

A sourcebook for
CHAMPIONS

COPS, CREWS, AND CABALS



STEVEN S. LONG

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A Setting Book For *Champions*

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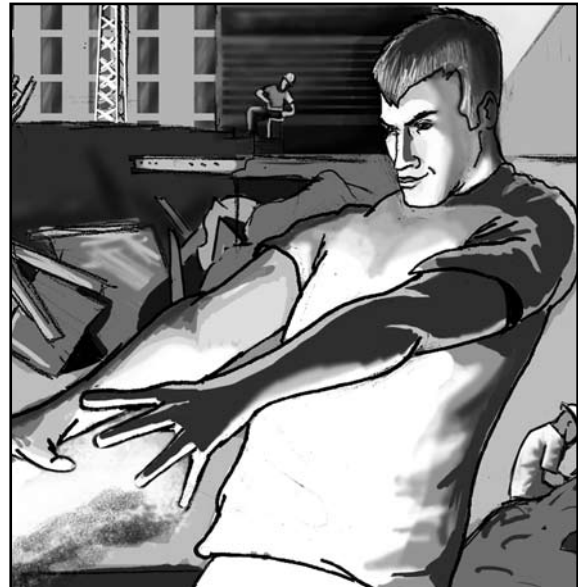
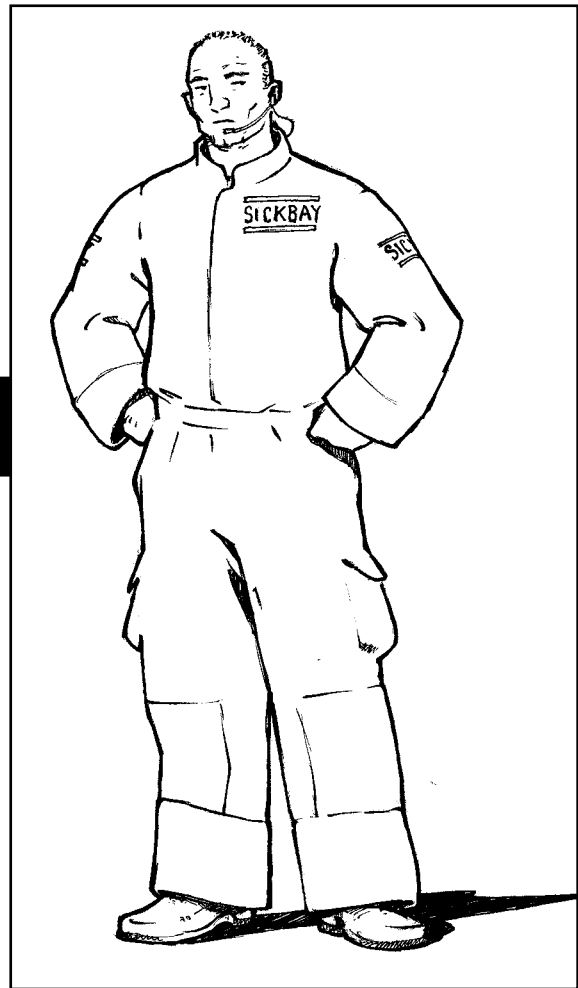
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To all the Hero fans who participated in the discussion of this book and offered suggestions for what it should include. You're all Heroes!



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INTRODUCTION



APPENDICES

Finally, the last part of the book is several appendices containing character sheets for guards, agents, and other “generic” characters described in the player’s section of the book.

VIPER, UNTIL, DEMON. Everyone in the Champions Universe knows about organizations like this — groups so large and powerful that they can, and often do, have an impact on entire nations, continents, or even the planet itself. DEMON’s scheme could easily spell the end of reality as people know it, while VIPER’s goals, though far more mundane, aren’t necessarily any less dangerous.

But not every organization in the Champions Universe — or your campaign setting — needs to be so large and monumental. In a society where superhuman powers exist and are publicly known, some superhumans choose to do other things with their powers than dress up in costumes to fight (or commit) crime. They might use their powers to earn a nice living, cause harmless trouble, or help others in quiet ways. Similarly, businesses and even entire sectors of the economy spring up around the Superhuman World, whether to cater to it, serve it, oppose it, or exploit it.

Cops, Crews, And Cabals takes a look at a dozen organizations of the latter type — smaller and less well-known to the public than VIPER, but not necessarily any less useful or important in your campaign. They run the gamut from groups that work with heroes, to ones neutral to them, to criminal cartels they have to oppose.

Chapter One, *Angelstone Laboratories*, describes a scientific organization and think tank whose work and interests often intersect with the Superhuman World. Your heroes might contact Angelstone to have a strange device analyzed, to obtain the latest intelligence on what’s happening in Awad, or to get some tests run on evidence.

Chapter Two, *Bastion Alpha Security*, depicts a “security” (read: mercenary) organization that uses personnel who’ve undergone a low-level superhuman augmentation process. In addition to providing a ready resource for dictators and supervillains to use, Bastion Alpha can become a steady supplier of powerful “thugs” for anyone in your campaign.

Chapter Three, *Executive Control Solutions*, details an organization that is in many ways the opposite number of Bastion Alpha. ECS is definitely a mercenary organization, one with a reputation for successfully opposing and defeating superhuman adversaries. But it’s much more responsible in who it chooses as clients and how it performs missions. It could easily become a quasi-ally of your heroes.

Chapter Four, *The Exoplanetary Society*, is a group of “concerned citizens” with an interest in alien life on Earth and alien civilizations. With members ranging from people who are seriously concerned about the threat posed by aliens, to violently anti-alien extremists, it could become a real thorn in the side of any alien hero.

Chapter Five, *Grand Cienelago Island*, is a secret Caribbean resort that caters to superheroes. Being a hero is a tough job, and even the most dedicated crimefighter needs a vacation every now and then to unwind. Where better than a gorgeous tropical island with a resort and staff designed to cater to his every need?

Chapter Six, *MCPD Special Unit Omega*, draws back the curtain to show you the Millennium City Police Department’s elite anti-supervillain squad. Composed of men and women who work hard, play hard, and may have to make the ultimate sacrifice for the people of the City of the Future, the SUO could be just the sort of assistance your heroes need to tackle a tough foe.

Chapter Seven, *Sickbay*, provides all the details on a special medical care service for superheroes. Heroes who get hurt in the line of duty can’t always go to the hospital or a private physician, and that’s where Sickbay comes in. Equipped to provide everything from EMT field teams to surgery on superhuman physiologies, Sickbay may mean the difference between life and death for your heroes.

Chapter Eight, *Trans-City Construction*, discusses a construction company that specializes in high-speed construction projects, including repairing the damage caused by superbattles. Run by a man with matter transmutation powers, it’s the perfect solution to many a problem caused by superhuman violence.

The remainder of the book is for the GM alone. It provides the GM-only information about what’s covered in the other parts of the book. If you’re a player, don’t read this section — you’ll spoil your fun! Chapter Nine is the GM’s *Vault*, which contains secret information about the first eight chapters — additional details the players shouldn’t know, or sometimes the correct information instead of what’s commonly believed.

Chapter Ten, *ICON*, describes the International Consortium, an up-and-coming criminal organization that wants to supplant the likes of VIPER and rule the world itself. Unless your heroes stop ICON in time, they’ll soon have another major threat on their hands....

Chapter Eleven, *Motlee’s Crew*, covers a crew of skilled, hard-core robbers... each of whom happens to have a minor superpower or two that makes the job easier. None of them are a match for your heroes in a superbattle, but between their wits, their skills, and their abilities they may cause your PCs all kinds of trouble.

Chapter Twelve, *Villainy Unlimited*, describes an agency that provides numerous support services to supervillains: legal representation; bail; costumes; mediation; and much more. If your PCs can find it and put it out of business they can make life a lot harder for their enemies.



**Angelstone
Laboratories**

ANGELSTONE LABORATORIES



Begun as a defense industry contractor during the Cold War, Angelstone Laboratories has grown to become a wealthy and influential research organization with expertise in many fields. Since the mid-Seventies it's included studies of superhumanity and supercrime among its activities, and many superheroes have come to rely on Angelstone as a source of information and assistance in their fight against evil.

HISTORY

Angelstone Laboratories was founded in 1958 by Preston Angel II, a World War II veteran who served in the European theater for two years. After the war he attended Cornell University on the GI Bill, discovering an unexpected interest in and talent for science. He graduated in just two years and went to work for a firm called Inter-Atlantic Dynamics. IAD was primarily a defense contractor that made its money working for various branches of the US military developing various weapons systems and related technologies.

Angel enjoyed the work at IAD for the most part, but he was a bit too much of a maverick in his approach to it (and to other people) to fit into an organization that large and hierarchical comfortably. After several years there, during which he carefully saved his money, he left to form his own firm, christening it "Angelstone Laboratories."

The first few years of Angelstone's existence were rough, with the firm barely scraping by on whatever bits and pieces of work Angel and his few employees could obtain. But in 1962 their persistence and sacrifices paid off when Angelstone won a contract to develop components for a new Navy radar system. It did the work so well that some of the government's military contractors took note and began sending more work Angelstone's way. The company's success was now assured.

In 1967 Angelstone underwent the first of several expansions. Angel's agile mind wasn't satisfied with just developing new military technology; he wanted to learn more, experience more, and do more. He established what's now known as the Research Section to function as

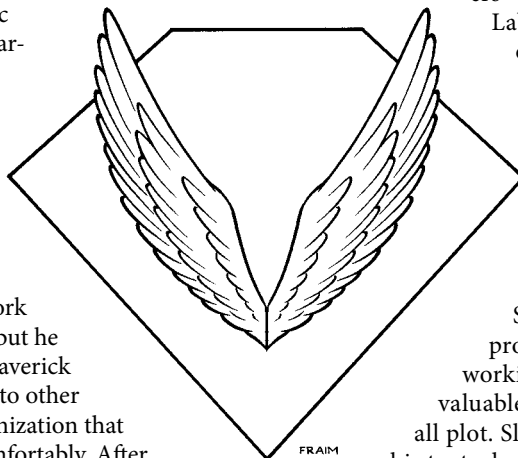
a think tank-style organization. His justification for this was increasing the range of services Angelstone could offer the government (and possibly even private organizations), but his real reason was satisfying his own intellectual curiosity. The Research Section initially focused on topics pertaining to the war in Vietnam and the containment doctrine, but over the next decade branched out into topics of interest to private commercial clients, such as market research for large companies.

ATTACK OF THE SERPENT

Angelstone broadened its focus further in the mid-Seventies after it became the latest in a long string of victims of the criminal organization VIPER. The Nest Leader of one of the Washington, D.C. Nests, a man who called himself the Scarlet King, hatched a plot to infiltrate the US government through its service providers — including Angelstone Laboratories. Over the course of several years he got some of his underlings hired by Angelstone, first in minor clerical positions but later into the ranks of the scientists and researchers. Information these moles fed back to the Scarlet King clued him in to projects the government was working on and provided other valuable information for his overall plot. Slowly but surely he worked his tentacles into the Pentagon and other branches of American government...

...only to trip himself up by moving too quickly. When some choice information came his way through one of his Angelstone sources, he tried to blackmail the Secretary of Defense into becoming his puppet. The Secretary refused and turned to several superheroes — an early incarnation of what would become the Capital Patrol in the Eighties — for help. The heroes investigated, and their work soon led them to Angelstone Laboratories. A brief but intense confrontation with the VIPER agents resulted in significant damage to Angelstone's New York facility, several injured employees, and two deaths.

For Preston Angel III, who'd taken over leadership of the firm from his father in 1970 when his father retired after being badly hurt in an automobile collision, this incident was like a splash of cold



water in the face. He was shocked and dismayed at how easily his company had become a VIPER patsy, and deeply grieved by what happened to his employees. Angelstone had dabbled in studies of superhumanity and related phenomena before — it couldn't survive in its industry if it didn't — but now he realized the company had just been dipping its toes in those waters. What it needed was a serious focus on the problems faced and posed by superhumanity, particularly the threat of supervillains and criminal syndicates like VIPER.

To that end, Angel did two things. First, in 1976 he created a new branch of the Research Section, the Superhuman Studies Division. The "SSD" soon began offering its services to police departments, government officials, and similar organizations, often for significantly reduced rates. Second, he instructed the various divisions of the Applied Sciences Section to create small sub-sections devoted primarily to studying (and in some cases inventing) super-technology, mostly with an eye toward countering or restraining supervillains.

Some experts scoffed at Angelstone's entry into the "field" of superhuman studies, thinking it the dilettantish fad of a man who'd been hurt but would soon find more profitable activities for his company. They couldn't have been more wrong. Thanks to the quality of its work (and those reduced rates, which it still offers to this day), Angelstone soon became known for the accuracy of its studies of supervillain activities, the insightfulness of its psychological profiles of known villains, and the sturdiness of its patented Supercriminal Restraint System (SCRS) devices. (See Chapter Seven for details on some of this technology.)

THE EIGHTIES AND NINETIES

As the Superhuman World grew and became more active in the Eighties, and the Reagan Administration ramped up the US military to put pressure on (and eventually cause the collapse of) Soviet Russia, Angelstone Laboratories found itself with almost more work than it could handle. It hired additional personnel and began building a series of secondary offices in cities like San Francisco and Vibora Bay (though the bulk of its work was still done at its major facilities near New York and Washington). In a rare blunder Preston Angel III attempted to move the company into the aerospace industry by buying the assets of the bankrupt Norwestar Industries, but the company lacked the capital and experience to make a go of it. The "Norwestar Division" was sold off to Boeing in 1995 at what amounted to a loss.

But Angelstone more than made up for that loss due to the terrible tragedy of the Battle of Detroit. After the government announced its plans for Millennium City, Angelstone Laboratories was right there in the forefront of the effort with new technologies it had been working on, research on the project and the future of the city, and studies about how to prevent (or at least react to) future superhuman disasters of that magnitude. Many of the technological and social developments

that Lennies now take for granted began, in some form, in Angelstone's labs.

THE PRESENT DAY

Since the year 2000 it's mostly been business as usual for Angelstone, except for a brief period in 2003 when the company had to fight off a hostile takeover attempt by ACI and its infamous leader, Franklin Stone. Ordinarily Angelstone would have a difficult time opposing such a juggernaut, and for a while things looked grim, but a white knight in the form of Harmon Industries came to the rescue. Harmon is now a partial owner of Angelstone, and ties between the two companies have led to increased profits for both.

In the twenty-first century Angelstone Laboratories is firmly established as one of the leading technology research firms and "think tanks" in the United States. While it's best known for its work in high-end defense contracting and researching the Superhuman World, the truth is that it has its fingers in many pies, including plenty the average person would never consider profitable or interesting.

THE COMPETITION

Due to the wide nature of fields it works in, Angelstone Laboratories has many competitors. Its "first tier" rivals are defense contractors and think tanks of similar size, such as National Applied Research, Inc. (a subsidiary of ACI), NovaSolutions Worldwide, and the Silverbrook Corporation. It strives to submit lower bids than they do for all sorts of governmental research and development projects.

Angelstone also competes with companies that do corporate research, but to a lesser degree. Angelstone's profile in the world of marketing, economics, and consumer research isn't as strong as it is in the defense and superhuman fields, so it's often at a disadvantage when bidding on such projects. But it manages to get enough of that kind of work to keep the "C&C" division afloat.

These days most people see the Goodman Insititute, founded in 2003, as Angelstone's closest counterpart and competitor. (See *Champions Universe: News Of The World* for more information about the Insititute.) However, the differences between the two of them are actually fairly significant. First, Angelstone is a much older and better-established company run entirely on a for-profit basis. It charges reduced rates to some clients as a public service, but ultimately it still needs to make money for its work. Second, while it does have branches and projects specializing in topics concerned with the Superhuman World, it's not primarily focused on superhumanity the way the Goodman Insititute is — its research, development, and interests are much broader. Third, it has nothing like the "Encounter Teams" the Goodman Insititute fields. Only in the rarest of occasions will PCs encounter Angelstone researchers collecting data "in the field" by monitoring superbattles or the like; Angelstone personnel get their work

done in the lab and the library. Fourth, Angelstone Laboratories doesn't have "special deals" or contractual arrangements with any super-teams or individual heroes. Crimefighters come to Angelstone for assistance simply because of its stellar reputation in many fields, including analyzing supertechnology.

ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES

Compared to many corporations of similar size, Angelstone Laboratories has a relatively simple table of organization, one that reflects its roots as a scientific research company focused on defense contracts. The chairman and chief executive officer is Preston Angel IV, the fifty-something grandson of the company's founder. He has an active Board of Directors, but in most cases they tend to defer to his wishes even though he and his family at this point only own 34% of the company's stock (which is publicly traded on the NASDAQ). Like his father and grandfather before him, Angel has proven to be a shrewd businessman, so his directors' faith in him is usually justified.

The Offices

Angelstone Laboratories has three main offices (in Millennium City, New York City, and Washington, D.C.) and five minor facilities (in Vibora Bay, San Francisco, Chicago, Seattle, and Atlanta).

MILLENNIUM CITY

The youngest of Angelstone's major offices, the Millennium City facility was built in 1997 as part of the general reconstruction of Detroit. It's got the same sort of new, high-tech, cutting edge feel to it that most of Millennium City's businesses and buildings do.

Unsurprisingly, the Millennium City offices are where about half of all of Angelstone's work on matters pertaining to the Superhuman World takes place. It has more laboratories devoted to analyzing and developing supertechnology (including the Supercriminal Restraint System), more databases about superhumanity, and more access to superhumans than any of the company's other major offices.

The Millennium City offices occupy a seemingly-ordinary six-story office building in the Westside neighborhood; many employees live just a short distance away in the residential parts of that section of the city. The first floor contains the reception area, a major conference auditorium and several smaller conference rooms, and various administrative offices. The second and third floors are given over to think-tank researchers and include a well-stocked library and related resources. The top three floors contain laboratories devoted to scientific and technological research and development; the joke is that if the scientists blow off the top of the building at least no one on the floors below will get hurt.

Sarah Fulgate, a member of the Board of Directors, heads the Millennium City office. A no-nonsense businesswoman who relaxes by playing high-stakes poker on the weekends, she's not particularly well-liked but is respected by her colleagues and underlings. She has a taste for fine art and has decorated the first floor with several attractive (and moderately valuable) paintings and pieces of sculpture.

NEW YORK CITY

The "New York City" facility is actually located a short distance outside the city proper, in Putnam County, New York. It consists of a "campus" of four three-story buildings arranged around a pleasantly-landscaped quadrangle. This is where the majority of Angelstone's scientific and technological research takes place; most of the buildings are occupied by various laboratories and related facilities. Some of the scientific equipment here is state-of-the-art and very valuable, so security is tight and the security systems are top-notch. On some occasions Angelstone has even hired Executive Control Solutions (see Chapter Three) to provide extra protection when it suspected a robbery was imminent.

Bradley Holmes, Vice President of the Applied Sciences Section, heads the New York facility. Unfortunately he's not much of an administrator. He was a laboratory scientist for over twenty years, and secretly still longs to be back in the lab. As a result he spends far too much time in the laboratories talking with the scientists and assisting them, and too little time on the daily details of running a business. His indefatigable secretary, Abigail Glaurek, actually runs a lot of things behind the scenes; everyone in the office knows not to cross her.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Angelstone's facilities in America's capital are actually *two* facilities. Located in Washington proper is an administrative office that occupies two stories of an office building. This is where Preston Angel IV and several other major corporate leaders have their offices; from here they work on obtaining new government contracts. Several miles away in northern Virginia, in a much less expensive office building, are the main offices where "the real work" gets done. About two-thirds of the researchers here are "think tank" personnel rather than laboratory scientists, but the building does have facilities where Angelstone develops technology (and can show or demonstrate it to government personnel if necessary).

MINOR OFFICES

Angelstone's minor offices are like microcosms of its larger ones. They tend to be relatively balanced between Applied Sciences and Research, though some tilt one way or another (the San Francisco office, for example, has more Applied Sciences resources). Their think tank work often tends to focus on local or state issues, rather than the national or international matters delved into



by researchers at the larger offices. Each of them is located well away from the well-developed city centers in more industrial areas where they occupy large, factory-like buildings suitable for laboratories and testing areas.

Sections And Divisions

Broadly speaking, Angelstone Laboratories' services fall into two categories: contractual and speculative. Most of its work is contractual, meaning that it's conducted according to the terms of a contract with an outside party (often the US government, but sometimes a corporation or wealthy private employer). It works on or researches whatever the person or entity contracting its services wants it to, whether that's preparing a report on Dr. Destroyer's impact on the European economy, an analysis of potential security issues in sub-Saharan Africa, a scientific study of the effects of kelvarite on human tissue, or efforts to create improved targeting software for Air Force jets. In other cases Angelstone does work "on spec," hoping to attract enough paying customers to make the work pay for itself. Typically spec projects are seminars that interested persons pay a steep fee to attend, such as "Russian Security 2007: The Effects of Superhumanity on the Stability of the Former Soviet Union" or "Technology Trends: A Guide for Near-Future Investing and Venture Capital Allocation." But some spec projects involve technology. For example, a researcher who convinces the company he can build a better blaster rifle might get the go-ahead and funding to do

the work. Once Angelstone has a working prototype in hand and can gauge production costs it can "pitch" the rifle to police and military organizations and drum up orders to fund the manufacturing process.

To provide these services with maximum efficiency (and profitability), Angelstone divides its workforce into two sections: Applied Sciences and Research. Within each section are several divisions focused on more specific fields of study.

APPLIED SCIENCES SECTION

The Applied Sciences Section is sometimes known within the company as "the old guard," since it's the core business of the company that it was originally founded to do: scientific and technological research and development. Even today its work largely involves defense contracting for the United States military (and some other allied militaries), though it does significantly more corporate/commercial work than it did in the Fifties through the Seventies.

The head of the Applied Research Section is Vice President Namesh Rajavade, Ph.D., a Harvard-trained biologist who also has a business degree from the London School of Economics. Now largely retired from laboratory work in favor of administrative duties he seems to enjoy more, Dr. Rajavade has an easygoing management style and tries to encourage the members of his Section to explore new ideas and seek important breakthroughs... even if that means spending some time running down blind alleys. The father of four, he enjoys playing golf during his off hours.

FEES AND CHARGES

As a for-profit business, Angelstone Laboratories charges a fee for its services. For contracted work the fee is settled in advance, typically according to a standard schedule used by Angelstone. For special or unique matters, the company ignores the schedule and negotiates a fee directly.

Typically Angelstone Laboratories does not charge a fee to superheroes who come to it for assistance — it values the good publicity it obtains for such work, and the contact with members of the Superhuman World, more than the money. However, there are limits to this. Providing free analysis of evidence from a crime scene, a free psychological profile of Herculan, or a free copy of the company's latest briefing on Dr. Destroyer is one thing; extremely expensive requests are another. If a hero comes to Angelstone and asks it to design a new weapon for him, and the work costs tens of thousands (or even millions) of dollars, Angelstone will expect some sort of compensation (negotiated in advance, of course). It may not charge him nearly as much as it would charge the government or a corporation, but it has to at least recoup some of its expenses.

Some of the divisions within Applied Sciences include:

Applied Biology Division

Applied Biology used to be the smallest division of Applied Sciences, but over the past two decades, as biology has made new and amazing strides, it's grown and become a much more important part of the company. "AB" researchers focus on all aspects of the biological sciences, including genetics (some participated in the Human Genome Project), microbiology, and agricultural biology. As of 2007, some of the division's cutting-edge research projects involve attempts to create biological batteries and computer systems, efforts to cure some genetic-based diseases, and a long-term experiment designed to improve rice crop yields.

Applied Chemistry Division

While some say the field of Chemistry has been eclipsed by Physics and Biology, the scientists working in the Applied Chemistry Division disagree. They devote long hours and considerable brainpower to developing new chemicals, finding new applications for existing chemicals, and improving chemical manufacturing processes. The division is well-known in security circles for its work on non-lethal chemical weapons designed to incapacitate targets without lasting harm, and in environmental circles for developing technologies that decrease industrial pollution output.

Applied Physics Division

Despite the name "Applied" Physics, within the company the "AP" Division is considered to be something of a haven for theoreticians and dreamers. While it's true the division engages in more than its fair share of "blue sky" research projects that bear little (if any) practical fruit, it also does plenty of work that the company makes money from. Its studies of supertechnology have yielded some excellent results, and several of its scientists maintain close contact with scientifically-minded superhumans to exchange ideas.

Criminalistics Division

The Applied Sciences division that superhero PCs are most likely to have contact with is Criminalistics, which was established in the mid-Seventies after the VIPER incident. The Criminalistics Division functions partly as a private criminalistics laboratory that runs various tests (such as DNA "fingerprinting") for police agencies for a fee, and partly as a consulting service to assist with matters related to forensics. Superheroes who don't have expertise in this area often meet with Criminalistics Division scientists to have evidence analyzed for clues they (the heroes) can follow up on.

Superhuman Subsections

Within each division of Applied Sciences there's a "subsection" specifically devoted to exploring how that field relates to the Superhuman World. For example, the Superhuman Criminalistics Subsection compiles data on the trace evidence left by the use of superpowers, and the Superhuman Biology Subsection studies mutant genes and how to induce (or remove) superhuman powers.

RESEARCH SECTION

The Research Section grew organically as Angelstone evolved and realized it could make money offering additional services to its standard customer, the US government. It's basically a "think tank" that researches (a) whatever it's hired to research, and (b) subjects it thinks it can earn money on through books, seminars, and the like.

The head of the Applied Research Section is Vice President Martin Merriwether, Ph.D. (see below). Some of the section's divisions include:

Consumer And Corporate Affairs Division

The Consumer and Corporate Affairs Division, known throughout Angelstone simply as "C&C," tackles research projects for private commercial clients — other corporations, industry lobbying groups, and the like. Some Angelstone employees in other divisions tend to look down on C&C as being "too mercenary" or "using science for bad purposes," but C&C researchers have only to point to the company's quarterly earnings statements to show just how much they contribute to Angelstone's bottom line. Indeed, without C&C, Angelstone probably couldn't afford some of the "pure" science projects it undertakes.

Criminology Division

A close complement to the Criminalistics Division, Criminology researches the causes and nature of crime; it's particularly known for its work in the fields of transnational organized crime, domestic terrorism, and penology. Like Criminalistics it arose when Angelstone shifted its priorities after the VIPER incident. Some of its researchers are leading-edge theorists on crime phenomena, and many hold positions in the sociology departments of universities. Left-wing advocates have criticized the division and its reports for being too right-wing, though the scientists insist they're just reporting the facts and reaching the logical conclusions they dictate.

Leading the Criminology Division is Robert Maddox, Ph.D., an expert on juvenile crime. He's an often frustratingly curious and pedantic man who constantly asks his researchers "Why?" and "Where's the rest of the data you need to support this conclusion?" Some of them believe his niggling criticisms cause them to have to do twice as much work as they really need to; others think he's just the sort of rigorous overseer the division needs.

Domestic Affairs Studies Division

The least glamorous Research division after C&C, Domestic Affairs studies matters pertaining to American domestic policy and practice. It analyzes economic and demographic trends to make political predictions, evaluates the effects of specific government policies over time, and investigates American culture and society in all its wondrous diversity. Its members frequently testify before Congress about bills under consideration.

National Security Studies Division

The international counterpart to Domestic Affairs is National Security Studies, which explores the subjects of threats to United States security, the role of American military and intelligence in the modern world, international historical and economic developments of interest to policymakers, and the like. In the wake of 9/11 and the war in Iraq it's grown in size and importance; over the past half-decade it's issued a virtual blizzard of reports, white papers, and strategic documents. Nearly all of its researchers have some level of security clearance.

Peter Balducci, a former high-ranking employee of the Central Intelligence Agency, runs the NSS. Some people in the company suspect he still works for Langley... just not publicly.

Superhuman Studies Division

The Superhuman Studies Division researches aspects of the Superhuman World not covered by some other division of the section. Examples include the impact of superhuman combat on city infrastructure (or the insurance industry), how superheroes interact with the media, and the ramifications of corporate sponsorship of superheroes. In general its work reflects positively on superheroes, but it has done contracted research for the Institute for Human Advancement in the past, making some superheroes suspicious of it.

Resources

As a reasonably large and well-respected research corporation, Angelstone Laboratories possesses extensive resources. Aside from liquid assets and the buildings it owns, these fall into three categories:

INFORMATION

Angelstone's most important resource is the vast amount of information it collects, analyzes, and archives. Its overall corporate library is extensive, though in this day and age researchers tend to rely on computerized databases as much as on books and written reports. And Angelstone gives them plenty of access to such things; it subscribes to literally hundreds of database services ranging from the relatively mundane to the ultra-exclusive. Access to these sources is one of the "perks" that attracts many top-flight researchers to the company.

TECHNOLOGY

In the minds of the public (and even many government officials and superheroes), Angelstone Laboratories' primary business is researching and developing new technologies, and there's no denying it devotes a lot of money, time, and effort to that pursuit. As a result many of its facilities are filled with valuable technology: expensive com-

puter systems; various types of high-end manufacturing equipment; elaborate sensors; and of course all sorts of prototype and experimental devices that Angelstone scientists are working on. More than once some supervillain or criminal organization has targeted Angelstone to steal such things; it's thought that ARGENT keeps a close eye on what the company does.

INFLUENCE

Although it's often underestimated, even by company employees, Angelstone's influence in government circles is one of its most important resources. Many officials trust Angelstone and rely on the conclusions of its researchers when analyzing policy matters. Defense contractors know that for decades Angelstone has crafted cutting-edge military systems that got the job done. Angelstone personnel often testify on Capitol Hill, and Preston Angel IV is said to have the ears of several senators and congressmen.

(In game terms, if a character wants to buy Angelstone Laboratories as an organization Contact, Angelstone has "extremely useful Skills and resources" [+3 points], "access to major institutions" [+1 point], and "significant Contacts of its own" [+1 point].)

SECURITY

With so many trade secrets in its labs and classified documents on its researchers' desks, Angelstone Laboratories takes security seriously. Under the watchful eye of Chief of Security Patricia Klein (see below), a legion of security personnel is on duty night and day to protect the company's resources.

Anyone visiting an Angelstone facility is expected to sign in and out, and if appropriate his license tag number and other pertinent information are noted by personnel at the security desk. While on Angelstone premises he wears an electronic badge that's coded to let him into areas the company wants him to visit and keep him out of places he's not allowed to go. A central security computer can trace his movements based on where the badge goes.

At night, electronic security systems also help to protect Angelstone facilities (and in some sensitive areas they're used in the daytime as well). Typical examples include motion detectors, body heat detectors, window monitors, and closed-circuit TV cameras.

Angelstone guards usually wear a distinctive blue-grey uniform with the company's angel-wings-in-a-diamond logo prominently displayed. Most of the time their only weapons are Angelstone *Lightning Stick* tasers and Mechalene zip-ties (see pages 62-63). If they're expecting serious trouble they don body armor (DEF 6) and carry blaster rifles (Energy Blast 10d6).

Corporate Culture

In terms of corporate culture Angelstone Laboratories often feels as much like a college campus as it does a business. The atmosphere tends to be friendly and laid-back (at least compared to most corporations), though the scientists and researchers take their work seriously. Many of them put in long hours, even discussing aspects of their projects with colleagues during lunch. Some of them like to relieve the stress with elaborate practical jokes; there's something of a competition within the company to come up with the most clever (but non-disruptive) prank.

Of course, there are always a few people who don't fit into the general mold — after all, scientists and researchers can often be eccentric. Some Angelstone researchers are intensely competitive, refusing to let anyone but their superiors know what they're doing. Some espouse crackpot theories that would get them fired from most institutions, but they do enough money-making work to justify keeping them on. Some are so wrapped up in their work that they're anti-social. But for the most part the average Angelstone scientist is open, reasonably friendly, and highly interested in his work.

PERSONNEL

Angelstone employs a total of several hundred people among its various facilities. Some of the more prominent or important include:

Company Leaders

PRESTON ANGEL IV

6 STR	8 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
13 INT	13 EGO	13 PRE	8 COM
2 PD	2 ED	1 SPD	2 REC
16 END	15 STUN		

Abilities: Bureacratics 12-; Conversation 12-; CK: Manhattan 11-; CK: Washington, D.C. 8-; KS: Angelstone Projects 16-; KS: The Business World 11-; KS: General Science Trivia 8-; Persuasion 12-; PS: Play Golf 11-; PS: Sailing 11-; Trading 12-; Contacts (various, in the Business World and Washington, D.C., plus with American Avenger and FalconMan of the Capital Patrol); Money: Wealthy

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted: by various investors and governmental oversight bodies 8- (Watching)

Notes: Preston Angel IV is the third generation of the Angel family to run Angelstone Laboratories; he's both the President and the Chief Executive Officer. He currently owns 23% of Angelstone's stock outright, making him the company's largest single investor; other members of his family, including his three adult children, own another 10% and almost always sign their proxies over to him.

Unlike his grandfather and father, both of whom were interested in both the "science" and "business" aspects of the company, "Four" (as some company insiders call him) is pretty much just a businessman. Years of exposure to scientists have given him a better knowledge of scientific subjects than the man in the street, but he has no formal training in the subject and doesn't really miss it. The only part of Angelstone's work that really interests him are the reports prepared by the C&C division, many of which he reads cover to cover. He'd like to expand Angelstone Laboratories into other fields via investment in, or even purchase of, other businesses, but so far hasn't been able to convince the Board of Directors to risk that much capital.

Angel splits his time 60-40 between Angelstone's New York and Washington offices. He actually prefers Washington, where he spends much of his time meeting with and schmoozing various Department of Defense officials, congressmen, policymakers, and military personnel, but the company administration is too entrenched in the New York facility for him to escape it completely.

Characters who encounter Angel will find him to be affable but a little guarded, at least until he gets to know them. He tends to be a bit suspicious of anything he doesn't thoroughly understand or can't control, and superheroes are both

mysterious and uncontrollable. But that being said, he has nothing against them specifically, and recognizes the great good they do in society (not to mention the money his company earns by studying them). He's friends with two members of the Capital Patrol, the American Avenger and FalconMan, and has occasionally used that friendship to help some of his company's research projects.

Preston Angel IV is a dignified-looking white man in his early fifties. He's got brown hair that's slowly but surely going grey, a large, aquiline nose, and a strong jaw. He has no facial hair but wears glasses for nearsightedness. He dresses like the wealthy businessman he is and carries himself with an aura of respectability. He has three grown children, two sons and a daughter. One of his sons and his son-in-law both work for Angelstone; the other son is sort of the "black sheep" of the family, a bohemian artist who lives in a converted loft in San Francisco. During his leisure time he plays golf, sails his small yacht the *Enigma*, or devotes himself to one of his "reading projects" (his current one: read all the great Russian novels).



ALLEN JEFFERSON, PH.D.

8 STR	10 DEX	10 CON	8 BODY
13 INT	10 EGO	10 PRE	9 COM
3 PD	3 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
20 END	20 STUN		

Abilities: +10 Presence, Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks; Bureaucratics 8-; Computer Programming 8-; Criminology 8-; Forensic Medicine 14-; CK: Millennium City 11-; Paramedics 12-; Scientist (Biology 11-, Chemistry 11-, Criminology 14-, Dactyloscopy 11-, Fiber/Hair Analysis 11-, Firearms Ballistics 11-, Forensic Entomology 11-, Human Biology 12-, Medicine 11-; Serology 11-, Sociology 11-; Surgery 11-); Contacts (various, in the Scientific and Law Enforcement Worlds)

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Angelstone Laboratories 8- (Watching)

Notes: Allen Jefferson is one of Angelstone Laboratories' most skilled criminalists. He grew up poor in one of Detroit's less attractive neighborhoods and it seemed like he was already on a fast track to nowhere even as a child. But fortune in the form of a distant cousin with money and education smiled on him. Recognizing young Allen's natural intellect during a visit, the cousin arranged to pay for private schooling for him. Away from the streets and plunged into an intense academic environment, Allen thrived. He eventually graduated high school with honors, attended the University of Chicago, graduated it with honors and a degree in Biology, attended medical school there as well, and after med school got a job with the Chicago medical examiner.

Years spent performing autopsies and working with the police to solve crimes made Jefferson an expert on most facets of forensic pathology... but in time the work began to dull a little. It seemed like the same old thing day after day, with relatively few actual challenges. When he heard that Angelstone Laboratories was looking to hire more forensic pathologists, he jumped at the chance. Given his credentials Angelstone was quick to hire him.

Since joining Angelstone's Millennium City office, Jefferson has thrived. Being exposed to unusual cases (often ones involving superhumans) from around the country has re-awakened his interest in his work. It also made him realize that he was interested in crime from the other angle — its root causes and nature, not just its most unfortunate end results. In his spare time he attended Millennium City University, and after several years obtained a Master's degree in Criminology. Though most of his work still involves forensic pathology and related matters, he sometimes writes papers for the Research Section.

In person Jefferson comes across as intense and focused. He's not anti-social, but he tends to enjoy his work and related subjects more than interacting with other people. When dealing with PCs he's likely to be "all business," asking precise questions and offering the best opinions and infor-

OTHER EMPLOYEES

Some of Angelstone Laboratories' other employees include:

KAREN COHEN

A member of the Research Section in the New York office, Karen Cohen specializes in the study of vigilantism, both by superhumans and non-superhumans. Not being afraid to do research "in the field," she spends a lot of time in Millennium City, New York City, and Hudson City gathering evidence for her reports, which are typically marketed to police and security organizations. Overall she tends to be at least mildly against superheroes and vigilantes; she prefers that the police and democratically-elected officials ensure public safety. But her in-depth knowledge of the subject sometimes leads heroes to consult with her.

MATTHEW NORTON

If he were a little more quick-witted, a little more tactically oriented, and braver, Matthew Norton might have become a gadgeteer superhero. He's got that sort of mind for electronic devices — an intuitive understanding of how they work, how to change or improve them, and how to invent new ones that marks a gadgeteer. Angelstone usually puts him on the team for any major new technology-based R&D project, and superheroes who come to Angelstone for advice and assistance regarding some strange gadget they've acquired may soon find themselves handed off to him.

Norton is a black male in his late twenties, 5'9" tall and oddly skinny for

mation he can in a formal manner. He tends to be hard to impress and won't be cowed just because he's dealing with someone famous who could kill him with a casual swat.

Allen Jefferson is a black man in his mid-thirties with the build of someone who works out and plays team sports regularly. He has his hair cut fairly close to the skull and keeps his beard and moustache stylishly trimmed. He usually wears a white labcoat over typical men's officewear (slacks, shirt, tie); he keeps the labcoat impeccably clean. For fun he jogs, plays computer games, and practices judo (though not intensely enough to have any real combat skill at it).



PATRICIA KLEIN

13 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	12 BODY
10 INT	10 EGO	15 PRE	12 COM
6 PD	5 ED	3 SPD	6 REC
26 END	30 STUN		

Abilities: Martial Arts (Commando Training, Jeet Kune Do, Knifefighting); +1 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups; Running +1" (7" total); +1 with All Combat; +1 HTH; Breakfall 12-; Bribery 8-; Bureaucratics 8-; Combat Driving 8-; CK: New York City 11-; KS: Angelstone Security Procedures 14-; KS: Commando Training 11-; KS: Jeet Kune Do 11-; KS: Knifefighting 11-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-; KS: Supervillains 8-; Lockpicking 8-; Security Systems 12-; Stealth 12-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Martial Arts Weapons, Small Arms; Weaponsmith (Firearms) 8-

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Angelstone Laboratories 8- (Watching)

Notes: Patricia Klein grew up a tomboy, the only daughter in a family with five children. She constantly competed with her brothers, and often beat them. After graduating high school she joined the US Army. She served in the Army for over a dozen years, eventually becoming a specialist and trainer in hand-to-hand combat and knifefighting.

In 2001 Klein left the military and entered the private sector. She considered joining a police department or applying to the FBI, but being part of another quasi-military organization didn't really appeal to her, so she went into the security field as one of Angelstone's guards. Her intelligence, aptitude for the work, and skills marked her as something special, and she quickly rose through the ranks, becoming Chief of Corporate Security in 2005. It's not a place she ever expected to be (much less as much money as she ever expected to earn), but she enjoys it thoroughly.

Klein takes her job *very* seriously. She's something of a martinet, always insisting that everything be done "just so" and that her "troops" perform at maximum efficiency. This attitude doesn't make her many friends among her colleagues, but it gets results and that's all her employers really care about. She gets very "wound up" in her job, almost seeming to take any significant breach of security as a personal insult; she's working her way up to an ulcer from all the stress, and often takes antacid tablets.

Now in her late thirties, Patricia Klein is an attractive 5'10" tall white woman; she has shoulder-length blonde hair and blue eyes. She maintains her athletic-but-rounded-in-all-the-right-places figure by religiously exercising and practicing her martial arts for at least two hours a day. She prefers to wear a more military-style pantsuit patterned after the uniform her guards wear when she's on the job, but she often has to dress more formally to meet with company executives and other VIPs. She's single; most people in the company (incorrectly) believe that she's a lesbian.

MARTIN MERRIWETHER, PH.D.

6 STR	7 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
15 INT	10 EGO	10 PRE	8 COM
2 PD	2 ED	1 SPD	3 REC
16 END	15 STUN		

Abilities: Bureaucrats 8-; Computer Programming 8-; CK: Saigon 8-; Language: Vietnamese (basic conversation); Persuasion 11-; Scholar (History 12-, Military History 13-, US Enemy Military Vehicles And Equipment 14-, US Military History 13-, US Military Vehicles And Equipment 14-, Wargame Design And Theory 12-, Wargames And Boardgames 12-); Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance (4)

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Angelstone Laboratories 8- (Watching)

Notes: As a young man, Martin Merriwether didn't seem likely to amount to much. After high school he was drafted into the Navy and participated in the Vietnam War. When he was honorably discharged in 1972 he used government funding to go to college. He discovered that his experiences had given him an interest in history, particularly military history, so that's what he got his degree in. Lacking anything better to do, he went on to grad school, eventually earning a Ph.D. for a thesis analyzing the role of the Navy in the Vietnam conflict.

Merriwether spent almost two decades in the halls of academia, teaching at one school after another, "trading up" to more prestigious universities each time. But eventually he tired of teaching and took a job with Angelstone. There he could do more types of research than he could as a publish-or-perish academic *and* avoid the annoyance of having to teach students. He soon became a specialist at designing wargames and similar scenarios for the military. (Although he doesn't do much of this work anymore, he enjoys playing wargames, and has considered designing some for publication.) Eventually his experience and track record within the company got him bumped upstairs to management, and in 2004 he became the Vice President in charge of the Research Section.

Merriwether is mostly likely to have contact with the PCs if they are well-known and well-respected. When they come to Angelstone for help with a research project, their "celebrity status" is likely to get them sent straight in to see Merriwether. Years of dealing with prickly government bureaucrats and military men has made him friendly and diplomatic, so he won't react negatively to any but the strangest heroes (and even then will conceal his reaction as much as possible) and will do his best to accommodate their requests. He may also try to drum up their interest in a "pet project" he's had percolating in the back of his mind for a while — wargames to help police departments cope with supervillains.

Martin Merriwether is now approaching sixty, but is still fairly healthy and fit despite having become a bit pudgy over the years from good eating and too little exercise. His black hair is going grey. He dresses like a typical businessman,

but if he has to go into the labs for some reason he switches his suit jacket for a white labcoat. He does volunteer work for several charities that work with Vietnamese orphans, and tends to travel back to Vietnam at least once every couple of years.

MAX SIKES, PH.D.

8 STR	8 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
10 INT	10 EGO	8 PRE	8 COM
2 PD	2 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
16 END	16 STUN		

Abilities: Running -3"; Bureaucrats 8-; Gambling (Card Games) 8-; Scholar (African History 11-, African Politics 11-, Cold War History 11-, Espionage World 11-, Military History 11-, Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-, Stocks And Investing 11-; US Military Vehicles And Equipment 11-); Contacts (various in the US intelligence community); Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance (6); Money: Well Off

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Angelstone Laboratories 8- (Watching)

Notes: Max Sikes's planned military career was cut short in 1986 when a shipboard accident permanently injured his right leg, rendering him partially lame for life. With the help of a high-ranking family friend he transitioned into the Office of Naval Intelligence, becoming an analyst. The work proved to be intellectually stimulating and he did well at it. He briefly considered trying to go into field work, but realizing he didn't really have the background for it decided to focus on his scholarly work instead. Since he couldn't make much progress with just a Master's degree, he returned to school, attending Johns Hopkins University to obtain a Ph.D. in national security studies.

Sikes remained with ONI for a few more years, but eventually the financial pressures of raising a family forced him to look for better-paying private work. He landed at Angelstone Laboratories after a brief (but unpleasant) tenure at a competitor where he didn't quite "fit in." Angelstone was a much better work environment for him, and he's been one of the National Security Section's "stars" ever since. He's testified before Congress over half a dozen times on various matters pertaining to international relations and military power. He's become a specialist in African affairs, though he certainly doesn't limit himself to studying the Dark Continent.

Max Sikes is a forty-something white man who's mostly thin but has a slight gut due to age and drinking too much wine. He uses a cane to walk because of the injury to his leg. He prefers "business casual" clothes, though he changes to more leisurely garb when relaxing at home with his wife and two teenaged children. His main hobby is playing the stock market (he constantly tinkers with his investment portfolio), but he's recently become a devotee of poker and has gotten good enough to actually make some money in low-level tournaments.

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someone who consumes so much pizza, soda pop, and chips. He's usually pretty serious and focused about work, but has a slight tendency to "geek out" when talking about things that interest him, including electronics, computers, massive multiplayer online role-playing games, superheroes, Halle Berry, and cooking.

LUDMILA PETROVSKAYA

An immigrant from Russia, where she was a university professor, Dr. Petrovskaya is one of the world's foremost authorities on Dr. Destroyer. She's thoroughly studied all known information about him and reviewed the speculation, and as a result seems to have an excellent "handle" on him. Her reports and analyses have predicted several of his actions and helped the authorities to prepare for him (though her track record is by no means perfect — profiling ordinary criminals isn't exactly a precise science, and profiling megavillains like Destroyer is as much an art as it is a science). She's frequently consulted by governments and superteams concerned about the Destroyer threat. Angelstone Laboratories usually charges little or nothing for her work as a service to humanity.

WANDA WICHERLY

While most people think of it as a source of cutting-edge technology and a top-notch think tank, ultimately Angelstone Laboratories is a business and has to make money. Wanda Wicherly is Angelstone's Chief Financial Officer, which means it's her job to see

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that it does. Seemingly indefatigable, she puts in such long hours that she often has to call for a temp secretary so her regular one can go home. Most people in the company regard her as a sourpuss and a killjoy, since she seems intent on questioning the value of virtually everything that's not obviously very profitable — particularly the blue sky research projects so many of Angelstone's technologists hold near and dear.

REYNOLD

Angelstone's Millennium City facility has a maid service that comes in twice a week to give the place a thorough cleaning, but on a daily basis that job, as well as a host of other small "fix-it" type chores, is handled by an old black man named Reynold. No one outside of Human Resources seems to know his last name, but everyone likes him. He's always got a smile on his face and a kind word for everyone as he sweeps, mops, and repairs. Reynold is as much a fixture of the place as the precision lasers in the lab or the computer database systems in the library.

USING ANGELSTONE LABORATORIES

There are many ways you can use Angelstone Laboratories in your campaign. The main ones include:

HELPER TO HEROES

Not every superteam has a gadgeteer, science expert, or ace investigator among its ranks — and of course solo heroes can only have so many resources at hand. Angelstone Laboratories can help heroes cope with technology- or criminalistics-related issues they encounter (usually free of charge, as discussed above). Find a strange device in one of Mechanon's bases? Angelstone can research it and tell you what it does. Need to figure out a way for your energy blast to penetrate Lady Blue's force-field? Well, it just so happens one of Angelstone's labs has been working on an experimental beam enhancing device. Trying to track down a superpowered killer who dismembers his

victims and re-arranges their body parts into a grisly jigsaw puzzle? Angelstone's Criminalistics Division can help analyze the evidence and point the way to the villain.

FOIL FOR HEROES

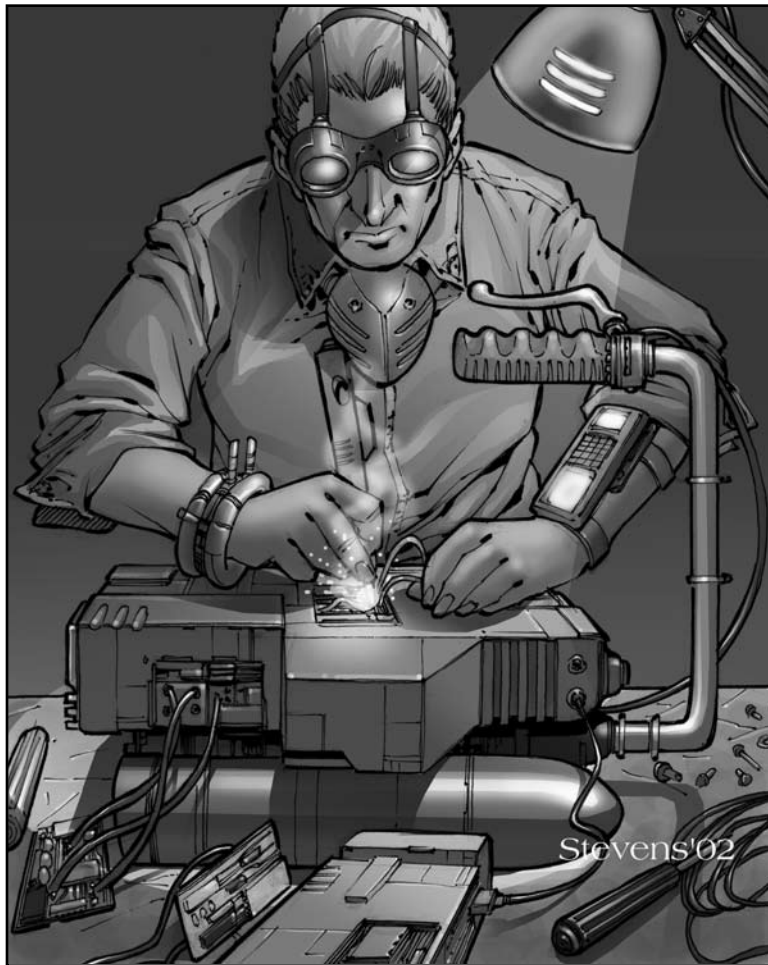
In some settings, Angelstone Laboratories might have more in common with the Institute for Human Advancement than the Goodman Institute. In this case the VIPER incident in the Seventies basically turned the company *against* superhumans, whom it sees as a threat. It's certainly not a villainous organization, but it won't help heroes, will help the police capture wanted heroes, generates a lot of research that reflects negatively on superhumans, and perhaps even indirectly lobbies Congress for more restrictions on superhumans. It wouldn't Hunt (Watch) heroes itself, but its assistance would make the IHA's job of doing so much, much easier.

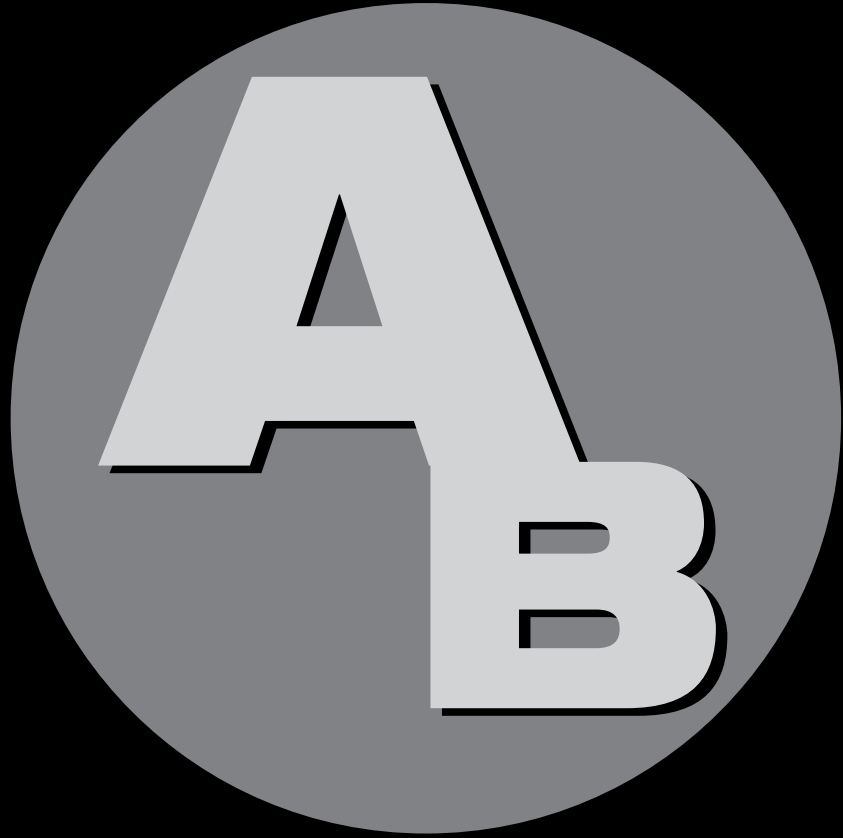
SUPER-EMPLOYER

Angelstone Laboratories could employ super-heroes for one reason or another. It wouldn't pay them money to fight crime, but it might pay them for accurate first-hand information about supervillains, to obtain rare materials or components for a device it's building, to help test a prototype invention, to donate DNA for research purposes, or the like.

ANGELSTONE INVESTIGATORS

You could even base an entire campaign around Angelstone Laboratories — specifically its Criminalistics Division. The PCs would be skilled crime investigators flown all around the country (and the world) to help the authorities analyze crime scenes and evidence (particularly from supercrimes and villains). Since the PCs are the heroes they'd probably get involved in other aspects of the investigation and even carry sidearms, though "realistically" a criminalist or forensic pathologist does most of his work in the lab.





**Bastion Alpha
Security**

BASTION ALPHA SECURITY



In a world where superhumans and supertech exist, many people try to use them (or exploit them) to create businesses and make money. Nowhere is this more apparent than with Bastion Alpha Security, a company whose motto — “Protection Beyond the Merely Human” — unhesitatingly advertises the fact that its guards are superhumanly strong, fast, and tough. But despite presenting itself as nothing more than a security firm in the United States, Bastion Alpha’s other main offices in Nairobi, Kenya and Tashkent, Uzbekistan make it clear what the company really is: a modern-day band of mercenaries, available for hire to anyone who can pay its fees.

HISTORY

Bastion Alpha Security was founded in 1995 by Anderson Powell, a mutant with powers of growth who briefly fought crime in the New York City area in the early Nineties using the superhero name “Titan.” A veteran of the US Marines, Powell became a superhero mainly because people who knew he had superpowers persuaded him to. As he stated in a 2002 interview in *SuperWorld Magazine*:

Powell: Being a superhero wasn’t really my idea. My mom and dad, they knew about my powers; so did a couple friends from high school and one guy I knew in the Marines. They all sort of *assumed* I was going to become a superhero — what else does someone with superpowers do? I guess that assumption sort of influenced what I did. I knew I oughtta do *something* with my powers, but I didn’t want to become the twenty-five foot-tall construction worker or whatever. So I put on a costume and a mask and I beat up bank robbers.

