

Augustus Fairchild

My name is Augustus.... Oh, bloody hell. You won't be able to tell anyone. You're a criminal and no one would be likely to believe you.

My name is Marcus Cole. I am an Amaki of the House of Swords, formerly of the House of Marduk of New Babylon and I am a Duelist. Not just any Duelist, but the greatest of all Duelists ever to be initiated by the House. How did I come to hold such a lofty title? Well, I shall start at the beginning. I am Marcus Cole, and this is my story...

I was born cool day in the time between the changing of Summer to Autumn. The day was clouded and a light drizzle fell. My parents bathed me for the first time in this realm, thanking Anu, Lord of the Sky, for my safe arrival. My first years are rather unremarkable, as I was cared for like any other, like my sister, and my brother before her. However, upon my tenth year of life, talents began to emerge. At my school, when I would get frustrated, things would simply burst into flame, causing my teachers to scamper about like mice under foot as they rushed to find water to douse the flames. This was actually quite amusing to one of my age, and so it was let go.

After that first occasion, I was pulled aside, counseled even, by the schoolmaster. He pulled me aside, into his office, and explained to me that I was special. I showed a rare talent, a talent that made me eligible for entrance in to the House of Swords. Even by my tenth year I had heard stories of the House of Swords, of the people they trained, the Duelists. I also knew the fame, and honor, that each Duelist earned. The thought of becoming one of the great warriors, one with mind, body, and soul, intrigued me, to say the least.

I began to discuss the possibilities with my parents that very night. Eventually, we came to a decision. One that would change my life. I was admitted into the House of Swords a few short months later, much to the relief of my schoolteachers, I assure you. Within the confines of the academy of the House of Swords, I was introduced to Margeaux Vincent, my new teacher.

At first, she taught me of the history of the Amaki as well as how to control some of my talents (in order to be less distracting while she taught). After only a year, I was given my first lesson with a sword. I took quickly, though, turning my clumsy strikes into precise, fluid movement in a year. Margeaux next taught me the use of several other forms of swords, long and short, light and heavy. In three years, I had mastered nearly every type of sword known to the Amaki. I had learned how to focus my psychic energy to help me put even greater strength behind the strike. I also learned the truth of the House of Swords. Their origins, their purpose and their murders. But, still, I did not turn away. I was far too determined to quit now. In five years, I had mastered every type of bladed weapon and continued to learn to focus my powers. By the end of my tenth year, I had learned how to create a field of energy around my body, how to heal my body through pure strength of will, and how improve my vision with a thought. Finally, I was ready for the initiation.

The initiation ceremony was long, even boring at first, as I was heralded by everyone and their mother. But the time I had awaited had finally arrived. Two elder students escorted me to the platform, where everyone could see, and there, I conjured forth the weapon of the Duelist, the Psi-Sword. And with little help from the elder students. Over the course of the next five years, I competed in the tournaments, designed to hone my swordsmanship skills to the finest edge.

Unfortunately, with greatness, comes envy. Envy of others, of what they aspire to become. I won every yearly tournament for the first five years after my initiation. Several fellow students, led by Agricola Caesar, conspired against me. They attacked me in my sleep, only my keen hearing warned me of their approach. I fought them off, killing all but three. The three who were not killed, but were seriously wounded, were excommunicated from the House, their tongues cut out

and psionic dampeners placed in their brain to prevent the use of their powers. All this was well and good, but revenge is never far from humiliation.

I was awakened early one morning, three years after the incident, by an aide to Margeaux. The aide had grave news, indeed. My parents, both, and my sister, had been murdered in the night. Slashed to ribbons. I excused the aide, then wept. Mere minutes later, I realized that I was feeling wrong. Sadness was an appropriate emotion, but a lust for vengeance soon overcame it. I went to my childhood home, questioned anyone who may have witnessed the atrocity, and finally determined what had happened. My family had been killed by a skilled swordsman, and not just any swordsman, but a Duelist. No one else could have struck with such precision.

