

## Chronicle Comics: Character Dossier



"When I step up, you'd best step aside."

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### Identity Profile

**Name at Birth:** Raymond "Ray" Harwood

**Primary Moniker:** Big Stepper

**Other Known Names:** The Hog of Havoc, Stampede, Iron Trotter

**Visibility:** Obscured

**Chronological Age:** 34

**Species/Type:** Beast Bloomer (Pig)

**Moral Stance:** Neutral (Anti-Hero tendencies)

**Group Affiliations:** Beast Bloomers

**Family Ties:** Estranged younger sister, Mia Harwood

**Operational Base:** The N.E.S.T. (Network for Enhanced Survival and Tactics)

**Nationality:** American

**Civil Status:** Single

**Day Job or Role:** Heavy enforcer for Beast Bloomers; former construction foreman and aspiring country singer

**Birth Date:** November 12th

**Hometown:** Kansas City, Missouri

**Creator(s):** Mac

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## Physical Attributes

**Sex/Gender Identity:** Male

**Sexual Preference:** Heterosexual

**Height:** 6'7"

**Weight:** 340 lbs (mostly muscle)

**Eyes:** Dark brown

**Hair:** Buzzed black hair, slight facial scruff

**Defining Characteristics:**

- Thick, boar-like hide on his arms and chest
  - Short, blunt tusks protruding from his lower jaw
  - Coarse, bristle-like hair along his back and forearms
  - A deep voice, perfect for country ballads
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## Personality Profile

Raymond "Big Stepper" Harwood is a man of contrasts. On the surface, he's a towering, intimidating figure with an imposing presence, but beneath the gruff exterior lies a man deeply attuned to the values of loyalty, family, and hard work. He's a protector by nature, always willing to step up for those who need it. However, Ray's strained relationship with his estranged sister weighs heavily on him, leaving him with a deep sense of guilt and unresolved emotional conflict.

Ray is surprisingly warm and humorous when around trusted allies, though his intimidating size and tendency to snort when frustrated often scare off strangers. His love for country music remains one of his few ties to his pre-Bloomer life, and he frequently hums or sings during quiet moments to calm his nerves. Despite his resilience, Ray fears losing control of his animalistic traits, dreading the day his humanity might fully slip away.

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## History

### Early Life: Building Foundations

Raymond Harwood was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri, in a modest working-class neighborhood. His parents, David and Susan Harwood, were hardworking individuals who instilled in him a strong sense of responsibility and the value of loyalty. David, a mechanic, often

played country records at home, inspiring Ray's love for the genre, while Susan, a schoolteacher, emphasized the importance of family and perseverance.

Ray was a protective older brother to his younger sister, Mia. The two shared a close bond, with Ray often acting as a father figure due to their parents' demanding work schedules. However, tragedy struck when Ray was 16, and his parents were killed in a car accident. Suddenly, Ray found himself thrust into the role of caregiver for Mia, a burden he took on without hesitation but at great personal cost.

Determined to provide for his sister, Ray dropped out of high school and took a job in construction. Though the work was grueling, he excelled, quickly earning the respect of his coworkers for his reliability and strength. His natural leadership abilities eventually earned him a promotion to foreman by his mid-20s. However, the long hours and physical toll of the job left little room for personal ambition, forcing Ray to put his dreams of becoming a country singer on hold.

### **The Dream of Country Music**

Despite his demanding responsibilities, Ray never gave up on music. Inspired by the records his father used to play, he began writing his own songs, drawing from his life experiences of love, loss, and perseverance. His deep, resonant voice and raw, heartfelt lyrics resonated with local audiences, and he began performing at small bars and honky-tonks in Kansas City.

Ray's weekends were a whirlwind of gigs and late-night songwriting sessions, and though his music never earned him much money, it provided an outlet for his emotions. His performances became a source of pride for Mia, who encouraged him to pursue music full-time. However, Ray's sense of duty to his sister and his fear of failure held him back. He saw music as a dream, not a practical way to support their future.

As the years went on, Ray's inability to fully commit to his music strained his relationship with Mia. She grew frustrated with his refusal to take risks and his tendency to shoulder everything alone. Their once-close bond began to fray, culminating in a heated argument where Mia accused Ray of being too stubborn to let anyone help him. Shortly after, Mia left Kansas City to pursue her own dreams, leaving Ray feeling abandoned and guilt-ridden.

