

ICONS

SUPERPOWERED ROLEPLAYING

OFFICIAL GAME ADVENTURE

WHITEOUT!

By John Post



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A freak blizzard dumps several feet of snow on the heroes' city. While assisting local authorities, they discover that cities all across the country, and the world, are also being buried by unnatural snowstorms. The heroes must discover the source of the blizzards and stop them or witness the coming of an Ice Age.

This adventure for the **ICONS: Super-Powered Roleplaying** game is designed for four to six heroes. It envisions a team of heroes approximating the power levels of the Avengers or the Justice League. For a higher powered group of heroes than the base setting, the Game Master can subtract the hero's number of powers from 10, instead of 6, to get the hero's starting Determination and use the Hero Improvement option, **ICONS**, page 93. The Game Master could also allow players to create heroes based on 60 points instead of 45. If the Game Master wants to adjust the adventure for fewer or less powerful heroes, he can do the following. If the heroes are not able to fly, the Game Master should give the team access to some advanced vehicles. The adventure calls for the heroes to travel places where commercial airlines do not fly. In **Chapter One**, the Game Master can limit the number of tasks or have the heroes accompany local authorities and provide direct assistance to them. In **Chapter Four**, the Game Master can limit the number of guards and spread out the attacks of super-powered enemies to allow the heroes sufficient time to recuperate before entering the final battle. Of course, a liberal supply of Determination can improve the heroes' chance of success.

This adventure requires the heroes to combat a natural disaster, discover and locate the source of the disaster, and ultimately stop future disasters from happening. It should take four to eight hours of game time to run the adventure, depending on the focus of the players and the size of the team. Each chapter features multiple potential encounters, if the group has limited time, for example in a convention setting, the Game Master should select only one or two encounters from each chapter. If the group has more time, the Game Master should allow the players free rein and allow them to explore the several possible paths to reach the final battle.

If you are not planning to act as Game Master for this adventure, **read no further!** You will detract from your enjoyment of the adventure and that of your fellow players by doing so. Game Masters should read the adventure at least twice, paying particular attention to the flow of clues and the powers of the main villain and her allies, before running it.

SYNOPSIS

Chapter One has the heroes encounter a blizzard and deal with the effects it has on the civilian populace. Shortly thereafter, the heroes discover that the blizzard has an unnatural source and similar storms are striking many major cities across the hemisphere. In **Chapter Two**, the heroes discover that Professor Chaudhry, who is infamous in the climatological community for proposing that global warming be stopped by using weather control to cover one of the Earth's hemispheres in snow and ice to reflect the sun's rays and cool the other hemisphere to a sustainable temperature, was working on such a plan and has been kidnapped. In **Chapter Three**, the heroes discover that the weather controlling mutant, Buran, has abducted Professor Chaudhry and is creating a network of satellites to bring about a new ice age. **Chapter Four** has the heroes confront Buran and her minions, disable the satellites, and return the weather to normal.



CHAPTER 1: A WINTER WONDERLAND

What starts as an unexpected snow shower soon turns into a full-blown blizzard. Over the course of a couple of hours, a major snowstorm causes whiteout conditions in the heroes' city. As the storm worsens, the temperature drops precipitously, several feet of snow accumulates, and snowdrifts block the roads. The local authorities issue a blizzard warning and instruct the populace to remain in place until the storm passes. The authorities do not know that the blizzard is not a normal storm, which will not stop unless the heroes intervene.

GETTING THE CHARACTERS INVOLVED

Getting the heroes involved should not be difficult because of the widespread effects of the storm. The Game Master could use any of the following ideas. If the heroes are members of a team with a relationship with local authorities, the mayor may request their assistance. Heroes who have jobs in their secret identities may be trapped at their places of work with their co-workers. If the heroes brave the storm, they may encounter stranded motorists, downed power lines, or trapped paramedics. If the heroes are still reluctant to get involved, the mayor makes a direct request for their assistance through the Emergency Broadcasting System. The local authorities are instructing residents to remain in place and wait out the storm; however, much of the local populace is unwilling to do so. Because many people are making last-ditch efforts to get home, to buy supplies, or to find their loved ones, there are plenty of people who are in need of rescuing.



COMBATING A NATURAL DISASTER

Unlike a super villain, which has a finite ability to resist and is clearly defeated or not, a natural disaster affecting an entire town may seem overwhelming. The players could spend several evenings of game play attempting to counter the effects of the blizzard and not have more than a minimal effect on the storm's many victims. The number of people in need of assistance is simply too great for the heroes to rescue everyone. The object of this chapter is not to make the heroes' actions seem futile, but it should be used to impress upon the players, and their heroes, the importance of finding the source of the blizzards and stopping them.

The following tasks are some example crises that the heroes might encounter. It is next to impossible for an adventure to predict the types of powers that the heroes possess and stunts they might use, but among the possible encounters, the Game Master should select those that are most suitable for the heroes. Many of the encounters can be resolved using various Powers or combinations of Powers. In the spirit of **ICONS**, the Game Master should freely give Determination and allow the players to use Stunts to creatively overcome these crises.

CLEARING ROADS

The blizzard struck with little warning, and rush hour commuters attempting to return home are trapped in their vehicles all over the city. Various accidents caused by the storm have made the major roads little more than snow covered parking lots, with the city plows unable to clear them because of the bumper-to-bumper traffic.

A thirteen-vehicle accident is blocking traffic on one of the main routes out of the city. A delivery truck jack-knifed trying to avoid a fender bender, and numerous cars have collided trying to avoid the accident. The vehicles were traveling relatively slowly, so there were no serious injuries, but Frank Winchester, an attorney in his late sixties, is having a heart attack. The paramedics have not arrived, and because of the snow, they will not.

RESCUING STRANDED MOTORISTS

Should the heroes be unable to clear the roads or decide that clearing them is futile because of the continued whiteout conditions, the stranded motorists may need to be evacuated to wait out the blizzard. The city has designated the local sports arena and many schools as storm shelters for those unable to reach their homes or stay in their places of work.

Emily Rafferty, a pregnant investment banker, has worked longer than her doctor recommended. She is having contractions while stranded with her fellow motorists. She has not called the paramedics, but has called her husband. She has decided to brave the storm and is walking to the nearest hospital.

EFFECTS OF COLD

Individuals who spend any significant amount of time in the blizzard without proper protection suffer a Stamina loss of 1 point of Cold damage for every hour of exposure. If the hero loses 3 or more Stamina points to the blizzard, the Game Master should give the hero a temporary Challenge of Frostbitten until the damage is healed. Frostbitten characters may lose feeling in their fingers or toes and experience a loss of manual dexterity.

REPAIRING DOWNED POWER LINES

The heavy snows and winds have downed trees and power lines. Large areas of the city are without electricity. The repair teams are unable to fix the lines while the blizzard rages. If power is not restored, at risk individuals might freeze to death before the storm lifts.

The Mayor has designated Cesar Chavez Elementary School as an emergency shelter. Most of the students remain in the school, unable to leave because of the snow. The school was renovated to be green, so it is outfitted with solar panels and uses an electric boiler for heat. The school has lost power and its emergency generator is running low on fuel. When the heroes pass by, they see a darkened school only lit by flashlights and candles.

ASSISTING FIRST RESPONDERS

People continue to have medical emergencies (strokes, heart attacks, injuries, births, etc.) during the blizzard; however, since the storm started no ambulances or medevac helicopters have been able to leave the hospital. Without their assistance, many citizens might not survive the storm.

There is an ambulance trapped in the storm. They responded to an emergency call from police regarding a bank robbery. There are two gunshot victims at the bank. They may not live without surgery, which the paramedics are unable to perform. In addition, there are three armed, and desperate, thieves trapped in the snowstorm and looking for a way to get out of town with their stolen money. Use the Stock Character, Thug, statistics from **ICONS**, page 118, for the thieves.

CHARACTERS WITH ELEMENTAL CONTROL (WEATHER)

Heroes who possess the Powers of Moving, Shaping, or Creating weather using Elemental Control (Weather) have a significant advantage in dealing with the crises presented in this chapter. A Game Master may be tempted to set unreasonably difficult tests to keep them from dominating the action or resolving the challenges too easily. Resist this temptation. Allow the hero the chance to shine. If weather control heroes cannot excel under these circumstances, when will they?

With the Moving Power, a hero may transport large amounts of snow each page (see **ICONS**, page 62, for the size). This Power makes clearing roads very easy, but has limited application elsewhere. The Shaping Power allows the hero to direct the existing winter storm to create walls or geometric shapes. The hero could use these shapes to focus winds to blow the snow from a road, create a sphere of calm in the storm to allow safe flight and landing zones for the medevac helicopters, or create a dome to allow trapped civilians to travel safely to shelter.