SuperWorld: But your heart wasn’t really in it?

Powell: To be honest — no. I’ve met a bunch of superheroes in my time, and a lotta ‘em, you know, they have this sort of “spark” — this heroic nature that makes them want to “do good” no matter what the cost. I never felt that way. I guess I was sort of guilty into it. All I could ever think was, there’s gotta be some way to use these powers to make big money. I sure didn’t want to become a supervillain, but I wanted to use my powers for me, not for other people.

In 1995, Powell finally hit on the idea that would make his name: running a security service. Who better to protect someone’s valuables or place of business than a genuine superhero? Scraping together what money he had, he founded Bastion Alpha Security.

Bastion Alpha’s first few years were lean. Powell worked long hours trying to build up the business, and while it experienced no significant failures it never had any major successes or got any major contracts, either. By 2001, Powell was beginning to despair... but then something changed.

In that year, Bastion Alpha Security introduced its now-famous slogan and showed the world a new corps of guards: muscular, cold-eyed, extremely competent men who demonstrated strength and speed in excess of what anyone but the most accomplished Olympic weightlifters possessed. To this day Powell remains completely silent on where he got these new guards, whom he called his “Gold Bastion,” and on the subject of the “Bastion Process” that creates them, but there’s no denying the effect they had on his business. The idea of being protected by guards augmented to superhuman power — even low superhuman power — was extremely appealing to many prospective employers. Besides the fact that the guards were obviously well-trained, advertising that “this facility has superhuman protection” was enough to scare off most would-be robbers.

Seemingly overnight Bastion Alpha’s fortunes changed. It went from being a third-tier (at best) player in the security game to a major name in the industry. By 2002 it had expanded significantly, opening offices in Millennium City, Vibora Bay, Chicago, and San Francisco. The year 2003 saw it go international, with London, Paris, and Nairobi offices, and in 2005 it opened its most recent office, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

GUARDS... OR MERCENARIES?

Despite its unquestionable success, in the past several years Bastion Alpha Security has come under increasing scrutiny from watchdog groups and even Interpol. Ever since it introduced its Gold Bastion guards (and in succeeding years Iron, Steel, and finally Questionite guards who were even tougher and stronger), unsubstantiated rumors have floated around the underworld, and at times leaked into the press, that Bastion Alpha recruits its guards with shady promises to make them superhuman without revealing the risks of pain and death that its augmentation process entails. Bastion Alpha uncatagorically denies these claims, but it has kept the specifics of its augmentation process totally secret, and so far its lawyers have fought off all attempts to make it reveal that information.

Of greater concern for some authorities are claims that Bastion Alpha Security “guards” abroad, particularly in the Nairobi and Tashkent offices, are not actually guards *per se* but highly-paid mercenaries who fight in brush wars, serve overlords, and even work for supervillains. While Bastion Alpha flatly denies any accusations that it’s been involved in assassinations or similar activities, it does admit that some of its international employers “seek services beyond basic security.” It’s supposedly an “open secret” in some circles that Bastion Alpha is a mercenary firm like its competitor Executive Control Solutions (see Chapter Three).

ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES

Bastion Alpha Security is organized along quasi-military lines — a not-surprising method for a company founded by a military veteran that recruits many military veterans as employees and offers paramilitary services to its clientele. Anderson Powell (still referred to as “Titan” by many employees, though usually not to his face) is the “commander in chief,” the man who has the final say in all important matters. He rarely leads his men in the field; these days he’s almost entirely an office-bound administrator.

Powell’s “second-in-command” is Jorge Orejuela Rodriguez, a tough-as-nails veteran of the Gulf War (and many smaller conflicts during a brief career as a field mercenary). Rodriguez travels to Bastion Alpha’s various offices frequently, bearing word from Powell.

Each of Bastion Alpha’s offices is headed by an employee who holds the rank of Commander: Dennis Wayne (New York City); Allen Kim (Millennium City); Greg Hardcastle (Chicago); Antonio Salcedo (Vibora Bay); Derek Cooper (San Francisco); Roger Harwood (London); Henri Darboux (Paris); Ken Lassiter (Nairobi); and Jason Frobisher (Tashkent). Although bound to obey orders from the home office (or Powell or Rodriguez individually), each of them has total authority over his men otherwise. All that Powell asks is that they make a profit and draw as little unwanted attention as possible. The latter responsibility is particularly important; Powell is well aware that Bastion Alpha’s success will quickly reverse itself if the authorities begin to scrutinize the company’s activities too closely.

Ranks

Bastion Alpha’s guards — “field agents,” as the company sometimes calls them — use a quasi-military ranking system. From highest to lowest, the ranks are: Major, Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, Corporal, Guard. Typically a new field agent starts with the rank of Guard and works his way up the ladder based on merit and experience. Bastion Alpha also gives preference to level of augmentation; if a Gold and a Steel guard are both up for the same promotion, the Steel guard gets it

almost every time. All promotions above the rank of Lieutenant require the approval of Anderson Powell himself — captains and majors usually command large groups of guards in the field and are in charge of operations for significant clients, so Powell wants to be as sure as he can of their loyalty and competence. Commanders, and of course Rodriguez and ultimately Powell himself, outrank majors.

OFFICES

Bastion Alpha’s main offices are in New York City: a corporate/administrative office in Manhattan where Powell works and meets with clients; a medical clinic, also in Manhattan, where Dr. Fortus performs his medical examinations and superhuman augmentation procedures; and a warehouse in Brooklyn where much of the company’s equipment is stored when not needed. Security on all three facilities, especially the clinic and warehouse, is *very* tight; the latter two in particular have the latest in supertech security systems and a round-the-clock rotation of a dozen Steel Bastion guards.

A couple hours outside the city, in a *very* secluded and well-protected area, Bastion Alpha Security has its primary training camp, known as Bastion Point. This is where it teaches its Basic and Advanced Security Training courses (see below). Arend Friedel, an intense, humorless man of German extraction, is camp commandant; even Anderson Powell seems a little nervous around him. It has lesser training camps out west, and also near its Nairobi and Tashkent offices.

Other Domestic Offices

The other domestic offices tend to be organized a little differently. Except for the one in Millennium City, which has two “branches” (an administrative office and a combined medical clinic/warehouse), they all occupy a single facility that serves as office space, medical rooms (if needed) and storage. Thus they tend to be located outside the city center proper in industrial parks and the like.

International Offices

Compared to the American facilities, the Bastion Alpha Security offices in London and Paris are simple affairs — basically just large, easily-accessible offices in those cities where company officials can meet with clients and recruiters can speak to prospective new field agents. On the other hand, the Nairobi and Tashkent “offices” are both large compounds with multiple simple but sturdy buildings. Nearly everyone, including clerical employees, has had at least Basic Security Training, and most carry sidearms (or have them within easy reach). Guards patrol the compounds at all hours of the day to keep them secure.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Unsurprisingly, Bastion Alpha Security has a very “macho” corporate culture. Strength, power, skill, toughness, victory at all costs, and other “male” values are paramount, and competitiveness reigns. The officers and employees are quick



to pull together against any outside threat — they have high morale and excellent camaraderie — but among themselves they compete in dozens of ways every day. On the job they struggle to see who can do the best work, work the longest hours, or complete the toughest chores, all the while trash-talking one another. They also get into long, loud debates about nearly everything under the sun. Some of these “discussions” are about work-related topics (such as which firearms are better for a given task), but many of them are just another way to have fun and establish who’s top dog (the great “Who’s hotter, Daphne from *Scooby Doo* or Josie from *Josie And The Pussycats*?” debate remains unresolved to this day). Sometimes the discussions morph into “quizzes” where a superior officer simultaneously challenges and teaches his men (for example, “OK, you’re pinned down by fire from at least two enemies, you have only four rounds of ammo, a smoke grenade, a pack of cigarettes, and two sticks of gum... what do you do?”).

The oneupsmanship continues into the guards’ leisure hours. When they’re off-duty they love to compete in sports and games, ranging from darts at the local bar to full-contact football on the rec fields at Bastion Point. The company’s annual boxing tournament draws employees from all over the world and comes with large cash prizes as well as bragging rights for the winners.

There are very few women who work for Bastion Alpha, and nearly all of them are clerical personnel; none are field agents. The male-oriented culture of the organization tends to discourage women from wanting to get close to it; most of the guards seem to regard women as weaklings, sex objects, and servants.

SERVICES

Bastion Alpha Security provides two basic types of services to its clients: straightforward security (guarding things, training guards, installing and monitoring security devices); and mercenary services in foreign venues. The latter services (often euphemistically described as “security problem consultation and direct-action solutions”) are not openly advertised in the United States or Europe; word about them circulates through the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World and in the pages of certain obscure trade journals.

SECURITY WORK

Bastion Alpha’s security services cover the gamut from guards, to alarms, to security training.

Guard Detail

Bastion Alpha broke into the security field as a provider of guards to businesses and transportation services, and this service remains the backbone of the company today. Whether a client is a major celebrity who needs two or three guards to accompany him to a club opening, a bank that wants to protect its shipments of cash and other valuables, or a company that wants an entire facility guarded 24 hours a day, Bastion Alpha can meet its needs.

The cost of hiring Bastion Alpha guards depends partly on their level of training (Basic or Advanced; see below), but mostly on their level of superhuman augmentation. There are five categories of augmentation: Bronze; Gold; Iron; Steel; and Questionite. (See Appendix One for more information.)

Bronze Bastion Guards: Bronze Bastion guards are the least augmented of the company's personnel, and thus the most affordable — a perfect choice for a client with some minor security concerns but no major worries. According to the company literature, each is roughly twice as strong and tough as a moderate human athlete.

Gold Bastion Guards: One step up from Bronze are the Gold Bastion guard, whom the company describes as being four times as strong as the average human male. Technically this is still within the range for “normal” humans, but it's so far beyond the norm that most people consider it “superhuman.”

Iron Bastion Guards: On the other hand, Iron Bastion guards definitely verge into the superhuman, with strength and speed eight times average. This is the most powerful type of Bastion Alpha guard most clients can afford; beyond this point Bastion Alpha's guard services get *expensive*.

Steel Bastion Guards: Steel Bastion guards are obviously superhuman; they got muscles no ordinary human could have even with the most intense training. Furthermore, company literature claims they are bulletproof to low-caliber, low-powered firearms.

Questionite Bastion Guards: The most powerful — and thus most expensive — guards available from Bastion Alpha are the Questionite Bastion field agents, who are strong enough to pick up cars and can definitely withstand at least some types of small arms fire. A squad of Questionites (or “Qs,” as they're sometimes known within the company) can take on a much larger group of ordinary soldiers and defeat them easily.

Security Systems

Although it's not the company's area of greatest expertise, Bastion Alpha Security does have teams of technicians who install, maintain, and monitor electronic security systems for clients. It touts its systems as being “as cutting-edge and powerful as our Bastion guards.”

Security Training

In the past few years, Bastion Alpha Security has earned a solid reputation as a trainer of other companies' security personnel. It has transformed parts of the Bastion Point facility in New York state to accommodate classes of up to 100 people who study security skills, some of Bastion Alpha's special security procedures, and similar subjects.

Bastion Alpha's training is divided into two courses: Basic and Advanced. The Advanced course is open only to personnel who have completed the Basic course. Bastion Alpha Basic training is an intensive one-month course that covers general security procedures, bodyguarding, weapons use, parachuting, small boats, hand-to-hand combat, and general fitness. Students live in dormitories at Bastion Point and eat at dining facilities there; basically they live and breathe security for four solid weeks.

BASTION ALPHA BASIC SECURITY TRAINING PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
3	Climbing
2	KS: Security Procedures 11-
10	Martial Arts (Commando Training; 10 points' worth of maneuvers)
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
2	PS: Security Guard 11-
3	Stealth
1	Tactics 8-
3	TF: Basic Parachuting, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
3	WF: Small Arms, Knives

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 29

Disadvantages

Value	Disadvantage
10	Distinctive Features: Style (see <i>The Ultimate Martial Artist</i>)

Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 10

The Advanced security course requires another two months. Its curriculum includes crisis driving, advanced hand-to-hand combat, more parachuting, some military-grade personal weapons use, basic SCUBA training, a thorough introduction to security systems and alarms, shadowing, and general combat training. Additionally, each student chooses one or more areas of “Security Specialization” for which he receives extensive training from an expert instructor in small classes so there's a lot of student-teacher interaction. Advanced Security Training is a tough, exhausting course, but those who make it through come out of it as highly-skilled, highly-employable security professionals.

All Bastion Alpha field agents have had at least Basic training; most have Advanced as well. The accompanying Package Deals describe both levels of training.

MERCENARY WORK

Bastion Alpha tries to paper over the fact with euphemisms and attempts to maintain a low profile, but the truth is that the company does outright mercenary work. Bastion Alpha field agents have fought alongside regular troops in various minor conflicts in Africa and Central Asia. In the right circumstances it would expand to other markets, such as Central/South America.

Despite some accusations in the press, Bastion Alpha has some restrictions on the sort of mercenary work it does. It won't engage in assassination work, spearhead assaults on targets, or the like. As a mercenary force it functions as a *support* organization, helping established militaries or revolutionary groups achieve their objectives. It doesn't do the work for them, it helps them do it themselves.

BASTION ALPHA ADVANCED SECURITY TRAINING PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
3	Combat Driving
6	Martial Arts (another 6 points' worth of Martial Maneuvers from Commando Training, or at the GM's option another style)
16	+2 with All Combat
1	Security Systems 8-
1	Shadowing 8-
2	TF: Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA
2	WF: Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/ Heavy Machine Guns
6	<i>Security Specialization Training</i> : 6 points' worth of Skills from the following list: Autofire Skills, Combat Piloting, Combat Skill Levels, Concealment, Cryptography, Demolitions, Electronics, Fast Draw, Interrogation, Martial Arts, Mechanics, Navigation, Paramedics, Persuasion, Security Systems, Shadowing, Skill Levels, Survival, Systems Operation, Tracking, Weapon Familiarity, Weaponsmith

Note: characters buy this Package Deal *in addition* to the Basic Bastion Alpha Training Package Deal. They cannot buy Bastion Alpha Advanced Security Training by itself.

Total Cost Of Additional Abilities: +37

Resources

Besides its highly-trained superhuman personnel, Bastion Alpha Security's main resource is its equipment. Over the years the company has acquired a large arsenal of gear, ranging from the equipment carried by field agents (see below) to a few old surplus Soviet tanks (for which it has no ammunition). It has a large fleet of vehicles, including used Humvees for transporting field agents in dangerous zones to about a dozen helicopters. For mercenary work it usually includes provisions in its contract that the employer must either provide vehicles and other necessary gear, or pay to replace/repair Bastion Alpha equipment the company uses.

Some of the gear carried by Bastion Alpha field agents includes:

BAS-12 ASSAULT RIFLE

Effect:	RKA 2d6, Autofire (5), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier
Target:	One character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	335"
Charges:	2 Clips of 30 Charges
Breakability:	15 DEF

Description: The standard Bastion Alpha-issued weapon is an assault rifle that's a modified version of the Colt M4A1 Carbine, and like the M4 fires 5.56mm ammunition. It's somewhat larger and heavier than that rifle to make it look more intimidating and to make it more difficult for non-augmented persons (*i.e.*, anyone who's not a Bastion Alpha guard) to use. It has a rail system to which various accessories (like a targeting scope, a laser sight, or a flashlight) can be attached. (See *Dark Champions* for more information on fire-arms accessories.)

Game Information: *RKA 2d6, Autofire (5 shots; +½), +1 Increased STUN Multiplier (+¼), 2 Clips of 30 Charges each (+½) (67 Active Points); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), STR Minimum (14, Does Not Add To Damage; -1), Two-Handed (-½) (17 Active Points) plus +1 OCV (5 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Two-Handed (-½) (total cost: 2 points) plus +1 versus Range Modifier (3 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Two-Handed (-½) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 20 points.*

Options:

1) BA-SMG: For jobs where discretion is more of a concern, Bastion Alpha personnel sometimes carry a submachine gun version of the BAS-12 that's chambered for 9mm ammunition. It's fairly easy to conceal under a trenchcoat or in many types of containers. Change to: *RKA 1d6+1, Autofire (5 shots; +½), 2 Clips of 30 Charges each (+½) (40 Active Points); OAF (-1), Beam (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), STR Minimum (14, Does Not Add To Damage; -1) (11 Active Points) plus +1 OCV (5 Active Points); OAF (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Two-Handed (-½) (total cost: 2 points). Total cost: 13 points.*

VARICOLOR SMOKE GRENADES

Effect:	Change Environment (-3 to Sight Group PER Rolls), Varying Effect (multiple colors of smoke)
Target:	4" radius
Duration:	1 Turn
Range:	RBS
Charges:	4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each
Breakability:	5 DEF

Description: Bastion Alpha's personnel use smoke grenades that incorporate a special chemical technology. By pressing a specific stud on the grenade before throwing it, the technology mixes certain dyes into the smoke so that it can be any one of five colors: black, white, red, blue, or green. Field agents are trained to use certain colors of smoke for specific purposes: black as general cover, white to call for help, and so on.

Game Information: *Change Environment 4" radius, -3 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Varying Effect (multiple colors of smoke, see text; +¼) (26 Active Points); OAF (-1), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (removed by strong winds or rain; -½). Total cost: 9 points.*

BASTION BODY ARMOR

Effect:	Armor (8 PD/8 ED), Activation Roll 14- (see text)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	8 DEF

Description: For situations where it expects significant danger, Bastion Alpha issues its personnel body armor that covers the chest (including neck), waist area, arms, legs, and feet (plus a helmet; see below). For circumstances requiring greater discretion it has less protective but also less obvious forms of armor.

Game Information: *Armor (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (see text; -½), Half Mass (-½). Total cost: 10 points.*

BASTION HELMET

Effect:	Armor (8 PD/8 ED), Activation Roll 8- (see text); Radio Perception/Transmission
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	8 DEF

Description: To go with their body armor, Bastion Alpha personnel also wear helmets. Built into the helmet is a radio for efficient person-to-person and intra-squad communications. The helmet can have a full faceplate attached, thus concealing the wearer's identity while protecting his face.

Game Information:

Cost Power

- 6 *Protective Helmet:* Armor (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 8- (see text; -2), Half Mass (-½)
- 6 *Helmet Radio:* Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group) (10 Active Points); OIF (-½), Affected As Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-¼)

Total cost: 12 points.

NIGHTRANGE BINOCULARS

Effect:	+6 versus the Range Modifier for Sight Group; Nightvision; Infrared Perception; Absolute Range Sense
Target/Area Affected:	Self
Duration:	Constant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	4 DEF

Description: These small but powerful binoculars incorporate nightsight and thermalvision technology and a laser rangefinder, giving the user an unparalleled capacity to see in the dark. The company is working on a version that will attach directly to the user's helmet, thus freeing up his hands.

Game Information: *+6 versus the Range Modifier for Sight Group (9 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 4 points) plus Nightvision (5 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 2 points) plus Infrared Perception (Sight Group) (5 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 2 points) plus Absolute Range Sense (3 Active Points); OAF (-1) (total cost: 1 point). Total cost: 9 points.*

PERSONNEL

Bastion Alpha has a payroll numbering in the hundreds worldwide, though only about half are qualified field agents; the rest are administrators, assistants, mechanics, logistics experts, and the other people needed to keep a hard-charging paramilitary organization on its feet. Some of the more prominent or important employees include:



ANDERSON “TITAN” POWELL

The founder, owner, and unquestioned leader of Bastion Alpha Security is Anderson Powell, still better known in the minds of many of the public as the former superhero Titan of the New York area. People who are inclined to view super-strong metahumans as dullards or lummoxes are in for a surprise if they encounter Powell; he’s articulate, witty, forceful, and reasonably well-read. He’s got a sharp enough head for business to keep his company on a sound footing, and a decisiveness that helps him take advantage of opportunities and exploit his enemies’ weaknesses.

Even when he turns off his Growth powers, Anderson Powell is still a huge man: seven feet tall with a build like a professional weighlifter. He’s white, with sandy blonde hair and no facial hair; his expression is usually serious, and can quickly turn cruel. When meeting with prospective clients he wears a men’s shirt, pants, and tie, but usually not a jacket. In the field he wears a standard Bastion Alpha uniform specially tailored to his size.

JORGE OREJUELA RODRIGUEZ

Anderson Powell’s second-in-command is a hard-bitten Hispanic man of Puerto Rican and Jamaican descent. Often tasked with carrying out Powell’s less-pleasant commands, he tackles tough jobs with relish and doesn’t hesitate to get rid of any obstacles in his way. He seems to particularly enjoy firing unacceptable field agents in ways that goad their pride, then beating them to a pulp when they can’t resist taking a swing at him. Aside from a few small quirks like that, he tends to be quiet and utterly efficient, especially when “backing up” Powell during important business meetings.

JASON FROBISHER

When Anderson Powell needed someone to become Commander of Bastion Alpha’s new Tashkent office, the obvious choice was Jason Frobisher. A Nebraskan who’d come to Millennium City hoping to break into broadcasting, Frobisher responded to a Bastion advertisement after he failed to get any sort of media job. He turned out to be a perfect candidate for the Steel level of the Bastion Process as well as psychologically suited to security work. Over the course of several years he rose steadily through the ranks, never failing to complete an assignment satisfactorily.

In person Frobisher affects a sort of light “good ol’ boy” attitude, but if you talk to him for any length of time it quickly becomes apparent that he’s got a sharp mind and is a cutthroat negotiator when it comes to settling on a contract with a client. He gets along well with most people until they give him reason not to, in which case he quickly turns cold, even hostile. He particularly enjoys the company of beautiful women and is something of a skirt-chaser.

Frobisher is a handsome white man in his early thirties with the crisp bearing and closely-cropped hair of a military veteran. He keeps his face clean-shaven, which makes the two-inch scar along his left jaw clearly visible. He typically wears a standard Bastion Alpha uniform. When he’s not busy working he relaxes with fishing, skiing, and reading military history.



TAWANDA CHARLES

In the male-dominated world of Bastion Alpha Security, it takes a strong woman to survive, much less thrive. Tawanda Charles is just such a woman. A self-described “tough broad” who grew up in some of the worst projects of Chicago, she escaped her background by joining the Army, where she was assigned to logistics and supply. After being dishonorably discharged for her involvement in a smuggling scheme, she drifted into the Mercenary World — there isn’t a force out there that couldn’t benefit from better logistics. Eventually Rodriguez heard about her good work and hired her.

Head Quartermaster Charles rules over Bastion Alpha’s warehouse in Brooklyn with an iron fist. She doesn’t tolerate backtalk, disobedience, laziness, or disrespect; anyone displaying such qualities earns himself a good tongue-lashing at best, and as often as not a few good smacks in the head. She has no formal fighting training but is a good gutter-fighter in case someone objects to her particular brand of leadership. Despite taking no lip from anyone else she’s quick to make suggestive comments and innuendo-laden statements to any man she finds even slightly attractive, and tends to enjoy anyone who can return her crude style of flattery with equal wit and descriptiveness.

Charles is a plump (some uncharitable people might say “fat”) black woman around forty years old. She wears military-style fatigues in the Bastion colors but not a standard Bastion uniform. She’s rarely without her clipboard full of shipping invoices and her PDA.



AREND FRIEDEL

Part of Bastion Alpha’s reputation rests on its ability to train people to be skilled security guards and soldiers, and ultimately responsibility for that instruction falls on the shoulders of Arend Friedel, the Commandant of Bastion Point. Well-known for his utter refusal to laugh, or even smile, Friedel is a scrawny-looking, balding European man in his fifties — but anyone who takes his appearance for weakness will soon learn that he didn’t come by his position by accident; his hand-to-hand combat abilities and other martial skills are top-notch. Aside from Anderson Powell, who hired him, no one in the company really knows anything about him. A couple people have snuck looks at his personnel file, only to find it virtually empty.

RUDY YOUNTS

One of Bastion Alpha’s most accomplished field officers, Rudy Younts holds the rank of captain and is a shoe-in for major the next time promotions come down. He’s a rare example of a Bastion Alpha guard who hasn’t undergone the Bastion Process at all. He’s a mutant himself with minor physical enhancements (somewhere between a Bronze and a Gold Bastion guard, roughly speaking) and enhanced senses. His sight, hearing, and smell are all far better than those of normal humans, and according to the stories his men tell he even possesses a bat-like radar and an uncanny ability to predict dangerous situations.





**Executive
Control
Solutions**

EXECUTIVE CONTROL SOLUTIONS



In a world where supervillains can pose a serious threat to a city, a nation, or even the entire world, many people aren't content to sit back and wait for superheroes to save them. They prefer to find ways to protect themselves and their property from supervillains, killer robots, and other superhuman perils. Executive Control Solutions, a mercenary and security firm founded by former UNTIL agents, specializes in hunting and combatting superhuman menaces using only ordinary human intelligence, toughness, and technological know-how.

HISTORY

In 1993, three UNTIL agents — Roger Summers of Great Britain, Janice Glenn of the United States, and Prawiro Leimena from Malaysia — found themselves at something of a crossroads. Close friends who'd served together for many years, they all enjoyed their work in general but were becoming increasingly discontented. They wanted to do something different, to break out of the ruts their lives had fallen into... but still use the logistical and paramilitary skills they'd worked so hard to learn and develop.

The rise of private international mercenary firms as part of the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World gave them an idea: why can't *we* do that? They resigned from UNTIL, moved to London, pooled their savings, and founded Executive Control Solutions, Inc. (today often known in mercenary circles as "ECS"). The company's stated goal and philosophy was "to provide responsible paramilitary solutions to national problems."

Unfortunately, sticking to that philosophy made things rough on the three business partners at first. It's easy enough to field a mercenary army if you're not picky about who you work for or what you do. But it's another thing entirely to try to restrict yourself to "responsible" activities for "legitimate" employers. ECS turned down many a job that its accountants would have preferred to see it take, and as a result it was soon in rocky financial shape. The strain proved too much for

the friendship; Glenn chose to leave the company. Summers and Leimena bought out her share, pushing them further toward financial collapse.

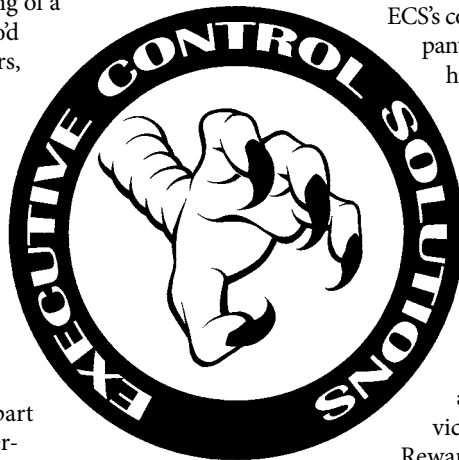
A highly successful operation in central Africa in 1998 brought the company some much-needed positive publicity and several hefty contracts, alleviating some of the immediate financial concerns. But ultimately that was just a bandage on the wound; without a way to drum up more business on a regular basis, Executive Control Solutions was eventually going to hit a dry spell from which it could not recover.

In 2002, inspiration struck. While helping the Colombian government to quell a particularly brutal faction of the FARC revolutionary group, Executive Control "advisors" (soldiers) got lucky and captured a supervillain who'd been working with them — an Argentinian supercriminal named *Acecharo Oscuro* ("Dark Stalker"). Since he wasn't covered by ECS's contract with Colombia, the company was free to turn him in for a hefty reward.

Summers and Leimena realized they were on to something. For years they'd used their experiences as UNTIL agents (and the fact that they often recruited other former UNTIL agents) as a "selling point" in their advertising. Why not take that one step further and begin focusing their services on the Superhuman World? Rewards offered for supervillains

often mounted into the millions, and the publicity for dealing with them was invaluable.

Slowly but surely the two partners began retooling the company to be less of a mercenary outfit and more of a "provider of anti-superhuman security" (and bounty hunting) organization. They brought about half their soldiers in from the field and put them through a special training course modeled after what they did at the UNTIL academy. They revamped the company uniform to make it look more like the outfits worn by the likes of UNTIL, PRIMUS, and various MARS units across the US. Most importantly, they designed new equipment for their troops to help them combat and capture superhuman opponents. In 2003, when they felt the company was ready, they began advertising their new services.



Response was immediate and enthusiastic; ECS had tapped into a hidden cultural vein. Lots of people didn't like being so dependent on super-heroes to save them from villains. They hated feeling helpless, or having to simply hope and pray that some costumed nutjob wouldn't fixate on them or their company and ruin their lives. The idea that they could hire a group of ordinary, well-trained, well-equipped humans to protect them had definite appeal. Soon ECS almost had more work than it could handle; it transferred more personnel in from the mercenary side of the company and in 2004-05 went on a major recruiting drive to swell its ranks. In 2005 Executive Control Solutions posted its largest profit to date.

The year 2005 wasn't all sunshine and roses, though. The United Nations sued the company in United States federal court claiming patent infringement. The lawsuit alleged that the equipment designed by ECS for its guards incorporated UNTIL technology that Summers and Leimena had learned about during their career with the Tribunal. ECS flatly denied the allegations, and after much wrangling the case was settled out of court in 2006. The terms of the settlement remain private.

Today Executive Control Solutions, Inc. has firmly established itself as one of the world's leading security organizations for companies and other clients that expect trouble from superpowered criminals. It's also earned a well-deserved reputation for "bounty hunting" wanted villains. With the steady hands of Summers and Leimena at the tiller, it seems likely that ECS will continue to succeed for many years to come.

ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES

Despite its prominence in certain circles, Executive Control Solutions is a relatively small company and thus has a simple organizational structure. At the top of the company pyramid are Roger Summers and Prawiro Leimena, the two remaining founders. Summers serves as CEO and President, while Leimena is the Chief Financial Officer and head of Human Resources. Although the company's become too big for them to oversee every little detail the way they did in the old days, they still try to remain as actively involved and "in the loop" as possible. Both of them travel frequently to the company's various offices (see below), though their home base is in New York City.

The next level of authority below Summers and Leimena are the heads of the various other major offices and important sections within the company (see below). These men and women are all experienced in the field; many are former soldiers, UNTIL or PRIMUS agents, or cops. As a sort of "corporate council" or informal board of directors they often provide useful advice to Summers and Leimena... but ultimately the final decisions are up to the two partners.

RANKS

Although each office head has his own staff of clerical and administrative personnel, some of whom have significant authority within their respective jurisdictions, the real power on the lower end of the ECS spectrum rests in the guards, who are organized and commanded according to ranks. During the early history of the company, ECS used a rank structure similar to the military: private, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, major. When Summers and Leimena revamped the company in 2002 they decided to change the table of organization to use more "civilian-friendly" designations that would put their security clients more at ease. From highest to lowest, the current ranks are:

Sector Commander (highest-ranking field officer in an office)

Field Commander (leads a "field team" of 2-4 platoons)

Detail Commander (commands a platoon of 3-5 squads)

Squad Commander (commands a squad of 3-5 guards)

Guard (the individual "soldiers")

(In game terms, Guard is a 1-point *Membership Perk*; each rank above guard costs +1 point per rank.)

Typically Executive Control Solutions doesn't need to use teams larger than one or two platoons, but for some major assignments or attempts to capture powerful villains field teams are necessary.

As Human Resources director, Prawiro Leimena sometimes shuffles guards around to meet current needs, but typically ECS assigns a guard to a given office for long periods of time so he can put down roots. However, Leimena also has to factor in public perception. ECS works hard to dispel any notion that it maintains a "private army" (though technically this is exactly what it does), so it doesn't want to have too many guards at one office at one time.

SECTIONS

Cutting across the regional jurisdictions of the various offices (see below) are the *sections* of the company, which handle particular types of work for the company. Section chiefs rank together with office heads in terms of authority. The primary sections include:

Investigation

Only a foolish man goes into a fight unprepared. One of the keys to Executive Control Solutions, Inc.'s success against superhuman criminals is its Investigation section, which consists of a group of skilled investigators at every major office. They serve two primary functions.

First, they help track down wanted villains so ECS knows where to send agents to capture them. They use a combination of their Streetwise abilities and general investigative skills to figure out where a villain's hiding out, and if possible who's with him or what other resources he has.

Second, the investigators study wanted supervillains to learn their powers, weaknesses, tactics, and habits. They compile this information into an overall database and various reports. Research and Development uses the data when designing weapons and gadgets to help the guards capture a villain, and the guards study them to learn how a target fights and what he's likely to do in a combat situation.

ECS's Chief of Investigation is Franklin Harris, a 20-year veteran detective with the Detroit and Millennium City police departments who retired from the force to take a better-paying job with Executive Control Solutions. He's known as much for his chain-smoking as he is for his bulldog tenacity when following a lead (though he doesn't do nearly as much "field work" as he used to, and privately confesses that he doesn't mind, since his back bothers him a lot these days). He works out of the Millennium City office most of the time, but occasionally flies to other offices to help with particularly thorny investigations.

Public Relations

The work that Executive Control Solutions does often earns it public praise, particularly when it collars some dangerous villain with a minimum of property destruction and injury. But it also earns the company condemnation from some commentators, who consider it a "private army beholden to no one" or "a force of vigilantes masquerading as would-be cops." Although ECS is strictly bound by laws governing security operations and bounty hunting, and does it best to follow those laws scrupulously, it still creates some negative impressions. The company's Public Relations department was created in part to dispel those negative images and if possible replace them with positive ones. PR personnel issue press releases stressing the positive aspects of ECS's work and the fine qualities of its guards. It often organizes company participation in charitable activities to put a more "personal" spin on ECS and erase the idea of "faceless masses of soldiers." Currently it's also trying to sell an ECS-based reality show pitch to various television networks.

Public Relations's other job is to advertise the company's services. Mostly it does this by buying ad space in corporate trade journals, publications catering to the wealthy and famous, and the like. In a few venues (particularly Millennium City and New York, both of which have significant supervillain problems) it does some television advertising.

Research And Development

Patent disputes with the United Nations aside, Executive Control Solutions has developed a well-deserved reputation for the quality and effectiveness of its equipment. Credit for that rests squarely on the shoulders of the Research and Development section, which has its main offices in Millennium City but "branch" workrooms, laboratories, and testing facilities at all of ECS's other major offices. Since the company lacks the budget and time to design, develop, and manufacture gadgets from the ground up, R&D personnel usually take

commercially-available systems and combine them with or adapt them to their own designs. Thus they create something new and effective that's a blend of the standard and the innovative. Their best-known work are the guards' sonic rifles, but they're also responsible for the metacuffs and other items in the standard guards' "kit." (See below for more information on ECS technology.)

Larry Parkinson is Chief of R&D. The polar opposite of a stereotypical tech-head, he's gregarious, athletic, extroverted, and an excellent conversationalist. Although he puts in long hours working on ECS gear, he manages to find time for a variety of hobbies including skiing, motorcycling, and painting.

Security Systems

Though it's a small part of ECS's business, as part of providing anti-supervillain security it does install security devices specially designed to counteract superpowers. Examples include "phase field" devices that make electric fences impassible via Desolidification or Teleportation, motion and heat sensors sensitive enough to detect Desolidified or Shrunk characters, and the like. ECS has these devices custom-designed for each job, usually contracting with Angelstone Laboratories to do the work.

OFFICES

Executive Control Solutions has offices in several major cities throughout the world.

New York City

When ECS shifted away from straightforward mercenary work to supervillain security, the company's "center of gravity" shifted from London to Manhattan. While London doesn't lack for supercrime, it's definitely the low man on that totem pole when compared to New York. With more and more emphasis being placed on American clients, New York soon supplanted London the company's most important office.

In addition to a small, elegantly-appointed office on the 34th story of a midtown Manhattan skyscraper where Summers and Leimena can meet with current or prospective clients, Executive Control Solutions owns a warehouse in New Jersey where it stores gear and does weapons testing. This facility isn't as large as some people expect since ECS tends to keep a lot of its vehicles and other equipment distributed among its main offices. But it's still important enough for the company to keep heavy guard over.

Millennium City

Almost equal in importance to New York, the Millennium City office has been one of the company's most active in the past several years. With superhuman activity so prominent in the City of the Future, businesses both large and small often feel the need for some sort of protection other than an insurance policy... and that's where Executive Control Solutions comes in. The company's familiar talon-in-a-circle logo appears often in the streets on the vans that carry guards from one job to another.

The Millennium City office suffered a tragedy in December 2006 when its director, Gerald “Jerry” Robinson, died of complications from an injury suffered during the company’s (ultimately successful) attempt to collect a bounty on the supervillain Fenris. The new director, Eli Rousseau, was brought in from the Geneva office and is still regarded as something of an “outsider” by the local guards. He’s slowly but surely earning the locals’ respect, but it will take time.

San Francisco

Although ECS has a small office in Los Angeles, its main West Coast operation is based in the Bay Area., where it stations several platoons of guards and the support staff needed to keep them functioning at peak efficiency. Besides the San Francisco region itself, the office’s jurisdiction covers an north into Oregon and Washington and east into Nevada... though of course the further ECS guards have to travel, the more expensive their services become.

The head of the San Francisco office is Maria Patel, who’s the company’s foremost authority on mystic- and occult-oriented superhumans and paranormal activity. She frequently flies to Vibora Bay or other cities to develop special security packages for clients concerned about arcane problems... though even the best preparation and weaponry may not matter much against the unpredictability of magic.

International Offices

Executive Control Solutions also maintains four international offices in London, Cairo, New Delhi, and Tokyo.

London was the site of the company’s very first office and is still its headquarters on paper (though the *de facto* HQ is New York). Today it handles super-security throughout Europe and also serves as a recruitment office for the mercenary side of the business.

The **Cairo** office handles all of Africa, which means it’s the one office that’s still focused on mercenary work instead of protection against superhumans. Compared to the other offices it’s a kind of run-down, ramshackle affair, filled with hard, competent men who know a lot about the worst mankind has to offer.

The **New Delhi** office was originally started to handle mercenary work in Central Asia, but it’s also well-placed to offer ECS’s super-security services to the burgeoning industries of India. With an active (and often, by Western standards, bizarre) superhuman community, India offers plenty of challenges for a firm that protects people from villains.

The youngest of ECS’s main offices, **Tokyo** opened in 2005 when a botched handling of a supervillain bank robbery by the local police created a business opportunity for ECS. It’s been phenomenally successful to date, not only adding lots of money to the company’s bottom line but inspiring fans among the Japanese; there’s even an officially-sanctioned manga (Japanese comic book) about ECS that tells fictional stories of the company’s exploits.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Unsurprisingly for a company founded by UNTIL veterans, Executive Control Solutions prides itself on professionalism, efficiency, and strength in the service of its clients against superhuman menaces. While it’s true that some ECS guards have a chip on their shoulders about supervillains and like feeling big and tough when they defeat them, most work for the company because they genuinely want to help people and find the challenge of facing down superhuman adversaries exciting.

Summers and Leimena are both big believers in presentation and image, and they try to instill the same concern for these matters in their employees. While ultimately getting the job done is all that matters, getting it done with courtesy, aplomb, and discipline impresses people even more. ECS expects its employees to look and act their best on the job, thus projecting an aura of professional competence and respectability in addition to strength and power. Compared to outfits like Bastion Alpha Security they sometimes look a little *too* dapper, but ECS caters to a clientele that prefers a little finesse and panache. What works in the jungles of South America doesn’t cut the mustard when applying for a position guarding the factories of a Fortune 500 company from the likes of Grond.



RECRUITING

Executive Control Solutions doesn't have the resources for or interest in extensive security training programs, so it recruits guards who've already been trained by some other organization: military veterans; former UNTIL and PRIMUS agents; ex-police officers; and the like. Applicants have to provide detailed information about their backgrounds and pass several mental and physical tests designed to gauge their general fitness, observational skills, and aptitude for the sort of security work ECS does. (Prospective employees interested in mercenary work undergo a different series of tests at the Cairo office.)

After accepting an offer of employment, a new ECS guard attends a week-long course that introduces him to the company's technology, tactics, methods, and practices. This includes basic study of likely superhuman adversaries; thereafter agents get weekly (or sometimes daily) briefings on supervillains. The accompanying Package Deal describes Executive Control Solutions training; see Appendix Two for a full character sheet for a typical ECS guard.

SERVICES

The services offered by Executive Control Solutions, Inc. to its clients, or that it performs on its own, generally fall into four categories: security; bodyguarding; bounty hunting; and mercenary work.

SECURITY SERVICES

First and foremost these days, Executive Control Solutions is a provider of security services — in other words, security guards. But not just *any* guards. These guards are specially trained

ECS TRAINING PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
6	+2 DEX
4	+2 CON
2	+2 PD
2	+2 ED
8	+1 SPD
2	KS: ECS Practices And Procedures 11-
2	KS: Supervillains 11-
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
2	PS: Bounty Hunter 11-
2	PS: Security Guard 11-
1	Tactics 8-
1	Fringe Benefit: Membership: ECS Guard

Total Cost Of Package Abilities And Equipment: 34

Disadvantages

Value	Disadvantage
5	Distinctive Features: ECS Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 25

and equipped to fend off supervillains and similar menaces, whether that's an attack by Holocaust on a client's office, a rampaging slime-beast that threatens to destroy a client's factory, or a VIPER assault on a client's R&D lab. And of course they can cope with mundane threats as well.

ECS's main goal when confronting a superhuman threat is containment and delay. While a group of guards can defeat some supervillains, others are generally beyond them. In that case the guards basically stall for time until superheroes and/or the authorities can arrive. All guards at a security site have contact information for the local superheroes and police programmed into their helmet communications systems for near-instant dialing.

BODYGUARDING

Closely related to static security work is bodyguarding. Many famous, wealthy, or controversial people fear being attacked or kidnapped by supervillains or the likes of VIPER. Costumed nutjobs (such as Foxbat) and extremist whackos (like Thorn) seem particularly prone to engage in such activities, and their attacks often aren't easy to predict. To protect these clients, Executive Control Solutions provides round-the-clock bodyguards. Although not usually as well-equipped or armored as standard security personnel, ECS bodyguards offer clients a measure of comfort and protection they can obtain nowhere else.

BOUNTY HUNTING

Executive Control Solutions was originally inspired to refocus its business on anti-supervillain activities when it earned a generous bounty from capturing a South American superhero, and bounty hunting has remained part of its income stream ever since. Pursuing wanted supervillains for their rewards isn't exactly safe work, so teams assigned to it have to appreciate a challenge! They also have to keep a cool head under pressure, because bounty hunting is difficult, strictly-regulated work, not an occupation for hotheads or the triggerhappy. To motivate its bounty hunting personnel to be careful, ECS offers the team a bonus consisting of a percentage of the bounty split evenly among all members... provided that no team member gets injured or runs afoul of the law.

MERCENARY WORK

Summers, Glenn, and Leimena originally founded Executive Control Solutions as an "ethical" mercenary company, and the company remains active in that field today — but not nearly to the same extent it was before 2002. Since it now has limited resources to devote to this work, ECS is even more selective than ever about the clients it takes on. It prefers legitimate, respected governments who need assistance training military personnel, putting down violent insurgencies, or the like. It rarely gets involved with revolutionary groups unless they're clearly on the side of the angels.

Resources

In addition to its various warehouses, compounds, and offices, Executive Control Solutions owns a fleet of vehicles — vans to transport guards around town, SUVs and other rugged vehicles for use in the field, even a few helicopters and small planes. But the company is best known for its specially-designed weapons and other personal gear. While some of the weapons do pack a considerable punch when that's needed, for the most part ECS prefers to focus on incapacitation and restraint rather than causing harm.

ECS SONIC RIFLE

Effect: Energy Blast 9d6; RKA 2d6+1; Drain DEX 3d6
Target: One character/One Character/1" Radius
Duration: Instant
Range: 225"/175"/225"
Charges: 2 clips of 30 Charges each for entire Multipower

Breakability: 18 DEF

Description: The main weapon for Executive Control Solutions guards is the ECS Sonic Rifle, which can emit focused beams of sound powerful enough to stun or seriously injure a target. By changing the setting the user can widen the beam enough so that it doesn't cause harm but does interfere with the inner ear, robbing the target of his balance and deftness. When facing tough foes, guards often team up to combine Sonic Vertigo fire on a single target; it doesn't take much to make even the strongest foes so dizzy they can't walk.

Game Information:

Cost Power

- 45 *ECS Sonic Rifle:* Multipower, 60-point reserve, 2 clips of 30 Charges each for entire Multipower (+½); all OAF (-1)
 2u 1) *Sonic Blast:* Energy Blast 9d6; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼)
 1u 2) *Sonic Liquification:* RKA 2d6+1; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼)
 3u 3) *Sonic Vertigo:* Drain DEX 3d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½), Ranged (+½); OAF (-1)

Total cost: 51 points.

Options:

1) **ECS Sonic Pistol:** Personnel assigned to body-guard duty usually can't carry a rifle. They rely on this pistol-sized sonic weapon instead, typically carrying it in a shoulder holster. Change to:

Cost Power

- 25 *ECS Sonic Pistol:* Multipower, 40-point reserve, 30 Charges for entire Multipower (+¼); all OAF (-1)
 2u 1) *Sonic Blast:* Energy Blast 8d6; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼)
 1u 2) *Sonic Liquification:* RKA 1½d6; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼)
 1u 3) *Sonic Vertigo:* Drain DEX 2d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1)

Total cost: 29 points.

MTS WEAKENER RIFLE

Effect: Drain 4d6, any one Characteristic at a time
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: 50"
Charges: 16 Charges
Breakability: 16 DEF

Description: The MTS (Metabolism-Targeting Soporific) Weakener Rifle is designed to hinder, and ultimately bring down without lasting harm, even the toughest targets. It fires a mini-missile-like dart. Before firing the shooter uses a selector switch to determine what type of drug the dart contains; the rifle instantly fills the dart with the proper mixture of chemicals. When the dart hits the target it simultaneously injects the drug and creates a small cloud of atomized drug around him, thus hitting him with a powerful double dose. Typically ECS guards favor the Drain STR, Drain SPD, and Drain STUN drugs, but the weapon's versatility gives them options against nearly any foe.

Game Information: *Drain 4d6, any one Characteristic at a time (+¼), Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Minute; +¼), Limited Range (50"; +¼) (80 Active Points); OAF (-1), 16 Charges (-0). Total cost: 35 points.*

ECS FLASHBANG GRENADES

Effect: Sight and Hearing Group Flash 8d6
Target: 1" Radius
Duration: Instant
Range: RBS
Charges: 4 Charges
Breakability: 14 DEF

Description: Guards on either security or body-guarding duties usually carry four of these miniature grenades, which combine an ultra-bright flash of light with an intense thunderclap of sound to disorient and blind the foe. Guards train to use their Flashbangs intelligently — one after another to keep targets helpless, not all at once (which would waste most of the effect).

Game Information: *Sight and Hearing Group Flash 8d6, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½) (67 Active Points); OAF (-1), Can Be Missile Deflected (-¼), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 19 points.*

ECS GLUE GRENADES

Effect:	Entangle 6d6, 0 DEF
Target:	Explosion
Duration:	Instant
Range:	RBS
Charges:	4 Charges
Breakability:	18 DEF

Description: Another of ECS's useful restraint devices, the Glue Grenade covers a wide area with sticky mucilage that traps and restrains people. Guards have to be careful when they use it, though, since they can easily trap themselves or their colleagues.

Game Information: *Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF, Explosion (+½) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), No DEF (-1½), Can Be Missile Deflected (-¼), Range Based On STR (-¼), 4 Charges (-1). Total cost: 17 points.*

METACUFFS

Effect:	Entangle 4-8d6, 8-16 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks
Target:	Self
Duration:	Instant
Range:	No Range
Charges:	1 Recoverable Charge
Breakability:	8-16 DEF

Description: After they've incapacitated a target, ECS guards restrain him using their MetaCuffs, a special type of handcuff invented by R&D. Made of case-hardened titanium steel with a questionite ribbing, and in the case of Mark III also containing an internal reinforcing force-field, they can hold even the strongest foes.

All ECS guards carry a set of Mark I MetaCuffs when in the field; they're not much larger or more obtrusive than standard handcuffs. The Marks II and III are too large and bulky to carry comfortably; if ECS thinks they might be needed, it keeps them nearby (in, say, a store-room, locker, or van).

Game Information:**Cost Power**

- 14 *MetaCuff, Mk. I:* Entangle 4d6 (standard effect: 4 BODY), 8 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+½) (90 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), Set Effect (hands only; -1), Does Not Prevent Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), No Range (-½), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (-1¼)
- 21 *MetaCuff, Mk. II:* As Mark I, but Entangle 6d6 (standard effect: 6 BODY), 12 DEF (135 Active Points)
- 28 *MetaCuff, Mk. III:* As Mark I, but Entangle 8d6 (standard effect: 6 BODY), 16 DEF (180 Active Points)

ECS BODY ARMOR

Effect:	Armor (8 PD/8 ED), Activation Roll 14- (see text)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	8 DEF

Description: Executive Control Solutions wants to keep its people safe, and one way it does that is to issue them protective body armor. The R&D section is currently researching force-field technology in the hopes of improving agents' survivability even further.

Game Information: *Armor (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (covers all but head and hands; -½), Half Mass (-½). Total cost: 10 points.*

ECS HELMET

Effect:	Armor (8 PD/8 ED), Activation Roll 8- (see text); HRRP; Sight and Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	8 DEF

Description: The ECS helmet provides more than just protection against head injuries. It has a tiny viewscreen over the left eye that can display communications data or show what the camera on the other side does; this feature also protects the wearer's vision by shielding one of his eyes from Flash attacks. The helmet also includes a microphone arm that holds a mike in front of the wearer's mouth; R&D is experimenting with smaller mikes to reduce the chance of mouth injuries in combat.

Game Information:**Cost Power**

- 6 *Protective Helmet:* Armor (8 PD/8 ED) (24 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 8- (covers Hit Locations 3-5; -2), Half Mass (-½)
- 6 *Helmet Radio:* HRRP (Radio Group) (12 Active Points); OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
- 7 *Sight Protection:* Sight Group Flash Defense (10 points); OIF (-½)
- 7 *Hearing Protection:* Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points); OIF (-½)

Total cost: 26 points.

PERSONNEL

Although it's well-known for its high technology, at its heart Executive Control Solutions is really about people — courageous, skilled people who appreciate a challenging work environment and enjoy making a difference.

Company Leaders

ROGER SUMMERS

10 STR	10 DEX	10 CON	10 BODY
13 INT	10 EGO	15 PRE	12 COM
4 PD	4 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
20 END	20 STUN		

Abilities: Martial Arts: UNTIL Combat Training (16 points' worth of maneuvers); +1 with All Combat; Breakfall 8-; Bribery 8-; Bureaucratics 12-; Combat Driving 8-; KS: The Business World 8-; KS: History 11-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-; KS: Supervillains 12-; KS: UNTIL 8-; Languages: French, German (both basic conversation); Stealth 12-; Tactics 12-; WF: Small Arms; Well-Connected and Contacts (30 points' worth in UNTIL and the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World); Fringe Benefit: Membership (owner of ECS); Money (Well Off); Vehicle (customized Shelby AC Cobra)

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Watching); Rivalry: Professional (other security professionals)

Notes: A naturalized American born in Great Britain, Roger Summers joined UNTIL after finishing university (where he studied history, a subject he still enjoys). From 1977 until 1985 he was a field agent, mostly assigned to European offices; from 1985 until 1993 he held administrative positions — his eyesight worsened to the point where he wasn't qualified for combat duties. In the early Nineties he first got the idea to leave UNTIL and form a private mercenary company, and he persuaded his good friends Janice Glenn and Prawiro Leimena to join him.

Despite the fact that it was originally his idea, Summers was never entirely comfortable with running a mercenary army. When the idea of providing "super-security" came up during a meeting with Leimena and other company officers, Summers enthusiastically backed it. To ensure that it would happen he even took a reduction in salary so there'd be enough money to meet the expenses of retooling the company for its new focus. These days he's much happier in his job, and hopes to phase out the mercenary side of the company within a few years.

In person, Summers displays a quiet British reserve — he's all business, talks quietly but firmly, and rarely shows any strong emotion. Compared to his business partner Leimena he's practically a recluse, staying at the New York office and putting in long hours. He's not unfriendly or unpleasant — in fact, he can be quite charming when he wants to be — he just prefers his own company to the company of others most of the time.

During his time in UNTIL Summers came into contact with several superheroes. He admires heroes' courage and selflessness and tends to get along well with them. If a known hero came to him for help, he'd do what he could as long as it didn't involve serious risks to himself, his family, or his company.

Now in his early Fifties, Summers is starting to think about retiring so he can spend more time with his family. His wife, Elizabeth, is a New Yorker who runs a small high-end antiques store; they have two children (a daughter Elise, 16, and a son James, 14).

PRAWIRO LEIMENA

12 STR	12 DEX	12 CON	10 BODY
10 INT	10 EGO	13 PRE	12 COM
6 PD	6 ED	3 SPD	4 REC
24 END	25 STUN		

Abilities: Martial Arts: UNTIL Combat Training (20 points' worth of maneuvers), Jujutsu (8 points' worth of maneuvers), Kenjutsu (8 points' worth of maneuvers); +1 HTH; Breakfall 11-; Climbing 11-; Combat Driving 11-; KS: Japanese History, Culture, And Civilization 11-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; KS: UNTIL 8-; Languages: English (completely fluent), Japanese (basic conversation); Paramedics 11-; PS: Cooking 11-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, Helicopters, Small Planes; WF: Small Arms, Common Melee Weapons; Fringe Benefit: Membership (owner of ECS)

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: UNTIL 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Thrillseeker; Rivalry: Professional (other security professionals)

Notes: Prawiro Leimena grew up in one of the poorer sections of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Gifted with natural athletic talent and the brains to match, he did well enough in school to win a university scholarship. Eager to see more of the world after he graduated, he considered a diplomatic career but ultimately chose to join UNTIL because it was a more active, challenging career.

One of the first people Leimena met on the job was Roger Summers. Though they came from very different backgrounds they immediately hit it off and became close friends. Later their circle expanded to three with the addition of Janice Glenn. When Summers began to think about leaving UNTIL, he talked it over with his two friends and found out they felt the same. Leimena in particular was excited about the possibility of doing something new. While he enjoyed his work and believed in UNTIL's ideals, he felt a little too confined in the Tribunal and wanted to chart his own course more.

Since the founding of Executive Control Solutions, Leimena has been the optimistic "cheerleader" for the company. Even during the worst days he could still see good things ahead and kept everyone going. It still hurts him to this day that Glenn finally lost faith and left the company, but he's glad that her dark view of the company's future proved incorrect.

Leimena is the “hands-on” director of the company. He enjoys meeting with clients, traveling to the various offices around the world to handle important projects directly, and so on. Summers happily leaves such duties to him... and claims to be not at all jealous of Leimena’s string of beautiful girlfriends.

Compare to his quieter, more thoughtful partner Roger Summers, Leimena exudes energy and enthusiasm. He talks at a rapid pace, often digressing from his main topic, and sometimes seems to have trouble sitting still for long periods of time. (He rarely attends sporting or cultural events for this reason.) Open and outgoing, he seems intent on winning everyone — particularly prospective clients — over with his charm.

