

Basilea



Hespera was the name that the Greeks gave to the lands which lay as far to the west as they could imagine -- specifically Italy. The Latins, in their turn, applied that name to the lands which lay to *their* west -- specifically Spain and the northwest of Africa. How much this was influenced by the secret that a land which called itself Hespera could be found in the distant west, hidden by an invisible barrier among the mountains of what is now called the Western Sahara, is impossible to know. The Greeks would have been fascinated and horrified by that land, if they knew of it, for it was and is a place where what they viewed as the natural order of things was overturned -- where women governed and fought, and men cared for the home and the family. The men were not enslaved or ill-treated -- usually -- but they were certainly considered the lesser, weaker sex.

This has begun to change, in recent decades, as the **Hesperans** become more and more aware of the world in which they live, a world which is slowly moving towards equality of the sexes. Many Hesperans wonder if they are not crippling themselves by suppressing the agency and intellect of the male half of their population. Yet there are voices which decry such change and reject any imitation of the world beyond their barrier. After all, they are not human. Their ancestors were brought to this world millennia ago by the Olympians, from a world which supposedly orbits one of the stars in the constellation humans call Lyra.

The greatest voice for change, the greatest hero of her people, is Sharana, called Basilea (or Princess) by the people of the outside world. Nearly sixty years ago -- a small but significant fragment of the three centuries that her people normally live -- she was chosen by their oracles to leave their hidden city and prepare to answer a great threat to the world whose existence they perceived, but whose details they could not know. Obedient to the oracles, she did so,

arriving in America in the year men called 1963. Almost by accident, she became known as a defender of the weak and the innocent, an example of what women could do. She joined with other champions as a member of **the Institute**, never dreaming that **one of her fellows** would become the great threat that the oracles perceived.

When that threat finally materialized in 1971, she fought harder than anyone else, and was badly wounded .., but was satisfied with the victory nonetheless. During her recuperation in Hespera, she spoke of what she had seen and done, and the Queen of Hespera herself came to listen. Her ruler urged Sharana to consider her task complete and remain, offering to make the young warrior an adviser long before her years would normally grant her the role. Sharana declined the honor she was offered, knowing that there was still more to do in the outside world, still more to see and do ... and learn.

She remained in action for another decade, far longer than any of her colleagues, before she was finally called back to be acclaimed as the new Queen, following the passing of her predecessor. By then, she had reached a point where she was weary of trying to save a world which kept trying to tear itself apart, and more interested in trying to put her learning into practice among her own people. The task of governing Hespera was as great a challenge as any she had faced until then, and for a long while she let herself forget about the world beyond the barrier. Even in her moments of greatest frustration, she never thought to abandon her duties.

And then, two decades later, the oracles came to her with a new warning. She considered sending **a younger warrior**, one of the adopted daughters whom she had trained, but decided that this task called for experience, not youth. And so she returned to the world to join in the battle against **Cerebron**, and helped to found **the Powerhouse**, dividing her time between the worlds outside and inside the barrier. In her more cynical moments, Sharana wonders whether the oracles -- most of whom have no love for the changes she seeks to make -- might have tricked her. If so, she is determined to make the best of it.

Sharana maintains no dual identity, preferring to meet people without hiding her true nature from them. While she is almost never there, her base of operations is in the city of Hesperia, California, which has a climate that reminds her of her homeland. Her most immediate goal is to persuade the elder Hesperan known as **Nocticula** to abandon her parasitic and hedonistic lifestyle and return to their people. Then, perhaps, she will take the opportunity to investigate the origins of her people, and learn whether it is true that **the Olympians** are all gone ...

Update 2021: Sharana has stepped down as Queen, retired as Basilea and permanently resigned from the Powerhouse, and passed her shield on to her youngest daughter, **Nzarde**, before the latter was sent into exile. She is currently active as an adviser to the new queen of Hespera, Najobe.

Update 2022: After a long year spent further healing the wounds of the recent civil war, Sharana was surprised to be contacted by a telepathic speaker who claimed to be the goddess **Metis**, though disclaiming divinity. Metis urged her (and through her, the rest of Hespera) to prepare for a great struggle that would come upon the whole solar system shortly. Sharana reached out to **some old allies** to make those preparations. She thus ended up fighting the battle against **Vulcan** as the admiral of a small space fleet crewed by her people and the returned Olympians, among others. **In both of the timelines** that result from that conflict, Najobe has since sent Sharana to the moon of Ganymede to act as an emissary to the Olympians, with the result that she has learned more than she ever expected to know about the secret history of her people. On Timeline α , her shock at **the death of Paragon** has stopped her from pursuing plans to discover what might be found on the world where her people originally existed; on Timeline β , she expects to be ready to depart early in the next year, travelling in the company of **Feena** and her action team.

Update 2023: The Convergence resulted in her Timeline β version existing and departing from Earth in Feena's company early in this year; she will likely not learn of Paragon's death until after she returns.