The Creating Power can be used to counter the effects of the blizzard by summoning warmer weather. A successful test lessens the intensity of the storm—the greater the success, the closer to normal weather the Power produces. The difficulty of the test is set by the area the hero wishes to affect. A Moderate Success reduces the blizzard conditions to a heavy snowfall and moderate winds. Visibility is still reduced, but with some difficulty, medevac helicopters can fly and individuals can walk in it. The temperature is still significantly below freezing. A Major Success reduces the blizzard to nothing more than a gentle snow shower with little breeze. The temperature rises to 32 degrees Fahrenheit or zero degrees Celsius. Flight is unimpeded and walking or driving is only affected by the preexisting snow. A Massive Success stops all snowfall and raises the temperature well above freezing. The snow melts if the hero maintains the effect long enough.

Test Difficulty

4

6

8

10

Area Affected

A city block

A neighborhood

The city

The state

Despite any temporary successes achieved by the hero, the blizzard continues in the surrounding areas and returns immediately to the area unless constantly held in check. In any event, the hero is unable to aid the entire country or the world, so allowing the hero to save the city does not derail the entire adventure.

WHEN ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

The Game Master should allow the heroes an opportunity to display their powers, to assist the local citizens, and to realize that the storm is not getting better. Once each of the heroes has spent some time “on stage,” the Game Master should move on to the next chapter. Of course, if the players are enjoying the change of pace, allow them to continue rescuing people until they are ready to progress to the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: THE WINTER'S TALE

In this chapter, the heroes investigate the reasons for the storm and are likely to learn some or all of the events leading up to the blizzards. Approximately one year ago, Buran hatched a plan for global domination. After she learned of Project Teapot and Professor Ritu Chaudhry's involvement in the research on weather control, she decided to use Chaudhry's research to set up a network of weather control satellites. She contacted Richard Upton to assist her. He initially resisted, but when his company, Upton Aeronautics, lost all government contracts, he became desperate and agreed to help for a price. Buran promised to purchase a sufficient number of rockets to launch her satellite network and give him two billion dollars.

Buran told Upton to convince Chaudhry to work for his company, but she persistently refused. Three months ago, Upton and Buran grew frustrated with Chaudhry's recalcitrance and sent men to kidnap her. While Upton was building rockets and trying to hire Chaudhry, Buran was busy recruiting a team of super villains to assist her and building an arctic base and launch facility. After her capture, Chaudhry's reluctance vanished, and she has perfected her weather control research by studying Buran's powerful abilities. Chaudhry has overseen construction of dozens of satellites, which now orbit the planet. When the adventure started, Buran ordered the satellites to cover the Northern Hemisphere in snow and ice. She was slightly over anxious, and Upton told her that they needed some important prototypes from his research facility in Chicago. Buran delayed the activation of the satellites along the plane's route from Chicago to Anchorage.

To initiate this chapter, have one of the heroes notice a broadcast on the Weather Channel, possibly while in a shelter, while walking past an electronics store, or on the smart phone of an innocent bystander. The meteorologist explains that the storm appears to have stalled over the heroes' region and should continue to cause blizzard-like conditions for the next thirty-six to seventy-two hours. The channel then shows a map with similar weather patterns over other urban centers in the immediate vicinity. The program then displays another map showing similar blizzards across cities all over Northern America, Europe, and Asia. The meteorologist then states the obvious—“These storms are not natural and can only be the product of some maniac.”

The following are potential sources the heroes might use to gather information about the blizzards. The list is not meant to be exhaustive, and if the heroes pursue other plausible leads, the Game Master should use the sources below as inspiration and give the heroes the information that they would have obtained from the listed sources.

LOCAL METEOROLOGIST, HEIDI SUMMERS

Heidi Summers is a meteorologist for the local news station. Heroes familiar with the local media know her by name or reputation; those with a positive relationship with the media may know Summers from her early days as a crime and superhero reporter. Summers is not a meteorologist by training, but she has taken some interest in it since her promotion. If asked about the blizzard, Summers knows the following.

The storm cannot be natural. It is centered on the city and appeared to arrive out of nowhere instead of following the normal development of a storm. What is even more bizarre is that similar storms started appearing over the major urban centers of America at about the same time. Most experts are speculating that the storms have been caused either by some powerful magic or advanced technological means.

Summers remembers interviewing an eccentric professor, Ritu Chaudhry, who speculated that she could create a device to reverse global warming. Her theory was that by covering one hemisphere of the earth in snow and ice, the sun's rays would be reflected, making the remaining hemisphere habitable. Chaudhry was ridiculed by the climatological community and stopped appearing at conferences. At the time, Summers interviewed Chaudhry, she was a visiting professor at the local university.

Summers shows the heroes a time lapse Doppler radar map of the nation. They see storms forming over the major cities north of 37 degrees latitude (roughly from Richmond, Virginia, on the East Coast to San Francisco, California, on the West Coast). The storms form at 9:00 AM, but no storm forms over Chicago until 10:00 AM. A storm then forms over Minneapolis at 10:30 AM, over Winnipeg at 11:00 AM, over Saskatoon at 11:30 AM, and over Calgary at 2:00 PM. A storm forms over Seattle at 3:00 PM, and one forms over Vancouver at 3:30 PM. No storm forms over Anchorage until 7:00 PM. Summers has no explanation for this pattern, but heroes with a Pilot specialty recognize that the line of cities corresponds with a typical flight path from Chicago to Seattle.

LOCAL CLIMATOLOGIST, STEPHEN WEBBER

Heroes with academic backgrounds or contacts know Professor Stephen Webber as a climatologist at the local university. If asked, Webber has no explanation for the current rash of blizzards striking the country, but he confides in the heroes that he uncovered documents showing NASA experimented with weather control during the Reagan Administration. Webber believes that weather control research continued after official government funding ceased. Webber provides the heroes with the name of a climatologist on NASA's Earth Observatory team, Simon Balmaceda.

If asked about Professor Chaudhry, Webber knows that she had some unorthodox theories about combating global warming. She has not published or presented anything in the last few years. She took a position at a small liberal arts college in the Midwest. The rumor was that she had lost tenure at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was forced to take a new position.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA)

Heroes with government backgrounds or utilize their government contacts are directed to Kurt Briscoe, Ph.D., at the NOAA. He provides the heroes with the same information as Heidi Summers, above, with the following exceptions. Briscoe knows Chaudhry from their time together at NASA. He describes her not as eccentric, but certifiably insane. NASA terminated her employment for inappropriate use of government resources. She was caught taking government property to her private laboratory for some private project.

If asked to give his opinion about the time lapse Doppler radar map, Briscoe recognizes that it follows a common flight path from Chicago to Seattle. If the heroes have impressed Briscoe, either through their intelligence or respect for him, he gives them a name of a friend, Bryan Johnson, who works at the FAA. Briscoe tells the heroes that Johnson can assist them in tracking down the flights that flew from Chicago to Seattle during the applicable times.

PROFESSOR RITU CHAUDHRY

College officials report that Professor Chaudhry is on sabbatical this year and has not visited campus in months. Chaudhry's campus office and laboratory are nearly empty. Nothing of interest remains behind. Heroes with a Science Specialty note that the laboratory is very small and incredibly dated. If Chaudhry is conducting serious work, it is being done elsewhere. If questioned, members of the science faculty speak positively of Chaudhry. She is an engaging teacher, and her students like her. Because this is a teaching college, her research interests are not well known. The heroes can obtain Chaudhry's home address from the college or with an Investigation test of 4.

Chaudhry's house is in a nice neighborhood, but her yard is unkempt. Upon closer inspection, the heroes discover that her home has been empty for some time. There is a coating of dust over all the furniture, several months of mail is piled up behind the front door, and the food in the refrigerator is spoiled or rotten. There are two areas of interest in Chaudhry's home: her home office and her basement laboratory.

Chaudhry's home office appears unremarkable. The heroes notice that her desk has a monitor, keyboard, and laptop docking station, but no computer. Her desk contains a number of pieces of opened mail. The last opened letter is dated three months ago. The mail includes various credit card and utility bills, but more interestingly, the heroes notice an employment offer letter from Upton Aeronautics. The letter offers Chaudhry a seven-figure salary and a fully outfitted and staffed laboratory, among other benefits. Searching the trash uncovers previous offer letters, which show a dramatic increase in the promised salary and benefits. The oldest is nine months old, and the most recent is four months old. Chaudhry's desk also holds several purchase orders placed with Aerospace Satellite Corporation. The orders are for satellite components placed over the last year, with the final one placed more than three months ago.

Chaudhry's basement contains a clean room and science laboratory. There are various schematics on the table, but no trace of whatever her project was. Heroes with the Electronics Specialty recognize the plans as those for a satellite of some sort. Any hero with an Electronics Specialty of Expert or better determines that the satellite schematic appears to be a designed for a nuclear powered, low-earth orbiting satellite with components that would allow it to take direction from earth. There is room in the satellite for a large component of unknown purpose. Other notes in the laboratory chronicle Chaudhry's multiple, unsuccessful attempts to create a device to alter weather patterns. A hero who makes a massive success on an Electronics test of 6 can discern the abilities of the satellite, listed in Chapter Three.

Heroes with the Postcognition Power who view Chaudhry's home three months earlier see the following. A group of three men in powered armor land in her backyard under cover of darkness. They dismount and enter her home. They find Chaudhry working in her laboratory and subdue her. They take the satellite upon which she was working and her computer. They then place her in a capsule, don their powered armor suits, and fly off. The entire abduction takes approximately five minutes.

LOCAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OR FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA)

If the heroes contact the local airport, search the Internet for flight information and make an Investigation test of 3, or contact Bryan Johnson at the FAA, they uncover the following. Six commercial passenger flights flew directly from Chicago to Seattle in the two hours before the snowstorm in Chicago became severe enough to halt flights. There were only two passenger flights from Chicago to Seattle that departed between 9:00 and 10:00 AM. Neither of those flights continued to Anchorage.

If the heroes talk to someone with access to cargo flight plans, such as Bryan Johnson, or otherwise have access to the information, they discover the following. There was only one flight that left Chicago for Seattle before the 10:00 AM storm hit and continued on to Alaska. It was a commercial cargo plane owned by Upton Aeronautics. After landing in Seattle, it refueled and flew to Anchorage.

RUNNING AN INVESTIGATIVE ADVENTURE

Adventures that require an investigation can be entertaining and fun or frustrating and boring. The difference is usually determined by how stingy the Game Master is with the clues and how clear the clues are in leading the characters toward the next encounter. The Game Master should know that it is highly unlikely that any players in the group are the next Sherlock Holmes, so do not be embarrassed about making the trail of breadcrumbs very conspicuous.

Any instance where information is available to heroes with a specific Specialty, but none of the heroes have it, the Game Master should make the information available to a hero with an applicable Quality. The player should not have to spend Determination and tag the Quality to gain the clue; just let the hero have it, as long as it advances the story. Allow the heroes to gather the clues with minimal die rolls or "hiding the ball." If they look in the correct location, give them the information. Do not require an Awareness test or similar tests, unless success or failure makes the adventure more interesting and will not prevent the heroes from getting to the next clue location. Not finding a piece of information is not going to make the adventure more fun. The fun comes from deciding what to do with the information the heroes have gathered.

Players often tend to linger with a source of information longer than is strictly necessary. They may believe that the source has additional information or be unsure of how to close the scene. The Game Master should take a firm hand in these instances. As soon as the characters have all of the information that a source can provide, close the scene. The source might be called away by someone, need to answer the phone, or tell the heroes, "That's all I know." The exact method is best left to the Game Master, but it should communicate to the players that they have gotten everything they are going to from this source.

At some point in the adventure, the players and their heroes will speculate as to what is happening. This speculation is an important part of any investigation because it allows players, and heroes, to share their thoughts, which might inspire others to make connections that they would not otherwise make. The Game Master should be aware that it is easy for these speculative discussions to derail an adventure and absorb a great deal of time. The Game Master should feel free to prod the players with reports of blizzard related casualties across the country. If the prodding becomes ineffective, the Game Master should feel free to short circuit the investigative stage by having Buran's minions attack the heroes. After they are defeated, proceed directly to the Interrogating Buran's Minions section below.



UPTON AERONAUTICS

Any hero with a Pilot, Military, or Business Specialty, knows the following about Upton Aeronautics. If none of the characters possesses those Specialties, an Investigation test of 4 also grants the information. If asked, Bryan Johnson or the local air traffic controller can provide this information. Robert Upton, a brilliant engineer who made his fortune in the computer industry, founded the company with the goal of winning the X Prize. In an effort to win the prize, his company created a series of rockets and space vehicles. Although the company did not win the prize for creating a reusable space plane, it is widely suspected in the industry that Upton Aeronautics staged a demonstration of a solo, manned, orbit-capable vehicle for NASA and the military. The suit was intended to allow individuals to fly to and from the International Space Station or to conduct repairs on satellites. The military viewed it as a way to conduct precision anti-satellite operations. While in negotiations with the government, allegations arose that Robert Upton was supplying his company's rocket technology to Iran and North Korea. The government ended all negotiations when an armored flight suit, similar in design and performance to the one demonstrated for NASA, accompanied Buran during an attack on a shipment of advanced weaponry for the Army. No charges were filed and Upton Aeronautics denied all involvement in the attack.

Anyone with a Business Specialty of Expert or better, someone who conducts Internet research on Upton Aeronautics and makes an Investigation test of 6, or talks to an industry insider knows or discovers the following. After Upton Aeronautics was barred from contracting with the government, industry insiders expected it to have massive layoffs, discontinue its rocket propulsion research, or close its doors. The company has done none of these things. Despite having no recognizable customers, it continues to hire aeronautical engineers and expand its facilities. It recently purchased an Alaskan airfreight company and a satellite manufacturer. Insiders were puzzled by the purchases because they had little to do with the Upton Aeronautics' core business. Upton Aeronautics now has research or production facilities in Anchorage, Chicago, and Seattle.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)

Simon Balmaceda is the acting head of NASA's Earth Observatory project. He is incredibly busy dealing with the worldwide weather event. The head of NASA has personally told him that if he does not uncover the source of the problem he will be shoveling snow for the short remainder of his career. He has no idea what is causing the storms. Balmaceda only grudgingly agrees to see the heroes if they get past his administrative assistant. To do so, they must use charm, a Power, or mention that Kurt Briscoe sent them.

If asked about NASA's weather control research, Balmaceda tells the heroes the following. In the 1960s, NOAA experimented with seeding clouds to produce rain or lessen the intensity of hurricanes, but the project was considered a failure and was never shown to have any effect. Later, NASA and DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) conducted experiments in the 1980s that attempted to mimic the abilities of a weather control mutant. The goal was to control precipitation—causing floods or droughts. Project Teapot attempted to create an electronic device that could be carried by a Black Bird (Lockheed's SR-71 "Black Bird" was a long-range strategic reconnaissance aircraft capable of speeds in excess of Mach 3) over enemy territory. The scientists were never able to reproduce any weather control effects without the assistance of the mutant, so the program was eventually scrapped. It probably could have continued, but Teapot came under severe scrutiny when one of the scientists, Professor Ritu Chaudhry, was accused of misappropriation of government property. The property was never recovered and she was not charged with any crime.

If asked about Chaudhry, Balmaceda volunteers the following. Chaudhry was convinced that she could replicate the weather control abilities of mutants and blamed the project's failures on our mutant, Tempest. Chaudhry claimed that Tempest's powers were too weak to properly analyze, which made replicating them impossible. She was certain that the success the Russians had shown was because of the powerful mutant they were using in their experiments.

If asked about the Soviet weather control program, he volunteers that Grom ("Thunder") was a powerful weather controller. He caused punishing winters in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation and covered the retreat from the country with dense fog. After the U.S. learned of the Soviet's weather control capabilities, NASA and DARPA were tasked with starting Project Teapot.

If asked how someone could maintain the storms over a so many cities for such a long period, Balmaceda offers several possibilities: (1) the group has enlisted hundreds of powerful weather control mutants; (2) they are using some very powerful device with an incredible range that can target multiple locations; or (3) they are using a network of weather control satellites.

If asked about recent satellite launches, Balmaceda does some research before pulling up a screen on his computer

that shows forty satellites of unknown origin were launched to low earth orbits over in the last three months. He provides the heroes with the coordinates and orbits of the satellites, if asked. Balmaceda tells the heroes that the satellites appear to be a modified design based on a communications satellite produced by Aerospace Satellite Corporation. He does not know the location from which they were launched and does not have access to that information. It is classified and outside of his area of access. He suggests contacting someone at the Missile Warning Center.

AEROSPACE SATELLITE CORPORATION (ASC)

Anyone with a Business Specialty of Expert or better, with a Quality that would grant knowledge of the aerospace industry, or who makes an Investigation test of 4, knows or discovers that ASC is a leading manufacturer of geostationary weather, global positioning, and military communications satellites. In general, Aerospace Satellite Corporation has up to two dozen spacecraft in varying stages of production.

ASC is publically traded, and a hero with a Business Specialty or knowledge of the stock market knows that its stock has plummeted recently because of a series of high profile thefts of its satellites. A team of power armor wearing attackers intercepted two shipments of completed military communications satellites on their way to be launched.

If the heroes approach a representative from ASC, they are directed to George Dent, head of Corporate Security. Dent informs the heroes of the above information and beseeches them to guard the company's next shipment of satellites. He is authorized to give them a lucrative bonus if the shipment reaches its destination, but does not make the offer initially out of fear of offending the heroes. Dent does not know how the villains have been able to locate the shipments, but the officials in the company believe that the villains have found a way to activate the satellites'



communication platform, track it, and then intercept the transport plane. Each satellite has a unique broadcast signature, which could be used to track them. If asked about the satellites' current locations, Dent can provide the heroes with the coordinates and orbits of the satellites. ASC has not been able to track the stolen satellites while they were on the surface, but once they are in low-Earth orbit, they have been tracking them.

BURAN'S INVOLVEMENT

Once the heroes have an idea that weather control or Upton Aeronautics are involved in this crisis, anyone with the Criminology Specialty or an appropriate Quality recalls the following. Buran is a powerful mutant with Elemental Control (Weather) and Flight, as her most prominent powers. She has successfully used her powers to extort money from agricultural communities in the past. Buran has rarely been caught, but when she was, she claimed that she was merely a businesswoman providing much needed rain to drought stricken areas. Prosecutors were never able to prove that she caused the initial droughts, so they were unable to secure any convictions.