Despite being in his mid-forties, Leimena remains in excellent shape, partly thanks to his many active hobbies: rock climbing, martial arts, parachuting. He spends at least two hours a day exercising in some way. One of his more sedentary hobbies is his interest in Japanese history and culture; he spearheaded the establishment of ECS’s Tokyo office. He’s also an excellent amateur cook.

Prawiro Leimena is a Malaysian male in his early forties; he’s 5’8” tall with a whipcord-thin athletic build and a shock of black hair that he tries to keep nicely styled but which tends to get messed up easily.



KATIE SAKAMURA

13 STR	15 DEX	15 CON	13 BODY
13 INT	12 EGO	15 PRE	12 COM
5 PD	5 ED	3 SPD	6 REC
30 END	30 STUN		

Abilities: Martial Arts: Karate and Kung Fu (20 points’ worth of maneuvers); +2 with All Combat; Demolitions 12-; KS: ECS Practices And Procedures 11-; KS: Supervillains 14-; PS: Bodyguard 12-; PS: Bounty Hunter 11-; PS: Security Guard 12-; PS: Soldier 11-; Security Systems 8-; Stealth 12-; Tactics 12-; Teamwork 12-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Small Arms; Fringe Benefit: Membership (ECS Field Commander)

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: ECS 8- (Watching); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Born and raised in San Francisco, Katie Sakamura joined the Army after finishing college and specialized in Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). When her hitch was up she got a job on the bomb squad of the San Francisco Police Department, transferring to the Millennium City PD in 1999 when she followed her boyfriend at the time to the City of the Future. But in time she decided she wanted to do more. After a bitter breakup with her boyfriend, she applied to Executive Control Solutions to become a mercenary, but the company’s recruiters thought she’d be better at security work and persuaded her to try that instead.

It turned out they were right. Sakamura showed a flair for security duties and soon began to receive promotions. As of 2007 she’s one of the company’s field commanders in Millennium City, and the odds are good she’ll make sector commander when her boss leaves his job someday.

Although she’s usually inobtrusive and quiet, Sakamura has a natural gift for small-unit tactics and commanding people in crisis situations. She can shout loud enough to be heard across a battlefield without the need for radios if she has to, and her aggressive-but-clever “in your face” style of attacking the enemy always inspires her troops. She studies supervillains extensively and drills her men on how to counteract their powers. Her repeated requests for a “danger room”-style training facility have been turned down... but she’s going to keep asking until she gets it.

Katie Sakamura is a petite Asian woman about 30 years old; from her appearance you’d never guess that she’s an expert at kung fu and an experienced mercenary field commander. She wears a typical ECS uniform, but in Army green rather than dark grey so her troops can easily spot her. In addition to her sonic rifle she carries a matching sonic pistol.

Other Personnel

LUTHER “LOOT” ARONSKI

A guard assigned to the Millennium City office, Luther Aronski brings experience fighting in the Iraq War and serving as a cop on the MCPD to the job. Smart, tough, and even-tempered, he's risen to the position of detail commander. His vices include a taste for fine liquor and a tendency to hit on nearly every even semi-attractive single woman he meets. His nickname comes from his phenomenal luck at the weekly poker game.

RODNEY COCKBURN

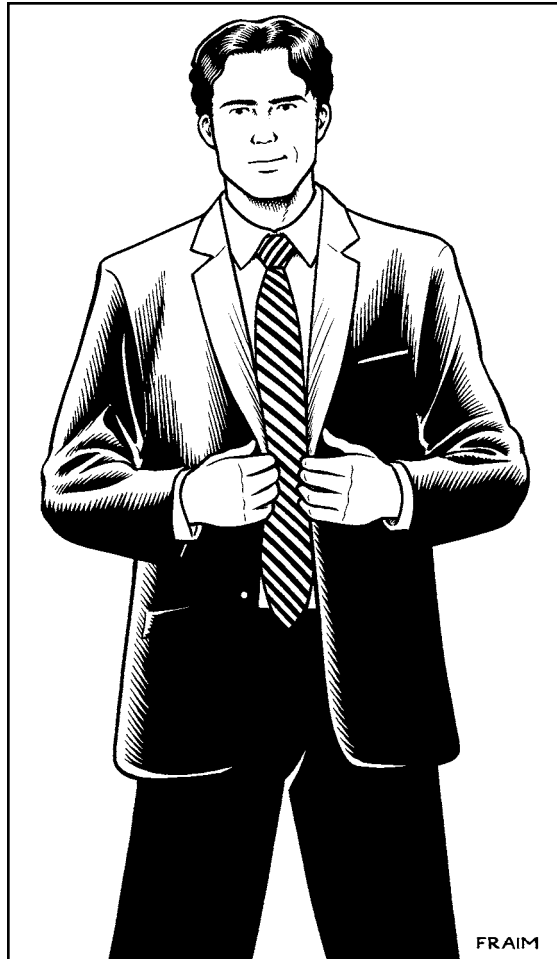
Executive Control Solutions depends on its investigators to help keep its bounty hunting business profitable, and no one in the Investigation section is as skilled or clever as Rodney Cockburn. He grew up on the hard streets of Harlem, but instead of becoming a “gangsta” like most of his contemporaries he got out and joined the New York Police Department. After attaining the rank of detective and working in that capacity for the NYPD for several years, he took a job with ECS because it offered a change of pace, challenging cases, and the opportunity to travel. He spends about two-thirds of his time in New York, and the rest helping out with thorny cases in other offices.

EVAN DRISCOLL

Evan Driscoll is one of ECS's guards who specializes in bodyguard work. He's become a favorite of several well-heeled clients who consider him a “good luck charm” because of his ability to steer clear of (or get them out of) troublesome situations. ECS is a little worried he might strike out on his own to start a competing bodyguarding company, so they're careful to keep him happy.

ARTHUR LEIGH

Arthur Leigh was once one of ECS's best mercenary commanders, but in 2004 he suffered a leg injury that left him with a permanent limp, thus rendering him unfit for combat service. Not being a person given to self-pity or laziness, Leigh got a transfer into R&D, where he put his knack for weaponry to work creating new designs and improvements for ECS gear. Although he lacks the formal training that most R&D technicians do, his natural flair for the work and his hands-on knowledge of what field personnel need make him an important member of the team. When he's not working his hobbies include fishing, target shooting, and attending Millennium City sports teams' games.



RICHIE VALENZUELA

Richie Valenzuela is the public face of ECS to many people. He's one of the company's customer service representatives — the people who try to drum up new business, who have preliminary meetings with clients to define their needs before passing them on to the higher-ups, and who maintain frequent contact with their “accounts” to ensure that everything ECS does is to their satisfaction.

A handsome, smiling thirtysomething of Puerto Rican descent, he's always impeccably dressed in the latest men's fashions. No matter how stressful, harried, or dangerous things get, he always looks calm and confident. Some people in the company think he's kind of a phony; others find him genuinely friendly and accept that he just has to be “on” all the time to do his job.

USING EXECUTIVE CONTROL SOLUTIONS, INC.

There are many ways you can use Executive Control Solutions, Inc. in your campaign. The main ones include:

ALLIES OF THE HEROES

If the PCs are respected heroes who get along well with the public, they might find themselves working with ECS from time to time to protect specific targets (typically corporations or government installations) from potential supervillain attack. In some campaigns ECS might expand its services to offer superpowered guards (though that deviates from its usual message of “you don’t need a superhuman — we can protect you without needing superpowers”). In that case the PCs might be company employees, with every game session involving some new protection or bounty hunting task for them to undertake.

ADVERSARIES OF THE HEROES

On the other hand, some groups of PCs are wanted by the law (either because the campaign outlaws all superheroes, they’ve done something illegal while crimefighting, have been framed for a crime, or are mistakenly thought of as supervillains). In that case ECS may have

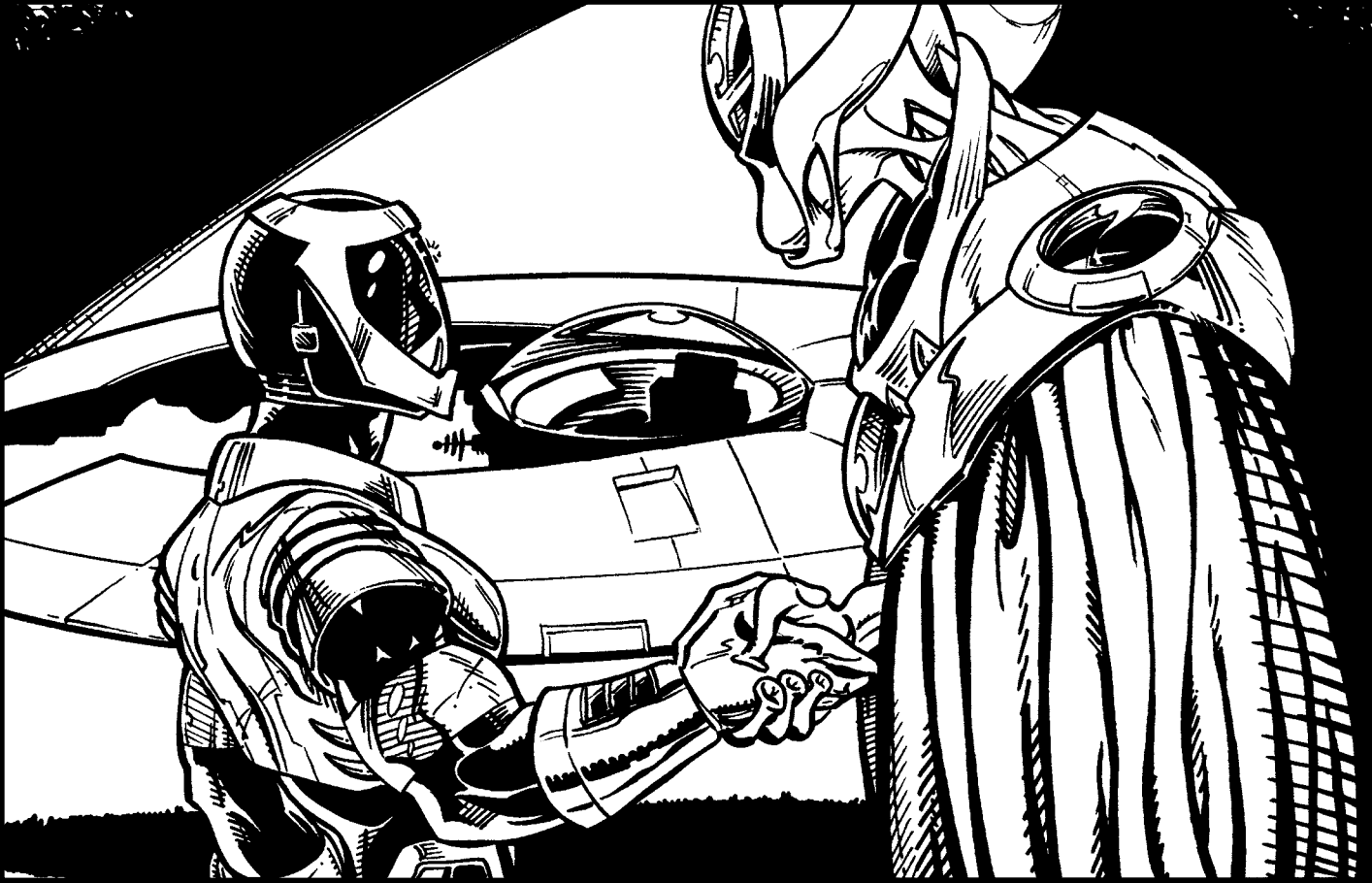
them on its bounty list. If they’re worth enough money ECS will task one or more platoons with the job of capturing them, and that platoon will develop special tactics and weapons to take them down.

INFORMATION RESOURCE

ECS keeps extensive files on supervillains to help it plan for attacks and prepare ways to counter a villain’s powers. There may be times when the PCs need information that only ECS possesses. Whether the company’s willing to work with them will depend on their reputation and what they offer in exchange. At the very least ECS is likely to want a “quid pro quo” in the form of equivalent information the company doesn’t already have.

BOUNTY HUNTING CAMPAIGN

Executive Control Solutions could be the focus of an entire campaign. In an ECS game, the PCs are guards/bounty hunters who have to use their skills, weapons, and wits to fight superhumans who are much more personally powerful than they are. Through in a generous helping of investigation and a tablespoon of social interaction and personal relationships among the team and other ECS employees, and you’ve got yourself a game!



The Exoplanetary Society

THE EXOPLANETARY SOCIETY



Mankind hasn't been quite the same since 1938, when it first learned of the existence of alien civilizations. Over the decades some people have been fascinated by aliens, some scared of them; some have fallen victim to periodic alien attempts to invade and conquer Earth, while countless others have been saved by alien superheroes now residing on Humanity's homeworld. The Exoplanetary Society is an organization that attempts to raise awareness of issues posed by the existence of alien life... particularly the dangers aliens may pose to Earth.

HISTORY

The first visit to Earth by the enigmatic Mandaarions in 1973 touched off a wave of interest in aliens and alien civilizations that's never fully subsided. Articles and books on the subject began to proliferate, though Humanity's sparse knowledge of galactic civilizations meant they were often at least half-filled with wild speculation and turgid predictions.

In 1974, a group of people interested in UFOs and alien life formed at a Boston bookstore owned by one of the members. About half of them were simply interested in the subject and wanted to talk about it with like-minded people; the rest claimed to have at some point encountered (or been abducted by) aliens at some point in the past. Every Wednesday night the bookstore's back room was filled with rollicking, nonstop conversation sometimes punctuated by arguments on subjects both profound and trivial.

At first the group had no name, but eventually someone christened it "the Exoplanetary Society." As more and more people found out about it, it grew. By 1976 it had spilled out to occupy the entire bookstore; by 1979 it outgrew the store and had to book meeting rooms at local venues.

The Exoplanetary Society lurched along under its own head of steam until 1982, when a couple named James and Deborah Dodds became members. The Dodds claimed to have been kidnapped and studied by a mysterious grey- or blue-skinned group of aliens in 1980. According to their story, the aliens said they were planning an invasion of Earth and needed to study samples of Humanity to best prepare their biological weapons. Somehow (their memories are foggy at best, and have not responded to hypnotherapy or other conventional treatments) the Dodds escaped the aliens. They were deeply con-

cerned about the threat the aliens posed to Earth and wanted to do something about it... but they hadn't been able to get the authorities to listen to them at all. The Exoplanetary Society was the first sympathetic group they'd found.

The Dodds brought something else to the Exoplanetary Society besides a convincing account of alien abduction: money. They weren't simple farmers or drifters, as alien abductees were so often depicted in the media. James Dodds owned a small manufacturing corporation, and his wife was a high-priced corporate attorney. Grateful for having found someone who listened to and believed them, they saw in the Exoplanetary Society the nucleus of an organization that could be a voice trumpeting the cause of Humanity against alien dangers. They founded the Exoplanetary Foundation to fund the Society's activities.

With Dodds money backing it, the Exoplanetary Society "went pro." It began a major advertising campaign to attract new members and raise awareness of alien-related issues. The Dodds themselves basically ran the organization until 1986, when it became too much work for them. They stepped back, keeping control of the Foundation and using its money to hire a full-time director and other staff.

Over the next decade the Exoplanetary Society continued its expansion, and in time had millions of names on its membership rolls and mailing lists. It had nice office space in Boston and smaller offices in some other major cities. It took another giant step forward in 1997 when Sean Clemens came in as director. A former academic, Clemens brought a level of intensity and creativity previous directors had lacked. With him at the helm, the Society upscaled its image, developing a reputation not just as an educational organization and watchdog group, but as an authoritative voice on All Things Alien and a lobbying group concerned about alien threats. In the past several years, Clemens and other high-ranking members of the Exoplanetary Society have testified before Congress several times. Major newspapers and other media outlets frequently quote or refer to the Society's press releases and research papers.

The Society suffered a blow in 2002 when James and Deborah Dodds vanished. Despite extensive investigation by the police, the FBI, and private investigators hired by the Society, no trace of them was ever found. They were last seen by a friend at approximately 6:00 PM on October 18 as they left to drive up to their vacation home on the Maine shore. They never made it to the house, and neither they nor their car has ever been found.



ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES

Compared to a corporation or a major international organization like the Red Cross, the Exoplanetary Society has a simple structure — fitting for a group mostly consisting of dues-paying “members” rather than employees. Basically it consists of two branches: the Society itself; and the closely-tied Exoplanetary Foundation that funds it.

THE SOCIETY

The Society has two major offices. The first is its headquarters in Boston, which occupies a simple but tasteful three-story building a few removes from downtown. It includes reception areas, meeting rooms, and a small auditorium on the first floor, and various offices and related facilities on the top. The best corner office on the third floor belongs to Sean Clemens.

The Exoplanetary’s “second headquarters” is its office in Washington, D.C. from which it conducts most of its lobbying and public awareness campaigns. Compared to the Boston office, it’s cramped and hectic; much to the disapproval of Lucia Wyzniewski, who runs it, many of the employees there have a tendency to goof off by challenging one another to “shooter” computer games.

The Exoplanetary Institute

The Society’s “office” in Chicago is the Exoplanetary Institute, its “school” and think tank for studying aliens, alien civilizations, UFOs, and related phenomena. Despite the somewhat “fringe”

nature of many of the subjects it studies, the Institute counts many respected academics among its fellows, and attracts many more every year with its seminars, library, and other resources. Aside from the government, it’s considered one of the most, if not *the* most, authoritative sources for information on alien life. Heroes needing to research a particular alien civilization might very well head to the Institute... though it’s likely the Institute will want to interview them (about their encounters with aliens, if human; about their people and civilization, if alien) in exchange.

Ursula Rice, formerly of the University of Wisconsin history department, is the Dean of the Institute. An attractive forty-something who’s one of Humanity’s experts on the Perseid civilization, she knows the Champions well and frequently interviews Ironclad about his people. Rumor-mongering publications like SuperRomance.Com speculate that there’s more to the relationship than that, but neither Dr. Rice nor Ironclad have commented on this.

Field And Satellite Offices

Besides its two headquarters, the Society has moderate-sized offices in major cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Seattle to coordinate regional activities. It refers to these as “field offices,” though they usually focus more on administrative matters and local education than field work. Tasks like visiting peoples’ houses to interview them, investigating crash sites, keeping watch for UFOs, and giving seminars in schools usually fall to the even smaller offices in other cities and towns — what the Society calls “satellite offices.”

Compared to the national and field offices, satellite offices are much more likely to be run by what Sean Clemens diplomatically refers to as the Society's "more marginal members." The Society largely functions on the strength of volunteer labor, and that means it can't always be too picky about who mans the satellite offices or does the thousand and one minor (but potentially very important) tasks it has to handle every day. Some satellite office leaders are nothing more than an interested person who works out of an "office" set up in what used to be a guest bedroom in his house. But despite their reputation, most satellite office leaders are genuinely interested in some or all facets of the Society's work and do their best to represent it and further its goals.

THE FOUNDATION

Based in a building less than a block's walk from the Society's headquarters in Boston, the Exoplanetary Foundation provides the funding that keeps the Society running. Foundation money, supplemented by income from membership dues and advertisements in Society publications, pays the salaries of Society employees, keeps the Society's libraries up to date, and covers printing costs. The Foundation also provides grant money for non-Society research projects and efforts that relate to the Society's interests and goals. For example, if a superhero wanted to write a book about his adventures among alien civilizations, the Exoplanetary Foundation might give him grant money to hire a ghost writer to help create the manuscript, plus a smaller grant to the Society to use its contacts to put the hero in touch with a publisher.

LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP

Aside from a small number of full- and part-time employees, the Exoplanetary Society consists of dues-paying members. Most members simply want to belong to the organization for some reason, but about one in five also does some sort of volunteer work on the Society's behalf — stuffing envelopes, monitoring the local area for signs of UFO activity, visiting schools to give presentations, and so forth.

The Society has four levels of membership. The basic, Bronze, level costs \$25 US in annual dues. Bronze members receive the Society's monthly magazine, *ExoWatch*. They also receive a membership decal and a 10% discount in the Society's gift shops (one online, one at the Institute).

The next level up, Silver, costs \$35 US per year. Silver members get all the benefits of Bronze membership, plus they receive invitations to special Society functions throughout the year. They also get a 10% discount on entrance and event tickets at *ExoCon*, the Society's annual convention held in the Chicago area every spring. Gold members, who pay \$50 a year, get invited to special banquets and seminars and have limited access to the Society's archives and library at the Institute. They get a 25% discount on entrance and event tickets at *ExoCon*.

The ultimate level of membership is Grey, which costs \$100 US per year. A Grey member has full access to the Society archives and library, gets a 50% discount at *ExoCon*, and gets invited to exclusive events open to no other level of membership.

(In game terms, the GM can let characters buy membership with Money, and/or can treat it as a *Membership Perk*: 1 Character Point for Bronze; 2 for Silver; 3 for Gold, and 4 for Grey. Most employees automatically receive Grey membership; higher-ranking employees pay for a 5-point *Membership Perk* to cover their additional powers and privileges.)

FUNCTIONS

Generally speaking, the Society has four roles: lobbying and public awareness campaigns regarding threats posed by aliens; collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data about aliens; monitoring alien activity on Earth; and education.

LOBBYING AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

First and foremost the Exoplanetary Society is an organization dedicated to studying and informing people (particularly government authorities) about the possible dangers posed to Earth and Humanity by aliens and alien civilizations. Most members are perfectly willing to concede that not all aliens are *per se* hostile or dangerous, and that some may in fact be beneficent or helpful. But the Society was founded largely because no one in government would take a possible alien threat seriously, and it continues to point out — often vociferously — all the potential perils and difficulties that aliens could cause Humans.

At the forefront of these efforts is the Society's lobbying apparatus, headed by Lucia Wyzniewski. Society lobbyists are up on Capitol Hill and in government offices every week, ceaselessly trying to open the eyes of the public's representatives to facts that suggest aliens are spying on Humanity, planning to invade Earth, accidentally (or intentionally) giving Humans cancer, or whatever other danger most concerns the Society at the time.

Despite all the time it spends on education, the Exoplanetary Society is best known to the general public in this role. Ask an American what he thinks the Exoplanetary Society does, and he's likely to answer, "Aren't they those guys up in DC always yelling about how aliens are on their way to kill us?"

STUDYING ALIENS

Many of the earliest members of the Exoplanetary Society were less concerned about alien threats than simply learning everything they could about those fascinating new races from outer space. To this day the Exoplanetary Society remains intensely curious about alien life, not just because knowledge helps them evaluate potential threats but for the sheer joy of learning something new and amazing. Thanks to the efforts of its resident scholars and thousands of dedicated volunteers over the years, the Society possesses one of the world's largest and most complete libraries/databases about aliens and their civilization.



MONITORING ALIEN ACTIVITY

Closely related to the Society's general goal of learning about aliens is its work monitoring alien activity on Earth as best it can. Members jokingly refer to this side of the Society as "Project Blue Book," after the old US Air Force program for investigating UFO incidents. Mostly conducted by volunteers, this work consists of two things. First, members keep track of what known aliens on Earth, like Ironclad and Herculan, are doing. They maintain files of press clippings, follow aliens around in public filming them with video cameras, and basically study aliens' every move as best they can. On at least two confirmed occasions, tips called in to the police or UNTIL by Society "watchers" have stopped alien supervillains from committing crimes.

Second, members monitor their local areas for UFOs or other signs of secret alien activity. Some are more zealous than others, and fully 98% of the incidents reported to the Society prove

baseless... but the Society believes the remaining 2% can be very, very important and justify all the effort. Every January the Society issues a report, *Covert Alien Activities*, summarizing the previous year's unexplained events; the report is free to any member of the public who wants one.

EDUCATION

The Society puts its fount of knowledge to work by sending trained volunteers to public schools, civic organizations, and the like to give lectures about what Humanity knows regarding aliens. It only accepts volunteers into this program whom it believes work well with others and will put a positive face on the Society (as Sean Clemens bluntly put it, "no whackos"). They're trained to teach only facts considered verified and accurate, and generally to remain neutral and educational instead of becoming preachy or trying to recruit new members.

Organizational Culture

The Exoplanetary Society has an unusual organizational culture due to the interplay, and sometimes clashes, among four “interest groups” within its membership. Some members fit into more than one group, but all seem to belong to at least one.

ALIEN AFFICIANADOS

The largest subset of the membership is simply people who are fascinated by alien life and UFOs and want to know more about them, talk about them with like-minded people, and so forth. These members often dominate the conversation at local Society meetings with talk of some fascinating “fact” they just learned about the Malvans, their latest pet theory about Perseid religion, or speculations about starship technology.

SINCERELY CONCERNED CITIZENS

Almost as large as the Alien Afficianados are the Sincerely Concerned Citizens — Americans who are genuinely troubled about the possible dangers posed by aliens and want the government to prepare for them. They don’t hate aliens *per se*, but they think “something needs to be done” about “the threat.” They form the backbone of the organization when it comes to doing volunteer work and otherwise keeping the Society going.

ALIEN HATERS

The flip side of the Alien Afficianados and Sincerely Concerned Citizens alike, the Alien Haters despise aliens and think they should all be kicked off the planet or killed — even “supposedly” beneficent ones like Ironclad. Xenophobic in the ultimate sense of the word, they push the Society to take a harder line, scoff at anyone who doesn’t agree with them, and sometimes disrupt local meetings with their strident rhetoric.

ALIEN ABDUCTEES

The smallest subset of the organization are people who claim to have encountered or been abducted by aliens. Some seem calm and rational, others are clearly delusional; some claim aliens are friendly and helpful, others that the Alien Haters are right. All of them seem to be struggling with what happened (or what they think happened) to them, and being part of the Society helps them try to cope.

EXOPLANETARY SOCIETY PERSONNEL

Society Employees

SEAN CLEMENS

Since 1997, Sean Clemens has been executive director of the Exoplanetary Society. A former businessman who worked for several major companies, he took the job after his son claimed to have been kidnapped and experimented upon by aliens, and was later checked into a mental health facility because of his supposed experiences (he remains there to this day; Clemens visits him at least once a week). Under his guidance the Society has become larger, and what’s better more influential, than ever before. It’s gone from a largely fringe organization to one whose experts are taken seriously in Congress and the media.

Clemens himself is a handsome, engaging man in his late forties. He has a way of seeming interested in whoever he’s talking to, as if he’s giving that person his full attention and genuinely wants to hear what they have to say. While he occasionally makes mildly disparaging remarks about some of the less stable or well-socialized members of the Society, over the past ten years he’s become genuinely intrigued by the Society’s work and now believes thoroughly in its platform that aliens should be taken seriously and the potential dangers they pose prepared for.

Clemens is the father of three children, two adults and one in his late teens. He divorced five years ago and has dated a series of women since then, never seriously; in some Boston circles he’s considered quite a catch. He’s white and a bit on the pudgy side (but he’s trying to trim down by hitting the gym regularly). He usually wears men’s suits but tends to look a bit rumpled due to the long hours he puts in and the stress of his job. He’s clean-shaven and wears glasses.



LUCIA WYZNEWSKI

The main responsibility for getting the Society's message across to the American government rests on the capable shoulders of Lucia Wyzniewski, who runs the Washington, D.C. office. A graduate of Brown and the University of Michigan School of Law, she was a private attorney in Washington for several years before becoming a lobbyist with a succession of firms. Eventually she decided she wanted to do something more interesting and intellectually stimulating, and her quest eventually led her to the Exoplanetary Society.

Wyzniewski is an emotional, passionate woman who's *very* good at arguing for a cause. She puts both her fire and her lawyer's diplomacy to work on the Society's behalf, working hard to convince Congressmen who think her organization's concerns can easily be dismissed. It's a long, uphill battle, but one mind at a time she's trying to make a difference.

Wyzniewski is a pretty white woman in her early thirties. As befits a lobbyist who frequently conducts press conferences, she dresses stylishly in the latest fashions, has her shoulder-length hair professionally styled, and in general always looks her best.

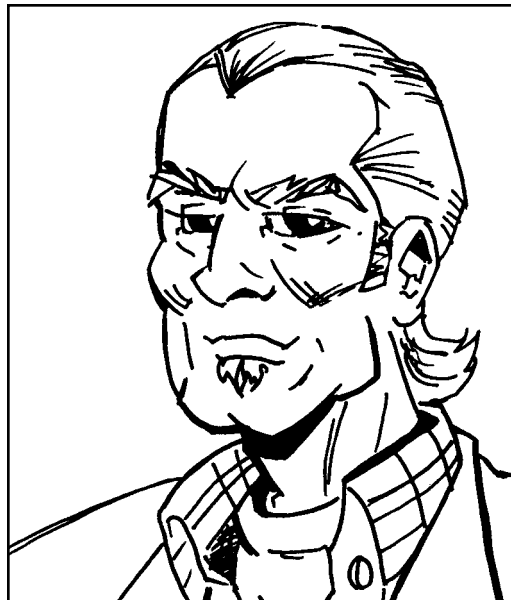


KEVIN ALTMAN

One of the most prominent full-time researchers at the Exoplanetary Institute, Kevin Altman was once a tenure-track English professor at Notre Dame who'd made a considerable reputation for himself with his perspectives on Dickens and other nineteenth-century British novelists. He gave that work up after nearly being killed when a battle broke out between the Peacekeepers and Firewing while he was visiting Chicago. The incident preyed on his mind for months, and eventually he became convinced that Firewing, and by extension other aliens, were a tremendous threat to Humanity that had to be taken care of.

Abandoning his work in the field of literary studies, Altman began reading everything he could find about aliens. After several of his essays on the subject of the "alien menace" came to the attention of the Society's directors, he received a visiting fellowship to the Institute. The quality of his work during that time led the Institute to offer him a full-time position.

Altman is a weaselly-looking white man of indeterminate age; he might be in his late twenties and in rotten shape, or in surprisingly good shape for someone over 40. He's thin, pale-skinned, balding, and dresses in the sloppy fashion of a person with better things on his mind than "mere fashion." His eyes often dart nervously from side to side as he tries to watch everything around him at once. Most of the time he can discuss his interest in alien life rationally (though he never backs down from his belief that aliens are dangerous), but sometimes his fanaticism and paranoia leak through.



Other Employees And Members

ROBERT RENSIGGER

Robert Rensigger heads the Society's field office in Millennium City. A thirtysomething husband and father of two, he's been fascinated by space travel and aliens ever since he can remember. He desperately wanted to be an astronaut when he was younger, and even joined the Air Force, but he just didn't have the chops to make it as a combat pilot, much less a spaceman. These days he pins his hopes for getting into space someday on the eventual success of commercial space travel, or perhaps gifts of technology from aliens. Rensigger is a combination of Alien Afficianado and Sincerely Concerned Citizen; he takes his job very seriously...

...but he secretly admits to himself that one of the reasons he works so hard at it is that it occasionally gives him the chance to talk to *actual aliens* like Ironclad. In 2006 he published a book, *Aliens Among Us*, a collection of interviews he conducted with various known aliens now living on Earth. It briefly made the bestseller list and brought him a small measure of fame; he donated most of the proceeds from the book to the Society. At his publisher's urging he's working on two other books. One is a follow-up to *Aliens Among Us*, with all-new interviews. The other, tentatively titled *From The Deep Beyond*, examines Vibron and other Andromedan superhumans and speculates about life in the Andromeda Galaxy.

WILSON "ZOOM" HILLMER

One of the Society's most dedicated "field agents," "Zoom" Hillmer could have stepped right out of central casting. He drives around the country in a beat-up old mobile home, tracking down reports of UFOs and other strange occurrences and trying to find out the truth behind them. He carries at least two cameras with him everywhere he goes, and often as many as five; he lives off of a small trust fund and money he brings in selling photos to news outlets. Virtually all he can talk about with other people is his work. A dedicated Alien Afficianado, he generally thinks that aliens are likely to be friendly, if not helpful, but he recognizes that some clearly pose a threat to Earth. That's why he works so tirelessly to find out What's Going On.

BRUCE TURLINGETTI

One of the most prominent and vocal Alien Haters in the Society, Bruce Turlingetti is *convinced* that all aliens are up to no good and just want to plunder Earth for her resources — everything from ore and genetic samples to Human slaves. His passionate, well-written editorials in *ExoWatch* have swayed more than one member to his side.

USING THE EXOPLANETARY SOCIETY

There are many ways you can use the Exoplanetary Society in your campaign. The main ones include:

INFORMATION RESOURCE

If the PCs plan to pursue an alien supercriminal like Firewing or Herculano, or they're going out into space and want to know what they might find out there, the Society's library and databases may have just the information they need to maximize their chances of success. But of course, they could also have speculation or incorrect information masquerading as facts....

ADVERSARY

If a PC is an alien, the Society probably keeps tabs on him. This might even rise to the level of a Hunted if the Exoplanetarians think he poses a particularly strong threat. As a Hunter, the Society only Watches; it lacks Noncombat Influence (it's certainly influential in some respects, but not enough to qualify for NCI).

PUPPETS

Perhaps some wily alien invader wants to get rid of the competition and is manipulating the Society to do its dirty work. Or maybe the whole organization is some sort of front for an alien invasion....

THE EXOPLANETARY SOCIETY CAMPAIGN

The GM could even run an entire campaign based around the Exoplanetary Society. Instead of being a team of superheroes, the PCs are a group of intrepid investigators for the Society who go around the country (and the world) investigating potential alien menaces. They might even have the hardware to fight dangerous aliens themselves.



Grand Cienelago Island

GRAND CIENELAGO ISLANDS



Even the most dedicated and disciplined worker needs a vacation occasionally — a break from the routine, a chance to “get away from it all” and relax. The more stressful the job, the more a vacation becomes necessary. And what job could be more stressful than the often-thankless task of superheroing?

Welcome to Grand Cienelago Island, the Caribbean resort for superheroes only! No matter what sort of superpowers you have, or how worried you are about keeping your true identity a secret, Grand Cienelago can tailor a vacation package to meet your needs. Come on down for some fun in the sun today!

HISTORY

Grand Cienelago Island (pronounced “seen-uh-LAH-go”) began as a dream possessed by Vernon Putnam. A scientist and technologist, Putnam adventured as the powered armor superhero Silver Shield from the mid-Sixties to the early Eighties. He finally got out of the game when his reflexes began to slow and he felt it was time to devote himself to more sedentary pursuits.

Despite not being an active member of the superheroing fraternity anymore, Putnam worried about his fellow heroes. He’d known all too many over the years who suffered from stress — the intense pressure of putting one’s life on the line (and for an often-ungrateful public), the difficulties of balancing a “real life” with one’s costumed life, the burdens of maintaining two identities. And there was no way to escape from that stress; no matter where most heroes went, trouble seemed to raise its head. He decided he’d do something about that. After considerable thought, he had the idea of creating a Caribbean resort just for superheroes.

Knowing that a hero resort would have to remain totally secret to the rest of the world if it were to succeed, Putnam began working on his plan with great caution. Thanks to his many patents and other work in technological fields he was an immensely wealthy man, so at first he discretely put out feelers about buying a Caribbean or South Seas island. Despite several months of effort, it didn’t work out. The only islands available for sale were too publicly known, or too near known islands for him to conceal them. Finally he realized the only solution was to create his own island away from the prying eyes of the world. To do that, he needed the help of three superheroes.

The first was the Japanese battlesuit-wearing hero Tetsuronin. Considered one of the most powerful heroes in the world, he was also one of the most technologically advanced. Putnam was no slouch at gadgetry himself, but the first step of the plan required a cloaking device strong enough to hide the creation and existence of the island from both satellites and the naked eye. Tetsuronin approved of Putnam’s plan and gladly agreed to help. Even wealthier than Putnam, he not only designed and built the cloaking device at his own expense, he donated a considerable sum to start a trust fund to pay for the construction, staffing, and maintenance of the resort. To this day he visits there frequently, and a small statue of him in the main lobby commemorates his efforts on behalf of the superhero community.

The second was the earth-manipulating Brazilian superhero *Montanha* (“Mountain”), who took some convincing but finally agreed the merits of the project outweighed the risks (which he, with his powers, could minimize). Once the cloaking device was functioning, Montanha and Putnam went to the chosen site in the middle of the Caribbean. Slowly, carefully, working with utter precision to avoid triggering seismographs all over the world, Montanha raised an entire new island from the floor of the sea.

But a barren island isn’t much of a place to take a vacation. To remedy the problem, Putnam enlisted the help of the plant-controlling Scottish superheroine Evergreen. Enchanted with the idea of a place where she could vacation with her colleagues, and further wooed by the promise of free lifetime admittance to the resort for up to a month a year, Evergreen came to the newborn island and made it bloom. Under her careful ministrations, over the course of half a year a jungle grew there — but a jungle tailored to allow resort facilities to be built without having to chop down any trees, and to support a profusion of pleasing birds and other wildlife.

Now all Putnam had to do was get the resort built. Although he wasn’t a trained general contractor, he could teach himself enough. He created a corps of robots, programmed them with the necessary skills and information, gave them tools and raw materials, and set them loose. Six months later he had the resort he’d envisioned. He spent another two months polishing and preparing the place, and two more hiring staff (not an easy thing to do when you can’t tell prospective employees exactly what they’ll be doing). In April 1999 he opened the doors of Grand Cienelago Island. It took a while for word to filter out to the superhero community, since he was very, very careful about who he told, but within a year the facility saw steady business.



HURRICANE ISIDORE

Everything went smoothly until September, 2002, when Hurricane Isidore struck. Putnam had designed the island's facilities, particularly the cloaking device, to withstand most storms, but Isidore was a bit more than Grand Cienelago could handle. The cloaking device held, but the jungle and many buildings suffered significant damage. Putnam shut down the resort for three months to make repairs and install a force-field device to offer even more protection from severe weather. Today Grand Cienelago is so well-protected that it would take a direct hit from a Category 5 hurricane to damage it.

THE NEMESIS SCANDAL

A far different storm, with potentially greater repercussions, struck in the summer of 2004. Orion, an archer hero from the Pacific Northwest, was visiting the resort in the company of the lovely superheroine Nemesis from Chicago. The problem was that, unknown to most of the superhero community, Orion was married to the Seattle superheroine Scythe. Scythe found out about the tryst and showed up at Grand Cienelago. A terrible scene resulted... and soon degenerated into a battle between Nemesis and Scythe in utter defiance of Grand Cienelago rules. It didn't take the security-bots long to break up the fight, but the peace and tranquility of the resort had been shattered.

Superheroes gossip like any other group of people, and it wasn't long before people were

choosing sides. Many of them were sympathetic to Orion on some level, since it soon became known that he and Scythe were in a miserable and loveless marriage. But no one approved of how he'd handled things, and some heroes outright condemned him and sided with Scythe. Business at the resort took a steep dive as some heroes refused to spend time with people on opposite sides of the argument, or decided to be even more discrete about their leisure activities.

The whole thing blew over before the next summer, particularly after it became known that Orion and Scythe had divorced and Orion had moved to Chicago and married Nemesis. But echoes of the incident still linger here and there, and Putnam remains concerned that a similar occurrence could cause even more problems in the future.

RECENT RENOVATIONS

In early 2007 Putnam renovated some of the island's structures, correcting problems he'd inadvertently caused with his ignorance of construction engineering and updating many systems and facilities with improved technology or features. He reopened in March of that year to large crowds and full bookings, confirming what everyone in the superhero community already knew: Grand Cienelago has become the favored vacation spot of superheroes around the world... and one of the best-kept secrets in the Champions Universe.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

Because Vernon Putnam sees Grand Cienelago Island as a sort of service he provides to the super-human community, the rates and fees he charges for staying on the island vary. If a hero's wealthy enough, he pays what he'd expect to pay at any comparable Caribbean resort (which means it's quite expensive). Heroes of lesser means pay lower rates, though they always have to pay at least a little something so they don't abuse the privilege of coming. In some cases Putnam lets a guest trade services or work for his stay. For example, a hero with performing skills might put on a show in the Cienelago Theater, or one with travel powers might bring in a shipment of supplies.

ORGANIZATION AND LOGISTICS

Thanks to the fact that most of the workers are robots (for security and logistics reasons), Grand Cienelago Island is almost (but not quite) a one-man operation. With the help of his self-designed supercomputer ROGER (Resort Online GEneral Records), Vernon Putnam oversees all of the resort's background functions including the ordering of supplies and raw materials, setting up robotic work details, handling any problems that arise with the resort's human staff, and the like. The other major task — scheduling vacationers' use of the resort's facilities — and related duties are handled by the Head Concierge, Annette Coveau.

Other than some jobs Putnam feels should be handled by living, breathing humans — chefs, waiters, masseuses, the band, and so on — all the labor on the Island is done by Putnam's robots. The ones that have to interact directly with visitors (such as the check-in clerks) look human enough to avoid causing any discomfort; robots that do the work away from patrons' eyes may not even be humaniform at all.

KEEPING THE SECRET

The cloaking device that conceals Grand Cienelago Island affects both satellite surveillance and human eyesight. In addition to software covertly inserted into observation satellite networks, the device primarily consists of a large generator built into one of the buildings on the island. It makes the entire island and about 100 yards of water around it look like ordinary Caribbean ocean when viewed from above by satellite or from closer by with the naked eye. Permanent buoys mark the boundary of the "cloaked zone" so guests don't swim or boat beyond it.

If someone in a ship or plane were to penetrate the cloaking field, he would immediately perceive Grand Cienelago Island; it would instantly appear as if by magic. So far that's never happened, and Putnam has his fingers crossed that it never will.

Who Knows?

The other major secrecy issue for Grand Cienelago Island is this: which superheroes get to know about it? Initially Putnam himself could inform heroes he trusted, and likewise trust them only to tell other heroes they thought could remain quiet about the place. Slowly but surely the word has filtered out, though not every superhero in the world knows about it. Some are too marginalized, too disliked by their fellows, or regarded as being too hotheaded or indiscreet for anyone to ever tell them about the resort.

In some respects the island's nature and purpose help to ensure secrecy — heroes *love* having the resort available to them and *do not* want to lose it, so they're very, very careful not to tell new heroes about it unless they're certain those heroes can be trusted. In some ways being told about

Grand Cienelago Island is a mark of distinction in the superhero community, a sign that a hero has "made it" and is thought of as a true and worthy colleague by other heroes.

(In game terms, the GM can handle knowledge of Grand Cienelago Island in any one of three ways. First, he can assume that any well-regarded superhero who has Knowledge Skills like The Superhuman World or Superheroes on at least a 13- roll knows about the resort; villains, marginal heroes, and civilians don't know about it no matter how good their rolls in such Skills are. Second, knowledge of the resort could be a 1-point Fringe Benefit characters have to pay for or earn during the game. Last but not least, the GM can simply reveal or not reveal Grand Cienelago to the PCs via roleplaying and character interaction during the course of the game.)

SUPPLIES AND PROVISIONS

Since Putnam wants to keep Grand Cienelago Island's existence secret from the world at large, he has to take special precautions when it comes to buying and sending supplies to the resort. This primarily means fresh food for the restaurants, but the resort needs plenty of other things — office supplies, building materials, replacement parts for labor robots, soap, and on and on — every week.

Putnam's main solution to this dilemma was to establish a front company, Carib Import/Export, in Miami. Carib supposedly is a distributor of supplies to the hotel and restaurant trade, but in fact the only one it works for is Grand Cienelago Island. Carib's employees are ordinary humans sworn to secrecy about how the company works, and that loyalty ensured by paying them hefty salaries and lavish benefits. (They don't know about Grand Cienelago Island, just about the teleportation system described below; most of them assume the company is a front for some offshore company that has to remain anonymous so it can evade taxes, or for some similar reason.)

Concealed inside Carib Import/Export's warehouse is a crude but effective teleportation platform designed and built by Putnam and Tet-suronin; it links to a similar platform on Grand Cienelago Island. The teleportation system is neither powerful nor sophisticated enough to transport living beings; even if someone provided enough electricity to use the system on a human or animal, using the device would kill the subject. (And just in case, Putnam has built extensive safeguards into the device to make it impossible for living beings to use.) But it works perfectly well for foodstuffs and all sorts of supplies.

One happy side effect of the teleportation system is that it makes it a relatively simple matter to satisfy the sometimes-odd demands of the resort's unusual patrons. If a hero absolutely has to have powdered argonite to sprinkle on his breakfast cereal, it's a lot quicker to send it through the teleportation system than to send an employee all the way to the mainland for it.

On rare occasions Grand Cienelago Island has to bring in supplies too large for the teleporter, or new workers. In that situation Putnam uses a private jet. The pilot, who like Carib's employees is sworn to secrecy, files a flight plan that takes the plane over the island, quickly stops at Grand Cienelago to drop off passengers and cargo, and then heads on to his ultimate destination.

GETTING TO THE ISLAND

Getting visitors to Grand Cienelago Island can also pose challenges, though it's usually not too much of a problem. Many superheroes have travel powers and can get to the resort on their own without much difficulty. For example, Putnam has built a quiet little alcove just off the main lobby as an arrival and departure point for teleporters so they don't startle the other guests or accidentally materialize inside a bellboy-bot.

For heroes who can't reach the island on their own or want to travel in a group, the same jet that delivers supplies can carry up to ten passengers in comfort, even luxury. It's not perfect — there's no stewardess, just a self-serve bar and selection of snacks — but it's a lot better than flying economy class.

SECURITY

Generally speaking there's little need for security at Grand Cienelago Island. After all, the visitors are superheroes, most of whom are friendly, noble-minded, and (during their leisure hours) easy-going. But most of them are still human, and sometimes human emotions and foibles can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. (Witness the Orion-Nemesis-Scythe incident.) In such situations Putnam can often depend on the other heroes visiting the resort to lend a hand to solve a problem (or at least keep it from getting worse). But in case they don't or can't, Putnam has a small squad of Cienelago Security-Bots that can handle trouble. Strong, durable, and equipped with a variety of weapons, the Cienelago Security-Bots can handle most troublemakers without difficulty. (See Appendix Three for more information on the Security-Bots.)

The Rules

Basic logistics aside, one of the main things that keeps Grand Cienelago Island functioning efficiently is a list of simple rules governing conduct on or concerning the resort. These include:

1. Do not talk about Grand Cienelago Island. Only tell other heroes you absolutely trust to keep the secret. If the resort is exposed, everyone suffers, including you.
2. No fighting.
3. No supervillains are permitted on the island; Grand Cienelago Island is a resort for *superheroes*, not *superhumans*. Vernon Putnam has the final say on who counts as a "villain," and reserves the right to refuse admittance to the island to anyone.
4. Please respect the privacy of heroes who prefer to keep their identities secret even on the island.

Organizational Culture

Grand Cienelago Island is a fairly small group of people despite the size and complexity of the resort because so much of the work is done by robots and automated systems. Putnam stresses friendliness, professionalism, and efficiency as values his human employees should embrace; he doesn't want his guests to have to worry about a thing other than "What shall we do tomorrow?"

Resort employees have a sort of blasé, seen-it-all-before attitude that would never exist in a place where heroes weren't so commonplace. They don't even blink to see a hero fly down through an open window to take a seat in a restaurant, walk through the walls of the lobby, or teleport from the water back up to his beach towel.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Grand Cienelago Island is a full-service Caribbean resort offering the entire spectrum of luxury vacation facilities and activities, combined with facilities specifically constructed for use by superhumans. It includes:

THE CIENELAGO HOTEL

The centerpiece of Grand Cienelago Island is the Cienelago Hotel, a 15-story four-star hotel. From its sumptuously-appointed, air-conditioned lobby to its immaculate rooms, everything about it speaks of sophistication, luxury, and utter relaxation. Rooms are available with one or two king-sized beds, and some are designed (or can be configured) for heroes with unusual powers. For example, some rooms are furnished with totally fireproof furniture for use by flame-based or energy-emitting heroes, have reinforced furniture and floors for extra-heavy heroes, or come equipped with special ventilation equipment for heroes who don't breathe oxygen.

The Cienelago Hotel caters to its guests' every need. It includes a full-service spa where you can get a makeover or a massage, jacuzzis and hot tubs, a cinema showing the latest Hollywood films, an Olympic-sized pool with amazing water slides, a library for more studious heroes, costume tailoring and repair, and just about any other service you can imagine.

THE COTTAGES AT CIENELAGO

Heroes who want a little more privacy than they can get at the Hotel can instead check in to the Cottages at Cienelago, a collection of bungalows clustered here and there throughout the island. They range in size from one-person units, to two-person cottages (the most common size), to bungalows large enough for groups of up to twelve guests. Room service from any island restaurant delivers to any bungalow, and most other hotel services are available there as well.



RESTAURANTS

One of the best things about going on vacation is you don't have to stay on your diet. Grand Cienelago Island has several excellent restaurants to satisfy visitors' appetites, including:

Windward

The main restaurant at the Cienelago Hotel is Windward, run by award-winning chef Paul Heuer. It has a lengthy menu with an international flair; it features dishes from every continent on Earth, though the emphasis is on American, European, and to a lesser extent Asian cuisine. The staff prides itself on being able to meet some of the unusual dietary requirements of its superheroic clientele with speed and efficiency.

Windward serves all three meals, though at breakfast it prefers to direct visitors toward its extensive buffet. It also uses buffet-style serving for special events and promotions, such as Main Street 1955 (diner-style food) or A Trip to the French Riviera (French cuisine). Usually there's at least one special event per month, and often more.

Seating at Windward requires a reservation during peak tourist seasons, but is otherwise open. The staff posts a notice outside the restaurant each morning indicating whether patrons must reserve tables.

The Cienelago Café

For lighter fare and more casual dining than at Windward, visitors can treat themselves to lunch or dinner at the Cienelago Café. Specializing in soups, salads, and sandwiches, but also serving a variety of heartier entrees, it's the perfect place to stop in for a bite after a morning of swimming or hiking.

Steel Drum Express

Located right on one of the island's beaches and happily catering to patrons still dressed in swimwear, the Steel Drum Express is a burger-and-beer sort of joint with a Jamaican theme. In addition to standard "comfort food," patrons can order jerk chicken or pork, get a bottle of Ting or a Red Stripe beer, and enjoy the relaxing sounds of reggae and calypso music coming through the sound system.

Papa's Pizzeria

No matter how you like your pizza — frou-frou California gourmet style, Chicago deep-dish, authentic Italian style, New York thin crust — Papa's Pizzeria can make it for you. It also has a menu of ingredients that goes beyond the standard dozen or so pizza toppings into the realm of the unusual (alligator meat, mango, portabella mushrooms, argonite dust...).

BEACHES

Aside perhaps from the luxurious Hotel, the main attraction of Grand Cienelago Island is its beaches. Virtually all of the island's coastline was tailored by Montanha and Evergreen to create large, pristine white-sand beaches. The clear, crystal-blue waters of the Caribbean lap against the shore, tempting guests to go for a swim or skin dive among schools of rainbow-hued fish.

HIKING AND CLIMBING

If you want to do something outdoors but sunbathing is too lazy for you, there are plenty of hiking trails wending through Grand Cienelago Island's jungle, and the small mountain in the center of the island makes for a good climb. Bird-

watching expeditions and nature hikes are scheduled daily during peak tourist season. Hunting is not allowed, though sometimes a hero practices his stealth skills by sneaking up on a member of the island's small population of wild boars.

SPORTS FACILITIES

Even when they're on vacation, some superheroes can't stop training or exercising. Grand Cienelago Island features a full-service gymnasium, plus sporting fields in case two teams of heroes want to challenge one another to a game of softball or rugby. Though it's no "danger room," the gymnasium is specially constructed to withstand superhuman impact and stress. Thus, two bricks can have a boxing match without worrying about the collateral damage, and a character who can lift 100 tons will find weight machines that can be calibrated for that kind of load.

Much to the regret of some guests, Grand Cienelago Island doesn't have a golf course. There simply isn't room, even if the jungle were removed, and the topography of the island isn't really suitable for a course anyway.

THE CIENELAGO THEATER

Grand Cienelago Island has a theater/auditorium suitable for putting on plays, concerts, lectures, and similar events. It's not used as much as one might think, though, because of the difficulty of getting performers to the island. Aside from the house band, Wildman Serenade, a lot of the performances are actually put on by guests, either for fun or in exchange for deferring some of their bill. Sapphire has performed there on more than one occasion, and it turns out that several heroes are accomplished amateur stage magicians. Sometimes the resort sponsors "talent shows" where heroes or hero teams can show off their stuff and perhaps win a prize... not to mention bragging rights.

THE SUGAR BARON CASINO

Guests who are interested in something more exciting than "dinner and a show" can visit the Sugar Baron Casino, which has a full array of games of chance: slot machines; poker; blackjack; craps; baccarat; roulette; and more. Putnam enjoys mingling with the guests here some evenings, playing the part of a big-money, glad-handing casino owner.

NIGHTCLUBS

After an amazing day on the beach and a delicious meal, it's time to dance the night away! Grand Cienelago Island features several nightclubs, ranging from the quiet With A Twist martini and cigar bar, to the disco-oriented Club Jimmy, to the modern dance club Technophilia. Like the sports facilities the dance clubs are specially reinforced to withstand the effects of dancers who can vibrate at supersonic speed or weigh ten tons.

PERSONNEL

Some of the people that keep Grand Cienelago Island running include:

VERNON "SILVER SHIELD" PUTNAM

10 STR	14 DEX	14 CON	10 BODY
18 INT	12 EGO	18 PRE	12 COM
5 PD	5 ED	3 SPD	6 REC
30 END	30 STUN		

Abilities: Powered armor suit with mostly late 1970s-era supertechnology (use Steel Commando from page 122 of *Champions Universe*, but build the Energy Rifle into the suit as an OIF weapons array); +2 with Ranged Combat; Computer Programming 14-; Conversation 13-; Deduction 13-; Electronics 14-; Gambling (Card Games) 8-; Inventor 13-; KS: Grand Cienelago Island 16-; KS: The Superhuman World 11-; Mechanics 13-; Persuasion 13-; Security Systems 8-; Stealth 12-; Systems Operation 13-; Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons) 13-; Well-Connected and Contacts (30 points' worth, throughout the Superhuman World); Money (Wealthy)

150+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Wants To Serve Humanity By Serving The Superhero Community



Notes: Now in his early sixties, Vernon Putnam has found a new lease on life through serving the superhero community as the creator, owner, and operator of Grand Cienelago Island. After retiring from active superheroing in the early Eighties he was sort of at odds, and though he could find plenty of ways to occupy his time he was essentially bored. The Grand Cienelago Island project, and what it's evolved into, captivate him the way superheroing used to.

Although he definitely enjoys mingling with his guests, Putnam is essentially a private person. He's never had a serious romantic relationship in his life, and ultimately is most comfortable with just his own company. At the end of the night he's happy to retire to his lavish penthouse suite atop the hotel.

Although the days when he was a dashing powered armor superhero are behind him, Putnam retains some of his former good looks and athletic conditioning despite being a bit over sixty years old. He often has a serious, all-business sort of look on his face and wears men's suits during the working day. At night he lightens up considerably, and often dons a tuxedo so he can put in a stylish appearance at the Sugar Baron Casino.



