

SEVEN

In the early years of her life, Serena Vervain didn't know she was any different from other children. She grew up in the West End of Freedom City, raised by her grandmother after her parents died in an accident. Her Nana taught Serena about herbs and folk remedies, read her stories and faerie tales, and told her about the little people and the spirits, both good and bad. Serena learned not to talk to other children about these things; they were part of the secret world that she shared only with her Nana.

When Serena turned thirteen, she learned the truth. She came from a bloodline of witches that stretched back to the founding days of Freedom City. The gift often skipped generations, as it did with her mother, but Serena showed signs of being the most gifted witch in her family's history and the seventh to wield a witch's true potential of powers. As Serena's gifts awakened, she learned her family had enemies, some of them ancient, and she would need protection from them. Her grandmother enrolled Serena at the Claremont Academy, where she could hone her gifts and benefit from both its protection and its education. There she took the codename "Seven," as seven is a magical number and she was the seventh fully-realized witch of her bloodline. Now, at the age of 16, Serena has proven an exemplary student, and she has also begun learning from Adrian Eldrich, Earth's master mage (p. 135).

Although she knows nothing of him yet, Serena's greatest enemy is lawyer Lucius Cabot (p. 53), an immortal who sold his soul to the forces of evil. Cabot is troubled by a prophecy that says the descendant of a witch he helped to hang will prove to be his undoing. He has carefully eliminated these descendants over the years. After arranging the accident that killed Serena's parents, he believed that he was safe, but the prophecy will not be denied unless Cabot can eliminate Seven as well.

Quote: "Great Goddess, aid your daughter!"

Personality: Serena is a vivacious young woman with a love of life. She's friendly and cares about others, doing her best to make them feel comfortable. In many ways, she's the spiritual heart of the Next-Gen, helping to settle fights and getting every-



one to cooperate.

While the team respects Bowman, everyone loves Seven and talks to her. She balances both her mundane and magical studies with fighting alongside the Next-Gen and having fun and relaxing. She naively encourages everyone else to do as much, since she assumes they can manage their time like she does. She's always organizing trips to the mall or the movies or something to break up the team's routine, and she constantly encourages Bowman and Nereid to lighten up. She loves Chris (Megastar) like the little brother she never had but she is blind to his crush on her.

Powers & Tactics: Seven is a witch, able to cast various spells. Her primary power is control over the elements (air, earth, fire, and water). She is also sensitive to mystical forces, and can sense when they are nearby. Her powers are still developing. Sometimes she can cast more complex and powerful spells with a bit of preparation and access to her spellbooks and grimoires (and the use of a Hero Point for the power stunt).

Appearance: Seven is an attractive young woman with long, black hair and green-gold eyes. She often dresses in a black, dark

blue, or dark green dress over a pair of similarly colored thigh-high boots. Pouches of herbs and other spell components hang from her belt.

Campaign Use: Seven is a sorceress-in-training with the potential to be one of the most powerful spellcasters in the world. Heroes may help protect her from more powerful enemies seeking to do her harm before she can challenge their might. They might have to deal with the effects of a failed spell or enchantment on Seven's part. Mystic heroes could even become mentors or teachers for Seven, perhaps guest-lecturers or tutors at the Claremont Academy or simply consultants and allies brought to the enigmatic home of Adrian Eldrich.

Villain Option: Seven *does* come from a long line of witches, but they are all evil to the core. She is a true bad seed, tainted from the very beginning. Her unleashed powers led to her parents' deaths. Her grandmother, the stern priestess of a secret black magic coven, raised her. Now the old woman fears Seven's growing power, and tries to keep the girl under her thumb, but Seven is rebellious and wants to have *fun* with her power.

Seven: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (+9L, fire blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +12, Knowledge (occult) +7, Sense Motive +7.

Feats: Dodge, Lighting Reflexes, Skill Focus (Concentration), Mystic Awareness.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +6 [*Source:* Training; *Cost:* 1 pp], Sorcery +9 [*Spells:* Air Control, Animation, ESP, Flight, Force Field, Obscure, Snare; *Power Stunts:* Earth Control, Fire Control, Water Control; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp].

LILLIAN VERVAIN

Seven's grandmother Lillian grew up in a very different time, when the Craft was something special, something secret, not something for crass entertainment in the media and on television. In her day, it was something kept secret, shared only within the family, and never talked about openly among strangers or friends. Although Lillian never had the kind of power that Serena possesses, she still uses her own modest gifts clandestinely in her herbalists' shop, which lies on Morrow Street two blocks away from her house on Sindella Boulevard. Although she seems like nothing more than a kind, elderly widow living in an old house in the West End, Lillian has actually lived a fairly adventurous life, and knows people like Adrian Eldrich and Duncan Summers because of it. As to the exact nature of those friendships over the years, Lillian merely smiles wistfully and changes the subject.

Lillian continues to teach her granddaughter what she can and supports her growth as a witch. Tremendously proud of Serena, she still fears the day when she'll have to leave the girl on her own. Lillian uses her own mystic powers rarely due to the strain they place upon her. She's well known in the West End as a source of sage advice and every folk and homeopathic cure known for 100 years. She's also pleasant enough company regardless, and Lil is always available for a cup of tea and sympathy.

