



# INTRODUCTION

The hardest job in gaming is not game designer, and it's not developer, editor, publisher, or even art director. The hardest, and often most elusive, job in roleplaying gaming is that of Gamemaster.

It has been said, and truthfully, that the secret to the world's most successful roleplaying game is to figure out how to package a great Gamemaster with each rulebook: somebody with clear understanding of the rules, boundless imagination and enthusiasm for running the game, and willing to lovingly detail settings, characters, and adventures, all for the enjoyment of a group of players. Needless to say, Green Ronin Publishing has not yet figured out how pre-package a great GM for you. Fortunately, we may not need to.

You may already know a great Gamemaster, or you may already *be* a great one, or have the potential to be. All you need is for somebody to make the job a bit easier. That is where this book comes in. The *Mutants & Masterminds Hero's Handbook* provides all of the game systems needed to run and play a complete series. What this book, the *Gamemaster's Guide*, has are resources: tools and advice to help M&M GMs do their jobs easily and well.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The tools in this book are yours to use as you see fit for your M&M game. **Chapter 3** and the **Appendix** offer pre-built time-savers, while **Chapter 1** and **Chapter 2** have more theory for world-designers. **Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5** offer plenty of adventure ideas, while **Chapter 6** is for the system-tinkerers. Regardless of your particular interest, read through all the chapters in the *Gamemaster's Guide*, chances are you'll find something useful for your game in each one.

### CHAPTER 1: SETTINGS

**Chapter 1: Settings** discusses creating an entire universe of your M&M heroes: choose a setting, scope, and style, look at different genres, time periods, and cosmologies. The chapter includes ideas about the nature and origin of super powers in the setting, and the role of super-powered characters in it.

### CHAPTER 2: ADVERSARIES

**Chapter 2: Adversaries** talks about villains: their roles in the series, different types, motivations, backgrounds, and goals. It also looks at villain tactics, how to play villains, and how to use them to the greatest effect in your games. It concludes with a look at villain teams and organizations.

### CHAPTER 3: ARCHETYPES

**Chapter 3: Archetypes** provides M&M Gamemasters a whole toolbox of ready-to-use characters. It starts off with a discussion on villain design, then provides eighteen fully detailed villain archetypes of varying power levels, with plenty of options to customize and create a wide range of foes. The chapter concludes with a catalog of animal, minion, and monster archetypes you can use to fill out the ranks of a villain's henchmen or as foes in their own right.

### CHAPTER 4: PLOTS

**Chapter 4: Plots** is all about villainous schemes, from conquest to theft, looking at the various goals of the nefarious in detail, including various examples and springboards for your own ideas. It includes a random adventure idea table along with some advice on construction M&M adventures.

### CHAPTER 5: CHALLENGES

**Chapter 5: Challenges** looks at the various non-villainous threats heroes may encounter, from natural disasters to harsh environments. It also looks at various types of traps, from cunning captures to deadly deathtraps and how to use them effectively in your game.

### CHAPTER 6: OPTIONS

**Chapter 6: Options** gives you some ways to modify the M&M system to suit the type of game you want to run, along with some additional tools for the Gamemaster's toolbox, including fighting styles, systems for reputation, wealth, and mass combat, and ways to make the game more dynamic or more lethal, as you prefer.

### APPENDIX: VILLAINOUS LAIRS

The **Appendix** of the *Gamemaster's Guide* provides nine ready-to-use villainous lairs, from an abandoned amusement park to an island lair (perhaps complete with volcano). You can use the maps and descriptions of these lairs with the villain archetypes and plots in this book, in conjunction with your own villains and adventures, or just as inspiration to create lairs for your own villains, or even headquarters for the heroes!