Last year a severe winter storm stuck right before the Super Bowl. It is widely rumored that the National Football League and the corporate sponsors for the game paid Buran millions to ensure clear weather. All of the parties involved deny the allegations.

It is widely believed that Buran has also engaged in the theft of high tech equipment and other acts of corporate espionage. Because she is frequently seen accompanied by men in powered armor, which closely resembles that manufactured by Upton Aeronautics, many believe that she and Robert Upton are co-conspirators.

MISSILE WARNING CENTER (MWC)

The Missile Warning Center is located deep inside Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The MWC coordinates the U.S. armed forces detection of worldwide missile launches, nuclear detonations, and space re-entry events. General Richard Thompson is in command of the facility. Heroes with a Specialty in Military or an applicable Quality are escorted to see him. Any heroes of known foreign citizenship are instructed to wait in a lobby.

When asked about unusual satellite launches, General Thompson informs the heroes that his people have monitored about three dozen such launches coming from inside the Arctic Circle. He tells them that the information is highly classified and U.S. reconnaissance planes have attempted to gather PHOTINT (photographic intelligence) of the launch coordinates, but clouds or fog has shrouded the area during every flight. General Thompson provides the heroes with the coordinates, if asked.

If the heroes ask General Thompson to mount a military strike against the weather control satellites, he tells them that it is impossible. The United States has signed treaties that prevent it from developing space-based weapons. In addition, using a missile to strike one or more satellites would leave dangerous debris in orbit that could disable or destroy many communication, weather, and surveillance satellites. The satellites appear to be nuclear powered, which means that their destruction in low earth orbit could endanger large areas of the planet. The only sure way to disable the satellites without potentially catastrophic damage would be to launch multiple shuttle missions to collect them, which would take months or years to arrange and complete. These missions would only be successful if the satellites were unarmed.

CHAPTER 3: GOING TO ALASKA

After following the trail of clues, the heroes should decide on one of the courses of action below. Of course, no published adventure can predict everything a group of players might do. The Game Master can improvise the actions and responses of Buran by remembering that her primary motivation is to continue the blizzards in the Northern Hemisphere and her second motivation is to expand the satellite network by collecting satellite components, constructing more weather control satellites, and launching them.

AEROSPACE SATELLITE CORPORATION SHIPMENT

ASC is scheduled to ship two communications satellites to Kazakhstan. The satellites are to be launched within the next month. ASC has chartered a jumbo jet to ferry the cargo from San Francisco to Kazakhstan. During past robberies, the plane has been boarded during refueling in Alaska, but this time the jet is of sufficient size to make the flight without stopping. Three to six individuals in flight capable powered armor perpetrated the past robberies. They approached the airport below radar, barely above the rooftops, and left the same way. The suits were capable of traveling in excess of the speed of sound and were armed and armored against small arms fire. The satellites are of such weight (2 to 4 tons) that at least two suits were required to carry one.

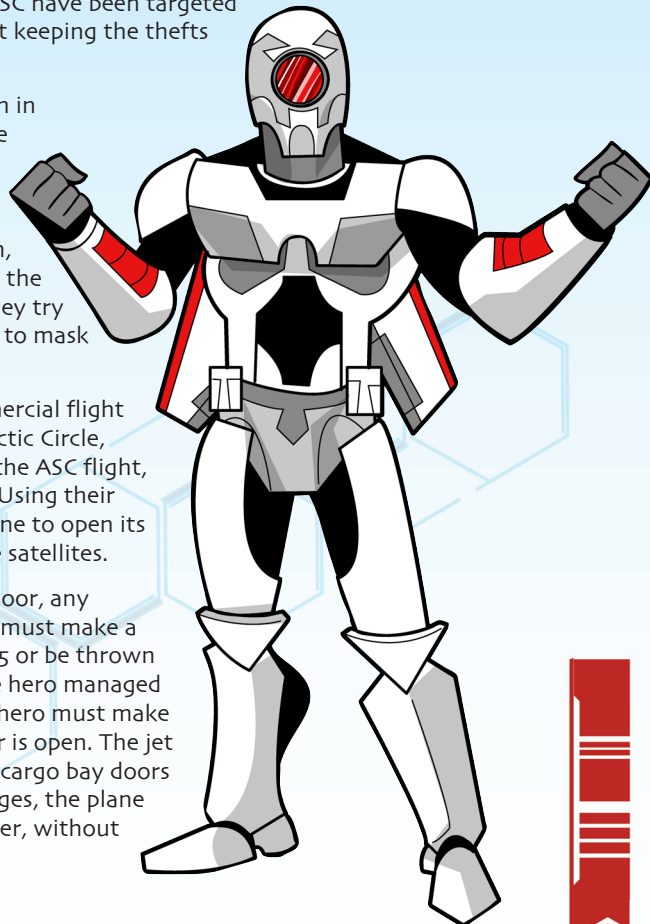
LAYING THE TRAP

Upton Aeronautics's employees are monitoring all flights to the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan and the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in China, which are the two premier satellite launch facilities outside of the United States. Buran has captured multiple satellites from other manufacturers, but manufacturers other than ASC have been targeted less frequently and have been more successful at keeping the thefts out of the news.

When they discover a potential flight, three men in Columbus Mark II suits for each satellite trail the flight to determine the best place to collect the satellites. Their preferred method is to do it on the ground, but the powered armor pilots will not enter the Continental United States, Russian, or Chinese airspace. They do not wish to engage the air forces of those nations. When they travel, they try to stay below radar or shadow passenger planes to mask their radar signatures.

The Columbus pilots intend to intercept a commercial flight from Moscow to Los Angeles as it is over the Arctic Circle, shadow it until they are within sensor range of the ASC flight, and then make a midair takeover of that flight. Using their Interface Power, the pilots plan to direct the plane to open its cargo bay doors, enter the plane, and collect the satellites.

When the Columbus pilots open the cargo bay door, any unsecured heroes in the cargo area of the plane must make a Strength test, limited by Coordination, versus a 5 or be thrown from the plane. A successful test means that the hero managed to grab something before being jettisoned. The hero must make a Strength test of 5 for each page the cargo door is open. The jet loses altitude and is difficult to control with the cargo bay doors open. If the doors remain open for 8 or more pages, the plane enters a death spiral from which it cannot recover, without assistance from the heroes.



POWERED ARMOR PILOTS (COLUMBUS Mk II SUITS)

Prowess 4
Coordination 4
Strength 6
Intellect 4
Awareness 4
Willpower 3
Stamina 9

Specialties: Aerial Combat, Computers

Powers: Blast 5 (Blasting), Flight 8 (Capable of Mach 10), Invulnerability 4, Life Support 8 (All but Eating and Sleeping), Interface 3, and Supersenses 3 (Radar, Enhanced Vision, and Extended Vision)

Notes: The Powered Armor Pilots are not mercenaries. They are employees of Upton Aeronautics who started flight training before the company was banned from doing business with the government. They were going to be satellite repair and deliverymen. With the company under suspicion, Upton decided to arm the suits and hire them out to the highest bidders.

SATELLITE COORDINATES AND ORBITS

The satellites are in polar orbits, approximately 621 miles (1000 kilometers) above the Earth's surface. They are traveling at 17,000 mph or 8 meters per second, and at that speed, contact with an object of any size larger than a golf ball would disable or destroy them. The resulting debris could potentially jeopardize other satellites. If a damaged satellite re-enters the Earth's atmosphere, it could spread radioactive debris across a wide swath.

CAPTURING OR DESTROYING A SATELLITE

If the heroes damage a satellite, once the Upton Aeronautics monitoring station receives a warning signal, a Columbus pilot is sent to repair the satellite. If there is a catastrophic event or it is obvious that the heroes are attempting to destroy a satellite, Liberator leads a team of Columbus pilots to investigate. Liberator and his Columbus pilots should equal the number of heroes. Once Upton's team is alerted, it takes approximately six minutes for them to arrive.

If the heroes attempt to use kinetic devices against the satellites, the satellites arm themselves, use their Blast attack to target, and destroy the missiles before impact. Likewise, if the heroes approach the satellites, they target the heroes with their Blast attack and alert Upton's monitoring station.

WEATHER CONTROL SATELLITES

Prowess —
Coordination 5
Strength 3
Intellect 2
Awareness 3
Willpower —
Stamina 6

Specialties: Power (Blast) Expert

Powers: Elemental Control (Weather) 10, Invulnerability 3, Blast 3, Supersenses 1 (Radar)

Notes: Not being alive, the satellites are immune to anything affecting a living metabolism or mind. They have no Willpower, but instead their Stamina equals twice their Strength. The satellite's programming allows it to react to certain predetermined scenarios. An attempt by the heroes to capture or destroy a satellite is an event for which it is programmed.