### **The Transformation**

Shortly after Mia's departure, Ray's life took another devastating turn. While working a job at a downtown construction site, Ray was involved in a serious accident. A piece of heavy machinery malfunctioned, leaving him with a knee injury that ended his construction career. Faced with mounting bills and no clear path forward, Ray spiraled into a deep depression. Music, once his escape, now felt like a cruel reminder of his failures.

It was during this low point that Ray's fate was irrevocably altered. One evening, while performing at a local dive bar, he unknowingly became a test subject for the experimental **Beast Bloom** spray. A shady corporate representative from Jungle, the shadowy conglomerate

responsible for the product, released the gas into the bar as part of a covert trial. The spray bonded Ray with the archetype of a wild boar, triggering a painful transformation that left him physically and emotionally shattered.

Ray awoke the next morning in a wrecked bar, his body unrecognizable. He was taller, bulkier, and covered in thick, leathery skin with coarse bristles. His hands were massive, his jaw sported small tusks, and his strength was uncontrollable. In his confusion and panic, Ray fled the city, retreating to the nearby wilderness to avoid harming anyone. Over the following weeks, Ray struggled to control his newfound powers, leaving a trail of destruction in his wake.

### **Joining the Beast Bloomers**

Ray's aimless wandering eventually brought him into contact with the Beast Bloomers, a faction of individuals who had undergone similar transformations due to the Beast Bloom spray. Initially wary of them, Ray was convinced to join after a chance encounter with their leader, Juno "Claw" Ashridge. Juno recognized Ray's potential as both a fighter and a protector and offered him a place among their ranks.

For the first time in years, Ray found a sense of purpose. The Beast Bloomers became his new family, and their mission to uncover the truth behind Beast Bloom gave him a reason to fight. Ray quickly proved himself as the group's heavy enforcer, using his immense strength and resilience to protect his comrades. Despite his intimidating appearance, he became a mentor figure to newer recruits, offering guidance and support to those struggling with their transformations.

### **Current Life and Motivations**

Today, Ray is a cornerstone of the Beast Bloomers, feared by their enemies and respected by his allies. He has embraced his role as "Big Stepper," a name that reflects both his physical power and his unwavering determination to move forward despite his burdens. However, Ray's journey is far from over.

Deep down, Ray still wrestles with guilt over his strained relationship with Mia and longs to reconnect with her. He fears she won't recognize or accept the man he's become, both physically and emotionally. Despite this, Ray holds onto the hope that their bond can be mended. He also dreams of recording his music one day, seeing it as a way to preserve the humanity he fears losing to his animalistic traits.

As the Beast Bloomers continue their fight against Jungle and the prejudice of the world, Ray remains a symbol of strength and resilience. He's determined to uncover the truth about Beast Bloom, protect his newfound family, and find redemption—not just for himself, but for the countless lives changed by the spray.

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### **Powers and Abilities**

Ray's transformation gave him immense physical power and abilities derived from his bond with a boar. His primary power is his ability to generate incredible momentum when charging forward. While not truly unstoppable, Ray's immense size, strength, and determination make him extremely difficult to stop once he builds up speed. His charges can knock down walls, flip vehicles, and scatter groups of enemies. This ability is particularly effective in open spaces, where he can fully unleash his potential.

In addition to his charging power, Ray possesses enhanced strength and durability. His thick, leathery hide provides resistance to blunt force trauma, small-caliber bullets, and environmental hazards like sharp debris. His tusks, though small, are capable of piercing metal and are used as weapons in close combat. Ray also has a heightened sense of smell, allowing him to track scents or detect hidden foes.

Despite his advantages, Ray's abilities come with notable limits. His charges require a clear path to build momentum, making him vulnerable in tight or cluttered environments. His thick hide, while durable, does not protect him from heat, cold, or precision attacks aimed at his vulnerable joints or eyes. Overexertion also causes him to overheat quickly, leaving him fatigued and vulnerable in prolonged battles.

### **Charging Momentum**

Ray's primary ability is his enhanced momentum-based charge. Once he begins moving forward, his body generates increasing kinetic energy, making him extremely difficult to stop. His charge allows him to bulldoze through walls, vehicles, and even groups of enemies. The sheer force of his impact creates shockwaves, destabilizing the terrain around him and scattering debris. While not truly unstoppable, his combination of mass and acceleration means only the strongest barriers or precision attacks can halt his momentum.