ANNETTE COUVREAU

The Grand Cienelago Island employee who actually has the most contact with guests is Annette Couvreau, the Head Concierge. She formerly worked at several major hotels in Europe and America, where her duties were more hectic and stressful and less glamorous. At Grand Cienelago Island her primary duty is to schedule the use of resort facilities so that there's no confusion over who gets a massage at what time or when the Peacekeepers have a sports field reserved for their touch football game against the Champions. She's also responsible for making sure any special requests are fulfilled, which sometimes taxes her creativeness and resources... but she always comes through in the end.

Couvreau possesses the quality, essential for any concierge but particularly for one working at Grand Cienelago Island, of being totally unflappable. No matter how terrible the crisis that erupts, how daunting the being threatening her, how impressive the hero standing in front of her, she refuses to appear distressed, hurried, or panicked. She believes that by maintaining rock-solid control over herself, she instills similar qualities in the people working for her.

Annette Couvreau is a pretty thirtysomething woman of French ancestry. She's quick-witted, efficient, and skilled at dealing with all sorts of requests and problems as expeditiously as possible. She wears a grey women's business suit and skirt with a white blouse and black shoes.

PAUL HEUER

Paul Heuer's always been something of a maverick in the culinary world. After attending several prestigious cooking schools, including the famed Cordon Bleu, he returned home to his native Millennium City and opened... a restaurant serving gourmet burgers and hot dogs. His colleagues told him he was wasting his talent, but he loved doing it and his kitschily-named Heuer House restaurant soon became one of the most popular in town — even superheroes sometimes ate there.

Vernon Putnam particularly liked Heuer House, and when he realized he needed a chef for Grand Cienelago Island, he took a chance and approached Heuer about it. Heuer jumped at the opportunity. As much as he loved preparing food, he was already bored with running his restaurant and wanted a new challenge... not to mention a chance to drop out of site of the Culinary World, since he'd never been much interested in politicking and oneupsmanship. Leaving Heuer House in the hands of his partners, he dropped off the face of the Earth... and landed on Grand Cienelago Island.

Heuer is in charge of all the restaurants at the resort, a job he loves. He's made Windward into a top-notch restaurant, one that could stand proud among the eateries of New York, San Francisco, or Paris. He spends about a third of his time planning menus and handling administrative details, a third cooking, and a third mingling and eating with the guests. A true *bon vivant*, he's a welcome guest at anyone's table or party.

Paul Heuer is a white man, 5'9" tall and decidedly plump. He keeps his black hair cut short and carefully styled so he can wear a chef's hat for long periods of time without messing it up too much. He's usually got a chef's uniform (often food-stained) on when working, but is quick to change to something more elegant and formal (or at least cleaner) when meeting and greeting people.

Minor Employees

Some of the resort's other employees include:

PAUL ALTMAN

Paul Altman is a young man, one of about half a dozen who serve as busboys and in similar roles around Grand Cienelago Island. Like several of the others, he took the job primarily because it involves close contact with superheroes. He longs to be some hero's sidekick or protege, or just a superhuman himself, and he figures hanging around them is the most likely way to achieve that goal. He's polite and respectful to all the visitors despite his geekish enthusiasm, and takes any opportunity to spend time around them.

CAROL FINNEGAN

At 5'10", 110 pounds, with long blonde hair, a gorgeous face, and a figure to die for, Carol Finnegan could easily become a model, and she knows it. Some women with her assets would get a job, and some would try to marry for money, but Carol's what's known in some circles as a "capechaser." She has a thing for superheroes and

wants to date (and hopefully marry) one. She interviewed for the Grand Cienelago Island job before she knew what it was, but once she found out what it involved she signed on without hesitation. By day she works at the Cienelago Café, at night she waits tables at Windward, and after work she hits the nightclubs hoping to meet that special caped someone.

WILDMAN SERENADE

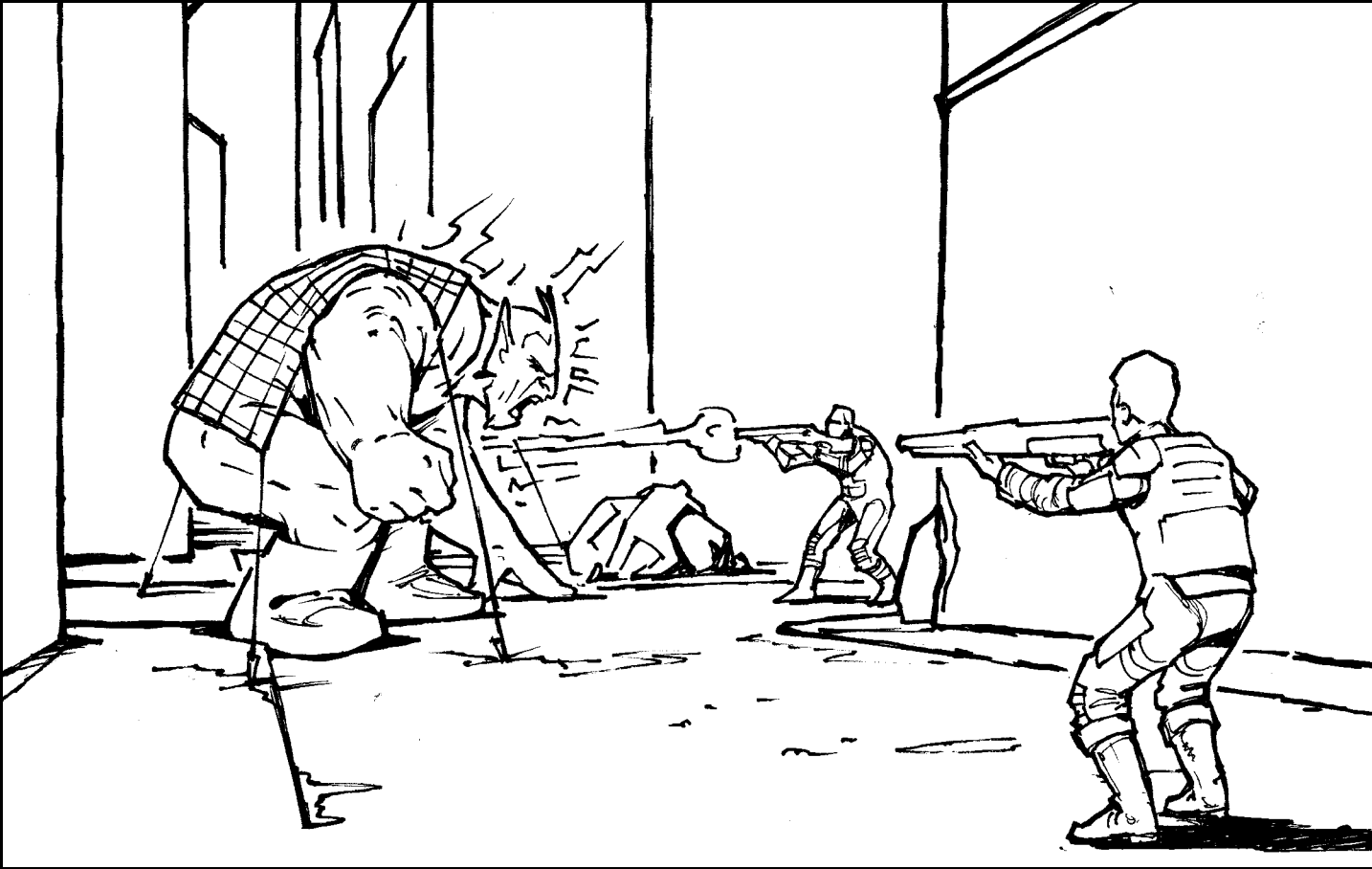
The house band for Grand Cienelago Island is Wildman Serenade, a quintet composed of Jim "Wildman" Griffith (lead singer), Eric Windham (guitar), Peter Kyle (bass), Ben Ormond (keyboards) and Dan Danielson (drums). A versatile group, they prefer to play rock-and-roll shows at the theater or live at one of the nightclubs, but they can also play lighter music for other events.

USING GRAND CIENELAGO ISLAND

Grand Cienelago Island serves two primary purposes. First, it provides a venue for roleplaying-oriented scenarios. Your PCs can "get away from it all" and delve into some really in-depth character development in a setting where there's no chance someone will call on them to stop a crime or help prevent some natural disaster. Plus, they can just plain have fun challenging other heroes to baseball games, seeking romance, and comparing notes with their colleagues.

Second, the resort is a good way for heroes to learn little tidbits of information about one another. For example, inside that armor Defender could be male or female, old or young, and of any race. But when you see him on the beach at Grand Cienelago Island, you discover he's (a) male, and (b) caucasian. There may come a time when such seemingly useless trivia becomes the key to victory, such as figuring out which Defender is the real, mind-controlled one and which are realistic-looking killer robots.





MCPD Special Unit Omega

MCPD SPECIAL UNIT OMEGA



In 1995, the Millennium City Police Department founded the Metahuman Activity Response Squad (MARS), a unit of police officers specially trained and equipped to deal with superhuman threats that's since been copied by police departments all over the United States and the world. Four years later it created an even more specialized subset of MARS, the Special Unit Omega (SUO).

HISTORY

In 1999, the supervillain Holocaust attacked Millennium City when an attempted robbery went bad and he had to fight his way to freedom. The MCPD responded in force, with the MARS leading the fight... but it wasn't enough. Holocaust was simply too powerful for the cops, even the officers of the MARS. Holocaust escaped, leaving over a dozen policemen dead in his wake.

Long-time critics of the MARS program pointed to the unit's inability to stop Holocaust, declared the entire "experiment" an abject failure, and insisted that the MCPD dismantle the entire expensive program. The police had a different idea. They suggested that the MARS's inability to stop villains as powerful as Holocaust was due to the unit's *lack* of sufficient funding and powerful equipment. Recognizing that they'd never convince the city to increase the allocations for all of the MARS to the levels they wanted, the police brass suggested creating a specially-trained and -equipped unit within the MARS to tackle the toughest, most dangerous villains.

Debate raged through City Hall and in the newspapers for months, but in the end the city's leadership saw the wisdom of the police proposal and decided to adopt it. The mayor approved funding for an elite unit of eight officers to be chosen primarily (if not exclusively) from the ranks of the MARS, plus additional support staff and related personnel.

UNLEASH THE CANNON

The chief of police handed the job of creating this new unit, now christened Special Unit Omega, to Major Walter LaCouer, who was the commander of the MARS at that time. LaCouer, never one to be known for a conventional approach to matters, turned to an old friend.

Tim Connolly was a five-times-decorated officer who despite that stellar record was on a seemingly permanent suspension in 1999. Known throughout the Department as "Cannon" for his

"short on empathy, long on violence" approach to police work (as the media once put it), Connolly had finally ticked off his captain one too many times and was involved in a series of disciplinary hearings pertaining to his actions both as a regular cop, and later as a member of the MARS. Recognizing that the new SUO was going to need a hard-charging, speaks his mind, takes no prisoners kind of officer to run it, LaCouer arranged to sweep aside most of the (largely trumped-up) charges against Connolly, promote him to Lieutenant, and give him a job: build the SUO.

Connolly agreed to the job with one provision: he had complete control over who he chose for Omega. He wasn't going to play favorites, take on anyone's protégé, or conform to notions of political correctness. He was going to build the best anti-supervillain police squad in the world, and he couldn't remain true to that goal if he had half a dozen higher-ups looking over his shoulder and second-guessing his every move. Against the better judgment of many commanders, including Connolly's former captain, Major LaCouer agreed... and newly-minted Lieutenant Connolly got to work.

RECRUITMENT

Connolly decided on a two-pronged approach to filling the other seven slots in the SUO. He had one spot already sewn up: his old friend Eric Hinkle, a departmental sniping champion. He put Hinkle in charge of running and overseeing an "open tryout" program — anyone in the department who wanted to try to earn a spot on Special Unit Omega could come to the tryouts, run through Hinkle's grueling obstacle course, and see if he could make the grade.

While Hinkle was doing that, Connolly reviewed personnel files in search of people he wanted to go after whether they tried out or not. Drawing on his own past history, he paid special attention to officers most commanders didn't want — the troublemakers, the disciplinary cases, the mavericks whose talents, skills, and brains were being stifled by the police bureaucracy.

He found his first potential candidate in Jake Zimmerman, an officer on "medical leave" because he decked a commanding officer after an incident in which Zimmerman was injured and his partner was killed. Zimmerman alleged the commander was incompetent and deliberately ignored valid intel. After reviewing the case with a fresh eye, Connolly decided Zimmerman was right. He visited him at his home and offered him a job. Given a choice between joining a new elite unit

and facing a potentially career-ending disciplinary situation that Connolly could make go away, Zimmerman signed onto the SUO.

Billy Kwan was another disciplinary case whom Connolly decided was worth rescuing. A former Marine and veteran of the Iraq War, Kwan had joined the MCPD bomb squad after he returned home to the States. Unfortunately his tendency to play practical jokes (often ones involving tiny amounts of explosives) and his willingness to take risks to get his job done did not sit well with his superior officers. After one of them got hurt by a “firecracker” Kwan planted under his chair, it looked like Kwan wasn’t long for the MCPD... until Connolly rescued him.

But not every potential recruit who caught Connolly’s eye was on the outs with the brass. Enrique Ramirez was a MARS officer with a distinguished service record and a lot of respect from his peers — a real cop’s cop. But what really drew Connolly’s attention were Ramirez’s skills as a weaponsmith and technician. He knew the team was going to have some top-notch gear and would need someone who could look after it. Ramirez jumped at the offer, which meant more excitement, better pay, and the chance to work with tech far beyond anything he’d ever seen before.

Connolly found his last recruit almost by accident... literally. One day while he was heading out of the motor pool to observe some potential SUO officers in action, he nearly had a fender-bender with a beat cop. He jumped out of his car to give the idiot a piece of his mind — only to find himself in a head-to-head argument with a feisty female cop named Delilah Flores. She thought he was in the wrong and wasn’t willing to back down despite being four inches shorter and four ranks down the departmental ladder on him. Impressed, he offered her a chance to try out for Hinkle. “Let’s see if your brass matches your sass,” was how he put it.

Hinkle soon reported that her physical skills lived up to her assertive nature. Beyond her, his tryout program had netted two other worthwhile recruits. One was another MARS officer named Al Ferrell. Far from his departmental reputation as being a sort of self-centered jerk, Ferrell was willing to give his all and work as hard as he could to earn a spot on the SUO, and his dedication and discipline paid off. The other was one of the biggest, strongest cops Hinkle had ever seen, the aptly-nicknamed “Tank” Jablonski. Jablonski had won the departmental boxing competition earlier that year, defeating several officers who were favorites of certain top-ranking commanders and thus earning himself a place in the doghouse. Some of his skills weren’t quite up to Connolly’s preferences, but Jablonski made up for it by being able to take more punishment and pain than any other three officers combined.

TRAINING

Now that Connolly had his team of eight it was time to put them through their paces.

Training started with a six-week stint at an isolated MCPD facility in the Michigan woods. Connolly took his and his recruits’ basic police skills, pushed them to the max, and then took them beyond, turning the SUO from eight individual cops into a well-oiled fighting machine able to take on more powerful enemies using perfect teamwork, coordination, and tactics. He enlisted the help of several prominent superheroes to play the part of “villains” so the “Omegans” could get some experience fighting real superhuman foes.

By the time the six weeks were done, much of SUO’s gear had been delivered to the Department, so training started again with the equipment so the Omegans could get used to it. For greater realism Connolly got departmental permission to conduct live-fire exercises in several buildings scheduled for demolition, again calling on helpful superheroes to take the part of the bad guys. The Omegans usually won in these simulations — a strong indication that the Department’s faith in the program, plus Connolly’s approach and training methods, were justified.

ON THE STREETS

After a final departmental review of the program, in 2000 Special Unit Omega was approved for duty and hit the streets. It still spent most of its time in training and simulations, since even in Millennium City there’s only so much need for anti-supervillain cops, particularly an elite unit of them. The Omegans first proved their worth in mid-2001, when the Slug brought his particular brand of evil to the City of the Future. He snuck into City Hall one night and transformed several officials working late into Elder Worms. As prominent city leaders came to work the next day, they were lured into the Slug’s trap and transformed in turn. Through a special ritual the Slug further transformed several of his victims into Elder Worm sorcerers — sort of the equivalent of supervillains for his race. When the Slug announced his presence to the world, the MARS and SUO were called in to deal with the situation. While MARS officers fought and captured the regular Elder Worms, Special Unit Omega went after the sorcerers and their master. While no one on the team escaped uninjured, their combined firepower stopped the sorcerers. With his plan falling apart, the Slug fled, unfortunately defying the Omegans’ efforts to capture him. But despite that, had it not been for the bravery and skills of the SUO, the entire city might have fallen to the Slug’s plot.

In 2003, Special Unit Omega got a new main firearm, the Neuro-Rifle (see below). Considered safer for bystanders than ordinary assault rifles, the Neuro-Rifle has become the unit’s signature weapon... despite the fact that it wasn’t universally well-received at first. Several officers, including Hinkle and Ferrell, preferred to stick with regular firearms, and to this day still gripe about the energy rifles at times. But no one can deny that

they're effective... and every SUO officer still has his regulation MCPD .45 sidearm if bullets are absolutely necessary.

In 2004, the Omegans responded to the threat caused by King Cobra and his Ophidian Plague. Fortunately Special Unit Omega was out of town on a training exercise during the initial outbreak of the Plague, and so was spared the effects. Alerted by an emergency message from police headquarters, the Omegans returned to Millennium City immediately. While uninfected MCPD officers worked hard to keep infected citizens under control, SUO focused its efforts on capturing infected supervillains. The Champions themselves fought an infected Ultimates, but SUO took care of the likes of Blowtorch, Fenris, Ogre, and Vibron.

In late 2006 the Omegans faced their greatest challenge ever when Kanrok the Acquisitioner came to Millennium City to "acquire" the Champions, particularly Ironclad, for the Malvan arena. Unfortunately the entire team except for Defender, Sapphire, and Kinetik was on an adventure in another dimension. The three heroes were able to broadcast a call for help immediately before Kanrok's attack, and Special Unit Omega responded. When the Omegans arrived Sapphire was already badly hurt and the other two heroes were fighting a defensive action. The Omegans laid in their heaviest fire, timing their shots for maximum impact. When Kanrok turned to "swat these meddlesome gnats," as he put it, Defender and Kinetik were able to get in some telling blows. Weakened, and reeling under steady fire from the Omegans, Kanrok fled and has not yet returned. Defender later publicly acknowledged to a reporter that, "Had it not been for Special Unit Omega, my colleagues and I would now be fighting alien monsters in a gladiatorial pit on Malva."

Today Special Unit Omega is a firmly-established part of the MCPD with a strong (and well-deserved) reputation of being able to do what it was created to do: fight and defeat the worst superhuman menaces. It's had its ups and downs over the years, and its eight members have racked up more than their fair share of hospital time recuperating from on-the-job injuries, but their record of accomplishments and valor speaks for itself.

ORGANIZATION

As an eight-member team, Special Unit Omega doesn't need much in the way of organization charts or fancy chains of command. Lieutenant Tim "Cannon" Connolly, the team's founder, remains fully in control as Unit commander (or as he prefers to put it, "top dog"). Eric Hinkle serves as his sergeant and second in command, though there's not as much to that job as there would be in a larger unit — Connolly's right out there on the street with his men every day, so it's not as if they don't know him or have access to him.

The other six members of the team are all equals, holding the rank of corporal. Connolly wisely defers to one of them when his area of expertise (if any) comes up — for example, Billy Kwan becomes *de facto* commander when the team has to deal with a crisis involving explosives.

Technically Special Unit Omega is a subset of the Metahuman Activities Response Squad (MARS), but in practice it enjoys a high degree of autonomy. In fact, some people in the department resent SUO for the way it seems to think of itself as being "above" other units, and for its ability to operate citywide with far fewer of the usual bureaucratic hassles. To make matters worse, because SUO usually has to deal with rapidly-developing crisis situations, it can often "commandeer" departmental resources (including vehicles, criminalists, and laboratory time) for its own purposes, further angering cops used to the regular routine. Lieutenant Connolly is aware of some of this "perception problem," but frankly is far more concerned with getting his job done and protecting the people of Millennium City than he is with whether some cops get their feathers ruffled.

TRAINING

One of the keys to Special Unit Omega's success is its intensive training regimen, which is an ongoing process. The "curriculum" combines some standard advanced police training with elements taken from military special forces training, hand-to-hand combat (primarily the martial art of Krav Maga), exercises, classroom study of supervillains and their powers, tactical drills focused on combatting superhumans (often conducted with the help of superheroes who volunteer to play villains), and even working with psionic heroes to condition the officers' minds to resist mental powers. The accompanying Package Deal describes the skills and abilities SUO officers possess; it's in addition to a "basic" policeman Package Deal, such as the Police Officer Package Deal on page 46 of *Dark Champions*.

TACTICS

Even well-equipped humans need special tactics to take on superhumans, particularly powerful ones. The cornerstones of Special Unit Omega's tactical doctrine are: (a) focused fire, and (b) keeping the opponents busy.

SPECIAL UNIT OMEGA PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
3	<i>Mental Conditioning</i> : Mental Defense (3 points + (EGO/5))
32	Martial Arts: Krav Maga (Choke Hold, Martial Block, Martial Disarm, Martial Dodge, Martial Grab, Martial Strike, Martial Throw, Offensive Strike; Use Art with Clubs)
12	+4 DEX
6	+3 CON
3	+3 INT
3	+3 PRE
8	+1 with All Combat
2	KS: Supervillains 11-
3	Stealth
5	Tactics (INT +1)
7	Teamwork (DEX +2)
1	WF: SUO Neuro-Rifle

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 85

First and foremost, SUO prefers to have multiple officers focus their fire on a single target to bring him down quickly. Obviously this works best when the entire team faces one foe, since even a powerful opponent usually can't stand up to eight Energy Blasts or Drains every single Phase. But even against several opponents, Unit cops can partly focus their fire, usually in teams of two: Connolly and Hinkle on one opponent; Ferrell and Kwan on a second; Zimmerman and Ramirez on a third; and Flores and Jablonski on a fourth. If possible SUO prefers not to tackle more than four opponents at once; if that happens it usually calls for reinforcements from the rest of the MARS.

Second, Special Unit Omega likes to keep its opponents occupied — if they're busy Dodging, escaping from Grabs, and coping with the effects of being Flashed they can't counterattack as effectively. One way the team accomplishes this is to stagger Phases when fighting a single opponent, or small numbers of opponents. Rather than each cop attacking in Segments 4, 8, and 12, some of them Hold their Actions to attack on other Segments so the target doesn't get a chance to rest.

TEAM CULTURE

Special Unit Omega has been together seven years now, and thankfully has suffered no fatalities (though it's had some *very* close calls, and every member has spent time in the hospital recuperating from injuries). As a result the team has developed a great deal of camaraderie and has very high morale — even the occasional defeat or setback doesn't keep the team down for long.

Still, among any group of people together for that long, particularly people with strong personalities, tensions are bound to develop here and there. Lately the main source of tension has been the growing romantic relationship between Zimmerman and Flores, who began dating in March, 2006 after several years of sort of flirting with and

dancing around one another. That's introduced a new element into their working relationship, one that Connolly isn't entirely sure he approves of. Ferrell also seems particularly perturbed by the situation; his usual sarcastic comments have become more biting of late.

The Omegans have a well-deserved reputation for working hard and taking risks. To some extent they're all thrillseekers, eager to do more and accomplish more regardless of the danger to themselves. Sometimes they actually seem to compete to see who can do the most daring things. But they don't just work together, they also socialize together a lot — “work hard, party hard” as they like to say. At least two or three nights a week they tend to get together for drinks or dinner (or both...), and during the summer they're often over at one another's houses for barbecues and cook-outs. Their capacity for alcohol is as legendary as their willingness to tackle supervillains.

EQUIPMENT

In addition to standard MARS gear (see *Millennium City*, pages 60-62), Special Unit Omega has access to some specific equipment of its own. In some cases it's used to test out high-end gear before the Department adopts it for MARS as a whole.

SUO NEURO-RIFLE

Effect:	Energy Blast 10d6; Energy Blast 5d6, NND; various Drains 4d6
Target:	One character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	250" or 200"
Charges:	2 clips of 30 Charges each
Breakability:	18 DEF

Description: Much to the chagrin of some SUO members, who would have preferred to stick with tried and true assault rifles, in 2003 the Department obtained through a federal grant a special weapon for the team: the Neuro-Rifle, a product of a Harmon Industries R&D lab. The switch was motivated by a couple of incidents in which bullets ricocheting off superhuman bodies narrowly missed injuring people.

The Neuro-Rifle avoids that problem by using tuned energy beams instead of physical projectiles. The beam interferes with the target's neurological processes, causing injury, weakness, or other debilitating effects. While the beams can be Missle Deflected in some cases, they don't ricochet off targets they hit. As an additional safety feature the beams can't cause Knockback.

The Neuro-Rifle is complex enough to require a separate Weapon Familiarity; it doesn't fall under Small Arms. This has the additional benefit of making it difficult for the Unit's opponents to use captured weapons against it.

The Neuro-Rifle's biggest weakness as far as the team is concerned is that it doesn't have an automatic fire feature, nor one that makes it easy to hit fast-moving targets (*i.e.*, an Area Of Effect

(One Hex) option for at least some settings).

Harmon Industries is working on improvements to the rifle that will incorporate these suggestions, but it remains to be seen if a new version of the weapon will be affordable enough to manufacture.

Game Information:

Cost Power

- 36 *SUO Neuro-Rifle*: Multipower, 60-point reserve, 2 clips of 30 Charges each for entire reserve (+½); all OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 1) *Neuro-Pain*: Energy Blast 10d6; OAF (-1), No Knockback (-¼), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 2) *Neuro-Stunning*: Energy Blast 5d6, NND (defense is Force Field or Force Wall; +1); OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 3) *Neuro-Interference I*: Drain STUN 4d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 4) *Neuro-Interference II*: Drain STR 4d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 5) *Neuro-Interference III*: Drain DEX 4d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 6) *Neuro-Interference IV*: Drain SPD 4d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)
- 2u 7) *Neuro-Interference V*: Drain END 4d6, Ranged (+½); OAF (-1), Two-Handed (-½)

Total cost: 50 points.

SCRS-1 E-NET RIFLE

Effect: Entangle 6d6, 12 DEF
Target: 1" Radius
Duration: Instant
Range: 30"
Charges: 10 Charges
Breakability: 26 DEF

Description: According to the Angelstone Laboratories brochure for the SCRS-1 E-Net Rifle, "The first stage in restraining any criminal, superhuman or otherwise, is to capture them unharmed." The E-Net Rifle is intended to do just that. It fires a net of ultrafine plastic fibers — so thin that ordinarily anyone could tear them. But imbedded in the fibers are nanomachines that generate a powerful force-field around each fiber, in effect creating an "energy net" even super-strong criminals can't break free from.

The E-Net comes in two forms. The main one is a dedicated rifle the same size as most assault rifles. It fires a sabot that holds the net. The sabot breaks apart upon exiting the barrel, freeing the net to continue traveling toward the target. The second, the SCRS-1U, is a much smaller launcher that mounts underneath the barrel of an assault rifle, shotgun, or other longarm. It fires smaller, weaker nets over a shorter distance, but still comes in mighty handy when fighting superhumans.

Game Information: *Entangle 6d6* (standard effect: 6 BODY), 12 DEF, Area Of Effect (One Hex; +½) (135 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), Limited Range (30"; -¼), Two-Handed (-½), 10 Charges (-¼).
Total cost: 41 points.

Options:

1) SCRS-1U Underbarrel E-Net Launcher:

Change to: Entangle 4d6 (standard effect: 4 BODY), 8 DEF (60 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), Limited Range (20"; -¼), Two-Handed (-½), 2 Charges (-½).
Total cost: 13 points.

MECHALENE ZIPCUFFS

Effect: Entangle 5-10d6, 10-20 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks
Target: One character
Duration: Instant
Range: No Range
Charges: 12 Charges
Breakability: 10-20 DEF

Description: The "second stage" of Angelstone Laboratories's Supercriminal Restraint System (SCRS) devices are the Mechalene Zipcuffs. Made of a special plastic developed from technology recovered from the murderous sentient robot Mechanon, they're capable of holding even the strongest superhumans. Each one consists of a strip of plastic (of varying thickness depending on strength) with one end molded so that the rest of the strip can be pulled through it one way, but not back out again. It's the work of seconds to loop one around a held or restrained criminal's wrists or feet and then pull it tight (which causes a "zip" sound that gives the cuffs their name).

Mechalene Zipcuffs come in three basic types. The *Standard* model suffices for any criminal with ordinary human strength up to superhumans who can lift as much as about 25 metric tons. The *Heavy-Duty* and *Extra-Strength* versions are intended for even stronger supervillains, up to and including the likes of Grond, Ripper, and Gargantua.

Once they're attached, the only easy way to remove Mechalene Zipcuffs from someone is with a special cutting tool, also manufactured solely by Angelstone Laboratories. An ordinary knife or pair of tinsnips can do the trick, but that takes a lot more time and elbow grease. Angelstone sells Zipcuffs in packs of 12, boxed ten packs to the case; each case comes with one cutting tool.

Game Information:

- 19 *Standard Mechalene Zipcuff*: Entangle 5d6 (standard effect: 5 BODY), 10 DEF, Takes No Damage From Attacks (+½) (112 Active Points); OAF (-1), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼), Set Effect (hands or feet only; -1), Does Not Prevent Use Of Accessible Foci (-1), No Range (-½), Must Follow Grab Or Target Must Be Willing (-½), Vulnerable (special cutting tool, see text; -¼), 12 Charges (-¼)
- 27 *Heavy-Duty Mechalene Zipcuff*: As Standard, but Entangle 7d6 (standard effect: 7 BODY), 14 DEF (157 Active Points)
- 39 *Extra-Strength Mechalene Zipcuff*: As Standard, but Entangle 10d6 (standard effect: 10 BODY), 20 DEF (225 Active Points)

LIGHTNING STICK TASER

Effect:	Energy Blast 12d6, NND; HA +3d6
Target:	One character
Duration:	Instant
Range:	Touch/12"/Touch
END Cost:	30 Charges for entire Multipower/0
Breakability:	30 DEF

Description: As an additional form of perpetrator restraint and control, SUO officers carry the "Lightning Stick" taser developed by Angelstone Laboratories. A combination of taser and nightstick, it has several functions. First, the user can touch a target with the metal prongs on the end to deliver a stunning shock. The user can control the amount of volts delivered with a simple thumb switch in the handle, from 2,000 (the amount in a standard taser, and thus suitable for ordinary humans) to 18,000 (upper-end ranges are only for the toughest superhumans). In game terms 2,000 volts is an Energy Blast 8d6, NND; every 2,000 volts beyond that adds +½d6.

Second, the user can fire the metal prongs toward a target up to 12" away, delivering the same sort of stunning shock.

Third, a Lightning Stick can function as an ordinary nightstick. SUO officers are trained to use the club with their Krav Maga maneuvers.

Game Information:

Cost	Power
------	-------

- | | |
|----|---|
| 75 | <i>Lightning Stick Taser:</i> Multipower, 120-point reserve, 30 Charges for entire reserve (+¼); all OAF |
| 4u | 1) <i>HTH Taser:</i> Energy Blast 12d6, NND (defense is insulated ED; +1); OAF (-1), No Range (-½), Requires Multiple Charges (1 Charge for 8d6, +1 Charge for every +1 DC thereafter; -¼) |
| 5u | 2) <i>Ranged Taser:</i> Energy Blast 12d6, NND (defense is insulated ED; +1); OAF (-1), Limited Range (12"; -¼), Requires Multiple Charges (1 Charge for 8d6, +1 Charge for every +1 DC thereafter; -¼) |
| 6 | <i>Combat Baton:</i> HA +3d6; OAF (-1), Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) |

Total cost: 90 points.

SUO BODY ARMOR

Effect:	Armor (11 PD/11 ED), Activation Roll 13-; Force Field (6 PD/6 ED/6 Power Defense)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent/Constant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0/12 Charges
Breakability:	11 DEF

Description: Besides the standard MCPD uniform (Armor [1 PD], Activation Roll 15-), Special Unit Omega officers wear a variant of the MCPD Protective Vest. SUO Body Armor covers more of the body, automatically comes with light ceramic inserts, and includes a force-field belt with a short-duration battery for emergencies. They also wear the standard MCPD helmet, which protects the head and has a built-in encrypted radio (see *Millennium City*, page 61).

Game Information:

Cost	Power
------	-------

- | | |
|----|---|
| 11 | <i>SUO Body Armor With Light Ceramic Inserts:</i> Armor (+11 PD/+11 ED) (33 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 13- (-¾), Mass (Half Mass; -½), Real Armor (-¼) |
| 11 | <i>SUO Force-Field Belt:</i> Force Field (6 PD/6 ED/6 Power Defense), 12 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (+¼) (22 Active Points); OIF (-1) |

Total cost: 22 points.

PERSONNEL

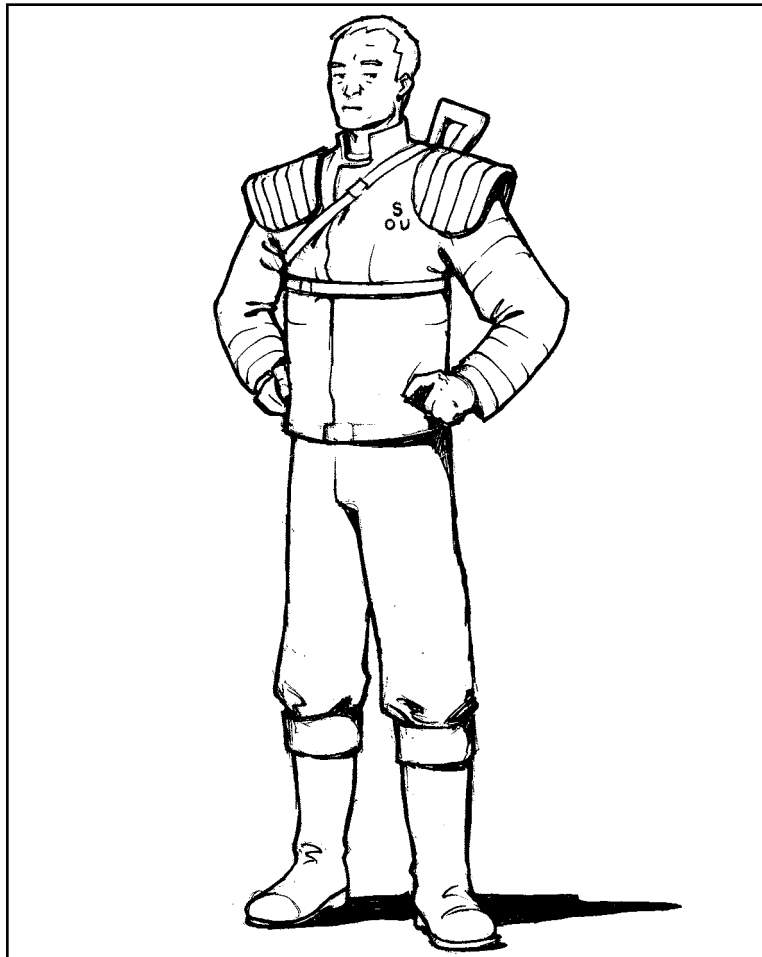
LT. TIM "CANNON" CONNOLLY

13	STR	15	DEX	15	CON	12	BODY
15	INT	13	EGO	18	PRE	10	COM
5	PD	5	ED	3	SPD	7	REC
30	END	30	STUN				

Abilities: +1 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Krav Maga; see Package Deal); Mental Defense (6 points); +1 with All Combat; Combat Driving 12-; Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Security Systems 8-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 13-; Tactics 13-; Teamwork 14-; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Contacts (10 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Hunted: Millennium City Media 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Cares More About Results Than Procedure; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: There are some people who claim Tim Connolly was born to be a cop. There are others who think he should be anything but.



Connolly was raised by a family of old-fashioned, hard-working cops; both his father and his uncle were on the Detroit PD. Everyone expected he'd grow up to be a cop himself, and he didn't disappoint. But even at the Academy he earned a reputation as something of a maverick — the student who often ignored instructors' advice to try his own thing and who seemed to go out of his way to antagonize certain teachers. Despite this he got top grades and had no problem earning his place on the force.

Connolly spent a few years learning the ropes and generally staying out of trouble, but soon he was right back in the stew. In 1996 allegations that he used excessive force on a suspect made the papers, creating difficulties for the Department even though he was completely cleared of all charges. After that he suffered from more allegations as perpetrators came to view him as an "easy mark," though in only one case was anything negative entered into his file. Commanders took to shuffling him around a lot, with no one really wanting him in their district even though he earned five medals for his repeated acts of selfless bravery.

In 1997 Connolly applied to and was accepted into the MARS. Everything was going smoothly — by his standards at least, if not the Department's — until 1999, when the MARS attempted to stop a VIPER robbery led by the Dragon Branch member Adder. During the confrontation Connolly beat Adder badly enough to put him in the hospital for weeks, resulting in a new wave of negative publicity for the Department despite the fact that the robbery was foiled. Connolly's captain had had enough. He brought Connolly up on a long series of charges and put him on indefinite suspension pending a hearing. And that's where he remained until Walter LaCouer got permission to put Connolly in charge of Special Unit Omega.

Having his own elite squad to command seems to have calmed Connolly down... a little. He's still every bit as unconventional as he used to be, though the burdens of command have given him a greater appreciation for what he put his own commanders through. Ultimately he's focused on results, not procedures or policies, and that tends to annoy bureaucratic cops who want everything done "by the book." Nor is he

above getting his hands dirty if the situation calls for it, though he's not one to administer "curb-stone justice" — any villain who ever took a beating from him took it in a fair fight that the villain instigated. Connolly is happiest when he's out in the field with his men, and least happy when trapped at his desk filling out paperwork. He prefers to lead from the front and won't ask his men to do something he's not willing to do with them.

Twice divorced, Connolly spends most of his time at work, though he's had a series of short-term girlfriends over the past few years. He plays in a weekly poker game with some other cops, though he loses more than he wins. He grills a mean burger and knows more about wine than he lets on to his team. He enjoys playing strategy board games like chess and go on the computer, but rarely plays against other people in person.

Tim Connolly is a white man who's in his late thirties; he has short, sandy blonde hair, blue eyes, and is clean-shaven. He's got an athlete's build and works hard to keep it despite his age. While on the job he wears his SUO uniform (sans body armor) at all times.

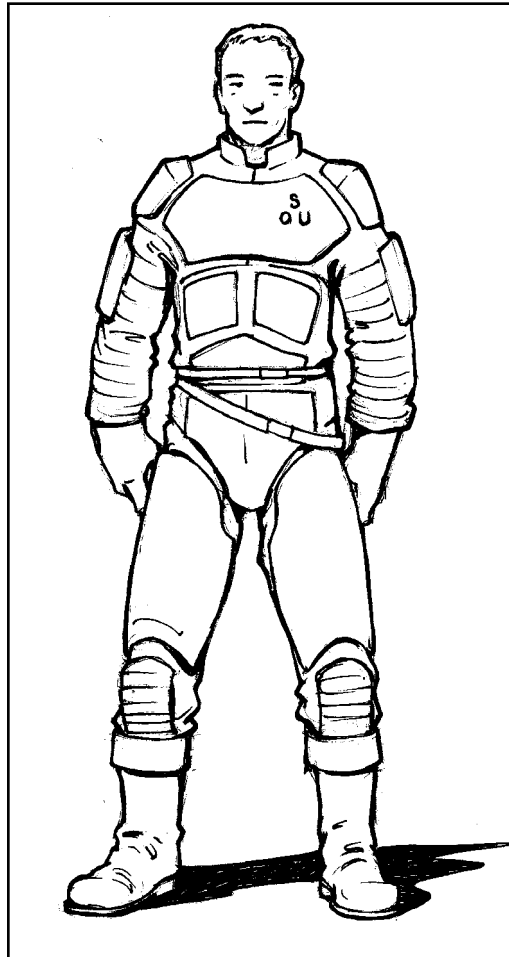
SGT. ERIC HINKLE

12 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	11 BODY
14 INT	10 EGO	15 PRE	10 COM
4 PD	4 ED	3 SPD	5 REC
26 END	25 STUN		

Abilities: +2 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Krav Maga; see Package Deal); Mental Defense (5 points); +1 with All Combat; +2 with Rifles; +8 versus Range Modifier with Rifles; Bureaucratics 12-; Combat Driving 8-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; KS: US Marines 11-; PS: Police Officer 11-; PS: Sniper 13-; PS: Soldier 11-; Stealth 12-; Street-wise 12-; Tactics 13-; Teamwork 14-; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Contacts (12 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Born and raised in rural Michigan, Eric Hinkle mostly hunted, fished, and played sports as a kid; school was boring. He squeaked through high school by the grace of some teachers who liked him despite his lackadaisical attitude. With his diploma behind him he joined the Marines, eventually seeing action in the Gulf War. Recog-



nizing his talent for distance shooting the Marines trained him as a sniper, and he put his skills to good use out in the desert.

After his hitch in the Marines ended, Hinkle decided he'd try his luck stateside rather than going for another term with the Marines. He moved to Detroit and got a job with the SWAT team. In 1994 he met a cop named Connolly (whose then-wife was friends with Hinkle's wife), and the two men became close friends. They had a lot of opinions and attitudes in common, though Hinkle was *much* better at working within the system and keeping his bosses happy than Connolly could ever be. When Connolly got the job commanding the SUO, it was only natural that he'd recruit his friend Hinkle for help.

Without Hinkle as second in command, the SUO would have a lot harder time functioning. Hinkle is a superb diplomat, able to soothe the commanders Connolly ticks off and present the Unit's case to the brass in just the right way. He's also a master at "working" the Department to get what he needs; sometimes it seems as if he knows someone in every part of the MCPD, or has just the right dirt on just the right captain to make things go the way he wants them to.

Hinkle is married and the father of two pre-teen daughters (since he lives with three women, he jokes that he has to come to work to avoid estrogen poisoning). He doesn't talk about it much, but the one great fear he has about his work is that some nutjob supervillain will kidnap, hurt, or kill his family to get back at the SUO. He's done everything he can to protect them, including installing expensive state of the art security systems at his house, but he's afraid it won't be enough if the worst happens.

Aside perhaps from Jablonski, Hinkle is the closest thing Special Unit Omega has to a party pooper. When the team goes out for eats and drinks, he's usually the first one to leave so he can get home to his family; when the group talks trash or makes wild bets, he tends to be the one holding on to his tongue and his money. He spends most of his leisure time working around his house, watching sports on TV, or playing with his daughters.

Eric Hinkle looks far too young and boyish to be second-in-command of the SUO, but he's actually in his late twenties even though he looks like he's still in college. He's tried a couple times to grow a beard to make himself look older, but it never turns out right, so he remains clean-shaven most of the time. He's white, with brown hair and eyes, and wears the SUO uniform.

AL FERRELL

15 STR	16 DEX	16 CON	13 BODY
13 INT	10 EGO	15 PRE	11 COM
7 PD	6 ED	3 SPD	6 REC
32 END	33 STUN		

Abilities: +1 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Krav Maga; see Package Deal); Mental Defense (5 points); +1 with All Combat; +1 with Krav Maga; Combat Driving 12-; Gambling (Card Games, Sports Betting) 12-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Professional Sports 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 12-; Tactics 14-; Teamwork 14-; TF: Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting, Small Planes; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Contacts (4 points worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: In Love With Delilah Flores; Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Al Ferrell dreamed of a football career, but it wasn't to be. He was plenty athletic, but he didn't really have the chops to be a great wide receiver or quarterback, and he wasn't willing to accept any less glamorous position. He worked at competitive bodybuilding for a while in college, but ultimately found it kind of boring and gave it up.

Ferrell joined the MCPD in 1996 after an Academy career almost as distinguished as Connolly's. He quickly became known for his smarts, his athleticism, and his bravery; cops still tell the story about how he faced down three armed bank robbers and convinced them all to lay down their weapons and give themselves up. Other cops refuse to believe this ever happened, arguing Ferrell would just have shot the perps the way he killed two gang punks in 1998 in an incident even the newspapers had to agree was self-defense.

Ferrell joined the MARS in late '98 and did just as well at that job, showing a flair for small-unit tactics that got him promoted to corporal. When the tryouts for Special Unit Omega were announced, he was one of the first to sign up and passed Sgt. Hinkle's tests with flying colors. To this day he's proud of his time in the MARS and often mentions it; he seems to think that it makes him a little better than the Omegas who came from other parts of the force.

Ferrell has the classic overachiever sort of personality. He's confident (if not overconfident) about nearly everything, convinced he can handle whatever life throws his way. Dedicated and disciplined, he'd be a great model of professionalism on the Unit if it weren't for a sarcastic, cynical streak that prevents him from keeping his mouth shut when he sees or hears something stupid. The other Omegas assume that Ferrell generally refrains from making any such comments about Connolly or Hinkle because

Connolly has privately beaten the crap out of him a few times as a way of showing who's in charge (though there's never been any evidence to prove that this actually happened).

Ferrell is an exercise nut who spend a lot of time in the gym even after a hard day at work; he's got a superbly-toned muscular build that really catches a lady's eye, and aside from Jablonski is the strongest member of the team. His other leisure activities including parachuting, flying small planes, playing poker, and watching sports (often together with Hinkle).

DELILAH FLORES

10 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	12 BODY
14 INT	13 EGO	15 PRE	16 COM
4 PD	4 ED	3 SPD	6 REC
30 END	30 STUN		

Abilities: +1 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Krav Maga; see Package Deal); Mental Defense (6 points); +1 with All Combat; Combat Driving 8-; Criminology 8-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; Language: English (completely fluent; Spanish is Native); PS: Dancing 11-; PS: Golf 8-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 12-; Tactics 13-; Teamwork 14-; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Contacts (4 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Assertive (And Often Argumentative); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: The child of Mexican immigrants, Delilah Flores grew up surrounded by mothers and aunts who were all homemakers. That didn't appeal to her. A tomboy almost as soon as she could walk, she preferred sports, climbing trees, dancing, and just about anything active to sitting around at home or playing with dolls. Her traditional family didn't take this very well — and they were horrified when they found out she had enrolled at the police academy and was planning to become a cop.

In the male-dominated Law Enforcement World, Flores quickly learned that she had to work harder than the men to be thought half as good, and even more importantly that she should always keep from looking weak. She developed a reputation for being troublesome and hard to work with not because she wasn't a good cop — she was, her personnel file proved it — but because she questioned and argued too much and seemed unwilling to compromise.

After she caught Connolly's attention that day in the parking garage, Flores worked hard to make it onto his team; she was smart enough to know a good break when she saw one. Her efforts paid off, and in a few weeks later she was picked as the only female member of the team. In a way nothing changed for her — she still felt like she had to prove herself constantly to this group of guys — but in other ways everything did. The other members of the Unit knew quality when they saw it, and they knew Connolly wouldn't choose someone who didn't deserve to be on the team, so they treated her with a lot more respect and professional courtesy than she was used to. Over the years she's gotten over the need to prove herself and has learned to react to being teased about being "the chick" on the team with as many good-natured insults as she gets. But she's never quite outgrown her assertiveness; it's a rare subject on which she isn't willing to offer an opinion or get into an argument over.

Common sense and professionalism have both long told Flores that getting involved with another cop is a Bad Idea. Despite this, after some time in the SUO she found herself kind of attracted to both Jake Zimmerman and Al Ferrell. She eventually realized Ferrell just wasn't right for her at all, but her casual interest in Zimmerman remained, and was returned. They flirted a bit every now and then, but nothing ever came of it — one or the other of them was always involved in some other relationship or just not in a position to act on their feelings. Finally in 2005 the stars aligned and they went out on a date. That was followed by another date here and there over the course of several months, and by mid-2006 they were seeing one another exclusively. She's not sure just how serious it all is, but she knows she's having fun and enjoys being with him. The fact that her mother has shifted from pestering her about "finding a nice boy" to "so when is he going to propose?" is the only downside to the situation.

Flores puts in as many long hours as anyone else on the team, but she's a firm believer in the value of leisure time — she can't quite understand guys like Connolly and Ferrell who seem so totally wrapped up in work. When she's off-duty she likes to go shopping for clothes (or just about anything else), go dancing at clubs, or play golf with Jake (though she's still not very good).

MICHAEL “TANK” JABLONSKI

23	STR	13	DEX	20	CON	16	BODY
10	INT	10	EGO	15	PRE	10	COM
10	PD	8	ED	3	SPD	10	REC
40	END	50	STUN				

Abilities: Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%, STUN Only, Requires A CON Roll; +20 PRE, Only To Resist Fear-/Intimidation-Based Presence Attacks; +1 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Boxing); Mental Defense (5 points); +1 with All Combat; +4 with Boxing; Combat Driving 8-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Football 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; PS: Play Football 11-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 12-; Tactics 12-; Teamwork 14-; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Contacts (4 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: The biggest, scariest-looking member of Special Unit Omega is Mike Jablonski, a former MARS member better known to most MCPD officers as “Tank.” 6’6” tall with a muscular build, he’s been the Department’s weightlifting champion five years running and the boxing champion five out of the past eight years (one year he couldn’t compete due to a death in the family, the other two he went into the tournament suffering from bad colds).

Next to his teammates Jablonski, who comes from a Polish family whose founders migrated to America to work in the steel mills, seems kind of slow and lumbering at times, though comparing him to a civilian shows how fast and athletic he really is. He can withstand a lot of punishment, and is usually the last one standing when the team gets the worst of it in a fight with a supervillain. Utterly fearless, he’s renowned throughout the MCPD for having once punched Ogre in the face; to this day he claims the three weeks he spent in traction as a result of Ogre smashing him through a building in return were “totally worth it.”

Al Ferrell has a habit of calling Jablonski “Schoolboy” because he’s the least party-oriented of any member of the team. He rarely drinks beer or liquor (though he enjoys a glass of good wine sometimes), usually avoids eating red meat, and prefers to get to bed early whenever he can. A devoted football fan, especially of the MC Lions, he frequently holds Sunday cookouts in autumn for SUO at his house so they can all watch the games and chow down on his famous “Barbecue Chicken a la Tank.”

Jablonski is married and has a young son; his wife, Penny, is only a few inches shorter than he, though not nearly so muscular.

WILLIAM “BILLY” KWAN

10	STR	16	DEX	14	CON	11	BODY
13	INT	13	EGO	15	PRE	10	COM
7	PD	5	ED	3	SPD	5	REC
28	END	23	STUN				

Abilities: +1 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Kung Fu); Mental Defense (6 points); +1 with All Combat; Combat Driving 8-; Demolitions 13-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; Language: English (Cantonese is Native); PS: Police Officer 11-; Stealth 13-; Streetwise 12-; Tactics 13-; Teamwork 14-; TF: Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle, Grenade Launchers; Contacts (4 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: Practical Joker; Psychological Limitation: Thrillseeker; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Billy Kwan is a third-generation immigrant; his grandparents fled southern China to escape the Communist takeover in 1949. His father owned a restaurant, a kung fu school, and a couple of other small businesses in San Francisco; to this day Kwan wonders if he was secretly a mutant with the power to not have to sleep.

Unfortunately the elder Kwan’s work ethic didn’t wear off on his middle son. Billy was kind of lazy, mostly interested in fun, sports, and girls (not necessarily in that order). To make matters worse, he was an inveterate practical joker. Relations between him and his father were strained...

...so strained, in fact, that after high school Billy decided to get as far away from his father as possible. He joined the Marines, became an EOD (explosives disposal) expert, and got sent on a tour of duty to Iraq. He learned a lot during his time there, and he enjoyed the work and helping the Iraqi people, but he liked the comforts of home too much to stay in the military. He didn’t want to go back to the Bay Area, though; that was too close to his father for comfort. A friend in the military who was from Millennium City told him the police department there was hiring, so he thought he’d give it a try.

A few weeks later he was part of the MCPD bomb squad. He soon earned a reputation as the squad member who’d work on any explosive, no matter how dangerous... and as a practical joker of the first water. The adrenaline rush he got from the work made all the other parts of his life seem dull and slow by comparison.

When Tim Connolly approached him about joining Special Unit Omega, it seemed like a dream come true. A practical joke he’d played on one of his superiors had gone a *little* too far, resulting in a minor injury, and he was in real danger of being fired. Not only did Connolly get him out of that jam, he offered a job that would give Kwan his much-desired adrenaline rush far more frequently.

But the job didn't come easy. Kwan's experience with small-unit tactics and fighting was pretty minimal, and he had to train hard to get up to par with his teammates. He skipped their Krav Maga training in favor of continuing with his Kung Fu, and often teases them about the "inferior" art they practice (though his record in challenge matches is only about 50-50). He's as much of a practical joker as ever, though a couple of his teammates (particularly Ferrell and Zimmerman) seem willing to give as good as they get. At times the prank wars escalate to the point where Lt. Connolly has to say something and the situation cools down... for a few weeks.

Kwan has a steady girlfriend, a young Korean-American woman named Susan Kim. They've been dating steadily for two years and he's slowly but surely working up the nerve to ask her to marry him.

ENRIQUE RAMIREZ

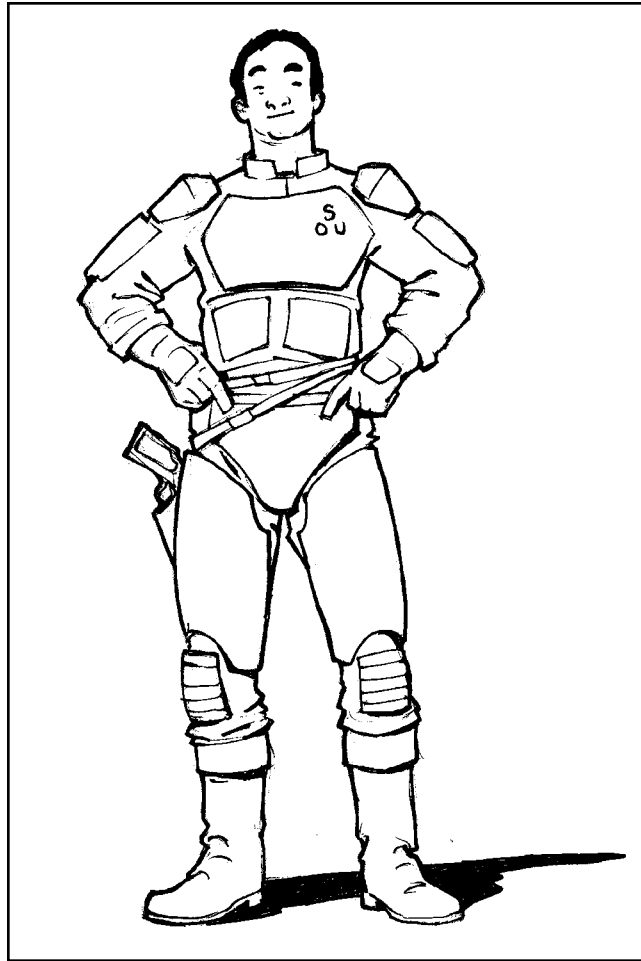
10 STR	15 DEX	14 CON	11 BODY
13 INT	12 EGO	14 PRE	10 COM
5 PD	4 ED	3 SPD	5 REC
28 END	25 STUN		

Abilities: Gadget Pool (20 point pool, Can Only Be Changed In A Lab); +1 PER with Sight Group; Martial Arts (Krav Maga; see Package Deal); Mental Defense (5 points); +1 with All Combat; Combat Driving 8-; Computer Programming 8-; Electronics 8-; Inventor 8-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Airplanes Of TheWorld 8-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; Language: English (Spanish is Native); Lockpicking 8-; Mechanics 8-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Security Systems 8-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 12-; Tactics 13-; Teamwork 14-; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Weaponsmith (Firearms, Energy Weapons) 13-; Contacts (4 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Enrique Ramirez has been defying stereotypes all his life. He and his parents are immigrants from Mexico — but legal ones. As a kid he was kind of a nerd, intensely interested in computers and science, but he was also socially adept, athletic, handsome, and popular. He could move easily between the "geeks" and the popular kids, and was a favorite with both the student body and the teachers. He's one of the few people you'll ever meet who has absolutely no horror stories about high school life.