Basilea -- PL 11 (Third Edition)

Abilities:

STR 7 | STA 8 | AGL 4 | DEX 5 | FGT 10 | INT 2 | AWE 5 | PRE 5

Powers:

Adamantine Shield: Strength-based Ranged Damage 2; Strength-based Damage 2; Enhanced Defenses 4 (Dodge 2, Parry 2); Removable (-3 points) - 14 points

Hesperan Biology: Immunity 3 (aging, disease, poison) - 3 points

Hesperan Swiftness: Leaping 5 (250 feet); Speed 4 (30 MPH); Swimming 4 (8 MPH) - 13 points

Hesperan Telepathy: Mental Communication 3 - 12 points

Hesperan Telepathy: Array (22 points)

- **Paralyzing Glare:** Cumulative Sight-Dependent Perception Range Affliction 7 (Resisted by Will; Impaired, Disabled, Paralyzed), Reversible - 22 points
- **Soulgaze:** Cumulative Sight-Dependent Mind Reading 11 - 1 point

Strength of Will: Impervious Will 9, Limited to mental effects - 5 points

Advantages:

Defensive Roll, Improved Defense, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Power Attack, Ranged Attack 4, Set-Up, Takedown.

Skills:

Acrobatics 6 (+10), Athletics 4 (+11), Close Combat: Shield 3 (+13), Expertise: History 6 (+8)
Expertise: Military 7 (+9), Insight 6 (+11), Intimidation 6 (+11), Perception 8 (+13), Persuasion 7
(+12), Ranged Combat: Throwing 2 (+7), Vehicles 5 (+10).

Offense:

Initiative +8
Unarmed +10 (Close Damage 7)
Shield Bash +13 (Close Damage 9)
Thrown Shield +11 (Ranged Damage 9)
Paralyzing Glare -- (Perception Range Will 7)

Defense:

Dodge 12/10, Parry 12/10, Fortitude 11, Toughness 10/8, Will 9.

Totals:

Abilities 92 + Powers 70 + Advantages 12 + Skills 30 + Defenses 14 = 218 points

Offensive PL: 11

Defensive PL: 11

Resistance PL: 10

Skill PL: 7

Complications:

Exemplar--Motivation. Nemesis (Nocticula.) ***Responsibility*** (Hespera.) ***Truthful and Direct.***

Note: Her 1960s-era incarnation was PL 10, with STA 7, FGT 8, AWE 3, PRE 3 and Dodge 8; her Paralyzing Gaze was rank 5, her Soulgaze was rank 8, and her Shielded Mind was rank 5. She had achieved her current level of ability by 1975.

Basilea -- PL 11 (4th Edition)

Abilities:

STR 7 | AGL 4 | STA 8 | INT 2 | AWE 5 | PRE 5

Combat:

Attack 9 | Defense 12/10 | Initiative 12

Specialized Attack: Shield 13

Resistances:

Dodge 10 | Fortitude 9 | Toughness 10/8 | Will 11

Powers:

Adamantine Shield: Bludgeoning Damage 2, Strength-based, Thrown; Enhanced Advantage 1

(Quick Counter Damage), Sustained; Enhanced Defense 2, Sustained; Easily Removable (-4 points) - 4 points

Hesperan Biology: Immunity 3 (aging, disease, poison) - 3 points

Hesperan Swiftmess: Leaping 5; Speed 4; Swimming 4 - 13 points

Hesperan Telepathy Basics: Mental Communication 3 - 6 points

Hesperan Telepathy Techniques: Array - 23 points

- **Paralyzing Glare:** Paralyze 7 (Resisted by Will), Cumulative, Perception Range, Sight-Dependent, Reversible
- **Soulgaze:** Mind Reading 11, Cumulative, Sight-Dependent

Mental Translation: Comprehend Languages - 2 points

Strength of Will: Impervious Will 11, Limited to mental effects - 11 points

Advantages:

Assessment, Connections, Counterattack, Defensive Roll 2, Defensive Throw, Distracting Intimidation, Encourage 2, Equipment, Improved Defense, Improved Disarm, Improved Evasion, Improved Initiative, Improved Team Attack, Improved Trip, *Quick Counter Damage*, Ricochet Thrown Shield 3, Set-Up, Takedown, Taunting Intimidation.

Equipment:

Powerhouse Commlink - 4 points

Skills:

Acrobatics 6 (+10), Athletics 4 (+11), History Expertise 6 (+8), Insight 6 (+11), Intimidation 6 (+11), Perception 8 (+13), Persuasion 7 (+12), Survival 4 (+9), Tactics Expertise 8 (+10), Vehicles 4 (+8).

Offense:

Unarmed +9 (Close Damage 7)

Shield Bash +13 (Close Damage 9)

Thrown Shield +9 (Ranged Damage 9)

Paralyzing Glare -- (Perception Range Will 7)

Totals:

Abilities 62 + Combat 42 + Powers 62 + Advantages 22 + Skills 28 + Resistances 13 = 229 points

Complications:

Exemplar--Motivation. Nemesis (Nocticula.) **Responsibility** (Hespera.) **Truthful and Direct.**