- **Range of Effect:** His charge is most effective in open spaces or long corridors where he can build up speed.
- **Impact Force:** At full momentum, Ray can flip trucks, break through reinforced steel doors, and send opponents flying upon impact.

### **Enhanced Strength**

Ray's boar-like physiology grants him immense physical strength, even when stationary. His raw power allows him to lift and throw vehicles, break through reinforced barriers, and overpower multiple opponents in melee combat. This strength is not limited to his upper body; his legs are powerful enough to deliver devastating kicks or leap short distances despite his size.

- **Practical Use:** Ray's strength is often employed in combat, demolition, or creating safe passages for his team. He can act as a living battering ram when subtlety isn't an option.

### **Durability and Resistance**

Ray's transformation gave him a thick, leathery hide akin to a boar's tough skin. This hide provides natural resistance to blunt force trauma, small-caliber bullets, and environmental hazards such as sharp debris or minor explosions. His body is designed to endure physical punishment, allowing him to remain standing in situations that would incapacitate most others.

- **Tough Hide:** The thick skin covers most of his body, particularly his chest, arms, and back, making him resistant to cutting or piercing attacks from conventional weapons.
- **Resilience:** Ray's durability allows him to recover quickly from physical blows, maintaining combat effectiveness longer than most.

## Enhanced Senses

Ray's bond with the boar granted him an acute sense of smell, allowing him to track scents over long distances or detect hidden enemies. This sense is particularly useful in dense environments like forests or urban ruins where visual tracking might fail. Additionally, his hearing has improved, giving him an edge in detecting distant or subtle sounds.

- **Scent Tracking:** Ray can differentiate between multiple scents and follow trails with impressive accuracy, making him an effective tracker.
- **Sound Detection:** His enhanced hearing enables him to pick up faint sounds, such as approaching footsteps or the hum of machinery, even in noisy environments.

## Endurance and Recovery

One of Ray's lesser-known abilities is his enhanced endurance, a trait tied to his boar physiology. He can sustain prolonged physical activity without tiring as quickly as an ordinary human, making him well-suited for extended battles or physically demanding missions. Additionally, his body recovers from injuries faster than average, though not at a superhuman rate.

- **Prolonged Stamina:** Ray can fight or carry heavy loads for extended periods without succumbing to exhaustion.
- **Healing Factor:** Minor injuries, such as cuts and bruises, heal within hours, while more severe wounds take days rather than weeks.

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## Learned Skills

Ray's years as a construction foreman provided him with a deep understanding of structural integrity, allowing him to identify weak points in buildings or terrain during combat. This skill also helps him create safe escape routes for his allies. His time as a country singer honed his stage presence and charisma, which he occasionally uses to boost team morale or diffuse tense situations.

While not formally trained, Ray is a skilled brawler thanks to years of physical labor and occasional bar fights. He's also adept at basic mechanical repair, often fixing equipment or improvising solutions for the Beast Bloomers in the field.

### **Construction Expertise**

Ray spent over a decade in the construction industry, working his way up to foreman. His deep understanding of structural engineering and building techniques gives him a unique edge in combat and tactical situations. Ray can quickly assess the integrity of buildings or terrain, identifying weak points to exploit or secure.

- **Combat Application:** In the field, Ray uses this knowledge to pinpoint areas where his strength or charge can cause maximum damage, such as collapsing a structure on enemies or creating escape routes for his team.
- **Utility:** His expertise extends to fortifying the Beast Bloomers' base at the N.E.S.T. He's instrumental in maintaining and upgrading the faction's infrastructure, ensuring their hideout is both secure and functional.

### **Mechanical Repair**

Years of working with heavy machinery on construction sites taught Ray how to maintain and repair complex equipment. From bulldozers to generators, Ray's mechanical skills allow him to troubleshoot and fix problems in the field.

- **Combat Application:** When equipment is damaged during missions, Ray can perform emergency repairs or jury-rig temporary fixes to keep the team operational.
- **Utility:** Ray's mechanical skills are invaluable at the N.E.S.T., where he helps maintain stolen or salvaged technology, such as vehicles, gear, and experimental devices.

### **Hand-to-Hand Combat**

Though Ray has no formal martial arts training, his background in hard labor and countless barroom scuffles taught him to be an effective brawler. Ray's fighting style relies on overwhelming strength and instinct, making him a dangerous opponent in close quarters.