With even greater determination, I started to scour the city, questioning anyone who had known my Agricola as to their possible whereabouts. Soon enough, I learned of the whereabouts of Agricola's family. Biding my time until late in the night, I prowled about the home, easily finding entrance through a second-story window. I steeled myself for what I was about to do, as it was not really my style, and silently slit the throats of each, and every member of his family, four people in all. I then silently slipped out into the cool night, moving silently for the House of Swords.

I made it back, unmolested, to the House. I slept that night. More soundly than I had since my parents murder. I had my revenge. An eye for an eye, life for a life. I smiled, ever so slightly, at the despair Agricola would feel when he discovered what he had brought upon himself. I awoke the next morning from a sound sleep, unplagued by nightmares. At the morning meal, I was approached by one of the House of Swords Grandmaster's attendants. He bade me to follow him, by which I was led to the office of the Grandmaster himself.

"You have done a great injustice," the Grandmaster said. "I admit that it was not without just cause, but I cannot condone it. The House of the Sphinx has asked that we bring the perpetrator to justice. I know that you killed Agricola's family, but there is no proof. If anyone were to leak this information, it could be devastating. I have decided to..."

"But Sir!" I interrupted. "I have only done what the law would not."

"Enough!" the Grandmaster shouted. "I have decided to send you on a mission; a mission that requires secrecy, guile and a steady blade to complete. I have chosen you. You will travel to the fringes of the Coalition States in North America, where you will keep an eye on their movement. Should anything present a potential problem, it is to be reported to us. We will let you know how we wish to deal with the situation. Is that understood?"

"Yes," I said grudgingly. Though I thought, for one brief instance, that I should take the mission then disappear. But I had sworn to my duty, and I would not desert the House yet.

"Good," said the Grandmaster. "Marcus, your name is now Augustus Fairchild. You are a knight of the old ways. Where you tell people you are from is up to you, but be consistent. We wouldn't want any inconsistencies to come back to haunt you. Your transport waits at the docks in the city of Ishmil. The boat will take you to North America; give you a map to your destination, as well as a horse for transport. You are dismissed."

Angry and feeling an injustice was brought against me, I left. From the Grandmaster's office I went to my room, gathered my few possessions and left for Ishmil. I boarded a boat, on which I spent the next three weeks. The next three weeks were hard. I was forced to battle Splogorhian Slavers and undersea menaces. In the end, however, I made it to the eastern coast in one piece, but I still had much to do and a great distance to cover. I was given my horse and bid farewell. I spent the next fortnight crossing the wilderness of what was once known as the American Empire. The woods and hills of the east are a sight for one raised in a jungle region of South America, much more beautiful and quiet. I found my way through the area I now know as the

Magic Zone with only a few encounters. It seems a Lord Dunscon likes to try to show off his power by sending out Shadow Beasts to prey on hapless travelers. The poor bastards never stood a chance against the skill and bite of my Psi-blade.

Eventually I found my way near enough to the Coalition States to perform my mission. I have monitored the activity of a Special Forces unit they have sent on many missions. Through the streets of Tolkeen, and across the seas to the continent of Europe, I have followed them. This group has been responsible for a great achievement, uncovering a great smuggling ring. The Coalition then sent them to the New German Republic, where I again followed them, to stop the smugglers at their source. I was ordered to follow in order to discover just how far the Coalition would go to stop their enemies. It seems the Coalition is also quite willing to sacrifice their own, as they have left the group with no help and as enemies of the New German Republic.

And with this, I end my talk. I hope you have learned all you need to know, because that is all I will tell you.

With that, I got up and left the small bar, where I had joined my contact.

He had told me where to find the psi-stalker and the two humans I had been watching for nearly a month. I had lost them after they were ambushed at a Coalition airbase, taken somewhere that I could not follow. I now know they are leaving the country, branded enemies of the state, hunted anywhere within the borders of the New German Republic. Where they were going, I don't know, but east seems the general direction.

Now I must continue to follow them, as I have been ordered, but to what end? They have no ties with the Coalition States. They are renegades and criminals, and yet I must follow them. Perhaps New Babylon believes they may still be a threat. They may be a threat, but they are also vulnerable. I have decided to attempt to join these three, in hopes of learning even more about them and their apparently failed mission.