Lillian Vervain is a thin, slight woman just under five feet tall. She wears her snow-white hair up in a bun always, though a few pictures show her with waist-length jet-black hair in her youth. She wears simple dresses these days, and often wears an apron whether she's at home cooking and cleaning or puttering around the herbalists' shop she still operates three days a week. She's an excellent cook, "since it's one of the best sorts of magic for everyone." Serena's classmates never turn down an offer of dinner at Nana Vervain's house.

Lillian Vervain: PL 7; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 ranged (+5L, fire blast); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 19, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +13, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (occult) +10, Profession (cook) +12, Sense Motive +13.

Feats: Mystic Awareness.

Powers: Sorcery +5 [*Spells:* Air Control, Animation, ESP, Flight, Force Field, Obscure, Snare; *Power Stunts:* Earth Control, Fire Control, Water Control; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp], Super-Wisdom +6 [*Source:* Training; *Cost:* 3 pp].

SONIC

Lemar Phillips had a pretty ordinary childhood growing up in Lincoln. He got into his share of trouble, although he was basically a good kid. He ran with a pretty rough crowd until he caught the attention of Wilson Jeffers, the director of the Lincoln Youth Center. Wilson helped give Lemar some direction and in many ways became the father figure he lacked at home.

One night late in 1999, Lemar tried to stop a friend from getting involved in a gang robbery. Instead, he got dragged along against his will. Things went wrong almost from the start, and the gang botched an attempt to steal an experimental sonic disruptor weapon, damaging the device in the process. When it exploded, Lemar Phillips took the brunt of the blast but he miraculously survived and found that he now possessed the device's power to generate and control sound.

Lemar told Mr. Jeffers about his newfound abilities and wanted his help in learning to control them. Wilson Jeffers then shared his secret with Lemar—he had been the Black Avenger years before, a member of the Freedom League and the hero of Lincoln. Jeffers began training the boy to master his powers, and Lemar adopted the identity of Sonic. He also tracked down the criminal who sponsored the gang heist—the Maestro, the malevolent conductor of crime—and helped put him away in Providence Asylum for a time.

Since then, Sonic has become well known as a hero in Lincoln and Southside, and he's had adventures alongside Foreshadow, Johnny Rocket, and another Southside rookie hero named Wyzrd. Some of Sonic's young fans have been tagging area buildings with his name in spraypaint, reminding would-be criminals that a new hero walks the streets of Lincoln. Ironically, Lemar recently had to spend a few hours scrubbing such a tag off the Youth Center. Still, he (and secretly Jeffers) is glad the community has accepted its new hero.

Duncan Summers offered Sonic the opportunity to attend the Claremont Academy, but Lemar insisted on only doing so after his

regular classes at Joseph Clark High School in Lincoln. Afternoons and evenings, Sonic patrols and trains with Mr. Jeffers and his teammates in the Next-Gen.

Quote: "Check it, son! This'll put your head out!"

Personality: Sonic is a sixteen-year-old with super-powers, so he's caught between the fun of being able to do amazing things and the need to keep his powers secret and use them well. He idolizes Wilson Jeffers and hopes to make his mentor proud of him. He feels a strong sense of responsibility toward his mother, his little brother Toby, and to the Lincoln neighborhood where he grew up. He's a bit awed by older and more experienced heroes like Foreshadow, while he's a bit competitive with heroes closer to his own age like his teammates and Wyzrd. Lemar can be surprisingly level headed, but he still makes his share of mistakes.

Powers & Tactics: Sonic has the ability to generate and control high-frequency sound. He can create deafening blasts of sound or sonic force beams that can shatter concrete. He can also dampen sound waves in his area, creating a zone of complete silence. His sonic vibrations also allow him to fly and create a protective vibratory shield around his body. Both latter effects create a constant, low-pitched humming noise.

Sonic tends to go for the straightforward method of blasting his opponents unconscious, although he'll sometimes use his deafening sonic blasts to soften up a group of foes and disrupt their ability to communicate. Against opponents with sound-related powers, he'll often create a zone of silence to block or negate them.

Appearance: Sonic is a sixteen-year-old African American boy with an athletic build, short brown hair, and brown eyes. His costume consists of a mask that covers the top half of his head and ties in the back, a short-sleeved form-fitting shirt (a stylized "S" on the front in white), and fingerless gloves, all of them in black. He wears baggy jeans and sneakers.

Campaign Use: Sonic is a rookie hero who sees himself as the protector of his Lincoln neighborhood. Heroes can encounter him in and around Lincoln and Southside. His enthusiasm and cockiness get him in trouble from time to time. He may fall into a villain's trap and need the heroes' help—perhaps Wilson Jeffers contacts them—or he may jump to conclusions and attack the heroes before he realizes who they are.

Villain Option: It's not difficult to imagine what might have happened if Sonic hadn't found the right kind of guidance. The villainous Sonic used his powers to take over a gang in Lincoln and became a super-powered bully, taking whatever he wants until someone stops him. Or perhaps the guidance Sonic received was not toward heroism. Wilson Jeffers could be a political radical devoted to balancing inequalities in American society through violence, with Sonic as his willing protégé.

Sonic: PL 9; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (+10S, sonic blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +7, Knowledge (Freedom City) +6, Listen +8, Spot +5, Taunt +9.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Ultra-Hearing.

Powers: Amazing Save (Reflex) +4 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Energy Control (sonic) +9 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field, Obscure (silence), Power Stunts: Energy Blast; Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp].