- **Combat Application:** In melee combat, Ray combines his raw power with simple but devastating techniques like grapples, body slams, and powerful punches. His experience allows him to adapt quickly to opponents, leveraging his size and durability to overpower them.
- **Utility:** As a leader in the field, Ray trains newer members of the Beast Bloomers in basic self-defense techniques, ensuring they can handle themselves in a fight.

### **Musical Talent**

Before his transformation, Ray pursued a career as a country singer, honing his vocal and guitar-playing skills. While this talent might seem unrelated to combat, it plays a significant role in maintaining morale within the Beast Bloomers.

- **Combat Application:** Though rare, Ray has used his music to distract enemies or buy time during tense situations. His booming voice and natural charisma can defuse conflicts or rally allies.
- **Utility:** Ray often plays his guitar during downtime at the N.E.S.T., providing a sense of normalcy and camaraderie among the Beast Bloomers. His songs, often inspired by their shared struggles, serve as a reminder of what they're fighting for.

### Improvisation and Problem-Solving

Ray's life experiences—working in construction, pursuing music, and navigating the challenges of his transformation—have made him a master of improvisation. He thrives in unpredictable situations, using his resourcefulness to turn the tide in his favor.

- **Combat Application:** Ray can quickly adapt to battlefield conditions, using whatever tools or resources are available to create innovative solutions. For example, he might use construction materials as makeshift weapons or barricades.
  - **Utility:** In missions where plans go awry, Ray's quick thinking and practical mindset help the team recover and find new ways to achieve their goals.
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### Weaknesses

Ray's reliance on momentum for his most devastating attacks can be a double-edged sword. If his charge is interrupted by a sudden obstacle or an opponent's counterattack, the resulting whiplash leaves him stunned and vulnerable for several moments. Furthermore, his boar-like physiology makes him prone to overheating, particularly during intense physical activity or in hot environments. This vulnerability forces him to pace himself in prolonged fights.

On an emotional level, Ray struggles with feelings of guilt and inadequacy stemming from his past failures. His temper, combined with his animal instincts, can lead to rash decisions or destructive outbursts that endanger himself and his team.

While Ray is a formidable force in combat, his powers come with significant drawbacks that opponents can exploit:

**Momentum Dependency:** His charge requires a clear path to build speed, making it ineffective in tight spaces, cluttered environments, or against agile opponents. If stopped abruptly, Ray experiences a painful whiplash effect that leaves him momentarily stunned and disoriented.



**Overheating:** Ray's boar-like physiology includes a high metabolic output during physical activity, which makes him prone to overheating. Prolonged combat or exposure to high temperatures can weaken his endurance and impair his focus.

**Limited Range:** While Ray's physical powers excel in melee and close-quarters combat, he has no ranged abilities, leaving him vulnerable to opponents who can attack from a distance.

**Sensory Overload:** His heightened senses can be a double-edged sword. Strong smells, like tear gas or chemical agents, and loud noises, such as explosions, can overwhelm him, rendering him temporarily incapacitated.

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## Power Metrics

**Intellect:** 3/7

**Physical Power:** 6/7

**Speed/Agility:** 3/7

**Stamina/Endurance:** 5/7

**Energy Output:** 3/7

**Combat Skill:** 2/7

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## Tools of the Trade

Ray carries a simple but sturdy guitar, a relic of his pre-Bloomer life, which he often plays during downtime or to calm his nerves. For combat, he uses a reinforced sledgehammer that complements his immense strength and provides an option for situations where charging isn't viable. His tactical vest is outfitted with lightweight armor plates, offering some additional protection while keeping him mobile.

## Tusks and Close-Quarters Combat

Ray's transformation included the growth of short but incredibly durable tusks that protrude from his lower jaw. While not large, these tusks are sharp enough to pierce metal when combined with his charging force and are frequently used in close-quarters combat. Additionally, his thick forearms and bristle-covered shoulders make him a devastating brawler, able to knock opponents off balance with sheer mass and weight.

- **Tusks:** Used for piercing or ramming attacks, especially during charges.
  - **Bristle Defense:** His coarse, spiky hair provides a slight deterrent to grappling attacks, as it can scratch or irritate opponents trying to grab him.
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## **Fun Facts**

- Ray's favorite song to sing is "Take Me Home, Country Roads," which he often hums during missions.
- He has a secret dream of recording an album with other Beast Bloomers, even if it's just for fun.
- Despite his imposing size, Ray has a gentle touch when it comes to playing guitar or repairing equipment.