UPTON AERONAUTICS ALASKAN SUPPLY STATION

Upton Aeronautics maintains multiple hangars at the Anchorage airport. The hangars are on the periphery of the airport and each is large enough to allow discreet loading and unloading of a jumbo jet. When a shipment lands, the largest items are transferred to trucks for hauling to Prudhoe Bay. Smaller items are loaded onto regional aircraft and sent to the same place. Columbus pilots transport sensitive items directly to Buran's base.

ATTACKING THE SUPPLY STATION

The Supply Station is patrolled at all times by multiple teams of mercenaries in four-wheel drive vehicles. Pilots in Columbus suits are waiting in a hangar, away from public view, but are ready to be called, if necessary. In general, they only fly under cover of night or if a general alarm is sounded. If a general alarm is sounded, a good guideline for the Game Master would be to have mercenaries equal to three times the number of heroes and Columbus pilots equal to the number of heroes. If the Game Master wishes to reduce the number of villains for the final battle, any of the villains, other than Buran and the Alchemist, could be at the Supply Station, with Liberator being the most likely.

BURAN'S MERCENARIES

Prowess 4
Coordination 4
Strength 4
Intellect 4
Awareness 4
Willpower 4
Stamina 8

Specialties: Marital Arts Expert, Military Expert, Weapons (Guns) Expert, Drive

Notes: These are professional mercenaries; many are former members of Special Forces teams from the world's premier militaries. They have a great deal of combat training and experience. Mercenaries carry the following equipment: sidearm (shooting damage 4), rifle (shooting damage 5), cold weather gear (Resistance 2 (Cold)), and night vision goggles (Supersenses 1 (infravision)).

FOLLOWING A SUPPLY SHIPMENT

Following the shipments from Anchorage to Prudhoe Bay is relatively easy. The contractors that Upton uses do not suspect anything untoward is happening and are not the least suspicious. Once the heroes arrive at the Prudhoe Bay base, things change. The base is filled with large shipping containers and crates. More items than just the air shipments are staged here before going to Buran's base. Everything that The Alchemist cannot easily create is located here. The shipments consist almost solely of advanced electronics gear, weapons, and food. Columbus pilots ferry much of the gear on the last leg of the journey, but some snowmobile caravans carry less valuable gear on its way to Buran's base. This base is guarded similarly to the facility at the Anchorage airport.

INTERROGATING THE MINIONS

Once the heroes have defeated or captured a Columbus pilot or one of Buran's minions, they may attempt to question either of them about their employers' plans. The Game Master may allow heroes with Psychiatry or Criminology to add their Specialty bonus to Intimidating or Persuading tests. Of course, a hero with Telepathy Power is able to glean all of the information below with a successful test against the target's Willpower.

The Columbus pilots are not hardened veterans and have little knowledge of the dire situation caused by the blizzards. If the heroes tell the Columbus pilots about the wide spread damage, add a +1 bonus to any Intimidating or Persuading test. If the pilots are removed from their armor, add another +1 bonus to the effort. A Moderate success at Intimidating or Persuading produces the information below.

Buran's mercenaries are aware of the damage being caused and do not care. Buran recruited veterans with no family ties or from countries in the Southern Hemisphere for just this reason. Likewise, they are being paid very well with a success bonus large enough to make them filthy rich. A Major success from Intimidating is necessary for one of Buran's mercenaries to divulge the location of the base. A Massive Success produces all of the information below.

The minions know the location of Buran's base and the satellite launch facility. They also know the number of defense personnel on the base and their weapons. The minions know that Buran's plan is to hold the Northern Hemisphere hostage for three to five days before demanding a trillion dollar ransom. The minions do not know that Buran actually intends to cover the northernmost portion of the globe in snow and ice until everyone north of the 40th parallel, roughly New York, Madrid, or Naples, is forced to relocate or submit to her rule.

The minions know the names and general abilities of the villains at the base; however, that knowledge is vague. All have a good idea of the capabilities of the Liberator's suit and that Buran can control the winds and weather. They know that Kavik can turn into a giant wolverine and that

the Alchemist can transmute objects. Some of the mercenaries know that Baba Yaga is a witch, and they surmise that she can do all manner of curses, but none actually knows anything about her powers, except that she can heal.

FINDING THE SATELLITE LAUNCH SITE

The satellite launch facility is only a mile from Buran's base. A passage through the snow and ice connects it to the barracks in the main base. When not preparing for a launch, only a small guard is stationed here, with two or three maintenance personnel. The guard is one Columbus pilot and a number of mercenaries equal to the number of heroes. Additional Columbus pilots may be encountered here fueling their suits before or after patrolling. If the heroes attack, any unengaged guards or engineers immediately notify the main base, see Buran's Reaction below.

BASE PERSONNEL

Prowess 3
Coordination 3
Strength 4
Intellect 3
Awareness 3
Willpower 3
Stamina 8

Specialties: Military, Weapons (Guns) and one of the following: Engineering (Aeronautics), Mechanics, or Electronics.

Notes: These veterans have expertise in non-combat, support roles, such as radar operators, mechanics, engineers, and the like. They have some combat training and experience, but are not expected to carryout combat operations like the mercenaries. Inside they carry a sidearm (shooting damage 4). When outside the base, they carry the following equipment: rifle (shooting damage 5), cold weather gear (Resistance 2 (Cold)), and night vision goggles (Supersenses 1 (infravision)).

CHAPTER 4: THE HOME OF THE BLIZZARD

In this chapter, the heroes finally locate and confront the mastermind behind the blizzards. To prevent her from succeeding, the characters must defeat Buran, the other super villains, and her minions or somehow disable the command center for the weather control satellites. The heroes must accomplish this while braving the extreme temperatures and weather of the Arctic Circle.

BASE DEFENSES

Buran's base is on a small, mountainous island inside the Arctic Circle. The island is covered in snow and ice year round, and there are glaciers in spots. The base is situated in a valley with radar and thermal imaging stations on the surrounding mountains (effective Awareness 6). Three mercenaries and a radar operator staff each of the six observation stations. The mercenaries operate a battery of surface to air missiles (Coordination 5; shooting damage 8). The personnel are shuttled to and from the main base by the patrols.

The patrols consist of three mercenaries in specially outfitted tracked vehicles. They are armed with a mounted machine gun (shooting damage 6) and three shoulder-fired, surface to air missiles (Coordination 4; shooting damage 7). The vehicle is armored (Invulnerability 3), solidly constructed (Strength 8), and has advanced instrumentation. GPS allows the crew to return to base in whiteout conditions. The vehicles patrol the island looking for evidence of intruders. Columbus pilots also patrol the airspace surrounding the island in a 150 mile (240 kilometer) radius.

BASE BUILDINGS

The base is laid out in a six spoke, wheel pattern. The Command Center is located at the hub with the six outbuildings surrounding it. The buildings are connected by passages that form the six spokes and the wheel. Each building and the connecting tubes are constructed of thick walls of a magical alloy (Strength 10 and Invulnerability 6) created by the Alchemist. The buildings are described below.

GARAGE

The maintenance bay holds the ground vehicles for the base, which includes the armored tracked vehicles used by the patrols and several snowmobiles, when they are not in use. Several mechanics can be found here during all hours. They are responsible for fueling, maintaining, and repairing the base's ground fleet. For the mechanics, use the Base Personnel statistics, above.

HANGAR A

This is where the powered armor suits are stored and maintained. During the day, there are always four to six engineers working on the suits. After work hours, the bay is generally empty. The only people potentially present at night are Columbus pilots at the start or end of their patrol shifts or Upton working on his Liberator suit. Any engineers encountered here do not engage the heroes, but attempt to sound the general alarm. If combat statistics are needed, use the Stock Characters, Bystander, statistics from the **ICONS** book, page 116, except they have an Intellect of 4 and a Specialty of Mechanic Expert. Any Columbus pilots encountered here attempt to don their suits before engaging in combat. If they are unable to do so, they surrender immediately.

The workbenches around the bay are filled with spare parts and partially assembled suits. The Liberator suit is maintained here when Upton is not wearing it. Anyone who succeeds on a Mechanics test of 5 or more can tell that the engineers appear to be working on assembling a spare Liberator suit. It is approximately seventy-five percent finished.

HANGAR B

This area is where the rocket bodies and engines are assembled. A partially assembled rocket takes up much of the floor space. During the day, there is a team of a dozen engineers present. They are non-combatants and sound the general alarm if they encounter any heroes. If combat statistics are needed, use the Stock Characters, Bystander, statistics from the **ICONS** book, page 116, except they have an Intellect of 4 and a Specialty of Science (Aeronautics) Expert.

CLEAN ROOM

This building is a huge clean room where the weather control satellites are assembled. The building does not have an exit to the outside, and anyone using the internal entrance must pass through an air shower for dust removal and don protective clothing. Three satellites in various states of assembly fill the laboratory. During the day, there is a team of a ten scientists and engineers assembling and testing satellites. Professor Chaudhry supervises them. They are non-combatants and sound the general alarm if they encounter any heroes. If combat statistics are needed, use the Stock Characters, Bystander, statistics from the **ICONS** book, page 116, except they have an Intellect of 5 and Specialties of Electronics Expert and Computer Expert.

