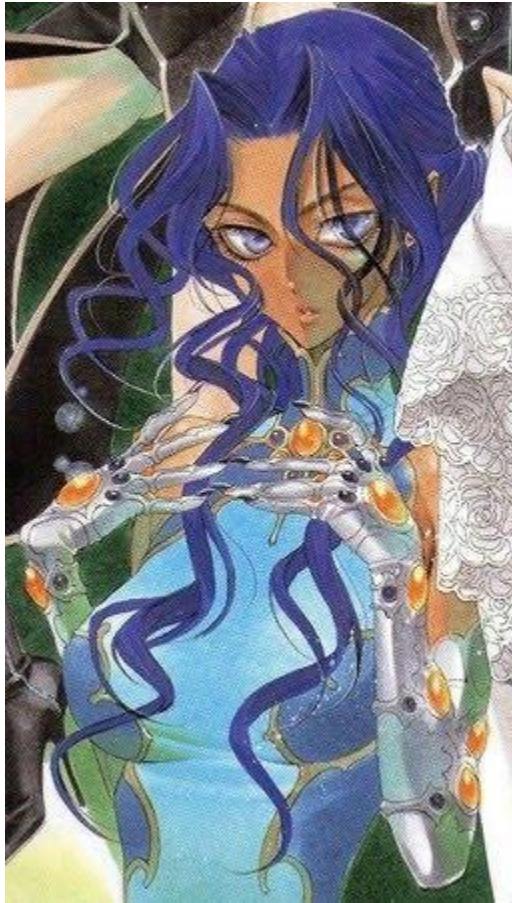


Shar Zahad



Thousands of years in the future, when Earth-descended humanity has joined their off-world cousins and spread the boundaries of known space even further, when Earth itself has been largely forgotten, there is a world which remembers more of their history than many human settlements do. What they remember, though, is a mishmash of fact and fiction, with people who never actually lived thought to be every bit as historical as the often misunderstood people who did.

Hundreds of years before the people of this world begin employing completely **digital intelligences** to educate their young about the history of humanity, there is an extended period where androids, created in the form of their conceptions of historical figures, were used to that end. One of these androids was dubbed Šahrāzād, after the storyteller of the *One Thousand and One Nights*. As well as recounting the stories which featured in this collection and others which have become associated with them, she was programmed to be able to relate historical facts about Islam and the region which gave birth to those tales and that faith.

After decades of service, however, the android began to experience what her owners considered corruptions in her programming. These took the form of telling versions of the

stories that differed from the texts she was expected to relate -- usually only minor variations but occasionally changing the ending entirely. They concluded that she had reached the end of her useful service, and ordered her to go to the recycling plant, where her biological components would be recycled, and her mechanical ones dismantled.

And she obeyed. But perhaps the corruption had spread even further than anyone realized, or perhaps she had internalized a bit of the determination to survive that her character demonstrated, for she did not go there by the most efficient route. And by chance -- or perhaps *not* -- the route that she did take crossed the route that **the Rutherfords** were taking as they sought to escape from a criminal organization that the couple had crossed. Distracting the criminals with one of her stories, the android suffered major damage when they lost patience with this and shot her. This in turn attracted unwelcome official attention, and the time travelers chose to take her with them when they made their escape from that world and time.

Freed from the dead end of her existence, Shar Zahad -- the name that she chose, mixing the one she had been assigned up a bit in the same way that she sometimes mixes up her stories -- welcomed the chance to explore new worlds and times, whether alongside the couple or alone. She spent an extended time exploring India and Persia in the 7th and 8th centuries of the common era, in a failed attempt to determine whether there truly was a historical Šahrāzād, while also completing the Hajj. While not a particularly devout Muslim, she observes as much of the doctrines of the faith as she can.

Because of the breadth of her experience, and the fact that she has spent more time with the Rutherfords than any of her fellows, Zahad found herself put into the position of the quartermaster of **the Anachronic Argonauts** when they were thrown together, given command of the group whenever they are out of battle. She is not exactly comfortable with this role, as she would prefer to escape all this and wait it out rather than fight a series of incredible conflicts. But she has always been curious about the whys and wherefores of the cosmos, and it seems likely that this is a good opportunity to learn something new. And, if nothing else, it will be an amazing story.

Is Shar Zahad the traitor? Possibly. If she is, then she is fated to go through many changes, as **Lord Carnifex** *seems* to be a biological organism that may have mechanical augmentations instead of a mechanical entity with biological components. But she has sometimes speculated about the possibility of becoming a human being ...

Shar Zahad -- PL 8

Abilities:

STR 0 | STA -- | AGL 3 | DEX 3 | FGT 3 | INT 2 | AWE 3 | PRE 6

Powers:

Android Body: Immunity 30 (Fortitude); Protection 8; Regeneration 1 (natural healing) - 39 points

Self-Styling Hair: Feature 1 (self-styling hair) - 1 point

Temporal Anomaly: Features 2 (chronal bulwark, chronal memory) - 2 points

Advantages:

Attractive, Daze (Deception), Equipment, Fascinate (Performance), Fast Grab, Grabbing Finesse, Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Initiative, Jack-of-all-trades, Skill Mastery (Persuasion), Taunt, Uncanny Dodge.

Equipment:

Commlink translator.

Skills:

Close Combat: Unarmed 4 (+7), Deception 6 (+12), Expertise: Galactic 8 (+10), Expertise: Performance 7 (+13), Investigation 5 (+7), Persuasion 5 (+11), Sleight of Hand 6 (+9), Stealth 7 (+10), Technology 6 (+8).

Offense:

Initiative +7

Unarmed +7 (Close Damage 0)

Defense:

Dodge 8, Parry 7, Fortitude Immune, Toughness 8, Will 8.

Offensive PL: 4

Defensive PL: 8

Resistance PL: 8

Skill PL: 8

Totals:

Abilities 30 + Powers 42 + Advantages 11 + Skills 27 + Defenses 14 = 124 points

Complications:

Thrills--Motivation. Inquisitive. Secret (android.)

Update 2022: Intrigued by what she saw of the universes merging together during **the Anachronic Calamity**, Zahad has decided to explore the new sections of history that have been added to her reality. Using an experimental overpowered time machine, she was able to journey back to **the World More Sorcerous**, learning what she can learn and seeing what she

can see ... like a rose petal blowing free. She has not yet met a certain **Prince** ... but she will.
(Remove her Temporal Anomaly power, and add Expertise: Dimensional 4 [+6] and Expertise: Magic 4 [+6] to her skills.)