Everyone figured Ramirez would go on to a big, successful business or R&D career of some sort after college, but he surprised everyone by joining the MCPD. He wanted to "give something back" and help the society that had welcomed his family and allowed it to become successful. Joining the military didn't interest him, so he took the other logical step and became a cop.



After graduating from the Academy Ramirez was put out on the streets as a beat cop. He did that for several years, but his interest in weapon-smithing eventually got him transferred into the weapons maintenance, testing, and development section of the Department. He kind of missed being out on the street, but he loved getting to tinker with weapons all day; he even worked some on designs and ideas of his own for new types of police equipment. One day he fine-tuned Connolly's assault rifle so well that the Cannon sat up and took notice. A few months later when Connolly was putting Special Unit Omega together, he remembered Ramirez and offered him a spot on the team... provided he could pass the Unit's physical tests. He could, and soon he was not only part of the Department's new elite anti-supervillain squad, he was getting to work with the most advanced technology he'd ever seen in his life.

Ramirez's tactical judgment, supreme professionalism, and bravery have earned him plenty of respect among SUO, but his real value to the team comes from his technological skills. First, he maintains (and when possible, improves) the Unit's weaponry and gear. He had to learn a lot "on the job," since he was used to standard firearms instead of blaster rifles, but he's gotten quite skilled at jury-rigging repairs when the Neuro-Rifles get damaged or finding a way to adjust a rifle's output to make it more effective against a particular villain. (He always carries a PDA containing all the technical data he needs, including notes on which

villains have proven more vulnerable to which energy frequencies.) Second, he often experiments with new gadgets or devices to make the Unit's job easier. His Gadget Pool VPP represents prototypes and other inventions that he's currently "field-testing" or has put together for a specific mission. Third, when the team encounters some sort of technological obstacle during a confrontation with a villain, Ramirez is the one who tries to handle it (though compared to a gadgeteer superhero he's not good at rapidly improvising in the field).

Ramirez is a very private person who keeps his personal life pretty much to himself. He enjoys going out with his teammates to eat, drink, play cards, see a movie, whatever, but if he has a girlfriend he never brings her along. His hobbies include building model airplanes, playing computer wargames, and constantly rebuilding his home PC (nicknamed "Big Bertha") for better performance.

A dark-haired Hispanic male about thirty years old, Enrique Ramirez seems to have a smile on his face all the time when he's around people he knows and likes, but a serious, sometimes shy demeanor when dealing with the public or strangers. He wears the SUO uniform.

JAKE ZIMMERMAN

13	STR	16	DEX	15	CON	13	BODY
15	INT	13	EGO	16	PRE	13	COM
6	PD	6	ED	3	SPD	7	REC
30	END	35	STUN				

Abilities: +1 PER with all Sense Groups; Martial Arts (Krav Maga; see Package Deal); Mental Defense (6 points); +2 with All Combat; +1 with Firearms; Combat Driving 8-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Criminal Law And Procedure 11-; KS: Golf 11-; KS: The Law Enforcement World 11-; KS: Supervillains 11-; PS: Play Golf 11-; PS: Police Officer 11-; Stealth 13-; Streetwise 13-; Tactics 13-; Teamwork 14-; WF: Small Arms, SUO Neuro-Rifle; Contacts (4 points' worth); Fringe Benefits: Local Police Powers, Law Enforcement Rank, Weapon Permit

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Uniform/Badge; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Watching); Psychological Limitation: In Love With Delilah Flores; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: If you had to pick one word to describe Jake Zimmerman, it would come down to a choice between "firebrand" or "troublemaker," depending on how much you agree with him. He's always been a great cop, but his "inability" to follow orders he thinks are stupid or respect commanders he considers incompetent had left him with few friends among the upper ranks of the MCPD. He was on the verge of being bounced from the force for punching a superior officer when Connolly rescued him by bringing him into the SUO fold.

And Zimmerman has repaid Connolly's trust in full. He scored at or near the top in every test the lieutenant put the new squad through, and he continues to be one of the team's best officers overall. More than once his fast thinking has

saved a mission that would otherwise have failed. Quick-witted, highly observant, and possessed of a keen ability to judge other people, Zimmerman is also as good at negotiating and persuading as he is at fighting.

Zimmerman is the team's most skilled "sneak." Sometimes he'll sneak around a potential battlefield, take up a position opposite Hinkle's, and do a little sniping of his own so they can catch villains in a crossfire.

For the past couple years Zimmerman has dated Delilah Flores, at first casually but now seriously. He's deeply in love with her, to the point where he's almost jeopardized missions once or twice to protect her. He's asked her several times to marry him, but she keeps gently putting him off.

Zimmerman is an avid golfer; if he didn't enjoy police work so much he'd give some serious thought to turning pro. He's divorced and has a young son, whom he has custody of on alternate weekends... though much to his sadness work often interferes with their time together.

USING SPECIAL UNIT OMEGA

You can use Special Unit Omega in one of several ways, depending on the nature of your campaign:

ALLIES

In settings where the PCs have some sort of official sanction, or are at least respected by the authorities enough to get involved with "police business" from time to time, Special Unit Omega might be frequent allies. When the Unit encounters a villain it can't handle, it calls on the PCs for help; when the PCs need assistance mopping up some enemy, Special Unit Omega is just what the doctor ordered.

ADVERSARIES

On the other hand, not all PC heroes enjoy that sort of good relationship with the police. For example, some fight crime in settings where superhumans have to register with the government, but they have not registered; in other cases a hero team seems more like villains due to misunderstandings, the editorials of an anti-superhuman newspaper publisher, or the like. In that case Special Unit Omega may be assigned to capture them. As a Hunter, Special Unit Omega is usually More Powerful (since it can call on police resources) and has NCI.

BASIS FOR A CAMPAIGN

Last but not least, the GM could base an entire campaign around Special Unit Omega, or at least the general concept of an elite anti-supervillain police squad. The players use the members of SUO as their PCs, or create their own SUO cops to take the place of the eight described above.



SICKBAY

SICKBAY



Superheroes need medical care as much as anyone else — in fact, given the dangers of their mission, they often need a lot *more* medical care than the man on the street.

Unfortunately, heroes who conceal their identities behind masks, who live their lives in the shadows, and who are often wanted by the police or pursued by fanatical enemies usually can't just waltz into the local hospital or doctor's office and get patched up. Fortunately for the superhero community of Millennium City, one dedicated doctor spotted the problem and came up with a solution.

HISTORY

Doctor Jeffrey Hansen is a caring and compassionate physician who turned down numerous lucrative job offers to work at the Hansen Medical Clinic, a semi-free medical facility for the impoverished people of Millennium City and the surrounding communities. Founded by his once-wealthy family in the early Sixties, it has a long and proud tradition of service to the community, and Hansen wanted to be part of that. Still, as satisfying as his work was, it lacked a certain intellectual challenge, and he always felt he should be doing something *more* as a way of giving back to a city that had given his family so much.

The solution to Hansen's problem — though he didn't recognize it as such at the time — came one fateful night in 2001 when he and a date were walking back to his car from a late dinner. Suddenly a mugger jumped out of the shadows, knocking Hansen to the ground and threatening him with a gun. The man was demanding money in a crazed voice, but Hansen feared that even if he gave the robber his wallet, he might get shot anyway.

In a flash of silver and jet the superhero Nightwind swept down from the rooftops, hitting the mugger with a flying kick that knocked him unconscious and into a pile of trash in a nearby alley. That would have been the end of it... except that before the mugger passed out he reflexively squeezed the trigger, catching Nightwind in the stomach with the bullet.

Bleeding profusely, Nightwind might have died right there on the sidewalk had it not been for Dr. Hansen. Improvising surgical tools from his pocketknife and his date's tweezers, and bandages from strips of cloth torn from his own suit jacket, he removed the bullet and patched up the wound, stabilizing the hero long enough to get him to Hansen's car and drive him to the hospital.

Once at the hospital Nightwind got full medical care... but Hansen also witnessed him having to cope with what seemed like a dozen different problems caused by the fact that he was a superhero. Fussbudget hospital administrators kept pestering him for an insurance card or other means of payment. Police officers responding to the hospital's report of a shooting victim wanted to know his real identity and see his permit to carry firearms in public. Hospital workers who were superhero fans kept stopping by to take his picture or try to get an autograph. A couple hours later when no one was looking, but long before he should have even been walking, Nightwind snuck out the window and vanished.

Superheroes need their own hospital, Hansen thought to himself. It was a great idea — but also a very expensive one, and he simply didn't have the money. He briefly looked into the possibility of getting charitable funding, but no one he broached the idea with wanted to have anything to do with a secret (and possibly illegal) medical clinic. Eventually he dropped the idea and went back to work.

Fast forward to late 2003. Just like he usually did for fun, Hansen bought a lottery ticket when the prize went high enough — and this time he won. After taxes he netted close to \$100 million dollars. Suddenly he remembered his old dream of a "hero hospital." *Now* he could afford to put his plan into action. He immediately quit his job at the Hansen Medical Clinic, though not without a few twinges of guilt for "abandoning the family legacy"; most people cynically assumed that since he was now rich, he was giving up his sham of caring about the downtrodden to live a life of idle luxury. (To this day he still sometimes encounters that attitude, and it pains him.)

Working through a series of shell companies, Hansen purchased a small building not too far from Mercy Hospital. While keeping the outside of the building looking like a typical office, he outfitted it with the standard equipment for an emergency room in a high-violence neighborhood, since he expected (correctly) that most of his work would basically be trauma medicine. With his clinic all set up and ready to go, he realized he wasn't entirely sure how to get the word out to the superhero community but still keep the clinic's existence secret so supervillains, the police, and hero fans wouldn't disturb it. After some thought he decided to approach one of the best-know public superheroes: the sentient simian Dr. Silverback.

Silverback loved the idea of a free medical clinic dedicated to helping injured and sick superheroes and agreed to help by spreading the word to heroes he trusted. Realizing that sooner or later word about the clinic — which Hansen called *Sickbay* as a nod to his love of the TV series *Star Trek* — was likely to leak out, Silverback also suggested several alternate sites to Hansen and advised him to remain prepared to relocate quickly at all times.

Hansen got his first patient two nights later, when Nighthawk of the Champions showed up to get treatment for some cuts and scrapes sustained during the evening's crimefighting. Slowly but surely, "business" increased to the point where Hansen was busy nearly every night. Eventually he had to hire a staff and other doctors to help him. As of mid-2007, Sickbay has become an important resource for the superheroes of Millennium City. Though it's had a few close calls the secret of its existence remains safe... for now.

ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES

Although it started as a simple one-man operation, Sickbay has grown to encompass over a dozen medical professionals who secretly serve the superhero community. The budget for Sickbay comes primarily from Hansen's fortune, but many wealthy superheroes voluntarily pay for their treatments there or donate money to Sickbay's trust fund. In early 2007 an anonymous donation of \$10 million became the largest gift ever received by Sickbay; Hansen has tried (and failed) to find out who was so generous.

Roughly speaking, Sickbay can be thought of as having two branches. The first is the "office staff" — two doctors and three nurses who work at the clinic near Mercy Hospital. They provide most of the major medical care, keep the facility clean, and so forth. Thanks to the fact that they don't have to file insurance paperwork or deal with a hospital bureaucracy, and that medical records are transcribed from dictation machines by a device designed by Dr. Silverback, they can spend nearly all of their time on patient care and other vital tasks.

The second branch is Sickbay's squad of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) who administer medical care in the field. Led by a former US Army Ranger named Robert Ross, the EMTs use special hovercraft ambulances (see *Equipment*, below) to pick up heroes who are too badly injured to get to the clinic themselves. More than once a Sickbay Hover-Ambulance has swooped right into the middle of a superbattle to rescue a badly-injured hero and take him to the clinic. This has saved lives, but at the expense of revealing the clinic's existence (though not location) to some villains, members of the underworld, and other persons. Despite the security risks, Dr. Hansen considers the EMTs a vital part of Sickbay and has no plans to do away with their services.

THE CLINIC

Sickbay's physical facility — "the clinic," as it's known — is still located in the four-story building Hansen bought several years ago, though Dr. Hansen and his staff are ready to abandon it with just a few minutes' notice if necessary. The building has a somewhat run-down appearance, though that's mostly a sham; Hansen has had it renovated and repaired to tip-top condition inside and keeps the outside in poor condition to discourage the curious.

Sickbay masquerades as a telephone answering service office, thus giving it a reason to have lights burning there all night. There's a tiny "reception room" just inside the front door in case anyone comes in to inquire about phone services, at which point the "receptionist" (a limited-function, realistic-looking android created by Dr. Silverback) politely turns the potential customer away. The receptionist is also programmed to recognize superhumans in need of medical assistance and to call the staff if necessary.

Getting In

There are three entrances to the clinic besides the front door. First, there's a back door in a secluded alley. This is where most patients enter, since it's concealed from the street. It leads to an emergency room where a duty nurse performs intake and triage on the patient. The back door is not unlocked, though — a hero who wants in has to press a buzzer and be seen on a two-way video screen by the duty nurse. In practical deference to the possibility that some injured heroes may not be able to stand, there's also a buzzer near ground level.

Second, for heroes who need even more concealment there's an entrance from the sewer system. It leads into a "clean room" where the hero is subjected to a rapid antiseptic shower. There's a two-way camera at the entrance to the clean room, just like the one in the alley.

Third, there's an aerial entrance on the roof that allows the Hover-Ambulances to enter and exit (plus a high-speed elevator to take patients down from the fourth floor landing pad to the emergency room). A two sliding doors rapidly retract and close to open or seal the hangar. This entrance only opens for the Hover-Ambulances; it's not a general entrance for flying heroes (though one could certainly enter or exit while the doors are open, a period of 1 Turn from the time they start to open).

Despite this wide selection of entrances some heroes find their own ways to get into the clinic. Heroes who can become intangible often just walk through the alley wall right into the ER, and heroes so often teleport in that the staff has set aside a small corner as their "landing zone" so they don't accidentally materialize in an object or person.

Floor By Floor

The first floor of the Sickbay clinic contains the emergency room, plus several private patient rooms off of it where heroes can be taken for specific treatment after their initial intake. Most visits to Sickbay don't require a hero to leave this floor; Sickbay's three doctors can stitch minor wounds, treat cuts and bruises, set most broken bones, and the like right here.

Sickbay's second floor has rooms for diagnostic equipment and two small operating theaters. Seriously-injured heroes are immediately transferred here by high-speed elevator so one of the doctors can get right to work saving their lives.

The third floor contains more diagnostic equipment plus a "recuperation ward" with 15 beds. Most of the beds are in one dormitory-like room, with only curtains to separate them, but there are three private rooms for patients who may put other patients at risk of infection, radiation poisoning from an Always On Damage Shield, or the like.

The fourth floor includes the hangar for the Hover-Ambulances (see above), offices for the doctors, equipment storage, and a few areas where the staff can put more beds if necessary (though they've never had to).

Equipment And Services

Besides some of the specialized equipment described below, Sickbay contains a full range of standard medical equipment to diagnose and treat various combat medicine conditions and illnesses, plus equipment specially designed for use on superhumans. For example, not all superheroes can submit to an MRI scan, so Dr. Hansen has worked with gadgeteer heroes to create a similar machine that uses a pulson energy field instead of magnetism. Sickbay's equipment also typically works on a much wider range of body shapes and sizes than similar machines in an ordinary hospital.

Although it has many advanced systems, Sickbay is not set up to provide long-term care of illnesses and chronic conditions; it primarily focuses on trauma medicine. It doesn't have the lab facilities to study serious diseases, for instance. A hero who presents with a problem Sickbay isn't equipped to treat is so informed and advised to visit a standard hospital or to contact the Centers for Disease Control. If the Sickbay staff feels that a patient is contagious and should not be allowed to leave on his own, it transports him to an appropriate facility via Hover-Ambulance. On two occasions Dr. Hansen has had to tranquilize an unruly hero whom he felt posed a serious public health risk so that hero could be taken to Mercy Hospital. This cost him a little credibility in the eyes of some heroes, but most members of the superhero community recognize the necessity for his actions and don't hold them against him.

WHO KNOWS ABOUT SICKBAY?

Just like with Grand Cienelago Island, one of the big questions concerning Sickbay is this: which superheroes get to know about it? Doctor Hansen wants to make sure that people who need Sickbay's services know about it, but he doesn't want it to become a target for supervillains. At first Dr. Silverback simply spread the word to heroes he knew and trusted, relying on their discretion and judgment when it came to passing on the information. That's worked pretty well, and over the years heroes "in the know" have developed an informal policy: only after a newcomer has been fighting crime and villainy as a superhero for at least six months, thus establishing his *bona fides*, should more experienced heroes introduce him to Sickbay.

Of course, that policy is flexible enough to allow for some variations. If a new hero works with and earns the respect of existing heroes of good judgment, they might tell him about Sickbay earlier. A new hero who's badly injured might get taken to Sickbay for treatment regardless of whether he's learned about it already. Hansen would rather risk the clinic's exposure than allow a hero to suffer or die from an injury the clinic could treat.

Because it's such a valuable service for them, superheroes work hard to keep Sickbay a secret. They don't talk about it casually, they take as much caution as they can when they go to visit it, and they don't go to Sickbay for injuries they can get treated for in conventional facilities without raising suspicion. If a supervillain or other dangerous individual were to learn about Sickbay, Millennium City's superheroes would take pains to make it *very* clear to him what would happen to him if he tells anyone else. Some mentalist heroes might even be inclined to wipe that memory from the villain's mind, even though they'd normally never even consider that sort of psionic tampering.

(In game terms, the GM can handle knowledge of Sickbay in any one of three ways. First, he can assume that any well-regarded Millennium City superhero who has Knowledge Skills like The Superhuman World or Superheroes on at least a 13- roll knows about Sickbay. Heroes from other cities need those Skills on at least a 15-; villains, marginal heroes, and civilians don't know about it no matter how good their rolls in such Skills are. Second, knowledge of Sickbay could be a 1-point Fringe Benefit characters have to pay for or earn during the game. Last but not least, the GM can simply reveal or not reveal Sickbay to the PCs via roleplaying and character interaction during the course of the game.)

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Hansen, his two doctor colleagues, and the other medical professionals who comprise the Sickbay staff are drawn tightly together by two things. The first is a genuine desire to help the superhero community by keeping heroes “in good repair.” The sometimes stressful conditions under which they work, combined with the need to maintain the facility’s secret, give the team a high degree of morale and camaraderie.

The second is the Hippocratic Oath. While only the three doctors have actually had to swear the oath, the nurses and other Sickbay workers generally agree with the sentiment. The truth is that while Sickbay doesn’t cater to supervillains, if a villain in need of medical care stumbled into the place, Hansen and his colleagues wouldn’t hesitate to offer treatment regardless of their personal safety or the need to keep Sickbay secure. Only if a villain posed a threat to other patients would they refuse to help him. A few Sickbay personnel, most prominently Robert Ross, have no desire to help villains at all and would watch them die rather than provide medical care to them.

EQUIPMENT

Doctors and EMTs who work exclusively on superhumans often need special tools to get the job done. Some of Sickbay’s most useful equipment includes:

HOVER-AMBULANCE

In its early days Sickbay experimented with using ambulances similar to the ones used by ordinary paramedics, but this didn’t work out. They were too slow, too weak and small to carry some heroes, too easily damaged, and worst of all too easily spotted. The problem was solved by several heroes who repaid Sickbay for its services by “liberating” several VIPER Falcon Hover-Vans from various Nests and giving them to Sickbay. Technologically-adept superheroes volunteered their time to strip out the weapons and install the systems and equipment Sickbay’s EMTs needed, plus a stealth field generator to shield the ambulance from detection (though the stealth field has a limited duration and thus has to be used carefully; it won’t work at all if any of the vehicle’s doors are opened).

SICKBAY HOVER-AMBULANCE

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
4	Size	20	2.5” x 1.25”; -4 KB; -2 DCV
35	STR	5	Lift 3,200 kg; 7d6 [0]
12	DEX	6	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
19	BODY	5	
6	DEF	12	
4	SPD	18	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
			Total Characteristic Cost: 66

Movement: Flight: 26”/104”
Ground: 0”/0”

Abilities & Equipment

Cost	Power	END
85	<i>Hover Generator:</i> Flight 26”, x4 Noncombat Multiple, Sideways Maneuverability (+½)	0
-12	<i>Flight Only:</i> Ground Movement -6” (0” total)	
-2	<i>Flight Only:</i> Swimming -2” (0” total)	
18	<i>Stealth Field Generator:</i> Invisibility to Sight and Hearing Groups, 30 Charges (+¼); IIF Bulky (-¾), Does Not Work While Any Door Is Open (-0) [30]	
5	<i>Communications System:</i> HRRP; OIF Bulky (-1), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)	
10	<i>Radar Array:</i> Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees); OIF Bulky (-1)	0

Skills/Laboratories

4	<i>Maneuverable:</i> +2 with Flight
13	Paramedics 14-

Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 121

Total Vehicle Cost: 187

Value Disadvantages

None

Total Disadvantage Points: 0

Total Cost: 187/5 = 37

Description: Based on a VIPER vehicle, a Sickbay Hover-Ambulance can reach a velocity of approximately 155 miles per hour and is highly maneuverable (users need a special Transport Familiarity to pilot it properly, a safety measure built into the vehicle to keep it from being stolen). It typically has a crew of two EMTs, plus room in the back for up to four stretchers (racked bunk bed-style, two on each wall) and seats for half a dozen more patients, ride-alongs, or extra EMTs. It has compact versions of many of the specialized medical devices found at Sickbay’s clinic, as well as standard medical devices the EMTs need.

SICKBAY FIELD MEDICAL KIT

Effect:	Paramedics 14-; SS: Medicine 12-; SS: Superhuman Physiology And Medicine 14-; HRRP
Target:	One character
Duration:	Constant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	2 DEF

Description: Every Sickbay EMT and doctor has his own version of this kit, which was designed primarily by Dr. Silverback. Among other things it includes: reusable syringes with questionite-tipped needles (for penetrating super-hard skin); a built-in computerized database on general superhuman physiology and medical problems (not specific to any given superhuman, to avoid privacy problems); hardened, questionite-laced splints capable of restraining even superhumanly-strong limbs; a built-in two-way, full-spectrum communications system encryptedly linked to Sickbay itself; and various drugs of general application (though Sickbay EMTs refrain from using drugs on patients unless it's deemed absolutely necessary; that's the sort of treatment a doctor should administer).

Game Information:

Cost	Power
6	Paramedics 14-; OAF (-1)
1	SS: Medicine 12-; OAF (-1)
2	SS: Superhuman Physiology And Medicine 14-; OAF (-1)
5	<i>Communications System:</i> HRRP; OAF (-1), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)

Total cost: 14 points

SICKBAY MEDICAL SCANNER

Effect:	Detect Medical Condition 14- (see text)
Target:	Self
Duration:	Constant
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	2 DEF

Description: This device is a PDA-sized medical scanning device that uses a field of pulson energy to evaluate a patient's general medical condition. When placed on the subject's body and activated, it perceives and provides readouts about significant medical conditions. It can't detect every little medical problem a subject has. It can, for example, perceive physical injuries, broken bones, collapsed or injured internal organs, systemic failures, and some widespread diseases or severe cases of poisoning. It cannot detect genetic alterations, subtle diseases or poisons, or similar conditions. Like most of Sickbay's equipment, it's focused on combat and trauma medicine, not general medical care.

Game Information: *Detect Medical Condition (INT Roll +3; see text) (Radio Group) (13 Active Points); OAF (-1), Affected As Sight Group As Well As Radio Group (-½). Total cost: 5 points.*

SICKBAY EMT BODY ARMOR

Effect:	Armor (6 PD/6 ED), Activation Roll 11-
Target:	Self
Duration:	Persistent
Range:	Self
END Cost:	0
Breakability:	6 DEF

Description: Sickbay wants to keep its EMTs healthy as much as it wants to care for injured superheroes. In addition to providing free medical care for them and their immediate families, it issues them a protective vest similar to those worn by police officers and soldiers. Specially designed for comfort and freedom of movement as well as defense, this body armor has more than once saved the life of a Sickbay EMT.

Game Information: *Armor (6 PD/6 ED) (18 Active Points); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 11- (covers Hit Locations 9-13; -1), Mass (Half Mass; -½), Real Armor (-¼). Total cost: 5 points.*

PERSONNEL

Major Personnel

DR. JEFFREY HANSEN

8	STR	12	DEX	10	CON	10	BODY
13	INT	10	EGO	13	PRE	10	COM
4	PD	4	ED	3	SPD	4	REC
20	END	19	STUN				

Abilities: Bureaucratics 8-; Conversation 12-; Deduction 12-; High Society 12-; CK: Millennium City 11-; KS: Millennium City Superheroes 11-; Paramedics 14-; Persuasion 12-; PS: Doctor 14-; Scientist (Biology 11-, Chemistry 11-, Genetics 11-, Human Biology 12-, Medicine 14-, Superhuman Physiology 14-; Surgery 14-); Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Medicine

25+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Hippocratic Oath

Notes: Jeffrey Hansen was born into the Hansen family, once one of Detroit's wealthiest and most socially prominent families. Unfortunately his grandparents and parents made some poor investment choices, and by the mid-Seventies the family that had created the Hansen Medical Clinic, the Hansen Community Development Initiative, and the Hansen School of Business at a local college through its charitable donations was on the verge of becoming a charity case itself. Jeffrey grew up in an atmosphere of genteel poverty, acutely aware that his family had once been capable of great things but had been dealt a harsh blow by fate.

Some people would have grown up bitter and greedy in an environment like that, but in Hansen it awoke a compassion for the unfortunate and downtrodden. After seeing how doctors valiantly battled the cancer that ultimately claimed his grandfather's life, he decided to become a physician himself. His parents, hoping that a successful medical career could bring the money that would revitalize the family fortune, heartily approved of his decision. They were bitterly disappointed when he chose to go to work at the Hansen Medical Clinic for a pittance instead of accepting any one of a dozen offers he received from lucrative private practices. Since then he's largely become estranged from his parents and two sisters (one a business executive for Pharos Industries, and one who married well). His family later had cause to regret its treatment of him when he won the lottery, but he's not the sort to gloat over such things. His wife Sandra handles that.

Hansen's founding of Sickbay is discussed above. Since achieving his dream of creating a medical clinic for superheroes, Hansen has worked there nearly every single night. He rarely takes vacations or even days off, though the fact that he now has a staff and colleagues makes that



possible if he wants to. The other doctors worry that he works himself a little too hard and have encouraged him to relax more often, maybe even hire a fourth doctor for Sickbay, but he enjoys his work too much to "slack off" (as he puts it).

Hansen still thinks of himself and Sickbay as serving a community that deserves his, and Millennium City's, profound gratitude and respect. What he doesn't grasp is how grateful the city's superheroes are to *him*. To repay his sacrifices they donate money and supplies to the clinic, volunteer their time and skills as needed, and most importantly keep its secret. Unbeknownst to Dr. Hansen, much of the time whenever he, his family, or any of his staff go out in public there's a hero somewhere nearby keeping an inobtrusive eye on them — the last thing the heroes of Millennium City want is for any of them to get hurt or kidnapped. If no one is available to "shadow" him, Witchcraft or some other mystic hero puts a tracing-spell on him in case of emergencies.

Jeffrey Hansen is a white man in his early thirties with sandy blonde hair that he keeps cut in a short, simple style. At the clinic he wears standard medical scrubs with a labcoat and his favorite stethoscope slung around his neck. He often looks tired, the result of too many long hours and too much stress. He's married to Sandra, a psychiatrist; they have a son and a daughter.

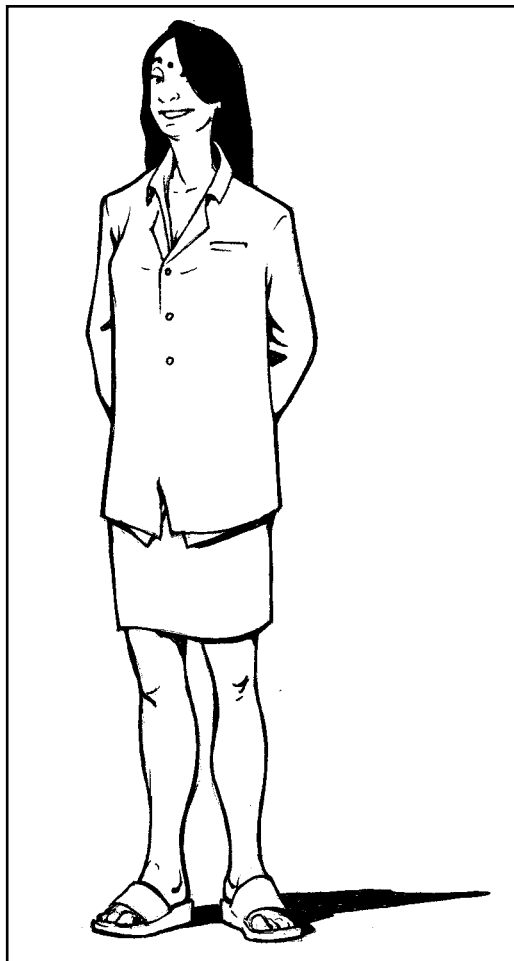
DR. MONICA RAVSHAPUTRI

8 STR	8 DEX	9 CON	9 BODY
13 INT	10 EGO	10 PRE	12 COM
3 PD	3 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
18 END	18 STUN		

Abilities: Computer Programming 8-; Language: English (completely fluent; Hindi is Native); KS: Millennium City Superheroes 8-; Paramedics 12-; PS: Doctor 12-; Riding 8-; TF: Equines, Snow Skiing; WF: Bows; Scientist (Biology 11-, Chemistry 11-, Genetics 11-, Human Biology 12-, Medicine 12-, Superhuman Physiology 12-; Surgery 11-); Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Medicine

25+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Hippocratic Oath

Notes: The daughter of an American diplomat posted to India and an Indian businesswoman, Monica Ravshaputri took her mother's family name to better fit in in her homeland. Bright and capable, she attended college in India and medical school in England and America. After graduating



she decided to live and practice in the States — specifically, Millennium City, which appealed to her with its high-tech nature and bright optimism.

Unfortunately her career got off to a rocky start. After a few good months she sued the hospital she was working in for sexual harassment due to the actions of one of the senior physicians. The man she accused was wealthy, powerful, and highly respected in the community, so filing the suit automatically made her something of a pariah. She persisted in going forward with her suit despite settlement offers, veiled threats, and other blandishments from various sources. It came to trial... and she lost. It was her word against his, and he had an army of character witnesses who testified on his behalf.

Her career was effectively ruined; no one in Millennium City was going to work with her now... except one person. Having heard about her brave (if ultimately pointless) fight and its aftermath, Jeffrey Hansen decided she had just the sort of dedication and guts he needed for his first colleague at Sickbay.

Intrigued by both Hansen's enigmatic offer of an interview and descriptions of "a job unlike any other you can imagine in the medical field," Ravshaputri showed up to talk to him. After a few minutes of conversation to gauge her personality and drive, Hansen took a chance and opened up to her about the job. *He's right*, she thought. *This isn't like any other medical job out there.* And that meant it was a job she wanted. She signed on with Sickbay and has worked there ever since. Except for a couple times where superheroes had negative reactions to some drug or treatment and hurt her with their thrashing about and randomly-fired eyebeams, she hasn't regretted taking the job for a minute.

Doctor Ravshaputri is an active and energetic woman. Her hobbies include horseback riding, archery, and skiing, though she never has as much time for any of them as she likes. When a call comes in that sounds like a doctor might be needed in the middle of a superbattle, she's usually the one who accompanies Ross and his EMTs to the scene. While she denies it when Hansen teases her about being an "adrenaline junkie," to herself she has to admit that he's not entirely wrong.

A beautiful Hindu woman in her early thirties, Dr. Ravshaputri is Dr. Hansen's opposite in many ways. Despite putting in equally long hours she always seems to look fresh and vibrant, as if ready for a night on the town. She prefers comfortable street clothes — mostly stylish pantsuits and the like — to scrubs, though she does wear a labcoat. Her hair is long and black.

ROBERT ROSS

13 STR	15 DEX	15 CON	12 BODY
13 INT	13 EGO	15 PRE	10 COM
6 PD	4 ED	3 SPD	6 REC
30 END	30 STUN		

Abilities: Martial Arts (Commando Training); Running +2" (8" total); Swimming +2" (4" total); +2 OCV with Firearms; Climbing 12-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-; KS: Ranger History And Traditions 11-; KS: US Army History And Customs 11-; Navigation (Land) 12-; Paramedics 13-; PS: EMT 13-; PS: Ranger 11-; PS: Soldier 11-; Stealth 12-; Survival (Desert, Mountains, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-; Tactics 12-; Tracking 12-; TF: Basic and Advanced Parachuting, Sickbay Hover-Ambulance, Small Motorized Boats; WF: Small Arms, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns, Grenade Launchers, Knives, Shoulder-Fired Weapons; Contacts (10 points' worth)

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: US Army 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Psychological Limitation: Eye For An Eye

Notes: Robert Ross is the head of the EMT squads Sickbay sends into the field to help superheroes who can't make it to the clinic on their own. Often that means flying right into the middle of a super-battle and becoming a target, but Ross is used to that kind of thing.

The son of an Ohio steel mill family, Ross joined the Army after high school. His combination of brains and superb physical conditioning made him a natural candidate for the Rangers. He applied, passed the tests, and became a member of the elite unit. He spent the next several years participating in special missions all over the world, often in dangerous and stressful conditions.

After several terms of enlistment, Ross decided it was time for a change of pace. He briefly considered teaching, security work, or being a bodyguard, but none of those careers really appealed to him. Then he got a mysterious offer from a doctor in Millennium City and couldn't resist checking it out.

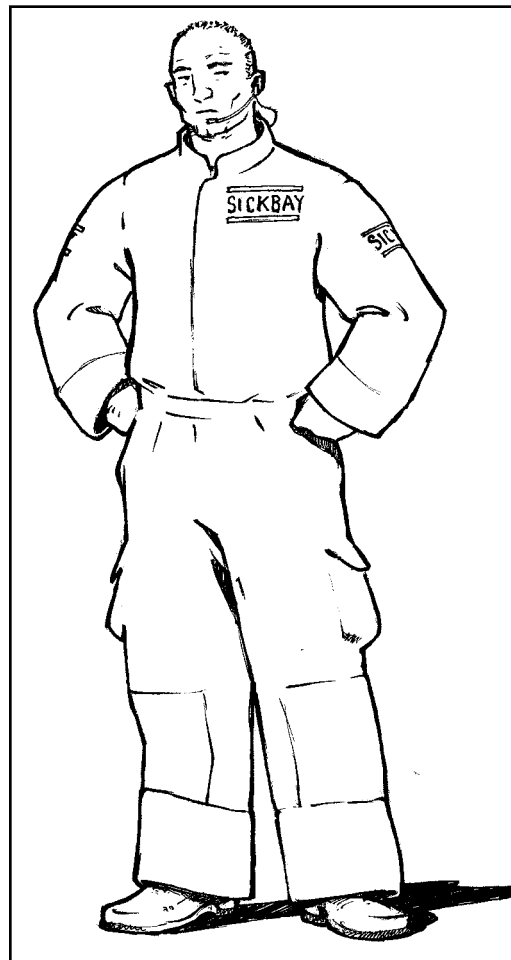
Jeffrey Hansen had an interesting proposal for Ross: put together a secret team of "commando medics" who would rescue injured superheroes and help save their lives. Having been on the receiving end of a medic's attentions more than once during his career, Ross was intrigued by the idea. Not only would it offer plenty of excitement, it was a chance to help "the good guys" without worrying about red tape, politics, or any of that other crap. "Sign me up," he said.

It took Ross months to put together two acceptable squads of EMTs. It would have been difficult enough recruiting people for such an unusual job. Doing it without being able to tell potential employees exactly what they'd been

doing was downright frustrating. But he'd had tough jobs before, and he got through this one just like he'd gotten through the ones that came before.

Ross is one of the few people working for Sickbay who does *not* believe in the Hippocratic Oath. As far as he's concerned, only people who deserve medical care should get it. He'd sit by and watch a villain bleed to death on the grounds the villain got what he deserved. On the other hand, he willingly risks his life to help heroes he's never met. In direct violation of Hansen's orders he carries a small but powerful concealed pistol with him when he works, but he's never had to use it... so far.

Now in his mid-thirties, Robert Ross still has the athletic build, squared shoulders, strict posture, and focused attention of a US Army Ranger (his former profession). Like the EMTs who serve under him in the field, he wears a navy blue jumpsuit with the word SICKBAY in red on the left chest, both upper arms, and the back, plus a headset that lets him keep in contact with base and his men. He's a white man who keeps his black hair in a short military buzzcut. He's not married, preferring to spend time with a succession of girlfriends who eventually get tired of his weird work schedule and hardnosed attitudes and move on to greener pastures.



Other Personnel

DR. HUGH WARDNER

The most recent addition to Sickbay's staff of physicians is Hugh Wardner, a graduate of the Tulane University School of Medicine. He practiced briefly in Vibora Bay, but after a highly-publicized incident in which he saved the life of the superhero Amphibian, Dr. Hansen invited him to join the Sickbay staff. Happy to leave behind his mundane practice for something cutting-edge and challenging, Wardner moved to the City of the Future.

It hasn't quite worked out as he planned. The job definitely has as many challenges as he expected, but the stress makes his emergency room internship seem tame at times. He's convinced that word about the clinic is going to slip out, so he's become obsessive about security. Hansen's becoming a bit worried about him and thinks he might need some therapy... or at least a long vacation.

ANGELA SIMMS, LPN

When a hero comes to Sickbay in search of medical care, the first face he usually sees is that of Angela Simms, the rotund black woman who serves as the clinic's duty nurse. She mans the front desk, does the initial intake on patients, and sometimes provides minor medical care to patients waiting to see a doctor. Despite the pressures of her job she always seems to be cheerful and upbeat, making small talk and cracking jokes; at least twice a week she brings delicious homemade cookies or cupcakes for her co-workers ("If that woman doesn't quit baking I'm going to gain 20 pounds," says Dr. Ravshaputri).

ROBERTA BUROVA, RN

"Bobbi" Burova is Sickbay's chief surgical nurse. She does lots of other things, of course — it's not as if the doctors have to perform major surgery every night — but when they *do* have to remove a bullet that's lodged in a hero's leg or repair severe internal injuries, she's the one standing next to them, handing out instruments, soaking up blood, and swabbing sweaty foreheads. She's as meticulous and detailed as a surgical nurse should be, but it spills over into her life in negative ways; she's at least borderline obsessive-compulsive and frets constantly about whether she remembered to lock her front door, turn off her coffee pot, and so on. She's a widow with two grown children, so she devotes a lot of time and attention to her work.

USING SICKBAY

You can use Sickbay in many different ways, such as:

HERO SUPPORT AND PLOT DEVICE

At its most basic, Sickbay can simply fulfill its intended role as a support service for your PCs and their superhero colleagues. But that raises all sorts of intriguing possibilities, including the obvious one: what happens when word about the place finally leaks out? Will reporters descend on the place looking for a hot story? Will supervillains attack, or take the doctors hostage, or demand equal time and treatment? And perhaps most importantly for your heroes' long-term health: if the genie does get out of the bottle, can Dr. Hansen stuff it back in by moving the clinic to a new location?

THE SICKBAY CAMPAIGN

For a change of pace, perhaps your players could take the part of a Sickbay EMT squad for an evening's game session, or even an entire campaign. This might require expanding the nature and role of the EMTs to include medical treatment and investigation so the GM can draw on medical shows ranging from *Marcus Welby, M.D.* to *ER* to *Scrubs* to *House* for plot ideas and inspiration. Combine those elements with comic books wildness and you'd have one heck of a game!

SICKBAY IN YOUR CAMPAIGN SETTING

Not all *Champions* games take place in Millennium City, but that doesn't mean you can't use Sickbay in your game. First, you can simply transport the entire clinic and all its personal lock, stock, and stethoscopes to your own campaign city — there's nothing about Sickbay or its personnel that ties them too closely to the City of the Future to move. Second, you can have Sickbay "branch out" by establishing satellite clinics in other cities. That would probably require more cash than Hansen has, but perhaps a wealthy PC would be interested in donating to the cause....



TRANS-CITY CONSTRUCTION

TRANS-CITY CONSTRUCTION



In a world where a superbattle, an alien starship crashing to Earth, or a giant monster's rampage can smash a building to rubble in mere minutes, there's a need for a construction firm that can construct buildings and repair damaged ones nearly as quickly. Enter Trans-City Construction.

HISTORY

Trans-City Construction is a classic example of a superhuman finding ways to use his powers both for personal profit and to provide a valuable service for the community without putting on a costume and fighting crime. Jeff Baker was born a mutant. During his adolescence he manifested the power to transmute inorganic matter. He briefly considered becoming a superhero, but the more he thought about it the more painfully obvious it was that his powers really weren't of much use against the likes of Dr. Destroyer, Holocaust, Mechassassin... or even Foxbat, really. So he decided to find a way he could use his powers to help people that (a) didn't involve fighting, and (b) would benefit him personally.

It didn't take long for him to realize that construction work was the perfect answer. He started working construction jobs while he was still in high school so he could learn the trade, and after graduating switched to doing it full-time. After a few years of that, when he figured he knew enough to run his own firm, he quit and formed Trans-City Construction.

TCC was an immediate hit. His powers allowed the company to complete jobs in a fraction of the time that an ordinary firm took, with fewer mistakes or complications. (And the ones that did occur he could correct easily.) He soon had more work than he knew what to do with and had to go on a serious hiring campaign. Some of TCC's most valued employees, including the invaluable Maureen Wilkinson, came aboard during this initial expansion phase.

Baker's plans hit a snag when he began having union problems. The construction unions decided he was taking money out of their pockets and needed to slow down, if not go away entirely. For

awhile things looked pretty grim, as more and more construction workers refused to hire on for TCC jobs. But Baker's unwillingness to cave in to economic blackmail paid off in the end. He was able to hire enough workers who didn't care about the union to keep going — barely. When the unions realized they couldn't drive him out of business they decided to negotiate. In the interest of good business relations Baker agreed, and the two sides eventually reached a compromise that resulted in Baker hiring more union personnel. Since he doesn't really need them full-time he's basically paying them to do nothing for a good part of the day, but that's easier and cheaper than constantly quarrelling with the unions.

With those problems smoothed out, TCC continued to expand, becoming one of the most successful construction firms in Millennium City — and one of the most specialized. Rather than take on ordinary jobs, TCC advertised itself as “the fastest builders in America!”. With Baker's powers to speed things along, TCC could erect a building in a fraction of the time an ordinary firm could, or make repairs to a damaged building almost overnight. In a city with so much superhuman activity, being able to clean up after and repair the effects of superbattles was the ticket to big money, and by the time he was 25 Baker was a millionaire many times over.

Trans-City began its second big expansion in 2003, when Baker started opening offices in other cities, including Chicago, Vibora Bay, San Francisco, Denver, and New York. Those branches of the company tend to function more like ordinary construction firms, since they don't have Baker's services to call on nearly every day. But if necessary — and if the price is right — Baker's willing to fly to another city and put his abilities to work for a client.

Today Trans-City Construction is one of the most highly-regarded construction firms in Millennium City, known as much for its “cleanup” services after superbattles as for full construction projects. When a business needs a new building built quickly, or needs rapid repairs so it can go on functioning with minimal interruption, TCC is usually the firm that gets the call.

ORGANIZATION AND RESOURCES

Despite its prominence in some circles, Trans-City Construction is a pretty basic corporation on paper. Jeff Baker is the sole owner; he doesn't even have any business partners, though he maintains a profit-sharing program for his employees. He spends a lot of his time in the home office taking care of administrative and managerial details... but in the final analysis the company's success is due to his transmutation powers, so he has to go out into the field frequently to help with building projects. He prefers to do this in the morning hours, leaving the afternoon for ordinary construction workers to get their jobs done, but it really depends on the nature of a project and the demands of a customer. Sometimes to ensure that a structure gets built in time he has to be there practically around the clock, transmuting rubble or raw materials into building products.

Assisting Baker with administrative duties is a small but diligent staff headed by his office manager, Maureen Wilkinson. Mostly the staff works on preparing bids for future work and coordinating work crews' assignments for current projects. Peter Greene, TCC's accountant, handles financial matters.

Depending on its current workload, TCC may have half a dozen or more large "work crews" assigned to specific jobs. Each work crew consists of construction workers employed directly by TCC, plus specialized subcontractors hired for that job based on submitted bids. TCC has a foreman to oversee each job all the way through to completion. Rick Bannister is the company's Chief Foreman, in charge of overseeing and managing all ongoing jobs. Running a construction project is a thankless task filled with thousands of little details, clashing personalities, incompatible schedules, and the threat of a lawsuit lurking in practically every corner, but Bannister and his foremen get the job done.

EQUIPMENT

Trans-City Construction owns a small fleet of its own construction vehicles — trucks, bulldozers, and the like — and subcontracts with other construction firms for whatever else it needs, from dumptrucks to backhoes. Similarly, it has plenty of construction equipment of its own, but usually relies on subcontractors to bring whatever specialized gear they need to do their specific jobs.

To maintain his company's reputation as a sort of cutting-edge, high-tech construction firm, Jeff Baker has looked into having some special equipment designed and constructed. His main idea along these lines is a "hover-forklift" that could easily carry heavy loads to any part of a building using gravitic technology, and a similar "hover-dolly" that a single worker could use to carry a very heavy load. But so far none of these ideas has gotten past the drawing board stage; they're simply too expensive for Baker to seriously consider manufacturing at this time.

PERSONNEL

Major Employees

JEFF BAKER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
12	INT	2	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
				Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
				Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
				Phases: 6, 12
3	PD	1		
3	ED	0		
2	SPD	0		
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
22	STUN	0		
				Total Characteristics Cost: 18

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers

40 *Matter Transmutation:* Major Transform 4d6 (any inorganic material to any other inorganic material [see text]; heals back through another application of this or a similar power), Improved Results Group (any inorganic material, see text; +¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼), Extra Time (at least a Full Phase, and often longer, see text; -½), Limited Target (inorganic materials, see text; -¼), No Range (-½)

END

3

Perks

10 Money: Wealthy

Skills

3 Bureaucratics 12-
 2 KS: Millennium City Construction Codes And Regulations 11-
 2 KS: The Millennium City Construction World 11-
 2 PS: Carpentry 11-
 2 PS: Construction Worker 11-
 2 PS: General Contractor 11-
 1 SS: Materials Science 8-
 1 SS: Physics 8-

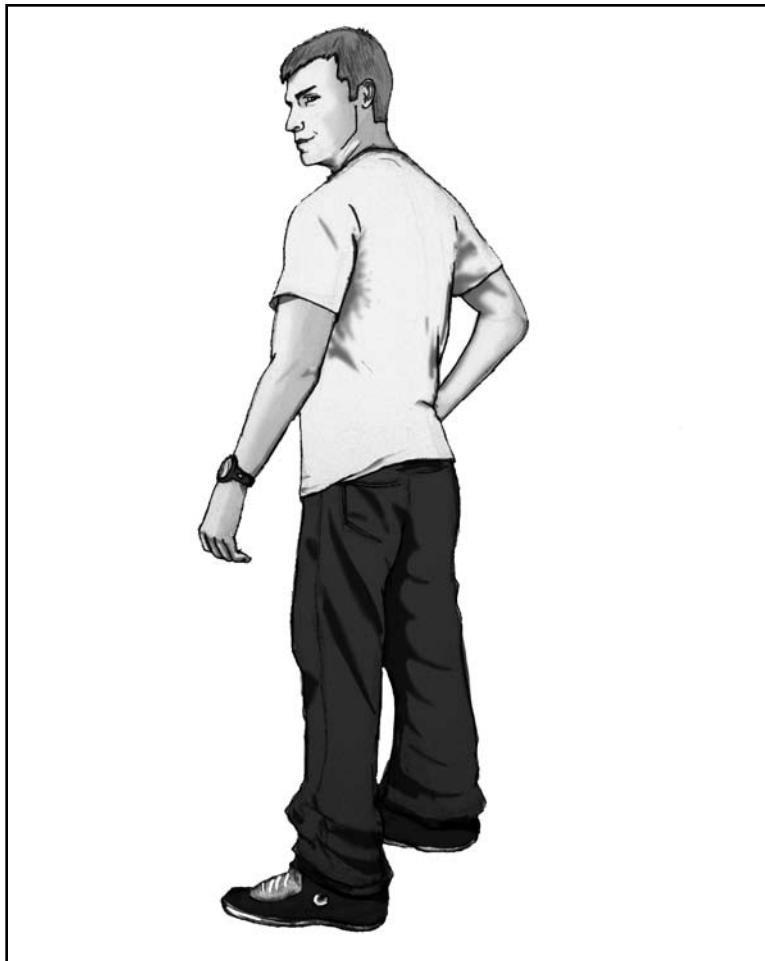
Total Powers & Skills Cost: 65

Total Cost: 83

100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
 5 Hunted: Millennium City Construction Unions 8- (As Pow, NCI, Watching)

Total Disadvantage Points: 115



Background/History: Jeff Baker first discovered he was a mutant when he was a teenager and a bully was picking on him. The bully was about to hit him with a baseball bat... when Baker reflexively transmuted it into a piece of polyester cloth! The terrified bully ran, and until Baker went public with his abilities could never get anyone to believe what happened.

Baker spent the next few weeks and months experimenting, learning the limits of his abilities. He wasn't happy to discover that he couldn't turn rocks into diamonds or squirrels into beautiful girls, but all things considered he couldn't really complain. Now he just had to figure out what to do with his powers.

As a long-time superhero fan and devoted reader of *SuperWorld* magazine, Baker's first thought was to become a costumed crimefighter like his idols. But it didn't take long for him to realize his powers just weren't suited to that. For one thing, they worked pretty slowly (especially if he wanted to do anything really significant or combat-effective); for another, he had to touch his target to affect it. Reluctantly but maturely, he shelved his dreams of becoming a superhero and looked for other ways to use his powers.

The answer came to him one night while his parents were talking about renovating the kitchen. Construction! With his powers he could construct buildings quickly and cheaply. He went out the next week and found a part-time construction job... and the rest, as they say, is history.

Personality/Motivation: Jeff Baker's a more or less an ordinary guy, without the extremes of personality (positive or negative) that tend to mark so many superhumans. He just wants to run his business in peace, make money, and enjoy life with his friends (he doesn't yet have a steady girlfriend, much less a family). His feud with the construction unions has left him with a dislike of them, but he puts it aside so he can do business efficiently. A tiny little part of him still dreams of being a superhero, but it doesn't interest him enough to pursue the (no doubt dangerous and expensive) experiments required to boost his powers and physiology to that level.

Baker has become known as an advocate of hiring superhumans. He's a textbook example of how to make money with a good superpower, and he often advises businesses about how to hire the superpowered, and the superpowered on how best to profit responsibly from their powers.

Quote: "Trans-City prides itself on meeting deadlines other companies can only dream of, Mr. Stone. But like anything else in business, the fastest service commands the highest price."

Powers/Tactics: Jeff Baker is a mutant with matter transmutation powers, but contrary to some of the wild stories told about him in the tabloids early in his career, there are definite limits on what he can do (besides the standard ones like volume of material he can affect at once). First and foremost, he cannot affect living matter. He can affect

some types of living matter after it's dead (such as wood), but other types he cannot affect at all (e.g., human or animal flesh).

Second, he can only transmute that matter into other types of nonliving matter. His powers work best and easiest if the result of the transform is relatively similar to the starting material — wood into another type of wood, stone into earth or metal, and the like. That sort of Transform takes him only a Full Phase Action. The more dissimilar the two types, the longer the transmutation takes, up to about 20 Minutes (and in some cases he may even have to pay full END cost). Transmutations that involve multiple materials also take longer.

Third, he cannot transmute materials into highly-valuable substances, such as gold, oil, or diamonds. Whether this is a hard-and-fast restriction or one he's subconsciously imposed on himself, the fact of the matter is he can't shower his girlfriends with jewelry or turn dead leaves into \$100 bills. Similarly, he can't transmute raw matter into working machines or the like, though he can, for example, transform a pile of rubble into a wood and plaster wall with metal pipes running through it and electrical cable in those pipes.

Campaign Use: The PCs are most likely to encounter Baker in a business context — such as when they hire him to quickly rebuild their damaged headquarters, or perhaps work with Rodger Bright (*Everyman*, page 60) to design and construct an all-new base for them. Or they might hire him to advise them on ways to make money with their powers.

To make Baker more powerful, remove the Extra Time from his Transform, allowing him to do his work in the blink of an eye. To weaken him, remove the Reduced Endurance, and perhaps even add Increased Endurance Cost.

Baker doesn't Hunt people.

Appearance: Jeff Baker is only in his mid-twenties, an early age to be so successful in his field. He wears casual clothes most of the time — jeans and simple button-down shirts, plus sneakers or work-boots as the situation requires. He's white, 5'11" tall, with short sandy blonde hair.

MAUREEN WILKINSON

8 STR	10 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
10 INT	8 EGO	10 PRE	10 COM
2 PD	2 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
16 END	16 STUN		

Abilities: Bureaucratics 11-; KS: Coffee 11-; Persuasion 11-; PS: Computer Use 13-; PS: Cooking 11-; PS: Office Manager 14-; Money: Well Off (2 points); Eidetic Memory

25+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Fussbudget

Notes: When Trans-City Construction's business really began to take off, Jeff Baker realized he needed more help running the company. In particular, he needed an office manager to handle the thousand and one little details that came up during the course of a day, since he often had to be out in the field putting his powers to work.

The third candidate he interviewed was Maureen Wilkinson, a short (4'11"), plump, feisty woman who practically barged into his office and didn't leave until she'd gotten herself a job. Although he had some misgivings at first, Baker quickly learned that she was the perfect woman for the job. Gifted with a photographic memory, a knack for organizing things, and a devotion to business efficiency, she quickly had the TCC offices running far better than he ever could have. In the years since she's become indispensable... and, thanks to the generous salaries and lavish Christmas bonuses he pays her, quite well off for an office manager.