PROFESSOR CHAUDHRY

Prowess 2
Coordination 3
Strength 2
Intellect 8
Awareness 2
Willpower 3
Stamina 5

Specialties: Electronics Master, Computers Master, Science (Climatology) Master.
Powers: Power Duplication 6 (Device -- only works on powers of level 6 or higher, and can only be built into devices constructed by Chaudhry.

Notes: Ritu Chaudhry is an incredibly gifted scientist. She believes that the only way to save the planet from rising sea levels and mass extinction of plants and animals is to cover half the globe in snow and ice. The academic community has ostracized her for this belief, but she no longer cares what anyone thinks and is solely focused on "saving" the world. When Chaudhry learned of Buran's plans, she quickly agreed to assist and has been a willing participant ever since..

BARRACKS

The building contains living quarters, dining rooms, a kitchen, a gym, an entertainment center, and a library. During their off duty hours, the base personnel spend their time here resting and relaxing. Heroes may notice that the barracks is twice the size it needs to be for the current number of people stationed at the base. The other point of interest is that the entertainment center is filled with an impressive array of music and movies, but there is no Internet connection, satellite feed, or other access to the outside world. The barracks has no exterior access point.

SUPPLY DEPOT

This warehouse holds enough supplies and material to provision a garrison twice the size of that present for at least a year. In addition to food, clothing, and other personal effects, the supply depot contains arms and equipment to outfit enough people to double the size of the garrison. All of the equipment is top of the line, as if no expense was spared. If the heroes are unprepared for the perpetual darkness or extreme cold in the Arctic, they can outfit themselves. Any of the equipment carried by the base personnel, described above, is present here; however, the spare Columbus powered armor suits are located in Hangar A.

COMMAND CENTER

This building is the nerve center of the base. From the top floor, personnel monitor the facility's radar and surveillance cameras. It also contains the command and control equipment for launching, monitoring, and controlling the weather satellites. An adjacent room houses the communications equipment for the base. Buran strictly limits access to the equipment to control the information available to base personnel. The lower floors contain offices for senior personnel, a medical facility, brig, and a weapons locker. The bottom floor is underground and contains the base's sewer treatment plant and power generator. A nuclear generator from a decommissioned Soviet submarine creates steam, which is used to supply the base with power and heat.

Heroes with any relevant Specialty notice that the equipment related to their Specialty is the highest quality and most cutting edge available. The equipment also has multiple redundant systems, and the base appears completely self-sustaining. Heroes with an appropriate Specialty or Quality surmise that the base has the ability to operate for at least one year and possibly two, at current staffing levels, without any support from the outside world

BURAN'S REACTION

Base personnel have been on high alert since Buran ordered the start of Project Whiteout. They are under strict orders to report anything suspicious to the Command Center and then reconnoiter, and if the target is hostile, engage it. Neither group of personnel is very likely to follow this order. Buran's mercenaries are overconfident and would like nothing more than to defeat a hero. If they outnumber the hero or heroes by at least two to one, they attack first and notify the Command Center later. The Columbus pilots do not want to risk raising a false alarm, and looking bad, so they are likely to confirm any suspicions before reporting to Command. Pilots who recognize that a hero is in the area immediately notify the Command Center and request support.

Once someone reports that the heroes are near the base, Buran raises a blizzard. The high winds buffet any flyers and prevent surface to air missiles from operating effectively (−2 to Coordination). The snow causes whiteout conditions, which completely obscures normal vision, and the temperature drops such that exposed flesh suffer frostbite in under a minute.

When the alarm sounds, the Command Center remotely seals the tunnels between the base buildings and the tunnel leading to the launch facility. Positive identification by Command through the closed circuit cameras is required for anyone to enter or leave an area. Columbus pilots are instructed to report to Hangar A and prepare for battle. Command also monitors the launch pad, launch facility, and surveillance outposts through the closed circuit camera network.

While the blizzard rages, base personnel prepare for battle. Buran is impatient and stops the storm before all of the base personnel are ready. The first wave of defenders is comprised of Liberator, with one Columbus pilot for every flying hero, and Kavik, with one armored vehicle for every hero on the ground. Buran monitors the battle from the Command Center.

If the defenders are holding their own and the fight seems to be capable of going either way, Buran joins the battle herself. If the heroes easily defeat the defenders, Buran sends another wave of Columbus pilots and mercenaries. While the heroes are slowed, Buran instructs the Command Center to prepare for evacuation. The staff prepares a mobile satellite phone and computer with the applicable access codes to control the weather satellites remotely. Buran instructs the staff to purge the computers of all access codes for the satellites and flees.

If the heroes have difficulty and are defeated, Buran orders them to be placed in the brig and immobilized to the extent possible. The Alchemist creates magical alloy shackles or other devices to limit their movement. Once the heroes regain consciousness, Buran gloats in front of them and explains her plans for world domination. She then threatens the heroes with a cold death as a glacier crushes them. This speech comes as a revelation to Liberator and the Alchemist. After Buran's speech, Liberator secretly orders his staff to prepare to evacuate. When Buran finds out, she orders her mercenaries to stop them from leaving, and a fight breaks out. The Alchemist approaches the heroes in the chaos and requests their assistance in exchange for helping them escape. The Alchemist explains that Buran is holding his family hostage to force him to cooperate in her plans.

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

The adventure is written under the assumption that it occurs during the winter months. Starting on the Autumnal Equinox, the days in the Arctic Circle become very short, until the sun does not rise above the horizon at all. The sun returns as the Vernal Equinox approaches, and for several months during the summer, it does not set. All of the employees and villains stationed at Buran's base have access to night vision goggles.

Individuals who spend any time in the Arctic weather during the winter without proper protection suffer a Stamina loss of 2 points of Cold damage for every five minutes of exposure. If a hero loses 4 or more Stamina points to the cold, the Game Master should give the hero a temporary Challenge of Frostbitten until the damage is healed. Individuals affected by frostbite begin to lose feeling in their fingers or toes and experience a loss of manual dexterity. If a hero loses more than 6 points of Stamina, the Game Master should give the hero the temporary Challenge of Hypothermia. Hypothermia can result in confusion, disorientation, lethargy, and loss of coordination.



BURAN



ABILITIES

PROWESS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
COORDINATION	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
STRENGTH	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INTELLECT	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AWARENESS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WILLPOWER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

HEIGHT: 5'8" WEIGHT: 140

FIRST APPEARANCE: ALL-STAR #14

POWERS

Elemental Control (Weather)

Attack. Create. Defend. Move.
Shape. Detect

Flight

Aura (Frigid Cold)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SPECIALTIES

Mental Resistance

Business

STAMINA

9

QUALITIES

QUEEN OF WINTER

MOTIVATION: BRING THE WORLD TO ITS KNEES!

CHALLENGES

MEGALOMANIAC

IMPATIENT

WEAKNESS: NON-WINTER-RELATED WEATHER EFFECTS ARE -3 TO POWER LEVEL.

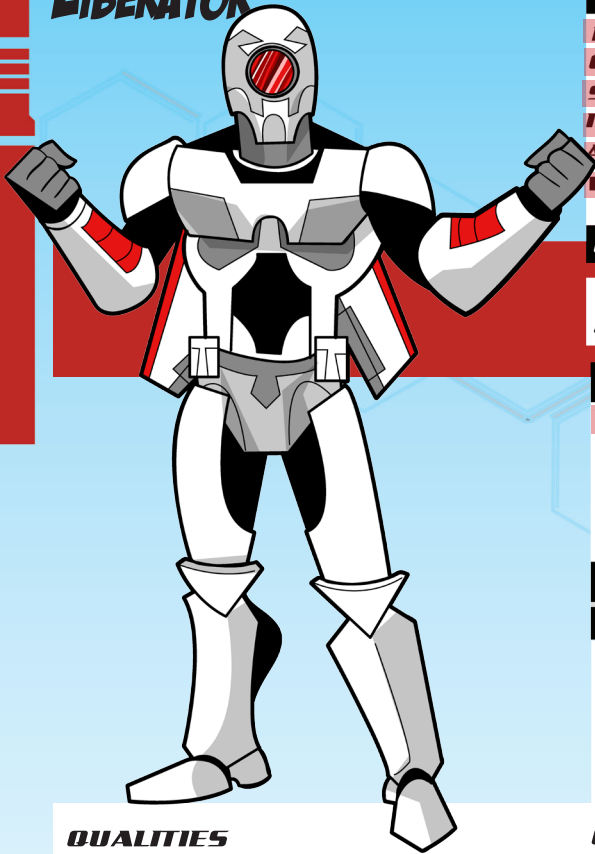
Vera Mamedov was born at the research enclave of Akademgorodok, Novosibirsk, where her parents, two top Soviet research scientists, worked. Although they lived in Siberia, she and her parents were prosperous and benefited greatly through their Party connections. Vera was still a young girl when the Soviet Union started to collapse. Her parents lost their jobs and were forced to move to America, where they were hired by a small biotech startup. They developed many advanced technologies for the company, but ultimately were cheated out of the profits and stock options associated with them. The founder of the company became a billionaire while her parents got nothing. They fought the company in the courts, but were unsuccessful and saddled with huge legal bills. Vera's desperate parents were recruited by a criminal organization. They created a super-serum that gave their test subjects (mob goons) temporary powers to fight heroes. Once the mob bosses had what they wanted, they had Vera's parents killed to prevent the serum from getting to their competitors. Vera was grief stricken and took a massive dose of the remaining serum with the intention of killing herself. Instead, she developed her super powers.