October 31, 105 PA – I succeeded in joining up with these three and have learned their names. The psi-stalker, a female, is Morgan Boru, a lieutenant in the Coalition Military. Or at least she thinks she is. The first of the two humans is Alan Parker, a demolition specialist and an odd individual at best. The second is of Hispanic descent, similar to the humans found in New Babylon. His name is Joaquin and he was once a member of the Coalition Resistance in Tolkeen. A motley bunch, this covert operations squad is. I even had to save their ass from a group of mercenaries. My own attempt was unsuccessful, but I seem to have annoyed the mercenary leader.

November 2, 105 PA – Joining up with a group of wanted criminals is proving to be even more dangerous than I might have suspected. After being released from our captors by a group of D-bees I have identified as Srynn Cannibals, we have gone from the proverbial frying pan to the fire. The Srynn have asked for our assistance in fending off some type of tyrant they have been providing with experiment subjects. Our hands are tied; we will help the Srynn.

Unknown (December, 105 PA?) – We were unable to fend off the group holding the Srynn tribe beneath their boot and were captured. We were held captive in an underground complex for an undetermined amount of time. After interrogation as to our presence in Europe, we were told of the consequences of helping the Srynn. The tribe must be put down. Since we caused the problem, we must put down the insurrection. To guarantee our cooperation to the end, they have implanted us with some type of explosive chip. To mutiny during battle or deny the “request” is to have our brains splattered about.

Unknown (December, 105 PA?) -- The insurrection was put down and the snow has begun to fall. After being separated from the other group following the removal of the explosive chip, I have been unsuccessful in locating them. I go now to Tarnow in an effort to continue my mission or find passage to return to the House of Swords... as a failure.

December 24, 105 PA -- I have learned that the covert operations group has disappeared in the Russian wilderness. Where they might be, I'll probably never know. For now, I return to North America to continue gathering intelligence on the factions of North America. Target: Pecos Empire.

Disposition

Augustus is very solemn and serious. The death of his family and betrayal by people, whom he thought were friends, has left him with nothing but his work and his revenge. He forces himself to put it all aside only because he knows that he must serve his country first, rather than give in to his own self-serving desires and abandon everything for a chase that could take months, or even years, to end. He never openly shows emotion to anyone, using it to help him hid his identity from people. Though he will never reveal his name to anyone outside New Babylon, he may "open up" to other people and consider them friends. Perhaps even talking about his past, without revealing too much, of course.

Even though he is borderline obsessed with revenge, Augustus still keeps his cool. He is a thinker and a strategist, as well as a patriot. Augustus retains a strict code of honor, never hurting innocents or torturing for pleasure. He will, however, use muscle as a means of persuasion to get the information he requires.

Appearance

Augustus appears as a human, devoid of hair and with skin resembling stone, similar to granite. He prefers to wear loose fitting pants (usually black or dark gray) and hiking boots. He never wears a shirt. Instead, he wears a single sash (crimson, gold-embroidered edge) fitting diagonally across his chest, giving him a greater range of movement. The sash contains several hidden compartments for hiding lockpicks and other tools he may need during his mission. He hates to wear armor, preferring to rely on his natural psionic shield. This does not stop him from wearing his suit of articulated armor when he is expecting heavy combat, however. When his mission requires secrecy, Augustus wears a black jumpsuit, with his articulated armor worn beneath. Over his typical garb, he wears a cloak, deep crimson, with a gold-embroidered edge.

Alignment

1. I (C) Keep my word of honor and have a high regard for life and freedom
Augustus has always been a family man first, and a patriot second, though there is very little gray area between the two. In addition, if Augustus has promised to complete his mission, he will do so, no matter what the cost is to himself. If he is to bring someone back alive, he will bring them back alive. If they are killed, he will be so ashamed that he will demand punishment, if he even returns at all.
2. I (A) Lie and cheat those not worthy of my respect
Augustus does not like to lie, but only does so to get the job done. He basically considers anyone he has been sent to spy on not worthy of his respect until they have proven themselves otherwise.
3. I (E) might or might not kill an unarmed foe.
It all depends on who this person is and what they have done to me in the past. If the foe was disarmed in combat after attacking me, then I will most certainly kill him. Otherwise, I may spare his life.
4. I (D) will not kill innocents, particularly children (but may harm, kidnap other adults)
Augustus prefers to keep innocent people out of the crossfire. He will never allow a child to be harmed by crossfire, but if an adult accidentally runs into the area, then it was their own stupidity.
5. I (A) never torture for pleasure, but may use muscle to extract information.