Aside from office efficiency, Maureen's great passion is coffee. She loves it so much she makes her own blend from beans she buys at gourmet food stores, refusing to let Baker or the rest of the staff drink "that tepid swill" that comes from coffee bars, grocery stores, and other places she disdains. She's also a superb cook who sometimes treats the office to cookies, cakes, or even a homemade pizza.

RICK BANNISTER

10 STR	10 DEX	10 CON	10 BODY
10 INT	8 EGO	10 PRE	8 COM
3 PD	3 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
20 END	20 STUN		

Abilities: Bureaucratics 8-; Demolitions 8-; Persuasion 11-; PS: Carpentry 11-; PS: Construction Worker 13-; PS: Electrician 8-; PS: Foreman 14-; PS: General Contractor 13-; TF: Construction And Agricultural Vehicles

25+ Disadvantages: None

Notes: A 20-odd year veteran of the construction industry, Rick Bannister started on the low end of the ladder as an apprentice carpenter after high school. He slowly but surely worked his way up that ladder, and in his early 30s transitioned out of carpentry into construction management and general contracting. He was looking for a new challenge when he heard that Trans-City needed a chief foreman. He applied for the job and got it easily thanks to his experience and the breadth of his skills.

As TCC's Chief Foreman, Bannister is the "in the field" head of all jobs TCC is currently working on. All the jobs have a specific foreman who reports to him each day. He usually gives most of his attention to one (or at most two) particularly difficult or important jobs. Unless a job requires Baker's powers or input specifically, clients are likely to deal with Bannister a lot more than with his boss.

In person Bannister tends to be calm, friendly, diplomatic, and something of a wisecracker. His men like and respect him (for the most part), and he repays their loyalty by being a pretty easy guy to work for. But his friendly exterior has a backbone of steel, and more than once he's had to get into a screaming argument with some subcontractor or laborer over a seemingly trivial detail. When push comes to shove he doesn't give an inch, not even to battle-hardened union reps.

Rick Bannister is a white guy in his early 40s, 5'10" tall with a prominent beer belly and rapidly-thinning black hair. He wears workboots, jeans, workshirts, a hardhat, and a light toolbelt (since it just feels "weird" to him to be on a jobsite and not have at least a few tools with him). He likes to smoke cigars, but only does so outside when he's not around fuel or any other dangerous flammables. He's married and has three sons; the oldest works part-time for TCC.

THEO RONDELL

35 STR	14 DEX	20 CON	18 BODY
10 INT	10 EGO	15 PRE	12 COM
15 PD	15 ED	3 SPD	11 REC
40 END	50 STUN		

Abilities: +15 STR, Only To Lift; Leaping +8"; Damage Resistance (8 PD/8 ED); PS: Construction Worker 11-; Streetwise 8-; WF: Handguns

100+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: Mutant; Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)

Notes: Theo Rondell is an example of Jeff Baker putting his money where his mouth is. Baker's long been an advocate of hiring superhumans, of giving them a fair shot despite the fact that they sometimes seem odd or even frightening. After hearing one of Baker's speeches, a parole officer told him about Theo Rondell.

Rondell grew up near Millennium City in a rough neighborhood. As a teen he began running with gangs — and then, when his mutant powers of strength and toughness emerged, leading them. What started as a pretty minor criminal record looked like it was heading toward a major criminal career... but then he got busted with a kilo of heroin in his car.

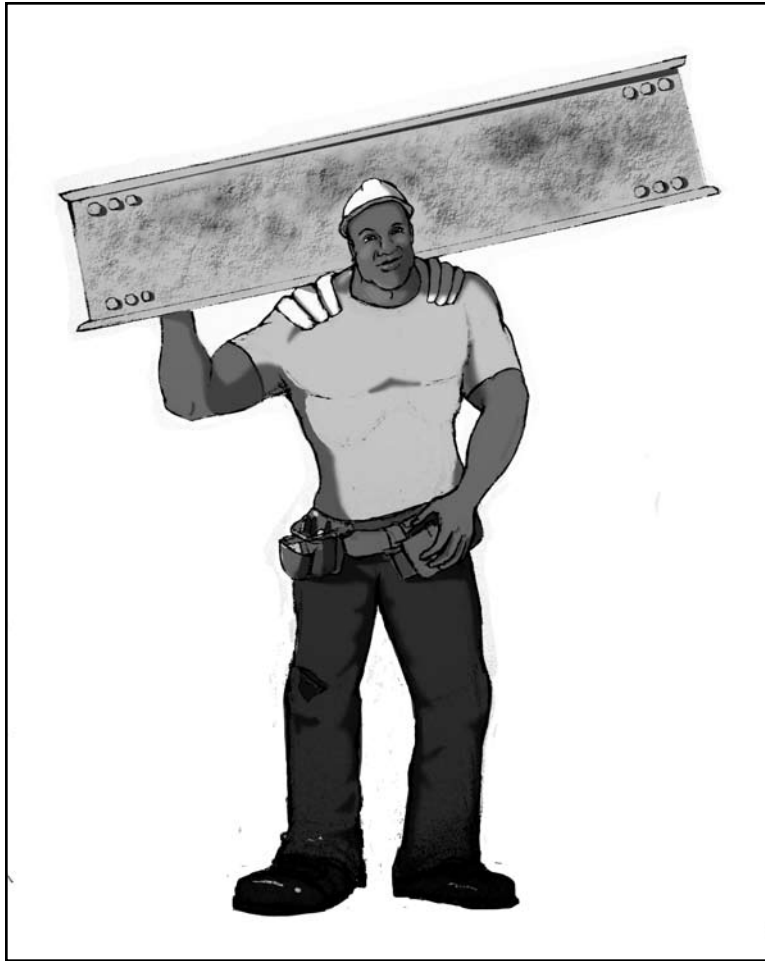
He insisted he was innocent, that a rival had planted it on him, but the jury didn't buy that story. He would have spent a decade in jail, but an overcrowding problem earned him early release after only a couple years because there'd been no violence involved in his offense.

Rondell's probation officer urged Baker to give the young man a job, a way to use his powers constructively and keep from falling back into old, bad habits. Baker agreed, and Rondell, knowing he'd have it a lot easier in the parole system, accepted the job offer.

At first it wasn't a good fit. Rondell was surly and aggravated, tied down as he was to the first real job he'd ever had. But between Baker's patience and the fact that his powers made him a *really* good construction worker, he slowly came around. Having the respect, admiration, and even awe of his fellow workers felt really good, and he had to admit that he liked it better when he earned the money for something and bought it rather than just stealing it.

Rondell's mutant powers make him immensely strong and tough. He can lift loads of up to 25 tons and leap four stories upward while carrying them, making it a snap for TCC to take supplies to the upper levels of a building. His hands are tough enough for him to drive nails or rivets by strength alone. On several occasions he's used his toughness and speed to protect his co-workers from accidents that would have seriously injured them but only tore his clothing.

Rondell is an enormous black man, 6'6" tall and extremely muscular. On the job he dresses in jeans and specially-made shirts that have padding in the shoulders so he can carry heavy loads without tearing the cloth.



Other Employees

ADRIANNE COLE

Adrienne is one of only a handful of women employed by TCC in front-line construction jobs — and that's because she's a member of an even more exclusive group, TCC's superpowered employees. She's a low-level telekinetic (Telekinesis, STR 20, Fine Manipulation) who turns her talents to dozens of minor chores during the course of a day: pulling wires; lifting supplies to upper stories; catching workers or tools that fall; holding odd-shaped items together so they can be permanently nailed or welded together; and so forth.

Adrienne is a young white woman — only 20 — who's not unpleasant to look at but is a little on

the plump side. She wears typical work clothes and a hard hat on the job. She can be plenty friendly once you get to know her, but at first has a sort of guarded-but-aggressive demeanor that comes from having to constantly prove to her male co-workers that she's as tough and skilled as they are.

PETER GREENE

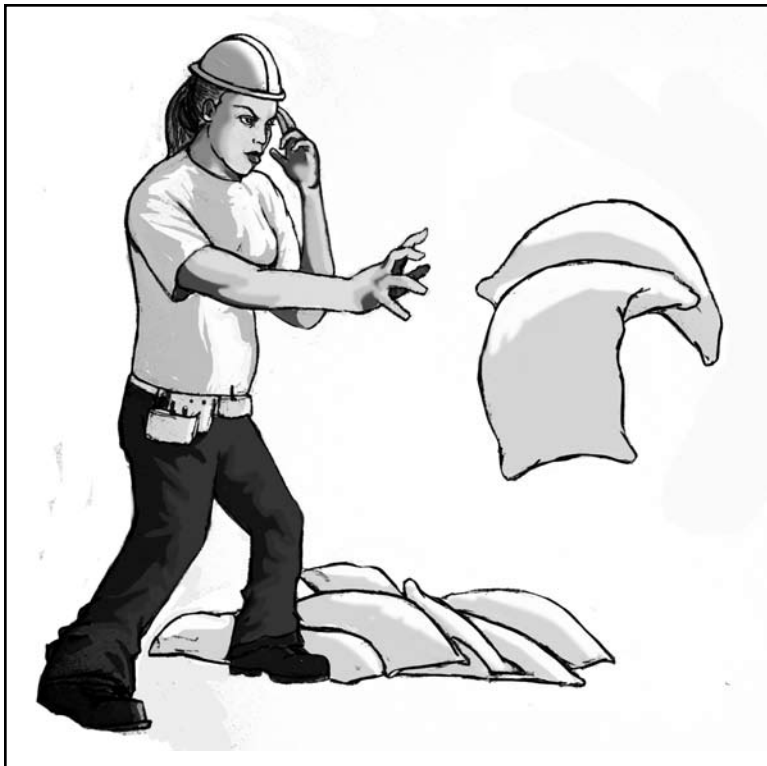
Trans-City Construction's chief accountant is Peter Greene, a still-handsome man in his late 40s. From his office at TCC's company headquarters he makes sure accounts receivable exceed accounts payable, that taxes and licensing fees are paid on time, and that everyone gets paid promptly. He's got a staff of six accountants and assistants to help with all this work.

Greene is known around the company as a cutthroat poker player. He organizes a weekly poker game on Thursday nights that Jeff Baker himself

sometimes plays in, though the stakes are pretty low by Baker's standards (\$1-\$3-\$5 most nights). As often as not Greene goes home the big winner. He's also known to bet on sports pretty heavily at times.

DAN TAYLOR

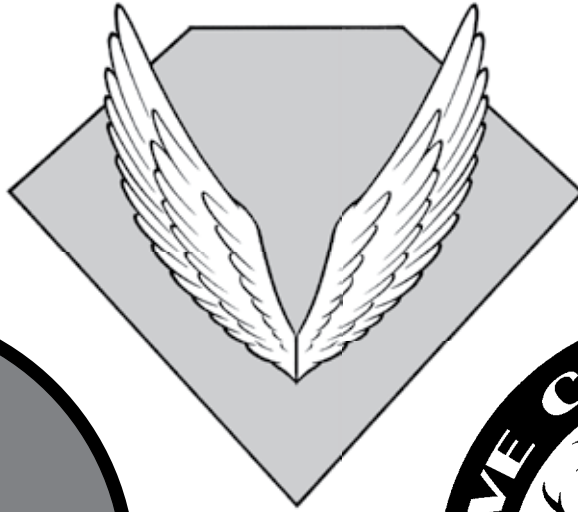
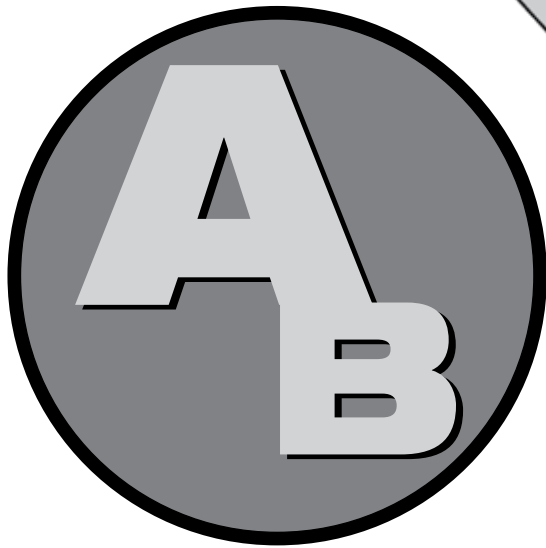
If you've seen those commercials that TCC runs on all the Millennium City television stations, you've seen Dan Taylor, the company's head of public relations and advertising. Handsome, well-tanned even in the dead of winter, and constantly smiling, Taylor could sell water to fish if he had to. His characteristic greeting, "Hey, howya-doin, goodtaseeya," is as familiar around the TCC offices as Maureen Wilkinson's coffee.



USING TRANS-CITY CONSTRUCTION

First and foremost, Trans-City Construction serves as “background color” for your campaign. It’s traditional for comic book settings to experience relatively few major changes despite the devastating effects of super-battles. Even if the fight between your PCs and Firewing causes all sorts of destruction, by the next issue the odds are whatever was damaged will be back in its usual condition. This defies logic — until you introduce a company like TCC that *can* repair damaged buildings (and even build new ones) practically overnight.

Beyond that, TCC has many possibilities for your campaign. First, Jeff Baker and his company make a great Contact for the PCs. For one thing, they’re bound to need his services sooner or later, so it can’t hurt to have an “inside track” that will get them moved to the top of his projects list. Beyond that, TCC provides an outlet for PCs who want to use their powers for something besides fighting crime. The company makes a point of hiring superhumans that have useful powers, and maybe one or more PCs fits that category. Fighting crime doesn’t usually pay very well, but characters can make good money working for TCC even part-time.



FRAIM

THE GM'S VAULT

THE GM'S VAULT



This chapter contains additional and/or secret information about the Champions Universe and recent events in the various Champions settings for the GM's eyes alone. *If you're playing in, or plan to play in a campaign based in the Champions Universe, do not read this section!*

CHAPTER ONE: ANGELSTONE LABORATORIES

PAGE 7 — THE SILVERBROOK CORPORATION

Silverbrook is similar to Angelstone Laboratories in many respects, but it's a front for ARGENT. Its research into superhumans is mostly devoted to ways to defeat superheroes or help villains, not vice-versa like Angelstone.

PAGE 11 — PETER BALDUCCI

While Peter Balducci maintains his contacts at Central Intelligence, and Angelstone Laboratories does various research projects for the Agency, he no longer works directly for the CIA or has anything to do with its activities abroad. But he likes to slyly *imply* that he does as a way of having fun with people.

PAGE 15 — LUDMILA PETROVSKAYA

Doctor Petrovskaya harbors an intense desire to talk to Dr. Destroyer in person — to interview him, hopefully, but at the very least to gauge what he's "really like" and bask in his presence. Despite the fact that she knows he's totally evil and has to be stopped (and in fact has helped to stop his schemes in the past), she's utterly fascinated with him.

Destroyer's opinion of Dr. Petrovskaya's "expertise" on him is unknown.

PAGE 15 — WANDA WICHERLY

Wanda Wicherly's long hours involve more than just her usual work. She's saved up her own money and secretly sought outside investors and is planning to attempt a takeover of the company.

PAGE 16 — REYNOLD

Reynold is more than just an old black janitor — he's an ARGENT plant. Nowhere near as placid-minded as he looks, he carefully observes everything that goes on, "accidentally" knocks design documents in the trash so he can "throw them out," and covertly puts taps in Angelstone's computers when he has the chance (which isn't often). Thanks to him, slowly but surely ARGENT is developing a fairly thorough picture of much of what goes on at Angelstone, a firm whose ability to develop cutting-edge military systems interests it very much. Who knows... perhaps one of Wicherly's investors (see above) is secretly an ARGENT front...

Even worse, Reynold isn't entirely loyal to ARGENT. He also sells some of what he finds to VIPER.

ANGELSTONE LABORATORIES PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving Angelstone Laboratories:

The classic Angelstone plot #1: an experiment being conducted at an Angelstone lab goes wrong, and the result — an unlucky lab assistant who's been transformed into a monster, a cloud of mutagenic gas, an out-of-control and heavily armed war robot... — threatens the entire city. The PCs have to stop it, and then help Angelstone investigate what went wrong. Was it just a mistake... or sabotage?

The classic Angelstone plot #2: the heroes find a piece of supertechnology, or alien technology, that they can't make heads or tails of, so they bring it to Angelstone Laboratories for analysis. In studying it Angelstone somehow "activates" it, and the heroes have to deal with the consequences... or Reynold tips ARGENT or VIPER off to it and the heroes have to fight off agents who've come to steal it.

A Consumer and Corporate Affairs research project has uncovered a strange fact: the advertising during a specific morning game show seems to be *unusually* effective at selling products — all sorts of products. Something's definitely amiss, but what... and why?

CHAPTER TWO: BASTION ALPHA SECURITY

The publicly-known history of Bastion Alpha Security leaves out many important details.

The key to Bastion's success is, of course, the Bastion Process that augments ordinary humans to low superhuman levels of strength, toughness, and swiftness (see the Appendix for specifics). But Anderson Powell is no scientist; he didn't invent the Process. His company's savior is a mysterious man he knows as Dr. Ivan Fortus.

In late 2000 Powell was struggling to keep Bastion Alpha alive. He had few contracts and was drowning in debt. One day a waspish little man who introduced himself as "Dr. Ivan Fortus" showed up unannounced at his office. Thinking he might be a prospective client, Powell agreed to see him, but he soon learned Fortus wasn't interested in hiring Bastion Alpha, but working for it. "In this business, you need an edge," Fortus said, "and I can provide that edge." He explained that he had invented a secret process through which he could use mutant DNA to augment the capabilities of non-mutant humans. It didn't necessarily work with all mutant powers, but Powell's DNA — which gave him greater strength and toughness (and when necessary size) than normal — would be perfect for his purposes. Using tissue samples from Powell, Fortus could create legions of guards that would be much stronger, tougher, and faster than even the best-trained humans.

Sensing an idea that could make his company a major player in the security field, Powell agreed... and less than a year later he had his first corps of Gold Bastion guards. Soon business was booming, and it wasn't long before Bastion Alpha Security opened new offices around the country. In 2003, a few "discrete inquiries" from certain foreign persons gave Powell the idea of expanding into mercenary work. The result was the opening of the London and Paris offices (which, although they do provide standard security services, exist primarily to recruit new personnel and meet with potential employers from the Third World) and the Nairobi "office" (really more of a military compound at that point). The Tashkent office followed two years later when the company's mercenary business in Central Asia grew enough to require it.

DOCTOR FORTUS AND THE BASTION PROCESS

Anderson Powell has no idea where Dr. Fortus came from or got his training, and to be honest he doesn't really care. The two men have formed a solid, extremely profitable business partnership, and trust one another not to "rock the boat" by poking into each other's private lives.

But the truth is that "Doctor" Fortus isn't really a doctor at all. Although he does have a biochemistry degree from Tufts and a medical degree from Indiana University School of Medicine, his process wasn't something he invented in a lab. Ivan Fortus is a mutant with

the unusual power to induce mutations in other people by using mutant DNA. Fortus "absorbs" a sample of mutant DNA and then "injects" it into a subject, who receives powers similar to (but usually notably weaker than) those possessed by the source of the mutant DNA.

Fortus can't predict exactly what will happen when he grants someone superpowers — it depends in part on his power, and in part on the subject's genetics. His ability to augment a subject improves the more he works with a given sample of DNA, though he may never be able to "unlock" all the abilities in that DNA. That's why the early Bronze and Gold Bastion guards aren't as powerful as the later Iron, Steel, and Questionite guards — Fortus "understands" Powell's DNA well enough now to get better results from it. Still, the most important factor in the equation is the subject's own DNA; many people aren't susceptible to it at all, and some can never be better than Bronze or Gold level.

For example, using Anderson Powell's DNA Fortus can augment someone's strength, agility, and toughness, though never to levels that reach Powell's own — even a Questionite Bastion guard isn't as powerful as Powell. Fortus cannot grant anyone Powell's ability to grow to enormous size; that ability is one he cannot "unlock" or whose "transfer" to another person via Fortus's own body is impossible.

Fortus keeps the nature of his work secret from everyone, including Powell. He has an elaborate lab at the New York facility (and lesser ones at Bastion Alpha's other offices) where he takes the subjects to undergo the Bastion Process... but most of the equipment basically goes unused. Fortus has it merely for show, to disguise the fact that he's a mutant.

The Deadline

Powell and Fortus keep many other things about the Bastion Process secret, particularly the fact that the process "burns out" anyone subjected to it, killing him in no more than a decade. The Bronze Bastion process shortens the subject's life to about 10 years after the augmentation takes place; Gold Bastion, to about eight years; Iron Bastion, to about six years; Steel Bastion, to about four years; and Questionite Bastion, to about two years (the record-holder in the latter case lived for a full 29 months before succumbing to the effects). As the deadline approaches the subject feels increasingly achy and tired, though he doesn't weaken or become less strong. Eventually his body "overloads" and his heart shuts down.

Keeping this secret even from his employees is one of the key factors in Powell's success, so he goes to great lengths to maintain the facade. Guards approaching their "deadlines" (which Fortus can track through the twice yearly medical check-ups all Bastion Alpha personnel undergo) are sent on more dangerous missions so they'll get killed before death-by-Process can overtake them, and in more than one case Powell has lured a guard to an isolated location, murdered him, and then claimed he went "missing in action."

Recruitment

Bastion Alpha gets its recruits mostly from advertisements in “soldier of fortune”-type magazines, word of mouth in the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World, and so forth. (In recent years it’s also gotten a lot of recruits in the Third World, though any such recruits must speak fluent English.) Before subjecting anyone to the Process it puts that person through a battery of tests designed to evaluate his physical and psychological fitness for the treatment. Recruits deemed acceptable have to sign a ten-year contract... and a waiver releasing the company from any liability in the event the Process goes wrong.

OFFICE SECURITY

The main text doesn’t exaggerate the extent of security at Bastion Alpha’s facilities; if anything, it understates it. Powell is *obsessive* about security, and he’s drilled that same level of concern into his underlings and guards. If penetrating the security is even possible, doing so requires multiple Skill rolls at significant penalties (-6 or more). And even then, self-destruct systems may prevent the PCs from obtaining what they want; Powell would rather destroy valuable data and equipment than have it fall into the hands of his enemies.

Similarly, the compounds in Nairobi and Tashkent, while they appear to have just “tight security” at a casual glance, are actually heavily fortified. It would take a tank — or a superhero — to smash into one, and even then he’d face a fight from dozens of heavily-armed, well-trained fighting men.

BASTION ALPHA SERVICES

See Appendix One for Package Deals for the five levels of Bastion Process augmentation and example character sheets for various categories of Bastion Alpha guards.

Despite its advertising claims, Bastion Alpha doesn’t do anything special with its security sys-

tems. Its technicians modify them to suit their own preferences and the needs of the client, of course, but otherwise they’re more or less standard devices purchased from standard manufacturers, not supertechnology or new, innovative designs.

Although Bastion Alpha doesn’t advertise its mercenary services in America, it does provide them there. Powell long ago abandoned nearly all his scruples about who his company works for, and as a result Bastion Alpha is happy to hire out its personnel to work for supervillains, VIPER, or the like. It simply requires that they be provided with other uniforms and comparable weaponry so that nothing can be directly traced back to it. Captured Bastion Alpha personnel are generally loyal enough that they refuse to admit any association with the company... or, if confronted with undeniable evidence that they work for Powell, insist that they were “off the reservation” and working for the client without Bastion Alpha’s knowledge or approval.

Similarly, in some cases Bastion Alpha doesn’t hire out its own personnel but agrees to expose a client’s personnel to the Bastion Process directly. In effect Bastion Alpha is a source of “super-thugs” and “ultra-henchmen” for any villain or organization with enough money... at least as long as what it’s doing remains a secret from the authorities and superheroes. But even if Bastion Alpha Security is exposed, the operation can resume eventually as long as Dr. Fortus remains free and has access to Anderson Powell’s DNA (or similar DNA).

The main text is correct that Bastion Alpha doesn’t engage in assassination missions, but it has been known to undertake other direct operations, such as assaults on airports. It tries to keep those activities to a minimum, though, since Powell is rightly concerned that too much of that will bring unwanted attention. Bastion Alpha would rather cast itself in the same sort of light as the Green Berets — a helping and educational force, not an outright army for hire.

PERSONNEL

Here's some more information on some of the employees described in Chapter Two:

ANDERSON "TITAN" POWELL				
Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6,400 kg; 8d6 [4]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
30	CON	40	15-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
25	PD	17		Total: 25 PD (10 rPD)
20	ED	14		Total: 20 ED (10 rED)
5	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
14	REC	0		
60	END	0		
60	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 187

Movement: Running: 18"/36" (when Grown)

Cost	Powers	END
45	<i>Titan Size:</i> Growth (+30 STR, +6 BODY, +6 STUN, -6" KB, 6,400 kg, -4 DCV, +4 PER Rolls to perceive character, 4 m [about 25 feet] tall, 2 m wide), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0
10	<i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED)	0
24	<i>Gigantic Legs:</i> Running +12" (18" total), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Linked (to Growth; -¼)	1
Perks		
20	Contacts (various in the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World)	
5	Membership: leader of a mercenary organization	
10	Money: Wealthy	Skills
15	+3 HTH	
3	Climbing 13-	
2	CK: New York City 11-	
4	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-	
1	KS: The Superhuman World 8-	
2	KS: World Crises And "Hot Spots" 11-	
2	KS: World Politics 11-	
1	Lockpicking 8-	
2	PS: Soldier 11-	
1	Security Systems 8-	
3	Stealth 13-	
3	Tactics 11-	
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Basic Parachuting	
3	WF: Small Arms, Knives	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 159

Total Cost: 346

200+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Looks Out For Number One (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Might Makes Right (Common, Moderate)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional, with other leading security/mercenary commanders
- 20 Vulnerability: 2 x STUN from Electricity (Common)
- 66 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 346

Background/History: The main text touches briefly on the pertinent aspects of Anderson Powell's background. A former US Marine, he was blessed with mutant powers that he decided to use to become a superhero simply because family and friends expected it of him. After several years fighting crime in New York as the growing, super-strong hero Titan, he decided that superheroing wasn't really for him — he wanted to use his powers to make money, not do good deeds. He realized that a security service backed by the power of a superhuman was a sure winner, and Bastion Alpha Security was born. The first few years were a struggle, but since he met and teamed up with Dr. Fortus Bastion Alpha has become known world-wide... and he's become a wealthy man.

Personality/Motivation: While it's incorrect to describe Anderson Powell as self-absorbed, he's definitely focused on himself. He looks out for number one, and unless you somehow impact his life he doesn't pay you much attention. If you impact it well, he'll work with you, help you, be your friend. That's how he is with most of his employees. If you impact it negatively, he'll do whatever he must to get you out of the way. When he first got into the security business he governed himself with a sort of moral code, but as the money's come rolling in that's gone out the window. More than once he's killed someone to keep his company's secrets safe, and he'll do it again if he has to. To the victor go the spoils....

Quote: "Please have a seat and tell me what we here at Bastion Alpha can do to meet your security needs."

Powers/Tactics: Anderson Powell is a mutant with powers of super-strength, super-toughness, and growth. Even at normal size he can lift over six metric tons; at his full height (25 feet) he can bench-press 400 tons! He prefers to run things from his office these days, but if it's absolutely necessary he takes to the field with his men to wipe up the opposition as quickly as possible.

Powell's powers aren't all beneficial. His mutation also saddled him with a weakness: electricity has an unusually strong effect on his

ANDERSON POWELL PLOT SEEDS

The shoe's on the other foot — Bastion Alpha Security has been the victim of several break-ins it can't stop or solve. Powell hires the PCs to find out what's going on.

Powell becomes attracted to a female PC. He begins doing all sorts of things to win her attentions, starting with the relatively harming and innocent but potentially progressing to outright stalking if she offends his male pride too much.

Powell invites one or more PCs to a high-stakes poker game. Naturally, some of the other attendees are not people the PCs get along with....

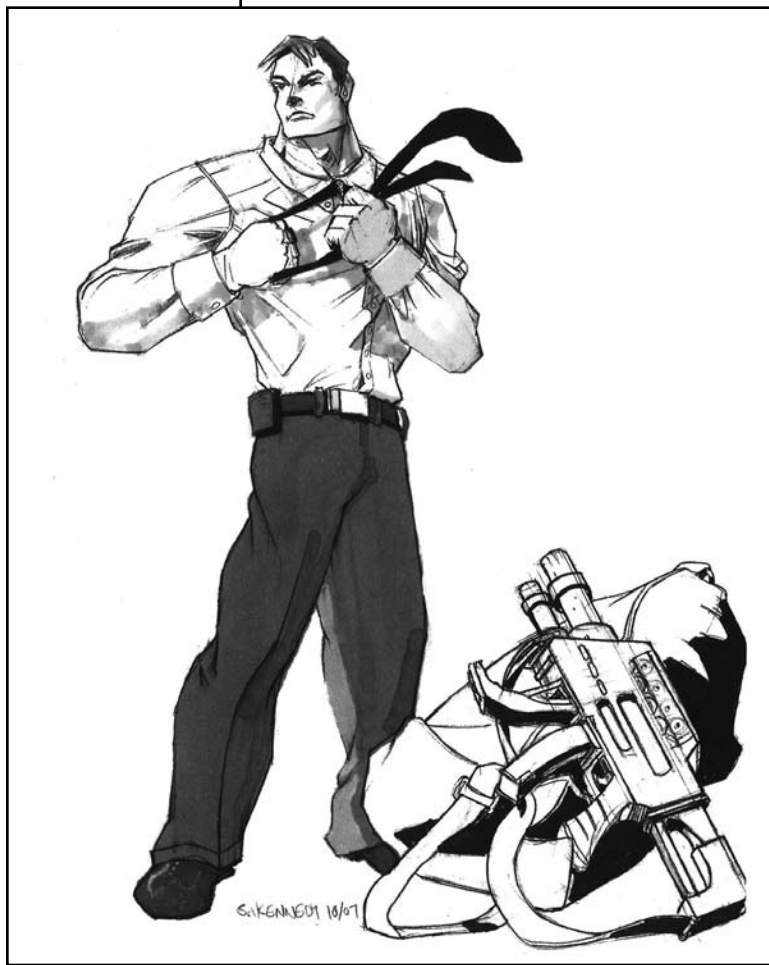
system. He does his best to avoid opponents with electricity powers or tasers, though he tries not to be obvious about it.

Campaign Use: The PCs are most likely to encounter Powell as head of Bastion Alpha Security; he doesn't fight (or commit) crime. Or they might run into him at a society function, since he likes to mingle with the wealthy and powerful.

To make Powell a tougher foe, increase his Growth and/or give him more abilities Linked to his existing Growth (more PRE, more STR, more CON, or even an Area Of Effect (One Hex) for his STR). To weaken him, halve his Growth. Don't reduce his Characteristics, since they're used to determine how much effect the Bastion Process can have.

Powell doesn't Hunt people unless hired to... and generally speaking Bastion Alpha Security doesn't take on bounty hunting jobs.

Appearance: See main text.



JORGE OREJUELA RODRIGUEZ

25 STR	18 DEX	18 CON	16 BODY
15 INT	13 EGO	20 PRE	10 COM
14 PD	14 ED	4 SPD	9 REC
40 END	40 STUN		

Abilities: Running +2" (8" total); Martial Arts (Boxing, Commando Training, Judo; 30 points' worth of Martial Maneuvers); +1 with All Combat; +1 HTH; Breakfall 13-; Bribery 8-; Bureaucratics 8-; Climbing 13-; Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-; Gambling (Card Games) 8-; Interrogation 13-; KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-; Paramedics 12-; Stealth 13-; TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Small Arms, Knives

50+ Disadvantages: Hunteds (same as Anderson Powell); Psychological Limitation: Ruthless

Notes: Rodriguez is every bit the stone-cold bastard he appears to be. He grew up poor in Jamaica, where his parents virtually sold him into slavery to stave off eviction. Working in the fields made him tough and strong, but also filled him with hate. When he was 16 he saw his chance, killed his "employer," and fled. He bummed around the world for awhile getting into trouble and eventually joined the French Foreign Legion. A few years with the Legion was all he could take; he got out and got into mercenary work, where he could be a little pickier about who he took orders from. A chance meeting in a bar in Marseilles introduced him to Anderson Powell. They hit it off, Rodriguez went to work for him, and in time worked his way up to Powell's second-in-command.

Rodriguez has undergone the Iron augmentation process. On top of that he has extensive training and experience as a mercenary. Unlike his good friend Powell, he never really had any moral code at all; he's not a casual killer but feels no qualms whatsoever about using any level of violence when he thinks it's called for.

Tawanda Charles

Tawanda Charles is a weak link in the Bastion Alpha chain. Despite her toughness and cynical attitude she thoroughly believes the world owes her a living, and since it's not bothering to pay her she's gotta take what she can get. Not satisfied with the generous salary Bastion Alpha pays her, she's been running the same smuggling and theft schemes that got her booted out of the Army. It's probably only a matter of time before Powell or Rodriguez tumbles to what she's doing, and then things will go very, very badly for her. But if the PCs can get their hands on her, she has no real loyalty to Bastion Alpha at all and will sing like a canary to save her own skin.

Arend Friedel

Friedel is a former member of the Stasi, the East German secret police. After the collapse of his country he fled, knowing he'd be tried for all sorts of crimes pertaining to his acts of torture, murder, and rape if he stayed. He got into the mercenary underground and after several years came into contact with field agents of Bastion

Alpha. Learning from them that the company was looking to hire senior officers, he applied under an assumed name. Intrigued by his qualifications, Anderson Powell had him investigated, eventually learning his true background. In exchange for Powell's silence (and a hefty salary), Friedel agreed to accept the post of Commandant. He's found the job of putting recruits and trainees through their paces most enjoyable, since it satisfies his sadistic tendencies.

Rudy Younts

In game terms, Younts has STR 18, DEX 15, CON 15, INT 18, and SPD 3. He has Radar, Danger Sense 14- (immediate vicinity, out of combat, sense), and +3 to PER Rolls with the Sight, Hearing, and Smell Groups and his Radar (his senses of touch and taste are human normal). He's totally loyal to Bastion Alpha and Anderson Powell, and would never betray either.

Using Bastion Alpha Security

Bastion Alpha Security is primarily intended as a "bad guy" organization, not an ally for the heroes or even a neutral party. It can become an adversary for your PCs in one or more of several ways.

MANPOWER SUPPLIER

First and foremost, Bastion Alpha can supply field agents to your villains and criminal organizations who need a little extra muscle. This is particularly helpful for organizations that don't have their own agents, such as ARGENT. If you have a non-superpowered enemy in one of your plots, hiring some Questionite Bastion agents may give him the "oomph" his organization needs to fight the PCs effectively. In essence you can think of Bastion Alpha as a "thug supplier," whether it supplies ordinary thugs that went through its Basic Training course or squads of its elite superhumanly-strong soldiers.

VILLAIN CREATOR

There's no need to restrict the Bastion Process to just creating the sorts of soldiers described in Chapter Two (with character sheets in Appendix One). Assuming he got his hands on other types of mutant DNA (or perhaps even mutated DNA), Dr. Fortus could create all sorts of low-powered supervillains. Bastion Alpha could become a "supervillain factory" providing short-lived superhuman resources to anyone who could pay its price... thus creating no end of trouble for your PCs.

BRANCH OF A LARGER ORGANIZATION

If you don't want Bastion Alpha Security to exist independently, it might be (or become) a branch of a larger organization. It's an ideal "paramilitary wing" for ARGENT if you want such a thing, and ICON (see Chapter Six) could definitely make use of more resources and muscle. It would also make a good front organization for VIPER.

CAMPAIGN ADVERSARY

If you're running a campaign where the PCs are members of Executive Control Solutions (see Chapter Three), Bastion Alpha Security makes a good archnemesis. It's the rival company that competes with dirty tricks, double dealing, illegal activities, and everything else the PCs won't stoop to, making it an enemy your players will love to hate.

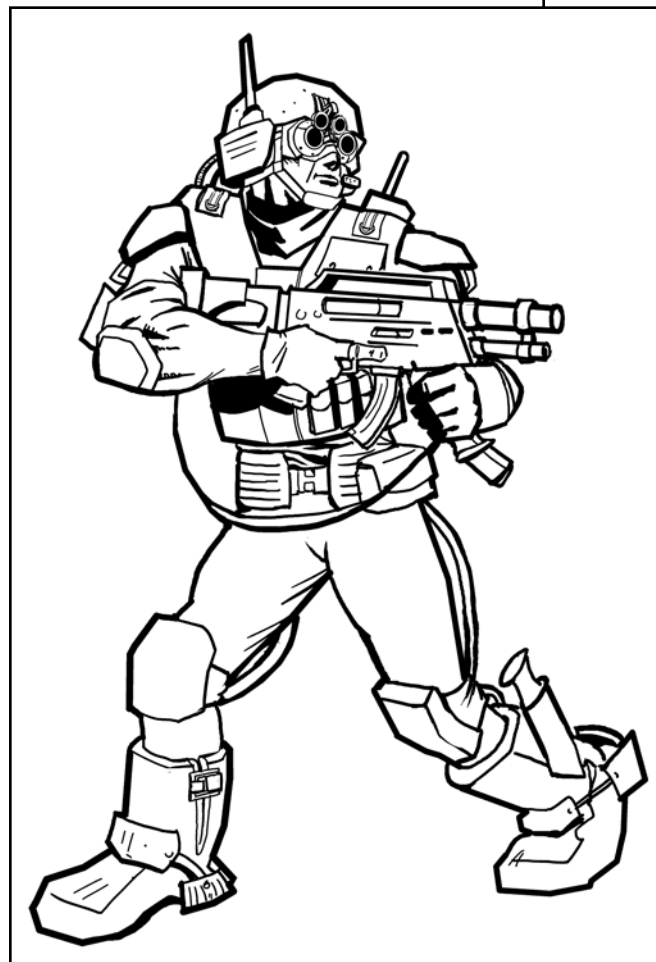
BASTION ALPHA SECURITY PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving Bastion Alpha Security:

The classic Bastion Alpha plot: the PCs begin to wonder about how Bastion Alpha "manufactures" superhuman guards and start investigating. This quickly turns into a dangerous cat-and-mouse game with Anderson Powell and his forces, who don't take kindly to superpowered busybodies poking their noses in where they don't belong.

The PCs hear through the grapevine that Bastion Alpha Security is buying up a *lot* of Angelstone Laboratories stock. Is Anderson Powell trying to get his hands on Angelstone's cutting-edge military technology, or does he have something else in mind?

A government contact of the PCs' claims that Bastion Alpha's activities in a Central Asian nation are threatening to destabilize the entire region. He asks the PCs to go over there secretly and stop the mercenaries.



CHAPTER THREE: EXECUTIVE CONTROL SERVICES, INC.

PAGE 37 — EVAN DRISCOLL

Driscoll's skill at protecting clients isn't all due to skill. Unknown to anyone (including him), he's a mutant with low-level precognition powers. In game terms, he has Danger Sense (immediate vicinity, out of combat, sense) 11- and a few similar powers. Contrary to company fears he has no plans to start his own body-guarding service; a more likely scenario for him to leave ECS would be for a client to hire him directly as a full-time bodyguard.

EXECUTIVE CONTROL SERVICES PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving ECS:

During the 2004-05 recruitment drive, ECS wasn't able to be quite as thorough as usual in its background checks... and it let a serpent into its midst. This dangerous employee could be a potential traitor, a spy for a rival firm, a VIPER agent who's reporting everything the company learns or does to his superiors, or simply an unstable individual who may "lose it" one day and become a deadly threat to everyone around him.

Janice Glenn, jealous of ECS's success after she left the firm because she was certain it was going to crash and burn, starts up her own security company, Glenn Protective Services. Her gimmick is that she has a team of actual superheroes working for her! But to the PCs it seems like her company heroes have powers very similar to their own. Could Glenn somehow have cloned the PCs? If not, is there some other cause or is it all just an incredible coincidence? And is it possible her "heroes" aren't really all that interested in protecting clients, but are casing them for future robberies?

After a mysterious burglar repeatedly thwarts ECS's efforts to stop him, the company *quietly* asks the PCs for some assistance. The culprit is Utility, who wants to prove that he's not only better than the heroes, but than the company he thinks has stolen his "schtick."

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EXOPLANETARY SOCIETY

PAGE 40 — THE DODDS'S DISAPPEARANCE

The exact nature of what happened to James and Deborah Dodds is left up to the GM. The aliens who kidnapped them (the Hzeel) might have come back for them, or killed them to get revenge. Or they could simply have been the victims of a mundane crime or accident.

PAGE 44 — SEAN CLEMENS

Was Clemens's son really abducted by aliens? If so, which ones, and why? If the Society is being manipulated by aliens for some reason, perhaps they did it to get Clemens to become director because they want him in the position....

PAGE 45 — LUCIA WYZNEWSKI

Wyznewski's professionalism can be seen in the fact that despite her vociferous arguments to the contrary, personally she isn't really all that concerned about aliens. Though she'd never say so in public or admit it to a colleague, for the most part she thinks the Society is brewing a tempest in a teapot and that the authorities (perhaps with the help of superheroes) are perfectly capable of handling extraterrestrial threats on their own.

PAGE 46 — BRUCE TURLINGETTI

Privately Clemens and some other Exoplanetary Society leaders are worried that Turlingetti is becoming *too* influential. They're trying to find a way to ease him out of the organization... or at least make him tone down his rhetoric.

Turlingetti is a firearms enthusiast and always has a concealed firearm on his person "in case those alien bastards come to get me for telling the truth about them!"

EXOPLANETARY SOCIETY PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving the Exoplanetary Society:

James and Deborah Dodds stumble into the Society's headquarters in Boston, looking just the same as they did the day they vanished. They can't really remember anything, not even how they got to Boston, though occasionally flashes of memory break through — a room like a medical classroom, a Nordic-like alien being apparently interrogating them, a strange control panel. The Society hires the PCs to find out what happened to the Dodds.

A Society "field agent" stumbles onto what he's *convinced* is evidence of an alien invasion... but it's so far-fetched not even other Society members believe him. Desperate to save Humanity, he turns to the PCs for help.

Representatives of a previously unknown alien civilization, the Karaxar, arrive on Earth, introduce themselves publicly by landing their starship in the middle of Central Park, and announce that they're here to open up diplomatic and trade relations with Humanity. The Exoplanetary Society immediately begins a crusade to convince the public to have nothing to do with this "potential menace to our entire planet!". Is the Society right, or are the Karaxar the beneficent advanced species they claim to be?

CHAPTER FIVE: GRAND CIENELAGO ISLAND

Keeping Grand Cienelago Island secret remains one of Vernon Putnam's highest goals. If someone were to penetrate the cloaking field accidentally, he's not sure what he'd do. If necessary he'd have security robots capture the hapless "perpetrators" and then he'd cobble together machinery to brainwash them into forgetting what they saw (or have a cooperative mentalist hero do the job). If possible he'll explain the situation to the people who stumbled into the resort and get them to agree to the brainwashing for the good of mankind, but if they won't he'll do it against their will. He doesn't like the idea at all, and he knows that if he did it and the superhero community found out about it he'd lose business, but it's still better than having everything he's worked for.

Other than someone accidentally discovering Grand Cienelago Island, there are two main threats to the resort's secrecy. The first is a hurricane or other major storm, but as discussed in Chapter Five Putnam has planned for that as best he can. The other is that an employee of Carib Import/Export, the supplies plane pilot, or a former resort employee will leak information about it to the world. Putnam carefully screens his employees to choose people he doesn't think are ever likely to do that, but you can never tell what a person might do if pushed to extremes. If that happens, Putnam will control the situation as best he can, and if he can't he'll either hope it blows over or bite the bullet and reveal the resort to the world.

PAGE 54 — ANNETTE COUVREAU

In game terms, Couvreau has +30 PRE, Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1).

PAGE 54 — PAUL HEUER

While it's true Heuer doesn't really care for the rest of the cooking community, he is something of an egotist — he likes people to know how good he is and to praise him for his work. That's the one part of his job that rankles; nothing he does is known beyond a very small, select group of people. While he'd never betray the secret of Grand Cienelago Island, he wouldn't be all that upset if word about it leaked out to the world.

GRAND CIENELAGO ISLAND PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving Grand Cienelago Island:

The classic Grand Cienelago plot: someone, probably either a supervillain or a reporter, finds out about the resort. It falls to the heroes to (a) protect it, and (b) find a way to keep its secret safe. In the case of a villain this probably involves a fight that ultimately ends in the villain developing amnesia; with a reporter it leads to a more serious plot revolving around questions of free will and freedom of the press. If you want to use the reporter angle, the reporter is Tom Kittridge. He got a job working as a bartender at the resort, but the truth is he's a sleazy tabloid reporter who interviewed for a mysterious job hoping to find a story. Now he plans to write a book all about Grand Cienelago Island and exposing the dirty little secrets of the superhero community. He keeps his ears and eyes open at all times, searching for more grist for his sordid little mill.

A guest at Grand Cienelago Island is found dead! The PCs have a murder mystery on their hands... and every suspect is a superhero....

Superheroes who get married often choose to have the honeymoon, if not the entire ceremony, at Grand Cienelago Island. See "My Big Fat Caped Wedding" in *Villainy Amok* for all sorts of scenario ideas about superhero weddings.

CHAPTER SIX: MCPD SPECIAL UNIT OMEGA

Al Ferrell is one of the weak points on the team. He's very much in love with Delilah Flores. Seeing her with Jake Zimmerman, knowing he "lost" her to him (though he never really had a chance), gnaws at his gut. He's not yet at the point where his jealousy has turned to active hatred, but that will probably happen if Zimmerman and Flores remain an item. For the time being his feelings have simply made him more sarcastic toward the two lovebirds. The whole situation could have a real negative impact on the team, especially if some supervillain learns about the rift....

Billy Kwan's girlfriend, Susan Kim, is not all sweetness and light. Her family has strong ties to Korean organized crime groups, and though she doesn't have anything to do with "the family business," it sort of taints her by association. There may come a time where she has to choose between love of Kwan and loyalty to family.

Ramirez never brings his girlfriend to team social gatherings because he doesn't have one — he's gay. He doesn't want to deal with the potential problems his sexual orientation might cause, so he just keeps the whole situation under wraps (which does not particularly make his boyfriend happy). Sooner or later the whole thing is likely to backfire... though his teammates think the world of him and honestly might not even care.



Zimmerman's becoming increasingly frustrated with Flores's rejection of his marriage proposals. Eventually she's either going to have to get as serious about the relationship as he is, or he's going to have to adjust his desires... or the whole relationship is likely to fall apart, which will get messy fast.

SPECIAL UNIT OMEGA PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving Special Unit Omega:

The classic SUO plot #1: the team gets in over its head and has to call the heroes for help. Once the PCs resolve the situation (which typically involves rescuing at least one Omegan who's

been captured by the villains), the superheroes and the cops team up to bring down the bad guy.

The classic SUO plot #2: an old enemy frames the PCs for a crime and then uses his powers to enflame the city against them. On the run from everyone, the heroes find that their toughest foes, the ones that pursue them most tenaciously, are the members of Special Unit Omega.

Ferrell finally goes over the deep end. Driven to extremes by jealousy of Zimmerman, he betrays SUO to a villain (chosen by you), with the agreement that he gets Flores. The PCs have to rescue the team and defeat the villain (and his new henchman, Ferrell).

CHAPTER SEVEN: SICKBAY

The anonymous \$10 million gift was from Dwarfstar, leader of the Chicago superteam the Peacekeepers. Grateful for treatment received there when he was injured in Millennium City during a solo adventure, he decided he should do something to ensure the clinic's ongoing success. He's looking into ways to establish a similar facility in the Windy City.

While there's only one two-way camera visible at the back door, there are actually two more that are concealed: one across the alley on the other wall (to see if there are other people nearby, or a hero is being coerced somehow); and one at ground level (to view collapsed heroes or simply get another angle on what the other cameras see). Similarly, the sewer entrance has an extra camera, just in case.

Unbeknownst to Bobbi Burova, her son Allen is a minor Millennium City superhero named Richter; he has vibration powers he gained in a laboratory accident (he's a scientist working on applied sonics). She's worked on him a time or two without realizing who he is, since they're semi-estranged and don't see one another more than a couple times a year.

SICKBAY PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving Sickbay:

During a tussle with a hero who's seeing monsters after being exposed to Mirage's "hallucination spray" weapon, Dr. Wardner accidentally injects himself with one of the clinic's special drugs for superhumans. It turns his fears about security into full-blown paranoia, and he barricades himself and several badly-injured heroes (including the



hallucinating one, who now considers Wardner his "master") inside the clinic. A full-frontal assault could hurt Wardner or kill the injured heroes... but the drug won't wear off for hours, during which some of the injured heroes could die. How can the heroes resolve the situation?

Doctor Hansen abruptly quits Sickbay and withdraws all his funding from the clinic. What happened? Is he sick, or being threatened, or just burned out? And where will the other doctors find the money to keep the doors open?

Binder finds out about Sickbay and offers Dr. Hansen a deal: I'll keep your secret provided you agree to treat the Ultimates just like you do heroes, and do not inform the police about them. Hansen reluctantly agrees... but Robert Ross can't stand the idea. He anonymously tips off the PCs about what's happening.

CHAPTER EIGHT: TRANS-CITY CONSTRUCTION

There's another way you could use TCC besides the ones listed in the main text. If you want to make the company a little more sinister, perhaps Baker has ways of subtly encouraging superbattles in built-up areas to generate business for himself. At the simplest level this may mean nothing more than monitoring police band radio and calling in anonymous tips to the PCs about supercrimes in progress. At worst, Baker may actually hire villains to start battles, instructing them to cause as much destruction as possible so he can get the contract to rebuild whatever's damaged.

PAGE 83 — JEFF BAKER

The restrictions on Baker's powers describe what he's told people publicly. The truth is he *can* transmute ordinary substances into valuable ones like gold or diamonds — it just takes a *lot* more time and effort. He doesn't do it very often, partly because of the effort but mostly because he's smart enough to realize that flooding the commodities markets doesn't help him. Once a week or so he transmutes a pebble into a one to three carat diamond. Most of the diamonds he stores in a highly secure safe in his luxurious home (as a hedge against future need); the rest he sells into the diamond markets through various shell companies.

PAGE 87 — PETER GREENE

Greene is using his position as company accountant to embezzle thousands of dollars. At first he did it to pay some major medical bills his family had incurred (his daughter had cancer, which is now in remission), but now he does it for pure profit and to cover his occasional gambling losses. He's concealed his tracks well enough that it would take a good forensic accountant and a lot of digging to figure out what he's done.

TRANS-CITY CONSTRUCTION PLOT SEEDS

Here are three plot seeds involving TCC:

A villain needs to have his new secret headquarters built as soon as possible, so he kidnaps some of Baker's friends and family and holds them hostage to get TCC to do the work. Baker doesn't mind building the base, but he knows the villain will kill him, his employees, and the hostages to keep the place secret after it's done. He manages to send some clues to the PCs when the villain's not looking; they just have to figure out what they mean and arrive in time to rescue everyone....

Some of the jobs TCC has been working on have suffered robberies of valuable equipment... and all the clues point to Theo Rondell. Rondell protests his innocence, and Baker believes him. He asks the PCs to investigate the situation and clear his employee's name.

Several structures built by TCC have collapsed over the past few weeks. Alleging flawed construction and fraud by TCC, the owners of those buildings have filed massive lawsuits against Baker and his company. Convinced he's done nothing wrong and is the victim of a strange conspiracy, he appeals to the PCs for help.



ICON



ICON — the International CONSortium — is a would-be major criminal organization in the early stages of its development. A would-be world ruler with dreams of becoming similar to (and supplanting) the likes of VIPER, ICON doesn't pose much of a threat now... but if not stopped will become a deadly danger.

HISTORY

The origins of most criminal conspiracies are shrouded in mystery or lost to the mists of time. Not so that of ICON, whose history is quite well-known... at least to the principles involved. The rest of the world remains ignorant of the organization's existence — for now.

In 1997 an immensely wealthy businessman named Jacob Harrow went to prison for stock fraud, tax evasion, and a host of related charges. Harrow had risen to prominence in the 1970s as the founder and head of Harrow Industries, which began as a defense contractor but quickly became a multi-national conglomerate due to Harrow's shrewd business sense. By the early Nineties Harrow was one of the richest men in the world, with a personal fortune said to eclipse that of many small nations.

But it wasn't enough. Harrow always wanted more — more wealth, more power, more influence, more resources — and he didn't particularly care what he had to do to get it. According to documents filed during his court case, beginning in 1985 he began manipulating his companies' stock, evading tax payments, and committing numerous other white-collar crimes that bilked investors and various governments out of billions of dollars. Believing his money and social contacts insulated him from prosecution, Harrow became more and more daring... only to be tripped up by some clever investigators from the Securities and Exchange Commission.

It took nearly five years for Harrow's case to wend its way through the courts, with his cadre of high-priced lawyers fighting the government tooth and nail every step of the way. But in the end the evidence was ironclad; all the smooth talking in the world couldn't get around the basic fact that Harrow had personally and knowingly committed numerous crimes and in effect spearheaded a massive conspiracy of financial advisors, attorneys, and other helpers who did the work necessary to implement his plans. Wanting to make an example of Harrow for the entire business community, the judge sentenced him to nearly twenty years' incarceration.

It was only a minimum-security federal prison... but it was still prison. Harrow raged and fumed against the government and all the other enemies that dared to treat him — him! — this way. It was beyond bearing, and he didn't intend to bear it any longer than he possibly had to. He was going to escape and take revenge on everyone who'd "done him wrong."

Although Harrow's attorneys had insulated the bulk of his vast fortune from seizure, even with his money backing them there was only so much they could do to try to break Harrow out of prison... and as it turned out, that was the key to what Harrow now sees as his destiny. While waiting not-so-patiently in prison for his henchmen to get him out, Harrow met a man named Evzen Hlavacek, a Czech emigre who was also in prison for financial fraud. But unbeknownst to the authorities, Hlavacek wasn't exactly the sort of criminal who belonged in minimum security. A former member of VIPER who left that organization under a death sentence for reasons he won't explain, Hlavacek had been involved in nearly every criminal activity one could imagine. Despite a veneer of sophistication and class, Hlavacek had personally killed over half a dozen men with his bare hands... and had no compunctions about killing more if he had to.

Harrow and Hlavacek were kindred souls and quickly became close comrades. Each sensed in the other a desire for what he himself wanted: more money and greater power. They wanted to command men and have no one gainsay them, to do as they willed without governments interfering, to have all the finest things in life, to live like the emperors of old. They talked of this often, and in time realized that perhaps it could all be theirs. A marriage of Harrow's business skills and Hlavacek's criminal connections could create an organization that would run the world from behind the scenes — much like VIPER wanted to do, but without the flashiness and extreme personalities that so often hampered the snakes' plans. They christened their new organization ICON, for "the International Consortium," though at the time it was a group of just two.