Vera took the name "Buran," meaning blizzard, and used her newfound powers to destroy the local crime bosses. She was initially thought to be a hero, but when she started offering her services to stop unseasonal rain or lengthy droughts in the Midwest, people started to suspect that she was causing the problems she was later paid to solve. After spending a few years in her weather racket, Buran gathered enough money and connections to pursue her ultimate goal of establishing her own nation over the shattered ruins of the two countries that had been responsible for destroying her parents. She felt that because her parents had been cheated by both the communist and capitalist systems, the only way to ensure fairness was through pulling down those economies and creating her own nation. She has spent the last year assembling her team to carry out this plan. She has not told Liberator her plans; he thinks she is going to make a 10 billion dollar demand to stop the storms.

Buran spends most of her time in the Command Center, where she has access to the base's satellite surveillance feeds, the local communications of her guards, and international news reports. Since the adventure started, she has scarcely left and sleeps in her office. She revels in the destruction and chaos to the financial markets that her storms have caused. She often sleeps and eats in her office. She only returns to her quarters to shower and change.

When role-playing Buran, widen your eyes and tilt your head back while gesticulating wildly. She is an imposing figure and is quite dramatic. She is also completely insane, but will not let her true plans become known until she is assured that she cannot be stopped.

LIBERATOR



QUALITIES

CEO OF UPTON AERONAUTICS
SOLO-MANNED ORBITAL VEHICLE

ABILITIES											
PROWESS	5										
COORDINATION	5										
STRENGTH	8										
INTELLECT	8										
AWARENESS	5										
WILLPOWER	5										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

HEIGHT: 6'5" WEIGHT: 230
FIRST APPEARANCE: ALL-STAR #14

POWERS											
Wizardry (Advanced Power Armor) (See details below)											
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

SPECIALTIES										
Electronics Expert Computer Expert Mechanics Expert Aerial Combat										STAMINA 13

CHALLENGES

INFERIORITY COMPLEX - "JUST A GUY IN A SPACE SUIT."

WEAKNESS- WITHOUT SUIT, STRENGTH, AWARENESS AND PROWESS DROP TO 3.

Richard Upton made his fortune during the Internet Boom as a founding member of a software company. He divested himself before the Internet bubble burst and used his money to found Upton Aeronautics. He was a brilliant scientist and engineer and now had the means to pursue his life's dream—to return a man to the moon. Upton Aeronautics created satellite and rockets for both private and government customers. His company spent a huge amount of resources in pursuit of the X Prize for creating a reusable launch vehicle, but failed to win. The Columbus solo-manned space suit was unable to carry the required weight, so the prize went to another. Upton's company had banked heavily on winning the \$10 million prize. When it failed, Upton looked for alternate means of financing his company. Upton started selling rocket technology to North Korea and Iran. He also created a new suit and began engaging in corporate espionage. He raided his competitors and did large amounts of damage to their property and products, which increased business for Upton Aeronautics. During these raids, he encountered Buran, who had discovered his identity. He agreed to assist her to avoid exposure.

COLUMBUS Mk IV ARMOR

The advanced prototype features the following powers, all rated at Liberator's Wizardry level:

Invulnerability

Life Support (All but Eating & Sleeping)

Blast

Supersenses - Radar, Nightvision, Magnification of visual to close range, +2 hearing, +3 Vision

Flight

Interface

Their activities held off creditors long enough to develop the Columbus suit, Mark II. Upton demonstrated it to NASA with the hopes of using it to carry astronauts and cargo to and from the International Space Station. His hopes were dashed when his company fell under investigation by the government for violating various nonproliferation laws. The company was heavily fined and forbidden from doing business with the United States government for 10 years.

Buran approached the desperate Upton and offered to save his company. She told him that she knew of a way to hold the advanced post-industrial economies of the world hostage. She would pay him two billion dollars and purchase 40 rockets from him, if he lent his expertise to the plan. Upton knew that he was going down a path fraught with danger, but reluctantly accepted her offer. He felt that if this plan allowed his company to colonize the Moon or Mars, it would be worth whatever harm Buran caused. For the last year, he has been assisting Buran in acquiring advanced technology and launching her weather control satellites.

In his Liberator armor, Upton speaks in a mechanized voice. He worries about his legacy being tarnished by assisting Buran, so he goes to great lengths to keep his identity secret. He also has qualms about killing people and fighting heroes, so he warns them to surrender more than is tactically wise and tries not to endanger innocents.

KAVIK



ABILITIES



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

HEIGHT: 9' **WEIGHT:** 1000
FIRST APPEARANCE: MIGHTY SAGUARO #34

POWERS



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SPECIALTIES

Stealth Expert
Nature (Arctic) Expert

STAMINA

13

QUALITIES

AVATAR OF THE WOLVERINE SPIRIT
CONNECTIONS: INUIT COMMUNITY

CHALLENGES

WEAKNESS: NO POWERS IN HUMAN FORM, AND ALL ABILITIES DROP TO 3.
SOCIAL: ANIMALISTIC

Brian Okpik was born in a small Inuit village in the Northwest Territories of Canada. His village was very poor, but he hardly knew it. He had everything that he wanted and enjoyed hunting and fishing. When Brian was older, his great grandfather, the village shaman, trained him in the ways of his people. When Brian was ready, he prepared for his vision quest. He took a long, solo journey across the Arctic Ocean to speak to the spirits. Early in his trip, Brian lost most of his supplies, but rather than turn back and fail, he continued. He paddled his small kayak through the cold waters filled with ice. As he neared exhaustion and death, a vision came to him. Brian saw the spirit of the wolverine, which told him that he needed to protect his people from those who would destroy their way of life and were on a path to destroy the world. The spirit told him that it could fill him with power whenever he called the name Kavik ("Wolverine").

When Brian returned to his village, he discovered that he had been gone for several months, not a few days as he thought. In his absence, government officials had relocated his village to make way for a petroleum project. His grandfather had led the protests against relocation, but the protests ended when he died in an accident. Brian did not believe that his grandfather's death was an accident and called on Kavik. When oil company workers reported that a creature the size of a grizzly bear had destroyed their worksite, authorities did not believe them, but their reports were corroborated by others. Kavik, the giant wolverine, has become a hero to the Inuit people and a scourge on the petroleum and commercial fishing industry. Initially limited to the northern reaches of Canada, Kavik has recently taken to attacking anything he thinks contributes greenhouse gases to the environment. When Buran discovered Kavik's motivation for his destructive acts, she tracked him down and described her plan. Kavik immediately offered to assist her in any way possible.

Kavik spends his time roaming the islands and icy waters around the base. In general, he stays in human form while fishing and hunting. He carries a radio, fishing supplies, and a rifle. He can be summoned to the base relatively quickly. Since the blizzards have started, Buran has asked him to stay close to base. Kavik has agreed, but is growing bored.

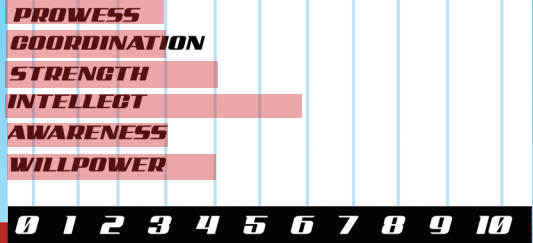
In human form, he looks like a typical resident of the far north. He is short and squat, with dark black hair and eyes and a tanned, weathered face and hands. He speaks in a clear voice and looks directly into the eyes of whoever is talking to him. In Kavik form, he is a gigantic wolverine weighing about 1000 pounds (450 Kilograms) and standing over nine feet (three meters) tall. Kavik is capable of speech, but generally only snarls and growls.



THE ALCHEMIST



ABILITIES



HEIGHT: 6'0" WEIGHT: 190
 FIRST APPEARANCE: ASTOUNDING HEX-MEN #61

POWERS

Transmutation - touch required
Wizardry - Alchemy
Paralysis
Emotion Control



SPECIALTIES

Science (Chemistry)
Master

STAMINA

8

QUALITIES

MASTER OF POTIONS
MOTIVATION: PROVIDE FOR HIS FAMILY

CHALLENGES

POWERS REQUIRE ALCHEMICAL PREPERATIONS.