Augustus abhors torture, but will certainly take to beating someone bare fisted to get the information that is needed.

6. I (A) Never kill for pleasure.
Augustus doesn't like to kill. It leaves too many obstacles and is rather messy. He prefers to complete his missions in complete secrecy, leaving the enemy to ponder what exactly just happened.
7. I (B) possibly or possibly not help someone in need.
Augustus prefers rewards, but he doesn't like to see people suffer, but he likes to see himself suffer even less. Friends will always be helped, but if it's a stranger, it's every man for himself.
8. I (B) work with groups, but dislike confining laws and bureaucracy (red tape).
Augustus doesn't mind working with others, but likes solo missions the best. Most often he will work with groups in order to save his own ass and for mutual protection.
9. I (E) have no deference to laws or authority, but will work within the laws if I must.
Being a spy, laws can be a burden or an asset. They might be able to get him out of a mess on a technicality (which he will exploit to the fullest extent) or they might get him in trouble (Intelligence is a dangerous game and politics can be deadly).
10. I (A) never betray a friend.
A friend is one of the best assets to have in the world of Intelligence and Counterintelligence. Without friends, how would you make any contacts in order to get the information you need. Betraying them would just make them hate you, thus losing an excellent source of information.

Armor: None
MDC: /

Weapons

Amaki Blast Sword	HTH/500 ft	3d6/2d6+6 MD	
TW Psi-Blade	HTH	+2d6 MD to Psi-Sword	
KEP-Special	200 ft	5d6 MD	10 /

Equipment

4 e-clips for KEP-Special, 0 Empty
4 e-clips for Amaki Blast Sword, 0 Empty
hiking boots
loose-fitting pants (1 pair gray, 1 pair red)
Sash (5 hidden pockets, crimson, embroidered gold edges)
Hooded Cloak (crimson, embroidered gold edges)
Black leather gloves

Psionics

Bio-regeneration
Psi-Shield
Mind Block
Nightvision
Empathy
Presence Sense
Psi-Sword (4d6 MD)
Psi-Field (40 MDC)

Hand to Hand: Martial Arts

Two attacks, +4 initiative, +9 to parry and dodge, +7 strike, +1 disarm.

USE THESE BONUSES WHEN NOT USING A SWORD.

VEHICLE

Type: Full Conversion Bionic Horse

Weight: 1400 lbs

Running Speed: 60 mph

Leaps: 12 feet high and 24 feet lengthwise from a running start

Fatigue Factor: Fatigue rate is reduced by 90%

P.S.: Physical Strength is roughly equal to a robot P.S. of 26 and can pull 6 tons

M.D.C.:

* Front Leg – 125 /
* Front Leg – 125 /
* Rear Leg – 180 /
* Rear Leg – 180 /
Chest – 160 /
Head & Neck – 140 /
Bionic Body & Armor (main body) – 275 /

Note: Hitting aa moving and weaving target is difficult to begin with, so most attackers shooting at a moving horse and/or rider are usually –3 to strike to begin with (thi penalty does not apply to marksmen such as Cossacks, Samurai, or American Cowboys, Gunfighters, and Gunslingers). Those body areas marked with n Asterisk are even more difficult to hit and give attackers an additional penalty of –4 to strike (a total of –7 for most opponents).

Bonuses: +3 initiative, +3 dodge when running, +2 roll, +2 vs H.F.

Damage:

Stomp – 2d6 x 10 S.D.C. or 1 M.D.C.
Kick with front legs – 1d4 M.D.C.
Kick with back legs – 2d4 M.D.C.
Power kick with hind legs (only) – 2d6 + 4 M.D. (takes two attacks)

Special: Two large compartments in the sides of the horse's main body to store possessions and travelling equipment.

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