The first step in their plans was to get out of prison. Putting Harrow's attorneys in touch with Hlavacek's criminal contacts got that accomplished when they hired a (disguised) team of Bastion Alpha Security soldiers to break them out. A hideout was arranged on a Caribbean property purchased by one of the numerous shell and false-front companies Harrow had set up over the years

that even government investigators had never connected with him. Ensnared in island luxury, waited upon by beautiful women and humble servants, guarded by the security world's elite personnel, Harrow and Hlavacek laid out the framework of an organization they planned to grow into a world-dominating conspiracy... with them as its unquestioned leaders.

ORGANIZATION AND RESOURCES

The organization that Harrow and Hlavacek have built up over the past several years remains relatively simple in structure — for the time being it's just not large enough to have become very complex. They have been proceeding, and will continue to proceed, slowly and carefully so that they avoid drawing unwanted attention, be it from governments and Interpol or underworld competitors like VIPER.

At the top level of the organization are Harrow and Hlavacek themselves. They're referred to among the lower ranks as "the Secret Masters," a term designed to lend them an aura of mystery and power as well as to imply that there is a whole council of leaders, not just two. If someone has to refer to a specific Secret Master, he uses a code-name. Harrow is "the Emperor," while Hlavacek is "the Hanged Man." These terms were mostly concocted by Hlavacek, who has an interest in subjects like the occult and conspiracy theory. Harrow finds the whole thing sort of stupid and a little demeaning, but he goes along with it because he recognizes the value of creating a powerful image... and of hiding his identity from people.

THE CELLS

The next level of authority in the organization below the Secret Masters are what Harrow and Hlavacek refer to as the "cell leaders." Over the past several years the two have used their contacts to establish "cells" of criminals loyal to them — essentially gangs of various sorts under a different name. Most of them were recruited by Hlavacek, often from other organized crime groups, with the promise of big profits and lots of resources. The cell leaders are the individual leaders of these groups, the ones with whom Harrow and Hlavacek communicate.

Most major cities in America and Europe, and quite a few in other parts of the world, have at least one ICON cell, and many have more than one. Most cells specialize in one or more types of crime (such as narcotics distribution, insurance fraud, or robbery), but some are more generalist. One advantage to being part of ICON is that Harrow and Hlavacek can move personnel around as needed, quickly and easily. If someone in, say, Chicago needs to be killed, the Secret Masters can fly in a hitman from Seattle, have him do the job, then put him back on a plane later that same day, leaving the police totally baffled.

Typically the members of one cell don't know about another, though sometimes they learn about others during joint operations masterminded by Harrow or Hlavacek. They know they belong to an international criminal conspiracy called ICON, and some other details, but they can't identify very many other members to the authorities. That will change as the organization becomes more powerful and cohesive, but for the time being ICON is structured more like a revolutionary or terrorist organization than VIPER.

In Harrow and Hlavacek's long-term plan, there will eventually be more levels to the organization. They envision a "council" of second-tier leaders who control all the cells in a region, plus a third tier of "city leaders" who control all the cells in a city and answer to the council. In addition there would be separate branches of the organization to deal with wide-scale areas of interest like technology and government corruption. But for now they must content themselves with what they have and work carefully toward their ultimate goal.

FACILITIES

Harrow and Hlavacek generally remain on Harrow's Caribbean island, where they feel relatively safe from detection and extradition. If necessary ICON has plenty of other bolt-holes they can flee to, including several in Third World countries that don't have extradition treaties with the United States and where Harrow's lavish bribes effectively insulate him from any problems. The island has a private airstrip (where a small jet is kept fueled and ready to go at all times) and a large dock with both one of Harrow's yachts and a small private submarine moored there.

Some of ICON's other notable facilities include:

- a large manufacturing concern in Thailand suitable for making many types of goods
- an isolated mountain villa in the Andes
- a plantation in Indonesia
- a weapons factory in Mexico
- a luxury apartment building in Chicago
- a pharmaceuticals factory in India

In other words, at present ICON's facilities tend to be businesses or residences that it can turn to criminal purposes, or safehouses and the like. It doesn't have "bases" or "headquarters" like VIPER or DEMON. It will one day, if allowed to grow, but right now it has other priorities.

TECHNOLOGY

Both Harrow and Hlavacek understand technology — its uses, its value to an organization such as theirs. They have carefully schooled their underlings in ways to use technology both to commit crimes and to avoid detection. For example, most members of ICON are provided with special cell phones manufactured by one of Har-

row's many companies. They look like ordinary cell phones, but in fact have heavy encryption so that communications between ICON members remain secret from unwanted listeners. Each also contains a self-destruct chip, triggerable either by the user or remotely by the Secret Masters, to prevent law enforcement or enemy organizations from making use of it.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Currently ICON is a pretty collegial organization... for a criminal conspiracy. There are two reasons for this. First, in recruiting members for the organization's cells, Harrow and Hlavacek have been careful to choose criminals of the right temperament — ability to work reasonably well with others, dissatisfied with their former organizations for some reason, capacity for group loyalty. Beggars can't always be choosers, but to the extent possible they've been selective.

Second, to some extent all the members share the goal of growing ICON and making it more profitable and powerful. Many of them came to ICON from some other organization, be it a gang, a company, VIPER, or a robbers' crew. They left because they were dissatisfied for some reason, usually a perceived lack of money or respect. They recognize the potential in ICON and want to see it succeed, because they know that when it does they'll have the money and power they crave. Unity of purpose does a lot to build camaraderie and morale.

Still, there's no honor among thieves, which creates sources of tension among the members. First, the cell structure of ICON can mean that a member develops more loyalty to his cell than to the organization as a whole. The Secret Masters have lavishly doled out money and equipment in exchange for loyalty, and it seems to have worked. But there's no telling how long it will continue to work... or what will happen when Harrow and Hlavacek try to merge the cells into a more cohesive organization.

Second, ICON in some ways is a schizophrenic organization — half based in the world of white-collar crime, half in the street underworld. The members recruited by Harrow tend to be more like him, while those recruited by Hlavacek are hardened, often violent, criminals. This creates a certain clash of cultures in which each "side" understands the value of the other but still scorns them. In the long run the Secret Masters have to either find a way to integrate the two sides, or defuse this tension, or it will probably tear the organization apart at some point.

Third, a group of dishonest men is never entirely trustworthy even if they're all supposedly working in their own self-interest. Sooner or later a seemingly trivial dispute between two members is going to escalate to the point that Harrow and Hlavacek have to deal with it, or the earnings will grow to the point where they have to establish rules for who gets what. Inevitably someone will lose out or feel insulted... and simmering resentment eventually boils over.

For their part, Harrow and Hlavacek continue to get along very well — but it's not hard to remain friends when you're successful. The question is whether their mutual admiration will weather the difficult times that are bound to come along. Harrow knows he can't beat Hlavacek in a one-on-one physical confrontation, so he's careful to have a small but powerful handgun with him at all times, and if possible at least one bodyguard (a Questionite-level superhuman hired directly from Bastion Alpha Security) who's personally loyal to him. Hlavacek hasn't made any special preparations yet, but as soon as he sees things beginning to go a bit south he'll take precautions.

ACTIVITIES

As befits an organization intended to rule the underworld (and, eventually, the world), ICON is already engaged in a wide variety of criminal enterprises. These include (in rough order of earnings, greatest to least) drug smuggling/sales, white-collar crime and computer hacking, robbery, fraud, and murder for hire. Harrow and Hlavacek are always on the lookout for new criminal opportunities; so are most cell leaders.

One area that Harrow and Hlavacek have paid special attention to is forgery. To function effectively, ICON's operatives need to stay "off the grid," particularly if they already have criminal records. The ability to provide them with nigh-foolproof false identification papers, driver's licenses, national registry cards, business licenses, shipping invoices, or whatever else they need means ICON has a real leg up on the law. And since running an international criminal consortium costs a lot of money, a good counterfeiting operation more than pays for itself. As of mid-2007, ICON's best forgers are mostly individual craftsmen based in Europe, though Harrow owns a small printing firm in Hong Kong that primarily does ICON work these days. Hlavacek has instructed the European forgers to each teach their skills to six students (supplied by Hlavacek), whom ICON will then transfer to other parts of the world to work their particular brand of criminal magic... and teach more forgers in turn.

Typically ICON tries to confine its operations to a single cell. But if a significant chance to make a big score or eliminate a rival crops up, Harrow and Hlavacek are more than willing to bring two or more cells together to take advantage of it.

PERSONNEL

The Secret Masters

JACOB HARROW (THE EMPEROR)

8	STR	10	DEX	11	CON	10	BODY
18	INT	18	EGO	20	PRE	10	COM
3	PD	3	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
22	END	20	STUN				

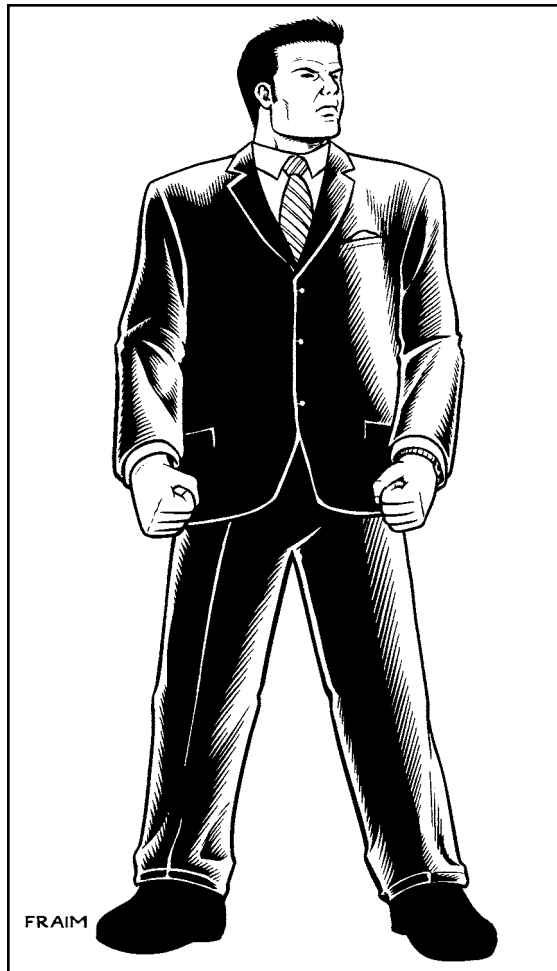
Abilities: Bribery 13-; Bureaucrats 13-; Conversation 13-; Deduction 13-; KS: The Business World 13-; KS: The Financial World 13-; KS: High Finance 13-; Oratory 13-; Persuasion 13-; Trading 13-; WF: Handguns; Well-Connected and Contacts (100 points' worth); Money: Filthy Rich

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture); Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Psychological Limitation: Has To Be In Charge; Psychological Limitation: Lusts For Wealth And Power; Social Limitation: Secret Identity (is in hiding; is not known to be the Emperor)

Notes: Jacob Harrow was born to parents whose only real ambition was to get through life without attracting any attention. That wasn't enough for Jacob. From his earliest years he wanted more — more food, more clothes, more of whatever there was to have. Gifted with both intelligence and charisma, he figured out early how to draw people to him and manipulate them for his own purposes.

Harrow breezed through school with straight As, attended Harvard and the Harvard Business School. Rejecting offers from dozens of top firms, he founded his own defense contracting company, Harrow Industries, in 1971. Most people predicted rapid failure, but Harrow defied the odds. Over the next twenty years he built Harrow Industries into one of the world's largest and most profitable multinational conglomerates, making himself a billionaire many times over.

It seemed as if Jacob Harrow could do no wrong — but his hubris proved his undoing. He became so rich, so influential, so powerful that he thought he could do whatever he wanted. "Laws are for people too stupid to know how to chart the course of their own destiny," he scoffed. But it turned out laws were also for wealthy men of great pride and arrogance. It almost came as a physical blow to him when the FBI arrested him, and when the dust cleared five years later he found himself sitting in a minimum-security cell.



If rage could call down thunderbolts from the heavens, Jacob Harrow would have blasted the world with lightning. His anger at his humiliation and downfall was so great that his doctors feared it would cause him medical problems. Only when he met Evzen Hlavacek and began to see a way out of his dilemma did he calm down, channeling his anger into scheming.

Today Harrow feels like a young man once more. Founding and building up ICON reminds him of the early days of Harrow Industries... but this time there are no petty government bureaucrats to kowtow to, no idiotic regulations to obey. Now he is truly "charting the course of his own destiny," and he will deal with any obstacles to his plans as a man of power should — by removing the obstacle immediately as he sees fit.

Jacob Harrow is a white man in his early 60s (though he appears to be in his late 40s at worst; he's in extremely good shape for his age). He has the look of a man of power and wealth and carries himself with the air of someone who's used to being obeyed. His black hair is well-styled, his green eyes are piercing, and he wears expensive men's suits.

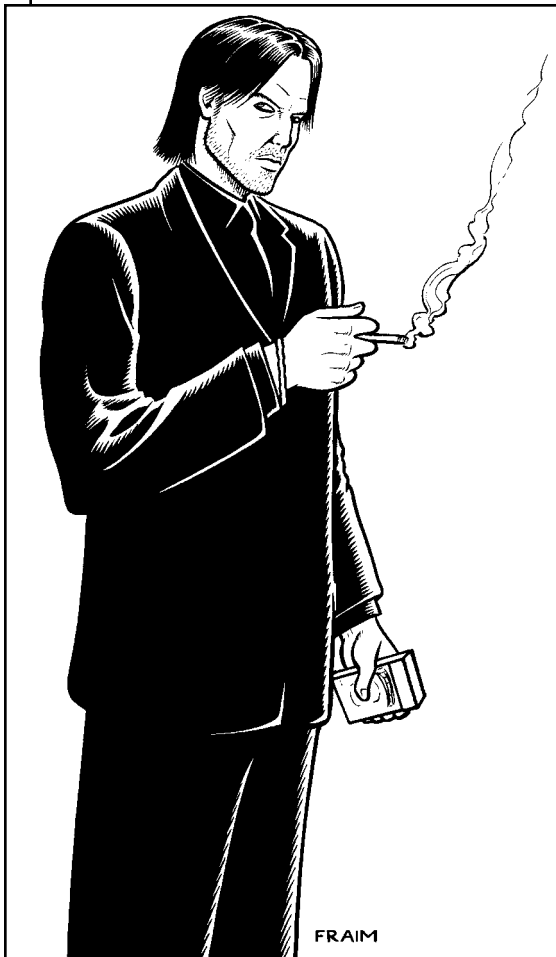
EVZEN HLAVACEK (THE HANGED MAN)

15	STR	15	DEX	15	CON	13	BODY
13	INT	13	EGO	18	PRE	8	COM
6	PD	6	ED	3	SPD	6	REC
30	END	35	STUN				

Abilities: Martial Arts (Dirty Infighting with +2 Extra DCs); +2 with All Combat; Bribery 13-; Combat Driving 13-; Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12-; Forgery (Documents) 8-; AK: Europe 14-; KS: Eastern European/Russian Underworld 14-; Languages: English, Russian, Serbo-Croatian (fluent conversation; Czech is Native); Rapid Attack (Ranged); Shadowing 13-; Stealth 12-; Streetwise 14-; TF: Small Motorized Boats, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles; WF: Small Arms, Knives; Well-Connected and Contacts (30 points' worth)

50+ Disadvantages: Distinctive Features: various jailhouse tattoos; Hunted: FBI 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture); Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Hunted: VIPER 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Kill); Social Limitation: Secret Identity (is in hiding; is not known to be the Hanged Man)

Notes: Evzen Hlavacek grew up in one of the worst neighborhoods of Prague during the later years of the Cold War. Smart and tough, he mostly lived on the streets and supported him-



self with petty crime. In time he graduated to more and more serious crimes and fell in with a gang of men like himself. As he moved into full-blown organized crime, he became wealthy, but he also made enemies and attracted the attentions of the police. He spent time in various Eastern European and Russian jails, becoming even tougher and developing underworld contacts that would later serve him well when he and Harrow set up ICON.

During his last stint in prison, Hlavacek met a man who turned out to be a high-ranking VIPER agent. Intrigued by the man's stories and the possibilities VIPER offered, Hlavacek went along when the snakes broke their agent out. He joined the ranks of VIPER and for a time did well in the organization. But eventually he decided it was not for him. The costumes, the high technology, the super-battles — they seemed unnecessarily dangerous and flashy, not the way a true criminal organization should act. So he committed what is to VIPER the ultimate sin: he left, abandoning the snakes to do his own thing once more. Knowing they'd look for him in Europe, he moved to the United States, took over a Russian gang in New York City, and was soon up to his old tricks.

In the early Nineties he fell victim to an FBI surveillance operation, though he got lucky — due to problems with the surveillance tapes, the charges the prosecution could make stick in court were only enough to get him sent to a minimum-security facility. There he met Jacob Harrow... and the rest, as they say, is history.

Despite his sort of washed-out look (see below), Hlavacek is actually a brute of a man — strong, fast, tough, strong-willed, violent, and ruthless. He's got the power of a weightlifter's body and the speed of a martial artist, making him a vicious fighter who's hard to beat one-on-one. His fighting training all comes from the School of Hard Knocks; he doesn't have a formal style. He usually carries a gun and a knife everywhere he goes. The gun (a Russian semi-automatic) is stuck in his belt or a jacket pocket; the knife, a large-bladed folding model that he keeps razor-sharp, is in his right pants pocket.

Evzen Hlavacek is a white man of Czech ancestry. He's got a sort of seedy, dissipated look to him, the result of too many years of intense criminal activity and excessive habits. His hair is black, and his eyes brown; he often seems to have a touch of five o'clock shadow. He wears dark men's suits and chain-smokes European cigarettes. Hidden beneath his clothes are various jailhouse tattoos, relics of his time in Eastern European prisons. On those rare occasions when he goes out on the town he tends to flash a lot of money around, simultaneously showing off and ensuring servile attention from wait staff, clerks, and maitre d's.

Other Personnel

ANITA BUCKMAN

Some of ICON's best document forgery is done by Anita Buckman, a Brit of West Indian ancestry who lives in London. Friendly, fast-talking, and vivacious, she's usually taken for a secretary (or, when she dresses right, a model), but the fact is that she makes her money with her artistic talents. She's got a superb eye for judging a document and then reproducing it using expensive copying, printing, and engraving equipment she's carefully acquired over the years. Her specialty is passports, but she can handle just about any sort of personal identification type of document (she refrains from counterfeiting money). She used to work freelance, but was lured into the ICON fold by Hlavacek with (a) the promise of steady work, and (b) some all-new, state of the art, untraceable printing equipment. She still does a few "side jobs" for old friends and clients without ICON's knowledge.

TOM CONWAY

When it comes to hijacking, strong-arm robberies, smash-and-grab jobs, and other relatively simple robbery schemes, Tom Conway is tops in the field. He's not smart enough to be a con man (and doesn't really have the patience for it either), but he can put together a hijacking better than just about anyone. A native of Ireland, he used to ply his trade in Dublin, but when the police got too close for comfort ICON moved him to New York and hooked him up with a crew there. Now he's making more money than ever before... though some conflicts he's gotten into with Mafia-based crews may eventually cause ICON problems.

GERALD MORTON

One of Jacob Harrow's best remaining contacts in the legitimate business world is Gerald Morton, a young executive with a major financial firm based in Chicago. Possessing an MBA, a JD, and enough chutzpah to fill Wrigley Field, Morton is an unabashed "cowboy capitalist" who'll do nearly anything to make more money. He used to work for Harrow directly and was considered by many to be the man's protégé, but was fortunate enough to escape the scandal that blew up around Harrow mostly unscathed. Today few people remember that he used to associate with the now-infamous Harrow... and no one outside of ICON is aware that he *still* associates with the Emperor. Through encrypted communications he passes tips and info to Harrow, and learns enough in return about Harrow's plans to cash in on the information himself. He wouldn't think of committing violent crimes, but just about any sort of white-collar shenanigans are fair game.

KOVAR SLADEK

Evzen Hlavacek and Kovar Sladek grew up on the streets of Prague together. They were never as close as brothers, but they were friends and often worked jobs together. Sladek had the admirable quality of being even more violent and ruthless than Hlavacek, making him an ideal companion for robberies, gang fights, and killings.

As Hlavacek went on to become a robber and organized crime guy, Sladek started getting more and more strong-arm work and eventually became known as an excellent assassin. Cold, efficient, professional, and utterly without sympathy, he killed on command for a succession of gang and mob bosses throughout Eastern Europe. When the Secret Masters began forming ICON, Hlavacek remembered his old friend and recruited him for the organization. Still based in Prague (though now living in a luxury penthouse rather than a slum), Sladek flies all over the world working ICON's deadly will, killing without compunction and then leaving town before the body is cold.

When he's not "on the job," Sladek usually runs small scams to keep himself busy and earn some extra cash, or spends his time and money indulging his taste for fine liquor and beautiful women. He can put away more booze than any two other men and still remain steady on his feet. He'd like to own some bars and nightclubs himself one day, but right now doesn't want to tie himself down with such investments.

USING ICON

Since ICON is a criminal organization, it's not hard for most GMs to figure out intriguing ways to use it in a campaign. Some possibilities include:

MAIN FOE FOR LOW-POWERED HEROES

In low-powered superhero campaigns (or even some types of Dark Champions games), ICON makes a good substitute for the likes of VIPER. The snakes are too big, powerful, and well-equipped for lower-powered supers to fight effectively. In ICON they have a foe they can tackle and expect to beat consistently.

A CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Most criminal organizations in *Champions* campaigns, such as DEMON, VIPER, and ARGENT, are so large, powerful, and well-entrenched that destroying them for good is a pipe dream. Even the mightiest heroes can't expect to wipe VIPER from the face of the Earth, whether in a single adventure or over the course of a campaign. But ICON is different. It's just getting started, which makes it relatively small and vulnerable. Your PCs *could* smash ICON once and for all, ending its potential menace before it has the chance to grow into full-blown villainy.

In other words, ICON gives your heroes a chance to make a difference — the opportunity to have a lasting positive impact on the world. It's



not the usual game of “put the villain in jail and wait for him to escape in a few months for another fight.” If Harrow and Hlavacek get captured again, they’re going to be sent to a maximum-security federal penitentiary for life... and the odds are they’ll remain there until old age or some other convict with a grudge plants them in the ground.

Plot Seeds

Here are three plot seeds for ICON:

ICON decides it’s time to upgrade its tech profile a little and outfit its soldiers with better equipment. They begin hitting research laboratories, defense contractors, and similar targets in search of the latest technology. If the heroes don’t stop it in time, ICON will become much more powerful. (For an added twist, assume ICON has robbed several ARGENT-owned facilities, and to

dispose of the problem efficiently ARGENT tips the heroes off to ICON’s existence).

ICON props up a shaky, corrupt government in a small South Asian nation. As the regime’s main pillar of support, ICON basically has free rein to do what it wants there, and soon the place is a den of iniquity that makes Sodom and Gomorrah look like a family vacation resort. Eventually this causes enough problems to attract the PCs’ attention.

Harrow buys some of the secrets of the Bastion Process (see page 91) from a disgruntled former Bastion Alpha Security employee, and then reverse engineers the rest of what he needs to know. Suddenly ICON is an organization of super-strong, super-tough criminals and is ready to compete with the big boys. If the PCs don’t stop it *now*, they probably never will.



MOTLEE'S CREW

MOTLEE'S CREW



Membership: James Motlee; Carmen Santoro; Brian Gorrell; Franklin Wilson; Phillip Walker

Background/History: James Motlee was a man with a plan. He was a thief, and a good one. No, not just good — *great*. When he set his mind to taking down a target, he almost always got the job done and escaped clean. The problem was, there are only so many jobs a thief can pull by himself. The really big scores required teamwork, multiple skill sets, and more than one pair of hands and eyes.

So Motlee put his mind to the task of recruiting a crew. It wasn't going to be easy, because the ideal member of the group he wanted would possess not just one but several special qualities. First, he'd be a skilled thief, one with years of experience and the ability to keep up with Motlee himself. Second, he'd fit in well with the group as a whole, and be willing to follow Motlee's instructions as leader, without being a sycophant or yes-man.

Third and most importantly, he'd have superpowers. Aside from skill, the key to Motlee's success was his power of invisibility. He was convinced there were more people like him out there, who had superpowers but chose to use them for personal gain in a quiet way, without putting on a costume or challenging superheroes to a brawl. He just had to find them.

Motlee's first recruit was Franklin Wilson, a man he'd worked with several times but hadn't known was superhuman. Like everyone else, he just assumed Wilson was very skilled with makeup and impersonations, making him a top-notch "faceman." The two of them teamed up again to swindle a jewelry dealer out of some diamonds... and Motlee accidentally walked in on Wilson when he was in mid-change. After getting over his astonishment and calming down the panicked Wilson, Motlee pitched his idea of a superpowered crew and quickly sold Wilson on the concept.

The two of them began putting out feelers, looking for thieves with a reputation for being able to do "impossible" jobs. Through an old prison friend of Wilson's they heard about Phillip Walker, an ace lockpick who could supposedly get into any locked room. They began tailing him and watching how he worked. Soon it became obvious that Walker couldn't pick locks at all, he was a teleporter! They introduced themselves to him and explained the situation. Though he was chagrined at having been so easily surveilled, Walker was happy to find other people like him and joined the group.

Walker was acquainted with the man who'd become the fourth member of the crew, Brian Gorrell. Gorrell *could* pick locks, and with phenomenal

skill and speed to boot. He was also supposedly a superb second-story man who could climb nearly anywhere. The more he thought about it, the more Walker wondered if Gorrell might not be a superhuman. It turned out he was. Telekinetic powers explained much of his success as a thief, and made him a perfect candidate for the team. He was reluctant to join at first, but after being given the "hard sell" he realized how much more money he could make as part of a crew, so he signed up.

The team met its fifth member and only woman, Carmen Santoro, totally by accident. They were drinking in a bar, saw her, and began competing to see who could attract her attention. She strung them along, so deftly pickpocketing them in the process that none of the four thieves realized he'd been taken until last call, when they couldn't pay for their drinks. Motlee figured out she had to be more than just a skilled pickpocket, tracked her down, found out the truth, and offered her a job. Grateful not to be turned in to the cops (or killed), Santoro took the offer. She knew it was her ticket to the big scores... and besides, it was fun to have four men paying her so much attention.

Group Relations: For the most part, Motlee's Crew is a fairly tight band of thieves. They work together well, and they all realize that as long as that continues they'll continue to make millions. They're also drawn together by the common bond of being skilled, superpowered thieves; to some extent they all feel a little like "freaks" (even if it's just subconsciously) and like having the company of similar people. But there's no honor among thieves, so inevitably certain tensions arise. The biggest source of trouble is Carmen, whom each of the four men would like to be romantically involved with. She can't resist stringing them along and tweaking their pride so they constantly compete with one another for her attention and good favor, which often results in hurt feelings and wounded egos. Motlee has to spend a lot of time soothing ruffled feathers.

Brian Gorrell is ambitious enough to want to lead the group, and young enough not to understand that he lacks the "seasoning" for the job just yet, so he sometimes rankles at having to take orders. Occasionally he defies his instructions and does as he thinks best, which succeeds spectacularly about a third of the time but causes major problems during most jobs. Similarly, Phillip Walker is young and hot-headed enough to chafe at having to go along with the team sometimes. The two of them sometimes team up to hatch schemes that often end up causing trouble for the whole crew... though occasionally they're quite profitable instead.

Motlee's Crew doesn't have much to do with the rest of the Superhuman World if it can help it; the five members don't really even think of themselves as "supervillains" or follow the classic costumed criminal tropes. Despite the fact that commentators and experts often compare them to GRAB, they have a very poor opinion of Black Diamond and friends. As far as Motlee's Crew is concerned, GRAB is just a bunch of smash-and-grab artists, not true thieves who carefully and cleverly plan their jobs.

Tactics: Motlee's Crew doesn't fight; they're thieves, not robbers or soldiers. If a job goes south for any reason, they flee. They prefer to stick together, but if that's not possible or advisable, it's every man for himself. Motlee, Santoro, and Walker all have a relatively easy time getting away thanks to their respective powers; Gorrell and Wilson are more likely to be caught.

Equipment: The members of Motlee's Crew are all pretty well off (and Motlee himself is quite rich, thanks to a combination of success at his chosen career and sound investment strategies). As a result, they can usually obtain whatever equipment they need for a specific score, even if they have to get it custom-made by underworld armorers (such as Wayland Talos, Brainchild, or ARGENT). They don't carry weapons or wear body armor; if they get to the point where such things would be necessary they'll flee (if they can) or surrender (if not).

Campaign Use: Motlee's Crew is intended to present a different sort of challenge for your heroes. Most superhuman criminals are costumed villains who on some level are willing to stand and fight if they must, and who rely almost entirely on their superpowers to commit crimes. Motlee's Crew is the opposite. Their powers make stealing things *easier*, and even allow them to attempt jobs that thieves without their powers could probably never do — but ultimately they think of themselves as skilled thieves, not supervillains. Even if they lose their powers they can still do things like pick locks, disguise themselves, move stealthfully, and thwart security systems, and they take real pride in that.

Don't worry about making Motlee's Crew tougher; they're not fighters at all. If you want to make the team a more challenging foe for the PCs,

MOTLEE'S CREW PLOT SEEDS

The classic Motlee's Crew plot: the PCs, or a PC, have something the Crew wants. Soon the PCs find themselves caught up in a web of deception, misdirection, and subterfuge. To get out of it they're going to have to figure out what's real, what's fake, and what the Crew is up to.

Once again competing for Carmen Santoro's affections, the four male members of Motlee's Crew challenge one another to see who can steal the most valuable or noteworthy items in a twenty-four hour period. It's up to the PCs to stop the rash of thefts... and perhaps a PC's Focus or costume is one of the items a Crew member wants to steal!

The shoe's on the other foot — to save the world the PCs have to sneak into a VIPER base and steal something without being detected. Since they lack the skills for that, they're going to need the help of Motlee's Crew...

give them more powers that let the members more easily avoid detection and escape capture. The difficult thing about opposing Motlee's Crew should be laying hands on them at all, not having to beat them into submission. To weaken them, impose even more Limitations on their powers so they have to be careful about how they use them.

If you want Motlee's Crew to be a little harder-edged, don't change their powers but make them more inclined to react violently if thwarted. In this case they typically wear body armor and carry assault rifles, submachine guns, and other ordnance in case they need to shoot their way out of a theft gone bad. In this case, each of them should have at least +1 OCV with Firearms or Ranged Attacks.

Motlee's Crew only Hunts people who have something the team's members want to steal. In that case they start the job by carefully surveilling and researching the target; if possible they want to know more about him than he knows about himself. As soon as they find a "chink in his armor" — a routine or habit he doesn't vary, a fondness for something they can provide or control (particularly something illicit), or best of all naked greed — they craft a plan to exploit that weakness. Then they put the plan in motion.

JAMES MOTLEE PLOT SEEDS

Motlee begins waking up invisible, the way he did when he first got his powers — something that's never happened since that day. Concerned something is going wrong, but having no one to turn to for help, he decides the best source of answers is the database of a PC (or beloved NPC hero, such as Dr. Silverback).

Motlee gets a line on a job that turns out to be more than he can handle — the target was a front for VIPER, and now the snakes want revenge. Since he took the job himself without telling his partners about it, he can't turn to them for help. Trick-ing the PCs into getting him out of this jam is a *much* better idea....

An old flame of Motlee's begins dating a PC. Jealous, he sets out to make the PC's life a living hell.

JAMES MOTLEE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	2		
23	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 54

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

20	<i>Walking Unseen:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe; Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)	6
3	<i>Observant:</i> +1 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups	0

Perks

10 Money: Wealthy

Skills

3	+1 with Concealment, Security Systems, and Stealth
3	Bribery 12-
1	Bugging 8-
3	Computer Programming 12-
3	Concealment 12-
5	Cramming
3	Deduction 12-
1	Demolitions 8-
1	Electronics 8-
1	Forgery (Documents) 8-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 12-
3	Lockpicking 12-
1	Mechanics 8-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 80

Total Cost: 134

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Does Not Suffer Fools Lightly (Common, Moderate)
10	Vulnerability: 2 x STUN from Light Powers (Uncommon)

Total Disadvantage Points: 155

Background/History: They say it's better to be lucky than good. Fortunately for him, Jim Motlee is both.

The luckiest break he ever got was the work-study job the Student Loans office assigned him in college. He worked for the optics lab. Mostly it was fetch-and-carry for the professors and grad students, but occasionally he got to play some minor role in an experiment. One such experiment was an attempt to create a "light-bending generator" that would effectively make a vehicle invisible. The work was going well, but during a test of a prototype, something went wrong, and instead of bending light properly the generator discharged all of its energy into the nearby Motlee, then exploded.

The blast knocked Motlee out cold but didn't inflict any lasting harm beyond a few burns that were treated at the local hospital. But the next morning Motlee got the shock of his life when he awakened and looked in the mirror... and no reflection looked back! After a few moments of panic he calmed down and thought about things. He decided the blast must have altered him somehow, and the change took place while he was sleeping. He tried concentrating on his appearance... and in a few seconds faded into view.

Motlee quit school the next day. He had it made and he knew it. He wasn't going to waste his time trying to use his power to fight crime or anything stupid like that; he'd use them to get rich. Over the next few weeks petty theft slowly evolved into major robberies. He had trouble at first disposing of his loot, but in time he made contact with some fences.

Eventually Motlee realized he could only go so far based on his invisibility power alone. Not being seen wasn't enough to get him into highly-secured areas where the *really* valuable things were kept. Fired with ambition and greed he began studying the skills of a professional thief, training for many hours every day. Initially he taught himself, but when he felt he needed help he paid underworld colleagues to "tutor" him.

Today, with years of training and experience under his belt, Jim Motlee is a skilled thief with the pleasant advantage of being able to turn himself invisible. He's made millions, but there's no end in sight as far as he's concerned... especially with his four partners to help him.

Personality/Motivation: Like most thieves Motlee is a greedy bastard — though he's got enough sense of decency and self-preservation not to cheat his partners over a few bucks. What makes him different is a harder-edged quality. He wants everything to run with military efficiency and precision, and he gets increasingly upset if that doesn't happen or something else interferes with his elaborate plans. He particularly dislikes it when some idiot makes his life harder, gets in his way, or otherwise annoys him, and sometimes goes to a lot of trouble to get revenge on such people no matter how trivial their offenses.

Quote: “Okay, here’s the plan. Stick with it and we can add a couple zeroes to our bank accounts tomorrow.”

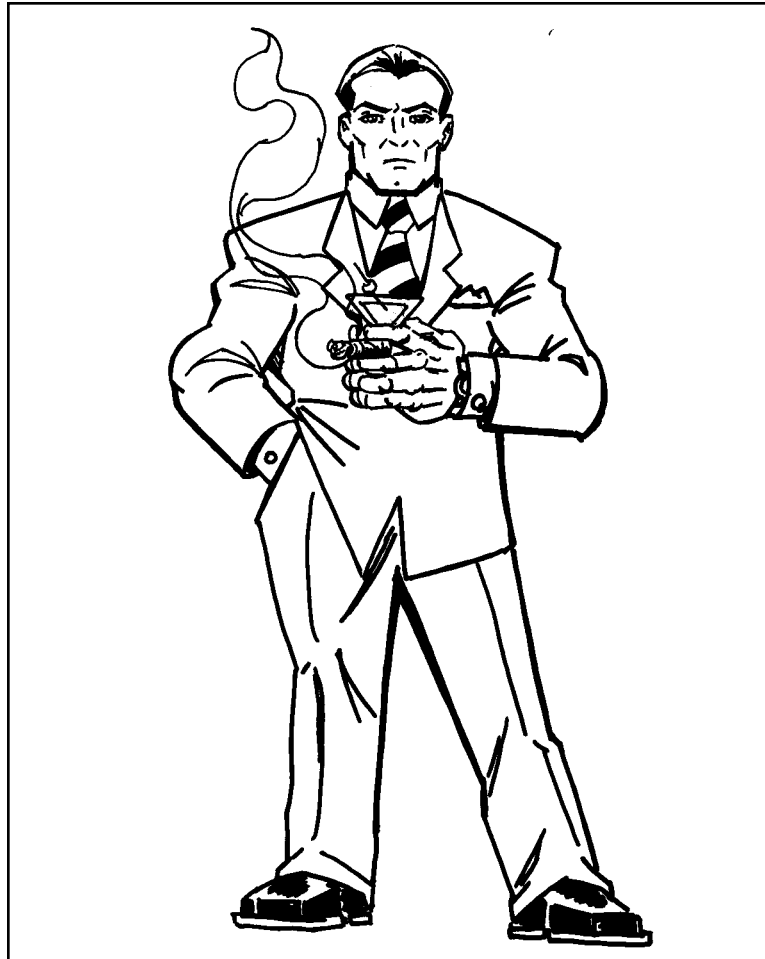
Powers/Tactics: James Motlee is a skilled thief with particular training in breaking and entering and avoiding/disabling alarms and other security devices. He’s also a fairly accomplished hacker and can turn his hand to several other underworld tasks (such as forging papers) if necessary. What sets him apart from other thieves is the fact that he can turn invisible, which makes many of his jobs a snap. He can’t make other people or large carried objects invisible with him, though, so he has to plan the best way to make use of his power.

Unbeknownst to Motlee, the accident that gave him his power also altered his cellular structure in such a way that he experiences intense pain whenever he’s hit by Light-based attacks (including lasers).

It’s possible this condition will worsen as he ages.

Campaign Use: When not leading his Crew, Jim Motlee might pull smaller, easier jobs on his own. That might pit him against the PCs, or an underworld “fixer” might put the heroes in touch with Motlee if they need his particular brand of “help” with an important mission... though of course he’ll expect to be well-paid for his efforts.

To make Motlee more powerful, increase his DEX to 18, and perhaps expand his Invisibility to cover the Hearing Group so he can move silently. To weaken him, Limit his Invisibility so he can’t use any Senses from the affected Groups as long as



the power is active. Thus, he’d have to memorize a room’s layout and security systems as best he could, turn Invisible, move to where he thinks he needs to be, and reappear, since while Invisible he’ll be blind.

See above regarding how Motlee Hunts people.

Appearance: James Motlee is a handsome white man in his early thirties, 6’0” tall with dark hair and eyes. He has a taste for the finer things in life and can usually be found wearing an expensive men’s suit, smoking rare cigars, drinking superb whiskeys, and keeping company with pretty women.

BRIAN GORRELL PLOT SEEDS

Gorrell's latest girlfriend turns out to be a thief herself, and he wants her in the Crew. To keep things going smoothly as the team trains for a big job, Motlee agrees. But is the girlfriend all she seems? Could she be a VIPER plant who's manipulating the Crew to steal something that VIPER can use to threaten the Earth?

Convinced he can "unlock" his powers and gain even more telekinetic abilities, Gorrell makes contact with ARGENT and arranges to go through an "augmentation procedure." But something goes wrong and he becomes a rampaging brute with major telekinetic powers! The PCs have to stop him while the Crew works behind the scenes to (a) undo the effects of the procedure, and (b) keep their friend from winding up in police custody.

Without informing the Crew, Gorrell accepts a freelance assignment to steal dozens of rare and antique cars. For fun he bets that he can do it all in a week for double or nothing his fee. The PCs (or perhaps just one or two of them) have to deal with this strange rash of car thefts.

BRIAN GORRELL

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
14	COM	2	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	4		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
22	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 41

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Flight: 0"/0"

Cost Powers END

12	<i>Untouching:</i> Telekinesis (10 STR), Fine Manipulation; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½)	4
3	<i>Telekinetic Levitation:</i> Flight 6"; Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Increased Endurance Cost (x4 END; -1½), Levitation (-½)	4

Perks

5 Money: Well Off

Skills

3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 12-
1	Disguise 8-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 12-
7	Lockpicking 14-
2	PS: Car Thief 11-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Seduction 12-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 53

Total Cost: 94

100+ Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
20	Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Ambitious (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Skirtchaser (Common, Strong)
5	Rivalry: Professional, with Phillip Walker

Total Disadvantage Points: 165

Background/History: Brian Gorrell is a mutant with minor telekinetic powers. He first discovered his powers when he was just 16 and had his first car. One day he accidentally dropped his keys down a sidewalk grating. While reaching through it, straining to get to them, they suddenly *leaped* into his hand! He was so startled he nearly dropped them again. After quickly looking around to make sure no one else had seen what happened, he drove away from there to a secluded spot where he began practicing with his new powers.

Over the next few weeks, he discovered he could basically only do two things: pick up and manipulate objects weighing up to 100 kilos from a distance; and levitate himself at about the same speed he could run. His career as a petty crook and car thief suddenly took a major turn for the better. Now he could open any locked car, hotwire it, and drive it away in seconds with a minimum of noise, damage, and fuss. And with his levitation power, he could become the ultimate second-story man.

Slowly but surely, Gorrell began to expand his criminal activities. He wasn't satisfied with grand theft auto money; he wanted bigger scores. He teamed up with a series of other thieves, learning from them but always chafing at never being the one in charge. His "in" to the really big time came when Motlee offered him a spot on his new crew. Gorrell was reluctant at first, since it was just another situation where he wouldn't be top dog, but the prospect of pulling the biggest, most profitable scores of his career was too tempting to pass up.

Personality/Motivation: Despite being pretty damn clever and worldly wise, when you get right down to it Brian Gorrell is far too overconfident. He's *convinced* he could, and should, be the leader of Motlee's Crew, even though most of the plans he comes up with on his own turn out badly. (He has no problem remembering the ones that succeed; he seems to conveniently forget about the failures.) His ambition drives him to be a troublemaker, to question Motlee's instructions, to go "off the reservation" and do things the way *he* thinks they should be done, and to take risks so he can impress his colleagues or out-do his friendly rival Phillip Walker.

Gorrell's other Achilles's heel is his love of women. He can't resist hitting on a beautiful girl (much to Carmen Santoro's annoyance, since she has to put up with him nearly every day), and more than once he's thrown off the group's timetable by staying in a bar just a *little* too long talking to some sweet young thing. An attractive female PC might be able to wrap him around her little finger... though with his Conversation skill, talking to him may not always be the safest thing to do.

Quote: "I'm telling you, if we do it my way, it's easier, quicker, and more profitable."

Powers/Tactics: Gorrell is a mutant with minor telekinetic powers. He can lift weights of up to 100 kg telekinetically, and manipulate objects with great finesse if necessary. He can also levitate himself (“fly” straight up and down) at a speed of 6” per Phase. Both of these abilities take time and effort to use compared to most superhumans’ powers, but they’re still a big help to him in his chosen profession.

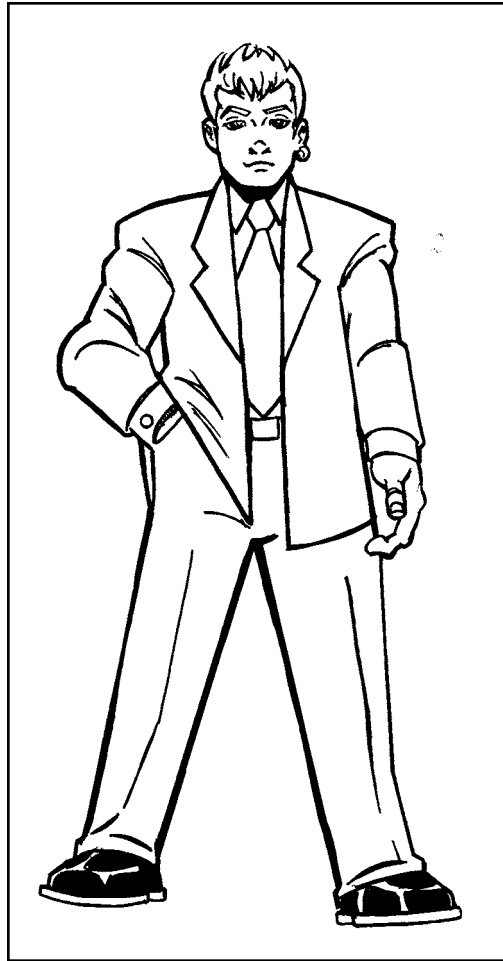
As a thief, Gorrell specializes in Lockpicking; he’s the Crew’s best picker of locks. He’s also the backup “faceman” if the team needs someone in disguise other than Franklin Wilson.

Campaign Use: Gorrell creates a certain tension within the ranks of Motlee’s Crew that PCs may learn about and find ways to exploit. He’s never going to be satisfied unless he’s the one making the plans and giving the orders, and since Motlee has no intention of giving up the top dog spot, ultimately Gorrell is either going to have to calm down or quit the team.

To make Gorrell more powerful, remove the *Increased Endurance Cost* and/or *Extra Time Limitations* from his powers. To weaken him, increase the *Increased Endurance Cost* so that using his powers *really* tires him out.

See above regarding how Gorrell Hunts people.

Appearance: Brian Gorrell, the youngest member of the Crew at 22, used to be a street punk, complete with the bizarre hair, clothes, and piercings. Since “turning pro” he’s informally adopted Motlee as his role model and changed his style to match — though he still wears one earring as a nod to his old self.



CARMEN SANTORO PLOT SEEDS

It turns out Santoro's second ex-husband was Holocaust. It was the briefest of flings and an impetuous marriage by any standard, but he's decided he wants her back. He's tracked her down at long last. To get rid of him without making a worse enemy out of him, the Crew needs to trick the PCs into taking him down....

After meeting a beautiful female PC at a society event and hearing people talk about how pretty the heroine is, Santoro decides to prove who's prettier and sets out to steal the heroine's boyfriend.

Santoro decides to study fine art in the hopes of learning about things she can steal. While taking a class or spending time at the museum she meets a male PC, and a romance develops....

CARMEN SANTORO

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 50 kg; 1½d6 [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
18	COM	4	13-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	0		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
20	STUN	0		
Total Characteristics Cost: 34				

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers

40 *Intangibility:* Desolidification (affected by magic)

END

4

Perks

5 Money: Well Off

Skills

1 Combat Driving 8-
 3 Concealment 12-
 3 Conversation 12-
 3 Deduction 12-
 2 Gambling (Card Games) 12-
 3 High Society 12-
 1 Lockpicking 8-
 3 Persuasion 12-
 1 Security Systems 8-
 3 Seduction 12-
 7 Sleight Of Hand 14-
 5 Stealth 13-
 3 Streetwise 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 83

Total Cost: 117

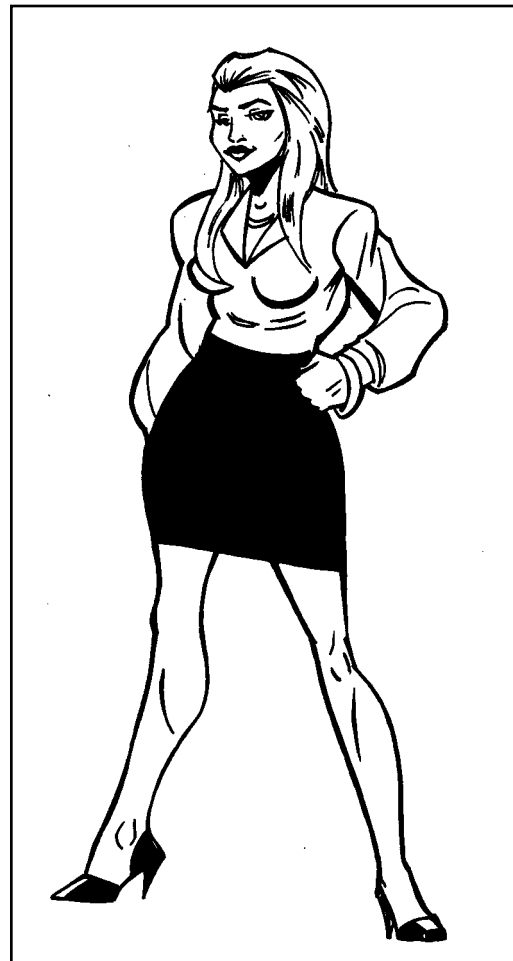
100+ Disadvantages

10 Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
 20 Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
 15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
 10 Psychological Limitation: Vain (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 155

Background/History: Carmen Santoro is a private person and has never told the rest of the Crew much about herself. From bits and pieces of information she's dropped, they know she's a mutant and that her powers first manifested when she was in high school. Her family was apparently pretty poor, and her father very abusive, so she ran away and lived by her wits, using her powers to steal things. They have no idea whatsoever that she's been married twice, once to a man who's now a high-ranking UNTIL field agent and once to a man she now believes might be the supervillain Holocaust....

Personality/Motivation: Although she does a good job hiding it most of the time, Santoro is conceited and vain. She revels in the attention that her good looks and sophisticated manner bring her; she gets frustrated and annoyed if she's not the focus of all the local male attention. If there's another woman around who even approaches being as pretty as she is (much less, God forbid, *prettier*), she'll subtly (and then not so subtly) try to drive her away with barbed comments, aggravating suggestions, and other passive-aggressive behavior.



Quote: “Don’t worry about the pressure plate — it can’t “feel” me if I walk over it intangibly.”

Powers/Tactics: Carmen Santoro possesses one simple but useful power: Desolidification. She can make herself intangible to walk through walls and otherwise penetrate secured areas, then let her teammates in. Being intangible is also a good way to avoid many alarms and security devices.

Santoro is the team’s best sleight of hand artist, largely because she can use her powers to help her. By selectively Desolidifying part or all of her hand, she can reach into a pocket without any chance of being detected, let a palmed object “slip through” into another hand or pocket, and the like. Even the most casual, fleeting contact is enough to let her take or manipulate something from or on another person. Additionally, Santoro is often a key player in schemes involving impersonation or con artistry, since as a beautiful woman she’s the perfect “accessory” for a Crew member playing the part of “high roller” — and she’s an ideal distraction to get a security guard to look the other way.

Campaign Use: Santoro might make an enjoyable romantic interest for a male PC, given all the baggage she comes with. Perhaps the right superhero could even reform her through the power of True Love.

To make Santoro a more powerful character, give her some Desolidification-based powers (see *The UNTIL Superpowers Databases* or *The Ultimate Metamorph* for plenty of ideas). To weaken her, apply Increased Endurance Cost (x2 END; -½) to her Desolidification.

See above regarding how Santoro Hunts people.

Appearance: Carmen Santoro is pretty enough to be a model, though that career never appealed to her. Her classical good looks, cascading auburn hair, and perfectly-proportioned figure have turned many a head and caused more than one car wreck. When she’s working she wears simple, practical clothes; the rest of the time she “girls it up” with fancy blouses and skirts.

PHILLIP WALKER

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
28	END	0		
22	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 41

Movement: Running: 6”/12”
Teleportation: 15”/30”

Cost Powers END

52	<i>Insta-Travel:</i> Teleportation 15”, Position Shift, Armor Piercing (+½)	5
12	<i>Teleportation Sense:</i> Clairsentience (Sight Group), Targeting; Only To Perceive Teleportation Locations (-1), Instant (-½)	3
2	<i>Quick-Change Artist:</i> Cosmetic Transform 2d6 (one set of clothing into another); Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), No Range (-½), Requires A Sleight Of Hand Roll (-½), Self Only (-½), 1 Recoverable Charge (see text; -1¼)	1

Perks

5 Money: Well Off

Skills

3	Concealment 12-
3	Disguise 12-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 86

Total Cost: 127

100+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Macho; Full Of Young Male Pride (Common, Moderate)
5	Rivalry: Professional, with Brian Gorrell

Total Disadvantage Points: 150

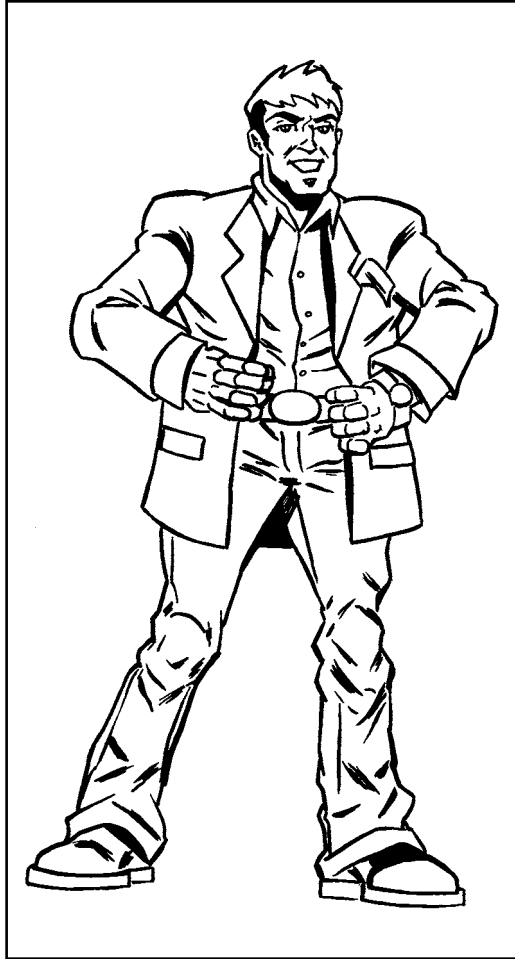
Background/History: Phillip Walker had the misfortune to be born into a family whose father was a scientist with little in the way of ethics or scruples. A biologist with some radical ideas about human development and virology, he looked on his children as potential fodder for experiments and tests. Being guinea pigs took its toll on the children, most of whom were weak and frequently sick. Phillip seemed to have a slightly harder constitution and became a favorite subject for the more rigorous tests.

PHILLIP WALKER PLOT SEEDS

Phillip wasn’t the only Walker child to gain superhuman powers from their father’s sadistic treatment. One of his siblings is now a superhero (perhaps a PC!) or villain. That could lead to all sorts of relationships that could help Motlee’s Crew, or cause it no end of trouble....

Walker makes a boastful promise to a girl that he can get her any gift she wants — and what she wants is something belonging to one of the PCs. Time for Walker’s greatest solo caper ever!

After being humiliated by another, more skilled, teleporter, Walker becomes determined to increase his own power. What lengths is he willing to go to, and risks to impose on himself and his friends, to achieve his goal?



Then one day Phillip became extremely ill after a series of tests. Scared about losing his best subject but not willing to expose himself to prosecution if he took the boy to the hospital and his actions became public, his father injected Phillip with an experimental serum he'd been developing. It worked... better than his father had intended, in fact. A few days after getting better, Phillip discovered he now had the ability to teleport! Somehow the tests and drugs had altered his biochemistry enough to give him superpowers. Unwilling to be put through even more brutal tests, Phillip ran away from home and never looked back.

He soon discovered that being a teleporter made it easy for him to steal things. At first he did it just to survive, but it quickly became his source of income. As he worked his way up the underworld social ladder, word got out about the thief that could get into any locked room. Eventually word of him got back to Jim Motlee, who correctly deduced that Walker must have superhuman powers. That in turn led to an offer to join the Crew, and the flattered Walker couldn't say no.

Personality/Motivation: Walker is (to use one of Franklin Wilson's favorite phrases) "young and full of stupid." He's got a lot of male pride in him, plus the arrogance that comes from being so successful at a relatively young age. As a result he doesn't always take orders well, and intensely dislikes

being insulted or belittled. He's quick to accept challenges, attempt things he's not truly capable of, or let little frustrations "get his back up." This sometimes makes him a disruptive influence on the Crew, especially when he "teams up" with his friend (and rival) Brian Gorrell for some "outside work" that leads to trouble.