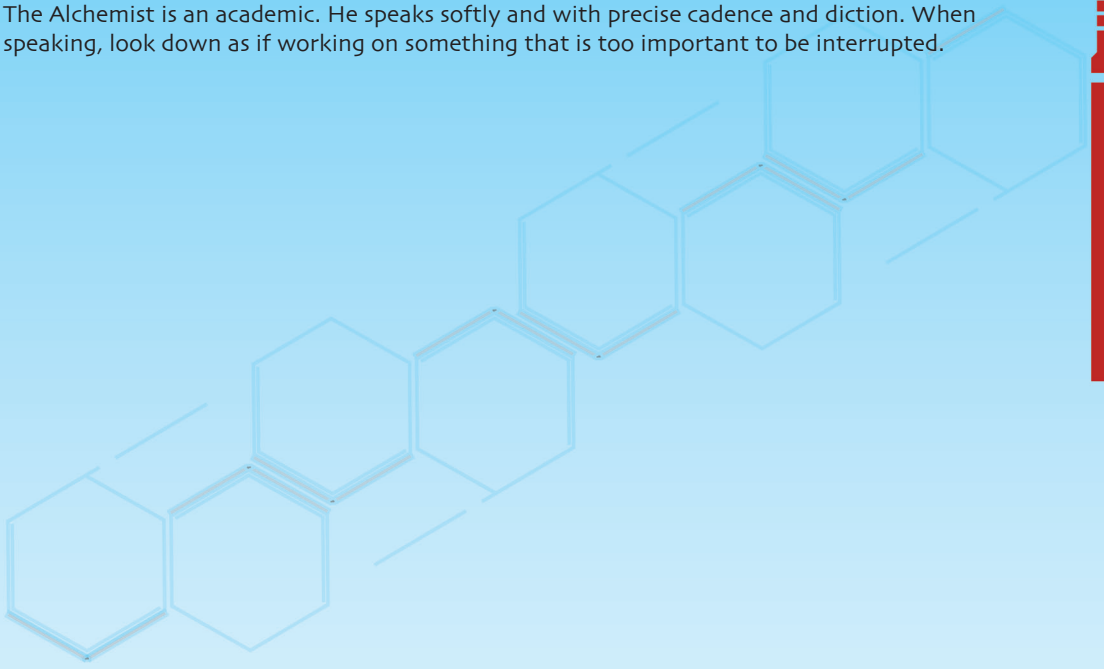
Phillip Sean was a promising graduate student with an interest in medieval history. He was sitting in a lecture on alchemy one day when his professor and several social science types started talking about alchemy in glowing terms. Phillip decided to write a paper on the processes used by alchemists and why they could never work. He dove into his research and starting analyzing the processes he had found. Much to his amazement, they actually produced results. He attempted to analyze the results, but could find no scientific reason for them to work. He replicated the results in different settings and under different conditions. Eventually, he thought to have someone else try to replicate the results. His lab partner agreed and reported that, of course, the process did not work and it could never work. Phillip was left with the only possible conclusion, for whatever reason, he had the ability to practice alchemy.

Phillip was interested in becoming a scientist and had no desire to create gold or love potions, so he finished his paper, fabricating the results, and never mentioned alchemy to anyone again. Later, he was hired by Upton Aeronautics to assist in creating a super strong alloy for their space suit program. Phillip needed to perfect the metal for the suit before some other company claimed the X Prize. Phillip caved in to temptation and used alchemy to combine the properties of several metals into a magical, super metal. The metal made the suits lighter, stronger, and capable of a round trip orbital flight. Unfortunately, when the metal could not be reproduced without Phillip's presence, Upton figured out what was happening. Upton then told Buran about Phillip's Power.

When Phillip refused to go along with her plan, Buran told him that his wife and children would be very disappointed if he did not cooperate. She told him that they would be living in Hawaii, where they would be safe, until Phillip's job was done. To protect his identity, he took the name the Alchemist, and has been held by Buran for the last year. During that time, he has created most of the material for the base by transforming snow or ice sculptures into the appropriate materials.

Although the Alchemist is being held against his will, he is not closely monitored. Buran knows that he would not get far outside the base and would not endanger his family by fleeing. He is usually in his quarters, except when called to create fuel or other supplies for the base.

The Alchemist is an academic. He speaks softly and with precise cadence and diction. When speaking, look down as if working on something that is too important to be interrupted.



BABA YAGA



ABILITIES

PROWESS

COORDINATION

STRENGTH

INTELLECT

AWARENESS

WILLPOWER

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

HEIGHT: 5'5

WEIGHT: 140

FIRST APPEARANCE: ASTOUNDING HEX-MEN #61

POWERS

**Wizardry: Healing, Precog
Probability Control (Bad)
Affliction**

Flight

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SPECIALTIES

Occult Expert

STAMINA

10

QUALITIES

MYTHICAL WITCH OF SLAVIC FOLKLORE

MOTIVATION: CAUSE PAIN AND MISERY

CONNECTIONS: FASHION INDUSTRY

CHALLENGES

HIDEOUS OLD CRONE

HATES ATTRACTIVE PEOPLE

AFFLICTION WORKS AT VISUAL RANGE, BUT ONLY DOES DAMAGE EVERY THIRD PAGE.

Nadia Kuznetsov was rich, beautiful super model travelling through Eastern Europe when a freak winter storm struck. She attempted to beat the storm to her destination, but got lost in the rural roads and crashed her car. Disoriented and injured, Nadia wandered into the storm until she saw what looked like an elevated hut. She approached the hut, and it descended to allow her entrance. Nadia discovered that the hut was filled with strange materials and a bubbling cauldron of some foul liquid. On the other side of the cauldron sat a hideous, old crone. The witch asked Nadia if she wanted to inherit the title of Baba Yaga. Nadia thought she was in a dream and answered yes. The old crone turned into an attractive, middle-aged woman, who then smiled and left the hut. Nadia woke up thinking the whole event had been a bizarre dream. When she looked into the mirror and saw the old crone Baba Yaga looking back, she let out a terrified scream.

Nadia has not taken to becoming a powerful witch from Slavic folklore very well. She attempted to return to her home, but was thrown out. Her fiancé and friends turned their backs on her. Whenever she was seen in public, people treated her with contempt and recoiled at her appearance. This abrupt reversal of fortune turned Nadia bitter and spiteful. She decided to make the world suffer. She cursed her enemies in the fashion world with hideous boils or disfigurement. All of her former lovers died in mysterious accidents. When Buran approached Baba Yaga with an offer to cover the world in ice and snow, she quickly accepted.

Since the blizzards have started, Baba Yaga spends most of her time in her quarters. She has promised Buran to counter any magical threats. To this end, she peers into the future and looks to warn Buran of any potential impediments to their plan. From her basin of water, Baba Yaga can use her Powers on anyone she sees.

Baba Yaga is not a front line fighter. She uses her Bad Luck and Affliction Powers on the heroes and her Healing Power on the villains from afar. If the fight starts to go poorly for the defenders, Baba Yaga flees in her flying mortar and pestle. If encountered, she cackles and points her fingers a lot. When role-playing her, channel your inner Wicked Witch of the West; cackle and complain about the injustice and tyranny of the pretty people of the world while pointing your finger at the heroes.



EPILOGUE

If the heroes defeat Liberator and Kavik and either defeat Buran or force her to flee, the remaining base personnel surrender rather than battle the heroes. The Alchemist claims innocence and will not fight, while Baba Yaga flees. The heroes discover that the weather satellites are programmed to continue producing blizzards until ordered otherwise. The satellite control systems are unable to alter their programming without the access codes, which are only known by Buran. She refuses to surrender them and no threat sways her. Heroes with a Specialty in Computers may attempt an Intellect test against a 10 to crack the access code of the satellite network. If the characters are unable to break the code, Upton offers his assistance in exchange for some lenience.

The Game Master could extend the adventure in several ways. Assuming the heroes turn the satellites off, unless something is done to remove them from orbit, someone could use them in the future. If Buran or Baba Yaga escapes, they may attempt to assemble another group of villains to continue their plans. They will attempt to recruit a skilled computer hacker, possibly Arobas (**ICONS**, page 96), to assist them in reestablishing control over the network. The government may ask for the characters' assistance in collecting or disabling the satellites. Some sinister element of the government may simply demand the access code, classify the satellites a state secret, and threaten the characters against disclosing their existence. How do the heroes react when natural disasters start hitting the enemies of the State? The Alchemist may request that the heroes rescue his family from Buran's minions. If the Alchemist assisted the heroes, Buran may have ordered Baba Yaga to punish his family. Alternately, the Game Master may create an entirely new villain to confront the heroes. If the players enjoyed combating a natural disaster, state or national authorities may request their assistance in cleaning up the blizzards' aftermath or responding to severe spring floods when the snows finally melt.

Finally, the heroes may have a dilemma on their hands about how to handle Buran's base. It is located on a very isolated island in disputed waters in the Arctic Circle. The Canadian, American, and Russian governments claim it. All three have agreed to leave the island empty while they negotiate. The base is filled with the best equipment that money can buy. It has access to a network of surveillance satellites and worldwide news feeds. It is constructed of a nearly indestructible metal and defended by batteries of anti-aircraft missile that can be remotely operated. The heroes may decide that the base and its contents are spoils of war and claim it for their own, or they may decide that the base is too dangerous to allow standing.

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