vortex:** Teleport 8 (1 mile), Accurate, Change Direction, Increased Mass 2 (200 lbs.) • 27 points
- **Dimensional Vortex:** Movement 3 (Dimension Travel 3: Any Dimension), Increased Mass 2 (200 lbs.) • 1 point
- **Long-Range Personal Vortex:** Teleport 8, Accurate, Change Direction, Extended, Limited to Extended (250 Miles), Increased Mass 2 (200 lbs.) • 1 point
- **Vortex Portal:** Teleport 8 (1 mile), Accurate, Change Direction, Distracting, Portal, Tiring • 1 point

Vortex Platform: Flight 1 (4 MPH), Platform • 1 point

SKILLS

Deception 8 (+8), Expertise: Musician 2 (+4), Expertise: Student 2 (+4), Perception 6 (+8), Persuasion 6 (+6), Stealth 6 (+9)

ADVANTAGES

Accurate Attack, Luck 2, Power Attack, Ranged Attack 4, Redirect, Taunt, Ultimate Effort (Dodge checks)

PERSONALITY

Vortex is always saying things without thinking and is always surprised when people “take things the wrong way.” He honestly doesn’t expect people to be offended, because he doesn’t get easily offended. Despite his obnoxiousness, at heart he’s a good guy and regrets his past actions while being forced to work for Professor Zed. He’s vowed to make up for his past and wants to do good, not only for himself, but to show his teammates their faith in him isn’t misplaced.

POWERS & ABILITIES

Vortex opens vortices to other dimensions and uses them to teleport himself and others as well as “shunt” energies into other worlds. In addition, he can open smaller portals to a variety of dimensions and allow their contents to stream forth as blasts of destructive energy. His Projection Vortex and Wide-angle Vortex both have the Variable Descriptor, allowing him to fire blasts of fire, heat, lightning, cold, radiation, or any other attack with an “environmental” descriptor. He doesn’t have any control over the energies that spill forth, but he’s able to vary the intensity of

OFFENSE

INITIATIVE +3

Unarmed +0 Close, Damage 0

Projection Vortex +8 Ranged, Damage 12, Variable Descriptor

Wide-Angle Vortex— Close, Cone Area Damage 12, Variable Descriptor

Wind-Tunnel Vortex— Close, Cone Area Move Object 6 Linked to Cumulative Cone Area Sustained Affliction 6, Resisted by Fortitude

DEFENSE

DODGE 14/3* **FORTITUDE** 8

PARRY 11/0* **TOUGHNESS** 6/3*

WILL 8 *Without Shunting Field.

POWER POINTS

ABILITIES 28 **SKILLS** 15

POWERS 85 **DEFENSES** 11

ADVANTAGES 11 **TOTAL** 150

COMPLICATIONS

Enemy: Professor Zed, if he’s still alive, and whatever came through the second portal are keeping an eye on Vortex and are looking to reclaim his powers.

Identity: Vortex is very careful about keeping his identity as Matthew McDonald a secret and he worries Professor Zed will return to ruin it for him.

Motivation—Thrills: Vortex enjoys using his powers and the exciting and unpredictable situations he gets into when he uses them.

Reputation: Vortex’s string of thefts were well publicized and he still suffers some backlash from people who don’t quite buy his conversion to the side of the angels.

the attacks significantly. Using Accurate Attack and Power Attack Vortex can shift his attack and damage values from +13 to attack with 7 damage all the way to +3 to hit with 17 damage!

Vortex has the ability to travel to other dimensions, but he doesn’t like to because he has no real knowledge of other worlds and thus no idea where he’ll end up. The excitement of not knowing where he’ll end up is a rush, but one too many jaunts into vacuum, searing heat, or other dangerous environments has taught him it’s better not to push his luck with that particular ability.

ENEMIES

Vortex is afraid Professor Zed and whatever it was that came through the second portal are both out to get him... and he’s right. Zed hasn’t raised his head since disappearing, but it’s only a matter of time. As for the thing that came through the portal, Vortex doesn’t know it, but that’s the creature known as Cerebrus Rex. One day soon, the two of them will come after Vortex and try to reclaim the power he’s “stolen.”

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