Of all the members of the Crew, Walker is the most lavish spender. He likes fast cars and fast women, hand-tailored clothes, the best liquor, and gambling. Sometimes he loses more than he should and has to appeal to his friends to bail him out, or take down a score solo.

Quote: "Yeah, like they can keep me outta there."

Powers/Tactics: Phillip Walker has a short-range teleportation power that can get him into nearly anywhere, even rooms that are specially shielded against most teleporters. He's got an instinctive sense for whether there's an area in the room that he can fit in, thereby preventing him from teleporting into a solid object and killing or seriously injuring himself.

Compared to the other members of the Crew, Walker is relatively unskilled as a thief; he hasn't had time to develop skills yet, though Motlee's patiently trying to teach him. Up until now he's simply relied on his teleportation powers combined with smash-and-grab techniques. One of the few tricks he has learned is being a quick-change artist. To do this he wears a special set of tear-away clothes over another set. By teleporting out of sight and taking a Phase to discard the outer set of clothing he can radically change his appearance in just a couple seconds (though his face remains the same unless he's been using a disguise he can take off). He can later recover the Charge by obtaining another set of tear-away clothing.

Campaign Use: Of all the members of Motlee's Crew, it's Phillip Walker who shows the most promise to Jim Motlee. He's still young and impetuous, but Motlee can see in him someone who could become as skilled and professional a thief as Motlee himself, someday. Motlee spends a lot of time and attention on Walker, which sometimes makes the other members of the Crew feel jealous or ignored.

You can make Walker a tougher foe by expanding the range of his Teleportation powers — add No Relative Velocity, some Noncombat Multiples, a low-level MegaScaled option, and/or some Fixed Locations. To weaken him, add Increased Endurance Cost or Extra Time to his Teleportation.

See above regarding how Walker Hunts people.

Appearance: Phillip Walker is 5'10" tall with the trim, athletic build of a dedicated runner. He's more casual about his clothing than Motlee, but with his good looks, sense of style, and confident demeanor he often looks like he's stepped out of a high-fashion catalogue.

FRANKLIN WILSON				
Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 50 kg; 1½d6 [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
21	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 37

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
8	<i>Alterable Face:</i> Shape Shift (Sight, Touch, and Hearing Groups), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Facial Features And Voice Only (-1), Extra Time (5 Minutes to activate; -1)	0
5	<i>Alterable Face — Mimicry:</i> Imitation for Shape Shift, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Facial Features And Voice Only (-1), Extra Time (20 Minutes to activate; -1¼)	0



4 *Alterable Face — Imitate Retina Prints:* Cellular for Shape Shift, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Facial Features Only (-1), Extra Time (1 Hour to activate; -1½)

Perks

10 Money: Wealthy

Skills

- 3 Acting 13-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Disguise 13-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 3 KS: Con Games And Scams 13-
- 1 Lockpicking 8-
- 1 Mimicry 8-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 3 Seduction 13-
- 1 Sleight Of Hand 8-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 1 Ventriloquism 8-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 58

Total Cost: 95

100+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable; Always Noticed; Detectable Only By Unusual Senses)
- 20 Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 140

Background/History: Like several of his crewmates, Franklin Wilson is a mutant, but unlike them (and most other mutants) he didn't gain his powers during adolescence. They manifested when he was in his early twenties and already working as a con man. The stress of a con going bad caused his face to spontaneously change shape. The process was so painful he blacked out; his partners barely got him away from there before the would-be victim could call the cops. After he came to and figured out what had happened, he realized that he'd been given a gift that made him the ultimate conman.

His partners were all uncomfortable working with him after that, so he drifted away and worked some small-time scams on his own. He kept his powers a secret, preferring for people to think he was simply an expert disguise artist. For a while he teamed up with another skilled thief, Jim Motlee... and then one day Motlee discovered his secret. But it turned out Motlee had powers of his own, and a plan for creating a superpowered crew. Wilson became the Crew's first member.

Personality/Motivation: Wilson is a little older than the rest of the Crew and it shows in his attitudes. He's serious, disciplined, professional; he dislikes showing off, competitiveness, joking around, or general shenanigans. In many ways he plays the part of "elder statesman" or father figure, giving his colleagues the benefit of his years of experience and his extensive network of

FRANKLIN WILSON PLOT SEEDS

A powerful corporate head or political official suffers a debilitating injury, but his assistants don't want him to be seen as weak or compromised. They find out about Wilson and hire him to "replace" their injured boss. Wilson plans to exploit the situation for all it's worth... so the PCs have to find out about it and put a stop to him.

Wilson becomes infatuated with a female PC, so he kidnaps her significant other and takes his place.

Wilson discovers he has incurable cancer and is dying. He agrees to sell his body to VIPER in exchange for an enormous sum of money to be split between his partners. Since he's smart enough not to trust the snakes, the whole deal is arranged through an elaborate series of intermediaries... giving the PCs a chance to stop it before VIPER has the means to create a squad of shapeshifting assassins!

underworld contacts.

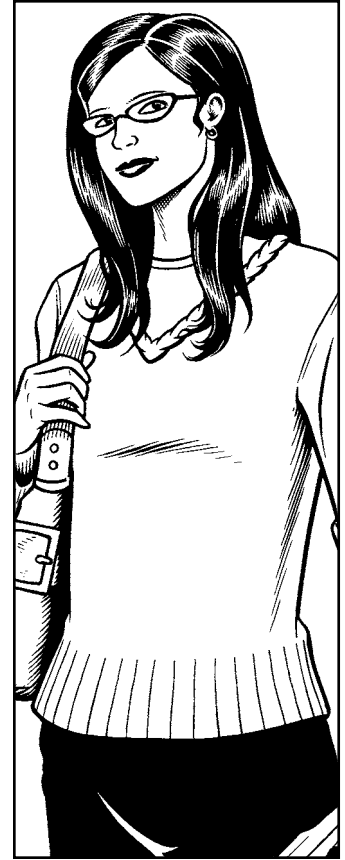
Quote: "Let's take this slow and do it by the numbers. Fast thieves end up in jail."

Powers/Tactics: Franklin Wilson has the power to change the shape and appearance of his face, head, and neck either to look like someone else or simply to look different from himself. He cannot change any other part of his body, so if he wants to change the color of his skin, he has to make sure the rest of his body is covered up so as not to give away the deception. Changing his facial features takes time, and the more extensive the change, the longer: 5 minutes for standard alterations; 20 minutes if he wants to imitate someone (which requires that he either have touched them skin-to-skin at some point, or have a good picture of them to work from); and an hour if he wants to change his retina prints (this always requires skin-to-skin contact with the subject if he wants to imitate someone).

Campaign Use: Wilson's power opens up all sorts of possibilities for Motlee's Crew that would otherwise be difficult for you to arrange. If necessary, allow him to change his skin color throughout his body so things become even easier. To make him more powerful beyond that, you could expand his Shape Shift to cover his entire body so he can be spindly teenagers, big muscle-bound thugs, or anyone else he needs to be. To weaken him, remove the Reduced Endurance on his Shape Shift so he can only maintain a change for so long.

See above regarding how Wilson Hunts people.

Appearance: Franklin Wilson is a black man, 5'7" tall with an average build. His features are bland and quiet; most people wouldn't look twice at him. He dresses to blend in... though in this group of flashier folk that sort of makes him stand out.



VILLAINY UNLIMITED

VILLAINY UNLIMITED



It's not easy being a supervillain. The public hates you, the police chase you, superheroes track you down and beat you to a pulp. All you've ever asked out of life is the chance to become rich and successful by using your powers to steal instead of having to work, but the world's against you.

Now you have someone on your side! *Villainy Unlimited* is here to make your life easier and maximize your chances for success in your chosen career. Let Villainy Unlimited handle all the little details while you implement your master plan!

HISTORY

Beginning with his inspired (and ultimately successful) defense of the supervillain Heartbreaker in 1987, lawyer Thomas "Tom" Franchetti became one of the best-known "villain defense attorneys" in the nation. When a villain needed the best legal representation he could obtain, Franchetti was often the man he called. Sometimes Franchetti even took a case for a greatly reduced fee because of the publicity he could obtain.

In 1998 Franchetti decided to relocate his main offices from New York City to the newly-built Millennium City, which he (rightly) believed would become a hotbed of superhuman activity. The next year he was confronted with a problem that ultimately led him to transform his business from an ordinary law office into what he now calls Villainy Unlimited. A new client, a villain named Battleaxe, was worried about his two young children. He knew the villain game could be a dangerous one, and he wanted to make sure his kids would be all right if the worst happened to him. He asked Franchetti to set up a trust fund for them using money he (Battleaxe) had earned so far, and to insulate it from the authorities as much as possible.

Franchetti took care of the matter, but it made him think. *What other sorts of services could villains use that I could make money providing for them?* He could think of plenty of things off the top of his head — money management, insurance, and bail bonding, to name just three. Never one to turn down a chance to make more money, Franchetti began laying the groundwork for his new enterprises.

In 2001, word began to filter out through the supervillain grapevine about *Villainy Unlimited*, a support service for villains. Many supercriminals were skeptical at first, suspecting it was some sort

of sting operation by UNTIL, but after a few of them tried it and gave glowing reports of VU's services, Franchetti's business boomed. Today he's still known publicly as an ace criminal defense attorney, but to the villain community he's much, much more than that.

ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES

Villainy Unlimited is a series of small companies all linked together through Franchetti, though he's used his legal skills to conceal as much of what's really going on as he possibly can. They're all based in an office building in the Downtown district that Franchetti owns through several shell companies. To the ignorant eye the various "branches" of the company look like separate offices run by separate firms — but once someone gets inside and takes a careful look around, he discovers they're all interconnected by stairwells and private elevators.

Although Franchetti tries hard not to engage in blatantly illegal activities (see below), he knows that some of what he does it at the very least questionable. Since he has no intention of going to prison himself, he's made plans for a speedy escape if necessary. Parked in the back of his office building is a nondescript vehicle that's actually a high-tech wonder he had specially designed by one of his clients. Able to reach sportscar speeds, it also features a detachable computer system to which all of Franchetti's records are backed up each night. Concealed in a special compartment are five sets of false identity papers that Franchetti can use to flee the country if necessary, as well as \$100,000 in cash to supplement his various offshore bank accounts.

Villainy Unlimited is simply structured thanks to the fact that it grew out of a one-man law office and is basically still run by one man. At the top sits Franchetti, who meets with nearly all the clients at some point and even considers a few of the more mentally stable ones (such as Lady Blue and Utility) his friends. One step below him on the organizational ladder are the heads of the various "branches" of the company, such as Stephen Renfrew (the "owner" of Renfrew Bail Bonds, VU's bonding department), Dr. Michael Watkins (head of the "medical department"), and Fran Grubman ("owner" of Grubman Insurance). Like Franchetti himself, each of them typically has a small staff

(often no more than a single person) to help run their “businesses” and provide a decent cover should anyone come snooping around.

Franchetti takes great care when choosing employees for Villainy Unlimited. He needs people who’ll remain loyal to him despite the odd clientele and the sometimes illegal nature of the company’s activities. He interviews prospective employees carefully, searching for people with enough scruples to “stay bought” for the large salaries he pays but not so many scruples that they’ll betray VU to the cops. So far he’s succeeded admirably.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Villainy Unlimited’s corporate culture revolves mainly around the charismatic Franchetti, who’s liked, even adored, by his employees. He has a real knack for handling people and knowing how to get the best out of them; in return they tend to work hard and obey his orders without question. None of them have any illusions about what they do for a living; they don’t think they’re actually working for heroes or other “legitimate” clients. They’re just the sort of people who are willing to work for supervillains in exchange for a nice, fat salary.

SERVICES

Villainy Unlimited provides an array of services for its supervillainous clients:

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

The only part of Villainy Unlimited that’s known to the public at large is The Law Offices of Thomas Franchetti, Esq. — Franchetti’s first and most successful business. As a criminal defense attorney, Franchetti ranks among the best, and as a specialist in superhuman criminal matters he’s even more exclusive (and thus can charge very high fees). Only about one-fourth of his clients are supervillains, but their cases occupy about half of his working hours... and bring him enormous amounts of publicity.

Franchetti’s legal services for villains go beyond the courtroom, though he keeps any other work as hush-hush as possible — they’re a Villainy Unlimited service, not a Law Offices one. He establishes trust funds for villains, helps them market their images (if necessary), sets up corporations for them (provided he thinks it’s legitimate), prepares wills, and so forth.

BAIL BONDING

Through the front of Renfrew Bail Bonds, Villainy Unlimited provides bond money for supervillains. Primarily VU does this for long-term Franchetti clients it knows it can trust, or other villains who seem reliable — it won’t fork over any money, usually tens of thousands of dollars (if not more), for someone it thinks will bolt before trial. On a few occasions Franchetti has let a villain work off some of his legal debt by tracking down and capturing a bailjumper.

Stephen Renfrew, an oily little man who tries his best to seem debonair, sophisticated, and worldly-wise, runs Renfrew Bail Bonds for Franchetti. Although he likes his job, privately he’s deeply jealous of Franchetti, and if pushed a little too hard might turn on him.

COSTUMES

The typical supervillain can’t just waltz into any old tailor’s shop and ask to have a new costume made, so Villainy Unlimited has stepped in to fill this gap. Taryn Marquez, ably assisted by Petra Svoboda, serves as costumer to the supervillain set — and armorer too, in some respects, since she often has to work with various types of armored cloth. Her sartorial skills combined with keen eye for fashion have improved the look of many a supercriminal.

EQUIPMENT

Villainy Unlimited won’t obtain illegal gear for a client, nor gear it thinks is specifically intended for use in a crime (see below). But Franchetti has no qualms about helping a client acquire “legitimate” equipment that’s legal for anyone to own, such as a sportscar. He’ll even arrange the paperwork so the true identity of the owner remains obscure.

INSURANCE

Few villains can get any sort of insurance, especially if they have public identities — and those who can discover that the insurance company will void the policy if how they got hurt or killed becomes known. Villainy Unlimited, on the other hand, is willing to provide life and health insurance to supervillains knowing who they are and what they do. The premiums are *not* cheap by any means, but it’s the only way most villains can get a policy they know will be fairly paid. And VU is scrupulously fair about these matters, since no one wants to have an angry supervillain around....

MEDIATION AND NEGOTIATION

Supervillains often have differences among themselves, and they usually settle them with a good old-fashioned brawl. But that’s not always the solution, and they can’t avail themselves of society’s other mechanisms for resolving disputes, such as filing a lawsuit. Villainy Unlimited addresses this by providing mediation and negotiation services for the supervillain set. All participants have to voluntarily agree to the process, and to be bound by Franchetti’s final decision. Anyone who violates this pledge is barred from using VU’s services (sometimes for a specific period, sometimes permanently), so very few villains have ever gone back on their word after Franchetti made his ruling.

MEDICAL CARE

There’s no such thing as a Sickbay for supervillains, so they have to make do with what Villainy Unlimited can offer. Hidden behind the facade of a medical research clinic, Dr. Michael Watkins provides basic medical care, trauma medicine, and

even some simple surgery to supervillains and their families. The only drawback to this is that there's no "secret entrance," so villains who are injured after the building closes have to have a way to sneak in or the ability to fly to the clinic's window.

MONEY MANAGEMENT

While Villainy Unlimited won't help villains launder money, it does provide financial and investment advice, help them set up bank accounts under false names, and so forth. It does this primarily for villains it can trust not to abuse the process, but it tends to err on the side of doing the work (and collecting the fee) when what the villain wants isn't clearly illegal.

WHAT VILLAINY UNLIMITED WON'T DO

Whenever he first meets with a client, Franchetti is careful to outline not only what Villainy Unlimited can provide for a client, but what it *won't* do. He doesn't want the company or its employees to engage in any activities that amount to blatant assistance in committing crimes or hiding from the law. Among other things:

- VU will not provide a villain with anything that directly helps that villain (or anyone else) commit a crime. This includes, but is not limited to, things like obtaining the floor plans of a building, putting the villain in touch with someone who can build him gadgets he needs to commit crimes, and the like.
- VU will not help a villain hide out from the law. It won't provide its clients with safehouses, fake identity papers, or anything like that.
- VU will not directly launder money for a villain, for example by helping him invest it in real estate or a business. But it will use that money to set up offshore bank accounts, trust funds, or the like — Franchetti doesn't object so much to using the proceeds of crime as he does to hiding the source and nature of those funds from law enforcement, which could get him into serious trouble.

PERSONNEL

Major Personnel

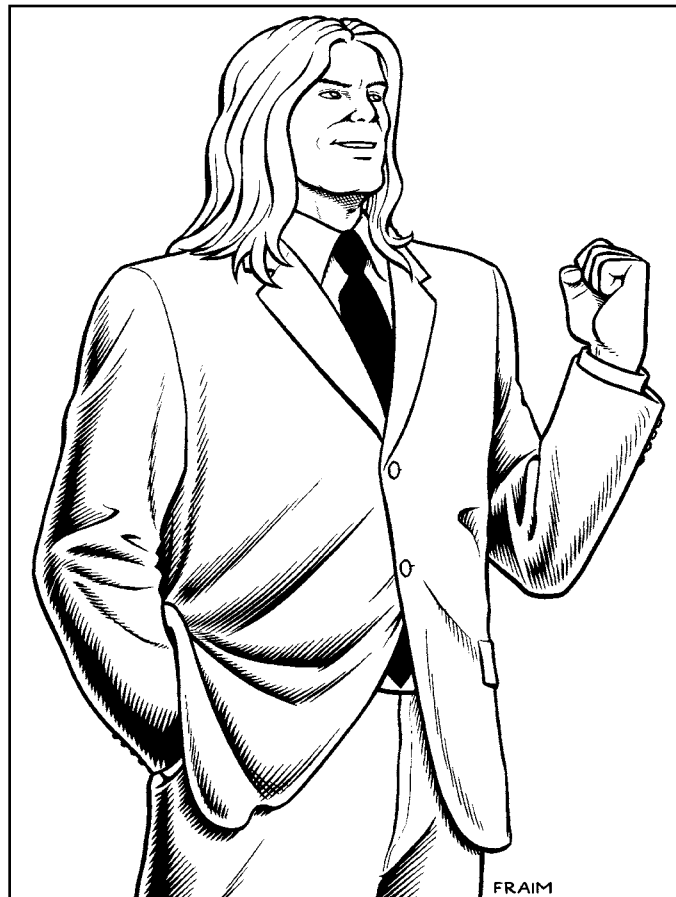
THOMAS "TOM" FRANCHETTI

8 STR	9 DEX	10 CON	8 BODY
16 INT	12 EGO	18 PRE	12 COM
3 PD	3 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
20 END	17 STUN		

Abilities: Bribery 8-; Bureaucratics 13-; Conversation 13-; Deduction 12-; CK: Millennium City 11-; CK: New York City 11-; Languages: Italian, Spanish (both fluent conversation; English is Native); Oratory 13-; Persuasion 13-; Seduction 13-; Streetwise 8-; Scholar (KS: Business Law 13-; KS: Contracts 14-; KS: Criminal Law 14-; KS: Law 14-; KS: Superlaw 14-; KS: Supervillains 11-; KS: Torts 11-; KS: Wills And Trusts 14-); Well-Connected and Contacts (20 points' worth); Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Law; Money: Wealthy

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted: MCPD 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Psychological Limitation: Greedy; Reputation: supervillain defense attorney

Notes: Born to a working-class family in Brooklyn, Tom Franchetti grew up playing and fighting with his four brothers. That spirit of bulldog-stubborn competitiveness never left him. His aggressive approach to dealing with the world, combined with his native intelligence, made law school the obvious choice for him.



After graduating Franchetti went to work for a Brooklyn firm doing criminal defense and personal injury cases. He learned a lot, but ultimately he didn't like working for anyone else. When he felt he was ready he hung out his own shingle. Years of hard work in the trenches of the justice system followed, and slowly but surely he established a reputation as a top-notch, take-no-prisoners defense attorney. But he never represented a supervillain until the Heartbreaker case in 1987, when his clever defense and brilliant oratory swayed a jury to overlook what many people thought was irrefutable evidence and got Heartbreaker acquitted of two charges of murder and three of armed robbery. The verdict brought Franchetti national attention, and soon other supervillains were beating a path to his doorstep. That led him to move to Millennium City, and in time to found Villainy Unlimited.

Franchetti claims to be a staunch proponent of the adversarial system and a man dedicated to protecting the rights of the accused, be they superpowered or mundane. The truth is that he's really in it for the money, and he happens to be very, very good at making money as a "hired gun" who defends criminals. He pretends to himself and his employees that Villainy Unlimited won't help its clients commit a crime, but the truth is that anytime there's a "grey" area, he chooses to help the client and make the money rather than erring on the side of caution and strict ethics. But all the time he does these things, he proceeds as cautiously as he can to keep his own butt from landing in a sling. Helping clients and making a lot of money is one thing; going to jail because of it is another.

Tom Franchetti is a handsome, silver-tongued devil. A leonine head of long brown hair frames his face, and he's usually got a smile for everyone... except when engaged in cutthroat negotiations. He's 6'0" tall and wears expensive men's suits. He's got a real charisma about him, a friendly, open personality that makes people instinctively like him. He's adept at using his personal charm to his own advantage.

VILLAINY UNLIMITED PLOT SEEDS

Taryn Marquez approaches a wealthy hero (perhaps one she's been seeing socially) about financing her "costumes for heroes" business. One of VU's clients find out about this and decides to "remove" her before she spills the secret about the company's existence. The PCs have to keep her safe until they can learn enough to take care of VU permanently.

A villain files suit against one of the PCs, alleging copyright and trademark infringement pertaining to their (very similar) costumes. Representing the villain is Tom Franchetti, who's also the person who helped the villain trademark his image.

Tom Franchetti and all of his records and files mysteriously vanish overnight! Villains begin tearing the city apart trying to find them, alerting the PCs that something unusual is going on. It becomes a race to see who can find the incriminating evidence first. And just what happened to Franchetti, anyway?

MARIE MCALLISTER

7 STR	8 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
11 INT	8 EGO	10 PRE	14 COM
2 PD	2 ED	2 SPD	3 REC
16 END	16 STUN		

Abilities: Bureaucrats 8-; KS: Fashion And Style 11-; KS: Law 8-; KS: Supervillains 8-; PS: Administrative Assistant 14-; PS: Computer Use 11-; PS: Paralegal 8-

25+ Disadvantages: None

Notes: For the past four years, Marie McAllister has served as Tom Franchetti's administrative assistant and office manager. She started as just one of the secretaries in the office, but when his then office manager quit she abruptly found herself promoted. Thrown into the deep end, she demonstrated that she could swim quite well, and has been running the VU office ever since. Without her Franchetti would have a much, much harder time keeping things organized and all his "business interests" functioning efficiently.

McAllister doesn't worry too much about the ethical and legal implications of her work; she figures Franchetti is too concerned about his own skin to ever make her do anything that's outright illegal. Still, some of the clients worry her a little bit. Even though Franchetti assures her they're not dangerous, she finds them creepy and doesn't like being around them. Despite the high salary Franchetti pays her, she sometimes wonders if she shouldn't find a safer job somewhere else. Having learned a little about the law during her tenure at VU, she's even thought about trying to go to law school. She also sometimes dreams about becoming a fashion designer.

McAllister's been married for six years. But, unable to resist Franchetti's charms, she's been conducting a torrid affair with him for the past several months. The two of them "work late" most weeknights, staying at the office long after the other employees have left. As if that weren't tricky enough, a couple of supervillains, most notably Orion, seem to be romantically interested in her.

Marie McAllister is an attractive white woman, 5'7" tall with shoulder-length blonde hair and blue eyes; she's slender (thanks to diligently visiting the gym every day) with a well-developed figure. She has excellent fashion sense and always dresses stylishly.

WILLIAM BURNSON

10	STR	10	DEX	10	CON	9	BODY
13	INT	12	EGO	13	PRE	10	COM
2	PD	2	ED	2	SPD	4	REC
20	END	20	STUN				

Abilities: Bureaucratics 12-; Computer Programming 8-; Deduction 12-; Oratory 12-; Persuasion 12-; Scholar (KS: Business Law 11-; KS: Contracts 11-; KS: Criminal Law 11-; KS: Law 12-; KS: Torts 11-); TF: Snow Skiing, Two-Wheeled Muscle-Powered Ground Vehicles; Well-Connected and Contacts (10 points' worth); Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Law

25+ Disadvantages: None

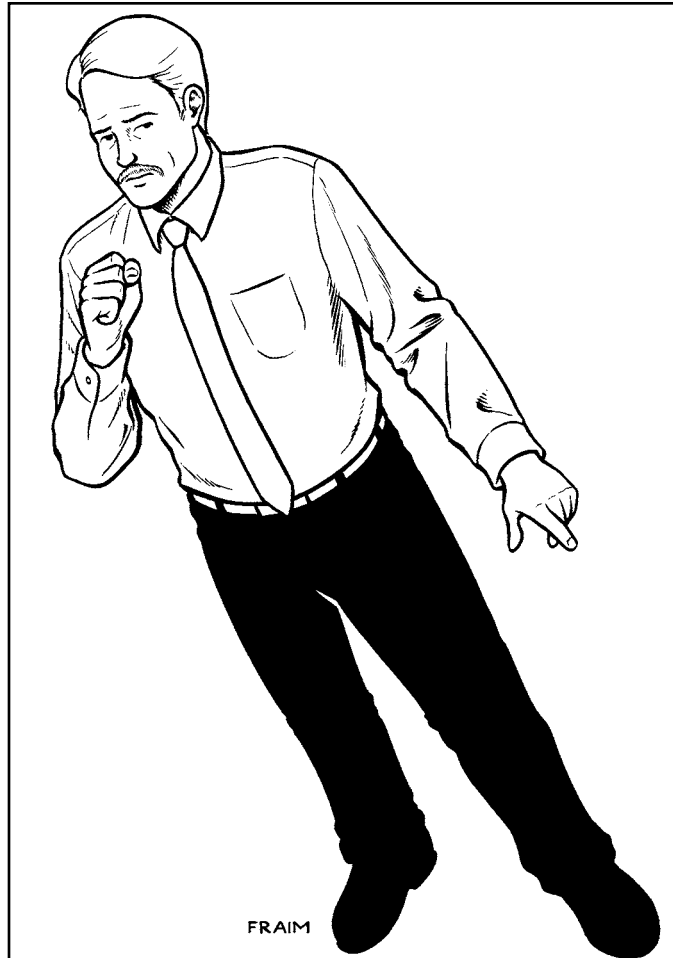
Notes: William Burnson is Tom Franchetti's protégé and right-hand man. When he first went to school he studied computer science, but he finally gave in to his lawyer grandfather's advice and went to law school instead of joining the work force after graduation. As his grandfather predicted, he did well in law school, finishing with honors after a stint on the law review. He joined the Millennium City public defender's office, working there for several years to gain courtroom experience and learn the system. His plan was to open his own practice someday... but then he heard that Tom Franchetti was looking for an associate. What could be more exciting than defending supervillains? He applied for the job, and after several grueling interviews, got it.

Since then Burnson's been a key player in Villainy Unlimited. Franchetti really has more work than he can handle, but he doesn't want to go on a major hiring campaign because few people are suited to work for an organization like VU. In Burnson he found someone who was both intellectually and temperamentally suited for the work, and that's made things in the legal side of the VU offices run much, much more smoothly. (But it won't be long before Franchetti's going to have to seriously consider adding a third attorney....)

Unlike his boss, Burnson genuinely believes that every defendant deserves the best representation possible, even if he can't pay top legal fees. A textbook example of a bleeding heart liberal, he also thinks

that most defendants are as much victims of "the system" as they are actually guilty of crimes, and that by protecting them he's ultimately doing society more good than harm. Still, he questions his own actions sometimes. It's hard to argue around the point that some of the supervillains he defends in court pose a serious danger to the community. But in the end he swallows his doubts, relying on the adversarial system to achieve the best results as often as possible.

Burnson is a slender white man 5'9" tall. His hair and moustache are blonde. He dresses well, but not as stylishly as his boss Tom Franchetti. He's got a sort of nervous manner and tends to talk at a rapid-fire pace. He's in good shape from hobbies like biking and skiing. He's also fond of hiking, and contributes to the Sierra Club and other environmental causes. He's a vegan and health food nut who's very particular about what he eats.



DR. MICHAEL WATKINS

8 STR	8 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
13 INT	12 EGO	13 PRE	10 COM
3 PD	3 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
16 END	16 STUN		

Abilities: Deduction 12-; High Society 8-; CK: Millennium City 11-; Paramedics 13-; PS: Doctor 12-; Scientist (Biology 11-, Chemistry 11-, Human Biology 12-, Medicine 12-, Superhuman Physiology 12-; Surgery 12-); Fringe Benefit: License To Practice Medicine

25+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Hippocratic Oath

Notes: Villainy Unlimited isn't set up to provide full-scale medical care (not even full trauma medicine the way Sickbay is), but Franchetti realized early on that medical services were something many supervillains needed. He decided that was a good way for VU to make money, even though some aspects of it (such as treating gunshot wounds without reporting them to the police) violated his general policy about not committing crimes. He justified this to himself on humanitarian grounds, arguing that if VU didn't provide clean, competent medical care his clients would go to back-alley quacks who'd do them more harm than good.

To run this new "division" of VU he hired Dr. Michael Watkins, a veteran of the Mercy Hospital emergency room. In Watkins he found his ideal candidate: someone so devoted to the Hippocratic principle that he'd be willing to break the law to uphold it. Watkins thinks *everyone* deserves the best medical care, regardless of income, social class, or legal status. In Villainy Unlimited he saw a chance to serve a segment of the community that often had to make do with little or no medical care, and he couldn't resist the opportunity. Contrary to the what he reads in the papers, he finds that nearly all the villains he's provided care to are average guys, even friendly. It's never really occurred to him that they like him because he's helping them, not because they're genuinely personable.

Watkins is a handsome man in his late twenties whose black hair, brown eyes, and dark complexion betray a hint of Mediterranean ancestry. Around his VU offices (a series of three rooms set up for basic medical procedures and tests) he usually wears nice pants and shoes, a button-down shirt with no tie, and a white labcoat. He has one nurse to assist him. He usually keeps his "office hours" at night and sleeps during the day, but Franchetti and the VU staff can page him any time he's needed.

TARYN MARQUEZ

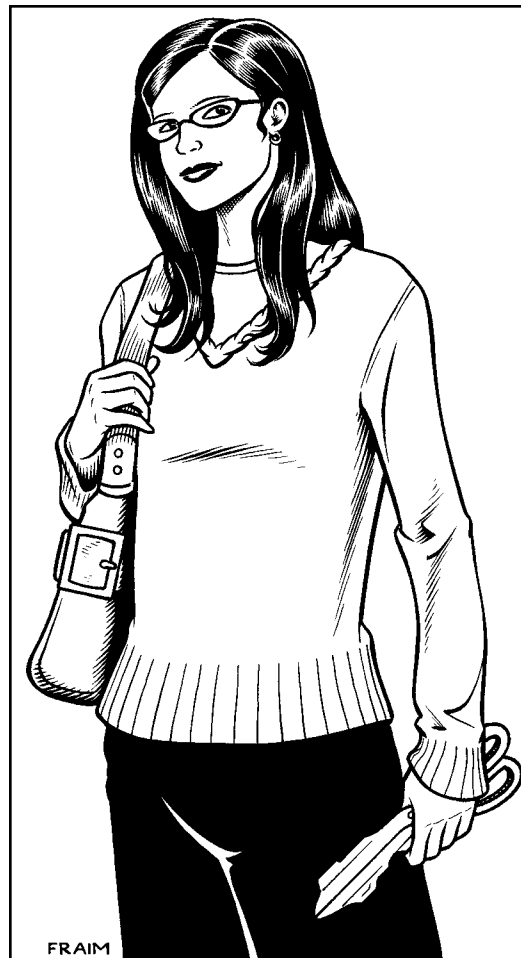
9 STR	12 DEX	8 CON	8 BODY
10 INT	10 EGO	10 PRE	13 COM
2 PD	2 ED	2 SPD	4 REC
16 END	19 STUN		

Abilities: KS: Fashion And Style 14-; PS: Fashion Designer 13-; PS: Sewing 14-; SS: Fashion Materials Science 11-; Sleight Of Hand 8-; Contacts (10 points' worth in show business)

25+ Disadvantages: None

Notes: Just because you have superpowers doesn't mean you know how to dress for success, choose colors that don't clash, or accessorize. After seeing the ridiculous costumes some of his clients wore, Tom Franchetti had the brilliant idea to provide a clothier service for them. He had to hunt around for awhile to find the right person for the job, but eventually a friend put him in touch with Taryn Marquez, who was doing freelance costuming work for a couple of Hollywood studios at the time.

Marquez had been sewing since age eight, when her mother refused to make her any more costumes for the little plays she liked to put on in the backyard with her friends. She dreamed of becoming an actress, but as she got older was mature enough to realize she didn't really have the talent to succeed at acting. So she focused on making costumes instead, something she *did* have the talent for. She was good enough to win a



scholarship to the Fashion Institute of Technology, where she learned even more about designing and making clothes.

After graduating she got a job designing costumes for some of the opera and theater companies in New York. Her performance on those jobs earned her attention and contacts in Hollywood, and in time costuming work there as well. (She claims to have met, and briefly dated, famed actor Blake Overmyer during this time, though she doesn't have any pictures to back up her stories.) Eventually she had enough contacts and a sufficient reputation to go freelance. But the job Franchetti offered was so intriguing, and so lucrative, that she couldn't resist taking it.

As Villainy Unlimited's seamstress, Marquez is responsible for sewing costumes for villains, designing new ones as needed (or making minor modifications and improvements to existing ones), and suggesting to VU's clients better ways to present themselves fashion-wise. While she prefers working in ordinary types of cloth, many villains want their costume to be protective as well as stylish, so she often has to use armored cloth, kevlar, and similar materials. She has one assistant, Petra Svoboda, a Serbian immigrant.

Unbeknownst to Franchetti, Marquez "moonlights" as a costume designer for super-heroes as well. She doesn't particularly worry about the fact that her main job involves villains, but she gets a real kick out of helping heroes. If she can save up enough money to buy the high-tech machinery needed to work with armored cloth, she might one day quit VU to focus on her hero-oriented work full-time.

Taryn Marquez is a pretty 28 year-old woman of half Hispanic, half Anglo ancestry. She has long black hair, brown eyes, and wears glasses to correct farsightedness. Although she does most of her seamstressing using high-tech devices suitable for cutting and working with armored cloth, she's rarely to be found without a simple sewing kit... just in case.

Minor Employees

GERALD GRICE

A man like Tom Franchetti sometimes needs a little PR help — not everyone thinks highly of someone who makes his money keeping supervillains out of jail. To that end he hired Gerald Grice as his public relations representative and "agent." When he developed the concept of Villainy Unlimited, he hired Grice full-time to provide spin doctoring not only for Franchetti himself, but for any of VU's clients who wanted such services. Many villains could care less what the public thinks about them, but some want to create or maintain some sort of positive reputation... and of course Franchetti may put Grice to work improving a client's reputation before a big trial.

Grice is a middle-aged black man with two decades of experience in public relations, marketing, advertising, and related fields. He's an eternal

optimist who has a real knack for seeing the positive side of any person or situation. He enjoys his work with VU because it's so challenging — anyone can come up with an ad to promote a new brand of soap, but making people think positively of Hornet or Blackguard is a different matter.

JAMES "TEX" WHITTAKER

Franchetti knows business and finance law, but he's not trained to give investment advice or manage money full-time. To handle those duties he hired "Tex" Whittaker, an accountant and stockbroker from northeast Texas. Smart as a whip and gregarious almost to a fault, Whittaker has a way of making even the most suspicious and antisocial villains feel at ease with his financial acumen. He's a tall, raw-boned sort of fellow. He usually introduces himself as "Tex Whittaker, from Dallas," as if his Texas accent, cowboy boots, and string tie didn't already tell everyone where he's from.

USING VILLAINY UNLIMITED

Some of the ways you can use Villainy Unlimited in your games include:

A SOURCE OF PLOTS

First and foremost VU serves as a source of plot hooks and adventures for you to use in your campaign. Overall it presents the serious subplot of "Who's providing villains with all this help?," requiring the heroes to investigate and hopefully shut the service down. But you can spin plenty of lesser plots off that main theme. Examples include "Where did Villain So-and-So get such a fabulous new costume... and can I get one?" and "Someone's framing me for a crime I didn't commit, so I'm hiring Tom Franchetti."

In general, Villainy Unlimited should be sort of a thorn in the side of the PCs, though usually an indirect one. By providing villains with valuable resources and services (such as medical care), it can keep them active past the point where the heroes would otherwise be able to capture them. By insulating a villain's assets so his family gets them, VU can prevent victims of that villain's crimes from receiving compensation. Keep VU's activities on the up-and-up as much as possible so the PCs are frustrated and aggravated by Franchetti and his employees, but can't simply have them arrested.

THE OPPOSITE NUMBER

Franchetti limits himself to working for villains because they have few other services to turn to and therefore have to pay top dollar for his help. But there's no reason someone else — perhaps even a PC in his secret identity — couldn't establish a similar company catering to heroes. Costumed crimefighters face many of the same difficulties villains do when it comes to things like costuming, licensing their images, getting insurance, and hiring quality legal representation, so there's good money to be made even if it's not the piles and piles of cash Franchetti rakes in.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX ONE: BASTION ALPHA SECURITY PERSONNEL

Here's the game information about Bastion Alpha Security's personnel for the GM's use.

Bastion Process Package Deals

The accompanying five Package Deals describe the effects of the Bastion Process.

BRONZE BASTION PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
5	+5 STR
6	+2 DEX
6	+3 CON
4	+2 BODY
2	+2 PD
2	+2 ED
8	+1 SPD

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 33

GOLD BASTION PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
10	+10 STR
12	+4 DEX
10	+5 CON
8	+4 BODY
4	+4 PD
4	+4 ED
6	+1 SPD

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 54

IRON BASTION PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
15	+15 STR
18	+6 DEX
16	+8 CON
12	+6 BODY
6	+6 PD
6	+6 ED
14	+2 SPD
2	Running +1"

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 89

STEEL BASTION PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
20	+20 STR
24	+8 DEX
20	+10 CON
16	+8 BODY
8	+8 PD
8	+8 ED
12	+2 SPD
2	Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED)
4	Running +2"

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 114

QUESTIONITE BASTION PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
25	+25 STR
30	+10 DEX
24	+12 CON
20	+10 BODY
10	+10 PD
10	+10 ED
10	+1 SPD (plus +1 from DEX)
4	Damage Resistance (4 PD/4 ED)
6	Running +3"

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 139

Bastion Alpha Field Agents

Here are character sheets for guards, thugs, and soldiers with the combined effects of the Bastion Process and Bastion Alpha security training.

BRONZE BASTION GUARD, BASIC TRAINING

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5 PD				2 Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5 ED				2 Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3 SPD				8 Phases: 4, 8, 12
6 REC				0
26 END				0
27 STUN				0 Total Characteristics Cost: 33

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Skills

3	Climbing	11-
2	KS: Security Procedures	11-
2	PS: Bodyguard	11-
2	PS: Security Guard	11-
3	Stealth	11-
1	Tactics	8-
3	TF: Basic Parachuting, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats	
3	WF: Small Arms, Knives	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 31

Total Cost: 64

50+ Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
10	Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
10	Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Other Disadvantages specific to the individual

Total Disadvantage Points: 100

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
 Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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**BRONZE BASTION GUARD,
ADVANCED TRAINING**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
27	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 33

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3 Aikido Throw	+0	+1	3d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
4 Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 25 STR
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Skills

- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 3 Climbing 11-
- 3 Combat Driving 11-
- 3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 11-
- 2 KS: Security Procedures 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 1 Security Systems 8-
- 1 Shadowing 8-
- 3 Stealth 11-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 5 TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
- 5 WF: Small Arms, Knives, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns
- 3 One Characteristic-based Skill of the GM's choice (see Advanced Training Package Deal)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 69

Total Cost: 102

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 2 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 100

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

- Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

GOLD BASTION GUARD, BASIC TRAINING

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	13-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
7	ED	4		Total: 7 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
7	REC	0		
30	END	0		
32	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 54

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 25 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Skills

- 3 Climbing 12-
- 2 KS: Security Procedures 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 3 TF: Basic Parachuting, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Knives

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 31

Total Cost: 85

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual

Total Disadvantage Points: 100

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

- Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

**GOLD BASTION GUARD,
ADVANCED TRAINING**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [2]
14	DEX	12	13-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)
7	ED	4		Total: 7 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
7	REC	0		
30	END	0		
32	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 54

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3 Aikido Throw	+0	+1	4d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	6d6 Strike
4 Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 30 STR
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 30 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort

Skills

- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 3 Climbing 12-
- 3 Combat Driving 12-
- 3 Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12-
- 2 KS: Security Procedures 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 1 Security Systems 8-
- 1 Shadowing 8-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 5 TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
- 5 WF: Small Arms, Knives, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns
- 3 One Characteristic-based Skill of the GM's choice (see Advanced Training Package Deal)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 69

Total Cost: 123

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 23 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 123

Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

- Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

IRON BASTION GUARD, BASIC TRAINING

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [2]
16	DEX	18	13-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	16	13-	
16	BODY	12	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
11	PD	6		Total: 11 PD (0 rPD)
10	ED	6		Total: 10 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
36	END	0		
38	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 87

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	7d6 Strike	
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 35 STR	
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
2	<i>Fast Runner: Running +1" (7" total)</i>				1

Skills

- 3 Climbing 12-
- 2 KS: Security Procedures 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 3 TF: Basic Parachuting, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Knives

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 33

Total Cost: 120

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 20 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 120

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

- Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

**IRON BASTION GUARD,
ADVANCED TRAINING**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [2]
16	DEX	18	13-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	16	13-	
16	BODY	12	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
11	PD	6		Total: 11 PD (0 rPD)
10	ED	6		Total: 10 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
36	END	0		
38	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 87

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3 Aikido Throw	+0	+1	5d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	7d6 Strike
4 Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 35 STR
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 35 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
2 <i>Fast Runner: Running +1"</i> (7" total)			1

Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
3	Climbing 12-
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 12-
2	KS: Security Procedures 11-
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
2	PS: Security Guard 11-
1	Security Systems 8-
1	Shadowing 8-
3	Stealth 12-
1	Tactics 8-
5	TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
5	WF: Small Arms, Knives, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns
3	One Characteristic-based Skill of the GM's choice (see Advanced Training Package Deal)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 71

Total Cost: 158

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nighrange binoculars, multitool

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 58 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 158

Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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STEEL BASTION GUARD, BASIC TRAINING

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
14	PD	8		Total: 14 PD (2 rPD)
12	ED	8		Total: 12 ED (2 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
36	END	0		
38	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 108

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	END
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	8d6 Strike	
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 40 STR	
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
2 <i>Supertough Skin: Damage Resistance</i> (2 PD/2 ED)				0
4 <i>Fast Runner: Running +2"</i> (8" total)				1

Skills

- 3 Climbing 13-
- 2 KS: Security Procedures 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 3 TF: Basic Parachuting, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Knives

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 37

Total Cost: 145

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 45 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 145

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

- Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

**STEEL BASTION GUARD,
ADVANCED TRAINING**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30	STR	20	15-	Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
14	PD	8		Total: 14 PD (2 rPD)
12	ED	8		Total: 12 ED (2 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
36	END	0		
38	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 108

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3 Aikido Throw	+0	+1	6d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	8d6 Strike
4 Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 40 STR
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 40 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
2 <i>Supertough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED)			0
4 <i>Fast Runner:</i> Running +2" (8" total)			1

Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
2	KS: Security Procedures 11-
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
2	PS: Security Guard 11-
1	Security Systems 8-
1	Shadowing 8-
3	Stealth 13-
1	Tactics 8-
5	TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
5	WF: Small Arms, Knives, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns
3	One Characteristic-based Skill of the GM's choice (see Advanced Training Package Deal)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 75

Total Cost: 183

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 83 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 183

Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

□□□□

**QUESTIONITE BASTION
GUARD, BASIC TRAINING**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
35	STR	25	16-	Lift 3,200 kg; 7d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
22	CON	24	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
17	PD	10		Total: 17 PD (4 rPD)
14	ED	10		Total: 14 ED (4 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
11	REC	0		
44	END	0		
49	STUN	0		
Total Characteristics Cost: 129				

Movement: Running: 9"/18"

Cost Powers **END**

Martial Arts: Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4 Boxing Cross	+0	+2	9d6 Strike
4 Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 45 STR
4 Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4 <i>Supertough Skin: Damage Resistance (4 PD/4 ED)</i>			0
6 <i>Fast Runner: Running +3" (9" total)</i>			1

Skills

- 3 Climbing 13-
- 2 KS: Security Procedures 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 3 TF: Basic Parachuting, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
- 3 WF: Small Arms, Knives

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 41

Total Cost: 170

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 70 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 170

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

- Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nightrange binoculars, multitool

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

Agent Control

Stun:

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

**QUESTIONITE BASTION GUARD,
ADVANCED TRAINING**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
35	STR	25	16-	Lift 3,200 kg; 7d6 [3]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
22	CON	24	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
17	PD	10		Total: 17 PD (4 rPD)
14	ED	10		Total: 14 ED (4 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
11	REC	0		
44	END	0		
49	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 129

Movement: Running: 9"/18"

Cost Powers **END**

*Martial Arts: Commando Training
Maneuver OCV DCV Notes*

3	Aikido Throw	+0	+1	7d6 + v/5, Target Falls	
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	9d6 Strike	
4	Hold	-1	-1	Grab Three Limbs, 45 STR	
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm, 45 STR	
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4	<i>Supertough Skin: Damage Resistance (4 PD/4 ED)</i>				0
6	<i>Fast Runner: Running +3" (9" total)</i>				1

Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving 13-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
2	KS: Security Procedures 11-
2	PS: Bodyguard 11-
2	PS: Security Guard 11-
1	Security Systems 8-
1	Shadowing 8-
3	Stealth 13-
1	Tactics 8-
5	TF: Basic Parachuting, Advanced Parachuting, SCUBA, Small Rowed Boats, Small Motorized Boats
5	WF: Small Arms, Knives, Grenade Launchers, General Purpose/Heavy Machine Guns
3	One Characteristic-based Skill of the GM's choice (see Advanced Training Package Deal)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 79

Total Cost: 208

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
BAS-12 Assault Rifle	+1	+1	2d6	1d6	14	AF5, 2 x 30 shots
Varicolor Smoke Grenades	+0	RBS	CE 4"	—	RBS	-3 Sight PER, 4 Charges
Survival Knife	+0	RBS	1d6	1d6-1	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Bastion Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
Bastion Helmet (8 DEF, Activation Roll 8-, Radio Perception/Transmission)

Gear: Nighrange binoculars, multitool

50+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable; Large Group)
- 10 Hunted: US Government 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 20 Other Disadvantages specific to the individual
- 108 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 208

Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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BAS-12 Assault Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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Varicolor Smoke Grenades Charges:

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APPENDIX TWO: EXECUTIVE CONTROL SOLUTIONS GUARD

EXECUTIVE CONTROL SOLUTIONS GUARD

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
12	CON	4	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
21	STUN	0		Total Characteristics Cost: 22

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Perks

1 Fringe Benefit: Membership: ECS Guard

Skills

- 2 KS: ECS Practices And Procedures 11-
- 2 KS: Supervillains 11-
- 2 PS: Bodyguard 11-
- 2 PS: Bounty Hunter 11-
- 2 PS: Security Guard 11-
- 1 Tactics 8-
- 16 16 more points' worth of Skills representing the individual Guard's past experiences or interests

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 28

Total Cost: 50

25+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: ECS Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 50

Description: ECS guards come from many nations and walks of life, though most are American or Western European, and only a few field personnel are women. Typically a soldier wears a uniform that consists primarily of dark grey fatigues and body armor with a matching helmet; the helmet resembles a modern US Army kevlar helmet but includes a viewscreen over the left eye and a microphone arm to hold a mike in front of the mouth. His black leather belt holds several pouches for carrying gear (including Flashbang or Glue grenades, if necessary); also carried on the belt are a pair of Meta-Cuffs for restraining superhumans. Each guard carries a super-tech sonic rifle.

Agent Control

Stun:

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ECS Sonic Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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ECS Sonic Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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MTS Weakener Rifle Charges:

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Flashbang Grenades Charges:

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Glue Grenades Charges:

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Agent Control

Stun:

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ECS Sonic Rifle Charges (clip 1):

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ECS Sonic Rifle Charges (clip 2):

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MTS Weakener Rifle Charges:

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □

Flashbang Grenades Charges:

□□□□

Glue Grenades Charges:

□□□□

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Damage	STUN	STR Min	Notes
ECS Sonic Rifle	+0	+0	*	—	—	2 clips of 30 Charges
MTS Weakener Rifle	+0	+0	Drain 4d6	—	—	16
Flashbang Grenades	+0	RBS	Flash 8d6	—	—	4
Glue Grenades	+0	RBS	Ent 6d6	—	—	4

Armor

- ECS Body Armor (8 DEF, Activation Roll 14-)
- ECS Helmet (8 DEF, covers Hit Locations 3-5; HRRP; Sight and Hearing Group Flash Defense (10 points each))

Gear: As needed for current assignment

*: 8d6 N, 2d67+1 K, Drain DEX 3d6; see page 33

APPENDIX THREE: CIENELAGO SECURITY-BOT

CIENELAGO SECURITY-BOT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	30	17-	Lift 6,400 kg; 8d6 [4]
22	DEX	36	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
25	CON	30	14-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
10	COM	0	11-	
				Total: 25 PD (25 rPD)
				Total: 25 ED (25 rED)
				Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
25	PD	17		
25	ED	20		
6	SPD	28		
13	REC	0		
70	END	10		
50	STUN	2		
				Total Characteristics Cost: 228

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Flight: 20"/40"

Cost	Powers	END
60	<i>Weapons Systems:</i> Multipower, 60-point reserve	
6u	1) <i>Pulson Blaster:</i> Energy Blast 12d6	6
6u	2) <i>Stunner Beam:</i> Energy Blast 6d6, NND (defense is Power Defense; +1)	6
6u	3) <i>Tractor Beam:</i> Telekinesis (40 STR)	6
6u	4) <i>Energy Shackles:</i> Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF	6
12	<i>Robotic Body:</i> Hardened (+¼) for 25 PD/25 ED	0
31	<i>Robotic Body:</i> Damage Resistance (25 PD/25 ED), Hardened (+¼)	0
60	<i>Antigrav Hover Systems:</i> Flight 20", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0
5	<i>Visual Sensors:</i> Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	<i>Visual Sensors:</i> Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group)	0
20	<i>Built-In Radar:</i> Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360 Degrees)	0
15	<i>Built-In Sonar:</i> Active Sonar (Hearing Group)	0
12	<i>Communications Systems:</i> HRRP	0
5	<i>Steel Tentacles:</i> Extra Limbs (2 — legs function like hands)	0
Talents		
12	<i>Onboard Computer Systems:</i> Absolute Range Sense, Absolute Time Sense, Bump Of Direction, Lightning Calculator	
Skills		
12	+4 with <i>Weapon Systems</i> Multipower	
4	+2 with <i>Flight</i>	
8	KS: Grand Cienelago Island Security Protocols 18-	
3	KS: Superhumans 13-	
3	Tactics 13-	
3	Teamwork 13-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 294
Total Cost: 522

200+ Disadvantages

- 5 Physical Limitation: Affected By Mental Powers That Affect Machine Class Of Minds As Well As Human Class (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Slavishly Loyal To Vernon Putnam (Very Common, Total)
- 10 Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Cyberkinetic attacks (Uncommon)
- 282 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 522

Description: A Cienelago Security-Bot is vaguely humanoid. Its main body is a cylinder roughly the same size as a human torso. On top of the cylinder is a dome-shaped "head," and the cylinder can emit "arms" and "legs" when necessary (though all four can function as dexterously as human arms and hands). Usually the Bot moves by using its hover technology to fly or float through the air.

Security-Bot Control

Stun:

Endurance:

Security-Bot Control

Stun:

Endurance:

Security-Bot Control

Stun:

Endurance:

Security-Bot Control

Stun:

Endurance:

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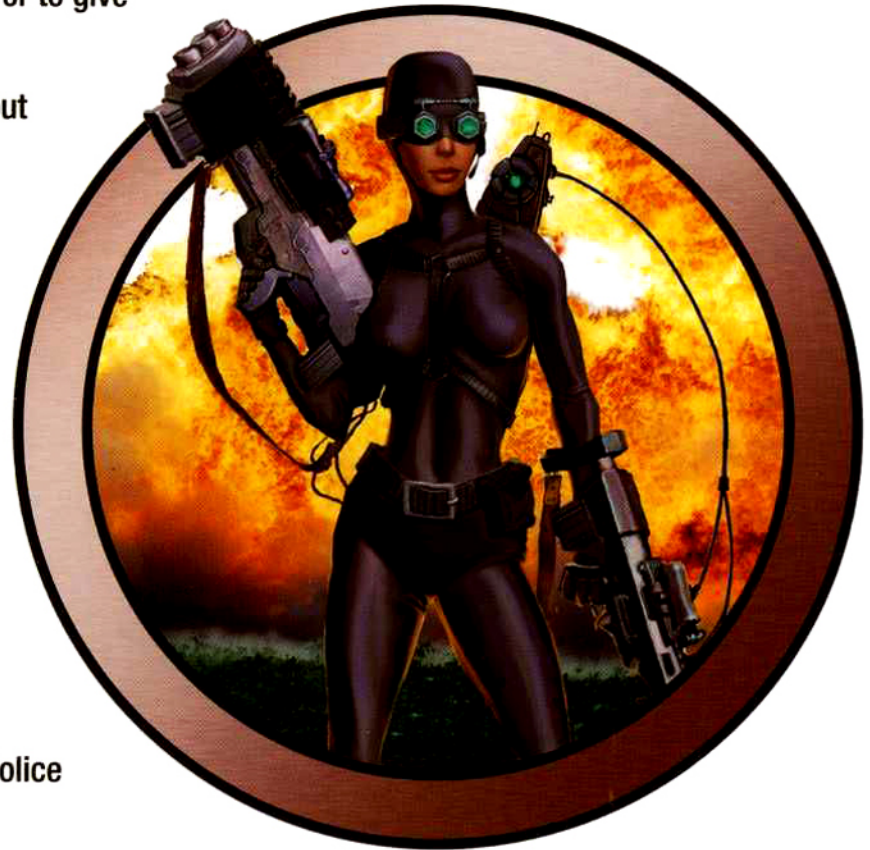
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- **Grand Cienelago Island**, a secret Caribbean vacation resort for superheroes
- **MCPD Special Unit Omega**, the Millennium City Police Department's elite anti-supervillain squad
- **Sickbay**, a special medical care service for superheroes
- **Trans-City Construction**, a construction company that specializes in high-speed construction projects, including repairing the damage caused by superbattles
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